

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



BACK TO GODHEAD

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Lifting Zulu Spirits

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FEATURES

Founder's Lecture

7 The Two Souls in the Body

Śrīla Prabhupāda explains that only with the help of the other soul in our bodies can we do anything.

13 Lessons from Death

Devotees of Kṛṣṇa respond to others' suffering with both sympathy and philosophical insight.

Spiritual Places

17 Śrīla Prabhupāda's Gifts to Malaysia

During a five-day visit in 1971, Śrīla Prabhupāda laid the foundation for the many Kṛṣṇa conscious programs thriving there today.

Lord Caitanya's Eight Teachings

27 TEACHINGS 4 & 5:

Resolute in Purpose

Embodying the mood of the perfect chanter of Kṛṣṇa's names, Lord Caitanya rejects everything but pure service to the Lord.

33 Does Religion Cause War?

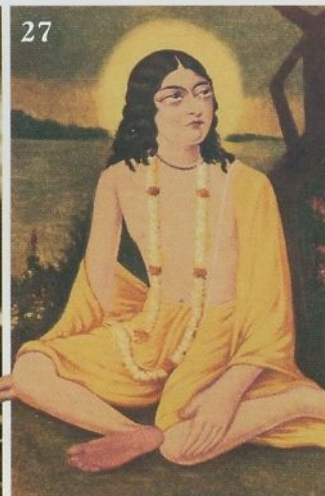
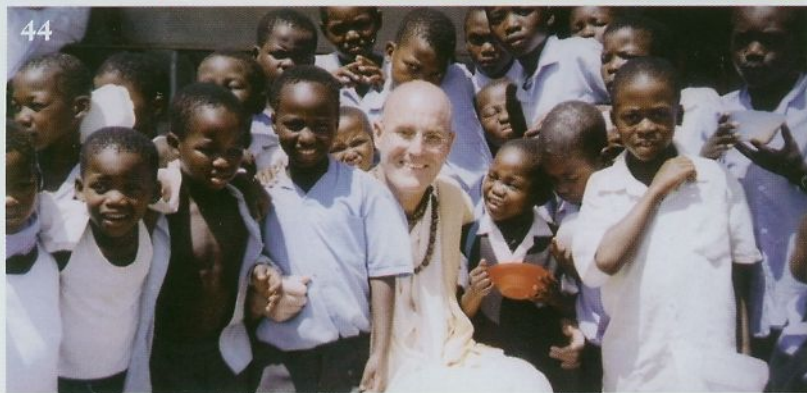
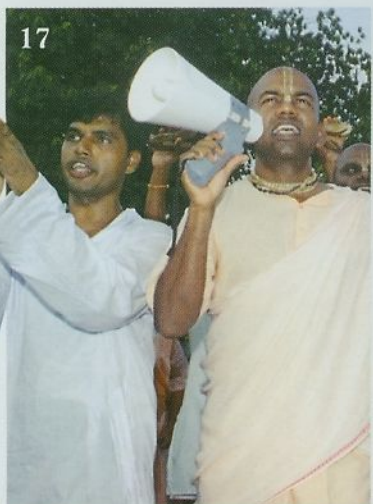
Religion often has nothing to do with what are labeled "religious conflicts."

44 Lifting Zulu Spirits

Braving anti-white sentiment—which runs strong among victims of apartheid—devotees of Kṛṣṇa enter Zulu villages, armed with *prasādam* and the holy names.

50 The Bittersweet Taste Of Spiritual Separation

A poetic rendition of Arjuna's lament on the departure of Lord Kṛṣṇa.



