

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



# BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement • Sept / Oct 2002 • \$4.00 / £2.50

# Radhadesh

## A Spiritual Oasis

### ALSO:

The Missing Technology  
Śrīla Prabhupāda at M.I.T.

A Siberian Gypsy Welcome  
Hearts Warm Up to Kṛṣṇa

The All-Powerful  
Names of God  
Lord Caitanya's Teachings

Druze Sheikhs:  
At Home in India  
Back to Their Spiritual Roots

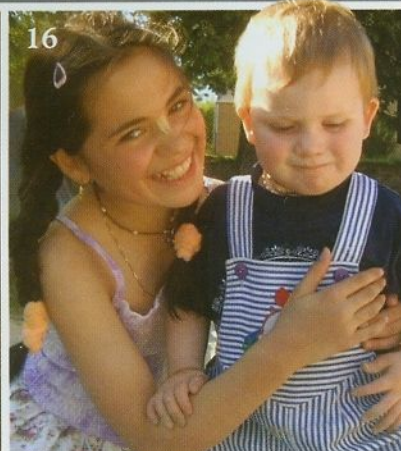
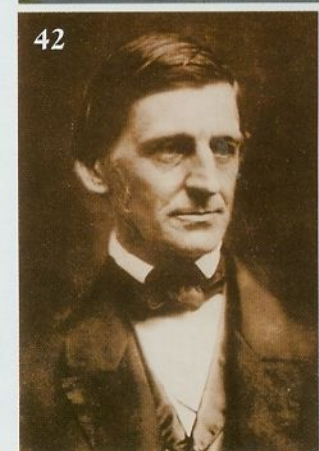
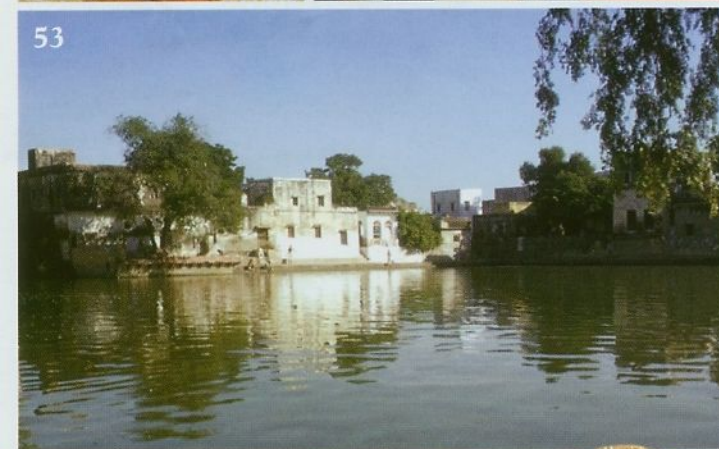
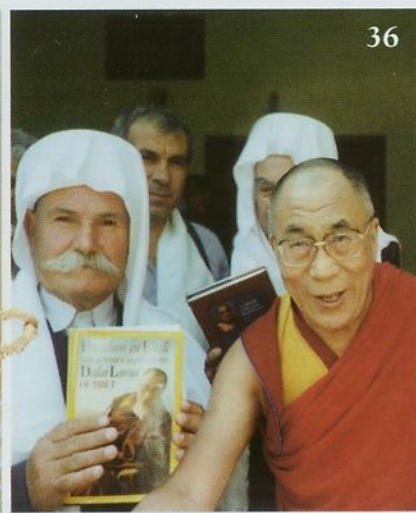
The Appearance  
Of Radha Kunda  
Lord Kṛṣṇa's Favorite Lake

When the West Loved India  
Scholars Found Love  
At First Sight

Assisting you in your quest for the Absolute Truth

# Back to Godh

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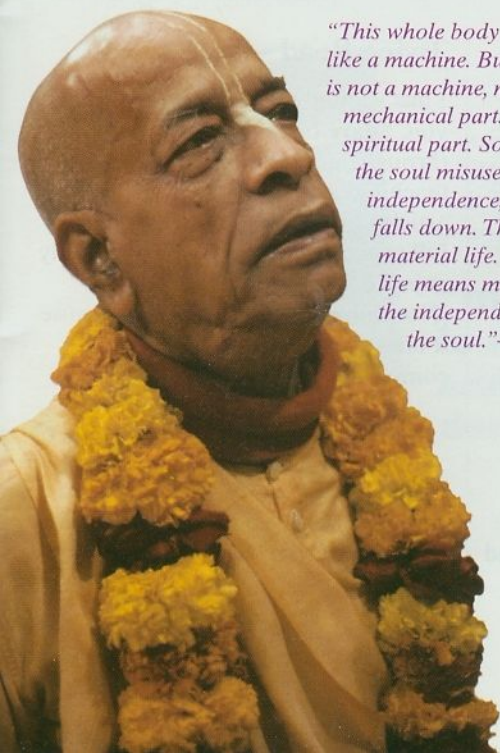
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**COVER** This former castle in the Ardennes Forest of Belgium now serves as a Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa temple and the center of a thriving Hare Kṛṣṇa community. Please see the article beginning on page 16.

*“This whole body is just like a machine. But the soul is not a machine, not a mechanical part. It is the spiritual part. So when the soul misuses his independence, then he falls down. That is material life. Material life means misusing the independence of the soul.”—p. 58*



## WELCOME



**THIS ISSUE’S** cover story takes us to the Ardennes Forest of Belgium, site of major World War II battles. In an area replete with war memorials, we find a beautiful old castle at the

center of a flourishing Kṛṣṇa conscious community: Radhadesh. The castle-turned-temple has become a popular tourist attraction, giving residents the chance to show others life with Kṛṣṇa in the center.

Also in this issue, we follow up on an article we ran five years ago about the Druze, an Israeli Arab sect with spiritual roots in India. Dhīra Govinda Dāsa, who wrote the first article, now describes the joyful trip a group of Druze leaders made to India last spring (a trip that included a meeting of the Druze and the Dalai Lama at a Hare Kṛṣṇa temple).

In our excerpt from Devāmṛta Swami’s *Searching for Vedic India*, you’ll hear unabashed praise for the *Vedas* from European thinkers who first encountered them. The book is a comprehensive look at evidence supporting the authenticity and superiority of Vedic culture and philosophy.

Satyarāja Dāsa continues his enlightening series on Lord Caitanya’s “Eight Teachings.” And we celebrate an auspicious event on our Vaiṣṇava calendar with Amala Bhakta Dāsa’s “The Appearance of Radha Kunda.”

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*

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## Grateful Student

I found Gopīparāṇadhana's article, "Serving the Words of His Predecessors" [July/August] fascinating! I've been told countless times that Śrīlā Prabhupāda based his purports on the commentaries of previous *ācāryas*, and of course I've seen him quote from them directly throughout his purports. I had no idea, though, that practically every sentence and concept is a derivative of the realizations of these great seers.

I personally owe a great debt of gratitude to Gopīparāṇadhana Prabhu. It's because of his volunteering to teach Sanskrit to our little rag-tag group of *gurukula* kids here in Hillsborough, North Carolina, that my passion for that beautiful language thrives to this day. Eleven years after my final lesson with him, I'm trying to communicate that same fascination with this ancient language to the students of Padma Academy.

Please publish more of Gopī-  
parāṇadhana Prabhu's writings.  
Campakalatā Devī Dāsī  
Hillsborough, North Carolina

## Karṇa Coverage

The article "Karṇa's Choice," by Ūrmilā Devī Dāsī, in the March/April issue was very good. The *Mahābhārata* is a very complex and long story, but this article summarized it very accurately, and from Karṇa's viewpoint. Karṇa spent his life bewildered as to his identity. He felt victimized by fate—a tragic story! Excellently covered.

I also particularly liked the article "Destiny and Endeavor," by Bhayāhārī Dāsa, in the January/February issue. The interaction of fate, effort, and time was very well explained from a personal, everyday practical life perspective.

Please keep up the good work.  
These articles are food for the soul.  
Dipak Lakhani  
Nottingham, England

## The Good and the Bad

I'd like to point out some of the things you are doing right and some of the things you are doing wrong.

Everyone out here likes the way you list all the Festivals of India for North America every year. I like seeing the list of back issues, especially when you show different covers of back issues. I bought twenty-five back issues this year, and I'm definitely going to buy more. I like seeing BTG crammed full of photos and paintings, along with the names of the artists and photographers.

As for the things I don't like about BTG—there are none!

Yajña Hotra Dāsa  
Ashcroft, B.C., Canada

## Enlightening and Satisfying

Thank you for your sublime magazine. It is so uplifting! BTG is definitely a big help in the self-realization process. It is enlightening and satisfying for the soul. Every two months I eagerly wait for our BTG issue to arrive, and it seems so long in between. My consciousness has a tendency to drop, but when I read the articles, I instantly feel better and hopeful. I am very grateful. Thank you for your excellent work.

Nadine Bouchard  
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

## Twice Read

I just wanted to write and say thank you. I have been receiving BTG through another person, and I love the teachings and the stories. I read the articles twice sometimes to grasp the full concept of the lesson. I especially enjoyed "Vaiṣṇava Compassion," [November/December 2001] because it taught me the true meaning of compassion.

Ricardo Ontiveros  
Crescent City, California

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# CORRECTION

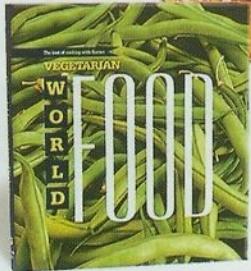
I would like to apologize for two historical inaccuracies in my article on Tamāl Krishna Goswami in the July/August issue: (1) I say that he began the preaching movement in the Orient, and (2) I say that he began the Rādhā-Dāmodara Traveling Saṅkīrtana Party. Both these statements are misleading. I would like to set the record straight: (1) By the time Goswami Mahārāja arrived in the Orient, the movement

there had already begun; (2) Viṣṇujana Swami had already started the Rādhā-Dāmodara Traveling Saṅkīrtana Party, and only somewhat later did TKG join the party. While TKG certainly developed these projects, transforming them into something even more sublime than they already were, he was not their originator. And so, in the interest of historical accuracy, let me go on record as making these corrections.

Satyarāja Dāsa



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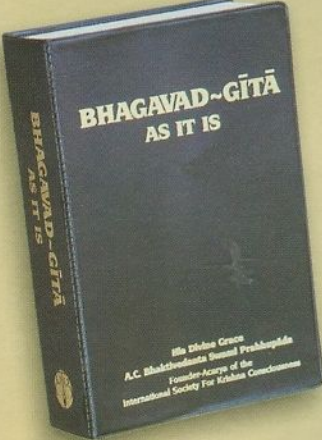
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**"In this world there is nothing so sublime and pure as transcendental knowledge."**

—*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.38

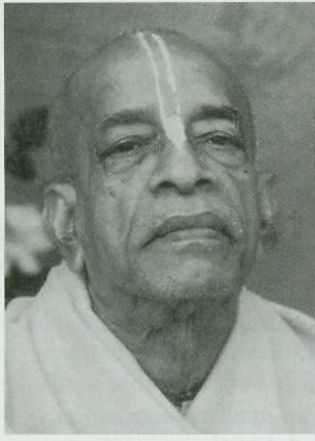
FOUNDER'S LECTURE

Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Boston—May 5, 1968

# THE MISSING TECHNOLOGY

*The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement  
teaches a science missing from  
the classrooms of even the world's  
best universities.*





In this lecture, Śrīla Prabhupāda tells the story of the boatman and the student to show that without the essential knowledge, we're lost.

## by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda

Founder-Ācārya of the International Society  
for Krishna Consciousness

*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya  
jñānāñjana-śalākayā  
cakṣur unmlitaṁ yena  
tasmāi śrī-gurave namaḥ*

“I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, who with the torchlight of knowledge has opened my eyes, which were blinded by the darkness of ignorance.”

**T**HIS PRAYER IS OFFERING respectful obeisances to the spiritual master. Why? Because the spiritual master is the person who opens our eyes, complicated in ignorance, with the torch of transcendental knowledge. *Timirāndhasya*. Every one of us is born ignorant, and we require specific education and training for seeing things as they are.

Today I am very glad to meet you. You are all students of technology. This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is another technology. In the modern state of civilization there are different departments of knowledge. There is a department for teaching medical science, there is a department for teaching engineering—so many other departments of knowledge. Unfortunately, there is no department for distributing knowledge of the science of the soul. But that is the most important thing, because the soul is the mainstay, the background of all our movements.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* [3.42] there is a nice verse:

*indriyāṇi parāṇy āhur  
indriyebhyaḥ paraṁ manaḥ  
manasas tu parā buddhir  
yo buddheḥ paratas tu saḥ*

The idea is that in the present consciousness I am thinking that I am the body, although actually I am not the body. This is ignorance. “Body” means the senses. When I am talking, I am using my tongue for vibration. So these bodily activities are sensual activities.

If you go deep into the matter, you'll find that the senses can act only when the mind is sound. A crazy man, or a madman, cannot use his senses properly. Therefore the technology of the mind is a higher science. First of all there is the technology of the senses, and then a higher technology of the mind, which is known as psychology and studies thinking, feeling, willing. Psychologists are trying to understand how these are working.

Above the mind, or mental science, is the science of intelligence. And above the science of intelligence, the background is the soul. Unfortunately, we have technology for the bodily senses, we have technology for psychology, but we have no technology for intelligence or the science of the soul. The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is the technology of the science of soul.

### THE BOATMAN AND THE STUDENT

There is a nice story. You'll appreciate it. In India, especially in Bengal, there are many rivers. One student of technology was going home, and he was on the boat.

The student asked the boatman, “Do you know what the stars are?”

The boatman said, “Sir, I'm an ordinary boatman. What do I know about these stars?”

# Modern technology has no remedy for birth, death, old age, and disease. These are the real problems.



“Oh. Then fifty percent of your life is wasted, useless.”

Then he asked, “Do you know about these trees? Do you know any science of botany?”

The boatman said, “Sir, I’m an ordinary laborer. What do I know about botany?”

“Oh. Then seventy-five percent of your life is useless.”

In this way the student of technology was asking the boatman, “Do you know this? Do you know that?” And the boatman was replying, “I’m an ordinary man. What do I know of all these things?”

Then all of a sudden there was a black cloud, and there was a storm, and the river began to well, and the boatman said, “My dear sir, do you know how to swim?”

“Oh,” the student said, “no.”

“Then your knowledge is a hundred percent spoiled. Now you have to go down into the river. Your life is finished.”

They dropped into the river, and the technology student, because he did not know how to swim, was grabbed by the waves in the storm.

The idea is that we are making progress, certainly, in technology, in economics, in so many other departments of human necessities, but *Bhagavad-gītā* points out the real problem of this world, or the real problem of our life. It is said in the *Gītā* [13.9], *janma-mṛtyu-jarā-vyādhi-duḥkha-doṣānudarśanam*. If you are intelligent enough, then you should see that the real problem is birth, death, old age, and disease. *Janma* means “birth,” *mṛtyu* means “death,” *jarā* means “old age,” and *vyādhi* means “disease.”

Our actual material problem is this: *janma-mṛtyu-jarā-vyādhi*. We have forgotten the precarious condition we were in while living in the abdomen of

our mother. We can know from the descriptions of medical science how the child is packed up there and how much suffering is there. The worms bite the child, and he cannot express himself; he suffers. The mother eats something, and the pungent taste gives him suffering. These descriptions are there in the *śāstras*, the scriptures and authentic Vedic literature, telling how the child suffers within the abdomen of mother.

These are the sufferings of birth. A child has to remain in that condition at least for ten [lunar] months. Now just imagine if you are put into that air-packed condition for three minutes now—you will immediately die. But actually, we had that experience of remaining in the mother’s womb in that air-packed condition for ten months. The suffering was there, but the child was incapable of expressing himself or his consciousness was not so elevated. He could not cry, but the suffering was there.

Similarly, at the time of death there is suffering. And there is suffering in old age. Because I am an old man, I have so many bodily complaints. The anatomical or physiological condition is deteriorating. The stomach is not digesting food as nicely as when I was young. So the sufferings are there.

And there is the suffering of disease. Who wants disease?

## SOLUTION TO THE REAL PROBLEMS

Modern technology has no remedy for birth, death, old age, and disease. These are the real problems. But because these problems cannot be solved by modern scientific advancement of knowledge, they have practically been set aside.

But there is a solution. That solu-

tion is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* [8.15]:

*mām upetya punar janma  
duḥkhālayam aśāsvatam  
nāpnuvanti mahātmāṇāḥ  
saṁsiddhiṁ paramām gatāḥ*

“My dear Arjuna, if somebody comes to Me . . .” (“Me” means the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa.) “If somebody comes to Me, then he hasn’t got to take birth again in this miserable material condition.”

*Duḥkhālayam* means “the place of miseries.” We are thinking that we have made a paradise, but actually the place is miserable, because the threefold miseries are there. Either in America or in India or in any other country or any other planet, the material miseries are of three kinds: *ādhyātmika*, *ādhibhautika*, and *ādhidaiṅkika*.

*Ādhyātmika* means miseries pertaining to the body and the mind. Sometimes we are feeling headaches; sometimes we are feeling some other pains. For anything pertaining to the body and mind there is some pain. These pains are called *ādhyātmika*.

Similarly, there are pains inflicted by other living entities. They are called *ādhibhautika*.

And there are pains offered by nature. All of a sudden there is an earthquake, or all of a sudden there is famine or something else we have no control over.

These three kinds of miseries are always there. But under the spell of illusion we are thinking we are happy. The material energy is so illusory that however abominable a condition a living entity may be in, he thinks he is happy.

You take any animal. Just take the hog—that life is a most filthy life. Of course, you have no experience of see-



ing hogs here in the city. In the past, there are many hogs in the city, and they live in filthy places. They eat stool and live a most abominable life. But if you were to ask a hog, “You are living in such an abominable condition. Let me do something good for you,” he’d refuse to accept. If you give him some nice preparation—as we have got in India, *halavā*—he’ll not accept it. He will accept stool, because his body is meant for that purpose and he will not like any palatable food. He will like that stool. This is the spell of *māyā*, illusion.

## THE RIGHT QUESTION

Kṛṣṇa consciousness teaches that if we are actually educated, then we must question, “Why am I suffering?” This is called *brahma-jijñāsā*. In the *Vedānta-sūtra* the first aphorism is *athāto brahma jijñāsā*: We should inquire about our existence as soul, not as body or as mind, because we are neither body nor mind. *Atha ataḥ* means that this is the time—this human form of life, with developed consciousness and greater intelligence than the animals—when one should inquire about his spiritual existence. That is real technology.

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* [5.5.5] says, *parābhavas tāvad abodha-jāto yāvan na jijñāsata ātma-tattvam*. As long as one does not inquire about his spiritual existence, he is defeated in his real mission of life. Every one of us is born ignorant because we do not know our real identity. Generally, we accept that “I am this body,” but actually we are not the body.

This can be understood very easily. Suppose you have been seeing a friend all along. All of a sudden he dies, and you say, “My friend is gone.” Well, your friend is lying there with all the body—hands, legs, everything. He’s lying there. Why do you say that your friend is gone? Because you have never seen your friend. You have seen only his bodily structure, that’s all.

Similarly, at the present moment humanitarian work is going on, but we do not know the basic principle of humanitarian work. The *Bhāgavatam* [10.84.13] answers this: *yasyātma-buddhiḥ kuṇape tri-dhātuke sva-dhīḥ kalatrādiṣu bhauma-ijya-dhīḥ... sa eva*

*go-kharaḥ*. If a person thinks, “I am this body, my kinsmen will protect me, and the land where the body has grown is worshipable,” then he is considered to be like an animal.

These instructions are there. Unfortunately, we have no time or desire to understand actually what I am, why I am suffering, what is this world, what is my relationship with this world, what is God, what is my relationship with God. These questions are very important, and there is technology to understand them. And the *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Vedānta-sūtra*—all these literatures are there. If we look to these literatures, we’ll find the solution of the problems of life. But we are not interested. That is the difficulty. We are thinking we are happy, we have no problem, although there are so many problems and we are not happy.

That is called *māyā*. *Māyā* means what is not. *Mā* means “not.” *Yā* means “this.” We are thinking we are happy, but actually we are not happy. And even if we are happy, how long are we happy? Take, for example, you Americans, the richest nation of the world. Your material comforts and standard of living are greater than other countries’. But just try to think how long you can remain as Americans. Say, for fifty years or a hundred years at most.

We do not know what is going to happen in our next life, because we do not believe in the next life. But actually there is a next life.

We don’t take care for our next life and irresponsibly waste our valuable human form of life like ordinary animals. Ordinary animals demand something to eat, they want to sleep, they want to defend, and they want to mate. So similarly, if a human being is also busy with the four principles of bodily demands, namely eating, sleeping, mating, and defending, then, according to Vedic literature, he is not a human being. *Dharmaṇa hīna paśubhiḥ samānāḥ*. If the human being does not understand his real spiritual identity and is simply busy with the four demands of bodily necessities, then *paśubhiḥ samānāḥ*—he’s equal to lower animals, cats and dogs.

