

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

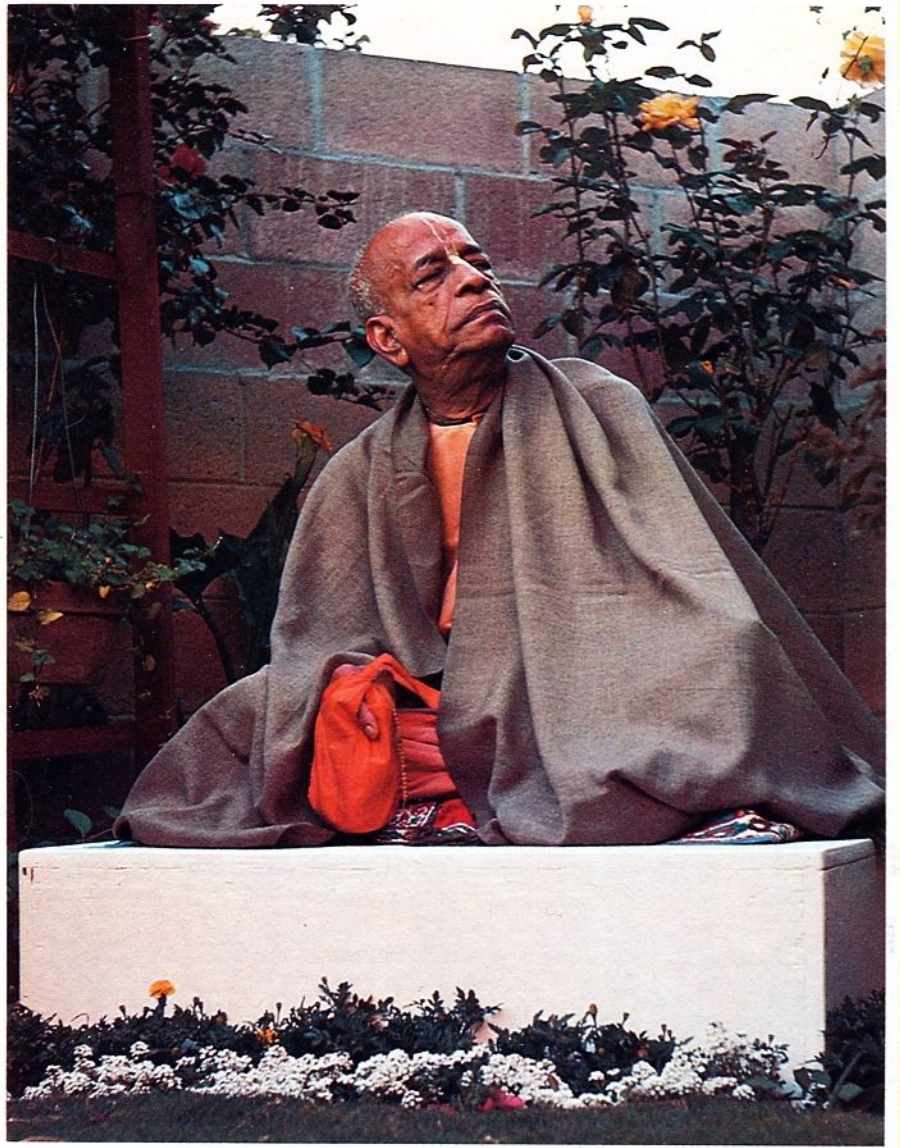
BACK TO GODHEAD

Vol. 22 No. 12

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT



His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda,
 Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, came to America in 1965, at age sixty-nine, to fulfill his spiritual master's request that he teach the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the English-speaking world. In a dozen years he published some seventy volumes of translation and commentary on India's Vedic literature, and these are now standard in universities worldwide. Meanwhile, traveling almost nonstop, Śrīla Prabhupāda molded his international society into a worldwide confederation of *āśramas*, schools, temples, and farm communities. He passed away in 1977 in 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

BACK TO GODHEAD

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

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

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COVER: As described in the ancient Vedic scripture *Īsopaniṣad*, the Absolute Truth is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, who expands Himself into unlimited forms possessing the same unlimited potency as His. Just as millions of candles can be lit by one candle, the four-armed forms of Lord Viṣṇu expand from Lord Kṛṣṇa without His being in the least diminished. The Viṣṇu expansions of Lord Kṛṣṇa preside over spiritual planets in Vaikuṅṭha, the kingdom of God, where devotees worship Them with all awe and reverence. The supreme Vaikuṅṭha planet is Goloka Vṛndāvana, where Kṛṣṇa's pure devotees worship Him in the highest exchanges of intimacy. (Painting by Rāmanātha dāsa.)

THE HUMAN MACHINE

Simply studying the “machine” of the human body is not enough.
We must use the machine to attain life’s ultimate goal.

A lecture in Philadelphia on July 14, 1975

by HIS DIVINE GRACE

A. C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA

Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

*niśamya mriyamāṇasya
mukhato hari-kīrtanam
bhartur nāma mahārāja
pārsadāḥ sahasāpatan*

“My dear king, the order carriers of Viṣṇu, the Viṣṇudūtas, immediately arrived when they heard the holy name of their master from the mouth of the dying Ajāmila, who had certainly chanted without offense because he had chanted in complete anxiety.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.1.30)

In your city the police are wandering in their car, and if somebody calls for the police, immediately they go to him. Similarly, the attendants of Lord Viṣṇu are wandering throughout the universe, searching out somebody who is chanting the holy name of the Lord. If you chant the holy name of the Lord, they are very much pleased, and they immediately come.

When Ajāmila called out “Nārāyaṇa!” he was simply calling his son, but the attendants of Hari took notice of the chanting only, that’s all. They did not care to know whether or not Ajāmila meant Lord Nārāyaṇa. No. Because they heard their master’s name, they immediately appeared. This is clear.

So, anyone who chants the holy name of the Lord is immediately taken care of by

the attendants of the Supreme Lord. Especially if one chants at the time of death—that is when the account is figured up. If you practice chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa during your lifetime, naturally at the last moment of your life you will be inclined to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. It is so nice.

If in this life I practice chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, then gradually the core of my heart will be cleansed and everything will become manifest. My position, my duty, what is God—everything will become manifest (*ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam*). Now, because our hearts are filled up with so much rubbish, we cannot understand the science of God. But if you practice chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, your heart will become cleansed and you will see things as they are.

And as soon as you are able to see things as they are, your material bondage is over. Now you are researching the bodily senses—finding out how they work—and doing so many things simply on the basis of the body. But as soon as your heart becomes cleansed, you will immediately understand, “I am not this body. So what is the use of studying cells and atoms, this and that? I am simply wasting my time.”

Suppose I am driving a very nice car, but I am simply absorbed in the machine only. I have forgotten my destination,

where I have to go, and I am busy studying the car. What is the use? You may be driving a good car, but you must know how to reach your destination. That is your main business. Knowing how the car works is secondary. Your main business is knowing how to utilize the car so you can reach your destination. That is intelligence.

So, we have fallen into this material condition, and we are occupying various forms. As long as we are in the bodily concept—thinking “I am this ‘car’”—that is ignorance. What is wanted is to think, “I am not this body. I am spirit soul, and I have to utilize this body to go to my destination—the spiritual world—where I can meet the supreme spirit, God, and live in His association.” Human life is meant for understanding what the Supreme Lord is, where He lives, what He does, and what our relationship with Him is. To seek to understand these things is called *brahma-jijñāsā*, “inquiry into the Absolute Truth.” That is actual education.

We are given this machine of the body, but what is the use of simply studying the machine? The *śāstra* [scripture] says that since the machine will work until it is rotten, you shouldn’t bother with the machine but should search out the Absolute Truth. But people are simply thinking, “Oh, now we have such a good machine.”



The dog also has a machine. The ant also has a machine, the elephant has a machine, the human being has a machine—every living entity has a bodily machine. But the *śāstra* says that this human machine should not be utilized like the animals’.

God has given us a human machine, and now we should utilize it to go to our destination. *Nṛ-deham ādyam . . . plavaṁ sukalpam*. This *nṛ-deha*, this human machine, is very carefully made—not by me but by nature. Nature is the agent of God. I wanted to do something, and so I required a particular type of machine. God ordered nature: “This living entity wants to do such and such, so give him an appropriate machine.” And she did that.

So, *prakṛti*, or nature, gives us different types of machines. *Prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ*. I am not the ultimate controller of the machine, nor have I made the machine. Rather, I have been given this machine as a gift to fulfill my desires. This is our position.

Now, the *śāstra* says, *nṛ-deham ādyam sulabham sudurlabham plavaṁ sukalpam*. This human body is a very good machine, and it is very rare. With great difficulty we have gotten this machine, because we had to come through so many other machines—the aquatics, the plants, the insects and trees, the serpents and reptiles, and then the birds and beasts. This has taken millions and millions of years. For example, we have seen trees that are standing for more than five thousand years. If you get that kind of machine, you cannot move: you have to stand in one place. We had to go through this. Foolish people do not know.

Therefore this human machine is *sudurlabham*, “very difficult to attain.” And it is also *sukalpam*, “very nicely made.” Those who are medical men know how nicely it is made—how the nerves are working, how the brain is working, the intestines and heart and everything is working so nicely. It is a grand machine. Therefore it is called *sukalpam*, “very well constructed.”

And what for? Suppose you have a nice, well-constructed boat. Then you can get into it and cross over a river or ocean. Similarly, in the human “boat” we can cross over this material ocean. Life after life we have been struggling in this material ocean, but now we have a suitable boat to cross it—this human body.

The human boat is especially advantageous because the breeze is very favorable. The breeze is the *śāstra*. When you ply your boat, if the breeze is favorable for pushing on to your destination, that is another advantage. So, we have a good boat and a good breeze. And, *guru-karmadhāram*—the *guru* is the good captain who can steer the boat. He is giving instructions: “Sail like this, turn quickly this

way, now that way.”

So, we have a great opportunity: the boat is very nice, the captain is very good, the breeze is very favorable. But if with all these advantageous facilities we do not cross over the sea of ignorance, of material existence, then we are committing suicide (*sa ātma-hā*). You have such a great opportunity, yet still you are remaining in this material world, repeatedly suffering birth, old age, disease, and death. Is that very good intelligence? No. That is not good.

People are being misled. They are studying the human machine, that’s all. Instead of taking advantage of the machine to cross over the material ocean, they are busy studying it. And they cannot even study it completely. I may claim, “This is my body,” but if somebody asks me, “How many hairs do you have on your body?” I cannot say. How I am eating something, how it is being turned into some secretion,

People neglect to use the human machine for going to their destination; they simply study it. This is going on in the name of science. What is this nonsensical science? Simply busy in studying the machine?

how the secretion is becoming blood and going to the heart, how the blood is being distributed throughout the arteries and veins—I do not know any of these things. I can simply theorize.

The human machine is not under your control. The machine is made by God, or by nature. It is a very subtle machine. So if you are intelligent, you will ask, “What is the use of simply studying the machine? I have it, so let me utilize it for going to my destination.” That is intelligence.

But no, people neglect to use the human machine for going to their destination, and instead they simply study it. And this is going on in the name of science. What is this nonsensical science? Simply busy in studying the machine?

This is our mistake: Although we should use our developed human consciousness for going back home, back to Godhead, we are not doing so. Why should we waste our human intelligence? Suppose you

study the human machine throughout your whole life. What will you get? Can you adjust the machine so that it will not be lost, so there will be no death? All you scientists who are studying the machine, have you found any means by which there will be no death? Where is that knowledge? Death will come. You may study the machine or not study the machine, but in due course of time death will come and take you.

You cannot cure even one disease. You are embarrassed by the cancer disease. So, find out how the cells are working and how they can be changed, and then there will be no more cancer. No, that you cannot do. You go on studying and simply waste your time.

The *śāstra* says, “Don’t waste your valuable time in that way. Try to understand God. Use your intelligence for this purpose.” It is also said, *tapo divyam . . . yena sattvaṁ śuddhyet*. You have to undergo austerities so that in the future you will not be subjected to this machine. That is your business—not to study the machine, but to become independent of the machine.

As long as you are in this material world, you are desiring in a certain way, nature is supplying you a certain type of machine, then you are busy trying to fulfill your desires, then the machine breaks, and then you accept another machine. This is going on. So your problem is to stop this repetition of birth, old age, disease, and death. Come to your spiritual life. That is your business. That is the instruction of the *śāstra*.

Everyone knows how to maintain the machine. The dog knows how to maintain his machine. He eats according to the necessity of his doggy body. Similarly, we are maintaining our human body. That is natural. The supplies are already there. You cannot manufacture them. That is the Vedic instruction: *nityo nityānām cetanaś cetanānām eko bahūnām yo vidadhāti kāmān*. “There are millions and trillions of living entities, but there is one living entity—God—who is supplying the necessities of all the others.”

We ordinary living entities have many millions of duplicates. Therefore the word *nityānām* is used, meaning “eternal living beings.” The ordinary living beings, or *jīvas*, are innumerable. You cannot count them. But above these innumerable living entities is one prime living entity, God. He is also a living entity, as we are. In your Bible there is the statement that “Man is made in the image of God.” So, God is a living entity, and this human form is made according to the form of the Lord. The human form is an imitation; God’s form is real (*sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*).

But you are thinking that God has no form. Why? Wherefrom did you get your form? You are daily praying, “O God, our father, give us our daily bread.” So, you

accept God as the supreme father. And if you have form, your father must have form. This is reasonable. Therefore, how can you say God has no form? This is all foolishness.

Suppose a child is born after the death of his father. So, simply because he has not seen his father, that does not mean he should conclude, "My father had no form." This is not a good conclusion. His mother can tell him, "Yes, my child, your father had form." This is intelligence.

So, God is a living entity, but the difference between Him and all the other living entities is that they are all dependent on Him. That's all. God is great, we are small. He is just like a father who maintains all his children. We are all children, and the supreme father maintains us.

Now one child may like to play with a motorcar toy, another with a doll, and so

on. And the parents are supplying: "All right, you take this toy car, you take this doll." Similarly, we are playing like that—making plans to enjoy—and God is supplying all our necessities. But He doesn't want to do that. He says, "My dear child, you are grown up now, you have this human body. Don't play like this and waste your time. Get an education and know things as they are." That education is called *brahma-jijñāsā*, "inquiry into the Absolute Truth." As the *Vedānta-sūtra* says, "Now that you have the human form of life, try to understand God. That is your main business."

Unfortunately, we are misled by blind leaders. We have been engaged in studying the body, that's all. So here it is said, *niśamya mriyamāṇasya mukhato hari-kīrtanam*. God very much appreciates it when we use our tongue and mouth to

chant His holy name. He very much appreciates that. Because the name of God is not different from God Himself, as soon as you chant Hare Kṛṣṇa you are in touch with Him.

In another place the *Bhāgavatam* says, *punya-sravaṇa-kīrtanaḥ*. *Śravaṇa* means "hearing," and *kīrtanaḥ* means "chanting." So, one who is chanting God's name and one who is hearing God's name—both are purified. Simply by chanting the name of God one can be delivered from birth and death. The example is given here—Ajāmila. He was addicted to so many sinful activities, and out of fear or because of good luck he chanted "Nārāyaṇa!" at the time of death. Immediately the attendants of Nārāyaṇa came to deliver him. This is the great benefit of chanting the holy name of the Lord.

Hare Kṛṣṇa. Thank you very much. ☐



GAURĀṅGHĀTĪ DĀSĀ

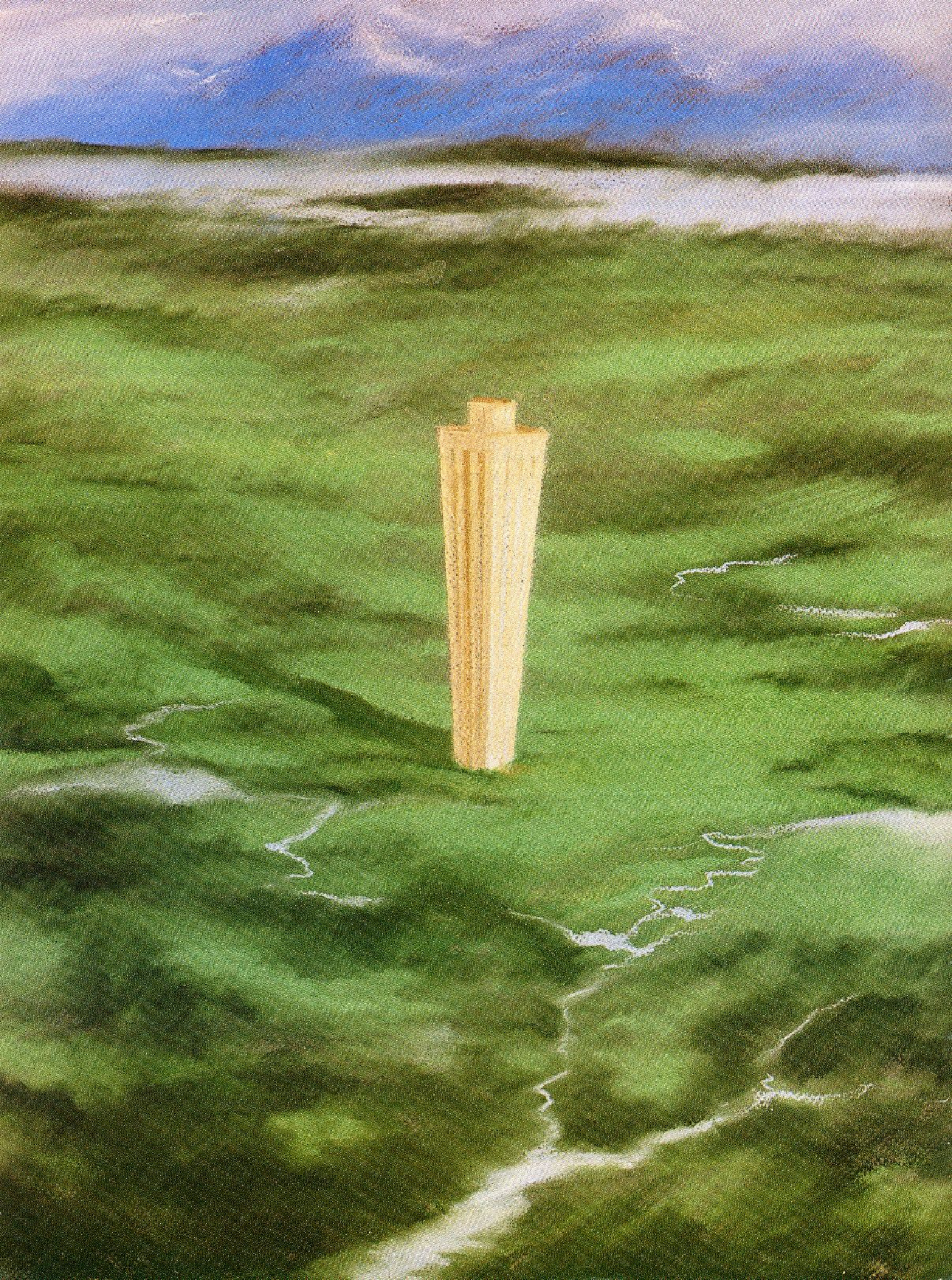
CHANT!

