

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



BACK TO GODHEAD

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 1992
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ŚRĪ RĀDHĀ RAMAÑAJĪ

The Deity Who
Manifested Himself

THE ISKCON FOUNDATION

Gathering Support
For Kṛṣṇa's Cause





Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa

*Diorama from the First American Theistic Exhibition (FATE)
at the Los Angeles Hare Kṛṣṇa Temple*

BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement

Founded 1944 • Vol. 26, No. 1 • January / February 1992

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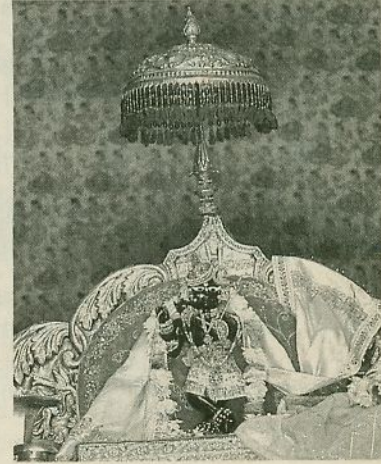
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Now enjoying religious freedom in an independent nation, devotees in Lithuania look back on days of darkness.



COVER: The Deity of Kṛṣṇa named Śrī Rādhā-Ramaṇajī appeared four hundred years ago in Vṛndāvana, India, the holy place of Lord Kṛṣṇa's eternal pastimes. The reverence and opulence with which Rādhā-Ramaṇajī is worshiped today make His temple one of the most popular in Vṛndāvana. Please see page 24 for the history of His appearance.

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BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement

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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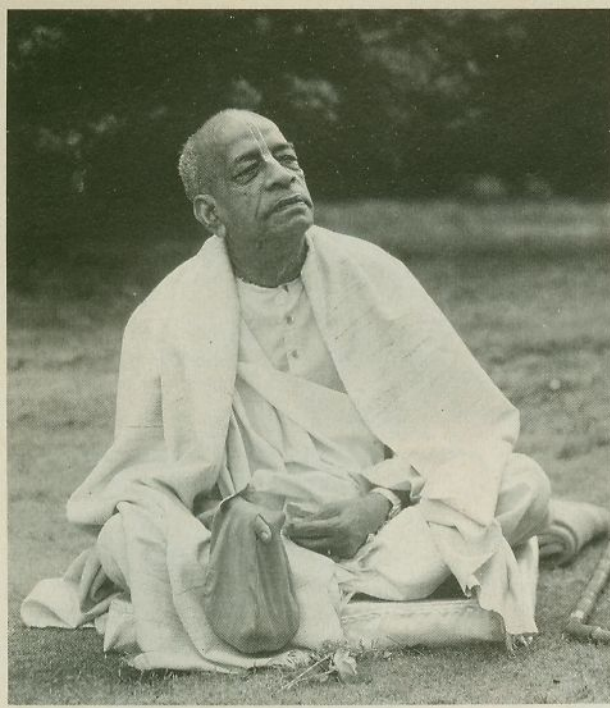
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His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda

Founder-Ācārya of the
International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Statement of Purposes

Back to Godhead magazine 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

The Caitanya Vaiṣṇavas

WHEN ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA brought Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the West in 1965, he was carrying forward the movement begun by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu five hundred years ago in Māyāpur, West Bengal. Śrīla Prabhupāda brought Kṛṣṇa consciousness packaged in a spiritual tradition known as Gauḍīya (or Bengali) Vaiṣṇavism. Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas are devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is Kṛṣṇa Himself in the form of His own devotee. In this issue of *Back to Godhead* we look at some of the history and important devotees in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava tradition.

In January, Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas celebrate the appearance of Nityānanda Prabhu, Lord Caitanya's closest associate. Śrīla Prabhupāda speaks about Nityānanda Prabhu in the opening article of this issue. Nityānanda is Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa's first expansion. Since Balarāma has the same potency as Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma (or Nityānanda) is also God.

Many people in the West had heard of Kṛṣṇa before Śrīla Prabhupāda's arrival in New York. Kṛṣṇa's *Bhagavad-gītā* had been available in English for a long time. But hardly anyone outside India knew of Lord Caitanya and Nityānanda. So Śrīla Prabhupāda came to deliver everyone from this great misfortune. Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda are especially merciful forms of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma who descended to save the fallen souls of this age. They brought with Them the process of God realization for the

age: the congregational chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. Although Lord Caitanya and Nityānanda appeared in Bengal, They came to deliver the whole world.

In his lecture Śrīla Prabhupāda tells of Nityānanda Prabhu's mercy, and he quotes the full text of a song by Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura. Narottama wrote many Bengali devotional songs shortly after Lord Caitanya passed away. He was one of the three great devotees who transported the writings of the six Gosvāmīs from Vṛndāvana to Bengal. Lord Caitanya had empowered the Gosvāmīs to write many books explaining the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and the philosophy of the *saṅkīrtana* movement. The Gosvāmīs entrusted to Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura, Śyāmananda Prabhu, and Śrīnivāsa Ācārya the vital task of delivering the manuscripts to devotees in Bengal. In this issue, we begin a three-part biography of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya that will describe their journey.

One of the six Gosvāmīs was Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, founder of Vṛndāvana's Rādhā Ramaṇa Temple. In this issue, Padma Nābha Goswami, one of the present leaders of the temple and a descendant of its first priest, relates the temple's history.

Read on to learn more about the roots of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava tradition.

—Nāgarāja Dāsa
Associate Editor

LETTERS

Superb Job

Meant to write to you after your first new issue—you have done a superb job re-thinking and re-presenting. Good luck. My heart is with you.

C.H. Coggins
Auburndale, MA

Cheers for Shelter

Thank you very much for printing the fantastic article on Shelter and Bhakta Vic in the Sep/Oct issue. These guys really deserve it. Shelter is an incredible inspiration to me as well as many other young devotees everywhere. Shelter was my introduction to Krsna consciousness when they played here on Oct. 3, 1990. That day was the most purposeful moment in my life, and from then on it has been complete joy. I look forward to seeing Bhakta Vic's column in upcoming issues, as he is an incredibly intelligent individual. All glories to Shelter's devotional service! Hare Krsna!

Mike Day
Highlands Ranch,
Colorado

Thanks so much for publishing the article by Bhakta Vic. It was thoroughly enlivening to read the whole magazine!

Phaliñī Dāsī
Grass Valley, California

I was fortunate enough to be able to accompany Shelter at their very packed concert here recently. (they broke the fire code, there were so many people). Immediately upon their arrival, groups of anywhere from five to ten people surrounded the band, and the "youths" asked sincere questions for the entire length of time we were there (six hours). Then many came back to the temple, and even more came to the Sunday feast the next night.

When the band sang, a hundred young men and women were scream-

ing the words to "Saranagati," and everybody chanted Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare, Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. Many of Srila Prabhupada's books were sold.

I thought straightedge hardcore wouldn't last, but it appears now to me to be expanding, and there definitely is a group of people within it who are seeking higher consciousness.

Vedātmā Dāsa
St. Louis

Contemporary and Controversial

I think the new magazines are excellent. The basics are still there, but it looks exciting and new. Even simple changes such as adding pictures of temples and Deities to the list of ISKCON temples make a difference and make the whole magazine more enticing.

I also very much appreciate BTG's willingness to discuss "controversial" (women's issue, mistakes of the movement in the past) and contemporary ("Hardcore Hare Krsnas") topics. I find the quality of the writing to be very good, less "official party line" and more of the personalities of the individuals being expressed.

Caitanya-rūpā Dāsī
Port Royal, Pennsylvania

Childish Argument

In the Sept./Oct. issue of BTG, Suhotra Swami points out the devotions of one Jagannatha Dasa, a so-called follower of Haridasa Thakura: "He (Jagannatha Dasa) had his followers cover their mouths while chanting the maha-mantra and told them to chant the second half (Hare Rama) first." But according to Srila Prabhupada it doesn't matter whether one chants Hare Krsna first or Hare Rama first.

The following is taken from a class by Srila Prabhupada on Srimad-Bhagavatam (3.26.5), given on December 17, 1974, in Bombay.

Srila Prabhupada is describing the

many forms of the Lord and then goes on to say, "So either you chant Hare Rama or you chant Hare Krsna, it is the same; there is no difference. Sometimes they place first Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare; and sometimes they place first Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare. There is no difference. Sometimes they say, 'No, it should be Hare Rama first'; sometimes 'Hare Krsna first.' But that is not very important, childish."

While one is chanting the maha-mantra one after another, what is the difference? Srila Prabhupada instructed his disciples to chant Hare Krsna first because that is how Lord Caitanya chanted. Otherwise, it makes no difference, as pointed out by Srila Prabhupada.

Frank Chiefo
Cincinnati, Ohio

Like the Ganges

Every two months I wait for that breath of fresh air to arrive, and just like the river Ganges it comes down from the spiritual world through the mists of Maya to illuminate my heart. I cannot practice Krsna consciousness very nicely, and I keep falling down and picking myself up, but without your magazine I would be lost forever. Please keep sending it for my sake and for sudras like me.

James Murphy
London, England

Worshiping Kṛṣṇa as Buddha

As a subscriber to the new Back to Godhead magazine, I enjoy reading about Lord Krishna and the spreading of Krishna consciousness more than I ever have before.

On June 20, 1991, I formally converted to Buddhism, from the Baptist branch of Christianity. I learned subsequently that Lord Krishna does truly appear in the form of Lord Buddha, and I became more enthu-

siastic than ever in my daily worship in my new religion.

Keep up the grand work in your magazine.

Don Coston, Jr.
West Conshohocken,
Pennsylvania

Disappointed Becomes Satisfied

When BTG first came out last January, I was a little disappointed. First, it was late. Then I never received my second magazine. But after the last issue, I was satisfied. I'm writing to thank you for producing a beautiful magazine!

Just the other day my mother was commenting to me how she liked the new BTG. She said it didn't treat you like a first-timer to Krsna conscious philosophy, but now BTG gave more information and discussion on Krsna consciousness today.

Jagāi Nitāi Dāsa
Los Angeles

First Visit

Hare Krsna! I just returned from my first visit to a temple. I've felt pretty isolated in Des Moines, so I was really looking forward to meeting other devotees. I hadn't ever spoken with a devotee face to face.

The Detroit temple is where I was able to visit, Sunday, Sept. 22, 1991. I really wasn't sure what to expect.

The grounds were very nice. When I walked from my car to the main entrance, I felt very calm, the whole grounds are wonderful to walk thru.

As I opened the front door at 9 A.M. that morning, I heard someone singing some beautiful Sanskrit. I found him sitting on some steps in the entryway. It was from that point on that I felt very welcome. The devotee, Navadwipa Dasa, took the time to show me around the beautiful building. The tours weren't to start until 12:30 and I had to leave around that time, so Navadwipa Dasa was kind enough to show me the temple

and rest of the grounds. Navadwipa Dasa's wife was also very kind to explain things to me. After Navadwipa Dasa had shown me around and left me to enjoy the temple and grounds, I was sitting outside on a bench reading a book on Krsna when a devotee from the kitchen came out and offered me some cooked sweets. This was very nice! A little later, after I had the chance to use my japa beads for the first time in a temple, the gift shop opened and I stocked up on several books and other items.

I can't say enough about the wonderful temple and devotees in Detroit. All glories to Krsna and His devotees!

Mark Haydon
Des Moines, Iowa

One Father's Service

"If they read one word of my books," Prabhupada said, "they'll be benefited." That applies also to BTG.

In the '60's, my father worked for a big commercial bakery in the Bowery. He mentioned to me then that he met these young men several times who wore ridiculous clothes and were bald. "Nice boys," he said. "They're nice boys. I give them money and they always want me to take their magazine, but I don't want to get into that stuff!"

A long time after I became a devotee, the temple president and I both sent my father a BTG subscription one year. When asked what he was doing with the two magazines, he said he was placing them each month in the waiting room of the Veterans Hospital where he was being treated for cancer.

Although my father was a typical example of an ignorant person who wouldn't read anything but the newspaper, he became attracted to Back to Godhead, and the philosophy had some effect on him. He would sometimes say things like, "Those guys with the ropes are coming for me

soon, you know."

Presently it's the anniversary of his death. Whether or not he had an appointment with the Yamadutas is not too significant to me. What is significant is the service, however small, that he rendered to Prabhupada and his movement. I think BTG would be well placed in the homes of all our parents, and we need not think too much if they'll read the whole thing.

On behalf of the grateful dead
San Diego, California

No Onions?

I can understand the prohibition against meat-eating. But what's wrong with eating garlic and onions? Surely there's no more violence committed when we eat an onion than when we eat a potato. Is it considered sinful to eat garlic and onions?

Ranjeet Sharma
Durban, South Africa

Eating onions and garlic adversely affects one's consciousness. Why? Because the modes of goodness, passion, and ignorance influence every living thing—human, animal, or plant—and we learn from the Vedic literature that onions and garlic are in the lower modes of nature: passion and ignorance. In spiritual life one should cultivate the mode of goodness and avoid the lower modes.

Sin in its broadest sense is any activity that hinders our spiritual advancement. Since eating foods in the modes of ignorance and passion hampers our Kṛṣṇa consciousness, Vaiṣṇava spiritual masters teach their followers to give up onions and garlic. Most important, as aspiring devotees of Kṛṣṇa we eat only what we offer Him. And His great devotees tell us He doesn't eat onions and garlic. ❀

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



The Source of Spiritual Strength

A lecture in Bhubaneswar on February 2, 1977

by His Divine Grace

A.C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI
PRABHUPĀDA

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

• • •

TODAY IS THE APPEARANCE DAY of Nityānanda Prabhu. Nityānanda Prabhu is Baladeva, Baladeva-tattva. Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura has sung, *vrajendra nandana yei, śacī sūta haila sei, balarāma haila nitāi*: “He who was formerly the son of Nanda Mahārāja has appeared as the son of Śacīdevī.” Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s mother’s name was Śacīdevī. So Kṛṣṇa is Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and Balarāma is Nityānanda Prabhu.

In the Vedic literature it is said, *nāyam ātmā bala-hiṇena labhyaḥ*: “One cannot understand the Absolute Truth without *bala*.” *Bala* means strength. Sometimes rascal philosophers say that

*Left: Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu (on left)
and Nityānanda Prabhu dance in ecstasy as they spread
the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra.*

On spiritual strength, the body moves.

Suppose you have a very good car. When there is no petrol, how will the car move? It is not possible.

There is a kind of spirit required—“petrol spirit.”



bala means bodily strength. They propagate the philosophy that “Unless you are bodily stout and strong, you cannot achieve spiritual salvation. You must be very strong and stout and eat meat and fight, and then you’ll get a spiritual birth in your next life.”

No. The strength—*bala*—required to understand the Absolute Truth is different. This is spiritual strength. The difficulty of the present situation is that although we are moving on account of spiritual strength, people have no information of spiritual strength. They are thinking of material strength.

That is expressed by Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura’s song: *ahañkāre matta hoiyā, nitāi-pada pāsariyā, asatyere satya kori māni*. The misconception of thinking that *bala* means bodily strength is due to *ahañkāra*, false ego. By the spell of *māyā*, people are thinking, “We are independent. We can do whatever we like.” This is called *ahañkāra-vimūḍhātmā*. Under false pretext, false prestige, everyone is thinking, “We are independent. We can find the solution of the problems of life by material adjustment.”

So that is the material disease—*ahañkāra-vimūḍhātmā*. Bewildered, people do not understand that the real strength is spiritual strength. We see daily that a person may be very strong, very powerful, have a good brain, be a very good scientist—but what is the person’s real strength? The strength is *ātmā*. As soon as the *ātmā*, or the soul, goes out of the body, the intelligence, the strength—so many things—they are nothing.

That is the difference between a dead man and a living man. A living man may

be very powerful and in a very good position, but as soon as he dies, he is lying down on the floor. And if you kick him on his face, he’ll not protest. So where is the strength? The strength is gone. That is spiritual strength.

On spiritual strength, the body moves. Suppose you have a very good car—Mercedes or Rolls Royce. When there is no petrol, how will the car move? It is not possible. There is a kind of spirit required—“petrol spirit.”

Similarly, real strength is spiritual strength. That spiritual strength is Balarāma. Therefore we have to take shelter of the lotus feet of Balarāma. Balarāma means *guru-tattva*. Balarāma represents *guru*. If we want to understand Caitanya Mahāprabhu, if we want to understand Kṛṣṇa, then we must take shelter of Balarāma.

Nāyam ātmā bala-hiṇena labhyaḥ. This Vedic injunction means, “Without the mercy of Balarāma you cannot realize your spiritual identity.” Balarāma comes as Nityānanda Prabhu. Therefore we must take shelter of Nityānanda.

This song by Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura begins *nitāi-pada-kamala, koṭi-candra-suśītala*: “The lotus feet of Nityānanda are as cooling as millions of moons.” If we take shelter of Nityānanda Prabhu, we’ll get peace. For example, in daytime, especially in the summer, we become exhausted by the heat. But in the evening, as soon as there is moonshine we become satisfied. All the day’s labor and fatigue are immediately removed. One moon gives us so much pleasure. And the shade of Nityānanda Prabhu’s lotus feet is as pleasing as the moonshine of millions of moons.

If we actually want peace of mind, if we actually want to be free from material fatigue, we must take shelter of Nityānanda Prabhu. Nityānanda Prabhu is strength, spiritual strength. And without spiritual strength, you cannot approach Kṛṣṇa.

Nāyam ātmā pravacanena labhyaḥ: “If you are a good speaker, that does not mean you’ll understand Kṛṣṇa.” *Na medhasā*: “Neither by a good brain.” Because you have a very good brain you’ll understand Kṛṣṇa? No. *Na bahunā śrutena*. You think that because you are a very good scholar, a university degree holder, you can understand Kṛṣṇa? No. That is not possible.

We must have spiritual strength. The source of spiritual strength is Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa’s first manifestation, *prakāśa-vigraha*. Kṛṣṇa is manifesting Himself through Balarāma. So we have to take shelter of Nityānanda Prabhu.

Je chāyā jagata jurāy. The whole world is suffering, but if you want peace, take shelter of Nityānanda Prabhu.

Heno nitāi bine bhāi, rādhā-kṛṣṇa pāite nāi, dṛḍha kori’ dharo nitāi pāy. Our real aim of life is how to go back home, back to Godhead, and associate with Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. In another song the same author says, *manuṣya-janama pāiyā, rādhā-kṛṣṇa nā bhajiyā, jāniyā śuniyā biṣa khāinu*. Unless you come to Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, you cannot get real pleasure. If you want to dance and get pleasure, don’t dance independently. Dance with Kṛṣṇa.

Just like here, in our temple, we are also eating, but we are eating the remnants of food left by Kṛṣṇa. That is real pleasure. It is not that we stop

(continued on page 52)



Is the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam Class Still Relevant?

by Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami

DEVOTEES IN Kṛṣṇa consciousness are seeking new ways to open and deepen their relationships with one another. They are not satisfied with the impersonal communications that often characterize human dealings in the material world. To become more functional and happy in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, some devotees turn to personal counseling and even professional therapy. But what about that old forum of self-improvement—hearing the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from a self-realized speaker? Is the process of *śravaṇam* (submissively hearing the scriptures) still relevant? Can our *śravaṇam* be improved?

Personal counseling in Kṛṣṇa consciousness takes place when one devotee seeks confidential guidance from another, trusted devotee. This method is implied in Rūpa Gosvāmī's description of loving exchanges among devotees: "... revealing one's mind in confidence, inquiring confidentially" (*Upadeśāmṛta*, Text 4). Sometimes I may act as the counselor for my friend, and sometimes I go to him to receive counseling. It is a practice that calls for mutual love and trust. It develops through honest exchanges, with reference to the Kṛṣṇa conscious conclusion (*siddhānta*).

Persons with severe difficulties sometimes seek counseling from professional therapists. In a recent seminar at ISKCON's Gītā Nāgarī farm, some devotees testified that therapy helped them, and they compared it to going to a physician whose treatment may help someone function better in devotional service. Other devotees at the seminar pointed out the risks of seeking help from persons who do not practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness. A professional psychologist may strive to be neutral in his advice, but can he support celibacy or be sympathetic to

a life of full dedication to Kṛṣṇa?

Aside from counseling sessions, devotees seek meaningful encounters among themselves, both on a one to one basis and in community. Open discussion in a community is usually called *iṣṭa-goṣṭhī*. In a news article about the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, a journalist once described an *iṣṭa-goṣṭhī* as a "transcendental gripe session." More precisely, at an *iṣṭa-goṣṭhī* devotees can discuss problems that may have built up for want of sufficient communication. They are usually topics that affect the whole community, and the guiding principle is that we can discuss them candidly, looking for Kṛṣṇa conscious solutions.

When devotees speak about the need for informal meetings, the already existing forms of communication may sometimes come in for criticism. Sometimes the daily *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class is singled out as lacking in inspiration.

Certainly, *Bhāgavatam* lecturers and their audiences may improve their rapport. But hearing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is still the best method for removing doubts and dirt from the heart. When a learned Vaiṣṇava speaks from the scriptures and answers questions, the potency for self-improvement is unlimited.

Śrīla Prabhupāda personally introduced the *Bhāgavatam* class into ISKCON, and it is a time-honored method of communication. Thousands of years ago the sages at Naimiṣāraṇya heard *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from Sūta Gosvāmī. Sūta Gosvāmī had previously attended the original *Bhāgavatam* classes held by Śukadeva Gosvāmī, who spoke to Mahārāja Parīkṣit at a gathering of learned devotees.

The successful *Śrīmad-*

Bhāgavatam class requires an eager audience and a qualified speaker. Many of us have had the experience of enduring *Bhāgavatam* classes we found boring. Sometimes we think a speaker has not prepared himself well, or he uses the occasion to air his personal opinions under the cover of scripture. Admitting this, both audience and speaker of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* can strive to improve their performance.

The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class can be a most personal, relevant, and effective way of spiritual communication. Let other methods of communication be encouraged, as long as they can make us more fit to chant and hear about Kṛṣṇa and perform devotional service. There is a time and a need to deal with topics that don't belong in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class. But there is also a time to put aside all relative matters and hear the Absolute Truth.

We can never completely solve the difficulties of family, marriage, and community living. Human dealings are innately imperfect. The source of perfection is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, and He is represented by the teacher Vyāsadeva, who is represented whenever a qualified devotee speaks the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Many devotees had their lives dramatically transformed by hearing a *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class. When Śrīla Prabhupāda gave a lecture in January 1974 stressing the need to "distribute books, distribute books, distribute books," several devotees in the audience vowed on the spot to dedicate their lives to that instruction. *The Nectar of Devotion* relates the history of a *brāhmaṇa* who heard that devotional offerings could be made in the mind, practiced mental

worship, and so was personally brought by Lord Nārāyaṇa to Vaikuṅṭha.

The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* message is most potent when spoken by a pure devotee like Śrīla Prabhupāda. But as Prabhupāda told us, the message is effective when spoken in disciplic succession by his representatives.

How can a speaker improve the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* presentation? I once wrote a letter to Śrīla Prabhupāda asking if it was advisable to rehearse and carefully prepare my *Bhāgavatam* lectures. Śrīla Prabhupāda replied: "It is all right to prepare your lectures, but you should also be ready to speak at a moment's notice."

It's important for speakers to leave time at the end of their lectures so

that the audience can ask questions. This is often the most enlivening part of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class.

As hearers, we should not demand novelty from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Even if we have heard the same teachings before, that doesn't mean we have fully realized them or we're practicing them perfectly. Hearing the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is a comprehensive practice. Prabhupāda states that one should hear the message with rapt attention, but for this one needs a pure mind. And for purity of mind one should be pure in one's activities, regulated in eating, mating, sleeping, and defending.

To be dissatisfied with superficial relations is a healthy sign. We should encourage one another to address and solve personal and community

problems. Furthermore, we should realize the strength we can gain from the methods Prabhupāda has given us. Prominent among these is the daily hearing of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

As stated in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.18), "By regular attendance in classes on the *Bhāgavatam* and by rendering of service to the pure devotee, all that is troublesome to the heart is almost completely destroyed, and loving service unto the Personality of Godhead, who is praised with transcendental songs, is established as an irrevocable fact."

