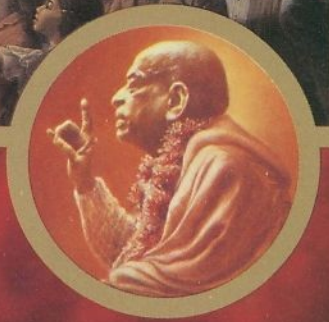


GODHEAD IS LIGHT. NESCIENCE IS DARKNESS. WHERE THERE IS GODHEAD THERE IS NO NESCIENCE.

BACK TO GODHEAD

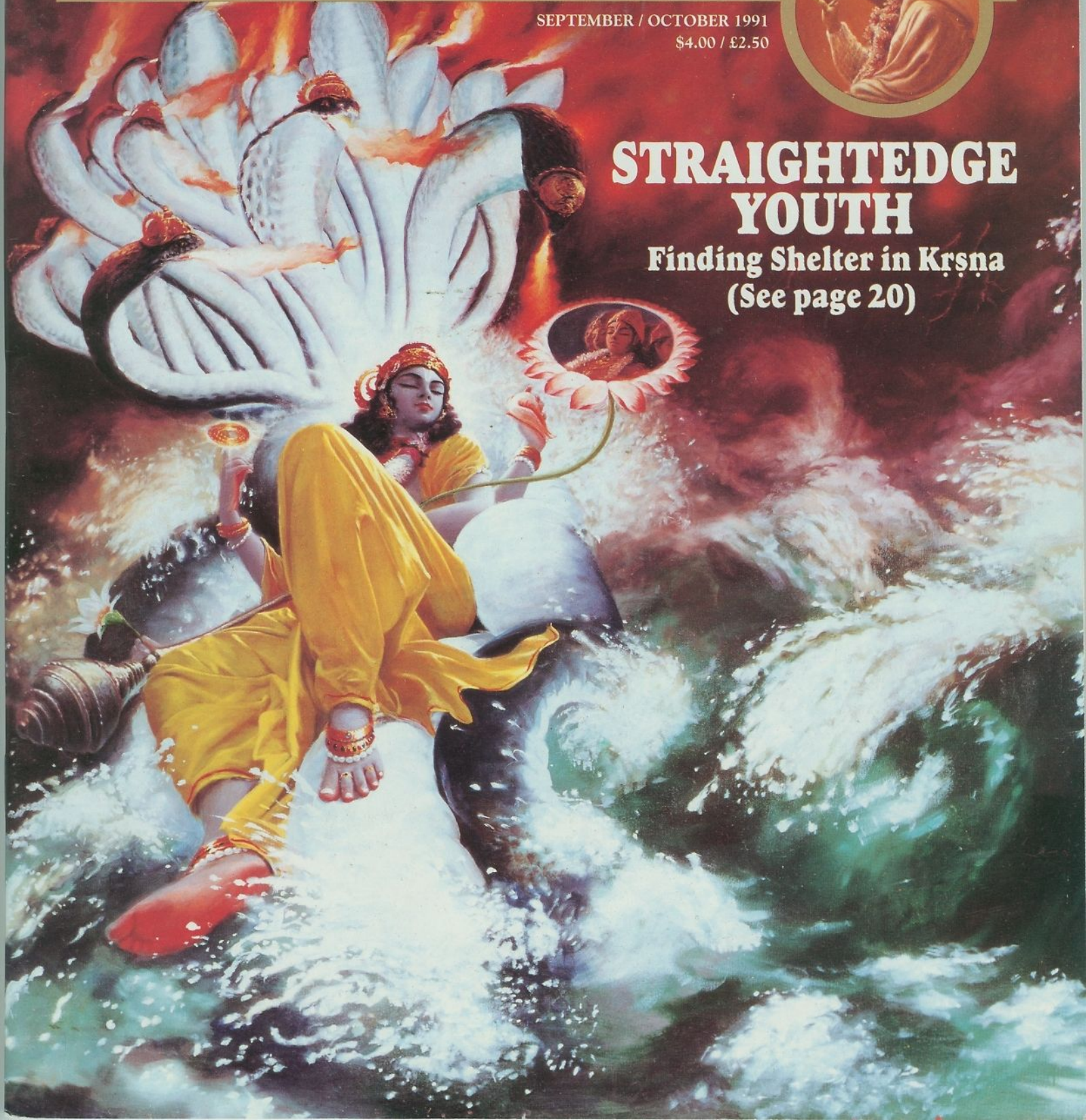
SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 1991

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STRAIGHTEDGE YOUTH

Finding Shelter in Kṛṣṇa
(See page 20)





BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement

Founded 1944 • Vol. 25, No. 5 • September / October 1991

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Liberation in Service to Lord Kṛṣṇa 6

Śrīla Prabhupāda explains that the soul bound by the material energy is robbed of its true satisfaction and the use of its immense power.

Hardcore Hare Kṛṣṇas: The Straightedge Connection 20

Having rejected what others hold dear, kids in the "straightedge" movement are finding shelter in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

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Five groups who confuse depravity with spirituality.

Krishna's Followers in Moscow 42

Out in the open and drawing crowds. Reprinted from *Soviet Union Illustrated Monthly* magazine.

Primordial Alphabet Soup 51

Keyboard-punching monkeys illustrate the effect of the laws of chemical bonding on theories of life's origin.



COVER: In the water of the cosmic Garbhodaka Ocean, Lord Viṣṇu lies on His great serpent bed Ananta Śeṣa, who breathes flames that devastate the universe. Lord Viṣṇu, an expansion of Lord Kṛṣṇa, is the ultimate cause of the creation, maintenance, and destruction of the universe. And He is the ultimate shelter of all living entities. Taking shelter of Viṣṇu (or Kṛṣṇa) is the theme of the music and lyrics of the "straight-edge hardcore" rock group Shelter. Please see the article starting on page 20. (Painting by Yadurāṇī Devī Dāsī.)

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BACK TO GODHEAD



FOUNDER (under the direction of His Divine Grace Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti-siddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda) **His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda**

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PRONUNCIATION We spell Sanskrit words and names by a phonetic system that lets you know how to say each word. Pronounce short **a** like the **u** in **but**, long **ā** like the **a** in **far** (and held twice as long as the short **a**). Pronounce **e** like the **a** in **evade**, long **ī** like the **i** in **pique**. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **ri** in **rim**, and **ḥ** like the **ch** in **chair**. Pronounce consonants like **ch**, **jh**, and **dh** as in **staunch-heart**, **hedge-hog**, and **red-hot**. Pronounce ś and ṣ like **sh**. So for *Kṛṣṇa* say KRISHNA, and for *Caitanya* say CHAITANYA.

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

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Statement Of Purposes

Back to Godhead, the magazine of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, is a cultural presentation to respiritualize human society. It aims at achieving the following purposes:

1. To help all people distinguish more clearly between reality and illusion, spirit and matter, the eternal and the temporary.
2. To present Kṛṣṇa consciousness as taught in *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.
3. To help every living being remember and serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead.
4. To offer guidance in the techniques of spiritual life.
5. To expose the faults of materialism.
6. To promote a balanced, natural way of life, informed by spiritual values.
7. To increase spiritual fellowship among all living beings, in relationship with Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.
8. To perpetuate and spread the Vedic culture.
9. To celebrate the chanting of the holy names of God through the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

FROM THE EDITOR

Gifts and Gatherings

A GROUP OF TEENAGE KIDS have commandeered a full sixteen pages of this issue of *Back to Godhead*. And we've been glad to see them do it.

We're not interested in hardcore music and youth scenes. But we are when they're connected with Kṛṣṇa.

Because Kṛṣṇa is purely spiritual, everything linked with Kṛṣṇa becomes spiritualized. So, for example, we don't care about battlefields—places where people go about killing one another. But we're interested in the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra because Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared there and spoke *Bhagavad-gītā* to His devotee Arjuna.

So it is that we've dedicated a large share of this BTG to Shelter, a Kṛṣṇa conscious rock band. We started with just a short article, but the kids (their word) had more and more to say. And what they were saying made sense, because these are not just kids—they're philosophers and devotees.

Our thanks, then, to Bhakta Vic, Raghunātha Dāsa (Ray Cappo), and the other members of Shelter for what they've contributed to this issue of *Back to Godhead*—and to the youth of today.

* * *

Thanks also to the many other devotees and readers who've been contributing to BTG.

BTG is *your* magazine, and we welcome you to take part in it. We thrive on your comments, your questions, your criticisms. We're enlivened by your ideas and suggestions.

Writers, artists, photographers—we especially invite you to use your talents

and skills for BTG. As the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* tells us, whatever gifts we have reach their highest perfection when offered for the Absolute Truth.

* * *

Our "Gatherings" feature, started in our last issue, is growing quickly.

I myself have had the opportunity to visit several of the gatherings listed, and I can say from my own experience what a pleasure they are.

It's a pleasure to get together with devotees who've taken what they've learned from Śrīla Prabhupāda and put it into practice in their homes. And I'm sure it's a pleasure for them to share it with others.

Of special appeal to me at many of these meetings is the mixture I find of devotees from India, devotees from the West, and the Western-born sons and daughters of Indian families. At gatherings like these, the Western devotees deepen their feel for the value of the Vedic customs and culture. The Indian devotees feel inspired by the Kṛṣṇa consciousness of their Western friends. And the Western-born Indians get a lift from both sides.

Ultimately, we find, "Western" and "Indian" don't really matter at all. When we chant Hare Kṛṣṇa we forget who we supposedly are and enjoy serving together in our true identity as spiritual souls.

I'm delighted that *Back to Godhead* is able to spread the word of these spiritual gatherings. This is precisely the sort of networking for which a magazine like this is ideal.

—Jayādvaita Swami

LETTERS

Whose Opinions?

It seems to me an article like the one about ISKCON's governing body [BTG, May/June] should have had the author's name on it. When I'm reading opinions, whose are they?

Anthony Morgan
Amherst, Massachusetts

You're right. The author was Jayādvaīta Swami.

Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa

In the BTG issues for March/April and May/June, the phrase "Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra" appears throughout, but if someone were wondering what that mantra is, he would be pretty hard pressed to find it. Is it a policy of yours not to put the words "Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare" anywhere in "The Magazine of the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement"?

Vipramukhya Swami
Burnaby, British Columbia
Canada

No. Thanks for reminding us.

A Benefit by Error

My husband and I had a delightful mistake happen when we realized we had paid for two subscriptions. Now we can each relish from cover to cover our own BTG. I hope this letter will inspire other devotees to get two subscriptions also. Then you will have an extra copy to read or distribute as a gift.

Biśālakṣi Devī Dasī
and Prabhāsa Dāsa
Madison Heights, Michigan

Hungary Update

I would like to submit some information to update your news about Hungary.

We have three centers in Hungary. There are about fifty full-time devotees and thirty initiated. Since we received legal permission, in July 1989, we have distributed about 200,000 of Srila Prabhupada's books.

As a religion, Kṛṣṇa consciousness is monetarily supported by the State. For the purchase of our temple, for example, the government gave half a million forint [about US\$7500]. The

State still gives us yearly support for our different projects.

In Budapest we have regularly 100 to 150 guests on our Sunday feasts. It is just because the temple room cannot hold more. Otherwise we had a big open program and 800 attended. So the interest is very good.

Sivarama Swami is the GBC [ISKCON Governing Body Commissioner] for Hungary. He started four years ago from literally nothing, and due to His mercy the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is expanding nicely in Hungary.

Baladeva Dāsa
Budapest, Hungary

We welcome your letters. Send correspondence to The Editors, Back to Godhead, P.O. Box 90946, San Diego, CA 92169, USA.

Our thanks to the several hundred readers who returned the questionnaire we sent out with the March/April issue. Your responses and suggestions have been valuable. We're already using many of the ideas you gave us.

INQUIRIES

Q: The Bhagavad-gita (18.48) says that we should continue to carry out our prescribed duties, for they are born out of our own nature. (1) What does "born out of our own nature" mean? (2) The purport also says that a sudra should carry out the orders of the bad master even though they should not be done. I assume this means one should go on doing something wrong even if he knows about it. Changing things would mean not doing your prescribed duty. Please elaborate on this topic.

In your March issue, under the topic "A Great Husband's Great Wife," you explained the rules of

conduct of a chaste and faithful wife (sadhvi). The purport also says that even if there is some wrong on the part of the husband, the wife must tolerate it, and thus there will be no misunderstanding between husband and wife. If the husband shows some illicit sexual advances towards his wife, should she just please him or should she shun him? Where does one draw the line between one's duty and tolerance?

Mukesh Mehta
Kew Gardens, New York

A: The *Bhagavad-gītā* tells us that three modes of nature—goodness,

passion, and ignorance—govern our physical and mental qualities. These qualities make up "our nature."

And according to our nature, there's a work that suits each of us best. An intellectual will be ill-suited to street-sweeping, a street sweeper ill-suited for teaching trigonometry. So the Vedic system assigns duties to each of us, fitted to our nature.

In the Vedic conception, what's wrong for us depends on our occupation. For example, a *brāhmaṇa* (a priest or intellectual) must be scrupulously honest. So for a *brāhmaṇa*, lying is wrong. But in a *vaiśya* (merchant), lying is tolerable. A merchant

tells us, "For you I'm not making any profit." It's a lie, of course, but that's business.

Similarly, for a *kṣatriya* (king or statesman) a vow to be nonviolent is wrong. A *kṣatriya* must protect his citizens, so when force is needed he must use it. But for a *brāhmaṇa* to use violence is wrong. A *brāhmaṇa* must be peaceful and nonviolent.

Similarly, a *brāhmaṇa* must be free and independent. So for him it's wrong to be employed and obliged to others. A bought-out intellectual, the Vedic sages say, is no better than a dog. But for a *śūdra*, a hired workman, independence is wrong. A *śūdra*, by definition, lacks higher intelligence. Given independence, he'll misuse it. So for a *śūdra*, acting independently is wrong.

Every duty has some fault in it. But when we try to cure such faults by going against our natural duties, the Vedic sages say it won't work. The wrongs we cause will be greater than the wrongs we try to rectify.

The highest duty for all living beings is to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead. So in the highest sense, whatever acts bring us closer to Kṛṣṇa are right, and whatever acts pull us away are wrong.

A wife should tolerate the wrongs of her husband, but not to the point of getting dragged into the four main sins—illicit sex, meat-eating, gambling, and intoxication. The *Srīmad-Bhāgavatam* (7.11.28) says, "A chaste wife should engage with affection in the service of a husband who is not fallen." In Kṛṣṇa consciousness, a wife is not a machine for sense gratification.

Q: I'm hoping you won't mind answering a couple of questions about the maha-mantra.

First I'd like to know: Is there a verse somewhere in the Vedas that actually states the mantra in the form printed in BTG [Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare]? I haven't come across any, so I'm curious.

Also I'm wondering: Does a recording of chanting have the same effect as "live" chanting, e.g., I have a tape of Srila Prabhupada singing the

mantra, so would just listening to that be very effective?

Stefan Sondej
Sydney, Australia

A: Yes, the *mahā-mantra* is found in the *Vedas*, in the following verse (5) from the *Kalīsantarāṇa Upaniṣad*:

*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa
kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma
rāma rāma hare hare*

*iti sodaśaka nāmnām
kali-kalmaṣa nāśanam
nātaḥ parataropāyaḥ
sarva-vedeṣu dṛṣyate*

"Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare—these sixteen names can nullify all the degrading, contaminating effects of the materialistic Age of Kali. In all the *Vedas*, no higher way is to be found." The chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa is always equally potent, whether heard "live" or on tape. This is the nature of transcendental sound. The *Bhagavad-gītā* is a "recording" of Lord Kṛṣṇa's words. Yet the *Gītā* is still as potent today as it was when the Lord first spoke it. When we hear the transcendental sound from the lips of a pure devotee of the Lord, that sound vibration is always effective.

Q: In several books I have read by A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada he says that to chant Jesus's name will work for becoming God conscious. What should I tell Christians when

they say Jesus was the son of God and by giving your life to him you can be "born again" and go to heaven? Should Kṛṣṇa's servants think that Jesus was also a messenger of God and what he said is true?

I was raised a Methodist, but I feel so good when I chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. I feel that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is awakening my soul!

Thank you for your help and thanks to you and Kṛṣṇa for Back to Godhead.

Mark Haydon
Des Moines, Iowa

A: Christ is the son of God, and Kṛṣṇa is God. So by giving one's life to Kṛṣṇa one perfectly follows the teachings of Jesus. Hare Kṛṣṇa. ☸

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Liberation In Service to Lord Kṛṣṇa

A lecture in Vṛndāvana on November 2, 1972, by
His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda
Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

*ato vai kavayo nityaṁ
bhaktiṁ paramayā mudā
vāsudeve bhagavati
kurvanty ātma-prasādanīm*

“Therefore all transcendentalists have been rendering loving service with great delight to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, from time immemorial because such devotional service is enlivening to the self.

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.2.22)

Atmā means self, mind, or body. We are living in three stages: the bodily concept of life, the mental concept of life, and the spiritual concept of life. Those who are grossly in ignorance think in terms of the bodily concept of life. Those who are a little more advanced think in terms of the mental or psychological concept of life. And those who are still more advanced think in terms of the spiritual concept of life.

The spiritual concept of life was described in a previous verse: *vadanti tat tattva-vidas tattvam. Tattvam* means truth. The truth is spirit, not matter. Matter is truth but subordinate to spirit. On the basis of spirit, matter grows, just as our body has grown on the basis of our spiritual existence.

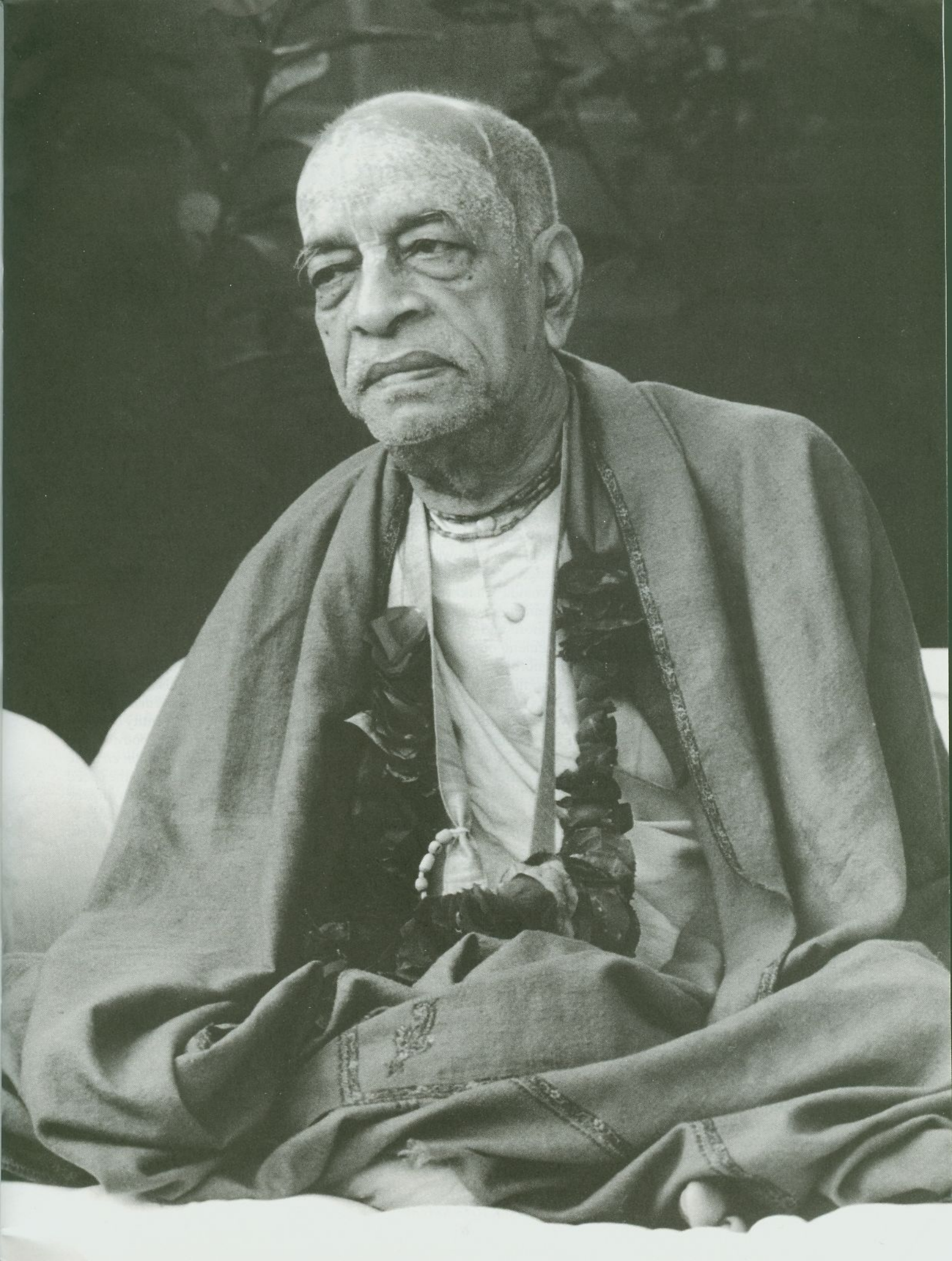
So spiritual realization is the ultimate goal of our life. *Jivasya tattva-jijñāsā nārtho yaś ceha karmabhiḥ*. Inquiry about the truth is the main business of the living entity. But

living entities lower than human beings—animals, birds, beasts, trees, aquatics, insects—have no privilege to inquire about the Absolute Truth. It is in the human form of life that one can inquire about the Absolute Truth.

When one is actually inquisitive about the Absolute Truth, he realizes three transcendental subjects: *brahmeti paramāmeti bhagavān iti śabdyate*—the all-pervading Brahman, the localized Supersoul, and Bhagavān, the Personality of Godhead. Ultimately one has to reach the platform of Bhagavān, Vāsudeva. *Vāsudeva sarvam iti sa mahātmā sudurlabhaḥ*. One who reaches the point of understanding Vāsudeva, Kṛṣṇa, is the perfect *mahātmā*.

Others may be transcendentalists (*ko-vidah*, “men of knowledge”), but one who has reached the point of understanding Vāsudeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is called *mahātmā*. *Mahātmā* is a very common word in India. Any saintly person is called a *mahātmā*. But according to Vedic description, a *mahātmā* is one who has reached the point of understanding Vāsudeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

In another place it is stated: *mahat-sevāṁ dvāram āhur vimuktes tamo-dvāraṁ yoṣitām saṅgi-saṅgam*. There are two ways of life. One way is liberation, and the other way is bondage. For example, when a reel of thread turns one way it draws in the thread, and when it turns the other way it releases the



Modern education has no information about bondage and liberation. There is no education to enable students to understand God, themselves, and their relationship with God, Viṣṇu.



thread. Similarly, we can lead our life in two ways, either towards liberation or towards the darkness of bondage.

By gradual evolution we come to the human form of life. Now we can move in two ways, either towards liberation or towards bondage.

Modern education has no information about bondage and liberation. There is no education to enable students to understand God, themselves, and their relationship with God, Viṣṇu. These things are unknown to the modern educationist.

