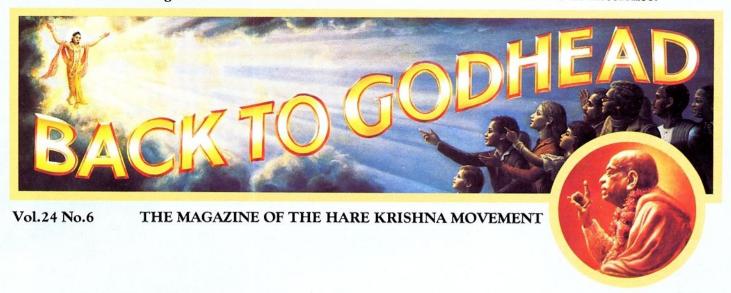
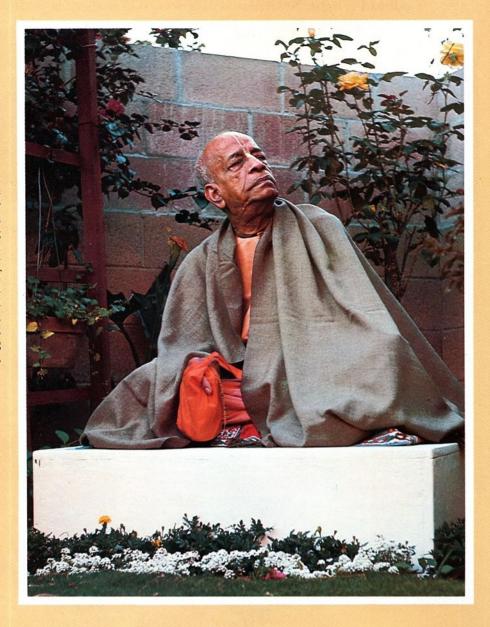
Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.





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 Krsna 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 Vrndāvana, India, the place most sacred to Lord Krsna. 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:

- 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.
- 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).
- To teach and encourage the sankīrtana 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.
- To bring the members closer together for the purpose of teaching a simpler, more natural way of life.
- With a view toward achieving the aforementioned purposes, to publish and distribute periodicals, books, and other writings.

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EDITOR IN CHIEF Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami MANAGING EDITOR Sesa dasa ASSOCIATE EDITORS Dravida dasa, Mathureśa dāsa, Nāgarāja dāsa CONTRIBUTING EDITORS Drutakarmā dāsa. Dvārakādhīśa-devī dāsī, Kundalī dāsa, Viśākhā-devī dāsī DESIGN Yamarāja dāsa ILLUSTRATOR Keśīsūdana dāsa COMPOSITION Prānadā-devī dāsī PROOFREADER Ksamā-devī dāsī ARCHIVES Ravindranātha dāsa SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES Prāṇadā-devī dāsī, Virginia Ishizaki ADVERTISING Puruşārtha dāsa

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 a like the a in far (and hold it twice as long as the short a). Pronounce e like the a in evade, long i like the iin pique. Pronounce the vowel r like the riin rim, and c like the ch in chair. Pronounce the aspirated consonants (ch, jh, dh, etc.) as in staunch-heart, hedge-hog, and red-hot. Pronounce the sibilants \$ and s like sh. So for Kṛṣṇa say KRISHNA, and for Caitanya say CHAITANYA.

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

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#### PUT KRSNA IN THE CENTER

Śrīla Prabhupāda explains why the Kṛṣṇa consciousness system of yoga is the best means for understanding the Supreme Person-and everything else.

#### A Course in Vedic Knowledge

#### LESSON SEVEN: VEDIC SOCIETY (PART II) 5

The spiritual divisions of varnāśrama are the soul of the Vedic social body.

#### FEED THE STOMACH, WATER THE ROOT

"You are the servant of God"—how does that sound to you?

#### POET FOR LIBERATED SOULS

The poems of Jayadeva, a twelfth-century saint, could touch the heart of God.

#### MOTHER MILD 20

According to the Vedic tradition, there are seven kinds of mother. Modern society is killing one of them by the millions.

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

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#### SEEDS FOR THE SIMPLE LIFE 28

Śrīla Prabhupāda visited this tropical island and sowed the seeds of a life free from the soul-killing influences of modern civilization.

THE VEDIC OBSERVER COOKING WITH KŪRMA CENTERS AROUND THE WORLD 16 PULLOUT POSTER EVERY TOWN AND VILLAGE 23 LETTERS 34 ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT 35 NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

COVER: At Gītā-nāgarī, the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement's farm in Port Royal, Pennsylvania, Sureśvara dāsa shows the natural affection all devotees of Kṛṣṇa have for the cow. From the Vedic literature we learn that the cow is especially dear to God. Kṛṣṇa is the original form of God-an eternally youthful cowherd who spends His time enjoying with His family and friends in their simple village. In our sophisticated modern society, we are forgetting the debt of gratitude we owe the cow. One of the goals of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement is to help us remember. Please see the article on page 20. (Photo by Yamarāja dāsa.)

Lord Kṛṣṇa describes different yoga systems in the Bhagavad-gītā, but He clearly points to one as the best.

# Put Kṛṣṇa In The Center

A lecture in Stockholm on September 10, 1973 by HIS DIVINE GRACE A. C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA

Founder-Ācārva of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

śrī-bhagavān uvāca mayy āsakta-manāḥ pārtha yogam yuñjan mad-āśrayaḥ asamśayam samagram mām yathā jñāsyasi tac chṛṇu

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: 'Now hear, O son of Pṛthā [Arjuna], how by practicing yoga in full consciousness of Me, with mind attached to Me, you can know Me in full, free from doubt.' "
(Bhagavad-gītā 7.1)

This is a verse from the Seventh Chapter of Bhagavad-gītā, which we have published as Bhagavad-gītā As It Is. There are many editions of Bhagavad-gītā, and most of them have been edited to push forward the editor's own philosophical views. But we do not accept Bhagavad-gītā in that light. Bhagavad-gītā is spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. It is stated here, bhagavān uvāca. Those who are Sanskrit scholars will understand what is meant by the word bhagavān. Bhaga means "opulence," and one who

possesses something is called *vān*. So *bhagavān* means "one who possesses all opulences."

There are six kinds of opulence: wealth, reputation, strength, knowledge, renunciation, and beauty. If a person is very rich, he is opulent; he attracts the attention of many persons. Similarly, if a person is very influential or strong, he also attracts. If a man is very famous for his activities, he also attracts attention. If a man or woman is very beautiful, he or she attracts attention. If one is very learned, he also attracts attention.

We all possess these opulences in some small quantity. Every one of us may possess some riches, may be a little wise or a little strong. But when you find that person who possesses more opulences than anyone else, that is God. The Sanskrit word for this is asamordhva. Sama means "equal," and asama means "without being equal." And ūrdhva means "above." No one is equal to or greater than God. That is the definition of God. "God is great" means that nobody is equal to Him and

PAINTING BY YADURĀŅĪ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ Text and painting ®The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust



nobody is above Him in any kind of opulence. That is called *bhagavān*.

Vyāsadeva writes bhagavān in Bhagavad-gītā to describe Kṛṣṇa. Bhagavad-gītā is one of the chapters of Mahābhārata. Mahābhārata means "the history of greater India." India is the name given by Westerners. But the real name is Bhāratavarṣa. Bhārata-varṣa means not only India but the whole planet. Five thousand years ago it was known as Bhārata-varṣa. Now the name Bhārata-varṣa indicates only India.

So the background of this *Bhagavadgītā* is that there was a worldwide fight called the Battle of Kurukṣetra. Kurukṣetra is a place that still exists, and there was a battle there five thousand years ago. The main parties in the fight were cousinbrothers, the Kurus and the Pāṇḍavas. *Bhagavad-gītā* was spoken there by Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Bhagavān.

Therefore, it is said bhagavān uvaca. Kṛṣṇa is teaching Arjuna bhakti-yoga. Yoga is the means by which you can contact the Supreme. Yoga means "linking." There are many yoga systems for linking ourselves with the Supreme Absolute Truth.

The Absolute Truth is realized in three phases: impersonal, localized, and personal. In the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam it is said that the Absolute Truth is realized by different persons according to different angles of vision. For example, if you see a mountain from a distant place, you see something cloudy. If you go nearer, then you find it is something green. And if you actually reach the mountain, then you find so many varieties. There are trees, there are houses, there are living entities, animals, everything. The object is one, but according to the vision of the person from the different distances, the same object is realized in different phases.

Therefore, the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam says, vadanti tat tattva-vidas tattvam yaj jñānam advayam. The object is one, but according to different understandings, somebody is realizing the Absolute Truth as impersonal Brahman, somebody is realizing the Absolute Truth as localized Paramātmā, and somebody is realizing the same Absolute Truth as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Ultimately, the Absolute Truth is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Bhagavān.

Therefore, Vyāsadeva, the compiler of Mahābhārata, says, śrī bhagavān uvāca. So in this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement we understand that Bhagavān is Kṛṣṇa. He has many millions of names, but Kṛṣṇa is the chief name. Kṛṣṇa means "the all-attractive." God must be all-attractive. It is not that God is attractive for one person and not for another. No. God is attractive for all living entities. There-

fore, you see in pictures of Kṛṣṇa that He is loving the calves and cows, He is loving the trees, He is loving the *gopīs*, He is loving the cowherd boys. For Him, for God, everyone is a lovable object because everyone is the son of God.

Kṛṣṇa states in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that there are different species of life and different forms of life. He says, "Their mother is the material nature, and I am the seed-giving father."

God is attractive for everyone, and God is equal to everyone. There is no distinction for God that here is an animal, here is a man, here is a tree. No. Every living entity is part and parcel of God. That is our understanding of God consciousness, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

There are different processes of yoga for linking with God, out of which three are principal: jñāna-yoga, haṭha-yoga, and

God is equal to everyone.
There is no distinction for God that here is an animal, here is a man, here is a tree. Every living entity is part and parcel of God. That is our understanding of God consciousness.

bhakti-yoga. Bhakti-yoga is the topmost. That is described in the Bhagavad-gītā [6.47]:

yogīnām api sarvešām mad-gatenāntar-ātmanā śraddhāvān bhajate yo mām sa me yuktatamo mataḥ

Of all yogīs, the yogī who is always thinking of Kṛṣṇa with love and faith is the first-class yogī.

The Seventh Chapter of the Bhagavadgūtā describes how to become a first-class
yogī. Kṛṣṇa Himself explains how it is to
be done. If you want to understand God, it
is better to understand from God Himself.
Instead of speculating about God, it is better to understand God from the words of
God.

Vyāsadeva is the compiler of all Vedic knowledge, and he accepts Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Later on, all the ācāryas—Rāmānujācārya, Madhvācārya, Viṣṇusvāmī, Lord Caitanya—they all accepted Kṛṣṇa. As far as our Vedic culture is concerned, Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Here it is also said, śrī bhagavān uvāca. Kṛṣṇa is teaching how to become a first-class yogī in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He is saying, mayy āsakta-manāh pārtha yogam yunjan mad-āśrayaḥ. Mayi means "unto Me," and āsakta means "attachment."

The Kṛṣṇa consciousness yoga means to increase attachment for Kṛṣṇa. That's all. Everyone has attachment for something, either for his family or for some friend or for some house or some hobby or some cats, some dogs. There is attachment. That doesn't have to be learned. Attachment is there in everyone's heart. Everyone wants to be attached to somebody else; everybody wants to love somebody else. Love does not mean oneness. For love there must be two: the lover and the beloved.

The Kṛṣṇa consciousness yoga system is the means to increase your attachment for Kṛṣṇa. Therefore it is said here, mayy āsakta-manāḥ pārtha—"gradually increasing one's attachment for Me." Kṛṣṇa says one should practice this yoga system by taking shelter of Him. You can take shelter directly of Kṛṣṇa, or you can take shelter of a person who has taken shelter of Kṛṣṇa. That is the meaning of madāśrayaḥ. That is the system of paramparā, disciplic succession. If you increase your attachment for Kṛṣṇa, or if you increase your attachment for a person who is a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, it is the same.

For example, if something is charged with electricity and you touch something else to it, it also becomes electrified. We have daily experience. The wires distribute the electricity from the powerhouse, and as soon as we join the plug, immediately it is electrified. Similarly, if you carry the words of Kṛṣṇa as they are carried by others in the disciplic succession, then you are in touch with Kṛṣṇa. That is called yogam yunjan mad-āśrayaḥ: always being linked with Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa says in this verse, "Please try to hear from Me." Kṛṣṇa is speaking personally. So if we accept *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is, as instructed by Kṛṣṇa Himself, then we can understand God without any doubt.

In our present position, with blunt material senses, with four defects, it is not possible to understand what God is. We have four defects in this material condition: we commit mistakes, we are illusioned, we tend to cheat, and our senses are imperfect.

Every day we see the sun with our eyes, but because our senses are imperfect, we see the sun as a disk, although it is thousands of times bigger than the earth. In

(continued on page 34)



#### A Course in Vedic Knowledge

This series systematically explains some of the important philosophical concepts that form the foundation of the Vedic culture and the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

# LESSON SEVEN: Vedic Society

by PAVANEŚANA DĀSA

Part II: In last month's issue, we discussed how the Vedic literature recommends the varṇāśrama system, the organization of society into four social divisions (varṇas) and four spiritual divisions (āśramas), and we discussed the characteristics of the four varṇas. Now we'll discuss the four āśramas: (1) brahmacārī, or student life; (2) gṛhastha, married life; (3) vānaprastha, retired life; and (4) sannyāsa, renounced life.

The goal of Vedic society is to bring people closer to God. Attachment to God and attachment to matter are diametrically opposed. The more people are attracted to material life, the less they will be inclined to spiritual life, and vice versa. Therefore the *varṇāśrama* system

stresses progressive detachment from material enjoyment.