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



LORD KRṢṂA'S CUISINE

By Request— Cooking Lessons

by Yamuna Devi

I'M BEGINNING my second year writing this column. In the premiere issue I asked readers to send in their requests for topics. Nearly all the letters came from people living outside ISKCON temples—a chef, a prison inmate, a graduate student, and a physician, to name a few. The most requested topic was cooking lessons.

Many ISKCON centers offer cooking classes, but for *Back to Godhead* readers who don't have access to them, this year in this column I'll focus on introductory cooking lessons.

The textbook and homework source for the study is my new paperback entitled *The Best of Lord Krishna's Cuisine*. A shortened edition of my 800-page hardback, it offers substantial text and 172 recipes from five regional Indian cuisines—North, South, East, West, and Central. While classically Indian in origin, these vegetarian recipes keep Western tastes in mind. Hot chilies and sea-

sonings are used in moderation, and much like salt and lemon juice, they act as flavor enhancers instead of overpowering elements.

In the eight years I served as one of Prabhupāda's personal cooks, he sampled more than eighty-five percent of the dishes in the book. If he critiqued or commented on a dish, I worked that information into the final version of the recipe. More than a dozen dishes are Śrīla Prabhupāda originals—from Creamy Mung Dāl with Chopped Spinach to the techniques in Three Methods of Cooking Vegetables. For the Simple Tomato Chutney he simply gave me a list of the ingredients and left the amounts and texture up to me. Creamy Pineapple and Rice Jubilee is a dish he taught my sister Jānakī in San Francisco. His recipe for Bittermelon Chips with Coconut was a regular on many lunch plates, with flavor variations of the dish rendered by his

cook Mālatī Devī Dāsī.

On occasion Śrīla Prabhupāda might have suggested a seasoning adjustment or explained how a different heat intensity would affect the finished texture or body of a dish. Perhaps he came into the kitchen and gave an impromptu demonstration of a technique or procedure. No matter what his involvement in my learning these recipes, I've tried to let each page of *The Best of Lord Krishna's Cuisine* reflect Śrīla Prabhupāda's standard and instruction.

Śrīla Prabhupāda continually revealed new aspects of the art of devotional cooking, not only to me but to all his student cooks. So I've spent day upon week collaborating with many of his other cooks, collecting recipes, comparing notes, and recalling stories for the text. Most of my colleagues agree that his instructions seemed to flow out of the student's eagerness to learn. He once said that

he gave the instructions because we wanted to hear so intently, and of course he was right.

As with the cookbook, in this column I will try to explain things in a simple, uncomplicated way. I hope it will spark your interest enough so you'll delve more deeply into the subject. You can use either the soft- or hardback edition of the cookbook for the course. They're available in bookstores or by mail order from Bala Books, 12520 Kirkham Ct., Poway, CA 92064.

Before we proceed to class topics such as rice, legumes, vegetables, and condiments, I'd like to address a few questions I'm repeatedly asked about devotional Vaiṣṇava cooking: What is the attitude of the Vaiṣṇava cook? What rules and regulations surround the preparation of food in the kitchen? What type of food should we eat daily? How do I organize my kitchen, and what special equipment do I need? How do I make my cooking a meditation, a *yoga*, and a devotional offering to Lord Kṛṣṇa? What is the nature of food offered to Kṛṣṇa, and how does it affect consciousness?

In the next issue, we'll glance at

some of Śrīla Prabhupāda's early letters and conversations on these subjects and hear insights from early ISKCON cooks.

For the newcomer to Vaiṣṇava cooking, these topics are concisely answered in an excellent BBT publication called *The Higher Taste—A Guide to Gourmet Vegetarian Cooking and a Karma-Free Diet*, available through ISKCON centers worldwide. Pick up a copy for good reading.

The standards you'll learn in this course will be easy to put into gear, as I'll give more weight to attitude than to paraphernalia. Devotional cooking is not a mechanical process but a means of purifying the heart.

In subsequent issues we'll focus on chapters in the book such as *Rice, Dāls, Vegetables, Salads, and Beverages*. We'll concentrate on ingredients, how and where to find them, technique, and easy-to-prepare recipes for workday meals. I encourage you to get *The Best of Lord Krishna's Cuisine* and explore a new culinary adventure this year. It will not only expand your taste horizon; it will likely change your life.

The classes will start in the next issue, but for now, here's a recipe for a simple pepper blend with a terrific flavor. Try it out for a week in place of plain black pepper.

PEPPER BLEND

- ½ tablespoon dried lemon peel
- 1 tablespoon allspice
- 1 tablespoon coarse sea salt
- 2 tablespoons white peppercorns (*muntok*)
- 3 tablespoons black peppercorns (preferably tellicherry)
- 3 tablespoons red peppercorns
- 4 tablespoons freeze-dried green peppercorns

Simply mix the ingredients and while you're cooking grind them fresh from a pepper mill when the recipe calls for black pepper. The ingredients are available at gourmet and specialty food stores.

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.



INDIA'S HERITAGE

Service to the Cow

by Advaita Ācārya Dāsa

THE VEDAS DESCRIBE the cow as our mother (*go-mātā*). Why? Because she gives the milk that nurtures and nourishes us from infancy to old age. When the cow is happy, satisfied, and well taken care of, she produces far more milk than her calf requires. We can use this milk for our dietary needs.

Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, "Foods such as milk, milk products, sugar, rice, wheat, fruits, and vegetables are the foods that best aid health and increase life's duration." He calls milk "the most wonderful of all foods."

The ox plows the fields from which grains, fruits, and vegetables

are produced. Therefore the cow and ox together provide human beings with the complete foods to satisfy all our nutritional needs.

In return for all the service the cow and ox provide, the *Vedas* prescribe three duties for human beings toward the cow:

1. Serving the cow (*go-sevā*)
2. Worshiping the cow (*go-pūjā*)
3. Protecting the cow (*go-rakṣya*)

Serving the cow: We should serve the cow with the same attitude that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, serves the cows in Vṛndāvana. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* describes in detail how Lord Kṛṣṇa takes the cows and calves every

morning to graze on the pastures of Govardhana Hill. There are hundreds of thousands of cows at the palace of Nanda Mahārāja (Lord Kṛṣṇa's father), and each cow has her own name. Whenever Lord Kṛṣṇa plays His flute and calls the cows by name, the cows, intelligent and affectionate, come running toward Him.

The Vedic literature enjoins us to satisfy the needs of the cows daily (with food, shelter, and so on) before we satisfy our own needs. This is how Āryans—civilized persons—should serve the cows.

Worshiping the cows: The Vedic scripture states that all the demigods and demigoddesses reside in the body

of a cow. This explains why the body of a cow is divine and holy. If we worship Mother Cow, we attain the same material benefits we'd get by worshipping the demigods and demigoddesses individually. The *Garuḍa Purāṇa* says that anyone who has even once worshiped Mother Cow will be saved after death from the great suffering of hell (Naraka). Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself, gave more importance to the worship of the cows than to the worship of the king of the demigods, Indra. Therefore in India even today many millions of pious Vedic followers worship Mother Cow at least once a year on Govardhana Pūjā day.

Protecting the cows: If we accept the cow as our mother, she deserves our veneration and love. And we should protect her from all dangers. In Vedic times it was the duty of everyone, especially kings, to protect the cows at all cost.

In the Vedic literature we find the revealing story of Emperor Dalip (an ancestor of Lord Rāmacandra in the Sun Dynasty) and his commitment to cow protection. Once when Emperor Dalip was in the forest, he saw that a ferocious lion had gotten hold of a cow and was going to kill her. The emperor challenged the lion, "If you kill the cow, I will kill you. Let this

cow go free!"

The lion replied, "O pious king! For my food I must kill animals. If I let this cow go free, what will I eat? I'll die of hunger."

Emperor Dalip thought for a few moments and replied, "O lion, if you let this cow go free, you do not have to die of hunger. I offer my body for you to eat! Let my body be your food!"

As soon as Emperor Dalip lay before the lion to be killed so that the cow could live, the lion and cow transformed themselves into a divine man and woman. The lion was Dharma, righteousness personified, and the cow was Mother Earth personified. They had been testing the emperor's commitment to cow protection.

How can we protect cows today? In the United States alone more than forty million cows will be slaughtered this year to satisfy the demands of meat-eaters. And all over the globe many millions more will be slaughtered for the same reason. Yet this should not discourage us from our goal of cow protection. Even today, when the effects of Kali Yuga (the Age of Ignorance) are so strong, intelligent people can take part in the auspicious act of cow protection in two ways:

1. Never eat cow flesh (never eat meat!) and thereby never support

cow killing. Please also tell others about the sinfulness of cow slaughter.

2. Help ISKCON farm projects where active cow protection is being practiced under Śrīla Prabhupāda's direct order. For example, the Adopt-A-Cow program at the Gītā Nāgarī farm in Port Royal, Pennsylvania, provides you a direct opportunity to give financial and other help for the upkeep of about 150 cows.

The three basic duties of human beings toward the cow—service, worship, and protection—should and can be practiced today. The cow needs our love, affection, and reverence because, after all, she is our mother and she is so dear to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Advaita Ācārya Dāsa (Dr. Arvind K. Singh) was born in 1943 in a traditional Vaiṣṇava family in Uttar Pradesh, India. Educated in India, he has served as an anesthesiologist in America since 1973. In 1980 he and his wife received spiritual initiation in ISKCON from Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami. Advaita Ācārya Dāsa started the Adopt-A-Cow program at the Gītā Nāgarī farm in 1985. Now he is also a director of the ISKCON Foundation. He lives in Scranton, Pennsylvania. He and his wife have three sons.



SCIENCE: THE VEDIC VIEW

The Little Man in the Brain

by Sadāpūta Dāsa

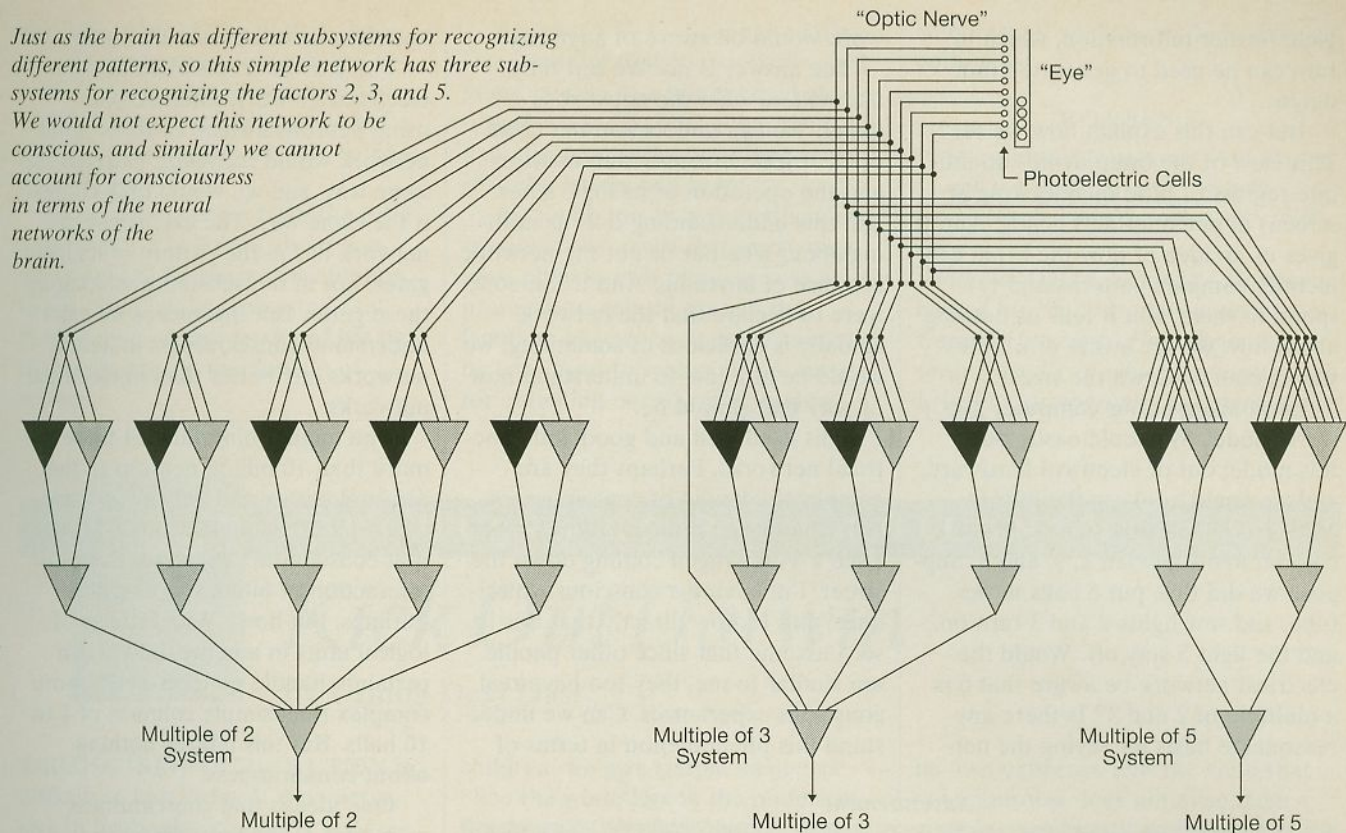
DURING A RECENT television show entitled "Inside Information," vision scientist V. S. Ramachandran of the University of California at San Diego made some interesting points about how we see. He said that if you ask the man in the street how vision works, he will say there is an image on the retina of the eye. The optic nerve faithfully transmits this image to a screen in the brain, in what we call the visual cortex. And that image is what you see.

Ramachandran pointed out that this explanation leads to a logical fallacy. If you create an image inside the head, then you need another person in the head—a little man in the brain—who looks at that image. Then you have to postulate an even smaller person inside his head to explain how he sees, and so on, *ad infinitum*. This is obvious nonsense, and Ramachandran said that inside the brain there really is no replica of the external world. Rather, there is

an abstract, symbolic description of that world. Brain scientists are like cryptographers trying to crack the code the brain uses in perceiving its environment.

So how does perception work? Suppose you are looking at a car traveling down a street. You perceive the shape of the car, its color, and its motion all at once. You may realize at once that it's red, that it's a Volkswagen bug, and that it's slow enough and far enough away so you'll have

Just as the brain has different subsystems for recognizing different patterns, so this simple network has three subsystems for recognizing the factors 2, 3, and 5. We would not expect this network to be conscious, and similarly we cannot account for consciousness in terms of the neural networks of the brain.



time to cross the street in front of it.

Recent research in brain science shows that the brain houses three separate visual systems to see shape, color, and motion. All three systems use information coming down the optic nerves from the eyes, but the systems are distinct both anatomically and functionally. The systems are named after the complex anatomical pathways they occupy in the brain.

The parvo-interblob-pale-stripe system deals with color contrast along borders of objects, but not color per se. It responds to the shapes of objects, but says nothing about their colors. The blob-thin-stripe-V4 system determines colors and shades of gray, but it has low resolution for shapes. The magno-4B-thick-stripe-MT system tells about movement and depth, but it's color-blind and doesn't react to stationary images.¹ All three systems work together when you see the Volkswagen coming down the street.

To illustrate how such a visual system works, I've devised a simple example with computer logic. The figure above shows an "eye" consisting of a vertical plastic tube with ten

photoelectric cells in a vertical row. The tube has room for one to ten small plastic balls. The photoelectric cells detect the balls. Each output wire from a photocell is "on" if a ball is present in front of the cell, and "off" if a ball is not present.

The ten wires from the cells form a kind of "optic nerve." This nerve divides into three branches leading to three processing systems.

The multiple-of-2 system tells whether the number of balls is odd or even. It works through logic gates, represented by the gray and black triangles. The wires going to the top of a triangle are its input wires, and the wire going down from the triangle's point is its output wire. A gray triangle represents a none-gate. Its output wire is on if none of its input wires are on, and otherwise it is off. A black triangle represents an all-gate. Its output wire is on if all its input wires are on, and not otherwise. The gates in the multiple-of-2 system are arranged so that the final output wire emerging from the bottom of the system is on if the number of balls is even, and off if the number is odd.

Similarly, the gates in the multiple-

of-3 system are arranged so that the final output wire is on only if the number of balls is a multiple of 3 (i.e., 3, 6, or 9). In the multiple-of-5 system, the output wire is on only if the number of balls is a multiple of 5 (i.e., 5 or 10).

This network recognizes three distinct features of the number of balls.

It does this using three distinct subsystems of gates that operate in parallel, each subsystem using simple logical operations in response to binary information (represented by "on" and "off" or 1 and 0). These subsystems resemble the brain's subsystems for recognizing the shape, color, and motion of an image. The brain's subsystems use distinct sets of neurons, which work with binary information. (When a neuron is stimulated, it either fires or it doesn't, with no response in between.)

Our example of a computer network gives some idea of how the brain can process information with which to respond to its environment. Data from the senses, encoded as patterns of nerve impulses, can travel to a wide variety of brain subsystems, where networks of neurons extract various kinds of information. This information can then be combined to

yield further information, which in turn can be used to generate brain output.

But can this explain how we see? This view of the brain avoids an infinite regress of little men looking at screens in one another's heads. And it gives us an idea of how the brain can identify complex patterns and respond to them. But it tells us nothing about how we are aware of a Volkswagen coming down the street.

Look again at our computer network model. We could easily build this model out of electrical hardware, and we could hook up the output wires from the three subsystems to colored lights labeled 2, 3, and 5. Suppose we did this, put 6 balls in the tube, and saw lights 2 and 3 turn on, and the light 5 stay off. Would the electrical network be aware that 6 is a multiple of 2 and 3? Is there any reasonable basis for saying the net-

work would be aware of anything?

The answer is no. We can fully understand what the network is doing. We can understand the flows of electrical current within its wires and the operation of its logic gates. But this understanding tells us nothing about whether or not the network is aware of anything. And if someone were to declare that the network actually is conscious of something, we would be at a loss to understand how or why that should be.

This is all well and good with electrical networks. Perhaps they are completely devoid of consciousness. But what about human brains? When I see a Volkswagen coming down the street, I'm having a conscious experience, and I know directly that this is so. I assume that since other people are similar to me, they too have real conscious experiences. Can we understand this phenomenon in terms of

networks of neurons in the brain?

The answer seems to be no. Our electrical network could be built using neurons instead of wires. That network would recognize patterns the same way, and we would understand it the same way. The essence of the network lies in the pattern of its logic gates, not in the substance making up these gates. But this means we can't understand consciousness in neural networks any better than in electrical networks.

One might point out that there are more than 10 billion neurons in the cerebral cortex and only a few logic gates in our example. Couldn't it be that consciousness emerges from the interaction of billions of neurons? Perhaps, but how? With billions of logical units in a network, one can certainly handle patterns much more complex than simple columns of 1 to 10 balls. But this tells us nothing about consciousness.

One idea is that consciousness may arise at the level where the brain organizes information from separate systems, like those for shape, color, and motion, and integrates it into one unified gestalt. One problem with this proposal: Does such unification actually occur? To write down a lot of information you need many letters, and if you code the information in patterns of nerve impulses, you need a lot of neurons to store it. No matter how much you try to compress it by careful coding, it remains spread out and not truly unified. And if you mix together all the information in one spread-out region of the cerebral cortex, you have in effect re-created the screen in the original story of the little man in the brain.

The basic fallacy of the little man in the brain argument is that it assumes implicitly that consciousness can be understood in physical terms. One tries to explain consciousness by describing a machine that creates a certain display of information. Then one recognizes that the mere presence of displayed information fails to account for consciousness of that information. Then one proposes another mechanism to interpret the information and finally generate consciousness. When that attempt

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VOLUME ONE

by Śrī Nandanandana Dāsa (Stephen Knapp)

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also fails, one takes refuge in the overwhelming complexity of the brain and says that a consciousness-producing mechanism must be hidden in there somewhere. All we have to do is find it.

One way to escape from the little man fallacy is to forget about consciousness and restrict our attention to the brain's data processing. But this leaves a crucial aspect of life permanently outside the domain of science.

Another way to escape the fallacy is to consider that consciousness just might be due to a nonphysical entity—dare we say a soul?—that reads the data displays of the brain just as we read the letters of a book.

Although this idea is anathema to scientists who insist that everything must obey known physical laws, it promises to greatly expand the frontiers of science. It could very well be true. And to realize its potential for enriching our scientific under-

standing, all we have to do is seriously consider it.

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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*.



SCHOOLING KṚṢṆA'S CHILDREN

Kick Out Darwin

by Urmilā Devī Dāsī

THE DOCTRINE OF EVOLUTION is difficult to hide from. It is so pervasive in textbooks of science, geography, history, and literature that the reader, numbed by repetition, hardly notices the constant drone.

Our children need help to remain awake to spiritual life amidst this sleepy cloud of propaganda. We need to teach them the truth. And we need to show them, clearly and specifically, how evolutionists are lying.

Does it really matter? Is it important for our children to know the origin of life and the universe? Perhaps they can be clear about spiritual life without bothering to think about Darwin one way or the other.

But can they? In most standard modern versions, evolution links tightly with the outlook that all order, law, and life come about by chance. But spiritual life means connecting with the Supreme Spirit, Kṛṣṇa, who is a person directing the cosmos and giving the seed of life.

Also inherent in most of today's evolutionary views is the notion that life is a complicated organization of matter. But spiritual life begins when one understands that the self, the essential living being, is irreducibly spirit, always distinct from matter.

Therefore, we need to teach the truth. The order and law of this world are everywhere. For young

children, we give simple analogies. "See the white line in the middle of the street?" We show them. "That means there is a government. I may not see the mayor or the governor or the president, but this line is proof that they exist. In the same way, the cycle of seasons and the intricate design of a plant are proofs of an intelligent creator."

Materialistic evolutionists scoff at proving God by design. What of injustice and suffering, they ask? Did God design these?

"Yes," we tell our children, "just as the government—made up of *people*—has designed the prison and court system."

The problems posed by the materialists become an indication of God when resolved by explanations of *karma* and reincarnation.

In such ways, whether informally as opportunities arise or as part of a planned curriculum of science and social studies, we can teach young children to see Kṛṣṇa in His creation.

We also need to teach the difference between life and matter.

The love of a cat for her kittens, the urge for survival that sends the ant over what to him is a hundred miles for a grain of sugar—these are constant signs that life is other than matter. The inability of a machine, even a computer, to become aware of

its own existence tells the child that consciousness does not arise from a complex combination of matter. Rather, just as I, a conscious being, operate a computer, so I operate this body. My computer will never write this article by itself.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's books brim with evidence for God and the soul. Daily in-depth study of his books will awaken children's true vision. They will see that behind the veil of *māyā* is the face of the Supreme Lord.

We need to protect our impressionable and vulnerable children from the evolutionists' propaganda machine. Films, television programs, textbooks, and science museums often conform to evolutionary doctrine unquestioningly. Exposure to these, especially frequent exposure, may draw the blind of darkness over the window of our children's knowledge.

But how can we combat the evolutionists' propaganda? When the child matures in the realm of intellectual and reasoning ability, we must systematically attack the unsound premises of evolution while giving evidence for the existence of Kṛṣṇa and the soul.

Our first argument is that the bodily machine of even the simplest life form cannot arise from a chance combination of matter, any more than an explosion in a printing shop could bring into existence a dictionary or

*Evolutionists say that life came from matter
and that all species have gradually developed from the first life form.
Practically speaking, that's what evolutionists must say.*



the works of Shakespeare.

Second, even if somehow the external body of a living being could spring forth from random material processes, the body cannot work without the soul. An airplane is built by intelligent people, not by a tornado in a junk yard. But however an airplane is built, it needs a pilot. Otherwise, it can sit on the runway for thousands of years without flying. Despite a machine's complex technology, it still needs a living being to push the buttons.

In this way, we can explain that the symptoms exhibited by living beings—from the plant to the ant to human beings—indicate the presence of a “driver,” the soul. And as soon as this driver leaves, the body dies and decays.

Evolutionists say that life came originally from matter and that all species have gradually developed from the first life form. Practically speaking, that's what evolutionists must say. Why? Because they'd never convince us that advanced life forms arose from matter. We'd never believe that giraffes appeared suddenly from a pond. Evolutionists would be a laughing stock if they asserted that each species developed independently in its present form from chance molecular collisions.