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

You'd probably never think this picture shows people practicing yoga. But chanting the names of God is actually the supreme form of yoga. Of course, devotees chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa certainly don't look much like yogīs. At least not the kind of yogīs most people think of when they hear the word. But most people, it seems, have little understanding of what yoga is really all about.

Yoga is a Sanskrit word meaning "union." India's ancient Sanskrit literatures, the *Vedas*, explain that the purpose of yoga is to purify our consciousness so that we can re-establish our eternal relationship with God. The sitting postures and breathing exercises most people associate with yoga are part of a certain type of yoga system—known as *hatha-yoga*—that was practiced thousands of years ago. By practicing *hatha-yoga*, great sages could completely withdraw their mind and senses from the material world and, after a very long time, find God within their hearts.

In this age, though, the *Vedas* discourage us from trying to reach God by following the *hatha-yoga* system. We just don't have the time or the determination. But in another way we're fortunate, because in this age God, or Kṛṣṇa, has come in the form of His holy name. To associate with Him, we simply have to chant His name. The goal of yoga, union with God, is easily attained through chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. And unlike other forms of yoga, the results come quickly. So, you too can be a yogī. Just try chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa—and feel yourself coming closer to God.



THE MYTH OF OVERPOPULATION

“According to the *Vedas*, population experts are wrong in their crucial assumption that earth cannot supply the needs of a large population. If people are God conscious, there is virtually no limit to the population the earth can comfortably support.”

by DRUTAKARMĀ DĀSA

One of the myths most strongly entrenched in the modern mind is that birth control is necessary because of the threat of overpopulation. But His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda has stated: “There is no scarcity for maintenance in the material world.” According to Śrīla Prabhupāda, human society’s leadership “is disturbed about the food situation and, to cover up the real fact of administrative mismanagement, takes shelter in the plea that the population is excessively increasing” (*Bhāg.* 3.5.5, purport).

The world is far from being overpopulated. A simple calculation shows that all five billion men, women, and children on earth could be placed within the 267,339 square miles of the state of Texas, with each person occupying about fifteen hundred square feet of space.

But what about food? A study by the University of California’s Division of Agricultural Science shows that by practicing the best agricultural methods now in use, the world’s farmers could raise enough food to provide an American-style diet for ten times the present population. And if people would be satisfied with an equally nourishing but mostly vegetarian diet, we could feed thirty times the present population.

Studies of an African famine in the early 1970’s revealed that every country affected had within its borders the agricultural resources to feed its people. As

Frances Moore Lappé points out in her well-researched book *Food First*, much of the best land was being misused for production of exportable cash crops.

Śrīla Prabhupāda also noted this fact. During a visit to Mauritius in 1975, in a lecture attended by some of the nation’s leading citizens, he stated, “So I see in your Mauritius island you have got enough land to produce food grains.” He then challenged, “I understand that instead of growing food grains you are growing sugarcane for exporting. Why? You first of all grow your own eatables, and if there is time and if your population has sufficient food grains, then you can try to grow other fruits and vegetables for exporting.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda went on to say, “I have traveled to Africa, Australia, and America, and everywhere there is so much land vacant. If we use it to produce food grains, then we can feed ten times as much population as at the present moment. There is no question of scarcity. The whole creation is so made by Kṛṣṇa that everything is *pūrṇam*, complete.”

Food resources are also wasted by improper diets. During his lecture in Mauritius, Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “I have seen in the Western countries that they are growing food grains for the animals, and the food grains are eaten by the animals, and the animal is eaten by the man. . . . What are the statistics? The animals are eating food grains, but the same amount

of food grains can be eaten by so many men.”

Such statistics do exist. Government figures show that about ninety percent of the edible grains harvested in the United States are fed to animals that are later killed for meat. But for every sixteen pounds of grain fed to beef cattle, only one pound of meat is produced.

Śrīla Prabhupāda concluded, “If there were one government on the surface of the earth to handle the distribution of grain, there would be no question of scarcity, no necessity to open slaughterhouses, and no need to present false theories about overpopulation” (*Bhāg.* 4.17.25, purport).

The first person to sound the overpopulation alarm was the English economist Malthus (1766-1834), who calculated that population tends to increase much faster than the earth’s limited food supply. New farmland, of which there is only so much, said Malthus, can be brought into production only slowly and with great labor and careful planning, whereas—because of the constant pressure of sex desire—people will have as many children as they are able, unless they are checked. Therefore the population is almost always pushing the limit of available food, and suffering results. Malthus summarized this with his maxim that food production increases arithmetically, while population increases geometrically.

“That population has this constant tendency to increase beyond the means of

subsistence,” states Malthus, “. . . will sufficiently appear from a review of the different states of society in which man has existed.” But according to the Vedic viewpoint, the earth can produce an almost unlimited amount of life’s necessities. Restriction occurs not from overpopulation but from some other cause, namely the self-destructive attitudes and actions of the planet’s population.

The science of ecology has awakened us to a greater appreciation of how different organisms and natural resources are linked in complex interdependency, and how easily this interdependency can be disturbed—as in the case of acid rain, for example. While doing research for NASA, scientist Jim Lovelock concluded that the “earth’s living matter, air, oceans, and land surface form a complex system which can be seen as a single organism and which has the capacity to keep our planet a fit place for life.” He calls his hypothesis the “Gaia principle,” after the Greek goddess of the earth.

Lovelock himself, adhering to the principles of materialistic science, does not believe in a personified earth deity. But he does point out, “The concept of Mother Earth, or, as the Greeks called her long ago, Gaia, has been widely held throughout history and has been the basis of a belief which still coexists with the great religions.” The Vedic scriptures clearly state that the earth is the visible form of the goddess Bhūmi, who restricts or increases her production according to the population’s level of spiritual consciousness.

“Therefore,” states Śrīla Prabhupāda, “although there may be a great increase in population on the surface of the earth, if the people are exactly in line with God consciousness and are not miscreants, such a burden on the earth is a source of pleasure for her” (*Bhāg.* 3.3.14, purport).

So according to the *Vedas*, Malthus and later population experts are wrong in their crucial assumption that earth cannot supply the needs of a large population. If people are God conscious, there is virtually no limit to the population the earth can comfortably support.

Nevertheless, Malthus did have some valuable points to make about population control. He believed that the best solution was voluntary restraint from marriage—without “vice,” by which he meant any kind of illicit sex whatsoever. Malthus specifically opposed free sex, which relies on abortion and contraception for population control. “A promiscuous intercourse to such a degree as to prevent the birth of children,” he warned, “seems to lower, in the most marked manner, the dignity of human nature. . . . When a general corruption of morals, with regard to the sex, pervades all classes of society, its effects must necessarily be to poison the

springs of domestic happiness, to weaken conjugal and parental affection, and to lessen the united exertions and ardour of parents in the care and education of their children.”

The dangers Malthus warned of have come to pass. Divorce, teenage suicide, child abuse, sex crimes—all are on the rise. Neglected children from broken homes fill the courts. In the face of the dangers from herpes, AIDS, and other sexually transmitted diseases, many people—often out of fear for their lives—are limiting their promiscuity. In Africa, where in some countries promiscuity is rampant, far more people face death from AIDS than from starvation.

In his study of population in different parts of the world, Malthus took special note of India, where the process of moral restraint is recommended in the Vedic scriptures such as the *Manu-saṁhitā*, the

The earth can produce an almost unlimited amount of life’s necessities. Restriction occurs not from overpopulation but from the self-destructive attitudes and actions of the planet’s population.

laws compiled by Manu, the forefather of mankind. Malthus noted, “In almost every part of the ordinances of Manu, sensuality of all kinds is strongly reprobated, and chastity inculcated as a religious duty.” Śrīla Prabhupāda states, “We do not find in Vedic literatures that they ever used contraceptive methods. . . . The contraceptive method should be restraint in sex life. . . . If one is fortunate enough to have a good, conscientious wife, he can decide by mutual consultation that human life is meant for advancing in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and not for begetting a large number of children” (*Bhāg.* 4.27.6, purport).

Margaret Sanger (1879–1966), a principal organizer of the modern birth control movement, once visited Gandhi in India and tried to persuade him to support a birth control program for his country. “He agreed,” wrote Sanger, “that no more than

three or four children should be born to a family, but insisted that intercourse, therefore, should be restricted for the entire married life of the couple to three or four occasions.”

Sanger and her followers had more success with people of other religious backgrounds. The wives of some American Episcopal bishops once asked Sanger to convince their husbands about the necessity for legalized birth control. Sanger complied, and soon thereafter the bishops reversed their previous opposition. Although most Protestant and Jewish denominations approve birth control, the Catholic Church continues to oppose it. Despite much opposition from the laity—and some clergymen as well—the pope has maintained that sex other than for conception is sinful. Nevertheless, the Church still allows sex during the so-called safe period, as well as after menopause and for sterile persons. That contradiction is not present in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement—non-procreative sex is against the Vedic principles.

Sanger had strong emotional reasons for her birth control crusade. She once saw a woman die in childbirth and resolved “to do something to change the destiny of mothers whose miseries were as vast as the sky.” That is certainly a noble aspiration, but the means chosen by Sanger will not give the result she desired. They can only insure more suffering.

Sanger believed that “women should free themselves from biological slavery, which could best be accomplished through birth control.” The *Vedas*, however, reveal our actual enslavement: every one of us—male or female—is caught up in the endless cycle of birth and death. Our real identity is that we are eternal spirit souls, now engaged in temporary material bodies subject to various miseries and the destructive influence of time. We are transmigrating from one material body to another, lifetime after painful lifetime.

Is reincarnation just a belief? According to the *Vedas*, it is a fact each of us must face. Even Western science has turned up evidence (in research into out-of-body experiences and memories of past lives) that strongly suggests there is a conscious part of us that survives the death experience. We return, the *Vedas* explain, to suffer the reactions to the activities we performed in our previous life.

Śrīla Prabhupāda therefore warns, “Illicit sex creates pregnancies, and these unwanted pregnancies lead to abortion. Those involved become implicated in these sins, so much so that they are punished in the same way the next life. Thus in the next life they also enter the womb of a mother and are killed in the same way” (*Bhāg.* 5.4.9, purport).

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Adopt a Cow for Peace

At the Hare Kṛṣṇa farm in Pennsylvania, devotees work for peace in a revolutionary way.

by SUREŚVARA DĀSA

Cows munch pasture under clear skies. Waves of grain rustle in the summer wind. Silos flank a white barn, where a husband and wife clean stalls and get ready for the next milking. It looks like an ordinary dairy, but if the cows here could talk they would tell you differently. It's Gītā-nāgarī, the Hare Kṛṣṇa farm in central Pennsylvania, home of a novel peace project called Adopt A Cow.

"Ever wonder why humanity is always at war?" an American devotee asks a barn guest. "India's sages say that man's inhumanity to man is largely a product of man's inhumanity to animals—especially the cow."

Generally, as soon as a cow's milk output starts to slip, modern dairymen sell her for slaughter. When they look the cow in the eye, somehow they don't see a sentient being like themselves; they see a dollar sign. "A sign," says the devotee, "of our predatory times."

Begun in 1975, the six-hundred-acre Gītā-nāgarī farm runs much as Indian villages have for centuries. The keystone is the cow. Like a mother, she nourishes the hundred-member community with her milk. And like a father, the bull helps till the ground to provide food. The devotees protect them for as long as they live; they will never hear the sound of the slaughterer's gun.



A few contented members of the Gītā-nāgarī community.

Man's "dominion" over the cattle, the devotees say, is clarified in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, wherein Kṛṣṇa recommends cow protection for the peace and prosperity of society.

Have Gītā-nāgarī's cow protectors prospered? Devotees point to the farm's successes. In 1977 they managed to build their own temple, in 1980 their own school, and in 1983 the Pennsylvania Dairymen's Association commended the farm for managing the top-producing herd of Brown Swiss cows in the state.

That same year, to accommodate their hundred-plus herd, the devotees broke ground for a new barn, complete with methane digester. The cows' dung contains enough methane gas to power the whole community. But lack of funds since then has brought construction to a halt.

Nevertheless, the devotees' struggles inspired a few of their Indian friends to pull together and help. As educated Indians working in America, they apprecia-

ted the farm as a haven from the modern McDonald's culture, and they saw a chance to proclaim India's message of peace and good will. How could Indians at large help build a new barn for Kṛṣṇa's cows? Simple. Adopt one.

In the fall of 1985, the devotees organized Adopt A Cow, placed ads in newspapers for natives of India, and sent solicitation letters to

fifteen thousand Hindus in the U.S., encouraging them to "make a stand for world peace" and fulfill their religious obligation to "protect the sacred cow."

Jag Bushan Kaul and his wife, Veena, were among the first to respond. In their suburban Detroit home hangs a framed color photo of their adopted cow.

"In India, cow protection is as sacred as motherhood," says Kaul. "All of us were raised on cow's milk. When we were growing up, every family in the village kept a cow as part of the family. But in America we tend to forget our intimate relationship and debt of gratitude to the cow."

Says adopter Shyamasundar Mahajan, a physician from Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania: "In America alone, more than forty million cows and calves are slaughtered every year. This is needlessly cruel. We can live a healthy life with a properly balanced vegetarian diet. Available statistics now point to beef-eating, not smoking, as

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Lord Kṛṣṇa's Cuisine

Odd Inedibles or Divine Delights— The Choice is Yours

Upside-slime cake, slugetti, puréed slug tartare—ugh!
I'll stick with my fruits and vegetables, thank you.

by VIŚĀKHĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

Beneath an azure sky, kids romp in a spectacular, sun-sparkled fountain, lively Scotsmen dance on the main stage, and crowds gather at dozens of fascinating booths—Ukrainian folk art; Greek hand-weaving; wood-carving; pottery; basketry; calligraphy. It's the first annual International Village Fair, a nine-day extravaganza under a huge open-air pavilion in the most popular spot in town. And

in the center of it all: live cooking demonstrations.

For two days I watch as cooks demonstrate a grotesque array of cuisines from around the world. A smiling Jamaican with glossy black hair makes refreshing ginger tea and a swordfish stir-fry. A nervous Irish lady tells of her native boiled bacon. An African-American fast-foods cook holds up a browned rib cage, and as I

walk up she carves it and sprinkles on a southern spice mix. A kosher cook explains gefilte fish. A proud Iranian marinates ground veal.

The people listen and laugh, take notes, ask questions, and feel happy to be there, enjoying summery breezes and a symphony of native music, falling water, and casual cross-cultural enrichment.

"Why did you demonstrate only vegetarian foods?" I asked the surly cook from India. "Well, we have limited time," she said. "And besides, I didn't make the menu; the fair's organizers made it. I could just as well have demonstrated nonvegetarian, but they asked me to cook things like *purīs*, *pakorās*, and *wadas*."

For a devotee, the remarkable thing about an event like this is to see how people all over the world eat without discrimination. A few months back, in an article called "Odd But Edible," food columnist Jim Quinn wrote, "I had the very best braised pig's intestines and the best duck foot and sea cucumber casserole I've ever tasted . . . odd but edible parts of animal anatomy that delight me and a sizable majority of *Inquirer* readers but that lead others to write letters of intense moral fervor. Please, if you are the kind of vegetarian who thinks it's somehow worse to eat the webbing between the toes of a cute little duck than it is to eat hamburger made from the neck of a lovable, young, dewy-eyed steer, stop now. . . . Just put this article aside; you won't like it."

No, Mr. Quinn, we're not that kind of vegetarian. We agree that eating hamburger is as bad as eating duck's foot. And we think that you and other omnivores would delight in timing your next tasting experiment with the springtime Slugfest cookout held annually in Guerneville, California (population 900). For eight years locals have vied for prizes for producing the tastiest dishes made from slugs, which thrive along the banks of the nearby Russian River. Last year's winners included upside-slime cake, slugetti, and puréed slug tartare.

There are other tastes, even more available and unexplored, that Quinn and his brethren are missing—taste delights that were known to our 12,000-year-old ancestors. Archaeologist Chris Stringer of the Natural History Museum in London, reporting of the Stone Age Britons, says, "It now looks definitely as though the humans were treated in just the same way as the animals—as food."

Certainly Quinn and the Village Fair goers would think of Lord Kṛṣṇa's cuisine as dreadfully constrained. Even kosher food—which includes meat—is subject to this criticism. Two women at the fair left the kosher demonstration after a few minutes, one saying to the other, "This is the least interesting demonstration—the cui-

(Recipes from *The Hare Krishna Book of Vegetarian Cooking*, by Ādi-rāja dāsa. Opposite page, counterclockwise from top: *Kathmir vada*, *Gajar vada*, *Dahi vada*.)

Chickpea-flour and Coriander-leaf Tidbits (*Kathmir vada*)

Preparation time: 45 minutes
Servings: 4-6

2 ounces fresh coriander leaves
2 cups sifted chickpea flour
2 cups plain yogurt
1 or 2 fresh chilies, chopped
3 teaspoons salt
1¾ cups water
ghee (clarified butter) or
vegetable oil for deep-frying

1. Wash the coriander leaves thoroughly and remove the largest stems. Chop the leaves into small pieces and combine in a mixing bowl with the chickpea flour, yogurt, chilies, and salt. Slowly add water, stirring as you do, until the batter has a milklike consistency.

