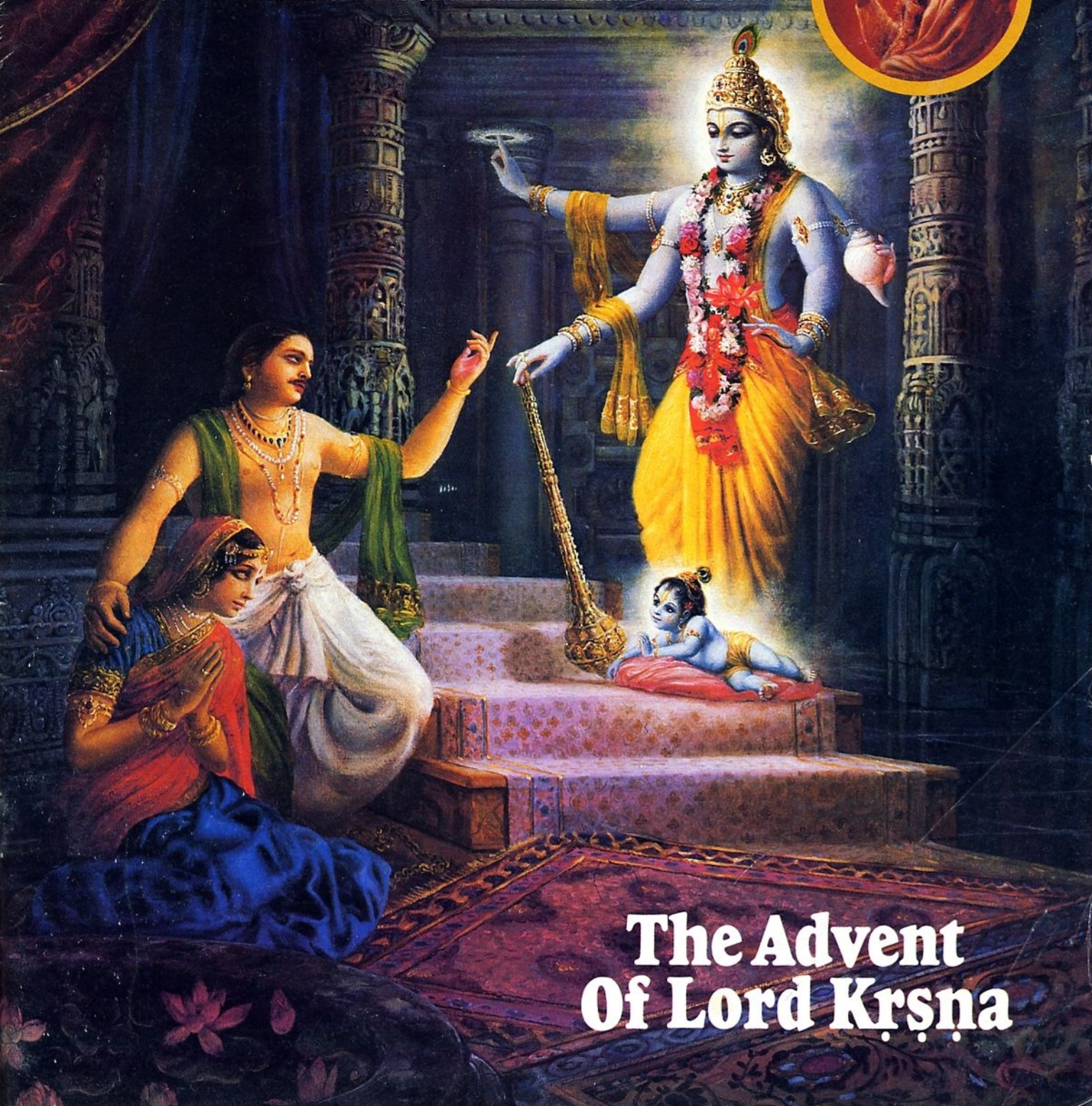


Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.

BACK TO GODHEAD

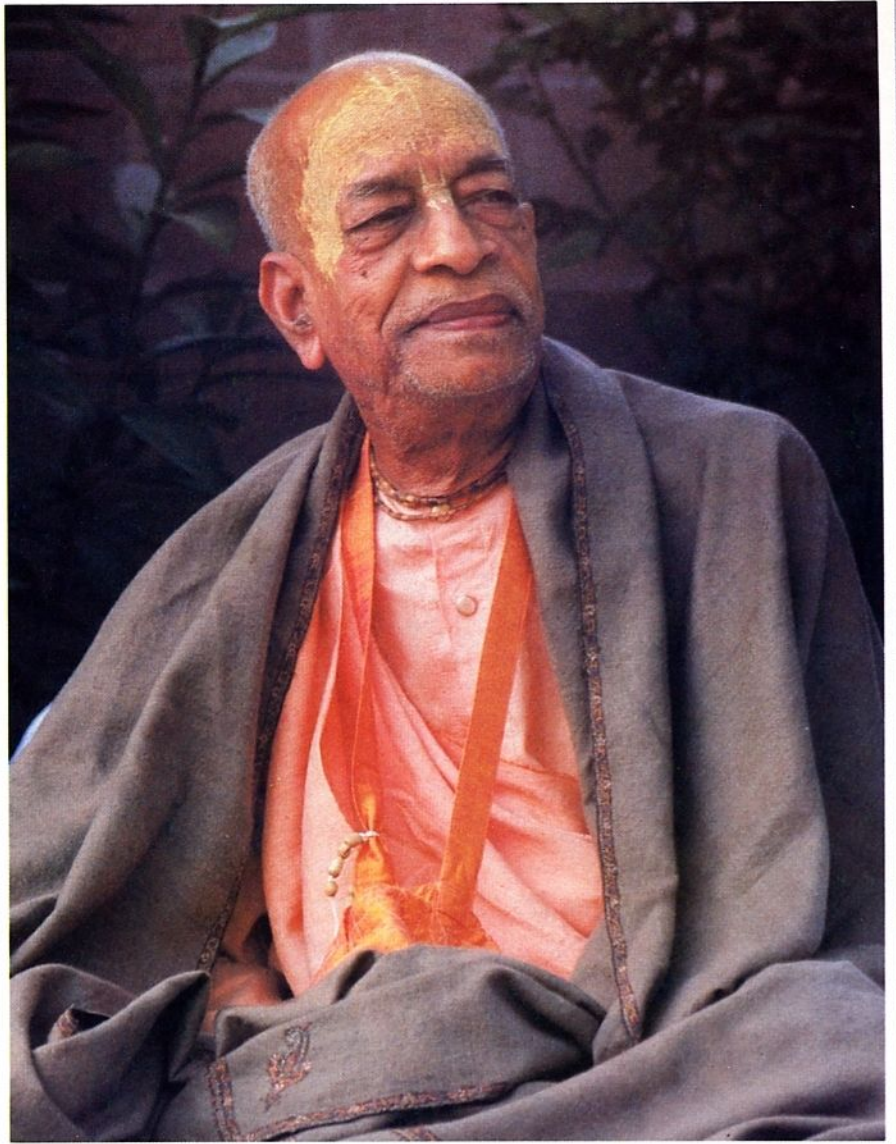
Vol. 22 No. 8

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT



The Advent Of Lord Kṛṣṇa

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 Vṛndāvana, India, the place most sacred to Lord Kṛṣṇa. His disciples are carrying forward the movement he started.



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

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

The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement

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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 **ipique**. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **r** in **rim**, and **ṛ** like the **ch** in **chair**. Pronounce the aspirated consonants (**ch**, **jh**, **dh**, etc.) as in **staunch**-heart, **hedge**-hog, 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* (dāst for women), meaning "servant." For instance, the name *Kṛṣṇa dāsa* means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

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COVER: August 16 marks the anniversary of Lord Kṛṣṇa's appearance on earth, and devotees around the world will celebrate the event, known as Janmāṣṭamī, with grand festivals. Kṛṣṇa promises in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that He descends during times of irreligion to protect His pure-hearted devotees and destroy the envious miscreants. Fifty centuries ago He came to protect devotees like His parents, Vasudeva and Devakī, who had been imprisoned by the vicious King Kāṁsa. Kṛṣṇa appeared in the prison in His four-armed Viṣṇu form to assure them that He was God and they had nothing to fear. He then assumed the form of an ordinary child. Please see article on page 6. (Painting by Yadurāṇī-devī dāst.)

POTENCIES OF THE OMNIPOTENT

Because God's energies are inconceivable,
some philosophers conclude that He has none.

A lecture in Los Angeles in December 1973,
by HIS DIVINE GRACE
A. C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA
Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

*yadā mukundo bhagavān imān mahīm
jahau sva-tanvā śravaṇīya-sat-kathāḥ
tadāhar evāpratibuddha-cetasām
abhadra-hetuḥ kalir anvavartata*

“When the Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, left this earthly planet in His selfsame form, from that very day Kali, who had already partially appeared, became fully manifest to create inauspicious conditions for those who are endowed with a poor fund of knowledge.”

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.15.36)

When Lord Kṛṣṇa leaves this earth planet or appears here, He does so by His own potency. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* [4.6] Kṛṣṇa says, *sambhavāmy ātmamāyayā*: “I incarnate by My own potency.” God has unlimited potencies (*parāsya śaktir vividhaiva śrūyate*), and learned scholars and saintly persons have accepted the idea of God's potencies. There are certain philosophers, however, who are of the opinion that God has no potency. But that is not a fact. From the Vedic literatures we learn that God has unlimited potencies.

Now, how can we understand the Lord's potencies? One way is by the example of fire, which has two potencies, heat and light. A fire is in one place, but it expands its potencies of heat and light. That is

within our experience; it is not very difficult to understand. Similarly, the sun also expands the potencies of heat and light. It is lying in one corner of the sky, but it expands its potencies throughout the universe. The sunshine is distributed all over the sky, all over the planetary system, and so are the sun's light and heat. The sun is 93 million miles away from us, but still we are feeling scorching heat—120 degrees, 135 degrees.

So, if even a material thing like the sun has so much potency, how much more potency must the Supreme Personality of Godhead have? His potency is *acintya*, inconceivable, beyond our conception. That is the statement of the *Vedas*:

*na tasya kāryaṁ karaṇaṁ ca vidyate
na tat-samaś cābhyadhikaś ca dṛśyate
parāsya śaktir vividhaiva śrūyate
svābhāvīkī jñāna-bala-kriyā ca*

“The Supreme Lord has no duty to perform, and no one is seen to be greater than or equal to Him. He has unlimited varieties of energy, which act automatically” [*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 6.8].

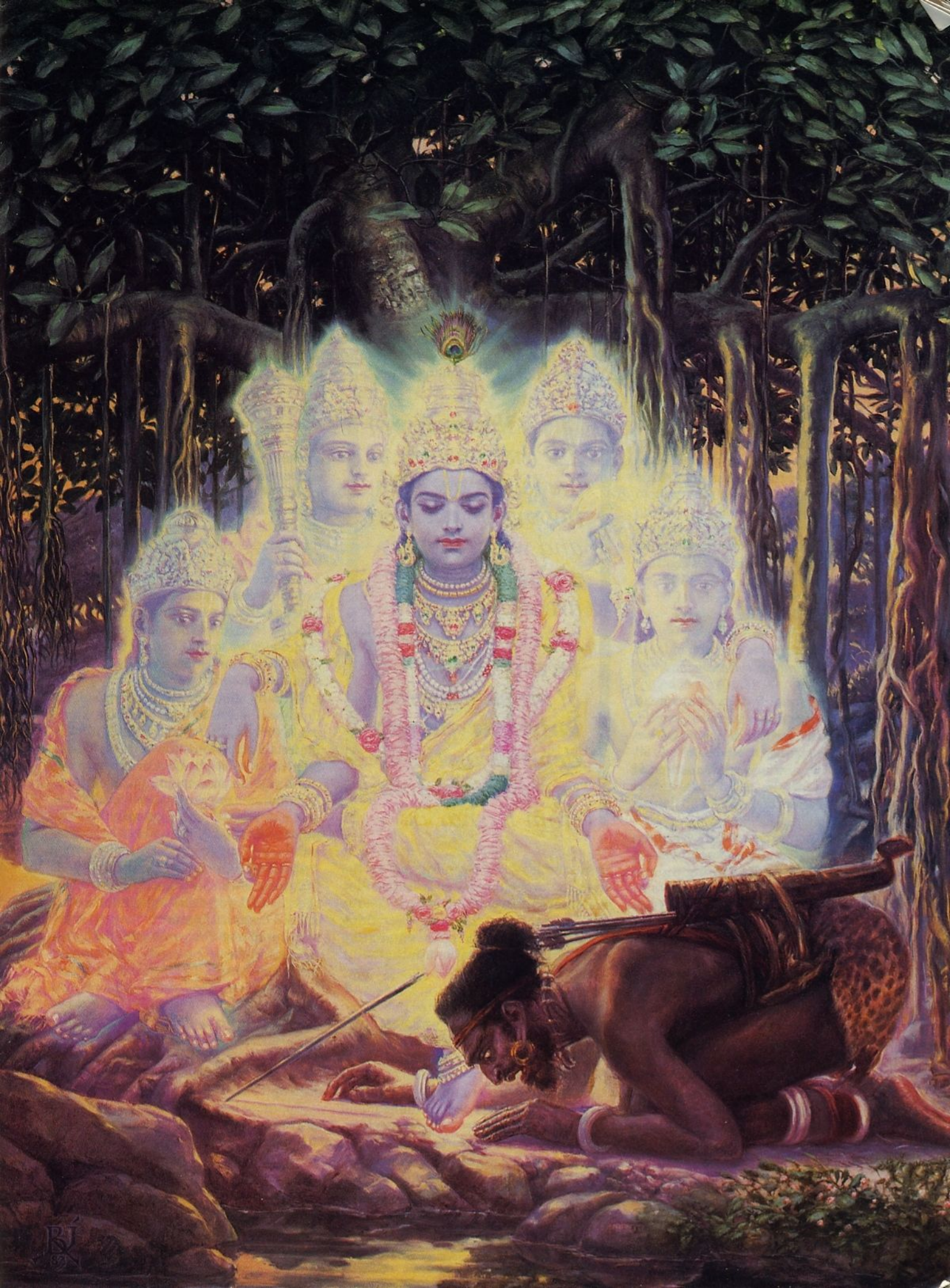
This is a description of the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Person. What kind of person? A person like you, working the whole day for money? No. *Na tasya kāryaṁ karaṇaṁ ca vidyate*: Kṛṣṇa doesn't

have to do anything. He is simply playing on His flute and enjoying with Rādhārāṇī, that's all. He hasn't got to go to the office, to the factory. He is simply enjoying: *ānandamayo 'bhyāsāt*.

And we try to imitate Kṛṣṇa's enjoyment. Young boys and girls like to mix with each other and dance together. The same activities are there in Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. Kṛṣṇa is dancing with the *gopīs* [cowherd girls] in the forest, and you are dancing with your girlfriend in the nightclub. But your dancing will not give you satisfaction, because it is imitation. If you want real dancing, come to Kṛṣṇa. That is Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

We are trying to take the misled people from illusion to reality. The Māyāvādī [impersonalistic] philosophers say that there is no pleasure in dancing: “Make it zero; forget it.” But we don't say that. We say that there is dancing in the original conception of the Absolute Truth. That is what the *Vedānta-sūtra* says: *janmādy asya yataḥ*. “The Absolute Truth is that from

To bewilder the faithless, who think that Kṛṣṇa has a material body, He pretended to die as the result of being shot in the foot by a hunter. But Kṛṣṇa's form is spiritual, and from it expand unlimited potencies. Shown here surrounding Kṛṣṇa, in their personal forms, are His chief weapons—the lotus, club, disc, and conchshell.



which everything has come." Whatever you are experiencing—wherefrom has it come? It has come from the Absolute. That is the meaning of "Absolute." But because here in the relative world dancing is pervertedly reflected and is not reality, you are confused, baffled.

So, our proposition is that you come to the reality. That is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The same dancing will be there. For example, here is a picture of Kṛṣṇa dancing with the *gopīs*. And because we are part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa, we also like to dance with young girls. Even in old age men are dancing with young girls. In Paris there is a club for old men, all about to die. They come to the club and pay a fifty-dollar entrance fee so they can enjoy young girls and wine. They cannot actually enjoy, yet still they come. As it is said, *jarāgate kim yuvati nārī*: "When one is an old man, what is the use of mixing with young girls?" Still, the old men like to mix with young girls, although they do not really enjoy. Therefore they are unsatisfied, frustrated. This is the position of those who are trying to imitate Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa is so great that He is simultaneously and inconceivably present in all places. He explains this in the *Bhagavad-gītā* [9.4]:

*mayā tatam idaṁ sarvaṁ
jagad avyakta-mūrtinā
mat-sthāni sarva-bhūtāni
na cāhaṁ teṣv avasthitaḥ*

"By My impersonal feature I am spread everywhere. Everything is resting on Me, but I am not in everything." It is a fact that everything is resting on Kṛṣṇa, just as all the planets are resting on the sunshine. It is a scientific fact that the planets are revolving on account of the heat and light of the sun.

Now, what do we mean that "everything is resting on Kṛṣṇa"? Take this earth planet, for example. Everything on this planet—the trees, the rivers, the mountains, the cities, the cars—all of that is one unit, the earth planet. And there are millions and trillions of planets. How are they existing? They are existing on the sunshine. And wherefrom does the sunshine come? The sunshine comes from the sun, which comes from God. Therefore, indirectly everything depends on Kṛṣṇa's potency. As he says, *mat-sthāni sarva-bhūtāni*: "Everything is resting on My potency." *Na cāhaṁ teṣv avasthitaḥ*: "But personally I am not within everything." This is *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*: The Lord is simultaneously one with and different from everything. This is our philosophy.

So, our point is that Kṛṣṇa, although situated in the spiritual world, works through His potencies, just as a rich man sits in his

parlor and runs his business through his subordinates. He hasn't got to go personally to the office. We have seen Mr. Birla [a wealthy Indian gentleman] sitting in his home and running his business through his "potencies"—his secretaries, clerks, and so on. They are doing all the work; he hasn't got to work.

Similarly, because Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Person, He hasn't got to work personally. He is always engaged in playing His flute and dancing with the *gopīs*. That's all. *Ānandamayo 'bhyāsāt*: He is simply enjoying.

So, Kṛṣṇa's potencies are working in both the spiritual and material worlds. How? I have already given the example of the sun. The sun is in the sky, and the sunshine is working. By the energy of the sun-

*By the energy of
the sunshine
the leaves are coming
out on the trees,
and when there is
no sunshine they
are dropping.
Everything depends
on the energy
of the sun. Similarly,
everything
depends on the
energies emanating
from Kṛṣṇa.*

shine the leaves are coming out on the trees, and when there is no sunshine they are dropping. Everything depends on the energy of the sun. Similarly, everything depends on the energies emanating from Kṛṣṇa. As explained in the Vedic literature:

*eka-deśa-sthitasyaṅner
jyotsnā vistāriṇī yathā
parasya brahmaṇaḥ śaktis
tathedaṁ akhilaṁ jagat*

"Just as a fire situated in one corner of a room fills the whole room with heat and light, so the Absolute Truth, Kṛṣṇa, pervades this entire universe with His potencies." Whatever you see in this cosmic manifestation is simply a demonstration of the potencies of the Lord.