Yet how strong is the evidence for gradual evolution? At the chemical level, we can point out that scientists have failed to show how matter could by chance alone pull together even one protein needed for life. Going further down the supposed evolutionary line, we can show our children that crucial evidence for evolution is lacking in the fossil record, that mutations are generally harmful and

do not change one species into another, and that intermediate forms of organs would be nonfunctional and therefore hinder rather than enhance the survival of their owner. We can give specific examples from the evolutionists' bag of so-called proofs and show how they are irrelevant or distorted.

Finally, it's helpful to expose children to mysteries scientists can't explain. We can study well-documented instances of psychic ability and out-of-body experiences that support the conclusion that the mind is more than the brain. While we don't rely on such empirical evidence or put full faith in what is sometimes sensationalism, a carefully chosen study of the most solid evidence can help a child know that many of the inexplicable occurrences described in the *Vedas* are still happening today.

For most of us, to refute evolutionist propaganda entirely from our own understanding and knowledge would be difficult. So I suggest some books and videos that can help structure an educational program, whether at home or at school. There are certainly many other useful resources, and I would be glad to hear of other suggestions. As Śrīla Prabhupāda told us, “The more we kick out Darwin, the more we advance in spiritual consciousness.”



The following are books and videos I suggest for students at least thirteen years old. (Younger children may be able to grasp at least the basic ideas.) The materials not produced by ISKCON are quite valuable. They may not present a

complete view of the soul and God, but they do a good job of dismantling evolution and establishing theism, at least in a general way. Please keep in mind, of course, that they may put forth some minor points with which we disagree.

ISKCON:

Life Comes from Life, Śrīla Prabhupāda (Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, 3764 Watseka Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90034).

Human Evolution, video, Sadāpūta Dāsa (Bhaktivedanta Institute, P.O. Box 99584, San Diego, CA 92169).

Darwin's Secret Identity, David Webb (Available from Krishna Culture, P.O. Box 12380, Philadelphia, PA 19119).

NON-ISKCON:

“*Mysteries of the Unexplained*,” Reader's Digest, 1982. Often available through bookstores, it probes into such diverse topics as bizarre coincidence, unusual rain (frogs, nuts), inexplicable astronomical occurrences, UFOs, psychic ability, spontaneous human combustion, miracles, monsters, and evidence for advanced ancient civilizations (including a reference to the Vedic *brahmāstra* weapon). Each section includes only well-documented cases. The official scientific explanation is offered and then placed into doubt.

The following are available from Master Books, Creation Resource, P.O. Box 1606, El Cajon, CA 92022; (800) 999-3777:

Understanding Genesis, Unit One: Creation: Facts and Bias, video, Ken Ham. This is excellent for preachers. Showing how our assumptions affect what we see, it throws doubt on the supposed authority of science. Some slight sectarian references.

Origins: Creation or Evolution, Richard Bliss. Simple and clear, this is the best general textbook I know of. It contains some slight references to a young Earth. No sectarian religious content.

Origin of Life: Evolution/Creation, Richard Bliss and Gary Parker. This

only covers whether or not life could have first arisen spontaneously from matter. Easy to understand. Slightly nods to the idea that life is simply a complex organization of matter. No sectarian religious content.

Understanding Genesis, Unit Four: What's Wrong With Evolution, video, Gary Parker. Shows that one species cannot evolve into another. Some slight sectarian references.

Back to Genesis: Is Life Just Chemistry?, video, Michael Girouard. Explains why life cannot originate by chance from matter.

Deals with Stanley Miller's experiment and various aspects of initial creation. Some slight sectarian references.

Urmilā Devī Dāsī became a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda in 1973. She has been involved in ISKCON education for the last seven years, primarily as the principal of the Detroit gurukula. She recently moved with her husband and their three children to the ISKCON community in Hillsborough, North Carolina, where she is working to establish a model of spiritual education.



THE LAND, THE COWS, AND KRṢṂA

The Origins of Cow-Killing Economics

by Hare Kṛṣṇa Devī Dāsī

PART I

The *Bhagavad-gītā* specifically instructs us, *kṛṣi-go-rakṣya*: we human beings must protect the cow, our milk-giving mother. *Go-rakṣya*—“protect the cow.” Not *go-hatya*—“kill the cow.” This is most sinful.

—Śrīla Prabhupāda

AS I DISCUSSED in my last column, Lord Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that the activities of the productive class of society should be *kṛṣi-go-rakṣya-vāṇijyam*: agriculture, cow protection, and trade. Agriculture gives us grains. Cow protection gives us milk and the oxen to produce the grains. And trade, which comes about naturally when there's surplus production, benefits the farmer and the rest of society.

Grains and cows are an important basis of wealth, not only in the spiritual culture advocated by Lord Kṛṣṇa but also in modern materialistic economics. The crucial difference is that the center of the spiritual economic system is cow *protection*, and

the center of the materialistic system is cow *killing*.

In this series, we'll examine how cow killing became an important part of the modern economic system. As this brief history unfolds, note how slaughtering the cow, pushing the ox out of work, and stoking up production for centralized marketing and money-grabbing have led us to the present precarious state of affairs.

As we drive down the road and see many prosperous hamburger chains, we may take it for granted that cow slaughter has always been a basic feature of civilizations outside India. But that is not the case. The ancient Egyptians prohibited cow slaughter. The Hebrews, among others, restricted it to religious sacrifices. Still today, the pastoral peoples of East Africa slaughter cattle only during rituals and ceremonies. And in modern communist China, even Mao Zedong himself observed, “Draft oxen are a treasure to the peasants. As it is practically a religious tenet that ‘Those who slaughter cattle in this life will themselves become cattle in the next,’ draft oxen

must never be killed.”

One might ask how an avowed atheistic leader such as Mao Zedong could have allowed himself to support a religious belief against killing oxen? Anthropologist Marvin Harris suggests that religious and ritual restrictions on cow slaughter and eating of cow flesh were not irrational laws but important tools for the welfare of society. The draft power or milk of the animal was too valuable to lose. And wasting pasture to feed many cows for slaughter would eventually have brought starvation.

Then why has cow slaughter become so prominent over the last few centuries? Let's begin in Europe in the late Middle Ages. That's when the draft horse began to push the ox out of agriculture. Even though horses needed costly grain, they could plow much faster than oxen. “They were able to increase greatly the amount of food that one farmer could raise, which meant that more men were freed to pursue the arts and crafts,” observed agricultural historians Vernon Carter and Tom Dale. So people started shifting to the

towns, and oxen started heading for slaughter.

In the 1700's, the industrial revolution speeded up cow slaughter. New farming machines and new crops such as clover and turnips made cows easier to raise for meat. And technological advances increased the output and efficiency of slaughterhouses. So producers could supply meat more cheaply.

Factory life forced people to change what they ate. Unlike the farmer, the factory worker couldn't go home to a lunch of lentil stew or porridge. Bread and meat were more convenient. So the factory worker's food preference changed to meat, and because his income was increasing, he could afford it.

In *The Industrial Revolution*, Frederick Dietz writes, "Since meat was coming to be more valuable than powers of draft in an ox," traditional breeds that provided milk and draft power tended to be "replaced by such new breeds of cattle as the Durham shorthorns, the Herefords, and the Devons." So the industrial revolution bred beef cattle.

But it was across the ocean in the newly developing American nation that raising cows for meat would become a big way to gain wealth. This is somewhat ironic because in America until about 1840, when draft horses became more widespread, oxen were the main source of agricultural traction. A team of oxen could be bought for one sixth the price of a team of horses, oxen could do the same work for less expense in feed,

and oxen were resistant to disease. Ben Franklin noted, "The farmers are more thriving in those parts of the country where cattle are used than in those where the labor is done by horses. The latter are said to require twice the quantity of food to maintain them."

Yet two factors made it possible and even profitable to raise cattle for slaughter. The first was the Native American crop maize—or corn—which gave much higher yields than European grains. The second was that by taking land from the Native Americans, European immigrants could create much larger farms than in Europe.

Since the Native Americans had never farmed with draft animals, most of their land had never been used for anything more than hunting and gathering. The new American farmers were able to take hold of large plots of this fertile land, so with oxen the farmers could reap tons of grain more than they needed for their own subsistence.

The farmers, of course, wanted to make money from the grain, but shipping it to market was difficult. Roads were poor, and carts were scarce, especially during the American Revolutionary War, when they were absorbed by the military. Smithsonian agricultural historian John Schlebecker relates the farmers' unenlightened solution: "Corn-fed cattle and hogs which transported themselves provided one important way of moving the corn crop to market. The grain otherwise had to be

transported by cart and wagon."

North American farmers also developed vital economic relations with the slave-powered sugar plantations of the West Indies. European plantation owners preferred to plant all their West Indian acreage in sugar, sell it at high prices, and import whatever else they needed for food. "Corn, wheat, flour and bread from North America always found a ready market in the West Indies. The West Indians also bought large quantities of dried and salted meats." Thus *kṛṣi-gohatya*, farming and cow killing, began to assume an important place in American economic development.

Neglecting to follow Kṛṣṇa's instructions to base the economy on agriculture, cow protection, and trade has led to disastrous results. The role of the ox in Kṛṣṇa's system is crucial. The ox's limited productivity works against the growth of a centralized, impersonal, exploitive economy and keeps society based in the country, where the simple life favors spiritual advancement. The more society strays from Kṛṣṇa's plan, the more suffering increases. In my next column, I'll discuss how the mechanization of agriculture multiplied the misery.

Hare Kṛṣṇa Devī Dāśī has been involved in Kṛṣṇa consciousness since 1978. She spent several years on ISKCON's Gītā Nāgarī farm in Pennsylvania. She now lives in Maine, where you can write to her c/o The Ox Power Alternative Energy Club, 9B Stetson St., Brunswick, ME 04011.



THROUGH THE EYES OF ŚASTRA

ISKCON's Dharma-Cakra

A true story by Ravindra Svarūpa Dāsa

PART I: THE PROPHECY

DASHING ALONG in a lurching little car, we were on our way to see Panditji when Delhi suddenly went dark. Our headlight beams, slewing and bouncing, threw up rapid-fire

scenes of blacked-out apartment blocks, empty eroded lots, and here and there clusters of human faces, radiant in the darkness like petals on damp soil.

"This will make us late," remarked Mahārāja unnecessarily.

"Panditji should know that," I

said. Panditji was reputed not only to be a brilliant astrologer but a seer as well. Local devotees had begun to consult him regularly.

"Well, he has just got a new *mantra*, and his accuracy has much improved," said our native guide and driver, peering intently into the black-



Talking rapidly and gesturing broadly with his arms, Panditji expounded upon the chart.

ness into which we were hurtling. “At first when I was going, you could be completely confident on Fridays only. But slowly, slowly, he has gotten better.”

“With each new *mantra*,” Mahārāja said.

“It is quite astonishing, really. Now in March Panditji will be receiving his final *mantra*. Then he will be completely accurate.”

Tacking smartly over the gullied and potholed paving, our guide wound us deeper and deeper into a vast maze of apartment blocks.

“It would be nice if Panditji were right about ISKCON,” I said. The report was that Panditji was predicting that ISKCON would save the whole world.

“Oh, yes. He’s so positive about ISKCON,” said our guide. “And now he is becoming a devotee himself.”

“Because of what he foresees,” said Mahārāja.

“That and good association. He was a pure *śakta*—Lakṣmī and Durgā only were there—but now you will see Kṛṣṇa on his walls.”

“From *śakta* to *bhakta*,” said Mahārāja.

The car swerved and slammed to a stop. The road ahead was packed solid with people. Somewhere within the throng wailed raucous band music, all trombones and clarinets.

“A wedding,” said our guide. “But from here we can go by foot.”

Leaving the car, we squeezed into the milling, roaring crowd. Hissing kerosene lamps of terrific incandescence swayed here and there above the crush, borne on the heads of boys in red livery. From the lamps, long sharp shards of garish light drove deep into the tumult of moving shadows and boiling dust. Through that we pushed and groped our way.

Suddenly the music engulfed us, and we were forced to dodge marching rows of energetically blowing bandsmen. Lines of red, wet faces bobbed by, veins bulging, cheeks ballooning, eyes popping. The musicians were encased in extraordinary, comic-opera uniforms: no two alike, all weighed down with rococo exuberance of silver and gold, and all of

them unspeakably soiled and spotted—picked up, it seemed, at some rummage sale of uniforms of deposed tropical dictators.

No less zany were the instruments. Mutant trombones sported valves of trumpets, or two slides, or slides that took off at various angles. Trumpets and baritones blossomed with multiple bells. Woodwinds coiled, curled, bulged, and bent in ways I’d never seen before. My ears and mind boggled at the deafening music—an uncanny, impossible blend of Indian *rāgas* and Dixieland jazz.

We rounded a street corner and were released at last into the silence and the space of a broad and barren square, walled in by high apartment blocks. We made our way past a jostling queue of women and children eager to thrust plastic buckets under a gushing standpipe. And then for a long time we were ascending narrow outdoor steps, switching back repeatedly, our shoulders brushing the high cement wall that enclosed us, until we stood upon a rooftop under the Delhi night sky, where the

last russet of twilight was sliding under the western horizon. Here a woman with a flashlight led us to a small, windowless, bunkerlike structure. She said we were to wait inside for Panditji. We filed in through a low door.

Just inside, at the door's left, a magnificent brass image of Lakṣmī Devī glowed softly in the light of *ghee* lamps tiered below her polished teak throne. The flames flickered in the wake of our passage. Flanking

the altar, covering a low table and the floor before it, were a vast number of identical brass pots, each anointed on the belly with scarlet swastikas, crowned with an array of mango leaves around a cloth-bound coconut, and hung with garlands of marigolds, now dried up.

We sat at the other end of the room, on cushions before Panditji's low wooden desk. Thick books stuffed a case against the wall to our right, and the overflow, in precarious

pile, took the floor on both sides of the desk. On the wall facing us geometrical *yāntras* of Lakṣmī and Durgā, etched on sheets of burnished copper, burned within the shadows; color prints of Lakṣmī, Durgā, and Kālī further displayed Panditji's devotion to the goddess. But, reassuringly, Kṛṣṇa's picture commanded pride of place above Lakṣmī's altar, and Sūrya-Nārāyaṇa flamed among the *yāntras*.

"Interesting vibes," Mahārāja was just noting softly, when Panditji entered. He was younger than I had imagined, and startlingly nondescript in appearance. You thought of a clerk or bank teller.

After introductions, Mahārāja handed Panditji his chart, a computer printout. Working methodically, Panditji positioned on his desk a tall candle with trapezoidal sides that yielded a long and bright flame; then he carefully copied Mahārāja's chart onto a page of a large ledger book and returned the printout. Silently, without expression, holding very still, he considered the chart for some time. Then he thumped the page hard with his pencil point, and looking up at Mahārāja, said with great animation: "This is your last birth."

Talking rapidly and gesturing broadly with his arms, Panditji expounded upon the chart. Occasionally he would snatch off his gray wool cap, palpitate it vigorously with his fingers, and then suddenly slam it back onto his head. He would fling both arms out completely to emphasize a point.

As Panditji spoke, the candle on the desk cast his shadow, greatly enlarged, upon the walls and ceiling, so that his sweeping gestures danced all around us, embracing us, enclosing us in around the candlelight, the book, and the seer.

Mahārāja entered into a long technical discussion with Panditji I could not follow. Toward the end, Panditji qualified his initial statement somewhat: An upcoming period presented a slight danger that Mahārāja could end up in the heavenly planets, but if all went well, he would be liberated. In any case, he was not returning to this planet. Panditji wound up with some sound practical advice.

Changing the subject, Mahārāja mentioned to Panditji that I was leav-

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**“And then after that, ISKCON will
become very, very powerful.”**

**He paused a beat and added: “And I think the day
it will be accomplished is March 7.”**

• • •

ing for Calcutta tomorrow to attend ISKCON's annual Governing Body Commission meetings, soon to begin in Māyāpur. Panditji began to extol ISKCON.

“It will not be possible to overestimate the importance of your movement for the world.”

“How will this year's meeting go?” I asked, pulling back from the grandiose.

“Oh, very well, very, very well,” Panditji said, his face bright and eyes shining. “Nineteen-ninety will be a very important year for the world, and most especially for ISKCON.” Speaking swiftly and surely, he entered into an intricate numerological analysis of “1990.”

Falling under the spell of Panditji's prophetic utterances, I became conscious of the cosmic spaces hanging above us, of the turning of the starry wheel of time. Through the door open to the night I could hear the music of the wedding band—*rāga* in ragtime—getting steadily louder now: a procession was headed our way. I watched the seer's shadow dance across the ceiling and walls, and thought, “This is too much.” I picture the words in red ink on a manuscript margin. I would have cut it. The blackout, the crazy band, the theatrical shadows. The effects were heavy-handed—and derivative as well: The band was straight out of Fellini, and the shadows, of course, from Disney's “Sorcerer's Apprentice.” However, I was aware that I wasn't writing this script, and I wondered whether I was in a position to criticize whoever was.

Panditji continued, speaking with great assurance: “And this meeting—now at the start of 1990—it will be

the turning point of ISKCON. The meeting will be very cordial.” He paused, almost visibly gathering power. “In fact, at this meeting the *dharma-cakra* of ISKCON will be assembled and put into motion.”

“*Dharma-cakra*?” I asked. The wheel of truth or righteousness, the *dharma-cakra* was generally known as the Buddhist symbol for the all-pervading power of true religion. How was Panditji using it?

He explained: *Cakra* means wheel, and a wheel rotates smoothly and can travel everywhere when all its spokes are strong and properly aligned. Until now, Panditji said—comparing the individual GBC members to the spokes of the ISKCON *dharma-cakra*—the members of the GBC have not been properly aligned. Individual members have put their own zones or concerns or conceptions before the interest of the whole. Therefore there has not been proper cooperation and harmony. The spokes have been misaligned. But at this meeting, he said, it will be properly assembled.

“The meeting will be cordial, and differences will be overcome,” he said. “And then after that, ISKCON will become very, very powerful.” He paused a beat and added: “And I think the day it will be accomplished is March 7.”

“On that exact day?” I said.

“Yes. That day . . . it will be accomplished.”

“But I think the meetings are over with on the third or fourth,” I said.

“Perhaps it doesn't have to happen at the meetings,” Mahārāja suggested.

“Or sometimes the meetings run extra days,” I said.

“In any case,” Panditji said, “I think that is the day.”

I was puzzled. Panditji had described a process, the assembling of the *dharma-cakra*, and at the same time given a single date for its “accomplishment.” What was meant by “accomplishment”?

I turned this over in my mind while Mahārāja and our guide pursued prophecy with Panditji. They discussed some prognostications of great wars, apparently from Nostradamus. Panditji said that no great cities would be destroyed by war, but that some huge geological cataclysm, substantially altering the earth's geography, was in the offing. The conversation turned again to Mahārāja's chart and wound down to astrological technicalities.

Panditji led us down the narrow steps by flashlight. The city was still in blackout, but now it was calm and silent. The street of the wedding party was deserted, and a huge, bunting-hung pavilion on one side stood empty and abandoned, all revelers having retired to rest.

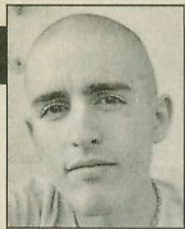
Later, back in our room, Mahārāja looked up March 7 on his Vaiṣṇava calendar.

“Well, that's one thing,” he said. “It's Ekādaśī.”

Next issue—

Part II: The Prophecy Fulfilled

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.



Meeting "Mr. Sex-Is-Great"

by Bhakta Vic 108

THE CROWD TONIGHT is volatile like nitro. Intense polarization: ninety percent of the kids are totally into Shelter*, heart and soul. The rest, dead set against us. The mixture explodes as our music blares. Kids running and jumping around, urgently singing along.

At song's abrupt end, silence envelops the hall. Ears perk to receive Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Taking advantage of the quiet, those opposed launch a shower of protests, the first attack their spearhead slogan—"Sex is great!"—followed by anthems of sex glorification and a flurry of praise for masturbation.

A few sharp words from Raghunātha slice their offensive to pieces. The power chords of our next song finish them off. The show ends. Pulling a book bag full of 'zines over my shoulder, I move into the crowd.

Guess who I run into . . . yeah, Mr. Sex-Is-Great himself. Not unexpectedly, whatever he has to say is pretty crude. I shrug off his remarks with a "Yeah, yeah, sure, sure" and walk away.

The next thing I know, his eyes are inches from my face, and he's shouting and pointing fingers of accusation. I out-shout him, arrogant enough myself, then draw him into a quieter corner, hoping to transform wrath into discussion.

After letting him blow off verbal steam for close to ten minutes, I interrupt: "Hey listen. In two sentences or less, what's your point?"

"I just think it's so stupid that you guys are against sex! Sex is beautiful! Sex is totally natural."

"We're *not* against sex."

Pause. Let it sink in.

"Sex is natural. You're right. And sex *naturally* results in a baby. Latex

condoms don't grow on trees. Sex that's dependent on all that stuff is obviously unnatural. But sex *can* be natural and beautiful and all that mushy poetic stuff, if it's followed through to its natural conclusion. Otherwise it's nothing more than mutual exploitation, thinly masked by a ridiculously transparent costume of lovey-dove-dove."

With gestures comically reminiscent of a college professor, he asks, "Sex only for procreation?"

"Yeah, but not that any John and Sally can hop into the sack and have some kid they kick out onto the street. That's not natural either. They have to be committed and qualified to raise the kid, giving him or her every opportunity for a full life enriched with self-realization. *Then*, like you say, sex is beautiful."

"Do you have sex?"

"I don't."

That ignites him: "No way! No possible way! I don't believe you for a second. You'll go crazy. You've got to have sex!"

Shades of the old "you'll die if you don't eat meat" argument. "You don't go crazy without sex," I tell him. "You go crazy with it. Here you are with some overwhelming, consuming compulsion which is never fully satisfied but instead burns more fiercely every time you go at it. Now that's enough to drive *anyone* crazy. And that's exactly what sex . . ."

"Look," he interrupts, "I'm studying to be a sex therapist . . ."

"So then you know firsthand all the crazy problems surrounding sex."

"People just need to open up."

The standard textbook dogma.

"People are so afraid of sex. That's why they have so many problems."

"Come on! You really believe that trash? There's no proof that anyone, anywhere, at any time, has ever had a life of deep fulfillment and satisfaction by opening up to sex. In fact,

just the opposite. As people get more and more into sex, the world just gets proportionately hotter. Depression, violence, crime—how often are they all bound up with your just-get-into-it sex? Doesn't say a whole lot for your so-called sexual revolution, does it?"

Nothing. He just stares at his shoes. Then something clicks and his eyes light up. "I have sex, and I'm happy!"

The utter predictability almost hurts. "The truth is you're accepting a pitifully temporary high. If you're really so satisfied, why are you always so damn bored, looking for something to do? Only a hungry man goes in search of a meal. A person who's already satisfied has no need."

His strong frame shakes with disapproval. "No! No! You don't understand! You can't repress the sex drive!"

"Stand still for a second," I say, waiting for him to calm down. "I agree with you. You can't shut off or stifle the sex drive, because it originally comes from the deepest recesses of the self."

"Right," he graciously confirms.

"The strongest and most primal urge of the soul," I explain, "is called *bhakti*. When this drive tries to find expression through the body, it gets perverted into the sex drive."

"Sex is not perverted!" he explodes. "Cool it. I don't mean 'perverted' like some weirdo flasher in the park. Maybe 'distorted' is a better word. Anyway, the sex drive is a garbled expression of our deepest primal urge for pure devotion."

"A devotee," I continue, "is not some stuffy character with a stiff upper lip and self-crucifying Victorian ideals. Myself, I want the *most* pleasure. I want to satisfy the sex drive to the maximum possible extent, at the fountainhead, in sex's most primal and unbridled form—the urge for pure devotion. This is the only way the sex drive will ever really make you happy."

*The popular straightedge band Vic was part of before recently forming his new band, 108.

That's the *only* way to satisfy sex desire."