ead

DEPARTMENTS

Letters 4

Glossary 11

Śrīla Prabhupāda Speaks Out 15

*“Independence Means You Can Do
Whatever You Like”*

Book Section: Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 37

The Appearance of Nara-Nārāyaṇa Rṣi

Calendar 42

Hare Kṛṣṇa Mantra 43

Gatherings 56

BTG Index, 2002 57

Centers Around the World 59

From the Editor 62

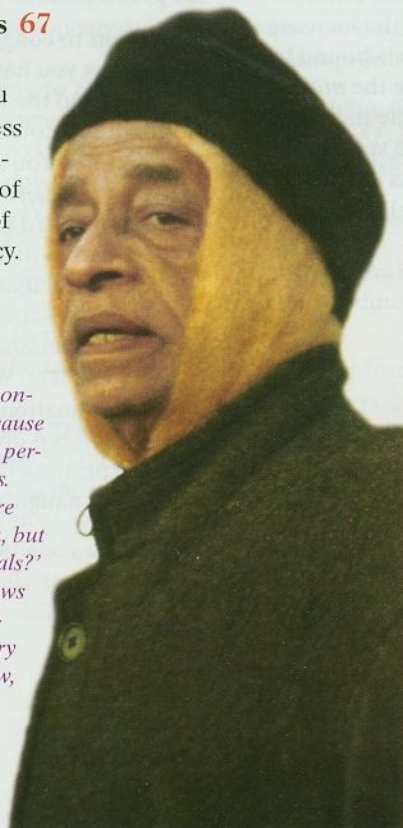
Greater Than God

The Krishna.com Store 63

Vedic Thoughts 67

COVER In a Zulu village, His Holiness Indradyumna Swami stands in a sea of happy recipients of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s mercy. (Photo by Śrī Nāthjī Dāsa.)

“A government constructing a city also constructs a prison—because they know that some persons will be criminals. One may say, ‘You are constructing a prison, but where are the criminals?’ The government knows—there will be criminals. So if the ordinary government can know, why can’t God know?”—p. 31



WELCOME



IN THIS ISSUE we present Kālakaṅṭha Dāsa’s article “The Bittersweet Taste of Spiritual Separation” to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the passing of His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder/ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Though not directly about Śrīla Prabhupāda, the article, most of which is a poem, shows the intense longing devotees feel when the Lord—or His pure representative—leaves their vision. Disciples and followers of Śrīla Prabhupāda honor the anniversary of his departure by rededicating themselves to his mission, guaranteeing themselves eventual reunion with him.

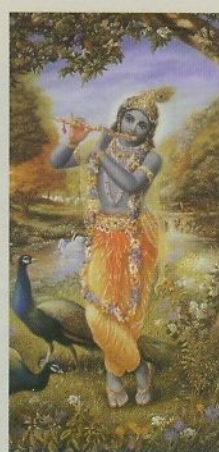
“Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Gifts to Malaysia” highlights some of Prabhupāda’s contributions to the world during the twelve years he spearheaded the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. Prabhupāda spent only a few days in Malaysia, but he successfully planted seeds of Kṛṣṇa consciousness that are bearing fruit today.

Prabhupāda delivered his supreme spiritual gifts first to the West and then to the rest of the world. Those who feel indebted to him try to repay him by following his example. In this issue we travel with a group of intrepid disciples and granddisciples as they brave racial tension to carry the message of Kṛṣṇa to Zulu homelands.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.—Nāgarāja Dāsa, Editor

OUR PURPOSES

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



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



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



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

BACK TO GODHEAD

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Hare Krishna Movement

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(under the direction of His Divine Grace
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Letters

Invaluable Support

Thank you for Arcana-siddhī Devī
Dasī's article "Dealing with Depres-
sion" [July/August]. The edition
landed on my doorstep a week after
my mother's brother died tragically.
The entire family was, and is, in tur-
moil, but are thankfully taking some
shelter of the holy name.

I have been a practicing devotee
for eight years, and never before had
the distress and temporary nature of
the material world been so obvious to
me. My mother's pain, and my own, is
something I didn't know how deal
with, and your article helped me
understand this, and also be open to
seeking help spiritually or profession-
ally. The devotees' support and
guidance is absolutely invaluable,
especially in times of distress.

Nima Suchak
London, England

The Chanting Cure

I read the article "Dealing with De-
pression" in your recent issue of
BTG. The article is very interesting
and is indeed a motivator for all. In
today's world, where all are hanker-
ing for possessions and the increase
of material assets, there is bound to
be depression. Chanting the *mahā-*
mantra not only takes the individual
from the material to the spiritual
platform, but also assists in identify-
ing the self with the soul and not the
body.

Ramnath Murali
Mumbai, India

Timely Invitation

I've always loved BTG. Over the
years, while feeling separation from
devotees, struggling at the university,
BTG has been the window to the
Kṛṣṇa conscious realm. Now, in the
intensity of separation from my spiri-

tual master, Tamāl Krishna Goswami,
again BTG offers a helping hand.