2. Pour the batter into a medium-size pot and place over a medium flame. Cook gently for 15 to 20 minutes. As the batter thickens, stir frequently with a wide wooden spoon to avoid scorching. The batter is ready when a dab of it solidifies on a cool surface. Now pour the batter into a shallow cake pan (1 to 2 inches deep) and let it cool for at least 15 minutes. When it becomes firm, cut it into diamonds and deep-fry the pieces in ghee or vegetable oil until golden brown.

3. Remove, drain, and offer to Kṛṣṇa hot or at room temperature with date-and-tamarind chutney.

(See third column for chutney recipe.)

Spiced Carrot Croquettes (*Gajar vada*)

Preparation time: 25 minutes
Servings: 4-6

4 or 5 medium-size carrots, washed
and scraped
1 cup chickpea flour
2 tablespoons walnuts or filberts,
chopped coarse
1 tablespoon grated fresh coconut
1 tablespoon chopped fresh coriander
or parsley leaves
2 fresh chilies, seeded and chopped
1 teaspoon *garam masāla*
½ teaspoon turmeric
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon baking powder
ghee or vegetable oil for deep-frying

1. Grate the carrots on the fine holes of a

metal grater until you have about 9 ounces of grated carrots. Put the grated carrots and all the other ingredients in a large bowl. Mix with just enough water to make a paste thick enough to hold together when deep-fried.

2. Heat the ghee or vegetable oil in a wok or saucepan over a medium flame. Pick up a lump of batter with a tablespoon. Use your finger to push the lump into the hot ghee or oil. Do this until you have 8 to 10 *vadas* cooking at the same time. Adjust the heat and turn the *vadas* often so that they become nicely browned on all sides in 4 or 5 minutes. Remove with a slotted spoon. Drain in a strainer or colander. Offer to Kṛṣṇa.

Dāl Croquettes in Yogurt Sauce (*Dahi vada*)

Soaking time: several hours for the *dāl*
Preparation time: 40 minutes
Servings: 4-6

1 cup *urad dāl*, sorted and washed
water for soaking
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
2 fresh chilies, seeded and chopped
1 tablespoon fresh ginger, grated
½ teaspoon asafetida
1½ teaspoons salt
ghee or vegetable oil for deep-frying
1 tablespoon grated coconut
2 tablespoons chopped fresh coriander leaves
2 pinches cayenne pepper
1¾ cups plain yogurt

1. Soak the *dāl* in warm water for several hours. Drain it and grind it in an electric blender (or a grinder) with just enough water to make a thick, smooth paste. Scrape this paste into a bowl and mix in the cumin seeds, chilies, ginger, asafetida, and ½ teaspoon salt.

2. Heat the ghee or oil in a wok or saucepan over a medium flame. Moisten your left hand with a little water and put 2 ounces of the mixture on it. Flatten it slightly with the thumb of your left hand to form a flat patty. Poke it in the center with the little finger of your right hand to make a depression. Now carefully slide it into the ghee. Because the *dāl* is not very firm, this operation may require some practice (if it seems difficult, don't worry: you can also use a spoon to put lumps of the batter into the hot ghee). Fry the *vadas* for 6 to 8 minutes on each side until they become reddish brown. Remove and drain in a colander.

3. Mix the grated coconut, fresh coriander, cayenne pepper, and remaining salt into the yogurt and cover the *vadas* with this sauce. After one hour, garnish each *vada* by filling the dent in the center with a dab of date-and-tamarind chutney. Offer to Kṛṣṇa.

Date-and-Tamarind Chutney (*Khajur Imli Ki Chatni*)

Preparation time: 35 minutes
Servings: 4-6

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

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

2. To this juice add all the other ingredients. Cook uncovered over a medium flame until most of the liquid evaporates and the chutney is the consistency of marmalade. Offer to Kṛṣṇa.

Toasted Chickpea-flour Fudge (*Dvārakā barfi*)

Preparation time: 30 minutes

1¾ cups butter
3 cups sifted chickpea flour
1 cup milk
1 cup water
1¼ cups sugar
¼ cup cashew or pistachio nuts,
chopped coarse
2 tablespoons coconut

1. Melt the butter in a medium-size saucepan. Stir the chickpea flour into the butter and stir-fry it gently over a low flame, taking care not to burn it. After about 15 minutes, when the flour is lightly browned, remove the pan from the heat.

2. In another saucepan, make the syrup by boiling together the milk, water, and sugar until a drop of syrup makes one strand between your thumb and forefinger. Stir the nuts and coconut into the syrup, and pour the syrup into the chickpea flour. Cook and stir gently over a very low flame until the mixture thickens and becomes less sticky.

3. After it cools enough to handle, form it into a square cake on a plate. When it becomes firm, cut it into pieces. Top each piece with half a cashew nut or some chopped pistachio nuts. Offer to Kṛṣṇa.

sine is too limited." So then, what of a diet that contains no meat, fish, or eggs? It must have the appeal of solitary confinement to a society girl.

As I returned from the Village Fair, I thought of the Iranian cooking pounded calf's flesh, the Afro-American sawing through ribs, and the Indian who didn't

care what she cooked. I wished that the devotees had been there, showing that the "limited" ingredients of grains, fruits, vegetables, milk, and milk products can fulfill all the reasons for eating: health, strength, satisfaction, and happiness; and showing that fifty kinds of spice, fifty varieties of vegetable, fifty different grains and leg-

umes, and dozens of different fruits and milk products can be combined to make thousands of delicious dishes.

Maybe then a few "lovers of strange cuisine," as Quinn calls them, could have been attracted to the divine delights of Kṛṣṇa's normal—and spiritually uplifting—cuisine. ❧

Krishna Consciousness AND THE WORLD

C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

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Santiago, Chile—Govinda's (contact ISKCON Santiago)

Adopt a Cow

(continued from page 9)

this country's greatest health hazard."

For \$3,000, subscribers like Kaul and Mahajan can support a cow for life. Besides a color photo, they receive a gold certificate of adoption, a brass plaque, milk products, periodic news of the cow's progress, and a free "get-acquainted vacation weekend at the farm. A wonderful opportunity to visit with your family cow."

Other plans allow subscribers to give

\$30 or \$100 monthly for a year, with option to renew. The half-million-dollar barn complex will require at least two hundred adopters; to date, about half that number have adopted cows.

Predictably, Adopt A Cow has drawn peals of laughter from the American press. "It's No Bull—Hindus Adopt Cows." Vegetarians and animal rights activists, though, have taken serious notice. Adopt A Cow ads now appear in their publications, and today most of the project's inquiries are from Americans.

Gloria Perlis is president of the Lehigh Valley Vegetarian Society, which has sponsored a bus trip to the farm, brought devotees to Allentown to cater the club's social functions, and recently adopted a cow.

"The devotees cater all our events now," says Perlis, who regularly orders cheese, yogurt, and desserts from the farm. "It's the only kind of cheese I'll eat, because it comes from animals that will never be killed."

"I wanted to stop enriching the veal industry by buying dairy products at my local Acme," says Jane Tufton, an animal rights activist from Allentown, who also receives the farm's products.

As Perlis and Tufton are well aware, veal is a by-product of the dairy industry, since it comes from calves bred to maintain milking stock. Such calves live in particularly inhumane conditions on food-industry factory farms.

If you're still wondering about the sages' link between slaughter and war, the devotees recommend a visit to a slaughterhouse—preferably a modern one, where hundreds of cows daily are bound, shot, shackled, hung, knifed, dehided, split, weighed, and shrouded for chilling coolers. Concentration camps never enjoyed such efficiency, or such good public relations. After all, the public's dinner table is the last stop on the production line.

"You have just dined," wrote Emerson, "and however scrupulously the slaughterhouse is concealed in the graceful distance of miles, there is complicity."

On my one visit to a slaughterhouse, I noted employees of many extractions—a kind of General Assembly of butchers. I thought of the United Nations, of how its buildings stand on the very spot where New York City slaughterhouses used to, and how its members have failed to keep the peace. The "progress" that produced the slaughterhouse, two world wars, and the pandemic carnage since then, has at last—summitry notwithstanding—stockpiled enough bombs to slaughter us all.

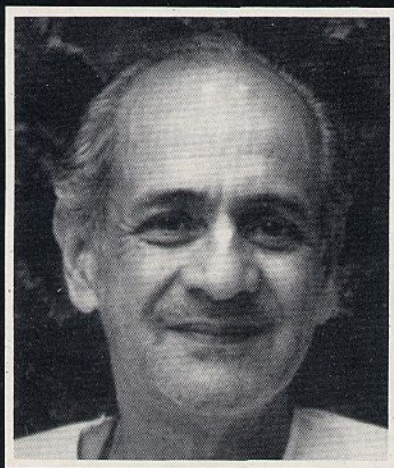
Adopt A Cow may not close the slaughterhouse tomorrow, but it can certainly help us reconsider our responsibility to this beneficent animal. And humane considerations aside, is America really more peaceful and prosperous for having entrusted the cow to a "dairy industry" perennially awash in a sea of surplus milk? Or for having discarded the bull for the tractor, partly for which she must risk her sons' lives in the Middle East to keep fuel lines open?

Says Adopt A Cow promoter Gaura Hari dāsa: "The idea is to get people thinking of Elsie and Elmer as part of the family—not dinner. Otherwise, you can talk of peace till the cows come home." ❏

For more information on Adopt A Cow, write or call the *Gitā-nāgarī* farm. See address list on page 12.

In Memoriam

Viśvambhara Gosvāmī



On August 20, 1987, Ācārya Viśvambhara Gosvāmī, head of the Rādhā-ramaṇa temple in Vṛndāvana, India, and a long-time friend of Śrīla Prabhupāda and ISKCON, passed away in Vṛndāvana. Viśvambhara Gosvāmī was born in Vṛndāvana in 1922.

The Rādhā-ramaṇa temple was established almost five hundred years ago by Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, and since then the temple has been run by the ancestors of Viśvambhara Gosvāmī, who took over the management of the temple when his father passed away in 1964. Viśvambhara Gosvāmī had a successful law practice in Mathurā, but he gave it up to devote himself fully to serving Śrī Rādhā-ramaṇa. He was well known and respected in Vṛndāvana, and served as Vṛndāvana's mayor for some time.

During the fifties and sixties, when Śrīla Prabhupāda lived in Vṛndāvana he would visit Viśvambhara Gosvāmī, who always appreciated Śrīla Prabhupāda's desire to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. He was genuinely impressed by Śrīla Prabhupāda's accomplishments and often spoke heartfelt appreciations during the annual festival in Vṛndāvana commemorating Śrīla Prabhupāda's passing

away. He recognized that Śrīla Prabhupāda had been sent by Lord Caitanya to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness around the world.

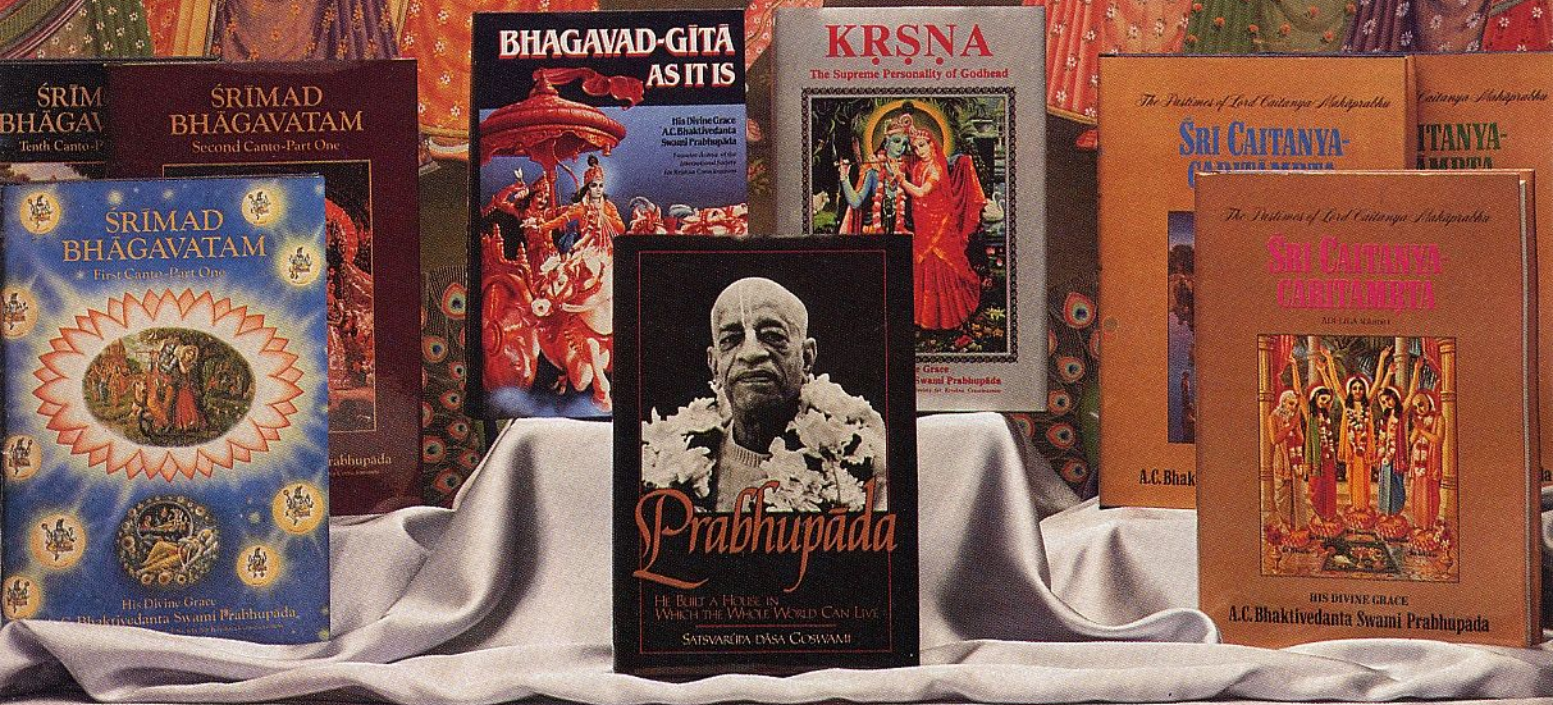
Śrīla Prabhupāda also recognized Viśvambhara Gosvāmī's devotion to Kṛṣṇa and sent some of his disciples to learn from Viśvambhara Gosvāmī the intricacies of Deity worship. Śrīla Prabhupāda told them that the worship of Rādhā-ramaṇa was of a high standard that they should try to emulate. Viśvambhara Gosvāmī was eager to assist the devotees, who found his instructions about Deity worship very valuable.

Anyone who had the good fortune to associate with Viśvambhara Gosvāmī appreciated his Vaiṣṇava qualities. He was exceptionally humble. Even though he was the leader of a prestigious institution, with hundreds of disciples throughout India, he wanted no respect for himself. Rather, he treated everyone with the greatest respect. When ISKCON devotees were guests at his home, he would often serve them himself.

Viśvambhara Gosvāmī was enthusiastic to spread the message of Lord Caitanya, and he took to heart Lord Caitanya's instruction that anyone born in India must make his life successful by becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious and then giving Kṛṣṇa consciousness to others. Viśvambhara made three trips to the West for preaching, twice to the United States and once to Europe. He traveled to many Western cities, speaking at temples, colleges, and elsewhere, and meeting many important persons. When he visited New York City, he went to see the places where Śrīla Prabhupāda first preached when he came to America. He said they were now holy places.

Viśvambhara Gosvāmī was everyone's well-wisher. Those who knew him will feel a great loss by his absence. Indeed, the whole world suffers with the departure of a pure Vaiṣṇava like Śrī Viśvambhara Gosvāmī, who has now returned to Kṛṣṇa's eternal abode.

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On Pilgrimage

VRINDĀVANA JOURNAL

Excerpts from the diary of a young American on a twenty-five-day pilgrimage through the land of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes.

by GĪTĀ-NĀGARĪ DĀSA

PHOTOS BY YAMARĀJA DĀSA





February 13, Mathurā

It is 2:00 A.M. Outside in the courtyard a dog is barking. We slept last night eighteen to a room in the *āśrama* attached to the temple here at Kṛṣṇa's birthsite. I re-

tired at 9:30, and this barking dog has awakened me. Returning to sleep is impossible. This makes my third night in a row with less than five hours sleep; but somehow one does not grow tired in Mathurā. There is a weariness in my body, like you might feel after doing strenuous exercise, but not that drowsy, dull, mode-of-ignorance feeling you experience elsewhere.

February 14

As we left Mathurā, our *pada-yātrā* elephant led, followed by the *kīrtana* party and ox-cart with the deities.

We entered the village of Madhuvana—the land that time forgot. Who can de-



ISKCON's *pada-yātrā* (below) on its 168-mile-, 25-day-tour of Vraja, Lord Kṛṣṇa's eternal home. At left, a devotee worships the *pada-yātrā* Deities, Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Lord Nityānanda. At far left, author Gītānāgarī dāsa.

scribe it! I thought the town of Vṛndāvana was a village, but compared to Madhuvana, Vṛndāvana is a big city. This is a real village. First, you see the fields, then the huts, with their simple thatched roofs. In the center of the village stands the village well. There is no electricity. We enter the village 150 devotees strong. The villagers have never seen anything like us. They don't quite know what to do.

The village children follow our *kīrtana*,

their faces lit with happiness and excitement. The piety of these people cannot be fathomed. Their faces are like lights in the night. The *kīrtana* reverberates off the cement walls in the narrow village street, and ecstasy descends upon us. The austerity of the walk now seems worth it, a million times over.

February 15

We started out from Madhuvana this





morning to go to Śantanu-kuṇḍa. The distance is fourteen kilometers. The early-morning walk was one of extraordinary beauty. We passed field after field of bright-green wheat, punctuated by tall fields of sugarcane. The road was soft and pleasing, cooling to the feet. It was like getting a foot massage.

