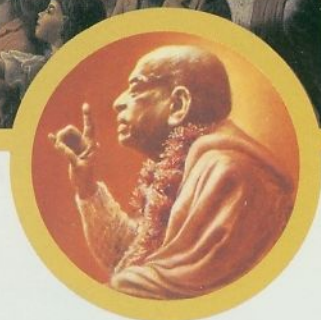


GODHEAD IS LIGHT. NESCIENCE IS DARKNESS. WHERE THERE IS GODHEAD THERE IS NO NESCIENCE.



JULY / AUGUST 1993 • \$4.00 / £2.50



SCENES OF PILGRIMAGE

WEST BENGAL, 1993



Getting free from the grip of illusion ■ Does God go against the laws of nature? ■ The Festival of the Chariots: its secret meaning ■ The tragedy of toxic meat ■ Television: your kids and the one-eyed guru



Kṛṣṇa and Yaśodā

Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī, the anniversary of Lord Kṛṣṇa's appearance, falls on August 11 this year, and devotees all over the world will commemorate the event with grand festivals. Although Kṛṣṇa appeared as the son of Vasudeva and Devakī, He spent His childhood with the cowherd king Nanda and his wife, Yaśodā. Kṛṣṇa, although God, considers Yaśodā His "real" mother.

BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement

Founded 1944 • Vol. 27, No. 4 • July / August 1993

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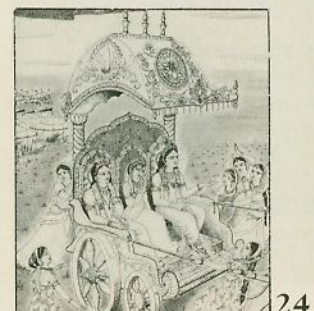
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The Tragedy of Toxic Meat



COVER: This happy pilgrim is one of more than eight hundred from around the world who came together in Māyāpur, West Bengal, last spring. They came for ISKCON's fourth annual tour through the nine islands that make up the sacred land of Lord Caitanya's appearance and early pastimes. The article begins on page 32. (Photo by Viśākhā Devī Dāsī.)

BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement

FOUNDER

(under the direction of His Divine Grace
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta 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 **r** like the **ri** in **rim**, and **ch** like the **ch** in **chair**. Pronounce consonants like **ch**, **jh**, and **dh** as in **staunch**-heart, **hedg**-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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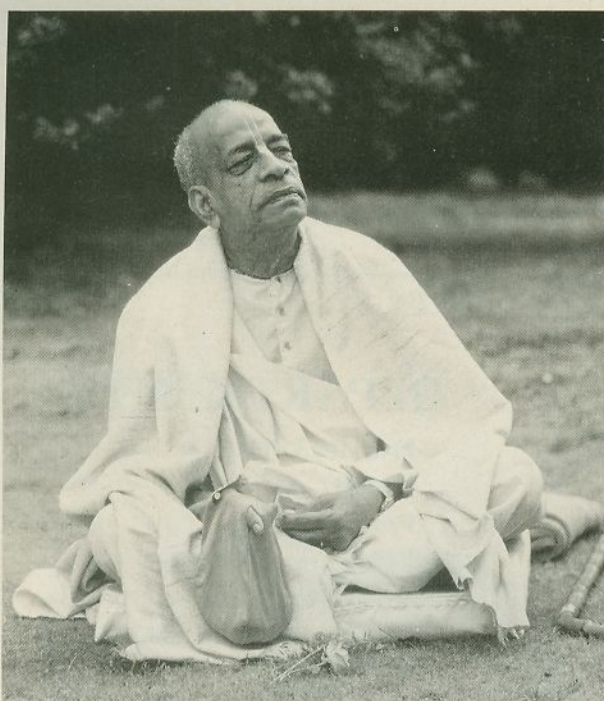
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His Divine Grace

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 spiritualize 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.

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

FROM THE EDITOR

Case Settled, Temples Free

ISKCON—the International Society for Krishna Consciousness—has settled out of court its seventeen-year legal battle with Robin George and her mother, Marcia. Though the terms of the agreement are not to be disclosed, we consider them excellent. And the six American Hare Kṛṣṇa temples the case had threatened to shut down are now free and clear.

The History

In 1974, Robin George, then fifteen, ran away from home and lived in ISKCON temples for about a year. Two years later, Robin and Marcia sued ISKCON. The devotees, they charged, had brainwashed Robin into running away. They had “mentally kidnapped” her, distressing her mother and causing mortal grief to her father.

A California jury tore into ISKCON with a \$32 million judgment. The judge reduced it to \$9 million. Courts of Appeal threw out the charge of brainwashing and cut the judgment to \$485,000 (nearly \$1 million, counting interest).

In the course of the battle, ISKCON had brought its case as far as the U.S. Supreme Court. The Supreme Court had sent the case back down—and both sides were girding themselves for the next round, in the court where the case had begun.

But rather than keep spending to continue the fight, both sides found it wiser to reach an agreement.

The Lessons

There were those who had hoped that the Georges’ \$32-million verdict would bring the death of ISKCON. We’re delighted to have disappointed them.

With this test behind us, ISKCON is clearly in America to stay.

We’ve sent a clear message: We’re not an easy hit. We don’t give up. For the ser-

vice of Kṛṣṇa, we’ll fight all the way to the Supreme Court. And win.

On every legal point of precedential value, we prevailed. Preaching is not brainwashing. Chanting is not mind control. Vegetarianism is not food deprivation. Hare Kṛṣṇa is not Dracula.

In the course of our struggles, we found friends. Sympathizers donated generously, scholars came forward to testify for us, Hindu leaders spoke out on our behalf. Even leading Christian and Jewish organizations came forward, recognizing that to safeguard their own rights they need to stand up for ours.

For the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement in America, still young in the early 70’s, the George case has been part of our growing up. When the case began, we were still barely past the generational upheavals of the hippy era. “Don’t trust anyone over thirty” still fresh in our minds, we could shield a fifteen-year-old from her parents without thought of the consequences. Now many of us are grandparents. Do we trust people under thirty? Sure. But if you’re still a kid and you want to join our temple, we’ll ask you for a note from mom and dad.

Finally, we’ve become stronger spiritually. Living under the constant threat that ISKCON could literally be sued out of existence, we had no alternative but to stand together in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and depend on Kṛṣṇa.

And now, by Kṛṣṇa’s grace, we’re free. A burden we’ve borne for seventeen years is off our backs. Now ISKCON in America is ready to move forward.

And what have the Georges learned? We don’t know. As they travel on in their sojourn from each lifetime to the next, we wish them well.

—Jayādvaita Swami

LETTERS

Enlightening, Inspiring, Uplifting

Yes, how enlivening to receive BTG. BTG is most essential to our Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That association makes us energetic in devotional service to the Lord. The illustrations are enlightening to see. And all the articles are most spiritually uplifting.

I look forward to the next issue of BTG.

Īśvara-Rāṇī Devī Dāśī and family
Carriere, Mississippi

I just want to drop you a short note, thanking you for BTG, this great source of inspiration. I have been reading BTG and chanting for 7 years, and though personally I may be quite inadequate, I truly find these teachings to be the only true desire of my life. So I am very pleased with BTG. Every issue, as far as I can remember, has passed my test. I cry.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

William L. Duke
Nashville, Tennessee

Give Us More About Kṛṣṇa

I have been reading the new BTG thoroughly for the last two years. I appreciate your articles. The magazine should publish more stories from *Bhagavatam* directly related to Lord Kṛṣṇa and His pastimes. Bhakta Vic's article has no place in BTG.

Ram and Rama Chaturvedi
Orange, California

Why Not Run a School?

In the March 1993 issue Urmila Devi Dasi wrote about different vocations devotees could perform for both spiritual and material gain. In my relations with schools I have discovered a great vocation that is very brahminical—owning a temple school. I have seen many Christian churches that have schools attached to them, run by husband and wife teams. The schools are on the church property and pay rent but are privately owned. These schools teach traditional academics along with the Christian philosophy. We need schools in ISKCON. Good

schools run by devoted people. Devotees running a school could make a reasonable living and do so much for our children. It seems like a great way to make a living and always be close to Kṛṣṇa.

Pāṇḍavavijaya Dāsa
Houston, Texas

Maps, Please

I thoroughly enjoy the articles on different places in India that you write about in each issue. But I tried looking on a map to find the small towns and can't find them. A suggestion: in future issues, is it possible to show a small map of India where these cities are?

Mike Schneider
Tampa, Florida

Good suggestion. Will do.

Places for Guests

I should like to suggest that a list of ISKCON centers that offer guest accommodations be published in a future issue of BTG and that whenever an updated list of ISKCON centers appears in BTG, the availability of guest accommodations be indicated on the list.

A. Bhat
Middlesex, U.K.

By Śrīla Prabhupāda's order, every ISKCON center tries to offer accommodations for ISKCON's life members. Some centers can provide more comfort than others. And some centers have large guesthouses. Your suggestion is worthwhile. Look for the list in an upcoming issue.

Milk: It's for Everyone

I really liked the article "Is Milk for Everyone?" We need more articles like this to counter the false propaganda against drinking milk. Here at our restaurant we are putting copies on every table.

I would like to add that aside from cardamom and saffron as mucus reducers in milk, more effective are

ginger, cinnamon, cloves, black pepper, and honey. (Honey, of course, should not be cooked but added afterwards.) Honey has the dual function of reducing mucus and providing sweetening, which, as noted in the article, is important for the proper digestion of milk.

Śyāmasundara Dāsa
Laguna Beach, California

Sharing Back to Godhead

The article on Tulasi Devi really opened my eyes and enthused me. While traveling on a train to Canada I met someone interested, and that BTG was the only small publication I had on me, so I gave it away. But I definitely want a copy for myself. Enclosed is a check for \$4.00. Thank you very much.

Sādhvī Dāśī
Lewistown, Pennsylvania

The Controversy Over Ayodhyā

I wish to comment regarding ISKCON's uninvolvedness in liberating Rama Janma Bhūmi [the birthplace of Lord Śrī Rāma] and in the future of Kṛṣṇa Janma Bhūmi, the holiest of all Vaisnava holy places.

At Bhaktivedanta Manor in London, where I have had the privilege to obtain the darshan of Sri Sri Radha Gokulananda over the last fifteen years, since 1981 an active campaign has been fought to keep the temple open for all visitors. So also in New York and other parts of America, ISKCON temples have taken their fight to the courts of America. Even our Founder-Acarya, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupadaji, fought a campaign in the courts of Bombay for the rightful possession of the land where now the Sri Sri Radha-Rasavihari temple stands.

Finally, I humbly cite the example of Lord Sri Caitanya. Over 500 years ago the Kazi of Navadwip ordered the followers of Lord Caitanya not to chant and dance or play mridanga on the streets, since the noise disturbed

the residents. So what was the reaction of the Lord? Did He ask His followers to simply leave the area and go to the forest for sankirtana so that the people would not get disturbed?

Far from it: He showed through example that dharmic activity could not be checked by adharma. He gathered His followers, and others also, and led a public disobedience march right up to the door of the Kazi.

All this tells us that we should be peaceful as long as we (dharma) are not threatened. Otherwise we should consume the opposition (adharma) like wildfire.

ISKCON should be at the forefront of the campaign to uproot the adharma slapped on the most holy of the holy places—Rama Janma Bhumi and Krsna Janma Bhumi.

J. P. Patel
London, England

I have been following the various editorials on the Ayodhya conflict in *Hinduism Today*, *The New York Times*, etc. I found your BTG commentary the most complete yet. It is a complicated issue, and you have handled it expertly.

Badrinārāyaṇa Dāsa
San Diego, California

Front-Cover Errors

Since BTG is like scripture and its covers are worshipable, I feel constrained to comment on your March/April cover and its explanation.

The story of this art is that a well-known scholar in India, who wrote during the time of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati, claimed that this painting in miniature was found on a wooden cover for a leaf manuscript of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and was executed by an artist in the court of Maharaja Prataparudra. Since this painting was done contemporaneously to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, it now became the nearest thing to a photograph of the Lord.

It seems from your cover explanation that you accept this assertion.

However, there is a dispute amongst scholars as to the authenticity of this painting. The scholar in question, D. C. Sen, once met with Srila Bhaktisiddhanta, but was not recognized to write authoritatively about Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Although he was perhaps the first to render the *Bhakti Ratnakara* into English, there are ample inaccuracies in his books. What is questioned in this painting is whether the scene took place, with all of the personalities depicted.

There are several modern renditions of the original painting, all with variations. The scene shows Sri Gadadhara reading from the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, and seated around him are Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Nityananda Prabhu, and Advaita Prabhu. On either side of Gadadhara are Srivasa Thakura and perhaps Rupa Gosvami. Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya is depicted in the background, kneeling rather than sitting. A turbaned King Prataparudra is prostrating himself before the group. In most of the modern renditions Haridasa Thakura is standing in the background, hanging his clothes on the clothesline. Sometimes other important personalities such as Ramananda Raya are included. Curiously, Srila Svarupa Damodara is excluded.

The rendition by the ISKCON artist Pariksit Dasa is different from other modern renditions. Advaita Prabhu, who was considerably older than Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, is traditionally shown with white hair and beard, and not with the gleaming black hair of a younger person. Haridasa Thakura, shown in most renditions as bearded, is absent. Sri Gadadhara is shown having what appears to be either a South Indian or a Kashmiri sikha [the tuft of hair devotees keep at the back of the head], when in fact, being from Bengal, he is more likely to have one in the Gaudiya Vaisnava style. Also, the clothes on the line have been elongated to appear like dhotis, whereas in other renditions the clothes are

usually short in the babaji style of dress.

I do not think the ISKCON artist was commissioned to make this painting to illustrate Srila Prabhupada's *Caitanya-caritamrita*, because scripture does not describe this particular event with all these personalities present.

Your dating in the cover explanation is questionable. It is risky to state dates for Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's [pastimes], because there is such a paucity of them listed authoritatively in *Caitanya-caritamrita*. In fact Krsna dasa Kaviraja gives only three: 1486 A.D., the appearance of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu; 1534, the Lord's disappearance (*Adi* 13.9); and 1616, the date given for the completion of *Caitanya-caritamrita* in the book's very last couplet. (The Saka calendar is converted to the Christian one by adding 79 years.)

Regarding your dates for Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's residence in Puri, obviously 1544 is a printer's devil, because the correct one is 1534. From where did you get 1520? Srila Prabhupada says in the summary of Chapter 20 of the *Antya-lila* that Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu lived in Puri for twelve years. This observation is based on verse 20.69, which describes that Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu experienced ecstatic bliss for twelve years. That would give us 1522. However, this date should be taken to refer to the Lord's deep absorption in rapture rather than when He commenced residing in Puri. The *Caitanya-caritamrita* clearly reports that Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu traveled for six years after taking sannyasa and lived in Puri for 18 years (*Adi* 13.12-13). Thus, the Lord's Puri residence began in 1516.

Brahmānanda Dāsa
Merrifield, Virginia

We want to hear from you. Please send correspondence to: The Editors, Back to Godhead, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, FL 32615, USA.



FIXED IN THE HIGHER NATURE

When we're ready, Kṛṣṇa will release us from the grip of illusion and bring us to His world of freedom.

A lecture given in New York, July 25, 1966

by His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Founder-Ācārya of the International Society
for Krishna Consciousness

• • •

*janma karma ca me divyam
evaṁ yo vetti tattvataḥ
tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma
naiti mām eti so 'rjuna*

“One who knows the transcendental nature of My appearance and activities does not, upon leaving the body, take his birth again in this material world, but attains My eternal abode, O Arjuna.”

—*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.9

LORD KṚṢṆA SAYS, “My birth and activities are all transcendental, and anyone who can understand the transcendental activities, appearance, and disappearance of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in truth becomes a liberated person.” *Tyaktvā* means “by quitting.” By giving up the present material body, he is at once transferred to the spiritual world. He does not have to come back to the material world to get another body. He at once develops his own spiritual body just like Kṛṣṇa’s. This is the process: Simply by understanding Kṛṣṇa’s transcendental activities, appearance, and disappearance, one becomes fully spiritualized.

The spiritual body is already existing. I am spirit. I have my spiritual body, but that body is now covered by matter. So by

understanding the transcendental activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, by Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one can become liberated. And what is the result of that liberation? That is stated in the Eighth Chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. The Lord says, *mām upetya tu kaunteya duḥkhālayam aśāśvatam nāpnuvanti* . . . “My dear Arjuna, Kaunteya (son of Kuntī), please note that anyone who comes to Me does not come again to the material world, which is *duḥkhālayam*, a place of misery.”

The Place of Misery and Impermanence

The material world is certified by the Supreme Personality of Godhead as a place of misery. Now, if this place is made for that purpose—just to give us miseries only—how can you make it a place of happiness? The place is meant for misery. So Lord Kṛṣṇa says, “Anyone who comes back to Me doesn’t have to return to this place of miseries.”

We are deluded, illusioned. We are accepting this place as a permanent settlement. We are making plans, so many plans, to make a permanent settlement, but the Lord says not only that this is a world full of misery, but also that you cannot remain here permanently. However you plan to live here permanently, you cannot live

Left: Lord Kṛṣṇa as Gopāla, the protector of the cows.

***You may live for some years very comfortably,
but cruel death will come and snatch you from your
comfortable position and put you into
another position. And this is beyond your control.***

• • •

*na mām duṣkṛtīno mūḍhāḥ
prapadyante narādhamāḥ
māyayāpahṛta-jñānā
āsuram-bhāvam āsritāḥ*

“There are persons who are miscreants, foolish, the lowest of humankind, and who have been plundered of their real knowledge by the stringent laws of material nature. Such people do not come unto Me.”

If we study *Bhagavad-gītā* we have to take *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is. We cannot give our own interpretation just to suit our purpose. It has already been explained in this Fourth Chapter that *Bhagavad-gītā* is understood by the *paramparā* system, the disciplic succession. So we have to take this knowledge from the disciplic succession. The *Bhagavad-gītā* was spoken some millions of years ago to the sun-god. That is also stated in the *Gītā*. The sun-god taught *Bhagavad-gītā* to Manu, and Manu instructed Ikṣvāku. In this way the *Bhagavad-gītā* comes by disciplic succession. But during the time of the Kurukṣetra war, that great philosophy of the yoga system—*Bhagavad-gītā*—was lost, and therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa again taught it to Arjuna. Therefore if we want to understand the *Gītā* we have to understand it as Arjuna understood it. That is the process.

No Birth and Death

Here the Lord says, “My appearance and disappearance...” Mark these words—*appearance* and *disappearance*. The words *birth* and *death* are not applicable to the Lord. *Birth* and *death* apply to the material body. The material body has its birth, and the material body has its death. But the spiritual body is eternal. It has neither birth nor death. Therefore in relation to the spiritual body, the exact language to be used is “appearance and disappearance.”

I have several times given the example of the sun. The sun appears and

disappears. For the sun there is no question of birth and death, because the sun is eternal. So when the Lord comes, He is just like the sun appearing and disappearing. That we do not see Kṛṣṇa does not mean that He is not present.

Of course, when we acquire transcendental senses we will see Kṛṣṇa through the *Bhagavad-gītā*. The *Bhagavad-gītā* is Kṛṣṇa. It is not different from Kṛṣṇa. That is the sense of absolute knowledge. In the absolute world there is no difference between the person and the person’s words. My words or my songs are being recorded on a tape recorder, but they are different from me. This is the world of duality. But in the absolute world, there is no such difference.

We are chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare. The name Kṛṣṇa and the personality Kṛṣṇa are the same. When I hear the transcendental sound vibration *Kṛṣṇa*, that means Kṛṣṇa is on my tongue, on my ear. Therefore, if we chant this vibration of transcendental sound with devotion and attention, that is the highest type of meditation and yoga.

And it is very easy. The process is that you chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and you hear exactly the same sound. So your mind is concentrated on the sound *Kṛṣṇa*, and Kṛṣṇa is not different from that sound. Therefore when we chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, the chanting is as good as Kṛṣṇa. Therefore it is stated here, “My appearance, disappearance, activities, and glories are *divyam*.” *Divyam* means transcendental. They do not belong to this world of duality.

The Higher Nature

Transcendental means above duality. That is the nature of the absolute world. So one is liberated by understanding these facts—that Kṛṣṇa is
(please turn to page 47)

here. You have to give up this place. You can spoil your energy trying to make this material world very comfortable, or you may live for some years very comfortably, but cruel death will come and snatch you from your comfortable position and put you into another position. And this is beyond your control. You cannot say, “I have made my position secure. I have become comfortable by great endeavor, by advancement of economic development, by advancement of material science. Let me remain here. I am happy.”

Time will say, “No, that will not be allowed. You must leave at once, without delay.”

When your President Kennedy was in a procession and the time came, he had to leave everything at once—at once—without any hesitation. You cannot hesitate.

We are in the grip of the material nature. However we may declare ourselves independent, we are not independent. We are dependent, completely dependent. We may foolishly mislead ourselves with a false sense of independence, but we are completely under the control of the material nature. The material nature is so strong that to get out of our entanglement is very difficult. But there is a way. That is described in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: *mām eva ye prapadyante māyām etiāṁ taranti te*: “Anyone who surrenders unto Me [Kṛṣṇa] can easily cross beyond the material energy.” The whole process of material nature is going on under the principle that we must go back to the eternal world to get our eternal life of bliss and knowledge.

These things are awaiting us. But if we do not try to attain that sublime position and we spoil our energy trying to adjust this temporary material world, that is our foolishness. In the Seventh Chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.15) the Lord says:



Eagerness to Attain Kṛṣṇa Consciousness

by Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA OFTEN instructed us on the importance of cultivating eagerness, or the strong desire to attain Kṛṣṇa. He said we should desire and hanker after the supreme kingdom if we really want to achieve it. Once, a young man asked him what it was like to desire Kṛṣṇa, and Śrīla Prabhupāda replied, “What do you feel when you see a pretty girl walking down the street?” The boy was surprised. “You mean it’s like that?” As aspiring transcendentalists, we are not interested in pretty girls or any material thing, but that quality of spontaneous desire, that eagerness—that is what we want to feel, but in relation to Kṛṣṇa.

I have recently been reading some verses in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* about eagerness for becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious and how Kṛṣṇa works with us to try to increase our eagerness. In the First Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* the great sage Nārada tells his disciple Vyāsadeva how in his (Nārada’s) previous life he got the association of some Vaiṣṇavas, pure devotees of the Lord, who stayed for several months at the inn where his mother was engaged as a maidservant. Nārada tells how as a young boy of only five years, he brought those devotees *prasādam*, sanctified food which had been offered first to the Supreme Lord. With the permission of those devotees he took the remnants of the food, and he also heard from them about the attractive activities of Lord Kṛṣṇa. He relates how, as he did these things, all his sinful activities went away and his real spiritual self was revealed to him.

Vyāsadeva was interested to hear about this and wanted to hear more. When the spiritual master talks about his life, the disciple is always interested to hear. I remember how Śrīla

Prabhupāda sometimes told us things about his own life, and even if we had heard them before, we were always eager to hear Prabhupāda tell these stories again. So it was in that mood that Vyāsadeva, hearing about Śrī Nārada’s birth and activities, wanted to hear more.

In the association of pure devotees, Nārada went on, his eagerness for Kṛṣṇa consciousness developed, but after they departed, leaving him in the care of his affectionate mother, this eagerness diminished. So when his mother suddenly died, bitten by a snake, he took this as special mercy of the Lord. Prabhupāda writes, “Confidential devotees of the Lord see in every step a benedictory direction of the Lord. What is considered to be an odd or difficult moment in the mundane sense is accepted as special mercy of the Lord.” Now Nārada, although still a boy of only five years, could depend fully on all the hearing and chanting he had done with the sages.

Nārada took up the life of a traveling mendicant, and soon he had an amazing experience. He tells Vyāsa, “As soon as I began to meditate upon the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead with my mind transformed in transcendental love, tears rolled down my eyes, and without delay the Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared on the lotus of my heart. The transcendental form of the Lord, as it is, satisfies the mind’s desire and at once erases all mental incongruities. Upon losing that form, I suddenly got up, being perturbed, as is usual when one loses something which is desirable.”

So it seems that Nārada Muni glimpsed the Lord, but then the Lord went away and it was a great shock for him. Śrīla Prabhupāda describes

this in such an appealing way. “For the whole duration of our lives we go see different forms in the material world, but none of them is just apt to satisfy the mind, nor can any one of them vanquish all perturbation of the mind. These are the special features of the transcendental form of the Lord, and one who has once seen that form is not satisfied with anything else; no form in the material world can any longer satisfy the seer.”

Kṛṣṇa Himself explained to Nārada the reason for His sudden disappearance. “O virtuous one, you have only once seen My person, and this is just to increase your desire for Me, because the more you hanker for Me, the more you will be freed from all material desires.” Elsewhere in the scriptures it is stated that eagerness is the price one has to pay to achieve success in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We shouldn’t think that Kṛṣṇa is playing a cruel trick on His devotee, some sort of hide-and-seek game: “You saw Me, but I am not going to let you see Me again, for no reason.” He wants to increase the devotee’s eagerness to see Him again, as it is this eagerness that will bring the devotee to the perfectional stage, where he will be qualified to go back to Godhead.

I am not Nārada, but I am trying to think how this has some relevance for me. In commenting on this verse, Prabhupāda says we should go on serving Kṛṣṇa and this will increase our hankering. “The more a person is engaged in the transcendental loving service of the Lord, the more he acquires a hankering for it. That is the nature of godly service. Material service has satiation, whereas spiritual service of the Lord has neither satiation nor end. . . . By intense service to the Lord, one can experience the presence of the Lord

transcendentally. Therefore, seeing the Lord means being engaged in His service because His service and His person are identical.”

If we are performing devotional service but not feeling an increase in eagerness, that means we are doing something wrong. We should inquire from the spiritual master, from the scriptures, from other devotees, and from within our own hearts, “Why isn’t my hankering for Kṛṣṇa increasing?” If instead we are feeling, “This is enough, I have found a good niche in Kṛṣṇa consciousness,” that is not a good sign. That is complacency. To actually attain the audience of Kṛṣṇa, to get His association, we must go on increasing our desire and eagerness to see and serve Him.

