

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

BACK TO GODHEAD

Vol. 16 No. 5

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT

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Recording the First Hare Kṛṣṇa LP



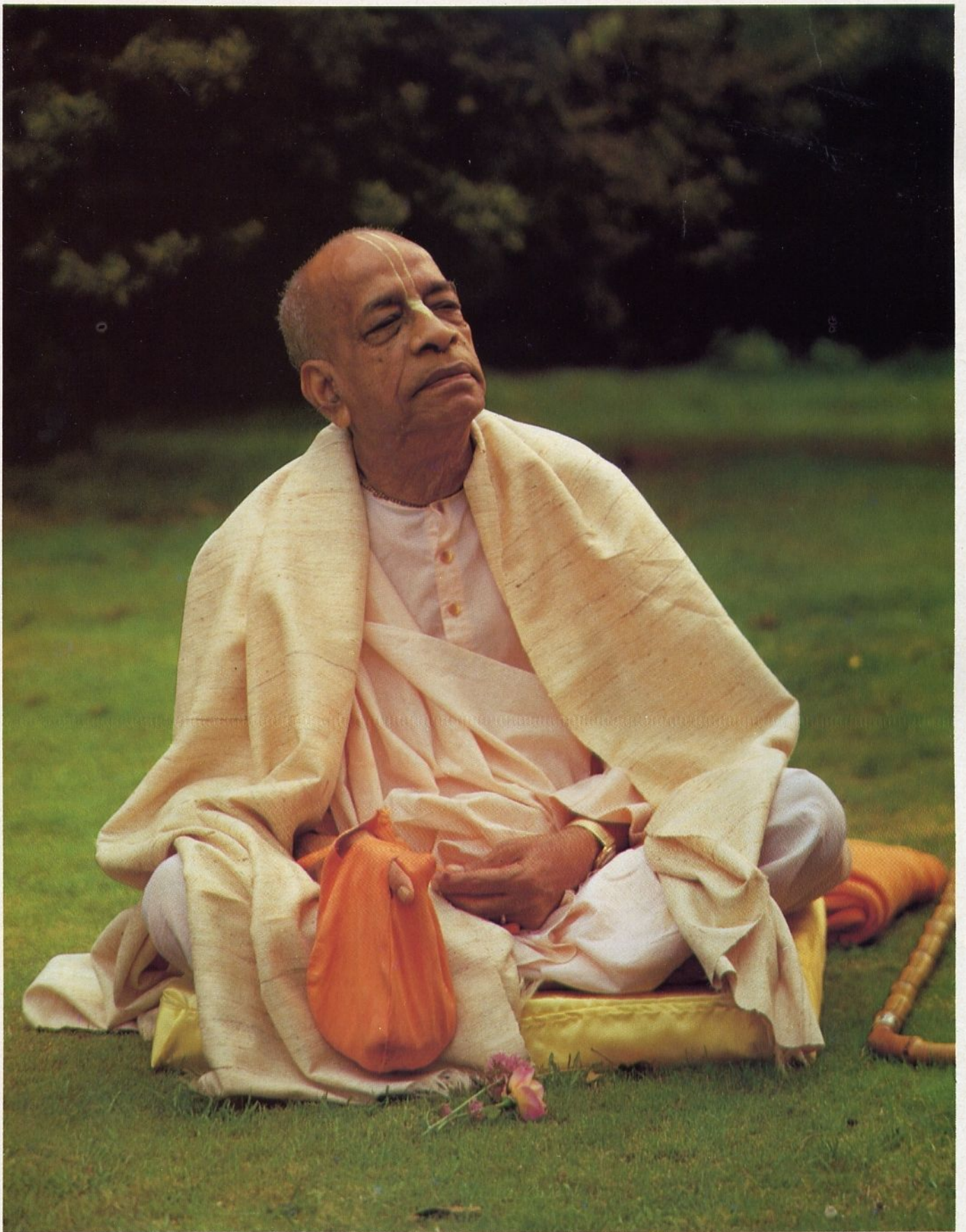


PHOTO: BHARGAVA DĀSA

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

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VOL. 16, NO. 5

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His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda

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PRONUNCIATION of Sanskrit words and names. BACK TO GODHEAD follows the international scholarly standard. Pronounce short **a** like the **u** in **but**, long **ā** like the **a** in **far** (and hold it twice as long as the short **a**). Pronounce **ē** like the **a** in **evade**, long **i** like the **i** in **pique**. Pronounce the aspirated consonants (**ch**, **jh**, **dh**, etc.) as in **staunch-heart**, **hedg-hog**, and **red-hot**. Finally, pronounce the 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* (*dāsi* for women), meaning "servant." For instance, the name *Kṛṣṇa dāsa* means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

◀ His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda came to America in 1965, at age sixty-nine, 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.

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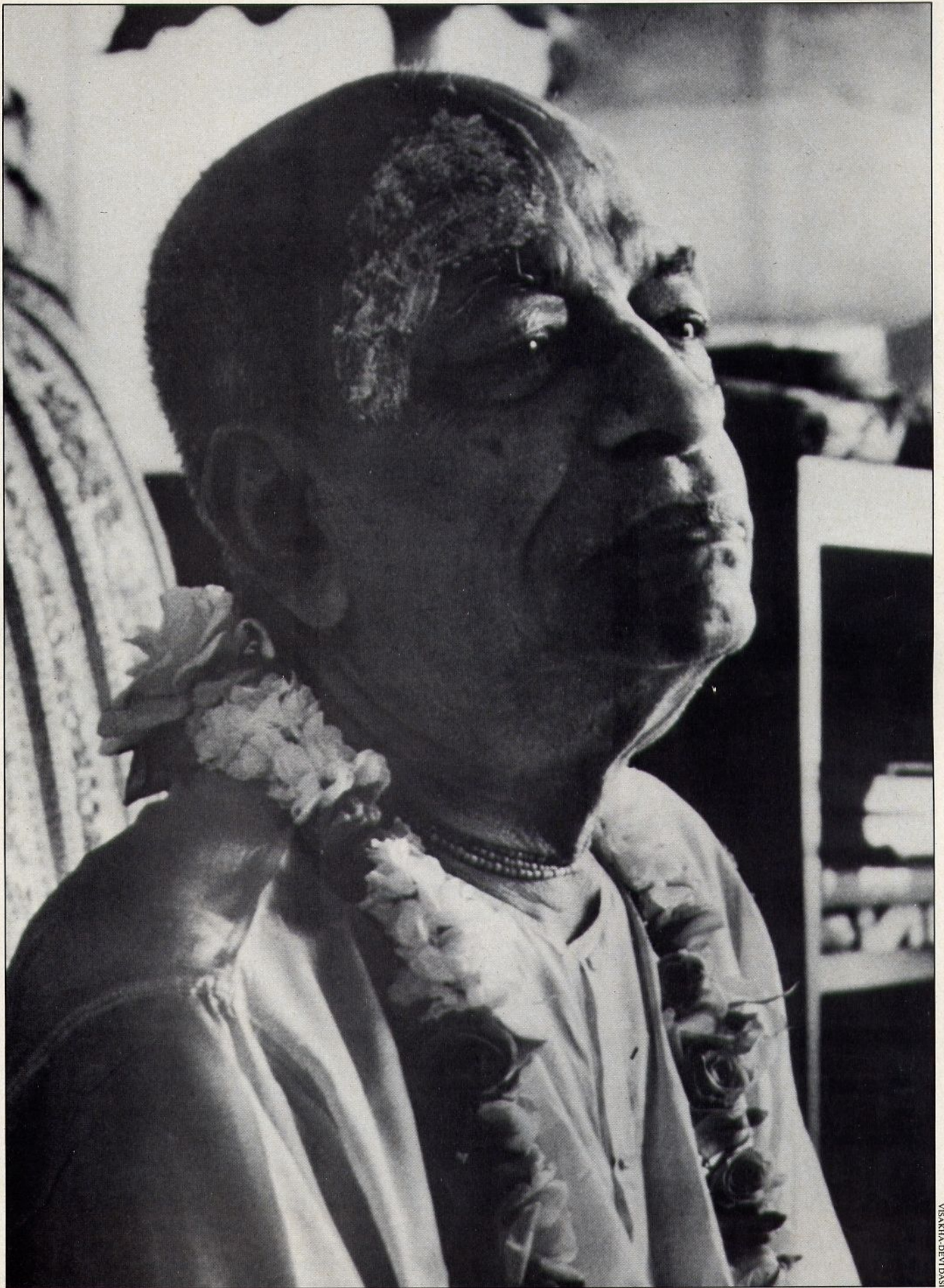
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Cover: The Divine Brothers—Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and Balarāma, His first expansion—sport in the spiritual realm called Goloka Vṛndāvana. Endowed with transcendental form, personality, and qualities, Śrī Kṛṣṇa revealed Himself on earth five thousand years ago to attract conditioned souls away from the ephemeral pleasures of this material world and back to the eternal, spiritual pleasure of devotional service to Him. The place of His appearance, Vṛndāvana, ninety miles from New Delhi, is an exact replica of Goloka Vṛndāvana in the spiritual world. Today pilgrims can still see herds of cows roaming Vṛndāvana's forest paths and peacocks prancing in the fields—vivid reminders of the Lord's pastimes. (Painting: Puṣkara dāsa)

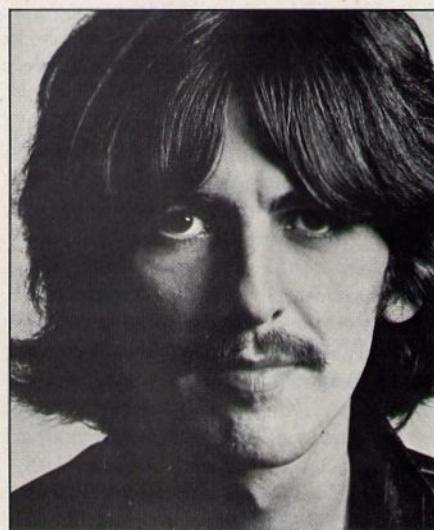
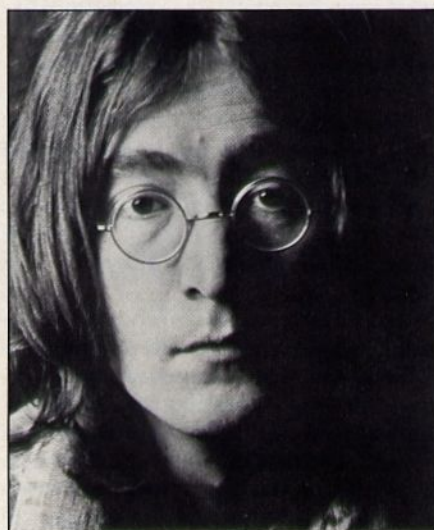
ABOUT BACK TO GODHEAD: "Godhead is light" has always been BACK TO GODHEAD's byword—"Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience." Godhead means the source of everything, and this journal is meant to assist readers in cultivating practical, scientific realization of Godhead. To 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."



VISAKHA-DEVIDASI

ON THE STRENGTH OF CHANTING HARE KṚṢṆA

A talk between John Lennon, Yoko Ono, George Harrison, and His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.



UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL PHOTO

Summer, 1969: The setting is Tittenhurst Park, John Lennon's sixty-acre estate in Ascot, a London suburb. John had invited the dozen or so devotees then living in London to stay at the estate, and they had decorated a small recital hall there as a temple. A few weeks previously, the devotees had recorded the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra on Apple Records. Now, on September 8, Śrīla Prabhupāda was arriving, and John offered to have him picked up in his Rolls Royce at Heathrow Airport and brought to stay with the devotees at Tittenhurst. It was during Śrīla Prabhupāda's stay there that this conversation took place.

Śrīla Prabhupāda [to John Lennon]: You are anxious to bring about peace in the world. I've read some of your statements, and they show me that you're anxious to do something. Actually, every saintly person should be anxious to bring peace to the world. But we must know the process. In *Bhagavad-gītā* [5.29], Lord Kṛṣṇa explains how to achieve peace:

*bhoktāraṁ yajña-tapasāṁ
sarva-loka-maheśvaram
suhṛdaṁ sarva-bhūtānāṁ
jñātvā māṁ śāntim ṛchati*

People can become peaceful by knowing three things. If people perfectly under-

stand only three things, then they'll become peaceful. What are they? First of all, Lord Kṛṣṇa says that He is the real enjoyer of all the sacrifices, austerities, and penances that people undertake to perfect their lives. For instance, your own musical activities are also a form of austerity. Your songs have become popular because you have undergone some austerities. You have come to perfection, but that required some penances and austerities. Scientific discoveries also require austerities. In fact, anything valuable requires austerity. If one works very devoutly and painstakingly, one becomes successful.

That is called *yajña*, or sacrifice. It is

also called *tapasya*, or penance. So Kṛṣṇa says that He is the enjoyer of the results of your *tapasya*. He claims, “The result of your *tapasya* should come to Me. Then you’ll be satisfied.”

The second thing people should remember is that Kṛṣṇa is the supreme proprietor. People are claiming, “This is my England,” “This is my India,” “This is my Germany,” “This is my China.” No! Everything belongs to God, Kṛṣṇa. Not only this planet belongs to Kṛṣṇa, but all other planets in the universe.

Still, we have divided even this planet into so many nations. Originally, this planet was not divided. From the historical accounts in the *Mahābhārata*, we understand that the whole planet was once ruled by a single emperor who resided in India, in the place called Hastināpura, the site of modern Delhi. Even up to five thousand years ago there was only one king, Mahārāja Parīkṣit. The whole planet was under one flag and was called Bhārata-varṣa. But gradually Bhārata-varṣa has become smaller and smaller and smaller. For instance, very recently, just twenty years ago, the remaining portion of Bhārata-varṣa, now called India, was divided into Pakistan and Hindustan. Actually, India was one, but now it has been reduced by the partition. This dividing is going on.

But actually this whole planet is God’s place. It is nobody else’s place. How can we claim possession? For example, you have given me this place to stay in. If I stay for one week and then claim, “Oh, this is my room,” is that a very nice thing? There will immediately be some disagreement, some trouble. Rather, I should recognize the actual fact, namely, that you have kindly spared this room. By your permission I am living here comfortably. And when it is necessary for me to leave, I shall go.

Similarly, we all come here into the kingdom of God empty-handed, and we go empty-handed. So how can we claim that this is my property, this is my country, this is my world, this is my planet? Why do we make such claims? Is it not insanity? So Lord Kṛṣṇa says, *sarva-loka-maheśvaram*: “I am the Supreme Lord of every place.”

Thirdly, we should always remember that Kṛṣṇa is the real friend of every living entity and that He is sitting as a friend within everyone’s heart. He’s such a nice friend. In this material world, we make friendships, but they break up. Or my friend lives somewhere, and I live somewhere else. But Kṛṣṇa is such a nice friend that He is living within—within me and within my heart. He is the best friend of all living beings. He’s not just the friend of a select few, but He is dwelling even within

the heart of the most insignificant creature as Paramātmā, or Supersoul.

So if these three things are understood clearly, then one becomes peaceful. This is the real peace formula. . . .

In *Bhagavad-gītā* the Lord also says, “Whatever action is performed by a great man, common men follow in his footsteps. And whatever standards he sets by exemplary acts, all the world pursues.” [*Bhagavad-gītā* 3.21] The idea is that if something is accepted by the leading persons, the ordinary persons follow. If the leading persons say it is all right, then others also accept it. So by the grace of God, Kṛṣṇa, you are leaders. Thousands of

**We all come here
empty-handed, and
we go empty-handed.
So how can we claim
that this is
my property, this
is my country?
Is it not insanity?**

young people follow you. They like you. And if you give them something actually spiritual, the face of the world will change.

The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is not newly manufactured. From the historical point of view, it is at least five thousand years old. The *Bhagavad-gītā*, which is the basis of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, was spoken by Lord Kṛṣṇa five thousand years ago. Of course, *Bhagavad-gītā* is generally regarded as an Indian religious book. But it isn’t—it’s not simply Indian or Hindu. The *Bhagavad-gītā* is meant for all people of the world, and not even just for human beings but for all other living creatures as well. In Chapter Fourteen the Lord says, “It should be understood that all species of life, O son of Kuntī, are made possible by birth in this material nature and that I am the seed-giving father.” [Bg. 14.4]

This indicates that the eternal living entity appears in varieties of temporary, material forms, just like we here now have the forms of ladies, gentlemen, and young men. We all have different forms. This whole world is full of varieties of life, but Kṛṣṇa says, *aham̐ bija-pradaḥ pitā*: “I am the father of all of them.” *Pitā* means “father.” So the Lord claims all living entities as His sons.

Some people may say that Kṛṣṇa is Indian, Kṛṣṇa is Hindu, Or Kṛṣṇa is something else. But no—Kṛṣṇa is actually the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the seed-giving father of all living things on this planet. This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement was started by Kṛṣṇa Himself. Therefore, it isn’t sectarian; it’s meant for everyone.

And in *Bhagavad-gītā* [9.34] Kṛṣṇa describes the universal process for worshipping Him:

*man-manā bhava mad-bhaktō
mad-yājī māṁ namaskuru . . .*

“Engage your mind always in thinking of Me and become My devotee. Offer obeisances to Me and worship Me. Being completely absorbed in Me, surely you will come to Me.”

Kṛṣṇa says, You should always think of Me: let your mind always be engaged in Me, Kṛṣṇa. Just become My devotee. If you want to worship, just worship Me. If you want to offer respects, offer them to Me. And if you do this, then without a doubt you’ll come to Me.

This is a very simple method. Always think of Kṛṣṇa. There is no loss, and the gain is very great.

So if one chants Hare Kṛṣṇa, one undergoes no material loss, but gains spiritually. So why not try it? There is no expenditure. Everything has some price, but the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* is different. Lord Kṛṣṇa and His followers in disciplic succession do not sell it—rather, they distribute it freely. We simply say to everyone, “Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. Dance in ecstasy.” It is a very nice thing.

So, I have come to your country, England, and especially here to your home to explain this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. It is very beneficial. You are intelligent boys. So my request to you is that you try to understand this Kṛṣṇa consciousness philosophy with all your powers of reason and argument. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, the author of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, says, *śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya-dayā karaḥ vicāra, vicāra karile citte pābe camatkara*: “If you are indeed interested in logic and argument, kindly apply it to the mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.* If you do so, you will find it strikingly wonderful.” [Cc. Ādi 8.15] So just apply your powers of judgment to the mercy of Lord Caitanya. If you scrutinize His mercy, you’ll find it sublime.

We are not forcing people to accept the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. Rather,

*Lord Caitanya, an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, appeared five centuries ago in Bengal and taught that everyone should chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa.

we are putting it before them for their judgment. Let them judge it. We are not a sectarian religious movement—Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a science. So we ask you to judge it scrutinizingly with all your intellect. And we are sure you will find it sublime. And if you find it sublime, then why not help put it before the world?

Have you read our book *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*?

John Lennon: I've read bits of *Bhagavad-gītā*. I don't know which version it was. There are so many different translations.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, there are different translations, in which the authors have given their own interpretations of the text. Therefore I have prepared our *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*. Even Indian authors sometimes misrepresent *Bhagavad-gītā*. For instance, one prominent Indian politician tried to give his own interpretation of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Say you have a box for a fountain pen. Everyone knows it is a fountain pen box. But someone might say, "No, it is something else. That is my interpretation." Is that very good?

Interpretation is required only when things are not understood clearly. If everybody can understand that this box is a fountain pen box, where is the necessity for interpretation? *Bhagavad-gītā* is clear; it is just like sunlight, and sunlight does not require the aid of a lamp.

Let me give you an example. The first verse of *Bhagavad-gītā* is

*dhṛtarāṣṭra uvāca
dharmakṣetre kurukṣetre
samavetaḥ yuyutsavaḥ
māmakāḥ pāṇḍavaś caiva
kim akurvata sañjaya*

Dhṛtarāṣṭra uvāca means that King Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the father of Duryodhana, is asking his secretary, Sañjaya, about his sons, who are facing the Pāṇḍavas on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra. *Māmakāḥ* means "my sons." *Pāṇḍavāḥ* refers to the sons of King Pāṇḍu, the younger brother of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. *Yuyutsavaḥ* means "with fighting spirit." So Dhṛtarāṣṭra is saying, "My sons and the sons of my younger brother Pāṇḍu are assembled on the battlefield, ready to fight each other." The place where the battle will be fought is called *kurukṣetra*, which is also *dharmakṣetra*, a place of pilgrimage. *Kim akurvata*. "Now that they have assembled at Kurukṣetra," asks Dhṛtarāṣṭra, "what will they do?" This place, Kurukṣetra, still exists in India. Have you been to India?

