

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

BACK TO GODHEAD

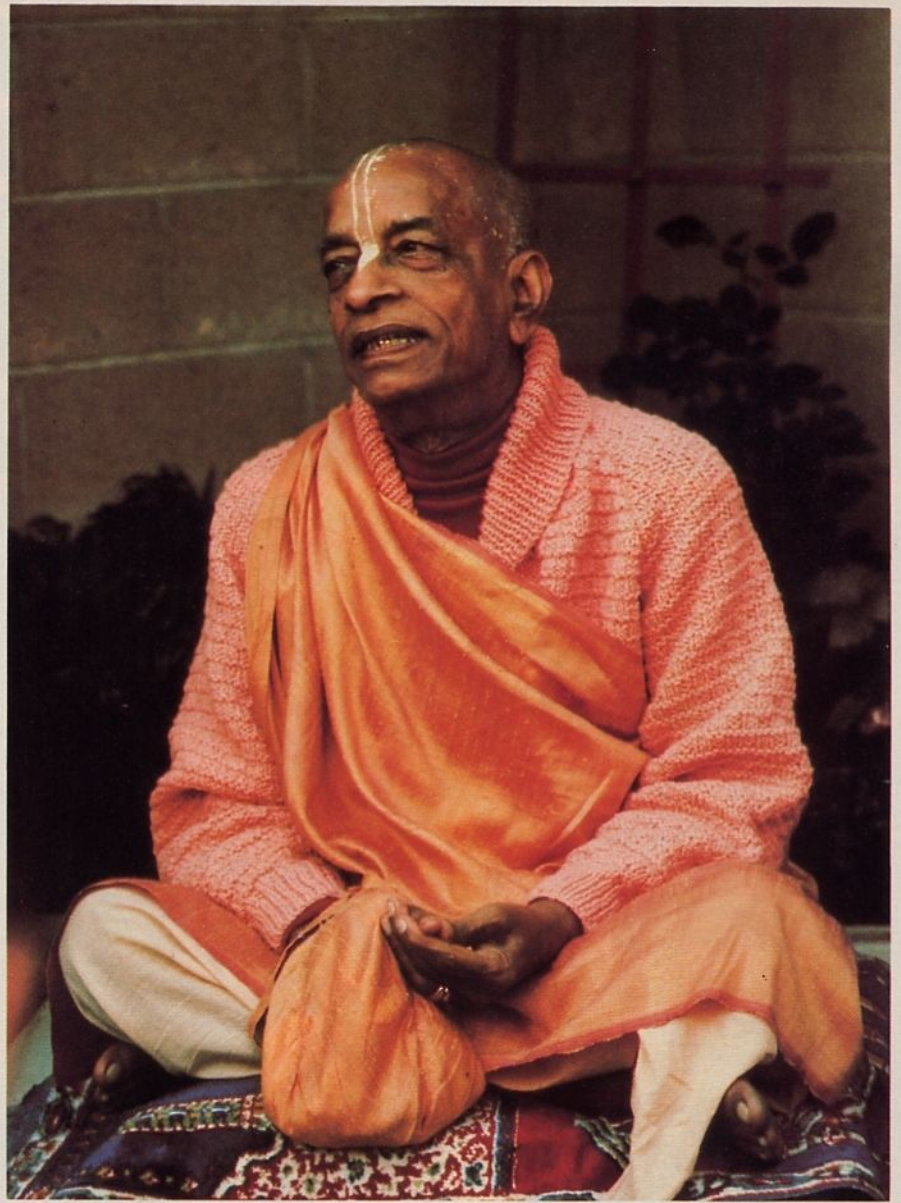
Vol.21 No.6

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT



**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. Advanced disciples throughout the world have been authorized to serve in the position of spiritual master, initiating disciples of their own. And these disciples, in turn, become linked with Śrīla Prabhupāda through the transcendental system of disciplic succession.



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.

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A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda

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PRONUNCIATION. We spell Sanskrit words and names by a phonetic 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 **pique**. 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, **hedgehog**, 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* (*dāsi* for women), meaning "servant." For instance, the name *Kṛṣṇa dāsa* means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

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COVER: Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and Rādhārāṇī, His eternal consort and the embodiment of pure devotion, enjoy loving pastimes in Their spiritual abode, Goloka Vṛndāvana. These pastimes are exchanges of uninterrupted bliss and are devoid of the impurities that infect mundane relationships. Thus Rādhā, even in Her anger, evokes Kṛṣṇa's love, ever increasing His pleasure as She displays the sweet variegatedness of Her personality. (Painting by Yadurāṇī-devī dāsi)

THE SHELTER FROM ALL DANGERS

Life's basic problem. Humanity's essential question.
And God's compassionate answer.

A lecture by HIS DIVINE GRACE
A. C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA
Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

*'sādhya'-'sādhana'-tattva puchite nā jāni
kṛpā kari' saba tattva kaha ta' āpani*

“Actually, I do not know how to inquire about the goal of life and the process for obtaining it. Being merciful upon me, please explain all these truths.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 20.103)

Human life is meant for understanding *tattva*, the Absolute Truth. That is the special advantage of human life. But if a human being is not trained to inquire about the Absolute Truth, he is at a great disadvantage.

In human life the chance is there to make a solution to the whole problem—the struggle for existence, for the survival of the fittest. This struggle is going on life after life. But now, in human life, one can end that struggle by understanding the goal of life and being trained in how to achieve it. If that opportunity is refused to human society by the guardians, by the government, it is a great disservice.

Human beings should not be kept in the darkness of animal propensities. How many plants and creepers there are! How

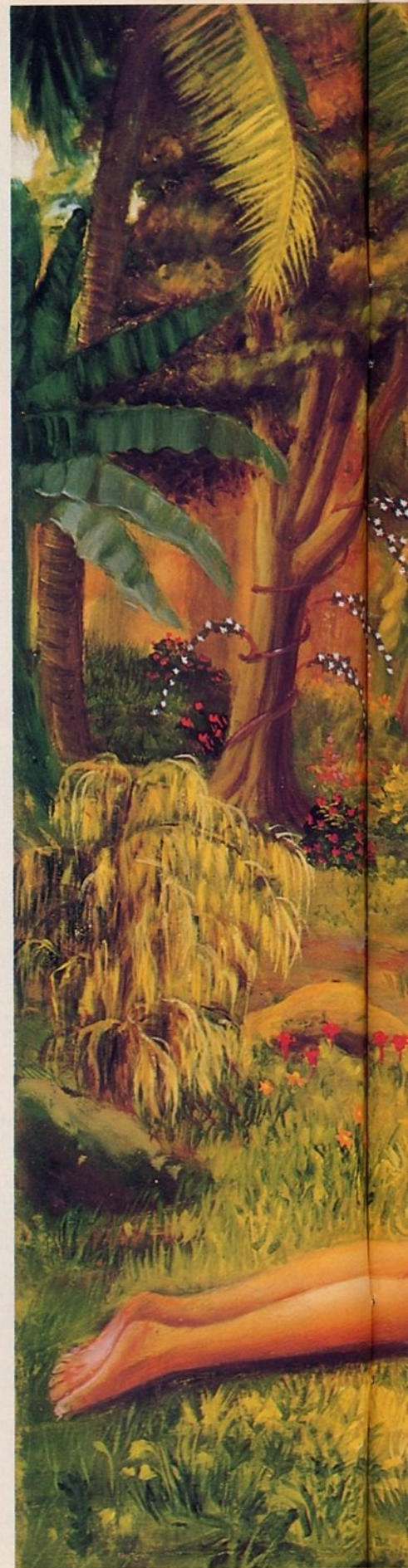
many animals! How many aquatics! We have come through all these species after many thousands and millions of years of evolution. And now we have a chance to escape from this painful process. Therefore the human being is advised to try to understand the goal of life: *tamasī mā jyotir gamāḥ*. “Don't stay in darkness. Go to the light.” That is the Vedic injunction.

So, from the very beginning of life, children should be trained to inquire about the goal of life. But if they are kept in darkness, simply taught to eat, drink, be merry, and enjoy—that is not civilization. They must be given the opportunity to inquire more and more about the goal of life. What is the goal of life? To revive our intimate relationship with God.

As Caitanya Mahāprabhu* explains, we are intimately related to God, but somehow we have fallen into this material world, and we are mistakenly accepting this body as our self. We are being trained

*Lord Caitanya is Kṛṣṇa Himself in the role of His own devotee. He appeared in India five hundred years ago to teach love of God through the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*.

Sanātana Gosvāmi, formerly a wealthy and influential minister in the government of West Bengal, gave up his exalted post and humbly approached Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu for the solution to the problems of life. He thus demonstrated the proper method of accepting a spiritual master.





only to see to our bodily interests, just like cats and dogs. The animals are interested in the body only. They have no other interest. But if a human being is kept in the same darkness, simply concerned with his body, that is a great disadvantage.

Sanātana Gosvāmī understood that, and therefore he asked Śrī Caitanya Mahārabhu,

*'ke āmi', 'kene āmāya jāre tāpa-traya'
ihā nāhi jāni—'kemane hita haya'*

"Who am I? Why should there be such a struggle for existence? Why not an easy life, a peaceful life? Why do some elements give us opposition? I want to be happy, but there is opposition. Why?"

Even with a fly we have to fight. I am sitting, not doing any harm to the fly, but it attacks me and bothers me. Or you may be walking on the street, committing no offense, but from a house a dog begins to bark, "Why are you coming here? Why are you coming here?" There is no cause for his barking, but because he is a dog his business is to bark, "Why are you coming? Why are you coming?"

Similarly, the immigration department restricts our freedom to go from one place to another. The immigration official barks, "Why are you coming? Why are you coming?" In many places we have been refused entry—"No, you cannot enter. Go back."—and I had to go back.

So, in this material world you cannot live peacefully. Not at all. There are so many impediments. The scripture says, *padam padam yad vipadām*: "At every step there is danger." Danger not only from the lower animals but also from human society. No, our life is not very happy in this material world.

Therefore we should be advanced in inquiring, Why are there so many impediments? How can I become happy? What is the goal of my life? Asking these questions is human life, and Sanātana Gosvāmī is representing us in asking these questions of Śrī Caitanya Mahārabhu.

By the mercy of Caitanya Mahārabhu, or by the mercy of His servants, one can be enlightened as to what is the goal of life, why there is a struggle for existence, why there is death, why there is birth. I do not want to die, I do not want to enter into a mother's womb and remain in a packed-up condition for so many days, I do not want to become an old man—but these things are forced upon me. Why? Our real business is to answer this question, not to arrange for economic development.

Whatever economic development we are destined to get, we shall get it. Whatever happiness or distress we are destined to get, we shall get it. We don't try for distress, but it comes; it is forced upon us. Similarly, although you don't try for it, the

little happiness you are destined to obtain will also come. Therefore the scripture advises, "Instead of wasting your time bothering about so-called happiness and distress, better to engage your valuable time in understanding what is the goal of life, why there are so many problems, why you have to struggle for existence. This is your business."

In this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement we are giving people a chance to understand the problems of life and how to solve them. It is not a sectarian movement or a so-called religious movement. It is not a religion. It is an educational and cultural movement. Everyone has to understand the goal of life, why there is a struggle for existence, and whether there is any remedy, a process whereby we can live very peacefully, without any disturbances. These are the things to be learned in human life, and one should approach a bona fide spiritual master to learn them.

This is what Sanātana Gosvāmī did. He

***I do not want to die,
I do not want to
enter into a mother's
womb, I do not
want to become an
old man—but these
things are forced
upon me. Why?***

was a government minister, very educated and well placed, but he approached Caitanya Mahārabhu and humbly surrendered. So we should also approach Lord Caitanya or His representative and surrender (*tad viddhi pranīpātena*). One shouldn't challenge, "Can you show me God?" No, this is not the way to approach the spiritual master. God is everywhere, but now you do not have the eyes to see Him. So this challenging attitude will not help us. We must be submissive. As Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *tad viddhi pranīpātena pariprasnena sevayā*: "To understand the transcendental science, approach a spiritual master and humbly surrender to him, inquire from him, and serve him." Sanātana Gosvāmī is a perfect example. He is submitting himself very humbly before Śrī Caitanya Mahārabhu.

So, first of all surrender (*pranīpātena*); then ask questions (*pariprasnena*). Don't waste your time questioning the spiritual master unless you are surrendered. You

must be ready to accept the answers he gives. Then you may make an inquiry. If you think, "I have to test his answers because I am more learned and more advanced than he," then don't go to the spiritual master. First of all settle up in your mind that whatever answers the spiritual master gives, you'll accept. Then you can make an inquiry.

Sanātana Gosvāmī completely surrendered to Caitanya Mahārabhu. Sanātana said, "Actually, I do not know how to inquire from You. So kindly tell me what the subject matter of inquiry should be and what the answers to such inquiry are. I am a completely blank slate; I am simply submitting myself to You." Sanātana was inquisitive about *sādhyā*, the goal of life, and *sādhana*, the process by which one can attain the goal. But he said, "I do not know anything about these things, so I am simply depending on Your mercy." That is surrender.

In this way we can make advancement in our spiritual education. But we must also carry out the orders of the spiritual master. As Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura says, *guru-mukha-padma-vākya cittete koriyā aikya*: "Make the orders of the spiritual master your life and soul." And then, *ār nā koriho mane āsā*: "Do not think otherwise." Simply accept what he says.

Of course, first of all you must select who will be your spiritual master. You must know his qualifications. If you want to purchase gold, you must at least know where gold is available. If you are so foolish that you go to a butcher shop to buy diamonds or gold, then you'll be cheated. Similarly, if out of ignorance you approach the wrong person for spiritual guidance, you'll be cheated.

So, finding a bona fide *guru* requires intelligence and sincerity. If you are serious about understanding the goal of life, spiritual knowledge, then Kṛṣṇa will help you. He is situated in everyone's heart, and He understands when you are sincerely seeking the Absolute Truth. Then He gives direction: "Go to this person." Kṛṣṇa is already giving direction in every respect. We want to do so many things, and Kṛṣṇa is giving us the facility. As He says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* [18.61], *īśvarah sarva-bhūtānām hṛd-ḍeṣe 'rjuna tiṣṭhati/ bhrāmayan sarva-bhūtāni*. As the Supersoul in the heart, Kṛṣṇa is giving facilities to all living entities in their wanderings throughout the various species. But when one becomes very eager to understand Kṛṣṇa, or God, He is glad to give instruction: "Go to such-and-such person and submissively inquire from him. You'll be enlightened." *Guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bija*: By the mercy of the spiritual master and Kṛṣṇa, one can make spiritual advancement. One must simply be sincere.

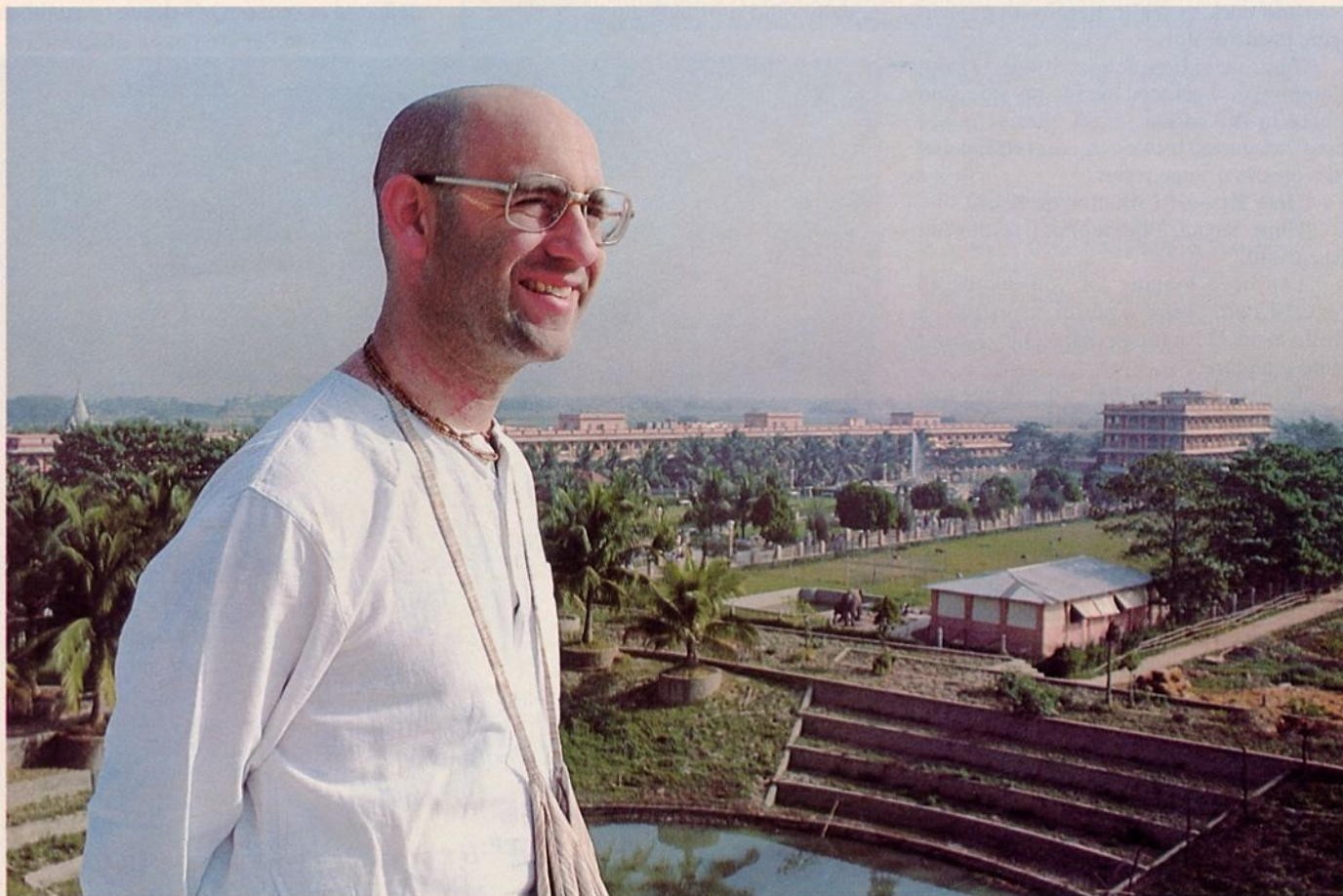
Thank you very much. Hare Kṛṣṇa. 🌸

Coming to Kṛṣṇa

“Don’t Leave...Live!”

A Peace Corps worker on assignment in India resolves to follow the transcendental call.

by BRAHMATĪRTHA DĀSA as told to ĀNAKADUNDUBHI DĀSA



Brahmatīrtha dāsa at Śrīdhāma Māyāpur, ISKCON’s flourishing spiritual project in West Bengal. Here, more than fourteen years ago, he received valuable instructions about spiritual life from His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

One hot smoggy day in the summer of 1968, I went for a walk in New York’s Greenwich Village, browsing through the occult bookstores. As I stood inside one store, reading a small pocket copy of *Bhagavad-gītā*, I saw an incredible sight: a group of young men and women in robes and *sāris*, dancing double-file down the sidewalk. The men had shaved heads, and they were playing clay drums and cymbals. They were singing a song that they repeated to a simple melody, and it seemed to me I had heard this song before. I was very attracted.

All the way home, I tried to remember where I’d heard that song before. I went

through all my record albums, and then finally it came to me—the *Hair* soundtrack. I played it time and time again: “Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.”

