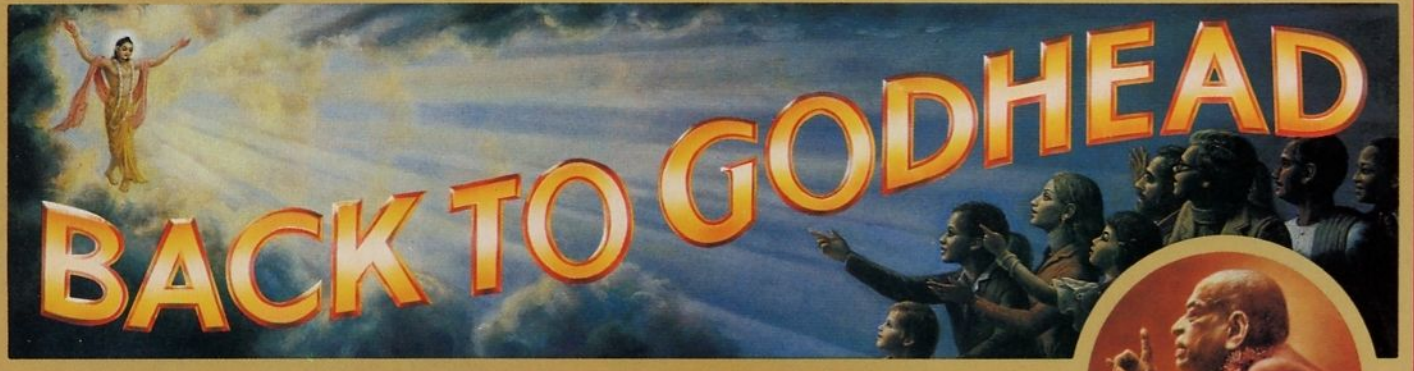
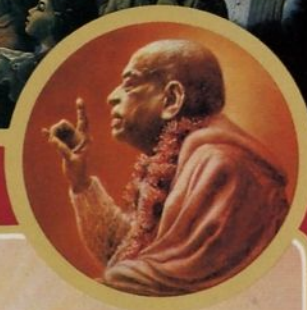


Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.



January 1983 \$1.50 THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT



A New Interview With
**GEORGE
HARRISON**

ALSO:

**Fasting for
Spiritual Health**

**A New Feature:
Bhakti-Yoga
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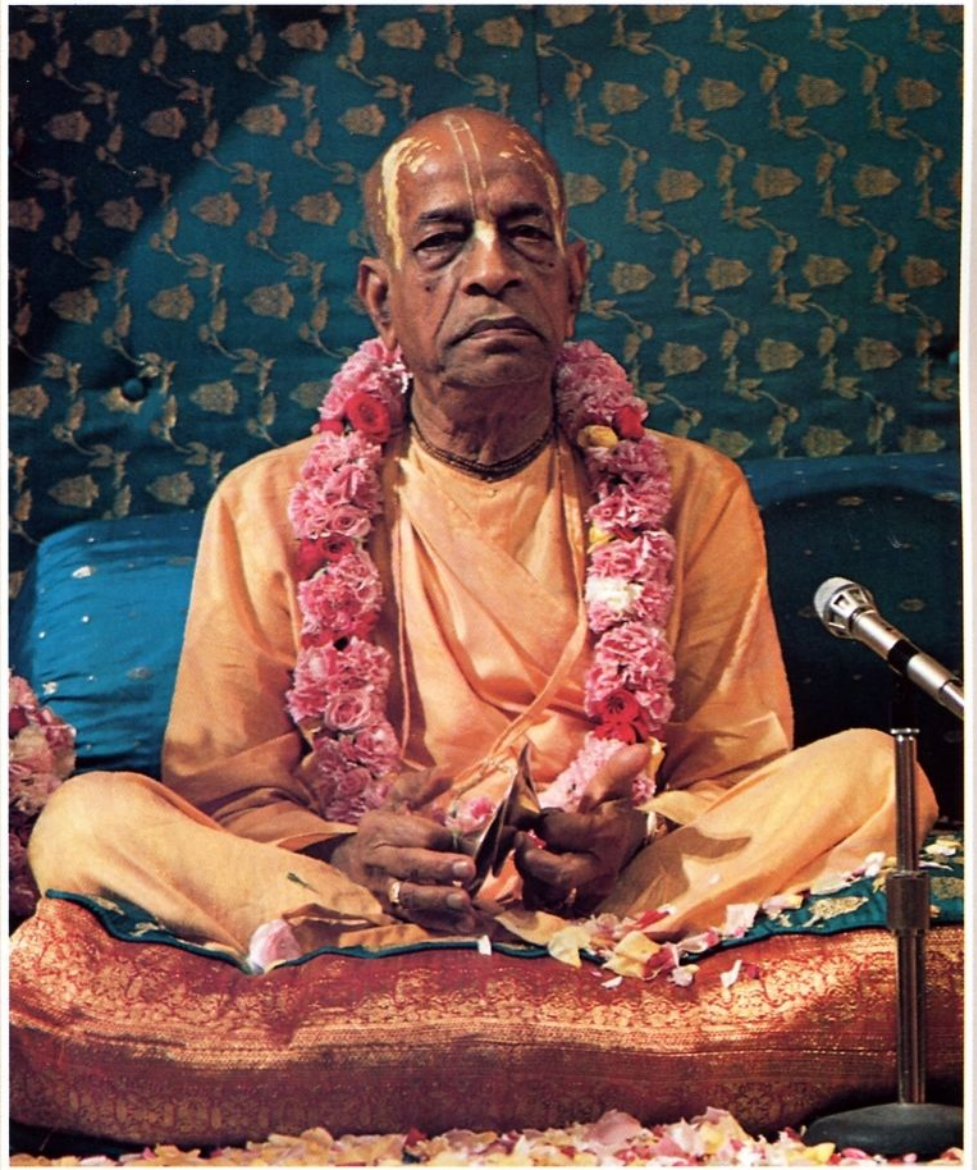
**The Meaning
Of Dharma**

**First
Encounter
With a
Pure Devotee**



His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda,

Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, 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 literature, 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. His disciples are carrying forward the movement he started.



BACK TO GODHEAD is the monthly journal of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. When Śrīla Prabhupāda began the Society (in New York City, in 1966), he put into writing the purposes he wanted it to achieve. They are as follows:

1. To systematically propagate spiritual knowledge to society at large and to educate all peoples in the techniques of spiritual life in order to check the imbalance of values in life and to achieve real unity and peace in the world.
2. To propagate a consciousness of Kṛṣṇa, as it is revealed in *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.
3. To bring the members of the Society together with each other and nearer to Kṛṣṇa, the prime entity, thus developing the idea within the members, and humanity at large, that each soul is part and parcel of the quality of Godhead (Kṛṣṇa).
4. To teach and encourage the *saṅkīrtana* movement, congregational chanting of the holy names of God, as revealed in the teachings of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
5. To erect for the members and for society at large a holy place of transcendental pastimes dedicated to the personality of Kṛṣṇa.
6. To bring the members closer together for the purpose of teaching a simpler, more natural way of life.
7. With a view toward achieving the aforementioned purposes, to publish and distribute periodicals, books, and other writings.

BACK TO GODHEAD

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A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda

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PRONUNCIATION. We spell Sanskrit words and names by a scholarly system that lets you know how to say each word. Pronounce short **a** like the **u** in **but**, long **ā** like the **a** in **far** (and hold it twice as long as the short **a**). Pronounce **e** like the **a** in **evade**, long **ī** like the **i** in **pike**. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **ri** in **rim**, and **ṛ** like the **ch** in **chair**. Pronounce the aspirated consonants (**ch**, **jh**, **dh**, etc.) as in **staunch-heart**, **heudgehog**, and **red-hot**. Finally, pronounce the sibilants **ś** and **ṣ** like **sh**. So for *Kṛṣṇa* say **KRISHNA**, and for *Caitanya* say **CHAITANYA**.

SPIRITUAL NAMES. Members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness receive names of Lord Kṛṣṇa or His great devotees, combined with *dāsa* (dāśī for women), meaning "servant." For instance, the name *Kṛṣṇa dāsa* means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

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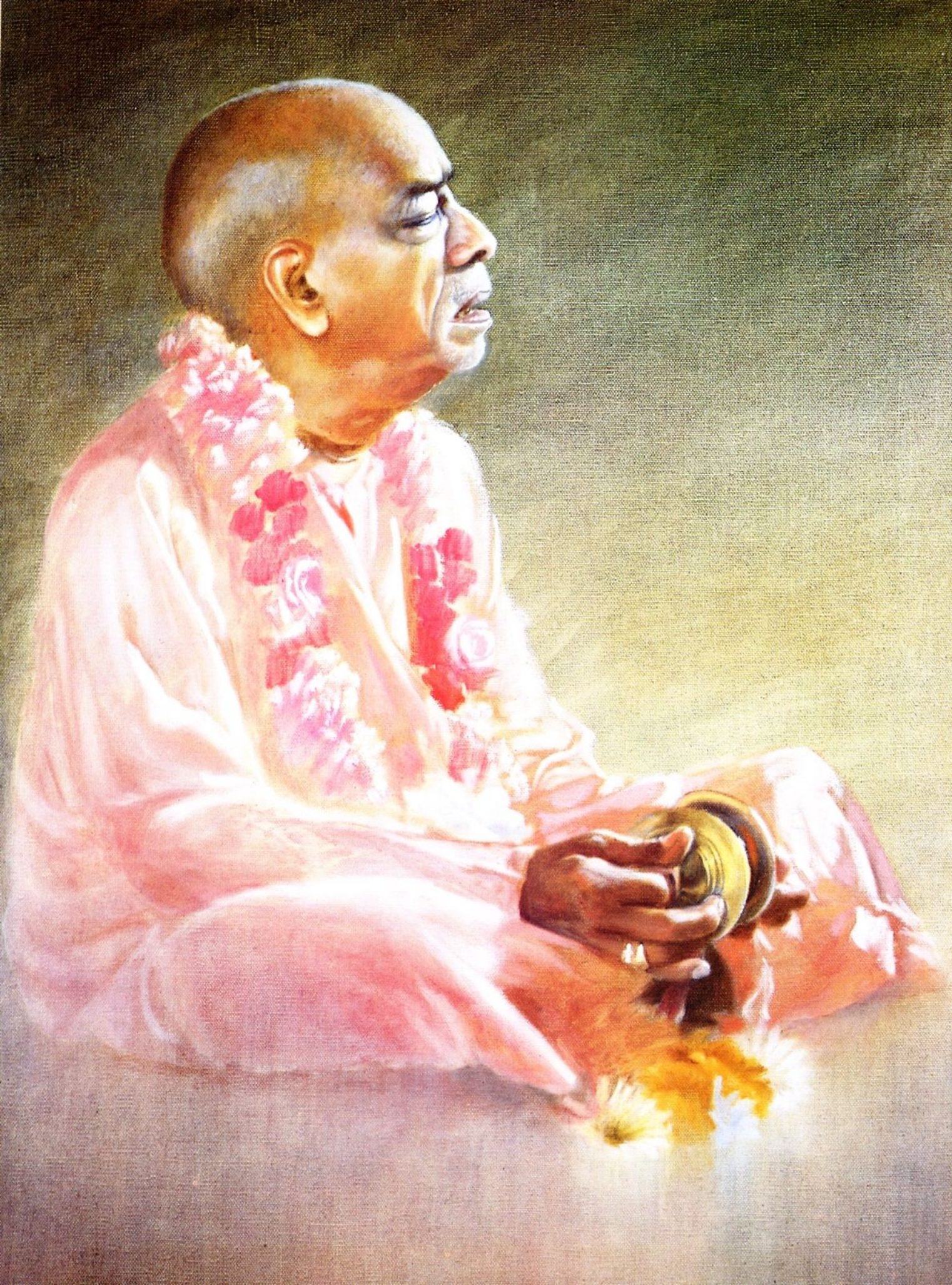
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COVER: The Lord in the Heart. When *yogīs* sit in meditation and look within, their aim is to realize this form of Lord Kṛṣṇa—known as Viṣṇu, "the All-pervading One." Lord Viṣṇu is present within the heart of every living being, and even within the atom. It is He who sustains the entire cosmos, and it is He from whom we get the intelligence to act in accordance with our karmic destiny—or in accordance with our desire to attain spiritual enlightenment. (Painting: Dhṛti-devī dāśī)



KṚṢṆA'S BLESSINGS IN THE CHANTING OF HIS NAME

January 1, 1969.

The Hare Kṛṣṇa movement has just arrived in Great Britain. And a gathering of Londoners interested in the movement listens to this message recorded for them by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Ladies and gentlemen: Please accept my greetings for the happy new year of 1969, and please accept the blessings of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for your kindly participating in this happy meeting of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared on earth five thousand years ago and gave us the unique philosophy and religious principles of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the shape of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Unfortunately, in the course of time, because things change and deteriorate in the material world, people deteriorated and forgot the art of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa again appeared as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu at the end of the fifteenth century to revive the same Kṛṣṇa consciousness atmosphere in human society.

Lord Caitanya's special gift to the fallen souls of the Age of Quarrel and Disagreement is to induce people in general—the religionists, the philosophers, everyone—to take to the chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. Lord Caitanya informed us that the Absolute Supreme Personality of Godhead can descend in transcendental sound and that when we chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* offenselessly we immediately contact Kṛṣṇa in His internal energy. Thus we immediately become purified from all the dirty things in our heart.

Our conditioned life of material existence is due to dirty things in our heart.

Originally we are all Kṛṣṇa conscious living beings, but because of our long association with matter, we have been transmigrating from one form of body to another, suffering in the cycle of birth and death in various species of life (numbering 8,400,000). Every one of us, although originally a spiritual soul and therefore qualitatively one in constitution with the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, has identified with our material body. Thus we are being subjected to various material pangs, specifically birth, old age, disease, and death.

The whole material civilization is a hard struggle against birth, old age, disease, and death. Against these perpetual problems human society is struggling fruitlessly in many ways. Some people are making material attempts, and some are making partially spiritual attempts. The materialists are trying to solve the problems through scientific knowledge, education, philosophy, ethics, literature, and so on. The salvationists are trying to solve the problems by putting forth various ways of discerning matter from spirit. And some people are trying to overcome birth and death through mystic *yoga*.

But all of these people—the materialists, the salvationists, and the *yogīs*—must know it for certain that in this Age of Kali, the Age of Quarrel and Dissension, there is no possibility of success without accepting the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the speaker of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, has therefore recommended that whether you are a fruitive worker, a salvationist, or a mystic *yogī*, if you actually want to be freed from the pangs of material existence you must take to the process of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the art of purifying our heart of the dust of material desires. As living entities we have desire as a component part of our constitution. Therefore we cannot stop desiring. But we can *purify* our desire. Killing desire is no solution, but *curing* desire—the diseased condition of desire—is the right solution. And when the dust of misunderstanding is cleared from our heart, we can see our real position and make steady progress toward the ultimate goal of life.

We have forgotten that the ultimate goal of our life is to revive our lost relationship with God, or Kṛṣṇa. To revive that relationship we should execute all of our activities in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We do not ask you to cease your present occupational duties; we simply recommend that you execute those duties in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu never recommended that one change his position in life. Rather, He favored the process

of staying in one's position and hearing about Kṛṣṇa from a bona fide source. To arrive at the real goal of life, one should give up the artificial process of philosophical speculation and instead submissively hear about the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which is contained in Vedic literatures such as *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. If one submissively chants the *mahā-mantra* (Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa) and hears without any misinterpretation the message of Kṛṣṇa as it is given in *Bhagavad-gītā*, then one does not have to change his position by some artificial method. Simply by chanting and hearing about Kṛṣṇa, you will come to the transcendental position, in which you can know God—His name, His form, His qualities, His pastimes, His paraphernalia, and so on.

We are, however, misled at present by leaders who have very little connection

with God, or Kṛṣṇa. Some of them deny the existence of God. Some of them try to put themselves in God's place. Some of them, utterly hopeless and frustrated at being unable to reach any right conclusion, think the ultimate goal of life is void, or zero. But Kṛṣṇa consciousness is solid ground for understanding God directly by the simple method of chanting His holy name.

Misled by spiritually blind leaders, people in general, who themselves are spiritually blind, have failed to achieve their desired success. But here is a method, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, that is directly offered by Kṛṣṇa. He plainly gave us His instructions five thousand years ago in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, and He confirmed them five hundred years ago in the form of Lord Caitanya.

So the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is a great art of life, very easy and sublime.

The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement gives you everything you want, without any artificial endeavor. It is transcendently colorful and full of transcendental pleasure. We prosecute Kṛṣṇa consciousness through singing, dancing, eating, and hearing philosophy received through the authorized disciplic succession of spiritual masters coming down from Kṛṣṇa Himself. Therefore Kṛṣṇa consciousness gives us complete spiritual success, without our undergoing any artificial change of our natural instincts.

Consciousness is already in you, but it is now dirty consciousness. What we have to do now is cleanse our consciousness of all dirty things and make it pure consciousness—Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And we can easily do this by the pleasant method of chanting the glorious holy name of God: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

We welcome your letters. Write to
BACK TO GODHEAD
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LETTERS

After reading Ravindra-svarupa dasa's article on Rabbi Kushner's book *Why Bad Things Happen to Good People*, one really begins to wonder how someone who's supposed to have some religious responsibility to others can get away with ideas like those put forth in his book. There are many people in the world who have some awesome disabilities but still manage to rise above it all and be productive even in the strict material sense. How much more successful one's life can be when dovetailed to the Lord's service.

The idea that God (Kṛṣṇa) is limited is just one big rationalization for man's greed, selfishness, and overall propensity for sense gratification, which he can blame on no one but himself. If we could really learn and understand the laws of karma and the science of self-realization as expounded by Srila Prabhupada and the ISKCON devotees, then there would not have to be a Beirut, a Belfast, etc., and *everyone's* karma would be a whole lot better.

Hugo R. Del Bove
Nutley, New Jersey

* * *

"The Freedom to Make Up Your Own Mind," which appeared in your November issue, is timely, informative, and challenging.

As a professor researching about the harmful effects of brainwashing and forced deprogramming, I can very well understand the agony, humiliation, and

mental anguish of the victims of deprogramming.

The Hare Krishna movement is based on an ancient thought system which is very deep, enriching, and transcendental. It is illuminating, tolerant, all-inclusive, rational, scientific, and penetrating. If people want to experience it, enjoy it, and transform their lives to the highest level, why deny them the opportunity?

Closed-mindedness, rigidity, deprogramming, and coercion are not the answers to the complex social dilemmas we are facing. What we need is openness, tolerance, dialogue, and understanding of the beliefs and attitudes of other people.

M. A. Suseelan
Associate Professor
Marywood College
Scranton, Pennsylvania

* * *

I have been a profound reader of BACK TO GODHEAD for the last three years and just cannot explain the pleasure it gives me. I must thank you for giving us this superb publication, which really has changed my life as well as my husband's.

I have been reading *Bhagavad-gita As It Is* in Gujarati, by A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, and I have come across a portion in which he says that *yajna* is necessary for human purification and that it is best done by *sankirtana-yajna*. Please explain what is *sankirtana-yajna*, how one should engage in these activities,

and also who is the right person who performs this. We have been living in Zambia for the last 30 years and have an utmost desire to introduce the Hare Krishna movement in this country, for the people and for ourselves.