John Lennon: Yes. But not to that place. We went to Hṛṣīkeśa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Oh, Hṛṣīkeśa. Hṛṣīkeśa is also a famous place of pilgrimage. Similarly, Kurukṣetra is a place of pilgrimage, near Delhi. It has been known as a

place of pilgrimage since the Vedic times. In the *Vedas* it is stated, *kurukṣetre dharmam yājayet*: "If you want to perform a religious ceremony, you should go to Kurukṣetra." Therefore Kurukṣetra is called *dharmakṣetra*, a place of pilgrimage.

In other words, Kurukṣetra is an actual historical location. And the Pāṇḍavas and the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra are actual historical personalities. Their history is recorded in the *Mahābhārata*. But in spite of these facts, some people interpret *kurukṣetra* as "the body," and the *Pāṇḍavas* as "the senses." These things are going on, but we object. Why should anyone interpret *Bhagavad-gītā* like that when the facts are

**Nature is so cruel.
In America
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thought he was the
most fortunate man,
the happiest man.
But within a second
it was all finished.**

there, presented so clearly?

Bhagavad-gītā is a very authoritative and popular book, so unscrupulous authors try to put forward their own half-baked philosophies in the guise of commentaries on *Bhagavad-gītā*. Therefore, there are so many false and misleading interpretations of *Bhagavad-gītā*—six hundred and sixty-four or so. Everyone thinks he can interpret the *Bhagavad-gītā* in his own way. But why? Why should this be allowed? We say, No, you cannot interpret *Bhagavad-gītā*. Otherwise, what is the authority of *Bhagavad-gītā*? The author of *Bhagavad-gītā* did not leave it to be interpreted by third-class men. The author is Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord. He said everything clearly. Why should an ordinary man interpret His words? That is our objection.

Therefore, we are presenting *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*. In *Bhagavad-gītā* you'll find very elevated philosophy and theology as well as sociology, politics, and science. Everything is there, and everything is clearly explained by Kṛṣṇa. So this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement means to present *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is. That's all. We have not manufactured anything.

[*Śrīla Prabhupāda* pauses a moment and sips some water.]

Be happy and make all others happy. This is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. *Sarve sukheṇa bhavantu*. That is the Vedic idea: everyone be happy. Caitanya Mahāprabhu said the same thing. He wanted this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement to be preached in every village and in every town of the world. It will make people happy. He foretold this. The purpose of any great mission, or of any high ideals, should be to make people happy, because in this material existence there is no happiness. That is a fact. There cannot be any happiness here.

This place is not meant for happiness. In *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself says that this world is *duḥkhālayam aśāśvatam*. *Duḥkhālayam* means it is a place of miseries, and *aśāśvatam* means it is temporary. Everything here is temporary. So you might accept that this material world is a miserable place and say, "All right, it's miserable, but I accept it." But that attitude has no value, because the material nature will not even allow you to stay here and accept the misery. This world is *aśāśvatam*, temporary. You have to leave.

But Kṛṣṇa says there is a way to end this miserable existence: "After attaining Me, the great souls, who are *yogīs* in devotion, never return to this temporary world, which is full of miseries, because they have attained the highest perfection." [Bg. 8.15] If somebody comes to Me, says Kṛṣṇa, then he doesn't have to return to the miserable conditions of life in the material world.

So, we should understand what Kṛṣṇa is saying here. Nature is so cruel. In America, President Kennedy thought he was the most fortunate man, the happiest man. He was young, he was elected President. He had a nice wife and children and was respected all over the world. But within a second [*Śrīla Prabhupāda snaps his fingers*] it was all finished. His position was temporary. Now what is his condition? Where is he? If life is eternal, if the living entity is eternal, then where has he gone? What is he doing? Is he happy, or is he distressed? Has he been reborn in America, in China? No one can say.

But it is a fact that as a living entity he's eternal, he's existing. That is the beginning of *Bhagavad-gītā's* philosophy. *Na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre*. After the destruction of this body, the living entity is not destroyed: he is still there. Just like in your childhood you had a small body. That body is no more, but you are still existing. So it is natural that when this body ceases to exist, you will continue to exist in another body. It's not very difficult to understand. The soul is eternal, and the body is temporary. That's a fact.

Therefore, this present life is meant for

manufacturing the next body. That is Vedic knowledge. In this life we are creating our next body. For instance, a boy may be studying very nicely in school. In this way he is creating his adult body. As a young man he will enjoy the results of his boyhood education. By education he can get a nice job, a nice house. So in this sense we can say that the young boy at school is creating his next body.

Similarly, we are all creating our next bodies according to our *karma*. By *karma*, most people will take another material body. But Kṛṣṇa says it is possible to create a spiritual body so that you can come to Him. He says that those who worship Him go to His spiritual planet after death.

The whole Vedic philosophy teaches that if you want to go to a particular planet you must have a suitable body. You cannot go with this body. For instance, people are now trying to go to the moon planet. They are attempting to go with their material bodies, but they cannot stay there. But Kṛṣṇa gives the process for going to other planets, and the highest planet is Kṛṣṇa's planet. You can go there. "Those who worship the demigods will take birth among the demigods; those who worship ghosts and spirits will take birth among such beings; those who worship ancestors go to the ancestors; and those who worship Me will live with Me." [Bg. 9.25]

One who worships Kṛṣṇa does not come back again to this miserable material condition. Why? He has attained the highest perfection, to go back to Kṛṣṇa. So this is the greatest benediction for human society, to train people to go back to Kṛṣṇa's spiritual planet, where they can dance with Kṛṣṇa in *rāsa-līlā*. Have you seen pictures of Kṛṣṇa's *rāsa-līlā* dancing?

John Lennon: Which picture?

Disciple: The painting of Kṛṣṇa dancing with Rādhā and the cowherd girls, the *gopīs*.

John Lennon: Oh, you mean the one on the wall of the temple room?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. So, we can go to the spiritual world and join with Kṛṣṇa and dance happily, with no anxiety. Living beings can have so many different connections with Kṛṣṇa—as friend, as servant, as parent, as lover, whatever you like. Kṛṣṇa says, *ye yathā mām prapadyante tānīs tathaiva bhajāmy aham*: "All of them—as they surrender unto Me—I reward accordingly." [Bg. 4.11] Just cultivate the consciousness of the particular relationship you desire with Kṛṣṇa. He is prepared to accept you in that capacity. And that makes a solution to all problems.

In this world, nothing is permanent, nothing is blissful, nothing is full of knowledge. So we are training Western boys and

girls in the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Anyone can take advantage of it. It is very beneficial. You should also try to understand it, and if you find it valuable, then please take it up. You are looking for something very nice. Is my proposal unreasonable? You are intelligent boys. Try to understand it.

And you also have very good musical abilities. The Vedic *mantras* were all transmitted through music. The *Sāma-veda*, in particular, is full of music:

*yaṁ brahmā varuṇendra-rudra-marutaḥ
stunvanti divyair stāvair
vedaiḥ sāṅga-pada-kramopaniṣadair
gāyanti yaṁ sāmāgāḥ*

**A mantra cannot
be manufactured.
It must come from
the original,
Supreme Absolute,
through the
disciplic succession.
Only then will it act.**

"I offer my humble obeisances to the Supreme Lord, whom great demigods like Brahmā, Varuṇa, Indra, Śiva, and the Maruts praise with transcendental prayers. Those who know the *Sāma-veda* sing about Him with different Vedic hymns." [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 12.13.1] *Sāmāgāḥ* means the followers of the *Sāma-veda*. *Gāyanti* means that they are always engaged in music. Through musical vibrations they are approaching the Supreme. *Gāyanti* means singing. So, Vedic *mantras* are meant to be sung. *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* can be sung very nicely. This is the proper way of chanting Vedic *mantras*. Simply by hearing the vibration, people will receive benefit, even if they do not understand the meaning. [Śrīla Prabhupāda then chants some mantras from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.]

Simply by transcendental sound vibration everything can be achieved. What kind of philosophy are you following? May I ask?

John Lennon: Following?

Yoko Ono: We don't follow anything. We are just living.

George Harrison: We've done meditation. Or I do my meditation—*mantra*

meditation.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Hare Kṛṣṇa is also *mantra*.

John Lennon: Ours is not a song, though.

George Harrison: No, no. It's chanting.

John Lennon: We heard it from Maharishi. A *mantra* each.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: His *mantras* are not public.

George Harrison: Not out loud . . . no.

John Lennon: No—it's a secret.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: There's a story about Rāmānujācārya, a great Kṛṣṇa conscious spiritual master. His spiritual master gave him a *mantra* and said, "My dear boy, you chant this *mantra* silently. Nobody else can hear it. It is very secret." Rāmānujācārya asked his *guru*, "What is the effect of this *mantra*?" The *guru* said, "By chanting this *mantra* in meditation, you'll get liberation."

So Rāmānujācārya immediately went out to a big public meeting and said, "Everyone chant this *mantra*. You'll all be liberated." [Laughter.] Then he came back to his spiritual master, who was very angry, and said, "I told you that you should chant silently!" Rāmānujācārya said, "Yes, I have committed an offense. So whatever punishment you like you can give me. But because you told me that this *mantra* will give liberation, I have given it to the public. Let everyone be liberated, and let me go to hell—I am prepared. But if by chanting this *mantra* everyone can be liberated, let it be publicly distributed."

His spiritual master then embraced him, saying, "You are greater than me."

You see? If a *mantra* has so much power, why should it be secret? It should be distributed. People are suffering. So Caitanya Mahāprabhu said to chant this Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* loudly. Anyone who hears it, even the birds and beasts, will become liberated.

Yoko Ono: If Hare Kṛṣṇa is such a strong, powerful *mantra*, is there any reason to chant anything else? For instance, you talked about songs and different *mantras*. Is there any point in the chanting of another song or *mantra*?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: There are other *mantras*, but the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* is especially recommended for this age. But other Vedic *mantras* are also chanted. As I told you, the sages would sit with musical instruments, like the tamboura, and chant them. For instance, Nārada Muni* is always chanting *mantras* and playing his stringed instrument, the *vīṇā*. So chanting out loud, with musical instruments, is not a new thing. It has been done since time

(continued on page 21)

*A liberated sage who travels throughout the universe preaching love of God.



N.D. Desai

Industrialist with a Mission

A successful Bombay engineer seeks to inspire purity in his daily world of business and finance.

Text and photos by
YOGEŚVARA DĀSA

Every evening at 6:00 Narendra Desai leaves his office in downtown Bombay. His chauffeur drives him home through streets crowded with cars, trucks, ox-carts, rickshas, eight million people, and an occasional elephant. They pull up at a seven-story building overlooking parks, swimming pools, and the Arabian Sea. Upstairs, Dr. Desai bathes, changes into white silk robes, applies two lines of sacred clay to his forehead, and enters the marble temple in his apartment. He places three drops of water in his right hand, then three drops in the left, lights three sticks

of incense, and begins reciting Sanskrit verses of prayer.

Soon his wife and three children join him. Tiny burning wicks of clarified butter throw soft light on the devotional paintings and tapestries. Everyone's attention is focused on the smiling Deities of Lord Kṛṣṇa and His consort Rādhā. After the last prayer has been recited and the last flower offered, parents and children bow to the floor in submission to the Deities and then prepare for a dinner of vegetarian dishes first offered to the Lord.

The Desai family repeats the procedure

each morning and evening, seven days a week, 365 a year. Brought up by pious, well-to-do parents, Dr. Desai has known the significance of the *ārati* ceremony since childhood. In fact, so have most Hindus. The same elaborate offering to the Deity takes place in millions of homes across the subcontinent and around the world. Kṛṣṇa, the ceremony proclaims, is the Supreme Lord and enjoyer of all works and sacrifices. He is the real master of the home, and His pleasure is the true goal of one's daily activities.

For Dr. Desai, however, the ceremony

does not end with the last ablu-tion. As an initiated devotee of ISKCON, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, he has dedicated his words, wealth, intelligence, and life to spreading the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa. His spiritual name, Nāthji dāsa, means “servant of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is the master of all creation.”

An ordinary day for Nāthji begins at 4:00 A.M. After morning duties he takes a brisk walk around Seaface Park while chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa on prayer beads and then joins his family in their temple room by 6:30 for ceremonies and a reading from *Bhagavad-gītā*. At breakfast, father and children trade stories from the epic histo-

like the one at the ISKCON āśrama in Hyderabad, and the printing of Vaiṣṇava literature, he has designed a traveling temple, built on a large Tata company truck chassis, that will broadcast *Bhagavad-gītā* to villages all over India. He sponsors gatherings as well—sometimes in tents holding fifteen thousand people, sometimes in the privacy of his own apartment—to teach *bhakti* (devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa) and encourage membership in ISKCON. Nāthji also serves as General Secretary to Bombay’s Bhaktivedanta Institute, a branch of ISKCON dedicated to presenting Vedic scriptural conclusions in scientific terms.

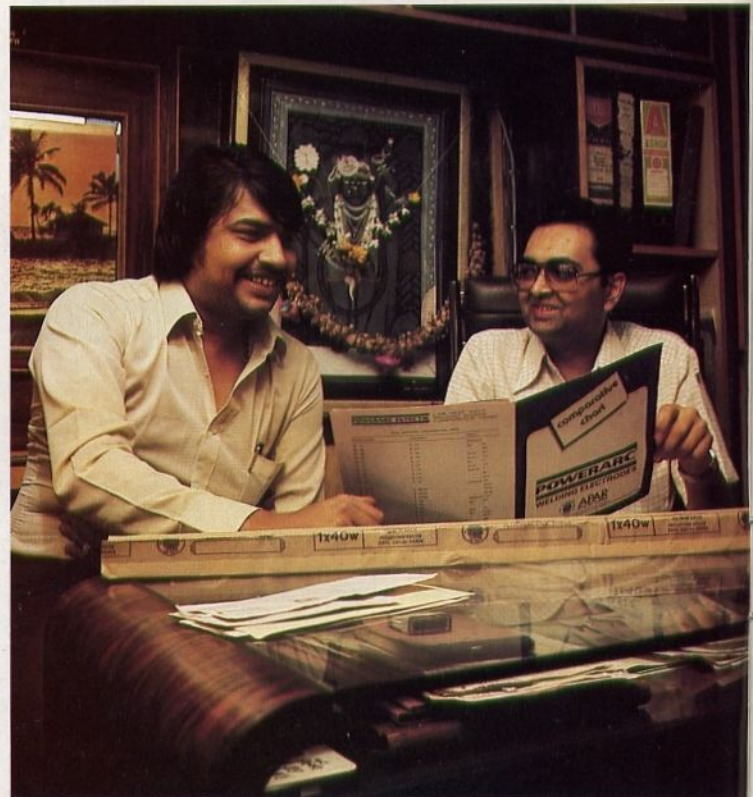


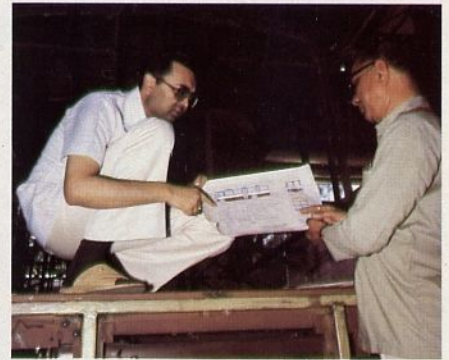
SRI SADANAND, BOMBAY

ries *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata*. At 8:00 Nāthji brings his children to school and continues on to his office, where duties may include reviewing company accounts, evaluating new equipment, calling the minister of finance in Delhi about a new export factory, or visiting the refinery in Trombay, a Bombay suburb. Nāthji returns home by 7:00 for evening temple ceremonies, an offering of foods to the Deity, and then dinner with his family. Before retiring at 10:00 he may read from scriptures or prepare notes for his Sunday lecture at ISKCON’s Bombay temple and cultural center.

Nāthji is the chairman of the board and managing director of several private companies, whose total combined sales exceed \$40 million annually. Among his factories are India’s largest producer of light bulbs, fluorescent tubes, and other lighting supplies and the country’s second largest supplier of active electronic components. Despite the importance of his various enterprises, Nāthji’s real attention remains focused on his projects for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In addition to providing financial backing for temples, cow protection centers (*go-śālas*)

Nāthji’s acceptance of prayer beads from his spiritual master, Srila Kīrtanānanda Swami Bhaktipāda, highlights his initiation ceremony (above). At right, a client examines an APAR electrical supplies catalog while the original Nāthji—Lord Kṛṣṇa—looks on from a painting behind the desk.





While inspecting his Trombay oil refinery, at left, Nāthji explains plant facilities to a visitor. A traveling temple (above), designed and built by Nāthji, will bring Lord Kṛṣṇa's message to villages across India. Seated at the dinner table (below), Nāthji and family exchange amusing stories from scripture.

Still, Nāthji began to visit Śrīla Prabhupāda whenever Prabhupāda came to Bombay. "I would argue that the *Vedas* describe every living entity as *brahman*, spiritual energy, and that Kṛṣṇa is just one expression of that spiritual energy. Śrīla Prabhupāda would correct me immediately. 'You may be *brahman*, but Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Brahman. He is the source of everything, including the *brahman* energy. You are a tiny particle of *brahman*, and He is the complete whole. Where have you picked up this nonsense impersonalistic idea? You are God? Did you create the universe? What is your authority to speak? Kṛṣṇa spoke *Bhagavad-gītā*. Can you speak such wisdom?' In this way he would defeat me."

Despite philosophical differences with Śrīla Prabhupāda, Nāthji was attracted by his explanations and broad vision of theological matters. Studying the books of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and attending classes at the Bombay temple led Nāthji to adopt the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa as a daily meditation. Eventually he even relinquished his impersonal conceptions of truth in favor of the Vaiṣṇava explanation that the soul retains individuality eternally in loving service to the Supreme Person.

Just when Narendra Desai was feeling ready to take initiation into Kṛṣṇa consciousness, Śrīla Prabhupāda left this material world. Dr. Desai approached Girirāja Swami, the president of ISKCON Bombay, and asked where he was to find a bona fide spiritual master now that Śrīla Prabhupāda was gone. Girirāja Swami handed him some cassette recordings of



At age twenty-one Nāthji graduated with a masters' in engineering from the University of Pennsylvania. That same year he secured a contract from Sunoco to open a nonfuel oil refinery outside Bombay, and soon thereafter he finished his Ph.D. One evening in 1971 he met devotees for the first time at his parents' house. His father, a member of Indian Parliament and president of several Bombay factories, often received religious people

at his home. He greatly appreciated Śrīla Prabhupāda's purity and world preaching efforts and invited him to come with disciples for chanting and a lecture. That evening Nāthji's father became one of ISKCON's first Life Members, but Nāthji remained skeptical. He had read several editions of *Bhagavad-gītā* commented upon by impersonalistic scholars, and the nondevotional, 'monistic school appealed to him more than the idea of a personal God.

Ceremonies before the Deity of Kṛṣṇa

and readings from *Bhagavad-gītā* bring Nāthji and his wife Maithili to the family temple room each morning and evening. Articles for the traditional *ārati* fill the altar: flower, conchshell, handkerchief, essential oils, incense, ghee wick lamps, and water cup.

At right, a crowd of Sunday visitors to the Bombay Kṛṣṇa temple listens intently as Nāthji explains a Sanskrit verse from the sacred *Gītā*.

Śrīla Kīrtanānanda Swami, one of the disciples Śrīla Prabhupāda had entrusted with the duty of initiating new devotees. Nāthji listened and found Kīrtanānanda Swami's explanations nondifferent from those of Śrīla Prabhupāda. Each point was clearly and authoritatively presented.

"That was when I knew I had found my *guru*. Just as the Ganges water is the same at Devaprayag, Hṛṣikeṣa, and Hardwar, so the teachings coming down in disciplic succession from Lord Kṛṣṇa are the same, whether delivered by Śrīla Prabhupāda or his faithful representative. I know that by hearing from Śrīla Kīrtanānanda Swami I receive the same wisdom passed down through the entire history of Vaiṣṇava spiritual masters."

