

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

# BACK TO GODHEAD



The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement • July/August 2000 • \$4.00/£4.50



## Poland's Summer Festivals

Hands Off My Pesto! • Sanātana's Great Escape • Real Relief and Joy  
The Meaning of Perfection • What Do We Mean by Varṇāśrama?

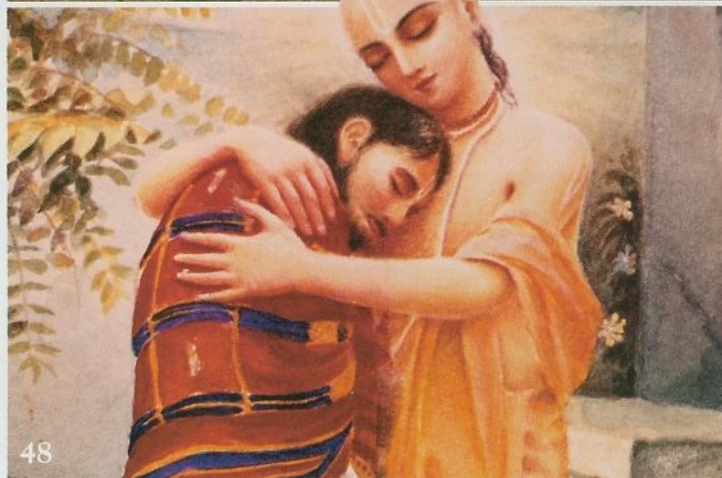
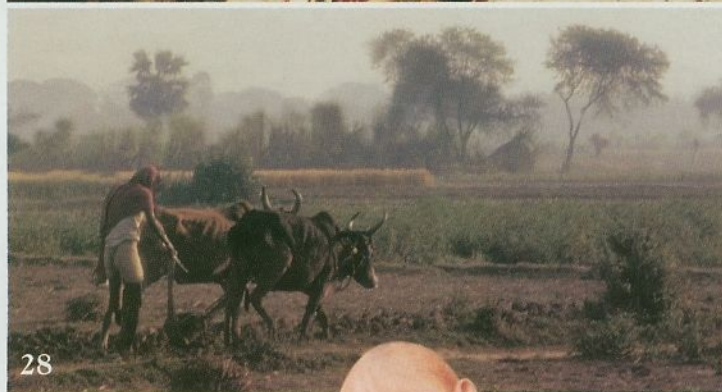


Assisting you in your quest for the Absolute Truth

# Back to Godh

Founded 1944

Vol. 34, No. 4 • July/August 2000



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*Home Where We Belong*

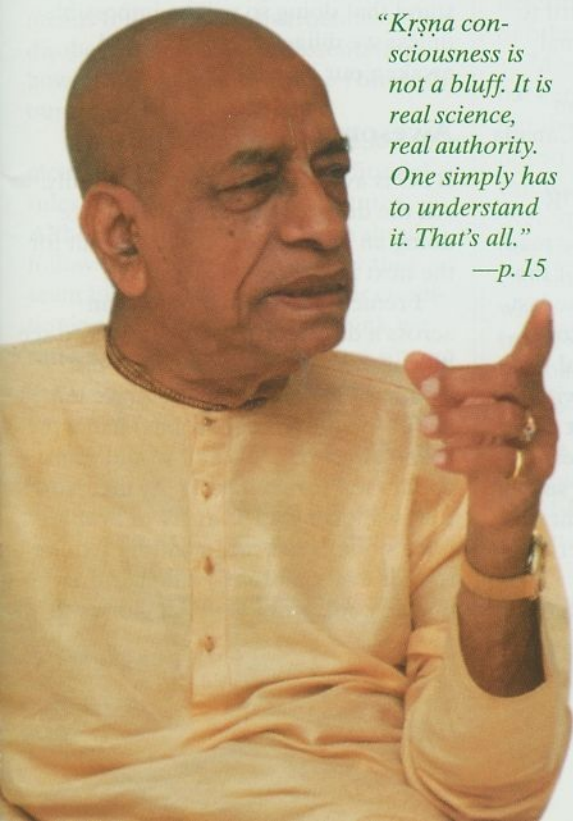
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## COVER

The Festival of Indian Culture has toured Poland for the past ten summers, introducing tens of thousands of people to India's glorious spiritual heritage. For a report on one of the festivals, please see the article beginning on page 17.

*"Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not a bluff. It is real science, real authority. One simply has to understand it. That's all."*

—p. 15



## WELCOME



**ARTICLES IN THIS ISSUE** show the universal appeal and relevance of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the essence of India's great cultural tradition. "Bharata Culture on the Baltic

Coast" takes us to the Festival of Indian Culture during its annual summer tour of Poland, where people get the chance to enjoy the art, dance, music, drama, cuisine, and philosophy of India. The festival stresses the spiritual aspects of the culture, giving people more than just a satisfying aesthetic experience; it helps draw out their devotion to the Lord, the innate quality of the soul in any culture.

In "What Do We Mean by Varṇāśrama?" Hare Kṛṣṇa Devī Dāsī, who has spent years researching the subject, explains what the original Indian, or Vedic, social organization is all about. She also shows adulterated forms of that system visible today, without the benefits of the original. Lord Kṛṣṇa designed *varṇāśrama* for the spiritual progress of every member of human society, and Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted his followers to revive it for everyone's benefit.

Spiritual festivals and social organization are two ways in which the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement works to raise the spiritual awareness of large numbers of people. Indian or Polish, American or Russian—all who come in touch with Kṛṣṇa advance toward perfection.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.—Nāgarāja Dāsa, Editor

## 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.



*Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead and 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*



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



# BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the  
Hare Krishna Movement

## FOUNDER

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

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# Letters

## Mindblowing

It was really a pleasure reading the January/February issue of BTG. The article by Kālakaṅṭha Dāsa on the research project of Dhīra Govinda Dāsa was mindblowing. I am a post-graduate student at the University of Mauritius. Many times I have tried to apply the teachings of Śrīla Prabhupāda to my research studies, but I was always unsuccessful. When I read that article, I was really inspired. In my opinion BTG magazine should publish more articles related to the personal experience of Śrīla Prabhupāda's teachings in everyday life. This will surely inspire more people to take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and to strengthen the determination of Kṛṣṇa conscious devotees.

Veer Ramloghnan  
Mauritius (Via the Internet)

## Uplifted

I am an ardent follower of this beautiful magazine. I come from a family with a strong religious background, all widely read in the holy scriptures. We were disciplined to follow the strict Vedic rules. I would like to give my heartfelt gratitude to all of you behind the superb BTG. Every time I receive an issue, I look forward to the next one. I'm getting spiritual upliftment from every issue.

Subramaniyam Baskaran  
Scarborough, Ontario, Canada

## Death and Remembering

In several places in BTG I have read that while departing the body, if the soul thinks of Lord Kṛṣṇa as the last thought, then it reaches only Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supersoul, as its final destination. How does this fit with the laws of karma, where your past works determine your next life and destiny in the material world? Is it not saying that all your life you can commit sins and in old age run to the shelter of Lord Kṛṣṇa and try to develop the skills to think of Him in

your last thoughts and thus reach Him—in other words, attain liberation?  
Amit Pande  
Via the Internet.

**OUR REPLY:** One of the main teachings of *Bhagavad-gītā* is that karma, or work, done for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa brings no reaction. Such work is called *akarma*. The devotee serving Kṛṣṇa under the direction of Kṛṣṇa's representative, the bona fide spiritual master, performs spiritual activities that not only have no material reaction; they act to purify the consciousness. Purified consciousness means Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Unless we develop Kṛṣṇa consciousness during our life, to remember Kṛṣṇa at the time of death will be very difficult. Śrīla Prabhupāda cautions, "Remembrance of Kṛṣṇa is not possible for the impure soul who has not practiced Kṛṣṇa consciousness in devotional service."

At death, we'll naturally remember whatever we're attached to. If we spend our life developing attachments to things other than Kṛṣṇa, we'll remember those things—look to them to save us—at the time of death. So while it is true that whoever remembers Kṛṣṇa at death goes to Him, we should understand that doing so will be impossible unless we diligently practice and awaken our love for Him.

## Awesome

BTG is awesome. It reads beautifully. All the devotees who contribute are doing an incredible job. I can't wait for the next issue.

I remember the first time I ran across a devotee of Kṛṣṇa. If I could see him again, would he remember me? I wonder if he knows that what we talked about (on a KrishnaFest bus) had a profound effect on the way I would think about God for the rest of my life. Now I'm swallowing up as many of Prabhupāda's books as I can, chanting sixteen rounds every morning, and learning how to cook *prasādam*. All glories to



the hardworking devotees behind the scenes of the only magazine that really needs to be at Borders bookstore.

Jason Pearson  
Chicago, Illinois

## Looking for Hope

I am a Life Member of ISKCON. I understand that a more materialistic life means a less spiritual one. But I'm not strong enough to follow all of God's rules (as mentioned in the *Gītā*). I therefore follow a more materialistic life and less of a spiritual life, apart from praying to Lord Kṛṣṇa almost daily.

I want to make money, get married, have a sex life, and eat meat. If I do all these things, does that mean I can never enter God's kingdom when I die, even though I believe in God's existence and pray to Him daily?

Naresh Kumar  
Birmingham, England

OUR REPLY: You are correct in saying that material life and spiritual life oppose each other. Fortunately, the power of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is such that you don't have to give up your ordinary life and leave for the forest. You can spiritualize your life by connecting it with Kṛṣṇa. But connecting with Kṛṣṇa means following His instructions. If we disobey Kṛṣṇa or his representative, how can we expect to please Him with our prayers?

The regulative principles followed by members of ISKCON are traditional rules found in the Vedic scriptures. Although any civilized person should follow them, in modern society they seem like great austerities. Our conditioning and karma make us think we can't follow them. But if we are sincere in making spiritual progress, we'll get the resolve to follow them.

Achieving the association of Kṛṣṇa is no small feat. We shouldn't think we don't have to work for it. It takes effort, or what we refer to as austerity. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Lord Rṣabhadeva tells his sons that human life is meant

for austerity, because by austerity one can attain unending bliss.

Our problem is that we're not serious about attaining the goal. Materialists are so serious about such things as making millions of dollars or winning Olympic medals that they perform incredible austerities to attain their goals. We have to muster at least a minimum amount of desire if we expect to attain Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda said that performing sinful activities while trying to advance in spiritual life is like trying to ignite a fire while pouring water on it; it won't work. What you propose won't work. You can't have it both ways. Your problem is one of desire. You have to increase your desire for spiritual life. How can you do that? Regularly chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, read Śrīla Prabhupāda's books, associate with devotees, visit the temple, and so on.

You are fighting an inner conflict, being pulled in two directions. If you want to be successful, you have to increase your attraction to the pull of Kṛṣṇa. Sinful life will dampen the power of even the best spiritual practices. Again, you have to have enough determination to give up sinful life. Pray to Kṛṣṇa for that, not for material things. He can give you strength and determination, as He has for thousands of others.

Most ISKCON devotees came from backgrounds that included sinful acts, but they were able to give them up. It's not so hard to give up meat-eating, for example. Millions of people who aren't even spiritually inclined have given up this vicious habit. Don't think that you can sincerely offer prayers to the Lord while slaughtering his innocent creatures. We suggest you at least give up this bad habit to show Kṛṣṇa you're trying. ☉

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# 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.

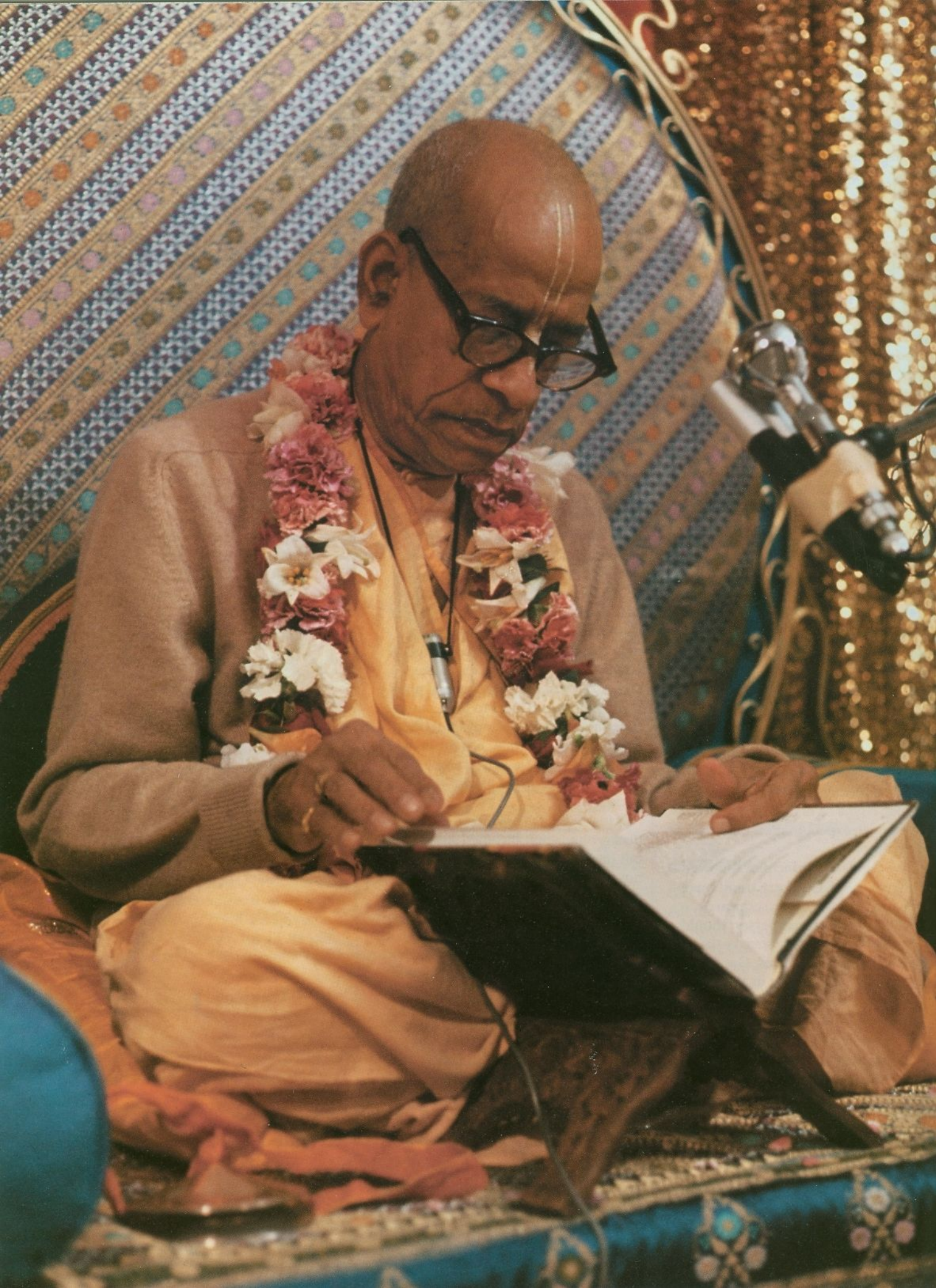
## Pronunciation

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 **ī** like the **i** in **pique**. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **ri** in **rim**, and **ṣ** 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

ISKCON members receive names of Lord Kṛṣṇa or His great devotees, combined with Dāsa, for men, or Dāsī, for women, both of which mean "servant." For instance, the name Kṛṣṇa Dāsa means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."







# THE MEANING OF PERFECTION

*Once we know the key, we can attain perfection  
by the simple acts of our daily life.*

A lecture given in Vṛndāvana, India, on October 24, 1972

by **His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda**

Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

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

“O best among the twice-born, it is therefore concluded that 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.”

—*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.2.13

**V**arṇāśrama is very important in human society. Unless society accepts the principles of *varṇa* and *āśrama*, it is an animal society, not a human society. The four *varṇas*, or occupational divisions, are *brāhmaṇas* [priests and teachers], *kṣatriyas* [rulers and warriors], *vaiśyas* [farmers and merchants], and *śūdras* [laborers and artisans]. The four *āśramas*, or spiritual orders, are *brahmacharya* [student], *gṛhastha* [householder], *vānaprastha* [retired], and *sannyāsa*

[renounced]. That is Vedic culture: *varṇa* and *āśrama*. That is accepted as human society.

In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* it is said,

*varṇāśramācāravatā  
puruṣeṇa paraḥ pumān  
viṣṇur ārādhyate panthā  
nānyat tat-toṣa-kāraṇam*

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu, is worshiped by the proper execution of prescribed duties in the system of *varṇa* and *āśrama*. There is no other way to satisfy the Supreme Lord.” The whole aim of life is to achieve the favor of Viṣṇu. A *Ṛg-Veda* mantra says, *om tad viṣṇoḥ paramam padam*: “The abode of Viṣṇu is the supreme destination.” But people do not know the goal of life. *Na te viduḥ svārtha-gatiṁ hi viṣṇum*.

Any society that does not know the aim of life is in darkness. Actually, at the present moment especially, the whole human society has missed the point. People are trying to be happy by material adjustment. Leaders



# *Everyone must attain perfection, but people are not interested in understanding or pursuing the perfection of life.*



are trying to make the whole human society happy by social adjustment, by political adjustment, by economic adjustment, or by religious adjustment. But the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* says, *durāśayā ye bahir-artha-māninaḥ*: Their hope will never be fulfilled, because they have accepted the external, material energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the key to happiness.

Just as my shawl is external in relation to my body, my body is also external in relation to the real person, the soul. But people have no information of the soul, nor of Viṣṇu, or Kṛṣṇa, the origin of the soul. They are interested only in the external body. That is called *bahir-artha*. *Bahiḥ* means “external,” and *artha* means “interest.” In our book *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* we have a painting of a woman taking care of a cage while the bird within is dying. *Bahir-artha-mānī* means that we are taking care of the body but not taking care of the soul within. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* says that this is the civilization of cows and asses. *Sa eva gokharaḥ*. *Go* means “cows,” and *khara* means “asses.”

## TWICE-BORN

Today’s verse was spoken in the forest of Naimisharanya thousands of years ago. The speaker, Sūta Gosvāmī, addresses the audience as *dvija-śreṣṭhāḥ*, “best of the twice-born.” All those present in that meeting were the best *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas*, and *vaiśyas*. These classes are supposed to be twice-born. One birth is by the father and mother, and the second birth is by the guru and Vedic knowledge. The guru is the father, and Vedic knowledge is the mother.

*Śūdras* are once-born. They have no ceremony for becoming twice-born. Or, we can say, anyone who is not twice-born is a *śūdra*. If the twice-born

ceremony is not observed, then the person is a *śūdra*. At present, even in India, these ceremonies are not accepted. People do not care for them. And what to speak of other countries. Therefore the conclusion of the *sāstra*, scripture, is *kalau śūdra-sambhavaḥ*: In this age of Kali there are only *śūdras*. Practically there are no *brāhmaṇas*, no *kṣatriyas*, no *vaiśyas*.

Today’s verse says, *varṇāśrama-vibhāgaśaḥ*, “by the divisions of *varṇāśrama*.” Unless society accepts the four *varṇas* and four *āśramas*, it is not human society. In human society there is understanding of God, not in animal society. Therefore, because the institution of *varṇāśrama* is now abolished, people are becoming godless, because *varṇāśrama* means the set-up of society where gradually one can understand Viṣṇu and worship Viṣṇu. *Viṣṇur ārādhyate*. That is the system.

Today we have so-called *brāhmaṇas* and so-called *kṣatriyas* who have no information of Viṣṇu. They declare, “I am a *brāhmaṇa*”; “I am a *kṣatriya*.” But according to *sāstra* they are called *dvija-bandhu*, those born of *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, or *vaiśya* families who do not act like *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas*, or *vaiśyas*. They are not accepted as *dvija*, twice-born.

The *Mahābhārata* was compiled by Vyāsadeva for women, *śūdras*, and *dvija-bandhus*, because these groups generally could not understand the language of the four original *Vedas*. The *Mahābhārata* is called the fifth *Veda*. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* it is said,

*mām hi pārtha vyapāśritya  
ye 'pi syuḥ pāpa-yonayah  
sriyo vaiśyās tathā śūdrās  
te 'pi yānti parām gatim*

When one becomes Kṛṣṇa conscious, it does not matter whether one is a woman, a *śūdra*, or a *dvija-bandhu*; one can be elevated to the highest plat-

form of perfection. That is Kṛṣṇa’s special favor.

Everyone must attain perfection, but people are not interested in understanding or pursuing the perfection of life. The perfection, as stated in today’s verse, is *hari-toṣaṇam*, to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

## LORD KRṢṆA’S POSITION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is Viṣṇu, or Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is the origin of *viṣṇu-tattva*—the category of Viṣṇu, or God. *Ahaṁ sarvasya prabhavaḥ*. Kṛṣṇa says that He is the origin of Viṣṇu. He is the origin of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Maheśvara, the original demigods of the creation. Brahmā is the creator, Viṣṇu is the maintainer, and Maheśvara—Mahādeva, or Lord Śiva—is the destroyer. When Kṛṣṇa says, *ahaṁ sarvasya prabhavaḥ*, that means He’s the origin of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Lord Śiva. So if we satisfy Hari, or Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, we don’t have to separately satisfy the demigods. Kṛṣṇa includes everything.

An example is given: *yathā taror mūla-niṣecanena tṛpyanti tat-skandhabhujopasākhāḥ*. By pouring water on the root of a tree, you automatically water the branches, twigs, leaves, flowers—everything. *Prāṇopahārāc ca yathendriyāṇām*: By supplying food to the stomach, automatically the energy will be distributed to other parts of the body. You do not have to supply food to the eyes, to the ears, to the nose. No. Simply supply food to the stomach, and the energy will be distributed. Similarly, *saṁsiddhir hari-toṣaṇam*: If you simply satisfy Hari, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, then you satisfy all others.

We read an example of this point in the *Mahābhārata*. Once Duryodhana, the enemy of the Pāṇḍavas, satisfied the sage Durvāsā, so Durvāsā wanted



to give him a benediction. Duryodhana was very cunning. His only aim was to cheat the Pāṇḍavas.

Duryodhana told Duvāsā, “My dear sir, I shall ask you for the benediction some other time, not now.”

Later, when the Pāṇḍavas, with their wife Draupadī, were in exile in the forest, Duryodhana approached Duvāsā Muni.

“My dear sir, you wanted to give me a benediction. I have come for it. Go to the Pāṇḍavas with your sixty thousand disciples after Draupadī has eaten.”

Duvāsā was known for creating havoc when displeased. Duryodhana felt that the Pāṇḍavas, living in the forest without adequate supplies, would not be able to receive Duvāsā properly, and he would punish them with his great power.

Duvāsā and his disciples then visited the Pāṇḍavas in the forest. As *kṣatriyas*, the Pāṇḍavas were duty bound to receive the *brāhmaṇas*. But the Pāṇḍavas had eaten and had nothing to offer their guests. Perplexed, the Pāṇḍavas asked them to bathe while they made the arrangements to feed them.

Kṛṣṇa’s vow is that He will always see that His devotees are protected. So when the Pāṇḍavas were perplexed, Kṛṣṇa came there.

“What is the problem?” Kṛṣṇa asked.

They explained, and then Kṛṣṇa asked if Draupadī, the wife of the Pāṇḍavas, had eaten. Draupadī had once received the benediction that as long as she had not eaten her meal, she would be able to feed any number of guests. She told Kṛṣṇa that she had already eaten.

“Just go and find any little food in the kitchen,” Kṛṣṇa said.

Draupadī found a little food stuck to the side of a pot and brought it to Kṛṣṇa. When Kṛṣṇa ate it, Duvāsā Muni and company felt that their stomachs were full. Ashamed at being unable to accept a meal from the Pāṇḍavas, they fled.

That is the process. If you can satisfy Kṛṣṇa—if Kṛṣṇa says, “All right”—then everything is all right. That is the principle of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. Somehow or other, satisfy

Kṛṣṇa. *Samsiddhir hari-toṣaṇam*. Then you will get all perfection. It is a very simple method. Try to satisfy Kṛṣṇa, and you will be satisfied in every respect. Everything will be perfect.

Kṛṣṇa also says that. And it is not very difficult to satisfy Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is so kind. He says, *patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyam yo me bhaktyā prayacchati*: “You want to feed Me—that’s all right. Just collect a flower or a leaf and offer it to Me with devotion.” The real offering is *bhakti*—love, devotion. Kṛṣṇa is not asking you to bring Him large quantities of delicious food. No. Kṛṣṇa wants your love.

Kṛṣṇa is not a beggar, nor is He hungry, coming to your place to eat something. That’s not Kṛṣṇa’s position. Kṛṣṇa wants only your love.

A father takes responsibility for the whole family. He works hard day and night to maintain the family. In return, he only expects love from his wife and children. That is the impetus for economic development. The father works hard to earn money, but he needs only a little for himself. He works hard so that when he comes home, he can see his wife and children very satisfied.

Similarly, Kṛṣṇa has expanded His family. He has become so many living entities. What is the idea? *Ānandamayo ’bhyāsāt*. Because He’s *ānandamaya*, full of pleasure, He wants to enjoy loving exchanges between Himself and the living entities. That is His purpose. Otherwise, why has He created us? He wants love. But rascals have forgotten that. They say, “There is no God. I am God. I am the enjoyer.” Instead of loving God, they are becoming “God.” This has killed the whole situation.

Therefore Kṛṣṇa comes. He wants to reestablish the reciprocal exchange of love, which is called *bhakti*. You love Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa loves you. Kṛṣṇa loves you even without receiving your love. Otherwise, how are you eating? You cannot live even for a moment without Kṛṣṇa’s mercy. That’s a fact. *Eko bahūnām yo vidadhāti kāmān*.

## THE MEANING OF DHARMA

Kṛṣṇa comes to establish dharma. Dharma means what is enjoined by (please turn to page 14)

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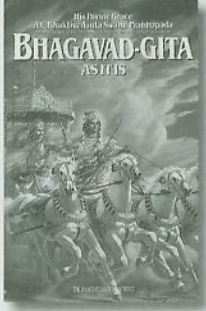
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# Q&A on the GĪTĀ

Compiled by Krishan B. Lal



Detail from a painting by Madhava Prīyā Devī Dāsī

*With Lord Kṛṣṇa driving his chariot, Arjuna faces Grandfather Bhīṣma on the Battlefield of Kurukshetra.*



# PART 5

The *Gītā*, or *Bhagavad-gītā* (“The Song of God”), was spoken five thousand years ago by Lord Kṛṣṇa to the prince Arjuna. It contains the essence of Vedic knowledge.

The compiler has applied a question/answer format to the Introduction to *Bhagavad-gītā* As It Is, by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

## Can we travel to higher planets?

As we, the living entity, repeatedly transmigrate from one body to another, we also travel from one planet to another. But we cannot go to any planet we like merely by a mechanical arrangement. If we desire to go to other planets, there is a process for going there, and no mechanical arrangement is necessary. The *Gītā* instructs *yānti deva-vratā devān pītṛn yānti pītṛ-vratāḥ*. There are three planetary systems: higher, middle, and lower. The moon, the sun, and higher planets are called *Svarga-loka*. The earth belongs to the middle planetary system. *Bhagavad-gītā* informs us how to travel to the higher planetary systems (*Devaloka*) with a very simple formula: *yānti deva-vratā devān*. One need only worship the particular demigod of that planet.

Yet *Bhagavad-gītā* does not advise us to go to any of the planets in the material world, because even if we go to *Brahmaloka*, the highest planet, through some sort of mechanical contrivance by maybe traveling for forty thousand years (and who would live that long?), we will still find the material inconveniences of birth, death, disease, and old age. But one who wants to approach the supreme planet, Kṛṣṇaloka, or any of the other planets within the spiritual sky will not meet with these material inconveniences.