This does not mean that people in Vedic society were deprived of enjoyment. They were restricted for their own benefit from the types of sense gratification that cause suffering and continuous bondage in the cycle of birth, old age, disease, and death. And they were encouraged to enjoy in a more refined way, in accordance with religious principles. This type of pleasure is much more enjoyable and conducive to health and well-being, and it elevates one to higher consciousness and spiritual awareness, instead of degrading one to lower forms of life.

The greatest attachment in the material world is due to sexual pleasure, described in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam as a tight knot binding one to this material world. Sexual activity that ignores religious principles increases one's desire to stay in the material world and decreases one's spiritual intelligence. Therefore in Vedic society sex was limited to marriage, and it was for procreation only.

Now let us analyze the functions of the four āśramas:

#### Brahmacārī

The brahmacārī āśrama is student life, the first quarter of a man's life. Education in Vedic society did not consist of mere accumulation of data—facts, figures, equations, dates, formulas, and so on. Neither did it consist of speculative attempts to explain the world in terms of big bangs and primordial soups. Vedic education was intrinsically spiritual. It taught the student practical knowledge about using the material body in conjunction with the laws of God in order to live happily in this material world and to attain the goal of life, pure God consciousness.

This does not mean, however, that people in the Vedic ages had inferior material knowledge. Unlike our modern society, with its inductive attempts to gain knowledge, Vedic society derived highly developed knowledge from a perfect source: the Vedic scriptures, which emanate from God Himself. In this ancient literature we find descriptions of things modern man prides himself on having invented only recently: nuclear technology, airplanes, and space travel, to name a few.

In Vedic society boys from the age of five would receive their education from a spiritual master, or *guru*. They would live in his residence, called an āśrama, strictly observe celibacy and sense control, and serve him with humility and dedication. The *guru* would teach them according to their natural inclination, or *varṇa*. At age twenty-five the student could enter the householder āśrama. Girls would be educated by their parents and live at home up to the time of their marriage.

Grhastha

The grhastha āśrama is married life, the second quarter of life. In family life there is the natural tendency to accumulate money and acquire material objects. All four āśramas are for spiritual advancement, but only the grhastha āśrama allows for making money. Therefore, the entire Vedic society was maintained by the householder āśrama.

This may seem unfair to us today. Everyone wants to acquire as much as possible and not have to share it with others. But the Vedic system counteracts this materialistic tendency by establishing charity as the religious duty of the householder. For example, before taking his meal, the *grhastha* was supposed to step into the street and call out loudly three times: "If anyone is hungry, he

Vedic society
was based on
the understanding
that the soul is covered by a body subject to birth, old
age, disease, and
death, and that the
soul is the real
life—eternal, distinct from matter,
and full of knowledge and happiness.

should come and eat in my house." Only then would he and his family eat.

The gṛhasthas understood that charity to saintly persons is not a liability but an asset in one's spiritual account. In Vedic society brahmacārīs and sannyāsīs used to beg from the householders. Begging helped the brahmacārīs and sannyāsīs culture humility and enabled the gṛhasthas to use some of their money for a spiritual cause.

The householder benefited by the association of saintly persons because he received valuable spiritual instructions from them. He knew that a society without holy men and God conscious preachers, without charity and sacrifices, is a hellish situation.

#### Vānaprastha

The stage of retirement from family life is called *vānaprastha*. It is the third quarter of life. Modern society postulates the

goals of life as wealth, fame, beauty, sense gratification, ample opportunity for sex, and so on. Consequently, people often continue trying to attain these things until they die. Politicians cling to their power even when they're senile or invalid. Dying businessmen pray to their doctors to prolong their life just a little so that they can finish some business. Aging film stars get face lifts in a vain attempt to trick nature.

Vedic society was based on the understanding that the spirit soul is covered by a temporary body subject to birth, old age, disease, and death, and that the soul is the real life—eternal, distinct from matter, and full of knowledge and happiness. The body, along with all material attributes like fame, wealth, and beauty, will perish sooner or later.

When the householder reached age fifty, he would enter the *vānaprastha* order, giving up his sexual relationship with his wife and gradually retiring from business and family life. He would travel to places of pilgrimage, often accompanied by his wife, and devote more time to spiritual practices, such as reading the holy scriptures and meditation.

Instead of increasing his attachment to matter at the end of life, he would gradually detach himself from worldly affairs. He knew that material accomplishments have no value at the time of death. When the soul transmigrates into another body, all assets like cars or bank accounts have to be left behind. A man is born without a penny, and he has to leave this world in the same condition. At death the only useful asset is knowledge of one's true self and of one's relationship with God. With this objective the retired householder would prepare himself for the final stage of life.

#### Sannyāsa

The renounced order, sannyāsa, is the last stage of life. In Vedic society it was entirely reserved for spiritual advancement. The sannyāsī would leave his family in order to give up any attachment to his wife and children. He would travel without any possessions, without any insurance plan or material security, and simply depend on Kṛṣṇa. His only business was to become Kṛṣṇa conscious and convey his realizations to others.

The sannyāsīs were the spiritual leaders of society. They lived by the charity of the householders, and anyone would be honored and happy to receive sannyāsīs in his house, for their presence afforded an opportunity to hear realized transcendental knowledge.

The Vedic literature states that charity given to a qualified *brāhmaṇa* is returned a thousand times in the next life, and charity given to a fully realized devotee is returned by unlimited multiplication. And

(continued on page 15)

# THE VEDIC OBSERVER

Transcendental Commentary on the Issues of the Day

#### MUSTACHES AND MONEYBELTS

by Jayādvaita Swami (Vṛṇdāvaṇa, India)

In the ancient land of the Incas and the Aztecs, in the capital city of a country I'd rather not name, for many years an old man with a pushcart stood on the street outside our Hare Kṛṣṇa temple selling bananas, oranges, apples, pineapples, and papayas. Now the fruits and the pushcart are gone, but the man is still there. And now he has a new occupation—changing dollars.

He and nearly everyone else on the block.

Roll down your car window. You'll get

dred-or back down to four hundred.

What's going on?

A local devotee explains:

It starts up in the selvas—the jungles of the mountains, where the main crop these days is the coca plant. The buyers pay in U.S. dollars. Then the local growers come down to the city to change their dollars into money they can spend—that is, into the national currency.

And because that local money is so wobbly, everyone who's saving money wants dollars. If you're holding on to cash, you don't bank it in the national currency. You lock it up in your house somewhere—in dollars. And you change it back into local cash only as you need money to spend.

So the people from the *selva* are selling dollars, and everyone else is buying. And who's buying more than anyone else? The

nuts. But since when is it the government's business to make citizens happy?

This is Kali-yuga, the age of cheating and hypocrisy. And cheating begins at the top. A main role of the state, we're told in the Vedic literature, is to protect the citizens from thieves. But in this age, forget it—the leaders of the state *are* the thieves.

And what are these thieves mixed up in? Drugs, prostitution, gambling, killing. With all those dollars coming into the treasury, how hard do you suppose the local government is fighting the coca trade? Instead they're busy cashing in—and prostituting the national economy in the bargain.

It's two weeks later. The rates have changed again: more than eleven hundred to the dollar. The fruit seller is busy selling dollars. And this republic's economy is busy going bananas.

Now contrast this with the Vedic civilization. In the Vedic civilization people stick to simple occupations and save their time for developing their relationship with Kṛṣṇa. The Vedic economy is a simple one, in which material wealth consists mainly of things people need, like land and food.

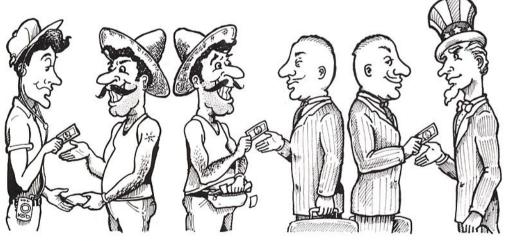
For those who want temporary luxury in this world, the perennial opulences are natural ones like land, grain, fruits, milk products, and gold. And for those who want permanent wealth, the ultimate object is the transcendent source of all opulences, Krsna.

Another week has gone by. Now the rate is eighteen hundred to the dollar. Bananas and more bananas!

Of course, ultimately what's real is what's eternal. So in that sense money, being temporary, is unreal anyway. And how stable can you expect unreality to be? The real thing is not a temporary stash of money but our eternal relationship with the Supreme Being, Kṛṣṇa.

But eighteen hundred to the dollar! That's not just unreal. That's ridiculous.

Maybe my devotee friend is wrong about what's behind it. But back in the days of the Incas and the Aztecs, at least the money was gold. Nowadays the money is paper. And the Real Thing is coke.



the latest street-market exchange rate. And on the spot you can change your local money for U.S. dollars—or vice versa. Change dollars on the sidewalk, change dollars on the road. The whole street is astir with mustaches and moneybelts and fistfuls of currency. Walk through our temple gate into our garden: on the wooden benches beneath the palm trees, the mustaches and moneybelts have spilled over from the street, and hands are swapping local currency for dollars. And it's not only our block—it's like this all over downtown.

And—whew!—what happens to the rates! The day I arrive, six hundred to the dollar; four days later, eight twenty. And tomorrow it might be up to nine hun-

national government.

Like most Latin American countries, this one has a huge national debt. But one big advantage of being a government is that whenever you need money you can print it. Just start up the presses and roll off as much as you want. Great!

Well, not so great. You can spend that money here. But outside the country, who wants it? Those bankers you owe want dollars.

That's why the local government has men out in the street buying up all the dollars they can get. The formula is simple: print your own currency, buy dollars, pay offyour debt. (Or now that you've got more money, spend it.)

Of course, you'll drive the local citizens

# Feed the Stomac

We're already the willing servants of our Why do we hate to be told

#### by NĀGARĀJA DĀSA

"Mahārāja Parīkṣit attained the highest perfection, shelter at Lord Krsna's lotus feet, simply by hearing about Lord Visnu. Śukadeva Gosvāmī attained perfection simply by reciting Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. Prahlāda Mahārāja attained perfection by remembering the Lord. The goddess of fortune attained perfection by massaging the transcendental legs of Mahā-Viṣṇu. Mahārāja Pṛthu attained perfection by worshiping the Deity, and Akrūra attained perfection by offering prayers to the Lord. Hanuman attained perfection by rendering service to Lord Rāmacandra, and Arjuna attained perfection by being Kṛṣṇa's friend. Bali Mahārāja attained perfection by dedicating everything to the lotus feet of Krsna.'

—Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.265

he Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement has an important reminder for the world: we're all servants of God. You won't see throngs of people pouring into our temples every day to hear that, as people often do when all-is-one svāmīs flatter them that they're God. Since people really don't know much about God, they also haven't the faintest notion what it means to serve Him. But those rare souls who know God and serve Him say the pleasure they obtain is unsurpassed. After all, it is God they're serving. If you have to serve someone, why not serve the Supreme?

And we do have to serve in one way or another, though we don't like to admit it. We're always serving others our employers, our customers, our families. If we have no one else to serve, we serve a pet.

Though to be called a *servant* sounds demeaning, we serve in many ways

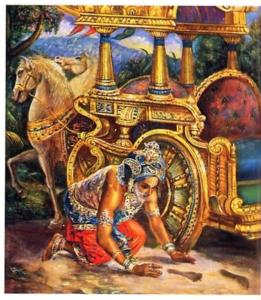
Clockwise from upper left, paintings are by Muralidhara dāsa, Puşkara dāsa, Yadurāŋı-devī dāsī, Dṛgha-devī dāsī, Parīkṣit dāsa, Bharadvāja dāsa, Puṣkara dāsa, Yadurāṇī-devī dāsī. Paintings ©The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust.



Śukadeva Gosvāmī narrates Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam to Mahārāja Parīksit.



The appearance of Pṛthu Mahārāja and his consort, Arci, from King Vena's body.



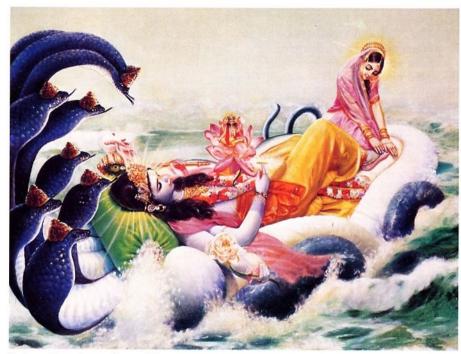
Akrūra becomes overwhelmed at the sight of Krsna's footprints.

# h,Water the Root

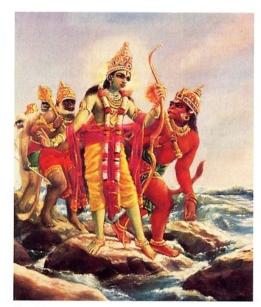
families, our countries—even our dogs. we're the servants of God?



Prahlāda with his classmates.



Laksmīdevī, the goddess of fortune, massages the feet of Lord Visnu.



Lord Ramacandra and His faithful servant Hanumān cross the ocean to Lankā.



Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa blow their transcendental conchshells.



Bali Mahārāja prepares to bathe Lord Vāmana's feet.

without complaint. Why? Because we have a motive. We expect some reward for our service, some love or some money. We want pleasure, something we don't expect to get by serving God.

Now, what happens when we choose to serve someone other than God? Do we get the reward we expect? Not really. Not the lasting happiness we seek. If we want that, we have to offer our service to the Supreme Person, our primeval Lord and master, the reservoir of all pleasure.

This is a simple concept, which the Vedic literature explains with a couple of analogies: If you want to nourish the parts of your body, you must supply food to the stomach; if you want to water the limbs, leaves, and flowers of a tree, you have to water the root.

