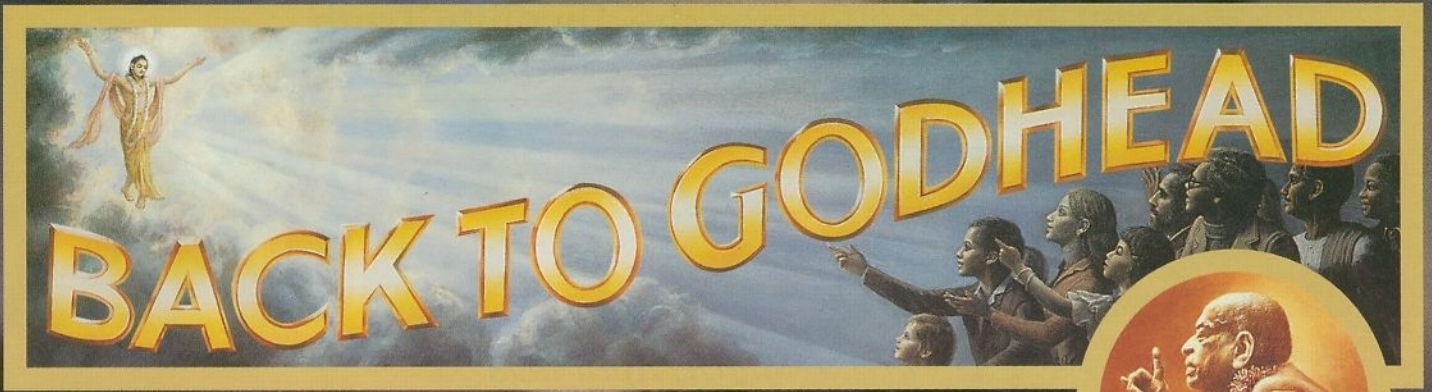


Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.



The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement • March/April 1998 • \$4.00 / £4.50

# CHANTING THE HOLY NAMES

The Pleasing, Potent Way to God

## RĀMA-RĀJYA

Bringing God's Reign to Earth

## SELF-KNOWLEDGE

The Right Medicine for the Real Disease

## AUSTERITY

Door to the Highest Pleasure



Assisting you in your quest for the Absolute Truth

# Back to Godh

Founded 1944 • Vol. 32, No. 2 • March/April 1998

F  
E  
A  
T  
U  
R  
E  
S

7

## Who Is Lord Caitanya?

An incarnation of God appeared on earth only five hundred years ago. The Vedic scriptures prove it, Śrīla Prabhupāda explains.

16

## Near Death While Out Chanting

“I’m clutching my beads, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa to myself, and wishing that by Kṛṣṇa’s grace some devotee might come by and help me out.”

20

## The Religion For this Age

In this age of irreligion, the Vedic scriptures prescribe an easy but effective way to realize God.

30

MAHĀBHĀRATA

## Invincible Weapons For Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna

The Lord and His devotee reunite with their eternal weapons.



44

39

## The Mercy of Caitanya Mahāprabhu

A godbrother of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s talks about their early friendship and their meeting again after many years.

44

## Rāma-Rājya Automatically

The secret to creating the kingdom of God on earth.

51

## The Right Medicine

We willingly submit to healers of the body, but why not to healers of the soul?

D  
E  
P  
A  
R  
T  
M  
E  
N  
T  
S

4

Letters

19

Śrīla Prabhupāda Speaks Out

29

Glossary

33

The Hare Kṛṣṇa Catalog

37

Every Town and Village



37

40

Kṛṣṇa on the Net

42

The Vedic Observer

53

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

57

Hare Kṛṣṇa Centers

63

Vedic Thoughts

64

Gatherings

65

The Hare Kṛṣṇa Calendar

66

From the Editor

# ead

## C O L U M N S

11

### Lessons from the Road

*Japa as Meditation*

12

### Lord Kṛṣṇa's Cuisine

*The Burfi Family—Milk Fudges*

13

### Book Distribution

*Solace for All*

14

### Schooling Kṛṣṇa's Children

*Spiritual Holidays*

15

### The Land, the Cows, and Kṛṣṇa

*Māyā Writes the Script*

61

### India's Heritage

*A Blessed Departure*

62

### Bhakti-Yoga at Home

*Austerity—Door to the  
Highest Pleasure*

## COVER

In San Francisco, California, a young girl takes part in the congregational chanting of the holy names of the Lord, the most powerful way to God realization. Please see the article beginning on page 20. (Photo by Yamarāja Dāsa.)

## WELCOME, NEW READERS



Whether you've studied yoga in depth, or simply felt some interest, this issue of *Back to Godhead* has something for you.

Five hundred years

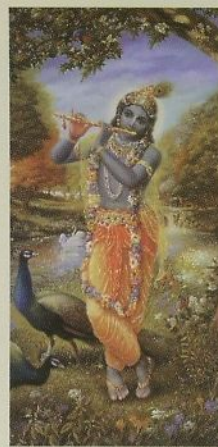
ago, Lord Caitanya revitalized the practice of bhakti (devotional) yoga, as taught by Lord Kṛṣṇa in the ancient *Bhagavad-gītā* and other Vedic scriptures. In 1966, Śrīla Prabhupāda brought the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement from India to the West, and soon, by his efforts, bhakti-yoga began spreading all over the world.

In this issue you'll learn how bhakti-yoga begins with chanting God's names. You'll discover what the *Vedas* say about this easy but powerful process of meditation. And you'll see how bhakti-yoga blossoms to encompass a rich, transcendent culture of spirituality.

Enjoy these pages of art, cuisine, philosophy, literature, and personal experiences, all connected to Lord Kṛṣṇa through bhakti, the yoga of spiritual love.

We're happy to have you with us. To help you get oriented, we've included a Glossary on page 29. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

*Nāgarāja Dāsa,  
Managing Editor*



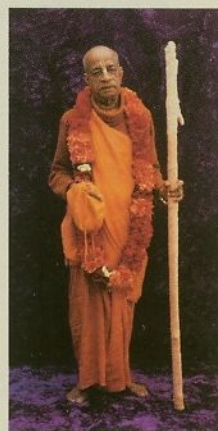
*Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the source of all material and spiritual worlds*



*Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Kṛṣṇa's most recent incarnation, taught Kṛṣṇa consciousness through the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa.*

## OUR PURPOSES

- To help all people discern reality from illusion, spirit from matter, the eternal from the temporary.
- To expose the faults of materialism.
- To offer guidance in the Vedic techniques of spiritual life.
- To preserve and spread the Vedic culture.
- To celebrate the chanting of the holy names of God as taught by Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
- To help every living being remember and serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead.



*His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Acārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness*

# BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the  
Hare Krishna Movement

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(under the direction of His Divine Grace  
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His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta  
Swami Prabhupāda

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# Letters

## The ISKCON Laity

I would just like to say how much I enjoy BTG. Each issue seems to have so much in it when it arrives. But it is never enough; I am always left wishing there was more. But I guess only one issue can come at a time! It struck me recently that we never see any articles in BTG from the ISKCON laity and there must be many more of us than there are devotees. It may well be that none of the lay members are qualified to say anything that could be printed in BTG, but perhaps our experiences within ISKCON and our meetings with Śrīla Prabhupāda would be of interest to some readers. It is just a thought, and I have enclosed a short piece that might be of some use. If not, please consign it to the waste paper bin!

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Brian Fleming  
Abergate, Scotland

*We plan to run the article in an upcoming issue.—The Editors*

## Lunacy

I was amazed to read your editorial in the Sept./Oct. 1997 issue of BTG. Swami Prabhupāda claims that Neil Armstrong never landed on the moon. It was a grand illusion played out by the U.S. administration. Please bear in mind that your magazine is printed thanks to technology; Swami Prabhupāda flew to the U.S. to spread the message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness thanks to technology; I am sending this e-mail thanks to technology. You are entitled to your beliefs, but this sort of balderdash erodes the credibility of the movement and pushes you to the edges of the lunatic fringe.

Sunil Shibad  
Mahim, Mumbai, India

**REPLY FROM JAYĀDVAITA SWAMI:** You are bashing us for more than we said. On the basis of Vedic literature, Śrīla Prabhupāda indeed affirmed

that the moon landing didn't happen; Mr. Armstrong couldn't have strong-armed his way onto the moon. But whether the landing was a U.S. hoax or the lunar explorers mistakenly thought they had gone there is a matter we left open.

As for technology: Thanks to technology, King Kong climbed the Empire State Building, and Steven Spielberg's aliens and dinosaurs walk the earth. Thanks to technology, people see heaven on LSD, born men become lovely women, and political propaganda bewilders entire nations. Thanks to technology... Shall we go on?

By the way, speaking of the lunatic fringe, why do you suppose that the great conquerors of space, having spent billions to land on the moon, are now bypassing the moon and sending rockets off to Mars?

## More on the Moon

I truly believe we did go to the moon and have gathered scientific data about the moon. I could say it confidently because of my education (M.S. in physics and M.S. in electrical engineering).

What Śrīla Prabhupāda does not like is a heart, whether of a scientist or not, who does not know or love Kṛṣṇa.

There is no need to go to moon or Mars, Śrīla Prabhupāda says. There is a need to become Kṛṣṇa conscious first. As Kṛṣṇa consciousness spreads, particularly among the leaders of a society, the society will have fewer problems.

Suresh Vyas  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

## Questions from a Life Member

In July 1978, just sitting in my house, I picked up a book bought for me by my son. The book was about Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

# What Is the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement?

Founded in 1966 by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) carries on in the modern world a great ancient tradition rooted in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the teachings Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke five millenniums ago. The *Gītā* and the other Vedic scriptures declare Kṛṣṇa to be the original person, God Himself, who appears periodically in this world to liberate all living beings.

Only five hundred years ago, Kṛṣṇa descended as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to teach the most sublime and effective means of meditation for the present day: the chanting of the names of God, especially as found in the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

Today members of ISKCON continue Lord Caitanya's movement by distributing the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra all over the world.

## 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 **i** like the **i** in **pique**. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **ri** in **rim**, and **ṛ** like the **ch** in **chair**. Pronounce consonants like **ch**, **jh**, and **dh** as in **staunch-heart**, **hedgehog**, and **red-hot**. Pronounce **ś** and **ṣ** like **sh**. So for *Kṛṣṇa* say KRISHNA, 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.”

I read it and I was determined to read more. I went to the Hare Kṛṣṇa temple (Bhaktivedanta Manor), Letchmore Heath, for worship. I met some devotees there and they gave me some more books to read. These were *Teachings of Lord Caitanya* and *The Science of Self-Realization*. I read them both, which gave me a lot of strength to continue.

By my determination I became a life member of ISKCON in May 1982. The devotees of this society render commendable services to mankind. His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda has enlightened the whole world by writing his books. He is still present. We can always associate with him through his instructions. These books and instructions give me that association and salvation. I appreciate Śrīla Prabhupāda's writings and instructions from the core of my heart, as well as his high position in the spiritual world.

I am a retired person and strictly vegetarian, living with my wife. I have unshakable belief both in Sanātana-dharma and in vegetarianism. Some time ago I read about the Gaudiya Math, personalists and impersonalists and Māyāvādīs, what they are and their religious philosophy. I shall be very grateful if you could please put some light on this subject according to the Vedic scriptures.

Hari Verma

Southall, Middlesex, England

OUR REPLY: The Gaudiya Math was the spiritual society set up by Śrīla Prabhupāda's spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, to spread the teachings of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. After Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī left this world, the Gaudiya Math broke up into many smaller institutions, some of them still existing. Śrīla Prabhupāda later established the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, which is now spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world.

Impersonalists, or Māyāvādīs, are philosophers who believe that the

Absolute Truth is ultimately impersonal or void. All variety, they say, is but illusion (although they cannot clearly say where that illusion has its source). The personalist philosophers, in contrast, are those who recognize that everything—material variety, illusion itself, spiritual oneness, and spiritual variety—has its source in the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

## Praises

I can fill up several e-mail letters praising BTG magazine. It always was a first-class publication, and the new format is superb. Everyone I know is impressed by it. In particular I have enjoyed the articles on holy places in India, and the ongoing series of translations of the *Mahābhārata* is absolutely delightful.

Sam Richardson  
via the Internet

## India First?

[In response to BTG's announcement that henceforward we're putting India first in our address list:] *Back to Godhead* is a magazine with a spiritual purpose. Once that purpose is achieved correctly by the reader or contributor, where BTG is printed or which center is listed first among many others around the world does not matter. Because the actual center of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is in our own individual hearts. It is a spiritual awareness. To think in terms of physical places is allowing our minds to be confined in a sense gratification, which is not the purpose why BTG was started.

Alfa B. Saam

Roermond, The Netherlands

OUR REPLY: Yes, the place for Kṛṣṇa consciousness is in our hearts. But when we're conscious of Kṛṣṇa, we also become conscious of the sacred places where Kṛṣṇa appeared and performed His pastimes. As Kṛṣṇa is spiritual, so too are the places

(please turn to page 28)



# WHO IS LORD CAITANYA?

*Understanding His position in the light of scripture  
and the teachings of previous spiritual masters.*

...

A lecture given in Māyāpur, West Bengal, on March 2, 1974

by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

*jaya jaya mahāprabhu śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya  
tānhāra caraṇāśrita sei baḍa dhanya*

“Let me offer glorification to the Supreme Lord, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. One who has taken shelter of His lotus feet is the most glorified person.”

—Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 7.2

ŚRĪ KṚṢṆA CAITANYA is Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī spoke this verse:

*namo mahā-vadānyāya  
kṛṣṇa-prema-pradāya te  
kṛṣṇāya kṛṣṇa-caitanya-  
nāmne gaura-tviṣe namaḥ*

“O most munificent incarnation! You are Kṛṣṇa Himself appearing as Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu. You have assumed the golden color of Śrī-

matī Rādhārāṇī [Lord Kṛṣṇa’s internal energy], and You are widely distributing pure love of Kṛṣṇa. We offer our respectful obeisances unto You.”

Lord Caitanya is Kṛṣṇa Himself. In this age, known as Kali-yuga, Kṛṣṇa’s direct incarnation is Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. This is also confirmed throughout the Vedic literature—*Mahābhārata*, *Purāṇas*, *Upaniṣads*. The essence of all Vedic literature is the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and there also Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is accepted as the Supreme Lord:

*kṛṣṇa-varnaṁ tviṣākṛṣṇaṁ  
sāṅgopāṅgāstra-pārṣadam  
yajñair saṅkirtana-prāyair  
yajanti hi su-medhasaḥ*

The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* says that in the Kali-yuga the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa has a bodily complexion that is *akṛṣṇa*, “not *kṛṣṇa*.” The Sanskrit word

Painting by Rāmadāsa-Abhirāma Dāsa

# The perfection of human life is possible by the mercy of guru and Kṛṣṇa.



*kṛṣṇa* means “black.” In the *sāstra*, the scriptures, it is said that Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, appears in the four *yugas*, or ages, in four different colors:

*āsan varṇās trayo hy asya  
grhṇato 'nuyugam tanūḥ  
śuklo raktas tathā pītaḥ  
idānīm kṛṣṇataṁ gataḥ*

“Your son Kṛṣṇa appears as an incarnation in every millennium. In the past He assumed three colors—white, red, and yellow—and now He has appeared in a blackish color.” This verse was spoken by the learned *brāhmaṇa* Gargamuni during Kṛṣṇa’s name-giving ceremony. In the Vedic culture, as soon as a child is born his horoscope is made and his past and future are calculated. Today, because of poverty and other reasons, practically no one does this. But this is one of the *saṁskāras*, or purifying rituals for human life. At conception there is the *garbhādhāna saṁskāra*, while the child is within the womb there is a *saṁskāra*, and so on. In this way a human body is purified by ten kinds of *saṁskāras*, or purificatory methods.

It is said, *janmanā jāyate sūdraḥ saṁskārād bhaved dvija*: “Everyone is born a *śudra*, a member of the unpurified caste, but by *saṁskāra* one becomes twice-born, or a *brāhmaṇa*.”

Everyone is born from a father and a mother. Even cats and dogs have a father and a mother. Any life you get, there is a father and a mother. Therefore the *Prema-vivarta* says:

*janame janame sabe pitā-mātā pāya  
kṛṣṇa guru nahi mile bhaja hari ei*

“In every birth you’ll get a father and a mother. But in every birth you cannot get Kṛṣṇa or a bona fide spiritual master.” The perfection of human life is possible by the mercy of guru and Kṛṣṇa. And that mercy can be achieved

in the human form of life, not in the life of cats and dogs.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is acting as both guru and Kṛṣṇa, or as the combination of the two. Kavirāja Gosvāmī, the author of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, first offered his obeisances to Lord Caitanya in the first verse of this chapter (*agaty-eka-gatiṁ natvā . . .*). After offering obeisances to the Supreme Lord, “the only hope for the hopeless,” now the author is again offering obeisances with the second verse: *jaya jaya mahāprabhu śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya*.

## PRABHU AND MAHĀPRABHU

Nityānanda Prabhu, Advaita Prabhu—any Vaiṣṇava, or devotee of the Lord, is addressed as *prabhu* (“Lord” or “master”). But Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Mahāprabhu, the “topmost *prabhu*, the master *prabhu*.” All others are servant *prabhus*. For example, if you work in an office, you may consider your immediate boss your master, but he’s not the master. The managing director or the proprietor is master of the office. But, still, those who work under him—“sub-*prabhus*”—are also called *prabhu*.

All Vaiṣṇavas should be addressed as “Prabhu.” That is the etiquette. But Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Mahāprabhu because He’s the greatest master.

*ekale īśvara kṛṣṇa āra saba bhṛtya  
yāre yaiche nācāya, se taiche kare nṛtya*

“Lord Kṛṣṇa alone is the supreme controller, and all others are His servants. They dance as He makes them do so.” We are simply dancing in the material world, trying to be the master. Everyone is trying. Everyone wants to exploit the resources of the material nature, to become the master. That is the struggle for existence. I am trying to become the master, and you are

trying to become the master, so there is a clash. I challenge you, “Why should you be the master?” And you challenge why I should be the master. That is going on. That is the nature of the material world. But if we accept that we are eternal servants and not the master, and that the master is Kṛṣṇa or Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, then our problems are solved.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has sung, *jīva kṛṣṇa dāsa ei viśvās korle to āra duḥkha nāi*: “If you just understand that the spirit soul is the eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa, you will never have any more sorrows.” That is the solution.

Everyone wants to become the master, the *prabhu*. You can become *prabhu*. That is not extraordinary. Some way or other we are *prabhus*. Suppose I am a family man. I am managing my family, my wife, my children, my servants, my subordinates, so I may be *prabhu*. In that sense I am a small *prabhu*. Similarly, everyone is *prabhu*. But there is the supreme *prabhu*, the *prabhu* of all *prabhus*. That Mahāprabhu is Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya. He’s Kṛṣṇa.

As it is stated in the *Brahma-saṁhitā*: *īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ*. *īśvara* means “ruler” or “controller.” All of us are more or less little controllers or rulers, but not the absolute ruler. The absolute ruler is Kṛṣṇa. Similarly, the absolute *prabhu*, master, is Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

## TAKING SHELTER OF MAHĀPRABHU

*Tānhāra caraṇāsṛita*: Everyone is *prabhu*, but when the *prabhu* takes shelter of the lotus feet of the Mahāprabhu, *sei baḍa dhanya*—the *prabhu* becomes glorified. Don’t remain satisfied being a *prabhu* of your wife, children, family, country, or this or that, but try to become the servant of Mahāprabhu. *Tānhāra caraṇāsṛita*. When you take shelter of the supreme *prabhu*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, then



your life is successful. *Sei baḍa dhanya*: you are glorified.

To become the servant of God, or Mahāprabhu, is very prestigious. It is not very easy to become the servant of Kṛṣṇa or Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu. So if one agrees to become the servant of the supreme *prabhu*, one's life is successful. *Sei baḍa dhanya*: he is glorified.

The Vaiṣṇava's principle is to come to the platform of eternal servitude—not to become the master, but to become servant of the master. That is perfect philosophy. *Gopī-bhartuḥ pada-kamalayoḥ dāsa-dāsānudāsaḥ*. The *brāhmaṇa* is thinking himself the master of the *kṣatriya* [warrior] or the *vaiśya* [merchant] or the *śūdra* [laborer]. The *sannyāsī* [renunciant] is thinking himself the master of the *vānaprastha* [retired person], the *gṛhastha* [householder], or the *brahmacārī* [celibate student]. Similarly, the head of the household is thinking himself the master, and the *kṣatriya* king is thinking he's the master. You are a master to some extent, but if you accept Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu or Śrī Kṛṣṇa as your master, your life is successful. That is the secret of success, as confirmed in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*:

*ataḥ pumbhir dvija-śreṣṭhā  
varṇāśrama-vibhāgaśaḥ  
svanuṣṭhitasya dharmasya  
saṁsiddhir hari-toṣaṇam*

“The highest perfection one can achieve by discharging the duties prescribed for one's own occupation according to caste divisions and orders of life is to please the Personality of Godhead.” Arjuna was a *kṣatriya*; his business was to fight. Why was he fighting the Battle of Kurukṣetra? To become the master of the kingdom. But he stayed eternally the servant of Kṛṣṇa. That is success. Don't be satisfied simply to be the master of your material position. Try to become the servant of the supreme; then you are successful.

Our mastership is relative; under certain conditions we become the master. But Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the master without any conditions. *Namo mahā-vadānyāya kṛṣṇa-prema-pradāya te*. Because He's the master, He can distribute Kṛṣṇa-*prema*, love of

Kṛṣṇa, very easily. Otherwise, Kṛṣṇa-*prema* is very difficult to attain. Even understanding Kṛṣṇa is very difficult.

*manuṣyānām sahasreṣu  
kaścīd yayati siddhaye  
yatatām api siddhānām  
kaścīn mām vetti tattvataḥ*

Out of many millions of persons, one may try to make his life successful, and out of many such persons who have become successful in understanding their constitutional position, one may understand Kṛṣṇa. One may understand; there is no surety. To understand Kṛṣṇa is a very, very difficult job.

*brahma-bhūtaḥ prasannātmā  
na śocati na kāṅkṣati  
samaḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu  
mad-bhaktiṁ labhate parām*

To understand Kṛṣṇa and to understand the service of Kṛṣṇa is very exalted. One has to become *brahma-bhūtaḥ*, completely liberated. Then one can understand how to render service to Kṛṣṇa, *mad-bhaktiṁ labhate parām*. But this difficult subject matter is given very easily by Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Therefore Rūpa Gosvāmī offered his first prayer to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu:

*namo mahā-vadānyāya  
kṛṣṇa-prema-pradāya te  
kṛṣṇāya kṛṣṇa-caitanya-  
nāmne gaura-tviṣe namaḥ*

“You are not only giving Kṛṣṇa, but You are giving Kṛṣṇa-*prema*, love of Kṛṣṇa.” You may meet an exalted person, but to have an intimate, loving relationship with an exalted person is

## CALENDAR CLOSE-UP

### Śrī Abhirāma Ṭhākura

Disappearance Day: April 19

Śrī Abhirāma Ṭhākura was a great devotee and associate of Lord Nityānanda Prabhu. He was so learned in the scriptures and such a powerful preacher that atheists would flee from him.

Śrī Abhirāma Ṭhākura lived in the village of Khanakula Krishnanagar, in what is now the Hooghly district of West Bengal. Lord Kṛṣṇa once told Abhirāma Ṭhākura in a dream that in a Deity form He was buried in Khanakula Krishnanagar. The next day Abhirāma and other villagers excavated the Deity of Gopīnātha and established His worship.

According to the authoritative book *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dipikā*, which reveals the eternal identity of the associates of Lord Caitanya, Śrī Abhirāma Ṭhākura is the cowherd boy Śrīdhāmā in Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. One day while absorbed in the mood of a cowherd boy, Abhirāma lifted a huge log, turned it into a flute, and played it.

Abhirāma Ṭhākura had a whip named Jaya Maṅgala, and anyone he would touch with the whip would be filled with love for Kṛṣṇa. One notable beneficiary of the mercy of Abhirāma and his whip was the great devotee Śrīnivāsa Ācārya.

When Lord Caitanya was residing at Jagannātha Purī, in Orissa, He ordered Lord Nityānanda to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness in Bengal, and He sent Abhirāma Ṭhākura and Gadādhara Dāsa with Him.

A great festival is held in Khanakula Krishnanagar each year on the disappearance day of Śrī Abhirāma Ṭhākura.

(Full calendar on page 63.)

# *We accept Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu as God on the authority of scripture and the ācāryas, our predecessor spiritual masters.*

• • •

not very easy. But Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu distributed love of Kṛṣṇa to anyone. That is Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu's contribution to human society. If you simply come under the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, then love of Kṛṣṇa is very easily achieved. To come under the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu means you have Kṛṣṇa. That is the verdict of the scripture and *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. Kṛṣṇa, Caitanya Mahāprabhu, does not give anything else. He directly gives you Kṛṣṇa and love of Kṛṣṇa.

## **GLORIOUS NAVADVĪPA**

To award this greatest benediction to human society, Caitanya Mahāprabhu took *sannyāsa*, the renounced order of life, at the age of twenty-four in this land of Māyāpur, Navadvīpa. It is a very glorified place. It is not an ordinary place. The Vaiṣṇava devotee and poet Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura says, *gauḍa maṇḍala bhūmi, yeba jane cintāmaṇi tara hoy vrajabhūme vāsa*. "Anyone who understands the spiritual value of Navadvīpa lives in Vrajabhūmi, Vṛndāvana—Lord Kṛṣṇa's land." There is no difference between Vṛndāvana and Navadvīpa, or Gauḍamaṇḍala-bhūmi. That is the verdict of the *śāstra*.

Read Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura's *Prārthanā* and Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *Prārthanā*. They are very, very valuable for advancement in spiritual understanding—especially Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura's *Prārthanā*. By reading them, by understanding them, we can understand Kṛṣṇa very easily. Otherwise, it is very, very difficult to understand Kṛṣṇa. Big, big scholars, big, big *sannyāsīs*—they cannot understand

Kṛṣṇa. They think Kṛṣṇa is like us— a very great man, a politician, a historical person. Or they think of Kṛṣṇa as a debauchee because He associated with the *gopīs*, the cowherd girls, or because He married sixteen thousand wives.

We shall be misled in understanding Kṛṣṇa if we try to do so by our own knowledge. We have to accept Kṛṣṇa through Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. And Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu advises everyone:

*āmāra ājñāya guru hañā tāra' ei deśa  
yāre dekha tāre kaha 'kṛṣṇa'-upadeśa*

"Instruct everyone to follow the orders of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa as they are given in the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. In this way become a spiritual master and try to liberate everyone in this land." Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Kṛṣṇa Himself. Because Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came as a human being, people have misunderstood Him to be a human being. But He's not human being; He's the master of the human beings.