The Vedic literature therefore says, *andhaḥ yathāndhair upānīyamānās te 'pīṣa-tantryām uru-dhāmnī-baddhāḥ*. *Uru* means “very strong.” *Dhāmnī* means “rope.” If your hands and legs are tied strongly, it is very difficult for you to move. Similarly, by the laws of nature every living entity is bound up very strongly—*īsa-tantryā*, “by the laws of the Supreme Lord.” We are bound up. We cannot deviate.

We cannot violate the laws of nature. Everyone can experience this. A little violation, a little deviation from the laws of nature, and we suffer. That is our daily experience. For example, the laws of nature dictate that you can eat only as much as you can digest. If you eat more, by the laws of nature you will suffer from indigestion. You cannot violate the law without suffering. *Daivī hy eṣā guṇa-mayī mama māyā duratyayā*. Nobody can violate the laws of nature.

We have discussed how to get out of the laws of nature: *mukta-saṅgasya jāyate*. *Mukta-saṅga* means one who has become freed from the three modes of material nature. After being freed from those three modes, then one can talk of *vāsudeva-bhakti*.

From another point of view, one can become free from this bondage of material nature simply by devotional

service to Vāsudeva. That is stressed in this chapter of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from the very beginning:

*vāsudeve bhagavati
bhakti-yogaḥ prayojitaḥ
janayaty āśu vairāgyaṁ
jñānaṁ ca yad ahaitukam*

If one simply learns how to render devotional service to Vāsudeva, Kṛṣṇa, then very soon one becomes detached from material bondage. And one gets knowledge, real knowledge. Material knowledge is the cause of bondage. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has said that advancement of material knowledge means more and more bondage. And advancement of spiritual knowledge means more and more liberation. Our problem, therefore, is how to liberate ourselves from material bondage.

We are bound up. I am a spirit soul, you are a spirit soul, but we are put into material bondage. And because we are in material bondage we have no freedom. People do not understand this.

The spirit soul is described as *sarva-ga*. *Sarva-ga* means that the spirit soul can go anywhere he likes. But due to this material bondage—because we have material bodies—we are checked. We cannot even go to other planets.

Of course, the *yogīs* by yogic processes become a little free from this material body. Therefore they can transfer from one place to another very quickly—even *yogīs* who are on the material platform. On this planet they travel very quickly. There are many *yogīs* still in India who take bath in four places daily early in the morning. They take bath in Jagannatha Purī, Rāmeśvaram, Hardwar, and Dvārakā. We met some *yogīs*, and they said how quickly they can go from one place to another.

From our own experience we can all understand how they can do this. Just consider the mind. The mind is so swift that in a second it can reach thousands of miles away. And the spirit soul is still more subtle. So the speed of the spirit soul is very, very great. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa says, *tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma naiti mām eti so 'rjuna*: “Just after giving up this body, one can immediately come to Me in the spiritual world.” These are the Vedic statements.

You can try to understand. *Tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma naiti*—we accept another body immediately after death. When you are walking you take your second step when your first step is secure. Similarly as soon as the next body is arranged by superior arrangement, we give up the present body and enter into another gross body. This is the law.

So Kṛṣṇa says, *tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma naiti*. If the living entity does not enter into another gross body, where does he go? Kṛṣṇa says, *mām eti*: “He comes to Me.” Now, imagine the speed of the spirit soul. Just after leaving the body at death he immediately goes to Goloka Vṛndāvana, or at least to where Kṛṣṇa is, to join Kṛṣṇa’s *nitya-līlā*, His eternal pastimes.

How Kṛṣṇa’s *nitya-līlā* are going on has been described in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. Kṛṣṇa is always present in one of the universes in His *bhauma-līlā*, His pastimes in the material world. Lord Caitanya has given the example of the movement of the sun. By the movement of the sun, we divide the day into twenty-four hours, into sixty minutes, into sixty seconds. Yet each time of the day is always existing. For example, our sunrise today was at six-thirty. This six-thirty passed here, but somewhere else it is now six-thirty. And when six-thirty passes there, somewhere else it will be

(please turn to page 36)



Who Is God?

by Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami

LAST CHRISTMAS, *Life* magazine did a cover story entitled “Who is God?” They asked that question of many people and printed the replies. The color photos of worshipers throughout the world showed many ways of approaching God. *Life* said, “The God of our story is the God of personal, private faith.” Intrigued by the topic, I asked myself, “Okay, what’s your answer to ‘Who is God?’”

My personal faith in God comes from my spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and from the Vedic scriptures. The intimations I had of God’s presence when I was a child were faint indications only. Real God consciousness began for me when I met Śrīla Prabhupāda and heard about Lord Kṛṣṇa. It is the Supreme Lord who speaks the *Bhagavad-gītā* whom I wish to serve and love.

God is revealed not only in the Vedic scriptures but in other scriptures of the great world religions. The worshipers appear to have different understandings, yet the expert spiritual master knows that the essence of religion is one—love of God. The details differ with the time in which religion is taught, the persons to whom it is taught, and the place where it is taught.

We cannot deny that God comes to people in His own way. One *Life* testimony was from an old woman who didn’t know for sure whether there is a next life or whether there is God. A housemaid from Beirut said that God is a very old black person and He wears a long white robe.

Everyone is entitled to his or her own faith. But there is a science of revelation. God shouldn’t be discussed only by hunches. We have a right to our own feelings, but the feelings need to be directed.

I cannot claim to be more directly touched by God than others. But my point is that we should become educated in our God consciousness. We shouldn’t deliberately avoid this edu-

cation, thinking that it’s sectarian. And we shouldn’t, like some people, take God in a sentimental way and think that sacred books and teachers are useless.

In our relationship with God, the most important relationship of our lives, it is best that we approach reliable sources of study. Śrīla Prabhupāda used to say that religion without philosophy is sentiment or fanaticism, and philosophy without religion is dry speculation. Therefore pure devotees of Kṛṣṇa are *bhakti-vedāntas*: they approach God through devotion (*bhakti*) as well as through scriptural knowledge and the power of reasoning (*vedānta*).

Who is God? Only God Himself knows this answer completely, and therefore we should hear from Him. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* and other scriptures, Lord Kṛṣṇa tells us, “I can be known only by devotional service.” Kṛṣṇa also makes it easy for us to know Him by telling us He can be seen even within the material world. He says, “I am the taste of water, the light of the sun and the moon, the syllable *om* in the Vedic *mantras*; I am the sound in ether and the ability in man” (*Bhagavad-gītā* 7.8).

There are symptoms of a person who has realized God. The chief symptom is that he always serves and praises his Supreme Beloved. He cannot bear to be away from Kṛṣṇa’s service for even a moment. When people come in contact with such a pure devotee, they also become attracted to hearing and chanting about the Supreme. And the result of such knowledgeable devotional service is that one can ultimately attain to Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s eternal abode.

Frankly, some of the witnessing in *Life* turned me off. A rancher thinks God is pleased when he kills cows. A boy from India says, “It would be pretty boring sticking to one God every day. . . . My dad bought this lottery pen. It shoots out numbers

like in the lottery . . . so when I pray I take a number. Whichever number comes out I pray to that god.”

I know that any progress toward God-worship is worthwhile. The Supreme Lord considers all worshipers pious, even when they approach Him for material relief through the demigods. But should we consider all God-conscious persons to be on the same level? Kṛṣṇa says, “As all approach Me I reciprocate. Everyone is on My path.” But He also advises that the best devotees are they who approach the Supreme Personality of Godhead not for any profit but just out of love. This topmost way of knowing God is *bhakti-yoga*. Kṛṣṇa calls it “the king of all knowledge.” And He advises that we eventually give up all lesser forms of religion and “Just surrender to Me.”

In former ages, persons determined to know “Who is God?” used to undergo severe austerities to reach the goal. Because the difficult practices of yoga and meditation are mostly no longer possible in the present age, Lord Caitanya has taught us an easy method, one authorized by scriptures: chanting the holy names of God. The holy names are not different from God Himself, so a sincere chanter can make quick advancement in God consciousness.

For the most part I enjoyed reading *Life*’s faithful testimonies. They’re certainly more encouraging than statements by nonbelievers. I honor the witnesses. It is an education to meet God-fearing, God-loving persons. And if we can learn to appreciate one another, we can go a long way toward defeating atheism. When devotees of God meet with open minds, I will find that “my” God is not so different from yours.

Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami is the author of more than two dozen books, including a six-volume biography of Śrīla Prabhupāda.



Kicchari: India's Famous One-Pot Meal

by Yamuna Devi

LONG-TIME *Back to Godhead* readers will recall that for several years Viśākhā Dāsī wrote this column. Since she has made *kicchari* nearly every day for twenty years, I asked her to write something about *kicchari*. Not surprisingly, she discussed Rādhārāṇī's serving mood to Śrī Kṛṣṇa more than *kicchari*. Here are her thoughts, an enlivening preface to the late-autumn *kicchari* menus that follow.

"Rādhārāṇī, the eternal consort of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, was given the benediction that whatever She cooked would be more delicious than nectar. Aromatic and pleasing to see, Her dishes are the essence of all delicacies. She cooks so many types of dishes that no one can know them perfectly, and the Lord, upon eating Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's meals, feels great satisfaction.

"We might think that the Lord's satisfaction is due to the unsurpassed quality and diversity of Rādhārāṇī's cooking. But in truth this is not so. His satisfaction is due to Rādhārāṇī's supermost glory—Her *bhakti*, Her unmotivated and uninterrupted loving devotion for Him and His devotees. And Lord Kṛṣṇa seeks to evoke that glorious quality in all of us. Therefore He says, "If one offers Me with love and devotion a leaf, a flower, a fruit, or water, I will accept it."

"Getting a leaf, a fruit, a flower, or water isn't a problem, and the physical act of making an offering to the Lord is manageable. Loving devotion, however, goes beyond the mechanics of physical activity and intellectual correctness. It goes to the innermost core of one's heart, where the Lord, resplendent with the radiance of a bluish-black rain cloud, is situated. It is only by His and His devotees' grace that our innate feelings for Him can be aroused. And all acts done for Him can assist in this process of arousal,

including, and perhaps especially, cooking for Him, offering food to Him, and eating while remembering Him.

"But what if one isn't naturally a good cook? What if like me one has limited time, energy, and kitchen equipment? And, even more, hardly a tinge of devotion?

"Still there is hope. First, because for one on the path of awakening love for Kṛṣṇa there is no loss. With attention, a tinge of devotion may become a grain, then a pinch, then a morsel, and so on. And second, because one doesn't have to cook elaborately. For those of us not so qualified, or who prefer simple meals, there is always *kicchari*.

Made from simple ingredients—dried split peas, rice, vegetables, and spices—*kicchari* is a perfect one-pot meal. You can combine the elements in endless variety, creating new and fresh variations at every turn. And more important, the Lord will accept *kicchari* when you offer it to Him with devotion. Try it with Yamuna's menus that follow."

* * *

These *kicchari* meals are easy enough for busy workday schedules, and delicious enough for weekend company. *Kicchari* is traditionally made on the stovetop, but both of these varieties are baked, leaving you free for other tasks. While the tastes are typically Indian, the dishes use ingredients readily found in supermarkets and natural food stores.

Cilantro, also called fresh coriander, is the most popular herb in India and much of the world. Mustard seeds have a nutty flavor when toasted and lend a pleasant flavor to many legume, grain, and vegetable dishes. If possible, buy organic rice, split peas, vege-

tables, and herbs, available in larger natural food stores. Their flavor is considerably more distinctive than nonorganic.

MENU ONE

BAKED STEW OF YELLOW SPLIT PEAS AND BROWN RICE WITH CARROTS AND PEPPERS (Serves 4)

This no-fuss entree takes only minutes to prepare, and it cooks by itself in two hours. Marbled with brilliant red bell peppers, orange carrots, and green cilantro, this golden stew is beautiful, satisfying, and inviting for a fall dinner.

Accompany with LIGHT TOMATO CHUTNEY, salad, and *capātis* (toasted flat breads).

- 1 cup yellow split peas, soaked in water overnight
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup long-grain brown rice
- 5 cups water or vegetable stock
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon turmeric
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1-inch slice fresh ginger
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cilantro leaves
- 2 tablespoons butter or peanut oil
- 3 red bell peppers, seeded, deribbed, and cut into $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch squares
- 1 pound slender carrots, scraped and cut into $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch pieces
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoons salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon mustard seeds

Preheat the oven to 375°. Rinse and drain the split peas and place them in a 3-quart casserole. Add the next five ingredients, half of the cilantro, and a dab of butter or oil. Cover the pan and bake for 1 hour.

Stir in the vegetables and salt. Bake uncovered until the water is absorbed

and the split peas and rice are soft (about 1 hour).

Place the mustard seeds in a small pot, cover, and fry over moderate heat until they turn grey and pop. Stir them into the stew with the remaining butter or oil and cilantro.

LIGHT TOMATO CHUTNEY (Serves 4)

2 teaspoons peanut oil
1 teaspoon fennel seeds
2 fresh *jalapenos* chilies, seeded and slivered
1½ pounds plum tomatoes, chopped coarse
2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint
2 tablespoons maple syrup
salt and freshly ground pepper

Place half of the oil, fennel seeds, and *jalapenos* in a saucepan over moderate heat. Toast until the seeds darken a few shades. Add the tomatoes and maple syrup and cook, stirring occasionally, for 30 minutes.

Fold in the mint and remaining oil. Season with salt and pepper. Serve warm or at room temperature.

MENU TWO

BAKED KICCHARI OF BASMATI RICE AND GREEN SPLIT PEAS WITH TOASTED ALMONDS (Serves 6)

With a texture similar to South Indian *pongal*, this baked *kicchari* has a pilaf-like consistency—hearty and inviting. The dish that goes with it, BAKED VEGETABLE PACKETS, cooks by itself, leaving you free in the kitchen. Serve with lime yogurt.

1 cup green split peas, soaked in water overnight
4½ cups water or vegetable stock
½ teaspoon curry powder
1 cinnamon stick
6 whole cloves
¼ to ½ teaspoon crushed red chilies
¼ cup cilantro leaves
⅔ cup long-grain rice, preferably *basmati*
1½ teaspoons salt
½ teaspoon cumin seeds
2 tablespoons butter
3 tablespoons toasted sliced almonds

Preheat the oven to 375°. Rinse and drain the split peas and transfer them to a 3-quart casserole. Add the next five ingredients, half of the cilantro, and a dab of butter. Cover the pan and bake for 1 hour.

Stir in the rice and salt. Partially cover and bake until the water is absorbed and the split peas and rice are soft (about 1 hour.)

Place the cumin seeds in a small pot and fry over moderate heat until they darken a few shades. Stir into the

kicchari with the butter and remaining herbs. Garnish with almonds.

BAKED VEGETABLE PACKETS (Serves 6)

2 large red bell peppers, seeded, deribbed, and cut into long strips
3 small zucchini, sliced ½-inch thick
1 cup corn kernels
½ pound thin green beans, cut in 1-inch pieces
3 tablespoons chopped cilantro
½ teaspoon coriander seeds, crushed
½ cup vegetable stock
salt and cayenne pepper
lemon juice

Preheat the oven to 350°. Combine the vegetables, coriander seeds, and stock in a large bowl. Season with a light sprinkle of salt and cayenne. Place an equal amount of the vegetables in mounds on six 12-inch squares of kitchen parchment or tin foil. Fold two ends of the squares together at the top and seal the sides by folding them together twice.

Bake on baking trays until the vegetables are tender (about 30 minutes). Just before serving, break the packets open and sprinkle with lemon juice.

Yamuna Devi is the author of Lord Krishna's Cuisine: The Art of Indian Vegetarian Cooking and is a regular contributor to the Washington Post.



THE LAND, THE COWS, AND KRṢṆA

Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa And Draw a Plow

by Hare Kṛṣṇa Devī Dāśī

KṚṢṆA CONSCIOUSNESS is practical. For spiritual advancement, you don't have to renounce everything, go to the forest, and simply chant Hare Kṛṣṇa all day long. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa explains that all of us should continue to perform our duties according to our nature, but we should work with love and devotion as an

offering to Him. Thereby every one of us can attain spiritual perfection.

The Vedic framework for organizing the work of a spiritual society is called *varṇāśrama-dharma*. As Kṛṣṇa describes in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *varṇāśrama* gives each of us work to do that suits our natural qualities. This is known as the *daivi-varṇāśrama*

system, which Prabhupāda distinguishes from the exploitive caste system of modern India, in which a person's role in society is determined by what family he is born in.

A pure devotee of the Lord is considered to be above the *varṇāśrama* system. But as Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura states, "During *sādhana-bhakti*, or

devotional service in practice, so long as one has material desires within the heart one should stay within the confines of *varṇāśrama*”¹ That is, unless one is a pure devotee one needs to keep working in society for his or her own purification. Simply, the work should be done to please Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda warned us that we can’t match the renounced life of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana, and he criticized *bābājīs* who make a show of piety by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa yet still smoke cigarettes and keep loose relationships with women. “We can tell all these *bābājīs* they should be employed, chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, and draw a plow. Then it will be nice.”²

Śrīla Prabhupāda’s remark about the *bābājīs* is more than a dismissal of a group of show-bottle spiritualists. The fact is, if these *bābājīs* would take up Prabhupāda’s instructions they could eventually attain the spiritual platform they now pretend to be on.

Prabhupāda’s remark is a valuable instruction for us, too. Like the *bābājīs*, we sometimes tend to be sentimental about Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We may want to enjoy intense devotional feelings from chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, but we may forget that to please Kṛṣṇa we must offer Him our daily work as well: “Do it for Me.”³

So the principle embodied in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s simple instruction “Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and draw a plow” speaks vitally to us. And if we follow it? We have Prabhupāda’s simple benediction: “Then it will be nice.” Our spiritual life will be successful.

In this column, I want to meditate on Śrīla Prabhupāda’s order to “Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and draw a plow,” particularly as it applies to cow protection and agriculture.

We know we should offer our work to Kṛṣṇa, but sometimes it’s not easy for us to do it wholeheartedly, especially if our work has aspects displeasing to Kṛṣṇa.

In the sixteenth century that happened to Sanātana Gosvāmī when he was the minister in charge of the government secretariat for the Nawab of Bengal. Sanātana Gosvāmī’s expert management freed the Nawab from administrative duties so the Nawab could spend his time attacking other states. But when the Nawab at last

prepared to attack Orissa, where the temple of Lord Jagannātha is located, Sanātana Gosvāmī resigned his post, and the Nawab had him imprisoned.

Most of us are not as strong as Sanātana Gosvāmī, and if our work puts us in a compromising situation it may keep us from fully taking up the devotional process or maintaining our devotional practice. Śrīla Prabhupāda realized this, and that’s why he pushed his followers to revive the pure system of *varṇāśrama*. That system naturally purifies the work we do because the whole system is designed to satisfy the



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senses of the Supreme Lord.

Prabhupāda explained that without this system Kṛṣṇa consciousness can be difficult to take up: “Our main aim is how to give them Kṛṣṇa consciousness. But if they are already disturbed in every respect, then how will they take it?” Therefore, Śrīla Prabhupāda said, to help them come to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, “this is the method—*varṇāśrama*.”⁴

Elaborating on this, ISKCON leader Jagadīśa Goswami cites three basic reasons Prabhupāda gave for using *varṇāśrama* within ISKCON: (1) to organize our society effectively,

(2) to engage the psychophysical propensities of our devotees to keep them happy and advancing in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and (3) to construct a house in which all the people of the world can live peacefully.⁵

Varṇāśrama serves as a preliminary means of bringing people to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, even if they’re not yet chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “We must pave the situation in such a way that gradually people will be promoted to the spiritual plane. . . . The chanting will go on. That is not stopped. But at the same time *varṇāśrama-dharma* must be established to make the way easy.”⁶

In the *varṇāśrama* system, it is the *vaiśyas*, the productive class, who generate the wealth. And how are they to do this? Kṛṣṇa says, *kṛṣi-go-rakṣya vāṇijyam*—by farming, cow protection, and trade.⁷

The trade or business mentioned here is largely another aspect of farming or cow protection. Prabhupāda explains: “Business means if you have got extra grains or extra foodstuff you can sell where there is necessity, where there is want. That is business. We are not going to open mills and factories. . . . That is *sūdra* [low-class] business. The real business is that you produce enough food grains, as much as possible, and you eat and distribute.”⁸

Śrīla Prabhupāda further stresses the “cow protection” part of Kṛṣṇa’s instructions: “The *Bhagavad-gītā* specifically instructs us, *kṛṣi-go-rakṣya*: We human beings must pro-*tec*t the cow, our milk-giving mother. *Go-rakṣya*—protect the cow. Not *go-hatya*—kill the cow. This is most sinful.”⁹

In later columns I shall discuss how the modern economy depends on cow killing, and where this leads.

The leaders of ISKCON are determined not to simply let the world go to pieces because of ignorance and greed. They are working instead to help usher in the Golden Age of Lord Caitanya so that everyone may chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and live peacefully. An important part of this is to set up a *varṇāśrama* society. And crucial to *varṇāśrama* is cow protection and simple agrarian villages where every-one can advance in spiritual life.

1. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, cited in Jagadīṣa Goswami, "Can We Implement Varṇāśrama-dharma?" Lecture in Vancouver, Canada, September 9, 1985.
2. Śrīla Prabhupāda, "Varṇāśrama Talks," Vṛndāvana, India, March 1974.
3. *Bhagavad-gītā* 9.27.
4. Śrīla Prabhupāda, op. cit.

5. Śrīla Prabhupāda, op. cit.
6. Śrīla Prabhupāda, Conversation, Māyāpur, India, February 14, 1977.
7. *Bhagavad-gītā* 18.44.
8. Śrīla Prabhupāda, "Varṇāśrama Talks."
9. *Back to Godhead*, "Śrīla Prabhupāda Speaks Out: Sin in the Name of Religion," Vol. 21, No. 8, p. 14.
10. Śrīla Prabhupāda, "Varṇāśrama Talks."

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INDIA'S HERITAGE

How Do We Understand The Temple Deity?

by Navīṇa Kṛṣṇa Dāsa

MOST OF US FROM INDIA, regardless of where we're living now, at times go to a temple to see the Deity form of the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu or one of His incarnations. We also many times see the deities of various demigods.

Perhaps on a few occasions, which we may remember as high points in our lives, we have gone with friends and relatives to holy *tīrthas*, places of pilgrimage. We then performed special penances or pious acts. And so we appreciated the audience of the Deity in an especially rewarding manner. We came back from these journeys feeling peaceful, content, and purified.

Many of us appreciate our visits to the ISKCON temples deeply. In the 1970's these were perhaps the only temples of Lord Kṛṣṇa we found outside the borders of India. We were struck with wonder by the dedication and devotion Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples showed towards the Deities. The cleanliness, punctuality, decorations, and high standards of offerings amazed us. Even in India, it was rare to see such fine arrangements. The lives of the devotees seemed centered on the Deity. Lord Kṛṣṇa's words from *Bhagavad-gītā* seemed to come alive all over the world as we saw men and women living His teachings.

Today many of us continue to visit the ISKCON temples or other

temples to see the Deity regularly. For one person that may mean going to the temple every day, for another once a week, and for others only once or twice a year, on special days such as Janmāṣṭamī and Diwali.