Relatives and acquaintances looked askance at the idea of a highborn Hindu taking initiation from an American. "I told them there was nothing American left in him, that he had completely dedicated himself to Kṛṣṇa's transcendental loving service. But many of them remained socially offended. I had been in Bombay five years, accumulating 'friends' like sins, and after my initiation many of them at first shunned me."

The notion that only born Hindus can accept spiritual initiation or perform the initiatory rites is widespread in India yet erroneous. According to Vaiṣṇava scriptures, offering initiation into spiritual life is the prerogative of anyone fully conversant with the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and any sincere person can be a candidate for initiation. Nonetheless, social custom has made guruship and discipleship the privileges of those born in *brāhmaṇa*, or high-caste, families. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who promulgated the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in Bengal five hundred years ago, defied this artificial restriction and, on the authority of scripture, accepted disciples from middle-class, low-class, and even outcaste families. The spiritual masters in succession from Him have followed His example.

Nāthji was not disturbed by the criticism ("I didn't become a devotee to win friends," he says), and he continued his devotional practices openly. Paintings of



Lord Kṛṣṇa and His many incarnations adorned the walls of his office and home. Holiday gifts to clients included posters of the Deities at New Vrindaban, his spiritual master's rural community in West Virginia. Many photos of Śrīla Prabhupāda and Kīrtanānanda Swami graced the tops of his desks, tables, and dressers. Nāthji even printed a special pocket edition of *Bhagavad-gītā*, just to have on hand for visitors and friends.

Not long after Nāthji's initiation, a young Communist union leader instigated a strike at one of Nāthji's factories. Nāthji rejected the strike leader's ambitious demands and instead handed him a copy of Śrīla Prabhupāda's *Bhagavad-gītā*.

"This has nothing to do with religion," the union organizer said. "We are talking worker-management relations."

"Then consult the real owner of the factory," Nāthji replied. "My workers know I am a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. They know I manage this place on His behalf. They also know I try to encourage them by setting an example of fairness and concern for their well-being. These are qualities Lord Kṛṣṇa praises in the *Gītā*. But your demands are unreasonable by any standards except your own. If you want to negotiate successfully with me, I suggest you take this book home and read it."

Nāthji noted that the workers were impressed by hearing him speak so strongly about the *Gītā*'s teachings, and after a few meetings they signed an agreement. Nāthji later learned that the union leader, like many of his contemporaries, had received training in *Bhagavad-gītā* as a boy and that the negotiations had rekindled his appreciation for its teachings. After the strike the union leader even com-

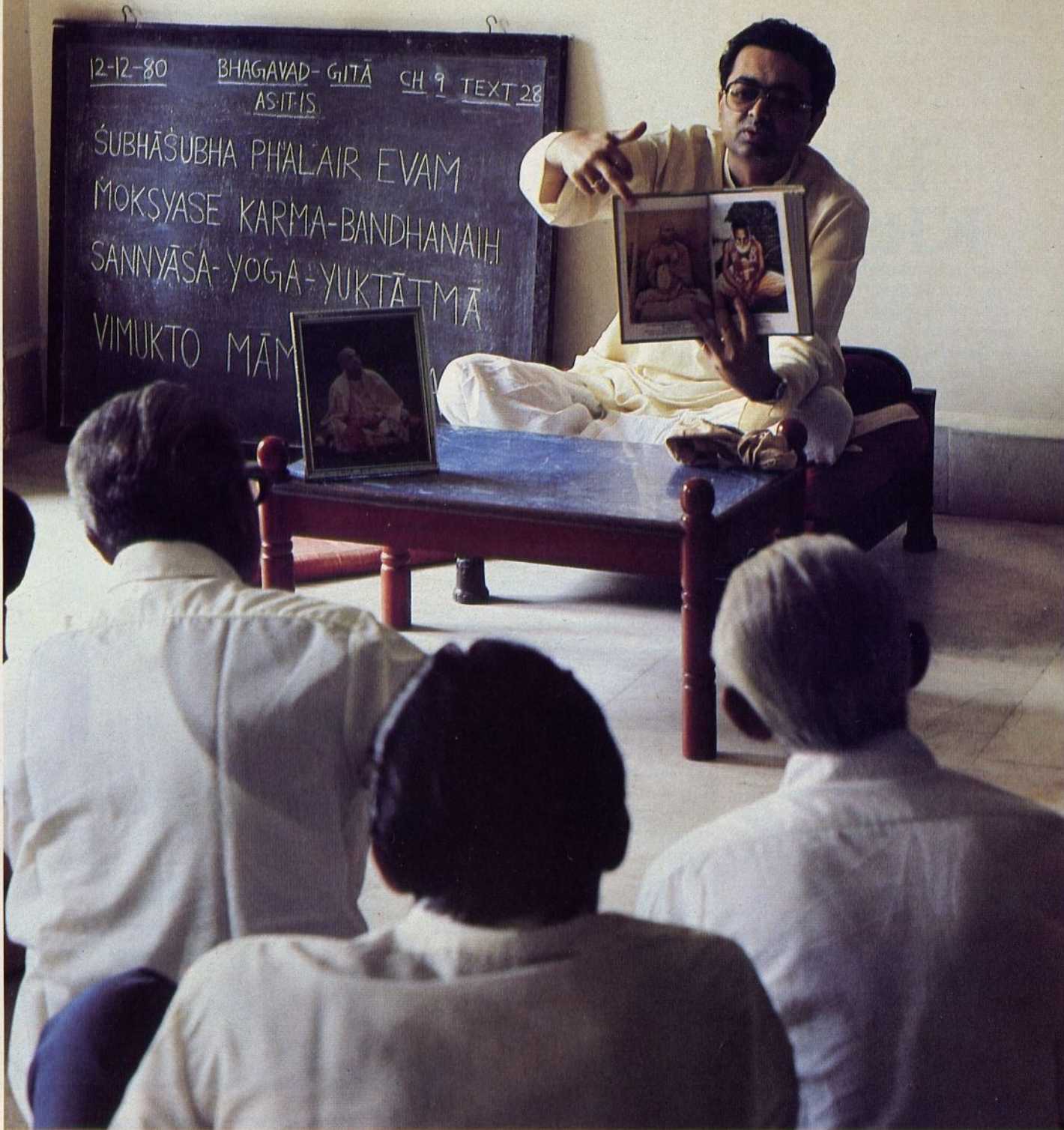
mented that work, after all, "wasn't everything." Eventually he quit the Party and took to regularly studying the sacred text.

"I had never heard of a strike being argued in quite that way," Nāthji says, "but one must have the strength of his convictions. Especially in business, where corruption is so widespread, *Bhagavad-gītā* has been for me an important guiding force for knowing how to act in the right way."

Acting "in the right way" is a lesson Nāthji imparts gently to his children, whom he feels have been "entrusted" to him. "Lord Kṛṣṇa describes in the *Gītā* that unsuccessful *yogīs* take their birth in affluent or devotee families, a position from which they may easily complete their course of self-realization. By Kṛṣṇa's arrangement, I am able to offer my children a favorable situation for becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious, and I therefore take it that they are very elevated souls.

"When I talk to them about the eternality of the soul and our loving relationship with Kṛṣṇa, they take it seriously. It's not that I impose the *Gītā*'s teachings on them; they actually understand and follow. Of course I still play the role of father, but they know that in a higher sense Kṛṣṇa is their real Father and I am more like a guardian."

Nāthji also teaches his children not to fall for what he calls "sweet talk,"—that is, the allurements of materialism—without carefully considering the consequences. "A classmate may invite them to smoke or drink or indulge in some other distraction, so we have an agreement. Before accepting any proposal they are not sure is truly beneficial, we discuss: What do the scriptures say? What will the effect be? What is




the authority behind the suggestion, its motive? Naturally, the main thing is for them to see good examples in their father and mother. Children are so perceptive, they see even the slightest flaw. In that way they are forcing us to become Kṛṣṇa conscious."

Nāthji's mother, an elderly woman who has done much social service and received several requests to run for public office, was at first suspicious that such a large or-

ganization as ISKCON might have been infiltrated by the C.I.A. Her suspicions were allayed when Girirāja Swami reassured her that any agent capable of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa on beads for the two prescribed hours daily, following the rules of a devotee—no illicit sex, no meat-eating, no intoxicants (including coffee, tea, and cigarettes), and no gambling—would be a true agent of intelligence and a most welcome member of the commu-

nity. Mrs. Desai has been a well-wisher of ISKCON ever since.

"Śrīla Prabhupāda's message to the world was not one of artificial renunciation," Nāthji says, "but of devotion. Whatever you may be—family man, businessman, professional—add Kṛṣṇa to your life and be happy. Business, after all, is an essential element of society. But if you work for Kṛṣṇa, your life becomes sublime." 

The Biography of a Pure Devotee

BROADCASTING KṚṢṆA'S GLORIES

Handmade magazines and a unique recording help launch Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the West.

by ŚRĪLA SATSVARŪPA DĀSA GOSWAMI

For years Śrīla Prabhupāda had pursued alone his mission to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness, first in India and then in America. Now the handful of early followers in New York began to assume duties in preaching on their own. He was not alone any more.

Prabhupāda had begun BACK TO GODHEAD magazine in India. Although he had been writing articles since the 1930s, it was in 1944, in Calcutta, that he had singlehandedly begun the magazine, in response to his spiritual master's request that he preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness in English. It had been with great difficulty that through his pharmaceutical business he had managed to gather the four hun-

dred rupees a month for printing. And he had singlehandedly written, edited, published, financed, and distributed each issue. In those early years, BACK TO GODHEAD had been Śrīla Prabhupāda's major literary work and preaching mission. He had envisioned widespread distribution of the magazine, and he had thought of plans for spreading the message of Lord Caitanya all over the world. He had drawn up a list of major countries and the number of copies of the magazine he wanted to send to each. He sought donations to finance this project, but help was scarce. Then in 1959 he had turned his energies toward writing and publishing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. But now he wanted to revive BACK TO GODHEAD, and this time it would not be done singlehandedly. This time he would give the responsibility to his disciples.

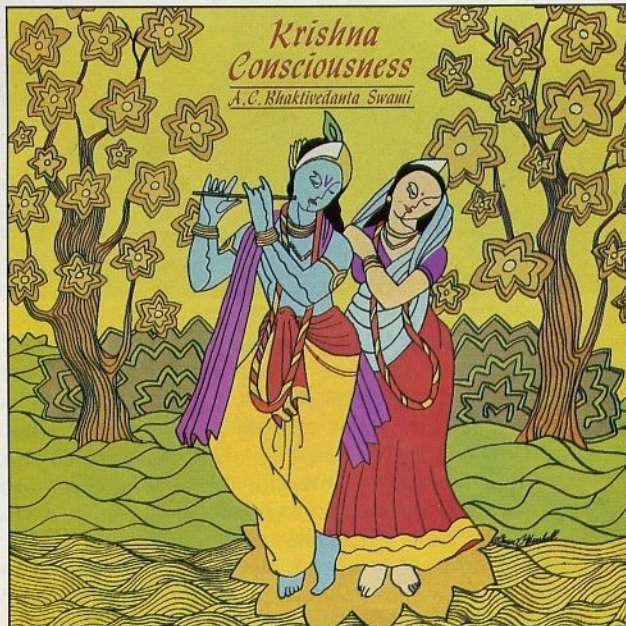
Greg Scharf, now Gargamuni since his

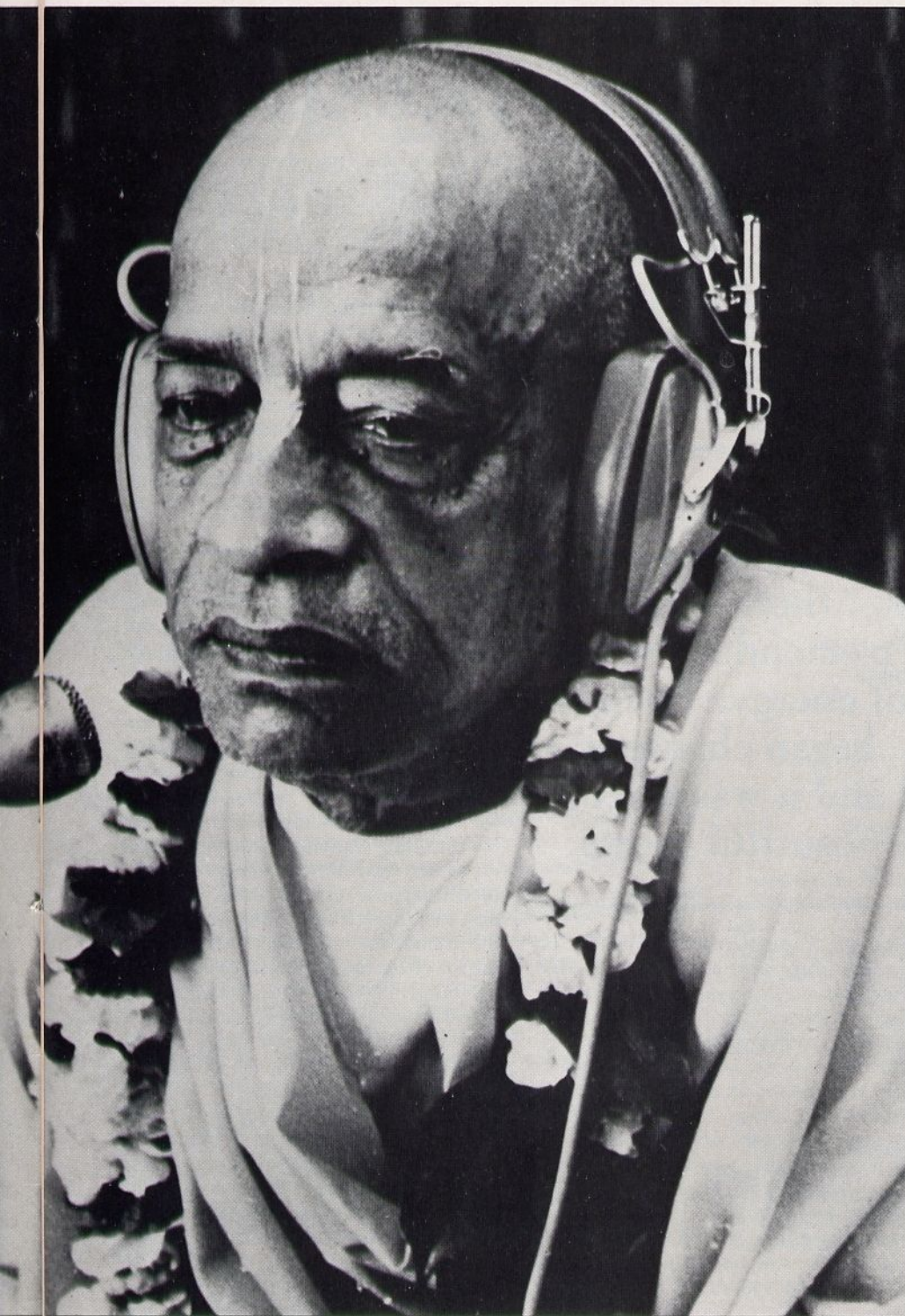
From *Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta*, by Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami. © 1980 by the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust.



Śrīla Prabhupāda led the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa in a 1966 recording entitled "Kṛṣṇa Consciousness" (right).

On a small press his disciples printed the first BACK TO GODHEAD magazine (far right), one hundred copies, and then distributed them by bicycle.





recent initiation, found a press. A country club in Queens was trying to sell its small A.B. Dick press. Prabhupāda was interested, and he rode out to Queens in a borrowed van with Gargamuni and Kīrtanānanda to see the machine. It was old, but in good condition. The manager of the country club wanted \$250 for it. Prabhupāda looked over the machine carefully and talked with the manager, telling him of his spiritual mission. The manager mentioned a second press he had on hand and explained that neither machine was actu-

ally of use to him. So Prabhupāda said he would pay \$250 for both machines; the country club did not really need them, and besides, the manager should help out, since Prabhupāda had an important spiritual message to print for the benefit of all humanity. The man agreed. Prabhupāda had Gargamuni and Kīrtanānanda load both machines into the van, and ISKCON had its printing press.

Śrīla Prabhupāda gave over the editorship of *BACK TO GODHEAD* magazine to Hayagrīva and Rāya Rāma. For so many

years he had taken *BACK TO GODHEAD* as his personal service to his spiritual master, but now he would let young men like Hayagrīva, the college English teacher, and Rāya Rāma, the professional writer, take up *BACK TO GODHEAD* magazine as their service to *their* spiritual master. In a short time, Hayagrīva and Rāya Rāma had compiled the first issue and were ready to print.

It was an off night — no public *kīrtana* and lecture — and Swamiji was up in his room working on his translation of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Downstairs, the printing of the first issue had been going on for hours. Rāya Rāma had typed the stencils, and during the printing he had stood nervously over the machine, examining the printing quality of each page, stroking his beard, and murmuring, “Hm m m m m.” Now it was time to collate and staple each magazine. The stencils had lasted for one hundred copies, and one hundred copies of each of the twenty-eight pages and the front and back cover were now lined up along two of the unvarnished benches Raphael had made that summer. A few devotees collated and stapled the magazine in an assembly line, walking along the stacks of pages, taking one page under another until they reached the end of the bench and gave the assembled stack of pages to Gargamuni, who stood brushing his long hair out of his eyes, stapling each magazine with the stapler and staples Brahmānanda had brought from his Board of Education office. Even Hayagrīva, who usually didn’t volunteer for menial duties, was there, walking down the line, collating.

Suddenly the side door opened, and to their surprise they saw Swamiji looking in at them. Then he opened the door wide and entered the room. He had never come down like this on an off night before. They felt an unexpected flush of emotion and love for him, and they dropped down on their knees, bowing their heads to the floor. “No, no,” he said, raising his hand to stop them as some were still bowing and others already rising to their feet. “Continue what you are doing.” When they stood up and saw him standing with them, they weren’t sure what to do. But obviously he had come down to see them producing his *BACK TO GODHEAD* magazine, so they continued working, silently and efficiently. Prabhupāda walked down the row of pages, his hand and wrist extending gracefully from the folds of his shawl as he touched a stack of pages and then a finished magazine. “ISKCON Press,” he said.

Jagannātha had designed the cover, using a pen-and-ink drawing of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. It was a simple drawing within a pattern of concentric circles. The first

page opened with the same motto Prabhupāda had used for years on his BACK TO GODHEAD: "Godhead is light, nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience." And on the same page, Hayagrīva had not been able to resist giving a quotation from William Blake, approved by Swamiji, which substantiated the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness:

God appears, and God is Light
To those poor souls who dwell in Night,
But does a Human Form display
To those who dwell in realms of Day.

Although the editorial spoke of Blake, Whitman, and Jesus Christ, it stressed:

... it is to teach this science [of devotion to God] that Swami Bhaktivedanta has come to America. His message is simple: the chanting of the Holy Name of God: "Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare . . ."

Following the orders of his spiritual master, His Divine Grace Sri Srimad Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Prabhupad, Swami Bhaktivedanta began the initial publication of *Back to Godhead* in 1944. This bi-monthly, published from 1944 to 1956 in Vrindaban, India, . . . established Swami Bhaktivedanta as the leading Personalist in India. This issue marks the first publication of *Back to Godhead* in the West.

Prabhupāda's first and main instruction to his editors had been that they should produce the magazine *regularly—every month*. Even if they didn't know how to sell the copies or even if they only turned out two pages, they had to continue bearing the standard.

He called Hayagrīva to his room and presented him a complete three-volume set of his *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. On the front page of each volume he had written, "To Sriman Hayagrīva das Brahmācari with my blessings, A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami." Hayagrīva was grateful and mentioned that he had not been able to afford them. "That's all right," Prabhupāda said. "Now you compile this BACK TO GODHEAD. Work sincerely, and make it as big as *Time* magazine."

Prabhupāda wanted all his disciples to take part in it. "Don't be dull," he said. "Write something." He wanted to give his disciples BACK TO GODHEAD for their own preaching. Brahmānanda and Gargamuni took the first issues out that same night on bicycles, riding to every head shop on the Lower East Side, all the way to Fourteenth Street and as far west as the West Village, until they had distributed all one hundred issues. This was an increase in the preaching. Now all his students could take part in the work—typing, editing, writing, assembling, selling. It was *his* preaching, of course, but he wasn't alone any more.

* * *

Alan Kallman was a record producer. He had read the article in *The East Village*

Other about the swami from India and the *mantra* he had brought with him. When he had read the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* on the front page, he had become attracted. The article gave the idea that one could get a tremendous high or ecstasy from chanting. The Swami's Second Avenue address was given in the article, so one night in November, Alan and his wife visited the storefront.

