

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

# BACK TO GODHEAD

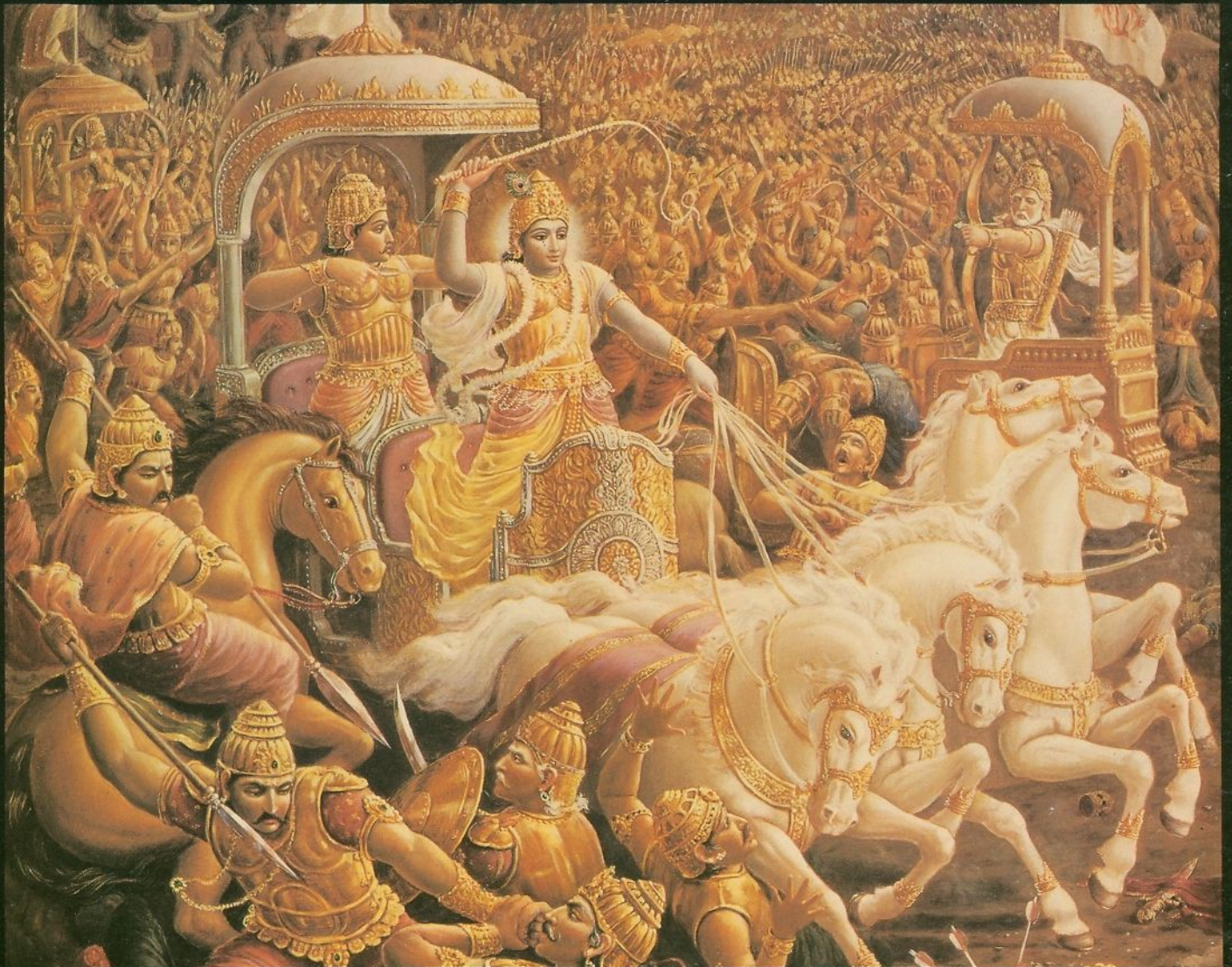
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STARTING IN THIS ISSUE!

# MAHĀBHĀRATA

The History of Greater India







## Muralīdhara

*Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Who Carries the Flute*

A painting by Annapūrṇā Devī Dāsī



# BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement

Founded 1944 • Vol. 27, No. 5 • September / October 1993

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**COVER:** On the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, Lord Kṛṣṇa drives the chariot of Arjuna as Arjuna aims an arrow at his grandfather, the mighty Bhīṣma. The Kurukṣetra war is the climax of the *Mahābhārata*, which we begin presenting in this issue of *Back to Godhead*. For the first excerpt from this great epic, please see page 24. (Painting by Parikṣit Dāsa.)



# BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement

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(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 **c** like the **ch** in **chair**. Pronounce consonants like **ch**, **jh**, and **dh** as in **staunch-heart**, **hedge-hog**, and **red-hot**. Pronounce **ś** and **ṣ** like **sh**. So for *Kṛṣṇa* say KRISHNA, and for *Caitanya* say CHAITANYA.

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

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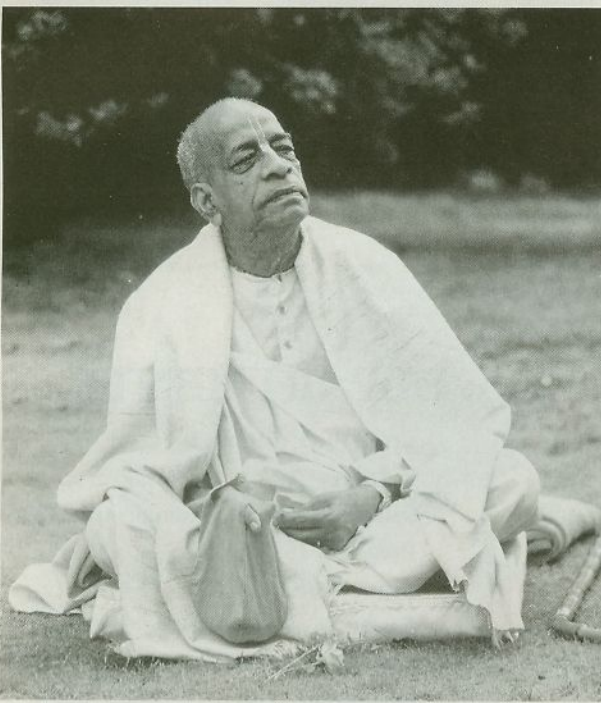
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## His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda

Founder-Ācārya of the  
International Society for Krishna Consciousness

## Statement of Purposes

*Back to Godhead* magazine is a cultural presentation to respiritualize human society. It aims at achieving the following purposes:

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

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



# FROM THE EDITOR

## Magnolias and Rattlesnakes

AFTER THREE YEARS in San Diego, we've moved to the other side of America, to the Hare Kṛṣṇa farm outside the small town of Alachua, in north central Florida.

Alachua lies about seventy miles south of Georgia, eighty miles inland from the Atlantic, half an hour's drive from Gainesville (yes, Gainesville), home of the University of Florida, where students on the plaza, every day for the last twenty years, have augmented their studies with a full lunch of *Kṛṣṇa-prasādam*.

Alachua gets weather that's pleasantly warm in the winter, blazing hot in the summer. Thunderstorms blow in and out at any time of day.

Magnolias thrive here. Spanish moss hangs from the trees. Morning and evening are ushered in by choruses of frogs, birds, and crickets. We've got rattlesnakes too. A few weeks ago Arcita's shotgun nailed one about five feet long.

Our new office is a double-wide mobile home we've plunked down on the edge of a field. Woods line the dirt road in front of us, pastures the other three sides. All of our neighbors are cows.

The temple's land runs for 120 acres, and other devotees own more land nearby. All together, the area has pulled in more than 200 devotees.

The force behind our move was the married people on our staff: Nāgarāja Dāsa, our



*Left to right: Jayādvaita Swami, Parambrahma Dāsa, Yamarāja Dāsa, Nāgarāja Dāsa, Prāṇadā Dāsī, and Arcita Dāsa, with Raman, the team mascot.*

managing editor, and his wife, Prāṇadā Dāsī, who proofreads BTG and helps us watch over the business side of things. For them, San Diego meant paying high rent and raising their child in the city. In Alachua, they're building a house on their own land (they'll share it with two cows they're adopting), and their son's growing up in the country, in a big Hare Kṛṣṇa community.

A member of the community, Parambrahma Dāsa, has become our new circulation director. He's taking charge of our efforts to bring BTG to more readers.

Moving here has brought us closer to one of our editorial goals—to show a simpler, more natural way of life, centered on Kṛṣṇa.

—Jayādvaita Swami



# LETTERS

## Appreciation

Thank you for sending the May/June '93 issue of BTG. We thoroughly enjoyed the magazine. Thank you for doing such a good job on BTG. The whole magazine is well-rounded with its many varied articles.

Lalitā Priyā Devī Dāsī  
Efland, North Carolina

## Mysterious Power of BTG

I am amazed at the influence your magazine has on me. I have been in contact with the local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for about two years now. I am what one would term "fringy." I know this, but I do truly love Lord Kṛṣṇa and call on His name every day.

Twice in the past two years I have completely dropped out of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement—cut all ties with devotees. Do you know what brought

me back both times? The *Back to Godhead* magazine. I simply pick it up and thumb through the pages and look at the pictures and find my spirit jump for joy, and Lord Kṛṣṇa's name returns to my tongue. I do not understand this mysterious power BTG has over me, but I thank you for it. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Michael Warren  
Portland, Oregon

## "It Pays to Advertise"

I just wanted you to know that the small blurb in BTG about the retreats in Gītā Nāgarī proved very successful. Several people from distant places have contacted me regarding the retreats. One of them is an architect and has volunteered his service free of charge for any temple needing it. This is just one example of the fruit of

posting BTG information on the retreats. Some high school kids also came and were greatly relieved to be in the company of devotees. They drove six hours just to reach the retreat.

Romapāda Swami  
Brooklyn, New York

## Tulasī Devī and Yogamāyā: A Clarification

In Govinda Dāsī's article about Śrīmatī Tulasī Devī published in the January/February 1993 issue, Govinda Dāsī states, "Vṛndā Devī may be likened to a grand director or choreographer of the Vṛndāvana *līlā*, and her parrots are her communication service."

The only correct thing about this statement is that Tulasī engages her parrots for communicating mes-

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sages. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī writes in *Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā*, "Full of all transcendental opulences, Paurṇamāsī Devī is the incarnation of the Lord's Yogamāyā potency. She makes the arrangements for Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes to be properly performed." Paurṇamāsī's service is to make arrangements for all the Vṛndā-

vana *līlās*. Tulasī Devī's service is more specifically connected with the *mādhurya-rasa* (conjugal relationship) in making arrangements for the meeting of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Therefore, if anyone is to be compared to the grand director and choreographer of the many varieties of Vṛndāvana *līlā* with all *rasas*, then

that person is Paurṇamāsī Devī (Yogamāyā).

Janajanmādhī Dāsa  
Beeville, Texas ☸

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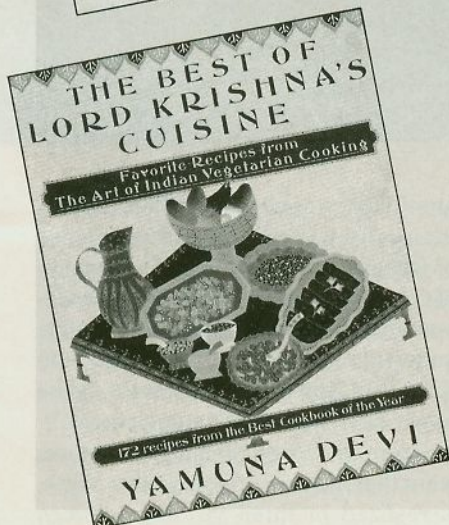
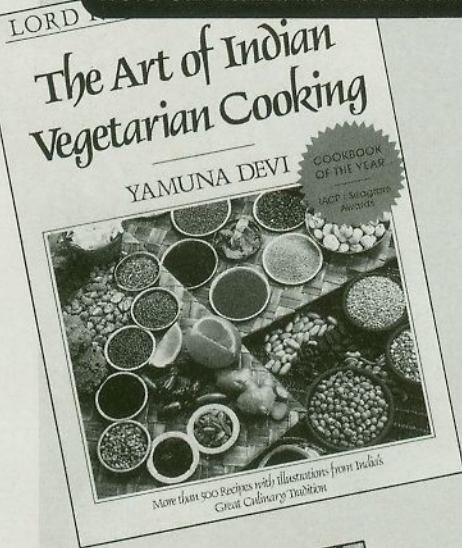
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# Who Needs A Guru?

*The Vedic literature reveals the essential qualification of a person ready to accept a spiritual master.*

---

A lecture given in New York, August 15, 1966

---

by His Divine Grace  
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami  
Prabhupāda

Founder-Ācārya of the International Society  
For Krishna Consciousness



*tad viddhi praṇipātena  
paripraśnena sevayā  
upadekṣyanti te jñānaṁ  
jñāninas tattva-darśinaḥ*

“Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized souls can impart knowledge unto you because they have seen the truth.”—*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.34

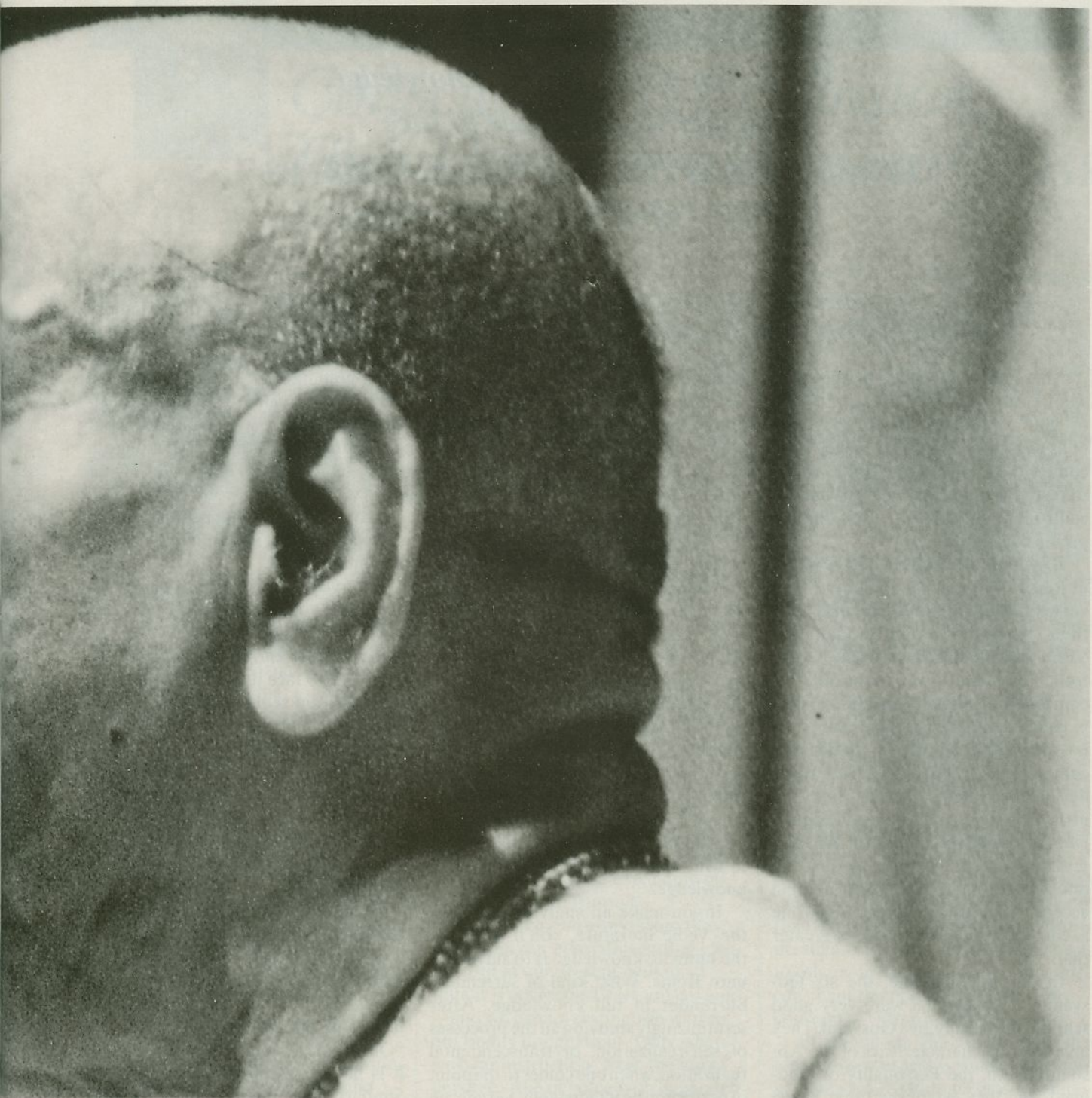
**L**ORD ŚRĪ KRṢṂA has concluded that of all the sacrifices we are expected to do, the best sacrifice is to acquire knowledge. Our material conditioned life is due to ignorance. Therefore the purpose of sacrifice, penance, yoga, and philosophical discussion is to acquire knowledge.

Transcendental knowledge is viewed from three angles of vision: knowledge of Brahman, or the impersonal Abso-

lute Truth; knowledge of Paramātmā, the localized Supersoul; and knowledge of Bhagavān, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The first stage in the development of knowledge is that we must understand, “I am not this body. I am spirit soul, and my aim of life should be to get out of material entanglement.”

From the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* we learn that the *tattva*, the Absolute Truth, is realized in three visions, *brahmeti*





*paramātmēti bhagavān iti śabdyate:* Brahman, Paramātmā, and Bhagavān. And after a description of different manifestations of Viṣṇu, or God, the *Bhāgavatam* states, *kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam:* Bhagavān, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is Kṛṣṇa.

God expands Himself in various ways. We living entities are also expansions of God. There are degrees of expansion, and the central point, or the

primal Lord, is Śrī Kṛṣṇa. There are many thousands of incarnations of Godhead. After the list of incarnations in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the conclusion is given: *ete cāmśa-kalāḥ puṁsaḥ kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam.* The author of the *Bhāgavatam* concludes that all the incarnations of Godhead are either plenary manifestations of Kṛṣṇa or manifestations of the plenary manifestations. Just as the incarnations ap-

peared, Kṛṣṇa Himself also appeared. And He proclaimed that He comes whenever there is a rise of irreligion. So He is accepted as the original Supreme Personality of Godhead.

In the *Brahma-saṁhitā*, another Vedic literature, Kṛṣṇa's position is also confirmed:

*īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ  
sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ*



**When you are in perfect knowledge,  
you can see God face to face  
just as you are seeing me and I am seeing you.  
But that requires a qualification.**

• • •

*anādir ādir govindah  
sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*

There are many gods. In one sense we are also god. The literal meaning of “god” is controller, *īśvara*. Every one of us has some controlling capacity. We control the family, or the office, or the state, or the municipality. Everyone is a controller. But none of us is the supreme controller.

Brahmā is the controller of the whole universe. There are innumerable universes and innumerable Brahmās. And their controller is Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu. Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu is controlled by Mahā-Viṣṇu. Mahā-Viṣṇu is controlled by Saṅkarṣana. Saṅkarṣana is controlled by Nārāyaṇa. Nārāyaṇa is controlled by Vāsudeva. Vāsudeva is controlled by Baladeva. And Baladeva is controlled by Kṛṣṇa. Therefore in the *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa says, *mattaḥ parataram nānyat kiñcid asti dhanāñjaya*: “My dear Arjuna, there is no one greater than Me.” And Arjuna accepts: “You are *asamordhva*—no one is equal to You, and no one is greater than You.”

In our spiritual line, the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana were very good scholars, especially Jīva Gosvāmī. They analyzed the characteristics of the Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead, and they established that Kṛṣṇa has all the transcendental qualities of Godhead. Nārāyaṇa has ninety-four percent of the transcendental qualities of the Absolute Truth, Lord Śiva has eighty-four percent, and we living beings have seventy-eight percent. And we have those qualities only partially, not in full.

Now, Kṛṣṇa says that to acquire knowledge is the best kind of sacrifice. There are different kinds of sacrifice, or *yajña*, mentioned in the *Gītā*: *dravya-*

*yajña* (sacrifice of one’s possessions), *jñāna-yajña* (sacrifice in knowledge), *yoga-yajña* (sacrifice in yoga). But here Kṛṣṇa concludes that all sacrifices are just steps to come to the point of real knowledge. Here in New York you have your Empire State Building. So you can go up to the twenty-fifth floor, the fiftieth floor, the seventieth, seventy-fifth, eightieth. But unless you reach the 102nd story, you have not made perfect progress. Lord Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *bahūnām janmānām ante jñānavān mām prapadyate*. After many, many births of culturing knowledge, when one comes to the real knowledge he surrenders unto the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa. That is the highest stage of knowledge. Kṛṣṇa advises Arjuna, *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja*: “Because you are My very confidential friend, I am telling you not to bother with anything else. Just surrender unto Me.” This is the most confidential knowledge.

If you make an analytical study of the Vedic literature, you’ll find that the ultimate knowledge is to surrender unto Kṛṣṇa. What kind of surrender? Surrender in full knowledge. After scrutinizingly studying all the processes of self-realization, or transcendental realization, when one comes to the point of perfection he understands, *vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti*: “Vāsudeva, Kṛṣṇa, is everything.” This is confirmed in the *Brahma-saṁhitā*:

*īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ  
sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ  
anādir ādir govindah  
sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*

*Sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam* means “the cause of all causes.” I have my body, and the cause of it was my father. And

his father was the cause of my father’s body. You go on searching—father, father’s father, his father, grandfather, great-grandfather . . . Don’t think that because you cannot see your great-grandfather there was no father of your grandfather. Don’t think, “Anything out of my sight does not exist.” No. That is not a very intelligent conclusion. That I cannot see what is happening beyond this wall does not mean there is nothing beyond this wall.

Everyone wants to see God immediately. But you can see God only when you are perfectly qualified. When you are in perfect knowledge, you can see God face to face just as you are seeing me and I am seeing you. But that requires a qualification. That qualification is Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

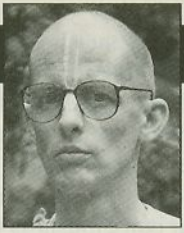
Kṛṣṇa consciousness begins with *śravaṇam kīrtanam*, hearing and chanting. We have to hear about Kṛṣṇa. The *Bhagavad-gītā* is the preliminary study of understanding or hearing about Kṛṣṇa.

I came to your country, the United States of America, after hearing about it. In my childhood I had heard of it in school when I read history or geography. I heard first of all. I did not come first of all. So by hearing I understood, “Oh, that’s a wonderful country, and it is far away, and if I go there . . .” Similarly, you might first of all hear about India and then think about going there.

If we want to see God, first we have to hear about Him. That is the process. The Kṛṣṇa consciousness process begins with hearing, *śravaṇam*. Then *kīrtanam*. *Kīrtanam* means to chant about Kṛṣṇa’s glories, His holy name, His form, His qualities. This is association with Kṛṣṇa, because Kṛṣṇa, or God, is absolute. He is not different from His name,

*(please turn to page 42)*





# Consciousness Expansion: Humbler Than a Blade of Grass

by Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami

SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE helps us discriminate between what is to be done and what is not to be done. That discrimination in turn helps us rise higher and higher in spiritual life until our consciousness expands and blossoms into the spiritual world.

Consciousness expansion was a popular idea in the 1960s. Many people tried to expand their consciousness by using psychedelic or hallucinogenic drugs. Others tried sensory deprivation or techniques of Eastern meditation to push past the frontiers of the rational mind. Śrīla Prabhupāda adopted the phrase “consciousness expansion” and applied it to chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

Prabhupāda said that to expand our consciousness means to know Kṛṣṇa. He is the Supreme Being and the Supreme Intelligence, and He is the first cause of the universe. Therefore, He is the source of consciousness. Although we, as infinitesimal beings, cannot expand our consciousness to *become* the universe, by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa we can come to know the source of the universe and therefore everything about the universe.

By encouraging us to “expand our consciousness,” Śrīla Prabhupāda was not merely employing a preaching tactic. He wanted his disciples to go beyond selfish I-centered designations and reach out with knowledge and love to all living entities. Prabhupāda wanted us to have equal vision; he wanted us to be *paṇḍitāḥ sama-darśinaḥ*, self-realized souls who see all living beings with equal vision.

One time a man challenged Prabhupāda, “Have you realized *paṇḍitāḥ sama-darśinaḥ*? Can you see all living beings with equal vision?” Prabhupāda responded humbly by saying he did not have this vision. All he had was the order of his spiritual

master, which he was working hard to carry out. The man took advantage of Prabhupāda’s humble statement by challenging further: “If you haven’t realized *paṇḍitāḥ sama-darśinaḥ*, if all you are doing is following the order of your spiritual master, then what is your claim to greatness?” Prabhupāda replied it was true that all he was doing was following the order of his guru. Then he said, “I have one vision of *paṇḍitāḥ sama-darśinaḥ*, and that is that all living entities, without discrimination, should be given Kṛṣṇa consciousness.” The man was impressed by Prabhupāda’s conviction and understood that he had truly equal vision.

If we are to expand our consciousness to see all living beings equally, then at the very least we have to recognize the fatherhood of God, Kṛṣṇa. With this vision, we can preach even to an insect. And if we take Prabhupāda’s analogy of the *bhakti-latā*, the devotional creeper, we can see how to follow the expanding of consciousness to fruition.

The *bhakti-latā* grows from the soul, from our eternally existing identity. But in our present embodied state it is covered—or *we* are covered—and we cannot distinguish it from our bodily designations. Only when we hear instructions from the pure devotee—the devotee with expanded consciousness—is the devotional creeper again stirred to life.

Lord Caitanya says that the creeper grows after being watered by the words of the pure devotee. It then grows beyond the material designations, beyond the impersonal spiritual effulgence, the *brahmajyoti*, beyond even the Vaikuṅṭha planets, and reaches Goloka Vṛndāvana, the abode of Kṛṣṇa. There it flourishes and develops the fruits of love of God

in one of the five primary relationships with Kṛṣṇa.

