

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

BACK TO GODHEAD

Vol. 22 No. 9

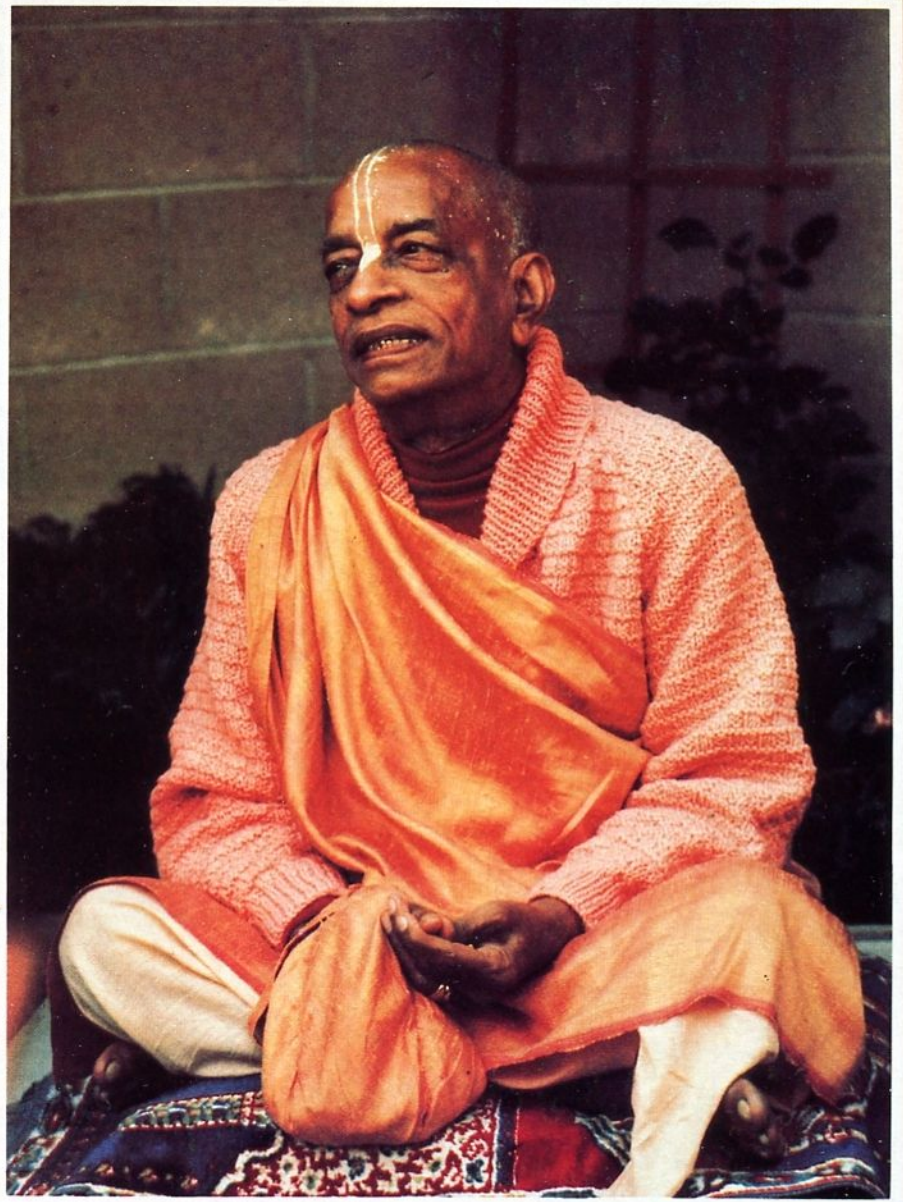
THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT



The Kidnapping of Princess Rukmiṇī

The most powerful warriors of the day desired her hand in marriage.
But on her request, Lord Kṛṣṇa swept her away from them
just as a lion takes a deer from the jackals.

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 pique. Pronounce the vowel ṛ like the rī in rim, and e like the eh 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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EQUAL JUSTICE 3

Śrīla Prabhupāda explains that without the sanction of the supreme "state," the supreme order-giver, we cannot do anything.

Coming to Kṛṣṇa

MY EUREKA EXPERIENCE 5

The truth of Śrīla Prabhupāda's words brings sudden conviction and clarity into a young man's life.

Lord Kṛṣṇa's Cuisine

300 YEARS OF BARBARISM 8

Our cuisine writer takes a "gustatory tour" that evokes her disgust and causes her to reflect on the eating habits of Americans.

FOUR NO-NONSENSE FACTS OF LIFE 11

Conditions in the material world turn our bodies into time-ravaged shells. But there is a way to improve our standard of living.

Book Section

ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM 23

The continuing presentation of India's great spiritual classic. Translation and commentary by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

THE KIDNAPPING OF PRINCESS RUKMIṆĪ 30

From Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, a true tale of palace intrigue: a pastime of Kṛṣṇa and His first queen.

LETTERS 14

PULLOUT POSTER 18

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT 22

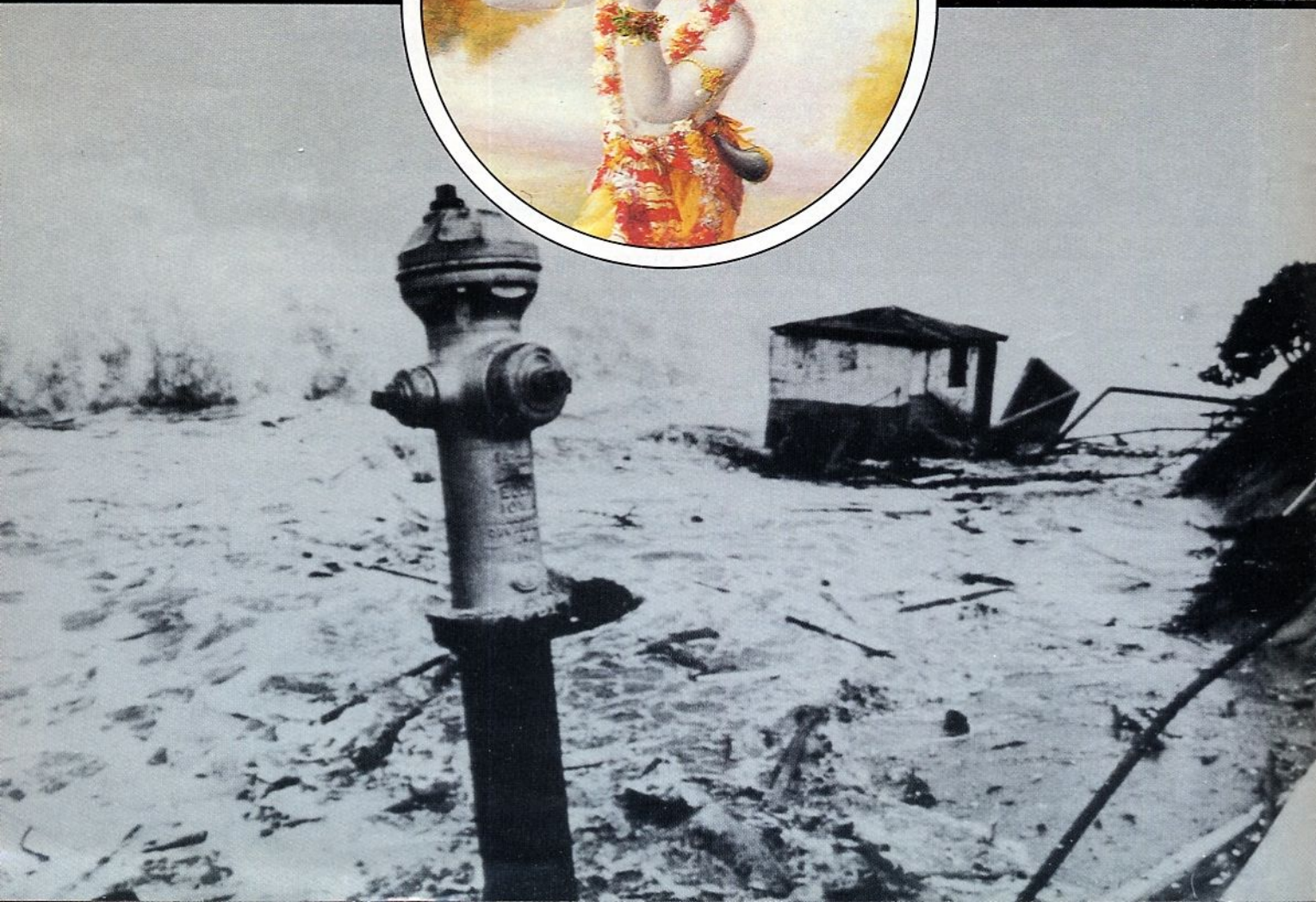
FOR YOUR INFORMATION 26

EVERY TOWN AND VILLAGE 27

THE VEDIC OBSERVER 28

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR 36

COVER: Just before the exquisitely beautiful princess Rukmiṇī was to be married to Śiṣupāla, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, appeared on the scene and took her onto His chariot. A great battle ensued between Kṛṣṇa and many princes and soldiers, but Kṛṣṇa was victorious, and Rukmiṇī was able to fulfill her cherished desire to have Him for her husband. Devotees are always eager to hear about all the transcendental activities of the Lord because even His fighting is on the absolute platform and hearing about it frees one from all material contamination. Please see story on page 30. (Painting by Muralīdhara dāsa.)



If God is impartial, why does one person
inherit a million dollars and another suffer a great loss?
Why is one saved and another killed?

EQUAL JUSTICE

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

*prāyēñaitad bhagavata
īśvarasya viceṣṭitam
mitho nighnanti bhūtāni
bhāvayanti ca yan mithaḥ*

“Factually this is all due to the supreme will of the Lord, the Personality of Godhead. Sometimes people kill one another, and at other times they protect one another.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.15.24)

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Now you can read the purport.

Devotee [reading]: “According to the anthropologists, there is nature’s law of struggle for existence and survival of the fittest. But they do not know that behind the law of nature is the supreme direction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* it is confirmed that the law of nature is executed under the direction of the Lord. Whenever, therefore, there is peace in the world, it must be known that it is due to the good will of the Lord. And whenever there is upheaval in the world, it is also due to the supreme will of the Lord. Not a blade of grass moves without the will of the Lord. Whenever, therefore, there is disobedience of the es-

The ocean shows two faces and seems to testify that God, who controls its power, is acting partially, allowing some to swim and sunbathe, and attacking others with relentless fury. But God is impartial, and those who understand Him know that He treats everyone equally.

established rules enacted by the Lord, there is war between men and nations. The surest way to the path of peace, therefore, is dovetailing everything to the established rule of the Lord. The established rule is that whatever we do, whatever we eat, whatever we sacrifice or whatever we give in charity must be done to the full satisfaction of the Lord. No one should do anything, eat anything, sacrifice anything or give anything in charity against the will of the Lord. Discretion is the better part of valor, and one must learn how to discriminate between actions which may be pleasing to the Lord and those which may not be pleasing to the Lord. An action is thus judged by the Lord’s pleasure or displeasure. There is no room for personal whims; we must always be guided by the pleasure of the Lord. Such action is called *yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam*, or actions performed which are linked with the Supreme Lord. That is the art of doing a thing perfectly.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: So, the first step in spiritual understanding is to know that there is no enjoyment in this material world, only suffering. If in the struggle for existence we are able to counteract the suffering a little bit, we take that as enjoyment. But actually there is no enjoyment. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa, the supreme authority, says that this material world is *duḥkhālayam*, “the place for suffering.” That is a fact.

Now, if a person is accepting suffering as enjoyment, we would say he’s insane,

while the person who is trying to actually end suffering is sane. I’ll give you a practical example. In the prison house, some prisoners are called first class. They are given special favor by the government. And there are third-class prisoners also. But both of them are prisoners, and they must suffer. If the first-class prisoner thinks he can enjoy in the prison, he is fool number one. After all, a prison is not meant for comfortable life; it is meant for suffering. Śrīla Bhaktīnoda Ṭhākura therefore sings, *anādi karama-phale paḍi’ bhavārṇava-jale taribāre nā dekhi upāya*: “I have fallen into this ocean of material life because of my fruitive activities, and I can see no way out of this suffering.”

So, we have no independence to do anything about the suffering of this prison house of the material world. Everyone is thinking, “I am independent,” but that is not the fact. As Lord Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* [3.27],

*prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni
gunaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ
ahaṅkāra-vimūḍhātmā
kartāham iti manyate*

“Everybody is controlled by the laws of material nature, but the foolish persons think they are working independently.”

And ultimately Kṛṣṇa is doing everything. As it is said in this verse of the *Bhāgavatam*, *prāyēñaitad bhagavata īśvarasya viceṣṭitam*: “Everything is due to the

will of the Lord.” We cannot do anything without the will of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the civil state you cannot do anything without the sanction of the government. Similarly, without the sanction of the supreme “state,” the supreme order-giver—Kṛṣṇa, or God—we cannot do anything.

Here it is also said, *mitho nighnanti bhūtāni bhāvayanti ca yan mithaḥ*: “Sometimes, by His will, we kill one another, and sometimes we give protection to one another.” So does this mean that at different times Kṛṣṇa thinks differently, that He is partial? No. Kṛṣṇa’s actions are *daiva*, superior. Kṛṣṇa is just like a high-court judge. In one case a judge will condemn somebody to be hanged, and in another case he will award someone millions of dollars. Is he partial? No. He is simply administering the law, that’s all. One man has created a situation in which he should be condemned to death, and the other man has created a situation in which he will be rewarded with millions of dollars. Everything depends on one’s actions.

So, we are acting in different ways, and by superior administration (*daiva-netreṇa*) we are getting different types of bodies and suffering or enjoying the consequences. This is our position. Kṛṣṇa is impartial. As He says in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *samo ’haṁ sarva-bhūteṣu*: “I am equal to everyone.” Otherwise, how could He be God? God is not partial—deciding whimsically that somebody should be killed and somebody else should be rewarded with ten million dollars. No. By our own work we create our own situation. That you should know.

Now, according to the state law, if I kill somebody, I should also be killed. The law of nature, or the law of God, works similarly. But we forget our past life. No one thinks, “It is because I killed this person in my past life that he is now killing me.” But although we forget our past life, Kṛṣṇa does not forget. And He reminds us: “This child killed you in his past life, so now you can kill him in the womb.” Kṛṣṇa is described as *updraṣṭā* and *anumantā*, “the witness and permitter.” So He sees everything, and then He reminds everyone how to act in order to enjoy or suffer the fruits of their actions. Sometimes He reminds us to kill someone, and sometimes He reminds us to protect someone.

There is nothing wrong with this; it is equal justice. So don’t think that because Kṛṣṇa gives sanction (*viceṣṭitam*) He is partial. No. He is always impartial. We are simply suffering the results of our own activities that violate the will of God. Therefore, for our own benefit we should always try to understand the will of God. That is our duty. The human form of life is an opportunity to understand the will of God. He expresses His will very clearly in the *Bhagavad-gītā* [18.66]: *sarva-dharmān*

parityajya mām ekam śaraṇam vraja. “Just give up all other business and surrender to Me.” Nobody can say, “What is the will of God? I do not know.” No, you know. And what is the result of surrendering to Kṛṣṇa? He says, *ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi*: “I will give you protection and relieve you from the effects of all sinful activity.”

If you become nicely educated, cultured, then you get a good position in society. But if you’re a rascal, you suffer. Similarly, we suffer on account of our sinful activities, and we enjoy by performing pious activities. That is nature’s law, called *karma-bandha*. So long as we do not know what is the will of God, what is our duty, we will create our own position by sinful or pious activities, and therefore we will sometimes suffer and sometimes enjoy.