*Bhagavad-gītā* gives you the clue. It is not very difficult to understand

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

this science. The *Bhagavad-gītā* gives you the information of the spirit soul very simply. The *Bhagavad-gītā* [2.13] says,

*dehino 'smin yathā dehe  
kaumāraṁ yauvanaṁ jarā  
tathā dehāntara-prāptir  
dhīras tatra na muhyati*

When you were a child you were within this body—not exactly this body, but another body, which was so small. Now where is that body? That body is gone. You have another body. *Dehinaḥ* means the soul, the spirit soul, who is within this body. He is changing bodies from moment to moment. It is a fact, a medical fact, that you are changing your body every moment. The last change is called death. And then we have to accept another body. But we do not know what sort of body we are going to accept. That technology is wanting in modern civilization.

There are 8,400,000 different bodies, and after leaving this body you may enter any of such bodies. After leaving

this body, you can become an American or you can become an Indian or you can become Chinaman. Or you can become a god in the moon planet or some other planet. Or you can become a dog, you can become hog, you can become a serpent—anything. That is under the control of material nature. That is not under your control.

But if you take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, it will be under your control. How is it possible? The *Bhagavad-gītā* [9.25] answers:

*yānti deva-vratā devān  
pitṛn yānti pitṛ-vratāḥ  
bhūtāni yānti bhūtejā  
yānti mad-yājino 'pi mām*

“Those who worship the demigods will take birth among the demigods; those who worship the ancestors will go to the ancestors; those who worship ghosts and spirits will take birth among such beings; and those who worship Me will live with Me.”

There are innumerable planets. The ultimate, highest planet is called Brah-

maloka. The advantage of going to Brahmaloaka is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* [8.17]: *sahasra-yuga-paryantam ahar yad brahmaṇo viduḥ*. You can live there for millions and millions of years. But still, there is death and there is birth and there is old age and there is disease. But if somebody is transferred to the planet called Kṛṣṇaloka, Goloka Vṛndāvana, or Vaikuṅṭha, then he hasn't got to come back to this temporary existence.

This information is there, and it is very scientific. It is not dogmatic. If you accept it with reason and argument and with human consciousness, the solutions are there.

## NOT BOGUS PROPAGANDA

The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is not a new movement. This movement has been current at least since five hundred years ago. Lord Caitanya started this movement in the fifteenth century. This movement is current everywhere in India, but in your country, of course, it is new. But our request is that you kindly take this movement a little seriously. We do not ask you to stop your technological advance. You do it. There is a nice proverb in Bengal that says that a woman who is busy in household work also takes care to dress herself nicely. Similarly, you may be busy with all kinds of technology. That is not forbidden. But at the same time, try to understand this technology, the science of the soul. That is there. It is not bogus propaganda. It is factual. It is science.

As science is not bogus propaganda, this Kṛṣṇa consciousness is also not bogus propaganda. As science means two plus two equals four, Kṛṣṇa consciousness means mitigating all the problems of life. And the process is very easy. Lord Caitanya recommends that for self-realization in this age, one must simply chant the names of God. He says that in this age, our life is very short, we are not very enlightened in spiritual matters, we are very lazy, and we are unfortunate. Under these conditions people are recommended simply to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. *Harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam*.

(please turn to page 57)

# COMING UP!

*You'll find these stories and more in the next issue.*



## KṚṢṆA CONSCIOUSNESS IN MALAYSIA

How Śrīla Prabhupāda sparked a revival

## LIFTING ZULU SPIRITS

*Prasādam* and the holy names in Zulu homelands

## SEPARATION FROM KṚṢṆA

A poetic rendition of Arjuna's lament

## THE CHALLENGE OF RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE

Does religion cause war?

## BECOMING THE LORD'S SERVANT

The seventh process of *bhakti-yoga*

# 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 Kurukshetra**—an epic battle for rule of the world, fought five thousand years ago.

**Bhagavad-gītā**—the sacred book in which Lord Kṛṣṇa gives the essence of knowledge to His friend and disciple Arjuna.

**Bhakti**—devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

**Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura**—the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. 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.

**Kīrtana**—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.

**Modes of nature**—the three qualities (goodness, passion, and ignorance) that hold sway over all action in the material world.

**Nityānanda**—the incarnation of Lord Balarāma who appeared with Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

**Prasādam**—vegetarian food that has been prepared for the Lord and offered to Him with devotion (literally "mercy").

**Purāṇas**—Vedic histories.

**Rādhārāṇī**—Lord Kṛṣṇa's consort and pleasure potency.

**Rathayātrā**—"chariot festival": a festival in which the form of Kṛṣṇa is borne in procession on a large canopy-topped chariot or float, especially the festival originating in Puri, India, for Jagannātha (Lord Kṛṣṇa, "the Lord of the universe").

**Sannyāsa**—the renounced life of a man who relinquishes home to dedicate himself fully to the Supreme.

**Śrī**—an honorific meaning "opulent" (similarly: Śrīla, Śrīmad, Śrīmān, Śrīmatī).

**Śrīla Prabhupāda**—His Divine Grace A. C. 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.

# A SIBERIAN GYPSY WELCOME

*A traveling preacher warms some hearts  
after a cool reception in a cold house  
in frozen, mid-winter Siberia.*

by Indradyumna Swami

Drawings by Dīna Bhandu Dāsa

ON DECEMBER 11 last year, we awoke early to prepare for our journey to Krasnoyarsk, 1,000 km farther east in Siberia. Because our train was canceled, Uttamaśloka Dāsa suggested we drive 350 km north to Novosibirsk and then catch a train to Krasnoyarsk.

I objected.

"The road through the forest to Novosibirsk is unsafe, and if our car breaks down we'll be in real trouble. It's minus 45° Celsius [-49° F] outside!"

But there was no alternative, and by noon we were driving slowly north on the icy road to Novosibirsk.

Two hours into our journey, our devotee driver began falling asleep and I made him pull over. Switching seats with him, I drove the car most of the rest of the way. We arrived safely in Novosibirsk five hours later, just in time to catch our train to Krasnoyarsk. As

we settled in for the fifteen-hour journey through the Siberian countryside, I breathed easy. I prefer trains to cars while traveling in these remote areas.

Not long after leaving Novosibirsk we were passing through dense forest regions, blanketed in thick snowdrifts. Although rich in gold, oil, iron ore, natural gas, Siberia to this day remains mostly undeveloped because of its remote location and harsh climate. The northern area, in particular, with its treeless marshy plains perpetually frozen to great depths, is inaccessible to humans. Most of the rivers here are frozen solid six to nine months of the year. The only souls brave enough to venture beyond the cities are hunters searching for wolves, bears, reindeer, antelopes, and, in the Amur River region near China, leopards and tigers.

Perhaps another reason the region is slow to develop is the stigma at-

tached to it. In the 1930s and '40s the Soviets used it as a place to exile criminals and political dissidents. Siberian prison camps absorbed tens of millions of victims into a forced labor system that mainly worked the salt mines. Many perished. But I have always found that the more extreme regions of the world are better for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness. People are not in illusion about the temporary and miserable nature of this material world and are, therefore, more inclined to hear our philosophy.

## FLOWER HOUR

When we arrived in Krasnoyarsk we were met at the station by my disciple Guru Vrata Dāsa, who is the temple president, and a number of devotees. Because of its isolated location, Krasnoyarsk receives only one or two visiting *sannyāsīs* a year, so the devotees were very happy to see us. That evening, they drove me to a hall program where, once again, I found a gathering of more than five hundred enthusiastic congregation members. Among them I spotted a group of ten gypsy men I had met last year when visiting Krasnoyarsk. When they saw me, they folded their hands in *praṇāma* and smiled.

I turned to Guru Vrata and asked if we would be having a program for the gypsies while I was in Krasnoyarsk, something we had discussed on my previous visit.

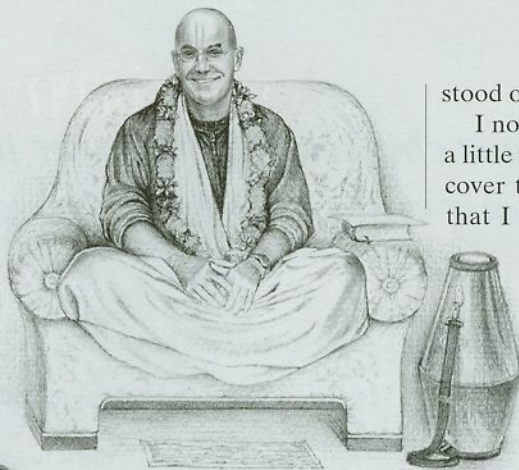
"Yes," He replied, "they've been waiting one year for you."

The program that night was especially nice. Guru Vrata had informed me that many of the congregation were well educated, being teachers, doctors, lawyers, and businessmen. So I carefully developed my theme of the glories of the holy name, accentuating it with verses and pastimes, and spoke for over an hour.

After the lecture, every member of the audience came forward in file and offered me a flower or a small donation. I was a little embarrassed by the generous response of so many learned people, and even while receiving their kind offerings I was eager to have *kīrtana* with them as a gesture of my grati-

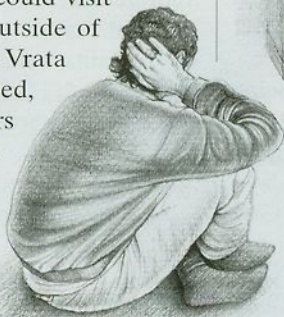
tude. I had to wait almost an hour before everyone had come forward, but then we had a *kīrtana* that had everyone (even the finely dressed ladies and gentlemen) chanting and dancing in ecstasy.

The next morning, Guru Vrata came to my apartment and informed me that the leaders of the gypsy community had agreed that I could visit their village just outside of Krasnoyarsk. Guru Vrata himself was surprised, because no outsiders had ever been invited to the gypsy town. Gypsies are generally fiercely independent

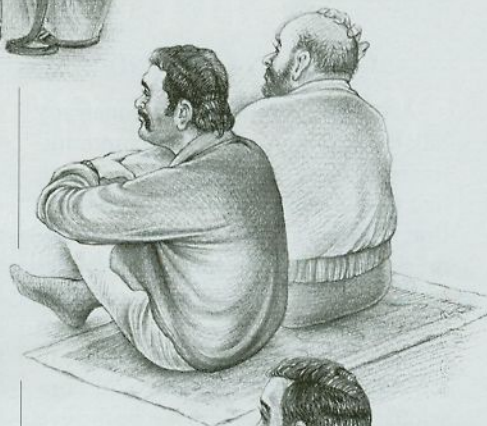


stood on one side of the room.

I noticed that the gypsy men were a little nervous, and I was soon to discover the reason. They all motioned that I was to go upstairs to a large room where we would have our meeting. I walked up the stairs and into the room, where I found the nine elders of the community. They



**“The boy’s questions had taken the conversation to another dimension, not challenging and threatening but sincere and searching. I could see that the elders were impressed with him and, by Kṛṣṇa’s grace, the philosophy I was presenting.”**



It was arranged that we would meet in the house of one of the gypsy men who is practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness. No women were allowed, because gypsy tradition has it that women are not included in public functions involving outsiders. So a group of devotee men and I headed out of town in the temple van, and after an hour and a half came to a village consisting mainly of old wooden houses. Gypsy children were playing in the snow, but when they saw our van they all ran away to the safety of their homes and peered out the windows at us.

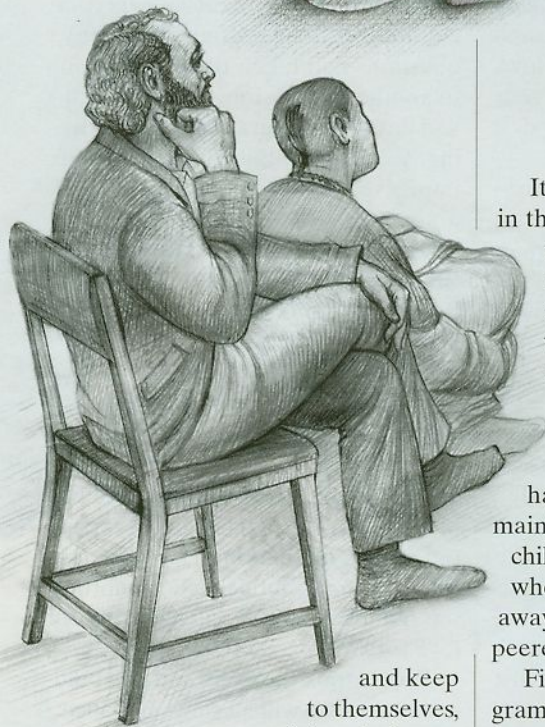
Finding the house where the program was to be held, we got out of our van and walked to the door through the thick snowdrifts. I had no idea what to expect.

When we knocked on the door, a gypsy devotee opened it and greeted us with, “*Haribol!*” As we walked in, I was amazed at the devotional atmosphere in the home. Everything was spotlessly clean, and nicely framed pictures of Kṛṣṇa and Śrīla Prabhupāda were on practically every wall. A large bookcase in the living room contained only Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books, and a nice altar with photographs of the disciple succession and Pañca-tattva

had come to meet me, one of leaders of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

The atmosphere was tense. As I entered I smiled and greeted them, with absolutely no response. Rather, they stared at me in disbelief, having never seen a devotee in robes before. A few of them even scowled as they looked me up and down. All were dressed in dark clothes, and because of the chill in the old wooden house, some were still wearing their large fur coats. I noted that several of them had scars on their heads and faces.

As I sat down on a big chair provided for me, the gypsy devotees and the temple devotees sat in front of me. When one of the gypsy devotees gave



and keep to themselves, retaining their customs and traditions in an age when many ethnic groups are blending into society. But the ten men I had met last year have been practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness for more than four years and are regularly chanting sixteen rounds, following the regulative principles, and visiting the temple. Last year, when I asked if I could visit their village they replied that the elders of their community would not accept it, but they promised to work on them. It appeared that the elders gave their consent only at the last moment.

# *The leader challenged, “Do our people have to give up our culture to practice your religion?”*

• • •

me a big flower garland, I just smiled nervously at the nine elders, but again got only cold stares.

## **COMMON GROUND**

After a few moments, I began my talk by stating that our two communities were closely related, because both had their origins in India. That I knew that gypsies hailed from India impressed the elders, especially the biggest man among them, who appeared to be their leader. After I had spoken for some time about the similarities in our cultures (we are both God-conscious communities and we both love to sing and dance), the leader suddenly stood up and, while pointing at the gypsy men who were practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness, challenged me loudly, “Do our people have to give up our culture to practice your religion?”

“No,” I calmly replied, “it’s not necessary. In the beginning, one simply has to add the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa—the names of God—to one’s life. You don’t have to give up anything. By chanting, one naturally gives up all bad habits.”

“Gypsies have bad habits?” he retorted, and at that very moment began coughing heavily, unable to control himself.

Praying to Kṛṣṇa that my guess was right, I said, “Yes, smoking cigarettes is a nasty habit.”

At that, everyone started laughing. Even the leader accepted that I had defeated him on that one, and he gave me a small (very small) smile in recognition.

Then one of the elders, who was holding a badly injured hand (I learned later that it was a gunshot wound), challenged, “And our children?”

That’s all he said, but the inference was clear: “Are we interested in turning the gypsy children into Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees?”

I thought for a moment, carefully choosing my words, knowing that the future of the gypsy devotees lay in what I said.

“What is the harm if a child is being taught to love God?” I replied. “Love of God is natural and the most important thing a child can learn. Nowadays, children are losing the sense of God consciousness and developing so many negative traits. If we encourage your children to love God through singing His names, dancing in happiness, and eating pure food offered to Him in love, we are actually doing a service to your community. Gypsies believe in God. It is a part of your tradition.”

All eyes were on the elder as everyone waited for him to respond. He sat there for a few moments, contemplating what I had said and looking at the five or six gypsy children sitting on the floor.

## **A CHILD LEADS**

Suddenly, to everyone’s surprise, one of the children, a boy about ten years old, looked up at me and said, “God is very great. How can we, who are so small, understand Him?”

I was stunned by his intelligent and thoughtful question, as was everyone.

Looking at the boy, I replied, “Just as you learn an important subject matter from a teacher, you also learn about God from a teacher.”

The boy said, “Are you such a teacher? Can you teach us about God?”

Putting aside humility for the need of the hour, I replied slowly, “Yes, by the mercy of my spiritual master, I am.”

“Then tell me what the soul is made of,” he said, “and tell me what happens to the soul when we die. Then tell me what God is like.”

The room became silent. I looked at the gypsy elders and saw them staring at me intently.

I said, “The soul is a spiritual per-

son with a spiritual form. God is the Supreme Person, and His form is also spiritual. As His parts and parcels, as His servants, we all have a loving relationship with Him. At the present moment, we have forgotten that relationship, because we think we are these material bodies and that the goal of life is material enjoyment.”

I spoke pure Kṛṣṇa conscious philosophy for about forty-five minutes. I watched in amazement as everyone, children and adults, listened. The boy’s questions had taken the conversation to another dimension, not challenging and threatening but sincere and searching. I could see that the elders were impressed with him and, by Kṛṣṇa’s grace, the philosophy I was presenting.

At the end of my talk, the leader of the gypsies himself began asking deeper questions. He’d heard about karma.

“What is karma, and why is it bad to kill animals?” he asked. And finally, “How does one become free from sinful reactions?”

The last question was the one I had been waiting for, and I began to explain the glories of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa—how it destroys sinful reactions, uproots our material desires, and awakens our love for God.

Then I took the drum and said boldly, “So now we will all sing and dance.”

Everyone’s eyes lit up as their faces broke out in smiles.

I thought, “Now that we’ve broken the ice, here’s our chance.”

## **UNITED IN THE HOLY NAME**

I started chanting slowly, beginning with Śrīla Prabhupāda’s *praṇāmantra*. I was concentrating and focusing on His Divine Grace, praying that the chanting of the holy names would enter the hearts of the gypsy elders and

(please turn to page 35)

# “When the Soul Misuses His Independence”

*This conversation between His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and Professor John Mize took place in Los Angeles on June 23, 1975.*

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** In *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa advises Arjuna, “The body and the soul are different.”

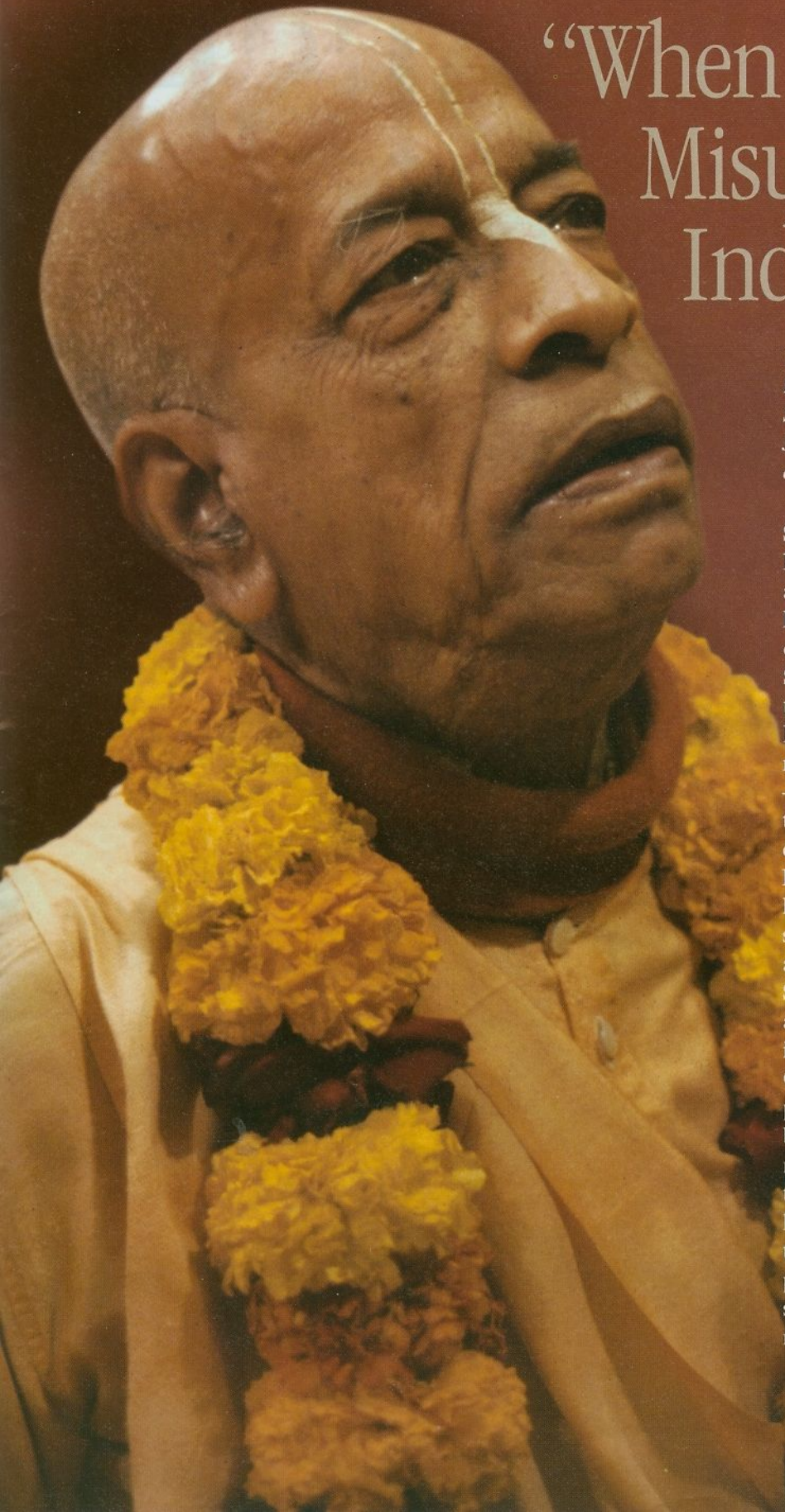
**Dr. Mize:** The body and soul are different. Yes. So it seems to me, too.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That’s nice. That is the beginning of spiritual education. People do not understand. I have seen many big, big European professors—they do not have any clear conception that the body and the soul are different.