Alan: *There were about thirty pairs of shoes in the back of the room—people in the front and shoes in the back. We took off our shoes and sat down. Everyone was seated and very quiet. Front and center was a chair, and everyone was staring at this chair. Even then we felt a certain energy in*

The Swami came in and sat down, and there was a tremendous surge of energy. Then he began chanting, and it was a very beautiful sound.

the room. No one was saying anything, and everyone was staring at the chair. The next thing was our first sight of the Swami. He came in and sat down on the chair, and there was a tremendous surge of energy. The Swami began chanting, and it was a very beautiful sound. Swamiji had this little drum he was hitting—very penetrating and exciting. One of the devotees was holding up a sign with the chant written on it so everyone could follow. Then the devotees got up and danced in a circle, a special dance with steps to it. The Swami was looking around the room, and he seemed to smile as he looked at you, as if to encourage you to join.

The next day, Alan phoned Prabhupāda to propose that he make a record of the chanting. But it was Brahmānanda who answered the phone, and he gave Alan an appointment with the Swami that evening. So again Alan and his wife went down to the East Village, which to them was the neighborhood where things were happening. If you wanted to have some excitement, you went down to the East Village.

When they entered the Swami's room, he was seated at his typewriter, working. As soon as Alan mentioned his idea about

making a record, Prabhupāda was interested. "Yes," he said, "we *must* record. If it will help us distribute the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, then it is our duty." They scheduled the recording for two weeks later, in December, at the Adelphi Recording Studio near Times Square. Alan's wife was impressed by how enthusiastically the Swami had gotten to the point of making the record: "He had so much energy and ambition in his plans."

It was the night before the recording date. A boy walked into the storefront for the evening *kīrtana* carrying a large, two-headed Indian drum. This was not unusual, as guests often brought drums, flutes, and other instruments, yet this time Swamiji seemed particularly interested. The boy sat down and was preparing to play when Prabhupāda motioned for the boy to bring him the drum.

Brahmānanda: *Swamiji began to play, and his hands were just dancing on the drum. Everyone was stunned that Swamiji knew how to do this. All we had seen was the bongo drum, so I thought it was the proper Indian drum. But when this two-headed drum came out of nowhere and Swamiji started playing it like a master musician, it created an ecstasy a hundred times more than the bongo drum had.*

After the *kīrtana*, Prabhupāda asked the boy if he could borrow the drum for the recording session the next night. The boy at first was reluctant, but the devotees promised to return his drum the next day, so he agreed and said he would bring the drum the next evening. When he left the storefront that night with his drum under his arm, the devotees thought they would never see the boy or his drum again, but the next day, a few hours before Swamiji was to leave for the studio, the boy returned with his drum.

It was a cold December night. The Swami, dressed in his usual saffron *dhoti*, a tweed overcoat, and a pair of gray shoes, got into Rūpānuga's VW van with about fifteen of his followers and their instruments and started out for the recording studio.

Brahmānanda: *We didn't start recording right away, because there was a group ahead of us. So we went out for a walk in Times Square. We were just standing there with Swamiji, seeing all the flashing lights and all the sense gratification, when a woman came up to Swamiji and said, "Oh, hello. Where do you come from?" in a very loud, matronly way. Swamiji said, "I am a monk from India." And she said, "Oh, that's wonderful. Glad to meet you." And then she shook Swamiji's hand and left.*

At the studio, everyone accepted the devotees as a regular music group. One of the rock musicians asked them what the
(continued on page 32)

ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the "cream of the Vedic literatures" of ancient India. Five thousand years ago the great sage Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa composed this *purāṇa*, or history, to explain the essence of spiritual knowledge. The original Sanskrit text is presented here with transliteration, word meanings, translation, and purports by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Second Canto: "The Cosmic Manifestation"

CHAPTER SEVEN

Scheduled Incarnations with Specific Functions

In this installment of our serialized presentation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Lord Brahmā continues to tell his son and disciple Nārada of Lord Kṛṣṇa's incarnations. Among them are the Lord's appearances as a horse, a fish, a tortoise, and a man-lion.

PURPORT

(continued from Text 9)

According to the system of *varṇāśrama-dharma*, the pious and learned *brāhmaṇas* were the natural guardians of society. The *brāhmaṇas*, by their learned labor of love, would instruct the administrator-kings how to rule the country in complete righteousness, and thus the process would go on as a perfect welfare state. The kings or the *kṣatriya* administrators would always consult the council of learned *brāhmaṇas*. They were never autocratic monarchs. The scriptures like *Manu-saṁhitā* and other authorized books of the great sages were guiding principles for ruling the subjects, and there was no need for less intelligent persons to manufacture a code of law in the name of democracy. The less intelligent mass of people have very little knowledge of their own welfare, as a child has very little knowledge of its future well-being. The experienced father guides the innocent child towards the path of progress, and the childlike mass of people need similar guidance. The standard welfare codes are already there in the *Manu-saṁhitā* and other Vedic literatures. The learned *brāhmaṇas* would advise the king in terms of those standard books of knowledge and with reference to the particular situation of time and place. Such *brāhmaṇas* were not paid servants of the king, and therefore they had the strength to dictate to the king on the principles of scriptures. This system continued even up to the time of Mahārāja Candragupta, and the *brāhmaṇa* Cāṇakya was his unpaid prime minister.

Mahārāja Vena did not adhere to this principle of ruling, and he disobeyed the learned *brāhmaṇas*. The broad-minded *brāhmaṇas* were not self-interested, but looked to the interest of complete welfare for all the subjects. They wanted to chastise King Vena for his misconduct and so prayed to the Almighty Lord as well as cursed the king.

Long life, obedience, good reputation, righteousness, prospects of being promoted to higher planets, and blessings of great personalities are all vanquished simply by disobedience to a great soul. One should strictly try to follow in the footsteps of great souls. Mahārāja Vena became a king, undoubtedly due to his past deeds of righteousness, but because he willfully neglected the great souls, he was punished by the loss of all the above-mentioned acquisitions. In the *Vāmana Purāṇa* the history of Mahārāja Vena and his degradation are fully described. When Mahārāja Pṛthu heard about the hellish condition of his father, Vena, who was suffering from leprosy in the family of a *mleccha*, he at once brought the former king to Kurukṣetra for his purification and relieved him of all sufferings.

Mahārāja Pṛthu, the incarnation of God, descended by the prayer of the *brāhmaṇas* to rectify the disorders on earth. He produced all kinds of crops. But, at the same time, he performed the duty of a son who delivers his father from hellish conditions. The word *putra* means one who delivers from hell, called *put*. That is a worthy son.

TEXT 10

नामेरसावृषभ आस सुदेविस्त्रु-
यो वै चचार समदृग् जडयोगचर्याम् ।
यत्पारमहंस्यमृषयः पदमामनन्ति
स्वस्थः प्रशान्तकरणः परिमुक्तसङ्गः॥१०॥

*nābher asāv ṛṣabha āsa sudevi-sūnur
yo vai cacāra sama-dṛg jaḍa-yoga-caryām
yat pāramahaṁsyam ṛṣayah padam āmananti
svasthaḥ praśānta-karaṇaḥ parimukta-saṅgaḥ*

nābheḥ—by Mahārāja Nābhi; *asau*—the Personality of Godhead; *ṛṣabhaḥ*—Rṣabha; *āsa*—became; *sudevi*—Sudevi; *sūnuḥ*—the son of; *yaḥ*—who; *vai*—certainly; *cacāra*—performed; *sama-dṛk*—equibalanced; *jaḍa*—material; *yoga-caryām*—performance of *yoga*; *yaḥ*—which; *pāramahaṁsyam*—the highest stage of perfection; *ṛṣayah*—the learned sages; *padam*—situation; *āmananti*—do accept; *svasthaḥ*—self-reposed; *praśānta*—suspended; *karaṇaḥ*—the material senses; *parimukta*—perfectly liberated; *saṅgaḥ*—material contamination.

TRANSLATION

The Lord appeared as the son of Sudevi, the wife of King Nābhi, and was known as Rṣabhadeva. He performed materialistic *yoga* to equilibrium the mind. This stage is also accepted as the highest perfectional situation of liberation, wherein one is situated in one's self and is completely satisfied.

PURPORT

Out of many types of mystic performances for self-realization, the process of *jaḍa-yoga* is also one accepted by authorities. This *jaḍa-yoga* involves practicing becoming like a dumb stone and not being affected by material reactions. Just as a stone is indifferent to all kinds of attacks and reattacks of external situations, similarly one practices *jaḍa-yoga* by tolerating voluntary infliction of pain upon the material body. Such *yogīs*, out of many self-infliction methods, practice plucking out the hairs on their heads, without shaving and without any instrumental help. But the real purpose of such *jaḍa-yoga* practice is to get free from all material affection and to be completely situated in the self. At the last stage of his life, Emperor Rṣabhadeva wandered like a dumb madman, unaffected by all kinds of bodily mistreatment. Seeing him like a madman, wandering naked with long hair and a long beard, less intelligent children and men in the street used to spit on him and urinate on his body. He used to lie in his own stool and never move. But the stool of his

body was fragrant like the smell of fragrant flowers, and a saintly person would recognize him as a *paramahansa*, one in the highest state of human perfection. One who is not able to make his stool fragrant should not, however, imitate Emperor Rṣabhadeva. The practice of *jaḍa-yoga* was possible for Rṣabhadeva and others on the same level of perfection, but such an uncommon practice is impossible for an ordinary man.

The real purpose of *jaḍa-yoga*, as mentioned here in this verse, is *praśānta-karaṇaḥ*, or subduing the senses. The whole process of *yoga*, under whatever heading it may be, is to control the unbridled material senses and thus prepare oneself for self-realization. In this age specifically, this *jaḍa-yoga* cannot be of any practical value, but on the other hand the practice of *bhakti-yoga* is feasible because it is just suitable for this age. The simple method of hearing from the right source, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, will lead one to the highest perfectional stage of *yoga*. Rṣabhadeva was the son of King Nābhi and the grandson of King Āgnīdhra, and he was the father of King Bharata, after whose name this planet earth was called *Bhārata-varṣa*. Rṣabhadeva's mother was also known as Merudevī, although her name is mentioned here as Sudevī. It is sometimes proposed that Sudevī was another wife of King Nābhi, but since King Rṣabhadeva is mentioned elsewhere as the son of Merudevī, it is clear that Merudevī and Sudevī are the same person under different names.

TEXT 11

सत्रे ममास भगवान् हयशीरषायो
साक्षात् स यज्ञपुरुषस्तपनीयवर्णः ।
छन्दोमयो मखमयोऽखिलदेवतात्मा
वाचो बभूवुरुशतीः श्वसतोऽस्य नस्तः ॥११॥

satre mamāsa bhagavān haya-śiraṣātho
sākṣāt sa yajña-puruṣas tapanīya-varṇaḥ
chandomayo makhamayo 'khila-devatātmā
vāco babhūvuruṣatīḥ śvasato 'sya nastah

satre—in the sacrificial ceremony; *mama*—of mine; *āsa*—appeared; *bhagavān*—the Personality of Godhead; *haya-śiraṣā*—with His horselike head; *atha*—thus; *sākṣāt*—directly; *saḥ*—He; *yajña-puruṣaḥ*—the person who is pleased by performances of sacrifice; *tapanīya*—golden; *varṇaḥ*—hue; *chandaḥ-mayaḥ*—personified Vedic hymns; *makha-mayaḥ*—personified sacrifices; *akhila*—all that be; *devatā-ātmā*—the soul of the demigods; *vācaḥ*—sounds; *babhūvuh*—become audible; *uṣatīḥ*—very pleasing to hear; *śvasataḥ*—while breathing; *asya*—His; *nastah*—through the nostrils.

TRANSLATION

The Lord appeared as the Hayagrīva incarnation in a sacrifice performed by me [Brahmā]. He is the personified sacrifices, and the hue of His body is golden. He is the personified Vedas as well, and the Supersoul of all demigods. When He breathed, all the sweet sounds of the Vedic hymns came out of His nostrils.

PURPORT

The Vedic hymns are generally meant for sacrifices performed by fruitive workers who also want to satisfy the demigods to achieve their fruitive result. But the Lord is the personified sacrifices and personified Vedic hymns. Therefore one who is directly a devotee of the Lord is a person who has automatically both served the purposes of sacrifices and pleased the demigods. The devotees of the Lord may not perform any sacrifice or may not please the demigods as per Vedic injunctions, and still the devotees are on a higher level than the fruitive workers or the worshipers of different demigods.

TEXT 12

मत्स्यो युगान्तसमये मनुनोपलब्धः
क्षोणीमयो निखिलजीवनिक्कायकेतः ।

विंसितानुरुभये सलिले मुखान्मे
आदाय तत्र विजहार ह वेदमार्गान् ॥१२॥

matsyo yugānta-samaye manunopalabdhaḥ
kṣoṇīmayo nikhila-jīva-nikāya-ketaḥ
visraṁsitān uru-bhaye salile mukhān me
ādāya tatra vijahāra ha veda-mārgān

matsyaḥ—incarnation of the fish; *yuga-anta*—at the end of the millennium; *samaye*—at the time of; *manunā*—the would-be Vaivasvata Manu; *upalabdhaḥ*—seen; *kṣoṇīmayaḥ*—up to the earthly planets; *nikhila*—all; *jīva*—living entities; *nikāya-ketaḥ*—shelter for; *visraṁsitān*—emanating from; *uru*—great; *bhaye*—out of fear; *salile*—in the water; *mukhāt*—from the mouth; *me*—mine; *ādāya*—having taken to; *tatra*—there; *vijahāra*—enjoyed; *ha*—certainly; *veda-mārgān*—all the Vedas.

TRANSLATION

At the end of the millennium, the would-be Vaivasvata Manu, of the name Satyavrata, would see that the Lord in the fish incarnation is the shelter of all kinds of living entities, up to those in the earthly planets. Because of my fear of the vast water at the end of the millennium, the Vedas come out of my [Brahmā's] mouth, and the Lord enjoys those vast waters and protects the Vedas.

PURPORT

During one day of Brahmā there are fourteen Manus, and at the end of each Manu there is devastation up to the earthly planets, and the vast water is fearful even to Brahmā. So in the beginning of the would-be Vaivasvata Manu, such devastation would be seen by him. There would be many other incidents also, such as the killing of the famous Śaṅkhāsura. This foretelling is by the past experience of Brahmāji, who knew that in that fearful devastating scene, the Vedas would come out of his mouth, but the Lord in His fish incarnation not only would save all living entities, namely the demigods, animals, men and great sages, but would also save the Vedas.

TEXT 13

क्षीरोदधामरदानवयूथपाना-
मुन्मथ्रताममृतलब्धय आदिदेवः ।
पृष्ठेन कच्छपवपुर्विदधार गोत्रं
निद्राक्षणोऽद्रिपरिवर्तकषाणकण्डूः ॥१३॥

kṣīrodadhāv amara-dānava-yūthapānām
unmathnatām amṛta-labdhyā ādi-devaḥ
prṣṭhena kacchapa-vapur vidadhāra gotraṁ
nīdrākṣaṇo 'dri-parivarta-kaṣāṇa-kaṇḍūḥ

kṣīra—milk; *udadhau*—in the ocean of; *amara*—the demigods; *dānava*—the demons; *yūtha-pānām*—of the leaders of both hosts; *unmathnatām*—while churning; *amṛta*—nectar; *labdhaya*—for gaining; *ādi-devaḥ*—the primeval Lord; *prṣṭhena*—by the backbone; *kacchapa*—tortoise; *vapuḥ*—body; *vidadhāra*—assumed; *gotraṁ*—the Mandara Hill; *nīdrākṣaṇaḥ*—while partly sleeping; *adri-parivarta*—rolling the hill; *kaṣāṇa*—scratching; *kaṇḍūḥ*—itching.

TRANSLATION

The primeval Lord then assumed the tortoise incarnation in order to serve as a resting place [pivot] for the Mandara Mountain, which was acting as a churning rod. The demigods and demons were churning the ocean of milk with the Mandara Mountain in order to extract nectar. The mountain moved back and forth, scratching the back of Lord Tortoise, who, while partially sleeping, was experiencing an itching sensation.

PURPORT

Although it is not in our experience, there is a milk ocean within this universe. Even the modern scientist accepts that there are hundreds and hundreds of thousands of planets hovering over our heads, and each of them has different kinds of climatic conditions. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* gives much information which may not tally with our present experience. But as far as Indian sages are concerned, knowledge is received from the Vedic literatures, and the authorities accept without any hesitation that we should look through the pages of authentic books of knowledge (*śāstra-kaṣṭurvat*). So we cannot deny the existence of the ocean of milk as stated in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* unless and until we have experimentally seen all the planets hovering in space. Since such an experiment is not possible, naturally we have to accept the statement of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as it is because it is so accepted by spiritual leaders like Śrīdhara Svāmī, Jīva Gosvāmī, Viśvanātha Cakravartī and others. The Vedic process is to follow in the footsteps of great authorities, and that is the only process for knowing that which is beyond our imagination.

The primeval Lord, being all-powerful, can do whatever He likes, and therefore His assuming the incarnation of a tortoise or a fish for serving a particular purpose is not at all astonishing. Therefore we should not have any hesitation whatsoever in accepting the statements of the authentic scriptures like *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

The gigantic work of churning the milk ocean by the combined effort of the demigods and the demons required a gigantic resting ground or pivot for the gigantic Mandara Hill. Thus to help the attempt of the demigods the primeval Lord assumed the incarnation of a gigantic tortoise, swimming in the ocean of milk. At the same time, the mountain scratched His backbone as He was partially sleeping and thus relieved His itching sensation.

TEXT 14

त्रैपिष्टपोरुभयहा स नृसिंहरूपं
कृत्वा भ्रमद्भ्रुकुटिदंष्ट्रकरालवक्त्रम् ।
दैत्येन्द्रमाशु गदयाभिपतन्तमारा-
दूरो निपात्य विददार नखैः स्फुरन्तम् ॥१४॥

traī-piṣṭaporu-bhaya-hā sa nṛsiṃha-rūpaṃ
kṛtvā bhramad-bhrukuṭi-daṃṣṭra-karāla-vaktram
daityendram āśu gadayābhipatantam ārād
ūrau nipātya vidādāra nakhaiḥ sphurantam

traī-piṣṭapa—the demigods; *uru-bhaya-hā*—one who vanquishes great fears; *saḥ*—He (the Personality of Godhead); *nṛsiṃha-rūpaṃ*—assuming the incarnation Nṛsiṃha; *kṛtvā*—doing so; *bhramat*—by rolling; *bhru-kuṭi*—eyebrows; *daṃṣṭra*—teeth; *karāla*—greatly fearful; *vaktram*—mouth; *daitya-indram*—the king of the demons; *āśu*—immediately; *gadayā*—with club in hand; *abhipatantam*—while falling down; *ārād*—nearby; *ūrau*—on the thighs; *nipātya*—placing on; *vidādāra*—pierced; *nakhaiḥ*—by the nails; *sphurantam*—while challenging.

TRANSLATION

The Personality of Godhead assumed the incarnation of Nṛsiṃhadeva in order to vanquish the great fears of the demigods. He killed the king of the demons [Hiraṇyakaśipu], who challenged the Lord with a club in his hand, by placing the demon on His thighs and piercing him with His nails, rolling His eyebrows in anger and showing His fearful teeth and mouth.

PURPORT

The history of Hiraṇyakaśipu and his great devotee-son Prahlāda Mahārāja is narrated in the Seventh Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Hiraṇyakaśipu became very powerful by material achievements and

thought himself to be immortal by the grace of Brahmājī. Brahmājī declined to award him the benediction of immortality because he himself is not an immortal being. But Hiraṇyakaśipu derived Brahmājī's benediction in a roundabout way, almost equal to becoming an immortal being. Hiraṇyakaśipu was sure that he would not be killed by any man or demigod or by any kind of known weapon, nor would he die in day or night. The Lord, however, assumed the incarnation of half-man and half-lion, which was beyond the imagination of a materialistic demon like Hiraṇyakaśipu, and thus, keeping pace with the benediction of Brahmājī, the Lord killed him. He killed him on His lap, so that he was killed neither on the land nor on the water nor in the sky. The demon was pierced by Nṛsiṃha's nails, which were beyond the human weapons imaginable by Hiraṇyakaśipu. The literal meaning of Hiraṇyakaśipu is one who is after gold and soft bedding, the ultimate aim of all materialistic men. Such demonic men, who have no relationship with God, gradually become puffed up by material acquisitions and begin to challenge the authority of the Supreme Lord and torture those who are devotees of the Lord. Prahlāda Mahārāja happened to be the son of Hiraṇyakaśipu, and because the boy was a great devotee, his father tortured him to the best of his ability. In this extreme situation, the Lord assumed the incarnation of Nṛsiṃhadeva, and just to finish the enemy of the demigods, the Lord killed Hiraṇyakaśipu in a manner beyond the demon's imagination. Materialistic plans of godless demons are always frustrated by the all-powerful Lord.