So, we must know what our duty is. That

We are suffering, yet still we follow the dictation of lust and greed. In this way we create our karma. Any sane man will think, “For so long I have served my nasty desires, but still I am not happy.”

we have forgotten. *Na te viduḥ svārthagatiṁ hi viṣṇum*: In the material condition we have forgotten our actual aim of life—Lord Kṛṣṇa. Therefore Kṛṣṇa comes here. He says in *Bhagavad-gītā* [4.7], *yadā yadā hi dharmasya glānir bhavati bhārata . . . tadātmānaṁ sṛjāmy aham*: “When people forget their duty, I come.” When we forget our duty, that is called *dharmasya-glāniḥ*. *Dharma* is not a religious sentiment. *Dharma* means “one’s occupational duty.” This is explained in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

So, our real occupational duty is to serve the Supreme Lord. We are meant for serving Kṛṣṇa, but when we forget to serve Kṛṣṇa and we try to serve so many other things—our lust, our greediness, our illusion—so many problems result. We *have* to serve—that is our position. Nobody can be free from service. That is not possible. But we do not know where to give our service. That we have forgotten.

Kāmādīnām kati na katidhā pālītā durni-

deśāḥ: The human beings in ignorance are serving lust, greediness, illusion, anger—so many things they are serving. One man kills another because of lusty desire, or out of illusion. So, we are serving—there is no doubt about it—but we are serving our lust, avarice, and so on. Now we have to learn that we are being frustrated by serving all these things, and then we have to turn that service attitude toward Kṛṣṇa. That is Kṛṣṇa’s mission. Kṛṣṇa says, “You are serving already. You cannot be free from service. But your service is misplaced. Therefore just turn your service unto Me and you will become happy.” That is Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

A greedy man suffers because he eats more than he needs. So many diseases—diabetes, dysentery. These diseases come from eating more than required. Still, even though he is suffering, he cannot stop over-eating, because he is greedy and lusty. That is the cause. If you have no appetite and still you eat, then you must suffer. You will contract some disease and suffer. That is a medical fact.

So, we are serving, but we are serving our lust and our greediness, and therefore we are suffering. We are infected with lust, greediness, illusion, fearfulness—so many things. If you steal, you will be fearful: “Oh, I may be arrested, I may be arrested.” Because you have done something wrong, you are under the influence of fear. It is very easy to understand.

We are creating our situation by serving different types of desires. That’s all. And sometimes we are doing something which we know we should not do. But although we have done so much to serve our lust and greediness, they are not merciful, and still they are dictating: “Go on doing this, go on doing this.” We are suffering, yet still we are following the dictation of lust and greed. In this way we are creating our own *karma*. Any sane man will think, “For so long I have served my nasty desires, but still I am not happy, nor are my desires satisfied.” The desires of the lusty man are never satiated. He has killed so many animals simply for the satisfaction of his tongue, and he may know that he should stop, but no, he will go on killing, killing, killing, killing, killing, killing. He is never satisfied. He never concludes, “I have killed so many innocent animals. No more! Let me stop.” No, there is no stopping.

The biblical injunction is “Thou shalt not kill,” but people will kill and kill and kill and kill, and still they want to be peaceful and satisfied. Just see! The Bible says, “Thou shalt not kill,” and even though they are simply engaged in this killing business, still they want to be happy. “Therefore,” Kṛṣṇa says, “be killed by occasional world war.” You must be killed. You have created this situation, so

(continued on page 14)



Coming to Kṛṣṇa

My Eureka Experience

A few lines from a little book turn a routine evening after work into an Archimedean bath.

by KUṆḌALĪ DĀSA

A eureka experience occurs when something routine and familiar suddenly triggers a powerful, emotionally charged realization, and you perceive as never before the depth, meaning, and significance of that particular action or statement.

You feel like the Greek mathematician Archimedes felt when, upon entering his bath one day, he suddenly discovered how to measure the density of an object by seeing the amount of water his body displaced. And like Archimedes, when you have such a stirring revelation, you may also feel like dashing through the streets

shouting "Eureka! Eureka!"

I had my eureka experience one day in May 1973. I'd gotten home from work around five thirty, and as usual I performed my daily rite of watching television with the sound off, the stereo blaring at near peak volume. That was how I'd purge myself of a day at the office of White, Weld and Co., a brokerage house near Wall Street.

My roommate walked in, a big smile on his face, and tossed a booklet in my direction. In deference to the loud music, he pointed to the booklet while silently

ILLUSTRATION BY MARK KELLY

mouthed "Got that for you."

I turned down the music and retrieved the booklet from the floor. The title was *Kṛṣṇa, the Reservoir of Pleasure*. "Thanks, Kevin," I said. "I just read a book about Kṛṣṇa a few weeks ago. Three volumes. Interesting stuff."

"I saw you reading it; that's why I brought this for you. What about the magazines?"

Kevin worked in an office in mid-Manhattan, and almost daily he saw Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees chanting on the streets or distributing literature in the subways. He brought me whatever literature they gave him in exchange for his occasional donations of pocket change. Over a few months I had acquired three or four *Back to Godhead* magazines, which I'd flipped through and tucked under the stereo.

"Mostly looked at the pictures," I said. "Some really beautiful art. You know, I thought Hare Kṛṣṇas were just die-hard hippies, trying to be Siddhartha or something, but I'm really beginning to respect them."

Kevin was noncommittal. "They seem sincere," he said, "but that's not my scene."

Kevin had an innate aversion for spiritual life. He wasn't an out-and-out hedonist, mind you; he believed in the golden rule. He reckoned his observance of it took care of his end of life's bargain. He had no objection to my interest in spiritual life, however, and in his own quiet way he encouraged me by bringing me the booklet and the magazines.

While Kevin fixed dinner, I started on the *Reservoir of Pleasure*. I had enjoyed the other Hare Kṛṣṇa books, and I was eager to see what a booklet with such a promising title would yield. My eagerness paid off right in the first paragraph:

Each of us, every living being, seeks pleasure. But we do not know how to seek pleasure perfectly. With a materialistic concept of life, we are frustrated at every step in satisfying our pleasure because we have no information regarding the real level on which to have real pleasure.

Not very earthshaking statements at first glance. In most instances I would have just kept on reading, the way Archimedes might have blithely taken his bath with no further thought about the overflowing water. But he didn't, because all at once the significance of the overflowing water overwhelmed him. Similarly, I was overwhelmed by the passage; it struck me like a blow between the eyes.

The more I thought about the import of those few sentences, the more they made sense and the more the truth of them became etched into my mind. I felt myself enter an altered state of consciousness wherein I perceived with profound clarity

that these statements weren't merely true, they were *absolutely* true.

My thoughts gathered momentum. The experience was like a voice speaking to me from within. "This is the challenge of life," it said. "You have to search out perfect happiness. If you don't, your life will be worthless. After tonight, unless you do everything in your power to find perfect happiness, you will never be satisfied."

"That's it," I thought. "That's the whole problem of life summed up right there. Without consciously and deliberately seeking a solution to this problem, what is the value of any other endeavor? Now I understand what Socrates meant when he said, 'The unexamined life is not worth living.'"

Walking to the bus stand, I had no intention of reading the books. Although I considered myself a broad-minded spiritual eclectic, my eclecticism did not extend to the Hare Kṛṣṇas. Early on I had ruled them out from serious consideration.

I went into my bedroom and closed the door. I didn't want to risk Kevin's diverting my thoughts before I had fully digested them.

My eureka experience actually had its roots in an episode that had occurred about a month earlier. I hadn't seen my parents since the previous fall, so one balmy Saturday morning I went by bus to New Jersey to spend the day with them. That evening, just before my return journey, Irwin, my stepfather, said, "Conrad, I have a little gift for you," and popped three books into my hand. They were a trilogy entitled *Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead*.

"Hare Kṛṣṇa books," Irwin said with a huge grin. He was enjoying himself, getting a kick out of giving me some books by the weird Hare Kṛṣṇas. "You like books on mysticism and that kinda thing, right?"

"Yeah, I even have a few Hare Kṛṣṇa magazines," I replied, feigning interest in Kṛṣṇa literature to appear appreciative of his gift.

Irwin was the personnel director at Saint Barnabas Hospital for Chronic Diseases, in the Bronx. He had gotten the books from his assistant, who had gotten them from a devotee in the New York Port Authority terminal. His assistant didn't want the books, so Irwin, thinking I'd be interested in reading up on Hare Kṛṣṇa philosophy, had offered to take them.

Irwin opened one of the books. "Look at that," he said. "George Harrison wrote the foreword. You like him, right?"

"Oh, yes, he's one of my favorites. I don't know about the Hare Kṛṣṇas, though. I always avoid them down where I work. I see them chanting in Central Park on the weekends; they're a little too flamboyant for me—"

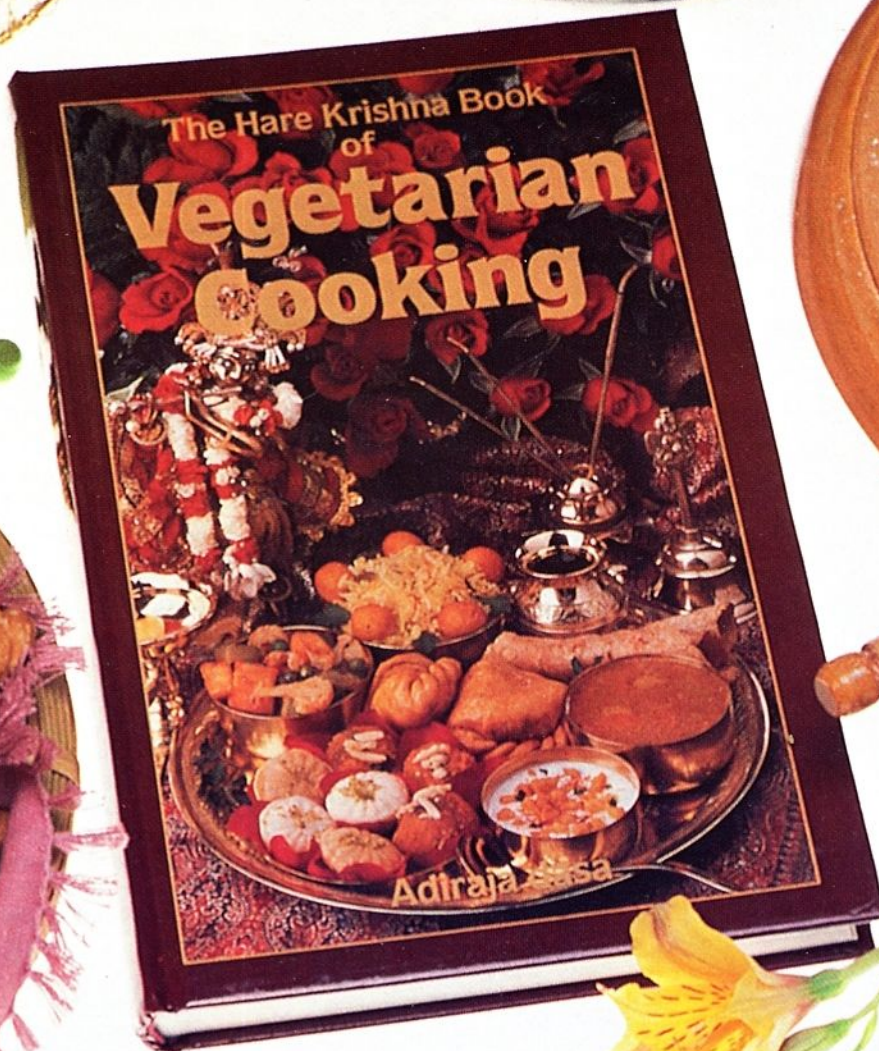
"You can say that again," Mom said. "I think they're all a little weird myself. Anyway, at least reading one of their books is better than being seen with them in public."

Walking to the bus stand, I had no intention of reading the books. Although I considered myself a broad-minded spiritual eclectic—I would read any book, tract, or magazine by anyone claiming to be a spiritual luminary—my eclecticism did not extend to the Hare Kṛṣṇas. Early on I had ruled them out from serious consideration. Too fanatic, I thought. Too public. Too loud about their spirituality. In my view, being spiritual was fine, but proselytizing on street corners was not. Although a part of me admired the devotees for their courage of conviction, that wasn't enough to make me want to read their books.

But a bus ride from Teaneck to New York in the late evening is boring, and I'm the type of person for whom any printed matter is grist for my reading mill. Besides, I did want to know what George Harrison had to say about the enigmatic Hare Kṛṣṇas. So, despite my reluctance, I opened Volume One and started reading his "Words From Apple."

I read all the way home and on, until two the next morning. I found everything about the book fascinating: the cover, the foreword, the preface, the introduction, the illustrations, and the stories themselves. They were a summary translation from Sanskrit of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in India five thousand years ago. Śrīla Prabhupāda's lucid commentary ran throughout the narrative. I was amazed to learn of the deep philosophy and tradition behind the people I'd seen chanting in the streets.

Reading at every spare moment, day
(continued on page 10)

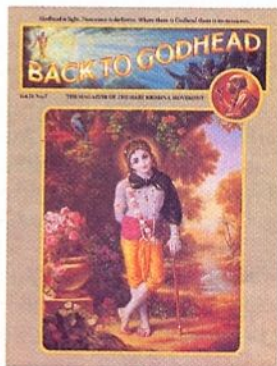


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ROGER ANNEY

Lord Kṛṣṇa's Cuisine

300 Years of Barbarism

A visit to an exhibit of Philadelphia's culinary history reveals incongruity in the "city of brotherly love."

by VIŚĀKHĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

"Ages of Eating in Philadelphia," I read the title to the cover story to the food section of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. "An overview of 300 years of Philadelphia cuisine, 'The Larder Invaded: Three Centuries of Philadelphia Food and Drink' is a gustatory tour by means of 1,200 paintings, utensils and cookbooks..." the article read. As *Back to Godhead's* cuisine writer, I decided to go, although not without skepticism—Philadelphians undoubtedly had been eating for three hundred years, but that didn't ne-

cessarily mean they knew anything about eating.

The exhibit was located in two adjoining buildings, one belonging to the Library Company of Philadelphia—the oldest cultural institution in America—and the other to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. I entered the prestigious buildings at Locust and Thirteenth Streets and was politely ushered past four galleries of classical paintings to a sign—"Philadelphia's Taste Displayed"—marking the beginning of the exhibit.

"Turtle meat has been a highlight of Philadelphia cuisine since pre-revolutionary days, . . ." the caption on the first display case asserted. I moved on to the next exhibit. "Philadelphians were more oyster crazy than most. They ate them raw, fried, stewed, pickled, broiled, even frozen (as a hangover remedy). . . ." I skipped "Fish" and went to the "Scrapple" display. Beneath the glass case an ancient-looking cookbook was propped open to an ancient scrapple recipe. "Scrapple: take all the useless parts from a pig's head; add the lungs, liver and heart; put into an iron pot over the fire . . ."

I thought I shouldn't have put so many coins in the parking meter—the exhibit was grotesque beyond my imagination. Philadelphians should be embarrassed at their history of eating, not proud of it.

Since I had time I meandered on, feeling rather disgusted, past the exhibits of catfish, sugars and spices, ice cream molds from the eighteenth century, early cookbook writers, the first Philadelphia restaurants and street vendors—until a painting in a corner caught my eye.

It was a watercolor of a parade coming down Chestnut Street, just a few blocks from Locust and Thirteenth, were I was. Men, women, and children crowded the broad streets and leaned out of the three-story houses that went off as far as one could see. They were all witnessing the "Procession of Victuallers of Philadelphia." Hundreds of uniformed men on horseback surrounded a horse-drawn double-decker cart. A band was playing on the first deck, and a man stood next to a large brown ox on the second deck. Above the ox a flag waved with the words "Fed By Lewis Clapier."

