

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



BACK TO GODHEAD



Vol. 14 No. 9

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT



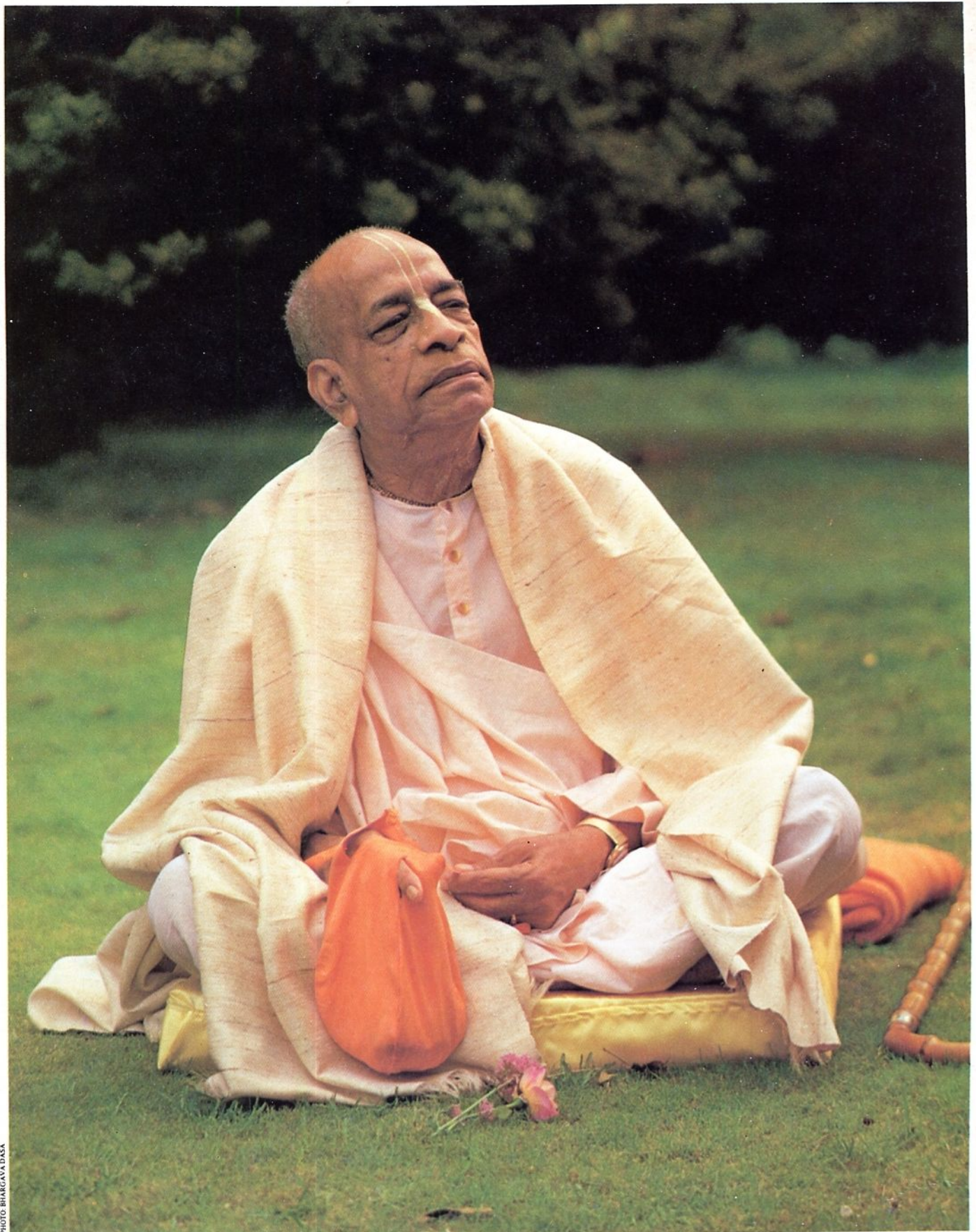


PHOTO: BHARGAVA DASA

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

BACK TO GODHEAD

VOL. 14, NO. 9

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. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

EDITOR IN CHIEF Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami
SENIOR EDITOR Jayādvaīta Swami
ASSOCIATE EDITOR Jagajīvana dāsa
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR Drutakarmā dāsa
DESIGN Yamarāja dāsa
PRODUCTION Purnānanda dāsa, Vimalā-devī dasī,
Vicāru dāsa
PHOTOGRAPHY Bhārgava dāsa, Muralīvādāna dāsa,
Vidyānanda dāsa, Nityarptā-devī dasī, Viśākhā-
devī dasī
COMPOSITION Lalitā-sakhī-devī dasī, Mahā-māyā-
devī dasī
SANSKRIT EDITORS Satyanārāyana dāsa,
Gopīparānadhana dāsa
PROOFREADERS Adhokṣaja dāsa, Śrīkānta dāsa
ARCHIVES Parama-rūpa dāsa
PRINTING CONSULTANT Paul Bleier

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 consonants
(**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* (*dāsī* for women),
meaning "servant." For instance, the name *Kṛṣṇa dāsa*
means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

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

Published monthly, \$8.00 per year (\$10.00 outside USA),
by the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust.

Subscription Offices: 3764 Watseka Avenue, Los
Angeles, Calif. 90034.

Editorial Offices: The Hare Krishna Building, 340 W.
55th Street, New York, N.Y. 10019.

European Subscription Offices: Bhaktivedanta Manor,
Letchmore Heath, Watford, Herts. WD2 8EP, England.

Indian Subscription Offices: BBT, Hare Krishna Land,
Juhu, Bombay 400 054, India.



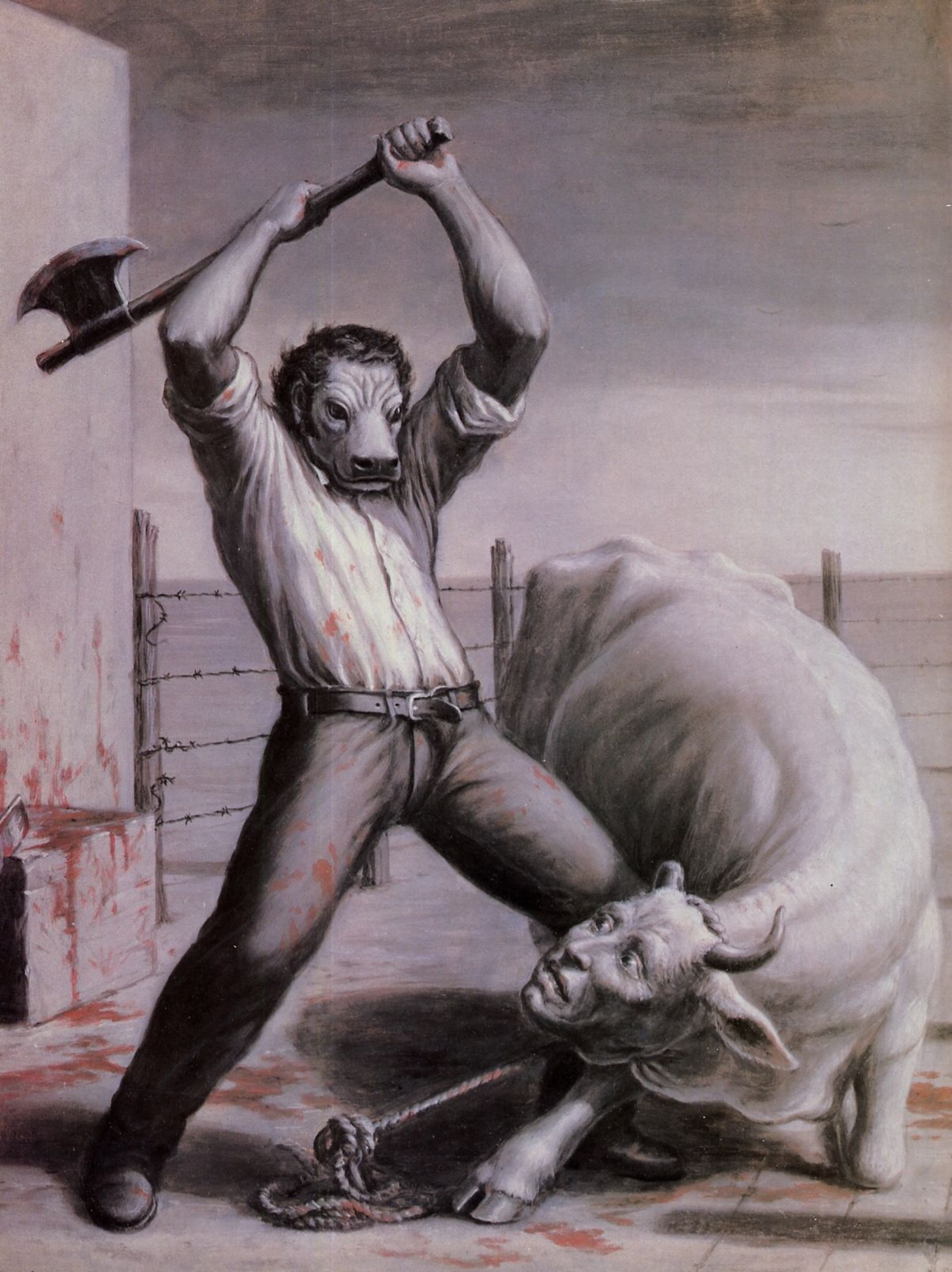
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ISSN 0005-3643

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COVER: Dhanvantari, the Originator of Medicine. Many millennia ago, through His
incarnation Dhanvantari, Kṛṣṇa the Supreme Personality of Godhead introduced cures for the
diseases that afflict our material bodies. Dhanvantari personifies Lord Kṛṣṇa's fame, which can
attract all living beings. Whoever becomes attracted to Kṛṣṇa is cured of his real disease, the
materialistic consciousness that keeps us materially embodied, caught in the cycle of death and
rebirth. (Cover art: Jayarāma 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."



Śrīla Prabhupāda points out that
when humanity gets vicious, we get caught in a vicious circle.

SLAUGHTERHOUSE CIVILIZATION

How to Undo It, Before It Does Us In

June 1974, at the Hare Kṛṣṇa farm near Paris. His Divine Grace A. C. Bhakti-vedanta Swami Prabhupāda and several of his disciples talk about an alternative society.

Yogeśvara dāsa: The other day, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you were saying that in India, at least until recently, it has been forbidden to eat cows—that those who ate animals would eat only dogs and goats.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. For meat-eaters, that is what the Vedic culture recommends: “Eat dogs.” As in Korea they are eating dogs, so you also can eat dogs. But don’t eat cows until after they have died a natural death. We don’t say, “Don’t eat.” You are so very fond of eating cows. All right, you can eat them, because after their death we have to give them to somebody, some living entity. Generally, cow carcasses are given to the vultures. But then, why only to the vultures? Why not to the modern “civilized” people, who are as good as vultures? [Laughter.]

These so-called civilized people—what is the difference between these rascals and vultures? The vultures also enjoy killing and then eating the dead body. “Make it dead and then enjoy”—people have become vultures. And their civilization is a vulture civilization. Animal eaters—they’re like jackals, vultures, dogs. Flesh is not human food. Here in the Vedic culture is civilized food, human food: milk, fruit, vegetables, nuts, grain. Let them learn it. Uncivilized rogues, vultures, *rākṣasas* [demons]—and they’re *leaders*.

Therefore I say that today the leaders are all fourth-class men. And that is why the whole world is in a chaotic condition. We require learned spiritual teachers—

first-class men—to lead. My disciples are training to become first-class men. If people will take our advice, then everything will be all right. What is the use of fourth-class men leading?

If I speak so frankly, people will be very angry. But basically, their leaders are all fourth-class. First-class men are great devotees of the Lord, who can guide the administrators and the citizens through their words and practical example. Second-class men are administrative, military men, who look after the smooth running of the government and the safety of the citizens. And third-class men are farmers, who grow crops and protect the cows. But today who is protecting the cows? That is the third-class men’s business. So therefore every one is fourth-class or lower. *Śva-vid-varāhoṣṭra-kharaiḥ samstutaḥ puruṣaḥ paśuḥ* [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 2.3.19]: people are living just like animals—without regulative, spiritual principles—and from among themselves they are electing the biggest animals. Anyone can do whatever he likes, whatever he thinks—no regulative principles.

But human life is meant for regulative principles. We are insisting that our students follow regulative principles—no meat-eating, no illicit sex, no intoxication, no gambling—just to make them real human beings. Without regulative principles it is animal life. Animal life.

In the human form of life, after passing through millions of lives in the plant and animal species, the spirit soul gets the chance to take up the *yoga* system—and *yoga* means strict regulative principles. *Indriya-samīyamaḥ*—controlling the senses. That is the real *yoga* system. But today most people, though they may say

they are practicing *yoga*—they are misusing it. Just like the animals, they cannot control their senses. As human beings, they have higher intelligence; they should learn how to control the senses. This is human life. *Na yat-karṇa-pathopeto*: one who has not heard the message of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead—even for a moment—he’s an animal. The general mass of people, unless they are trained systematically for a higher standard of life in spiritual values, are no better than animals. They are on the level of dogs, hogs, camels, and asses.

Modern university education practically prepares one to acquire a doggish mentality for accepting the service of a greater master. Like the dogs, after finishing their so-called education the so-called educated persons move from door to door with applications for some service. We have this experience in India. There are so many educated men who are unemployed—because they have been educated as dogs. They must find a master; otherwise they have no power to work independently. Just like a dog—unless he finds a master, he is a street dog, loitering in the street.

Śrīla Bhagavān dāsa Goswami: So many Ph.D.’s are graduating from school now that there are not enough jobs for them. So they have to take jobs as truck drivers or taxi drivers.

Yogeśvara dāsa: They’re supposed to be the educated class, too—*brāhmaṇas*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, they are not *brāhmaṇas*. Those who give education in exchange for money—they are not *brāhmaṇas*. For instance, we are lecturing, educating people. We don’t say, “Give us a salary.” We simply ask them, “Please

come." That is why we are cooking food and holding so many free festivals. "We'll give you food. We'll give you a comfortable seat. Please come and hear about self-realization and God consciousness." We are not asking money—"First of all pay the fee; then you can come and learn *Bhagavad-gītā*." We never say that. But these so-called teachers who first of all bargain for a salary—"What salary will you give me?"—that is a dog's concern. That is not a *brāhmaṇa*'s concern. A *brāhmaṇa* will never ask about a salary. A *brāhmaṇa* is eager to see that people are educated. "Take free education and be educated; be a human being"—this is a *brāhmaṇa*'s concern: You see? I came here not to ask for any money but to give instruction.

Śrīla Bhagavān dāsa Goswami: Today the priests are afraid to speak too strongly—or else they'll be fired and get no salary. And the politicians—they're afraid to speak. They're afraid that they'll be voted out or get no more money to support themselves.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: The priests are after money. They are not first-class; they are low-class men. This is the reason that Christianity has fallen down. The priests cannot speak straightforwardly. There is a straightforward commandment—"Thou shall not kill." But because people are already killing, the priests are afraid to present the commandment straightforwardly. Now they are even granting man-to-man marriage, what to speak of other things. The priests are sermonizing on this idea of man-to-man marriage. Just see how degraded they have become. Previously was there any conception like this, at least outside America? Nobody thought that a man could be married to another man. What is this? And the priests are supporting it. Do you know that? So what is their standard?

Jyotirmayī-devī dāśī: That priest who visited was telling you that he was asking all his parishioners to follow God's law. So you asked him if he was going to get them to follow the Fifth Commandment, the law against killing—including animal killing and especially cow killing.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, this is our proposal: "Why should you kill the cow? Let the cow be protected." You can take the cow's milk and use this milk for making so many nutritious, delicious preparations. Aside from that, as far as meat-eating is concerned, every cow will die—so you just wait a while, and there will be so many dead cows. Then you can take all the dead cows and eat. So how is this a bad proposal? If you say, "You are restraining us from meat-eating"—no, we don't restrain you. We simply ask you, "Don't kill. When the cow is dead, you can eat it."

Yogeśvara dāsa: You've pointed out that

the cow is just like a mother.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. She gives us her milk.

Yogeśvara dāsa: But in the West now, when their parents grow old the people generally send them away to old age homes. So if people have no compassion even toward their own parents, how can we educate them to protect the cow?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: They don't have to protect the cow. We shall protect the cow. Simply we ask them, "Don't purchase meat from the slaughterhouse. We shall

If you kill, you
must be killed.
If you kill the
cow, who is
your mother,
then in some
future lifetime
your mother will
kill you.

supply you the cow after her death." Where is the difficulty?

Śrīla Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami: Not enough meat fast enough—they're eating so much meat.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: "Not enough"? By killing the cows, how will you get any more meat? The total number of cows will remain the same. Simply wait for their natural death. That is the only restriction. You have got a limited number of cows. Either you wait for their death or you kill them at once—the number of cows is the same. So we simply ask you, "Don't kill them. Wait for their natural death and then take the meat." What is the difficulty? And we simply ask you, "As long as they're alive, let us take the cow's milk and prepare delicious foods for the whole human society."

Yogeśvara dāsa: If people don't kill the cows then they will have even more meat, because that way the cows will have more time to reproduce more cows. If they don't kill the cows right away, there will be even more cows.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: More cows, yes. They'll have more cows. We simply request, "Don't kill. Don't maintain slaughterhouses." That is very sinful. It brings a

very awkward karmic reaction upon society. Stop these slaughterhouses. We don't say, "Stop eating meat." You can eat meat, but don't take it from the slaughterhouse, by killing. Simply wait and you'll get the carcasses.

After all, how long will the cows live? Their maximum age is twenty years, and there are many cows who live only eighteen, sixteen, or ten years. So wait that much time; then regularly get dead cows and eat. What is the difficulty?

For the first few years you may not get quite as much as now. During that time you can eat some dogs and cats. [Laughter.] Yes. In Korea they eat dogs. What is the difference between here and Korea? You can also eat dogs for the time being. Or hogs. Eat hogs. We don't prohibit the killing of these less important animals. We neither sanction nor prohibit. But especially we request cow protection, because it is ordered by Lord Kṛṣṇa. *Go-rakṣya*: "Protect the cows." That is our duty.