My parents had already planned a future for me: a good education and a good job. It wasn’t that I consciously rebelled against them, but some unknown force seemed to be leading me in another direction—India. The dream of visiting India had grown with me since childhood. I’d seen pictures in *National Geographic* of lush tropical forests and jungles, magnificent temples, and fabulous festivals. By

the time I finished a college course on Eastern philosophy, I was convinced I had to go. There were questions that I just had to find the answers to, and I sensed that the answers were hidden somewhere in that ancient tradition.

I couldn’t just tell my parents that I was going to India for a spiritual search. So I decided to join the Peace Corps as a teacher and work in India. On the application form were three blank spaces for desired assignments, and I wrote India in all three spaces. Six months later I was on a plane bound for Delhi.

One day on a crowded Calcutta train, I saw a poster advertising a Hare Kṛṣṇa

festival at Deshapriya Park. I was elated; weren't these the people I had seen singing on the streets in New York? I turned to a Sikh gentleman in a large turban and asked, "Deshapriya Park—where?" Silently he pointed back in the direction we had just come. I struggled to get off the overcrowded train. Hurrying through the streets, I began asking everyone—sweepers, stall owners, police—where I could find the park. But by evening I still had not located it.

Finally I began to look for a taxi, abandoning the search for the day. It was now evening rush hour. I ran up to a taxi that had stopped at a traffic light, although it was too dark to see if there were passengers inside or not.

"Take me to Free School Street," I said, jumping in. I glanced over to my side, and there in the corner, amid piles of books and magazines, was a shaven-headed devotee in orange robes.

"Hare Kṛṣṇa!" I shouted excitedly.

"Hare Kṛṣṇa," he replied, somewhat surprised.

"I've been looking for you people all day," I said. "I saw a poster advertising a festival in Deshapriya Park, but I can't find the place."

"It's just nearby," he said. "You came within two minutes of it. I'm going there now."

Within two minutes we pulled up in front of what looked like a large park. The entire park was covered with a huge circus tent, and under its canopy crowded almost fifteen thousand people. At the far end of the pavilion was a big stage, and at its center was a simple raised dais. There sat the founder and spiritual master of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda, regally wearing scores of flower garlands offered by his disciples. He sat silently as one of his disciples introduced him to the crowd. When the disciple explained that Śrīla Prabhupāda had traveled alone at the age of seventy to boldly preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness in America, the audience responded with a standing ovation. The devotees jumped to their feet to lead them in the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa.

When the program was over and Śrīla Prabhupāda was being driven away in his car, I ran up to the devotee who had spoken. "Can I come?" I begged. "I'd like to meet the *guru*." "Sure, jump in," he replied, smiling.

We sped off, arriving fifteen minutes later at a huge old Victorian mansion, a remnant of the British raj. The interior had been converted into a temple. As we entered the temple, the devotees invited me to meet Śrīla Prabhupāda and to ask him any questions I might have.

Śrīla Prabhupāda was sitting on a cushion behind a low desk. Six or seven Indian

gentlemen surrounded him. I had always thought that if I ever met a *guru* I would ask him all the many questions that had haunted me over the years. But as I entered Śrīla Prabhupāda's room, I couldn't remember a single question. I folded my palms and sat down nervously before him. Śrīla Prabhupāda looked at me and smiled warmly.

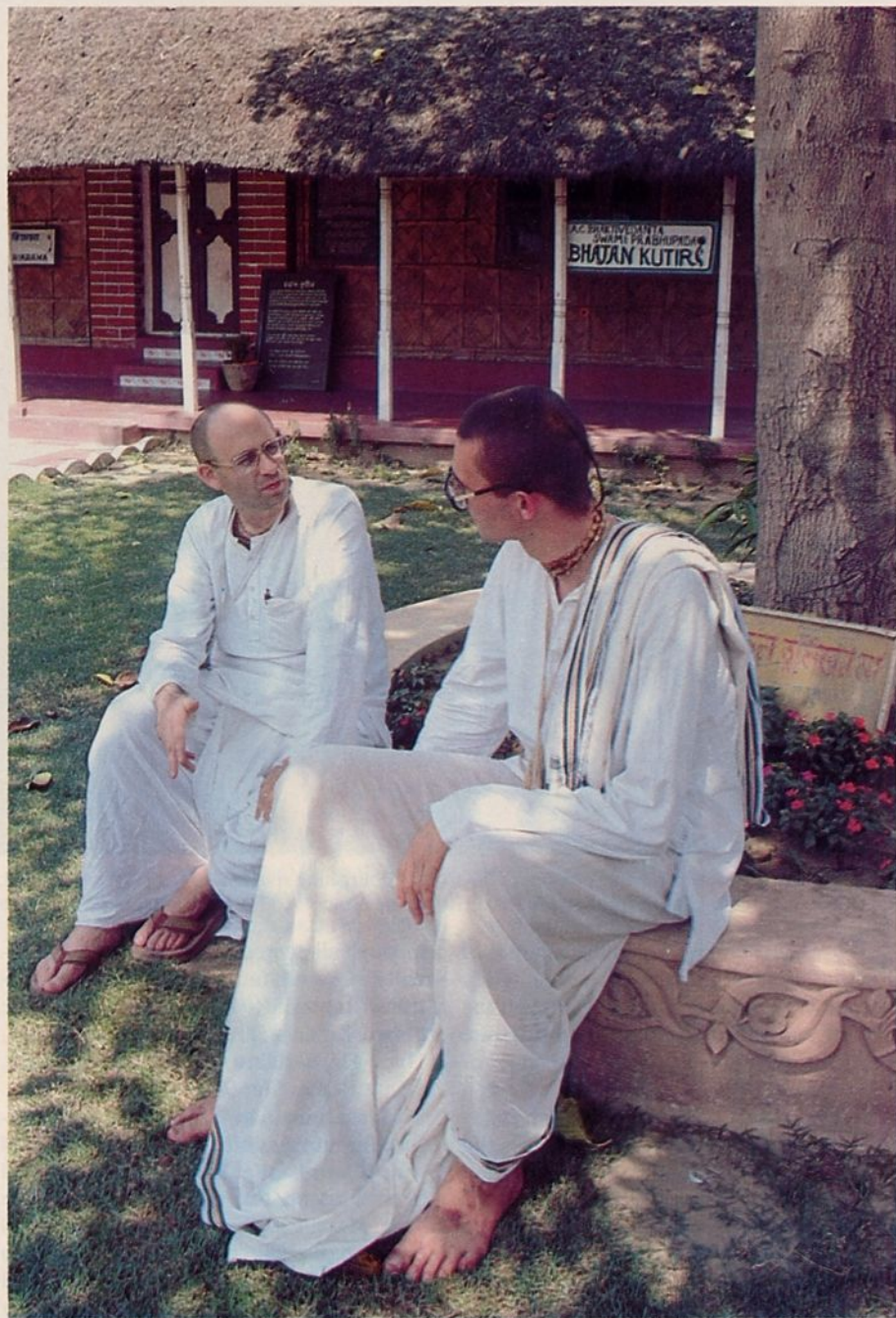
"You have some questions?" he asked in a deep but gentle voice.

I couldn't remember any of my questions. Suddenly, something inside inspired me to challenge him. Considering myself somewhat knowledgeable in Buddhism, I thought to ask him about another, equally valid spiritual path.

"What about Buddhism?" I challenged. "Speak about Buddhism," he replied, totally undisturbed by my attack.

Fool that I was, I had to answer. I began to rattle off something I had read in a book about the eightfold mystic path. But soon I exhausted my knowledge of the matter and felt totally deflated.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's face broke into a broad, radiant grin. He briefly explained that Buddhism was impractical because the soul is eternal and has personality, being part and parcel of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. The soul can never be extinguished by the philosophical process of negation. Śrīla Prabhupāda defeated me not out of a desire to establish



At the site of his enlightening discussions with Śrīla Prabhupāda, Brahmātīrtha dāsa (left) reminisces with his Godbrother Ānakadundubhi dāsa.

his own erudition but out of concern and compassion. Immediately I felt great respect for him. Śrīla Prabhupāda returned to his discussion with the other gentlemen, and I paid my obeisances and left the room.

The next day I had to return to my Peace Corps work in Bihar, about two hundred-fifty miles west of Calcutta. Already I was developing a bad taste for my life there. I seemed to be just killing time, living from day to day. I began to feel that my existence was bland compared to the fresh and colorful lives of Śrīla Prabhupāda and his devotees.

Within a month I returned to Calcutta and went straight to the temple. Śrīla Prabhupāda wasn't there, but the devotees welcomed me like a prodigal son returned. They fed me delicious vegetarian food and answered my barrage of questions and philosophical doubts with incredible patience. That evening, as I prepared to leave for my hotel, one of the devotees told me about a festival they were holding in Māyāpur. Śrīla Prabhupāda was there, as were many devotees from all over the world. An Indian boy named Manohara offered to take me with him the following day. Happily I accepted.

The next day we boarded a steam train that must have been left over from the Second World War. It was a five-hour journey to a country town called Navavīpa, where we hired a ricksha that took us through the town's center. Next we had to take a small wooden boat across the river Ganges. After thirty minutes of utter silence, except for the gentle splash of the water against the bottom of the boat, we had crossed the confluence of two Ganges branches. Paying the boatman a few coins, we again boarded a ricksha.

The azure sky was dotted with wispy clouds. Birds whistled and chattered in the dense undergrowth that practically engulfed the narrow road. Finally we stopped at a small encampment of rugged canvas tents.

"This is Māyāpur," said Manohara, leading me to Śrīla Prabhupāda's hut.

Śrīla Prabhupāda remembered me from our brief meeting in Calcutta and welcomed me warmly. It was wonderful to see him again. He sat on a clean white cushion, and he exuded an aura of perfect peace and tranquillity.

"So, do you have some questions?" he asked me.

I didn't want to foolishly challenge him again. Within my mind I decided to at least theoretically accept that this person knew the Absolute Truth. It wasn't real surrender, only an intellectual adjustment. But it was a large step for me.

I asked Śrīla Prabhupāda about science as a way of finding truth, and he began to explain about the all-attractive spiritual

nature of God, Kṛṣṇa, and about how everything has its source in Him.

Everything about Śrīla Prabhupāda enthralled me. The movements of his hands and the expressions of his mouth and eyes seemed to indicate a person whose consciousness was fixed beyond the limitations of the mundane sphere. When he spoke, I felt obliged to ponder deeply his profound and logical statements. As I sat

there at his feet trying to understand, he destroyed my intellectual pride.

Each evening I would go to Śrīla Prabhupāda's hut. How fortunate I was, I thought, to have come in contact with this person. Slowly, methodically, he was removing all of my misconceptions, bringing me to the platform of a sincere, inquisitive student of spiritual science.

(continued on page 10)

Scientists, Teachers, and Cheaters

An excerpt from *Perfect Questions, Perfect Answers*, talks between Śrīla Prabhupāda and Brahmānītha dāsa (Bob Cohen) in Māyāpur, India, during February 1972.

Bob: What is a scientist?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: One who knows things as they are.

Bob: He thinks he knows things as they are.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: What?

Bob: He hopes he knows things as they are.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, he is supposed to know. We approach the scientist because he is supposed to know things correctly. A scientist means one who knows things as they are. Kṛṣṇa is the greatest scientist.

Śyāmasundara: How is Kṛṣṇa the greatest scientist?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Because He knows everything. A scientist is one who knows a subject matter thoroughly. He is a scientist. Kṛṣṇa—He knows everything.

Bob: I am presently a science teacher.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, teaching. But unless you have perfect knowledge, how can you teach? That is our question.

Bob: Without perfect knowledge, though, you can teach—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is cheating; that is not teaching. That is cheating. Just like the scientists say, "There was a chunk . . . and the creation took place. Perhaps. Maybe . . ." What is this? Simply cheating! It is not teaching; it is cheating.

Bob: Without perfect knowledge, can I not teach some things? For example, I may—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: You can teach up to the point you know.

Bob: Yes, but I should not claim to teach more than I know.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, that is cheating.

Śyāmasundara: In other words, he can't teach the truth if he has only partial knowledge.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. That is not possible for any human being. A human being has imperfect senses. So how can he teach perfect knowledge? Suppose you see the sun as a disc. You have no means to approach the sun. If you say that we can see the sun by telescope and this and that, they are also made by you, and you are imperfect. So how can your machine be perfect? Therefore, your knowledge of the sun is imperfect. So don't teach about the

sun unless you have perfect knowledge. That is cheating.

Bob: But what about teaching that it is supposed that the sun is 93,000,000 miles away?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: As soon as you say "it is supposed," it is not scientific.

Bob: But I think that almost all science, then, is not scientific.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is the point!

Bob: All science is based on, you know, suppositions of this or that.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. They are teaching imperfectly. Just like they are advertising so much about the moon. Do you think their knowledge is perfect?

Bob: No.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Then?

Bob: What is the proper duty of the teacher in society? Let us say a science teacher. What should he be doing in the classroom?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: You should simply teach about Kṛṣṇa.

Bob: He should not teach about—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No. That will include everything. His aim should be to know Kṛṣṇa.

Bob: Can a scientist teach the science of combining acid and alkaline, and this kind of science, with Kṛṣṇa as its object?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: How can it be?

Bob: If you—when one studies science, one finds general tendencies of nature, and these general tendencies of nature point to a controlling force . . .

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That I was explaining the other day. I asked one chemist whether, according to chemical formulas, hydrogen and oxygen linked together become water. Do they not?

Bob: It's true.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Now, there is a vast amount of water in the Atlantic Ocean and Pacific Ocean. What quantity of chemicals was required?

Bob: How much?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. How many tons?

Bob: Many!

Śrīla Prabhupāda: So who supplied it?

Bob: . . . I see.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: So that is science. You can teach like that.

THE VEDIC

Transcendental Comment

WHEN TECHNOLOGY FAILS

by Dvārakādhīśa-devī dāsī

Where do you look for the future of America? In technology? In politics? In urban renewal? In outer space?

Ah, outer space—that final, endless frontier that, though alien and forbidding, beckons nonetheless with irresistible mystery and unlimited promise, that great, unfathomed starry expanse that just may hold the key to creation and existence.

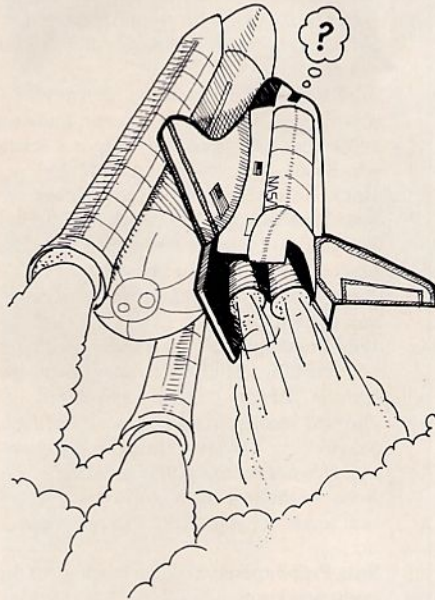
We Americans are known for our appreciation of a challenge, our passion for new frontiers. And the limitless reaches of outer space provide a welcome contrast to the troubled frontiers on our crowded planet. *Time* magazine noted that “Going into space was the obligation of America, an absolute writ of being—and staying—free” (*Time*, Feb. 10, p. 46).

America, despite its ethnic diversity, is unified in its reverence for exploring outer space. Americans are genuinely impressed by the photographs of their flag on the moon, and they admire the bravery of their astronauts. Thus it was that, on January 28 of this year, America was plunged into mourning. On that day the U.S. space shuttle *Challenger* exploded just seventy-three seconds after take-off, killing all seven crew members. In one sense, it was a small loss: only seven persons died. Yet their deaths struck the collective consciousness of America with unusual force, penetrating the indifference so carefully preserved in a world of unceasing tragedy.

Perhaps there is a reason for America’s grief that reaches beyond the loss of the seven lives, beyond the frustrated space mission. That the U. S. and space technology have become united in inspiration and purpose is undeniable. As John Logsdon, a space policy expert with George Washington University, commented, “It [the space shuttle] is one of our most common national symbols now. Right after the bald eagle.” In a society without distinctive cultural traditions, technological advances have become our heritage and our hope. We place our trust in science and technology to cure our diseases, to lessen our

work loads, to bring ordinary people close to the wonders of space. Although there is the acknowledged risk, still we are shocked when technology falls short.

Is our faith in science supplanting our faith in God? Perhaps it’s not so obvious, but many Americans are drifting away from their religious faiths and finding solace in the solutions offered by modern technology. God is a mystery, while science is explained with neat logic and numbers and equations. Science and technology are created and understood by fellow human beings; thus it seems that we have



somehow outwitted the Supreme Intelligence. Like mischievous pups, we delight in this apparent independence, moving ever further from His strict supervision, enjoying what appears to be ultimate freedom from the laws of nature, the laws of God.

But we are not free. We are under the control of God—His nature and His laws. Despite our endeavors, we cannot achieve any technological gains without His sanction.

We will become fortunate when we depend on God rather than imperfect modern technology which betrays us repeatedly. God is independent and omnipotent; His technology never fails. If we turn to Him,

He will not only solve the problems that we have looked to technology to solve, but He will also enlighten us in our true relationship with the universe and Him.

BONES OF CONTENTION

by Mathureśa dāsa

The Vedic literature expounds the perfect evolutionary theory. The first point is that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, fashioned all species of life at the very beginning of creation. Men and apes, microbes and mosquitoes, have lived more or less side by side from the start.

What evolves, the *Vedas* say, is the soul. An eternal individual soul inhabits and activates each and every body. Transmigrating in a cycle of repeated births and deaths, the soul automatically evolves through the lower species until it is finally placed in a human womb to inhabit a human embryo.

In the human form, the soul has higher intelligence and is therefore held responsible for his activities, just as a citizen, at a specified age, becomes answerable to the state. According to his activities, a soul embodied in human form is either thrown back down in the lower species or elevated to higher levels of existence and ultimately to the transcendental kingdom of God.

That’s the Vedic version of evolution, a version that hasn’t changed in thousands of years.

And what about the Darwinian and neo-Darwinian (and neo-neo-Darwinian) theories? To make a long diatribe short, any theory claiming that one species of life evolved from another is unacceptable. There’s no fossil evidence that this ever happened, and the idea that simple life forms somehow upgraded themselves contradicts known scientific laws.

But in all fairness, a theory or a school of thought doesn’t have to be reasonable to be interesting, or even useful. Darwin and his descendants have done a great service to mankind by showing us how people will sometimes undergo intellectual contortions, defy common sense, and perpe-

OBSERVER

ary on the Issues of the Day

trate grand frauds to paint a picture of the universe without God or the soul. I like the grand frauds best, and Java man was, until recently, my favorite.

Java man, once accepted by many fossil experts as strong evidence of an evolutionary link between modern man and the apes, was unearthed at Trinil, Java, in 1891. Dubbed *Pithecanthropus erectus* by his proud discoverer, Java man became a celebrity. A life-size model of his human-like form toured museums throughout Europe, and drawings were published showing in fine detail even the hairs on his head and the lines on his face. Gazing at these dramatic re-creations, no one could have guessed that the only relevant remains the Trinil site had yielded were a piece of a skull, a thigh bone, and a few teeth.

Java man is of course not alone in the gallery of questionable, or downright fraudulent, archeological finds. Piltdown man, discovered in Sussex, England, in 1912, was thought to be "the missing link" until 1953, when tests showed him to be a forgery—a modern human skull fitted with an ape's jaw. And Nebraska man, alias *Hesperopithecus*, turned out to be nothing more than a pig's tooth! Ironically enough, before these "men" from Java, Sussex, and Nebraska were exposed, they served as proof of the theory of evolution at the Scopes "monkey trial" in 1925, and thus they helped set a precedent in U.S. education favorable to the teaching of Darwinian evolution, a precedent that remains today.