The *bhakti-latā* grows by reaching beyond matter, by throwing off all that is false to the soul, but there is no indication that the soul grows bigger. In a sense, in order for the soul to expand in consciousness, it has to grow smaller.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura wrote in his commentary to Lord Caitanya’s *Śikṣāṣṭakam* that human beings have no true measure of their self-worth. Instead, they are hampered by an overdeveloped false ego, or a consciousness that has been wrongly conceived. He says that the best method of consciousness expansion is exemplified in this verse:

*tṛṇād api sunīcena  
taror iva sahiṣṇunā  
amāninā mānadena  
kīrtaniyaḥ sadā hariḥ*

“One should chant the holy name of the Lord in a humble state of mind, thinking oneself lower than the straw in the street. One should be more tolerant than a tree, devoid of all sense of false prestige, and ready to offer all respect to others. In such a state of mind, one can chant the holy name of the Lord constantly.” (*Śikṣāṣṭakam*, Verse 3)

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura explains that ideal consciousness is smaller, not bigger. He says, “Although grass is matter, its ego is natural and proportionate to it, whereas my false ego, made up of my gross and subtle bodies, is utterly illusory because it is not connected to my original spiritual self. Therefore, I ought to become more humble than a blade of grass.”

Grass is modest; we are not. A blade of grass may not be able to walk and work like a human being, but it accepts that it is tiny. It accepts that others will tread on it, and it bends to that affront



humbly. It knows its place.

A tree is tolerant and giving and expects no return for its generosity. Trees too are modest. We can follow the example of the tree by caring for others. That is the whole spirit of preaching. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “One who chants offenselessly is overwhelmed with thoughts of others’ well-being. Thus the special quality of compassion without envy is being described.”

This is the true spirit of expanded consciousness that Śrīla Prabhupāda expected of us, and this is the model of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s own expanded, compassionate consciousness. Prabhupāda was so humble that he

could give Kṛṣṇa consciousness to everyone without discrimination. His was the true vision of *paṇḍitāḥ samadarśinaḥ*. As Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “He who in spite of having every reason to be proud demonstrates tolerance, humility, and a spotless heart is a fit candidate to chant purely.”

We cannot imitate the *mahā-bhāgavata*, the most highly realized devotee, but at least we can practice what he teaches. By chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and practicing humility, we will realize consciousness expansion in the purest sense. We will naturally offer respects to all living entities because we will develop the equal vision in

which we see them all as servants of Kṛṣṇa. As our intelligence becomes purified, we will be able to associate with Kṛṣṇa more and more through His holy name. Then, as our devotion grows, we will feel our smallness and never mistreat anyone as an inferior. It is then that our consciousness will begin to bear the fruits of love of God and of compassion for other living entities.

*Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami travels extensively to speak and write about Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He is the author of more than two dozen books, including a six-volume biography of Śrīla Prabhupāda.*



## LORD KRṢṂA’S CUISINE

### COOKING CLASS: LESSON NINE

# Dry-Textured Vegetables

by Yamuna Devi

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA called pan-fried potatoes “dry potatoes,” and they were one of his favorite vegetable dishes. He might ask for them any time, from breakfast to late-night supper. We typically served him *capātis* or *purīs* with these crispy potato nuggets, which are succulent inside and fragrant with aromatic seasonings. Newcomers to dry potatoes might try them with sourdough toast, whole-grain toast, or thin-sliced rye toast.

In India, dry-textured potato dishes take on many regional faces. In the north, they might consist of pan-fried diced vegetables laced with toasted cumin, crushed chilies, and a sprinkle of turmeric. In the east, black cumin seeds and cassia are typical seasonings. In the west, a sprinkle of lime juice, minced cilantro, and refined sugar might round off flavors. In the south, grated coconut and fresh curry leaves would likely find their way into many versions.

#### Everyday Dry-textured Vegetables

While dry-textured potatoes are an enduring favorite in India, several

other vegetables lend themselves to the technique. If you want fresh new ways to prepare everyday okra, eggplant, cauliflower, summer squash, or green beans, take a look at the dry-textured vegetable section in the class textbook, *Lord Krishna’s Cuisine*. How about trying Okra Supreme, Spiced Green Beans, or Summer Squash and Green Peas? Or how about Spicy Cauliflower with Braised Tomatoes, or Crispy Diced Eggplant with Toasted Fenugreek Seeds?

If you don’t have some of the seasonings recommended in the recipes, use a few of the everyday ones recommended in my last column: turmeric, cumin seeds, mustard seeds, coriander seeds, fresh herbs, and crushed hot chilies. Follow the procedures and techniques in the recipes, but simplify the seasonings and let them breathe to suit your family’s tastes.

#### Techniques for Low-fat Cooking

Today more and more people are interested in healthy eating. Eating more vegetables not only makes meals more interesting; it’s a vital part

of good nutrition. It’s an ideal way to fill up and not out, provided you keep added fats to a minimum.

Since writing *Lord Krishna’s Cuisine*, I have greatly cut down the fat I use in cooking. It’s easy to reduce the suggested amount of ghee or oil in dry-textured vegetable recipes—going from 4 or 5 tablespoons to as little as 2 or 3 teaspoons—provided you use quality heavy-bottomed nonstick cookware. Two new brands I can recommend are Meyer’s Duralon and Farberware’s Millennium, the former with a ten-year warranty and the latter with twenty years.

To reduce fat when following recipes, add sprinkles of water or cooking liquid to “water-fry” instead of “fat-fry” the vegetable, and when cooking in small pans use less heat and reduce the cooking times. Once you begin to reduce fat in your cooking, you’ll enjoy the seasonings in a fresh way.

#### Assignment

If you are following the cooking classes, make a few dry-textured



## MĀLATĪ'S DRY POTATOES WITH CASHEWS

(Serves 6)

Mālatī whipped up this terrific dish in a makeshift kitchen in Vṛndāvana, India. Her gift for creating masterpieces under the most trying conditions always enlivened me. Though she used cassia leaves, called *tejpatta* and available at India grocery stores, bay leaves work equally well.

2 pounds waxy red potatoes  
½ cup dry-roasted cashew bits  
1 cup cilantro leaves  
½ cup water  
1½ tablespoons unrefined corn oil  
½ tablespoon cumin seeds  
1 tablespoon fennel seeds  
2–3 cassia or bay leaves  
salt and freshly ground pepper

Boil or steam the potatoes until they're fork-tender. Peel them and cut them into ¾-inch cubes. Place the cashews, cilantro, and water in a blender and puree.

Heat the oil in a large nonstick skillet. Add the cumin and fennel seeds and toast them until they darken a few shades. Drop in the cassia or bay leaves, and within seconds add the potatoes. Pan-fry until the potatoes begin to brown. Pour in the cashew puree and fry a minute or so. Season with salt and pepper before offering to Kṛṣṇa.

## JĀNAKĪ'S DRY POTATOES

(Serves 6)

You have three options here: plain potatoes, potatoes folded into nonfat yogurt, or potatoes folded into sour cream.

1¾ pounds waxy new potatoes  
1 tablespoon ghee or virgin olive oil  
2 teaspoons cumin seeds  
¼ teaspoon crushed hot chilies  
½ teaspoon turmeric  
salt and freshly ground pepper  
3 tablespoons parsley  
⅓ cup nonfat yogurt or sour cream (optional)

Boil or steam the potatoes until they're fork-tender. Cool, peel, and cut them into ½-inch pieces.

Heat the ghee or oil in a large nonstick skillet. When it is hot but not smoking, add the cumin and chilies and fry them until they darken slightly. Stir in the potatoes and turmeric, and pan-fry until lightly browned, adding sprinkles of water a few times. Season with salt and pepper. Before offering to Kṛṣṇa, fold in the parsley and the optional yogurt or sour cream.

potato dishes: Sesame Yogurt Potatoes, Baby Potatoes with Seasoned Tomato Sauce, and Crusty Potatoes with White Poppy Seeds (use almonds if you don't have white poppy seeds).

The recipes above can easily take

center stage for a simple meal. Both are loosely based on creations prepared by Śrīla Prabhupāda's early disciples Mālatī Dāsī and Jānakī Devī. It's easy to see why Prabhupāda showed approval for the dishes.

*Yamuna Devi is the author of the award-winning books 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

# Chanting with Purpose

by Rohiṇinandana Dāsa

THE VEDIC SCRIPTURES recommend that in this age the best way to awaken our original love for God is to chant His holy names. The chanting is a meditation on Kṛṣṇa, who is present in the sound of His name. As one associates with Kṛṣṇa through His name, one's consciousness becomes purified. Initiated devotees in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement vow to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra at least sixteen "rounds" on their beads every day. To chant a round means to

chant the mantra once on each bead of a string of 108.

People sometimes ask me, "What's the point of counting how many mantras we chant? Surely the main thing is to chant with feeling and because we want to, not because we're trying to get a certain number done. We may end up thinking of numbers rather than Kṛṣṇa."

There's truth in this statement. Sometimes I am just trying to "get my rounds done." Sometimes I chant

when I don't want to, or I chant mechanically, without much feeling for Lord Kṛṣṇa. Still, the *Padma Purāṇa* says it's better to chant imperfectly than not at all, because by practice we'll improve. Kṛṣṇa sees our attempt and helps us according to our sincerity of purpose.

For fifteen years I lived in and around ISKCON temples, and I always chanted my rounds in the temple with other devotees. I found it quite easy to finish my quota every



day, riding on the wavelike strength of a group of other serious chanters. Sometimes I visited Māyāpur or Vṛndāvana—the lands of the holy name—where chanting was as easy and natural as breathing.

For the last five years my family and I have lived mostly away from a temple and the constant association of other chanters. The first thing that struck me when we moved into our cottage was that it was much harder to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa on my beads and to finish my rounds regularly. I found myself slipping behind until I'd be as many as three or four days behind. To catch up, I'd have to take a long walk.

I've heard that Śrīla Prabhupāda said that being a family man was harder than being a spiritual master. I'm not looking for excuses, but maybe others find it easier to keep their spiritual practices going amid

the seemingly endless demands of being a parent and a husband—cleaning, cooking, gardening, shopping, making money, keeping accounts, paying bills, maintaining a car and a house, dealing with illnesses, accidents, arguments . . . I'll stop here!

In our family we have a little morning service (described in BTG Vol. 25, No. 2). It's a great inspiration and help to us all. It's something none of us would like to forgo, although sometimes it's difficult to fit in. After our service, I chant a round with my eldest son, Rādhānātha. I also chant some rounds with Rādhā Priyā, my wife, before the children wake up. Still, I do most of my chanting alone, or carrying a baby on my arm.

Even though chanting has become more difficult, now it also means more to me. It's my most significant link

with Kṛṣṇa. In holy places like temples, spiritual programs go on practically twenty-four hours a day, and there are always lots of devotees to associate with. But here at home, apart from our rudimentary altar, our own celebration of Vaiṣṇava festivals, and the occasional sound of church bells, there's not much else for spiritual support but my chanting.

Gone too is the social pressure to complete my rounds. I'm chanting because I want to and not because I'm trying to keep up with others. My main motivation in chanting is no longer duty—it's *need*. To keep going in spiritual life, I know I have to chant.

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

## How to Chant on Beads

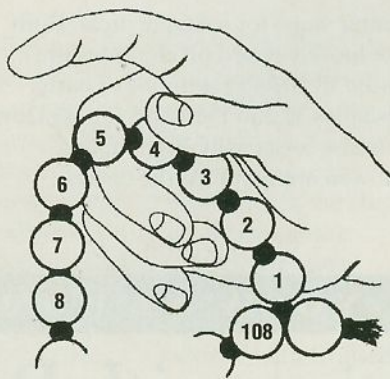
HOLD YOUR BEADS in your right hand, between your thumb and middle finger.

Begin chanting on the bead next to the large bead. Chant the complete *mahā-mantra* aloud: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

Make sure to pronounce each word distinctly. Hare is pronounced *huh-ray*. Kṛṣṇa is pronounced *krishna*. And Rāma rhymes with the English word *drama*.

After chanting one mantra on the first bead, move to the next bead and chant the *mahā-mantra* again. Continue in this way until you have chanted on all 108 beads. You have just chanted one "round."

Don't chant on or cross over the large bead. To chant another round, turn your beads around and begin moving them in the other direction. The last bead of your first round will be the first bead of your next. If you wish, you can roll the beads slightly between your finger and thumb as you chant.



Try to focus your mind on the sound of the holy name. Lord Kṛṣṇa says we should practice controlling our restless mind by bringing it back from wherever it has strayed. Our chanting is an invitation to Kṛṣṇa. If He kindly comes, He is our guest. And if we ignore Him by allowing our minds to wander, how long will our special guest want to stay?

Śrīla Prabhupāda says the *mahā-mantra* is a spiritual call to the Lord and His energy (Harā, or Rādhā) to give us protection. And he says that chanting is exactly like the genuine

cry of a child for its mother.

The *mahā-mantra* means, "My dear Lord, please accept me." Or, when further elaborated, "My dear Lord, having forgotten You I have fallen into the material world and have wandered through various species of life for so long. Please be merciful to me. Please pick me up and engage me once again in Your service."

We can get help in chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa by invoking the mercy of Lord Caitanya and His associates by chanting the mantra that glorifies them: *jaya śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya prabhu nityānanda śrī-advaita gadādhara śrīvāsādi-gaura-bhakta-vṛnda*. You can chant this mantra before you begin chanting your rounds or before each round.

Lord Caitanya said that there are no hard and fast rules for chanting. So you can chant quietly or loudly, sitting, standing, or walking, with your eyes open or closed. The important principle is to hear the sound of the name without distraction.





# Unemployment and the Decline of Small Farms

by Hare Kṛṣṇa Devī Dāśī

## PART 1

FOR DEVOTEES of Kṛṣṇa, work has a higher purpose than simply keeping the body alive. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.46) Lord Kṛṣṇa reveals the spiritual significance of work: “By performing his own work, in worship of the Lord, a man can attain perfection.”

The government, therefore, Śrīla Prabhupāda taught, is dutybound to ensure that every person is engaged according to his ability. “There should be no unemployment,” he said. “Just stop this unemployment, and you will see—the whole world will be peaceful.”

Since the whole world isn't peaceful, I listened with interest last year as my sociology teacher made some remarks calculated to deflate college-boy enthusiasm about the upcoming presidential election: “It really doesn't matter who wins this election. Everything is going to stay the same. Take unemployment. All three candidates talk about reducing unemployment. But if you listen carefully—none of them talks about creating full employment. Why is that?”

“Full employment is bad for business. Businesses need unemployment to keep labor costs down. If everyone has a job, then companies have to pay higher wages to attract workers. This cuts into profits—and it means lower campaign contributions. So none of the candidates advocates full employment.”

The professor was right, of course. High unemployment helps keep down labor costs, favoring employers. And from the government's point of view, unemployment has the desirable side effect of holding down inflation. Full employment means higher wages, and

higher wages translate into higher-priced goods for consumers. That's inflation. So economists tell us that in a market economy we just have to live with the “agonizing tradeoff between inflation and unemployment.”

When a society has high unemployment, of course, it has the high costs that come with it. The most visible: the costs of welfare checks and unemployment benefits. Prolonged unemployment also dampens consumer confidence. Sales go down because people don't know when they'll have more money. Economists also point out that the real cost of high unemployment is the loss of goods and services that willing workers could have provided.

And then there are the social and psychological costs. A person's contribution to society is mostly defined by the work he or she does. Take away someone's work and you've cut that person off. “In our society, it is murder, psychologically, to deprive a man of a job. . . .” said Martin Luther King, Jr. “You are in substance saying to that man that he has no right to exist.”

### “Re-Engineering” and The Growth of Unemployment

What causes unemployment? Two causes are easy to see: mechanization and the movement of jobs to countries with cheap labor. Employers go in for machines or high technology to save on labor costs. Sometimes workers are laid off right away, and sometimes job losses come later. As a result of industry's big investment in computers and other technology over the past couple of decades, we may soon see millions of more people out of work.

A recent front-page article in *The Wall Street Journal* (March 16) tells of “re-engineering”—“a technique for finally getting the elusive productivity

improvements that companies had hoped to reap from the hundreds of billions of dollars they invested in data-processing equipment over the past couple decades.” Through re-engineering, the *Journal* says, businesses will achieve “stunning productivity gains.” Businesses will do this by training employees in multiple skills, pushing decision-making to lower levels, and reorganizing assembly lines and offices to simplify and speed up work. Another technique: using temporary workers to avoid adding new workers to the permanent payroll.

But the costs in unemployment will be tremendous. The U.S. private sector, the *Journal* says, “today encompasses roughly 90 million jobs.” By some estimates, re-engineering will wipe out as many as 25 million of them.

John C. Skerritt, managing partner in the financial services group at Andersen Consulting, says, “We can see many, many ways jobs will be destroyed, but we can't see where they will be created. This may be the biggest social issue of the next 20 years.”

John Sculley, CEO of Apple Computer, commented that the “reorganization of work” might prove “as massive and wrenching as the Industrial Revolution.”

The *Journal* concludes, “With millions being laid off, nearly everyone may feel threatened, and with good cause. For most workers, job security will be the most tenuous since the Depression.”

### History of Unemployment

Today the problems of unemployment may seem eternal, and when Śrīla Prabhupāda admonishes that the government must make sure that everyone has a suitable job, his words may seem impracticable. But even a



few hundred years ago, things were quite different. In the Middle Ages, for example, Europe had its problems, but unemployment was not large among them. Most people had a specific work to do for their livelihood.

But as Europe shifted its economic base from subsistence farming to commerce and industry, people were no longer assured a productive role, and they began to lose their jobs. With the invention of the water wheel, the windmill, and the horse collar, many serfs and peasants were put out of work, kicked off their land.

By 1449, there were so many jobless "loiterers" that the first vagrancy law was passed: any person unemployed had to work for whoever offered him a job—at any wage.

Unemployed serfs became "free labor." They no longer had a master to work for. Anyone could pay them a wage for work, and not have to be responsible for their livelihood and well-being. So now employers no longer had to pay a liveable wage—a great boon for business. Without long-term responsibility, employers could hire and fire "human capital" at will.

By the end of the sixteenth cen-

ture, the number of displaced workers had grown dramatically. At the end of the sixteenth century, English geographer Richard Hakluyt wrote of what this meant in England:

Multitudes of loiterers and idle vagabonds, having no way to be set on work, often fall to pilfering and thieving and other lewdness, whereby all the prisons of the land are daily pestered and stuffed full of them, where either they pitifully pine away, or else at length are miserably hanged, even twenty at a clap out of some one jail.

### Unemployment and Crime

In the centuries since then, the link between joblessness and crime has stayed. As sociologist Elliot Currie points out, evidence suggests that if you know which inmates among already hardened prisoners will be released but be out of a job, you know which are most likely to go on to become high-rate offenders.

Citing research by Johns Hopkins sociologist M. Harvey Brenner, Currie says that in 1970

an increase in the American unemployment rate of one percentage point accounted for nearly 4 percent of that year's homicides, almost 6 percent of its robberies, and close to 9 percent of narcotics arrests.

These effects of unemployment come about only partly due to the pressure of losing a job and running out of money, Brenner says. Equally important is what he calls "the compound-interest effect." Out of a job, a person may turn to drugs and alcohol. And these in turn lead to crime.

Brenner also points out that by forcing jobless workers to move to other cities in search of work, unemployment breaks up families. This also leads to higher crime rates. When you think about the rates of unemployment predicted for the next couple of decades, you can't help but wonder: What will happen to families in a country where twenty-five million people are moving from place to place, desperately looking for work?

Currie gives evidence that along with unemployment, underemployment fosters crime too. A job flipping hamburgers at McDonald's may not be

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enough to keep a teenager out of the drug trade. People need jobs that can give them a decent and stable living. Beyond that, as argued by Carroll D. Wright in 1878, “The kind of labor which requires the most skill on the part of the workman to perform insures the laborer most perfectly against want and crime.” Currie concludes that an economy that condemns many to drudgery and frequent unemployment will be neither just nor safe.

### A Rural Solution

Tellingly, Currie links the problem of urban crime with the displacement of farm workers in earlier decades. The steady and massive erosion of jobs for small farmers and farm workers pushed millions of rural people into the cities—just when steady work for low-skilled newcomers in the cities was disappearing, lost to automation,

the suburbs, or low-wage havens abroad.

Currie makes a case similar to Śrīla Prabhupāda’s: to reduce crime and suffering, it is the duty of the government to provide everyone with suitable work.

What does Currie hold up as an example? Not the creation of inner-city business enterprise zones. Instead he recalls Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). In the 1930s and 1940s, it put more than 2.5 million poor young men to work, mostly in national and state forest projects and other public works.

Anyone who has visited American parks and seen the beautiful log and stone cabins, shelters, and even woodland chapels put up by the young CCC workers can appreciate that, at least in the material sense, here was good work in a simple natural environment

conducive to good character. The government invested a lot of money in the CCC, but the investment paid off in tangible structures, crime prevention, and the development of good people.

Roosevelt’s CCC approach to unemployment held this irony: although a wholesome rural environment might have been new to many CCC workers, many—possibly even most—had parents or grandparents who had worked in rural settings decades earlier. What was it that pushed them or lured them off the land to seek work in the crime-ridden cities? Next time I’ll discuss the sociological effects of replacing small farms with agribusinesses and industry.

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



## SCHOOLING KṚṢṆA’S CHILDREN

# “Your Children Are . . . Different”

by Urmilā Devī Dāsī

I RECENTLY TOOK my children and some of my teenage students with me to an education conference, where we met with Dave Marks, a textbook author and retired teacher with more than thirty years of experience in public and private schools. He has written a text we use as part of our English instruction. Soon after the conference, he wrote me this letter: “What a nice surprise to meet some of your students. . . . I would like you to pass on the feelings I have about meeting them. They were not at all like the students I have been used to meeting. Your kids were pleasant, bright, enthusiastic and happy. Whatever you are doing to or for them sure is working. Please tell them how pleased I was to meet them and what a good feeling to know that I may have had even a very small part in their education.”

I recalled when my son was three

years old and I brought him and his friend into a museum in Philadelphia to use the lavatory before a festival began. “I’ve never seen children like that!” the guard said when I asked for directions. “What do you feed them? They’re so bright!”

Yes, our children are different. By their character, behavior, and bright faces, Prabhupāda wanted them to stand clearly apart from ordinary materialists. He referred to children raised in Kṛṣṇa consciousness as “Vai-kunṭha children,” children free from anxiety, as if they carry within themselves the spiritual world.

Kṛṣṇa conscious children are different by virtue of practical aspects of their upbringing. They don’t go to movies, watch television, read romance novels, visit amusement parks, eat food not offered to Kṛṣṇa, or tune into the latest musicians. Instead they read

the words of saints and sages, tune into Vedic mantras, and pass time with the plots of *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyana*. These children have spiritual knowledge that illumines everything, like the sun in the day, and that enlightenment is visible in their external demeanor.

Although this special, “unworldly” quality is the goal of Kṛṣṇa conscious child training, we may sometimes worry that our children will be *too* different—weird. How will they relate to ordinary people? When these kids turn into adults, will they be able to buy a plane ticket? Could a Kṛṣṇa conscious child grow up to work as a doctor?

Two years ago my sister visited America from her overseas home. To see her, many of my cousins gathered at my mother’s house in New York. My children sat with their children, many of whom they’d never met, and played and talked for several hours. One



cousin pulled me aside. "Our children can get along together!" she whispered.

"Are you surprised?" I asked.

"Well, yes. I mean, I thought, well, that your children would be too 'different.' But they're very nice, happy kids."

I smiled.

We certainly teach our children (and ourselves) to avoid intimate dealing with materialistic people who will distract us from spiritual life. Our children learn to do everything—games, chores, schoolwork, conversation—in the service of Lord Kṛṣṇa. But as these children advance in awareness of how everything is connected with Kṛṣṇa, they do not become sectarian or self-righteous. Nor do they become materially inept or incompetent.

The more a child becomes Kṛṣṇa conscious, the more clearly he or she sees others with love, compassion, and humility. A child who is factually progressing in realization of Kṛṣṇa becomes a true friend of all living beings. So it isn't difficult for such a child to show this universal friendship in practical, ordinary dealings. Nondevotees then find the children to be both different and accessible, saintly yet human.

As for material knowledge and skills, our children learn how to use this world in Kṛṣṇa's service. Naturally they must learn how to read maps, buy airline tickets, drive cars, and have a means of livelihood. Kṛṣṇa never teaches laziness; He teaches that everyone must have a duty, because no one can even maintain his physical

body without work. If a devotee lacks some material skill, Kṛṣṇa will provide for that lack. One who worships the Lord with love does not lose the results of ordinary material work, nor the results of philosophical knowledge. Indeed, we see in our children that having Kṛṣṇa consciousness is like having a million dollars. When you have a million, all of your ten-dollar problems are solved.

*Urmilā Devī 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 main author and compiler of Vaikuṅṭha Children, a gurukula classroom guidebook.*



## STRAIGHT TALK

# Follow Yourself

by Vraja Kishor Dāsa

THE SHOW IS FINISHED, the equipment loaded. The van sits before the front door, and I sit inside the van. It is cold and windy on a German shore.

Three guys approach—young, clean-cut, and straight-edged. They want to do an interview.

"I don't need Kṛṣṇa," says the spokesman, with an unforgettable German accent. "I have my own way."

"That's cool." I say. "What way is that?"

Lots of hesitation. Lots of stuttering. Lots of eyes darting back and forth between the three of them.

Finally the spokesman speaks up. "I believe in my own self. I rely on my own self. I follow only my own self."

"Great. But who is that self?"

More darting eyes and stuttering. Sentences begin, but confusion consumes them and silence dominates. They can't answer.

I ask them, "How can you believe in it, rely on it, and follow it if you don't even know what it is?"

Silence is spoken in German.