Each of us has different hopes, realizations, thoughts, experiences, and feelings when in the presence of the Deity. As we stand before the Deity, we find ourselves in the court of the Supreme Lord Himself. We have been granted an audience with the Lord. He seems to give us His attention. And we can have the most

intimate exchanges with Him.

We find ourselves asking questions of the Deity. We say prayers, make requests, and ask for explanations, forgiveness, or blessings. Somehow we know that the Deity hears us, and that alone is most satisfying. Many times the smile on the Lord's face is enough to tell us we have been heard.

Knowing that the Supreme Lord is our eternal maintainer and well-wisher, we leave satisfied, knowing that everything is in the right hands.

To various degrees we have had



Worshipping the Deity in the San Diego temple.

the good fortune of realizing that the Supreme Lord is fully present in His Deity form, as much as in His teachings, His holy name, and His pastimes. No amount of criticism, ridicule, disbelief, or challenge deters us from our relationship with the Deity. Feeling sorry for the unfortunate who don't understand the Lord's presence in their city or village as the temple Deity, we go on trying to deepen our relationship with the Lord.

We understand that until we are completely free from all impurities we will not fully realize the Lord's presence. And we hesitate to drink, smoke, gamble, eat nonvegetarian foods, or indulge in irreligious sexual activity because we know that these things may make us feel embarrassed about going before the Deity. These, we know, block our attraction for the Lord.

We remember the words of great *ācāryas* who tell us that one day when we're sufficiently pure the Deity will speak to us and enable us to see His transcendental pastimes.

The scriptures and great *ācāryas* tell us that our relationship with the Deity develops through cultivation. To understand the Lord's presence, many activities will help us.

When we go to the temple we can develop the habit of always bringing

some offering for the Deity. Usually the temple priests guide us to bring appropriate gifts. We offer our respects and bow our head before the Deity. We see His beautiful form, observe His worship or *ārati*, hear and sing His glories, partake of His *mahā-prasādam* and *caranāmṛta*, pray to Him. These all help cultivate our relationship with Him.

As we perform these scientific devotional acts prescribed in the scriptures, our relationship with the Deity gets deeper and deeper. We look forward to visiting the Lord and having His audience. The importance of our relationship with the Deity becomes greater and greater, and material relationships in the world seem less and less important. We begin to understand the feelings and realizations of great souls known to be dedicated and devoted to their Deities.

By the mercy of the Deity we can feel ourselves making genuine spiritual advancement. Knowledge about ourselves, about the world, and about the purpose of life seems to awaken. Detachment from less important material affairs and attachment for the reality of committed spiritual life seem to grow simultaneously.

We find ourselves becoming more and more attracted to the name, form,

teachings, and pastimes of the Supreme Lord. We want to make the best offerings possible to the Deity and make all kinds of arrangements to provide for His worship. And we avoid all irreligious and immoral acts.

Feeling unworthy yet deeply grateful, we desire and act to help others receive the same good fortune. We become eager to distribute the mercy of the Lord. We take part in teaching the less informed. And to those still unreceptive we distribute *prasādam*, remnants of the Lord's food, so that their hearts may soften and they will take advantage of their rare human birth. In these various ways, we begin to appreciate and understand the greatness of our Vedic or Indian heritage.

As these symptoms begin to appear steadily in our lives, we know that we are moving forward on the spiritual path. We know that we have received the mercy of the Supreme Lord and that He is attracting us back home, back to Godhead.

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SCHOOLING KRṢṂA'S CHILDREN

What's a Child to Read?

by Śrī Rāma Dāsa

PARENTS OFTEN WRITE and ask for advice about reading material for their children. They want to expose their children to as much Kṛṣṇa consciousness as possible (and limit their exposure to materialism), but run into several practical problems, especially: (1) there is a shortage of good Kṛṣṇa conscious books for children, and (2) many kids will read almost anything they can get their hands on.

So parents wonder what they can do to see that their children's reading fosters Kṛṣṇa consciousness. How can we exercise reasonable guidance

without being oppressive? And, perhaps more important, how can we teach children discrimination when they read?

By discrimination I mean looking into something deeply enough to understand how it will influence one's thinking and life. I mean going beyond the superficial mindset modern society conditions us to—a mindset in which most problems can be solved within the thirty minutes of an average television show, in which buying toys can give one true satisfaction, in which there's no clear right and

wrong, no one knows the Absolute Truth, and where the best we can do is come up with our own reality.

Since most of our children are exposed hundreds of times a day to the full force of corporate marketing and political/social propaganda, gross and subtle, we must teach them how to discriminate beyond the superficial and oversimplified.

The first step toward insuring that your kid reads acceptable books is this: before you give your child a book, read it yourself. Too often I've seen parents and teachers turn chil-

dren loose in the library to select whatever appeals to them, not realizing that many innocent-looking books subvert the values they're trying to teach them at home or in school.

Here are a few points to consider when evaluating a book:

1. Theme. Stories are meant to be enjoyable. But most stories also teach something, even though the author may not directly say what it is. The plot, characters, conflicts, and outcome usually support one main idea, often philosophical or moral. This theme is the essence of a book. Parents should ascertain whether or not a book's theme is compatible with a God-centered, Kṛṣṇa conscious view of life.

2. Heroes. Children naturally identify with the heroes or main characters of a story. When you look at a book, ask yourself: will you be satisfied seeing your children grow up emulating the qualities of those characters? You'll rarely find characters who closely resemble devotees. But at least you can look for those who demonstrate good moral behavior, appreciation for God and His representatives, respect for authority, and so on.

3. Morality. The best we can expect from many books is that they will teach children to behave morally. Look for books that show a clear sense of right and wrong, ultimately having its roots in the laws of God. Avoid books that push "situation ethics," where there is no absolute

right and wrong and everyone must come up with his or her own standards of morality for every situation.

4. Good and evil. In the Vedic conception of drama, a work should have a happy ending where good is rewarded and evil punished. This leaves the reader with a sense of satisfaction and a feeling of faith in the purpose of life. Books without happy endings often leave children feeling empty, wondering if there is any order and justice in life.

5. Wisdom. Does the book show respect for knowledge and wisdom? Does it treat spiritually-minded characters favorably, or as "naive sentimentalists"?

6. View of God. Does the author present God as impersonal, either directly or indirectly? Does he or she hint that perhaps God is not there—or that if He is, He has no influence on the world's affairs? Does the book equate service to man with service to God? We need books that do better than that.

7. View of Religion. What is the author's attitude toward religion? Writers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries often portrayed religion unfavorably. They were struggling to expose religious institutions that were rife with corruption and foolishness, and sentimental followers who allowed themselves to be exploited in the name of spirituality.

8. Humanism. Humanism pervades modern society. It is so much a part of Western education that we may not

recognize it, even when it's blatant.

Roughly, humanism means faith that the intellect of man is sufficient to solve all problems for the individual and society. Man can achieve anything he puts his mind and efforts to. Humanism exalts man's supposed superiority over nature and the irrelevance of God's will and influence. It makes man the measure of all things.

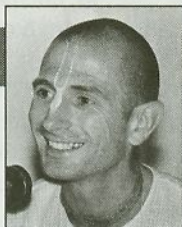
If a book pushes humanism, avoid it.

In summary, the main question should be, "What benefit will my child get from reading this book?" Does it emphasize spiritual values or give good moral guidance? Is it well-written literature? Does it offer useful information or ideas? Does it reinforce Kṛṣṇa conscious principles or values?

Schools should take the evaluation process one step further. As mentioned above, we must teach our children to evaluate books themselves—to look beyond the surface and judge for themselves the value of what they read, hear, and watch.

ISKCON's board of education has a much more detailed set of evaluation guidelines. If you'd like a copy, please write to me at the address below and ask for "Guidelines for Evaluating Children's Literature."

Śrī Rāma Dāsa
Chairman
ISKCON Board of Education
3764 Watseka Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90034
U.S.A.



BHAKTI-YOGA AT HOME

Early to Bed . . .

by Rohiṇinandana Dāsa

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA taught that devotees of Kṛṣṇa don't "live to sleep, but sleep to rest the body." They work hard for Kṛṣṇa and rather unwillingly lie down for rejuvenating sleep. As it is said, "Sleep is sweet to the laboring man." Devotees don't want to sleep long, like a bear, or sneak in more than they need.

Devotees act to wake up in another sense too: they try to wake up to their true position as spiritual persons, eternal servants of Kṛṣṇa. They don't wish to fall back into the dreamy slumber of being "English," "American," or "Chinese," "man" or "woman," "Christian," "Muslim," or "Hare Kṛṣṇa monk." Of being young

or old, awake or asleep, fresh or tired, ill or well. They want to be firmly situated in the absolute conception that they have nothing to do with the material body. To achieve this they adjust all relative aspects of their life.

So devotees get up early to take advantage of the special energy and

clarity of the early-morning hours. They also try to go to bed early. As an old proverb says, "One hour's sleep before midnight is worth three after."

How much sleep do I need? Five, six, seven, eight hours?

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, one of Lord Caitanya's chief disciples, generally slept for only one and a half hours, and sometimes he didn't sleep at all. Śrīla Prabhupāda went to bed at 10:00 P.M. and rose before midnight to write his books. And he would rest for only another hour or two during the day. Just imagine how much extra time we would have if we could consistently do the same.

But Lord Kṛṣṇa recommends mod-

eration and regulation. So we should find out how much sleep we need and work from there to gradually decrease it. (With practice, roughly six hours should be about right.) We are servants of Kṛṣṇa, not sleep. By practice we can conquer sleep, become Kṛṣṇa conscious, and attain success in life.

Besides seeing sleep as an opportunity to renew failing energy, devotees see sleep as a reminder of irresistible death, which forces everyone, pauper or king, to lie down. Devotees acknowledge that they are not the controller of anything, even their eyelids. Before sleeping a devotee may humbly pray, "My dear Lord, if You like I will awaken here in this place,

or perhaps I will awaken in another place. But wherever I may be, or in whatever form You give me, please allow me to serve You."

A few suggestions: Try reading or hearing about Kṛṣṇa in the evening. Before going to sleep, resolutely consider what time you intend to rise and why—you may find you don't even need an alarm. And last, when you wake up, loudly chant "Hare Kṛṣṇa!" and feel how the spiritual energy quickly dissipates the effects of the mode of ignorance. Sweet dreams.

Rohiṇinandana Dāsa lives in southern England with his wife and their three children. You can write to him c/o BTG.



THROUGH THE EYES OF ŚĀSTRA

Of Death and Editors

by Ravindra Svarūpa Dāsa

AFTER I MISSED my last column, a memo from our hard-boiled editor slithered off my fax machine. "Near-death is a valid excuse for not writing," he conceded grudgingly. "But since you've survived, you might as well write."

I didn't find out I had been near death until my fourth day in the hospital. With a BTG deadline approaching and a load of GBC assignments on hold, I had begun pestering my doctor to let me out.

Giving me a severe look, my doctor sat by my bed, right next to the marvelous digital IV machine counting down drips in LED. I had come to admire both man and machine as wonders of modern medicine.

"Look," he began sternly, "you don't seem to understand how close you came to . . ." A delicate turning down of the palm stood in for the D word. "When you got to the emergency room we couldn't get a blood pressure reading. It's a good thing you didn't wait any longer.

"You've heard about Jim Henson, the creator of the Muppets? He had the same thing as you, but he delayed getting to the hospital a bit too long,

and he died. You've been in a dangerous spot, and—you're what?" A glance at my file. "Forty-six. Not so young any more. So just slow down. Give yourself time to recover."

I would have gotten a doctor's note then for my editor, Jayādvaita Swami, but my mind was reacting to the announcement of my close call with Mr. D. I was caught up by some intense but contradictory feelings.

A spontaneous, sheerly animal elation at being alive was rising from my body. My very cells seemed to be celebrating. But this feeling was at once overpowered by one far better, and less expected: a sudden vivid awareness of the presence of Kṛṣṇa. He seemed very close and very friendly.

It was, on reflection, simple enough to understand: being close to death was being close to Kṛṣṇa. To be sure, not everyone encounters it that way. Yet everyone, it seems, feels death's proximity as the approach of an awesome, overwhelming, illimitable otherness. We totter precariously upon the brink of this mysterious infinity, and in its huge presence our life and concerns suddenly become

utterly trivial and insignificant, of no more weight than blowing dust and vanishing vapor.

This is the generic character of the human reaction. But we can experience that generic character in one of two radically different forms.

If we have invested all our effort and hopes in this present life, considering it all-in-all, the awareness of death's proximity is profoundly terrifying, and we'll do our best afterwards to forget it. In this case, we encounter death as a hostile, malevolent Nothingness intent upon annihilating us and all we cherish. Because the threat of death is present at every moment, and because we realize that death will inevitably get its way, we are never free of what has been called "the anxiety of existence."

This very anxiety had impelled me to spend the last twenty years in a sustained systematic effort to rid myself of material attachments and desires. The death of a brother had shown me the truth about our material condition and left me unable to see any future in mundane life. So I had come to place my hopes and efforts in Kṛṣṇa

(please turn to page 18)

PADAYĀTRĀ WORLDWIDE

IN CELEBRATION OF ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA'S CENTENNIAL APPEARANCE ANNIVERSARY

1996 marks the one hundredth anniversary appearance of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Devotees throughout the Society are planning for the largest celebration in ISKCON's history, culminating in a gigantic festival in Calcutta, Śrīla Prabhupāda's birthplace.

Devotees are making goals to be achieved in the next five years in numbers of one hundred: 100 Rathayātrā festivals, 100 Food for Life centers opened, Śrīla Prabhupāda's *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* printed and distributed in 100 languages . . .

We want to take Śrīla Prabhupāda's Padayātrā to 100 countries.

So far, Padayātrā has marched in ten countries, including the U.S.A., England, Mauritius, New Zealand, and Italy. Padayātrā in India has been going strong since 1984. The devotees there have vowed to cover at least 100,000 kilometers by 1996. They have already covered half of this. Padayātrā is also scheduled to begin in the Caribbean this summer. After England, the European Padayātrā will reach France, Holland, and Belgium by the end of the year. Australia, Malaysia, and Fiji will have Padayātrās by 1992. But



with only five years left and ninety countries to go, we need your help to succeed.

Please join us as we walk side by side chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa in towns and villages around the globe. Or better still, why not help organize Padayātrā in your own country? Devotees are waiting to hear from you. Let's join together not only to fulfill one of Prabhupāda's last desires but to celebrate the anniversary of his

auspicious appearance. What better way than by helping him fulfill the prediction that the holy name will be heard in every town and village of the world?

For information on how to join Padayātrā or bring it to your hometown, please write to a Padayātrā office at one of the addresses listed on page 38.

"Either I go with you or not, the program which you are doing [traveling *saṅkīrtana*] is completely approved by me. Go on steady with your program. As long as we are following the regulative principles of devotional service, I am always with you. So be encouraged to continue this program more and more and expand it so that the preaching will be heard in every town and village."

—Letter from Śrīla Prabhupāda to
Lokanātha Mahārāja, August 23, 1976



EDITORS (continued from page 16) consciousness, in activities and relationships not subject to time.

The doctor's announcement precipitated in me the generic human reaction—a heightened awareness of an awesome otherness and the insubstantiality of this life. But I experienced this awareness concretely as the closeness of Kṛṣṇa. He, personally, was that awesome Other, and I eagerly welcomed the devastation His proximity wreaks on material attachments and values; it was liberating.

If death approached me in this form, you could say it was because I had, in effect, spent the last twenty years dying. The renunciation of material activities, desires, and attachments, a renunciation devotees cultivate systematically, is a kind of death. But that renunciation is only one side of the practice.

The other side is made of the spiritual relationships we establish with Kṛṣṇa and His devotees and the service we perform in that company. Over time they become more and more relishable, and as the devotee becomes increasingly absorbed in them, renunciation takes place naturally. Activities and relationships in Kṛṣṇa consciousness are not material, and one fully engaged in them has already entered into eternal, spiritual life. Death—the giving up of the present body—does not disturb the devotee's activities or relationships. In that sense, a devotee does not die.

A materialist, however, has to die. Deeply attached to sense objects, to bodily relationships and temporary activities, a materialist will refuse the opportunity to engage in devotional service and surrender to Kṛṣṇa. The

renunciation practiced by devotees seems to him like death. He will not bow down before Kṛṣṇa.

Yet ultimately he must. He must give up everything and fall prostrate before a higher power. He experiences his necessary renunciation and surrender to Kṛṣṇa as a horrifying process of ultimate destruction. Those who want the illusion of independence from Kṛṣṇa must undergo, over and over again, the illusion of death.

Feeling the control of Kṛṣṇa, being conscious of His kind presence, I spent some happy days in the hospital bed. Emergency treatment had countered the extreme dehydration, and the Ampecillin pumping into my vein from the marvelous machine seemed to be doing the job. But, warned my doctor, I was not out of danger. The pernicious *streptococcus pyogenes* swarming in my blood normally resides in the

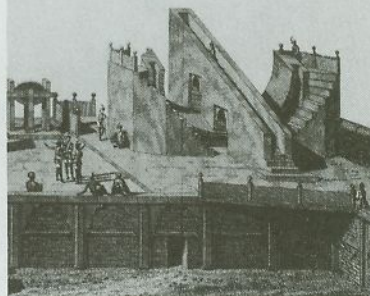
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human intestinal tract. Had it come in from my own guts? Tests had to be performed.

I did not mind. I was interested to see what Kṛṣṇa wanted. It seemed as if I were watching the world go on in my absence. At the same time, I was getting a much closer look at ordinary material life than I was used to.

Early every evening my roommate Jimmy—a horse trainer with a broken leg in traction—would be joined by his wife and children, loaded down with bags of fast foods and snacks. They would spread themselves through the room and begin eating, talking, and watching TV, all at the same time. They made themselves at home, transforming the hospital room into their living room. Jimmy and his family were remarkably open and friendly people, and they instinctively fit me right in as a guest or family friend. They politely offered me their cookies and popcorn and sodas, called upon me to join in their running commentaries on the programs and commercials on TV, and sought my judgment on family decisions or problems.

For close to a week I nearly lived with them as part of their family. It was strange. Here I felt myself on the boundary between life and death, seeing the world as if from the other side, happily disengaged from it, and yet I was willy-nilly immersed as I had never been before in the modes of

ordinary, thoughtless living. I wondered whether karmic reactions of my own were not being played out in some condensed or denatured fashion. I grew to like this family, but seeing them conduct their affairs, I felt helplessly sad for them. They were nice people who were not living their own lives, for they were controlled entirely by material nature.

I was trying to be free, but how well was I doing? I felt detached, but not detached enough; close to Kṛṣṇa, but not close enough. I must confess to a third feeling in response to my doctor's announcement.

In addition to the animal relief and to a sense of closeness to Kṛṣṇa, there was also a sense of disappointment. Dying had its attractions, too. For twenty years I had been at war with my material conditioning—with my dispositions toward sense gratification, with my failures of character, with my envy and my inveterate laziness. By the time I so abruptly landed in the hospital, I was thoroughly fed up with this particular conditioned self. The thought of starting over filled me with relief—it would be wonderful to take a higher birth, to be endowed from the beginning with a better character, to possess natural nobility of mind, to grow up without having to do or see many things I had seen and done in this life. The prospect was enticing.

But it was not to be.

When an infected blister on my heel, contracted in India, yielded up the same virulent organism that had invaded my blood, my doctor declared me out of danger; the source of the septicemia was clear. He released me from the hospital. I got well.

As for my conditioned nature, I take it as Kṛṣṇa's desire that He wants me to keep working on it. That's His decision.

If death is the final exam to test how we have spent our lives, I suppose I was given a kind of midterm. Midterm exams provide students with a mid-course bearing. I know better what I have to do.

Clearly, one of those things, as my hard-boiled editor insists, is to write. By the arrangement of providence, I am finishing this column at our Gītā Nāgarī farm. By the same arrangement, Jayādvaita Swami happens to be here. We have been put up together in the same house. "Finished yet?" he says when he comes in the door. This is Kṛṣṇa's mercy. I get the message.

Ravindra Svarūpa Dāsa, ISKCON's Governing Body Commissioner for the U.S. mid-Atlantic region, lives at the Philadelphia temple, where he joined ISKCON in 1971. He holds a Ph.D. in religion from Temple University.

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HARDCORE HARE KṚṢṆAS

The Straightedge Connection

by Bhakta Vic Shelter



Right: Vic at the Cabaret,
Buffalo, New York.

Last year I joined the Hare Kṛṣṇas. And as if that wasn't enough to drive any respectable American mother to tears, these weren't just any Hare Kṛṣṇas: they were punk rockers.

Yes, I joined a punk rock Hare Kṛṣṇa band.

I'd better backtrack and let you in on the full story. It all starts about two or three years ago. I was in a punk band called Beyond.

If you want to get accurate about it, "punk" isn't exactly the right term. Nowadays it's called hardcore, specifically, straightedge hardcore. Straightedge is a youth movement whose adherents pretty much follow the four regs* (well, at least three of them). All around the world there are hundreds of thousands of straightedge kids who don't take intoxicants, and most of them don't eat meat or gamble. They all look down on casual sex, and some of them are even

* The "four regs" is ISKCON slang for the regulative principles all initiated Kṛṣṇa devotees follow—no intoxicants, no meat-eating, no gambling, and no illicit sex.—Ed.

strictly celibate. No lie.

Before I drift too far from the plot, let's get back to my old band, Beyond. We'd play concerts all over and sing about being straightedge and all this other socially conscious stuff. One day in Connecticut it so happened that we played a few shows with probably the most popular straightedge band in the world, Youth of Today.

I had heard that the lead singer, Ray, was into some far-out Kṛṣṇa thing, and I guess I was pretty interested in the whole idea. I fancied myself a pretty darn spiritual guy. Hey, I even had dreadlocks and read the Old Testament. Besides that, one of my favorite bands was the Cro-Mags. They were the first Kṛṣṇa influence on the hardcore music scene. Everyone considered them cool guys, so naturally Kṛṣṇa had a good connotation in my mind, since I too, after all, wanted to be a "cool guy." My





THE SHELTER MAILBOX

Kids from all over write to Shelter. Here are excerpts from some letters, with Bhakta Vic Shelter's replies.

When you first got into Kṛṣṇa consciousness, did your friends joke you a lot? My friends seem to think it's a joke.

I thought my mom was cool about K.C., but I guess I was wrong. She flipped when she found out the Shelter show was at the temple. So I've unfortunately gone back to hiding everything at school in my locker.

Is hiding from my mom that Kṛṣṇa is the way for me wrong?

In the mornings I've usually got enough time to chant one round on my beads before my mom gets up. Is that enough or should I try to do more?

When I'm 18, what needs to be done so I can move into a temple?

Chris
Maryland

VIC: The first thing is friends. . . . Well, if my friends joked they did it behind my back, because as far as I know they didn't. Some of them thought Kṛṣṇa consciousness was dumb or whatever. So what I did was I heard their comments out and weighed what they were saying, what gripe or difficulty they had with Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Then I myself challenged the Kṛṣṇa philosophy with that same argument and saw if Kṛṣṇa consciousness could be defeated.

In most cases you'll find that your friends aren't saying anything intellectual at all. They're just name

calling. But I found that a big reason behind this is their fear of losing your friendship—which we should assure them is something that doesn't have to happen as long as they don't want it to.

You don't have to pay much attention to other people's opinions of you. The most important thing right now is your own opinion, and the opinion of the great spiritual masters.