On the way we passed through Talavana forest, where there are deities of Balarāma—black, with His right hand raised—and Revatī, His eternal consort. Talavana forest is where Dhenukāsura was killed. This demon, in the form of a gi-

Lakṣmī the elephant leads the way (above) as the pada-yātrā enters a town near Govardhana Hill. At right, a devotee from Japan distributes Back to Godhead to some inquisitive locals.





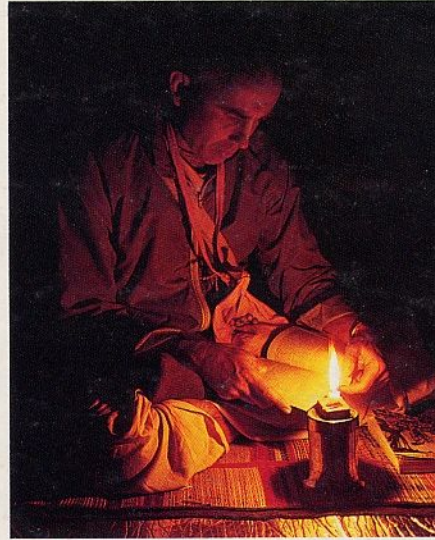
that whoever bathes here will be blessed to understand the purport to the Vedic literature. I filled my canteen and rubbed the water over my body.

Near Kumudavana is Śantanu-kuṇḍa, where King Śantanu performed austerities to beget Bhīṣmadeva. The *kuṇḍa* is now muddy and only a few feet deep, but it is

was reflected in the worship, the beauty of the Deity shone through—black Kṛṣṇa with a flute.

Now we have arrived at Bahulāvana and are camped for the day. We have walked through four of the twelve forests of Vṛndāvana. The Bahulā-kuṇḍa is one of the nicest *kuṇḍas* I've seen. Clean water. This is a picturesque village, and the people are helpful and happy. They seem materially a little better off than the people at Śantanu-kuṇḍa. Through a Hindi-speaking devotee from Delhi I was able to talk to some of the local teenage boys.

Tonight after *prasādam* we had our regular evening program—*kīrtana*, a lecture, a play, and a puppet show. All the devotees gather onstage, the villagers all around us. After an exuberant *kīrtana* Rādhā-ramaṇa dāsa introduces all the



Reading by candlelight (left) is often a necessity in this land where electricity is scarce. Below, these Deities of Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva (center) and Lord Varāha (far left) were worshiped by Kṛṣṇa's father, Nanda Mahārāja.



ant ass, was not allowing anyone into this part of Vṛndāvana. The cowherd boys were attracted to the beautiful fruit trees there. So Balarāma killed the demon by grasping one of his hind legs and throwing him into a tree. There are still palm trees in this part of Vṛndāvana; one is in the courtyard of the temple.

We then walked to Kumudavana. *Kumuda* means “water lily.” During Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes beautiful water lilies grew here. Lord Kapila, an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, performed austerities here in the Tretā-yuga. The *Varāha Purāṇa* states

the only place in the area to bathe. The village here is very poor. There is no grass, and dust is blowing all over. Many devotees are staying in tents set up on a sandy plain. I am staying in a room with pigeons flying above me here and there.

February 16

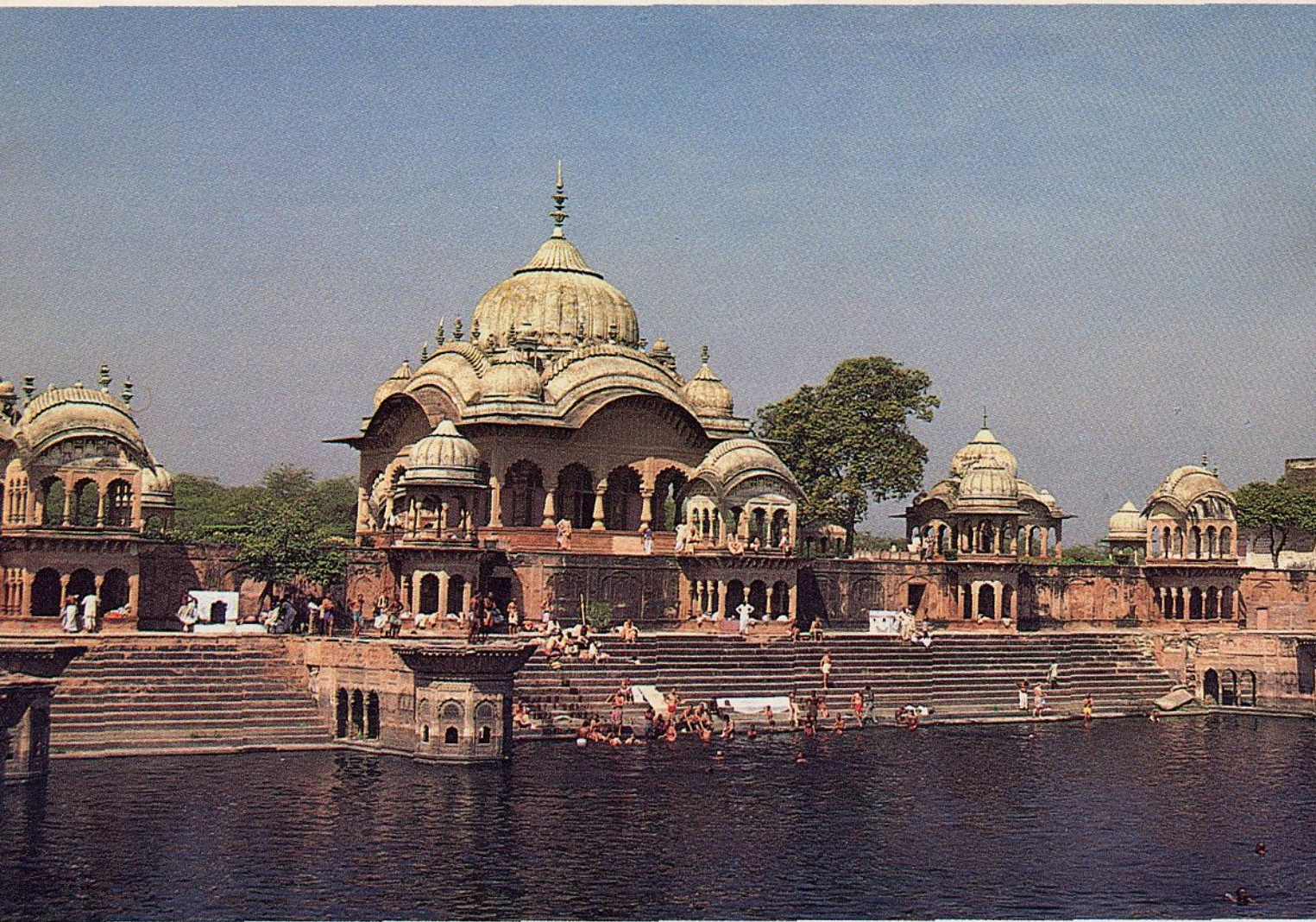
This morning we went on procession to the temple at Santanu-kuṇḍa. When we arrived—in the middle of *maṅgala-ārati*—five local devotees were ringing beautifully tuned gongs and chanting *mantras*. Even though the simplicity of the village

Western devotees. The amazing thing is the way the people react. It is very easy to get them to chant, often with great enthusiasm. You haven’t lived until you’ve heard a hundred Brijbāsis chanting *Hari Bol!* at the top of their lungs.

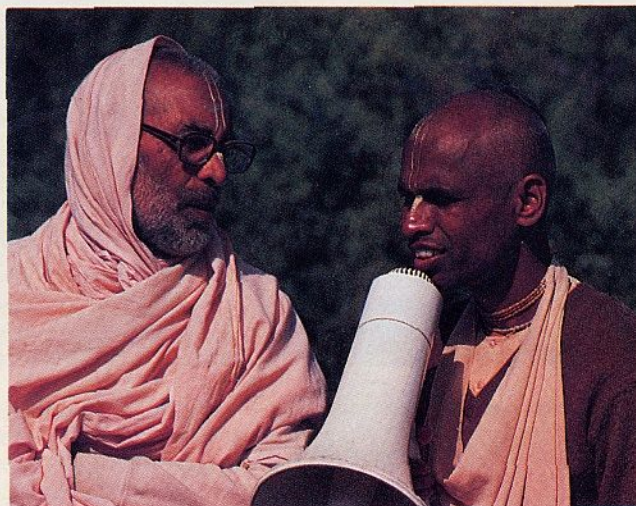
February 17

The *parikrama* left Bāhulāvana about 9:00 A.M. for Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa. I took the opportunity to walk quite a distance ahead of the party. It was nice to be out in the countryside by myself.

Upon arriving at Rādhā-kuṇḍa, we



Devotees bathe at Kusuma-sarovara (above), where the gopīs would pick flowers for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. At right, pada-yātrā director Lokanātha Swami (with megaphone) introduces Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, a disciple of B.P. Keśava Mahārāja, Śrīla Prabhupāda’s sannyāsa-guru.

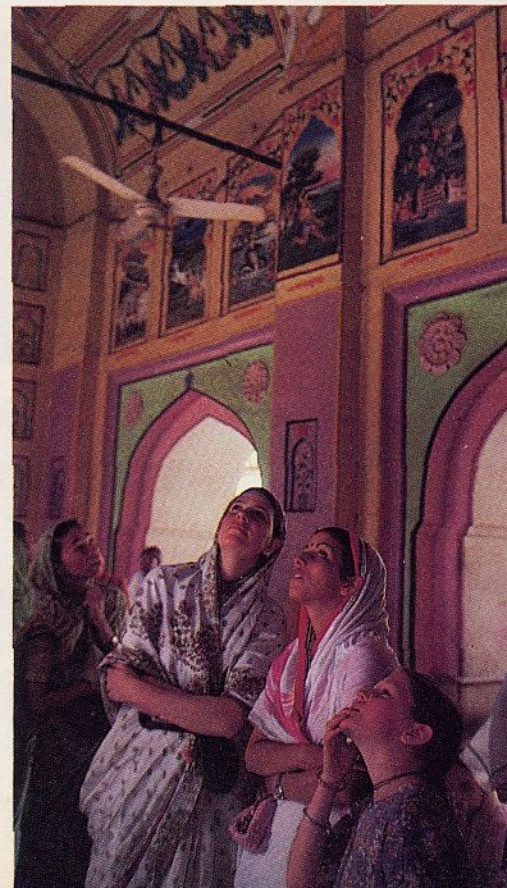


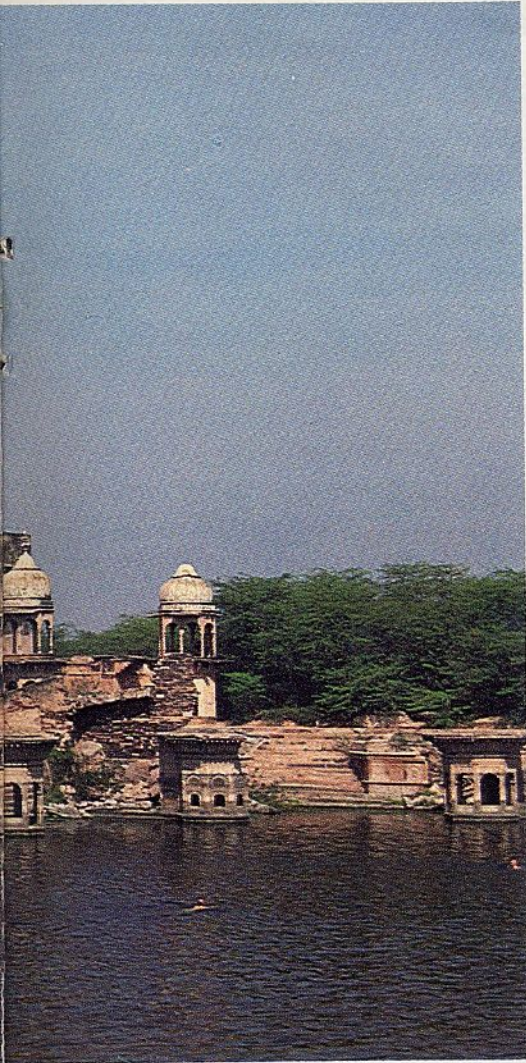
were told to respect but not enter this most sacred of all *kuṇḍas*, so I put some water on my head and then bathed with water from Śyāma-kuṇḍa. Many old people reside here, living out their last days in this holy place. I passed one old woman on the street who seemed one step from death. She looked at me and just said, “*Jaya Rādhē*,” but she said it in such a way, with

such feeling, that it touched me very deeply. One has to be very careful around these holy places. I hope I did not commit any offenses here, either to the site or to its saintly residents.

February 18

Often I see people circumambulating Śyāma-kuṇḍa and Rādhā-kuṇḍa by of-





fering prostrate obeisances, placing a rock before them, and then offering obeisances again. It is quite an austerity to go all the way around the two lakes this way. It takes several hours to complete. I don't think I'll try it, soft American that I am.

Today we'll walk four kilometers to Govardhana—a very short distance by *pada-yātrā* standards—and on the way we will stop to bathe at Kusuma-sarovara, where the *gopīs* used to pick flowers for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

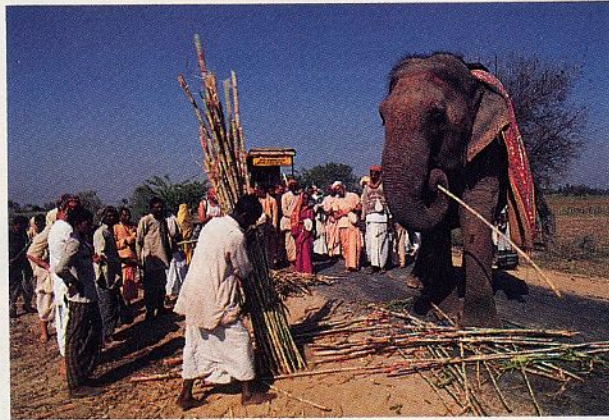
February 19

This morning Lokanātha Mahārāja gave a wonderful talk on the significance of Vraja-maṇḍala *pada-yātrā*. He read from a work written by a disciple of Gadādhara Paṇḍita. This disciple, Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa, wrote twelve books on Vṛndāvana. He compares different parts of Vṛndāvana to Kṛṣṇa's body. He says there

are 2,500 forests in Vṛndāvana. Kṛṣṇa's heart is Mathurā, Vṛndāvana is his navel, Madhuvana his chest, and so on. In this way we will touch many of the parts of Kṛṣṇa's body on our *pada-yātrā*.

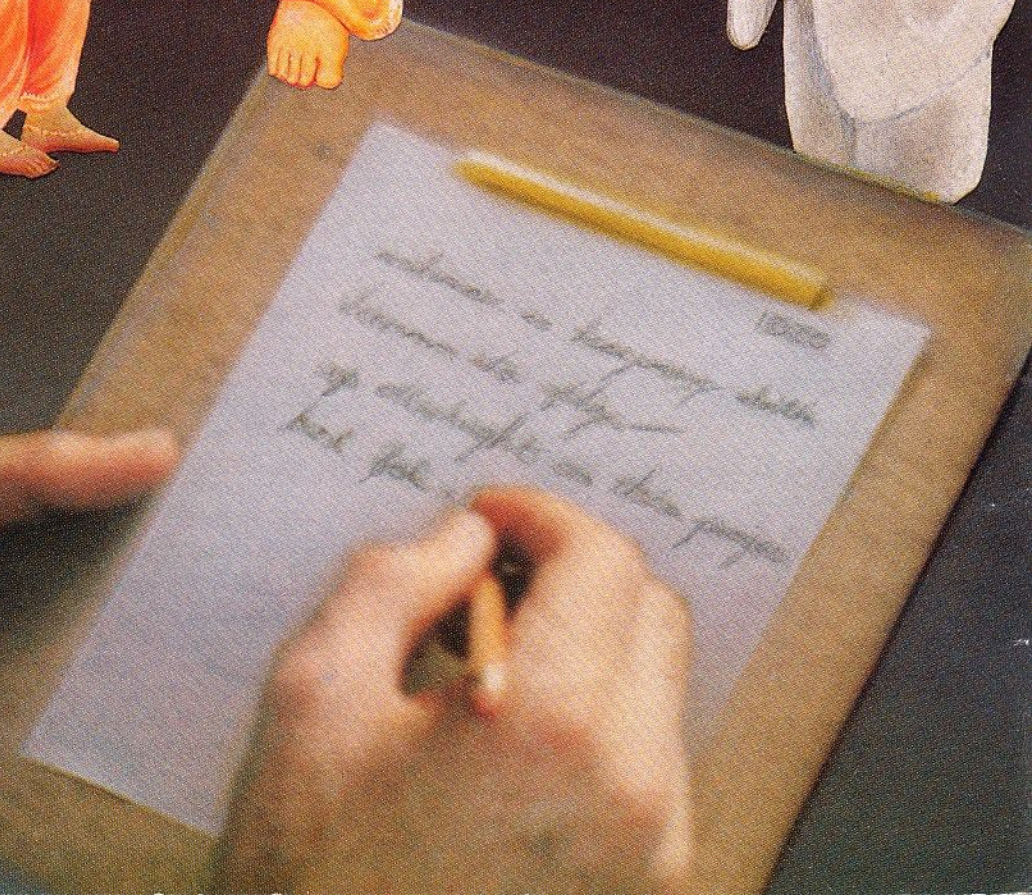
The path we are walking is approximately 168 miles long. In A.D. 1515 Lord Caitanya performed the Vraja *parikrama*. When Lord Caitanya came here, the local people did not know the significance or the location of many of the sites of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. But because Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, He knew everything about Vraja, and He revealed all the holy places so people could come here and take advantage of the supreme *dhāma*.

Lokanātha Mahārāja said that Vraja-maṇḍala *pada-yātrā* is a fully authorized way to get closer to Kṛṣṇa. Everything we are doing—chanting, bathing, taking
(continued on page 25)



Lakṣmī gets some fresh sugarcane (left) from a local farmer. At the Nandagrāma temple (below, left), devotees admire colorful murals depicting Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. Below, a trademark of ISKCON's *pada-yātrā*—lively kīrtanas!