TEXT 15

अन्तःसरस्युरुबलेन पदे गृहीतो
ग्राहेण यूयपतिरम्बुजहस्त आर्तः ।
आहेदमादिपुरुषाखिललोकनाथ
तीर्थश्रवः श्रवणमङ्गलनामधेय ॥१५॥

antaḥ-sarasy uru-balena pade grhīto
grāheṇa yūtha-patir ambuja-hasta ārtah
āhedam ādi-puruṣākhila-loka-nātha
tīrtha-śravaḥ śravaṇa-maṅgala-nāmadheya

antaḥ-sarasi—within the river; *uru-balena*—by superior strength; *pade*—leg; *grhītaḥ*—being taken up; *grāheṇa*—by the crocodile; *yūtha-patiḥ*—of the leader of the elephants; *ambuja-hastah*—with a lotus flower in the hand; *ārtah*—greatly aggrieved; *āha*—addressed; *idam*—like this; *ādi-puruṣa*—the original enjoyer; *akhila-loka-nātha*—the Lord of the universe; *tīrtha-śravaḥ*—as famous as a place of pilgrimage; *śravaṇa-maṅgala*—all good simply by hearing the name; *nāma-dheya*—whose holy name is worth chanting.

TRANSLATION

The leader of the elephants, whose leg was attacked in a river by a crocodile of superior strength, was much aggrieved. Taking a lotus flower in his trunk, he addressed the Lord, saying, "O original enjoyer, Lord of the universe! O deliverer, as famous as a place of pilgrimage! All are purified simply by hearing Your holy name, which is worthy to be chanted."

PURPORT

The history of delivering the leader of the elephants, whose leg was attacked in the river by the superior strength of a crocodile, is described in the Eighth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Since the Lord is absolute knowledge, there is no difference between His holy name and the Personality of Godhead. The leader of the elephants was much distressed when he was attacked by the crocodile. Although the elephant is always stronger than the crocodile, the latter is stronger than the elephant when it is in the water. And because the elephant was a great devotee of the Lord in his previous birth, he was able to chant the holy name of the Lord by dint of his past good deeds. Every living entity is always distressed in this material world because this place is such that at every step

one has to meet with some kind of distress. But one who is supported by his past good deeds engages himself in the devotional service of the Lord, as confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.16). Those who are supported by impious acts cannot be engaged in the devotional service of the Lord, even though they are distressed. This is also confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.15). The Personality of Godhead Hari appeared at once on the back of His eternal bearer, Garuḍa, and delivered the elephant.

The elephant was conscious of his relation with the Supreme Lord. He addressed the Lord as *ādi-puruṣa*, or the original enjoyer. Both the Lord and the living beings are conscious and are therefore enjoyers, but the Lord is the original enjoyer because He is the creator of everything. In a family, both the father and his sons are undoubtedly enjoyers but the father is the original enjoyer, and the sons are subsequent enjoyers. A pure devotee knows well that everything in the universe is the property of the Lord and that a living entity can enjoy a thing as ordained by the Lord. A living being cannot even touch a thing which is not allotted to him. This idea of the original enjoyer is explained very nicely in the *Īsopaniṣad*. One who knows this difference between the Lord and himself never accepts anything without first offering it to the Lord.

The elephant addressed the Lord as *akhila-loka-nātha*, or the Lord of the universe, who is therefore the Lord of the elephant also. The elephant, being a pure devotee of the Lord, specifically deserved to be saved from the attack of the crocodile, and because it is a promise of the Lord that His devotee will never be vanquished, it was quite befitting that the elephant called upon the Lord to protect him, and the merciful Lord also at once responded. The Lord is the protector of everyone, but He is the first protector of one who acknowledges the superiority of the Lord instead of being so falsely proud as to deny the superiority of the Lord or to claim to be equal to Him. He is ever superior. A pure devotee of the Lord knows this difference between the Lord and himself. Therefore a pure devotee is given first preference because of his full dependence, whereas the person who denies the existence of the Lord and declares himself the Lord is called *asura*, and as such he is given protection by the strength of limited power subject to the sanction of the Lord. Since the Lord is superior to everyone, His perfection is also superior. No one can imagine it.

The elephant addressed the Lord as *tīrtha-śravaḥ*, or “as famous as a place of pilgrimage.” People go to places of pilgrimage in order to be delivered from the reactions of unknown sinful acts. But one can be freed from all sinful reactions simply by remembering His holy name. The Lord is therefore as good as the holy places of pilgrimage. One can be free from all sinful reactions after reaching a place of pilgrimage, but one can have the same benefit at home or at any place simply by chanting the holy name of the Lord. For a pure devotee, there is no need to go to the holy place of pilgrimage. He can be delivered from all sinful acts simply by remembering the Lord in earnestness. A pure devotee of the Lord never commits any sinful acts, but because the whole world is full of the sinful atmosphere, even a pure devotee may commit a sin unconsciously, as a matter of course. One who commits sinful acts consciously cannot be worthy of being a devotee of the Lord, but a pure devotee who unconsciously does something sinful is certainly delivered by the Lord because a pure devotee remembers the Lord always.

The Lord's holy name is called *śravaṇa-maṅgala*. This means that one receives everything auspicious simply by hearing the holy name. In another place in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, His holy name is described as *punya-śravaṇa-kīrtana*. It is a pious act simply to chant and hear all about the Lord. The Lord descends on this earth and acts like others in connection with the activities of the world just to create subject matters for hearing about Him; otherwise the Lord has nothing to do in this world, nor has He any obligation to do anything. He comes out of His own causeless mercy and acts as He desires, the *Vedas* and *Purāṇas* are full of descriptions of His different activities so that people in general may naturally be eager to hear and read something about His activities. Generally, however, the modern fictions and novels of the world occupy

a greater part of people's valuable time. Such literatures cannot do good to anyone; on the contrary, they agitate the young mind unnecessarily and increase the modes of passion and ignorance, leading to increasing bondage to the material conditions. The same aptitude for hearing and reading is better utilized in hearing and reading of the Lord's activities. This will give one all-around benefit.

It is concluded, therefore, that the holy name of the Lord and topics in relation with Him are always worth hearing, and therefore He is called here in this verse *nāma-dheya*, or one whose holy name is worth chanting.

TEXT 16

श्रुत्वा हरिस्तमरणार्थिनमप्रमेय-
श्चक्रायुधः पतगराजशुजाधिरूढः ।
चक्रेण नक्रवदनं विनिपाद्य तस्मा-
द्धस्ते प्रगृह्य भगवान्कृपयोजहार ॥१६॥

*śrutvā haris tam araṇārthinam aprameyaś
cakrāyudhaḥ patagarāja-bhujādhirūḍhaḥ
cakreṇa nakra-vadanam vinipātya tasmād
dhaste pragrhyā bhagavān kṛpayojhāra*

śrutvā—by hearing; *hariḥ*—the Personality of Godhead; *tam*—him; *araṇa-arthinam*—one who is in need of help; *aprameyaś*—the unlimitedly powerful Lord; *akra*—wheel; *āyudhaḥ*—equipped with His weapon; *pataga-rāja*—the king of the birds (Garuḍa); *bhujā-adhirūḍhaḥ*—being seated on the wings of; *cakreṇa*—by the wheel; *nakra-vadanam*—the mouth of the crocodile; *vinipātya*—cutting in two; *tasmāt*—from the mouth of the crocodile; *haste*—in the hands; *pragrhyā*—taking hold of the trunk; *bhagavān*—the Personality of Godhead; *kṛpayā*—out of causeless mercy; *ujhāra*—delivered him.

TRANSLATION

The Personality of Godhead, after hearing the elephant's plea, felt that the elephant needed His immediate help, for he was in great distress. Thus at once the Lord appeared there on the wings of the king of birds, Garuḍa, fully equipped with His weapon, the wheel [akra]. With the wheel He cut to pieces the mouth of the crocodile to save the elephant, and He delivered the elephant by lifting him by his trunk.

PURPORT

The Lord resides in His Vaikuṅṭha planet. No one can estimate how far away this planet is situated. It is said, however, that anyone trying to reach that planet by airships or by mindships, traveling for millions of years, will find it still unknown. Modern scientists have invented airships which are material, and the *yogīs* make a still finer material attempt to travel by mindships. The *yogīs* can reach any distant place very quickly with the help of mindships. But neither the airship nor the mindship has access to the kingdom of God in the Vaikuṅṭhaloka, situated far beyond the material sky. Since this is the situation, how was it possible for the prayers of the elephant to be heard from such an unlimitedly distant place, and how could the Lord at once appear on the spot? These things cannot be calculated by human imagination. All this was possible by the unlimited power of the Lord, and therefore the Lord is described here as *aprameya*, for not even the best human brain can estimate His powers and potencies by mathematical calculation. The Lord can hear from such a distant place, He can eat from there, and He can appear simultaneously in all places at a moment's notice. Such is the omnipotency of the Lord.

(continued in next issue)



Every Town and Village

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

ISKCON Cinema Releases Documentary Film



Yadubara dāsa and his wife, Viśākhā-devī dāsī, edit the new film in their Philadelphia workshop.

New York—ISKCON Cinema, the motion picture division of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, has released a new 16mm film entitled *The World of Hare Kṛṣṇa*. The 33-minute color documentary was conceived and produced by Yadubara dāsa and his wife, Viśākhā-devī dāsī, who spent two years traveling the world to shoot the footage and another

six months to edit the film and the script.

The World of Hare Kṛṣṇa opens with a short historical account of how Lord Kṛṣṇa's teachings have come down to us through the ages and how His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda introduced these teachings to Westerners through his Kṛṣṇa consciousness Society.

Then the film takes us on a world tour of

the activities of the devotees today: publishing, illustrating, and distributing Kṛṣṇa conscious literature in Paris; congregationally chanting the names of God in London; portraying Kṛṣṇa's pastimes through art, dance, music, drama, and sculpture in Bombay; cooking and distributing *prasādam* (food offered to Kṛṣṇa) in Fiji; learning Sanskrit in the *gurukula* school in Los Angeles; and farming in the Spanish countryside. We also see some special projects, like the temple-on-wheels in England, the 54-foot sailboat-temple in Hawaii, and Prabhupāda's Palace in the hills of West Virginia.

For anyone who's wondering, "What do those Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees believe in? What do they do? How did it all start?" *The World of Hare Kṛṣṇa* offers some illuminating answers.

Movement Expands in Northeastern U.S.

New York—While hundreds of regulars from the old Hare Kṛṣṇa temple on Fifty-fifth Street will still enjoy weekly programs at the new center three blocks away, thousands more outside midtown finally have temples to call their own.

Proceeds from the sale of the old Fifty-fifth Street building enabled the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement to establish four new centers: a sixty-five-acre farm in upstate New York, a three-acre retreat in northern New Jersey, a meeting hall in the New York borough of Queens, and a three-story cultural center and restaurant on Seventh Avenue in Manhattan.

"Each center has its particular appeal," says Lakṣmī-Nṛsiṃha dāsa, regional secretary for the movement in the New York metropolitan area. "The farm upstate gives an excellent setting for our *gurukula* children's school, and it's a place where we can have our own self-sufficient community. In Queens we're right in the middle of fifty thousand Indian people who've been wanting us there for years. In New Jersey we have a peaceful spiritual retreat where interested people can come stay with us for a weekend or however long they'd like. And we still have everything we need in Manhattan, but in an even better location."

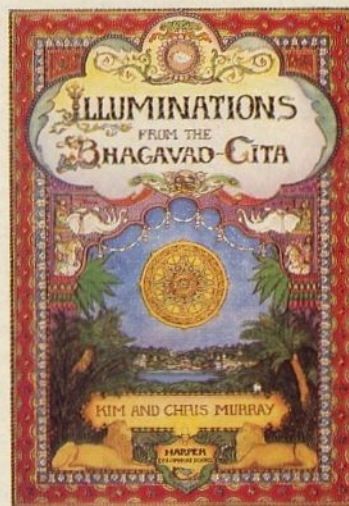
Amidst these changes, the movement has also expanded its center in Freeport, Long Island, a New York suburb.

"Illuminations from the Bhagavad-gītā" Published

New York—Harper and Row recently published *Illuminations from the Bhagavad-gītā*, a collaborative effort by Kim and Chris Murray of Washington, D.C. Kim Murray had worked diligently for five years on the book's forty color plates and fifty black-and-white drawings, which illustrate verses her husband Chris selected from *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

Reviewing the book, the *Washington Star* called the paintings "extraordinary . . . an accretion of thousands of details portraying the paradisaical landscape of transcendent knowledge . . . remarkable additions to the art of book illustration: sweet, innocent, beautiful."

Harper and Row printed 30,000 copies, of which more than 10,000 have been sold in less than two months.



ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

On Technology and Unemployment

This exchange between His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and one of his disciples took place some seven years ago in Geneva.

Devotee: In a recent speech a politician in India said that eighty percent of the Indian people live in rural villages. His proposal was to increase the technology on the farms. Instead of people having to harvest the wheat by hand, they would have motorized harvesters, and instead of having to use bullocks to pull the plow, they'd use a tractor.

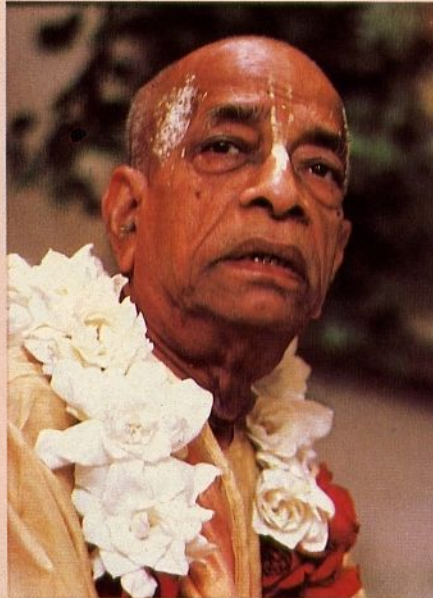
Śrīla Prabhupāda: In India many men are already unemployed, so to introduce more machinery there is a not a very good proposal. One hundred men's work can be done by one man working a machine. But why should there be so many men unemployed? Why not engage one hundred men instead of engaging one? Here in the West, also, there is much unemployment. Because in your Western countries everything is done by machine, you are creating many hippies, frustrated young people with nothing to do. That is another kind of unemployment. So in many cases machines create unemployment.

Everyone should be employed; otherwise there will be trouble. "An idle brain is a devil's workshop." When there are so many people without any engagement, why should we introduce machinery to create more unemployment? The best policy is that nobody should be unemployed; everyone should be busy.

Devotee: But someone might argue, "The machine is freeing us from so much time-consuming labor."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Free for what? For drinking and doing all kinds of nonsense. What is the meaning of this freedom? If you make people free to cultivate Kṛṣṇa consciousness, that is another thing. Of course, when someone comes to our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, he should also be fully engaged. This movement is not meant for eating and sleeping, but for working for Kṛṣṇa. So whether here in Kṛṣṇa consciousness or there in the outer society, the policy should be that everyone should be employed and busy. Then there will be a good civilization.

In the Vedic civilization, it was the duty of the head of society to see that everyone was working, either as a *brāhmaṇa* [an intellectual or teacher], a *kṣatriya* [a military or political leader], a *vaiśya* [a farmer or merchant], or a *śūdra* [a laborer]. Every-



one must work; then there will be peace. At the present moment we can see that on account of so much technology, there are unemployment and many lazy fellows. The hippies are lazy, that's all. They don't want to do anything.

Devotee: Another argument might be that with technology we can work so much better, so much more efficiently, so the productivity of those who *do* work goes way up.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Better that more men be employed doing the work less efficiently. In *Bhagavad-gītā* [18.48] Kṛṣṇa says,

*saha-jaṁ karma kaunteya
sa-doṣam api na tyajet
sarvārambhā hi doṣeṇa
dhūmenāgnir ivāvṛtāḥ*

"Every endeavor is covered by some sort of fault, just as fire is covered by smoke. Therefore one should not give up the work which is born of his nature, O son of Kuntī, even if such work is full of fault." And a Hindi proverb says, "*Bekārī se begārī acchī hai.*" *Bekārī* means "without employment." And *begārī* means "to work without salary." In India, we have seen many villagers come and request a shopkeeper, or any gentleman, "Please give me some work. I don't want a salary. If you like, you can give me something to eat. Otherwise, I don't even want that." So, what gentleman, if you work at his place, will not give you something to eat? Immediately the worker gets some occupation, along with food and shelter. Then, when he's working, if the gentleman sees that he's working

very nicely, he will say, "All right, take some salary." Therefore it is better to work without any remuneration than to remain lazy, without any work. That is a very dangerous position. But in the modern civilization, on account of too many machines, there are so many unemployed people, and so many lazies also. It is not good.

Devotee: Most people would say these ideas are very old-fashioned. They'd rather have their technology, even if it creates a high unemployment rate, because they see it as a means of freedom from drudgery, and also as a means of freedom to enjoy television, movies, automobiles—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Technology is not freedom. Rather, it is a free way to hell. It is not freedom. Everyone should be engaged in work according to his ability. If you have good intelligence, you may do the work of a *brāhmaṇa*—studying scriptures and writing books, giving knowledge to others. That is the *brāhmaṇa*'s work. You don't have to bother about your subsistence. The society will supply it. In the Vedic civilization *brāhmaṇas* did not work for a salary. They were busy studying the Vedic literature and teaching others, and the society gave them food.

As for the *kṣatriyas*, they must give protection to the other members of society. There will be danger, there will be attack, and the *kṣatriyas* should protect the people. For that purpose, they may levy taxes. Then, those who are less intelligent than the *kṣatriyas* are the *vaiśyas*, the mercantile community, who engage in producing food and giving protection to the cows. These things are required. And finally there are the *śūdras*, who help the three higher classes.

This is the natural division of society, and it is very good, because it was created by Kṛṣṇa Himself (*cātur-varṇyam mayā sṛṣṭam*). Everyone is employed. The intelligent class is employed, the martial class is employed, the mercantile class is employed, and the rest, the *śūdras*, are also employed. There is no need to form political parties and fight. In Vedic times there was no such thing. The king was the supervisor who saw that everyone was engaged in his respective duty. So people had no time to form false political parties and make agitation and fight one another. There was no such chance.

But the beginning of everything is to understand, "I am not this body," and this is stressed again and again by Kṛṣṇa in *Bhagavad-gītā*.

CHANTING

(continued from page 6)

immemorial. But the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra is especially recommended for this age. This is stated in many Vedic literatures, such as the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāna*, the *Kalīsantarāṇa Upaniṣad*, the *Agni Purāna*, and so forth.

And apart from the statements of the Vedic literature, Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, in the form of Lord Caitanya, preached that everyone should chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. And many people followed Him. When a scientist discovers something, it becomes public property; people may take advantage of it. Similarly, if a mantra has potency, all people should be able to take advantage of it. Why should it remain secret? Why should it be for only a particular person?

John Lennon: If all mantras are just the name of God, then whether it's a secret mantra or an open mantra it's all the name of God. So it doesn't really make much difference, does it, which one you sing?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: It does make a difference. For instance, in a drug shop they sell all types of medicines for curing different diseases. But still you have to get a doctor's prescription in order to get a particular type of medicine. Otherwise, the druggist won't supply you. You might go to the drug shop and say, "I'm diseased. Please give me any medicine you have." But the druggist will ask you, "Where is your prescription?"