And economically, also, it is very useful. Kṛṣṇa has not recommended this for nothing; it is not like that. Kṛṣṇa's order has meaning. The cows on our Hare Kṛṣṇa farms are giving more milk than other cows—because they are confident, "We will not be killed here." It is not like these rascals, these so-called Christians say: "They have no soul; they have no intelligence." They have intelligence. In other places they do not give so much milk. But on our farms they are very jolly. As soon as the devotees call, they'll come. Yes—just like friends. And they are confident, "We'll not be killed." So they are jubilant and they are giving much milk. Yes.

In Europe and America the cows are very good, but the cow killing system also is very good. So you stop this. You simply request them, "You'll get the cow's flesh. As soon as she is dead, we shall supply you free of charge. You haven't got to pay so much money. You can get the flesh free and eat it then. Why are you killing? Stop these slaughterhouses." What is wrong in this proposal?

We don't want to stop trade, or the production of grains and vegetables and fruit. But we want to stop these killing houses. It is very, very sinful. That is why all over the world they have so many wars. Every ten or fifteen years there is a big war—a wholesale slaughterhouse for humankind. But these rascals—they do not see it, that by the law of *karma*, every action must have its reaction.

You are killing innocent cows and other animals—nature will take revenge. Just wait. As soon as the time is right, nature will gather all these rascals and slaughter them. Finished. They'll fight amongst themselves—Protestants and Catholics, Russia and America, this one and that

one. It is going on. Why? This is nature's law. Tit for tat. "You have killed. Now you kill yourselves."

They are sending animals to the slaughterhouse, and now they'll create their own slaughterhouse. [Imitating gunfire] Tung! Tung! Kill! Kill! You see? Just take Belfast, for example. The Roman Catholics are killing the Protestants, and the Protestants are killing the Catholics. This is nature's law. It's not necessary that you be sent to the ordinary slaughterhouse. You'll make a slaughterhouse at home. You'll kill your own child—abortion. This is nature's law. Who are these children being killed? They are these meat-eaters. They enjoyed themselves when so many animals were killed, and now they're being killed by their mothers. People do not know how nature is working. *If you kill, you must be killed.* If you kill the cow, who is your mother, then in some future lifetime your mother will kill you. Yes. The mother becomes the child, and the child becomes the mother.

Mām sa khādatīti māmśaḥ. The Sanskrit word is *māmśa*. *Mām* means "me" and *sa* means "he." I am killing this animal; I am eating him. And in my next lifetime he'll kill me and eat me. When the animal is sacrificed, this *mantra* is recited into the ear of the animal—"You are giving your life, so in your next life you will get the opportunity of becoming a human being. And I who am now killing you will become an animal, and you will kill me." So after understanding this *mantra*, who will be ready to kill an animal?

Śrīla Bhagavān dāsa Goswami: Many people today are discussing this topic of reincarnation, but they don't understand the significance of the effects . . .

Śrīla Prabhupāda: How will they understand? All dull-headed fools and rascals, dressed like gentlemen. That's all. *Tāvaca śobhate mūrkhō yāvat kiñcin na bhāṣate.* A rascal, a fool, is prestigious as long as he does not speak. As soon as he speaks, his nature will be revealed—what he really is. Therefore that priest who came did not stay long. He did not want to expose himself. [Laughter.]

Śrīla Bhagavān dāsa Goswami: Less intelligent.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Now, we must take to agricultural work—produce food and give protection to the cow. And if we produce a surplus, we can trade. It is a simple thing that we must do. Our people should live peacefully in farming villages, produce grain and fruit and vegetables, give protection to the cows, and work hard. And if there is a surplus, we can start restaurants. Kṛṣṇa conscious people will never be losers by following the instructions of Kṛṣṇa. They will live comfortably, without any material want, and *tyaktvā dehaṁ*

punar janma naiti [Bg. 4.9]; after leaving this body they will go directly to God. This is our way of life.

So open restaurants in any part of any city and make nice *kacauris*, *śrīkhaṇḍa*, *puris*, *halavā*, and so many other delicacies. And people will purchase them. They will come and sit down. I have given the format: "Every preparation is ready—you can sit down. This is our standard charge for a meal. Now, as much as you like you take. You can take one helping or two, three, four—as much as you like. But don't waste.

**If an animal
comes to your
garden to eat,
don't prohibit him.
He is also part
and parcel
of Kṛṣṇa. If you
prohibit him,
where will he eat?**

Don't waste." Suppose one man eats a single savory and another man eats four savories. That does not mean we shall charge more. Same charge. Same charge. "You can sit down, eat to your heart's content, and be satisfied." Let everyone be satisfied. "We will supply. Simply don't waste." This is our program. Not that each time—just as the hotel does—each time a plate is brought, immediately a bill. No. "You can sit down and eat to your satisfaction. The charge stays the same."

Śrīla Bhagavān dāsa Goswami: I think people will leave the restaurant with their pockets full of savories. [Laughter.]

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That we shall not allow. **Śrīla Bhagavān dāsa Goswami:** You were telling us one time that in India, if a person has a mango orchard and you're hungry you can come in and eat, but you cannot take any away with you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. If you have a garden and somebody says, "I want to eat some fruit," you'll say, "Yes, come on. Take as much fruit as you like." But he should not gather up more than he can eat and take it away. Any number of men can come and eat to their satisfaction. The farmers do not even prohibit the monkeys—"All right, let them come in. After

all, it is God's property." This is the Kṛṣṇa conscious system: if an animal, say a monkey, comes to your garden to eat, don't prohibit him. He is also part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa. If you prohibit him, where will he eat?

I have another story; this one was told by my father. My father's elder brother was running a cloth shop. Before closing the shop my uncle would put out a basin filled with rice. Of course, as in any village, there were rats. But the rats would take the rice and not cut even a single cloth. Cloth is very costly. If even one cloth had been cut by a rat, then it would have been a great loss. So with a few pennies' worth of rice, he saved many dollars' worth of cloth. This Kṛṣṇa culture is practical. "They are also part and parcel of God. Give them food. They'll not create any disturbance. Give them food."

Everyone has an obligation to feed whoever is hungry—even if it is a tiger . . . even if it is a tiger. Once a certain spiritual teacher was living in the jungle. His disciples knew, "The tigers will never come and disturb us, because our teacher keeps some milk at a little distance from the *āśrama*, and the tigers come and drink and go away."

The teacher would call, "You! Tiger! You can come and take your milk here!" [Laughter.] And they would come and take the milk and go away. And they would never attack any members of the *āśrama*. The teacher would say, "They are my men—don't harm them."

I remember seeing at the World's Fair that a man had trained a lion. And the man was playing with that lion just like one plays with a dog. These animals can understand, "This man loves me. He gives me food; he is my friend." They also appreciate.

When Haridāsa Thākura was living in a cave and chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, a big snake who also lived there decided to go away. The snake knew—"He's a saintly person. He should not be disturbed. Let me go away." And from *Bhagavad-gītā* we understand, *īśvaraḥ sarva-bhūtānāṁ hṛd-deśe*—Kṛṣṇa is in everyone's heart, and He is dictating. So Kṛṣṇa can dictate peace and harmony to the animals, to the serpent, to everyone. [Śrīla Prabhupāda pauses reflectively.]

The Vedic culture offers so many nice, delicious foods, and mostly they are made with milk products. But these so-called civilized people—they do not know. They kill the cows and throw the milk away to the hogs, and they are proud of their civilization—like jackals and vultures. Actually, this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement will transform the uncivilized people and bring the whole world to real civilization.



BAD KARMA

There's More to It Than Stubbing Your Toe

by JAYĀDVAITA SWAMI

In most people's minds a person is a body. Whenever a child is born, a new person has come into existence. He grows up, lives out his life, and finally dies, and then that particular person has ceased to exist. In this view, life is sort of a one-time, open-and-shut affair.

From the Vedic viewpoint, however, a person is an eternal traveler who wanders from one body to the next. He appears in different guises—sometimes as a genius, sometimes a fool, sometimes a wealthy man, sometimes a pauper. Sometimes he assumes the role of an American or Englishman, at other times an Indian or Chinese. And with each change of body, he forgets his previous life.

Now one might ask, what is it that determines the kind of body one will appear in next?

According to *Bhagavad-gītā*, our next destination depends upon the direction our consciousness points

to at the time of death; it is our consciousness that carries us to our next body. And the direction our consciousness points to will naturally depend upon the activities we have performed throughout our life.

To give an analogy: A student enters high school and pursues his studies for some years, then graduates and goes on either to college or to some sort of work. Now, what kind of job or college he goes to will depend to a great extent on how he has spent his time in high school. If he has studied diligently and done well on his exams, perhaps he will go on to an excellent college and a rewarding career. On the other hand, if he has frittered away his time, he may find himself struggling to land a tiresome job for low pay. In other words, his next life—his life after school—depends on how he thinks and acts before he graduates.

In the same way, our next body will depend on how we think and act now. We have only so many years in our present body, and then the examination comes, at death. At death our consciousness is tested. We have spent our time however we felt best, and at death—"Time's up!" Our present lifetime comes to a close, and our consciousness carries us to our next body.

It is not desire alone that determines our next body; we get not exactly what we desire but what we deserve. A student may desire to go to Harvard or Yale, but his desire alone will not get him in; he must also have high enough grades, be able to pay the tuition, and so on. Similarly, it is not that we will become wealthy and aristocratic in our next birth merely by aspiring to wealth and aristocracy now. We must first act in such a way that we deserve it.

So people are born in different



countries, different families, and different bodies not by chance but according to precise and intricate natural laws of cause and effect. These laws are known in Sanskrit as the laws of *karma*.

The word *karma* literally means “action,” yet it also carries the import of “fate” or “destiny.” This is entirely reasonable, for it is our actions that determine our fate. This is not a matter of esoteric belief or superstition but of common sense and practical everyday experience. Suppose I put my hand in a fire. This is a kind of action. Yet it also implies an entirely predictable reaction—I’m going to get burned.

So in everyday life my actions have certain reactions; cause and effect are always at work. I may not always understand what the results of my actions will be, and when something has taken place I may not always understand why—but at least I can be sure that what is happening now has resulted from what has gone before and will influence what will happen next.

Now, the Vedic teachings carry this understanding one step further. From a materialistic viewpoint, cause and effect may bounce me around during my lifetime in this body, but no longer—when the body is dead, I am dead, and the chain of action and reaction comes to an end. But what the Vedic teachings propose is that this chain of action and reaction extends not only within our present lifetime but before it and beyond it, throughout a succession of lives. Why does a person take his birth in a particular body? It is because of his past *karma*, his past activities. What kind of body will he be born in next? Again, that depends on his *karma*. His present activities—together with the sum total of his previous activities—will determine his consciousness at the time of his death, and that consciousness will carry him on to his next body.

What’s more, a living being may travel not only from one human body to another but also down from the human species to the body of a

plant or animal. In these lower species also, birth and death take place—consciousness enters the body, stays there for some time, and then leaves for the next body.

So the soul travels from one body to the next, and from one species to the next. Sometimes he goes up to the human form of life, sometimes down to the plant or animal kingdom.

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In the material world, all living beings have the same spiritual nature, yet think and act differently according to the different material bodies they have received. A living being with a cat body thinks and acts like a cat, with a fish body he thinks and acts like a fish, and so on. By nature’s laws, he has no freedom to do otherwise. So by nature’s laws the living beings in the lower species always progress from one species to the next one higher, until they gradually reach the human form. After all, since plants and animals have virtually no freedom, they never do anything contrary to nature’s laws. A tiger may eat flesh, for example, because that is the tiger’s nature; but a tiger will never steal oranges.

In human life, however, we can transgress the laws of nature. The human body offers us freedom, and we may use this freedom properly

or improperly, as we choose.

By nature’s laws the human body is specifically meant for spiritual realization. In lower forms of life we can eat, sleep, have sex, and defend ourselves, and of course we may perform the same activities in the human body also. But in the human body we also have the intelligence to understand who we are and what the purpose of life is, who God is and how we can develop our love for God. This is the real purpose of human life.

The animals also have intelligence, but they can use their intelligence only for eating, sleeping, mating, and defending. If the human being uses his intelligence only for these purposes, he is misusing the advantages of his human life. This misuse is what is known as “bad *karma*.”

Most of us have heard or used the phrase “bad *karma*,” usually in relation to trifles—if we get a parking ticket or stub our toe or lose a coin in a vending machine, we write it off as “bad *karma*.” Yet bad *karma* can be far more serious, as the illustrations on these pages point out.

The girl on the cover of *Exposure* may think herself lucky to have won a choice modeling assignment, but she is unaware of the karmic reactions involved. Although human life is meant for higher purposes than showing off one’s body, there are other forms of life—the tree, for example—in which standing naked is entirely natural. So the girl is unwittingly molding her actions and consciousness in such a way that her next body may be that of a tree. And after a long lifetime in the body of a tree, the soul must then transmigrate upward through millions of more species before again getting the opportunity of a human birth.

Sometimes we say that someone eats like a pig or sleeps like a bear. Here again, the laws of *karma* act with a kind of poetic justice. For if someone wants to eat like a pig, why should he take his next birth in a human body? Pig consciousness, pig body. This is the law of nature. 🐷

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

Beyond Sexism, Beyond Tokenism

This exchange between His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and a reporter took place in Philadelphia during July of 1975.

Reporter: The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement has been what some would consider sexist, because certain propensities for women have been defined, by the devotees or the Vedic scriptures—I'm not sure which—and I wondered if you would comment on that. The allegation is not necessarily that the movement is *against* women, but that it defines inferior roles for them by their natural traits.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: We give equal roles spiritually. Materially, one person is an assistant, another person is a manager. How can you avoid this? Everyone will be a manager, nobody will be an assistant? Can you achieve equality materially? Materially one person is a parent, another is a child; one is an assistant, another is a manager; one is a woman, another is a man. How can you stop this? But spiritually they are all equal.

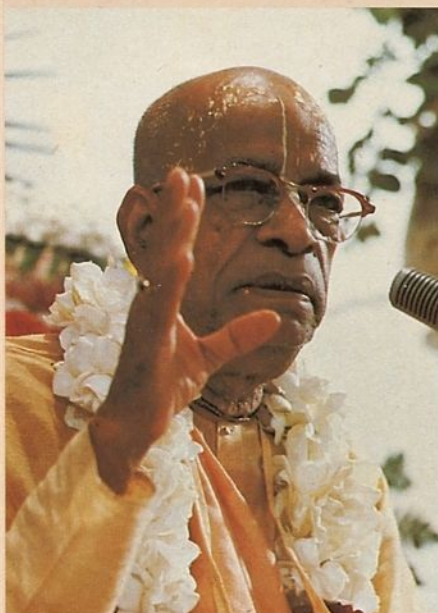
Reporter: So then what is happening materially is unimportant?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: The thing is that when you come to the spiritual platform, when you see the spirit soul within everyone—then *that* is equality. For instance, you are differently dressed, in a red blouse, and I am differently dressed. This difference must be there. There are so many men and women—and they are differently dressed. You cannot say they are equal with respect to their dress.

But within the dress—as spiritual beings—they are all the same. In *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa says that through spiritual vision, we can see a learned scholar, a cow, an elephant, a dog, and even a dog-eater as equals. And yet materially, how can they be equal?

If I invite a learned scholar and ask him, "Please sit down with this dog," will he be pleased? He will feel insulted. I may see that within the dog there is a spirit soul and within the learned scholar there is a spirit soul. But if I say, "Oh, you may be a learned scholar and you may think the dog is just a dog, but I see you as equals," that will be an insult. So the fact is that we cannot disturb the divergent material situation, but at the same time we have to understand what the situation is spiritually.

Artificially, on the platform of the material body, you may make man and woman equal, but actually it is not a fact.



In one place in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the Supreme Personality of Godhead says that one who has spiritual vision sees everyone as equal. And yet in another place the Supreme Lord says, *strīṣu duṣṭāsu vārṣṇeya jāyate varṇa-saṅkaraḥ*: unless you protect women, low-class men will seduce them, and society will be burdened with unwanted children. Just take this "women's liberation"—it is simply a trick by the men. Now the men can have free prostitutes, that's all. And once a man makes a woman pregnant, he can go away and let her choose between begging support from the government or killing her child . . . abortion. You may not like to hear it, but "women's liberation" means that the men have tricked you. So to make progress toward the end of spiritual realization, we must make some slight material distinction: women must be protected.

If we were actually discriminating against women, then how could it be that in our temple we are enjoying together? We are enjoying because actually we are equal—on the spiritual platform. We do not say, "You are a woman. Oh, you cannot become a devotee." No. We welcome everyone. We request everyone, "Come to the spiritual platform. Then everything will be nice." When one is spiritually realized, he knows that spiritually there is no distinction between himself and anyone else—and so he becomes happy. In the material conception, one person is always trying to take another person's position. But in the spiritual conception there is no

more hankering and no more lamentation, because everyone understands that spiritually we are one.

Here at our temple you can see it practically: the boy is dancing, the father is dancing, the black is dancing, the white is dancing, the young are dancing, the old are dancing. You can see it practically. The woman is dancing, the man is dancing—everyone is dancing. They are not dancing artificially, like dogs. They are dancing out of spiritual ecstasy. This is the spiritual platform, the "dancing platform." They are dancing naturally, spontaneously, because they are realizing God, because they are in relationship with God. They are feeling the ecstasy that "we are all servants of Kṛṣṇa."

And this is despite any material distinctions. A man's bodily structure and a woman's bodily structure are different. How can you say they are equal? If a man and a woman are equal materially, then why doesn't the man also become pregnant? The distinction is there by nature. Sometimes people think that I am making the distinction, but the distinction is already there. But despite this distinction, when the man and the woman think in connection with Kṛṣṇa—"I am a spirit soul; my function is to serve God"—then they are equal.

Our proposition is that artificially we should not try to make equality. That will be a failure. It is already a failure. For instance, in London I saw a woman police officer. So I was joking with her: "If I capture your hand and snatch you, what will you do? You will simply cry. So what is the use of your being a police officer?" A police officer requires bodily strength. If there is some hooligan, he can give him a slap or catch him; but what will a woman do? So we say, "Be practical." Artificial equality will not endure.