## Is the material world a reflection of the spiritual world?

In the Fifteenth Chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the real picture of the

material world is given. It is said there:

*ūrdhva-mūlam adhaḥ-sākham  
aśvatthaṁ prāhur avyayam  
chandāmsi yasya parṇāni  
yas taṁ veda sa veda-vit*

Here the material world is described as a tree whose roots are upwards and branches are below. We have experience of a tree whose roots are upward: A person standing on the bank of a river or any reservoir of water can see that the trees reflected in the water are upside down. The branches go downward and the roots upward.

Similarly, the material world is a reflection of the spiritual world. The material world is but a shadow of reality. In the shadow there is no reality or substantiality, but from the shadow we can understand that there are substance and reality. In the desert there is no water, but the mirage suggests that there is such a thing as water. In the material world there is no water—there is no happiness—but the real water of actual happiness is there in the spiritual world. All of this information is given in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, and we are given information how to leave the material world and begin a truly blissful life in the spiritual sky.

## How can we attain the spiritual world?

The Lord suggests that we attain the spiritual world in the following manner (Bg. 15.5):

*nirmāna-mohā jīta-saṅga-doṣā  
adhyaṭma-nityā vinivṛtta-kāmāḥ  
dvandvair vimuktāḥ sukha-duḥkha-  
samjñair  
gacchanty amūḍhāḥ padam  
avyayam tat*

The *padam avyayam*, or eternal kingdom, can be reached by one who is *nirmāna-moha*. What does this mean? We are after designations. Someone wants to become “sir,” someone wants to become “lord,” someone wants to become the president or a rich man or a king or something else. As long as we are attached to these designations, we are attached

to the body, because designations belong to the body. But we are not these bodies, and realizing this is the first stage in spiritual realization. We are associated with the three modes of material nature, but we must become detached through devotional service to the Lord.

If we are not attached to devotional service to the Lord, then we cannot become detached from the modes of material nature. Designations and attachments are due to our lust and desire, our wanting to lord it over the material nature. The eternal kingdom, which is never destroyed, can be approached by one who is not bewildered by the attractions of false material enjoyments, who is situated in the service of the Supreme Lord.

## Why can't we see the spiritual world?

The *Gītā* (8.21) states:

*avyakto 'kṣara ity uktas  
tam āhuḥ paramāṁ gatim  
yaṁ prāpya na nivartante  
tad dhāma paramaṁ mama*

*Avyakta* means “unmanifested.” The spiritual world is unmanifested. Not even all of the material world is manifested before us. Our senses are so imperfect that we cannot even see all of the stars within the material universe, so what to speak of the spiritual planets.

## What are the relative sizes of the material and spiritual worlds?

The material world has been approximated as only one quarter of the creation (*ekāṁśena sthito jagat*). In the material segment there are millions and billions of universes with trillions of planets and suns, stars, and moons. But this whole material creation is only a fragment of the total creation. Most of the creation is in the spiritual sky.

## How does reincarnation take place?

The living entity decides to act in a certain way and is then entangled in the reactions of his work. If he forgets Kṛṣṇa at death, after giving up the body he enters another, as we put on and take off clothes. As the soul



thus migrates, he suffers the reactions of his past activities. A person dies after higher authorities have decided what form of body he will have in the next life.

According to our activities in this life, we either rise or sink.

*yaṁ yaṁ vāpi smaran bhāvaṁ  
tyajaty ante kalevaram  
taṁ tam evaiti kaunteya  
sadā tad-bhāva-bhāvitaḥ*

“Whatever state of being one remembers when he quits his body, O son of Kuntī, that state he will attain without fail.” (Bg. 8.6). At the time of death either we remain in the inferior energy of this material world, or we transfer to the energy of the spiritual world. This life is a preparation for the next life. If we prepare, therefore, in this life to get promotion to the kingdom of God, then surely, after quitting this material body, we will attain a spiritual body just like the Lord’s.

### What is the result of remembering Kṛṣṇa at the time of death?

In *Bhagavad-gītā* (8.5) it is said:

*anta-kāle ca mām eva  
smaran muktvā kalevaram  
yaḥ prayāti sa mad-bhāvaṁ  
yāti nāsty atra saṁśayaḥ*

“And whoever at the end of his life quits his body remembering Me alone at once attains My nature. Of this there is not doubt.” One who thinks of Kṛṣṇa at the time of death

goes to Kṛṣṇa. One must remember the form of Kṛṣṇa; if he quits his body thinking of this form, he surely approaches the spiritual kingdom.

### What is the difference between spiritual form and our present body?

The Supreme Being is *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*—that is, His form is eternal, full of knowledge and bliss. Our present body is not *sac-cid-ānanda*. It is *asat*, not *sat*. It is not eternal; it is perishable. It is not *cit*, full of knowledge, but it is full of ignorance. We have no knowledge of the spiritual kingdom, nor do we even have perfect knowledge of the material world. The body is also *nir-ānanda*; instead of being full of bliss it is full of misery. All of the miseries we experience in this world arise from the body, but one who leaves the body thinking of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, at once attains a *sac-cid-ānanda* body.

### Does thinking of Kṛṣṇa require giving up our occupational duties?

In the eighth chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā*, Kṛṣṇa does not advise Arjuna to remember Him and give up his occupation.

*tasmāt sarveṣu kāleṣu  
mām anusmara yudhya ca  
mayy arpita-mano-buddhir  
mām evaiṣyasy asaṁśayaḥ*

“Therefore, Arjuna, you should always think of Me in the form of Kṛṣṇa and at the same time continue

your prescribed duty of fighting. With your activities dedicated to Me and your mind and intelligence fixed on Me, you will attain Me without doubt.” (Bg. 8.7) Arjuna was always thinking of Kṛṣṇa; he was the constant companion of Kṛṣṇa, and at the same time he was a warrior. Kṛṣṇa did not advise him to give up fighting and go to the forest to meditate.

### What is required to remember Kṛṣṇa at death?

If we don’t practice remembering Kṛṣṇa while struggling for existence, it will not be possible to remember Him at death. Lord Caitanya also advises this. He says, *kīrtaniyaḥ sadā hariḥ*: one should practice chanting the names of the Lord always. The names of the Lord and the Lord are identical. So Lord Kṛṣṇa’s instructions to Arjuna to “remember Me” and Lord Caitanya’s injunction to “always chant the names of Lord Kṛṣṇa” are the same instruction. There is no difference, because Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa’s name are identical. In the absolute status there is no difference between reference and referent. Therefore we have to practice remembering the Lord always, twenty-four hours a day, by chanting His names and molding our life’s activities in such a way that we can remember Him always.

### How is it possible to always remember Kṛṣṇa while working?

Spiritual teachers give the following example: If a married woman is attached to another man, or if a man has an attachment for a woman other than his wife, then the attachment is very strong. One with such an attachment is always thinking of the loved one. The wife who is thinking of her lover is always thinking of meeting him, even while she is carrying out her household chores. In fact, she carries out her household work even more carefully so her husband will not suspect her attachment.

Similarly, we should always remember the supreme lover, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and at the same time perform our material duties very nicely. A strong sense of love is required here.

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If we have a strong sense of love for the Supreme Lord, then we can discharge our duty and at the same time remember Him. But we have to develop that sense of love.

### Who is the best yogi?

When Lord Kṛṣṇa delineates the yoga system, Arjuna says that the practice of this system is not possible for him.

*arjuna uvāca  
yo 'yaṁ yogas tvayā proktaḥ  
sāmyena madhusūdana  
etasyāhaṁ na paśyāmi  
cañcalatvāt sthitim sthirām*

“Arjuna said: O Madhusūdana, the system of yoga which You have summarized appears impractical and unendurable to me, for the mind is restless and unsteady.” (Bg. 6.33) But the Lord says:

*yoginām api sarveṣāṁ  
mad-gaten-āntar-ātmanā  
śraddhāvān bhajate yo mān  
sa me yuktatamo mataḥ*

“Of all yogis, the one with great faith who always abides in Me, thinks of Me within himself, and renders transcendental loving service to Me is the most intimately united with Me in yoga and is the highest of all. That is My opinion.” (Bg. 6.47) So one who thinks of the Supreme Lord always is the greatest yogi, the greatest *jñānī*, and the greatest devotee at the same time. The Lord further tells Arjuna that as a *kṣatriya* he cannot give up his fighting, but if he fights remembering Kṛṣṇa, he will be able to remember Kṛṣṇa at the time of death. One must be completely surrendered in the transcendental loving service of the Lord.

### What are the destinations of the different kinds of transcendentalists?

There are different kinds of transcendentalists: the *brahma-vādī*, who realizes the Lord's spiritual effulgence (*brahmajyoti*); the *paramātmā-vādī*, who realizes the Supersoul, or the Lord in the heart; and the devotee, who realizes Bhagavān, the Personality of Godhead. One who

desires to merge into the existence of the Supreme Brahman is transferred to the *brahmajyoti* of the Supreme Lord and thus attains the spiritual sky. The devotee, who wants to enjoy the association of the Lord, enters into the Vaikuṅṭha planets, which are innumerable, and the Supreme Lord by His plenary expansions as Nārāyaṇa with four hands associates with him there.

At the end of life the transcendentalists think either of the *brahmajyoti*, the Paramātmā, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In all cases they enter into the spiritual

sky, but only the devotee, or he who is in personal touch with the Supreme Lord, enters into the Vaikuṅṭha planets or the Goloka Vṛndāvana planet. The Lord says, “Of this there is not doubt.” There is no question of disbelieving it. We should not reject what does not tally with our imagination. Our attitude should be that of Arjuna: “I believe everything that You have said.” ❁

*Krishnan B. Lal, an ISKCON Life Member, is retired and lives in Huntington Beach, California.*

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## MEANING OF PERFECTION

(continued from page 9)

the Lord. What God says, that is dharma. Not that you manufacture your dharma. God, Kṛṣṇa, says, *man-manā bhava mad-bhakto mad-yājī māṅ namaskuru*: “Always think of Me, become My devotee, worship Me, and bow down to Me.” Kṛṣṇa says, *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekam śaraṇam vraja*: “Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me.” This is dharma. Any so-called dharma that does not involve surrender to God is not real dharma. It is called *kaitava* dharma, “cheating religion.” Therefore the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* says, *dharmah projjhita-kaitavo 'tra*: “All cheating dharma is thrown away, kicked out.”

Here the same thing is confirmed: *svanuṣṭhitasya dharmasya saṁsiddhir hari-toṣaṇam*. You are religious; that's all right. But the purpose of religion

is to satisfy the Supreme Lord. That is perfection. It doesn't matter what your occupation is. It is said, *varṇāśrama-vibhāgaśah*, “by the divisions of *varṇāśrama*.” A *brāhmaṇa* can satisfy Kṛṣṇa by his austerity, by his truthfulness, by his knowledge of the *sāstras*. He can preach the knowledge of the *sāstras* to the world. He can eat on behalf of God. According to Vedic civilization, there is *brāhmaṇa-bhojana*. *Brāhmaṇa-bhojana* means that Kṛṣṇa eats through the *brāhmaṇas*.

So a *brāhmaṇa* can remain a *brāhmaṇa* and satisfy the Lord by his activities. The same is true for others. Arjuna was not a *brāhmaṇa*; he was *kṣatriya*. He was not a *sannyāsi*; he was a *gṛhastha*, a householder and a king. He knew how to kill. So by killing he satisfied Kṛṣṇa. *Saṁsiddhir hari-toṣaṇam*. That was the whole purpose of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Arjuna was unwilling to kill, and Kṛṣṇa was induc-

ing him, “You must kill.” And when Arjuna agreed to kill, then Kṛṣṇa became satisfied and Arjuna became perfect.

These examples are evidence. The purpose of life is to satisfy Kṛṣṇa. When Arjuna refused to fight, that was for his own satisfaction. “I shall not kill my grandfather, my nephews, my brother on the other side. If they die, I shall be unhappy. So what is the use of killing them?” These considerations were all sense gratification, so-called nonviolence. A devotee does not know what is violence and non-violence. He wants to satisfy Kṛṣṇa. That's all. Devotees do not know what is morality or immorality. They want to satisfy Kṛṣṇa. The *gopis*, the cowherd girls, went to Kṛṣṇa in the dead of night. That is immoral. But they did not know what is morality or immorality. They had to go to Kṛṣṇa. *Saṁsiddhir hari-toṣaṇam*.

Everyone should try to satisfy Lord Kṛṣṇa. *Man-manā bhava mad-bhakto mad-yājī māṅ namaskuru*. That is the perfection of life. Always think of Kṛṣṇa (*man-manāḥ*). “Always become My devotee” (*mad-bhakta*). “Always worship Me” (*mad-yājī*). “Always offer your obeisances unto Me” (*māṅ namaskuru*).

“But I have another religion, Sir. Why shall I think of You only? I have to think of Goddess Kālī. Otherwise I cannot eat meat.”

Therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa says, *sarva-dharmān parityajya*: “It is all nonsense. Give up all this nonsense.” *Mām ekam*. “Simply surrender unto Me.” *Ekam*. “Don't bother with the demigods.”

So this is the real dharma: *saṁsiddhir hari-toṣaṇam*. Somehow or other, satisfy Kṛṣṇa. Arjuna satisfied Kṛṣṇa by killing. Killing is not a very good art. But because by killing, Arjuna satisfied Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa gave him a certificate: *bhakto 'si me sakhā ceti*, “Oh, you are My very dear friend.”

Kṛṣṇa's purpose was to kill the demons. *Paritrāṇāya sādhuṇām vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām*. Arjuna helped kill the demons and fulfill the desire of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore Arjuna became perfect by killing. So if you do anything sanctioned by Kṛṣṇa, or by His bona fide representative, that is real dharma. *Saṁsiddhir hari-toṣaṇam*.

Thank you very much. ❁

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## “Kṛṣṇa Consciousness Is Real Science”

Here we continue an exchange between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and the poet Allen Ginsberg. It took place on May 12, 1969, in Columbus, Ohio.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not a bluff. It is real science, real authority. One simply has to understand it. That’s all. Therefore, in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* it is said, *kṛṣṇa yei bhaje sei baḍa catura*: Unless one is very, very intelligent, he cannot come to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He must be very intelligent. So if we find one or two intelligent persons . . . *Ekaś candras tamo hanti na ca tārāḥ sahasraśaḥ*: One moon is sufficient to eradicate all darkness. There is no need of millions of stars. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is so beautiful. You call any intelligent person, and we are prepared to convince him. Any intelligent person. He must be a little intelligent. That’s all.

**Allen Ginsberg:** Yes, but I’m not even convinced. I mean, everything you say is beautiful, but . . .

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** No. You are a very intelligent boy. Why do you not think you are intelligent? You are a recognized poet; you are a popular poet. I take it that you are intelligent. You are first-class intelligent. You are chanting.

**Allen Ginsberg:** But for

me the chanting is almost a physical body movement, rather than a . . .

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** For now that may be, but your intelligence is sufficient. If this standard of intelligent men is what I get as my followers, that will be my good fortune. You see. Now, at least, I request you that you try to understand this Kṛṣṇa consciousness philosophy. It is not sentiment. It is not bluffing. It is not a money-making business.

**Allen Ginsberg:** No. Obviously not.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** You see? You know my activities from the very beginning. I came here single-handed. I chanted. That’s all. I never asked anybody for money.

**Allen Ginsberg:** That was never in question.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** I never said, “I’ll give you Kṛṣṇa consciousness for this or that.” No. So it is not a bluff. It is purely scientific. Transcendental science. So I want some American gentlemen to understand this.

**Allen Ginsberg:** Well, Howard [Prabhupāda’s disciple Hayagrīva Dāsa] teaches at the university, and he understands.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. So we want many Howards. [Chuckles.] Your country is so big.

**Allen Ginsberg:** Actually, what I was getting into . . . You were saying that Kṛṣṇa says, “So everything stands on My personality.” And then there was a twist there: “But I am . . .”—was it “empty”? Is that what you said before? Do you remember? Just about eight minutes ago, you concluded the analogy of the sun.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** The sun-god, the sun globe, and the sunshine.

**Disciple:** Kṛṣṇa says, Me, but I am absent.

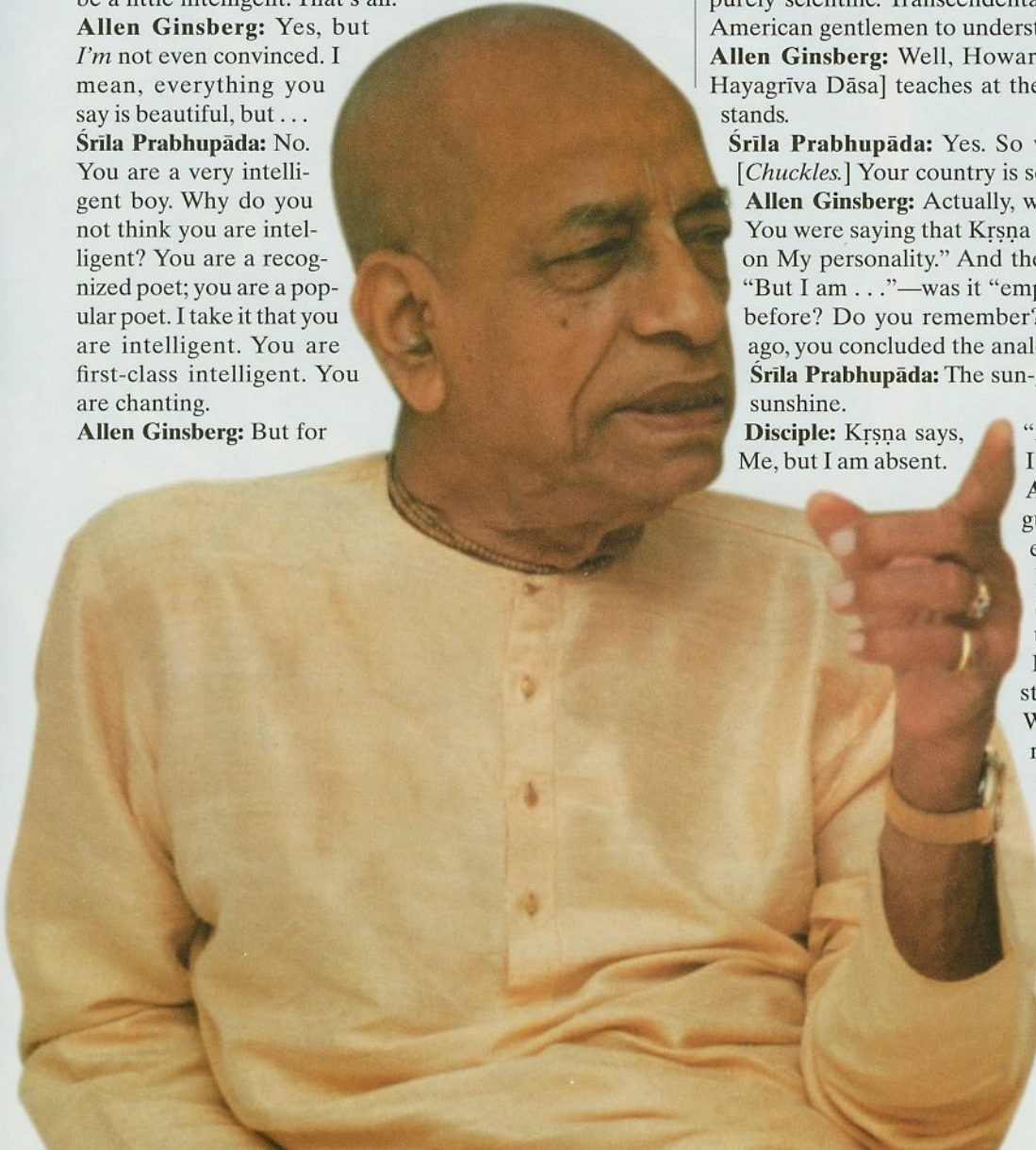
“All things are depending on I am not in them.”

**Allen Ginsberg:** Oh, oh. I guess that’s where I . . . “Everything is depending on Me, yet I am not in them.”

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** “Everything is resting on Me. But I am not there.” For instance, this table is Kṛṣṇa. Without Kṛṣṇa it would have no existence. But at the same time, the table is not Kṛṣṇa. The pantheist will say, “Everything is God. Therefore, I worship this table.”

**Allen Ginsberg:** So, then, who is Kṛṣṇa?

(please turn to page 56)

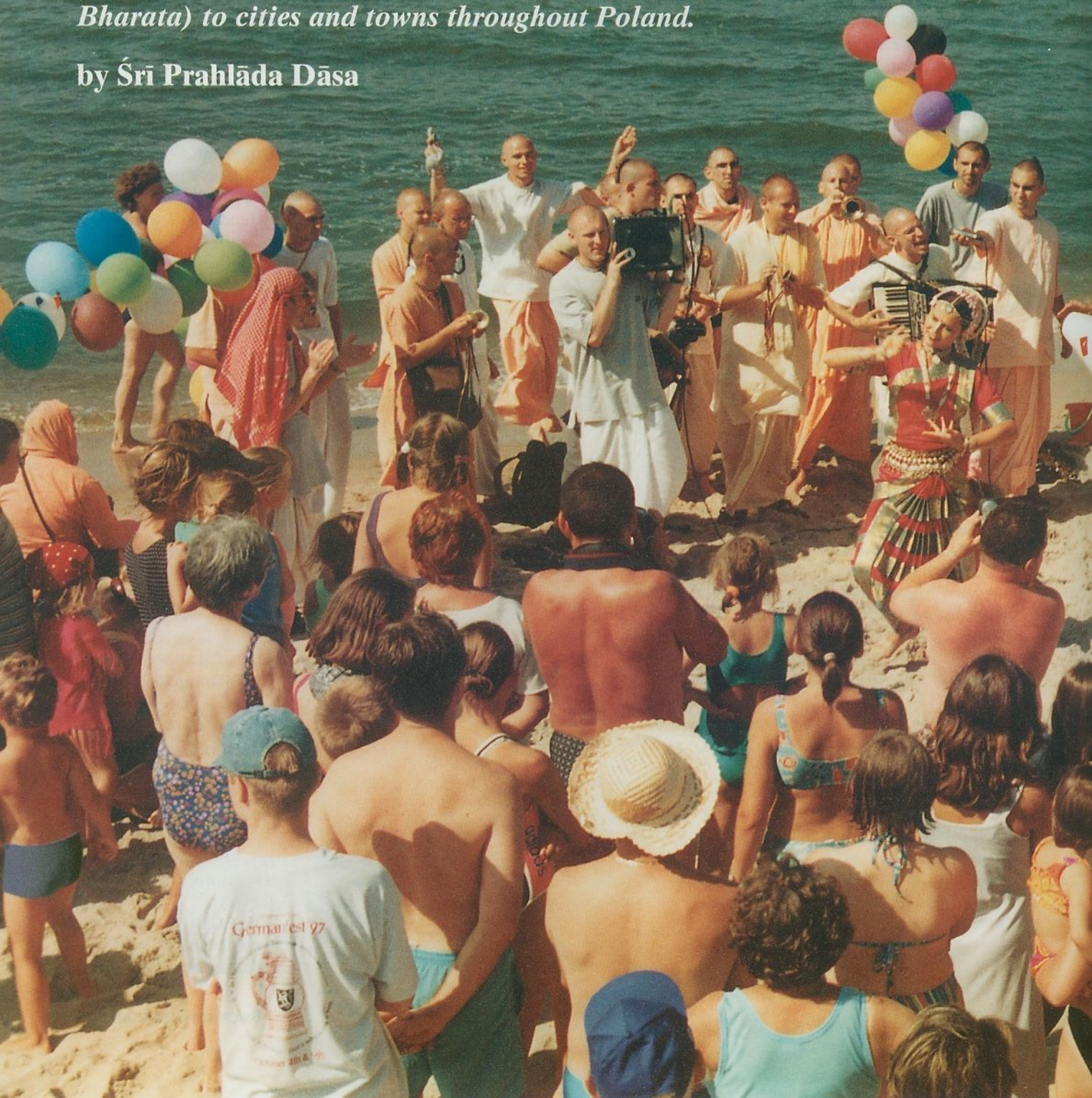




# Bharata Culture On the Baltic Coast

*ISKCON's "Festival of Indian Culture" carries the essence of the spiritual culture of India (originally called Bharata) to cities and towns throughout Poland.*

by Śrī Prahlaḍa Dāsa







**E**WA, BEATA, and Ania, three girls aged nine, eleven, and thirteen, live in Mrzezyno, a quiet town of four thousand with a beach and port on Poland's northern Baltic coast. They wait excitedly all year for summer, when forty thousand vacationers descend on Mrzezyno and the town comes alive. Impromptu bars, cafes, discos, hotels, campgrounds, and billboards spring up.

The girls' excitement comes from more than just looking forward to summer tourism. Every day they go down to the beach to see, "Have they come yet?"

One Saturday morning as the trio strolls along the port, they hear cymbal chimes and drum rhythms growing louder by the second.

"It's them!" the girls yell in joy, running in the direction of the sound.

A bouquet of colors appears. Forty-five people dance down the street in two lines, women in elegant saris in front and back. Many in the group carry flags and strings of balloons. Spectators on the street and in windows smile to see the women's friendly waves as they dance in unison.

In the middle of the procession shaven-headed men in bright robes dance with joy to the accompaniment of cymbals, drums, a trumpet, and an accordion.

The lead singer's voice charms Ewa, Beata, and Ania with their favorite chant: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

In their excitement the girls recognize someone.

"Śrī Rādhikā!"

They run forward to hug their old friend, dressed like a traditional Indian dancer.

### BEACH PARTY

The train of dancing devotees gradually winds its way to beach, where the procession attracts the curious. While

*Beachgoers in Mrzezyno sample the music and dance they'll enjoy at the Festival of India, which has toured Poland for the past ten summers.*





*Costumed with oversized heads, players enact scenes from the epic Rāmāyaṇa. Below, right: Śūrpaṇakhā, sister of the evil king Rāvaṇa.*



some people laugh or ignore the scene, others clap, and many smile and wave.

With a cue from Indradyumna Swami, Śrī Rādhikā halts the forward march. The sea forms a beautiful backdrop for the musical party. A crowd gathers to see the entertainment. Out in front, Śrī Rādhikā dances with Ewa, Beata, and Ania. They invite children from the ring of spectators to come and dance, and soon twenty-five dancers move in swirling chains.

The music builds to an intense climax, everyone absorbed in Kṛṣṇa's holy names. Then, to the applause of bystanders, the performance comes to

a close and Indradyumna Swami steps forward.

“Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your kind appreciation.”

Gaurāṅgi Dāsī translates into Polish for the crowd.

“We are members of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. Tonight and tomorrow at 5:00 PM we'll be putting on a festival of Indian culture on the pier. The stage program will include traditional Indian music, dance, and theater. We also have exhibits on the Indian philosophy and way of life.

“In one tent you'll be able to put on an Indian sari to wear for the even-





ing. In another you can have your face painted with Indian flower designs and treat yourself to delicious Indian vegetarian food. This is a festival for the whole family, and it's free."

Indradyumna Swami asks who will be there, and most in the audience raise their hands high. The music starts again, and procession moves on.

## SETTING UP THE SITE

At the festival site, only a hundred meters from the beach, a team of devotees unloads the semitrailer. They set up fifteen tents along both sides of the pier and bolt scaffolding to the truck trailer to erect a stage. A banner adorning the stage reads "Festival of Indian Culture, 10th Anniversary Tour."

One crewman is Narottama Dāsa, age twenty-two, a second-generation Kṛṣṇa devotee and a graduate of a *gurukula* (Hare Kṛṣṇa school) in Murwillumbah, Australia. After graduating three years ago, he didn't know what to do with himself.