People are still trying to make a man out of a few bones. With my sharp ear for scandal, I came upon one of the latest incidents of fraud while watching a CBS television news story on MIAs—soldiers missing in action in the Vietnam War. This particular incident doesn't involve archeologists, but I'd say it sheds some light on the proper attitude toward alleged bone proofs. It's my new favorite.

Colonel Thomas Hart, the story began, was shot down over Laos in 1972. CBS learned that when the Air Force gave Ann Hart what they said were her husband's remains, she was doubtful. She hired a forensic anthropologist, who confirmed

that identification was impossible from the few bones the Air Force had provided.

Kathrynn Fanning is another MIA wife. She had already buried what the government had said were the remains of her husband, Hugh, missing over North Vietnam in 1967. She too became suspicious. She had the bones exhumed and examined by Michael Charney, an anthropologist at Colorado State.

"There's no way they could identify this as Major Fanning or anybody else," said Charney while showing the bones to a



CBS reporter. "In fact, we're not even sure they all belong to the same individual."

Hey, you know, that's what more than a few people said about Java man way back in the 1890s. Archeologist Eugene Dubois found Java man's thigh bone fourteen meters away from his skull and teeth, prompting other scientists to suggest that the thigh bone belonged to someone else, maybe an ordinary, garden-variety human being. But Mr. Dubois was evidently under pressure to produce proof of Darwin's theory, just as today the Armed Forces are apparently under pressure to somehow or other account for all their MIAs.

Says Mrs. Hart, "The technical people

involved [at the Army's Central Identification Lab in Hawaii] were simply told that thirteen people died on this aircraft. Here's what we brought back. . . . Find thirteen people, and they did."

Neither Ann Hart nor Kathrynn Fanning are willing to accept, merely on the basis of a few bones, that their husbands have died. And their example has helped inspire me, at least, to refuse to accept that Java man, or any other missing link, ever *lived*. If the two ladies prefer to wait, hoping all the time that the future will bring good news, I'll wait too, understanding in the meantime that my human body descended from other human bodies going back to the beginning of creation, that man has existed alongside all the other species from the very start, and that the origin of all species of life, and of all us embodied souls, is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa.

MORAL FAILURE OF THE SECULAR STATE

by Drutakarmā dāsa

Contemporary civic life in America and around the world is predominantly secular. Discussion of values and ethics from a spiritual point of view is discouraged in both public educational institutions and government. Especially for those who regard themselves as liberals, the rigid separation of Church and State has become an inviolable principle. Yet things may be changing.

The Brookings Institution, one of America's most renowned liberal think tanks, concludes in one of its recent reports, "Religion in American Public Life," that American democracy "depends for its health on values that over the not-so-long run must come from religion." In other words, secular value systems cannot maintain peace and harmony in society. It is through religion, the report says, that "human rights are rooted in the moral worth with which a loving Creator has endowed each human soul, and social authority is legitimized by making it answer to a transcendent moral law."

At this point a problem arises: how to

practically introduce “transcendent moral law” into government and society. After all, there are many religions, each with its particular version of such law. Is the version of one religion to be imposed upon members of other faiths? Śrīla Prabhupāda gives a solution in his commentary to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*:

Nowadays there is propaganda everywhere, all over the world, for a secular state interested in only mundane activities. But if the citizens of the state are not educated in good qualities, how can there be happiness? For example, if the total population is untruthful, how can a state be happy? Therefore without consideration of one’s belonging to a sectarian religion, whether it be Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, or any other sect, everyone should be taught to be truthful. Similarly, everyone should be taught to be merciful.

In other words, there are certain basic spiritual principles that are common to all genuine religions. The Vedic scriptures of India are unique in that they focus on these universal principles rather than sectarian religious beliefs. According to the Vedic literature, the fundamental prin-

ciples of religion are truthfulness, mercy, cleanliness, and austerity, and the fundamental religious practice is chanting the names of God.

Without imposing sectarian religious views on the citizens, the government must nevertheless assure that the religious principles of truthfulness, mercy, cleanliness, and austerity flourish in society. Rather than standing idly by, waving the flag of secularism while unguided citizens lead lives of decadence, our leaders should discourage sinful acts. The Vedic literature identifies four sinful acts specifically responsible for eroding religious principles: Gambling destroys truthfulness, meat-eating destroys mercy, intoxication destroys austerity, and illicit sex destroys cleanliness.

Of course, before the leaders of society can encourage the citizens to refrain from sinful activities, they themselves must become free from these habits. The citizens can then be trained in spiritual practices that will gradually destroy their desires for irreligious life.

It is not possible for government to effectively ban the sinful activities men-

tioned above—as evidenced by the days of the Prohibition in America—unless the citizens are educated about the value of following religious principles and are feeling the satisfaction of genuine spiritual conduct.

The most effective way to educate and purify the citizens is to give them a direct experience of spiritual life. God can be perceived in the sound of His names. The leaders must therefore actively promote the chanting of the holy names of God. This sublime spiritual practice is recommended in all the scriptures of the world. Government cannot favor one religion over another, yet it must encourage everyone to chant the name of God as he understands it—be it “Jehovah,” “Allah,” or “Kṛṣṇa.” God is one, though He may be known by many different names.

Only by instituting these fundamental spiritual principles can government insure peace and prosperity in human society. As Lord Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā*, “He who discards scriptural injunctions and acts according to his own whims attains neither perfection, nor happiness, nor the supreme destination.”

“Don’t Leave” (continued from page 7)

One evening I took a walk along the front of the property. The moon was full, illuminating everything, and the Ganges shimmered in the distance like a thread of silver. A mild breeze blew, and the atmosphere felt somehow purifying. Walking alone, I began to consider how my consciousness was changing. Looking back on my life, I could see how kind God had been to me; it seemed that every stage had been a step in His plan to bring me to this point. I stood by the side of the shining Ganges, watching her flow down to the ocean. Yes, I thought, now I must begin my journey back to Kṛṣṇa.

The next evening as we gathered at Śrīla Prabhupāda’s feet, I tried to explain that I would be leaving the next day to return to my work. Nervously I said, “Tommorrow I’ll have to leave you and . . .”

Looking lovingly at me, he said, “Don’t talk l-e-a-v-e, but talk l-i-v-e.”

Inconceivably, he seemed to address my soul directly. I suddenly became overwhelmed with love and appreciation for him. I felt such emotion that I had to excuse myself. Sitting down on the edge of a rice field, my eyes brimming with tears of happiness and relief, I knew my life would never be the same again. Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted me to become a devotee, and I knew deep inside that this was all I had ever wanted.

Although I returned to my work with the Peace Corps, I spent as much time with the devotees as possible. Finally I returned to New York. The devotees assured me that there was a temple in New York and that Śrīla Prabhupāda would come there to visit. I wrote to Śrīla Prabhupāda and explained what I was doing. I felt that by writing I had a direct link with him.

Within a week I received his reply:

My dear Bob,

Please accept my blessings. I thank you very much for your letter dated June 12, 1972. I have noted the sentiments expressed therein with great pleasure. I am very glad to hear that you are associating with us. I know that you are a very good boy, very intelligent, and your behavior is gentle, so I have all confidence that very quickly Krishna will bestow all His blessings upon you, and you will feel yourself becoming perfectly happy in Krishna consciousness. . . . Any man with a good scientific and philosophical mind, like your good self, must first appreciate what transcendental knowledge is. . . . To get knowledge is the first item for anyone who is hoping to find the perfection of his life. . . .

We are just now typing up the tapes of those conversations we held in Mayapur, and we shall be publishing them as a book. It will be called “PERFECT QUESTIONS, PERFECT ANSWERS.” . . . I shall be very much englandened to meet you in New York once again.

Your ever well-wisher,
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

This was a great surprise. Śrīla Prabhupāda considered the questions I had asked in my foolishness and ignorance to be perfect transcendental inquiries! It was an incredible honor, although I felt somewhat embarrassed.

A month later Śrīla Prabhupāda came to the New York temple. I went with my wife, Barbara, wanting her to meet him. Śrīla Prabhupāda entered the hallway, and we all scattered flower petals and bowed down to offer respects.

In my heart I was feeling very much ashamed, because although I had received so much instruction and encouragement from him, I had still not fully committed myself. I felt that I was letting him down. As he approached me, I bowed down to the floor, hoping that he would not see me. I kept my head down and offered the Sanskrit prayers very slowly. After saying the prayers, I raised my head, thinking he had passed by. Then I saw two bronze-colored feet before me, and I looked up to see Śrīla Prabhupāda’s beaming face.

“Oh, it’s you!” he exclaimed as I rose to my feet. He put his arms around my shoulders and gave me a welcoming embrace like a loving father. Everyone gave a loud exclamation of pleasure and jubilation that I had achieved such a place of affection in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s heart. He had literally embraced me into his fold.

Two years later, when my wife and I were fully ready, Śrīla Prabhupāda accepted us both as his formally initiated disciples.

The Noblest Ambition

Alec's parents just wanted him to be happy. Any career he chose would be fine with them—except the one he really wanted.

by KUṆḌALĪ DĀSA

Last Christmas, one of my devotee friends went to visit his parents. It was his first visit in the five years since he had taken up Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Before leaving, Saṅkarṣaṇa confided to me that because his parents strongly objected to his involvement in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, he had some reservations about his visit. That evening, when he returned to the temple, I asked him how it went.

"They're still pretty unhappy about my decision to join," he replied. "They were glad about my visit, though."

I saw he was disappointed.

"What is it about Kṛṣṇa consciousness they object to?" I asked.

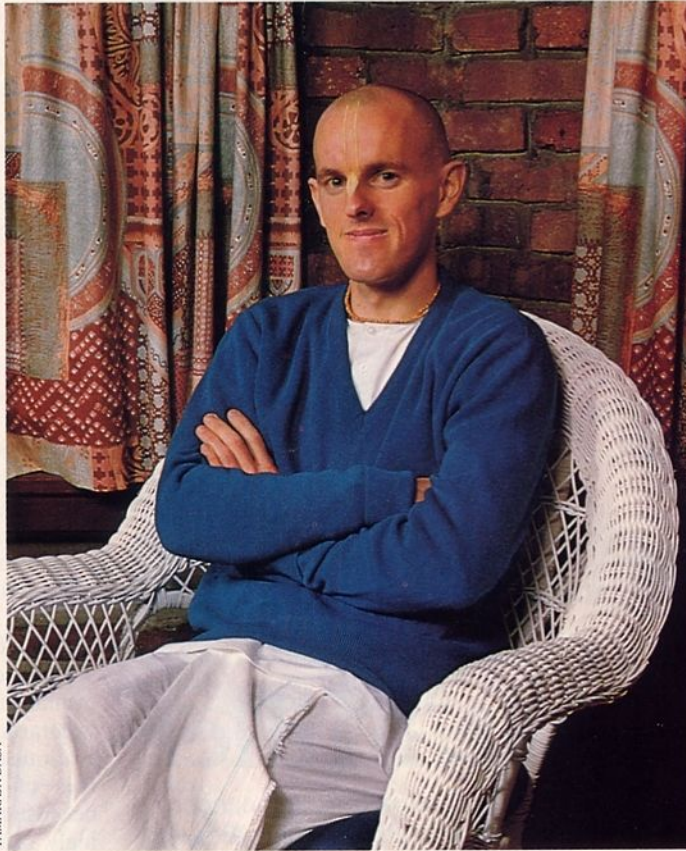
"Everything," he replied. "They accuse me of being too narrow, of not experiencing the world enough. My life is too much centered on one thing—Kṛṣṇa."

"And your parents' opinion of you is the reason you went to see them only once in five years?"

"No. You see, when I first joined the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement they tried to force me to quit. It caused a big stink. Only after five years did I feel confident enough to visit them without fear of their pulling a stunt like that again."

"You mean they would have had you deprogrammed!"

"Not exactly. They weren't really prepared to hire thugs to coerce me, but they were prepared to try to 'set me



Sankarṣaṇa dāsa

straight' themselves."

"Let me ask you something," I said. "Do you think your parents object to your choice of spiritual discipline or to spiritual life, period? Suppose you were to become a monk or a priest, something within their own tradition. Would that pacify them?"

Saṅkarṣaṇa thought a moment. "I think they would prefer that, but only as 'the lesser of two evils.'"

"The problem, then, is not that you want to serve Kṛṣṇa. The difficulty is in their attachment to you. They want you to be a materialist."

"That's the crux of the matter. But they couch their attachment in terms of objec-

tions to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which they really know nothing about. My mother spent a good bit of time apologizing to me for failing as a mother and thus causing me to become a Hare Kṛṣṇa. It was embarrassing. The funny thing is, all my life she used to tell me, 'I just want you to do whatever you want in life, Alec, whatever makes you happy.' Now they say I am being misled, that on my own I would not choose the Kṛṣṇa conscious path."

"There's no doubt about it, Saṅkarṣaṇa, parental attachment is extremely strong. Throughout history parents have often done everything they could to prevent a son or daughter from taking to spiritual life. In most cases their children hadn't even converted to another faith: Ther-

esa of Avila had to run away from home to become a nun; Francis of Assisi's father publicly disowned him; Thomas Aquinas's family locked him in a room with a prostitute to lure him into breaking his vow of celibacy; even Jesus Christ had to break out of the parental bond so he could go about his Father's business.

"In our line, also, there is the example of Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. His parents hired guards to watch him. When he finally ran away to join Lord Caitanya, they sent a party to recapture him. He had to avoid the main roads. Material attachment can make parents act insanely."

(continued on page 32)



ROGER ANNEY

Lord Kṛṣṇa's Cuisine

Meat and Mr. Miller

The risk of obesity, high blood pressure, constipation, and cancer evidently aren't enough to get meat-eaters to change their diet.

by VIŚĀKHĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

I received a publication from the U.S. Government Printing Office entitled "There's Something to Be Said for Never Saying, 'Please Pass the Meat.'" It was a compelling statement for vegetarianism written by Roger W. Miller, editor of the Food and Drug Administration's *Consumer* magazine.

According to Mr. Miller, the Food and Nutrition Board of the National Academy of Sciences studied the vegetarian diet—legumes, grains, nuts, vegetables, and milk—and concluded that it provides all necessary proteins and other nutrients.

"The idea that vegetarians can't get what their bodies need without meat was pretty well put into the myth category" by the academy.

In addition, Mr. Miller explained that, as a group, vegetarians may be much healthier than nonvegetarians. They have less risk of developing cancer, obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, and constipation.

Vegetarians can "also be credited with adopting a very efficient means of getting their bodily essentials—a consideration of no small merit on this planet of finite re-

sources." Meat is expensive to buy because it's expensive to produce—cattle must eat sixteen pounds of grain to produce one pound of meat. "The world's food shortages," Mr. Miller says, "might lessen if vegetarianism swept the world."

Thus, "economists, philosophers, and nutritionists who look at vegetarians often have to come up with plus marks for these flesh teetotalers." Many vegetarians, he concluded, "have earned and deserve their wholesomer-than-thou attitude."

But, when I read in the small italicized paragraph at the end of the paper that Mr. Miller "enjoys steaks, pork chops, and hamburgers and admires vegetarians," the entire paper—and Mr. Miller—took on a new light.

Here was a qualified person who compared vegetarianism to nonvegetarianism and saw that, from an impartial viewpoint, vegetarianism was the better alternative. Yet only intellectually was he impartial. When it came to his own menu, he was partial to meat.

As an avowed vegetarian, at first I was incredulous. Then it began to make sense. Nowhere in his paper had Mr. Miller expressed compassion for the millions of innocent animals who are born and raised in confined and crowded conditions, then fattened with artificial roughage (including cardboard, shopping bags, computer paper, corrugated boxes, and newspapers), pumped full of antibiotics, and finally slaughtered for the family supper. Empathy with the animals impels many a vegetarian. Although he did mention that "Hindus avoid meat because they believe in transmigration; thus butchering an animal would be tantamount to butchering a person," Mr. Miller himself has no faith in such beliefs.

But even aversion to slaughter is not the primary factor that makes me partial to a vegetarian diet. Over and above considerations of health and nonviolence, devotees of Kṛṣṇa are "flesh teetotalers" because they eat only food they have lovingly offered to Kṛṣṇa. Since Kṛṣṇa requests, and will accept, only vegetarian foods—fruits, vegetables, grains, milk, and milk products—devotees are vegetarian primarily out of love for Him. They are partial not to vegetarian over non-vegetarian food, but to Kṛṣṇa.

And Kṛṣṇa is partial to them. Although as the supreme father He is equal to all, Kṛṣṇa naturally favors His devotees over the atheists, just as a parent favors an affectionate child over a delinquent one. "I am equal to all," Lord Kṛṣṇa says in the *Gītā*, "but whoever renders service unto Me in devotion is a friend and is in Me, and I am also a friend to him" (Bg. 9.29).

The Lord's devotees easily and happily serve Him by cooking vegetarian meals, offering them to Him with devotion, and

(Recipes from *The Hare Krishna Book of Vegetarian Cooking*, by Ādi-rāja dāsa)

Date and Tamarind Chutney (*Khajur imli ki chatni*)

Preparation time: 35 minutes
Servings: 4-6

3 ounces tamarind
1½ cups water
7 ounces dates, pitted and chopped
1 teaspoon sugar
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon ground cumin
1 pinch cayenne pepper

1. Break the lump of tamarind into small pieces and boil them in the water for 10 minutes. Then pour the tamarind and water through a strainer. With a wooden spoon push as much of the pulp as possible through the strainer into the water, scraping the bottom of the strainer every few seconds. Continue until all the pulp has been extracted from the seeds and fiber.

2. Add all of the other ingredients to the pulp-and-water mixture. Cook over medium flame, uncovered, until most of the liquid cooks off and the chutney takes on the consistency of marmalade. Offer to Kṛṣṇa.

Sweet Dāl (*Jagannātha Purī channe ki dāl*)

Preparation time: 1 hour
Servings: 4-6

9 ounces *channa dāl*
5 cups water
2 teaspoons salt
4 bay leaves
5 or 6 medium-size tomatoes
1 tablespoon butter
2 tablespoons ghee (clarified butter) or vegetable oil
½ teaspoon cumin seeds
1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
½ teaspoon powdered asafetida
3 tablespoons grated fresh
(or 4 tablespoons dry) coconut
2 tablespoons brown sugar
2 tablespoons molasses

1. Soak the *dāl* in water for 3 to 4 hours and leave in a strainer to drain. Bring the water, with the salt, to a boil in a large pot; then add the *dāl* and bay leaves. Cook partially covered over a medium flame for 30 to 40 minutes, removing any froth that collects on the surface. Then lift the cover, stir the *dāl* several times, and lower the flame to a simmer.

2. Wash the tomatoes, cut each one into 8 wedges, and add to the *dāl* with the butter.

Replace the cover and let the *dāl* simmer while you prepare the seasonings.

3. Heat the ghee or oil in a small saucepan and fry the cumin seeds for a few seconds. Then add the grated ginger, asafetida, and grated coconut. Fry this mixture for 2 minutes, stirring constantly. Now pour the ghee and spices into the cooked *dāl*, along with the sugar and molasses. Stir well and simmer for 5 more minutes before offering to Kṛṣṇa.