Pushpaban Patel
Kitwe, Zambia

OUR REPLY: The word *yajña* means "a sacrifice to please the Supreme Lord." *Sankirtana* refers to chanting about and glorifying the Lord. And the best way to perform the *sankirtana-yajña* is simply to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. The best persons from whom to learn this chanting are the devotees of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. And because you sincerely desire to spread the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, the best person in Zambia to perform this chanting is *you*. (We're also sending a copy of your letter to our devotees who travel in Africa, so that perhaps they'll come to Zambia and encourage you.) Thank you for your kind letter.

* * *

Hare Kṛṣṇa! I have only read a few issues of BACK TO GODHEAD magazine, but what I have read has been wonderful. Your articles are interesting, informative, and highly understandable. When I read about Kim Perrine and her "deprogramming" horror, I was shocked! That someone would try to "cure" their son or daughter from a happy and productive life is horrible. Aren't their any laws against kidnapping an adult?

Cassandra Roberts
Brooklyn, New York

Doing Bhakti-Yoga in Your Home

GETTING STARTED

A new BACK TO GODHEAD feature.

by MADHYAMĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

This article is the first in a series that will give you practical guidance in performing *bhakti-yoga*, the *yoga* of devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Wherever you live, wherever you travel, at work, at school, or in your home, you can do *bhakti-yoga* and become Kṛṣṇa conscious.

There are many ways you can practice *bhakti-yoga*: hearing about Kṛṣṇa, chanting about Him, offering Him prayers, worshipping Him, and so on. But the basic rule behind every practice is simply this: Always remember Kṛṣṇa and never forget Him. All the other rules and regulations are servants of this one principle.

But why *should* you remember Kṛṣṇa? Why is remembering Kṛṣṇa, God, more significant than remembering last week's hockey scores or the Preamble to the Constitution? What will you get by remembering Kṛṣṇa that you won't get any other way?

Yoga means "link." By serving Kṛṣṇa with *bhakti*, devotion, we link up with Him. We are not our material bodies; we are spiritual souls. Somehow or other we've been overcome by Kṛṣṇa's external, material energy. But when we voluntarily use our material bodies and minds to serve the Lord by working for Him and remembering Him, our bodies and minds become spiritualized.

If you take an iron rod and put it into a blazing fire, it will become warm, hot, red-hot, and finally as hot as the fire itself. It will burn anything it touches, just as the fire would, because it will have developed the qualities of fire by associating with fire. In the same way, when you associate with Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Spiritual Person, you reawaken your original spiritual nature.

This reawakening of the soul is so relishable that once you've tasted this nectar of



servicing the Lord you'll automatically want to go on and on tasting it. Unlike other *yoga* systems, which people take up as a means to some end (*hatha-yoga* for health, for example), *bhakti-yoga* is simultaneously the means and the end. Just as a delicious meal pleases a hungry man, even from the first bite, *bhakti-yoga* gives transcendental pleasure to anyone who takes it up, even in the beginning stages.

And not only will you want to continue performing devotional service; you'll also find yourself losing the desire to exploit nature and other people for selfish ends. The inferior pleasures you can get from ordinary, material activities (including habits you may have been trying to kick for years) will seem tasteless compared to the superior pleasure of serving Kṛṣṇa.

If you think it's too difficult to add *bhakti-yoga* to your life, think again. Here's a surprise for you: You're already doing it! Just by reading through the pages of BACK TO GODHEAD magazine, you're taking the first step in *bhakti-yoga*: hearing about Lord Kṛṣṇa. What result can you expect? The scriptural classic *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* explains: If you regularly hear about Kṛṣṇa from those who are purely teaching about Him, everything hindering your spiritual advancement will be gradually destroyed. Just by hearing about Kṛṣṇa, you'll find yourself wanting more and more to serve Him and be with Him.

How does this happen? The Lord Himself does this for you. Wherever the Lord is spoken of, He Himself is present in the form of transcendental sound. This sound is as powerful as the Lord Himself, because He invests it with His potencies. Śrīla Prabhupāda, in his commentary on the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, says that out of love the Lord responds immediately to any sincere person who wants "to get admittance to the transcendental service of the Lord." When Lord Kṛṣṇa sees that someone has become eager to hear about Him, "the Lord acts from within that devotee in such a way that the devotee can easily go back to Him. The Lord is more anxious to take us back into His kingdom than we can desire. Anyone who desires to go back to Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa helps in all respects."

Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Spiritual Person. We are also spiritual persons, and *bhakti-yoga* is our eternal spiritual activity. It follows, then, that there must be a spiritual place, distinct from this temporary material world, where the activities of loving

(continued on page 13)

“MY SWEET LORD”

George Harrison talks about his music, his spiritual journey, and what he has found in the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

In the summer of 1969, before the dissolution of the most popular music group of all time, George Harrison produced a hit single, “The Hare Kṛṣṇa Mantra,” which he recorded with the devotees of the London Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Temple. The record became a best-seller in Europe and Asia, and soon the Hare Kṛṣṇa chant became a household word—especially in England, where the BBC featured the Hare Krishna Chanters, as they were then called, four times on the country’s most popular television program, Top of the Pops.

Today, nearly fifteen years later, the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra still plays a key role in the former Beatle’s life. In this conversation with Mukunda Goswami, a long-time personal friend and a leader of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, George reveals some memorable experiences he’s had while chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and describes in detail his deep personal realizations about the chanting and the philosophy of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. The conversation was taped on September 4, 1982, at George’s home in England.

Mukunda Goswami: Oftentimes you speak of yourself as a plainclothes devotee, a closet yogī or “closet Kṛṣṇa,” and millions of people all over the world have been introduced to the chanting by your songs. How did you first come in contact with Kṛṣṇa?

George Harrison: Through my visits to India. So by the time the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement first came to England in 1969, John and I had already gotten ahold of

Prabhupāda’s first album, *Kṛṣṇa Consciousness*. We had played it a lot and liked it. That was the first time I’d ever heard the chanting of the *mahā-mantra*.

Mukunda: When Gurudāsa, Śyāmasundara, and I [the Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees sent from America to open a temple in London] first came to England, you cosigned the lease on our first temple in central London, bought the Manor* for us, and financed the first printing of the book *Kṛṣṇa*. You hadn’t really known us for a very long time at all. Wasn’t that a kind of sudden change for you?

George: Not really, I always felt at home with Kṛṣṇa. You see, it was always a part of me. I think it’s something that’s been with me from my previous birth. Your coming to England and all that was just like another piece of a jigsaw puzzle that was coming together to make a complete picture. It had been slowly fitting together. That’s why I responded to you all the way I did when you first came to London. Let’s face it. If you’re going to have to stand up and be counted, I figured, “I would rather be with these guys than with those other guys over there.” It’s like that. I mean I’d rather be one of the devotees of God than one of the straight, so-called sane or normal people who just don’t understand that man is a spiritual being, that he has a soul. And I felt comfortable with

*Bhaktivedanta Manor, a seventeen-acre estate outside London, purchased by George in 1973 and donated to ISKCON for use as a temple and *yoga āśrama*.



you all, too, kind of like we’d known each other before. It was a pretty natural thing, really.

Mukunda: What was it that really got you started on your spiritual journey?

George: It wasn’t until the experience of the ‘60s really hit. You know, having been successful and meeting everybody we thought worth meeting and finding out they weren’t worth meeting, and having had more hit records than everybody else and having done it bigger than everybody else. It was like reaching the top of a wall and then looking over and seeing that there’s so much more on the other side. So



I felt it was part of my duty to say, "Oh, okay, maybe you are thinking this is all you need—to be rich and famous—but actually it isn't."

Mukunda: George, in your autobiography, *I, Me, Mine*, you said your song "Awaiting on You All" is about *japa yoga*, or chanting *mantras* on beads. You explained that a *mantra* is "mystical energy encased in a sound structure," and that "each *mantra* contains within its vibrations a certain power." But of all *mantras*, you stated, "the *mahā-mantra* [the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*] has been prescribed as the easiest and surest way for attaining

Realization in this present age." As a practitioner of *japa yoga*, what realizations have you experienced from chanting?

George: Prabhupāda* told me once that we should just keep chanting all the time, or as much as possible. Once you do that, you realize the benefit. The response that comes from chanting is in the form of bliss, or spiritual happiness, which is a much higher taste than any happiness found here in the material world. That's why I

*His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* (spiritual master) of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

say the more you do it, the more you don't want to stop, because it feels so nice and peaceful.

Mukunda: What is it about the *mantra* that brings about this feeling of peace and happiness?

George: The word *Hare* is the word that calls upon the energy that's around the Lord. If you say the *mantra* enough, you build up an identification with God. God's all happiness, all bliss, and by chanting His names we connect with Him. So it's really a process of actually having a realization of God, which all becomes clear with the expanded state of consciousness that

develops when you chant. Like I said in the introduction I wrote for Prabhupāda's *Kṛṣṇa* book some years ago, "If there's a God, I want to see Him. It's pointless to believe in something without proof, and Kṛṣṇa consciousness and meditation are methods where you can actually obtain God perception." You don't get it in five minutes. It's something that takes time, but it works because it's a direct process of attaining God and will help us to have pure consciousness and good perception that is above the normal, everyday state of consciousness.

Mukunda: How do you feel after chanting for a long time?

George: In the life I lead, I find that I sometimes have opportunities when I really get going at it, and the more I do it, I find the harder it is to stop, and I don't want to lose the feeling it gives me.

For example, once I chanted the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* all the way from France to Portugal, nonstop. I drove for about twenty-three hours and chanted all the way. It gets you feeling a bit invincible. The funny thing was that I didn't even know where I was going. I mean I had bought a map, and I knew basically which way I was aiming, but I couldn't speak French, Spanish, or Portuguese. But none of that seemed to matter. You know, once you get chanting, then things start to happen transcendently.

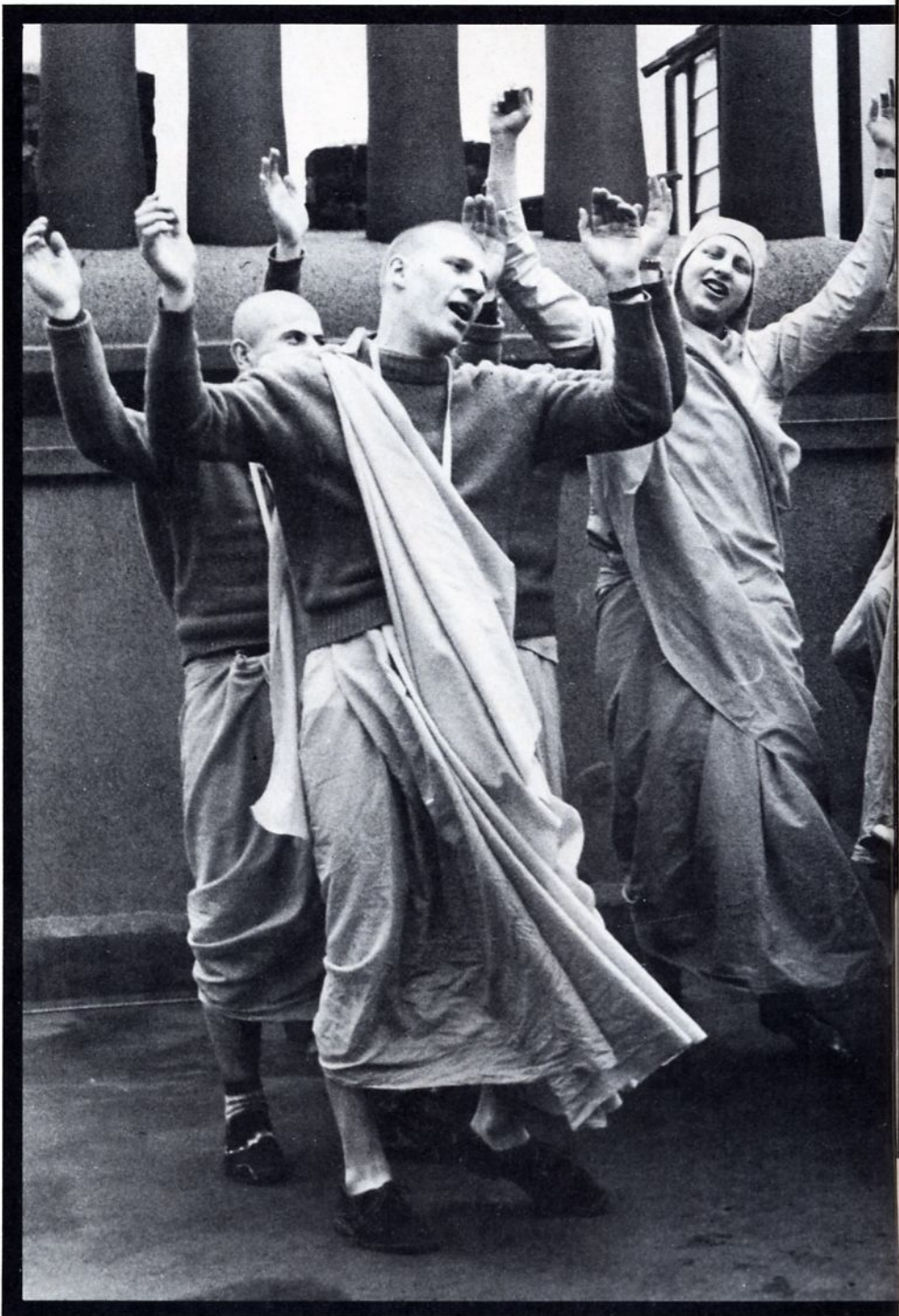
Mukunda: The *Vedas* inform us that because God is absolute, there is no difference between God the person and His holy name; the name *is* God. When you first started chanting, could you perceive that?

George: It takes a certain amount of time and faith to accept or to realize that there is no difference between Him and His name, to get to the point where you're no longer mystified by where He is. You know, like, "Is He around here?" You realize after some time, "Here He is—right here!" It's a matter of practice. So when I say that "I see God," I don't necessarily mean to say that when I chant I'm seeing Kṛṣṇa in His original form when He came five thousand years ago, dancing across the water, playing His flute. Of course, that would also be nice, and it's quite possible too. When you become real pure by chanting, you *can* actually see God like that, I mean personally. But no doubt you can feel His presence and know that He's there when you're chanting.

Mukunda: Can you think of any incident where you felt God's presence very strongly through chanting?

George: Once I was on an airplane that was in an electric storm. It was hit by lightning three times, and a Boeing 707 went over the top of us, missing by inches. I thought the back end of the plane had blown off. I was on my way from Los

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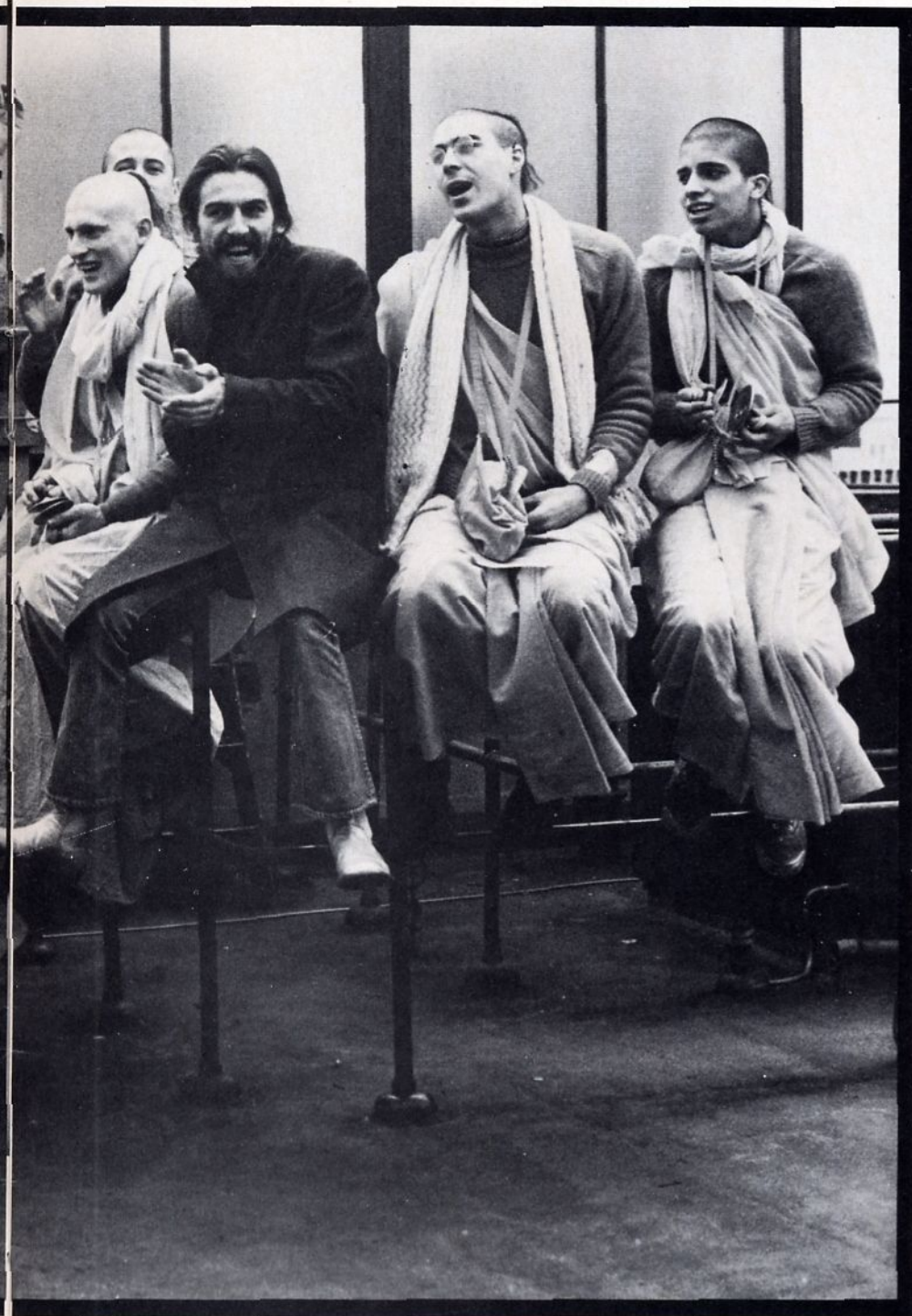


London, March 3, 1970: On the roof of the Apple recording studio, George and Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees of the

Angeles to New York to organize the Bangladesh concert. As soon as the plane began bouncing around, I started chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. The whole thing went on for about an hour and a half or two hours, the plane dropping hundreds of feet and bouncing all over in the storm, all the lights out and all these explosions, and everybody terrified. I ended up with my feet pressed against the seat in front, my seat belt as tight as it could be, gripping on the thing, and yelling Hare Kṛṣṇa,

Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare at the top of my voice. I know for me, the difference between making it and not making it was actually chanting the *mantra*. Peter Sellers also swore that chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa saved him from a plane crash once.

Mukunda: Did any of the other Beatles chant?
George: Before meeting Prabhupāda and all of you, I had bought that album Prabhupāda did in New York, and John and I listened to it. I remember we sang it for days, John and I, with ukulele banjos, sailing through the Greek Islands chanting



London temple celebrate the release of *Govinda*, a record produced by George and featuring the devotees.

Hare Kṛṣṇa. Like six hours we sang, because we couldn't stop once we got going. As soon as we stopped, it was like the lights went out. It went on to the point where our jaws were aching, singing the *mantra* over and over and over and over and over. We felt exalted; it was a very happy time for us.

Mukunda: Although John never made Hare Kṛṣṇa a big part of his life, he echoed the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in a hit song he wrote, "Instant Karma."

Now what's the difference between chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and meditation?