Receiving the May/June BTG felt
like receiving an invitation when I
most needed it. Śrīla Prabhupāda's
words in his lecture "Come to My
Eternal Place" and Kālakaṅṭha Pra-
bhū's wonderful editorial felt like the
blessings of Prabhupāda and Tamāl
Kṛṣṇa Goswami on us—that we could
all meet again in Tamāl Kṛṣṇa Go-
swami's room, relishing his association
along with the sweetest *kīrtana*. All this
in a delightful magazine called *Back to
Godhead!*

The July/August BTG, with the fea-
ture article about the life of Śrīla
Tamāl Kṛṣṇa Goswami, was also
incredible. We are very grateful to
Satyarāja Prabhu for writing such a
touching, brilliant article. Tamāl Kṛṣṇa
Goswami has been glorified in a
dynamic way.

To everyone at BTG, including the
Web site designers, thank you so very,
very much. BTG is truly something out
of this world.

Yaśodā Dulāla Dāsa
Johannesburgh, South Africa

Top Notch

I just want to congratulate you all for
the success you have had with *Back to
Godhead* and the new Kṛṣṇa Web site.
Both are top notch in terms of quality
and quantity. You are the empowered
agents of the Lord, and I am glad that
due to your hard work you have
enlightened so many fallen souls,
including myself and my brother Art.

Of course I also want to offer my
respectful obeisances unto Prabhu-
pāda's lotus feet. Without his courage
and determination there would be no
ISKCON. Keep up the good work and
keep on printing many beautiful
pictures of naughty butter-stealing
Kṛṣṇa.

Greg Madej
Via the Internet

Truth Triumphs

I am writing to express my sincere blessings to this most extraordinary magazine. I become ever more indebted to everyone there after every article that I read, especially when I read an explanation of an aspect of the eternal faith that I may have not understood. I say with Lord Nārāyaṇa in my heart that I wish the best for your magazine.

Kalyan namastu! (May you prosper.)

Vijay bhava! (May you be victorious.)

Satyam eva jayate! (Only truth triumphs.) Your magazine is the truth to this statement.

Jeremy Hewett
Via the Internet

First Humans

According to the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the living entities are all created by the Pracetās. Who was the first human being on this planet? Science says that on this planet, there were first trees and animals and so forth. According to the *Vedas*, were humans created in some mystical way suddenly out of the dust, as Lord Brahmā appeared mystically?

We know, according to *Bhagavad-gītā*, that the Vedic science was passed down from Brahmā to the sun-god, who again passed it down to Ikṣvāku, the king of the earth. Was he the first human being here? He can only be a king when there is population. Is there any information existing about this?

Hemaśarīra Dāsa
Germany

DRUTAKARMĀ DĀSA REPLIES:

“The rebirth of Prajāpati Dakṣa as the son of the Pracetās, and the progeny of Dakṣa’s daughters, who initiated the races of demigods, demons, human beings, animals, serpents, birds, and so on—all this is described.”

(*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 12.12.17) This verse appears to give the proper sequence of events. Dakṣa is the son of the Pracetās, and Dakṣa’s daughters, who were given in marriage to different demigods and sages, are the generators of the human population on earth and other planets.

This populating of the earth takes place after the end of each *manvantara* period in a day of Brahma. There are fourteen such *manvantara* periods, and the human population on earth is regenerated after the devastation that normally follows each one.

The humans and other species are the offspring of the reproductive processes of the daughters of Dakṣa. So it is not that God is creating the human beings from dust.

All the details of how exactly the demigods generate the human population, and who exactly the first human on earth was, I cannot say, based on what I currently know from the Vedic literature.

Human populations on earth are also generated after each night of Brahmā and after each life of Brahmā. I assume the process would be similar to that which takes place after the end of each *manvantara*, namely that demigods from the higher material regions of the universe produce the populations through their reproductive activities.