Because we are part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa very kindly comes when we are distressed because of violating the laws of religion. *Yadā yadā hi dharmasya glānir bhavati. Dharmasya glāni* means "deviation from the path of religion." And what is religion? *Dharmaṁ tu sāksād bhagavat-praṇītam*. Religion means the laws of God. That is the simple definition of religion. The rules and regulations given by the Lord are called religion, just as the rules and regulations given by the state are called law. You cannot manufacture law. Similarly, you cannot manufacture dharma. Nowadays, in this Kali-yuga, rascals manufacture religion. But who cares for

that religion? Or what will be the benefit of such religion? There will be no benefit.

Today, so-called religious leaders even claim to be God. But Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu never manufactured religion, and to set the example He never said, "I am Kṛṣṇa." Rather, when He was in Vṛndāvana some of the devotees praised Him: "You are Kṛṣṇa." He blocked His ears: "No, no. Don't say that," indicating that to claim to become God or Kṛṣṇa is the highest type of rascaldom.

Some Māyāvādīs, or impersonalists, claim, "Everyone is God. I am God, you are God." They are all rascals. We do not accept such cheap "Gods." No. We accept Kṛṣṇa. And we accept Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu as God on the authority of *śāstra* and the *ācāryas*, our predecessor spiritual masters. We follow in the footsteps of the *ācāryas*. Rūpa Gosvāmī says, *kṛṣṇāya kṛṣṇa-caitanya-nāmnē*: "Sir, You are Kṛṣṇa. You have come under the name of Kṛṣṇa Caitanya. You are so magnanimous that You are distributing love of Kṛṣṇa."

Without being Kṛṣṇa, how can one distribute Kṛṣṇa? Without being a millionaire, how can one distribute millions of dollars? Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu is so magnanimous that He is distributing Kṛṣṇa. So take shelter of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

You have come from distant places. You have spent much money to come here. Take advantage of this journey and chant *śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya prabhu-nityānanda śrī-advaita gadādhara śrīvāsādi-gaura-bhakta-vṛnda*. Then you'll get Kṛṣṇa, surely. This land is Caitanya Mahāprabhu's birthplace. Anyone who takes shelter of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu is glorified.

Thank you very much. 🌸



# Japa as Meditation

by Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami

**S**ĀRVABHAUMA Bhaṭṭācārya had been a famous logician and teacher of the impersonal path, and his conversion to Vaiṣṇavism is chronicled in several chapters of the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. It is said of Sārvabhauma after his conversion, “He did not know anything but the service of the Lord, and he always chanted the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya . . . . Indeed, chanting the holy names became his meditation.”

Meditation is the seventh stage in the eightfold mystic yoga system by which one gradually learns to sit still, control the breath, withdraw the senses from the world, fix the mind on one point, and eventually attain full concentration on the object of meditation. Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya attained that stage by concentrating on the Lord’s holy names.

In Western countries, “meditation” has become a buzzword. In the 1960s the only meditation that people discussed was “Transcendental Meditation,” by which one could purchase a mantra and meditate on it twice a day. Now many other forms of meditation and “mindfulness” are popular both in Christian and non-Christian traditions. People meditate for a short time each day to relieve stress and augment health. Śrīla Prabhupāda said that serious yoga practice aimed at a spiritual goal is far too difficult in this age of distraction. Real meditation is full time.

For those who chant the holy names, hearing *japa* (private chanting on beads) described as “meditation” may sound distasteful when considered alongside the other processes practiced these days, but *japa* is meditation, and to achieve the result we must do it with attention.

Meditation involves controlling

the mind, and that’s difficult, as anyone who has tried to chant realizes quickly. Therefore, we sometimes wonder whether it is necessary or helpful to study meditation techniques and bring them into our own practice.

Śrīla Prabhupāda didn’t think so. Whenever devotees asked him how to concentrate on the holy name, he responded simply: “Just hear.”

“But what about my mind?”  
“Just hear.”

Prabhupāda knew that by chanting we would learn how to chant; the holy name itself would teach us. The *Bhagavad-gītā* assigns the path: “From wherever the mind wanders due to its flickering and unsteady nature, one must certainly withdraw it and bring it back under the control of the self.”

Therefore, in the name of disinterest in other forms of meditation, we shouldn’t abandon the practices common to all forms. We should begin our daily *japa* by calming the mind. We should chant our rounds (of beads) in a sacred space and control the breath by the chanting. We should fix the mind on the syllables of the holy name. We should maintain good posture. In the early days at 26 Second Avenue in New York City, we would sit slouched over as Śrīla Prabhupāda gave his morning class. Once he stopped his lecture and asked us to sit straight. Although bhakti-yoga does not involve sitting postures and breathing exercises, he said, it is still yoga.

With the aid of these basic components of meditation, we can learn to become prayerful in our approach to the holy name. Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya was able to chant with no other thought than the name and

Lord Caitanya’s mercy.

Our biggest obstacles to chanting are indifference to the holy name and distraction. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura addresses these points in his *Harināma Cintāmaṇi*, suggesting that we chant in the company of devotees focused on the holy name. By learning to emulate their mood, we will learn to concentrate. He also suggests we chant in a secluded place. By accepting the discipline of a vow to chant, we will be forced to fix our attention. Gradually we will move from an hour spent chanting to two hours to four hours, and eventually we will chant constantly.

And enthusiasm is vital. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura states: “Those who chant distractedly are always eager to somehow complete the fixed number of holy names and be done with it. It is important to concentrate on the quality of the chanting and not on trying to artificially increase the number of holy names.”

He adds that we should utter and hear the name distinctly. It is only by the Lord’s mercy that distraction can be overcome. “Therefore it is essential to fervently beg for the Lord’s grace with great humility. This is the living entity’s only means of salvation.”

Ultimately, our success in chanting will come from Kṛṣṇa’s mercy, but while awaiting that mercy, we can continue to chant with enthusiasm and concentration and, as far as we are able, make the holy name the central focus of our lives.

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



## COOKING CLASS—LESSON 34

## The Burfi Family—Milk Fudges

by Yamuna Devi

WHILE BENGALI MILK sweets such as *sandēśa* and *rasgullā* are made with *chenna* cheese (milk curds), milk sweets of northern India are made with *khoa*, milk boiled down to a fudgelike consistency. Add sugar to *khoa*, and you have classic plain *burfi*. Other enduring varieties of *burfi* are almond, cashew, pistachio, coconut, squash, and carrot.

Today, most *burfi* found in Indian sweet shops is not made with true *khoa*, but with quick or instant mock *khoa* made by blending powdered milk with water, milk, or cream. *Burfi* made like this may look like the real thing, but its taste and texture fall far short.

In home kitchens, the ratio of sugar to *khoa* in *burfi* varies from region to region. The recipes in the class textbook, *Lord Krishna's Cuisine*, call for a small amount of sugar, showcasing the caramelized lactose sugars that intensify in flavor as the milk is reduced to a fudge. Add more as you please.

**Perā**

In the late 1960s, *perā* was one of the first sweets in the *burfi* family Śrīla Prabhupāda taught his disciples

to make. In 1969 he taught a few of us how to make a Vṛndāvana sweet called Vṛndāvana Perā—melt-in-your-mouth milk-fudge balls rolled in sugar crystals. The recipe for it is on page 628 in the class textbook.

If you are following this cooking-class series, make a few batches of *perās* using different types of sugar, such as fructose, Sucanat, brown sugar, date sugar, turbinado sugar, Florida Crystals, maple sugar crystals, or a local sugar used in your part of the world. Find the types you most want to use in the service of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

**Kitchen Practice**

To cook down milk to make *khoa*, the basis of *burfi*, takes time. So while making *khoa*, concentrate on the holy name. Listen to a tape of Kṛṣṇa conscious music or discourse. Watch the milk as it boils, and listen to the whisper of sound it makes in different stages of reduction. Relish the cooking, and think of pleasing the senses of the Lord. Think purity, quality, and cleanliness.

*Yamuna Devi is the author of the award-winning cookbooks Lord*

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

**DOUBLE-GINGER PERĀ**

(Makes 1 dozen pieces)

1-inch piece fresh ginger, scraped  
3 cups milk  
2½ cups (600 ml) cream  
1½ tablespoons (22 ml) minced stem ginger or minced candied ginger  
⅔ cup (160 ml) sugar, preferably unrefined

Finely grate the ginger, taking care to collect all of the liquid and fibers in a bowl. Transfer both the liquid and the fibers to a piece of cotton and wring out into a bowl as much ginger juice as possible.

Pour the milk and cream into a large nonstick pan and place over high heat. Stirring constantly, bring to a boil and cook until the milk and cream are reduced to a thick cream sauce. Add the ginger juice, the stem or candied ginger, and the sugar. Reduce the heat to moderate.

Stirring constantly, cook until the mass pulls away from the sides of the pan and holds its shape. Transfer to another pan or a tray and cool to room temperature. Divide into 12 pieces, roll into balls, and offer to Lord Krishna.

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# Solace for All

compiled by Navina Nirada Dāsa

**H**ERE ARE SOME experiences and realizations of devotees who give people Kṛṣṇa consciousness by giving them books by Śrīla Prabhupāda and his followers.

## Death Wish Stopped

Once I was distributing Śrīla Prabhupāda's books in a small city in Belgium, and I met a woman who listened very emotionally as I showed her a book. She told me she didn't need the book, because she had just bought some pills in the pharmacy (she showed them to me) and was on her way home to take them all at once and end her life.

Shocked, I asked her why. She said her husband had died and she couldn't live without him. I told her about reincarnation, and I explained that committing suicide would not solve her problems. I said that this knowledge was in Śrīla Prabhupāda's books and they would be a great help and shelter for her.

She decided to read the book before taking the pills and asked me to come to her house so that she could pay for the book. After she had invited me to sit down, we started a conversation. She showed me photographs of her husband, and to my amazement I came across some pictures of she and her husband visiting Radhadesh [the main Hare Kṛṣṇa center in Belgium] during a marriage ceremony.

I said, "Hey! That's where I live! And the girl getting married there is my friend, and she's also here in town right now."

I went to get my devotee friend. As we spoke with the woman, she gradually became more and more enthusiastic and bought all five books we had with us. She promised us she

was going to throw the pills away, read the books thoroughly, and keep contact with the devotees.

She kept her promise. Now she often visits the temple, and she opens her house for any devotee who wants to stay overnight or distribute books from there.

Hārāprāṇā Devī Dāsī  
Radhadesh, Belgium

## Pleasant Dreams

I met a woman in Dingolfing, Germany, who at first wasn't interested in the books but then revealed she was very disturbed because her husband had recently died. I showed her a copy of Śrīla Prabhupāda's *Second Chance*. After looking at the cover, she became thoughtful and looked at me, pondering whether or not she should tell me her problem.

She told me that her husband had been very cruel but she was such a faithful wife that even when he became terminally ill she nursed him until death. After his death she started having terrible dreams and then visions. She was regularly terrorized by his ghost. She had never believed in ghosts, but now she knew they exist.

I gave her three big books, and since we were right next to my van, I also gave her a copy of *Reincarnation*, a German book by Rāja-vidyā Dāsa.

About a year later I met her at the same shopping center. She told me she had become convinced by the books and when she started reading them in her room, her husband stopped visiting.

She was very grateful, only lamenting that since reading the books, she could no longer relate to

her mundane friends and their trivial talks in the workplace.

Bhaktavatsala Dāsa  
Nava-jīyaḍa-nṛsimha-kṣetra,  
Germany

## Joyful Reunion

A few years ago in Norway I approached a woman in a parked car. She rolled down the window, and I handed her a book. On seeing the book, her face lit up and tears came to her eyes. She was so emotional she couldn't speak for a few moments but just swayed back and forth.

She then told me that twenty years ago she and her son had seen a group of devotees chanting in San Francisco. She was captured by the rhythms and the atmosphere of the chanting party, and without wanting to, she started to dance to the beat and couldn't stop.

Her son tried to stop her. "Ma, what are you doing?"

After a while a devotee went over to her and gave her a book. Now, on meeting me and seeing the same type of book she'd received twenty years ago, she felt the same ecstasy again. As she was relating the story, she demonstrated the dancing. She bought two more books, and I went away thinking, "When will the day come when I will appreciate Śrīla Prabhupāda's books as she has—with joyful tears coming to my eyes upon receiving such a treasure."

Tapasa Dāsa  
Stockholm

*Navina Nirada Dāsa, a disciple of Harikeśa Swami, has been a leading book distributor for many years. He heads ISKCON's book distribution ministry and travels worldwide to train and inspire book distributors.*



# Spiritual Holidays

by Ūrmilā Devī Dāsī

**HOLIDAYS!** A break from routine, a special mark on the calendar, a day that can absorb a child's mind for weeks or more beforehand. Holidays connected with Lord Kṛṣṇa help children become absorbed in pleasing Him. The calendar of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement overflows with days to celebrate. Major festivals commemorate the divine birth, or appearance, of Kṛṣṇa and His incarnations. Other festivals celebrate Kṛṣṇa's pastimes and the anniversaries of the appearance and passing of pure devotees of the Lord.

Unfortunately, we might neglect to take full advantage of the intense spiritual effect Kṛṣṇa conscious holidays can have on a child's life. On minor festival days, the occasion may pass by unnoticed, or there may be only a scriptural reading geared to an adult audience. Adults may even plan events mostly for adults. Children come to the adult gathering, but they simply learn that a holiday means being bored, or running and playing wildly.

How can our children find the spiritual highlights of their lives in festivals?

**PLAYS:** Putting on a play about the holiday is exciting for children. They love rehearsing, dressing up, and getting on stage. And they love pleasing the adults, who enjoy the plays in spite of (and to some extent because of) the imperfections. Older children can spend many weeks striving for professional results. They can also write or adapt a script, buy costumes and make-up, create the soundtrack, and so on.

Children can also prepare a dramatic reading related to the holiday. Such readings require far less work

for the adults directing the show, and absorb the children's minds almost as much as a full production.

**PROJECTS:** Every year at the Govardhana Pūjā festival, honoring Lord Kṛṣṇa's lifting of Govardhana Hill, our students make a small hill of papier mâché over wire and balloons. We paint it and decorate it with plants, streams, pools, plastic or clay animals, and so on. (We make the pools from mirrors and the streams from tinsel over tin foil). One year, to celebrate Rathayātrā each student made his or her own cart from a shoe box and cardboard. We've also made dioramas inside boxes. A simple one- or two-day project: writing about the festival and then mounting and decorating the poem or essay.

**GAMES:** To celebrate the appearance of Lord Varāha, the Lord as a giant boar who lifted the earth with His tusks, the children play "stick the earth on Varāha's tusks." Some years we have groups of students make a picture of Varāha and the earth and then play the game with the best picture. Last year our grown daughter drew Varāha, and the students competed for the best earth drawing. Then, blindfolded, each of us tried to tape the earth as close as possible to the tips of the Lord's tusks. A simple prize awaited the winner.

**KĪRTANAS:** Children love singing "Sītā-Rāma" on Lord Rāma's appearance day, or whatever songs and prayers relate to the incarnation or event we are celebrating. Sometimes we make copies of a song in Devanagari, the original Sanskrit alphabet, to have the children practice their Sanskrit while they learn the prayer.

**STORIES:** What is more fun for a child than a story? But so often we

adults just read, without expression or explanation, from a book written for adults. If we dramatize a little, have lively questions and answers, and concentrate on the story line, children will be entranced. Today we also have many Kṛṣṇa conscious stories on audio and video tape.

**CHILDREN HELPING ADULTS:** Children can decorate the temple, help with cooking a feast, and do extra cleaning at home or at the temple. If they worship a Deity of the Lord, they can make Him a special flower garland or a new outfit, or decorate His altar with flowers. Older children can help in many ways at the temple.

**FASTING:** Fasting may not sound like fun for a child, but most children delight in performing some austerity for Kṛṣṇa. Many festival days call for fasting, either until noon or the evening. I generally ask children under age seven to eat, even if they want to fast. I encourage children over ten to try the fast, and I have *prasādam* available if they can't stick to it. Children remember with fondness the first Janmāṣṭamī they fasted until midnight.

**GENERAL MOOD:** We can find many more ways to include children in holidays. The real key is the mood of the adults. We need to remember that celebrating the glory of the Lord is for children too.

In the next issue, we'll look at celebrating secular holidays.

*Ūrmilā Devī Dāsī and her family run a school in North Carolina. She is the major author and compiler of Vaikuṅṭha Children, a guide to Kṛṣṇa conscious education for children.*



## Māyā Writes the Script

by Hare Kṛṣṇa Devī Dāsī

**M**AINE YANKEE, our state's nuclear power plant, is going to shut down. Unsafe, they say.

Thirty or forty years ago harnessing “the peaceful power of the atom” was the promise of the future. Promoters claimed, “Nuclear power’s going to be so cheap they won’t even have to bill you for it.” But thirty years later the dream is over. We’re not independent; we’ve been dependent on Maine Yankee. Cheap electricity? You call a \$200-a-month electricity bill—for an apartment—cheap? And clean? Luckily, they’re shutting down the plant before we have a Chernobyl-style meltdown. Now all we have to worry about is thousands of years of radioactive waste.

It wasn’t supposed to be like this. Somehow our great breakthroughs in energy technology always end up causing unexpected trouble. Take petroleum. It was supposed to provide cheap, reliable energy. But then we discovered that supplies were limited and those who controlled the supplies raised prices.

Our solution: develop other sources of petroleum. Experts have determined that Azerbaijan has enough oil to meet the entire energy needs of the United States for thirty years or more. So now we have no more problems with our petroleum supply—or do we?

For starters, what about shipping it? *The New York Times* (September 21, 1997) says, “Depending on where the lines are laid, power over the West’s energy supply may fall to Chechen rebels, irredentist Armenians, government-connected cliques of Russian or Turkish gangsters, Iranian mullahs, Kurdish guerrillas or mercurial chieftains of the Avars,

Lezgins, Swanetians and other Caucasian ethnic groups that nurse ancient grievances of which the outside world knows almost nothing.” It’s a front-page article subtitled “Pipe Dreams.”

In fact our plans to live luxuriously on cheap energy are pipe dreams, fantasies. They are like movies—only you could never sell a movie with a plot like that to any Hollywood director. “Too complicated. No one would believe it. The script is too complex.” But there it is, too complicated or not.

The scriptwriter is Māyā Devī, the embodiment of the Lord’s external energy. She controls all material activities, and she’s a great artist. Some artists use many themes in their work. Others present the same theme again and again in an endless variety of ways. That’s what Māyā does. Her theme: You can try to enjoy in this world, but you can’t win. There will always be a snare. Better to give up trying and surrender to Kṛṣṇa.

Our technical solutions come and go, but Māyā always writes her script on the same basic plot line: First comes great hope for material progress. That develops for some time at the cost of immense energy and struggle. Finally the “progress” breaks down, causing great distress. If you know the basic script, seeing what’s going to happen next is easy.

Māyā’s plots are always the same. Take the latest energy solution: fuel cells. Clean energy, no problem. Hydrogen and oxygen unite creating energy. Byproduct: water. So, no problem, right? But where do we get the ingredients? We can get oxygen from the air, but hydrogen must be “reformed” from another substance.

It turns out the most practical substance for the base fuel is gasoline. “We already have gasoline everywhere,” said scientist Matthew L. Wald. “If you can actually reform gasoline, to give you hydrogen, that would be ideal. The infrastructure is already there.” And where will the petroleum for gasoline come from? Try Azerbaijan. You can chalk out the rest of the plot.

Śrīla Prabhupāda explains it in a nutshell: “We are trying to exploit the resources of material nature, but actually we are becoming more and more entangled in her complexities. Therefore, although we are engaged in a hard struggle to conquer nature, we are ever more dependent on her.”

Isn’t there any way out of this?

Śrīla Prabhupāda explains that, too, “This illusory struggle against material nature can be stopped at once by revival of our eternal Kṛṣṇa consciousness.” Kṛṣṇa consciousness means acting in harmony with Kṛṣṇa’s plan. Kṛṣṇa’s arrangement for human beings is simple living and high thinking. He has given us the bull to provide transportation and to help us produce our food so that our spiritual life does not have to be distracted by worrying about international trade relations or high-level politics.

So it’s really our choice. Should society start taking steps towards simple living and high thinking, or should we keep on the path of complicated living and low thinking? Should we try to mold our lives to Kṛṣṇa’s plan, or should we keep letting Māyā write the script?

*Hare Kṛṣṇa Devī Dāsī, an ISKCON devotee since 1978, is co-editor of the newsletter Hare Kṛṣṇa Rural Life.*

# NEAR D WHILE OUT

*Devotees are ready to take risks to assist the Lord in His mission.*

by Locanānanda Dāsa

ALL GLORIES TO Śrī Kṛṣṇa *saṅkīrtana*, the chanting of the holy names of the Lord,” Yajña Puruṣa Dāsa and I recite as the D train makes its way toward midtown Manhattan. “*Saṅkīrtana* cleanses the heart of all the dust accumulated for years . . .”

We’re leading a party of twenty-five enthusiastic devotees to Fifth Avenue, where Lord Jagannātha’s Rathayātrā parade will take place in just a few days. More and more devotees have been arriving daily from all over the country to attend the festival, and our *kīrtana* party is becoming more powerful and impressive. Jaded New Yorkers who have “seen it all” cannot help but notice our ecstatic chanting and dancing. The holy name is entering their hearts.

I joined the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in Paris, France, in 1970, and from the beginning I loved street *saṅkīrtana*—going out with devotees to chant in public. Being in our early twenties, we could go out all day long to chant, dance, and tell others about Kṛṣṇa, without feeling the least bit tired. Our enthusiasm for *saṅkīrtana* was irrepressible, and when we tasted the sweetness of the holy name, we knew



Yamaraṅga Dāsa

Locanānanda Dāsa leads the chanting at a New York City Rathayātrā parade.



# EATH CHANTING

we'd been favored by Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Most important, by performing this *yajña*, or sacrifice, despite adversity, we were assisting our spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, in his mission to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the world.

Now, twenty-seven years later, we're out for street *saṅkīrtana* in America. As our chanting party rises out of the subway into the midday sun, we form two lines before heading to the front of the public library at 42nd Street and Fifth Avenue. Despite the ninety-degree heat, we dance with abandon and loudly chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra for all to hear.

After about an hour, a policeman tells us we've been chanting in a "quiet zone" (in midtown Manhattan?) and should move up the street. So we head north across 42nd Street. It's my turn to pass out books, and I decide to first get a drink at the water fountain in Bryant Park, next to the library.

My thirst quenched, I start to rejoin the devotees, but a businessman seated in the park on a green folding chair calls me over. He asks some philosophical questions, and I'm happy to answer from what I've learned from Śrīla Prabhupāda's books.

Suddenly, I'm feeling sick, light-headed. Fearing I might have heat stroke, I excuse myself from our conversation. The businessman offers me his chair, accepts a booklet on the teachings of Prahāda Mahārāja and an invitation to Rathayātrā, and then

***"I'm clutching my beads, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa to myself, and wishing that by Kṛṣṇa's grace some devotee might come by and help me out."***

leaves the park.

I sit down, but there's no relief. Soon I'm kneeling on the pavement trying to get comfortable. I don't have the strength or balance to rise to my feet.

Now I'm lying on the stone, and a policeman orders me to lie on the grass like everyone else. I stumble over to the wide lawn, but the sun makes me feel worse, so I move over to a shaded area and lie down on some matted vines. It's cool, and I start to feel a little better, but within a moment a gardener rushes over to me holding a sign he has pulled from the ground. It reads, "Do Not Lie on the Vines."

Another policeman comes over to order me off the vines and onto a bench. I comply, and a sympathetic woman offers me something to drink, assuming I might be diabetic. I thank

her with a Prahāda pamphlet.

Now I'm feeling so alarmingly bad, I ask someone to have the policeman call an ambulance. Disgusted as I lie on the stone path amid cigarette butts and other filth, I begin to think of the *saṅkīrtana* party, wondering if they will soon return this way. I hope to hear the sound of cymbals at any moment.

Several policemen are standing around me now. I'm clutching my beads, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa to myself, and wishing that by Kṛṣṇa's grace some devotee might come by and help me out.

I overhear a conversation between a policeman and a passerby:

"Do you know this person?"

"Yes. He's from our temple."

"Where's your temple?"

"At 305 Schermerhorn Street in Brooklyn."

I look up and see a devotee standing over me. I've never seen him before. He just happened to be passing through the park.

"Are you leaving your body or something?" he asks. "The best thing to do is just chant Hare Kṛṣṇa."

Introducing himself as Indranuja Dāsa, he sits next to me, and we chant together, waiting for the ambulance to arrive.

I think, "Kṛṣṇa is so kind that He has sent this nice devotee to help me prepare to go back to Godhead."

But then my material attachments start to hit me. "If I'm leaving my body," I think, "I'll be losing the association

of my friends and family.”

Anxiously, I begin to consider the pastime of Bharata Mahārāja, whose path back to Godhead was blocked by his attachment to a deer, which he remembered affectionately at the time of death.

“If death is taking me now,” I think, “I have to fix my mind on Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.”

I picture the temple’s Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Deities wearing a beautiful red and black outfit with jewels and gold trim. As I remember Kṛṣṇa in this way, tears fill my eyes. My life is now completely in Kṛṣṇa’s hands, and if Kṛṣṇa desires, I can leave my body at any moment.

## THE DIAGNOSIS

The ambulance finally arrives, and Indranuja comes with me to the hospital. The doctors and nurses all want to know why a man my age is chanting and dancing on Fifth Avenue. I tell them Lord Caitanya wants us to spread love of God in this way.

“You’re having a heart attack,” one of the doctors says. “It runs in your family, but if you agree we can perform a

procedure right now to save your life.”

As they describe the details of catheterization and angioplasty, Indranuja Prabhu passes out. With no time to waste, I sign the release. I’m quickly wheeled into the operating room, where the procedure is to be performed.

In angioplasty, a probe enters the coronary arteries and chambers of the heart, releasing dyes that can be monitored on a TV screen. As expert as the doctors at Bellevue Hospital are, they have no information about the invisible soul residing in the region of the heart. Their knowledge is limited to auricles and ventricles.

Forced to lie motionless on my back for more than two hours, I softly chant the mahā-mantra on my beads. At one point the pain in my chest is so excruciating that a nurse has to give me a massive dose of morphine just so I can breathe. I feel like I’m having a second heart attack right on the operating table.

By the time I’m on a bed in the intensive care unit, I realize that not only did I not go back to Godhead, but instead I’m forced to endure a severe karmic reaction for some sinful activity. Or perhaps it’s Kṛṣṇa’s mercy to

make me more serious about spiritual life. Either way, I’m determined to get back to spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness as soon as I’m well enough. I want to continue to fulfill the order of my spiritual master to chant, dance, become purified, and engage others in the *saṅkīrtana* movement, which is meant to uplift all of human society.