George: It's really the same sort of thing as meditation, but I think it has a quicker effect. I mean, even if you put your beads down, you can still say the *mantra* or sing it without actually keeping track on your beads. One of the main differences between silent meditation and chanting is that silent meditation is rather dependent on concentration, but when you chant, it's more of a direct connection with God.

Chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa is a type of meditation that can be practiced even if the mind is in turbulence. You can even

be doing it and other things at the same time. That's what's so nice. In my life there's been many times the *mantra* brought things around. It keeps me in tune with reality, and the more you sit in one place and chant, the more incense you offer to Kṛṣṇa in the same room, the more you purify the vibration, the more you can achieve what you're trying to do, which is just trying to remember God, God, God, God, God, as often as possible. And if you're talking to Him with the *mantra*, it certainly helps.

Mukunda: What else helps you to fix your mind on God?

George: Well, just having as many things around me that will remind me of Him, like incense and pictures. Just the other day I was looking at a small picture on the wall of my studio of you, Gurudāsa, and Śyāmasundara, and just seeing all the old devotees made me think of Kṛṣṇa. I guess that's the business of devotees—to make you think of God.

Mukunda: How often do you chant?

George: Whenever I get a chance.

Mukunda: Once you asked Śrīla Prabhupāda about a verse he quoted from the *Vedas*, in which it's said that when one chants the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa dances on the tongue and one wishes one had thousands of ears and thousands of mouths with which to better appreciate the holy names of God.

George: Yes, I think he was talking about the realization that there is no difference between Him standing before you and His being present in His name. That's the real beauty of chanting—you directly connect with God. I have no doubt that by saying *Kṛṣṇa* over and over again, He can come and dance on the tongue. The main thing, though, is to keep in touch with God.

Mukunda: So your habit is generally to use the beads when you chant?

George: Oh, yeah. I have my beads. I remember when I first got them, they were just big knobby globs of wood, but now I'm very glad to say that they're smooth from chanting a lot.

Mukunda: Do you generally keep them in the bag when you chant?

George: Yes. I find it's very good to be touching them. It keeps another one of the senses fixed on God. Beads really help in that respect. You know, the frustrating thing about it was in the beginning there was a period when I was heavy into chanting and I had my hand in my bead bag all the time. And I got so tired of people asking me, "Did you hurt your hand, break it or something?" In the end I used to say, "Yeah. Yeah. I had an accident," because it was easier than explaining everything. Using the beads also helps me to release a lot of nervous energy.

Mukunda: Some people say that if
(continued on page 22)

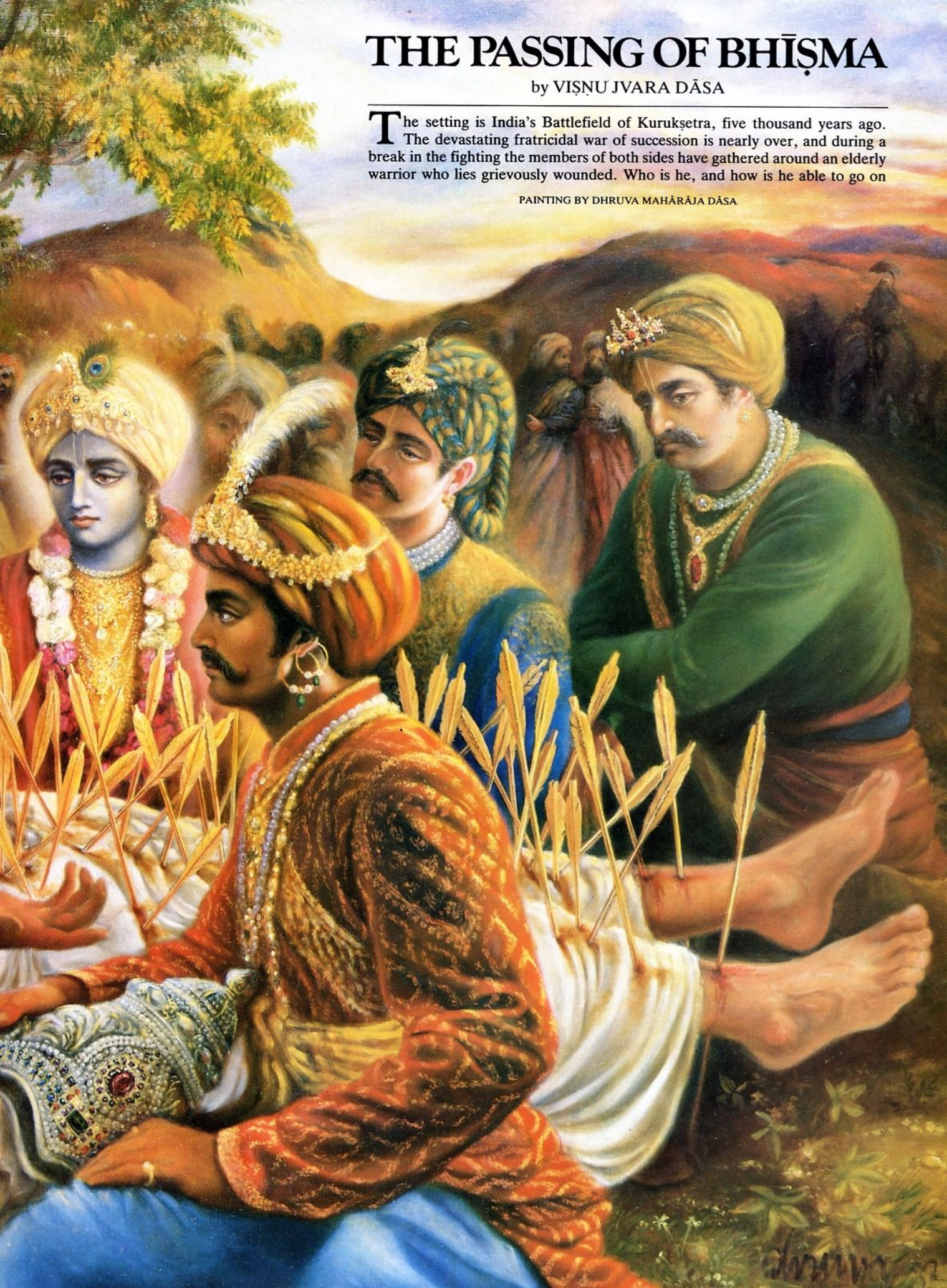


THE PASSING OF BHĪṢMA

by VIṢṆU JVARA DĀSA

The setting is India's Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, five thousand years ago. The devastating fratricidal war of succession is nearly over, and during a break in the fighting the members of both sides have gathered around an elderly warrior who lies grievously wounded. Who is he, and how is he able to go on

PAINTING BY DHRUVA MAHĀRĀJA DĀSA



living despite the many arrows that pierce his body?

He is the formidable Bhīṣmadeva, the most powerful warrior of his day and a great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. We find his history recounted in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and the *Mahābhārata*, two great epics of India's Vedic civilization.

Bhīṣma was the only son of the virtuous King Śantanu. Śantanu loved Bhīṣma dearly and gave him the best training, sending him to the sage Vasiṣṭha to learn spiritual science and to Paraśurāma, an incarnation of God, to learn military science. Bhīṣma matured into a greatly powerful and pious warrior.

A dutiful son, Bhīṣma tried to please his father in all respects. Once, King Śantanu fell in love with a certain fisherman's daughter of striking beauty. The king wanted to marry the girl, but her father wouldn't allow it unless his daughter's future son could ascend the throne. Śantanu couldn't agree, since Bhīṣma was his first-born. To resolve the impasse, Bhīṣma promised never to accept the throne. But the fisherman still refused, thinking that Bhīṣma might marry and have a son who could become king. At that point Bhīṣma vowed never to marry. Everyone was awestruck, since it was unheard-of for a member of the warrior caste to remain celibate. The fisherman then gave King Śantanu the hand of his daughter, and the king was so pleased with Bhīṣma that he gave him the boon of being able to die at a time of his own choosing. Thus we see that despite hundreds of wounds, Bhīṣma remains alive.

The figures gathered around Bhīṣmadeva are Lord Kṛṣṇa and the five Pāṇḍavas, headed by Yudhiṣṭhira. The Pāṇḍavas are the great-grandchildren of King Śantanu and Satyawatī, the fisherman's daughter. Because the father of the Pāṇḍavas, King Pāṇḍu, had died at an early age, they were raised by Bhīṣma in the house of their paternal uncle, Dhṛtarāṣṭra. Dhṛtarāṣṭra had one hundred sons, headed by Duryodhana. Duryodhana, his ninety-nine brothers, and the Pāṇḍavas grew up together in Dhṛtarāṣṭra's palace, but since the Pāṇḍavas were more proficient in all the games and sporting events, and since it was Yudhiṣṭhira, the eldest Pāṇḍava, who was in line to ascend the throne, Duryodhana became envious of Yudhiṣṭhira and his brothers. As time passed, this envy grew into a burning hatred, and Duryodhana constantly schemed how to wrest the kingdom from Yudhiṣṭhira.

As the Pāṇḍavas and Lord Kṛṣṇa kneel beside Bhīṣma, he tearfully recalls all the atrocities perpetrated against them by the unscrupulous Duryodhana. Once, Duryodhana built a house of shellac and invited the Pāṇḍavas to come and live in it with their mother, Queen Kuntī. Only a cryptic

THE YOGA DICTIONARY

The Sanskrit language is rich in words to communicate ideas about spiritual life, yoga, and God realization. This dictionary, appearing by installments in BACK TO GODHEAD, focuses upon the most important of these words (and, occasionally, upon relevant English terms) and explains what they mean. (For a guide to proper pronunciation, please see page 1.)

D **Devahūti**—The princess Devahūti was the daughter of King Manu and the wife of the sage Kardama. She and her husband underwent severe austerities, and later she became the mother of the incarnation of God known as Kapiladeva, who appeared many thousands of years ago, in the age known as the Satya-yuga.

Devahūti accepted her own son, Lord Kapiladeva, as her spiritual master, and He taught her the philosophy known as Sāṅkhya, which culminates in pure devotional service. Kapiladeva, the son of Devahūti, is the original teacher of the Sāṅkhya philosophy. His teachings to His mother are described in the Third Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Devakī—the devotee who served as the mother of Lord Kṛṣṇa when Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared on earth.

To enact His transcendental pastimes, the Supreme Lord arranges, by His spiritual potency, to be born as the son of His devotee. As explained in *Bhagavad-gītā*, this "birth" is entirely different from the birth of an ordinary living being, for the Lord is born not as a result of natural forces but by His own supernatural desire. The Lord is the father of all living beings, but He enjoys awarding the roles of father and mother to certain special devotees and acting as their son.

Just as Devahūti became the mother of Lord Kapiladeva, the incarnation of Godhead, Devakī became the mother of Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead in His original transcendental form, the origin of all incarnations.

Because of appearing as the son of Devakī, Kṛṣṇa is also known as Devakī-nandana. Later in His pastimes He became the foster son of Yaśodā and her husband, Mahārāja Nanda, the king of the cowherdmen in the village of Vṛndāvana. Therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa is also known as Yaśodā-nandana and Nanda-nandana. Lord Kṛṣṇa has innumerable transcendental names on account of His unlimited pastimes.

Lord Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā* that simply by understanding the transcendental nature of His birth and activities one can gain freedom from material existence and return to the spiritual world.

Dhanvantari—the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa who inaugurated the medical science. The ancient Vedic literature

deals with all types of knowledge, material and spiritual. It therefore includes a scientific system of medicine, known as *Āyur-veda*, to cure the diseases of embodied living beings.

In embodied life, one is inevitably afflicted by diseases, and embodied life itself is a symptom of the ultimate disease—the disease of repeated birth and death.

Because Dhanvantari is an incarnation of the Supreme Lord, by remembering His name one becomes free from this material disease. The chanting of the holy name of the Supreme Lord is the cure for the disease of birth and death.

Dharma—The word *dharma* is most often translated as "religion," but this translation is inaccurate because *dharma* refers to the inherent quality of an object, that which does not change. It is the *dharma* of fire to give off heat and light, the *dharma* of water to be wet. Religion can change, as one can change his faith from Christian to Muslim, or from Hindu to Jew. To understand our *dharma*, then, we must ascertain the constant quality of a living being.

That constant quality is service. One person serves another: husband serves wife, employee serves boss, student serves teacher, comrade serves the state; the list is endless.

But the only service fully true to our eternal nature is service to God. We are eternal, God is eternal, and service to God is also eternal. Therefore our eternal occupation is to render devotional service to God. This service is also known as *sanātana-dharma*, the eternal religion of every living being.

Dhīra—The Sanskrit word *dhīra* means "sober" or "undisturbed."

Life in the material world is compared to a whirlpool, swirling with the dualities of heat and cold, desire and disdain, happiness and distress, success and failure. One whose consciousness is steady and undisturbed amidst this whirlpool, who is fixed in transcendental consciousness, is called *dhīra*.

Lord Kṛṣṇa explains in *Bhagavad-gītā* that such a person clearly sees that the changing circumstances of the material world affect only the temporary material body but not the real self, the eternally existing soul within the body.

warning from Vidura, Dhṛtarāṣṭra's wise and saintly brother, enabled the Pāṇḍavas to escape unharmed when one of Duryodhana's henchmen set the house ablaze.

Undaunted, Duryodhana next tried to cheat the Pāṇḍavas in a rigged gambling match. On the advice of the evil Sakuni, an expert swindler, Duryodhana invited the Pāṇḍavas to come to the palace and enjoy "a friendly gambling match." In this ill-fated match, Yudhiṣṭhira lost all his wealth and position. Even then Duryodhana and Sakuni were unsatisfied, and they suggested that Yudhiṣṭhira bet his wife, Draupadī. Bound by the strict codes of his warrior caste, Yudhiṣṭhira reluctantly agreed, and Draupadī too was lost. Duryodhana's vicious cohorts then tried to disrobe her in full view of the august assembly. But she prayed fervently to Lord Kṛṣṇa to save her, and He supplied her an unlimited amount of cloth. She couldn't be disrobed! Still, the heinous attempt by Duryodhana and his men created between the two parties an intense hatred that eventually led to the Battle of Kurukṣetra.

It is in the aftermath of this battle that we find Bhīṣmadeva, surrounded by the Pāṇḍavas and Lord Kṛṣṇa. Bhīṣma was such a fierce and skillful fighter that he was virtually invincible; only by a trick was he mortally wounded. Now, in recognition of his exalted position and his profound devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa, many great saints and sages have also gathered to hear his last words.

While instructing and consoling Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīṣma sees that the astrologically auspicious moment for his death is fast approaching. He then fixes his mind and senses on the Lord, withdrawing them from anything else. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa says that whatever one thinks of at the time of death will determine one's

next life. "And if one thinks of Me," the Lord says, "he will attain to My eternal, spiritual kingdom." Bhīṣmadeva knows all this, and desiring to go back to Godhead, he concentrates his full attention on the beautiful form of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is mercifully kneeling beside him.

Bhīṣma's deep meditation on Kṛṣṇa raises his consciousness to a transcendental state, and he ceases to feel any pain from his wounds. Then Bhīṣma offers these sublime prayers to the Lord:

"Let me now invest my thinking, feeling, and willing solely in the all-powerful Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is always self-satisfied, but sometimes He enjoys transcendental pleasure by descending to the material world. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the intimate friend of Arjuna, has appeared on earth in His transcendental bluish form, which is attractive to everyone in the three worlds. May that Kṛṣṇa, with His glittering yellow dress and lotuslike face, be the sole object of my attraction. On the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, Kṛṣṇa's armor shone brightly, His flowing hair turned ashen from the dust upraised by the horses' hoofs, and beads of perspiration moistened His face. He enjoyed it when my sharp arrows pierced His skin. Let my mind be absorbed in these thoughts of Śrī Kṛṣṇa."

Kṛṣṇa promised to abstain from direct combat in the battle, so He took the role of Arjuna's charioteer. But when Bhīṣma threatened Arjuna's life, Kṛṣṇa, to protect His devotee, broke His promise. Kṛṣṇa got off the chariot and rushed toward Bhīṣma. It was then that Bhīṣma shot his arrows at the Lord. Unaffected by Bhīṣma's attack, Kṛṣṇa was apparently about to slay him when the day's fighting ended.

We may be puzzled to learn that a great

devotee of Kṛṣṇa attacked Him in battle and wounded Him—and that the Lord enjoyed this! The mystery is cleared up when we understand that Kṛṣṇa, like us, sometimes wants to fight, and that He likes to engage in mock-fighting with His devotees. Bhīṣma was both a great warrior and a great servant of the Lord, and he pleased Kṛṣṇa by fighting with Him on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra. The Lord's body, being pure spirit and thus indestructible, was of course not really wounded in the fight.

After completing his prayers to the Lord, Bhīṣma falls silent, stops breathing, and passes away. His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda explains this event as follows: "The stage attained by Bhīṣmadeva while quitting his material body is called *nirvikalpa-samādhi* because he merged his self totally in thoughts of the Lord by remembering His different activities, by chanting the glories of the Lord, and by seeing the Lord personally present before him. Thus all his activities became concentrated upon the Lord, without deviation. This is the highest stage of perfection, and it is possible for everyone to attain this stage by practicing devotional service."

Bhīṣmadeva is remembered in the Vedic literature for his unparalleled heroism, his great vow of celibacy, and his deep devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa. His glorious death confirms Kṛṣṇa's statements in *Bhagavad-gītā* that "the sober person is not bewildered by the change of body known as death" and "the self-realized soul is not disturbed even in the greatest difficulty." By fixing our minds on Kṛṣṇa and serving Him during our lifetime, we can, like Bhīṣma, cross over the ocean of material tribulations and enter the spiritual world at death.

GETTING STARTED

(continued from page 5)

devotional exchange can go on eternally. There is. It's called Goloka Vṛndāvana, and it's Lord Kṛṣṇa's eternal home, far beyond our material vision. Then you may ask, How can we take up *bhakti-yoga* while in this material world?

The pure devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who dedicate their lives to spreading the knowledge of *bhakti-yoga*, can create spiritual places even here in the material world. The centers of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness are such places. If I met you in the course of my day, and if you seemed interested, I would invite you to one of these centers, either for the famous Sunday feast or for an evening class. Then you could get a first-hand experience of doing *bhakti-yoga* with others interested in reviving

their Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

But for you, as for many people I meet, visiting a Hare Kṛṣṇa center may be impractical. Maybe you live too far away. Maybe your commitments to your job or family leave you little free time. Maybe you already belong to a spiritual fellowship, or maybe you're skeptical about any spiritual path (a common viewpoint in this age of cheaters).

In any case, please try *bhakti-yoga* in your own home. All the articles in this series are meant to help you do just that. Simply by reading BACK TO GODHEAD you've made a good start—you've begun hearing about Lord Kṛṣṇa. Next month's article tells you about another basic practice: chanting the Lord's holy names.

But you don't have to wait till next month's BACK TO GODHEAD comes to start chanting. There are no hard and fast rules. Simply chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-*

mantra: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. Take a little time out and try the chanting. Chant while you're driving to work, while you're standing in line at the supermarket, while you're walking to a class. If you watch television, turn down the volume during the commercials and chant (a double treat: not only will you gain spiritually, you'll miss a dose of Madison Avenue brainwashing). Chant out loud when you can. Chant silently if you'd rather not attract attention. However you do it, please try the chanting. Kṛṣṇa is personally present in His holy names, and in transcendental literature like the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and BACK TO GODHEAD magazine. Take Him into your life, into your home. If you do, you'll be well on your way along the road back to your eternal home, with Him.