I read the caption below the painting:

On the 15th of March, 1821, the butchers opened the most notable meat fair the city had ever known. After a week's exhibition, most of the 63 head of cattle, 42 oxen, 4 bears, 3 deer, 10 goats, 8 mammoth hogs and countless sheep were slaughtered. Alive or in dressed form, the 86,731 pounds of meat were paraded through Philadelphia's streets and sold within 24 hours.

I was the only person at the exhibit that day, and I stood for a long time looking at the painting. I read the artist's ornately calligraphic words beneath his painting: "The occasion that gave rise to this splendid procession was conveying the meat . . . which, for number, quality, beauty and variety has never been slaughtered at any one time in this, or probably in any other, country. . . ."

As any devotee would, I saw this event as cold-blooded murder. It was immoral and heinous, and it would wreak havoc for all its vacuum-hearted participants and supporters. Śrīla Prabhupāda writes:

(continued on page 35)

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

Fried Cabbage and Potatoes (*Bandgobhi alu sabji*)

Preparation and cooking time: 30 minutes
Servings: 4-6

1 pound cabbage (a small head)
4 medium-size potatoes
4 medium-size ripe tomatoes
1 tablespoon fresh ginger, peeled and grated
1 teaspoon turmeric
¼-½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
2 cloves (or ¼ teaspoon ground cloves)
2 cardamom pods (or ¼ teaspoon ground)
1 3-inch cinnamon stick (or ½ tsp. ground)
1½ teaspoons salt
½ teaspoon sugar
5 tablespoons ghee (clarified butter) or vegetable oil
½ cup water

1. Wash the cabbage, shred it, and let it drain. With an electric coffee grinder or a mortar and pestle, grind the cloves, cardamom, and cinnamon stick into a powder and set aside.

2. Peel and cube the potatoes, and cut each tomato into 8 wedges.

3. In a nonstick saucepan, heat 3 tablespoons of the ghee or vegetable oil over a moderate flame. Put the cubed potatoes in the pan and stir-fry them, scraping the bottom of the pan frequently, until they are lightly browned. Remove them from the pan and set them aside.

4. Put the remaining 2 tablespoons of ghee or vegetable oil in the same saucepan and stir-fry the grated ginger. Add the cayenne pepper and turmeric, and continue to fry for a few seconds more. Now add the shredded cabbage and fry for 3 or 4 more minutes, stirring regularly to mix it with the spices and prevent scorching. Add the tomatoes, fried potatoes, salt, sugar, and water. Cover the pan and simmer over a low flame until all the vegetables are tender.

5. Before offering to Kṛṣṇa, sprinkle the previously prepared ground sweet spices over the top and mix gently.

Chickpea-flour Bread (*Besan roti*)

Preparation time: 15 minutes
Standing time: 30 minutes
Rolling and cooking time: 5 minutes for each *roti*
Servings: 12

1½ cups sifted whole-wheat flour
1½ cups chickpea flour
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon ground black pepper
½ teaspoon cumin seeds
1 fresh chili, minced
3 tablespoons fresh coriander or spinach leaves
1 tablespoon ghee or butter
½ cup warm water

1. Combine the flours, salt, spices, and coriander leaves in a large bowl. Rub the ghee or butter into the mixture. Gradually add warm water while mixing and kneading, until you have a smooth and elastic dough. Cover the dough with a moist cloth and set aside.

2. After 30 minutes or more, put a heavy griddle over a medium-low flame. Break the dough into 12 parts. Take each part, form it into a ball, and roll it into a disc. Brush it with melted butter and fold it in half. Butter and fold in half again, making a triangle. Roll it out into a thin triangle. When the pan is hot, place a *besan roti* on it and cook each side for 2 or 3 minutes, using a little ghee or butter if the *roti* sticks to the pan. Then spread ½ teaspoon of ghee or melted butter over one side and rub it into the *roti* with the back of the spoon. Do the same with the other side. The *besan roti* is finished when both sides are golden-brown and freckled with red spots. Cook all 12 the same way. Offer to Kṛṣṇa.

Mung Beans in Yogurt Sauce (*Mithi ghani dāl*)

Soaking time: overnight
Sprouting time: 24 hours
Preparation time: 1 hour
Servings: 4-6

1 cup whole *mung* beans
1 cup yogurt or buttermilk
2 tablespoons chickpea flour
3 tablespoons ghee or vegetable oil
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
1 tablespoon fresh ginger, grated
3 fresh chilies, seeded and minced
¼ teaspoon asafetida
5 curry leaves (if available)
1 teaspoon turmeric
1½ teaspoons salt
2 cups water
1½ teaspoons sugar
3 heaping tablespoons fresh coriander leaves, chopped

1. Wash the *mung* beans and soak them overnight. The next morning, tie them in a moist cloth and hang them for 24 hours before cooking, so they can begin to sprout. Check from time to time to make sure the cloth does not dry out.

2. Mix the chickpea flour with the yogurt or buttermilk and set aside. Heat the ghee or vegetable oil and fry the cumin, ginger, chilies, and asafetida. When the cumin seeds darken, add the curry leaves, turmeric, salt, and sprouted *mung* beans. Pour the water into the pan and cook over a medium flame for 30 or 40 minutes, adding a little more water if necessary. When the beans are soft, add the yogurt or buttermilk; then add the sugar and cook for 5 more minutes. Garnish with the chopped coriander leaves. Offer to Kṛṣṇa.

Mixed Vegetable Rice (*Sabji pulao*)

Soaking and draining time: 30 minutes
Preparation time: 35-40 minutes

Servings: 4-6

2 whole cloves
2 cinnamon sticks, crushed
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
½ teaspoon ground cardamom seeds
¼ teaspoon asafetida
1 cup basmati rice
1 tablespoon ghee or butter
1 fresh chili, seeded and minced
½ teaspoon fresh ginger, grated
½ teaspoon turmeric
4 ounces fresh peas
4 ounces green beans
4 ounces cauliflower buds
4 ounces diced carrots
2 cups water
2 teaspoons salt
3 firm ripe tomatoes, washed and chopped
2 bay leaves
2 lemons or limes, cut into wedges

1. Begin by wrapping the cloves, cinnamon sticks, cumin, cardamom, and asafetida in a small piece of muslin (like a tea bag).

2. Wash the rice, soak it for 15 minutes, and let it drain for 15 minutes. Heat the ghee or butter in a medium-size saucepan and fry the chili, grated ginger, and turmeric.

3. Now add the vegetables (except the tomatoes) and fry for 4 or 5 minutes more. Add the rice and stir for a moment. Then add the water, salt, tomatoes, and bay leaves. Stir again and bring to a boil. Suspend the little bag of spices in the rice, cover the pot, and cook over a very low flame until the rice has absorbed all the water.

4. Remove the spice bag and squeeze it over the rice. Turn the rice onto a pre-heated serving dish and garnish with wedges of lemon or lime. Offer to Kṛṣṇa.

Pineapple Chutney (*Anannas ki chatni*)

Preparation time: 30 minutes
Servings: 4-6

1 medium-large pineapple
1 tablespoon ghee
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
2 fresh chilies, seeded and minced
½ teaspoon turmeric
4 tablespoons water
1 cup brown sugar

1. Hold the pineapple upright and pare off the skin with a sharp knife; then dig out the eyes. Cut the pineapple lengthwise into quarters and remove the core from each quarter. Then cut each quarter lengthwise into three strips and cut each strip into chunks. Set the pineapple aside in a bowl.

2. Heat the ghee in a saucepan and fry the cumin seeds and chilies until they darken. Toss in the turmeric; then immediately add the pineapple chunks. After stir-frying for 4 or 5 minutes, add the water. Cover the pan. Cook over a low flame for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove the cover and continue to cook until most of the liquid is cooked off. Finally, stir in the sugar and cook over the same low flame until the chutney thickens again (about 10 minutes). Offer to Kṛṣṇa.

Experience

(continued from page 6)

and night, I finished all three volumes in a few days. One thing I readily appreciated was the historical account of Kṛṣṇa's life. I had read *Bhagavad-gītā* and numerous books citing the *Gītā*, but it had never occurred to me to think of the speaker of the *Gītā*, Kṛṣṇa, as an actual historical person. He was usually portrayed as a mythical person, one whose existence was incidental, not instrumental, to the ideas in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. It was enlightening to learn about His life, both before and after He spoke the *Gītā*.

At the same time I made a grievous mistake. I took particular relish in identifying myself with Kṛṣṇa, the way a person might vicariously enjoy the role of the hero in a story. I imagined that the descriptions of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes were a sample of the kind of pastimes I would enjoy when I became enlightened and realized that I too was God.

In those days I was an impersonalist. I believed that I was God, somehow temporarily fallen into illusion and therefore forgetful of my true identity. I thought the aim of spiritual life was to realize my "godself" and merge back into the Universal Oversoul. This, I thought, was the heart of India's Vedantic philosophy, for that was the slant of virtually every book on the subject that I'd read prior to Śrīla Prabhupāda's.

Never having encountered personalism (the doctrine that the individual souls are eternal persons and loving servants of the Supreme Eternal Person), I had wrongly assumed Śrīla Prabhupāda to be of the same impersonal persuasion as myself. I therefore interpreted all I read in his books in impersonalistic terms.

Reading the same books now, I see clearly that the impersonal conception is a prime target of Prabhupāda's strong personalistic commentary. I wonder at how I was so foolish as to twist his words to suit my preconceived notions of spirituality. I'm embarrassed to admit that despite my fascination with the pastimes, I had no solid understanding of Kṛṣṇa consciousness after reading the *Kṛṣṇa* trilogy.

What I did gain, however, which helped prepare me for my eureka experience, was a willingness to read more books by Śrīla Prabhupāda. Though I hadn't properly understood the trilogy, I was convinced that Prabhupāda was a genuine self-realized spiritual authority, that he wasn't just conjecturing about transcendence.

My conviction about Prabhupāda's spiritual authority came in handy when I read the *Reservoir of Pleasure*. Because I had enjoyed the trilogy, I was more recep-

tive—but not uncritically so—to what Prabhupāda had to say.

In one sense, my realization that night was not unique. Many others have come to similar conclusions about life. That wasn't even the first time I had had thoughts about the frustration of my desires for pleasure. What made it unique were the clarity with which I saw the truth of Prabhupāda's words, and the conviction that perception brought me. It galvanized me with resolve to make the search for perfect pleasure my priority. I knew I would never be able to ignore this experience and simply meander through life.

As I read on, I saw that Śrīla Prabhupāda proposed Kṛṣṇa consciousness as

I decided that if accepting the path to perfect pleasure meant shaving my head, wearing robes, and singing and dancing in the street, I would do those things. They seemed a small price to pay for the thing I wanted more than anything else.

the process for realizing perfect pleasure. All his arguments made sense to me, but I wasn't convinced yet; I wanted to study his teachings more carefully. At the same time, I decided that if accepting the path to perfect pleasure meant shaving my head, wearing robes, and singing and dancing in the street, I would do those things. They seemed a small price to pay for the thing I wanted more than anything else in the world.

I was cautious, though. I went to the Kṛṣṇa temple in Brooklyn to see if devotees practiced what Prabhupāda preached. I was pleased to see that they did. I read more of his books—*Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, *Teachings of Lord Caitanya*, *The Nectar of Devotion*, and *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*—and found no inconsistency in the philosophy. I started visiting the temple twice daily, attending morning and evening classes, and chanting with the devotees in Times Square.

By the end of July, I could no longer

bear living a dual life, so I tendered my resignation at White, Weld and Co. In giving my reasons for quitting, I quoted the lyrics from a song by Cat Stevens that had been coursing through my mind for several months:

I don't want to work away
doing just what they all say
work hard boy and you'll find
one day you'll have a job like mine,
job like mine, a job like mine.
Be wise, look ahead, use your eyes,
they said. Be straight. Think right.
But I might die tonight.

And I gave my closing comment: "There must be more to life than a promising future in a lucrative dog-eat-dog career on Wall Street, and I'm determined to find it." Two weeks later I moved into the temple.

That fall my eureka experience bore its first fruit. My conclusion about Śrīla Prabhupāda being a genuine self-realized soul was confirmed in a most wonderful way, leaving me no room for doubt. He came to New York, and the devotees went en masse to greet him at the airport.

He carried himself with a childlike innocence I had never seen before; he seemed to be the humblest person I'd ever seen. Yet he was regal in his bearing—aloof, but not at all haughty. His countenance was sublime.

Right away I knew I was in the presence of a saint. I was stunned. In my thinking, saints were beings so rare as to be mythical, like unicorns. I had relegated saints to religious storybooks. I had never dreamed I would meet a real one face to face.

Along with the devotees present, I bowed to him, my head touching the floor as I recited in Sanskrit two prayers I'd learned at the temple:

I offer my respectful obeisances unto His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who is very dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa, having taken shelter at His lotus feet.

Our respectful obeisances are unto you, O spiritual master, servant of Sarasvatī Gosvāmī. You are kindly preaching the message of Lord Caitanyadeva and delivering the Western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism.

Before rising, I vowed to follow Śrīla Prabhupāda for as long as I lived. Immediately my whole being felt light, as if a great burden had been lifted off me. I felt happiness beyond anything I'd ever felt. It was an incomparably ecstatic, rapturous feeling.

To this day I have no idea why the opening passage of the *Reservoir of Pleasure* had such an overpowering effect on me. I have thought about it over the years, and I can think of no explanation, except a simple admission that it was Kṛṣṇa's mercy. ❧

4

NO-NONSENSE FACTS OF LIFE

A hard look at the problems we all face.

by VIŚĀKHĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

You may have heard Kṛṣṇa's devotees use the term *conditioned soul*, and you may have wondered what it meant. A conditioned soul is one controlled by the insurmountable forces of material nature, especially the miseries of birth, aging, disease, and death.

For us conditioned souls in the material world, all the rewards and pleasantries of life—the tender love of our friends and relatives, our homes, hobbies, studies, dinners at eight, and tennis on Sundays—all are fleeting because of these relentless impositions of nature. Some souls, desiring to attain lasting pleasure, try to become unconditioned, free from the influence of material nature.

To do this they require a qualified spiritual teacher, as well as guidebooks, like *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, elaborate treatises on material and spiritual knowledge. *Bhagavad-gītā* describes one aspect of knowledge as “the perception of the evil of birth, death, old age, and disease.” This unabashedly pessimistic view of material life is an impetus for those who want to become unconditioned.

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Third Canto, this impetus is strengthened through a discussion between Lord Kapila, an incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and His mother, Devahūti.

“Devahūti said: My dear Lord, please describe in detail, both for myself and for people in general, the continual process of birth and death, for by hearing of such calamities we may become detached from the activities of this material world.”

In answer to her question, Lord Kapila explained in detail how the life force, the soul, enters the womb of a woman through a particle of male semen during sexual intercourse, how the fetus develops over the weeks and months of pregnancy, and how it suffers.



Owing to the mother's eating bitter, pungent food, or food which is too salty or too sour, the body of the child incessantly suffers pains which are almost intolerable. Covered outside by the intestines, the child remains lying on one side of the abdomen, his head turned toward his belly and his back arched like a bow. The child thus remains just like a bird in a cage without freedom of movement.

Although scientific researchers have confirmed many of the *Bhāgavatam's* statements about the development of the fetus, they have yet to discover how much it suffers. As we have forgotten the pain of

injuries or illnesses we suffered years ago, we have similarly forgotten the pain of the fetal condition.

And what to speak of the birth itself! “Pushed downward all of a sudden by the wind that helps parturition,” Kapila describes, “the child comes out with great trouble, head downward, breathless, and deprived of memory due to severe agony.”

As any mother knows, the infant's miseries continue after birth. The helpless babe can't express what he wants, nor can he refuse the undesirables given him. He can't scratch himself or even move properly, and he cries from indigestion, colic, teething, teasing, and from pains that only he knows.