So, we take our birth and accept our

death, but not independently. We are under the control of the Lord's material potency. The Lord has many potencies, which have been divided into three categories. One is called the internal potency, one is called the external potency, and one is called the marginal potency. The external potency is this material world—so many universes, so many planets, stars, and so on. These are all manifestations of Kṛṣṇa's external potency. And then there is the internal potency, the spiritual world. That we cannot see; it is not within our experience. But we get information about the spiritual world from the *Bhagavad-gītā* [8.20]: *paras tasmāt tu bhāvo 'nyo 'vyakto 'vyaktāt sanātanaḥ*. "Beyond this material nature is another nature, which is eternal." This material nature is not eternal. Take your body, for example. It is not eternal. Similarly, this gigantic "body" of the universe is also not eternal. It has a date of creation and a date of dissolution. But the spiritual nature is eternal—it is never created or annihilated.

Now, we are the Lord's marginal potency. For example, when we walk on the shore of the Pacific Ocean, some days we find that the water is covering part of the beach, and some days we see it is open. There is no water on that part. So, that part which is sometimes covered and sometimes open is called "marginal." Similarly, we being Kṛṣṇa's marginal potency, sometimes we are influenced by the material nature and sometimes by the spiritual nature.

Actually, we belong to the spiritual nature, but because we are minute spirit souls we have come in contact with this material nature somehow or other. This is an incompatible position for us, and so we cannot make a permanent adjustment here. Therefore we are getting one type of body and enjoying or suffering, and then another type of body, then another, and so on.

But if we like, since we are of the spiritual nature we can transfer ourselves to the spiritual world and remain there eternally. The eternal nature of the soul is described in the *Bhagavad-gītā* [2.20]: *na jāyate mriyate vā kadācin . . . na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre*. "The soul never takes birth or dies at any time." In other words, the soul is everlasting, eternal. Then what is death? Death is the annihilation of the material body, not of the soul. Therefore it is said here, *na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre*: "The soul is not dead after the annihilation of the body."

So, the conclusion is that because we are marginal—situated between the spiritual nature and the material nature—we have a tendency to come under the control of Kṛṣṇa's external, material energy and identify ourselves with this temporary, material body. Actually we are spiritual;

our real nature is eternal. We never take birth and never die. But on account of our contact with the material nature, we are getting material bodies, which are always changing. Thus we have accepted birth and death as natural. But that is not our real nature.

At the present moment we are under the material nature, but if we try we can get out of this covering of material nature and come to the spiritual nature. That is Kṛṣṇa consciousness—to leave that marginal position and come onto the “land” so that there will be no disturbance by the “water.” If you remain in the marginal position, sometimes you will be covered by water and sometimes you will be dry. But if you come a little forward to the land side, the ocean has no power to touch you.

Now, Kṛṣṇa is not like us. The present verse of the *Bhāgavatam* says that Kṛṣṇa left this world, but that does not mean He left this world as we leave it. Our leaving this world means that we leave this material body and accept another material body. Now we may have an American body, and in our next life we may be in a Russian body. An American who is fighting against the Russians in this life may get a Russian body in his next life. (This is the law of nature: *sadā tad-bhāva-bhāvitaḥ*. “Whatever one thinks of at the time of death determines his next life.”) And then in his Russian body he will fight with the Americans and in his next life again become an American. This is going on: *bhūtvā bhūtvā pralīyate*. Sometimes Russian, sometimes American, go on fighting, that’s all. This is called *māyā*, illusion.

Everyone in this material world is under this illusion. The living entities are loitering in this material nature, sometimes in this body, sometimes in that body, sometimes this way, sometimes that way. Simply loitering. No one knows where to find shelter, where to find permanent life, permanent peace, permanent happiness. They are simply changing forms of government: electing one rascal, rejecting him, electing another rascal, and rejecting him. Because the candidates are all rascals, the people have no alternative but to elect a rascal. They are thinking, “By electing this rascal, we shall be happy.” *Andhā yathāndhair upanīyamānāḥ*: The people are blind, and they are accepting leaders who are also blind. What will be the profit? If you are blind and you are led by another blind man, what will be the profit? Both of you will fall down into a ditch.

Therefore, if you want real happiness, you must accept the leadership of a man who has eyes to see. And whose eyes are open? That is explained in the Vedic literature:

*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya
jñānānjana-śalākayā*

*caḥsur unmīlitam yena
tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

Everyone is blind, in the darkness of ignorance. So it is the *guru’s* business to open their eyes, to help them see things as they are. That is the *guru’s* business.

How can darkness be removed? By light. At night we cannot see. Everything is dark because the sun is not in the sky. But in the morning, as soon as the sun rises, we can see everything. Because we are in the darkness of ignorance, we cannot see things properly. The spirit soul exists and God exists, but now we cannot see them. We have to get the light of transcendental knowledge to see things as they are. That is wanted.

The Vedic literature therefore advises,

**No one knows
where to
find shelter. They
are simply changing
forms of
government: elect-
ing another ras-
cal, rejecting him.
Because the candi-
dates are all
rascals, the people
have no alterna-
tive but to elect
a rascal.**

tamasi mā jyotir gamāḥ: “Don’t keep yourself in darkness; go to the light.” This is possible in human life. In animal life you kept yourself in darkness because there was no possibility of coming to the light. If I invite all the dogs and cats in Los Angeles to come here and hear about the *Bhagavad-gītā*, they will not come, because they are animals. But if I appeal to the human beings, some may be interested. They should all be interested, but the times are so bad that almost nobody is interested. Still, a few people may be interested, but not the cats and dogs.

In the human form of life there is a necessity of coming to the light and making a solution to the problems of life. Therefore Kṛṣṇa appears in this world. He states in the *Bhagavad-gītā* [4.6], *prakṛtiṁ svām adhiṣṭhāya sambhavāmy ātma-māyayā*: “I appear in My transcendental form by My

own energy.” We are under the control of the material nature, but Kṛṣṇa is not under this control. That is to be understood. Therefore, the present verse of the *Bhāgavatam* says, *jahau sva-tanvā*. *Sva* means “own,” and *tanu* means “body.” In other words, Kṛṣṇa left this world in His own transcendental body.

So, when Kṛṣṇa appears in this world or leaves it, He does so in His own transcendental body. For us there is a distinction between the soul and the body. I am a spiritual soul, but my body is material. This distinction is there because we are conditioned by the material body. But Kṛṣṇa is not conditioned by a material body. Therefore here it says *jahau sva-tanvā*: “He left in His own, original, spiritual body.”

One so-called scholar who does not know Kṛṣṇa has written a commentary on the *Bhagavad-gītā* in which he tries to make a distinction between Kṛṣṇa’s soul and His body. Kṛṣṇa says [Bg. 9.34], *man-manā bhava mad-bhaktō mad-yājī mām namaskuru*: “Just think of Me, become My devotee, offer your obeisances unto Me, and worship Me.” But this rascal commentator says it is not to the *person* Kṛṣṇa that we should offer obeisances but to the soul *within* Kṛṣṇa. Just see how ignorant he is! He does not know that for Kṛṣṇa there is no such division between His self, or soul, and His body. This fool is rascal number one, and yet he has written a commentary on the *Bhagavad-gītā* and is accepted as a scholar. And this nonsense is going on all over the world.

Therefore Kṛṣṇa says, *avajānanti mām mūdhā mānuṣiṁ tanum āsṛitaḥ*: “The rascals [*mūdhās*] think that because I appear in a human form I am an ordinary human being.” And then, *paraṁ bhāvam ajānanto*: “They do not know My great potency.” Still, these rascals go on explaining the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

So, while for us there is a distinction between body and soul, for Kṛṣṇa there is no such distinction. Also, there is no distinction between Kṛṣṇa Himself and His Deity form made of stone. Why? Because the stone is Kṛṣṇa’s energy. Earth, water, fire, air—everything is Kṛṣṇa’s energy. That we have already explained. So, He can appear in any form, from anywhere, from anything. That is Kṛṣṇa’s potency. So, you have to understand what Kṛṣṇa is. And as soon as you understand Kṛṣṇa in truth, you become liberated: *janma karma ca me divyam evaṁ yo vetti taitvataḥ/tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma naiti mām eti so ’rjuna*.

Here the *Bhāgavatam* says *jahau sva-tanvā*: “Kṛṣṇa left this world in His own, original body.” Kṛṣṇa does not leave His body as we leave ours. No. We are leaving one body and accepting another by the force of material nature. *Prakṛteḥ kriya-*
(continued on page 35)

The Advent Of Lord Kṛṣṇa

“I could have appeared just like an ordinary child,”
the Lord said, “but you may have doubted who I really am.”

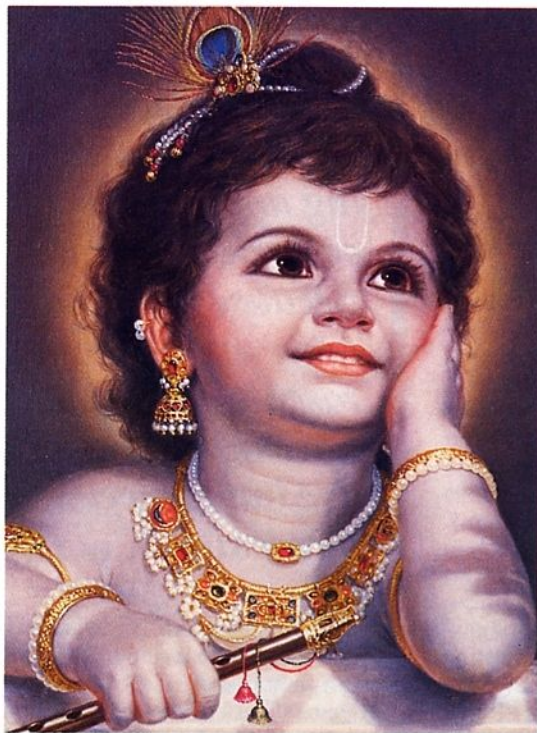
Adapted by Amala-bhakta dāsa from Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda.

Once, thousands of years ago, the world was overburdened by the unnecessary defense forces of different kings who were actually demons but were posing themselves as the royal order. At that time the whole world became perturbed, so the predominating deity of the planet earth, known as Bhūmī, went to see Lord Brahmā, the creator of the universe. Bhūmī assumed the form of a cow, presented herself before Lord Brahmā with tears in her eyes, and related to him the calamitous condition of the earth.

Lord Brahmā became much aggrieved after hearing from Bhūmī, so he, along with Bhūmī and all the other demigods, journeyed to the spiritual planet of Śvetādvīpa, where the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu resides. There, on the shore of the ocean of milk, Lord Brahmā began to pacify Lord Viṣṇu with prayers. Next, he sat in meditation for a while, received a message in his heart from Lord Viṣṇu, and then broadcast it to the demigods. The message was as follows:

I, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, will appear on earth very soon along with My supremely powerful potencies. As long as I remain to execute My mission of annihilating the demons and establishing the devotees, the demigods should also remain there to assist Me. They should all immediately take birth in the Yadu dynasty, wherein I will also appear in due course of time.

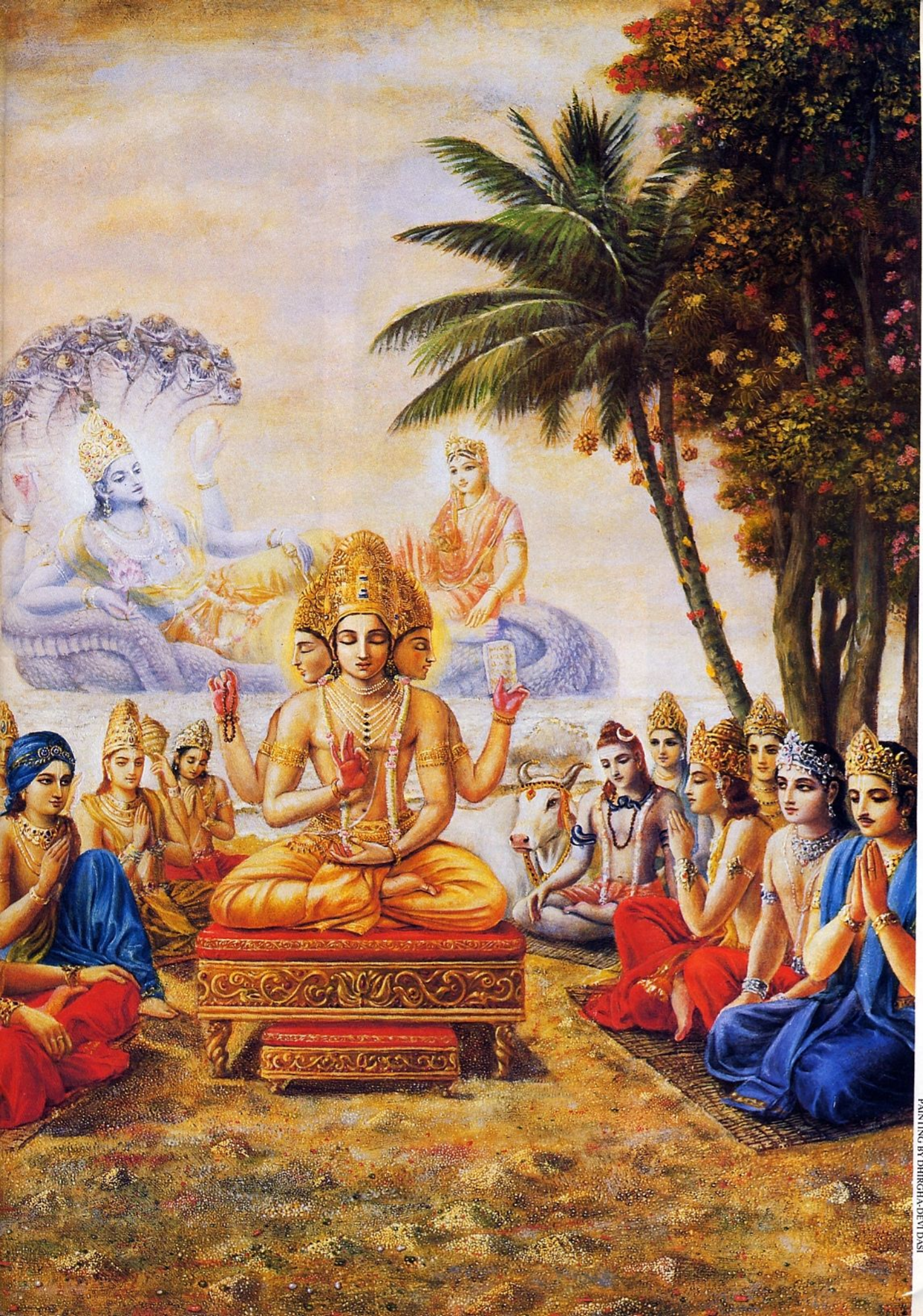
After instructing and pacifying Bhūmī and all the demigods with sweet words, Lord Brahmā departed for his own planet, Brahmāloka.



DETAIL FROM A PAINTING BY PARIKṢIT DĀSA

To please His devotees, Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead (above), appears in this world as the most beautiful and enchanting child. At right, on hearing of Mother Earth's plight, Lord Brahmā and the demigods have gone to the spiritual planet Śvetādvīpa. There, at the shore of the ocean of milk, they pray for Lord Kṛṣṇa to come to earth.





PAINTING BY DHIRCHANDRA DEVI DAS

Kaṁsa draws his sword and prepares to kill his sister Devakī (right) after hearing a voice from the sky telling him that her eighth child will kill him.

At right, middle, the demigods invisibly enter the palace to offer prayers to Lord Kṛṣṇa, present within Devakī's womb. Dispelling the darkness of Kaṁsa's prison (far right), Kṛṣṇa appears before Vasudeva and Devakī, first as four-armed Viṣṇu and then as an ordinary child.



The leader of the Yadu dynasty, King Śūrasena, was ruling over the district known as Mathurā. Because of King Śūrasena's rule, Mathurā became the capital city of the Yadu dynasty kings, who were all very pious.

One time, Vasudeva, the son of Śūrasena, just after marrying Devakī, was going home on his chariot with his bride. At that time, Kaṁsa, the son of King Ugrasena, to please his sister Devakī, had voluntarily taken the reins of the horses of Vasudeva's chariot. According to the custom of Vedic civilization, when a girl is married, the brother takes the sister and brother-in-law to their home. Because the bride may feel too much grief over the separation from her family, her brother goes with her until she reaches her father-in-law's house.

While the bride and bridegroom were riding on the chariot, musicians were playing jubilantly on conchshells, bugles, drums, and kettledrums to mark the auspicious occasion. The procession was proceeding very pleasingly, when suddenly from the sky a miraculous voice boomed:

"Kaṁsa, you are such a fool! You are driving the chariot of your sister and your brother-in-law, but you do not know that their eighth child will kill you!"

After hearing the prophecy from the sky, Kaṁsa, because he was very demonic, immediately caught hold of Devakī's hair and was just about to kill her with his sword. But Vasudeva, astonished,

then attempted to pacify his cruel, shameless brother-in-law and said:

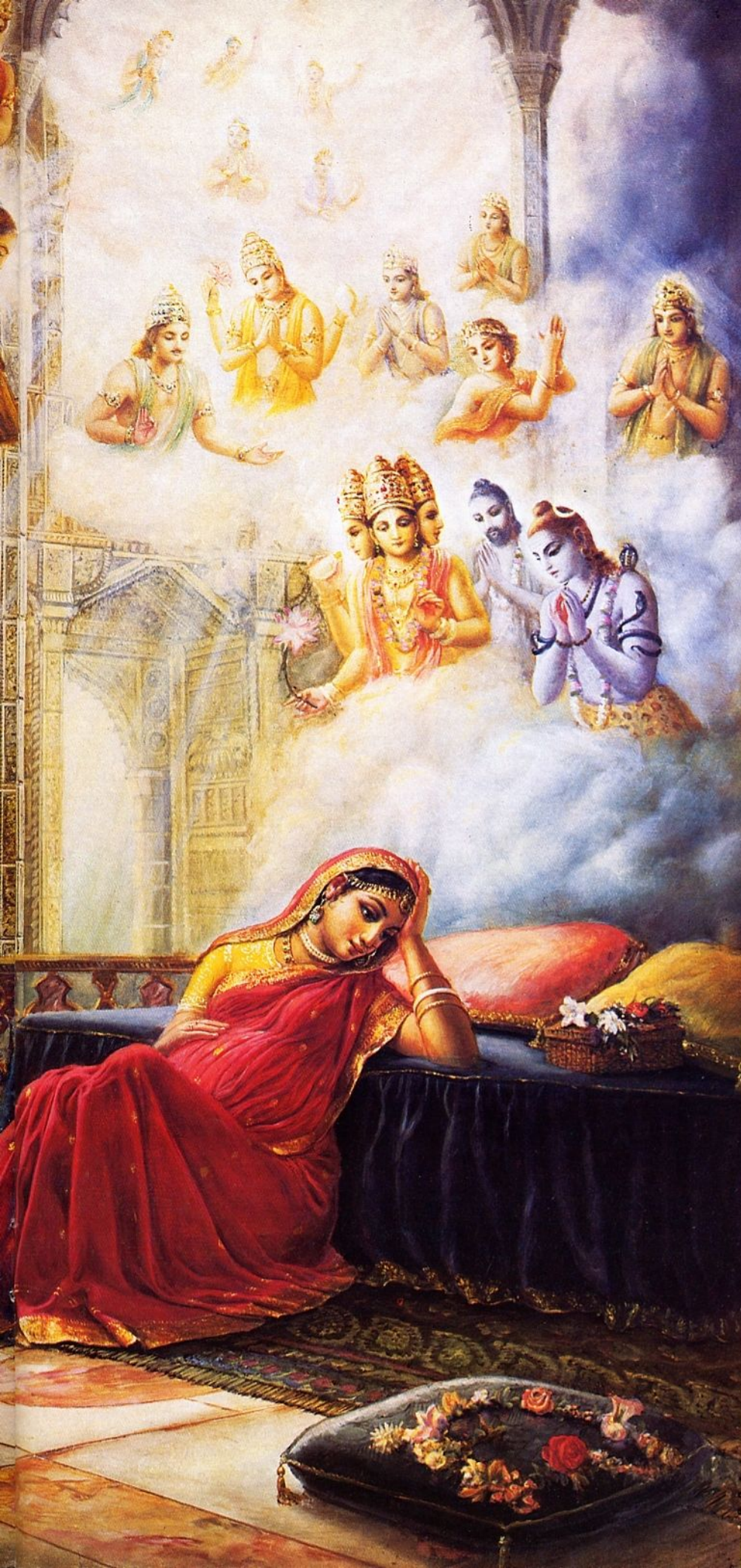
"My dear Kaṁsa, you are the most famous king of the Bhoja dynasty. And people know that you are the greatest warrior and valiant king. How is it that you are so infuriated that you are prepared to kill a woman—your own sister—at this auspicious time of her marriage? Why are you so afraid of death? From the very day you took your birth, you began to die. And when you do die, you will receive another body by the arrangement of material nature. Therefore, having nothing really to fear, please do not be overwhelmed by the dictation of your mind and body.