We are all equal, undoubtedly, because we are all spirit souls. *Asmin dehe*: within everyone's material body there is a spirit soul. That we have to understand first of all, and then if we cultivate knowledge and understanding on that platform of spirit soul, then we shall feel equal and there will be no disturbance. Everyone will be peaceful. That is wanted. We are stressing this point—that if you say artificially that we are equal, it will not have any effect. But when you understand that we are equal spiritually, that will be beneficial. That will bring peace and happiness all over the world.

AMERICA IN THE 1980's

LOOKING FOR LEADERS

Not long ago Ray Ruppert, religion editor of the *Seattle Times*, visited that city's Kṛṣṇa center to talk with Śrīla Haṁsadūta Swami.

Mr. Ruppert: One of the basic questions that people ask is, What is the attraction this kind of religious experience holds for young Americans?

Śrīla Haṁsadūta Swami: The attraction is that it is practical. Everything people do begins with someone else giving them a practical example. If my father is smoking then I smoke. If he drinks then I will drink also, in spite of what he says. Of course, in every country there is some religious community; there are priests and religious leaders. But almost everywhere the leaders have become deviated. They don't follow their own principles, their own disciplines. So naturally the young people reject them. They are seeking some alternative, so if they find the right example they will accept it.

Mr. Ruppert: But in a sense the young people are not following the example of their fathers or of their religious heritage.

Śrīla Haṁsadūta Swami: That's right. And I say they don't follow because the priests don't follow. The priests are smoking, drinking, and having affairs with women. How can anyone accept that? What is the difference between the priests and an ordinary man?

Mr. Ruppert: But this means the young person has to have some kind of discrimination. Otherwise he is going to follow . . .

Śrīla Haṁsadūta Swami: . . . another false

leader. So the difficulty in America now is that because no one has any discrimination, so many bogus religious leaders are popping up. But nevertheless there are genuine religious leaders. It is just that the government doesn't know how to recognize them and protect them and at the same time root out those who are not bona fide, because the government leaders are themselves irreligious. This is the problem. The problem is with our leaders.

Mr. Ruppert: Do you believe that it would be a proper function of the government to sustain or to protect . . .

Śrīla Haṁsadūta Swami: . . . the principles of religion. The principles of religion include truthfulness, mercy, and self-control. But our leaders are not truthful, not merciful, not self-controlled. It is taken for granted that public leaders will tell so many lies when they campaign, and when they are in office they'll accept bribes and do so many other illegal things in the name of the law. It is taken for granted, and that means the people will also follow this example. They will become untruthful, uncontrolled, and selfish. The four irreligious principles are animal-killing, intoxication, illicit sex, and gambling, and all these things are being endorsed by the government—in the form of slaughterhouses, nightclubs, breweries, gambling casinos.

Mr. Ruppert: Returning to the young people . . .

Śrīla Haṁsadūta Swami: Young people by nature will search out higher ideals. That is always the nature of young people, especially in America, where there is so much freedom—they get education and religious freedom.

Mr. Ruppert: Yet many of them have been led astray, apparently.

Śrīla Haṁsadūta Swami: Yes. Because the government is corrupt, and so even in this field of religion there is so much corruption. But nevertheless there are genuine spiritual leaders. This movement is a genuine spiritual movement. But one must examine it very carefully, rather than lump it together with everything else that has disappointed people.

Mr. Ruppert: Is this the only genuine movement?

Śrīla Haṁsadūta Swami: We have not been able to find anything more genuine or as genuine, and therefore we have accepted it. And it is being accepted by religionists, and scholars, and even the government is gradually recognizing it as something very genuine and not something faddish. It is based on a great tradition. We've published over seventy books, translations from the original Sanskrit. And our activities are all grounded in those time-honored books. We don't do anything whimsically.

Mr. Ruppert: How does it happen that a movement which came out of the Orient is attracting and drawing to it Western young people almost exclusively?

Śrīla Haṁsadūta Swami: Actually, our movement is spread all over the world, in Europe, Africa, South America—I personally preached in Hong Kong and the Philippines—and, of course, also in India. So it is not a fact that it is exclusively here; it is everywhere.

And the reason it attracts people all over (of course, especially in the West) is that its principles are universal spiritual principles that do not depend on any particular place, time, or circumstance. Otherwise, how could people accept it? We are not interested in being Hindus. We are interested in the science, the philosophy of life.

Western education teaches the sciences of medicine, economics, engineering, chemistry, politics, and so on. These are all material sciences. But the science of the self, which is the science of life, is not being taught. And that is the basic science, the one that gives all other sciences their usefulness.

For instance, medical science is applicable only to a living body, not to a dead body. A dead body has no value; medicine will not act on a dead body. So the question is, What is this living principle or living force which by its absence makes the body worthless in an instant? Modern science cannot satisfy us; it does not give us the answers to these questions.

Therefore, genuine spiritual science is needed, and people are hankering after that. There is a spiritual vacuum. Young people, especially, gravitate toward spiritual knowledge. And that is a natural tendency, because everyone is a spirit soul.

Mr. Ruppert: Would you consider going to countries like China?

Śrīla Haṁsadūta Swami: Why not? A third of the world's population is in China. They're spirit souls like everyone else. We don't think in terms of "friends" and "enemies," either politically or racially. We think in terms of spirit soul. The American, the Chinese, the Russian, the black man, the white man—all of them are spirit souls. The duty of a spiritual teacher is to deliver everyone, regardless of his caste, color, or creed. So for us it is a field for teaching, that's all. One billion people is a big field.

Mr. Ruppert: Yes, it is. But there are practical problems.

Śrīla Haṁsadūta Swami: Those have to be overcome, because this is our duty. A fireman cannot say, "This fire is too hot. I can't deal with it." No. It's his duty. Sometimes the fire may be easy to extinguish, and sometimes difficult and dangerous—he may even lose his life. But he has to do

it. Similarly, a soldier has to go to the front. He may lose his life, but he has to go. So similarly, a real spiritual teacher has to go everywhere and deliver the message of Kṛṣṇa.

Mr. Ruppert: What is happening to the movement in this country?

Śrīla Haṁsadūta Swami: It is gradually growing, as it always has. It won't grow by leaps and bounds, because to participate in this movement, a person has to have

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real understanding. This movement is not for faddists. It is not just something fashionable. It is genuine, so one must be prepared to make a sacrifice. As you know, we follow four basic regulative principles. We don't eat meat, fish, or eggs. We don't smoke or drink or take any kind of intoxicants. We don't indulge in illicit sex. And we don't gamble. Most people are not ready to give up these things, so we can't accept them. We cannot make any compromise in order to get large numbers of followers. We are not interested in large numbers. We are interested in a few people who can understand this philosophy and who can apply it in their everyday lives.

Mr. Ruppert: So you will have a smaller number but, in a sense, a purer number.

Śrīla Haṁsadūta Swami: Yes, they will be purer, and purity is the force. Purity is the force, not just so many heads to count. There are millions of asses, and they still remain asses.

Mr. Ruppert: A person who comes into this movement—has he previously looked into other groups? Has he made a comparison?

Śrīla Haṁsadūta Swami: More than likely, yes. Most people have. First of all, practically all of us have Christian backgrounds. I was personally brought up very strictly. I

went to church every morning and read the Bible. As a matter of fact, I was just reading the Bible this morning. Most of the men and women who join us have examined not only their Christian doctrines but other things also, and they have generally been educated in the university. They are informed.

Mr. Ruppert: I see. How is the movement financed?

Śrīla Haṁsadūta Swami: We finance practically all our activities by the publication, distribution, and sale of our books, which, incidentally, are used in universities all over the country.

Mr. Ruppert: Is that the only way?

Śrīla Haṁsadūta Swami: We also have an incense business, based in Los Angeles, but that's much less significant. The real basis of our income is our books.

Mr. Ruppert: Generally speaking, it seems to me that the book business in this country has not been all that good.

Śrīla Haṁsadūta Swami: Because we are spiritual teachers, as you know, we don't depend on the normal distribution, but we go door-to-door or into the streets, and we approach people personally in the traditional style, as monks did years ago. A monk must confront the public and bring them the message, because people are not going to come and knock on the door. They are not going to stand in line like they do for bread.

Mr. Ruppert: I understand that since the passing of the founder, the movement is now headed by eleven persons. How is this arrangement working out?

Śrīla Haṁsadūta Swami: Very well. Every year we have a meeting in India, and at that time we discuss the management and development of our movement. If some member were not up to the standard of total purity, he would be corrected. Or if he were incorrigible, he would be removed. So our movement is governed by a democratic system of checks and balances.

Mr. Ruppert: Do you have a chairman?

Śrīla Haṁsadūta Swami: We have chairmen for the sake of conducting meetings, but they have no more power than anyone else.

Mr. Ruppert: It seems that you are more open, publicity-wise, than you had been a few years ago.

Śrīla Haṁsadūta Swami: That may be; I don't know. We are carrying on the same activities now . . .

Mr. Ruppert: Is this a decision you made—to be more open?

Śrīla Haṁsadūta Swami: I don't think so. For some reason the press seems to feel that we are more open, and that might be because we have become more experienced in dealing with the press. But we never, at any time from the beginning, had

any policy of being secretive or closed. I think it was just our inexperience in how to invite the press and how to host them and make them feel comfortable, and even how to answer their questions. But I think we are gaining more experience in dealing with the media. For example, we've published this little booklet, a request to the media, *Please Don't Lump Us In*.

Mr. Ruppert: Yes, I have seen that.

Śrīla Hamsadūta Swami: We're appealing to them not just to take us as one of the group, but to intelligently study our movement in comparison to others and see if there isn't a genuine difference. I think the press has been very understanding about our movement, perhaps because they see something genuine from their dealings with us in the past.

Mr. Ruppert: You spoke yesterday about deprogramming, and I gather that you don't exactly approve of it.

Śrīla Hamsadūta Swami: I don't approve of it on principle. I've heard just recently that some man—I forget his name—has set up in Pennsylvania what amounts to nothing short of a concentration camp. It has electric fences, trained dogs, and watchtowers with guards, radar, and the whole works, in collaboration (or conspiracy) with the local sheriff and judge. That place is practically impenetrable, and they bring their deprogramming victims there. I don't find this to be at all American; it is not what America stands for. I find it quite wrong.

Mr. Ruppert: Have you lost any of your members that way?

Śrīla Hamsadūta Swami: We have lost a few, but not many. Deprogrammers generally don't deal with us, because as I explained, our members have to be mature. They have to possess a philosophical understanding, rather than a sentimental attraction or a mood of vague rebelliousness. We don't accept members so easily.

Mr. Ruppert: What does it take to become a member?

Śrīla Hamsadūta Swami: First of all, one must follow these four principles or restrictions: no meat-eating, no illicit sex, no intoxication, and no gambling. And if a person is going to live in the temple as a *brahmacārī*, in other words as a celibate student, he will have to shave his head and wear a *dhotī*, the simple monastic robe that we wear. He'll have to follow the daily schedule, which includes rising at 4 A.M., bathing, and meditating. And there aren't too many people who are willing to do these things.

Mr. Ruppert: What does he do the rest of the day?

Śrīla Hamsadūta Swami: That depends. If he's a carpenter he'll probably be building something, or if he has a knack for cooking he may be cooking. If he knows how to

type he'll quite likely be typing. In other words, just as in any other organization, we have so many practical engagements.

Mr. Ruppert: Would he hold a job outside?

Śrīla Hamsadūta Swami: No, generally those who live in the temple are engaged in full-time teaching work. But other devotees who are married and have children will probably have an ordinary job.

Mr. Ruppert: Do you ever see the day

Prabhupāda said the Americans should take up this movement, they should destroy atheistic communism, and they should spread God consciousness all over.

when this country might accept this movement as . . .

Śrīla Hamsadūta Swami: Yes, I see the day when America's leaders will be thoroughly versed in the principles of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and they will rule the citizens on that basis and people will be happy. Actually, our spiritual master envisioned that all the countries of the world will follow. If Americans take up this culture and philosophy, then the whole world will take it up. Prabhupāda said that the Americans should take up this movement, they should destroy atheistic communism, and they should spread God consciousness all over. Americans still enjoy the greatest freedom, especially religious freedom, but if they want to keep their freedom, then they must come back to a God conscious way of living. That will insure their freedom and strength. America is now deteriorating. The young people are degenerating due to godlessness. That is the real reason for the decline. America's popularity is declining all over the world, because the leaders are becoming godless and the people are losing faith in them.

Mr. Ruppert: Yet we have a president who makes quite a statement of his own religious conviction.

Śrīla Hamsadūta Swami: Statements in

themselves are not convincing. Actions speak louder than words. As I explained, there are four basic principles, and one who is actually religious will follow them. We don't care whether he follows this faith or that faith; he may be a Christian or a Jew or whatever. But he has to follow these four basic principles. That is, he must be free from intoxication of all kinds, including smoking and drinking; he must be free from illicit sexual connections; he must be free from gambling; and he must be free from eating meat, fish, and eggs. Then he becomes an effective leader.


Mr. Ruppert: But we have not seen any such leader.

Śrīla Hamsadūta Swami: Not yet. But if our book distribution is successful—and it is conceivable that within the next ten years every person in this country will have one of our books—then that will be a great foundation upon which we can request the people to vote for or to demand a God conscious leader.

Mr. Ruppert: That would be in the next ten years or so . . .

Śrīla Hamsadūta Swami: Ten years is not a long time. If you think back ten years, it's just like yesterday. This movement only started twelve years ago. And it has won the acclaim of religionists and scholars. Our books are being used in university classes, and this is a very encouraging sign.

Mr. Ruppert: Then what you're concerned with is not the conversion of huge masses of people but the spreading of these principles, regardless of the person's religious affiliation?

Śrīla Hamsadūta Swami: Yes. If he follows these principles, then that's what we care about. For instance, a humanitarian wants to see that everyone is receiving sufficient food. He doesn't care exactly what style of food it's going to be, as long as everyone is getting well fed. Similarly, we want to see everyone following the principles of religion. It doesn't matter whether they are Christians, Mohammedans, Jews, or whatever, because all the scriptures of the world are one in principle. As I said, just before you came I was reading the Bible. I don't find that the Bible is contradictory to the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Not at all. I find everything Jesus taught to be completely harmonious with what Kṛṣṇa taught. 



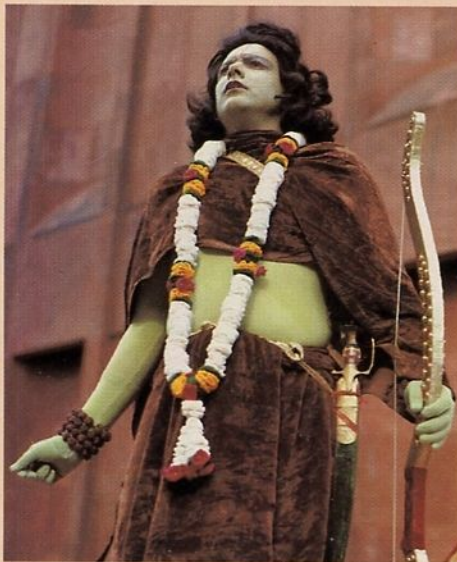
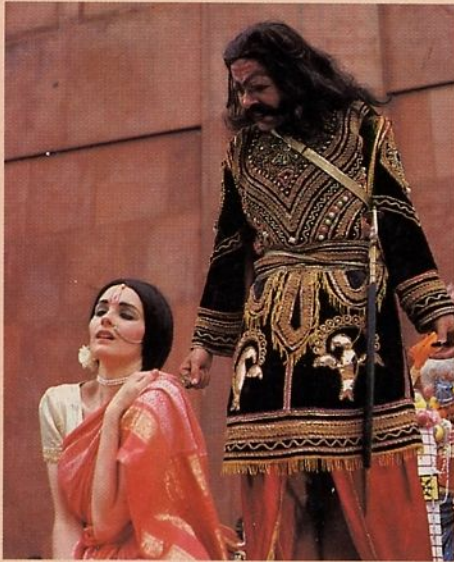
His Divine Grace Hamsadūta Swami is one of the spiritual masters that ISKCON's founder-ācārya Śrīla Prabhupāda selected to initiate new disciples. He is ISKCON's director in the north-western United States, the Philippines, Taiwan, Malaysia, Singapore, Korea, and Sri Lanka.



Every Town and Village

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

Rāmāyaṇa: A Hit at NYC Festival



The demonic Rāvaṇa holds the chaste and beautiful Sītā captive (above left). But Sītā remains convinced that Her eternal spouse Lord Rāma (above right) will come to the rescue.

For several years now, actors and critics alike have been paying regular visits to the Hare Krishna Building to take in performances by Govinda's American Theater Ensemble (G.A.T.E.). The special attraction of late has been the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa's *avatāra* Lord Rāma. During New York's recent Festival of the Chariots, G.A.T.E. took the *Rāmāyaṇa* outdoors, and Elinor Fuchs of the *Soho News* did this review:

"If you had been on LaGuardia Place last Saturday afternoon, just below Washington Square Park, you could have witnessed a two-hour performance of scenes from the *Ramayana*, the great Hindu epic, produced and acted by members of the Hare Krishna movement.

"The afternoon was a celebration of *Ratha-yatra*, or the Festival of the Chariots, sacred to Jagannatha, a form of Krishna worshiped in the city of Jagannatha Puri, India. Two brightly painted wooden chariots with silk canopies thirty feet high arrived, tugged on thick yellow ropes. Jagannatha and other Deities on their red velvet thrones were then installed on a raised platform set against the dramatic red walls of New York University's Bobst Library.

"When the drama finally begins, the mighty demon Ravana's ugly sister attempts to seduce Lord Rama in the forest.

Rama is faithful to the chaste and beautiful Sita, and the titanic battle between the divine and the demonic is launched.

"Thirty small children, most of them from the New York Hindu community, stand at the foot of the stage, flinching in delight at the sword play and bow-and-arrow battles. Part of the adult audience sits behind them on folding chairs; others stand on the sidewalks under the trees. An unknown seven-year-old girl wreathed in marigolds arrives on my lap and stays for an hour.

"The street-theater interest would have lured one forth in short, but one stayed to admire the conviction of the players, none of whom has had professional acting experience, though the man who played Hanuman, the monkey servant of Rama, had extensive ballet background.