In other words, don't let your friends bug you. But don't be insensitive towards them either, if you can help it. If you continue to develop your Kṛṣṇa consciousness, just by being friends with you they'll make spiritual progress. So don't cut them off. But don't take them seriously either. They're in bigtime illusion, after all.

Next up . . . Is it wrong to hide from your mom that Kṛṣṇa is the way for you? This is a much tougher question. When everything is said and done I would say yes, it is wrong. But you have to be careful not to blow her out of the water. You have to be tactful and give it to her slowly, in degrees, and not freak her out.

Of course, the most important thing is that you can go on chanting and practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness. So you have to judge for yourself, using your intelligence: will telling your mom all about everything infringe on your Kṛṣṇa consciousness?

Anyway, if you want my advice, I think you should definitely make a goal of telling your mom all about Kṛṣṇa consciousness and your involvement with it. But you should make it a gradual thing. Don't be defensive or self-righteous about it: "Mom, you're a materialistic demon!" But be open. They can

write me a letter if they want. Whatever. But don't try to hide it. When you try to hide things, it only leads to distress.

One of the pillars of spiritual life is honesty. Just try to present the truth in a palatable way, and don't fry her out. How's that?

The next point is your chanting. I think it's fantastic that you're doing one round a day! That's great! Always do that one round without fail. If you can do more, go ahead, but first of all chant that one round, somehow or other. Kṛṣṇa will be pleased, and He will work out some opportunity for you to chant more when the time is right.

For now, always do your round every day and try to remember Kṛṣṇa throughout the day as much as possible, through His philosophy, His name, His form, His pastimes, and so on. You'll definitely see yourself making spiritual advancement quickly, and you'll notice purer and purer devotion manifesting itself in your heart. Go for it, and keep up the fantastic work!

At 18 you're going to move into a temple. . . . Ok, that's great. But for now become Kṛṣṇa conscious as far as possible in your current situation. When 18 comes then we'll worry about 18. Temple life is dead serious and is a big step. My advice for you is to begin preparing now for temple life by becoming determined and serious at home and following a Kṛṣṇa conscious life as much as possible. You may not be able to go the whole nine yards right now, but pick whatever you can do, and do it without fail, every day. If you start from now, by the time you move into a temple you'll be serious and sincere enough to really do great service to Śrīla Prabhupāda and Lord Caitanya.

Chris Toliver

questionable motives notwithstanding, when we played those shows with Youth of Today I found the singer, Ray, and eavesdropped my way into an interview he was doing with some kids who publish their own underground straightedge magazine. Ray was using

words like *transcendental* and *cosmic*, which really piqued my interest. I asked a bunch of questions about the title of the first Cro-Mags album, "The Age of Quarrel."

As questions followed answers, I got more and more into it, sitting on the

lawn before that concert in Connecticut. As a result of this meeting, I decided to check out Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. From there on in, it's pretty much history.

Shortly afterwards I moved out to San Diego and joined a new band, Inside

Below, left to right:
Bhakta Chris, Bhakta Eric
Raghunātha Dāsa, Bhakta Vic



Out. In this band I tried to incorporate the message of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The result was an overtly spiritual, if still a little (or a lot) hodgepodge, band who rapidly became real popular.

As I mentioned before, in the hardcore scene the kids publish their own magazines, and around this time I also started doing one. I called it *The Enquirer*, and it was through and through about Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I made and personally sold about 350 copies of the first issue.

By now Ray from Youth of Today was also in a new band, Shelter, which, like my magazine, was completely dedicated to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This was creating quite a stir in the hardcore

scene, and Kṛṣṇa would frequently pop up in any conversation you'd lend an ear to.

Once again my band and Ray's toured together. Picture eight punk "musicians," a bus full of saffron-clad teenage Hare Kṛṣṇas, and two *gōsvāmīs*, masters of the senses: Guṇagrāhī Goswami and Dhanurdara Swami. (The *gōsvāmīs* both showed the highest tolerance by putting up with us all for that two-week tour).

As we traveled around the country, it became obvious that Kṛṣṇa consciousness had become a major force in hardcore. Imagine four hundred teenagers, most wearing *tulasī* on their necks, paying like five or ten dollars apiece to come listen to a bunch of Hare Kṛṣṇas.

It's a far cry from getting ignored on the street corner.

Nor is it sheer numbers alone that's impressive. Have you ever been approached in a parking lot by five enthusiastic kids who spontaneously want to know how to offer their food to Lord Kṛṣṇa and where they can get *japa* beads? It happened more than once.

By the time the tour was over, I had joined Shelter, and shortly afterwards I became a *bramacāri*, a student, under the care of Guṇagrāhī Goswami.

That was last year. Today I'm sitting behind a computer at ISKCON Philadelphia. On my right there's a desk that has a constant supply of at least fifteen letters from unbelievably intelligent and



THE SHELTER MAILBOX

Everyone I know hassles me about Kṛṣṇa. They always ask me when am I going to shave my head and go to an airport. I say, "When I'm ready." But that really doesn't bother me. What bothers me is they are always looking for an argument and questions I can't answer.

How do Kṛṣṇas feel about homeless people? Why are they homeless? Did they do something wrong in their past life to deserve being homeless, diseased and ill? Why?

In the past 11 months I have learned so many things I had no clue about. Like how short life is. So I'm always trying to live every day to its fullest and purest. All I want, Bhakta Vic, is to do right for myself, get enlightened, and be my own self, and also to find my own self. To me finding myself is going to take some time, but I'm scared. Am I just going overboard? No! I'm not afraid of how long it will take to find myself, just afraid to do it.

In my town I'm honestly the only one that is into Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Seriously. Everyone in

this town is infatuated with the newest clothes and cars, no intelligence that it all could be gone tomorrow. Death will come and go and they will have no control over it.

Erika
New Jersey

VIC: Your "friends" can be a hassle. . . . Well, try to see it as Kṛṣṇa's mercy. He's giving you a chance to show real devotion to Him by undergoing so many trials. Any orangutan can act spiritual when everything smells like a bed of roses. But when things get difficult, that's what separates the sincere from the tag-alongs. This is a chance to show Kṛṣṇa you're sincere. Seeing that, He'll give you more and more mercy and realization.

Anyway, if they want to argue, tell them you're not into it. Tell them that if they really want to argue, I'll argue with 'em. They can write me, and I'll be glad to hassle with them.

Your realizations about death and the futility of material life are really potent. Thanks for sharing them with me.

Homeless. A devotee is compassionate to everyone. He or she

sees that in reality *everyone* is homeless. Our lifetimes last for the blink of an eye, and at death all of our flimsy makeshift shelters in this material world get torn away from us. We're kicked out, evicted, homeless.

Everyone from the diamond-ringer in the highrise office to the wino in the gutter is in the same position: homeless, without shelter. The only difference is that it's less obvious to the businessman than to the wino.

Yes, homeless people are in the sick position they're in because of their *karma*, things they did in the past. It's their own fault, when you get right down to it. According to *karma*, we all get what we had coming to us.

But the spirit soul doesn't deserve to have anything to do with *karma* at all. So a devotee doesn't become cold: "Oh, you deserve to be homeless!" Instead, the devotee realizes, "You're a spirit soul. You deserve to be happy, not suffering." So a devotee's mercy goes out to everyone. He or she tries to give everyone a home under the shelter of Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. That's real welfare work. And that's the real way to take care of the homeless.

**Left and right:
Raghunātha
Dāsa at The
Lost Horizon,
Syracuse,
New York.**

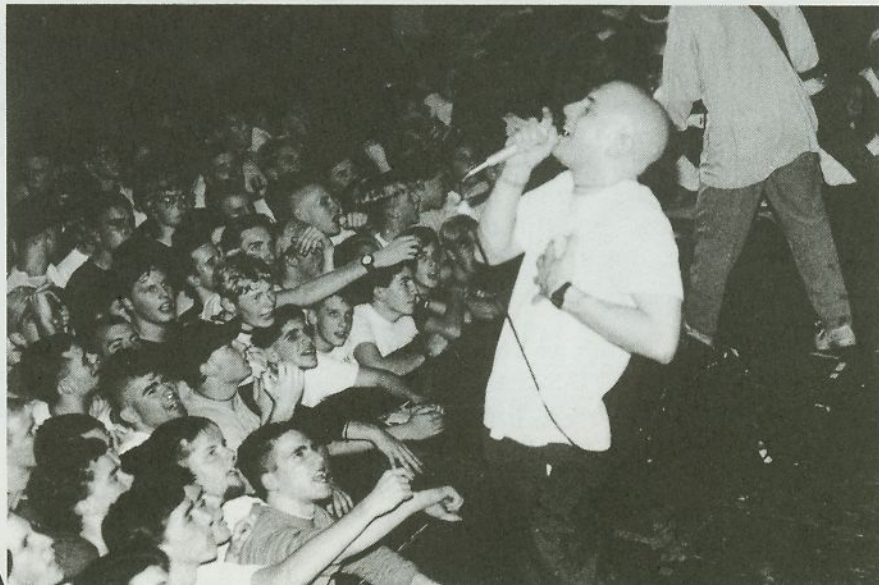
sincere people all over the world. I spend at least an hour and a half every day writing replies to their inquiries about Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Upstairs is the office of the record label we run, Equal Vision Records, which is a showcase for the growing

number of Kṛṣṇa conscious hardcore bands. Through Equal Vision we sell Śrīla Prabhupāda's books and other Kṛṣṇa conscious music and literature.

Locally, young people are showing up at our Sunday and Wednesday feasts. Four or five over the past four weeks

Steve Silvers



THE SHELTER MAILBOX

What about sex? Can a Krishna have sex or not? I'm 17 and I don't have sex, but I think it's real hard to control it.

Tom
Salzburg, Austria

VIC: Sex desire seems difficult to control. It's true. But it's possible to do it successfully. Here's how.

Let me give you an example. Say you have a piece of pizza (ok, soy pizza). You're totally starving. I mean, you haven't eaten a crumb for days. So you have this piece of pizza, and you're just about to chomp on it, and up strolls little old me saying, "Wait a minute! Wait a minute! Don't bite into that pizza!"

You stop short and stare at me.

I say, "I want you to give me that pizza."

"No way! I'm starved!"
"Come on, just give it up. Give it to me."

But it's difficult. I mean, you're hungry! You just can't give it up. No matter how much you sympathize with me, you just can't bring yourself to give me that piece of pizza.

But then out from behind my back I pull out a piping-hot super-soy pizza with all kinds of amazing toppings and great heaps of sauce and everything you could ever ask for. Now I say, "Give me that slice, and I'll give you this whole pie."

All of a sudden it's very easy to give up your cold and greasy old piece of tofu-joy pizza.

It's the same thing to control sex desire. Just to try to sit there and hold your breath, repressing the urge, repressing the urge—that doesn't do anything but get you completely frustrated. In fact, sex desire is impossible to control

that way.

But if you get something better than sex, you right away lose your attraction for it, and then you can give it up without even hardly thinking about it, just like you gave up the greasy slice for a hot new pie.

But what's better than sex? In the material world, nothing. Sex is the topmost nectarean pleasure in this world (why do you think everybody's killing themselves over it?). But for one who has tasted even a drop of the ocean of transcendental loving service to the supreme reservoir of pleasure, Kṛṣṇa, sex life becomes about as attractive as a piece of stool.

So one who wants to free himself or herself from slavery to the sexual organs should immediately take to chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. You'll experience things that make it easy to give up every vice you ever hated.

have taken up *sādhana-bhakti*, the practice of devotional service, with sincerity and vigor. Ray has been initiated as Raghunātha Dāsa. *The Enquirer* has reached its fourth issue, and more than three thousand have been sold and studied. There are new Kṛṣṇa conscious magazines emerging, and it's seldom you see any zine (to use the lingo) that doesn't at least mention Kṛṣṇa once or twice. Shelter has released an album, plus a single that has sold well into the thousands. The record sleeves are packed with information about Kṛṣṇa. All of this has fallen upon earnest eyes and minds starving for something more than modern materialistic society can offer them.

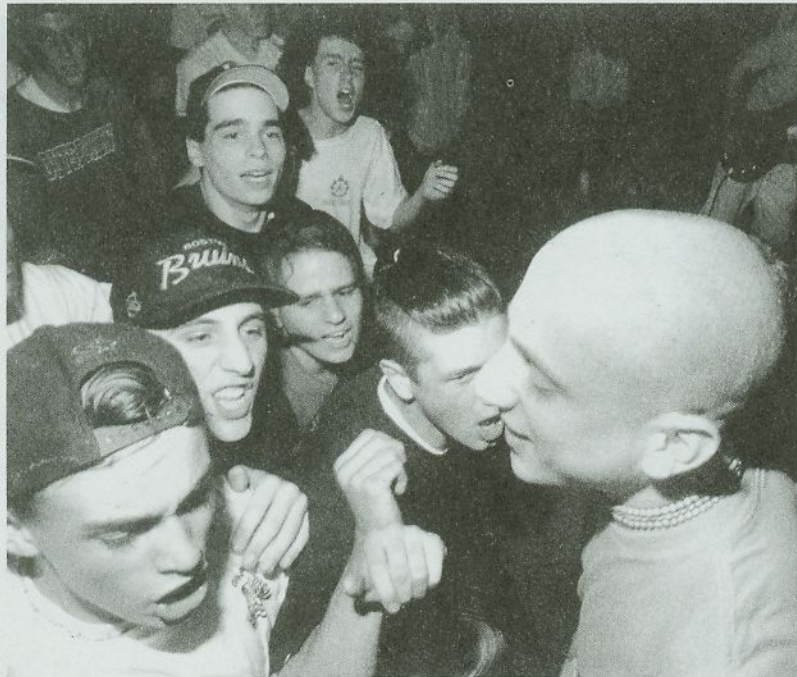
To try to meet this ever-increasing demand for hardcore Kṛṣṇa consciousness, we'll be releasing another LP soon, along with a single from a new Kṛṣṇa conscious band out of Texas called Refuse to Fall.

By the time you read this, we'll be on the road again, touring the U.S. Besides our musical attack on *māyā*, we'll have





Vic at
City Gardens,
Trenton,
New Jersey.



Left: At the Cabaret, Buffalo, New York. Right: Vic at Lost Horizon, Syracuse, New York.



THE SHELTER MAILBOX

I must admit: I've read the Gita and the Upanishads and I feel they have helped me a lot. I'm gaining a lot of insight because of them. I have one BIG problem: Sex. I'm seeing this girl, and we have sex. I don't view it as illicit, though. I love her, and she loves me. We didn't have sex until we were sure we were ready. What I mean is we were responsible. Besides, wasn't Kṛṣṇa somewhat of a ladies man?

Dan
Pennsylvania

VIC: Ok, you've got the sex problem. If you two love each other, that's very good. You can live together and help each other advance in spiritual life. That is perfect Kṛṣṇa consciousness. But you have to be completely honest. Do you love her? Who is she? She's not the body. She's a spiritual soul, a part of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Loving the real her means treating her that way. "Making love" to a mental and physical combination of atoms and mole-

cules is not loving the real her.

To love someone means to desire her highest welfare, all the time. In other words, you always want the best for that person. And what's the best thing for the person you love? Well, certainly it's not to tie that person tighter and tighter to temporary, illusory, miserable bodily existence. But that's what happens when we're attached to enjoying the material energy through the senses, and specifically through the genitals. If you look beneath all the romantic poetry and flowery phrases, that's what happens at sex, nothing else.

Would your relationship be harmed if you stopped having sex? Would this "love" keep going if either party didn't get what they wanted? Try this experiment for a month or so. If the relationship is one of true love, you'll find that by stopping sex your relationship will deepen and become more intimate and exciting. If it isn't real love, things will start to fall apart as soon as the bed isn't bouncing.

Real relationships are more than just sex or no sex. I hope you two will start to help each other along in spiritual life. You'll find that this is

so much more intimate than mundane animal sex. It's a much deeper love. You might as well try it.

You ask whether Kṛṣṇa was a ladies man. To be honest, Kṛṣṇa's pastimes are above our current level of realization. Kṛṣṇa's not a man. He's the Supreme Personality. He's not at all like me or you. He's in a class completely by Himself. Kṛṣṇa is Kṛṣṇa, and the spirit soul is His servant. But in the material world we're all trying to imitate Kṛṣṇa and become supreme enjoyers. That's why there's war, divorce, breakups, suicide. It's just not our prerogative to imitate Kṛṣṇa. Why? Because we're just plain not Him, and never will be.

The first, most essential principle of spiritual life is to realize (not just theoretically understand, but *realize*) that we're not the body, we're spirit soul. Once we're living every second of our lives aware of this fact, then we'll be able to understand Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. For now, let's stick to the first point. First find out if you're the body and if sex has anything to do with who you really are. Then we can talk about Kṛṣṇa's transcendental pastimes. [Dan and his girlfriend are now celibate.]



it's
con-
tinuing
to expand ex-
ponentially. I only
hope that more and
more devotees will come
forward to lend a hand in this
wonderful opportunity to give real
shelter to souls wandering homeless
and aimless through the life-threatening
Age of Quarrel.

new
booklets,
pamphlets,
and magazines
printed and more in
the works. Boredom is
definitely not a factor when
you're in Shelter.

This hardcore arm of Śrīla
Prabhupāda's movement has expanded
beyond my ability to describe it. And

The best part about the whole thing
is that I've been blessed with the con-
stant association of the members of
Shelter and Equal Vision, who are such
sincere and fired-up devotees. By their
mercy, I'm managing to stay in Prabhu-
pāda's revolutionary movement for
spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I pray
that they'll continue to treat me so
kindly, despite my constant flow of
offenses.

Equality

*This is a pamphlet I wrote
for straightedge kids.*

“First of all,” he told me, “anyone who thinks there’s any equality in this society is completely crazy.” His right hand rested on the shallow stage. Casual.

Contrast his compelling voice: “I mean, you can’t so much as set your big toe on the sidewalk without instantly being labeled up and down, stereotyped, and neatly filed away under everyone’s preconceptions and prejudices. Ain’t that right?”

Of course I had to agree. “Yeah.” “But why?” His words were punctuated with *deep* enthusiasm. “Why are we so totally lacking any living equality in this society? Why?”

I mumbled, “Uh . . . I don’t . . . I guess . . . you know . . .”

“Because this society is based on bodies.”

Pause: Dramatic effect.

“If you want to get right down to the hard reality, in their eyes you

THE SHELTER MAILBOX

Let’s face it, man, you joined a club just like everyone else. You all dress the same. You all have the same bald haircut. You all believe the same things. You totally gave up your individuality, man. Sheep. You’re no longer a person. You’re just another Hare Kṛṣṇa, like all the rest. Let’s face it, you lost it.

Matt
Boise, Idaho

VIC: Hare Kṛṣṇa and thanks for your letter. You seem like a person who values individuality very highly, but I think you’ve stumbled into self-contradiction. The philosophy in your letter denies true individuality and defines people as nothing more than production-line robots ready for mass social programming.

What you wind up saying is that people have to be *made into* individuals by the clothes they wear, the music they listen to, etc. In other words, it’s the things we do that make us into indivi-



Chris Toliver

duals, and if we don't do the "right" things (like if we shave our heads and wear robes) then we lose our individuality.

If I have to make myself an individual, then I must not *be* an individual to begin with. I must be some kind of blank slate who has to go out and buy my personhood, wear my "individuality." So although I'm sure you think of yourself as someone who holds individuality very dear, you've turned it into something bought from a thrift store and a hair salon.

I don't subscribe to your opinion. Sorry.

We don't take individuality so cheaply in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We say that an individual is something you are, not something you become. In other words, true individuality is not external. It's not in the clothes you wear or the style of your hair. It's deep inside the self, an inalterable reality, and it can't be taken away from you by anyone.

I know from your past letters that you don't want to hear a "bunch of mumbo-jumbo from some wacked-out scriptures." So let me illustrate the point by using a common-sense scientific experiment that has nothing to do with "scripture."

Let's say you take three hundred people, dress them up in identical three-piece suits and ties, and line them up against a white wall. They all have identical haircuts too—three hundred people wearing exactly the same clothes and hair.

But if you go and talk to each one, you'll find that they're different people with

individual identities and personalities.

This proves the simple point that it's not the clothes we wear that makes us the individual persons we are. It's something much deeper. I'm no more or less an individual in a green vinyl spiked jumpsuit and purple beehive hairdo than I am in an orange robe and a shaved head, because individuality has nothing to do with appearance. So just that devotees dress alike doesn't mean they've lost their individuality.

But we all believe the same things, so obviously we must be a bunch of "sheep." I don't want to be antagonistic or anything, Matt, but it seems like your idea of individuality is straight out of the dark ages or something: As long as I disagree with you I'm an individual, but as soon as we agree we become clones? It's just not like that.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not a set of random beliefs. It deals scientifically with the subject of spirituality. It's a science, like math, for example. In common math everyone believes that two plus two equals four. Everyone believes exactly the same thing. Are you going to write letters to all the mathematicians and tell them they're dummies and sheep?

Not only is it untrue that a person loses his individuality by becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious; our real individuality never fully manifests *until* we become Kṛṣṇa conscious.

A devotee has an intense love for individuality and personality. Our philosophy is that they are two of the most essential ingredients of the deepest self. They're at the core of our very being. But by trying to hide behind the false identities and costumes we put on in the material world, we trade in that priceless individuality for a handful of ashes and dust.

In the material world everyone tries to get sense gratification. Thinking that

we will be happy if we make the senses happy, we soon become bewildered and mistake the body and its senses for our true self. It's at that exact instant that we turn away from our real individuality and personhood.

The body is made of inert matter—atoms, electrons, etc. Atoms don't have a shred of individuality or personality. Hydrogen is hydrogen. You've seen one, you've seen them all. Simple logic:

- I see the body as my self.
 - The body is a lump of atoms and electrons.
 - Atoms and electrons are non-persons and have no individuality.
- ∴ Therefore I see my self as a non-person with no individuality.

How you see yourself is what you become.

Anyway, Matt, what I'm trying to say is that we stifle our true individuality by accepting the idea that we are the body. As long as I identify with this body and try to enjoy its senses, I'm choking my real personality and individuality.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness, believe it or not, is intended to uncover the true self, the real individual person. Behind all the masks. Beyond all the acts. It's a scientific way to rise above the confining illusion of identifying with the body.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness doesn't take away individuality. On the contrary, it gives individuality the freedom to expand and express itself to its fullest potential.

I hope I didn't come off as arrogant or condescending in this letter. If I did, I apologize.

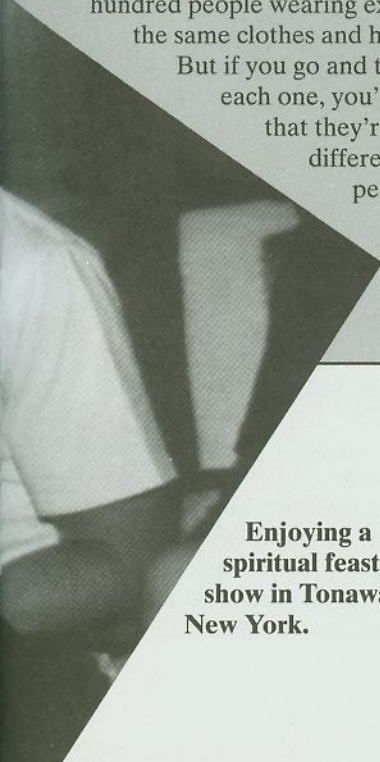
I just wrote because you seemed like a person who recognizes the value of individuality and I hoped we might both benefit if I shared with you what I have learned.

ain't nothing but a lump of flesh. They have no scientific understanding of the spirit soul, and that's why there's not a single shred of equality in their world."