PSYCHOANALYSIS OF THE MAHĀTMĀS

An open letter to a famous psychoanalyst reveals how scientific scrutiny fails to illuminate the characters of God and His devotees.

by MATHUREŚA DĀSA

Dear Professor Erikson*,
Nearly twenty years ago you wrote a letter to Mahatma Gandhi and published it as a chapter entitled "A Personal Word" in your book *Gandhi's Truth*. Since "A Personal Word" is an open letter, I'm taking the liberty to submit this open, and tardy, reply.

The "Personal Word" letter speaks to the late Gandhi as you had come to know and admire—and doubt—him through his writings and by interviewing some of his friends and followers. When you began the letter, you were halfway through *Gandhi's Truth*, and a disenchantment with Gandhian nonviolence was making it difficult for you to finish the book. Addressing Gandhi, you wrote:

I must now confess that a few times in your work . . . I seemed to sense the presence of a kind of untruth in the very protestation of truth; of something unclean when all the words spelled out an unreal purity; and above all, of a displaced violence where nonviolence was the professed issue.

You contend, Professor Erikson, that Gandhi, the champion of nonviolence, had a violent, vindictive side to him, especially when dealing with his own family. Gandhi was, in his own words, "cruelly kind" to his wife Kasturba, and he disowned his son Harilal simply because Harilal wanted to get married. These and other examples of apparent harshness prompt you to caution Gandhi that "the future of Satyagraha is at stake . . . because you seem unaware of . . . an ambivalence, a co-existence of love

*Erik H. Erikson, an American psychoanalyst and educator, won a Pulitzer Prize in 1970 for *Gandhi's Truth: On the Origin of Militant Nonviolence*.

and hate, which must become conscious in those who work for peace." Without an awareness of this ambivalence, of man's "inner ambiguities," the strict moralism of the nonviolence movement could only succeed, you said, "in driving our worst proclivities underground, to remain there until riotous conditions of uncertainty or chaos would permit them to emerge redoubled."

This is certainly a controversial analysis of Gandhi, who to this day is worshiped in India as a saint, martyr, and national hero. What I find most disturbing, however, is that you juxtapose Gandhi's alleged hidden violence with his fondness for the story of the boy named Prahlada:

You, Mahatmaji, love the story of that boy prince who would not accept the claim of his father, the Demon King, to a power greater than God's, not even after the boy had been exposed to terrible tortures. At the end he was made to embrace a red-hot metal pillar; but out of this suggestive object stepped God, half lion half man, and tore the king to pieces. You call that prince the first Satyagrahi.

I am familiar with the history of Prahlada because it is recounted in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the top-most of India's ancient Vedic literatures. Prahlada is a pure devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa. And the half-man, half-lion God is Nṛsimhadeva, an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa. In mentioning Gandhi's appreciation for the story of Prahlada and Nṛsimhadeva you imply a parallel not only between Gandhi and the tolerant, nonviolent Prahlada, but also between Gandhi's subconscious anger and the fierce form of Lord Nṛsimhadeva hidden in the pillar.

and the fierce form of Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva hidden in the pillar.

You also remark how Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva emerged from a pillar, which you call a “suggestive object.” (According to the *Bhāgavatam*, by the way, the pillar was not red-hot iron, nor was Prahlaḍa forced to embrace it. But these are only details.) Since you are a protégé, a devotee, of Sigmund Freud, “suggestive” could only mean that the pillar was a phallic symbol and that Gandhi was therefore embroiled in an Oedipal struggle with the paternalistic British empire, feigning affectionate nonviolence but gripped deep within himself by a murderous vengeance.

You seem to have dragged not only the saintly Gandhi but Prahlaḍa and Nṛsiṃhadeva as well into the ambiguous, contradictory, and seamy arena of the human psyche. I fear, in other words, that in the activities of Prahlaḍa and Nṛsiṃhadeva, as in Gandhi’s activities, you “sense the presence of a kind of untruth in the very protestation of truth, . . . of a displaced violence where nonviolence was the professed issue.” I suspect that you find it contradictory, or untruthful, that Prahlaḍa’s nonviolent demeanor led to his father’s violent demise. You seem to indicate that Prahlaḍa too had an Oedipus complex, and that in acting nonviolently toward his father, he succeeded only in driving his “worst proclivities underground,” where they remained “until riotous conditions of uncertainty” permitted them to “emerge redoubled” in the form of the angry Nṛsiṃhadeva.

Perhaps I am mistaken, Professor Erikson. Perhaps I have misjudged your intentions. And certainly your discussion of the Prahlaḍa history is a minor theme in “A Personal Word.” But even so, I feel compelled to vindicate the characters of Prahlaḍa and Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva.

Prahlaḍa should not be analyzed using ordinary human standards, because as a pure devotee he did not identify with his temporary human body. He correctly saw the body as a vehicle for the eternal self. Thus, unlike us, he didn’t think of himself as a citizen of a particular nation, a member of a particular religion, a male, or a youth, but only as a soul surrendered to God, the supreme father.

If Prahlaḍa had identified with his body, he would not have been able to peacefully tolerate the tortures administered by his demoniac father. And to be thus devoid of bodily consciousness, he must have been totally free from all sex desire, since sex tightens the knot of bodily identification. Prahlaḍa therefore cannot properly be subjected to Freudian analysis and thereby assigned material, sexual motives.

One whose only motive is to serve and glorify Kṛṣṇa is, according to the

Bhagavad-gītā’s definition, a “mahātma,” or great soul, and Prahlaḍa perfectly fits that definition. Even during Hiranya-kaṣipu’s atrocities, Prahlaḍa was chanting Kṛṣṇa’s glories and calmly urging his demoniac father to do the same. Prahlaḍa knew that glorifying God frees the soul from *samsāra*—the cruel and violent cycle of repeated birth and death. In trying to induce his father to chant, Prahlaḍa therefore exhibited the supreme form of nonviolence. He was indeed the “first Satyagrahi.” Of course, Prahlaḍa’s staunch faith in God only enraged his atheistic father, although that was not Prahlaḍa’s intention.

Not only was Prahlaḍa not bound up in a murderous Oedipal struggle with his father, but he saw his father as he saw himself—a pure soul in a temporary body.

Prahlaḍa neither requested nor reveled in the bloody shredding of his father. Instead, after Hiranyakaṣipu’s death, Prahlaḍa requested Nṛsiṃhadeva to liberate Hiranyakaṣipu’s soul from saṃsāra. The request was readily granted.

Prahlaḍa neither requested nor reveled in the bloody shredding of his father. Instead, after Hiranyakaṣipu’s death, Prahlaḍa humbly requested Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva to liberate Hiranyakaṣipu’s soul from *samsāra*. And the request was readily granted.

Even more than with Prahlaḍa, ordinary analysis fails to illuminate the character of Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva. Nṛsiṃhadeva is not the product of “a riotous condition of uncertainty,” nor is He an Oedipal eruption in anyone’s psychic terrain. Nṛsiṃhadeva is nondifferent from Kṛṣṇa, the fully independent and fully cognizant Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Personality of Godhead is not a product of anything, but rather produces everything from Himself.

To be exact, Nṛsiṃhadeva is a personal

expansion of Kṛṣṇa, and every one of Kṛṣṇa’s innumerable expansions, though they are all one and the same personality, are also separate individuals. This is the absolute and inconceivable nature of the Personality of Godhead. When you or I exhibit anger or some other emotion, our friends may remark that we have become “different persons,” because our personalities have to some degree been temporarily transformed. Kṛṣṇa’s personality also has many moods and emotions, but since He is supreme, His “different persons” have an eternal individual existence as expansions of His personality. Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva is such an individual, so to judge Him as we would a human being is a gross blunder.

As the original person, Kṛṣṇa is the origin of all the emotions we experience—such as affection and anger—and He Himself possesses feelings and emotions to a supreme degree. God is a person like us, but unlike us both His affection and His anger are unlimited, transcendental, and of equal value.

In the Prahlaḍa pastime, for example, it appears that Kṛṣṇa favored Prahlaḍa and punished Hiranyakaṣipu—that He showed an ungodly, partisan spirit. But Hiranyakaṣipu benefited as much from Kṛṣṇa’s anger as Prahlaḍa did from His affection. Kṛṣṇa is the father of all living entities, and therefore, like a good father, He exhibits love and anger only for His children’s benefit. Kṛṣṇa Himself explains in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that He is equally disposed to everyone but that He warmly reciprocates the service and friendship of His devotees. Thus we cannot properly criticize His anger, nor should we make a material distinction between His violent and nonviolent moods.

By all this I do not mean to say, Professor Erikson, that the Personality of Godhead cannot be the subject of your scientific scrutiny. On the contrary, for the serious student of personality, Kṛṣṇa and His expansions are essential subject matters. The possibilities for research are limitless. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.14.7) declares:

In time, great scientists may be able to count all the atoms of the universe, all the stars and planets in the sky, and all the particles of snow, but who among them can count the unlimited transcendental qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead? He descends on the surface of the globe for the benefit of all living entities.

As a great scientist yourself, you could do no better than to take up the eternal occupation of *mahātmās* like Prahlaḍa by analyzing and describing the unlimited character of the Absolute Truth in order to liberate all human society from the violence of *samsāra*. ❏

After reading about the birth of Lord Kṛṣṇa in Śrīla Prabhupāda's *Kṛṣṇa* book, I am confused about who comes first—Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu. I thought Kṛṣṇa was the original Personality of Godhead, but in the *Kṛṣṇa* book Viṣṇu appears and transforms into Kṛṣṇa.

Please respond for my sake and that of others who may also be curious to know the facts.

Gladstone Muma
Kitwe, Zambia

OUR REPLY: You are right in saying we should respond for the benefit of those persons who are curious to know the facts. It is a very common—but mistaken—assumption that Lord Kṛṣṇa is an incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu. This misunderstanding is routinely made by people who jump to the Tenth Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, where Kṛṣṇa's pastimes are described, and neglect to read the earlier nine cantos, wherein all the groundwork for understanding the Tenth Canto is set forth.

According to the Vedic scriptures and Lord Kṛṣṇa's own words in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the two-handed form of Kṛṣṇa is the original form of Godhead. Kṛṣṇa says, *aham ādir hi devānām*: "I am the origin of all the gods," and *mattaḥ parataram*

LETTERS

nānyat: "There is no truth superior to Me." All other forms of the Lord are expanded from Kṛṣṇa. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* states, *kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*: Kṛṣṇa is the original form of God. This is also the verdict of Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva, Nārada Muni, Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and many other Vedic authorities.

At the time of His appearance as Kṛṣṇa, the Lord first appeared as Viṣṇu and then changed into Kṛṣṇa, but that does not mean Kṛṣṇa came from Viṣṇu. Kṛṣṇa exists eternally, and His form is the origin of all other forms. Because He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, He can appear as Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu according to His will.

* * *

I have been reading *Back to Godhead* magazine now for a few years. I have found it very inspiring, so much so that I have erected an altar for Lord Kṛṣṇa in my cell and offer whatever decent food is available. I am a vegan, so the food I receive is what Kṛṣṇa wishes to be offered—

no meat, fish, or eggs. I also chant Hare Kṛṣṇa on homemade beads and read His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda's very nice books.

The only thing I feel a bit confused about is why there has never been an article about persons practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness in jail. Here—and even more so in America, I would imagine—there are a lot of inmates who chant Hare Kṛṣṇa but, alas, are not at liberty to directly engage in the Lord's service. It would be nice to read about my fellow prisoners who chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Paul Burke
Glasgow, Scotland

OUR REPLY: We're happy to learn that you are a regular reader of *Back to Godhead*, and that you have facility in prison to worship Kṛṣṇa and offer food to Him. We have no reason for not featuring an article on Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the prisons, other than that no one has submitted an article on that subject. We rarely assign specific articles to be written by members of our staff. Generally we run articles submitted by our staff and devotees around the movement that they themselves have chosen to write. We print whatever is philosophically correct and meets a certain standard of readability. ☐

JOURNAL

(continued from page 21)

prasādam, kīrtana, Bhāgavatam class—all are fully authorized activities for getting closer to Kṛṣṇa. If we adopt the right means, then we will get the correct results and will find Kṛṣṇa and not *māyā*. Here in Vṛndāvana we can practice the Kṛṣṇa culture openly and freely, more so than anywhere else in the universe. We can dress as devotees, chant as devotees—completely and openly to our hearts content.

February 20

Today we circumambulated Govardhana Hill. This is an easy statement to make; it is another thing to actually do it—especially barefooted. We started at 6:30 in the morning and ended tonight at 5:00. We stopped at many sacred places along the way, including Mānāsī Gaṅgā (the Ganges that Kṛṣṇa created from His mind) and Annakūṭa (the spot where Indra bathed Kṛṣṇa after Kṛṣṇa had lifted Govardhana Hill).

February 21, 22

On our way to Kāmya-vana, a *sannyāsī* said that even if we can't see Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana, He can see us. He sees us and acknowledges that we made the pilgrimage here. Most of the time I don't want Kṛṣṇa to see me—I'm so low and filled

with gross desires. In the past I've even tried to hide from Kṛṣṇa. But here in Vṛndāvana the thought that Kṛṣṇa is watching gave me a thrill. It is like that here in Vṛndāvana.

This is a harsh land. Even now, in the middle of spring, it is ninety degrees by mid-afternoon. It is desertlike, a land where you can't find fresh, clear brooks. All the drinking water has to be dug for. But all of a sudden you remember Kṛṣṇa, and sweetness overtakes you, and all the pain of this harsh climate and land seem a million miles away, and even your own body and its pains seem like they don't belong to you.

February 23

It is nighttime. The devotees are packed up right next to each other. There is no "I want this room. . . I need this facility." The beauty of *pada-yātrā* is its simplicity and its sacrifice. Everyone is sacrificing bodily comfort for the comfort of close association with devotees. In one corner, a devotee reads a book by flashlight. Another chants softly in another corner. Others walk through with *japa* beads in their hands. One elderly devotee comes through with a tray of hot coals and frankincense and fills the room with fragrance.

February 24

Today we left Kāmya-vana, the fifth of

Vṛndāvana's twelve forests. It was worth all the trouble of coming to India just to take the walk from Kāmya-vana to Varṣāṇā, the home of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Last night it rained and broke the heat spell of the last few days. We took a path to Varṣāṇā that was completely through the countryside. There was a cool, refreshing breeze blowing, and the sand was soft and moist. We went through field after field of irrigated crops. The sun slipped over the horizon, and the clouds filtered the light through their deep-blue billows.

One feels the real Vṛndāvana here. There is great peace and beauty. We go into the interior farming villages that can be reached only by footpaths. The faces of these people are so pious it is a benediction just to see them. Here in the farming villages the water is fresh and clean, the crops plentiful. The villagers chant the holy names spontaneously. Everywhere it is "Jaya Rādhe!" "Rādhe Śyāma!" All the villagers greet each other like this. It's a way of life enviable to complicated Westerners.

February 25, 26

We have spent two days in Varṣāṇā. It is very peaceful and still here. Tonight, after bathing in Pīlu-koṭi-kuṇḍa, where Rādhārāṇī used to wash Her hands, I thought how nice it would be if everyone could experience this wonderful place. I com-

posed an invitation: “My friends, walk out to the Pilu-koṭi-kunḍa and see the peacocks in the fields. It is evening, and in Varṣāṇā everything is cooling. Meet the devotees of Kṛṣṇa here and join in *kīrtana* with them. See their faces, for one look at the true devotees of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī in Varṣāṇā is enough to free you from all anxiety. Then join them in procession up the hill that has hundreds of worn steps climbing into the heavens. Each stone bears the footprints of millions of devotees who have walked here before you.

“At the top of the hill, look over the land of Kṛṣṇa as it stretches out, panoramic, before you. See the Kṛṣṇa-blue clouds hanging over the purple horizon, lightning flashing from one to another. Then turn and behold Rādhārāṇī’s temple, with its murals depicting the pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. See the Deities of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa here and join in the enchanting *kīrtana*, being sung in Their glorification. If you do this, Rādhārāṇī will be pleased with you, and Her kindness on you will bring the happiness you ache for in this world.”

February 27

Here in Nandagrāma, Kṛṣṇa lived from age eight to sixteen. He lived for His first seven years in Gokula, and for one year He lived in Chattikara, just down the road from ISKCON’s Krishna-Balarām Mandir. We bathed in Pāvana-sarovara, where mother Yaśodā used to bathe child Kṛṣṇa.

At Prema-sarovara, a little outside Varṣāṇā, Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja spoke on the glories of Vṛndāvana-dhāma. He said that great persons like Brahmā, Śiva, and Nārada are always desiring to take the dust of Vṛndāvana on their heads. Vṛndāvana is not part of the earth planet; it is the spiritual world. He said that if somehow a sinful person sneaks onto this *parikrama* and associates with the devotees, he will also become totally purified. By going on Vraja-maṇḍala *parikrama*, one achieves the same result as that achieved by performing millions of births of *sādhana-bhakti*. But one must be careful not to commit offenses to the holy *dhāma*.

February 28

This morning I went up to the main temple here at Nandagrāma. It has black marble Deities of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. They are both in the threefold-bending form and are holding flutes. On Their left and right are two tall deities of Yaśodā and Nanda. Rādhārāṇī is also there, as well as two of Kṛṣṇa’s friends, Śrīdāmā and Madhumāṅgala.

It is nice to be in Nandagrāma early in the morning, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa in the place where Kṛṣṇa lived. One is overcome with the timelessness, the eternity of it all, and reverence to Kṛṣṇa is a natural emo-

tion. What has to be forced in the West is completely natural here.

March 1

We spent the day in Kosi, where Śrīla Prabhupāda came to meet Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta’s *parikrama* in the 1930’s. This evening we had a huge *saṅkīrtana* down the main street in town. Although the street is only about ten feet wide, it is lined with shops and packed with people. If it hadn’t been for Lakṣmī, our elephant, I don’t think we could have made our way through the teeming humanity. People came forward to give offerings to the deities—and food to the elephant.