"My friends and I got into drugs. My parents tried to advise me against it, but they didn't really have anything for me to do. Two years ago when Indradyumna Swami came to our farm, he spent a lot of time with me and encouraged me to start chanting again and to come to Poland. For six months I worked really hard for a local devotee, and finally I was able to buy my ticket. It's the best thing I ever did.

"Tomorrow when the festival finishes we'll dismantle everything and then set up again the next day. We do festivals in two or three towns a week, five months a year. It's a lot of hard work, but it's fun too. Clean fun. I have friends here, and I feel I'm doing something worthwhile for people in general, for ISKCON, and for myself. My parents are really proud of me."

After the stage goes up, it's time for Jāmbavān to do his work at the mixing desk. He tunes the sound system, adjusting the crossover and equalization. The twenty-two-year-old sound technician is a graduate of *gurukula* in India. His mother is Australian, and he was born in England.

"I was living in Vṛndāvana with my parents, fiddling with my computer,





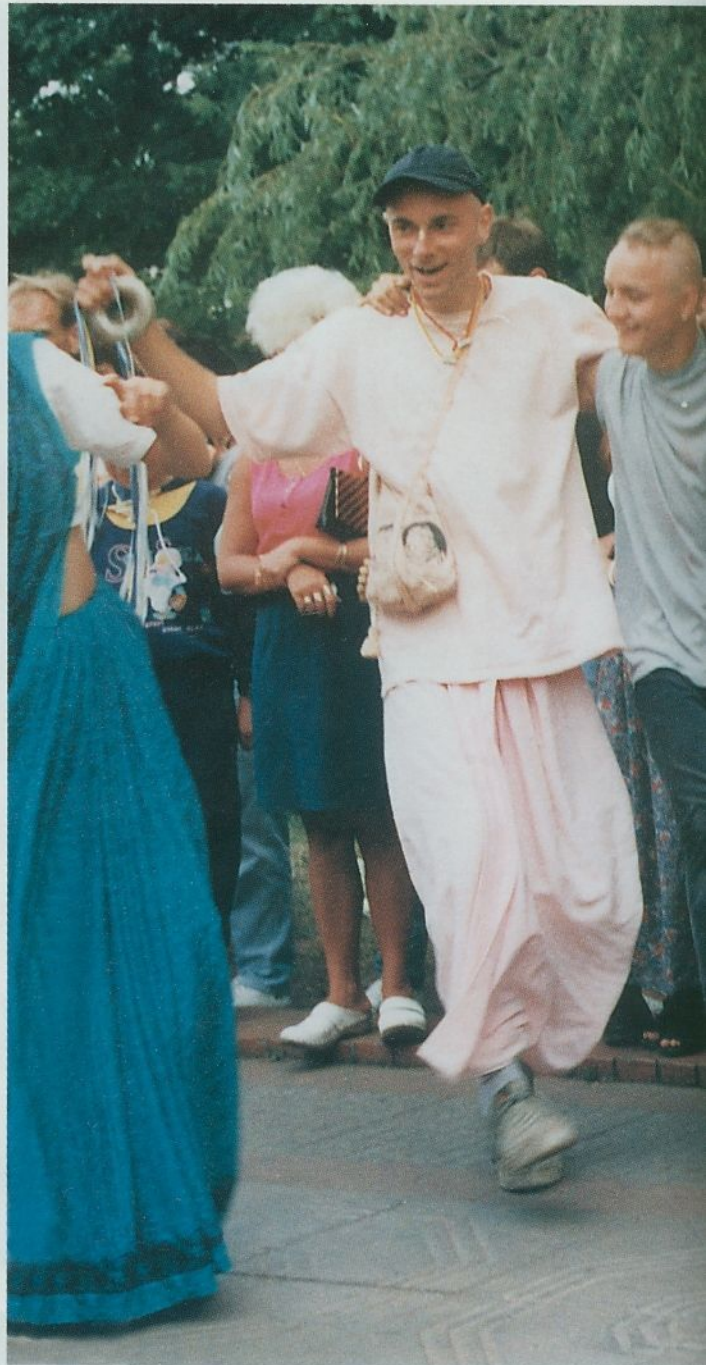
waiting for something to happen with my life. Then Indradyumna Swami invited me to the Polish tour as assistant sound engineer. I gladly accepted his offer.

“Last year I worked as an understudy. This year I’m running the whole system: four thousand watts of amplifiers, a twelve-channel mixing desk, and several multi-effects units.

“The festivals used to be held indoors for fewer than a thousand peo-

*Members of the festival team invite onlookers to dance to the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra (right).*

*Below, festival director Indradyumna Swami signs a copy of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Bhagavad-gītā As It Is.*



ple. Now that they’re open-air events, two thousand to ten thousand guests come—and the sound system is too small.”

### THE STAGE SHOW

Today people start arriving at 4:30. Tribhuvaneśvara Dāsa opens the festival by singing devotional songs, accompanied by traditional Indian instruments. He graduated from Poland’s Poznan Music College in 1978 and

spent time singing and playing keyboards in a cabaret band on a Polish luxury cruiser. In 1989, on a street in Warsaw, a Hare Kṛṣṇa devotee sold him a *Bhagavad-gītā*.

“After reading the book,” he says, “I decided to dedicate my talents to glorifying Kṛṣṇa.”

Several thousand people wander through the festival site. The only open area is directly in front of the stage. Ewa, Beata, and Ania, their faces painted to match their saris, are danc-

ing with Śrī Rādhikā and other young girls similarly dressed. Śrī Rādhikā teaches simple Bharata Natyam steps to the girls, who will present their skills to the crowd.

Tribhuvaneśvara, the festival’s master of ceremonies, welcomes the guests and invites applause for the dancers as they enter the stage. Croatian Śrī Rādhikā wins hearts as she tells the public in broken Polish about Bharata Natyam.

“We have started a dance school





here in Mrzezyno,” Tribhuvaneśvara announces.

The girls dance, carefully following their teacher’s movements. The audience responds with flashing cameras and thunderous applause.

The students then join the audience to watch Śrī Rādhikā perform “Kṛṣṇa, the Lifter of Govardhana Hill.”

While actors backstage prepare for the *Rāmāyaṇa* theater, Tribhuvaneśvara tells the audience that the pastimes of Lord Rāma and His queen,



Sitā, have fascinated the people of Southeast Asia for thousands of years.

Music composed by Tribhuvaneśvara ushers the actors onto the stage. Each actor has a magnificent larger-than-life mask visible from far away. Tribhuvaneśvara reads the entire script (except Sitā's part, read by a woman), changing his voice for each character.

## AROUND THE SITE

While most of the crowd focuses on the stage, around the festival site a lot else is going on. Piotrek, a teenaged boy from Katowice, approaches Indradyumna Swami with a photo of both of them together at last year's festival. Piotrek asks him to sign the photo.

"When I was leaving home for vacation, I packed this photo, thinking that I might meet you. When I got off the train this morning and saw a poster advertising the festival, I couldn't believe it."

Past the exhibition tents, where

people read panels on reincarnation, vegetarianism, and the scientific basis of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, we come to the restaurant tent, now vacant. From behind empty tables, cook Rukmiṇī-priyā Dāsī apologizes.

"Sorry, there's nothing left. Everything sold out in the first two hours of the festival. A few people said that never before in their life had they tasted anything so delicious."

The questions-and-answers tent is packed. A man asks Jayatām Dāsa if Kṛṣṇa and the Christian's God is the same person.

"God is one," Jayatām replies, "though His names are many. Allah, Yahweh, and Kṛṣṇa are names for the same person. Just as the sun is known by as many names as there are languages in the world, so is God."

An elderly woman with a dog asks if Hare Kṛṣṇa is a cult.

"The International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness," Jayatām answers, "is a registered religion in this country. In India people have taught

this philosophy and lived this culture for thousands of years. People unfamiliar with this culture sometimes say we are a cult, but not informed people like scholars or the government."

A boy interrupts.

"Then why do the priests insist that Hare Kṛṣṇa is a dangerous sect?"

In reply, Jayatām asks, "Who in this tent is afraid of death?"

Almost everyone in the tent raises his or her hand.

"Why are you afraid?"

A discussion develops, and Jayatām concludes by saying that people are afraid of death because of ignorance of an afterlife.

"It is human nature to fear what we don't understand," he says.

At the gift shops, people buy imported items from India. Saṅgīta-priyā Dāsī, just back from the *Rāmāyana* theater, where she plays the voice of Sitā, explains that profits from the gift shop help keep the festival going.

Saṅgīta reminisces as she serves a young girl.





“Six years ago I was just like her, an eighteen-year-old attending the festival for the first time.”

Introduced on the stage as the festival’s organizer, Indradyumna Swami summarizes the essential philosophy of *Bhavagad-gītā*. He holds a copy of

the book in front of him for the audience to see. His words, along with the words of the translator, resound throughout the festival site.

“In *Bhavagad-gītā*, Kṛṣṇa, as God is known in the ancient Sanskrit language of India, speaks specifically for

the benefit of human society. Unlike the animals, human beings can inquire, ‘Who am I?’ ”

He explains the basic philosophy of the soul and then says, “Some of you may be wondering why European boys and girls have accepted an Eastern culture and philosophy. I’m sure that if you speak to them they will each give you a different answer to this question. But I also think that their answers could be grouped into two categories. One, they are attracted by the philosophy. And two, they are attracted by the pure way we live.

“If you have a pure goal like attaining love of God, you should have a pure



Guests try to decide on dessert (left) in the restaurant tent. Above, Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nītāi (Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda) have traveled throughout Poland with the Festival of India. At right: His Holiness Indradyumna Swami.





way of life. In Kṛṣṇa consciousness we follow four principles: no meat-eating, no illicit sex, no intoxication, and no gambling. Although you may not be ready to follow the principles yourselves, how many of you think the world would be a better place if people lived by them? Please raise your hands.”

Most in the audience raise their hands.

“Some of you may be thinking, ‘Yeah, the principles are good, but what about fun? No hamburgers. No beer or vodka. No discos on Friday night. What do you guys do for fun? Hare Kṛṣṇas must be really sad people.’ ”







A crowd listens (left) as a devotee translates Indradyumna Swami's talk into Polish. Below, the audience enjoys a scene from the Rāmāyaṇa, enacted on the festival stage.

"I can see that many young people are waiting for our reggae band, Village of Peace. So please give a warm welcome to the lead vocalist, all the way from New Zealand, Śrī Prahlāda."

I enter the stage with the other band members for our first set.

### SATISFIED CUSTOMERS

At the book tent, Rādhā Sakhī Vṛndā Dāsī and Nandinī Dāsī are busy keeping up with the demand. Most of the *Gītā* sales come after Indradyumna Swami's talk on the stage.

"What are your names," he asks a



He pulls a sad face, and many in the audience laugh.

Then his face lights up with a big smile.

"In Kṛṣṇa consciousness we feel happiness on the spiritual platform, on the platform of the soul. Anyone can feel it at once by chanting the names of God. I invite all of you to please repeat after me. Two words at a time: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare."

Playing the harmonium, Indradyumna Swami leads a beautiful *kīrtana*, accompanied by Ekalavya Dāsa on trumpet.

Guests and devotees dance, sway-

ing back and forth in front of the stage. Śrī Rādhikā and her "students" dance in circles, holding each other's hands. Indradyumna Swami suddenly changes the melody, and the *kīrtana*'s tempo builds. Bhakti-priyā Dāsa joins in with his bass guitar, and Śyāma Bhakta Dāsa plays his African *djambe*. Devotees and guests dance with abandon.

Indradyumna Swami ends the *kīrtana* and speaks some final words.

"If you have enjoyed the chanting, the dancing, and the talk on the philosophy, I would like to invite you to take it home with you. If you take a *Bhagavad-gītā* from our bookshop, where I am going right now, I'll write a little dedication for you.

middle-aged man with his wife and two sons.

Nandinī writes their names on a piece of paper, which Indradyumna Swami copies onto the front page of the book:

July 18, 1999

Mrzezyno, Poland

Dear Jacek, Magda, Bartek, and Rafal, May this ancient wisdom bring peace and happiness into your lives.

Yours, Indradyumna Swami

Indradyumna Swami is excited about the success of the festival.

"Each festival is a gem," he says. "It's not always easy to get permission



# Festival Appreciation

*Excerpts from letters written by mayors and cultural directors in some Polish cities that hosted the Festival of India. (Translated from Polish.)*

The spectacle was held in a nice atmosphere, delivering heaps of spiritual experiences. Warmly recommended.

—Mayor of Miedzychod

The idea of the festival is splendid, and the people presenting it are full of kindness and grace. I am still hopeful that people who improperly understand the word “tolerance” will deliberately begin to change their outlook upon life and will kindly accept this kind of spectacle in future years.

—Director of the Culture House, Miedzychod

The Festival of India was a cultural and artistic undertaking on a very high organizational level. We give the organizers the highest mark. In thanking you for presenting India’s culture, we are inviting you again to Glogow.

—The Chief of Glogow’s Culture Department (On behalf of the President of Glogow)

Hearty thanks for marvelous and gorgeous entertainment. The friendly mood and kindness prevailing during the Festival of

India may for all of us be an excellent example of a grand and professionally prepared show. The dance, theater, pantomime, and concerts executed by artists representing united cultures of both West and East caused bliss and enchantment among all the Festival’s participants.

—Mayor of Wolsztyn

We would like to thank you for organizing and delivering so many unforgettable experiences from this wonderful event. We hope that it is the first step toward future cooperation.

—Director of the Culture House, Chocianow

This astonishing event will be long remembered by the inhabitants of Chocianow. The Festival delivered to the public a lot of sensations and made it possible to get in contact with Indian culture, lifestyle, and philosophy. Hoping for future visit of your Festival.

—Mayor of Chocianow

The whole affair was accepted very nicely by the inhabitants of Chojnow, which was proved by their attendance in great numbers. The Festival in a significant way helped us get to know this culture. I invite future cooperation and wish for many more successful festivals.

—Director of the Culture House, Chojnow

thing: we’ll have the pleasure of meeting again. Thank you all for coming. Good-by till tomorrow, and remember, chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and be happy!”

I sign CDs and cassettes and give my address to those who want to write to me. I have received many letters from kids who stopped smoking, drinking alcohol, or eating meat after attending one of our concerts. Some kids start to read Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books and regularly chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. I know I’m not a great musician, but letters like these and memories of the kids chanting and dancing in the concerts inspire me to keep singing.

## ANOTHER YEAR

Port authority captain Jusef is pleased he attended the festival.

“My superiors in Szczecin and the local priest told me not to allow the festival this year. I didn’t listen to them, and the mayor supported my decision. I’m so glad your festival has come back to Mrzezyno. People have such a good time when you come to town.”

As he walks away carrying his favorite *prasādam*—deep-fried vegetable *samosās*—he turns and says to Indradyumna Swami, “May these festivals continue for the next hundred years!”

As the festival ends, Beata, Ewa, and Ania excitedly run with a festival poster and a pen, requesting autographs from Indradyumna Swami, Tribhuvaneśvara, and other artists. Two buses carrying exhausted devotees pull out of the festival site. Three teary-eyed girls wave.

“Good-by,” they shout. “Come again next year.” ☀

*Twenty-two-year-old Śrī Prahlāda Dāsa has been a Kṛṣṇa devotee since age five. He has traveled with the Poland festival tour since it began in 1990. Last year he was married onstage to Rukmiṇī Priyā Devī Dāsi during the Polish Woodstock festival.*

to do them. Sometimes mayors on their own or under pressure from the local priests cancel the festivals at the last moment.”

## HARE KṚṢṆA REGGAE

Village of Peace’s Kṛṣṇa reggae has a crowd of a couple hundred people dancing in front of the stage. I sing in

English, Bengali, and Sanskrit. We’re gaining a reputation, and fans call out requests. “Wake Up” and “Divine Love” are favorites.

Ten o’clock is close-down time. I say good-night to the audience.

“We have been together all night, and I can safely say that by now we’re all friends. We don’t like to say good-by to friends, but there is one good



## CALENDAR

*This calendar is calculated for Mayapur, West Bengal, India. The dates, derived from a lunar calendar, may vary by one day for other locations. Consult your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for the exact dates for your area.*

*Because the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement comes in disciplic line from Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the calendar includes not only dates relevant to all followers of the Vedic tradition but also dates relating to Lord Caitanya's associates and prominent spiritual masters in His disciplic succession.*

### Month of Vāmana

(June 17–July 16)

#### JULY

**1**—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Gadādhara Paṇḍita, one of the principal associates of Lord Caitanya. Also, disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Fasting till noon, then feasting.

**2**—Guṇḍicā-mārjana. Festival of cleansing the Guṇḍicā temple in Jagannatha Puri, India.

**3**—Lord Jagannātha's Rathayātrā in Jagannatha Puri. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara and Śrīla Śivānanda Sena, intimate associates of Lord Caitanya.

**12**—Śayanā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

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

### Month of Śrīdhara

(July 17–August 15)

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

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

**25**—Anniversary of the incorporation of ISKCON, in New York City, 1966.

**27**—Kāmikā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

#### AUGUST

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

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

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

### Month of Hṛṣikeśa

(August 16–September 13)

**16**—Anniversary of the departure of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the United States in 1965.

**23**—Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī, appearance anniversary of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Fasting till midnight, followed by a break-fast of Ekādaśī *prasādam*

(no grains or beans). Feasting tomorrow. Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for a schedule of events.

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

**26**—Annadā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

#### SEPTEMBER

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

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

**10**—Parśvā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans. Śrī Vāmana-dvādaśī, appearance anniversary of Lord Vāmanadeva, Lord Kṛṣṇa's incarnation as a dwarf brāhmaṇa. Fasting till noon. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

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

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



# What Do We Mean by

*To see the true value of the Vedic social system,  
we need to understand it in its original form.*

by Hare Kṛṣṇa Devī Dāsī

**T**HINKERS THROUGHOUT history—from Plato to Locke to modern political theorists—have always discussed the ideal form of social organization. Vedic literature also addresses this question and presents as the ideal the social system known as *varṇāśrama*, which divides society into four *varṇas*, or occupational groups, and four *āśramas*, or stages of life. The four *varṇas* are *brāhmaṇas* (priests and teachers), *kṣatriyas* (rulers and warriors), *vaiśyas* (farmers and merchants), and *śūdras* (laborers and artisans). The four *āśramas* are *brahmacarya* (student), *gṛhastha* (householder), *vānaprastha* (retired), and *sannyāsa* (renounced).

When His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda carried the wisdom of Vedic literature to the West, he was hoping for nothing short of a spiritual revolution. He knew that

without Kṛṣṇa consciousness, people cannot be happy. An important part of his strategy to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness around the world was the revival of *varṇāśrama*. For many years, his followers have pondered his instructions about *varṇāśrama*, but so far have made little progress in fulfilling his vision for it.

Part of the problem may be confusion caused by apparently contradictory things Śrīla Prabhupāda said about *varṇāśrama*. For example, in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.31), Prabhupāda refers to *varṇāśrama* as “man’s stepping-stone for spiritual understanding.” But in other places he implies that *varṇāśrama* can become simply a materialistic arrangement for one social group to dominate another, and by reinforcing identity based on bodily categories, it creates a stumbling block on the path to spiritual advancement. In

Goals

Basis of One’s Varṇa

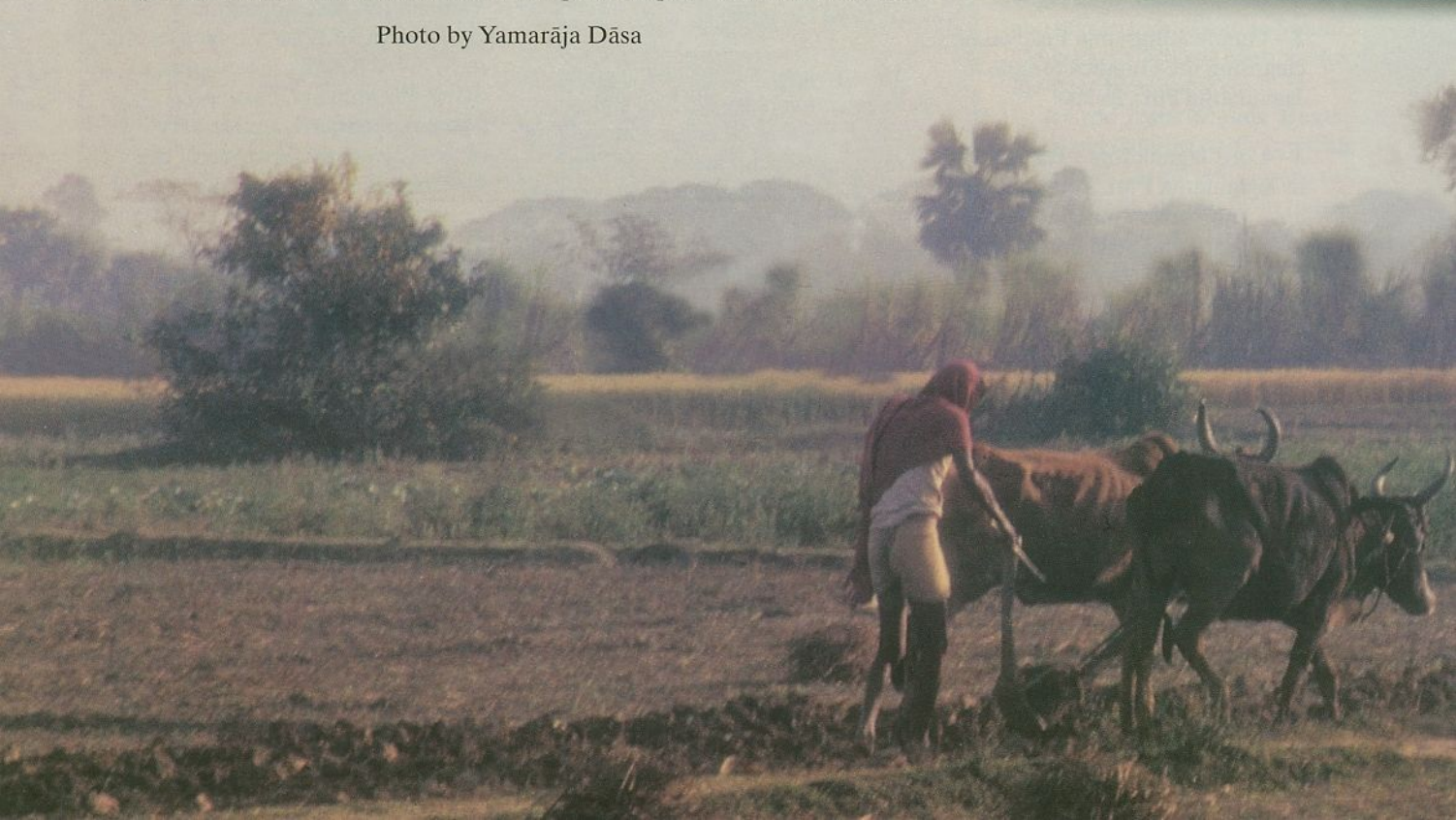
Class of Main Activities

Highest Position

Varṇas Eligible  
For Highest Position

Contribution to  
Spiritual Advancement

Photo by Yamarāja Dāsa





# Vaṛṇāśrama?

## Daiva Vaṛṇāśrama

## Materialistic Vaṛṇāśrama

## Spontaneous Vaṛṇāśrama

To please the Supreme Lord; to allow members to cooperate to help each other advance spiritually	To organize an orderly society; to promote social prestige; to help people advance to higher material planets	To preserve order and the material comfort of the higher classes
Character, qualities, training, and work	Parentage	Parentage and wealth
Karma-yoga up through bhakti-yoga (akarma)	Karma	Vikarma
Self-realized soul	Brāhmaṇa	The rich and famous
All	Brāhmaṇa	The rich and famous
Assists all citizens in spiritual progress	Links members to an authentic spiritual tradition; helps only the high-born and spiritually inclined.	None

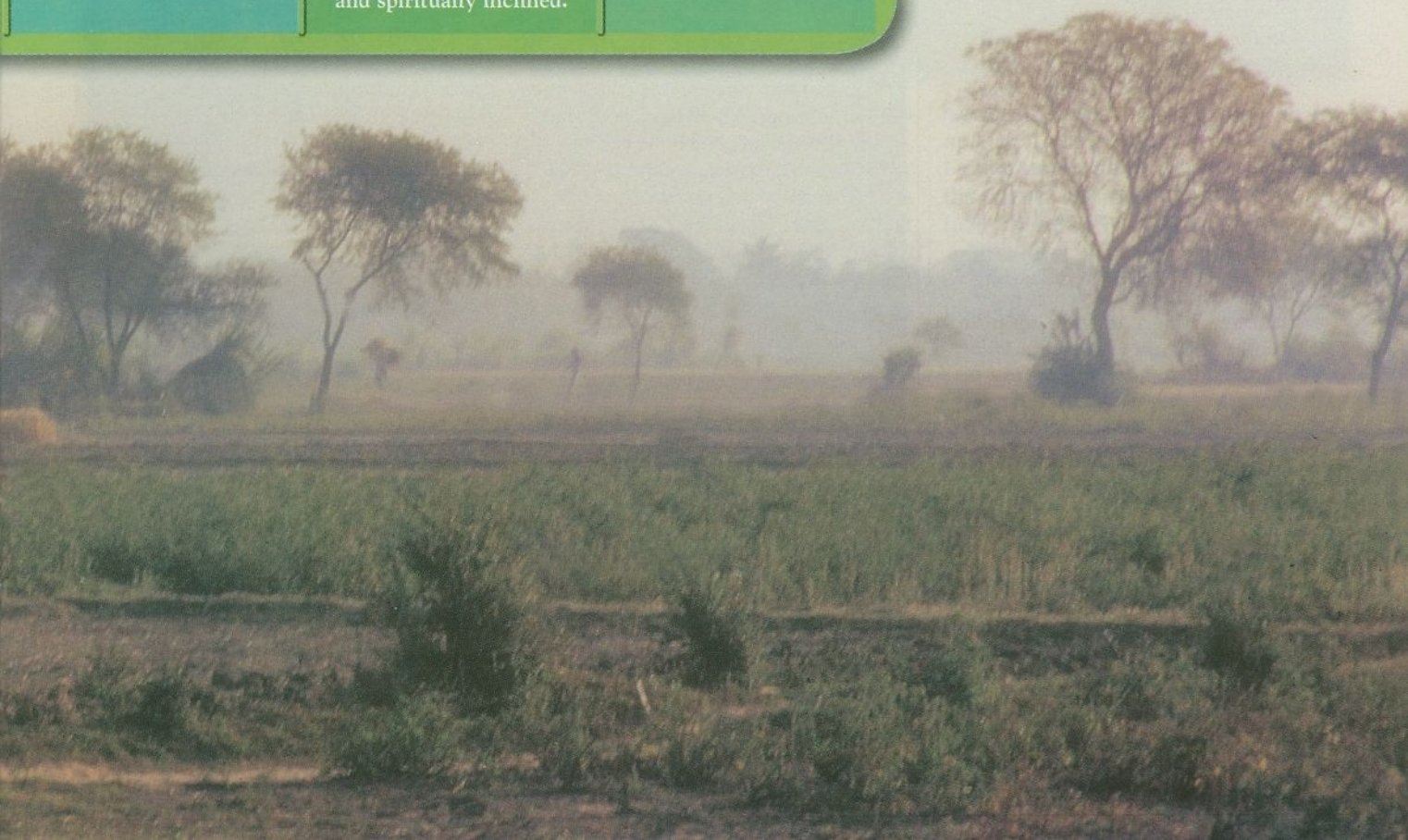
some instances Śrīla Prabhupāda says that because Lord Kṛṣṇa created *vaṛṇāśrama*, it exists in all societies at all times. But Prabhupāda also sets forth the establishment of *vaṛṇāśrama* as a central goal of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. So is *vaṛṇāśrama* an aid for spiritual elevation, or an instrument for social oppression? Does it exist throughout human society, and has it existed throughout history, or is it yet to be established?