"So you don't have sex?"

I can just about see my words floating out his other ear. "No. I don't."

"Let me ask you a question. Do you masturbate?"

"No."

"Impossible! You gotta . . ."

"Look, this is the last time I'm gonna try to communicate with you, so listen close. I couldn't care less about masturbation. Or any kind of

sex. What's so fantastic about it? Cockroaches do it. Worms do it. I want something more out of life than worm pleasure. And because I'm actually getting that higher pleasure by stimulating my Kṛṣṇa consciousness—the most intense, urgent, and pure desire—I couldn't care less about your sexology and your crazy masturbation theories.

"Sex is like a mosquito bite. You'll never satisfy it by scratching. I don't care if you're up to your ears in sex—you'll never be satisfied. The only way

you can really fulfill and express the pure sex desire and bring the highest pleasure into your life is to develop love for Kṛṣṇa. That's all I have to say."

I walk away from a man who continues to shout the glories of sex. Wasted time? Well, *he* sure didn't hear a word. But I know I did. And I hope you did too.

Bhakta Vic 108 joined the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement about a year and a half ago. He and his new band—108—are based at the Washington, D.C., temple.



BHAKTI-YOGA AT HOME

Touch It to Your Head

by Rohiṇinandana Dāsa

IN VEDIC CULTURE, one shows respect to an object by touching it to one's head. When Śrīla Prabhupāda was a child, his mother taught him to pick up and touch to his head any grains of rice that might have fallen from his plate. I teach this same practice to my children. The lesson I'm trying to teach them goes deeper than the concept of "waste not, want not" my own father taught me. And it goes deeper than the idea of saving the earth's resources. I'm teaching my children that the grain of rice should be respected because it was given by God. In fact, it is a part of God.

The grain of rice is, of course, produced from the earth. In Sanskrit, the earth is known as Bhūmi, derived from *bhū*, which means "becoming," "being," "existing," or "produced." Bhūmi is therefore known as Mother Earth because she enables us to exist materially by providing our bodies and the food that nourishes them.

Our father is Lord Kṛṣṇa—spiritually because our existence as spiritual beings depends upon Him, and materially because He injects us as seeds into the womb of Mother Earth, who produces the life forms we souls inhabit. A grain of rice, the product of one life form (the rice plant), is a result of the energies of Father Kṛṣṇa and Mother Earth and

so represents them.

The *Vedānta-sūtra* states, *śakti śaktimatayor abhedah*: "The energy and the energetic are nondifferent." In other words, the cause of a thing is present in that thing. So a rice grain is nondifferent from Kṛṣṇa because it is one of His energies.

How special one grain of rice is! By touching it to our heads in the right consciousness, we're touching Kṛṣṇa.

We can honor Kṛṣṇa through His energy in many ways. For example, we can respect Kṛṣṇa by turning off an electrical appliance as we leave a room. We can resolve, "Kṛṣṇa has kindly provided so much. Let me accept my quota only—what I need to live—and let me not misuse one particle of His energy."

Śrīla Prabhupāda taught by example how to conserve Kṛṣṇa's energy. On a morning walk, he once went into a neighbor's garden to turn off a dripping tap. Another time, although ill he got up from his bed to turn off a fan running unnecessarily in an adjoining room.

Śrīla Prabhupāda criticized the wastefulness of his Western disciples.

"This is your custom," he once said. "Simply wasting. If you have some extra cloth, you cannot fold it. You cut it off and throw it away.

Whatever goes wrong, you solve it with money, and it appears good. You make some accident, and you cover it quickly with money. It is not that you are very capable, but with money you cover your deficiencies."

While cautiously using Kṛṣṇa's energy in His service, we must especially be concerned with our use of the energy of time. Kṛṣṇa says, "Time I am." The greatest deficiency is to waste time. Once a moment has passed, all the money in the world cannot buy it back. When we try to dedicate every moment to Kṛṣṇa's service, we'll get a sense of the eternal world, where time is never wasted.

As Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or *yoga*, is "the art of living" (*yoga karmasu kauśalam*). By remembering Kṛṣṇa when we turn off a light or a tap, when we recycle paper or glass or reuse an envelope, or when we work to reduce our necessities, we'll not only act more harmoniously with the earth, but we'll also make spiritual advancement and prepare ourselves to go back home, back to Godhead.

Rohiṇinandana Dāsa lives in southern England with his wife and their three children. Please write to him at Woodgate Cottage, Beckley Nr. Rye, E. Sussex TN31 6UH, U. K.

ŚRĪ RĀDHĀ-RAMAṆAJĪ

The Self-Manifested Deity

*Seeing His devotee's desire to increase His loving service,
Lord Kṛṣṇa responds in a most glorious way.*

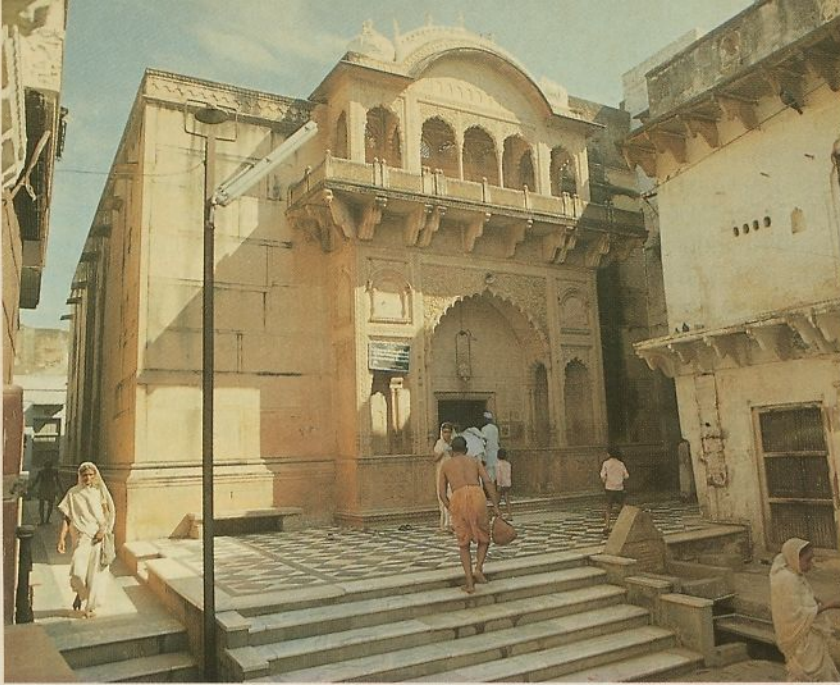
by Padma Nābha Goswami



Śrī Rādhā-Ramaṇajī



The Deity is offered a ghee lamp during an āraṭi ceremony.



The Rādhā-Ramaṇa Temple



WHEN Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu visited South India on His tour of the holy places, He visited the Śrī Raṅgam Temple. In front of the Deity He chanted and danced in ecstatic *saṅkīrtana*. The head priest of the Śrī Raṅgam Temple, Śrī Vyeṅkaṭa Bhaṭṭa, was very much impressed with Śrī Mahāprabhu's love of God.

After Mahāprabhu's *kīrtana*, Vyeṅkaṭa Bhaṭṭa invited Him to his house. There he requested Mahāprabhu to stay during the four months of Cāturmāsya, which was soon to start. Mahāprabhu, as a *sannyāsī*, accepted his request.

Vyeṅkaṭa Bhaṭṭa directed his son, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, to render all services to Mahāprabhu during this period, and Gopāla Bhaṭṭa with great sincerity took care of Śrī Mahāprabhu's every need. As a result he received great benefit by Mahāprabhu's association. Being pleased with Gopāla Bhaṭṭa's devotional affection, Mahāprabhu gave him initiation and ordered him that after the disappearance (death) of his parents he should go to Vṛndāvana to live there, performing *bhajana*, devotional service, and writing books.

At the age of thirty, after his parents disappeared, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa went to Vṛndāvana. When he reached there, he heard that Mahāprabhu had already visited Vṛndāvana and had returned to Purī. Hearing this, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa was disappointed, thinking that Mahāprabhu had never ordered him to visit Him in Purī. Mahāprabhu, however, through Rūpa Gosvāmī and Sanātana Gosvāmī, sent Gopāla Bhaṭṭa His personal *āsana* (seat) and cloth as signs of His blessings.

Later, when Gopāla Bhaṭṭa heard of the disappearance of Mahāprabhu, he felt great separation from the Lord. But in a dream Mahāprabhu instructed him,

"If you want My *darśana*, if you want to see Me, make a pilgrimage to Nepal."

In Nepal, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa visited the Gandak River and took his bath there. After his bath, he filled his waterpot, but was surprised to see that some *śālagrāma-silās* had entered it. He emptied them back into the river and refilled his water pot, but again he saw that some *śālagrāma-silās* had entered his water. He emptied his waterpot one more time, and upon filling it a third time, he saw that now twelve *śālagrāma-silās* were there. Thinking that this must be some mercy of the Lord, he decided to bring all the *śālagrāma-silās* to Vṛndāvana.

Gopāla Bhaṭṭa gave initiation to Gopinātha Dāsa, a *bramacāri* who lived with him and rendered him all services.

One day a wealthy man came to Vṛndāvana and offered Gopāla Bhaṭṭa all kinds of dresses and ornaments for his *śālagrāmas*. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, however, told him to give them to somebody else, since his *śālagrāmas* were of a round shape and therefore the dresses and ornaments could not be used.

This incident made Gopāla Bhaṭṭa think deeply. It was Nṛsimha Caturdaśī, the appearance day of Lord Nṛsimha-deva, and Gopāla Bhaṭṭa remembered how Lord Nṛsimha, in His form as half-lion, half-man, had come out of a pillar. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa prayed to the Lord, "O Lord, You are very merciful. You fulfill all the desires of Your devotees. I wish to serve You in Your full form." He read the pastimes of Lord Nṛsimhadeva in the *Sṛmad-Bhāgavatm*, and after chanting in ecstasy he fell unconscious. The next morning he awoke to find that one of the twelve *śālagrāmas*, the Dāmodara *śilā*, had manifested as Śrī Rādhā-Ramaṇa. He informed Sanātana Gosvāmī and Rūpa Gosvāmī.

Gopāla Bhaṭṭa started serving Śrī Rādhā-Ramaṇajī. After some years, however, he became concerned: after his disappearance, who would continue the service of Śrī Rādhā-Ramaṇa? He asked Gopinātha Dāsa, his *bramacāri* disciple, to get married and take the service of Śrī Rādhā-Ramaṇa as a hereditary duty. Gopinātha Dāsa did not want to marry but suggested his

younger brother, who was married. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa agreed and initiated him.

After the disappearance of Śrī Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, this disciple, known as Dāmodara Dāsa Goswami, continued the worship of Śrī Rādhā-Ramaṇajī. Since then the Goswami families descended from Dāmodara Dāsa Goswami and, spiritually, from Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī have continued the worship of Śrī Rādhā-Ramaṇa very nicely in Vṛndāvana to this very day.

Before preaching in the West, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the Founder-*Ācārya* of ISKCON, was for many years a close friend of Śrī Vishwambhar Goswami, an *ācārya* in the line of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī. Śrīla Prabhupāda advised his devotees to learn the high standard of Deity worship and Vaiṣṇava etiquette from the Śrī Rādhā-Ramaṇa Temple. Many times Śrīla Prabhupāda visited the Śrī Rādhā-Ramaṇa Temple and was very much impressed. ☀

Padma Nābha Goswami, son of Śrī Vishwambhar Goswami, is one of the present leaders of the Rādhā-Ramaṇa Temple.

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Krishna to you for more than forty years.
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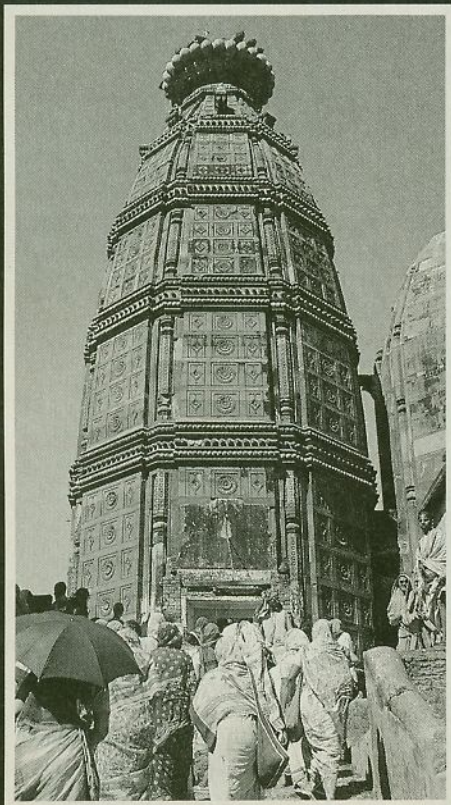
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PROMOTING THE ORIGINAL IDEA

A newly chartered foundation will help ISKCON fulfill the mission of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

by Drutakarmā Dāsa

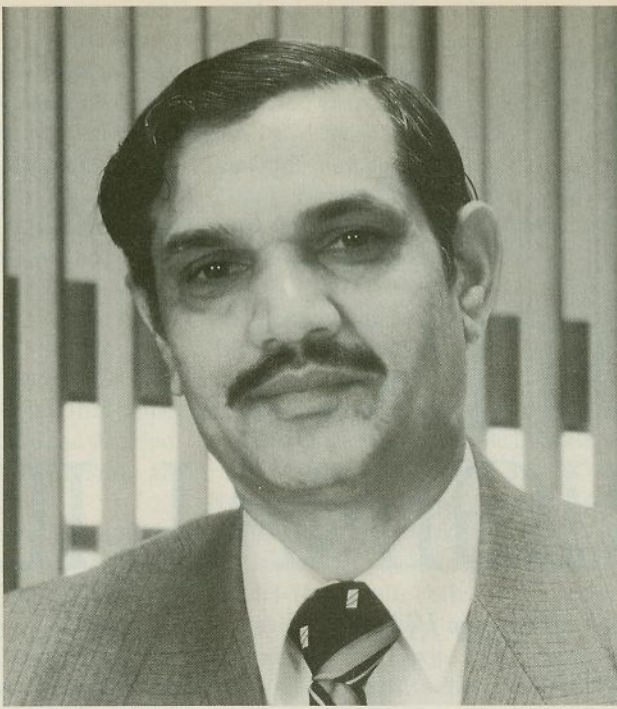
FOR SOME PEOPLE, a foundation is simply a good way to keep the government tax agents from taking away a personal fortune. Others see foundations as an excellent way to promote an idea. These days thousands of foundations promote a variety of ideas, ranging from animal rights to human rights. But now there's a new foundation on the scene—the only one dedicated to propagating the idea of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It is called the ISKCON Foundation, chartered last year in California.

“In a perfect world ideas could be born, nourished, developed, made known



*Alfred Brush Ford (Ambarīśa Dāsa)
ISKCON Foundation Chairman*

“The ISKCON Foundation is a vehicle to carry Śrīla Prabhupāda’s movement into the next millennium.”



Dahyabhai Patel
ISKCON Foundation Co-Vice-Chairman

***“I support
the ISKCON
movement
with my
heart. The
Foundation
will be
beneficial to
our future
generation.”***

to everyone, criticized and perfected, and put to good use, without the crude fact of financial support ever entering into the process. Seldom, if ever, in the practical world in which we live, does this occur. The influence of money on ideas can be powerful.” So said Warren Weaver, an official of the Rockefeller Foundation, in 1967.

And it is true that foundations such as the Rockefeller Foundation have been instrumental in propagating certain ideas in human society. The Rockefeller Foundation built the Mt. Palomar observatory, where much of the astronomical work related to the godless Big Bang theory of the origin of the universe was performed. The Foundation also funded much of the initial work in genetics and particle physics, supported archaeological work crucial to modern ideas of human evolution, gave money for opening schools of psychiatry at major universities, and supported population studies and medical studies that resulted in the legalization of abortion in the United States and population control programs around the world.

The above list is an example of the strong secular and materialistic focus

major foundations tend to have in their giving policies.

In 1951, before Śrīla Prabhupāda came to the United States, he wrote a letter asking the Ford Foundation to fund his work of spreading true God consciousness through an association of intelligent people. But a staff assistant at the Detroit office of the Foundation wrote back: “Regret to advise that we are unable to pursue your suggestions concerning the establishment of an association of the intelligent class of people. The Ford Foundation has no program in which specific ideas such as you describe might be included.”

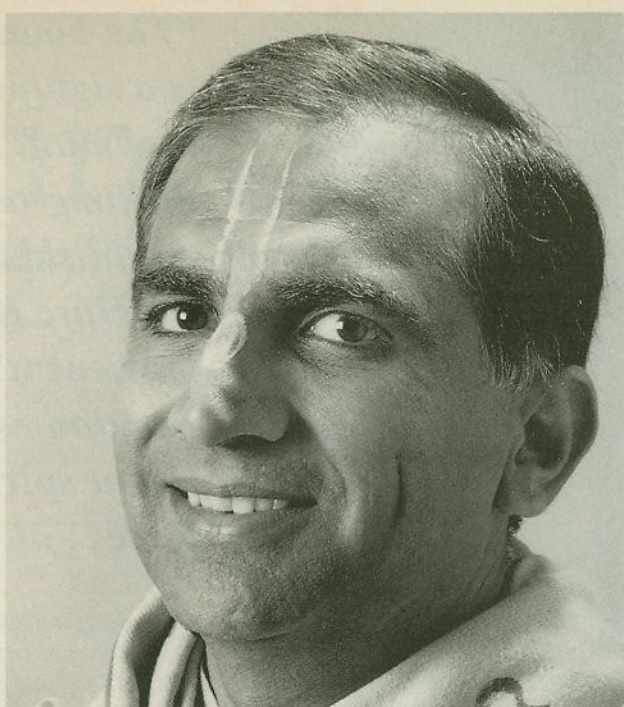
In 1969, Śrīla Prabhupāda, reflecting on his personal experience, commented on how unfortunate it was that the foundations would not support anything genuinely spiritual. “If you go to such foundations and say, ‘Give us some money for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness, printing these books,’ they will reply, ‘No, no. We are not interested in religion. We are for scientific improvement.’”

Nevertheless, Śrīla Prabhupāda continued to see the foundations as important and in 1969 requested his

American disciples to approach them. “There are so many rich people in your country. If somebody comes forward, we can make very nice progress very quickly. So we have to make some propaganda amongst them. Actually it [Kṛṣṇa consciousness] is the nicest thing possible. Simply they have to be convinced. That’s a fact. Nobody can challenge our sincerity and our purity in this world. . . . The best thing is what we are presenting. There is no doubt about it. Now people have to know it. How to make it known? We have to go to the newspaper man, magazine man, to the foundations.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda would no doubt be pleased with the establishment of the ISKCON Foundation. Significantly, Alfred Brush Ford (Ambarīśa Dāsa), a great-grandson of Henry Ford, has agreed to serve as chairman of the ISKCON Foundation Board.

“The ISKCON Foundation is a vehicle to carry Śrīla Prabhupāda’s movement into the next millennium,” says Ambarīśa, who is also head of the ISKCON Ministry of Cultural Affairs. He adds, “Only by offering people the genuine Vedic culture of India can we satisfy their desires for peace, prosperity,



Naveen Khurana (Naviṇa Kṛṣṇa Dāsa)
ISKCON Foundation Chief Executive Officer

“Lord Caitanya ordered that Kṛṣṇa’s message be spread to every town and village of the world. The Foundation will assist ISKCON in making this order a reality.”

and spiritual fulfillment.”

Dr. Vibhakar Mody, Dr. Arvind Singh (Advaita Ācārya Dāsa), and Mr. Dahyabhai Patel have agreed to serve as vice-chairmen of the ISKCON Foundation. Dr. Mody and Dr. Singh are physicians, and Mr. Patel is the president of a manufacturing company in Irvine, California. Their participation on the Foundation board reflects the growing commitment to ISKCON among its friends in the Indian community.

“I support the ISKCON movement from my heart,” says Dahyabhai Patel. He believes the ISKCON Foundation “will be beneficial to our future generation.”

The chief executive officer of the ISKCON Foundation is Naveen Khurana (Naviṇa Kṛṣṇa Dāsa), who holds an M.B.A. from the University of Illinois.

“Lord Caitanya ordered that Kṛṣṇa’s message be spread to every town and village in the world,” says Naviṇa Kṛṣṇa. “The Foundation will assist ISKCON in making this order a reality.”

Other founding members of the board include Alister Taylor (Advaita Ācārya Dāsa), John Sims (Abhirāma Dāsa), G. L. Goyani (Gadādhara Dāsa), Dinesh Patel, James McDonough

(Dhṛṣṭadyumna Dāsa), Ian Cheverton (Vicitravīrya Dāsa), Dr. Kirit Joshi, Amrish Goel, Charles Geer, Dr. Subramaniam Shastri, and William Ogle (Balavanta Dāsa). All of them have successful professional and business experience.

“The formation of the ISKCON Foundation is a significant landmark in the long-term establishment of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement’s position as a major spiritual force in the West and all over the world,” says Advaita Ācārya Dāsa. “I am honored to be involved.”

The ISKCON Foundation board also includes the following members of ISKCON’s Governing Body Commission—Mukunda Goswami, Śrīdhara Swami, Badrinārāyaṇa Dāsa, and Raviṇdra Svarūpa Dāsa.

The entire ISKCON Foundation Board was approved by the North American Committee of ISKCON’s Governing Body Commission, as well as the North American temple presidents. The Foundation will be primarily active in North America, although it is hoped that it will inspire similar efforts in other parts of the world.

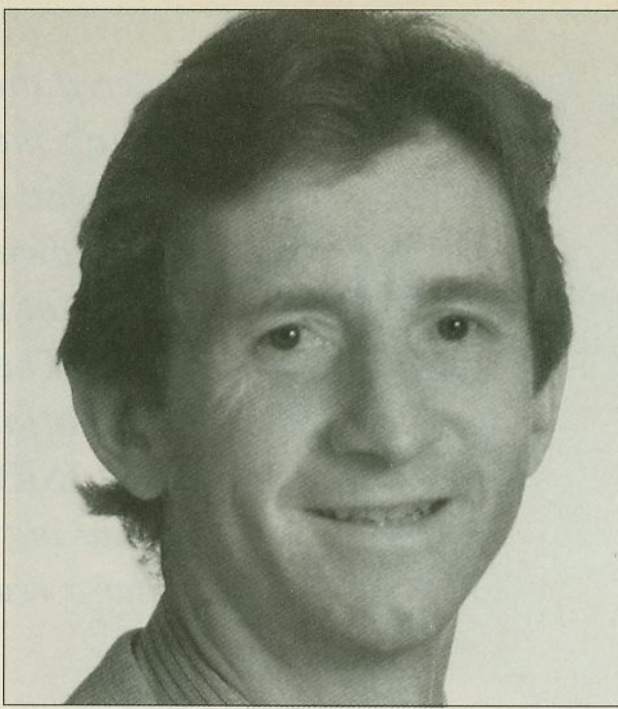
Of course, one might ask: Since ISKCON is already raising funds

through its temples and the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, what is the need for the ISKCON Foundation?

The answer takes us to the heart of what a foundation does. Compared to governments, even the biggest foundations have limited funds at their disposal. They therefore tend to look for emerging, breakthrough areas of research and development where a small investment can have the greatest impact. So foundations have commonly been active in farsighted social and intellectual trendsetting. The ISKCON Foundation will also function in this tradition.

The ISKCON Foundation has a board of thoughtful, concerned ISKCON members who will be using Foundation funds and their own expertise to encourage innovative approaches in critical areas—getting important projects off the ground, helping established programs with special needs, and identifying new avenues and methods for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

In the twenty-five years since its founding by Śrīla Prabhupāda, ISKCON has compiled a remarkable record of achievement. ISKCON has:



Alister Taylor (Advaita Ācārya Dāsa)
ISKCON Foundation Board Member

“The Foundation is a significant landmark in the long-term establishment of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement’s position as a major spiritual force . . .”