God, or Kṛṣṇa, is the root of everything. He explains this Himself in the Bhagavad-gūtā: aham sarvasya prabhavo mattaḥ sarvam pravartate. "I am the source of all material and spiritual worlds. Everything emanates from Me."

There is much evidence that Kṛṣṇa is God, the Absolute Truth, the source of everything, but the best evidence is Kṛṣṇa's word. Kṛṣṇa's Gītā has been read, honored, and even worshiped by millions of people for thousands of years. In the modern age, many great thinkers, such as Emerson, Thoreau, and Schopenhauer, have studied Kṛṣṇa's teachings. Śrīla Prabhupāda suggests that if we respect Kṛṣṇa's integrity enough to study His words, we should at least theoretically accept that He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. That's what He says, and indeed, only when we accept Him as such is the Gītā comprehensible. "The most secret of all secrets" was perfectly clear to Arjuna because, as Kṛṣṇa told him, "You are never envious of Me." When we put aside envy, we can consider what Kṛṣṇa is saying.

Kṛṣṇa explains that we are all part of Him, and so our satisfaction naturally comes when we serve Him. But for many people, serving God seems intangible. God seems remote. "It's not like serving the members of my family," we say. "They're right here, and it's natural to serve them. I like to do it."

Family affection is so strong, in fact, that sometimes people who have lived together a long time can't bear separation from each other. My grandparents, for instance, who were married for sixty years, died a week apart. My grandmother couldn't live without her husband. If such deep attachment can develop in sixty years, how deep must be our attachment for Kṛṣṇa, who is "right here," right in our hearts, forever.

When we awaken that relationship with Kṛṣṇa, the all-attractive Supreme Person, then naturally we'll want to serve Him. It simply requires some practice, much as a child can walk by practice because the ability is already within him.

The Vedic literature describes nine ways we can serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead: hearing about Kṛṣṇa, chanting His glories, remembering Him, attending Him, worshiping Him, praying to Him, serving Him through thick and thin, making friends with Him, and fully surrendering to Him. Even if done without full love, these nine aspects of bhakti-yoga ("linking with God through devotional service") will gradually bring us to maturity in our relationship with Him.

Bhakti-yoga is so powerful that the Vedic literature abounds with stories of people who became pure lovers of God by perfecting only one type of service. Śukadeva Gosvāmī, for instance, perfected his Kṛṣṇa consciousness by reciting Śrīmad-

When we awaken our relationship with Kṛṣṇa, then naturally we'll want to serve Him. It simply requires some practice, much as a child can walk by practice because the ability is already within him.

Bhāgavatam, and Parīkṣit Mahārāja, who sat enthralled at Śukadeva's feet, became perfect by hearing the transcendental topics of Krsna.

Although all the processes are important and effective, hearing is the beginning and the most important. Unless we hear about Kṛṣṇa and how to reawaken our love for Him, we can't even begin spiritual life. The Caitanya-caritāmṛta states, nitya-siddha kṛṣṇa-prema 'sādhya' kabhu naya/ śravaṇādi-śuddha-citte karaye udaya: "Love for Kṛṣṇa is eternally situated within the living entity. It can be awakened by devotional service, beginning with hearing."

We have been asleep to devotional service for so long, though, that even after hearing about Kṛṣṇa, we may still feel that serving Him is a chore. Until we are completely free of the misunderstanding that we are the number one enjoyer of this

world, we can't selflessly serve the Supreme. We want to be served. We still envy God; He is still our rival. By progressive devotional service, however, we gradually understand that we are never independent to do as we please. Is anyone so independent that he doesn't have to get sick, grow old, and die? Our attempts to lord it over this world are like the attempts of a person to get pleasure by bashing his head against a wall. His only pleasure is the relief he feels when he stops. The pleasure of devotional service, however, goes beyond mere relief from material misery. As our desire to serve Kṛṣṇa grows, our consciousness awakens to transcendental

When we finally revive our pure love for Kṛṣṇa, we re-enter our unique, eternal relationship with Him. The relationships we live and die for in the material world are but pale reflections of the immortal relationships we can share with Kṛṣṇa. We can be Kṛṣṇa's servant, friend, parent, or even His lover. And Kṛṣṇa is so touched by our service that, unlike the bad masters of this world, He selflessly tries to serve us. Such is the sweetness of pure love.

It shouldn't be hard for us to agree to join Kṛṣṇa. Because God is the source of all pleasure, nothing can compare to a relationship with Him. Some devotees who have re-entered their relationship with Kṛṣṇa and are absorbed in serving Him have recorded their realizations in many beautiful prayers. King Kulaśekhara of South India prayed, "O my Lord Mukunda! I bow my head before Your Lordship's lotus feet and respectfully ask for the fulfillment of my only desire: Throughout my repeated births, may I never forget You but always remember You by Your Lordship's mercy."

King Kulasekhara has realized his position as servant of Kṛṣṇa, and His addressing Kṛṣṇa as "Mukunda" is significant. Mukunda is a name for Kṛṣṇa that means "the giver of liberation." Although King Kulasekhara knows he can obtain liberation from the material world by Kṛṣṇa's grace, he doesn't care about that. He simply wants the benediction that he can always serve Kṛṣṇa by remembering Him—even if he must remain in the material world.

We often find in prayers by great devotees that they decry liberation. In fact, the very word *liberation*, or in Sanskrit, *mukti*, is sometimes repulsive to a devotee. That's because it often implies impersonal liberation, or merging into the effulgence of God, the liberation sought by the Māyāvādīs, or impersonalists. The devotee finds this idea horrifying. Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī says, *kaivalyam narakāyate*: "Merging into the impersonal Brahman is worse than hell." Why? Because it

(continued on page 14)

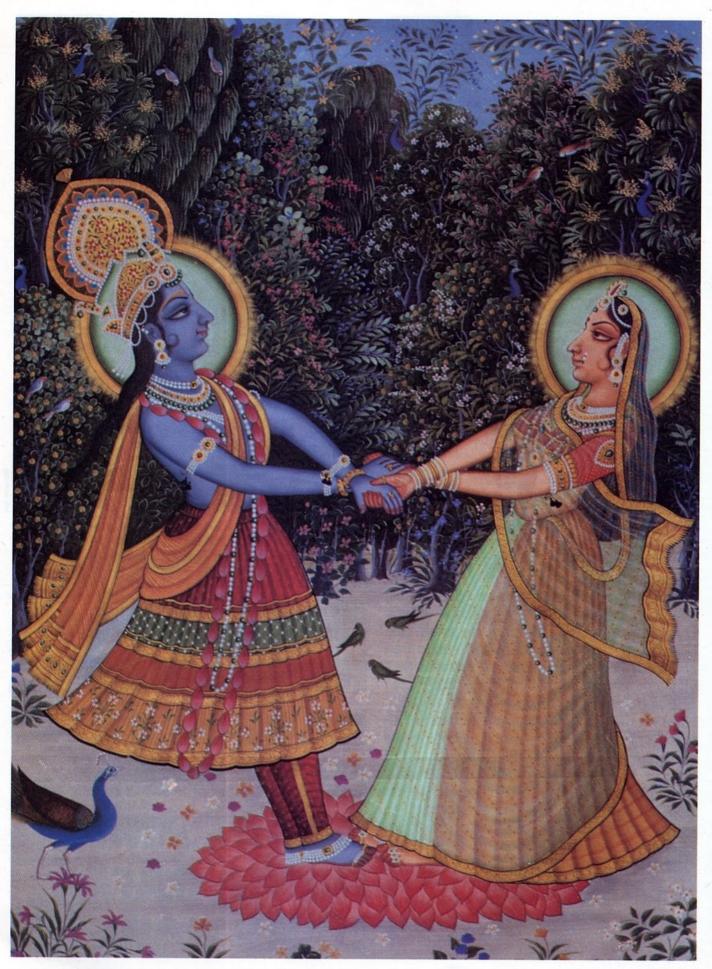


Bogota, Colombia

"It is stated in the Vedānta-sūtra that sound is the origin of all objects of material possession and that by sound one can also dissolve this material existence. Anāvrttih śabdāt means "liberation by sound." The entire material manifestation began from sound, and sound can also end material entanglement, if it has a particular potency. The particular sound capable of doing this is the transcendental vibration Hare Kṛṣṇa. Our entanglement in material affairs has begun from material sound. Now we must purify that sound in spiritual understanding. There is sound in the spiritual world also. If we approach that sound, then our spiritual life begins, and the other requirements for spiritual advancement can be supplied. We have to understand very clearly that sound is the beginning of the creation of all material objects for our sense gratification. Similarly, if sound is purified, our spiritual necessities also are produced from sound."

> —His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

# HARE KRŞŅA HARE KRŞŅA KRŞŅA KRŞŅA HARE HARE HARE RĀMA HARE RĀMA RĀMA RĀMA HARE HARE



# Poet For Liberated Souls

The poems of Jayadeva so wonderfully describe Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes that Kṛṣṇa Himselfas Lord Caitanya—would swoon on hearing them.

by SATYARĀJA DĀSA



rīla Vyāsadeva compiled the Vedic literature some five thousand years ago, and since then many great devotees have created literary works following the conclusions of Vyāsadeva's writings and drawing on their own realizations. One such pure devotee was Jayadeva Gosvāmī, who, in the twelfth century A.D., composed Gīta-govinda, one of the greatest Vaisnava classics of all time.

Jayadeva was born in the village of Kenduli, West Bengal. His father's name was Bhojadeva,

Opposite page: A painting of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa done in a style typical of that used to illustrate Gītā-govinda. Left, the author of Gītā-govinda, Jayadeva Gosvāmī.

and his mother's Ramā. Little is known about his early life, but it is said that he was a Sanskrit scholar at an early age and was inclined toward spiritual life. Some of his contemporaries have described him as "the incarnation of melody."

As a young man, Jayadeva went to Jagannātha Purī after visiting many holy places. There he married a girl named Padmāvatī, who was devoted to the Deity of Lord Jagannātha (Kṛṣṇa, "the Lord of the universe"). Jayadeva also developed deep love for the Lord. Inspired by the beauty of Purī and Lord Jagannātha, he composed Gīta-govinda, and it quickly became the joy of the Vaisnava community.

At the time, Gajapati Purushottamadev was the provincial king. He was openly envious of Jayadeva and soon posed an ill-fated challenge. The king considered himself a master poet, on a par with Jayadeva, and composed a work entitled Abhinava Gīta-govinda. One day, he summoned his advisors and asked them to widely circulate his work, in an attempt to make it more popular than Jayadeva's. The king's own men, however, ridiculed his attempt, saying that it is impossible to compare a lamp to the sun.

Still, the king was relentless. A controversy soon arose, and the *brāhmaṇas* (the king's priests) decided that the matter would be settled by placing both manuscripts before the Deity of Lord Jagannātha for the night. By morning, they said, the Lord Himself would decide.

When the devotees went to greet the Deity the next day, they found Jayadeva's Gita-govinda clasped against the Deity's chest, and the king's manuscript scattered about the floor. The decision was clear.

Jayadeva's fame spread across India, his work being recited or sung in every major temple and royal court. So popular was his work that beginning in the fifteenth century, various schools of classical Indian art began to render it more than any other religious text. *Gīta-govinda* was illustrated in Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, and the Punjab hills. Gujarat produced the earliest illustrated manu-

script in 1450. The next significant *Gītagovinda* series was painted in 1590, and it is now on display in Bombay's Prince of Wales Museum.

The great Mogul emperor Akbar was an admirer of *Gīta-govinda* and commissioned a special illustrated manuscript, one of the most important renditions ever produced. His manuscript was done in Mogul style and showed a fascinating merger of religious and cultural milieus. Rādhārāṇī, for instance, Lord Kṛṣṇa's eternal consort, was depicted in typical Mogul dress.

Later in life, Jayadeva became the court poet of King Lakshmanasena, the king of Bengal for the latter half of the twelfth century. The king's patronage of Jayadeva added insult to injury for Gajapati Purushottamadev, who soon resigned from his post in Purī.

Jayadeva's work became more famous as the years passed, and after he left this world, the words of his immortal *Gītagovinda* were inscribed on the Jaya-Vijaya doorway of the Jagannātha temple in Purī.

The most significant testament to the value of Jayadeva's work is that it was fully appreciated by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who used to have it read to Him nightly. Lord Caitanya is Kṛṣṇa Himself in the role of a perfect devotee. Since God Himself is pleased with Jayadeva's work, it must be considered consummate.

Consequently, Śrīla Prabhupada states that Jayadeva should be counted among the mahājanas, the great souls who come to this world on behalf of the Lord to show the proper methods of devotional service. This puts Jayadeva in the company of such exalted personalities as Brahmā, Nārada, and Prahlāda. Jayadeva's distinct position is revealed in the depth of his work. Gīta-govinda deals with the intimate pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, the ultimate in spiritual truth. Skillfully weaving pastoral drama with scriptural fact through the medium of Sanskrit melody, Jayadeva brings to life every nuance of spiritual love, in union and in separation. Still, as the perfect teacher, Jayadeva is careful, for he does not want his readers to mistake the loving pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa for lusty exchanges. The interaction of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa is the most wholesome spiritual relationship, of which material relationships are but a perverted counterpart.

To prevent misconceptions, great Vaisnava teachers throughout history have recommended the reading of basic spiritual texts, such as the *Bhagavad-gītā*, before one approaches the esoteric pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. And even then, one requires the direction of a bona fide spiritual master coming in disciplic succession. Otherwise, one is sure to misinterpret the teachings. Śrīla Prabhupāda, in fact, has written that the esoteric works of Jayadeva and others like him should be read only by liberated souls.