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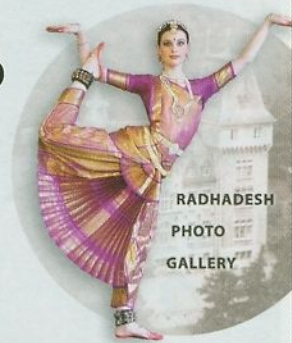
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The Two Souls in



the Body

*Although we occupy the body,
we should acknowledge
that it belongs to someone else.*

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

Founder-Ācārya of the International Society
for Krishna Consciousness

*upadraṣṭānumantā ca
bhartā bhoktā maheśvaraḥ
paramātmēti cāpy ukto
dehe 'smin puruṣaḥ paraḥ*

“Yet in this body there is another, a transcendental enjoyer, who is the Lord, the supreme proprietor, who exists as the overseer and permitter, and who is known as the Supersoul.”—*Bhagavad-gītā* 13.23

THERE ARE two *puruṣas*, or enjoyers. One *puruṣa* is the living entity, *ātmā*, and the other *puruṣa* is the Supersoul, Paramātmā. Sometimes the Māyāvādī philosophers, or impersonalists, do not distinguish between *ātmā* and Paramātmā. But here it is distinctly explained by the Supreme Personality of Godhead that there are two *puruṣas*. One *puruṣa* is enjoying the fruits of his activities, *prakṛti-sthaḥ*. Being influenced by the quality of *prakṛti*, material nature, he is *sad-asad-yoni-janmasu*: he is taking birth in different types and species of life. And the other *puruṣa* is *upadraṣṭā*, the overseer. He simply sees how the other *puruṣa* is working. And according to the living entity *puruṣa*'s



karma, or work, the overseer gives the result. The overseer is the witness.

If the living entity *puruṣa* works piously, then he gets a certain type of body. *Janmaīśvarya-śruta-śrī*. He gets a nice body, born in a rich family or a *brāhmaṇa* family or a scholarly family. He gets opulence, a beautiful body, a good education. These distinctions are there because the Paramātmā *puruṣa* is observing the activities of the *jīvātmā puruṣa*. According to the individual soul's karma, and according to his desire, the Supersoul gives different types of body.

In another place it is said, *īśvaraḥ sarva-bhūtānāṃ hṛd-deśe 'rjuna tiṣṭhati* [*Bhagavad-gītā* 18.61]: the Supreme Personality of Godhead as Paramātmā, Antaryāmī, is situated in everyone's heart. *Bhrāmayan sarva-bhūtāni yantrārūdhāni māyayā* [*Bhagavad-gītā* 18.61]: He is directing *māyā*, the illusory energy, to give each living entity a particular type of body, and the living entity is moving with that body.

For example, according to the price, you can get a car. You can get a Rolls Royce, a Chevrolet, a Cadillac, a Ford, an Ambassador, a Jeep. According to your ability to pay for it, you get a certain type of car, and you can travel. Similarly, according to your karma, good and bad, you get a type of body. There are 8,400,000 species of body. You get one of them and suffer and enjoy.

Tathā dehāntara-prāptiḥ [*Bhagavad-gītā* 2.13]. You have to change your body. Next you can get a cat body or a dog body, a tree body or a demigod body, a Brahmā body or an Indra body, an Indian body, an American body, a serpent body, an insect body, a

The metaphor of “two birds in the tree,” from the Upaniṣads, shows that within the body are two souls: the individual soul (jīvātmā) and the Supreme Soul (Paramātmā). Through the agency of the body, the jīvātmā enjoys and suffers the results of his work, while the Paramātmā, though observing and permitting the jīvātmā's actions and reactions, is unaffected by the body.

We are trying to educate people to become Kṛṣṇa conscious so that they may not have to accept another material body.

• • •

bird body—any. There is no guarantee which body you will get. That will be awarded to you according to your karma. Unfortunately, people do not know this. Just like animals, they do not know how to get a better body.

*aśītiṁ caturaś caiva
lakṣāṁś tāñ jīva-jātiṣu
bhramadbhiḥ puruṣaṁ prāpyaṁ
mānuṣyaṁ janma-paryayāt*

This is a statement from the *Padma Purāṇa*. *Janma-paryayāt*: by evolution we come to the human form of body, and in the human form of body we have the chance to develop Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If we do not do that, then we are missing the opportunity.

You shall get your next body according to your karma. But if you become Kṛṣṇa conscious in this body, and if you try to understand Kṛṣṇa, then *tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma naiti* [*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.9]—after giving up this body, you do not accept another material body. That is the purpose of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. We are trying to educate people to become Kṛṣṇa conscious so that they may not have to accept another material body.