Similarly, in this age of Kali [the Age of Quarrel and Hypocrisy] the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra is prescribed in the *śāstras*, or scriptures. And the great teacher Caitanya Mahāprabhu, whom we consider to be an incarnation of God, also prescribed it. Therefore, our principle is that everyone should follow the prescription of the great authorities. *Mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ*. We should follow in the footsteps of the great authorities. That is our business. The *Mahābhārata* [*Vana-parva*, 313.117] states,

tarko 'pratiṣṭhaḥ śrutayo vibhinnā
nāsāv ṛṣir yasya mataḥ na bhinnam
dharmasya tattvaṁ nihitaṁ guhāyām
mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ

This Vedic mantra says that if you simply try to argue and approach the Absolute Truth, it is very difficult. By argument and reason it is very difficult, because our arguments and reason are limited. And our senses are imperfect. There are many confusing varieties of scriptures, and every philosopher has a different opinion, and unless a philosopher defeats other philosophers, he cannot become recognized as a big philosopher. One theory replaces another, and therefore philosophical specu-

lation will not help us arrive at the Absolute Truth. The Absolute Truth is very secret. So how can one achieve such a secret thing? You simply follow the great personalities who have already achieved success.

So our Kṛṣṇa consciousness philosophical method is to follow the great personalities, such as Lord Kṛṣṇa, Lord Caitanya, and the great spiritual masters in disciplic succession. Take shelter of bona fide authorities and follow them—that is recommended in the *Vedas*. That will take you to the ultimate goal.

In *Bhagavad-gītā* [4.1], Lord Kṛṣṇa also recommends this process. The Lord says,

**Speculation
will not help you
arrive at the
Absolute Truth.
Simply follow the
great personalities
who have already
achieved success.**

"I instructed this imperishable science of *yoga* to the sun-god, Vivasvān, and Vivasvān instructed it to Manu, the father of mankind, and Manu in turn instructed it to Ikṣvāku." Kṛṣṇa is saying, My dear Arjuna, don't think that this science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is something new. No. It is eternal, and I first spoke it to the sun-god, Vivasvān, and Vivasvān spoke it to his son Manu, and Manu also transferred this knowledge to his son, King Ikṣvāku.

The Lord further explains,

evaṁ paramparā-prāptam
imaṁ rājarṣayo viduḥ
sa kāleneha mahatā
yogo naṣṭaḥ parantapa

"This supreme science was thus received through the chain of disciplic succession, and the saintly kings understood it in that way. But in course of time, the succession was broken, and therefore the science as it is appears to be lost." [Bg. 4.2]

Evaṁ paramparā-prāptam: In this way, by disciplic succession, the knowledge is coming down. *Sa kāleneha mahatā yogo naṣṭaḥ parantapa:* But in the course of time the succession was broken. Therefore Kṛṣṇa says, "I am speaking it to you again."

So a mantra should be received from the disciplic succession. The Vedic injunction is *sampradāya-vihīnā ye mantrās te niṣphalā matāḥ*. If your mantra does not come through the disciplic succession, it will not be effective. *Mantrās te niṣphalāḥ. Niṣphalāḥ* means that it will not produce the desired result. So the mantra must be received through the proper channel, or it will not act. A mantra cannot be manufactured. It must come from the original Supreme Absolute, coming down through the channel of disciplic succession. It has to be received in that way, and only then will it act.

According to our Kṛṣṇa consciousness philosophy, the mantra is coming down through four channels of disciplic succession: one through Lord Śiva, one through the goddess Lakṣmī, one through Lord Brahmā, and one through the four Kumāras. The same thing comes down through different channels. These are called the four *sampradāyas*, or disciplic successions.

So, one has to take his mantra from one of these four *sampradāyas*; then only is that mantra active. If we receive the mantra in that way, it will be effective. And if one does not receive his mantra through one of these *sampradāya* channels, then it will not act; it will not give fruit.

Yoko Ono: If the mantra itself has such power, does it matter where you receive it, where you take it?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, it does matter. For instance, milk is nutritious. That's a fact; everyone knows. But if milk is touched by the lips of a serpent, it is no longer nutritious. It becomes poisonous.

Yoko Ono: Well, milk is material.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, it is material. But since you are trying to understand spiritual topics through your material senses, we have to give material examples.

Yoko Ono: Well, no, I don't think you have to give me the material sense. I mean, the mantra is not material. It should be something spiritual; therefore, I don't think anybody should be able to spoil it. I wonder if anybody can actually spoil something that isn't material.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But if you don't receive the mantra through the proper channel, it may not really be spiritual.

John Lennon: How would you know, anyway? How are you able to tell? I mean, for any of your disciples or us or anybody else who goes to any spiritual master—how are we to tell if he's for real or not?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: You shouldn't go to just any spiritual master.

John Lennon: Yes, we should go to a true master. But how are we to tell one from the other?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: It is not that you can go

to just any spiritual master. He must be a member of a recognized *sampradāya*, a particular line of disciplic succession.

John Lennon: But what if one of these masters who's not in the line says exactly the same thing as one who is? What if he says his *mantra* is coming from the *Vedas*, and he seems to speak with as much authority as you? He could probably be right. It's confusing—like having too many fruits on a plate.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: If the *mantra* is actually coming through a bona fide disciplic succession, then it will have potency.

John Lennon: But the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* is the best one?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes.

Yoko Ono: Well, if Hare Kṛṣṇa is the best one, why should we bother to say anything else other than Hare Kṛṣṇa?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: It's true, you don't have to bother with anything else. We say that the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* is sufficient for one's perfection, for liberation.

George Harrison: Isn't it like flowers? Somebody may prefer roses, and somebody may like carnations better. Isn't it really a matter for the individual devotee to decide? One person may find that Hare Kṛṣṇa is more beneficial to his spiritual progress, and yet another person may find that some other *mantra* may be more beneficial for himself. Isn't it just a matter of taste, like choosing a flower? They're all flowers, but some people may like one better than another.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But still there is a distinction. A fragrant rose is considered better than a flower without any scent.

Yoko Ono: In that case, I can't—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Let's try to understand this flower example.

Yoko Ono: O.K.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: You may be attracted by one flower, and I may be attracted by another flower. But among the flowers a distinction can be made. There are many flowers that have no fragrance and many that have fragrance.

Yoko Ono: Is that flower that has fragrance better?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Therefore, your attraction for a particular flower is not the solution to the question of which is actually better. In the same way, personal attraction is not the solution to choosing the best spiritual process. In *Bhagavad-gītā* [4.11], Lord Kṛṣṇa says, "As one surrenders unto Me, I reward him accordingly." Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Absolute. If someone wants to enjoy a particular relationship with Him, Kṛṣṇa presents Himself in that way. It's just like the flower example. You may want a yellow flower, and that flower may not have any fragrance. That flower is there; it's for you, that's all. But

if someone wants a rose, Kṛṣṇa gives him a rose. You both get the flower of your choice, but when you make a comparative study of which is better, the rose will be considered better.

So Kṛṣṇa reveals Himself in different ways to different types of seekers. Realization of Kṛṣṇa, the Absolute Truth, is of three varieties: Brahman, Paramātmā, and Bhagavān. Brahman, Paramātmā, and Bhagavān are simply three different features of the Absolute Truth. The *jñānis*, or empiric philosophers, reach the impersonal Brahman. The *yogīs* focus on the Supersoul, Paramātmā. And the devotees aim at Bhagavān, or Kṛṣṇa, the Su-

**The Absolute
is so great
and unlimited that
it is not possible
for us to know Him
completely.
But we should try
as far as possible.**

preme Personality of Godhead. But Kṛṣṇa and the Supersoul and the impersonal Brahman are not different. They are all like the light, which is opposed to darkness. But even in light there are varieties.

In the *Vedas*, the three features of the Absolute Truth are explained by the example of sunlight, sun globe, and sun-god. In the sunshine there is light, and in the sun globe there is also light. Within the sun globe dwells the predominating deity of the sun planet, and he must also be full of light. Otherwise, where does all the sun's light come from? Brahman, God's impersonal aspect, is compared to the sun's rays, the Supersoul is like the sun globe, and Kṛṣṇa is like the personality of the sun-god. But taken together they are all the sun.

Nevertheless, distinctions remain. For instance, just because the sunshine comes through the window into your room, you cannot say that the sun itself has come. That would be a mistake. The sun is many millions of miles away. In a sense, the sun is present in your room, but it is a question of degree. So the degrees of spiritual realization in Brahman, Paramātmā, and Bhagavān realization are different.

Yoko Ono: But you said that if the milk is

touched by the lips of a serpent it will become poisonous. A lot of churches probably had good teachings in the beginning, but over time their messages have deteriorated. Now how can a person decide if the message of Brahman that you're talking about will always remain in its pure state? How can you be sure it won't be poisoned by serpents?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That's an individual matter. You have to become a serious student.

Yoko Ono: Well, what do you mean by "serious student"? I mean, we're born serious or born—you know—unserious.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Being a serious student means that you try to understand the distinction between Brahman, Paramātmā, and Bhagavān.

Yoko Ono: But does it depend on knowledge? I mean, the final judgment you make?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Everything depends on knowledge. Without knowledge, how can we make progress? To be a serious student means to acquire knowledge.

Yoko Ono: But its not always the knowledgeable ones who—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, no one can know the Absolute Truth completely. That is because our knowledge is very imperfect. But still, as far as our knowledge allows, we should try to understand the Absolute Truth. The *Vedas* say, *avān-mānasa-gocara*. The Absolute is so great and unlimited that it is not possible for us to know Him completely; our senses do not allow it. But we should try as far as possible. And it is possible, because, after all, we are part and parcel of the Absolute. Therefore, all of the qualities of the Absolute are there in us, but in minute quantity. But that minute quantity of the Absolute within us is very great when compared to material knowledge.

Material knowledge is practically no knowledge whatsoever. It is covered knowledge. But when one is liberated, and attains liberated knowledge, his knowledge is very much greater than the greatest material knowledge. So, as far as possible, we should try to understand Brahman, Paramātmā, and Bhagavān. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* [1.2.11] states, "Learned transcendentalists who know the Absolute Truth call this nondual substance Brahman, Paramātmā, or Bhagavān." Now again, what is the distinction among these three degrees of knowledge? Actually, knowledge of Brahman, knowledge of Paramātmā, and knowledge of Bhagavān are knowledge of the same thing.

There is another example in this connection. Imagine you are looking at a hill

(continued on page 30)

EVOLUTION

A Doctrine in Search of a Theory

Problem:

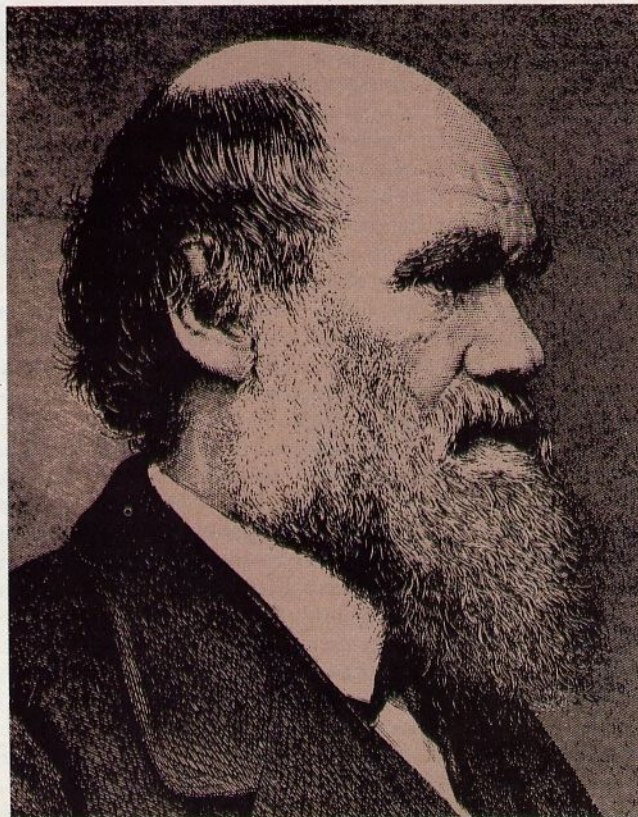
If the standard evolutionary mechanism is inadequate,
how can the origin of species be explained?

by SADĀPŪTA DĀSA

All reputable evolutionary biologists now agree that the evolution of life is directed by the process of natural selection, and by nothing else.¹ With these words Sir Julian Huxley summed up the consensus of learned opinion at the Darwin Centennial Celebration in 1959.

Among the eminent biologists and evolutionists attending the celebration, great confidence prevailed that the origin of living species was now almost fully understood. Evolutionists had clearly established that all living organisms had gradually evolved through small variations in form and function, slowly accumulating, generation by generation, over a vast span of geological time. Geneticists had shown that all biological variations arose from random genetic accidents called mutations. Evolutionary theorists, building on this finding, had clearly identified Darwinian natural selection as the sole guiding force that sorted out these variations and thereby molded the diverse forms of living beings. Although many minute details certainly remained to be worked out, scientists believed they had arrived at an essentially complete understanding of life and its historical development.

With this striking unanimity of established scientific opinion reached little more than two decades ago, perhaps we are surprised to hear that the theory of evolution



“I am in thick mud.”—Charles Darwin

has recently become the focus of a great controversy among evolutionists themselves. The last few years have seen the established theory of mutation and natural selection increasingly challenged by critical studies and dissenting interpretations of the evidence. The theory has clearly shown itself unsound, although scientists have thus far been unable to devise an acceptable new theory to replace it.

A few months ago this controversy became a near battle as some 150 prominent evolutionists gathered at Chicago's Field Museum of Natural History to thrash out various conflicting hypotheses about the nature of evolution. After four days of heated discussions (closed to all but a few outside observers), the evolutionists remained convinced that evolution is a fact.

Unfortunately, however, they could not reach a clear understanding of just what this fact is. *The New York Times* reported that the assembled scientists were unable either to specify the mechanism of evolution or to agree on “how anyone could establish with some certainty that it happened one way and not another.”²

Why this shift from unanimity and certainty to controversy and indecision? In this article we shall try to answer this question by examining some basic features of the modern theory of evolution. We shall try to identify the reasons why many scientists have sought an evolutionary explanation of life, and we shall also point out some of the problems that have impeded their efforts. We shall argue that the theory of evolution has been motivated more by philosophical misunderstanding than by the strength of empirical evidence and that the current confusion among evolutionary theorists has come about because

factual evidence has persistently refused to conform to the patterns imposed by an inconsistent and inadequate philosophical system. Finally, we shall present for these philosophical problems a solution that can lead to a more satisfactory understanding of the nature and origin of life.

Evolution Is Invisible

When Charles Darwin originally set forth his evolutionary theory, he maintained that the forms of living organisms change slowly and continuously from generation to generation and that over many millions of years these changes bring about new species and higher categories of organisms. One immediate implication of this theory was that the fossil record of ancient

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plant and animal life should display a continuum of fossilized life forms ranging from the most primitive to the most advanced. Given that organisms tend to leave occasional fossilized remains, scientists naturally expected to find a petrified motion picture of evolutionary history entombed in the earth's sedimentary rocks.

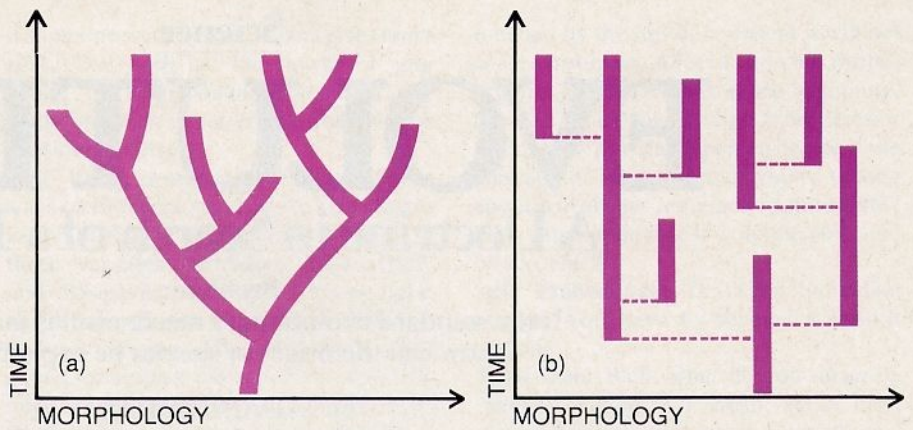
But in Darwin's time it was well known that the fossil record did not actually reveal such a picture. On the contrary, paleontologists had observed that distinct plant and animal species tended to appear abruptly in the fossil strata without recognizable antecedents. Each species remained essentially unchanged throughout the strata bearing its fossilized remains. Fossils yielded practically no evidence of gradual change from one species to another.

Darwin admitted that the fossil evidence, far from supporting his theory, seemed directly to contradict it. He responded by proposing that the fossil record was drastically incomplete. The innumerable intermediate life forms required by his theory must have existed, but they had left no recognizable traces in the fossil deposits known in his time. Darwin suggested that further research would undoubtedly uncover many of these missing forms, and their discovery would vindicate his theory.

For many years orthodox evolutionary opinion has adhered to Darwin's basic views. But dissenting voices have increasingly been heard. At the recent meeting of evolutionists in Chicago, Niles Eldridge, a paleontologist from the American Museum of Natural History in New York, declared, "The pattern we were told to find for the last 120 years does not exist."³ Despite intense effort, several generations of paleontologists have found few examples in which one fossil species seems to transform gradually into another, and some researchers say none at all have been found.

Punctuated Equilibrium

As a result, Eldridge, Gould, and several other prominent paleontologists now propose that species have not actually arisen by a slow process of transformation. As an alternative, they have devised what they call the theory of "punctuated equilibrium."⁴ According to this theory, evolutionary changes take place in short bursts separated by long periods during which the forms of living organisms remain static. A typical species will arise from an earlier species in a "geological microsecond"—a period of a few thousand years that appears like an instant from the multimillion-year perspective of geological time. Also, a species will not arise through a gradual modification of its parent population. Rather, it will arise when a tiny group that has been isolated from the main population, perhaps by a geographical barrier, is rapidly transformed.



The Darwinian theory of evolution states that species have developed gradually, as illustrated by the branching tree pattern (a). But the fossil record does not substantiate this pattern of development. As a result, some paleontologists have introduced the "punctuated equilibrium" model, shown in (b), in which the transitions between species are officially invisible.

One consequence of the theory of punctuated equilibrium is that it makes the process of large-scale evolution officially invisible. On one hand, we cannot expect the fossil record to show how a new species evolved, for the evolution takes place in a tiny population, during a geological "microsecond." On the other hand, we cannot expect to see a new species evolve within the recorded span of human history, for a geological microsecond of 10,000 to 50,000 years is still immensely long when measured in human lifetimes.

Of course, we may possibly observe small-scale changes in organisms, like those produced through controlled breeding, or like the famous change in color exhibited by the peppered moths of industrial England. Yet such changes are known to be reversible, and at most they result in only minor variations within a species. For example, settlers introduced domesticated rabbits into Australia in 1788, and some escaped and flourished in the wild. Yet despite the effects of breeding by humans, these domesticated rabbits were still classed as rabbits, and today their descendants have reverted to their ancestral form: they look exactly like wild rabbits.⁵

But explaining superficial variations of this kind is not the real problem confronting evolutionists. The real problem is explaining how higher forms of plants and animals have arisen from lower forms, and how these in turn have arisen from inanimate matter. No large-scale transformations of this kind have ever been observed within the brief span of human history. The orthodox Darwinian theory maintained that such transformations should be directly visible in the fossil record. But the theory of punctuated equilibrium says we should not expect even the fossil record to show these transformations. In fact, the actual process that brings about new species of life has *always* been invisible. Now, in the new theory propounded by

Eldridge and Gould, this process is held to be invisible even in principle.

The Enigma of Biological Form

If we cannot hope to find direct evidence delineating the development of major new forms of life, we might at least expect the theory of evolution to provide us a convincing explanation of how, in principle, such developments might take place. Since the Darwinian theory asserts that small variations in organic form gradually accumulate, we might expect evolutionary theorists to provide us with plausible evolutionary sequences leading from lower to higher forms of life. In such evolutionary sequences, each organism should be fit to live in its particular environment, and the differences between successive organisms in the chain should be of the kind we would expect from random mutation.

When we examine the literature of evolutionary theory, we do indeed encounter many explanations of this kind, but in every case they are disappointingly vague and incomplete. Typical is this statement by the prominent evolutionist Ernst Mayr: "The evolution of the eye ultimately hinges on one particular property of certain types of protoplasm—photosensitivity. . . . Once one admits that the possession of such photosensitivity may have selective value, all else follows by necessity."⁶ Mayr does not, and indeed *can* not, specify the particular steps leading from a photosensitive speck to a fully developed eye. His account of the evolution of the eye is typical of theoretical evolutionary explanations, for it relies on an abiding faith in the power of natural selection and mutation to effect large-scale transformations in organic form that evolutionists themselves cannot even imagine, much less observe.