"The principal parts of Lord Rama, his consort Sita, Rama's enemy Ravana, and Hanuman were played with evident religious inspiration and commitment. This same spirit had a unifying effect on the most diverse theatrical means, which included three ballets for masked animal characters, songs accompanied by guitar, and a taped score that freely alternated traditional Indian music with Rachmaninoff and Rimsky-Korsakov. Ravana's last-ditch exhortation to his troops, before he is overwhelmed in battle by Rama and his

monkey legions, was shouted over a passage from Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*. Many of the costumes and props were spectacular, and the make-up, wigs, and masks were vigorous and bold. This was a *Ramayana* with no holds barred, and not the slightest trace of amateur's embarrassment, even though the quality of performance became uneven in the smaller roles.

"The group of 12 players, at one time called the Theater of the Absolute Truth but now more modestly titled Govinda's American Theater Ensemble, has been performing the *Ramayana* pretty steadily for the past two years. The leading actors, Nandakishor Das and Lokamangala Das, who play Rama and Ravana, are the group's co-directors and have spent between them 19 years in the Krishna consciousness movement. All the actors are full-time Hare Krishna devotees. They perform the *Ramayana* regularly on Friday evenings and on some Sundays at the Hare Krishna Building, 340 W. 55 St."

Hare Kṛṣṇa Calendar

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

Year 493 Caitanya Era — Vaiṣṇava month of Padmanābha		
	October 1	October 2
	Victory celebration of Lord Rāmacandra. Appearance of Śrīpāda Madhvācārya.	Pāśāṅkuśā-ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans).
	October 3	October 5
Disappearance of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Śrī Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, and Śrīla Kṛṣṇānātha Kavirāja Gosvāmī.		Autumn rāsa dance of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Disappearance of Śrīla Murāri Gupta.
Vaiṣṇava month of Dāmodara		
	October 10	October 14
	Disappearance of Śrīla Nārōttama dāsa Ṭhākura.	Appearance of Śrīla Vīracandra Prabhu.
	October 16	October 17
Disappearance of Śrīla Narahari Sarakāra Ṭhākura. English rendering of Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta completed by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.		Pakṣa-vardhani-mahādvadāśī (fasting from grains and beans).
	October 22	October 23
Śrī Govardhana-pūjā. Worship of Bali Mahārāja. Appearance of Śrīla Rasikānanda Prabhu.	Disappearance of Śrīla Vasudeva Goṣṭhā Ṭhākura.	Disappearance of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.
	October 28	October 31
Disappearance of Śrīla Śrīnīvāsa Ācārya, Śrīla Dhanañjaya Paṇḍita, and Śrīla Gadādhara Ṭhākura.	Śrī Uthānaikādaśī (fasting from grains and beans). Disappearance of Śrīla Gaurāṅgōra dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja.	

The Beautiful Story of the Personality of Godhead

ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

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

Second Canto: "The Cosmic Manifestation"

CHAPTER THREE

Pure Devotional Service: The Change in Heart

As our serialized presentation of Srimad-Bhagavatam continues, we learn the importance of hearing and chanting about the Personality of Godhead, visiting His temples and the places sacred to Him, and rendering Him devotional service.

TEXT 20

बिले बतोरुक्रमविक्रमान् ये
न शृण्वतः कर्णपुटे नरस्य ।
जिह्वासती दार्दुरिकेव सूत
न चोपगायत्युरुगायगाथाः ॥२०॥

bile batorukrama-vikramān ye
na śṛṇvataḥ karna-puṭe narasya
jihvāsati dārdurikeva sūta
na copagāyaty urugāya-gāthāḥ

bile—snake holes; bata—like; urukrama—the Lord, who acts marvelously; vikramān—prowess; ye—all these; na—never; śṛṇvataḥ—heard; karna-puṭe—the earholes; narasya—of the man; jihvā—tongue; asatī—useless; dārdurikā—of the frogs; iva—exactly like that; sūta—O Sūta Gosvāmī; na—never; ca—also; upagāyati—chants loudly; urugāya—worth singing; gāthāḥ—songs.

TRANSLATION

One who has not listened to the messages about the prowess and marvelous acts of the Personality of Godhead and has not sung or chanted loudly the worthy songs about the Lord is to be considered to possess earholes like the holes of snakes and a tongue like the tongue of a frog.

PURPORT

Devotional service to the Lord is rendered by all limbs or parts of the body. It is the transcendental dynamic force of the spirit soul; therefore a devotee is engaged one hundred percent in the service of the Lord. One can engage in devotional service when the senses of the body are purified in relation with the Lord, and one can render service to the Lord with the help of all the senses. As such, the senses and the action of the senses are to be considered impure or materialistic as long as they are employed only in sense gratification. The purified senses are engaged not in sense

gratification but in the service of the Lord *in toto*. The Lord is the Supreme with all senses, and the servitor, who is part and parcel of the Lord, also has the same senses. Service to the Lord is the completely purified use of the senses, as described in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. The Lord imparted instructions with full senses, and Arjuna received them with full senses, and thus there was a perfect exchange of sensible and logical understanding between the master and the disciple. Spiritual understanding is nothing like an electrical charge from the master to the disciple, as foolishly claimed by some propaganda-mongers. Everything is full of sense and logic, and the exchange of views between the master and disciple is possible only when the reception is submissive and real. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* it is said that one should receive the teaching of Lord Caitanya with intellect and full senses so that one can logically understand the great mission.

In the impure state of a living being, the various senses are fully engaged in mundane affairs. If the ear is not engaged in the service of the Lord by hearing about Him from *Bhagavad-gītā* or *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, certainly the holes of the ear will be filled with some rubbish. Therefore the messages of *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* should be preached all over the world very loudly. That is the duty of a pure devotee who has actually heard about them from the perfect sources. Many want to speak something to others, but because they are not trained to speak on the subject matter of Vedic wisdom they are all speaking nonsense, and people are receiving them with no sense. There are hundreds and thousands of sources for distributing mundane news of the world, and people of the world are also receiving it. Similarly, the people of the world should be taught to hear the transcendental topics of the Lord, and the devotee of the Lord must speak loudly so that they can hear. The frogs loudly croak, with the result that they invite the snakes to eat them. The human tongue is especially given for chanting the Vedic hymns and not for croaking like frogs. The word *asatī* used in this verse is also significant. *Asatī* means a woman who has become a prostitute. A prostitute has no reputation for good womanly qualities. Similarly, the tongue, which is given to the human being for chanting the Vedic hymns, will be considered a prostitute when engaged in chanting some mundane nonsense.

TEXT 21

भारः परं पट्टकिरीटजुष्ट-
मप्युत्तमाङ्गं न नमेन्मुकुन्दम् ।
शबौ करी नो कुरुते सपर्या
हरेर्लसत्काञ्चनकङ्कणी वा ॥२१॥

bhāraḥ param paṭṭa-kīṛita-juṣṭam
apy uttamāṅgam na naman mukundam
śāvau karau no kurute saparyāṁ
harer lasat-kāñcana-kañkanau vā

bhāraḥ—a great burden; *param*—heavy; *paṭṭa*—silk; *kirita*—turban; *juṣṭam*—dressed with; *api*—even; *uttama*—upper; *aṅgam*—parts of the body; *na*—never; *namet*—bow down; *mukundam*—Lord Kṛṣṇa, the deliverer; *sāvau*—dead bodies; *karau*—hands; *no*—do not; *kurute*—do; *saparyām*—worshiping; *hareḥ*—of the Personality of Godhead; *lasat*—glittering; *kāñcana*—made of gold; *kañkanau*—bangles; *vā*—even though.

TRANSLATION

The upper portion of the body, though crowned with a silk turban, is only a heavy burden if not bowed down before the Personality of Godhead who can award mukti [freedom]. And the hands, though decorated with glittering bangles, are like those of a dead man if not engaged in the service of the Personality of Godhead Hari.

PURPORT

As stated hereinbefore, there are three kinds of devotees of the Lord. The first-class devotee does not at all see anyone who is not in the service of the Lord, but the second-class devotee makes distinctions between devotees and nondevotees. The second-class devotees are therefore meant for preaching work, and as referred to in the above verse, they must loudly preach the glories of the Lord. The second-class devotee accepts disciples from the section of third-class devotees or nondevotees. Sometimes the first-class devotee also comes down to the category of the second-class devotee for preaching work. But the common man, who is expected to become at least a third-class devotee, is advised herein to visit the temple of the Lord and bow down before the Deity, even though he may be a very rich man or even a king with a silk turban or crown. The Lord is the Lord of everyone, including the great kings and emperors, and men who are rich in the estimation of mundane people must therefore make it a point to visit the temple of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and regularly bow down before the Deity. The Lord in the temple in the worshipable form is never to be considered to be made of stone or wood, for the Lord in His *arcā* incarnation as the Deity in the temple shows immense favor to the fallen souls by His auspicious presence. By the hearing process, as mentioned hereinbefore, this realization of the presence of the Lord in the temple is made possible. As such, the first process in the routine work of devotional service—hearing—is the essential point. Hearing by all classes of devotees from the authentic sources like *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is essential. The common man who is puffed up with his material position and does not bow down before the Deity of the Lord in the temple, or who defies temple worship without any knowledge of the science, must know that his so-called turban or crown will only succeed in further drowning him in the water of the ocean of material existence. A drowning man with a heavy weight on his head is sure to go down more swiftly than those who have no heavy weight. A foolish, puffed-up man defies the science of God and says that God has no meaning for him, but when he is in the grip of God's law and is caught by some disease like cerebral thrombosis, that godless man sinks into the ocean of nescience by the weight of his material acquisition. Advancement of material science without God consciousness is a heavy load on the head of human society, and so one must take heed of this great warning.

The common man, if he has no time to worship the Lord, may at least engage his hands for a few seconds in washing or sweeping the Lord's temple. Mahārāja Pratāparudra, the greatly powerful king of Orissa, was always very busy with heavy state responsibilities, yet he made it a point to sweep the temple of Lord Jagannātha at Puri once a year during the festival of the Lord. The idea is that however important a man one may be he must accept the supremacy of the Supreme Lord. This God consciousness will help a man even in his material prosperity. Mahārāja Pratāparudra's subordination before Lord Jagannātha made him a powerful king, so much so that even the great Pathan in his time could not enter into Orissa on account of the powerful Mahārāja Pratāparudra. And at last Mahārāja Pratāparudra was graced by Lord Śrī Caitanya on

the very grounds of his acceptance of subordination to the Lord of the universe. So even though a rich man's wife has glittering bangles made of gold on her hands, she must engage herself in rendering service to the Lord.

TEXT 22

बर्हायिते ते नयने नराणां
लिङ्गानि विष्णोर्न निरीक्षतो ये ।
पादौ नृणां तौ द्रुमजन्मभाजौ
क्षेत्राणि नातुव्रजतो हरेर्यौ ॥२२॥

barhāyite te nayane narāṇām
liṅgāni viṣṇor na nirīkṣato ye
pādau nṛṇām tau druma-jaṇma-bhājau
kṣetrāṇi nānuvrajato harer yau

barhāyite—like plumes of a peacock; *te*—those; *nayane*—eyes; *narāṇām*—of men; *liṅgāni*—forms; *viṣṇoḥ*—of the Personality of Godhead; *na*—does not; *nirīkṣataḥ*—look upon; *ye*—all such; *pādau*—legs; *nṛṇām*—of men; *tau*—those; *druma-jaṇma*—being born of the tree; *bhājau*—like that; *kṣetrāṇi*—holy places; *na*—never; *anuvrajataḥ*—goes after; *hareḥ*—of the Lord; *yau*—which.

TRANSLATION

The eyes which do not look at the symbolic representations of the Personality of Godhead Viṣṇu [His forms, name, quality, etc.] are like those printed on the plumes of the peacock, and the legs which do not move to the holy places [where the Lord is remembered] are considered to be like tree trunks.

PURPORT

Especially for the householder devotees, the path of Deity worship is strongly recommended. As far as possible, every householder, by the direction of the spiritual master, must install the Deity of Viṣṇu, forms like Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa or Sitā-Rāma especially, or any other form of the Lord, like Nṛsiṃha, Varāha, Gaura-Nitāi, Matsya, Kūrma, *sālagrāma-silā* and many other forms of Viṣṇu, like Tri-vikrama, Keśava, Acyuta, Vāsudeva, Nārāyaṇa and Dāmodara, as recommended in the *Vaiṣṇava-tantras* or *Purāṇas*, and one's family should worship strictly following the directions and regulations of *arcana-vidhi*. Any member of the family who is above twelve years of age should be initiated by a bona fide spiritual master, and all the members of the household should be engaged in the daily service of the Lord, beginning from morning (4 a.m.) till night (10 p.m.) by performing *maṅgala-ārātriḥa*, *nirañjana*, *arcana*, *pūjā*, *kīrtana*, *śṛṅgāra*, *bhoga-vaikālī*, *sandhyā-ārātriḥa*, *pāṭha*, *bhoga* (at night), *śayana-ārātriḥa*, etc. Engagement in such worship of the Deity, under the direction of a bona fide spiritual master, will greatly help the householders to purify their very existence and make rapid progress in spiritual knowledge. Simple theoretical book knowledge is not sufficient for a neophyte devotee. Book knowledge is theoretical, whereas the *arcana* process is practical. Spiritual knowledge must be developed by a combination of theoretical and practical knowledge, and that is the guaranteed way for attainment of spiritual perfection. The training of devotional service for a neophyte devotee completely depends on the expert spiritual master who knows how to lead his disciple to make gradual progress towards the path back home, back to Godhead. One should not become a pseudo spiritual master as a matter of business to meet one's family expenditures; one must be an expert spiritual master to deliver the disciple from the clutches of impending death. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has defined the bona fide qualities of a spiritual master, and one of the verses in that description reads:

śrī-vigrahārādhana-nitya-nānā-
śṛṅgāra-tan-mandira-mārjanādau

yuktasya bhaktāṁś ca niyuñjato 'pi
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam

Śrī-vigraha is the arca, or suitable worshipable form of the Lord, and the disciple should be engaged in worshiping the Deity regularly by śrīngāra, by proper decoration and dressing, as also by mandira-māṛjana, the matter of cleansing the temple. The spiritual master teaches the neophyte devotee all these kindly and personally to help him gradually in the realization of the transcendental name, quality, form, etc., of the Lord.

Only attention engaged in the service of the Lord, especially in dressing and decorating the temple, accompanied by musical kīrtana and spiritual instructions from scriptures, can save the common man from the hellish cinema attractions and rubbish sex-songs broadcast everywhere by radios. If one is unable to maintain a temple at home, he should go to another's temple where all the above performances are regularly executed. Visiting the temple of a devotee and looking at the profusely decorated forms of the Lord well dressed in a well-decorated, sanctified temple naturally infuse the mundane mind with spiritual inspiration. People should visit holy places like Vṛndāvana where such temples and worship of the Deity are specifically maintained. Formerly all rich men like kings and rich merchants constructed such temples under the direction of expert devotees of the Lord, like the six Gosvāmīs, and it is the duty of the common man to take advantage of these temples and festivals observed in the holy places of pilgrimage by following in the footsteps of great devotees (anuvraja). One should not visit all these sanctified pilgrimage places and temples with sightseeing in mind, but one must go to such temples and sanctified places immortalized by the transcendental pastimes of the Lord and be guided by proper men who know the science. This is called anuvraja. Anu means to follow. It is therefore best to follow the instruction of the bona fide spiritual master, even in visiting temples and the holy places of pilgrimage. One who does not move in that way is as good as a standing tree condemned by the Lord not to move. The moving tendency of the human being is misused by visiting places for sightseeing. The best purpose of such traveling tendencies could be fulfilled by visiting the holy places established by great ācāryas and thereby not being misled by the atheistic propaganda of moneymaking men who have no knowledge of spiritual matters.

TEXT 23

जीवञ्चवो मागवताङ्घ्रिरेणुं
न जातु मर्त्योऽभिलभेत यस्तु ।
श्रीविष्णुपद्या मनुजस्तुलस्याः
श्वसानञ्चवो यस्तु न वेद गन्धम् ॥२३॥

jīvañ chavo bhāgavatāṅghri-reṇuṁ
na jātu martyo 'bhilabheta yas tu
śrī-viṣṇu-padyā manujas tulasyaḥ
śvasaṅ chavo yas tu na veda gandham

jīvan—while living; śavaḥ—a dead body; bhāgavata-āṅghri-reṇuṁ—the dust of the feet of a pure devotee; na—never; jātu—at any time; martyaḥ—mortal; abhilabheta—particularly received; yaḥ—a person; tu—but; śrī—with opulence; viṣṇu-padyāḥ—of the lotus feet of Viṣṇu; manu-jah—a descendant of Manu (a man); tulasyaḥ—leaves of the tulasi tree; śvasaṅ—while breathing; śavaḥ—still a dead body; yaḥ—who; tu—but; na veda—never experienced; gandham—the aroma.

TRANSLATION

The person who has not at any time received the dust of the feet of the Lord's pure devotee upon his head is certainly a dead body. And the person who has never experienced the aroma of the tulasi

leaves from the lotus feet of the Lord is also a dead body, although breathing.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura, the breathing dead body is a ghost. When a man dies, he is called dead, but when he again appears in a subtle form not visible to our present vision and yet acts, such a dead body is called a ghost. Ghosts are always very bad elements, always creating a fearful situation for others. Similarly, the ghostlike nondevotees who have no respect for the pure devotees, nor for the Viṣṇu Deity in the temples, create a fearful situation for the devotees at all times. The Lord never accepts any offering by such impure ghosts. There is a common saying that one should first love the dog of the beloved before one shows any loving sentiments for the beloved. The stage of pure devotion is attained by sincerely serving a pure devotee of the Lord. The first condition of devotional service to the Lord is therefore to be a servant of a pure devotee, and this condition is fulfilled by the statement "reception of the dust of the lotus feet of a pure devotee who has also served another pure devotee." That is the way of pure disciplic succession, or devotional paramparā.