## SURE DESTINATION

Lord Caitanya predicted that the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra would be chanted in every town and village in the world. Echoing that prediction, Śrīla Prabhupāda has written, “In all the cities, towns, and villages on the earth, from all the oceans, seas, rivers, and streams, everyone will chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa.” In a mood of pure devotion Śrīla Prabhupāda prayed to the lotus feet of the Lord: “As the vast mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu conquers all directions, a flood of transcendental ecstasy will certainly cover the land. When all the sinful, miserable living entities become happy, the Vaiṣṇavas’ desire is then fulfilled.”

The more one is dedicated to the *saṅkīrtana* movement, the more one may be called upon to take risks for the mission of the spiritual master. One may even have to put one’s very life on the line. Being prepared to sacrifice everything to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness guarantees that at the moment of death we will go back home, back to Godhead. We don’t have to worry about our next destination. By Kṛṣṇa’s arrangement we’ll give up our useless material bodies under the most auspicious conditions and return to the spiritual world. Not forgetting the service we have rendered to Him in this lifetime, the Lord will enter our minds to steady our meditation on His lotus feet and draw us into the eternally blissful association of pure devotees engaged in His loving service. When we take every opportunity to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness and discuss topics of Kṛṣṇa, we will never have to fear coming back to this temporary world of flickering happiness. ❁

*Locanānanda Dāsa regularly leads out chanting parties in New York City, where he has been living since 1982.*

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# Śrīla Prabhupāda Speaks Out

“We Are Offering, ‘Here Is God.’”

*During a morning walk in Los Angeles on June 25, 1975, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami speaks on the value of Kṛṣṇa consciousness with Dr. J. Stillson Judah, then of the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California.*

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Neither the theosophist nor the theologian has a clear idea of God. Do you agree?

**Dr. Judah:** I would make a distinction between *knowing* God and *knowing about* God. There is knowledge about God in various books, but one does not know God unless one somehow experiences God. I feel that this is the one thing the bhakti movement of Śrī Caitanya has done: it has allowed its devotees to experience God, to know Him personally in a way that changes their lives.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That is the Vedic civilization.

**Dr. Judah:** Yes.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** *Na te viduḥ svārtha-gatiṁ hi viṣṇum.* Materialistic persons do not know Viṣṇu, or God, nor do they know that the ultimate goal of life is to know Viṣṇu. That knowledge is essential to human life. But it is missing. People do not care to know the ultimate goal of human life. That is their defect. Nobody cares to know, especially in this age.

So that is the defeat of human civilization. They have come to the human form of life. Now they must know what God is. Otherwise, it is defeat.

**Dr. Judah:** That’s true.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** The opportunity is given by nature, which grants the human being good consciousness to know God, Viṣṇu. Now, practically, especially in the Western world, no one can say what is God.

**Dr. Judah:** That is quite true.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** So, if we are offering, “Here is God,” why do they not accept? What is the objection?

**Dr. Judah:** I think the great problem in the Western world is that it has always been involved in materialism.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That means the people don’t want to know God. That is a very horrible condition.

**Dr. Judah:** That’s true.

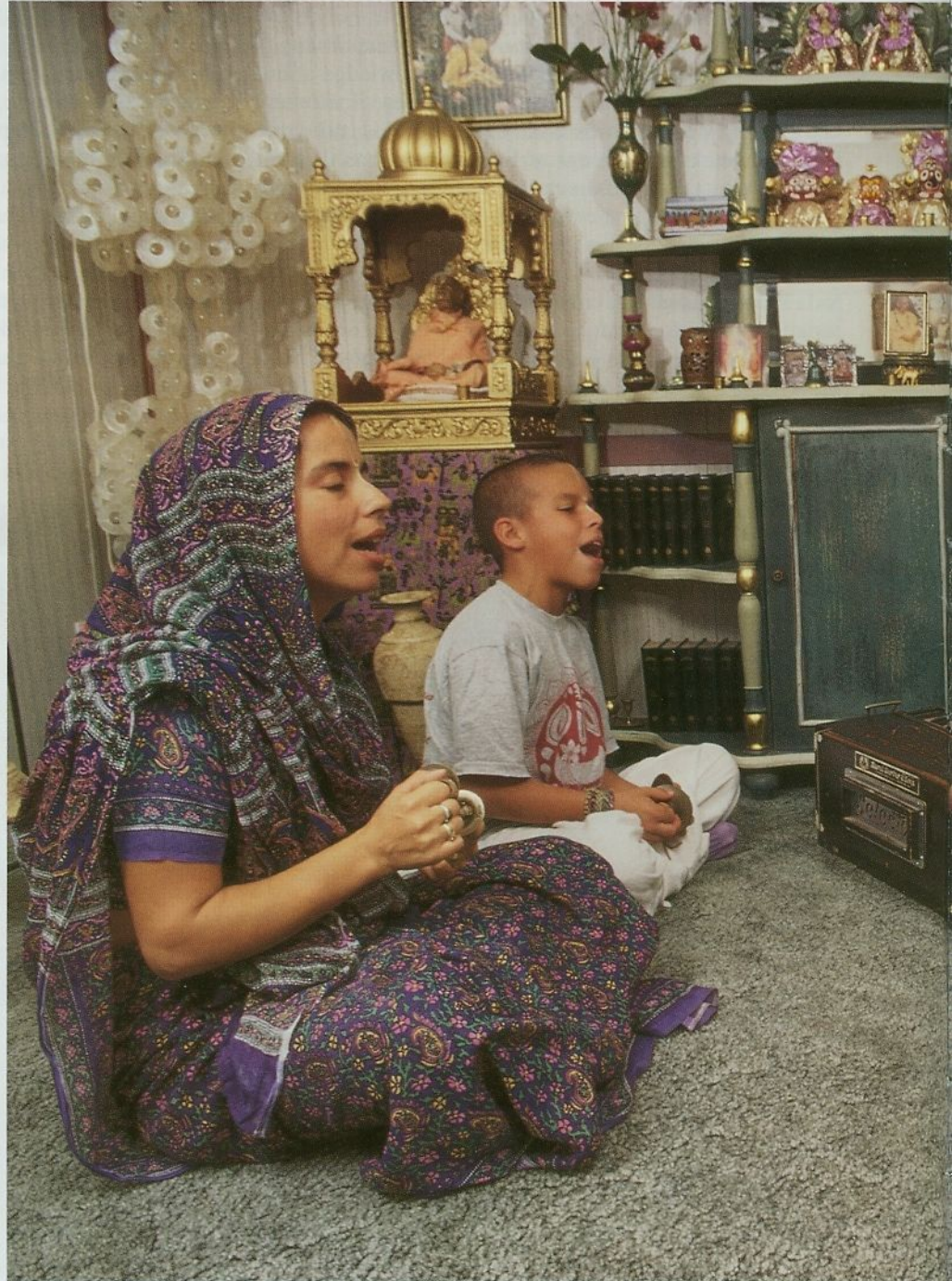
**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Not only horrible—it is the animals’ condition. People who do not want to know God are just like the animals. Animals are uninterested in God. They have no church or temple. But in the human society, whether one is Hindu or Muslim or Christian, there is some arrangement

*(please turn to page 60)*



# The Religion fo

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# r this Age

*It's available to everyone,  
it's simple and joyful to perform,  
and it works.*

by Prabhupādācārya Dāsa

THE VEDIC scriptures prescribe for each age a particular religious practice by which people can attain the goal of life—love of God, or pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The religious process for each age suits the resources and capabilities of the people of that age. Each age, or *yuga*, lasts hundreds of thousands of years, and we are now in the last of the cycle of four ages. The prescribed religion for the first age (Satya-yuga) was meditation, for the second (Tretā-yuga) performance of sacrifice, and for the third (Dvāpara-yuga) elaborate worship of the Deity in the temple. The prescribed religion for the present age, known as Kali-yuga (“the Age of Quarrel”), is the chanting of the holy names of the Lord. The *Bṛhan-nāradiya Purāṇa* (3.28.126) states:

*harer nāma hare nāma  
harer nāma eva kevalam  
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva  
nāsty eva gatir anyathā*

“In the age of Kali the only means of deliverance is to chant the holy name of the Lord, chant the holy name of the Lord, chant the holy name of the Lord. There is no other way. There is no other way. There is no other way.”

## FOR EVERYONE IN ALL AGES

Although all the religious processes mentioned in the *Vedas* are authorized, having been given by the Lord Himself, only one—*harināma-saṅkīrtana*,\* the chanting of the holy names of the Lord—is effective for everyone at all times and places. People have

\*Hari is a name for God, *nāma* means “name,” and *saṅkīrtana* means “congregational chanting” or “glorification of the Complete Whole [Kṛṣṇa].”



Yamañña Dāsa

# Chanting the names of the Lord doesn't cost anything, and one can do it anytime and anywhere.

## The future Church of the World

The following, by Śrīla Bhakti-  
vinoda Thākura, a predecessor  
spiritual master of the Hare  
Kṛṣṇa movement, is taken from  
an essay that first appeared in the  
Thākura's monthly journal  
Sajjana-toṣaṇī, published in the  
1880s.

THE RELIGION preached by  
[Caitanya] Mahāprabhu is uni-  
versal and not exclusive. . . . The  
principle of *kīrtana* as the fu-  
ture church of the world invites  
all classes of men, without dis-  
tinction of caste or clan, to the  
highest cultivation of the spirit.  
This church, it appears, will  
extend all over the world and  
take the place of all sectarian  
churches, which exclude outsiders  
from the precincts of the

mosque, church, or temple.

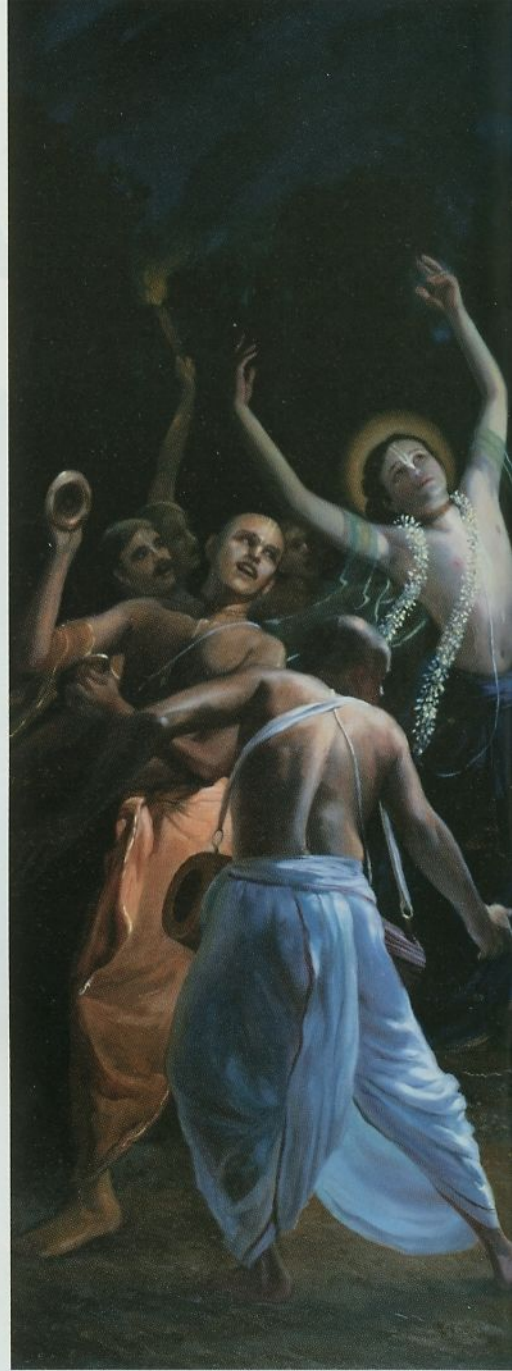
Lord Caitanya did not advent  
Himself to liberate only a few  
men of India. Rather, His main  
objective was to emancipate all  
living entities of all countries  
throughout the entire universe  
and preach the Eternal Religion.  
Lord Caitanya says in the  
*Caitanya-bhāgavata*: "In every  
town, country, and village, My  
name will be sung." There is no  
doubt that this unquestionable  
order will come to pass. . . .

Oh, for that day when the for-  
tunate English, French, Russian,  
German, and American people  
will take up banners, *mṛdaṅgas*  
[drums], and *karatālas* [cymbals],  
and raise *kīrtana* throughout  
their streets and towns. When  
will that day come?



Viśākhā Devī Dāśī

Multi-national chanting party in Māyāpur, West Bengal.



become self-realized by *harināma-  
saṅkīrtana* throughout the ages. It has  
been and still is the most effective means  
for achieving spiritual perfection and  
seeing the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa,  
face to face.

People today would do well to learn  
about the *harināma-saṅkīrtana* reli-  
gious process, which is both practical  
and pleasurable. Chanting the names  
of the Lord doesn't cost anything, and  
one can do it anytime and anywhere.

Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in-



Painting by Ramadāsa Abhirāma Dāsa

roduced the religious process for this age five hundred years ago. His followers in disciplic succession have continued to spread His teachings to this day. As recorded in the *Caitanya Maṅgala*, a sixteenth-century biography on Lord Caitanya, the Lord Himself predicted, “My commander-in-chief devotee [*mora senapati bhakta*] will spread the chanting of the holy names around the world.” His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of the Internation-

al Society for Krishna Consciousness, fulfilled that prediction.

### THE PRINCIPLE OF SACRIFICE

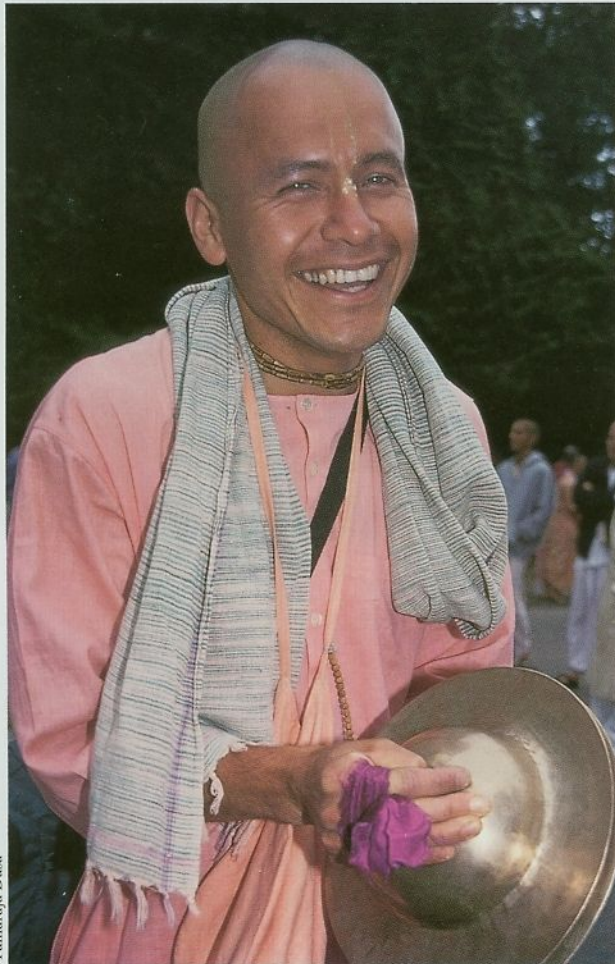
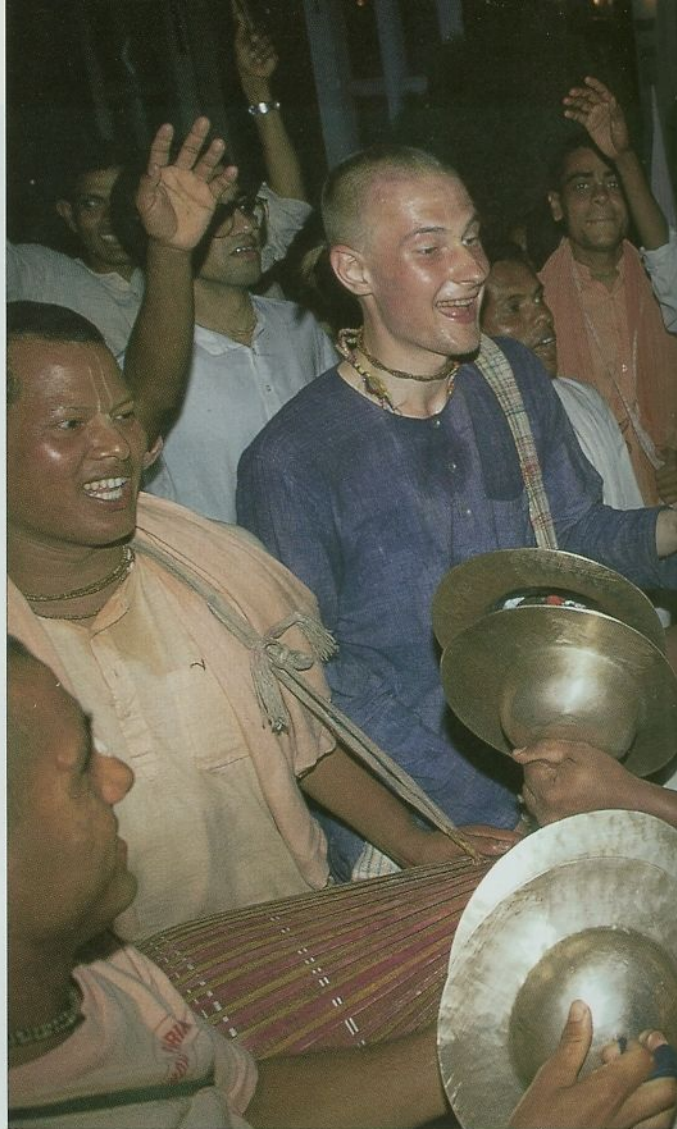
To understand the importance of accepting the religious process prescribed for the age, we need to understand the principle of *yajña*, or religious sacrifice. The Vedic scriptures teach us to show our appreciation and gratitude to the Lord, who alone provides us the

necessities of life. We do this by performing *yajña*, or sacrifice. Pious souls naturally feel gratitude and devotion for the Lord, and they willingly perform *yajña*. Impious nondevotees, on the other hand, claim that material nature is all in all and that thanking God is useless. Spiritual life begins when one appreciates Lord Kṛṣṇa and worships Him by the methods of sacrifice He has prescribed.

Lord Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā* that by performing *yajña* one receives



Yamardja Dasa



Yamardja Dasa

The main benefit  
of chanting is that one  
gradually develops pure  
love of God, the  
ultimate goal of life.





Yamarāja Dāsa

all material and spiritual necessities of life. And by neglecting *yajña*, He says, one becomes liable for punishment and wastes the valuable human form of life: “My dear Arjuna, one who does not follow in human life the cycle of sacrifice thus established by the *Vedas* certainly leads a life full of sin. Living only for the satisfaction of the senses, such a person lives in vain.”

### THE BENEFITS OF CHANTING

The main benefit of chanting is that one gradually develops pure love of God, the ultimate goal of life. Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu explains that chanting cleanses the mind and “extinguishes the blazing fire of material existence,” in the form of the miseries of birth, old age, disease, and death, all caused by our false identification with the material body. By reawakening our dormant Kṛṣṇa consciousness, we come to understand our real identity as eternal servants of Kṛṣṇa and naturally develop progressive spiritual qualities such as patience, humility, tolerance, fearlessness, and freedom from anxiety.

Having cleansed the mind of the dirt of materialistic thoughts, feelings, and desires, the chanter begins to taste the transcendental sweetness of the holy names. Pure devotees of the Lord have compared the spiritual happiness derived from chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa to “an ever-expanding ocean of spiritual bliss.” That happiness—the real happiness we all seek—is available to anyone who takes up the practice of chanting the holy names.

Lord Caitanya taught the essence of sincere chanting:

*trṇād api sunīcena  
taror iva sahiṣṇunā  
amānīnā mānadena  
kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hari*

In this verse Lord Caitanya reveals the proper mood for performing *harināma-saṅkīrtana*: “One should consider oneself lower than the straw in the street, one should be more tolerant than a tree, and one should be prepared to offer all respects to others, without desiring respect for oneself. In

Yamarāja Dāsa



this mood, one can chant the holy names of the Lord constantly.”

## THE HARE KṚṢṆA MAHĀ-MANTRA

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu taught that God has hundreds and millions of names, such as Kṛṣṇa and Govinda, and one can chant any of them and receive immeasurable spiritual benefit. He Himself specifically taught the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra (“the great chant”): Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. *Kṛṣṇa* means “the all-attractive person,” *Rāma* means “the highest pleasure,” and *Hare* refers to Lord Kṛṣṇa’s spiritual energy (or, more precisely, His internal pleasure potency), known as Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. By chanting the mahā-mantra one can eventually achieve the highest perfection even in this lifetime.

To benefit from chanting other Vedic mantras, one must chant with perfect meter and pronunciation and fulfill many other conditions not possible in the present age. One can reap the rewards of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, however, simply by chanting the mantra and hearing attentively. Anyone can chant at any time, in any condition of life. Lord Caitanya, in his treatise on chanting, known as *Śikṣāṣṭaka*, has written, “There are no hard and fast rules for chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.”



Yamunā Dāsa

Chanting softly on beads for one’s own spiritual benefit is called *japa*.

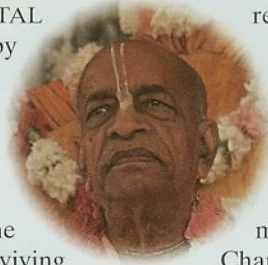
## The Great Chant for Deliverance

An excerpt from Śrīla Prabhupāda’s essay  
“Chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa Mantra”

THE TRANSCENDENTAL vibration established by the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare is the sublime method for reviving our transcendental consciousness. As living spiritual souls, we are all originally Kṛṣṇa conscious entities, but due to our association with matter from time immemorial, our consciousness is now polluted by the material atmosphere. . . .

The chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare is the transcendental process for reviving this original pure consciousness. By chanting this transcendental vibration, we can cleanse away all misgivings within our hearts. The basic principle of all such misgivings is the false consciousness that I am the lord of all I survey.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not an artificial imposition on the mind. This consciousness is the original natural energy of the living entity. When we hear the transcendental vibration, this consciousness is



revived. This simplest method of meditation is recommended for this age. By practical experience also, one can perceive that by chanting this mahā-mantra, or the Great Chanting for Deliverance, one can at once feel a transcendental ecstasy coming through from the spiritual stratum. . . .

When one is factually on the plane of spiritual understanding, surpassing the stages of sense, mind, and intelligence, he is then on the transcendental plane. This chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra is enacted from the spiritual platform, and thus this sound vibration surpasses all lower strata of consciousness—namely sensual, mental, and intellectual. There is no need, therefore, to understand the language of the mantra, nor is there any need for mental speculation nor any intellectual adjustment for chanting this mahā-mantra. It springs automatically from the spiritual platform, and as such, anyone can take part in vibrating this transcendental sound without any previous qualification. . . .

## CONGREGATIONAL CHANTING

One can chant Hare Kṛṣṇa loudly in a group, softly to oneself, or even within the mind. Loud chanting has the added benefit of allowing other living beings to hear the holy names. This fits well with one of the characteristics of real religion: everyone should benefit from its performance. The *Vedas* proclaim, *sarve sukhino bhavantu*: “Let everyone be happy.” More than any other religious process, *harināma-saṅkīrtana* fulfills that need in human society. Lord Caitanya proclaims, “All glories

to the congregational chanting of the holy names. It is the prime benediction for humanity at large because it spreads the rays of the benediction moon.” (*Śikṣāṣṭaka* 1)

Devotees in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement perform the traditional methods of congregational chanting called *kīrtana* and *bhajana*. Though the word *kīrtana* in its broadest sense means simply “glorification,” it often refers to group singing of Hare Kṛṣṇa accompanied by percussion instruments, such as gongs, drums (*mṛdaṅgas*), and cymbals (*karatālas*). During *kīrtana*, whether in the temple or outside, devotees usu-

ally stand or dance. One person leads the singing, and everyone else responds.

Devotees hold *kīrtanas* in public places so that others may benefit by hearing the Lord's holy names. Kṛṣṇa considers such unintentional hearing devotional service, and it entitles one to render more service in the future.

*Bhajana* refers to the singing of devotional songs and prayers written by great devotees of the Lord. Devotees usually sit during *bhajan*s, which are often accompanied by melodious instruments such as the *tamboura* (a stringed instrument) or harmonium (a small hand-pumped organ), in addition to *mṛdaṅgas* and *karatālas*.

## PRIVATE CHANTING

Chanting softly for one's own spiritual benefit is called *japa*. Śrīla Prabhupāda taught the traditional practice of chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra on a string of 108 beads, often made from the wood of the sacred Tulasī plant. Initiated disciples in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement vow to chant every day at least sixteen "rounds" (sets of 108). Beginners are encouraged to chant as many rounds as they can. It is helpful to chant a fixed number of rounds daily without fail (four rounds is a good starting point) and gradually increase to at least sixteen rounds daily. Śrīla Prabhupāda writes in *The Nectar of Devotion*, "It is better if one fixes up a regulative principle according to his own ability and then follows that vow without fail. That will make him advanced in spiritual life."

Chanting is easier in the association of devotees, and everyone is welcome to chant *japa* with devotees in any ISKCON center during the daily *japa* period (generally 5:30–7:00 A.M.).

*Japa* can be thought of as "spiritual weightlifting"—the more you chant, the more you can chant. As we build our spiritual strength by chanting *japa*, we will gradually develop a desire for chanting and become joyful. Be patient, and don't expect overnight results (though they've been known to happen). Be enthusiastic to chant every day and be confident that your faithful performance of the prescribed religious sacrifice for this age will please Lord Kṛṣṇa.

## CHANTING TO PLEASE THE LORD

Most important is to chant with a sincere desire to serve and please Kṛṣṇa. Because the Lord has instructed us to chant His names, we can be sure He is pleased when we do so. And when He is pleased, we automatically become happy. Kṛṣṇa is the root of everything, so we benefit ourselves by pleasing Him, just as we nourish the leaves and branches of a tree by watering the root.

We don't even need to try for our own happiness in any other way. Everything is in the holy name, because

the name is nondifferent from the Lord Himself. *Harināma-saṅkīrtana* is Lord Kṛṣṇa's greatest kindness upon the fallen souls of this age. He has given us an easy, effective means by which to please Him. ❀

*Prabhupādācārya Dāsa, a disciple of Śrīmān Virabāhu Dāsa, joined the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement in 1986. A small-business marketing consultant, he assists BTG in marketing and other areas.*

*Chanting aids—musical instruments, meditation beads, and so on—are available through the Hare Kṛṣṇa Catalog (see page 36).*



Yamrajia Dasa

**LETTERS** (continued from page 5)  
connected with Kṛṣṇa, such as Vṛndāvana, Dvārakā, Kurukṣetra, and Māyāpur. Kṛṣṇa's places are dear to the hearts of Kṛṣṇa's devotees. And it is because of the presence of such places in India that we're listing India first.

## Muslims the Real Followers of Bhagavad-gītā?

I have gone thoroughly through all the issues of BTG this year, and I could to some extent know the essence of life. Sir, based on the knowledge gained, I have the following comment to make:

In Dyaneshwari, Dyaneshwar Maharaj says that in spite of knowing the supremacy of Lord Kṛṣṇa, people worship demigods (the sun, moon, etc.) for exploiting the required śakti [power] from God. Kṛṣṇa says you need not go anywhere, just remember Me, but...