Jayadeva begins his Gīta-govinda with a beautiful prayer, entitled Daśāvatāra Stotra: "The Prayer to the Ten Incarnations." In this prayer, he reminds his readers of Lord Kṛṣṇa's divinity, hoping to allay their possible misinterpretation of the pastimes of the Lord recounted in the book. In the last verse of Daśāvatāra Stotra, Jayadeva summarizes the activities of ten incarnations of Lord Kṛṣṇa:

O Lord Kṛṣṇa, I offer my obeisances unto You, the Supreme Lord. You appear in the form of the following ten incarnations. In the form of Matsya, You rescue the Vedas, and as Kurma, You bear the Mandara Mountain on Your back. As Varāha, You lift the earth with Your tusk, and in the form of Nrsimha, You tear open the chest of the demon Hiranyakaśipu. In the form of Vāmana, You trick Bali by asking him for only three steps of land, and then You take away the whole universe by expanding Your steps. As Parasurāma, You slay all the wicked kings, and as Rāmacandra, You conquer the evil king Rāvaņa. In the form of Balarāma, You carry a plow, with which You subdue the wicked and draw toward You the river Yamuna. As Lord Buddha, You show compassion to all living beings, and at the end of the present age, Kali-yuga, You appear as Kalki to destroy the lowest among men.

#### Water the Root

(continued from page 10)

denies one the opportunity to serve

The happiness of serving Kṛṣṇa is millions of times greater than that obtained by the impersonalists who enter the Brahman effulgence. One devotee says that if you multiply the happiness of Brahman liberation millions of times, it won't equal an atomic fraction of the pleasure of serving Kṛṣṇa, which is an ocean of bliss.

Devotees will not give up serving Kṛṣṇa for anything. There are many descriptions

in the Vedic literature of impersonalists who have become devotees of Kṛṣṇa—Śukadeva Gosvāmī and the four Kumāras are examples—but a devotee never becomes an impersonalist. In the First Canto of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, the sage Nārada Muni tells Śrīla Vyāsadeva, the compiler of Vedic literature, that even an immature devotee who falls down from his practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness will never forget the pleasure of serving Kṛṣṇa. Such a person is called rasa-grahaḥ, "one who has had a real taste."

In trying to convince people that serving Kṛṣṇa is in their best interest, we are sometimes asked, "What about serving your fellow man?" People object, for instance, when money that could be used for ministering to the poor is used for building opulent temples.

No one should think, though, that a devotee is callous to the suffering of others and that he's interested only in the joy he obtains by serving God. The scriptures describe devotees as kṛpāmbudhiḥ paraduḥkha-duḥkhī—they are an ocean of mercy, and they feel the suffering of others as their own suffering. But the devotees know the real cause of everyone's suffering—not just the poor's—and they know

# Cooking with KURMA



Based on the three-part videotape series Cooking With Kūrma, produced by ISKCON Television (ITV)\*, this column features the gourmet recipes and authentic Indian techniques of ISKCON's famous Australian chef Kūrma dāsa.

#### Rose-Saffron Śrīkhand

(Serves 10-12)

#### Ingredients

8 cups plain yogurt ¼ teaspoon saffron strands ½ teaspoon rose water 1 to 1¼ cups powdered sugar

- 1. Hang the yogurt in a cheesecloth over a bowl for at least 5 hours.
- 2. Make a paste with the saffron strands by crushing and pulverizing them and adding the rose water.
- 3. Pour the thickened yogurt into a bowl and add the saffron paste and powdered sugar. Blend well and chill. Garnish with a sprinkle of rose water and a few saffron strands. Offer to Krsna.
- \* For information about ITV, see "Resources" on page 24.



the real solution. We are all suffering in this world because we have forgotten that we are eternal servants of Kṛṣṇa. The cure, therefore, is to become reinstated in our original position through devotional service.

So a devotee does serve his fellow man.

When he builds a beautiful temple, he wants to attract people to come there and hear about Kṛṣṇa so that their spiritual lives can begin. When Lord Kṛṣṇa descended five hundred years ago as Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, He especially (continued on page 34)

# **Vedic Society**

(continued from page 6)

we find the following statement regarding the benefit of associating with saintly persons: "The verdict of all revealed scriptures is that by even a moment's association with a pure devotee, one can attain all success."

By their preaching, sannyāsīs created a potent spiritual atmosphere. Their very presence reminded the attached householders that they too would one day have to renounce their possessions—either voluntarily or at death—and that they had better prepare for this ultimate test.

Vedic society did not see life as a onetime event but as a continuous cycle. Preparation for the next life and worship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, were essential ingredients of social life. Simple living and high thinking enabled people to concentrate on their longterm goal of spiritual perfection and God consciousness.

Today's materialistic society is devoted exclusively to the pursuit of short-term goals. God consciousness is thought of as impractical, outdated, unrealistic, or non-progressive. But this kind of thinking has stripped people's lives of meaning and lasting values. It has created an atmosphere of anxiety, because people have nothing to live for. Society has lost its soul.

Materialistic persons desperately try to prepare for any conceivable problem or calamity. But no one is preparing for the one disaster that's sure to strike—death. Spiritual knowledge means to understand that death is not the end of all our efforts, but the final exam of one lifetime, which determines our next destination.

Spiritual culture is not a matter of East or West, Indian or American. It is the eternal right of every human being, for it leads to the perfection of life. So modern life is certainly a different culture from the Vedic one. But must we follow the culture in which we were born and raised if it is entirely opposed to the progressive values of life?

Materialistic values, even if they seem progressive, accomplish only one thing: the endless repetition of birth, old age, disease, and death. The Vedic literature tells us that all activities that do not provoke an attraction for the Personality of Godhead are nothing but a waste of time, because they obstruct us from attaining our spiritual destination.

The Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.2.10) states:

Life's desires should never be directed toward sense gratification. One should desire only a healthy life, or self-preservation, since a human being is meant for inquiry about the Absolute Truth. Nothing else should be the goal of one's works.

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Brussels, Belglum—49 rue Marché aux Poulets-1000 Bruxelles/ Tel. (02) 513 86 05/04

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Düdingen, Switzerland—Im Sillien Tal, CH3186 Düdingen (FRI) Tel. (037) 43-26-98

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Warsaw, Poland—"Towarzystvo Swiadomosci Kryszny Bhakti Yoga—w PR.L." skr. pocztowa nr. 257, 02-770

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#### Krishna Consciousness

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Mexico City—Gob. Tiburcio Montiel 45, San Miquel Chaputlepoc, Mexico City 01000 D.F./ Tel. 59-10132
Mexico City—Govinda's Cultural Center, Insurgentes Sur 2384-1, Mexico City 01000 D.F./ Tel. 548-9323
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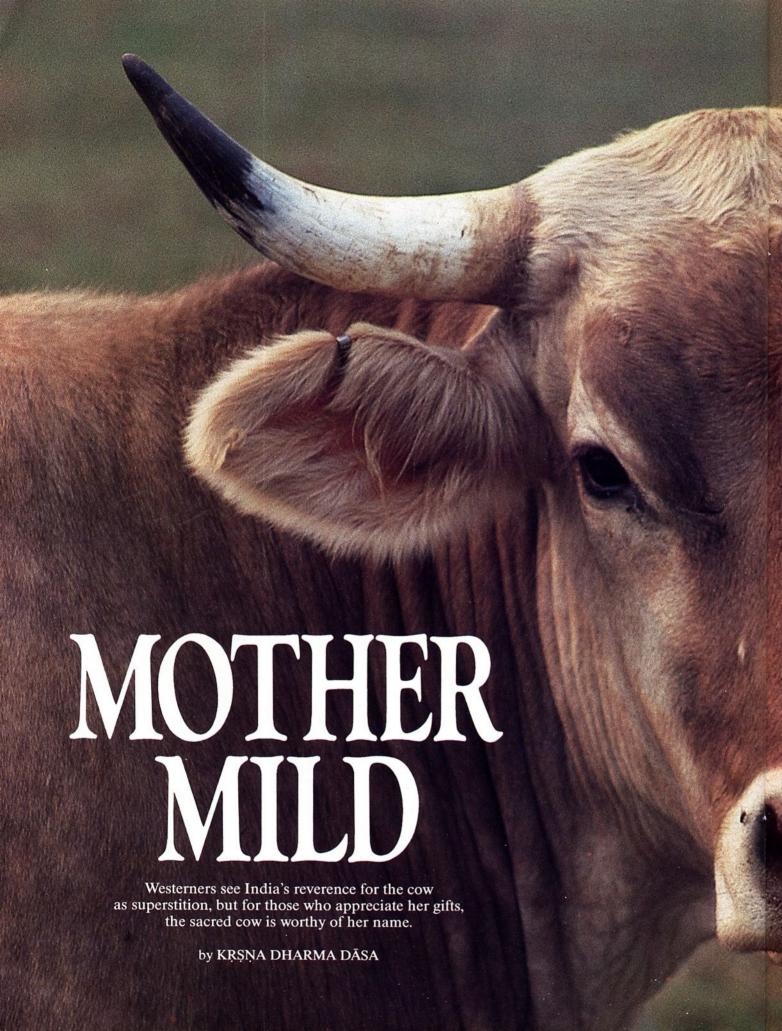
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In Vedic religion there is in fact a ceremony—go-pūjā— extant for thousands of years, in which the cow is worshiped. But just how primitive is it? Is the cow some kind of symbolic god?

For the Indian villager with his agrarian life, the conservation of natural resources is an integral part of daily existence. He is expert in using nature's gifts to

manufacture all his requirements, from his mud hut to his

Inset (from top): ISKCON pilgrims outside a temple in Dvārakā, India; New Govardhana farm, Murwillumbah, N.S.W., Australia; Gītā-nāgarī farm, Port Royal, Pennsylvania; a farmer in West Bengal, India. (Photos by Yamarāja dāsa and Višākhā-devī dāsī.)

homespun clothes. And protecting cows has always been the most important feature of the village conservation program; every homestead has at least one cow.

The cow and bull are indispensable in rural India, where about eighty percent of the population lives. The cow, eating only grass, happily supplies milk, which provides virtually all of the nutrients our bodies need. From milk we get cheese, curd, butter, ghee (clarified butter), whey, cream, yogurt, and an endless variety of milk-based preparations well known to experts in traditional Indian cookery. Because the cow supplies milk, she is accepted in the Vedas as our mother.

In India it is well known that cow dung has antiseptic properties, and in any Indian village one will see cow-dung patties drying in the sun to provide an excellent fuel for cooking fires. The urine of the cow is prescribed as a medicine for the liver by the Ayur-veda, the Vedic scripture on the science of healing.

The bull is also an invaluable asset to the small farmer. The strong bull enjoys working all day pulling a plow through the fields. How quaint, you may say, but not very efficient or practical these days. Well, the use of the bull may be slower than machinery, but it does not compact the soil and reduce its productivity as does heavy modern machinery. There are other problems with machinery in India. such as its inability to cope with seasonal changes and monsoons. (What to speak of the problems of finding spare parts or a mechanic.) Because the bull provides for food, he is considered our father.

In Vedic society it was recognized that a symbiotic relationship exists between man and cow. The cow produces far more milk than her calf requires. If the calf is allowed unrestricted access to the udder, mastitis will develop, which could lead to the cow's death. When the cow is done calving, she will peacefully continue to produce milk. Of course, if she's not milked, she will feel pain.

People object now about the exploitation of cows in dairies that are more like factories. The calves are taken from their mothers at birth, and the cows are slaughtered when past milking age. This is not the Vedic system, which demands that the cow be as well looked after as most people today look after their dogs. But are there any practical examples of the Vedic system in operation, where the cow is not grossly exploited and made to suffer in exchange for her milk and flesh?

Of course, rural India is one good place to look. Another example is the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), among whose principles is cow protection. Indeed, in the Bhagavadgītā cow protection is given the status of a religious principle. All ISKCON farms are dedicated to this important principle. and the results can be seen. The cows are happy and peaceful and produce abundant, creamy milk. On ISKCON farms (there are fifty worldwide), the cows and bulls capture many prizes at local shows.

One of the main purposes of ISKCON is to establish self-sufficient farming communities. The farming techniques employed are traditional and organic and as far as possible avoid the use of modern machinery. Men and animals work harmoniously together to glean just enough for survival, forgoing machines designed to produce more for profit-making. The Vedic tenet of ahimsa, or nonviolence toward all living entities, is carefully observed. Thus, of course, animal slaughter of any kind is avoided, and even a plant's life is taken only to provide subsistence. If

Cow slaughter just does not make sense. Such a useful creature is being killed for her flesh. It is like taking an expensive car and demolishing it for its scrap value. We value our machines, but can any machine produce milk from a little grass?

items cannot be indigenously produced and need to be bought, excess milk can be sold to provide the necessary money. Otherwise, the milk is converted into longlasting ghee for future use or barter.

The cow is therefore the basis of the Vedic economy and is accorded the highest possible regard. On the ISKCON Hertfordshire farm, the grounds of the United Kingdom's main temple of Kṛṣṇa, ten cows are looked after by Duśyanta dasa and three or four other groundsmen.

"A man can easily maintain himself and his family with an acre or two and a cow," says Duśyanta. "This may sound idealistic, but consider the immense amount of land now given over to livestock for commercial farming. To produce one kilo of beef protein requires twenty kilos of vegetable protein as feed. We graze our cows, and each one needs only one acre. An acre of land can produce three hundred pounds of vegetable protein or twenty pounds of beef in an equal amount of time. Every day our cows each give an average of forty to fifty pints of milk. To kill these cows for food would not make economic sense."

Śrīla Prabhupāda was appalled by the slaughter of thousands of cows every day in the West. To him it just did not make sense. Such a useful creature is being killed for her flesh. It is like taking an expensive car and demolishing it for its scrap value. We value our machines, but can any machine produce milk from a little grass?

Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, "While living, the cows give service by giving milk, and even after death they give service by making available their skin, hooves, and horns, which may be used in so many ways. Nonetheless, the present human society is so ungrateful that they needlessly kill these innocent cows.'

The Vedic literature tells how Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, takes the role of a cowherd boy for His pastimes. In fact, one of Krsna's names is Govinda, meaning "one who gives pleasure to the cows." Five thousand years ago, Krsna appeared as the son of the leader of a cowherd community. At that time a man was wealthy not if he had a pile of paper money but according to the number of cows and the amount of land he possessed. Krsna's community had hundreds of thousands of cows. Thus the members of the community are described as having been very rich. They paid tax to the king with ghee, cheese, and whole milk and would also barter these products for cloth and other items in the market.

The cow also appears in religious symbolism in the Vedic literature. Religion is symbolized by the form of a bull, known as Dharma. In one well-known Vedic history, Dharma was attacked by Kali, the personification of the bad qualities of this age. Kali had broken three of Dharma's legs (symbolizing cleanliness, austerity, and mercy) when the king arrived on the scene. He was immediately ready to kill Kali, who begged for his life. The king allowed Kali to live in certain places only, one of them being wherever animal slaughter was taking place.

ISKCON farms are developing in most countries, and they invite anyone to visit and see the Vedic economic system in practice. "Simple living and high thinking" is the underlying principle of ISKCON farm life. A respect for all living entities as part of God forms the basis for a life very much in harmony with nature. And for the cow, there will always be a special regard, thanks to her free and bountiful gifts. 

# **Every Town**

The worldwide activities of the International



# **And Village**

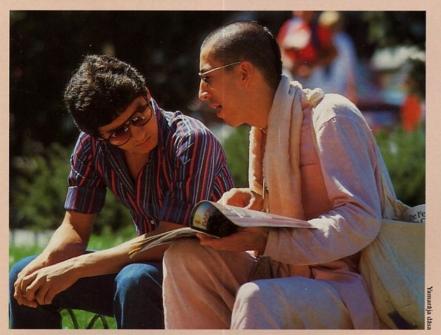
Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON)

#### College Preaching Going Strong

Gainesville, Florida—Students in colleges and universities all over North America are regularly hearing about Kṛṣṇa and receiving His prasādam (spiritual food), according to the second North American College Newsletter, published here recently by the ISKCON College Committee. The newsletter presents a summary of college preaching during the fall of 1988.

Śrīla Prabhupāda encouraged his disciples to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness among the student community, and many devotees several persons have become devotees of Kṛṣṇa as a result of the program. At San Diego State University, fifty to sixty students attend a similar program weekly.

Rtadhvaja Swami runs the college preaching program at the University of Florida, Gainesville. Amarendra dāsa, now with the ISKCON Office of Legal Affairs, started the program sixteen years ago, and it's been going on ever since. Devotees serve a thousand plates of prasādam a week on the campus plaza. A popular University of Florida T-shirt announces "cosmic lunches on the Plaza of the Americas with the



In New York City, a university student receives a Back to Godhead magazine.

have taken up the task. At some colleges, devotees have held programs for many years, and their efforts are bearing fruit. Devotees from ISKCON's temple in San Diego have been holding an evening program once a week on the campus of U.C. San Diego for about seven years. Thirty to forty students attend each week, and

Krishnas" as a main motive to attend U.F. The devotees recently bought a nine-bedroom, five-bath fraternity house, and they are renting rooms—prasādam included—to students. The renters must also follow the regulative principles (no meat-eating, no illicit sex, no intoxication, and no gambling).

M.I.T., Penn State, Michigan State, Windsor University, Boise State, Louisiana State—students on these campuses and many more are getting a real education by associating with the preachers of Lord Caitanya's sankīrtana movement.

#### Druze Eager for Śrīla Prabhupāda's Books

Tel Aviv, Israel-Members of the Druze sect, an Arab community living in Syria, Lebanon, and Israel that practices a special closed religion of its own, are buying Śrīla Prabhupāda's books in great quantities. For the last thousand years, the Druze have maintained their close-knit identity and distinctive faith. Their religious system is guarded in secrecy, and only a few elite members have access to their ancient scriptures. The Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees in Israel have discovered, however, that the Druze believe in reincarnation and are genuinely attracted to Śrīla Prabhupāda's books.

Although the books are in Hebrew, which most Druze don't read, a team of six Israeli devotees sells an average of twelve sets of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books a day. The sets consist of Bhagavad-gītā As It Is, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Vol. 1), Kṛṣṇa book, and two volumes of Caitanva-caritāmrta.

Salman Falah, the minister of education for the Druze people in Israel, recently bought a set of the Hebrew books as well as a thirty-volume English set. He is developing a thesis that the Druze religion came from Indian scriptures. He ordered fifty Hebrew sets of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books for the institutions under his supervision.

The late Druze leader and Sanskrit scholar Kemal Jumbalat translated some of the Vedic literature into Arabic, and one of his books was about Krsna.

#### **NEWS BRIEFS**

In Cyprus, presidents Spyzon Kypsianou and Yozpos Volsiliou, as well as government ministers, high-court judges, and other famous Greek personalities, have received Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. Bhakta Thzasos Constantinon has produced an audio tape of the Hare Krsna mahā-mantra and other devotional songs that is being being well received in the Cypriot market.

Devotees in Malaysia put on six Ratha-yātrā festivals there last year, during which they distributed twelve thousand pieces of literature about Kṛṣṇa consciousness and twenty thousand plates of prasādam. ISKCON Malaysia has one thousand life members, who receive a full set of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatams, monthly Back to Godhead magazines, and a local newsletter.

The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust (BBT) announced a fifty-percent increase in the number of big books (hardbound, 250-plus pages) distributed last year over the previous year. There was a ten percent increase in income. Owing to a significant reduction in operating costs, the BBT came close to achieving the goal set by Srīla Prabhupāda of spending fifty percent for book production and fifty percent for other projects. In 1988 forty-nine percent was spent on book production, half of that for reprinting.

The following books were printed: Teachings of Queen Kuntī, Teachings of Lord Kapila, Teachings of Lord Caitanya, The Science of Self-Realization, Bhagavad-gītā As It Is softbound, and a twelve-volume Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

West Australia's largest newspaper, The West Australian (circulation 330,000), ran an extensive article on the devotees there. The article included an interview with Prabhavisnu Swami, ISKCON's governing body commissioner for Australia. Another favorable article appeared in Musical Express magazine,

#### Festivals & Calendar

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

> Month of Trivikrama (May 21-June 19)

June 1—Appearance anniversary of Srīla Vmdāvana dāsa Thākura, author of Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata, a famous biography of Lord Caitanya.

June 13—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūsana, a famous spiritual master in the Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava sampradāya (disciplic succession), and the author of Govinda-bhāṣya, an important commentary on the Vedanta-sūtra. Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Gangamātā Gosvāminī, a famous woman spiritual master in the Gaudīya Vaisnava sampradāya.

June 15-Pandava Nirjalā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

June 17-Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's chipped-rice-and-yogurt festival at Pānihāti.

June 19-Snāna-yātrā, the bathing festival of Lord Jagannatha. Disappearance anniversaries of Śrīla Mukunda Datta and Śrīla Śrīdhara Paṇḍita, two great devotees of Lord Caitanya.

> Month of Vāmana (June 20-July 18)

June 28—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, one of the principal associates of Lord Caitanya.

June 29-Yoginī Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

July 3-Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Gadādhara Paṇḍita, one of the principal associates of Lord Caitanya. Also, disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura. Fasting till noon, then feasting.

July 4-Gundicā-marjana. Festival of the cleansing of the Gundica temple.

July 5—Lord Jagannātha's Ratha-yātrā in Puri, India. Also, disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī and Śrīla Śivānanda Sena, intimate associates of Lord Caitanva.

July 14—Śayanā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

praising Gopal's vegetarian restaurant. Columnist Michael Dwyer wrote, "The Bhagavad-gita teaches that vegetarianism is good for your karma, your body, and your consciousness. So before you even consider the taste and the value, there are three very good reasons to try Gopal's."

#### RESOURCES

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

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ISKCON Education. There are now two newsletters to help you keep up with education in ISKCON: ISKCON Gurukula Newsletter (practical information about teaching for schools, teachers, and parents; three or four issues a year), and ISKCON Educational Journal (a forum for exchange of ideas, opinions, and news about education and varnāśrama in ISKCON; two or three issues a year). Subscribe to either or both for \$5.00 for four issues. Write to the ISKCON Board of Education, 3764 Watseka Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90034.

Have a computer and modem? Log on to the ISKCON Education BBS: (213) 837-9713. Daily: 6:00 P.M. to 9:00 A.M. Weekends: twentyfour hours.

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

#### **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 TWENTY-ONE

#### Conversation Between Manu and Kardama

In this installment of our continuing presentation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, the sage Maitreya describes to Vidura, a great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the arrival of Svāyambhuva Manu at the hermitage of Kardama Muni.

#### **TEXT 35**

#### अथ सम्प्रस्थिते गुक्के कर्दमो भगवानृषिः। आस्ते स्म विन्दुसरसि तं कालं प्रतिपालयन् ॥३५॥

atha samprasthite šukle kardamo bhagavān ṛṣiḥ āste sma bindusarasi taṁ kālaṁ pratipālayan

atha—then; samprasthite śukle—when the Lord had gone; kar-damaḥ—Kardama Muni; bhagavān—the greatly powerful; ṛṣiḥ—sage; āste sma—stayed; bindu-sarasi—on the bank of Lake Bindu-sarovara; tam—that; kālam—time; pratipālayan—awaiting.

#### TRANSLATION

Then, after the departure of the Lord, the worshipful sage Kardama stayed on the bank of Bindu-sarovara, awaiting the time of which the Lord had spoken.

#### **TEXT 36**

#### मजुः खन्दनमास्याय शातकौम्भपरिच्छदम् । आरोप्य खां दुहितरं समार्थः पर्यटन्महीम् ॥३६॥

manuh syandanam ästhäya sätakaumbha-paricchadam äropya sväm duhitaram sa-bhäryah paryatan mahīm

manuh—Sväyambhuva Manu; syandanam—the chariot; ästhäya—having mounted; śātakaumbha—made of gold; paricchadam—the outer cover; āropya—putting on; svām—his own; duhitaram—daughter; sabhāryah—along with his wife; paryaṭan—traveling all over; mahīm—the globe.

#### TRANSLATION

Sväyambhuva Manu, with his wife, mounted his chariot, which was decorated with golden ornaments. Placing his daughter on it with them, he began traveling all over the earth.

#### PURPORT

The Emperor Manu, as the great ruler of the world, could have engaged an agent to find a suitable husband for his daughter, but because he loved her just as a father should, he himself left his state on a golden chariot, with only his wife, to find her a suitable husband.

#### **TEXT 37**

#### तसिन् सुधन्वभहनि भगवान् यत्समादिशत् । उपायादाश्रमपदं स्वनेः शान्तव्रतस्य तत् ॥३७॥

tasmin sudhanvann ahani bhagavān yat samādišat upāyād āśrama-padam muneḥ śānta-vratasya tat

tasmin—on that; su-dhanvan—O great bowman Vidura; ahani—on the day; bhagavān—the Lord; yat—which; samādišat—foretold; upāyāt—he reached; āśrama-padam—the holy hermitage; muneḥ—of the sage; śānta—completed; vratasya—whose vows of austerity; tat—that.

#### TRANSLATION

O Vidura, they reached the hermitage of the sage, who had just completed his vows of austerity on the very day foretold by the Lord.

#### **TEXTS 38-39**

यसिन् भगवतो नेत्रान्न्यपतन्नश्चविन्दवः। कृपया सम्परीतस्य प्रपन्नेऽपितया भृशम् ॥३८॥ तद्वै विन्दुसरो नाम सरस्वत्या परिप्छतम् । पुण्यं शिवामृतज्ञलं महर्षिगणसेवितम् ॥३९॥

> yasmin bhagavato netrān nyapatann ašru-bindavaḥ kṛpayā samparītasya prapanne 'rpitayā bhṛśam

tad vai bindusaro nāma sarasvatyā pariplutam puṇyam sivāmṛta-jalam maharṣi-gaṇa-sevitam

yasmin—in which; bhagavatah—of the Lord; netrāt—from the eye; nyapatan—fell down; aśru-bindavah—teardrops; kṛpayā—by compassion; samparītasya—who was overwhelmed; prapanne—on the surrendered soul (Kardama); arpitayā—placed upon; bhṛśam—extremely; tat—that; vai—indeed; bindu-sarah—lake of tears; nāma—called; sarasvatyā—by the River Sarasvatī; pariplutam—overflowed; punyam—holy; śiva—auspicious; amṛta—nectar; jalam—water; mahā-ṛṣi—of great sages; gaṇa—by hosts; sevitam—served.

#### TRANSLATION

The holy Lake Bindu-sarovara, flooded by the waters of the River Sarasvati, was resorted to by hosts of eminent sages. Its holy water was not only auspicious but as sweet as nectar. It was called Bindu-sarovara because drops of tears had fallen there from the eyes of the Lord, who was overwhelmed by extreme compassion for the sage who had sought His protection.