As natural as it is for a young man to be attracted to a pretty girl, as eager as a young girl is to be with that young man, that is how natural it is for the pure soul to be attracted to Kṛṣṇa. We should aspire to have such eagerness to attain Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If Kṛṣṇa sees we are sincere and eager to serve Him and our spiritual master, then He will direct us how and where to do it. Kṛṣṇa can deal with us in so many ways, perhaps by first giving us the mercy of this eagerness, or by first seeing our sincere activities in devotional service and then giving us mercy. There is no set law, but if we do feel this increased hankering, we should mostly think that we haven’t really done anything, that it is simply due to the mercy of the Lord.

If we want the story of our devotional service to be a success story, we should deliberate individually on our own lives and see what we can do to increase our eagerness to attain Kṛṣṇa. Seeing our efforts, the Lord will certainly help us, just as He helped Śrī Nārada. And as followers of Prabhupāda, if we especially want to experience the special atmosphere of eternal Vṛndāvana, where Kṛṣṇa constantly enacts His enchanting pastimes, we must simply become eager for that transcendental goal.

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



LORD KRṢṂA’S CUISINE

COOKING CLASS: LESSON EIGHT

Vegetable Basics 101

by Yamuna Devi

DOES POTATO-CAULIFLOWER Janaki, Eggplant-Coconut Murari, Spinach Karunamayi, Potato Salad Mukunda, or Brussels Sprouts Annapurna ring a bell with you? If so, you’re either a veteran of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement from 1967 or well versed in its early history. These are names coined by disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda for vegetable dishes he made in his San Francisco kitchen.

No aspect of devotional cooking has been more satisfying for me than working with vegetables, not only because of the increasing number of organic vegetables sold commercially, but because seedsmen offer home gardeners hundreds more unique seeds for cultivation. Cooks worldwide know the rewards of planting, growing, harvesting, cooking, and finally offering vegetables in the temple.

And—surprise—you don’t need a garden plot to grow veggies. I’ve cultivated them in containers on patios, rooftops, balconies, and front

walkways. To get an idea of the seed varieties available in America, leaf through Shepherd’s Garden Seeds catalog (203-482-3638). You’ll find fourteen types of beans, seven beets, nine corns, sixteen lettuces, scores of herbs, and so on. Check with local nurseries for similar seeds or for plants.

Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Early Lessons

In my first unpublished cookbook, a calligraphed manuscript compiled some twenty-six years ago, the vegetable introduction reads: “To best satisfy Lord Kṛṣṇa, learn perfection in every step of cooking. To avoid overcooking vegetables, regulate the heat source and adjust cooking times with refined senses.” While these terse statements are incomplete, they do offer novice cooks a few insights into devotional vegetable cookery. What’s needed is expertise, judgment, and an awareness of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s presence.

The 1967 San Francisco temple

housed a near balance of men and women, many eager to learn cooking from Śrīla Prabhupāda. Our first apprentice task was cutting vegetables. Learning how to cut vegetables into uniform sizes and shapes is an art. You learn how to mince, dice, cube, chiffonade, julienne, roll-cut, finely chop, coarsely chop, thinly slice, trim in smooth ovals, and so on. Daily practice is the only way to precision cutting. If you’re following the class series, refer to these techniques in the class textbook, *Lord Krishna’s Cuisine*, and practice with every vegetable you touch.

Vegetable Basics

In retrospect, I’m somewhat in awe of the masterful way Śrīla Prabhupāda introduced students to vegetable cookery. He didn’t teach with recipes but showed us how three cooking methods and seasonings affect the final taste and texture of a dish. The following instructions will let you make numerous dishes with potatoes.

By using the same ingredients and changing heat, seasonings, and the size of vegetables, you can give each dish a different taste, texture, and appearance. To keep the fat content of dry-textured vegetable dishes to a minimum, I recommend using a heavy-bottomed nonstick pan. Now let's look at three cooking methods and three seasoning options.

COOKING METHODS

Cooking Method 1

Sautéed Dry Potatoes
(cooked without water)

Sauté small pieces of uniformly cut potatoes—julienned, diced, or diagonal sliced—in seasoned ghee or oil in an open pan until they're partially cooked and partially browned. As they cook, turn them frequently to keep them from browning unevenly or sticking.

From here on, there are two options. The first is to reduce the heat to medium-low and stir-fry until the potatoes are tender and golden brown. The second is to add liquid and, by controlling the heat, cook to tenderness so that when the liquid has evaporated, the potatoes are dry and golden brown. This method also works well with yams, beets, parsnips, carrots, or sweet potatoes.

Cooking Method 2

Sautéed Potatoes (cooked in broth)

Sauté the potato cubes briefly in seasoned oil or ghee, and then simmer them in an aromatic broth until they're tender. Four finished textures are possible: potato stew, potatoes in a sauce, moist potatoes, and crusty, dry potatoes. Heat control and timing are important in controlling the finished texture of the dish. Other vegetables suitable for this method include beans, cauliflower, eggplants, and winter and summer squash.

Cooking Method 3

Precooked Potatoes in Seasoned Ghee, Sauce, or Broth

Bake, steam, boil, fry, or roast new potatoes until they're almost tender,

and then cut them into the desired shapes. Finish cooking the potatoes in seasoned ghee, brown them in oil, and add stock, or fold them into seasoned yogurt, gravy, or sauce. This method works well with almost any vegetable.

SEASONING OPTIONS

Now let's explore cooking one pound of potatoes with the cooking methods just mentioned and the seasoning options below. A blend of spices toasted in ghee or oil is called a *chaunk*. When chilies or spice seeds

are toasted, volatile oils lying dormant are released, and their true flavor emerges. Seasonings should be toasted until they darken a few shades; if they turn brownish-black or burn, the flavor will be pungent and unpleasant. In our temple in 1967, most vegetables were made with the first seasoning blend.

Seasoning 1

1–3 tablespoons ghee or unrefined corn oil
¼ teaspoon crushed dried chilies
1 teaspoon cumin seeds

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½ teaspoon turmeric
 3–4 tablespoons water or stock for
 Method 1; 1–2 cups for Methods
 2 and 3
 salt and freshly ground pepper
 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro or
 parsley

Seasoning 2

Same as Seasoning 1, except replace
 the dried chilies with 1–2 teaspoons
 chopped hot green chilies and add ½
 tablespoon grated ginger root.

Seasoning 3

Same as Seasoning 2, except add:
 1 teaspoon mustard seeds
 ¼ teaspoon ground yellow
 asafetida
 ½ tablespoon ground coriander

EXAMPLES

Example of Cooking Method 1

Indian-Style Hash Browns

Cut 1 pound of potatoes into ½-inch
 dice. Heat the ghee or oil in a heavy
 nonstick skillet over moderate heat.
 When the skillet is hot but not

smoking, add the chilies and spice
 seeds and fry them until the cumin
 darkens a few shades and the mustard
 seeds, if you're using them, turn grey
 and pop. (If you're using Seasoning 2,
 add green chilies and ginger and fry
 them a few seconds). Add the pota-
 toes at once, raise the heat slightly,
 and sauté the potatoes until they're
 partially cooked and lightly browned.

Reduce the heat to low and stir in
 the ground spices. At this point, you
 can add liquid. Stirring occasionally,
 cook the potatoes covered or uncov-
 ered until they're fork-tender, golden,
 and crusty. Season with salt and
 pepper and sprinkle with herbs.

Example of Cooking Method 2

Potatoes in Aromatic Broth

Cut 1 pound of potatoes into 1-inch
 cubes. Heat half of the ghee or oil in a
 heavy nonstick saucepan over moder-
 ately high heat. When the saucepan is
 hot but not smoking, add the red or
 green chilies, the spice seeds, and the
 ginger. Fry as above. Add the asa-
 fetida and fry a few seconds; then stir
 in the potatoes. Sauté until the cubes
 are lightly browned.

Stir in the ground spices, half of

the herbs, and 2 ½ cups of liquid. Par-
 tially cover, reduce the heat to low, and
 gently cook until the potatoes are ten-
 der, resting in an aromatic broth. Sea-
 son with salt and pepper. Finish with
 the remaining ghee or oil and the herbs.

Example of Cooking Method 3

Crusty Potatoes with Herb Yogurt

Bake 1 pound of Idaho potatoes until
 they're tender. Cool, peel, and cut
 them into ½-inch-thick julienne.

Heat the ghee or oil in a heavy
 nonstick skillet over moderate heat.
 When the ghee or oil is hot but not
 smoking, add the spices as above. Stir
 in the potatoes and fry them long
 enough to warm them through and
 coat them with spices.

Remove the potatoes from the heat
 and season them with salt and pepper.
 Stir the herbs into ½ cup of nonfat
 yogurt or sour cream and fold this into
 the potatoes just before you offer it to
 Kṛṣṇa.

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



BHAKTI-YOGA AT HOME

Regulation: The Path to Freedom and Love

by Rohiṇīnandana Dāsa

NOW THAT I LIVE IN the country, I'm
 more aware of the predictable pattern
 of nature. I notice how trees and
 creatures in and around my cottage
 submit themselves to the laws of the
 universe, as if even they recognize a
 superior power. At an ordained time
 they sprout and grow, shed their
 leaves or fur, and reproduce and die.

As I watch with fascination, I
 sometimes forget that the same cre-
 ative and destructive principles are
 also at work on my own body and its

offspring. But at night, when one by
 one my children, my wife, and I
 succumb to sleep, I sense our subser-
 vience to the regulation of the vast
 mechanism of the universe.

Regulation is an intrinsic part of
 yoga, too. Yoga is the art of living
 within the universe and ultimately
 becoming liberated from its stringent
 laws. So in *bhakti-yoga*, devotees use
 regulation to help awaken their
 eternal love for Lord Kṛṣṇa, which is
 the only sure means to permanent

liberation.

Of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books, *The
 Nectar of Devotion* most systemati-
 cally describes *sādhana-bhakti*, or the
 regulative practice of *bhakti-yoga*.
Sādhana means the method for attain-
 ing something, and *bhakti* means
 devotion to Kṛṣṇa. *Sādhana-bhakti*
 develops in two parts: *vaidhi* and
rāgānuga. *Vaidhi* means to follow
 rules and regulations of *bhakti-yoga*
 under the order of a spiritual master,
 and *rāgānuga* means to follow them

out of spontaneous attraction for Kṛṣṇa.

Like a baby's ability to walk, love for Kṛṣṇa lies inherent within us. By practicing the simple principles of *vaidhi-bhakti*, we can all develop spontaneous attraction and affection for the Lord.

You can begin *vaidhi-bhakti* by making a daily practice of the Kṛṣṇa conscious activities you already like to do. If you like to offer incense to a picture of Lord Kṛṣṇa or His pure devotee, you can make this offering a part of your daily devotional service. It will become a duty you'll be careful to remember, and you'll progress from liking to burn incense in your room, to offering it to Lord Kṛṣṇa before you enjoy it, and finally to offering it at His convenience and for His pleasure only. (Of course, as you master this art, your pleasure will increase hundreds and hundreds of times.)

Similarly you can offer a flower, a fruit, or fresh water daily and clean the place where you make your offerings. In this way you can gradually add Kṛṣṇa to all the phases of your life.

Suppose you like to chant on your beads. Commit yourself to chanting a

certain number of rounds on your beads every day. If a day goes by and you haven't finished your quota, you'll naturally remember, "Oh, I haven't finished my rounds. I'd better finish them before I go to bed." The same principle can apply to reading Śrīla Prabhupāda's books: you can make a commitment to read a certain number of pages or a certain amount of time every day. In this way you'll make great spiritual progress.

Don't worry that setting up spiritual regulation will make your life stereotyped or boring, as material habits and customs are apt to do. Like Kṛṣṇa's words, spiritual duties are ever fresh, and they'll help your individuality and originality come to the surface.

If you stick as rigidly as possible to your regulation, despite sometimes feeling lethargic or despondent, you'll find that in the face of obstacles you'll become enlivened and surcharged.

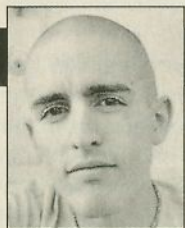
Bhakti-yoga is both the means and the end of transcending duality, for it is nondifferent from Kṛṣṇa Himself.

Sometimes you may even wonder why you took up Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the first place. Such thoughts arise

because we are influenced by material nature, and our conditioned minds tend to accept something one minute and reject it the next.

If the force of your material conditioning and bad habits make you feel like quitting, you can submit yourself to Kṛṣṇa and expect His mercy. Because we are the Lord's tiny expansions, and in one sense nondifferent from Him, He naturally loves us, regardless of our condition. Kṛṣṇa will unfailingly help us should we simply make an effort—or even desire to make an effort—in His direction. "God helps those who help themselves." Everything ultimately depends on Lord Kṛṣṇa's mercy. And if you resolve to follow what Kṛṣṇa terms "the regulative principles of freedom" despite any impediments and difficulties, you will undoubtedly be a recipient of the Lord's "complete mercy" (Bg. 2.64). Just imagine that!

Rohiṇīnandana Dāsa and Rādhā Priyā Dāsi would like to correspond with anyone interested in living near them. Write to them at Woodgate Cottage, Beckley Nr. Rye, E. Sussex TN31 6UH, UK.



STRAIGHT TALK

Is This Suffering?

by Vraja Kishor Dāsa

"THIS WORLD IS A PLACE of misery and suffering." Is it? Well, maybe. But to me it seems like it ain't . . . It's just boring as hell.

You know, when I hear someone say the world is a place of suffering, I just can't relate. I mean, sure there's a pretty big earthquake in Transylvania now and then; and yeah, a few bloody riots in Zimbabwe—but 99% of the time my main problem is trying to find a decent sitcom rerun on TV.

That's the story of my life: a group of events strung together, a series of attempts at boredom evasion. Crack a joke. Turn the channel. Call a friend. Blast the stereo. Chew some gum. Go to a show. Scribble. Write a Shakespearean love sonnet . . . Whatever.

Somehow—escape.

But the boredom always returns, leading in around the edges.

Why? 'Cause that's the way it is. That's one thing the material world is made of: boredom.

We don't want to hear that. We can't stand being bored. It's not right. It's not fair. I don't deserve it!

I really *don't*. The soul is full of vibrancy and constantly intensifying newness. And that's why we loathe family picnics. And that's why we're dissatisfied. We're not supposed to be bored. But we are.

Why? How has the all-adventurous soul gone bland? Because he has put himself into the world of make-believe.

For the soul to interact with the material world, he has to make believe. Make believe he's some eighteen-year-old guy with his first driver's license. Make believe he's some proud new grandpa. Make believe he's the body.

See, everything in life happens to the body—the soul has to make believe it means something to him. Nothing directly touches him. No tear, no fear. Everything is vicarious—secondhand life.

After 72 billion zillion lifetimes, it gets pretty stale. And so we're bored. *That* is real suffering. When someone says this is a world of suffering, that's often what he really means. Not that there's some grandstand fireworks

display of tear-jerking tragedy. It's just boredom. Terminally recurrent boredom.

But the spiritual world ain't some cartoon funny factory where everyone trips on laughing gas all day. It's not some big goody-two-shoes Good Samaritan smile. Or some fat angel with a harp.

The spiritual world is where the soul stops the make-believe. There experience is not vicarious or second-hand. Every emotion reaches in and grabs you by the throat, strangles you, tickles you, beats you up, and caresses you. There you live as you know you're supposed to—exciting, adventurous, dangerous, yet at the same time thrillingly soft, quiet, and safe.

In the material world, even in our deepest suffering, we're not suffering. The self in this world is in a body cast. Stagnating. Isolated. Unable to feel.

That is hell.

In Śrī Vṛndāvana, Kṛṣṇa's dearest girlfriends (the *gopīs*) are anything but bored.

To get a rough idea what the *gopīs'* life is like at any given second, take all the happiest, most thrilling moments of everyone in the world and pile them together into a big mountain. That "mountain" would seem smaller than a pebble when placed next to the unguessable heights of sheer excitement the *gopīs* experience by meeting their Kṛṣṇa.

Now take all the heart-wrenching torments and tragedies of the world

and put them all together. They'd seem hardly a scrap of paper blowing in the breeze, next to the bottomless desperation the *gopīs* feel when apart from their Kṛṣṇa.

Theirs is the world of full color, ours the world in black & white. We can live in full color. That's Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Otherwise, I guess there might be an "I Love Lucy" rerun at 4:30. . . .

Vraja Kishor Dāsa (formerly Bhakta Vic of 108) joined the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement about three years ago. He recently received spiritual initiation from Dhanurdhara Swami in Vṛndāvana, India. He and his band (called 108) are based at ISKCON's temple in Washington, D.C.



SCHOOLING KRṢṆA'S CHILDREN

Your Kids And the One-Eyed Guru

by Urmilā Devī Dāsī

WHEN OUR OLDEST SON, Mādhava, now eighteen, was small, he had few toys—some blocks, some clay. We never had a television or a video player, so he played with his toys in imitation of what he saw—worship of Kṛṣṇa, chanting of His names, initiation ceremonies, bathing of the Deity. Today, having grown up without television, he has transformed his childhood play into adult service to the Lord.

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.3.15) Prabhupāda describes the benefit of growing up in a family of devotees:

By the grace of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, we had the chance of being born in a Vaiṣṇava family, and in our childhood we imitated the worship of Lord Kṛṣṇa by imitating our father. Our father encouraged us in all respects to observe all functions such as the Ratha-yātrā and Dola-yātrā ceremonies, and he used to spend money liberally for distributing *prasāda* to us children and our

friends. Our spiritual master, who also took his birth in a Vaiṣṇava family, got all inspirations from his great Vaiṣṇava father, Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda. That is the way of all lucky Vaiṣṇava families. The celebrated Mīrā Bāi was a staunch devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa as the great lifter of Govardhana Hill.

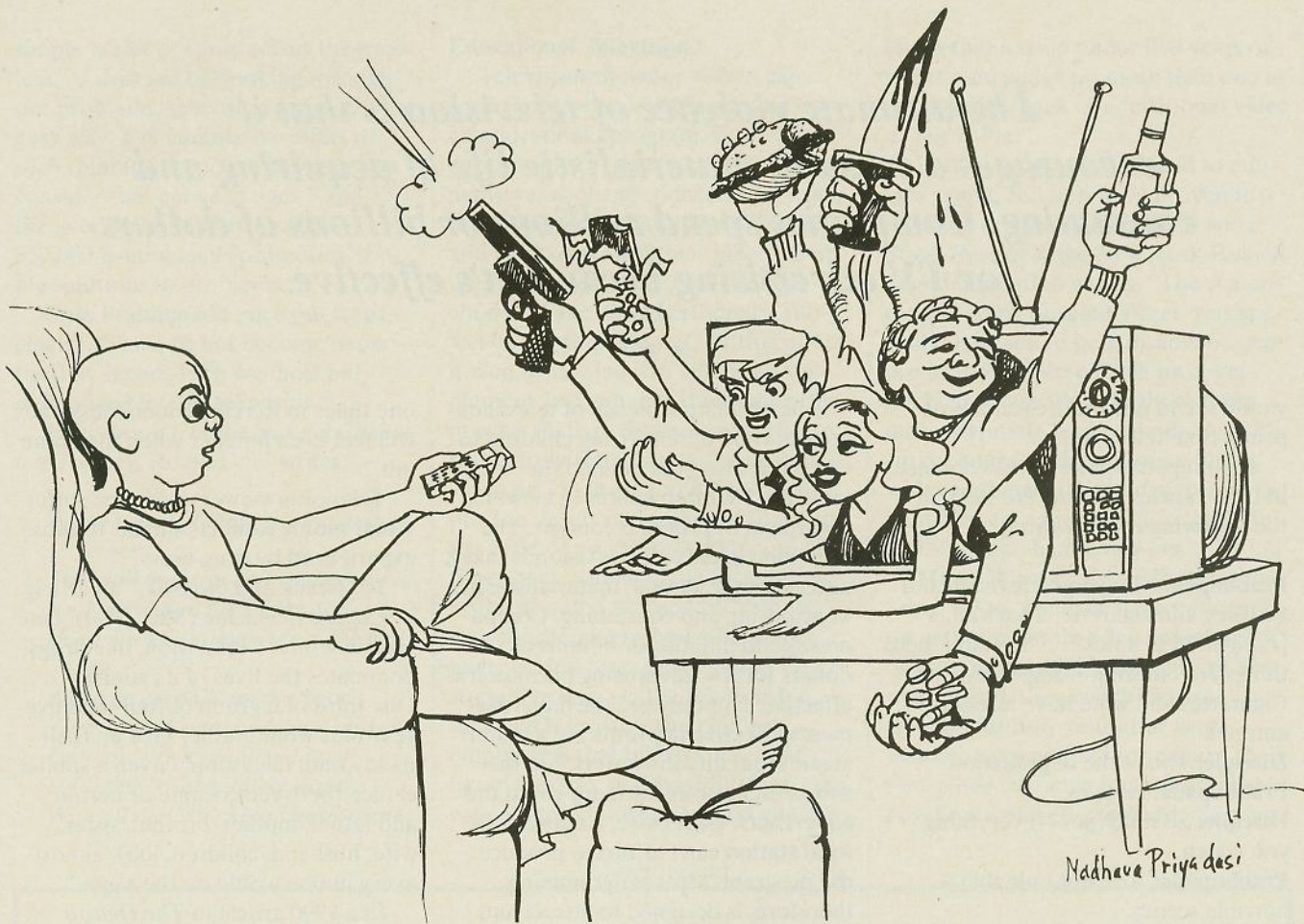
The life history of many such devotees is almost the same because there is always symmetry between the early lives of all great devotees of the Lord. According to Jīva Gosvāmī, Mahārāja Parīkṣit must have heard about the childhood pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa at Vṛndāvana, for he used to imitate the pastimes with his young playmates. According to Śrīdhara Svāmī, Mahārāja Parīkṣit used to imitate the worship of the family Deity by elderly members.

What We See and Think of, We Become

Mahārāja Parīkṣit heard the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and imitated them.

Our son saw the worship of Kṛṣṇa and imitated that. These activities transform one's consciousness from matter to spirit. Children should see Kṛṣṇa and hear about Him, because they'll become what they see, hear, and think about. Kṛṣṇa explains this in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (8.6): "Whatever state of being one remembers when he quits his body, O son of Kuntī, that state he will attain without fail." Prabhupāda comments:

A person who at the end of his life quits his body thinking of Kṛṣṇa attains the transcendental nature of the Supreme Lord, but it is not true that a person who thinks of something other than Kṛṣṇa attains the same transcendental state. This is a point we should note very carefully. . . . Mahārāja Bharata, although a great personality, thought of a deer at the end of his life, and so in his next life he was transferred into the body of a deer. . . . Of course, one's thoughts during the



course of one's life accumulate to influence one's thoughts at the moment of death, so this life creates one's next life.

Television's ideas, sounds, and images are not of Kṛṣṇa. In *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television*, Jerry Mander writes:

When you are watching TV, . . . you have opened your mind, and someone else's daydreams have entered. . . . Your mind is the screen for their microwave pictures. Once their images are inside you, they imprint upon your memory. They become yours. . . . What's more, the images remain in you permanently. . . . Please bring to mind any of the following: John F. Kennedy, Milton Berle, Captain Kangaroo, Captain Kirk, Henry Kissinger. Were you able to make a picture of them in your head? . . . Now would you make the effort, please, to erase these TV people from your mind? Make them go away. Erase Johnny Carson or Henry Kissinger. . . . Once television places an image inside your head, it is yours forever.

Just as children absorbed in spiritual images imitate them, children absorbed in television images imitate those images. Mander writes, "Children's games are largely based on their experiences. If they live in the country, their games will involve animals. If they go to movies, their games will reflect that. If they watch television, you can see it in their games. In all cases, the characters and creatures they are imitating are based upon the pictures of them which they carry in their minds."

We must ask whether we want our children to become like a television character, or like Kṛṣṇa. Do we want them to attain the spiritual world after death, or take a body according to their television-influenced thoughts?

Association with Passion and Ignorance

Quoting the Vedic scripture *Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya*, Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, "Association is very important. It acts just like a crystal stone, which will reflect anything which is put before it." And in commenting on the

importance of proper association for one wishing to attain ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa, Prabhupāda writes, "It is essential, therefore, that one constantly associate with pure devotees who are engaged morning and evening in chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. In this way one will get the chance to purify his heart and develop this ecstatic pure love for Kṛṣṇa." He also writes that one should strictly avoid association with persons not interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Unfortunately, television means association not with saintly people but with those in the darkness of passion and ignorance. In *The Big Book of Home Learning*, author Mary Pride writes that TV may keep kids off the street corners, but "it also brings the street corners into our living rooms." Children between the ages of three and seventeen see an average of eighteen thousand acts of violence. According to Jim Trelease, author of *Read-Aloud Handbook*, you would have to see all thirty-seven of Shakespeare's plays to see as many acts of human violence (fifty-four) as you

The ultimate violence of television is that it encourages a sensual, materialistic life of acquiring and consuming. Companies spend millions or billions of dollars for TV advertising because it's effective.



would see in just three evenings of prime-time television.

Prabhupāda spoke of this violence, in Los Angeles on June 26, 1975, in the following conversation:

Prabhupāda: Dog and television and whiskey and cigarette. That's all. [Laughter.] Is it not? . . . In India these things are entering—dog, television. Cigarettes and wine have already entered.

Disciple: This is the degradation.

Prabhupāda: Ah, yes.

Disciple: So much sex—everything you watch.

Prabhupāda: And not only that—horrible scenes.

Disciple: Yes.

Prabhupāda: Killing and like that.