But Kaṁsa was not at all pacified, so Vasudeva tried another tack: "My dear brother-in-law, please consider that you have no danger from your sister. The danger is to come from the sons of your sister, who are not present now. And who knows? There may or may not be sons in the future. Considering all this, you are safe for the present. But if Devakī does give birth to sons, I promise that I shall present all of them to you for necessary action."

Kaṁsa knew the value of Vasudeva's word of honor and was convinced by his argument. So, for the time being he desisted from killing his sister. Vasudeva was very relieved and, after praising Kaṁsa's decision, returned with Devakī to his home.

When the first son was born, Vasudeva immediately brought the child before





PAINTING BY SULA KRISHNA DEVI DAS

Kaṁsa. Kaṁsa was pleased to see Vasudeva keeping his promise. Feeling somewhat compassionate, he said, "My dear Vasudeva, you need not give this child to me, for it is your eighth child that is supposed to kill me. You can take him back."

When Vasudeva was returning home with his first-born child, he was pleased by Kaṁsa's behavior. But he knew that Kaṁsa, who lacked self-control, could change his mind at any moment.

At that time the great sage Nārada visited Kaṁsa, and he heard about Kaṁsa's returning Vasudeva's first-born child. Nārada was eager to accelerate the descent of Lord Kṛṣṇa. He therefore informed Kaṁsa that personalities in Vṛndāvana like Nanda Mahārāja, all the cowherd men and girls, and the wives of the cowherd men, as well as Vasudeva, Śūrasena, and all of Vasudeva's relatives born in the Yadu dynasty, were preparing for the appearance of the Supreme Lord. Nārada warned Kaṁsa to be careful of his so-called friends and well-wishers in those



PAINTING BY YADU KRISHNA DEVI DAS

families. They were actually demigods who had taken birth in the Yadu dynasty to prepare for Lord Kṛṣṇa's appearance.

Kaṁsa at once became alert. He understood that since the demigods had already taken birth, Lord Viṣṇu, or Kṛṣṇa, must be coming soon. Therefore, he at once arrested Vasudeva and Devakī and shackled them behind prison bars.

Within the prison Devakī gave birth to a male child year after year. And Kaṁsa, thinking each of the babies to be the incarnation of Viṣṇu, killed each one of them. Though he was particularly afraid of the eighth child, after the visit of Nārada he came to the conclusion that any of the children might be Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, he felt it was safer to kill all the babies.

Kaṁsa also imprisoned his father because he was the chief king among the

Yadu, Bhoja, and Andhaka dynasties. And he occupied the kingdom of Śūrasena, Vasudeva's father. Thus he declared himself the king of all these places.

Kaṁsa made alliances with other demonic kings, until he became the strongest of leaders. Then he began to behave most hatefully toward the Yadu dynasty, in which Kṛṣṇa was soon to take birth.

When Devakī became pregnant for the seventh time, a plenary expansion of Kṛṣṇa known as Ananta Śeṣa appeared within her womb. At that time, Kṛṣṇa ordered his principal potency, Yogamāyā, to take birth in the village of Vṛndāvana, which was near Mathurā. There, Rohiṇī, one of the wives of Vasudeva, was residing at the house of Nanda and Yaśodā. Not only Rohiṇī, but many others of the Yadu dynasty were scattered all over the country

Acting as an umbrella, Ananta Śeṣa, an expansion of Lord Viṣṇu, shelters Vasudeva and baby Kṛṣṇa from the rain (right) as they cross the Yamunā River. At far right, Kṛṣṇa's sister, Yogamāyā, foiling Kaṁsa's attempt to kill her, enters the sky and informs the demon that Kṛṣṇa, who will kill him, has already been born somewhere else.



PAINTING BY RĀMADĀSA ABHIRĀMA DĀSĪ

out of fear of Kaṁsa's atrocities. Some of them were even living in mountain caves.

The Lord said to Yogamāyā, "My plenary expansion Ananta Śeṣa is within the womb of Devakī. He is the source of all spiritual power and is the original spiritual master. He shall be known as Balarāma. You can arrange the transfer of Ananta Śeṣa from the womb of Devakī to the womb of Rohiṇī. After this arrangement, I am going to appear in the womb of Devakī, with My full potencies, as her son. And you will appear as the daughter of Nanda and Yaśodā in Vṛndāvana."

After Ananta Śeṣa was transferred from Devakī's womb to Rohiṇī's, people believed that Devakī's seventh pregnancy had been a miscarriage.

Thereafter, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, entered the heart of Vasudeva. He then transferred Himself to the heart of Devakī and from there entered her womb. It was by immaculate conception—that is, without the use of seminal discharge—that the Lord chose to appear in Devakī's womb.

When Kaṁsa looked at his sister and saw her glowing, transcendental beauty, he at once concluded that the Supreme Personality of Godhead had taken shelter in her womb. Kaṁsa then began to brood: "What is to be done with Devakī? Surely she has Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa within her womb, so it is certain that Viṣṇu has come to kill me. If I kill Devakī now, Viṣṇu will enforce His supreme will more vehemently. Besides, killing her would be a most abominable act and would spoil my reputation, for Devakī is a woman, she is under my

their heavenly abodes.

When it was time for the Lord to appear, the constellations in the sky became very auspicious. In all directions there was an atmosphere of peace and prosperity: flowers bloomed, birds sang, peacocks danced, and the wind blew pleasantly. The celestials sang, danced, and offered prayers to the Lord. The demigods showered flowers from the sky. The waves at the seashore were mild, and the clouds rumbled delightfully.

Then Lord Viṣṇu, who resides in the heart of every living being, took birth in the darkness of night, appearing before Devakī like the full moon rising on the eastern horizon.

It was obvious that He was none other than Lord Viṣṇu, for He had four hands, which held a conchshell, a club, a disc, and a lotus flower. His chest was decorated with the mark of *śrīvatsa*, a curl of golden hair; He wore a jeweled necklace of *kaustubha* stone; and He was clothed in yellow silk. He looked dazzling, like a bright blackish cloud. He also wore a helmet inlaid with the *vaidūrya* stone, sported valuable bracelets, earrings, and other similar ornaments all over His body, and had an abundance of hair on His head.

Vasudeva was struck with wonder. As he looked at his newborn baby, he was so happy that in celebration he mentally gave away thousands of cows in charity to the *brāhmaṇas*. Then he bowed with folded hands and began to offer the Lord heartfelt prayers. Vasudeva was in a transcendental state, and he became completely free from all fear of Kaṁsa.

After Vasudeva finished his prayers, Devakī offered hers. She was very frightened because of her brother's atrocities, so she begged:

My Lord, please save me from the cruel hands of Kaṁsa, for You are always ready to give protection to Your servitors. My only cause of fear from my brother Kaṁsa is due to Your appearance. Kaṁsa may not know that You are already born. Therefore, I entreat You to conceal Your four-armed form so that You will not be easily recognizable, and then perhaps I can hide You somewhere from Kaṁsa.

But Kṛṣṇa replied,

I appeared in this Viṣṇu form just to convince you that I, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, have again taken birth. I could have appeared just like an ordinary child, but then you may have doubted who I really am. I know you are very concerned about Me and afraid of Kaṁsa, and to allay those fears, here is what is to be done: Father, I want you to take Me to Gokula immediately. There, you will find that Yaśodā has just given birth to a daughter. You will replace her daughter with Me and then bring her daughter back here.

(continued on page 23)



THE VEDIC

Transcendental Commentaries

NOW AND THEN

by Rūpānuga dāsa

On December 12, 1986, the *Wall Street Journal* published the results of an attitude survey of college freshmen originally taken in 1967 and repeated in 1985. In 1967, 83 percent believed "it is essential or very important to develop a meaningful philosophy of life," and 44 percent believed "it is essential or very important to be well-off financially." In 1985, the answers appeared to indicate a reversal of attitudes: only 43 percent were more concerned about developing a meaningful philosophy of life, while 71 percent placed more emphasis on their economic development!

Were people more spiritually inclined twenty years ago, as these surveys seem to indicate? Actually, these statistics do not take into account economic changes of the last twenty years. Although the median income is nearly twice as much now as in 1967, the dollar buys much less. In more and more families both spouses work. People work all hours of the day and night, many businesses staying open very late or even twenty-four hours a day or seven days a week. Twenty years ago these were exceptions. People may be no less sensitive, intellectual, or spiritually inclined now, but for many of them earning a living has become harder and more complex. Generally, people postpone serious spiritual endeavors or inquiry into the higher purposes of life until they achieve economic stability. This helps to explain the differences between the answers in the 1967 and the 1985 surveys.

If we were asked those survey questions now, what would be our answer? Are we after more economic development or a satisfying, meaningful philosophy of life? Or do we want both? Is it possible to develop a meaningful philosophy of life without neglecting economic necessities according to our position and status? How can spiritual values be compatible with material values? To answer, one needs to analyze both.

The basis of economic development is easy enough to recognize—it's work. After all, one has to keep body and soul together

by working. To work according to one's psychophysical nature is known in Sanskrit as *varṇa*.

A meaningful philosophy of life depends on our state of consciousness—how aware we are of ourselves and the world and universe before us. Our consciousness naturally expands as we mature: from awareness of mother, then father, siblings, friends, community, religion, nation, humanity, other living entities, and the world around us in general. The highest stage of consciousness is God consciousness, or, more precisely, consciousness of the Supreme Personality

up everything considered material.

This misgiving is directly addressed by Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura (Śrīla Prabhupāda's spiritual master) in his commentary to Text 61 of the ancient *Brahma-saṁhitā*, or *Hymns of Brahmā*. He formulates the basic question: How can one continue with worldly affairs if one is always engaged in the pursuit of spiritual happiness? And what would be the activities of such spirituality if one were required to withdraw from society?

In answer, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta explains that you don't have to withdraw. When worldly activities are performed as



of Godhead. That consciousness is described and analyzed in the Vedic literature, especially *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Although this higher consciousness is natural, like learning to walk, speak, or act, it is not automatic. Rather, God consciousness, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is awakened by certain techniques, which can be practiced anywhere in the world—even at home—by anyone.

Initially, one may doubt that one can relate one's work to spiritual values. Owning to experience, one may conclude that to make spiritual progress one must give

a basis for Kṛṣṇa consciousness, they are considered subsidiary devotional, or spiritual, practices. In other words, one should begin spiritual life by considering how to organize one's worldly activities so that they are conducive to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. One's worldly activities are favorable to Kṛṣṇa consciousness when one meditates upon Kṛṣṇa and obeys His instructions. In such a position one will not become lethargic about spiritual life even though engaged in working with agnostic or atheistic people.

Śrīla Prabhupāda gives an example:

OBSERVER

ary on the Issues of the Day

Just as a married woman who has a paramour performs her household duties nicely so that her husband won't suspect that she is always meditating upon meeting her lover, one should do one's work conscientiously, never losing sight of the fact that one is a servant of Godhead, or Kṛṣṇa.

If one's work becomes a means to such a spiritual end, then that work will eventually lose its material quality. Everything is originally spiritual because it comes from God, but when spiritual energy is covered by *māyā*, or forgetfulness of God, it appears to be material. When so-called material things are used in Kṛṣṇa's service, they regain their original spiritual quality.

Spiritual behavior or practices, technically called *āśrama*, combine naturally with one's work, or *varṇa*. One who lives in this way is acting according to *varṇ-āśrama*, the system for spiritualizing one's life. The first stage of spiritual practices includes chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, studying scriptures, and serving others by passing on whatever Kṛṣṇa consciousness one has understood. The purifying effects of these practices cause gradual detachment from such antispiritual habits as intoxication, nonvegetarianism, gambling, and illicit sexuality.

This is explained in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.59): "Though the embodied soul may be restricted from sense enjoyment, the taste for sense objects remains. But, ceasing such engagements by experiencing a higher taste, he is fixed in consciousness." Śrīla Prabhupāda comments, "One who has tasted the beauty of the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, in the course of his advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, no longer has a taste for dead material things. . . . When one is actually Kṛṣṇa conscious, he automatically loses his taste for pale things."

THINKING OF GRANDPA

by Dvārakādhīśa-devī dāśī

My grandfather used to be the president of a railroad company. A tall man with a deep, booming voice, he commanded respect on the job and at home.

He was the undisputed patriarch of my mother's German family, and we kids were awed by his somber presence. We loved him, though, because his deep chuckles and twinkling blue eyes emanated humor and affection.

Now he lies in a sterile hospital bed, defeated by illness and age. Nurses hardly a quarter his age bounce into the room to roll him over or poke needles into his withered arm. "Now, this might sting a little bit, Mr. Schmidt," they coo, just as he used to coo at his numerous grandchildren. He closes his eyes and prays that the end will come soon.

of my grandfather's large frame, wasted by old age and illness. I remember his expansive confidence and his kindness.

"I guess this is what it means to have a material body," I say with a sigh.

As soon as I say it, the room seems to chill, as if I had announced my grandfather's funeral plans. Mom shoots me a cold stare, and my grandmother seems ready to cry. Everyone else appears uneasy—crossing and uncrossing their legs, pursing their lips, frowning their brows. *There she goes*, they think, *promulgating her sectarian religious views at this most delicate family conference.*



About thirty miles away my grandmother sits with our family in our living room, twisting her wedding band around her knobby finger. "He doesn't want to see anyone," she says. "And he doesn't want anyone to see him the way he is now. He can't move his legs. He's so weak he can't sit up, can't feed himself. He has the sweetest little nurse, but he won't even look at her. He's starting therapy now, but the doctors say his recovery will be slow because he's so depressed."

We listen, asking questions like "Do they think he'll ever walk again?" I think

Okay, maybe it was crass of me to bring up the grimmer aspects of human experience in such a matter-of-fact way. After all, it's not just *any* material body wasting away in a hospital bed—it's Grandpa! To suggest some responsibility on his part for his intense suffering is a little bit too direct for my family's sensibilities.

It's just that they identify so completely with their bodies! I don't want to lecture them, but sometimes I marvel at the strength of their illusion. All of them have suffered through some bitter moments,

(continued on page 23)

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

Mad Scientists

This is a continuation of a conversation that took place between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and biochemist Thoudam Singh, Ph.D., in Bhubanesvara, India, on February 3, 1977.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Just try to understand. Anyone who is not a devotee of the Lord—his whole life is a drawback. He has no value. And he is condemned so much. In *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa calls him *duṣkṛtīnāḥ*, *mūḍhāḥ*, *narāḍhamāḥ*, *māyayāpahṛta-jñānāḥ*: “rascal, ass, lowest of mankind, knowledge stolen by illusion.”

What can be done? A scientist who does not pursue the real science, the science of God, is condemned.

“Oh? But he has earned so many big degrees.”

No. *Māyayāpahṛta-jñānāḥ*—without knowledge of God, his knowledge is not knowledge but illusion. Finished.

Anyone who has no knowledge about this Kṛṣṇa consciousness—he’s so condemned. You can’t give him any position. It is not possible. *Piśācī paile*: when a man becomes mad, what is his position?

Even someone who has become a high-court judge—if he has also become mad, he has no position. He’s useless.

“Now, wait just a moment. He is a high-court judge!”

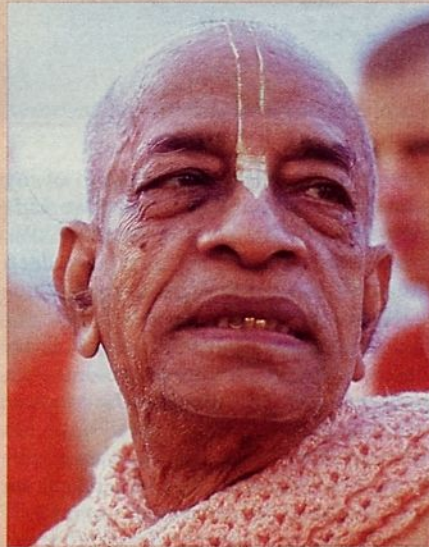
That’s all right. But his present position—because he is mad—has no value.

I have seen all this with my own eyes. Some fifty years ago, near my father-in-law’s house, there lived a very famous scientist. A great scholar—he’d gotten all sorts of degrees, including Ph.D., and he used to study like anything. Later, he became so mad that he would run on the street in front of my father-in-law’s house, naked.

So what was his value? Just consider. This same man was so educated in so many fields of knowledge. But when he became mad and went running naked, who paid him any respect?

Now, anyone who is under the deluding influence of this material energy—he is like that. Although actually he is part and parcel of God, he has now forgotten God and his own soul. So he’s mad.

And *piśācī paile yena mati-channa haya*, *māyā grasta jīvera haya sei bhava udaya*: When a man becomes mad, he is finished. Whatever he may speak, it is all madness. It has no importance. His words may seem important on the relative platform, but on the absolute platform they must be mad.



Because the basic principle behind the words—the man himself—is mad.

Dr. Singh: The madness of the scientists may be a little different. They are mad or illusioned in that they know little of God’s natural law, but they extrapolate vastly.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: You can explain their madness in so many ways, but first try to understand the main idea: a very educated man—when he becomes mad, then he and his words have no value.

In everyday life it is like that. If a high-court judge has become mad, you cannot give him the same high position. You cannot say, “Sir, you are now mad, but that’s no matter. You just come and take your exalted seat, and everything will be all right.” No, that is not possible.

Of course, if by treatment you restore the man to sanity, that is another thing. Then he can work as before. You see, the person’s inner potency is not finished, but as long as he shall remain mad, then his practical qualification will be finished.

Dr. Singh: That was my idea also. For example, a scientist might, let’s say, decide to write an equation that describes a spherical object’s shape. But if he were to take only two points, his equation would be one for a straight line. And he would delude himself and others into thinking the object not spherical but flat or straight.

In other words, in this example, although the scientist may not be running naked, he would still be mad—because he would be basing his conclusion on insufficient knowledge.

Or to put it another way, sanity means

understanding that our knowledge of things is very limited. And so, we have to understand, if we extrapolate from our limited knowledge to draw sweeping conclusions—conclusions beyond our knowledge—then it all becomes . . . just becomes false.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. If we go beyond our knowledge, it is false. When we have gone beyond our knowledge, our conclusions have to be false. Our conclusions must be false—unless they come from someone whose knowledge goes beyond our own. In other words, from someone who is a bona fide authority.