To clarify these issues, we must recognize that the word *vaṛṇāśrama* conveys similar but significantly different meanings in different contexts. Here are three basic types of *vaṛṇāśrama*:

1. The original *vaṛṇāśrama* is the division of society into four *vaṛṇas* and four *āśramas* that cooperate to satisfy the Supreme Lord. One's *vaṛṇa* is determined by one's character, qualities, training, and work. The focus is spiritual advancement and spiritual satisfaction for each member of society.

This kind of *vaṛṇāśrama* is a spiritual institution, just as a temple or a church becomes spiritual when used to glorify the Supreme Lord. The original *vaṛṇāśrama* is sometimes referred to as *daiva*, or "divine," *vaṛṇāśrama*.

2. Materialistic *vaṛṇāśrama* is the formal division of society into four







*varṇas* and four *āśramas* primarily to control society and increase the material well-being of certain groups. Typically, parentage and adherence to certain rituals determine *varṇa*, rather character and training. The hereditary caste system, a perversion of the original *varṇāśrama*, is in the category of materialistic *varṇāśrama*.

3. Spontaneous *varṇāśrama* is a “default” society that results because by nature people tend to divide into classes (the four *varṇas*). Spontaneous *varṇāśrama* is devoid of a connection with the Supreme Lord and does nothing to promote spiritual progress.

To help us understand the kind of *varṇāśrama* Śrīla Prabhupāda promoted, let’s look at these types of *varṇāśramas* more closely, beginning with the least spiritual type.

### SPONTANEOUS VARṆĀŚRAMA

In a June 1971 conversation with Professor Grigoriy Kotovsky in Moscow, Śrīla Prabhupāda explained that because *varṇāśrama* is created by God, it exists in every society in every age:

In *Bhagavad-gītā* [4.13] there is the statement *cātur-varṇyaṁ mayā sṛjitaḥ*: this system was created by Viṣṇu [God]. So since *varṇāśrama* is a creation of the Supreme, it cannot be changed. It is prevalent everywhere. It is like the sun. The sun is a creation of the Supreme. The sunshine is there in America, in Russia, and in India—everywhere. Similarly, this *varṇāśrama* system is prevalent everywhere in some form or another. Take, for example, the *brāhmaṇas*, the most intelligent class of men. They are the brains of the society. The *kṣatriyas* are the administrative class; then the *vaiśyas* are the productive class, and the *śūdras* are the worker class. These four classes of men are prevalent everywhere under different names. Because it is created by the original creator, so it is prevalent everywhere, *varṇāśrama-dharma*. (Moscow, June 22, 1971)

Prabhupāda is describing spontaneous *varṇāśrama*. People naturally tend to divide into the classes Prabhupāda mentions, but there is no goal of using that social structure to serve the Lord.

### MATERIALISTIC VARṆĀŚRAMA

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.8) Sūta Gosvāmī criticizes what we would call materialistic *varṇāśrama*: “The occupational activities a man performs according to his own position are only so much useless labor if they do not provoke attraction for the message of the Personality of Godhead.” This verse applies to the caste system of modern India. Although the caste system has some basis in religious tradition, for most of its practitioners the

primary motivation is respectable social standing and material enjoyment, either in this life or the next, rather than service to the Supreme Lord.

### ORIGINAL VARṆĀŚRAMA

The great sage Parāśara tells us how human society can satisfy the Supreme Lord, even though He is already full in all opulences:

*varṇāśramācāravatā  
puruṣeṇa paraḥ pumān  
viṣṇur ārādhyate panthā  
nānyat tat-toṣa-kāraṇam*

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu, is worshiped by the proper execution of prescribed duties

## Lord Caitanya and the Caste System

MATERIALISTIC *varṇāśrama* was practiced at least as far back as five hundred years ago, when Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared on earth as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. The hereditary *brāhmaṇas* of the day were anxious to protect their social standing and expected others to observe their social customs. Lord Caitanya, however, saw that such customs promoted social prestige and not spiritual advancement, so He defied them again and again.

The caste *brāhmaṇas* believed that a person working in a *śūdra*’s occupation could not become a spiritual master. Since Rāmānanda Rāya was a government employee, they considered him a *śūdra*. The Lord discounted Rāmānanda Rāya’s nominal social position and took spiritual instruction from him because Rāmānanda Rāya was a devotee on the highest level of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The caste *brāhmaṇas*

also considered anyone from a Muslim family unfit to enter the temple at Puri and see the Deity form of Kṛṣṇa as Lord Jagannātha. But Lord Caitanya, who is actually the same as Jagannātha, visited the great devotee Hari-dāsa Ṭhākura every day, even though Hari-dāsa came from a Muslim family.

The hereditary *brāhmaṇas* of Lord Caitanya’s day were obsessed with dozens of rules and strictures drawn from the idea that a *brāhmaṇa* would jeopardize his position by eating with or even touching anyone from outside the *brāhmaṇa* caste. Lord Caitanya dismissed such materialistic conceptions, however, accepting invitations to eat with devotees in the lowest social position. He freely touched and embraced sincere worshipers of the Lord, challenging the degraded, materialistic system of *varṇāśrama*.



in the system of *varṇa* and *āśrama*. There is no other way to satisfy the Lord.” (*Viṣṇu Purāṇa* 3.8.9)

Parāśara Muni is referring to the original *varṇāśrama* system. Its essential feature is the deliberate organization of society so that the members of each class perform activities that help members of other classes in their spiritual advancement.

It is interesting to note that in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* verse, Śrīla Prabhupāda translates the word *toṣa* as “satisfy” rather than “please.” I take this to mean that even though Kṛṣṇa is pleased by the service of individual devotees, He is satisfied when everyone serves Him, because He knows that by serving Him all living entities will gain the greatest benefit. In *daiva varṇāśrama* everyone can serve the Lord, whatever his level of spiritual advancement, by following the principles Kṛṣṇa sets forth in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. In the third chapter, Kṛṣṇa offers a description of work according to the principles of karma-yoga for those at the beginning level of spiritual advancement. As Kṛṣṇa further explains in the twelfth chapter, those most captivated by material enjoyment and least able to follow regulations can make spiritual advancement by working for Him, offering Him the fruits of their labor, or at least renouncing the fruits of their labor for some charitable cause. Kṛṣṇa emphasizes dutiful working according to one’s nature, with detachment from the fruits of labor. Workers in *daiva varṇāśrama* can gain further advancement because they work in the association of devotees and serve them.

Furthermore, everyone—*brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya*, or *śūdra*—is eligible to advance to the topmost spiritual platform by offering not just the fruits of activity but the very activity itself to the Lord in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In the eighteenth chapter (verses 45–46), Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna, “By following his qualities of work, every man can become perfect. Now please hear from Me how this can be done. By worship of the Lord, who is the source of all beings and who is all-

## The Natural System for Civilized Life

by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

HUMAN SOCIETY all over the world is divided into four castes and four orders of life. The four castes are the intelligent caste, the martial caste, the productive caste, and the laborer caste. These castes are classified in terms of one’s work and qualification and not by birth. Then again there are four orders of life, namely the student life, the householder’s life, the retired life, and the devotional life. In the best interest of human society there must be such divisions of life; otherwise no social institution can grow in a healthy state. And in each and every one of the above-mentioned divisions of life, *the aim must be to please the supreme authority of the Personality of Godhead*. This institutional function of human society is known as the system of *varṇāśrama-dharma*, which is quite natural for the civilized life.

The *varṇāśrama* institution is constructed to enable one to realize the Absolute Truth. It is

not for artificial domination of one division over another. When the aim of life, i.e., realization of the Absolute Truth, is missed by too much attachment for *indriya-prīti*, or sense gratification, as already discussed hereinbefore, the institution of the *varṇāśrama* is utilized by selfish men to pose an artificial predominance over the weaker section. In the Kali-yuga, or in the age of quarrel, this artificial predominance is already current, but the saner section of the people know it well that the divisions of castes and orders of life are meant for smooth social intercourse and high-thinking self-realization and not for any other purpose.

Herein the statement of *Bhāgavatam* is that the highest aim of life or the highest perfection of the institution of the *varṇāśrama-dharma* is to cooperate jointly for the satisfaction of the Supreme Lord. This is also confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.13).

—*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*  
1.2.13, Purport

pervading, a man can attain perfection through performing his own work.”

At this level, work is no longer counted as karma-yoga. Instead, it is considered *bhakti-yoga*, the highest stage of devotional service. Kṛṣṇa informs Arjuna that if he acts on the platform of *bhakti-yoga*, he can “abandon all varieties of religion.” He has simply to perform his occupational duty as an offering of love to Kṛṣṇa. He need not worry about all the injunctions contained in the “flowery words of the *Vedas*,” which concerned him in the opening pages of the *Gītā*.

So only *daiva varṇāśrama*—the original system created by the Lord—can

satisfy the Lord, because everyone can make spiritual progress. The more materially attached can learn to renounce the fruits of their labor. The more spiritually advanced can gain the highest spiritual ecstasy by offering their labor to the Lord in a spirit of loving devotion. The Lord is satisfied because He sees all His children advancing towards Him, each according to his highest capacity at the moment.

Those who have reached the top platform of pure devotional service, such as Arjuna [see sidebar: “*Varṇāśrama* and Karma”], are in fact transcendental to *varṇāśrama*, even though they still appear to be carrying out their







varṇāśrama duties like anyone else. When engaged in pure devotional service by doing their work as *bhakti-yoga*, they are no longer on the material platform; they are in spiritual ecstasy.

Now that we have examined the three main types of *varṇ-āśrama*, let's look at what we might call "Prabhupāda's *varṇāśrama*."

### PRABHUPĀDA'S VARṆĀŚRAMA

In the Ninth Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (9.10.51), commenting on the *varṇāśrama* structure in Lord Rāmacandra's ideal kingdom, Śrīla Prabhupāda writes: "Among the four *yugas* [ages]—Satya, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali—Kali-yuga is the worst, but if the process of *varṇāśrama-dharma* is introduced, even in this age of Kali, the situation of Satya-yuga can be invoked. The Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, is meant for this purpose."

When Śrīla Prabhupāda indicates that it is a mission of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement to establish *varṇ-āśrama*, he clearly does not mean the spontaneous *varṇ-āśrama* he told Professor Kotovsky was already existing all over the world. Nor does he mean the materialistic *varṇāśrama* of social prestige. Rather, Śrīla Prabhupāda means the original *varṇāśrama*, the social organization that can satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, because it provides for the spiritual advancement of all types of people. Nev-

ertheless, the *varṇāśrama* Śrīla Prabhupāda presents for his followers has certain prominent features especially meant to make it an effective tool for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the present age.

**Not by birth.** First of all, Prabhupāda

ria, a devotee's teachers and guru can help determine the *varṇa* best suited for his specific nature and guide him to appropriate training for that *varṇa*.

**Living off the land.** In previous ages there was no need to specify this, but for our age Śrīla Prabhupāda constantly urged devotees to "get all your necessities from the land" and to "grow your own food, produce your own cloth." A society based on simple living and high thinking would favor spiritual advancement.

**The *Varṇāśrama* college.** Śrīla Prabhupāda writes in *The Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (9.10.50), "As there are schools and colleges to train students to become chemical engineers, lawyers, or specialists in many other departments of knowledge, there must be schools and colleges to train students to become *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas*, *sūdras*, *brahmacārīs*, *gṛhasthas*, *vānaprasthas*, and *sannyāsīs*."

In March 1974 in Vṛndāvana, Prabhupāda first outlined his ideas for a *varṇ-āśrama* college. Unlike traditional Vedic schools in which *vaiśyas*, for example, were taught only scriptural studies (getting their vocational training at home), the *varṇāśrama* college would be for them somewhat like an agricultural university, in that there would be plenty

of hands-on instruction, including practical subjects such as cow protection and food-crop cultivation. Also unlike traditional Vedic schools, even *sūdras* would be included, although, again, their subjects would be centered on hands-on learning rather

When Śrīla Prabhupāda indicates that it is a mission of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement to establish *varṇāśrama*, he means the original *varṇ-āśrama*, the social organization that can satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

pāda emphasizes that *varṇa* designations should be determined by character, training, and work, not by birth. He cites the injunctions of such sages as Nārada Muni to back up his position. Śrīla Prabhupāda indicates that rather than society's using birth as the crite-







than formal classroom instruction. By training students in all the subjects necessary for the smooth functioning of a self-sufficient village, such a college would provide the foundation for setting up *varṇāśrama*.

**Small-scale subsistence farming.** Economic historians say that large-

scale market-oriented farm production was unknown up to a couple hundred years ago. Today modern agribusinesses maintain large farms by capital-intensive techniques that rely heavily on tractors and petroleum, large pools of migrant workers, debt-intensive financing practices such as mortgages,

government loans, and futures speculation in the commodity markets. In the model of *varṇāśrama* Śrīla Prabhupāda presents, farmers don't go into debt, because their local government gives them small plots to farm. Because these plots cannot be resold, farmers do not risk the unemployment that results

## Karma and Varṇāśrama

STUDENTS OF Kṛṣṇa consciousness know that the ideal life is a fully spiritual one—a life of devotional service to Kṛṣṇa. They know that activities such as hearing about Kṛṣṇa, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, and so on, are purely spiritual and therefore yield no material reaction, or karma. But what about the activities of *varṇāśrama* or, specifically, our *varṇas*, or occupations? Aren't they material and therefore karmic?

Lord Kṛṣṇa teaches in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that whether a person's work is spiritual or material depends mainly on his consciousness. Kṛṣṇa also describes three kinds of action: karma, *vikarma*, and *akarma*. (*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.17) Let's examine these and related terms in light of the different kinds of *varṇāśrama*.

Karma can mean any activity—prescribed, sinful, or transcendental. But a more specific definition is work prescribed by scripture for one's *varṇa*. Such work brings material rewards. The work of persons who follow the materialistic system of *varṇāśrama* is karma.

*Vikarma* means work against the laws of God, and it brings punishment. Much work under a spontaneous system of *varṇāśrama* falls into the category of *vikarma*.

*Akarma* means work as an offering to Kṛṣṇa. Such work produces no material reward or

punishment but leads to spiritual liberation. *Akarma* activities are the goal of the original, or *daiva*, *varṇāśrama* system.

Kṛṣṇa recommends *akarma* (Bg. 3.9): "Work done as a sacrifice for Viṣṇu has to be performed; otherwise work causes bondage in this material world. Therefore, O son of Kuntī, perform your prescribed duties for His satisfaction, and in that way you will always remain free from bondage."

*Karma-kāṇḍa* refers to acts performed under Vedic injunctions for promotion to higher material planets. Such acts are part of materialistic *varṇāśrama*.

Yoga is a cognate of the English word *yoke*. A yoke links two oxen, and yoga links the individual living being and the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Within the framework of *daiva varṇāśrama*, different forms of yoga help people on the spiritual path.

Karma-yoga means offering the fruits of one's activities to the Lord. Common in *daiva varṇāśrama*, karma-yoga marks the beginning of spiritual life.

*Jñāna-yoga* means to offer the results of one's intellectual activities to the Lord by trying to understand Him. It is a step in spiritual development and is part of *daiva varṇāśrama*.

*Bhakti-yoga* means to offer one's activities to the Lord in complete love and devotion, free of

desire for material benefit. *Bhakti-yoga* is the summit of all yogas because it is completely *akarma*, or without material results. The goal of *daiva varṇāśrama* is to gradually elevate all citizens to *bhakti-yoga*.

To understand the relationship between karma and *varṇāśrama*, we must understand that similar activities may be spiritually dissimilar. In *Rāja Vidyā* Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, "On the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, Arjuna engaged in fighting, and those on the side of Duryodhana engaged in fighting. We must understand how it is that Arjuna is free from reaction whereas Duryodhana is not. Externally we can see that both parties are engaged in fighting, but we should understand that Arjuna is not bound by reactions because he is fighting under the order of Kṛṣṇa."

Finally, we must understand that within *daiva varṇāśrama* our consciousness—not our *varṇa* or *āśrama*—determines our spiritual standing. Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote to a disciple, "Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that anyone who surrenders unto Me, whether a woman, *sūdra*, *vaiśya*, etc., they all attain the highest perfection of *bhakti-yoga*—not that now I am *grhastha*, I am doing karma-yoga, or now I am *vānaprastha*, I am doing *sāṅkhya-yoga*. This is all nonsense."



# Varṇāśrama Curriculum: A Sampler of Courses

IN CONSIDERING COURSES for each *varṇa*, I asked myself, What kind of knowledge is needed to build a self-sufficient spiritual community that can encourage and protect its citizens? I also looked at the qualities and duties of the different *varṇas* as described in scripture and thought about what kind of training would best help each *varṇa* develop. Finally, I looked at Prabhupāda's descriptions of training for the different *varṇas*.

## Brāhmaṇas

- Scriptural studies
- Prabhupāda's instructions on *varṇāśrama*
- Teacher training
- Mental health and learning disabilities
- Ayurvedic medicine
- Herbal healing
- Deity worship in the rural community
- Kings in the *Bhāgavatam*

## Kṣatriyas

- Religion
- Politics
- Social order (Sociology)
- Economics
- Military arts
- Ethics and morality
- The sciences
- Management
- Devotional service

Some subjects require further consideration. For example, Prabhupāda suggests training in the sciences for *kṣatriyas*, but science is a broad field. Should *kṣatriyas* learn nuclear physics and synthetic chemistry? Or would agronomy, ecology, sanitation, and dairy science be more valuable to the leader of a self-sufficient community?

Śrīla Prabhupāda said that a *varṇāśrama* community would consist of just a few *brāhmaṇas* and *kṣatriyas*. Most citizens would work as *vaiśyas* or *sūdras*.

## Vaiśyas

- Fundamentals of ecology and permaculture
- Agronomy
- Developing a resource inventory
- Basic farming practice
- Fundamentals of animal health and reproduction
- Kṛṣṇa's example of cow protection
- Basic cow care
- Working with oxen

- The herd sire
- Pasture management
- Food grain production and processing
- Fiber plant production and processing
- Economics
- Orchard skills
- Forestry

Since those working in the *sūdra varṇa* support the other members of society, their curriculum would need to be accordingly broad. Many courses would emphasize hands-on instruction to build expertise in practical skills.

## Śūdras

- Technical drawing
- Implement design and construction
- Woodworking and carpentry
- Blacksmithing
- Cart and wagon design and construction
- Road building and excavating
- Energy-efficient house construction
- Papermaking
- Shorthand
- Water supply and sanitation
- Energy forms: Potentials and pitfalls
- Performance arts for preaching
- Visual arts for preaching
- Small-scale textile production
- Vegetable dyes

As in any small college, students majoring in different *varṇas* would have ample opportunity to interact with each other, and those interactions would foster a spirit of appreciation, cooperation, and community. Students in different *varṇas* might study some of the same courses. For example, for a successful self-sufficient community both *vaiśyas* and *kṣatriyas* should have a basic understanding of soil science and soil conservation, taught in an agronomy course. As the teachers of the community, *brāhmaṇas* would specialize in different areas of knowledge. So besides brahminical courses, *brāhmaṇas* would study subjects primarily meant for *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas*, or *sūdras*.

All students would take some core subjects, such as an elementary course in cow protection and a course on community development. Most important, to create a common goal and vision for a *varṇāśrama* community, all students would come together to study Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions on *varṇāśrama* and farm community development.





when all the land ends up in the hands of the slickest businessman.

**Economy based on agriculture and cow protection.** Again, there was no need to emphasize this approach in traditional Vedic times, but for our modern times, when factory production and the service industry drive the economy, Śrīla Prabhupāda often stressed the importance of resting our self-sufficient economy on agriculture and cow protection, or “living as Kṛṣṇa lived.”

In the ideal *varṇāśrama* community, applying the principles of cow protection would mean that plowing should be done with oxen rather than tractors. The farmer effectively owns his means of production in a non-competitive system, and production is focused on home use and charitable giving, with only the excess being sold. Economic development would be highly localized, and short-distance shipping by ox-cart would replace long-distance shipping by trucks and trains.

**Mutual respect between *varṇas*.** In a 1975 conversation with an Indian governor in Vṛndāvana, Śrīla Prabhupāda emphasized the deadly hazard of promoting contempt and hatred between the classes: “The *śūdras* were hated like anything, so they became Mohammedans. . . .

Now the result is that you and Pakistan go on fighting forever.” In contrast, Prabhupāda stresses that in *varṇāśrama* everyone’s position is to be respected and appreciated because everyone is serving the Lord.

**Protection for laborers.** Prabhu-

pāda’s *varṇāśrama* does not sanction harsh treatment of workers and the hope of placating them with the promise of rewards in the next life. The other classes should treat their dependent workers kindly and fairly. To provide the needs for any society takes hard

man, namely rice, wheat, grains, milk, fruits, and vegetables. The production of machines and machine tools increases the artificial living of a class of vested interests and keeps thousands of men in starvation and unrest. This should not be the standard of civilization.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.9.26, Purport)

On one hand, industrial development subjects the laborer to ghastly working conditions; on the other hand, its machines threaten him with unemployment and misery. Prabhupāda considered laboring-class unrest a clear symptom of poorly trained government leaders. The test of good government is whether it can make everyone happy (*sarve sukhino bhavantu*). In return for their labor, workers should be treated amicably and assured of food, shelter, the necessities of life, and protection for their families.

**Using *varṇāśrama* as a preaching tool.** Śrīla Prabhupāda envisioned *varṇāśrama* as the only effective means of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the world.

In big scale you cannot make all of them *brāhmaṇas* or *sannyāsīs*. No. That is not possible. This is small scale. What percentage of people of the world are we attracting? Very insignifi-

cant. But if you want to make the whole human society perfect, then this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement should be introduced according to Kṛṣṇa’s instructions—if you want to do it in a large scale for the benefit of the whole human society. Now we

For modern times, when factory production and the service industry drive the economy, Śrīla Prabhupāda often stressed the importance of resting our self-sufficient economy on agriculture and cow protection, or “living as Kṛṣṇa lived.”

work, but Prabhupāda condemned the hellish working conditions and social exploitation of modern industry: “The productive energy of the laborer is misused when he is occupied by industrial enterprises. Industry of various types cannot produce the essential needs of





# Transitional Varṇāśrama: Steps We Can Take Now

Here are some suggestions for ways in which Śrīla Prabhupāda's followers can work toward implementing varṇāśrama in line with his vision and desires.

## Study and Discuss

### Śrīla Prabhupāda's Instructions

The more we can get together to study and discuss Prabhupāda's instructions on the pitfalls of the materialistic varṇāśrama systems and the benefits of the original system, the better our chances of avoiding mistakes so we can build a system that will help people in their spiritual lives. ISKCON centers can set up weekly classes to study Prabhupāda's instructions on varṇāśrama.

## Develop Training

### In Self-Sufficiency Skills

Even though ISKCON may not have a full-fledged varṇāśrama college, it can still offer training in some of the subjects needed to help self-sufficient communities develop. Prabhupāda told devotees in Mauritius that others would be attracted by their "training power." Classes in gardening, carpentry, and community relations, for example, can teach valuable skills while providing opportunities to

tell others about Kṛṣṇa conscious philosophy.

## Support Cow Protection

Cow protection is an important duty of the vaiśya class, of which businessmen are a part. Although properly caring for cows in a modern industrial city is impossible, men and women in business can fulfill their responsibility by supporting cow protection in ISKCON farm communities. They can also visit the farms to see how the needs of the cows are being met and the cowherds trained and maintained.

## Support Kṛṣṇa Conscious Farmers

"Anything grown in the garden is a hundred times more valuable than if it is purchased from the market," Śrīla Prabhupāda told disciples in France. What could be a more opulent offering to the Lord than fruits, vegetables, and grains grown by devotee farmers with love and devotion for Him—without the use of poisonous sprays or slaughterhouse by-products such as bloodmeal and bonemeal, popular with most other organic farmers? Devotee farmers who use a rototiller to grow tomatoes, beans, and squash for the market may not be quite up to the

ideal of Prabhupāda's ox-powered subsistence grain farmer, but certainly to be working on the land for Kṛṣṇa is a big step in the right direction. If such farmers are supported, their children might become inspired to take care of the cows and become Kṛṣṇa conscious ox-power farmers.

## Show Appreciation

### For the Service of Others

One of the most dangerous aspects of any class system is the fostering of feelings of contempt between classes. This threatens social harmony and reinforces materialistic class identity, stunting spiritual growth. To move toward Prabhupāda's varṇāśrama system, we must practice showing our appreciation when others serve the Lord by their occupational duty, whether by dressing the Deity, managing the temple accounts, raising Kṛṣṇa conscious children, acting as temple president, growing vegetables for the Lord, or putting in a new electrical system. If we look for the connection with Kṛṣṇa, we lose our materialistic vision of others and reinforce their identity as devotees. Also, we can encourage them in their service by providing opportunities for additional training in their specialty.

are picking up some of them, the best. That is one thing. But Caitanya Mahāprabhu said *para-upakāra*. Why only a certain section should be picked up? Let the whole mass of people get the benefit of it. But then it is required to be systematic. Therefore, we have to introduce this *varṇāśrama-dharma*. It must be done perfectly. It is possible, and people will become happy."

(Māyāpur, February 14, 1977)

The varṇāśrama model that Śrīla Prabhupāda presents is specifically adapted to the present age and focused on attaining the highest level of love of Godhead for all. Even if we can't come to Śrīla Prabhupāda's ideal standards at once, we can take steps toward varṇāśrama that will provide the momentum to reach the goal. Faced with the inevitable difficulties of the present age, many people

will then have the chance to be attracted to self-sufficient varṇāśrama villages, centered on the worship of Lord Kṛṣṇa. ☀

Formerly the editor of Hare Kṛṣṇa Rural Life, Hare Kṛṣṇa Devī Dāsī is currently compiling a five-volume series of Śrīla Prabhupāda's teachings on varṇāśrama and farm community development.





Referred to as “the ripe fruit of the tree of Vedic literature,” *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the most complete and authoritative exposition of Vedic knowledge. Five thousand years ago the great sage Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa composed this *purāṇa*, or history, to explain the essence of spiritual knowledge. Here we present *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in serialized form, with the original Sanskrit text, transliteration, word meanings, translation, and purports by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

# TWO KINDS OF RELIGION

*Lord Kapila, an incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa, explains to His mother, Devahūti, the difference between the religious practices of materialists and those of the Lord’s devotees.*

## CANTO 3: CHAPTER 32

18 त्रैवर्गिकास्ते पुरुषा विमुखा हरिमेधसः  
कथायां कथनीयोरुविक्रमस्य मधुद्विषः

*traī-varṅikāś te puruṣā  
vimukhā hari-medhasaḥ  
kathāyāṁ kathānīyōru-  
vikramasya madhudviṣaḥ*

*traī-varṅikāḥ*—interested in the three elevating processes; *te*—those; *puruṣāḥ*—persons; *vimukhāḥ*—not interested; *hari-medhasaḥ*—of Lord Hari; *kathāyām*—in the pastimes; *kathānīya*—worth chanting of; *uru-vikramasya*—whose excellent prowess; *madhu-dviṣaḥ*—the killer of the Madhu demon.

Such persons are called *traī-varṅika* because they are interested in the three elevating processes. They are averse to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who can give relief to the conditioned soul. They are not interested in the Supreme Personality’s pastimes, which are worth hearing because of His transcendental prowess.