Children are affected by this violence. Marie Winn writes in *The Plug-In Drug*:

There is no doubt that the children involved in serious crimes today are not normal. Their histories reveal without exception a background of poverty, degradation, neglect, scholastic failure, frustration, and heavy television viewing. But while poverty and family pathology did not appear for the first time in American society in the decades between 1952 and 1972, a frightening new breed of juvenile offender did. "It is as though our society had bred a new genetic strain," writes a reporter in *The New York Times*, "the child-murderer who feels no remorse and is scarcely conscious of his acts. . . ." The problem is not that they learn how to commit violence from watching violence on television (although perhaps they sometimes do), but that television conditions them to deal with real people as if they were on a television screen.

The ultimate violence of television goes beyond desensitizing children to cruelty. It also goes beyond the violence TV often ignites in viewers, regardless of program content. The ultimate violence of television is that it encourages a sensual, materialistic life of acquiring and consuming. Companies spend millions or billions of dollars for TV advertising because it's effective. Not only are the advertisements effective in producing a materialistic mentality in viewers, but the shows themselves must appeal to the advertisers. Otherwise, a network or local station can't afford to produce the program. Most programming, therefore, is designed to attract and produce the type of person who will be influenced by the advertisements. This is the real violence. As Prabhupāda writes, "To train the innocent boy to be a sense gratifier at the early age when the child is actually happy in any circumstance is the greatest violence."

Therefore, in *The Nectar of Instruction* Prabhupāda writes that intelligent persons interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness should never take part in such activities as watching television.

Television as Intoxication

It is bad enough that the content of most TV shows is firmly in passion and ignorance, filling our children's consciousness with images and desires in these lower modes of nature. But evidence also shows that the act of watching television is itself a type of intoxication, firmly in the mode of ignorance. "TV is a drug," wrote Eleanor Randolph in an article in *The Detroit Free Press* (May 9, 1990). "Like other addictions, such as cigarettes, booze . . . and drugs, television may be something else in our society that feels good for the moment, but only makes things worse. . . . If some-

one tunes in to relieve loneliness, they will feel even lonelier when they tune out."

Television viewers can even suffer visual-motor conflicts similar to those experienced by drug users.

In "Crack and the Box," an article in *Esquire* magazine (May 1990), Pete Hamill wrote, "Television, like drugs, dominates the lives of its addicts. . . . One third of a group of four- and five-year-olds would rather give up their daddy than television. Given a similar choice (between cocaine or heroin and father, mother, brother, sister, wife, husband, children, job), almost every junkie would do the same."

In a 1990 article in *The Detroit News*, Anne Roark wrote:

Television is more likely than any other leisure activity to leave people passive, tense and unable to concentrate. . . . The longer people watch, the less able they are to concentrate. They become increasingly drowsy and bored. As time goes on, they grow sadder, lonelier, more irritable and more hostile. Although it is true people are relaxed while the television set is on, when they turn it off, they are even less relaxed than before they began to watch.

Also, the content and nature of the shows and commercials may predispose children to take shelter of chemical intoxication to solve life's problems. After all, TV trains its viewers to change their mood by the turn of a dial. In *Read-Aloud Handbook*, Jim Trelease comments, "It is implicit in every one of television's commercials that there is no problem which cannot be solved by simple artificial means. Whether the problem is anxiety or common diarrhea, nervous tension or the common cold, a

simple tablet or spray solves the problem. . . . Instead of thinking through our problems, television promotes the easy way. The cumulative effect of such thinking is enormous when you consider that between ages 1 and 17 the average child is exposed to 350,000 commercials promoting simple solutions to problems."

Śrīla Prabhupāda once put it succinctly: "If we do not become hypnotized by Kṛṣṇa, then we must be hypnotized by this television."

In his book *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, Roald Dahl writes:

*We've watched them gaping at the screen,
They loll and slip and lounge about,
And stare until their eyes pop out.
(Last week in someone's place we saw
A dozen eyeballs on the floor.)
They sit and stare and stare and sit
Until they're hypnotized by it,
Until they're absolutely drunk
With all that shocking ghastly junk.*

Educational Television?

Television shows or videos can sometimes be a valuable adjunct to an educational program. From an in-depth study of the effects of TV and many years of experience using video in a classroom, I have found that TV and video can have their place when used with great care. Generally, if children have already studied a subject by reading about it, writing about it, and discussing it, a video can supplement and enhance their education in ways that are difficult to duplicate. But merely watching an "educational" video or TV show about, for example, the desert in Southern California has little or no value. And too much time spent watching any form of television or video is time lost from the way children learn best—by seeing, hearing, and practicing. Nearly every study I've seen on the relationship between television and children emphasizes that television is most likely to harm, and least likely to educate, young children. A good guide-

line is that a child under five years of age should watch no more than one or two hours a week of educational video or television.

In fact, programs designed to educate young children have proven to have the opposite effect. In *Sesame Street Revisited*, the New York Russell Sage Foundation writes, "The American program 'Sesame Street' was specially designed to help disadvantaged pre-school children catch up cognitively and verbally with those from more fortunate backgrounds. A 1975 survey suggests that 'Sesame Street' widened the achievement gap, and that light viewers exhibited more gains in learning than heavy viewers."

Marie Winn writes in *The Plug-In Drug*, "Poor children have not caught up with their more advantaged peers, or even made significant gains of any sort, though they watch 'Sesame Street' faithfully year after year. Schools have not had to readjust their first-grade curricula to accommodate a new breed of well-prepared, 'Sesame

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***Is it that we can't throw away our TV,
or that we don't really want to? We can stop our children
from running in the street or playing
with kitchen knives—why not from watching TV?***

• • •

Street-wise children with higher levels of language maturity. . . . Their language skills do not show any significant or permanent gains as they progress through school."

My own experience as a teacher bears this out. I could always tell the children who had watched much so-called educational television. They were less responsive to teaching, had a shorter attention span, were less interested in learning to read, and had a difficult time adjusting to any disciplined learning.

It is far better to prepare a child for school by reading to him and letting him see you read. "Compared to reading, television is still the more passive of the two activities," says Jim Trelease in *Read-Aloud Handbook*. "In reading, educators point out, a child must actively use a variety of skills involving sounds, spelling rules, blendings, as well as constructing mental images of the scene described in the book. Television requires no such mental activity."

Many of America's materially best-educated students seem to understand this. About one third of students in the Ivy League colleges such as Harvard, Yale, and Princeton never watch television. (*U.S. News*, April 12, 1993, "Inside the Ivy League")

Can videos be used for spiritual education? We have a large and growing library of Kṛṣṇa conscious videos available for our children. Yet even these should be used only rarely, especially when children are very young. Prabhupāda wanted our young children to play games about Kṛṣṇa, running and jumping outside. As they mature, our children should spend the bulk of their time chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, going to school, or doing some practical service. Certainly entertainment centered on Kṛṣṇa and His incarnations was an important feature

of Vedic life. But the average child today watches six or seven hours of television daily. Is there any history of a society that entertained its children for seven hours a day?

Parental Control—Can't or Won't

In *The Big Book of Home Learning*, Mary Pride writes, "Do you really want to know how it is that some mothers of seven can find time to write books or make patchwork quilts or run Bed and Breakfast operations while other mothers of one don't even get around to making the bed? Those who can, do. Those who watch TV (more than 15 minutes or so a day), can't."

An article in *The New York Times Magazine* (Feb. 2, 1975) said about such parents: "There is an immediate remedy available that does not seem to have occurred to them—turn off the set."

Is it that we can't throw away our TV, or that we don't really want to? We can stop our children from running in the street or playing with kitchen knives—why not from watching TV? Are we so attached to the box as a babysitter that we have no concern about its material and spiritual effects on our children? The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* states that one should not become a parent unless he can liberate his children from the material world. The price of life without TV seems a small one to pay.

More advice from *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*:

*The most important thing we've learned,
So far as children are concerned,
Is never, NEVER, NEVER let
Them near your television set—
Or better still, just don't install
The idiotic thing at all.*

Children Without TV?

In 1987, several parents at one of our ISKCON centers in England met to discuss the problem of television. Mādhavī Devī Dāśī related how, when her children were very young, they were satisfied with a small variety of Kṛṣṇa conscious videos. As time went by they wanted more and more variety. Gradually it got out of hand as she let them fill in with materialistic programs. In desperation she got rid of the TV, apprehensive of how the children would react. To her surprise, they never seemed to miss it and have rarely asked for it.

Children can play. They can read. They can garden. They can learn useful crafts. They can worship the household Deity.

*So please, oh please, we beg, we pray,
Go throw your TV set away,
And in its place you can install
A lovely bookshelf on the wall.*

As the children get a higher taste for Kṛṣṇa conscious engagement, they will have no interest in watching mundane movies or television. We want them to come to the standard that Śrīla Prabhupāda set in his personal life, as he relates in the following story:

"There was an incident in my life. I was, of course, at that time a householder. So one friend was going to the cinema with his family, and he saw me. I was in the street, and he stopped his car and asked me, 'Come. We are going to cinema.' So I refused, 'If you give me one thousand dollars, still I shall not go to the cinema.' So he dragged me. He took me to the cinema house, but I never entered. I came back. You see? Because it was detestful."

Another time Prabhupāda said, "The sign of a devotee is that the devotee is no more interested with material enjoyment. So these young boys and

girls, they do not go to cinema. Why? They don't want this! . . . They don't want this material happiness. . . . That is the test. When one becomes detestful of material enjoyment, you will know—or he'll know, personally, how much he is advanced in spiritual life."

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Urmilā Devi Dāsī was initiated in 1973 and has been involved in ISKCON education since 1983. She, her husband, and their three children live at the ISKCON community in Hillsborough, North Carolina, where she runs a school for children aged 5–18. She is the major author and compiler of *Vaikuṅṭha Children, a gurukula classroom guidebook*.



SCIENCE: THE VEDIC VIEW

Does God Go Against The Laws of Nature?

by Sadāpūta Dāsa

ERNAN MCMULLIN, a physicist, philosopher, and Catholic priest in the Department of Philosophy at Notre Dame University, has given careful thought to the relation between religion and modern science. In the introduction to his book *Evolution and Creation*, he offers some advice he calls "valuable direction for the contemporary Christian":

When an apparent conflict arises between a strongly supported scientific theory and some item of Christian doctrine, the Christian ought to look very carefully to the credentials of the doctrine. It may well be that when he does so, the scientific understanding will enable the doctrine to be reformulated in a more adequate way.¹

McMullin applies this advice to the question of how the Christian doctrine of creation is to be reconciled with the neo-Darwinian theory of evolution. Many Christian creationists have argued that divine creation is a supernatural process that cannot be understood in terms of known physical principles. But McMullin presents an alternative scenario in which creation is seen as a process of

evolution proceeding according to natural laws.

He bases this scenario on ideas expressed by the early church father Augustine. Augustine maintained that Genesis in the Bible refers to a process of instantaneous creation in which God implants "seed principles" in formless matter. These seed principles are not final created forms. Rather, they contain the potential to gradually manifest these forms.

McMullin grants that Augustine thought each created form would develop from its own seed principle. The idea that one type of organism would evolve from another was foreign to him. But McMullin points out that Augustine's idea can be readily adapted to modern evolutionary thinking. The seed principles can be thought of as the laws of nature God imposed on formless matter at the moment of creation (the Big Bang). Since God is omniscient and omnipotent, He can create laws that bring about the gradual manifestation of all created forms in the universe, including human beings.

These gradual evolutionary developments are simply the unfolding of God's original plan, and they do not

require any further "divine interventions" that would violate God's natural laws. Thus McMullin is able to formulate an idea of evolutionary creation that agrees fully with modern science and "complements Christian belief."²

Can McMullin's approach be applied to reconcile the *Bhagavad-gītā* with modern science? Of course, the topic of evolution is touchy and controversial. So we may be wise at first to just consider the idea that nature runs by divinely created natural laws. Let us see if the *Bhagavad-gītā* supports this idea.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.8) Kṛṣṇa says, "The whole cosmic order is under Me. Under My will it is automatically manifested again and again, and under My will it is annihilated at the end." Here Kṛṣṇa says that material nature (*prakṛti*) is manifested automatically (*avaśam*). Kṛṣṇa also says (13.30), *prakṛtyaiva ca karmāṇi kriyamāṇāni sarvaśaḥ*. This means that material activities are in all respects carried out by material nature (*prakṛti*). This also suggests that *prakṛti* runs automatically, an idea given further support by the nearly identical statement (3.27)

What if your scriptures really do make statements contrary to modern science? How far can you go in scriptural reinterpretation and reformulation?

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prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ. Kṛṣṇa also says (13.20) that the transformations of matter and of living beings are both products of material nature.

All in all, then, one might argue that the *Bhagavad-gītā* agrees with the modern scientific conclusion that all material phenomena run according to the laws of nature. These phenomena are divinely directed in the sense that the laws of nature are created and sustained by God.

One might further suggest that God never engages in any kind of “divine intervention,” for then He would break His own laws (and violate the conclusions of science). From McMullin’s observations, one might gather that we’d be wise to understand the *Bhagavad-gītā* in this way. After all, if we think that God sometimes breaks the laws of nature, when does He do that? Certainly He doesn’t seem to do it during the scientific experiments that demonstrate the natural laws. If we think God breaks the laws of nature, He must do it when scientists aren’t looking.

This means we are trying to fit God into the gaps in our scientific knowledge. McMullin warns, “Making God a ‘God of the gaps’ is a risky business. Gap-closing is the *business* of science. To rest belief in God on the presence of gaps in the explanatory chain is to pit religion *against* science.”³

If we invoke a “God of the gaps,” then we are asking for embarrassment when science fills the gaps and shows that we are fools. To show the inevitable results of this kind of folly, McMullin cites a remark by Augustine:

If those not bound by the authority of the Scriptures find a Christian mistaken in a field which they them-

selves know well and hear him base foolish opinions on the Scriptures, how are they going to believe the Scriptures regarding the resurrection of the dead? [How can they believe the Scriptures] when they think that the pages of Scripture are full of falsehoods regarding facts which they themselves have learnt from experience and light of reason?⁴

We can rephrase this by asking, “How are people going to believe in the scriptures of Kṛṣṇa consciousness if devotees tell them that these scriptures are full of statements contrary to modern science?” Augustine has raised a good point, and McMullin responds to it by calling him “the man of good sense.”⁵

But there might be a problem here. What if your scriptures really do make statements contrary to modern science? How far can you go in scriptural reinterpretation and reformulation? To see what I mean, let’s consider some further statements from the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

First of all, is it valid to interpret *prakṛti* as material nature in the sense that physical scientists understand this term? Kṛṣṇa says, “Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence and false ego—all together these eight constitute My separated material energies.” (Bg. 7.4) Now modern science certainly accepts earth, water, fire, and air as forms of material energy, and ether might be so accepted if we were to identify it as Einstein’s curved space-time continuum. But modern physics makes no reference to mind, intelligence, and false ego as separate material energies.

Careful study shows that the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Srīmad-Bhāgavatam* portray mind, intelli-

gence, and false ego as material energies not made from earth, water, fire, air, and ether. According to these texts, the mind comes up with thoughts, which govern the behavior of the body. This means the physical body is influenced by a type of energy, called mind (*manas*), unknown to modern science.

So even if the *Bhagavad-gītā* is saying that material phenomena run automatically by the laws of nature, we must recognize that the *Gītā*’s laws of nature are quite different from modern physicists’ laws. If the *Gītā* is right, then thinking is not just a product of brain action. Rather, it involves the action of a kind of energy that science doesn’t know about.

This could be true, because there is an enormous gap in our scientific understanding of the brain. Why should we suppose that if science ever fills this gap it will fill it with the kind of physical theory of brain action that many scientists now favor? Scientists generally believe that the brain controls the mind. But a theory may emerge in which the mind controls the brain.

Another point is that according to the *Bhagavad-gītā*, God does intervene in the course of natural events. The transformations of matter by natural law are only partly automatic, like the workings of a computer interfacing with a human operator.

The *Bhagavad-gītā* (13.23) defines the role of the Supersoul as follows: “In this body there is another, a transcendental enjoyer, who is the Lord, the supreme proprietor, who exists as the overseer and permitter, and who is known as the Supersoul.” The words overseer (*upadraṣṭā*) and permitter (*anumantā*) indicate that the Supersoul is in charge of the activities of each person. This means that the Super-

soul's decisions determine the behavior of the person's physical body.

It follows that the human body does *not* strictly follow the laws of physics. If it did, the Supersoul's role as controller would be a mockery, because His decisions would always have to accord with a system of differential equations.

Nor can we say that the Supersoul exerts control by directing the random events of quantum theory. Quantum mechanical randomness must always follow quantum statistics, and this means that it must appear noisy and chaotic, like the clicks made by a Geiger counter near a radioactive substance. Of course, the Supersoul can create random effects if He wants to. But to say that the Supersoul must always act in the chaotic fashion dictated by quantum statistics would be to contradict His position as overseer and permitter.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.15) Kṛṣṇa says, "I am seated in everyone's heart, and from Me come remembrance, knowledge and forgetfulness." Here one might conceivably argue that Kṛṣṇa simply set matter in motion at the time of creation in such a way as to provide remembrance, knowledge, and forgetfulness for all the sentient beings who would later develop.

But this interpretation strains hard against *Bhagavad-gītā* 10.10: "To those who are constantly devoted to serving Me with love, I give the understanding

by which they can come to Me." This indicates that Kṛṣṇa gives personal attention to individuals.

Commenting on this verse, Śrīla Prabhupāda writes that Kṛṣṇa gives instructions from within so that one "may ultimately come to Him without difficulty." Of course, when a person receives these instructions, the result is that the person's behavior changes.

In other words, Kṛṣṇa specifically reciprocates with each person in an observable way that cannot be accounted for by any impersonal system of physical laws. This conclusion is also supported by *Bhagavad-gītā* 10.11: "To show them special mercy, I, dwelling in their hearts, destroy with the shining lamp of knowledge the darkness born of ignorance."

McMullin raises the question, "If Nature is complete in its own order, if there are no barriers to the reach of science, does not belief in a Creator drop away as superfluous?"⁶ Many intelligent people may feel inclined to reply that if Nature truly is complete in its own order, then belief in the Creator as described in *Bhagavad-gītā* ought to drop away.

But why should we think that the order of nature, as envisioned by contemporary scientists, is complete? If science does succeed in filling the many gaps that exist in our current knowledge, a radically new and unexpected picture of reality may emerge.

It may be the business of scientists to fill gaps, but scientists are certainly not obliged to fill them with the ideas current at one moment in history.

Just as nineteenth-century physicists had no idea of the quantum mechanical theory of the atom, so present-day scientists can have no idea of the science of mind that may develop in the future. And if science someday makes enormous progress and scientists begin to acquire the scientific knowledge of Brahmā, they may then be able to see clearly how God intervenes creatively in the phenomena of nature.

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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 *Forbidden Archeology: The Hidden History of the Human Race*.



THE LAND, THE COWS, AND KRṢṆA

The Tragedy of Toxic Meat

by Hare Kṛṣṇa Devī Dāsī

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA TAUGHT that the purpose of all religions is the same: to help people develop love of God. And to aid in achieving this end, the basic principles of religion are also the same: truthfulness, cleanliness, austerity, and mercy. All religions encourage people to develop these qualities to help them awaken their love of God.

The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* explains that four sins—gambling, illicit sex,

intoxication, and meat-eating—destroy the four principles of religion. In particular, animal slaughter and meat-eating destroy mercy. To cut the throat of a living, feeling animal, one must repress any natural inclination toward mercy. At first glance, it might seem like modern meat-eaters are exempt from the cruelty of animal slaughter. After all, what do a couple of kids chomping down hamburgers at a fast-food outlet have to do with cru-

elty and violence? But the truth is, mass marketing, modern agribusiness, and centralized slaughterhouses dramatically escalate the cruelty and suffering. The miserable animals are only the first in a great network of victims who suffer in a slaughterhouse society.

Material Pleasure and Safety

When sinful activities destroy the principles of religion, people cannot succeed in spiritual life, nor can they

be happy or peaceful. By luring us into temporary sense pleasure, sinful activities reinforce our misconception that we are our material bodies and make us forget the spiritual purpose of life. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa has attached dangers to sinful activities to discourage us from seeking pleasure in them. To a certain extent, everyone knows the risks involved in sin. Responsible parents try to keep their children from gambling, intoxication, and sexual promiscuity. So it seems ironic that they expect meat-eating to be safe.

Jack in the Box—A Horrible Surprise

These things are on my mind because of an outbreak of E. coli bacteria poisoning in Washington State in January. Four hundred people were poisoned by hamburgers sold by the Jack in the Box fast-food chain. Three children died, and 125 people had to be hospitalized. An article in *The New York Times* (February 9) stated, “The outbreak was the largest and most serious of a dangerous bacterium that has struck before and will surely strike again.” News of the poisonings brought an immediate outcry that the government, cattlemen, and meat packers should take steps to protect meat from contamination.

People blamed confinement cattle operations for increasing the spread of the pathogens among cattle. Ranchers and meat packers were put on the defensive. A *Farm Journal* editorial (mid-February) bemoaned the crisis: “Beef’s place on the consumer dinner plate is no longer secure. The status of beef in the American diet has enough challenges without food safety issues.”

Remedies for Unsafe Meat?

The public demanded solutions to the problem of unsafe meat. “At the moment, the U.S. is losing the food poisoning war,” said a science article in *The Wall Street Journal* (March 16). “The way food is produced and eaten today is making life a picnic for microorganisms.” Bad meat is blamed for 150 deaths and 150,000 illnesses counted in the U.S. in the past 10 years. In response to the Jack in the Box crisis, the new secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture appointed 160 more meat inspectors,

bringing the total to 7,200. But in a country where millions of animals are slaughtered yearly, how much inspecting can 160 more people do?

According to *The Wall Street Journal* (February 12), “Meat inspection has changed little since reaction to Upton Sinclair’s 1906 book *The Jungle* on dirty packinghouse conditions got the federal government into the watchdog business.” Current inspection methods at high-speed processing plants mean that inspectors usually

maldehyde and benzene, while others are totally unknown.” Other problems include shipping and storing radioactive waste. Not a very promising solution.

Still another suggestion is to inject healthy animals with friendly bacteria that will drive off attacks from harmful bacteria. But some scientists worry about those supposedly friendly germs. We know too little, they say, about whether a strain friendly in the lab might go toxic in the wild. (*The*

Tainted Meat Deaths Teach Obvious Lesson

Letter to the editor of *The New York Times*, March 2, 1993

(Reprinted by permission)

Your Feb. 9 Science Times article seeking lessons in the outbreak of illnesses from tainted meat in Washington State misses the most important lesson: avoid meat entirely.

The facts speak for themselves. Salmonella infects one in three poultry products bought in this country’s supermarkets, and millions of flulike maladies are the result. Salmonella is hardly the only hazardous bacterium that finds its way into meat. Campylobacter, yersinia and listeria are all common, and produce many infections a year.

More important, the rates of cancer, heart disease, stroke and diabetes practically drop off the chart in cultures that eat little or no meat. A national meat-free diet would save more in health care costs than any reform plan being considered. . . . [emphasis added]

We should all heed the lessons of modern medicine and kick the meat habit.

David B. Wasser
Communications Director
Physicians Committee for
Responsible Medicine

have time for only a quick look at a fraction of the carcasses a plant turns out.

Even if more sophisticated inspection methods were used, inspectors “would be able to keep track only of the number of microorganisms in meat—not whether they are harmful. Nor can they detect pathogens such as the virulent E. coli strain blamed in the tainted-hamburger episode in time to keep it from reaching consumers; it typically takes days for that pathogen to show up in tests.” (*The Wall Street Journal*, February 12)

Another method offered is to kill pathogens in meat by irradiation. But according to Christine Klaehn, director of the Food Irradiation Project, “Irradiation causes chemical alterations in food leading to formation of radiolytic products. Radiation biologists say some of these new substances are known carcinogens, such as for-

Wall Street Journal, March 16)

The problem is, bacterial contamination in meat is natural. Most meat contains millions of bacteria. According to nature’s plan, bacteria are supposed to break down meat and make it spoil and decay. If they didn’t, the landscape would be littered with dead animal carcasses.

Many bacteria don’t discriminate between one kind of flesh and another. They grow just as well in human bodies as they do in the bodies of hogs or chickens. It makes sense that pathogens that thrive inside cattle are likely to do well inside humans, because the bodies are so similar.

Children at Risk

Sadly, these pathogens are the most toxic to young children, who have the least knowledge of dietary hazards and the least control over what they eat. In an article in *The*

The two chief arguments left in favor of meat-eating are that meat provides protein and some people like the flavor. You could offer the same arguments for cannibalism.

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New York Times (Feb. 9), Lawrence K. Altman, M.D., wrote, "Epidemiologists are finding that the ailment hemolytic uremic syndrome [caused by E. coli bacteria] can strike anyone at any age, with the highest rates in children under 5, especially for the kidney complications."

To compound the tragedy, children are prime targets of advertising by fast-food chains. Millions of conscientious parents who carefully guard their small children from playing with electric outlets and running in traffic think nothing of taking them to eat hamburger or chicken at McDonald's or Colonel Sanders.

Of course, contamination from E. coli bacteria is only one of a long list of dangers from eating meat. Dr. Walter Willet, professor and chairman of the department of Nutrition at Harvard School of Public Health, declared in 1991, "If you step back and look at the data, the optimum amount of red meat you eat should be zero." The conclusion is, if I feed my children meat, I'm teaching them habits likely to shorten their life. (See "Tainted Meat Deaths," p. 22)

Leadership Example Needed

Writers like Jeremy Rifkin and Jerome Robbins have documented not only the health problems caused by meat-eating but also the immense environmental destruction caused by feed crop production and overgrazing. Agricultural economist Marty Strange explains how U.S. government subsidies geared to large-scale growers of feed-crops drive small farmers off the land. Food and development expert Frances Moore Lappe and sociologist Harriet Friedman have exposed how commercial feed crops for meat pro-

duction are crushing lives of peasant farmers abroad. Isaac Bashevis Singer, Colman McCarthy, and even the U.S. House Committee on Government Operations have revealed the health hazards and psychological trauma endured by slaughterhouse workers.