"See, that's why you do need Kṛṣṇa

consciousness."

No comment.

"The first point is that the self is not the body."

He sits up straighter in the van chair. "Yes," he says, "I am not the body. I am the collection of all the ideals that my brothers and I share in common."

"These ideals are not the self," I say. "They're all impressed upon you from *outside* your self."

They eventually agree: The self is beyond the body *and* the ideals of the mind.

Then I ask, "We know what the self isn't. But what is it?"

"The spirit?"

"Yeah. The self is a particle of spirit, a part of the complete spirit, just as a guitar string is a part of the complete guitar. If you rip off that guitar string and throw it on the sidewalk out here—what value does it have?"

"Nothing."

"Yeah, not a whole lot," I say. "It's useless. But when you connect that

string to the complete guitar—tune it up and all that—it has so much value, right? It can make music. It can make songs. The string is valuable when it works for the complete guitar."

They nod.

"So, the real nature of the self," I continue, "is to serve the complete self."

"What do you mean, 'complete self'?" one of them asks.

"Kṛṣṇa. The highest expression of the self is to serve Kṛṣṇa."

"Oh."

"That's what it really means to 'follow yourself.' That's Kṛṣṇa consciousness."

They were thoughtful. I was thankful.

*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 Dallas, Texas.*



New York City, December 1965 . . .

# Swamiji's First Christmas



New to New York, Bhaktivedanta Swami, Śrīla Prabhupāda, had undoubtedly taken up the greatest austerity on the order of his Guru Mahārāja. In the short space of three months he had traveled from his beloved village of Vṛndāvana, crossing the ocean in a small freighter on which he had suffered two heart attacks, to the freezing, inhospitable, dangerous streets of New York City.

Possessing only a short letter of introduction, he was offered a small room in the back of an apartment occupied by Dr. Mishra, a well-meaning Māyāvādī “uptown Swami.”

Even with weather, health, and living conditions at their worst, Śrīla Prabhupāda enthusiastically began spreading the message.

As his biography tells us, “The weather grew cold. . . . On Columbus Avenue shops were selling Christmas trees, and the continental restaurants were bright with holiday lighting. On Seventy-second the Retailers’ Association erected tall red poles topped with green tinsel Christmas trees. The tops of the trees on both sides of the street sprouted tinsel garlands that spanned the street and

joined in red tinsel stars surrounded by colored lights.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda wore a coat Dr. Mishra had given him, but he never gave up wearing his *dhoti*, despite the cold, windy walks.

“Although Prabhupāda did no Christmas shopping, he visited many bookstores—Orientalia, Sam Weiser’s, Doubleday, the Paragon, and others—trying to sell his *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Mrs. Ferber, the wife of the Paragon Book Gallery proprietor, considered Prabhupāda ‘a pleasant and extremely

polite small gentleman.’ The first time he called she wasn’t interested in his books, but he tried again, and she took several volumes. Prabhupāda used to stop by about once a week, and since his books were selling regularly, he would collect. Sometimes when he needed copies to sell personally, he would come by and pick them up from Mrs. Ferber, and sometimes he would phone to ask her how his books were selling.”

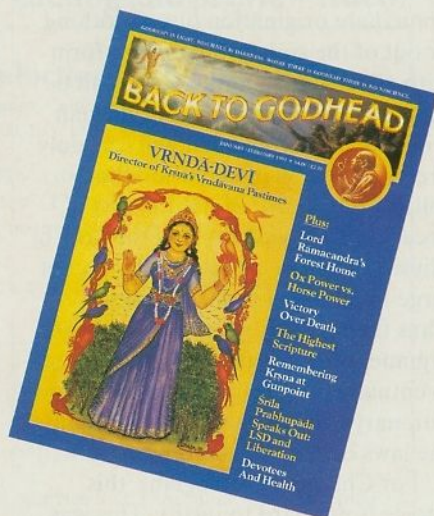
## “I Have Come to Give Something”

All during that winter Prabhupāda would try to preach to whomever he could get to listen. He also continued to translate *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, alone in his fifth-floor room.

“The weather went below freezing, colder than he had ever experienced in India. Daily he had to walk toward the Hudson against a west wind that even on an ordinary winter’s day would take your breath away and make your eyes water and your face grow numb. . . .

“His advisors had cautioned him not to remain an alien but to get into the spirit of American life, even if it meant breaking vows he had held in India. . . . But Prabhupāda’s idea was different, and he could not be budged. The others may have had to compromise, he thought, but they had come to beg technological knowledge from the West. ‘I have not come to beg something,’ he said, ‘but to give something.’”

Swamiji had reinvented Christmas. And his followers for decades to come would try to assist him in his transcendental giving. Especially at Christmas.



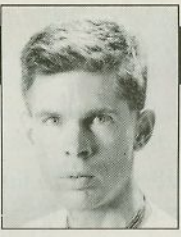
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# The Seeds of Reason

by Sadāpūta Dāsa

IN THE MID-NINETEENTH century Charles Darwin corresponded regularly with Asa Gray, a Harvard professor of botany who was an evangelical Christian. Gray was dedicated to scientific empiricism, but in those days he opposed the idea of the evolutionary transformation of species. He held the traditional view that God had individually designed and created the bodily forms of living organisms.

For some time, Darwin tried to break down Gray's resistance. For example, in 1860 Darwin wrote to Gray:

I see a bird which I want for food, take my gun and kill it. I do this designedly. An innocent and good man stands under a tree and is killed by a flash of lightning. Do you believe (and I really should like to hear) that God designedly killed this man?

Many or most persons do believe this; I can't and don't. If you believe so, do you believe that when a swallow snaps up a gnat, that God designed that that particular swallow should snap up that particular gnat at that particular instant? I believe that man and the gnat are in the same predicament. If the death of neither man nor gnat are designed, I see no good reason to believe that their first birth or production should be necessarily designed.<sup>1</sup>

Gray was quickly persuaded by Darwin's thesis that species evolve, but in spite of many powerful arguments like this one, he stuck to the idea of divine design. He would argue that species might evolve by Darwin's process of natural selection but God must somehow guide the process. In fact, even Darwin himself was swayed by Gray's arguments. Once he reprinted one of Gray's reviews of his theory at his own expense, and across the top he printed the slogan "Natural

Selection not Inconsistent with Natural Theology."

## Guided Evolution Rejected

Darwin soon rejected Gray's method of harmonizing evolution with theology, and so did many mainstream Christian scientists. As David Livingstone put it in his history of the Christian response to Darwinism, "Christians were soon to abandon this version [of Asa Gray] in favor of a more holistic design located in the regularity of natural law."<sup>2</sup> In other words, instead of guiding nature organism by organism to bring forth specific designs, God designed the laws of physics in such a way that all organisms would emerge automatically by Darwinian evolution.

The reason for abandoning Gray's guided evolution is this: The laws of physics (in Darwin's time and now) do not allow for some nonphysical agent to manipulate the course of events. Therefore, if God were to guide the natural processes to come up with particular species one by one, He would violate the laws of physics.

Gray argued in favor of evolution by saying, "If the alternative be the immediate origination out of nothing, or out of the soil, of the human form with all its actual marks, there can be no doubt which side a scientific man will take."<sup>3</sup> The scientist will certainly prefer a process of evolution that follows the course of nature. But if occasional big violations of the laws of physics are to be rejected, why accept large numbers of small violations? Thus the scientist who accepts Gray's argument for evolution is likely to opt eventually for a fully naturalistic evolutionary process that does not violate the laws of physics at all.

For Christian theologians, this choice is not hard to justify. This was demonstrated by George Frederick Wright, a geologist, evangelical minister, and friend of Asa Gray. Wright

rejected guided evolution, and he used the doctrines of Calvinism to argue that God is concerned only with the ultimate cause of creation—the laws of nature. Wright was able to satisfy physical scientists and Darwinian evolutionists by asserting that Darwinism was "the Calvinistic interpretation of nature."

## Creative Seeds

Of course, the real laws of nature may differ from the laws of physics. In my last column I pointed out that the Vedic literature clearly supports this view. Since no scientist has ever shown that all natural phenomena obey known physical laws, students of science and religion might be wise to seek alternatives to using physics as the basis for understanding God's role in nature. I would therefore like to describe in more detail the Vedic version of the creation of living species.

To do this, let me return to another topic mentioned in my last column—Saint Augustine's idea of "seed principles." According to Augustine, at the moment of creation God planted in nature *rationes seminales*, or "rational seeds." In due course of time, these seeds produced the forms of living beings by a natural process of unfolding. The rational seeds cannot be directly perceived by human senses, but each seed contains the potential for manifesting a specific gross form. According to the Catholic philosopher Frederick Copleston, the idea of the rational seeds did not come from Christian scripture or tradition. Augustine got the idea from the pagan philosopher Plotinus, and ultimately it came from the Stoics.<sup>4</sup>

Some scientists say that Augustine's theory foreshadows the modern idea that the laws of physics unfold the development of species through Darwinian evolution. These scientists suggest that the physical laws can thereby be regarded as "seed prin-



ciples" of creation. This is certainly not what Augustine had in mind, but Augustine's idea does turn out to be strikingly similar to the concept of divine creation presented in the Vedic literature.

According to the Vedic conception, Kṛṣṇa brings about creation by investing His potency in seed forms called *bījas*. This idea is illustrated by the following passage from a lecture on the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* given by Śrīla Prabhupāda in 1972:

Kṛṣṇa's energy is so powerful that He puts the potency in a seed. *Bījaṁ māṁ sarva-bhūtānām*, Kṛṣṇa says. *Bīja* means "seed." "For whatever is coming out, being manifested, I am the seed." This means, "It is manufactured under My

supervision." Just find the seed of a banyan tree. It is a small grain, like a mustard seed. But you sow the seed, and a gigantic tree will come out. Unless the energetic tree is there within the seed, how does it come out?

Like Augustine's *rationes seminales*, the *bījas*, or creative seeds, are placed within matter at the initial moment of creation. This is described in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.26.19), which says that the Supreme Personality of Godhead (Mahā-Viṣṇu) impregnates the womb of material nature. Nature then delivers the sum total of cosmic intelligence. This cosmic intelligence includes specific information defining the karmic destiny of the conditioned souls.

Initially material nature is in a quiescent state, called *pradhāna*. At the moment of creation, Mahā-Viṣṇu injects into the *pradhāna* innumerable conditioned souls, along with seed information defining their karma. This information guides transformations of material nature which give rise to the bodily forms and situations of the conditioned souls.

### Subtle Forms of Energy

A crucial difference between this model of creation and modern evolutionary theories is that the injected seed information involves specific details for individuals. Rather than compare this information to the laws of physics, we could better compare it to the software of a virtual-reality

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***Asa Gray and George Frederick Wright felt that creation must be the work of God but it should not violate the course of nature. We can see that the Vedic account of creation satisfies these two requirements.***

• • •

system. When virtual-reality software is inserted into a suitable computer, the computer generates illusory bodily forms, which the players in the virtual-reality game experience as real. The intelligent design of the software by the computer programmer corresponds to the intelligent design of the seed information by Mahā-Viṣṇu.

One might argue that a computer contains complex electronic circuits designed to run its software but in nature we find nothing but randomly moving atoms and subatomic particles. If “seed information” were injected into nature, how would it be able to generate the bodily forms of living organisms?

This question is not answered by Augustine’s sketchy theory of the *rationes seminales*. The Vedic literature, however, gives an answer. Just as gross physical seeds are always produced and disseminated by living organisms, so the seed information injected by Mahā-Viṣṇu is always controlled and manipulated by living beings.

In the *Brahma-saṁhitā*, texts 7–10, it is said that the impregnating glance of Mahā-Viṣṇu becomes manifest in the material world as a being named Śambhu. The conceiving potency of nature, known as Māyā, likewise appears from Ramā Devī, the eternal consort of Viṣṇu. From the union of Śambhu and Māyā, innumerable living beings are generated through sexual procreation. The bodies of these beings are made of spiritual and subtle forms of energy unknown to modern physics. The gross physical bodies of our experience are generated from subtle living forms by the interaction of gross and subtle forms

of energy. Thus the basic rule is that life forms are generated from seeds by a process of reproduction, subtle forms giving rise to gross forms.

Asa Gray and George Frederick Wright felt that creation must be the work of God but it should not violate the course of nature. We can see that the Vedic account of creation satisfies these two requirements. It does so, however, by speaking about spiritual and subtle phenomena in nature that are completely outside the scope of modern physical science.

**A Deeper View of Cause and Effect**

The Vedic account also provides an answer to Darwin’s questions about design in nature. The *Padma Purāṇa* explains that karmic reactions to activities exist in the form of seeds stored within the heart, or subtle mind, of an individual.<sup>5</sup> In due course of time, these seeds fructify in the form of specific physical events.

This is the Vedic explanation of why lightning strikes Darwin’s “innocent and good man” standing beneath a tree. The lightning stroke is not delivered whimsically by a wrathful God; it comes naturally as a reaction to the man’s past actions. But the natural system that brings about this reaction is designed by God for the explicit purpose of administering divine justice. Even the eating of gnats by swallows is part of the divine plan. Gnats and swallows also have souls, and the experiences they undergo in the course of nature are designed to bring about progressive evolution of their consciousness.

The karmic seeds culminating in the lightning stroke consist of subtle energy. They are transferred from body to body in the process of

transmigration of the soul, and they manifest their effects through complex control systems operating within nature. According to Vedic literature, these control systems are directed by living beings known as demigods, and ultimately they are under the supervision of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Darwin’s theory of evolution can be seen as an attempt to give an alternative to the idea of whimsical, sudden creation by divine fiat. The theory attempted to explain the origin of species rationally in terms of a natural process of cause and effect. According to the Vedic literature there is indeed a rational process of creation. But it involves concepts and categories of being that go far beyond the limits of present-day science.

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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 Alien Identities: Ancient Insights into Modern UFO Phenomena.*



# A TREATISE ON DEVOTIONAL SERVICE

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

...

by Kuṇḍalī Dāsa and Satya Nārāyaṇa Dāsa

THIS FIFTH OF THE six *sandar-  
bhas* (treatises) describes *abhi-  
deya tattva*, or the process for  
attaining love of God. As the name of  
the treatise suggests, that process is  
*bhakti*, devotional service. *Bhakti* is a  
scientific process, with many subtleties  
and nuances, which are discussed in this  
*sandarbha*.

What is *bhakti*? Who should per-  
form it? Why should it be performed?  
What is needed to perform it? All these  
questions are answered here, largely  
from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

First Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī shows that  
the central purpose of the *Bhāgavatam*  
is to present *bhakti*. He does this by  
analyzing again the various speakers in  
the *Bhāgavatam*. From this analysis he  
concludes that no other path can suc-  
ceed without *bhakti* yet *bhakti* itself is  
independent; it does not rely on any  
other process.

Jīva Gosvāmī states, therefore, that  
a devotee should never independently



Painting by Yadurāṇī Devī Dāśī

*In Goloka  
Vṛndāvana,  
the highest  
planet in the  
spiritual  
world,  
everyone is  
constantly  
engaged in  
the loving  
service of  
the divine  
couple, Śrī  
Śrī Rādhā-  
Kṛṣṇa.*



worship any demigod. Still, a devotee should never disrespect the demigods (nor any living being). Rather, he should respect the demigods as the Lord's assistants, because even Lord Śiva is a great Vaiṣṇava, a great devotee.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī tells us that the Supreme Lord is quickly pleased with a person who is merciful to every living being. If one is unable to help others and show them mercy, one can simply respect them; but one should give special respect to a devotee.

All good qualities reside in a devotee. A devotee who has progressed to the stage of faith (*śraddhā*) need not engage in karma, or duties prescribed in the *varṇāśrama* social system. And *bhakti* is never destroyed; any devotion one accrues is never lost.

### Pure Devotion Stands Supreme

By careful analysis of the *Bhāgavatam* one can see that *bhakti* alone is the means to perfection. Indeed, in all goals, at all times, in all places, in all scripture, in all duties, in all conditions, *bhakti* is supreme.

Sometimes *bhakti* mixed with fruitive activities is encouraged, but that is only to attract people to pure *bhakti*, because *bhakti* is the supreme religion. It grants all desires and removes all obstacles.

*Bhakti* is so powerful that it frees the devotee from all fear and all sins. If one commits an offense, in *bhakti* one needs no separate means of atonement. Furthermore, birth in a low family or low species neither obstructs *bhakti* nor disqualifies one from performing it.

Only *bhakti* stands untouched by the modes of nature. It is even beyond the mode of goodness. One may argue that since *bhakti* is performed with the external and internal senses, and since those senses are influenced by the three modes of nature, *bhakti* is also mixed with the three modes.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī counters by explaining that the power of transcendental knowledge and the power of transcendental action are powers that come directly from the Lord. The Lord en-

ables the body and senses to become permeated with God consciousness and perform their devotional functions.

*Bhakti* is a consolidated form of the pleasure potency. Thus only *bhakti* can please Kṛṣṇa, who is otherwise self-satisfied. *Bhakti* is granted to the living entities by the Lord, and yet it attracts Him.

### How Can Pure Devotion Be Attained?

Even the semblance (*ābhāsa*) of *bhakti* is very powerful. To demonstrate

Statements in praise of *bhakti* are not mere glorification—indeed, it is offensive to minimize the power of *bhakti* by considering such praises to be emotional or hyperbolic outpourings of the enraptured devotee. Such an attitude obstructs one's progress on the path of *bhakti*.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī proceeds by showing that even a liberated soul can go to hell because of offenses. Śrīla Jīva then speaks at length of the ten offenses to avoid in chanting the holy names. If one is not making advancement even after chanting the holy names, he says, it is because of offenses, past or present.

Furthermore, a duplicitous person can never get *bhakti*. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī cites the example of Duryodhana, who worshiped Kṛṣṇa but never made spiritual advancement. Only qualified persons get the mercy of Kṛṣṇa to attain *prema bhakti*, devotional service in pure love of Godhead. *Prema bhakti* is so powerful that it frees one from even hunger and thirst, as it did for Mahārāja Parīkṣit.

What is the main way to attain this wonderful *bhakti*? Jīva Gosvāmī says the most essential element is association with devotees of the Lord. An offenseless person who gets even a little association with pure devotees, as Nārada Muni did, develops attachment to Kṛṣṇa in short order. Offenders, on the other hand, need special mercy. Nalakuvera and Maṇi-grīva are examples.

Essentially, *satsaṅga*—spiritual association—means the association of guru, the spiritual master. The *dikṣā* guru, the guru who gives one initiation, is also generally the *śikṣā* guru, or the guru who gives one instruction. But whereas there is only one *dikṣā* guru, the *śikṣā* gurus may be many. The *śikṣā* guru is accepted with the permission of the *dikṣā* guru. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī describes the qualifications of a guru at length.

### What Kinds of Devotion Are There?

Next Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains the various types of *bhakti*. We shall briefly

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this. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī relates a story. Once a rat ate a ghee wick burning in front of the Deity, and when the rat's mouth started burning, the rat jumped up and down in pain. The Lord took this jumping as an offering of the devotional *ārati* ceremony. So when the rat died it became a queen in its next life, and she was attached to offering ghee lamps in the temple. She attained salvation in that life. Thus by *ābhāsa*, or an inadvertent expression of devotion, this living being got the full benefit of *abhideya*, or the process of *bhakti*.



## AROPSIDDHA BHAKTI

(Perfection attained by offering the fruit of one's karma in devotional service)

Offering of works done against the Vedic rules      Offering of works done according to the *Vedas*

touch on the main three. The first is *aropsiddha bhakti*, perfection attained by offering the fruit of one's karma in devotional service. When works are offered to the Lord, devotion is attributed to them, even though the activity itself is not devotional. This is called attributed devotion.

*Aropsiddha* is further divided into two types—offering of works done against the Vedic rules and offering of works done according to the *Vedas*. Although works cause bondage in this material world, they can also remedy material suffering if offered to God. A thorn causes pain, but it can also pry another thorn loose.

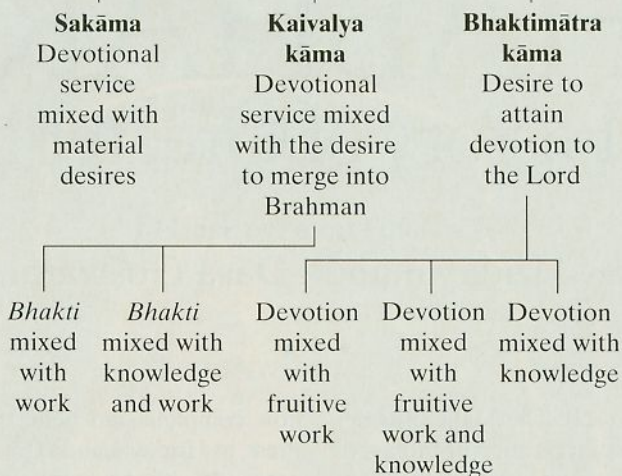
Here Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī refutes the philosophy of *pūrva mīmāṃsā*, which says that the piety of an act resides in the performer and gives its fruit automatically, with no need of consent from the Supreme Lord. The reality is that piety causes bondage as well. Only when pious activity is offered to God does it bring salvation. That is *aropsiddha bhakti*.

The second type of *bhakti* is called *saṅgasiddha bhakti*. This is devotional service accompanied by other spiritual processes. Karma (work) and *jñāna* (knowledge), for example, are not devotion, but by association with *bhakti* they take on the nature of devotion. That is to say, something which is not directly *bhakti* but which helps *bhakti* is counted as *bhakti*.

An example that applies is that of electricity. An object may have no electricity, but when put in contact with electricity it becomes electrified and acts like electricity. Another example:

## SAṄGASIDDHA BHAKTI

(Devotional service accompanied by other spiritual processes)



detachment of the mind from sense gratification is not devotion, because it has no relation to the Lord, but such detachment helps one perform devotional service; therefore, it is counted as part of *abhideya*, or the process of devotion.

*Saṅgasiddha bhakti* is further divided into three categories. The first is *sakāma*—devotional service mixed with material desires. The second is *kaivalya kāma*—devotional service mixed with the desire to merge into Brahman. (This is of two types—*bhakti* mixed with work and *bhakti* mixed with knowledge and work.) The third is *bhaktimātra kāma*—desire to attain devotion to the Lord. (This again is of three types: devotion mixed with fruitive work; devotion mixed with fruitive work and knowledge; and devotion mixed only with knowledge.)

After *saṅgasiddha bhakti*, the third main type of devotion is called *svārūpasiddha bhakti*—devotional service by itself, intrinsic, and not dependent on anything else. Devotional practices such as hearing and chanting, which put one in direct contact with the Lord, are examples of *svārūpasiddha bhakti*. *Svārūpasiddha* is called by various names—*śuddha*, *kevala*, *niṣkāma*, *nirguṇa*, *akiñcana*, *ahaituki*. The list goes on.

Jīva Gosvāmī states that the purpose of explaining all the other aspects of *bhakti* is to explain *svārūpasiddha bhakti*, which has two main parts, called

## SVARŪPASIDDHA BHAKTI

(Devotional service by itself, intrinsic, and not dependent on anything else)

**Vaidhi** Devotional service performed according to rules      **Rāgānuga** Spontaneous devotional service

*vaidhi* (devotional service performed according to rules) and *rāgānuga* (spontaneous devotional service).

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī further divides all the categories of devotional service into two—sincere and insincere.

### Highlights on the Spiritual Path

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī now discusses *vaidhi bhakti* and *rāgānuga bhakti* in even greater detail than that given in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

He says that the *rāgānuga bhakta*, the spontaneous devotee, is guided by love alone. Even if he acts in precise accord with the scriptures, his *bhakti* is not *vaidhi* but *rāgānuga*. Further, *rāgānuga* is possible only in relation to Kṛṣṇa and not with any of the incarnations or other forms of the Lord.

Worship of Kṛṣṇa in His abode called Gokula is topmost. And in Gokula, worship following in the footsteps of the *gopīs* is supreme. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī advises that a devotee never reveal his personal realizations in public; rather, he should keep his progress confidential.

He says that to develop a taste for hearing *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, topics of Kṛṣṇa, is the greatest good fortune and it will definitely lead one to Kṛṣṇa. Of all practices, nothing compares to hearing *kṛṣṇa-kathā*; it is the very best.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains that offenses committed during Deity worship are removed by reciting the *Bhagavad-gītā*, by reciting the thousand names of  
(please turn to page 42)



# MAHĀBHĀRATA

## The History of Greater India

Translated from the Sanskrit  
by Hridayananda Dasa Goswami

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EDITOR'S NOTE: The Vedic histories tell us that the civilization of India—or Bhāratavarṣa, as it was called—once extended throughout the world. *Mahābhārata* is the great history of that greater India. It is an epic poem of more than 100,000 verses, composed in Sanskrit by the sage Vyāsa.

The *Mahābhārata* is full of dramatic and instructive incidents, which reach their philosophical high point in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Through the pages of the *Mahābhārata* we can gain a deeper understanding of the knowledge, the values, and the culture of the Vedic way of life.

Thus far, the editions of the *Mahābhārata* available in English have been either drastically abridged or difficult to penetrate. Often, the translator regards the *Mahābhārata* as a fascinating literary work, an object about which to speculate, but not as what the followers of the Vedic culture accept it to be: a work of truth, a doorway to ultimate understanding.

But now a new translation has been undertaken by Hridayananda Dasa Goswami, a leading disciple of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. This new translation brings to us an English text that is scholarly, devotional, and eminently readable.

The translation of the *Ādi Parva*—the first “book” of the *Mahābhārata*—is

now complete and being readied for press, as Hridayananda Dasa Goswami proceeds with the next book.

In this issue of BTG we present a selection from Hridayananda Dasa Goswami's new translation of the *Mahābhārata*. This is the first of what will be an ongoing series. To introduce the series, we begin with a large installment. The future installments will be smaller, but steady.

In India, for generations people in towns and villages have gathered in the evening to hear readings from Vedic histories like the *Mahābhārata*. Now, in each issue of BTG, we'll be able to relish and learn from this valuable well-spring of Vedic culture and wisdom.