SOUL AND SUPERSOUL

The other *puruṣa* described here is Paramātmā. We are *ātmā*, soul, and He is Paramātmā, Supersoul. We are *īśvara*, controller; He is Parameśvara, supreme controller. We are not Param-eśvara. We are Brahman, spirit, and He is Parabrahman, supreme spirit.

The word *param*, “supreme,” is used. But sometimes men with little intelligence cannot distinguish between Paramātmā and *ātmā*, Parameśvara and *īśvara*.

Here another phrase is used: *bhoktā maheśvaraḥ*. We are not *bhoktā*, the enjoyer. We are trying to become *bhoktā*, but we are becoming baffled. It is not possible. We cannot become *bhoktā*. We can be the enjoyed, the predominated, but not the predominant. One thing is enjoyed, and the other the enjoyer. The Supreme Lord is the enjoyer. *Bhoktāraṁ yajña-tapasāṁ sarva-loka-maheśvaram* [*Bhagavad-gītā* 5.29].

Maheśvara, or *mahā īśvara*. *Mahā* means great. *Īśvara* means controller. We can control a few men, but the name Maheśvara means that God controls all living entities. *Nityo nityānāṁ cetanaś cetanānām* [*Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 2.2.13]. We may be very proud of controlling a factory, a few thousand workers, but we are not Maheśvara. The Maheśvara is Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who in His Paramātmā feature is situated in every body. *Paramātmēti cāpy ukto dehe 'smin*. *Asmin dehe* means “within this body.”

There are two souls. In this chapter Kṛṣṇa says, *kṣetra-jñāṁ cāpi mām vid-dhi sarva-kṣetreṣu bhārata* [*Bhagavad-gītā* 13.3]: “I am also the *kṣetra-jñā*.” The body is the *kṣetra*, or field, and the soul is *kṣetra-jñā*, one who knows about the body. You have your body, and I have my body. I know it is my body, and you know it is your body, just as you know your apartment or your living room. But there is a partner in our body. That is Kṛṣṇa, Paramātmā. I can take care of my body. I am the owner of this body. But Kṛṣṇa is the owner of all bodies.

The tenant is the occupier, and the landlord is the owner. Similarly, I am the occupier of this body, and Kṛṣṇa, Paramātmā, is the owner of this body. To understand that is knowledge. I am not the owner of this body. There-

fore Kṛṣṇa’s name is Hṛṣikeśa. *Hṛṣika* means the senses, and *īśa* means the controller. We are claiming, “This is my hand,” but this is not my hand. This is Kṛṣṇa’s hand. The tenant may occupy the room, but he is not the owner of the room. The owner is a different person. Similarly, we may occupy this body or any body, but we are not the owner of this body.

As soon as we know, “I am not the owner of the body; I am the occupier of the body,” that is knowledge. We are falsely claiming that we are the owner of the body. But we are not the owner of the body. I cannot therefore repair anything. If any part or limb of my body goes wrong, I do not know how to repair it. But Kṛṣṇa can do it because He is the owner, Hṛṣikeśa.

Hṛṣikeṇa hṛṣikeśa-sevanaṁ bhaktir ucyate. You have to pay the owner of your apartment. Similarly, we have to serve Kṛṣṇa for allowing us to occupy this body. That is devotion.

ALL KṚṢṆA’S HANDS AND LEGS

It is also explained: *sarvataḥ pāñi-pādaṁ tat*. The Supreme Lord has His hands and legs everywhere. How is that? Because your hands and my hands are Kṛṣṇa’s hands. Therefore they should be used for Kṛṣṇa.

In ordinary understanding, because I think these are my hands I use my hand for my eating, not for others’ eating. But actually all hands and legs belong to Kṛṣṇa and should be used for Kṛṣṇa. That is called *bhakti*. If you don’t use your hands and legs in that way, that is against the laws of nature.

Kṛṣṇa, the Supersoul, is *anumantā*: without His permission you cannot do anything. Because everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa, how can you use something without His permission? Take, for ex-

ample, a father and a son, a little child. The child wants to do something and wants permission from the father, and the father gives it. In our childhood I remember that even for going to the privy I wanted permission from my mother. "Can I go?" That is nature. Mother is not restricting me; still, I am asking her permission. "Can I go? Can I go?" I remember it. That is natural. Similarly, we cannot do anything without the permission of the Super-soul within the heart. Therefore He is *anumantā*.