—brought together people from all racial, national, and religious backgrounds in a worldwide spiritual community;

—built 300 temples, farms, schools, and institutes in all parts of the world;

—printed 400 million books of Vedic knowledge in more than 60 languages;

—distributed 900 million plates of spiritual vegetarian food (*prasādam*);

—renovated holy places in India, such as Vṛndāvana;

—established cow protection programs on 6 continents;

—held major academic conferences and published books on scientific topics through its Bhaktivedanta Institute;

—set up an archives to preserve rare Vedic texts and record the history of ISKCON;

—maintained a high standard of *pūjā* in its temples;

—celebrated 500 Rathayātrā festivals of Lord Jagannātha in cities around the world;

—defended the freedom of Kṛṣṇa

devotees to practice their religion in many countries.

All of this caused the renowned scholar A. L. Basham, author of *The Wonder That Was India*, to comment: “Hinduism is once more becoming . . . an expansive missionary religion taking in people from all over the world. . . . The culmination of this process so far is that represented by the followers of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.”

Unfortunately, because of insufficient expertise in management and organization, ISKCON’s record of success has not translated into the degree of public recognition, understanding, and support that might be desired. The Foundation is therefore initiating a two-phase program to achieve these objectives in North America.

Phase 1

In the first phase of activity (1991–1992), the ISKCON Foundation is conducting the movement’s 25th Anniversary Campaign.

In this phase, a primary goal of the Foundation will be to improve the management and organization of ISKCON temples. A key element will be to bring

more Indian community and other congregational members into the forefront of ISKCON leadership on all levels—local, national, and international.

To help local temples achieve financial stability, the Foundation is developing a system of annual membership by ISKCON friends and supporters. The program involves methods employed by successful nonprofit organizations of all kinds.

Through its public relations committee, the Foundation will help ISKCON establish better relations with various segments of society, including government, business, academia, the media, and the Indian community.

The first Vaiṣṇava Vedic college has already won approval to grant degrees in the United States. The Foundation will help create the college’s educational programs, including Vedic philosophy, Vedic science, and Sanskrit.

Lawsuits are part of the price ISKCON pays for following Lord Kṛṣṇa’s instruction to teach the message of the *Gītā* in a sometimes unfriendly environment. For years ISKCON has been fighting religious intolerance in courtrooms around the world, and the

(please turn to page 50)

Śrīnivāsa Ācārya

The Embodiment of Lord Caitanya's Love

by Satyarāja Dāsa

Illustrations by Rasa Priyā Devī Dāsī

PART I

ŚRĪNIVĀSA ĀCĀRYA is one of the most important personalities in the religious history of Bengal, perhaps the most important Vaiṣṇava teacher in the generation immediately following Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He is chiefly remembered as the illustrious disciple of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī and Jīva Gosvāmī. His achievements include delivering the writings of the Gosvāmīs from Vṛndāvana to Bengal, converting King Birhambir to Vaiṣṇavism, and originating the Manohar Shoy style of *kīrtana*. At Kheturi, Bengal, he co-organized the first Gaura Purṇīma Festival (celebrating the anniversary of Caitanya Mahāprabhu's appearance in this world), which Narottama, Śyāmānanda, and thousands of other Vaiṣṇavas attended.

Śrīnivāsa's Parents

Śrīnivāsa Ācārya's parents—the *brāhmaṇa* Gaṅgādhara Bhaṭṭācārya and his wife, Lakṣmī Priyā—lived in the small village of Cakhandī, on the bank of the Ganges in the Burdwan district of Bengal. They longed to raise a child who would be a great devotee, but until the birth of Śrīnivāsa, they were childless for many years.

Gaṅgādhara was himself a great devotee of the Golden Avatāra, Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the incarnation of Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa predicted in the scriptures. Lord Caitanya had appeared in Navadvīpa and was currently in the world. Gaṅgādhara spent much of his time hearing and retelling



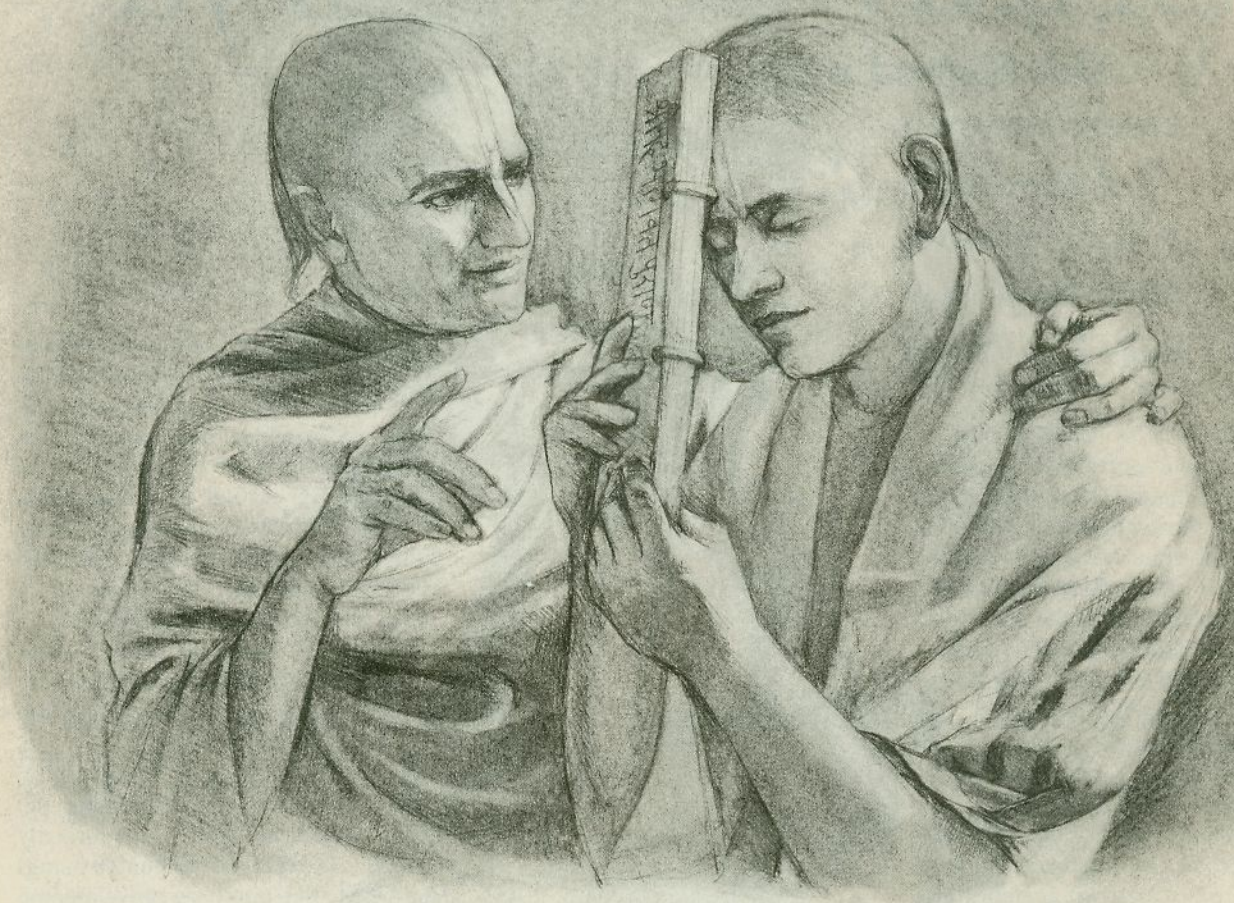
the stories of Lord Caitanya's pastimes (*līlā*) with the Lord's intimate associates. He wanted to see Lord Caitanya, but social and familial obligations kept him at home, so he resolved to meditate on the Lord in separation. In 1510, however, he could not tolerate the separation any longer. He set out for Navadvīpa to see the Lord of his life. After only seven miles, as far as the village of Katwa, he learned that Nimāi of Nadiyā—Caitanya Mahāprabhu—was in that very village taking *sannyāsa*, the renounced order of life.

"What?" cried Gaṅgādhara. "Why must my Lord take the renounced order? This austerity is reserved for human beings like me so we can overcome our attachments to this world. Certainly there is no need for Śrī Nimāi, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, to live the harsh life of an ascetic."

But Gaṅgādhara's reservations were mixed with excitement: he would soon see his Lord face to face. When he approached the sacrificial area where Śrī Nimāi was taking *sannyāsa*, he saw the Lord's intimate associates—Nityānanda Prabhu, Candrasekhara Ācārya, Mukunda Datta, and many others. He saw Madhu Śilā, the barber, preparing to cut Nimāi's beautiful locks of raven black hair.

"No!" the onlookers were saying. "Please stop!" They, like Gaṅgādhara,

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could not conceive of the Lord in the renounced order of life. Even Madhu, who had the good fortune to touch the Lord's head, could cut His hair out of duty only, weeping profusely. Madhu and the others knew that the Lord had decided to set an example for the entire religious world and stress the importance of renunciation. There was nothing they could do.

“Caitanya Dāsa”

Keśava Bhārati, the *sannyāsa-guru*, gave Nimāi His new *sannyāsa* name, “Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya.” The crowd was in shock: “Beautiful Nimāi is really taking *sannyāsa*!” They couldn't believe their eyes, from which tears were flowing incessantly. But the deed was done.

Madhu fainted. Why had he shaved the Lord's head? It was as if he had been

controlled by the Lord's own hand to fulfill the Lord's own desire. “Caitanya! Caitanya!” said Gaṅgādhara Bhaṭṭācārya to himself. “Caitanya! Caitanya! Caitanya!” he repeated again and again. His eyes pleaded with everyone there: he wanted to understand what had just happened, but all he could do was mutter in a stupor of mixed emotions.

Gaṅgādhara found himself calling the Lord's names aloud with uncontrollable enthusiasm—“Caitanya! Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya! Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya!”

He returned to Cakhandi, half mad with ecstasy, unable to stop repeating the Lord's names. He told his wife what had happened, and she too was overcome with ecstasy. As the days passed, their ecstasy increased, and the whole town of Cakhandi marveled at Gaṅgādhara's transformation. Seeing Gaṅgādhara's absorption in Śrī Caitanya's

name, his wife and the other villagers began calling him Caitanya Dāsa.

Journey To Purī

Caitanya Dāsa and his wife went to Jagannātha Purī, where Lord Caitanya had gone after accepting the renounced order. When the couple arrived, they went to Śrī Caitanya and surrendered at His feet.

“Lord Jagannātha is very happy that you have come here,” the Lord said. “Go to the temple and see His Deity form. The lotus-eyed Lord is extremely merciful, so please go see Him.”

Govinda, Lord Caitanya's personal servant, accompanied Caitanya Dāsa and his wife to the temple, where they offered many prayers at the feet of Lord Jagannātha. Weeping tears of divine love, the happy *brāhmaṇa* couple were

“The manuscript in my possession has become illegible,” Gadādhara said, “from the tears I have cried onto its pages.” Śrīnivāsa touched the book to his head and felt ecstasy arise within himself.

• • •

soon escorted to the luxurious accommodations Lord Caitanya had arranged for them. They spent several happy days with Śrī Caitanya in Jagannātha Purī.

One day Lord Caitanya told His servant of His plans for the couple. “Govinda,” the Lord said, “although Caitanya Dāsa and his wife have not mentioned it to Me, I know they would like to have a child. They said so in front of Lord Jagannātha, who is nondifferent from Me. They have prayed sincerely, and I know their hearts. Their desired offspring will soon appear. His name will be Śrīnivāsa, and he will be a greatly beautiful child. Through Rūpa and Sanātana I will manifest the *bhakti-śāstras*, and through Śrīnivāsa I will distribute them. Caitanya Dāsa and his wife should quickly return to Chakandhi.”

The Appearance of Śrīnivāsa

In Cakhandi the couple had a beautiful baby boy, whom they named Śrīnivāsa. He was born in the second or third decade of the sixteenth century on the auspicious full-moon day of the month of Vaiśākhā (April–May). Lakṣmī Priyā’s father, Balarāma Vipra, a learned astrologer, told the happy couple that their son was a *mahāpuruṣa*, a divinely empowered soul.

The boy had a broad chest and a long, elegant nose, and his beautiful eyes extended like lotus petals. Like Lord Caitanya, he had a bodily luster resembling molten gold and arms that extended down to his knees. According to custom, Caitanya Dāsa and Lakṣmī Priyā gave charity to the *brāhmaṇas*, and the *brāhmaṇas* blessed the child.

Śrīnivāsa’s Youth

Lakṣmī Priyā would constantly sing the glories of Lord Caitanya into the

child’s ears, and the melodious sounds made him joyful. As Śrīnivāsa grew, he learned to chant the names of Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Soon this small crescent moon known as Śrīnivāsa grew full and was known as the brightest and most beautiful boy in Cakhandi. He studied under the famed Dhanañjaya Vidyāvācaspati, who taught him all branches of Vedic learning, including religion, logic, poetry, political science, grammar, and Āyurveda.

According to the *Prema-vilāsa*, Dhanañjaya Vidyāvācaspati said that he had nothing to teach Śrīnivāsa. The *Prema-vilāsa* also relates that the goddess of education appeared to Śrīnivāsa in a dream and told him she would make him proficient in all areas of learning, especially the scriptures. Still, Śrīnivāsa became known as Dhanañjaya Vidyāvācaspati’s prize pupil, and as such he was the pride of Cakhandi. He was loved by all the townspeople, who saw him as a precious gem.

Narahari Sarakāra Ṭhākura

Because of Śrīnivāsa’s popularity, he met Narahari Sarakāra, an intimate associate of Lord Caitanya from nearby Śrīkhaṇḍa. Narahari Sarakāra’s intense devotion had pleased Lord Caitanya, and Narahari had the distinction of being allowed to sing the Lord’s glories in the Lord’s presence, although the Lord, out of humility, would not let anyone else do so. This distinction impressed young Śrīnivāsa, and he accepted Śrī Narahari as his first instructing *guru*.

After meeting Narahari Sarakāra, Śrīnivāsa began to show signs of ecstasy. Narahari told Śrīnivāsa to go to Purī to see Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. While Śrīnivāsa was considering how to execute the instruction, his father passed away from this mortal world after seven days of fever. It was a shock to the

family, and Śrīnivāsa did all he could to console his mother.

Meanwhile, the omniscient Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was preparing His associates for Śrīnivāsa’s arrival. He had already written to Rūpa, Sanātana, and Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī requesting them to teach Śrīnivāsa spiritual life. And He asked Gadādhara Paṇḍita in Jagannātha Purī to teach Śrīnivāsa the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

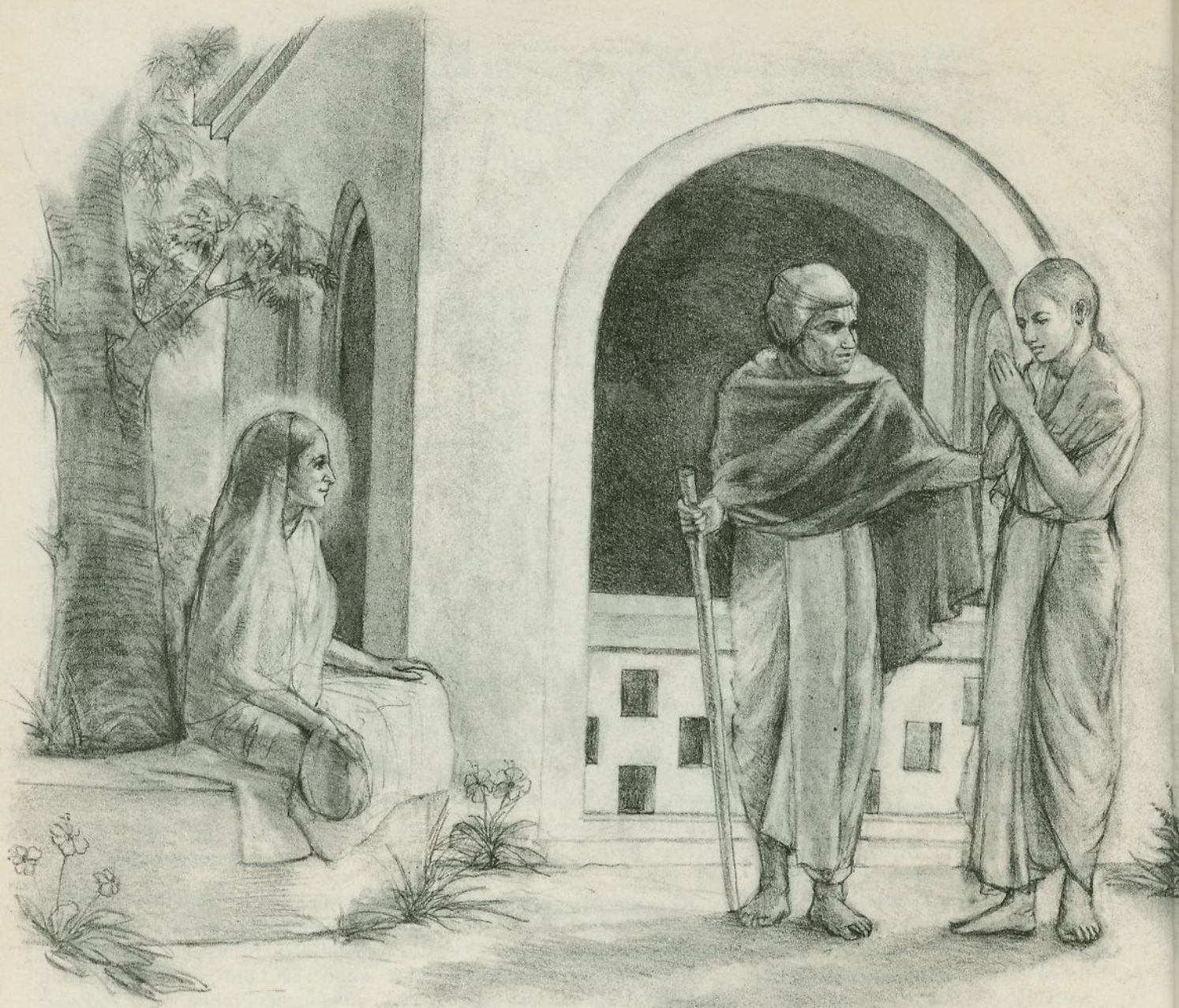
Narahari Sarakāra advised Śrīnivāsa to see to his mother’s care in Jajigram, where her father and brothers had moved from Cakhandi. Then Śrīnivāsa was to proceed to Purī to associate with Lord Caitanya. Śrīnivāsa asked Narahari to initiate him into the chanting of Kṛṣṇa’s name, but Narahari told him that Lord Caitanya wanted him to take initiation from Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī.

Meeting with Gadādhara Paṇḍita

Still a boy, Śrīnivāsa set out with a companion for Purī. On the way, he learned that Śrī Caitanya had left this world. Then Lord Caitanya—along with Nityānanda Prabhu, who had also passed away—appeared to Śrīnivāsa “on the pretext of a dream” and consoled him. The phrase *shopna chaley* (“on the pretext of a dream”) appears frequently in Bengali literature of the period and is usually taken to mean “in a spiritual vision.”

Still, Śrīnivāsa remained grief-stricken. He went to the Gopinātha temple in Purī to take shelter of Gadādhara Paṇḍita. The Paṇḍita was overcome with separation from Lord Caitanya, and tears always flowed from his eyes. Śrīnivāsa bowed at Śrī Gadādhara’s feet and introduced himself.

Gadādhara Paṇḍita became joyful. “I’m glad you have come and introduced



yourself," he said. "Just before passing away, Caitanya Mahāprabhu told me to teach you the *Bhāgavatam*. He knew you would arrive in Purī one day, and He asked me to explain Kṛṣṇa-līlā to you."

Gadādhara Paṇḍita's joy—he could now fulfill this order of the Lord—again turned to sadness. "I cannot teach you *Bhāgavatam* at this time, O young Śrīnivāsa," he said, "for the manuscript in my possession has become illegible from the tears I have cried onto its pages."

Śrīnivāsa touched the sacred book to his head and felt ecstasy arise within himself. Nonetheless, the problem of studying a book that had been rendered illegible remained. But Śrī Gadādhara and Śrīnivāsa would not be swayed from their purpose. The will of Mahāprabhu could not be obstructed. Śrī Gadādhara sent a message to Narahari Sarakāra in Bengal asking him to secure another manuscript of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Narahari replied that another copy was available and that a messenger should

be dispatched immediately. Gadādhara sent Śrīnivāsa himself and told him to hurry. The separation from Lord Caitanya was intolerable, he said, and he didn't know how long he could stay in this world.

Before leaving, Śrīnivāsa fulfilled a long-cherished desire to see Lord Caitanya's associates. He went to the homes of Rāmānanda Rāya, Śikhi Māhiti, Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, Vakreśvara Paṇḍita, Paramānanda Purī, Gopinātha Ācārya, and many others.

Śrīnivāsa was enthralled with the home of Śrī Caitanya in Navadvīpa, where he met Viṣṇupriyā Devī, the Lord's revered widow, and her esteemed servants.

• • •



He also went to see King Pratāparudra, but according to the *Bhakti-ratnākara* the king had gone away in solitude to lament the Lord's passing.

Śrīnivāsa as Gaura Śakti

Śrīnivāsa reminded the great personalities in Purī of Lord Caitanya. Seeing his intense and unprecedented love of Godhead, the devotees could understand that he was Gaura Śakti, the embodiment of the energy of Caitanya

Mahāprabhu. According to the *Prema-vilāsa*, Śrīnivāsa is an incarnation of Lord Caitanya's ecstasy. The Lord's intimate associates could naturally perceive this and could understand that through Śrīnivāsa the eternal message of Lord Caitanya—the message of the Vedic literature—would be widely distributed.

Lord Caitanya had broken open the storehouse of nectarean love of God, and the Gosvāmīs, by writing books, had taken that nectar and placed it in tangible vessels. Śrīnivāsa would see that these vessels were circulated among all sincere souls. The intimate associates of the Lord gave Śrīnivāsa instructions and advice for carrying on the mission.

When Śrīnivāsa arrived in Bengal and received the copy of the *Bhāgavatam* from Narahari Sarakāra Ṭhākura, he learned that Gadādhara Paṇḍita had passed away. The news was a terrible blow, and Śrīnivāsa lamented. Then Gadādhara Paṇḍita appeared to him on the pretext of a dream and encouraged him to go forward.

Śrīnivāsa reflected on the inconceivable will of the Lord. Why had He taken away the person who was to teach him the *Bhāgavatam*? Was there a new plan? Was someone else to teach him the sacred scriptures? Some say that Śrīnivāsa fell despondent at this time, but not much is known about the years that followed Śrī Gadādhara's passing from this world. It is generally assumed that Śrīnivāsa spent this time at first in a heartbroken state and then in serious meditation. He probably continued his studies, as he was still in his teens.

When Śrī Jāhnavā Devī, the wife of Nityānanda Prabhu, went to Vṇḍāvana, Rūpa Gosvāmī asked her to send Śrīnivāsa to Vṇḍāvana as soon as possible. On her return to Bengal, she relayed the message to Narahari. Śrī

Caitanya had told the Gosvāmīs of Vraja to train Śrīnivāsa, and Narahari advised him to hasten to Vṇḍāvana so that the Lord's com-mand should not be violated.

The request heightened Śrīnivāsa's desire to study *bhakti* literature with Rūpa and Sanātana. Had he gone to Vṇḍāvana then, he would have met Rūpa and Sanātana. But he decided to visit the homes of Lord Caitanya's principal associates on the way, stopping at Navadvīpa to visit Śrī Caitanya's home.

Association with The Navadvīpa Devotees

This was the second time Śrīnivāsa delayed a journey: first the journey to see Gadādhara Paṇḍita, and now Rūpa and Sanātana. Perhaps Śrīnivāsa's enthusiasm to associate with Lord Caitanya's direct followers in Purī and Navadvīpa was so overwhelming that he was unable to heed the advice of his forebears. Some say that all of this was the will of providence, so that Śrīnivāsa would take initiation from Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī. Others say that Śrīnivāsa, by his example, was teaching the importance of pilgrimage and association with devotees.

Śrīnivāsa was enthralled with the home of Śrī Caitanya in Navadvīpa (Māyāpur), where he met Viṣṇupriyā Devī, the Lord's revered widow, and her esteemed servants, Vaṁśivadana Ṭhākura and Īśāna Prabhu. They all blessed Śrīnivāsa, and he stayed with them for several days, hearing the pastimes of Lord Caitanya.