March 2

At around four in the afternoon we arrived in Shergarh, where Lord Balarāma performed His *rāsa* dance. A small group

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of us has been rehearsing a play—“The Transcendental Attempts of Lord Caitanya to Reach Vṛndāvana.” The play finally came together for a few seconds during rehearsal today. Our play ends with everyone chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, and as we were all chanting together—Japanese, Americans, South Americans, Europeans, Indians—I felt perhaps one of the most ecstatic moments I have felt since coming to Vṛndāvana. At least for some moments I felt a strong kinship with these devotees—these souls—and I transcended the bodily conception and felt real union in worship of Kṛṣṇa.

March 3

This morning I went out to the Vṛndāvana countryside to chant the holy name. This part of Vṛndāvana, the Yamunā River basin, is the most beautiful part of Vraja I have seen—very flat and lush. There are many peacocks here. This time

of year the Yamunā flows shallow, and I saw many cranes, swans, and egrets.

March 4,5,6

We have arrived at ISKCON’s Krishna-Balarām Mandir, and a German devotee and I have rented a room nearby. The room is spartan, with no running water, only a pump outside. Three weeks ago I could not have thought of staying in a room like this. But now, after three weeks of *pada-yātrā*, just to have a water pump to myself is a great luxury. We will spend three days here visiting the many holy spots in the town of Vṛndāvana.

March 7

Tonight after sunset we took a short walk up to the Dauji temple. Dauji is Lord Balarāma, and He is accompanied by His consort Revatī. It is a very sweet temple with a wide, open courtyard. Dauji was shrouded in slight darkness, with Revatī standing not by His side, but facing Him. We had a wonderful *kīrtana* before the Deities. The locals hardly ever see foreigners, and to see us dancing in *kīrtana* fascinates them. We try to tolerate their constant stares. No matter how many times we tell them we don’t speak their language, they still speak to us a mile a minute. We remind ourselves that they are all exalted persons, being residents of Kṛṣṇa’s eternal home.

March 8

Today we walked from Dauji to Gokula, where Kṛṣṇa lived until age seven. We stopped many times along the way to see the spots where Kṛṣṇa performed His childhood pastimes.

Tonight my wife and I walked up a hill overlooking the *pada-yātrā* deity cart and the temple where we are staying. Two *kīrtanas* were going on below us, and in the distance a major storm was brewing and sweeping over the darkened plains. My wife turned to me and said, “I don’t think we’ll ever be the same again.” I agreed. Vraja-maṇḍala *parikrama* is permanently etched in our hearts.

March 9

Today is the last day of the *parikrama*. We walk down the streets of Mathurā to Viśrama-gḥāṭa, where our pilgrimage began, and bathe in the Yamunā River. I’ve lost count of how many times the sacred Yamunā has bathed my body, bathed my soul. Lokanātha Mahārāja garlands all the devotees, and as I receive my garland, I touch his feet and put the dust to my head. We start out for Kṛṣṇa’s birthplace, and the chanting begins. I feel very fortunate as I walk through the streets of Mathurā chanting Kṛṣṇa’s holy names. Kṛṣṇa is so kind upon His devotees. I pray to become His devotee. ☐

Every Town

And Village

The worldwide activities of the International

Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON)



Half a Million Attend Bombay Janmāṣṭamī

Juhu, Bombay—More than half a million guests attended ISKCON's Janmāṣṭamī celebrations here. The three-day event commemorating the anniversary of Lord Kṛṣṇa's appearance also included festivities in honor of Indian Independence Day and Vyāsa-pūjā, the appearance anniversary of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of ISKCON. Dignitaries in attend-

which presented the play *Govardhana-pūjā*, a Kathak dance on Kṛṣṇa's childhood pastimes performed by more than fifty children, and a Manipuri dance on Kṛṣṇa's stealing butter. More than two hundred children competed on stage in events such as story-telling, drawing, fancy dress, and dance.

Bhakti Kala Kshetra, ISKCON Bombay's institute for the performing arts, packed the auditorium for eight days with a festival of *bhajan*s that included such guests

Ramesh Prabhoo, speaking in Marathi, commented that he would like to see the name of Juhu Road changed to Bhaktivedanta Swami Marg in honor of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

During the three-day festival, the devotees distributed 8,062 of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books.

NEWS BRIEFS

Calling attention to the plight of imprisoned Soviet Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees, fifty devotees from the New Varṣāṇā farm near Auckland, New Zealand, recently held a demonstration outside a theater where a group of touring Russian dancers were performing. The devotees presented the dancers with flower garlands, as well as sweets from Gopal's restaurant, located across the street from the theater, and asked them to deliver a petition to Mikhail Gorbachev requesting freedom for the imprisoned Soviet devotees.

After spending the month of Kārttika in Vṛndāvana, the ISKCON *pada-yātrā* is moving on to Rajasthan and Gujarat. It plans to reach the place where it began—Dvārakā, on the west coast of India—by March 1988.

Work on Śrīla Prabhupāda's *samādhi* in Vṛndāvana is progressing steadily. The brick structure is gradually disappearing under marble. The devotees in charge of the construction are struggling to keep the flow of high-quality marble coming in. Says project manager Toṣaṇa Kṛṣṇa, "It's a war, but we're winning."

Devotees recently opened Gopal's Restaurant in downtown Christchurch, New Zealand. Opening night was a great success attended by national press representatives, leading Christchurch council members, members of the city's

BRAHMANANDA DĀSA



Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsabihārī, presiding Deities at Hare Krishna Land, Juhu Beach, Bombay.

ance included Sri Vilas Sawant, Bombay's minister for urban development, who was so impressed with the temple and the festival that he expressed his desire to help ISKCON start a temple in downtown Bombay. Senior Police Inspector of Juhu Shri Shanbag and Assistant Commissioner of Police Shri Garuda also joined in the celebrations.

The programs included an annual favorite—the Children's Sunday Dramatic Workshop,

and performers as Hari Om and Nandini Sharan, Arati Mukherjee, Manhar Udhas, Minoo Purshottam, Purshottam Jalota, Anup Jalota, Anuradha Paudwal, Govindprasad Jaipurwala, Nitin Mukesh, Shekar Kalyan, Vijay and Renu Chaudhary, Sanjay Khan, J. Om Prakash, and others.

During the Vyāsa-pūjā celebrations, more than two thousand life members and friends heard and presented homages to Śrīla Prabhupāda. Bombay Mayor Shri

legal fraternity, the professor of religious studies at Canterbury University, and the city's top restaurateurs. Christchurch's major daily newspaper, the *Press*, ran an impressive feature article on the restaurant that included three large color photographs.

Back to Godhead editor in chief Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami recently addressed a conference of the southeastern United States branch of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad held in Charlotte, North Carolina. Satsvarūpa Mahārāja spoke on the contribution of Vedic literature in the modern age. About five hundred persons attended the conference.

RESOURCES

Ekādaśī, the Day of Lord Hari, is a definitive explanation of the origin, practice, and results of this potent fast day, written by a lifelong resident of Vṛndāvana, His Holiness Kṛṣṇa Balarām Swami, 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.

Hear the message of Kṛṣṇa directly from His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Śrīla Prabhupāda's lectures, interviews, and conversations are available on more than seven hundred audio cassettes. Also available, on microfilm; all his letters, as well as transcriptions of all his recorded lectures. For a catalog, send \$5 to the Bhaktive-

danta Archives, P.O. Box 34453, Los Angeles, CA 90034.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Śrī Govinda-virudāvali* (*Calling Out to Lord Kṛṣṇa*) was recently published by the Kṛṣṇa Institute. To purchase a copy send \$6 to the Kṛṣṇa Institute, P.O. Box 281, Culver City, CA 90232.

You can also send for other books from the Kṛṣṇa Institute: Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī's *Śrī Caitanya-candrāmṛta* (\$6), Śrīla

Jīva Gosvāmī's *Śrī Tattva-sandarbhā* (\$10), Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's *Śrī Vraja-vilāsa-stava* (\$6), Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa's *Śrī Aisvarya-kādambinī* (\$6), Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa* (\$6), and *The Glories of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu* (\$6). (Please include \$2 per order for postage and handling.)

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 Bombay.

Listen to transcendental dramatic narration of stories about *avatāras* and saints, recorded by Amalabhakta dāsa with musical accompaniment, on audio cassette—an excellent way to develop spiritual awareness while walking, working, housekeeping, exercising, or just relaxing. For a free catalog, write to Krishna Productions, 3305 Cardiff Ave., Dept. BTG, Los Angeles, CA 90034, or call (213) 838-4474.

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*.

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Festivals & Calendar

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

Month of Keśava (November 6–December 5)

December 1—Mokṣadā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

Month of Nārāyaṇa (December 6–January 4)

December 9—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, the spiritual master of Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda.

December 16—Saphalā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

December 21—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Locana dāsa Ṭhākura, a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa known for his Bengali devotional songs. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

December 30—Putradā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

Month of Mādhava (January 5–February 2)

January 9—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

January 10—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jayadeva Gosvāmī, a great spiritual master and the author of *Gīta-govinda*.

Book Section

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 SEVENTEEN

Victory of Hiraṇyākṣa Over All the Directions of the Universe

In this installment of our continuing presentation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, the sage Maitreya begins to describe to Vidura, a great devotee of the Lord, the activities of the powerful demon Hiraṇyākṣa, who had terrorized the universe.

TEXT 17

दिवि स्पृशौ हेमकिरीटकोटिभि-
निरुद्धकाष्ठौ स्फुरदङ्गदाशुजा ।
गां कम्पयन्तौ चरणैः पदे पदे
कट्या सुकाञ्च्यार्कमतीत्य तस्थतुः ॥१७॥

*divi-spr̥ṣau hema-kirīṭa-koṭibhir
niruddha-kāṣṭhau sphurad-aṅgadā-bhujau
gāṁ kampayantau caraṇaiḥ padē padē
kaṭyā sukāñcyārkam atītya tasthatuḥ*

divi-spr̥ṣau—touching the sky; *hema*—golden; *kirīṭa*—of their helmets; *koṭibhiḥ*—with the crests; *niruddha*—blocked; *kāṣṭhau*—the directions; *sphurat*—brilliant; *aṅgadā*—bracelets; *bhujau*—on whose arms; *gām*—the earth; *kampayantau*—shaking; *caraiḥ*—with their feet; *padē padē*—at every step; *kaṭyā*—with their waists; *su-kāñcyā*—with beautiful decorated belts; *arkam*—the sun; *atītya*—surpassing; *tasthatuḥ*—they stood.

TRANSLATION

Their bodies became so tall that they seemed to kiss the sky with the crests of their gold crowns. They blocked the view of all directions and while walking shook the earth at every step. Their arms were adorned with brilliant bracelets, and they stood as if covering the sun with their waists, which were bound with excellent and beautiful girdles.

PURPORT

In the demonic way of civilization, people are interested in getting a body constructed in such a way that when they walk on the street the earth will tremble and when they stand it will appear that they cover the sun and the vision of the four directions. If a race appears strong in body, their country is materially considered to be among the highly advanced nations of the world.

TEXT 18

प्रजापतिर्नाम तयोरकार्षीद्
यः प्राक् स्वदेहाद्यमयोरजायत ।
तं वै हिरण्यकशिपुं विदुः प्रजा
यं तं हिरण्याक्षमस्त सायतः ॥१८॥

*prajāpatir nāma tayor akāṛṣīd
yaḥ prāk sva-dehād yamayor ajāyata*

*taṁ vai hiraṇyakaśipuṁ viduḥ prajā
yaṁ taṁ hiraṇyākṣam asūta sāgrataḥ*

prajāpatiḥ—Kāśyapa; *nāma*—names; *tayoḥ*—of the two; *akāṛṣīt*—gave; *yaḥ*—who; *prāk*—first; *sva-dehāt*—from his body; *yama-yoḥ*—of the twins; *ajāyata*—was delivered; *taṁ*—him; *vai*—indeed; *hiraṇyakaśipuṁ*—Hiraṇyakaśipu; *viduḥ*—know; *prajāḥ*—people; *yam*—whom; *taṁ*—him; *hiraṇyākṣam*—Hiraṇyākṣa; *asūta*—gave birth to; *sā*—she (Diti); *agrataḥ*—first.

TRANSLATION

Kāśyapa, Prajapati, the creator of the living entities, gave his twin sons their names; the one who was born first he named Hiraṇyākṣa, and the one who was first conceived by Diti he named Hiraṇyakaśipu.

PURPORT

There is an authoritative Vedic literature called *Piṇḍa-siddhi* in which the scientific understanding of pregnancy is very nicely described. It is stated that when the male secretion enters the menstrual flux in the uterus in two successive drops, the mother develops two embryos in her womb, and she brings forth twins in a reverse order to that in which they were first conceived; the child conceived first is born later, and the one conceived later is brought forth first. The first child conceived in the womb lives behind the second child, so when birth takes place the second child appears first, and the first child appears second. In this case it is understood that Hiraṇyākṣa, the second child conceived, was delivered first, whereas Hiraṇyakaśipu, the child who was behind him, having been conceived first, was born second.

TEXT 19

चक्रे हिरण्यकशिपुर्दोर्म्या ब्रह्मवरेण च ।
वशे सपालोच्छाकांस्त्रीनकुतोमृत्युरुद्धतः ॥१९॥

*cakre hiraṇyakaśipur
dorbhyām brahma-vareṇa ca
vaśe sa-pālā lokāṁs trin
akuto-mṛtyur uddhataḥ*

cakre—made; *hiraṇyakaśipuḥ*—Hiraṇyakaśipu; *dorbhyām*—by his two arms; *brahma-vareṇa*—by the benediction of Brahmā; *ca*—and; *vaśe*—under his control; *sa-pālān*—along with their protectors; *lokān*—the worlds; *trin*—three; *akutaḥ-mṛtyuḥ*—fearing death from no one; *uddhataḥ*—puffed up.

TRANSLATION

The elder child, Hiraṇyakaśipu, was unafraid of death from anyone within the three worlds because he received a benediction from Lord Brahmā. He was proud and puffed up due to this benediction and was able to bring all three planetary systems under his control.

PURPORT

As will be revealed in later chapters, Hiraṇyakaśipu underwent severe austerity and penance to satisfy Brahmā and thus receive a benediction of immortality. Actually, it is impossible even for Lord Brahmā to

give anyone the benediction of becoming immortal, but indirectly Hiranyakaśipu received the benediction that no one within this material world would be able to kill him. In other words, because he originally came from the abode of Vaikuṅṭha, he was not to be killed by anyone within this material world. The Lord desired to appear Himself to kill him. One may be very proud of his material advancement in knowledge, but he cannot be immune to the four principles of material existence, namely birth, death, old age and disease. It was the Lord's plan to teach people that even Hiranyakaśipu, who was so powerful and strongly built, could not live more than his destined duration of life. One may become as strong and puffed up as Hiranyakaśipu and bring under his control all the three worlds, but there is no possibility of continuing life eternally or keeping the conquered booty forever. So many emperors have ascended to power, and they are now lost in oblivion; that is the history of the world.

TEXT 20

हिरण्याक्षोऽनुजस्तस्य प्रियः प्रीतिकृदन्वहम् ।
गदापाणिर्दिवं यातो युयुत्सुर्मृगयन् रणम् ॥२०॥

hiranyākṣo 'nujas tasya
priyaḥ prīti-kṛd anvaham
gadā-pāṇir divaṁ yāto
yuyutsuḥ mṛgayan raṇam

hiranyākṣah—Hiranyākṣa; anujah—younger brother; tasya—his; priyah—beloved; prīti-kṛt—ready to please; anu-aham—every day; gadā-pāṇih—with a club in hand; divam—to the higher planets; yātaḥ—traveled; yuyutsuḥ—desirous to fight; mṛgayan—seeking; raṇam—combat.

TRANSLATION

His younger brother, Hiranyākṣa, was always ready to satisfy his elder brother by his activities. Hiranyākṣa took a club on his shoulder and traveled all over the universe with a fighting spirit just to satisfy Hiranyakaśipu.

PURPORT

The demonic spirit is to train all family members to exploit the resources of this universe for personal sense gratification, whereas the godly spirit is to engage everything in the service of the Lord. Hiranyakaśipu was himself very powerful, and he made his younger brother, Hiranyākṣa, powerful to assist him in fighting with everyone and lording it over material nature as long as possible. If possible, he wanted to rule the universe eternally. These are demonstrations of the spirit of the demonic living entity.

TEXT 21

तं वीक्ष्य दुःसहजवं रणत्काञ्चननूपुरम् ।
वैजयन्त्या स्रजा जुष्टमंस्यस्तमहागदम् ॥२१॥

taṁ vīkṣya duḥsaha-javaṁ
raṇat-kāñcana-nūpuram
vaijayantya srajā juṣṭam
aṁsa-nyasta-mahā-gadam

taṁ—him; vīkṣya—having seen; duḥsaha—difficult to control; javam—temper; raṇat—tinkling; kāñcana—gold; nūpuram—anklets; vaijayantya srajā—with a vaijayanti garland; juṣṭam—adorned; aṁsa—on his shoulder; nyasta—rested; mahā-gadam—a huge mace.

TRANSLATION

Hiranyākṣa's temper was difficult to control. He had anklets of gold tinkling about his feet, he was adorned with a gigantic garland, and he rested his huge mace on one of his shoulders.

TEXT 22

मनोवीर्यवरोत्सिक्तमसुष्यमकुतोभयम् ।
भीता निलिखिरे देवास्तास्वर्त्रस्ता इवाहयः ॥२२॥

mano-vīrya-varotsiktam
asṛnyam akuto-bhayam
bhīta nililyire devās
tārṣya-trastā ivāhayah

manaḥ-vīrya—by mental and bodily strength; vara—by the boon; ut-siktam—proud; asṛnyam—not able to be checked; akutaḥ-bhayam—fearing no one; bhītāḥ—frightened; nililyire—hid themselves; devāḥ—the demigods; tārkṣya—Garuḍa; trastāḥ—frightened of; iva—like; ahayah—snakes.

TRANSLATION

His mental and bodily strength as well as the boon conferred upon him had made him proud. He feared death at the hands of no one, and there was no checking him. The gods, therefore, were seized with fear at his very sight, and they hid themselves even as snakes hide themselves for fear of Garuḍa.