Mahārāja Rahūgaṇa inquired from the great saint Jaḍa Bharata as to how he had attained such a liberated stage of a paramahansa, and in answer the great saint replied as follows (Bhāg. 5.12.12):

rahūgaṇaitat tapasā na yāti
na cejyayā nīrvapaṇād grhād vā
na cchandasā naiva jalāgni-sūryair
vinā mahat-pāda-rajo-'bhiṣekam

"O King Rahūgaṇa, the perfectional stage of devotional service, or the paramahansa stage of life, cannot be attained unless one is blessed by the dust of the feet of great devotees. It is never attained by tapasya [austerity], the Vedic worshiping process, acceptance of the renounced order of life, the discharge of the duties of household life, the chanting of the Vedic hymns, or the performance of penances in the hot sun, within cold water or before the blazing fire."

In other words, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the property of His pure unconditional devotees, and as such only the devotees can deliver Kṛṣṇa to another devotee; Kṛṣṇa is never obtainable directly. Lord Caitanya therefore designated Himself as gopī-bhartuḥ pada-kamalayor dāsa-dāsānudāsaḥ, or "the most obedient servant of the servants of the Lord, who maintains the gopī damsels at Vṛndāvana." A pure devotee therefore never approaches the Lord directly, but tries to please the servant of the Lord's servants, and thus the Lord becomes pleased, and only then can the devotee relish the taste of the tulasi leaves stuck to His lotus feet. In the Brahma-saṁhitā it is said that the Lord is never to be found by becoming a great scholar of the Vedic literatures, but He is very easily approachable through His pure devotee. In Vṛndāvana all the pure devotees pray for the mercy of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, the pleasure potency of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is a tenderhearted feminine counterpart of the supreme whole, resembling the perfectional stage of the worldly feminine nature. Therefore, the mercy of Rādhārāṇī is available very readily to the sincere devotees, and once She recommends such a devotee to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Lord at once accepts the devotee's admittance into His association. The conclusion is, therefore, that one should be more serious about seeking the mercy of the devotee than that of the Lord directly, and by one's doing so (by the good will of the devotee) the natural attraction for the service of the Lord will be revived.

TEXT 24

तदस्मसारं हृदयं वतेदं
यद् गृह्यमाणैर्हरिनामधेयैः ।
न विक्रियेताय यदा विकारो
नेत्रे जलं गात्ररूहेषु हर्षः ॥२४॥

*tad aśma-sāraṁ hṛdayaṁ batedaṁ
yad grhyamāṇair hari-nāma-dheyaiḥ
na vikriyetaṭha yadā vikāro
netre jalam gātra-ruheṣu harṣaḥ*

tat—that; *aśma-sāraṁ*—is steel-framed; *hṛdayam*—heart; *bata idam*—certainly that; *yat*—which; *grhyamāṇaiḥ*—in spite of chanting; *hari-nāma*—the holy name of the Lord; *dheyaiḥ*—by concentration of the mind; *na*—does not; *vikriyeta*—change; *atha*—thus; *yadā*—when; *vikāraḥ*—reaction; *netre*—in the eyes; *jalam*—tears; *gātra-ruheṣu*—at the pores; *harṣaḥ*—eruptions of ecstasy.

TRANSLATION

Certainly that heart is steel-framed which, in spite of one's chanting the holy name of the Lord with concentration, does not change when ecstasy takes place, tears fill the eyes and the hairs stand on end.

PURPORT

We should note with profit that in the first three chapters of the Second Canto a gradual process of development of devotional service is being presented. In the First Chapter the first step in devotional service for God consciousness by the process of hearing and chanting has been stressed, and a gross conception of the Personality of Godhead in His universal form for the beginners is recommended. By such a gross conception of God through the material manifestations of His energy, one is enabled to spiritualize the mind and the senses and gradually concentrate the mind upon Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme, who is present as the Supersoul in every heart and everywhere, in every atom of the material universe. The system of *pañca-upāsanā*, recommending five mental attitudes for the common man, is also enacted for this purpose, namely gradual development, worship of the superior that may be in the form of fire, electricity, the sun, the mass of living beings, Lord Śiva and, at last, the impersonal Supersoul, the partial representation of Lord Viṣṇu. They are all nicely described in the Second Chapter, but in the Third Chapter further development is prescribed after one has actually reached the stage of Viṣṇu worship, or pure devotional service, and the mature stage of Viṣṇu worship is suggested herein in relation to the change of heart.

The whole process of spiritual culture is aimed at changing the heart of the living being in the matter of his eternal relation with the Supreme Lord as subordinate servant, which is his eternal constitutional position. So with the progress of devotional service, the reaction of change in the heart is exhibited by gradual detachment from the sense of material enjoyment by a false sense of lording it over the world and an increase in the attitude of rendering loving service to the Lord. *Vidhi-bhakti*, or regulated devotional service by the limbs of the body (namely the eyes, the ears, the nose, the hands and the legs, as already explained hereinbefore), is now stressed herein in relation to the mind, which is the impetus for all activities of the limbs of the body. It is expected by all means that by discharging regulated devotional service one must manifest the change of heart. If there is no such change, the heart must be considered steel-framed, for it is not melted even when there is chanting of the holy name of the Lord. We must always remember that hearing and chanting are the basic principles of discharging devotional duties, and if they are properly performed there will follow the reactional ecstasy with signs of tears in the eyes and standing of the hairs on the body. These are natural consequences and are the preliminary symptoms of the *bhāva* stage, which occurs before one reaches the perfectional stage of *prema*, love of Godhead.

If the reaction does not take place, even after continuous hearing and chanting of the holy name of the Lord, it may be considered to be due to

offenses only. That is the opinion of the *Sandarbha*. In the beginning of chanting of the holy name of the Lord, if the devotee has not been very careful about evading the ten kinds of offenses at the feet of the holy name, certainly the reaction of feelings of separation will not be visible by tears in the eyes and standing of the hair on end.

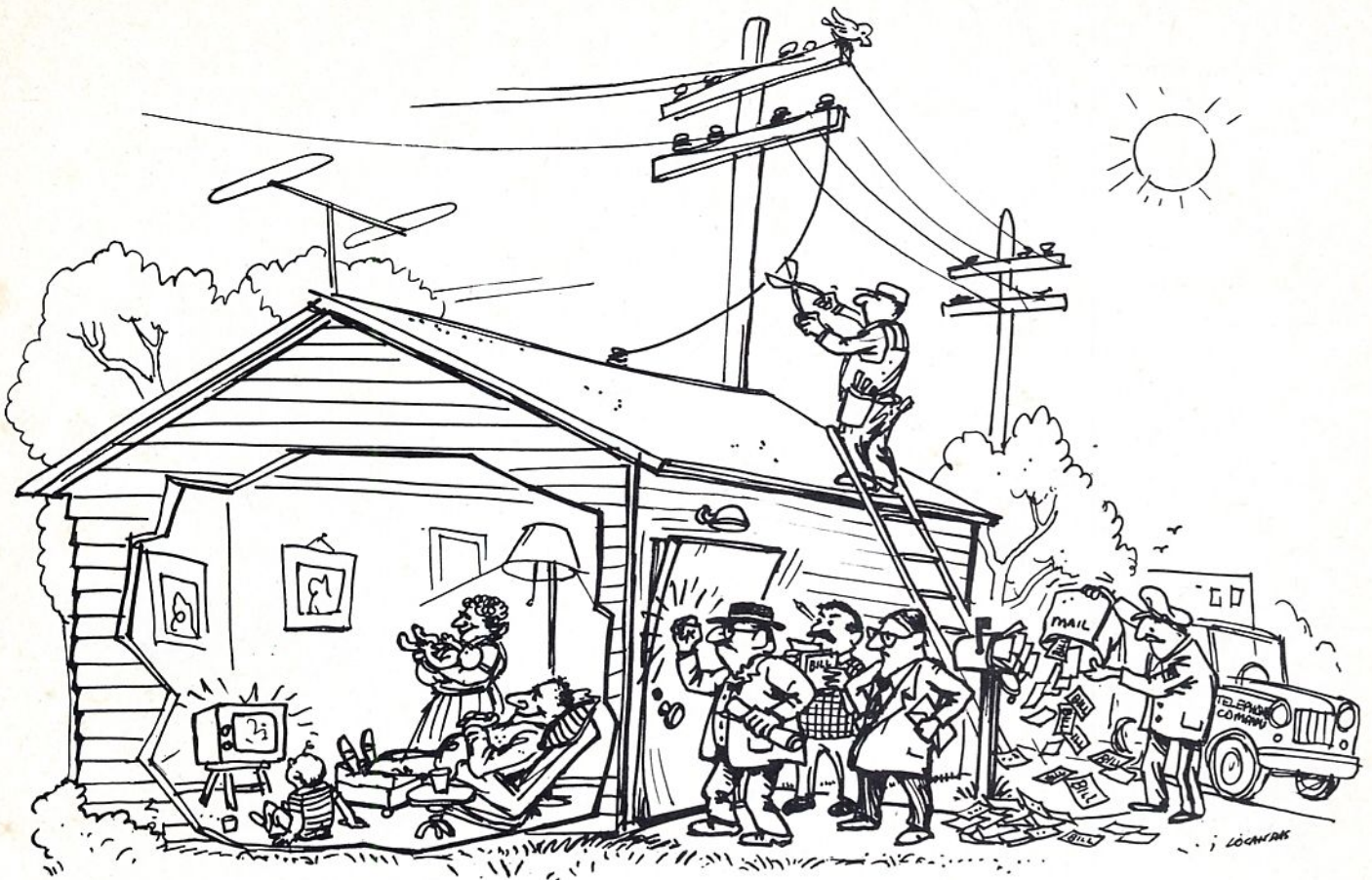
The *bhāva* stage is manifested by eight transcendental symptoms, namely inertness, perspiration, standing of hairs on end, failing in the voice, trembling, paleness of the body, tears in the eyes and finally trance. *The Nectar of Devotion*, a summary study of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, explains those symptoms and vividly describes other transcendental developments, both in steady and accelerating manifestations.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has very critically discussed all these *bhāva* displays in connection with some unscrupulous neophyte's imitating the above symptoms for cheap appreciation. Not only Viśvanātha Cakravartī but also Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī treated them very critically. Sometimes all the above eight symptoms of ecstasy are imitated by the mundane devotees (*prākṛta-sahajiyās*), but the pseudo symptoms are at once detected when one sees the pseudodevotee addicted to so many forbidden things. Even though decorated with the signs of a devotee, a person addicted to smoking, drinking or illegitimate sex with women cannot have all the above-mentioned ecstatic symptoms. But it is seen that sometimes these symptoms are willfully imitated, and for this reason Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī accuses the imitators of being stone-hearted men. They are sometimes even affected by the reflection of such transcendental symptoms, yet if they still do not give up the forbidden habits, then they are hopeless cases for transcendental realization.

When Lord Caitanya met Śrīla Rāmānanda Rāya of Kāvura on the bank of the Godāvāri, the Lord developed all these symptoms, but because of the presence of some nondevotee *brāhmaṇas* who were attendants of the Rāya, the Lord suppressed these symptoms. So sometimes they are not visible even in the body of the first-class devotee for certain circumstantial reasons. Therefore real, steady *bhāva* is definitely displayed in the matter of cessation of material desires (*kṣānti*), utilization of every moment in the transcendental loving service of the Lord (*avyārtha-kālatvam*), eagerness for glorifying the Lord constantly (*nāma-gāne sadā ruci*), attraction for living in the land of the Lord (*prītis tad-vasati sthale*), complete detachment from material happiness (*virakti*), and pridelessness (*māna-sūnyatā*). One who has developed all these transcendental qualities is really possessed of the *bhāva* stage, as distinguished from the stonehearted imitator or mundane devotee.

The whole process can be summarized as follows: The advanced devotee who chants the holy name of the Lord in a perfectly offenseless manner and is friendly to everyone can actually relish the transcendental taste of glorifying the Lord. And the result of such realization is reflected in the cessation of all material desires, etc., as mentioned above. The neophytes, due to their being in the lower stage of devotional service, are invariably envious, so much so that they invent their own ways and means of devotional regulations without following the *ācāryas*. As such, even if they make a show of constantly chanting the holy name of the Lord, they cannot relish the transcendental taste of the holy name. Therefore, the show of tears in the eyes, trembling, perspiration or unconsciousness, etc., is condemned. They can, however, get in touch with a pure devotee of the Lord and rectify their bad habits; otherwise they shall continue to be stonehearted and unfit for any treatment. A complete progressive march on the return path home, back to Godhead, will depend on the instructions of the revealed scriptures directed by a realized devotee.

(continued in next issue)



The story of a beleaguered homeowner.

WHO'S PAYING THE RENT?

For months now, my mail has been building up in the mailbox at the front of the house. The letters have begun to overflow and make a small pile on the ground. I walk by them every day, but somehow I can't take the time to bend down and pick them up. I find it much easier to forget about them—it's probably not important anyway. Better to eat something, sit back on the sofa, and watch the football game on TV. "Don't worry," my mind assures me. "Everything's perfectly under your control. You've got everything you've always wanted. Nobody can bother you now. Relax and enjoy yourself." So life goes on, despite a nagging fear that perhaps there just might be something important in the mail, after all.

Then the doorbell rings—it's the landlord. "Excuse me," he says a bit tensely. "You haven't paid the rent."

Is that all? Why is he so upset? I mean, isn't this house here for me to enjoy? When you get right down to it, what's the dif-

by ŚRĪLA HARIKEŚA SWAMI

ference if I pay rent or not?

Now the bill collector arrives. "Sir, you'd better pay up for the electricity, water, and other utilities. Otherwise, we'll have no choice but to cut them off."

Why is he so pushy? What's the hurry? "Later, I'll pay you later. Can't you see I've got to take care of the house, the car, the stereo, the dog, and myself and the kids? These are pressing needs—why are you insisting on payment now? I'll pay you later, when I have time."

"Sorry," they say in near unison. "No tax payments, no rent payments . . . then no electricity, no water, no house. You've got to go."

Unbelievable! Five minutes later it's stereo, dog, furniture, and family out on the street and the door boarded up, with the pile of unpaid bills still on the ground.

On a much grander scale, the human

family might ask, "Are we actually making our rent payments for all that is being supplied to us, or are we facing eviction?" Perhaps each one of us ought to examine our situation, while we still have time. . . .

This material body is a home that I'm living in. Like an ordinary home, it needs various facilities for its maintenance—light, air, water, and so forth. As long as I'm living here in this world in a material body, I will automatically have to use many varieties of God's energies. These energies are supplied to every one of us, for no living body could subsist without them. Yet from time to time we get bills and reminders from the Supreme Lord and His representatives—instructions about repaying Him for services rendered.

If I try to enjoy all these facilities independently, without paying for them, I'll receive the same treatment as if I had neglected to pay my rent. The landlord will force me out of my comfortable position and put me out in the street. If I

fail to satisfy the Supreme Lord, then I'll undergo various disturbances and frustrations within this lifetime, leading inevitably to death. This is the ultimate lesson to be learned by all intelligent people.

Already the bill collector is knocking on our door. And yet we're choosing to neglect him. Were we to answer the door and do the needful, we might be spared from any further trouble, but our insistence on avoiding the issue is making our eviction inevitable. Already we're seeing ominous signs. If we could just learn how to read the signs, we could avert disaster. The clearest of all signs, the loudest knocking on our door, is the all-pervading destroyer of all things—time.

Time is such a powerful representative of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, that it touches all of us and all things within the creation. All of us are forced to experience the miseries of becoming old, undergoing diseases, and ultimately dying. The hand of time mercilessly takes away all health, beauty, wealth, and strength, and ultimately the life force itself. No one can avoid time, the stringent killer of all.

Not only is the time factor visible in the transformations of the material body, but it is clearly visible all over the surface of the globe as social, political, and economic disturbances, as well as periodic calamities and disasters. Atomic energy, once considered so safe, is proving more dangerous than we could ever have imagined. Our bodily and psychological health is deteriorating on account of radioactive and industrial pollution, and moral pollution makes it hard to live without fear of thieves and rogues, even among our business associates. While it lasts, oil is fast becoming more valuable than gold. And revolution and civil war greet us daily in the newspapers, as governments rise and fall with increasing frequency. Above all looms the dark specter of global war. In recent months we have begun to ask not *whether* there will be a war, but *when*.

Every day the knocking at the door gets louder. Can we ignore it much longer? We all know that at one point that knocking may get so strong that it will knock our door down. Then what will we do?

How can we repay the Supreme Lord for all the "utilities" that He has so kindly supplied us? We cannot repay Kṛṣṇa with anything material, like money or jewels. That would be like offering a candy manufacturer a box of sweets. Kṛṣṇa is the source of all the opulences within this world, so we cannot repay the Lord with material presentations alone. Rather, we have to offer to Kṛṣṇa that which is the most valuable treasure, that which He presently is not in possession of: our love

and devotion. If we engage ourselves in the transcendental devotional service of the Lord, then we will actually be able to satisfy the Lord.

Anyone who has taken his birth as a human being is endowed with sufficient brain substance to engage himself in a spiritual process designed to purify his consciousness and elevate him to this platform of devotional service. When we chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* (Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare), then we awaken the natural love dormant within our hearts and offer it to the Supreme Lord to repay Him for all that He has done for us, and to offer our deepest regrets that we have tried to forget Him and neglect His position as the owner and controller of the entire creation.

Such a loving devotee, who is absorbed in the daily chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* and who regularly engages himself in devotional service, no longer has to experience fear or anxiety from the ominous sounds of the "knocking on the door." For he is no longer bound by the ignorance

which had covered his real knowledge since time immemorial and which had caused him to perform so many sinful activities in the first place. He cannot be disturbed by any material conditions, not even by the most disturbing of all—death. A devotee views death much differently from the way a nondevotee views it, just as a kitten views the mother cat's mouth differently from the way a rat views it. When the mother cat grabs the rat by the scruff of its neck, the rat feels the horror of sure destruction. But when the cat grabs the kitten, the kitten feels the happiness of being carried gently back home.



His Divine Grace Harikeśa Swami is one of the spiritual masters that ISKCON's founder-ācārya Śrīla Prabhupāda selected to initiate new disciples. He is ISKCON's director in Germany, Scandinavia, Switzerland, Austria, eastern Europe, and the Middle East.