#### PURPORT

Kardama underwent austerities to gain the causeless mercy of the Lord, and when the Lord arrived there He was so compassionate that in pleasure He shed tears, which became Bindu-sarovara. Bindu-sarovara, therefore, is worshiped by great sages and learned scholars because, according to the philosophy of the Absolute Truth, the Lord and the tears from His eyes are not different. Just as drops of perspiration which fell from the toe of the Lord became the sacred Ganges, so teardrops from the transcendental eyes of the Lord became Bindu-sarovara. Both are transcendental entities and are worshiped by great sages and scholars. The water of Bindu-sarovara is described here as śivāmrta-jala. Śiva means "curing." Anyone who drinks the water of Bindu-sarovara is cured of all material diseases; similarly, anyone who takes his bath in the Ganges also is relieved of all material diseases. These claims are accepted by great scholars and authorities and are still being acted upon even in this fallen age of Kali.

#### **TEXT 40**

पुण्यद्रमलताजालैः क्जन्तपुण्यमृगद्विजैः। सर्वर्तुफलपुष्पाद्धं वनराजिश्रियान्वितम्।।४०।।

> puṇya-druma-latā-jālaih kūjat-puṇya-mṛga-dvijaiḥ sarvartu-phala-puṣpāḍhyaṁ vaṇa-rāji-śriyānvitam

punya—pious; druma—of trees; latā—of creepers; jālaih—with clusters; kūjat—uttering cries; punya—pious; mrga—animals; dvi-jaih—with birds; sarva—in all; rtu—seasons; phala—in fruits; puspa—in flowers; āḍhyam—rich; vana-rāji—of groves of trees; śriyā—by the beauty; anvitam—adorned.

#### TRANSLATION

The shore of the lake was surrounded by clusters of pious trees and creepers, rich in fruits and flowers of all seasons, that afforded shelter to pious animals and birds, which uttered various cries. It was adorned by the beauty of groves of forest trees.

#### **PURPORT**

It is stated here that Bindu-sarovara was surrounded by pious trees and birds. As there are different classes of men in human society, some pious and virtuous and some impious and sinful, so also among trees and birds there are the pious and the impious. Trees which do not bear nice fruit or flowers are considered impious, and birds which are very nasty, such as crows, are considered impious. In the land surrounding Bindusarovara there was not a single impious bird or tree. Every tree bore fruits and flowers, and every bird sang the glories of the Lord—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

#### TEXT 41

मत्तद्विजगणैर्चुष्टं मत्तश्रमरविश्रमम् । मत्तवर्हिनटाटोपमाह्वयन्मत्तकोकिलम् ॥४१॥

> matta-dvija-gaṇair ghuṣṭaṁ matta-bhramara-vibhramam matta-barhi-naṭāṭopam āhvayan-matta-kokilam

matta—overjoyed; dvija—of birds; ganaih—by flocks; ghuṣṭam—resounded; matta—intoxicated; bhramara—of bees; vibhramam—wandering; matta—maddened; barhi—of peacocks; naṭa—of dancers; āṭopam—pride; āhvayat—calling one another; matta—merry; kokilam—cuckoos.

#### TRANSLATION

The area resounded with the notes of overjoyed birds. Intoxicated bees wandered there, intoxicated peacocks proudly danced, and merry cuckoos called one another.

#### PURPORT

The beauty of the pleasant sounds heard in the area surrounding Lake Bindu-sarovara is described here. After drinking honey, the black bees became maddened, and they hummed in intoxication. Merry peacocks danced just like actors and actresses, and merry cuckoos called their mates very nicely.

#### **TEXTS 42-43**

कदम्बचम्पकाशोककरञ्जबकुलासनैः । कुन्दमन्दारकुटजैश्चृतपोतैरलङ्कृतम् ॥४२॥ कारण्डवैः प्रवेर्दसैः कुररैर्जलकुकुटैः। सारसैथकवाकैथ चकोरैर्वल्गु कूजितम्॥४३॥

> kadamba-campakāśokakarañja-bakulāsanaiḥ kunda-mandāra-kuṭajaiś cūta-potair alaṅkṛtam

kāraṇḍavaih plavair hamsaih kurarair jala-kukkuṭaiḥ sārasaiś cakravākaiś ca cakorair valgu kūjitam

kadamba—kadamba flowers; campaka—campaka flowers; aśoka—aśoka flowers; karañja—karañja flowers; bakula—bakula flowers; āsanaiḥ—by āsana trees; kunda—kunda; mandāra—mandāra; kuṭa-jaiḥ—and by kuṭaja trees; cūta-potaiḥ—by young mango trees; alaṅkṛtam—adorned; kāranḍavaiḥ—by kāranḍava ducks; plavaiḥ—by plavas; haṁsaiḥ—by swans; kuraraiḥ—by ospreys; jala-kukkuṭaiḥ—by waterfowl; sārasaiḥ—by cranes; cakravākaiḥ—by cakravāka birds; ca—and; cakoraiḥ—by cakora birds; valgu—pleasing; kūjitam—vibration of birds' sounds.

#### TRANSLATION

Lake Bindu-sarovara was adorned by flowering trees such as kadamba, campaka, aśoka, karañja, bakula, āsana, kunda, mandāra, kuṭaja and young mango trees. The air was filled with the pleasing notes of kāraṇḍava ducks, plavas, swans, ospreys, waterfowl, cranes, cakravākas and cakoras.

#### PURPORT

For most of the trees, flowers, fruits and birds mentioned here as surrounding Bindu-sarovara Lake, English synonyms cannot be found. All the trees mentioned are very pious in that they produce a nice aromatic flower, such as the *campaka*, *kadamba* and *bakula*. The sweet sounds of waterfowl and cranes made the surrounding area as pleasant as possible and created a very suitable spiritual atmosphere.

TEXT 44 तथैव इरिणैः क्रोडैः श्वाविद्गवयकुझरैः। गोपुच्छैईरिभिर्मर्केर्नकुलैर्नाभिमिर्न्थतम् ॥४४॥

> tathaiva harinaih krodaih śvāvid-gavaya-kuñjaraih gopucchair haribhir markair nakulair nābhibhir vṛtam

tathā eva—likewise; hariṇaiḥ—by deer; krodaiḥ—by boars; śvāvit—porcupines; gavaya—a wild animal closely resembling the cow; kuājaraiḥ—by elephants; gapucchaiḥ—by baboons; haribhiḥ—by lions; markaih—by monkeys; nakulaih—by mongooses; nābhibhih—by musk deer; vṛtam—surrounded.

#### TRANSLATION

Its shores abounded with deer, boars, porcupines, gavayas, elephants, baboons, lions, monkeys, mongooses and musk deer.

#### PURPORT

Musk deer are not found in every forest, but only in places like Bindusarovara. They are always intoxicated by the aroma of musk secreted from their navels. Gavayas, the species of cow mentioned herein, bear a

bunch of hair at the end of their tails. This bunch of hair is used in temple worship to fan the Deities. Gavayas are sometimes called camarīs, and they are considered very sacred. In India there are still gypsies or forest mercantile people who flourish by trading kastūrī, or musk, and the bunches of hair from the camarīs. These are always in great demand for the higher classes of Hindu population, and such business still goes on in large cities and villages in India.

**TEXTS 45-47** 

प्रविश्य तत्तीर्थवरमादिराजः सहात्मजः। ददर्शे म्रुनिमासीनं तस्मिन् हृतहुताश्चनम् ॥४५॥ विद्योतमानं वपुषा तपस्युत्रयुजा चिरम्। नातिक्षामं मगवतः स्निग्धापाङ्गावलोकनात्। तद्वश्यहृतामृतकलापीयूषश्रवणेन च॥४६॥ प्रांशुं पद्मपलाशाक्षं जटिलं चीरवाससम्। उपसंश्रित्य मलिनं यथाईणमसंस्कृतम्॥४०॥

> pravisya tat tīrtha-varam ādi-rājah sahātmajah dadarsa munim āsīnam tasmin huta-hutāsanam

> vidyotamānam vapuṣā tapasy ugra-yujā ciram nātikṣāmam bhagavataḥ snigdhāpāngāvalokanāt tad-vyāhṛtāmṛta-kalāpīyūṣa-śravaṇena ca

prāmsum padma-palāsākṣam jaṭilam cīra-vāsasam upasamsritya malinam yathārhanam asamskrtam

praviśya—entering; tat—that; tīrtha-varam—best of sacred places; ādi-rājah—the first monarch (Svāyambhuva Manu); saha-ātmajah—along with his daughter; dadarśa—saw; munim—the sage; āsīnam—sitting; tasmin—in the hermitage; huta—being offered oblations; huta-aśanam—the sacred fire; vidyotamānam—shining brilliantly: vapuṣā—by his body; tapasi—in penance; ugra—terribly; yujā—engaged in yoga; ciram—for a long time; na—not; atikṣāmam—very emaciated; bhagavataḥ—of the Lord; snigdha—affectionate; apāṅga—sidelong; avalokanāt—from the glance; tat—of Him; vyāḥrta—from the words; amrta-kalā—moonlike; pīyūṣa—the nectar; śravaṇena—by hearing; ca—and; prāmśum—tall; padma—lotus flower; palāša—petal; akṣām—eyes; jaṭilam—matted locks; cīra-vāṣasam—having rags for clothes; upasamśritya—having approached; malinam—soiled; yathā—like; arhaṇam—gem; asamskṛtam—unpolished.

#### TRANSLATION

Entering that most sacred spot with his daughter and going near the sage, the first monarch, Sväyambhuva Manu, saw the sage sitting in his hermitage, having just propitiated the sacred fire by pouring oblations into it. His body shone most brilliantly; though he had engaged in austere penance for a long time, he was not emaciated, for the Lord had cast His affectionate sidelong glance upon him and he had also heard the nectar flowing from the moonlike words of the Lord. The sage was tall, his eyes were large, like the petals of a lotus, and he had matted locks on his head. He was clad in rags. Sväyambhuva Manu approached and saw him to be somewhat soiled, like an unpolished gem.

#### PURPORT

Here are some descriptions of a brahmacārī-yogī. In the morning, the first duty of a brahmacārī seeking spiritual elevation is huta-hutāśana, to offer sacrifical oblations to the Supreme Lord. Those engaged in brahmacarya cannot sleep until seven or nine o'clock in the morning. They must rise early in the morning, at least one and a half hours before the sun rises, and offer oblations, or in this age, they must chant the holy name of the Lord, Hare Kṛṣṇa. As referred to by Lord Caitanya, kalau

nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatir anyathā: there is no other alternative, no other alternative, no other alternative, in this age, to chanting the holy name of the Lord. The brahmacārī must rise early in the morning and, after placing himself, should chant the holy name of the Lord. From the very features of the sage, it appeared that he had undergone great austerities; that is the sign of one observing brahmacarya, the vow of celibacy. If one lives otherwise, it will be manifest in the lust visible in his face and body. The word vidyotamānam indicates that the brahmacārī feature showed in his body. That is the certificate that one has undergone great austerity in yoga. A drunkard or smoker or sexmonger can never be eligible to practice yoga. Generally yogis look very skinny because of their not being comfortably situated, but Kardama Muni was not emaciated, for he had seen the Supreme Personality of Godhead face to face. Here the word snigdhāpāngāvalokanāt means that he was fortunate enough to see the Supreme Lord face to face. He looked healthy because he had directly received the nectarean sound vibrations from the lotus lips of the Personality of Godhead. Similarly, one who hears the transcendental sound vibration of the holy name of the Lord. Hare Kṛṣṇa, also improves in health. We have actually seen that many brahmacārīs and grhasthas connected with the International Society for Krishna Consciousness have improved in health, and a luster has come to their faces. It is essential that a brahmacārī engaged in spiritual advancement look very healthy and lustrous. The comparison of the sage to an unpolished gem is very appropriate. Even if a gem just taken from a mine looks unpolished, the luster of the gem cannot be stopped. Similarly, although Kardama was not properly dressed and his body was not properly cleansed, his overall appearance was gemlike.

#### **TEXT 48**

#### अथोटजमुपायातं नृदेवं प्रणतं पुरः। सपर्यया पर्यगृह्णात्प्रतिनन्द्यानुरूपया।।४८॥

athoṭajam upāyātam nṛdevam praṇatam puraḥ saparyayā paryagṛḥṇāt pratinandyānurūpayā

atha—then; utajam—the hermitage; upāyātam—approached: nṛde-vam—the monarch; pṛaṇatam—bowed down; purah—in front: saparyayā—with honor; paryagṛḥṇāt—received him: pṛatinandya—greeting him: anurūpayā—befitting the King's position.

#### TRANSLATION

Seeing that the monarch had come to his hermitage and was bowing before him, the sage greeted him with benediction and received him with due honor.

#### PURPORT

Emperor Svāyambhuva Manu not only approached the cottage of dried leaves possessed by the hermit Kardama but also offered respectful obeisances unto him. Similarly, it was the duty of the hermit to offer blessings to kings who used to approach his hermitage in the jungle.

#### **TEXT 49**

#### गृहीतार्हणमासीनं संयतं त्रीणयन्मुनिः। सारन् भगवदादेशमित्याह श्रक्ष्णया गिरा ॥४९॥

gṛhītārhaṇam āsīnam samyatam priṇayan muniḥ smaran bhagavad-ādeśam ity āha ślakṣṇayā girā

gṛhīta—received; arhaṇam—honor; āsīnam—seated; samyatam—remained silent; prīṇayan—delighting; munih—the sage; smaran—remembering; bhagavat—of the Lord; ādešam—the order; iti—thus; āha—spoke; ślakṣṇayā—sweet; girā—with a voice.

#### TRANSLATION

After receiving the sage's attention, the King sat down and was silent. Recalling the instructions of the Lord, Kardama then spoke to the King as follows, delighting him with his sweet accents.

(continued in next issue)



Spiritual Places

# Seeds For The Simple Life

On a small island in the Indian Ocean, these devotees are living as Kṛṣṇa did, and with Kṛṣṇa on their minds.