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*As this selection begins, we find the sage Vaiśampāyana speaking the Mahābhārata in the court of King Janamejaya, the emperor of the world. Here, Vaiśampāyana tells of the boon granted to Kuntī Devī, who will become the mother of the Pāṇdavas, the heroes of the Mahābhārata.*

### **The Curse of Pāṇḍu**

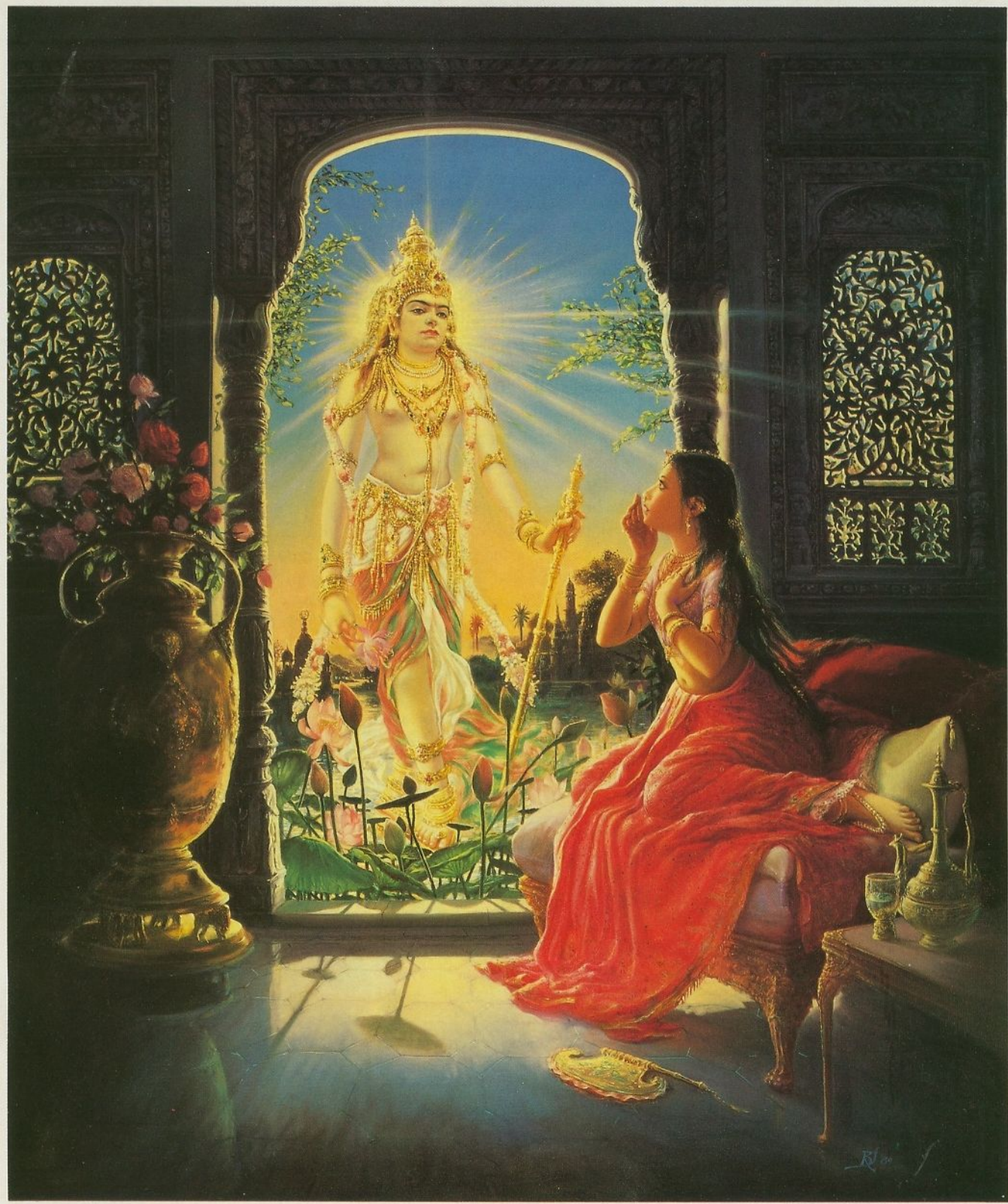
*Vaiśampāyana said:*

King Śūra, the leader of the Yadu dynasty, was the father of Vasudeva [who later became the father of Lord

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Painting by Vāradarāja Dāsa. Illustrations by Puṣkara Dāsa





*Beckoned by a powerful mantra, the sun-god enters the room of the maiden Kuntī Devi.*



Kṛṣṇa]. Śūra's daughter was named Pṛthā, and no woman on earth had beauty like hers.

The sister of King Śūra's father had a son named Kuntibhoja who was unable to beget children, and so the mighty Śūra promised to give his first child to his cousin. Thus when Pṛthā was born, Śūra declared, "This girl is my first child," and acting as a true friend, he gave the baby girl to his friend Kuntibhoja, a great soul who yearned for the gift of a child.

Kuntibhoja was a saintly king, and as his daughter began to grow up, he engaged her in worshiping the Supreme Lord and respectfully serving guests who came to the palace. Once Pṛthā was asked to take care of a fierce *brāhmaṇa* named Durvāsā, who was strict in his vows but possessed a frightening tem-

per and an inscrutable sense of propriety. Pṛthā made every effort to please the *brāhmaṇa*, and he was fully satisfied with her service. Foreseeing her need for a lawful means to overcome her future problems, the sage gave her a mantra endowed with mystic power and said to her, "Whichever god you summon with this mantra, that god will bless you with a child."

When the *brāhmaṇa* had thus instructed her, that chaste maiden of high reputation was filled with curiosity. [She wondered how the mantra worked, and when she was alone decided to see for herself.] Thus she summoned the sun-god, and at once saw coming toward her the great light-maker, maintainer of the world. Shapely Pṛthā gazed upon this wonder and was astonished, and the resplendent sun, who reveals all visible

things, then gave her a child.

Pṛthā then gave birth to a heroic son destined to be the best of all who bear arms. Covered with armor, that handsome child of a god abounded in natural opulence, for he was born with a natural armor and glowing earrings that illuminated his face. One day this son would be famous throughout the world as Karna.

The supremely splendid sun then returned to the girl her virginity, and having given this, that most generous god returned to his celestial abode. Seeing her newborn son, the Vṛṣṇī princess became wretched with worry, and her mind could think of only one thing: "What is to be done? What can I do to become virtuous?" Kuntī was terrified to face her relatives, and to conceal (what she felt to be) her improper deed,



In compliance with Lord Indra's request, Vasuṣeṇa cuts off his natural armor and earrings.



*As the sun covers the splendor  
of the innumerable stars, so Pāṇḍu covered  
the splendor of all the other kings of the earth  
simply by standing in the festive arena.*



she sent her child, born with extraordinary armor and earrings, to float alone down the river. Just then a man who was the respectable son of a chariot driver, and the husband of Rādhā, found the abandoned child and with his wife accepted the babe as his own son. The two of them fashioned a name for the child: "This child has taken birth with riches, so his name shall be Vasuṣena."

Vasuṣena matured into a powerful and heroic youth who excelled in all kinds of weapons, and he would stand and worship the sun-god until his back was burning. He was true to his word, and at the time when he chanted his prayers to the sun, there was nothing that great soul and hero would not give to the *brāhmaṇas*.

Once the effulgent Indra, who maintains this world, assumed the form of a *brāhmaṇa* and begged Vasuṣena for his natural armor and earrings. Though discouraged at this request, Vasuṣena cut off his armor and earrings and offered them with folded hands. Amazed at this act, Indra gave him the *śakti* weapon and said; "Whomever you desire to conquer, whether he be a god, a demon, or a man, whether a Gandharva, a celestial snake, or a horrible Rākṣasa—at whom ever you angrily hurl this weapon, that person shall be no longer."

Before, his name was known to be Vasuṣena, but now by this deed, he was known as Vaikartana Karṇa.\*

**Kuntī's Marriage**

*Vaiśampāyana continued:*

The daughter of Kuntibhoja could take great vows and carry them out faithfully, for she delighted in following

\**vaikartana*: "the child of the sun," or "the one who cut (himself to keep his vow)"

the laws of God. She possessed a natural goodness, and her beauty was beyond compare. Pṛthā was endowed with an extraordinary feminine grace, but although she was in the full bloom of her radiant youth, no suitable prince had dared to come forward to request her hand in marriage. Pṛthā, also known as Kuntī, was thoughtful about her future. Acting through her father, she called all the best kings and princes by having it announced that her father the king would give her away at a *svayamvara* ceremony. Then when the day arrived, and in the middle of the arena, that thoughtful young lady beheld the tiger of all kings, Pāṇḍu, the great son of the Bhārata clan.

Out of the thousands of monarchs who eagerly courted her, Kuntī selected the young and powerful Pāṇḍu, the beloved Kuru prince who had the chest of a lion, shoulders like a bull elephant, and large, handsome eyes as fearless as those of an angry bull. As the sun covers the splendor of the innumerable stars, so Pāṇḍu covered the splendor of all the other kings of the earth simply by standing in the festive arena. In that royal assembly he seemed like a new Indra.

The daughter of Kuntibhoja was radiantly beautiful, and her youthful body was a flawless creation. When she finally saw Pāṇḍu, that best of men, in the royal assembly, there was a strong fluttering in her heart, her entire body was filled with romantic desire, and her steady mind was disturbed. Kuntī took the ceremonial garland and shyly approached the Kuru king and placed it on his shoulders, thus accepting him alone as her beloved husband.

When all the assembled kings heard that Kuntī had chosen Pāṇḍu, they left

that place as they had come, on elephants, horses, and chariots. Kuntī's father then held an opulent wedding ceremony worthy of a king's daughter. [Often at a *svayamvara* ceremony the other kings would challenge the chosen groom to test his strength, but not a single warrior dared step forward against the young Pāṇḍu.]

Pāṇḍu accepted Kuntī's hand with grace and charm, and all agreed that his was a blessed life and that no one could estimate the fortune and happiness of a man who had gained such a qualified wife. Pāṇḍu joined with Kuntibhoja's daughter in sacred marriage just as mighty Indra had joined with the goddess Paulomī.

King Kuntibhoja, a lord of the earth, married his daughter Kuntī to Pāṇḍu, and then he honored his son-in-law with all kinds of valuable gifts and sent Pāṇḍu and his new wife back to the city of the Kurus. With fatherly concern for the royal couple, he also arranged for a powerful military escort colorfully bedecked with varieties of official flags and festoons.

When Pāṇḍu reached his own city, he was met with an equally festive reception. Great sages and qualified *brāhmaṇas* escorted him into the majestic capital city, all the while blessing and praising him with beautiful hymns. After completing brief formalities, King Pāṇḍu saw to it that his wife Kuntī was comfortably settled in their new home.

Thereafter he journeyed with Devavrata Bhīṣma to the capital of Madra, for Mādri, the daughter of the Madra ruler, was renowned throughout the three worlds as a woman of incomparable beauty. She was acquired, on Pāṇḍu's behalf, with the payment of a





*To uphold the honor of the House of Kuru, Pāṇḍu conquers the kings of the world and brings them under the jurisdiction of his government.*

large treasure. Bhīṣma then arranged her marriage with that great soul, Pāṇḍu.

### **Pāṇḍu's Conquest**

The wise Pāṇḍu was a tiger among men. Throughout the earth all men who saw him were amazed, for he had the chest of a lion, shoulders like a mighty elephant, and large, handsome eyes as fearless as those of an angry bull. Satisfied with his marriages, endowed with extraordinary strength and daring, Pāṇḍu now desired to conquer the world, and he lashed out against the many enemies of the House of Kuru. Pāṇḍu first marched upon the wicked Daśārṇas and defeated them in battle. Pāṇḍu fought like a lion, for he knew that the honor of the Kuru dynasty rested on him. The Kuru army was a colorful sight

with its many bright banners whipping in the wind.

Pāṇḍu next directed this powerful force of elephants, horses, chariots, and infantry toward the kingdom of Magadha. King Darva of Magadha was the declared enemy of all the world's kings, whom he cruelly harassed in many ways, but Pāṇḍu boldly struck him down in his royal palace. [The kingdom of Magadha had grown wealthy and powerful by its constant aggression.] Pāṇḍu now carried away the inflated treasury as well as many fine animals and soldiers. Next Pāṇḍu went to Mithilā and defeated the Videha army in battle, and then in direct combat with the fighting men of Kāśī, Suhma, and Puṇḍra, Pāṇḍu established the glory of the Kurus by the frightening strength of his own

two arms. Young Pāṇḍu, with his blazing volleys of arrows and the shooting flames of his lances, was like a scorching fire, and when the kings of men approached that fire they were burned to ashes. The kings with their armies were devastated by Pāṇḍu and his army, and they were brought under Pāṇḍu's government and integrated into the central tax structure.

When Pāṇḍu conquered all the kings of the world, the rulers themselves unanimously agreed that Pāṇḍu alone was a great hero, just like Indra, who overshadows all other cosmic rulers. Thus all the leaders of this abundant earth came before Pāṇḍu with their hands folded in respect, bringing as tribute to the world's leader varieties of jewels, precious pearls, coral, gold, and





silver, and a wealth of cows, bulls, horses, chariots, and elephants. The kings also delivered asses, camels, buffalo, and goats and sheep. The great ruler of Hastināpura graciously accepted all these offerings and again set out with his spirited mounts, touring and engladdening the lands of his kingdom, and finally returning to his capital city, Hastināpura.

[The people exclaimed:]

“Śantanu was a lion among kings, and steeped in wisdom was the fabled Bharata, but their glorious victory cry had perished, but now Pāṇḍu has again raised up that celebrated sound. Those who stole the royal lands and treasures of the Kurus are now dutiful subjects who pay tax to their lord, the lion of Hastināpura.”

Thus with trusting hearts, jubilant kings and royal ministers joined the citizens of town and country in praise of King Pāṇḍu. When Pāṇḍu returned to the capital after conquering the entire world, all the citizens, along with the royal family, were overwhelmed with happiness. Headed by Bhīṣma they all hurried out to meet him. Before they had gone very far, the citizens of Hastināpura were thrilled to see that the earth was crowded with many types of people who had returned with the victorious Pāṇḍu. Bhīṣma and the other Kurus could see no end to the fabulous wealth carried by the victorious army. Varieties of vehicles were being employed simply to carry the jewels and precious stones. There seemed to be unlimited herds of elephants, horses,

bulls, and cows, and there were numberless camels and sheep and countless chariots and wagons.

When Pāṇḍu caught sight of Bhīṣma, who was like his father, he immediately came forward and offered respect at his feet. Then Pāṇḍu gave great joy to his mother and duly honored even the simple citizens of the town and country.

Pāṇḍu had brought the entire world back into order and had smashed cruel and wicked kingdoms. His mission accomplished, he had now come home. Approaching his beloved son, the mighty Bhīṣma shed tears of joy.

To the stirring sounds of hundreds of musical instruments being played together, and with the deep rumbling of kettledrums, King Pāṇḍu, lifting the



*When the simple inhabitants of the forest  
saw the heroic Bhārata king  
with his two wives, wielding his arrows, sword,  
and bow, and dressed in his fabulous armor,  
they considered him to be a god on earth.*

• • •

hearts of the citizens, entered the royal city of Hastināpura.

*Vaiśampāyana said:*

With his own hands Pāṇḍu had conquered great riches, but he did not keep them for himself. After consulting with his older brother, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Pāṇḍu offered the wealth to Bhīṣma, Satyawatī, and his own mother, Ambālikā, and he set aside riches for his wise brother Vidura.

Pāṇḍu was generous by nature, and he fully satisfied his well-wishing friends with opulent gifts. In that festive atmosphere, Bhīṣma also pleased Satyawatī by presenting her with a gift of beautiful gems won by Pāṇḍu. With great affection Ambālikā embraced her mighty son Pāṇḍu, the best of men, just as Paulomī embraces Jayanta.

With the vast wealth amassed by Pāṇḍu, Dhṛtarāṣṭra performed the five great sacrifices that are ultimately meant to satisfy the Supreme Lord. At these powerful events, which were equal to a hundred horse sacrifices, hundreds and thousands of precious gifts were offered to the teachers of mankind and to other respectable citizens.

Although Pāṇḍu had truly conquered the world, he was nevertheless uninterested in a life of leisure and royal opulence. Taking his wives, Kuntī and Mādri, he left his palatial residence, with its gorgeous beds and couches, and went to the forest. Pāṇḍu always liked to wander through the beautiful forests and woods, and he would spend most of his time away from the city engaged in hunting.

King Pāṇḍu especially enjoyed the delightful foothills and valleys south of the Himālayan range, and he established a dwelling there in a forest of

giant Śāla trees. Accompanied by his charming wives, Kuntī and Mādri, Pāṇḍu shone in that forest setting like Indra's lordly elephant in the midst of two she-elephants.

Pāṇḍu was large and handsome and a consummate master of weapons. When the simple inhabitants of the forest saw the heroic Bhārata king with his two wives, wielding his arrows, sword, and bow, and dressed in his fabulous armor, they considered him to be a god on earth. Encouraged by Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the forest dwellers always brought to Pāṇḍu whatever he needed or desired, immediately carrying it to him even to the far ends of the forest.

Meanwhile in the Kuru capital of Hastināpura, Bhīṣma heard that King Devaka had a beautiful young daughter named Pāraśavī, who was eligible for marriage to a royal family. After studying the matter, Bhīṣma decided that she was a most desirable bride for a Kuru prince, and so he arranged to bring her to the Kuru capital, where he married her with the great-minded Vidura. Indeed, her birth was similar to that of Vidura. Vidura was especially admired by the Kuru royalty for his wisdom and kindness, and with his faithful wife he begot fine sons who shared all the sublime qualities of their father.

### **Gāndhārī Gives Birth**

*Śrī Vaiśampāyana said:*

O king, then Dhṛtarāṣṭra begot a hundred sons in his wife, Gāndhārī, and his one hundred and first child was born from the daughter of a merchant. And Pāṇḍu, to expand his royal lineage, obtained five sons, all Mahāratha warriors, through his two wives, Kuntī and Mādri. These five sons were all fathered by the gods themselves.

*King Janamejaya said:*

O best of the twice-born, how did a hundred sons take birth from Gāndhārī? How long did it take to beget them all, and who was the eldest of the boys? How was a single child born to Dhṛtarāṣṭra from a merchant's daughter? And how could Dhṛtarāṣṭra disregard in that way a wife like Gāndhārī, who was always devoted to his happiness, and who ever walked in the path of righteousness?

How is it that Pāṇḍu, though cursed by a saintly sage, obtained from the gods five sons who were all Mahāratha warriors? O ascetic whose wealth is austerity, you know the answers to my questions. Explain, then, in detail these events as they actually took place, for I never grow tired of hearing about my ancestors.

*Śrī Vaiśampāyana said:*

Once the great sage Dvaipāyana, known as Vyāsa, happened to be troubled by hunger and fatigue. Gāndhārī, the chaste wife of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, met him in that exhausted state and fully satisfied him with her devoted service. Vyāsa then offered her a boon, and she chose to have a hundred sons of the same character as her husband. Vyāsa blessed her as she desired, and in times he became pregnant by her husband, Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

Gāndhārī carried her pregnancy for two full years, and still she was childless. Gradually, grief took hold of her mind. Hearing that her sister-in-law Kuntī had given birth to a son who was like a little sun-god, and seeing no progress in her own pregnancy, Gāndhārī desperately thought of what to do. Unable to bear her frustration, she repeatedly struck her womb with great effort, causing



the embryo to fall out. A hard lump of flesh, like a red iron ball, fell from her womb. After two years of suffering, this was the result. Pain and anger grew in her chest, and without saying anything to her husband, Gāndhārī was about to throw away the lump of flesh.

The great sage Vyāsa had blessed Gāndhārī to have one hundred sons. Now by his powerful vision he understood that Gāndhārī was about to destroy her embryo, and so that eloquent sage quickly came to her and saw the fleshy mass. He then said to her, "O daughter of Subala, what are you planning to do?"

Gāndhārī truthfully revealed her plan to the great sage. "When I heard," she said, "that Kuntī was the first to have a son and that her child was as beautiful as the sun-god himself, I could

not bear the frustration and struck down this embryo from my womb. My lord, you once blessed me to have a hundred children. But now, for my hundred sons, this mere lump of flesh has taken birth."

*Vyāsadeva said:*

Dear daughter of Subala, it is even so, and cannot be otherwise, for my words never prove false, even when spoken in jest. Certainly whatever I promised you must come true. Quickly, prepare a hundred bowls and fill them with clarified butter. Then we shall sprinkle cold water over this ball of flesh and keep it, along with the bowls, in a carefully guarded place.

*Śrī Vaiśampāyana said:*

When the fleshy ball was sprinkled with cold water, it divided itself in time

into 101 little embryos, each the size of a thumb. Vyāsadeva then placed these embryos in the bowls filled with clarified butter and arranged for the bowls to be carefully guarded. Vyāsa instructed Gāndhārī that the pots should be opened only after a certain amount of time had elapsed. The arrangement thus completed, the great soul Vyāsadeva returned to the mighty Himālaya mountains to continue his austerities.

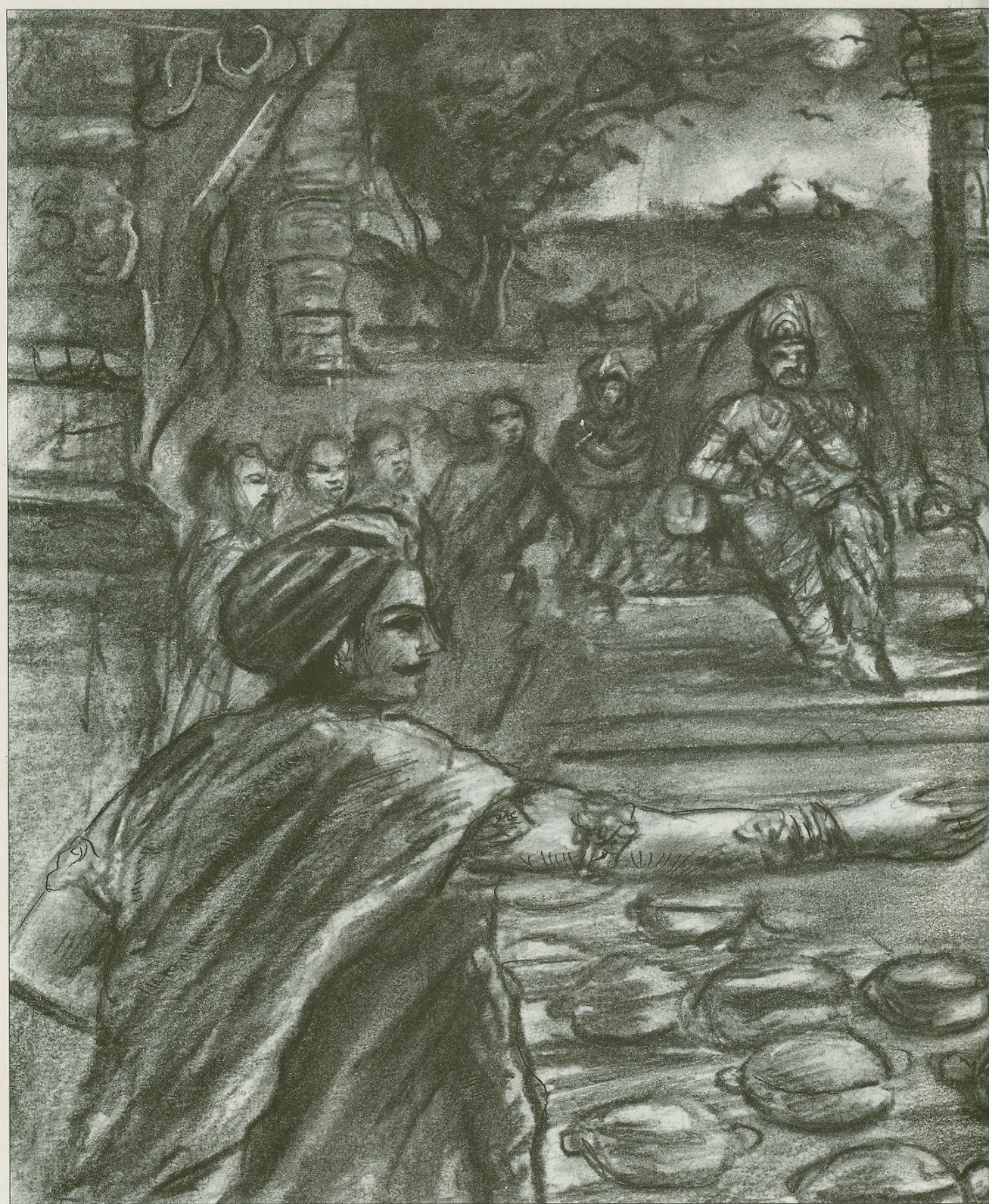
Gāndhārī carefully followed the instructions of the great sage and eventually her first child, known as Duryodhana, took birth. Although Duryodhana was the first son born to Gāndhārī and Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Pāṇḍu's son Yudhiṣṭhira was clearly his senior, being by birth the eldest Kuru prince.

Indeed, the moment his son was born, Dhṛtarāṣṭra called for many learned



*Frustrated by her two-year pregnancy and the news that her sister-in-law Kuntī had given birth to a son, Gāndhārī repeatedly strikes her womb.*





*While howling jackals and other ill omens accompany the birth of Duryodhana, Vidura tries to convince Dhṛtarāṣṭra to sacrifice the child to save the world.*





*brāhmaṇas*, along with Bhīṣma and Vidura, and said to them, “Let me first acknowledge that among the Kuru princes, Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Pāṇḍu, is the eldest, and I am certain that he will bring nothing but fortune to our family. By his own excellent qualities he has earned the right to rule our kingdom, and we cannot speak even a word against him. But will my son Duryodhana, who was born immediately after Yudhiṣṭhira, also become a worthy king? All of you, tell me truly and precisely what the future is for my son.”