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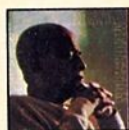


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Happy Liberation

“Same-gender affectional and sexual orientation” and beyond.

by JAGAJĪVANA DĀSA

Caro, thirtyish and wearing brown, a filmmaker-screenwriter and easily one of the “beautiful people,” is back in Manhattan to review takes from several months on location. Now, as before, Caro will be coming a few nights a week to the Kṛṣṇa center to hear half-hour classes on *Bhagavad-gītā*, the science of self-realization.

“There’s a difficulty in homosexuality,” Caro confides to me, “in that one *really* knows that it’s a distortion. As soon as it goes into a personal relationship, there’s a raging contradiction. You’ve got two proud roosters or two hens—and sometimes one of the roosters is forced to play a hen, or one of the hens is forced to play a rooster. It’s edgy.”

But Caro, what about *The Joy of Gay Sex*, *The Joy of Lesbian Sex*, and Masters and Johnson’s new *Homosexuality in Perspective*, plus *Time*’s recent cover story, the one that said, “By looking honestly and critically at the gay life, straight men and women can learn important lessons . . . among them . . . treating sexual partners with consideration, understanding, and unhurried gentleness.” What about that?

“Absolute hogwash,” Caro says, “—utter nonsense. A husband and wife have a natural, God-given relationship. The man never totally comprehends the woman’s psychology, nor the woman the man’s psychology, and this is the charm.

“Now, what Masters and Johnson and *Time* are blowing all out of proportion is this: homosexuality—and heterosexuality where procreation is not involved and sensual gratification dominates the relationship—is unnatural, an illusion, a game. To make homosexuality ‘work,’ you really have to work hard and pay dogged attention to technique—to playing the game of being ‘considerate.’ One false move and you might get a bad report and jeopardize your future make-outs.”

After observing that Masters and Johnson’s most notable finding seems to be that they can make good money selling their findings, Caro continues, “The natural, God-given purpose of sex is having a child, just like the natural purpose of eating is keeping your body fit. Once you take away the idea of having a child, then you’re

working with a distortion, heterosexual or homosexual.

“You can even go all the way to sado-masochism—you know, the whipping-and-beating route. And the real reason people do this is that they know in their inner self, their inner spiritual core, ‘I’ve corrupted myself; I’ve become a living distortion. I ought to be flogged.’

“You want to believe Masters and Johnson when they say, ‘You can do anything—whatever titillates your body is good for you.’ They know so many clever words, and radio and T.V. talk-show emcees introduce them as though they were the royal couple and held the panacea for all sexual problems. Yet what made them devote twenty-five years of their lives to studying the sex act? What kind of obsession is that, you know? What’s *their* problem?”

“Another thing—” says Caro. “Who are the testers choosing? Anybody who would perform sex for spectators must be rather peculiar. And they weigh a few hundred of these ‘test cases’ against how many millions of ordinary people? I don’t find any credibility in this kind of so-called scientific test. It’s all trumped-up nonsense.

“The ‘homosexual revolution’ is a publicists’ game. Do you think *Time* is reporting the average person’s feelings? They’re pushing atheistic materialism, that’s all. And one of their current ploys is the ‘homosexual revolution.’ Actually, they should call it the ‘homosexual revulsion.’ Most homosexuals—and heterosexuals who’ve forgotten procreation and turned sex into a sensual game—are inwardly in agony, because they know they’ve smeared excrement all over their spiritual identity.”

Now Caro speaks of a recent visit to a church in the Village. “If you’re a homosexual and you find a spiritual group that doesn’t reject you, you’re delighted, overjoyed. But I attended one service where at first everything seemed sublime and spiritual and then right afterward the ‘clergy’ started smooching. If you’re looking for spiritual enlightenment, you have to feel cheated. I’m sure Christ would be appalled at this. He taught that the body is dust and ‘Be pure as your heavenly father is pure.’ But they don’t show you how to get beyond homosexuality or unchaste heterosexu-

ality, either of which is a perversion, an animality. Instead these so-called Christian priests hold seminars on ‘same-gender affectional and sexual orientation.’ They say, ‘Let’s celebrate our gay spirituality.’ *What spirituality?* How can you understand the Supreme Spirit if you immerse yourself in a sensual garbage pail?”

“If you listen to people who can manipulate words, they can talk any kind of bunk and make you say, ‘Well, that sounds reasonable.’ But actually,” Caro says, “no one is born a homosexual; even crazy Kinsey knew there are ‘no peculiar hormonal or hereditary factors involved.’ So you have to be very well centered spiritually to see through good actors with good scripts—to look at these people and say, ‘Nonsense. They’re a bunch of jokers, a bunch of Georgia crackers. They may as well be selling medicine bottles from a covered wagon.’

“I’m convinced that deep inside, every one of us is really a pure spirit, a pure soul. But it’s next to impossible to stay in touch with your inner self unless you can get yourself some solid spiritual instruction. I feel that if you’re sincere, sooner or later you’re going to find a sincere, first-rate spiritual teacher.”

Already Caro is planning to become a student of one of the spiritual masters that Śrīla Prabhupāda chose before passing from this world. Caro knows—and we talk about it awhile—that a genuine spiritual master helps his student understand, “I’m not my material body; I’m a pure spirit, a servant of the Supreme Spirit.” And this is liberation—not the slavery of trying to satisfy the body’s insatiable demands, but the freedom to satisfy the soul’s need to serve the all-loving Supreme Soul (and all other souls) with love and devotion.

“No question,” Caro says. “This is liberation. Even a half-hour hearing devotees talk about Kṛṣṇa consciousness and your life changes. My happy experience with the devotees is that suddenly you can walk into a room and no one’s checking out your body, sizing you up financially or sexually (‘How can I use this one?’ or ‘How can I make out with this one?’). When you meet Kṛṣṇa conscious people you meet their spirits, and your own.”

THE BOWERY LECTURES

by ŚRĪLA SATSVARŪPA DĀSA GOSWAMI

The Swami (as Śrīla Prabhupāda was known to the hip crowd who visited his Bowery loft) continued with his Monday, Wednesday, and Friday evening lectures on *Bhagavad-gītā*. He would begin punctually at eight o'clock, and those who attended the full program would join him for half an hour of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, followed by a lecture from *Bhagavad-gītā* (usually forty-five minutes long), a question-and-answer period, and finally another half hour of chanting, with everything ending by ten. Some of these evening programs Śrīla Prabhupāda recorded on tape.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is just trying to place Arjuna on the platform of working in pure consciousness. [Thus Prabhupāda spoke in April, 1966.] We have already discussed for so many days that we are not this dull body but we are consciousness. Somehow or other we are in contact with matter. Therefore our freedom is checked.

Attendance at the evening lectures was better now than it had been uptown. The loft offered a larger space; in fact, the platform where Śrīla Prabhupāda sat nearly equaled the area of his entire office-cubicle on Seventy-second Street. The dingy loft, its rafters unpainted, was more like an old warehouse than a temple. The members of his audience, most of them musicians, had come to meditate on the mystical sounds of the Swami's *kīrtana*, his chanting. The *kīrtana* having just ended, Swamiji was speaking.

As spiritual beings we are free to act, free to have anything. Pure, no contamination—no disease, no birth, no death, no old age. And besides that, we have got many, many other qualifications in our spiritual life.

When he spoke he was pure spiritual form. The Vedic scriptures say that a *sādhu*, a saint, is not seen but heard. If the people in the audience wanted to know Prabhupāda, they would have to hear him. But even though they heard him, some heard only an old man with an Indian-British accent. The attentive, however, heard him saying that we are all spiritual but have now become material and are therefore encountering problems.

When he spoke he was no longer the old Indian *svāmī* who lived on the other side

of the partition of this loft, hanging his clothes there to dry and barely getting his meals. That he was also, but now he was speaking as the emissary of Lord Kṛṣṇa, beyond time and space, and hundreds of spiritual masters in the chain of disciplic succession spoke through him. He had entered amidst New York's bohemians in 1966 saying that 1966 was temporary and illusory, that he was eternal and they were eternal, that he was not an old Indian holy man and they were not young artists and musicians, for each person is an eternal spiritual being. This was the meaning in the vibrations of the *kīrtana*, and now he was explaining it philosophically, advocating a total change in consciousness, a total change in life, and nothing less. Yet he knew that they could not take it all, so he urged them to take whatever they could.

You will be glad to hear that this process of spiritual realization, once begun, guarantees one to have his next life as a human being. Once karma-yoga is begun it will continue. It doesn't matter—even if one fails to complete the course, still he is not loser, he is not loser. Now, if someone begins this yoga of self-realization but unfortunately cannot prosecute this task in a nice way—if he falls down from the path—still there is encouragement that you are not a loser. You will be given a chance next life, and that next life is not an ordinary next life. And for one who is successful—oh, what to speak of him! The successful goes back to Godhead. So we are holding this class, and although you have multifarious duties, you come here thrice a week and try to understand. And this will not go in vain. Even if you stop coming here, that impression will never go. I tell you, the impression will never go. If you do some practical work, that is very, very nice. But even if you do not do any practical work, simply if you give your submissive aural reception and understand what is the nature of God—if you simply hear and have an idea even—then you will be free from this material bondage.

He was talking to a crowd deeply set in their hip life. He knew they couldn't give up taking dope, and there they sat with their common-law wives. Some had said frankly that they couldn't take up this

orthodox philosophy. Their path was to play music, live with a woman, and meditate sometimes. And be free. They were musicians and artists. They'd hear him speak in the evening, and then they'd stay up all night with their instruments, their women, their drugs, their bohemian scene. Yet somehow they were drawn to him. He had the good vibrations of the *kīrtana*, and they wanted to help him out. They were glad to help him out, because he had no one else; but they weren't looking to become his disciples or change their style and follow his rules. So Prabhupāda was saying to them, "That's all right. Even if you can only do a little, it will be good for you. We are all pure spirit souls. But you have forgotten. You have fallen into the cycle of birth and death. Whatever you can do towards reviving your original consciousness is good for you. There will be no loss."

Prabhupāda's main stress was on what he called "dovetailing your consciousness with the Supreme Consciousness." Consciousness was a popular word in the 1960's. There was consciousness expansion and cosmic consciousness and altered states of consciousness and now, dovetailing the individual consciousness with the Supreme Consciousness. This, Prabhupāda explained, was the perfection of consciousness. This was the love and peace that everyone was really after. And yet Prabhupāda talked of it in terms of war. . . .

Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Consciousness. And Arjuna, as a representative individual consciousness, is asked to act intelligently in collaboration with the Supreme Consciousness. Then he will be free from the bondage of birth, death, old age, and disease. They were talking on the battlefield, and Arjuna says, "I will not fight. I will not fight with my relatives and brothers for the sake of achieving some kingdom. No, no."

Therefore, to the ordinary man it appears that, "Oh, Arjuna is a very nice man, nonviolent. He has given everything up for the sake of his relatives. Oh, what a nice man he is." This is the ordinary calculation. But what does Kṛṣṇa say? He says, "You are damned fool number one." Now just see. The things which are



estimated in the public eye as very nice, very good—that is here condemned by God. So you have to see whether the Supreme Consciousness is pleased with your actions. And Arjuna's action was not approved by Lord Kṛṣṇa. It was for his own whim, sense gratification, that at first he would not fight. But in the end, for Kṛṣṇa's satisfaction, he did fight. And that is our perfection—when we act for the satisfaction of the Supreme Consciousness.

This idea was difficult for the people in his audience, who were all opposed to the United States' role in Vietnam. Like Arjuna, they wanted peace. And they wondered why a Swami was sanctioning war.

He had to explain: Yes, Arjuna's idea not to fight was good, but then Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Consciousness, instructed him to fight anyway. Therefore, Arjuna's fighting was above mundane ethics; it was absolute. If we follow Arjuna, give up our self-centered ideas of "good" and "bad" and act for Kṛṣṇa, not for our sense gratification, then that is perfect—because Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Consciousness. This was Prabhupāda's answer.

Still, they wanted to know his political views. Did he support America's involvement in Vietnam? Was he antiwar? But Prabhupāda was neither hawk nor dove. He had no political motive behind his example of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna. His theme was simple and pure: Beyond the good or the bad is the Absolute, and to act in accord with the Absolute is also beyond good and bad.

But what about Vietnam—did Kṛṣṇa say to fight there? No, Prabhupāda said. The Vietnam war was different from the Kurukṣetra war. In the battle of Kurukṣetra, Kṛṣṇa was personally present, asking Arjuna to fight. It was a different war.

But his audience had yet another objection. If he was not addressing the Vietnam war, then why not? After all, this was 1966. If he was *not* talking about the war, then what was his relevancy? Prabhupāda replied that his message was the most urgent and relevant. The Vietnam war was an inevitable karmic reaction; it was one symptom, not the whole problem. And only *this* philosophy—surrender to the Supreme Consciousness—addressed the real problem.

But for many, the reference to fighting was so emotionally charged that they could not go beyond the immediate politics of Vietnam to Prabhupāda's real message of surrender to the Supreme Consciousness. They had respect for the Swami—they realized he was referring to a deeper philosophy—yet the story of Arjuna and the war made things difficult. Nonetheless, Prabhupāda continued to refer to Arjuna's

fighting as the classical example of *Bhagavad-gītā's* basic teaching.

No one objected to the basic teaching. But the example! Prabhupāda had deliberately handed his audience a volatile example. He hadn't come to join their peace movement, and he did not accept their shortsighted concept of peace. He confronted them. It would be better to fight in Kṛṣṇa consciousness than to live in a so-called peace devoid of God realization. Yes, the example was hard for them to accept. It made them think. And if they did accept, then they might come near to understanding the Absolute.

But Prabhupāda was not suggesting that to dovetail with the Supreme Consciousness they would have to go fight in Vietnam or perform some other horrible act on behalf of God. In fact, he knew that spiritual life would have to be more attractive than material life, or his audience would never take to it. So he wanted to bring the theme of dovetailing with the Supreme Consciousness down to something practical, something all-attractive and beautiful, something anyone could do and would want to do. He wanted to encourage them by explaining that they could do their thing—but for Kṛṣṇa. Arjuna was, after all, a warrior by occupation. Kṛṣṇa was not asking him to give up his work, but to do it for the Supreme. Prabhupāda was asking the same thing of his audience. And they could begin with something as simple as offering their food to God and chanting His holy names.

Is it very difficult, dovetailing our consciousness with the Supreme Consciousness? Not at all. Not at all! No sane man will say, "Oh, it is not possible." Because everyone has to eat. So God wants to eat something. Why don't you first offer your food to God? Then you eat. But you may say, "But if God takes it away, then how shall I eat?" No, no. God will not take it. Daily, after preparing our foodstuffs, we are offering to Kṛṣṇa. There is a witness: Mr. David has seen. [Śrīla Prabhupāda laughs.] God eats! But His spiritual eating is such that even after His eating, the whole thing is still there.*

So we shall not suffer a pinch if we dovetail our desires with the Supreme Lord. We simply have to learn the art—how to dovetail. Nothing has to be changed. The fighting man did not change into an artist or musician. If you are a musician, you remain a musician. If you are a medical man, you remain a medical man. Whatever you are, you remain. But dovetail it. If by my eating the Lord is satisfied, then that is my perfection. If by my fighting the Lord is satisfied, then that

*David Allen, who shared the loft at 94 Bowery with Śrīla Prabhupāda.

is my perfection. So in every sphere of life, we have to know whether the Lord is satisfied. That technique we have to learn. Then it is as easy as anything. We have to stop creating our own plans and thoughts and take the perfect plans from the Supreme Lord and then execute them. That will become the perfection of our life.

And Lord Caitanya has made acting on the platform of pure consciousness very easy. Just as there are some note-makers of school books—"Easy Study"—so Lord Caitanya has recommended that you be engaged in whatever occupation, but just hear about Kṛṣṇa. Continue to hear the Bhagavad-gītā and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. It is for this that we are trying to organize this institution. So you have come, and whatever work you do, it doesn't matter. Everything will be adjusted by and by, as our mind becomes clear simply by hearing. If you continue this process, chanting the Kṛṣṇa name, you will practically see how much your heart is becoming clear and how much you are making progress towards spiritual realization, the real identity of pure consciousness.

Prabhupāda spoke on behalf of the Supreme Consciousness, although to some of his hearers he seemed more the helpless old mendicant who depended on them for assistance. When he spoke to them, he presented the full force of Kṛṣṇa's transcendental message. He was beyond all temporary designations, and he urged them to understand that they also did not belong to the temporary scene. Yet Carl Yeargens, James Greene, Carol Bekar, and others saw him in a familiar way. To think of him as a poor Indian *sādhu* who needed their help and who complemented their scene with his mystical Indian chants was one thing, but to accept him as a representative of God was too heavy. (Actually the word *guru* means "heavy." The *guru* is one who is heavy with knowledge.) Prabhupāda cautioned them, "One should not keep a *guru* as a fashion—'Oh, yes I have got my *guru*.'" Accepting a spiritual master was not a cheap thing. The spiritual master must be bona fide; he must be fully dovetailed with the Supreme Consciousness. Prabhupāda offered his day-to-day activities as credentials:

I am here always working at something, reading or writing, some kind of reading or writing—twenty-four hours. Simply when I feel hungry, I take some food. And simply when I feel sleepy, I go to bed. Otherwise, I don't feel fatigued. You can ask Mr. David whether I am not doing this.

Of course, Prabhupāda's daily routine didn't require certification from David Allen. Any of Prabhupāda's regular visitors could see that although he appeared frail and old or dependent on others for his

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Kṛṣṇa Consciousness? TELL ME ABOUT IT!

Early one evening, I answered the phone.
“Hello, Mom? I just want to tell you I’m at the Kṛṣṇa temple in Potomac, Maryland. I live here now.”

by DIANE SAUTTER

It was the rootless summer after the years of high school for my oldest son Andy. At that time he lived more or less from day to day, with few plans for the future. He had his tight circle of friends, most of whom were as uncertain about life as he (although all managed a defensive bravado). Andy seemed to me to be adrift in a world without values or purpose. The family he had grown up in had broken apart through divorce at the end of his freshman year, and although as a single parent I had found my own world purposeful and personally growing, there seemed to be no way to share my reality with Andy. The strangled communication from our former family life had carried over and left him in particular (I have two other, younger sons also) in an isolated adolescent vacuum. Love occasionally struggled its way across the chasm between us, painfully, but I seemed unable to alleviate his suffering. He had found nothing of value in high school, and his abilities in art and music were used less and less, from lack of motivation.