PURPORT: ❶ According to Vedic thought, there are four elevating principles, namely religiosity, economic develop-

ment, sense gratification, and liberation. Persons who are simply interested in material enjoyment make plans to execute prescribed duties. They are interested in the three elevating processes of religious rituals, economic elevation, and sense enjoyment. By developing their economic condition, they can enjoy material life. Materialistic persons, therefore, are interested in those elevating processes, which are called *traī-varṅika*. *Traī* means “three”; *varṅika* means “elevating processes.” Such materialistic persons are never attracted by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Rather, they are antagonistic towards Him.

❷ The Supreme Personality of Godhead is here described as *hari-medhaḥ*, or “He who can deliver one from the cycle of birth and death.” Materialistic persons are never interested in hearing about the marvelous pastimes of the Lord. ❸ They think that they are fiction and stories and that the Supreme Godhead is also a man of material nature. They are not fit for advancing in devotional service, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Such materialistic persons are

- (1) What are the four elevating principles described in the *Vedas*?
- (2) Why is the Lord described as *hari-medhaḥ*?
- (3) Why are some persons never interested in hearing about the Lord’s pastimes?



interested in newspaper stories, novels, and imaginary dramas. The factual activities of the Lord, such as Lord Kṛṣṇa's acting in the Battle of Kurukṣetra, or the activities of the Pāṇḍavas, or the Lord's activities in Vṛndāvana or Dvārakā, are related in the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which are full of the Lord's activities. But materialistic persons who engage in elevating their position in the material world are not interested in such activities of the Lord. They may be interested in the activities of a great politician or a great rich man of this world, but they are not interested in the transcendental activities of the Supreme Lord.

## 19 नूनं दैवेन विहता ये चाच्युतकथासुधाम् हित्वा शृण्वन्त्यसद्गथाः पुरीषमिव विद्भुजः

*nūnaṁ daivena vihatā  
ye cācyuta-kathā-sudhām  
hitvā śṛṅvanti asad-gāthāḥ  
purīṣam iva viḍ-bhujāḥ*

*nūnam*—certainly; *daivena*—by the order of the Lord; *vihatāḥ*—condemned; *ye*—those who; *ca*—also; *acyuta*—of the infallible Lord; *kathā*—stories; *sudhām*—nectar; *hitvā*—having given up; *śṛṅvanti*—they hear; *asad-gāthāḥ*—stories about materialistic persons; *purīṣam*—stool; *iva*—like; *viḍ-bhujāḥ*—stool-eaters (hogs).

**Such persons are condemned by the supreme order of the Lord. Because they are averse to the nectar of the activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, they are compared to stool-eating hogs. They give up hearing the transcendental activities of the Lord and indulge in hearing of the abominable activities of materialistic persons.**

PURPORT: Everyone is addicted to hearing of the activities of another person, whether a politician or a rich man or an imaginary character whose activities are created in a novel. There are so many nonsensical literatures, stories, and books of speculative philosophy. Materialistic persons are very interested in reading such literature, but when they are presented with genuine books of knowledge like *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, or other scriptures of the world, such as the Bible and Koran, they are not interested. These persons are condemned by the supreme order as much as a hog is condemned. The hog is

(4) Why are materialistic persons considered condemned?

(5) Where do persons who have been elevated to higher planets go at the end of life?

interested in eating stool. If the hog is offered some nice preparation made of condensed milk or ghee, he won't like it; he would prefer obnoxious, bad-smelling stool, which he finds very relishable. ❹ Materialistic persons are considered condemned because they are interested in hellish activities and not in transcendental activities. The message of the Lord's activities is nectar, and besides that message, any information which may be of interest is actually hellish.

## 20 दक्षिणेन पथार्यम्णः पितृलोकं व्रजन्ति ते प्रजामनु प्रजायन्ते श्मशानान्तक्रियाकृतः

*dakṣiṇena pathāryamṇaḥ  
pitr-lokaṁ vrajanti te  
prajāṁ anu prajāyante  
śmaśānānta-kriyā-kṛtāḥ*

*dakṣiṇena*—southern; *pathā*—by the path; *aryamṇaḥ*—of the sun; *pitṛ-lokaṁ*—to Pitṛloka; *vrajanti*—go; *te*—they; *prajāṁ*—their families; *anu*—along with; *prajāyante*—they take birth; *śmaśāna*—the crematorium; *anta*—to the end; *kriyā*—fruitive activities; *kṛtāḥ*—performing.

**Such materialistic persons are allowed to go to the planet called Pitṛloka by the southern course of the sun, but they again come back to this planet and take birth in their own families, beginning again the same fruitive activities from birth to the end of life.**

PURPORT: In *Bhagavad-gītā*, Ninth Chapter, verse 21, it is stated that such persons are elevated to the higher planetary systems. ❺ As soon as their lifetimes of fruitive activity are finished, they return to this planet, and thus they go up and come down. Those who are elevated to the higher planets again come back into the same family for which they had too much attachment; they are born, and the fruitive activities continue again until the end of life. There are different prescribed rituals from birth until the end of life, and they are very much attached to such activities.

## 21 ततस्ते क्षीणसुकृताः पुनर्लोकमिमं सति पतन्ति विवशा देवैः सद्यो विभ्रंशितोदयाः

*tatas te kṣīṇa-sukṛtāḥ  
punar lokam imam sati  
patanti vivaśā devaiḥ  
sadyo vibhramśitodayāḥ*

*tataḥ*—then; *te*—they; *kṣīṇa*—exhausted; *su-kṛtāḥ*—results of their pious activities; *punaḥ*—again; *lokam imam*—to this planet; *sati*—O virtuous mother; *patanti*—fall; *vivaśāḥ*—helpless; *devaiḥ*—by higher arrangement; *sadyaḥ*—suddenly; *vibhramśita*—caused to fall; *udayaḥ*—their prosperity.



When the results of their pious activities are exhausted, they fall down by higher arrangement and again come back to this planet, just as any person raised to a high position sometimes all of a sudden falls.

PURPORT: It is sometimes found that a person elevated to a very high position in government service falls down all of a sudden, and no one can check him. Similarly, after finishing their period of enjoyment, foolish persons who are very much interested in being elevated to the position of president in higher planets also fall down to this planet. 6 The distinction between the elevated position of a devotee and that of an ordinary person attracted to fruitive activities is that when a devotee is elevated to the spiritual kingdom he never falls down, whereas an ordinary person falls, even if he is elevated to the highest planetary system, Brahmaloaka. It is confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā* (*ābrahma-bhuvanāl lokāḥ*) that even if one is elevated to a higher planet, he has to come down again. But Kṛṣṇa confirms in *Bhagavad-gītā* (8.16), *mām upetya tu kaunteya punar janma na vidyate*: “Anyone who attains My abode never comes back to this conditioned life of material existence.”

## 22 तस्मात्त्वं सर्वभावेन भजस्व परमेष्ठिनम् तद्गुणाश्रयया भक्त्या भजनीयपदाम्बुजम्

*tasmāt tvam̐ sarva-bhāvena  
bhajasva parameṣṭhinam  
tad-guṇāśrayayā bhaktyā  
bhajāniya-padāmbujam*

*tasmāt*—therefore; *tvam*—you (Devahūti); *sarva-bhāvena*—with loving ecstasy; *bhajasva*—worship; *parameṣṭhinam*—the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *tad-guṇa*—the qualities of the Lord; *āśrayayā*—connected with; *bhaktyā*—by devotional service; *bhajāniya*—worshipable; *padāmbujam*—whose lotus feet.

My dear mother, I therefore advise that you take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for His lotus feet are worth worshipping. Accept this with all devotion and love, for thus you can be situated in transcendental devotional service.

PURPORT: The word *parameṣṭhinam* is sometimes used in connection with Brahmā. *Parameṣṭhī* means “the supreme person.” As Brahmā is the supreme person within this universe, Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality in the spiritual world. Lord Kapiladeva advises His mother that she should take shelter of the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, because it is worthwhile. Taking shelter of demigods, even those in the highest positions, like Brahmā and Śiva, is not advised herein. One should take shelter of the Supreme Godhead.

*Sarva-bhāvena* means “in all-loving ecstasy.” *Bhāva* is the preliminary stage of elevation before the attainment of pure love of Godhead. It is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *budhā bhāva-samanvitāḥ*: one who has attained the stage of *bhāva* can accept the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa as worshipable. This is also advised here by Lord Kapila to His mother.

Also significant in this verse is the phrase *tad-guṇāśrayayā bhaktyā*. This means that discharging devotional service unto Kṛṣṇa is transcendental; it is not material activity. This is confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā*: those who engage in devotional service are accepted to be situated in the spiritual kingdom. *Brahma-bhūyāya kalpate*: they at once become situated in the transcendental kingdom.

7 Devotional service in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the only means for attaining the highest perfection of life for the human being. This is recommended herein by Lord Kapila to His mother. Bhakti is therefore *nirguṇa*, free from all tinges of material qualities. Although the discharge of devotional service appears to be like material activities, it is never *saguṇa*, or contaminated by material qualities. *Tad-guṇāśrayayā* means that Lord Kṛṣṇa’s transcendental qualities are so sublime that there is no need to divert one’s attention to any other activities. His behavior with the devotees is so exalted that a devotee need not try to divert his attention to any other worship. 8 It is said that the demoniac Pūtanā came to kill Kṛṣṇa by poisoning Him, but because Kṛṣṇa was pleased to suck her breast, she was given the same position as His mother. Devotees pray, therefore, that if a demon who wanted to kill Kṛṣṇa gets such an exalted position, why should they go to anyone other than Kṛṣṇa for their worshipful attachment? 9 There are two kinds of religious activities: one for material advancement and the other for spiritual advancement. By taking shelter under the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, one is endowed with both kinds of prosperity, material and spiritual. Why then should one go to any demigod?

## 23 वासुदेवे भगवति भक्तियोगः प्रयोजितः जनयत्याशु वैराग्यं ज्ञानं यद्ब्रह्मदर्शनम्

- (6) What is the difference between the elevated position of a devotee and that of an ordinary person?
- (7) What is the only means for attaining the highest perfection of life?
- (8) Why did Pūtanā attain the same position as Kṛṣṇa’s mother?
- (9) What are the two kinds of religious activity?



*vāsudeve bhagavati  
bhakti-yogaḥ prayojitaḥ  
janayaty āśu vairāgyam  
jñānam yad brahma-darśanam*

*vāsudeve*—unto Kṛṣṇa; *bhagavati*—the Personality of Godhead; *bhakti-yogaḥ*—devotional service; *prayojitaḥ*—discharged; *janayati*—produces; *āśu*—very soon; *vairāgyam*—detachment; *jñānam*—knowledge; *yat*—which; *brahma-darśanam*—self-realization.

**Engagement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and application of devotional service unto Kṛṣṇa make it possible to advance in knowledge and detachment, as well as in self-realization.**

PURPORT: It is said by less intelligent men that *bhakti-yoga*, or devotional service, is meant for persons who are not advanced in transcendental knowledge and renunciation.

10 But the fact is that if one engages in the devotional service of the Lord in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he does not have to attempt separately to practice detachment or to wait for an awakening of transcendental knowledge. It is said that one who engages unflinchingly in the devotional service of the Lord actually has all the good qualities of the demigods develop in him automatically. One cannot discover how such good qualities develop in the body of a devotee, but actually it happens. There is one instance where a hunter was taking pleasure in killing animals, but after becoming a devotee he was not prepared to kill even an ant. Such is the quality of a devotee.

Those who are very eager to advance in transcendental knowledge can engage themselves in pure devotional service, without wasting time in mental speculation. For arriving at the positive conclusions of knowledge in the Absolute Truth, the word *brahma-darśanam* is significant in this verse.

11 *Brahma-darśanam* means to realize or to understand the Transcendence. One who engages in the service of Vāsudeva can actually realize what Brahman is. If Brahman is impersonal, then there is no question of *darśanam*, which means “seeing face to face.” *Darśanam* refers to seeing the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva. Unless the seer

- (10) Does a devotee have to separately pursue knowledge and detachment?  
(11) What does *brahma-darśanam* mean?  
(12) Why is there nothing agreeable or disagreeable for a devotee?  
(13) Why does a devotee see that there is nothing good in the material world?  
(14) How does a devotee become qualitatively one with God?

and the seen are persons, there is no *darśanam*. *Brahma-darśanam* means that as soon as one sees the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he can at once realize what impersonal Brahman is. A devotee does not need to make separate investigations to understand the nature of Brahman. *Bhagavad-gītā* also confirms this. *Brahma-bhūyāya kalpate*: a devotee at once becomes a self-realized soul in the Absolute Truth.

## 24 यदास्य चित्तमर्थेषु समेष्विन्द्रियवृत्तिभिः न विगृह्णाति वैषम्यं प्रियमप्रियमित्युत

*yadāsyā cittam artheṣu  
sameṣv indriya-vṛttibhiḥ  
na vighṛṇāti vaiṣamyam  
priyam apriyam ity uta*

*yadā*—when; *asya*—of the devotee; *cittam*—the mind; *artheṣu*—in the sense objects; *sameṣu*—same; *indriya-vṛttibhiḥ*—by the activities of the senses; *na*—not; *vighṛṇāti*—does perceive; *vaiṣamyam*—difference; *priyam*—agreeable; *apriyam*—not agreeable; *iti*—thus; *uta*—certainly.

**The exalted devotee’s mind becomes equipoised in sensory activities, and he is transcendental to that which is agreeable and not agreeable.**

PURPORT: The significance of advancement in transcendental knowledge and detachment from material attraction is exhibited in the personality of a highly advanced devotee. 12 For him there is nothing agreeable or disagreeable because he does not act in any way for his personal sense gratification. Whatever he does, whatever he thinks, is for the satisfaction of the Personality of Godhead. Either in the material world or in the spiritual world, his equipoised mind is completely manifested. 13 He can understand that in the material world there is nothing good; everything is bad due to its being contaminated by material nature. The materialists’ conclusions of good and bad, moral and immoral, etc., are simply mental concoction or sentiment. Actually there is nothing good in the material world. In the spiritual field everything is absolutely good. There is no inebriety in the spiritual varieties.

Because a devotee accepts everything in spiritual vision, he is equipoised; that is the symptom of his being elevated to the transcendental position. He automatically attains detachment, *vairāgya*, then *jñāna*, knowledge, and then actual transcendental knowledge. 14 The conclusion is that an advanced devotee dovetails himself in the transcendental qualities of the Lord, and in that sense he becomes qualitatively one with the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

(Continued in the next issue.)



# HANDS OFF MY PESTO!

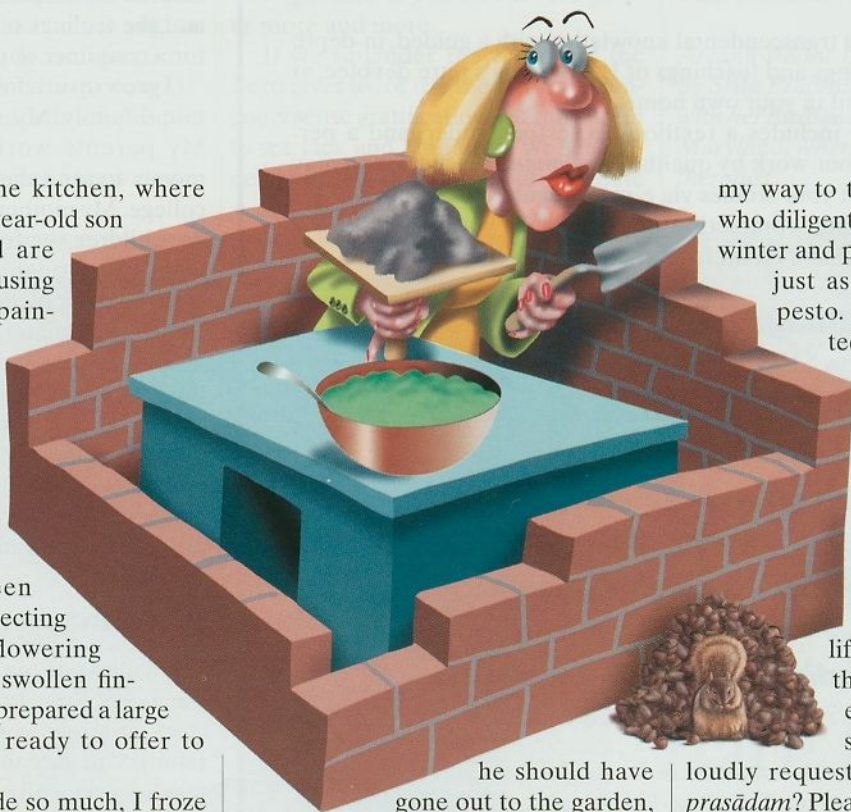
*The small events of everyday life can inspire thoughts that favor our spiritual progress.*

by Arcana-siddhī Devī Dāsī

I WALK INTO the kitchen, where my seventeen-year-old son and his friend are making a snack—using the pesto\* I had painstakingly made the week before with fresh basil from our garden. I had picked a large stainless-steel bowl full of aromatic leaves and had even been stung by a bee collecting nectar from the flowering buds. Despite my swollen finger, I had carefully prepared a large quantity of pesto ready to offer to the Lord.

Since I had made so much, I froze some to be used during the winter. So to see the boys using the pesto I had kept as a special winter treat, I snapped at my son. I told him he should have asked me first before using things in the freezer. If he wanted pesto,

\*A sauce typically made with basil, pine nuts, olive oil, and grated Parmesan.



my way to the body of a squirrel, who diligently collects nuts for the winter and protects them carefully, just as I had done with my pesto. As an aspiring devotee, I recognized the folly of my mentality and prayed to Kṛṣṇa to help me correct my misguided thinking.

With tears in my eyes, I remembered Prabhupāda's words to a disciple who had asked about married life. Prabhupāda replied that when a householder cooks *prasādam*, he should go outside and

he should have gone out to the garden, picked some leaves, and made his own.

After my harsh words to the dumbfounded boys, I felt very ashamed and angry with myself. "What kind of reaction was that?" I asked myself. I reacted to my son like a miser. "Is that the mentality I want to cultivate?" Since our thoughts at death transport us to our next body, I could well be on

loudly request, "Does anyone want *prasādam*? Please come." He should do this three times, Prabhupāda said. And if no one replies, then he can eat.

When the disciple heard Prabhupāda's answer, he thought that perhaps Prabhupāda had misunderstood the question, so he asked again. Śrīla Prabhupāda gave the same answer.

Why out of all the things in the scriptures about married life did Śrīla



Prabhupāda choose this particular instruction to capsule how married couples should live? In light of the pesto incident, I'm pondering Prabhupāda's words, trying to understand how important those instructions are for a householder's spiritual life.

Before getting married I lived in a women's ashram for five years. I had a sleeping bag and a footlocker filled with my possessions. I could have been

packed and ready to move in about five minutes. After I got married and had a child, my family's household possessions gradually increased. Our first move out of the temple community took a couple of trips in a station wagon. For the next move we rented a small trailer, for the next one a big trailer. If we have to move again, we'll need a large moving van.

When living as a single woman in

the temple, I didn't worry much about my maintenance. Our needs were simple, our wants few. We depended on Kṛṣṇa to provide everything, and He clearly did. As my possessions increase, my anxieties about protecting them increase too. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa describes the mentality of a person devoid of God consciousness: "So much wealth do I have today, and I will gain more according to my schemes. . . . I am the lord of everything. I am the enjoyer. I am perfect, powerful, and happy. I am the richest man, surrounded by aristocratic relatives. There is none so powerful and happy as I am."

My reaction in the kitchen today borders on this kind of thinking. It is a warning signal to me that something is awry in my consciousness. I want to have a deeper understanding of what created my response, the quick anger and the feelings of strong attachment for a container of pesto.

I grew up in a fairly stable and functional family. My mother was frugal. My parents worked hard to save money to send their three children to college. My mother denied herself and her children the frills of life to give us what she thought was important: a good education. She taught me how to forgo immediate pleasure for long-term gain. I'm grateful to her for that lesson. But she also taught me to be afraid of not having enough. I developed a mentality of lack and limitation, neither of which is spiritual. For the Lord and His devotees there is only unlimited abundance.

## THE INEXHAUSTIBLE POT

To illustrate the unlimited nature of the Lord, Śrīla Prabhupāda told the story of a boy from an impoverished family. One day the child's *brāhmaṇa* teacher asked all his students to bring some food for a program. Hundreds of people were to attend. Since *brāhmaṇas* received no pay for their services, to ask charity from their students was quite befitting.

When the little boy asked his mother what he could bring to his teacher, she said that they were too poor to provide anything. On seeing her child's disgruntled face, she suggested he go

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**"In this world there is nothing so sublime  
and pure as transcendental knowledge."**

**—Bhagavad-gītā 4.38**

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to the forest to find Kṛṣṇa, who is known as Dīna Bandhu, “the friend of the poor,” and ask Him to help.

The child left for the forest in search of the Lord, repeatedly calling out, “Dīna Bandhu! Dīna Bandhu! Please come!”

When the Lord did not appear, the child cried piteously. Then, because of the child’s intense desire, the Lord appeared before him.

When the child expressed his desire, Kṛṣṇa told him to return the day of the program. He would supply yogurt. The boy happily left and told his teacher that he would bring yogurt. The teacher thanked the child for his offering.

The day of the event, the child returned to the forest to find Kṛṣṇa, who appeared and gave him a quart of yogurt. The child took the yogurt and presented it to his teacher.

Seeing the small container of yogurt, the teacher snatched the yogurt and exclaimed with indignation, “What? This is all you have brought? There will be hundreds of people here!”

Angered, the teacher threw down

the pot, and the yogurt spilled out. But when the teacher picked up the container, he saw that it was still full. The teacher again dropped the container, spilling the yogurt, but to his amazement it remained full. From this he could ascertain that it was spiritual. As Śrīla Prabhupāda says, in spiritual arithmetic  $1 - 1 = 1$ . Kṛṣṇa is never diminished.

## GIVING WHAT KRṢṆA GIVES

Meditating on this pastime, I reflect on how a devotee should never be afraid to give in charity. It is the duty of a householder to give in charity. Giving softens the heart and destroys the illusion that the money or thing is mine. In reality any possession we have belongs to Kṛṣṇa, given by Him to be used in His service. As we use the gifts and opulence in His service, He gives us more and more.

If we squander the resources the Lord gives us, or use them to enjoy ungodly sense gratification, we can expect to see lack and limitation. We see evidence of this fact in the current state

of affairs. Mother earth has the capacity, by Kṛṣṇa’s grace, to supply unlimited resources to the world. But because of the lack of God consciousness and the misuse of her abundant gifts, people are suffering in so many ways.

Every experience in life contains an opportunity for us to learn and grow, as long as we are open to learning. When situations in my life evoke negative emotions like anger, greed, and fear, I know I need to take time out and ask Kṛṣṇa to help me understand the lesson.

Today’s experience inspires me to pray to Kṛṣṇa to have a giving heart and to be free from the fear of lack and limitation. And the next time I make pesto, I’ll go outside and loudly shout, “Does anyone want *prasādam*? Does anyone want *prasādam*? Does anyone want *prasādam*?” ❁

*Arcana-siddhī Devī Dāsī was initiated by Śrīla Prabhupāda in 1976. She lives with her husband and son in Baltimore, Maryland, where she works as a family therapist.*



Yamārāja Dāsa

Hare Kṛṣṇa  
Hare Kṛṣṇa  
Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa  
Hare Hare  
Hare Rāma  
Hare Rāma  
Rāma Rāma  
Hare Hare

PRONUNCIATION: *ha-ray, krish-na, ra-ma* (rhymes with “drama”)



# THE VEDIC OBSE

## LORD KRṢṂA ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF...GOLF?

by Satyarāja Dāsa

FIVE YEARS AGO, William Morrow & Company published Steven Pressfield's novel *The Legend of Bagger Vance: Golf and the Game of Life*, which quickly attracted a wide audience. The book follows in a long line of fictional works on golf and mysticism. The forerunner of the genre is Michael Murphy's 1972 classic, *Golf in the Kingdom*, in which a godlike character, Shivas Irons, teaches the mortal

world of the parallels between the secrets of golf and the secrets of life.

In Pressfield's book, instead of Shivas (read: Shiva, the demigod of destruction), we have Bagger Vance (read: Bhagavān, "the Holy One," a name for the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa), and the story is essentially an inventive retelling of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Pressfield obviously knows his *Gītā* well, and this is reflected throughout his novel.

The setting of *Bagger Vance* revolves around a golf tournament at Krewe Island, off Savannah, Georgia's, windy Atlantic shore. The year is 1931, and we are here to watch an engaging thirty-six-hole match in which Bobby Jones and Walter Hagen, legends of golf in their own time, are joined by a reluctant opponent, the famed but troubled war hero Rannulph Junah

(read: R. Junah, or Arjuna, Kṛṣṇa's devotee). The outcome of the game, as we soon see, depends more on Bagger Vance, a caddie who carries the secret of "the Authentic Swing," than on the talents of the golfers. His inscrutable wisdom and mysterious powers guide the play and leave a lasting impression, not only on R. Junah but—sixty years later—on a brilliant but discouraged young medical student. Like the *Gītā*, then, the instructions of Bagger Vance are not just for R. Junah, but for Everyman.

Although the *Gītā* is never mentioned directly (except one verse, which opens the book), the parallels are uncanny. Bagger Vance, tall and dark (like Kṛṣṇa), turns the game field into something more, the battlefield of life. He instructs R. Junah in a good deal more than golf, and by the end of



Illustration by Puṣkara Dāsa



# RVER

## Transcendental Commentary On the Issues of the Day

the novel it becomes clear that Bagger Vance is no ordinary mortal. “I come again in every age,” says Vance, “taking on human form to perform the duty I set myself. I return to right the balance of things. . . . Forget all else Junah, but remember this: You are never alone. You have your caddie. You have me.”

I spoke with Pressfield, the author of *Bagger Vance*, and he told me that he had always been interested in the *Gītā* and appreciated the idea of Bhagavān, God, humbling Himself to become the charioteer of His devotee Arjuna. In the same way, Pressfield said, a caddie, as qualified as he may be, takes the humble position of assisting the golfer.

In an interview published on the *Bagger Vance* web site, Pressfield reveals more about the book:

The idea behind *Bagger Vance* was to do the *Bhagavad Gīta* contemporarily. In the *Gīta* the troubled warrior Arjuna receives instruction from Krishna, Supreme Lord of the Universe, who has assumed human form as Arjuna’s charioteer. Instead of a troubled warrior, it’s a troubled golf champion (Rannulph Junah); instead of his charioteer, it’s his caddie—Bagger Vance. . . . Golf, as everyone knows who has played it and loved it, is a very mystical sport. A golf course is like a battlefield. It even looks like a battlefield, with its rolling ramparts and redoubts.

### HEARING THE GĪTĀ’S MESSAGE

It is clear from *Bagger Vance* that Pressfield has high regard for the *Gītā*, generally interpreting it according to

traditional models. The Vaiṣṇava tradition (with roots in the *Gītā*), however, explains what might be missed in a general reading: that texts such as the *Gītā* are meant to be understood in certain esoteric lineages. The *Gītā* itself declares this to be true. (4.2) Moreover, the *Gītā* says that to truly understand its internal message, one must be a devotee and friend of Lord Kṛṣṇa: *bhaktō ‘si me sakhā ceti*. (4.3) While Pressfield’s use of the *Gītā* may be a bit unorthodox, there is much to suggest that he is, by some measure, Kṛṣṇa’s devotee and friend. Nonetheless, without the disciplic succession, it is difficult to get all the *Gītā* has to offer.