Just as a farmer neglects his old and worn-out animals, so, in Lord Kapila's words, “seeing the old man unable to support them, his family members do not treat him with the same respect as before.” Thus old people, regarded by their relatives as too difficult to live with and care for, languish in homes for the aged. If they do stay home, “they remain just like a pet dog and eat whatever is negligently given to them.” Afflicted with many illnesses, Kapila explains, they eat only small morsels of food and remain idle invalids, while their bodies dwindle and deteriorate under the imperceptible yet indomitable influence of time. The old person's body becomes a time-ravaged shell, like an abandoned house, a barren structure without facilities or comfort.

In the form of old age, time serves a summons of death that

no one can refuse. But instead of preparing for death, senior citizens erect a lackluster façade of painted wrinkles, dyed hair, and sporty clothes.



Living on their “golden years” retirement funds, they enjoy shuffleboard, mild surf, and shopping expeditions—until death comes and their body, along with its facade, returns to dust.

Despite extensive medical research, sophisticated hospitals, and hard-working doctors, disease has not decreased. Just as the body must take birth and must die, so it must be wracked by one or more of myriad diseases—from arthritis to AIDS, from muscle sprains to mental imbalance. Though considered



an abnormal condition, disease is actually the normal condition imposed on the bodies of all conditioned souls subjected to the impositions of nature.

“What is the most amazing thing?” a sagacious king was once asked. “The most amazing thing,” the king responded, “is that although everyone knows he is destined to die, just as his relatives and friends have died, no one prepares for his own death. He acts as if he will live forever.”

Time vanquishes everything material. With each rising and setting of the sun, with each passing moment, the balance of our life is being snatched away. Each passing birthday means one year closer to death.

Lord Kapila describes a dying man’s final moments:

In his diseased condition, the old man’s eyes bulge due to the pressure of air from within, and his glands become congested with mucus. He has difficulty breathing, and upon exhaling and inhaling he produces a sound like *ghura-ghura*, a rattling within the throat.

In this way he comes under the clutches of death and lies down, surrounded by lamenting friends and relatives, and although he wants to speak with them, he no longer can. Thus he dies pitifully, in inconceivable pain and grief.

Unable to finish his plans, dissatisfied with the provisions he’s made for his family, and unaware of his own fate, the dying man is as helpless as a newborn.

Our brief lifetime is likened to a bubble in the ocean. The tossing of ocean waves produces many small bubbles that

stay together for some time and then separate, never to reunite. Similarly, our family, friends, and countrymen cluster like bubbles, only to be separated by death.

Although all conditioned souls, as eternal spiritual beings, are not meant to die, they are subject to death because their existence is intertwined with material nature. But it is possible to become disentangled, to solve the problem of death.



Conclusion

“The saints and sages,” Devahūti said, “being freed from all the disturbances of the senses and mind, meditate upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for by His mercy only can one become free from the clutches of material nature.”

Lord Kapila appreciated her realization and said,

The path of devotional service is very easy. You can execute this system without difficulty, and by following it you shall very soon be liberated, even within your present body. Persons who are not conversant with this method of devotional service to the Supreme Lord certainly cannot get out of the cycle of birth and death.

Since the conditioned soul doesn’t know of the spiritual science called devotional service, he works hard and neglects to look philosophically at the causes of and cures for his miseries. But the unconditioned soul withdraws his senses from material activities and, well-equipped with knowledge and detachment, engages them fully in the service of the Supreme Lord. Anyone whose only aim is to serve the Supreme Lord under the direction of a bona fide spiritual master is liberated even within the material body. Although he will still have to satisfy the body’s basic needs, he is not disturbed by the forces of material nature.

“You mean an unconditioned soul doesn’t grow old, get diseases, or die?” you may ask in disbelief. Of course, from an external viewpoint he does experience these conditions. But in a higher, spiritual sense he doesn’t, because he has realized that he’s not the material body but the spirit soul within. Just as my wearing an old coat and blouse won’t make me old, similarly the conditions of the body and mind can never actually affect the eternal soul.

So even death—the ultimate material condition—has no influence on the liberated soul. For example, when a cat holds a rat in its mouth, the rat feels terror, knowing that death is near. But when that same cat holds its kitten in its mouth, the kitten feels comfort. Similarly, when death comes for a conditioned soul, he’s terrified, but for an unconditioned soul “death” means that the Lord has come to carry him back to Godhead, back to the spiritual world. ❏

LETTERS

I have tried to read *Bhagavad-gītā*, the *Upaniṣads*, the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, etc. The philosophy is very hard to internalize, to say the least. I was born into the "Hindu" religion and have almost blindly followed the customs and traditions of Hinduism for fifty years.

Difficulty has started since I started trying to interpret and read the philosophy behind Hinduism and the great books like the *Gītā* and the *Mahābhārata*, etc. The more I read I get more confused and it becomes even harder to undergo realization. At this point in time I feel I am grossly deluded. Hope your help will clear some of this confusion. Thank you.

Dr. H. K. Sinha
London, England

OUR REPLY: I can understand your confusion in trying to understand the philosophy of the Vedic literatures. It seems that everyone who reads the *Bhagavad-gītā* has his own interpretation, and unfortunately many people try to present their interpretations as the absolute truth. The fact is, however, that we can learn the absolute truth only from the Absolute Truth Himself.

In other words, we cannot hear from just anyone. We have to hear from God or His representatives. Kṛṣṇa clearly says in *Bhagavad-gītā* that He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Supreme Absolute Truth. And many saints and sages confirm that He is God. Why should we try to interpret Kṛṣṇa's words? He is God, and He can speak clearly for our understanding. Those who interpret Kṛṣṇa's words actually misinterpret them. We should hear only from those who give us Kṛṣṇa's teachings without any adulteration. Only such persons are qualified *gurus*. Kṛṣṇa's unadulterated teachings have the potency to change our hearts and give us full realization.

This we have seen by the work of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. Because he presented *Bhagavad-gītā* "as it is," he was able to create many devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa all over the world. As a result of seeing things clearly by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa and His pure representative Śrīla Prabhupāda, these devotees are enthusiastically engaging in the service of the Absolute Truth, for the benefit of themselves and all humanity.

Please continue to read Śrīla Prabhupāda's books and associate with the devotees. I'm sure your confusion will soon clear up.

* * *

I've wanted to ask you this question for some time, but I didn't have enough inspiration or inquisitiveness until now. What if someone says, "My scripture doesn't tell about God having a personal form, so I don't believe God has a personal form"? We can try to tell him or her all about the Vedic scriptures, but still the question will come again: "I was only taught the Bible . . ." Many people had the same viewpoint before they came to Śrīla Prabhupāda. What did he say to them?

Neeraj Wadehra
Tustin, California

OUR REPLY: We have logical arguments to show that it is perfectly reasonable for God to have a personal form. We'll give you one of those arguments in a moment.

As far as the Bible is concerned, Genesis states specifically that God made man in His own image and likeness. This cannot be interpreted to mean anything except that our form is fashioned after the Lord's own form.

That does not mean the Lord's form is made of material substances, such as flesh,

blood, and bone. His form is completely spiritual. A mannequin is not made of the same substances as your body, but like your body it also has a form. Similarly, our form is like Kṛṣṇa's, but it's not exactly the same. His form is made of spiritual energy; ours is made of material substances. We also have a spiritual form, but it is now covered by our flesh-and-blood form.

It is somewhat difficult to make a completely reasonable case for the existence of God's form strictly on the strength of the Bible. Lord Jesus, the foremost preceptor of the biblical line, said, "I have much to teach, but you are not ready to hear it." No one can reasonably assert, therefore, that merely because something is not mentioned in the Bible (Kṛṣṇa's name, for example) it's automatically a falsehood. That would be very narrow, sectarian religious chauvinism, especially when a little objective study would show anyone that the Vedic science of God continues long after the Bible has stopped. Any sincere person can study that science and gain immense benefit.

Now here is the argument for the Lord's personal form: God is the Absolute Truth and the source of everything. That means that every quality, every element—every manifestation everywhere—originates in Him. Otherwise, the Absolute Truth, God, could not be described as perfect, complete, unlimited, and so forth. Now, if everything in creation originates from the Absolute Truth, the quality of personhood must also originate in Him. In other words, He must be a person.

Personhood is one of God's unlimited qualities. If you say, "No, not possible," you immediately impose a limitation on the unlimited, which, obviously, you cannot do. To fulfill the literal meaning of *Absolute Truth*, we must accept that God is a transcendental person.

Our material minds find it difficult to accept such a transcendental person. But all the scriptures of the world portray God as a person, and great saints and devotees, having realized God's personality after sincere practice of devotional service, glorify Him in music, art, and poetry. ☐

EQUAL JUSTICE

(continued from page 4)

you must be killed. You may be an American or an Englishman or a German, this or that, and you may be very proud of your nationality, but you must be killed. This is the position of the modern civilization. Everything takes place by the will of God: *īśvarasya viceṣṭitam*. You have killed so many animals? Now let there be wholesale human slaughter by one atom bomb.

These rascals do not know how things

are going on by the will of the Lord. If the ordinary state laws declare that one who kills somebody must be hanged, do you think you can simply bluff the supreme authority, Kṛṣṇa? Do you think you can go on killing, killing, killing and remain unpunished? No. You will be killed by pestilence, by famine, even within your mother's womb. In the womb there is supposed to be good protection, but there also you will be killed. Human civilization has degenerated so much that the killing business is increasing daily.

Therefore, we must submit to Kṛṣṇa. We cannot remain free of the laws of God. That is not possible. So we must surrender: "O Kṛṣṇa, O God, I have acted sinfully for so many births, but I did not become happy. Nor am I happy at the present moment. So now I surrender unto You. You promise to give protection to those who surrender unto You, so kindly give me protection from my sinful reactions and engage me in Your service." This is the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

Thank you very much. Hare Kṛṣṇa. ☐

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GOOD REASON
WHY YOU
SHOULD COME
TO THE
SUNDAY FEAST.**

THE CAULIFLOWER PAKORĀ



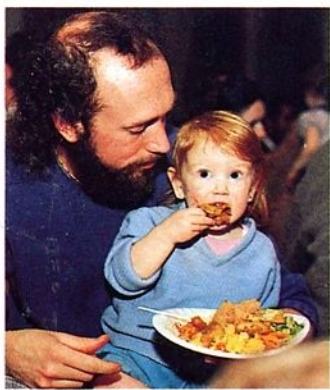
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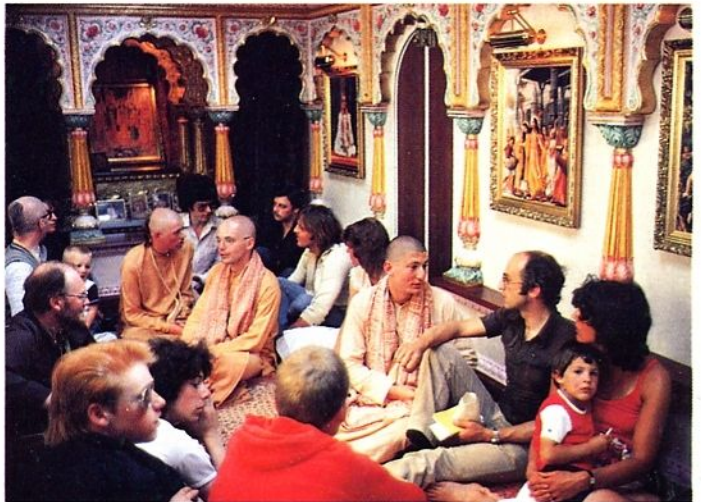
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The Goal of Yoga

Following the ancient *yoga* system prescribed in the *Vedas* for former ages, the perfect *yogī* raises his soul from one *cakra* (circle of subtle air) to another until he reaches the *ājñā-cakra*, between the eyebrows. From there he can penetrate the *brahma-randhra*, or the hole in his skull, and go to any planet he desires or even through the coverings of the material universe and into the spiritual kingdom of *Vaikuṅṭha*. Although this mystic *yoga* practice is impossible in this age, anyone can attain the same result by following the simple process of *bhakti-yoga*, beginning with chanting the Hare *Kṛṣṇa mantra*.

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

The Ultimate Science

This is the 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.

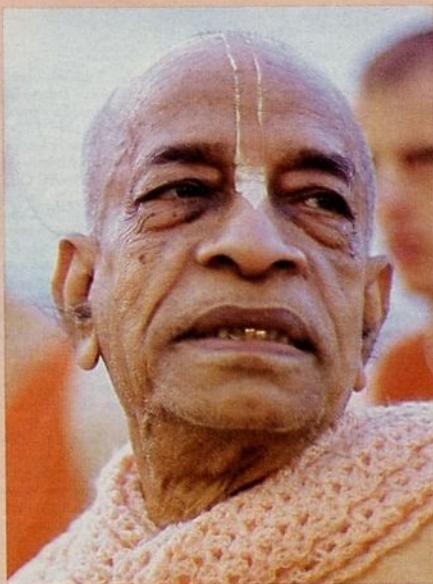
Dr. Singh: Śrīla Prabhupāda, many people would probably agree with what you say about getting knowledge. The ascending path—pulling ourselves up by our own bootstraps, if you will—has to be always uncertain and incomplete. But when you can get your knowledge from a genuine authority who already possesses higher knowledge and experience—that path, the descending path, is much better. The preferable path for acquiring knowledge is the descending one.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. *Avaroha panthā*, the descending path, is naturally superior. Why? Because *aham ādir hi devānām*—this path of knowledge starts from Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, the origin of all knowledge. And it descends from the Lord, through His bona fide representatives, godly personalities such as Brahmā, Nārada, and Vyāsa. They're all *devas*, godly personalities. And Kṛṣṇa says, *aham ādir hi devānām*: "I am the very origin of all these godly personalities." Therefore, this Vedic knowledge is coming directly from Kṛṣṇa through the system of *paramparā*, or disciplic succession.

And the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Lord Kṛṣṇa's book, is the same thing. Through this book—the Lord's literary incarnation—His knowledge is coming down to us still. To facilitate our knowledge-acquiring process, the Lord Himself is speaking directly to us. His own words are recorded for us in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. There Kṛṣṇa speaks directly to the human being Arjuna, and through him directly to us. Therefore, the *Bhagavad-gītā* is the right source of knowledge.

Dr. Singh: Yesterday a doctor of agricultural science visited me. He has his Ph.D. from the University of Missouri, and we talked together for a long time. In fact, we were talking about doing some experiments together. One experiment would be to prove that the chemical reactions within the living body are different from the normal chemical reactions that we know.

In fact, some famous experiments have already touched on this very point. A French scientist named Kervran says his findings are beyond our present knowl-



edge of chemistry. In other words, the chemical reactions within the living body are so vastly different from ordinary reactions, they prove that life is nonchemical, nonphysical.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is correct. It is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: life is nonchemical, nonphysical.

Dr. Singh: Yes, and we want to prove it on a purely experimental basis. It's a very simple experiment. We germinate some seeds, like barley or rice, and we calculate the amount of, let's say, calcium. Now, as a place to germinate the seed on, we use a piece of ashless, pure-cellulose filter paper, completely devoid of calcium. First, we calculate the amount of calcium present before the seed germinates. Then we germinate the seed with deionized water, again completely devoid of calcium. Once the seed germinates, we analyze the calcium content.

What Kervran found is this: The amount of calcium is much increased. So we do not know where that calcium is coming from. And this phenomenon is beyond our present knowledge of chemistry.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: The soul has entered and has germinated the seed—and this has produced the increased calcium.

Dr. Singh: Yes. This increased calcium has to be coming from somewhere. There has to be a cause.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That cause is the soul.
Dr. Singh: There's another nice experiment

that uses Spanish Moss, a plant common in Florida, where it grows on many kinds of trees. We found that this Spanish Moss also grows on copper wire—and when it does, amazingly it produces iron. So there are many intriguing experiments. The U.S. Department of Agriculture can perform these and help shed light on the spiritual dimension.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: In essence, these experiments prove that life produces matter. Spirit produces matter.