No sooner had Dhṛtarāṣṭra finished speaking, when evil omens appeared in all directions. Jackals and other scavenging beasts began howling, and observing such fearful signs everywhere, the *brāhmaṇas*, along with the wise Vidura, said to Dhṛtarāṣṭra, “O king, it is manifest from the signs that this son of yours will destroy the entire dynasty! If you want any peace for your family, we urge you to reject this child. If you raise him as your son, you will commit a grievous mistake. O king, be satisfied with ninety-nine sons. Sacrifice one to save the world and to protect your own family. One relative may be rejected to save the family, and one family may be given up to save a village. A single village may be sacrificed to save the state, and the whole world should be renounced to save one’s soul.”

Even when thus addressed by Vidura and all the learned *brāhmaṇas*, Dhṛtarāṣṭra was unable follow their advice, bewildered as he was by affection for his infant son. And in the following month, all of Dhṛtarāṣṭra’s hundred sons were born, as well as a single daughter, his hundred-and-first child.

During the time that Gāndhārī had been suffering and incapacitated with the burden of her large and prolonged pregnancy, a merchant’s daughter had taken care of the mighty-armed Dhṛtarāṣṭra, who was blind and always needed a nurse. After serving the king for one year, the woman gave birth to his child, the famous and wise Yuyutsu, also named Karaṇa because of his mixed birth by a royal father and a mother of a *vaiśya*, or mercantile, family.

Thus the learned Dhṛtarāṣṭra begot a hundred warrior sons in the royal line along with a single lovely daughter named Duḥśalā [and an additional son

begotten in a *vaiśya* maiden]. Each of these hundred sons would become masters of chariot fighting, able to fight alone with thousands of enemy warriors.

*Janamejaya said:*

You have told us how by the mercy of saintly Vyāsa, Dhṛtarāṣṭra had a hundred sons. You have also mentioned that Dhṛtarāṣṭra begot a son named Yuyutsu with a nurse born of the merchant community. But you have not explained about Dhṛtarāṣṭra’s daughter.

It is well known, O sinless one, that Gāndhārī was blessed by Vyāsadeva, the seer of measureless might, to have a hundred sons. Now, my lord, please describe how that single daughter was born. If saintly Vyāsa divided the lump of flesh into one hundred parts, and Gāndhārī had no other children after that, how was her daughter Duḥśalā born? Please tell me what happened. O learned sage, I am extremely curious to hear about this.

*Vaiśampāyana said:*

Dear descendant of Pāṇḍu, you have raised a very good question, and I shall answer you.

The great ascetic Vyāsa had sprinkled cold water on the lump of flesh, thus dividing it into different living parts. As each new embryo appeared, Gāndhārī’s nurse placed them one by one into bowls filled with clarified butter. As this continued the pious Gāndhārī, always firm in her religious vows, began to meditate on what it would be like to have a daughter. That lovely woman had been blessed to have a hundred sons, but now within her mind she felt a mother’s natural affection for a daughter. The more she thought about it, the more her desire grew.

“Undoubtedly,” she thought, “the holy sage will fulfill his promise and I will have a hundred sons, but if I could have just one daughter, I would feel the greatest satisfaction. Just one little daughter, younger than all her one hundred brothers, would be so nice. Then my husband could enjoy the pious rewards given to those whose daughters beget good sons.

“Women cherish a special love for a son-in-law. I have been blessed with one hundred sons, but if I just had one daughter (whom I’d marry with a fine



son-in-law), then, surrounded by my sons and my daughter's sons, I would certainly fulfill all my duties in life.

[Gāndhārī's mind was fixed in her desire to have a daughter, and she offered this prayer to God:]

"If I have been truthful in life, if I have performed austerities, given charity, or ignited the fire of sacrifice, if ever I have pleased my respectable superiors, then may I please have a daughter."

Just as Gāndhārī was praying in that way, the illustrious sage Dvaipāyana Vyāsa finished dividing the lump of flesh, counting the pieces to make sure there were a hundred. He then addressed Gāndhārī, the daughter of King Subala: "Dear lady," he said, "There are a full hundred sons here and so I did not make you a false promise. But somehow by the arrangement of providence there is one extra part, in addition to the hundred, and it shall become the daughter you so much desire, O fortunate woman."

*Vaiśampāyana said:*

The grand ascetic Vyāsa then had one more pot full of clarified butter brought to that place, and he placed within it the embryo that was Gāndhārī's daughter. And so, dear Bharata king, I have now explained to you how Gāndhārī gave birth to a single daughter named Duḥśalā. Now tell me, sinless king, what else shall I narrate to you?

### **Pāṇḍu's Deadly Mistake**

*King Janamejaya said:*

O master of Vedic knowledge, you have told how, by the arrangement of the sage Vyāsadeva, the human sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra took birth in a nonhuman and extraordinary way. And I have heard you systematically recite their names, O *brāhmaṇa*. Now please describe the sons of Pāṇḍu, who were great souls, as mighty as the king of the gods, for as mentioned by you, the gods incarnated in this world by investing their own

potency in the sons of Pāṇḍu. Therefore, I want to hear all about their birth, for their deeds were superhuman. O narrate it, Vaiśampāyana!

*Śrī Vaiśampāyana said:*

While living in the woodlands, King Pāṇḍu once entered a vast forested area that teemed with wild and dangerous beasts. There he saw a large male deer about to mate with his doe, and with five quick, deadly arrows of golden shafts and handsome plumes, Pāṇḍu pierced both the deer and his female companion. The deer was actually a sage's son who had grown powerful by practice of severe austerities. Just as that young and mighty ascetic was having intercourse with his wife, who had taken the shape of a lovely doe, he was struck down by Pāṇḍu's arrows. Giving out a human shriek, he fell to the ground in shock and anguish, and realizing what had happened, he cried out to the king.



*Pāṇḍu aims his deadly arrow at a sage and his wife disguised as deer.*



**“Hear my words, Pāṇḍu! I declare that one day  
when you are helplessly driven by desire, the act of begetting  
will most surely bring your life to an end!”**

• • •

*The deer said:*

Even the most sinful men filled with lust and anger and lacking all reason and sanity would never act as cruelly as you have! Your judgment is not above the law! It is the law that is above you! Wisdom does not agree to purposes forbidden by law and providence. You took birth in a leading family, a family that has always been devoted to religious principles. How could you be so overwhelmed by desire and greed that your mind could deviate so far from those principles?

*Pāṇḍu said:*

It is the function of kings to personally kill enemies in battle, and kings are also authorized to hunt wild animals. O deer, you should not wrongly condemn me. Kings are allowed to kill deer when they do so without concealment or trickery. You know this to be the law, so why do you condemn me?

The great sage Agastya,\* while seated in sacrifice, went to the deep forest and hunted for deer, which he then consecrated and offered to all the appropriate deities. If you wish to blame someone for my act, then it is Agastya's fault that you are being offered in sacrifice to God.

*The deer replied:*

Although you cite the example of Agastya, kings traditionally do not shoot their arrows at enemies who are caught in a moment of weakness. There are very specific times at which one is allowed to kill one's enemies.

*Pāṇḍu said:*

But kings slay deer whether they are

\*Agastya was a great soul who would never harm another living being. He knew that by Vedic sacrifice even an ordinary animal is quickly elevated and ultimately achieves liberation.

alert or not, wherever they find them, using their sharp arrows and strength. Therefore, why do you condemn me?

*The deer said:*

I do not condemn you for my own sake simply because you were hunting deer. But you should have waited while I begot a child in my beloved wife. You did not have to be so cruel. All God's creatures desire to beget children, for the begetting of life is a blessing for all. What truly wise man would slay a deer who was in the very act of begetting a child? We wanted to beget a religious child. That was the goal of our life, and now you have ruined everything.

You took birth in the great Kuru dynasty. The wise Kuru kings never caused suffering or harm to an innocent person. Therefore you have done something that does not benefit you. You have committed the cruelest of all acts, something the whole world condemns. What you have done will not lead you to heaven, nor will it spread your good fame, for it is a most irreligious deed, O ruler of the Bharatas.

O Pāṇḍu, you know quite well about affairs with women, and you have learned the truth and meaning of the law from our scriptures. O Pāṇḍu, you who shine like a god should never have committed such an unholy act! Indeed it is you who are meant to subdue the perpetrators of cruelty, the sinful men who care nothing for civilized life, who seek money and pleasure without regard for the rights or happiness of others. What have you done? O best of kings, you have struck me down, a simple sage who offended no one, who asked nothing from others. I lived in this forest eating roots and wild fruit, always peaceful and kind to all creatures.

Hear my words, Pāṇḍu! Because you have cruelly slain us, a married couple joined in the act of begetting, I declare that one day when you are helplessly

driven by desire, the act of begetting will most surely bring your life to an end!

I am Kindama, a sage of unrivaled austerities. Feeling embarrassed among human beings, I took the form of a stag and wandered with the deer in the deep woods, engaging in conjugal affairs with my wife, who took the form of a doe. You will not incur the sin of killing a *brāhmaṇa*, for you did not understand my identity. Nevertheless, you slayed me when I was lost in conjugal desire. You fool! For that sin you must suffer. Indeed, you will suffer the very same fate, for when you go to lie with your dear one, enchanted by desire, in that very situation you will go to the world of the departed! And the lover with whom you lay in your final moment will follow you with great devotion as you fall into the hands of the lord of death, whom all creatures must obey. O wisest of men, as I was hurled into distress, even as I was experiencing such happiness, so will you, at a time of happiness, come to a painful end.

*Vaiśampāyana said:*

Having spoken thus, the griefstricken ascetic lost his life, and in that instant Pāṇḍu fell into utter despair. ❁

*Hridayananda Dasa Goswami led the team of devotee-scholars who completed the translation and commentary of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam begun by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. Fluent in several languages, Hridayananda Dasa Goswami has extensively taught Kṛṣṇa consciousness in India, Europe, the United States, and Latin America. He is a member of the Governing Body Commission, the ultimate managing authority of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. He is now doing graduate work in Sanskrit and Indian Studies at Harvard University.*



# Shelter Beyond Duality

*“Life was tough from the start . . . a slap on the backside.  
But at age four came my first hard taste of reality.”*

by Indradyumna Swami



**T**HIS IS THE STORY of my life. Or better yet, the story of two lives: the one my spiritual master saved me from, and the one he gave me. Both concern the same person, but one life was temporary, ignorant, and full of suffering, and the other is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss. This is the story of the miracle, for me at least, of how I was delivered from the ocean of material life.

You could say my story begins within the womb. But I know it goes back many lifetimes, to a past too distant for me to know or understand. If cameras had existed that long ago, I imagine we'd see on these pages photos of kings

and paupers, animals and men, the famous and the infamous—all dying and then being born again. But this chapter of my story begins, like all life stories, from the day I was delivered anew, with a mother and father, sisters and brothers, cousins and nephews.

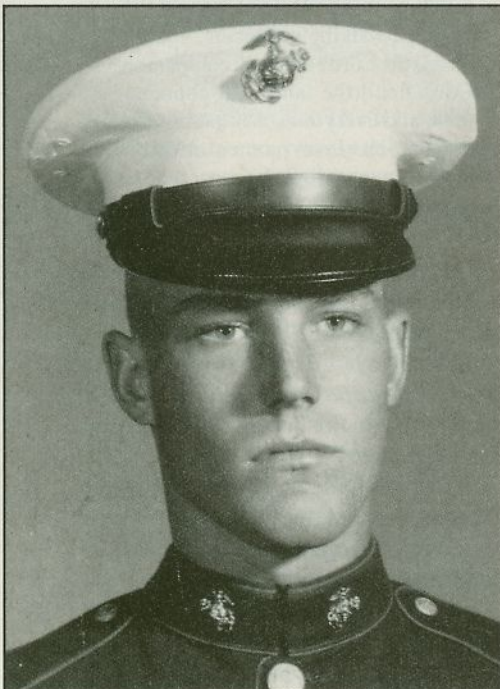
Life was tough from the start . . . a slap on the backside. But at age four came my first hard taste of reality: I contracted spinal meningitis. The doctors were experimenting with new drugs, but none of them had proved reliable. I remember seeing my mother cry when they told her what I had. All I knew was a raging fever and lonely months in the hospital ward as doctors des-

perately tried to save my life. I remember once hearing nurses whispering about my inevitable death. Anxious for shelter, I wondered, “Where is my mother now?”

But after some months the medicines proved effective. I left the hospital a little wiser. I was only four, but I knew more what to expect. Life wasn't going to be all what the storybooks said.

When I was six, Old Yellar died. He was the neighborhood hound, the best friend of all the boys on the block, our constant companion until the day he crossed the road a little late. The car that hit him didn't even stop. Some of





the boys ran after it throwing rocks. The rest of us cried at Old Yellar's side as we watched his life ebb away. We pleaded to Mr. Franklin, who came by in his ice cream truck, to save Old Yellar. He just stood motionless, because it was too late. Again a distant thought came into my mind: "Who can we turn to for help?"

As I grew, I mostly learned how to survive. School seemed irrelevant. I became disillusioned quickly, my mind pondering the dualities of birth and death, happiness and distress. Nothing would last. That I had seen—not the shelter of the womb, Old Yellar, or for that matter even me.

I began to see that others were also perplexed and suffering. Not only people, but animals as well.

But not everyone was sympathetic to how I looked at things. At twelve years old in school we were asked to draw what we'd like to see on the table at the upcoming Thanksgiving Feast. I drew vegetables, no turkey or meat. My classmates saw it as hilarious; my teachers thought it odd. And the day I refused to eat meat my father figured I was downright impolite, and he sent me to bed without supper. As I lay in bed, I thought how hard life is, even if you try to do things right.

At sixteen I made the break. "Maybe

it isn't like this everywhere," I thought. Perhaps somewhere else I could find a really satisfying life. Sometimes I'd felt I'd come close, especially when my friends and I surfed the waves at Stinson Beach, near San Francisco. Out there, we were free and moving.

With great hope and expectations we packed our gear that summer and headed south. Perhaps in Mexico we'd find the perfect wave. But even as we left, my friends chided me when I said, "But it won't last forever."

At San Blas we were thrilled when we caught waves that gave rides a mile long. But the real challenge was around the point, at Rodger's Bay. There the



# *One day I approached my authorities and refused to fight.*

*The next several days in jail gave me time to think.*

*“It’s easy to kill but so hard to know what to live for.”*

• • •

waves broke in perfect formation. The curl was flawless—you could shoot the tube! It seemed perfect. But there was one problem—the waves broke onto a coral reef.

I don’t really know what impelled me to paddle toward the reef that day. Some boys challenged me; others pleaded with me not to go. Perhaps I was desperate.

I caught the wave with ease. It was big, beautiful, and long. I quickly turned left, crouched, and suddenly found myself racing into the tube. I was thrilled, exhilarated—this was it! But in my excitement I lost my concentration and slipped . . . right into the deadly reef.

I remember screaming for help as the coral tore into my skin. But in the back of my mind I thought again, “Who can help me now?”

I rolled and tumbled across the rocks and landed close to the beach. Some villagers came and pulled me out. I was fortunate; except for a large gash on my left leg, I had mostly minor cuts and bruises. But my surfboard was finished, and so was my search for the perfect wave.

Back in the States, I reflected that if I couldn’t save myself, maybe I could save others. So I enlisted in the Marine Corps, America’s top fighting unit. My country was fighting in Vietnam to stop the spread of communism. I thought if we could win in Vietnam, perhaps we could bring peace and happiness to the world.

It’s been said that we can see heaven and hell even in this life. That year I saw hell as I went through the ordeal of becoming a killer. But often as we’d fix our bayonets for a practice duel my mind would object, “You don’t really believe in the war, do you? Be honest with yourself—you’re only here for name and fame. And you might well lose your life for it.”

One day I approached my authorities

and refused to fight. The next several days in jail gave me time to think. “It’s easy to kill but so hard to know what to live for.”

By the time I received my discharge papers, I didn’t know whether to go left or right. I wandered in desperation, thinking how each time I made a step in life I met with frustration and despair. One day in the privacy of my room, I called out to God. “My Lord, I’m in a world of distress! If You’re really there, please give me shelter.”

The next afternoon I wandered into a museum, intent on forgetting myself by browsing through antiquities. An exhibit on India’s culture and traditions caught my eye. As I surveyed the paintings and artifacts, my eyes fell upon the most beautiful painting, marked “Kṛṣṇa and His Milkmaids.” The scene captivated my attention, and I moved closer to read the text that went with it:

“This scene depicts heaven, where God enjoys eternal life.”

“Yes,” I thought, “that’s what I’m looking for—eternal life, a place beyond the dualities of the world. But could it be like this? Who is Kṛṣṇa, and what is a ‘milkmaid’ anyway?”

I looked around for someone to explain the painting in more depth. But a guard announced that the museum was about to close. Disappointed, I walked out the main entrance and came upon a most amazing sight. Seated on the lawn before me were orange-robed monks with large staffs in their hands. They were speaking intently to a crowd around them.

I inched forward to hear better and was stunned when the tallest monk told the crowd about Kṛṣṇa and the spiritual world. I learned later that what he was speaking is found in the ancient Vedic scripture *Brahma-saṁhitā*:

Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He lives forever in the spiri-

tual world, beyond the dualities of material life. His transcendental land of Vṛndāvana is populated by goddesses of fortune, who appear as milkmaids and who love Kṛṣṇa beyond anything else. The trees there fulfill all desires, and the waters of immortality flow through land made of wish-fulfilling stone. There all speech is song, all walking is dancing, and the flute is the Lord’s constant companion. Cows flood the land with abundant milk, and everything is luminous like the sun. Since every moment in Vṛndāvana is spent in loving Kṛṣṇa, there is no past or future.

“That’s it!” I yelled out.

Surprised, the monk turned toward me. “That’s what?” he asked.

“That’s what I’m looking for!” I replied. “I prayed last night. Then I saw the painting in the museum . . . and now I’ve found you!”

“He’s probably on LSD,” remarked a woman to my left.

I composed myself, a bit embarrassed that the entire crowd was staring at me.

But I was determined. Never before had I heard such knowledge, and so concisely explained. I introduced myself to the monk.

“I’m Viṣṇujana Swami,” he said, “and we’ve come to take you home.”

And so it began—this new life, my life as a devotee of Kṛṣṇa—way back in 1971. If I could show you all that’s happened since then, you’d see many photos on this page—of singing the holy names and dancing, of feasts and illuminating discourses too numerous to mention or explain. Let it suffice to say that on that day I started home again, beyond the dualities of birth and death, to the shelter of the eternal realm. ☀

*Indradyumna Swami travels around the world spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He’s based at the ISKCON temple in Durban, South Africa.*



# Śrīla Prabhupāda Speaks Out

## REAL ADVANCEMENT OF CIVILIZATION

*This conversation between Śrīla Prabhupāda and some American disciples took place in Surat, India, on December 21, 1970.*

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** In your country there is a welfare department. The expenditure is increasing.

**Disciple:** Yes.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That means the social structure is very bad. Otherwise, the natural procedure is that everyone should be self-independent. . . .

**Disciple:** But what can the state do? Should the state just leave the people alone?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** No. The state should make the citizens so nicely developed in their Kṛṣṇa consciousness that they will be self-dependent, self-satisfied. That is the ideal of civilization.

**Disciple:** But America is very far from that.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Therefore it is not advanced, although they are very proud of their advancement. This is not a sign of advancement. . . .

Not very long ago, say about two hundred years, there was a big zamindar [landholder]. He was known as king in Krishnanagar. He was very charitably disposed, so he went to a *brāhmaṇa*—a greatly learned scholar—and asked him, “Can I help you in any way?” And the *brāhmaṇa* replied, “No, I don’t require your help. I am quite satisfied.”

The zamindar asked, “How are you satisfied?”

The *brāhmaṇa* said, “Oh, my students bring some rice, so my wife boils that. And I have got this tamarind tree. I take some leaves and prepare some juice out of it. That is sufficient.” You have perhaps heard of Cāṇakya Paṇḍita. He was the greatest politician. He was prime minister of India. But he was living in a cottage and just giving instructions. So that is India’s Vedic civilization. Everyone is satisfied, self-sufficient.

And now, in your country, to work you have to go to an office fifty miles away. And because you have to take this trouble, Kṛṣṇa has provided you with cars. You are thinking, “I am advanced.” You don’t think, “Although I

have got a car, I have to go fifty miles from my home.” This is illusion. You are thinking, “I am advanced. I am happy. I have got this car.” This is illusion.

Yes, [my disciple] Gaurasundara was going to work [to maintain a temple in Hawaii], and he was driving fifty miles to Honolulu. The poor fellow had to rise early in the morning, and he had to hurry greatly. Therefore I advised, “Gaurasundara, better you give up this job. Just depend on Kṛṣṇa.” So he has given it up.

What is this? Going fifty miles by motorcycle or motor car—how tedious it is. But still they are satisfied: “We are advanced.” And because they have many cars, there is always that [imitates a traffic noise] wherever I go.

**Disciple:** And more problems come after that.

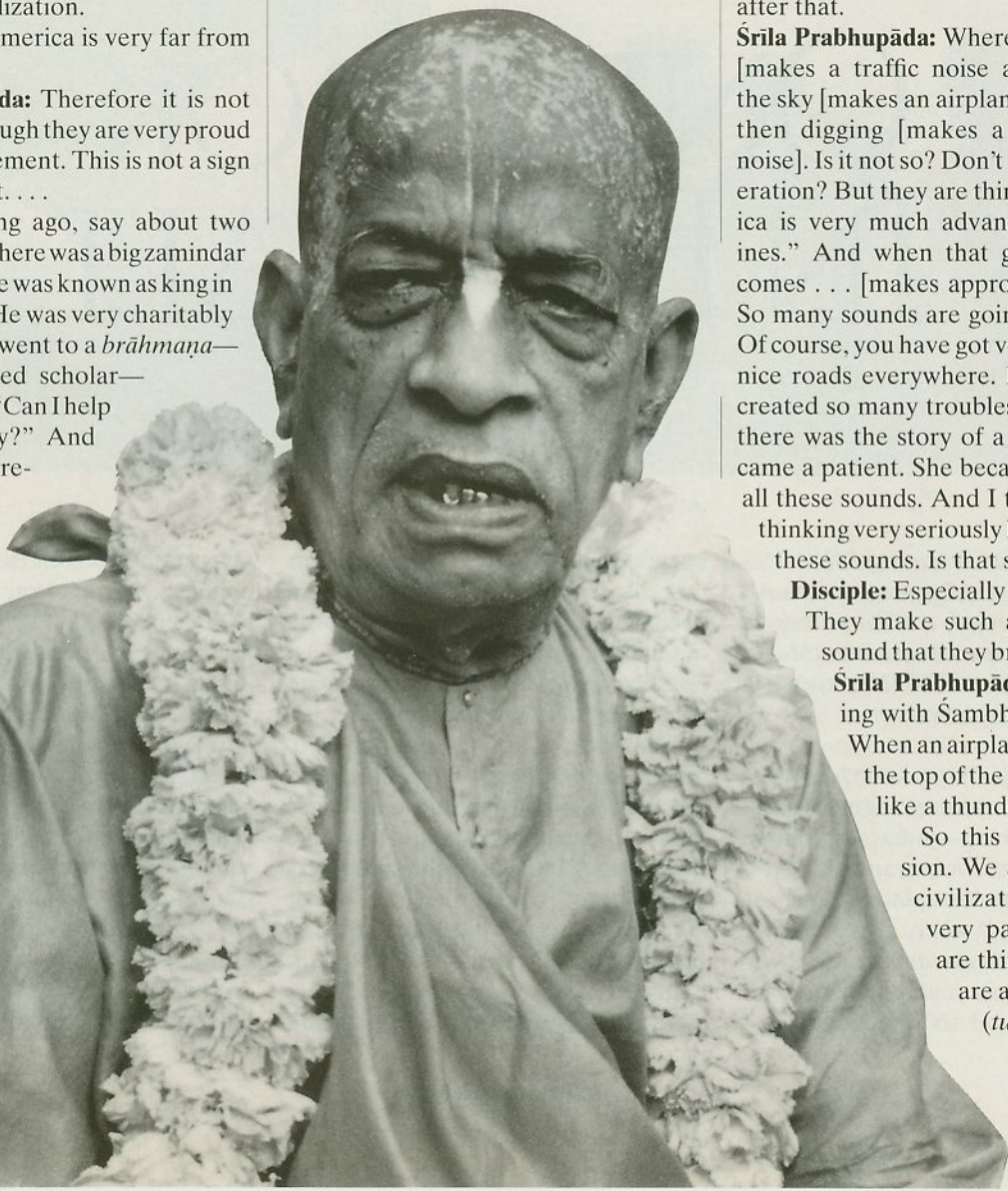
**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Wherever you go—[makes a traffic noise again]. Up in the sky [makes an airplane noise]. And then digging [makes a jackhammer noise]. Is it not so? Don’t you feel bothered? But they are thinking, “America is very much advanced in machines.” And when that garbage truck comes . . . [makes appropriate noise]. So many sounds are going on, always. Of course, you have got very nice cities, nice roads everywhere. But you have created so many troubles. In the news there was the story of a lady who became a patient. She became mad from all these sounds. And I think they are thinking very seriously how to stop all these sounds. Is that so?