**Dr. Mize:** It still disturbs me, of course: how the body can influence the mind so much—the mind not being the soul, apparently.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Actually, the soul is above not only the mind but also the intelligence. Above the intelligence. Our gross senses provide our present perception, which is direct. And beyond these gross senses, there is the mind. And beyond the mind, there is the intelligence. And beyond the intelligence, there is the soul. So coming to this platform of the soul requires the process of meditation—to make our sense activities calm and quiet and our mind settled, so that we can then rise

*(please turn to page 57)*



SPIRITUAL PLACES

THE JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE HISTORY OF IRELAND

# RADHADESH

## A Spiritual Oasis





*In the Belgian Ardennes a Kṛṣṇa conscious community thrives around a medieval-style castle.*

by Mahāprabhu Dāsa



*Families make up about half of the eighty devotees who live in and around Radhadesh's castle-turned-temple.*

**I**N A SMALL LOCALE called Petite Somme, where the Ardennes forests and hills transform the otherwise flat landscape of Belgium and Holland, lies a thriving Kṛṣṇa conscious community called Radhadesh. Standing prominently at the center of the community is the Château de Petite Somme, a well-known castle with a rich history going back to the thirteenth century. The present building, in neogothic style, dates to the nineteenth century. In World War II, American soldiers used the castle as a hospital during the famous Battle of the Bulge. It stood empty and deteriorating from 1975 until 1980, when ISKCON bought the property, which consisted of the castle, several other buildings, and forty-eight hectares (118 acres) of fields and woods. Devotees at once began renovation work that has gone on for over two decades.

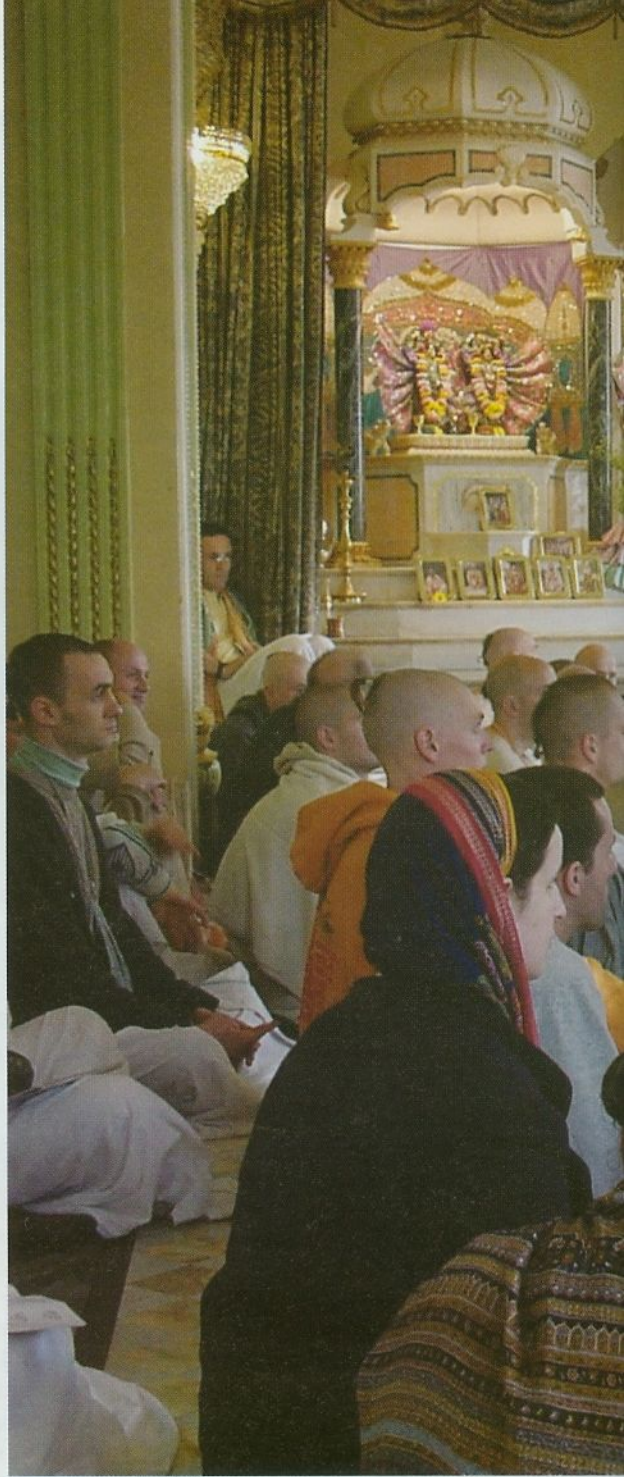
The castle lies a little over a hundred kilometers from Brussels, the capital of Belgium and the European Union. Nature is generous in this part of Belgium—practically no industries, no major cities, and more land per person than anywhere else in Benelux. Thick forests, abundant hills, and clear rivers make the area a popular destination for visitors, who come by the

thousands every weekend and holiday from all over Belgium and Holland. History is everywhere: medieval towns and castles, stone barns and houses, and monuments to fallen soldiers from the fierce battles of WW II.

Radhadesh itself has become well known throughout Belgium and Holland, and about 45,000 visitors come every year to visit the castle and community, attracted by the beauty of the place and by the life of its special inhabitants. Eighty devotees live in and around the castle; about half are married.

Most of the devotees and visitors are from Holland and Flanders, the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium, where ISKCON has a good public image and good relations with governmental authorities. But Radhadesh is located in the French part of Belgium (called Wallonia), where the public image suffers because of the influence of France. In France, ISKCON and hundreds of other religious minorities are labeled as dangerous cults. The media, the Belgian government, and anti-cult organizations work hard to create a negative public image for any group they consider a cult. The devotees in Radhadesh are struggling to change that perception by reaching out

*Śaunaka R̥ṣi Dāsa (right), head of ISKCON Communications Europe, lectures on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam during a visit to Radhadesh. Below: Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gopinātha, the presiding deities. Below, right: A sampling of the dozens of dishes offered to the deities during a major festival.*



to politicians, academics, the media, the local people, and established religious organizations.

### **CONTINUAL RENOVATIONS**

In 1980, as soon as the castle was bought, the devotees began major renovation work. After several months, devotees and deities moved from Amsterdam to Radhadesh. Hṛdaya Caitanya Dāsa, temple president in

Radhadesh since 1986, is originally from Belgium but decided to join ISKCON in Amsterdam. After only one night in the temple, he moved with many devotees to Radhadesh, where he has worked on almost every renovation and construction project.

The highlight of the rich makeover history is the new temple within the castle. It took a year to build, with beautiful marble from Carrarra, Italy, and a unique marble altar designed by Italian furniture designer and devotee

Matsya Avatāra Dāsa. The temple is heated from beneath the floor, making it pleasant during the long winter months.

Slowly but steadily every building in Radhadesh has been renovated, transformed, and expanded under the expert guidance and hands-on involvement of Hṛdaya Caitanya Dāsa, who has built Radhadesh into one of the most beautiful ISKCON projects in the world. He has also inspired the devotees by his personal example of steady-



ness in his spiritual practices and eagerness to perform heaps of devotional service.

The last major project was the building of a large boutique, a new veranda-style cafeteria-restaurant, a conference room for over one hundred people, and a six-story guest house, in a style similar to the castle's. The guest house will include at least twenty guest rooms with attached bathrooms, as well as workshops, storage rooms, and apartments for Radhadesh residents.



## OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Devotees at Radhadesh have several programs for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness, including festivals, book distribution, street chanting, Food for Life, and seminars for the congregation. Yet the unique form of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness that Radhadesh is famous for is the guided tours of the castle. These include an audio-visual presentation; a visit to the temple, with an introductory talk on Kṛṣṇa consciousness; a long climb up the tower for a breathtaking view of the property and the region; a visit to the Prabhupāda room, with its unique stained-glass window depicting the ten incarnations of Kṛṣṇa; and a visit to the

book room, where visitors can buy Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. Before leaving the castle, guests can see a live Bharat Natyam dance performance.

The tour guide then escorts the group from the castle to another building, where they visit the bakery, the boutique, and the cafeteria-restaurant. Many groups choose to take a vegetarian meal in Radhadesh as part of their trip.

Organized tours of the castle began around 1987 and have been developing ever since. In 1989 Rāmānanda Rāya Dāsa signed a contract with a bus company to visit Radhadesh with over a hundred buses each year. Once in 1989, seventeen buses arrived in one day. Now at least two hundred buses

visit Radhadesh each year. Rāmānanda Rāya Dāsa has dedicated his energy to making this program a success.

Five or so devotees welcome and guide the visitors. The tours are a main source of income for the community.

## FOCUS ON EDUCATION

Radhadesh has developed several educational programs. The first, the Bhakta Program, helps prospective devotees from city temples like Antwerp and Amsterdam become familiar with Kṛṣṇa conscious philosophy and practices while living in a peaceful environment. A day school, started in the late eighties, is open to the com-

*A devotee offers a lamp (left) during the daily worship of Śrīla Prabhupāda. Devotees take advantage of the rich soil to grow flowers for the deity worship (below). As in all ISKCON centers, beautiful fresh-flower garlands are prepared for the deities every day (bottom).*



munity's children. Radhadesh has become a regular setting for seminars, such as the Teacher Training Course, the Communications Course, and the Bhakti-śāstrī Course. Most important, the ISKCON Convention has taken place in Radhadesh for over ten years. Around 130 devotees come together from all over the world for five days of learning in an atmosphere of surcharged spiritual association.

This year the Bhaktivedanta College, run by Bhaktivedanta Library Services (BLS), will launch a nine-month ministerial course for devotees from Europe. The course will provide systematic training in many fields of knowledge related to the Kṛṣṇa con-



scious way of life. Viṣṇu Mūrti Dāsa and Yadunandana Dāsa will direct the project, which will start on September 9 with a pilot course.

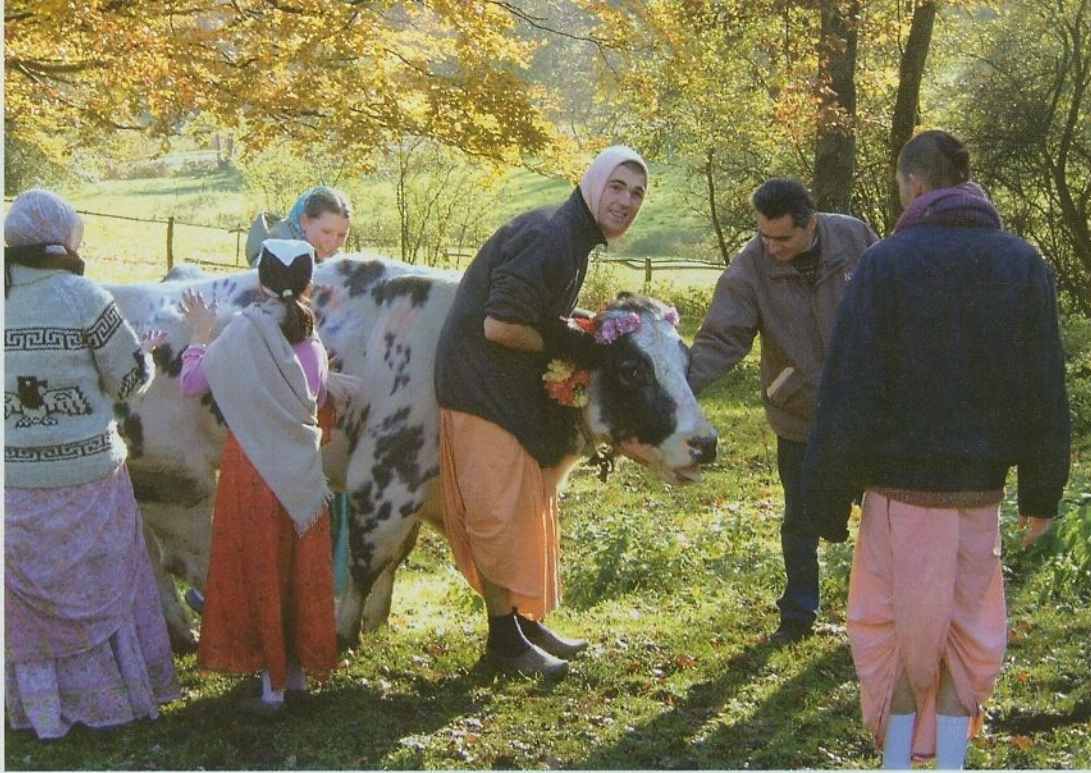
To support Radhadesh's emphasis on education, the BLS also manages a new library, opened on June 30. Still in development, it will offer a wide selection of Vedic texts, Vaiṣṇava literature, and books on subjects such as philosophy, comparative religion, and new religious movements. The library will include audio, video, and other media. It is open to students of Bhaktivedanta College, members of the Radhadesh community, and visitors.

### A HIGH STANDARD OF WORSHIP

Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gopīnātha, the presiding deities in Radhadesh, were in-

*Many of Radhadesh's 45,000 yearly guests include in their tour a visit to the gift shop (above) and the glass-enclosed restaurant (right).*





A decorated cow (left) gets special attention during the annual Govardhana Pūjā festival. Below, Radhadesh tours include a visit to the book room, where guests can buy Śrīla Prabhupāda's books to round out their trip.



stalled in February 1977 in Amsterdam and moved to Radhadesh three years later. Śrīla Prabhupāda himself installed Radhadesh's deities of Jagannātha, Baladeva, and Subhadrā in July 1972 in Amsterdam. The installation was filmed by Dutch television and is described in *Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta*, by Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami. Śrī Śrī Gaura Nitāi were installed in Amsterdam in 1976.

Deity worship in Radhadesh is of a high standard: six opulent offerings a day and seven new outfits a year. As

the only deities of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Jagannātha in the Benelux, they are very dear to all the devotees serving in those countries. In the Benelux, Lord Jagannātha sometimes performs his Rathayātrā pastime four times in one year.

Nikuñja Vāsinī Devī Dāsī has been taking care of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gopīnātha since just after Their installation. She and her husband, Prema Siddhi Dāsa, oversee the deity worship.

This year, on Janmāṣṭamī and Vyāsa Pūjā (August 31 and September 1),



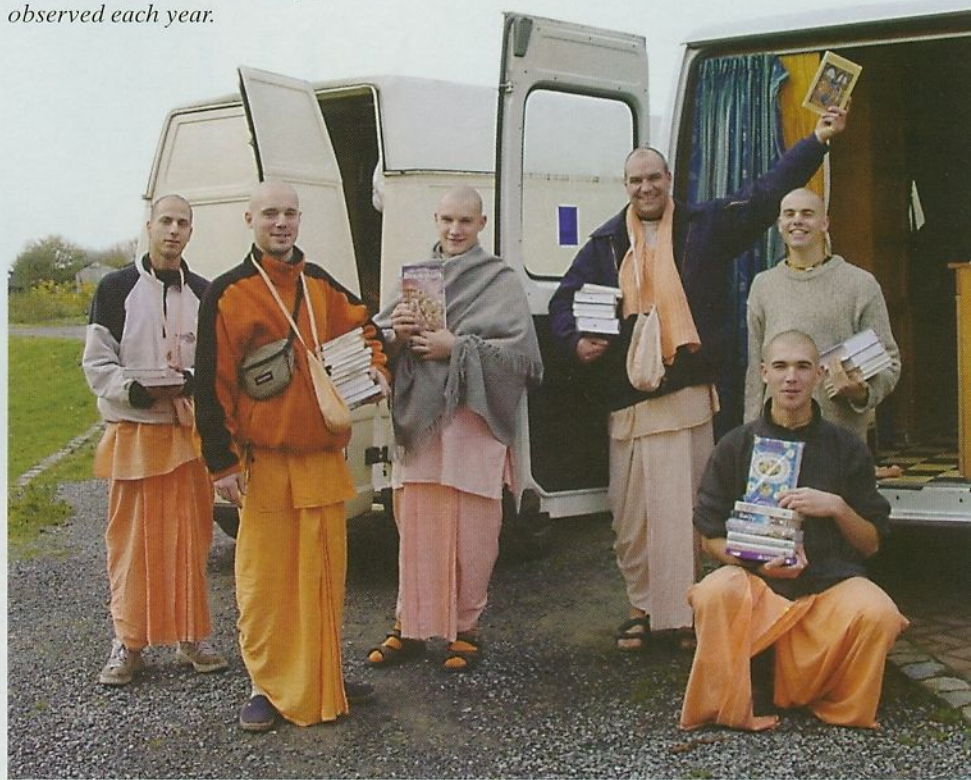
*Radhadesh in winter (above). At right, devotees reenact a scene from the Mahābhārata.*







*A team of brahmachārīs (below) prepares to set out from Radhadesh to distribute books in Benelux. At bottom, resident Bharata Natyam dancers perform for visitors and add color and grace to the many festivals observed each year.*



Radhadesh is celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the installation of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gopīnātha and the thirtieth anniversary of the installation of Śrī Śrī Jagannātha, Baladeva, and Subhadrā. Many devotees who helped set up ISKCON in the Benelux will be on hand to tell their stories and realizations from those early days. ☸

*Mahāprabhu Dāsa, originally from Uruguay, joined ISKCON in Paris in 1982 after having studied political science at Syracuse University in New York. He is the vice president of Radhadesh. He and his wife, Aśokā Devī Dāsī, have an eight-month-old daughter, Suśilā.*



#### ONLINE EXTRAS

- Photo gallery ([krishna.com/365](http://krishna.com/365))
- Link to the Radhadesh web site ([krishna.com/365](http://krishna.com/365))



## TEACHINGS 2 &amp; 3

# THE ALL-POWERFUL NAMES OF GOD

*When we chant in full spiritual humility,  
we'll find God in full in the sound of His holy names.*

by Satyarāja Dāsa

*This is the third of a five-part series on Lord Caitanya's Śikṣāṣṭaka, or "Eight Teachings." The series has been adapted from lectures presented at the New York City Public Library to a group of students from Columbia University.*

*nāmnām akāri bahudhā nija-sarva-śaktiḥ  
tatrārpitā niyamitaḥ smaraṇe na kālaḥ  
etādṛśī tava kṛpā bhagavan mamāpi  
durdaivam idṛśam ihājani nānurāgaḥ*

**O** MY LORD, YOUR holy name alone can render all benediction to living beings, and thus You have hundreds and millions of names, like Kṛṣṇa and Govinda. In these transcendental names You have invested all Your transcendental energies, and there are no hard and fast rules for chanting these names. O my Lord, out of kindness You enable us to easily approach You by chanting Your holy names, but I am so unfortunate that I have no attraction for them."

This verse begins with an affirmation of the fact that everything can be gotten from the holy name,

since the holy name is herein revealed to be nondifferent from the Lord's own nature. Lord Caitanya expresses this by saying *nija-sarva-śaktiḥ*: all of the Lord's potencies exist in His holy name. In other words, the Lord and His name are nondifferent. That is the nature of absolute phenomena.

We, on the other hand, are accustomed to relative phenomena, and so we cannot conceive of an object and its name being nondifferent. In the relative world a name is just a symbol, an abstract representation. If I think of water, for example, the thought alone cannot quench my thirst. The substance water and the word *water* are two completely different phenomena. I can chant "water, water, water" until I'm blue in the face, but my thirst will not go away. That is the nature of the relative world.

The Absolute realm is just the opposite. There, a name and the thing it represents are identical. If I chant "Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa," I'm actually in contact with Him.

This principle was explained in complex theological terminology by the disciples of Lord Caitanya known as the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

*Lord Caitanya composed His Śikṣāṣṭaka when He resided in Jagannatha Puri, on the Bay of Bengal. While bathing daily in the ocean, He often exhibited symptoms of the highest love for Kṛṣṇa.*

They called it *nāma-nāminor-advaita*, which means, “the nondifference between the named one and the name.” Jiva Gosvāmī went so far as to say, *bhāgavat svarūpam eva nāma*, or “the name is the essence of the Lord.” In fact, Caitanya Mahāprabhu taught that the holy name is a type of avatar, *varṇarūpenāvātāro ’yam*: “the Lord in the form of syllables.”

If you study the Judaeo-Christian tradition, you will find that this principle was understood in ancient times. For example, there is great instruction in “Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name.” Not only is this encouragement for chanting God’s name, but the word *hallowed* didn’t always mean what it means today. Today it means “sacred.” We say that the name of God is sacred. But originally the word *hallowed* meant “whole.” The name of God was considered complete. So “hallowed be Thy name” meant that God’s name was complete in itself, or full of God’s own potency, as Caitanya Mahāprabhu says.