Dr. Singh: Yes.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Not that matter produces life—no. This is established: matter does not produce life. It is quite the opposite. Life—spirit—produces matter. Only when there is spirit can these increased quantities of calcium or iron come forth.

Dr. Singh: There's another nice experiment that was done by a German scientist named Hauschka. He was studying the interaction of moonlight and plants. So he measured the amount of a particular element in, say, a flower. I don't exactly remember. And he measured the amount of that element present in the plant, according to the waxing and the waning of the moon. As it turns out, the element increases in the light of the full moon.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, in the *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa confirms that He supplies the succulence, the "juice of life," to vegetables—through the light of the moon.

Dr. Singh: Surely. And Hauschka's experiment demonstrates this whole phenomenon very graphically. You understand—a curve showing this element rising and falling with the waxing and waning of the moon.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, by the Lord's natural arrangement, the moonlight is full of living entities who interact most beneficially with the vegetation. And similarly, the *brahmajyoti*, or universal effulgence, is full of living entities.

Dr. Singh: So these phenomena are beyond science.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Not beyond. You do not know that science.

Dr. Singh: By "beyond science," I meant beyond our present science, our present scientific knowledge.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Your present science is imperfect. But this additional dimension we are discussing is within the realm of science. This is spiritual science.

(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) complete their prayers to Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who then speaks encouraging words to His servants Jaya and Vijaya.

PURPORT

(continued from Text 23)

In *Bhagavad-gītā* it is stated by the Lord Himself that the acts and character of great authorities are followed by people in general. Leaders of ideal character are therefore needed in society. Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, appeared in this material world just to show the example of perfect authority, and people have to follow His path. The Vedic injunction is that one cannot understand the Absolute Truth simply by mental speculation or logical argument. One has to follow the authorities. *Mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ*. Great authorities should be followed; otherwise, if we simply depend on the scriptures, we are sometimes misled by rascals, or else we cannot understand or follow the different spiritual injunctions. The best path is to follow the authorities. The four *brāhmaṇa*-sages stated that Kṛṣṇa is naturally the protector of the cows and *brāhmaṇas*: *go-brāhmaṇa-hitāya ca*. When Kṛṣṇa was on this planet, He set a practical example. He was a cowherd boy, and He was very respectful to the *brāhmaṇas* and devotees.

It is also affirmed herein that the *brāhmaṇas* are the best of the twice-born. *Brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas* and *vaiśyas* are all twice-born, but the *brāhmaṇas* are the best. When there is a fight between two persons, each of them protects the upper part of his body—the head, the arms and the belly. Similarly, for the actual advancement of human civilization, the best part of the social body, namely the *brāhmaṇas*, the *kṣatriyas* and *vaiśyas* (the intelligent class of men, the military class and the mercantile men) should be given special protection. Protection of the laborers should not be neglected, but special protection should be given to the upper orders. Of all classes of men, the *brāhmaṇas* and the *Vaiṣṇavas* should be given special protection. They should be worshiped. When their protection is performed, it is just like worshipping God. That is not exactly protection; it is a duty. One should worship the *brāhmaṇas* and *Vaiṣṇavas* by offering them all kinds of endowments and sweet words, and if one has no means to offer anything, he must at least use sweet words to pacify them. The Lord personally exhibited this behavior towards the Kumāras.

If this system is not introduced by the leaders, then human civilization will be lost. When there is no protection and special treatment for persons who are devotees of the Lord, who are highly intelligent in spiritual life, then the whole society is lost. The word *naikṣyati* indicates that such a civilization becomes spoiled and is annihilated. The kind of civilization recommended is called *deva-patha*, which means the “royal

road of the demigods.” Demigods are supposed to be fully fixed in devotional service, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness; that is the auspicious path that should be protected. If the authorities or the leaders of society do not give special respect to the *brāhmaṇas* and *Vaiṣṇavas* and do not offer them not only sweet words but all facilities, then the path of progress will be lost to human civilization. The Lord personally wanted to teach this, and therefore He offered so much praise to the Kumāras.

TEXT 24

तत्तेऽनभीष्टमिव सत्त्वनिधेर्विधित्तोः
क्षेमं जनाय निजशक्तिभिरुद्धृतारेः ।
नैतावता त्र्यधिपतेर्वैत विश्वभर्तु-
स्तेजः क्षतं त्ववनतस्य स ते विनोदः ॥२४॥

*tat te 'nabhiṣṭam iva sattva-nidher vidhittoḥ
kṣemam janāya nija-śaktibhir uddhṛtāreḥ
naitāvataḥ try-adhipateḥ bata viśva-bhartus
tejaḥ kṣataḥ tv avanatasya sa te vinodaḥ*

tat—that destruction of the path of auspiciousness; *te*—by You; *anabhiṣṭam*—is not liked; *iva*—as; *sattva-nidheḥ*—the reservoir of all goodness; *vidhittoḥ*—desiring to do; *kṣemam*—good; *janāya*—for the people in general; *nija-śaktibhiḥ*—by Your own potencies; *uddhṛta*—destroyed; *areḥ*—the opposite element; *na*—not; *etāvataḥ*—by this; *tri-adhipateḥ*—of the proprietor of the three kinds of creations; *bata*—O Lord; *viśva-bhartuḥ*—the maintainer of the universe; *tejaḥ*—potency; *kṣatam*—reduced; *tu*—but; *avanatasya*—submissive; *saḥ*—that; *te*—Your; *vinodaḥ*—pleasure.

TRANSLATION

Dear Lord, You never want the auspicious path to be destroyed, for You are the reservoir of all goodness. Just to benefit people in general, You destroy the evil element by Your mighty potency. You are the proprietor of the three creations and the maintainer of the entire universe. Therefore Your potency is not reduced by Your submissive behavior. Rather, by submission You exhibit Your transcendental pastimes.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa was never reduced in His position by becoming a cowherd boy or by offering respect to Sudāmā Brāhmaṇa or His other devotees like Nanda Mahārāja, Vasudeva, Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira and the Pāṇḍavas' mother, Kuntī. Everyone knew that He was the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, yet His behavior was exemplary. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*; His form is completely spiritual, full of bliss and knowledge, and it is eternal. Because the living entities are His parts and parcels, originally they also belong to the same quality of eternal form as the Lord, but when they come in contact with *māyā*, the material potency, due to their forgetfulness their existential constitution is covered. We should try to under-

stand the appearance of Lord Kṛṣṇa in this spirit, as the Kumāras pray to Him. He is eternally a cowherd boy at Vṛndāvana, He is eternally the leader of the Battle of Kurukṣetra, and He is eternally the opulent prince of Dvārakā and the lover of the damsels of Vṛndāvana; all His appearances are meaningful because they show His real characteristics to the conditioned souls, who have forgotten their relationship with the Supreme Lord. He does everything for their benefit. The force exhibited in the Battle of Kurukṣetra by the desire of Kṛṣṇa and through the agency of Arjuna was also necessary because when people become too irreligious, force is required. Nonviolence in this respect is rascaldom.

TEXT 25

यं वानयोर्दममधीश भवान् विधत्ते
वृत्तिं नु वा तदनुमन्महि निर्व्यलीकम् ।
अस्मासु वा य उचितो ध्रियतां स दण्डो
येऽनागसौ वयमयुङ्क्षमहि किल्बिषेण ॥२५॥

*yam vānaylor damam adhīsa bhavān vidhatte
vṛttim nu vā tad anumanmahi nirvyalikam
asmāsu vā ya ucito dhriyatām sa daṇḍo
ye 'nāgasau vayam ayuṅkṣmahi kilbiṣeṇa*

yam—which; *vā*—or; *anayoḥ*—of both of them; *damam*—punishment; *adhīsa*—O Lord; *bhavān*—Your Lordship; *vidhatte*—awards; *vṛttim*—better existence; *nu*—certainly; *vā*—or; *tat*—that; *anumanmahi*—we accept; *nirvyalikam*—without duplicity; *asmāsu*—to us; *vā*—or; *yaḥ*—whichever; *ucitaḥ*—is proper; *dhriyatām*—may be awarded; *saḥ*—that; *daṇḍaḥ*—punishment; *ye*—who; *anāgasau*—sinless; *vayam*—we; *ayuṅkṣmahi*—allotted; *kilbiṣeṇa*—with a curse.

TRANSLATION

O Lord, whatever punishment You wish to award to these two innocent persons or also to us we shall accept without duplicity. We understand that we have cursed two faultless persons.

PURPORT

The sages, the four Kumāras, now reject their cursing of the two doorkeepers, Jaya and Vijaya, because they are now conscious that persons who engage in the service of the Lord cannot be at fault at any stage. It is said that anyone who has implicit faith in the service of the Lord, or who actually engages in transcendental loving service, has all the good qualities of the demigods. Therefore, a devotee cannot be at fault. If sometimes it is found that he is in error by accident or by some temporary arrangement, that should not be taken very seriously. The cursing of Jaya and Vijaya is here repented. Now the Kumāras are thinking in terms of their position in the modes of passion and ignorance, and they are prepared to accept any kind of punishment from the Lord. In general, when dealing with devotees, we should not try to find faults. In *Bhagavad-gītā* also it is confirmed that the devotee who faithfully serves the Supreme Lord, even if found to commit a gross mistake, should be considered a *sādhu*, or saintly person. Due to former habits he may commit some wrong, but because he is engaged in the service of the Lord, that wrong should not be taken very seriously.

TEXT 26

श्रीभगवानुवाच

एतौ सुरेतरगतिं प्रतिपद्य सद्यः
संरम्भसम्भृतसमाध्यनुबद्धयोगी ।
भूयः सकाशमुपयास्यत आशु यो वः
शापो मयैव निमित्तस्तद्वेत विप्राः ॥२६॥

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
etau suretara-gatiṁ pratipadya sadyaḥ
samrambha-sambhṛta-samādhy-anubaddha-yogau

bhūyaḥ sakāśam upayāsyata āśu yo vaḥ
śāpo mayai va nimitas tad aveta viprāḥ

śrī-bhagavān uvāca—the Supreme Personality of Godhead replied; *etau*—these two doorkeepers; *sura-itarā*—demoniac; *gatiṁ*—the womb; *pratipadya*—obtaining; *sadyaḥ*—quickly; *samrambha*—by anger; *sambhṛta*—intensified; *samādhi*—concentration of mind; *anubaddha*—firmly; *yogau*—united with Me; *bhūyaḥ*—again; *sakāśam*—to My presence; *upayāsyataḥ*—shall return; *āśu*—shortly; *yaḥ*—which; *vaḥ*—of you; *śāpaḥ*—curse; *mayā*—by Me; *eva*—alone; *nimitaḥ*—ordained; *tat*—that; *aveta*—know; *viprāḥ*—O brāhmanas.

TRANSLATION

The Lord replied: O brāhmanas, knew that the punishment you inflicted on them was originally ordained by Me, and therefore they will fall to a birth in a demoniac family. But they will be firmly united with Me in thought through mental concentration intensified by anger, and they will return to My presence shortly.

PURPORT

The Lord stated that the punishment inflicted by the sages upon the doorkeepers Jaya and Vijaya was conceived by the Lord Himself. Without the Lord's sanction, nothing can happen. It is to be understood that there was a plan in the cursing of the Lord's devotees in Vaikuṅṭha, and His plan is explained by many stalwart authorities. The Lord sometimes desires to fight. The fighting spirit also exists in the Supreme Lord, otherwise how could fighting be manifested at all? Because the Lord is the source of everything, anger and fighting are also inherent in His personality. When He desires to fight with someone, He has to find an enemy, but in the Vaikuṅṭha world there is no enemy because everyone is engaged fully in His service. Therefore He sometimes comes to the material world as an incarnation in order to manifest His fighting spirit.

In *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.8) also it is said that the Lord appears just to give protection to the devotees and to annihilate the nondevotees. The non-devotees are found in the material world, not in the spiritual world; therefore, when the Lord wants to fight, He has to come to this world. But who will fight with the Supreme Lord? No one is able to fight with Him! Therefore, because the Lord's pastimes in the material world are always performed with His associates, not with others, He has to find some devotee who will play the part of an enemy. In *Bhagavad-gītā* the Lord says to Arjuna, "My dear Arjuna, both you and I have appeared many, many times in this material world, but you have forgotten, whereas I remember." Thus Jaya and Vijaya were selected by the Lord to fight with Him in the material world, and that was the reason the sages came to see Him and accidentally the doorkeepers were cursed. It was the Lord's desire to send them to the material world, not perpetually, but for some time. Therefore, just as on a theatrical stage someone takes the part of enemy to the proprietor of the stage, although the play is for a short time and there is no permanent enmity between the servant and the proprietor, so the *sura-janas* (devotees) were cursed by the sages to go to the *asura-jana*, or atheistic families. That a devotee should come into an atheistic family is surprising, but it is simply a show. After finishing their mock fighting, both the devotee and the Lord are again associated in the spiritual planets. That is very explicitly explained here. The conclusion is that no one falls from the spiritual world, or Vaikuṅṭha planet, for it is the eternal abode. But sometimes, as the Lord desires, devotees come into this material world as preachers or as atheists. In each case we must understand that there is a plan of the Lord. Lord Buddha, for example, was an incarnation, yet he preached atheism: "There is no God." But actually there was a plan behind this, as explained in the *Bhāgavatam*.

TEXT 27

ब्रह्मोवाच

अथ ते मुनयो दृष्ट्वा नयनानन्दभाजनम् ।
वैकुण्ठं तदधिष्ठानं विकुण्ठं च स्वयंप्रभम् ॥२७॥

brahmovāca
 atha te munayo dr̥ṣṭvā
 nayanānanda-bhājanam
 vaikunṭham tad-adhiṣṭhānam
 vikunṭham ca svayam-prabham

brahmā uvāca—Lord Brahmā said; atha—now; te—those; munayah—sages; dr̥ṣṭvā—after seeing; nayana—of the eyes; ānanda—pleasure; bhājanam—producing; vaikunṭham—the Vaikuṅṭha planet; tat—of Him; adhiṣṭhānam—the abode; vikunṭham—the Supreme Personality of Godhead; ca—and; svayam-prabham—self-illuminating.

TRANSLATION

Lord Brahmā said: After seeing the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in the self-illuminated Vaikuṅṭha planet, the sages left that transcendental abode.

PURPORT

The transcendental abode of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* and confirmed in this verse, is self-illuminated. In *Bhagavad-gītā* it is said that in the spiritual world there is no need of sun, moon or electricity. This indicates that all the planets there are self-illuminated, self-sufficient and independent; everything there is complete. Lord Kṛṣṇa says that once one goes to that Vaikuṅṭha planet, he never returns. The inhabitants of Vaikuṅṭha never return to the material world, but the incident of Jaya and Vijaya was a different case. They came to the material world for some time, and then they returned to Vaikuṅṭha.

TEXT 28

भगवन्तं परिक्रम्य प्रणिपत्यानुमान्य च ।
 प्रतिजग्मुः प्रमुदिताः शंसन्तो वैष्णवीं श्रियम् ॥२८॥

bhagavantam parikramya
 praṇipatyānumānya ca
 pratijagmuḥ pramuditāḥ
 śaṁsanto vaiṣṇavīm śriyam

bhagavantam—the Supreme Personality of Godhead; parikramya—after circumambulating; praṇipatyā—after offering obeisances; anumānya—after learning; ca—and; pratijagmuḥ—returned; pramuditāḥ—extremely delighted; śaṁsantaḥ—glorifying; vaiṣṇavīm—of the Vaiṣṇavas; śriyam—opulence.

TRANSLATION

The sages circumambulated the Supreme Lord, offered their obeisances and returned, extremely delighted at learning of the divine opulences of the Vaiṣṇava.

PURPORT

It is still a respectful practice to circumambulate the Lord in Hindu temples. Especially in Vaiṣṇava temples there is an arrangement for people to offer their respects to the Deity and circumambulate the temple at least three times.