**Disciple:** Especially the airplanes. They make such a tremendous sound that they break windows.

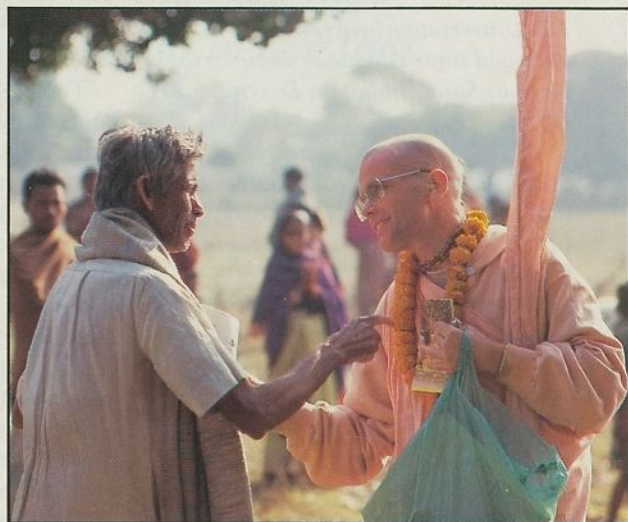
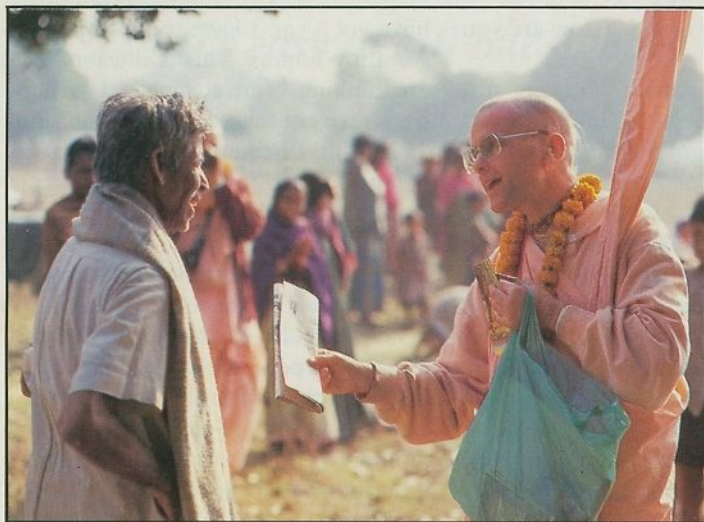
**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** I am staying with Śambhu in Bombay. When an airplane comes over the top of the house, it is just like a thunderbolt. . . .

So this is called illusion. We are creating a civilization which is very painful, but we are thinking that we are advanced. This

(turn to page 58)







# ONE BOOK IN BENGALI

by Mahā-Viṣṇu Swami  
photos by Viśākhā Devī Dāsī

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*This past February during ISKCON's annual walking pilgrimage in Nava-dvīpa, West Bengal, a BTG photographer snapped a special encounter. Mahā-Viṣṇu Swami, the ISKCON devotee in the pictures, tells the story.*

ALMOST A THOUSAND devotees were walking together that morning—junior and senior, men and women, young and old.

We came to the place known as “Naimiṣāranya,” where it is said that the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* was first spoken. In previous years we had never visited there and so I was excited. I

knew that if we performed sacrifice at that very place, it could curtail the strength of Kali-yuga, the present Age of Quarrel, and its demonic forces, especially in my own heart. I needed some mercy, and this was the chance.

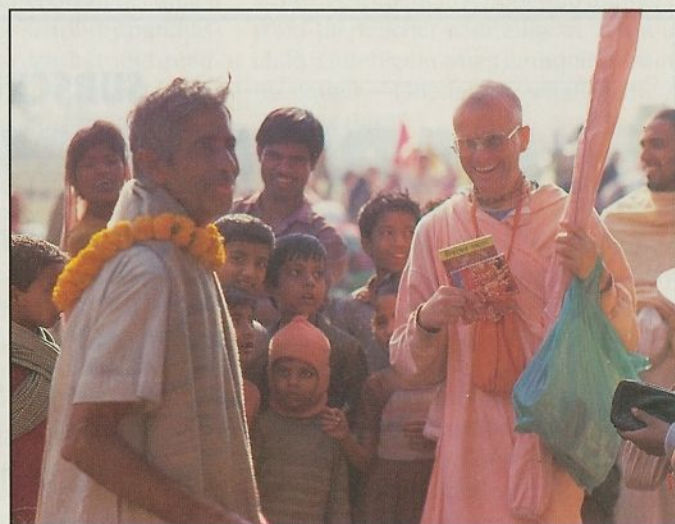
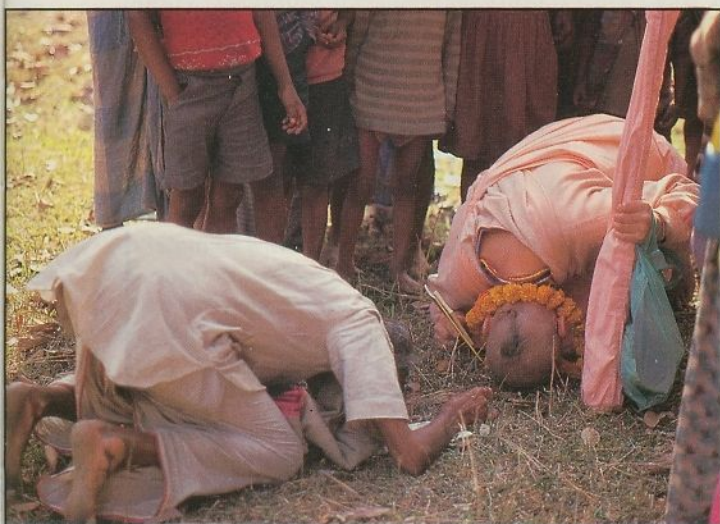
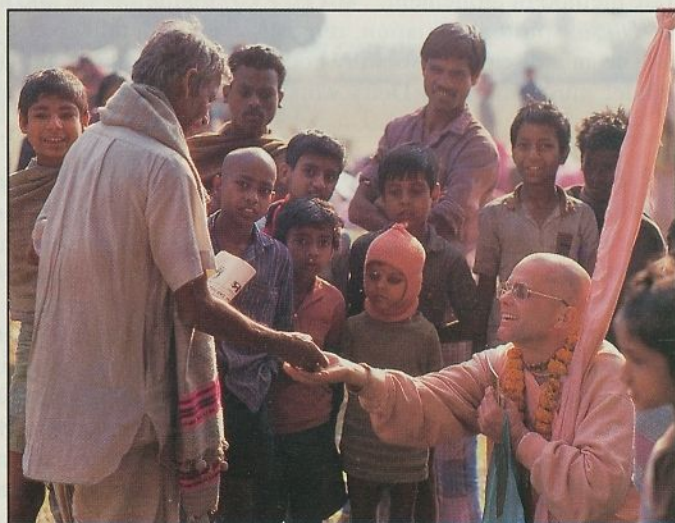
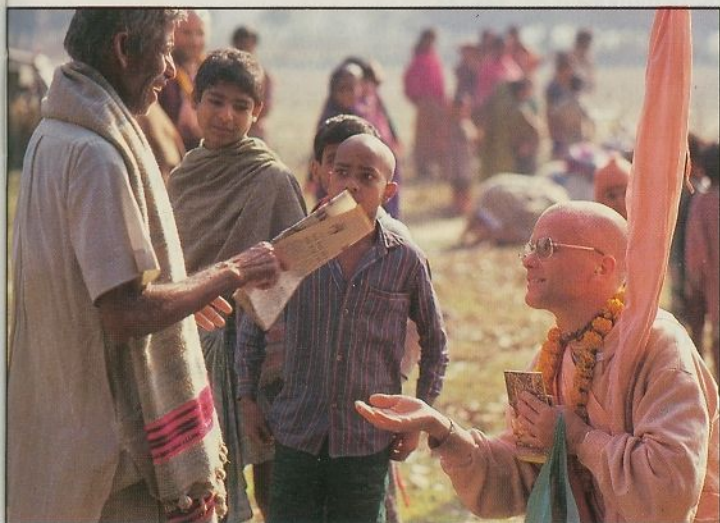
The place was a treeless, deserted, open common land with no nearby houses. I was told that only a few poor refugee homesteaders were trying to subsist here. In the morning sun it was beautiful, with a wide open sky. Whilst the devotees came together and the significance of the place was being told, I began to feel, by Śrīla Prabhupāda's mercy, that it was up to me to distribute

at least one book in Bengali, although nobody was there. I knew that the devotees would have a big chanting session and then move on, so I only had a short time.

So I started to search for local people. One or two children stood gawking at the chanters, and a few older village women were collecting grass nearby. They had no money and they couldn't read. I could only speak a few Bengali phrases anyway. I was hoping and praying to Lord Caitanya and Prabhupāda, “Please let me find someone in time.”

Then I saw one elderly farmer, wear-





ing a white cloth and carrying a sickle in his hand. I approached him smiling, holding out the Bengali *Back to Godhead*, “Bhagavat Darshan.” “*Ektanin!*” (Please take one!) But he staunchly resisted, his face unresponsive to my smiles and gestures. Maybe he was suspicious of a foreign “*sādhu*” confronting him near his own village. But I knew that Kṛṣṇa was in his heart, and I was desperate because there were no other people. So I offered my obeisances to his feet and prayed to Kṛṣṇa that the man would at least take hold of the magazine. When I stood up and offered him the magazine again, he looked

changed, and he took it in an obliged manner. Then I had to ask him for two rupees. “*Dui takka den!*” I said, showing two fingers and smiling. I was hoping and praying he would have something hidden away.

By this time a small group of people were watching. I was aware that this was a dramatic and significant event. The man’s face cracked into a smile of defeat, and he started looking for the few coins he had. He found the coins and gave them to me. Then with great respect he bowed down to me and paid his obeisances! I was wearing a garland, so I naturally responded by giving it to

him. I could see now that he was actually a devotee and this had been a kind of test for me.

I felt fortunate to have been able to perform this *saṅkīrtana-yajña*, the sacrifice of book distribution, at that special place and time. This was all the mercy of Śrīla Prabhupāda and the devotees, whose chanting was filling the atmosphere. ☀

*Mahā-Viṣṇu Swami, from England, helps lead the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement in Nepal and in the Indian state of Bihar. Viśākhā Devī Dāśī is a regular contributor to BTG.*



**TREATISE** (continued from page 23) Viṣṇu, by offering prayers to Tulasī Devī, and by similar acts, which are themselves devotional service. For one on the path of *bhakti*, there is no separate method of atonement.

*Dīkṣā*, spiritual initiation, removes all sins in a disciple. A wealthy householder must engage in Deity worship

for his spiritual progress. If unable to do so he should witness another's worship, or he may worship in the mind.

As in the other *Sandarbhas*, in this *Sandarbha* we find many more enlightening details given by the mercy of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the learned *ācārya* and protector of the path of unalloyed de-

votion. In a synopsis such as this we cannot go into all these details. We have given some highlights to enliven those on the spiritual path. We pray that our humble attempt may be successful. ❁

*Kuṇḍalī Dāsa and Satya Nārāyaṇa Dāsa are living in Vṛndāvana, India, working on a translation of the Ṣaṭ Sandarbha.*

**GURU** (continued from page 8)

His qualities, His form, His pastimes. So hearing and chanting of the qualities or form or name of the Supreme, of the Absolute, means associating with the Supreme. That is direct transcendental association. As we go on associating with Kṛṣṇa, He helps us understand Him.

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* we find this verse:

*śṛṅvatām sva-kathāḥ kṛṣṇaḥ  
puṇya-śravaṇa-kīrtanaḥ  
hr̥dy antaḥ stho hy abhadrāṇi  
vidhunoti suhṛt satām*

Kṛṣṇa is sitting within your heart. He is acting as your spiritual master, *caitya-guru*. Hearing *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, topics about Kṛṣṇa, is *puṇya-śravaṇa-kīrtanaḥ*: even if you do not understand, it will increase your virtue. By so many years of asso-

ciation with matter, we have accumulated many dirty things within our heart. By hearing about Kṛṣṇa, the heart gradually becomes cleansed.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the friend of everyone, but He's a special friend to the devotee. That you will find in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. *Samo 'haṁ sarva-bhūteṣu na me dveṣyo 'sti na priyaḥ*: "I am the friend of everyone. Actually, no one is My enemy and no one is My friend, because

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***Kṛṣṇa is the first spiritual master,  
and when we become more interested  
we have to go to a physical spiritual master.  
That is enjoined in today's verse.***

• • •

I am equal to everyone." *Sama* means "equal." *Ye bhajanti tu mām bhaktyā mayi te teṣu*: "But I give special attention to a person devoted to Me and engaged in My devotional service." Therefore one of Kṛṣṇa's names is *suhṛt satām*. *Suhṛt* means "friend." And *satām* means "those who are trying for eternal life."

In the material world we don't get anything eternal; everything is temporary. Therefore the material world is called *asat*. The Vedic injunction is *asato mā sad gamah*: "Don't remain in the temporary world. Try to go to the eternal world." *Tamaṣi mā jyotir gamah*: "Don't remain in darkness. Go to the kingdom of light." These are Vedic injunctions.

Kṛṣṇa is within our heart. Therefore, as soon as we become a little inclined toward Kṛṣṇa, from within our heart He gives us favorable instruction so that we can gradually progress. Kṛṣṇa is the first spiritual master, and when we become more interested we have to go to a physical spiritual master. That is enjoined in today's verse. Kṛṣṇa advises, "If you want to know the transcendental science, just try to approach someone who knows it."

Kṛṣṇa mentions *praṇipātena, paripraśnena*, and *sevayā*. *Praṇipāta* means surrender. You must select a person to whom you can surrender yourself. No one likes to surrender to anyone. We are puffed up with whatever knowledge we have—"Oh, who can give me knowledge?" There is regular propaganda that for spiritual realization there is no need of a spiritual master. But the Vedic literature—*Bhagavad-gītā*, the *Bhāgavatam*, the *Upaniṣads*—does not say that. It says that there is need of a spiritual master.

Take, for example, the *Upaniṣads*. In the Vedic *Upaniṣads* it is said, *tad-*

*vijñānārtham sa gurum evābhigacchet . . . śrotriyaṁ brahma-ṇiṣṭham*: "If you want to learn the transcendental subject, you must approach a guru."

In the material world also, if I want to learn music I have to find a musician. Without having the association of a musician, no one can learn music.

Suppose you want to become an engineer. You have to enroll yourself in an engineering or technical college and learn there. And no one can become a medical practitioner simply by purchasing books from the market and reading at home. That is not possible. You have to admit yourself into a medical college and undergo training and practical examination. Similarly, if you want to learn the *Bhagavad-gītā* or any transcendental subject matter, you have to do it as instructed here by Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself. He is the speaker of the *Gītā*, and He says, *tad viddhi praṇipātena paripraśnena sevayā*: "You must go to a person to whom you can surrender yourself."

That means you have to determine, "Who is the real person who can give me instruction on the *Bhagavad-gītā*?" You must not search for someone whimsically. You have to seriously search for a person who is actually in knowledge. Otherwise, why surrender? There would be no need to surrender. But here it is said clearly, "You have to surrender to a person." That means you have to find a person to whom you can voluntarily surrender. Without finding that person, your mission will not be fulfilled.

In the beginning, Arjuna was talking with Kṛṣṇa as a friend. Kṛṣṇa was saying, "Oh, you are a *kṣatriya*, a military man. How can you give up fighting?" They were having friendly talks. But when Arjuna realized, "Our friendly talks will not make a solution," he sur-

rendered unto Kṛṣṇa. *Śiṣyas te 'ham śādhi mām tvām prapannam*: "I am a disciple surrendered unto You. Please tell me what is my duty."

That is the process. Here also, Kṛṣṇa advises, "If you want to learn *Bhagavad-gītā*, you have to go to a person to whom you can surrender." And not blindly surrender. You must be able to inquire. The next qualification is *paripraśna*, inquiry. Without inquiry, you cannot advance. A student in school who inquires from the teacher is intelligent. Even a child is intelligent when he inquires from his father, "Oh, father, what is this? What is this?"

Inquiry is required. One should not think, "Oh, I have found a good spiritual master. He's learned. All right, I have surrendered. Now my business is finished." No, that is not right. You may have a very good spiritual master, but if you have no power to inquire from him, you cannot progress.

How should you inquire? Without challenge. You should not think, "Oh, I shall see what kind of spiritual master he is. Let me challenge him and put some irrelevant questions and talk nonsensically." That will not help you. Inquire on the point. *Paripraśna* means inquiry on the point, and that inquiry should be *sevayā*, with service. One should not think, "I have inquired so many things from such and such person, and I have not rendered any payment or any service, so I have gained." No. Without service your inquiry will be futile.

So three things are mentioned in this verse: *praṇipāta*, *paripraśna*, and *sevā*. *Praṇipāta* (surrender) implies that you must at least have the qualification to find a person who is actually fit to give you real instruction. That remains on you. Suppose you have to purchase some gold or jewels. If you



*The subject matter of Kṛṣṇa  
is not so easy to understand. It is very difficult.  
But one can understand it easily by  
the process prescribed in the Bhagavad-gītā.*

• • •

do not know where to purchase—if you go to a grocery shop to purchase a jewel—then you'll be cheated.

If you go to a grocer and ask, "Can you sell me a diamond?" he will understand, "Here is a fool. Let me sell him something else for a diamond." He can charge anything.

When you come home, your relatives will ask, "What have you brought?" "This is a diamond. I bought it at the grocery shop."

Trying to find a spiritual master in that way will not do. You have to become a little intelligent, because without being intelligent no one can make any spiritual progress. The *Vedānta-sūtra* states, *athāto brahma-jijñāsā*. *Brahma-jijñāsā* means to inquire about the supreme subject matter, Brahman. That requires a qualification. That qualification is explained by the word *atha*. *Atha* refers to those who have become experienced of the miserable life of the material world. They can inquire about the Absolute Truth, about spiritual life.

Similarly, the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* says, *tasmād guruṃ prapadyeta jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam*. *Uttamam* means *udgata-tamam*: transcendental. *Tama* means darkness. Anything of this material world is in darkness because this material world is dark. The whole world, the whole universe, is dark. Therefore we need sunlight, moonlight, electricity. *Uttamam* means transcendental subjects, which are beyond the darkness. In the spiritual world there is no darkness.

If anyone wants to inquire about the spiritual world, he has to find a spiritual master. Otherwise, there is no need for a spiritual master. Suppose I want a spiritual master or I want to study

*Bhagavad-gītā* or *Vedānta-sūtra* so that I may make some material improvement. That is not required. For material improvement you can work just as so many people are working—in industry or something like that. That is prescribed. But if you are at all interested in the subject of Brahman, the spiritual subject, you require a spiritual master. That is clearly stated: *tasmād guruṃ prapadyeta*. *Tasmād* means "therefore." "Therefore one has to surrender unto the spiritual master." Who has to surrender? One who is *jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam*, very much eager to understand the transcendental subject matter.

You'll find the same instruction in any Vedic literature. For example, today's verse from the *Bhagavad-gītā* says, *jñāninās tattva-darśinaḥ*. *Jñāni* means a man in perfect knowledge. Perfect knowledge means one has perfect vision—not theoretical, but actual vision of the spiritual subject matter. *Tattva* means the Absolute Truth. You'll find in the *Gītā* that Kṛṣṇa is the supreme *tattva*, the supreme Absolute Truth.

Kṛṣṇa says, *manuṣyāṅāṃ sahas-reṣu kaścīd yatati siddhaye*: "Out of many, many thousands of people, a few may try to get spiritual salvation." Not everyone is expected to hanker after spiritual salvation. To qualify for that hankering takes many, many years. Out of many, many thousands of people, one is anxious for spiritual realization. And out of many perfected spiritualists, someone may know Kṛṣṇa. So the subject matter of Kṛṣṇa is not so easy to understand. It is very difficult. But one can understand it easily by the process prescribed in the *Bhagavad-gītā*:

*bhaktiyā māṃ abhijānāti  
yāvān yaś cāsmi tattvataḥ*

*tato māṃ tattvato jñātvā  
viśate tad-anantaram*

If you accept *bhakti*, devotional service, you can understand the difficult subject matter of Kṛṣṇa very easily. *Abhijānāti* means you can understand perfectly. *Tattvataḥ* means the Absolute Truth as it is. You can understand that. *Tato māṃ tattvato jñātvā*: after understanding the science of Kṛṣṇa perfectly, one becomes eligible to enter the spiritual kingdom.

Now, if after many, many births, when I am perfect in knowledge, I have to surrender to Kṛṣṇa, why not surrender to Him at once? Why should I wait for many, many births? That is the intelligent proposal. If surrender to Kṛṣṇa is the end of perfection, why not accept that perfection immediately?

But people are doubtful. Someone asked me, "How long will it take to be perfect in Kṛṣṇa consciousness?" I replied that Kṛṣṇa consciousness can be had in one second, or it may not be had in thousands of births and deaths.

But if we understand that after attaining full knowledge I have to ultimately surrender to Kṛṣṇa—and that I become a great soul by doing that—why not surrender to Kṛṣṇa at once? Why not become a great soul at once?

But we are not prepared to immediately accept Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme. We have many doubts. Therefore, to drive away all our doubts, the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* are there. If we scrutinizingly study these two books, we can understand the science of Kṛṣṇa very nicely, and our progress in Kṛṣṇa consciousness will be definite.

Thank you very much. ❀



# SENIOR BLACK LEADER ENDORSES HARE KṚṢṆA

by Bhaktin Robin Cannon



*Bhaktin Robin Cannon (left) with Queen Mother Moore*

**B**EFORE COMING TO Kṛṣṇa consciousness, I had a mentor for whom I still maintain great respect and loving affection. Although no one has done for the world what Śrīla Prabhupāda has, what Queen Mother Audley Moore has accomplished in her lifetime awes me. She was born in 1898, in a small Louisiana town called New Iberia. Last July, Queen Mother Moore turned 95.

By an odd chance, she and I met in a Goodwill thrift shop. Since the store served as a warehouse, it was the size of a football field. I was darting through the aisles on a mission to seek and horde all I could find. She, meanwhile, was scrutinizing an oriental rug. Then I saw her, and although she wasn't in her usual exotic attire, something about her presence made me have to know her.

I was 22 and she was 81, and at that very first glimpse of her my whole agenda changed. I had to know her. So I offered her a lift home in the hope she wasn't driving. She accepted my offer,

and during our ride it gradually unfolded that Queen Mother Moore had traveled the globe on speaking tours throughout America, Africa, and the Caribbean. I learned that she had been given her honorary title for her contributions to the cause of "black liberation," first by a group of stu-

dents in the 1950s, and then more officially in 1972 by the Ashanti government of Ghana, Africa.

A week later I went to one of her lectures at New York Technical College, where she presented the history of America's brutal slave trade and its aftermath. I'll never forget the bitter cold that night, and how, once I heard the weather report, I expected her to cancel the engagement. Snow was threatening, and it was ten-degree weather, with a wind chill making it well below zero. So far as I was concerned, in that weather even someone my age could barely get around, let alone someone her age; but Queen Mother cheerfully kept her appointment, accompanied

by me and her 78-year-old sister Loretta, who was so bent by rheumatism she couldn't walk without crutches.

At that talk, Queen Mother offered vivid descriptions of the slave ships, telling how Africans were chained and then lined up and crammed together squatting, with hardly even breathing



room. She showed diagrams of a slave ship. When a slave grew seasick, she described, he was left there to vomit on his nearest compatriot. Or if (as many did) a slave were to die in transport, his body was simply left there until he could be conveniently thrown overboard. Sharks followed the slave ships for evening meals.

Yet how much did things get better for us in America during and after slavery? Even after slavery was abolished, she told us, the U.S. government enacted “black codes” that denied “Negroes” basic rights like the right to assemble in public or defend oneself in court against claims by a white man. These black codes effectively stripped blacks of the benefits of citizenship, while burdening us with its responsibilities.

These horrific experiences of slavery and discrimination, Queen Mother said, resulted in a “concocted individual called a Negro” who no longer resembled his original form, a person “altered and denatured” into what she called oppression psychosis, a state of self-hate and self-destruction.

Queen Mother Moore has spent close to seventy years pondering and speaking out on these issues. In the thirties she struggled to organize black domestic workers to seek higher wages, and later founded organizations, canvassed door to door, raised money for drug rehabilitation groups, and did tours of churches, colleges and prisons.

It all started in her youth, in the 1920s, when she marched with black leader Marcus Garvey. Much of her teachings came from Garvey’s “Back to Africa” movement, which she expounded on with writings of her own.

Although I had been superficially acquainted with the ugly abominations of slavery, till I met her I had never heard such a clear discussion of the abuses Africans had suffered, nor seen anyone so painstakingly committed to combating such evils. All this had great

impact on me, a young black woman who had already witnessed incidents of racism and seen the subtle signs of self-hatred in myself.

The Queen Mother’s exposing us to the glorious heritage of African civilizations rejuvenated my pride and put me back on a path I had wavered from. Yet somehow it wasn’t enough to replenish the spirit within me or restore it to health and happiness.

Well, fortunately Queen Mother Moore had another part of her platform. “Know thyself is the first law of nature,” she would say. “If a cat had kit-

## Letter from Queen Mother Moore

Dear Makeda [Robin] and Hladini Shakti das:

I wanted to thank you for bringing Kṛṣṇa consciousness into my life, with various Vaishnava concepts as expressed in the Bhagavad-gita As It Is. Though relatively new to me, of the various texts I’ve read, I consider this to be among the highest and most meritorious.

As a staunch freedom fighter for several decades, I’ve seen the endless futility of material struggles, many of which I concede arise from falsely identifying with the type and complexion of our bodies. Through this literature, I have found solace. Now I have faith that as stated in Bhagavad-gita, we are not our bodies, but eternal spirit souls that can occupy limitless types of bodies. This knowledge makes perfect sense to me, and I’m glad to finally find something that has such a resounding ring of truth to it. Again, I thank you for bringing me the Bhagavad-gita As It Is.

I did not have the pleasure of knowing the founder of your movement, but I feel much empathy with his mission and realize this to be the essence of knowledge that can liberate all people—African and otherwise.

tens in the oven, you wouldn’t call them biscuits.” And so beyond urging that we memorialize our ancestors with monuments and seek reparations for the injuries against us, she strongly endorsed that blacks search after their true identity, and at all costs strive for the highest liberation—to know “ourselves” (which she believed were African).