Rice with Spinach (*Palak chawal*)

Preparation time: 30-40 minutes
Servings: 4-6

10 ounces *basmati* or other good long-grain rice
1½ teaspoons salt
¾ cups water
½ pound fresh spinach
1 tablespoon ghee or vegetable oil
1 teaspoon ground coriander
2 bay leaves
4 ounces unsalted peanuts (optional), lightly fried
1 pinch ground black pepper

1. Wash the rice thoroughly, soak it, and let it drain. Put the water and the salt into a pot and heat over a high flame. Remove the tough stalks from the spinach, wash the leaves in several changes of water, and drain. Then wilt the leaves by plunging them into the boiling salted water. Put them into a colander and rinse under cold water; then drain them and chop them into small pieces.

2. In a medium-size saucepan, heat the ghee or oil and fry the ground coriander and bay leaves. Add the rice and stir-fry until the grains are coated and become translucent. Add the chopped spinach and stir for a minute; then pour the salted water into the saucepan and bring to a boil.

3. Cover the pan and cook gently over a low flame for 20 minutes. If you use peanuts, put them in (without stirring) 5 minutes before you finish cooking. When the rice is completely cooked, add the pepper. Mix the ingredients with a fork before offering to Kṛṣṇa.

Potatoes au Gratin (*Alu gaurāṅga*)

Preparation time: 1 hour
Servings: 4-6

1 pound *panir* (milk curd)
10 medium-size potatoes, precooked
½ teaspoon asafetida
3 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
3 tablespoons chopped fresh coriander leaves

3 tablespoons ground coriander
2½ cups sour cream mixed with
1 teaspoon turmeric
4 ounces butter
2 tablespoons powdered milk

1. Rinse the *paneer* well under cold running water. Then gather the cheesecloth tight around the *paneer* and squeeze out most of the water. Wash and peel the potatoes and cut them into thin slices.

2. Cover the bottom of a greased casserole or cake pan with one third of the potato slices. Sprinkle this layer with one third of each spice, in this order: asafetida, salt, pepper, fresh coriander, ground coriander. Cover with a layer of one third of the crumbled *panir* and a layer of one third of the sour cream. Dot with one third of the butter.

3. Cover this with a second layer of sliced potatoes and other ingredients, in the same manner as the first layer. Make the third layer with the rest of the sliced potatoes, and repeat the procedure using the rest of the ingredients. Finally, sprinkle a thin layer of powdered milk over the top. Tightly cover the casserole with a sheet of aluminum foil, and bake it in the oven for about 45 minutes at 400°F. Remove the aluminum foil 10 minutes before the end of cooking so that the top can brown. Offer to Kṛṣṇa.

Potato and Coconut Salad (*Alu narial raita*)

Preparation time: 30 minutes
Servings: 4-6

6 medium-size potatoes
1½ cups plain yogurt
2 teaspoons salt
4 ounces grated coconut
1 tablespoon ghee or vegetable oil
1 teaspoon black mustard seeds
1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger
1 fresh chili, minced
2 firm ripe tomatoes
several sprigs of parsley

1. Boil the potatoes until they're soft. Peel them, cut them into ¾-inch cubes, and put them in a bowl. Refrigerate.

2. Wash the tomatoes and cut each into 8 wedges.

3. Mix together the yogurt, salt, and grated coconut. Heat the ghee in a small pan; then toss in the mustard seeds, covering the pan immediately so that the frying seeds won't pop out. When they finish popping, add the ginger and chili. Stir for a few seconds. Empty this *masālā* into the bowl of yogurt, drop the potatoes in, mix, and toss gently to give the potatoes an even coating of yogurt and spices.

4. Garnish with a sprig of parsley and wedges of tomato. Offer to Kṛṣṇa.

then enjoying the Lord's *prasādam*, or spiritualized food. In this way the devotees get all the material benefits of the vegetarian diet, and, when they're advanced spiritually, they return to the kingdom of God.

We are free to place our faith where we want. Some, like Mr. Miller, place their faith in their own likes and dislikes and conduct their lives accordingly, whereas others place their faith in Lord Kṛṣṇa and conduct their lives according to His likes

and dislikes. So while Mr. Miller and others may continue to laud vegetarianism from an impartial viewpoint, devotees will continue to enjoy the benefits, both material and spiritual, of being partial to Kṛṣṇa.

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

Darwin's Evolving Apartments

This is a continuation of a conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and a guest, Dr. Christian Hauser, a psychiatrist, that took place in Stockholm in September 1973.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Darwin theorized that these material bodies “evolve”—the fish body changes into a reptile body, the ape body changes into a human body, and so on. This is nonsense.

Dr. Hauser: But somehow it is persuasive.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, not at all. Take this apartment we are in now. In an hour or so you may go across the city to another apartment. So will it mean this apartment has somehow “evolved” into that apartment?

You, the spiritual person, the apartment dweller, simply have chosen to go from one material apartment to another. Not that this material apartment has “evolved” into that apartment.

Dr. Hauser: Yes, I can see what you mean.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Darwin's nonsense lies there. He claimed one apartment was changing into another apartment—one apartment becoming a different apartment. Of course, that is not a fact. This rascal has left the whole world in spiritual confusion. Darkness.

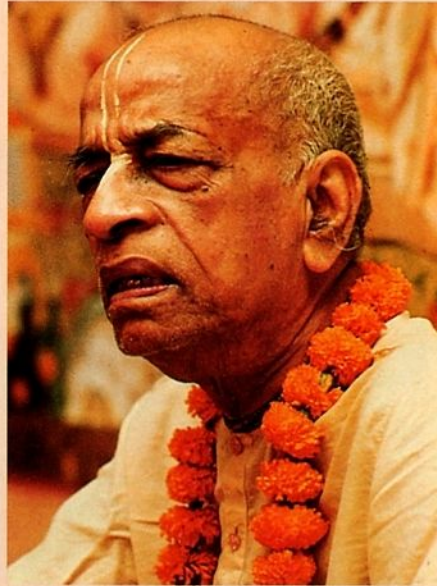
Just try to understand how foolish Darwin was. This room cannot develop into another room. I, the dweller in this room, can go from this room to another room—but the rooms are there already. This, in actuality, is the meaning of “evolution”: from one lifetime to the next, the living soul moves from one ready-made kind of material bodily dwelling to another. All the different kinds of bodies are there already—ready-made.

Dr. Hauser: So one goes to a bigger and better apartment in the next lifetime.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Bigger and better or smaller and worse—depending on his activities in this life. Not necessarily bigger and better. This is just more of the same nonsense.

Dr. Hauser: Well, through trial and error from one lifetime to another, I may be able to enter a bigger and better body on account of my increased intelligence.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Oh? For instance, you may have intelligence to desire a nicer garment, but if you have no money—that is to say, no credit with the garment



maker—how can you get that nicer garment? You will have to accept something inferior.

So what we daily see in these various species—these garments for the living soul—is the soul's “evolution” from one kind of body to another according to his *karma*, his past activity. According to his credit or lack of credit with the garment maker, he may or may not get a bigger and better body.

Karmaṇā daiva netreṇa: The Vedic literature instructs that if you want to go to a better condition of life, then you'll have to pay for it with godly activity. But God has already created that better condition of life—it is there already. Not that this inferior condition somehow mysteriously changes into that better condition. That is merely Darwin's nonsense.

Take the condition of life on the moon. It is different from the condition of life on this earth. But the condition of life on the moon is already there. You simply have to transfer yourself from this planet to that planet through your activity. So Darwin's theory of evolution completely misses the point.

Darwin says that the material body is evolving. Such absolute nonsense. If the material body is evolving, then why at the present moment are the monkeys not producing human bodies? This nonsensical “evolution”—where is the evidence? You

have seen the monkeys in the zoo. Where is the evidence in the zoo that a monkey has produced a human being? Do you think this Darwinian business is all right?

Dr. Hauser: Yes, that life might have evolved into various forms—this I'm fairly sure of. And also that the human being might not have existed about a hundred thousand years ago.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No. These various material forms have always existed, thanks to God's natural arrangement. The human form did not have to “evolve.” It has always existed. Eternally. Thanks to God's natural arrangement.

Disciple: Recently, in Africa some scientists discovered skeletal remains that predated the “part-ape, part-man” creature they like to picture in their textbooks—by hundreds of thousands of years. And these skeletal remains were completely human. They were the same as the remains of any modern man. So even though this information may never get into the textbooks, all Darwin's theories of evolution are demolished.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: By now Darwin's nonsense has polluted everyone's thinking. So let us stay with this simple example: When I go from this apartment to another apartment, this apartment does not “evolve” into the other apartment. I merely move from one preexisting apartment to another.

The apartments are preexisting, and I, the living soul, the apartment-dweller, am preexisting. The apartments do not change, and I do not change. Only my location changes.

So Darwin merged the “I”—the soul, the apartment-dweller—with the body, the apartment. And he said the apartment somehow changes. This is his nonsense.

Dr. Hauser: Yes, I think he's only talking about apartments, not the apartment-dwellers, and he's saying the apartments are changing.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, that is his rascal-dom. On account of Darwin and his modern disciples, people have lost sight of the very aim of this human life—which is to free the spirit self from these lifetimes in so many tenth-class material apartments and to go back to the spiritual world and live forever with the Lord in full, everlasting happiness.

(To be continued.)

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.

Third Canto: “The Status Quo”

CHAPTER TWELVE

Creation of the Kumāras and Others

In this installment of our continuing presentation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, the great sage Maitreya concludes his descriptions of the material creations of Brahmā, to Vidura, an eternal associate of the Lord.

TEXT 40

षोडश्युक्त्यौ पूर्ववक्त्रात्पुरीष्यग्निष्टुतावथ ।
आप्तोर्यामातिरात्रौ च वाजपेयं सगोसवम् ॥४०॥

ṣoḍaśy-ukthau pūrva-vaktrāt
purīṣy-agniṣṭutāu atha
āptoryāmātirātrau ca
vājapeyam sagosavam

ṣoḍaśy-ukthau—types of sacrifice; pūrva-vaktrāt—from the eastern mouth; purīṣy-agniṣṭutau—types of sacrifice; atha—then; āptoryāmātirātrau—types of sacrifice; ca—and; vājapeyam—type of sacrifice; sa-gosavam—type of sacrifice.

TRANSLATION

All the different varieties of fire sacrifices [ṣoḍaśi, uktha, purīṣi, agniṣṭoma, āptoryāma, atirātra, vājapeya and gosava] became manifested from the eastern mouth of Brahmā.

TEXT 41

विद्या दानं तपः सत्यं धर्मस्येति पदानि च ।
आश्रमश्च यथासंख्यमसृजत्सह वृत्तिभिः ॥४१॥

vidyā dānaṁ tapaḥ satyam
dharmasyeti padāni ca
āśramāṁś ca yathā-saṅkhyam
asrjat saha vṛttibhiḥ

vidyā—education; dānam—charity; tapaḥ—penance; satyam—truth; dharmasya—of religion; iti—thus; padāni—four legs; ca—also; āśramān—orders of life; ca—also; yathā—as they are; saṅkhyam—in number; asrjat—created; saha—along with; vṛttibhiḥ—by vocations.

TRANSLATION

Education, charity, penance and truth are said to be the four legs of religion, and to learn this there are four orders of life with different classifications of castes according to vocation. Brahmā created all these in systematic order.

PURPORT

The nucleus of the four social orders—brahmacarya, or student life,

gṛhastha, or household family life, vānaprastha, or retired life for practicing penance, and sannyāsa, or renounced life for preaching the truth—is the four legs of religion. The vocational divisions are the brāhmaṇas, or the intelligent class, the kṣatriyas, or administrative class, the vaiśyas, or mercantile productive class, and the śūdras, or general laborer class who have no specific qualifications. All were systematically planned and created by Brahmā for the regular promotion of self-realization. Student life is meant for acquiring the best education; household family life is meant for gratifying the senses, provided it is performed with a charitable disposition of mind, retirement from household life is meant for penance, for advancement in spiritual life, and renounced life is meant for preaching the Absolute Truth to the people in general. The combined actions of all members of society make the whole situation favorable for the upliftment of the mission of human life. The beginning of this social institution is based on education meant for purifying the animal propensities of the human being. The highest purificatory process is knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the purest of the pure.

TEXT 42

सावित्रं प्राजापत्यं च ब्राह्मं चाथ बृहत्तया ।
वार्तासञ्चयशालीनशिलोच्छ इति वै गृहे ॥४२॥

sāvitrāṁ prajāpatyam ca
brāhmaṁ cātha bṛhat tathā
vārtā sañcaya-śālīna-
śiloṅcha iti vai grhe

sāvitrāṁ—the thread ceremony of the twice-born; prajāpatyam—to execute the vow for one year; ca—and; brāhmaṁ—acceptance of the Vedas; ca—and; atha—also; bṛhat—complete abstinence from sex life; tathā—then; vārtā—vocation in terms of Vedic sanction; sañcaya—professional duty; śālīna—livelihood without asking anyone for cooperation; śila-uñchaḥ—picking up rejected grains; iti—thus; vai—even though; grhe—in household life.

TRANSLATION

Then the thread ceremony for the twice-born was inaugurated, as were the rules to be followed for at least one year after acceptance of the Vedas, rules for observing complete abstinence from sex life, vocations in terms of Vedic injunctions, various professional duties in household life, and the method of maintaining a livelihood without anyone’s cooperation by picking up rejected grains.

PURPORT

During student life the brahmacāris were given full instructions about the importance of the human form of life. Thus the basic education was designed to encourage the student in becoming free from family encumbrances. Only students unable to accept such a vow in life were

allowed to go home and marry a suitable wife. Otherwise, the student would remain a permanent *brahmacārī*, observing complete abstinence from sex life for his whole life. It all depended on the quality of the student's training. We had the opportunity to meet an avowed *brahmacārī* in the personality of our spiritual master, Om Viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Such a great soul is called a *naiṣṭhika-brahmacārī*.

TEXT 43

वैखानसा बालखिल्यौदुम्बराः फेनपा वने ।
न्यासे कुटीचकः पूर्वं बह्वोदो हंसनिष्क्रियौ ॥४३॥

*vaikhānasā vālakhilyau-
dumbarāḥ phenapā vane
nyāse kuṭīcakaḥ pūrvam
bahvodo haṁsa-niṣkriyau*

vaikhānasāḥ—the section of men who retire from active life and live on half-boiled meals; *vālakhilya*—one who quits his former stock of grains on receipt of more; *audumbarāḥ*—one who lives on what he gets from the direction towards which he starts after rising from bed; *phenapāḥ*—one who lives on the fruits which automatically fall from the tree; *vane*—in the forest; *nyāse*—in the order of renunciation; *kuṭīcakaḥ*—life in the family without attachment; *pūrvam*—in the beginning; *bahvodaḥ*—giving up all material activities and engaging fully in transcendental service; *haṁsa*—fully engaged in transcendental knowledge; *niṣkriyau*—stopping all kinds of activities.

TRANSLATION

The four divisions of retired life are the *vaikhānasas*, *vālakhilyas*, *audumbaras* and *phenapas*. The four divisions of the renounced order of life are the *kuṭīcakas*, *bahvodas*, *haṁsas* and *niṣkriyas*. All these were manifested from Brahmā.

PURPORT

The *varṇāśrama-dharma*, or the institution of the four divisions and orders of social and spiritual life, is not a new invention of the modern age, as proposed by the less intelligent. It is an institution established by Brahmā from the beginning of the creation. This is also confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.13): *cātur-varṇyam mayā sṛṣṭam*.

TEXT 44

आन्वीक्षिकी त्रयी वार्ता दण्डनीतित्थैव च ।
एवं व्याहृतयश्चासन् प्रणवो ह्यस्य दहतः ॥४४॥

*ānvīkṣikī trayī vārtā
daṇḍa-nītiḥ tathāiva ca
evam vyāhṛtayaś cāsan
praṇavo hy asya dahataḥ*

ānvīkṣikī—logic; *trayī*—the three goals, namely religion, economy and salvation; *vārtā*—sense gratification; *daṇḍa*—law and order; *nītiḥ*—moral codes; *tathā*—as also; *eva ca*—respectively; *evam*—thus; *vyāhṛtayaḥ*—the celebrated hymns *bhūḥ*, *bhuvah* and *svah*; *ca*—also; *āsan*—came into existence; *praṇavaḥ*—the *omkāra*; *hi*—certainly; *asya*—of him (Brahmā); *dahataḥ*—from the heart.

TRANSLATION

The science of logical argument, the Vedic goals of life, and also law and order, moral codes, and the celebrated hymns *bhūḥ*, *bhuvah* and *svah* all became manifested from the mouths of Brahmā, and the *praṇava omkāra* was manifested from his heart.

TEXT 45

तस्योष्णिगासील्लोमभ्यो गायत्री च त्वचो विभोः ।
त्रिष्टुम्मासात्सुतोऽनुष्टुब्जगत्यस्त्रः प्रजापतेः ॥४५॥

*tasyoṣṇig āsīl lomabhyo
gāyatrī ca tvaca vibhoḥ
triṣṭum māṁsāt snuto 'nuṣṭub
jagaty asthnaḥ prajāpateḥ*

tasya—his; *uṣṇik*—one of the Vedic meters; *āsīl*—generated; *lomabhyaḥ*—from the hairs on the body; *gāyatrī*—the principal Vedic hymn; *ca*—also; *tvacaḥ*—from the skin; *vibhoḥ*—of the lord; *triṣṭup*—a particular type of poetic meter; *māṁsāt*—from the flesh; *snutaḥ*—from the sinews; *anuṣṭup*—another type of poetic meter; *jagatī*—another type of poetic meter; *asthnaḥ*—from the bones; *prajāpateḥ*—of the father of the living entities.

TRANSLATION

Thereafter the art of literary expression, *uṣṇik*, was generated from the hairs on the body of the almighty Prajāpati. The principal Vedic hymn, *gāyatrī*, was generated from the skin, *triṣṭup* from the flesh, *anuṣṭup* from the veins, and *jagatī* from the bones of the lord of the living entities.

TEXT 46

मज्जायाः पङ्क्तिरूपमा बृहती प्राणतोऽभवत् ॥४६॥

*majjāyāḥ paṅktir utpannā
bṛhatī prāṇato 'bhavat*

majjāyāḥ—from the bone marrow; *paṅktiḥ*—a particular type of verse; *utpannā*—became manifested; *bṛhatī*—another type of verse; *prāṇataḥ*—out of the life-breathing; *abhavat*—generated.

TRANSLATION

The art of writing verse, *paṅkti*, became manifested from the bone marrow, and that of *bṛhatī*, another type of verse, was generated from the life-breath of the lord of the living entities.

TEXT 47

स्पर्शस्तस्याभवज्जीवः स्वरो देह उदाहृत ।
ऊष्माणमिन्द्रियाण्याहुरन्तःस्था बलमात्मनः ।
स्वराः सप्त विहारेण भवन्ति स प्रजापतेः ॥४७॥

*sparśas tasyābhavaj jīvaḥ
svaro deha udāhṛta
ūṣmāṇam indriyāṇy āhur
antaḥ-sthā balam ātmanaḥ
svarāḥ sapta vihāreṇa
bhavanti sma prajāpateḥ*

sparśaḥ—the set of letters from *ka* to *ma*; *tasya*—his; *abhavat*—became; *jīvaḥ*—the soul; *svaraḥ*—vowels; *dehaḥ*—his body; *udāhṛtaḥ*—are expressed; *ūṣmāṇam*—the letters *śa*, *ṣa*, *sa* and *ha*; *indriyāṇi*—the senses; *āhuḥ*—are called; *antaḥ-sthāḥ*—the set of letters so known (*ya*, *ra*, *la* and *va*); *balam*—energy; *ātmanaḥ*—of his self; *svarāḥ*—music; *sapta*—seven; *vihāreṇa*—by the sensual activities; *bhavanti sma*—became manifested; *prajāpateḥ*—of the lord of the living entities.