When we do something wrong, why has Kṛṣṇa as Antaryāmī, as Paramātmā, given permission? That question may be raised. Because I cannot do anything without His permission, He must give permission for me to do something wrong. That has already been explained.

*puruṣaḥ prakṛti-stho hi
bhūṅkte prakṛti-jān guṇān
kāraṇaṁ guṇa-saṅgo 'sya
sad-asad-yoni-janmasu*

"The living entity in material nature thus follows the ways of life, enjoying the three modes of nature. This is due to his association with that material nature. Thus he meets with good and evil among various species." [Bhagavad-gītā 13.22] Kṛṣṇa can give you permission, but you will have to take the enjoyment and suffering. You insist on getting permission: "I want to do this." And without permission, you cannot do it. Therefore Kṛṣṇa gives you permission: "All right, do it, but at your risk." Kṛṣṇa does not want that you should do it, but you want to do it. Therefore He gives permission. Kṛṣṇa wants us to surrender to Him: *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ saraṇam* [Bhagavad-gītā 18.66]. That is His demand. But our demand is different.

"I shall not surrender, Sir. I want to do this."

"All right, do it at your own risk."

But if you follow the instruction of Kṛṣṇa, then He takes charge of you. *Ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi*. So you do sinful or pious acts and enjoy the effect, but when you follow the instruction of Kṛṣṇa, there is no such distinction. Your actions are tran-

scendental. That is called Brahman, and it is above the *guṇas*, the three modes of material nature.

*mām ca yo 'vyabhicāreṇa
bhakti-yogena sevate
sa guṇān samatīyaitān
brahma-bhūyāya kalpate*

Kṛṣṇa says, "Anyone engaged in rendering service unto Me is not affected by the activities. He is immune from the result of all activities." [Bhagavad-gītā 14.26] The same point is made in many places.

If you want to act for your satisfaction, Kṛṣṇa will give you permission, but you will have to enjoy or suffer the effects. It is very simple to understand. So therefore Kṛṣṇa is called *anumantā*, the one who gives permission: "Yes, you can take. You can do it."

TWO BIRDS IN A TREE

It is figuratively explained in the *Upaniṣads* that there are two birds [souls] in this tree [the body]. One is observing, and the other is enjoying. The observing bird is the Paramātmā, Kṛṣṇa. He is *upadraṣṭā*: He is simply seeing your activities and giving you the effect. And He is *anumantā*. What you are doing now, Kṛṣṇa does not want it. But because you wanted persistently to do it, He gives permission—because without His permission, you cannot do it. That is the conclusion.

He is the maintainer. You cannot get anything without His mercy. There may be ample supply of the necessities of life by the grace of Kṛṣṇa, and there may be scarcity. People are now complaining about overpopulation. There is no question of overpopulation. Kṛṣṇa is quite competent, able to maintain everyone. But as you become godless, as you become disobedient to the laws of God, there will be restriction. You cannot have the full supply of the necessities of life.

That time has already come. All these rascals, godless rascals, are now suffering. The only remedy is to become a devotee. Kṛṣṇa is *bhartā*: He can maintain many millions. There is no question of overpopulation. He can maintain. But nature will not supply. Nature will restrict supply if you

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."

become goddess. Nature is very strong, strict. *Daivī hy eṣā guṇamayī mama māyā duratyayā* [*Bhagavad-gītā* 7.14]. Kṛṣṇa will restrict the supply.

In this age, Kali-yuga, people are becoming degraded, and the supply will be reduced. There will be no supply of milk. There will be no supply of sugar. That is stated in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. There will be no supply of rice, no supply of wheat. Now you can get these things, either on the black

market or on the white market, but the time is coming when there will be no supply. You will be forced to eat beef. Now it is opening here—beef shop, big, big beef shop. The time has already come, gradually, and it will increase, unless you take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

*kaler doṣa-nidhe rājann
asti hy eko mahān guṇaḥ
kīrtanād eva kṛṣṇasya
mukta-saṅgaḥ paraṁ vrajet*

Kali-yuga is a time of suffering. Being godless, people cannot get a comfortable life in Kali-yuga. And Kali-yuga means godlessness. *Man-dāḥ sumanda-matayo manda-bhāgyā hy upadrutāḥ* [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.1.10]. Therefore everyone should take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness to save himself from the onslaught of Kali-yuga, which will increase day by day.