Queen Mother was so committed to this search for our true identity that she established a research institute, which studied the works of Plato and Socrates, Garvey, W. E. B. Dubois, and others. To inspire us to define and seek true

liberation, in many of her speeches she quoted a remark by Benjamin Franklin. That remark still has profound effect on me: “Those who seek temporary shelter” (be it food, jobs, or housing, she would footnote) “above the basic liberties” (like personhood, mobility, and freedom of speech) “deserve neither.”

How then did Queen Mother Moore start pursuing Kṛṣṇa consciousness? Well, encouraged by her conviction, and by the words of Benjamin Franklin she quoted, I continued to search for my true self and those “basic liberties”

she taught were my birthright. In years to come, that search led me to the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, to Vedic study, and to the gradual realization that I am not my body. The real source of my sufferings, I came to understand, is my spiritual disconnection from God, which subjects me to an endless cycle of changing bodies, with their aging, disease, and death.

Naturally I was eager to share this knowledge with Queen Mother Moore, who had always thirsted for the truth, who had been so generous and compassionate to me, and who was herself fast approaching a change of body. So I visited her and we spoke at length about Kṛṣṇa. I brought her some books and *mahā-prasādam*. On later occasions I took with me my brother Hlāḍīṇī Śakti Dāsa, and he too preached about

Kṛṣṇa’s glories, plus the joy and necessity of serving Kṛṣṇa, and of transcending the bodily platform.

Queen Mother Moore was receptive to these ideas, and almost instantly attracted to the philosophy. She asked me to write down the *mahā-mantra* for her so she could learn to recite Kṛṣṇa’s names aloud. Of course, to me this wasn’t the first sign of her transcendental leanings. Over the years of going with her to lectures, I had made a point of looking closely in her for signs of racism, which I knew my heart couldn’t approve. And so while reporters clicked their pens



and flashed her cameras and grateful admirers sought her autograph, I always looked deep and close at her face. I would especially watch her eyes when she greeted people with white bodies, just to see her reaction. (I even noted, as most newspapers did not, that Queen Mother Moore would sometimes welcome white activists into her fold, because for her what mattered was one's philosophy, not one's complexion.)

It was from this kind of scrutiny that I became convinced that while Queen Mother may have been misled by the material nature, she was by no means a racist.

Well, any doubts I might have had about Queen Mother's racial feelings were thoroughly dispelled last December when I visited her again for preaching. This time I told her, straight out, of my plans to take initiation from a white-bodied *sādhu* named Dhanurdhara Swami, who was instructing me on the real goal of life—to revive my dormant love of God and thus break the cycle of rebirth.

Right there and then, Queen Mother Moore turned to me and smilingly nodded. "I'm so glad you've found your way, darling," she said. Then, as only a great soul could, she joined me in rejoicing my victory—for she realized that I had succeeded in surrendering my false ego and body consciousness to the higher platform of loving God.

This all occurred between November 1990 and March 1992. In January 1992, Queen Mother Moore visited Nigeria, taking the *Bhagavad-gītā* with her to read on the plane. When she returned from that trip, she gave me a letter personally endorsing the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, saying that she fully accepted Lord Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead and fully accepted the authority of the *Vedas*.

Eight months later, despite her difficulty in walking, she made her second visit to the Brooklyn temple, where she met some devotees, greeted the Deities, and did a small tour of the temple, asking many questions all the while.

Upon seeing Rādhā and Govinda, she at once exclaimed: "My, I've never seen anything so beautiful! Christians don't have nothing on you Hare Kṛṣṇas." As might be expected, she also asked devotees how Vedic culture approaches funeral rites and burials.

Over my years of associating with Queen Mother Moore, I've been inspired by her sacrifice and her uncompromising will to tell the truth. Now I'm delighted to see that Audley Moore is just as staunchly committed to accepting the truth (once she has heard it) as to telling it. This integrity has helped make her Kṛṣṇa conscious.

Kṛṣṇa has always promised that if we sincerely endeavor for the Absolute Truth, He will reveal Himself to us through the mercy of a devotee, if only a novice one like me. Well, Queen Mother's interest in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is just one of the many confirmations I've seen of Kṛṣṇa's unlimited mercy.

Over the years, Queen Mother has

amassed a large following and touched the lives and hearts of many people. Schools have been opened in her name, and many celebrated people hold her in esteem. So her endorsement is worth its weight in gold. It may help attract many wandering conditioned souls who like me have been searching for truth and liberation.

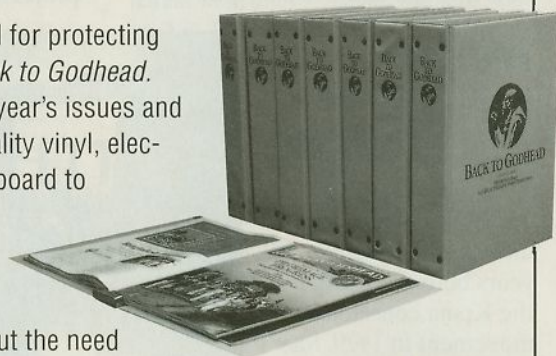
As a devotee I'm naturally grateful to everyone who has helped me surrender to Kṛṣṇa. Queen Mother Moore is such a person. I hope you will join me in praying for this great lady. ❁

*Bhaktin Robin and her husband, Bhakta Stewart, are members of the Hare Kṛṣṇa community in Los Angeles.*

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# PROFILE

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

## PROJECT

Krishna Vision

## HEADQUARTERS

Villa Vrindavana, Florence, Italy

## PROJECT MEMBERS

Kṛṣṇa Prema Dāsa (musician, audio engineer) and his wife, Nitya-ṭṛptā Devī Dāsī (photographer, visual programmer)

## GOAL

To attract people to Kṛṣṇa consciousness through audiovisual technology.

## HISTORY

In 1985, Kṛṣṇa Prema and Nitya-ṭṛptā decided to combine their talents in Kṛṣṇa's service. He had been a professional musician for twenty years before coming to the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in 1979. She had been a photographer for the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust for ten years. They started Krishna Vision to present Kṛṣṇa consciousness through music and sophisticated slide projection. ISKCON Italy got them started with a studio, a sound system, and nine computer-run slide projectors.

From 1985 to 1988 Kṛṣṇa Prema and Nitya-ṭṛptā did research, put together programs, and put on shows throughout Italy. Krishna Vision started traveling in

1989—to India for the Kumbha Melā and ISKCON's Māyāpur/Vṛndāvana festival. Since then they've been invited all over the world to present Krishna Vision programs, which can be shown alone or in conjunction with other Kṛṣṇa conscious presentations, such as plays, dances, and lectures.

## DETAILS

Kṛṣṇa Prema and Nitya-ṭṛptā continue their research on audiovisual technology to enhance the quality of the sounds and images of their shows. They use computer-generated graphics and computer-enhanced images. A new development: using projected images as backdrops

to Kṛṣṇa Prema's live musical performances.

Here's a list of Krishna Vision shows:

1. *Prabhupāda's ISKCON* (22 minutes)
2. *Kumbha Melā, the Search for Immortality* (21 minutes)
3. *Śrī Tulasī Kirtana* (10 minutes)
4. *Bhajahū Re Mana* (14 minutes)
5. *Śikṣāṣṭakam* (13 minutes)
6. *Remembering Śrīla Prabhupāda* (23 minutes)
7. *Krishna, the All-Attractive* (#1) (26 minutes)
8. *Krishna, the All-Attractive* (#2) (18 minutes)
9. *Lecture Introduction* (13 minutes)
10. *Reincarnation* (17 minutes)
11. *Beyond Birth and Death* (16 minutes)
12. *Gauranga Bhajan Band European Tours* (16 minutes)

## PLANS

Kṛṣṇa Prema and Nitya-ṭṛptā plan to get a set of nine projectors for India so that each year Krishna Vision can spend a few months traveling there. They've found that their high-technology presentation has great potential for inspiring Kṛṣṇa consciousness in India.

## OBSTACLES

They sometimes need more money to maintain or buy equipment.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

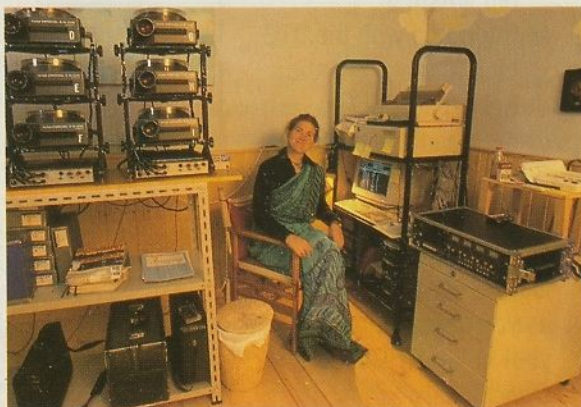
- Send money for equipment to be used in India (\$13,000 needed).
- Buy Krishna Vision audio cassettes.
- Invite Krishna Vision to your area and pay their travel expenses.

For more information, contact:

Krishna Vision  
Villa Vrindavana  
Via Scopeti 106  
San Casciano V.P. (Fi) 50026  
Italy



*Kṛṣṇa Prema Dāsa works on a sound track in the Krishna Vision sound studio.*



*Nitya-ṭṛptā Devī Dāsī programs a nine-projector slide show in the video room.*



# Growing With Grief

*Her voice hesitates. "I have bad news for you."*

by Cintāmaṇī Dhāma Devī Dāsī



**B**REATHLESS FROM running to the phone, I pick up the receiver, my seven-week-old daughter gurgling playfully in my arms.

"Can I speak to Rosalynne?" asks the voice at the other end.

"Speaking," I pipe back.

"This is Anna."

Anna . . . I try to think who it could be . . . Of course! My brother's girlfriend! I've never met her, though I've heard a lot about her.

"Hello, Anna. What can I do for you?"

My voice conveys that I'm happy she has rung. After all, I love my brother, and I know she means a lot to him.

Her voice hesitates. "I have bad news for you."

Bad news . . . The words are just registering as she continues to blurt

out, "Colin is dead. He died in a road accident."

The smile from a few seconds ago is still painted on my face. I try to make sense of what I've just heard. Maybe this is a sick joke. No, I can't imagine a girl like Anna playing such a hoax. Maybe I heard wrong.

"What did you say, Anna?"

"Colin is dead, Rosalynne. He died yesterday."

Colin, my younger brother—tall, good-looking Colin. Just a few weeks ago he had happily boasted to me about the amazing job he'd landed as an assistant buyer for an international corporation.

"I'll be flying all over Europe and the States now," he'd said. "And I've got myself a brand-new car."

"Great," I said, laughing. "Now you can afford to give the temple a donation. You've got no excuses now."

We were very different, Colin and I. More than ten years ago, I had chosen to become a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, abandoning my career for a more renounced life in search of spiritual knowledge. Colin, on the other hand, was materially ambitious and barely able to conceal his disdain for religious people. So I never tried discussing with him topics like the



# *If with the death of my brother I'm unable to fix my mind on Kṛṣṇa's holy names, how much more difficult it will be to do this when I face my own death.*



soul, karma, or reincarnation, and he appreciated that. He said that of all religious people he thought the Hare Kṛṣṇas were the nicest because at least we didn't force religion down his throat. Now I wish I'd tried harder to interest him. Anyway, it's too late. He's dead.

I sit silently, possibly in shock, little Lalitā cooing contentedly in my arms.

Anna's voice continues, giving details of the accident, the funeral, the state of my parents. I thank her and we hang up.

The finality of death hits me, and the shock gives way to grief. I'm unable to keep from wailing. My three-year-old son, Gopāla, rushes in. He's surprised to see mummy crying. He comes up to me, smiles consolingly, and strokes my face and head.

"Mummy, don't cry."

I try to smile. "It's all right, Colin. Mummy's all right."

It's the first time I've made the mistake of calling Gopāla Colin. My mistake triggers another bout of sobbing. Gopāla reminds me of Colin when we were little. Colin was also gentle and loving, and suddenly the physical similarities become more obvious as well.

"Mummy, don't cry." Gopāla smiles anxiously as he stares with concern into my eyes and continues stroking me. He tries to give me a hug, but Lalitā's in the way. For his sake I feel I must get hold of myself.

I try to control my grief with knowledge. "The wise lament neither for the living nor for the dead." I've been studying the *Bhagavad-gītā* for eleven years, and now Kṛṣṇa's teachings try to penetrate my grief. But my mind wavers between Kṛṣṇa's instructions and my sense of irreversible loss.

I try chanting the *mahā-mantra*: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma

Rāma, Hare Hare. As I chant, my mind wanders to childhood scenes with my brother—how we used to go swimming together. Though younger, he was a better swimmer, and I used to feel envious. Now, remembering that envy causes me guilt. Other scenes materialize in my mind: our excursions to the park, to the beach, and then back further in time and playing hide-and-seek, the playground . . .

I weep. Even after eleven years of practicing *bhakti-yoga*, I find it hard to control my mind. Bodily identifications are deep-rooted. Because I think I'm my body, I think I have an eternal relationship with my brother, my parents, and my child. But the body is temporary, and my misperception causes me suffering.

"Mummy, don't cry." Gopāla tries to console me, and I smile back reassuringly.

But the mind is difficult to control. Still, as Kṛṣṇa explains in the *Gītā*, we can control it with practice and detachment. Realizing our spiritual identity becomes easier as we practice detachment from bodily pleasures. If we've practiced throughout our life, then we may be able to fix the mind on Kṛṣṇa at death. The *Gītā* explains that our thoughts at death determine our next destination. So if we think of a loved one or of material happiness, we'll take birth again to continue "enjoying" and suffering. But if we can fix the mind on Kṛṣṇa, we'll escape the cycle of birth and death and go back to Godhead to serve the Supreme Lord in loving reciprocation.

I can now understand how difficult it will be to think of Kṛṣṇa at death. If with the death of my brother I'm unable to fix my mind on Kṛṣṇa's holy names, how much more difficult it will be to do this when I face my own death. I must prac-

tice, and this is a good opportunity. I turn to the *Gītā* (2.17–25):

That which pervades the entire body you should know to be indestructible. No one is able to destroy that imperishable soul. The material body of the indestructible, immeasurable, and eternal living entity is sure to come to an end. . . .

Neither he who thinks the living entity the slayer nor he who thinks it slain is in knowledge, for the self slays not nor is slain. For the soul there is neither birth nor death at any time. He has not come into being, does not come into being, and will not come into being. He is unborn, eternal, ever-existing, and primeval. He is not slain when the body is slain. . . .

As a person puts on new garments, giving up old ones, the soul similarly accepts new material bodies, giving up the old and useless ones. . . .

This individual soul is unbreakable and insoluble, and can be neither burned nor dried. He is everlasting, present everywhere, unchangeable, immovable, and eternally the same. It is said that the soul is invisible, inconceivable, and immutable. Knowing this, you should not grieve for the body.

The phone rings again, my husband this time. He's in a meeting, but he's just calling to see if there are any messages. I wonder whether or not I should tell him. I decide I will. Reading the *Bhagavad-gītā* has pacified my mind. It has reminded me that the real Colin—the eternal soul, the eternal servant of God—continues to exist. Only his temporary identity as Colin Dodds has ceased, and the real Colin—the soul I never saw anyway—has gone on to his next destination. Why lament for his temporary body, which was destined to be destroyed sooner or later?

(please turn to page 58)



# FREEDOM THROUGH ATTACHMENT

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 explains how attachment to devotees can free one from material bondage.*

## THIRD CANTO/CHAPTER 25

24 त एते साधवः साध्वि सर्वसङ्गविवर्जिताः ।  
सङ्गस्तेष्वथ ते प्रार्थ्यः सङ्गदोषहरा हि ते ॥२४॥

*ta ete sādhaḥ sādhvī  
sarva-saṅga-vivarjitāḥ  
saṅgas teṣv atha te prārthyah  
saṅga-doṣa-harā hi te*

*te ete*—those very; *sādhaḥ*—devotees; *sādhvī*—virtuous lady; *sarva*—all; *saṅga*—attachments; *vivarjitāḥ*—freed from; *saṅgaḥ*—attachment; *teṣu*—unto them; *atha*—hence; *te*—by you; *prārthyah*—must be sought; *saṅga-doṣa*—the pernicious effects of material attachment; *harāḥ*—counter-acters of; *hi*—indeed; *te*—they.

**O My mother, O virtuous lady, these are the qualities of great devotees who are free from all attachment. You must seek attachment to such holy men, for this counteracts the pernicious effects of material attachment.**

**PURPORT:** Kapila Muni herein advises His mother, Devahūti, that if she wants to be free from material attachment, she should increase her attachment for the *sādhus*, or devotees who are completely freed from all material attachment. In *Bhagavad-gītā*, Fifteenth Chapter, verse 5, it is stated who is qualified to enter into the kingdom of God-



*Devahūti hears from her son, Kapila, about the importance of hearing from realized sages.*

head. It is said there, *nirmāna-mohā jita-saṅga-doṣā*. This refers to one who is completely freed from the puffed-up condition of material possessiveness. A person may be materially very rich, opulent, or respectable, but if he at all wants to transfer himself to the spiritual kingdom, back home, back to Godhead, then he has to be freed from the puffed-up condition of material possessiveness, because that is a false position.

The word *moha* used here means the false understanding that one is rich or poor. In this material world, the conception that one is very rich or very poor—or any such



consciousness in connection with material existence—is false, because this body itself is false, or temporary. A pure soul who is prepared to be freed from this material entanglement must first of all be free from the association of the three modes of nature. Our consciousness at the present moment is polluted because of association with the three modes of nature; therefore in *Bhagavad-gītā* the same principle is stated. It is advised, *jīta-saiṅga-doṣāḥ*: one should be freed from the contaminated association of the three modes of material nature. Here also, in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, this is confirmed: a pure devotee, who is preparing to transfer himself to the spiritual kingdom, is also freed from the association of the three modes of material nature. We have to seek the association of such devotees. For this reason we have begun the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. There are many mercantile, scientific, and other associations in human society to develop a particular type of education or consciousness, but there is no association which helps one to get free from all material association. If anyone has reached the stage where he must become free from this material contamination, then he has to seek the association of devotees, wherein Kṛṣṇa consciousness is exclusively cultured. One can thereby become freed from all material association.

Because a devotee is freed from all contaminated material association, he is not affected by the miseries of material existence. Even though he appears to be in the material world, he is not affected by the miseries of the material world. How is it possible? There is a very good example in the activities of the cat. The cat carries her kittens in her mouth, and when she kills a rat she also carries the booty in her mouth. Thus both are carried in the mouth of the cat, but they are in different conditions. The kitten feels comfort in the mouth of the mother, whereas when the rat is carried in the mouth of the cat, the rat feels the blows of death. Similarly, those who are *sādhavaḥ*, or devotees engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the transcendental service of the Lord, do not feel the contamination of material miseries, whereas those who are not devotees in Kṛṣṇa consciousness actually feel the miseries of material existence. One should therefore give up the association of materialistic persons and seek the association of persons engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and by such association he will benefit in spiritual advancement. By their words and instructions, he will be able to cut off his attachment to material existence.

25 सतां प्रसङ्गान्मम वीर्यसंविदो  
भवन्ति हृत्कर्णरसायनाः कथाः ।  
तज्जोषणादाश्वपवर्गवर्त्मनि  
श्रद्धा रतिर्भक्तिरनुक्रमिष्यति ॥२५॥

*satām prasaṅgān mama vīrya-saṁvido  
bhavanti hṛt-karṇa-rasāyanāḥ kathāḥ  
taj-joṣaṅād āśv apavarga-varmani  
śraddhā ratir bhaktir anukramiṣyati*

*satām*—of pure devotees; *prasaṅgāt*—through the association; *mama*—My; *vīrya*—wonderful activities; *saṁvidāḥ*—by discussion of; *bhavanti*—become; *hṛt*—to the heart; *karṇa*—to the ear; *rasa-ayanāḥ*—pleasing; *kathāḥ*—the stories; *tat*—of that; *joṣaṅāt*—by cultivation; *āśu*—quickly; *apavarga*—of liberation; *varmani*—on the path; *śraddhā*—firm faith; *ratih*—attraction; *bhaktih*—devotion; *anukramiṣyati*—will follow in order.

**In the association of pure devotees, discussion of the pastimes and activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is very pleasing and satisfying to the ear and the heart. By cultivating such knowledge one gradually becomes advanced on the path of liberation, and thereafter he is freed, and his attraction becomes fixed. Then real devotion and devotional service begin.**

PURPORT: The process of advancing in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and devotional service is described here. The first point is that one must seek the association of persons who are Kṛṣṇa conscious and who engage in devotional service. Without such association one cannot make advancement. Simply by theoretical knowledge or study one cannot make any appreciable advancement. One must give up the association of materialistic persons and seek the association of devotees because without the association of devotees one cannot understand the activities of the Lord. Generally, people are convinced of the impersonal feature of the Absolute Truth. Because they do not associate with devotees, they cannot understand that the Absolute Truth can be a person and have personal activities. This is a very difficult subject matter, and unless one has personal understanding of the Absolute Truth, there is no meaning to devotion. Service or devotion cannot be offered to anything impersonal. Service must be offered to a person. Nondevotees cannot appreciate Kṛṣṇa consciousness by reading the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* or any other Vedic literature wherein the activities of the Lord are described; they think that these activities are fictional, manufactured stories because spiritual life is not explained to them in the proper mood. To understand the personal activities of the Lord, one has to seek the association of devotees, and by such association, when one contemplates and tries to understand the transcendental activities of the Lord, the path of liberation is open, and he is freed. One who has firm faith in the Supreme Personality of Godhead becomes fixed, and his attraction for association with the Lord and the devotees increases. Association with devotees means association with the Lord. The devotee who makes this association develops the consciousness for rendering service to the Lord, and then, being situated in the transcendental position of devotional service, he gradually becomes perfect.

26 भक्त्या पुमाञ्जातविराग ऐन्द्रियाद्  
दृष्टश्रुतान्मद्रचनानुचिन्तया ।



चित्तस्य यत्तो ग्रहणे योगयुक्तो  
यतिष्यते ऋजुभिर्योगमार्गैः ॥२६॥

*bhaktiā pumān jāta-virāga aindriyād  
dṛṣṭa-śrutān mad-racanānucintayā  
cittasya yatto grahaṇe yoga-yukto  
yatiṣyate ṛjubhīr yoga-mārgaiḥ*

*bhaktiā*—by devotional service; *pumān*—a person; *jāta-virāgaḥ*—having developed distaste; *aindriyāt*—for sense gratification; *dṛṣṭa*—seen (in this world); *śrutāt*—heard (in the next world); *mat-racana*—My activities of creation and so on; *anucintayā*—by constantly thinking about; *cittasya*—of the mind; *yattaḥ*—engaged; *grahaṇe*—in the control; *yoga-yuktaḥ*—situated in devotional service; *yatiṣyate*—will endeavor; *ṛjubhīḥ*—easy; *yoga-mārgaiḥ*—by the processes of mystic power.

**Thus consciously engaged in devotional service in the association of devotees, a person gains distaste for sense gratification, both in this world and in the next, by constantly thinking about the activities of the Lord. This process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the easiest process of mystic power; when one is actually situated on that path of devotional service, he is able to control the mind.**

PURPORT: In all scriptures people are encouraged to act in a pious way so that they can enjoy sense gratification not only in this life but also in the next. For example, one is promised promotion to the heavenly kingdom of higher planets by pious fruitive activities. But a devotee in the association of devotees prefers to contemplate the activities of the Lord—how He has created this universe, how He is maintaining it, how the creation dissolves, and how in the spiritual kingdom the Lord's pastimes are going on. There are full literatures describing these activities of the Lord, especially *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Brahma-saṁhītā*, and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The sincere devotee who associates with devotees gets the opportunity to hear and contemplate this subject of the pastimes of the Lord, and the result is that he feels distaste for so-called happiness in this or that world, in heaven or on other planets. The devotees are simply interested in being transferred to the personal association of the Lord; they have no more attraction for temporary so-called happiness. That is the position of one who is *yoga-yukta*. One who is fixed in mystic power is not disturbed by the allurements of this world or that world; he is interested in the matters of spiritual understanding or the spiritual situation. This sublime situation is very easily attained by the easiest process, *bhakti-yoga*. *Ṛjubhīr yoga-mārgaiḥ*. A very suitable word used here is *ṛjubhīḥ*, or "very easy." There are different processes of *yoga-mārga*, attaining *yoga* perfection, but this process, devotional service to the Lord, is the easiest. Not only is it the easiest process, but the result is sublime. Everyone, therefore, should try to take this process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and reach the highest perfection of life.

27 असेवयायं प्रकृतेर्गुणानां  
ज्ञानेन वैराग्यविजृम्भितेन ।  
योगेन मय्यर्पितया च भक्त्या  
मां प्रत्यगात्मानमिहावरुन्धे ॥२७॥

*asevayāyaṁ prakṛter guṇānām  
jñānena vairāgya-vijṛmbhītena  
yogena mayy arpitayā ca bhaktiā  
mām pratyag-ātmānam ihāvarundhe*

*asevayā*—by not engaging in the service; *ayam*—this person; *prakṛteḥ guṇānām*—of the modes of material nature; *jñānena*—by knowledge; *vairāgya*—with renunciation; *vijṛmbhītena*—developed; *yogena*—by practicing yoga; *mayi*—unto Me; *arpitayā*—fixed; *ca*—and; *bhaktiā*—with devotion; *mām*—unto Me; *pratyag-ātmānam*—the Absolute Truth; *iha*—in this very life; *avarundhe*—one attains.