We can return to a familiar example. If I am a small baby and I want to determine who is my father, that is simply beyond my knowledge. But if I receive knowledge from my mother—“Here is your father”—then my knowledge is sure to be correct. This subject matter is beyond my knowledge, but if I receive the knowledge from the right person, then my knowledge is correct.

Āroha-panthā and *avaroha-panthā*. To obtain knowledge, you have two paths: the ascending and descending. On the one hand you have the ascending path, on which you try to rise out of your ignorance through experience, trial and error, deduction. On the other hand you have the descending path, which means the knowledge comes down to you from persons with higher experience. The knowledge descends from higher authorities.

In this conditioned state of life—encased as we are by this material body, with its severely limited senses—there are many, many things beyond our knowledge. Therefore we have to take shelter of the descending path. This is our process. We have to take shelter of the *Vedas*, the scriptures. They are *śruti*, knowledge heard from higher authorities. This knowledge is perfect—coming from God by the system of *paramparā*, or disciplic succession. This knowledge comes from Lord Kṛṣṇa to Brahmā, from Brahmā to Nārada, from Nārada to Vyāsa, and so forth. This knowledge is perfect.

With our limited senses, deductive knowledge has to be imperfect. But with bona fide authorities—starting from the Lord Himself—descending knowledge is perfect. The other way is all imperfect, but this way is perfect.

Dr. Singh: Descending knowledge.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Hmm. This is perfect.

(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 SIXTEEN

The Two Doorkeepers of Vaikuṅṭha, Jaya and Vijaya, Cursed by the Sages

In this installment of our continuing presentation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, the Kumāras (the four boy-sages) offer prayers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead Lord Viṣṇu at the gates of Vaikuṅṭha (the kingdom of God).

TEXT 16

ऋषय ऊचुः

न वयं भगवन् विद्मस्तव देव चिकीर्षितम् ।
कृतो मेऽनुग्रहश्चेति यदव्यक्षः प्रमापसे ॥१६॥

ṛṣaya ūcuḥ
na vyaṁ bhagavan vidmaḥ
tava deva cikīrṣitam
kṛto me 'nugrahaś ceti
yad adhyakṣaḥ prabhāṣase

ṛṣayaḥ—the sages; *ūcuḥ*—said; *na*—not; *vayaṁ*—we; *bhagavan*—O Supreme Personality of Godhead; *vidmaḥ*—did know; *tava*—Your; *deva*—O Lord; *cikīrṣitam*—wish for us to do; *kṛtaḥ*—has been done; *me*—unto Me; *anugrahaḥ*—favor; *ca*—and; *iti*—thus; *yat*—which; *adhyakṣaḥ*—the supreme ruler; *prabhāṣase*—You say.

TRANSLATION

The sages said: O Supreme Personality of Godhead, we are unable to know what You intend for us to do, for even though You are the supreme ruler of all, You speak in our favor as if we had done something good for You.

PURPORT

The sages could understand that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is above everyone, was speaking as if He were in the wrong; therefore it was difficult for them to understand the words of the Lord. They could understand, however, that the Lord was speaking in such a humble way just to show them His all-merciful favor.

TEXT 17

ब्रह्मण्यस्य परं दैवं ब्राह्मणाः किल ते प्रभो ।
विप्राणां देवदेवानां भगवानात्मदैवतम् ॥१७॥

brahmanyasya param daivam
brāhmaṇāḥ kila te prabho
viprāṇām deva-devānām
bhagavān ātma-daivatam

brahmanyasya—of the supreme director of the brahminical culture; *param*—the highest; *daivam*—position; *brāhmaṇāḥ*—the *brāhmaṇas*; *kila*—for the teaching of others; *te*—Your; *prabho*—O Lord; *viprāṇām*—of the *brāhmaṇas*; *deva-devānām*—to be worshiped by the demigods; *bhagavān*—the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *ātma*—the self; *daivatam*—worshipable Deity.

TRANSLATION

O Lord, You are the supreme director of the brahminical culture. Your considering the *brāhmaṇas* to be in the highest position is Your example for teaching others. Actually You are the supreme worshipable Deity, not only for the gods but for the *brāhmaṇas* also.

PURPORT

In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* it is clearly stated that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the cause of all causes. There are undoubtedly many demigods, the chiefs of whom are Brahmā and Śiva. Lord Viṣṇu is the Lord of Brahmā and Śiva, not to speak of the *brāhmaṇas* in this material world. As mentioned in *Bhagavad-gītā*, the Supreme Lord is very favorable towards all activities performed according to brahminical culture, or the qualities of control of the senses and mind, cleanliness, forbearance, faith in scripture, and practical and theoretical knowledge. The Lord is the Supersoul of everyone. In *Bhagavad-gītā* it is said that the Lord is the source of all emanations; thus He is also the source of Brahmā and Śiva.

TEXT 18

त्वत्तः सनातनो धर्मो रक्ष्यते तनुमिस्तव ।
धर्मस्य परमो गुह्यो निर्विकारो भवान्तव ॥१८॥

tvattaḥ sanātano dharmo
rakṣyate tanubhis tava
dharmasya paramo guhyo
nirvikāro bhavān mataḥ

tvattaḥ—from You; *sanātanaḥ*—eternal; *dharmat*—occupation; *rakṣyate*—is protected; *tanubhiḥ*—by multimanifestations; *tava*—Your; *dharmasya*—of religious principles; *paramat*—the supreme; *guhyaḥ*—objective; *nirvikārah*—unchangeable; *bhavān*—You; *mataḥ*—in our opinion.

TRANSLATION

You are the source of the eternal occupation of all living entities, and by Your multimanifestations of Personalities of Godhead, You have always protected religion. You are the supreme objective of religious principles, and in our opinion You are inexhaustible and unchangeable eternally.

PURPORT

The statement in this verse *dharmasya paramo guhyaḥ* refers to the most confidential part of all religious principles. This is confirmed in

Bhagavad-gītā. The conclusion of Lord Kṛṣṇa in His advice to Arjuna is: "Give up all other religious engagement and just surrender unto Me." This is the most confidential knowledge in executing religious principles. In the *Bhāgavatam* also it is stated that if one does not become Kṛṣṇa conscious after very rigidly executing one's specified religious duties, all his labor in following so-called religious principles is simply a waste of time. Here also the sages confirm the statement that the Supreme Lord, not the demigods, is the ultimate goal of all religious principles. There are many foolish propagandists who say that worship of the demigods is also a way to reach the supreme goal, but in the authorized statements of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā* this is not accepted. *Bhagavad-gītā* says that one who worships a particular demigod can reach the demigod's planet, but one who worships the Supreme Personality of Godhead can enter into Vaikuṅṭha. Some propagandists say that regardless of what one does he will ultimately reach the supreme abode of the Personality of Godhead, but this is not valid. The Lord is eternal, the Lord's servitor is eternal, and the Lord's abode is also eternal. They are all described here as *sanātana*, or eternal. The result of devotional service, therefore, is not temporary, as is the achievement of heavenly planets by worshipping the demigods. The sages wanted to stress that although the Lord, out of His causeless mercy, says that He worships the *brāhmaṇas* and Vaiṣṇavas, actually the Lord is worshipable not only by the *brāhmaṇas* and Vaiṣṇavas but also by the demigods.

TEXT 19

तरन्ति ह्यज्ञसा मृत्युं निवृत्ता यदनुग्रहात् ।
योगिनः स भवान् किंस्विदनुगृह्येत यत्परैः ॥१९॥

*taranti hy añjasā mṛtyuṃ
nivr̥ttā yad-anugrahāt
yoginaḥ sa bhavān kim svīd
anugṛhyeta yat paraiḥ*

taranti—cross over; *hi*—because; *añjasā*—easily; *mṛtyuṃ*—birth and death; *nivr̥ttāḥ*—ceasing all material desires; *yat*—Your; *anugrahāt*—by mercy; *yoginaḥ*—transcendentalists; *saḥ*—the Supreme Lord; *bhavān*—You; *kim svīd*—never possible; *anugṛhyeta*—may be favored; *yat*—which; *paraiḥ*—by others.

TRANSLATION

Mystics and transcendentalists, by the mercy of the Lord, cross beyond nescience by ceasing all material desires. It is not possible, therefore, that the Supreme Lord can be favored by others.

PURPORT

Unless one is favored by the Supreme Lord, one cannot cross over the ocean of the nescience of repeated birth and death. Here it is stated that *yogīs* or mystics cross beyond nescience by the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. There are many kinds of mystics, such as the *karma-yogī*, *jñāna-yogī*, *dhyāna-yogī* and *bhakti-yogī*. The *karmīs* particularly search after the favor of the demigods, the *jñānīs* want to become one with the Supreme Absolute Truth, and the *yogīs* are satisfied simply by partial vision of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Paramātmā, and ultimately by oneness with Him. But the *bhaktas*, the devotees, want to associate with the Supreme Personality of Godhead eternally and serve Him. It has already been admitted that the Lord is eternal, and those who want the favor of the Supreme Lord perpetually are also eternal. Therefore *yogīs* here means devotees. By the mercy of the Lord, devotees can easily pass beyond the nescience of birth and death and attain the eternal abode of the Lord. The Lord is therefore not in need of another's favor because no one is equal to or greater than Him. Actually, everyone needs the favor of the Lord for successful understanding of his human mission.

TEXT 20

यं वै विभूतिरुपयात्यनुवेलमन्यै-
रर्थार्थिभिः स्वशिरसा धृतपादरेणुः ।
धन्यार्पिताङ्घ्रितुलसीनवदामधाम्नो
लोकं मधुव्रतपतेरिव कामयाना ॥२०॥

*yam vai vibhūtir upayāty anuvelam anyair
arthārthibhiḥ sva-śirasā dhṛta-pāda-reṇuḥ
dhanyārpitāṅghri-tulasī-nava-dāma-dhāmno
lokaṃ madhuvrata-pateriva kāma-yānā*

yam—whom; *vai*—certainly; *vibhūtiḥ*—Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune; *upayāti*—waits upon; *anuvelam*—occasionally; *anyaiḥ*—by others; *artha*—material facility; *arthibhiḥ*—by those who desire; *sva-śirasā*—on their own heads; *dhṛta*—accepting; *pāda*—of the feet; *reṇuḥ*—the dust; *dhanya*—by the devotees; *arpita*—offered; *āṅghri*—at Your feet; *tulasī*—of *tulasī* leaves; *nava*—fresh; *dāma*—on the garland; *dhāmaṇḥ*—having a place; *lokaṃ*—the place; *madhu-vrata-pateḥ*—of the king of the bees; *iva*—like; *kāma-yānā*—is anxious to secure.

TRANSLATION

The goddess of fortune, Lakṣmī, the dust of whose feet is worn on the head by others, waits upon You, as appointed, for she is anxious to secure a place in the abode of the king of bees, who hovers on the fresh wreath of *tulasī* leaves offered at Your feet by some blessed devotee.

PURPORT

As previously described, *tulasī* has attained all superior qualities due to being placed at the lotus feet of the Lord. The comparison made here is very nice. As the king of bees hovers over the *tulasī* leaves offered to the lotus feet of the Lord, so Lakṣmī, the goddess who is sought by the demigods, *brāhmaṇas*, Vaiṣṇavas and everyone else, always engages in rendering service to the lotus feet of the Lord. The conclusion is that no one can be the benefactor of the Lord; everyone is actually the servant of the servant of the Lord.

TEXT 21

यस्तां विविक्तचरितैरनुवर्तमानां
नात्याद्रियत्परमभागवतप्रसङ्गः ।
स त्वं द्विजानुपथपुण्यरजः पुनीतः
श्रीवत्सलक्ष्म किमगा भगभाजनस्त्वम् ॥२१॥

*yas tāṃ vivikta-caritair anuvartamānām
nātyādrīyat parama-bhāgavata-prasaṅgaḥ
sa tvam dvijānupatha-puṇya-rajah-punītaḥ
śrīvatsa-lakṣma kim agā bhaga-bhājanas tvam*

yaḥ—who; *tām*—Lakṣmī; *vivikta*—completely pure; *caritaiḥ*—devotional services; *anuvartamānām*—serving; *na*—not; *atyādrīyat*—attached; *parama*—the highest; *bhāgavata*—devotees; *prasaṅgaḥ*—attached; *saḥ*—the Supreme Lord; *tvam*—You; *dvija*—of the *brāhmaṇas*; *anupatha*—on the path; *puṇya*—sanctified; *rajah*—dust; *punītaḥ*—purified; *śrīvatsa*—of Śrīvatsa; *lakṣma*—the mark; *kim*—what; *agāḥ*—You obtained; *bhaga*—all opulences or all good qualities; *bhājanaḥ*—the reservoir; *tvam*—You.

TRANSLATION

O Lord, You are exceedingly attached to the activities of Your pure devotees, yet You are never attached to the goddesses of fortune who constantly engage in Your transcendental loving service. How can You be purified, therefore, by the dust of the path tra-

versed by the brāhmaṇas, and how can You be glorified or made fortunate by the marks of Śrīvatsa on Your chest?

PURPORT

It is said in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* that the Lord is always served by many hundreds of thousands of goddesses of fortune in His Vaikuṅṭha planet, yet because of His attitude of renunciation of all opulences, He is not attached to any one of them. The Lord has six opulences—unlimited wealth, unlimited fame, unlimited strength, unlimited beauty, unlimited knowledge and unlimited renunciation. All the demigods and other living entities worship Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune, just to get her favor, yet the Lord is never attached to her because He can create an unlimited number of such goddesses for His transcendental service. The goddess of fortune, Lakṣmī, is sometimes envious of the *tulasī* leaves which are placed at the lotus feet of the Lord, for they remain fixed there and do not move, whereas Lakṣmījī, although stationed by the chest of the Lord, sometimes has to please other devotees who pray for her favor. Lakṣmījī sometimes has to go to satisfy her numerous devotees, but *tulasī* leaves never forsake their position, and the Lord therefore appreciates the service of the *tulasī* more than the service of Lakṣmī. When the Lord says, therefore, that it is due to the causeless mercy of the brāhmaṇas that Lakṣmījī does not leave Him, we can understand that Lakṣmījī is attracted by the opulence of the Lord, not by the brāhmaṇas' benedictions upon Him. The Lord is not dependent on anyone's mercy for His opulence; He is always self-sufficient. The Lord's statement that His opulence is due to the benediction of the brāhmaṇas and Vaiṣṇavas is only to teach others that they should offer respect to the brāhmaṇas and Vaiṣṇavas, the devotees of the Lord.

TEXT 22

धर्मस्य ते भगवतस्त्रियुग त्रिभिः स्वैः
पद्भिश्चराचरमिदं द्विजदेवतार्थम् ।
नूनं भृतं तदभिघाति रजस्तमश्च
सत्त्वेन नो वरदया तनुवा निरस्य ॥२२॥

*dharmasya te bhagavatas tri-yuga tribhiḥ svaiḥ
padbhiḥ carācaram idaṁ dvija-devatārtham
nūnaṁ bhṛtaṁ tad-abhigāti rajas tamaś ca
sattvena no varadayā tanuvā nirasya*

dharmasya—of the personification of all religion; *te*—of You; *bhagavataḥ*—of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *tri-yuga*—You who are manifest in all three millenniums; *tribhiḥ*—by three; *svaiḥ*—Your own; *padbhiḥ*—feet; *cara-acaram*—animate and inanimate; *idaṁ*—this universe; *dvija*—the twice-born; *devatā*—the demigods; *artham*—for the sake of; *nūnaṁ*—however; *bhṛtaṁ*—protected; *tat*—those feet; *abhigāti*—destroying; *rajaś*—the mode of passion; *tamaś*—the mode of ignorance; *ca*—and; *sattvena*—of pure goodness; *naḥ*—unto us; *vara-dayā*—bestowing all blessings; *tanuvā*—by Your transcendental form; *nirasya*—driving away.

TRANSLATION

O Lord, You are the personification of all religion. Therefore You manifest Yourself in three millenniums, and thus You protect this universe, which consists of animate and inanimate beings. By Your grace, which is of pure goodness and is the bestower of all blessings, kindly drive away the elements of rajas and tamas for the sake of the demigods and twice-born.

PURPORT

The Lord is addressed in this verse as *tri-yuga*, or one who appears in three millenniums—namely the Satya, Dvāpara and Tretā *yugas*. He is not mentioned as appearing in the fourth millennium, or Kali-yuga. It is described in Vedic literature that in Kali-yuga He comes as *channa-*

avatāra, or an incarnation, but He does not appear as a manifest incarnation. In the other *yugas*, however, the Lord is a manifest incarnation, and therefore is addressed as *tri-yuga*, the Lord who appears in three *yugas*.

Śrīdhara Svāmī describes *tri-yuga* as follows: *yuga* means “couple,” and *tri* means “three.” The Lord is manifested as three couples by His six opulences, or three couples of opulences. In that way He can be addressed as *tri-yuga*. The Lord is the personality of religious principles. In three millenniums religious principles are protected by three kinds of spiritual culture, namely austerity, cleanliness and mercy. The Lord is called *tri-yuga* in that way also. In the age of Kali these three requisites to spiritual culture are almost absent, but the Lord is so kind that in spite of Kali-yuga's being devoid of these three spiritual qualities, He comes and protects the people of this age in His covered incarnation as Lord Caitanya. Lord Caitanya is called “covered” because although He is Kṛṣṇa Himself, He presents Himself as a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, not directly Kṛṣṇa. The devotees pray to Lord Caitanya, therefore, to eliminate their stock of passion and ignorance, the most conspicuous assets of this *yuga*. In the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement one cleanses himself of the modes of passion and ignorance by chanting the holy name of the Lord, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, as introduced by Lord Caitanya.

The four Kumāras were cognizant of their situation in the modes of passion and ignorance because, although in Vaikuṅṭha, they wanted to curse devotees of the Lord. Since they were conscious of their own weakness, they prayed to the Lord to remove their still-existing passion and ignorance. The three transcendental qualifications—cleanliness, austerity and mercy—are the qualifications of the twice-born and the demigods. Those who are not situated in the quality of goodness cannot accept these three principles of spiritual culture. For the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, therefore, there are three sinful activities which are prohibited—namely illicit sex, intoxication, and eating food other than the *prasāda* offered to Kṛṣṇa. These three prohibitions are based on the principles of austerity, cleanliness and mercy. Devotees are merciful because they spare the poor animals, and they are clean because they are free of contamination from unwanted foodstuff and unwanted habits. Austerity is represented by restricted sex life. These principles, indicated by the prayers of the four Kumāras, should be followed by the devotees who are engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 23

न त्वं द्विजोत्तमकुलं यदिहात्मगोपं
गोप्ता वृषः स्वर्हणेन सन्नृतेन ।
तर्ह्येव नङ्क्ष्यति शिवस्तव देव पन्था
लोकोऽग्रहीष्यदपमस्य हितत्प्रमाणम् ॥२३॥

*na tvaṁ dvijottama-kulam yadi hātma-gopam
goptā vṛṣaḥ svarhaṇena sa-sannṛtena
tarhy eva naṅkṣyati śivas tava deva panthā
loko 'grahīṣyat iṣabhasya hi tat pramāṇam*

na—not; *tvaṁ*—You; *dvija*—of the twice-born; *uttama-kulam*—the highest class; *yadi*—if; *ha*—indeed; *ātma-gopam*—worthy to be protected by You; *goptā*—the protector; *vṛṣaḥ*—the best; *su-arhaṇena*—by worship; *sa-sunnṛtena*—along with mild words; *tarhi*—then; *eva*—certainly; *naṅkṣyati*—will be lost; *śivaḥ*—auspicious; *tava*—Your; *deva*—O Lord; *panthāḥ*—the path; *lokaḥ*—the people in general; *agrahīṣyat*—would accept; *iṣabhasya*—of the best; *hi*—because; *tat*—that; *pramāṇam*—authority.