This is true of all genuinely spiritual sound vibrations. It is a nonsectarian principle. Therefore, Caitanya Mahā-

prabhu says *nāmnām akāri bahudhā*: there are various kinds of names for the Lord. They are not restricted to Sanskrit or Bengali. Any name that describes God is totally spiritual and is thus nondifferent from His very essence. The names *Kṛṣṇa* and *Govinda* are particularly special names, referring to God’s highest and original feature in the divine kingdom, in the spiritual world. For this reason, Prabhupāda, the translator of this verse, has used these two names as prime examples. But all genuine names of God are accepted. Therefore it is said that He has hundreds and millions of names.

All religious traditions teach this principle and encourage adherents to chant God’s names, even if, in practice, the instruction is hardly followed. In fact, all religions emphasize the chanting process as the prime means for developing God consciousness. For example, King David, of the Bible, preached: “From the rising of the sun until its setting, the Lord’s name is to be praised.” (Psalms 113:3) Saint Paul said, “Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” (Romans 10:13) In this way, the potency of

the name is endorsed even in the Western religious traditions.

## NO RESTRICTIONS

Not only can it be said that there are diverse names through which one can approach the Lord, but there are no hard and fast rules for chanting these names. No *niyamitah*, or “restrictions,” and no special time, *kālāḥ*, as Caitanya Mahāprabhu says. Anytime. Anywhere. You see, certain Vedic mantras, and certain prayers within other religious traditions as well, have definite rules about chanting them, according to time, place, and circumstance. But the name of God is special and is to be chanted constantly, as Caitanya Mahāprabhu again confirms in the next verse: *kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ*, which means that one should always chant the Lord’s name. This command is also in the Bible: “Pray ceaselessly.” (Thessalonians 5:17). Not vain repetition—the Bible warns us about that. But pure, sincere chanting, or prayerful chanting. Calling out to God with love and devotion. There are no rules and regulations to restrict that. That is beyond legislation. It is from the heart. Therefore, taking the position of the perfect devotee, teaching us how to pray in the proper mood, Caitanya Mahāprabhu thanks the Lord for showing us this mercy in relation to the holy name.

But just because the Lord is merciful enough to give us an unlimited variety of names, and to excuse us for offenses, informing us that there are no hard and fast rules for this chanting, we should not become exploitative. We should not abuse His kindness by chanting in an insincere way. No. We should be respectful, grateful, and humble—always anxious to become more and more sincere or adept in our chanting. We should always remember that despite the Lord’s kindness, we are still so fallen that we continue to have no taste for the name. Lord Caitanya, taking our position, teaches us exactly what our perceptions should be about our own relationship with the holy name. He says, *durdaivam iḍṛśam ihājani nānurāgaḥ*: “It is my great misfortune that I was born without any attraction or attachment for the holy

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## The Prabhupada Rasamrita Trust

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name.” Any questions?

Question: If chanting is an inherent feature of the soul—if it is natural to call out to God in love and devotion—why do we have no attraction? Why, as Lord Caitanya says, do we not have any natural attachment to the chanting?

Satyarāja Dāsa: That’s a very good question. Caitanya Mahāprabhu answered it in His first verse: We’ve accumulated dust—conditioning—on the mirror of the consciousness. So we have no taste, or rather, we’ve developed perverted tastes, so to speak. We’ve developed attraction and attachment for things of this world, and we’ve lost, or let us say, we’ve covered our natural attraction and attachment for things of the spirit, at least to the degree that we are conditioned.

You see, externally it may appear as though our taste for chanting develops gradually, that it is an acquired taste. But actually it is our original taste, the taste of the soul. It is our current personality that is actually acquired—it is unnatural.

In this connection, the etymology of the word “personality” is interesting. It’s traced back to the root *persona*, which originally referred to the mask that an actor wore during a dramatic performance. It wasn’t his real identity. It was a part he played. Similarly we’ve developed materialistic personalities, colored by the three modes of material nature: goodness, passion, and ignorance. And when we finally purify ourselves through certain reliable prescribed austerities, chief of which is the chanting of the holy name, we begin to remember our original personality. We begin to remember who we were before we adopted our external persona. That’s called self-realization.

## FOUR OBSTACLES

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, a great saint in Lord Caitanya’s line, has commented on this verse, directly answering your question. He says that there are basically four obstacles to our attraction and attachment to the holy name. First, he points to *svarūpa-bhrama*, or one’s “mistaken identity.” As soon as we are born into this world,

we identify with the body and mind, totally oblivious of our real identity as the soul within. Still, an honest person will admit, “I don’t know where I came from. I don’t know where I’m going. Since this is true, I’ve got a deep suspicion that I don’t even really know who I am now.” [Laughter.] If a person can admit this much, that’s a good beginning for spiritual life.

Next, Bhaktivinoda mentions *asad-tyāna*, or “evil propensities.” Because of our conditioning, we become selfish. Where there is self, there is self-interest. That’s natural. But the more covered we get, the more our sense of self-interest becomes exaggerated, and we develop an exploitative mentality, especially if we are conditioned by a preponderance of passion and ignorance. These are the evil propensities that tend to make our heart very hard, and we then have no patience for chanting the holy name. We develop an aversion for supplicating some distant “Supreme Being,” and we lose whatever spiritual taste we may have had. Or the taste becomes covered, as I have mentioned earlier.

*Hydaya-durbalya*, or “weakness of heart,” the third obstacle mentioned by Bhaktivinoda, is closely related to the principle of evil propensities. It takes strength to overcome one’s conditioning, which is deep-rooted. And one must purify one’s consciousness before one can even really understand why it is ultimately in one’s own self-interest to become free from the misconceptions associated with mundane existence.

The fourth and final obstacle mentioned by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura in this connection is *aparādha*, or “offenses.” I’ve made a list of the ten major offenses, and these can be circulated so you can get some idea.

You can see that it is a great science. And, in answer to your question, the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas have an elaborate theology about why the conditioned living entity may feel he has no taste for the holy name.

Now on to the third verse:

*tyñād api sunīcena  
taror iva sahiṣṇunā  
amānīnā mānadena  
kīrtaniyāḥ sadā hari*

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# One must chant in a state of *amāninā*: without being even slightly proud and arrogant.



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

Here Caitanya Mahāprabhu continues on the theme of humility. He ended the last verse by bemoaning His lack of taste for the holy name. A devotee will naturally develop such humility. In the third verse, Caitanya Mahāprabhu says that one must chant in a state of *amāninā*: without being even slightly proud and arrogant. That’s no easy accomplishment. But that’s what it takes to enter into the mysteries of the holy name.

We must consider ourselves *ṭṛṇād api sunīcena*, “more down-trodden than the lowly grass.” And we must have *taror iva sahiṣṇunā*—the full tolerance of a tree. Even if you hit a tree or treat it disrespectfully, it will still give you all the shade you want. It tolerates scorching heat and driving rain. Most of all, despite any inconvenience, it still gives shelter to others. That’s the main thing that one can learn from a tree.

Of course, it may be said that a tree has no choice and we do. But the tenor of this verse is that one must put oneself in that mood of selflessness: “I’m not so special.” Only if we feel ourselves to be in this lowly condition will we be ready to offer *mānadena*, or respect to all living beings. That’s the mood of a devotee. Now, someone may say that this is too self-effacing. A devotee may lose self-esteem, integrity. And how can one be a productive person—or even serve the Lord, for that matter—if one is feeling oneself to be in a terrible, lowly position?

We should understand that we have to follow Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s mood in a practical way. If I have a severe ego problem and feel totally

useless, so much so that I can’t do any tangible service or even chant, I’d do well to take pride in being an aspiring devotee of Kṛṣṇa. Because Kṛṣṇa, God, is the greatest, that’s really a great position.

By recognizing that I’ve found the path of God consciousness in this life, I should be genuinely happy and grateful. I certainly shouldn’t be so self-indulgent that I spend all my time worrying about how useless I am.

Truth be told, though, people don’t generally suffer from this problem. People tend to lean in the other direction. We generally think we’re God’s gift to creation. This type of ego problem is much more prominent. In fact, religious or “spiritual” people, too—in some cases, religious people especially—can be guilty of a “holier than thou” attitude. So, to compensate, we’re asked to go in the other direction: “You’re puffed-up; you think you’re so great. So now try and realize how small you actually are!”

## HUMBLING HONESTY

And in fact we are tiny. Out of all the countless universes, we’re in one small universe. Out of all the planets and stars in this universe, we’re on one particular planet. Given the limited dimensions of this planet, there are many countries. And of all those countries, I’m in one. This country is made up of many states, and those states of many cities. Of all these cities, I am in one particular city. In this city, there are many neighborhoods, and of them all, I’m in one particular neighborhood. In my neighborhood, there are many streets; I’m on only one street. Then, on this street there are many houses and apartment buildings. I happen to be in one particular apartment building. In this building there are many apartments of all shapes and sizes. I’m in one of them. And even in my one apartment, there are numerous living

beings, such as insects and microbes. I’m one living being among all of these living beings. And I’m thinking, “Oh, I’m so important.”

So if we’re a little introspective, a little contemplative, we’ll see our minuscule place in the universe. It’s humbling. If we think about God’s greatness, especially, we’ll realize how small we actually are. And there are definite advantages to realizing our tiny position. We don’t become the loser. Think about it. To be more tolerant than a tree . . . hmmm. That would be quite useful. How often we lose our temper or get angry about petty little things. If we can develop tolerance, we can rise beyond these problems. If you think about it, most of our problems come from having an inflated conception of who we are. Just imagine. If we were genuinely humble, then we would not get angry every time something didn’t go our way. And we would be sincerely grateful every time it did.

If we could attain this level, we would have a peaceful mind and we could chant the holy name without any disturbance. Or as Caitanya Mahāprabhu says, *kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ*—we could chant constantly. Why? Because our mind would be free. Mantra means “mind freedom,” or “mind release.” So to properly chant a mantra one must have a free mind. Actually, there are two sides: one must have a basically free mind to at least begin chanting; otherwise one won’t even want to start. And then by chanting, one’s mind can go further, attaining new heights of freedom, spiritual freedom. This is alluded to in this verse. ☸

*Satyārāja Dāsa is a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda and a regular contributor to BTG. He has written several books on Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the latest of which is Gita on the Green: The Mystical Tradition Behind Bagger Vance. He and his wife live near New York City.*

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# INCREASING THE UNIVERSAL POPULATION

*The sage Maitreya lists the offspring of the original sages in the universe.*

## CANTO 4: CHAPTER 1

37 तस्य यक्षपतिर्देवः कुबेरस्त्विडविडामुतः  
रावणः कुम्भकर्णश्च तथान्यस्यां विभीषणः

*tasya yakṣa-patir devaḥ  
kuberas tv iḍaviḍā-sutaḥ  
rāvaṇaḥ kumbhakarṇaś ca  
tathānyasyām vibhīṣaṇaḥ*

*tasya*—his; *yakṣa-patiḥ*—the king of the Yakṣas; *devaḥ*—demigod; *kuberaḥ*—Kuvera; *tv*—and; *iḍaviḍā*—of Iḍaviḍā; *sutaḥ*—son; *rāvaṇaḥ*—Rāvaṇa; *kumbhakarṇaḥ*—Kumbhakarṇa; *ca*—also; *tathā*—so; *anyasyām*—in the other; *vibhīṣaṇaḥ*—Vibhīṣaṇa.

Viśravā had two wives. ❶ The first wife was Iḍaviḍā, from whom Kuvera, the master of all Yakṣas, was born, and the next wife was named Keśinī, from whom three sons were born—Rāvaṇa, Kumbhakarṇa, and Vibhīṣaṇa.

38 पुलहस्य गतिर्भार्या त्रीनसूत सती सुतान्  
कर्मश्रेष्ठं वरीयांसं सहिष्णुं च महामते

*pulahasya gatir bhāryā  
trīn asūta satī sutān  
karmaśreṣṭham varīyāṁsaṁ  
sahiṣṇuṁ ca mahā-mate*

*pulahasya*—of Pulaha; *gatiḥ*—Gati; *bhāryā*—wife; *trīn*—three; *asūta*—gave birth; *satī*—chaste; *sutān*—sons; *karmaśreṣṭham*—very expert in fruitive activities; *varīyāṁsam*—very respectable; *sahiṣṇuṁ*—very tolerant; *ca*—also; *mahā-mate*—O great Vidura.

Gati, the wife of the sage Pulaha, gave birth to three sons, named Karmaśreṣṭha, Varīyān, and Sahiṣṇu, and all of them were great sages.

**(1) Who were the sons of Viśravā and his two wives?**

PURPORT: Gati, the wife of Pulaha, was the fifth daughter of Kardama Muni. She was very faithful to her husband, and all her sons were as good as he.

39 क्रतोरपि क्रिया भार्या वालखिल्यानसूयत  
ऋषीन्षष्टिसहस्राणि ज्वलतो ब्रह्मतेजसा

*krator api kriyā bhāryā  
vālakhilyān asūyata  
ṛṣīn ṣaṣṭi-sahasrāṇi  
jvalato brahma-tejaś*

*kratoḥ*—of the great sage Kratu; *api*—also; *kriyā*—Kriyā; *bhāryā*—wife; *vālakhilyān*—just like Vālakhilya; *asūyata*—begot; *ṛṣīn*—sages; *ṣaṣṭi*—sixty; *sahasrāṇi*—thousand; *jvalataḥ*—very brilliant; *brahma-tejaś*—by dint of the Brahman effulgence.

**Kratu's wife, Kriyā, gave birth to sixty thousand great sages, named the Vālakhilyas. All these sages were greatly advanced in spiritual knowledge, and their bodies were illuminated by such knowledge.**

PURPORT: ② Kriyā was the sixth daughter of Kardama Muni, and she produced sixty thousand sages, who were known as the Vālakhilyas ③ because they all retired from family life as *vānaprasthas*.

40 ऊर्जायां जज्ञिरे पुत्रा वसिष्ठस्य परन्तप  
चित्रकेतुप्रधानास्ते सप्त ब्रह्मर्षयोऽमलाः

*ūrjāyām jajñire putrā  
vasiṣṭhasya parantapa  
citraketu-pradhānās te  
sapta brahmarṣayo 'malāḥ*

*ūrjāyām*—in Ūrjā; *jajñire*—took birth; *putrāḥ*—sons; *vasiṣṭhasya*—of the great sage Vasiṣṭha; *parantapa*—O great one; *citraketu*—Citraketu; *pradhānāḥ*—headed by; *te*—all the sons; *sapta*—seven; *brahma-ṛṣayaḥ*—great sages with spiritual knowledge; *amalāḥ*—without contamination.

**The great sage Vasiṣṭha begot in his wife, Ūrjā, sometimes called Arundhati, seven spotlessly great sages, ④ headed by the sage named Citraketu.**

(2) How many sons did Kratu and his wife Kriyā produce?

(3) Why were they called the Vālakhilyas?

(4) Who was the chief son of Vasiṣṭha and Arundhati?

41 चित्रकेतुः सुरोचिश्च विरजा मित्र एव च  
उल्बणो वसुभृद्धानो घुमान् शक्त्यादयोऽपरे

*citraketuḥ surociś ca  
virajā mitra eva ca  
ulbaṇo vasubhṛdyāno  
dyumān śakty-ādayo 'pare*

*citraketuḥ*—Citraketu; *surociś ca*—and Suroci; *virajāḥ*—Virajā; *mitraḥ*—Mitra; *eva*—also; *ca*—and; *ulbaṇaḥ*—Ulbaṇa; *vasubhṛdyānaḥ*—Vasubhṛdyāna; *dyumān*—Dyumān; *śakti-ādayaḥ*—sons headed by Śakti; *apare*—from his other wife.

**The names of these seven sages are as follows: Citraketu, Suroci, Virajā, Mitra, Ulbaṇa, Vasubhṛdyāna, and Dyumān. Some other very competent sons were born from Vasiṣṭha's other wife.**

PURPORT: Ūrjā, who is sometimes known as Arundhati and was the wife of Vasiṣṭha, was the ninth daughter of Kardama Muni.

42 चित्तिस्त्वथर्वणः पत्नी लेभे पुत्रं धृतव्रतम  
दध्यञ्चमश्वशिरसं भृगोर्वशं निबोध मे

*cittiś tv atharvaṇaḥ patnī  
lebhe putraṁ dhṛta-vratam  
dadhyañcam aśvaśirasam  
bhṛgor vaṁśam nibodha me*

*cittiḥ*—Citti; *tv*—also; *atharvaṇaḥ*—of Atharvā; *patnī*—wife; *lebhe*—got; *putraṁ*—son; *dhṛta-vratam*—completely dedicated to a vow; *dadhyañcam*—Dadhyañca; *aśvaśirasam*—Aśvaśirā; *bhṛgoḥ vaṁśam*—generations of Bhṛgu; *nibodha*—try to understand; *me*—from me.

**Citti, wife of the sage Atharvā, gave birth to a son named Aśvaśirā by accepting a great vow called Dadhyañca. Now you may hear from me about the descendants of the sage Bhṛgu.**

PURPORT: The wife of Atharvā known as Citti is also known as Śānti. She was the eighth daughter of Kardama Muni.

43 भृगुः ख्यात्यां महाभागः पत्न्यां पुत्रानजीजन्त्  
धातारं च विधातारं श्रियं च भगवत्पराम्

*bhṛguḥ khyātyām mahā-bhāgaḥ  
patnyām putrān ajījanat  
dhātāraṁ ca vidhātāraṁ  
śriyam ca bhagavat-parām*



*bhṛguḥ*—the great sage Bhṛgu; *khyātyām*—in his wife, Khyāti; *mahā-bhāgaḥ*—greatly fortunate; *patnyām*—unto the wife; *putrān*—sons; *ajījanat*—gave birth; *dhātāram*—Dhātā; *ca*—also; *vidhātāram*—Vidhātā; *śriyam*—a daughter named Śrī; *ca bhagavat-parām*—and a great devotee of the Lord.

The sage Bhṛgu was highly fortunate. In his wife, known as Khyāti, he begot two sons, named Dhātā and Vidhātā, and one daughter, named Śrī, who was very much devoted to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

44 आयतिं नियतिं चैव सुते मेरुस्तयोरदात्  
ताभ्यां तयोरभवतां मृकण्डः प्राण एव च

*āyatim niyatim caiva  
sute merus tayor adāt  
tābhyām tayor abhavatām  
mṛkaṇḍaḥ prāṇa eva ca*

*āyatim*—Āyati; *niyatim*—Niyati; *ca eva*—also; *sute*—daughters; *meruḥ*—the sage Meru; *tayoḥ*—unto those two; *adāt*—gave in marriage; *tābhyām*—out of them; *tayoḥ*—both of them; *abhavatām*—appeared; *mṛkaṇḍaḥ*—Mṛkaṇḍa; *prāṇaḥ*—Prāṇa; *eva*—certainly; *ca*—and.

The sage Meru had two daughters, named Āyati and Niyati, whom he gave in charity to Dhātā and Vidhātā. Āyati and Niyati gave birth to two sons, Mṛkaṇḍa and Prāṇa.

45 मार्कण्डेयो मृकण्डस्य प्राणाद्वेदशिरा मुनिः  
कविश्च भार्गवो यस्य भगवानुशना सुतः

*mārkaṇḍeyo mṛkaṇḍasya  
prāṇād vedaśirā munih  
kaviś ca bhārgavo yasya  
bhagavān uśanā sutaḥ*

*mārkaṇḍeyaḥ*—Mārkaṇḍeya; *mṛkaṇḍasya*—of Mṛkaṇḍa; *prāṇāt*—from Prāṇa; *vedaśirāḥ*—Vedaśirā; *munih*—great sage; *kaviḥ ca*—of the name Kavi; *bhārgavaḥ*—of the name Bhārgava; *yasya*—whose; *bhagavān*—greatly powerful; *uśanā*—Śukrācārya; *sutaḥ*—son.

From Mṛkaṇḍa, Mārkaṇḍeya Muni was born, and from Prāṇa the sage Vedaśirā, whose son was Uśanā [Śukrācārya], also known as Kavi. Thus Kavi also belonged to the descendants of the Bhṛgu dynasty.

46–47 त एते मुनयः क्षत्तर्लोकान् सर्गैरभावयन्  
एष कर्दमदौहित्रसन्तानः कथितस्तव

शृण्वतः श्रद्धधानस्य सद्यः पापहरः परः  
प्रसूतिं मानवीं दक्ष उपयेमे ह्यजात्मजः

*ta ete munayaḥ kṣattar  
lokān sargair abhāvayan  
eṣa kardama-dauhitra-  
santānaḥ kathitas tava*

*śṛṇvataḥ śraddadhānasya  
sadyaḥ pāpa-haraḥ paraḥ  
prasūtim mānavīm dakṣa  
upayeme hy ajātmajaḥ*

*te*—they; *ete*—all; *munayaḥ*—great sages; *kṣattaḥ*—O Vidura; *lokān*—the three worlds; *sargaiḥ*—with their descendants; *abhāvayan*—filled; *eṣaḥ*—this; *kardama*—of the sage Kardama; *dauhitra*—grandsons; *santānaḥ*—offspring; *kathitaḥ*—already spoken; *tava*—unto you; *śṛṇvataḥ*—hearing; *śraddadhānasya*—of the faithful; *sadyaḥ*—immediately; *pāpa-haraḥ*—reducing all sinful activities; *paraḥ*—great; *prasūtim*—Prasūti; *mānavīm*—daughter of Manu; *dakṣaḥ*—King Dakṣa; *upayeme*—married; *hi*—certainly; *aja-ātma-jaḥ*—son of Brahmā.