TEXT 29

भगवाननुगावाह यातं मा भैष्टमस्तु शम् ।
 ब्रह्मतेजः समर्थोऽपि हन्तुं नेच्छे मत्तं तु मे ॥२९॥

bhagavān anugāv āha
 yātam mā bhaiṣṭam astu śam
 brahma-tejah samartha 'pi
 hantum necche matam tu me

bhagavān—the Supreme Personality of Godhead; anugau—to His two attendants; āha—said; yātam—depart from this place; mā—let

there not be; bhaiṣṭam—fear; astu—let there be; śam—happiness; brahma—of a brāhmaṇa; tejah—the curse; samarthaḥ—being able; api—even; hantum—to nullify; na icche—do not desire; matam—approved; tu—on the contrary; me—by Me.

TRANSLATION

The Lord then said to His attendants, Jaya and Vijaya: Depart this place, but fear not. All glories unto you. Though I am capable of nullifying the brāhmaṇas' curse, I would not do so. On the contrary, it has My approval.

PURPORT

As explained in connection with text 26, all the incidents that took place had the approval of the Lord. Ordinarily, there is no possibility that the four sages could be so angry with the doorkeepers, nor could the Supreme Lord neglect His two doorkeepers, nor can one come back from Vaikuṅṭha after once taking birth there. All these incidents, therefore, were designed by the Lord Himself for the sake of His pastimes in the material world. Thus He plainly says that it was done with His approval. Otherwise, it would have been impossible for inhabitants of Vaikuṅṭha to come back to this material world simply because of a brahminical curse. The Lord especially blesses the so-called culprits: "All glories unto you." A devotee, once accepted by the Lord, can never fall down. That is the conclusion of this incident.

TEXT 30

एतत्पुरैव निर्दिष्टं रमया क्रुद्धया यदा ।
 पुरापवारिता द्वारि विशन्ती मय्युपारते ॥३०॥

etat puraiva nirdiṣṭam
 ramayā kruddhayā yadā
 purāpavāritā dvāri
 viśanti mayy upārate

etat—this departure; purā—formerly; eva—certainly; nirdiṣṭam—foretold; ramayā—by Lakṣmī; kruddhayā—furious; yadā—when; purā—previously; apavāritā—prevented; dvāri—at the gate; viśanti—entering; mayi—as I; upārate—was resting.

TRANSLATION

This departure from Vaikuṅṭha was foretold by Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune. She was very angry because when she left My abode and then returned, you stopped her at the gate while I was sleeping.

TEXT 31

मयि संरम्भयोगेन निस्तीर्य ब्रह्महेलनम् ।
 प्रत्येभ्यतं निकाशं मे कालेनाल्पीयसा पुनः ॥३१॥

mayi saṁrambha-yogena
 nistīrya brahma-helanam
 pratyēṣyatam nikāśam me
 kālenālpīyasā punaḥ

mayi—unto Me; saṁrambha-yogena—by practice of mystic yoga in anger; nistīrya—being liberated from; brahma-helanam—the result of disobedience to the brāhmaṇas; pratyēṣyatam—will come back; nikāśam—near; me—Me; kālena—in due course of time; alpiyasā—very short; punaḥ—again.

TRANSLATION

The Lord assured the two Vaikuṅṭha inhabitants, Jaya and Vijaya: By practicing the mystic yoga system in anger, you will be cleansed of the sin of disobeying the brāhmaṇas and within a very short time return to Me.

(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.

Śrī Tattva Sandarbha, written by Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī and translated by Kuśakratha dāsa, is now available from The Krishna Institute, P.O. Box 281, Culver City, CA 90232. For your copy send \$10.00 plus \$2.00 postage.

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

To find out more, get in touch with the ISKCON farm community nearest you (you'll find them in the list of centers on pages 20–21 of this magazine).

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

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

Now your television can bring you closer to Kṛṣṇa. Videocassettes from ITV (ISKCON Television) bring the spiritual vision of Kṛṣṇa into your home.

See the pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Rāma . . . Visit the centers of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement around the world . . . Attend classes given by Śrīla Prabhupāda himself . . . Relish the life story of Śrīla Prabhupāda in *Your Ever Well-Wisher*.

Almost 100 shows to choose from. Top-quality, low-priced videocassettes. Available in 1/2-inch, 3/4-inch, NTSC (American), and PAL (overseas).

For a free, full-color catalog, write to ITV, 3764 Watseka Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90034.

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

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 Balarāma Swami, a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda's, who studied Sanskrit in India for many years, had long periods of association with Śrīla Prabhupāda in Vṛndāvana, and is a lifelong practitioner of Ekādaśī fasting. 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.

Become trained in brahminical knowledge, qualities, and skills. The Vṛndāvana Institute for Higher Education is offering courses in studying Śrīla Prabhupāda's books; clear thinking, speaking and writing; Vaiṣṇava etiquette; Sanskrit for preachers; and more. For information write The Vṛndāvana Institute for Higher Education, c/o ISKCON Ministry of Education, P.O. Box 400767, Brooklyn, NY 11240.

Going to Bombay?

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

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

Enjoy the writings of Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami, one of the present spiritual masters in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. The author of a six-volume biography of Śrīla Prabhupāda, he continues to produce essays, poems, and other writings for everyone interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. For a list of publications, write The Gītā-nāgarī Press, P.O. Box 149, Line Lexington, PA 18932.

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 Hṛṣīkeśa (August 10–September 7)

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 Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Fasting till noon, followed by feasting. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura, the foremost teacher of the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*.

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

Month of Padmanābha (September 8–October 7)

September 17—Anniversary of Śrīla Prabhupāda's arrival in the United States in 1965.

September 18—Indirā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

October 2—Śrī Rāmacandra-vijayotsava, the anniversary of Lord Rāmacandra's victory over the demon Rāvaṇa. Also, appearance anniversary of Śrīla Madhvācārya, a great teacher of devotional service.

October 3—Pāśāṅkuśā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

October 4—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, and Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, great associates and followers of Lord Caitanya.

October 7—Beginning of Dāmodara-vrata. Offering lamps for one month. Also, the fourth month of Cāturmāsya begins (fasting from *urad dāl*). Śrī Kṛṣṇa Śaradya Rāsa-yātrā. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Murāri Gupta, an associate of Lord Caitanya.



Every Town and Village

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

Lord Rāma Float in Moomba Parade



The Melbourne temple's prize-winning float passes before the reviewing stand during the city's annual Moomba parade.



Melbourne mayor Trevor Huggard presents the Lord Mayor's Award to temple president Balarāma dāsa, as Bhakta dāsa, project manager for the float, looks on.

Melbourne, Australia—At the annual Moomba parade held here recently, the Hare Kṛṣṇa float, entitled "Triumph of Lord Rāma," won the Lord Mayor's Award for the most entertaining entry. A crew of Melbourne devotees, led by Bhakta dāsa, worked for three months to prepare the float, which was based on India's ancient epic *Rāmāyaṇa*. The float depicted Lord Rāma (portrayed by Melbourne temple president Balarāma dāsa) and His brother Lakṣmaṇa (Manu dāsa), along with an army of monkey soldiers, battling Rāvaṇa, an evil multiheaded king.

As described in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, Lord Rāma attacked Rāvaṇa to free Sītā, Rāma's devoted wife, whom Rāvaṇa had kidnapped and was holding in captivity. At

the peak of the battle, Lord Rāma killed Rāvaṇa by firing an arrow into his heart.

On the float, Rāvaṇa—his five heads and four arms twisting from side to side—roared out in agony over the loudspeakers, an arrow protruding from his chest. On and around the float, Lord Rāma and his monkey soldiers fought with Rāvaṇa's demonic followers. At the back of the float, two trident-wielding witches tormented Sītā (Mohinī-devī dāsī) as she waited to be rescued by Rāma. And while these scenes were being enacted, in front of the float eighty blissful devotees chanted and danced.

The premier of the state of Victoria, Mr. Cain; the mayor of Melbourne, Councilman Trevor Huggard; and 400,000 other spectators applauded as the prize-winning float moved past.

After the parade, devotees distributed ten thousand packets of *prasādam* (vegetarian food offered to Kṛṣṇa) and thirty thousand books and magazines on Kṛṣṇa consciousness to people who came to see the float.

Kṛṣṇa Consciousness A Popular New Religion In West Africa

Lagos, Nigeria—Hare Kṛṣṇa Food for Life has become very popular in this country,

and one of the biggest radio stations in the country invites people to participate whenever the food distribution programs are held. The state police commissioner has given the devotees a special permit and provided police to maintain order at the heavily attended programs. Many individuals and companies have come forward to help sponsor the mass food distribution.

The British Broadcasting Corporation recently ran a documentary on new religious movements in Africa's west coast countries. The Catholic Archbishop of Lagos, Reverend Dr. Anthony Okogie, appearing on the program with a panel of other religious leaders, expressed his appreciation of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement for its "brotherly fellowship." "Sooner or later we shall catch up with them," the bishop said. Summarizing their assessment of the new religions, the panelists stated: "In contrast to groups that sometimes work against the peace and stability of the country, the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement has something unique to offer."

At the annual general meeting of the Nigeria-Russia Association, devotees distributed more than eighty copies of Śrīla Prabhupāda's Russian *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*.

* * *

Freetown, Sierra Leone—Bhaktitīrtha Swami, ISKCON's Governing Body Commissioner for West Africa, recently presented a set of thirty of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books to state president J. S. Momoh. Bhaktitīrtha Swami and Mr. Momoh discussed at length how to apply the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness to state management. Part of their meeting was broadcast on national television. Mr. Momoh is one of several West African heads of state who have received Śrīla Prabhupāda's books from Bhaktitīrtha Swami, who regularly corresponds with the presidents of Zambia and Ghana.

* * *

Warri, Nigeria—Bhaktitīrtha Swami recently initiated seventy disciples here and performed a joint wedding for six Hare Kṛṣṇa couples. The wedding and the festivities that followed were a grand celebration and were covered in several local magazines and newspapers.

THE VEDIC

Transcendental Commentaries

WHERE'S YOUR HEART?

by Kuṇḍali dāsa

The Beef Industry Council, seeing the waning popularity of meat-eating in America, has launched a \$30 million ad campaign to beef up sales. The Council's ad men recruited Cybill Shepherd, a well-known actress with a seductive girl-next-door look, to bring us the good news about the joy of eating a burger—"some-

ployers some consternation. Obviously she wasn't convinced of the message she delivered in the ad.

But her employers must be firm believers in meat-eating—fanatics practically. Because they're the ones laying out thirty million for their ad campaign, and they're the ones saying you should be leery of people who don't eat burgers.

Well, Mr. Cattle Rancher, it's a free country—if you don't happen to be a steer, that is—so I guess you're entitled to your opinion. By the same token I'd like to re-

me to ask, "Where's the beef?" But I ask you, "Where's your heart?"

DEATH AT THE POLLS

by Paramātmā dāsa

One point we often make in *Back to Godhead* is that death is everyone's worst fear. According to the results of one poll, we appear to be wrong.

At the library the other day I came across *The Book of Lists*. Browsing through, I read the entry under "The 14 Worst Human Fears." Someone had asked three thousand Americans, "What are you most afraid of?"

Many named more than one fear, but death was neither first, second, nor third on the list. Forty-one percent said "speaking before a group"; thirty-two percent, "heights"; twenty-two percent, "insects and bugs," "financial problems," "deep water"; nineteen percent, "sickness," "death."

And, in descending order: flying, loneliness, dogs, riding in or driving a car, darkness, elevators, and escalators.

There it was in black and white—scientific proof that not only was death not the most feared of all, it only ranked a paltry fourth place.

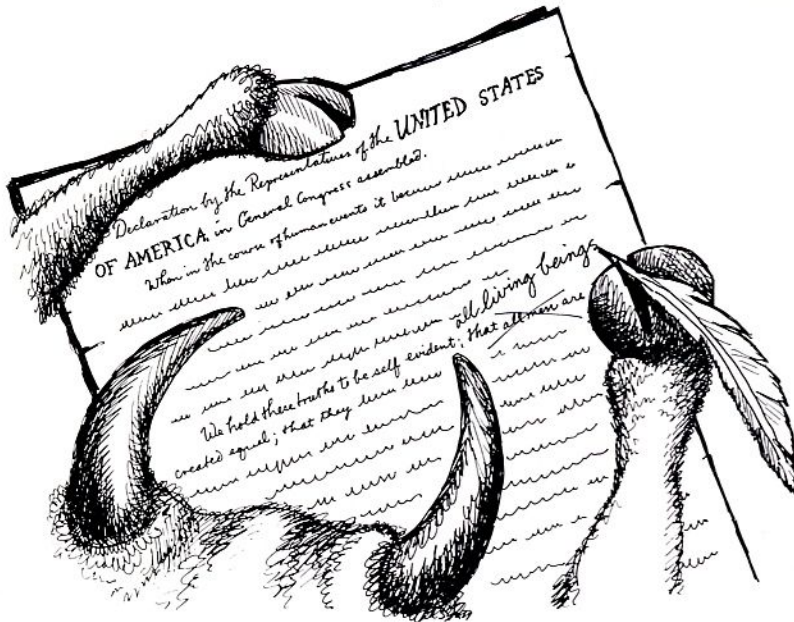
This bit of news caused me some uneasiness. I felt the poll challenged the validity of our claim that death is the most feared. And, of course, nobody likes to find out he's been wrong about something he's believed with complete conviction. I wondered if we could dare continue touting death as number one.

I still believed our stance was correct, but how could I justify it in light of this new evidence?

I also knew we were not about to change our editorial slant in *Back to Godhead* and start running "How to" pieces on overcoming fear of speaking before a group. Toastmaster International was already filling that need. And besides, people don't join the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement for overcoming fear of public speaking.

Still pondering the poll, I returned to the temple for lunch. I mentioned the poll to some of the devotees.

"I don't see this as a proof that we're



thing so hot and juicy and so utterly simple you can eat it with your hands."

The ad never mentions the links between meat-eating and heart disease, stroke, and cancer; or medical findings that reveal how a meat diet adversely affects chemical brain functions; or, of course, the bad karma incurred because of animal slaughter and meat consumption.

Rather, Cybill's enticing message ends on this unsettling note: "I know some people who don't eat burgers. But I'm not sure I trust them."

In an interview with *Family Circle* magazine, however, Cybill disclosed her real position: she herself stays away from red meat.

Since hamburgers contain red meat, Cybill no doubt caused her erstwhile em-

pond to your ad:

Really? You don't trust people who are content to live without encroaching on the well-being of other creatures? You don't trust people who are sensitive enough to feel for the plight of animals living on Auschwitz-type factory farms? You don't trust people who, when they hear the facts about meat-eating being a major cause of certain diseases and totally unnecessary for a balanced diet, are clear-headed and kindhearted enough to cut it out from their diet? You don't trust people who want to live in harmony with God's creatures? Don't you feel there's something admirable, something noble, something to be encouraged in such people?

If, as you imply, I can't trust such people, then why should I trust you? You want

OBSERVER

ary on the Issues of the Day

wrong," one devotee said. "I see it more as a confirmation of our philosophy."

"How's that?" I asked.

"Well, I think it confirms the section in the *Mahābhārata* where Yamarāja asked Yudhiṣṭhira a series of questions: What is the most valuable possession? What is good fortune? and so on. You remember that part?"

"Yeah . . . sort of."

"You remember the one where Yamarāja asked, 'What is the most amazing thing of all?'"

"That's the only one I remember—where Yudhiṣṭhira replied, 'Every day death takes lives beyond counting, yet those who live don't think about their own inevitable death.'"

"Right, so if a poll shows that people fear speaking to a group more than they fear death, that only confirms Yudhiṣṭhira's point: people don't think about their inevitable death. That's why they're more scared of other things.