Into this gap after high school came the idea of a junket with two or three of his friends. All I knew of their journey was that they planned to stop at a Kṛṣṇa temple for a “big feast”—something one of his friends had experienced before.

I didn’t hear from Andy for two or three weeks after they left. Then, early one evening, I answered the phone and was relieved to hear his voice, sounding clear and positive.

“Hello, Mom? I just want to tell you where I am. I’m at the Kṛṣṇa temple in Potomac, Maryland.”

“You’re still there?” I queried.

“Yeah. Well, I decided to stay. I live here now.”

“You live there?”



“Yeah. We’re all devotees here.”

I paused, reflecting on the strange word “devotee” and the calmly serious sound of Andy’s voice. I didn’t know exactly what a “devotee” was, yet something in his tone made me feel optimistic. I asked, “Are you still with your friends?”

“No. They left. They—well, you know those two—they couldn’t hack the disciplines.”

So his friends had departed to wander and Andy had stayed!

“What do you do there, Andy?”

“Well, I’m working on a little barn for the bull. We have a young bull calf here; he’s sort of a pet. You know—we don’t eat meat, or use any intoxicants, have any illicit sex, or do gambling. Everything we do is to serve Kṛṣṇa.”

This was a lot for my son to say. He was groping to tell me about his life there, but the life was very new to him and a great change from his habitual Western adolescent behavior. I wanted to help him explain more.

“How do you understand Kṛṣṇa, Andy? Is this a religion? Tell me about it.”

He hesitated, and I heard him turn to someone else nearby and ask, “Hey, Bhakta Joe, my mother wants to know who Kṛṣṇa is.” There was a sound of voices talking informally, and then Andy returned to the phone.

“Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord of the universe. That’s all we do here. We serve Kṛṣṇa.”

There was more to this conversation—for instance, did he need anything? However, for the first time in years, I heard in Andy’s voice something I had been aching to hear: a sense of direction, a sense of connection to something he valued. I wasn’t listening to his words as much as I was listening

to a tone of voice that said life was finally worthwhile. My mind trotted out the usual questions: Why call God Kṛṣṇa? What was the group life really like there? Why had he stayed when his restless friends, who were older and whom he tended to emulate, had left? What had he found that was helping him change his life? The questions went unanswered at this time, yet I felt good at the end of our conversation when he asked me to come down to visit him there: we were “in touch.” Whoever this Kṛṣṇa was, I apparently already owed Him a debt of gratitude.

This gratitude and spirit of inquiry became the basis for my interactions with Andy and with other devotees at the temple. A few months later, I arrived for my first visit at the camp in Potomac which had been turned to new use as a home for the Washington branch of ISKCON. Andy looked amazing: the shaven head and little tuft of hair at the back surprised me. When he was a baby it had, taken about eight months for his hair to come in—now, with

his Kṛṣṇa haircut, he reminded me of his original newborn state. He had the look of a person beginning life all over again. More than this, his eyes were clear and direct, and his approach to me warm. Gone were the hostility and shiftiness of communication which had plagued our relationship. He had been signing his letters to me “Your humble servant”—a phrase adopted from the spiritual preceptor of the Kṛṣṇa movement, Swami Prabhupāda. And now I could see it was more than a parroted phrase. It seems that by discovering God as his friend, and himself as a friend to God, Andy had also found his own capacity to be a friend to all other living beings, even to his mother.

My time at the temple was gratifying. The other devotees were courteous and helpful, and I was eager to hear from them about their lives there. I attended the early morning *ārati*, a ceremony for greeting the Deities every day at 4:30 A.M. I was not accustomed either to the early hour or to the way the devotees worshiped the Deities, but I could see that what mattered was what was in the devotees’ hearts, not what my mind conjectured about the figures on the altar. Here, obviously, was an attempt to practice loving God with all the heart, soul, and mind, in the most personal way possible, as Kṛṣṇa—not as an abstract God, but as a perceived person and presence.

I have grown to appreciate the theological depths of the Kṛṣṇa movement more than I ever thought I would in those early days at the temple, when I questioned the cost of the profusion of flowers on the altar. I have learned that Kṛṣṇa dwells in every living being as the Supersoul and source of inner guidance. The devotee also knows that he or she is part and parcel of the Supreme Consciousness, with the qualities of God but in a much smaller quantity than God. God is the complete whole, whereas each one of us is merely a


fragmental part. The joy of the Kṛṣṇa devotee seems due to the discovery that he or she is a fragmental part becoming conscious of his or her relationship to God—and Kṛṣṇa consciousness, devotional service to the Lord, is the process for going back, as they say, to Godhead. The devotee celebrates this relationship with God and makes it real in his own life through singing the Lord’s name and dancing. This is *bhakti-yoga*—the *yoga* of love.

Perhaps it is this chanting and dancing which has led parents and others aware of the Kṛṣṇa movement to make accusations about “cult” behavior. Yet the same people don’t bat an eyelash when their sons and daughters go to discos to dance and celebrate sex and intoxication. By contrast, the thirty or forty devotees at the Potomac temple are actively working to purify their lives by following a code not unlike the Ten Commandments. Drumming, playing hand cymbals, leaping, and chanting Kṛṣṇa’s name with great gusto, they dance and sing to celebrate God’s presence in their lives and to open up more completely to that presence. The world doesn’t mind when people celebrate sex and intoxication, but everyone becomes extremely concerned when young people begin to wholeheartedly celebrate God. Love of God has probably always been socially and culturally threatening—we see that in the life of Christ.

Of course, the real question for me, and for every parent, is how to behave when we are confronted with something strange and new which at first we may not understand. Perhaps because I work as a counselor, a trained listener, my natural approach was *Tell me about it*. From the beginning of my son’s affiliation with Kṛṣṇa consciousness, I have been feeling my way along, learning a religious system to a large extent new to me, although one of the oldest in the world. I have studied all sorts of graduate-level textbooks on religion,

and yet the many volumes of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, translated and explained by the scholarly Swami Prabhupāda, remain the most complete and articulate I have ever encountered.

When I see my son now, I see a young man growing into his prime, with a security and breadth of development rare in Western culture. Perhaps because the whole science of the soul is encompassed in the *Bhāgavatam* and because the main scripture of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, the *Bhagavad-gītā*, is so theologically profound, Andy—now Apauruṣeya, by initiation—knows who he is and how he is related to God and the universe. He has superb ways to grow, with appealing models in the *Bhāgavatam* and the high standard set by his spiritual master. He has a strong desire to serve Lord Kṛṣṇa and a practical, down-to-earth way of fulfilling that desire. He’s reaching out to people by introducing them to the ancient books on self-realization.

At my last visit with my son—the latest in a line of nine or ten increasingly cordial and happy times I have spent with him in the past three years he has lived at the temple—we sat talking for an hour in the bus station, waiting for my Greyhound to carry me back to the usual Western routines. People looked at us. Apauruṣeya was in his pale orange robes—he had just come from leading that evening’s chanting at the temple. I felt his calmness and conviction radiating and was proud of his dedication. There in the bus station filled with bored and idle people, we alone seemed to be experiencing a real person-to-person relationship. This was possible not only because I respect his choices, but because his choices are right choices for him; they are commitments based on a deep understanding of human life and its divine purpose. The Kṛṣṇa devotee is indeed a friend to all—even his mother feels served with an open heart. 

BOWERY LECTURES


(continued from page 24)

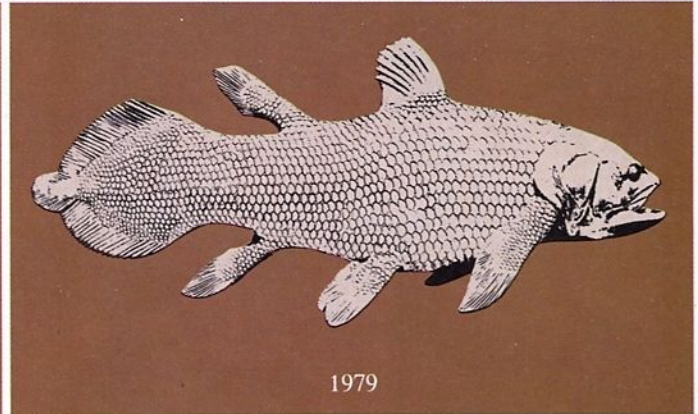
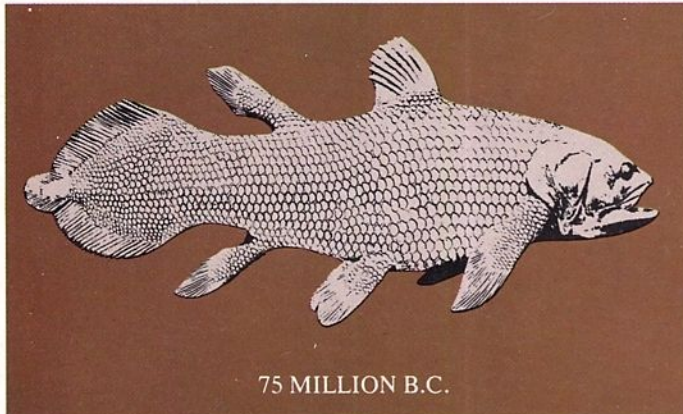
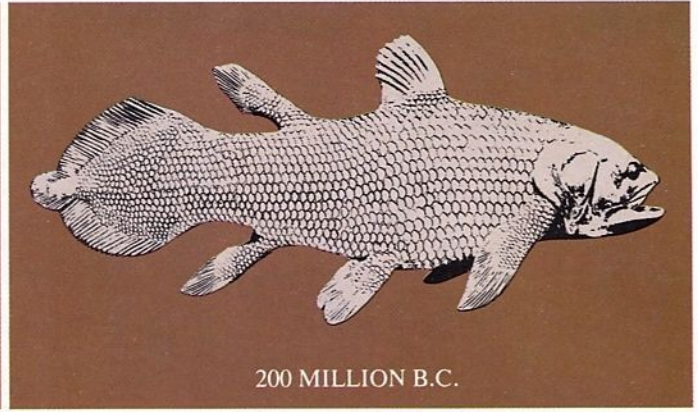
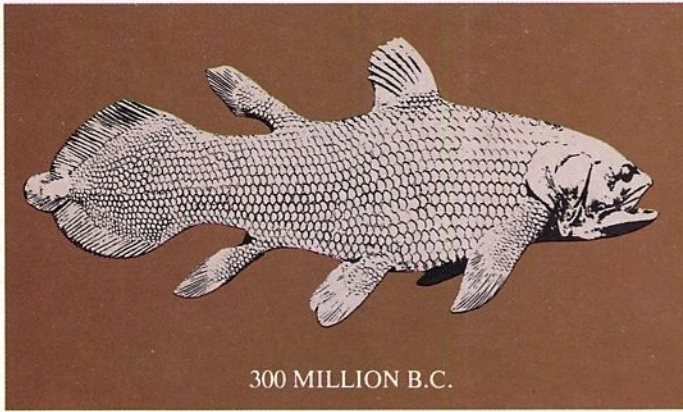
maintenance, he was somehow always transcendental. And even though they might not want to adhere to his orthodox philosophy or accept his demands of surrender, his personal life was a perfect example of dovetailing with the Supreme Consciousness.

As for himself, Prabhupāda knew *he* was dovetailed. He had been fully dovetailed in Vṛndāvana also, and he had no personal need or motive to come to America and live on the Bowery. It was for these others that he had come. His spiritual master and Lord Kṛṣṇa desired that the materially conditioned souls come out of

their illusion before it was too late. Speaking vigorously, even until he was physically exhausted—sometimes shouting, sometimes laughing, sometimes pleading—Prabhupāda gave his audience as much as he thought they could take. As the emissary of Kṛṣṇa and the disciplic succession, he could shout that everyone should dovetail with the Supreme. He could speak as strongly as he liked for as long as they were willing to listen. He was a *sādhu* (which in Sanskrit means “a saintly person” and “one who cuts”), and he was speaking the same message that for thousands of years the *sādhus* of the original Vedic culture had spoken. Now, in 1966, Prabhupāda was reviving the eternal spirit of the Vedic wisdom—and cutting the knots of

ignorance and illusion.

So everything is illusion, from the beginning of our birth. And that illusion is so strong it is very difficult to get out of. The whole thing is illusion. Birth is illusion. The body is illusion. The bodily relationship and the country are illusion. The father is illusion. The mother is illusion. The wife is illusion. The children are illusion. Everything is illusion. And we are contacting that illusion, thinking we are very learned, advanced. We are imagining so many things. But as soon as death comes—the actual fact—then we forget everything. We forget our country. We forget our relatives. We forget our wife, children, father, mother. Everything is gone. 



Since the theory of evolution requires a continuous process of gradual change in living forms, it has great difficulty explaining "living fossils" like the coelacanth (above), which remains virtually unchanged after 300 million years.

New insights about an old debate.

EVOLUTION OR PRODUCTION?

by JÑĀNA DĀSA

Implicit in current theories of evolution are two basic assumptions: first, that the myriad living forms have come into being exclusively by chance and the action of natural laws; and second, that consciousness and all life processes are nothing more than physiochemical interactions. In many arenas, both within and without the academic world, a debate is raging to determine the truth or falsehood of evolutionary theory and its implied assumptions. And for good reason. For if it is indeed true that life is ultimately nothing more than the interactions of atoms and

molecules, then any foundation for belief in God or a transcendent purpose to life would be utterly devastated. On the other hand, if the still unproven theory of evolution could be replaced by a scientifically verifiable theistic explanation for the origin of life and living forms, there would exist a firm basis for faith in an intelligent creator who endows life with meaning and purpose.

Here we would like to present such an alternative to evolutionary theory—an alternative which, for the sake of comparison, we shall call "the theory of production." This theory proposes that biological forms do not arise from the spontaneous self-organization of matter, but rather under the direction of a superior intelligence. Furthermore, it suggests that life and consciousness are not material phenomena, the results of physiochemical reactions. Instead, they result from a distinct, irreducible, nonphysical principle or entity, which is present within the material body during an individual's life-

time, and whose departure from the body leads to the change called death.

If we want to determine whether it is the theory of evolution or the theory of production that is scientifically more valid, we must test both against the fossil record. It is there alone that we will find concrete evidence of creatures that lived in bygone ages. The two theories differ in their predictions of what the fossil record will reveal. For example, the theory of evolution (in its simplest form) predicts that the fossil record will show a gradual change of living forms. There should be no sudden appearances of new groups of organisms or of novel bodily features. In other words, the fossil record should not show that organisms suddenly acquired fins, legs, or wings; rather, the record should document a step-by-step development of these organs over the ages. The theory of evolution further requires that the principle of gradual change apply to *all* groups of organisms. Although some organisms may change more or less than

JÑĀNA DĀSA earned his M.A. in chemistry at Wadham College, Oxford, and his Postgraduate Certificate of Education at London University. For four years he taught science at the secondary school level, and for two years he lived as a novice and monk in Buddhist monasteries in Japan. He has been a member of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness since 1974 and has worked with the Bhaktivedanta Institute since 1977.

others (because of differing circumstances), we should expect to see some degree of evolutionary change in all groups over the millions of years recorded in the geological column.

The theory of production, on the other hand, predicts that the fossil record will reveal a markedly different pattern of change. Why should this be so? Let's consider an analogy: the historical development of various types of engines. Steam engines, internal combustion engines, diesel engines, electric engines—none of these appeared by chance. Rather, over the years men have designed and built them to drive vehicles, pump water, lift weights, and so on. Now, we do not find that engines change gradually from one type to another. The reason for this discontinuity is that each type of engine is designed to take maximum advantage of particular chemical and physical processes, and it works by the interaction of precisely coordinated components. Beyond a small tolerance, any variation in the size or shape of the parts, or in the kind of fuel used, will result in the dysfunction of the whole system.

When we survey the history of the development of engines, we do not find any record of an engine intermediate between, say, the steam engine and the internal combustion engine. In fact, such an engine is inconceivable. We might possibly convert a steam engine into an internal combustion engine, but at the point when we switch from external to internal combustion, we would have to install a carburetor, spark plugs, a coil, and so on. These would be entirely useless in the steam engine, so what question is there of a gradual transition from one to the other?

Even if we consider only the various kinds of internal combustion engines, we find little scope for gradual, step-by-step development between them. Slight discrepancies in piston-stroke timing or gas-air mixtures can play havoc with any engine, so how can we imagine a gradual transition from, say, a piston engine to a rotary engine, or from an Otto engine (in which ignition occurs by means of spark plugs) to a diesel engine? Such changes are always sudden and radical; they date from the time when the new design is first produced by an inventor.

Now, the theory of production proposes that what is true for engines is also true for the forms of living beings. Unlike the theory of evolution, the theory of production does not require that the changes between species be gradual and continuous. Rather, it proposes that a superior, guiding intelligence has produced a discontinuous series of living forms— with

no intermediate forms linking them.

What does the fossil record actually reveal? In the words of the renowned evolutionist George Gaylord Simpson, "It is a fact that discontinuities are almost always and systematically present at the origin of really high categories [vertebrates, for example], and, like any other systematic feature of the record, this requires explanation."¹¹ The fossil record contains no evidence to back up evo-

The presence of
"living fossils"
requires that
evolutionists
explain why
evolution
took place
millions of
times faster
in some sectors
than in others.

lutionists' contention that multicellular organisms evolved from single-celled forms of life. Nor does it show how vertebrates evolved from the invertebrates; how spiders, crabs, trilobites, and insects evolved from simpler forms of life (supposedly some type of worm); how land plants evolved from marine vegetation; how flowering plants evolved from any previous type of plant; or how snakes, frogs, whales, and bats evolved from earlier, less specialized animals.