TRANSLATION

Brahmā's soul was manifested as the touch alphabets, his body as the vowels, his senses as the sibilant alphabets, his strength as the

intermediate alphabets and his sensual activities as the seven notes of music.

PURPORT

In Sanskrit there are thirteen vowels and thirty-five consonants. The vowels are *a, ā, i, ī, u, ū, ṛ, ṝ, l, e, ai, o, au*, and the consonants are *ka, kha, ga, gha*, etc. Amongst the consonants, the first twenty-five letters are called the *sparsas*. There are also four *antaḥ-sthas*. Of the *uṣmas* there are three *s's*, called *tālavya, mūrdhanya* and *dantya*. The musical notes are *ṣa, ṛ, gā, ma, pa, dha* and *ni*. All these sound vibrations are originally called *śabda-brahma*, or spiritual sound. It is said, therefore, that Brahmā was created in the Mahā-kalpa as the incarnation of spiritual sound. The *Vedas* are spiritual sound, and therefore there is no need of material interpretation for the sound vibration of the Vedic literature. The *Vedas* should be vibrated as they are, although they are symbolically represented with letters which are known to us materially. In the ultimate issue there is nothing material because everything has its origin in the spiritual world. The material manifestation is therefore called illusion in the proper sense of the term. For those who are realized souls there is nothing but spirit.

TEXT 48

शब्दब्रह्मात्मनस्तस्य व्यक्ताव्यक्तात्मनः परः ।
ब्रह्मावभाति विततो नानाशक्त्युपभृंहितः ॥४८॥

*śabda-brahmātmanas tasya
vyaktāvyaaktātmanah paraḥ
brahmāvabhāti vitato
nānā-śakty-upabr̥hītaḥ*

śabda-brahma—transcendental sound; *ātmanah*—of the Supreme Lord; *tasya*—His; *vyakta*—manifested; *avyakta-ātmanah*—of the unmanifested; *paraḥ*—transcendental; *brahmā*—the Absolute; *avabhāti*—completely manifested; *vitataḥ*—distributing; *nānā*—multifarious; *śakti*—energies; *upabr̥hītaḥ*—invested with.

TRANSLATION

Brahmā is the personal representation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the source of transcendental sound and is therefore above the conception of manifested and unmanifested. Brahmā is the complete form of the Absolute Truth and is invested with multifarious energies.

PURPORT

The post of Brahmā is the highest responsible post within the universe, and it is offered to the most perfect personality of the universe. Sometimes the Supreme Personality of Godhead has to become Brahmā when there is no suitable living being to occupy the post. In the material world, Brahmā is the complete representation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and transcendental sound, *praṇava*, comes from him. He is therefore invested with multifarious energies, from which all the demigods like Indra, Candra and Varuṇa are manifested. His transcendental value is not to be minimized, even though he exhibited a tendency to enjoy his own daughter. There is a purpose for the exhibition of such a tendency by Brahmā, and he is not to be condemned like an ordinary living entity.

TEXT 49

ततोऽपरामुपादाय स सर्गाय मनो दधे ॥४९॥

*tato 'parām upādāya
sa sargāya mano dadhe*

tataḥ—thereafter; *aparām*—another; *upādāya*—having accepted; *saḥ*—he; *sargāya*—in the matter of creation; *manaḥ*—mind; *dadhe*—gave attention.

TRANSLATION

Thereafter Brahmā accepted another body, in which sex life was not forbidden, and thus he engaged himself in the matter of further creation.

PURPORT

In his former body, which was transcendental, affection for sex life was forbidden, and Brahmā therefore had to accept another body to allow himself to be connected with sex. He thus engaged himself in the matter of creation. His former body transformed into fog, as previously described.

TEXT 50

ऋषीणां भूरिवीर्याणामपि सर्गमविस्तृतम् ।
ज्ञात्वा तद्दृष्टये भूयश्चिन्तयामास कौरव ॥५०॥

*ṛṣinām bhūri-vīryāṇām
api sargam avistr̥tam
jñātvā tad dṛṣṭaye bhūyaś
cintayām āsa kaurava*

ṛṣinām—of the great sages; *bhūri-vīryāṇām*—with great potential power; *api*—in spite of; *sargam*—the creation; *avistr̥tam*—not extended; *jñātvā*—knowing; *tat*—that; *dṛṣṭaye*—in his heart; *bhūyaś*—again; *cintayām āsa*—he began to consider; *kaurava*—O son of the Kurus.

TRANSLATION

O son of the Kurus, when Brahmā saw that in spite of the presence of sages of great potency there was no sufficient increase in population, he seriously began to consider how the population could be increased.

TEXT 51

अहो अद्भुतमेतन्मे व्यापृतस्यापि नित्यदा ।
न ह्येधन्ते प्रजा नूनं दैवमत्र विघातकम् ॥५१॥

*aho adbhutam etan me
vyāpṛtasyāpi nityadā
na hy edhante prajā nūnam
daivam atra vighātakam*

aho—alas; *adbhutam*—it is wonderful; *etat*—this; *me*—for me; *vyāpṛtasya*—being busy; *api*—although; *nityadā*—always; *na*—does not; *hi*—certainly; *edhante*—generate; *prajāḥ*—living entities; *nūnam*—however; *daivam*—destiny; *atra*—herein; *vighātakam*—against.

TRANSLATION

Brahmā thought to himself: Alas, it is wonderful that in spite of my being scattered all over, there is still insufficient population throughout the universe. There is no other cause for this misfortune but destiny.

TEXT 52

एवं युक्तकृतस्तस्य दैवश्चावेक्षतस्तदा ।
कस्य रूपमभूद् द्वेषा यत्कायमभिचक्षते ॥५२॥

*evam yukta-kṛtas tasya
daivam cāvekṣatas tadā
kasya rūpam abhūd dvedhā
yat kāyam abhicaḥṣate*

evam—thus; *yukta*—contemplating; *kṛtaḥ*—while doing so; *tasya*—his; *daivam*—supernatural power; *ca*—also; *avekṣataḥ*—observing;

tadā—at that time; *kasya*—of Brahmā; *rūpa*—form; *abhūt*—became manifested; *dvedhā*—twofold; *yat*—which is; *kāyam*—his body; *abhicakṣate*—is said to be.

TRANSLATION

While he was thus absorbed in contemplation and was observing the supernatural power, two other forms were generated from his body. They are still celebrated as the body of Brahmā.

PURPORT

Two bodies came out from the body of Brahmā. One had a mustache, and the other had swollen breasts. No one can explain the source of their manifestation, and therefore until today they are known as the *kāyam*, or the body of Brahmā, with no indication of their relationship as his son or daughter.

TEXT 53

ताभ्यां रूपविभागाभ्यां मिथुनं समपद्यत ॥५३॥

*tābhyām rūpa-vibhāgābhyām
mithunam samapadyata*

tābhyām—of them; *rūpa*—form; *vibhāgābhyām*—thus being divided; *mithunam*—sex relation; *samapadyata*—perfectly executed.

TRANSLATION

The two newly separated bodies united together in a sexual relationship.

TEXT 54

यस्तु तत्र पुमान् सोऽभून्मनुः खायम्बुवः खराट् ।
स्त्रीयासीच्छतरूपाख्या महिष्यस्य महात्मनः ॥५४॥

*yas tu tatra pumān so 'bhūn
manuḥ svāyambhuvaḥ svarāṭ
strī yāsīc chatarūpākhyā
mahīsy asya mahātmanah*

yaḥ—one who; *tu*—but; *tatra*—there; *pumān*—the male; *saḥ*—he; *abhūt*—became; *manuḥ*—the father of mankind; *svāyambhuvaḥ*—of the name Svāyambhuva; *sva-rāṭ*—fully independent; *strī*—the woman; *yā*—one who; *āsīt*—there was; *śatarūpā*—of the name Śatarūpā; *ākhyā*—known as; *mahiṣī*—the queen; *asya*—of him; *mahātmanah*—the great soul.

TRANSLATION

Out of them, the one who had the male form became known as the Manu named Svāyambhuva, and the woman became known as Śatarūpā, the queen of the great soul Manu.

TEXT 55

तदा मिथुनघर्मेण प्रजा होधाम्बभूवरे ॥५५॥

*tadā mithuna-dharmeṇa
prajā hy edhām babhūvire*

tadā—at that time; *mithuna*—sex life; *dharmeṇa*—according to regulative principles; *prajāḥ*—generations; *hi*—certainly; *edhām*—increased; *babhūvire*—took place.

TRANSLATION

Thereafter, by sex indulgence, they gradually increased generations of population one after another.

TEXT 56

स चापि शतरूपायां पञ्चापत्यान्यजीजन्त् ।
प्रियव्रतोत्तानपादौ तिस्रः कन्याश्च भारत ।

आकृतिर्देवहृतिश्च प्रसूतिरिति सत्तम ॥५६॥

*sa cāpi śatarūpāyām
pañcāpatyāny ajījanat
priyavratottānapādau
tisraḥ kanyās ca bhārata
ākūtir devahūtiś ca
prasūtir iti sattama*

saḥ—he (Manu); *ca*—also; *api*—in due course; *śatarūpāyām*—unto Śatarūpā; *pañca*—five; *apatyāni*—children; *ajījanat*—begot; *priyavrata*—Priyavrata; *uttānapādau*—Uttānapāda; *tisraḥ*—three in number; *kanyāḥ*—daughters; *ca*—also; *bhārata*—O son of Bharata; *ākūtiḥ*—Ākūti; *devahūtiḥ*—Devahūti; *ca*—and; *prasūtiḥ*—Prasūti; *iti*—thus; *sattama*—O best of all.

TRANSLATION

O son of Bharata, in due course of time he [Manu] begot in Śatarūpā five children—two sons, Priyavrata and Uttānapāda, and three daughters, Ākūti, Devahūti and Prasūti.

TEXT 57

आकृतिं रुचये प्रादात्कर्दमाय तु मध्यमाम् ।
दक्षयादात्प्रसूतिं च यत आपूरितं जगत् ॥५७॥

*ākūtiṁ rucaye prādāt
kardamāya tu madhyamām
dakṣāyādāt prasūtiṁ ca
yata āpūritam jagat*

ākūtim—the daughter named Ākūti; *rucaye*—unto the sage Ruci; *prādāt*—handed over; *kardamāya*—unto the sage Kardama; *tu*—but; *madhyamām*—the middle one (Devahūti); *dakṣāya*—unto Dakṣa; *adāt*—handed over; *prasūtim*—the youngest daughter; *ca*—also; *yataḥ*—wherefrom; *āpūritam*—is fulfilled; *jagat*—the whole world.

TRANSLATION

The father, Manu, handed over his first daughter, Ākūti, to the sage Ruci, the middle daughter, Devahūti, to the sage Kardama, and the youngest, Prasūti, to Dakṣa. From them, all the world filled with population.

PURPORT

The history of the creation of the population of the universe is given herewith. Brahmā is the original living creature in the universe, from whom were generated the Manu Svāyambhuva and his wife Śatarūpā. From Manu, two sons and three daughters were born, and from them all the population in different planets has sprung up until now. Therefore, Brahmā is known as the grandfather of everyone, and the Personality of Godhead, being the father of Brahmā, is known as the great-grandfather of all living beings. This is confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā* (11.39) as follows:

*vāyur yamo 'gnir varuṇaḥ śaśāṅkaḥ
prajāpatis tvaṁ prapitāmahaś ca
namo namas te 'stu sahasra-kṛtvaḥ
punaś ca bhūyo 'pi namo namas te*

“You are the Lord of air, the supreme justice Yama, the fire, and the Lord of rains. You are the moon, and You are the great-grandfather. Therefore I offer my respectful obeisances unto You again and again.”

Thus end the Bhaktivedanta purports of the Third Canto, Twelfth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “Creation of the Kumāras and Others.”

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Appearance of Lord Varāha

TEXT 1

श्रीशुक उवाच

निशम्य वाचं वदतो मुनेः पुण्यतमां नृप ।
भूयः पप्रच्छ कौरव्यो वासुदेवकथादतः ॥ १ ॥

śrī-śuka uvāca
niśamya vācam vadato
muneḥ puṇyatamāṁ nṛpa
bhūyaḥ papraccha kauravyo
vāsudeva-kathāḍṛtaḥ

śrī-śukaḥ uvāca—Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; niśamya—after hearing; vācam—talks; vadataḥ—the while speaking; muneḥ—of Maitreya Muni; puṇya-tamāṁ—the most virtuous; nṛpa—O King; bhūyaḥ—then again; papraccha—inquired; kauravyaḥ—the best amongst the Kurus (Vidura); vāsudeva-kathā—topics on the subject of the Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva; āḍṛtaḥ—one who so adores.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, after hearing all these most virtuous topics from the sage Maitreya, Vidura inquired further on the topics of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, which he adored to hear.

PURPORT

The word āḍṛtaḥ is significant because it indicates that Vidura had a natural inclination for hearing the transcendental message of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and he was never fully satisfied though continuing to hear those topics. He wanted to hear more and more so that he could be more and more blessed by the transcendental message.

TEXT 2

विदुर उवाच

स वै स्वायम्भुवः सम्राट् प्रियः पुत्रः स्वयम्भुवः ।
प्रतिलभ्य प्रियां पत्नीं किं चकार ततो मुने ॥ २ ॥

vidura uvāca
sa vai svāyambhuvaḥ samrāt
priyaḥ putraḥ svayambhuvaḥ
pratīlabhya priyāṁ patnīm
kiṁ cakāra tato mune

viduraḥ uvāca—Vidura said; saḥ—he; vai—easily; svāyambhuvaḥ—Svāyambhuva Manu; samrāt—the king of all kings; priyaḥ—dear; putraḥ—son; svayambhuvaḥ—of Brahmā; pratīlabhya—after obtaining; priyāṁ—most loving; patnīm—wife; kim—what; cakāra—did; tataḥ—thereafter; mune—O great sage.

TRANSLATION

Vidura said: O great sage, what did Svāyambhuva, the dear son of Brahmā, do after obtaining his very loving wife?

TEXT 3

चरितं तस्य राजर्षेरादिराजस्य सत्तम ।
ब्रूहि मे श्रद्धधानाय विष्वक्सेनाश्रयो ह्यसौ ॥ ३ ॥

caritaṁ tasya rājarṣeḥ
ādi-rājasya sattama
brūhi me śraddadhānāya
viṣvakṣeṇāśrayo hy asau

caritaṁ—character; tasya—his; rājarṣeḥ—of the saintly king; ādi-rājasya—of the original king; sattama—O most pious one; brūhi—kindly speak; me—unto me; śraddadhānāya—unto one eager to receive; viṣvakṣeṇa—of the Personality of Godhead; āśrayaḥ—one who has taken shelter; hi—certainly; asau—that king.

TRANSLATION

O best of the virtuous, the original king of kings [Manu] was a great devotee of the Personality of Godhead Hari, and thus it is worth hearing of his sublime character and activities. Please describe them. I am very eager to hear.

PURPORT

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is full of the transcendental topics of the Personality of Godhead and His pure devotees. In the absolute world there is no difference in quality between the Supreme Lord and His pure devotee. Therefore, hearing the topics of the Lord and hearing of the character and activities of the pure devotee have the same result, namely, the development of devotional service.

TEXT 4

श्रुतस्य पुंसं सुचिरभ्रमस्य
नन्वञ्जसा स्मृमिरीडितोऽर्थः ।
तत्तद्गुणानुश्रवणं मुकुन्द-
पादारविन्दं हृदयेषु येषाम् ॥ ४ ॥

śrutasya puṁsāṁ sucira-śramasya
nanv aṅjasā sūribhir īḍīto 'rthaḥ
tat-tad-guṇānuśravaṇaṁ mukunda-
pādāravindam hṛdayeṣu yeṣāṁ

śrutasya—of persons who are in the process of hearing; puṁsāṁ—of such persons; sucira—for a long time; śramasya—laboring very hard; nanu—certainly aṅjasā—elaborately; sūribhir—by pure devotees; īḍītaḥ—explained by; arthaḥ—statements; tat—that; tat—that; guṇa—transcendental qualities; anuśravaṇam—thinking; mukunda—the Personality of Godhead, who awards liberation; pāda-aravindam—the lotus feet; hṛdayeṣu—within the heart; yeṣāṁ—of them.

TRANSLATION

Persons who hear from a spiritual master with great labor and for a long time must hear from the mouths of pure devotees about the character and activities of pure devotees. Pure devotees always think within their hearts of the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead, who awards His devotees liberation.

PURPORT

Transcendental students are those who undergo great penance in being trained by hearing the Vedas from a bona fide spiritual master. Not only must they hear about the activities of the Lord, but they must also hear about the transcendental qualities of the devotees who are constantly thinking of the lotus feet of the Lord within their hearts. A pure devotee of the Lord cannot be separated from the lotus feet of the Lord for even a moment. Undoubtedly the Lord is always within the hearts of all living creatures, but they hardly know about it because they are deluded by the illusory material energy. The devotees, however, realize the presence of the Lord, and therefore they can always see the lotus feet of the Lord within their hearts. Such pure devotees of the Lord are as glorious as the Lord; they are, in fact, recommended by the Lord as more worshipable than He Himself. Worship of the devotee is more potent than worship of the Lord. It is therefore the duty of the transcendental students to hear of pure devotees, as explained by similar devotees of the Lord, because one cannot explain about the Lord or His devotee unless one happens to be a pure devotee himself.

(continued in next issue)

For Your Information

RESOURCES

Plain living, high thinking. Get out of the city—away from the 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, close to God. The Hare Kṛṣṇa movement has thirty-four 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 pages 20–21 of this magazine).

Or write or call Paramānanda dāsa, who is the ISKCON minister for farm communities. His address is the Gitā-nāgarī Farm, R.D. No. 1, Box 839, Port Royal, Pennsylvania 17082; phone: (717) 527-4101.

ISKCON REVIEW, a biannual, interdisciplinary journal dedicated to the academic study of ISKCON, includes articles from both inside and outside the movement, in-depth interviews with devotees, book reviews, and so on. To subscribe for one year, mail a check or money order for \$6 payable to ISKCON (\$10 foreign) to Śubhānanda dāsa, Editor, ISKCON REVIEW, 41 W. Allens Lane, Philadelphia, PA 19119.

"At present, it seems the more 'educated' one becomes, the less he believes in God, in God's law, and in the next life. . . . Thus modern education prepares men to become animals. If there is no education to teach a human being whether or not he is this body, he remains no better than an ass." Read the complete compilation of Śrīla Prabhupāda's words on *gurukula*, the Kṛṣṇa conscious educational system. *Śrīla Prabhupāda on Gurukula* is available from the ISKCON Ministry of Education, P.O. Box 11093, Dallas, TX 75223. \$3.50 plus \$1 postage; \$2 overseas postage.

Own a full set of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. Now you can have a full library of the Vedic classics in your home. Translated and explained by the world's foremost scholar and devotee, these books open up new realms of spiritual life. Each book is a deluxe, beautifully illustrated hardbound volume. And now we make it far easier for you than ever before to get a full set of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. For details, check with the Hare Kṛṣṇa center nearest you.

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ISKCON REVIEW, 41 W. Allens Lane, Philadelphia, PA 19119.

This year, visit Śrīla Prabhupāda's Palace of Gold. You'll find peace and inspiration in this spiritual place of pilgrimage. Tour the gardens, the gilded walkways, the marble halls and rooms. See the inspired works of devotee-painters, sculptors, and craftsmen. And enjoy delicious *kṛṣṇa-prasādam*, spiritual food, in the Palace of Gold Restaurant.