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

Nobel Prizes for Fools

The following conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and some of his disciples took place in June 1974 during an early-morning walk in Geneva.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: All the big leaders in the world are foolishly thinking they are independent. They are just like the dog who forgets that he is controlled by his master. The dog doesn't know he's controlled. He's thinking, "I am now free. Rau! Rau! Rau!" But then with a little pull of the chain, the master stops all his nonsense.

Devotee: Especially in the Western countries, Śrīla Prabhupāda, people don't like to think they are controlled.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Therefore they are rascals. Kṛṣṇa directly says, *ahaṅkāra-vimūḍhātā kartāham iti manyate*: "The fools and rascals think 'I am doing everything.'" One is controlled at every step, yet he is thinking, "I am doing everything." Therefore he is a rascal. In spite of his big, big house, his nice road and good car, he is a rascal. He thinks he is independent, that he will not die, but as soon as *māyā* [the material energy] kicks on his face, he must die. Immediately. He may protest, "I have still got some business to do!" but *māyā* says "No, no, sir, you must die immediately." And he thinks he is not controlled. What is this nonsense?

So, real knowledge is to understand, "In spite of all my so-called advancement of civilization, I am controlled." That is the beginning of knowledge. Then we should think how to get out of this control. But if we think, "I am not controlled," then we are no better than the cats and dogs. That is explained in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. *Prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni*: by *prakṛti*, by the material nature, one is pulled by the ear—"Come here!"

"Yes, sir."

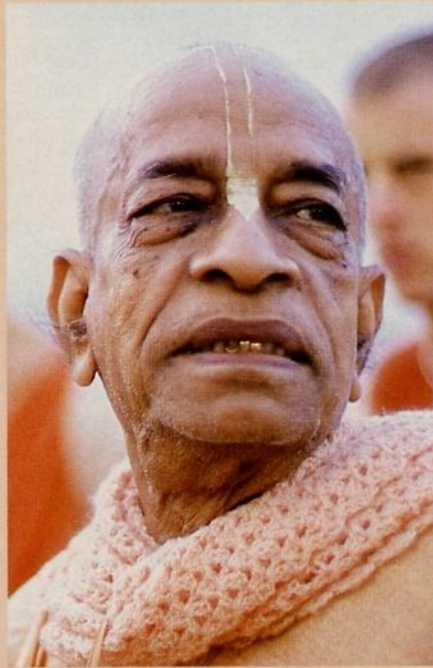
"Come here!"

"Yes, sir."

As soon as you eat a little more than you require, *māyā* says, "You must fast for three days." And you are not controlled? Just see how foolish these people are. And they are getting the Nobel Prize.

Devotee: No one has ever gotten the Nobel Prize for saying, "Yes, we are all controlled."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: This is because the men who are awarding the Nobel Prize are also rascals. It is a society of fools and rascals. Therefore my Guru Mahārāja [spiritual master] used to say, "This is a society of



the cheaters and the cheated."

Devotee: I have prepared an argument this morning.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: What is that?

Devotee: The psychologists have a theory that people are conditioned by their environment, their upbringing, their parents and teachers, and so on, and that because of this conditioning they act and think in a certain way. So the psychologists argue that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is just another kind of conditioning—that when you live in a Hare Kṛṣṇa temple you leave one kind of conditioning but you enter another kind of conditioning.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, we agree that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is conditioning, certainly. Your position is that you *must* be conditioned. If you become conditioned by God, that is your perfection. And if you become conditioned by *māyā*, that is your trouble. But in either case, you must be conditioned: you cannot be independent.

Unfortunately, you are *thinking* you are independent. That is your rascaldom. You should always think, "I must be conditioned. That is my constitutional position in life." In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa says, *mahātmānas tu mām pārtha daivīm prakṛtim āśritāḥ*: "The great souls, the *mahātmās*, are under My spiritual nature." So the devotees are still conditioned: they are under Kṛṣṇa's spiritual nature (*daivī prakṛti*).

First of all we must understand that our natural position is to be conditioned.

Now, by *whom* shall we be conditioned? Kṛṣṇa says, *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja*: "Become conditioned by Me; surrender to Me. Then you will be happy." Those who are thinking, "We shall not be conditioned" are in *māyā* [illusion]. The *Vedas* say, *nityo nityānām cetanaś cetanānām eko bahūnām yo vidadhāti kāmān*: "Among all the eternal living beings, one is supplying all the rest with their necessities of life." So God is supplying us with the necessities of life. Therefore we should recognize that we are living under His control and serve Him. Suppose you are giving me all my necessities of life. Shouldn't I reciprocate by rendering some service to you?

No one can be independent; it is not possible. These rascals are putting forward a wrong philosophy—this idea of "complete independence." They are simply becoming more and more conditioned by Kṛṣṇa's external, material energy.


Devotee: Their idea is that since our problems come from the wrong kind of conditioning during childhood, we should be given the opportunity in childhood of a good family, a good education, and so on, and in that way there won't be a bad reaction later on in life.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That means a child should be given the chance for better conditioning. But conditioning must go on. If they say, "Let the child be given freedom!" they are fools.

Devotee: They say that the child can have freedom when he receives good conditioning.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Bad conditioning or good conditioning—where is the freedom? Instead of bad conditioning, they are suggesting good conditioning; but that is not freedom. Suppose you are in the prison house. You are heavily conditioned. But even when you are released and get your so-called freedom, you are still controlled by the laws of the state. You are not free. You have simply gone from bad conditioning to good conditioning. And if you obey the state laws, then you are a good citizen and can live peacefully. But you are still controlled. How can you think you are free? That is foolishness.

Devotee: So in other words, your idea is to give people a better conditioning?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, not a *better* conditioning—the *best* conditioning. The best conditioning is to be under the control of Kṛṣṇa. That is the first-class way of life, and that is the only way to get free of the control of the material energy. 

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 TEN

Bhāgavatam Is the Answer to All Questions

As our serialized presentation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam continues, Śuka-deva Gosvāmī, the speaker of the Bhāgavatam, concludes his description of the Lord's universal form. Then he declares that the personal form of the Lord is supreme, beyond both the universal form worshiped by the pantheists and the impersonal form sought after by the monists.

TEXT 32

गुणात्मकानीन्द्रियाणि भूतादिप्रभवा गुणाः ।
मनः सर्वविकारात्मा बुद्धिर्विज्ञानरूपिणी ॥३२॥

guṇātma-kānīndriyāṇi
bhūtādi-prabhavā guṇāḥ
manaḥ sarva-vikārātmā
buddhir vijñāna-rūpiṇī

guṇa-ātmakāni—attached to the qualities; indriyāṇi—the senses; bhūta-ādi—material ego; prabhavāḥ—influenced by; guṇāḥ—the modes of material nature; manaḥ—the mind; sarva—all; vikāra—affection (happiness and distress); ātmā—form; buddhiḥ—intelligence; vijñāna—deliberation; rūpiṇī—featuring.

TRANSLATION

The sense organs are attached to the modes of material nature, and the modes of material nature are products of the false ego. The mind is subjected to all kinds of material experiences (happiness and distress), and the intelligence is the feature of the mind's deliberation.

PURPORT

Illusioned by the material nature, the living entity identifies with false ego. More clearly, when the living entity is entrapped by the material body, he at once identifies with the bodily relationships, forgetting his own identity as spirit soul. This false ego associates with different modes of material nature, and thus the senses become attached to the modes of material nature. Mind is the instrument for feeling different material experiences, but intelligence is deliberative and can change everything for the better. The intelligent person, therefore, can attain salvation from the illusion of material existence by proper use of intelligence. An intelligent person can detect the awkward position of material existence and thus begin to inquire as to what he is, why he is subjected to different kinds of miseries, and how to get rid of all miseries, and thus, by good association, an advanced intelligent person can turn towards the better life of self-realization. It is advised, therefore, that an intelligent person associate with the great sages and saints who are on the path of salvation. By such association, one can receive instructions which are able to slacken the conditioned soul's attachment for matter, and thus the intel-

ligent man gradually gets rid of the illusion of matter and false ego and is promoted to the real life of eternity, knowledge and bliss.

TEXT 33

एतद्भगवतो रूपं स्थूलं ते व्याहृतं मया ।
महादिभिश्चावरणैरष्टभिर्हिरावृतम् ॥३३॥

etaḥ bhagavato rūpaṁ
sthūlaṁ te vyāhṛtaṁ mayā
mahy-ādibhiḥ cāvaraṇair
aṣṭabhir bahir āvṛtam

etat—all these; bhagavataḥ—of the Personality of Godhead; rūpaṁ—form; sthūlam—gross; te—unto you; vyāhṛtam—explained; mayā—by me; mahī—the planets; ādibhiḥ—and so on; ca—unlimitedly; avaraṇaiḥ—by coverings; aṣṭabhiḥ—by eight; bahiḥ—external; āvṛtam—covered.

TRANSLATION

Thus by all this, the external feature of the Personality of Godhead is covered by gross forms such as those of planets, which were explained to you by me.

PURPORT

As explained in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.4), the separated material energy of the Personality of Godhead is covered by eight kinds of material coverings: earth, water, fire, air, sky, mind, intelligence and false ego. All these are emanations from the Personality of Godhead as His external energy. These coverings are just like the covering of clouds for the sun. The cloud is a creation of the sun, yet it actually covers the eyes so that one cannot see the sun. The sun cannot be covered by the clouds. The cloud can at utmost extend a few hundreds of miles in the sky, but the sun is far greater than millions of miles. So a hundred-mile covering is not competent to cover millions of miles. Therefore, one of the various energies of the Supreme Personality of Godhead cannot, of course, cover the Lord. But these coverings are created by Him to cover the eyes of the conditioned souls who want to lord it over the material nature. Actually the conditioned souls are covered by the illusory creative cloud of matter, and the Lord reserves the right of not being exposed to their eyes. Because they have no eyes of transcendental vision and because they cannot see the Personality of Godhead, they therefore deny the existence of the Lord and the transcendental form of the Lord. The covering of the gigantic material feature is accepted by such men with a poor fund of knowledge, and how this is so is explained in the following verse.

TEXT 34

अतः परं सूक्ष्मतममव्यक्तं निर्विशेषणम् ।
अनादिमध्यनिधनं नित्यं वाच्यनसः परम् ॥३४॥

ataḥ paraṁ sūkṣmatamam
avyaktaṁ nirviśeṣaṇam

*anādi-madhyā-nidhanam
nityam vān-manasaḥ param*

ataḥ—therefore; *param*—transcendental; *sūkṣmatamam*—finer than the finest; *avyaktam*—unmanifested; *nirviśeṣanam*—without material features; *anādi*—without beginning; *madhyā*—without an intermediate stage; *nidhanam*—without end; *nityam*—eternal; *vāk*—words; *manasaḥ*—of the mind; *param*—transcendental.

TRANSLATION

Therefore beyond this [gross manifestation] is a transcendental manifestation finer than the finest form. It has no beginning, no intermediate stage and no end; therefore it is beyond the limits of expression or mental speculation and is distinct from the material conception.

PURPORT

The gross external body of the Supreme is manifested at certain intervals, and thus the external feature or form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is not the eternal form of the Lord, which has no beginning, no intermediate stage and no end. Anything which has a beginning, interim and end is called material. The material world is begun from the Lord, and thus the form of the Lord, before the beginning of the material world, is certainly transcendental to the finest, or the finer material conception. The ether in the material world is considered to be the finest. Finer than the ether is mind, intelligence, and false ego. But all eight of the outward coverings are explained as outer coverings of the Absolute Truth. The Absolute Truth is therefore beyond the expression and speculation of the material conception. He is certainly transcendental to all material conceptions. This is called *nirviśeṣanam*. One should not, however, misunderstand *nirviśeṣanam* as being without any transcendental qualifications. *Viśeṣanam* means qualities. Therefore *nir* added to it means that he has no material qualities or variegatedness. This nullifying expression is described in four transcendental qualifications, namely unmanifested, transcendental, eternal, and beyond the conception of *mind or word*. Beyond the limits of words means negation of the material conception. Unless one is transcendentially situated, it is not possible to know the transcendental form of the Lord.

TEXT 35

अमुनी भगवद्भूये मया ते ह्यनुवर्णिते ।
उभे अपि न गृह्णन्ति मायासृष्टे विपश्चितः ॥३५॥

*amunī bhagavad-rūpe
mayā te hy anuvarṇite
ubhe api na gṛhṇanti
māyā-sṛṣṭe vipaścitaḥ*

amunī—all these; *bhagavat*—unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *rūpe*—in the forms; *mayā*—by me; *te*—unto you; *hi*—certainly; *anuvarṇite*—described respectively; *ubhe*—both; *api*—also; *na*—never; *gṛhṇanti*—accepts; *māyā*—external; *sṛṣṭe*—being so manifested; *vipaścitaḥ*—the learned one who knows.

TRANSLATION

Neither of the above forms of the Lord, as just described unto you from the material angle of vision, is accepted by the pure devotees of the Lord who know Him well.

PURPORT

The impersonalists think of the Absolute Personality of Godhead in two different ways, as above mentioned. On the one hand they worship

the Lord in His *viśva-rūpa*, or all-pervading universal form, and on the other they think of the Lord's unmanifested, indescribable, subtle form. The theories of pantheism and monism are respectively applicable to these two conceptions of the Supreme as gross and subtle, but both of them are rejected by the learned pure devotees of the Lord because they are aware of the factual position. This is very clearly mentioned in the Eleventh Chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, which records Arjuna's experience of the *viśva-rūpa* of the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

*adṛṣṭa-pūrvam hr̥ṣito 'smi dṛṣtvā
bhayena ca pravayathitām mano me
tad eva me darśaya deva rūpaṁ
prasīda deveśa jagan-nivāsa
(Bg. 11.45)*

Arjuna, as a pure devotee of the Lord, never previously saw the contemplated universal form of the Lord (*viśva-rūpa*), but when he did see it, his curiosities were satisfied. But he was not happy to see such a form of the Lord because of his attachment as a pure devotee. He was afraid to see the gigantic form of the Lord. He therefore prayed to the Lord to assume His four-handed Nārāyaṇa or Kṛṣṇa form, which alone could please Arjuna. Undoubtedly the Lord has the supreme potency to exhibit Himself in multifarious forms, but the pure devotees of the Lord are interested in His forms as eternally exhibited in the abode of the Lord, known as the *tripād-vibhūti* or kingdom of God. The Lord in the *tripād-vibhūti* abode exhibits Himself in two forms, either with four hands or with two hands. The *viśva-rūpa* exhibited in the material manifestation has unlimited hands and unlimited dimensions with everything unlimited. The pure devotees of the Lord worship Him in His Vaikuṅṭha forms as Nārāyaṇa or Kṛṣṇa. Sometimes the same Vaikuṅṭha forms of the Lord are in the material world also by His grace as Śrī Rāma, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Narasimhadeva, etc., and thus the pure devotees also worship them. Usually the features shown in the material world have no existence in the Vaikuṅṭha planets, and thus they are not accepted by the pure devotees. What the pure devotees worship from the very beginning are eternal forms of the Lord existing in the Vaikuṅṭha planets. The non-devotee impersonalists imagine the material forms of the Lord, and ultimately they merge in the impersonal *brahmajyoti* of the Lord, whereas the pure devotees of the Lord are worshipers of the Lord both in the beginning and also in the perfect stage of salvation, eternally. The worship of the pure devotee never stops, whereas the worship of the impersonalist stops after his attainment of salvation, when he merges in the impersonal form of the Lord known as the *brahmajyoti*. Therefore the pure devotees of the Lord are described here as *vipaścita*, or the learned who are in the knowledge of the Lord perfectly.

TEXT 36

स वाच्यवाचकतया भगवान् ब्रह्मरूपधृक् ।
नामरूपक्रिया घृते सकर्मकर्मकः परः ॥३६॥

*sa vācya-vācakatayā
bhagavān brahma-rūpa-dhṛk
nāma-rūpa-kriyā dhatte
sakarmākarmakaḥ paraḥ*

saḥ—He; *vācya*—by His forms and activities; *vācakatayā*—by His transcendental qualities and entourage; *bhagavān*—the Personality of Godhead; *brahma*—absolute; *rūpa-dhṛk*—by accepting visible forms; *nāma*—name; *rūpa*—form; *kriyā*—pastimes; *dhatte*—accepts; *sakarma*—engaged in work; *akarmakaḥ*—without being affected; *paraḥ*—transcendence.

TRANSLATION

He, the Personality of Godhead, manifests Himself in a transcendental form, being the subject of His transcendental name,

quality, pastimes, entourage and transcendental variegatedness. Although He is unaffected by all such activities, He appears to be so engaged.

PURPORT

Whenever there is a need of material creation, the transcendental Personality of Godhead accepts forms in the material world for creation, maintenance and destruction. One should be intelligent enough to know His activities in truth and not be biased to conclude that He descends to the material world by accepting a form created by material nature. Any form accepted from the material nature has its affection for everything done in the material world. A conditioned soul who accepts a material form for undergoing a certain term of material activities is subjected to the laws of matter. But here in this verse it is clearly stated that although the forms and activities of the Lord appear to be the same as those of a conditioned soul, they are supernatural and impossible for the conditioned soul. He, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is always unaffected by such activities. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.14) the Lord says:

*na mām karmāṇi limpanti
na me karma-phale sprhā
iti mām yo 'bhijānāti
karmabhir na sa badhyate*

The Lord is never affected by the activities which He apparently performs by His different incarnations and personalities, nor does He have any desire to achieve success by fruitive activities. The Lord is full by His different potencies of wealth, strength, fame, beauty, knowledge and renunciation, and thus He has no reason for physical exertion like the conditioned soul. Therefore an intelligent person who can distinguish between the transcendental activities of the Lord and the activities of the conditioned souls is also not bound by the reactions of activities. The Lord as Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Śiva conducts the three modes of material nature. From Viṣṇu is born Brahmā, and from Brahmā is born Śiva. Sometimes Brahmā is a separated part of Viṣṇu, and sometimes Brahmā is Viṣṇu Himself. Thus Brahmā creates the different species of life all over the universe, which means that the Lord creates the whole manifestation either by Himself or through the agency of His authorized deputies.