My dear Vidura, the population of the universe was thus increased by the descendants of these sages and the daughters of Kardama. Anyone who hears the descriptions of this dynasty with faith will be relieved from all sinful reactions. Another of Manu's daughters, known as Prasūti, married the son of Brahmā named Dakṣa.

48 तस्यां ससर्ज दुहितृः षोडशामल्लोचनाः  
त्रयोदशादाद्धर्माय तथैकामग्रये विभुः

*tasyām sasarja duhitṛḥ  
ṣoḍaśāmala-locanāḥ  
trayodaśādād dharmāya  
tathaikām agnaye vibhuḥ*

*tasyām*—unto her; *sasarja*—created; *duhitṛḥ*—daughters; *ṣoḍaśa*—sixteen; *amala-locanāḥ*—with lotuslike eyes; *trayodaśa*—thirteen; *adāt*—gave; *dharmāya*—to Dharma; *tathā*—so; *ekām*—one daughter; *agnaye*—to Agni; *vibhuḥ*—Dakṣa.

Dakṣa begot sixteen very beautiful daughters with lotuslike eyes in his wife Prasūti. Of these sixteen daughters, thirteen were given in marriage to Dharma, and one daughter was given to Agni.

49–52 पितृभ्य एकां युक्तेभ्यो भवायैकां भवच्छिदे  
श्रद्धा मैत्री दया शान्तिस्तुष्टिः पुष्टिः क्रि योन्नति

बुद्धिर्मेधा तितिक्षा हीमूर्तिर्धर्मस्य पत्नयः  
 श्रद्धासूत रुभं मैत्री प्रसादमभयं दया  
 शान्तिः सुखं मुदं तुष्टिः स्मयं पुष्टिरसूयत  
 योगं क्रियोन्नतिर्दर्पमर्थं बुद्धिरसूयत  
 मेधा स्मृतिं तितिक्षा तु क्षेमं हीः प्रश्रयं सुतम्  
 मूर्तिः सर्वगुणोत्पत्तिर्नरनारायणावृषी

*pitṛbhya ekām yuktebhyo  
 bhavāyaikām bhava-cchide  
 śraddhā maitrī dayā śāntiḥ  
 tuṣṭiḥ puṣṭiḥ kriyonnatīḥ*

*buddhir medhā titikṣā hrīr  
 mūrtir dharmasya patnayaḥ  
 śraddhāsūta śubham maitrī  
 prasādam abhayaṁ dayā*

*śāntiḥ sukham mudam tuṣṭiḥ  
 smayaṁ puṣṭir asūyata  
 yogam kriyonnatir darpam  
 artham buddhir asūyata*

*medhā smṛtiṁ titikṣā tu  
 kṣemaṁ hrīḥ praśrayaṁ sutam  
 mūrtiḥ sarva-guṇotpattir  
 nara-nārāyaṇāv ṛṣī*

*pitṛbhyaḥ*—to the Pitās; *ekām*—one daughter; *yuktebhyaḥ*—the assembled; *bhavāya*—to Lord Śiva; *ekām*—one daughter; *bhava-cchide*—who delivers from the material entanglement; *śraddhā*, *maitrī*, *dayā*, *śāntiḥ*, *tuṣṭiḥ*, *puṣṭiḥ*, *kriyā*, *unnatīḥ*, *buddhiḥ*, *medhā*, *titikṣā*, *hrīḥ*, *mūrtiḥ*—names of thirteen daughters of Dakṣa; *dharmasya*—of Dharma; *patnayaḥ*—the wives; *śraddhā*—Śraddhā; *asūta*—gave birth to; *śubham*—Śubha; *maitrī*—Maitrī; *prasādam*—Prasāda; *abhayaṁ*—Abhaya; *dayā*—Dayā; *śāntiḥ*—Śānti; *sukham*—Sukha; *mudam*—Muda; *tuṣṭiḥ*—Tuṣṭi; *smayaṁ*—Smaya; *puṣṭiḥ*—Puṣṭi; *asūyata*—gave birth to; *yogam*—Yoga; *kriyā*—Kriyā; *unnatīḥ*—Unnati; *darpam*—Darpa; *artham*—Artha; *buddhiḥ*—Buddhi; *asūyata*—begot; *medhā*—Medhā; *smṛtiṁ*—Smṛti; *titikṣā*—Titikṣā; *tu*—also; *kṣemaṁ*—Kṣema; *hrīḥ*—Hrī; *praśrayaṁ*—Praśraya; *sutam*—son; *mūrtiḥ*—Mūrti; *sarva-guṇa*—of all respectable qualities; *utpattīḥ*—the reservoir; *nara-nārāyaṇau*—both Nara and Nārāyaṇa; *ṛṣī*—the two sages.

(5) Which incarnation of the Lord appeared from the womb of Mūrti?

One of the remaining two daughters was given in charity to the Pitṛloka, where she resides very amicably, and the other was given to Lord Śiva, who is the deliverer of sinful persons from material entanglement. The names of the thirteen daughters of Dakṣa who were given to Dharma are Śraddhā, Maitrī, Dayā, Śānti, Tuṣṭi, Puṣṭi, Kriyā, Unnati, Buddhi, Medhā, Titikṣā, Hrī, and Mūrti. These thirteen daughters produced the following sons: Śraddhā gave birth to Śubha, Maitrī produced Prasāda, Dayā gave birth to Abhaya, Śānti gave birth to Sukha, Tuṣṭi gave birth to Muda, Puṣṭi gave birth to Smaya, Kriyā gave birth to Yoga, Unnati gave birth to Darpa, Buddhi gave birth to Artha, Medhā gave birth to Smṛti, Titikṣā gave birth to Kṣema, and Hrī gave birth to Praśraya. 5 Mūrti, a reservoir of all respectable qualities, gave birth to Śrī Nara-Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

53 ययोर्जन्मन्यदो विश्वमभ्यनन्दत्सुनिर्वृतम्  
 मनांसि ककुभो वाताः प्रसेदुः सरितोऽद्रयः

*yayor janmany ado viśvam  
 abhyanandat sunirvṛtam  
 manānsi kakubho vātāḥ  
 praseduḥ sarito 'drayaḥ*

*yayor*—both of whom (Nara and Nārāyaṇa); *janmani*—on the appearance; *adaḥ*—that; *viśvam*—universe; *abhyanandat*—became glad; *su-nirvṛtam*—full of joy; *manānsi*—everyone's mind; *kakubhaḥ*—the directions; *vātāḥ*—the air; *praseduḥ*—became pleasant; *saritaḥ*—the rivers; *adrayaḥ*—the mountains.

On the occasion of the appearance of Nara-Nārāyaṇa, the entire world was full of joy. Everyone's mind became tranquil, and thus in all directions the air, the rivers, and the mountains became pleasant.

54-55 दिव्यवाचन्त तूर्याणि पेतुः कुसुमवृष्टयः  
 मुनयस्तुष्टुवस्तुष्टा जगुर्गन्धर्वकिन्नराः  
 नृत्यन्ति स्म स्त्रियो देव्य आसीत्परममङ्गलम्  
 देवा ब्रह्मादयः सर्वे उपतस्थुरभिष्टवैः

*divy avādyanta tūryāṇi  
 petuḥ kusuma-vṛṣṭayaḥ  
 munayas tuṣṭuvus tuṣṭā  
 jagur gandharva-kinnarāḥ*

*nṛtyanti sma striyo devya  
 āsit parama-maṅgalam  
 devā brahmādayaḥ sarve  
 upatasthur abhiṣṭavaiḥ*

(continued in the next issue)

## GYPSY WELCOME

(continued from page 14)

purify them. To my knowledge, no gypsies have yet been initiated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It would be a great victory if the community elders allowed their people to freely practice *bhakti-yoga*.

When I got to the *mahā-mantra*, I continued chanting slowly so that everyone could follow. I became so immersed in the chanting that I had my eyes closed for a long time, and when I finally opened them, I was surprised to see everyone, including the gypsy leader, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa loudly with big smiles showing through their huge mustaches. Everyone was clapping and rocking back and forth. I kept the *kirtana* going, beating on the *mṛdaṅga* loudly, for almost an hour. When I finally finished, I looked around and saw that once again the holy names had defeated all arguments and had melted the hearts of a few more conditioned souls.

Just at that moment, devotees started bringing in *prasādam*. A huge feast had been prepared, so all of us (devotees and gypsies alike) took our seats on the floor, and after saying the prayer on the floor, and after saying the prayer on the floor, proceeded to savor it.

The gypsy leader, however, couldn't sit comfortably on the ground because his body was so large, so he stayed in his chair. Halfway through the meal he spoke up, and as he did everyone respectfully stopped eating.

Looking at me, he said, "Sir, is it all right that I am sitting higher than you? I can't sit on the floor, but I don't want to disrespect you."

"No, please don't worry." I replied. "It's perfectly all right that you are sitting higher than me. I am simply a guest in your village. You are the leader."

When I said that, he looked down, and he didn't say anything for the rest of the meal.

## INTENSE EMBRACE

Upon finishing *prasādam*, I washed my hands and stood up. When the gypsy leader saw me stand, he also stood, and we were spontaneously and simultaneously drawn to each other. As I approached him, I took off my big garland and, to the astonishment of all

the gypsies, put it around his neck.

There was a brief moment of silence, and then suddenly he reached out with his big arms and embraced me. As devotees and gypsies applauded, he held me tightly and I embraced him with the same intensity.

Afterwards, he stepped back and announced, "They are welcome in our village at any time."

As I prepared to leave for another program at the temple, the gypsy children started pleading with their fathers to let them come to the temple with me. The men looked at their leader, and when he smiled and nodded, all the children rushed to put on their coats and boots. Within a few moments they were piling into the back of the van with one of the fathers. We had *kirtana* all the way to temple, happily chanting the holy names of the Lord.

That evening I had seen the mercy of Lord Caitanya unfold before my very eyes. Kṛṣṇa consciousness had come to stay in that gypsy community. I pray I may always have a part to play in Mahāprabhu's mission of mercy—the *saṅkīrtana* movement of the holy names of the Lord.

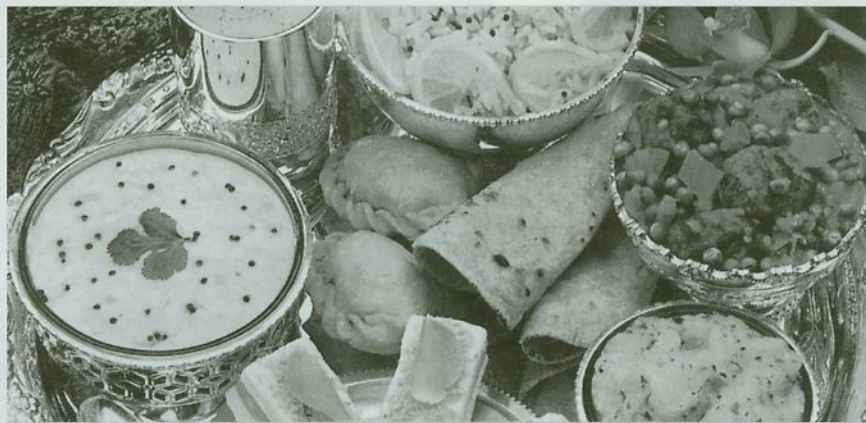
"He does not consider whether a

person is qualified or not. He does not see who is His own and who is an outsider. He does not consider who should receive and who should not. He does not consider whether it is the proper time. The Lord at once gives that nectar of pure devotional service that is difficult to attain even by hearing the message of the Lord, seeing the deity, offering obeisances, meditating, or following a host of spiritual practices. That Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Gaurahari [Caitanya Mahāprabhu], is my only shelter."

—Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī,  
*Caitanya-candrāmṛta* 7.75 ❁

*His Holiness Indradyumna Swami travels around the world teaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In Poland each summer he oversees dozens of festivals. Since 1990 these festivals have introduced Kṛṣṇa to hundreds of thousands of people.*

Adapted from the unpublished *Diary of a Traveling Preacher, Volume 3*. To receive chapters by e-mail as they come out regularly, write to [indradyumna.swami@pamho.net](mailto:indradyumna.swami@pamho.net). (Volume 1 is available from the Krishna.com Store. Please see page 64.)



## You're Invited! The Sunday Feast

Most Hare Kṛṣṇa centers around the world put on a special festival every Sunday—for regulars as well as newcomers. Come by and relish the taste of the world's oldest cultural tradition. Call your nearest center to find out the schedule for the Sunday Feast. (See "Centers," pages 59–61.)



# Druze Sheikhs

## At Home in India

*Ten years after meeting  
Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees  
in Israel, Druze leaders  
visit the land of their  
spiritual heritage.*

by Dhīra Govinda Dāsa



*Besides Lord Kṛṣṇa, I have no one.*

*Lord Kṛṣṇa, You are always my shelter.*

*Even by offering me all the world's treasures, no one could win my heart, because it is dedicated to You.*

*We are your devotees, and from Your worship we won't deviate, even if our bones are broken with sticks.*

*Please forgive Your servants the offenses we commit to You. Your mercy is bewildering to many people.*

*We are Yours forever. Our souls are dedicated to You.*

*We can lay down our lives for the service of Kṛṣṇa.*

*Please glance at us with Your sidelong glances and allow us to enter into Your kingdom.*

*Signed,*

*The most unworthy and weak among the devotees, and a beggar in front of God*

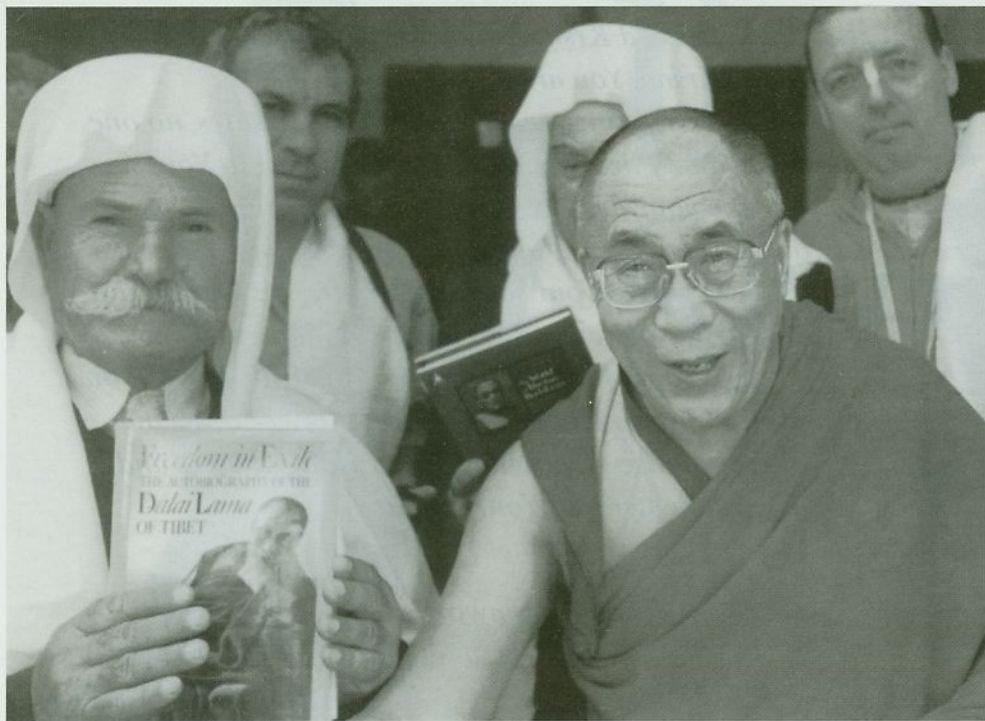
**Y**OU MIGHT EXPECT that these lines were written by a renowned poet of the Vaiṣṇava tradition, such as Jayadeva Gosvāmī or Narottama Dāsa Thākura. But, no, the author is Sheikh Fuad Aburukun, and the poem was composed in Arabic on the occasion of a welcome ceremony offered by the ISKCON Juhu Beach temple in Mumbai for a contingent of more than a dozen Druze sheikhs from Israel.

In its March/April 1997 issue, *Back to Godhead* printed an article describ-

ing the relationship between the Druze and the Hare Kṛṣṇas, forged during the late 1980s and early 1990s, when a team of devotees profusely distributed Śrīla Prabhupāda's books in the Druze villages. All sectors of Druze society welcomed the devotees and Vedic knowledge with eagerness. Dr. Salman Falach, Druze minister of education in Israel, bought full sets of books for all Druze schools and libraries and, echoing the thoughts of many Druze, stated, "I think that after reading these books

*A Druze sheikh (left) responds with joy on seeing the deities at the Krishna-Balaram Mandir in Vṛndāvana. At right, the sheikhs arrive for a reception at the Māyāpur Candrodaya Mandir.*





*The Dalai Lama meets with the sheikhs at ISKCON's Mumbai temple.*

On March 9, just after *maṅgala-ārati* in the temple of ISKCON Māyāpur, the Druze were warmly welcomed with a magnificent ceremony. The delegation of sheikhs entered the festive scene singing songs about Kṛṣṇa and His wonderful followers.

Then, outside the temple, Jayapatāka Swami, standing with the sheikhs on a raised platform constructed for the occasion, spoke to the devotees about the history and culture of the visitors. Sheikh Hussein Aburukun then addressed the crowd, reiterating the words of the late Sheikh Amin, proclaiming that the Druze and Hare Kṛṣṇas are like

one race. After each phrase his words were translated into English and Hindi, and the assembled devotees cheered. Other sheikhs also spoke, expressing their great happiness at being in that holy place with many wonderful people of God.

One sheikh announced, "We are very eager to visit the Ganges, because we have heard that simply by touching the water to our heads we will be freed of all sins."

While in Māyāpur the sheikhs did go to the Ganges River, as well as other

I will discover that our religion is coming from them."

Since the Druze are perceived by the world as an Arabic sect, their receptivity to Vaiṣṇava literature and culture may seem surprising. A study of Druze history, however, reveals that their roots are firmly planted in India. For example, a major tenet of Druze faith is the transmigration of the soul. Also, their histories are cyclical, dating back hundreds of millions of years, with descriptions of incarnations of God in human form appearing at regular intervals. This corresponds to Vedic literature and contrasts the Mideast religious traditions. The term *Druze* itself is a misnomer, coined by the Muslims, similar to the Muslim invention of the designation *Hindu*. Druze refer to themselves as *muwahidoon*, "the one, eternal religion," and believe there are *muwahidoon*, in various external manifestations, throughout the world.

Kamal Jumbalat, a modern Druze political, intellectual, and spiritual leader assassinated in Lebanon, had profound admiration for Indian culture. He visited India several times and was a strict vegetarian. His writings extol Kṛṣṇa, the *Bhagavad-gītā*,

and the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Jumbalat's picture hangs on the walls of most Druze homes.

Devotees met several times with Sheikh Tarif Amin, who was the worldwide spiritual leader for the Druze people. Sheikh Amin was grateful that Druze were placing sets of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books in their homes. He said that he wanted the Druze and the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement to work together as one race. Considering that the Druze are known for being insulated and secretive, this is a special declaration.

From studying Śrīla Prabhupāda's books for more than a decade and associating with devotees, Druze religious leaders increasingly developed interest in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and the similarities between Vaiṣṇavism and *muwahidoon* beliefs and practices. Several Druze sheikhs were inspired to visit Vaiṣṇava holy places in March and April of 2001.



*On the roof of the Māyāpur temple, His Holiness Jayapatāka Swami, one of the leaders of ISKCON Māyāpur, discusses Vedic scriptures with the sheikhs.*



*Gajapati Maharaja, the king of Orissa, holds a plaque presented to him by the visiting sheikhs.*

sacred sites, such as the nearby home of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. At the ISKCON temple of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava, with a backdrop of roaring *kīrtana*, they worshipfully offered incense to all the deities.

While accepting *mahā-prasādam*, a sheikh exclaimed, “We think that all our problems have now been solved simply by accepting this sanctified food from your hands.”

Moved by the devotion of the Vaiṣṇavas, a sheikh said, “What has most impressed us is the humility of the devotees. They are all so humble and gentle. We have a lot to learn from them.”

Several sheikhs told the devotees that the atmosphere of Śrīdhām Māyāpur had changed their hearts and greatly intensified the mood in which they approach God.

During a speech later in their visit, Sheikh Hussein said, “Since we stepped on the holy land of Māyāpur, we felt that we were coming home.”

### WITH THE KING IN PURI

Gajapati Maharaja, the king of Orissa, hosted the Druze in Jagannatha Puri on March 11. He asked the sheikhs

many questions. Sheikh Hussein explained that the Druze accept that the universe is at least 340 million years old, and that the scriptures from India are remarkably close in many details to the *muwahidoon* philosophical, historical, and cosmological understanding.

“We know that many incarnations of God have appeared in India,” he said, “and this has inspired us to come here. . . . In our culture the grandmother says to the children, ‘I hope I may enter the gate of heaven.’ To fulfill the desires of our ancestors, we have come to India to find the gate to heaven. . . . All true religious processes give some knowledge of God, but some give more, according to the capacity of the persons receiving the knowledge.”