The evidence against meat-eating has become overwhelming. At this point, the two chief arguments left in its favor are that meat provides protein and some people like the flavor. You could offer the same arguments for cannibalism.

In view of the detrimental effects of animal slaughter and meat-eating, some people think government leaders should speak out against the destructiveness of a meat-based culture—and back up their words by personal example. It's hard to see how leaders can push for lower health-care costs, lower farm subsidies, and higher environmental awareness and then leave their offices at night and go home to a dinner of steak or chicken.

It's hard to change old traditions, even when they're dangerous. But the health and environmental costs are continually escalating. Our modern leaders should set the right example—get meat off the table—because the slaughterhouse culture we live in hurts everyone, rich and poor, present and future generations.

Business leaders seem to think that spreading hamburger stands around the world represents economic progress, but in fact these businesses are harbingers of disaster. As Śrīla Prabhupāda explains, "These greatly sinful acts are responsible for all the trouble in present society. People do not know what they are doing in the

name of economic development." (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.17.3, purport) The karmic reactions for animal slaughter are so grave that a meat-eating society can never be safe, let alone merciful or peaceful.

Numbed to Spirituality

As I explained in the beginning of this article, the final tragedy of meat-eating is that it is tantamount to spiritual suicide. For human beings to kill innocent animals requires them to subjugate their feelings of mercy and humility—feelings essential for spiritual progress. When these finer human sentiments are obliterated, people become so dull they can no longer understand the true desires of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the dearest friend of every living entity. And without understanding His will, there is no chance of peace or brotherhood.

Only the animal killer cannot relish the transcendental message of the Supreme Lord. Therefore if people are to be educated on the path of Godhead, they must be taught first and foremost *to stop the process of animal killing*. . . . *It is nonsensical to say that animal killing has nothing to do with spiritual realization*. [There is a need] to save the poor animals from the slaughtering process of their big brothers who clamor for universal brotherhood, peace, justice and equity. There is no justice when there is animal killing.

—*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.3.24, purport

Hare Kṛṣṇa Devī Dāsī, an ISKCON devotee since 1978, spent several years on the Gūtā Nāgarī farm in Pennsylvania. She is co-editor of the newsletter Hare Kṛṣṇa Rural Life.

Rathayātrā Pas

When Śrīla Prabhupāda brought this colorful festival from India to the rest of the world, he revealed its profound meaning.

by Lokanāth Swami

ŚRĪ CAITANYA MAHĀPRABHU spent His later years in Jagannātha Purī, Orissa, immersed in love of Godhead and absorbed in wonderful pastimes with His intimate associates and with the Deity of Kṛṣṇa in Purī, known as Jagannātha, “the Lord of the universe.” This was nearly five hundred years ago.

One of the most attractive of Lord Caitanya’s pastimes was His role in the yearly Rathayātrā, the Festival of the Chariots, in which Lord Jagannātha parades through the main street of the city on a huge decorated cart pulled by devotees. Year after year—for eighteen years altogether—Lord Caitanya took part in the Rathayātrā festival in Purī.

Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu was Kṛṣṇa Himself in the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. So during the festival He used to chant and dance in front of Lord Jagannātha’s cart, acting out a drama. Śrīla Prabhupāda, commenting on the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, where these pastimes are described, says that the two Lords—Lord Caitanya and Lord Jagannātha—were reenacting a conjugal pastime, or *mādhurya-līlā*. Lord Caitanya, absorbed in transcendental emotions, would play the role of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, Lord Jagannātha’s eternal consort. Sometimes Lord Caitanya would fall behind Lord Jagannātha’s cart. The cart would then stop as Jagannātha tried to catch sight of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, attracted by His graceful and enchanting dancing.

The two Lords were reenacting the pastimes performed five thousand years ago in the holy place of Kurukṣetra when Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa met after many years of separation. They had last

seen each other in Vṛndāvana, when Akrūra had come to take Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to nearby Mathurā. That day had been the worst day for Rādhārāṇī, the *gopīs* (cowherd girls), and all the Vrajavāsīs (residents of Vṛndāvana). As Kṛṣṇa left, He promised that after killing the demons outside Vṛndāvana He would return.

Kṛṣṇa, the life of the Vrajavāsīs, stayed in Mathurā for some time and then moved to Dvārakā, where He continued His wondrous pastimes. During these many years, Rādhā and the Vrajavāsīs intensely, almost unbearably felt separation from Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet.

The Meeting at Kurukṣetra

When Nanda Mahārāja (Kṛṣṇa’s father) and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and the other residents of Vṛndāvana learned of Kṛṣṇa’s plan to visit Kurukṣetra, not far away, they at once decided to go there. The long-awaited meeting of Kṛṣṇa with these devotees from Vṛndāvana took place in Kurukṣetra on the occasion of a solar eclipse, when the residents of Dvārakā came to bathe in Kurukṣetra’s holy lakes.

The residents of Dvārakā, members of the Yadu dynasty, erected their royal camp, and nearby the cowherd Vrajavāsīs parked their simple carts. Kṛṣṇa and His brother Balarāma, Their sister Subhadrā, and the residents of Dvārakā and Vṛndāvana like Vasudeva, Devakī, Nanda Mahārāja, Yaśodā Māyī, Rohiṇī, Rādhārāṇī, the *gopīs*—all met together, mingling and sharing one another’s company.

The Vrajavāsīs and the *gopīs* were especially pleased to meet Kṛṣṇa, the

Lord of their life. Yet they felt that meeting Him at Kurukṣetra was different from meeting Him in Vṛndāvana. They were accustomed to see Him as a simple cowherd boy, not as a royal prince. The Kurukṣetra setting left them unsatisfied. They wanted Kṛṣṇa to come back to Vṛndāvana.

When Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa met, Rādhārāṇī, unable to hide Her desire, expressed Her feelings in this way (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 13. 126–131):

You are the same Kṛṣṇa, and I am the same Rādhārāṇī. We are meeting again the same way that We met in the beginning of Our lives. Although We are both the same, My mind is still attracted to Vṛndāvana-dhāma. I wish that You please again appear with Your lotus feet in Vṛndāvana.

Kurukṣetra is crowded with people, their elephants and horses, and the rattling of chariots. In Vṛndāvana, however, there are flower gardens where the humming of the bees and chirping of the birds can be heard. Here at Kurukṣetra You are dressed like a royal prince, accompanied by great warriors, but in Vṛndāvana You appeared just like an ordinary cowherd boy, accompanied only by Your beautiful flute.

Here there is not even a drop of the ocean of transcendental happiness that I enjoyed with You in Vṛndāvana. I therefore request You to come to Vṛndāvana and enjoy pastimes with Me. If You do so, My ambition will be fulfilled.

Rādhārāṇī also pleaded on behalf of the Vrajavāsīs: “Why is it that You are simply keeping them alive in a state of



After meeting Kṛṣṇa at Kurukṣetra after a long separation, the gopis wanted to bring Him back to Vṛndāvana, where they had enjoyed with Him in their youth.

***Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma, and Subhadṛā became
simply astounded. Their eyes grew bigger and bigger
in amazement, and other parts of their bodies—
arms, legs, and neck—withdrew into their bodies.***

• • •

suffering? The inhabitants of Vṛndāvana do not want You dressed like a prince, nor do they want You to associate with great warriors in a different country. They cannot leave the land of Vṛndāvana, and without Your presence they are all dying. What is their condition to be?" (Cc. *Madhya* 13, 145–146)

Hearing Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's pleas further stirred Lord Kṛṣṇa's love for the residents of Vṛndāvana and perturbed His body and mind.

"My dearest Rādhārāṇī," the Lord said, "Please hear Me. I am speaking the truth. I cry day and night simply remembering all of You inhabitants of Vṛndāvana. No one knows how unhappy this makes Me.

"All the inhabitants of Vṛndāvanadhāma—My mother, father, cowherd boyfriends, and everyone else—are like My life and soul. . . . I am always subservient to the loving affairs of all of You. I am under Your control only. My separation from You and residence in distant places have occurred due to My strong misfortune." (Cc. *Madhya* 13, 149–151)

Full with the desire to take Kṛṣṇa back to Vṛndāvana, the *gopīs* tried to convince Him and pull His chariot. And again, just as when He had left Vṛndāvana on Akrūra's chariot, the Lord promised Rādhārāṇī He would return. "Your loving qualities always attract Me to Vṛndāvana," Kṛṣṇa said. "Indeed, they will bring Me back within ten or twenty days, and when I return I shall enjoy both day and night with You and all the damsels of Vrajabhūmi." (Cc. *Madhya* 13, 158)

The Secret Behind Lord Caitanya's Dancing

In this meeting of Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa lies the secret behind Lord Caitanya's drama at the Jagannātha Purī Rathayātrā. Only a few of Lord Caitanya's intimate associates could under-

stand it. Śrīla Prabhupāda comments that the whole mood of the Rathayātrā festival is that of bringing Kṛṣṇa back from Kurukṣetra to Vṛndāvana. The imposing temple of Lord Jagannātha in Purī is taken to represent the kingdom of Dvārakā, the place where Kṛṣṇa enjoys supreme opulence, and the temple of Guṇḍicā, to which the Lord is brought, stands for Vṛndāvana, the realm of His sweetest pastimes.

Assuming the part of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, Lord Caitanya felt the ecstasy of this most exalted of the *gopīs*. By falling behind the Rathayātrā cart, He was testing Lord Jagannātha, seeking His reciprocation: "Is Kṛṣṇa remembering us? I want to see. Does He really care for us? If He does care, then He will wait and try to find out where we are."

Amazingly, every time Lord Caitanya would go behind the Rathayātrā cart, it would stop. Lord Jagannātha was waiting, trying to see, "Where is Rādhā? Where are the Vrajavāsīs?" Lord Jagannātha, who is Kṛṣṇa Himself, was trying to convey that transcendental feeling to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. "Even though I was away from Vṛndāvana, I have not forgotten You, My dear devotees, especially You, Rādhārāṇī."

The Deities' Unusual Forms

Anyone who sees the forms of Lord Jagannātha, Lord Baladeva, and Subhadṛā as they are worshiped in Jagannātha Purī may wonder why they look the way they do. Usually Kṛṣṇa is worshiped in His humanlike form of Śyāmasundara, playing the flute. Why would Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu choose to worship Lord Jagannātha, this crude, strange-looking form of the Lord? And why has such a form appeared in Purī in the first place? To discover the reason, let us go back to Kurukṣetra.

During the visit by the Vrajavāsīs, a

confidential pastime took place. Rohiṇī, Lord Balarāma's mother, met in a big tent a group of residents of Dvārakā. She had been staying in Vṛndāvana and now wanted to tell the residents of Dvārakā how much suffering the Vrajavāsīs were going through because of separation from Kṛṣṇa. Before beginning her narration, she posted Subhadṛā at the entrance of the tent. "If Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma come this way," Rohiṇī told her, "don't let Them in." She didn't want the Lords to hear her report, which would certainly agonize Them.

When Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma did happen to come by, Subhadṛā dutifully stopped Them from getting in. But They managed to listen from outside the tent. As They began hearing, Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma, and even Subhadṛā, who stood between Them, became motionless. They were completely dumbfounded, immersed in intense thoughts of Rādhā, the *gopīs*, and all the Vrajavāsīs.

Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma, and Subhadṛā had heard of the Vrajavāsīs' feelings of separation, but never directly from a Vrajavāsī like Rohiṇī. As a result, Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma, and Subhadṛā became simply astounded. Their eyes grew bigger and bigger in amazement, and other parts of their bodies—arms, legs, and neck—withdrew into their bodies, until Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma, and Subhadṛā exactly resembled the Deities now worshiped at Purī.

How Jagannātha Came to Purī

How then did these forms come to be worshiped? A few thousand years ago, Viśvakarmā, the architect of the demigods, agreed to carve Deities of Lord Jagannātha, Baladeva, and Subhadṛā, at the request of a great devotee king named Indradyumna. The king promised to let Viśvakarmā carve in seclusion until the work was finished.

(please turn to page 48)

A TREATISE ON LORD ŚRĪ KRṢṂA

*Part five of an overview of the
Ṣaṭ Sandarbha of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī*

...

by Satya Nārāyaṇa Dāsa and Kuṇḍalī Dāsa

IN THE FIRST THREE of his *Sandarbhās* (treatises), Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī discussed the supremacy of Bhagavān, the Personality of Godhead. Bhagavān is superior to both the Brahman (impersonal) and Paramātmā (Supersoul) features of the Absolute Truth.

Now, in the *Kṛṣṇa Sandarbha*, he says we must decide the identity of Bhagavān, or rather the identity of Svayam Bhagavān, the original form of the Personality of Godhead. Why? Because there are many incarnations of the Lord but we must know which one is the original form of the Lord. The answer, he says, must be decided by careful analysis, and that is the subject of the *Kṛṣṇa Sandarbha*.

Before the advent of Lord Caitanya, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa was not widely accepted as Svayam Bhagavān, only as one among many incarnations. His personal abode, therefore, along with His eternal associates and their eternal pastimes to-



*Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme
Personality of Godhead*

gether, were not accepted.

Various statements in the scriptures imply that Kṛṣṇa is not the original form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. For example, somewhere it is stated that Kṛṣṇa is a plenary expansion from Nārāyaṇa, elsewhere that He is an incarnation of Mahā-Viṣṇu, and elsewhere an incarnation of the hair of Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu. Still elsewhere He is said to be an incarnation of Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, of Vāmana, or of Lord Rāma. There are many other statements in this vein. This *Sandarbha* puts such statements in proper perspective. In fact, here in the *Kṛṣṇa Sandarbha* Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī displays his brilliant scholarship more than in any other book.

In the first chapter of the *Bhāgavatam* the assembled sages put six questions to Sūta Gosvāmī. One of them was this: "Please, O intelligent sage, tell us about the auspicious incarnations of the Lord." That request is answered in the third

chapter, where the incarnations are listed. Only the chief ones are listed, however, because the Lord's incarnations are unlimited. Just as rivers flow from an unlimited source of water, unlimited incarnations appear in the world, one after another. To list them all is impossible. So the third chapter lists only twenty-two.

The Essential Verse

Following the list of incarnations, one of the most important verses of the *Bhāgavatam* appears:

*ete cāmśa-kalāḥ puṁsaḥ
kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam
indrāri-vyākulaṁ lokam
mṛdayanti yuge yuge*

This verse forms the basis of *Śrī Kṛṣṇa Sandarbha*. The verse says, "These incarnations are portions—or portions—of the opulence of the Lord's *puruṣa* incarnations, but Kṛṣṇa is the original Personality of Godhead. The incarnations descend in every age to please the devotees by removing the demons who trouble Indra."

Jīva Gosvāmī says that this is the key verse because it mentions the original Personality of Godhead (Svayam Bhagavān). Indeed, it states categorically that Kṛṣṇa is that original Personality of Godhead. There are several verses in *Bhāgavatam* about Kṛṣṇa, but none are so definitive and clear. So he calls this verse the emperor verse, because it can defeat all others. He therefore analyzes this verse in great detail, word by word.

Ete, he says, means "these." *Ca* means "and," and it signifies "others." So *ete ca* refers to the twenty-two incarnations listed, and before them the *puruṣa avatāras* (the three forms by which Viṣṇu oversees the creation). It also includes the unlimited other incarnations not listed. Although these others are not directly mentioned, they are implied in the Sanskrit by the word *ca*.

The word *aṁśa* means "section" or "portion." It applies to expansions and expansions of expansions. The word *kalā* means "opulence." The word *puṁ-*

saḥ means "person," and Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī says that it is a synonym for *puruṣa*. So the verse states that all the unlimited incarnations come from the *puruṣa avatāras*.

One of the six standard methods of analyzing a text is to see whether the opening statements and the concluding statements confirm each other. In this chapter of the *Bhāgavatam* the opening statement refers to the *puruṣa* incarnation of the Lord (*bhagavān*), and the concluding statement is this *ete cāmśa*

Kṛṣṇa? Chapter, the twenty-third verse of the chapter states that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma appeared in the Vṛṣṇi dynasty as the nineteenth and twentieth incarnations. Now the *ete cāmśa* verse states that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. But if Kṛṣṇa is an incarnation, how then are we to conclude that He is the original Personality of Godhead, the source of all incarnations?

In reply, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī refers to the *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā*, which says that in

logic a later statement is always to be taken as more powerful than a previous one. A simple example illustrates how this works: If you ask for a glass of water and then say, "No, actually I would like a glass of milk," it is clearly understood that you want milk, not water.

On this reasoning, therefore, the latter statement—that Kṛṣṇa is Svayam Bhagavān, the original Personality of Godhead—is definitive and final.

To leave no room for doubt, Jīva Gosvāmī studies the point from yet another angle. Again he cites the *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā*, which lists six criteria by which one can determine the most powerful statement. By these criteria, there is a type of statement, called a *śruti*, that is independent and needs no elaboration or interpretation for the full meaning to be understood. Such a statement stands as the most powerful.

By this guideline, the statement *kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam* is a *śruti*. It is an unambiguous declarative statement, absolute and categorical. It

needs no interpretation and in fact is more powerful than the earlier mention of Kṛṣṇa as one of twenty-two incarnations.

Another point to note is that in the list of incarnations the word *bhagavān* is used only for Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa; it is not used anywhere else in the list.

But *bhagavān*, as used in that verse, applies to both Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, so someone may protest that this creates ambiguity. If you put a lamp on the threshold, it gives light both inside and outside. Similarly, in the list of incarna-

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verse. So Śrī Jīva says that if we study the first verse of the chapter and the first two lines of the concluding verse, we shall find that the two words *puruṣa* and *bhagavān* are used in both (*puṁsaḥ* and *puruṣa* being synonymous). Both verses, then, state that all the incarnations come not directly from Kṛṣṇa but from the *puruṣa avatāras*. And Kṛṣṇa is Svayam Bhagavān, the Personality of Godhead Himself.

Kṛṣṇa: Incarnation or Source?

So now we may ask, who exactly is

Our characteristic is to serve God.

If I don't serve God, then the characteristic will remain and I'll have to serve *māyā*, thinking in illusion that I have become master.



tions the word *bhagavān* gives its meaning to both Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma.

Jīva Gosvāmī says, “Yes, but that is all right, because technically Lord Balarāma is also not an incarnation.”

Then why are Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma listed as incarnations? Vyāsadeva could have listed twenty incarnations and then stated at the end that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma are Bhagavān. Then things would have been clear. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī counters that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma are listed because there is some similarity. Just as the other incarnations appear and seem to take birth and so on, so do Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. That's why Vyāsa listed Them as incarnations.

Kṛṣṇa Stands Apart

As Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī continues his word-by-word analysis, he comes to the word *tu*, which means “but.” It is a pivotal word, for it signals the reader or listener that what is about to come is different from what came before. In this chapter the topic is incarnations, so by using *tu* the author signals that Kṛṣṇa is not among the incarnations.

The word *tu* is also used to indicate the beginning of a definitive statement. According to the rules of Sanskrit, *tu* is used for those definitive statements classified as *śruti*, or the most powerful statements, described earlier. In effect, therefore, *tu* gives increased force to the categorical declaration that Kṛṣṇa is the original Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Now Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī explains that in the list of incarnations and in the *ete caṁśa* verse the word *bhagavān* has the same meaning. It conveys that, in reality, Kṛṣṇa is not an incarnation. In fact He is not even the source of incarnations. He is the source of the source of incarnations.

As Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī comes to the third line of the verse, he says that it is not to be linked with the second. In this

four-line verse, the second line stands alone, because its theme completely differs from what appears in the other three. The use of the word *tu* serves to separate the second line from the rest of the verse. Since Kṛṣṇa doesn't come for the sole purpose of ridding the universe of Indra's enemies, His coming is not like that of the other incarnations. Therefore the line about Him stands apart from the other three lines, which speak about incarnations.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī makes a grammatical point to support this view. The word *mṛdayanti* is plural, and Kṛṣṇa is singular, so Kṛṣṇa cannot be included in the plural usage of *mṛdayanti vyākulam*. In Sanskrit the subject and verb must agree both in gender and number. Here they do not match in number, so the verse makes sense only if *kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam* is taken as separate.

The Sūtra that Stands Supreme

These conclusions are lucid and powerful, but Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī wants to churn the subject more. He says that there are still many places in the *Bhāgavatam* where Kṛṣṇa is not called Svayam Bhagavān. He refers to the statements that He is an incarnation of hair, an incarnation of Viṣṇu, or some other incarnation. Altogether there are fifteen statements of this sort.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī asks, “Why don't I consider those fifteen statements right and the one under discussion mere glorification? Why not consider *kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam* just praise of Kṛṣṇa? After all, Kṛṣṇa is the topic, and so He is glorified at first, so that people will have faith and listen to this *Purāṇa*. But in reality Kṛṣṇa is not Svayam Bhagavān. Therefore we should interpret this statement in the light of those statements which are many whereas this is only one.”

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī answers this objection very nicely. First he asks, are

these objections based on the *Bhāgavatam* or on other sources? He says, we shall consider both possibilities.

First he counters the conflicting statements from the *Bhāgavatam*. In the first chapter the sages ask Sūta Gosvāmī six questions, and in the second chapter Sūta Gosvāmī answers the first four. In the third chapter, which lists the incarnations, he answers questions five and six. So far, Jīva Gosvāmī points out, no ambiguous statement about Kṛṣṇa has been made. And then He is clearly said to be Svayam Bhagavān.

Now, after this there may be many places where Kṛṣṇa clearly seems to be called something other than Svayam Bhagavān; but in the scriptures you always find that when a topic is to be explained there is first a *sūtra*, a terse statement giving the gist of what is about to be presented. Then the body of the work expands upon it. This is the standard procedure.

By definition, a *sūtra* must be short, compact, yet it must hold no ambiguity. It should be clear in meaning and cause no doubt. It must be a statement of essence, clear in form and without defects.

When all these criteria are applied to *kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*, it fits very well. It is a *sūtra*.

What kind of *sūtra* is it? When a topic is unknown and then a *sūtra* makes it known, the *sūtra* is called a *paribhāsa sūtra*. Up until this verse, nothing has been said about who is Svayam Bhagavān, but now Vyāsa says, *kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*. This is a perfect *paribhāsa sūtra*.

A *paribhāsa sūtra* is supposed to be universally applicable. It doesn't get repeated within the same text, because its universal application is understood. That's why Vyāsadeva did not repeat the *sūtra* that says that Kṛṣṇa is Svayam Bhagavān.

Whenever the *paribhāsa sūtra* and

***Among all other sources, Jīva Gosvāmī says,
he has already shown in the Tattva Sandarbha that the
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the highest. . . . Therefore we should
have no doubt that its authority is above all others.***



any other statement are in conflict, we must accept the *paribhāsa* as superior; the *paribhāsa* statement is always supreme. In fact, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī says that if a statement doesn't agree with the *paribhāsa sūtra* we must either reject that statement or interpret it. The *paribhāsa* is like a ruling king, whom all others have to obey. If they don't obey, then it is our duty to make them obey.

Ornaments to the Emperor

So far, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has dealt with statements from the *Bhāgavatam* that seem to contradict the emperor statement. Now he wants to show that the emperor statement supersedes statements from other sources, such as the *Vedas*, *Purāṇas*, and *Upaniṣads*.

Among all such sources, he says, he has already shown in the *Tattva Sandarbha* that the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the highest. It is the spotless *Purāṇa*. Therefore we should have no doubt that its authority is above all others. Further, the spotless *Purāṇa* says in the opening verse that here reality will be revealed. Any other source may present so many topics and conclusions, but we cannot be sure which are real and which aren't. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, on the other hand, is free from defects, and it is the essence of all the *Vedas*, *Purāṇas*, and *Itihāsas*. Therefore, this emperor statement from the *Bhāgavatam*—*kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*—defeats all contenders.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī expands on the emperor metaphor. When a king, he says, returns from a victorious campaign, the king goes on a victory parade, and everyone turns out to see him, even former rivals. People even come to see him who have no direct relationship with him but are there simply to attend the parade. In this way they honor and acknowledge the emperor's supremacy. They become like ornaments to him.

Similarly, the statement *kṛṣṇas tu*

bhagavān svayam can defeat any rival. So now that the *Bhāgavatam* has defeated all other contenders in all other texts, the emperor statement goes on a victory parade, and the presence of rival statements in the parade are like ornaments to the emperor.

Every Speaker, Every Word

To further support these conclusions, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī says, "Now I shall examine the statements of all the speakers in the *Bhāgavatam* to determine exactly what their thinking is about Kṛṣṇa." The conclusion of his review is that they actually want to speak about Kṛṣṇa, accepting Him as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. They compliment their questioners, "Your question is glorious because you have asked about Lord Kṛṣṇa."

This means that all the various speakers have one desire, to speak about Kṛṣṇa, and the audience wants to hear about Kṛṣṇa as well. That's why the largest section of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the Tenth Canto, devotes ninety chapters to Kṛṣṇa and no one else.

Next, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī considers the opening and the concluding verses of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. He conducts his analysis along the same careful lines as with the *ete cāṁśa* verse. The opening and closing verses, he concludes, show that the *Bhāgavatam* is only about Kṛṣṇa.

He then follows through by looking at every canto. Again he concludes that each canto simply speaks about Kṛṣṇa. In this way, he says, if you go to each chapter or to each verse or even to each word, the conclusion is that the *Bhāgavatam* speaks only about Kṛṣṇa. Thus, *kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*: Kṛṣṇa is the original Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Having established this, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī next sets out to establish the supremacy of Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana, with

Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. He says he needs to do this because whenever you speak about Kṛṣṇa as Svayam Bhagavān people automatically assume you refer to Kṛṣṇa in His opulent and majestic feature, as in Dvārakā.

Jīva Gosvāmī also discusses Kṛṣṇa's abode, Vṛndāvana, because some sects don't accept Vṛndāvana at all. They say Vṛndāvana is not mentioned by name anywhere in the scriptures. To counter this, he quotes from the *Vedas*, *Upaniṣads*, and other texts to show that Vṛndāvana is mentioned and that it is the highest of all abodes in the spiritual sky.