In this connection I would like to say: The Muslims are the real followers of *Bhagavad-gītā*, who only concentrate on their Allah (here, say Kṛṣṇa).

Kindly offer your comments.

Dr. Suresh S. Mahalle, M.Sc.,

Ph.D., IARI

Extension Agronomist

Introduction Training Centre

Regional Agricultural

Research Station

Karjat, Maharashtra, India

OUR REPLY: According to the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.6):

*sa vai puṁsām paro dharmo  
yato bhaktir adhokṣaje  
ahaituky apratihātā  
yayātmā suprasīdati*

"The best method of religion is that by which one develops loving devotional service to the transcendent Supreme Lord. Such devotional service must be unmotivated and uninterrupted to completely satisfy the self."

Whether one is Hindu, Muslim, Christian, or whatever is of little consequence. The real purpose of religion is to develop pure, unalloyed love for God. In the present age, the most rec-

ommended way to develop such love is to chant the holy name of the Supreme Lord. One should also give up four kinds of contaminating materialistic activities—gambling, intoxication, meat-eating, and illicit sex.

There is no need to worship demigods. The Vedic scriptures recommend that we single-mindedly render devotional service to the Supreme Lord, especially by chanting the mahā-mantra: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

## Dating Human Existence

In the article by Ravi Gupta in the March/April '97 issue, he writes, "Lord Rāma ruled during Tretā-yuga, some two million years ago."

According to all paleontologists, man evolved as Homosapiens with the current brain size only about 100,000 years ago. The evolutionary experts like Dr. Richard Leaky and all others estimate that mankind originated from Africa some 2.5 million years ago. Your writer only loses credibility when he uses numbers like two million years ago for Rāma's existence. There is no scientific proof that Śrī Rāma existed in Ayodhyā that long ago. The question really is: Are the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* historical facts, or are they fiction written to spread the word of God?

Nirmal Ghosh  
via the Internet

## DRUTAKARMĀ DĀSA REPLIES:

There are two ways of getting knowledge about events in the distant past. One is the descending path of knowledge, by which we accept the statements of the Vedic literature as true because they come from a perfect source. The Vedic literature, especially the *Purāṇas*, tells us that human beings have existed on earth for tens of millions of years.

These days, many people do not have much faith in the Vedic descending path of knowledge. Instead, they place their faith in the ascending path of knowledge, which relies on propos-

ing various theories from material evidence. This path of knowledge, according to the Vedic epistemological principles, is unreliable because it depends on human beings, who are all subject to four defects: they have imperfect senses, they can be in illusion, they make mistakes, and they have the tendency to cheat.

Archeology, the study of human antiquity, is one branch of modern science's ascending path of knowledge. And generally we are led to believe that all the archeological evidence ever discovered supports the idea that humans like ourselves evolved from more apelike ancestors within the past 100,000 or 200,000 years.

Archeology is certainly subject to the four defects just mentioned. Nevertheless, if we look into the entire history of archeology, and evaluate all the discoveries as fairly and objectively as we can, we find that over the past 150 years, archeologists and other earth scientists have uncovered a vast body of evidence consistent with Vedic accounts of extreme human antiquity. This evidence, reports of which can be found in scientific journals, takes the form of anatomically modern human skeletal remains and artifacts of human manufacture. This evidence has been eliminated from scientific discussion largely because it contradicts Darwinian evolutionary ideas. A detailed review of this astonishing evidence can be found in my book *Forbidden Archeology*, co-authored by Richard Thompson (Sadāpūta Dāsa). Those who read this book might develop a new respect for the historical accuracy of the Purāṇic histories, the *Rāmāyaṇa*, and the *Mahābhārata*. ☀

*Drutakarmā Dāsa (Michael A. Cremo) is a research associate with the Bhaktivedanta Institute and an associate editor for Back to Godhead.*

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# GLOSSARY

- Ācārya**—a spiritual master who teaches by example.
- Balarāma**—Lord Kṛṣṇa's first expansion, who acts in the role of Lord Kṛṣṇa's elder brother.
- Battle of Kurukṣetra**—an epic battle for rule of the world, fought five thousand years ago.
- Bhagavad-gītā**—the sacred book in which Lord Kṛṣṇa gives the essence of knowledge to His friend and disciple Arjuna.
- Bhakti**—devotional service to the Supreme Lord.
- Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura**—the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.
- Bhakti-yoga**—linking with the Supreme Lord through devotional service.
- Caitanya Mahāprabhu**—the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa who appeared five hundred years ago to teach the chanting of the names of God as the religion for the present age.
- Dharma**—(1) ordained duties or religious principles; (2) one's eternal, natural occupation (i.e., devotional service to the Lord).
- Godhead**—the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Reality, progressively realized first as the impersonal all-pervasive oneness, more fully as the Supersoul within the heart of every living being, and ultimately as the all-opulent Supreme Person.
- Gurukula**—a school where children learn the philosophy and practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness along with regular academic subjects (literally "the place of the guru").
- Hare Kṛṣṇa**—the great mantra Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.
- ISKCON**—the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.
- Japa**—individual chanting of names of God, usually while counting on beads.
- Kali-yuga**—in the endlessly repeated cycle of four cosmic ages, the present and worst age, the Age of Quarrel, of which 5,000 of 432,000 years have passed.
- Karma**—material action; its inevitable reaction; or the law by which such action and reaction are governed.
- Kīrtana**—congregational singing of names of God, usually accompanied by cymbals (*karatālas*) and drums (*mṛdaṅgas*).
- Kṛṣṇa**—the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His original transcendent form (see "Godhead").
- Mahābhārata**—the epic history of ancient India, a history in which the *Bhagavad-gītā* appears as the most important and well-known text.
- Māyā**—illusion; the energy of the Supreme Lord that deludes living entities into forgetting their spiritual nature and forgetting God.
- Māyāvādī**—one who regards the Absolute Truth as ultimately impersonal or void.
- Modes of nature**—the three qualities (goodness, passion, and ignorance) that hold sway over all action in the material world.
- Nityānanda**—the incarnation of Lord Balarāma who appeared with Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
- Prasādam**—vegetarian food that has been prepared for the Lord and offered to Him with devotion (literally "mercy").
- Purāṇas**—Vedic histories.
- Rādhārāṇī**—Lord Kṛṣṇa's consort and pleasure potency.
- Rathayātrā**—"chariot festival"; a festival in which the form of Kṛṣṇa is borne in procession on a large canopy-topped chariot or float, especially the festival originating in Puri, India, for Jagannātha (Lord Kṛṣṇa, "the Lord of the universe").
- Sannyāsa**—the renounced life of a man who relinquishes home to dedicate himself fully to the Supreme.
- Śrī**—an honorific meaning "opulent" (similarly: Śrīla, Śrīmad, Śrīmān, Śrīmatī).
- Śrīla Prabhupāda**—His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.
- Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam**—the most important of the eighteen *Purāṇas*, which tells of the nature and pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa.
- Supersoul**—the form of the Lord who resides in every heart along with the individual soul.
- Upaniṣads**—the 108 essential philosophical treatises that appear within the *Vedas*.
- Varṇāśrama**—the Vedic social system. It organizes society into four occupational and four spiritual divisions (*varṇas* and *āśramas*). The members of the four *varṇas* are the *brāhmaṇas* (intellectuals), the *kṣatriyas* (administrators and soldiers), the *vaiśyas* (farmers and businessmen), and the *śūdras* (laborers and assistants). The members of the four *āśramas* are the *brahmacārīs* (celibate students), *gṛhasthas* (married people), *vānaprasthas* (retired people), and *sannyāsīs* (renunciants).
- Vṛndāvana**—the transcendental abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa, mirrored on earth as the town in India where Kṛṣṇa appeared five thousand years ago.
- Vaiṣṇava**—a devotee of the Supreme Lord (from the word *Viṣṇu*).
- Vedas**—the hymns of knowledge revealed by the Lord Himself at the beginning of creation.
- Vedic**—pertaining to the culture in which the *Vedas* and related scriptures guide all aspects of human life.
- Viṣṇu**—in general, any form of the Personality of Godhead (see "Godhead"); in particular, the forms the Lord manifests to create and sustain the material world.

# Invincible Weapons For Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna

*Lord Kṛṣṇa receives the Sudarṣaṇa discus,  
Arjuna the Gāṇḍīva bow.*

Translated from Sanskrit  
by Hridayānanda Dāsa Goswami

• • •

*The sage Vaiśampāyana is telling the history of the Pāṇḍavas to their great-grandson, King Janamejaya. As the narration continues, Arjuna and Lord Kṛṣṇa, while on a pleasure outing to the Yamunā River, receive divine weapons from Varuṇa, the lord of the waters.*

**W**HILE LIVING in Indraprastha, the Pāṇḍavas subdued other regional rulers by the order of King Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Bhīṣma, son of Śantanu, [and brought those regions within a peaceful and unified Pāṇḍava administration]. Taking shelter of Dharmarāja Yudhiṣṭhira, the king of virtue, the whole world lived happily, for people depended on the righteous deeds of the king, just as they depended on their own bodies.

Yudhiṣṭhira, the noble Bhārata king, attended to his religious duties, economic policies, and personal desires in a balanced way, just as a man with acquaintances respects them as he does himself and yet sees them as different from himself. So ideal and balanced was the king in his worldly and religious affairs that religion, prosperity, and personal satisfaction seemed to incarnate on the earth in his person, although he was always apart from these three,

as a fourth and transcendental being.

The *Vedas* found in the king the supreme student, the grand rituals gained in him the best performer and patron, and the social classes found in him a pure-hearted protector. In his realm, wisdom gained a shelter, the laws of God found a true friend, and the goddess of fortune found a proper place to live. The king appeared nobler and finer in the company of his four brothers, as a grand ritual becomes lovelier when united with the four *Vedas*.

Equal in splendor to Bṛhaspati, the leading priests headed by Dhaumya surrounded and assisted Yudhiṣṭhira. The eyes and hearts of the citizens rejoiced exceedingly in that king of virtue, as much as in the spotless full moon. The citizens delighted in their destined good fortune, and whatever they desired in their hearts the king endeavored to give them. The king was wise, his speech elegant, and never did he utter a word that was untrue, unkind, deceitful, or unbecoming. He wielded unusual power, but he found his pleasure in working for the good of all people and of his own soul. So did all the Pāṇḍavas rejoice in the goodness of their works, for the fever of personal ambition did not burn in their hearts. Yet by their personal prowess

Illustration by Puṣkara Dāsa



*Varuṇa presents Arjuna two great quivers of inexhaustible arrows.*

## The Main Characters

**The Pāṇḍavas**—Though the name *Pāṇḍava* means “son of Pāṇḍu,” the five Pāṇḍavas were sired by demigods—the three eldest Pāṇḍavas (Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīma, and Arjuna) in the womb of King Pāṇḍu’s wife Kuntī, and the youngest (the twins, Nakula and Sahadeva) in the womb of Pāṇḍu’s wife Mādri. The Pāṇḍavas are sometimes called “Bhārata” or “best of the Bhāratas,” because they come in the dynasty of King Bharata.

**The Kurus**—The sons of both Pāṇḍu and Dhṛtarāṣṭra (the uncle of the Pāṇḍavas who because of blindness could not become the king) descended from King Kuru, but the name *Kurus* usually refers to Dhṛtarāṣṭra’s sons, the eldest of whom is Duryodhana.

**Bhīṣma**—A respected elder of the Kuru dynasty, he is the uncle of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Pāṇḍu, and Vidura.

they instilled a fear of God in all the rulers of the earth.

### THE EXCURSION

After Lord Kṛṣṇa had been staying for some days in Indraprastha, Arjuna said to Him, “Kṛṣṇa, the hot days are here; let us go to the Yamunā River. We will enjoy there, Madhusūdana, with our close friends, and we’ll come back in the evening—that is, Janārdana, if you like the idea.”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said, “Yes, son of Kuntī, I also like the idea. Let us go with our close friends and enjoy in the water as we like.”

After informing King Yudhiṣṭhira and receiving his permission, Arjuna and Govinda departed, surrounded by intimate friends. The area on the bank of the Yamunā featured large stocks of wealth, variegated garlands and necklaces, a large variety of excellent trees, both simple cottages and palatial estates like that of Indra, and a wide range of tasty food, drink, and other comforts. Indeed, that spot had everything needed for the enjoyment of Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa. Arriving there, the two friends and their companions entered the area, which was filled with all types of shining jewels, and they all began to play and enjoy as they wished.

Some of the women sported in the forest, some in the water, and some in the nice cottages. They enjoyed especially wherever Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna went and always tried to please them. At the height of the excitement, Draupadī and

Subhadrā offered gifts of priceless clothes and jewelry to all the ladies present. Some of the ladies danced joyfully, while others cried out in the joy of celebration. Some ladies laughed, and others drank fine beverages. Some ladies wept joyfully, some wrestled one another, and others had serious discussions in secluded spots. All around, the opulent forest was filled with the exquisitely rich sounds of flute, *viṇā*, and *mṛdaṅga* drum.

As the festival was thus progressing, Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, the darlings of the Kurus and Dāśārhas, went nearby to see a particularly charming area. Those two mighty souls who conquer hostile cities then sat down on most valuable seats. They enjoyed reminiscing about their many adventures and romances.

### THE FIRE-GOD’S REQUEST

As they sat together very happily, like the two Aśvin gods seated in heaven, a *brāhmaṇa* arrived and approached them. Standing tall like a big *śāla* tree, with tawny skin, a reddish mustache, an evenly proportioned body, and an effulgence like molten gold, he shone like the newly risen sun. He was dressed in black, with matted locks and a face as delicate as a lotus petal. Blazing with prowess, the tawny man came near Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, and the two quickly stood up to receive the radiant *brāhmaṇa*.

The *brāhmaṇa* said to Arjuna and Lord Kṛṣṇa, leader of the Sātvatas, “You

are the two great heroes of the world, standing here by the Khāṇḍava Forest. I am a *brāhmaṇa* who consumes immeasurable amounts, and I now beg you two, Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, that for once you offer me my full satisfaction of food.”

Thus addressed, Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna said to him, “Tell us what food will satisfy you, and we will try to bring it.”

The *brāhmaṇa* replied, “I do not eat ordinary grains, for you may know me to be the god of fire. Thus you should offer food appropriate for me.

“Lord Indra always carefully guards this Khāṇḍava Forest, and because such a mighty person guards it, I cannot burn it. His friend Takṣaka the serpent always resides here with his associates, and for his sake thunderbolt-wielding Indra carefully guards this forest. Many other beasts are equally protected by this arrangement. I desire to burn the forest, but Indra’s might does not allow me to do so. As soon as he sees me blazing, he rains down water from the clouds, and I am unable to burn this desirable forest. But now that I have met you two, who can help me by your unique skill with weapons. I can burn the Khāṇḍava Forest, [which I have selected as my food]. With your supreme knowledge of weapons, you shall ward off the torrents of water and all the beasts on all sides.”

Addressed thus, fearsome Arjuna replied to the sacred Fire, “I have many ultimate weapons of divine power, so I can battle many thunderbolt-wielding Indras. But, my lord, I do not have a bow that fits the strength of my arms and withstands my speed and power in battle. And when I am firing rapidly, I need an inexhaustible supply of arrows. Moreover, my chariot will not hold all the arrows I need. I would also request divine horses, white and as swift as the wind, and a chariot that rumbles like the clouds and shines as bright as the sun.

“Similarly, Śrī Kṛṣṇa does not have a weapon equal to His strength, a weapon by which He will slay the serpents and ghosts in battle. My lord, you must declare the means by which to accomplish this task, so that I may ward off Indra when he sends showers into the great forest. Whatever is to be done

(please turn to page 41)



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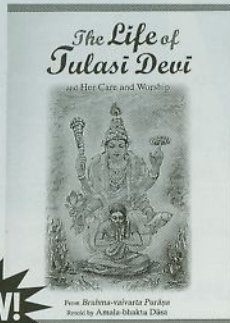
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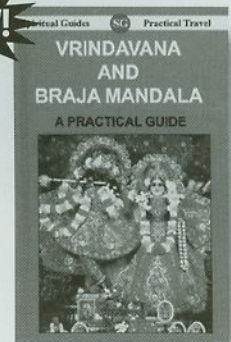
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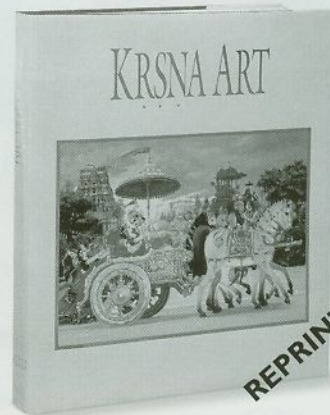
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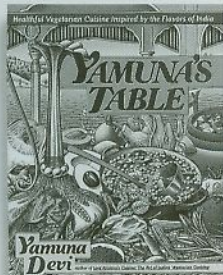
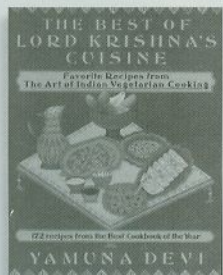
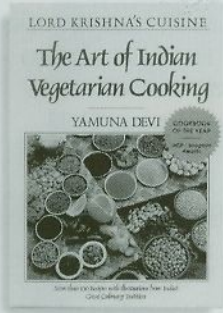
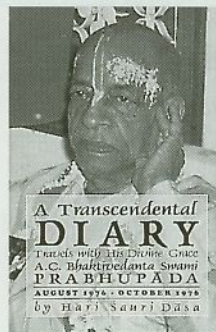
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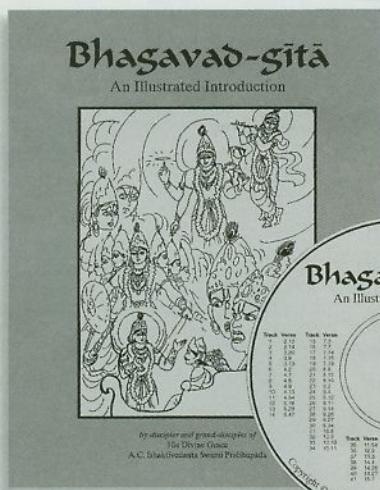
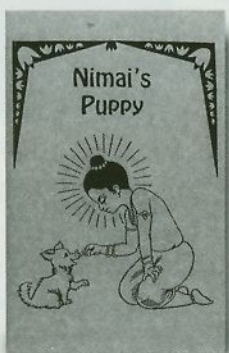
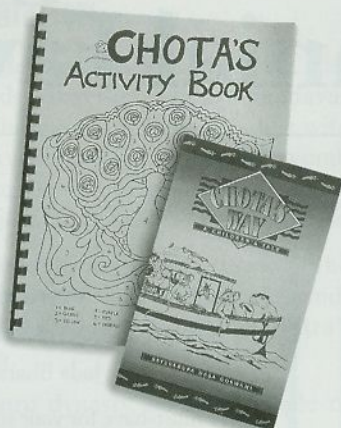
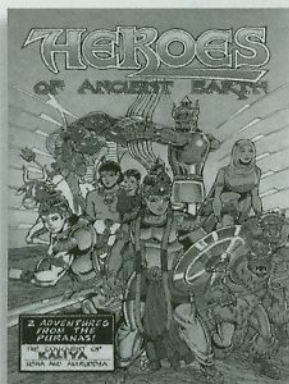


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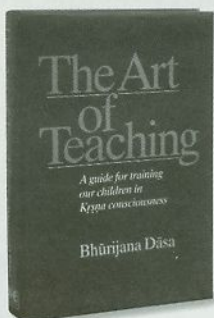
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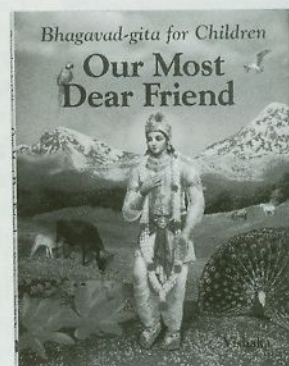
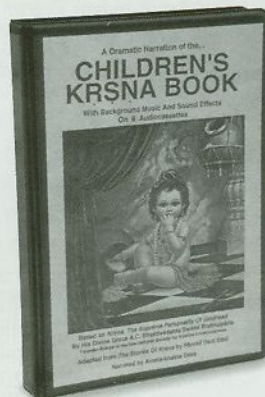
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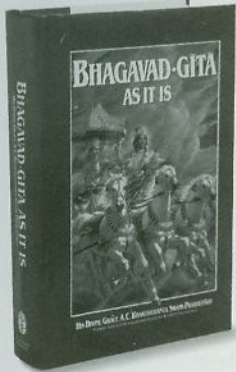
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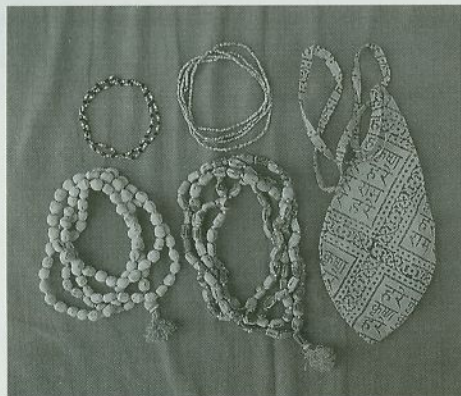
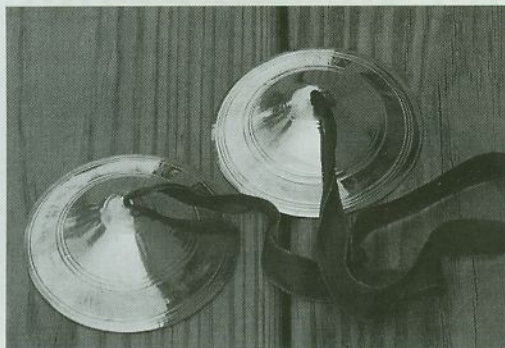
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## WORLD NEWS

**India** ISKCON Nagpur has moved to a new, larger place, in the heart of the city. Construction of the temple in the 27-room building is scheduled for completion in March.

ISKCON devotees took part in Kerala's Onam float parade last September with a Rathayātrā cart bearing Lord Jagannātha, Lord Balarāma, and Subhadrā Devī. Popularly known as Kerala's "harvest festival," Onam marks the appearance day of Lord Vāmanadeva, Lord Kṛṣṇa's incarnation as a dwarf *brāhmaṇa*. Among the more than half a million people attending the parade were Kerala's chief minister and his cabinet.

**Recent ISKCON Rathayātrās:** Kurukshetra (September), Chandigarh (November), and Dwaraka (January).

ISKCON's new temple in New Delhi is scheduled to open on the appearance day of Lord Rāmacandra (Rāma Navamī), April 5.

**The Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula in Vṛndāvana is accepting** applications for boys ages 5–14 for the 1998–99 school year (starts in July). Contact: Bhaktivedanta Swami International Gurukula, Bhaktivedanta Swami Marg, Vrindavana, Mathura UP, India; tel: +91-565-442-676; fax: +91-565-442-952; e-mail: vgurukula@com.bbt.se

**An eminent Muslim scholar visited** ISKCON's center in Juhu, Mumbai, last September for an interfaith dialogue. The scholar, Dr. Shuaib Sayed, from the Islamic Research Foundation, met with Airāvata Dāsa, head of the department of interfaith communications at ISKCON's center in Māyāpur, West Bengal.

**United States** ISKCON Honolulu won an award for its float in the Aloha Parade for the ninth straight year. Judges for the nationally televised parade presented devotees with the Board of Directors

Award for their Rathayātrā cart, elaborately decorated with a wide assortment of tropical plants and flowers.



*Passengers on the award-winning Rathayātrā cart in Honolulu.*

**Readers of The Tucson Weekly** voted Govinda's Restaurant in Tucson, Arizona, the winner in three categories in the "Best of Tucson" contest: Best Fine Dining, Best Vegan Selections, and Best Lunch Under \$5. Devotee-run Govinda's has been open since 1992. It is situated in the Chaitanya Cultural Center, a beautifully landscaped acre of oasis in the middle of the desert.

**Devotees at ISKCON's Murari-sevaka farm celebrated,** last November, the twentieth anniversary of the installation of their presiding Deities, Śrī Nitāi-Gauracandra.

**Great Britain** Bhaktivedanta Manor, the Hare Kṛṣṇa temple outside London, hosted an Open Day late last year, with guided tours of the building and its estate. Visitors viewed Vedic sculptures, cooking demonstrations, and traditional and contemporary dance, music, and theater.

The BBC World Service broadcasted a radio play last September about Lord Kṛṣṇa's advent. The play was performed by devotees from Bhaktivedanta Manor. Potential audience: 35 million listeners.

**Europe**

**Rathayātrās held** in Spain last fall: Madrid, Barcelona, and Torremolinos (Málaga).

**A September issue of Time magazine's European edition** ran the following letter from Bhakti Vikāṣa Swami, a frequent contributor to *Back to Godhead*:

MacDonalds and Coca-cola symbolize a grossly materialistic civilization centered on profit making and mindless enjoyment. That America is foisting this type of anti-culture on other countries is nothing to be proud of. Traditional religious, family and social values are being crushed by the relentless steamroller of Western culture. Aestheticism and finer sentiments are subjugated to lust, violence and endless passion for material things. America, take another look at yourself, lest you go down in history as the most exploitive and intellectually decrepit civilization ever.

Bhakti Vikasa Swami  
Baroda, India

**Devotees held** a Rathayātrā festival in Sofia, Bulgaria, last September.



*Rathayātrā festival in Sofia, Bulgaria.*

**Hong Kong**

**ISKCON's Hong Kong center** celebrated its tenth anniversary this past November. ISKCON has been present in Hong Kong since the early seventies and at the present location for the past ten years.

**New Zealand**

**Former prime minister David Lange** visited ISKCON's New Varshan Farm

last summer to see the progress on the new temple devotees are building there. The farm is near Auckland. While prime minister, Mr. Lange had been chief guest at

**DEPARTURES**

Lohitākṣa Dāsa, a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda's, left this world on November 29, in Śrī Vṛndāvana Dhāma, India. Lohitākṣa was well known in ISKCON for his talent as a Kṛṣṇa conscious actor. Since the early seventies, he took part in many dramatic presentations of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, on some occasions with Śrīla Prabhupāda in the audience. Lohitākṣa rendered devotional service not only in New York but also in Europe. And in 1975 he served the Deities in Vṛndāvana. In his last days, he came from New York City to Vṛndāvana. He left this world a week later.

BTG has learned of the passing away, some months ago, of Sri Damodar Prasad Shastri. Shastriji was the Ayurvedic doctor who expertly and devotedly attended Śrīla Prabhupāda during Prabhupāda's last days on earth.

the ground-consecrating ceremony for the temple. In an address following his tour, Mr. Lange told the devotees, "You are part of an international organization which has won great respect from people and has changed people's lives through their devotion in extraordinary ways. I want to thank you for that and for the contribution you make to New Zealand."