To close the meeting, Gajapati Maharaja spoke about the soul’s entanglement in the material world and it’s quest for enlightenment through self-realization and God-realization.

### FEELING KṚṢṆA’S PRESENCE

On March 15 the Druze were greeted at ISKCON’s Krishna-Balaram Mandir in Vṛndāvana.

A leading sheikh spoke: “We have never felt God’s presence as much as we do today. We bless you all with the names of Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Rāma. We consider ourselves part of this Hare Kṛṣṇa religion, although there is some difference in the rituals. The leaders and spiritual seekers of our group, such as Kamal Jumbalat, also came to India for knowledge. Formerly we were getting this knowledge via reading the books [of Śrīla Prabhupāda], and now we get more realization by meeting the devotees. And so we have embassies of Hare Kṛṣṇa in our village, because of the efforts of Vijñāna Dāsa, Yāmunācārya Dāsa, and Śuddha Sattva Dāsa [devotees who run a center in the Druze village of Osafia, Israel]. . . .

“We hope that by our prayers there will be peace between the many races of the world. It is predicted in our holy books that the final teachings of our religion will come from India. It is difficult to express in words our immense appreciation for you. I invite you all to come to our village. I am getting much inspiration from my Godbrothers here, and I would like to finish now by telling everyone Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Rāma.”

Several ISKCON leaders greeted

# *The sheikhs could appreciate the essential, unifying principles common to the muwahidoon and the Kṛṣṇa bhaktas, and to all genuine spiritual practitioners*



the sheikhs with warm salutations full of respect. A few led the assembly in chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, and the Druze raised their hands in feelings of joy and happily chanted.

When Vedavyāsapriya Swami mentioned that in Māyāpur the Druze had sung a song about Kṛṣṇa, the devotees were eager to hear it, and the Druze obliged by singing their Hare Kṛṣṇa song.

In Vṛndāvana the sheikhs visited holy sites, such as Lord Kṛṣṇa's birthplace. One day at the ISKCON temple the sheikhs met with newspaper and television reporters. Although the first questions were political, Sheikh Hussein deftly sidestepped the politics, and the questions then turned spiritual. Later, the sheikh revealed that while speaking to the reporters, the other sheikhs were nudging him and imploring him not to reveal secrets of the Druze scriptures. Sheikh Hussein told them that he wasn't disclosing the Druze scriptures, but rather he was speaking on the Vedic scriptures, and it just so happens that the two are the same.

On March 16 the Druze visited Govardhana Hill. At the Govardhana Palace temple they were received by Jayādvaitya Swami and Keśava Bhāratī Dāsa. A philosophical discussion ensued, with the sheikhs posing profound questions, such as "What is the significance of Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes?" "How can we enter those pastimes?" and "If God is Brahman, why do you worship His form?"

At Kusum Sarovara the conversation continued, with the Druze inquiring about the origin and significance of the Sanskrit language and the process of creation. They were very satisfied hearing from Jayādvaitya Swami about the detailed, scientific description of the creation provided in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and about how material

creation begins with a glance from the Lord, which conforms to the depiction in Druze literature.

By March 19 the Druze contingent reached Mumbai. There the sheikhs explained that the primary reason that worship of the form of God was relinquished in Druze tradition was to avoid persecution from the Muslim majority in countries where Druze resided. They said that upon seeing the deity worship performed in ISKCON temples, they realized that these rituals were very similar to those described in *muwahidoon* scripture, but circumstantially abandoned over time. During our original contact with the Druze more than a decade earlier, we learned that many of their current habits, such as meat-eating and coffee-drinking, were adopted to conform with Muslim practices but are not part of the authentic culture of the *muwahidoon*.

While touring the ISKCON Juhu Beach temple, the Druze met a member of the Hinduja family, who invited them to his home the next morning. They spoke at length the next day with Mr. Hinduja, who befriended and was intrigued by his special guests. They chanted the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* together, and Mr. Hinduja suggested they build Kṛṣṇa temples in Druze villages in Israel. Sheikh Hussein said that he could provide the land for such a project, and their host enthusiastically proposed that they proceed to make the idea a reality.

## **DRUZE ISKCON MEMBERS**

Two of the Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees who accompanied, served, and hosted the Druze during their visit to India were Tuṣṭi Mohana Kṛṣṇa Dāsa and Gopa Kumāra Dāsa, both native Druze and Arabic speakers. There was some concern that the Druze leaders would

be upset that these young members of their community had completely given their lives to the practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. To the contrary, the sheikhs were pleased that these young men had dedicated themselves to a spiritual process the sheikhs considered genuine and consistent with the *muwahidoon* heritage. Being from a land where external differences in religious practice have caused and continue to create divisive conflict, the sheikhs could especially appreciate the essential, unifying principles common to the *muwahidoon* and the Kṛṣṇa *bhaktas*, and to all genuine spiritual practitioners.

These descriptions of the sheikhs' visit to India were sent as letters to me by several devotees who were with the Druze during their pilgrimages. These devotees include Vijñāna Dāsa, Phālguna Dāsa, Tuṣṭi Mohana Dāsa, and Gopa Kumāra Dāsa. For me, as a member of the *saṅkīrtana* team that initially contacted the Druze in the Middle East in 1988, it was a tremendous joy to receive these reports. They were confirmation that the books distributed by the devotees, and studied voraciously by the Druze people, were like seeds that fructified a decade later in the form of this journey to the East, which the sheikhs considered a journey to the homeland of their patriarchs. ☸

*Dhīra Govinda Dāsa, who holds a doctorate degree in social work, is the director of ISKCON's Office of Child Protection, based in Alachua, Florida.*

The new updated edition of Dhīra Govinda Dāsa's book *Kṛṣṇa, Israel, and the Druze* is now available from the Krishna.com Store. Please see page 64.

### **ONLINE EXTRAS**

- More photos of the sheikhs' visit to India ([krishna.com/365](http://krishna.com/365))



# 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 Hṛṣīkeśa

(August 23–September 21)

### SEPTEMBER

1—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.

3—Annadā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

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

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

17—Parśvā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans. (Fasting till noon today for Śrī Vāmana-dvādaśī tomorrow.)

18—Śrī Vāmana-dvādaśī, appearance anniversary of Lord Vāmana, Lord Kṛṣṇa's incarnation as a dwarf *brāhmaṇa*. Appearance

anniversary of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

19—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.

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

21—Anniversary of Śrīla Prabhupāda's accepting *sannyāsa*, the renounced order of life. Third month of Cāturmāsya begins (fasting from milk).

## Month of Padmanābha

(September 22–October 21)

29—Anniversary of Śrīla Prabhupāda's arrival in the United States.

### OCTOBER

3—Trispr̥ṣā Mahā-dvādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans for Indirā Ekādaśī.

15—Rāmacandra Vijayotsava, the anniversary of Lord Rāmacandra's victory over the demon Rāvaṇa. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Madhvācārya, a Vaiṣṇava philosopher and spiritual master who appeared in the thirteenth century.

16—Pāśāṅkuṣā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

17—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, and Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, great associates and followers of Lord Caitanya.

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

## Month of Dāmodara

(October 22–November 20)

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

29—Appearance of Radha Kunda.

### NOVEMBER

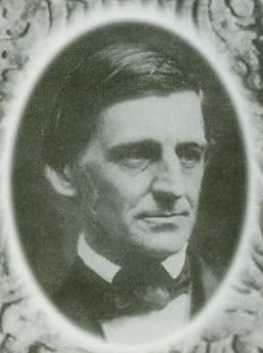
1—Ramā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

4—Diwali, the festival of illuminating Kṛṣṇa's temples with lamps. Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for details.

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

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

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



**EMERSON**



**VON HERDER**



**WHITMAN**



**SCHOPENHAUER**



**HEGEL**

# WHEN THE WEST LOVED INDIA

*On first encountering India, European and American scholars were often deeply moved by the wisdom, breadth, and eloquence of Vedic philosophy.*

by Devamrita Swami

IN 1784 THE ASIATIC Society of Bengal was established in Calcutta, to publish and disseminate historical, linguistic, and literary studies. William Jones, Charles Wilkins, and Thomas Colebrook emerged as the pioneers of Western Indological studies. Charles Wilkins had been the first to learn Sanskrit, and he busied himself studying with pundits in Benares and translating Sanskrit works. In 1785 he published his rendition of the *Bhagavad-gita*.

Several of the scholarly inclined British colonizers began to intuit that perhaps they had stumbled upon the primeval religion, predating anything from the Middle East. In 1786 the linguistically brilliant judge Sir William Jones announced to the Asiatic Society of Bengal his famous discovery that

Sanskrit was related to Latin and Greek, as well as Persian, Celtic, and Gothic.

To be precise, Jones was not the first to notice similarities. One hundred years earlier, a Florentine merchant in Goa, Filippo Sassetti, and an English Jesuit, Thomas Stevens, had independently detected the same phenomenon. Jones, however, was certainly the first to make a full scholarly presentation. And he forthrightly proclaimed heartfelt attraction to Vedic literature and philosophy:

I am in love with Gopia, charmed with Crishen [Krishna], an enthusiastic admirer of Raama and a devout adorer of Brihma [Brahma], Bishe [Vishnu], Mahiser [Maheshvara (Shiva)]; not to mention that Judishteir, Arjen, Co-rno [Yudhisthira, Arjuna, Karna] and other warriors of the M'hab'harat

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DIDEROT



VOLTAIRE



VON HUMBOLDT



BEETHOVEN



T. S. ELIOT



**“I am no Hindu  
but I hold the  
doctrine of the  
Hindus con-  
cerning a future  
state to be in-  
comparably more rational,  
more pious and more likely  
to deter men from vice than  
the horrid opinions incul-  
cated by the Christians on  
punishment without end.”**

**—Sir William Jones**

[Mahabharata] appear greater in my eyes than Agamemnon, Ajax and Achilles appeared when I first read the Iliad.

Jones described himself as “a devout and convinced Christian,” and like modern scholars he viewed the *Bhagavata Purana* as “a motley story.” Yet, remarkably ecumenical in his outlook, he did not hide his appreciation of the Vedic knowledge of reincarnation: “I am no Hindu but I hold the doctrine of the Hindus concerning a future state to be incomparably more rational, more pious and more likely to deter men from vice than the horrid opinions inculcated by the Christians on punishment without end.”

### **THE GERMAN ROMANCE WITH INDIA**

The work of the Asiatic Society of Bengal became the highbrow talk of Europe. The Society’s journal attained

immediate fame, and the English translations by its Calcutta Sanskritists were rendered into German and French. German scholars, in particular, lost no time accelerating into this new intellectual frontier. Sanskrit and Vedic philosophy became a prime delight for many German romanticists. Whereas the British relationship with India quickly entered the mold of colonialism and conversion, the Germans—with no economic or political interests in India to tend—freely plunged into a lively intellectual and emotional attachment.

The first to incite the German passion for India was Johann Gottfried von Herder, a philosopher and writer whose advocacy of intuition over rationality greatly influenced the famed Goethe. From von Herder came many of the ideas that formed the basis of German Romanticism, and he fired the imaginations of his literary fellows to venerate Mother India. “The Brahmins [the spiritual intelligentsia of India]

have wonderful wisdom and strength to form their people in great degrees of gentleness, courtesy, temperance, and chastity. They have so effectively established their people in these virtues that, in comparison, Europeans frequently appear as beastly, drunken or mad.”

Friedrich von Schlegel, another philosopher and writer whose essays contributed to the intellectual basis of German Romanticism, took to studying Sanskrit. Beginning in 1805, he used his newfound knowledge to teach a series of lectures at the University of Cologne. “Everything, absolutely everything, is of Indian origin,” he extolled. He attributed the Egyptian civilization to missionary seeds from India, and asserted that the Hebrew nation based itself on remnants of Vedic metaphysics. In 1808 Schlegel published his *Essay on Language and Wisdom of the Indians*. The first two sections of his book glorified the beauty and antiquity of the Sanskrit language, as well as its brilliance in conveying profound philosophical concepts. In another section he advocated that a migration of talent and intellect from northern India had introduced civilization to Europe.

To their intense appreciation of India, the German Romanticists grafted a love of Germany as the first European recipient of civilization. “If the regeneration of the human species started in the East, Germany must be considered the Orient of Europe,” said Friedrich von Schlegel’s brother, August Wilhelm von Schlegel. An influential scholar in his own right, August Wilhelm became the first professor of Sanskrit at the University of Bonn. In 1823 Julius von Klaproth coined the term “Indo-Germans,” and many German writers picked it up. Naturally, non-German intellectuals of the time quickly began to prefer the term “Indo-Europeans,” and Franz Bopp, in 1833, established that preference even east of the Rhine.

The Prussian minister of education, Wilhelm von Humboldt, began studying Sanskrit in 1821. Also renowned as a founding father of linguistics, Humboldt published an extensive study of the *Bhagavad-gita*. He described the *Bhagavad-gita* as “the

deepest and loftiest thing the world has to show." The rampant fascination with India affected also the famed composer Ludwig van Beethoven. His manuscripts contain fragments of selections from the *Upanishads* and the *Gita*.

The philosopher Georg Hegel compared the discovery of Sanskrit to the beholding of a new continent. He felt it established "historic ties between the German and Indian people." Though the complex Hegel admitted to no great love for India, and criticized Romantics for idolizing it, nevertheless in his classic *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, he eulogized the Indian subcontinent as the "starting-point for the whole Western world."

Another famous German philosopher, Arthur Schopenhauer, became completely enchanted by the *Upanishads*. Upon reading a translation into Latin, he called them "the production of the highest human wisdom." Considering the *Upanishads* to contain almost superhuman conceptions, Schopenhauer said, "It is the most satisfying and elevated reading (with the exception of the original text) which is possible in the world; it has been my solace in life and will be the solace of my death."

So internationally known was the magnitude of the German immersion in Vedic studies that, when in 1871 the various German states finally consolidated into the German Empire, some British authorities in India attributed the unification to the pervasive German love for Vedic knowledge. Though an exaggeration for sure, the notion does indicate Germany's reputation then for relishing ancient India. Sir Henry Maine, a scholarly member of the Viceroy of India's council, dramatically declared, "a nation has been born out of Sanskrit."

The energetic German commitment to Indic studies continues to this day. Almost every serious German library features a special collection of books on India. Every university maintains a departmental library of Indology. Chairs of Sanskrit are maintained at six universities: Bonn, Tübingen, Hamburg, Munich, Marburg, and Göttingen. Almost every university offers Sanskrit instruction in its department of com-

parative linguistics. Three German universities publish their own magazine on Indology.

## OTHER NATIONS JUMP ABOARD

The French were not to be left out of the rush to embrace India. Voltaire, the quintessential Enlightenment thinker, became fascinated. In 1775 he asserted, "I am convinced that everything has come down to us from the banks of the Ganges: astronomy, astrology, metempsychosis, etc." He too seemed to think everything about Adam and Genesis actually derived from India. Diderot, the French philosopher and writer famed for his work on the *Encyclopédie*, suggested in his article on India that the "sciences may be more ancient in India than in Egypt." In Paris, the first university chair for Sanskrit was established in 1816. Quickly French scholars translated the works of India-loving Ger-

mans. Jules Michelet, the French historian known for his spirited seventeenth-volume *Histoire de France*, felt certain that India was "the womb of the world."

The Slavic peoples also wanted in. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, questions of Slav roots concerned scholars of the various Slavic regions. Some would publish works comparing words in Sanskrit and Slavic languages. The Czech scholar Pavel Shafarik wrote that the Slavic peoples originated in India. A Polish scientist, Valentin Mayevsky, elaborately described the connection between the Slavic peoples and ancient Indians. Russia published its first Sanskrit text in 1787. N. I. Novikov translated Charles Wilkins's rendition of the *Bhagavad-gita* from English. An Asian Academy was established at St. Petersburg in 1810, with a Sanskrit professorship. Russia would go on to produce famous nineteenth-century Indologists such as V. P. Vasilyev and V. P. Mina-



**"In the morning I bathe my intellect in the stupendous and cosmogonical philosophy of the *Bhagavad-gita*, since whose composition years of the gods have elapsed and in comparison with which our modern world and its literature seems puny and trivial."**

**—Henry David Thoreau**

# *Unencumbered by biases, the original reactions of European scholars are a testimony to the intellectual joy a fair-minded approach to the Vedas can bring.*



yev. The Hungarian Csoma de Körös (1784–1842) visited India and studied language and literature there.

Across the Atlantic the Americans kept up with the Vedic bonanza. Formal Indic studies began there at Yale University in 1841. Elihu Yale, a former governor for the British East India Company at Madras, had funded the university in 1718, with the help of gifts brought over from India. The new university, rewarding his patronage, took on his name. At Harvard University, in 1836, a group of authors and poets gathered to found the Transcendental Club of America. The cream of America's literary world—Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Walt Whitman, and others—studied the Vedic texts available, as well as ideas from Goethe, Kant, and the ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and Persians.

The American transcendentalists, as they are now called, located and studied English translations of the *Bhagavad-gita*, *Upanishads*, and the *Vishnu* and *Bhagavata Puranas*. Emerson issued forth his classic praise of the *Gita*: “I owed a magnificent day to the *Bhagavad-gita*. It was the first of books; it was as if an empire spake to us, nothing small or unworthy, but large, serene, consistent, the voice of an old intelligence which in another age and climate had pondered and thus disposed of the same questions that exercise us.”

Henry David Thoreau, the still venerated author of *Walden*, is on record expressing intellectual euphoria: “What extracts from the *Vedas* I have read fall on me like the light of a higher and purer luminary, which describes a loftier course through a purer stratum.” Also, “In the morning I bathe my intellect in the stupendous and cosmogonical philosophy of the *Bhagavad-gita*, since whose composition years of the gods have elapsed and in comparison with which our modern world and its

literature seems puny and trivial.”

Anointing the *Gita* as the best intellectual treat, Thoreau said, “The reader is nowhere raised into and sustained in a bigger, purer or rarer region of thought than in the *Bhagavad-gita*.” For an American of his very conservative and Christian time, he made a bold evaluation: “The religion and philosophy of the Hebrews are those of a wilder and ruder tribe, wanting the civility and intellectual refinements and subtlety of Vedic culture.”

Other giants of the American literary world who acknowledged influence from Vedic philosophy were T. S. Eliot, Paul Elmer, and Irving Babbitt. They had all studied at Harvard under the renowned Sanskritist Charles Rochwell Lanman, who taught for over forty years and published books on Sanskrit and Vedic philosophy. Another factor contributing to Vedic interest in America was the founding, in 1842, of the American Oriental Society.

Certainly amid all the nations cited above, scholars with negative and even racist perceptions of the Vedic texts could be found. What is monumental, though, is the unique freshness and headiness that the very first winds of Indology blew through most academic chambers in the first half of the nineteenth century. “India, yes! The *Vedas*, yes!”

Especially at the junction of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, European intellectuals expected an “Oriental renaissance.” The idea was that, just as the study of Greek had paved the way for the first Renaissance, so the study of Sanskrit and the Vedas would launch the second. The older Orientalism—based on European studies of Arabic, Persian, and Hebrew—had given way to India and the *Vedas* as the standard bearer.

Unencumbered by biases, the original reactions of European scholars

are a testimony to the intellectual joy a fair-minded approach to the Vedas can bring. But the breezes of profound appreciation that swept the European continent did not last. After all, the British Crown had serious business to tend in India—with immense consequences for the study of India's past.

Mainly the Calcutta-based British intellectuals had sparked Europe's enthusiasm for India. In their homeland, however, the boom was modest. Some intellectuals in the British Isles were charmed by the ancient wisdom of India—its Sanskrit, astronomy, and geography. Some even sought to find a connection between ancient India and the Celts. The enthrallment did not last, in the downpour of realpolitik.

But the fire in England was soon damped. Great Britain could not, or would not, be the hearth for such a renaissance. Thereafter . . . the Victorians procured their best workers only by appealing to the German universities. . . . It was, above all, the case with Max Müller, who was born in Dessau in 1823 and died a professor of comparative linguistics at Oxford in 1900. Ultimately, England was to welcome many more Orientalists than she gave birth.