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, author of *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* and one of the world’s leading authorities on the Vaiṣṇava tradition, writes in his commentary on the *Gītā* (18.75): “This is the mystery of the disciplic succession. When the spiritual master is bona fide, then one can hear the *Bhagavad-gītā* directly, as Arjuna heard it. . . . If one does not come to the disciplic succession, he cannot hear Kṛṣṇa; therefore, his knowledge is always imperfect, at least as far as understanding *Bhagavad-gītā* is concerned.”

In his commentary on *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*, Mantra 13, Prabhupāda writes:

When Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa was present on this earth, the *bhakti-yoga* principles defined in *Bhagavad-gītā* had become distorted; therefore, the Lord had to reestablish the disciplic system beginning with Arjuna, who was the most confidential friend and devotee of the Lord. The Lord clearly told Arjuna (Bg. 4.3) that it was because Arjuna was His devotee and friend that he could understand the principles of the *Gīta*. In other words, only the Lord’s devotee and friend can understand the *Gītā*. This also means that only one who follows the path of Arjuna can





understand *Bhagavad-gītā*.

At the present moment there are many interpreters and translators of this sublime dialogue who care nothing for Lord Kṛṣṇa or Arjuna. Such interpreters explain the verses of the *Bhagavad-gītā* in their own way. . . . Such interpreters believe neither in Śrī Kṛṣṇa nor in His eternal abode. How, then, can they explain *Bhagavad-gītā*?

The *Legend of Bagger Vance* is not exactly what Prabhupāda is writing about here. It is not a formal commentary on the *Gītā*, nor is it a direct statement on Kṛṣṇa's teachings. Rather, it is a well-written work of fiction with many *Gītā*-inspired themes and ideas. Naturally, it sometimes differs from the perspective of the disciplic succession. For example, while philosophizing about "the golfer" and "the golf field"—reminiscent of the *Gītā*'s "the knower" and "the field"—Bagger Vance puts forward the monistic idea of the two becoming one. He says that enlightenment is attained when "the Knower" and "the Field" become identical. You have to "become the game, get so immersed in the game that you can't tell where it begins and where you end."

Clearly, you never really become the game. You become immersed in the game, but there is always a distinction between you and the game. And there

is a distinction between you and God, too. *Bhagavad-gītā* is clear on this, even if *The Legend of Bagger Vance* is not. The *Gītā* states that the knower of the field and the field are eternally separate. It explains the field of activity (the body) and the process of understanding one's relationship with the body—and with God. This relationship is understood by the soul (the self), the knower of the field. According to the *Gītā*, understanding the distinction between the field and the knower of the field is the first step in God realization. From this point, one can progress toward realizing God.

Several other problems with the *Bagger Vance* text become evident when seen in the light of the *Bhagavad-gītā*: Vance's message ultimately convinces R. Junah that he should stay in the game. But why? It seems he should continue his worthy game/profession/life simply because of its mystical existential nature—for its own sake. But an equally legitimate response would be to drop out of life altogether. Isn't renunciation an equally honorable path? Bagger Vance has no response. Love for the mystery of life, for duty, the game, the battle—in and of itself—seems to be implied. But what about love for Vance, for Kṛṣṇa? Where is the message of love of God, which is intimate and personalistic? This is a main

point in the *Gītā*; it is nowhere to be found in *The Legend of Bagger Vance*.

Pressfield does a brilliant job of communicating the great mysteries of life but neglects the theme of devotional service. *Bhagavad-gītā* teaches that service to the Lord is the greatest component of love. This may be considered the central teaching of the *Gītā*. But Pressfield leaves it aside. Such subtle philosophical nuances sharply distinguish the message of the *Gītā* from that of *The Legend of Bagger Vance*.

Finally, life is not a game. The real Arjuna was fond of the hunt; he was a warrior, a gamesman. But enlightenment came to him on the field of his profession. And he took it seriously. The metaphor of life as a mystical, existential game can be dangerously irresponsible. *Bagger Vance* may assume too much of its audience, expecting them to see the game of life, analogized with the game of golf, as something more than a passing frivolity. A game, by its nature, is to be taken lightly.

It should be remembered that *Bagger Vance* does not pretend to be scripture, to reveal "the truth." The book, as far as it goes, renders a great service—it ignites interest in the *Gītā* among those who may not have had such an interest. Still, if a book is going to be that close to the *Gītā*, a person who knows the *Gītā* will naturally look for points of commonalty and difference.

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### CREATIVE TEACHING

Aside from a few rough areas, though, *Bagger Vance* is thought-provoking, presenting the fundamental teachings of the *Gītā* in a creative way. For example, while an existential crisis besieges R. Junah, Vance helps him understand his true identity, much as Kṛṣṇa reminds Arjuna that he is the soul rather than the body:

"Tell me who you are, Junah. Who, in your deepest parts, when all that is inauthentic has been stripped away. Are you your name, Rannulph Junah? Will that hit this shot for you? Are you your illustrious forebears? Will they hit it? . . . Are you your roles, Junah? Scion, soldier, Southerner? Husband, father, lover.

(please turn to page 54)



# 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 Ṭhākura**—the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta 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.
- Kirtana**—congregational singing of names of God, usually accompanied by cymbals (*karatālas*) and drums (*mṛdaṅgas*).
- Kṛṣṇa**—the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His original transcendental 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.
- Rādhārānī**—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. Bhaktivedānta 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 and His devotees.
- 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*.
- Varnāśrama**—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 and priests), the *kṣatriyas* (administrators and soldiers), the *vaiśyas* (farmers and businessmen), and the *śūdras* (laborers and artisans). 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**—any form of the Personality of Godhead (see “Godhead”); the forms the Lord manifests to create and sustain the material world.



# SANĀTANA'S GREAT ESCAPE

*One of the original leaders of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement uses his diplomatic skills to free himself for the Lord's service.*

by Mathureśa Dāsa

*Sanātana Gosvāmī resigned his ministerial post in the Muslim government of sixteenth-century Bengal, having decided to dedicate his life to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission. The Nawab, or governor, imprisoned Sanātana, angered by his resignation. We now hear how Sanātana met Lord Caitanya in Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh) and told of his escape from prison and journey out of Bengal.*

SANĀTANA GOSVĀMĪ entered the city of Varanasi early in the spring of 1514. Having journeyed on back roads and jungle paths through Bengal and Bihar, he was dressed in torn and dirty clothes. His long hair, beard, and mustache were unkempt, and he carried a beggar's pot in his hand. Pleased to hear that Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu had arrived by boat from Allahabad, Sanātana went to Candraśekhara's house, where the Lord was staying, and sat down by the door.

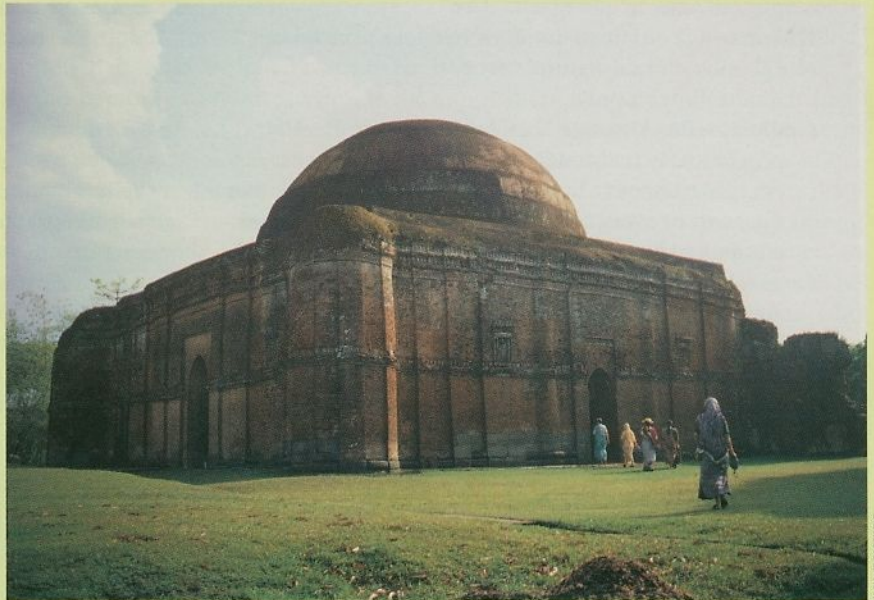
Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu could understand that Sanātana was outside.

"Candraśekhara," He said, "there's a Vaiṣṇava, a Hare Kṛṣṇa devotee, at your door. Please go call him in."

Candraśekhara went out to look and, seeing no Vaiṣṇava, came back.

"Is there anyone at your door at all?" the Lord asked.

"Only a Muslim mendicant," Candraśekhara replied.



Mathur Dāsa

"Please bring him here," the Lord said.

Hurrying back to the door, Candraśekhara spoke to Sanātana.

"O Muslim mendicant," he said, "kindly come in. The Lord is calling you."

Pleased with this invitation, Sanātana entered the house, where Lord Caitanya rose with haste to embrace and welcome him and to give him a seat by His side. Lord Caitanya is the Supreme Personality of Godhead playing the part of His own devotee. In both capacities, as Lord and devotee, He

was eager to welcome His Vaiṣṇava guest. Over Sanātana's protests, He extolled Sanātana's saintly influence upon even sacred places of pilgrimage like Varanasi. The Lord quoted a verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.13.10): "Saints of your caliber are themselves places of pilgrimage. Because of their purity, they are constant companions of the Lord, and therefore they can purify even the places of pilgrimage."

Only a few weeks before, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu had met Sanātana's brother, Rūpa Gosvāmī, in Allahabad. The Lord had enlightened Rūpa about



*The intelligent, determined Sanātana was able to get out of the Bengal governor's fortresslike prison (opposite page). Left, in Varanasi, Lord Caitanya welcomes Sanātana with a loving embrace.*

the soul's evolution, first through the species of material life in this universe and then, upon reentering the spiritual sky, through the transcendental stages of life in the spiritual creation. For the next two months in Varanasi, Lord Caitanya would elaborate on these and other topics in His teachings to Sanātana Gosvāmī. He would describe how the Supreme Lord expands Himself to individually preside over the innumerable spiritual planets and to create and govern the material universes. He would inform Sanātana about the location and dimensions of the spiritual planets and about the identity and activities of their denizens as precisely as one might describe the continents and nations of this earth. And He would delineate the direct route through the dark and temporary material cosmos to these effulgent and deathless spiritual destinations with as much clarity and detail as the best modern road maps and travel guides.

Despite the exalted, revolutionary nature of these pending transcendental topics, however, Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was Himself curious to know about Sanātana's recent travels and adventures.

"How did you escape from prison?" the Lord eagerly asked, and Sanātana happily told his story from beginning to end.

### **FORTUNATE JAIL KEEPER**

Sanātana recounted how, bound with iron chains at the Chika Mosjud prison near Ramakeli, Bengal, he had received a note from his younger brother Rūpa.

"My dear Sanātana," Rūpa Gosvāmī had written, "I have left a deposit of ten thousand gold coins with a local merchant. Use that money to get out of prison and come meet Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in Mathura and Vṇdāvana."

To further encourage Sanātana, Rūpa had included in his note a beautiful and mysterious Sanskrit verse:

Detail from a painting by Muralidhara Das



# *The hotel owner learned of the eight coins through an expert palmist and planned to rob and kill Sanātana and Īśāna.*

• • •

*yadu-pateḥ kva gatā mathurā-purī  
raghu-pateḥ kva gatottara-kośalā  
iti vicintya kurusva manaḥ sthiraṃ  
na sad idaṃ jagad ity avadhāraya*

“Where has the Mathura City of Yadupati gone? Where has the northern Kośala province of Raghupati gone? By reflection, make the mind steady, thinking, ‘This universe is not eternal.’”

Yadupati is a name for Lord Kṛṣṇa, and Raghupati a name for Lord Rāmacandra. Long ago They had appeared on earth and played as human beings, displaying Their eternal pastimes in the city of Mathura and the province of Kośala respectively. Now They had appeared again as Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu to entice mankind from the prison of material life in this temporary universe, and Lord Caitanya was currently on His way to Mathura, followed by Rūpa Gosvāmī.

Delighted with the note, Sanātana went to the Muslim jail keeper, an acquaintance from his government days, a simple man with little education or spiritual training. Summoning the diplomatic skills honed during his years as the Nawab’s prime minister, Sanātana began to satisfy the humble warden with praise.

“Dear sir,” Sanātana began, “you are a very fortunate person, a living saint, and a scholar steeped in knowledge of the Koran and similar books. So you must know that if you release a prisoner in accordance with your religious principles then you are blessed by the Supreme Lord.”

Flattered by the compliments from his fellow government servant, the jail keeper could not deny he was indeed a learned scholar and saintly person. He was all ears as Sanātana continued, stressing their long-standing friendship

and requesting release as a personal favor.

“Previously I have done much for you,” Sanātana said. “Now I am in difficulty. Please return my goodwill by releasing me.”

Sanātana sweetened their friendship with an offer of five thousand gold coins. By taking the gold and releasing an innocent prisoner, Sanātana explained, his friend the jail keeper would accumulate both piety and material wealth. He would get the best of both worlds.

“Please hear me, dear sir,” the jail keeper replied nervously. “Of course I want to let you go, because you have done much for me and are a fellow public servant. I know that, but I am afraid of the Nawab when he hears you are free. I’ll have to explain. What will I say?”

Sanātana had just the alibi.

“There is no danger,” he assured his friend. “The Nawab has gone south to conquer Orissa. If he returns, tell him that Sanātana went to answer the call of nature near the bank of the Ganges and that as soon as he saw the Ganges, he jumped in. Tell him, ‘I looked for a long time, but I could not find any trace of him. He jumped in with his shackles and drowned, washed away by the current.’”

“And don’t worry,” Sanātana added. “No one will find me. I shall become a mendicant and go to the holy city of Mecca.”

The jail keeper now had a forensic alibi for the Nawab, a religious alibi for his own conscience, and a promise of five thousand gold coins. He was still torn and wavering when Sanātana upped the offer to seven thousand coins and carefully stacked the money before him while he watched. Seeing the gleaming pile of gold growing, the

jail keeper finally caved in. That night he broke Sanātana’s shackles and let him escape across the Ganges.

## **DANGEROUS JOURNEY**

Though he now had three thousand coins remaining and hundreds of miles to traverse from Bengal west towards Mathura and Vṛndāvana, Sanātana left all the gold behind and set out on foot, looking the part of a beggar. The money had bought him release for Lord Caitanya’s service, but he had no interest in spending for a comfortable journey, nor was carrying gold safe for a lone traveler. As an escaped prisoner, too, and a famous man, Sanātana had to avoid notice. Using back roads and footpaths, he stayed off the highways known as “the way of the ramparts,” which the Nawab had fortified against invasion.

A servant named Īśāna followed Sanātana, and despite all his master’s evident precautions, Īśāna secretly carried eight gold coins. Crossing what is now Bihar province, Sanātana and Īśāna came to a hilly area known as Patada and stopped at a small hotel, where the gold proved nearly fatal. The hotel owner learned of the eight coins through an expert palmist and planned to rob and kill his two guests. In the meantime, he went out of his way to be respectful and attentive to their needs, providing them with food to cook and promising to personally guide them through the hills.

Sanātana went to the river to bathe, and as he had not eaten for two days, he cooked and had his meal. But he was suspicious. As a minister of the Nawab, he had faced many diplomats and sycophants. Here was a hotel owner, a stranger, giving him the royal treatment, though he and Īśāna



looked like paupers.

“Īśāna,” Sanātana inquired, “I think you must have something valuable with you.”

“Yes, I have seven gold coins,” Īśāna admitted, partially revealing his cache.

Sanātana became angry and be-  
rated his servant.

“Why do you carry this death knell on the road?”

Taking the seven coins, Sanātana went to the hotel owner, holding the coins before him.

“Please take these seven coins,” Sanātana requested, “and help us to cross these hills. I am an escaped political prisoner and cannot go along the way of the ramparts. It will be very pious of you to take this money and get me through the hills.”

The combination of gold and religious sentiments again proved effective. The hotel keeper confessed that he knew that Īśāna had eight coins in his pocket and that he had planned to kill both Īśāna and Sanātana. Now refusing the coins with embarrassment and chagrin, as an apology he offered to guide Sanātana through the hills for free.

“No,” Sanātana replied. “If you don’t accept these coins, someone else will kill me for them. Better you save me from the danger.”

With this settlement made, the hotel keeper hired four watchmen who through that entire night escorted Sanātana and Īśāna across the hills on a jungle path. Sanātana then sent Īśāna home with the gold coin Īśāna had tried to conceal and traveled on alone, wearing torn clothing, carrying a beggar’s pot, and losing his worries with every step he took.

### MEETING ŚRĪKĀNTA

Walking on and on, Sanātana came one evening to a town named Hajipura and sat down in a garden park. By coincidence a gentleman named Śrīkānta, the husband of Sanātana’s sister, was in Hajipura on government business. The Nawab had given Śrīkānta 300,000 gold coins to buy horses. Sitting in an elevated place transacting this business, Śrīkānta caught a  
*(please turn to page 55)*



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# REAL RELIEF AND JOY

*Why try to forget life's hardships through mind-numbing diversions, when you can escape to the pleasure of reality?*

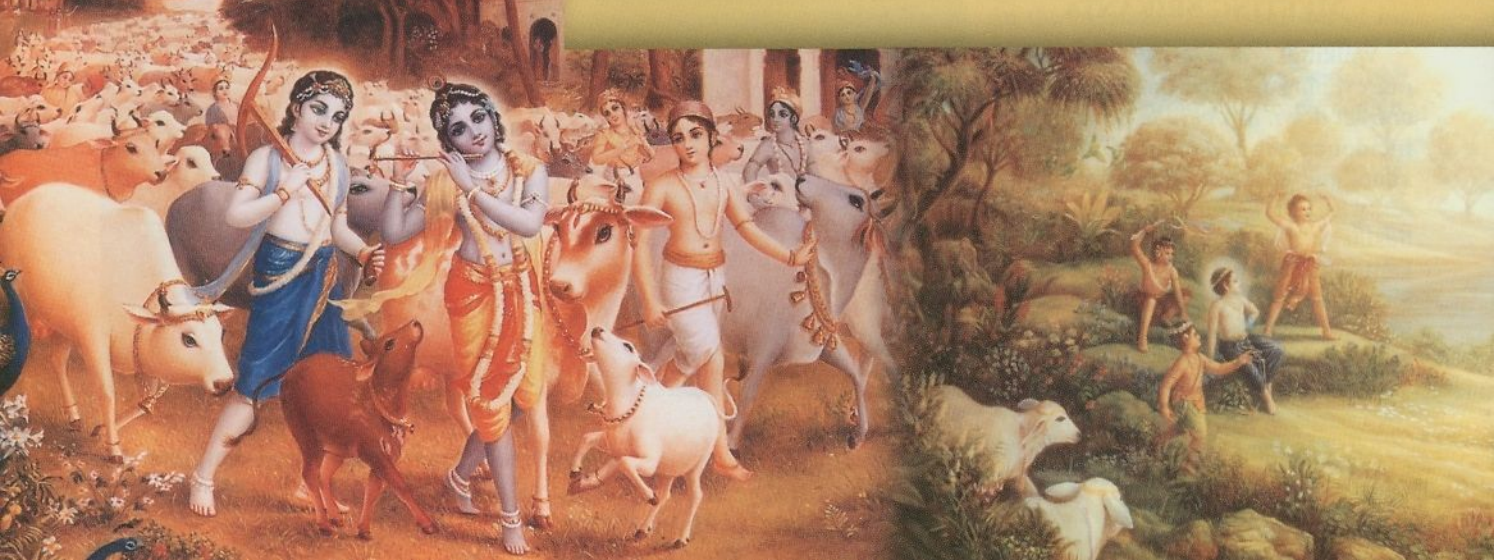
by Ūrmilā Devī Dāsī

**T**HE GLORIES OF the Lord, God of all creation, as He appears in His original form as Kṛṣṇa fill the pages of the book before me. The *Srīmad-Bhāgavatam* delivers excitement, adventure, love, bravery and battles, the inner and outer struggles of real people interacting with the Lord. Immersed in a swirling eddy of soothing nectar, I forget all worries.

Life in the material world is painful and hard. Some people will say it's full of joys, but those joys

have a price, and they ebb and flow with time. The joy is never constant or certain, and it usually results from or leads to misery.

People often look for relief in imagination and entertainment—books, art, movies, theater, music, television, computer games. And they often try to enhance the entertainment with chemical intoxication, from mild to menacing. Others seek relief by absorbing themselves in their work or relationships, which often cause grief. Some people seek







refuge in nature, travel, or sports.

There are as many ways to escape pain as there are people. And yet, if we are honest, we'll admit that whatever we do to find happiness and ease pain, life is not an unending, ever-increasing source of deep and broad happiness.

In resignation we might conclude that whatever joys we get are all that can be gotten. Yet the soul seeks pleasure, having as its right and natural condition an existence of expansive spiritual bliss. We can find bliss here, but it's independent of our material situation. It's available through contact with the Lord. Because He is full of bliss, connecting with Him revives the happy nature of the soul, who, though infinitesimal, is of the same nature as God.

To gain the true happiness we seek, spiritual teachers throughout the ages have recommended prayer and the hearing of scripture. The descriptions of God in Vedic scripture and the intimacy of the prayer that is the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra can bring us to a broad, deep connection with God available to very few

in other traditions. Vedic scripture gives us God as He is—enjoying with perfected souls in His own domain, a realm for His own pleasure. And the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* gives us the ultimate names of the Lord and His supreme energy.

Vedic scripture and the *mahā-mantra* take us beyond God as the creator, the deliverer, the terrible and jealous God who punishes evil and rewards good, to God as Kṛṣṇa, the supreme enjoyer, the ultimate lover and friend.

Reading about Kṛṣṇa is beyond relief; it is a positive happiness that automatically distances me from worldly struggles as I awaken to my true nature. Fully hearing Kṛṣṇa's name as I chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare has the same effect: I am at once beyond trouble and immersed in joy.

As I close my book or put down my chanting beads, the joy can stay with me by remembering Kṛṣṇa's deeds and the sound of His name. It is so simple, yet so sublime. ❁





## BATTLEFIELD OF... GOLF?

(continued from page 46)

Slayer of the foe in battle, comforter of the friend at home? Are you your virtues, Junah, or your sins? Your deeds, your feats? Are you your dreams or your nightmares? Tell me, Junah. Can you hit the ball with any of these?" . . . Vance pressed yet harder, "Then who are you? Answer me!"

Bagger Vance elaborates on the spiritual dimension of reality and ex-

plains that all beings partake of this higher nature.

*Gītā* parallels go further. Bagger Vance offers a brilliant analogy involving yoga (the path of discipline), *jñāna* (the path of knowledge), and *bhakti* (the path of devotion), acknowledging the supremacy of *bhakti* over the others. While explaining how to master the Game, Vance describes three possible approaches:

The first path, I heard him say, was the path of Discipline. It had some-

thing to do with beating balls, with endless practice, an utter relentless commitment to achieving physical mastery of the game.

Second was the path of Wisdom. I heard practically nothing of what Vance said here (I was checking yardage to three separate bunkers off the eighteenth) except, I believe, that the process was largely mental—a study of the Swing much like a scientist might undertake: analysis, dissection, and so on.

Third (and this I heard most of) was the path of love. . . .



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Vance goes on to explain that the path of love is the most effective. If you love the Game, you have the greatest chance of being a great player. The other paths are important, but *bhakti* is supreme.

Throughout the book, Vance describes the search for the “Authentic Swing,” which, he says, is metaphysically tantamount to the search for “the Self.” While the book may or may not help people find the Authentic Swing, the author seems to have found something: the recently released paperback version of his book is swinging rapidly from store shelves to home libraries.

What’s next—“Bhagavad-gita, The Movie”? Well, not exactly. Filming of

*The Legend of Bagger Vance* was completed on schedule last December. The movie, directed by Robert Redford, will be in theaters this year. Award-winning actors Will Smith and Matt Damon will portray Bagger Vance and R. Junnah, respectively. But don’t expect to learn *Bhagavad-gītā* from the movie: If the Bagger Vance book is a few golf holes short of the *Gītā*, the movie is on another playing field altogether. The *Gītā*-like mysticism is snuffed out of the Bagger Vance character, and he appears like a mere trickster instead—the wise one is replaced with a wise guy.

Nonetheless, people in the know are saying this will be the blockbuster

movie of the year. Critics are already calling it “a major hole-in-one.” But for the real deal behind the Bagger Vance story, one would do well to read *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, by Kṛṣṇa’s devotee and friend His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. For the *Gītā*, it might be said, is “The Holy One’s Hole-In-One.” ☀

*Satyarāja Dāsa is a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda and a regular contributor to BTG. He has written many books on Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He and his wife live in New York state. This article is adapted from the introduction to his forthcoming book The Mystical Tradition Behind Bagger Vance.*

## GREAT ESCAPE

(continued from page 51)

glimpse of Sanātana and later that evening went to see him. The two old friends talked long into the night, and Śrīkānta heard all about Sanātana’s arrest and escape. Seeing Sanātana, formerly the prime minister, in such a ragged condition distressed Śrīkānta and got him thinking. With a fortune in gold at his disposal, certainly he could help his wife’s brother get a new start in life.

“Why don’t you stay here with me for a couple of days,” Śrīkānta urged Sanātana. “You can get rid of these dirty clothes and dress like a gentleman again.”

Sanātana had already foiled a greedy jail keeper and a murderous hotel owner, all the while avoiding the Nawab’s soldiers and agents on his way to meet Lord Caitanya. Now here was a more formidable obstacle: a loving friend and close relative with money to spare. Sanātana thanked Śrīkānta but declined his offer.

“I cannot stay any longer,” Sanātana said. “Please help me across the Ganges so that I can leave right away.”

Insisting that Sanātana at least take a valuable woolen blanket, Śrīkānta helped him across the Ganges and with affection saw him on his way again.

## CLEAN-SHAVEN VAIṢṆAVA

Sanātana had left Śrīkānta in Hajipur a few days before. Now, sit-

ting with Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu at Candraśekhara’s house in Varanasi, he was feeling boundless happiness. After hearing about Sanātana’s adventures, Lord Caitanya in turn recounted His recent meeting with Sanātana’s brothers in Allahabad. Then He asked Sanātana to clean up and get a shave before lunch, and He requested Candraśekhara to provide Sanātana with fresh clothing.

Sanātana’s ragged, unkempt appearance was understandable considering the circumstances of his long journey, but Lord Caitanya wanted His followers looking like gentlemen. His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, writing in the early 1970s, explains: “Due to his long hair, mustache, and beard, Sanātana Gosvāmī looked like a hippie. Since Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu did not like Sanātana Gosvāmī’s hippie features, he asked Candraśekhara to get him shaved clean. If anyone with long hair or a beard wants to join this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement and live with us, he must similarly shave himself clean.”

Though offered new garments by Candraśekhara, Sanātana requested a used dhoti cloth instead, then proceeded to rip the cloth in pieces to make two sets of clothing. As for meals, a Maharastriyan *brāhmaṇa* who would later host Lord Caitanya’s lunch with the *sannyāsīs* of Varanasi invited Sanātana to take all his meals with him. Again Sanātana politely declined, pre-

ferring to avoid full meals and humbly beg a little food from door to door. Sanātana’s renunciation was extraordinary and cannot as a rule be imitated. He was determined to give up material opulence. Even Śrīkānta’s new woolen blanket had to go. Sanātana went to the bank of the Ganges and persuaded a surprised Bengali mendicant to take the blanket in exchange for the mendicant’s torn quilt.

Observing all these changes, and at last seeing even the valuable blanket gone, Lord Caitanya became unlimitedly happy and told Sanātana Gosvāmī, “Lord Kṛṣṇa has mercifully nullified your attachment for material things. So why would He allow you to maintain that valuable blanket, your last bit of material attachment? After vanquishing a disease, a good physician does not allow any of the disease to remain.”