**Indonesia**

**The island of Kalimantan (Borneo) is seeing** a spreading of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, with devotees in the cities of Palangkaraya, Pontianak, and Botang. Ratna Puṣpitā Devī Dāśī, the first devotee from a Dayak family, has donated land for a temple. The Dayaks are the original inhabitants of Kalimantan.

Bhakti Rāghava Swami, from Canada, spent a week last fall teaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the island's eager new devotees. While in Indonesia he also met with the twenty-five or so devotees on the island of Lombok, in Western Lesser Sunda Islands, just east of Bali.

**Africa**

**A radio program in Kaduna, Nigeria, aired** a message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness last fall, through a reading from a book by ISKCON leader Bhakti Tīrtha Swami, followed by an interview with an ISKCON devotee. The program was broadcast by the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria, said to beam the most powerful signal in Africa.

**Durban Rathayātrā—May 1-3**

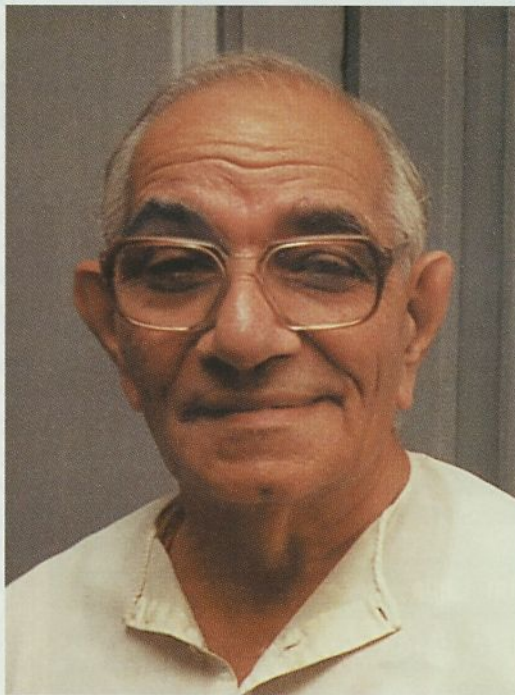
# The Mercy of Caitanya Mahāprabhu

*A godbrother of Śrīla Prabhupāda's  
remembers their early friendship  
and their meeting again after many years.*

*Dr. O.B.L. Kapoor, a scholar and devotee, and a friend of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, gave this interview at his home in Vṛndāvana, India, in October 1996. The interviewer, Hari Śauri Dāsa, served as Śrīla Prabhupāda's personal servant from November 1975 to March 1977. During that time, he kept a detailed diary that has become the basis of his multi-volume book A Transcendental Diary. (If you'd like a copy, please see page 33).*

**HARI ŚAURI DĀSA:** I understand that you first met Śrīla Prabhupāda when he was a householder in Allahabad.

**Dr. Kapoor:** I was with Prabhupāda for about eight years in Allahabad, from 1931 to 1939. We used to meet almost every day. I first met him in 1931 at the Rūpa Gaudiya Math [temple and āśrama]. The first time I saw him he was playing the *mrdaṅga* [drum] at the *maṭha*. There was a discourse that evening, and then *saṅkīrtana*. After the *saṅkīrtana* the leader of the *maṭha* introduced me to him as a research scholar at Allahabad University and a disciple of Prabhupāda [Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura]. I had just taken *dīkṣā* [initiation] from Prabhupāda. After that meeting our acquaintance



*Dr. O. B. L. Kapoor*

developed into friendship, and friendship developed into intimacy, and so on. We were very good friends. I used to call him Dada, "elder brother."

After 1939 we didn't meet for almost twenty-nine years, because I went out of Allahabad. I joined the government service, and he remained there. After some time he took *sannyāsa* [the renounced order of life], and he was going about here and there,

so we never met.

We finally met in 1967, here in Vṛndāvana. In 1967 I retired and came to Vṛndāvana to settle down. One day I had gone to the Rādhā Dāmodara temple. [Bhaktivedanta Swami] Prabhupāda had come from the West, and he was staying in a room at the Rādhā-Dāmodara temple. I was sitting, waiting for someone, on the verandah just outside his room. And Prabhupāda came out.

He was dressed in saffron. I had never seen him like that before. I had only known him as Abhay Babu, as a householder and a businessman. He was now in saffron with a *tridaṇḍī* [renunciant's staff] in his hand, and two disciples in saffron were following him, like *sādhus*.

I couldn't recognize him; thirty years had made a difference in his appearance, and he was

dressed in saffron. But he seemed to be looking, trying to recognize me. Then he hazarded a guess. He said, "Dr. Kapoor?"

Oh, I recognized him from his voice! I said, "Abhay Babu?" And he embraced me.

**HSD:** A very happy meeting.

**DK:** Yes. He was going somewhere, but he canceled his plans. He took me inside the room and told me all about

his preaching work in the West. He showed me the newspaper cuttings and so on. Very interesting meeting, very interesting.

In Allahabad we used to meet almost every day. Sometimes he used to come to my place, but mostly we met in the Rūpa Gaudiya Math, in the evening during the discourse and *kīrtana*.

**HSD:** Can you say something about how Śrīla Prabhupāda conducted his household affairs while he was also

developing his spiritual life.

**DK:** I didn't know much about his household affairs, because we met mostly at the *maṭha* in the evening. He had a shop. He sold medicines, and he also manufactured them. Once he manufactured a tonic, and he gave it to me.

I said, "That's nice, this gift of yours. I must accept it. But I wish you would give me the tonic which you yourself take—the tonic of Kṛṣṇa-

*prema* [love of Kṛṣṇa]."

He said, "I don't have that tonic. But I have the formula."

I said, "Oh, wonderful! If it is not a secret, tell me what the formula is."

He said, "No, it is not a secret at all:

*trṇād api sunīcena  
taror iva sahiṣṇunā  
amāninā mānadena  
kīrtaniyaḥ sadā hariḥ\**

This is the formula, and I am going to preach it all over the world."

At that time I couldn't recognize the significance of his words, but he was going to preach it all over the world. I thought it was just a casual statement. But now I look back, and I can see that he was even then thinking and planning to preach all over the world, which he did.

**HSD:** Yes, very wonderfully.

**DK:** Wonderfully. Ten years, I think, only. All the world over he preached. Almost a miracle. Almost a miracle.

**HSD:** Unrepeatable.

**DK:** Hmm. Unrepeatable. Even Emperor Ashok—he preached Buddhism, he was the owner of such a big empire—and even he couldn't do as much as Prabhupāda did in ten years.

**HSD:** You once told me that you saw a great change in Prabhupāda from when you knew him in Allahabad.

**DK:** Of course, in one sense there was a world of difference between the Abhay Babu I had known and the Bhaktivedanta Prabhupāda I met in Vṇḍāvana after thirty years. He was now the president of a huge organization, an international organization. He was preaching all over the world. All the same, he was as humble as ever. I could never have imagined that he could one day become Bhaktivedanta Prabhupāda. I could never have imagined. He was so simple. But, you see, he had the blessings of [Caitanya] Mahāprabhu. It is the blessings of Mahāprabhu that made him Prabhupāda. ☸

\*"One should chant the holy name of the Lord in a humble state of mind. One should be more tolerant than a tree, devoid of all sense of false prestige, and ready to offer all respects to others. In that way one can chant the holy name of the Lord constantly." (Śikṣāṣṭaka 3)



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# *Varuṇa presented to Arjuna the amazingly potent bow, which always increased the glory and fame of its owner.*



**WEAPONS** (continued from page 32) by manly prowess, we two shall do, O Fire, but you, my lord, should provide the proper instruments.”

## **THE MIGHTY WEAPONS**

Thus addressed, the smoke-crested lord of fire fixed his mind on Varuṇa, desiring to see that lord of worlds.

Varuṇa is the son of Aditi, and he is the god of the seas. Within his watery abode he understood that he was being thought of. He appeared to Fire, who welcomed him and spoke to the lord of the waters, who is the fourth among the leaders of the universe, being a protector and controller:

“King Soma once gave you a bow and quiver. Please give me both of them at once, and also the chariot marked with Hanumān, for Arjuna will perform a great task with that Gāṇḍīva bow. And also, for my sake, please give the great disc to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.”

“Yes, I shall give,” Varuṇa replied.

Varuṇa then presented to Arjuna the amazingly potent bow, a weapon that always increased the glory and fame of its owner, for it could not be conquered by any other weapon, being the harasser of all arms, the great one among weapons, devastating to enemy armies. That one weapon was equal to a hundred thousand weapons, and it made its owner’s kingdom flourish. Multicolored with all the hues, smooth and shining, without a scratch or scar, it had been worshiped by the gods and Gandharvas since time immemorial.

Varuṇa gave Arjuna that jewel of bows, two great quivers of inexhaustible shafts, and a chariot yoked to divine horses, its banner marked with Hanumān, the foremost of monkeys. The silver Gandharva horses were garlanded in gold. They moved at the speed of the mind or the wind and flashed like swift white clouds. The chariot had all necessary equipment. It could not be conquered by gods or

demons, and it radiated light and reverberated with a deep rumbling sound. Its beauty captivated the mind of all who beheld it. Viśvakarmā, the lord of design and construction, had created it by the power of his austerities, and its form, like that of the sun, could not be precisely discerned. By mounting this chariot, as big as an elephant or a cloud and blazing with splendor, the Moon had overcome the wicked Dānavas.

Atop this finest chariot rested a flag-staff that shone like Indra’s thunderbolt. It was made of gold and uniquely attractive. On the staff was the divine Hanumān, a transcendental monkey with the marks of the lion and tiger. Situated atop the chariot, he seemed to roar out and shine with power. On the flag were all kinds of powerful creatures, whose fierce roars destroyed the consciousness of enemy armies.

Arjuna walked reverently around the unique chariot, which shone with variegated flags, and he offered his obeisances to the Supreme Lord and to the secondary deities who had delivered the marvelous car.

Tightly fitted with armor, his sword and wrist- and finger-guards in place, Arjuna mounted the chariot as a pious man mounts the celestial craft that takes him to heaven. Firmly grasping the divine and glorious Gāṇḍīva bow, which had been constructed long ago by Brahmā, Arjuna rejoiced. Bowing to the sacred fire, the hero then gripped the bow and, exerting his power, strung it with a proper cord. When mighty Arjuna strung his bow, the twanging sound was so piercing that the minds of those who heard it shuddered.

Having obtained a suitable chariot and bow, along with two inexhaustible quivers of arrows, the son of Kuntī was now ready and enthusiastic to assist the god of fire, who then gave Lord Kṛṣṇa a discus whose hub was a thunderbolt. Holding again His eternal fiery weapon, which is ever devoted to Him, the Lord was ready to perform His pastimes.

Fire then said to the Lord, “My dear Kṛṣṇa, slayer of Madhu, with this weapon You will undoubtedly conquer in battle, even against superhuman opponents. With this weapon You will be superior in battle to the human beings and even to the gods, and certainly the Nāgas, the Rākṣasas, the Piśācas, and the wicked Daityas—no matter how excellent your enemy may be. Whenever You throw this weapon, my dear Mādhava, it will strike down the enemy in battle, without ever being struck, and it will always return to Your hand.”

Varuṇa then gave Lord Kṛṣṇa a terrifying club named Kaumodakī, which roared like a thunderbolt and brought death to the wicked. Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna were enlivened by the gifts.

Prepared with weapons, missiles, chariots, and banners, they said to Fire, “We are ready to fight, lord, even with all the gods and demons, what to speak of Indra, who desires to fight for the sake of a serpent.”

Arjuna said, “When Śrī Kṛṣṇa, chief of the Vṛṣṇis, hurls His disc weapon, no one in the universe will stand unconquered. Taking the Gāṇḍīva bow and these two inexhaustible quivers of arrows, I too, O Fire, shall boldly conquer all the worlds in battle. My lord, we are ready to help you, and as soon as you like, you may surround the forest with a great fire. This very moment, blaze away as you desire!” ❀

*Hridayānanda Dāsa Goswami, who holds a Ph.D. in Indology from Harvard University, is Professor of Vaiṣṇava Theology at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California. He frequently speaks at universities and is translating the Mahābhārata and other Sanskrit works.*

*Audio-cassette recordings of Hridayānanda Dāsa Goswami’s readings from the Mahābhārata are available from The Hare Kṛṣṇa Catalog. To order, or for more information, see page 36.*

# THE VEDIC O

*Transcendental Commentary on the*

## Good Intentions

by Mathureśa Dāsa

**A**T A PARK IN San Francisco a group of former Haight-Ashbury hippies serves free meals to the homeless. In a small town in northern Florida a young lady brings her playful poodle to the local retirement home to cheer elderly patients. In a Calcutta slum, saffron-robed missionaries open hospitals for the poor. The finest part of the human spirit takes satisfaction in doing good to others.

Despite all good intentions, however, there are serious shortcomings to these noble efforts.

Śrīla Prabhupāda explains, “Such an outlook of doing good to others in the form of society, community, family, country, or humanity is a partial manifestation of the original feeling in which a pure living entity feels happiness by the happiness of the Supreme Lord.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.3.10, purport) Intuition of our original love for the Supreme “is expressed in the manner of altruism, philanthropy, socialism, communism, etc., by the undeveloped minds of less intelligent persons.”

Because most people strongly identify with their own bodies, they selfishly seek bodily pleasure, much like animals. Philanthropy is a step or two above this animal platform. Instead of loving only his own body, the philanthropist expands his love to his community, his nation, to humanity, or to all living beings. He wants to feed, clothe, shelter, educate, and protect other bodies. His mind is still undeveloped, thinking, “I am this body, they are those bodies, and we’ll all be happy

by serving the body well.” But he has raised himself from the animal platform to the platform of doing good. In Vedic terms, he has raised himself towards the mode of goodness from the modes of ignorance and passion.

Despite his elevated position, however, the philanthropist is hardly better off than more selfish humans. Serving the body of society or the body of humanity doesn’t bring much more happiness than serving his own body. Nor is society or humanity satisfied. As pure spiritual entities, we are originally accustomed to the unlimited eternal happiness of serving the Supreme Person, Kṛṣṇa, of “feeling happiness by the happiness of the Supreme Lord.” No amount of bodily service can satisfy our eternal selves within the body, either individually or collectively.

Nor do philanthropists have much success in serving the body. In America in the sixties there was a war on poverty, in the seventies a war on crime, in the eighties a war on drugs, yet poverty, crime, and drugs persist. They either won the wars or are still in excellent fighting condition, as they have been throughout history. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.14) Lord Kṛṣṇa warns that without His assistance we cannot surmount the forces of His material nature:

*daivī hy eṣā guṇa-mayī  
mama māyā duratyayā  
mām eva ye prapadyante  
māyām etaṁ taranti te*

“This divine energy of Mine, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is very difficult to overcome. But those who have surrendered unto Me can easily cross beyond it.”

The fundamental forces of material nature are its three modes: goodness, passion, and ignorance. The animals are directed, or forced, predominantly by passion and ignorance, while human beings are forced by increased amounts of goodness, up to the level of the philanthropist, who is admittedly very good. But here Kṛṣṇa indicates that material goodness is, as much as passion and ignorance, a force to contend with in surmounting the miseries of nature, rather than a force liberating us from those miseries.

Goodness not only fails to cure afflictions like poverty, but it diverts our attention from more serious ailments: The clothed, well-fed, and well-educated body grows old, gets diseased, and dies like any other body; the wealthiest philanthropist stays as much a target for suffering in the cycle of repeated birth and death as those he tries to help. The miseries of material life stay to remind us that by our very constitution we cannot live happily while forgetting the Supreme.

Deluded and exhausted by the three modes of material nature, everyone is rendered incapable of understanding the inexhaustible Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, who is above the modes. “The best among the fools who are thus deluded,” Śrīla Prabhupāda says, “are those who engage in altruistic activities . . . Anyone who misunderstands the perishable body to be the self and who works for it in the name of sociology, politics, philanthropy, altruism, nationalism, or internationalism . . . is certainly a fool.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.5.11, purport) For all his effort, the philanthropist becomes only the best of fools.

# BSESERVER

*e Issues of the Day*

The philanthropist has the praiseworthy ambition to free others from suffering. He just doesn't know how. Kṛṣṇa says that alone we cannot surmount His material nature and its miseries but "those who have surrendered to Me can easily cross beyond it." Those who surrender to God as His servants are quickly reintroduced to His spiritual nature, which is deathless and otherwise misery-free. In the spiritual nature, everyone feels happiness by serving Kṛṣṇa's senses with devotion. Forgetfulness of this original happiness throws us into the miserable material nature, forcing us to serve our own senses.

Of course, many philanthropists and philanthropic organizations have religious affiliations and formally acknowledge the importance of worshiping God. But their activities most often stay on the platform of material goodness because of their vague or impersonal understandings of the soul and of God, the supreme soul. Even if, through great austerities, they raise themselves to a transcendental position, they return to the material nature for lack of shelter in service to the Personality of Godhead.

While sometimes appreciating God's position as the supreme creator and controller, these worshipers have little idea what He looks like, where He lives, how He dresses, what He likes to eat, or what He does in His spiritual kingdom beyond this material one. They therefore gravitate, in the name of serving God, towards serving in their goodness persons they do somewhat understand—the poor, the sick, the hungry and distressed—thus helping no one. They occasionally go so far

as to say that the poor are God. "Those in goodness cannot understand the soul as a person," Śrīla Prabhupāda warns. "This keeps them in goodness, and unless they are attracted by Kṛṣṇa-kathā they cannot be liberated." (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.5.11, purport)

Kṛṣṇa-kathā means hearing, discussing, and glorifying the Supreme Lord in His personal forms. Such glorification purifies one's heart of all vague and impersonal conceptions of the Supreme. It powerfully impels one to render service to Him and to all living entities, whom Kṛṣṇa claims in the *Gītā* as His eternal individual parts. Devotional service to Kṛṣṇa reduces, then eliminates altogether, the material miseries.

The best form of philanthropy, therefore—the only effective form—is to introduce oneself and others to the practice of Kṛṣṇa-kathā and devotional service. All other forms of welfare must continue, but always accompanied by Kṛṣṇa-kathā in order to develop and maintain the true perspective that doing good to others means helping them render devotional service with full knowledge and enthusiasm. Philanthropy without Kṛṣṇa-kathā is futile.

"Devotees are not unconcerned with the people's welfare," Śrīla Prabhupāda assures us. "They are always anxious to see how the people can be made happy both materially and spiritually." (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.14.7, purport) But they know that the root of all suffering is forgetfulness of our relationship with Kṛṣṇa, that the miseries of material life are designed to propel us towards remembering Him, and that those miseries stay insurmountable until we do so. ☀

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# RĀMA-RĀJYA AUTOMATICALLY

by Hridayānanda Dāsa Goswami

• • •

*A lecture given in Phoenix, Arizona, USA, on April 16, 1997, during the festival honoring the appearance day of Lord Rāmacandra.*

**W**E ARE CELEBRATING this evening Rāma Navamī, the appearance day of Lord Rāmacandra. Many of you know quite well the history of Rāma. Very briefly, for those who may not be so familiar, we are celebrating the appearance in this universe of a very important incarnation of God, the Supreme Lord who came to the world as Rāma, or Rāmacandra, in the celebrated Raghu dynasty a long, long time ago, before recorded history in the Western sense of the term.

Just as nowadays there are many bad leaders in the world, so also long, long ago there was a demon, or *asura*, named Rāvaṇa. The very name Rāvaṇa means that he made the whole world cry in anguish. Rāvaṇa had received a blessing from Brahmā, the engineer or secondary creator of the universe, that he could not be killed by any god. Rāvaṇa did not ask for immunity from death at the hands of human beings, because he had contempt for human beings.

To understand this story, which traditionally has been understood as history, not as mythology, we have to also understand the picture of life that we receive in the ancient Vedic literature, which has come down to us from India. We find a much more cosmopolitan, sophisticated picture of the universe, not the provincial view we find in modern materialistic society—that we human beings are all in all. Modern scientists often ridicule former



*Lord Rāmacandra and Sītā Devi served by Lakṣmaṇa and Hanumān, the divine monkey.*

# Sītā is called “the mother of the universe.” On the pretext of rescuing Sītā, Rāma killed Rāvaṇa and saved the world.

ways of thinking by saying that people believed the earth was the center of the universe and that all the planets went around the earth. Scientists laugh at this geocentric model. But they themselves have not improved upon this, because they are very much geocentric and anthropocentric, in the sense that, as far as they know, in the universe there is nothing but them; there is no life in other places. Sometimes they speculate that they may be discovering other planets, but as far as they know there is nothing else. They tend to ridicule the information we receive in ancient literature that the universe is filled with intelligent living beings.

## NOT MYTHOLOGY

It should not be taken as mythology when we hear that long, long ago Rāvaṇa received a benediction from Brahmā that he would not meet death at the hands of the superior living beings who manage the universe. For example, an intelligent human being can understand that in this city, Phoenix, there are trained people managing. It's not automatically that the lights go on, that the traffic lights work, that there's electricity, that when you turn the switch on your tap, water comes out, that food is being delivered to the wholesale and retail markets in an orderly fashion, and so on.

These things are not going on automatically. But from the point of view of a child or an animal these things are automatic. Similarly, this modern notion that all these forces within the universe—the cosmic lighting, the cosmic water supply, the wind, and so on—are working automatically is not an advanced or scientific notion; rather, it's the view of a child or an animal.

So we can see practically that people have now become like animals. That is stated in Vedic literature:

*āhāra-nidrā-bhaya-maithunaṁ ca  
sāmānyam etat paśubhir narāṇām  
dharmo hi teṣām adhiko viśeṣo  
dharmeṇa hiṇāḥ paśubhiḥ samānāḥ*

The first premise here is that there is no difference between human beings and animals in the basic functions of eating, sleeping, mating, and defending. We eat, the animals eat; we sleep, they sleep; and so on. But *dharmo hi teṣām adhiko viśeṣaḥ*: the particular superiority of human life lies in dharma. A human being has the capacity to ascertain and to willfully, consciously obey the laws of God. That capacity

is normally absent in lower forms of life. And so a human being who is bereft of dharma—who in no way understands that there are laws of God and higher spiritual principles—is equal to an animal.

This is very simple logic. If you say in abstract terms that *a* is distinguished from *b* by a certain quality you can call *y*, then if you remove *y* there's no further distinction. Then *a* equals *b*. So because people nowadays have no sense of dharma, they are equal to animals.

The only dharma nowadays is that I have my rights. There's no further talk of dharma. The discourse is in terms of rights. I have a right to do anything, whatever I want to do to enjoy my body. My body belongs to me. I can kill my baby if I like. I can kill animals if I like. I can do anything. Because people have become like animals, because they have no dharma, they cannot understand the intelligence behind the natural arrangements.

## UNIVERSAL MANAGERS SEEK HELP

So there are *devatās*, or gods, intelligent living beings who manage the universe, and long, long ago Brahmā gave the benediction to Rāvaṇa that he could not be killed by the *devatās*. Rāvaṇa, being contemptuous of human beings, didn't ask for protection from humans. The *devatās* prayed to the Supreme Lord, “Please come to this world playing the role of a human being, because that is a loophole in Rāvaṇa's contract. Rāvaṇa can be killed by a human being.”

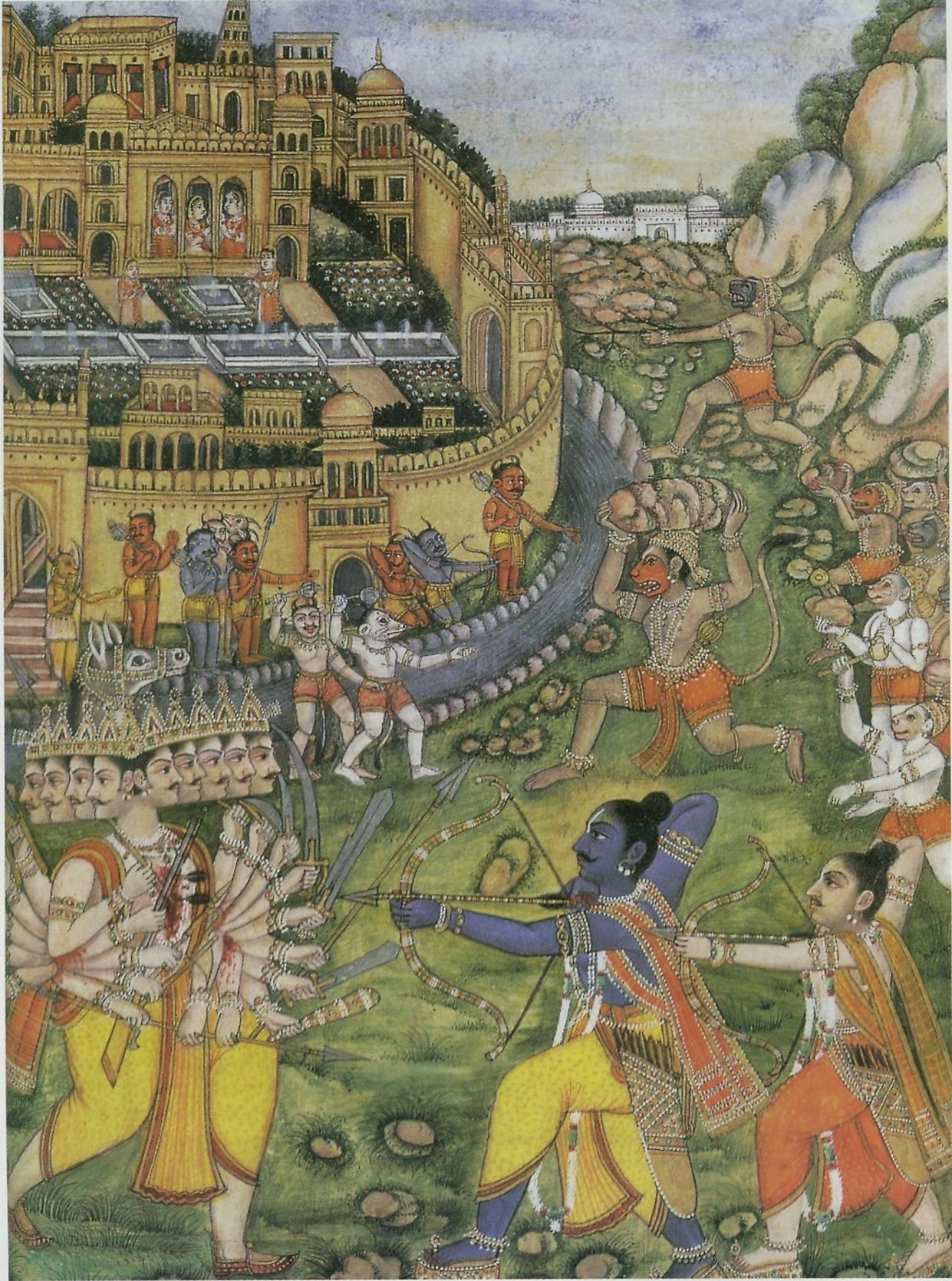
The *devatās* wanted to maintain law and order without breaking Brahmā's contract with Rāvaṇa. If you own a company and sign a contract with someone, even though the contract may not be favorable or may cause some harm, you want some solution that does not explicitly violate the terms of the contract, because law and order has to be maintained. So the request of the *devatās* is significant in that way.