"Actually," he added, "the poll was useful. Now you know that nineteen percent of the population consider death their worst fear. Those people, at least, are more likely to appreciate the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness."

"That's a good point," I said.

"One thing about these other fears," another devotee said, "is that you can make adjustments to avoid the fearful situations. If you're that scared of public speaking, you could probably avoid it—catch a cold, change professions, or something. Death is another story altogether. Who can avoid it?"

"Yes," another devotee said, "in my mind there's no comparison between fear of death and fear of public speaking. Yet you say only nineteen percent feared death the most. Just as Yudhiṣṭhira said—that's really amazing!"

MASTERING THE FUNDAMENTALISTS

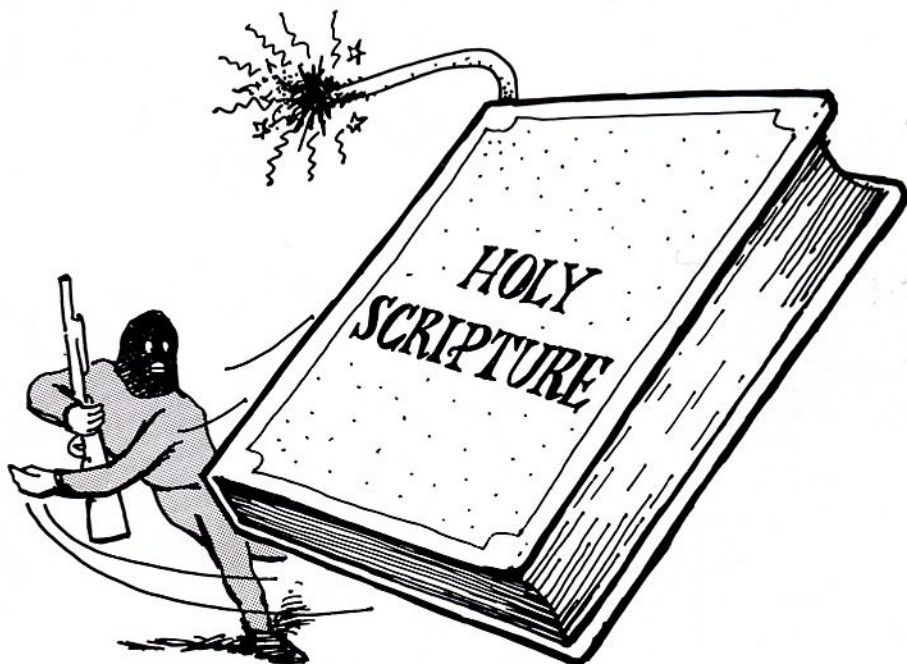
by Mathurēśa dāsa

People of uncommon ability often place an uncommon emphasis on fundamentals: a master cook may insist on careful measurement of quality ingre-

dients; a prima ballerina may daily practice the simplest steps. Since dedication to fundamentals is an element of excellence, we could call those who excel in any field "fundamentalists."

We could but we wouldn't—because the news media most often use the word *fundamentalist* to denote a religious fanatic, a zealot eager to force his belief on you. Two hundred U.S. Marines die in a Beirut bomb blast; tourists are gunned down in

feature is the domain of the third-class, or neophyte, devotees, who tend to be in the majority. Neophytes devoutly worship God in the church, mosque, or temple, strictly practicing the appropriate rituals and following the various moral codes set down in their scriptures. Neophytes are intolerant of even superficial differences in methods of worship, and they see members of other religions as outsiders destined for hell.



the Rome airport; Sunday-morning TV viewers lose millions in an evangelical swindle—and according to news reports the perpetrators in each case are "fundamentalists."

It's too bad that religious fundamentalism has a bad name, because in religion—as in cooking or ballet—a command of fundamentals should foster a universally laudable excellence. Since religious fundamentalism instead fosters a universally unlaudable fanaticism, we should conclude that today's fundamentalists haven't truly grasped their fundamentals.

According to the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, there are in every religion first-, second-, and third-class devotees of God, and fundamentalism in its fanatic

Though second-class devotees may be equally strict in practicing the rituals of their religion, they have through such strict practice and through careful study of scripture achieved a broader philosophical understanding of religion's purpose. In particular, the second-class devotee worships God not only in the church, mosque, or temple but in the heart of every living creature as well. As the neophyte respects his place of worship because it is "God's house," the second-class devotee sees every living body as a residence both for an eternal, individual soul and for the Supersoul, or God.

Thus as one of his "rituals" the second-class devotee practices offering respect to

(continued on page 35)

From *Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead*
by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda.
Adapted for *Back to Godhead*.

The Kidnapping of PRINCESS RUKMIṆĪ

Betrothed to a man she loathed, Rukmiṇī wanted
to elope with Kṛṣṇa. But would He consent?

The King of Vidarbha, Mahārāja Bhīṣmaka, had five sons and a young daughter known as Rukmiṇī. Many saintly persons used to visit the king's palace, and from them Rukmiṇī obtained information about Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Simply by hearing about the opulences of Kṛṣṇa, she desired to surrender herself to His lotus feet and become His wife. All the relatives of King Bhīṣmaka agreed that Rukmiṇī should be given in marriage to Kṛṣṇa, and after hearing how Rukmiṇī was a reservoir of all transcendental qualities—intelligence, liberality, exquisite beauty, and righteous behavior—Kṛṣṇa Himself decided that she was fit to be His wife.

However, Rukmiṇī's brother Rukmī arranged for her to be married to Śiṣupāla, a determined enemy of Kṛṣṇa's. When the black-eyed, beautiful Rukmiṇī heard of this settlement, she became very morose. But, being a king's daughter, she could understand political diplomacy, and therefore she decided to take immediate steps to acquire Kṛṣṇa as her husband. After some deliberation, she wrote a letter to Kṛṣṇa and entrusted it to a *brāhmaṇa* messenger. Without delay, she sent him with her letter to Kṛṣṇa's capital city of Dvārakā.

Reaching the gate of Dvārakā, the *brāhmaṇa* informed the doorkeeper of his mission, and the door-



keeper led him to Lord Kṛṣṇa, who was sitting on a golden throne. After the messenger was duly greeted according to his brahminical status, he carefully read Rukmiṇī's letter to the Supreme Lord:

My dear Kṛṣṇa, O infallible and most beautiful one, I have heard of Your transcendental qualities. I may be shameless in expressing myself so directly, but You have captivated me and taken my heart. I am an unmarried girl, young in

age, and You may doubt the steadiness of my character. But my dear Kṛṣṇa, since You are the supreme lion among human beings, the supreme person among persons, any girl not yet out of her home, or any woman of the highest chastity, would desire to marry You, being captivated by Your unprecedented character, knowledge, opulence, and position.

I know that You are very kind toward Your devotees. Therefore I have decided to become Your eternal maidservant. My dear Lord, I dedicate my life and soul unto Your lotus feet. I have selected Your Lordship as my husband, and I request You to accept me as Your wife. You are supremely powerful, O lotus-eyed one. Now I belong to You. It would be ludicrous if what is enjoyable for the lion is taken away by the jackal. Therefore I request You to immediately take care of me before I am taken away by Śiṣupāla. Please come here

Kṛṣṇa ponders Rukmiṇī's letter as the *brāhmaṇa* messenger looks on (right).

PAINTINGS BY PUṢKARA DĀSA





Kr̥ṣṇa sent the brāhmaṇa inside the palace to let Rukmiṇī know that He had arrived. When Rukmiṇī saw the brāhmaṇa, she was elated. She smiled and asked him whether or not Kṛṣṇa had come. The brāhmaṇa replied, "The son of the Yadu dynasty, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, has arrived!"



Kṛṣṇa's swift and beautiful horses (left) pull His chariot toward Kuṇḍina, covering the 1,000-mile distance in one night. Above, Rukmiṇī watches eagerly as the brāhmaṇa messenger approaches the palace to inform her of Kṛṣṇa's arrival.

and catch hold of my hand so that I may not be touched by Śiśupāla and his men.

Lord Kṛṣṇa was very pleased to hear Rukmiṇī's statement. He shook hands with the messenger and said, "My dear brāhmaṇa, I am very glad to hear that Rukmiṇī is anxious to marry Me, since I am also anxious to get her hand. I can understand that Rukmiṇī's brother has arranged her marriage with Śiśupāla in a spirit of animosity toward Me. So I am determined to give him a good lesson. Just as one can bring forth fire from ordinary wood by proper manipulation, similarly,

after dealing with the demoniac princes, I shall bring forth Rukmiṇī like fire from their midst."

When Kṛṣṇa heard that Rukmiṇī's marriage was scheduled for the following day, He decided to leave for the kingdom of Vidarbha immediately. He ordered His driver to harness the horses to His chariot and prepare for the journey, and they started at once. Within a single night they rode one thousand miles to their destination, the town of Kuṇḍina.

Kṛṣṇa's elder brother, Lord Balarāma, soon received the news that Kṛṣṇa had left for Kuṇḍina accompanied only by a brāhmaṇa, and Śiśupāla was there with his ally Jarāsandha and a large number of soldiers. Suspecting that they would attack Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma took strong military divisions of chariots, infantry, horses, and elephants and rode to the precinct of Kuṇḍina.

Meanwhile, inside the palace, Rukmiṇī was expecting Kṛṣṇa to arrive. But when neither He nor the brāhmaṇa messenger appeared, she became full of anxiety and began to think how unfortunate she was. She thought, "There is only one night before my marriage day, and still neither the brāhmaṇa nor Kṛṣṇa has returned. I cannot understand this."

Being the Supersoul of all living beings, Kṛṣṇa could understand Rukmiṇī's anxiety, so He sent the brāhmaṇa inside the palace to let her know that He had arrived. When Rukmiṇī saw the brāhmaṇa, she was elated. She smiled and asked him whether or not Kṛṣṇa had come. The brāhmaṇa replied, "The son of the Yadu dynasty, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, has arrived!" He further encouraged her by saying that Kṛṣṇa had promised to carry her away without fail. Rukmiṇī was so thrilled by the brāhmaṇa's message that she wanted to give him in charity everything she possessed. However, finding nothing at hand suitable for presentation, she simply bowed down and offered him her humble respects.

When King Bhīsmaka heard that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma had come, he invited Them to see the marriage ceremony of his daughter. He arranged to receive Them and Their soldiers in a garden house. As was the Vedic custom, the king offered Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma honey and fresh-washed cloth.

Meanwhile, Rukmiṇī came out of the palace to visit the temple of the goddess Durgā. Rukmiṇī was dressed very beautifully, and as she proceeded toward the temple, she was very silent and grave. Her mother and girlfriends were by her side, and she was surrounded by royal bodyguards. In this way she entered the temple and offered her prayers to the deity. Ordinary people pray to Durgā for material wealth, fame, strength, and so on. Rukmiṇī, however, desired to have Kṛṣṇa for her husband, and therefore she prayed to the deity to be pleased with her and bless her. Then she caught hold of the hand of one of her girlfriends and left the temple, accompanied by the others.

All the princes and visitors who had come to Kuṇḍina for the marriage were assembled outside the temple to see Rukmiṇī. When the princes, who were especially eager to see her, caught sight of

Rukmiṇī leaving the temple, they were struck with wonder. Indeed, they thought she had been especially manufactured by the Creator to bewilder them! She appeared to be just a youth not more than thirteen or fourteen years old. Her body was well constructed, the middle portion being thin. The beauty of her high cheeks and pink lips was enhanced by her scattered hair and different kinds of earrings, and around her feet she wore jeweled lockets. All in all, the bodily luster and beauty of Rukmiṇī, which was specifically intended to attract the attention of Kṛṣṇa, appeared as if painted by an artist perfectly presenting beauty following the description of great poets.

Although the princes gazed upon her beautiful features, she was not at all proud. Her eyes moved restlessly, and when she smiled very innocently, her teeth appeared just like lotus flowers. Expecting Kṛṣṇa to take her away at any moment, she proceeded very slowly toward her home. The motion of her legs was just like that of a full-grown swan's body, and her ankle bells tinkled very mildly.

The princes assembled there were so overwhelmed by Rukmiṇī's beauty that they almost became unconscious, and they fell from the backs of their horses and elephants. Full of lust, they hopelessly desired Rukmiṇī's hand, comparing their own beauty to hers. Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī, however, was not interested in any of them. In her heart she was simply expecting Kṛṣṇa to come and carry her away. As she adjusted the ornaments on the fingers of her left hand, she happened to look upon the princes. Suddenly she saw that Kṛṣṇa was among them. Although Rukmiṇī had never seen Kṛṣṇa before, she was always thinking of Him, and thus she had no difficulty recognizing Him.

Ignoring the other princes, Kṛṣṇa immediately took Rukmiṇī and placed her on His chariot. He then proceeded slowly, without fear, taking Rukmiṇī away exactly as a lion takes a deer from the midst of jackals. Meanwhile, Balarāma appeared on the scene with the soldiers of the Yadu dynasty.

Jarāsandha, who had previously been defeated many times by Kṛṣṇa, began to roar, "How is this? Kṛṣṇa is taking Rukmiṇī away from us without any opposition! What is the use of our being chivalrous fighters? My dear princes, just look! We are losing our reputation by this action! It is just like a jackal's taking booty from a lion!"

All the princes, led by Jarāsandha, then became very angry at Kṛṣṇa for kidnapping Rukmiṇī. They stood up and properly armed themselves with their bows and arrows. However, as they began to chase after Kṛṣṇa on their chariots, horses, and elephants, the soldiers of the Yadu dynasty

turned and faced them. Terrible fighting between the two belligerent groups ensued. The princes opposing Kṛṣṇa were all very expert fighters, and they shot their arrows at the Yadu soldiers just as a cloud splashes the face of a mountain with torrents of rain. Determined to defeat Kṛṣṇa and recapture Rukmiṇī from His custody, Jarāsandha and his companions fought with Kṛṣṇa's army as severely as possible. Rukmiṇī was seated by Kṛṣṇa's side on His chariot. She became fearful when she saw the arrows of the opposing party raining onto the faces of the soldiers of Yadu, and she looked at Kṛṣṇa, grateful that He had taken such a great risk alone. She felt very sorry. Kṛṣṇa understood, and He encouraged her with these words: "My dear Rukmiṇī, don't worry. Please rest assured that the soldiers of the Yadu dynasty will kill all their opponents without delay."

Rukmiṇī's brother Rukmī was very agitated. He was determined to personally teach Kṛṣṇa a lesson. He drew his bow and forcefully shot three arrows directly against Kṛṣṇa's body.

Lord Balarāma and the commanders of the Yadu soldiers did not tolerate the defiant attitude of Jarāsandha's army. They started to strike them with their arrows. As the fighting progressed, the princes and soldiers of the enemy began to fall from their horses, elephants, and chariots.

When the enemy found that they were gradually being defeated, they thought it unwise to risk losing men for the sake of Śīsupāla. They felt that Śīsupāla himself should have fought to rescue Rukmiṇī from the hands of Kṛṣṇa, but when they saw that Śīsupāla was not competent to fight with Kṛṣṇa, they decided not to lose their strength unnecessarily. Therefore they ceased fighting and dispersed.

Rukmiṇī's brother Rukmī, however, was very agitated. He was determined to personally teach Kṛṣṇa a lesson. He drew his bow and forcefully shot three arrows directly against Kṛṣṇa's body. Then he condemned Kṛṣṇa, saying, "You are the most abominable descendant of the Yadu dy-

nasty. Stand before me for a minute so I can teach You a good lesson! You are carrying away my sister just like a crow stealing clarified butter meant for use in a sacrifice. You are proud of Your military strength, but You cannot fight according to regulative principles. You have stolen my sister, so now I shall relieve You of Your false prestige. You can keep my sister in Your possession only as long as I do not pin You to the ground with my arrows."