Confident that I had heard all this religious rhetoric before, I protested: "Are you really trying to tell me that

because they don't believe in some kind of soul, that's why people are prejudiced? I can't see how a 'soul' has anything at all to do with equal rights."

"All right, OK," he said. "Let's just say you're right: It doesn't make one fig's bit of difference whether you



Enjoying a spiritual feast after a show in Tonawanda, New York.

E
EQUAL
V
VISION
R
RECORDS



Above: Logo for Shelter's record company. Above right: Vic explains the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness to a group of fans following a show in Tonawanda, New York.

believe in some soul or not. Let's just say, for the sake of argument, that everything they fed you in Biology and Chem 101 was true: You're nothing but a chance combination of atoms. If we build our society and our personal lives around these beliefs, then we'll never ever have equality."

"Why not?"
 "For one thing, no two bodies are the

"So I wondered, How were we equal? I mean, my mom told me everyone was equal, and deep down inside I knew she was right. But if we were equal, how come I couldn't draw or sing as good as those other guys? How were we equal? I couldn't figure it out."

He had a point there. Plus I got a kick out of his stories, and he seemed to make sense. But for some reason I still



Chris Toliver

same. Everybody is different. Like the kid I used to sit next to in elementary school—he was the best superhero drawer in the whole wide world. And me, I could barely draw a stick figure. Or that girl sitting behind me, the soloist for the glee club, or whatever it was. Her mouth could open up wider than her whole head and hit the highest notes you'd ever imagine. Meanwhile, they shoved me and my lousy alto voice wa-a-a-ay in the back. They practically had to bribe me to quit.

couldn't bring myself to come right out and agree with him so soon. So I coughed up something like "Well, you know, I mean, different people may be good at different things, but we're all the same on the inside."

"Wait a minute!" His eyebrows arched over wide eyes. "What do you mean 'on the inside'? I thought we said it didn't matter whether there was a soul or not, that we were just bodies. Well, what the heck is so special about the inside of a body?"

THE SHELTER MAILBOX

O.K. To start this off I want to say that I'm very ignorant as to what Kṛṣṇa is really about. I feel that I have a *very* basic idea of what it is supposed to be, but that's about it.

What I do know is that Krishnas are supposed to be against sense gratification. Correct? Supposedly by not gratifying your senses you gain a higher spiritual level. If I am correct in my understanding of this, I can see the point behind the idea.

But if you believe in not gratifying your senses how can you go to shows and dance and sing along and stuff like that? I mean pretty much the whole reason anyone, Kṛṣṇa or not, goes to shows is because of the good feeling they get and the fun they have. A show is a total sense experience—the sights of the band, the feeling of dancing, it's all

totally your senses. So in fact dancing and going to shows or even singing or playing an instrument in a band is gratifying your senses. So what about it?

Emil
New Jersey

VIC: You're right. Sense gratification is exactly the opposite of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

So then what the heck is "sense gratification"?

When you do anything—go to a show, type a letter, read a letter—you're always involved in some type of sense activity. You're hearing the music with your ears, typing with your fingers, reading with your eyes.

But sense activity comes in two flavors: (1) material sense activity and (2) spiritual sense activity. To understand the difference, we need to know first of all what the terms "material" and "spiritual" mean.

The trademark of material consciousness is known as "I, me, mine." Thinking that I'm number one, the most important person—that's material consciousness. And the actions I do in this consciousness are called materialistic. For example, because I think my stomach is more important than the stomach of the Ethiopian child, I keep eating meat and support an agriculture that robs the world of her ability to feed all of her inhabitants and more.

Another example: When I walk down the street, I somehow imagine that people in the passing cars are noticing me, the way I walk. They must be wondering where I'm going. Or at a hardcore show I'm thinking how everyone is watching me dance. I'm thinking that "I, me, mine" is the most important thing in the universe. That's materialistic consciousness.

In this consciousness I do something called sense gratification (or, in the terms of this letter, "material sense activity"). I use my senses to interact with the world around me, but the motive for the activity begins and ends with "I, me, or mine."

I get up and go to the store because I want a bag of potato chips. "I" is the center. Or sometimes we may get slightly more sophisticated and put "mine" in the center. My friends, my relatives, my race, my nationality, my gender. When some-

one works only for their country or something, this is usually mistaken for selfless activity. But it boils down to just an extended form of I-worship. I'm only interested in serving the larger group because *I* happen to be a part of it or *I* get some fringe benefit from doing that service.

So, yeah, I go to some hardcore show just because "I" want to get into the band and it makes "me" and "my" friends happy. Or I get into a band and play guitar for the same "I, me, mine" reasons. That's sense gratification.

Now let's get back to what spiritual sense activity is.

In Kṛṣṇa consciousness the senses are fully active, but there's no self-centered interest. The devotee is motivated solely by the desire to serve the Supreme Absolute Truth, Kṛṣṇa.

We can't do anything at all without using our senses. So if all sense activity were material, doing anything spiritual would be impossible. So we'd be stuck.

But Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the method of using the senses properly. It's the science of spiritual sense activity, in which "I, me and mine" is completely kicked out.

So, hardcore shows. For the last two months, Shelter has been dormant while the other band members are in India. So I haven't been to a hardcore show in two months. And to be honest with you I couldn't care less if I never went to another one again in my life. But because there are people at those shows who are interested in hearing about Kṛṣṇa consciousness, I'll go there and fully engage my senses in trying to serve the Absolute.

That's not sense gratification. But if I start to slip into the desire for personal fame and all that rock star stuff, or if I just want to go party it up in the pit, then it becomes sense gratification. That's why I'm trying to be very careful to avoid those things.



"Come on," I said. "You know what I mean: Inside. Inside, in our minds, in our thoughts and feelings, we're all equal."

"We are?" He smiled. "But my mind ain't no way the same as Einstein's, or Joe Duncicap's, for that matter. Right? Our minds are just as different, just as unequal, as our bodies. I think you can see that."

"I guess so. But our emotions . . ."

"No two people have the same emotions. It's common sense. No two people feel the same way about anything."

"But everybody has feelings."

"That's it!" His face lit up. "You got it!"

"I did?"

"Yeah. You just hit the nail right on the head. Now we're starting to come to true equality. Everyone has the basic capacity to feel, to experience."

"Yeah."

"But where do we get this ability from? Our bodies, our brains—they're all made of atoms. Atoms don't feel happy, angry, or frustrated. They don't experience. They don't feel anything. This is common scientific knowledge. Atoms don't experience, they don't feel. But you and me—we do experience. We do feel happiness, frustration, anger, elation. We're both aware of this conversation. So obviously we must be something more than atoms and electrons. And that 'something more' is where our true equality lies."

What he was saying was starting to click with me now. I don't know if I'm getting it down on paper as effectively as he said it to me, but his point was this: The modern belief that anything spiritual is just hocus-pocus, that everything (including you and me) can ultimately be boiled down to atoms and electrons—that's the bogus idea that stripped equality from our world. Equality lies in the universal ability of every living being to experience life. That's the ultimate common platform of all living beings: the spiritual platform. But a machine doesn't experience anything at all. So when they claim I'm nothing but a "molecular machine," and by constantly pounding it into my head they get me to believe it, then they've robbed me blind of my equality. When I buy into their plastic lifestyles, I trade

equality for a handful of cheap lifeless chemicals.

"But anyways," he kept on, "the fact is that we're not just a body. There's obviously something about us that is very different from the body—something that gives us all the ability to feel and experience, something that makes us all equal. You can call it a soul if you want. And anyone or any system that denies the reality of this soul steals our equality right out from under our cold noses."

"I think I see what you're saying."

"Now we got to tear down all these bogus systems that try to deny us the soul."

Anticipation . . . Intensity.

"Now that we know where and how real equality exists, we've got to revolutionize and protest up and down until all the lies of this body-conscious world empire are fully overthrown."

"Well, how do we do that?"

"As long as the masses believe that they are the body, as long as they think, I am this white body, I

**Raghunātha
Dāsa leads the
chanting at
the home of
another
band leader
who is
beginning
to follow
devotional
principles.**

am this black body, I am woman, I am man, human, animal, insect . . . as long as they accept this lie, fed by mass media ad campaigns and intensive social indoctrination, there will only be exploitation and inequality.

"And all these souped-up 'liberation' and 'equal rights' campaigns are unfortunately nothing more than a waste of time and energy, unless they're based on a scientific understanding of the spiritual self. When we really want to go beyond the catchy T-shirt slogans,



Chris Toliver

when we really want to have equality for everyone, then we must fight with every last ounce of our strength for spiritual revolution.

“Every living being is a spirit soul. I mean, every last one of us—we’re all part and parcel of the Supreme Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead. That’s real equality. And if we sincerely want to do something about it, we have to smash all this false materialistic propaganda of modern society, and we have to educate, on a massive

scale, about spiritual reality. That’s the whole purpose of this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. That’s what we’re all about.”

My dry mouth hung slightly open, speechless.

“So please,” he implored, “do something to push on this movement. In whatever way you can, do something to advance this revolution.”

He then moved off to find the next interested person. For days afterwards his words would repeat themselves

over and over again in my head: “Do something to advance this revolution.”

So I wrote this pamphlet in the hopes that those who read about our conversation will also be impelled to do something for real equality, to push on this soul revolution.

Anyone interested in any way can contact me: Bhakta Vic, 41 West Allens Lane, Philadelphia, PA 19119. ☸

Bhakta Vic Shelter begins a regular column in our next issue.



SERVICE (continued from page 8) six-thirty. Similarly, Kṛṣṇa is passing from one universe to another, and when He's visible in this universe, we find Kṛṣṇa's appearance.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī has informed us that a soul who has become competent to associate with Kṛṣṇa goes first of all to Kṛṣṇa within some universe where He is having His pastimes, *bhauma-līlā*. Then, just as a person is trained as an apprentice and then given a post, so when a living entity eligible by Kṛṣṇa consciousness gives up his body he is transferred at once to the universe where Kṛṣṇa is. And after being trained up thoroughly, he's transferred to the original Kṛṣṇaloka, Goloka Vṛndāvana.

How swift the spirit soul is—in a moment he goes either to Kṛṣṇa or to one of the universes! There are millions and trillions of universes. We have information of our universe, but from Vedic literature we get information that

there are millions and trillions of universes like this. We can see only one universe. But we get this information from *Brahma-saṁhitā*: *yasya prabhā prabhavato jagad-aṇḍa-koṭi*. The word *jagad-aṇḍa* means one universe. And *koṭi* means millions. So there are unlimited universes. And in each universe there are millions and trillions of planets, each different from the others. This is the creation.

So just imagine the vastness of God's creation, how He enters every universe continually, and how His *līlā* is going on. As soon as Kṛṣṇa's birth is finished in one universe, immediately in another universe His birth takes place. This is called *nitya-līlā*. So the spirit soul has immense power, and the soul is only a fragment of Kṛṣṇa. Now you can imagine the power of Kṛṣṇa. The living entity has so many potencies. So what potency must Kṛṣṇa have, who is full of spiritual potency?

Actually if we want to be happy, as

part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa, we must join Him. That is our value. This example I have given several times: a small screw from a machine has immense value when it is attached to the machine. But the same small screw when detached from the machine has no value. Not even a farthing. Similarly, we are part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa, Vāsudeva. Our value is in full when we join Kṛṣṇa, when we dovetail our activities in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Then we are valuable. Otherwise, so-called progress is simply illusion.

Therefore if we actually want happiness, we must dovetail our activities with Kṛṣṇa, Vāsudeva. It is for your interest. It is not for Kṛṣṇa's interest. Kṛṣṇa can create millions of living entities like you. He doesn't require your service. He's complete. But if you want your satisfaction, you have to dovetail yourself in devotional service to Kṛṣṇa. That is intelligence. Otherwise—foolishness, ignorance, illusion. Thank you very much. ❁

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EVERY TOWN & VILLAGE

The worldwide activities of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON).



WORLD NEWS

North America **A committee of the American Psychiatric Association**

has apologized for insensitive remarks about Hinduism and the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. When a report by the APA's Committee on Religion and Psychiatry portrayed the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement as a new religion or cult, several Indian psychiatrists objected. And the American Association of Psychiatrists from India lodged a formal complaint.

In response, the committee invited psychiatrist Prakash Desai and Harvard professor Diana Eck to speak to its members about Hindu religious and medical traditions.

"The Committee is now better informed," wrote its president, "... that the ancient and honorable traditions of the Hare Krishna sect of Hinduism are not 'cultic.'"

A further step toward understanding: At this year's annual APA convention, six psychiatrists and scholars spoke at a workshop to drive home the point, "Indian Religions Are Not Cults."

Europe **People in Greece are reading the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam**

in their native language, thanks to a donation by a wealthy Greek businessman who paid for printing the First Canto.

Soviet Union **The Vedic scripture Īsopaniṣad is appearing**

in Tatar, a Turkic language spoken mainly in the Soviet Union. Publisher: the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust.

Who are the first official advertisers in the history of the Moscow subway system?

The Soviet Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees.

Not Coke, not McDonalds, not IBM, not Smirnoff. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

The 3,500 cars of the Moscow "metro" carry seven million people a day. And for years the car walls offered nothing more for people to read than the metro schematics.

But that all changed in May. Since then, Moscow sub-

way riders have been seeing three-square-foot posters of Kṛṣṇa, in full color, advertising the *Bhagavad-gītā* and other Vedic scriptures. The books are published in Russian and other Soviet languages by the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust.

When people leave the cars, fifteen Kṛṣṇa conscious book-selling tables await them in strategic underground stations.

Comrades, Hare Kṛṣṇa!



Posters advertising Śrīla Prabhupāda's books now grace the walls of Moscow's subway cars.

India **The World Wildlife Fund has approved a grant**

to help restore the sacred forests of Vṛndāvana. ISKCON devotee Ranchor Dāsa, from England, and Sewak Saranji, his counterpart in Vṛndāvana, will use the grant—\$30,000 a year for three years—to plant trees along the pilgrimage path encircling Vṛndāvana, to build a tree nursery and information center, and to teach pilgrims and local people about the care of Vṛndāvana's natural resources.

PADAYĀTRĀ NEWS

Padayātrā India

Padayātrā is now in Nasik, the site of this year's Kumbha Melā, in the northwest of the state of Maharashtra. From Nasik the party moves further north into the state of Gujarat.

From October 23 through November 21, a separate Pādāyatra party will travel on pilgrimage throughout the land of Vṛndāvana, where Lord Kṛṣṇa performed the transcendental pastimes of His childhood and youth.

Padayātrā Europe

After taking part in a large annual fair in Lille, the largest city in northern France, Padayātrā Europe is walking on to Paris.

There, at the end of September, the Padayātrā will begin the world's longest Rathayātrā, or Festival of the Chariots. The festival will be on the road for a month, traveling from Paris to New Māyāpur, the Hare Kṛṣṇa farm near Chateauroux, six hundred kilometers south. The theme of the festival: "Marche Pour la Paix" ("Walk for Peace").

Padayātrā America

From the latest we've heard, Padayātrā America has been planning to travel in the Caribbean islands, starting with Trinidad.

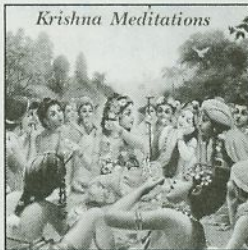
For more information about Padayātrā, write to:

International Padayātrā
M-119 Greater Kailash 1, New Delhi 100 048, India
Phone: 641-3249 or 641-2058

Padayātrā America
4969 Mills St., Apt. 10, La Mesa, CA 91941
Phone: (619) 461-2594,
Fax: (619) 463-0168

Padayātrā Europe
Bhaktivedanta Manor, Letchmore Heath, Watford,
Hertfordshire WD2 8EP, England
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Prabhu, Jaya Rādhē Jaya Kṛṣṇa,
Śrī Nāma-kirtana



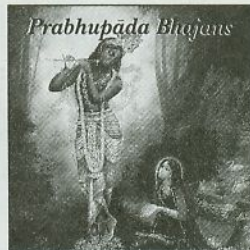
CD-2
Cintāmaṇi, Hare Kṛṣṇa Mantra
and Purport, Jaya Rādhā-Mādhava,
Prayers to the Six Gosvāmīs,
Gurvaṣṭakam



CD-3
Nāma-sankīrtana, Jīva Jāgo, Gāya
Gaura Madhura Svare and
Purport, Nārada Muni Bājāya
Viṇā and Purport



CD-4
Cintāmaṇi, Hari Hari
Bipale, Jaya Jagadīsa Hare,
Hare Kṛṣṇa Kirtana



CD-5
Mānasa Deha Geha and Purport,
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Deviant Vaiṣṇava Sects

*Sex, drugs, and the teachings of Lord Caitanya.
No, they don't go together as some would have us think.*



by Suhotra Swami

PART THREE: Ativādī, Āula, Bāula, Sain, and Daraveṣa

Ativādī

In the early 1870's Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, as a deputy magistrate stationed at the holy city of Jagannātha Purī, arrested, judged, and jailed a self-styled incarnation of Mahā-Viṣṇu named Bisā Kisen. Bisā Kisen, by his mystic power, used to lean into fire and then lift his head and make flames come out of his hair. He had two companions who presented themselves as Brahmā and Siva.

Many wealthy and influential Hindus of Orissa came under Bisā Kisen's sway. They sent him money to build a temple and provided him women for his "*rāsā-lilā*." Bisā Kisen belonged to the Ativādī-*apasampradāya*.

In a letter dated August 18, 1871, addressed to the editor of *Progress*, a newspaper in Cuttack, Orissa, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura described the origin, philosophy, and practices of the Ativādī sect. The Ativādīs claim to be Vaiṣṇavas, but they are quite opposed to the principles of Vaiṣṇavism. What follows is a synopsis of the most pertinent points of Bhaktivinoda's letter, along with other details gleaned from *Āpasampradāya-svarūpa*, a Bengali booklet

by Bhakti-vilāsa Bhārati Mahārāja.

The Ativādī *apasampradāya* (spurious sect) was started by one Jagannātha Dāsa when Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu stayed at Purī as a *sannyāsī*. Jagannātha Dāsa pretended to be a disciple of Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura, one of Lord Caitanya's close associates. But he later broke his connection with the Ṭhākura and began preaching his own ideas. For instance, he had his followers cover their mouths while chanting the *mahā-mantra* and told them to chant the second half (Hare Rāma) first.

Once Jagannātha Dāsa arrogantly approached Lord Caitanya, ignoring Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī, who would screen visitors so that they might not disturb the Lord. Jagannātha Dāsa wished to recite his Oriya translation of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which included five chapters of his own invention. He also wanted to explain his independent manner of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.

To avoid him, Lord Caitanya said, "A fallen soul like Me is not worthy to hear the *Bhāgavatam* composed by an author like you."

Then Jagannātha Dāsa declared Lord Caitanya to be Kṛṣṇa, and himself Rādhārāṇī.

The Lord replied, "Sir, you have become too great [*ativādī*]. An insignificant and fallen soul like Me can have nothing to do with you."

Jagannātha Dāsa and his followers took the Lord's statement as praise instead of what it really was—condemnation. Thus this *apasampradāya* views itself as more well-read in the scriptures than Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His associates, and likewise better in judgment and logic.

Jagannātha Dāsa had a sweet singing voice, which attracted women whom he engaged in massaging his body. When brought to the court of King Prataparudra for indecent behavior, he said to the king, "I don't see any difference between men and women." For conduct unbecoming a Vaiṣṇava *sādhu*, or saintly person, the king had him imprisoned.

Jagannātha Dāsa and his followers had been living in an *āśrama* donated by the king. But when Jagannātha Dāsa rejected Haridāsa Ṭhākura and started his own movement, the property was taken back. He then founded his own *āśrama* on the seashore. It is called the Satlahari Maṭha and can still be seen today.

Ativādī priests sometimes dress up

*These four sects believe
that all exalted states of transcendence
rest in the physical body.*

*Their motto is “What cannot be found in the body
cannot be found anywhere.”*



**Āula, Bāula, Sānī (Sain),
and Daraveṣa**

These four *apasampradāyas* are closely related. They may be regarded as divisions of one group, commonly called “the Bāulas of Bengal.” Heavily tantric, with Sufi leanings, they don’t necessarily present themselves as Vaiṣṇavas, though they claim to embody the real spirit of Lord Caitanya’s movement.

The Āulas, Bāulas, Sains, and Daraveṣa share the same philosophy, which directly descends from the Sahajayana tantric Buddhist tradition. They view all existence as being formed from the combination of the mundane male and female principles (*puruṣa* and *prakṛti*). They can harmonize these two principles within themselves, they believe, through so-called love generated by the bodily union of man and woman through tantric *yoga*. When *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* are perfectly harmonized, one realizes the inner ecstasy they call *jīyante mara*, or “death while living,” signified by complete stoppage of all physical and mental activity.

They identify this state with the *mahābhāva* ecstasy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. When this state is attained, they say, one can know the *maner manush*—the “man in the heart,” also known as *sahaja manush* (“natural man”), *bhaber manush* (“man of devotion”), *raser manush* (“man of rasa”), and *sonar manush* (“man of gold”).

These four sects believe that all exalted states of transcendence, like the realization of Vaikuṅṭha and Kṛṣṇaloka, rest in the physical body. Their motto is

“What cannot be found in the body cannot be found anywhere.” Without going into details of their practices, suffice it to say that this philosophy encourages a person to release the “inner bliss” stored in the body through degraded acts of lust and depravity.

These *apasampradāyas* are syncretic in that they combine aspects of different religious disciplines—Vaiṣṇava, Māyāvādī, tantric, and Islamic. And because they reject Deity worship they are iconoclastic.

The word *āula* has different meanings, either of Arabic or Bengali origin. The Persian word *aul* (from the Arabic *wallia*) means “very important person,” signifying the supposed exalted status of a member of the cult of Āulas. Also from the Islamic world is the word *autal*, “the first phase.” This indicates that of the four sects the Āulas are on the first stage of advancement because they are married householders.

Another meaning of Āula is *au* (“woman”) and *ula* (“come down”). This meaning points to their close connection to women, through whom they think descends deeper wisdom of the universe. In Bengali the word *āul* is related to *kulata* (“afflicted”) in the sense of being afflicted with love. For instance, in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* the word *āulaya* denotes the *gopīs*’ affliction with love for Kṛṣṇa.

The Āulas practice what is termed “bodily meditation.” This means that the men of this sect take themselves to be *puruṣa*, and women to be *prakṛti*. Their path to perfection is illicit sex. Husbands and wives of this community freely switch partners. Their idea is to excite their senses to a fever pitch so

(please turn to page 50)

as women on certain religious occasions, and they are known for loosely mixing with women. The Ativādīs are influential in Orissa because Jagannātha Dāsa’s translation of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is widely read, especially by simple, indiscriminating people.