TEXTS 37-40

प्रजापतीन्मनून् देवान्पृथीन् पितृगणान् पृथक् ।
सिद्धचारणगन्धर्वान् विद्याध्रासुरगुहकान् ॥३७॥
किन्नराप्सरसो नागान् सर्पान् किम्पुरुषान्नरान् ।
मातृ रक्षःपिशाचांश्च प्रेतभूतविनायकान् ॥३८॥
कूर्माम्बुजोन्मादवेतालान् यातुधानान् ग्रहानपि ।
खगान्मृगान् पशून् वृक्षान् गिरीन्नुपसरीसृपान् ॥३९॥
द्विविधाश्चतुर्विधा येऽन्ये जलस्थलनभौकसः ।
कुशलाकुशला मिश्राः कर्मणां गतयस्त्विमाः ॥४०॥

*prajā-patīn manūn devān
ṛṣīn pitr-gaṇān pṛthak
siddha-cāraṇa-gandharvān
vidyādhra-sura-guhyakān*

*kinnarāpsaraso nāgān
sarpān kimpuruṣān narān
mātṛ rakṣaḥ-piśācāś ca
preta-bhūta-vināyakān*

*kūśmāṇḍonmāda-veṭālān
yātudhānān grahān api*

*khagān mṛgān paśūn vṛkṣān
gīrīn nṛpa sarisṛpān*

*dvi-vidhāś catur-vidhā ye 'nye
jala-sthala-nabhaukasah
kuśalākuśalā miśrāḥ
karmanām gatayas tv imāḥ*

prajā-patīn—Brahmā and his sons like Dakṣa and others; *manūn*—the periodical heads like Vaivasvata Manu; *devān*—like Indra, Candra and Varuṇa; *ṛṣīn*—like Bhṛgu and Vasiṣṭha; *pitṛ-gaṇān*—the inhabitants of the Pitā planets; *pṛthak*—separately; *siddha*—the inhabitants of the Siddha planet; *cāraṇa*—the inhabitants of the Cāraṇa planet; *gandharvān*—the inhabitants of the Gandharva planets; *vidyādhra*—the inhabitants of the Vidyādhara planet; *asura*—the atheists; *guhyakān*—the inhabitants of the Yakṣa planet; *kinnara*—the inhabitants of the Kinnara planet; *apsarasah*—the beautiful angels of the Apsarā planet; *nāgān*—the serpentine inhabitants of Nāgaloka; *sarpān*—the inhabitants of Sarpaloka (snakes); *kimpuruṣān*—the monkey-shaped inhabitants of the Kimpuruṣa planet; *narān*—the inhabitants of earth; *mātṛ*—the inhabitants of Mātṛloka; *rakṣaḥ*—the inhabitants of the demoniac planet; *piśācān*—the inhabitants of Piśācaloka; *ca*—also; *preta*—the inhabitants of Pretaloka; *bhūta*—the evil spirits; *vināyakān*—the goblins; *kūśmāṇḍa*—will-o'-the-wisp; *unmāda*—lunatics; *veṭālān*—the jinn; *yātudhānān*—a particular type of evil spirit; *grahān*—the good and evil stars; *api*—also; *khagān*—the birds; *mṛgān*—the forest animals; *paśūn*—the household animals; *vṛkṣān*—the ghosts; *gīrīn*—the mountains; *nṛpa*—O King; *sarisṛpān*—reptiles; *dvi-vidhāḥ*—the moving and the standing living entities; *catuḥ-vidhāḥ*—living entities born from embryos, eggs, perspiration and seeds; *ye*—others; *anye*—all; *jala*—water; *sthala*—land; *nabha-okasah*—birds; *kuśala*—in happiness; *akuśalāḥ*—in distress; *miśrāḥ*—in mixed happiness and distress; *karmanām*—according to one's own past deeds; *gatayaḥ*—as result of; *tu*—but; *imāḥ*—all of them.

TRANSLATION

O King, know from me that all living entities are created by the Supreme Lord according to their past deeds. This includes Brahmā and his sons like Dakṣa, the periodical heads like Vaivasvata Manu, the demigods like Indra, Candra and Varuṇa, the great sages like Bhṛgu, Vyāsa and Vasiṣṭha, the inhabitants of Pitrloka and Siddhaloka, the Cāraṇas, Gandharvas, Vidyādharas, Asuras, Yakṣas, Kinnaras and angels, the serpentine, the monkey-shaped Kimpuruṣas, the human beings, the inhabitants of Mātṛloka, the demons, Piśācas, ghosts, spirits, lunatics and evil spirits, the good and evil stars, the goblins, the animals in the forest, the birds, the household animals, the reptiles, the mountains, the moving and standing living entities, the living entities born from embryos, from eggs, from perspiration and from seeds, and all others, whether they be in the water, land or sky, in happiness, in distress or in mixed happiness and distress. All of them, according to their past deeds, are created by the Supreme Lord.

PURPORT

The varieties of living entities are mentioned in this list, and, with no exception from the topmost planet down to the lowest planet of the universe, all of them in different species of life are created by the Almighty Father, Viṣṇu. Therefore no one is independent of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (14.4) the Lord therefore claims all living entities as His offspring in the following verse:

*sarva-yoniṣu kaunteya
mūrtayaḥ sambhavanti yāḥ
tāsāṁ brahma mahad yonir
ahaṁ bīja-pradaḥ pitā*

The material nature is compared to the mother. Although every living being is seen to come out of the mother's body, it is still a fact that the mother is not the ultimate cause of such a birth. The father is the ultimate cause of birth. Without the father's seed, no mother can give birth to a child. Therefore the living beings in different varieties of forms and positions within the innumerable universes are all born of the seeds of the Almighty Father, the Personality of Godhead, and only to the man with a poor fund of knowledge they appear to be born of the material nature. Being under the material energy of the Supreme Lord, all living entities beginning from Brahmā down to the insignificant ant are manifested in different bodies according to their past deeds.

The material nature is one of the energies of the Lord (Bg. 7.4). The material nature is inferior in comparison to the living entities, the superior nature. The superior nature and inferior nature of the Lord combine to manifest all universal affairs.

Some of the living entities are relatively happy in better conditions of life, whereas others are in distressed conditions of life. But factually, none of them are actually happy in material conditional life. No one can be happy in prison life, although one may be a first-class prisoner and another a third-class prisoner. The intelligent person should not try to be promoted from third-class prison life to first-class prison life, but should try to be released from the prison altogether. One may be promoted to first-class prisoner, but the same first-class prisoner is again degraded to a third-class prisoner in the next term. One should try to be free from prison life and go back home, back to Godhead. That is the real goal for all types of living entities.

TEXT 41

सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति तिस्रः सुरनृनारकाः ।
तत्राप्येकैकशो राजन् भिद्यन्ते गतयस्त्रिधा ।
यदैकैकतरोऽन्याभ्यां स्वभाव उपहन्यते ॥४१॥

*sattvaṁ rajas tama iti
tisraḥ sura-nṛ-nārakāḥ
tatrāpy ekaikaśo rājan
bhidyante gatayas tridhā
yadaikaikatara 'nyābhyāṁ
sva-bhāva upahanyate*

sattvaṁ—the mode of goodness; *rajaḥ*—the mode of passion; *tamaḥ*—the mode of darkness; *iti*—thus; *tisraḥ*—the three; *sura*—demigod; *nṛ*—human being; *nārakāḥ*—one who is suffering hellish conditions; *tatra api*—even there; *ekaikaśaḥ*—another; *rājan*—O King; *bhidyante*—divide into; *gatayaḥ*—movements; *tridhā*—three; *yadā*—at that time; *ekaikataraḥ*—one in relation with another; *anyābhyām*—from the other; *sva-bhāvaḥ*—habit; *upahanyate*—develops.

TRANSLATION

According to the different modes of material nature—the mode of goodness, the mode of passion and the mode of darkness—there are different living creatures, who are known as demigods, human beings and hellish living entities. O King, even a particular mode of nature, being mixed with the other two, is divided into three, and thus each kind of living creature is influenced by the other modes and acquires its habits also.

PURPORT

The living entities individually are being conducted by a particular mode of nature, but at the same time there is every chance of their being influenced by the other two. Generally, all conditioned souls in the material engagement are influenced by the mode of passion because every one of them is trying to lord it over the material nature to fulfill his individual desire. But in spite of the individual mode of passion, there is always the chance of being influenced by the other modes of nature by association. If one is in good association he can develop the mode of goodness, and if in bad association he may develop the mode of darkness or ignorance. Nothing is stereotyped. One can change his habit by good or bad association, and one has to become intelligent enough to discriminate between good and bad. The best association is the service of the devotees of the Lord, and by that association one can become the highest qualified man by the grace of the Lord's pure devotees. As we have already seen in the life of Śrīla Nārada Muni, he became the topmost devotee of the Lord simply by the association of pure devotees of the Lord. By birth he was the son of a maidservant and had no knowledge of his father and no academic education, even of the lowest status. But simply by associating with the devotees and by eating the remnants of their foodstuff, he gradually developed the transcendental qualities of the devotees. By such association, his taste for chanting and hearing the transcendental glories of the Lord became prominent, and because the glories of the Lord are nondifferent from the Lord, he got direct association with the Lord by means of sound representation. Similarly, there is the life of Ajāmila (Sixth Canto), who was the son of a *brāhmaṇa* and was educated and trained properly in the discharge of the duties of a *brāhmaṇa*, but who in spite of all this, because he contacted the bad association of a prostitute, was put into the path of the lowest quality of *caṇḍāla*, or the last position for a human being. Therefore the *Bhāgavatam* always recommends the association of the *mahat*, or the great soul, for opening the gate of salvation. To associate with persons engaged in lording it over the material world means to enter into the darkest region of hell. One should try to raise himself by the association of the great soul. That is the way of the perfection of life.

TEXT 42

स एवेदं जगद्धाता भगवान् धर्मरूपधृक् ।
पुष्णाति स्यापयन् विश्वं तिर्यङ्नरसुरादिभिः ॥४२॥

*sa evedaṁ jagad-dhātā
bhagavān dharmarūpa-dhṛk
puṣṇāti sthāpayan viśvaṁ
tiryaṅ-nara-surādibhiḥ*

saḥ—He; *eva*—certainly; *idam*—this; *jagat-dhātā*—the maintainer of the entire universe; *bhagavān*—the Personality of Godhead; *dharmarūpa-dhṛk*—assuming the form of religious principles; *puṣṇāti*—maintains; *sthāpayan*—after establishing; *viśvaṁ*—the universes; *tiryak*—living entities lower than the human beings; *nara*—the human beings; *sura-ādibhiḥ*—by the demigod incarnations.

TRANSLATION

He, the Personality of Godhead, as the maintainer of all in the universe, appears in different incarnations after establishing the creation, and thus He reclaims all kinds of conditioned souls amongst the humans, the nonhumans and the demigods.

(continued in next issue)



Every Town and Village

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

North American Hare Kṛṣṇa Leaders Hold Conference



Presidents of the North American Hare Kṛṣṇa centers at their recent two-day conference in Washington, D.C.

Washington, D.C.—On October 28, the presidents of the North American centers of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement gathered here for a two-day conference to share in

spiritual fellowship—and to share ideas about how to foster Kṛṣṇa consciousness in their local areas.

The movement has fifty-seven centers

in the United States and Canada.

Each of the temples of ISKCON, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, is separately constituted, with its own president, vice-president, and secretary.

Each temple is, in effect, a separate spiritual community, and the head of each community is the temple president. He is a spiritual leader who teaches and counsels devotees, and he organizes the work of the temple, coordinating who does what, where, and when.

He makes sure the silver on the altar gets polished, the flower garlands get made on time, the cars repaired, the account books balanced, guests courteously received. He sees to it that the temple community properly observes the many sacred festivals throughout the year. And he's also the one who leads the devotees in their work of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness by distributing Kṛṣṇa conscious books, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, and giving out *prasādam*, sanctified food.

The temple presidents, in turn, are responsible to the society's Governing Body Commission, whose two dozen members, each in a different part of the world, have the duty of keeping ISKCON straight on the spiritual course set for it by ISKCON's Founder-Ācārya, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

West Gets First Man-Lion Deity

The Bavarian Forest, West Germany—Millions of years ago, Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared on earth in His fierce form of Nṛsiṃhadeva (half-man, half-lion) to protect His dear devotee Prahlāda from his demonic father's depredations. Now, for the first time outside India, a Deity of Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva has been formally installed in a temple—the temple at Nava-Jiyāḍa-Nṛsiṃha-Kṣetra, the Hare Kṛṣṇa farm deep in the Bavarian Forest.

For three days devotees from the United States, India, Argentina, and Germany and several other European countries held an elaborate installation ceremony, complete with a fire sacrifice and a formal bathing of the Deity. Australian-born Gaura-Keśava dāsa, a *brāhmaṇa* priest fully trained in southern India, performed the sacred ceremonies strictly in accord with scriptural regulations. And Śrīla Harikeśa Swami, who oversees the society's affairs in northern, central, and eastern Europe, personally bathed the Deity.



The Deity of Nṛsiṃhadeva, Lord Kṛṣṇa's form as half-man, half-lion, sits triumphantly on His throne in the Hare Kṛṣṇa temple in West Germany's Bavarian Forest.



Lord Kṛṣṇa's Cuisine

Spiritual Fasting

With spiritual fasting, you may not make headlines,
but you'll make headway on the path back to Godhead.

Text and photo by
VIŚĀKHĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

What do Mahatma Gandhi, Dick Gregory, Jane Fonda, Norman Mailer, Bolivian dissidents, British suffragettes, and Irish revolutionaries have in common? Well, for one thing, at one time or another and for one reason or another, they've all fasted. Materially their fasting was somewhat successful, whether it was undertaken to free India from British domination, turn public opinion against the Vietnam War, lose weight, win amnesty for political prisoners, get the right to vote, or what have you.

But how about spiritually? It's not that

merely by starving we're sure to make spiritual progress. A lot depends on our purpose. Fasting for some political purpose may help us reach some political goal. But the Vedic teachings direct us beyond such goals. Fasting, say the Vedic scriptures, is meant to help us control the mind and senses so we can advance in spiritual realization; it's not for any other purpose. This may sound like a hard-nosed, short-sighted viewpoint, but before we make a hard-nosed, short-sighted judgment, let's take a closer look.

Say I'm overweight and want to whittle

away some extra pounds. (In Western countries, losing weight is the most common reason people fast.) And say I summon my utmost determination and fast to shed those extra pounds. Still, I don't solve the problem that made me overweight to begin with: poor eating habits. So I'm much like the proverbial elephant who bathes thoroughly in a river and then emerges only to roll on the muddy riverbank. What is the use of such a bath? Or, as Judith Dobrzynski says in the last sentences of her book *Fasting, a Way to Well-Being*: "It is always better to eat a well-balanced, moderate diet and to practice good living habits to ensure good health. There are no shortcuts to that goal."

The material goals achieved by fasting are like everything else material: temporary and limited. India is free of British rule, but it is not free of daily economic, political, and social crises, nor of drought, floods, poverty, and all the ills that accompany industrialization. The Vietnam War is over, but other wars are flaring up regularly. Similarly, you may regain your health by fasting, but for how long? Disease is an inevitable part of material life.

But a transcendentalist's fast is entirely different: his goals are neither temporary nor limited. He doesn't begin his fast with a press conference to alert the public, nor does he step on the scales daily to see his pound-down progress. He doesn't even long for the day when he can once again enjoy apple pie à la mode without remorse or guilt. In fact, the most advanced transcendentalists fast inadvertently—they actually forget to eat!

For such advanced souls, this forgetfulness is the result not of severe self-abnegation but of spontaneous pure love of God. For instance, Uddhava, a great scholar and a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa, is described like this in the Vedic classic *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*: "He was one who even in his childhood, at the age of five years, was so absorbed in the service of Lord Kṛṣṇa that when he was called by his mother for breakfast, he did not wish to have it." Similarly, Lord Caitanya's foremost disciples, the six Gosvāmīs, were so absorbed in devotional service and remembrance of the Lord that they also neglected eating.

We can understand this preoccupation to a small degree. Sometimes we get so caught up in a novel or TV show that even when someone calls us it doesn't register; it "goes in one ear and out the other." But we can't imitate the ecstasy of Kṛṣṇa's great devotees whose attention is so absorbed in the Supreme Lord that they forget to eat.

For those of us who are not on this exalted platform of spontaneous devotion to the Lord, the scriptures mention

specific observances that will help us come to this platform. As far as fasting goes, we fast on the appearance days of the Lord and His empowered representatives, and on Ekādaśī. (Ekādaśī is the eleventh day after each full moon and the eleventh day after each new moon.) On these days we try to concentrate our attention and energy on transcendental activities—hearing about and discussing Kṛṣṇa consciousness—and to minimize our bodily demands. In other words, the goal is spiritual advancement, self-realization.

There are different ways to observe Ekādaśī. You may fast the entire day; you may eat only fruit; you may eat only fruit, milk, milk products, and root vegetables

(such as potatoes, beets, white radishes, and peanuts) that are very simply spiced. But most commonly, devotees observe Ekādaśī by abstaining from all grains and beans. In other words, they avoid rice, wheat, corn, stringbeans, peas, *dāls* (soups made from dried beans), and spices that have been mixed with flour, like asafetida.

Although Ekādaśī is not difficult to follow, the results, materially and spiritually, are most beneficial. For one thing, this kind of fasting is good for your health, and it saves food too. (If Ekādaśī were generally observed, tons of food could be saved for people who really need it.) Besides that, this simple austerity helps us become

religious. The *Brahma-vaivarta Purāna*, one of the oldest scriptures known to man, states, “One who observes Ekādaśī is freed from all kinds of reactions to sinful activities and advances in pious life.” On the other hand, even if you’re a world-famous politician or a top-ranking comedian, if you sacrifice eating simply for material reasons your sacrifices are denigrated by Lord Kṛṣṇa: “Sacrifices performed without faith in the Supreme are nonpermanent. They are useless both in this life and the next” (Bg. 17.28).

Here are a few simple Ekādaśī recipes you can try for Kṛṣṇa’s pleasure. To find out when the next Ekādaśī is, look on page 31.

(Recipes by Yamunā-devī dāśī)

Creamy Cashew-Nut Chutney (*Kaju Chatni*)

This mild-tasting, velvety-smooth chutney has an outstanding flavor and is an excellent raw-food dip for fresh vegetables. Mixed with a little yogurt, it makes an excellent salad dressing.

Preparation time: 5 minutes

Yield: About ¾ cup

- 1 tablespoon fresh coriander leaves, minced
- 1 cup raw split or broken cashew nuts
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 to 3 teaspoons fresh ginger root, peeled and minced fine
- ½ to 2 teaspoons hot green chilies, seeded and minced fine
- ¼ to ½ cup water

1. Combine all the ingredients in a blender and blend for 30 seconds. Stop the motor, scrape the mixture down toward the blade, cover, and blend another 15 seconds. If necessary, add a little more water to insure a smooth purée.

2. Transfer the chutney to a small bowl and offer to Kṛṣṇa immediately. Covered, the chutney will keep in a refrigerator for up to 2 days. Since the chutney will thicken when it sits, before serving add a little water until it returns to its original creamy, moist consistency.

Water-Chestnut-Flour or Banana-Flour Halava (*Singara Halava*)

This halava is a fluffy, sweet pudding with a texture akin to that of mashed potatoes. Prepared without grains, it is a quite popular dessert served on Ekādaśī fasting days.

Preparation time: 20 minutes

Yield: 4 or 5 servings

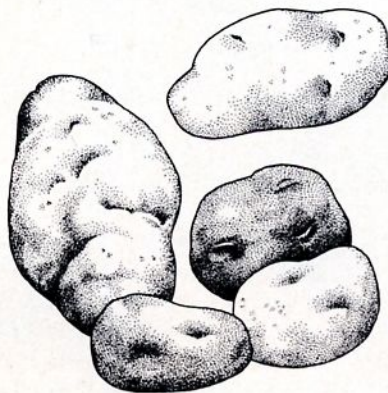
- ¾ to 1 cup milk
- ½ to ¾ cup sugar or honey
- ¼ teaspoon cardamom powder
- ⅛ teaspoon nutmeg powder

- ½ cup ghee (clarified butter)
- 1 cup banana flour or water-chestnut flour, sifted
- 2 tablespoons chopped walnuts or almonds
- 2 tablespoons chopped raisins

1. Combine the milk and sweetener in a blender, cover, and blend for 1½ minutes. Remove and add the powdered spices.

2. Heat the ghee in a 2-quart saucepan over a medium flame, sprinkle in the sifted flour, and slowly stir-fry for about 8 minutes or until the flour is lightly browned.

3. While stirring the flour-and-ghee mixture with one hand, slowly pour in the



sweetened milk, and then cook until the liquid is fully absorbed and the halava’s texture is light and fluffy.

4. Dish the halava into individual serving bowls or one large serving bowl and garnish with the chopped nuts and raisins. Offer to Kṛṣṇa hot.

Quick-and-Easy Sautéed Potatoes (*Sukhe Aloo*)

This is perhaps the most classic of all Ekādaśī potato preparations.