It is also significant that God—the Supreme Lord, Puruṣottama, Bhagavān—can come down to this world. After all, if you are the owner, if you create some enterprise and it is under your administration then no one can stop you if you want to go to your warehouse, your factory, your office, your clinic, or whatever. Who can stop you? So if Kṛṣṇa, or God, wants to come to this world, Kṛṣṇa can come.

Now, as many of you know, God came and appeared as the perfect king, Rāma, and there are so many stories told in the history known as the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Somehow Rāvaṇa, this evil person, kidnapped the wife of Rāma, the famous Sītā, the ideal woman. She is called *jagad mātā*, “the mother of the



*Forest sages discuss spiritual topics with Lord Rāma and Sitā Devi.*



*Lord Rāma slays Rāvaṇa, king of the demons.*



# If we want Rāma-rājya, we should ask ourselves, “Am I prepared to act as a loving servant of Rāma?”

universe.” On the pretext of rescuing Sītā, Rāma killed Rāvaṇa and saved the world.

If you study the character of Rāvaṇa, you find that in many ways he was a very advanced, educated person. And his kingdom, Śrī Laṅkā, was very sophisticated. Even Hanumān, the great devotee of Rāma, was impressed by the cultural level of Laṅkā. There were all kinds of performing arts and culture and poetry, and very beautiful people. Everything was organized very nicely. The economy was flourishing. There was exquisite architecture. Practically in every sense it would have to be considered an ideal place to live.

There was only one flaw in Rāvaṇa’s program, as Śrīla Prabhupāda repeatedly points out. The one mistake, the one fatal flaw in Rāvaṇa’s program of social development, was that he wanted to enjoy Lakṣmī (Sītā) without Nārāyaṇa (Rāma). Lakṣmī is the goddess of fortune, and her husband is Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme Lord.

When Kṛṣṇa was here five thousand years ago, He lived in Dvārakā, in Gujarat. So that place was also flourishing. The difference between Śrī Laṅkā and Dvārakā, or between Śrī Laṅkā and Ayodhyā, the kingdom of Rāma, was that in Dvārakā and Ayodhyā people were accepting Lakṣmī with Nārāyaṇa, whereas Rāvaṇa thought, “I will take Nārāyaṇa’s place. I will take Lakṣmī without Nārāyaṇa.” And therefore despite all his qualifications, he was destroyed.

## MODERN RĀVAṆAS

It is plain to see that modern society tends more to the Rāvaṇa side, to take Lakṣmī without Nārāyaṇa. That is called secularism, and it is causing modern problems. Everyone knows how the world is becoming poisoned. From the environmental perspective, the world is being poisoned because people’s minds are poisoned by this evil thought that “I can take Lakṣmī.”

The notion that “I can take Lakṣmī without Nārāyaṇa” is wrong. If we understand anything from the *Rāmāyaṇa*, from the glorious story of Rāma, we should understand this point. We should not try to take Lakṣmī in any way, shape, or form, without Nārāyaṇa.

We should rather be like the Ayodhyā-vāsīs, the residents of Ayodhyā. They had not become like Rāvaṇa. They knew Lord Rāma as the proprietor of everything. From the Vedic point of view, the very first principle you find is that God is the supreme proprietor. The *Īsopaniṣad*, among all the *Upaniṣads*, has a special place historically because it is the only *Upaniṣad* directly taken from the text of a Vedic *saṁhitā*, or treatise—the *Sāma Veda*. In the *Īsopaniṣad* the

very first statement is *iśāvāsyam idaṁ sarvaṁ*: “Whatever exists in the universe is the property of God.”

And Lord Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā*, *sarva-loka maheśvaram*: “I am the proprietor, the great Lord of all the worlds.” He also says, *ahaṁ sarvasya prabhavo mattaḥ sarvaṁ pravartate*: “I am the source of everything; everything emanates from Me.”

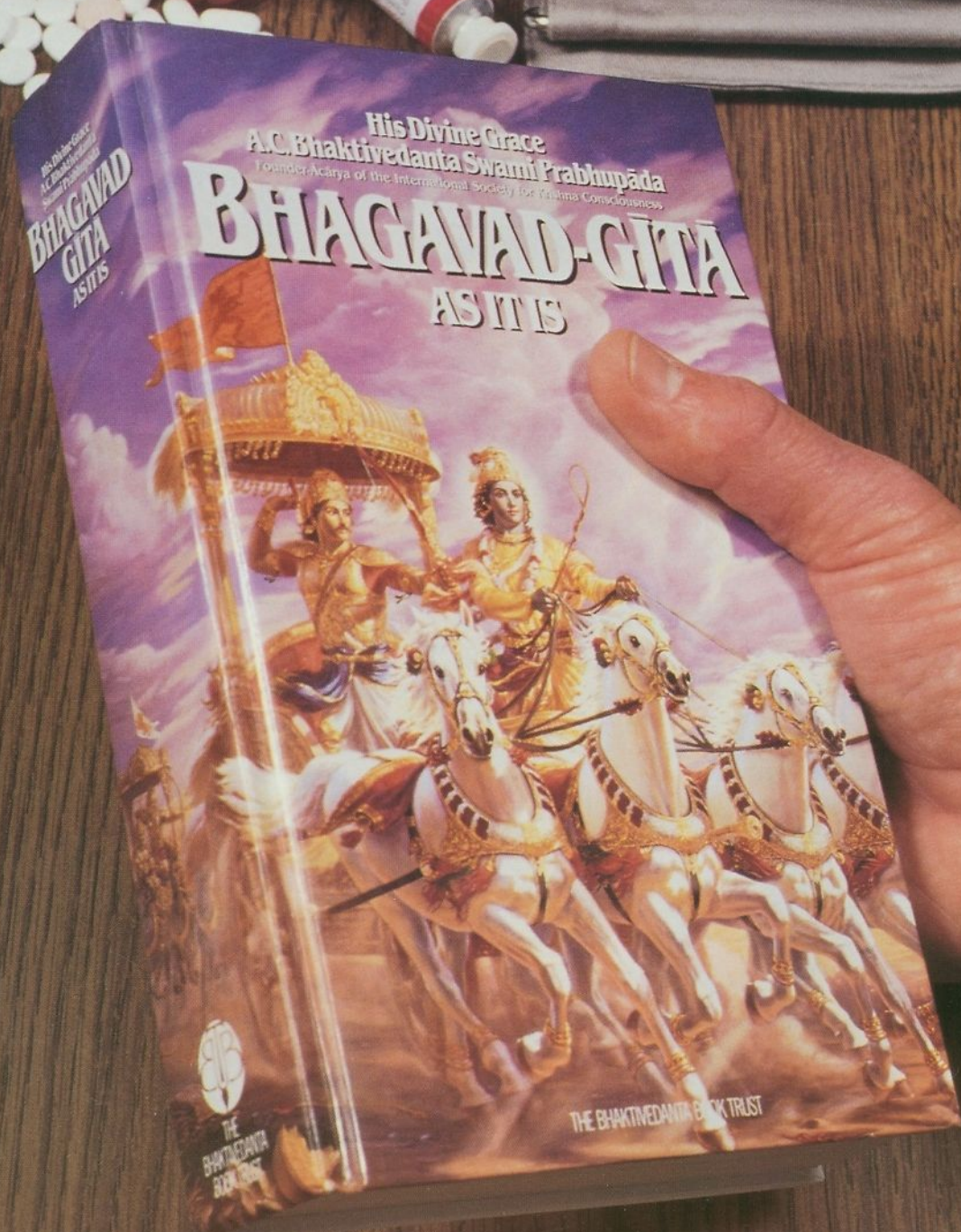
Every word in the *Gītā* is significant. Kṛṣṇa says, *iti matvā bhajante mām*: “Intelligent persons worship Me.” This is the real point of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. We should clearly understand the fault of Rāvaṇa. He did not recognize the position of Rāma or Nārāyaṇa.

## BECOMING AYODHYĀ-VĀSIS

Let us take advantage of this occasion to remember Rāma and to rededicate ourselves to the real work of human life. If you study Ayodhyā, you find that the residents were not impoverished. It was the most opulent city. It is not that by considering oneself a humble servant of Rāma one becomes a loser. We can identify in some way with the residents of Ayodhyā. We can see what their attitude was, how they were living. People talk about Rāma-rājya, the reign of Rāma. Of course, this is a controversial topic in India nowadays. But at least if we want Rāma-rājya, we should begin with ourselves. We should ask ourselves, “How am I prepared to become an Ayodhyā-vāsī?” It’s not simply a question of getting other people to do things; am I prepared to become like the residents of Ayodhyā? Am I prepared to act as a loving servant of Rāma the way those people did?

The real way to have Rāma-rājya is to convince others to love Rāma and to act in this mood, as loving servants of God. The residents of Ayodhyā were prepared to do anything for Rāma. When He was exiled to the forest, they were all prepared to go with Him. He had to convince them to stay behind, to keep His city going. It’s not that they were prepared to worship Rāma only if they would get some opulence. They were prepared to give up everything in a moment to be with Rāma or to satisfy Rāma. They could do anything for the satisfaction of Sītā and Rāma. So when a significant portion of the people have this understanding, then automatically, naturally, there will be Rāma-rājya. 🌸

*Hridayānanda Dāsa Goswami is translating the epic Mahābhārata, an excerpt of which appears in each issue of Back to Godhead.*



# THE RIGHT MEDICINE

*We place our trust in healers of the body,  
but we lack faith in true healers of the soul.*

by Devāmṛta Swami

*In his book Perfect Escape, Devāmṛta Swami comments on the teachings of the saint Jaḍa Bharata to King Rahūgaṇa, found in the Fifth Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. Having heard from Jaḍa Bharata, King Rahūgaṇa is now speaking.*

**B**ECAUSE OF the material conceptions that have shackled my mind, I declare myself diseased. My body, made of matter, is full of dirty things, and my vision is polluted by pride. Your words of nectar are the right medicine for me, like vaccine for one bitten by a snake. Like cooling water, your instructions relieve one from the scorching fever of material attachment.”

Have you ever known anyone afflicted with a terminal disease like cancer? Of course, in one sense everyone is a terminal case, as the death of the body is common to all. Nevertheless, we all want to live a full life span. Longevity is our expected privilege as members of the developed world. Just think what happens when an educated person of sufficient financial means receives a medical diagnosis that the end is near. Once the initial shock wears off, the person at once begins a desperate search for a brilliant doctor. We are all trained to believe that the fron-

tiers of science will continuously offer new prospects for miraculous cures.

A wealthy patient eagerly researches even the most remote leads. Consider, for example, the famous American basketball player Magic Johnson. When he learned he was HIV positive, he at once deployed his millions to seek out the premier AIDS specialists in America. No possibilities were left unexplored.

Suppose you have bone cancer. Fortunately, friends in the alternative medical scene tell you of a doctor who has astonishing success reversing deterioration in patients who surrender to his or her radical prescriptions. Just visualize what your attitude would be upon arriving at the treatment center: “Doctor, I’ve heard all about your special therapy and its extraordinary possibilities. Conventional doctors have given me no chance to live, but I’ll do anything you say to save my life. Your reputation is famous throughout all the journals of alternative healing. Please treat me. At least put me on the waiting list. I promise I’ll follow your every instruction completely—no matter how much I have to change my living habits.”

Bernie S. Siegal, alternative doctor and author, has sold millions of books recommending

Photo by Yamarāja Dāsa

# *One should not accept the tutelage of a spiritual guide without investigating whether he can indeed supply all the spiritual necessities.*

• • •

attitudinal healing. "Hope is therapeutic," he says. Although statistics show that a person with  $x$  number of terminal symptoms will die in  $y$  number of months, he tells of special possibilities. You could be among the exceptional cases—if you change your mentality. He advocates love, laughter, and doing what you like to do. Especially you should "live life to the max." Then you may qualify yourself for a complete remission, or at least a partial mitigation. People naturally flock to him for personal care.

Siegal says he wouldn't describe himself as a consummate optimist. Early in his medical career, he saw that although he was trained to help people live, everyone in fact dies. So he feels that if he can spread some happiness amidst the anguish of life, he has made a significant contribution. "I'm a realist," he said in a radio interview. "I know there's pain and trouble ahead, but I choose joy. As Joseph Campbell said: 'I'm here to participate joyfully in the sorrows of the world.' Life is tough, but since I'm here for a limited time, I choose joy. That's a choice we all have to make or we're not going to be grateful for life or be happy."

Judging by sales of Siegal's book, people appreciate his efforts. Like other alternative-medicine authors—Deepak Chopra, Larry Dossey, Andrew Weil—Siegal firmly insists on a reciprocal relationship of love and trust between the doctor and patient. The doctor must resonate with the patient's inner nature, so that the patient can arouse the dormant inner strengths crucial for the healing process.

The Western world easily accepts devotion to Siegal and his methodology. We cherish a doctor reputed for postponing disease and death. For a transcendentalist, however, the public's attitude differs. Society has hardly any idea how to encourage a genuine spiritual teacher. We don't understand the

dynamics of the relationship between a bona fide spiritual guide and a student. Nor do we understand the goal of that relationship.

Take for example Joseph Campbell, the famous popularizer of mythology. Commenting on Westerners' seeking spiritual guides, the late scholar said: "I think that is bad news. I really do think you can take clues from teachers; I know you can. But, you see, the traditional Oriental idea is that the student should submit absolutely to the teacher. The guru actually assumes responsibility for the student's moral life, and that is total giving. I don't think that's quite proper for a Western person. One of the big spiritual truths for the West is that each of us is a unique creature, and consequently has a unique path."

Yes, each of us is an individual. Kṛṣṇa, in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, confirms the eternal individuality of both the minute living entity and Himself, the Complete Whole: "Never was there a time when I did not exist, nor you, nor all these kings; nor in the future shall any of us cease to be." (2.12) Yet when living entities forget their relationship with the supreme source, they all suffer a common disease. Everywhere you'll find the same plague: misidentification with the body and mind, concurrent with an intense struggle to live an illusory life separate from Kṛṣṇa, the Complete Whole.

The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (5.5.18) warns that no one should become a spiritual teacher who cannot rescue a student from the cycle of repeated birth, disease, old age, and death. In fact, the text cautions that one should not even become a parent or a spouse if one cannot accomplish this most important task. Therefore, all Kṛṣṇa conscious literature advises that one not accept the tutelage of a spiritual guide without investigating whether he can indeed supply all the spiritual necessities. But when you find a doc-

tor who can actually heal the tumor of material existence, why not humble yourself in love and trust?

Doctors like Bernie Siegal aspire only to ease the pain in an admittedly tough and trouble-filled world. Certainly we do need to keep our bodies in the best possible health, and for talented medical help we should be grateful. But we should remember that even the most acclaimed doctors can offer only stop-gap measures in a temporary, precarious existence. For their critical aid in pursuing the ignorance that feels like bliss, we adore them. We desperately seek their guidance like drowning men battling for air. No arguments, just, "Doc, I know you can help me where all others have failed. Whatever you advise, I'll do without argument."

Actually, everyone is a terminal case—the death rate is 100 percent. Yet fed by scholarly and popular misunderstandings, we fail to value real therapy, real medicine, and to take advantage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

"Physician, heal thyself." Why merely take part in so-called joy in the sorrows of the world? Why not learn to rise above illusion and teach others to do the same? The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (5.5.4) says: "When a person considers sense gratification the aim of life, he certainly becomes mad after materialistic living and engages in all kinds of sinful activity. He does not know that due to his past misdeeds he has already received a body which, although temporary, is the cause of his misery. Actually the living entity should not have taken on a material body, but he has been awarded the material body for sense gratification. Therefore I think it not befitting an intelligent person to involve himself again in the activities of sense gratification by which he perpetually gets material bodies one after another."

Here we find a clear invitation to  
(please turn to page 60)

# SERVICE BY FRIENDSHIP AND CHARITY

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 Sāṅkhya, the analytical study of all existence. As the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam continues, Lord Kapila explains how to serve the Supersoul within the heart of every living being.

## THIRD CANTO / CHAPTER 29

27 अथ मां सर्वभूतेषु भूतात्मानं कृतालयम् ।  
अर्हयेदानमानाम्यां मैत्र्याभिन्नेन चक्षुषा ॥२७॥

*atha mām sarva-bhūteṣu  
bhūtātmānam kṛtālayam  
arhayed dāna-mānābhyāṁ  
māitryābhinnena cakṣuṣā*

*atha*—therefore; *mām*—Me; *sarva-bhūteṣu*—in all creatures; *bhūta-ātmānam*—the Self in all beings; *kṛta-ālayam*—abiding; *arhayet*—one should propitiate; *dāna-mānābhyām*—through charity and respect; *māitryā*—through friendship; *abhinnena*—equal; *cakṣuṣā*—by viewing.

Therefore, through charitable gifts and attention, as well as through friendly behavior and by viewing all to be alike, one

should propitiate Me, who abide in all creatures as their very Self.

PURPORT (continued from last issue): We should not, at the same time, misunderstand that the Supersoul situated in the heart of an animal like a hog and the Supersoul situated in the heart of a learned *brāhmaṇa* are different. The Supersoul in all living entities is the same Supreme Personality of Godhead. By His omnipotence, He can live anywhere, and He can create His *Vaikuṅṭha* situation everywhere. That is His inconceivable potency. Therefore, when Nārāyaṇa is living in the heart of a hog, He does not become a hog-Nārāyaṇa. He is always Nārāyaṇa and is unaffected by the body of the hog.

28 जीवाःश्रेष्ठा ह्यजीवानां ततः प्राणभृतः शुभे ।  
ततः सचित्ताः प्रवरास्ततश्चेन्द्रियवृत्तयः ॥२८॥

*jīvāḥ śreṣṭhā hy ajīvānām  
tataḥ prāṇa-bhṛtaḥ śubhe  
tataḥ sa-cittāḥ pravaraś  
tataś cendriya-vṛttayaḥ*

*jīvāḥ*—living entities; *śreṣṭhāḥ*—better; *hi*—indeed; *ajīvānām*—than inanimate objects; *tataḥ*—than them; *prāṇa-*

*bhṛtaḥ*—entities with life symptoms; *śubhe*—O blessed mother; *tataḥ*—than them; *sa-cittāḥ*—entities with developed consciousness; *pravaraḥ*—better; *tataḥ*—than them; *ca*—and; *indriya-vṛttayaḥ*—those with sense perception.

**Living entities are superior to inanimate objects, O blessed mother, and among them, living entities who display life symptoms are better. Animals with developed consciousness are better than them, and better still are those who have developed sense perception.**

PURPORT: In the previous verse it was explained that living entities should be honored by charitable gifts and friendly behavior, and in this verse and in the following verses, the description of different grades of living entities is given so that one can know when to behave friendly and when to give charity. For example, a tiger is a living entity, part and parcel of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and the Supreme Lord is living in the heart of the tiger as Supersoul. But does this mean that we have to treat the tiger in a friendly manner? Certainly not. We have to treat him differently, giving him charity in the form of *prasāda*. The many saintly persons in the jungles do not treat the tigers in a friendly way, but they supply *prasāda* foodstuffs to them. The tigers come, take the food and go away, just as a dog does. According to the Vedic system, a dog is not allowed to enter the house. Because of their uncleanness, cats and dogs are not allowed within the apartment of a gentleman, but are so trained that they stand outside. The compassionate householder will supply *prasāda* to the dogs and cats, who eat outside and then go away. We must treat the lower living entities compassionately, but this does not mean that we have to treat them in the same way we treat other human beings. The feeling of equality must be there, but the treatment should be discriminating. Just how discrimination should be maintained is given in the following six verses concerning the different grades of living conditions.

The first division is made between dead, stonelike matter and the living organism. A living organism is sometimes manifested even in stone. Experience shows that some hills and mountains grow. This is due to the presence of the soul within that stone. Above that, the next manifestation of the living condition is development of consciousness, and the next manifestation is the development of sense perception. In the *Mokṣa-dharma* section of the *Mahābhārata* it is stated that trees have developed sense perception; they can see and smell. We know by experience that trees can see. Sometimes in its growth a large tree changes its course of development to avoid some hindrances. This means that a tree can see, and according to *Mahābhārata*, a tree can also smell. This indicates the development of sense perception.

29 तत्रापि स्पर्शवेदिभ्यः प्रवरा रसवेदिनः ।  
तेभ्यो गन्धविदः श्रेष्ठास्ततः शब्दविदो वराः ॥२९॥

*tatrāpi sparśa-vedibhyaḥ*  
*pravarā rasa-vedinaḥ*  
*tebhyo gandha-vidaḥ śreṣṭhās*  
*tataḥ śabda-vido varāḥ*

*tatra*—among them; *api*—moreover; *sparśa-vedibhyaḥ*—than those perceiving touch; *pravaraḥ*—better; *rasa-vedinaḥ*—those perceiving taste; *tebhyaḥ*—than them; *gandha-vidaḥ*—those perceiving smell; *śreṣṭhāḥ*—better; *tataḥ*—than them; *śabda-vidaḥ*—those perceiving sound; *varāḥ*—better.

**Among the living entities who have developed sense perception, those who have developed the sense of taste are better than those who have developed only the sense of touch. Better than them are those who have developed the sense of smell, and better still are those who have developed the sense of hearing.**

PURPORT: Although Westerners accept that Darwin first expounded the doctrine of evolution, the science of anthropology is not new. The development of the evolutionary process was known long before from the *Bhāgavatam*, which was written five thousand years ago. There are records of the statements of Kapila Muni, who was present almost in the beginning of the creation. This knowledge has existed since the Vedic time, and all these sequences are disclosed in Vedic literature; the theory of gradual evolution or anthropology is not new to the *Vedas*. It is said here that amongst the trees there are also evolutionary processes; the different kinds of trees have touch perception. It is said that better than the trees are the fish because fish have developed the sense of taste. Better than the fish are the bees, who have developed the sense of smell, and better than them are the serpents because serpents have developed the sense of hearing. In the darkness of night a snake can find its eatables simply by hearing the frog's very pleasant cry. The snake can understand, "There is the frog," and he captures the frog simply because of its sound vibration. This example is sometimes given for persons who vibrate sounds simply for death. One may have a very nice tongue that can vibrate sound like the frogs, but that kind of vibration is simply calling death. The best use of the tongue and of sound vibration is to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. That will protect one from the hands of cruel death.

30 रूपभेदविदस्तत्र ततश्चोभयतोदतः ।  
तेषां बहुपदाः श्रेष्ठाश्चतुष्पादस्ततो द्विपात् ॥३०॥

*rūpa-bheda-vidas tatra*  
*tataś cobhayato-dataḥ*  
*teṣāṃ bahu-padāḥ śreṣṭhāḥ*  
*catuṣ-pādas tato dvi-pāt*

*rūpa-bheda*—distinctions of form; *vidah*—those who perceive; *tatra*—than them; *tataḥ*—than them; *ca*—and; *ubhayataḥ*—in both jaws; *dataḥ*—those with teeth; *teṣām*—of them; *bahu-padāḥ*—those who have many legs; *śreṣṭhāḥ*—better; *catuḥ-pādāḥ*—four-legged; *tataḥ*—than them; *dvi-pāt*—two-legged.

**Better than those living entities who can perceive sound are those who can distinguish between one form and another. Better than them are those who have developed upper and lower sets of teeth, and better still are those who have many legs. Better than them are the quadrupeds, and better still are the human beings.**

PURPORT: It is said that certain birds, such as crows, can distinguish one form from another. Living entities that have many legs, like the wasp, are better than plants and grasses, which have no legs. Four-legged animals are better than many-legged living entities, and better than the animals is the human being, who has only two legs.

**31 ततो वर्णाश्च चत्वारस्तेषां ब्राह्मण उत्तमः ।  
ब्राह्मणेष्वपि वेदज्ञो ह्यर्थज्ञोऽभ्यधिकस्ततः ॥३१॥**

*tato varṇāś ca catvāraś*  
*teṣāṃ brāhmaṇa uttamah*  
*brāhmaṇeṣu api veda-jñō*  
*hy artha-jñō 'bhyadhikas tataḥ*

*tataḥ*—among them; *varṇāḥ*—classes; *ca*—and; *catvāraḥ*—four; *teṣām*—of them; *brāhmaṇaḥ*—a *brāhmaṇa*; *uttamah*—best; *brāhmaṇeṣu*—among the *brāhmaṇas*; *api*—moreover; *veda*—the *Vedas*; *jñāḥ*—one who knows; *hi*—certainly; *artha*—the purpose; *jñāḥ*—one who knows; *abhyadhikah*—better; *tataḥ*—than him.

**Among human beings, the society which is divided according to quality and work is best, and in that society, the intelligent men, who are designated as *brāhmaṇas*, are best. Among the *brāhmaṇas*, one who has studied the *Vedas* is the best, and among the *brāhmaṇas* who have studied the *Vedas*, one who knows the actual purport of *Veda* is the best.**

PURPORT: The system of four classifications in human society according to quality and work is very scientific. This system of *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas*, and *sūdras* has now become vitiated as the present caste system in India, but it appears that this system has been current a very long time, since it is mentioned in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā*. Unless there is such a division of the social orders in human society, including the intelligent class, the martial class, the mercantile class, and the laborer class, there is always confusion as to who is to work for what purpose. A person trained to the stage of understanding the Absolute Truth is a *brāhmaṇa*, and when such a *brāhmaṇa* is *veda-jñā*, he understands the purpose of *Veda*. The purpose of *Veda* is

to understand the Absolute. One who understands the Absolute Truth in three phases, namely Brahman, Paramātmā, and Bhagavān, and who understands the term *Bhagavān* to mean the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is considered to be the best of the *brāhmaṇas*, or a Vaiṣṇava.

**32 अर्थज्ञात्संशयच्छेत्ता ततः श्रेयान् स्वकर्मकृत् ।  
मुक्तसङ्गस्ततो भूयानदोग्धा धर्ममात्मनः ॥३२॥**

*artha-jñāt saṁśaya-cchettā*  
*tataḥ śreyān sva-karma-kṛt*  
*mukta-saṅgas tato bhūyān*  
*adogdhā dharmam ātmanaḥ*

*artha-jñāt*—than one who knows the purpose of the *Vedas*; *saṁśaya*—doubts; *chettā*—one who cuts off; *tataḥ*—than him; *śreyān*—better; *sva-karma*—his prescribed duties; *kṛt*—one who executes; *mukta-saṅgaḥ*—liberated from material association; *tataḥ*—than him; *bhūyān*—better; *adogdhā*—not executing; *dharmam*—devotional service; *ātmanaḥ*—for himself.