Upon hearing all these crazy words from Rukmī, Lord Kṛṣṇa immediately shot an arrow and severed Rukmī's bowstring. Rukmī then took up another bow and shot another five arrows at Kṛṣṇa. Attacked for a second time by Rukmī, Kṛṣṇa again severed his bowstring. Again Rukmī took up a bow, and yet again Kṛṣṇa cut its string. Having run out of bows, Rukmī took the assistance of swords, shields, tridents, lances, and similar other weapons used in hand-to-hand combat. But Kṛṣṇa destroyed them all in the same way as before. Repeatedly baffled in his attempts, Rukmī finally took his sword and ran very swiftly toward Kṛṣṇa, just as a fly hurtles toward a fire. As soon as Rukmī reached Him, Kṛṣṇa cut his weapon to pieces, took out His own sharp sword, and prepared to kill him. But Rukmiṇī, understanding that Kṛṣṇa was not going to excuse her brother, fell down at the Lord's lotus feet. In a very grievous tone, trembling with fear, she began to plead with Him: "Please do not kill my brother just before the auspicious time of our marriage. I am happy to get You as my husband right at the last moment before my marriage to Śīsupāla, but I do not want our marriage to cost my elder brother's life. After all, he loves me, and he simply wants me to marry someone who, according to his calculations, is a better man than You."

At Rukmiṇī's request, Lord Kṛṣṇa grew compassionate and agreed not to kill the foolish Rukmī. At the same time, He wanted to give him some slight punishment. So He tied Rukmī up with a piece of cloth and snipped at his mustache, beard, and hair, leaving some spots here and there.

Kṛṣṇa then brought Rukmiṇī to Dvārakā and married her according to the Vedic rituals. All the inhabitants were happy on this occasion, and in every house there were great ceremonies. The citizens of Dvārakā were so pleased that they dressed themselves with the nicest possible ornaments and garments and presented gifts to the newly married couple. The story of how Kṛṣṇa kidnapped Rukmiṇī was poeticized, and the professional readers recited it everywhere. In this way, all the inhabitants of Dvārakā were extremely jubilant, seeing Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord, and Rukmiṇī, the goddess of fortune, peacefully united. ☐

FUNDAMENTALISTS

(continued from page 29)

all living creatures, not just to his place of worship or to the members of his own denomination. For practical reasons the second-class devotee may avoid both atheists and those who, though nominally theistic, have a narrow, fanatic, sectarian, neophyte world view. But in principle, at least, the second-class devotee sees everyone equally.

On the first-class platform, the devotee does not even distinguish between the atheists and the pious or between an ignorant fanatic and a more advanced devotee. Although he can clearly see material distinctions, because of his fully mature spiritual vision he considers these distinctions superficial. By his strong conviction

based on perfect realization, the first-class devotee can teach the universal spiritual principle of offering respect to the soul and the Supersoul, and thus he does not emphasize temporary differences.

The first-class devotee is therefore the genuinely laudable religious fundamentalist, since he has fully understood that all living entities, as eternal spiritual parts of God, are fundamentally equal. The second-class devotee too is a fundamentalist, though not fully mature. It is only the neophyte whose so-called fundamentalism is distasteful for its narrow sectarianism.

So whatever our denomination may be, we can reduce the ill effects of sectarian fundamentalism by following the *Bhagavad-gītā's* instruction that we serve and follow first-class devotees, whatever their denomination may be. ☐

Barbarism

(continued from page 8)

Slaughter is the way of subhumans. . . . The animal killers do not know that in the future the animals will have a body suitable to kill them. That is the law of nature. In human society, if one kills a man he has to be hanged. That is the law of the state. Because of ignorance, people do not perceive that there is a complete state controlled by the Supreme Lord. Every living creature is a son of the Supreme Lord, and He does not tolerate even an ant's being killed. One has to pay for it. So indulgence in animal killing for the taste of the tongue is the grossest kind of ignorance. A human being has no need to kill animals, because God has supplied so many nice things. If one indulges in meat-eating anyway, it is to be understood that he is acting in ignorance and is making his future very dark. . . . Human society is advancing in the wrong direction and is clearing the path to its own condemnation.

I moved on, past the exhibit of "Those Who Had Plenty and Those Who Did Not" and past the wines, ciders, and kitchen utensils of yore. I stopped again when I saw the next-to-last exhibit "Good Holy Food." Prominent was a cookbook published in 1683 by Thomas Tryon titled *The Way to Health, Long Life and Happiness*—entirely vegetarian. Nearby was a small tract published in 1850 called *Penny Vegetarian Cookery*, which "the Philadelphia Bible Society had distributed hundreds of to uplift the working masses by means of a vegetarian diet."

After I'd returned home, I called the curator of the museum and asked her why the vegetarian section of the exhibit had been labeled "Good Holy Food."

"Partly because it fit so well with the title of the last exhibit, 'Wholesome Good Food' [medicinal and mostly vegetarian]," she said. "And partly because all our vegetarian tracts in the Historical Society are religiously oriented." ☐

I told her something of what I do and my reaction to the Procession of Victualers. "I'm not a vegetarian," she said, "but still I found that celebration strange. After all, now we get our meat wrapped up in plastic from the market, and we don't have to encounter or think about the animal that it came from. But to have such a parade and then a slaughter—it just seems barbaric."

So now that the animals are removed from the public eye to be killed, it is not barbaric? I thought. *This is more civilized than killing them after a "splendid procession" through the city streets?* The logic eluded me. Death is death, whether before the eyes of hundreds on the city's streets or behind the closed doors of the slaughterhouse. Is it not all barbarism? Yet here was an educated, well-positioned woman speaking with patent illogic.

The museum's ghastly display of violence made me think how much more people could profit from an exhibit called "Lord Kṛṣṇa's Cuisine: A Timeless Transcendental Tradition." We could show the hundreds of dishes that can be made from milk and its products, and the fifty-odd enticing and enhancing spices that we use. We could give an introduction to the hundreds of thousands of meals that can be prepared from grains, vegetables, fruits, and milk products.

We could explain how this diet is more healthy, economical, humane, and conducive to spirituality than a diet that includes meat, fish, or eggs. We could explain the mentality of a devotee as he buys, cooks, offers, and serves the food, and the mentality of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who accepts the vegetarian food offered to Him with love and devotion. And we could provide samples—*samosās, pakorās, laḍḍus, sandeśa*.

There would be nothing barbaric here, nothing illogical or inharmonious with nature. And no one would feel sorry about putting so much money in the parking meter. ☐

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NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Two Views On Chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa

The chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa brings different responses from different people. Some love to chant; others think it's nonsense. By now millions of people have heard devotees chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, but many still know very little about the chanting. What is it, and how did it get here?

The chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* was mostly unheard-of outside India until His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda introduced it to the West, starting in New York City in 1966. Attracted by Prabhupāda's chanting, a few persons joined him and began to take it up seriously. Most people, however, regarded the chanting as alien to Western civilization. One poet-scholar even suggested to Śrīla Prabhupāda that he might do better to invent a more "American" *mantra*.

But as we often explain in *Back to Godhead*, the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa is nonsectarian. It does not belong only to the Indians, and neither does it exclude Christians, Muslims, or followers of other philosophies. All the great scriptures of the world praise the holy names of God, even though His name may vary from one country to another. According to the Vedic scriptures, the chanting of God's names is the most suitable method for attaining love of God, especially in the present age, when people are unable to perform more difficult spiritual disciplines.

Because most people continue to look upon public chanting as odd or disturbing, even the members of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement sometimes shy away from it. But at heart devotees know that public *kīrtana* is one of the best means of praising the Supreme Lord: it not only purifies the chanters, it benefits all those who hear.

I would like to share my own recent experience of chanting with devotees in downtown Atlanta, Georgia. In addition—and in contrast—I will include a non-devotee's impression as described by a columnist in the *Atlanta Journal*, of the same chanting. My account:

We parked the van on the eighth floor of Macy's parking building. On the street, the sky was clouded with smoke from nearby smokestacks, and the air was fouled from truck and car exhaust. Balabhadra dāsa said, "It's like you said in your class this morning: wherever human beings gather they pollute the place."

"Yes," I said, "They will poison the whole

planet. . . . Will we walk while we chant today?"

"Strolling *sankīrtana*," he said, and he led us off at a slow pace, double file, a dozen men and a half-dozen women.

A few devotees went out to distribute magazines, as well as cards with the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* and an invitation to the temple on them.

One of the best things was the way Balabhadra sang and waved to people as we passed them. Somehow, "we" and "they" were frozen in two different roles. Balabhadra's friendly wave broke the ice and drew many of them in. A young woman sitting on a park bench smiled shyly; an old black woman waved back grimly. Some people returned Balabhadra's greetings in jest, some were "cool," and some ignored. But Balabhadra just kept playing the drum, strolling, and waving to whoever caught his eye. We knew that by the chanting of God's names, everyone was receiving His mercy.

As we approached a row of fruit stands, one vendor began shouting at us. I heard, "Bald heads!" and "No Hare!" but mostly he was drowned out by the holy names.

"He's a regular," said Balabhadra, "just a harasser." When I looked back I saw the vendor, who was a black man, say to Haryasva, "Hey, black boy, how come you got that stuff on your face?"

Then a black policeman stepped in and told the vendor, "Don't harass them."

"I know my rights!" said the vendor.

"Don't harass them!"

"It's all right, officer," said Haryaśva. "I'll answer his question."

Another black vendor said to Haryaśva, "Don't pay him no attention."

I tried to guess what the passersby were thinking. While walking and singing I noticed headlines in the newspapers: "37 American Sailors Die in Missile Attack." I thought, theoretically, that it would be appropriate to die here while chanting.

I thought, *We're far away from Vṛndāvana*. In contrast to India, where I had recently visited, the people of Atlanta were dressed in stylish American business clothes, and the buildings all looked new. But whether we chant in India or the West, people receive us with the same mixture of enjoyment and disinterest.

When we reached the park, we posed in front of skyscrapers while Durdarśana dāsa took photos. The devotees then chanted and danced just as in the temple—only with hundreds watching and hearing—while I tried again to figure out what everyone was thinking and how we looked to them. I realized that was a useless speculation, so I joined with the chanting and dancing.

The next day an article about our chanting appeared in the *Atlanta Journal*, in a

column by Frances Cawthon. Her human interest sketch "Cultures Clash on Downtown Street at Midday" told of an old woman's incredulous responses to the devotees' chanting. Some excerpts:

The Hare Krishnas were bouncing around energetically in front of the downtown C&S Bank, their faces covered with joy and strategic makeup, the partially shaved heads of the men gleaming with oily perspiration in the midday sun. Lunch time office workers wove their way past, mostly averting their eyes. . . .

A woman with graying hair and a straining double-knit polyester dress of psychedelic black and white flowers that had managed to survive the 1960's stood aside and stared at them.

"Who are them people?" she asked. . . .

I told her they were Hare Krishnas.

"Hairy Christians?" she repeated in disbelief. "Why, them men have hardly no hair at all. How can they be called Hairy Christians?"

They weren't Christians, I explained; they belong to an Eastern religion.

She looked at me expectantly, and I was embarrassed that despite the many articles I had read about the group, I couldn't really tell her much.

"They are involved in the teachings of the Bhagavad-Gita," I said importantly—after sneaking a look at the card one of the men had given me earlier.

"I ain't never heard of him," she said. . . .

"Why are they all twirlin' around like that? I ain't heard so much noise and carrying-on since I went to a Holy-Roller revival in Alabama back in the forties. . . ."

"Maybe it's similar," I said. "You know, expressing exultation with your faith."

She didn't comment on that.

"Well I wisht I knew what it was that was makin' them so happy," she said.

I looked at the card again. "It says, 'Chant the Mahamantra and your life will be sublime.'"

She peeked over my shoulder at the words: "Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare, Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare."

She guffawed, causing the black-and-white flowers to writhe over a protruding stomach.

"I knew it. Just like them Holy Rollers in Alabama, talking in tongues that don't make a *bit* of sense. I guess my life ain't goin' to be sublime, then, 'cause I couldn't remember much less p'nonce all that stuff."

She walked off, a stolid, solid black-and-white floral pattern, shaking her head, while the Hare Krishnas, still smiling beatifically and pounding the daylight out of their instruments, twirled happily in their gossamer silks. —SDG

CHANT!



1987 Festival of the Chariots, Boston

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

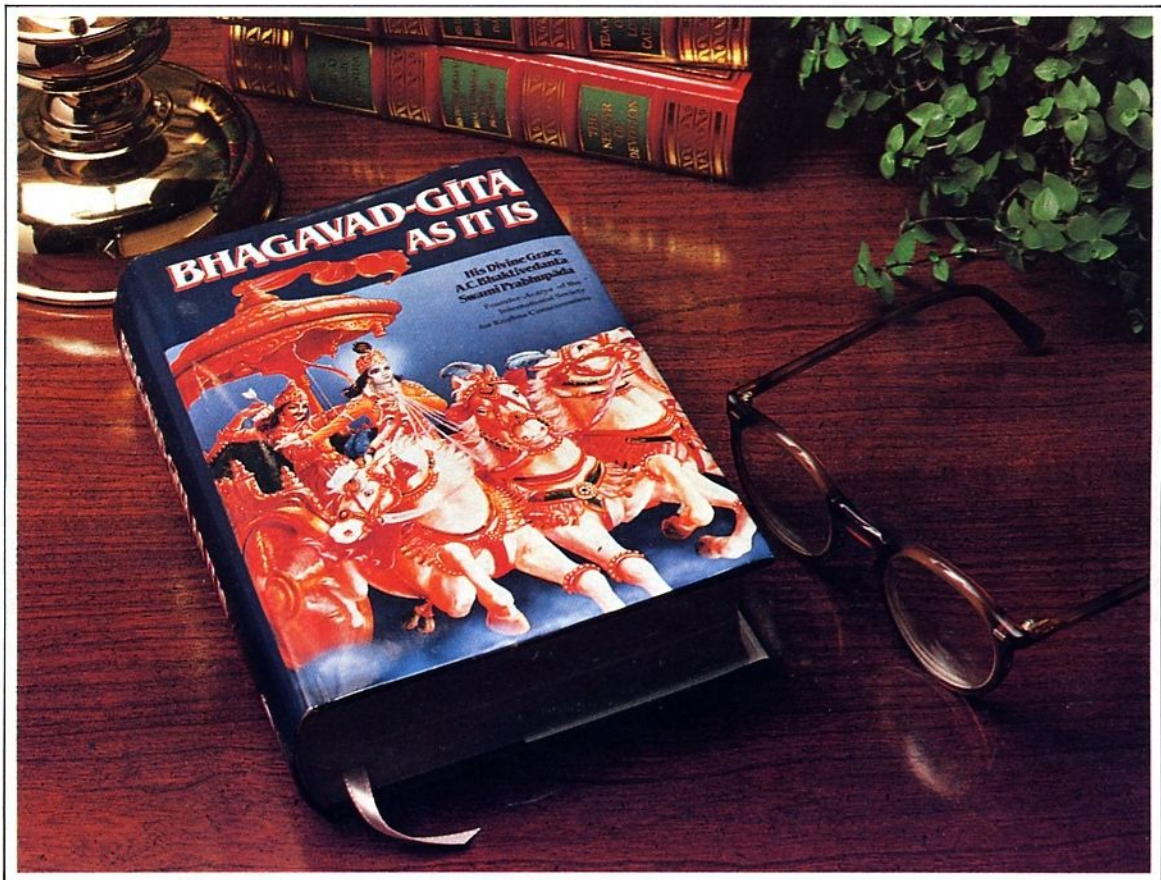
Tap into the reservoir of pleasure. By chanting the names of God, you'll immediately be in touch with the source of all pleasure. The name *Kṛṣṇa* means "the all-attractive person," and *Rāma* means "the supreme pleasure." *Hare* is a word addressing Harā, God's devotional energy, to whom we pray to 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.

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