In the days that followed, Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, being pleased with Sanātana Gosvāmī, began to tell him about Lord Kṛṣṇa’s real identity, transcendental qualities, and eternal activities. Sanātana, freed from his last piece of material attraction, was fully prepared to listen. ☀

(Next issue: *Lord Caitanya’s teachings to Sanātana Gosvāmī.*)

*Mathureśa Dāsa, a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda, has written many articles for BTG and other publications. He and his wife and their four children live in Alachua, Florida.*



**“We have got totally authoritative scriptures,  
with full descriptions of the Lord  
and answers to every possible question.”**

• • •

**REAL SCIENCE**

(continued from page 15)

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Kṛṣṇa is Kṛṣṇa.

**Allen Ginsberg:** But if He’s not apprehensible by our senses . . .

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** No. Why say He’s not apprehensible by our senses? As we said before, in a sense even this table is Kṛṣṇa. But at the same time—and this is the philosophy of Lord Caitanya: *acintya-bhedābheda*—this or any other thing and Kṛṣṇa are simultaneously one and different. That is very easy to understand. Suppose this table is gold. But this one gold thing is not the whole gold mine. There is a difference. Similarly, everything is Kṛṣṇa, but still, everything is different from Kṛṣṇa.

This principle of simultaneously one and different is explained in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. *Eka-deśa-sthitasyāgner jyotsnā vistāriṇī yathā/ parasya brahmaṇaḥ śaktis tatedam akhilam jagat*. In this verse we get the same idea that the Lord expands in the way of the sun-god, sun globe, and sunshine. The sun-god is situated in one place, and from that place blazing fire spreads its heat and light all over.

You can see this principle practically demonstrated in everyday life, also: the expansion of the sun’s heat and light all over the universe. We know that whatever we see within this material existence is depending on the sunlight, the sunshine. This statement is verifiable scientifically. Your electricity, your this, your that—whatever item you take—fundamentally it is sunshine. All these planets are moving, rotating, based on the sunshine.

If the sun’s heat were taken away, immediately the whole thing would be spoiled; therefore, everything is resting on the energy of the sun-god. But if you say, “Then let me search out the

sun-god who is behind the sunshine,” to do that you will have to go there.

**Disciple:** As I think the Christians also say, God is more than His creation.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. Certainly. This creation is only a part of the manifestation of His energy. Insignificant. That is explained in *Bhagavad-gītā*. *Atha vā bahunaitena kiṁ jñātena tavārjuna/ viṣṭabhyāham idam kṛtsnam ekāṁśena sthito jagat*: “This whole material existence is simply a partial manifestation of My energy.” Kṛṣṇa says, “I have entered into this whole material creation, and it is a partial manifestation of My energy.”

For instance, what is this body of yours? This body is a manifestation of your energy. The living entity is put into the mother’s womb in the form of a seed, and his body expands. This body is expanding. But because you are limited, your body expands only so much. Three feet or six feet. That’s all. No more. You cannot expand more than that. This is a crude example.

But the Lord—He’s unlimited. So He’s expanding unlimitedly. *Bṛhattvād br̥hhaṇattvād iti brahma*. *Brahman* means nothing is greater than Him, and nothing can expand like Him.

So the Vedic culture offers us all information—scientifically. We simply have to disseminate it. We have got totally authoritative scriptures, with full descriptions of the Lord and answers to every possible question. Everything is here. This is not blind following. It is not religious fanaticism. It is actually solid ground. One simply has to understand nicely. That’s all. And there is no difficulty. It is so simple.

Our initial recommendation is, Simply chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. If someone asks, “Aren’t these Sanskrit words?” that is not a problem. These are God’s names, and everyone is naturally attracted to

chanting them. So what is the difficulty? Bring any other religious principle, and you won’t find any so easy as this. We don’t recommend anything ritualistic; that is not a very important thing. We are giving the main instruction for this age, saying, “Simply chant.”

Of course, at our temples we have a few ritualistic performances. They give us a little help in focusing our mind on the Lord’s name. That’s all. They help. But they are not required. Caitanya Mahāprabhu says that all the strength and all the beauty, all the wisdom—everything is there in the name. Simply by chanting the name, we get all blessings, everything. Ritualistic performances assist us in hearing the name, but if somebody does not want our ritualistic performances, that is not an important thing. We simply recommend, “Please chant.” That’s all. For example, I requested you to chant. Not that I requested that you adopt our means. So this is what we are requesting. Let people chant—make an experiment. It is not a very difficult thing.

**Allen Ginsberg:** Well, the chanting is easy, the chanting is easy. That’s true.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. Let people do that and not come to the ritualistic performances. Let them chant as far as possible and see the result. This is the easiest method of transcendental realization. And if *you* recommend that people chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, oh, that will be accepted by many.

**Allen Ginsberg:** No. You see, I recommend it quite a bit, but it isn’t accepted by very many.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** [Chuckles.] No, no. To that I say, You are an American, and you are a popular leader. You have got some voice. I am a foreigner, newly arrived, so who cares about me? ☸



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- Mayapur, W.B.** — (contact ISKCON Mayapur)
- Vrindavan, U.P.** — Vrinda Kund, Nandagaon, Dist. Mathura, U.P./ E-mail: vrinda@aol.com

### ADDITIONAL RESTAURANT

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

### OTHER COUNTRIES

- Cebu, Philippines** — Hare Krishna Paradise, 231 Pagsabungan Road, Basak, Mandaue City/  
Tel. +63 (032) 345-3590
- **Chittagong, Bangladesh** — Caitanya Cultural Society, 23 Nandan Kanan, N.N. Paul Blvd./  
Tel. +88 (031) 610822
- Colombo, Sri Lanka** — 188 New Chetty St., Colombo 13/ Tel. +94 (01) 433325/ E-mail: iskon@st.lk
- Dhaka, Bangladesh** — 5 Chandra Mohon Basak St., Banagram, 1203/ Tel. +880 (02) 236249
- ◆ **Hong Kong** — 27 Chatham Road South, 6/F/ Tel. +852 (2) 739-6818/ Fax: +852 (2) 724-2186/  
E-mail: iskon.hong.kong@pamho.net
- Jakarta, Indonesia** — P. O. Box 2694, Jakarta Pusat 10001/ Tel. +62 (021) 489-9646
- Jessore, Bangladesh** — Nital Gaur Mandir, Kathakali Bazaar P. O., Panjia
- **Jessore, Bangladesh** — Sri Rup-Sanatan Smriti Tirtha Mandir, Ramshara, Magurahat P. O., Abhaynagar
- Kathmandu, Nepal** — Budhanilkantha (mail: P. O. Box 3520)/ Tel. +977 (01) 371743/  
Fax: +977 (01) 414409 (Attr: ISKCON)
- Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia** — Lot 9901, Jalan Awan Jawa, Taman Yarl, off 5½ Mile, Jalan Kelang Lama,  
Petaling/ Tel. +60 (03) 780-7355, -7360, or -7369/ Fax: +60 (03) 781-1644/ E-mail:  
simheswar.jps@pamho.net
- **Manila, Philippines** — 809 Chaffee St., Moonwalk Subd., Phase II, Paranaque City, Metro Manila  
1700/ Tel. +63 (02) 8249273/ E-mail: sridam.gds@pamho.net
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- Taipei, Taiwan** — (mail: c/o ISKCON Hong Kong)
- Tel Aviv, Israel** — 16 King George St. (mail: P. O. Box 48163, 61480)/ Tel. +972 (03) 528-5475 or  
629-9011/ Fax: +972 (03) 629-9011
- Tokyo, Japan** — 4-19-6 Kamatikada Nakano, 1F Subarhu Bldg., 164 / Tel. +81 (03) 5343-9147 or  
-3811/ Fax: +81 (03) 5343-3812
- Yogyakarta, Indonesia** — P. O. Box 25, Babarsari YK, DIY

### RURAL COMMUNITIES

- Bangladesh (Rangirkul Bidyashram)** — Rangirkul, Kulaura, Dist. Moulvibazar/ Fax: (0088) 08624-88035

**Note for international phone calls:** When dialing from outside the country, drop the "0" that begins most city codes (the numbers shown in parentheses). **Exception:** For Russia, the number to drop is the initial "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



- ◆ **Bangladesh (Sri Jagannatha Mandir)** — Jagannathpur, Comilla
- Bangladesh (Sri Pundarika Dhama)** — Mekhla, Hathazari, Dist. Chittagong/ Tel. (031) 610822
- Indonesia (Govinda Kunja)** — (contact ISKCON Jakarta)
- Malaysia** — Jalan Sungai Manik, 36000 Teluk Intan, Perak/ Tel. +63 (032) 83254
- Malaysia** — (contact ISKCON Kuala Lumpur)

## NORTH AMERICA

## CANADA

- ◆ **Calgary, Alberta** — 313 Fourth Street N.E., T2E 3S3/ Tel. (403) 265-3302/ Fax: (403) 547-0795/ E-mail: sahadveys@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: iskconmontreal@sprint.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 Avenue Rd., M5R 2J6/ Tel. (416) 922-5415/ Fax: (416) 922-1021/ E-mail: toronto@iskcon.net
- ◆ **Vancouver, B.C.** — 5462 S.E. Marine Dr., Burnaby V5J 3G8/ Tel. (604) 433-9728/ Fax: (604) 431-7251/ E-mail: jaygo@direct.ca; Govinda's Restaurant: Tel. (604) 433-2428/ Fax: (604) 431-7251/ E-mail: jaygo@direct.ca

## RURAL 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@wkwpowerlink.com

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- ◆ **Detroit, Michigan** — 383 Lenox Ave., 48215/ Tel. (313) 824-6000/ Fax: (313) 822-3748/ E-mail: fmansion@flash.net
- Gainesville, Florida** — 214 N.W. 14th St., 32603/ Tel. (352) 336-4183/ E-mail: krishna@afn.org
- Hartford, Connecticut** — 1683 Main St., E. Hartford, 06108/ Tel. & fax: (860) 289-7252/ E-mail: bhaktirasa@poboxes.com
- ◆ **Honolulu, Hawaii** — 51 Coelhu Way, 96817/ Tel. (808) 595-3947/ Fax: (808) 595-3433/ E-mail: iskcon-honolulu@iname.com
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- ◆ **Los Angeles, California** — 3764 Watseka Ave., 90034/ Tel. (310) 836-2676/ Fax: (310) 839-2715/ E-mail: niranntara@juno.com
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- Portland, Oregon** — 2353 SE 54th Ave., Portland, OR 97215/ Tel. (503) 236-0417/

E-mail: portland\_krishna@hotmail.com

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- ◆ **St. Louis, Missouri** — 3926 Lindell Blvd., 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: newgovardhan@cs.com
- San Jose, California** — 2679 New Jersey Ave., 95124/ Tel. (408) 559-3197
- Seattle, Washington** — 1420 228th Ave. S.E., Issaquah, 98027/ Tel. (425) 391-3293/ Fax: (425) 868-8928/ E-mail: haribol@iskcon.net
- Spanish Fork, Utah** — Krishna Temple Project & KHQN Radio, 8628 S. State Rd., 84660/ Tel. (801) 798-3559/ Fax: (801) 798-9121/ E-mail: carudask@burgoyne.com
- Tallahassee, Florida** — 1323 Nylis St., 32304/ Tel. & fax: (850) 681-9258/ E-mail: frr2897@garnet.acns.fsu.edu
- Towaco, New Jersey** — 100 Jacksonville Rd. (mail: P.O. Box 109), 07082/ Tel. & fax: (973) 299-0970/ E-mail: samik-rsi.acbsp@pamho.net
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- Alachua, Florida (New Raman Reti)** — P.O. Box 819, 32616/ Tel. & fax: (904) 462-2017/ E-mail: alachua@pamho.net
- Carriere, Mississippi (New Talavan)** — 31492 Anner Road, 39426/ Tel. (601) 749-9460 or 799-1354/ Fax: (601) 799-2924/ E-mail: talavan@datastar.net
- Gurabo, Puerto Rico (New Govardhana Hill)** — P.O. Box 1338, 00778/ Tel. (787) 737-3917/ E-mail: nrshingha@aol.com
- Hillsborough, North Carolina (New Goloka)** — 1032 Dimmocks Mill Rd., 27278/ Tel. (919) 732-6492/ Fax: (919) 732-8033/ E-mail: bkgoswami@compuserve.com
- Moundsville, West Virginia (New Vrindavan)** — R.D. No. 1, Box 319, Hare Krishna Ridge, 26041/ Tel. (304) 843-1600; Guest House, (304) 845-5905/ Fax: (304) 854-0023/ E-mail: palaceofgold@juno.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

- ★ **Alachua, Florida** — Govinda's, 14603 Main St., 32615/ Tel. (904) 462-4500/ Fax: (904) 418-3524
- Eugene, Oregon** — Govinda's Vegetarian Buffet, 270 W. 8th St., 97401/ Tel. (503) 686-3531
- Gainesville, Florida** — Balaji Indian Cuisine, 2106 SW 34th St., 32608/ Tel. (352) 378-2955
- San Juan, Puerto Rico** — Gopal, 201B Calle Tetuan, Viejo San Juan, 00901/ Tel. (787) 724-0229

## EUROPE

## UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND

- Belfast, Northern Ireland** — Brooklands, 140 Upper Dunmurray Lane, BT17 0HE/ Tel. +44 (01232) 620530
- Birmingham, England** — 84 Stanmore Rd., Edgbaston, B16 9TB/ Tel. +44 (0121) 420-4999
- Bristol, England** — Alberta Cottage, Wraxhall Road, Nailsea, BS19 1BN/ Tel. +44 (01275) 853788
- Cardiff, Wales** — 18 Greenfield Place, Caerphilly, Mid Glamorgan/ Tel. +44 (01222) 831579
- Cork, Ireland** — Highland Cottage, 81, Lower Glanmire Road, Cork City/ Tel. (021) 552976/ E-mail: cork@pamho.net
- Coventry, England** — Kingfield Rd., Radford, West Midlands (mail: 19 Gloucester St., CV1 3BZ)/ Tel. +44 (01203) 552822 or 555420/ E-mail: haridas.kds@pamho.net
- 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, LE5 4GU/ Tel. & fax: +44 (0116) 236-7723/ E-mail: gauranga.sundara@pamho.net
- Liverpool, England** — 114A Bold St., Merseyside, L1 4HY/ Tel. +44 (0151) 708-9400/ E-mail: liverpool@iskcon.net
- ◆ **London, England (city)** — 9/10 Soho St., W1V 5DA/ Tel. +44 (0171) 437-3662; (residential/pujaris/shop): 439-3606; office, 437-5875; Govinda's Restaurant, 437-4928/ Fax: +44 (0171) 439-1127/ E-mail: london@pamho.net
- London, England (country)** — Bhaktivedanta Manor, Dharam Marg, Hilfield Lane, Watford, Herts, WD2 8EZ/ Tel. +44 (01923) 857244/ Fax: +44 (01923) 852896/ E-mail: bhaktivedanta.manor@pamho.net; (for accommodations:) accommodations.requests@pamho.net
- London, England (south)** — 42 Enmore Road, South Norwood, SE25/ Tel. +44 (0181) 656-4296 or 654-3138
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- Newcastle upon Tyne, England** — 304 Westgate Rd., NE4 6AR/ Tel. +44 (0191) 272-1911
- Plymouth, England** — 2 Windermere Crescent, Derriford, Devon, PL6 5HX/ Tel. (01752) 776708/ E-mail: dhirasanta@pamho.net
- Romford, England** — 3 Rowan Walk, Hornchurch, Essex, RM11 2JA/ Tel. +44 (01708) 454092

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## GERMANY

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E-mail: visvadeva.hks@pamho.net
- ◆ **Cologne** — Taunusstr. 40, 51105/ Tel. +49 (0221) 830-1241/ Fax: +49 (0221) 837-0485
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- Munich** — Wachenheimer Strasse 1, 81539/ Tel. +49 (089) 6880-0288/ Fax: +49 (089) 6880-0289/  
**Nuernberg** — Kopernikusplatz 12, 90459/ Tel. +49 (0911) 446-7773/ E-mail: info@iskcon.de

## RURAL COMMUNITY

**Jandelsbrunn (Nava Jiyada Nrsimha Ksetra)** — Zielberg 20, 94118/ Tel. +49 (08583) 316/  
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- Szolnok** — Baratsag u. 6, 5000/ Tel. +36 (056) 412-124/ E-mail: 100324.3045@compuserve.com

## RURAL COMMUNITY

**Somogyvamos** — Krsna-völgy, Fő u. 38, 8699/ Tel. +36 (085) 340-185/  
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## ITALY

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- Bologna** — Via Ramo Barchetta 2, Castagnolo Minore, 40010 Bentivoglio (BO)/  
Tel. +39 (051) 863924
- Milan** — Centro Culturale Govinda via Valpetrosa 5, 20123/ Tel. +39 (02) 862417
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## RURAL COMMUNITY

**Czarnow (New Santipura)** — Czarnow 21, 58-424 Piszczowice, gm. Kamienna Gora/  
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## SPAIN

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E-mail: new.vrajamandala@pamho.net

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**Järna** — Almviks Gärd, 153 95/ Tel. +46 (08551) 52050/ Fax: +46 (08551) 52060/  
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## ADDITIONAL RESTAURANT

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## SWITZERLAND

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- Bern** — Marktgasse 7, 301/ Tel. +41 (031) 312-3825
- Zürich** — Govinda's, Preyergasse 16, 800/ Tel. +41 (01) 251-8859/

## OTHER COUNTRIES

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- Bratislava, Slovak Republic** — Za farou 12, 83107/ Tel. +0042 (17) 4371-2257/  
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- Gutenstein, Austria** — Vedisches Kulturzentrum, Markt 58, 2770/ Tel. & fax: +43 (02) 634-7731/  
E-mail: austria@pamho.net
- Helsinki, Finland** — Ruoholahdenkatu 24 D (III krs) 00180/ Tel. +358 (9) 694-9879/  
Fax: +358 (9) 694-9837/ E-mail: krishna@saunalahiti.fi
- Iasi, Romania** — Stradela Moara De Vint 72, 6600
- Kaunas, Lithuania** — 37, Savanoryu pr./ Tel. +370 (7) 22-2574 or 26-8953/  
Fax: +370 (7) 70-6642/ E-mail: kaunas@pamho.net
- ◆ **Lisbon, Portugal** — Rua Dona Estefania, 91 R/C 1000 Lisbon/ Tel. & fax: +351(01) 314-0314/  
E-mail: nitaitrade@mail.telepac.pt
  - **Ljubljana, Slovenia** — Zibertova 27, 1000/ Tel. +386 (061) 131-2124/ Fax: +386 (061) 310815/  
E-mail: ljubljana@pamho.net
  - Oslo, Norway** — Jonsrudvej 1G, 0274/ Tel. +47 (022) 552243/ Fax: +47 (022) 558172
  - Paris, France** — 31 rue du docteur Jean Vaquier, 93160 Noisy le Grand/ Tel. & fax:  
+33 (01) 4303-0951/ E-mail: nitai.gaurasundara.tkg@pamho.net
  - Plovdiv, Bulgaria** — ul. Prosveta 56, Kv. Proslav, 4015/ Tel. +359 (032) 446962/  
E-mail: plovdiv@pamho.net
  - Porto, Portugal** — Rua de S. Miguel 19, 4050 (mail: Apartado 4108, 4002 Porto Codex)/  
Tel. +351 (02) 200-5469
  - Prague, Czech Republic** — Jilova 290, Praha 5 - Zlicin 155 21/ Tel. +42 (02) 5795-0391 or  
-0401/ Fax: +42 (02) 302-1628/ E-mail: prague@pamho.net
  - Pula, Croatia** — Vinkuran centar 58, 52000 (mail: P.O. Box 16)/ Tel. & fax: +385 (052) 573581
  - ◆ **Riga, Latvia** — 56, K. Baron st., LV1011/ Tel. +371 (02) 27-2490/ Fax: +371 (2) 27-4120/  
E-mail: riga@pamho.net
  - Rijeka, Croatia** — Sv. Jurja 32, 51000 (mail: P.O. Box 61)/ Tel. +385 (051) 543 055/  
Fax: +385 (051) 543 056/ E-mail: navadvipa.hks@pamho.net
  - Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina** — ISKCON, Gornjo Vakufska 12, 71000/  
Tel. +387 (071) 201530
  - ◆ **Septon-Durbuy, Belgium** — Chateau de Petite Somme, B-6940/ Tel. +32 (086) 322926/  
Fax: +32 (086) 322929/ E-mail: radhadesh@pamho.net
  - Skopje, Macedonia** — Vvz. "ISKCON," Roze Luksemburg 13, 91000/ Tel. +389 (091) 201451
  - Sofia, Bulgaria** — "F.J.Kjuri" Str., 1113 Sofia (mail: Sofia 1000, P.O. Box 827)/  
Tel. +359 (02) 705-616 or 989-0488/ E-mail: sofia@pamho.net
  - Split, Croatia** — Cesta Mutogras 26, 21312 Podstrana (mail: P.O. Box 290, 2100)/  
Tel. +385 (021) 651137
  - ◆ **Tallinn, Estonia** — Luise Street 11a, 10142/ Tel. +372 6460047
  - Timisoara, Romania** — ISKCON, Porumbescu 92, 190/ Tel. +40 (961) 54776/  
E-mail: damodara@online.ee
  - Vienna, Austria** — Bhaktivadanta-Zentrum Wien, Roetzergaasse 34/3, 117/  
Tel. & Fax: +43 (01) 481-9212/ E-mail: vienna@pamho.net
  - Vilnius, Lithuania** — 23-1, Raugiklos st., 2024/ Tel. +370 (2) 23-5218/ E-mail: vilnius@pamho.net
  - Zagreb, Croatia** — (mail: P.O. Box 68, 10001)/ Tel. & fax: +385 (01) 3772-643
- RURAL COMMUNITIES**
- Czech Republic** — Krsnuv Dvur c. 1, 257 28 Chotysany/ Tel. +420 (0602) 375978/  
E-mail: varanasrama.lok@pamho.net
- ◆ **France (Bhaktivadanta Village)** — Chateau Bellevue, F-39700 Chatenois/ Tel. +33 (03) 8472-8235/  
Fax: +33 (03) 8482-6973/ E-mail: guru-sakti.hks@pamho.net
  - France (La Nouvelle Mayapura)** — Domaine d'Oublaise, 36360, Lucay le Mâle/  
Tel. +33 (02) 5440-2395/ Fax: +33 (02) 5440-2893/ E-mail: new.mayapur@pamho.net
- ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS**
- Copenhagen, Denmark** — Govinda's, Nørre Farimagsgade 82, DK-1364 Kbh K/  
Tel. +45 3333-7444
- Oslo, Norway** — Krishna's Cuisine, Kirkeveien 59B, 0364/ Tel. +47 (02) 260-6250
- Prague, Czech Republic** — Govinda's, Soukenicka 27, 110 00 Prague-1/  
Tel. +420 (02) 2481-6631 or 2481-6016/ E-mail: prahlada.nrsimha.ss@pamho.net
- Prague, Czech Republic** — Govinda's, Na hrizi 5, 180 00 Prague 8-Liben/  
Tel. +420 (02) 683-7226/ E-mail: prahlada.nrsimha.ss@pamho.net
- Presov, Slovak Republic** — Govinda's, Hlavna 70, 08001/ Tel. +0042 (191) 722 819
- Tallinn, Estonia** — Damodara, Lauteri Street 1, 10114/ Tel. +372 6442650
- Vienna, Austria** — Govinda, Lindengasse 2A, 1070/ Tel. +43 (01) 522-2817



## COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES

## RUSSIA

- Astrahan** — 141052, 8-59, Botvina st./ Tel. +7 (8510) 28-9431  
**Chita** — 27, Kurnatovskogo st./ Tel. +7 (30222) 23-4971 or -0911/ E-mail: kar@rex.chita.ru  
**Ekaterinburg** — 620078, G. Ekaterinburg, per. Otdelnyi 5DK VOG/ Tel. +7 (3432) 74-2200 or 49-5262/ E-mail: ekaterinburg@pamho.net  
**Irkutsk** — st. Krimskaya 6A/ Tel. (3952) 38-71-32 or 3240-62/ E-mail: iosk@iosk.irkutsk.ru  
**Kazan** — 13, Sortirovochnaya st., pos. Yudin/ Tel. +7 (8432) 55-2529 or 42-9991  
**Krasnodar** — 418, Stepnaya st., selo Elizavetinskoye, Krsnodarski krai/ Tel. +7 (8612) 50-1694  
**Kurjino** — 8, Shosseinaya st., pos. Erzhovo, Urupski region, Karachayevo-Cherkessia  
**Moscow** — 8/3, Khoroshevskoye sh. (mail: P.O. Box 69), 125284/ Tel. +7 (095) 255-6711/ Tel. & fax: +7 (095) 945-3317  
**Moscow** — Nekrasovskiy pos., Dmitrovskiy reg., 141700/ Tel. +7 (095) 577-8543, -8601, or -8775/ Fax: +7 (095) 446-4746  
**Murmansk** — 16, Frolova st. (mail: P.O. Box 5823)/ Tel. +7 (8152) 58-9284/ E-mail: upendra@mun.rosnec.ru  
**Nijny Novgorod** — 14b, Chernigovskaya st./ Tel. +7 (8312) 30-5197 or 25-2592/ E-mail: info@iskcon.nnov.ru  
**Novorossiysk** — 117, Shilleroyskaya st./ Tel. +7 (86134) 38-926 or 51-415  
**Novosibirsk** — 18/2, Kholodilynaya st., 630001/ Tel. +7 (3832) 46-2655 or -2666  
**Omsk** — 664099, 42 10th Severnaya st. (mail: P.O. Box 8741)/ Tel. +7 (3812) 24-5310 or 41-4051  
**Perm** — 10, Verhněkuryinskaya st., 614065/ Tel. +7 (3422) 33-5740 or 27-0681/ E-mail: ffi@pi.ccl.ru  
**Rostov-Na-Donu** — 84/1, Saryana st., 344025 (mail: P.O. Box 64, 344007)/ Tel. & fax: +7 (8632) 51-0456  
**Samara** — 122, Aeroportovskoye sh., Zubchinovka/ Tel. +7 (8462) 97-0318 or -0323  
**Simbirsk** — 10, Glinki st., 432002/ Tel. +7 (8422) 21-4016  
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**Ulan-Ude** — 670013, Prirechnaya str. 23/ Tel. +7 (3012) 30-795/ E-mail: abpchk@burnet.siberia.ru  
**Vladimir** — 60000, Nikolo-Galeyskaya st. 56/25/ Tel. +7 (0922) 32-6726/ E-mail: vladimir@pamho.net  
**Vladivostok** — 5-1, Rudneva st., 690087/ Tel. +7 (4232) 23-6685

## RESTAURANTS

- Ekaterinburg** — Sankirtana, 33 Bardina st./ Tel. +7 (3432) 41-2737  
**St. Petersburg** — Govinda's, 58, Angliyskiy pr., 190008/ Tel. +7 (812) 113-7896  
**Vladivostok** — Gopal's, 10/12, Oleynsky pr./ Tel. +7 (4232) 26-8943/ E-mail: vrajendra.kumar.pvs@pamho.net