The Ativādīs appear very devoted to Lord Jagannātha, the famous form of Kṛṣṇa worshiped in the Purī temple. They proudly claim that Lord Jagannātha has personally revealed some truth or prophecy to them. Thus every respected Ativādī can recite what he will speak of as his Malika, or series of revelations from the Lord. A common prediction is the year the world will end.

Yet despite the devotion the Ativādīs profess for Lord Jagannātha, the scriptures they received from their founder put forward many impersonal ideas. Though the Ativādīs worship the Lord’s form in the temple, they believe that when they die they will realize Him as formless. Worshiper and worshiped will then merge into oneness.

Ativādīs are mystics who practice *yoga* and sometimes work magic to cure diseases and bring people under their control. They form a secret brotherhood, Bhativinoda Ṭhākura says, like the Freemasons in the West, and use drugs like marijuana and opium. Bhativinoda Ṭhākura reckoned there were fifteen thousand of them in Orissa during his stay there. He noted that they often engaged in conspiracies against the government.

Bisa Kisen was only one of many self-proclaimed *avatāras* hailing from this *apasampradāya*. Lord Caitanya taught, *avatāra nāhi kahe āmi avatāra*: “The real incarnation of the Lord never claims to be one.”

PROFILE

HERE'S A Kṛṣṇa conscious project you might like to support or get involved in. We'll tell you what the goals are, who's involved, what's going on, what's blocking the way, and how you can give a hand.

PROJECT

Cultural Institute for the Vedic Arts (CIVA)

HEADQUARTERS

Hare Kṛṣṇa temple, Brooklyn, New York

PROJECT LEADER

Yadurāṇī Devī Dāsī, from New York City, a Hare Kṛṣṇa devotee since 1966. Śrīla Prabhupāda's senior woman disciple, Yadurāṇī painted, alone or with others, more than two hundred paintings published in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*.

GOAL

To flood the world with Kṛṣṇa conscious comic books and picture books. These books are for everyone, and especially for children and others reading mainly in this format.

DETAILS

In 1969 Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote to Rāyārāma Dāsa, the first editor of *Back to Godhead*, "I think in each and every issue a similar story sketch [the comic section] may be printed and it will be very interesting to the American reading public. It is interesting and thought-provoking. Therefore the more we print such sketch stories, it will appear greater in appreciation."

In 1976 in Vṛndāvana, Śrīla Prabhupāda told Yadurāṇī he wanted picture books of all the books he had

translated. He specifically mentioned picture books of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *The Nectar of Devotion*, and the *Bhagavad-gītā*. He said, "Just picture-caption, picture-caption." He said that everyone would like our work. "It will be like the rain after the drought of mundane art."

So far CIVA has published two comics, *The Advent* and *The Confrontation*.



Yadurāṇī Devī Dāsī

PLANS

Another comic, *Demoncraft*, is ready for printing. *Syamantaka Jewel* and *Kāliya Kṛṣṇa* should come out in a few months. CIVA would like to eventually publish a book every month.

OBSTACLES

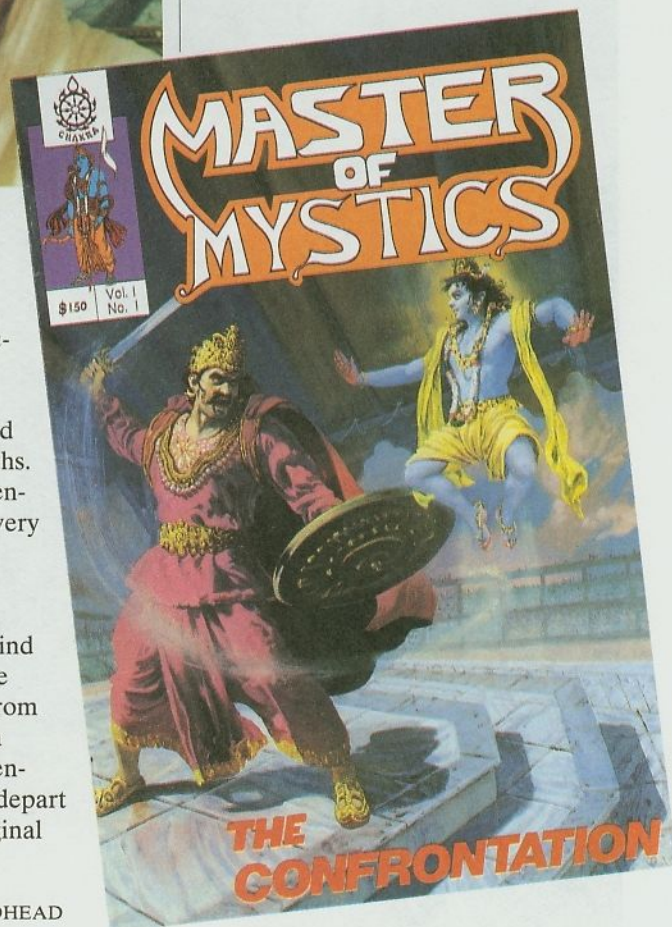
The first obstacle is to find qualified writers, people who can retell a story from the Vedic literature in a suspenseful, three-dimensional way and yet not depart from Prabhupāda's original

translation. Second, the project needs a general manager. And third, it needs funding. CIVA needs \$30,000–\$40,000 to get the next few books into print.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

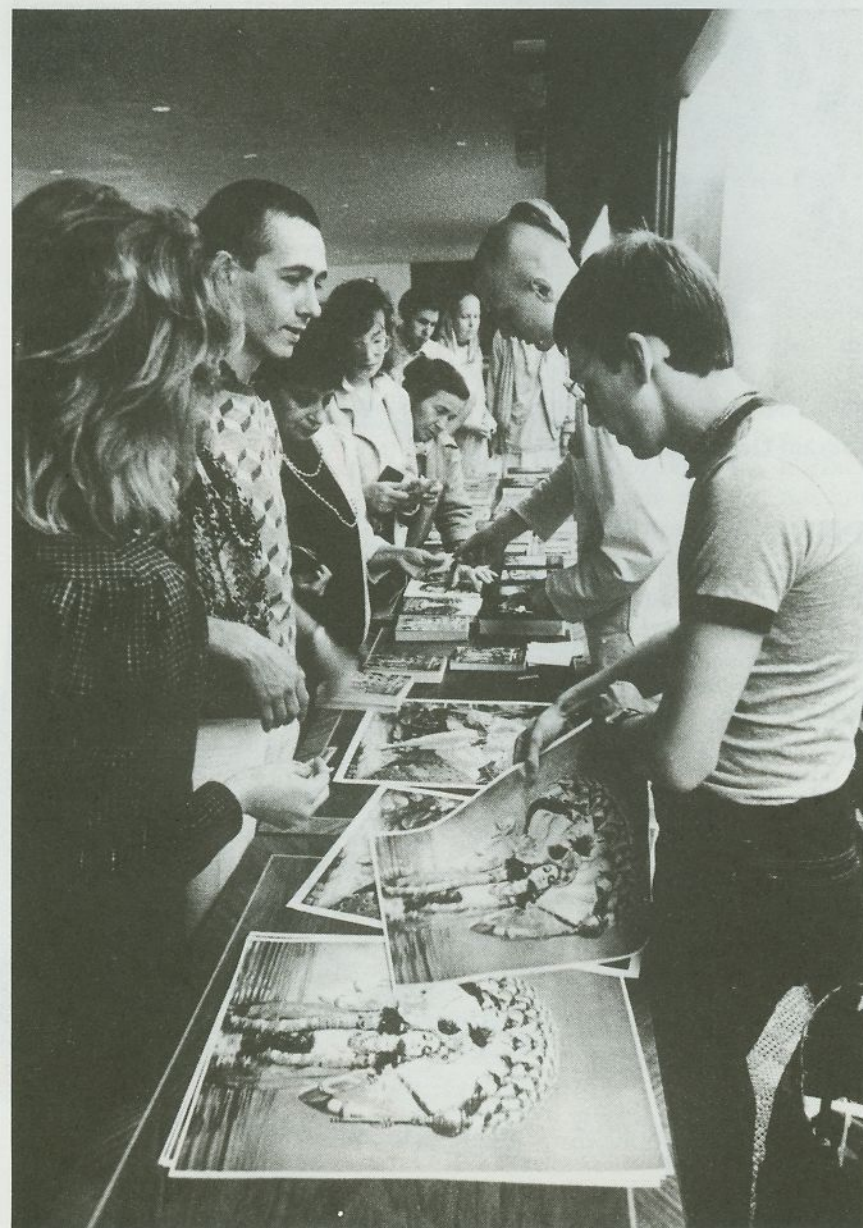
CIVA needs competent, responsible, and qualified artists, writers, editors, inkers, letterers, colorists, typists, sales personnel, and fund raisers. If you can fulfill any of these needs, or know someone who can, please contact:

Yadurāṇī Devī Dāsī
c/o CIVA
305 Schermerhorn Street
Brooklyn, NY 11217
Phone: (718) 858-9459



KRISHNA'S FOLLOWERS IN MOSCOW

Photographs by V. Seleznev



This article appeared in the December 1990 issue of Soviet Union Illustrated Monthly magazine. The magazine, founded under the title USSR in Construction in 1930 by Maxim Gorky, is published in twenty-one languages.

The restructuring drive and new thinking in the Soviet Union have brought about a fundamental change in state-church relations in this country. Hundreds of Russian Orthodox temples have been recently restored and opened to believers, ancient mosques are being built and restored now, various religious communities have been registered, and Sunday schools are opening. All this was reaffirmed by the Law on the Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations passed by the USSR Supreme Soviet, which "guarantees the citizens' right to determine and express their religious beliefs, to unrestrictedly profess and execute religious rites."

Twenty years have passed since the visit to the Soviet Union of Srila Prabhupada, the spiritual father of Krishna's followers. That visit planted the seeds of Vishnuism, a new and unorthodox phenomenon in this coun-

Text and photographs © 1990 by *Soviet Union Illustrated Monthly*. Reprinted by permission.



Harikesha Swami

try. Today there are nearly 10,000 Vishnuites in 100 cities of the country. These are people of different ages and social backgrounds. Most of them are well-educated people like engineers, physicians, laboratory workers, and journalists, but there are also workers and students among them as well.

After Prabhupada's demise in 1977, his followers divided the world into several zones. The zone the Soviet Union is part of is supervised by Robert Campagnola (the spiritual name: Harikesha Swami) and David Jakupko (Kirtiraja Dasa).*

In the summer of 1990 these spiritual leaders of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness paid a visit to the Soviet Union. During a press

*Three more supervisors have since been added.—Editor



At a Moscow auditorium, Kirtiraja Dasa (second from left) speaks about the Hare Krishna movement.



conference in Moscow they briefed the audience on the Society's activity, and spoke about its international ties and the proliferation of Krishna's teachings in the world and in the Soviet Union.

Only a few years ago, the adherents of Krishna were persecuted by the Soviet authorities and were looked upon as subversive elements. Ten years ago Harikesha and Kirtiraja were even deported from the USSR and the Society was banned. Today the Krishna Society is officially recognized in this country.

Harikesha and Kirtiraja expressed

their gratitude to the Soviet authorities for allowing them to visit their fellow believers. The goal of the visit was to establish spiritual and other contacts. Plans are afoot, for example, to render material aid to the Soviet Krishna worshippers and help to build a temple.

Although the Krishna movement originated in India, its center has now moved to the West (by the way, both leaders are Americans), is rich and has a powerful publishing potential.

One can often see Krishna followers selling their literature near underground stations, in underground crossings, and

in the streets of Moscow and other cities.

That's probably why Muscovites showed such a great interest in the big programme presented by the Krishna Society that included sacred music, classical Indian dances, an exhibition and sale of books and a presentation of video film held in one of the exhibition halls of the Moscow International Trade Center.

The Vishnuites believe that if a teaching leads to a better understanding of life and makes people better and stronger, it has the right to exist and win the hearts of people. ☸

DEVAHŪTI'S RADIANCE RENEWED

Rendered from Sanskrit into English,
with commentary,
by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupāda,
Founder-Ācārya of the International Society
For Krishna Consciousness

A thousand maidservants created by the yogic power of Kardama Muni finish dressing and ornamenting his wife, Devahūti, in the sacred lake Bindu-sarovara. As the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam continues, Devahūti and Kardama travel throughout the universe in his mystic aerial mansion.

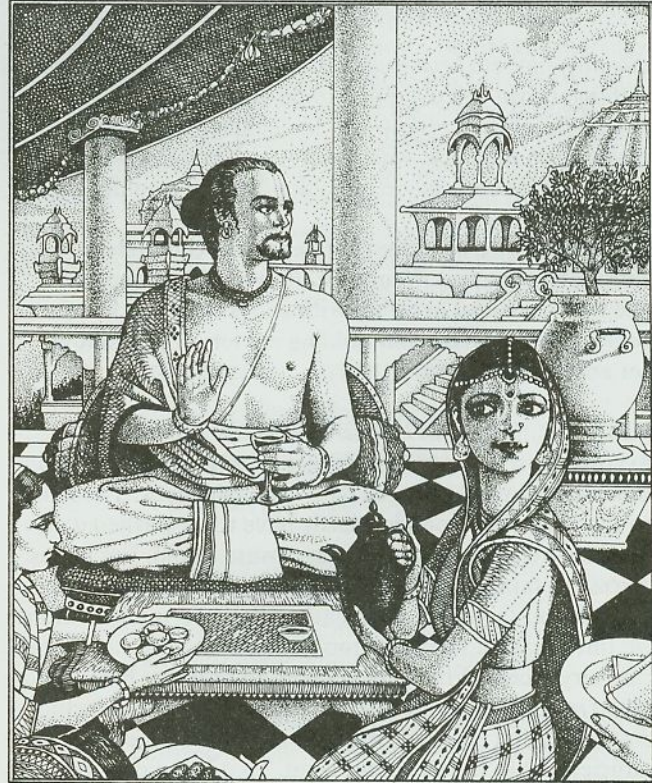
THIRDCANTO/CHAPTER 23

29 भूषणानि परार्थ्यानि वरीयांसि द्युमन्ति च ।
अन्नं सर्वगुणोपेतं पानं चैवामृतासवम् ॥२९॥

*bhūṣaṇāni parārdhyāni
varīyāṁsi dyumanti ca
annaṁ sarva-guṇopetaṁ
pānaṁ caivāmṛtāsavam*

bhūṣaṇāni—ornaments; para-ardhyāni—most valuable; varīyāṁsi—very excellent; dyumanti—splendid; ca—and; annam—food; sarva-guṇa—all good qualities; upetaṁ—containing; pānam—beverages; ca—and; eva—also; amṛta—sweet; āsavam—intoxicating.

They then decorated her with very excellent and valuable jewels, which shone brightly. Next they offered her food containing all good qualities, and a sweet, inebriating drink called āsavam.



Kardama Muni and Devahūti in their mystic mansion.

PURPORT: *Āsavam* is an Ayurvedic medical preparation; it is not a liquor. It is especially made from drugs and is meant to improve metabolism for the healthy condition of the body.

30 अथादर्शं स्वमात्मानं स्रग्विणं विरजाम्बरम् ।
विरजं कृतस्वस्त्ययनं कन्याभिर्बहुमानितम् ॥३०॥

athādarśe svam ātmānam
sragviṇam virajāmbaram
virajam kṛta-svastyanam
kanyābhir bahu-mānitam

atha—then; *ādarśe*—in a mirror; *svam ātmānam*—her own reflection; *srag-viṇam*—adorned with a garland; *viraja*—unsullied; *ambaram*—robes; *virajam*—freed from all bodily dirt; *kṛta-svasti-ayanam*—decorated with auspicious marks; *kanyābhiḥ*—by the maids; *bahu-mānitam*—very respectfully served.

Then in a mirror she beheld her own reflection. Her body was completely freed from all dirt, and she was adorned with a garland. Dressed in unsullied robes and decorated with auspicious marks of tilaka, she was served very respectfully by the maids.

31 स्नातं कृतशिरःस्नानं सर्वाभरणभूषितम् ।
निष्कग्रीवं वलयिनं कूजत्काञ्चननूपुरम् ॥३१॥

snātam kṛta-śiraḥ-snānam
sarvābharāṇa-bhūṣitam
niska-grivam valayinam
kūjat-kāñcana-nūpuram

snātam—bathed; *kṛta-śiraḥ*—including the head; *snānam*—bathing; *sarva*—all over; *ābharāṇa*—with ornaments; *bhū-ṣitam*—decorated; *niska*—a gold necklace with a locket; *grivam*—on the neck; *valayinam*—with bangles; *kūjat*—tinkling; *kāñcana*—made of gold; *nūpuram*—ankle bells.

Her entire body, including her head, was completely bathed, and she was decorated all over with ornaments. She wore a special necklace with a locket. There were bangles on her wrists and tinkling anklets of gold about her ankles.

PURPORT: The word *kṛta-śiraḥ-snānam* appears here. According to the *smṛti-śāstra*'s directions for daily duties, ladies are allowed to bathe daily up to the neck. The hair on the head does not necessarily have to be washed daily because the mass of wet hair may cause a cold. For ladies, therefore, taking a bath up to the neck is ordinarily prescribed, and they take a full bath only on certain occasions. On this occasion Devahūti took a full bath and washed her hair very nicely. When a lady takes an ordinary bath it is called *mala-snāna*, and when she takes a full bath, including the head, it is called *śiraḥ-snāna*. At this time she needs sufficient oil to smear on her head. That is the direction of the commentators of *smṛti-śāstra*.

32 श्रोण्योरध्यस्तया काञ्च्या काञ्च्या बहुरत्नया ।
हारेण च महार्हेण रुचकेन च भूषितम् ॥३२॥

śronyor adhyastayā kāñcyā
kāñcanyā bahu-ratnayā
hāreṇa ca mahārheṇa
rucakena ca bhūṣitam

śronyoh—on the hips; *adhyastayā*—worn; *kāñcyā*—with a girdle; *kāñcanyā*—made of gold; *bahu-ratnayā*—decorated with numerous jewels; *hāreṇa*—with a pearl necklace; *ca*—and; *mahā-arheṇa*—precious; *rucakena*—with auspicious substances; *ca*—and; *bhūṣitam*—adorned.

About her hips she wore a girdle of gold set with numerous jewels, and she was further adorned with a precious pearl necklace and auspicious substances.

PURPORT: Auspicious substances include saffron, *kuñ-kuma* and sandalwood pulp. Before taking a bath there are other auspicious substances, such as turmeric mixed with mustard seed oil, which are smeared all over the body. All kinds of auspicious substances were used to bathe Devahūti from top to toe.

33 सुदता सुभ्रुवा श्लक्ष्णस्निग्धापाङ्गेन चक्षुषा ।
पद्मकोशस्पृधा नीलैरलकैश्च लसन्मुखम् ॥३३॥

sudatā subhruvā ślakṣṇa-
snigdhpāṅgena cakṣuṣā
padma-kośa-sprdhā nilair
alakaiś ca lasan-mukham

su-datā—with beautiful teeth; *su-bhruvā*—with charming eyebrows; *ślakṣṇa*—lovely; *snigdha*—moist; *apāṅgena*—corners of eyes; *cakṣuṣā*—with eyes; *padma-kośa*—lotus buds; *sprdhā*—defeating; *nilaiḥ*—bluish; *alakaiḥ*—with curling hair; *ca*—and; *lasat*—shining; *mukham*—countenance.

Her countenance shone, with beautiful teeth and charming eyebrows. Her eyes, distinguished by lovely moist corners, defeated the beauty of lotus buds. Her face was surrounded by dark curling tresses.

PURPORT: According to Vedic culture, white teeth are very much appreciated. Devahūti's white teeth increased the beauty of her face and made it look like a lotus flower. When a face looks very attractive, the eyes are generally compared to lotus petals and the face to a lotus flower.

34 यदा सस्मार ऋषभमृषीणां दयितं पतिम् ।
तत्र चास्ते सह स्त्रीभिर्व्यास्ते स प्रजापतिः ॥३४॥

yadā sasmāra ṛṣabham
ṛṣiṇām dayitam patim
tatra cāste saha sribhir
yatrāste sa prajāpatih

yadā—when; *sasmāra*—she thought of; *ṛṣabham*—the foremost; *ṛṣinām*—among the ṛṣis; *dayitam*—dear; *patim*—husband; *tatra*—there; *ca*—and; *āste*—she was present; *saha*—along with; *śribhiḥ*—the maidservants; *yatra*—where; *āste*—was present; *saḥ*—he; *prajāpatiḥ*—the Prajāpati (Kardama).

When she thought of her great husband, the best of the sages, Kardama Muni, who was very dear to her, she, along with all the maidservants, at once appeared where he was.

PURPORT: It appears from this verse that in the beginning Devahūti thought herself to be dirty and dressed in a very niggardly way. When her husband asked her to enter the lake, she saw the maidservants, and they took care of her. Everything was done within the water, and as soon as she thought of her beloved husband, Kardama, she was brought before him without delay. These are some of the powers attained by perfect *yogis*; they can immediately execute anything they desire.

35 मर्तुः पुरस्तादात्मानं स्त्रीसहस्रवृत्तं तदा ।
निशाम्य तद्योगगतिं संशयं प्रत्यपद्यत ॥३५॥

*bhartuḥ purastād ātmānaṁ
strī-sahasra-vṛtaṁ tadā
niśāmya tad-yoga-gatiṁ
saṁśayaṁ pratyapadyata*

bhartuḥ—of her husband; *purastāt*—in the presence; *ātmānam*—herself; *strī-sahasra*—by a thousand maids; *vṛtam*—surrounded; *tadā*—then; *niśāmya*—seeing; *tat*—his; *yoga-gatiṁ*—yogic power; *saṁśayam pratyapadyata*—she was amazed.

She was amazed to find herself surrounded by a thousand maids in the presence of her husband and to witness his yogic power.

PURPORT: Devahūti saw everything miraculously done, yet when brought before her husband she could understand that it was all due to his great yogic mystic power. She understood that nothing was impossible for a *yogī* like Kardama Muni.

36 स तां कृतमलस्नानां विभ्राजन्तीमपूर्ववत् ।
आत्मनो विभ्रतीं रूपं संवीतरुचिरस्तनीम् ॥३६॥
37 विद्याधरीसहस्रेण सेव्यमानां सुवाससम् ।
जातभावो विमानं तदारोह्यदमित्रहन् ॥३७॥

*sa tāṁ kṛta-mala-snānām
vibhrājanṭīm apūrvavat
ātmano bibhratīm rūpaṁ
sa ṁvīta-rucira-stanīm*

*vidyādhari-sahasrena
sevyamānām suvāsasam*

*jāta-bhāvo vimānaṁ tad
ārohayat amitra-han*

sah—the sage; *tām*—her (Devahūti); *kṛta-mala-snānām*—bathed clean; *vibhrājanṭīm*—shining forth; *apūrvavat*—unprecedentedly; *ātmanaḥ*—her own; *bibhratīm*—possessing; *rūpaṁ*—beauty; *saṁvīta*—girded; *rucira*—charming; *stanīm*—with breasts; *vidyādhari*—of Gandharva girls; *sahasreṇa*—by a thousand; *sevyamānām*—being waited upon; *su-vāsasam*—dressed in excellent robes; *jāta-bhāvaḥ*—struck with fondness; *vimānam*—airplane like a mansion; *tat*—that; *ārohayat*—he put her on board; *amitra-han*—O destroyer of the enemy.