During those days he watched Viṣṇupriyā Devī perform severe austerities. For example, she would chant the *mahā-mantra*—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare—over each grain of rice she was

to eat. When she was finished with her daily chanting, she would eat only the grains she had set aside.

“Truly,” Śrīnivāsa said, “this is a wife who was worthy of Śrī Caitanya.”

Śrīnivāsa also met Dāmodara Paṇḍita, Śuklāmbāra, Murāri Gupta, and other early friends and intimates of Lord Caitanya in Navadvīpa. From there Śrīnivāsa went to nearby Śāntipura, where he was warmly greeted by Śrī Advaita’s wife, Sitā Thākuraṇī, and her sons Acyuta and Gopāla.

Śrīnivāsa Meets Jāhnavā Devī

Then Śrīnivāsa visited the house of Nityānanda Prabhu in Khardaha, where Jāhnavā Devī, her son Bīrabhadra, and others greeted Śrīnivāsa as if he were part of their own family. But Jāhnavā Devī encouraged him to start for Vṛndāvana without delay because Rūpa and Sanātana would soon rejoin the Lord in the spiritual world.

On the way to Vṛndāvana, Śrīnivāsa stopped at the well-known Abhirāma Thākura’s house in Khanakul Krishnanagar to deliver a letter from Jāhnavā Devī. The Thākura greeted him with three loving lashes from an extraordinary whip, but this unusual greeting was a benediction. The whip, known as Jai Maṅgala, would bestow love of God on anyone it touched. Śrī Abhirāma and his wife, Mālīṇī, showed deep affection for Śrīnivāsa. Not only did

they bless him with their famous whip, but they gave him valuable instructions and reiterated the importance of going to Vṛndāvana as soon as possible.

While continuing his journey, Śrīnivāsa stopped in Katwa, where his father had seen Lord Caitanya adopt the renounced order. Next he passed through Agradvīpa, where the three famous Ghosh brothers—Vāsudeva, Govinda, and Mādhava—had established their temple, and then he proceeded to Ekacakra, the birthplace of Nityānanda Prabhu. Finally, Śrīnivāsa made one last stop in Jajigram to say farewell to his aging mother and to visit Narahari Sarakāra, his beloved *guru*. Narahari was concerned about Śrīnivāsa’s delay in going to Vṛndāvana and asked him to leave immediately.

And so, without further delay Śrīnivāsa set out for Vraja. By this time he had achieved adulthood.

The Journey to Vraja

Meanwhile, Sanātana Gosvāmī had left this mortal world, and Rūpa Gosvāmī could not bear the separation. Śrī Rūpa felt that he, too, might not survive to instruct Śrīnivāsa, so he asked his distinguished disciple (and nephew) Jīva Gosvāmī to care for Śrīnivāsa.

Traveling in those days, mostly by foot, was difficult. Nonetheless, Śrīnivāsa was making determined progress, stopping briefly on the way in Benares

to visit the house of Candrasekhara Ācārya, where Lord Caitanya had lived for two months. Here Śrīnivāsa met an elderly disciple of Candrasekhara who invited him for a meal and showed him the places associated with Śrī Caitanya.

Next, Śrīnivāsa reached Prayag (known today as Allahabad) and spent the night there. Four days before arriving in Vṛndāvana, he heard that Sanātana had passed away four months earlier. And when he reached Mathurā, he learned that Rūpa Gosvāmī had passed away only three days earlier. Śrīnivāsa fell to the ground, crying like a madman. He felt himself the most unfortunate person in the universe. He had failed to meet Lord Caitanya and to study the *Bhāgavatam* with Gadādhara Paṇḍita. Now he had failed to meet Rūpa and Sanātana.

While Śrīnivāsa sat beneath a tree wishing for his own death, Rūpa and Sanātana appeared to him on the pretext of a dream and told him he was the embodiment of Lord Caitanya’s love. They encouraged him to proceed to Vṛndāvana to take shelter of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī and to study under Śrī Jīva with all his life and soul. ☀

(continued in the next issue)

Satyarāja Dāsa is a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda and a regular contributor to Back to Godhead. He has written several books on Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He and his wife live in New York City.

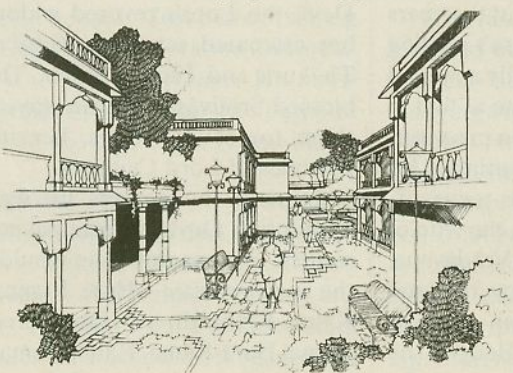
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EVERY TOWN & VILLAGE

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

WORLD NEWS

North America

The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust has published two

new books by Śrīla Prabhupāda. *Nārada-bhakti-sūtra* is a classic Sanskrit scripture on devotional service that Śrīla Prabhupāda began in 1967 but never completed. Now his disciples have finished it. *The Laws of Nature: An Infallible Justice* is a compilation of some of Śrīla Prabhupāda's talks and writings on *karma*, reincarnation, and devotional service. For more information, see back cover.

A drought hit ISKCON's Gītā Nāgarī farm in Pennsylvania last summer, causing a feed shortage. So devotees are raising funds to make sure the cows and bulls are well fed during the long winter. To help, send your contribution to Adopt-A-Cow, P.O. Box 839, Port Royal, PA 17082.

Europe

"Lord Jagannātha Greet a Free Berlin,"

read a banner at the Berlin Rathayātrā, held in September. After the festival, in the temple court-

yard the devotees held an installation ceremony for Deities of Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda.

ISKCON Padua, Italy, has moved to a new home, a two-hundred-year-old building known as Casa de Guistina. The devotees have renamed it Prabhupāda Deśa — "the place of Prabhupāda."



New temple in Padua, Italy

Devotees in Zurich took part in four big open-air festivals last summer. They distributed 38,000 plates of *prasādam*.

In November, Swiss National TV aired two programs on Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Also, Swiss National Radio interviewed devotees at their Roche d'Or farm, focusing on their ox training and biological farming.

India

The chariots rolled at ISKCON Bhubaneswar's Rathayātrā festival last

summer, as ten thousand people pulled. The parade was held the same day as the original Rathayātrā in Jagannātha Purī. The festival included nine days of programs and a return procession.

Six floats with Kṛṣṇa conscious themes moved through the center of town as part of the Janmāṣṭamī festival at ISKCON Udhampura, in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Ten thousand people attended the



Berlin Rathayātrā procession

three-day celebration, which included 24-hour-a-day chanting of Kṛṣṇa's holy names.



Member of Parliament Mr. Sunil Dutt pours Ganges water for bathing Bombay Deities.

Two hundred thousand people attended ISKCON Bombay's three-day Janmāṣṭamī celebration. Festival-goers bathed the temple's main Deities, Śrī Śrī Rādhā Rāsa-vihāri, Ganges water and other sacred substances from 1008 silver pots. Member of Parliament and veteran film-actor Mr. Sunil Dutt took part in the bathing ceremony.

Śrīla Prabhupāda speaks out to college students in Secunderabad. Bhakta Ravi of Bhaktivedanta Youth Services in Secunderabad has started a monthly publication entitled *Śrīla Prabhupāda Speaks Out*. BYS members there plan to distribute it widely at local colleges and universities.

Soviet Union **The Cable News Network (CNN) ran a story** in September on devotees chanting and distributing literature in Moscow. ISKCON leaders estimate that ten thousand people in the Soviet Union are seriously practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

In St. Petersburg, ISKCON's Cafe Govinda serves 300-400 customers a day.

Singapore **The Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Deities rode a boat on Janmāṣṭamī at ISKCON Singapore.** Devotees set up a pond in the temple, filled with lotuses and sweet-scented water. Each of the one hundred guests got the chance to pull Their Lordships' boat.

Africa **Hare Krishna Food for Life fed** hundreds of schoolchildren during ten days of intensive *prasādam* distribution in Zimbabwe last summer. The Food for Life team made their base at a primary school in the small village of Maramba and traveled to schools within a sixty-mile radius.

Several years ago the Zimbabwe government had banned ISKCON. Now the government was grateful to



Girirāja Swami teaches Zambian schoolchildren the mahā-mantra.

have ISKCON give out *prasādam* meals to drought victims near the Mozambique border.

For more detailed news, see ISKCON's monthly newspaper, ISKCON World Review. To subscribe, see page 55. Any news from your town or village? Please let us know!

MĀYĀPUR-VṚNDĀVANA NEWS

Māyāpur **Youth Seminar**
In December, Kṛṣṇa conscious young people from various Indian states gathered in Māyāpur for seminars organized by ISKCON's Bhaktivedanta Youth Services.

Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Festival
ISKCON's annual Māyāpur-Vṛndāvana Pilgrimage, attended by devotees from around the world, begins March 5 with a nine-day tour of Māyāpur (Navadvīpa Parikrama). After celebrating Lord Caitanya's appearance on March

18, devotees will travel to Vṛndāvana.

ISKCON's Governing Body Commission (GBC) will meet in Māyāpur February 18–March 3, just before the festival begins.

Vṛndāvana

Annual Fall Pilgrimage

Devotees from around the world toured Vṛndāvana during ISKCON's fifth annual Vraja Maṇḍala Parikrama, a walking pilgrimage through Kṛṣṇa's holy land. The pilgrimage took place during the sacred month of Kartika (October 23–November 21).

PADAYĀTRĀ NEWS

Padayātrā India

At the end of November, the Padayātrā was in Dvārakā for the opening of the ISKCON Padayātrā Gate. The gate commemorates the Padayātrā's first encirclement of India, a fourteen-thousand-kilometer walk that began in September 1984 and ended in March 1988.

The Padayātris are now walking through Gujarat on their way to Jaipur, Rajasthan.

Padayātrā Europe

The ox-cart for the Belfast-to-Moscow Padayātrā served as Lord Jagannātha's chariot for the first Paris Rathayātrā in ten years. The European Padayātrā is spending the winter at New Māyāpur, ISKCON's farm in southeastern France. In April, the devotees will head for Italy.

Padayātrā America

In mid-November the Padayātrā devotees drove to central America, to walk through Belize, Guatemala, and El Salvador. They are also seeking permission to hold Padayātrā in Cuba.

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

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Lithuanian Liberation

*While Lithuania moved
along the road to independence,
a few of her countrymen discovered
the path to full freedom.*

by Nartaka Gopāla Devī Dāsī

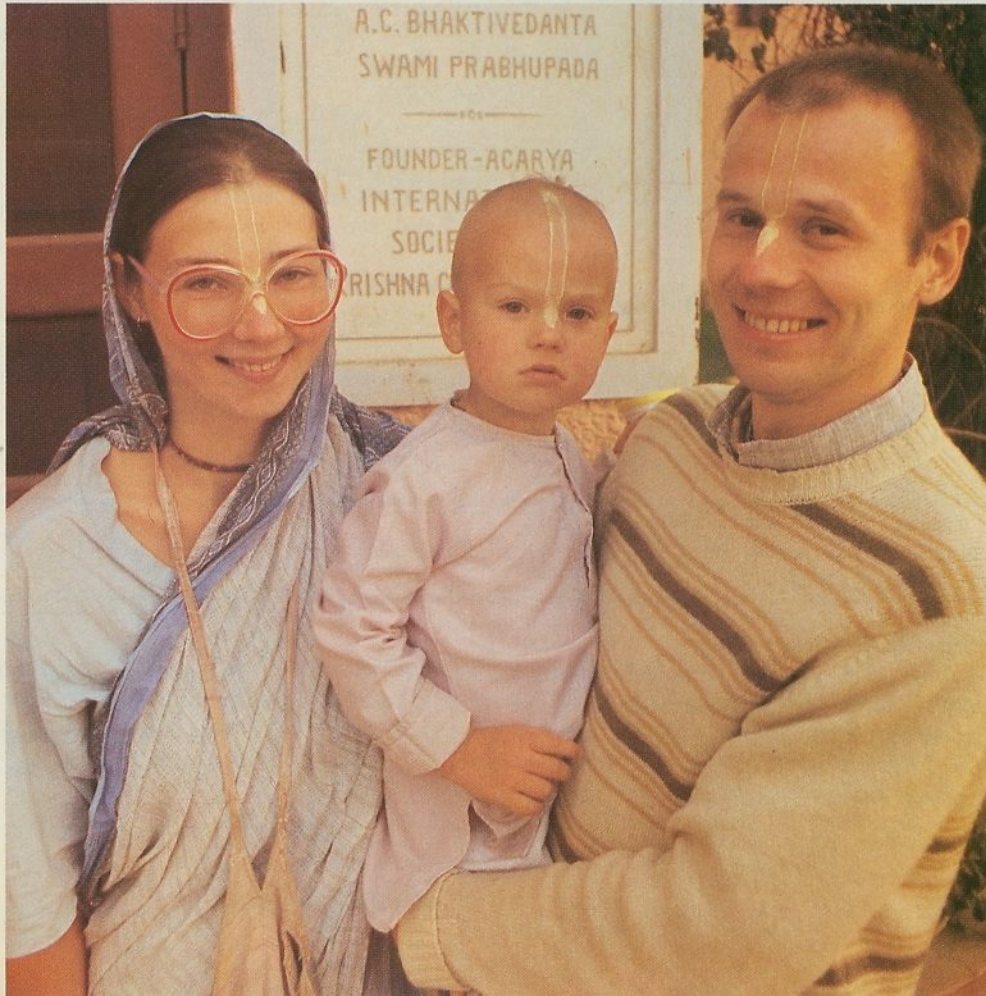
In 1980 Rimas was studying art at the Pedagogical Institute in Lithuania when a fellow student returned from the Olympics in Moscow with some books on Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As Rimas was greatly attracted to Vedic culture, he and several like-minded students decided to live together and practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness. They did many paintings of Kṛṣṇa and gradually turned the house into a temple.

At the time, the KGB had many spies, so they quickly learned of the students' Kṛṣṇa conscious activities. Rimas and his friends were mem-

bers of the Young Communist League, because there was little chance of entering a university without being a member of the League. So when reports of their religious activities spread, they

were called to a meeting and expelled from both the League and the school. The local newspaper called them CIA agents.

Rimas taught his father, Haris, the



*Rati Prādhā
Devī Dāsī
and
Rāma Bhadra
Ācārya Dāsa
with
their son*

Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. Haris was a member of the Communist Party and worked as a chief engineer at the Lithuanian Production Training Center. Haris knew he could benefit spiritually from Kṛṣṇa consciousness, so he began chanting at home and on the job.

One day during a *kīrtana* at Haris's home, the KGB arrived, destroyed his altar, and confiscated his religious paraphernalia. They claimed that the religious rituals he was practicing were harmful to health. At his job the KGB began to harass him by spreading false rumors. Haris tolerated their antics for many months just so more people could hear about Kṛṣṇa. Finally he was expelled from the Communist Party and automatically lost his job. But he was satisfied because everyone in the factory knew something about Kṛṣṇa.

In 1983 Rimas and Haris became initiated members of ISKCON. Rimas received the name Rāma Bhadra Ācārya Dāsa, and Haris became Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi Dāsa.

While working as an artist in a theater, Rāma Bhadra Ācārya met Rita, a student of journalism at the university. He gave her the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* in English. They began to discuss devo-

tional topics in parks or as they walked outside so that their conversations wouldn't be overheard. They didn't dare speak about Kṛṣṇa on the telephone or even out loud in their own rooms.

Rāma Bhadra Ācārya: "The KGB were aware of our every move, whether at school or on the job. They made us feel as if we were on a stage. They knew everything."

Soon Rita's Kṛṣṇa conscious activities were detected, and she was threatened by the KGB. One agent tried to blackmail her: "I know where your father's garden is. Something was stolen near there, and I can prove that you did it—unless you decide to leave the Hare Kṛṣṇas." They also tried to discourage her by saying that a sectarian person cannot become a journalist.

Rita finally left the university of her own accord because she knew that sooner or later she would be expelled. Eventually she married Rāma Bhadra Ācārya and became an initiated devotee, receiving the name Rati Prādhā Devī Dāsī.

* * *

In the spring of 1981 Razita was studying to be a librarian at the uni-

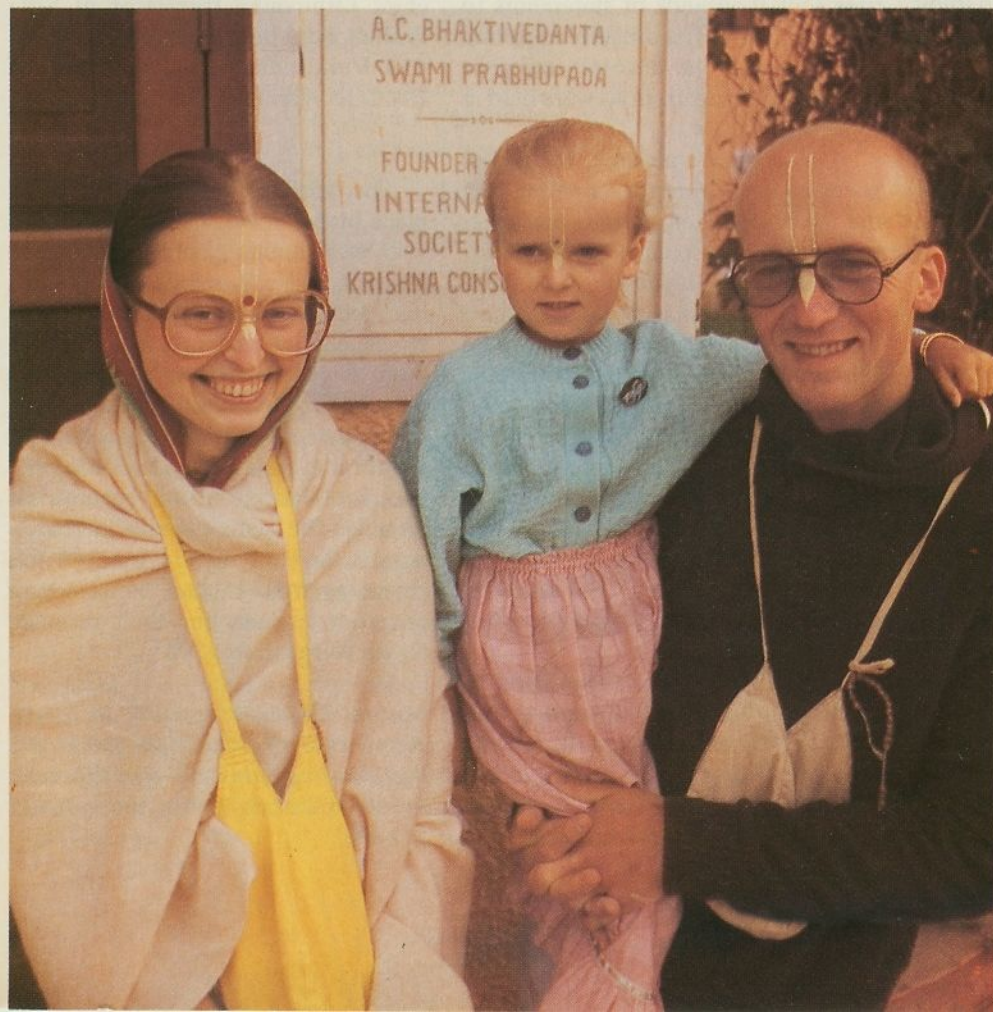
versity in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania. Her boyfriend, Gintaras, studied mechanical engineering. During school vacation they worked in a theater as pantomime actors. Some of their friends were artists interested in Eastern culture and philosophy. They gave Razita and Gintaras some books about Kṛṣṇa. There were no books available in their native tongue, Lithuanian, but someone had typewritten copies of *Perfect Questions, Perfect Answers* and *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, without purports, in Russian. They also read a few small articles from *Back to Godhead*.

As Razita and Gintaras began to appreciate the sublime Vedic philosophy, their friends invited them to the forest for a *kīrtana*. They all knew that they could be persecuted for religious activities, as their communist government's official doctrine was atheism. Nevertheless, thrilled with their new-found experience of chanting, they continued to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa near loud waterfalls so as not to be detected.

The next year Razita and Gintaras helped their friends print a magazine in Russian called Hare Kṛṣṇa. They published it with an old date to make it look as if it had been printed several years earlier. They could then tell the police, "I don't know where this came from. It was already here; I just found it."

One day Razita and Gintaras went to a *kīrtana* at a friend's house. Twenty people had been chanting for one hour when the police came. The police took them to the police station and released them after they'd made

*Rasikānanda
Devī Dāsī
and
Gaṅgāmbupāda Dāsa
with their
daughter, Godāvārī*



***At the first public kīrtana,
hundreds of onlookers watched with approval.
And when the fifteen devotees
were arrested and taken away, the people complained:
“Leave them alone! Let them sing!”***

• • •

appointments to speak with the KGB.

When Razita met the KGB agent, he told her, “We are here to help you. You must think about the future. If you want to stay in the university, you must sign this document denouncing the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.”

Razita refused to do so, even though she felt that her studies might be endangered.

Sometime later an opportunity arose for her to study in Czechoslovakia. She thought it might be a better place to practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness. But the school’s KGB refused her application, saying, “There’s no question of your going to study there. The question is, Will you be allowed to continue to study here? We know you were singing Hare Kṛṣṇa in the street.”

After some time Gintaras married Razita, and they both became initiated members of ISKCON, receiving the names Gaṅgāmbupāda Dāsa and Rasikānanda Devī Dāsi.

* * *

In 1985 the devotees of Lithuania and Latvia came together for a festival on Janmāṣṭamī, the appearance day of Lord Kṛṣṇa. One devotee was the caretaker of a museum construction site at an isolated location. It seemed to be an ideal spot for the festival. More than fifty devotees were cooking preparations to offer Lord Kṛṣṇa. The police arrived and took the devotees’ devotional clothes, *japa* beads, and books. The devotees had posted verses from the scriptures on the walls, and some policemen began to read the verses out loud.

Rasikānanda: “We were listening to verses from the policemen’s mouths, by Kṛṣṇa’s grace. This was our Janmāṣṭamī

celebration.”

Rati Prādhā: “Some situations were horrible, but we were prepared and waiting for them. We were thinking that we simply must persevere until the end and do whatever we can to spread knowledge about Kṛṣṇa.”

Rāma Bhadra Ācārya: “Until 1986 it was an extremely dark and hopeless period in our lives for openly spreading the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. It was a black time; there was no hope, and things seemed to be getting worse.”

It was at this time that a worldwide campaign was begun to “Free the Soviet Hare Kṛṣṇas.” Citizens of many countries sent thousands of statements to high-ranking Soviet officials imploring them to grant the devotees religious freedom. Demonstrations were held in some countries.

Around the same time, the Soviet government began experimenting with the new politics of *glasnost* and *perestroika*, which appeared favorable for those interested in pursuing a religious path. The Lithuanian devotees made a brave and bold decision: they would chant and dance in public, something never before done in Lithuania.

At the first public *kīrtana*, hundreds of onlookers watched with approval. And when the fifteen devotees were arrested and taken away, the people complained: “Leave them alone! Let them sing! We will stay!” For one hour the crowd stayed and discussed what had taken place.

Gradually the situation in Lithuania began to improve. In 1989 the devotees published their first book translated into the Lithuanian language, *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*. Also in that year a historic event took place when the first Rathayātrā in the

Soviet Union was held in Kaunos, Lithuania. Crowds surrounded the chariot with the Deities, and hundreds of people came to take *prasādam*.

Rasikānanda: “Before *glasnost*, devotees couldn’t work, study, or travel. My mother told me she would have me sent to Siberia and my daughter institutionalized. In the last few years we’ve been able to travel abroad. I’m distributing Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books, and intelligent people are listening. Now my mother is favorable.”

Rasikānanda’s husband, Gaṅgāmbupāda, binds the books and distributes them as well.