TRANSLATION

O Lord, You are the protector of the highest of the twice-born. If You do not protect them by offering worship and mild words, then certainly the auspicious path of worship will be rejected by people in general, who act on the strength and authority of Your Lordship.

(continued in next issue)

For Your Information

RESOURCES

Samādhi Now! Help complete the Samādhi Mandir of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Send donations to Prabhupāda's Vṛndāvana Samādhi Fund, c/o Atreya Rṣi dāsa, 2811 Regent St., Berkeley, CA 94705.

The *Glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa*, verses from Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Padyāvalī* selected and translated by Kuśakratha dāsa (see p. 34) is now available from The Sankirtan Movement, Inc., Mail Order Division, 3764 Watseka Ave.,

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Ekādaśī, the Day of Lord Hari, a definitive explanation of the origin, practice, and results of this potent fast day, written by a lifelong resident of Vṛndāvana, His Holiness Kṛṣṇa Balarām Swami, who studied Sanskrit in India for many years, who had long periods of association with Śrīla Prabhupāda in Vṛndāvana, and who is a lifelong practitioner of Ekādaśī fasting himself. The book's twenty-six chapters contain fascinating accounts from the *Purāṇas* concerning Ekādaśī and its blessings on the faithful practitioner. Profusely illustrated by Bhaktisiddhānta dāsa, ISKCON's premier book illustrator, this strikingly bound hard-cover volume contains a complete index and an exhaustive glossary. For your copy write to B. C., 1400 Haslett Rd., Williamston, MI 48895. Cost is \$10 (postage included). Make checks payable to ISKCON East Lansing.

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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 Śrīdhara (July 12–August 9)

August 5—Trisrṣṭā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Gaurīdāsa Paṇḍita, an associate of Lord Caitanya. Jhulana-yātrā (swing festival) of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa begins.

August 9—Jhulana-yātrā ends. Appearance

anniversary of Lord Balarāma. Fasting till moonrise, followed by feasting. Also, second month of Cāturmāsya begins (fasting from yogurt).

Month of Hṛṣīkeśa (August 10–September 7)

August 16—Śrī Kṛṣṇa-janmāṣṭamī, the appearance anniversary of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Fasting till midnight. Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for a schedule of events.

August 17—Appearance anniversary of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Fasting till noon, followed by feasting.

August 20—Annadā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

August 29—Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Sitā-devī, the consort of Śrīla Advaita Ācārya.

September 1—Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Fasting till noon, followed by feasting.

September 4—Parśvā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

September 5—Śrī Vāmana-dvādaśī, appearance anniversary of Lord Vāmanadeva. Fasting till noon, followed by feasting. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

September 6—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhaktivīnoda Ṭhākura, father of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura (Śrīla Prabhupāda's spiritual master), and a pioneer in preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness in English. Fasting till noon, followed by feasting. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura, the foremost teacher of the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa.

September 7—Third month of Cāturmāsya begins (fasting from milk).

Major Summer Festivals

Festival of the Chariots

August 1, 2—Montreal
August 22, 23—Vancouver
August 29, 30—Los Angeles
September 5, 6—San Francisco

Festival of India

August 8, 9—Boulder
August 15—Laguna Beach



Every Town and Village

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

Soviet Hare Krishnas Seek Religious Freedom



Śrīla Prabhupāda walks in front of Saint Basil's Cathedral in Red Square, Moscow, June 1971.

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Moscow (April 27)—Members of the Hare Krishna sect said Monday that despite an easing of restrictions on political dissent, Soviet authorities are still detaining followers in prisons and psychiatric hospitals.

Six members of the sect traveled from across the Soviet Union to appeal to authorities to legalize their religion and stop persecution of believers. "Our godbrothers are being put into jails and

mental hospitals," said a statement signed by 46 members. "We are accused of participating in a nonregistered religious-mystical sect and at the same time we are not allowed to register the group.

"We appeal to all the religious and non-religious world organizations to please support us in getting a legal position," it said. The members said they planned to deliver the appeal to authorities Tuesday.

The news conference, attended by a handful of Western reporters, was the first held by sect members, who previously were

reticent to talk to correspondents. The event revealed the hope engendered by recent Kremlin reforms, but also demonstrated that some aspects of Soviet society have not changed.

Only one of the sect members gathered in the cramped apartment on the outskirts of Moscow was dressed in the orange robe commonly worn by Krishnas. None had the shaved head and ponytail often seen on followers of the 15th-century Indian religion when they gather to chant on street corners of Western cities.

"They tell us we are lawbreakers, that we refuse work, that we are anti-social," said Olga Kustra, 28, a mother and musician. "But, in fact, they don't allow us to take part in society and we can't obtain work in our specialties."

Alexander Gramov, 40, a biologist from Leningrad, said about 26 followers of the sect are in prison camps or psychiatric hospitals, sentenced mostly under article 227 of the criminal code that makes it illegal to practice a religion considered harmful to a person's rights or health.

He said one member was convicted under the article and another who was serving a term has been re-sentenced since Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev announced plans to democratize Soviet society by pardoning 140 political prisoners.

Most of the 140 dissidents released in February and March had been sentenced for anti-Soviet slander or agitation.

Soviet law prohibits religions that are not officially registered, yet the members said their requests to register have been ignored since 1982.

"We tried again to register in July 1985, but so far they have not answered us," Gramov said. "We invited them to come and visit us, to watch how we pray, what we do. They said they would phone us, but they have not."

The government maintains the fasting and chanting that are an integral part of the religion are harmful to health and promote anti-social behavior.

But the members maintain they are a positive social force because they are pacifists and vegetarians who do not consume alcohol, nicotine or illegal drugs.

The members estimated their numbers in the thousands, but said most only chant the prayers, "Hare Krishna," and are not active followers. Gramov said 50 people meet in Leningrad regularly to participate in religious ceremonies.

Scholar's Book Confirms ISKCON Authenticity

Lewisburg, Pennsylvania—Larry Shinn, dean of Bucknell University's College of Arts and Sciences, states in his recently published book *The Dark Lord: Cult Images and the Hare Krishnas in America* that ISKCON is "an authentic missionary movement from India that has all the authenticity of an Indian devotional tradition." Professor Shinn, a Methodist minister and religious scholar, has been studying the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement for more than six years. During his research he interviewed one hundred thirty devotees in the United States and India and lived part time in nineteen Hare Kṛṣṇa temples.

In his 230-page book, Shinn refutes the

notion that the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement is a cult. The devotees are not confined to one place, he notes, nor are their actions controlled. Many travel from temple to temple. And Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees worship their leader not as God but as God's representative. Citing ISKCON's ancient Indian textual tradition, established priesthood, and community in India, he shows that it has all the indications of a genuine religious institution.

Professor Shinn believes that people's fears of the movement stem from their viewing ISKCON's religious practices as strange behavior. Yet, he points out, in India there is nothing peculiar about these practices.

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LETTERS

After reading the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, I am faced with the following difficulty and shall feel very thankful if you could clarify.

The Seventh Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā* is entitled “*Jñāna-Vijñāna Yoga*,” and the words *jñāna* and *vijñāna* occur about half a dozen times in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda has given two interpretations: (1) *Jñāna* refers to knowledge of self as distinguished from nonself or, in other words, knowledge that the spirit soul is not the body. *Vijñāna* refers to specific knowledge of the spirit soul’s constitutional position and his relationship to the Supreme Soul. (2) Phenomenal and numinous knowledge, which mean, respectively, “as apprehended by the mind as distinct from reality” and “which is beyond the senses and assumed by the mind, but transcendental in reality.”

These two interpretations are not quite the same. Kindly let me know how you differentiate between *jñāna* and *vijñāna*.

Dr. M. P. Varshney
Gaithersburg, Maryland

RAVĪNDRA-SVARŪPA DĀSA REPLIES: I should first point out, for the sake of thoroughness in our discussion, that there is yet a third sense of *jñāna-vijñāna* given in *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*. In Chapter Six, verse eight, for instance, the advanced *yogī (yukta)* is said to possess *jñāna-vijñāna*. Prabhupāda translates *jñāna* as “acquired knowledge,” which means, he explains in the purport, “book knowledge” or “mere academic knowledge.” *Vijñāna*, or “realization,” is acquired by the practical execution of Kṛṣṇa consciousness under the direction of a qualified spiritual master. *Vijñāna*, then, is practical realization through active devotional service.

Jñāna is theory; *vijñāna* is application, or practice. *Vijñāna*, therefore, is science. (Indeed, modern Sanskritists use the word *vijñāna* to translate the English science.) In *Teachings of Lord Caitanya* (p. 245) Śrīla Prabhupāda makes the following assertion: “Knowledge [i.e., *jñāna*] is information gathered from the scriptures, and science [i.e., *vijñāna*] is practical realization of that knowledge.” When Prabhupāda says Kṛṣṇa consciousness is “science,” he means it is *vijñāna*.

To summarize, we are considering three sets of renderings: *jñāna* as (1) knowledge that “I am not this body”; (2) phenomenal knowledge; and (3) book knowledge, or theory; and *vijñāna* as (1) knowledge that “I am a servant of Kṛṣṇa”; (2) numinous knowledge; and (3) realized

knowledge, or practice.

Now, how are these three sets of meanings related? Let us consider *jñāna* first. *Jñāna*, according to Vaiṣṇava understanding, refers to knowledge gained through mental speculation. Its basis is sense perception; thus in *Bhagavad-gītā* 6.46 Prabhupāda translates *jñānī* as “empiricist.” Thus, *jñāna* denotes “phenomenal knowledge.” When, however, such speculative knowledge rises to the attempt to understand the ultimate source of everything, it discovers at its ultimate limit the void or impersonal absolute (*nirviśeṣa-sūnyavāda*). The *jñānīs*, at the most mature level of their speculation, may understand as part of their impersonal realization “I am not this body.”

Such *jñāna* is “book knowledge” or “theory” because it entails the renunciation of all work, the suppression of the senses, and the rejection of the world as false; it is intellectualist in the extreme.

Vijñāna, by contrast, is “realized knowledge” because it does not come about by mental speculation and the cessation of actions but rather by engagement in active devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead—who lies beyond the impersonal aspect of the absolute encountered by the *jñānīs* and who is indeed the source of the impersonal Brahman (*brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhāham*). Thus the *jñānīs* are wanting in actual transcendental experience, in realized knowledge of the Supreme Person, which does not come by one’s efforts, however heroic, at mental speculation, but comes by humble service to please the Lord, who kindly reveals Himself. Prabhupāda writes:

Transcendental knowledge of the absolute Supreme Being can be known if it is made known by the Lord Himself. By the mental speculation of the greatest mundane thinkers, the Absolute Truth cannot be understood. The mental speculators can reach up to the standard of impersonal Brahman realization, but factually complete knowledge of transcendence is beyond the knowledge of impersonal Brahman.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 2.9.31

The *jñānīs* who suppress their senses cannot have the practical experience (*vijñāna*) of Kṛṣṇa’s transcendental form, name, qualities, and so on, because, as Rūpa Gosvāmī states, such divine transcendental variegatedness is not apprehensible by materially contaminated senses; it can be apprehended only when the senses (beginning with the tongue) are purified by active engagement in devotional service.

Thus, *vijñāna* as practical or realized knowledge and *vijñāna* as knowing “I am the servant of Kṛṣṇa” are related. The Sanskrit prefix *vi-* functions as an intensifier, and so *vijñāna* denotes a more complete state of knowledge of the Absolute. *Jñāna* tells us only of the qualitative oneness between ourselves and the Absolute, whereas *vijñāna* gives us further transcendental knowledge of quantitative difference: that Kṛṣṇa is *para-brahman*, infinitely great, and I am subordinate *brahman*, an infinitesimally small part, whose duty is to serve the whole.

In Śrīla Prabhupāda’s translation of *Bhagavad-gītā* 7.2, we see the English pair *phenomenal* and *numinous* used for the Sanskrit *jñāna-vijñāna*. Now, you understand *phenomenal* to mean “as apprehended by the mind as distinct from reality” and *numinous* to mean “that which is beyond the senses and assumed by the mind, but transcendental in reality.” These two definitions, however, pertain to the very specific way the philosopher Immanuel Kant used the terms *phenomenal* and *noumenal* in his metaphysics. According to Kant—and this is a very crude simplification—the phenomenal world as we can know it is already structured or ordered for us by our own mind or consciousness. Thus, there is a reality inaccessible in principle to us, absolutely beyond our apprehension, utterly unknowable. This is the “*Ding an sich*,” the “thing-in-itself,” which he also calls the noumenal reality as opposed to the phenomenal reality we perceive.

Now, Kṛṣṇa was not preaching Kantian philosophy, and while Prabhupāda’s “phenomenal” and “numinous” obviously allude to Kant’s distinction, that distinction cannot be applied too literally—as indeed the substitution of “numinous” for the Kantian “noumenal” reminds us. Let us simply say that *phenomenal* means the world as perceivable by mundane sense experience and mental speculation (up to some realization of the impersonal Absolute), and that *noumenal* or *numinous* refers to all that transcends such phenomenal knowledge.

The word *numinous* means “supernatural, mysterious; filled with a sense of the presence of divinity.” Thus it also means “beyond phenomena,” but it conveys in addition a more personal sense than Kant’s “noumenal.” It refers, indeed, to the divine realm of Goloka, where the Supreme Person, Śyāmasundara, whose spiritual form possesses innumerable inconceivable transcendental qualities, eternally revels in pastimes of love with His friends and lovers. That realm is directly perceived by pure devotees whose eyes have been spiritually opened by being anointed with the unguent of love of God. That is *vijñāna*, or numinous knowledge. ☪

GRANDPA

(continued from page 13)

and even the youngest children have been assaulted by health problems. But they manage to plug cheerfully along, smoothing the way with sympathy or intoxication, blithely ignoring the gradual deterioration of all they hold dear. Grandpa is dying in tremendous pain, yet they think life is wonderful.

As my grandfather lies longing for death's release, my family tries to devise methods to reawaken his zest for life. But what can they entice an eighty-year-old invalid with? Liquor? Girls? He's had everything that buckets of money could buy. Now when he thinks of his big house, his faithful employees, and the honor and respect he's received, he feels empty and sad. Nothing he accomplished in all those years is easing the pain of *this*: his body

is falling apart, and he's finished. It's not the physical pain that's tormenting him; it's the mental anguish. Because now he sees . . .

Once my sister and I were laughing at a pudgy middle-aged lady with eyebrows painted across her forehead and piles of raven curls perched above her graying scalp. But in the middle of the laugh I suddenly felt sad. What was funny about this woman's ignorance? Of course she wasn't beautiful, but what was the difference between her illusion and my own? Anyone who accepts the material body as the self is a fool. She was a fool in her attempts to beautify her aging body. I am a fool as I worry over the wrinkles in the corners of my eyes. My sister is a fool as she ponders over what shade of lipstick to buy. And our foolishness isn't funny—it's dangerous. This foolishness guarantees us immense suffering in this life, as Grandfather will

attest, and when this body is through, we'll get another, and another. And the further we deviate from self-realization, the more miserable our bodies become.

Yet what can I say to my family to help them, if even my gentle reminder of the body's temporal nature brings about such consternation? I want to tell them that Grandpa's physical condition can only get worse. Can't we tell him about the transcendental nature of the soul? And what about Grandma? She hasn't much longer herself. And what about you and me, Dad? Is it too hard to hear that we're all going to die?

Since they're my family, and since I love them, I decide to try again.

"Now that Grandpa is so sick, we can help him come closer to God," I say to my grandmother.

She smiles in appreciation, but her eyes drift away. . . .

Advent of Kṛṣṇa

(continued from page 11)

Having spoken thus, the Lord transformed Himself into an ordinary two-armed child and remained silent.

Vasudeva took Kṛṣṇa and walked out of the prison within Kāṁsa's palace. By the arrangement of Yogamāyā, Kṛṣṇa's internal potency, all the residents of the palace were overwhelmed with deep sleep, and all the palace doors and gates, which had been locked and shackled with chains, suddenly opened.

The night was very dark, but as soon as Vasudeva took Kṛṣṇa and went out, as a result of Kṛṣṇa's glaring effulgence he could see everything, just as in the sunlight.

At the same time, there was thunder in the sky and severe rainfall. While Vasudeva was carrying his son through the falling rain, Ananta Śeṣa appeared there in the shape of a serpent and spread His hood like an umbrella over the head of Vasudeva so that he would not be hampered by the rainfall.

When Vasudeva reached the bank of the Yamunā River, he saw that the water of the Yamunā was roaring with waves and that the whole span was full of foam. Still, in that furious feature, the river gave passage to Vasudeva, and he was able to cross it very easily.

On the other side he went to the home of Nanda Mahārāja, situated in Gokula, where he saw that all the cowherd men were fast asleep. He silently entered the house without difficulty and replaced Yaśodā's newborn girl with his son. Then he crossed the river again, returned to the prison, and closed all the doors and gates. He silently placed the baby girl on Devakī's lap and reclamped the shackles on himself so that Kāṁsa

could not understand what had happened.

In Gokula, when Yaśodā had given birth, she was so tired from the labor of delivery that she fell fast asleep. When she awoke, she could not remember whether she had given birth to a male or female child.

After Vasudeva reentered his cell, the gatekeepers awoke and heard the newborn child crying. They immediately hastened to Kāṁsa's bedroom to inform him. Kāṁsa jumped out of his bed and exclaimed, "Now the cruel death of my life has been born!" He became perplexed, his bodily hairs stood on end, and he hurried to the cell where Kṛṣṇa had been born.

Devakī, on seeing Kāṁsa approaching, meekly prayed to him: "My dear brother, my child is a female. Please do not kill her. When she is of age, I promise to give her to your son as a wife. According to the omen, you are not to be killed by a female, but by a male."

Nonetheless, Kāṁsa was so cruel that he did not listen to Devakī's prayers. Instead, to rebuke her, he forcibly grabbed the newborn child and was just about to mercilessly dash her onto the stone floor. However, the child, Yogamāyā, having miraculous powers, flew out of his hands and up into the air and mystically hovered there—as the goddess Durgā. She was decorated with a gorgeous dress, flower garlands, and ornaments, and in her eight hands she held a bow, a lance, arrows, a sword, a conchshell, a disc, a club, and a shield.

Seeing the glorious child, all the demigods appeared there, presented her with gifts, and offered their respective prayers. Then the goddess said to Kāṁsa, "You rascal! How can you kill me? The child who will kill you has already been born somewhere within this world. So don't be

so cruel to your poor sister!"

Kāṁsa then became overwhelmed with fear. Out of pity and guilt, he unshackled and freed Vasudeva and Devakī. Then he apologized very politely and effusively for his past atrocities against their newborn children.

When Devakī and Vasudeva saw Kāṁsa so repentant, they became pacified. Vasudeva then spoke to him in a very forgiving and philosophical manner. Kāṁsa became exceedingly pleased, and his guilt for having killed his nephews subsided. With the permission of Devakī and Vasudeva, he returned to his chambers with a relieved mind.