It's at New Vrindaban, the 3,000-acre Hare Kṛṣṇa community in the scenic West Virginia hills. Kṛṣṇa's devotees are here to welcome you, and we have a comfortable guesthouse where you can stay overnight.

The Palace of Gold is open throughout the year, with special festivals during the summer and fall months. A schedule of festivals and events is available. For more information, write to Prabhupāda's Palace of Gold, Hare Kṛṣṇa Ridge, New Vrindaban, West Virginia 26041. Or call (304) 843-1600.

Teach your children songs about Kṛṣṇa. The book *Songs of India*, composed, written, and illustrated by Bhavatāriṇī-devī dāsī, contains sheet music, and pictures to color, and it's accompanied by a cassette tape of the songs. Available from Bhava Productions, 3764 Watseka Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90034.

Going to Bombay?

Visit the ISKCON cultural center—Hare Krishna Land, in beautiful Juhu Beach. A short ride from the Bombay airports, Hare Krishna Land features a gorgeous traditional Kṛṣṇa temple, together with a multistory modern guesthouse, Govinda's pure vegetarian *prasādam* restaurant, musical and theatrical performances in the 425-seat auditorium, and a sublime atmosphere of spiritual realization in the association of Kṛṣṇa's devotees.

For further information, inquire at your local ISKCON center or get directly in touch with ISKCON in Bombay.

Note to Subscribers. Planning to move? Let us know when and where so we can keep your BACK TO GODHEAD coming without a break.

FESTIVALS & 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 Trivikrama (May 24-June 22)

May 28—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Rāmānanda Rāya, an intimate associate of Lord Caitanya.

June 3—Aparā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

June 4—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Thākura, author of *Caitanya Bhāgavata*.

June 17—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa.

June 18—Pāṇḍava-nirjalā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

June 20—Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's chipped-rice-and-yogurt festival at Pānihāṭī.

June 22—Snāna-yātrā, the bathing festival of Lord Jagannātha. Disappearance anniversaries of Śrīla Mukunda Datta and Śrīla Śrīdhara Paṇḍita.

Month of Vāmana (June 23-July 1)

June 23—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Śyāmānanda Prabhu.

June 25—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Tamāl Kṛṣṇa Goswami Gurudeva, one of the present spiritual masters in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

June 26—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Vakreśvara Paṇḍita.

July 2—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita. Yoginī Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

July 7—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Gadādhara Paṇḍita Gosvāmī. Disappearance of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura. Fasting til noon.

July 8—Śrī Guṇḍicā-mārjana, cleansing of the Guṇḍicā temple.

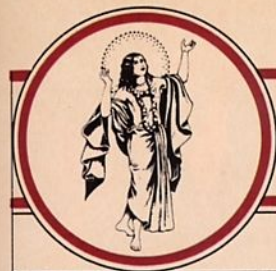
July 9—Ratha-yātrā of Lord Jagannātha. Disappearance anniversaries of Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī and Śrīla Śivānanda Sena.

July 13—Anniversary of the founding of ISKCON in 1966 by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Vakreśvara Paṇḍita.

July 14—Herā-pañcamī. Return Yātrā of Lord Jagannātha. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Rāmeśvara Swamī, one of the present spiritual masters in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

July 18—Trisprā Mahā-dvādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

July 21—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, one of the principle followers of Lord Caitanya. First month of Cāturmāsya begins (fasting from spinach).



Every Town and Village

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



Students at Waialua High School view the treasures of India's past at an exhibit by ISKCON's Vedic Cultural Association of Honolulu.

Hawaiians Get a Look at Vedic Culture

Honolulu, Hawaii—Over the past six months, ISKCON has brought India's cultural heritage to thousands of high school students here and throughout the island of Oahu. Under the direction of His Holiness Jagat Guru Swami, the Vedic Cultural Association has displayed its museum of Vedic culture in twenty-five high schools, in conjunction with the National Festival of India, which is cosponsored by the American and Indian governments. The ISKCON exhibit, with its exquisite brass Deities of Lord Kṛṣṇa, photographs of ancient temples, weapons of the famed Rajputs of Rajasthan, and many fascinating and beautiful artifacts of a bygone age, introduces the modern high school student to India's rich past.

India's greatest treasure—the timeless wisdom of her Vedic literature—is also on exhibit. At the weapons display students find the *Bhagavad-gītā*, famous for having been spoken on a battlefield just prior to the great Kurukṣetra War; at the temples exhibit they find *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*, which extols worship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; under the pictures of the great saints and *ācāryas* of India they find Śrīla Prabhupāda's *Science of Self-Realization*; and at the vegetarianism display they find a Hare Kṛṣṇa cookbook, *The Higher Taste*.

The vegetarianism exhibit, showing the importance of a vegetarian diet in both the traditional Vedic culture and the modern world, is one of the most popular exhibits.

Students and faculty alike have enthusiastically received the program, which has been approved by the state board of education. The head librarian of Waialua High School thanked the devotees for providing a valuable cultural experience to enhance students' understanding of India. He described the exhibits as "attractive, well-planned, and informative."

On weekends the museum goes into the shopping malls, where thousands of islanders and tourists view the exhibits and receive a copy of one of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. In the Alamoana Mall, thirteen thousand books were distributed in six days.

Jagat Guru Swami plans to take the museum to many universities and government buildings on the island.

He also plans to establish a permanent Vedic Cultural Center in the foothills of Hawaii's majestic mountains that will include a fully developed Vedic museum.

Book by ISKCON Scientist Reviewed

Granville C. Henry, professor of mathematics and philosophy at Claremont Mc-

Kenna College, Claremont, California, has published a review of *Mechanistic and Nonmechanistic Science: An Investigation into the Nature of Consciousness and Form*, by Dr. Richard L. Thompson (Sadāpūta dāsa), in *Zygon*, a journal of science and religion.

Professor Henry writes: "The attractive quality of this book is that Thompson writes as a scientist about science with a clarity, accuracy, and objectivity that should engender respect both from scientists and from those whose religious persuasions are other than his own. He presents the philosophical instabilities of contemporary scientific theory in a clear scientific language without recourse to *ad hoc* religious explanations."

Sadāpūta dāsa, who received a Ph.D. in mathematics from Cornell University in 1974, explains in his book that current mechanistic theories cannot explain the existence of consciousness and form.

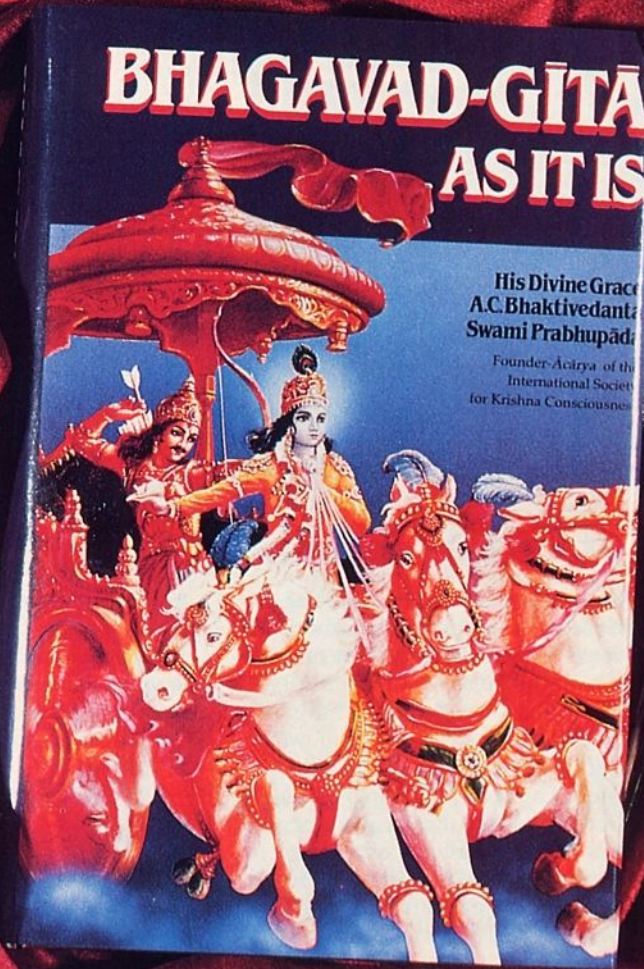
Professor Henry accepts Sadāpūta dāsa's conclusion that we need a non-mechanistic approach to human existence. He adds: "I think this book is a very valuable addition to the current literature in science and religion. Thompson's choice of examples from science that seem to upset contemporary scientific paradigms is superb. They are all relevant. They are carefully explained, and in one book."

New ISKCON Publications in Europe

The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust (BBT) recently released over forty new publications in Southern Europe and England. The Southern European BBT has printed the following new books: Italian translations of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (Cantos 8–10), *The Hare Kṛṣṇa Cookbook*, and *Prabhupāda* (the biography of the founder-*ācārya* of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement); French translations of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (Cantos 7–10), *The Hare Kṛṣṇa Cookbook*, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi-līlā, Vol. 1)*, and *Prabhupāda*; and Hebrew translations of the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi-līlā, Vols. 1–3)*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (Canto 1), and *Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead*.

In England, the BBT announced the release of *The Nectar of Devotion, Teachings of Lord Caitanya*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (Canto 1), and *Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi-līlā, Vols. 1–3)*.

A Treasure of Transcendental Knowledge...



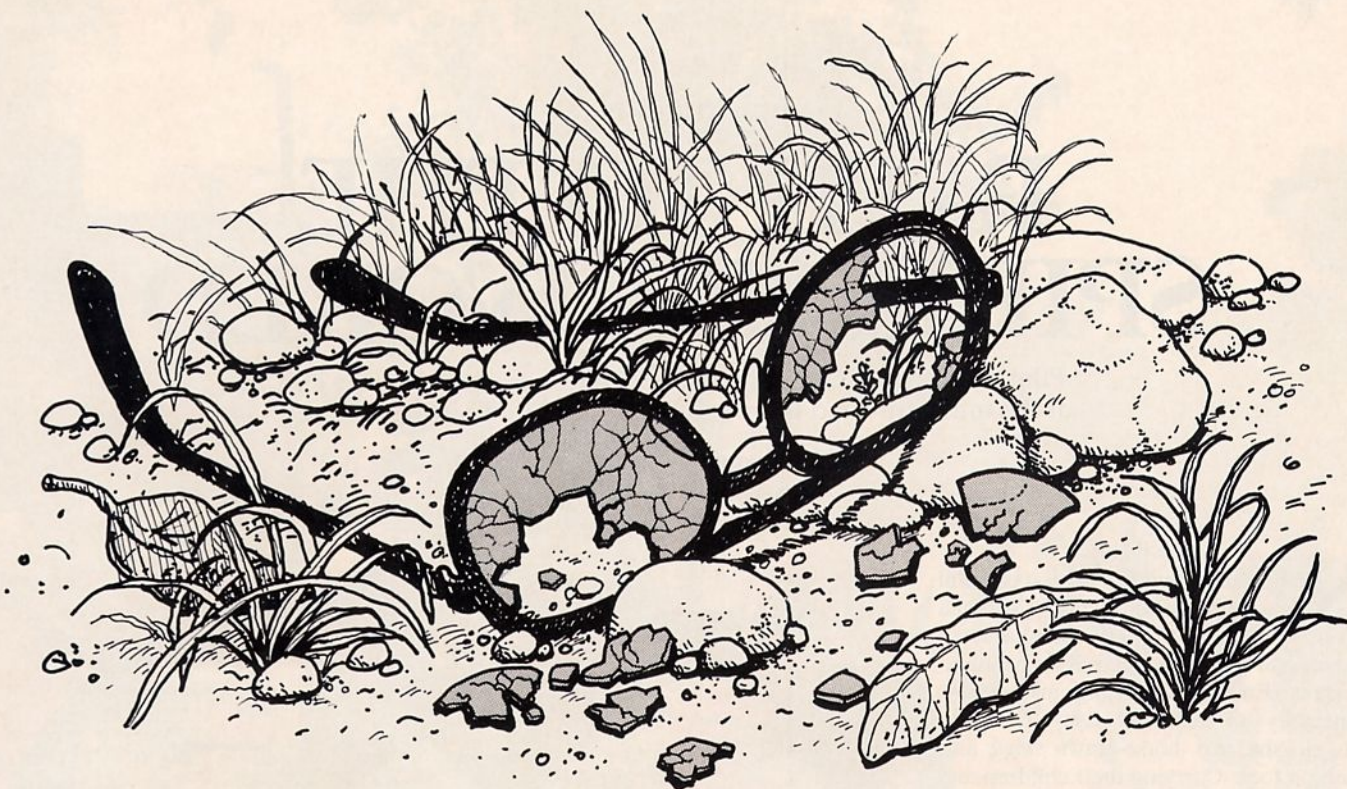
“A deeply felt, powerfully conceived and beautifully explained work. . . . I have never seen any other work on the *Gītā* with such an important voice and style. It is a work of undoubted integrity. . . . It will occupy a significant place in the intellectual and ethical life of modern man for a long time to come.”

—Dr. S. Shukla
Asst. Professor of Linguistics
Georgetown University

BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ AS IT IS

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

Revised and enlarged. With the original
Sanskrit text, Roman transliterations, English
synonyms, translation, and elaborate purports.
Plus 25 original, full-color illustrations.



CLOSE TO THE EDGE

Without an understanding of the soul, where is the comfort when death strikes?

by DVĀRAKĀDHĪŚA-DEVĪ DĀŚĪ

One moment he was there, youthful and confident. Then, he was gone. I was standing before him on the edge of the cliff when he stepped backward. First he fell about eight feet, landing on a small ledge that jutted out from the steep incline. He lay, frozen in time, peering up at me. No fear showed in his expression. Not at first. But gradually, as I watched, the terror came. His anguished eyes held my gaze for several long seconds. Helpless and horrified I stood as the boy slowly slipped from the tiny precipice, his right hand grasping a twig, his left arm waving mutely like a broken wing in the open air. I could do nothing to reach him, nothing to help him, yet I desperately tried to hold his gaze, as if by willing I could pull him back from his destiny.

In his eyes I could see surprise, anger, intense fear. Did he know he was going to die? He fell without a scream. All was still and silent. The only sound to punctuate his death was a gentle thud, and even that was nearly lost in the cool spring air.

A virtual stranger to me, the boy had

come to the countryside with a group of boisterous college students for rappelling, a sport in which you bound down the side of a cliff using ropes and harnesses. My girlfriend Lori and I had happened upon the group that day, and their enthusiasm for the sport had infected us. Soon we found ourselves rigged up to descend along with the others. One of the boys had come around in front of me to check my ropes, when he had distractedly stepped backward.

The group of us now stood hushed at the top of the cliff, stunned. So quickly the change had come, it seemed almost as if nothing had happened. Yet there it was, in a glimpse of plaid so far below, the most devastating of all tragedies.

By the time my fumbling fingers had untied the ropes, someone had run to call an ambulance, and the others were already down below. I shakily scrambled down the side of the cliff, no longer seeing the beauty of the countryside, but thinking the world was cold and cruel. We stood helplessly around the boy, unable to touch

his broken form. Someone remarked that we should find his glasses, and ludicrously, we began to search. It seemed no more incongruous than the crumpled body of this young man, dying in agony while the birds sang happily in the trees, no more senseless than the harsh intrusion of death on this magnificent spring day.

And equally incongruous: although death is inevitable, everyone present on that day—whether victim or bystander—was caught by surprise, unprepared. Everyone stood in shocked disbelief, as though such a thing as death was a rare, little understood phenomenon. How little we understand of our own existence. In the final moments of life, who cares for the complexities of world politics or the social indiscretions of famous movie stars or the acquisitions of our neighbors? Suddenly a whole life, however glorious or shameful, is left to the past. And our immediate destiny is cloaked in mystery. This moment awaits us all.

Perhaps it seems unforgivably cruel that
(continued on page 33)

Spiritual Places

PATH TO THE SPIRITUAL WORLD

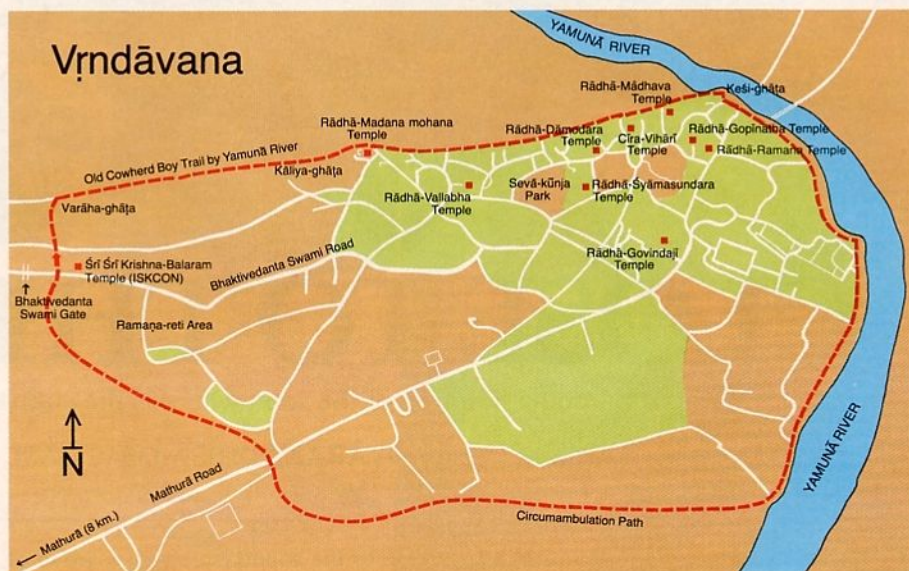
Pilgrims circumambulating India's holiest city come to the end of the much-traveled thoroughfare of repeated birth and death.

Text and photos by
VIŚĀKHĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

Nestled ninety miles southeast of Delhi near a curve of the winding Yamunā River, Vṛndāvana is for Hindus what Jerusalem is for Jews and Mecca is for Mohammedans. En masse the pilgrims come—especially on the holy days—by train, bus, ricksha, taxi, horse-drawn *tāngā*, and even on foot. Carrying their children and luggage, looking wide-eyed and innocent, they come to see the holy *tīrtha*, to touch the sacred earth, to beg the blessings of the Deities in the temple, to hear from the pious residents, to chant the holy names of the Lord, and to circumambulate on bare feet the sacred land of Vṛndāvana.

It was in Vṛndāvana that the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, passed the first fifteen years of His earthly pastimes fifty centuries ago. There Lord Kṛṣṇa pleased His parents and neighbors by acting like the perfect child, delighted His young boy-friends by playing with them as equals, killed His mortal enemies by His omnipotence, and charmed the cowherd girls by His all-attractive presence. Through these Vṛndāvana pastimes, He attracts all of us to rejoin Him in the spiritual kingdom, far beyond our mundane sphere.

Five hundred years ago Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared again to teach, as well as to relish, transcendental love for God. In this incarnation He appeared as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the most exalted devotee of Kṛṣṇa. He journeyed to Vṛndāvana, spontaneously compelled by a strong emotional love for the worshipable land of Kṛṣṇa. Vṛndāvana, Lord Caitanya knew, was transcendental, the spiritual world itself projected within the material context. In great ecstasy Lord Caitanya, during His pilgrimage to Vṛndāvana, relived within His heart the pastimes Lord Kṛṣṇa had enacted there forty-five centuries before. Śrī Caitanya later asked six of His prominent followers to reside in Vṛndāvana,



Vṛndāvana, the holy land of Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, draws pilgrims from throughout the world. At right, residents of the remote Indian state of Manipura circumambulate this sacred tract. Although Vṛndāvana is a small city with less than 50,000 residents, it is home to some five thousand Kṛṣṇa temples. The map above shows the seven major temples and the six-mile circumambulation path.

establishing temples and excavating the ancient holy places. The work of these six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana paved the way for successive generations of saints and holy teachers who have traveled to Vṛndāvana, lived in Vṛndāvana, worshiped Vṛndāvana, and sung the glories of Vṛndāvana.