The *Kṛṣṇa Sandarbha* deals in detail with various other topics—Vṛndāvana, Kṛṣṇa, the *gopīs*, and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. It speaks of the intricate distinctions between Kṛṣṇa's pastimes—manifest (*prakāṭa*) and unmanifest (*aprakāṭa*). It also glorifies the *gopīs'* superexcellent love for Kṛṣṇa. This topic will be treated at length in the last volume, *Śrī Prīti Sandarbha*.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī concludes the *Kṛṣṇa Sandarbha* with an analysis of the opening verse of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. He shows how this verse mentions Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and Their relationship of *mādhurya rasa*. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are in reality the object of meditation. Here again Jīva Gosvāmī gives a word-by-word analysis and reveals the opening verse of the *Bhāgavatam* to be nothing but a meditation on Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

He says that the conjugal pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are so sublime that even great sages, *ācāryas*, and demi-gods are unable to understand them. Yet Vyāsadeva wrote about these pastimes in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* to give us some glimpse of the highest stages of love of God. ☀

Satyā Nārāyaṇa Dāsa and Kundalī Dāsa are living in Vṛndāvana, India, working on a translation of the Ṣaṭ Sandarbha.

PROJECT PROFILE

HERE'S A Kṛṣṇa conscious project you might like to support or get involved in.

a full-fledged society in which anyone in any situation can move closer to Kṛṣṇa.

DETAILS

Gurukula Alumni, Inc., is a project undertaken by devotees who attended ISKCON's *gurukula* system. Now no longer children, they're enthusiastic to do their part in reuniting Śrīla Prabhupāda's family of devotees through open and honest communication.

Experts in social science tell us that for a spiritual movement to survive much beyond its founding members, its second generation has to take up the movement and continue. Common sense tells us the same thing.

So the first step has been to start a bimonthly international newsletter called *AS IT IS—The Voice of the Second Generation*. Although the newsletter is geared toward the *gurukulis* themselves, it offers valuable insights for adults into how the *gurukulis'* Kṛṣṇa consciousness is developing.

Every year, an international *gurukula* reunion is held in Los Angeles the same weekend as the Venice Beach Rathayātrā festival. Last year

about 150 current and former *gurukula* students attended, and so did many older devotees. Each year the reunion gets bigger and better. It's a highlight of an already exciting festival weekend. The 1993 reunion will be held July 24.

PLANS

Gurukula Alumni has already teamed up with ISKCON's International Board of Education to start Project Future Hope. This is a program to match *gurukula* graduates with devotee enterprises and employers.

Gurukula Alumni is looking for ways to let people know more about what the *gurukulis* are doing, and what they *can* do to help ISKCON grow. The idea is to interest more people and get more people involved.

OBSTACLES

Not enough devotees—younger or older—realize deeply enough the importance of the project. It needs all the support it can get. But so far the project has no steady source of funding.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

1. Subscribe to *AS IT IS*. For a six-issue subscription, send \$24 (U.S.) or \$30 (elsewhere).
2. Advertise in *AS IT IS*.
3. Sponsor the printing of an issue of *AS IT IS*.
4. Give a tax-deductible donation. Your donation will support both Gurukula Alumni, Inc., and Project Future Hope.
5. Ask questions or offer encouragement.

To send donations or get more information, please contact:

Gurukula Alumni, Inc.
P. O. Box 1395
Culver City, CA 90232, USA
Phone: (310) 204-6944
Fax: (310) 559-7101

PROJECT

Gurukula Alumni, Inc.

HEADQUARTERS

Los Angeles, California.

PROJECT

COORDINATORS

Bahulāśva Dāsa, Caitanya Maṅgala Dāsa, Manu Dāsa, and Śrī Gāṇḍhārī Dāsi

GOALS

1. To unite the former students of ISKCON's *gurukulas* (schools).
2. To provide opportunities for these former students (*gurukulis*) to develop relationships among themselves and with older devotees that will help these students find their place in life and in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
3. To form and maintain an alliance between ISKCON's first and second generations.
4. To help Śrīla Prabhupāda's Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement grow into



Left to right: Caitanya Maṅgala, Bahulāśva, Śrī Gāṇḍhārī, Manu.

ON PILGRIMAGE

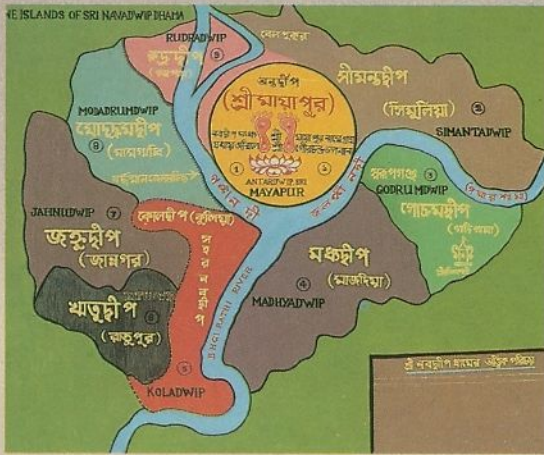
SCENES FROM NAVADVĪPA PARIKRAMA, 1993

*Devotees from around the world worship and explore
the sacred land of Lord Caitanya's pastimes.*

by Ravīndra Svarūpa Dāsa

Photos by Viśākhā-Devī Dāsī





Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees from around the world walk past the birthplace of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. The map at left shows the nine "islands" that make up Śrī Navadvīpa Dhāma.

streaming down it, lots of them, nudged along by village boys carrying switches. The hoofs of the cows raise a cloud of fine powder, as silky as talcum, that coats our bodies from head to

foot. Thus we receive our second "auspicious bath" of the day.

The United Nations Of the Spiritual World

For seven days we wander among the fields, villages, and cowsheds deep in the West Bengal countryside, on *parikrama*. *Parikrama* means "walking about." We are walking about Śrī Navadvīpa Dhāma, a place of pilgrimage, a

tirtha or "ford" for crossing from the material to the spiritual world. This crossing was opened by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who made His advent here 506 years ago. Both before and after the central event, the spiritual realm is manifest here within the material. *Parikrama* is the process by which the contiguous spiritual geography of Navadvīpa is disclosed.

In mundane geography, Navadvīpa Dhāma encompasses an area thirty-two miles in circumference, centered on Māyāpur, a three-mile tract resting on the eastern bank of the Bhagirathi River, a branch of the lower Ganges, directly north of the spot where the Jalangi empties into it. This is about sixty miles north of Calcutta as the crow flies.

On the first day out, our *parikrama* party holds 800 devotees from 46 different countries. India is represented by 230; Russia, 75; Germany, 60; United States, 50; Poland, 45; Australia, 35; Sweden, Belgium, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom each sends 25; Italy, Hungary, and Yugoslavia, 15

Two Auspicious Baths

After pulling ourselves from the grip of the Ganges, we clamber up the sand bluffs. The river glows like molten lead. The noon wind dries us. Languorous from water, wind, and sun, we make our way slowly up the long cart-track toward Belpukur, the family village of Lord Caitanya's mother, Śacī Devī. As the train of devotees stretches itself along the rising trail, cows come





each. Those delegating between six and ten: Spain, France, Peru, Brazil, Denmark, Ukraine, Latvia, Austria, Singapore, Argentina, Bulgaria, Lithuania, South Africa, New Zealand, and Japan. Those with five or less: Fiji, Czech, Nepal, Bahrain, Norway, Croatia, Ecuador, Malaysia, Canada, Mauritius, Bangladesh, Slovenia, the Netherlands, Costa Rica, Indonesia, Hong Kong, the Philippines, and Santo Domingo.

Each day our numbers increase. By the seventh and final day our ranks have

swollen by 300 more. But there is no documentation to say where they come from.

Thud-Thud-Thud

My first night on *parikrama* I bed down in an alcove within the sprawling tent complex set up for us. Fluorescent tubes glow its length and breadth. I try to fall asleep, but fairly close by an indefatigable little engine puts out a staccato thudding, an endless plosive stutter. For a long time I listen to that sound.

The sudden silence, when it stops, awakens me. All lights are out, the engine driving the generator mute at last.

In the morning dark, I bathe under a portable water tower erected in a nearby field; I am hammered by the same stuttering beat. Crouched in the trampled grass a little engine sucks my bath water up from the lake.

I come to hear that sound everywhere. It is the sound of a two-stroke, three-horsepower diesel engine. Every night a clutch of them chug away about



The pilgrimage begins. The palanquin near the front of the procession carries Deities of Lord Caitanya and His eternal companion Lord Nityānanda. At the far right flows the river Ganges. The dome and spire behind the procession belong to the puṣpa samādhī, or "flower memorial," of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

our camps bringing light, water, and amplification. "It is the engine of India," Pṛthu says.

As we pass through kingdoms of rice fields, the engines hang long strands of sound-beads in the rural silence. The machines hide within straw huts that punctuate the fields, banging tirelessly away. From the side of each hut a wide pipe pours well water into the fields.

We clamber aboard wide-beamed wooden boats fifty feet long to ply up the Ganges. The boatmen crank the

engines. Belches of black diesel smoke herald the beginning of the familiar thudding that will escort our flotilla for two hours on the wide waters.

The Cows Look Up

In all the villages we file through it is clear that kine are kin—venerable family members who intimately share the courtyards with their human relations. These cherished cows don't eat off the ground like beasts. A kindly consideration provides them with pottery bowls,

maybe four feet around, set in earthen pillars three feet high. As we move through the villages chanting, the humans line the paths to greet us, while behind them in the cow-crowded courtyards the cows look up from their bowls to acknowledge us with slow bovine stares before returning to their meals.

Of Soul and Soles

On *parikrama* the ground underfoot assumes immense importance, because you're supposed to go shoeless. A Western tenderfoot, I start out in my shoes, but take them off the second day after we receive an admonishing lecture by Lokanāth Swami, who promises "blisters become bliss." Others repeat the bodybuilder's slogan "No pain, no gain." Nevertheless, I keep my shoes handy in my shoulder bag, just in case.

I noticed the difference right away: barefoot I am definitely more here, in solid contact with the sacred soil. Grounded, or as they say in India, "earthed." However, now my vision perpetually scans the terrain immediately before my delicate feet, and much scenery flows by unseen. The cow paths and cart tracks deep in the country are wonderful: cool, soft powdery earth. Even brick roads through some larger villages are not bad. But I grow to hate the "government roads" whose dead surfaces abrade the soles and are sown like minefields with sharp tiny stones. I sometimes go shod against the unforgiving asphalt. Is this, too, holy ground? The question receives some discussion.

As we pick our way barefoot over a

While some devotees listen to pastimes, another, for a time, passes out.



rough section, Jayapatāka Mahārāja tells me, “Kavicandra Swami said he read if you wear your shoes you lose twenty-five percent of the benefit. Hey, only twenty-five percent! That’s not so much! Makes you reconsider about the shoes!”

In spite of my caution, my feet at the end have taken their punishment: blistered, pierced, cut, and bruised not just from walking ten vulnerable kilometers a day, but also from incautious dancing and leaping about on unyielding tile or cement. However: the bliss of the soul overcomes the pain of the soles.

The Owls at Mamgachi

Awash in the strong scent of *tulasi* plants, I am sitting under an ancient *bakul* tree in a temple courtyard in Mamgachi. I can see the graceful Deity Madana Gopāla, once worshiped by Lord Caitanya’s associate Vāsudeva Daṭṭa. The priest who has taken care of Madana Gopāla for fifty-four years, man and boy, stands white-haired and stooped on the temple plinth and addresses us. His name is Jagat Bandhu Dāsa Brahmācārī. The *bakul* tree is very old and sacred, he tells us; its enormous trunk is hollow; as a child he used to climb down inside it. In the branches of the tree dwell two white owls, emis-

saries of Lakṣmī Devī, the goddess of fortune and consort of Viṣṇu. Formerly, the two owls used to appear every evening at the time of *ārati*, when the priest would ring the bell and circle the five-flamed ghee lamp before Madana Gopāla and dusk would gather in the branches of the *bakul* tree. And there the owls would be, watching—large, pale, auspicious. But nowadays, the priest says, you don’t see them. They appear only very, very rarely.

The Trolley

In the middle of the procession rolls the loudspeaker trolley. A “trolley” in Bengali denotes a certain ubiquitous carrier for goods—a man-powered three-wheeled cycle with a flat wooden bed, about five feet long and three wide, set between the rear wheels. The driver of the trolley in our procession never rides; he just pushes. A bamboo mast, about five feet high, is lashed to the seat support; mounted fore and aft are two powerful loudspeakers. Tied above them is the receiver for the cordless microphone, its silver antenna jutting out like a gaff. Two hefty truck batteries and an amplifier ride the flat bed. Also: assorted shoulder bags and backpacks, canteens and bottles of Bisleri water, and the occasional footsore child,

who runs the risk, however, of inner-ear damage.

India has embraced sound amplification with unbridled enthusiasm. To Western ears, the whole country seems to have its volume set too high. Mobile and stationary loudspeakers seek you out everywhere. Pṛthu expounds to me on the theory that in India, Loudness is Truth. The holy name is sweet, but we do keep our distance from the sound trolley.

The cordless mike, however, is an unmitigated boon. In procession, the lead chanter moves at will up and down the line, the percussion section sticking to him like bodyguards around a head of state. When we stop at various holy places, the trol-



The Swami from Brazil holds the form of Śrīla Prabhupāda as a woman from Bengal offers flowers.



ley can sit even at a distance when walls, steps, or slopes block passage, and everyone can hear the preachers and storytellers, who are able to pass the mike around conveniently among themselves.

Best of all, at our stops the cordless mike gives unprecedented freedom to the *kirtana* leader. With the broadcasting trolley docked alongside the *kirtana* hall or temple yard, the untethered lead singer is free to plunge into the action on the floor, to spin around, to race back and forth, even to roll on the ground, and thus unbound by cordage to draw energy from the dancing troupe, while the invisible etheric umbilicus carries his mounting enthusiasm to the trolley, which delivers it to the happy crowd.

The Prabhupāda-Bearer

At the head of our procession, just behind the banner stretched between two poles, comes Śrīla Prabhupāda in deity form. He's carried each day by Parama

Gati Swami, a tall and graceful Brazilian who leads our temple in Paris. Parama Gati Swami has gotten in shape for this service, walking for days before in bare feet to toughen up his soles. As Prabhupāda's bearer, he can't break stride or hop around like the rest of us to avoid rough terrain.

Robed in saffron, garlanded with marigolds, Śrīla Prabhupāda rides between gold cushions upon a golden throne. Parama Gati Swami grasps the heavy *vyāsāsana* by its sides and bottom, bearing it straight out in front of his solar plexus. To insure a smooth ride, Prabhupāda has to be held slightly away from the carrier's body. Every evening Parama Gati Swami has to have his arms and shoulders massaged for a few hours to work the cramps out.

State of the Art

Pennants flying, our pilgrim-laden boat beats up the Ganges and disturbs a



Devotees enjoy unrestricted freedom in the chanting of Lord Kṛṣṇa's holy names.

huge flock of ducks. A dense cloud of birds bursts into the sky, each tiny dark laboring form precisely etched on pulsing blue. Awestruck, we watch the flock wheel about, drop over the water, rise up, wheel about again, and again, and again in a spectacular display of precision aerial acrobatics. As it slides past shifting vistas of earth and water and air, the racing bird-cloud continually alters shape while all the sharp-edged bird-forms in unison switch aspect from front to side to back. The display reminds me strongly of something. What? Ah! High-powered computer graphics!

We are walking a high dike-road; rice paddies stretch in both directions as far as the eye can see. Ponds for breeding small fish border the road twenty feet below. Suddenly, a large bird, stiletto-beaked, darts athwart us and hovers at eye level just beyond the embankment. I stop and gawk at this kingfisher—the size of him!—hanging like a hummingbird. Parked in sheer space, the bird peers down intently at the water below. Suddenly it become a falling needle-nosed dart that slips beneath the surface as smooth as grease; a moment later it regains the air in a blue-and-white flurry of feather and froth, a sliver of silver disappearing into its beak. I have looked with awe on

Cooling off in the waters of the Ganges.

stealth fighters and jump-jets, but that was before the demonstration of this hunter's aeronautics.

Excess at Narasimha Palli

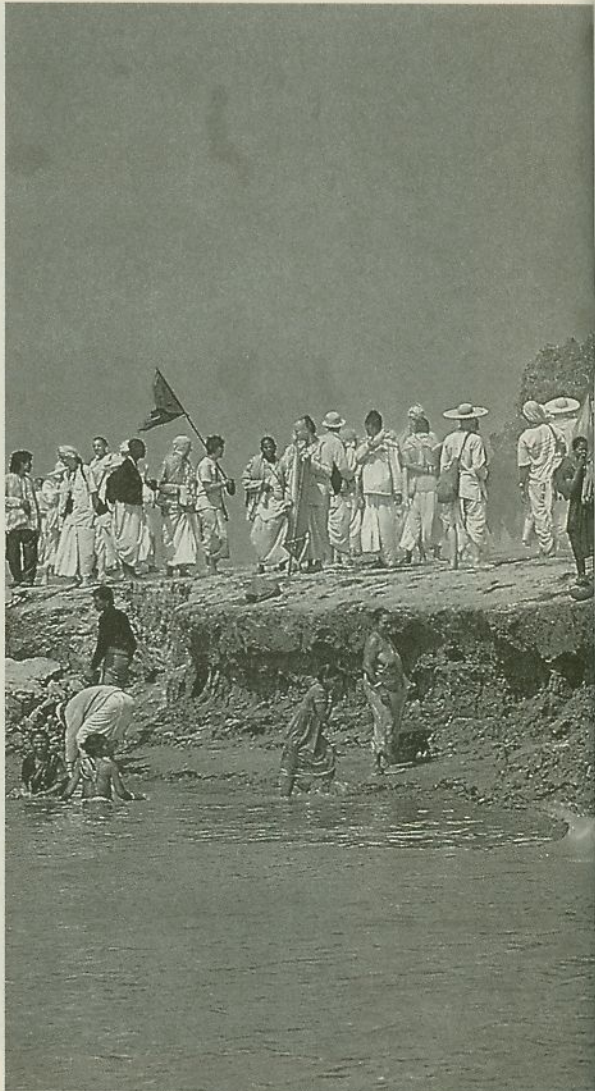
It is my first day on *parikrama*, and when we arrive at Narasimha Palli—our final destination—I have a headache. I want to be someplace quiet, and dark. I want to be by myself. But I am quite surrounded; the whole village has turned out to sell or watch. The *kirtana* hall—a roofed, open-sided terrazzo stage in front of a small domed temple—is crammed with a melee of devotees, who are spilling from the flanks and plunging in again. The sound trolley, drawn up alongside, demonstrates its potency to the wondering villagers. I crawl into a shady spot in a twin hall (meant for eating) adjacent the *kirtana* hall. There the uproar is getting wilder and wilder. I see arms flailing about, and the maelstrom in the middle of the press move up and down the hall.

Amazingly, I see feet in the air. A roar goes up. I see a well-known *sannyāsi*, of considerable heft, borne up over the devotees' heads. I disapprove. Each crash of drum and cymbal fires a squib of pain in my head. I am wondering where I can escape to, when a muscular, sweat-soaked figure emerges from the mob and lopes half-crouched toward me. It is Ayodhyāpati Dāsa, a former football player from Memphis, Tennessee, just the sort of fellow who made my life miserable in high school. He seizes my arm in a hard, meaty grip and pulls. I shake my head no, and he pulls harder. I am on my feet and a second later in the middle of the hub-bub, buffeted violently on all

sides. Ayodhyāpati puts his face two inches before mine and screams like a Marine Corps drill instructor at the top of his lungs. He is screaming: “Hare Kṛṣṇa! Hare Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa! Hare Hare!”

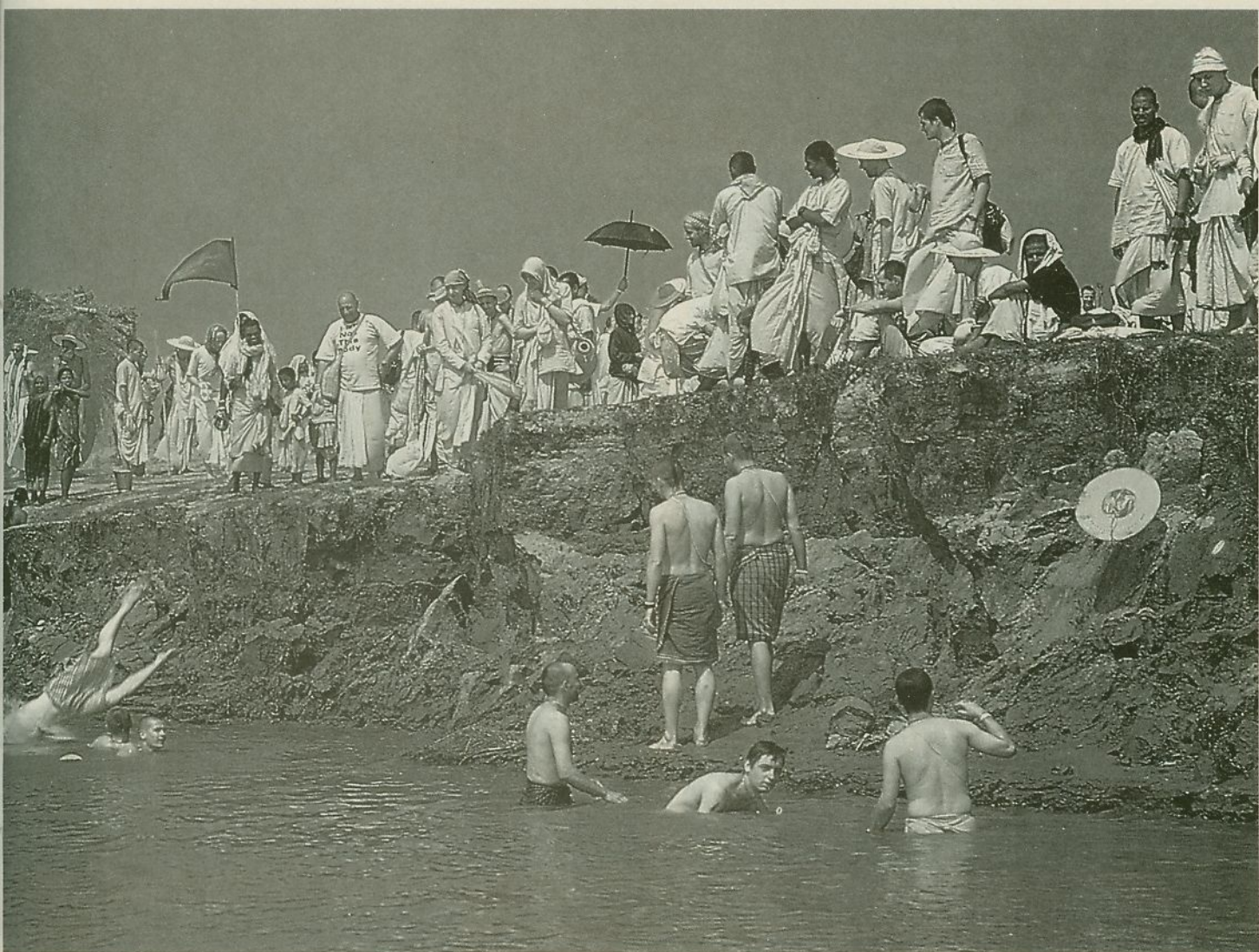
I scream back. He grins and shoves the microphone into my hand. The drums and cymbals crash. Jolts of energy surge into me from the press of buffeting bodies. The world starts spinning.

Fifteen minutes later, soaking wet, banged up about the ribs, I worm out of the line of scrimmage and fall panting on the sidelines, wondering what came over me. As I try to recover my breath, I feel that meaty grip biting on my arm again. I offer no resistance. He pulls me to a tiny side door of the temple. “Special mercy,” he points out. A devotee is stretched flat into the temple sanctum, his hands grasping the feet of the ancient black image of Narasimhadeva.



Yamunā Dāsa

Whompers in hand, Ayodhyāpati Dāsa leads the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa. After the pilgrimage, Ayodhyāpati accepted sannyāsa, the renounced order, and is now known as Bhakti Br̥ṅga Govinda Swami.



The devotee gets up, and I stretch into the cool, sweet-scented darkness and hold the feet of the ferocious half-man, half-lion incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, who once stopped at this place a very long time ago.

Satisfied, the *saṅkīrtana* drill instructor, coach, instigator, and rabble-rouser hauls me back into the *kīrtana*, where I am good for the course. Later, as we prepare to bathe in the lake, I thank Ayodhyāpati. He is limping from a pulled tendon; his forearms bear gashes from the edges of the wide brass cymbals called “whompers.” A few scrapes decorate his forehead. “A little rough,” I comment. But my headache is quite gone.

As we sit the following morning in a shady grove for breakfast, Śivarāma Swami delivers an announcement. He says that the *kīrtana* at Narasimha Palli was somewhat excessive. Of course, you

can do anything in ecstasy, but still, he says, we don’t see that Lord Caitanya’s associates ever picked devotees up and carried them around while others grabbed their feet. (Some of us are looking down abashed.) Śivarāma continues: We should keep the holy name in the center. We should take care not to concoct anything and not to get rowdy.

He is right, of course, and after that our *kīrtanas* are never so outre. Even so, I crave them. Narasimha Palli has made me an addict. And Ayodhyāpati, of course, still goads us on—somewhat subversively, I think.

Digestion

We sail past a sandbar in the Ganges occupied by a party of large, satiated vultures standing at their ease about the remains of some washed-up carrion. Having dined, they are peaceful, satisfied, dignified—reminding me of noth-

ing so much as a convocation of pious, prosperous burghers after a memorial banquet.

The Bats of Lord Śiva

We gather first in the village square before the empty temple, a small, pretty structure with a fresh pale-yellow wash on its plastered walls and a newly thatched roof. (I learn later that the renovations were paid for by the Bhaktivedanta Swami Charity Trust, established by Śrīla Prabhupāda to restore pilgrimage sites.) Sitting before the temple, we hear about the unusual deity who takes up residence here only twelve days in the year; the rest of the time he reposes under the waters of a nearby lake. He is called Haṁsa-vahana Mahādeva, Lord Śiva Who Rides A Swan.