PURPORT

The asuras are generally strongly built, as described here, and therefore their mental condition is very sound, and their prowess is also extraordinary. Hiranyākṣa and Hiranyakaśipu, having received the boon that they would not be killed by any other living entity within this universe, were almost immortal, and thus they were completely fearless.

TEXT 23

स वै तिरोहितान् दृष्ट्वा महसा स्वेन दैत्यराट् ।
सेन्द्रान्देवगणान् क्षीबानपश्यन् व्यनदद् भृशम् ॥२३॥

sa vai tirohitān dṛṣtvā
mahasā svēna daitya-rāṭ
sēndrān deva-gaṇān kṣībān
apaśyan vyanadad bhṛśam

saḥ—he; vai—indeed; tirohitān—vanished; dṛṣtvā—having seen; mahasā—by might; svēna—his own; daitya-rāṭ—the chief of the Daityas (demons); sa-indrān—along with Indra; deva-gaṇān—the demigods; kṣībān—intoxicated; apaśyan—not finding; vyanadat—roared; bhṛśam—loudly.

TRANSLATION

On not finding Indra and the other demigods, who had previously been intoxicated with power, the chief of the Daityas, seeing that they had all vanished before his might, roared loudly.

TEXT 24

ततो निवृत्तः क्रीडिष्यन् गम्भीरं भीमनिखनम् ।
विजगाहे महासच्चो वार्धि मत्त इव द्विपः ॥२४॥

tato nivṛtṭaḥ kṛiḍiṣyan
gambhīram bhīma-nisvanam
vijagāhe mahā-sattvaḥ
vārdhim matta iva dvīpāḥ

tataḥ—then; nivṛtṭaḥ—returned; kṛiḍiṣyan—for the sake of sport; gambhīram—deep; bhīma-nisvanam—making a terrible sound; vijagāhe—dived; mahā-sattvaḥ—the mighty being; vārdhim—in the ocean; mattaḥ—in wrath; iva—like; dvīpāḥ—an elephant.

TRANSLATION

After returning from the heavenly kingdom, the mighty demon, who was like an elephant in wrath, for the sake of sport dived into the deep ocean, which was roaring terribly.

TEXT 25

तस्मिन् प्रविष्टे वरुणस्य सैनिका
यादोगणाः सन्नधियः ससाध्वसाः ।
अहन्यमाना अपि तस्य वर्चसा
प्रघर्षिता द्रतरं प्रदुदुबुः ॥२५॥

*tasmin praviṣṭe varuṇasya sainikā
yādo-gaṇāḥ sanna-dhiyaḥ saśādhvasāḥ
ahanyamānā api tasya varcasā
pradharsitā dūratarāṃ pradudruvuh*

tasmin praviṣṭe—when he entered the ocean; *varuṇasya*—of Varuṇa; *sainikāḥ*—the defenders; *yādo-gaṇāḥ*—the aquatic animals; *sanna-dhiyaḥ*—depressed; *sa-sādhvasāḥ*—with fear; *ahanyamānāḥ*—not being hit; *api*—even; *tasya*—his; *varcasā*—by splendor; *pradharsitā*—stricken; *dūra-tarāṃ*—far away; *pradudruvuh*—they ran fast.

TRANSLATION

On his entering the ocean, the aquatic animals who formed the host of Varuṇa were stricken with fear and ran far away. Thus Hiranyākṣa showed his splendor without dealing a blow.

PURPORT

Materialistic demons sometimes appear to be very powerful and are seen to establish their supremacy throughout the world. Here also it appears that Hiranyākṣa, by his demonic strength, actually established his supremacy throughout the universe, and the demigods were afraid of his uncommon power. Not only were the demigods in space afraid of the demons Hiranyakāṣipu and Hiranyākṣa, but so also were the aquatic animals within the sea.

TEXT 26

स वर्षपूगानुदधौ महाबल-
श्रन्महोर्मिच्छ्वसनेरितान्मुहुः
मौर्व्याभिजग्ने गदया विमावरी-
मासेदिवांस्ततः पुरीं प्रचेतसः ॥२६॥

*sa varṣa-pūgān udadhau mahā-balāś
caran mahormiṅ chvasaneritān muhuḥ
maurvyābhijaghe gadayā vibhāvarim
āsedivāṃs tāta purīm pracetasah*

saḥ—he; *varṣa-pūgān*—for many years; *udadhau*—in the ocean; *mahā-balāś*—mighty; *caran*—moving; *mahā-ūrmin*—gigantic waves; *śvasana*—by the wind; *iritān*—tossed; *muhuḥ*—again and again; *maurvyā*—iron; *abhijaghe*—he struck; *gadayā*—with his mace; *vibhāvarim*—Vibhāvāri; *āsedivān*—reached; *tāta*—O dear Vidura; *purīm*—the capital; *pracetasah*—of Varuṇa.

TRANSLATION

Moving about in the ocean for many, many years, the mighty Hiranyākṣa smote the gigantic wind-tossed waves again and again with his iron mace and reached Vibhāvāri, the capital of Varuṇa.

PURPORT

Varuṇa is supposed to be the predominating deity of the waters, and his capital, which is known as Vibhāvāri, is within the watery kingdom.

TEXT 27

तत्रोपलभ्यासुरलोकपालकं
यादोगणानामृषभं प्रचेतसम् ।
सयन् प्रलब्धुं प्रणिपत्य नीचव-
ज्जगद मे देवधिराज संयुगम् ॥२७॥

*tatropalabhyāsura-loka-pālakaṃ
yādo-gaṇānām ṛṣabhaṃ pracetasam
smayan pralabdhum pranipatya nīcavaj
jagāda me dehy adhirāja saṃyugam*

tatra—there; *upalabhya*—having reached; *asura-loka*—of the regions where the demons reside; *pālakaṃ*—the guardian; *yādo-gaṇānām*—of the aquatic creatures; *ṛṣabham*—the lord; *pracetasam*—Varuṇa; *smayan*—smiling; *pralabdhum*—to make fun; *pranipatyā*—having bowed down; *nīcavaj*—like a lowborn man; *jagāda*—he said; *me*—to me; *dehi*—give; *adhirāja*—O great lord; *saṃyugam*—battle.

TRANSLATION

Vibhāvāri is the home of Varuṇa, lord of the aquatic creatures and guardian of the lower regions of the universe, where the demons generally reside. There Hiranyākṣa fell at Varuṇa's feet like a lowborn man, and to make fun of him he said with a smile, "Give me battle, O Supreme Lord!"

PURPORT

The demonic person always challenges others and tries to occupy others' property by force. Here these symptoms are fully displayed by Hiranyākṣa, who begged war from a person who had no desire to fight.

TEXT 28

त्वं लोकपालोऽधिपतिर्बृहच्छ्वा
वीर्यापहो दुर्मदवीरमानिनाम् ।
विजित्य लोकेऽखिलदैत्यदानवान्
यद्राजस्येन पुरायजत्प्रभो ॥२८॥

*tvaṃ loka-pālo 'dhipatir brhac-chravā
vīryāpaho dūrmada-vīra-māninām
vijitya loke 'khila-daitya-dānavān
yad rājasūyena purāyajat prabho*

tvaṃ—you (Varuṇa); *loka-pālah*—guardian of the planet; *adhipatiḥ*—a ruler; *brhat-śravāḥ*—of wide fame; *vīrya*—the power; *apahāḥ*—diminished; *dūrmada*—of the proud; *vīra-māninām*—thinking themselves very big heroes; *vijitya*—having conquered; *loke*—in the world; *akhila*—all; *daitya*—the demons; *dānavān*—the Dānavas; *yat*—whence; *rāja-sūyena*—with a Rājasūya sacrifice; *purā*—formerly; *ayajat*—worshiped; *prabho*—O lord.

TRANSLATION

You are the guardian of an entire sphere and a ruler of wide fame. Having crushed the might of arrogant and conceited warriors and having conquered all the Daityas and Dānavas in the world, you once performed a Rājasūya sacrifice to the Lord.

TEXT 29

स एवमुत्सिक्तमदेन विद्विषा
हृदं प्रलब्धो भगवानपां पतिः ।
रोषं सम्यत्वं स्मयन् खया धिया
व्यवोचदङ्गोपशमं गता वयम् ॥२९॥

*sa evam utsikta-madena vidviṣā
dṛḍham pralabdho bhagavān apāṃ patiḥ
roṣaṃ samuttham śamayan svayā dhiyā
vyavocad aṅgopśamaṃ gatā vayam*

saḥ—Varuṇa; *evam*—thus; *utsikta*—puffed up; *madena*—with vanity; *vidviṣā*—by the enemy; *dṛḍham*—deeply; *pralabdhaḥ*—mocked; *bhagavān*—worshipful; *apām*—of the waters; *patiḥ*—the lord; *roṣam*—anger; *samuttham*—sprung up; *śamayan*—controlling; *svayā dhiyā*—by his reason; *vyavocat*—he replied; *aṅga*—O dear one; *upaśamaṃ*—desisting from warfare; *gatāḥ*—gone; *vayam*—we.

TRANSLATION

Thus mocked by an enemy whose vanity knew no bounds, the worshipful lord of the waters waxed angry, but by dint of his reason he managed to curb the anger that had sprung up in him, and he replied: O dear one, we have now desisted from warfare, having grown too old for combat.

PURPORT

As we see, warmongering materialists always create fighting without reason.

(continued in next issue)

THE VEDIC

Transcendental Comment

GRAVE CONCERNS

by Dvārakādhīśa-devī dāśī

While other women pursue the temporary rewards of wealth, fame, and slim waistlines, Sally Burton has her mind on eternal arrangements. The widow of the illustrious Welsh actor Richard Burton, Sally was reportedly disturbed by the lavish funeral arrangements of Burton's more famous partner, Elizabeth Taylor. When she further heard rumors that Liz might be contemplating claiming a place beside Burton underground, Sally took decisive action. She bought a plot next to her late husband and designed a new headstone large enough to link the couple eternally. "That's *my* plot," she said. "I'll be buried next to him."

To her merit, she is at least facing the fact of her own imminent death. She's considering what's important in the afterlife—proximity to her husband. Though that may seem romantic and faithful, she's neglecting one important detail: Richard Burton is not present in that cemetery in Switzerland. There is as little connection between Richard Burton and that coffin in the ground as between any

random animate and inanimate objects in this world. The minute he died, Richard Burton gave up all connection to his body, his name and fame, and his wives. Now that body is the property of worms and insects. And when Sally dies, she too will lose all relationship with her body. What benefit will she gain from having their bodies rot side by side?

Our bodies are infused with life only when the spiritual energy of the soul is present within them. From the moment of conception to the moment of death, the body's activities and growth symptomize the soul's potency. As soon as the soul leaves the body, the body once again becomes nothing more wonderful than a collection of material elements, neither significant nor lovable. As the *Bhagavad-gītā* describes, the real person is the soul, who inhabits a particular body according to karmic destiny for a given time, and then takes up residence in a new body. "As a person puts on new garments, giving up old ones, the soul similarly accepts new material bodies, giving up the old and useless ones" (Bg. 2.22).

How differently might we live if we understood the temporality of material

circumstances! There would be no need to fret over our neighbors six feet under. Nor would there be any need to become envious or possessive; whatever we are clinging to will be lost at some unspecified point in the future anyway.

Now Richard Burton has another body, another family, another spouse. He no longer remembers either Sally or Liz, so why should there be any enmity over his wormy remains? Eternal aspirations, then, should be based on the knowledge that we have a future beyond this body, and we should seriously pursue information about our destinations. This information is authoritatively provided in scriptures such as the *Bhagavad-gītā*, which clearly explains the past, present, and future of the wandering souls.

Ironically, all Sally's attempts to solidify her connection to her husband are overshadowed by uncontrollable forces. In the public fancy, Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton will always be united. Building a bigger monument over Burton's gravesite won't change that. Nor can she change the superior karmic laws that allow one soul to associate with another for some time and then move on. Better she take the lesson from her husband's death and detach herself from all material calculations, meditating instead on the welfare of her spiritual self.

TUNE IN TO DANGER

by Mathureśa dāśa

On my way out the back door earlier this evening, I smelt gas and dashed to the kitchen to find that the oven was on but not lit. Through the oven window I spied four potatoes steeping peacefully but ineffectually in the fumes. After waiting for the air to clear, I relit the pilot and went to tell my wife what had almost happened to dinner.

We live in the country now. We moved last month to give our kids more room to run around, and to get away from traffic noise and from dog excreta on the sidewalks. The seclusion here is pleasing on one hand, hard to get used to on the other.



OBSERVER

ary on the Issues of the Day

The nearest grocery store is ten miles away instead of two blocks, and the big-city newspapers arrive a day late. Without an outdoor antenna, I couldn't even pick up the six o'clock news.

Country living, O.K., but let's not flirt with barbarism: I drove to town, bought a nine-foot-tall TV antenna, hauled the con-

their economies moving. If oil grew on trees, or if it were as easy to come by as water, we'd have nothing to fight over. But it only grows especially well around the Persian Gulf and a few other places, so the Gulf has to stay open and peaceful for our economies to run smoothly.

The long-term Kṛṣṇa conscious solu-

cle turn gears salvaged from a junked cement-mixer, sending a saw whirling at 2,500 rpms. Shame on chain saws. Ox power is quiet, and it runs on hay and oats.

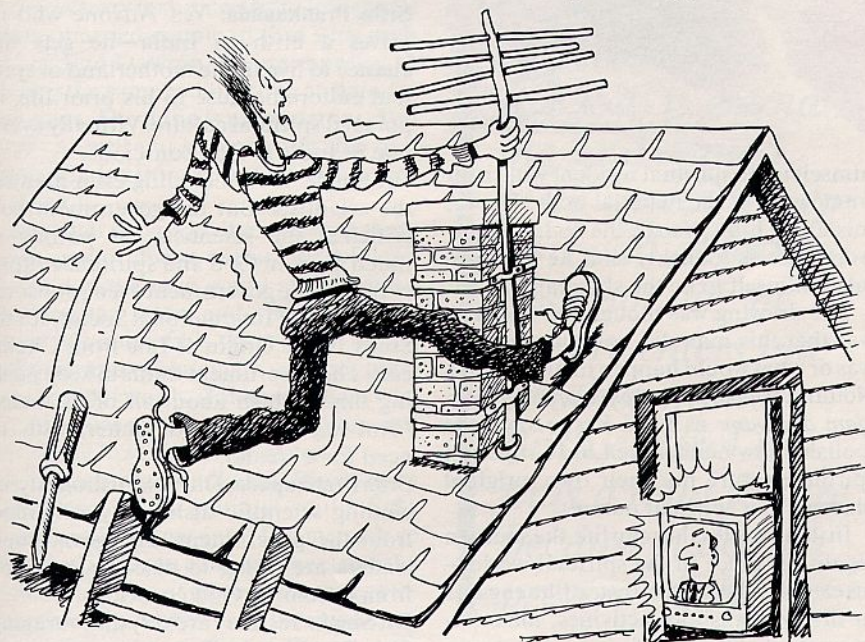
Trouble is, you can't gear up the oxen enough to whiz down the highway at sixty miles an hour in an ox-cart. Ox-carts are safer than cars, since even in head-on collisions, which are next to impossible anyway, nobody gets hurt. For speed, though, you want a car. I can't see myself riding the 150 miles to my monthly editorial meeting in Philadelphia behind an ox team, or on a train behind a wood-fired steam engine. So I guess we still need oil.

Then again, editorial meetings are boring. The heck with them.

A broader Kṛṣṇa conscious perspective on the Persian Gulf is that our world, oil or no, Persian Gulf or no, is not a safe or happy place. The potential for suffering is immense. Lord Kṛṣṇa sums it up concisely: no matter what you do, this world is *duḥkhālayam aśāsvatam*, temporary and full of misery. After narrowly avoiding a kitchen blowup, for instance, I risk my neck to hook up an antenna so I can watch the news. Then I tune in to learn that there's another explosive situation thousands of miles away that has much of the world on edge. If the oil-based Gulf conflict caught fire, the flames could easily spread, and millions of us might lose our potatoes, our homes, our lives.

The Gulf-conflict danger is larger scale, since it's the tempers of heavily armed nations that could explode, not just a few oil tankers or refineries—what to speak of one stove. But danger is danger, and a fall from the roof or a faulty pilot light could put me in just as bad shape as a world war. If we want to avert the danger of the Persian Gulf conflict, we should consider simpler, land-based energy sources, however quaint wood heat and ox power might sound to us now. But that alone won't give us total safety.

Perhaps, however, in quainter times we'd be more inclined to avert altogether the dangers of this irreparably miserable and temporary world by raising our mental antennas for reception of the *Gītā's* directions to a world that is eternal and full of pleasure. ☐



"At the top of the news, danger increased in the Gulf today as an Iranian Silkworm missile struck a Kuwaiti tanker. And on the national scene . . ."

traption up thirty feet to my sloping roof and—balancing on my haunches while fighting off fits of acrophobia—strapped the thing to the chimney. After lowering myself with relief through the skylight, I ran downstairs to find, with further relief, that the TV now picked up channel eight, an NBC affiliate. Ah, civilization!

The six o'clock news says there's an "explosive" situation in the Persian Gulf, with U.S. battleships and minesweepers escorting Kuwaiti tankers through the Straits of Hormuz. Russian warships are also in the area.

What would be a Kṛṣṇa conscious perspective on, or solution to, Gulf tensions? I'm not sure. Foreign warships are there because of oil, because all industrial nations depend completely on oil to keep

tion would be to depend more on the land for our needs, including our fuel needs. The *Bhagavad-gītā* asserts that the land is the foundation for a truly stable economy. Here in the country, fuel does grow on trees, or *as* trees, rather. One of my neighbors says (no, he doesn't work for the Federal Bureau of Statistics, but he's the best I can do) that one tenth of the dead trees standing in Pennsylvania forests could provide enough wood to heat every Pennsylvania home this winter. A mile away from me is ISKCON's Port Royal farm, where all the buildings are wood-heated and where the devotees haven't had to cut a live tree since they bought the place twelve years ago. And this year they're cutting all felled wood with their ox-power unit: five oxen walking in a cir-

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

The “Scientific Method”

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, what you say about modern scientists is quite accurate. Even though they know they have imperfect senses, make mistakes, and become illusioned, most are still eager to present themselves as big authorities and take big salaries. Dishonesty. And worse, they teach this dishonesty to their students.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes.