By the time the nineteenth century turned into the twentieth, almost all the benign attitudes spurring Western scholars' unbiased appreciation of Vedic knowledge had turned into ice. No independent India would be born of Sanskrit knowledge. The British goal, stated and unstated, was to eradicate any notions that India had knowledge in remote antiquity. ☀

*His Holiness Devāmṛta Swami is based in Australia and Los Angeles. He travels regularly throughout South America and Russia.*

# 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”)



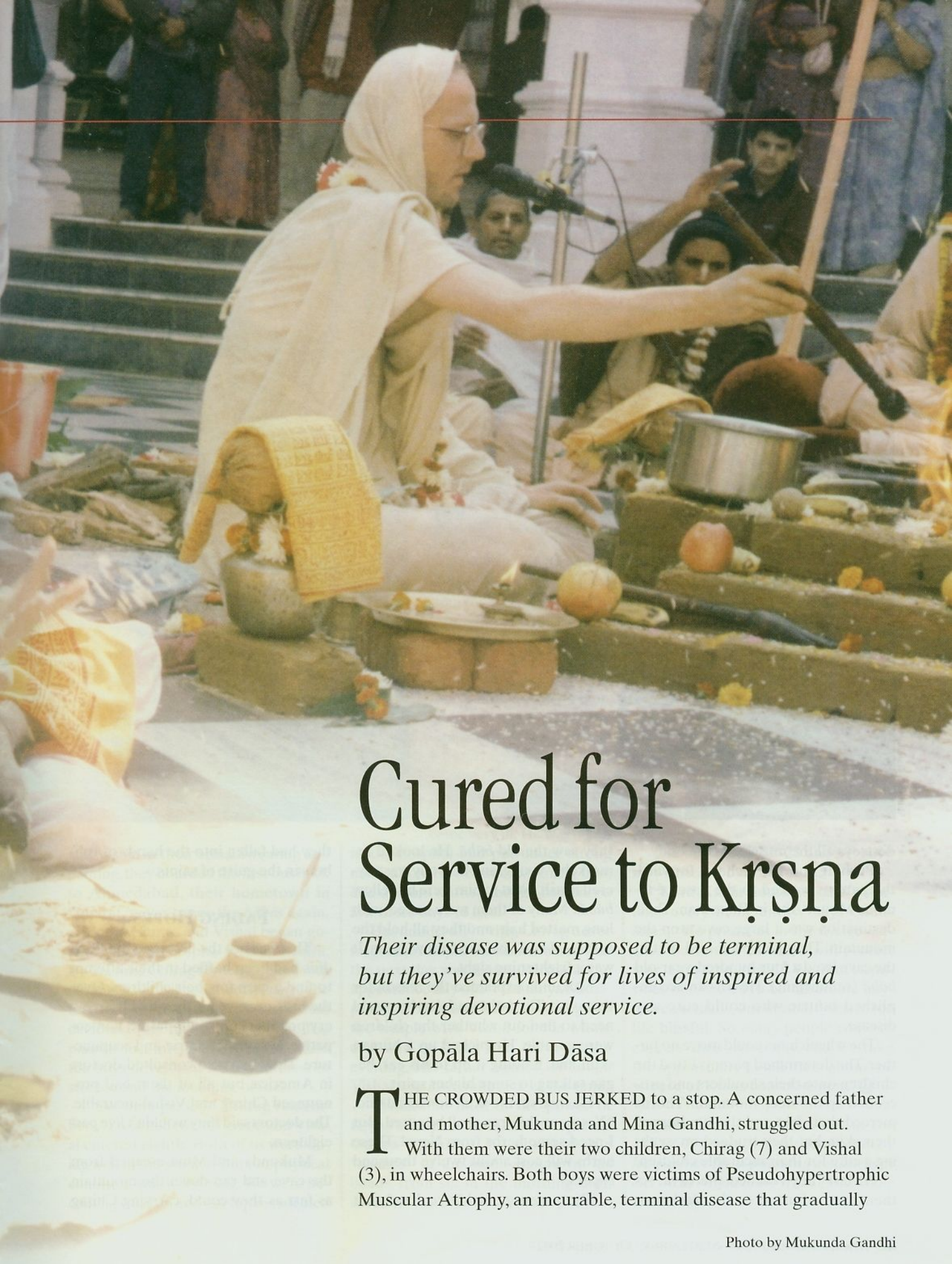
*Times Square, Manhattan, 2002*  
Photo by Dattātreya Dāsa

# HARE KR̥ṢṆA PEOPLE



*Viśvarūpa Dāsa (foreground) and Caturātmā Dāsa receive spiritual initiation at ISKCON's Krishna-Balaram Mandir in Vṛndāvana.*





# Cured for Service to Kṛṣṇa

*Their disease was supposed to be terminal,  
but they've survived for lives of inspired and  
inspiring devotional service.*

by Gopāla Hari Dāsa

**T**HE CROWDED BUS JERKED to a stop. A concerned father and mother, Mukunda and Mina Gandhi, struggled out. With them were their two children, Chirag (7) and Vishal (3), in wheelchairs. Both boys were victims of Pseudohypertrophic Muscular Atrophy, an incurable, terminal disease that gradually



destroys all the muscles in the body.

Pushing the wheelchairs forward, the parents walked to the base of famous Mount Abu in Rajasthan. Their destination was a large cave atop the mountain. They had been told that in the cave lived a four-hundred-year-old *bābā* (renunciant). He was an accomplished tantric who could cure any disease.

The wheelchairs could move no farther. The determined parents lifted the children onto their shoulders and proceeded up the steep mountain. Thorns pierced their feet and the sun burned their skin, but they trudged on, seeking a cure for their incurable children.

At last they reached the cave. As their eyes adjusted to the darkness,

they saw the old *bābā*. He looked remarkably young, and his body was covered in ash. Next to him were his fellow *bābās*. Many of them were naked, with long matted hair, and they all held the *triśula*—Lord Śiva’s trident weapon. It was a frightening sight.

Mukunda explained the reason for their visit. The *bābā* said that he would need to find out whether the children were curable. He picked up a human skull and, holding it up to his ear, began talking to some higher spirit.

He then set the skull down and said, “Yes, your children shall be cured. But I need some herbs from Nepal. These herbs will cost about twelve thousand rupees.”

The parents quickly realized that

they had fallen into the hands of robbers in the guise of saints.

## FADING HOPES

This was not the first time the Gandhis had been baffled in their attempt to find a cure for their children. Over the last seven years, they had tried every possible cure—allopathic, homeopathic, ayurvedic, tantric, and acupuncture. They had also consulted doctors in America, but all of them had pronounced Chirag and Vishal incurable. The doctors said they wouldn’t live past eighteen.

Mukunda and Mina escaped from the cave and ran down the mountain as fast as they could, carrying Chirag



*During a visit to the ISKCON center in Māyāpur, West Bengal, Caturātmā and Viśvarūpa toured holy places in the area with this group of devotees.*

and Vishal in their arms. Sweating and panting, they boarded the first bus back to Ahmedabad, their hometown in Gujarat, never to see the *bābās* again.

Soon, Chirag and Vishal began going to school, despite their ill health. By the time Chirag turned fifteen, both parents had resigned themselves to the fact that there was no cure and had decided to let fate run its course. The parents lost interest in religion, while the boys developed a deep interest in science and the meaning of life.

“As time passed,” Chirag remembers, “I reached twelfth grade and Vishal entered eighth. Both of us were doing well in our studies. But our physical condition was worsening. We were becoming weaker, and our bodies seemed

uglier than before. We began facing difficulties in eating and other ordinary activities. Our speech was unclear. Our parents were very worried.”

## GĪTĀ TO THE RESCUE

At the age of seventeen Chirag completed high school, but he didn’t have enough strength to pursue further studies. One day, he asked his father what he should do to use his time. His father was sitting in his office. He looked up at the five editions of *Bhagavad-gīta* on his bookshelf, randomly pulled out one, and gave it to Chirag. It was Prabhupāda’s *Bhagavad-gīta As It Is*.

Chirag read the book and found answers to questions he had been asking throughout his life. He persuaded his father to take him to the Kṛṣṇa temple in Ahmedabad. Soon, the entire family became devoted members of the temple and attended the Sunday Feast every week.

As the doctors had predicted, however, in his eighteenth year Chirag became very ill. He was taken

to the hospital and put under strong medication. He became extremely thin, and doctors warned that he had only a few more days to live.

But amidst all of this, Chirag never forgot the temple. He remembered that the next day was Gaura Pūrṇimā, the appearance day of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He asked his father to go to the temple with Vishal for the whole day, and to bring him there in the evening. His father agreed, although Vishal was also quite sick at the time.

Vishal had faith in the power of Kṛṣṇa’s holy name. At the temple on Gaura Pūrṇimā, he chanted 108 “rounds” of the *mahā-mantra* on his beads, from six in the morning until seven in the evening. At four o’clock,

Mukunda brought Chirag, who was on intravenous support. After viewing the deities, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda, they both went home.

That night, Chirag drank some *caraṇāmṛta* (water that has bathed the deities) that he had brought with him from the temple, and went to sleep.

The next morning, when Chirag awoke, he had miraculously regained his normal strength. The crisis was over.

Soon after, Chirag and Vishal received initiation from His Holiness Gopāl Kṛṣṇa Goswami, and were given the names Caturātmā Dāsa and Viśvarūpa, respectively. Today, despite their illness, they perform immense service for Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda. They lead *kīrtanas* expertly and give classes at the temple. Viśvarūpa has translated Śrīla Prabhupāda’s *Path of Perfection* into Gujarati. And although they cannot walk, they make yearly visits to Māyāpur, Jagannatha Puri, Vṛndāvana, Dwarka, and other holy places.

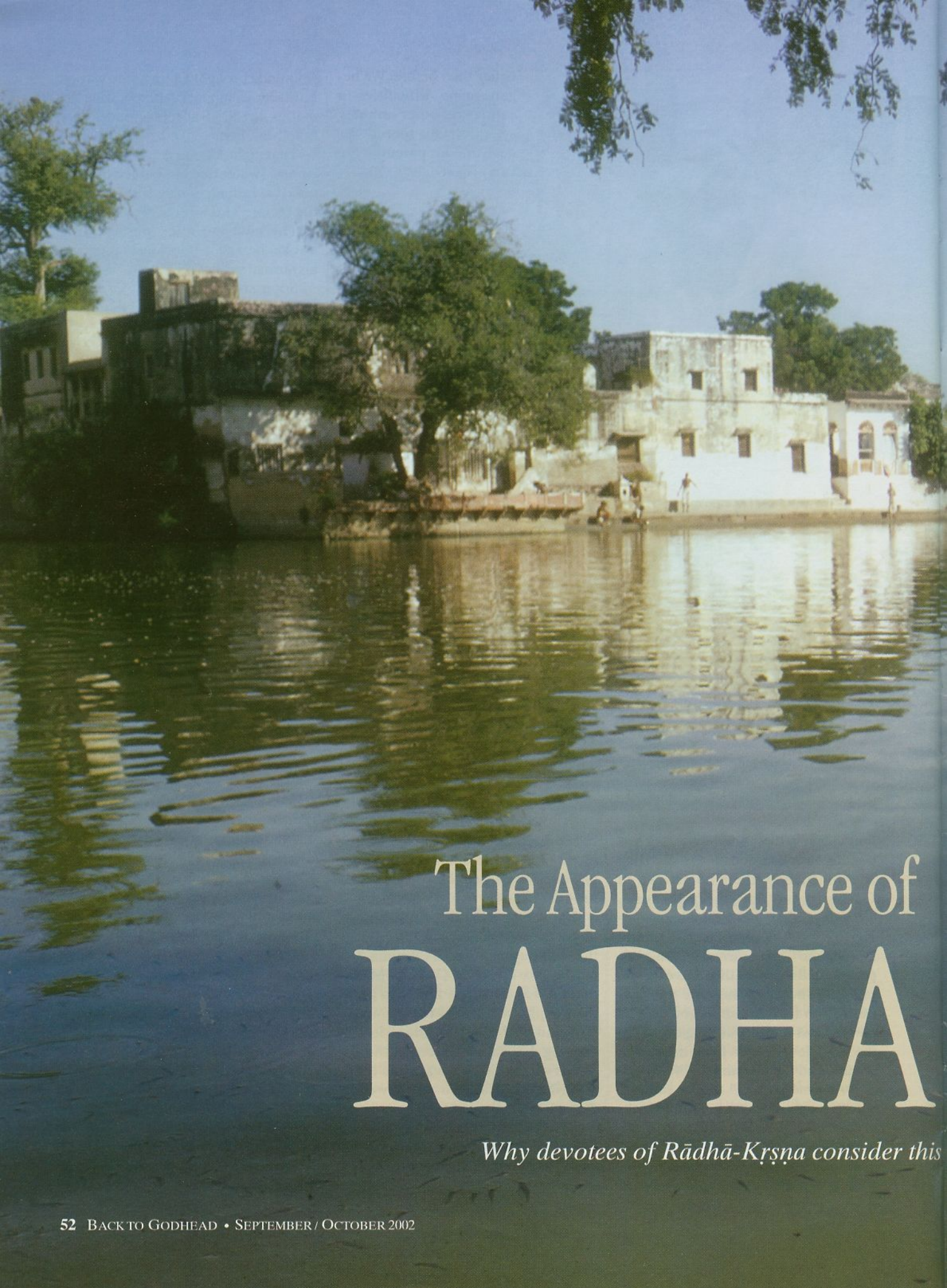
The brothers’ most successful activity in spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a youth program they have started in their home. By holding regular *kīrtanas* and discussion groups, they have touched the lives of hundreds of young people. The brothers have become spiritual mentors for the youth, encouraging them in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

“Caturātmā and Viśvarūpa are role models for me,” says one young man. “Their determination and faith are inspiring. If they can be good devotees in the face of such adversity, why can’t I?”

The brothers, now 23 and 19, have no worries about the future.

“Lord Kṛṣṇa nourishes and maintains every living entity,” says Caturātmā. “He promises in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, ‘Surrender to Me. I will protect you. Don’t be afraid.’ We don’t consider our bodies to be miserable anymore. Actually, our disability has made life blissful: So many people come to express their sympathy, and we take the opportunity to tell them about the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

*Gopāla Hari Dāsa, 18, lives at the ISKCON center in Boise, Idaho, run by his parents. He is pursuing a masters in electrical engineering from Boise State University.*



The Appearance of  
**RADHA**

*Why devotees of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa consider this*



by Amala Bhakta Dāsa

**O**N A FIELD NEAR Govardhana Hill, in the twilight, the demon Ariṣṭāsura had assumed the form of a bull and, at King Kāmsa's order, had tried to kill Lord Kṛṣṇa. Instead, the Lord had slain him. Just prior to his attack, Kṛṣṇa had been chatting with His girlfriends, the *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana, who had become quite frightened by the demon's angry bellowing.

Kṛṣṇa strolled over to them, expecting to engage in their usual *rāsa* dance. In this, the girls would form a circle, Kṛṣṇa would miraculously reproduce His body between each two girls, and the party would ecstatically dance round and round. But the *gopīs*, now relieved of their fear of Ariṣṭāsura, were in a playful, joking mood.

As Kṛṣṇa tried to place His arm around the shoulder of one of them,

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Excerpted from the soon-to-be-published biographical novel *Lord Krishna—the Supreme Mystic*. This excerpt is based on Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.36.16.

# KUNDA

*pond the most sacred spot in the universe.*



Painting by Durgā Devi Dāsī

# *The hole that Kṛṣṇa had made with His heel suddenly expanded into a vast hollow.*

• • •

she flinched and stepped back, saying, "I don't think You should touch any of us now."

Kṛṣṇa smiled.

"Oh? And why not?"

"Well, You've just killed a bull. And the scriptures consider a bull to be as sacred as a cow."

"True, but that bull was really a demon."

"Doesn't matter," a second girl said. "He still had a bull's body. So by killing him, You've committed a terrible sin."

"I have?" Kṛṣṇa beamed, playing along with their joke.

"Absolutely. You're very contaminated now."

"How terrible!" Kṛṣṇa said with mock seriousness. "Then what should I do?"

"You should atone for Your sin," a third *gopī* said.

"Atone?" He asked, eyebrows raised.

They all nodded firmly, wanting to laugh but restraining themselves.

"But how?"

The first *gopī* said, "I think You should bathe in every holy river in the world."

The other *gopīs* nodded.

"All the rivers?" Kṛṣṇa asked.

"Yes," the girls giggled. "All."

"But that'll take too long. I have a better idea."

"Oh?" they inquired.

"Instead, I'll bring the rivers here."

"How can You do that?" asked the second *gopī* skeptically.

"Just watch."

Kṛṣṇa turned away from them and kicked His heel into the ground, making a hole.

Then He ordered, "O holy rivers, please come here at once!"

In a few seconds, the personified

forms of every sacred river appeared there, standing with their palms folded and heads bowed. The men were bare-chested but decked in rich *dhōtis*, whereas the women were wearing luxurious saris.

Kṛṣṇa turned to the *gopīs*.

"See? They're all here."

Although the girls were astonished, they scoffed, "We don't see anybody."

Kṛṣṇa said to the rivers, "Would you please announce yourselves?"

Each river spoke his or her name, such as Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswati, Sarayu, Sona, and Sindhu.

The *gopīs* looked at each other doubtfully. Were those persons really those rivers?

Then the hole that Kṛṣṇa had made with His heel suddenly expanded into a vast hollow, and all the personified rivers gladly entered it, each manifesting his or her own water form. It was now a beautiful, inviting, holy pond.

Kṛṣṇa descended and splashed into it up to His neck, dunked His head several times, and climbed out, drying His dark glistening body with His hands.

"Well, now I'm completely pure." He smiled. "You don't have to worry anymore."

The girls giggled, knowing they never had to anyway.

"But look at you," Kṛṣṇa said with mock condescension, pointing at them.

"What about us?" a few asked.

"You're all impure."

"Us?" several answered, incredulously.

"Yes, you!"

"No, we didn't touch the bull," the second girl said. "You did."

"True, but you've never performed any religious activities for Lord Brahmā's pleasure. That makes you impure."

Then Kṛṣṇa's favorite, Śrīmatī Rā-

dhārāṇī, turned to Her girlfriends and said, "All right, if we're impure, then we'll become pure."

"How?" the third *gopī* asked.

"I'll make an even better pond than Kṛṣṇa's, and we'll all bathe in it."

"But where?" asked the second *gopī*.

"Just follow Me."

With Kṛṣṇa in tow, Rādhārāṇī confidently led Her friends a short distance away. They noticed that Ariṣṭāsura's hooves had dug a shallow ditch just west of Kṛṣṇa's pond, and Rādhārāṇī decided to make Her pond there.

"Let's start digging," She said to Her friends.

They bent over, began clutching clumps of soft clay, and discarded them. After only an hour, they created a large hollow.

Kṛṣṇa was astonished by how rapidly they had dug it.

When the *gopīs* came out, the Lord munificently said to them, "You can fill it up with the holy water from My pond."

"Your pond?" Rādhārāṇī asked, patronizingly.

"Yes, why not?"

"Because Your pond is contaminated. When You bathed in it, You left Your bull-killing sin there. I don't want that in My pond!"

Kṛṣṇa laughed loudly.

"Then where will You get the holy water?"

"From the nearby Manasi Ganga lake. We'll bring many pots of it here."

Kṛṣṇa recalled that some time ago He had meditated on the holy Ganges River, which was a considerable distance from Vṛndāvana, and had miraculously made it appear here as a lake. It was thus named Manasi Ganga ("the Ganges created by Kṛṣṇa's mind"). But now Kṛṣṇa wanted to spare Rādhārāṇī

*The story of the appearance of Radha Kunda begins with Lord Kṛṣṇa killing Ariṣṭāsura, a demon disguised as a bull who was terrorizing Vṛndāvana.*

and Her friends the heavy labor of lugging thousands of jugs of water from there to here. So He gestured to His pond, and suddenly a male representative of all the holy rivers emerged from it. With tears in his eyes, he folded his palms, bowed his head to the ground before Rādhārāṇī, and devotedly prayed to Her.

Rādhārāṇī's mood changed from playful to serious. She could see that he was approaching Her for some sacred purpose.

Rising to his knees, the representative said, "O Goddess, even those who know the scriptures well, such as Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva, cannot understand Your glories. Only Kṛṣṇa, the highest goal of all human effort, can.

Therefore, He wishes to make sure that, when You're fatigued, You can wash away Your perspiration. That would make Him very happy."

Rādhārāṇī gratefully glanced at Kṛṣṇa, and then returned Her attention to the rivers' representative.

"As soon as Kṛṣṇa ordered us, we came here to live in His excellent pond. But we all have a desire, and only if You are pleased with us can it be fulfilled."

Rādhārāṇī pleasantly asked, "Oh? And what is it?"

"We desire to come to Your pond, for only then will our lives be successful."

With a gentle smile, Rādhārāṇī replied, "All right. Please do."

Her friends nodded in agreement, feeling immensely happy.

At that moment, all the holy rivers in Kṛṣṇa's pond broke through its blackish clay boundary and quickly flowed into and filled Rādhārāṇī's pond. This movement sounded like a surging river during a heavy rainstorm.

As Rādhārāṇī was enjoying this sight, Kṛṣṇa seriously said, "My dear Rādhārāṇī, may Your pond become even more famous than Mine. I will always come here to bathe in it and to enjoy water sports. Indeed, this pond is as dear to Me as You."

Rādhārāṇī was touched deeply and replied, "And I, with My girlfriends, will also bathe in Your pond, even if You kill hundreds of Ariṣṭāsuras here. And anyone who, with intense devotion, bathes in My pond or resides on its bank will surely become very dear to Me."

"And dear to Me also," Kṛṣṇa added. "I will certainly bless such persons well!"

As the darkness enfolded them, Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* formed a circle and began their *rāsa* dance. He resembled a rain cloud, and Rādhārāṇī a flash of lightning. As They danced, They generated a torrential downpour of brilliant, transcendental joy. From that night on, Rādhārāṇī's pond (*kuṇḍa*) would be called Radha Kunda, and Kṛṣṇa's, Shyama Kunda. And anyone who would bathe even once in Her pond, or perform devotional service on its banks, would, by Her mercy, develop pure love for Kṛṣṇa. Such love would of course culminate in continuous divine ecstasy. Thus, Radha Kunda would become known as the most exalted pilgrimage spot in the world.