Here is the story: Once Sūta Gosvāmī, the famous reciter of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* at Naimiṣāraṇya forest five



The cherished cows of Lord Caitanya's abode.

millennia ago, came to this island in Navadvīpa and, endowed with foresight, narrated the future pastimes of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Eager to hear Sūta's discourse, Lord Śiva mounted his *vahana*, or carrier, the bull Nandi, and left his abode. Nandi was slow, and Lord Śiva became increasingly impatient. Stopping at the abode of Lord Brahmā, Śiva swapped his bull for Brahmā's much swifter swan-carrier, and on that he swooped down onto Navadvīpa in time to eagerly drink with his ears the nectar of Lord Caitanya's pastimes.

The Hamsa-vahana deity memorializes Lord Śiva's unusual appearance on Brahmā's swan, impelled by his ecstatic attraction to Lord Caitanya. The worshipers of Hamsa-vahana say that the deity is always extremely hot, so they must keep him continuously covered with water, like the core of a nuclear reactor. That's why he stays submerged in a lake. On the twelve days in April when Hamsa-vahana comes out to be viewed in the temple, water is poured over him nonstop, around the clock. Otherwise he would heat up and start smoking. All day and all night long queues of people waiting to bathe Hamsa-vahana stretch through the village streets.

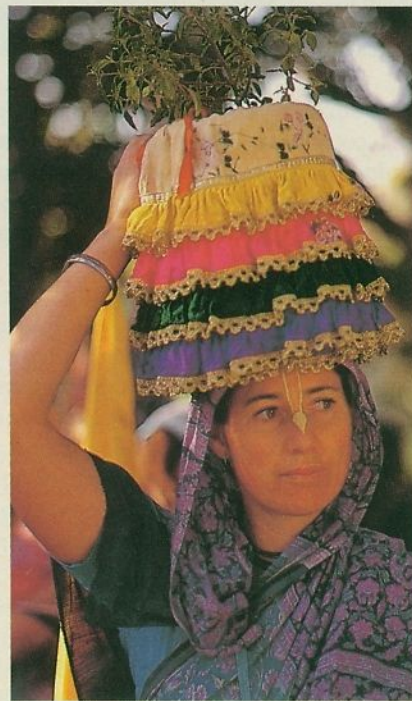
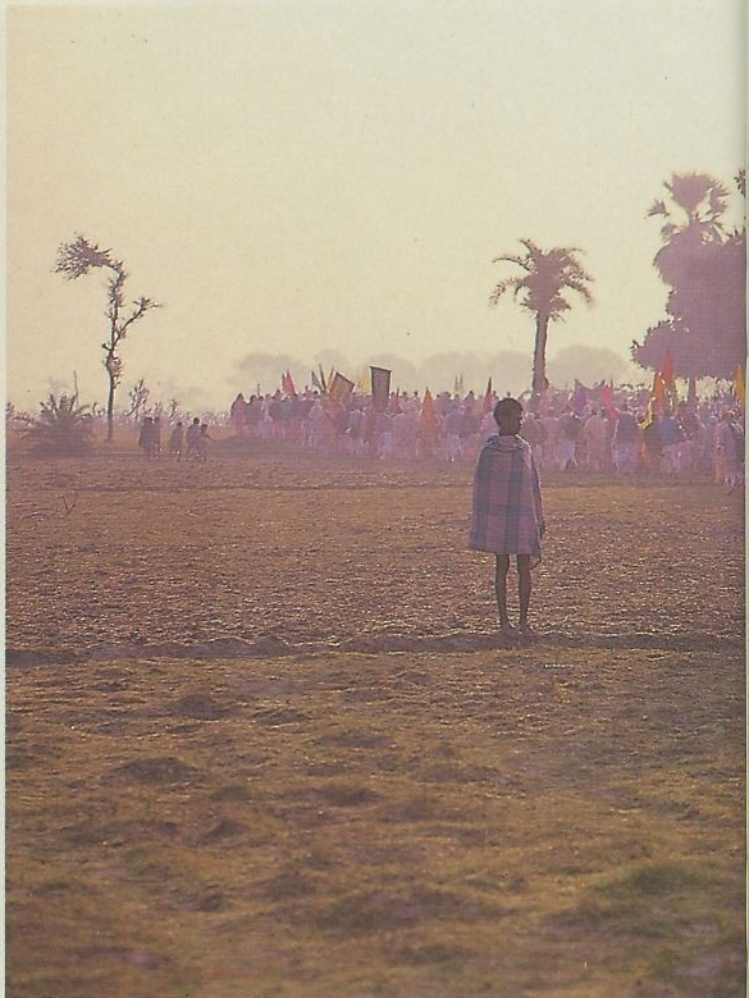
Popular opinion holds that Hamsa-vahana is hot from anger (as Śiva exemplifies destructive rage), but the truth is

that the heat arises from Lord Śiva's intense love for Lord Caitanya.

After hearing about Hamsa-vahana, we make our way out of the shady village, chanting loudly. A dirt cart-track takes us through dazzling rice fields toward a bosky tree line, ballooned out by the form of a massive banyan. These trees drink the waters of the lake in which Hamsa-vahana lies submerged.

As we close in on the great banyan, the sky over us erupts with the screeching fluttering forms of monstrous bats, five feet from wingtip to wingtip. These are the fruit bats of the Old World tropics, known aptly as "flying foxes." There are scores of them. Jinking and gyrating madly, they careen about the banyan, and their shrill cries of alarm usher us into the shade of the banyan's soaring vault.

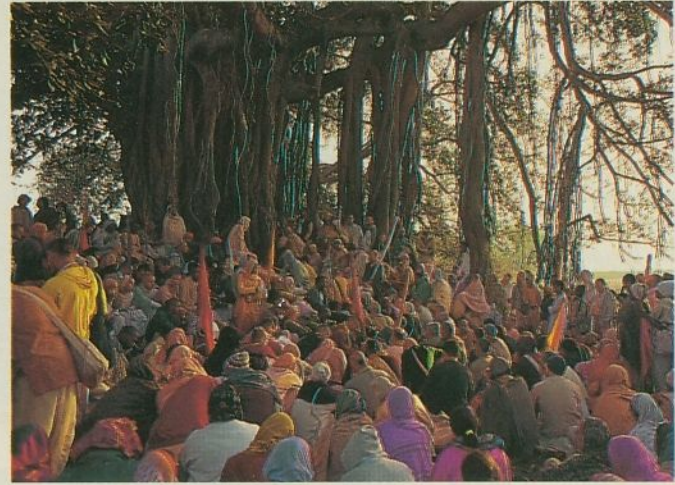
The mammoth trunk is a thick braid of interwoven risers, fused into a U. It perches on the high edge of a slope, crosshatched with knobby roots, that drops away to the lake shore. The entire amphitheater is covered by a vast umbrella of leaf, the ribbings of heavy branches arching far out over the waters. From the overhead vaulting hang



In the tradition of Indian pilgrims, a devotee from the West bears on her head a tulasi plant, sacred to Lord Kṛṣṇa.



Eight hundred devotees walk by in the morning mist. Below, devotees sit beneath Lord Śiva's banyan tree. Lord Śiva's lake is faintly visible in the background at the right.



about the treetop. Looking down at the bamboo slats jutting out of the water, I appeal to Haṁsa-vahana Mahādeva to help us distribute Lord Caitanya's mercy in this Kali-yuga, when so many people are ruled by the dangerous and destructive forces of the mode of darkness that Lord Śiva himself controls. As the foremost devotee of Kṛṣṇa, Lord Śiva should bestow his mercy to those people plagued by intoxication, insanity, rage, and despair—so that they can receive Lord Caitanya's gift of love of God.

Finally we leave the shelter of the banyan tree and again traverse the open fields. Five minutes later we halt in a

multiple roopy descenders, arboreal tails, their tips finely tasseled with roots-to-be, eager for earth.

After working through an obstacle course of living wood, I gain the trunk and sit on a fat root at the mouth of the U, which faces the lake. I peer in. The interior is about two feet across at the opening and reaches back about ten feet, widening out by another foot. Twelve feet up, the sides converge to make a roof. The interior wall, a weave of semi-fused tube-shaped slick-skinned risers, looks uncannily like the extraterrestrial organic structures depicted in Hollywood science fiction films.

The enclosure has been floored with mud, finished with a smooth, dun-colored plaster of cow dung. There is even a step. It is an exquisite *bhajana kuṭīr*, a meditation place for a sage with matted locks, a lookout providing a beautiful view of the shaded slope and shore and the hyacinth-covered waters of the lake itself. Most of all, the banyan cave is a place of *darśana*, of viewing the

deity, for in a direct line of sight from the entrance, about fifteen feet out into the plant-choked lake, stands a patch of clear water, in the middle of which rise out the struts of a sunken bamboo frame. Just here, on the lake bottom, coolly reposes Haṁsa-vahana Mahādeva.

When Haṁsa-vahana comes out of the lake, Subhāga Maharāja says, he is placed in the tree cave and worshiped before being carried to the thatched temple in the village. We set the deity of Śrīla Prabhupāda, seated on his golden *vyāsāsana*, within the tree-*kuṭīr*. First I bend inside to brush out a few dead leaves and curls of dried snakeskin. I get a closer look into the interior. Against the wall hang arras of well-knit spider webs, the X of a large black spider in the center of each one. The bellies of the spiders are marked horizontally with three parallel white lines—the forehead ornament of Lord Śiva.

I am asked to address the assembly. Overhead the leather-winged fox-bats still squeak and gibber as they pivot

high pasture, grass grazed to the nub, next to a mango grove. This is the place Sūta Goswami recited the pastimes of Caitanya; this field is identical with Naimiṣāranya, in northwest India, where Sūta spoke *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Naimiṣāranya is regarded as the hub of the universe, so any sacrifice performed here redounds to the benefit of all people. Mindful of this, to save all souls, we sit and chant a round of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra on our beads, and then stand and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa congregationally. The *kīrtana* is mellow and sweet. In the distance I see the flock of bats streaming away from the banyan tree. I watch them wandering over the brightly lit fields, their formation scattered and splayed. Idly, I wonder if they are disoriented by all the light, for it is now well into morning. I return my attention to the *kīrtana*. Suddenly they are massed directly over our heads, fairly low, wheeling about in tight spirals, their squeaks audible through our chanting. And then the sky is empty.

The essence of the journey is the chanting of the holy names—*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.*



The Elders

I hear that a number of young devotees profess astonishment to see us old folk—all around the half-century mark—frolicking in *kīrtana* like kids, forgetful of our dignity and decorum. We do let ourselves go. Afterwards, we sit around complaining to one another about our backs, our hip joints, our ankles, our arches. We vow we won't go overboard like this again; we remind ourselves that we don't have those elastic, quick-mending bodies of youth; but the next day we throw caution and common sense to the wind and whoop it up carelessly, in defiance of gravity.

In his evening years the poet W. B. Yeats wrote, some thought excessively, on carnal themes. "You think it horrible," he addressed these critics, "that lust and rage/ Should dance attention on my old age." He answered them with a rhetorical question: "What else have I to spur me into song?"

Well, here is something else. Here is our singing and dancing school, where aging men clap and sing, disdaining their bones and their dignity, no lust nor rage spurring them into song.

The Real Dirt

"Whoever rolls in the dirt of Surabhī Kuñja, chanting the names of Lord Caitanya and Nityānanda, receives the special mercy of Nityānanda," our guide announces, consulting his guidebook. I

file into the entranceway of Surabhī Kuñja with the first group to look for a good place to roll in the dirt. It's not easy. Right now, Surabhī Kuñja is a construction site, full of stacks of bricks, cement mix, and iron re-bars. Finally, someone discovers a patch of nice sand, and we throw ourselves down into it, rolling and chanting.

Shortly, Jayapatāka Mahārāja arrives. "Hey!" he exclaims. "This is construction sand! It was brought in from outside! Over here! Look! Here is the real dirt!" I dash over. Sure enough, there is a wide swatch of dark, crumbly earth. It looks good. We fling ourselves down and start rolling.

Subala Veśa

In a field outside a village the cows have been frightened by the crowd of passing pilgrims. Herders chase two mothers and their calves through the rice stubble, trying to get them to cross the road. At the edge the cows balk and bellow, eyes rolling and bulging, and bolt back through their herders. Our group stand well clear until the two



cows finally trot swiftly up the road. A cowherd boy picks up the littlest calf, hugging it tightly to his chest, and walks off after its mother.

“*Subala veśa*,” Bhūrijana says to me. “You know that story?”

“No.”

This is the story he told me; it is about Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is the embodiment of the internal pleasure potency of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is the supreme male; she, the supreme female; and the play of their ever-growing love affair is the most secret mystery enacted at the fountainhead of reality. Rādhā eternally belongs to Kṛṣṇa, and He to Her, but for the sake of increasing love, the couple forget themselves in dramatic arrangements, by which Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's relation with Kṛṣṇa is illicit, and scandalous. Defiers of convention, flaunters of morality, the lovers are kept apart by committees of vigilant elders. In anguish, they long for each other and, with their confidantes, obsessively conspire to meet secretly in the Vṛndāvana forests.

Their success breeds tightened secu-

rity, and Rādhā is virtually a prisoner in her own house. Yearning for Kṛṣṇa, all day long she goes about her duties under the sharp eye of Jaṭilā, her mother-in-law. Otherstrack Kṛṣṇa's movements. On the day in question, however, a close friend of Kṛṣṇa's named Subala goes toward the house of Rādhā's in-laws, with whom she lives. He has a calf with him. At the right spot, Subala gives a twist to the calf's tail; it races off, and as planned charges straight into the courtyard of Rādhā's family, Subala coming in hot pursuit. Jaṭilā is instantly alert. Warning bells go off.

“What are you doing here?” Jaṭilā demands of the panting Subala after stopping him just past the gate. “You're great buddies with that juvenile delinquent Kṛṣṇa. The two of you are up to something! I know it! Get out of here!”

“No, no, no,” Subala protests. “Mother, you've got it all wrong. I'm just trying to get my calf back, that's all.” He smiled charmingly. “And Mother, I have to agree with you about Kṛṣṇa. I'm finished with him. We had a fight this morning, and I've seen the light. You won't see me hanging out

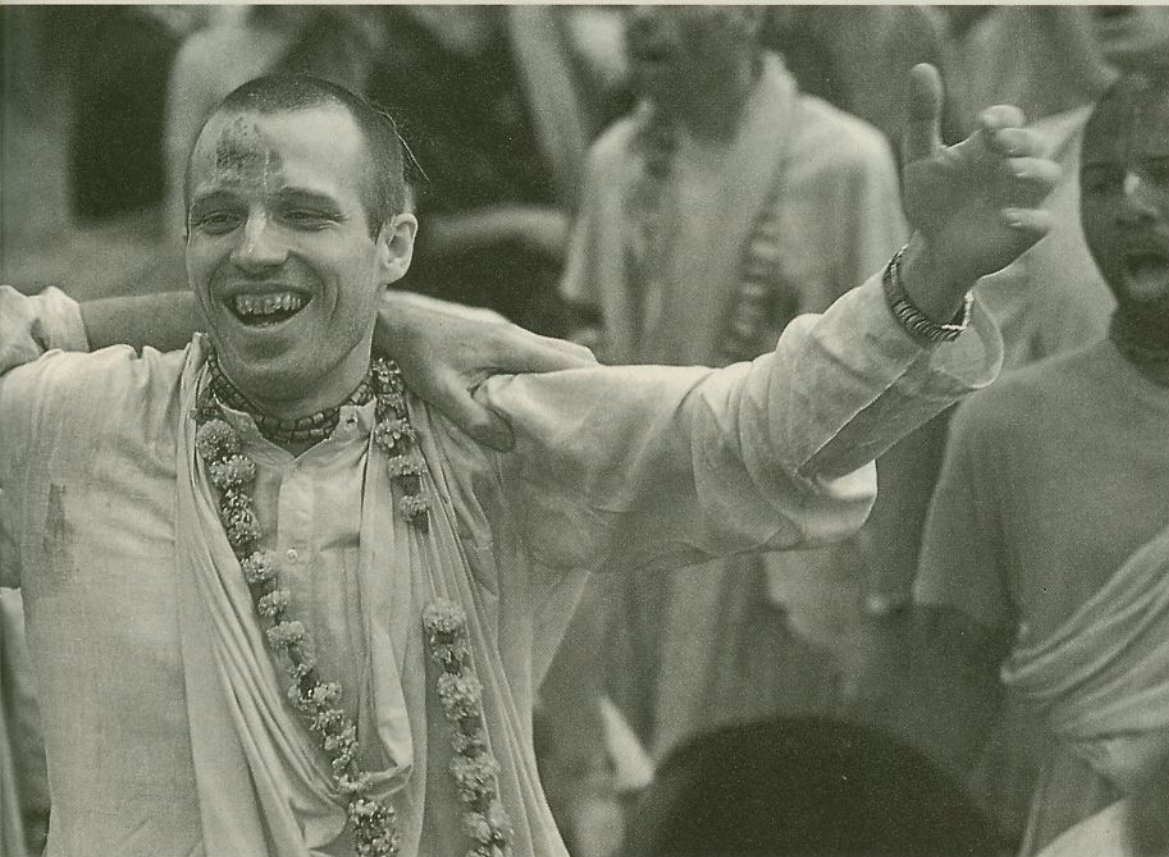
with him anymore, getting into trouble. Now, I'm just trying to do my duty. Please, let me get my calf.”

Jaṭilā is persuaded, and she lets Subala go find his calf.

He finds Rādhārāṇī, and swiftly he gives her his clothes to put on. Subala and Rādhā could be twins, so alike are their features, so when she is dressed in Subala's cow-herding clothes, she is a dead ringer. Then she wraps her arms about the calf and raises it up. Her breasts are completely hidden.

Giddy with the thought of meeting Kṛṣṇa, Rādhārāṇī walks away from her house, directly under the piercing gaze of Jaṭilā, who only sees Subala carrying his calf out. He looks back at Jaṭilā, and with a smile nods in farewell.

That's how Rādhā came to be dressed in *subala-veśa*, Subala's clothes. This pastime is still celebrated in Vṛndāvana temples. If you go on the right day, you'll see the Deity of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī dressed up in the outfit of a cowherd boy and holding a calf to her chest. Because she's dressed in a man's *dhotī*, it's one of the few times you can see her feet, usually hidden by her skirt or sari.



Tamāl Krishna Goswami Suffers a Defeat

After a four-hour march, we are gathered at our final stopping place, in a great hall before the Deities at the *yoga-pīṭha*, the birthsite of Lord Caitanya. Devotees have been coming to

An ecstatic sannyāsī from Germany, Śācinandana Swami (center), dances and chants with the author of this article, Ravindra Svarūpa Dāsa.

the microphone on the stage and sharing with the crowd their “*parikrama* realizations.” The other devotees are both instructed and entertained by these presentations, which have gone far past the scheduled time. We are supposed to take breakfast here and arrive back at our temple in time for the noon *ārati*. We won’t make it. As people speak, Tamāl Krishna Goswami, sotto voce, gathers support among the leaders onstage for a proposal to forgo breakfast in order to return in time for noon *ārati*: if we are late, the Deities will not be on view, and our final *kīrtana* will suffer.

Satisfied that he has support, Tamāl Krishna Goswami puts it to the crowd. He slants the presentation, making his preference clear. We should skip breakfast and be back in time for a grand finale *kīrtana*. What is eating compared to ecstatic chanting?

“How many want to skip breakfast and leave right away so we can have a huge *kīrtana*?” Strangely, only a few

hands go up.

“How many want to honor breakfast *prasādam* now, and take our chances on getting back?” The hall explodes with cheers and waving arms.

Moral: the *saikīrtana* army, like all armies, moves on its stomach.

Receptions

Villagers line the roadside to see us passing by. Sometimes we see them come running across the fields. They press their palms together in respect and, lifting their arms, shout, “*Gaura haribol! Gaura haribol!*” Sometimes a man will prostrate himself in the road and try to touch the passing pilgrims’ feet. Often villagers will spill buckets of water in our pathway as a sign of respect, and then smear their bodies with the water after everyone has passed through. Many times we are received by women with a chorus of shrill ululations, sounding something like the rising and falling trill of cicadas. It is an auspicious sound, like that of a conch shell, and goes by the name of *ulu-dhvani*.

Yamalia Dasa

On the last stretch of our journey, on the road between the *yoga-pīṭha* and our own temple, a woman stands, unexpectedly, in the exact center of the highway, facing our advancing column. She waits for us motionlessly, her eyes downcast as we advance toward her. A steel bucket, brimming with water, sits by her feet. A few yards in front of her, we come to a halt; she stands directly before Śrīla Prabhupāda in Parama Gati Swami’s hands. She is a strikingly lovely young woman. She has freshly bathed and is dressed with care in clean, new garments. The white Vaiṣṇava *tilaka* mark and large red *bindi* dot on her forehead, the bright vermilion anointing the part in her shining hair have

At the birth site of Lord Caitanya, devotees immerse themselves in the chanting of the holy names.



all been applied with precision. She keeps her eyes shyly downcast. As the half-mile-long column comes gradually to a stop behind us, we stand there as if mesmerized by her intensity of purpose, her shyness, her perfection of dress.

She tips the bucket forward, and the clear water washes toward us, flowing around Parama Gati Swami’s feet. She raises a white conch shell to her lips, and three husky, drawn-out notes vibrate the air. She lowers the conch. Then her mouth opens to an O, the tip of her pink tongue oscillates rapidly from side to side, and three long, trilling ululations, rising and falling, fill the air. When the shrill sound fades, she slowly offers obeisances, forehead on the wet tarmac, and then she steps aside.

The column moves forward.

Mantras of Sacrifice

We turn from the road and approach the great gate to our burgeoning Māyāpur City. A reception party has come out. Two elephants stand swaying side to side. Greeters move among the returning devotees heaping garlands of marigolds on them and plastering their foreheads with sandalwood paste. Priests come forward bearing a golden “auspicious pot” of sacrifice on a tray



Borne on the waters of the Ganges, devotees go with the flow.



covered with banana leaves; they are surrounded by *gurukula* boys, who chant the beautiful *Puruṣa-sūkta* mantras from the *R̥g Veda*.

Led by the elephants, we proceed slowly toward the temple. In front of me ring out the mantras of the ancient Vedic *yajña*, or sacrifice, the primary dispensation for a time now long past. From behind sounds the driving chorus of Hare Kṛṣṇa, the mantra of the *saṅkīrtana-yajña*, the dispensation for the present age. The eternal sounds of the two sacrifices, old and new, mingle and swirl about one another like the waters of the Yamunā and the Ganges in confluence. The mantras of sacrifice sweep us into the temple, where Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava are receiving *ārati*.

Saffron Feet

The sound trolley has been drawn up inside the temple, and the microphone moves in the eye of the storm all around the vast hall. The best chanters of the *parikrama*—Kṛpāmaya, Mahāmantra, Indradyumna Swami—are pushing the outer limits of enthusiasm, and the dancing hosts sway and sashay up and down the hall, join to race in snapping, human chains, link arms shoulder to shoulder and describe counter-rotating circles within circles, form up in tight opposing ranks that close in on each other and recoil like shock troops in close combat. The floor has become heaped with the litter of marigolds from our garlands, and the constant pounding of dancing feet has stirred and pounded them into a mash. The marble turns slick, the hall

redolent with the tang of the crushed flowers.

The feet of all the dancers have been dyed saffron up to the ankles by the marigold juice. After two hours I drop to the wayside, hors de combat, to recover in the lee of a pillar. The chanting roars on without me. I look at my feet. The stain is well worked in; the scrape of an experimental fingernail across the skin has no effect.

It will take three days for the saffron to disappear. ☸

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

CONDITIONED SOULS

(continued from page 64)

"Never, Rich."
 "Why not?"
 "I don't know. You tell me."
 "Okay. But if sex is natural, you also have to admit that sex is miraculous."
 "Amen," he said laughing.
 "Why? Why is sex miraculous?"
 "Conception," he grimaced. "That's the problem."
 "That's the *miracle*. You said it. Forget the miracles and we forget the divine purpose: to conceive and raise children to love God. And what a shrewd lover He is. Raising children is such a challenge, who would conceive them if sex were not so pleasurable?"
 "Sensational," Jack added, eyeballing a miniskirt.
 "There's the rub," I said with a laugh,

seeing the shapely thigh. "Lost in bodily sensation, we forget ourselves, and our ecstatic love of God. I scratch her itch, she scratches mine. But the souls within remain untouched and unsatisfied. To a saint, Jack, we're all rather queer."
 "Speak for yourself, young man. I still say homosexuality is a plague."
 "And the saint would agree. By its very nature, homosexuality precludes the miracle, the divine intent of sex. So do contraception and abortion. They are all perverse, to varying degrees, the rotted fruit of our misunderstanding."
 "Which is?"
 "That we are this body."
 "Hi, Jack!"
 "This what?" said Jack, now tipping his hat to the luscious young lady waving his way.
 "This body."

Jack's voice grew distant as her pink-clad derriere wiggled past. "If I'm not this body, then . . . whose body am I?"
 That finished me. Gasping and laughing, I could hardly reply. But Jack, eyes still tracking the pink, became strangely sober.
 "There's only one thing that bothers me, Rich."
 "What's that, Jack?"
 "Why did the good Lord put the funhouse so close to the outhouse? Do you think He's trying to tell us something?"
 "Jack."
 "What?"
 "I think you're becoming a saint." ❀

Sureśvara Dāsa, a recovering heterosexual, has been practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness since 1970.

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in such a way that we shall permanently exist in the
higher nature. And if we can die in that higher nature, then
our place in the transcendental world is reserved.*

• • •

NATURE (continued from page 8)
not different from the sound *Kṛṣṇa*, that *Kṛṣṇa* is not different from the *Bhagavad-gītā*, that *Kṛṣṇa* is not different from anything connected with *Kṛṣṇa*. These things are to be understood.