**Thus by not engaging in the service of the modes of material nature but by developing Kṛṣṇa consciousness, knowledge in renunciation, and by practicing yoga, in which the mind is always fixed in devotional service unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one achieves My association in this very life, for I am the Supreme Personality, the Absolute Truth.**

PURPORT: When one engages in devotional service to the Lord in the nine different kinds of *bhakti-yoga*, as enunciated in authoritative scriptures, such as hearing (*śravaṇam*), chanting (*kīrtanam*), remembering, offering worship, praying, and offering personal service—either in one of them, or two or three or all of them—he naturally has no opportunity to engage in the service of the three modes of material nature. Unless one has good engagements in spiritual service, it is not possible to get out of the attachment to material service. Those who are not devotees, therefore, are interested in so-called humanitarian or philanthropic work, such as opening a hospital or charitable institution. These are undoubtedly good works in the sense that they are pious activities, and their result is that the performer may get some opportunities for sense gratification, either in this life or in the next. Devotional service, however, is beyond the boundary of sense gratification. It is completely spiritual activity. When one engages in the spiritual activities of devotional service, naturally he does not get any opportunity to engage in sense gratificatory activities. Kṛṣṇa conscious activities are performed not blindly but with perfect understanding of knowledge and renunciation. This kind of yoga practice, in which the mind is always fixed upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead in devotion, results in liberation in this very life. The person who performs such acts gets in touch with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Lord Caitanya, therefore, approved the process of hearing from realized devotees about the pastimes of the Lord. It does



not matter to what category of this world the audience belongs. If one meekly and submissively hears about the activities of the Lord from a realized soul, he will be able to conquer the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is unconquerable by any other process. Hearing or associating with devotees is the most important function for self-realization.

देवहृतिरुवाच

28 काचिच्चयुचिता भक्तिः कीदृशी मम गोचरा ।

यया पदं ते निर्वाणमञ्जसान्वाश्रवा अहम् ॥२८॥

*devahūtir uvāca  
kācit tvayy ucitā bhaktiḥ  
kīdṛśī mama go-carā  
yayā padam te nirvāṇam  
añjasānvāśnavā aham*

*devahūtiḥ uvāca*—Devahūti said; *kācit*—what; *tvayī*—unto You; *ucitā*—proper; *bhaktiḥ*—devotional service; *kīdṛśī*—what kind; *mama*—by me; *go-carā*—fit to be practiced; *yayā*—by which; *padam*—feet; *te*—Your; *nirvāṇam*—liberation; *añjasā*—immediately; *anvāśnavai*—shall attain; *aham*—I.

**On hearing this statement of the Lord, Devahūti inquired: What kind of devotional service is worth developing and practicing to help me easily and immediately attain the service of Your lotus feet?**

**PURPORT:** It is stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* that no one is barred from rendering service to the Lord. Whether one is a woman or a laborer or a merchant, if he engages himself in the devotional service of the Lord he is promoted to the highest perfectional state and goes back home, back to Godhead. The devotional service most suitable for different types of devotees is determined and fixed by the mercy of the spiritual master.

29 यो योगो भगवद्भाषो निर्वाणात्मंस्त्वयोदितः ।

कीदृशः कति चाङ्गानि यतस्तत्त्वावबोधनम् ॥२९॥

*yo yogo bhagavad-bāṣo  
nirvāṇātmaṁstvayoditaḥ  
kīdṛśaḥ kati cāṅgāni  
yatas tattvāvabodhanam*

*yaḥ*—which; *yogaḥ*—mystic *yoga* process; *bhagavat-bāṣaḥ*—aiming at the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *nirvāṇa-ātman*—O embodiment of *nirvāṇa*; *tvayā*—by You; *uditaḥ*—explained; *kīdṛśaḥ*—of what nature; *kati*—how many; *ca*—and; *aṅgāni*—branches; *yataḥ*—by which; *tattva*—of the truth; *avabodhanam*—understanding.

**The mystic yoga system, as You have explained, aims at the Supreme Personality of Godhead and is meant for**

**completely ending material existence. Please let me know the nature of that yoga system. How many ways are there by which one can understand in truth that sublime yoga?**

**PURPORT:** There are different kinds of mystic yoga systems aiming for different phases of the Absolute Truth. The *jñāna-yoga* system aims at the impersonal Brahman effulgence, and the *haṭha-yoga* system aims at the localized personal aspect, the Paramātmā feature of the Absolute Truth, whereas *bhakti-yoga*, or devotional service, which is executed in nine ways, headed by hearing and chanting, aims at complete realization of the Supreme Lord. There are different methods of self-realization. But here Devahūti especially refers to the *bhakti-yoga* system, which has already been primarily explained by the Lord. The parts of the *bhakti-yoga* system are hearing, chanting, remembering, offering prayers, worshipping the Lord in the temple, accepting service to Him, carrying out His orders, making friendship with Him, and ultimately surrendering everything for the service of the Lord. The word *nirvāṇātman* is very significant in this verse. Unless one accepts the process of devotional service, one cannot end the continuation of material existence. As far as *jñānis* are concerned, they are interested in *jñāna-yoga*, but even if one elevates oneself, after a great performance of austerity, to the Brahman effulgence, there is a chance of falling down again to the material world. Therefore, *jñāna-yoga* does not actually end material existence. Similarly, regarding the *haṭha-yoga* system, which aims at the localized aspect of the Lord, Paramātmā, it has been experienced that many *yogīs*, such as Viśvāmitra, fall down. But *bhakti-yogīs*, once approaching the Supreme Personality of Godhead, never come back to this material world, as it is confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. *Yad gatvā na nivartante*: upon going, one never comes back. *Tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma naiti*: after giving up this body, he never comes back again to accept a material body. *Nirvāṇa* does not finish the existence of the soul. The soul is ever existing. Therefore *nirvāṇa* means to end one's material existence, and to end material existence means to go back to Godhead.

Sometimes it is asked how the living entity falls down from the spiritual world to the material world. Here is the answer. Unless one is elevated to the Vaikuṅṭha planets, directly in touch with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he is prone to fall down, either from the impersonal Brahman realization or from an ecstatic trance of meditation. Another word in this verse, *bhagavad-bāṣaḥ*, is very significant. *Bāṣaḥ* means "arrow." The *bhakti-yoga* system is just like an arrow aiming up to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The *bhakti-yoga* system never urges one towards the impersonal Brahman effulgence or to the point of Paramātmā realization. This *bāṣaḥ*, or arrow, is so sharp and swift that it goes directly to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, penetrating the regions of impersonal Brahman and localized Paramātmā.

(continued in the next issue)





# EVERY TOWN & VILLAGE

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

## WORLD NEWS

### North America

**An official endorsement from the mayor and an escort of ten police motorcycles highlighted ISKCON's Chariot Parade and Festival of India this June in Atlanta.** The celebration included ISKCON Atlanta's annual chipped-rice-and-yogurt festival.

**People smiled and cheered** as devotees passed by, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, at the annual Springtime Tallahassee parade in the capital of Florida. The judges gave the devotees the award for "Best Church Float"—even though they didn't have a float.



Kunti Devi Dāsi

*Chipped rice and yogurt on the altar at the ISKCON temple in Atlanta.*



*Devotees chant in the Springtime Tallahassee parade.*

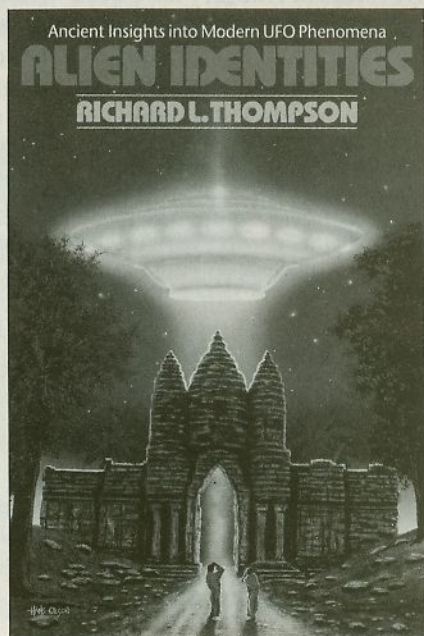
**Seventy-four leaders in religion, education, and law attended** a conference on religious liberty in which a Hare Kṛṣṇa devotee served as a panelist. The conference was held last spring at the Freedom Forum First Amendment Center, in Arlington, Virginia. The chairman of the Freedom Forum is Allen H. Neuharth, founder of *USA Today*.

**Devotees and friends have been attending** 6-day seminars on Kṛṣṇa conscious subjects several times a year at ISKCON's Gītā-Nāgarī Farm, near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The next seminars will be held September 7–12.

**ISKCON Los Angeles is launching** its newly arranged visitors center in October. The centerpiece: the highly successful Govinda's restaurant, formerly across the street, now directly next to the temple itself.

**Seven hundred devotees from ISKCON and from eastern India chanted** twenty-four hours nonstop at a Bengali cultural center in Toronto. They chanted Hare Kṛṣṇa to traditional Bengali melodies. Most of the chanters were from Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, and Bangladesh, where such chanting is indigenous.

**A new book by a BTG columnist investigates** parallels between modern reports of unidentified flying objects and similar reports from the Vedic literature of India. The book is *Alien Identities*, by Richard L.





Thompson (Sadāpūta Dāsa). For information on how to get copies, see page 60.

**Devotees in Spanish Fork, Utah, celebrate** their annual Festival of India on September 11.

**ISKCON Houston is buying** three quarters of an acre next to the temple for a restaurant and a hall for Kṛṣṇa conscious programs.

**A gong summons** four hundred needy people for a weekly meal in Los Angeles. A devotee from Hare Krishna Food for Life parks his van in a needy neighborhood and walks around with the gong to let people know he's there.

Europe

**Devotees in Sarajevo are still giving** daily free meals of *prasādam*. They also hold regular temple programs and put on concerts for children in hospitals. With food scarce, the devotees report an ironic benefit of war: people are getting closer to the land. With food scarce, they are growing vegetables in everything from their front yards to jars, crates, and bathtubs.

**The Hare Kṛṣṇa center in Copenhagen has moved** to a new, larger place, a former hotel thirty minutes from downtown.

**BTG contributor Hridayananda Dasa Goswami lectured** in the Polish cities of Warsaw, Gdynia, and Gdansk during a five-day tour last spring. He spoke at the University of Gdansk and the Polish Philosophical Association and was interviewed on Polish television.

**Devotees in Hungary have been fighting** moves by the government to restrict their religious freedoms. First a government committee declared ISKCON a "destructive cult." Then the governing party sent Parliament a bill that would deprive a religion of being "registered" unless it had 100,000 followers in Hungary or had been established there for more than 100 years. Devotees have sought to have the declaration rescinded and the bill defeated. At press time the outcome was still unknown.

Commonwealth of Independent States

**ISKCON members spoke** about the Vedic social system at a conference in

Novosibirsk, Russia, called "Help to Russia." Speakers at the conference included religious leaders, the chief economists of the city, and members of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The participants decided to include the statements of the devotees in a paper to be given to the Russian government.

India

**Devotees in ISKCON Secunderabad, Andhra Pradesh, laid the cornerstone** for a \$1 million temple and cultural complex on their land in the heart of the city. The ceremonies, held last May, included the official opening of the Hare Krishna Art Studio by the chief architect for the temple project, Sri G. Venkataramana Reddy, Vastupati. The studio is meant to encourage young artists in developing their talents for Kṛṣṇa's service.

**Donors in Bhubaneswar, Orissa, give** five hundred rupees each to provide five hundred plates of nutritious *prasādam* to the poor of their city. The program, organized by Hare Krishna Food for Life, encourages people to sponsor distribution of *prasādam* on the anniversary of a relative's death. This is a traditional Vedic act of charity meant to relieve one's relatives of suffering caused by past sins.

Australia

**Devotees at the New Gokula farm in New South Wales will train** local

jobless people to grow organic vegetables for Hare Krishna Food for Life. The project—a way to feed people and provide jobs at the same time—will be funded by the Jobskills program of the Federal Department of Employment, Education, and Training.



Devotees at New Gokula Farm grow vegetables for their Hare Krishna Food for Life program.

Latin America

**ISKCON has received** a donation of about 1,700

acres of land between Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. Devotees plan to use the land for self-sufficient farming. Twelve devotees are living on the land so far. Another donation: a place in the mountains, an hour and a half from Rio. Devotees plan to use it for retreats for interested friends.

**The Festival of the Chariots rolls in Rio** at Ipanema Beach at the end of October.



## PADAYĀTRĀ NEWS

### Padayātrā Latvia

Devotees in Latvia are getting ready for Padayātrā. An old woman living alone gave them a pair of untrained bulls, which a devotee from England has trained. Besides distributing books, the devotees hope to show people the value of ox power in a country where people are moving from the factories back to the land.



*Paraśurāma Dāsa trains an ox for Padayātrā in Latvia.*

### Padayātrā England

A party of devotees who put on a Padayātrā in England in April brought Padayātrā to three other countries this summer. They took their cart, Deities, and equipment and hooked up with local oxen for Padayātrās in Czech, Sweden, and Luxembourg.

For more information about Padayātrā, contact:

Padayātrā Worldwide  
62, Sant Nagar, New Delhi 110 065, India.  
Phone: +91 (11) 642-1736.  
Fax: +91 (11) 647-0742

Padayātrā America  
1111 Grand Ave., San Diego, CA 92109.  
Phone: +1 (619) 273-7262.

Padayātrā Europe  
Bhaktivedanta Manor, Leckmore Heath, Watford,  
Herts. WD2 8EP, England.  
Phone: +44 (92) 385-7244

## ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA'S CENTENNIAL—1996

*This new section of Every Town and Village features news about the upcoming year-long celebration in 1996 for the one-hundredth anniversary of Śrīla Prabhupāda's birth.*

### England

More than six hundred devotees attended the U.K.'s first Prabhupāda Reunion Festival, held in May at the Bhaktivedanta Manor outside London. Of the six devotees Śrīla Prabhupāda first sent to London in 1968, four attended the festival: Mukunda Goswami, Śyāmasundara Dāsa, Guru Dāsa, and Mālātī Dāsī. Former Beatle George Harrison, who had helped the devotees get established in England and acquire the Manor, also attended and led the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa.

### West Bengal

A group of devotees from Śrīdhām Māyāpur have begun touring West Bengal and holding programs to tell people about Śrīla Prabhupāda, his movement, and his upcoming Centennial. The party will bring their message to as many towns and villages as they can in the next three years.

For more information on the Centennial, contact:

Global Ministry for the Śrīla Prabhupāda Centennial  
62, Sant Nagar (near Nehru Place)  
New Delhi 110 065, India  
Phone: +91 (11) 6421763  
Fax: +91 (11) 6470742



*Devotees at the U.K.'s first Prabhupāda Reunion Festival.*



## GRIEF (continued from page 50)

As I tell my husband, however, my composure cracks and I fight to keep back the tears. Applying transcendental knowledge takes practice. Therefore, the scriptures advise that we take up this practice at once so we can endure undisturbed when our own death is upon us.

Half an hour later my husband is home. He decided to come and help. I appreciate his presence. As a devotee, he's sympathetic but not sentimental. He has come not to join in my grief but to help me transcend it. Being with another devotee strengthens my own resolve to act as a devotee and take shelter of Kṛṣṇa.

We decide to sing a devotional song. We sit cross-legged in our temple room, Lalitā sleeping peacefully on my lap, Gopāla resting against my shoulders. Normally he would go to his father, but today he stays close by me.

Gopāla's concern is touching. If this small child has such a capacity to love, I think, how much greater is God's. In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Lord Kṛṣṇa reassures us that He is our most intimate well-wisher. If I loved Colin, how much more Kṛṣṇa loves him. My relationship with Colin goes back only twenty-nine years, but he is eternally Kṛṣṇa's. The Vedic scriptures say that throughout our sojourn in the material world the Supreme Lord stays with us as the witness of our activities. On the merit of our past acts, He sanctions or thwarts our endeavors for material happiness. The materialist is elated in material happiness, taking

all credit for himself, and depressed in material distress, blaming God. But the transcendentalist remains steady in happiness and distress, gain and loss. He sees material happiness as the mercy of Kṛṣṇa because it provides a comfortable circumstance for practicing spiritual life. And he sees in suffering an impetus for becoming detached from material life. He never blames God for his suffering; rather, he sees suffering as the result of his past sinful acts.

I find comfort in these thoughts. I know that as the Supersoul, Lord Kṛṣṇa accompanies Colin. Kṛṣṇa is callous to the fleeting happiness and distress of this material world. He wants to help us become exhausted with our futile attempts at happiness. He wants us to surrender to Him in loving service and return to a life of eternal bliss and knowledge in the spiritual world. So my faith is that though I may not be able to understand how, Kṛṣṇa is in control and is acting for Colin's ultimate benefit.

My husband plays the harmonium, and I the *karatālas* (cymbals). I close my eyes and allow myself to become immersed in the sweet melody of Kṛṣṇa's holy names: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. The chant is like the crying of a child to its parent. "My dear lord Kṛṣṇa, please rescue me from the ocean of material suffering and again engage me in Your service."

As my husband brings the chanting to a close, I feel peaceful and composed. He consoles me with more thoughts

from the *Gītā*.

"We feel anxiety because we are eternal beings in an atmosphere of temporality," he says. "We hanker for stability—a stable environment and stable relationships. But in the material world, nothing is stable. And death is the most thorough destabilizer. But not if we can become fixed in our eternal identity as spirit souls, parts of the Supreme Lord. If we can realize our eternal loving relationship with Him, nothing—not even death—can take that away."

I feel grateful for this knowledge. My thoughts go to my parents. How much more difficult for them. They were never interested in the soul, karma, reincarnation, meditation. They accept only the here and now, what they can directly see with their eyes. I wonder if my brother's death will make them more thoughtful.

I hope my brother's short life and his death will not be futile. I hope that at least I can now become more resolute in my pursuit of spiritual perfection. The scriptures say that if someone attains pure devotion for God, he benefits ten generations of his family before and after him. But more than just helping myself and my own family, I pray I can become determined to help give this knowledge to others. 🌸

*Cintāmaṇi Dhāma Devī Dāsi holds a joint honors degree in philosophy and politics from Bristol University. She and her husband, Kṛṣṇa Dharma Dāsa, run the Manchester ISKCON center, which they opened in 1986.*

## SPEAKS OUT

(continued from page 39)

is illusion. We are simply creating problems, and still we are thinking that we are advanced.

But from another point of view, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* says there is no problem. *Tasyaiva hetoḥ prayateta kovidō na labhyate yad bhramatām upary adhaḥ*. You simply try for Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And how shall I live? The answer is: *tal labhyate duḥkḥavad anyataḥ sukhām*. You don't aspire for miseries, but they come upon you; they are forced upon you. Similarly, happiness will also be forced upon you, whatever you are destined to receive. So don't try for getting happiness or avoiding dis-

truss. Happiness and distress will go on. You simply try for Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which without your trying will never be achieved. You have to voluntarily try for Kṛṣṇa consciousness, revive it.

Therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa says, *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja* ["Simply surrender unto Me"]. . . . Kṛṣṇa can force you to become Kṛṣṇa conscious. But He doesn't do that. He doesn't interfere with your independence. He simply says, "Do it." Therefore you have to try for Kṛṣṇa consciousness, not for other things.

Other things are already there. For the birds and beasts there is no problem for eating. Why should you have a problem? A prisoner has no eating problem.

The government supplies what he needs. He only has the problem that he should not be a criminal. That is his problem. He should try for that: "I shall never again become a criminal." That is the real activity. It is not that in the prison he has to worry, "What shall I eat?" No, eating is already there. Even if you are a prisoner, the government has supplied food. Similarly, God has supplied everyone with eatables, even cats and dogs. Why not you? You have created your own problem. The real problem is how to develop Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

**Disciple:** These problems will take care of themselves if people develop Kṛṣṇa consciousness?

**Srila Prabhupāda:** Yes. 🌸



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◆ Temples with restaurants or dining. ★ New listing. Telephone numbers include country codes, identified by a +. To save space, we've skipped the code for North America (1). A full list of worldwide centers will appear in our January/February and July/August issues.



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If so, get in touch with the people listed here. They and their friends regularly gather in their homes—or they want to start. They'll be happy to hear from you.

If you'd like to be added to the list, please send your name, city, and phone number to: Gatherings, BTG, P. O. Box 90946, San Diego, CA 92169, USA.

In each issue we'll add new gatherings and list as many old ones as space allows.

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# The Hare Kṛṣṇa Calendar

## 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 Hṛṣikeśa (cont.) (September 17–30)

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

20—Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Sitā 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 Vāmana-dvādaśī, appearance anniversary of Lord Vāmanadeva. Feast at noon. Appearance anniversary of 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, an associate of Lord Caitanya and the foremost teacher of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.



Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

*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.*

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

## Month of Padmanābha (October 1–30)

## OCTOBER

1—Anniversary of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s taking *sannyāsa*, the renounced order of life.

12—Trisṛṣṭā Mahā-dvādaśī, fasting from grains and beans for Indirā Ekādaśī.

24—Rāmacandra Vijayotsava, the anniversary of Lord Rāmacandra’s victory over the demon Rāvaṇa.

26—Pāśāṅkuśā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

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

## Month of Dāmodara (October 31–November 29)

## NOVEMBER

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

10—Ramā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

13—Dīwali, the festival of illuminating Kṛṣṇa’s temples with lamps. Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for details.

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

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

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

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



# GIVING EVERYTHING UP

*Home . . . ? Job . . . ? Family . . . ? Now?*

by Jayādwaita Swami

• • •

SOMETIMES THOSE unfamiliar with the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement think that to attain Kṛṣṇa consciousness one needs to quit one's job, break off from one's family, give up everything, and just chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. If the world and what's in it are material, the thinking goes, to be spiritual one must give everything up.

One person who thought this way was a fellow named Kūrma, who lived in the fifteenth century in south India. Born in a family of *brāhmanas*, the highest caste, he seems to have been a prosperous man, and he was a follower of the Vedic way of life. Materially speaking, he and his family were well set up.

At this time, Lord Kṛṣṇa had appeared in India as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness through the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. For this role the Lord had taken the vow of *sannyāsa*, in which one renounces forever the comforts of family and home, and now He was touring south India.

He would go from village to village in the ecstasy of pure devotion, teaching people to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. The people He would teach would then teach others, and in this way Kṛṣṇa consciousness was spreading.

In the course of this tour, Lord Caitanya came to Kūrma's village. Taking advantage of this opportunity, with great respect and devotion Kūrma invited Lord Caitanya to his home. There Kūrma washed the

Lord's feet, and he and his family drank the water with which he had done so. Next Kūrma fed the Lord, and he and his family shared the remnants of the Lord's meal. These are all ways of honoring an exalted person according to the Vedic culture.

Kūrma now approached Lord Caitanya and said, "Even Lord Brahmā, the demigod in charge of creation, meditates upon Your lotus feet, and today those lotus feet have come into my home. The limits of my good fortune cannot be described. Today my birth, my family, and my wealth have all become glorious."

Then Kūrma expressed his desire: "My Lord, be merciful and let me go with You. I can no longer stand the waves of misery from materialistic life."

Inevitably, a householder's life is troublesome, full of problems, worries, and entanglements. Even its pleasures are a problem, because in family happiness one can easily lose one's spiritual balance. When home and family take over, spirituality can drop into the background like faded wallpaper. So it seems that although Kūrma was materially happy, he wanted to leave his home.

Lord Caitanya, however, replied from a different point of view. "Don't speak like that again," He said. "Better to stay at home and always chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa."

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is practical. In

the mature stage one may leave behind one's family and home to live exclusively for Kṛṣṇa. But until then one should stay on in one's home, keep up with one's work, and rise above illusions by following the standard regulative principles and chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. The basic regulations are four: no gambling, no meat-eating, no intoxicants, and no illicit sex. By following these four rules and chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, one will stay free from illusions and make steady progress in spiritual life.

Lord Caitanya further said to Kūrma, "Whomever you meet, tell them the message of Kṛṣṇa. In this way, by My order, become a spiritual master and liberate this land." Following the teachings of Lord Caitanya, under the guidance of one's own spiritual master, one can teach Kṛṣṇa consciousness to others. In this way one makes one's own life perfect and helps others perfect their lives also.

Lord Caitanya concluded, "If you follow this instruction, the waves of materialistic life won't block your spiritual advancement. Follow these regulative principles and we shall meet here again—or, rather, you will never lose My company."

One need not "give everything up." One need only take up the instructions of Lord Caitanya. ❀

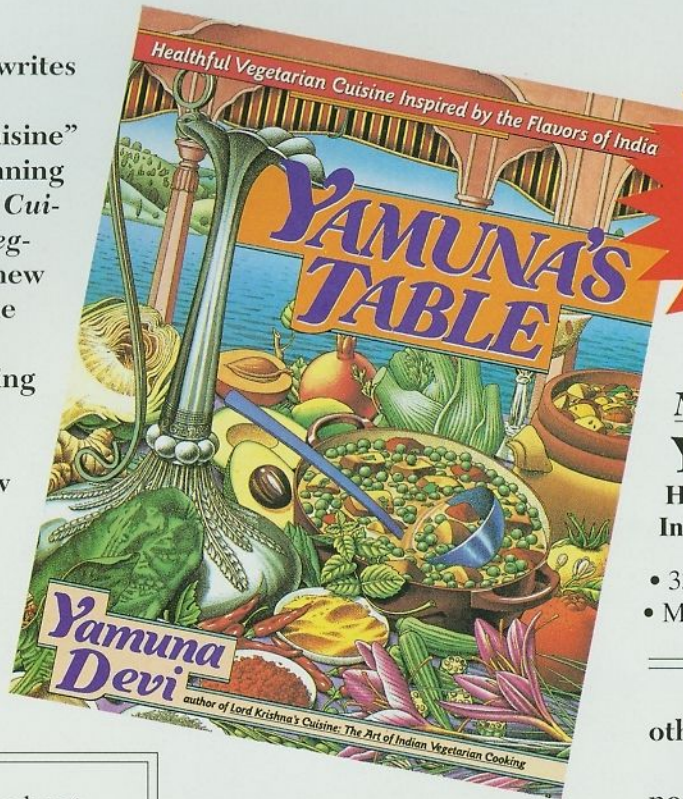
*Jayādwaita Swami is the Editor of Back to Godhead.*



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