For this reason, countless pilgrims travel many miles just to bathe in its spiritually exalting waters. ☀

*Amala Bhakta Dāsa, well-known for his audio recordings of Kṛṣṇa conscious books, is the author of The Life of Tulasi Devi, Mystical Stories from the Mahabharata, and Mystical Stories from the Srimad-Bhagavatam.*

*Thousands of pilgrims will visit Radha Kunda on October 29, the anniversary of the appearance of this sacred site.*

# Māyāpur Festival 2003

Śrī Māyāpur Chandrodaya Mandir  
Māyāpur, West Bengal, India

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Māyāpur Festival 2003 is a festival of hearing and chanting, dedicated to His Holiness Tamāl Krishna Goswami
  - No festival fee
  - Free *prasādam* for all attendees
  - Free rooms for all Śrīla Prabhupāda disciples, *sannyāsīs*, and *gurukula* alumni
  - Many leaders giving seminars

## SCHEDULE

**March 1** / GBC Meetings End. Devotees Arrive.

Festival Inauguration Ceremony

**March 2-6** / Festival Seminars

**March 7-13** / Parikramā

**March 13** / Festivities Begin

**March 18** / Gaura Pūrṇimā

**March 19** / Jagannātha Mīśra Feast. Festival Ends

**March 20** / Kolkata (Calcutta) Mahā-Nagar Saṅkīrtana

For more information, visit [www.mayapur.info](http://www.mayapur.info),  
or email [bhakti.purusottama.swami@pamho.net](mailto:bhakti.purusottama.swami@pamho.net).



## THE MISSING TECHNOLOGY

(continued from page 10)

Now, you may say, “This ‘Kṛṣṇa’ is an Indian name or a Hindu name. Why should we chant ‘Kṛṣṇa’?”

But if you have any name of God, you can chant that also. Caitanya Mahāprabhu says that God has millions and billions of names. So any name of God is as good as “Kṛṣṇa.” It doesn’t matter.

Then why do we chant Hare Kṛṣṇa? Because we are following the footsteps of Lord Caitanya, and He chanted this holy name.

So we request you most humbly: There is no loss on your part, but the gain is immense. If you take to chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, then gradually your misconception of this life will be cleared off. You will understand your real identity, and you will act in that way. And the technology is so nice that you may remain in your business. That doesn’t matter. You simply have to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. Suppose you are walking on the street. If you chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, nobody will tax you, nobody will bother you. But if by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa you derive some

benefit, why do you neglect it? That is our submission.

This movement is for solving the problems of life, and it can be easily done. Anyone can accept it. It doesn’t matter whether one is Indian or American or Hindu or Muslim or Christian. It doesn’t matter. Simply chant this vibration: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

I shall thank you if you join us in *kīrtana* and at least for a few minutes chant this Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Thank you very much. 🌸

## “... INDEPENDENCE”

(continued from page 15)

to the intelligence platform and eventually to the spiritual platform. [To a disciple:] Find this verse: *indriyāṇi parāṇy āhur indriyebhyaḥ paraṁ manah manasas tu parā buddhir yo buddheḥ paratas tu saḥ.*

**Disciple (after repeating the Sanskrit):**

“The working senses are superior to dull matter; mind is higher than the senses; intelligence is higher than the mind; and he [the soul] is even higher than the intelligence.”

And now the Purport, by Śrīla Prabhupāda: “The senses are different outlets for the activities of lust. Lust is reserved within the body, but it is given vent through the senses. Therefore, the senses are superior to the body as a whole. Their outlets are not in use when there is superior consciousness, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In Kṛṣṇa consciousness the soul makes direct connection with the Supreme Personality of Godhead; therefore the bodily functions, as described here, ultimately end in the Supreme Soul. Bodily action means the functions of the senses, and stopping the senses means stopping all bodily actions. But since the mind is active, then, even though the body may be silent and at rest, the mind will act—as it does during dreaming. But above the mind there is the determination of the intelligence, and above the intelligence is the soul proper. If, therefore, the soul is directly engaged with the Supreme, naturally all other subordinates, namely the intelligence, mind, and the senses, will be automatically engaged. In the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* there

is a passage in which it is said that the objects of sense gratification are superior to the senses, and mind is superior to sense objects. If, therefore, the mind is directly engaged in the service of the Lord constantly, then there is no chance of the senses becoming engaged in other ways. This mental attitude has already been explained. If the mind is engaged in the transcendental service of the Lord, there is no chance of its being engaged in the lower propensities. In the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* the soul has been described as *mahān*, the great. Therefore the soul is above all—namely, the sense objects, the senses, the mind, and the intelligence. Therefore, directly understanding the constitutional position of the soul is the solution of the whole problem.

“With intelligence one has to seek out the constitutional position of the soul and then engage the mind always in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That solves the whole problem. A neophyte spiritualist is generally advised to keep aloof from the objects of the senses. One has to strengthen the mind by use of intelligence. If by intelligence once engages one’s mind in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, by complete surrender unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, then, automatically, the mind becomes stronger, and even though the senses are very strong, like serpents, they will be no more effective than serpents with broken fangs. But even though the soul is the master of intelligence and mind, and the senses also, still, unless it is strengthened by association with Kṛṣṇa in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, there is every chance of falling

down due to the agitated mind.”

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Hm. The yogic process is to control the mind. Our process is, immediately engage the mind in Kṛṣṇa—thinking of Kṛṣṇa, feeling for Kṛṣṇa, willing to act for Kṛṣṇa. Then everything will be all right. Then everything will be all right. If the mind is immediately engaged in serving the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, then on this side and that side, everything will be all right. *Sa vai manah kṛṣṇa-padāravindayoḥ. Padāravindayoḥ:* the mind is focused on the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. So this is our process: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare—engaging the mind, meditation.

**Disciple:** Śrīla Prabhupāda, Dr. Mize was saying that he holds to the philosophy of Kant.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** What is Kant’s philosophy?

**Dr. Mize:** It seems one of Kant’s major differences with the point of view of the Eastern or Indian philosophies, in particular, is that for him, the soul of man is not something eternal but something created.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** No. The soul is part and parcel of God. Now, God is not created; He is above creation. God created the cosmic manifestation. Before the creation of this cosmic manifestation, God was there. Therefore, He is not created. And the soul—being part and parcel of God, he is also not created.

**Dr. Mize:** The question that bothers me is, Then why would the soul fall? I understand your conception that the soul

# Māyāpur Institute of Higher Education

## 2002–2003 Schedule and Courses

**October 25**—Application deadline for Vaiṣṇava Training and Education (VTE) Bhakti-śāstrī Course

**November 8**—Śrīla Prabhupāda's Disappearance Day

**November 11**—Registration for VTE Bhakti-śāstrī Course

**November 12–February 20**—VTE Bhakti-śāstrī Course

**January 20**—Application deadline for MIHE semester

**February 2**—Registration for MIHE semester

**February 3–7**—First week of MIHE semester\*

**February 9–13**—Second week of MIHE semester

**February 14–19**—Third week of MIHE semester

**February 15**—Lord Nityānanda's Appearance Day (no classes)

**February 20–March 1**—GBC meetings

**February 21**—Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's Appearance Day

**February 22–27**—VTE Teacher Training Course 1

**February 23–27**—Fourth week of MIHE semester

**March 1–6**—VTE Teacher Training Course 2

**March 2–6**—Fifth week of the MIHE semester

**March 7–13**—Gaura Maṇḍala Parikramā

**March 13**—VTE Bhakti-śāstrī Teacher Training Course

**March 18**—Gaura Pūrṇimā

**March 20–27**—VTE Teacher Training Course 4

### COURSES

*Learning the Skill and Benefits of Forgiving*—Bhaktitīrtha Swami  
*Uttama-bhakti*—Bhānu Swami

*Caring for Devotees: The Secret of Successful*

*Community Building*—Rādhānātha Swami

*Preaching Is the Essence: Essential Skills for*

*Effective Preaching*—Śacinandana Swami

*Nṛsiṃhadeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead*—Śrīdhara Swami

*From Śraddhā to Premā*—Vedavyāsa Priya Swami

*Basic Photography Skills*—Amogha Dāsa

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is part of the spiritual sky originally, or part and parcel of God. And yet he somehow falls out of this blissful condition, due to pride, much like the Christian thesis that the devil fell out of heaven due to pride. So it seems puzzling why the soul would be so silly, so foolish, so insane, as to do such a thing.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That is his independence.

**Dr. Mize:** Independence.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** If instead of using his independence properly he misuses his independence, he falls. He falls down on account of his independence. For instance, you have got independence. You are sitting here. You can go immediately. You may not like to hear me. That independence you have got. I have got it, also. I may choose not to talk with you. So that independence is always there. Similarly, as part and parcel of God, it is the duty of the soul to be always engaged in the service of the Lord. For instance, this finger is part and parcel of my body. Whatever I am ordering, it is immediately carrying out. I say, "Make it like this." [Śrīla Prabhupāda's index finger circles and swoops.] It will—it will do that. But this finger is dead matter—it is acting mechanically. The brain directs the finger, and the finger acts immediately, like a machine. This whole body is just like a machine. But the soul is not a machine, not a mechanical part. It is the spiritual part. So therefore, although I am directing the finger and, being a machine, it is working, at the same time I may direct a friend or servant to do something, and he may not do it. So when the soul misuses his independence, then he falls down. That is material life. Material life means misusing the independence of the soul. Take, for example, a son. A son's duty is to obey his father. But he may not obey. That is his madness. So when the soul misuses his independence and becomes mad, he is sent to this material world.

**Dr. Mize:** It is puzzling to me that one would be so foolish.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** By independence you can become foolish. Otherwise, there is no meaning of independence. Independence means you can do whatever you like. ❀

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## Evidence for Kṛṣṇa

PEOPLE WHO DOUBT there's life after death sometimes say, "No one has ever come back to tell us about it."

But what if someone claimed to have come back? Would we believe him? What kind of proof would we want?

Trying to prove that Kṛṣṇa is God presents a similar challenge.

Someone might ask, "If Kṛṣṇa is God, why doesn't He come and prove it?"

Well, there's evidence that He does come. For example, when He came five thousand years ago, millions of eyewitnesses saw Him, He did things only God can do, and Vyāsadeva, a reporter with impeccable credentials, kept track of it all.

Vyāsadeva recorded not only Kṛṣṇa's matchless deeds but also the testimonials of the greatest spiritual authorities of the time, a time when large numbers of people pursued spiritual realization with every ounce of their being. The consensus of these saints and sages—masters of spiritual learning and discipline—was that Kṛṣṇa is God.

People today tend to doubt the credibility of Vyāsadeva's writings, thanks in large part to a smear campaign started by the British during their takeover of India. Yet despite their efforts, the light of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and other books from Vyāsadeva's prolific pen keeps shining. As Devāmṛta Swami shows in this issue, great Western thinkers who received the *Vedas* without prejudice were astounded. Vyāsadeva's writings were superior to anything they had ever come across.

But what about the "stories" Vyāsadeva wrote? Was there really a boy named Kṛṣṇa who lifted mountains and killed monsters? Scholars for whom Vyāsadeva's "mythology" seems incompatible with

his erudite philosophical works might propose that Vyāsadeva didn't write both things. But that argument fails if we look at just one example of his work: *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. There Vyāsadeva has written both profound philosophy and—as the climax, no less—charming stories about Kṛṣṇa.

The great leaders of India's spiritual lineages since Kṛṣṇa's time have concluded that a great philosopher like Vyāsadeva wouldn't frivolously insert fanciful stories into his treatise on the Absolute Truth. Vyāsadeva's gravity alone is solid evidence that his stories of Kṛṣṇa's exploits tell of actual events.

Like many nineteenth-century scholars, anyone who reads the Vedic literature with an open mind is sure to be awed. But readers need help, too. Traditionally, a student of the *Vedas* gets guidance from a self-realized person coming in a line of authorized teachers. Four main lines have directed India's spiritual culture for hundreds of years, and each of them asserts that Kṛṣṇa, or His expansion Viṣṇu, is God.

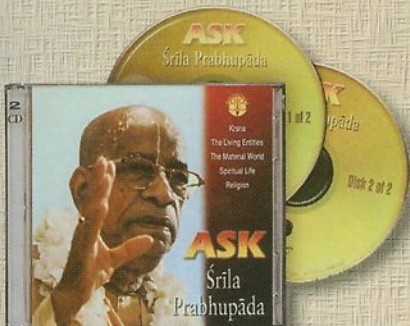
I find it disturbing to read media coverage of Kṛṣṇa conscious events that refers to devotees as worshipers of "the god Kṛṣṇa." For the average person in the West, the writer might as well be saying we worship "the god Zeus." Why would anyone take seriously a group of people who have arbitrarily chosen to worship one god out of a whole stable of contenders?

But our choice is far from arbitrary. It's founded in the Vedic scriptures, the credibility of saints of respected spiritual lines, and the realized conviction, persuasive writings, and pure character of Kṛṣṇa's emissary His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. —*Nāgarāja Dāsa*

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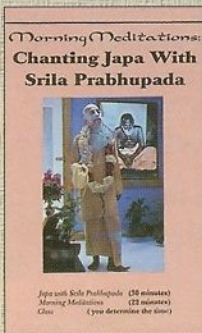
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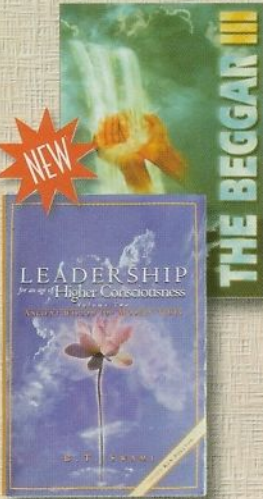
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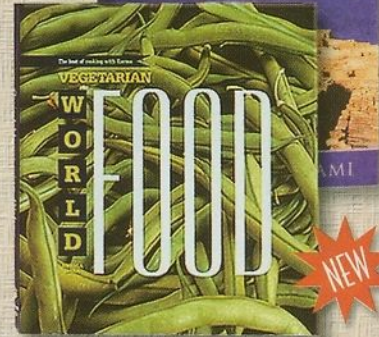
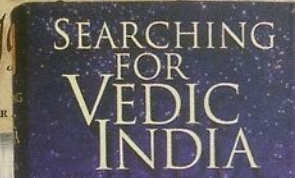
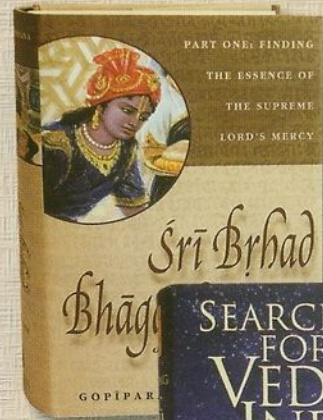
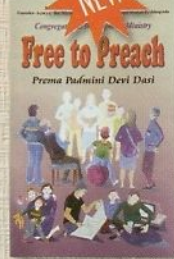
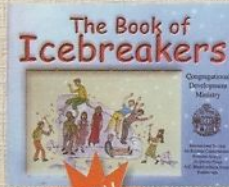
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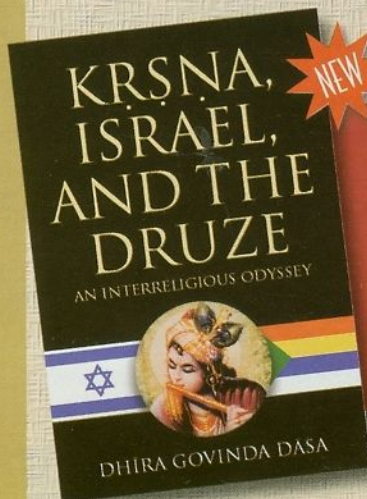
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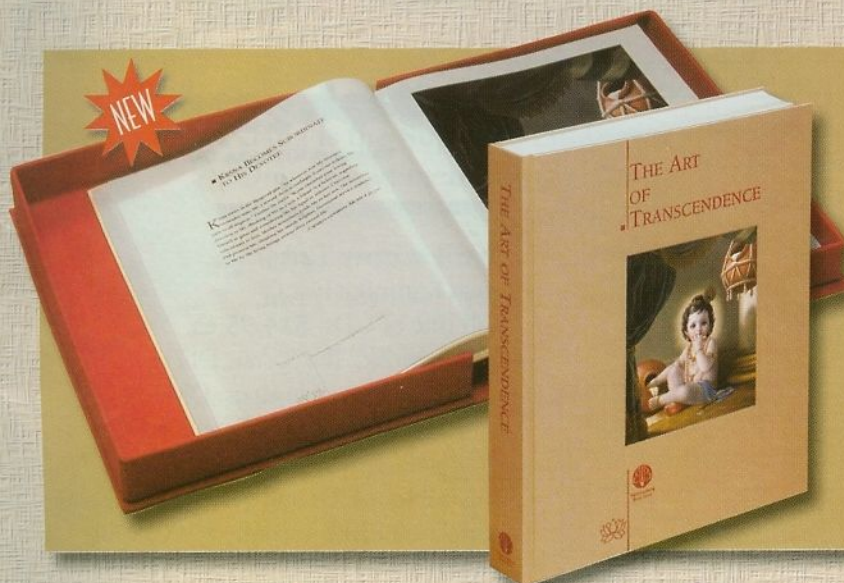
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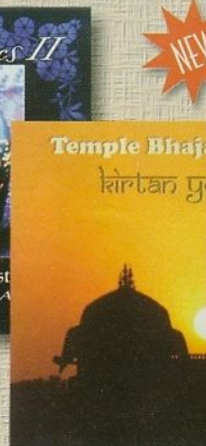
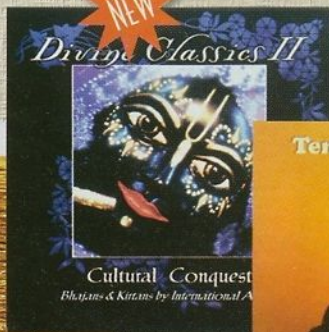
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# Vedic Thoughts

Yoga necessitates controlling the senses, and *bhakti-yoga*, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is the process of purifying the senses. When the senses are purified, they are automatically controlled. One cannot stop the activities of the senses by artificial means, but if one purifies the senses by engaging in the service of the Lord, the senses not only can be controlled from rubbish engagement, but can be engaged in the Lord's transcendental service.

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta  
Swami Prabhupāda  
*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.15.45, Purport

It is a great wonder that Kṛṣṇa, being impartial, is fully partial to His devotees.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura  
*Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.54, Purport

As soon as one becomes inimical to Kṛṣṇa and desires sense gratification, he is struck down by the illusory energy of the Lord.

Śrīla Jagadānanda Paṇḍita  
*Prema Vivārta*

Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Godhead. One should meditate on Him, relish the taste of reciprocating loving exchanges with Him, worship Him, and offer sacrifices to Him.

*Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad, Pūrva* 50

It is the living entity's constitutional position to be an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa because he is the marginal energy of Kṛṣṇa and a manifestation simultaneously one with and different from the Lord.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu  
*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 20.108

My dear Uddhava, the unalloyed devotional service rendered to Me by My devotees brings Me under their control. I cannot be thus controlled by those engaged in mystic yoga, Sāṅkhya philosophy, pious work, Vedic study, austerity, or renunciation.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa  
*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.14.20

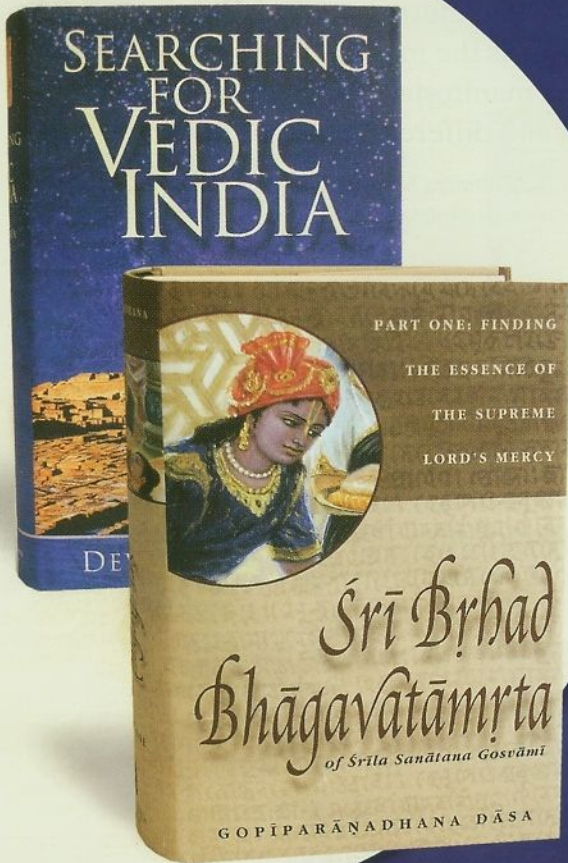
Even if one distributes ten million cows in charity during an eclipse of the sun, lives at the confluence of the Ganges and Yamuna for millions of years, or gives a mountain of gold in sacrifice to the *brāhmaṇas*, he does not earn one hundredth part of the merit derived from chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Vedic scripture  
Quoted in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā* 3.79, Purport

The lotus feet of Lord Viṣṇu are the supreme objective of all the demigods. Those lotus feet are as enlightening as the sun in the sky.

*Ṛg Veda* 1.22.20

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