But the next day Kāṁsa called all his counselors together and narrated to them all the incidents that had happened the night before. All the counselors of Kāṁsa were demons and eternal enemies of the demigods, so they became depressed upon hearing their master speak of the night's events. And although they were not very experienced or learned, they began to instruct Kāṁsa as follows: "Dear sir, let us now make arrangements to kill all children who were born within the last ten days in all towns, counties, villages, and pasturing grounds. Let us execute this plan indiscriminately."

Thus being advised by the demoniac ministers, Kāṁsa, who was from the very beginning the greatest rascal, decided to follow their advice. Thereafter, for many years, Kāṁsa sent demons to Vṛndāvana to kill Kṛṣṇa. But Kṛṣṇa, being the Supreme Lord, easily killed all of them. Kṛṣṇa's defeating the demons sent by Kāṁsa, as well as many of Kṛṣṇa's other transcendental pastimes, are narrated in *Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead*, by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.



Lord Kṛṣṇa's Cuisine

Liquid Religiosity

Nourishing our spiritual health through an appreciation of Kṛṣṇa's miracle in milk.

by VIŚĀKHĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

Milk has been famous as a storehouse of nutrients since long before the health-oriented 1980's began. Didn't your mother tell you that the minerals in milk help build strong bones and teeth?

In recent years, milk's status as a healthful beverage has been fortified, as more information about the value of its constituents has become known. That ubiquitous drink contains protein, carbohydrates, vitamins A, D, E, and K, calcium, niacin, phosphorus, magnesium, potassium, riboflavin, and sodium, as well as other minerals.

Each of these nutrients makes an important contribution to your health. Consider protein, for example. Proteins are composed of amino acids, which build and maintain body tissues, fight off disease, transport oxygen in the blood, regulate blood sugar, aid in making the hormones that regulate our metabolism, and supply energy.

The U.S. Recommended Daily Allowance of protein is your weight in pounds times 0.4 grams of protein. For example, if you weigh 150 pounds, you require 60 grams of protein a day. A cup of milk con-

tains about 8 grams of protein. By drinking two cups of milk a day, plus daily servings of cereal, bread, dried-bean soup, and rice or another grain dish, you can easily meet your protein requirements.

Although vegetarians are often accused of having protein-deficient diets, the fact is that many nonvegetarians ingest too much protein, causing a detrimental effect on their bodies. Dietician Nancy Clark, author of *The Athlete's Kitchen*, says, "Americans eat two or three times as much protein as they need." Pat Croce of the *Philadelphia Inquirer* says, "If more protein is eaten than required by our system's needs, it simply turns into unwanted fat." In addition, excess protein can result in an increased risk of dehydration, heat fatigue, and heat stroke, as well as cause diarrhea, gout, a loss of appetite, and a loss of calcium.

Calcium, also found abundantly in milk, is not something one wants to lose. Calcium is required for the blood to clot and for the heart to function normally. And it protects the teeth by neutralizing the cavity-forming acids in foods.

Also, today's health-conscious woman knows that getting enough calcium throughout her life is important for protecting bone health. Women run a high risk of developing osteoporosis, a bone degeneration disease that afflicts up to 20 million Americans with a weakened skeletal structure (brittle bones) and is a leading cause of death among older women in the United States.

The recommended daily allowance of calcium is 800 milligrams, but in 1986 the average calcium intake among women was only 650 milligrams—78 percent of the recommended amount. Proper milk intake could solve this problem, as one cup of milk contains about 300 milligrams of calcium. And besides curbing osteoporosis, calcium is also thought to lower high blood pressure and, according to some scientists, prevent cancer.

Unfortunately, however, in the United States soft drinks are more popular than milk. In fact, soft drinks are more popular than water. A recent survey showed that over the eight-year period from 1977 to 1985 soft drink consumption increased from 6 to 10 ounces per person per day, and now stands at 401 cans per person per year. Researchers from the dairy industry, in an attempt to counteract this trend and put the fizz back into their sales, are working on a carbonated version of milk that won't leave a mustache on your upper lip or a film on your tongue.

"It's a lot like club soda," says Anthony Lukas, president of Dairy Research, Inc. "It's very refreshing. Normally, milk coats the mouth, and people won't drink it to quench their thirst. But carbonated milk

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

Sweet Rice (*Khīr*)

Preparation time: 1 hour 15 minutes
Chilling time: 2 hours
Servings: 4-6

¼ cup short- or medium-grain white rice
7 cups whole milk
2 bay leaves
½ cup sugar
2 tablespoons sliced almonds, lightly toasted
½ teaspoon ground cardamom seeds

1. Wash the rice and set it aside to drain. In a tall pot that can hold at least twice the volume of the milk, bring the milk to a boil; then adjust the flame so the milk is always rising and frothing but not bubbling over. To minimize the cooking time, let the milk boil vigorously, uncovered, for the first 15 minutes while you stir it rhythmically with a wooden spatula to prevent the thick milk on the bottom of the pot from scorching.

2. Drop the rice into the milk along with the bay leaves. Continue stirring. Keep over a medium flame and stir very carefully for another 20 minutes until the rice breaks up and rolls with the milk. By now the milk should be reduced to two thirds of its original volume. Stir in the sugar, almonds, and ground cardamom seeds. Cook for 5 more minutes and remove from the flame. Sweet rice should be only slightly thick when removed from the flame because it will thicken when refrigerated. Chill well—the colder the sweet rice, the better it tastes.

For other classic flavors, replace the ground cardamom seeds with a teaspoon of rose water and a few pinches of saffron powder, or season with bay leaves only and add a tiny pinch of natural camphor at the end of cooking. Offer to Kṛṣṇa.

Saffron-flavored Milk with Pistachios (*Masāla Duddh*)

Preparation time: 10 minutes
Servings: 4

4 cups milk
10 saffron strands or
¼ teaspoon powdered saffron
4 cloves
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
3 tablespoons honey
1 tablespoon finely ground pistachio nuts

Bring the milk, with the saffron, cloves, and cinnamon, to a boil in a saucepan. Adjust the

flame so that the milk maintains a rolling boil for 5 minutes. Then remove from the flame, stir in the honey, and discard the cloves. Sprinkle the ground pistachio nuts over the top. Offer to Kṛṣṇa steaming hot.

Creamed Vermicelli Pudding (*Khīr Sevian*)

Preparation time: 20-25 minutes
Servings: 4-6

5 cups whole milk
1 tablespoon butter
6 cloves
1 teaspoon ground cardamom
4½ ounces fine vermicelli
½ cup sugar
1 tablespoon pistachio nuts
1 tablespoon almonds
1½ cups thick cream
1 teaspoon rose water

1. Bring the milk to a boil; then simmer. In another saucepan melt the butter and quickly fry the cloves and half of the ground cardamom. Add the vermicelli. Stir-fry until it is lightly browned. Pour the milk into the saucepan and boil over a medium flame for 5 minutes, stirring often. Stir in the sugar and the nuts. Lower the heat. Cook for 15 minutes (stirring every few minutes to prevent scorching) or as long as needed to allow the mixture to thicken slightly. Remember that it will continue to thicken after it is removed from the flame.

2. Take the saucepan off the flame, fold in the cream, and add the rose water. Pour the *khīr sevian* into a dish, top with the remaining ground cardamom, and offer to Kṛṣṇa hot or cold.

Cheese Balls Soaked in Cream Sauce (*Ras Malai*)

Preparation time: 1 hour 15 minutes
Soaking time: 30 minutes
Servings: 4-6

10 ounces *panīr* (milk curd)
2 teaspoons ground pistachio nuts
2 teaspoons ground almonds
3 cups water
2 cups sugar
4 cups milk
4 tablespoons thick cream
3 or 4 drops almond essence

1. Turn the *panīr* onto a work surface and crumble it. Using a pushing motion, knead it vigorously with the heels of your hands until it becomes smooth and your hands feel greasy. Now break off walnut-size pieces and

form them into balls that are perfectly smooth and round, without any cracks.

2. Make a mixture of 1 teaspoon each of sugar, ground pistachio nuts, and ground almonds. Make a depression in the center of each cheese ball and fill it with a little of the mixture. Pinch the stuffed cheese balls closed and roll them between your hands to make them round. (If you prefer you can use the cheese balls without the filling.)

3. Mix 2 cups of water with 1½ cups of sugar in a saucepan. Boil for 15 minutes, and then add a cup of water. Lower the flame to simmering and put the cheese balls into the syrup. Cover the saucepan to keep the syrup at a gently rolling boil. After 10 minutes, remove the cover. Then cook the cheese balls about 10 minutes more. They will swell to almost double their original size.

4. To see whether the cheese balls are done, tap one with your finger. If it feels soft, they are ready. Remove them from the flame, take them out of the syrup, and put them into the milk to soak for at least 30 minutes. Then remove them from the milk and put them aside.

5. Cook the milk over a high flame, stirring continuously, until it reduces to two thirds of its original volume. Add the cream and the remaining syrup, bring to a boil, and pour the mixture over the cheese balls. Sprinkle with the almond essence and ground nuts. Offer to Kṛṣṇa warm or chilled.

Hot Milk (*Gāram Duddh*)

Preparation time: 10 minutes
Servings: 4

4 cups milk
3 tablespoons sugar or 2 tablespoons honey

Either bring the milk to a boil three times, being careful that it doesn't spill over, or maintain a gentle rolling boil for 5 minutes. Remove from the flame, add the sweetener, and stir until it dissolves.

You may also flavor the milk by adding one of the following: (1) 3 or 4 bruised cardamom pods, (2) a drop or two of rose water, (3) 1 tablespoon of chicory or carob powder, (4) a big pinch of ground nutmeg or cinnamon, (5) or a few strands of saffron.

Hot milk with banana and mango makes a wonderful nectar drink. Crush a ripe banana or mango into a pulp and mix into the sweetened hot milk. Add 1 tablespoon of butter, ¼ teaspoon of ground cinnamon, and ¼ teaspoon of ground nutmeg.

For any type of hot milk, pour the milk from one cup to another several times. This cools it slightly and aerates it. Then offer it to Kṛṣṇa.

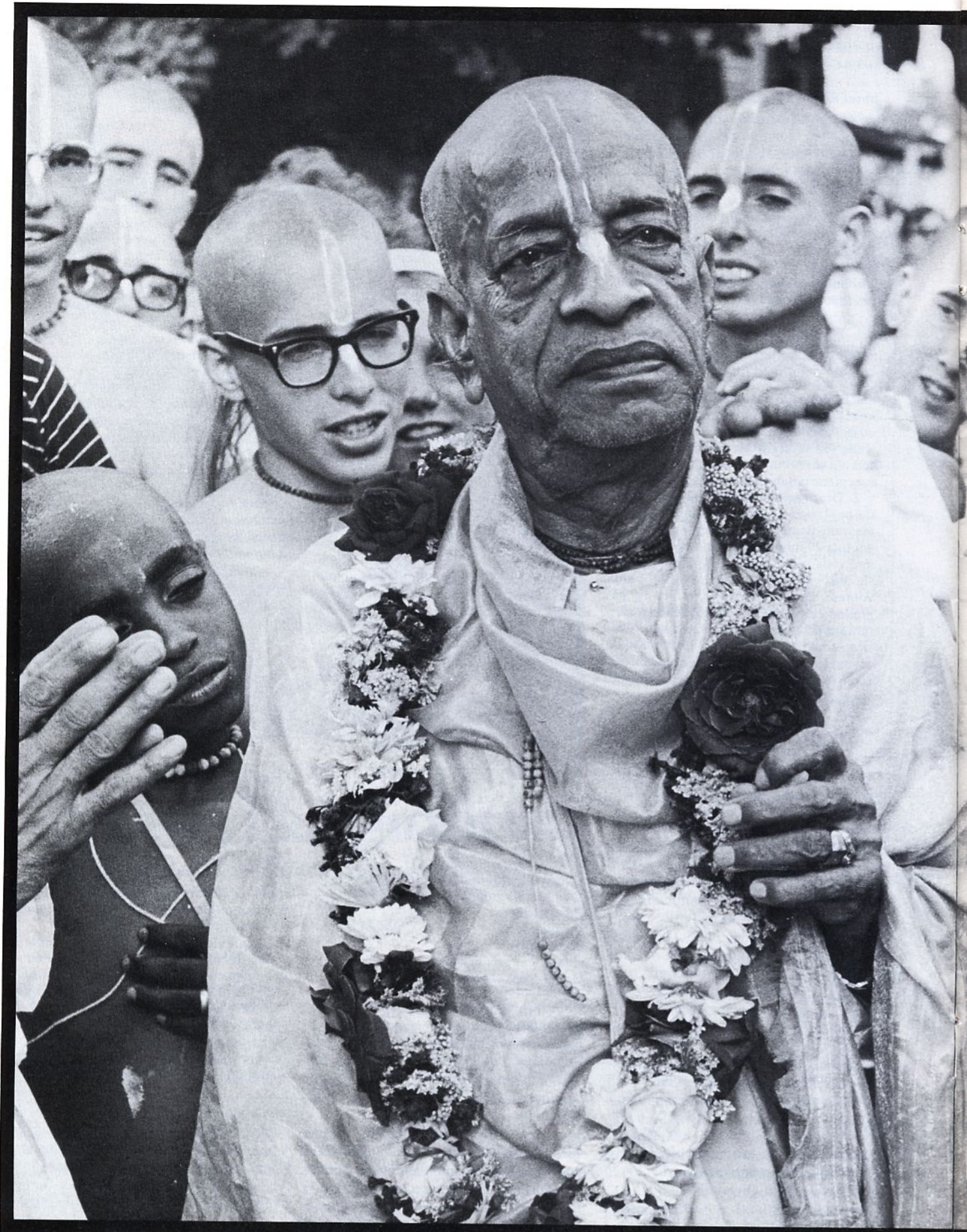
doesn't do that." Lukas claims that his product, which will be available late this year, will have all the nutritional value of milk—at a little higher price.

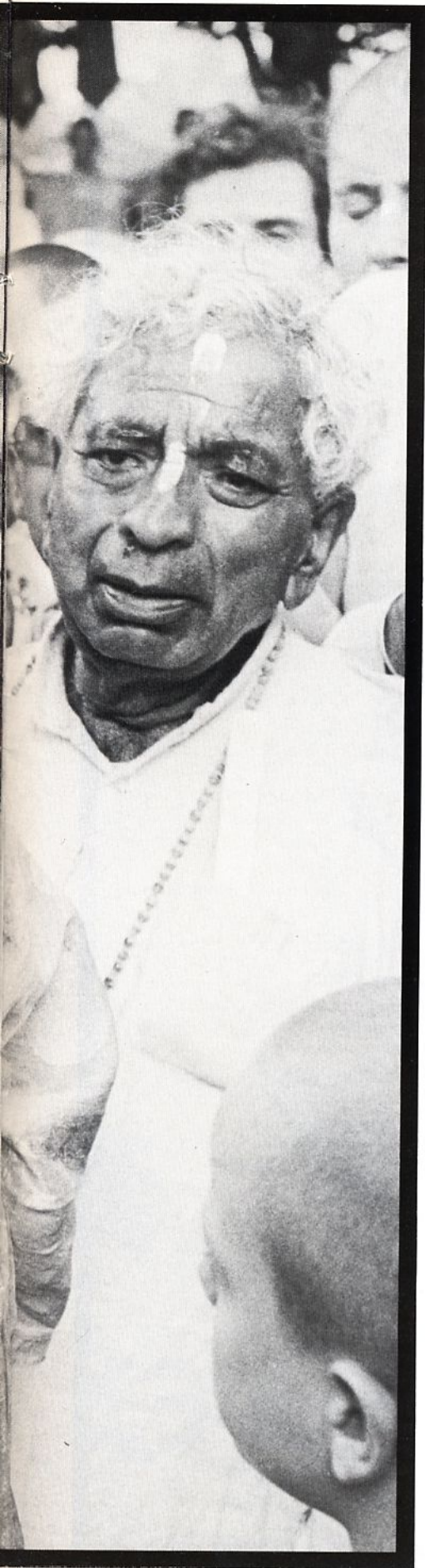
Even without the fizz, milk is relished by devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa both in the

morning with breakfast and in the evening just before bed. Śrīla Prabhupāda confirms that "there is a miracle in milk, for it contains all the necessary vitamins to sustain human physiological conditions." But beyond that, he points out,

there is also a quality in milk that is yet to be discovered by scientists in their laboratories. Describing milk as "liquid religiosity," Prabhupāda writes that it is effective for "maintaining the finer tissues

(continued on page 35)





In Praise of Śrīla Prabhupāda

In today's world of hypocrisy and scandal, we remember Śrīla Prabhupāda's pure qualities and his example of genuine spiritual leadership.

by AJITĀNANDA DĀSA

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who successfully distributed the message of Lord Kṛṣṇa throughout the world, was not an ordinary conditioned soul, governed by the harsh laws of material nature. Although he may have apparently exhibited commonplace characteristics, it is evident through careful study of his life that Śrīla Prabhupāda perfectly displayed the qualities of a pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

The Vedic literature states that only one who is free from material bondage can possess these qualities in full. Such a great soul is rarely found within this material realm, and owing to his unparalleled purity and exalted status as an intimate associate of the Supreme Lord, he is worshipable by the entire world. Following are some of the qualities of a pure devotee so eminently exemplified by Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Merciful

The ultimate expression of mercy is to freely afford everyone the opportunity to develop pure love of Godhead. This Śrīla Prabhupāda did by opening over one hundred temples, printing millions of books, and sending his disciples all over the world to teach the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. His distribution of mercy manifested naturally as a result of his heartfelt compassion for the long-suffering conditioned souls. His mercy fell everywhere, like pleasing rain upon the burning hearts of this age.