Text and photos by INDRADYUMNA SWAMI

s our plane circles over the sea preparing to land, my eye catches the glimmering isle of Mauritius, resplendent against the deep-blue water of the Indian Ocean. I think how appropriately sailors of yore called this tropical paradise "the star of the Indian Ocean." Mark Twain, upon visiting Mauritius for the first time, said, "First God saw Mauritius, then He created heaven." Charles Darwin came here, too, looking for answers to the secrets of life. His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda came here in September of 1975 to give the people of this tiny island the answers to those very questions.

As our 747 jumbo jet lumbers onto the



Chanting the holy names of Kṛṣṇa, the devotees bring life to Port Louis (left), the capital of Mauritius. Below, the presiding Deities at the Mauritius farm, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gokulānanda. Bottom, the devotees chant on their beads as temple president Śrīniketana dāsa leads them on a morning walk.



smiling. "Our movement is well known and popular here."

As we drive along, I'm immediately struck by the endless fields of sugarcane. I ask Śrīniketana if we also grow sugarcane at our ISKCON farm on the island.

"No," he says, laughing. "When Śrīla Prabhupāda visited here he encouraged us to live simply, set a good example, and become self-sufficient. When people came to visit Śrīla Prabhupāda, he told them, 'I see that on this island of Mauritius you have enough land to produce all your own food grains. But I understand that instead of growing food grains, you are growing sugarcane for export. Why? You are dependent on food grains, like rice, wheat, and dal, so why make an attempt to accumulate money instead of growing sufficient food? First grow your own eatables. Then if there is time and your population has sufficient food grains, you can try to grow other things for export. The first necessity is that you should be selfsufficient. That is God's arrangement."

After a scenic one-hour drive, we turn onto Hare Krishna Road and drive past a sign that reads "ISKCON Vedic Farm."

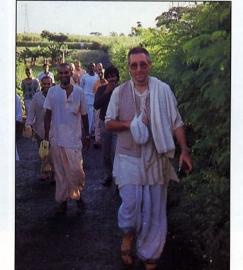
These five acres were donated to our Society in 1980 by our life member and friend Mr. Gowtam Teelock in the name of his father, Mr. Ramesvar Teelock,"

airfield, I see my Godbrothers and Godsisters atop the visitors' gallery in the airport terminal awaiting my arrival. As we taxi closer, I notice my old friend Śrīniketana dāsa, who came to Mauritius with a few devotees just before Śrīla Prabhupāda's visit.

I go to the line for customs and immigration, but a young customs officer approaches me and says politely, "Please step this way to the VIP hall." Within minutes I've cleared all formalities and am riding in a car to the temple with Śrīniketana dāsa.

"What was that VIP treatment all about?" I ask.

"It's only natural," Śrīniketana replies,

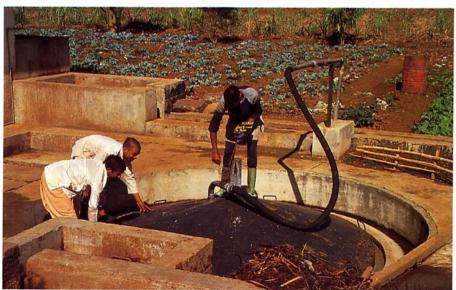


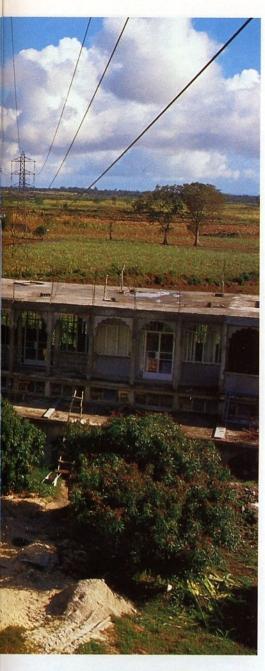


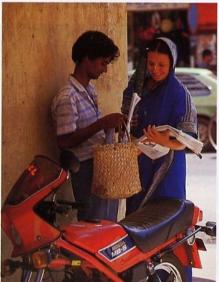
A stunning temple for Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gokulānanda (above) will soon grace the Mauritian countryside. At right, devotees check the bio-gas tank, which uses cow dung to produce methane gas for cooking.

Śrīniketana says. As my eye catches the construction of what is soon to become a magnificent temple, he smiles and says, "But in the beginning, there was only a stone building with a few iron sheets on top."

I soon realize that our ISKCON farm is in fact the heaven Mark Twain must have been aspiring for. Over the years, the devotees, acting on Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions, have planted numerous fruit







trees, vegetables, spices, and grains. The orchard is full of tropical fruits: mangoes, litchis, mandarins, oranges, grapefruit, papayas, passion fruit, jackfruit, guavas, and custard apples. Banana trees are in abundance.

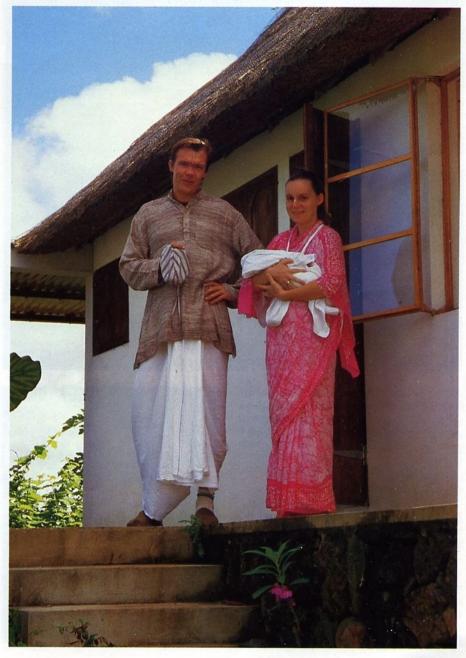
"The soil is so rich here," says Śrīniketana, "that if you throw a mango seed on the ground, a few years later you'll have a mango tree."

"Over here we have many coconut trees," he continues, pointing to a large coconut grove. "They provide many of our

The architect for Kṛṣṇa's temple, Arjuna dāsa (below), stands with his wife and their newborn child outside the house Arjuna built himself. Below, left, in a nearby town a devotee distributes literature about Kṛṣṇa.

necessities. No part of the tree is wasted. When the coconut is green, we drink the water inside and eat the pulp. It's very healthful. We dry the fiber of the shell and use it for polishing our floors and making brushes. We use the leaves for brooms, and when the tree is old, we use the trunk for firewood."

We get out of the car and walk past the gośālā, the area where the cows are kept. Śrīniketana remarks, "We just got word today that we received first prize from the minister of agriculture for our cowkeeping. Our cows are the healthiest and happiest on the island. They sense they won't be killed. Cow protection is vital to the material and spiritual welfare of society. Our cows give milk, and our oxen pull the plows in the fields. Life here is much like it was when Kṛṣṇa was present



in Vrndavana thousands of years ago. We take care of the cows, chant Hare Krsna, and worship our Deities, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gokulānanda."

I remark how much service the devotees are doing here.

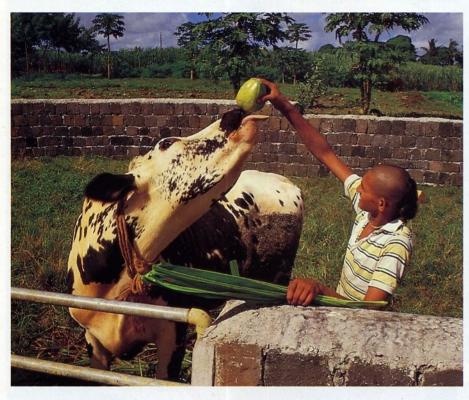
"Yes, that's true," Śrīniketana says. "They work hard, but because life's simple here, there's enough time to hear and chant about Krsna."

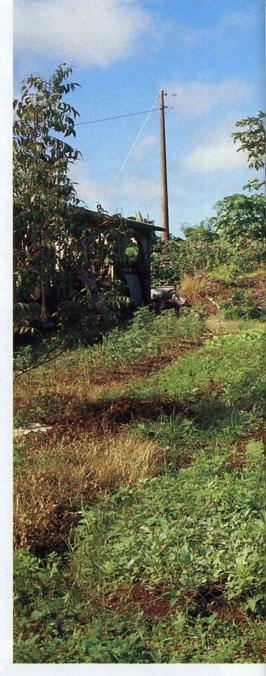
Śrīniketana continues, "This bio-gas unit supplies all the natural methane gas we use in cooking for the entire community. We take the dung of our cows, and by mixing it with water in a special process in the unit, gas is generated. We use the residue from that process for fertilizer."

Walking by the temple, he says, "Of the seventy devotees living on the island, thirty-five live here on the farm, and most to thatch the roof.

"We follow Śrīla Prabhupāda's motto here," says Arjuna, "'Simple living and high thinking.' Modern civilization is killing people's spirit and good qualities by encouraging them to pursue materialistic goals. People become entangled in the false pursuit of material enjoyment and forget the real purpose of life, Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Here we live simply and depend on Krsna, who kindly provides us with all the necessities of life. And we offer Kṛṣṇa the very best we have. Just like the temple we're building here-already it's attracting local villagers and tourists from all over the island."

"As I mentioned earlier," says Śrīniketana, "we are well known here. A few years ago we walked to every village on the island with a group of about twenty devo-

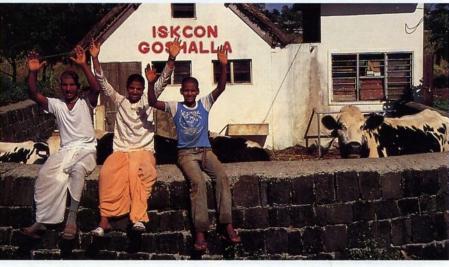




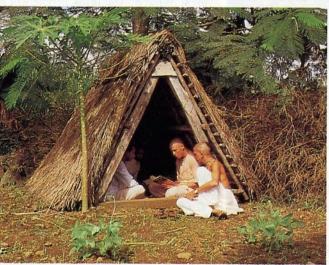
Eager for the prize (above), a cow goes after a papaya offered by her affectionate keeper. At right, a few of the cowherds outside the gośālā—"the place where cows are protected."

of them work on the construction of the temple. The temple was designed by our devotee architect, Arjuna dāsa, who comes from a prominent Franco-Mauritian family. We hope to finish the temple within two years.'

After settling in, we visit Arjuna's thatched-roof house for lunch. Arjuna built the small house for his young family and used the leaves from sugarcane fields







Living the natural way (above), the devotees on the Mauritian farm strive toward self-sufficiency by working the rich earth. At left, in one of the huts the brahmacārīs (celibate students) live in, devotees take a break to read Bhagavad-gītā As It Is.

tees, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and distributing prasādam [food offered to Kṛṣṇa]. And even today, we are a familiar sight in the cities and towns, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and distributing our books. We recently acquired another piece of land, on the other side of the island, near our preaching center in Quatre Borne. We want to build a temple there, too."

From the airplane, Mauritius seemed small, a tiny island in the vast ocean. But soon I begin to realize that it could easily contain the spiritual world of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I take rest for the night thinking of my preaching tour on "the star of the Indian Ocean," where Śrīla Prabhupāda sowed the seeds of simple living, high thinking, and beautiful temples to glorify the Lord.

#### Water the Root

(continued from page 15)

came to deliver people from their suffering. Therefore, He advised that everyone should make his life perfect by awakening his Kṛṣṇa consciousness and then give Kṛṣṇa consciousness to others. Although people today, who pride themselves on being "rational," might not be able to appreciate that spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the highest welfare work, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, the author of Caitanya-caritāmṛta, a famous biography of Lord Caitanya, says, "If you are indeed interested in logic and argument, kindly apply it to the mercy of Śrī Caitanya

Mahāprabhu. If you do so, you will find it to be strikingly wonderful." There is no better way to serve humanity than to bring people to the service of Krsna.

And what a rare opportunity that service is! While devotional service is everyone's business in the kingdom of God, it's very hard to come by in this underworld of birth and death. "After many births and deaths," Kṛṣṇa declares in the Bhagavadgūā, "he who is actually in knowledge surrenders unto Me, knowing Me to be the cause of all causes and all that is. Such a great soul is very rare." If we seek out and serve such a great soul, Kṛṣṇa advises, we can very easily "learn the truth" and return to Him.

So when we hear that we're servants of God, we shouldn't be disappointed; we should be delighted. We should be all we can be, as the saying goes, by understanding the exalted position of Lord Kṛṣṇa's servants and striving to become one of them.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, a leading disciple of Lord Caitanya's, has described what's required to attain pure devotional service to Kṛṣṇa: "Pure devotional service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness cannot be had even by pious activity in hundreds and thousands of lives. It can be attained only by paying one price—that is, intense greed to obtain it. If it is available somewhere, one must purchase it without delay."

## In the Center

(continued from page 4)

this way if we analyze our senses, it will be found that they are imperfect. Speculation based on imperfect senses is not perfect. Therefore all the speculators—so-called scientists, philosophers, and so on—put forward theories: "Perhaps." "It may be." That means it is not perfect knowledge. But if you receive knowledge

from the supreme perfect, God, that is actually perfect.

Our process is like that. In the Fourth Chapter of the Bhagavad-gītā, Kṛṣṇa says He spoke this philosophy of Bhagavad-gītā first to the sun-god, who spoke it to his son Manu, who spoke to his son Ikṣvāku. In this way, by disciplic succession, Bhagavad-gītā has come down to this earth. If we accept that disciplic succession, instead of unnecessarily interpreting Kṛṣṇa's words, then we can understand

Bhagavad-gītā. That is the process.