Preparation time: 25 minutes

Servings: 4

- ½ teaspoon black pepper, ground coarse
- ½ tablespoon dry-roasted cumin seeds, crushed coarse

½ teaspoon *chat masālā*, if available (try an Indian grocery)

- ½ cup plain yogurt
- 1½ pounds fresh potatoes suitable for boiling
- 3 tablespoons ghee or vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon salt

1. Peel the potatoes, cut them into 1-inch cubes, steam until tender, and cool.

2. Combine the black pepper, cumin seeds, *chat masālā*, and yogurt in a 1-quart mixing bowl.

3. Drop in the chunks of potato and gently toss and roll them in the seasoned yogurt. Set aside and marinate for 15 minutes.

4. Heat the ghee or vegetable oil in a heavy 10-inch frying pan over a medium to medium-high flame until a haze forms over the surface. Add the potatoes and salt, and then stir-fry until the potatoes form a golden crust. Offer to Kṛṣṇa hot.

Deep-Fried Mashed-Vegetable Croquettes (*Kacha Kela Bada*)

Preparation time: 25 minutes

Yield: 12 balls

- ½ pound fresh potatoes suitable for boiling
- ½ pound ripe bananas
- ½ pound colocasia root (try a specialty store)
- 1¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper, ground coarse
- 1 to 3 teaspoons hot green chilies, minced fine
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- ½ cup banana flour or water-chestnut flour
- 2½ to 3 cups ghee, vegetable oil, or nut oil

1. Wash the potatoes, peel, cut into 1-inch cubes, and steam until tender. Do the same with the bananas and colocasia root.

2. Mash together or purée chunks of potato, banana, and colocasia root. Then place in a bowl and knead in the salt, pepper, chilies, and lemon juice. Now knead in the flour until the dough is smooth.

3. Divide the dough into 12 smooth, round balls. Heat the ghee or oil in a deep frying vessel until the temperature reaches 350° F (use a frying thermometer). Slip in 6 balls at a time and fry, gently turning, until they are evenly cooked to a deep-reddish color. Remove with a slotted spoon and fry the remaining balls. Offer to Kṛṣṇa piping hot.

“MY SWEET LORD”

(continued from page 9)

everyone on the planet chanted Hare Kṛṣṇa, they wouldn't be able to keep their minds on what they were doing. In other words, if everyone started chanting, some people ask if the whole world wouldn't just grind to a halt. They wonder whether people would stop working in factories, for example.

George: No. Chanting doesn't stop you from being creative or productive. It actually helps you concentrate. I think this would make a great sketch for television: Imagine all the workers on the Ford assembly line in Detroit, all of them chanting “Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa” while bolting on the wheels. Now that would be wonderful. It might help out the auto industry, and probably there would be more decent cars too.

Mukunda: We've talked a lot about *japa*, or personalized chanting. But there's another type, called *kīrtana*, when one chants congregationally, in a temple or on the streets with a group of devotees. *Kīrtana* generally gives a more supercharged effect, like recharging one's spiritual batteries, and it gives others a chance to hear the holy names and become purified.

Actually, I was with Śrīla Prabhupāda when he first began the group chanting in Tompkins Square Park on New York's Lower East Side in 1966.

George: Yes, going to a temple or chanting with a group of other people—the vibration is that much stronger. Of course, for some people it's easy just to start chanting on their beads in the middle of a crowd, while other people are more comfortable chanting in the temple. But part of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is trying to tune in all the senses of all the people: to experience God through all the senses, not just by experiencing Him on Sunday, through your knees by kneeling on some hard wooden kneeler in the church. But if you visit a temple, you can see pictures of God, you can see the Deity form of the Lord, and you can just hear Him by listening to yourself and others say the *mantra*. It's just a way of realizing that all the senses can be applied toward perceiving God, and it makes it that much more appealing, seeing the pictures, hearing the *mantra*, smelling the incense, flowers, and so on. That's the nice thing about your movement. It incorporates everything—chanting, dancing, philosophy, and *prāsādam*.* The music and dancing is a serious part of the process too. It's not just something to burn off excess energy.

* Vegetarian foods that have been spiritualized by having been offered to Lord Kṛṣṇa with love and devotion.

Mukunda: We've always seen that when we chant in the streets, people are eager to crowd around and listen. A lot of them tap their feet or dance along.

George: It's great, the sound of the *karatālas* [cymbals]. When I hear them from a few blocks away, it's like some magical thing that awakens in me. Without their really being aware of what's happening, people are being awakened spiritually. Of course, in another sense, the *kīrtana* is always going on, whether we're hearing it or not.

Now, all over the place in Western cities, the *saṅkīrtana* party has become a common sight. I love to see these *saṅkīrtana* parties, because I love the whole idea of the devotees mixing it up with everybody, giving everybody a chance to remember. I wrote in the *Kṛṣṇa* book introduction,

*No matter how much
money you've got,
it doesn't necessarily
make you happy.
You have to find your
happiness with the
problems you have,
and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.*

“Everybody is looking for Kṛṣṇa. Some don't realize that they are, but they are. Kṛṣṇa is God . . . and by chanting His Holy Names, the devotee quickly develops God-consciousness.”

Mukunda: You know, Śrīla Prabhupāda often said that after a large number of temples were established, most people would simply begin to take up the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa within their own homes, and we're seeing more and more that this is what's happening. Our worldwide congregation is very large—in the millions.

George: I think it's better that it is spreading into the homes now. There are a lot of “closet Kṛṣṇas,” you know. There's a lot of people out there who are just waiting, and if it's not today, it will be tomorrow or next week or next year.

Back in the '60s, whatever we were all getting into, we tended to broadcast it as loud as we could. I had had certain realizations and went through a period where I was so thrilled about my discoveries and realizations that I wanted to shout and tell it to everybody. But there's a time to shout

it out and a time not to shout it out. A lot of people went underground with their spiritual life in the '70s, but they're out there in little nooks and crannies and in the countryside, people who look and dress straight, insurance salesman types, but they're really meditators and chanters, closet devotees.

Prabhupāda's movement is doing pretty well. It's growing like wildfire really. How long it will take until we get to a Golden Age where everybody's perfectly in tune with God's will I don't know; but because of Prabhupāda, Kṛṣṇa consciousness has certainly spread more in the last sixteen years than it has since the sixteenth century, since the time of Lord Caitanya.† The *mantra* has spread more quickly and the movement's gotten bigger and bigger. It would be great if everyone chanted. Everybody would benefit by doing it. No matter how much money you've got, it doesn't necessarily make you happy. You have to find your happiness with the problems you have, not worry too much about them, and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare.

Mukunda: In 1969 you produced a single called “The Hare Krishna Mantra,” which eventually became a hit in many countries. That tune later became a cut on the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Temple album, which you also produced. A lot of people in the recording business were surprised by this, your producing songs for and singing with the Hare Kṛṣṇas. Why did you do it?

George: Well, it's just all a part of service, isn't it? Spiritual service, in order to try to spread the *mantra* all over the world. Also, to try and give the devotees a wider base and a bigger foothold in England and everywhere else.

Mukunda: How did the success of this record of Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees chanting compare with some of the rock musicians you were producing at the time, like Jackie Lomax, Splinter, and Billy Preston?

George: It was a different thing. Nothing to do with that really. There was much more reason to it. There was less commercial potential in it, but it was much more satisfying to do, knowing the possibilities that it was going to create, the connotations it would have just by doing a three-and-a-half-minute *mantra*. That was more fun really than trying to make a pop hit record. It was the feeling of trying to utilize your skills or job to make it into some spiritual service to Kṛṣṇa.

Mukunda: When Apple, the recording company, called a press conference to promote the record, the media seemed to be

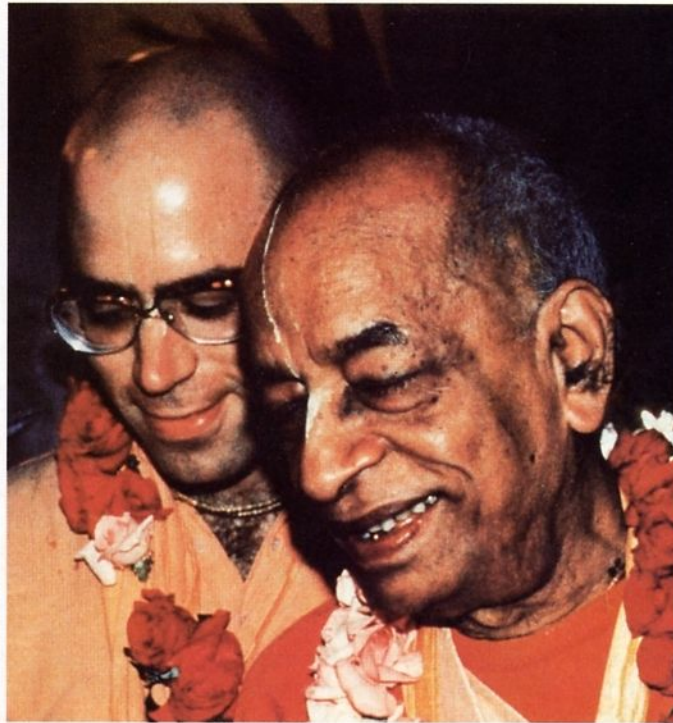
(continued on page 30)

† The great saint, mystic, and incarnation of Kṛṣṇa who popularized the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa and founded the modern-day Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

How I Met My Spiritual Master

“He sat on a raised dais with an Arabic tapestry behind him, and his powerful presence dominated the assembly.”

by ŚRĪLA TAMAL KRISHNA GOSWAMI



As personal secretary to Śrīla Prabhupāda, Śrīla Tamal Krishna Goswami shared many intimate moments with him, as here in India in 1976.

On that cool, windy mid-March evening, as I walked the five blocks from my residence to the San Francisco Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa temple, I was not aware of the great fortune that awaited me: the first meeting with my eternal spiritual master, His Divine Grace Om Viṣṇupāda 108 Śrī Śrīmad A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. I could not imagine how the course of my destiny would be totally shaped by the event which was about to take place. The previous day I had attended the Sunday Love Feast and with great pleasure had consumed plate after plate of delicious *prasādam*, food that had first been offered to Lord Kṛṣṇa. The devotees had invited me to the next evening's program, when their spiritual master would be personally present to lead *kīrtana* (chanting) and deliver a lecture. Walking through the thick San Francisco mist, I tried to anticipate what the meeting would be like.

* * *

I was raised by my parents without any religious training. Though they had discouraged any form of religious practice, even as a child, in the privacy of my room I

(Excerpted from *Servant of the Servant*, by Śrīla Tamal Krishna Goswami. © 1982 by the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust.)

would lie in bed at night and pray to God to protect those I loved. My parents were fairly moral, and by American standards modest in their habits. They were non-smokers, drank little, and were inclined toward intellectual and cultural pursuits. They maintained a liberal openmindedness, and as I grew of age they placed few restrictions upon me. At nineteen, when I left the shelter of their home to seek my own path, they made no objection.

In college I had delved into the thoughts of the great philosophers and literary personalities of the past. Echoing my goddess upbringing, I would argue with my logic professor, a devout Catholic, against the rationality of the existence of a God. Though seemingly irritated by my strong

protests, he confidentially admitted enjoying such discussions and was certain that I was actually a theist at heart. In fact, I was most impressed studying the works of those who were mystical in their visions—men like Aquinas, Strindberg, and Hesse. Being eager for my own “spiritual visions,” I tried to induce these with the aid of intoxicants; but ultimately my independent quest for higher truth remained unfulfilled.

I tried practicing macrobiotic dieting, nearly starving my body by eating only dried grains to increase my “yang nature.” But I was unable to

maintain the severe restrictions and would break my week-long fasts with ice cream and doughnuts. Practicing *hatha-yoga* had hardly been more successful. The *āsanas* and *prāṇāyāmas* had not brought me the lofty goals promised in the *yoga* books.

* * *

In 1966 New York's Lower East Side became a mecca for poets, philosophers, musicians, pseudospiritualists, and just plain drop-outs. I was a mixture of all these. A well-advertised Cosmic Love-In attracted me to Tompkins Square Park one October afternoon. I had brought my flute and was improvising music along with the other musicians present. We were playing intently, our eyes closed, when

suddenly a great vibration was heard throughout the park. It was the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, chanted by the devotees who had come to participate in the festival on the order of their spiritual master. For the rest of the afternoon their *kīrtana* entirely dominated the festival, and willingly or unwillingly I was swept up in the chanting for nearly two hours. Being unfamiliar with the *mantra*, I could not make out the exact words. Therefore, sometimes I accompanied the *kīrtana* by playing my flute, while at other times I joined in with the singing, imitating the sounds as best I could, while dancing along with the devotees.

Though at the time I could not understand the significance of the event, an informal initiation had taken place. The initiators, *guru* and Kṛṣṇa, had both been present. The spiritual master had been represented by his disciples, who were empowered to chant by his order. And Kṛṣṇa had been present in the form of His holy names.

It was not the first time I had heard of Kṛṣṇa. When in high school, I had been attracted to reading books on Brahmanism and Hinduism, and in college my favorite course had been an art history elective on the art and architecture of Indian temples. The character of Kṛṣṇa had frequently appeared in the numerous wall paintings, bas-reliefs, and sculptures of ancient India. To my art history professor, as well as in the books I had read, Kṛṣṇa had been merely a mythological hero of a bygone age, but for the devotees who had dedicated their lives in His service, Kṛṣṇa was the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the cause of all causes, and the goal of their existence. Hearing the name of Kṛṣṇa from their lips was a totally different experience. Because they had firm faith in chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, their association caused the holy name of the Lord to enter my heart.

After the Cosmic Love-In, some of my friends began attending the early-morning meditation at the small storefront temple on Second Avenue. Although I was living only a few blocks away, I did not take advantage of this opportunity. I preferred to practice *yoga* and meditation in the privacy of my own apartment. Once, perhaps a month after the park *kīrtana*, a sincere friend showed me a picture of the Swami who was leading the programs at the temple. I looked upon the beautiful, compassionate face of Śrīla Prabhupāda, his eyes beckoning, seeming to say, "There is no need to suffer any longer. Give up your stubborn pride and surrender. Just follow me; I will lead you." But I could sense that Prabhupāda's gaze, while soft and kind, nevertheless demanded a surrendered adherence I was not yet ready to offer. At the time I could not recognize that I was seeing my eternal spiritual master, whose

service would one day become the heart and soul of my life. I was unwilling to yet give up my false independence; therefore I suffered unnecessarily through the winter of 1966, although I had ample opportunity to accept the safe shelter of Prabhupāda's lotus feet.

* * *

By the time spring arrived, I had decided to leave New York for the more natural, inviting atmosphere of the West Coast. But I was disappointed to find San Francisco similar to what I had hoped to leave behind in New York. A chance acquaintance led me north, to Mendocino County, where a free-thinking bohemian, Lou Gottlieb, had opened his large, wooded, hilly farm to the public as "an act of love and peace." Anyone could come and live at Morning Star Ranch and do whatever he pleased.

Wanting to be alone, I found a secluded place within the woods and made my residence in the hollow of a giant redwood tree. With the cement-and-harsh-steel world far in the distance, I learned to survive without electricity, running water, and all the conveniences afforded by modern civilization. I now turned to nature for all my provisions, adopting the ways of the forest's other inhabitants, the trees, birds, and animals. I forged a close bond with the elements: the clear, cold mountain water that flowed in the brook, and the deep, penetrating warmth of the sun. And at night I gazed up to the heavens. The steady movements of the planets and stars, each in its own orbit, the changing of the seasons providing water, heat, and light to the countless inhabitants of earth—all bore testimony to a great master plan. The man-made, artificial environment of New York City had hidden this truth. Certainly, I thought, there is a God whose supreme intelligence has made such wonderful arrangements!

Living in such a natural setting, free from so many of the disturbances of city life, my mind became more tranquil and contemplative. It was actually Kṛṣṇa's arrangement to prepare me for chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda had visited Morning Star a month before my arrival, and his presence had left an indelible impression upon the residents. Daily they would hold impromptu *kīrtanas*, chanting enthusiastically with whatever instruments were available. By now I was ready, and I would emerge from the forest to join in the chanting whenever the *kīrtanas* took place. To remain living in the forest seemed a lonely prospect. There was no one to whom I could express my new-found realizations. And how was I going to make further advancement?

At the Unitarian Church, Śrīla Prabhupāda sat on a raised area and the devotees sat before him, between the pews and the altar. Just as in the temple, he began by chanting prayers to the previous spiritual masters and then chanted Hare Kṛṣṇa. I felt more closely identified with the devotees than with the persons in the audience.

I returned to the city, spending the winter of '67 in San Francisco, moving from one friend's house to another. My last residence was a small room in the Haight-Ashbury section of town, which I shared with my good friend Mark.

On the one solid wall of my room I tacked various occult and astrological charts. The two small cots placed on either end for sleeping were, along with a makeshift table, the room's only pieces of furniture. From this setting I would launch out onto my "spiritual" voyages through astrological calculations, tarot and I-Ching readings, meditation, music, and dance. By now I had almost given up the use of intoxicants, and since my stay in the forest I had become a vegetarian. Most significantly, I had continued to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.

It was while I was walking through Golden Gate Park one day that I had encountered a devotee who had stayed at Morning Star Ranch for some time. And it was at his invitation that I had visited the temple at Frederick Street for the Sunday Love Feast.

* * *

I was eager to reach the meeting. Quickly covering the five blocks between my residence and the temple, I crossed Stanyan, the broad street bordering Golden Gate Park. The small shops that formed the ground floors of the first half-dozen tenement buildings were all closed for the night. All, that is, except number 518, the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa temple. The door of the temple was different from the others on the street. Constructed by the devotees, it



had a rustic, homemade look, as the devotees had preferred to leave the raw wood unfinished instead of painting it. It was designed in two parts, so that during the day the bottom half could be closed, leaving the top open as a way of welcoming guests. Now the top half was also shut, to keep out the cold night air.

When I entered, it was like stepping into another world. The very long rectangular temple room was bathed in a light that seemed especially bright compared with the outside darkness. The air was heavy with incense. At the far end, opposite the door, I saw the Deities of Kṛṣṇa. The room was filled with young people, their casual, off-beat appearance easily identifying them as residents of Haight-Ashbury.

And then I saw Śrīla Prabhupāda. He sat on a raised dais with an Arabic tap-

estry behind him, and his powerful presence dominated the assembly. The meeting had just begun, so I quickly found a place to sit near the middle of the room. Prabhupāda began playing *karatālas* (hand cymbals) softly in a one-two-three rhythm as he chanted the evening prayers to his spiritual master and the disciple succession, Lord Caitanya, and Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Although this was the first time I had seen Śrīla Prabhupāda, I had heard his voice before, on the *Happening* record album, which Mark and I owned, and I had sung and danced along in accompaniment. Now, as I sat in Śrīla Prabhupāda's personal presence, listening to his rich, sweet voice accompanied only by the sound of his *karatālas*, I closed my eyes to enter into the mood of his singing.

As the prayers came to an end, other instruments began to sound. Then finally

came the *mahā-mantra*—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. The opening prayers had created a meditative mood, but now the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, chanted by everyone, filled the temple room and took command. As the volume and tempo increased, the devotees stood up and began to dance backward and forward. I also stood up, eager to take part. The whole room became a sea of swaying bodies, like so many waves moving back and forth to the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Prabhupāda led the *kīrtana*, striking his *karatālas* strongly, increasing the beat, while surveying the enthusiastic congregation with a knowing satisfaction. I was enjoying the *kīrtana*, feeling exhilarated by the dancing and chanting. My heart felt light, my mind free from any worries. The chanting continued for more than a half hour, and then, when it seemed to have reached a great crescendo, Prabhupāda struck his *karatālas* in a final note, and gradually the instruments faded, one by one, like an ebbing tide. As he pronounced the final prayers, his congregation settled, lulled by the waves of ecstatic *kīrtana*. Now it was time for the lecture.