When Śrīla Prabhupāda lectured during the early days of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, he would often

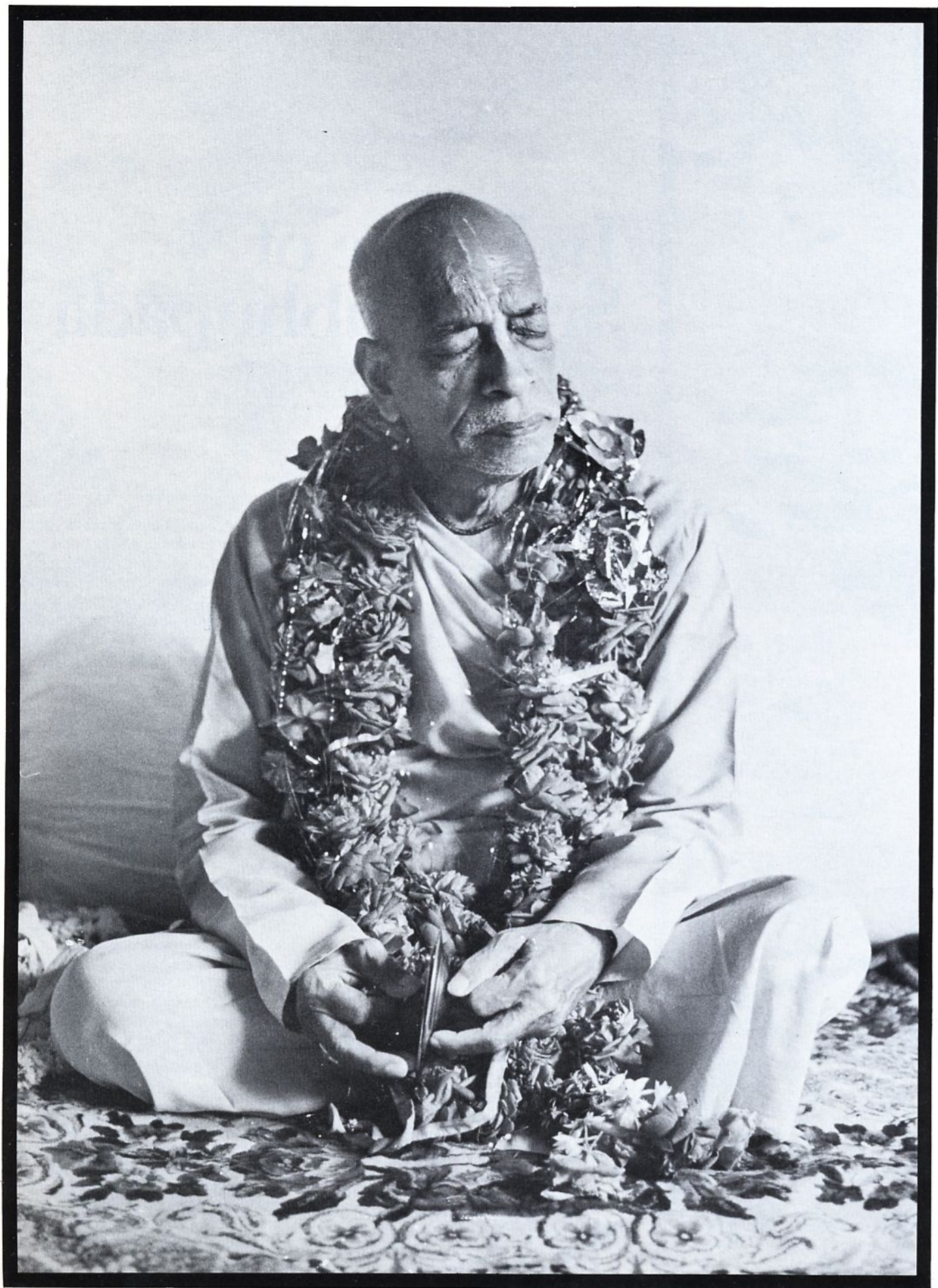
tell his listeners, "I have come to your country not to take anything, but simply to give." Those who were honest and sincere were able to sense Śrīla Prabhupāda's unalloyed desire to bestow upon them the highest form of mercy, and directed by Kṛṣṇa within their hearts, they voluntarily placed themselves under his guidance and protection.

Although Śrīla Prabhupāda is now gone from our material vision, his mercy is still available. A liberated soul is not bound by time and space, and neither is his mercy. One only has to open up one's heart to receive this benediction, which is being distributed freely to everyone.

Truthful

During the late 1960's, a generation of young men and women took part in a mass rebellion against the untruths that had been perpetrated upon them by governments, schools, media, and big business. At that time Śrīla Prabhupāda arrived on the scene, boldly preaching the message of Lord Kṛṣṇa. He spoke truthfully, never altering the pure message in deference to the time and circumstance to attract followers, fame, and money. In an atmosphere seething with the fumes of unrestricted sense gratification, Śrīla Prabhupāda presented a process of spiritual life based on personal sacrifice and purification of the senses.

In those days, with the peace movement in vogue, it was extremely unpopular to speak out on behalf of any form of military activity. But rather than cater to public opinion, Śrīla Prabhupāda



pāda spoke the truth about the *Bhagavad-gītā*, explaining to his youthful audience that Arjuna attained spiritual perfection by fighting a war under the order of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Because of Śrīla Prabhupāda's own spiritual qualities and his straightforward presentation of Lord Kṛṣṇa's message, people gradually began to understand the message and received it with great delight. Such was the powerful effect of Śrīla Prabhupāda's truthfulness.

Magnanimous

Śrīla Prabhupāda's gifts to the world were filled with tremendous spiritual value. He gave us a wonderful philosophy to live by, knowledge of our true spiritual identities, beautiful Deities of Kṛṣṇa to worship, the all-auspicious holy name of Kṛṣṇa, and delicious *kṛṣṇa-prasādam* (sanctified food offered to Kṛṣṇa). Śrīla Prabhupāda also gave us the spiritually enlivening association of devotees and the opportunity to develop pure love of Godhead and return to a life of eternity, bliss, and knowledge in the spiritual world.

In return for all these blessings, Śrīla Prabhupāda asked nothing for himself. He simply asked that we refrain from sinful activities, chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, and give Kṛṣṇa consciousness to others. In this way, selflessly giving of himself at every step, Śrīla Prabhupāda perfectly exhibited the magnanimous nature of a pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Without Material Possessions

A pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa is always diving and surfacing in the ocean of spiritual happiness. The *Vedas* explain that one drop of this happiness is millions of times greater than the paltry relish afforded by material sense gratification or even the pleasure derived from liberation from material existence. A pure devotee never depends on the accumulation of material possessions for his happiness. He accepts only what is necessary to perform devotional service and maintains full awareness that these facilities are actually the property of the Lord.

During Śrīla Prabhupāda's years spent in Vṛndāvana preparing for his eventual journey to the West, he lived very simply in a tiny room in the courtyard of the Rādhā-Dāmodara temple. After preaching vigorously in the West for a number of years, Śrīla Prabhupāda had access to much opulence, yet he never claimed any of it as his own and used every penny in the service of Kṛṣṇa.

Desireless

One is said to be desireless when his only interest lies in satisfying the tran-



scendental senses of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Desires are eternally flowing like a river from the heart of the living entity, and the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness can change the quality of those desires from material to spiritual.

Although Śrīla Prabhupāda began his preaching work very humbly, his mission became enormously successful, and Kṛṣṇa blessed him with great opulence. When a person acquires great amounts of wealth and power, he usually becomes thoroughly attached and polluted due to the strong force of his material desires. Śrīla Prabhupāda, however, remained aloof from this contamination because of his complete absorption in the desire to please Kṛṣṇa.

Indifferent to Material Acquisition

Because a pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa is desireless, he is naturally indifferent to material acquisition. Material facilities may come and go, but that does not concern him in the least.

Śrīla Prabhupāda once pointed out that if he had simply sat beneath a tree

and preached, very few people would have come to listen. Therefore, to effectively deliver the message of Lord Kṛṣṇa, he constructed beautifully ornate temples. At no time, however, was he desirous of settling in comfortably to enjoy these facilities, choosing instead to follow a rigorous schedule of traveling and preaching that even the youngest and healthiest of his disciples could not keep pace with.

Fixed

When Śrīla Prabhupāda was instructed by his spiritual master to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness in English, he took his order as his life and soul and fixed his determination upon carrying it out diligently. Founding the *Back to Godhead* magazine in 1944, Śrīla Prabhupāda single-handedly attended to its publication and distribution for many years, never once deviating from his sincere effort to please his spiritual master. As a result of Śrīla Prabhupāda's fixed determination, all of his preaching activities were crowned with glorious

success, and even now, in his physical absence, his followers carry on his work all over the world.

Without False Prestige

Śrīla Prabhupāda's humility was inconceivably deep and heartfelt, and it inspired a generation of young men and women, who had based their lives on the rejection of authority, to willingly accept his authority. Śrīla Prabhupāda never took credit for his many successes, always preferring to acknowledge his spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, and the assistance

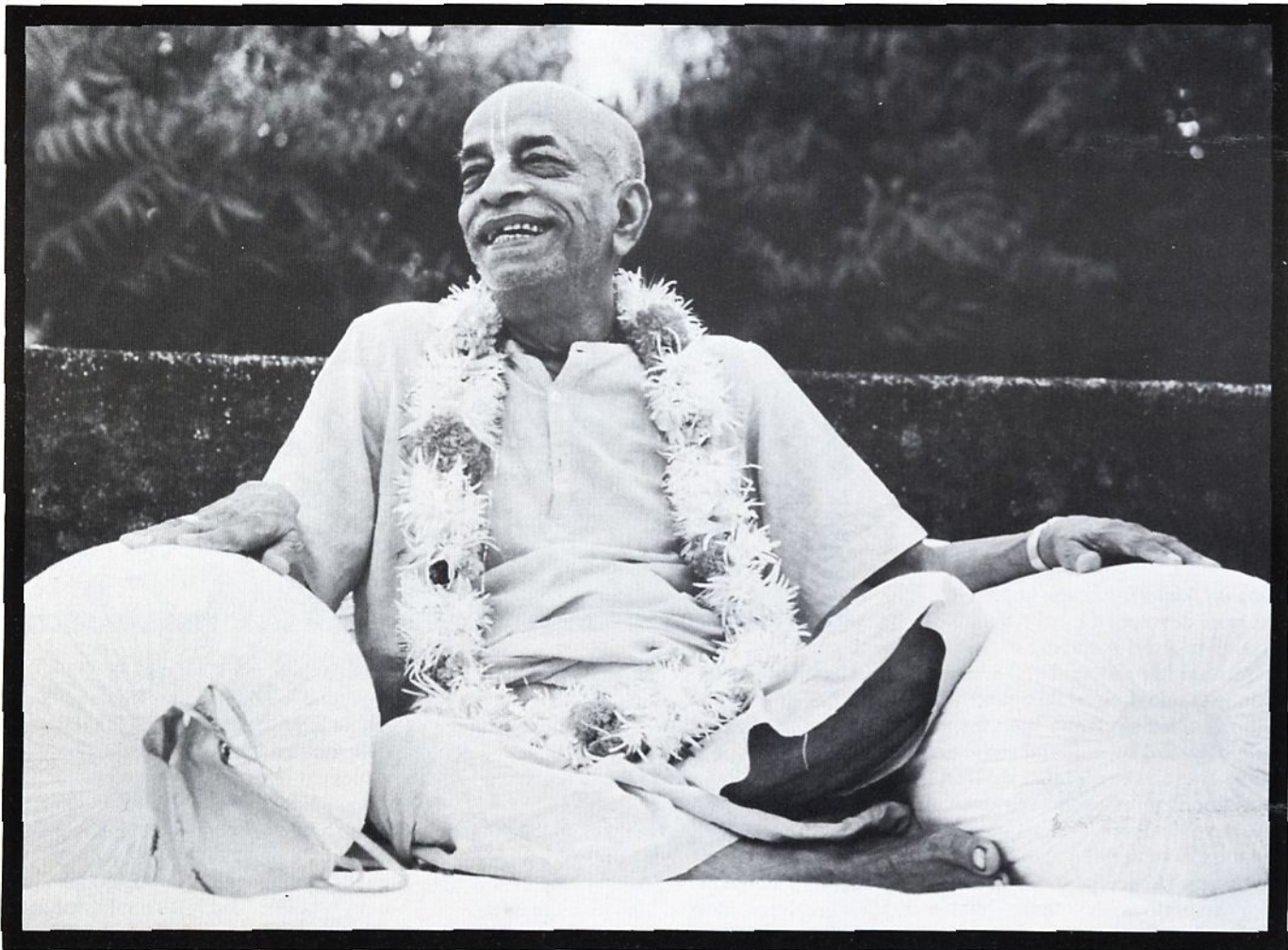
Lord Kṛṣṇa is always grave. Upon hearing this, one devotee, a very colorful and effusive person, decided to tone down his disposition and became straight-faced in an attempt to please his spiritual master. After a few days of this behavior by his disciple, Śrīla Prabhupāda looked at him quizzically and asked what was the matter. The disciple replied that he was trying to be grave.

At that, Śrīla Prabhupāda laughed and explained to him that being grave means to be serious about Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It has nothing to do with artificially repressing one's individuality.

In the material world friendships are formed on the basis of mutual sense gratification, and when sense gratification is disturbed, the relationship is either damaged or discontinued.

Śrīla Prabhupāda was a true friend to all, however, because he formed relationships with others motivated by his unalloyed desire to assist everyone in achieving the highest goal of life. He never desired to exploit anyone, and if there was ever an offense committed against him or some difficulty caused by others, he never took it seriously.

The scriptures state that if a disciple



given to him by his disciples.

During one lecture, Śrīla Prabhupāda touched the hearts of his disciples when he stated that he considered them to be representatives of his spiritual master, sent to assist him in his preaching mission. By this expression of sincere gratitude, Śrīla Prabhupāda displayed his mood of devout humility. Anyone pursuing the spiritual path should aspire to follow in his footsteps in this regard.

Grave

Śrīla Prabhupāda once explained to a group of his disciples that a devotee of

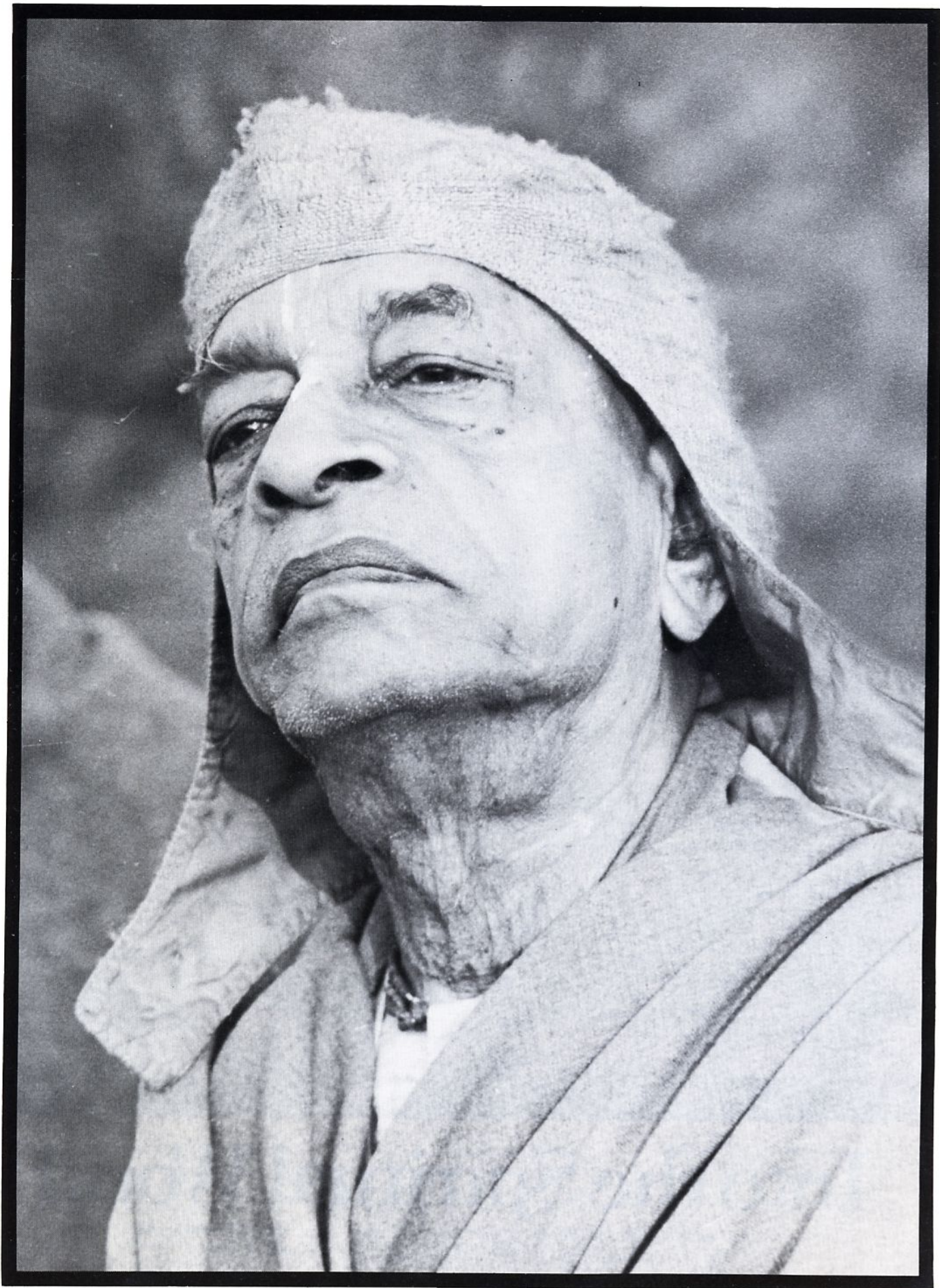
Śrīla Prabhupāda himself was a most vibrant personality. His life abounded with laughter and spiritual enjoyment, yet he was always serious about Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He never forgot Lord Kṛṣṇa, not even for a moment, and in this way displayed perfect gravity.

A Friend

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa states that He is the friend of all living beings. As the Lord's intimate associate, Śrīla Prabhupāda also displayed friendship to all by dint of his constant engagement in spiritual welfare activities.

commits a sinful activity, the spiritual master suffers. Śrīla Prabhupāda, out of his causeless mercy, accepted thousands of disciples, and because of their inevitable transgressions he had to undergo what appeared to be suffering. In spite of this, he never withdrew his mercy and friendship. Significantly, he always closed his letters to his disciples with the words "Your ever well-wisher."

The spiritual friendship of a pure devotee like Śrīla Prabhupāda is the rarest of gems, and it behooves us all to appreciate, revere, and guard it as our life's dearest treasure. ❏





Into the Spiritual World

“Kṛṣṇa assures us in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that if we want to live there He will make the arrangements. But first we must demonstrate that we are ready.”

by NĀGARĀJA DĀSA



PAINING BY PARIKSHIT DAS

Though the spiritual world is the abode of the highest pleasure, hardly anyone wants to go there. We say we'd like to go, and we may think we are going, but our actions speak differently. Either we don't fully believe in a spiritual world, or the information we have about it hasn't inspired us to act in a way that will get us there.

Most of us, having only scanty information of the spiritual world, imagine a place where angels float on clouds and play harps and trumpets all day—a boring existence when compared to our present life, with its friendships, family relations, fancy cars, nightclubs, restaurants, and Sunday afternoon football. Without these

Ecstatic activity and unlimited variety constitute the spiritual world, where everything is meant for the pleasure of the Supreme Lord, the center of everyone's attention. We can partake of the ecstasy of the kingdom of God, but because we fail to hear of its glories we search for happiness in the material world, only to find inevitable frustration.

things how can heaven be enjoyable? We even joke that hell would be better than heaven, because all our friends would be there. Fortunately, from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and other Vedic literature we get a much clearer, more inviting picture of heaven.

The spiritual world is not the creation of someone's imagination. It is God's eternal abode. Because God is a person, He has His own abode, called *Vaikuṅṭha* in Sanskrit, meaning "devoid of anxiety." Being God's home, *Vaikuṅṭha* possesses unlimited beauty and opulence. It's not a boring place. It is the realm of the original, spiritual forms of everything we find in the material world.

In other words, it's full of variety: birds, animals, forests, lakes, cities, airplanes, skyscrapers—everything. But they're all spiritual.

For example, in the many forests of *Vaikuṅṭha*, the trees—being fully conscious living beings like everything else there—supply everything the residents desire. *Cintāmaṇi*, a spiritual wish-fulfilling gem, serves as construction material in *Vaikuṅṭha*. The residents, unalloyed devotees of God, possess spiritual bodies that never become diseased, grow old, or die. Free from the frustrations and anxieties of material life, these eternally liberated souls enjoy unending happiness.

We conditioned souls, habituated to the dualities of happiness and distress in the material world, cannot conceive of the pleasure available to the inhabitants of *Vaikuṅṭha*. Material pleasures come only from the interaction of our senses with the sense objects (sound, form, touch, taste, and smell). Since the senses and their objects are limited and temporary, the pleasures derived from their interaction must also be limited and temporary—and therefore not really satisfying to the self, which is eternal.