The sage could see that Devahūti had washed herself clean and was shining forth as though no longer his former wife. She had regained her own original beauty as the daughter of a prince. Dressed in excellent robes, her charming breasts duly girded, she was waited upon by a thousand Gandharva girls. O destroyer of the enemy, his fondness for her grew, and he placed her on the aerial mansion.

PURPORT: Before her marriage, when Devahūti was brought by her parents before the sage Kardama, she was the perfectly beautiful princess, and Kardama Muni remembered her former beauty. But after her marriage, when she was engaged in the service of Kardama Muni, she neglected to care for her body like a princess, since there was no means for such care; her husband was living in a cottage, and since she was always engaged in serving him, her royal beauty disappeared, and she became just like an ordinary maidservant. Now, after being bathed by the Gandharva girls by the order of Kardama Muni's yogic power, she regained her beauty, and Kardama Muni felt attracted to the beauty she had shown before the marriage. The real beauty of a young woman is her breasts. When Kardama Muni saw the breasts of his wife so nicely decorated, increasing her beauty many times, he was attracted, even though he was a great sage. Śrīpāda Śaṅkarācārya has therefore warned the transcendentalists that one who is after transcendental realization should not be attracted by the raised breasts of a woman because they are nothing but an interaction of fat and blood within the body.

38 तस्मिन्नलुप्तमहिमा प्रिययानुरक्तो
विद्याधरीभिरुपचीर्णवपुर्विमाने ।
बभ्राज उत्कचकुमुद्रणवानपीच्य-
स्ताराभिरावृत्त इवोडुपतिर्नभःस्यः ॥३८॥

*tasminn alupta-mahimā priyayānurakto
vidyādhariḥ upacīrṇa-vapur vimāne
babhrāja utkaca-kumud-ḡaṇavān apicyas
tārābhir āvṛta ivodu-patir nabhaḥ-sthaḥ*

tasmin—in that; *alupta*—not lost; *mahimā*—glory; *priyaya*—with his beloved consort; *anuraktaḥ*—attached; *vidyā-dharibhiḥ*—by the Gandharva girls; *upacīrṇa*—waited upon; *vapuḥ*—his person; *vimāne*—on the airplane; *ba-*

bhrāja—he shone; *utkata*—open; *kumut-ganavān*—the moon, which is followed by rows of lilies; *apicyaḥ*—very charming; *tārābhiḥ*—by stars; *āvṛtaḥ*—surrounded; *iva*—as; *udu-patiḥ*—the moon (the chief of the stars); *nabhah-sthaḥ*—in the sky.

Though seemingly attached to his beloved consort while served by the Gandharva girls, the sage did not lose his glory, which was mastery over his self. In the aerial mansion Kardama Muni with his consort shone as charmingly as the moon in the midst of the stars in the sky, which causes rows of lilies to open in ponds at night.

PURPORT: The mansion was in the sky, and therefore the comparison to the full moon and stars is very beautifully composed in this verse. Kardama Muni looked like the full moon, and the girls who surrounded his wife, Devahūti, seemed just like the stars. On a full-moon night the stars and the moon together form a beautiful constellation; similarly, in that aerial mansion in the sky, Kardama Muni with his beautiful wife and the damsels surrounding them appeared like the moon and stars on a full-moon night.

39 तेनाष्टलोकपविहारकुलाचलेन्द्र-
द्रोणीस्वनङ्गसखमारुतसौभगासु ।
सिद्धैर्नुतो द्युधुनिपातशिवस्वनासु
रेमे चिरं घनदवल्ललनावरूथी ॥३९॥

*tenāṣṭa-lokapa-vihāra-kulācalendra-
dronīṣv anaṅga-sakha-māruta-saubhagāsu
siddhair nuto dyudhuni-pāta-śiva-svanāsu
reme ciram dhanadaval-lalanā-varūthi*

tena—by that airplane; *aṣṭa-loka-pa*—of the predominating deities of the eight heavenly planets; *vihāra*—the pleasure grounds; *kula-acala-indra*—of the king of the mountains (Meru); *dronīṣu*—in the valleys; *anaṅga*—of passion; *sakha*—the companions; *māruta*—with breezes; *saubhagāsu*—beautiful; *siddhaiḥ*—by the Siddhas; *nutaḥ*—being praised; *dyu-dhuni*—of the Ganges; *pāta*—of the downfall; *śiva-svanāsu*—vibrating with auspicious sounds; *reme*—he enjoyed; *ciram*—for a long time; *dhanada-vat*—like Kuvera; *lalanā*—by damsels; *varūthi*—surrounded.

In that aerial mansion he traveled to the pleasure valleys of Mount Meru, which were rendered all the more beautiful by cool, gentle, fragrant breezes that stimulated passion. In these valleys, the treasurer of the gods, Kuvera, surrounded by beautiful women and praised by the Siddhas, generally enjoys pleasure. Kardama Muni also, surrounded by the beautiful damsels and his wife, went there and enjoyed for many, many years.

PURPORT: Kuvera is one of the eight demigods who are in charge of different directions of the universe. It is said that Indra is in charge of the eastern side of the universe, where the heavenly planet, or paradise, is situated. Similarly, Agni is in charge of the southeastern portion of the

universe; Yama, the demigod who punishes sinners, is in charge of the southern portion; Nirṛti is in charge of the southwestern part of the universe; Varuṇa, the demigod in charge of the waters, is in charge of the western portion; Vāyu, who controls the air and who has wings to travel in the air, is in charge of the northwestern part of the universe; and Kuvera, the treasurer of the demigods, is in charge of the northern part of the universe. All these demigods take pleasure in the valleys of Mount Meru, which is situated somewhere between the sun and the earth. In the aerial mansion, Kardama Muni traveled throughout the eight directions controlled by the different demigods described above, and as the demigods go to Mount Meru, he also went there to enjoy life. When one is surrounded by young, beautiful girls, sex stimulation naturally becomes prominent. Kardama Muni was sexually stimulated, and he enjoyed his wife for many, many years in that part of Mount Meru. But his sex indulgence was praised by many, many Siddhas, beings who have attained perfection, because it was intended to produce good progeny for the good of universal affairs.

40 वैश्रम्भके सुरसने नन्दने पुष्पमद्रके ।
मानसे चैत्ररथ्ये च स रेमे रामया रतः ॥४०॥

*vaiśrambhake surasane
nandane puṣpabhadrake
mānase caitrarathye ca
sa reme rāmayā rataḥ*

vaiśrambhake—in the Vaiśrambhaka garden; *surasane*—in Surasana; *nandane*—in Nandana; *puṣpabhadrake*—in Puṣpabhadraka; *mānase*—by the Mānasa-sarovara Lake; *caitrarathye*—in Caitrarathya; *ca*—and; *saḥ*—he; *reme*—enjoyed; *rāmayā*—by his wife; *rataḥ*—satisfied.

Satisfied by his wife, he enjoyed in that aerial mansion not only on Mount Meru but in different gardens known as Vaiśrambhaka, Surasana, Nandana, Puṣpabhadraka and Caitrarathya, and by the Mānasa-sarovara Lake.

41 भ्राजिष्णुना विमानेन कामगेन महीयसा ।
वैमानिकानत्यशेत चरँल्लोकान् यथानिलः ॥४१॥

*bhrājiṣṇunā vimānena
kāma-gena mahīyasā
vaimānikān atyaśeta
caral lokān yathānilaḥ*

bhrājiṣṇunā—splendid; *vimānena*—with the airplane; *kāma-gena*—which flew according to his desire; *mahīyasā*—very great; *vaimānikān*—the demigods in their airplanes; *atyaśeta*—he surpassed; *caran*—traveling; *lokān*—through the planets; *yathā*—like; *anilaḥ*—the air.

He traveled in that way through the various planets, as the air passes uncontrolled in every direction. Coursing through the air in that great and splendid aerial mansion, which could fly at his will, he surpassed even the demigods.

(continued in the next issue)

Remembering Śrīla Prabhupāda

Disciples recall the pastimes of a pure devotee.

AT THE MĀYĀPUR FESTIVAL in 1975 I was posted outside Śrīla Prabhupāda's room to run errands for his servants. One morning as I waited on the veranda, Prabhupāda came out to wash his hands after breakfast. He noticed a couple of *sannyāsīs* looking over the balcony, so he paused and looked over the balcony too.

The *sannyāsīs* were looking at an old lady and her child going through a pile of leaf plates that had been thrown out after breakfast. Evidently the woman and her child had missed the mass *prasādam* distribution, and so they were picking through the plates looking for some remnants of food.

One of the *sannyāsīs* turned to Śrīla Prabhupāda and said, "Prabhupāda, sometimes I feel sorry for these people."

Prabhupāda turned with the most deep, compassionate, penetrating look and said, "Why just sometimes?"

Badrinārāyaṇa Dāsa
San Diego

IN JULY 1976, during Śrīla Prabhupāda's visit to Paris, two other devotees and I went into his room to report about our difficulties in maintaining our large temple in Schloss Rettershof, an old castle near Frankfurt, Germany. We proposed that we close the Schloss and develop smaller temples in various cities in Germany. We felt these centers would be

easier to maintain and would therefore increase the overall preaching.

Śrīla Prabhupāda heard the report. There was a long, great silence in the room, and we felt very uncomfortable.

Finally Śrīla Prabhupāda sat up, leaned forward by supporting himself with both hands on the table, and spoke very loudly and strongly, as if we were hard of hearing.

"And even if your child has been born deaf and blind, does it mean you kill it?"

Another extended silence. We sat greatly uncomfortable, embarrassed, and unable to say anything.

He repeated: "Does it mean you kill it?"

Silence. A minute went by that seemed like years.

Finally he concluded, "Don't kill

it—develop it! Don't become rolling stones."

We left the room in great embarrassment. It was clear what he thought about closing a temple of Kṛṣṇa.

Pr̥thu Dāsa
Ireland

• • •

ONE EVENING in Bhaktivedanta Manor in London, Śrīla Prabhupāda was sitting in his room with his disciples and a few guests, including a woman reporter who had come to interview Śrīla Prabhupāda. Despite the chilly English summer weather, the reporter was dressed in a miniskirt. Her first few questions revealed her skeptical and almost cynical attitude toward the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. As usual, Śrīla Prabhupāda coolly and expertly answered her questions.

Somewhat exasperated and in a challenging mood, she brought up the old question, "Why do you people have bald heads?"

Śrīla Prabhupāda immediately retorted, "Why do you have bare legs?"

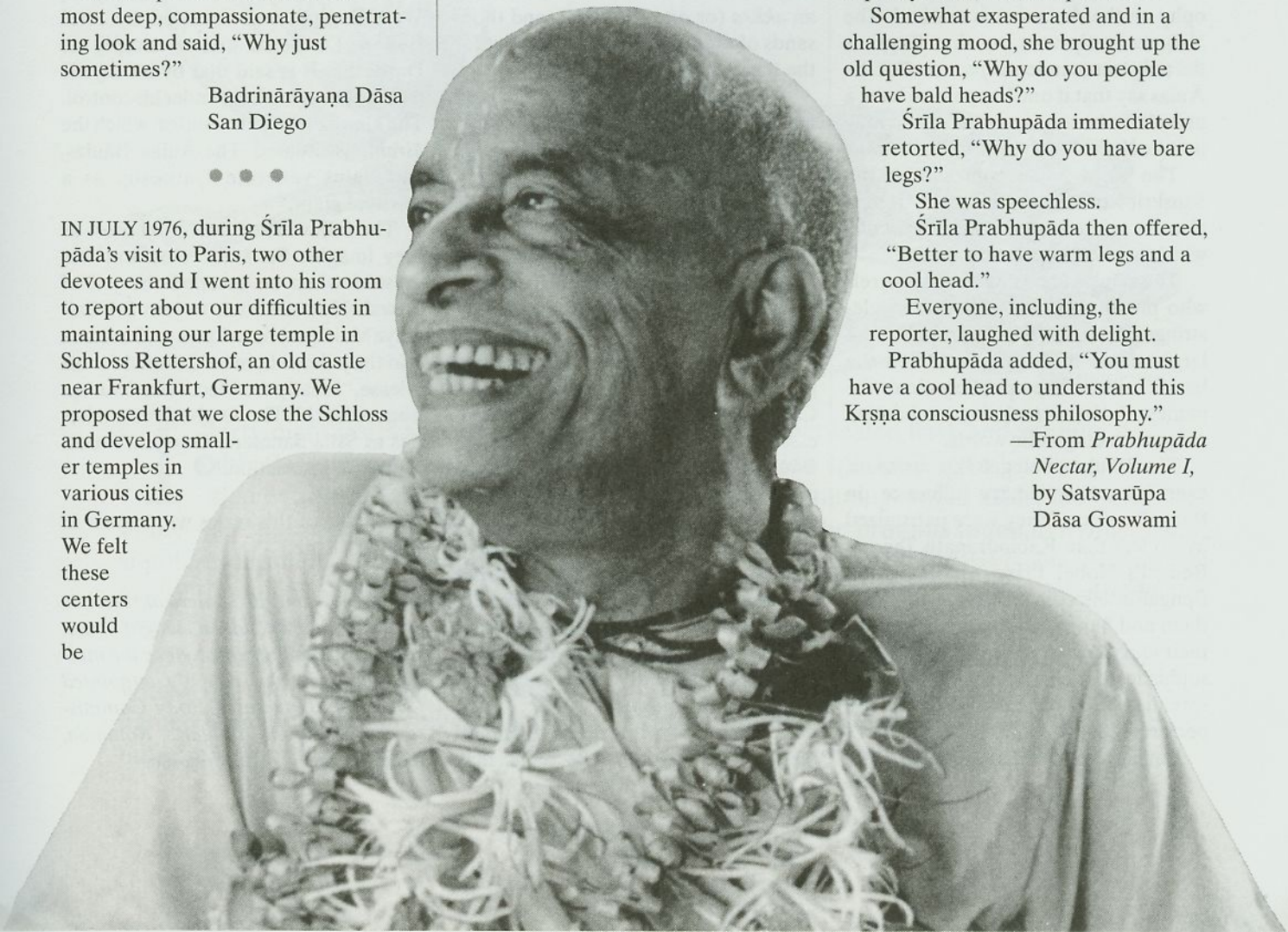
She was speechless.

Śrīla Prabhupāda then offered, "Better to have warm legs and a cool head."

Everyone, including the reporter, laughed with delight.

Prabhupāda added, "You must have a cool head to understand this Kṛṣṇa consciousness philosophy."

—From *Prabhupāda Nectar, Volume I*,
by Satsvarūpa
Dāsa Goswami



***Kṛṣṇa is the only transcendental puruṣa.
But the Āulas say that if one happens
to have a male form he too is puruṣa and so may
imitate Kṛṣṇa's activities with impunity.***



SECTS (continued from page 40)

they can attain divine love. They claim that Lord Caitanya, Lord Nityānanda, and the six Gosvāmīs were all “*āuliya*,” and they use citations from *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* to try to substantiate their claim.

But Lord Caitanya’s teachings clearly distinguish between love and lust. *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Ādī 4.165) defines love, or *prema*, as eagerness to please Kṛṣṇa, whereas lust is the eagerness to gratify one’s senses. By this definition, the practices of the Āulas are simply lust and have no connection with authorized scriptures.

The influence of Māyāvādī philosophy on the Āula sect is marked. The Vaiṣṇava scriptures say that Kṛṣṇa is the only transcendental *puruṣa*. But the Āulas say that if one happens to have a male form he too is *puruṣa* and so may imitate Kṛṣṇa’s activities with impunity.

The word *bāula* comes from the Sanskrit word *vatula*, or “mad.” It may also be related to the word *vyakula*, which means “impatiently eager.”

The Bāulas are wandering minstrels who play instruments like the single-stringed *ektar*, the *dugi* (a drum like the larger drum in a tabla set), and the bamboo flute. They publicly chant the names of Kṛṣṇa and sing enchanting songs with enigmatic words.

The Bāulas, being folk musicians, exert an extraordinary influence on Bengali culture. They were patronized by no less than Rabindranath Tagore, Bengal’s Nobel Prize-winning poet. Bengali intellectuals are fascinated with them and have written many books to their glory. In recent years, this kind of sophisticated regard for the Bāulas has spread to the West. Bāulas have even performed in London’s Albert Hall.

Bāulas often keep long hair in a bun

atop their heads and adorn their foreheads with *tilaka*. They may wear the gown of a Muslim fakir and wear on their necks Shaivaite *rudrākṣa* beads, the glass worry beads of a Muslim, and the *japa* beads of a Vaiṣṇava. They are usually bearded and carry a shoulder bag, a bamboo walking cane, and a *fisti* (a pot made from a big coconut). They have been known to use hashish liberally for “self-control.”

The Bāulas typically flock to festivals they call *mahotsabs*, many of which coincide with important Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava functions. The Jayadeva Mela each winter in Kenduli, in Bengal, is the largest such *mahotsab*. The Bāulas have an *akhra* (or *āśrama*) there, and thousands of them converge at that spot for the three-day festival.

At other places across Bengal and Bangladesh they hold *mahotsabs* throughout the year. The Bāulas move from one to the next, perform music, smoke hemp, and look for women. Often a Bāula picks up a woman (or *sādhikā*) at one *mahotsab* and drops her at the next to take on a new one. His former *sādhikā* will be picked up by another Bāula.

Some Bāulas write books presenting perverted accounts of the lives of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His associates. Because of their talents, the Bāulas cast over the minds of the innocent populace a spell that the Vaiṣṇavas regard as extremely inauspicious.

The word *sānī* comes from *svāmī* (master). The Sānī group is more commonly known as the Sain. They are mendicants who wander about without following any particular discipline, having supposedly renounced all external designations.

Supposedly liberated from all material conceptions, the Sains may

appear in any kind of dress (Hindu *sannyāsī* or Muslim fakir) or no dress at all. They are so much beyond the grip of illusion that they may drink wine or eat human flesh as expressions of their high awareness. Many Sains maintain themselves by distributing mysterious medicines and cures.

The Daraveṣa (Darbesh) are the *gurus* of the Āulas, Bāulas, and Sains. They are supposed to have reached the highest realization through tantric practice. *Darbesh* is a Sufi term, from the Persian *dar* (“door”) and *bhitan* (“to beg”), meaning “one who begs from door to door.”

The Darbesh Ashram in Dubrajpur, West Bengal, was founded by Atal Behari Darbesh, known simply as Darbeshji. It is said that by his mystic feats he brought a king under his control. The king gave him the land on which the *āśrama* is situated. The Āulas, Bāulas, and Sains venerate Darbeshji as a spiritual giant.

The followers of Darbeshji dress as they imagine Sanātana Gosvāmī was dressed when he escaped the jail of Nawab Hussain Shah to join Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in Prayaga. Sanātana told the jailer, whom he’d bribed for his release, “I shall go to Mecca as a *daraveṣa* [renunciant].” The Darbesh cult takes this as Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī’s most profound instruction. ❁

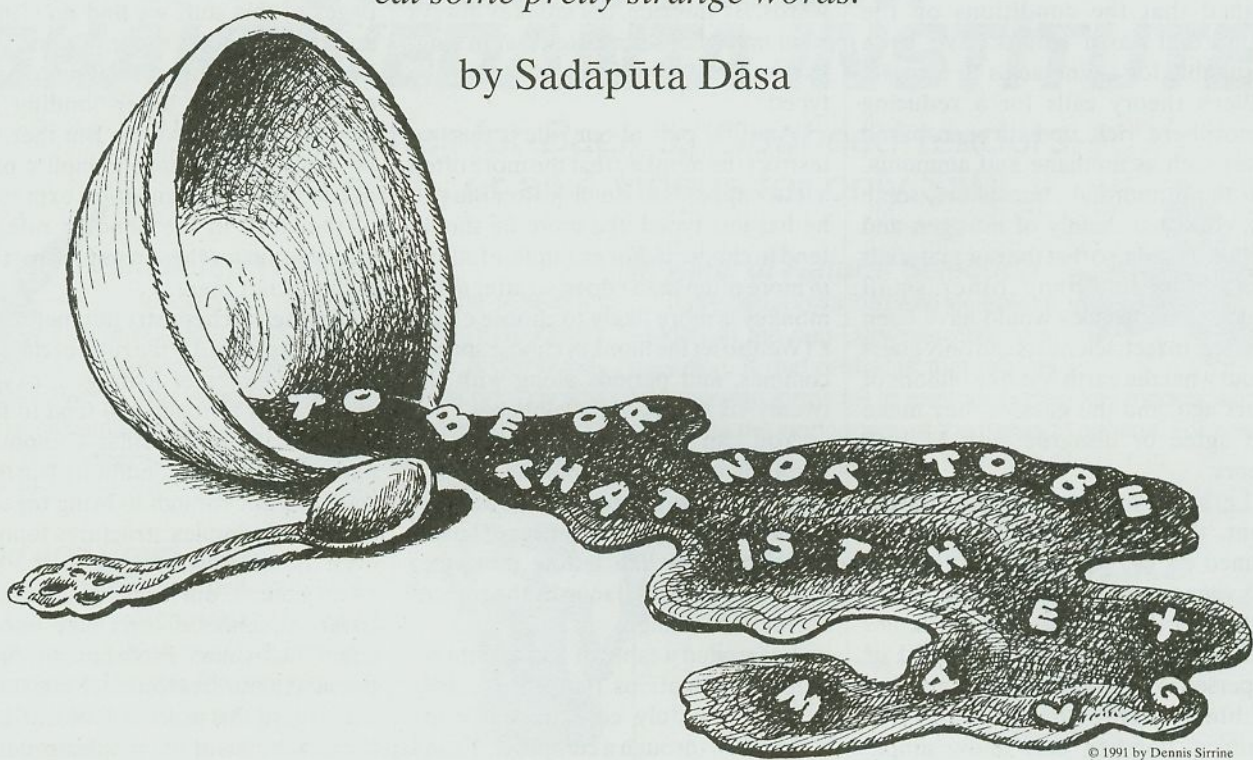
[Part Four of this series will appear in our next issue.]

Suhotra Swami, an American disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda, has taught Kṛṣṇa consciousness in Europe since the mid-seventies. He was recently appointed ISKCON’s Governing Body Commissioner for Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Albania, and Czechoslovakia.

Primordial Alphabet Soup

*The recipes seemed good.
Monkeys love it. But scientists may have to
eat some pretty strange words.*

by Sadāpūta Dāsa



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Thirty-eight years ago what is arguably the greatest mystery ever puzzled over by scientists—the origin of life—seemed virtually solved by a single simple experiment.” This is how the February 1991 issue of *Scientific American* begins a review of theories of the origin of life.¹

The simple experiment, carried out by a University of Chicago graduate student named Stanley Miller, involved placing a mixture of methane, ammonia, hydrogen,

and water in a sealed flask and zapping it with electrical sparks. The result was a tarry goo containing amino acids, the building blocks of the proteins found in living organisms.

To Miller it seemed but a few inevitable evolutionary steps from this primordial soup of water and biomolecules to the first living organisms. And from that day, college science students have been taught that science has explained life’s origin. Indeed,

Although the rules for chemical bonding may allow simple biological molecules to form, these same rules don't guarantee that the higher forms of organization found in living organisms will arise.



many students are under the impression that life itself has been synthesized in a test tube. Unfortunately, as the article in *Scientific American* points out, scientists are far from understanding life's origins.