The whole world is a manifestation of the energy of *Kṛṣṇa*. There are two kinds of energy: the lower energy and the higher energy. The higher energy manifests the living entities. We living entities belong to the higher nature of the Supreme Lord. *Jīva-bhūtām mahā-bāho yayedam dhāryate jagat*. This world is made of the lower, material nature, and the higher nature is the living entity. But anything connected with *Kṛṣṇa* enters the higher nature. Even material things dovetailed with *Kṛṣṇa* consciousness turn into the higher nature.

I have several times given this example: If you put an iron rod in the fire, it becomes warm, warmer, and gradually it becomes red hot. When it is red hot, it is transformed into the nature of fire. It is no longer iron. Similarly, if you constantly remain in *Kṛṣṇa* consciousness, you at once transfer yourself to the higher nature of *Kṛṣṇa*, and that is your liberation. If we can die in the higher nature, then this formula applies: *tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma naiti*—“He does not come back to the material world.”

So we have to practice *Kṛṣṇa* consciousness in such a way that we shall permanently exist in the higher nature. And if we can die in that higher nature, then our place in the transcendental world is reserved. In India there is a common saying: *bhajan koro pūjan koro murte jānle haya*. The meaning is that you may be a great meditator, or you may be a great religionist or yogi or a very learned scholar—or whatever you may be—but everything will be tested at the time of your death.

How far you have progressed will be

tested at the time of your death. That is also explained in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: *yaṁ yaṁ vāpi smaran bhāvaṁ tyajaty ante kalevaram*. *Ante* means “at the end.” The body is sure to end. *Antavanta ime dehā*. The body is *antavat*: it is destined to end. “As sure as death.” But *nityasyoktāḥ śarīriṇaḥ*. *Śarīriṇaḥ* means the spirit spark occupying the body. That is *nitya*, eternal. The whole process is that the eternal has to get rid of the non-permanent material contact. And he has to take leave for the spiritual world.

During our present life we have to practice in such a way that we remain constantly in the higher nature, in the spiritual nature, like an iron rod in the fire. Not that for one or two hours we make this association and try to be in the higher nature but after leaving this place we again turn to the lower nature. No. Whatever we hear from this place we should try to understand clearly without any doubt. For example, Lord *Kṛṣṇa* says that anyone who understands His appearance, disappearance, and activities—all these transcendental things—goes back to the kingdom of Godhead after leaving this body. Now, this fact should be clearly understood. So I am trying to make you understand clearly how it can be possible. We have to understand everything scrutinizingly. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* you will find, *tad vid-dhī pranīpātena paripraśnena sevayā*: One has to learn these things from the person who is in knowledge of them. It is not that simply by purchasing a *Bhagavad-gītā* we understand everything. No. *Tad vid-dhī pranīpātena paripraśnena sevayā*. You have to approach a person who is in knowledge of the thing. Without this, you cannot understand. It is recommended. It is essential.

Our propensity to inquire about the higher nature should be awakened. In the lower nature we are busy with eating, sleeping, defending, and sense

gratification. We should not be satisfied simply remaining in the lower nature. The human life is meant for developing the higher nature. The *Vedānta-sūtra* therefore says, *athāto brahma-jijñāsā*: Now we have the developed consciousness of the human body. Now is the time for asking about the Supreme Brahman.

So the higher nature has to be developed. This transcendental association is meant for developing that higher nature. We must understand the higher nature, as recommended in the *Vedas*. In all the scriptures it is said that without approaching a person who can teach you of the higher nature, you cannot develop the higher nature. You have the higher nature, but to invoke that higher nature requires the assistance of a person in the higher nature. That is recommended.

Accepting Higher Authority

If someone says, “I don’t require the help of any spiritual master,” that is wrong. In our Vedic culture, great learned scholars such as Śaṅkarācārya, Rāmānujācārya, Madhvācārya, Nimbarka, and Lord Caitanya all accepted a spiritual master. In India there have been many, many great scholars, and they all accepted a spiritual master. Even *Kṛṣṇa*, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, had a spiritual master because He wanted to show the example. He did not require under any circumstances to acquire knowledge from anyone, but because He was playing just like a human being He set the example of accepting a spiritual master. That is the system. *Evaṁ paramparā-prāptam imaṁ rājarṣayo viduḥ*. The disciplic succession must be accepted.

Now, just as we are trying to understand from *Kṛṣṇa*, Arjuna is trying to understand. Arjuna said to *Kṛṣṇa*, *śiṣyas te ’haṁ sādhi mām tvām prapannam*: “I

am surrendering unto You. Oh, accept me as Your disciple.” Śīṣya means disciple. Śas-dhātu is the verb from which this word śīṣya comes. Śīṣya means one who voluntarily accepts the disciplinary measures from the higher authority. He is called a śīṣya.

So to be situated in the higher nature, we have to approach a person like Kṛṣṇa or His representative. Arjuna got the instruction of *Bhagavad-gītā*, and he developed the higher nature. We have to take the knowledge from Arjuna as it is. We have to keep ourselves al-

ways in the higher nature. Then we will be prepared for the time of death. One day we will have to give up the body. I am now seventy years old. My days are numbered. I’ll have to give up this body. The warning is already there.

So we have to prepare ourselves. For example, when going from New York to California, you have to reserve a seat and make many arrangements. Similarly, we must know that we have to leave the body, and we must prepare for that. If we don’t prepare and all of a sudden death comes, our whole life is spoiled.

So we have to think of Kṛṣṇa. This is the easiest process: to think of the activities of Kṛṣṇa, how He appears, how He disappears. We must try to understand these things. This inquisitiveness is transcendental inquiry. And we must know the answers from persons who are in knowledge. That way we shall be able to put ourselves constantly in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The result will be that by quitting the body we shall be at once transferred to the transcendental world. This is the process.

Thank you very much. ❁

PASTIMES (continued from page 26)

But the impatient king broke into the room early, and Viśvakarmā disappeared, leaving behind the set of unfinished Deities. As the king began lamenting—for what would be the use of unfinished Deities?—Lord Jagannātha revealed His identity.

The Lord told the king that He had appeared in this form to fulfill the Vedic statement that although He is without hands and feet He accepts the offerings of His devotees and walks about to bestow His blessings upon the people of the earth. He added that the devotees who have achieved love of Godhead see Him as Śyāmasundara, Kṛṣṇa, the original Lord, holding a flute.

Then the sage Nārada came on the scene. He disclosed that Lord Kṛṣṇa had appeared in this particular form once before—in Kurukṣetra. Nārada himself had had the good fortune to see this. Hearing these statements, the king accepted Lord Jagannātha as his worshipable Lord. He understood that the form of the Deities was not an accidental creation: because he had been feeling intense separation from Kṛṣṇa, the Lord had appeared in this form. This was also a sign that the Lord had felt similar separation from the king. Overwhelmed with ecstasy, King Indradyumna began his worship. Since then these forms of Jagannātha, Baladeva, and Subhadrā have been worshiped in Purī.

The Ideal Place for Caitanya Mahāprabhu

It is not by chance that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu lived in Purī and there worshiped the Deity of Lord Jagannātha. Lord Caitanya, during His final pastimes, showed more and more the

mood of Rādhārāṇī. Day and night He lamented His separation from the Lord with intense feeling. Lord Jagannātha is the form Kṛṣṇa assumes as He thinks intensely and solely of the Vrajavāsīs, the *gopīs*, and Rādhārāṇī. Therefore the most appropriate Deity for Lord Caitanya, who had assumed the mood of Rādhārāṇī, was Lord Jagannātha.

The Meaning of the Rathayātrā Festival

Externally, Rathayātrā is spectacular—colorful and entertaining. Yet the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, the followers of Lord Caitanya, see in the Festival of the Chariots much more than just a happy event. The pulling of the cart by the Lord’s devotees symbolizes the attempt of the Vrajavāsīs, especially Rādhārāṇī and the *gopīs*, to bring Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma, and Subhadrā back to Vṛndāvana.

Vṛndāvana can also represent the heart of Kṛṣṇa’s devotee. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu prayed to Lord Kṛṣṇa, “For most people the mind and heart are one, but because My mind is never separated from Vṛndāvana, I consider My mind and Vṛndāvana to be one. My mind is already Vṛndāvana, and since You like Vṛndāvana, will You please place Your lotus feet there? I would deem that Your full mercy.” (Cc. *Madhya* 13.137) For the devotees of Lord Jagannātha who follow in the footsteps of Lord Caitanya, pulling the Rathayātrā cart is like pulling their worshipable Lord, Jagannātha or Kṛṣṇa, into their heart.

Festivals Around the World

The Lord of the universe now parades in major cities all over the world, increasing His mercy unlimitedly, responding to the desire of His pure devotee Śrīla Prabhupāda, who brought the

Rathayātrā to the West. The first Rathayātrā outside India was held on July 9, 1967, in San Francisco. That year the Deities rode on a flatbed truck borrowed from a group of hippies. In later years the Deities were placed on a more traditional chariot, a large wooden structure decorated with canopies and flags and pulled through the streets by the festival-goers.

As years passed, the chariots were made taller, and more beautiful, and soon ISKCON began holding Rathayātrās in many cities: New York, Los Angeles, London, Paris, Rome, Zurich, Sydney, Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal, Guadalajara, Rio de Janeiro, Moscow. Śrīla Prabhupāda happily acknowledged, “In 1973 there was a gorgeous Rathayātrā festival in London, England, and the car was brought to Trafalgar Square. The daily newspaper *The Guardian* published a front-page photo caption: ‘ISKCON Rathayātrā is rival to the Nelson Column in Trafalgar Square.’”

People everywhere are becoming attracted to the joyful and colorful Rathayātrā festival. Thousands of pleasure-seekers throng to behold the giant chariots, chant and dance a bit, enjoy tasty *prasādam* given free to all, or take part in a full festival of music, dance, exhibits, and spiritual entertainment. And because Lord Jagannātha is a most merciful form of the Lord, even those who hardly understand the philosophy behind Rathayātrā benefit just by seeing the festival or taking part in it. ❁

Lokanāth Swami has been a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda since 1972. He leads ISKCON’s worldwide Padayātrās, or walking pilgrimage parties.

EVERY TOWN & VILLAGE

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

WORLD NEWS

North America

A BTG columnist has won first place in the “inter-

national” category at the annual James Beard/Farberware Book Awards. The columnist, Yamuna Devi, won this “Oscar of the culinary world” with her book *Yamuna’s Table*. More than one thousand of America’s most influential culinary professionals attended the award ceremonies, held in New York City in May.

A video on cow slaughter and the environment took third place among 370 entries in a Canadian national video contest. The three Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees who produced the video received a \$1,000 award from the Canadian Governor General at a banquet in Toronto. The organizers of the contest are sending copies of the video to every school and public library in Canada.

United Kingdom

Deaf people are getting better opportunities to take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness thanks to the efforts of Bhakta Dinesh and Jagannātha Kṛṣṇa Dāsa. Dinesh, who is deaf, taught Jagannātha Kṛṣṇa sign language. Now the two of them have organized a monthly gathering of deaf people interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Kavita Kohli, a social worker and interpreter for the deaf, helps with the programs.

EMI Records has re-released “The Radha Krishna Temple” album, originally produced by George Harrison for Apple Records in 1971.

Europe

Śrīla Prabhupāda’s first Hungarian disciple was killed in a car accident this winter. The disciple, Śrīpāda B. A. Nārāyaṇa Swami, formerly known as Bhakti Dayāl Swami, had been a pioneer in spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness in Hungary.

More than two hundred students and professors attended conferences on Kṛṣṇa consciousness last winter in Spain at

the University of Barcelona and the University of Tarragona. The conferences were organized by the departments of anthropology.

Ten thousand visitors viewed a Vedic art exhibit organized by ISKCON devotees in January at an art gallery in Gdynia, Poland. The mayor opened the exhibit. Large audiences attended Kṛṣṇa conscious programs each evening.

One out of every twenty Latvians has received a book about Kṛṣṇa. Since 1990, the year before Latvia gained independence, the devotees have sold 70,000 books and 60,000 magazines and newspapers.

The ISKCON temple in Sarajevo stays open. “In this war,” writes Bhakta Sevko, “the temple is functioning like in peace. Every day we are holding programs, and every Sunday we are having a feast. By the mercy of the spiritual masters and all of the devotees who are thinking of us, we have remained untouched.”

Commonwealth of Independent States

Hare Krishna Food for Life provides food for as many as 200 people a day in Dzershyensk, Russia, a city once closed to visitors. Dzershyensk was formerly the site of factories for chemical weapons. Now guests enjoy *prasādam* at a center-city cafe



Bhaktin Ilona takes Kṛṣṇa’s message to the people of Latvia.

Anda Krauze

called Younost. Before the guests eat, devotees give a ten-minute explanation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. One group of devotees sings the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra while another group serves the *prasādam*.

Belarus radio broadcasts weekly shows about Kṛṣṇa conscious philosophy.

Devotees in Sukhumi, Georgia, have been feeding more than a thousand people daily, in the midst of a civil war.

India Residents of Vijayawada witnessed ISKCON's first Rathayātrā festival in their city last January. Vijayawada, on the sacred River Krishna in the state of Andhra Pradesh, is named for Arjuna, also known as Vijaya. The festival was inaugurated by Dr. P. V. Ranga Rao, the state's education minister and son of India's prime minister.

Laksmi Shankar sang devotional songs for the pleasure of Lord Jagannātha at the two-day Rathayātrā festival in Coimbatore, in the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu.

Devotees from Trivandrum camped in a shed for two months last winter in the cold Sabarimala Hills of Kerala. The devotees were there to sell Śrīla Prabhupāda's books and teach Kṛṣṇa consciousness to some of the millions of

pilgrims who climb the hills on an arduous pilgrimage to worship the demigod Ayyappa. The devotees manned their stall around the clock to cater to the constant stream of pilgrims.

A "Prabhupāda Ratha"—a chariot carrying an image of Śrīla Prabhupāda—has begun touring eastern India. The tour began in April from Śrīdāma Māyāpur, the birthplace of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, as one of the programs leading up to the Śrīla Prabhupāda Centennial Year, 1996.

South Africa Durban's biggest cultural festival—Rathayātrā—celebrated its fifth year last December. Devotees estimate that 178,000 people received free plates of Kṛṣṇa *prasādam* during the five-day event. Durban's director of publicity praised devotees for organizing "the most exciting, peace-promoting, and successful festival in Durban."

Latin America Managua, the capital of Nicaragua, has an ISKCON center again, after fifteen years. The temple stands in a quiet residential neighborhood near the center of the city.

Devotees in Cuenca, Ecuador, have started a new Kṛṣṇa conscious farm in a valley at the confluence of two rivers.

PADAYĀTRĀ NEWS

Padayātrā India

After a tour through Bihar, the Padayātrā walked down through Orissa to attend the Rathayātrā festival in Jagannātha Purī. Now the Padayātrā is traveling south through the state of Andhra Pradesh.

Padayātrā America

At press time the *padayātrīs*, after their walk through Central America, were resting in Panama and planning a tour of South America.

Padayātrā Europe

The Padayātrā spent three weeks in April and May around London, and then June in Sweden. On July 7 it starts a month-long tour of Czech, ending on August 10, Janmaṣṭami, the appearance day of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Next comes two weeks in Luxemburg, and then back to England.

Padayātrā New Zealand

In March, devotees completed their six-week walk through the North Island. Every two or three days they held programs in town halls, attended by one hundred to two hundred guests. The walk ended in Auckland, where the Padayātrā became a Rathayātrā parade, led by Mayor Les

Mills and his wife, Colleen. In his welcome address the mayor told the devotees, "We're with you in body and spirit!"

After the festival some devotees set out again, walking beside the bullock cart. They plan to visit every town and village in New Zealand.



Auckland mayor Les Mills and his wife, Colleen, lead Auckland's Rathayātrā parade.

THE SYMPTOMS OF A SĀDHU

*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*

Lord Kapila, an incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa, is teaching His mother, Devahūti, about devotional service. As the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam continues, Lord Kapila describes the qualities of sādhus and the importance of their association.

THIRD CANTO/CHAPTER 25

18 ज्ञानवैराग्ययुक्तेन भक्तियुक्तेन चात्मना ।
परिपश्यत्युदासीनं प्रकृतिं च हतौजसम् ॥१८॥

*jñāna-vairāgya-yuktena
bhakti-yuktena cātmanā
paripaśyaty udāsinam
prakṛtiṁ ca hataujasam*

jñāna—knowledge; vairāgya—renunciation; yuktena—equipped with; bhakti—devotional service; yuktena—equipped with; ca—and; ātmanā—by the mind; paripaśyati—one sees; udāsinam—indifferent; prakṛtiṁ—material existence; ca—and; hata-ojasam—reduced in strength.

In that position of self-realization, by practice of knowledge and renunciation in devotional service, one sees everything in the right perspective; he becomes indifferent to material existence, and the material influence acts less powerfully upon him.

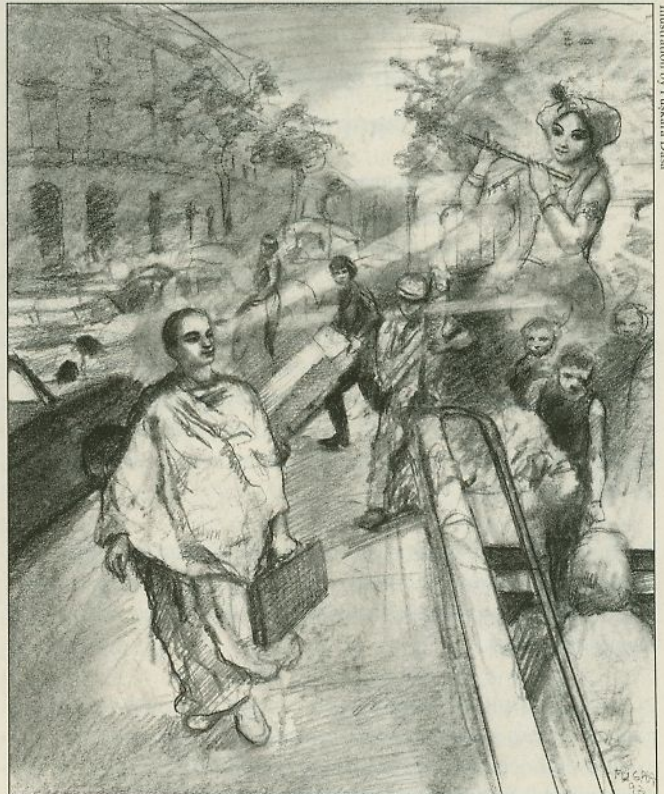


Illustration by Puskar Dasa

A self-realized person who sees Kṛṣṇa everywhere works free from attachment and illusion.

PURPORT: As the contamination of the germs of a particular disease can influence a weaker person, similarly the influence of material nature, or illusory energy, can act on the weaker, or conditioned, soul but not on the liberated soul. Self-realization is the position of the liberated state. One understands his constitutional position by knowledge and *vairāgya*, renunciation. Without knowledge, one cannot have realization. The realization that one is the infinitesimal part and parcel of the Supreme Spirit makes him unattached to material, conditional life. That is the beginning of devotional service. Unless one is liberated from material contamination, one cannot engage himself in the devotional service of the Lord. In this verse, therefore, it is stated, *jñāna-vairāgya-yuktena*: when one is in full knowledge of one's constitutional position and is in the renounced order of life, detached from material attraction, then, by pure devotional service, *bhakti-yuktena*, he can engage himself as a loving servant of the Lord. *Paripāśyati* means that he can see everything in its right perspective. Then the influence of material nature becomes almost nil. This is also confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā*. *Brahma-bhūtaḥ prasannātmā*: when one is self-realized he becomes happy and free from the influence of material nature, and at that time he is freed from lamentation and hankering. The Lord states that position as *mad-bhaktiṃ labhate parām*, the real state of beginning devotional service. Similarly, it is confirmed in the *Nārada-pañcarātra* that when the senses are purified they can then be engaged in the devotional service of the Lord. One who is attached to material contamination cannot be a devotee.

19 न युज्यमानया भक्त्या भगवत्यखिलात्मनि । सदृशोऽस्ति शिवः पन्था योगिनं ब्रह्मसिद्धये ॥१९॥

*na yujyamānayā bhaktiā
bhagavaty akhilātmani
sadr̥śo 'sti śivaḥ panthā-
yogināṃ brahma-siddhaye*

na—not; *yujyamānayā*—being performed; *bhaktiā*—devotional service; *bhagavaty*—towards the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *akhila-ātmani*—the Supersoul; *sadr̥śaḥ*—like; *asti*—there is; *śivaḥ*—auspicious; *panthāḥ*—path; *yoginām*—of the *yogīs*; *brahma-siddhaye*—for perfection in self-realization.

Perfection in self-realization cannot be attained by any kind of *yogī* unless he engages in devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for that is the only auspicious path.

PURPORT: That knowledge and renunciation are never perfect unless joined by devotional service is explicitly explained here. *Na yujyamānayā* means “without being dovetailed.” When there is devotional service, then the question is where to offer that service. Devotional service is to be offered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead,

who is the Supersoul of everything, for that is the only reliable path of self-realization, or Brahman realization. *Brahma-siddhaye* means to understand oneself to be different from matter, to understand oneself to be Brahman. The Vedic words are *ahaṃ brahmāsmi*. *Brahma-siddhi* means that one should know that he is not matter; he is pure soul. There are different kinds of *yogīs*, but every *yogī* is supposed to engage in self-realization, or Brahman realization. It is clearly stated here that unless one is fully engaged in the devotional service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead one cannot have easy approach to the path of *brahma-siddhi*.

In the beginning of the Second Chapter of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is stated that when one engages himself in the devotional service of Vāsudeva, spiritual knowledge and renunciation of the material world automatically become manifest. Thus a devotee does not have to try separately for renunciation or knowledge. Devotional service itself is so powerful that by one's service attitude, everything is revealed. It is stated here, *śivaḥ panthāḥ*: this is the only auspicious path for self-realization. The path of devotional service is the most confidential means for attaining Brahman realization. That perfection in Brahman realization is attained through the auspicious path of devotional service indicates that the so-called Brahman realization, or realization of the *brahmajyoti* effulgence, is not *brahma-siddhi*. Beyond that *brahmajyoti* there is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the *Upaniṣads* a devotee prays to the Lord to kindly put aside the effulgence, *brahmajyoti*, so that he may see within the *brahmajyoti* the actual, eternal form of the Lord. Unless one attains realization of the transcendental form of the Lord, there is no question of *bhakti*. *Bhakti* necessitates the existence of the recipient of devotional service and the devotee who renders devotional service. *Brahma-siddhi* through devotional service is realization of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The understanding of the effulgent rays of the body of the Supreme Godhead is not the perfect stage of *brahma-siddhi*, or Brahman realization. Nor is the realization of the Paramātmā feature of the Supreme Person perfect, for Bhagavān, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is *akhilātma*—He is the Supersoul. One who realizes the Supreme Personality realizes the other features, namely the Paramātmā feature and the Brahman feature, and that total realization is *brahma-siddhi*.

20 प्रसङ्गमजरं पाशमात्मनः कवयो विदुः । स एव साधुषु कृतो मोक्षद्वारमपावृतम् ॥२०॥

*prasaṅgam ajaram pāśam
ātmanaḥ kavayo viduḥ
sa eva sādhuṣu kṛto
mokṣa-dvāram apāvṛtam*

prasaṅgam—attachment; *ajaram*—strong; *pāśam*—entanglement; *ātmanaḥ*—of the soul; *kavayaḥ*—learned men; *viduḥ*—know; *sa eva*—that same; *sādhuṣu*—to the devotees; *kṛtaḥ*—applied; *mokṣa-dvāram*—the door of liberation; *apāvṛtam*—opened.

Every learned man knows very well that attachment for the material is the greatest entanglement of the spirit soul. But that same attachment, when applied to the self-realized devotees, opens the door of liberation.

PURPORT: Here it is clearly stated that attachment for one thing is the cause of bondage in conditioned life, and the same attachment, when applied to something else, opens the door of liberation. Attachment cannot be killed; it has simply to be transferred. Attachment for material things is called material consciousness, and attachment for Kṛṣṇa or His devotee is called Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Consciousness, therefore, is the platform of attachment. It is clearly stated here that when we simply purify the consciousness from material consciousness to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, we attain liberation. Despite the statement that one should give up attachment, desirelessness is not possible for a living entity. A living entity, by constitution, has the propensity to be attached to something. We see that if someone has no object of attachment, if he has no children, then he transfers his attachment to cats and dogs. This indicates that the propensity for attachment cannot be stopped; it must be utilized for the best purpose. Our attachment for material things perpetuates our conditional state, but the same attachment, when transferred to the Supreme Personality of Godhead or His devotee, is the source of liberation.

Here it is recommended that attachment should be transferred to the self-realized devotees, the *sādhus*. And who is a *sādhu*? A *sādhu* is not just an ordinary man with a saffron robe or long beard. A *sādhu* is described in *Bhagavad-gītā* as one who unflinchingly engages in devotional service. Even though one is found not to be following the strict rules and regulations of devotional service, if one simply has unflinching faith in Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Person, he is understood to be a *sādhu*. *Sādhur eva sa mantavyaḥ*. A *sādhu* is a strict follower of devotional service. It is recommended here that if one at all wants to realize Brahman, or spiritual perfection, his attachment should be transferred to the *sādhu*, or devotee. Lord Caitanya also confirmed this. *Lava-mātra sādhu-saṅge sarva-siddhi haya*: simply by a moment's association with a *sādhu*, one can attain perfection.