Our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is for understanding the Supreme Person, Kṛṣṇa, as He is, without any interpretation. That is Kṛṣṇa consciousness yoga. That can be achieved, as Kṛṣṇa says, by always keeping Him in the center. If you practice this yoga, keeping Kṛṣṇa in the center and always thinking of the form of Kṛṣṇa, then Kṛṣṇa will be revealed. This is the yoga system of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Thank you very much.

### NOTES

(continuea from page 50)

being can develop his dormant love of God and become learned in the science of God.

In reviewing the differences between devotional and philosophical theism, Macquarrie shows them to be in tension and expresses the need for their synthesis:

Perhaps there will always be a tension between images of God and concepts of God, between religious or biblical or revealed theology and philosophical or natural theology, and perhaps different types of mind will always lean toward the one side or the other, but we would make a mistake if we tried to eliminate either one of them. They belong dialectically together within theological reflection on God.

This desired union has been given to all humanity by Lord Caitanya, in the compatible practices of chanting, dancing, feasting, and studying the philosophy of acintya-bhedābheda-tattva.—SDG

We welcome your letters. Write to BACK TO GODHEAD 41 West Allens Lane Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19119

The tone of BTG is a problem that should be investigated. You are now publishing a magazine with clearly different voices that can range from folksy to aggressive, scholarly to pedestrian. It is not a good publishing practice.

Bhakta Nicholas Parkhurst Boston, Massachusetts

Back to Godhead could be improved by allowing individual style to survive your editors. It often seems that every article was written by the same person.

Urmilā-devī dāsī Detroit, Michigan

## LETTERS

Back to Godhead is a brilliant magazine, and just by reading it, I feel inspired in my own spiritual life. The articles are full of real spiritual knowledge. I also very much enjoy the articles "Coming to Kṛṣṇa," telling how people have come to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It's nice, too, when you show Hare Kṛṣṇa centers from around the world.

Priya Sihra Gillingham, England

Who authorizes the mundane articles in BTG, like the photo article of people gambling, smoking, and drinking? I'm

shocked. You give six pages to these sinful photographs and two or three inches of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* purports to go with them. What do you think people will remember—the pictures or the writing? Photos of sinful activities encourage more sin, no matter what you write.

Vivasvān dāsa Gainesville, Florida

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Viśākhā-devī dāsī's photo articles are always one of my favorite features of BTG. I strongly disagree that they are mundane! With the nice quotes from Prabhupāda's books, they become great preaching tools, helping us see Kṛṣṇa everywhere, and they also show us Prabhupāda's view of the slaughterhouse civilization of the West. I really think Prabhupāda would approve of her work.

Bob Roberts Union Lake, Michigan

## ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

#### The Demoniac Mentality

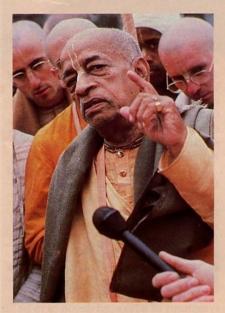
This is the continuation of a conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and some of his disciples in New Vrindaban, West Virginia, on June 26, 1976.

Śrīla Prabhupāda [to disciple]: Go on reading

Disciple [reading Bhagavad-gītā 16.10]: Kāmam āśritya duṣpūram dambhamāna-madānvitāḥ/ mohād gṛhītvāsād-grāhān pravartante 'śuci-vratāḥ: "Taking shelter of insatiable lust and absorbed in the conceit of pride and false prestige, the demoniac, thus illusioned, are always sworn to unclean work, attracted by the impermanent."

Purport, by Śrīla Prabhupāda: "The demoniac mentality is described here. The demons have no satiation for their lust. They will go on increasing and increasing their insatiable desires for material enjoyment. Although they are always full of anxieties on account of accepting nonpermanent things, they still continue to engage in such activities out of illusion. They have no knowledge and cannot tell that they are heading the wrong way. Accepting nonpermanent things, such demoniac people create their own God, create their own hymns, and chant accordingly. The result is that they become more and more attracted to two things-sex enjoyment and accumulation of material wealth. The word aśuci-vratāh, 'unclean vows,' is very significant in this connection. Such demoniac people are attracted only by wine, women, and meat-eating; those are their aśuci, unclean habits. Induced by pride and false prestige, they create some principles of religion which are not approved by the Vedic injunctions. Although such demoniac people are most abominable in the world, by artificial means the world creates a false honor for them. Although they are gliding toward hell, they consider themselves very much advanced."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: There are so many religious systems—"Yes, you can do whatever you like; you can eat whatever you like"—and still it is considered religion. This is demoniac. This will be explained further, hm? Pravṛttim ca nivṛttim ca janā na vidur āsurāḥ: "The demoniac do not know what to do and what not to do." Why?



Because they do not take any standard idea. They manufacture their own ideas. Disciple: Śrīla Prabhupāda, in the Catholic Church, the early fathers upheld the principle of no flesh-eating. That's part of the historical record. In time, though, the leaders became lax and changed the restriction to no flesheating on Fridays. Within our lifetime, they've changed their standard again. Disciple 2: They've changed so many things. When I was a boy, no one would have dreamed of defending homosexuality or abortion. Such things were utterly condemned. Now even some priests and nuns are openly promoting these things. The Church has lost much of its austerity and spiritual strength. Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is why they are selling churches. So many people are losing interest. For example, in London there are so many churches closed

Disciple: Reportedly, on account of the Pope's taking such a firm stand against abortion and contraception, as many as one quarter of practicing Catholics may have reduced their practice—or may have left the Church entirely.

for lack of interest.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Where have they gone? [Laughter]

Disciple: Well, they have given up going to church, at least.

Disciple 2: Their life has become hopeless.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No. Why do you say "hopeless"? There is certainly hope:

there is Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Disciple: Śrīla Prabhupāda, this verse really captures today's situation. The aśuci-vratāḥ—those who have made an unclean, materialistic vow—receive much respect. And yet genuine devotees of the Lord receive little, if any. Śrīla Prabhupāda: It is very fortunate that the materialists are not crucifying devotees. Lack of respect is one thing. But they crucified Lord Jesus Christ—they were so respectful. Because he was preaching God consciousness, he was crucified. What was his fault? He was talking of God; therefore he was crucified, with government approval.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam predicts, dasyudharmabhiḥ: as this age progresses, the government itself will consist of rogues and thieves. And just as rogues and thieves take your property away by force, so the government will take your property away by excessive taxation. Already, so many innocent people are

being harassed.

Disciple: Śrīla Prabhupāda, if we all naturally desire to live, why do people perform so many horrible acts that will destroy both others and themselves? Śrīla Prabhupāda: They are thinking that they can go on existing by putting others out of existence. In this material world, everyone has to struggle for existence. But they do not know how to exist. That is their foolishness. Everyone wants to go on existing, because actually he is eternal. He doesn't want to be destroyed. That is his natural inclination. But he does not know how to go on existing eternally. So we are giving the formula: if you want to exist eternally, come to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We are giving the right information. But people want to go on existing in the wrong way. That is not possible.

Disciple: Śrīla Prabhupāda, why does a demoniac person seem to want to exist by putting others out of existence? Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is simply the demoniac mentality. They are happy when others are unhappy. And when others are happy, they are unhappy.

But the devotee of the Lord is paraduḥkha-duḥkhī—he's happy only in seeing the happiness of others, and unhappy only in seeing the unhappiness of others. That is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That is natural.

(To be continued.)

# NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

#### Bhakti-vedanta: The Union of Religion and Philosophy

We often gain a new appreciation for Kṛṣṇa consciousness by observing someone trying to understand—independently of Vedic knowledge—a concept that is perfectly expressed in Vedic literature. I found this recently, while reading a book on theology, In Search of Deity: An Essay in Dialectical Theism, by John Macquarrie. Macquarrie was discussing the tendency for the religious and philosophical forms of theism to come into conflict:

Although the strongly personalist and even anthropomorphic language serves to keep before the worshiper that sense of affinity with the Divine Being which we have seen to be essential to belief in God and which is the business of religion to encourage and enhance, reflective members of the religious community have looked for ways of expressing theism that would be more satisfying intellectually. In general, they have tried to move away from images to concepts and to express theism as a philosophical doctrine.

But as Macquarrie points out, "It is not easy to see how the religious and philosophical forms of theism can be integrated.... Attempts to prove the divine existence may only sow doubts rather than provide certitude. The whole enterprise may seem to have become a theoretical matter and to be cut off from the practical business of living...."

While reading this I thought how well the integration of devotion and intellect has been achieved in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Śrīla Prabhupāda was well aware of the possible dilemma. He used to say, "Philosophy without religion is dry mental speculation. And religion without philosophy is sentimentality or fanaticism." The synthesis is revealed in the very name bestowed on the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement's founder-ācārya—"Bhaktivedanta."

Bhakti is the religion of divine ecstasy and emotional love of God. The Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.3.24) states, "Certainly that heart is steel-framed which, in spite of one's chanting the holy name of the Lord with concentration, does not change when ecstasy takes place, tears fill the eyes, and the hairs stand on end." In the Caitanyacaritāmṛta (Ādi 7.88-90), Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja relates how Lord Caitanya was instructed about ecstasy by His spiritual

master, Iśvara Purī. Iśvara Purī said, "When one actually develops love of Godhead, he naturally sometimes cries, sometimes laughs, sometimes chants, and sometimes runs here and there just like a madman. . . . These are various natural symptoms of ecstatic love of Godhead, which cause a devotee to dance and float in an ocean of transcendental bliss while chanting the Hare Krsna mantra."

The object of a devotee's bliss is Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Through *bhakti* a devotee enters into a personal, living relationship with Kṛṣṇa, either as a servant, friend, parent, or lover. And even in the beginning stages, the devotee is able to see God personally in His Deity form within the temple.

Some people misunderstand the symptoms of advanced devotees to be sentimental displays. There is also a class of sentimental devotees, known as sahajiyās, who take everything very cheaply and never wish to study the philosophy of Vedānta-sūtra and the Purāṇas. Their sentimental version of bhakti, however, is not the real thing. Śrīla Prabhupāda writes:

Thus it is to be understood that a Vaiṣṇava should be completely conversant with Vedānta philosophy, yet he should not think that studying Vedānta is all in all and therefore be unattached to the chanting of the holy name. A devotee must know the importance of simultaneously understanding Vedānta philosophy and chanting the holy names.

"Vedanta" refers to knowledge of the Absolute Truth gained by philosophical discussion, as contained in the scripture Vedānta-sūtra. There is no shortage of philosophical inquiry in the Vaisnava sampradāyas. The great philosophers such as Madhva and Rāmānuja, as well as Lord Caitanya and His disciples such as Jīva Gosvāmī, Rūpa Gosvāmī, and Sanātana Gosvāmī, testified to this. Any serious student of religion and philosophy who studies these great masters cannot come away with the opinion that there is a lack of intellectual conceptualization among the genuine Vaisnavas.

But this intellectualism is never dry or speculative, nor does it lead to an impersonal conclusion. It is based on the truth given in the *Vedas* by the

original philosopher-saints, especially Śrīla Vyāsadeva, the literary incarnation of God, who compiled all the *Vedas*. Vaiṣṇava theology is never one man's speculation but the expansion of an unbroken disciplic succession.

The philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness expressed by Lord Caitanya is the culmination and synthesis of centuries of Vaisnava thought. His teachings are called acintva-bhedābhedatattva, "the simultaneous and inconceivable oneness and difference of God and His energies." Previous Vedic philosophers often debated whether the Absolute Truth is an impersonal concept or the Supreme Person. According to the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, the Absolute Truth can be considered in any one of three aspects: the impersonal energy, the localized form of God in the heart, and the Supreme Personality of Godhead (Sri Krsna).

Lord Caitanya acknowledged both the personal and the impersonal. Drawing from the Vedic scriptures as evidence, He taught that God is a completely transcendental being, but since all the material worlds are His energy, He is also immanent within the worlds. A lover of God can therefore sense His full presence even in the smallest atom of existence, while at the same time worshiping God in His transcendental form in the spiritual world. This realization is inconceivable to an ordinary person but can be understood through bhakti, or devotion. Thus the philosophy of acintya-bhedābheda-tattva unites the philosopher's search for the perfect theology with the pure devotee's desire to approach God in an ecstatic union of love.

Those who seriously take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness prepare themselves by simultaneously following the paths of bhakti and Vedānta. The ordinary devotee cannot imitate the display of ecstatic emotion of the advanced devotee, and neither can most of us expect to master the dialectics of Vedānta on a par with Madhvācārya and other intellectual giants. Nevertheless, by reading the Bhaktivedanta purports and by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa (alone and in the company of devotees), any human

(continued on page 34)



# Godhead Is Light.

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"The process of going back home, back to Godhead, is to hear about the Supreme Lord and His name, form, attributes, pastimes, paraphernalia, and variegatedness. Foolish people do not know this. They want to hear something about the name, form, etc., of everything temporary, and they do not know how to utilize this propensity of hearing for the ultimate good."

—From Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.1.2, purport) by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda ☐ YES! Please enter my subscription to Back to Godhead. In Australia (P.O. Box 262, Botany, N.S.W. 2019): Payment enclosed: ☐ One year, A\$18.00 ☐ Two years, A\$36.00 In New Zealand (P.O. Box 5662, Aukland, NZ): Payment enclosed: ☐ One year, NZ\$24.95 In Great Britain (P.O. Box 151, Watford, Herts, WD2 4AD): Payment enclosed: ☐ One year, £10.50 ☐ Two years, £20.00 In U.S. and all other countries (P.O. Box 18983, Philadelphia, PA 19119): Payment enclosed: ☐ One year, US\$20.00 ☐ Two years, US\$38.00 Bill me (For orders from U.S. only): ☐ One year, US\$22.00 ☐ Two years, \$40.00 Please print: Name Address City(County) State Zip (Postcode)\_

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