Further analysis of material pleasures shows that they give only respite from our normally distressful condition. The material world, by its very nature, gives us distress: our own bodies and minds trouble us; business competitors, government officials, foreign governments, insects, dogs, and all sorts of other creatures harass us; and excessive heat, excessive cold, hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, and other unconquerable forces of nature torment us. No one is exempt from these miseries. They constantly attack, and if we can momentarily overcome them—or even forget about them—we think ourselves happy.

Spiritual pleasure is in another category altogether. In the spiritual world everyone derives pure happiness by serving God, Kṛṣṇa. Such service is the innate function of the soul. Once one tastes the happiness derived from that service, one automatically spurns even the highest

material pleasure. A great devotee has explained that even one drop of pleasure obtained from devotional service to Kṛṣṇa far exceeds an ocean of material pleasure. Thus *Vaikuṅṭha*, which is permeated by service to Kṛṣṇa, is the abode of unlimited pleasure.

Because we all want pleasure, when we hear from authorized sources that *Vaikuṅṭha* offers it unlimitedly, we should naturally want to go there. And we can if we want to. In fact, we were all there originally, but we left. Why? Because we didn't fit in.

To live in *Vaikuṅṭha*, we must be like its other inhabitants. Because of their full devotion to God, they never consider their own welfare; selfish desires do not exist there. The devotees serve Kṛṣṇa and each other in total selflessness. Were we to enter *Vaikuṅṭha* to fulfill our own desires, we

We may try to be good and hope God will grant us entrance into His abode after death. But what happens if our idea of goodness is inaccurate? What happens if it falls short of the mark?

would create a disturbance to the inhabitants, who are absorbed in satisfying Kṛṣṇa's desires. So even though we may claim that we want to go to the kingdom of God, how many of us are ready to live as its residents do?

As evidenced by our deeds in this world, most of us would rather live some other way. We'd rather be selfish than selfless. We'd rather go to Las Vegas for the casinos or to the Bahamas for the sun and surf. Travel agents sell plenty of tickets to these places. But few people want to go where everyone selflessly serves the Supreme Personality of Godhead without personal interests. Kṛṣṇa assures us in *Bhāgavad-gītā* that if we want to live there He will make the arrangements. But first we must demonstrate that we are ready.

We're in the material world because we're not ready; we want to enjoy the kingdom of God without God. Kṛṣṇa created us to enjoy with Him. That's our eternal

service, and it's blissful—it's ecstatic! But we don't want it. We don't want to serve Kṛṣṇa, because we covet His position. We want to enjoy *here*. Our original, pure consciousness—our Kṛṣṇa consciousness—is infected with the impure desire to enjoy the material world without Kṛṣṇa.

Without overcoming this disease of material consciousness, we'll never want to go back to *Vaikuṅṭha*. But if we sincerely desire eternal happiness, we must go back there. We'll need to recover our spiritual health.

That means we'll need a *guru*, a spiritual doctor who is going to ask us to do things we may not like. Patients usually dislike their medicine, but if they take their medicine and follow the regimen the qualified doctor prescribes, they'll be cured.

Similarly, the spiritual master, guided by scripture, prescribes the activities—which, like medicine, may sometimes appear distasteful—that will restore our original, healthy condition. If, on the other hand, we try without proper guidance to enter God's spiritual kingdom, we'll be in a precarious position because we have not properly qualified ourselves.

For example, many people think they are leading a good life and will go to the kingdom of God after death. They feel no need to accept a spiritual master or the scriptures. They have their own conception of what "good" is. Certainly we may try to be good and hope God will grant us entrance into His abode after death. But what happens if our idea of goodness is inaccurate? What happens if it falls short of the mark? According to *Bhāgavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the standard of goodness required of the inhabitants of *Vaikuṅṭha* far exceeds the characteristic piety of good people in this world.

Philosophers have long debated whether there exists an absolute standard of goodness. Nowadays, people tend to favor the idea that goodness is relative to the individual, as the common expression "What-ever is right for you is all right" indicates. But what I think is right and what you think is right are not necessarily the same thing.

It's reasonable and practical, therefore, to accept a definition of goodness from an authority. For example, we don't run society on the premise that everyone is right. Rather, our lawmakers set up standards of acceptable behavior for those who want to enjoy the benefits of living in society. Then, even if a citizen doesn't like the laws, he must either submit to them or risk punishment; they are not relative.

Similarly, God makes His laws, and we're liable for punishment if we violate them—knowingly or unknowingly. This may seem unfair, but the same principle applies in the state: ignorance of the law is no excuse. To live in the state we *must*

know its laws; to live in this world, which God created, we must know His laws. As human beings, with higher intelligence than the animals, we must accept that responsibility.

Fortunately, we can easily find out God's laws, His standards of goodness, because the scriptures reveal them. So we

should not reject the scriptures and invent our own religious path. As the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* states, *dharmam tu sākṣād bhagavat-praṇītam*: God Himself enunciates religious principles. Religion essentially means God's method for us to approach Him. Since we are in the subordinate position (He knows us but we don't

know Him), we must accept His direction on how to approach Him. That acceptance is the symptom of true goodness.

So if we really want to be good, if we really want to go to heaven, then we ought to let our actions speak the same as our words. That is the price for going back to the kingdom of God. ❏

OMNIPOTENT

(continued from page 5)

māṇāni gunaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ: Everything is happening by the force of the laws of nature. But Kṛṣṇa is not under the laws of nature. Nor is there any distinction between His self and His body. This is to be understood. If somebody thinks that Kṛṣṇa left His body and died like us, they are *mūḍhas*, rascals. Kṛṣṇa seemed to leave His body just to befool the rascals. The rascals think Kṛṣṇa is like us, and therefore, to bewilder them, Kṛṣṇa leaves an illusory body so that they may go on think-

ing like that. But actually, here is the secret: *jahau sva-tanvā*. "Kṛṣṇa left this world in His original body."

Now, here it also says, *śravaṇīya-sat-kathāḥ*: "Talks about Kṛṣṇa are transcendental." If His body were like ours—if He had a material body—then what would be the use of hearing about His activities? We are interested in the words of Kṛṣṇa in *Bhagavad-gītā*, but if Kṛṣṇa were like us, why should we be interested? Actually, by hearing about Kṛṣṇa you become liberated. So He cannot possibly be an ordinary human being like us. Only the less intelligent class of men (*apratibuddha-*

cetasām) think in this way.

The *Bhāgavatam* verse ends with the words *kalir anvavartata*: "Because Kṛṣṇa passed away, Kali [the present Age of Quarrel personified] got the opportunity to enter." That is to some extent a fact. But if Kṛṣṇa is everything, how can He go away? Kṛṣṇa can remain with you eternally. And if by becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious you keep yourself with Kṛṣṇa, where is the chance of Kali entering? Where is the chance? So, keep yourself always in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Kali will not be able to touch you.

Hare Kṛṣṇa. Thank you very much. ❏

Liquid Religiosity

(continued from page 25)

of the brain for understanding higher aims of life." In former ages great saints often subsisted only by drinking the one or two quarts of milk that householders would donate to them each day.

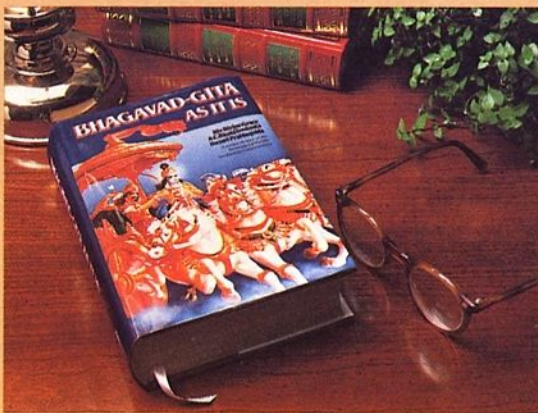
Now, unfortunately, people draw milk

from the cow artificially, and when there is no milk the cow is sent to be slaughtered. "These greatly sinful acts," Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, "are responsible for all the troubles in present society. People do not know what they are doing in the name of economic development."

So, milk is important for bodily maintenance and spiritual growth. If we can ap-

preciate milk's benefits, we will also appreciate the cows that deliver milk so generously. We can begin to view cows with affection, rather than as food. Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself is fond of cows and calves, and as we develop affection for the cow and appreciation for her unique product, we will feel our minds becoming clearer and our hearts softer. ❏

The Voice of an Old Intelligence



BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ AS IT IS

by His Divine Grace A. C.
Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Founder-Ācārya of the International Society
for Krishna Consciousness

For thousands of years the world's greatest minds have turned to the *Gītā* for answers to life's perennial questions. The timeless wisdom of the *Gītā* goes to the root of our problems and is as fresh and relevant today as when Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke it fifty centuries ago. *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*—the fruit of the scholarship and devotion of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the foremost devotee of Kṛṣṇa in this age—is the largest-selling edition of the *Gītā* in the Western world.

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NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Hindus in the West: The Challenge to Spiritual Roots

Many Indians now living in Western countries have become successful at their occupations, and they hope their children will become even more successful. In the United States the Indian population is one of the wealthiest minorities, with many leading professionals in various fields. There is not much doubt that the Indians in the West can succeed materially. But the challenge remains: will they be able—and willing—to retain their cultural origins?

As a Kṛṣṇa devotee of American origin, I have Indian friends both in the West and in India, and I share their concerns. At a recent conference of the Visva Hindu Parisad held in North Carolina, two of these concerns were the subjects of lectures: (1) "The Relevancy of Vedic Literature in the Modern Age" and (2) "The Effect of Karma on Youth." I would like to express my realization on these topics from the Kṛṣṇa conscious viewpoint.

Relevancy

It is proper for any religionist to assess whether his or her spiritual upbringing is keeping pace with modern life. But the assessment should not be superficial or too strongly swayed by current fashions. The fact is, "There is nothing new under the sun." Vedic literatures describe four problems that prevent all human beings from attaining happiness—birth, death, old age, and disease.

In the thousands of years since the Vedic literatures were presented to mankind, no one has been able to get free of these miseries, despite the advances of science, politics, or philosophical speculation. Although particular diseases may have been subdued by medicine and technology, many new diseases have arisen. *No one* has prevented death, and the introduction of nuclear weapons has greatly increased the probability of mass violence and death. Therefore, the statement of *Bhagavad-gītā* that human life is *duḥkhalāyam aśāsvatam*, unhappy and temporary, should be taken as a permanent fact. It is not a truth that belongs only to the East or West, just as the sun is not a product of East or West.

Vedic literature is certainly relevant, because it addresses humanity's age-old problems and presents profound solutions. The *Vedas* explain how we can transcend the anxieties of temporary existence and live more peacefully in this

life by cultivating our spiritual life. More important, by the process of *bhakti-yoga* we can develop love of God, conquer the dilemma of death, and gain eternal life.

Though the Vedic literatures are the oldest scriptures in the world, the followers of the *Vedas* should not think that the "ancient" truths have been outdated or replaced. Ralph Waldo Emerson, in his appreciation of *Bhagavad-gītā*, stated, "It is nothing small or unworthy, but large, serene, consistent, the voice of an old intelligence which in another age and climate had pondered and thus disposed of the same questions which exercise us." Similarly, Aldous Huxley described the *Upaniṣads* as "perennial philosophy." And Henry David Thoreau spoke of "the stupendous and cosmogonical philosophy of the *Bhagavad-gīta*, in comparison with which our modern world and its literature seem puny and trivial."

My Indian friends may consider me presumptuous to warn them not to think of Vedic scripture as dispensable. After all, I am a come-lately to Kṛṣṇa consciousness; they were born into it. Many Indians feel very confident that no matter how much they become Westernized, they will never lose their original scriptural ideas. Even if out of social pressure they compromise spiritual practices, many say, "I can always think of Kṛṣṇa." They show considerable anxiety, however, about whether their offspring will be able to keep the valuable roots of Indian spirituality.

Karma and Youth

Spiritual realization is not something parents or well-wishers can force upon youth. *Karma*, the inevitable law of cause and effect, operates upon the young as well as the old. Therefore, in the original Vedic culture spiritual training always began at the earliest possible age. Young students became adept at *yoga*, meditation, and appreciation of the epic literatures such as *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa*.

Although Indian parents may want their children to appreciate the values of Vedic culture, the parents are often disappointed. Young people are more interested in *preyas*, immediate pleasures, than in *śreyas*, pleasure received by sacrificing immediate gains in favor of long-term, spiritual ones. Although young people may sometimes forego an evening's fun at the cinema to study for exams, rarely do they sacrifice in favor of spiritual life. More of-

ten they indulge in excessive, sinful practices. For although youth is a time of great opportunity, it is also a time of uncontrolled senses. How, then, can Indian parents instill within their children an appreciation for Vedic culture?

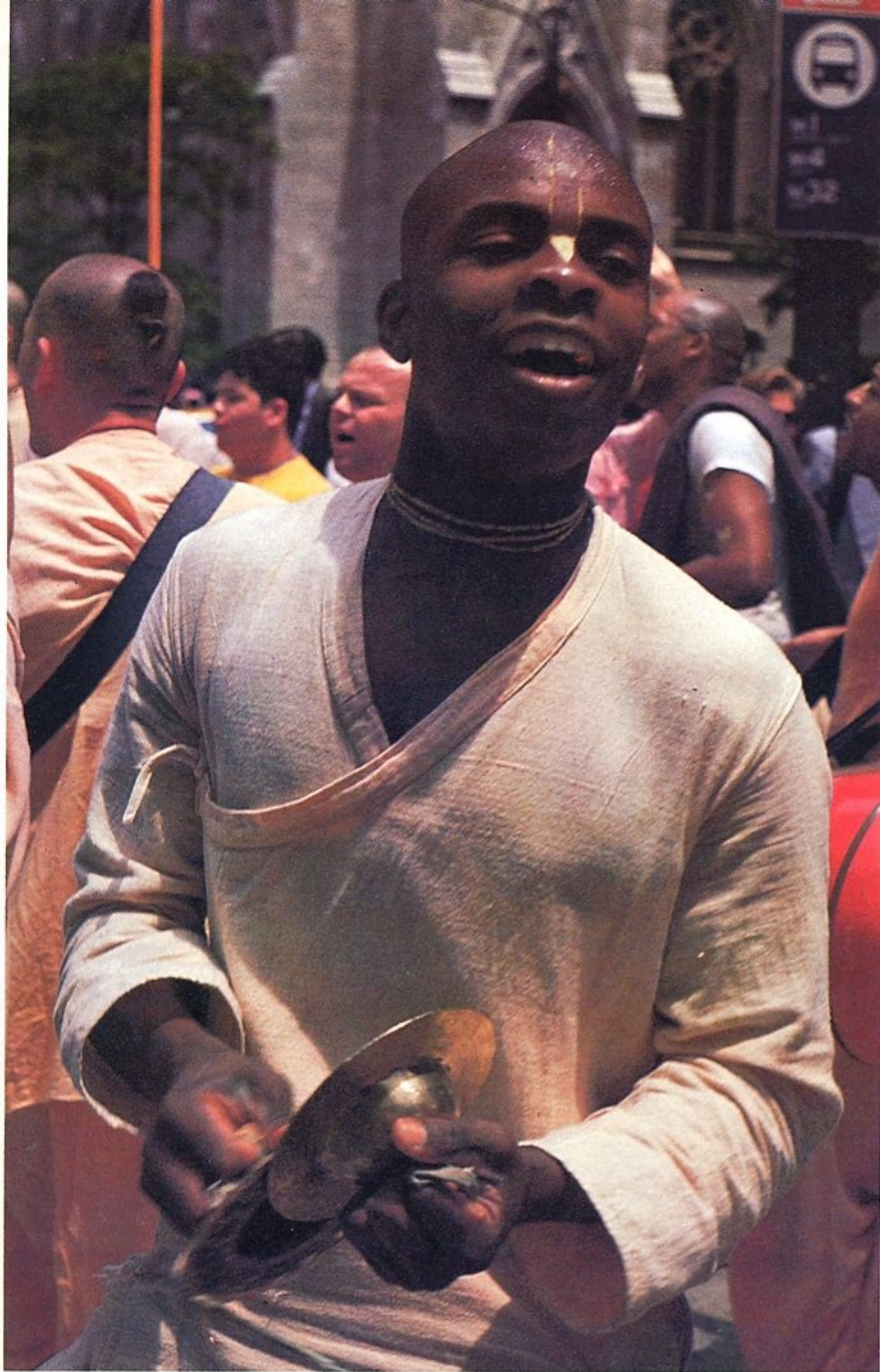
Appreciation for spiritual life comes only when we are able to associate with persons who are self-realized and who live according to spiritual truths. On the other hand, if we hear the speculations of nondevotees about the heroes of Vedic culture, such as Lord Kṛṣṇa, Lord Rāma, the Pāṇḍavas, and Hanumān, then we may come to regard them as mythical or irrelevant. Only the learned, God-conscious teachers and saintly persons can infuse us with the conviction that the personalities in the Vedic histories were real persons—persons of the highest standard, whose words and deeds should be followed by all humanity.

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda transplanted the Vedic culture, almost in its entirety, to countries throughout the world. By introducing Kṛṣṇa consciousness in Western countries through books and temple worship, Śrīla Prabhupāda proved that Vedic culture is not only for Hindus.

Lord Caitanya also predicted that the day would come when the names of Kṛṣṇa would be chanted in every town and village of the world. Because many pioneer teachers since Lord Caitanya have worked for the realization of this vision, we now see persons adopting Vaiṣṇava habits, lifestyle, and philosophy in places where Vedic culture was undreamt-of before.

If Indians in Western countries avail themselves of the association of the Westerners who have also become Kṛṣṇa conscious, this will provide a natural inspiration for everyone. Certainly the Western devotees will find their own convictions solidified when they make friends with Indians who have imbibed the Vedic ways from birth.

And the Indians, perhaps especially the young, may take heart to see Westerners giving up the glittering attractions of hedonism and staunchly defending Vedic knowledge against the onslaught of atheistic speculations. The more such association takes place, the more the Indian and Western devotees of Kṛṣṇa can be assured that Vedic spiritual life will certainly endure throughout the world, despite the challenges of modern life. —SDG



YAMARAJA DĀSA

CHANT!

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

Tap into the reservoir of pleasure. By chanting the names of God, you'll immediately be in touch with the source of all pleasure. The name *Kṛṣṇa* means "the all-attractive person," and *Rāma* means "the supreme pleasure." *Hare* is a word addressing Harā, God's devotional energy, to whom we pray to be engaged in the Lord's service. Because God is unlimited and absolute, He is fully present in the sound of His names. So, just as darkness cannot stand in the presence of light, miseries cannot affect us when we chant God's names.

Because we are spiritual and eternal, our natural state is one of unrestricted happiness. But forgetting our original positions as loving servants and devotees of Kṛṣṇa, we suffer the pains of material life. By chanting God's names, we become purified of all material desires, which separate us from Kṛṣṇa, and we regain entrance into the eternal, blissful, spiritual realm.

The spiritual realm is not restricted by time and space; it's always within reach. And you can experience it. Chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*—and taste the pleasure.



The Sunday Feast Miracle

Why does it taste so miraculously good?

We say the food is so delicious because we prepare it with devotion for Lord Kṛṣṇa. And because Kṛṣṇa *eats* it—with pleasure. That's a miracle.

But not only that. See the plate of delectables above? We offered it to Lord Kṛṣṇa, and He finished every bite. Yet because Kṛṣṇa is already full and perfect and because everything is contained within Him, the food is still there for us to serve to our Sunday guests. Another miracle.

So, why does the Sunday feast taste so good? Whatever *your* answer, come enjoy the Sunday Feast Miracle every week at your local Hare Kṛṣṇa center. (See pages 14-15.)