Mahātmā is a synonym of *sādhu*. It is said that service to a *mahātmā*, or elevated devotee of the Lord, is *dvāram āhur vimukteḥ*, the royal road of liberation. *Mahat-sevāṁ dvāram āhur vimuktes tamo-dvāraṁ yositāṁ saṅgi-saṅgam* (*Bhag.* 5.5.2). Rendering service to the materialists has the opposite effect. If anyone offers service to a gross materialist, or a person engaged only in sense enjoyment, then by association with such a person the door to hell is opened. The same principle is confirmed here. Attachment to a devotee is attachment to the service of the Lord because if one associates with a *sādhu*, the result will be that the *sādhu* will teach him how to become a devotee, a worshiper and a sincere servitor of the Lord. These are the gifts of a *sādhu*. If we want to associate with a *sādhu*, we cannot expect him to give us instructions on how to improve our material condition, but he will give us

instructions on how to cut the knot of the contamination of material attraction and how to elevate ourselves in devotional service. That is the result of associating with a *sādhu*. Kapila Muni first of all instructs that the path of liberation begins with such association.

21 तितिक्षवः कारुणिकाः सुहृदः सर्वदेहिनाम् ।

अजातशत्रवः शान्ताः साधवः साधुभूषणाः ॥२१॥

*titikṣavaḥ kāruṇikāḥ
suhṛdaḥ sarva-dehinām
ajāta-śatravaḥ śāntāḥ
sādhavaḥ sādhu-bhūṣanāḥ*

titikṣavaḥ—tolerant; *kāruṇikāḥ*—merciful; *suhṛdaḥ*—friendly; *sarva-dehinām*—to all living entities; *ajāta-śatravaḥ*—inimical to none; *śāntāḥ*—peaceful; *sādhavaḥ*—abiding by scriptures; *sādhu-bhūṣanāḥ*—adorned with sublime characteristics.

The symptoms of a *sādhu* are that he is tolerant, merciful and friendly to all living entities. He has no enemies, he is peaceful, he abides by the scriptures, and all his characteristics are sublime.

PURPORT: A *sādhu*, as described above, is a devotee of the Lord. His concern, therefore, is to enlighten people in devotional service to the Lord. That is his mercy. He knows that without devotional service to the Lord, human life is spoiled. A devotee travels all over the country, from door to door, preaching, “Be Kṛṣṇa conscious. Be a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Don't spoil your life in simply fulfilling your animal propensities. Human life is meant for self-realization, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness.” These are the preachings of a *sādhu*. He is not satisfied with his own liberation. He always thinks about others. He is the most compassionate personality towards all the fallen souls. One of his qualifications, therefore, is *kāruṇika*, great mercy to the fallen souls. While engaged in preaching work, he has to meet with so many opposing elements, and therefore the *sādhu*, or devotee of the Lord, has to be very tolerant. Someone may ill-treat him because the conditioned souls are not prepared to receive the transcendental knowledge of devotional service. They do not like it; that is their disease. The *sādhu* has the thankless task of impressing upon them the importance of devotional service. Sometimes devotees are personally attacked with violence. Lord Jesus Christ was crucified, Haridāsa Thākura was caned in twenty-two marketplaces, and Lord Caitanya's principal assistant, Nityānanda, was violently attacked by Jagāi and Mādhāi. But still they were tolerant because their mission was to deliver the fallen souls. One of the qualifications of a *sādhu* is that he is very tolerant and is merciful to all fallen souls. He is merciful because he is the well-wisher of all living entities. He is not only a well-wisher of human society, but a well-wisher of animal society as well. It is said here, *sarva-dehinām*, which indicates all living entities who have accepted material bodies. Not only

does the human being have a material body, but other living entities, such as cats and dogs, also have material bodies. The devotee of the Lord is merciful to everyone—the cats, dogs, trees, etc. He treats all living entities in such a way that they can ultimately get salvation from this material entanglement. Sivānanda Sena, one of the disciples of Lord Caitanya, gave liberation to a dog by treating the dog transcendently. There are many instances where a dog got salvation by association with a *sādhu*, because a *sādhu* engages in the highest philanthropic activities for the benediction of all living entities. Yet although a *sādhu* is not inimical towards anyone, the world is so ungrateful that even a *sādhu* has many enemies.

What is the difference between an enemy and a friend? It is a difference in behavior. A *sādhu* behaves with all conditioned souls for their ultimate relief from material entanglement. Therefore, no one can be more friendly than a *sādhu* in relieving a conditioned soul. A *sādhu* is calm, and he quietly and peacefully follows the principles of scripture. A *sādhu* means one who follows the principles of scripture and at the same time is a devotee of the Lord. One who actually follows the principles of scripture must be a devotee of God because all the *śāstras* instruct us to obey the orders of the Personality of Godhead. *Sādhu*, therefore, means a follower of the scriptural injunctions and a devotee of the Lord. All these characteristics are prominent in a devotee. A devotee develops all the good qualities of the demigods, whereas a nondevotee, even though academically qualified, has no actual good qualifications or good characteristics according to the standard of transcendental realization.

22 मय्यनन्येन भावेन भक्तिं कुर्वन्ति ये दृढाम् ।
मत्कृते त्यक्तकर्माणस्त्यक्तस्वजनबान्धवाः ॥२२॥

*mayy ananyena bhāvena
bhaktim kurvanti ye dṛdhām
mat-kṛte tyakta-karmāṇas
tyakta-svajana-bāndhavāḥ*

mayi—unto Me; *ananyena bhāvena*—with undeviated mind; *bhaktim*—devotional service; *kurvanti*—perform; *ye*—those who; *dṛdhām*—staunch; *mat-kṛte*—for My sake; *tyakta*—renounced; *karmāṇas*—activities; *tyakta*—renounced; *sva jana*—family relationships; *bāndhavāḥ*—friendly acquaintances.

Such a *sādhu* engages in staunch devotional service to the Lord without deviation. For the sake of the Lord he renounces all other connections, such as family relationships and friendly acquaintances within the world.

PURPORT: A person in the renounced order of life, a *sannyāsī*, is also called a *sādhu* because he renounces everything—his home, his comfort, his friends, his relatives, and his duties to friends and to family. He renounces everything for the sake of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. A

sannyāsī is generally in the renounced order of life, but his renunciation will be successful only when his energy is employed in the service of the Lord with great austerity. It is said here, therefore, *bhaktim kurvanti ye dṛdhām*. A person who seriously engages in the service of the Lord and is in the renounced order of life is a *sādhu*. A *sādhu* is one who has given up all responsibility to society, family, and worldly humanitarianism, simply for the service of the Lord. As soon as he takes his birth in the world, a person has so many responsibilities and obligations—to the public, to the demigods, to the great sages, to the general living beings, to his parents, to the family forefathers and to many others. When he gives up all such obligations for the sake of the service of the Supreme Lord, he is not punished for such renunciation of obligation. But if for sense gratification a person renounces all such obligations, he is punished by the law of nature.

23 मदाश्रयाः कथा मृष्टाः शृण्वन्ति कथयन्ति च ।
तपन्ति विविधास्तापा नैतान्मद्गतचेतसः ॥२३॥

*mad-āśrayāḥ kathā mṛṣṭāḥ
śṛṇvanti kathayanti ca
tapanti vividhās tāpā
naitān mad-gata-cetasah*

mat-āśrayāḥ—about Me; *kathāḥ*—stories; *mṛṣṭāḥ*—delightful; *śṛṇvanti*—they hear; *kathayanti*—they chant; *ca*—and; *tapanti*—inflict suffering; *vividhāḥ*—various; *tāpāḥ*—the material miseries; *na*—do not; *etān*—unto them; *mat-gata*—fixed on Me; *cetasah*—their thoughts.

Engaged constantly in chanting and hearing about Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the *sādhus* do not suffer from material miseries because they are always filled with thoughts of My pastimes and activities.

PURPORT: There are multifarious miseries in material existence—those pertaining to the body and the mind, those imposed by other living entities and those imposed by natural disturbances. But a *sādhu* is not disturbed by such miserable conditions because his mind is always filled with Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and thus he does not like to talk about anything but the activities of the Lord. Mahārāja Ambariṣa did not speak of anything but the pastimes of the Lord. *Vacāṁsi vaikunṭha-guṇānuvarṇane* (*Bhāg.* 9.4.18). He engaged his words only in glorification of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. *Sādhus* are always interested in hearing about the activities of the Lord or His devotees. Since they are filled with Kṛṣṇa consciousness, they are forgetful of the material miseries. Ordinary conditioned souls, being forgetful of the activities of the Lord, are always full of anxieties and material tribulations. On the other hand, since the devotees always engage in the topics of the Lord, they are forgetful of the miseries of material existence.

(continued in the next issue)

Śrīla Prabhupāda Speaks Out

THE FIGHTING SPIRIT

The following conversation with a military officer took place in Indore, India, on December 13, 1970.

Guest: From what I have heard from you, I have not understood your conception of God.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Our conception of God is that He is a transcendental person. *Īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇa sac-cid-ānanda vigrahaḥ*. *Īśvara* means Lord. The Supreme Lord is a person. As you are a person, He is also a person. But He is the chief person. *Nityo nityānām*. He is the leader, and we are the led. Or He is the master, and we are the servitors. That is our self realization, to understand that “I am an eternal servant of God.” In *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa says, *mamaivāṁśo jīva-loke jīva-bhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ*: “Eternally all living entities are My part and parcels.” So as the part and parcel of anything is meant to serve the cause of the whole, the only business of the living entity is to serve the Supreme. That is all.

Guest: One more thing, sir. Lord Kṛṣṇa never asked Arjuna to sit and do *bhajana* [worship]. He said, *uttiṣṭha mām anusudhaya yuddhya*: “Get up and fight.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, so fight with whom?

Guest: Whoever it is, but you must know who your enemies are.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That’s a nice proposal. Unless you know your enemy, how can you fight? We Vaiṣṇavas do not say that there is no need of fighting. We never say that. When there is need of fighting, we must fight. Someone in New York asked me, “Why is Kṛṣṇa advising Arjuna to fight, to become violent?” But there is no meaning to protesting against the action of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. That is our view.

We are Vaiṣṇavas, and we are chanting. But that does not mean that when there is need of fighting we shall lack in strength. We can fight. One gentleman told me, “Vaiṣṇavism makes one dull. One cannot act.” But I said, “No, you have not seen a Vaiṣṇava.” In the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyana* the heroes

were Arjuna and Hanumān, and they fought.

Guest: They fought.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. And who can be a better Vaiṣṇava than them?

Guest: Nobody.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: So being a Vaiṣṇava does not mean one is dull. No.

Guest: That is well proved. If there is need . . .

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. So our present fighting is against atheism. The atheists say, “There is no God. God is not a person. God is dead. I am God. You are God.” We are fighting against these principles. Our fighting is very strong. Don’t think we are idle. I have come here to fight with atheists. We say, “God is Kṛṣṇa. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is Kṛṣṇa. He is a person, and He is not dead.” This is our preaching. Therefore it is a fight.

Guest: God is not dead. He is not dead.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: How can He be dead? How can you think that God is dead? That is foolishness.

Guest: If you think that God is dead, that is your own ignorance.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: So we are fighting against this ignorance.

And at the present moment so many [false] theories and religious principles have sprung up unnecessarily. You see? But we are sticking to the principle that the only religion is to surrender to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. That is real religion: surrender.

Guest: Complete surrender.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Complete surrender. That is real religion. Kṛṣṇa says, *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja*: “Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me.” These are Kṛṣṇa’s words. *Bahunām janmanām ante jñānavān mām prapadyate. Prapadyate*—that is surrender.

Guest: On the first day of this inauguration [of a program in Indore], the speakers were giving some definitions

of karma-yoga.

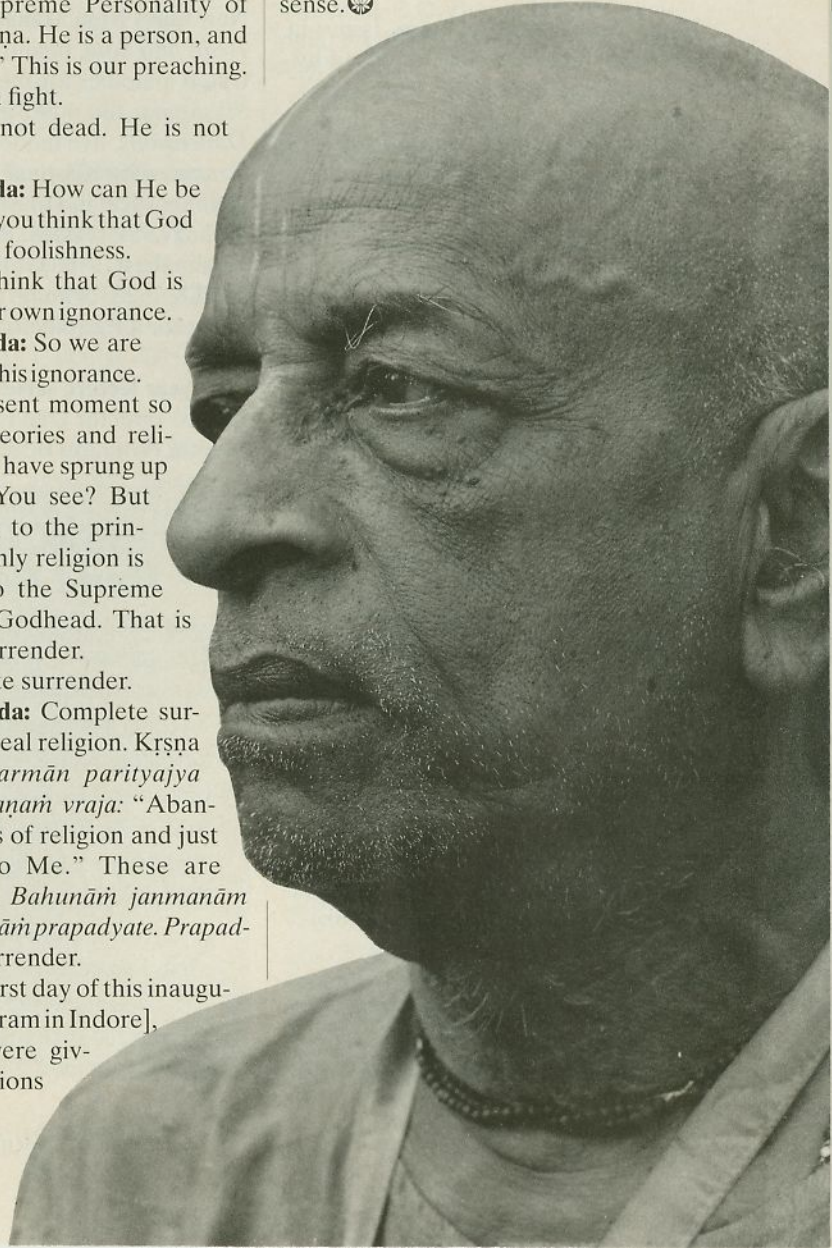
Śrīla Prabhupāda: Oh, the governor. Just see, he was speaking of karma-yoga. And in India—the land of sages, the land of Kṛṣṇa, the land of Lord Rāmacandra, the land of Mahārāja Parīkṣit—cow slaughter is going on without any restriction. And they are speaking of karma-yoga. Just see the fun.

Guest: I don’t know where India is going, where the land of Kṛṣṇa is going.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Well, we should try our best.

Guest: Yes, we have to fight these habits. It is our duty.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, that’s it. So you are a military man. I request you to fight against this non-sense. ☸



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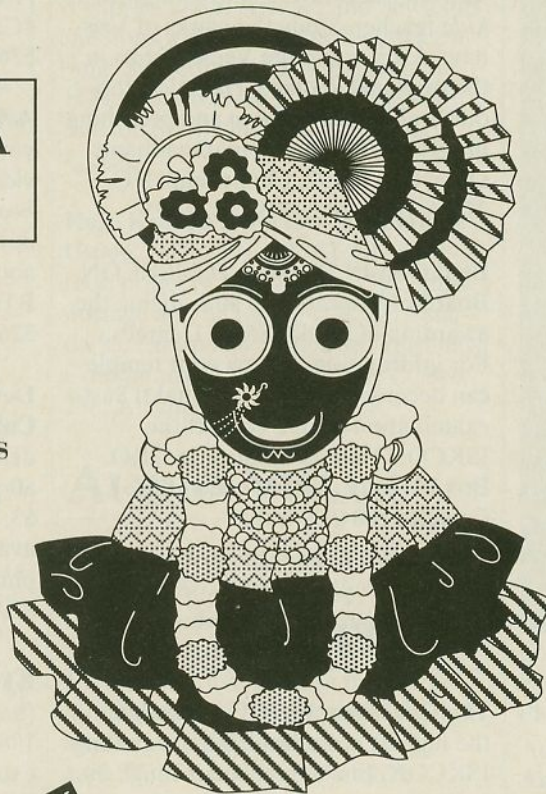
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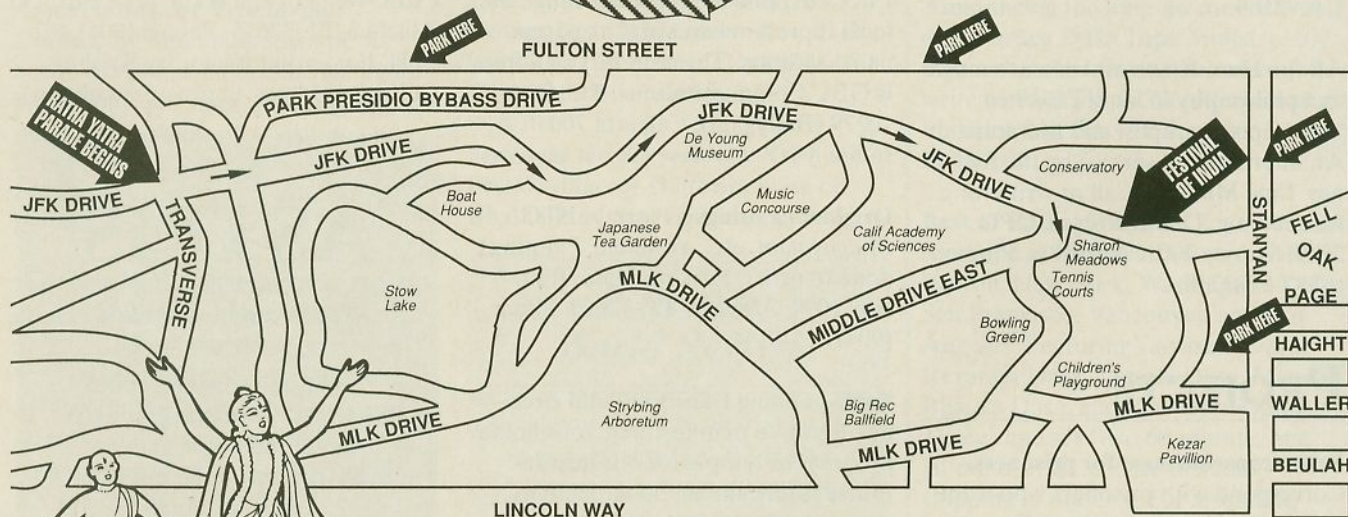
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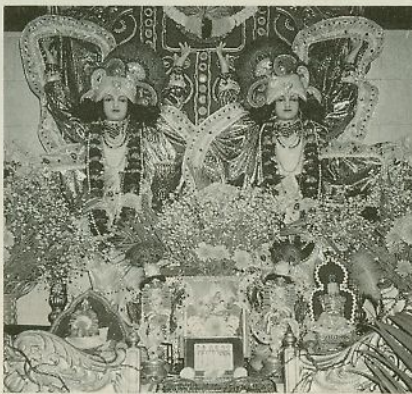
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The Hare Kṛṣṇa Calendar

Month of Vāmana (June 5–July 4)

JULY

4—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana. First month of Cāturmāsya begins (fasting from green leafy vegetables).

Month of Śrīdhara (July 5—August 2)

JULY

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

12—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Lokanātha Gosvāmī, a great devotee of Lord Caitanya.

15—Kāmikā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

29—Pavitropanā Ekādaśī, fasting from grains and beans. Jhulana Yātrā (swing festival) of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda begins.

30—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Gaurīdāsa Paṇḍita, an associate of Lord Caitanya.

AUGUST

2—Jhulana Yātrā ends. Appearance anniversary of Lord Balarāma. Fasting till noon, followed by feasting. Second month of Cāturmāsya begins (fasting from yogurt).

Month of Hṛṣīkeśa

(August 3–17, and continues after the Adhika month of Puruṣottama)

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

12—Appearance anniversary of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Fasting till noon, followed by feasting.

14—Annadā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

This calendar is 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.

Adhika Month of Puruṣottama

(August 18–September 16)

The “Adhika” month is an extra month inserted in the Vedic calendar at certain times. This extra month keeps the Vedic lunar calendar synchronized with solar events.

SEPTEMBER

12—Śuddha Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

Month of Hṛṣīkeśa (cont.) (September 17–30)

SEPTEMBER

19—Anniversary of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s arrival in the United States.

20—Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Sītā Devī, the consort of Śrīla Advaita Ācārya.

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

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

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

27—Śrī Vāmanadvādaśī, appearance anniversary of Lord

Vāmanadeva. Feast at noon. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

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

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

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



Upon His appearance, Lord Vāmanadeva is offered gifts by His parents and the demigods.

Painting by Pankaj Dasa

We Queer Conditioned Souls

by Sureśvara Dāsa

YOU CAN'T MISS JACK. The feather in his hat, the flower in his lapel, the sottish old twinkle. Round the town square he courts ladies often half his age, tipping his hat like some preposterous prince. We get along tremendously, Jack and I, because there but for Śrīla Prabhupāda goes your Vedic observer. And because what I have to say sounds so wonderfully preposterous to him that he loves to ask me questions.

"What's this country coming to, Rich?" he began recently, unfurling the morning paper.

"What's the matter, Romeo? Juliet jilt you again?"

"I'm serious, Rich. Look at this."

The headline screamed in the sunshine: PRESIDENT FAVORS GAYS IN MILITARY.

Then came Jack's editorial: "Queers in the schools, queers in the churches, queers in the government. Now our wrists are going limp on the front lines! Rich, I ask you again, what is this country coming to?"

"The mode of ignorance, my friend. But don't worry about our wrists. Alexander the Great favored males, and he conquered clear to India. If we really want to save the country, we'll have to tame our passion—or accept its fag end, ignorance. Tell me something, Jack, do you remember the first time you heard about sex?"

Jack smiled at the question, a setup for my "wild wisdom," as he called it. Playing wistful, he looked out across the courthouse green. "It's been a long time, Rich. How about you?"

"As a matter of fact, I remember the exact instant," I said, seizing the cue. "It was the first day of

junior high school. I was walking up the long steps, thinking about what the guys had been talking about at the bus stop. About what Jeff and Judy had been doing in the McGee barn. And then it hit me and I whispered, 'That's weird.' Another step and I whispered it again. 'That's weird.' And another, each time whispering my conviction, until at last I reached the top step and realized the ultimate weirdness: my parents conceiving me. 'That's really weird.' "

"That's nature, Rich," twinkled Jack.

"I know, but listen to how an innocent's impression of sex can remarkably resemble the mature realization of great saints." Thumbing through my pocket *Gītā*, I found Prabhupāda's citation of the Vaiṣṇava saint Yāmunācārya: " 'Since I have been engaged in the transcendental loving service of Kṛṣṇa, realizing ever-new pleasure in Him, whenever I think of sex pleasure, I spit at the thought, and my lips curl with distaste.' "

As I read, the courthouse clock struck twelve, sending a parade of secretaries on their lunch hour. Jack moistened his lips and leaned in close. "What if every time you spit, you think of sex?"

"Ah, then ignorance is truly nigh," I emoted, feeling like a foil to Woody Allen. Like Woody, though, Jack wanted something more than the fashion show unfolding. Me too. I kept going.

"Instead of educating innocence, our hedonistic society exploits it, convincing us that our essential nature is not spiritual but sexual."

"But sex is natural," Jack persisted.

"Then so is homosexuality."

(please turn to page 46)



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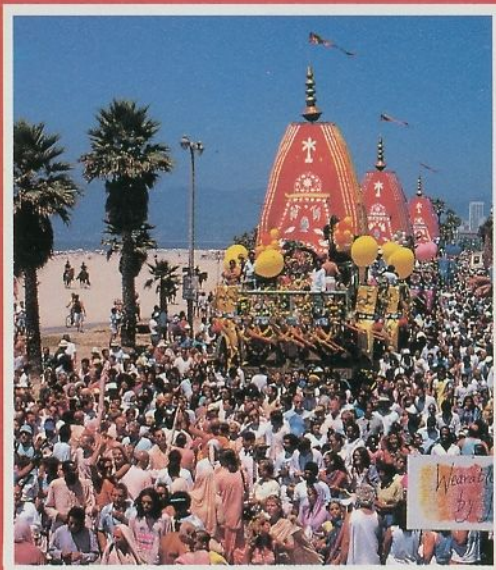
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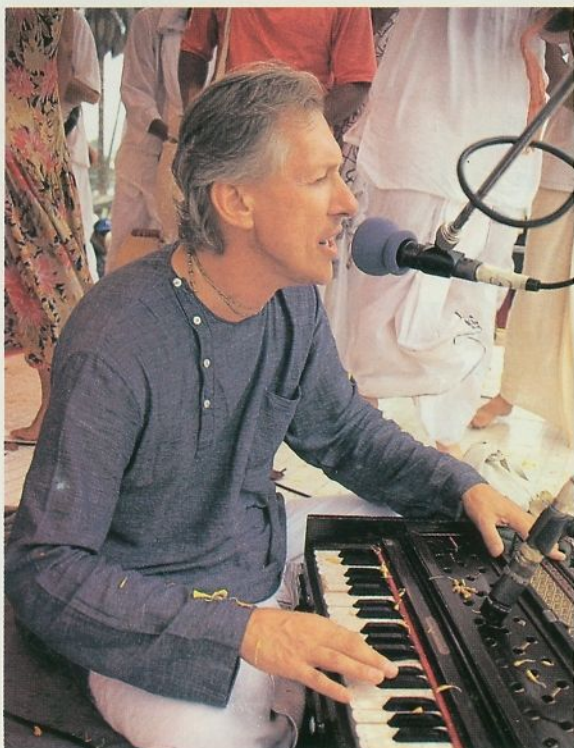
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Vaiyāsaki Dāsa at the 1992 Los Angeles Rathayātrā festival.