Rāma Bhadra Ācārya is now the chief Lithuanian translator of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books. His father, Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi, is the president of ISKCON Vilnius.

* * *

The developments that have taken place in the Soviet Union in the past year were unimaginable five or ten years ago. The Republic of Lithuania has declared its independence, and Kṛṣṇa conscious activities are flourishing there as well as in Russia. Devotees are planning many temples and Kṛṣṇa conscious schools and farm communities. Śrīla Prabhupāda went to Russia in 1971, and one Russian youth became his disciple. The seed of Kṛṣṇa consciousness Śrīla Prabhupāda planted has grown to fruition, and thousands of people are awakening their dormant Kṛṣṇa consciousness. ☸

Nartaka Gopāla Devī Dāsi, an American disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda, has been distributing his books since the early seventies. She and her husband now live in India.

DEVAHŪTI REQUESTS A BOON

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

Kardama Muni is about to leave home and dedicate himself to spiritual realization. As Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam continues, Kardama's wife, Devahūti, asks him to give her a son to instruct her in spiritual life.

THIRD CANTO/CHAPTER 23

देवहूतिरुवाच

51 सर्वं तद्भगवान्मह्यमुपोवाह प्रतिश्रुतम् ।
अथापि मे प्रपन्नया अभयं दातुमर्हसि ॥५१॥

*devahūtīr uvāca
sarvaṁ tad bhagavān mahyam
upovāha pratiśrutam
athāpi me prapannāyā
abhayaṁ dātum arhasi*

devahūtīh—Devahūti; uvāca—said; sarvaṁ—all; tat—that; bhagavān—Your Lordship; mahyam—for me; upovāha—has been fulfilled; pratiśrutam—promised; atha api—yet; me—unto me; prapannāyai—unto one who has surrendered; abhayam—fearlessness; dātum—to give; arhasi—you deserve.



Devahūti asks Kardama Muni to ensure that she will receive instruction after he has left home.

Sri Devahūti said: My lord, you have fulfilled all the promises you gave me, yet because I am your surrendered soul, you should give me fearlessness too.

PURPORT: Devahūti requested her husband to grant her something without fear. As a wife, she was a fully surrendered soul to her husband, and it is the responsibility of the husband to give his wife fearlessness. How one awards fearlessness to his subordinate is mentioned in the Fifth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. One who cannot get free from the clutches of death is dependent, and he should not become a spiritual master, nor a husband, nor a kinsman, nor a father, nor a mother, etc. It is the duty of the superior to give fearlessness to the subordinate. To take charge of someone, therefore, either as father, mother, spiritual master, relative, or husband, one must accept the responsibility to give his ward freedom from the fearful situation of material existence. Material existence is always fearful and full of anxiety. Devahūti is saying, “You have given me all sorts of material comforts by your yogic power, and since you are now prepared to go away, you must give me your last award so that I may get free from this material, conditional life.”

52 ब्रह्मन्दुहितृभिस्तुभ्यं विमृग्याः पतयः समाः ।

कश्चित्स्यानमे विशोकाय त्वयि प्रव्रजिते वनम् ॥५२॥

*brahman duhitṛbhis tubhyam
vimṛgyāḥ patayaḥ samāḥ
kaścit syān me viśokāya
tvayi pravrajite vanam*

brahman—my dear *brāhmaṇa*; *duhitṛbhiḥ*—by the daughters themselves; *tubhyam*—for you; *vimṛgyāḥ*—to be found out; *patayaḥ*—husbands; *samāḥ*—suitable; *kaścit*—someone; *syāt*—there should be; *me*—my; *viśokāya*—for solace; *tvayi*—when you; *pravrajite*—departed; *vanam*—to the forest.

My dear brāhmaṇa, as far as your daughters are concerned, they will find their own suitable husbands and go away to their respective homes. But who will give me solace after your departure as a sannyaṣī?

PURPORT: It is said that the father himself becomes the son in another form. The father and son are therefore considered to be nondifferent. A widow who has her son is actually not a widow, because she has the representative of her husband. Similarly, Devahūti is indirectly asking Kardama Muni to leave a representative so that in his absence she might be relieved of her anxieties by a suitable son. A householder is not expected to remain at home for all his days. After getting his sons and daughters married, a householder can retire from household life, leaving his wife in the charge of the grown-up sons. That is the social convention of the Vedic system. Devahūti is indirectly asking that in his absence from home there be at least one male child to give her relief from her anxieties. This relief means spiritual instruction. Relief does not

mean material comforts. Material comforts will end with the end of the body, but spiritual instruction will not end; it will go on with the spirit soul. Instruction in spiritual advancement is necessary, but without having a worthy son, how could Devahūti advance in spiritual knowledge? It is the duty of the husband to liquidate his debt to his wife. The wife gives her sincere service to the husband, and he becomes indebted to her because one cannot accept service from his subordinate without giving him something in exchange. The spiritual master cannot accept service from a disciple without awarding him spiritual instruction. That is the reciprocation of love and duty. Thus Devahūti reminds her husband, Kardama Muni, that she has rendered him faithful service. Even considering the situation on the basis of liquidating his debt toward his wife, he must give a male child before he leaves. Indirectly, Devahūti requests her husband to remain at home a few days more, or at least until a male child is born.

53 एतावतालं कालेन व्यतिक्रान्तेन मे प्रभो ।

इन्द्रियार्थप्रसङ्गेन परित्यक्तपरात्मनः ॥५३॥

*etāvatālaṁ kālena
vyatikrāntena me prabho
indriyārtha-prasaṅgena
parityakta-parātmanah*

etāvatā—so much; *alam*—for nothing; *kālena*—time; *vyatikrāntena*—passed by; *me*—my; *prabho*—O my lord; *indriya-artha*—sense gratification; *prasaṅgena*—in the matter of indulging; *parityakta*—disregarding; *para-ātmanah*—knowledge of the Supreme Lord.

Until now we have simply wasted so much of our time in sense gratification, neglecting to cultivate knowledge of the Supreme Lord.

PURPORT: Human life is not meant to be wasted, like that of the animals, in sense gratificatory activities. Animals always engage in sense gratification—eating, sleeping, fearing, and mating—but that is not the engagement of the human being, although, because of the material body, there is need of sense gratification according to a regulative principle. So, in effect, Devahūti said to her husband: “So far we have these daughters, and we have enjoyed material life in the aerial mansion, traveling all over the universe. These boons have come by your grace, but they have all been for sense gratification. Now there must be something for my spiritual advancement.”

54 इन्द्रियार्थेषु सज्जन्त्या प्रसङ्गस्त्वयि मे कृतः ।

अजानन्त्या परं भावं तथाप्यस्त्वभयाय मे ॥५४॥

*indriyārtheṣu sajjantyā
prasaṅgas tvayi me kṛtaḥ
ajānantyā paraṁ bhāvaṁ
tathāpy astv abhayāya me*

indriya-arthēṣu—to sense gratification; *sajjantiyā*—being attached; *prasaṅgaḥ*—affinity; *tvayi*—for you; *me*—by me; *kṛtaḥ*—was done; *ajānantiyā*—not knowing; *param bhāvam*—your transcendent situation; *tathā api*—nonetheless; *astu*—let it be; *abhayāya*—for fearlessness; *me*—my.

Not knowing your transcendental situation, I have loved you while remaining attached to the objects of the senses. Nonetheless, let the affinity I have developed for you rid me of all fear.

PURPORT: Devahūti is lamenting her position. As a woman, she had to love someone. Somehow or other, she came to love Kardama Muni, but without knowing of his spiritual advancement. Kardama Muni could understand Devahūti's heart; generally all women desire material enjoyment. They are called less intelligent because they are mostly prone to material enjoyment. Devahūti laments because her husband had given her the best kind of material enjoyment, but she did not know that he was so advanced in spiritual realization. Her plea was that even though she did not know the glories of her great husband, because she had taken shelter of him she must be delivered from material entanglement. Association with a great personality is most important. In *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* Lord Caitanya says that *sādhu-saṅga*, the association of a great saintly person, is very important, because even if one is not advanced in knowledge, simply by association with a great saintly person one can immediately make considerable advancement in spiritual life. As a woman, as an ordinary wife, Devahūti became attached to Kardama Muni in order to satisfy her sense enjoyment and other material necessities, but actually she associated with a great personality. Now she understood this, and she wanted to utilize the advantage of the association of her great husband.

**55 सङ्गो यः संसृतेर्हेतुरसत्सु विहितोऽधिया ।
स एव साधुषु कृतो निःसङ्गत्वाय कल्पते ॥५५॥**

*saṅgo yaḥ saṁsṛteḥ hetur
asatsu vihito 'dhiyā
sa eva sādhuṣu kṛto
niḥsaṅgatvāya kalpate*

saṅgaḥ—association; *yaḥ*—which; *saṁsṛteḥ*—of the cycle of birth and death; *hetuḥ*—the cause; *asatsu*—with those engaged in sense gratification; *vihitaḥ*—done; *adhiyā*—through ignorance; *saḥ*—the same thing; *eva*—certainly; *sādhuṣu*—with saintly persons; *kṛtaḥ*—performed; *niḥsaṅgatvāya*—to liberation; *kalpate*—leads.

Association for sense gratification is certainly the path of bondage. But the same type of association, performed with a saintly person, leads to the path of liberation, even if performed without knowledge.

PURPORT: The association of a saintly person in any way bears the same result. For example, Lord Kṛṣṇa met many

kinds of living entities, and some treated Him as an enemy, and some treated Him as an agent for sense gratification. It is generally said that the *gopīs* were attached to Kṛṣṇa for sense attractions, and yet they became first-class devotees of the Lord. Kama, Siṣupāla, Dantavakra, and other demons, however, were related to Kṛṣṇa as enemies. But whether they associated with Kṛṣṇa as enemies or for sense gratification, out of fear or as pure devotees, they all got liberation. That is the result of association with the Lord. Even if one does not understand who He is, the results have the same efficacy. Association with a great saintly person also results in liberation, just as whether one goes toward fire knowingly or unknowingly, the fire will make one warm. Devahūti expressed her gratefulness, for although she wanted to associate with Kardama Muni only for sense gratification, because he was spiritually great she was sure to be liberated by his benediction.

**56 नेह यत्कर्म धर्माय न विरागाय कल्पते ।
न तीर्थपदसेवायै जीवन्नपि मृतो हि सः ॥५६॥**

*neha yat karma dharmāya
a virāgāya kalpate
na tīrtha-pada-sevāyai
jīvaṇn api mṛto hi saḥ*

na—not; *iha*—here; *yat*—which; *karma*—work; *dharmāya*—for perfection of religious life; *na*—not; *virāgāya*—for detachment; *kalpate*—leads; *na*—not; *tīrtha-pada*—of the Lord's lotus feet; *sevāyai*—to devotional service; *jīvaṇn*—living; *api*—although; *mṛtaḥ*—dead; *hi*—indeed; *saḥ*—he.

Anyone whose work is not meant to elevate him to religious life, anyone whose religious ritualistic performances do not raise him to renunciation, and anyone situated in renunciation that does not lead him to devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, must be considered dead, although he is breathing.

PURPORT: Devahūti's statement is that since she was attached to living with her husband for sense gratification, which does not lead to liberation from material entanglement, her life was simply a waste of time. Any work one performs that does not lead to the state of religious life is useless activity. Everyone is by nature inclined to some sort of work, and when that work leads one to religious life and religious life leads one to renunciation and renunciation leads one to devotional service, one attains the perfection of work. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*, any work that does not lead ultimately to the standard of devotional service is a cause of bondage in the material world. *Yajñārthāt karmaṇo 'nyatra loko 'yaṁ karma-bandhanaḥ*. Unless one is gradually elevated to the position of devotional service, beginning from his natural activity, he is to be considered a dead body. Work which does not lead one to the understanding of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is considered useless.

sāhaṁ bhagavato nūnaṁ
vañcitā māyayā dṛdham
yat tvāṁ vimuktidaṁ prāpya
na mumukṣeya bandhanāt

sā—that very person; aham—I am; bhagavataḥ—of the Lord; nūnam—surely; vañcitā—cheated; māyayā—by the illusory energy; dṛdham—solidly; yat—because; tvām—you; vimukti-dam—who give liberation; prāpya—having attained; na mumukṣeya—I have not sought liberation; bandhanāt—from material bondage.

My lord, surely I have been solidly cheated by the insurmountable illusory energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for in spite of having obtained your association, which gives liberation from material bondage, I did not seek such liberation.

PURPORT: An intelligent man should utilize good opportunities. The first opportunity is the human form of life, and the second opportunity is to take birth in a suitable family where there is cultivation of spiritual knowledge; this is rarely obtained. The greatest opportunity is to have the association of a saintly person. Devahūti was conscious that she was born as the daughter of an emperor. She was sufficiently educated and cultured, and at last she got Kardama Muni, a saintly person and a great yogī, as her husband. Still, if she did not get liberation from the entanglement of material energy, then certainly she would be cheated by the insurmountable illusory energy. Actually, the illusory, material energy is cheating everyone. People do not know what they are doing when they worship the material energy in the form of goddess Kālī or Durgā for material boons. They ask, “Mother, give me great riches, give me a good wife, give me fame, give me victory.” But such devotees of the goddess Māyā, or Durgā, do not know that they are being cheated by that goddess. Material achievement is actually no achievement because as soon as one is illusioned by the material gifts, he becomes more and more entangled, and there is no question of liberation. One should be intelligent enough to know how to utilize material assets for the purpose of spiritual realization. That is called *karma-yoga* or *jñāna-yoga*. Whatever we have we should use in service to the Supreme Person. It is advised in *Bhagavad-gītā*, *sva-karmaṇā tam abhyarcya*: one should try to worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead by one’s assets. There are many forms of service to the Supreme Lord, and anyone can render service unto Him according to the best of his ability.

Thus end the Bhaktivedanta purports of the Third Canto, Twenty-third Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “Devahūti’s Lamentation.”

मैत्रेय उवाच

1 निर्वेदवादिनीमेवं मनोर्दुहितरं मुनिः ।
दयालुः शालिनीमाह शुक्लाभिव्याहृतं स्मरन् ॥ १ ॥

maitreya uvāca
nirveda-vādinim evaṁ
manor duhitaram muniḥ
dayāluḥ śālinim āha
śuklābhivyāhṛtaṁ smaran

maitreyaḥ—the great sage Maitreya; uvāca—said; nirveda-vādinim—who was speaking words full of renunciation; evam—thus; manor—of Svāyambhuva Manu; duhitaram—to the daughter; muniḥ—the sage Kardama; dayāluḥ—merciful; śālinim—who was worthy of praise; āha—replied; śukla—by Lord Viṣṇu; abhivyāhṛtam—what was said; smaran—recalling.

Recalling the words of Lord Viṣṇu, the merciful sage Kardama replied as follows to Svāyambhuva Manu’s praiseworthy daughter, Devahūti, who was speaking words full of renunciation.

ऋषिरुवाच

2 मा खिदो राजपुत्रीत्थमात्मानं प्रत्यनिन्दिते ।
भगवांस्तेऽक्षरो गर्भमदूरात्सम्प्रपत्स्यते ॥ २ ॥

ṛṣir uvāca
mā khido rāja-putrītham
ātmānaṁ praty anindite
bhagavāms te 'kṣaro garbham
adūrāt samprapatsyate

ṛṣiḥ uvāca—the sage said; mā khidaḥ—do not be disappointed; rāja-putri—O princess; itham—in this way; ātmānam—yourself; prati—toward; anindite—O praiseworthy Devahūti; bhagavān—the Supreme Personality of Godhead; te—your; akṣaraḥ—infallible; garbham—womb; adūrāt—without delay; samprapatsyate—will enter.

The sage said: Do not be disappointed with yourself, O princess. You are actually praiseworthy. The infallible Supreme Personality of Godhead will shortly enter your womb as your son.

PURPORT: Kardama Muni encouraged his wife not to be sorry, thinking herself unfortunate, because the Supreme Personality of Godhead, by His incarnation, was going to come from her body.

(continued in next issue)

Śrīla Prabhupāda Speaks Out

MISMANAGEMENT BY RASCALS

This exchange between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and some of his disciples took place in Geneva, Switzerland, on June 2, 1974.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: People are not bad. I have seen. They are very nice. The government—the rascals. A few men who are controlling the government—they are all rogues and thieves. Everywhere the masses are innocent. These rascals have misled them. In India, in Russia, I have seen. The mass of people—they are very nice.

Andhā yathāndhair upanīyamānaḥ: blind leaders, leading the blind populace into the ditch. The ordinary people are innocent. For instance, the India-Pakistan war happened due to these politicians. The Hindus, the Muslims—they are innocent. They don't fight. These politicians engage them to fight artificially for their political ambition. The wars declared nowadays are on account of these rascal politicians. The people do not want it.

Disciple: Śrīla Prabhupāda, it seems the politicians want to create scarcity artificially in some areas. But isn't it true that crops can be grown anywhere in the world?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. If crops did not grow anywhere in the world, then what would be the value of nature's arrangement?

Disciple: Well, for example, there are some parts of India that are too dry to cultivate the ground.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: "Dry" means there is no rain. If nature likes, there can be profuse rain. That is nature's arrangement. That is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. *Parjanyaād anna-sambhavaḥ. Parjanyaāt:* you must have sufficient rain.

And for having sufficient rain, you must execute *yajña*, or sacrifice. *Yajñād bhavati parjanyaḥ*. So these leaders are now becoming rascals. They are not performing *yajñas*. They are opening slaughterhouses. How will there be rain? Instead of performing *yajñas*, they are opening big, big slaughterhouses.

Disciple: Śrīla Prabhupāda, now in many

parts of the world, the desert area is increasing.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, the desert area will increase.

Disciple: So then, isn't it true that under present conditions, crops may not grow in every part of the world—and that it's necessary to transport food? At least for the time being, we don't have the possibility of growing food anywhere and everywhere. So some transportation of food is required.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: What will be the use of transportation as the production of food decreases? If there is decreasing hope of producing food grains, then what will be the use of transportation?

Disciple: Well, in some areas there still is hope of producing.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: If somewhere crops are produced, then in another place they can also be produced. You must perform *yajña—saṅkīrtana-yajña*, the chanting of the Lord's holy names. Then you will get enough food. *Yajñād bhavati parjanyaḥ, parjanyaād anna-sambhavaḥ, annād bhavanti bhūtāni*.

So in Switzerland are there many slaughterhouses?

Disciple: Some time ago, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I read in the newspaper that they had so much milk and so much butter that the government proposal was to kill the cows.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: "Kill the animals." Oh, just see. They will not give the milk and butter to others.

Disciple: The farmers were complaining that their prices weren't high enough, because there was so much milk.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Their criterion is price—not that the goods are required. They want money for purchasing wine. This is the difficulty. They are not satisfied simply by eating sufficiently. They want money for women and wine. This is their philosophy.

Disciple: In the United States, Śrīla Prabhupāda, they had that same problem. The farmers

felt they were not getting a big enough price.

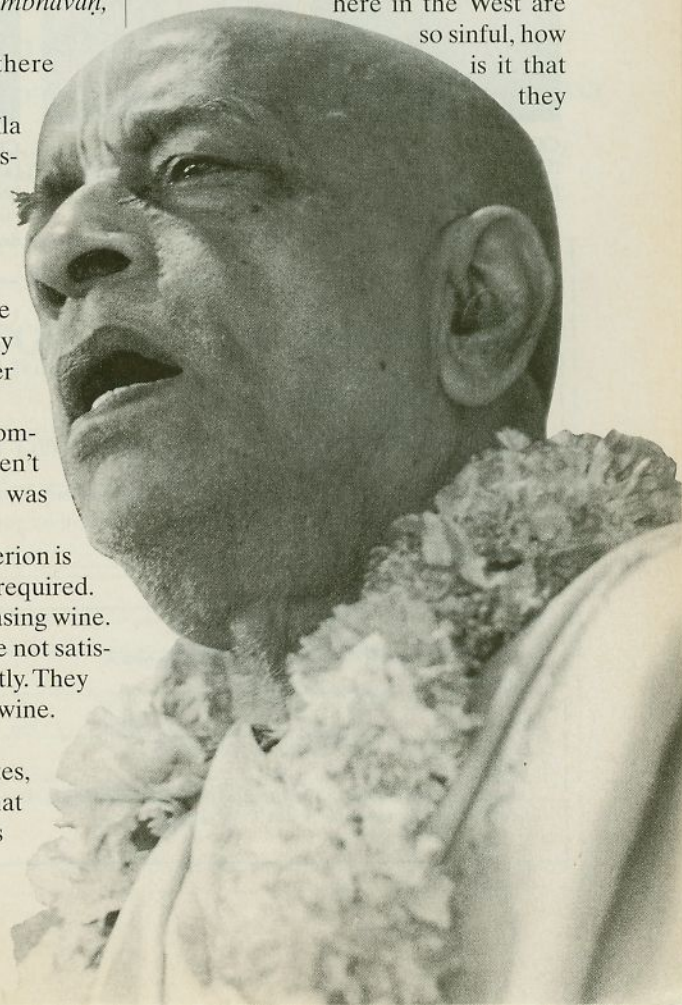
Śrīla Prabhupāda: So if they had sense, they would export to where there is necessity of this milk, butter, grain. Then the world would be happy.

Disciple: That was my question. If there is necessity for exporting, then is there necessity for maintaining ships and planes and trains and electrical dynamos and so forth?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No. The point is that if in one place you can produce food grains, butter, and milk, then why can you not produce these things in another place? That is my point. The land is everywhere the same.

Now, here in Europe and America, there is enough production because the population is less. America is larger than India and has much less population. Therefore you find excess. You see? Also, India is not fully producing, not utilizing all the land.

Disciple: Śrīla Prabhupāda, if the people here in the West are so sinful, how is it that they



have so much facility and comfort? Apparently, all of that will go away soon. Very soon.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Yes. As the people increase their sinful activities, this facility and comfort will be taken away.

Therefore we propose that “Everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa, and we are all sons of Kṛṣṇa. Just cooperate in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Then the whole world

will be happy.”

This is our proposal. “Why do you think, ‘It is American,’ ‘It is Swiss,’ ‘It is Indian’? Everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa. Let us become obedient to Kṛṣṇa, and because we are sons of Kṛṣṇa, let us enjoy the property of Kṛṣṇa. Immediately there will be happiness.”

I have several times said that all over the world, people can produce so much foodstuff that ten times the

present population can be fed. Ten times. In Africa, in Australia, and even in America, there is so much prospect of producing additional food.