Although evolutionists have adhered to this mode of explanation for many years, there is now evidence that its appeal is beginning to wane. According to a report

in *Science*, the predominant view among the evolutionists assembled at the recent meeting in Chicago was that the gradual selective accumulation of small variations cannot account for the appearance of new species.⁷

What has happened is that many evolutionists are now openly acknowledging one of the fundamental problems confronting evolutionary theory—the problem posed by the complex networks of structure and function that are characteristic of living organisms. Generally, each component of such a network is essential for the proper functioning of the whole. How, then, could the complete arrangement have arisen through a finely graded series of functional intermediate forms? In the past many evolutionists have been content to accept on faith that such sequences of intermediate stages must always be possible. But now a number of prominent evolutionists are openly admitting that in many significant cases the required intermediate stages simply may not exist.

To illustrate this problem in evolutionary theory, we shall consider a simple example provided by a type of flatworm called the microstomum.⁸ This flatworm is equipped with a kind of defensive cell called a nematocyst, which can fire a poisonous barbed thread. When the flatworm is attacked by a predator, the nematocysts, situated just beneath the surface of the worm's back, are discharged, thereby stinging the assailant and driving it away.

The most interesting aspect of this arrangement is that the nematocysts are not produced from the tissues of the flatworm itself. Rather, they are stolen from the

hydra, an aquatic organism on which the flatworm preys. The hydra has tentacles armed with several kinds of nematocysts, which it uses to subdue and capture the small animals on which it feeds. Some of these cells fire poisonous barbs, and others discharge various types of coiled and sticky threads that enable the hydra to hold on to its prey.

The flatworms generally avoid hydras. But biologists have observed that when the flatworms need more nematocysts, they will eat hydras and digest all of their tissues except these particular cells. The nematocysts are neither damaged nor discharged, but are enclosed within certain cells, which carry them toward the flatworm's back. The nematocysts that fire coiled or sticky threads are then digested, but those that fire poisonous barbs are transported to sites just beneath the outer layer of the worm's back.

There the nematocysts are oriented so that their stings will fire upward. The epithelial cells, which form the worm's outer layer, become very thin just above the newly positioned nematocysts, thus providing portholes for the firing of the stings. Finally, the cells that have encapsulated the nematocysts undergo extensive changes that enable these cells to act as trigger mechanisms. (The hydra's original trigger mechanism is contained in a type of cell called a cnidoblast, which the flatworm digests.)

Let us consider whether or not these defensive arrangements of the flatworm could have evolved step by step. An evolutionary scenario would have to begin with an ancestral flatworm that ate hydras but did not make use of their nematocysts.

In such a worm, what would be the first evolutionary step leading to the eventual exploitation of the nematocysts as defensive weapons? Unless the nematocysts were actually used as weapons, for the worm to manipulate them internally would be useless. Indeed, it would be dangerous, since the flatworm can easily be killed by the discharge of the hydra's stings.

Yet each step in the internal processing of the nematocysts is essential for their eventual use as weapons. If they were not transported to the flatworm's back, they could not be usefully deployed. If transported to the back but oriented incorrectly, they would be useless or even dangerous. If they were oriented beneath epithelial cells of normal thickness, the discharged sting would lose its momentum while passing through the epithelium, and the worm would sting itself.

There is also a further problem. Evidently the nematocysts are not triggered simply by pressure applied to the worm's back. Rather, their firing is governed by a complex control mechanism within the worm. Without this trigger mechanism the whole arrangement would be useless, even if the nematocysts were properly oriented beneath epithelial "portholes."

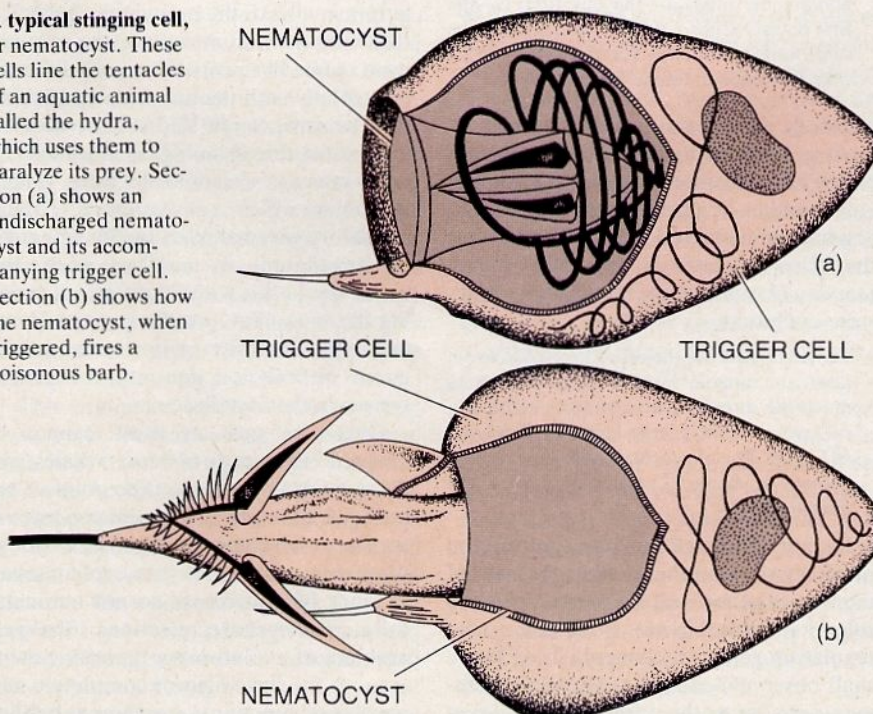
When examined closely, each step in the internal manipulation of the nematocysts resolves into a complex of substeps. For example, for a nematocyst to be transported to the back of the flatworm, one of the worm's cells must first recognize it, and then the cell must initiate a process of motion that specifically carries the nematocyst to the worm's dorsal region. These are both complex procedures. Yet for the flatworm to take advantage of the hydra's nematocysts, it would seem that many complex arrangements of this kind must be present simultaneously.

We can conclude that the standard Darwinian or neo-Darwinian theory of evolution cannot readily explain the origin of complicated interlocking arrangements such as the flatworm's defensive system. Yet such systems are by no means rare in nature. Indeed, it might be argued that nearly all complex organs and systems of organs in living beings involve many essential interdependent elements and that they are therefore not amenable to explanation by traditional evolutionary concepts.

The Return Of the Hopeful Monster

We have seen that the standard mechanism of evolutionary theory is inadequate to explain the development of complex living forms. How, then, can the origin of species be explained? At the conference in Chicago there were signs that at least some evolutionists are trying to resurrect a

A typical stinging cell, or nematocyst. These cells line the tentacles of an aquatic animal called the hydra, which uses them to paralyze its prey. Section (a) shows an undischarged nematocyst and its accompanying trigger cell. Section (b) shows how the nematocyst, when triggered, fires a poisonous barb.



theory that was greeted with almost universal scorn and derision when first proposed in the 1940s.⁹ This is the theory of "the hopeful monster," devised by the geneticist Richard Goldschmidt.

The key to this theory is the idea that the genetic systems of organisms must be so arranged that a single mutation can produce, in one stroke, an elaborate systematic change in biological structure and function. Almost all known mutations result in gross defects, and a few result in small modifications that can be useful for the organism under suitable environmental conditions. According to Goldschmidt, however, there must exist a special type of mutation capable of generating new complex structures, such as functional legs, wings, or lungs. Most of these macromutations, as he called them, would result in bizarre monstrosities completely unfit for survival. But a few macromutations would produce "hopeful monsters," novel creatures that just happened to be adapted to a totally new mode of existence.¹⁰

This theory is now at a very tentative and speculative stage, and many evolutionists still view it with suspicion. Nonetheless, it represents an important trend in current evolutionary thought, and it illustrates the desperate extremes to which evolutionists have been forced to go in their efforts to construct a workable evolutionary theory. We shall therefore briefly consider some of the reasoning underlying the theory of the hopeful monster.

In its present recension, this theory relies on the concepts of regulative and structural genes.¹¹ Biologists define a structural gene as a sequence of DNA coding that defines a specific structural element of a living organism. An example is the gene for hemoglobin, the oxygen-carrying pigment of the red blood cells. In contrast, a regulative gene is a sequence of DNA coding that controls the timing and order of expression of other genes. We can envision an interacting system of regulative and structural genes that acts as a kind of genetic computer program. Such a program might be capable of expressing and repressing various combinations of structural genes in a complex and systematic way. The hopeful monster theory proposes that small changes in such genetic programs might result in the systematic large-scale changes in biological organization that evolutionary theorists need.

Biologists cite certain kinds of mutations as evidence for the existence of regulative genes. For example, sometimes horses are born with three-toed feet. One might tentatively explain this variation by saying that although the genetic system of the horse always has the structural information for a multitoed foot, in normal horses a regulative gene suppresses the

genes for all the toes but one. When a mutation disables this regulatory gene, the latent genetic information is expressed, and a multitoed horse is born.

A certain mutation of fruit flies provides another possible example of the interaction of regulative and structural genes. In this mutation, known as *aristopedia*, a fully developed leg grows from the head of the fly in the position where the antenna normally grows. Scientists explain this anomaly by proposing that the regulative and structural genes for the leg comprise a kind of "subroutine" that is set in motion under the control of other regulatory genes. These regulatory genes may store information specifying the location of the leg, and if this information is disrupted by a mutation, the leg may form in an abnormal place.

Although the theory of regulative genes is still highly speculative, it does not seem unreasonable as a way of explaining certain types of mutation. But how this theory can account for Goldschmidt's hypothetical "macromutations" that produce complex, finely coordinated organs in a single stroke is not at all clear.

Impossible Mutations

We shall try to illustrate the potentialities and limitations of systems of regulatory genes by constructing a simple artificial example. We can regard the following array of symbols as a "genetic" system for a series of English sentences.

I am in (2); the orthodox (1) in (3). I believe I am in (9) as an (8) would be in if set to learn (5). The (8) (1) it was (7); () yet I cannot keep out of (4).

1—would say; 2—thick mud; 3—fétid abominable mud; 4—the question; 5—the first book of Euclid; 6—and I am in much the same mind; 7—no manner of use; 8—old gorilla; 9—much the same frame of mind.

The code used in this genetic system is almost self-explanatory. To produce the encoded English statements, simply replace each number in parentheses with the corresponding numbered phrase. The result is the following statement made by Charles Darwin about the mechanism of large-scale evolution.

I am in thick mud; the orthodox would say in fetid abominable mud. I believe I am in much the same frame of mind as an old gorilla would be in if set to learn the first book of Euclid. The old gorilla would say it was no manner of use; yet I cannot keep out of the question.¹²

In our artificial genetic system, the numbers in parentheses play the role of regulatory genes, and the phrases play the role of structural genes. If we mutate the regulatory gene (4), changing it to (3), we shall observe a change in Darwin's statements similar to the *aristopedia* mutation

of fruit flies. (We invite the reader to try this and observe the effects.) Also, when we examine the genetic system closely, we find that a mutation has changed one regulatory gene to (). If we convert this gene to (6), Darwin's statement apparently acquires an entirely new sentence, although all that has actually happened is that the complete text of the original has been restored.

We can thus see that various kinds of large-scale effects result from mutations in the regulatory genes of our artificial system. Yet all of these effects have one thing in common. They all involve the manipulation of material already present in the genetic system. To induce the system to produce something entirely new is a different matter.

For example, we invite the reader to try to find mutations that will expand Darwin's remarks to include the following statement from his *Origin of Species*.

I can see no difficulty in a race of bears being rendered, by natural selection, more and more aquatic in their habits, with larger and larger mouths, till a creature was produced as monstrous as a whale.¹³

We find ourselves in a quandary. We can gradually build up this additional statement by many small mutations, each of which might occur by "chance" with a reasonably high probability. But the intermediate states will all entail nonsensical sentence fragments that correspond in our analogy to useless or harmful mutant organs. We can also introduce the entire statement by a single random mutation; but then we are confronted by the problem that such a mutation must be exceedingly improbable. The more numerous the letters involved, the more improbable it is that they will fall into place the way you want them. The probability goes down exponentially with the number of variables, and the same can be said in general about the multifeatured biological mutations.

Of course, we could devise a genetic system in which a mutation in a single regulatory gene would cause our new statement suddenly to manifest itself. But could we do this without, in effect, building the statement into the system? If not, one might naturally ask how such complex latent information got into the genetic system in the first place.

Questions such as these cannot be avoided in the study of bears, whales, and living beings in general. The point of our artificial example is that the concepts of regulative and structural genes, although suggesting possible ways to explain several kinds of mutations, do not automatically answer these questions. The real problem of evolutionary theory—how to account for the origin of completely new organs and functions—remains as baffling

as before. And until evolutionists can provide a convincing solution to this problem, we must conclude that their evolutionary speculations have no sound basis.

Once again we stress the importance of the problem faced by evolutionary theory: Evolutionists have traditionally declared that mutation and natural selection can fully account for the origin of species, yet suitable sequences of mutations leading to the formation of new organs and systems of organs have never been shown to exist. Until they are, it is pointless even to discuss natural selection, and the origin of species remains shrouded in utter mystery.

Evolution and Negative Theology

We have seen that there is no direct evidence for the evolution of complex organic forms and that some prominent paleontologists maintain that such evidence may never be found. We have also seen that evolutionists do not have an adequate theory of evolutionary change and that they are still groping for such a theory in the realms of speculation and vague conjecture. We are therefore led to ask, In the absence of both observation and theory, what has convinced scientists to accept what we can only call the doctrine of evolution?

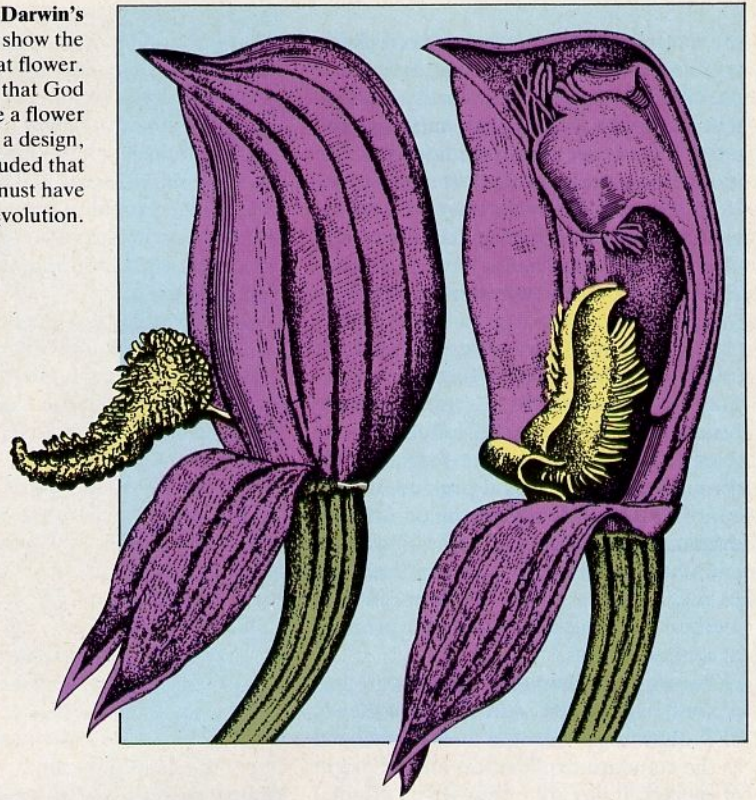
One important line of reasoning that has led many persons to adopt an evolutionary point of view could be called the argument by negative theology. Darwin himself used this argument extensively, and since his time it has been a mainstay of evolutionary thought.

In a recent popular book, paleontologist Steven J. Gould sums up the negative theological argument in these words: "Odd arrangements and funny solutions are the proof of evolution—paths that a sensible God would never tread but that a natural process, constrained by history, follows perforce."¹⁴ The basic form of the argument can be outlined as follows: "God must have certain characteristics, and He would have created a certain sort of world. Since the world as we see it is very different from this, it must be that there is no God. Since the only alternative to divine creation that we can think of is evolution, life must have arisen by some kind of evolutionary process."

This argument breaks down into two basic parts. One of these is the traditional argument from evil against the existence of God. According to this argument, the existence of many kinds of suffering, both in the human species and in the plant and animal kingdoms, is inconsistent with the idea that the world was created by an all-powerful benevolent being. In contrast, such suffering seems to fit naturally into the evolutionary world view.

The second part of the argument is that

Two views from Darwin's book on orchids show the structure of that flower. Having argued that God would not create a flower with such a design, Darwin concluded that such flowers must have arisen by evolution.



many features of living organisms would not, as Gould says, be designed by a "sensible God" and must therefore be due to evolution. The extra toes that sometimes appear on the feet of horses are an example of such a feature. Evolutionists argue that God would surely not produce such aberrations but that they can be explained by the hypothesis that horses evolved from a many-toed ancestor.

Another example in support of this argument is provided by Darwin's work with orchids. Darwin observed that the petals of these flowers are deployed in many remarkable arrangements, which insure that visiting insects will carry pollen from one flower to another. Yet since modified petals, rather than a completely novel kind of structure, are used in these arrangements, Darwin argued that divine creation was ruled out and that the orchids must therefore be products of evolution. In the words of Gould, "If God had designed a beautiful machine to reflect his wisdom and power, surely he would not have used a collection of parts generally fashioned for other purposes."¹⁵

What can we say about these arguments? We can observe immediately that they grow from a very much limited and stereotyped understanding of God that is never clearly formulated and that never draws on any specific source of spiritual knowledge. As such, these arguments are certainly unscientific, and when we consider the importance of the theory they are used to support, we can conclude that they are thoroughly irresponsible.

When we consider such negative theo-

logical arguments together with the observational and theoretical weaknesses of evolutionary thought, the "theory" of evolution seems little more than a poorly reasoned intellectual reaction against a spiritual tradition that was perceived as inadequate. Moreover, it is an entirely futile reaction, for it has succeeded neither in providing a genuine alternative source of spiritual knowledge nor in establishing a workable material explanation of the origin of life.

Natural Theology: A Dead End

The role the negative theological argument plays in the theory of evolution becomes clear when we consider the historical context in which this theory arose. When Darwin published his *Origin of Species* in 1859, European thought had been dominated for many years by an approach to spiritual knowledge known as natural theology. According to this approach, one can deduce from observations of natural phenomena that the world has been created by a supremely intelligent, benevolent, and all-powerful being. Pointing to the highly organized structural plans of living beings, the proponents of natural theology maintained that these plans imply the existence of an intelligent creator.

Before Darwin's time the British philosopher David Hume had pointed out that no amount of finite observation of the things of this world could possibly justify conclusions about an infinite transcendental being. He and many other critics also stressed that the standard conceptions of

the nature of this being were inconsistent with some of the most obvious features of the world, for why indeed would a benevolent being create a world of suffering and death? To many scientists, however, the most disheartening aspect of natural theology was that it provided no really satisfying explanation of the origin of life, and it offered no new avenues of exploration. Thus many perceived natural theology as a dead end.

In this context we can understand the initial appeal of Darwin's theory of evolution. Darwin explicitly rejected the sterile conceptions of natural theology and introduced an approach to the origin of life through entirely physical principles. This approach seemed to bring the question of origins into the familiar realms of physics and chemistry, where scientists had had so much success using the experimental method, and thus it held forth the promise of similar success.

Yet we have seen that this promise has never been fulfilled. Although the theory of evolution has become institutionalized as the standard explanation for the origin of species, it has not outgrown its original status as a reaction against an imperfect and restrictive system of theological thought. As such, it is no more valid than the system of natural theology it historically displaced. If speculative reasoning has given rise to an imperfect conception of God, then we certainly cannot expect negative arguments based on this conception to yield a true understanding of life's origins.

How, then, can we obtain a genuine understanding? Here we shall suggest that we can reach such an understanding only through a valid spiritual science. Speculation resting on a finite set of material observations is indeed inadequate to provide valid knowledge about a supreme transcendental being. But the answer to this problem is not to deny the existence of such a being and to seek explanations solely in familiar physical principles. This is the fallacy of the drunk who lost his keys near the doorstep of his house but would search for them only under a streetlamp because the light was better there.