Mark, who had also attended the meeting, signaled to me. We had another appointment. We had prearranged to stay only for the *kīrtana*, after which we had to rush to attend a different spiritual meeting.

Mark and I had been participating regularly in the sessions of a self-styled spiritualist, an American physicist named Ron Lamerick, who claimed to have had mystical experiences. His blend of science and Christianity attracted wealthy Californian conservatives as well as a small following of hip young people. To satisfy such diametrically opposed followers, Ron held separate meetings for each. The programs for the elderly conservatives were conducted at the homes of various influential persons. For them his style more resembled that of a university lecturer rather than a minister of religion, and it seemed to appeal to an audience grown tired of the usual church sermons. But for the hip young followers he adjusted his approach, holding informal meditation sessions while sitting with us on the floor in a circle. Since Mark and I were two of his main assistants, we attended both types of programs.

We had left the temple and driven to a large mansion on the outskirts of San Francisco, where Ron was giving a lecture. On Wednesday evening we repeated the same formula, first attending the *kīrtana* at the temple and then, just before Śrīla Prabhupāda's lecture, leaving for Ron Lamerick's meeting. But that evening Ron's lecture seemed distant and

unappealing compared to the exciting *kīrtana* we had just experienced. We returned home late at night, and as we sat in our small room, Mark and I discussed the evening's events, comparing the two meetings. We concluded that Friday we would stay to hear the Swami's lecture.

* * *

Śrīla Prabhupāda's exposition of the Kṛṣṇa conscious philosophy was not at all like the lectures of the "Western *guru*" we had been attending. Prabhupāda began the Friday evening lecture by reading in Sanskrit from a large book from which he continued to draw references throughout his talk. Although to me the Sanskrit was incomprehensible, I was impressed with its authoritative sound. It was clear that Śrīla Prabhupāda was expounding an ancient philosophy. His constant references to the text indicated that he was not speculating, trying to create his own brand of philosophy. And very clearly his points about how we were all suffering in this material world made sense. Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he said, would solve all problems of material existence. The easy method of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa would raise us to the spiritual platform, beyond happiness and distress. Each one of us, he explained, could practically experience the transcendental effect by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. Yes, I had experienced this.

The lecture was deep, and at times beyond my comprehension. But much that was said was common sense, and I could relate it to my own life. I felt that Prabhupāda's talk was directed at actually trying to benefit his audience. He was not trying to impress anyone by boasting of his own realizations, though it was clear he was speaking from personal conviction. There was no need for him to advertise himself, because he was not calling for followers but rather was appealing to the audience to try to improve their present condition and end their suffering way of life. It was practical.

I began to attend all the evening lectures at the temple. As I became familiar with the terms Prabhupāda used, the whole subject matter became more comprehensible. I purchased a set of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. Reading them each day confirmed what Prabhupāda was speaking in his lectures.

In each of his lectures, Prabhupāda stressed the importance of avoiding sinful activities, particularly intoxication, meat-eating, illicit sex, and gambling. It was the first time I had ever heard anyone explain that such behavior would impair spiritual development. Śrīla Prabhupāda was not compromising the absolute truth. He had come to deliver the timeless teachings of the spiritual world as he had heard them

from the disciplic succession, and there was nothing to be gained by watering down the process simply to increase the number of his followers. He was not a cheater, like the other *gurus* I had seen or heard of. He had full faith that Kṛṣṇa consciousness could deliver anyone who was sincere. Hearing only one lecture gave me the strength to avoid all of the sinful activities I had been habituated to for years. In Prabhupāda's straightforward presentation of the four regulative principles, I found the proper direction I needed.

* * *

Kṛṣṇa-prasādam, food offered to Lord Kṛṣṇa, was also an essential part of Śrīla Prabhupāda's rehabilitation program. Whether it be a large Love Feast or just

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The more I chanted,
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where I belonged.***

some cut pieces of fruit, no one visited the temple without receiving *prasādam*. Since that first Love Feast I had come on a number of occasions to take lunch at the temple. I began to find that whatever I prepared on my own seemed bland and unattractive in comparison with the Vedic recipes followed by the devotees, and it was at this point that Kṛṣṇa made an arrangement to help me surrender.

The upstairs tenants, who were allowing me the use of their kitchen, decided they were tired of being vegetarians, and after they began cooking meat again, I sensed that they felt my presence to be an intrusion on their privacy. With the loss of my cooking facilities, I was forced to come to the temple every morning for breakfast—a bowl of hot cereal with fresh fruit and milk. Once at the temple, I would stay for the rest of the morning, reading the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* or chanting on the large wooden *japa* beads made available

to any guest who wished to chant for a while. All the devotees would engage in their various duties, and I was left alone with the entire temple room to myself. Sitting against the wall I would chant softly, fingering each bead, enjoying the peaceful atmosphere.

Chanting *japa* was a wonderful experience. It brought to mind a book I had once read, Hesse's *Bead Game*. It described the meeting in a far distant retreat of powerful, great-minded souls who by playing the bead game received the wisdom by which to guide the future of the world. Unfortunately, the author never revealed the secret of how to play the game. It was intriguing to think of whether such a game could actually exist. Now, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa on the one hundred eight beads of the *japa-mālā*, I smiled. Had Hesse known about chanting?

For myself, the chanting seemed to resolve all problems. I was amazed at how this could be so. The more I chanted, the more I found my mind freed from any doubts or uneasiness. I looked for a long time at the paintings of Prabhupāda, his spiritual master, and Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. In their presence I felt a happiness and security as never before—this was where I belonged.

As the days passed, I began to get to know the different devotees. In exchange for taking my meals at the temple, they asked me to help by doing some service, and they engaged me in washing the cooking pots. My favorite pot was the largest of all, used for cooking the *dāl*, the split-pea soup. The yellow split peas would be hardened onto the bottom in a thick crust, which required forceful scrubbing and even scraping to remove. But I enjoyed every minute of it, for the devotees told me that by scrubbing Kṛṣṇa's pots I was cleansing the dirt from my heart. Sometimes, when I had done the pots, I would help in cleaning the kitchen floor, and I was impressed at how much emphasis was given to keeping everything spotlessly clean.

Doing these services gave me an opportunity to associate intimately with the devotees and hear about Kṛṣṇa consciousness from them. More and more, the temple was becoming my home, and I would return to my small room only to sleep at night. I acquired my own *japa* beads, and whenever I left the temple I would chant on the beads, feeling that they kept me connected with Kṛṣṇa. I was beginning to appreciate that by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa I could be Kṛṣṇa conscious anywhere, at any time.

* * *

Apart from the regular evening classes, the devotees sometimes arranged outside

engagements. These were aimed at audiences, who, while open-minded, would not ordinarily come to the Haight-Ashbury district to hear a swami speak. Public schools and Unitarian churches seemed to be the most ready to invite Śrīla Prabhupāda. On the nights that Prabhupāda was not giving class, I would usually go back to my room, but one evening, hearing that Prabhupāda would be speaking at a nearby Unitarian Church, I decided to attend.

The church was large, with high arched ceilings—a very good facility—but the many rows of pews remained empty that evening. However, although only five or six people came to hear him speak, Śrīla Prabhupāda was not disturbed. With the devotees sitting on the floor in the area between the pews and altar, Prabhupāda sat above them, on a raised area. Just as in the temple, he began by chanting the prayers to the disciplic succession and then led a long *kīrtana*. I felt more closely identified with the devotees than with the few persons in the audience, and I sat nearby on the floor. After the *kīrtana*, Prabhupāda gave a lecture explaining the Kṛṣṇa consciousness philosophy and the movement he had begun in America. When he called for questions, there was silence. The small audience had listened respectfully, but they did not seem interested enough to make any inquiry.

One doubt had been lingering in my mind. Seeing that Prabhupāda was asking for questions, I thought that this would be a good opportunity. I raised my hand, and when he nodded in acknowledgement, I stood up and asked, "If someone takes to Kṛṣṇa consciousness but is not completely successful—not perfect—what happens? What will be his fate?"

Prabhupāda nodded his head, understanding my question. He seemed pleased with the opportunity to speak more about Kṛṣṇa. He again explained that, as eternal spirit souls, we do not die at the time of passing away from our body. Unlike the body, which is only an external covering, consciousness is an actual extension of the soul. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is our original, eternal consciousness, and it can never be lost. Once revived, it becomes a permanent asset. Whereas in the material world, unless one is one-hundred-percent successful, his business may fail, in Kṛṣṇa consciousness whatever we do for Kṛṣṇa is our success. Even one percent done in devotional life is never lost, and one will begin from the point of two percent in his next life.

Prabhupāda was looking directly at me. Smiling, he asked, "Is that all right?"

I was satisfied and thanked him for this reassurance. I had already tried so many paths and never persevered in any one of them. And despite all my labor, what had

I gained? I knew from years of experience that practicing any discipline was not easy. I was not sure I could be successful in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and I wanted to be certain that by taking up the practice I would not be left emptyhanded at the end.

As I later found out, Śrīla Prabhupāda had appreciated my inquiry. It was the same question that Śrī Arjuna had placed before the original spiritual master, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Now, five thousand years later, Śrīla Prabhupāda had delivered to me the same knowledge Kṛṣṇa had spoken to Arjuna, as recorded in the Sixth Chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Hearing from Prabhupāda had been as good as hearing from

Kṛṣṇa Himself because of Prabhupāda's qualification as a pure devotee repeating without change the message received in disciplic succession from Kṛṣṇa. On his way home from the meeting, Prabhupāda had told his servant. "That boy will become a devotee." ❧

This article has been condensed from the first chapter of Servant of the Servant, a multi-volume memoir by Tamal Krishna Goswami. The first volume is available in paperback (227 pages, \$5.00, plus 50¢ postage in America) from ISKCON Houston, 1111 Rosalie Street, Houston, Texas 77004.

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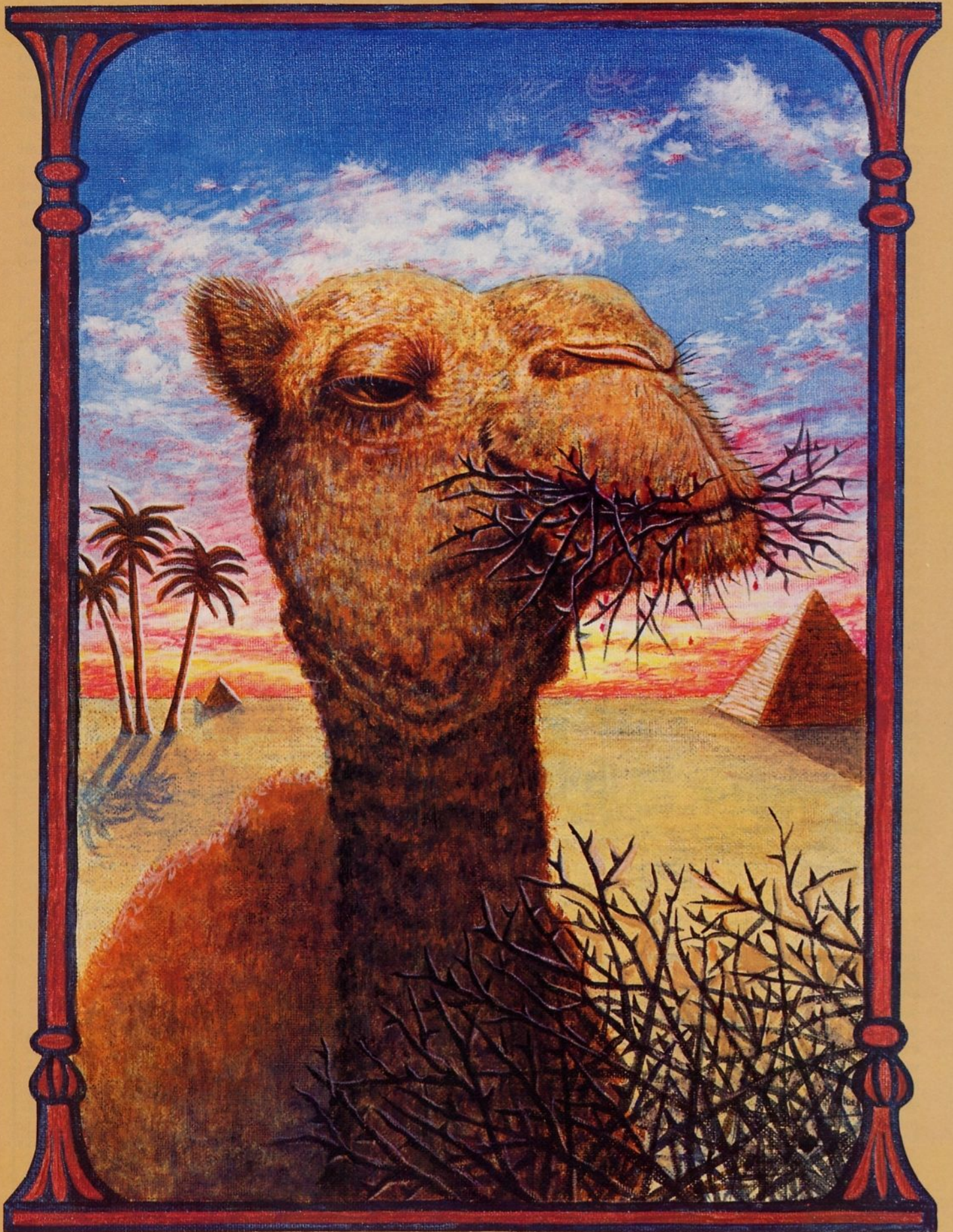
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The Camel and the Thorns

“No creature smarts so little as a fool.”—Alexander Pope

by DRAVIḌA DĀSA

Dumb. That's the only word for the camel, who often feasts on thorny bushes, mangles his mouth—and enjoys the taste of his own fresh blood. Never mind the pain and self-mutilation: it's the taste that counts.

Sure our camel is dumb—but not much dumber than humans who act much the same way. Take the two-pack-a-day cigarette smoker, for example. He's got a hacking cough, his doctor's told him he *has* to stop, even the very pack of cigarettes he's holding in his hand warns him that cigarette smoking is dangerous to his health. In short, he's killing himself, and he knows it. But light up he does—smoke after smoke, pack after pack.

Or take your all-American swinging bachelor, enjoying as much sex as he can get. It probably never occurs to him that with each sexual encounter he's sapping his vital energy. (In India, *yogīs* have known for millenniums that sexual restraint increases mental powers and resistance to disease.) Then again, it's hard to believe our jolly philanderer hasn't felt at least a twinge of anxiety about contracting herpes, the epidemic and incurable venereal disease, or felt the pain of loneliness that comes from having sex with everyone but loving no one. Still, he can't stop hurting himself in the name of pleasure.

Then we have the compulsive gambler. Nothing matters to him but being “in the action.” He'll take out a second mortgage on his house or go into debt to loan sharks just to get money to gamble. He may lose his job or destroy his family—but he *must* gamble.

Finally, there's your everyday enjoyer of hamburgers, medium-rare steaks, spaghetti and meatballs, bacon and eggs, pancakes with sausages, tender lamb chops, and so on. Eating meat at every meal is not only a pleasure for him but a measure of his success. But then come those unsettling reports from the National Academy of Sciences that there's definitely a connection between meat-eating and cancer. And if our meat-lover is a little sensitive, it might occur to him that when he could live perfectly well, and much *healthier*, on milk products, grains, vegetables, fruits, nuts, and so on, there's something wrong with a way of eating that contributes to the torture and slaughter of billions of animals every year. Maybe there *is* something like a karmic reaction that he'll have to suffer for eating all that meat. But forget the dangers, forget the *karma*—that Big Mac sure looks good!

Intoxication, sexual looseness, gambling, meat-eating. The philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness enjoins its followers to give up these self-destructive activities as soon as possible. Not only do they corrupt the body and mind, bringing suffering now and later on in life, but they also block spiritual development, bringing lifetimes of suffering in the cycle of repeated birth, old age, disease, and death. As the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, a devotional classic, explains, “Everyone will be attracted to hear Lord

Kṛṣṇa's teachings and His glorious pastimes—except those who are killing themselves through sinful activity.”

The problem, of course, is that even if we understand the need to give up smoking, eating meat, and so on, we can't. We're too addicted—physically, psychologically, culturally—to make such a radical change in the way we live. Of course many people *do* give up one or two of these things when they realize how harmful they are, but hardly anyone gives them all up, and all four of them are extremely detrimental to body, mind, and spirit.

But for those of us who really want to cure all our material addictions—for good—Kṛṣṇa consciousness can tell us how. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.59) Lord Kṛṣṇa gives the solution in a nutshell: “Although the embodied living being [that's us] may restrain himself from sense enjoyment, the taste for sense objects remains. But ceasing such engagements by experiencing a higher taste, he is fixed in consciousness.” Trying to give up powerful addictions by will power alone is almost always futile. But if we can get a “higher taste,” it becomes easy. We get that higher taste when we come in touch with Kṛṣṇa. In other words, the transcendental pleasure of Kṛṣṇa consciousness cures our addiction to lower pleasures.

Out of His mercy, Kṛṣṇa makes Himself available to us in many ways so that we can get in touch with Him. The first and foremost is through His holy names. When we chant the holy names of God, as in the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare—we come directly in contact with Kṛṣṇa through transcendental sound. Kṛṣṇa's name is nondifferent from Kṛṣṇa Himself, and since Kṛṣṇa is all-attractive, He draws our mind and heart to Him when we chant His names sincerely. Many a Hare Kṛṣṇa devotee can tell you how he tried to give up drugs, say, before becoming a devotee, but only after starting to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and serve the Lord was he able to do it—effortlessly.

Another way Kṛṣṇa makes Himself available to us is through *prasādam*, vegetarian food cooked for and offered to Kṛṣṇa with devotion. The endless variety of delicious preparations we can cook for Kṛṣṇa make giving up meat a snap.

And gambling and free sex also fall by the wayside when we take up Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It becomes obvious that there's just no percentage in them.

So the choice is ours: Either we can continue living like the camel, whipping our senses with sinful activities and trying to enjoy the taste of our own blood, or we can give up our addiction to lower pleasures by getting the higher taste of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which continues eternally. I think we'd all agree that chewing on thorns may be okay for the camel—after all, he's just a dumb animal—but it's not where a man belongs.

“MY SWEET LORD”

(continued from page 22)

shocked to hear you speak about the soul and God as being so important.

George: I felt it was important to try and be precise, to tell them and let them know. You know, to come out of the closet and really tell them. Because once you realize something, then you can't pretend you don't know it anymore.

I figured this is the space age, with airplanes and everything. If everyone can go around the world on their holidays, there's no reason why a *mantra* can't go a few miles as well. So the idea was to try to spiritually infiltrate society, so to speak. After I got Apple Records committed to you and the record released, and after our big promotion, we saw it was going to become a hit. And one of the greatest things, one of the greatest thrills of my life, actually, was seeing you all on BBC's *Top of the Pops*. I couldn't believe it. It's pretty hard to get on that program, because they only put you on it if you come into the Top 20. It was just like a breath of fresh air. My strategy was to keep it to a three-and-a-half-minute version of the *mantra* so they'd play it on the radio, and it worked. I did the harmonium and guitar track for that record at Abbey Road studios before one of the Beatles' sessions and then overdubbed a bass part. I remember Paul McCartney

and his wife, Linda, arrived at the studio and enjoyed the *mantra*.