**Better than the *brāhmaṇa* who knows the purpose of the *Vedas* is he who can dissipate all doubts, and better than him is one who strictly follows the brahminical principles. Better than him is one who is liberated from all material contamination, and better than him is a pure devotee, who executes devotional service without expectation of reward.**

PURPORT: *Artha-jñā brāhmaṇa* refers to one who has made a thorough analytical study of the Absolute Truth and who knows that the Absolute Truth is realized in three different phases, namely Brahman, Paramātmā, and Bhagavān. If someone not only has this knowledge but is able to clear all doubts if questioned about the Absolute Truth, he is considered better. Further, there may be a learned *brāhmaṇa*-Vaiṣṇava who can explain clearly and eradicate all doubts, but if he does not follow the Vaiṣṇava principles, then he is not situated on a higher level. One must be able to clear all doubts and simultaneously be situated in the brahminical characteristics. Such a person, who knows the purpose of the Vedic injunctions, who can employ the principles laid down in the Vedic literature, and who teaches his disciples in that way, is called an *ācārya*. The position of an *ācārya* is that he executes devotional service with no desire for elevation to a higher position of life.

The highest perfectional *brāhmaṇa* is the Vaiṣṇava. A Vaiṣṇava who knows the science of the Absolute Truth but is not able to preach such knowledge to others is described as being in the lower stage, one who not only understands the principles of the science of God but can also preach is in the second stage, and one who not only can preach but who also sees everything in the Absolute Truth and the Absolute Truth in everything is in the highest class of Vaiṣṇavas. It is mentioned here that a Vaiṣṇava is already a *brāhmaṇa*; in

fact, the highest stage of brahminical perfection is reached when one becomes a Vaiṣṇava.

33 तस्मान्मय्यर्पिताशेषक्रियार्थात्मा निरन्तरः ।  
मय्यर्पितात्मनः पुंसो मयि संन्यस्तकर्मणः ।  
न पश्यामि परं भूतमकर्तुः समदर्शनात् ॥३३॥

*tasmān mayy arpitāśeṣa-  
kriyārthātmā nirantarahaḥ  
mayy arpitātmanaḥ puṁso  
mayi sannyasta-karmaṇaḥ  
na paśyāmi paraṁ bhūtam  
akartuḥ sama-darśanāt*

*tasmāt*—than him; *mayi*—unto Me; *arpita*—offered; *aśeṣa*—all; *kriyā*—actions; *artha*—wealth; *ātmā*—life, soul; *nirantarahaḥ*—without cessation; *mayi*—unto Me; *arpita*—offered; *ātmanaḥ*—whose mind; *puṁsaḥ*—than a person; *mayi*—unto Me; *sannyasta*—dedicated; *karmaṇaḥ*—whose activities; *na*—not; *paśyāmi*—I see; *paraṁ*—greater; *bhūtam*—living entity; *akartuḥ*—without proprietorship; *sama*—same; *darśanāt*—whose vision.

**Therefore I do not find a greater person than he who has no interest outside of Mine and who therefore engages and dedicates all his activities and all his life—everything—unto Me without cessation.**

PURPORT: In this verse the word *sama-darśanāt* means that he no longer has any separate interest; the devotee's interest and the Supreme Personality of Godhead's interest are one. For example, Lord Caitanya, in the role of a devotee, also preached the same philosophy. He preached that Kṛṣṇa is the worshipful Lord, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and that the interest of His pure devotees is the same as His own.

Sometimes Māyāvādī philosophers, due to a poor fund of knowledge, define the word *sama-darśanāt* to mean that a devotee should see himself as one with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is foolishness. When one thinks himself one with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, there is no question of serving Him. When there is service, there must be a master. Three things must be present for there to be service: the master, the servant, and the service. Here it is clearly stated that he who has dedicated his life, all his activities, his mind, and his soul—everything—for the satisfaction of the Supreme Lord, is considered to be the greatest person.

The word *akartuḥ* means “without any sense of proprietorship.” Everyone wants to act as the proprietor of his actions so that he can enjoy the result. A devotee, however, has no such desire; he acts because the Personality of Godhead wants him to act in a particular way. He has no

personal motive. When Lord Caitanya preached Kṛṣṇa consciousness, it was not with the purpose that people would call Him Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead; rather, He preached that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and should be worshiped as such. A devotee who is a most confidential servant of the Lord never does anything for his personal account, but does everything for the satisfaction of the Supreme Lord. It is clearly stated, therefore, *mayi sannyasta-karmaṇaḥ*: the devotee works, but he works for the Supreme. It is also stated, *mayy arpitātmanaḥ*: “He gives his mind unto Me.” These are the qualifications of a devotee, who, according to this verse, is accepted as the highest of all human beings.

34 मनसैतानि भूतानि प्रणमेद्बहु मानयन् ।  
ईश्वरो जीवकल्या प्रविष्टो भगवानिति ॥३४॥

*manasaitāni bhūtāni  
praṇamed bahu mānayan  
īśvaro jīva-kalayā  
praviṣṭo bhagavān iti*

*manasā*—with the mind; *etāni*—to these; *bhūtāni*—living entities; *praṇamet*—he offers respects; *bahu mānayan*—showing regard; *īśvaraḥ*—the controller; *jīva*—of the living entities; *kalayā*—by His expansion as the Supersoul; *praviṣṭaḥ*—has entered; *bhagavān*—the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *iti*—thus.

**Such a perfect devotee offers respects to every living entity because he is under the firm conviction that the Supreme Personality of Godhead has entered the body of every living entity as the Supersoul, or controller.**

PURPORT: A perfect devotee, as described above, does not make the mistake of thinking that because the Supreme Personality of Godhead as Paramātmā has entered into the body of every living entity, every living entity has become the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is foolishness. Suppose a person enters into a room; that does not mean that the room has become that person. Similarly, that the Supreme Lord has entered into each of the 8,400,000 particular types of material bodies does not mean that each of these bodies has become the Supreme Lord. Because the Supreme Lord is present, however, a pure devotee accepts each body as the temple of the Lord, and since the devotee offers respect to such temples in full knowledge, he gives respect to every living entity in relationship with the Lord. Māyāvādī philosophers wrongly think that because the Supreme Person has entered the body of a poor man, the Supreme Lord has become *daridra-nārāyaṇa*, or poor Nārāyaṇa. These are all blasphemous statements of atheists and nondevotees.

(continued in the next issue)



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- Pune, Maharashtra** — 4 Tarapoor Rd., Camp, 411 001/ Tel. (0212) 667259
- Puri, Orissa** — Sipsarubuli Puri, Dist. Puri/ Tel. (06752) 24592 or 24594

- Puri, Orissa** — Bhakti Kuthi, Swargadwar, Puri/ Tel. (06752) 23740
- Secunderabad, A.P.** — 27 St. John's Rd., 500 026/ Tel. (040) 805232/ Fax: (040) 814021/  
E-mail: sahadeva.brs@com.bbt.se
- Silchar, Assam** — Ambikapatti, Silchar, Cachar Dist., 788 004
- Siliguri, W. Bengal** — Gitalpara, 734 406/ Tel. (0353) 426619/ Fax: (0353) 526130/  
E-mail: siliguri@com.bbt.se
- Sri Rangan, Tamil Nadu** — 16A Thiruvadi St., Trichy, 620 006/ Tel. (0431) 433945
- Surat, Gujarat** — Rander Rd., Jahangirpura, 395 005/ Tel. (0261) 685516 or 685891
- Surat, Gujarat** — Bhaktivedanta Rajavidyalaya, Krishnalok, Surat-Bardoli Rd. Gangapur,  
P.O. Gangadhara, Dist. Surat, 394 310/ Tel. (0261) 667075
- Thiruvananthapuram (Trivandrum), Kerala** — T.C. 224/1485, WC Hospital Rd., Thycad,  
695 014/ Tel. (0471) 328197/ E-mail: sarvaisvarya.jps@com.bbt.se
- Tirupati, A. P.** — K.T. Rd., Vinayaka Nagar, 517 507/ Tel. (08574) 20114
- Udhampur, Jammu and Kashmir** — Srila Prabhupada Ashram, Prabhupada Marg, Prabhupada  
Nagar, Udhampur 182 101/ Tel. (01992) 70298
- Vadodra (Baroda), Gujarat** — Hare Krishna Land, Gotri Rd., 390 021/ Tel. (0265) 326299 or  
321012/ Fax: (0265) 331013/ E-mail: basu.ghosh.acbsp@com.bbt.se
- Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujarat** — ISKCON Hare Krishna Land, 338 120/ Tel. (02692) 30796
- Varanasi, U. P.** — Annapura Nagar, Vidyapith Rd., Varanasi 221 001/ Tel. (0542) 362617
- ◆ **Vrindavana, U. P.** — Krishna-Balaram Mandir, Bhaktivedanta Swami Marg, Raman Reti,  
Mathura Dist., 281 124/ Tel. (0565) 442478 or 442355/ Fax: (0565) 442596/  
E-mail: 105146.1570@compuserve.com; (Gurukula:) vgurukula@com.bbt.se

## FARM COMMUNITIES

- Ahmedabad District, Gujarat** — Hare Krishna Farm, Katwada (contact ISKCON Ahmedabad)
- Assam** — Karnamadhu, Dist. Karimganj
- Chamorshi, Maharashtra** — 78 Krishnanagar Dham, Dist. Gadchiroli, 442 603/ Tel. (0218) 623473
- Hyderabad, A. P.** — P. O. Dabilpur Village, Medchal Tq., R.R. Dist., 501 401/ Tel. 552924
- Karnataka** — Bhaktivedanta Eco-Village, Nagodi P.O., Vullur Valley, Hosanagar Taluq, Shivmoga  
District, Karnataka 577 425 (mail: Garuda Guha, Kollur, D.K. District, Karnataka 576 220)
- Mayapur, West Bengal** — (contact ISKCON Mayapur)

## ADDITIONAL RESTAURANT

- Calcutta** — Hare Krishna Karma-Free Confectionary, 6 Russel St., Calcutta 700 071

## CANADA

- Calgary, Alberta** — 313 Fourth St. N.E., T2E 3S3/ Tel. (403) 265-3302/ Fax: (403) 547-0795/  
E-mail: sahadevs@cadvision.com
- Edmonton, Alberta** — 9353 35th Ave., T6E 5R5/ Tel. (403) 439-9999/  
E-mail: jsharma@mail.awinc.com
- Montreal, Quebec** — 1626 Pie IX Boulevard, H1V 2C5/ Tel. & fax: (514) 521-1301/  
E-mail: mtl@videotron.ca
- ◆ **Ottawa, Ontario** — 212 Somerset St. E., K1N 6V4/ Tel. (613) 565-6544/  
Fax: (613) 565-2575/ E-mail: 102623.2417@compuserve.com
- Regina, Saskatchewan** — 1279 Retallack St., S4T 2H8/ Tel. (306) 525-1640
- ◆ **Toronto, Ontario** — 243 Ave. Rd., M5R 2J6/ Tel. (416) 922-5415/ Fax: (416) 922-1021/  
E-mail: toronto@com.bbt.se
- ◆ **Vancouver, B.C.** — 5462 S.E. Marine Dr., Burnaby V5J 3G8/ Tel. (604) 433-9728/ Fax: (604)  
431-7251; Govinda's Restaurant: (604) 433-2428/ E-mail: jaygo@direct.ca

## FARM COMMUNITY

- Ashcroft, B.C.** — Saranagati Dhama (mail: P.O. Box 99, V0K 1A0, attn: Uttama Devi Dasi)/  
Tel. (250) 453-2397/ Fax: (250) 453-2622 [attn: (250) 453-2397]/  
E-mail: devadeva@mail.netshop.net

## U.S.A.

- ◆ **Atlanta, Georgia** — 1287 South Ponce de Leon Ave., N.E., 30306/ Tel. (404) 378-9234/  
Fax: (404) 373-3381/ E-mail: 76415.175@compuserve.com
- Austin, Texas** — 807-A E. 30th St., 78705/ Tel. (512) 320-0372/ Fax: (512) 320-0477/  
E-mail: sankarsana@aol.com
- Baltimore, Maryland** — 200 Bloomsbury Ave., Catonsville, 21228/ Tel. (410) 744-4069  
Tel. & fax: (410) 744-1624
- Berkeley, California** — 2334 Stuart St., 94705/ Tel. (510) 540-9215/ E-mail: berkeley@com.org
- Boise, Idaho** — 1615 Martha St., 83706/ Tel. (208) 344-4274/  
E-mail: arun.gupta@hp-boise-omd.om.hp.com
- Boston, Massachusetts** — 72 Commonwealth Ave., 02116/ Tel. (617) 247-8611/  
Fax: (617) 266-3744/ E-mail: iskoston@aol.com
- ◆ **Chicago, Illinois** — 1716 W. Lunt Ave., 60626/ Tel. (773) 973-0900/ Fax: (773) 973-0526/  
E-mail: trvkrm@aol.com
- Columbus, Ohio** — 379 W. Eighth Ave., 43201/ Tel. (614) 421-1661/ Fax: (614) 294-0545/  
E-mail: malati.acbsp@com.bbt.se

**Note for international phone calls:** When dialing from outside the country, drop the "0" that begins most city codes (the numbers shown in parentheses). **Exceptions:**

For Spain, the number to drop is the initial "9," for the CIS, "8." Telephone numbers include country codes, identified by a +. To save space, we've skipped the codes for North America (1) and India (91).

★ New listing ◆ Temples with restaurants or dining ● Revised listing

- ◆ **Dallas, Texas** — 5430 Gurley Ave., 75223/ Tel. (214) 827-6330/ Fax: (214) 823-7264/ E-mail: txkrishnas@aol.com
- ◆ **Denver, Colorado** — 1400 Cherry St., 80220/ Tel. (303) 333-5461/ Fax: (303) 321-9052/ E-mail: nmd@com.org
- ◆ **Detroit, Michigan** — 383 Lenox Ave., 48215/ Tel. (313) 824-6000/ Fax: (313) 822-3748/ E-mail: fmansion@flash.net
- ★ **Eugene, Oregon** — 426 E. 12th St., 97401/ Tel. (541) 345-9053/ E-mail: eugene@com.bbt.se
- ◆ **Gainesville, Florida** — 214 N.W. 14th St., 32603/ Tel. (352) 336-4183/ E-mail: krishna@afn.org
- ◆ **Gurabo, Puerto Rico** — HC01-Box 8440, 00778-9763/ Tel. & fax: (809) 737-1658
- ◆ **Hartford, Connecticut** — 1683 Main St., E. Hartford, 06108/ Tel. & fax: (860) 289-7252/ E-mail: bhaktirasa@poboxes.com
- ◆ **Honolulu, Hawaii** — 51 Coelho Way, 96817/ Tel. (808) 595-3947/ Fax: (808) 595-3433/ E-mail: iskcon@aloha.net
- ◆ **Houston, Texas** — 1320 W. 34th St., 77018/ Tel. (713) 686-4482/ Fax: (713) 686-0669/ E-mail: mbalar@hal-pc.org
- ◆ **Laguna Beach, California** — 285 Legion St., 92651/ Tel. (714) 494-7029/ Fax: (714) 497-9707/ E-mail: jagai@rupa.com
- ◆ **Long Island, New York** — 197 S. Ocean Ave., Freeport, 11520/ Tel. (516) 223-4909/ E-mail: jsantos@eznet.net
- ◆ **Los Angeles, California** — 3764 Watska Ave., 90034/ Tel. (310) 836-2676/ Fax: (310) 839-2715/ E-mail: svavasa.acbsp@com.bbt.se
- ◆ **Miami, Florida** — 3220 Virginia St., 33133 (mail: P.O. Box 337, Coconut Grove, FL 33233)/ Tel. (305) 442-7218/ Fax: (305) 444-7145/ E-mail: kesava.swami@com.bbt.se
- ◆ **New Orleans, Louisiana** — 2936 Esplanade Ave., 70119/ Tel. (504) 486-3583/ E-mail: 105225.401@compuserve.com
- ◆ **New York, New York** — 305 Schermerhorn St., Brooklyn, 11217/ Tel. (718) 855-6714/ Fax: (718) 875-6127/ E-mail: ramabhadr@aol.com
- ◆ **New York, New York** — 26 Second Ave., 10003/ Tel. (212) 420-1130/ E-mail: dayananda@msn.com
- ◆ **Philadelphia, Pennsylvania** — 41 West Allens Lane, 19119/ Tel. (215) 247-4600/ Fax: (215) 247-8702/ E-mail: vrndavana@netreach.net
- ◆ **Philadelphia, Pennsylvania** — 1408 South St., 19148/ Tel. (215) 985-9335/ E-mail: savecows@aol.com
- ◆ **Phoenix, Arizona** — 100 South Weber Dr., Chandler, 85226/ Tel. (602) 705-4900/ Fax: (602) 705-4901/ E-mail: 105613.1744@compuserve.com
- ◆ **Portland, Oregon** — 5137 N.E. 42 Ave., 97218/ Tel. (503) 287-3252/ Fax: (503) 284-8350 (call first)/ E-mail: ksetra@aol.com
- ◆ **St. Louis, Missouri** — 3926 Lindell Boulevard., 63108/ Tel. (314) 535-8085/ Fax: (314) 535-0672/ E-mail: stl@com.org
- ◆ **San Diego, California** — 1030 Grand Ave., Pacific Beach, 92109/ Tel. (619) 483-2500/ Fax: (619) 483-0941/ E-mail: dmraj@ix.netcom.com
- ◆ **Seattle, Washington** — 1420 228th Ave. S.E., Issaquah, 98027/ Tel. (206) 391-3293/ Fax: (206) 868-8928/ E-mail: haribol@iskcon.net
- ◆ **Tallahassee, Florida** — 1323 Nyllic St., 32304/ Tel. & fax: (850) 681-9258/ E-mail: frr2897@garnet.acns.fsu.edu
- ◆ **Towaco, New Jersey** — P.O. Box 109, 07082/ Tel. & fax: (973) 299-0970 E-mail: iskconnj@blast.net
- ◆ **Tucson, Arizona** — 711 E. Blacklidge Dr., 85719/ Tel. (520) 792-0630/ Fax: (520) 791-0906 E-mail: 105613.1744@compuserve.com
- ◆ **Washington, D.C.** — 3200 Ivy Way, Harwood, MD 20776/ Tel. (301) 261-4493/ Fax: (301) 261-4797/ E-mail: ifast@iskcon.com
- ◆ **Washington, D.C.** — 10310 Oaklyn Dr., Potomac, Maryland 20854/ Tel. (301) 299-2100/ Fax: (301) 983-5451/ E-mail: potomac.temple@usa.net

## FARM COMMUNITIES

- ◆ **Alachua, Florida (New Ramana-reti)** — P.O. Box 819, 32616/ Tel. (904) 462-2017/ E-mail: iskcon@afn.org
- ◆ **Carriere, Mississippi (New Talavan)** — 31492 Anner Rd., 39426/ Tel. (601) 749-0544 or 799-1354/ Fax: (601) 799-2924/ E-mail: talavan@datastar.net
- ◆ **Gurabo, Puerto Rico (New Govardhana Hill)** — (contact ISKCON Gurabo)
- ◆ **Hillsborough, North Carolina (New Goloka)** — 1032 Dimmocks Mill Rd., 27278/ Tel. (919) 732-6492/ Fax: (919) 732-8033/ E-mail: bkgoswami@compuserve.com
- ◆ **Mulberry, Tennessee (Murari-sevaka)** — Rt. No. 1, Box 146-A, 37359/ Tel. (615) 759-6888/ Fax: (615) 759-5785/ E-mail: 104400.3353@compuserve.com
- ◆ **Port Royal, Pennsylvania (Gita Nagari)** — R.D. No. 1, Box 839, 17082/ Tel. & fax: (717) 527-4101/ E-mail: acyutadasi@acsworld.net

## ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS AND DINING

- ◆ **Eugene, Oregon** — Govinda's Vegetarian Buffet, 270 W. 8th St., 97401/ Tel. (503) 686-3531
- ◆ **Fresno, California** — Govinda's, 2373 E. Shaw, 93710/ Tel. (209) 225-1230
- ◆ **Gainesville, Florida** — Radha's, 125 NW 23rd Ave., 32609/ Tel. (352) 376-9012

## UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND

- ◆ **Belfast, Northern Ireland** — Brooklands, 140 Upper Dunmurray Lane, BT17 OHE, Northern Ireland/ Tel. +44 (01232) 620530
- ◆ **Birmingham, England** — 84 Stanmore Rd., Edgbaston, B16 9TB/ Tel. +44 (0121) 420-4999
- ◆ **Bristol, England** — Alberta Cottage, Wraxhall Rd., Nailsea, BS19 1BN/ Tel. +44 (01275) 853788
- ◆ **Cardiff, Wales** — 18 Greenfield Place, Caerphilly, Mid Glamorgan/ Tel. +44 (01222) 831579
- ◆ **Coventry, England** — Sri Sri Radha Krishna Cultural Centre, Kingfield Rd., Radford, West Midlands (mail: 19 Gloucester St., CV1 3BZ)/ Tel. +44 (01203) 552822 or 555420/ E-mail: haridas.kds@com.bbt.se

- ◆ **Glasgow, Scotland** — Karuna Bhavan, Bankhouse Rd., Lesmahagow, Lanarkshire ML11 0ES/ Tel. +44 (01555) 894790/ Fax: +44 (01555) 894526/ E-mail: 106225.2716@compuserve.com
- ◆ **Leicester, England** — 21/21A Thoresby St., North Evington, Leicester LE5 4GU/ Tel. & fax: +44 (0116) 236-7723/ E-mail: gauranga.sundara@com.bbt.se
- ◆ **Liverpool, England** — 114A Bold St., England, Merseyside, L1 4HY/ Tel. +44 (0151) 708-9400 or 643-8817/ E-mail: iskcon.liverpool.uk@com.bbt.se
- ◆ **London, England (city)** — 9/10 Soho St., W1V 5DA, England/ Tel. +44 (0171) 437-3662; (residential/pujaris/shop): 439-3606/ Fax: +44 (0171) 439-1127; Govinda's Restaurant: Tel. +44 (0171) 437-4928; (office): 437-5875/ E-mail: london@com.bbt.se
- ◆ **London, England (country)** — Bhaktivedanta Manor, Dharam Marg, Hilfield Lane, Watford, Herts, WD2 8EZ, England/ Tel. +44 (01923) 857244/ Fax: +44 (01923) 852896/ E-mail: bhaktivedanta.manor@com.bbt.se
- ◆ **London, England (south)** — 42 Enmore Rd., South Norwood, London SE25/ Tel. +44 (0181) 656-4296 or 654-3138
- ◆ **Manchester, England** — 20 Mayfield Rd., Whalley Range, Manchester M16 8FT/ Tel. +44 (0161) 226-4416/ Tel. & fax: +44 (0161) 860-6117/ E-mail: krishna.dharma.mg@com.bbt.se
- ◆ **Newcastle upon Tyne, England** — 304 Westgate Rd., Tyne & Wear, NE4 6BR/ Tel. +44 (0191) 222-0150
- ◆ **Plymouth, England** — 5 Erme Park, Ermington, Devon PL2 9LY, England/ Tel. +44 (01548) 830085
- ◆ **Romford, England** — 3 Rowan Walk, Hornchurch, Essex, RM11 2JA, England/ Tel. +44 (01708) 454092

## FARM COMMUNITIES

- ◆ **County Wicklow, Ireland** — Rathgorragh, Kiltegan/ Tel. & fax: +353 (0508) 73305 or 73292/ E-mail: pragosa@connect.ie
- ◆ **Lisnaskea, Northern Ireland** — Govindadvipa Dhama, ISKCON Inishrath Island, BT92 9GN Lisnaskea, Co. Fermanagh/ Tel. +44 (013657) 21512 or 22682
- ◆ **London, England** — (contact Bhaktivedanta Manor)

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## ADDITIONAL RESTAURANT AND DINING

- ★ **Dublin, Ireland** — Govinda's Restaurant, 4 Aungier St., Dublin 2/ E-mail: pragosa@connect.ie

## AUSTRALASIA

## AUSTRALIA

- ◆ **Adelaide** — 227 Henley Beach Rd., Torrensville, SA 5031/ Tel. +61 (08) 8234-1378/ Fax: (08) 8234-1481/ E-mail: nash0024@finders.edu.au
- ◆ **Brisbane** — 95 Bank Rd., Graceville (mail: P.O. Box 83, Indooroopilly), QLD 4068/ Tel. +61 (07) 3379-5455/ Fax: +61 (07) 3379-5880/ E-mail: brisbane@com.bbt.se
- ◆ **Canberra** — 117 Hawksbury Crescent, Farrer, ACT 2607/ Tel. +61 (02) 6290-1869/ Fax: +61 (06) 286-4700/ E-mail: adi-p@msn.com
- ◆ **Melbourne** — 197 Danks St., Albert Park (mail: P.O. Box 125), VIC 3206/ Tel. +61 (03) 9699-5122/ Fax: +61 (03) 9690-4093/ E-mail: melbourne@iskcon.net
- ◆ **Perth** — 144 Railway Parade (mail: P.O. Box 102), Bayswater, WA 6053/ Tel. +61 (08) 9370-1552/ Fax: +61 (08) 9272-6636/ E-mail: vasudama@iinet.net.au
- ◆ **Sydney** — 180 Falcon St., North Sydney, NSW 2060 (mail: P.O. Box 459, Cammeray, NSW 2062)/ Tel. +61 (02) 9959-4558/ Fax: +61 (02) 9957-1893/ E-mail: sradiu@pradha.dialix.oz.au

## FARM COMMUNITIES

- ◆ **Bambra (New Nandagram)** — Oak Hill, Dean's Marsh Rd., Bambra, VIC 3241/ Tel. +61 (052) 887383/ Fax: +61 (052) 887309
- ◆ **Millfield, NSW** — New Gokula Farm, Lewis Lane (off Mt. View Rd., Millfield, near Cessnock (mail: P.O. Box 399, Cessnock), NSW 2325)/ Tel. +61 (049) 981800/ Fax: (Sydney temple)
- ◆ **Murwillumbah (New Govardhana)** — Tyalgum Rd., Eungella, via Murwillumbah (mail: P.O. Box 687), NSW 2484/ Tel. & fax: +61 (02) 6672-6579 or -3047

## ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS

- ◆ **Adelaide** — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 79 Hindley St., SA 5000/ Tel. +61 (08) 8231-5258
- ◆ **Brisbane** — Govindas, 1st floor, 99 Elizabeth St., QLD 4000/ Tel. +61 (07) 3210-0255
- ◆ **Brisbane** — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 190 Brunswick St., Fortitude Valley, QLD/ Tel. +61 (07) 3854-1016/ E-mail: brisbane@com.bbt.se
- ◆ **Melbourne** — Crossways, 1st Floor, 123 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (03) 9650-2939/ E-mail: crossways@iskcon.net
- ◆ **Melbourne** — Gopals, 139 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (03) 9650-1578
- ◆ **Perth** — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 200 William St., Northbridge, WA 6003/ Tel. +61 (08) 9227-1684/ E-mail: perth@com.bbt.se
- ◆ **Sydney** — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 529b King St., Newtown, NSW 2042/ Tel. +61 (02) 9550-6524