But they will not cooperate. They will go on killing the animals. They will throw the grain into the sea and claim, “It is our land—so this grain is our property to dispose of as we like.” Rascal civilization. ☸

(continued in the next issue)

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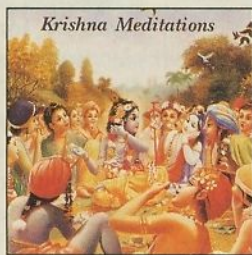
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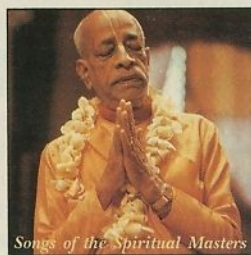
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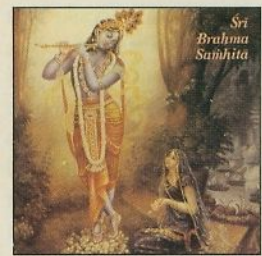
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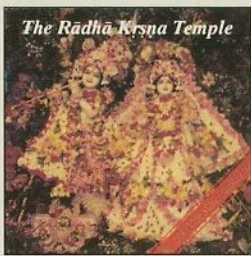
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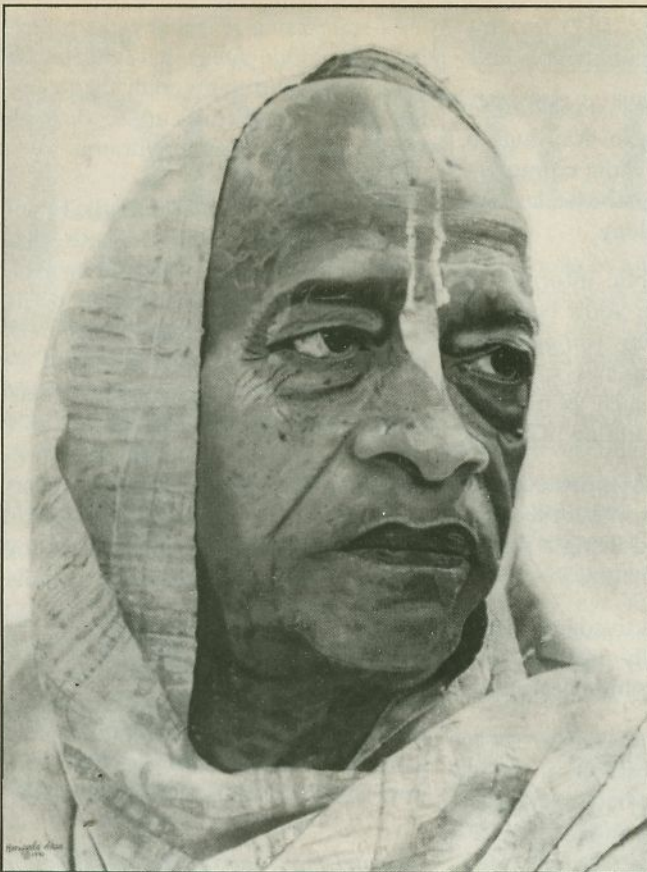
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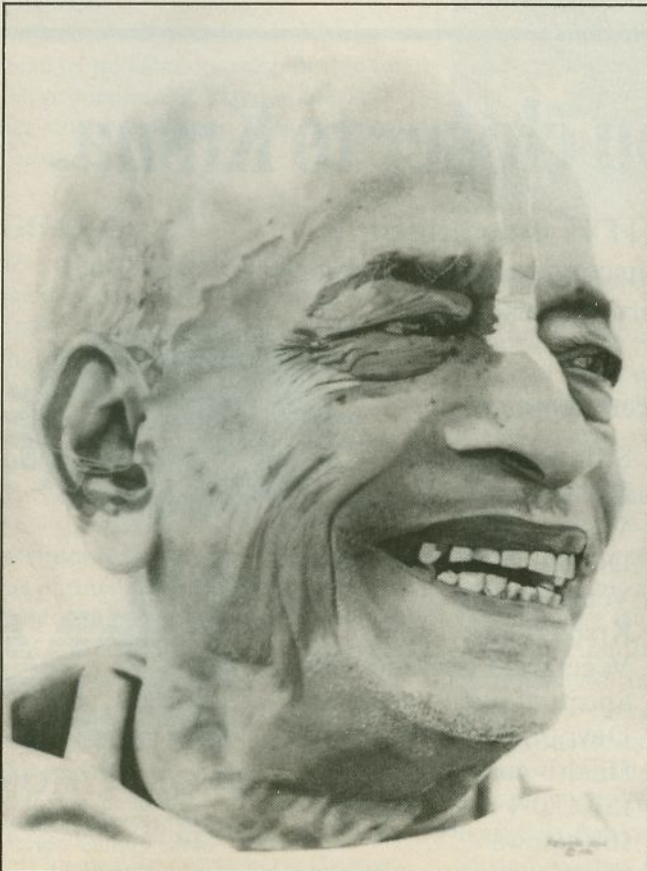
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IDEA (continued from page 30)
Foundation will act to insure that ISKCON's resources for legal defense remain at a high level of readiness and effectiveness.

Phase 2

Building on the accomplishments of Phase I, the Foundation will embark on a Śrīla Prabhupāda Centennial Campaign in 1992. The five-year campaign, which culminates in 1996 with the 100th anniversary of Śrīla Prabhupāda's birth, will incorporate local, North American, and international objectives.

Local campaigns will be conducted to better meet the needs of ISKCON congregations, including improving existing temples and developing more facilities and programs.

For North America as a whole, goals of the Śrīla Prabhupāda Centennial Campaign include:

—developing the National Vedic College, which will provide a base for research and publishing, as well as education and training for future generations.

—establishing an endowment for primary and secondary Vedic educa-

tion programs (grades 1-12) for children of ISKCON members and others.

—building the Vedic Planetarium and Science Museum in Washington, D.C., for presenting Vedic cosmology and astronomy through the latest video and computer technology.

—launching a public information campaign to publicize Vedic books of knowledge such as *Bhagavad-gītā*, thus creating increased awareness of fundamental Vedic truths such as transmigration of the soul and the law of *karma*.

—increasing facilities to protect cows and educate the public about the value of cow protection and living a simple life in harmony with nature.

—funding the Bhaktivedanta Archives' efforts to digitally preserve Sanskrit texts and ISKCON historical materials on CD-ROM.

—assisting the Festival of India, which stages yearly Rathayātrā parades in major cities, along with festivals promoting Vedic culture through food, music, dance, philosophy, and displays of paintings and photos.

—supporting KrishnaFest, a traveling group of devotees that reaches out to teenagers and young adults, acquainting them with Vedic culture through contemporary music and drama.

On the international level, the Foundation expects that with adequate organization and funding, ISKCON will be able to speed up construction of its model Vedic city in Mayāpur, West Bengal, the appearance place of Lord Caitanya. ISKCON will also be able to continue restoring and renovating holy places in and around Vṛndāvana, U. P., the site of Lord Kṛṣṇa's earthly appearance some five thousand years ago. Projects for building and renovating temples at holy places elsewhere in India will also benefit.

In an appeal to ISKCON friends and supporters, Foundation chairman Ambarīṣa Dāsa recently said, "Please join us in assisting Śrīla Prabhupāda and Lord Kṛṣṇa to make this a better world, now and for coming generations." ❁

Drutakarmā Dāsa is an Associate Editor of Back to Godhead. He and his wife live in San Diego.

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PROJECT

Bala Books.

HEADQUARTERS

New York and San Diego.

PROJECT LEADERS

Bala Books is led by devotees of Kṛṣṇa with backgrounds in publishing, filmmaking, and children's literature.

Publisher: Yogeśvara Dāsa, award-winning producer of animated children's films for PBS and The Disney Channel.

Director: Prahāda-priyā Dāsa, head of publications, responsible for the production of Yamuna Devi's acclaimed cookbook, *Lord Krishna's Cuisine*.

GOALS

To expand the library of Kṛṣṇa conscious stories through illustrated books, audio recordings, and films that will reach out to people both inside and outside ISKCON.

DETAILS

Encouraged by Śrīla Prabhupāda to publish children's books and other devotional literature, Yogeśvara and his partner Prahāda-priyā Dāsa have produced a dozen illustrated works and as many adult-level publications since Bala's inception in 1977.

"We were fortunate to have had Śrīla Prabhupāda's personal guidance for our service," Yogeśvara recalls. "He was clear that we should publish not just for our own congregations but for people everywhere. He saw

Bala Books as a vehicle for popularizing Kṛṣṇa consciousness on a mass scale. We didn't quite know how or why Kṛṣṇa conscious publications and programs would sell commercially, but as always, Prabhupāda knew what he was talking about. We've been astounded by the results."

In 1987, Bala Books published *Lord Krishna's Cuisine: The Art of Indian Vegetarian Cooking*, by Yamuna Devi. The 824-page encyclopedia of devotional cooking went on to receive the "Best Cookbook of the Year" award from The Interna-



Prahāda-priyā Dāsa edits photos for an upcoming book.

tional Association of Cooking Professionals. It is in its sixth American printing and its second British edition, and two foreign editions are scheduled for release next fall. Bala Books recently released an abridged paperback.

Bala Books has published and distributed more than 300,000 devotional books in the past 14 years. Bala titles have appeared in six languages, and a Russian language series is in translation. In 1984, the government of India selected Bala Books to produce two days of storytelling, dance, music, and puppetry at Lincoln Center in New York City as part of The Festival of India. Last year, Bala Books helped buy 26 Second Avenue, Śrīla Prabhupāda's

first temple in the West, and donated five thousand copies of the illustrated Prabhupāda biography to temples in Africa.

OBSTACLES

A small staff limits the company's ability to open new markets and begin new sales efforts.

PLANS

The company has embarked on several devotional projects, including an illustrated *Rāmāyaṇa* series and a feature film. A dozen illustrated children's

books are in development, and the company has outlined a children's book-with-audiocassette series of tales from India.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Submit the names of bookstores, gourmet shops, vegetarian restaurants, health-food stores, and other outlets that might be interested in carrying

the Bala Books cookbooks or children's publications.

For further information, please contact:

Prahāda-priyā Dāsa
Bala Books, Suite 7
12520 Kirkham Court
Poway, CA 92064
Phone: (619) 679-9080
Fax: (619) 679-6908

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For orders, please contact Kalki Dāsa at the Poway address.

STRENGTH

(continued from page 8)

eating. We are not dry philosophers. All over the world we are eating Kṛṣṇa *prasādam*. At least ten thousand men and women are taking Kṛṣṇa *prasādam*, but we have no anxiety. We have no anxiety. A family consists of a few members. They are full of anxiety about how to maintain the family. We are maintaining a family of ten thousand, and we have no anxiety. Just see practically. We have no anxiety. We require thousands and thousands of rupees for maintaining in Europe, America—a costly affair. But because we are under the shelter of Nityānanda Prabhu, Balarāma, we have no anxiety.

Material life means anxiety. You cannot avoid anxiety if you lead a material life. That is Prahlāda Mahārāja's instruction. He was asked by his father, "My dear son, what is the best thing you have learned from your teachers?"

He replied, "My dear best of the *asuras*, the whole human society is suffering, at least suffering from one disease—*anxiety*."

Ask anybody. Take a small ant and

take a big elephant. Take the President of the United States or take a street beggar. Ask them, "Are you free from anxiety?" Nobody will say, "Yes." They will say, "I am full of anxiety." That's a fact. Why are they full of anxiety? Prahlāda Mahārāja has replied, *sadā samudvigna-dhiyāmasad-grahāt*: "They are unhappy because they have accepted *asad-vastu*—that which will not exist."

Everything—whatever we have—will not exist. Our body will not exist. And this is the main platform of our present existence. In the material world, you exist only as long as the body is there. So Prahlāda Mahārāja said, "The real solution to the problems of life is to get out of this material condition. That is the best thing, in my opinion."

A Vedic injunction says, *asato mā sad gamaḥ*: "Don't live in this *asat*, this material condition." *Sad gamaḥ*: "Go to real existence." Real existence means spiritual life. If we actually want life, blissful life, we must get out of material existence. That is Prahlāda Mahārāja's instruction.

Samudvigna-dhiyām. And if you remain in material existence, you must suffer some anxiety. You will not be

exempt. So Prahlāda Mahārāja advises, *hitvātma-pātaṁ gṛham andha-kūpaṁ vanarṇi gato yad dharim āśrayeta*. The real problem is anxiety. And anxiety will continue as long as you are in material existence. Therefore, real life is to get out of material existence.

Ātma-pātam means "killing the soul." Material civilization is killing the soul. People have no information of the soul. They do not know how to become peaceful, how to become blissful. They are trying to be peaceful through the external material energy. They are thinking that by constructing big, big buildings they will be peaceful.

Here in Bhubaneswar they are doing this. They are building big roads and traveling with motor cars. And they are thinking that this is advancement of civilization. No. It is not advancement of civilization. It is increasing their anxiety. There is no solution to the anxiety.

Formerly there was no university. The university was in the cottage. Vyāsadeva was writing the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and all the *Purāṇas* in a cottage. That was the university. Who can produce such literature as that which Vyāsadeva has given? From any angle

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of vision—from the literary point of view, from the philosophical point of view—everything that he has written is perfect: the *Mahābhārata*, the *Purāṇas*, the *Vedānta-sūtra* . . .

There was no need of universities. His writing required a clear brain, and that was achieved through brahminical qualities: peacefulness, self-control, austerity, purity, tolerance, honesty, knowledge, wisdom, and religiousness. Where is the education today to teach these qualities? Technical education—how you can very nicely hammer—will not solve the problems of life.

If we want the real solution to the problems of life, our first duty is to take the shelter of Lord Nityānanda's lotus feet. Then we'll be happy. We'll be soothed by the moon rays emanating from His lotus feet, and all our fatigue will subside.

Sei sambandha nāhi jā'r, bṛthā janma gelo tā'r. If you have no connection with Nityānanda Prabhu, you're simply wasting time.

Se paśu boro dur-ācār. Here Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura has used a very strong word. "Anyone who has no connection with Nityānanda Prabhu is a *paśu*." *Paśu* means animal. How can an animal get happiness? That is not possible. From childhood the dog searches after food. The street dog cannot get food. Unless a dog has a master, he's always unhappy.

So it is better to become a dog of Nityānanda Prabhu instead of becoming a dog of so many other people. Then we shall be happy. Everyone is a dog. Everyone is searching after a master to serve. But no one is satisfied because such a master is a false master. When you take the real master, Nityānanda Prabhu, you'll be happy.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has sung, *vaiṣṇava ṭhākura, tomāra kukkura, boliyā jānaha more*: "My dear Vaiṣṇava Ṭhākura, kindly accept me as your dog. I am a dog already, but I am *māyā's* dog. I'm not a Vaiṣṇava's dog. So kindly accept me." If we do not become a dog of Nityānanda Prabhu, a Vaiṣṇava, or a *guru*, there is no question of happiness. *Nitāi nā bolilo mukhe, majila saṁsāra-sukhe.* One who has no connection with Nityānanda Prabhu and who does not say, "*Jaya Nitāi! Jaya Gaura!*" becomes absorbed in material enjoyment. *Majilo saṁsāra-sukhe*

means to think, "Society, friendship, and love, divinely bestowed upon man." Materialist persons say like that. In *saiṁsāra*, material existence of repeated birth and death, there cannot be *sukha*, happiness. But the materialist is attracted by material existence.

Vidyā kule ki koribe tār. What help will a university education or birth in a big family be? These will not help. Why are we accepting these false solutions?

Ahaṁkāre matta hoiyā, nitāi-pada pās-ariyā, asatyere satya kori māni.

Misled by false prestige and false ego, we are accepting the body, which will not exist. We have taken the body as reality. But if we take shelter of Nityānanda Prabhu, we'll get enlightenment.

Nitāiyer koruṇā habe, braje rādhā-kṛṣṇa pābe, dharo nitāi-caraṇa du'khāni. Therefore Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura advises that if you want the association of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, you must first achieve the mercy of Lord Nityānanda. Today is Nityānanda Prabhu's appearance day. Let us at least remember today the lotus feet of Nityānanda Prabhu. That is wanted.

Nitāiyer caraṇa satya, tāhāra sevaka nitya. The reality is *nitāi caraṇa*, the lotus feet of Nityānanda Prabhu. And anyone who is a servant of Nityānanda Prabhu is transcendental. One who becomes the dog of Nityānanda Prabhu gets eternal life. We are eternal, but under the misconception of material identification we are under the subjugation of *māyā*. It is very much a botheration, but people do not know this. We are going from one body to another, transmigrating. And there is no guarantee what our next body will be. But people have no science, no knowledge about this, the very first instruction of *Bhagavad-gītā*. They are

Chanting the Holy Names

by Rebecca Hickox

Every day I chant Your holy names,
And beg You to forgive my great offense,
For though I chant, my heart remains the same,
Engaged in its material pretense.

I daily seek the key to Your domain,
As I dance upon the temple floor,
And in the shelter of Your holy name,
Long to erase the life I led before.

It is not by my effort I am here,
But by Your mercy I aspire to climb.
I pray that You allow me to come near,
And in Your service I engage my mind.

Upon my tongue, my Lord, I beg You, dance.
Please give this fallen soul another chance.

rascals, and they are proud of their education, their universities. This is going on.

Nitāi-pada sadā koro āśa. Therefore we should always desire to be under the shelter of Nityānanda's lotus feet.

Narottama boro duḥkhī. Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura is an *ācārya*, a great spiritual master. But he is presenting himself as a common man. He is not *duḥkhī*, unhappy, but he's presenting himself as *duḥkhī*. *Ācāryas* are never *duḥkhī*. But taking the common man's position, he says, "Narottama is very unhappy." *Narottama* means "the best of the human beings." Here in the material world one may be the best of the human beings—in a very exalted position—but everyone is *duḥkhī*, unhappy.

Nitāi more koro sukhi: "Only Nityānanda can make me happy. Otherwise, it is not possible to be happy."

Rākho rāṅgā-caraṇera pāśa. So we should always pray to Nityānanda Prabhu, "Kindly keep me under Your shelter. I am very unhappy. Under the shelter of Your lotus feet I shall be happy." That is real happiness. Thank you very much. ❁

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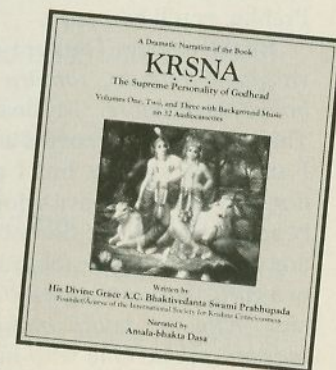
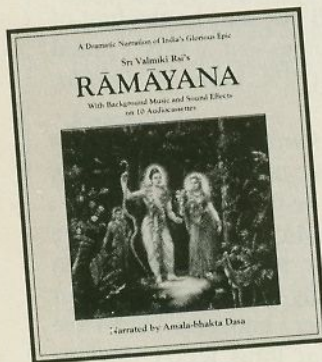
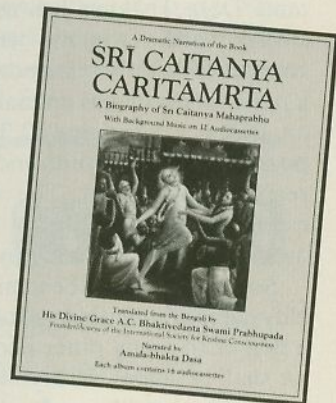
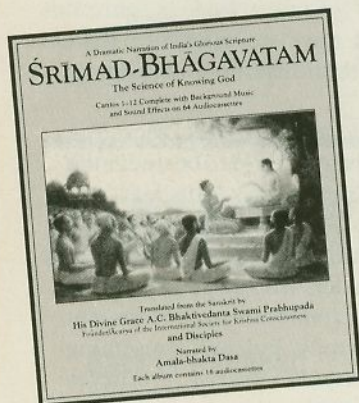
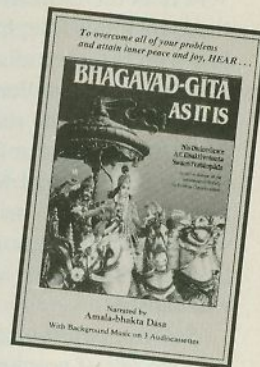
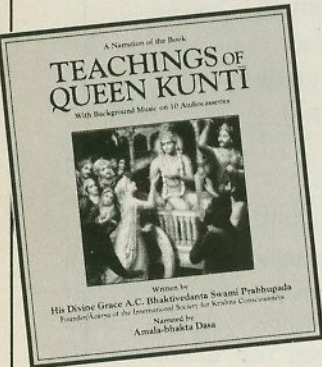
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1. The reader should be fairly easy to discern.
2. Your technique (exposure, focus, composition, use of background and light) should enhance your photographic message.

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Tel. +598 (2) 2484551

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RESTAURANTS

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The Hare Kṛṣṇa Calendar

Month of Nārāyaṇa

(December 22–January 19)

JANUARY

5—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Locana Dāsa Ṭhākura, a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa known for his Bengali devotional songs. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jiva Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

16—Putradā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

Month of Mādhava

(January 20–February 18)

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

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

27—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Locana Dāsa Ṭhākura, a great spiritual master whose Bengali devotional songs perpetuate the simple Kṛṣṇa conscious method of self-realization.

30—Ṣaṭ-tilā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

FEBRUARY

9—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, a Vaiṣṇava ācārya and author who appeared in the seventeenth century. Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Viṣṇupriyā Devī, the consort of Lord Caitanya.



Śrī Advaita Ācārya

11—Appearance anniversary of Śrī Advaita Ācārya, an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa's expansion Mahā-Viṣṇu and a close associate of Lord Caitanya. Fasting till noon, followed by feasting.

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.

13—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīpāda Madhvācārya, a Vaiṣṇava philosopher and spiritual master who appeared in the thirteenth century. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Rāmānujācārya, an eleventh-century philosopher and spiritual master.

15—Bhaimī Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans. Appearance anniversary of Lord Varāha, Lord Kṛṣṇa's boar incarnation (fasting till noon today; feasting tomorrow).



Lord Varāha

16—Appearance anniversary of Lord Nityānanda Prabhu, a close associate of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and an incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa's elder brother, Lord Balarāma. Feasting.

18—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura, a spiritual master in the disciplic line from Lord Caitanya who composed many devotional songs in Bengali.

Month of Govinda

(February 19–March 18)

22—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, the spiritual master of Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, the Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Fasting till noon, then feasting.

29—Vijayā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

MARCH

3—Śrī Śiva Rātri, the appearance anniversary of Lord Śiva.

5—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī, the great devotee in the disciplic line from Lord Caitanya who confirmed Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's discovery of Lord Caitanya's birthplace.

15—Amardakī-vrata Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

16—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī, spiritual master of Lord Caitanya's spiritual master.

18—Śrī Gaura Pūrṇimā, the appearance anniversary of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is Kṛṣṇa Himself in the role of His own devotee. Fasting till moonrise, followed by feasting.



Chanting on Arbat Street in Moscow

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

FROM AUTHORITATIVE SOURCES we learn that the chanting of the *mahā-mantra*—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare—is the embodiment of the perfection of *yoga* for this age.

Today we have great difficulties living fifty or sixty years. A person may live at the utmost eighty or a hundred years. In addition, these brief years are always fraught with difficulties due to circumstances of war, pestilence, famine, and so many other disturbances. We're also not very intelligent, and at the same time we're unfortunate. These are the characteristics of people living in Kali-yuga, a degraded age.

So properly speaking we can never attain success in the meditational *yoga* system described by Kṛṣṇa. At the utmost we can only gratify our personal whims by some pseudoadaptation of this system. Thus people are paying money to attend some classes in gymnastic exercises and deep breathing, and they're happy if they think they can lengthen their lifetimes by a few years or enjoy better sex life.

But we must understand that this is not the

actual *yoga* system. In this age that meditational system cannot be properly executed. Instead, all of the perfections of that system can be realized through *bhakti-yoga*, the sublime process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, specifically *mantra-yoga*, the glorification of Śrī Kṛṣṇa through the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa. That is recommended in Vedic scriptures and is introduced by great authorities like Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Indeed, the *Bhagavad-gītā* proclaims that the *mahātmās*, the great souls, are always chanting the glories of the Lord. If one wants to be a *mahātmā* in terms of the Vedic literature, in terms of *Bhagavad-gītā*, and in terms of the great authorities, then one has to adopt this process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.

But if we're content at making a show of meditation by sitting very straight in lotus position, then that is a different thing. But we should understand that such show-bottle performances have nothing to do with the actual perfection of *yoga*. The material disease cannot be cured by artificial medicine. We have to take the real cure straight from Kṛṣṇa.

—Śrīla Prabhupāda



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Nārada-bhakti-sūtra

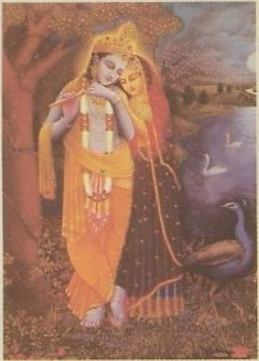
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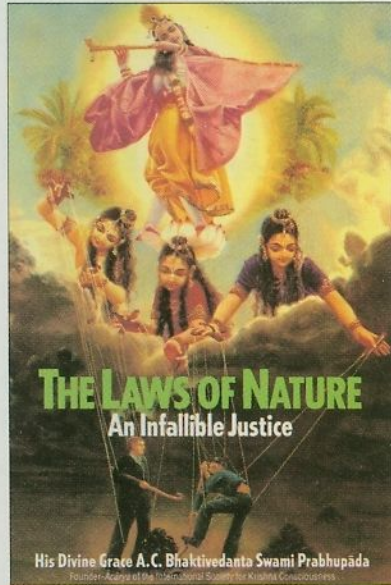
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