Dr. Singh: Millions of students. The students see, “Oh, even though this man has imperfect senses and makes mistakes and becomes illusioned, he still passes himself off as an exalted authority and gets away with the bluff. He makes his living by bluffing. So it appears I’ll have to bluff, also. The ‘scientific method.’”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Naturally the scientists spread the bluffing, the cheating. They understand that to be successful in their dishonesty, everyone else must become dishonest.

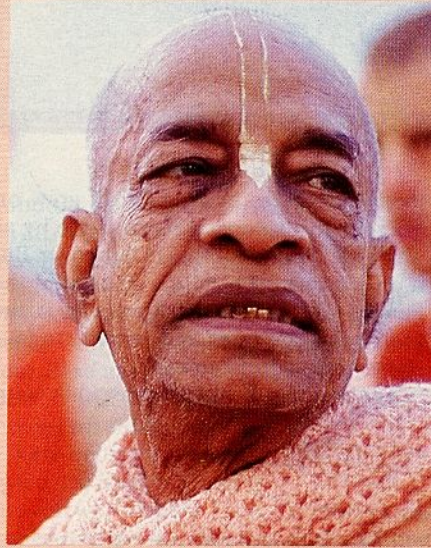
“Life evolves from matter,” the scientists teach us. No need to mention the soul or the Supreme Soul, the creator. “That would be religious sentimentalism—unprovable. We must adhere to our scientific method—everything provable.” But has anyone proved—ever—that life can come from matter? These scientists cannot create even a single blade of grass. And yet we have to tolerate their “life-evolves-from-matter” rubbish. This godless, irrational bluff. This dishonesty.

So save all these millions of students. If you can prove that these so-called scientists are actually dishonest—cheaters—that will be a very great service.

Dr. Singh: Yes, we can prove all these things in scientific journals such as *Scientific American*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Surely. During my college days, in 1916 or 1917, Calcutta University had an issue of *Scientific American* with a very memorable drawing. It showed that, ironically, modern man knows how to construct huge skyscrapers—but he does not know who he is. Modern man has no knowledge of his soul.

So here was this man expertly constructing the intricate iron framework of some skyscraper. And yet he was utterly unaware of his very self. Unaware that he



himself is the spiritual resident within the framework of the material body. He was mistaking himself to be the bodily framework, just as foolishly as if he had mistaken himself to be the skyscraper.

The drawing was thoughtful. The idea was that this man did not know who he was or what would happen in his next life. Nothing. *Mūḍho 'yam nābhijānāti loko mām ajam avyayam:* as Lord Kṛṣṇa says, the foolish know neither the Lord’s superior, spiritual nature nor their own, original place in that spiritual nature.

In this priceless human life, the soul can regain his place in the spiritual world—his eternal inheritance. Instead, he engages in flimsy, transitory activities, materialistic activities that will force him to stay in this material world for life after life of suffering. So he is losing his priceless opportunity to become eternally liberated.

Therefore, we have to save the bewildered soul. These materialistic activities—constantly striving after mundane profit, adoration, and distinction—these are not important. The important thing is to know yourself. Before you are forced to leave your present material body and accept another, come to know yourself and the Lord—so that when that death moment comes, He will deliver you from more material bodies and more suffering. Prepare yourself, so that He will take you back to His eternal, spiritual abode.

But today people are misled. They are captivated by these huge iron structures. Such foolishness. At the time of death, how will this iron structure help you? It

will remain—but you will be dragged into your next life, and your next material body, for more suffering.

According to the subtle situation you have created in this life—according to the state of your mind, intelligence, and ego—in your next life you will have to accept a corresponding gross situation. A new gross body—an all-new body, with all-new varieties of suffering. You are lost.

Dr. Singh: Here in India, at least, most people have held on to this spiritual perspective. They’re not so easily fooled by so-called advanced thinking. Here, even scientists tend to be God conscious.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Anyone who receives a birth in India—he gets this chance to live in the motherland of spiritual culture because in his prior life, he pursued spiritual culture. Virtually everyone in India is God conscious.

Dr. Singh: Yes—including even many of the scientists. But the government here criticizes the scientists for putting so much stock in God and spiritual culture.

In fact, the government even sponsored some kind of International Society for the Study of the Origin of Life from Chemicals. The government wants to keep pushing this rubbish about all of us merely “evolving” from dead matter, with no need for a creator.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Oh, yes. Dishonesty, including scientific dishonesty, originates from the government. The government leaders are trying to discourage people from becoming God conscious.

Dr. Singh: Yes, they are very discouraging.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Today the government leaders are generally big industrialists as well. So of course they are worrying:

“If people become God conscious, they will go back to the simple life of farms and villages, with no need for heavy industry. Then whom shall we get to work in our factories? This God consciousness will ruin all our industrial enterprises.

“In place of God consciousness, we shall maintain an elite of scientists to promote ‘the scientific method’: Forget God. Better not discuss God and the soul. Let us simply absorb ourselves in matter.”

A dangerous government. It is the duty of the government to help people become God conscious and spiritually realized. Instead, they are fostering the opposite atmosphere: “Forget God. Forget your soul. Work like hell. And go to hell.” ❏

(To be continued.)

OVERPOPULATION

(continued from page 8)

Because the soul is eternal, the soul denied birth by contraception and abortion does not die; he simply enters into another womb. Birth control is thus a total failure because it doesn't prevent birth. It only brings suffering for everyone involved. To protect ourselves from the harsh reactions to illicit sex, the Vedic literature proposes sexual restraint.

Margaret Sanger, and others who have followed her in the population control movement, believed that such voluntary restraint is impossible. In her autobiography Sanger quotes Baron Dawson of Penn, the court physician of Edward VII and George V, who in a speech at a congress of the Anglican Church answered the proposition by the Anglican bishops that sexual activity should be restricted to that necessary for procreation. "Imagine a young married couple in love with each other," said Dawson, "being expected to occupy the same room and to abstain for two years. The thing is preposterous. You might as well put water by the side of a man suffering from thirst and tell him not to drink it."

But what if, besides the waterpot, there were a pot of divine nectar? By drinking the nectar, the man could abstain from drinking the water and yet become relieved not only of his thirst but of all his suffering and experience a superior pleasure. In other words, if one experiences the superior pleasure of spiritual life, one can forego the lower pleasure of sex.

Commenting on a *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* description of the spiritual world, Śrīla Prabhupāda points out: "The men are so absorbed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness that the beautiful bodies of the women cannot attract them. In other words, there is enjoyment of the association of the opposite sex, but there is no sexual relationship. The residents of Vaikuṅṭha have a better standard of pleasure, so there is no need of sex pleasure" (*Bhāg.* 3.15.20, purport).

Because people have generally not experienced such higher pleasure, they must be attached to sexual pleasure, especially since we live in a culture where everyone is exposed to intense sexual propaganda. The Vedic civilization, however, strongly emphasizes *brahmacarya*, or celibacy, and formerly every child was expected to spend the first twenty or so years of life as a celibate student of the spiritual science of God consciousness.

This celibacy was not, however, a denial of the individual's innate desire for pleasure. Rather, giving up the lower pleasures of the sexual urge was merely a precondition for experiencing the higher, transcendental pleasures of the soul's spiritual love for God, who is known as Kṛṣṇa, the

reservoir of all pleasure.

In an atmosphere of sexual license, pregnancy is often regarded as an unwanted by-product that greatly decreases the value of sexual pleasure. The remedy that Sanger and her followers favored was contraception, rather than abortion. Sanger felt that abortion is violent, whereas contraception is somehow different. But contraception is simply a less obvious act of violence. Most contraceptive methods work on the principle of making the womb uninhabitable, by physical or chemical means, for the fertilized egg. This is actually another type of murder, operating at an earlier stage than abortion, because even at this very early stage, according to the *Vedas*, the soul has already been introduced into the egg.

Other methods of contraception aim at stopping either the sperm or egg from reaching the point of conception. But

Because the soul is eternal, the soul denied birth by contraception and abortion does not die; he simply enters into another womb. Birth control is thus a total failure because it doesn't prevent birth.

whether the method involves obstruction or destruction, the result is the same.

"Contraception deteriorates the womb so that it no longer is a good place for the soul," warns Śrīla Prabhupāda. "That is against the order of God. By the order of God, a soul is sent to a particular womb, but by this contraceptive he is denied that womb and has to be placed in another. That is disobedience to the Supreme. For example, take a man who is supposed to live in a particular apartment. If the situation there is so disturbed that he cannot enter the apartment, then he is put at a great disadvantage. That is illegal interference and is punishable" (*The Science of Self-Realization*, pp. 49-50).

Such methods of birth control are now prominent all over the world. Reversing this situation is going to be a difficult battle, but important skirmishes are already being won. All around the world, thou-

sands of married couples have adopted the Kṛṣṇa conscious principle of voluntarily restraining from sex except for procreation, and many more thousands of single men and women have opted for total celibacy, either permanently or until they marry.

The Vedic system of birth control does not mean no sex and fewer people, but sex according to spiritual principles—and better people, be they few or many. In this regard, Malthus made a point worth noting: "I have never considered any possible increase of population as an evil, except as far as it might increase the proportion of vice and misery." If the increasing population is of good character, there will naturally be a desirable decrease in vice and misery.

But how do we insure good population? According to the *Vedas*, the consciousness of the parents at the time of conception determines the quality of the child. Śrīla Prabhupāda advises, "The birth of a human being is a great science, and therefore reformation of the act of impregnation according to the Vedic ritual called *garbhādhāna-samskāra* is very important for generating good population. The problem is not to check the growth of the population, but to generate good population. . . . So-called birth control is not only vicious but also useless" (*Bhāg.* 3.5.19, purport).

Śrīla Prabhupāda further states, "This material world is created to give the conditioned souls a chance . . . for going back home, back to Godhead, and therefore generation of the living being is necessary. . . . and as such one can even serve the Lord in the act of such sexual pleasure. The service is counted when the children born of such sexual pleasure are properly trained in God consciousness" (*Bhāg.* 2.10.26, purport).

If the people are good, then no matter how numerous they are, they will be able to cooperate peacefully and, with the blessings of God, receive ample resources from Mother Earth. On the other hand, even a very limited population of bad character can make the planet into a hell. Selfish sex, aided by abortion, pills, condoms, and so on, is not going to make this world a happier place for anyone. People will continue in the cycle of birth and death, and the world will be a chaos of greed, anger, envy, and violence.

Śrīla Prabhupāda therefore advises, "Those who are sincere souls . . . should refrain from such child-killing and should atone for their sinful activities by taking to Kṛṣṇa consciousness very seriously. If one chants the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* without offenses, all of one's sinful actions are surely atoned for immediately, but one should not commit such deeds again. . . ." (*Bhāg.* 6.16.14, purport). ❧

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Who is Prabhupāda?

When a first-time reader of *Back to Godhead* sees the photos of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and reads his essays, he sometimes asks, "Where does your spiritual master live?" But if the reader notices the statement on the inside cover that "He passed away in 1977," he might then conclude, "Oh, he's dead." A new reader might also think *Back to Godhead* is advocating a personality cult.

All of these casual impressions are uninformed. And an important function of *Back to Godhead*, therefore, is to give clear information about Śrīla Prabhupāda and his teachings, which are important to everyone because they carry the message of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Because Śrīla Prabhupāda is a Vaiṣṇava, a pure devotee of God, he did not die, even though he "passed away" in 1977. The permanency of the Vaiṣṇava is expressed by the nineteenth-century teacher Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura:

He reasons ill who tells that Vaiṣṇavas die
When thou art living still in sound!
The Vaiṣṇavas die to live, and living try
To spread the holy name around.

A bona fide spiritual master is undying because his instructions are eternal. Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote in the dedication of his first book, "To my spiritual master, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī. He lives forever by his divine instructions, and the follower lives with him."

Śrīla Prabhupāda did not teach his own concoctions but spoke and wrote on the basis of *Bhagavad-gītā*, the science of the relation of the soul to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As the *Bhagavad-gītā's* teachings are immortal, so the teacher of *Bhagavad-gītā* is also imperishable. This is true of all teachers who live according to the scriptures.

The Vedic knowledge Śrīla Prabhupāda taught was first taught at the beginning of material creation, when the Supreme Lord enlightened Lord Brahmā, the first created being in the universe. Although Lord Brahmā learned many departments of spiritual and material knowledge, the topmost instruction was *bhakti-yoga*, devotional service to the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Brahmā passed on these teachings to his disciples, who in turn passed them on to their disciples down through the centuries.

One of the notable devotees in this line was Madhvācārya (A.D. 1239–1319), who is recognized as a great propounder of Vaiṣṇava philosophy. When Lord Kṛṣṇa descended in His form as Lord Caitanya five hundred years ago in Bengal, or Gauḍa-deśa, He appeared as a disciple in the line of Madhvācārya. Followers of Lord Caitanya are therefore known as the Brahma-Madhva-Gauḍīya Sampradāya. Śrīla Prabhupāda's own spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, who ordered Śrīla Prabhupāda to teach Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the West, appeared in this disciplic succession. The movement represented by Lord Caitanya and His followers is also known as the *saṅkīrtana* movement because of its emphasis on the chanting of the holy names of God (Hare Kṛṣṇa) as the most important method of God realization in this age.

Śrīla Prabhupāda is therefore one of many faithful teachers in disciplic succession, and yet he is outstanding even among spiritual masters. Professor Harvey Cox, a noted Harvard theologian, said of Prabhupāda: "In one sense Śrīla Prabhupāda was not at all 'original' . . . , but one who incarnates an ancient tradition. . . . Yet, it must be added, Śrīla Prabhupāda was also a unique person. . . . [He] is only one of thousands of teachers. But in another sense, he is one in a thousand, maybe one in a million."

Śrīla Prabhupāda's essays and lectures regularly appear in *Back to Godhead*, because he founded the magazine, in 1944. Moreover, he founded the worldwide Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, ISKCON, which had been predicted by past Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* who yearned to see Lord Kṛṣṇa's teachings spread outside the boundaries of India.

By reading Prabhupāda's articles in *Back to Godhead*, one is introduced to his teachings. In the beginning of each issue of the magazine, we present a lecture by Śrīla Prabhupāda. These lectures reveal how Prabhupāda assimilated the complex Vedic teachings and presented them in a way comprehensible to ordinary people, but without losing the potency of *bhakti-yoga*. Śrīla Prabhupāda gave us such a wealth of spoken and written material, all in English, that *Back to Godhead* is able to continually give new presentations of Vedic knowledge through his realized words.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's most important

contribution was his books. Not only did he translate *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and other Vedic scriptures, but he also wrote clear purports that assimilate the commentaries of the most prominent Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*. So through Prabhupāda we receive the distilled wisdom of hundreds of centuries. In addition to his scholarly and faithful renditions of the conclusions of the previous teachers, Prabhupāda added his own realizations as a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa and a world teacher. A taste of this is given each month in *Back to Godhead*, through the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* insert.

Another aspect of Prabhupāda appears monthly as "Śrīla Prabhupāda Speaks Out." Here we see Śrīla Prabhupāda in an impromptu mood conversing on topical themes. In "Śrīla Prabhupāda Speaks Out," His Divine Grace decries cheaters in religion, politics, and science. His statements are not "shooting from the hip," but based always on Vedic evidence. Thus, we get eternal Vedic knowledge applied to the crises of the late twentieth century.

As followers of Śrīla Prabhupāda, we feel love for him, and gratitude. But our desire to share his teachings with the readers of *Back to Godhead* is not sentimental. Prabhupāda always taught us that he was a representative and servant of Kṛṣṇa. He never made absurd claims that he was God or that everyone could become God. In the preface to his *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote, "Some say it is a great fortune for the Americans that I have started the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. But actually the original father of this movement is Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself."

Prabhupāda deflected attention away from himself and toward Lord Kṛṣṇa. Yet Kṛṣṇa says that one cannot transcend the cycle of birth and death and go back to the eternal, spiritual world unless one serves Him through His devotees. As He states in the *Ādi Purāna*, "Those who are directly My devotees are actually not My devotees. But those who are devotees of My servant are factually My devotees."

In keeping Śrīla Prabhupāda at the center of *Back to Godhead*, we are following this instruction of Lord Kṛṣṇa. We hope that by reading the teachings of Śrīla Prabhupāda, the readers will establish their relationship with him and come into direct association with the Supreme Personality of Godhead.—SDG

en-lit'nd

**Enlightened: freed from ignorance and misinformation;
filled with spiritual understanding; informed; illuminated.**

Whether we realize it or not, we're all looking for enlightenment. We want to know how to get free from all problems and find a situation that brings only peace and happiness. We deserve full peace and happiness, but we don't know how to get it. You might say we're in the dark. And to make things worse, when we look for solutions to life's problems, we get misinformation (from others who are in ignorance) that gives, at best, only temporary solutions.

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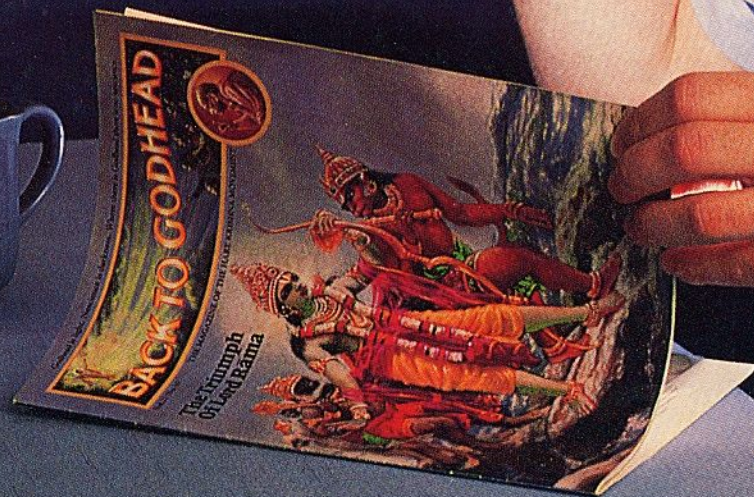
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