## FIJI

- ◆ **Labasa** — Delailabasa (mail: P.O. Box 133)/ Tel. +679 812912/ E-mail: fiji@com.bbt.se
- ◆ **Lautoka** — 5 Tavewa Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 125)/ Tel. +679 664112/ Fax: +679 663039 E-mail: fiji@com.bbt.se
- ◆ **Rakiraki** — Rewasa, Rakiraki (mail: P.O. Box 204)/ Tel. +679 694243/ E-mail: fiji@com.bbt.se
- ◆ **Suva** — Joyce Place, Off Pilling Rd. Nasinu 7½ miles, Samabula (mail: P.O. Box 3957)/ Tel. +679 381161/ E-mail: fiji@com.bbt.se

## RESTAURANTS

- ◆ **Labasa** — Hare Krishna Restaurant, Naseakula Rd./ Tel. +679 811364
- ◆ **Lautoka** — Gopal's, Corner of Yasawa St. and Naviti St./ Tel. +679 662990
- ◆ **Suva** — Gopal's, 18 Pratt St./ Tel. +679 314154/ E-mail: fiji@com.bbt.se

## NEW ZEALAND

**Christchurch** — 83 Bealey Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 25-190, Christchurch)/ Tel. +64 (03) 366-5174/  
Fax: +64 (03) 366-1965/ E-mail: iskconchch@clear.net.nz

**Wellington** — 60 Wade St., Wadestown, Wellington (mail: P.O. Box 2753)/ Tel. +64 (04) 472-0510

## FARM COMMUNITY

- **Auckland (New Varshan)** — Hwy. 28, Riverhead, next to Huapai Golf Course  
(mail: R.D. 2, Kumeu, Auckland)/ Tel. +64 (09) 412-8075/ Fax: +64 (09) 412-7130

## RESTAURANTS

**Auckland** — Gopal's, Civic House (1st floor), 291 Queen St./ Tel. +64 (09) 303-4885

**Christchurch** — Gopal's, 143 Worcester St./ Tel. +64 (03) 366-7035

## PAPUA NEW GUINEA

**Port Moresby** — Section 23, Lot 46, Gordonia St., Hohola (mail: P. O. Box 571, POM NCD)/  
Tel. +675 259213

## EUROPE (partial list)

- Amsterdam** — Van Hilligaertstraat 17, 1072 JX, Amsterdam, The Netherlands/ Tel. +31 (020) 675-1404/ Fax: +31 (020) 675-1405/ E-mail: amsterdam@com.bbt.se
- Barcelona** — Plaza Reial 12 Entlo 2, 08002 Barcelona/ Tel. +34 (09) 302-5194
- Bergamo, Italy** — Villaggio Hare Krishna, (da Medolago strada per Terno d'Isola) 24040 Chignolo d'Isola (BG)/ Tel. +39 (035) 494-0706/ Fax: +39 (035) 494-0705
- Berlin** — Johannisthaler Chaussee 78, 12259 Berlin (Britz)/ Tel. +49 (030) 631-2400/  
Fax: +49 (030) 618-9112/ E-mail: haribalaba.hks@com.bbt.se
- Budapest** — Mariaremetei ut. 77, Budapest 1028 II/ Tel. & fax: +36 (01) 275-8140/  
E-mail: 100263.3167@compuserve.com
- Copenhagen** — Blaagaardsgade 14, 2200 Copenhagen N/ Tel. +45 (03) 139-2826/  
E-mail: dk.community@com.bbt.se
- Gutenstein, Austria** — Vedisches Kulturzentrum, Markt 58, 2770 Gutenstein/  
Tel. & fax: +43 (02) 634731/ E-mail: austria@com.bbt.se
- ◆ **Heidelberg** — Kurfürsten-Anlage 5, D-69115 Heidelberg/ Tel. +49 (06221) 160128 or 165101/  
Fax: +49 (06221) 160103/ E-mail: bhagavat.dharma.ss@com.bbt.se
- Helsinki** — Ruoholahdenkatu 24 D (III krs) 00180, Helsinki/ Tel. +358 (0) 694-9879/  
Fax: +358 (0) 694-9837
- Madrid** — Espirito Santo 19, 28004 Madrid, Spain/ Tel. +34 (91) 521-3096
- Oslo** — Jonsrudvej 1G, 0274 Oslo, Norway/ Tel. +47 (022) 552243/ Fax: +47 (022) 558172
- Paris** — 31 Rue Jean Vacquier, 93160 Noisy le Grand/ Tel. +33 (01) 4304-3263  
Fax: +33 (01) 4305-7864/ E-mail: nitai.gaurasundara.tkg@com.bbt.se
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Fax: +42 (02) 302-1628/ E-mail: prague@com.bbt.se
- Rome** — Sri Gaura Mandala, Via Mazzanese km. 0,700-Pian del Pavone 01036 Nepi (VT)/  
Tel. +39 (0761) 527038 or 527251
- ◆ **Septon-Durbuy, Belgium** — Chateau de Petite Somme, B-6940 Septon-Durbuy/  
Tel. +32 (086) 322926/ Fax: +32 (086) 322929/ E-mail: radhadesh@com.bbt.se
- ◆ **Stockholm** — Fridhemsgatan 22, 11240 Stockholm/ Tel. +46 (08) 654-9002/ Fax: +46 (08) 650-8813
- Warsaw** — Mysiadlo, k. Warszawy, 05-500 Piaseczno, ul. Zakret 11 (mail: MTSK, 02-770,  
Warszawa 130, P.O. Box 257)/ Tel. & fax: +48 (022) 750-7797/ E-mail: warsaw@com.bbt.se
- Zürich** — Preyergasse 16, 8001 Zürich/ Tel. +41 (01) 251-8859/ E-mail: nitai.rama.tkg@com.bbt.se

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(continued from page 52)

real welfare work: teaching others to avoid material existence altogether.

That is the greatest gift. Rather than offering only temporary help, why not get to the root of the entire problem? Cure the bodily conception of life and alienation from the all-attractive reservoir of pleasure.

King Rahūgaṇa next tells Jaḍa Bhārata: "Whatever doubts I have regarding spiritual life I will ask you about. Although you have imparted to me mystic knowledge for my enlightenment, your meaning appears too difficult for my grasp. Please repeat your instructions in a simplified way so that I can digest them. I do have a very inquisitive mind, and I certainly desire a clear understanding."

The sage has adequately explained to the king a basic lesson in spiritual

knowledge. A sincere student, however, does have the right to humbly petition the spiritual director for clarification. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the most profound art and science, and as such it requires continuous guidance through a heartfelt intimate bond between teacher and student. Contrary to foolish fears, the relationship does not resemble a dictatorship. For instance, Kṛṣṇa is the Complete Whole and therefore the original guru. Yet after speaking eighteen chapters of the most wonderful knowledge to Arjuna, Kṛṣṇa clearly indicated that Arjuna still had his options:

"Thus I have explained to you knowledge still more confidential. Deliberate on this fully and do what you wish to do." (*Bhagavad-gītā* 18.63)

Kṛṣṇa lucidly delineates the results of all possible choices. Yet even the Supreme Infinite, the original teacher,

does not interfere with the tiny independence of the minute, finite living entity. Those giving knowledge and guidance on behalf of Kṛṣṇa also do not wring submission and agreement out of potential students. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a voluntary affair of devotional love and service. The best way for a newcomer to approach it is through careful deliberation. ❀

*Devāmṛta Swami, a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda's, joined the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in 1973. He accepted sannyāsa, the renounced order of life, in 1982. He now teaches Kṛṣṇa consciousness in Australia, New Zealand, and the Orient.*

*Perfect Escape is available from the Hare Kṛṣṇa Catalog. To order, see page 36.*

## SPEAKS OUT

(continued from page 19)

for understanding God. Now people are also neglecting that, all over the world. The Communists hate to say anything about God. So ultimately people are coming to such a condition—no word about God. So that is the condition of ordinary persons today. Now, apart from them, the theologians and theosophists are at least trying to understand God. But they cannot know God definitely. So why don't they accept knowledge from us? We are offering, "Here is God." Why should they object? If you do not know something and if I give you the information, why should you not take it?

**Dr. Judah:** That's a good question.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** For example, to gain higher technological knowledge, people from India go to foreign countries. One can take knowledge from anywhere. There should not be sectarianism: "Oh, why shall I take knowledge from here and there?" Wherever knowledge is available, we should take it. That is the real position of the seeker of knowledge.

Cāṇakya Paṇḍita says, "If in a pot of poison there is a little nectar, take the nectar." And *amedhyād api kāñcanam*: "If there is gold in a filthy place, take the gold." Not that the gold has been

polluted because it is in a filthy place. If there is some gold in the filthy place, don't hesitate. Take it.

And *nicād apy uttamām vidyām*. Generally, people used to take education from *brāhmaṇas*. So Cāṇakya Paṇḍita advises, "If actual education is available from a lower-class man—a *śudra* [laborer] or *caṇḍāla* [outcaste]—take it. Accept him as your master."

And *strī-ratnam duṣkulād api*. In India, according to Vedic civilization a young man marries a girl only after scrutinizing her family tradition. But Cāṇakya advises, "If a nice, educated, beautiful girl comes even from an abominable family, accept her." *Ratnam* means "jewel." If the girl is like a jewel although born of a low family, accept her.

One should accept anything very good, even if it is available from an undesirable place. So if you are actually seeking God and God is available from the Vedic literature, why don't you accept it? Why you should refuse that knowledge? That is not a very good sign.

**Dr. Judah:** No, that is true.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** So we are offering God. Why should people not take seriously what we are offering?

Now, people may object, "Kṛṣṇa is Indian, Kṛṣṇa is Hindu, so we shall

not accept Him as God." But in the *Bhagavad-gītā* it is written *śrī bhagavān uvāca*: "God said." So the verses are the words of God. And Kṛṣṇa says, *mattaḥ parataram nānyat kiñcid asti dhanāñjaya*: "There is no element superior to Me." Only God can say that. You may not like the word *Kṛṣṇa*, but take the words of God. Who can be superior to God?

**Dr. Judah:** That's true.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** So in this way you can read the *Bhagavad-gītā* and remove the word *Kṛṣṇa*, and it is still God's word. It is all factual knowledge. So why should people not take the science of God from *Bhagavad-gītā*?

**Dr. Judah:** Yes.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** God can say, "There is no principle superior to Me." And that is stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*:

*mattaḥ parataram nānyat  
kiñcid asti dhanāñjaya  
mayi sarvam idaṁ protaṁ  
sūtre maṇi-gaṇā iva*

"O conquerer of wealth, there is no truth superior to Me. Everything rests upon Me, as pearls are strung on a thread." Every word here is God's word. You may accept Kṛṣṇa as God or not, but the words are God's words. That is *Bhagavad-gītā*. ❀



## A Blessed Departure

by Ravi Gupta

**3**:30 A.M. on Saturday the phone rang here in Boise. When my father, Ananta-rūpa Dāsa, picked up the phone, my aunt was on the line, calling from Delhi.

"Get here as soon as possible," she said. "Father is very sick. He's in the hospital. He's on a ventilator and in critical condition."

My father prepared for the worst. He packed several spiritual items to help my grandfather meet an auspicious death: tapes of Śrīla Prabhupāda chanting, dust from Lord Kṛṣṇa's holy land of Vṛndāvana, sacred water from 1,008 holy places that had been collected by devotees for Śrīla Prabhupāda's Centennial, and a picture of our Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Deities, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Baṅkebihārī, who were so dear to my grandfather, Dr. Giridhari Lal Gupta.

My father left alone on the next flight to New Delhi. By the time he reached Jaipur, Rajasthan, on Monday afternoon, my grandfather's condition was slightly improved, and he was communicating through writing. My father spent half the night chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra by his side, while my grandfather fingered his own beads.

Beginning early Tuesday morning, my grandfather's condition quickly worsened. A sudden detachment overcame him. He stopped responding to questions.

Realizing the end was near, my grandmother, Revatī Devī Dāsī (formerly Ramavati Gupta), put on a tape of Śrīla Prabhupāda chanting. My father sprinkled Vṛndāvana dust on Grandfather's body. My uncle,

Dr. Sharad Gupta, placed a leaf from the holy Tulasi tree on Grandfather's forehead and sacred water in his mouth. Everyone gathered around the bed and chanted loudly with Śrīla Prabhupāda's tape, while my grandfather gripped his beads.

The doctor came in and asked, "Why are you creating this noise?" The nurses also came in to make a few last checks and laughed among themselves about the "primitive" practices.

After the doctors and nurses had left, the chanting intensified and went on for a long time. My father held the picture of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Baṅkebihārī before his father's face. Grandfather opened his eyes for the last time and gazed at their Lordships' forms.

At 12:20 P.M., my grandfather mouthed the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra and left his mortal coil.

That evening my father spoke on the *Bhagavad-gītā* to all the relatives and friends who had assembled. He selected verse five of Chapter Eight: "And whoever at the end of life quits the body remembering Me alone at once attains My nature. Of this there is no doubt." My father explained the special significance of Lord Kṛṣṇa's abode, as distinguished from the heavenly planets or the planets of the forefathers.

Two weeks before his death, my grandfather had stopped eating. He had also distributed chanting beads to close friends and implored them to chant the holy name. And he had written in his diary, "I have said good-bye to all my friends and rela-

tives. Now I say good-bye to my life."

By the mercy of the pure devotee Śrīla Prabhupāda and the instructions of the scriptures, he departed from his body in a most auspicious way. That is the power of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

That night, my grandmother, searching for some solace and meaning, found it in a copy of *Back to Godhead* magazine she'd picked up from her shelf. It was the May/June issue of 1995. The page she opened to had a short description of the life of Jayānanda Prabhu, a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda's who had passed away a few months before Śrīla Prabhupāda's own passing. The description included part of a letter Śrīla Prabhupāda had written to Jayānanda Prabhu on hearing of his passing: "As you were hearing Kṛṣṇa *kīrtana* [chanting], I am sure that you were directly promoted to Kṛṣṇa-loka [Kṛṣṇa's abode]. Kṛṣṇa has done a great favor to you not to continue your diseased body and has given you a suitable place for your service."

My grandfather's passing was distressful for those who knew him, but it showed the efficacy and value of Vedic culture and Śrīla Prabhupāda's teachings. It also showed how much that heritage, in modern India, is being lost.

*Ravi Gupta, age fifteen, lives at the Hare Kṛṣṇa center in Boise, Idaho, USA. The center is run by his parents. Ravi, who was schooled at home, is a third-year student at Boise State University.*



# Austerity— Door to the Highest Pleasure

by Rohiṇinandana Dāsa

**H**AIR SHIRTS. Little sleep. Cold showers. Dry crusts. Contrition. Severity. No affection. No sex. No fun.

These were some of the images the word *austerity* conjured up for me before I met Śrīla Prabhupāda, who attracted me to a life of austerity by teaching the secret of divine austerity (*tapo-divyam*), or austerity for the pleasure of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda pointed out that any reasonable person, whether materialist or spiritualist, will agree that the purpose of life is pleasure. Everyone wants to be happy; the only question is how to find pleasure that truly satisfies. He argued that all of us in the material world are more or less selfish but we don't know our actual self-interest.

Śrīla Prabhupāda explained that we are part of Kṛṣṇa, like leaves on a tree or fingers on a body. As the self-interest of a thirsty leaf lies in letting water find the tree's root, and the self-interest of a hungry finger lies in putting food in the mouth, so our self-interest lies in pleasing Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa's interest is our interest because we're never separate from Him. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* describes Lord Kṛṣṇa as *ātmānam akhilātmanām*, "the original soul of all living entities." So to love Kṛṣṇa is natural. When we realize this truth, what may now seem an austerity will be a blissful act of love. The devotee sage Nārada says, *ārādhito yadi haris tapasā tataḥ kim/ nārādhito yadi haris tapasā tataḥ kim*: "If I am worshipping Kṛṣṇa, what is the use of extraneous austerity? And if I'm not worshipping Kṛṣṇa, what is the use

of my austerity?"

Yet until I attain my natural, healthy state of pure love, I need to act in ways conducive to that end, to create an external and internal environment where love can grow. Śrīla Prabhupāda therefore taught that austerity means to voluntarily accept some physical inconveniences for spiritual advancement. Whatever we wish to achieve involves some effort. But effort does not necessarily imply drudgery. As we learn the transcendental art of dedicating our lives to Lord Kṛṣṇa's service, an apparent hardship or problem can become a joy, a labor of love.

We don't need to go looking for difficulty. We'll get it naturally, by our karma, just as we get ease. But austerity means performing our service to Kṛṣṇa despite any inconvenience that might come along.

Śrīla Prabhupāda said there's no need to undergo the austerities of bygone ages, such as meditating alone in the jungle, eating only roots and leaves, sitting surrounded by fire and the blazing sun in summer, or standing in freezing water up to the neck in winter. Rather, he taught the austerities outlined by Lord Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (17.14–17):

"Austerity of the body consists in worship of the Supreme Lord, the *brāhmaṇas*, the spiritual master, and superiors like the father and mother, and in cleanliness, simplicity, celibacy, and nonviolence.

"Austerity of speech consists in speaking words that are truthful, pleasing, beneficial, and not agitating to others, and also in regularly reciting Vedic literature.

"And satisfaction, simplicity, gravity, self-control, and purification of one's existence are the austerities of the mind.

"This threefold austerity, performed with transcendental faith by persons not expecting material benefits but engaged only for the sake of the Supreme, is called austerity in goodness."

Within the context of devotional service, this list of dos and don'ts—although in some ways resembling my original idea of austerity—becomes an exciting challenge. I've noticed that when I take up the austerities given in the list, I feel good, bright, and enlivened. I want to push forward along the spiritual path.

I also feel cleansed. Divine austerity acts like an invigorating shower, refreshing and cleansing us, no matter how dirty we may be.

The Sanskrit word for austerity—*tapasya*—includes the concept of heat. As heat purifies gold and increases its luster, so austerity burns away the dirty coverings of the soul and brightens one's spiritual luster.

Furthermore, Śrīla Prabhupāda brought us a very special gift: the austerity called *harināma-yajña*, the sacrifice of chanting the holy name of the Lord. This transcendental austerity snaps material bonds, stimulates full life, opens wide the door to the highest bliss, and showers its practitioners with love. Our main austerity is to bathe in the brilliant waters of the holy name.

*Rohiṇinandana Dāsa lives in southern England with his wife and their three children. Write to him in care of Back to Godhead.*

# Vedic Thoughts

The Lord is the bestower of all benediction. If someone gives something to the Lord, he is not the loser; he is the gainer by a million times.

His Divine Grace  
A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda  
*Kṛṣṇa*, Chapter 11

Pure devotional service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness cannot be had even by pious activity in hundreds and thousands of lives. It can be obtained only by paying one price—that is intense greed to obtain it. If it is available somewhere, one must purchase it without delay.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī  
*Padyāvali*

Even if one distributes ten million cows in charity during an eclipse of the sun, lives at the confluence of the Ganges and Yamunā for millions of years, or gives a mountain of gold in sacrifice to the *brāhmaṇas*, he does not earn even one hundredth part of the merit derived from chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī  
*Laghu-Bhāgavatāmṛta*

If one can understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the controller of all controllers, one can understand everything else.

*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*

Every man should act like this: when he meets a person more qualified than himself, he should be very pleased, when he meets someone less qualified than himself, he should be compassionate toward him; and when he meets someone equal to himself, he should make friendship with him. In this way one is never affected by the threefold miseries of the material world.

Śrī Nārada Muni  
*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.8.34

The highest worship is to worship Lord Viṣṇu [Kṛṣṇa], but even higher than that is to worship His devotees, the Vaiṣṇavas.

Lord Śiva  
*Padma Purāṇa*

Devotional service, beginning with the chanting of the holy name of the Lord, is the ultimate religious principle for the living entity in human society.

Śrī Yamarāja  
*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.3.22

One who does not accept the transcendental form of the Lord is certainly an agnostic. Such a person should be neither seen nor touched. Indeed, he is subject to be punished by Yamarāja [the lord of death].

Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu  
*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya-līlā* 6.167

Send your favorite quotations to: *Vedic Thoughts, Back to Godhead*, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, FL 32616, USA.  
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# Gatherings

The people listed here hold Kṛṣṇa conscious gatherings regularly in their homes—or they'd like to start. You're invited. Just give a call to find out when and where. If you hold Kṛṣṇa conscious gatherings and you'd like to be added to the list, please send your name, city, and phone number to Gatherings, BTG, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, FL 32616, USA.

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**HAWAII:** **Waimanalo Bay** — Above Heaven's Gate, (808) 259-5429

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# The Hare Kṛṣṇa Calendar

This calendar is calculated for Śrīdhām Māyāpur, West Bengal, India. Dates may vary by one day for other locations. Consult your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for the exact dates for your area.

## Month of Govinda

(February 12–March 13)

### MARCH

8—Amalakī-vrata Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

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

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

## Month of Viṣṇu

(March 14–April 11)

21—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, one of Lord Caitanya's principal associates.

24—Pāpamocanī Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

### APRIL

1—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Rāmānujācārya, a Vaiṣṇava philosopher and spiritual master who appeared in the eleventh century.

5—Śrī Rāma Navamī, the appearance anniversary of Lord Rāmacandra. Fasting till sunset, followed by feasting.

7—Kāmadā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

11—Śrī Kṛṣṇa Vasanta Rāsa, Kṛṣṇa's springtime rāsa dance. Balarāma Rāsa Yātrā, Balarāma's rāsa dance. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Śyāmānanda Paṇḍita, a follower of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

19—Disappearance of Śrī Abhirāma Ṭhākura, one of the principal associates of Lord Nityānanda Prabhu.

## Month of Madhusūdana

(April 12–May 11)

22—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Vṛndāvana Dāsa Ṭhākura, the author of *Śrī Caitanya Bhāgavata*, a biography on Lord Caitanya.



Śrīla Rāmānujācārya

23—Varūthini Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

26—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Gadādhara Paṇḍita, one of Lord Caitanya's principal associates.

29—Beginning of Candana Yātrā, the festival of anointing Lord Jagannātha with sandalwood pulp for twenty-one days.

### MAY

4—Appearance anniversary of

Śrīmatī Sitā Devī, the consort of Lord Rāmacandra. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Madhu Paṇḍita, a great devotee of Lord Caitanya.

5—Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Jāhnavā Devī, the consort of Lord Nityānanda Prabhu.

7—Mohiṇī Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

8—Rukmiṇī Dvādaśī, the appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī Devī, the consort of Lord Kṛṣṇa as Dvārakādḥīṣa, the Lord of Dvārakā.

9—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jayānanda Prabhu, a dedicated follower of Śrīla Prabhupāda who helped him bring the Rathayātrā festival to the Western world.

10—Nṛsimha Caturdaśī, the appearance anniversary of Lord Nṛsimha-deva, Lord Kṛṣṇa's half-man, half-lion incarnation. Fasting till dusk, followed by feasting.

11—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī, the spiritual master of Lord Caitanya's spiritual master. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, a follower of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Parameśvara Purī, an associate of Lord Caitanya.

## Month of Trivikrama

(May 12–June 10)

16—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Rāmānanda Rāya, an intimate associate of Lord Caitanya.

22—Aparā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

23—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Vṛndāvana Dāsa Ṭhākura, the author of *Śrī Caitanya Bhāgavata*, a biography on Lord Caitanya.

## Nothing that a Goat Won't Eat

ACCORDING TO an Indian proverb, there's nothing that a goat won't eat and nothing that a madman won't say. Madmen? Sometimes it seems like we're living in a world of them, or at least a world of fools. The human impulse is to say something—anything. Something stupid, something contentious, something sweet, deceitful, smart, ridiculous, or empty. Big strings of words, amounting to nothing. It's astonishing.

Nearly as surprising: You can speak the most outrageous foolishness, and someone out there—most likely *many* someones—will for sure take it as sensible, even as urgently important.

People babble on like sea waves, other people babble back. And soon you've got a tumultuous roar, of no significance at all. Babble on, Babylon.

Behind those babbling tongues churn babbling minds, full of everything, empty of substance.

For which the Vedic remedy is the chanting of the mahā-mantra: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

The purpose of the chanting is to pull the mind out of the din and fix it on one point: Kṛṣṇa.

That point—Kṛṣṇa—is not merely a point, but the ultimate substance. The word Kṛṣṇa indicates the supreme reality, the Absolute, the original source of everything.

More precisely, the word Kṛṣṇa *is* Kṛṣṇa. On the material platform, a word and what

it stands for are different. On the spiritual platform, Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa's name are the same.

So by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, we leave behind the clatter of illusion and come in touch with Kṛṣṇa, the Absolute Truth.

In the early stages of spiritual understanding, one realizes that Absolute Truth as an impersonal, all-pervading oneness. Further along, one perceives that Absolute Truth as the Supersoul, the source of all intelligence, the unseen guide within the heart. And when that unseen guide fully reveals Himself, one can see the Absolute Truth as the transcendent Personality of Godhead, free from all the grossness of matter yet tangibly real and specific in His unlimited names, forms, qualities, and pastimes.

It is when we come to Kṛṣṇa that real talking begins. That talking is done by the greatest self-realized souls. And by those who accept, repeat, and relish the words of those realized souls and thus become realized themselves.

Of course, those who babble on about nothing will think that whatever they're buzzing about is of great consequence and that Hare Kṛṣṇa is for fools.

Let them.

Following in the footsteps of the Vedic sages, we'll go on talking about Kṛṣṇa and chanting the mahā-mantra: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

—Jayādvaīta Swami

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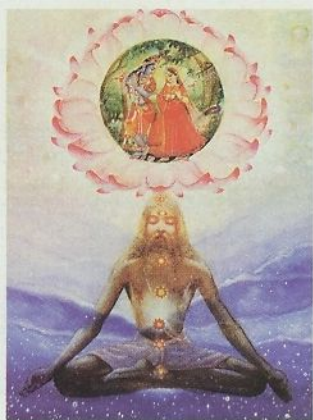
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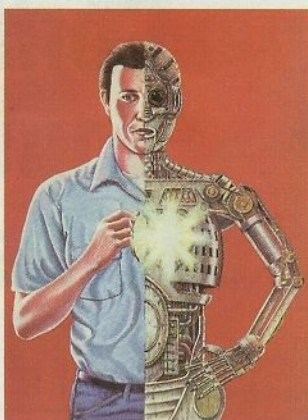
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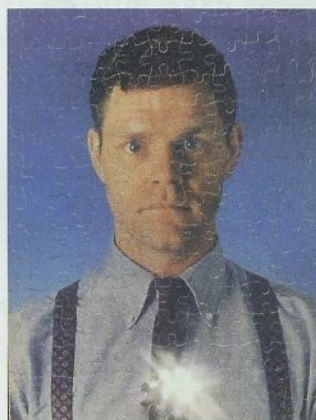
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