Thank you very much. ❁

**“Hmm . . . what will I give my loved ones this Christmas?
Fruitcake? . . . Slippers? . . . Ever-increasing happiness?”**



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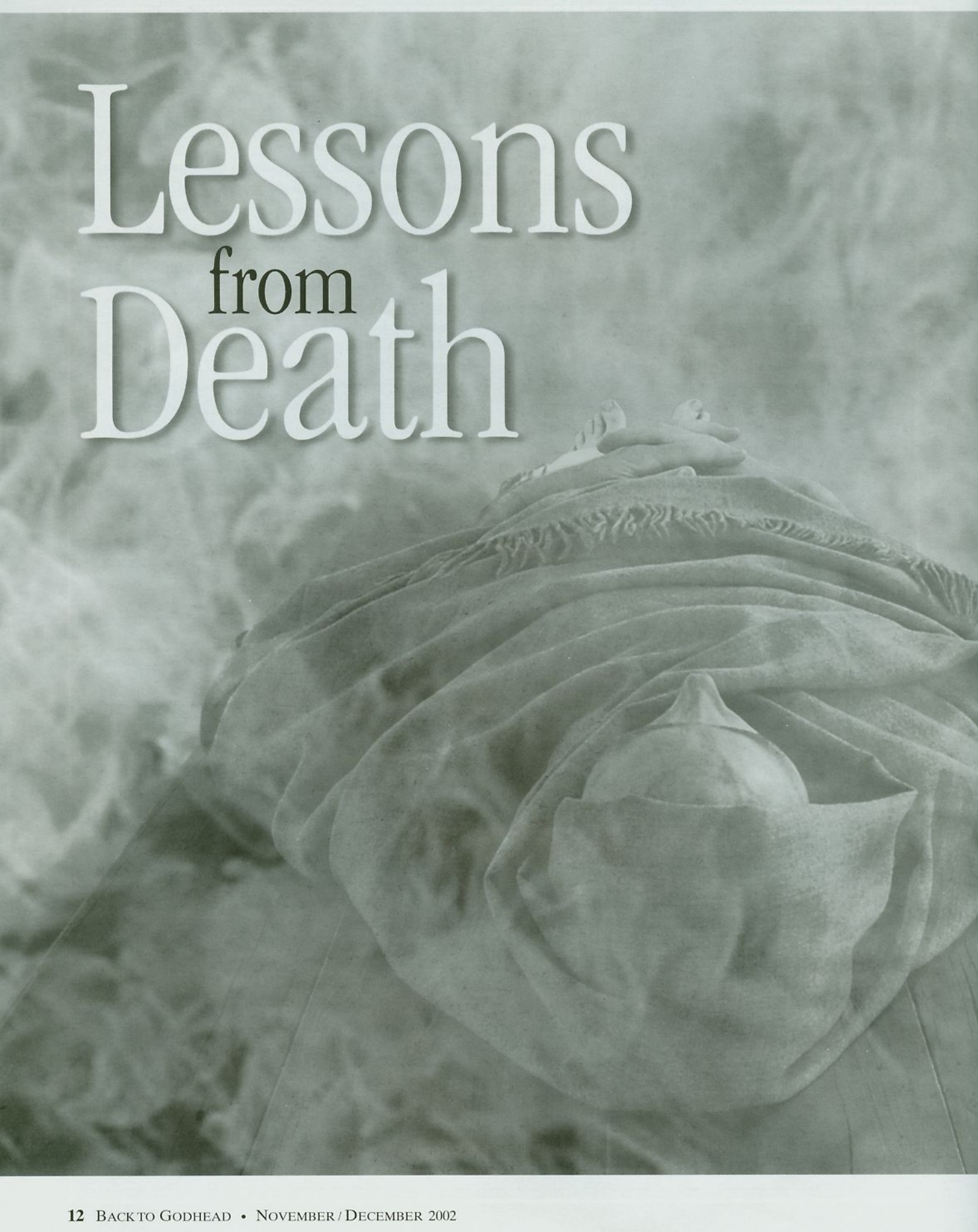
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Glossary