In 1932 Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, the founder of the Gaudiya Math, led an army of pilgrims on a month-long circumambulation of the entire Vṛndāvana area. And in 1956 His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda—foremost disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura—went to Vṛndāvana to live and write.

One day a stranger to Vṛndāvana asked Śrīla Prabhupāda, “Why are you living in Vṛndāvana? Why have you selected such a

dirty place to live after retiring?” Śrīla Prabhupāda noted, “Materialists consider Vṛndāvana an unclean city because there are many monkeys and dogs there, and along the bank of the Yamunā there is refuse. Such people cannot understand that Vṛndāvana is always a representation of the original Vṛndāvana, the abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa in the spiritual world. Lord Kṛṣṇa and His abode, Vṛndāvana, are equally worshipable.”

In the winter of 1971 my husband, Yadubara, and I decided to do a photo article on a quaint Indian village, and we asked Śrīla Prabhupāda, who had traveled widely in India, which village would be most suitable. Śrīla Prabhupāda replied that since we were foreigners we would be cheated and robbed wherever we went. We were instantly disappointed, and as





Śrīla Prabhupāda looked at us, we must have appeared obviously so. He paused, and after a moment he advised us to go and photograph Vṛndāvana. In the summer of '71 we went to Vṛndāvana. Then, in the fall of that year, we became disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda. Now we visit Vṛndāvana almost yearly.

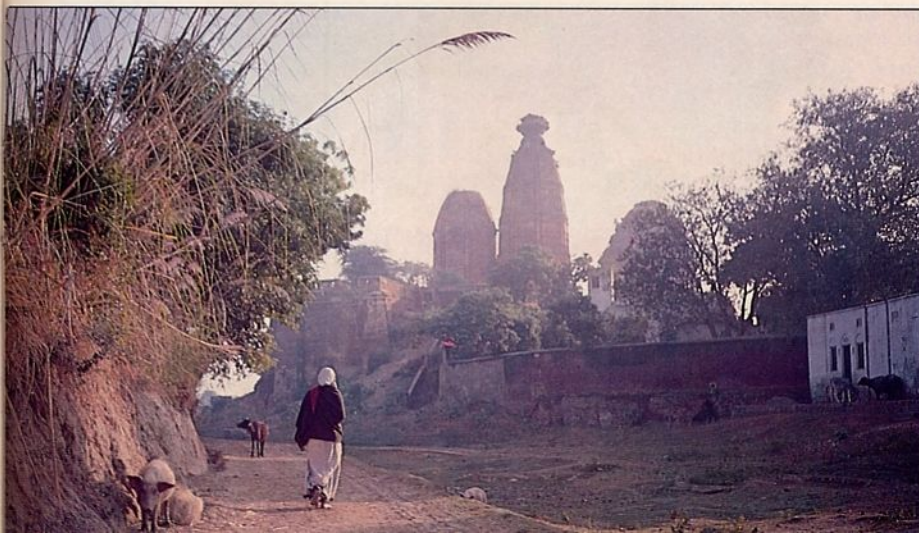
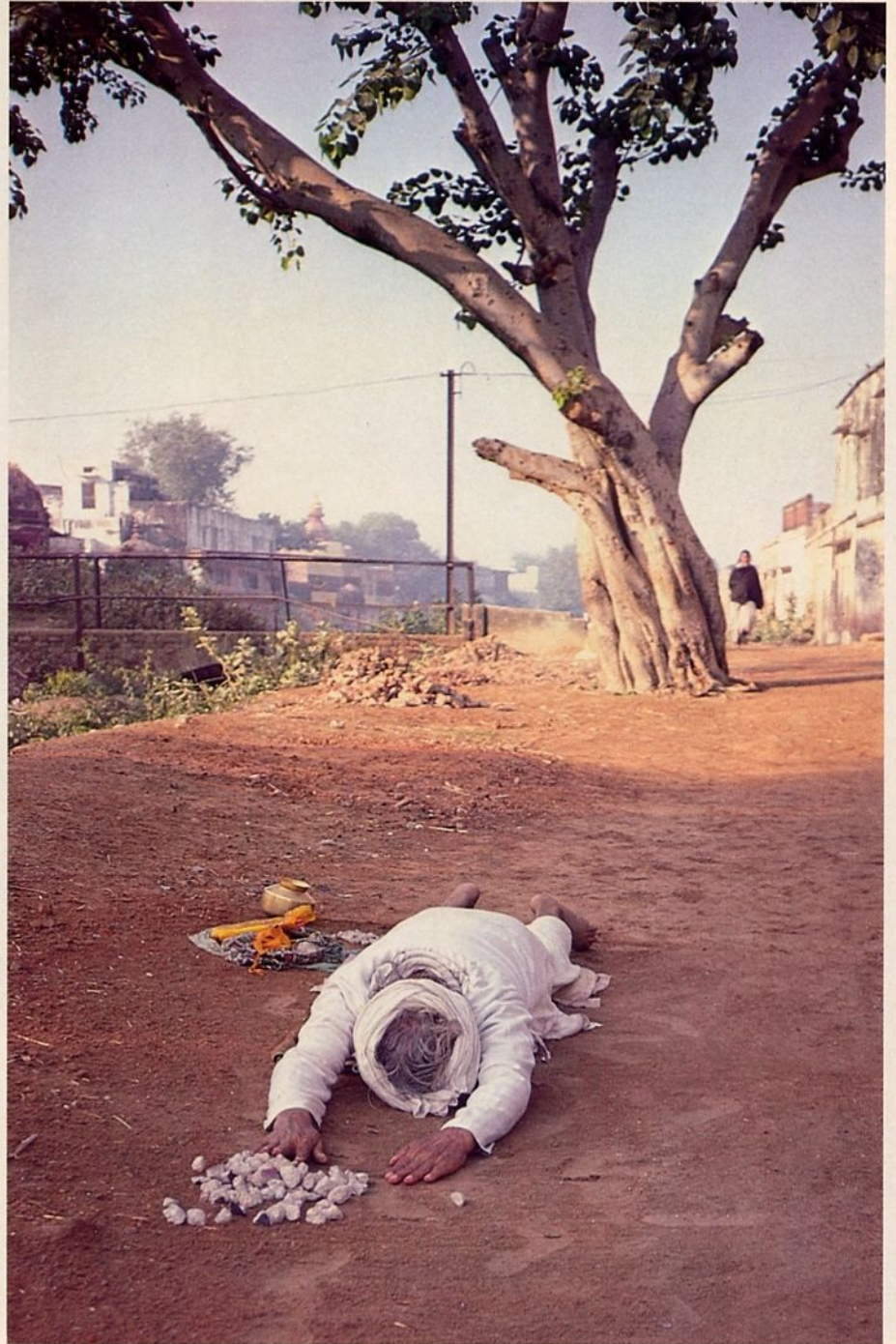
During my last trip, I joined a few of my Godsisters for daily excursions on the six-mile footpath that encircles the town. Śrīla Prabhupāda had explained that one who circumambulates holy places of pilgrimage like Vṛndāvana counteracts circumambulating through repeated births and deaths in this material world. So, confident of making some spiritual ad-

vancement, every afternoon at three my Godsisters and I met together and set off at a brisk pace along the dusty paths, to return by five.

We were staying at ISKCON's Krishna-Balarām Temple, just a one-minute walk from the westernmost edge of the *parikrama* (circumambulation) trail. Starting from there we walked through what Śrīla Prabhupāda called "the shimmering silver sands" of Ramaṇa-reti, an open area surrounded by woods, where Kṛṣṇa, His brother Balarāma, and Their friends and calves sported together.

At Ramaṇa-reti we turned right and entered a wide, shaded path that at one time ran along the bank of the Yamunā River.



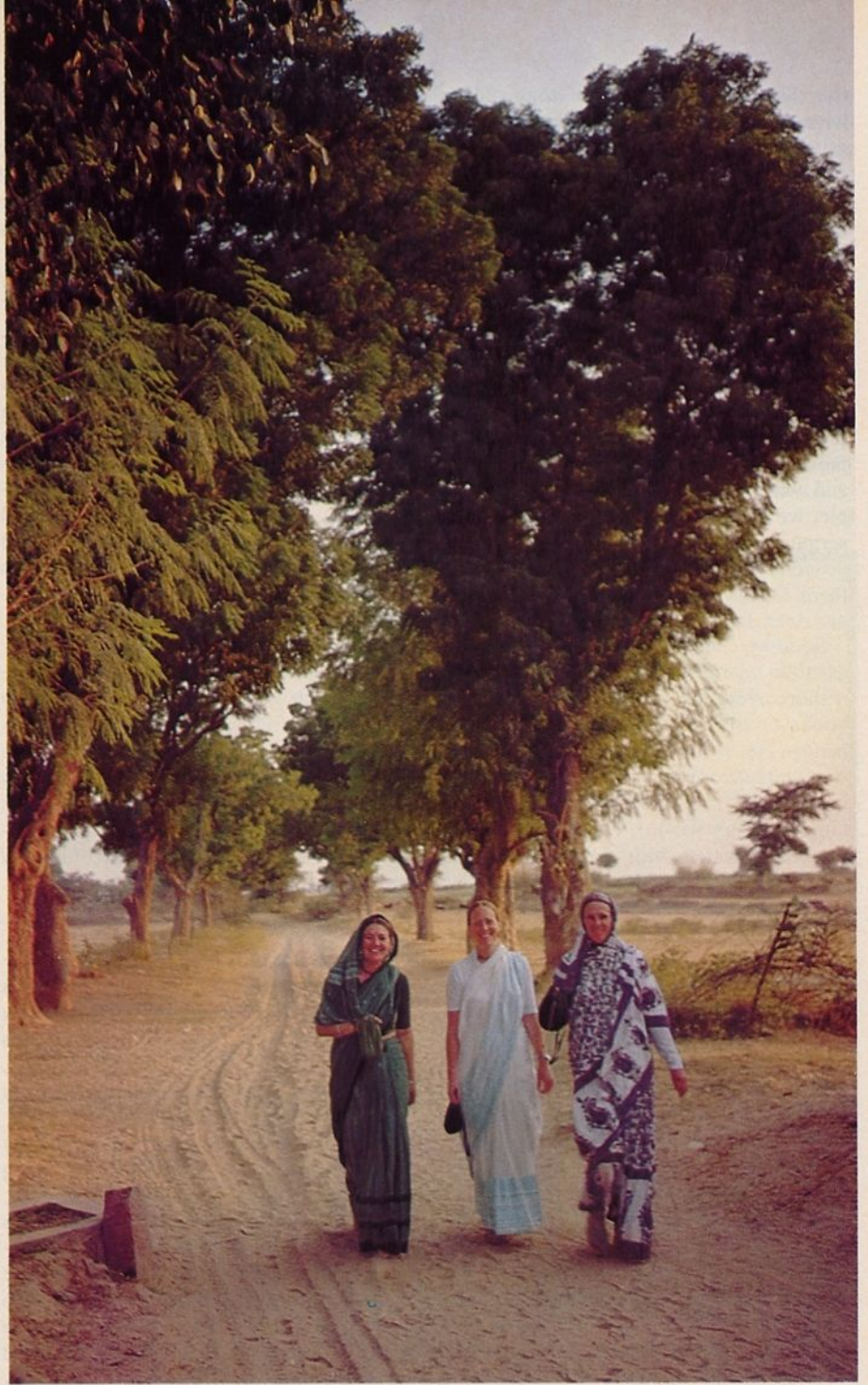


Along the path, two Vṛndāvana residents (above left) exchange morning greetings. Observing a rigid vow, an ascetic (above) circumambulates Vṛndāvana by prostrating himself 108 times at each step along the path. He marks each obeisance by placing one of his 108 rocks at the next spot. The Madana-mohana temple (left) was built in the sixteenth century under the direction of Sanātana Gosvāmī. Behind the temple a Deity of Kṛṣṇa (far left) resides at the place of Sanātana Gosvāmī's meditations.



In Vṛndāvana, man's best friend is the family cow (above). In a rustic open square amid Vṛndāvana's back streets (right), local residents celebrate the chariot festival of Jagannātha (Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the universe), now celebrated by Kṛṣṇa's devotees throughout the world. Above right, after two hours and six miles, Western pilgrims traverse a sandy stretch minutes before arriving at ISKCON's Krishna-Balaram temple.





Over the years, the Yamunā has changed course and today flows about half a mile to the north of the path.

After a half-mile walk, with flower gardens hidden behind a five-foot-high mud wall on our left and small *āśramas* (devotee residences) on our right, we came to Kāliya-ghāṭa. Here the path fanned out, and on our right we saw the string of bathing *ghāṭas* from centuries before, each *ghāṭa* with its wide stone steps leading down to where the Yamunā once flowed. Towering over one such *ghāṭa* was a huge *kadamba* tree, seeded from the very one Kṛṣṇa had jumped from fifty centuries before to chastise the great serpent Kāliya.

Just past Kāliya-ghāṭa, we saw the

Madana-mohana temple, its time-worn spires majestically adorning a steep hill. Madana-mohana, one of Vṛndāvana's first temples, was built by Sanātana Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana deputed by Lord Caitanya. Śrīla Prabhupāda has explained that by worshiping the Madana-mohana Deity, we can learn about Kṛṣṇa, ourself, and our relationship with Kṛṣṇa. This knowledge, he said, is the first business of human life.

Next we entered a more populated area. On the right, the domes of various temples stood out among two- and three-story apartment buildings. On our left were mud houses and huts and the inevitable scraggly children. Seeing us walking

and chanting on our beads, they skipped alongside us, mimicking our "Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare."

Further along the *parikrama* path, partially hidden by a concrete building and a high wall, is Imlitala, the tamarind tree that shaded Lord Caitanya. During His visit to Vṛndāvana Lord Caitanya would sit under this tree each afternoon, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and explaining the chanting to His visitors. Now the place where He sat is marked by His footprints, and just a few feet away a temple overlooks the Yamunā River.

Soon we were walking on the bank of

the river alongside a huge stone palace with many steps and low archways. Pilgrims were bathing and offering their prayers to the sacred river in which the Lord used to frolic.

Our pace slowed as we plodded through more soft sand, and we weaved among the many cows waiting to be herded home from a day of pasturing. On this part of our trek there was a different mood. Gone was the refuse that Śrīla Prabhupāda had commented on along the riverbank; gone were the open sewers, the badgering children, and the gaping pilgrims. We had to proceed single file along the narrow path, and when we glanced inside one small temple, we saw a *sādhu* sitting before an open scripture reading to a small group, while a peacock strutted in the courtyard before them. On our left was a sandy desert, and on our right, farms and *āśramas*.

Soon we came to a small temple no bigger than a large closet. The same devotee is there every day, either selling religious books or sitting quietly, chanting on his beads. He always kindly insists that we stop and take some *caraṇāmṛta*, water that has washed the lotus feet of his Deity Gopāla (baby Kṛṣṇa). He had mixed the sanctified water with yogurt and rose water, and we thankfully accepted the

purifying and rejuvenating sips that he spooned into our open palms. And as we moved on along the *parikrama* path, not wanting to lose our momentum, we could hear him say how happy he was to see Westerners taking the most auspicious walk in the world.


Along the path we also passed many Vṛndāvana residents transporting their goods to market. They carried their fruits, vegetables, and firewood in wicker baskets balanced gracefully on their heads (one sped ahead of us on a bicycle with a basket tottering on his head). Donkeys overloaded with bags full of sand (for construction), buffalo and bulls pulling wagons, and saffron-robed *sādhus* were all part of the scenario. Often they would greet us with “Jaya Rādhē,” reminding us of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s words: “All the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana are Vaiṣṇavas. They are all auspicious because somehow or other they always chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. Even though some of them do not strictly follow the rules and regulations of devotional service, on the whole they are devotees of Kṛṣṇa and chant His name directly or indirectly. . . . Even when they pass on the street, they are fortunate enough to exchange greetings by saying the name of Rādhā or Kṛṣṇa” (Cc.

Ādi 5.232, purport).

By and by we crossed one of the two busy main roads that lead to Vṛndāvana, and we could peer through some run-down buildings on the right and see Dāvānala-kuṇḍa, so called (*dāvānala* means “forest fire”) because there Lord Kṛṣṇa stopped a fire that threatened to envelop Vṛndāvana.

Now we were on the final stretch, and with relief we spotted the domes of the Krishna-Balaram Temple in the distance. We reflected on how we had just encircled Lord Kṛṣṇa’s abode, with its five thousand temples, countless sacred *tulasī* plants, devotees, Deities, and wish-fulfilling trees; and how we were a little more purified for it.

Finally we crossed Bhaktivedanta Swami Marg and arrived at our starting point. But we didn’t stop yet. Not till we got to the cold drink stand and a *nimbu pani* (fresh lime juice, with ice, water, and sugar). Sitting down was a great pleasure.

“Before *parikrama*, I feel too tired to go,” my friend Vidyā said, “and when we get back, my legs hurt. But somehow or other, I go so far, so fast, every day. It’s almost like something carries you around.” Śītālā and I share her feelings. It’s a mystical experience to circumambulate Kṛṣṇa’s holy land, Vṛndāvana. 

Noblest Ambition

(continued from page 11)

“I wonder how many would-be saints the world has lost because of parents who forced them into being materialists.”

“Probably none,” I replied. “No one can keep a person determined to give up worldly life from doing so. Family attachment simply becomes another obstacle to surmount on the progressive path of pure devotional service.”

“Yes, that’s true. It’s very rare that you hear of someone who’s been encouraged from the outset to become saintly. But often you hear of parents going berserk because they disapprove of their son’s or daughter’s trying to be saintly. It’s unfortunate that the world appreciates most saints only after they’re gone.”

“You have to try to see it from the parents’ point of view. Say you were a parent in the bodily conception of life. You’d think your child was yours, a part of you. Now, if he or she took a path in life you didn’t approve of—drug-dealing, say—what would you do? You couldn’t brag about it at the office, or at someone’s bar mitzvah. Your wife wouldn’t want to talk about it at the hairdresser’s. When others are talking about how ‘Steve is going here and doing that,’ and ‘Jan is studying this and that,’ what would you do? You’d just burn. A disappointment like that simply pinches a parent’s heart.

“And that’s only if their son is a drug addict or their daughter is pregnant and not even engaged. Everything is multiplied by a factor of ten when what’s in question is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. For a lot of parents, their whole world collapses. You really have to sympathize with them.”

“But I wouldn’t compare a drug addict or an unmarried mother to a person trying to become Kṛṣṇa conscious.”

“Aaah. But there’s the rub. In the eyes of a parent smitten with bodily attachment, Kṛṣṇa consciousness is even worse than drugs or illicit sex. Admitting to friends that ‘My child is a Hare Kṛṣṇa’ is just too much to bear. It’s just not as good as saying, ‘My son is studying law,’ or ‘My daughter is a psychologist, and she’s marrying an accountant at Du Pont.’

“Some parents would even prefer that their children lived humdrum lives of total mediocrity—as a check-out girl or a busboy clearing tables at a fast-food joint—rather than be a devotee of Kṛṣṇa.”

“There’s a bit of irony in all this,” Saṅkarṣaṇa replied, “because ultimately even materialistic society reveres saints. To try to become a saint in this world of sense pleasures is no small feat. Practically everything else is easier.”