It still sounds like quite a good recording, even after all these years. It was the greatest fun of all, really, to see Kṛṣṇa on *Top of the Pops*.

Mukunda: Shortly after its release, John Lennon told me that they played it at the intermission right before Bob Dylan did the Isle of Wight concert in the summer of '69.

George: They played it while they were getting the stage set up for Bob. It was great. Besides, it was a catchy tune, and the people didn't have to know what it meant in order to enjoy it. I felt very good when I first heard it was doing well.

Mukunda: How did you feel about the record technically, the voices?

George: Yamunā, the lead singer, has a naturally good voice. I liked the way she sang with conviction, and she sang like she'd been singing it a lot before.

You know, I used to sing the *mantra* long before I met any of the devotees or long before I met Prabhupāda, because I had his first record then for at least two years. When you're open to something it's like a beacon, and you attract it. From the first time I heard the chanting, it was like a door opened somewhere in my subconscious, maybe from some previous life.

Mukunda: In the lyrics to that song "Awaiting on You All," from the *All*

Things Must Pass album, you come right out front and tell people that they can be free from living in the material world by chanting the names of God. What made you do it? What kind of feedback did you get?

George: At that time, nobody was committed to that type of music in the pop world. There was, I felt, a real need for that, so rather than sitting and waiting for somebody else, I decided to do it myself. A lot of times we think, "Well, I agree with you, but I'm not going to stand up and be counted. Too risky." Everybody is always trying to keep themselves covered, stay commercial, so I thought, Just do it. Nobody else is, and I'm sick of all these young people just boogeying around, wasting their lives, you know. Also, I felt that there were a lot of people out there who would be reached. I still get letters from people saying, "I have been in the Kṛṣṇa temple for three years, and I would have never known about Kṛṣṇa unless you recorded the *All Things Must Pass* album." So I know, by the Lord's grace, I am a small part in the cosmic play. 🙏

This interview will continue in the next issue of BACK TO GODHEAD. The interview appears in full in Chant and Be Happy, a new book published by the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust. (You can get a copy from your local Hare Kṛṣṇa center or from ISKCON Educational Services, 3764 Wateka Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90034.)

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FESTIVALS

and the Hare Kṛṣṇa Calendar

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

Month of Nārāyaṇa

(December 31–January 28)

January 2—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura, the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda and the greatest propagator of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in India during the first half of this century. Devotees observe this day with readings about him and fasting till noon, followed by feasting. Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa center.

January 9—Saphalā Ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans).

January 17—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the great philosopher and pure devotee who was an immediate follower of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Pañcadraviḍa Swami, one of

the present spiritual masters in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

January 25—Putradā Ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans).

Month of Mādhava

(January 29–February 27)

January 31—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, the great follower of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu who established the Rādhā-ramaṇa temple in Vṛndāvana.

February 1—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jayadeva Gosvāmī, author of the famous Kṛṣṇa conscious poem *Gīta-govinda*.

February 8—Ṣaṭ-tilā Ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans).

RESOURCES

Plain living and high thinking. Get out of the city—away from noise, pollution, and the anxiety and madness of city life. Come back to a simpler, more natural way of life. Live close to the earth, and close to God. The Hare Kṛṣṇa movement has thirty farm communities throughout the world. These are sacred places where your spirit can unfold. And at the same time, they're realistic, practical places, where you can build a sane, stable life for yourself, and, if

you're married, for your family.

To find out more, get in touch with the ISKCON farm community nearest you (you'll find them in the list of centers on the back covers of this magazine). Or write or call Paramānanda dāsa, ISKCON Minister for Farm Communities, Gītā-nāgarī Farm, R.D. No. 1, Port Royal, Pennsylvania 17082 (phone: 717-527-2493).

Join us on pilgrimage in India. Every year, devotees of Kṛṣṇa from around the world join together for three weeks of spiritual association at the most holy places of pilgrimage in India. We have special group fares, and meals and accommodations at our own ISKCON centers. This year, the pilgrimage festival takes place at the end of March. And we invite you to join us.

For more information, write to India Festival, BACK TO GODHEAD, P.O. Box 18928, Philadelphia, PA 19119.

Prepare your child to go back to Godhead. ISKCON now has more than twenty primary and secondary schools worldwide, and some of these schools are now prepared to accept students from outside their local communities. If you want your child to have a strong spiritual foundation, in addition to standard academic knowledge, consider this golden opportunity.

For more information, write to His Holiness Jagadīśa Goswami, Minister of Education, c/o ISKCON Gurukula, P.O. Box 388, Lake Huntington, New York 12752.

NOTES

(continued from page 32)

Each month, BTG helps you stay in touch with Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and with the whole worldwide community of Kṛṣṇa conscious devotees.

With BTG, you reaffirm your identity as a spiritual living being and break away from the bondage of birth and death.

You gain philosophical understanding directly from Śrīla Prabhupāda—from his lectures and conversations and from his powerful translation and commentary for *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which we're presenting in installments. Śrīla Prabhupāda brings you the essence of Vedic spiritual truth. And articles by his disciples—and their disciples—help bring this truth even more sharply into focus.

Like other magazines, we bring you commentary on what's going on in the world—but it's commentary from the Vedic point of view, examining the world's events under the light of spiritual realization.

And although we're a spiritual magazine, that doesn't mean vague, sentimental, or namby-pamby. When something out there stinks, we say so—in no uncertain terms. A self-realized person may be hopeful, but he's not naive.

But although we may be critical, we're by no means cynical or sour. For a Kṛṣṇa conscious person, life is always bright and

joyful. So BACK TO GODHEAD is that way too.

We're colorful and bright, with artwork that brings you the sweetness of Kṛṣṇa's transcendental forms and pastimes. Our artists in California, New York, West Virginia, and Italy meditate deeply on Kṛṣṇa and use their skill to portray His pastimes in paintings that are "windows on the spiritual world." With BTG, those are windows you can look through month after month.

And getting back to this world, every month we keep you in touch with what's going on in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. With words and full-color photos, you visit Kṛṣṇa's temples—new ones and ancient. You attend festivals and celebrations. And you meet devotees and learn what Kṛṣṇa conscious life is like for them.

You learn new ways to transform your home into a place of ever-increasing spiritual consciousness. You find out practical details of how to chant, how to cook and offer food to Kṛṣṇa, and how to remember and serve Kṛṣṇa throughout the day.

With our Yoga Dictionary, you learn more about the philosophical terms and concepts of *yoga*.

And ultimately you learn to live in such a way that you can become perfect in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and go back home, back to Godhead.

And we want to learn from you, too.

Every month we receive letters from our readers, offering suggestions and criticisms, letting us know how we're doing. A few of them we publish, and all of them we read and think about.

As we mentioned before, one of the big reasons we've changed to a subscription magazine is that we want to get to know you better, and let you get to know us. So it's important for us to hear from you. Tell us how well—or how badly—you think we're doing. Where do you find we're being helpful, and where should we be doing more?

And there's one more favor we'd like to ask. If you find BTG worthwhile reading, please share it with your friends. Invite them to subscribe—or send them a gift subscription on your own. Spread the word. Since as a subscriber magazine we're just beginning, it will take us a while to make ourselves known. Many sincere people in America are searching for "something"—even if they're not sure what it is. So if you can put them in touch with Kṛṣṇa, that will be pleasing both to Kṛṣṇa and to them.

And we'll look forward to the pleasure of being with you every month through BACK TO GODHEAD.

Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

—Jayādvaiva Swami, Senior Editor

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

BTG: Changing and Staying the Same

When a magazine is just getting started, it's usual for the editors to write a column to announce its purpose, to let readers know what the magazine is all about.

BACK TO GODHEAD has been on the scene now for almost forty years, and in America since 1966. But we too think it's time to write a column to explain ourselves. Here's why.

At BTG, we're in the midst of a great change. For many years, most of our readers have picked up their BTG intermittently, one copy at a time. They'd meet a devotee somewhere in public—at an airport, a shopping mall, a street corner—and get a copy then. And that's how sixty to a hundred thousand people in America got a copy of BACK TO GODHEAD every month.

We were pretty happy about that—getting through to all those readers. But it had its drawbacks.

The main one was that we never knew who our readers were—and they hardly knew us. In every issue, we had to keep in mind that most of our readers were newcomers—in effect, total strangers. Every month we were talking to a whole new crowd.

And why publish a monthly unless we had readers who would be with us from month to month?

So we had to look at our magazine and ask ourselves, "What are we supposed to be doing? What are we all about? Are we a magazine, a brochure, a newsletter, or just what? Are we writing for ourselves, for our friends, for every man, woman, and child on earth—or is there some distinct group of people we could affectionately call 'our readers'?"

The results of our deliberations:

We've reaffirmed, first of all, that we are, in fact, a magazine. We're a monthly magazine of Kṛṣṇa consciousness—"The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement," as we've been saying all along.

But the big change is that no longer will we be a magazine you see now and then or pick up when you meet a devotee on the street. At least in America, BACK TO GODHEAD is now mainly a subscription magazine. You won't see BTG on the streets anymore. From now on, the way for you to get BACK TO GODHEAD is to join us as a subscriber.

And, to our delight, we find we have a natural audience of readers.

Of course, the devotees and close friends

of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement are regular members of the team. And we have ever-growing numbers of Asian Indian readers, who recognize in Kṛṣṇa consciousness the spiritual culture they grew up with. But, even more broadly, we know that thousands of Americans are serious about spiritual understanding—serious about understanding who they are and what life is ultimately for. For them BACK TO GODHEAD has a message of vital interest. And to go still broader, there are lots of people who are just plain curious about spiritual life, and what the Hare Kṛṣṇa people have to say about it.

And for whatever reason you're with us, welcome.

As a subscriber magazine, we look forward to getting to know you. We'll no longer feel like a stranger in a crowd or go about introducing ourselves every month to an ocean of unfamiliar faces. We'll count you as a friend from the very start. And we hope you'll think of us the same way.

But our friendship will be different from the friendships of the material world. This is a friendship that will transcend the boundaries of nationality, race, religion, age, sex, and mundane party spirit. It will go beyond the limitations of bodies and even minds. This friendship will come naturally from what all living beings have in common—that we are all eternal spiritual souls and all tiny parts of the supreme spiritual whole, Lord Kṛṣṇa.

You're not a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa? Don't feel left out. When we speak of Kṛṣṇa, we're not speaking of a "Hindu God," the God of a particular country or sect. We're speaking—by definition—of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the ultimate source of everything.

Through BACK TO GODHEAD, we come in touch with the Supreme, the Absolute Truth, in its three features—as the impersonal, all-pervading oneness, as the indwelling Supersoul (the form of God in everyone's heart), and ultimately as the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Through BACK TO GODHEAD magazine, we come closer to Kṛṣṇa. (When I say "we," I mean both you, the reader, and those of us who put the magazine together. We want to reawaken our relationship with Kṛṣṇa, learn to live in that relationship, and attain the perfection of that relationship—pure love for Kṛṣṇa.

In BACK TO GODHEAD, you won't find

the writing of professional journalists. So you may not find it as slick and polished as other magazines. But because this is the writing of persons actually dedicating themselves to spiritual enlightenment, it has a transcendental value ordinary journalism can't offer.

In other words, we're sincere—sincere not just about salaries or careers but instead about trying to understand the ultimate purpose of life, trying to get closer to that purpose, and helping others get closer also.

But sincerity isn't enough. BTG wasn't started merely by sincere, good-hearted people looking for spiritual truth. It was started by a spiritual master who understood the truth, who devoted his life to serving the truth and bringing the truth to others.

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder of BACK TO GODHEAD, was a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa. It was Śrīla Prabhupāda's own spiritual master who inspired him to start BTG, and it is Śrīla Prabhupāda himself who inspires us to keep it going and keep it always new and fresh.

When Śrīla Prabhupāda came to America in 1965, he carried with him a message placed in his trust through a chain of spiritual masters, a chain stretching back through history, linking him with a succession of self-realized scholars and devotees—and ultimately with Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself.

This is the Vedic tradition of knowledge and enlightenment. It's not just something you piece together on your own. It's an experience that comes alive for you when you come in touch with a self-realized soul. And it's a tradition resting not only on spiritual experiences but on the philosophy preserved since time immemorial in Vedic scriptures such as *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

And it's practical. This isn't just a philosophy for some few exalted souls who've renounced the world and gone off to somewhere in the Himalayas. We're talking about a way of enlightenment you can take part in all the time, and follow all the way to perfection.

And that's what BTG is all about. When you read BTG, you come right to the heart of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, to the heart of the Vedic experience—by philosophy, by science, by art and culture, and by your own realization.

(continued on page 31)

Centers of the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement

(continued from the back cover)

EUROPE (continued)

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Georgetown, Guyana—24 Uitvlugt Front, West Coast Demerara
La Paz, Bolivia—Avenida Herando Siles 6239 (mail: Casilla 10278 Obrajes)/ 785023
Lima, Peru—Jiron Junin 415/ 28-94-91
Medellín, Colombia—Carrera 32, No. 54-42
Montevideo, Uruguay—Casilla 10, 531, Suc. Pluna
Panama, Republic of Panama—P.O. Box 6-29-54
Quito, Ecuador—Apdo. 2384, Calle Yasuni No. 404 (mail: P.O. Box 2384)
San Jose, Costa Rica—100 mtrs. sureste de aptos Torre Blanca Urbanización Carmiol, Montes de Oca, Casa No. 49 (mail: P.O. Box 166, Paseo Estudiantes, Z-1002)
San Salvador, El Salvador—67 Avenida Sur No. 15, Colonia Escalon
Santiago, Chile—Estudiantes, 150
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic—Calle Cayetano Rodriguez No. 254/ (809) 688-7242
Trinidad and Tobago, West Indies—Prabhupada Ave., Longdenville, Chaguana

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 Toronto, Ontario—212 Somerset St. E., K1N 6V4/ (613) 233-1884
 Regina, Saskatchewan—2817 Victoria Ave., S4T 1K6/ (306) 522-4973
 Toronto, Ontario—243 Avenue Rd., M5R 2J6/ (416) 922-5415
 Vancouver, B.C.—5462 S.E. Marine Dr., Burnaby V5J 3G8/ (604) 433-8216
 Waterloo, Ontario—51 Amos Ave., N2L 2W6/ (519) 888-7321

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 Ottawa—The Back Home Buffet, 212 Somerset St. E./ (613) 233-4600

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 Berkeley, California—2334 Stuart St., 94705/ (415) 540-9215
 Boston, Massachusetts—72 Commonwealth Ave., 02116/ (617) 247-8611
 Chicago, Illinois—1716 W. Lunt Ave., 60626/ (312) 973-0900
 Cleveland, Ohio—15720 Euclid Ave., E. Cleveland, 44112/ (216) 681-9933
 Dallas, Texas—5430 Gurley Ave., 75223/ (214) 827-6330
 Denver, Colorado—1400 Cherry St., 80220/ (303) 333-5461
 Detroit, Michigan—383 Lenox Ave., 48215/ (313) 824-6000
 E. Lansing, Michigan—319 Grove St., 48823/ (517) 351-6603
 Fullerton, California—2011 E. Chapman Ave., 92631/ (714) 870-1156
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 Los Angeles, California—3764 Watska Ave., 90034/ (213) 836-2676
 Miami Beach, Florida—2445 Collins Ave., 33140/ (305) 672-9687
 Newark, Delaware—168 Elkton Rd., 19711/ (302) 453-8510
 New Orleans, Louisiana—2936 Esplanade Ave., 70119/ (504) 488-7433
 New York, New York—305 Schermerhorn St., Brooklyn, 11217/ (212) 855-6714
 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania—51 W. Allens Lane, 19119/ (215) 247-4600
 Portland, Oregon—3828 Southeast Division St., 97202/ (503) 232-2590
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 San Francisco, CA—Bhaktivedanta Fellowship—84 Carl St., 94117/ (415) 664-2397
 San Francisco—Bhaktivedanta Institute, 1403 Willard St., 94117/ (415) 664-7783
 San Juan, Puerto Rico—Box 215, Rt. 181, Gurabo, Santa Rita, 00658
 Seattle, Washington—400 18th Ave. E., 98112/ (206) 329-7011
 State College, Pennsylvania—103 E. Hamilton Ave., 16801/ (814) 234-1867

Tallahassee, Florida—701 W. Pensacola, 32304/ (904) 222-0790
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 Washington, D.C.—10310 Oaklyn Rd., Potomac, Maryland, 20854/ (301) 299-2100

FARM COMMUNITIES

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 Gainesville, Florida—Rt. 2, Box 24, Alachua, 32615/ (904) 462-3443
 Gurabo, Puerto Rico (New Govardhana Hill)—(contact ISKCON San Juan)
 Hopland, California (New Mt. Kailas)—Route 175, Box 469, 95449/ (707) 744-1100
 Hotchkiss, Colorado (New Barshana)—P.O. Box 112, 81419/ (303) 527-4584
 Lynchburg, Tennessee (Murāri-sevaka)—Rt. No. 1, Box 146-A (Mulberry), 37359/ (615) 759-7058
 Moundsville, W. Virginia (New Vrindaban)—R.D. No. 1, Box 319, Hare Krishna Ridge, 26041/ (304) 843-1600
 Ninole, Hawaii (New Kṛṣṇaloka)—P.O. Box 108, 96773/ (808) 595-3947
 Port Royal, Pennsylvania (Gitā-nāgari)—R.D. No. 1, 17082/ (717) 527-2493
 Three Rivers, CA (Bhaktivedanta Village)—44799 Dinely Dr., 93271/ (209) 561-9971

RESTAURANTS

Dallas—Kalachandji's (at ISKCON Dallas)
 Honolulu—Govinda's Sandwich Shoppe, Makaloe Plaza, 1540 Makaloe St., 96814/ (808) 942-8935
 Los Angeles—Govinda's, 9624 Venice Blvd., Culver City, 90230/ (213) 836-1269
 St. Louis—(at ISKCON St. Louis)/ (314) 535-8161
 San Francisco—Jagannatha's Cart, 57 Jessie St., 94105/ (415) 495-3083
 San Francisco—The Higher Taste, 775 Frederick St., 94117/ (415) 661-7290
 San Francisco—The Seven Mothers, 86 Carl St., 94117/ (415) 753-9703
 San Juan, Puerto Rico—Govinda, Tetuan 153, Viejo San Juan/ (809) 727-6926
 Santa Cruz, California—Govinda's, 2-1245 East Cliff Drive, 95062/ (408) 475-9833
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 Dublin, Ireland—Castlefield House, Knocklyon Road, Templeogue, Dublin 16/ 945504
 Glasgow, Scotland—571 Sauchiehall St., Charing Cross, Glasgow G3 7PQ/ 041-21-5999
 London, England (city)—10 Soho St., London W1/ 01-437-3662
 London, England (country)—Bhaktivedanta Manor, Letchmore Heath, Watford, Hertfordshire WD2 8EP/ Radlett 7244
 Manchester, England—106 College Road, Whalley Range, Manchester 16/ 061-881-1947
 Worcester, England—Chaitanya College at Croome Court, Severn Stoke, Worcester WR8 9DW/ 090 567-214

FARM COMMUNITIES

Glengarriff, Ireland (Hare Kṛṣṇa Farm)—County Cork
 London, England—(contact Bhaktivedanta Manor)

RESTAURANT

London—Healthy, Wealthy, and Wise, 9-10 Soho St./ 01-437-1835

(This list of worldwide Hare Kṛṣṇa centers continues on the inside back cover.)