A Broader Perspective

Here we shall introduce an alternative approach to spiritual knowledge, one that is able to provide a satisfactory understanding of the nature and origin of life. This approach is the spiritual science of *sanātana-dharma* expounded in the Vedic literatures of India, such as *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. As we shall briefly indicate, the unique advantage of *sanātana-dharma* is that it offers practical procedures that bring the individual into direct contact with transcendence. *Sanātana-*

dharma agrees with the conclusion of natural theology that the world has been produced by a supremely intelligent being. But since *sanātana-dharma* actually has the kind of sound observational basis that the evolutionists had hoped to attain, it is able to provide a genuine understanding of both the Supreme Being and the relation between the Supreme Being and the material world.

The *Bhagavad-gītā* identifies the ultimate, absolute cause underlying all phenomena as an eternal, transcendental person. This person is known in the Vedic tradition by many names, such as Kṛṣṇa and Govinda, and is also known as Allah in Islam and as God in the Judeo-Christian tradition. Kṛṣṇa is the celebrated Supreme Being who is the center of worship in many different religions, and who is also the object of speculative inquiry in diverse schools of philosophy.

According to *sanātana-dharma*, Kṛṣṇa is fully endowed with all the essential characteristics of personality, such as mind, senses, emotions, and intelligence. These personal qualities cannot be reduced to transformations of interactions of some impersonal substrate. *Sanātana-dharma* accepts transcendental personality as the irreducible basis of reality, and all phenomena, whether personal or impersonal, as manifestations of the energy of the Supreme Person.

The concept of personality makes little sense when divorced from the idea of interpersonal relationships. Thus, *sanātana-dharma* teaches that the Supreme Person is not alone. Kṛṣṇa is always accompanied by innumerable sentient beings called *ātmās*, who share His inherent personal qualities. These are all eternal, irreducible individuals, but they are qualitatively one with Kṛṣṇa, and their constitutional nature is to reciprocate with Him in loving personal relationships.

Modern science generally regards concepts such as these as subjects for either blind faith or unverifiable speculation. But in *sanātana-dharma* the concept of the eternal constitutional nature of the *ātmā* provides the key to a practical method whereby the individual person can obtain direct knowledge of transcendental subject matter.

According to *sanātana-dharma*, each living being in the material world consists of an *ātmā* in association with a body composed of material elements. The *ātmā* is bound to this temporary body through false ego, or the illusion that the body is the self. When the *ātmā* is in this materially conditioned state, his natural spiritual senses are linked with the sensory apparatus of the body, and he sees himself as a temporary, physical being.

Thus embodied, the *ātmā* is oblivious

of his original relationship with Kṛṣṇa and thus unaware of his true potential as a spiritual being. But, according to *sanātana-dharma*, this is a temporary state of affairs. *Sanātana-dharma* provides a practical method, known as *bhakti-yoga*, whereby the *ātmā* can revive his spiritual senses and re-establish direct contact with Kṛṣṇa. Thus the key to attaining reliable transcendental knowledge is to recognize that each individual person is actually a spiritual being and that his powers of observation are not limited to the sensory machinery of the material body.

The Role of Faith

The subject of *bhakti-yoga* involves many detailed considerations that lie beyond the scope of this article. Here we shall simply conclude by making a few observations about the role of faith in *sanātana-dharma*, in modern science, and in the theory of evolution. Since *sanātana-dharma* is based on verifiable observations, it does not depend on either blind faith or speculative argumentation. But faith is required in any difficult undertaking, and *sanātana-dharma* is no exception.

For example, before studying modern chemistry the prospective student must have faith that the many experiments upon which the subject is based actually work. He cannot know this in advance, and without such faith he would not be motivated to carry out the arduous work needed to master the subject. Normally, the student will begin with a certain amount of initial faith, and this faith will grow as he acquires more and more practical experience. The same process works in *sanātana-dharma*.

This brings us back to the theory of evolution. We have observed that this view of life first became prominent as a response to a loss of faith in a particular spiritual tradition. In the beginning of this article we briefly indicated that evolutionists possess neither a substantial body of direct observational evidence nor a workable theory of evolutionary transformation. Thus the theory's appeal still rests on the power of the negative theological arguments that formed its original basis—arguments that writers on evolution still repeatedly emphasize.

We suggest that these negative arguments appear insubstantial when carefully examined in the light of *sanātana-dharma*. The traditional "argument from evil" is directly answered by the understanding given in *sanātana-dharma* of the transcendental nature of the *ātmā* and the position of the conditioned *ātmā* in the material world. Most of the other negative theological arguments rest on flimsy reasoning and can hold up only until faced by a reasonable alternative.



The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. The Supreme cannot be understood through mundane speculative reasoning, but He reveals Himself when approached with sincere love and devotion. By resorting to fallacious arguments for a godless world view, evolutionists cut themselves and their followers off from knowing God, the true origin of species.

We have noted that evolutionists cite certain similarities between the bodily parts of various organisms as evidence of a common ancestor. Yet we can also readily interpret these similarities as evidence of a common designer. Furthermore, there is no reason to suppose that a "sensible God" would not take advantage of expedient engineering techniques. It might well be quite sensible for God to produce a one-toed horse's hoof by working from a basic multitoed plan and throwing genetic switches to suppress the development of the other toes. One can deny this possibility only in the absence of a sensible con-

ception of God and a valid understanding of the purpose of the material world.

According to *sanātana-dharma*, one can understand the purpose of the material creation through the concept of free will. The natural relationship between the *ātmā* and Kṛṣṇa is one of loving service, and love can exist only for one who has freedom. The *ātmā* is free to turn away from his relationship with the Supreme Person and seek to be independent, and Kṛṣṇa creates the material world as a place where the *ātmā* can do this. Here the *ātmā* becomes temporarily forgetful of his true nature and transmigrates from body to

body in various species of life.

Therefore, the material world is certainly a place of suffering. The conditioned living beings, deprived of their central object of devotion, inevitably have clashing interests and become sources of intense misery for one another. But should the Supreme Person be held at fault for allowing the living beings to have free will? The evolutionists' insistence on the "argument from evil" has led nowhere—and it has certainly not alleviated any of the suffering of this world. In *sanātana-dharma*, however, a genuine solution to the problem of suffering is available. Each individual person, by reawakening his original relationship with Kṛṣṇa, can remove the root cause of his suffering and attain both unlimited happiness and substantial knowledge about the nature and origin of life.

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Readers interested in the subject matter of this article are invited to correspond with the author at 51 West Allens Lane, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19119.

**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 anxiety.

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

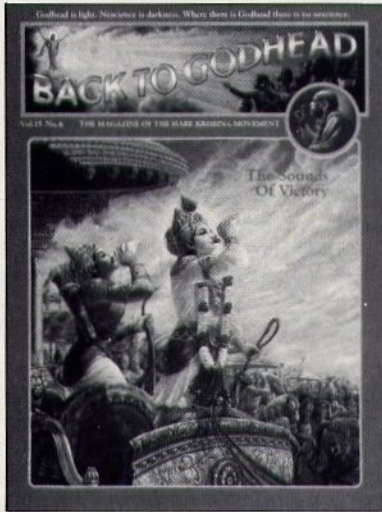
Five centuries ago, while spreading the

mahā-mantra throughout India, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu prayed, "O Supreme Lord, in Your 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.

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CHANTING

(continued from page 22)

from a distant place. First of all you see a hazy form on the horizon like a cloud. Then if you proceed closer you'll see it as something green. And if you actually walk on the hill, you'll see so many varieties of life—animals, men, trees, and so forth. But from the distance you just see it vaguely like a cloud.

So although the Absolute Truth is always the same, it appears different from different angles of vision. From the Brahman point of view, it appears like a hill seen as a cloud. When viewed as Paramātmā, the Absolute can be compared to the vision of the hill as something green. And when the Absolute is realized as the Supreme Person, Bhagavān, it is just like seeing the hill from up close. You see everything in complete detail.

Therefore, although the person who sees Brahman, the person who sees Paramātmā, and the person who sees Kṛṣṇa are all focusing on the same thing, their realization is different according to their respective positions.

These things are very nicely explained in *Bhagavad-gītā* [10.8], wherein Lord Kṛṣṇa says, "I am the source of all spiritual and material worlds. Everything emanates from Me. The wise who know this perfectly engage in My devotional service and worship Me with all their hearts." Kṛṣṇa says, I am the source of everything—Brahman, Paramātmā, everything. Elsewhere in *Bhagavad-gītā* [14.27] it is clearly stated that Kṛṣṇa is the source of Brahman: *brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhāham*.

So knowledge of Brahman and Paramātmā are included within knowledge of Kṛṣṇa. If one has knowledge of Kṛṣṇa, he automatically has knowledge of Paramātmā and Brahman. Such a person automatically achieves the result of the yogic principle of meditation, namely, realization of the Supersoul, Paramātmā. And he also achieves the result of empirical philosophical speculation, namely, realization of Brahman. Beyond that, he is situated personally in the service of the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa.

So if you make a comparative study, you'll find that knowledge of Kṛṣṇa includes all other knowledge. The *Vedas* confirm this: *yasmin vijñāte sarvam evaṃ vijñātam bhavati*: "If you understand the Supreme, then all knowledge becomes automatically revealed." And in *Bhagavad-gītā* it is stated, "Knowing this we have nothing more to know." So, first of all we have to seriously study the Vedic knowledge. Therefore, I am asking you to become serious students. By understanding Kṛṣṇa, you will understand everything. ❀

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BROADCASTING

(continued from page 14)

name of their group was, and Hayagrīva laughed and replied, "The Hare Kṛṣṇa Chanters." Of course most of the devotees weren't actually musicians, and yet the instruments they brought with them—a tamboura, a large harmonium (loaned by Allen Ginsberg), and rhythm instruments—were ones they had played during *kīrtanas* for months. So as they entered the studio they felt confident that they could produce their own sound. They just followed their Swami. He knew how to play, and they knew how to follow him. They weren't just another music group. It was music, but it was also chanting, meditation, worship.

Prabhupāda sat on a mat in the center of the studio, while the engineers arranged the microphones and assigned each devotee a place to sit according to his instrument. When the engineers were satisfied, they cued the devotees, and Swamiji began chanting and playing his drum.

The first sound was the tamboura, with its plucked, reverberating twang. An instant later Swamiji began beating the drum and singing, *Vande 'haṁ śrī-guroḥ* . . . Then the whole ensemble put out to sea—the tamboura, the harmonium, the clackers, the cymbals, Rūpānuga's bells, Swamiji's solo singing—pushing off from their moorings, out into a fair-weather sea of chanting. . . . *lalitā-śrī-viśākhānvitāms ca* . . .

Swamiji's voice in the studio was very sweet. His boys were feeling love, not just making a record. There was a feeling of success and union, a crowning evening to all their months together.

. . . *Śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya, prabhu-nityānanda* . . .

After a few minutes of singing prayers alone, Swamiji paused briefly while the instruments continued pulsing, and then began the *mantra*: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare. It was pure Bhaktivedanta Swami—expert, just like his cooking in the kitchen, like his lectures. The engineers liked what they heard—it would be a good take if nothing went wrong. The instruments were all right, the drum, the singing. The harmony was rough. But this was a special record—a happening. The Hare Kṛṣṇa Chanters were doing their thing, and they were doing it all right. Alan Kallman was excited. Here was an authentic sound. Maybe it would sell.

After a few rounds of the *mantra*, the devotees began to feel relaxed, as though they were back in the temple, and they were able to forget about making mistakes on the record. They just chanted, and the beat steadied into a slightly faster pace. The word *hare* would come sometimes

with a little shout in it, but there were no emotional theatrics in the chorus, just the straight response to the Swami's melody. Ten minutes went by. The chanting went faster, louder and faster—Swamiji doing more fancy things on the drum, until suddenly . . . everything stopped, with the droning note of the harmonium lingering.

Alan came out of the studio: "It was great, Swami. Great. Would you like to just go right ahead and read the address now? Or are you too tired?" With polite concern, pale, befreckled Alan Kallman peered through his thick glasses at the Swami. Swamiji appeared tired, but he replied, "No, I am not tired." Then the devotees sat back in the studio to watch

When Prabhupāda heard the recording of his chanting, he stood and began dancing, swaying back and forth, his arms upraised in ecstasy.

and listen as Prabhupāda read his prepared statement.

"As explained on the cover of the record album . . ." The sympathetic devotees thought that Swamiji, despite his accent, sounded perfectly clear, reading from his script like an elocutionist. ". . . this transcendental vibration by chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare is the sublime method for reviving our Kṛṣṇa consciousness." The language was philosophic, and the kind of people who usually walked out of the temple as soon as the *kīrtana* ended, before the Swami could even speak a word, would also not appreciate this speech on their record album. "As living spiritual souls," Swamiji preached, "we are all originally Kṛṣṇa conscious entities. But due to our association with matter from time immemorial, our consciousness is now polluted by material atmosphere." The devotees listened submissively to the words of their spiritual master, while at the same time trying to comprehend the effect this would have on the audience. Certainly some people would turn it off at the very mention of a spiritual nature. Swamiji continued reading, explaining that the chanting would deliver one from

the sensual, mental, and intellectual planes and bring one to the spiritual realm.

"We have seen it practically," he continued. "Even a child can take part in the chanting, or even a dog can take part in it. . . . The chanting should be heard, however, from the lips of a pure devotee of the Lord." And he continued reading on to the end. ". . . No other means, therefore, of spiritual realization is as effective in this age as chanting the *mahā-mantra*: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare."

Alan again came rushing out of the studio. It was fine, he said. He explained that they had recorded a little echo into the speech, to make it special for the listener. "Now," he pushed back his glasses with his finger. "We've got about ten minutes left on the side with the speech. Would you like to chant again? Or is it too late, Swamiji?" Prabhupāda smiled. No, it was not too late. He would chant the prayers to his spiritual master.

While his disciples lounged around the studio, watching their spiritual master and the technical activity of the engineers behind the glass, Prabhupāda began singing. Again the harmonium's drone began, then the tamboura and drum, but with a much smaller rhythm group than before. He sang through, without any retakes, and then ended the song (and the evening) with a fortissimo drumming as the hand-pumped organ notes faded.

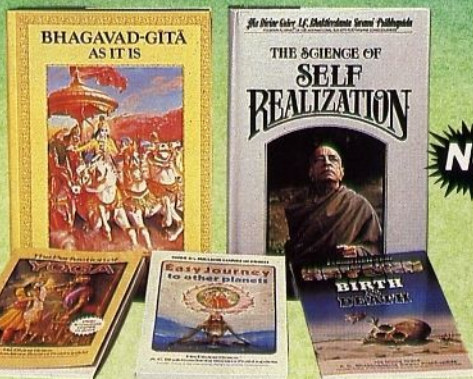
Again, Alan came out and thanked the Swami for being so patient and such a good studio musician. Prabhupāda was still sitting. "Now we are tired," he admitted.

Suddenly, over the studio sound system came a playback of the Hare Kṛṣṇa chanting, complete with echo. When Prabhupāda heard the successful recording of his chanting, he became happy and stood and began dancing, swaying back and forth, dipping slightly from the waist, his arms upraised in the style of Lord Caitanya, dancing in ecstasy. The scheduled performance was over, but now Swamiji was making the best performance of the evening from his spontaneous feelings. As he danced, his half-asleep disciples became startled and also rose to their feet and joined him, dancing in the same style. And in the recording booth behind the glass, the engineers also raised their hands and began dancing and chanting.

"Now you have made your best record," Swamiji told Mr. Kallman as he left the studio for the freezing Manhattan evening. Swamiji got into the front seat of the Volkswagen bus while "The Hare Kṛṣṇa Chanters" climbed into the back with their instruments, and Rūpānuga drove them back home, back to the Lower East Side.

(To be continued.)

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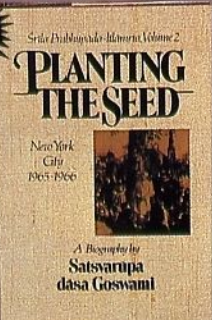
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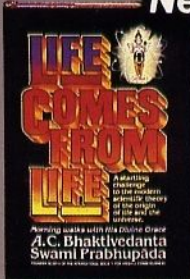
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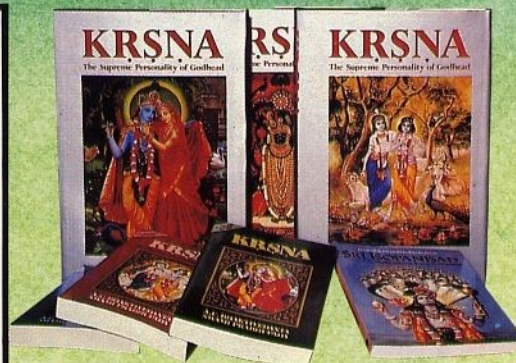
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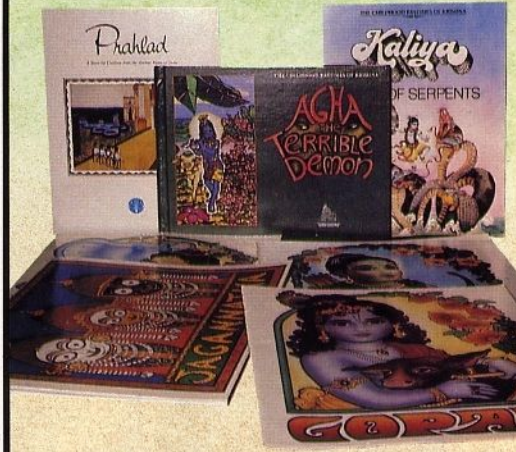
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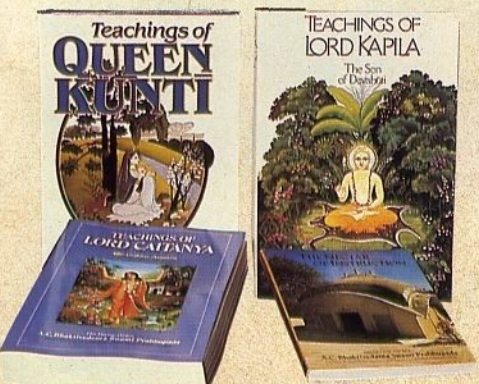
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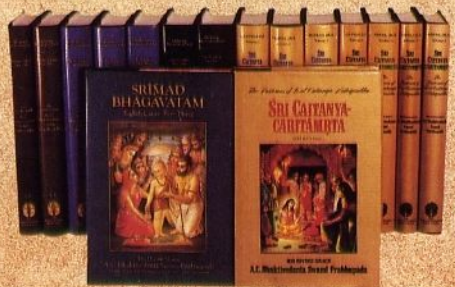
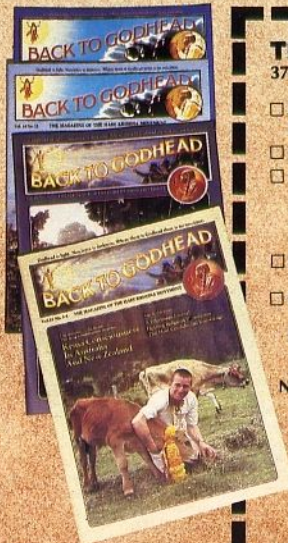
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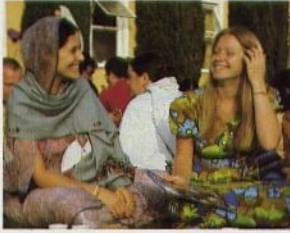
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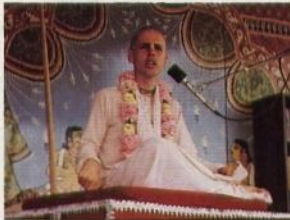
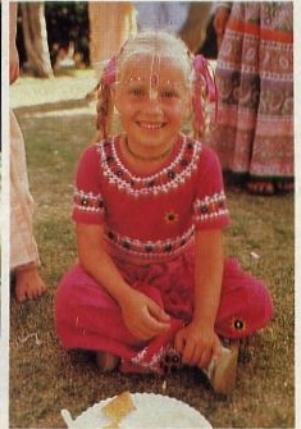
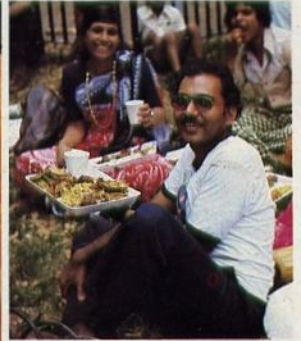
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