## UKRAINE

- Dnepropetrovsk** — Kalininskiy spusk 39/ Tel. +73 (0562) 42-3631 or 45-4709/ E-mail: vibhuti@iskcon.dp.ua  
**Donetsk** — 22, Rubenska st., Makeyevka 339018/ Tel. +380 (0622) 94-9104 or -3140/ E-mail: premada@iskcon.donetsk.ua  
**Kharkov** — 43, Verhnegiyovskaya st., Holodnaya Gora, 310015/ Tel. +380 (0572) 20-2167 or 72-6869/ E-mail: kharkov@iskcon.kharkov.ua  
**Kiev** — Dmitrievskaya, 21-13/ Tel. +380 (044) 219-1041 or -1042/ Tel. & fax: +380 (044) 244-4934/ E-mail: kiev@pamho.net  
**Kiev** — 16, Zorany per., 254078/ Tel. +380 (044) 433-8312, or 434-7028 or -5533/ E-mail: kiev@pamho.net  
**Lvov** — 4, Aurora st., Bldg. No. 4, 290032/ Tel. +380 (0322) 33-3106 or 72-8756  
**Nikolaev** — 5-8, Sudostroitelny per., 327052/ Tel. +380 (0510) 35-1734/ E-mail: vandy@iskcon.aip.nikolaev.ua  
**Vinnica** — 5, Chkalov st., 28601/ Tel. +380 (0432) 32-3152/ E-mail: om@iskcon.vinnica.ua

## OTHER COUNTRIES

- Almaty, Kazakhstan** — 5, Kommunarov per., 480022/ Tel. +7 (327) 235-3830 or -3930/ E-mail: advaita@advaita.itpm.alma-ata.su  
**Baku, Azerbaijan** — 2, Zardobi per., Uzbekistan st., pos. 8th km. 370060/ Tel. +994 (12) 21-2376/ E-mail: baku@pamho.net  
**Bishkek, Kirgizstan** — 5, Omsky per., 720007/ Tel. +7 (3312) 24-2230 or 44-3776/ E-mail: ildar@nlpub.freenet.bishkek.su  
**Dushanbe, Tajikistan** — 38, Anzob st., 734001/ Tel. +7 (3772) 27-1920 or -3990  
**Kishinev, Moldova** — 13, A. Popovich st., 277022/ Tel. +373 (2) 55-8099 or 76-9254/ E-mail: kishinev@pamho.net  
**Minsk, Belarus** — 11, Pavlova st., 220053/ Tel. +375 (172) 13-0629/ E-mail: minsk@pamho.net  
**Sukhumi, Georgia** — st. Pr-t Mira d 274/ Tel. +995 (8122) 2-9954  
**Tashkent, Uzbekistan** — 54, Cheryvakova st., 700005/ Tel. +7 (3712) 93-0352 or 34-4612/ E-mail: root@krish.tashkent.su  
**Tbilisi, Georgia** — 16, Kacharava st., Avchalskoye sh., 380053/ Tel. +995 (32) 62-3326 or 98-5812/ E-mail: nandapriya.hks@pamho.net

## RESTAURANT

- Almaty, Kazakhstan** — 4, Zalomova st., 480037/ Tel. +7 (327) 235-1444

## 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@pamho.net  
**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: krishnas@inet.net.au  
**Sydney** — 180 Falcon St., North Sydney, NSW 2060 (mail: P.O. Box 459, Cammeray, NSW 2062)/ Tel. +61 (029) 9959-4558/ Fax: +61 (029) 9957-1893/ E-mail: sraduucp@sraddha.dialix.oz.au

## RURAL COMMUNITIES

- Bambra (New Nandagram)** — Oak Hill, Dean's Marsh Rd. VIC 3241/ Tel. +61 (052) 887383/ Fax: +61 (052) 887309  
**Millfield, NSW** — New Gokula Farm, Lewis Lane (off Mt. View Rd., 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

## 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@pamho.net  
**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@pamho.net  
**Sydney** — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 529b King St., Newtown, NSW 2042/ Tel. +61 (02) 9550-6524

## NEW ZEALAND, FIJI, AND PAPUA NEW GUINEA

- Christchurch, NZ** — 83 Bealey Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 25-190)/ Tel. +64 (03) 366-5174/ Fax: +64 (03) 366-1965/ E-mail: iskconchch@clear.net.nz  
**Labasa, Fiji** — Delailabasa (mail: P.O. Box 133)/ Tel. +679 812912/ E-mail: fiji@pamho.net  
**Lautoka, Fiji** — 5 Tavewa Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 125)/ Tel. +679 664112/ Fax: +679 663039/ E-mail: fiji@pamho.net  
**Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea** — Section 23, Lot 46, Gordonia St., Hohola (mail: P.O. Box 571, POM NCD)/ Tel. +675 259213  
**Rakiraki, Fiji** — Rewasa (mail: P.O. Box 204)/ Tel. +679 694243/ E-mail: fiji@pamho.net  
**Suva, Fiji** — Joyce Place, Off Pilling Rd., Nasinu 7½ miles (mail: P.O. Box 2183, Govt. Bldgs./ Tel. +679 393 599/ E-mail: vdas@govnet.gov.fj)  
**Wellington, NZ** — 105 Newlands Rd., Newlands (mail: P.O. Box 2753)/ Tel. +64 (04) 478-1414

## RURAL COMMUNITY

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

## RESTAURANTS

- Auckland, NZ** — Gopal's, Civic House (1st floor), 291 Queen St./ Tel. +64 (09) 303-4885  
**Christchurch, NZ** — Gopal's, 143 Worcester St./ Tel. +64 (03) 366-7035/ E-mail: iskconchch@ckar.net.nz  
**Labasa, Fiji** — Hare Krishna Restaurant, Naseakula Road/ Tel. +679 811364  
**Lautoka, Fiji** — Gopal's, Corner of Yasava St. and Naviti St./ Tel. +679 662990  
**Suva, Fiji** — Hare Krishna Vegetarian Restaurant, 18 Pratt St./ Tel. +679 314154/ E-mail: vdas@govnet.gov.fj  
**Suva, Fiji** — Hare Krishna Vegetarian Restaurant, Dolphins FNPF Place, Victoria Parade/ Tel. +679 314154/ E-mail: vdas@govnet.gov.fj  
**Suva, Fiji** — Hare Krishna Vegetarian Restaurant, Terry Walk, Cumming St./ Tel. +679 312295/ E-mail: vdas@govnet.gov.fj

## AFRICA

## GHANA

- Accra** — Samsam Rd., Off Accra-Nsawam Hwy., Medie, Accra North (mail: P.O. Box 11686)  
**Kumasi** — P.O. Box 101, U.S.T  
**Nkwakaw** — P.O. Box 69  
**Sunyani** — South Ridge Estates, P.O. Box 685  
**Takoradi** — New Amanful, P.O. Box 328  
**Tarkwa** — State Housing Estate, Cyanide

## RURAL COMMUNITY

- Eastern Region** — Hare Krishna Farm Community, P.O. Box 15, Old Akraide

## NIGERIA

- Abeokuta** — Ibadan Rd., Obanotoka (mail: P.O. Box 5177)  
**Benin City** — 108 Lagos Rd., Uselu/ Tel. +234 (052) 247900  
**Enugu** — 56, Destiny Layout, Old Abakaliki Rd., Near Enugu Airport, Emene (by Efemeluna Bus stop)  
**Ibadan** — 700 meters from Iwo Rd., Ibadan-Lagos Express Way (mail: UIPO Box 9996)/ E-mail: gbogega@ibadan.skannet.com  
**Jos** — Airforce Base, Abattoir Rd., by Nammua, Ginnrg Village (mail: P.O. Box 6557)  
**Kaduna** — Federal Housing Estate, Abuja Rd. (mail: P.O. Box 1121), Goningora Village  
**Lagos** — 12, Gani Williams Close, off Osolo Way, Ajao Estate 7/8 Bus stop, International Airport Rd. (mail: P.O. Box 8793, Marina)/ Tel. & fax +234 (01) 876169/ E-mail: adolphus@ripost.pinet.net  
**Port Harcourt** — Umuebulu 11, 2nd tarred road (mail: P.O. Box 4429), Trans Amadi  
**Warri** — Okwodiete Village, Kilo 8, Effurun/Orerokpe Rd. (mail: P.O. Box 1922)

## SOUTH AFRICA

- Cape Town** — 17 St. Andrews Rd., Rondebosch 7700/ Tel. +27 (021) 689-1529/ Fax: +27 (021) 686-8233/ E-mail: cape.town@pamho.net  
**Durban, South Africa** — 50 Bhaktivandana Swami Circle (mail: P.O. Box 56003), Chatsworth, 4030/ Tel. +27 (031) 403-3328/ Fax: +27 (031) 403-4429/ E-mail: iskcon.durban@pamho.net



# CENTERS AROUND THE WORLD

- ◆ **Johannesburg** — 7971 Capricorn St. (Entrance on Nirvana Dr.), Ext. 9, Lenasia (mail: P.O. Box 926, Lenasia, 1820) / Tel. +27 (011) 854-1975 or 852-3176 / Tel. & fax: +27 (011) 852-3176 / E-mail: iskonjh@iafrica.com
- Port Elizabeth** — 15 Whitehall Court, Western Road 6000 / Tel. & fax +27 (041) 534330
- Pretoria** — 1189 Church St., Hatfield 0083 (mail: P.O. Box 14077, Hatfield 0028) / Tel. & fax: +27 (12) 342-6216 / E-mail: iskoncpt@global.co.za

## OTHER COUNTRIES

- Abidjan, Cote D'Ivoire** — AICK-CI, 01 B.P. 8366
- Gaborone, Botswana** — P.O. Box 201003 / Tel. +267 307768 / Fax: +267 301988
- Kampala, Uganda** — Bombo Rd., near Makerere University (mail: P.O. Box 1647) / Fax: +256 (041) 251145
- Kisumu, Kenya** — P.O. Box 547 / Tel. +254 (035) 42546 / Fax: +254 (035) 43294 / E-mail: pundarika.gkg@pamho.net
- Marondera, Zimbabwe** — 6 Pine Street (mail: P.O. Box 339) / Tel. +263 (028) 887-7801
- Mombasa, Kenya** — Hare Krishna House, Sauti Ya Kenya and Kisumu Rds. (mail: P.O. Box 82224) / Tel. +254 (011) 312248
- Nairobi, Kenya** — Muhuroni Close, off West Nagara Rd. (mail: P.O. Box 28946) / Tel. +254 (02) 744365 / Fax: +254 (02) 740957
- Phoenix, Mauritius** — Hare Krishna Land, Pont Fer (mail: P.O. Box 108, Quartre Bornes) / Tel. +230 696-5804 / Fax: +230 686-8576 / E-mail: iskon.hkl@bow.intnet.mu
- Rose Hill, Mauritius** — 13 Gordon St. / Tel. +230 454-5275 / E-mail: iskon.hkl@intnet.mu

## RURAL COMMUNITY

- Mauritius (ISKCON Vedic Farm)** — Hare Krishna Rd., Vrindaban / Tel. +230 418-3955 / E-mail: iskon.hkl@intnet.mu
- Uganda** — 9 Dewington Rd. (mail: P.O. Box 1647), Kampala / Tel. +256 (041) 232302

## LATIN AMERICA

### BOLIVIA

- Cochabamba** — Av. Heroínas E-435 Apt. 3 (mail: P.O. Box 2070) / Tel. & fax: +591 (042) 54346 / E-mail: bbt@pino.cbb.entelnet.bo
- ◆ **La Paz** — Pasaje Jauregui, 2262 / Tel. +591 (02) 390458 / Tel. & fax: +591 (02) 392710 / E-mail: maturesh@bo.net
- ◆ **Santa Cruz** — Calle 27 de Mayo No. 99 esq. Justo Bazan / Tel. & fax: +591 (03) 345189 / E-mail: sistemas@mitai.nrs.boinet.bo

### ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS

- Cochabamba** — Restaurant Gopal, calle España N-250 (Galeria Olimpia) / Tel. +591 (042) 34082
- Cochabamba** — Restaurant Govinda, calle Mexico #E0303 / Tel. +591 (042) 22568
- Cochabamba** — Restaurant Tulasi, Av. Heroínas E-262
- La Paz** — Restaurant Imperial, Calle Sagarnaga No. 213
- Oruro** — Restaurant Govinda, Calle 6 de Octubre No. 6071
- Santa Cruz** — Snack Govinda, Calle Bolívar esq. Av. Argomosa (primer anillo) / Tel. +591 (03) 345189
- Sucre** — Restaurant Sat Sanga, Calle Tarapacá No. 161 / Tel. +591 (64) 22547

### RURAL COMMUNITY

- Bolivia** — (contact ISKCON Cochabamba)

### BRAZIL

- Belém, PA** — Av. Almirante Tamandari, 1012, Centro, CEP 66023 000 / Tel. +55 (091) 243-0558 / E-mail: krsnadas@libnet.com.br
- ◆ **Belo Horizonte, MG** — R. Ametista, 212, Prado, CEP 30410 420 / Tel. +55 (031) 332-8460 / E-mail: iskonmg@gold.com.br
- Campina Grande, PB** — R. Verancio Neiva, 136, Centro / E-mail: mnama@netwaybbs.com.br
- ◆ **Curitiba, PR** — Alameda Cabral, 670, Centro, CEP 80410 210 / Tel. +55 (041) 277-3176 / E-mail: nataraj@crtsol.com.br
- Florianópolis, SC** — R. Cesar Augusto de Souza, 319, Careanos, CEP 88047 440 / E-mail: iswara@matrix.com.br
- Fortaleza, CE** — R. José Lourenço, 2114, Aldeota, CEP 60115 228 / Tel. +55 (085) 264-1273 / E-mail: harece@brhs.com.br
- Manaus, AM** — Av. 7 de Setembro, 1599, Centro, CEP 69005 141 / Tel. +55 (092) 232-0202 / E-mail: iskonam@internext.com.br
- Natal, RN** — Praia de Serinhaem, 2254, Ponta Negra, CEP 55092 180
- Porto Alegre, RS** — R. Tomás Flores, 331, Bonifim, CEP 90035 201 / Tel. +55 (051) 233-1474 / E-mail: taptakan@zaz.com.br
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- Ribeirão Preto, SP** — R. Carlos Gomes, 2315, Campos Elásios, CEP 14085 400 / Tel. +55 (016) 628-1533
- Rio de Janeiro, RJ** — (contact ISKCON Teresopolis)
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## Home Where We Belong

THE OTHER DAY I CAUGHT myself feeling sad for a moment that I wouldn't be around for a future technological breakthrough I read about: personal jet-packs. Wouldn't they be great? Strap one on, push a button, and zoom between home and office in no time.

Then I thought, "Do I really want to stay around for *that*?"

When I explain the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness to people, I naturally tell them that the goal of life should be to return to our original home in the spiritual world. Sometimes I sense that the idea strikes people as odd. Their faces show an uneasiness at the thought of having to leave this world to go somewhere else. That other place sounds great, but how can I leave behind everything and everyone I know? That's just too big a price to pay. I have too much invested here.

Because we mistakenly identify ourselves with our bodies, we're attached to our present life. Most of us feel no emotional ties with our eternal home. To think we belong in some other world is difficult. Many of us can't even imagine living in a foreign country, what to speak of a seemingly foreign planet. Goloka Vṛndāvana? You might as well invite us to move to Mars.

Our reluctance to leave familiar surroundings for the spiritual world shows we're forgetting we're going to have to leave our present situations anyway. How long can I stay in this American body? I'll be kicked out of this body

and into a new one, whether I like it or not.

The Vedic literature guides us toward doing the intelligent thing: preparing for the inevitable. The sage Cāṇakya said that we'll lose everything at death, so we'd be wise to use what we now have for our permanent benefit.

Our most valuable possession is our human body, which lets us think about higher things. The *Vedas* tell us we've had bodies in millions of species before getting a human body. So we'd better make the best of it. Our human emotions may bind us to our temporary life here on earth, but we should rise above them and understand that everything we're searching for here—in the lives we've tried to build for ourselves—can be found only in our eternal home. No need for jet-packs there. In liberated spiritual bodies we can go anywhere in an instant.

We're travelers who have been away from home so long we've forgotten our real family and friends, especially our dearest friend, Lord Kṛṣṇa. What misfortune! But Śrīla Prabhupāda, a pure devotee in full consciousness of his relationship with Kṛṣṇa, has given us spiritual practices to awaken our memory of Kṛṣṇa and our eternal relationship with Him. When we wake up to the glory of that relationship, we'll be happy to leave this world of misery to return to the world of Kṛṣṇa's abundant love. As the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* says, we'll feel like a traveler who has returned home after a troubled journey.—*Nāgarāja Dāsa*

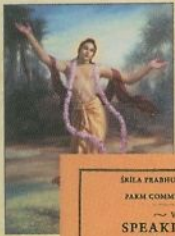


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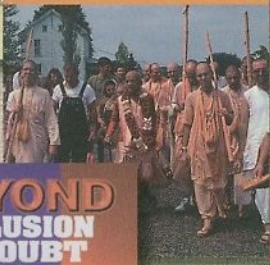
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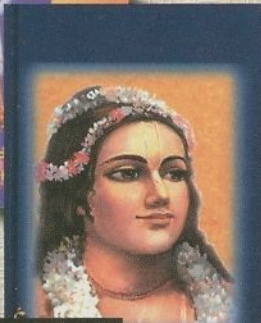
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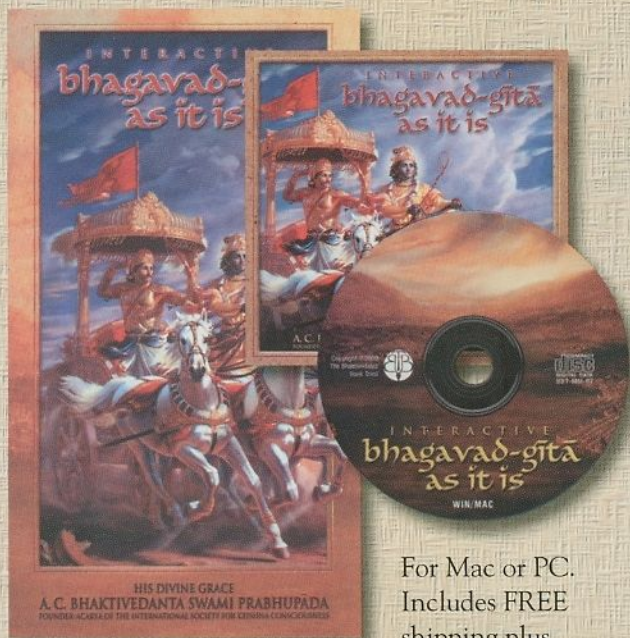
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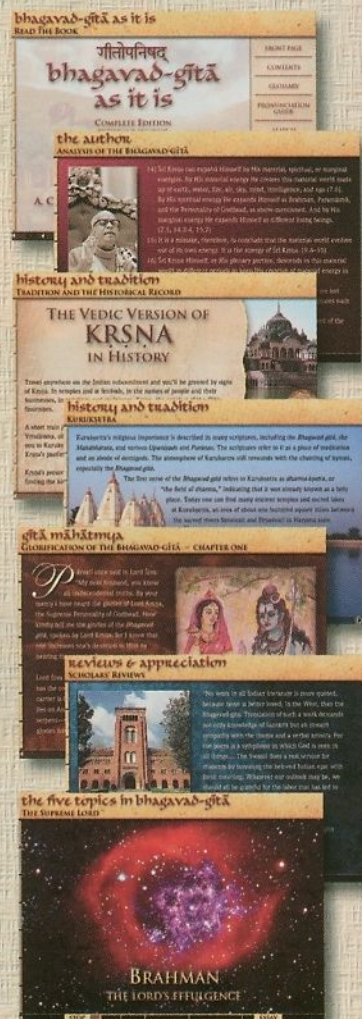
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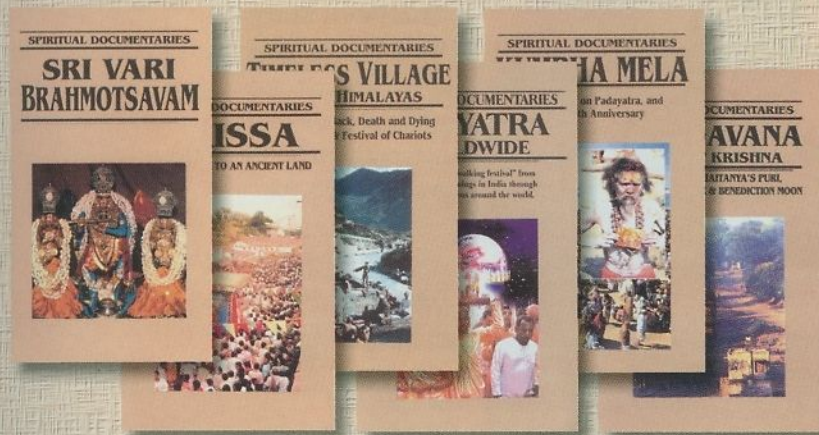
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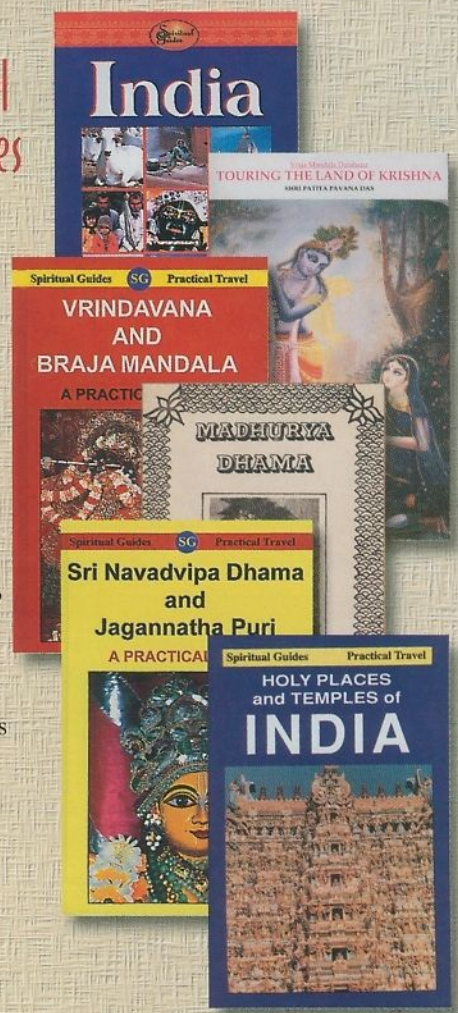
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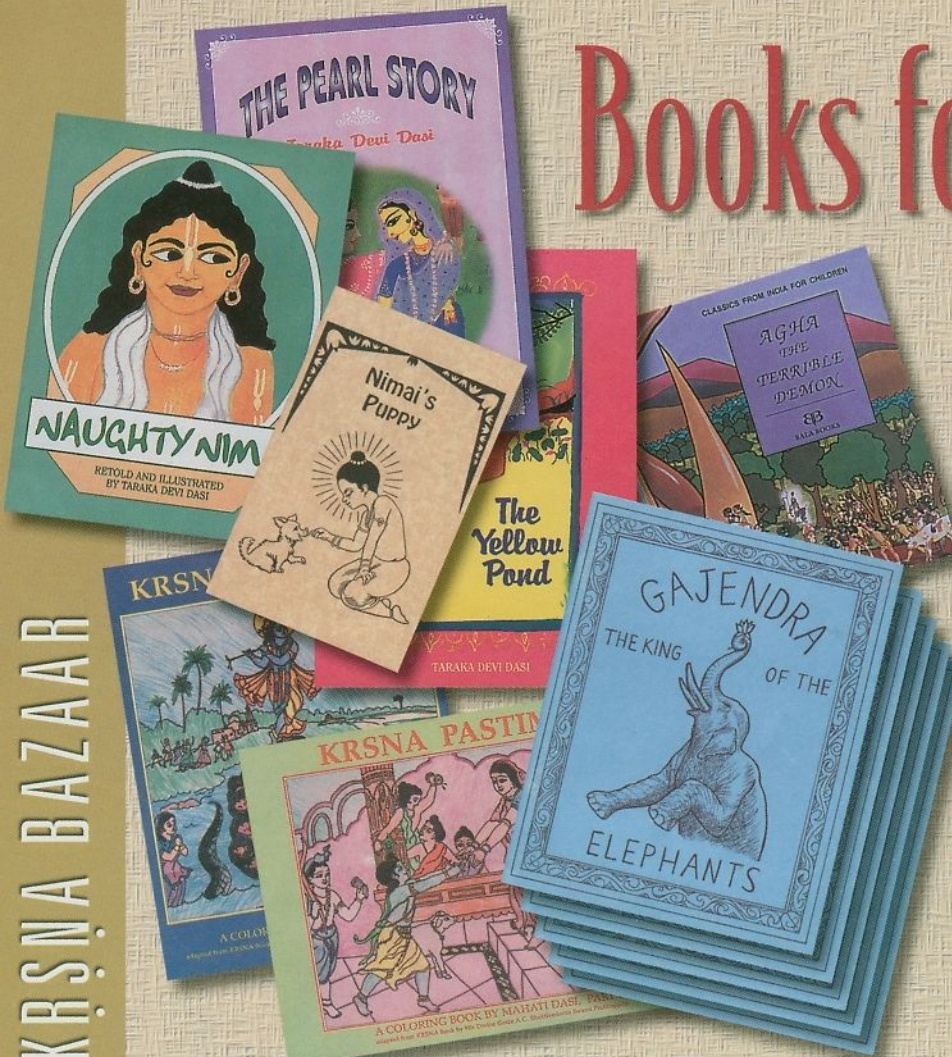
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# Vedic Thoughts

Constant thought of the Lord is the antiseptic method for keeping oneself free from the infectious contamination of the material qualities.

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta  
Swami Prabhupāda  
*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.1.32, Purport

O best of kings, if you desire to acquire the extraordinary knowledge by which the supreme goal is realized, then chant the name of Lord Govinda [Kṛṣṇa] with love and devotion.

*Garuḍa Purāṇa*  
Quoted in Śrīla Bhaktivīnoda Ṭhākura's  
*Bhajana Rahasya*

One who worships the Supreme Lord and His holy name with undivided faith, knowing Them to be identical, is considered an elevated, first-class devotee, even if he does not understand the intricacies of his own spiritual identity.

Śrīla Jagadānanda Paṇḍita  
*Prema Vivarta*, Chapter 12

Unintelligent men, who do not know Me perfectly, think that I, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, was impersonal before and have now assumed this personality. Due to their small knowledge, they do not know My higher nature, which is imperishable and supreme.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa  
*Bhagavad-gītā* 7.24

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is the reservoir of all beauty. All beautiful things emanate from Him, and His personal form is so attractive that it steals the eyes away from all other objects, which then seem devoid of beauty by comparison to Him. When Lord Kṛṣṇa was on the earth, He attracted the eyes of all people.

Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī  
*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.1.6

That head is the loftiest which is white with dust from bowing down to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Those eyes are the most beautiful which darkness has abandoned after they have seen Lord Hari. That intelligence is spotless—like the white glow of the moon or a conch shell—which concentrates on Lord Mādhava. And that tongue rains down nectar which constantly glorifies Lord Nārāyaṇa.

King Kulaśekhara  
*Mukunda-mālā-stotra* 19

The *Bhāgavata* [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*] does not allow its followers to ask anything from God except eternal love towards Him. The kingdom of the world, the beauties of the local heavens, and the sovereignty over the material world are never the subjects of Vaiṣṇava prayer.

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August 12: Chicago Rathayātrā

August 12–13: Vancouver Rathayātrā

August 22: Vancouver Janmāṣṭamī (Śrī Kṛṣṇa's  
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August 23: Vancouver Vyāsa Pūjā (Śrīla Prabhupāda's  
Appearance Day)

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NOTE: Some of these dates have not yet been confirmed. For more information, get in touch with the Hare Kṛṣṇa center in the city where the festival will be held, or write to Festival of India, P. O. Box 108, Sandy Ridge, NC 27046, USA.