And just as major groups of organisms tend to appear in the fossil record without warning, so do new structural features, such as legs, wings, and feathers. Says evolutionist J. William Schopf, "Interestingly, almost any list of major evolutionary events could also serve as an inventory of major unsolved problems in paleobiology, for the fossil record has provided only limited insight into the nature of these important evolutionary transitions."¹²

Another problem for the theory of evolution is the existence of "living fossils"—organisms living today that according to the fossil record were present on the earth in the same form millions of

years ago. Since the theory of evolution requires a continuous process of gradual change in living forms, it has great difficulty explaining living fossils. The theory of production, however, requires no such continuous change. This theory proposes that the various species are products of intelligent design, and thus as long as the design remains unchanged, successive generations may remain unchanged indefinitely.

So once again the fossil record supports the theory of production, rather than the theory of evolution. The presence of numerous living fossils requires the evolutionists to explain why, if evolution *did* take place, it seems to have done so millions of times faster in some sectors than in others. For example, during the same 200 million years in which certain types of fish were supposedly evolving into human beings, another type of fish (the coelacanth) has remained essentially unchanged up to the present day. If we go even further back in the fossil record, we find that squids, certain types of oysters, and the monoplacophoran (a mollusc with a hinged shell) all appeared suddenly in the Cambrian period, about 500 to 550 million years ago, and have survived to the present day virtually unchanged. During the same time span, say the evolutionists, certain worms (whose remains have *not* been found in the fossil record) supposedly evolved into *homo sapiens*!

Thus far we have discussed only the forms of living organisms. Now let's consider the intelligence behind and within them. Here again, engines provide a useful analogy. A functional engine is made possible by two types of intelligence. First, there is the intelligence of the operator. Being independent of the engine, the operator can use his intelligence to work the engine, or he can direct his attention elsewhere and leave the engine sitting idle. Second, there is the intelligence of the engine's manufacturer—an intelligence that enables him to produce engines in great numbers and of various designs.

Now, the theory of production proposes that just as an engine works only when someone turns it on and operates it, so the body of a living organism is alive and functional only by virtue of the presence of the nonmaterial living entity. Further, as mentioned previously, the production theory suggests that the bodies of organisms are formed by a superior intelligence—an intelligence capable of producing limitless numbers and great varieties of forms. Thus the direct evidence of the fossil record, illustrated by our engine analogy, seems to confirm not the theory of evolution but the theory of production. (continued on page 30)

Higher Education

LEARNING TO LIVE IN A COOPERATIVE SPIRIT

For four of her five years as a member of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, Mokṣarūpa-devī dāsī (right) has been a teacher in Kṛṣṇa conscious schools. Not long ago she was interviewed by James Stepney, a freelance writer.

Mr. Stepney: What is the difference between modern education and Kṛṣṇa conscious education?

Mokṣarūpa-devī dāsī: The main difference is that Kṛṣṇa conscious children chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and worship God throughout the day. As a result, they become relieved of all sorts of psychological problems and can work with an alert mind. There was an elderly lady who used to watch me taking the children to the park every day in Seattle. She lived across the street from a public school. One day she stopped me and asked, "How do you keep your children so well behaved? Every day I see the children in that school across the street yelling, fighting, arguing. But your children always look so neat and clean and well behaved."

I explained to her that our children learn how to live with others in a cooperative spirit by seeing one another as spiritual beings, all part and parcel of God. That way they have a natural respect for one another and a natural self-discipline. There's very little tendency for cruelty, lying, or cheating. Education for these children is not meaningless facts and dates, but rather a meaningful development of character and higher consciousness, God consciousness.

Mr. Stepney: Can you give a practical example of what you're talking about?

Mokṣarūpa-devī dāsī: Yes. Our children learn all the basics, but in a God-centered way. Take English. After they've gone through a standard primer, the children get to read about Kṛṣṇa's transcendental pastimes with His devotees. And that's the subject matter they use for learning how



Singing Hindi, Bengali, and English songs about Kṛṣṇa.

to analyze grammatically, how to summarize, how to spell, how to write an essay, and what have you. In math they might figure out how many apples it will take to make x number of apple pies, and yet at the same time they'll have the understanding that the pies are going to be offered to Kṛṣṇa and distributed to guests at a transcendental love feast. You see? So what the children learn helps them understand God and their relationship with Him. From the very beginning, their life has meaning, because for them God is a meaningful person. As they develop love for God, they also develop love for everyone else as part and parcel of God. They have great love and respect for the teachers and no desire to inflict pain on others.

Mr. Stepney: Would you say a Kṛṣṇa conscious education could cure a delinquent?

Mokṣarūpa-devī dāsī: Well, I'm no expert on crime, but I understand that it's children who hate and have known hate that become delinquents. And Kṛṣṇa conscious

children feel no hatred toward anyone, because they see that everyone comes from Kṛṣṇa.

Mr. Stepney: Just in general, what about children who enter a Kṛṣṇa conscious school after they've spent some years in ordinary public schools? Do they have a hard time adjusting?

Mokṣarūpa-devī dāsī: Sometimes we get problem cases, but even then, most children seem relieved to be in a God conscious setting. It doesn't take long for them to make friends with the other devotees and feel right at home. We have a good example here. One eight-year-old boy came to us from a typically heavy streets-of-New-York background. He was cynical, tough, rude, and miserable. But now, maybe for the first time in his life, he's happy. You can see it in his face. His gentle, spiritual qualities have come out.

Mr. Stepney: Apart from academics, what else do children do in a Kṛṣṇa conscious school? Does this kind of education require a restrained, passive routine?

Mokṣarūpa-devī dāsī: Not at all. The children fulfill their natural desires for fun and enjoyment. They go outside and play vigorously; their life is full of color. They spend days at a time visiting our farming villages and learning how to do things like taking care of the cows. Aside from field trips to the zoo, sometimes they travel to other cities for transcendental festivals. At the festivals they do ancient Indian drama and dance, and they sing songs for the guests in Hindi, Bengali, and English. And they're learning how to cook and sew and paint and play musical instruments. They do all sorts of things. The key is that Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord, is at the center of whatever they're doing. It's just like a lady said to me a couple of days ago. She came over with this delighted expression and said, "Nowadays we hardly ever see children like your children. They look so bright and happy."

EVOLUTION

(continued from page 28)

Of course, evolutionists have put forward a number of hypotheses to explain living fossils and the lack of intermediate forms in the fossil record. But no argument (however plausible it may seem) can obscure the lack of concrete evidence. One may be able to theorize about geo-

logical causes for the incompleteness of the fossil record; or about small, isolated populations evolving without leaving any fossilized remains; or about the possibility that evolution occurred by means of sudden extremely radical mutations, which would rule out the need for intermediate forms. But all these interpretations of the fossil record are indirect; they are based on the assumption that evolution has indeed taken place! The *direct* inter-


pretation of the fossil record leads us inevitably to the theory of production, not evolution.

Many eminent men of science have stated that life is not reducible to chemistry and physics. These include Alfred Wallace (co-author of Charles Darwin's first publication on evolution); Thomas H. Huxley (a contemporary of Darwin's who championed Darwin's evolutionary theory); and Nobel physicists Niels Bohr and Eugene Wigner. The eminent mathematician John von Neumann has shown how quantum mechanics implies that the consciousness of the observer (he called it the "abstract ego") is distinct from all aspects of the observer's body and brain.³ This concept of an "abstract ego" corresponds to the irreducible nonmaterial entity posited by the theory of production and called the *jīvātmā* by Lord Kṛṣṇa in *Bhagavad-gītā*.

In *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa says that He is the ultimate designer of all living forms: "Under My direction material nature is producing all species of moving and nonmoving beings." Later Kṛṣṇa says that the forms of living beings are like machines made of matter, and that within them the minute, spiritual living entity (the *jīvātmā*) resides.

And what is the nature of the *jīvātmā*? Kṛṣṇa's first instruction in the *Bhagavad-gītā* is that the living entity is indestructible, eternal: "For the living entity there is never birth or death. Nor, having once been, does he ever cease to be. He is unborn, eternal, ever-existing, and primeval. He is not slain when the body is slain." How, then, could the living being be a product of chemical activity? Rather, he is an eternal particle of spiritual energy, completely distinct from the actions and reactions of matter. His presence in the material body diffuses consciousness throughout every part of the organism, just as the sun diffuses light and heat throughout the solar system.

Finally, we also learn from the *Gītā* that it is Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, dwelling within each bodily form as the Supersoul, who provides every living being with the knowledge and understanding necessary to live within the world.

Thus we can see how the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-gītā* are confirmed, rather than contradicted, by the findings of modern science. 

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1. G.G. Simpson, *The Major Features of Evolution* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1953), p. 361.
2. J. William Schopf et al, *Journal of Paleontology*, Vol. 47 (1973), No. 1, p. 1.
3. J. von Neumann, *Mathematical Foundations of Quantum Mechanics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), pp. 417-421.

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-santarana 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

A New York City Festival Diary

Friday night, and I've come to see the chariots. Three colorful Jagannātha chariots standing in a dark parking lot. I encourage the workers who will stay up all night. They are dirty and tired in their work clothes—assembling the colorful chariots for Kṛṣṇa to ride in. Anticipation of tomorrow. Four hundred devotees will be coming from Philadelphia, Boston, Baltimore, Washington.

* * *

HARE KṚṢṂA CENTER—the twelve-story Manhattan temple. I sit in the lobby waiting for the elevator and hear of a girl whose mother came to the temple crying because her daughter joined Kṛṣṇa. Devotees are coming through the glass doors. I hear of a hybrid ape born in Atlanta. The *New York Times* says the ape is a breakthrough. Scientists are said to be thinking of crossing an ape with a human. They are trying to deny God. The New York temple is involved in a big court case; some people want to stop us from distributing our books.

In my room on the eleventh floor I take rest under a smiling picture of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

* * *

Saturday noon. At Fifty-ninth Street and Fifth Avenue the chariots are waiting. Forty feet high with spires atop. I bow to the statue of Śrīla Prabhupāda which sits on an elegant throne in the second chariot. He is dressed in a saffron *dhotī* and short-sleeved *kurtā*. He wears a wrist watch, and the soles of his soft feet show from beneath the *dhotī*. I take my seat beside him, and no sooner do I sit down than I discover a peacock fan beside me and begin fanning Prabhupāda as we proceed down The Avenue.

Young men, girls in saris, Indians, New Yorkers—all are pulling the chariots. Silken towers billowing in the wind—yellow, green, red, and blue. Slowly, majestically, we sail south. The sky is open above Fifth Avenue—it's like being in a canyon and above is the blue, luminous, distant sky, with white clouds. The Lord of the Universe rides in splendor, and I am His servant's servant.

What will I tell the people in Washington Square Park? It will be whatever Kṛṣṇa allows me to say.

The police seem to be eyeing me curiously. They almost all wear mustaches, and all wear light blue shirts and dark blue pants, strapped with a waistload of gun, handcuffs, club, and pad for writing violations—our official protectors, walking peacefully along with the parade. Captain Coyle is the in-charge, stuck with the job.

"Stuck with it? I requested it," says Captain Coyle. "Every year, somehow or other, the whole parade happens. You don't know how it works and I don't know how it works but every year it's worked so far. Do you know *why* this parade happens?"

"Why?"

Captain Coyle: "Because the Swami said to have the parade down Fifth Avenue, and therefore the parade goes down Fifth Avenue. I saw your faces when the Swami joined the parade on Thirty-fourth Street back in '76. I saw there was something special."

* * *

Washington Square Park. Brahmānanda Swami is manning the Question-and-Answer Booth. The police break up a bunch of "Jesus People" giving out pamphlets against Kṛṣṇa consciousness. A policeman tells them, "One day out of the year the Hare Kṛṣṇas hold this festival, and everyone in New York likes it—so why bother them?"

At the booth someone asks Brahmānanda Swami what he thinks of N.Y. U.

Brahmānanda Swami: "As a graduate of N.Y. U., I can say that I didn't learn anything of value. Anything worthwhile I learned was from Śrīla Prabhupāda."

Question: "Then how come you are speaking so intelligently?"

Brahmānanda Swami: "It was only *after* I met Śrīla Prabhupāda that I learned anything."

Question: "Why does the media treat you so badly?"

Brahmānanda Swami: "That's the media's business. They are not going to tell you to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. But we have our own media—our books. That's the real media."

Question: "Why do you always hassle us for money?"

Brahmānanda Swami: "What right do you have to challenge my right to ask you for money? The I.R.S. demands your money on behalf of the government. We do the same. We are Kṛṣṇa's taxation

department, and you have no right to challenge our right to ask for money."

Thousands of free plates of *prasāda* are distributed, and a big crowd stays to watch a two-hour play of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. In my lecture to the crowd, I remind them: Washington Square Park was the sight of the first public *kīrtana* in America held by Śrīla Prabhupāda in 1966.

* * *

"Are there any questions?" I ask. The small gathering of newcomers sit shyly, reluctant to answer. Now I am back in my room at the center, and Lord Jagannātha is back on His marble throne downstairs. Silence. No questions. Then . . . "Why doesn't a spiritual master show miracles?"

Answer: "A *yogī* or devotee can develop mystic powers, such as being able to walk on water or to produce any object he desires, but such *siddhis* do not grant the actual goal of spiritual life: pure love of God. Often such powers mislead the *yogī*, and his followers begin to worship him as God. One who can awaken love of God in others is the real miracle worker. One time in India, at a large gathering, a man asked Śrīla Prabhupāda whether he could produce miracles. Prabhupāda, who was sitting on a stage surrounded by many of his Western disciples, gestured to his disciples and replied, 'This is my miracle.'"

* * *

The eleven o'clock news. A doctor from Westchester is pulling on the chariot ropes, straining and sweating, his face bulging. As he pulls, a newscaster asks, "Do you think that this is a genuine religious experience?" "Yes, definitely. This is definitely a genuine religious experience."

None of us even know who the guy is. Like thousands of others, he had just grabbed the rope and pulled. He got Lord Jagannātha's mercy.

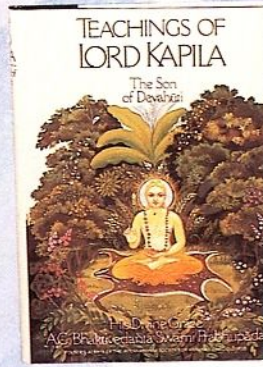
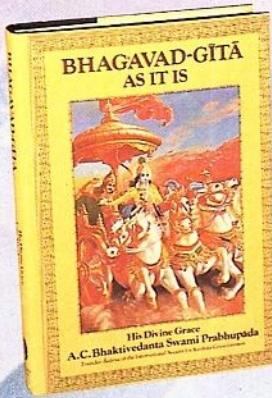
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It is warm, maybe ninety degrees. Alone, I walk to my window and look out at the proud, futile tower of the Empire State Building, its crowning floors lit up with floodlights. It is Saturday night, but the town seems different. A feeling as if the beast has a heart, the sinful machine has a soul within it somewhere. And it has been touched by the Ratha-yātrā festival. **SDG**

Climb to the highest consciousness

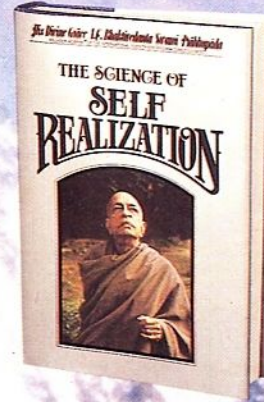
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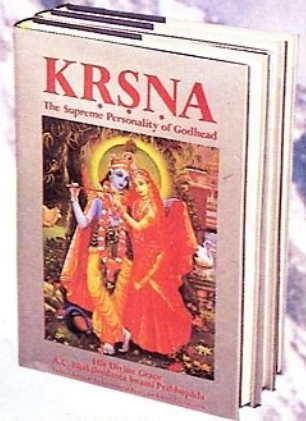
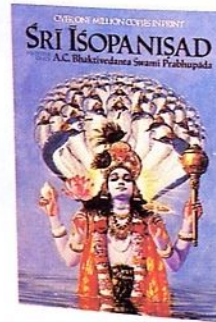
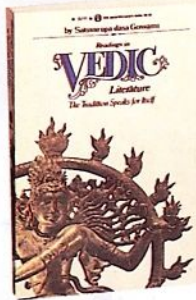
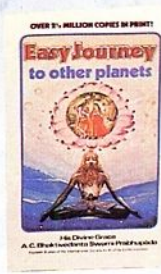


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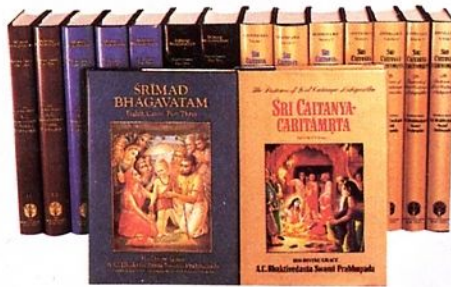
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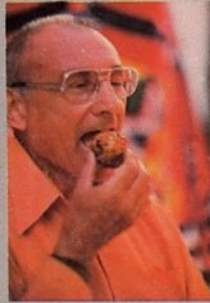
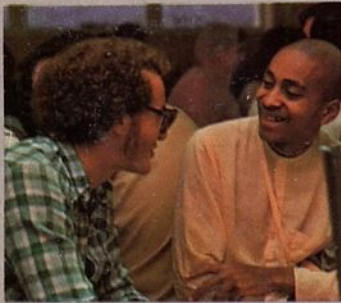
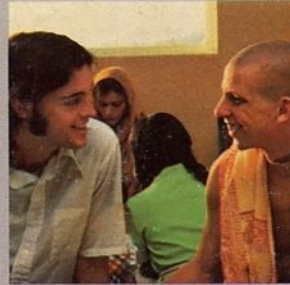
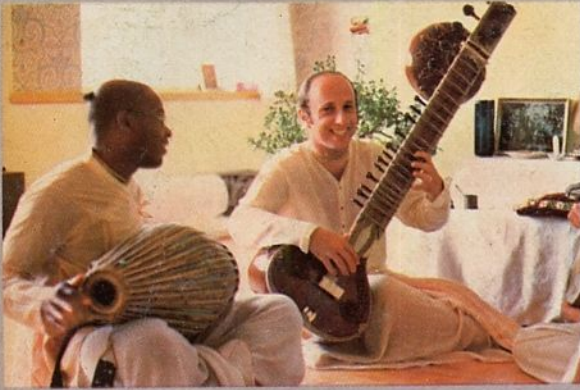
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