First of all, some scientists have argued that the conditions on the primordial earth would have been unsuitable for amino acids to form in. Miller's theory calls for a reducing atmosphere rich in hydrogen-based gases such as methane and ammonia. But the primordial atmosphere, some say, consisted mainly of nitrogen and carbon dioxide, so that the raw materials for amino acids and other small biological molecules would have been missing. In fact, scientists can only guess about what the earth was like billions of years ago, and the guesses they make can agree or disagree with Miller's theory.

Let's suppose, for the sake of argument, that amino acids would have formed on the primordial earth. And let's suppose they would have piled up with other simple biological molecules without being naturally destroyed or dispersed. We'd then run into another problem: Although the rules for chemical bonding may allow simple biological molecules to form, these same rules don't guarantee that the higher forms of organization found in living organisms will arise.

We can illustrate this by a simple example. We all know the story of the monkeys that randomly hit typewriter keys and by chance write Shakespeare's plays. Monkeys who strike keys completely at random are unlikely even to come up with English words, apart from short words like *is* or *at*. But we can improve on the monkeys' performance by introducing a simple rule.

Here's how the rule works. If a mon-

key has just typed *th*, we require that the next letter be fit for an English word including *th*. For example, the next letter might be *e*, forming the word *the*, or it might be *r*, since *thr* appears in *throw*. But the letter couldn't be *q* or *x*, since *thq* and *thx* don't come up in English words. By this rule, the monkey always randomly chooses a letter that in English could follow the last two letters he typed.

Another part of our rule is this: we instruct the monkey that the more often a letter appears in English after the two he has just typed, the more he should tend to choose it. For example, *e* follows *th* more often than *r* does, so after *th* the monkey is more likely to choose *e* than *r*. (We also let the monkey choose spaces, commas, and periods along with the twenty-six letters of the alphabet.)

You can think of this rule as an imitation of chemical bonding. An *e* or *r* can bond to *th*, but *q* or *z* can't. Allowing the monkey to type sequences of letters by this rule is like letting molecules form in a primordial soup by the rules of chemical bonding.

I compiled a table of allowed three-letter combinations (letter-triples) by running my July column, on Vedic astronomy, through a computer. Then I programmed the computer to generate sequences of letters according to the resulting rule. I call these sequences of letters "sentences," even though they're generally not punctuated properly. Here's an example:

"To the local thers an ut once scorpth ese, ar and astar. The ma, wers a godern the sky srittailis othicein volumn of the onsmilky way, thears"

Evolutionists, this seems promising. The computer-monkey is coming up with many English words, and some

even seem to convey a faint glimmer of meaning. One can imagine that in just a few evolutionary steps the computer will begin to express profound thoughts—with impeccable English grammar.

But unfortunately if we read a few pages of this stuff we find no signs of emerging complex order. We find short English words, often relating to astronomy, since the letter-bonding rule comes from such words. But there are no signs of the more complex order needed for the grammatical expression of thoughts. In the bonding rule, the information for these complex patterns is simply not there.

Biological chemistry puts before us a similar problem. By the rules of chemical bonding, atoms of hydrogen, oxygen, carbon, and nitrogen will tend to form amino acids and similar compounds under appropriate conditions. But these rules are not enough to bring together the highly complex structures found in even the simplest living cells.

Of course, our rule for generating letter sequences doesn't take into account Darwinian evolution by mutation and natural selection. Many scientists regard this process as essential for the development of complex order. So it's not surprising, one might say, that our simple rule cannot produce such order.

But the simple forming of molecules by chemical bonding in a primordial soup also doesn't involve Darwinian evolution. Darwinian evolution calls for a self-reproducing system of molecules. Indeed, one of the main tasks of origin-of-life theories is to explain how the first self-reproducing system arose.

In living organisms, self-reproduction is a dauntingly complex process involving proteins, deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) and ribonucleic acid

(RNA). If Darwinian evolution can't take place until such a complex system is operating, scientists are at a loss to explain how that complex system has come about.

The only hope has been to suppose that the first self-reproducing system was much simpler than the simplest of today's living cells. If somehow a single molecule could reproduce itself under suitable conditions, then perhaps it could evolve, develop liaisons with other molecules, and eventually give rise to the kind of organisms that exist today.

One of the most popular scenarios for a self-reproducing molecule has been the so-called "RNA-world." The idea is that an RNA molecule might be able to catalyze its own replication and so be able to evolve in a Darwinian manner. It has been shown that RNA molecules can act as enzymes that act on other RNA molecules. And Manfred Eigen of the Max Planck Institute has shown that RNA molecules reproducing under the influence of modern cellular enzymes can undergo a process of Darwinian evolution.

But the RNA-world models have problems. One is that RNA would seem unlikely to form on the prebiotic primordial earth. Another is that RNA cannot readily make new copies of itself in the laboratory without a great deal of help from scientists. (For one thing, RNA replication calls for pure conditions that can be provided in a laboratory but would not be expected in nature.)

Still, let's suppose that a self-reproducing molecule (which might or might not be RNA) did arise on the

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Assuming that self-replicating molecules could exist on a primordial earth, where can we expect their evolution to go? Nowhere meaningful.



primordial earth. What might we expect it to evolve into? To gain some insight into this, I introduced evolution into the computer-monkey model.

Darwinian evolution rests on the idea of survival of the fittest, or natural selection. So I defined the fitness of a monkey-generated "sentence" by looking at how often the letter-triples of that sentence appear in English. If a sentence has many frequent triples (like *the* or *ing*), it has high fitness; if it has few, it has low fitness. So if we replace infrequent or nonexistent triples (like *inz*) with common ones (like *ing*), we increase the sentence's fitness. Essentially, the closer a sentence gets to a real English sentence, the more fit it is.

I used survival of the fittest to simulate how evolution might take place in a population of twenty monkey-generated sentences. For a sentence to "give birth," I would simply add to the population a copy of the sentence that might differ by one letter. The copy would be the offspring, and the differing letter would correspond to a random mutation.

I divided time into generations. During each generation, the ten fittest sentences in the population would each give birth to ten offspring. At the same time, I cruelly killed off the ten sentences of least fitness, so that the fit sentences multiplied at the expense of the less fit ones. This was survival of the fittest.

I began with a population of twenty copies of the sentence "goderen the sky srittailis othicein volumn of the onsmilky way," generated by the letter-bonding rule. Here is how the fittest sentence in the population changed at intervals of 200 generations:

goderen the sky srittailis othicein
volumn of the onsmilky way,
zodur, the sky wriquat isuothyzet,
volum, of the oesmilky way,

zodur. the sky wriqua. isuothyzed,
volums of the oesmilky way.

zodur. the sky wriqua. invothyzed.
volums of the oesmilky way.

zodur. the lky wriqua, unvothyzed.
volums of theboesmilky way.

zodur. the lky wriqua, anvothyzed.
volums of theboesmilky way.

We see that the sentence is indeed evolving. But unfortunately it's not evolving into anything meaningful. This process of evolution is simply not able to generate the complex patterns of actual English speech.

My point is this: Assuming that self-replicating molecules could exist on a primordial earth, where can we expect their evolution to go? Nowhere meaningful. Such molecules may indeed evolve and grow molecularly more fit, but there is no reason to think they will evolve into living cells.

Molecular fitness will have something to do with how strongly a molecule's bonds hold it together and how well the molecule can catalyze its own replication. This kind of fitness may increase through Darwinian evolution. But there's no reason to think that anything will ever emerge from this, other than modified self-replicating molecules of the same type. There's no reason to suppose that the self-reproducing molecules will ever give rise to something completely different, such as an elaborate system of reproductive machinery based on DNA, RNA, enzymes, and the famous genetic code.

My purpose in giving these examples from sequences of letters is not to claim they *prove* anything about the origin of life. Rather, I'm simply illustrating some of the obstacles that theories of life's origin face. We can talk about these obstacles in purely chemical terms. Such discussions are necessarily technical.

So, again, here are the two obstacles we have discussed: (1) Natural rules for bonding between atoms may give rise to simple biological molecules under special circumstances (as in Miller's experiment), but they can't give rise to the complex structures needed for organisms to grow and reproduce. (2) If some hypothetical molecules were able to jump start their own replication, they might evolve by Darwinian natural selection and random variation. But no one has given any solid reason to suppose they would evolve into anything more than better self-replicating molecules. And, of course, it has not been shown that prebiotic molecular self-replication could happen.

In the thirty-eight years since Miller's famous experiment, scientists have come up with many complicated theories about how life might have originated, but they have failed to overcome these and other fundamental obstacles. Miller himself tends to disapprove of the futile speculations of the theorists. He argues that what the origin-of-life field needs is good experiments that actually demonstrate how life got started. But such experiments are not easy to devise. "I come up with a dozen ideas a day," Miller says, pausing to reflect, "and I usually discard the whole dozen."² ☸

Sadāpūta Dāsa (Richard L. Thompson) earned his Ph.D. in mathematics from Cornell University. He is the author of several books, of which the most recent is Vedic Cosmography and Astronomy (see page 20 to order).

REFERENCES

1. John Horgan, "In the Beginning..." *Scientific American*, February, 1991, p. 117.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 125.

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- Hardwar, U.P.**—Pahala Mala, Brittany Cottage, Kharkhari 249 401 (mail: P.O. Box 14)
- Hyderabad, A.P.**—Hare Krishna Land, Nampally Station Rd., 500 001/ Tel. 551018, 552924
- Imphal, Manipur**—Hare Krishna Land, Airport Road, 795 001/ Tel. 21587
- Madras, Tamil Nadu**—59, Burkit Rd., T. Nagar, 600 017/ Tel. 443266
- Mayapur, W. Bengal**—Shree Mayapur Chandrodaya Mandir, P.O. Shree Mayapur Dham, Dist. Nadia/ Tel. 31(Swarup Ganj)
- Moirang, Manipur**—Nongban Inghkon, Tidim Rd./ Tel. 795133
- Nagpur, Maharashtra**—70 Hill Road, Ramnagar, 440 010/ Tel. 33513
- New Delhi**—M-119 Greater Kailash 1, 110 048/ Tel. 6412058, 6419701
- New Delhi**—14/63, Punjabi Bagh, 110 026/ Tel. 5410782
- Pandharpur, Maharashtra**—Hare Krishna Ashram, across Chandrabhaga River, Dist. Sholapur, 413 304
- Patna, Bihar**—Rajendra Nagar Road No. 12, 800 016/ Tel. 50765
- Pune, Maharashtra**—4 Tarapoor Rd., Camp, 411 001/ Tel. 60124 and 64003
- Secunderabad, A.P.**—9-1-1 St. John's Road, 500 026/ Tel. 825232
- Silchar, Assam**—Ambikapatti, Silchar, Cachar Dist., 788004
- Siliguri, W. Bengal**—Gitalpara 734 401/ Tel. 26619
- Surat, Gujarat**—Rander Rd., Jahangirpura, 395 005/ Tel. 84215
- Tirupati, A.P.**—K.T. Road, Vinayaka Nagar 517 507/ Tel. 20114
- Trivandrum, Kerala**—T.C. 224/1485, WC Hospital Rd., Thycaud, 695 014/ Tel. 68197
- Udhampur, Jammu and Kashmir**—Prabhupada Nagar, Udhampur 182 101/ Tel. 496 P.P.
- Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujarat**—Sri Sri Radha Giredhari Mandir, opposite Polytechnic College, Vallabh Vidyanagar 338 120
- Vrindavana, U.P.**—Krishna-Balaram Mandir, Bhaktivedanta Swami Marg, Raman Reti, Mathur Dist. 281 124/ Tel. (5664) 82478

FARM COMMUNITIES

- Ahmedabad, Gujarat**—Nityananda Seva Ashram, Odhav Rd., Odhav 382 410/ Tel. 886 382
- Ahmedabad District, Gujarat**—Hare Krishna Farm, Katwada (contact ISKCON Ahmedabad)
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- Chamorshi, Maharashtra**—78 Krishnanagar Dham, District Gadachiroli, 442 603
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- Calcutta**—Hare Krishna Karma-Free Confectionary, 6 Russel Street, Calcutta 700 071
- Vrindavana**—Krishna-Balaram Mandir Guesthouse

OTHER COUNTRIES

- Bali, Indonesia**—(Contact ISKCON Jakarta)
- Bangkok, Thailand**—139 Soi Puttha Osotha, New Road (near GPO), Bangkok 10500
- Cagayan de Oro, Philippines**—30 Dahlia St., Ilaya Carmen, 900 Cagayan de Oro (c/o Sepulveda's Compound)
- Chittagong, Bangladesh**—Caitanya Cultural Society, Sri Pundarik Dham, Mekhala, Hathazari (city office and mail: 23 Nandan Kanan, Chittagong)/ Tel. 202219

Colombo, Sri Lanka—188 New Chetty St., Colombo 13/ Tel. 33325
Hong Kong—27 Chatam Road South, 6/F, Kowloon/ Tel. 3 7396818
Iloilo City, Philippines—13-1-1 Tereos St., La Paz, Iloilo City, Iloilo/ Tel. 73391
Jakarta, Indonesia—P.O. Box 2694, Jakarta Pusat 10001/ Tel. (21) 4899646
Kathmandu, Nepal—Vishnu Gaun Panchayat Ward No. 2, Budhanilkantha/ Tel. 4-10368
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia—Lot 9901, Jalan Awan Jawa, Taman Yari, off 5½ Mile, Jalan Kelang Lama, Petaling/ Tel. 7830172
Manila, Philippines—170 R. Fernandez, San Juan, Metro Manila/ Tel. 707410
Singapore—Govinda's Gifts, 3 Kerbau Road, Singapore 0718/ Tel. 336-1911 or 339-0109
Taipei, Taiwan—(mail: c/o ISKCON Hong Kong)
Tehran, Iran—Keshavarz-Dehkedeh Ave., Kamran St. No. 58/ Tel. 658870
Tokyo, Japan—2-41-12 Izumi, Suginami-ku, Tokyo T168/ Tel. (03) 3327-1541
Yogyakarta, Indonesia—P.O. Box 25, Babarsari YK, DIY

FARM COMMUNITIES

Bogor, Indonesia—Govinda Kunja (contact ISKCON Jakarta)
Cebu, Philippines (Hare Krishna Paradise)—231 Pagsabungan Rd., Basak, Mandaue City/ Tel. 83254
Perak, Malaysia—Jalan Sungai Manik, 36000 Teluk Intan, Perak

RESTAURANTS

Cebu, Philippines—Govinda's, 26 Sanchiangko St.
Hong Kong—The Higher Taste Vegetarian Dining Club (at ISKCON Hong Kong)
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Curitiba, PR—Rua Jornalista Caio Machado, 291, B. Sta. Quitéria, CEP 80320
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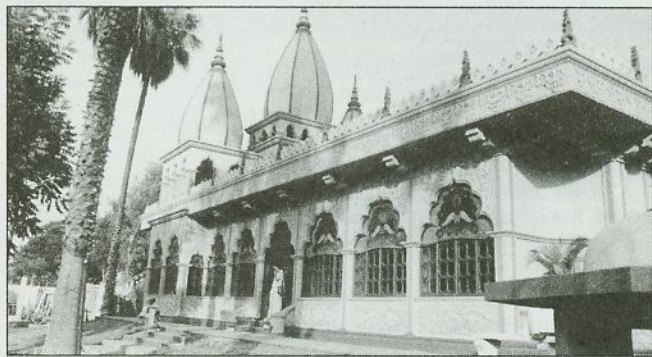
Arequipa—(at ISKCON Arequipa)
Cuzco—Espaderos 128
Lima—Schell 634 Miraflores

OTHER COUNTRIES

Asunción, Paraguay—Centro Bhaktivedanta, Paraguari 469, Asunción/ Tel. 492-800
Bahia Blanca, Argentina—Centro de Estudios Vedicos, Rondeau 473, (8000) Bahia Blanca
Bogotá, Colombia—Calle 63A, #10-62, Chapinero/ Tel. 249-5797
Buenos Aires, Argentina—Centro Bhaktivedanta, Andonaegui 2054, (1431)/ Tel. (01) 515567
Cali, Colombia—Avenida 2 EN, #24N-39/ Tel. 68-88-53
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Cochabamba, Bolivia—Av. Heroínas E-0435 Apt. 3 (mail: P. O. Box 2070, Cochabamba)
Cuenca, Ecuador—Entrada de Las Pencas 1— Avenida de Las Americas/ Tel. (593-7) 825211
Essequibo Coast, Guyana—New Navadvipa Dham, Mainstay, Essequibo Coast
Georgetown, Guyana—24 Uitvlugt Front, West Coast Demerara
Guatemala, Guatemala—Apartado Postal 1534
Guayaquil, Ecuador—6 de Marzo 226 y V. M. Rendon/ Tel. (593-4) 308412 y 309420
La Paz, Bolivia—P. O. Box 10278, Miraflores, La Paz
Montevideo, Uruguay—Centro de Bhakti-Yoga, Pablo de Maria 1427, Montevideo/ Tel. (82) 2484551
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Panama, Republic of Panama—Via las Cumbres, entrada Villa Zaita, frente a INPSA No. 1 (mail: P.O. Box 6-29-54, Panama)
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Quito, Ecuador—Inglaterra y Amazonas
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San José, Costa Rica—Centro Cultural Govinda, Av. 7, Calles 1 y 3, 235 mtrs. norte del Banco Anglo, San Pedro (mail: Apdo. 166, 1002)/ Tel. 23-5238
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Bolivia—Contact ISKCON Cochabamba
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El Salvador—Carretera a Santa Ana, Km. 34, Canton Los Indios, Zapotitan, Dpto. de La Libertad
Guyana—Seawell Village, Corentyne, East Berbice

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Guatemala, Guatemala—Callejor Santandes a una cuadra abajo de Guatel, Panajachel Solola
Quito, Ecuador—(contact ISKCON Quito)
San Salvador, El Salvador—25 Avenida Norte 1132
Santa Cruz, Bolivia—Snack Govinda, Av. Argomosa (1ero anillo), esq. Bolivar

The Hare Kṛṣṇa Calendar

Month of Hṛṣīkeśa

(August 26–September 23)

SEPTEMBER

2—Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī, the appearance anniversary of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Fasting till midnight. Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for a schedule of events.

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

5—Annadā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

13—Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Sitā Devī, the consort of Śrīla Advaita Ācārya.

14—Appearance anniversary of Lalitā-sakhī, one of the principal cowherd girlfriends of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

16—Śrī Rādhāṣṭamī, appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, Lord Kṛṣṇa's eternal consort. Fasting till noon, followed by feasting.

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

19—Parśvā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans. Fasting till noon for the appearance of Lord Vāmanadeva (tomorrow).

20—Śrī Vāmana-dvādaśī, appearance anniversary of Lord Vāmanadeva. Feast at noon. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

21—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, father of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura (Śrīla Prabhupāda's spiritual master), and a pioneer in preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness in English. Fasting till noon, followed by feasting.

22—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura, foremost teacher of the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa.

23—Third month of Cāturmāsya begins (fasting from milk). Also, the anniversary of the acceptance of *sannyāsa* by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

Calendar calculated for Śrīdhām Māyāpur, West Bengal, India. Dates may vary for other locations. Consult your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for the exact dates for your area.

Month of Padmanābha

(September 24–October 23)

OCTOBER

4—Indirā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

18—Rāmacandra Vijayotsava, the anniversary of Lord Rāmacandra's victory over the demon Rāvaṇa.

19—Pāśāṅkuṣā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

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

Month of Dāmodara

(October 24–November 19)

28—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura, a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa known for his Bengali devotional songs.

NOVEMBER

2—Ramā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

6—Diwali, the festival of illuminating Kṛṣṇa's temples with lamps. Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for details.

7—Govardhana Pūjā, the festival commemorating the worship of Govardhana Hill by the residents of Vṛndāvana and Kṛṣṇa's lifting the hill. Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for details.

10—Disappearance anniversary of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna consciousness. Devotees observe this day with personal remembrances of Śrīla Prabhupāda, readings from his biography, and fasting till noon, followed by feasting.

15—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, a great follower of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

18—Utthānā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans. Also, the disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Gaurakiśora Dāsa Bābājī, the spiritual master of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, who was Śrīla Prabhupāda's spiritual master. Fasting till noon.

21—Śrī Kṛṣṇa Rāsa-yātrā. Last day of Dāmodara-vrata and Cāturmāsya.

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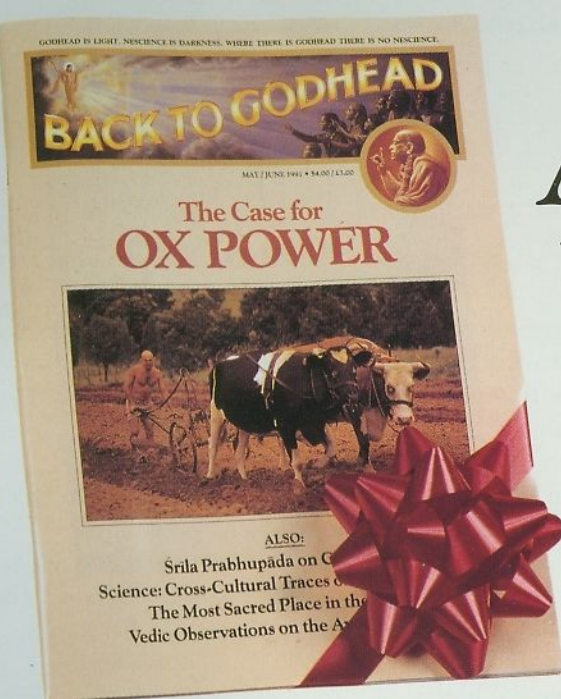
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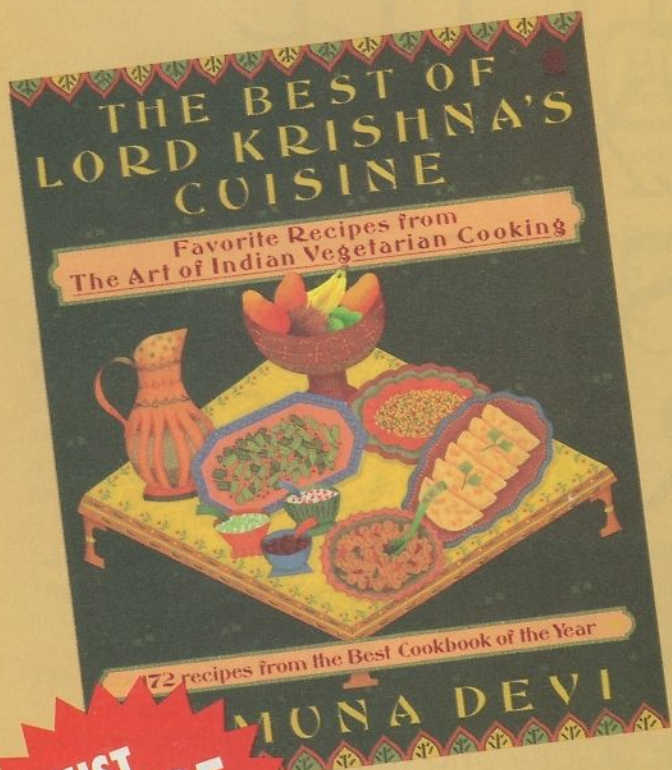
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