“That’s a fact. And people know it, too, but when it comes to their children, they’re not prepared to admit that wanting to become a saint is the noblest ambition.”

We passed a few moments in silence as

we thought about the difficulties of trying to be Kṛṣṇa conscious in a culture averse to devotional service to God. Suddenly Saṅkarṣaṇa’s face lit up. “I just got an idea,” he said. “Instead of saying I’m a Hare Kṛṣṇa, my parents could just tell people I’m trying to become a saint.”

“I don’t know if they’d do that,” I said, smiling, “but it would certainly help if they thought of you in that way.”

“Even if I get them to accept my wanting to be a saint, they would say, ‘Fine, if you want to be religious, why not in your own tradition?’”

“That’s a really hard one for materialists to understand. They have little conception of what it takes to live a religious life. Their idea is that *some* religion is good—but not too much. But that’s not God’s idea. God wants us to serve Him without interruption and without any personal motivation. For a conditioned soul, that’s a great austerity. You need a scripture that can motivate you to persevere when temptation threatens; you need the association of like-minded souls, good examples; you need a life-style that helps you toward your goal of absorption in God’s devotional service; and most of all you need a self-realized spiritual master to guide and inspire you.

“Kṛṣṇa consciousness gives us all this. In Kṛṣṇa consciousness we learn how to write for Kṛṣṇa, cook for Kṛṣṇa, eat for Kṛṣṇa, sleep for Kṛṣṇa, raise a family for

Kṛṣṇa. It's a great science: how to do everything for God's pleasure.

"Unfortunately, very few people have any idea of a scientific religion. They either sentimentally lump all religions together, assuming each has the same worth, or they claim a righteous monopoly on spiritual life to the exclusion of everyone else's revelation.

"Both these extremes are misguided. Kṛṣṇa says that there are various degrees of surrender, from no surrender at all up to full surrender, but that the goal is full surrender. We aim for that in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. At any rate," I concluded with a smile, "I like your idea of telling your parents to think of you as becoming a saint and not as being a Hare Kṛṣṇa."

"Yes," said Saṅkarṣaṇa, returning my smile. "It's worth a try."

THE EDGE

(continued from page 25)

mothers lose their children, children lose their parents, husbands lose their wives, and so on. Indeed, how can a person be truly happy knowing that in the course of time everything dear will be lost?

I wish I had known then something of the nature of the soul. I could have benefited the passing soul of that poor dying boy. And I could have solaced the others. I could have told them that we don't belong to this material world, a place of death and suffering. I could have reassured them that we exist eternally as spiritual beings, that we are only temporarily encased in flesh and blood; our physical bodies have a beginning and an end, but the soul is forever.

It would have eased our pain to have meditated on the ancient Vedic revelation that death is painful only when we accept the material body as the self and this material world as home. The Vedic scriptures compare this world to a prison. The purpose: to reform the lawbreakers so that they might again enjoy the benefits of freedom. In other words, although this material world incarcerates the eternal soul, it also rehabilitates. Ultimately its purpose is to persuade the spiritual living entities to return to their original position as eternal servants of God.

A person who is completely realized in his relationship with the Supreme Lord has no need to fear death. Death simply means that we change to a new body, one designed to facilitate our specific desires and aspirations. Thus, a person who lives like an animal, oblivious to the laws of God and to his own spiritual nature, is awarded an animal body, which better facilitates his mentality. A God-conscious person, however, will receive a body that will allow him to further glorify and serve

the Lord. One who successfully focuses on cultivating love for God beyond all else relieves himself simultaneously and automatically of the burden of future births. Thus he terminates his life-after-life sentence and returns to Lord Kṛṣṇa, where he belongs, to live eternally in love with God.

All this was unknown to me on that spring day long past. I remember how we earnestly searched through the weeds until we found the shattered spectacles. Useless, of course. They were as useless to their owner now as were our tears. But we placed the glasses gently in his shirt pocket. Perhaps we sought to comfort ourselves, to reassure ourselves that all our values and day-to-day activities hadn't suddenly,

in the face of inevitable death, become meaningless and absurd. Almost mystically my outlook had changed: even my deepest material concerns now appeared petty, and my usual responses and sentiments seemed inappropriate, even ludicrous. I had no knowledge of the eternal self within the temporary body. Now I know what a difference spiritual understanding makes. Without realizing the spiritual self within the body, we will find no comfort when death strikes. Comfort will come only when there is Kṛṣṇa consciousness, transcendental knowledge of the eternal soul in contact with God. Only then can we divest our life of all absurdity and our death of all tragedy.

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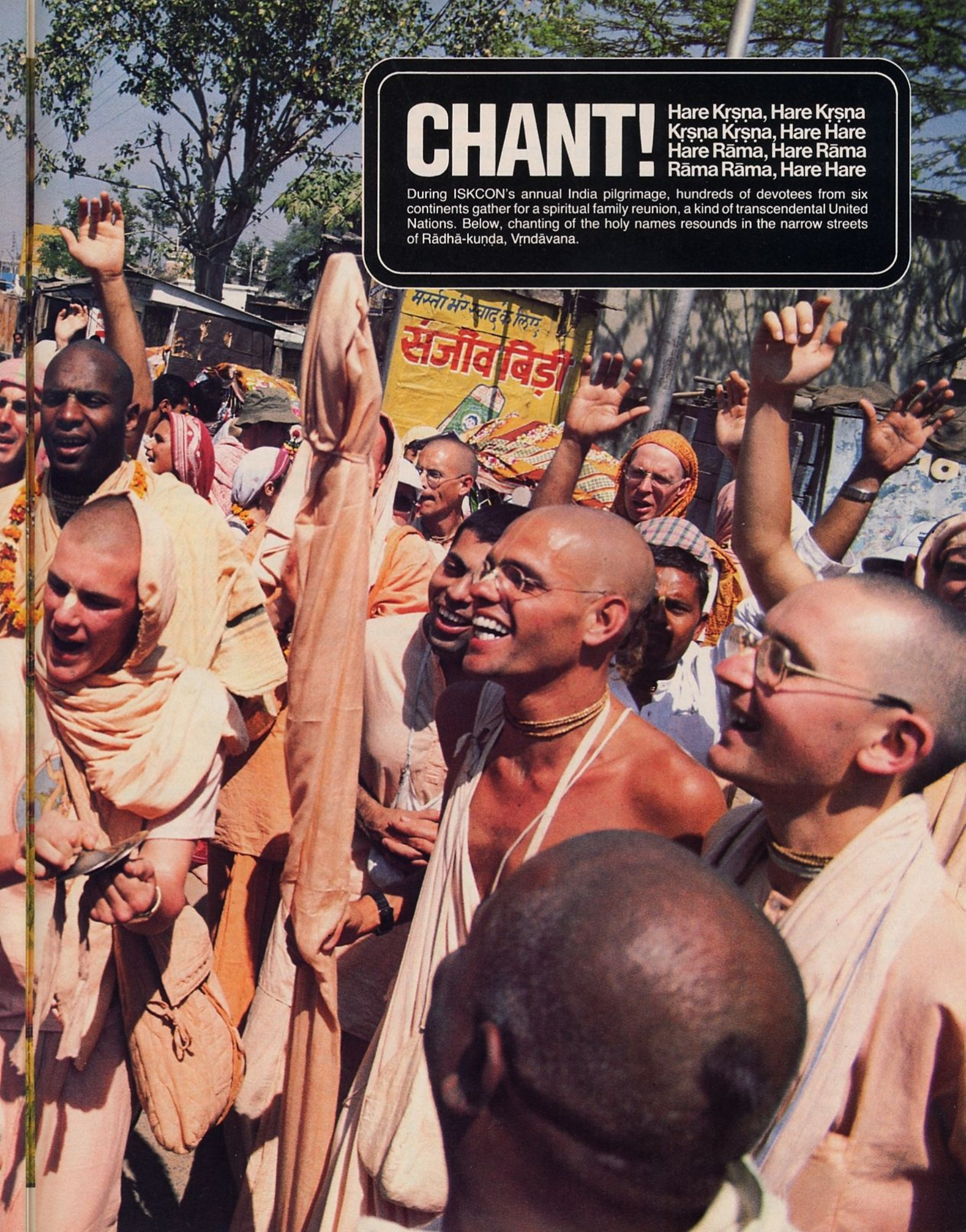
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CHANT!

Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa
Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare
Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma
Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare

During ISKCON's annual India pilgrimage, hundreds of devotees from six continents gather for a spiritual family reunion, a kind of transcendental United Nations. Below, chanting of the holy names resounds in the narrow streets of Rādhā-kuṇḍa, Vṛndāvana.



NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Gaura-pūrṇimā Diary

The full moon night of March 26 marked the 500th anniversary [Quincentennial] of Gaura-pūrṇimā, the appearance day of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu [Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself appearing as His own devotee to teach love of God through the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra]. The following is a diary I kept on that day in the place where Lord Caitanya appeared, Māyāpur, West Bengal.

I awake at 3:00 A.M. and sit up—“Who am I on Gaura-pūrṇimā day?” I can recite that I’m a spirit soul, an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa. But that is a realization I’m still approaching.

The day begins in relative quietness. I can hear crickets. The overhead fan whirs. I hear the rustle of a devotee’s sleeping bag in the next room. No *kīrtanas* or car honks yet. A gasoline engine’s constant drone drifts in over the rice fields—maybe an irrigation pump. There are the shocking-bright fluorescent green lights of a nearby temple. It’s time for me to get up.

Pre-dawn:
chanting *japa* on the roof.
Full moon.

The crowds are so great that I feel content to stay busy within my room. Now the moon has faded, and the sky lightens. The sun is a bright, fresh orange rising in front of cloud banks. Sparrows congregate on the rug outside my door.

Now the sky is filled with blazing light. Breezes blow through the room. Prabhupāda said these were “*Vaikuṅṭha* breezes”—from the spiritual world.

We’re scheduled to hold a fire sacrifice now, and as usual, there’s a delay in its starting.

While waiting, I very much like worshipping my small, personal deity of Śrīla Prabhupāda. The fine silk of his clothing is pleasing to see and touch and place on his body. This place—Māyāpur—is his place, and it is nice to think of him and serve him.

I reflect on how, after Śrīla Prabhupāda’s passing away, we are struggling, trying to worship him in separation. We are gradually becoming aware of his greatness, and we are developing the devotional techniques of *lilā-smaraṇam* (a technique by which a devotee can overcome the feelings of separation from Kṛṣṇa and His intimate associates by remembering

their pastimes).

The altar here is a table covered with a yellow silk cloth, and today’s offering of flowers is fresh and bright. Even simple elements: clear water bathing Prabhupāda’s body, filtered sunlight gently entering the room, soft breezes—all these take on a quality of great opulence and pleasure. To be involved in such worship is sublime.

I like the auspiciousness of this occasion. I like that I can perceive that auspiciousness to some degree. Our own ISKCON Māyāpur activities combine with the sounds of *kīrtana* and activity at the nearby temples to produce a vibration that seems to transform all heaven and earth. The blue of the sky, the green of the land, the silent silver sheet of Ganges water—Lord Caitanya’s Bengal.

By 12:30 it’s very hot. The sun blazes. I just returned from the sacrificial arena, where I initiated Nirañjana Swami into the renounced order. Now I’m back up in my room sitting, somewhat dazed, in thoughts about what a rich field for preaching Nirañjana Swami has in New England. I hope to assist him there.

I’m aware of my limits. I’m ill and sometimes in pain. Mostly I relax between exertions, planning to make a greater effort when the G.B.C. meetings start—despite the pain. I will try to spend a good part of each day at the meetings.

The Quincentennial celebrations have spawned meetings with top government leaders in India. Today, Ācāryapāda goes to Calcutta to join in a commemorative ceremony with the president of India. Gopāla Kṛṣṇa Goswami attended a program in New Delhi, in which Prime Minister Gandhi took part. The moon should rise in an hour, beginning the 501st year since Lord Caitanya’s appearance.

Holiest day—
One side of their hats turned up,
policemen move the crowds.

Gaura-pūrṇimā moon—
Waiting for the cooling rays
of the night.

Walking on the road,
pilgrims in white
in the sunlight.

With drums and cymbals,
hour by hour,
sun moves westward.

Devotees are waiting for moonrise when they may break their fast and relish the taste of *kṛṣṇa-prasādam*. “Today,” Ācāryadeva joked, “everyone is a devotee of the moon.”

Although moonrise was at four P.M., it’s now six-thirty and still the moon is not perceivable in the sky. Now (at 6:35 P.M.) I see it from the roof—a perfectly-round, but hazy-yellow moon. The astronauts didn’t go there. It’s the planet of Candra-loka, a heavenly (though material) abode. The familiar-but-mysterious moon planet: controller of tides; giver of taste to vegetables; appearing sometimes pock-marked but always beautiful; sending cool rays to end the day’s heat.

Tonight the moon is more than on other nights. It’s a wonderful way the Lord signals His advent. When Lord Caitanya appeared the moon was eclipsed, yet everyone chanted the holy name. Now we look to the moon, which is golden like Gaurāṅga, (a name of Lord Caitanya meaning “one whose limbs are golden”), and it helps us understand the blessings of Lord Caitanya and His *saṅkīrtana* (the congregational chanting of God’s divine names).

It feels good to be here in Māyāpur. It’s hard to imagine that any other place on earth affords such an intimate touch with Gaura-pūrṇimā.

The pavement is still warm to bare feet. The air smells sweet. We’re out in the West Bengal farmland, in the heartbeat of Lord Caitanya’s advent celebration. When, one day, celebrations like this unite the whole world, even then Māyāpur will be the capital for celebrating Gaura-pūrṇimā.

Whoever is here at this time is very fortunate. Something wonderful is happening, and even we who cannot fully appreciate it accept the benefit.

Full moon,
the *avatāra* appears
in a golden form.

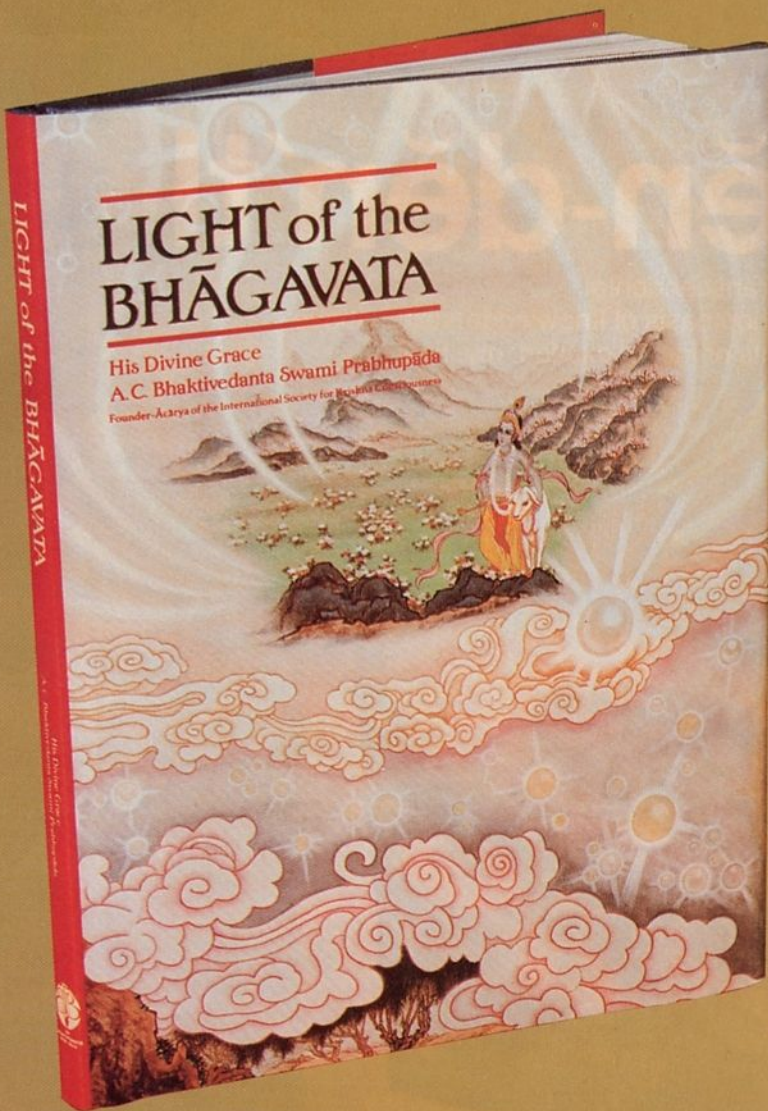
It’s a blessed land where almost everyone knows “Gaurāṅga,” “Mahāprabhu,” “Nītāi-Gaura.” Thousands of devotees of Lord Caitanya break their fasts, clapping hands and reciting prayers, chanting God’s names, honoring Bengali-style *prasādam*.
—SDG

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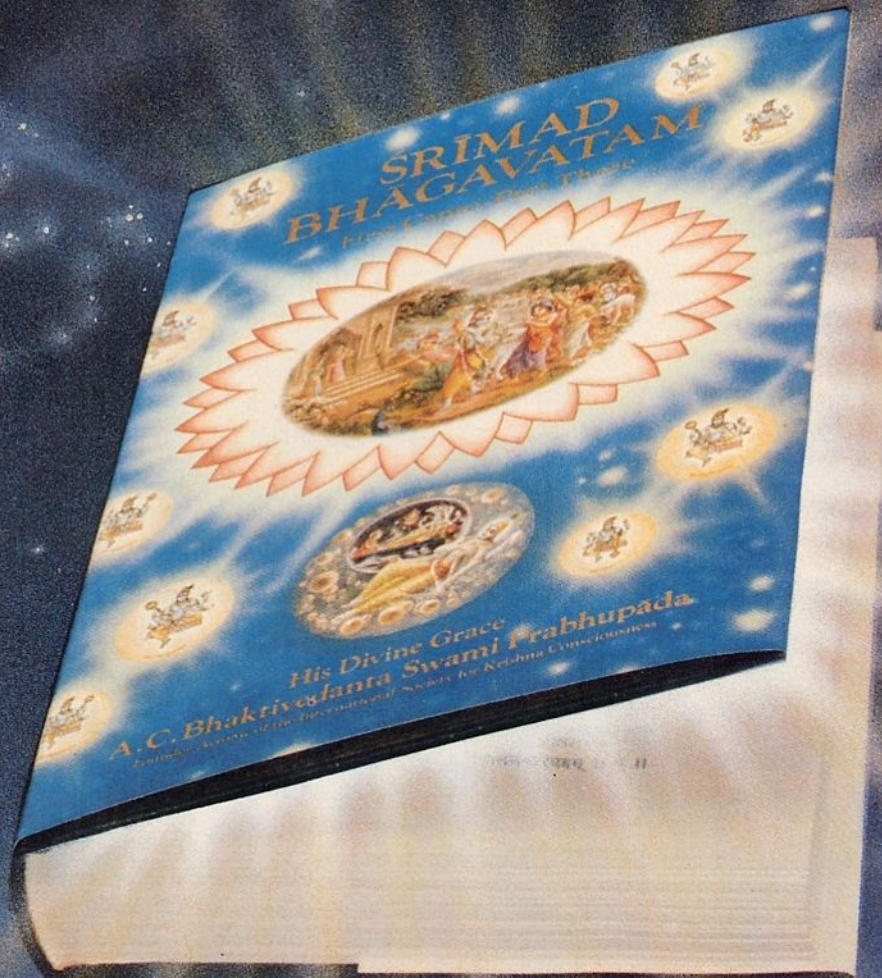
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