- Ācārya**—a spiritual master who teaches by example.
- Balarāma**—Lord Kṛṣṇa's first expansion, who acts in the role of Lord Kṛṣṇa's elder brother.
- Battle of 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 Ṭhākura**—the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda.
- Bhakti-yoga**—linking with the Supreme Lord through devotional service.
- Caitanya Mahāprabhu**—the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa who appeared five hundred years ago to teach the chanting of the names of God as the religion for the present age.
- Dharma**—(1) ordained duties or religious principles; (2) one's eternal, natural occupation (i.e., devotional service to the Lord).
- Godhead**—the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Reality, progressively realized first as the impersonal all-pervasive oneness, more fully as the Supersoul within the heart of every living being, and ultimately as the all-opulent Supreme Person.
- Gurukula**—a school where children learn the philosophy and practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness along with regular academic subjects (literally “the place of the guru”).
- Hare Kṛṣṇa**—the great mantra Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.
- ISKCON**—the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.
- Japa**—individual chanting of names of God, usually while counting on beads.
- Kali-yuga**—in the endlessly repeated cycle of four cosmic ages, the present and worst age, the Age of Quarrel, of which 5,000 of 432,000 years have passed.
- Karma**—material action; its inevitable reaction; or the law by which such action and reaction are governed.
- Kirtana**—congregational singing of names of God, usually accompanied by cymbals (*karatālas*) and drums (*mṛdaṅgas*).
- Kṛṣṇa**—the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His original transcendental form (see “Godhead”).
- Mahābhārata**—the epic history of ancient India, a history in which the *Bhagavad-gītā* appears as the most important and well-known text.
- Māyā**—illusion; the energy of the Supreme Lord that deludes living entities into forgetting their spiritual nature and forgetting God.
- Māyāvādī**—one who regards the Absolute Truth as ultimately impersonal.
- 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 *brahmacāris* (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.

Lessons from Death

A black and white photograph of a person lying in bed, covered with a blanket. The person's head is visible, resting on a pillow. In the foreground, there is a large, dark, textured object that resembles a flower or a piece of fabric, possibly a rose, which is partially covered by the blanket. The overall mood is somber and contemplative.

“My co-workers’ reaction to this incident pushed me to examine my own attitude toward suffering.”

by Karṇāmṛta Dāsa

EARLY THIS YEAR law enforcement officers, acting on a tip, visited the Tri-State Crematory on sixteen-acres in Noble, Georgia, owned by the Marsh family. When police found a skull and a torso floating in a lake on the property, they kept looking and eventually unearthed more than three hundred bodies in various states of decomposition.

For many years, the Marshes had accepted bodies for cremation but had instead dumped them, still in body bags, into shallow “graves,” heaped on other bodies. The gruesome sights rivaled the worst horror movie and traumatized workers and family members of the deceased. Many witnesses to the gory scene needed extensive counseling.

The story touched a nerve with my usually placid co-workers. Sympathizing with the deep grief of family and friends of the deceased, many were incensed and spoke out with anger. Every day the news media bombard us with so much violence and human misery that we tend to become desensitized to others’ suffering. I know I am. But my co-workers’ reaction to the incident pushed me to examine my own attitude toward suffering, and to consider my responsibility to share relevant, compassionately applied spiritual knowledge as I’ve learned it from Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Generally speaking, I see that uninformed people, lacking knowledge of the eternal soul, fear death and don’t know the purpose of life. This cloud of uncertainty surrounding life and death causes unnecessary anxiety and misery. Ironically, to live joyfully and peacefully, we must know what death is, and understand how to die.

The Tri-State Crematory news made me think that although many people in the United States rate themselves high in their standard of living, they

score low in their knowledge of death, as shown in their rituals for death, which reinforce their illusion. As soon as a person dies here, the body is whisked away to a funeral home to be prepared for viewing. An artificial, cosmetic process makes the body appear as alive and as beautiful as possible, perpetuating the myth that we are the body. Because we ignorantly think our self (soul) to be the body, we want our body to look good even when it’s dead.

Although materialistic culture does not give much stock to the next life or the eternality of the soul, costly, lavish funerals can exploit people’s sentiments. Funeral eulogies by the minister or the family—a good chance to help people understand death—are usually merely flowery, sentimental words meant to make people feel good.

Unfortunately, Western culture hides, denies, and disguises death. This life is taken to be everything, so there’s no use worrying about an unproven afterlife. Confusion about death underlies the sterile, superficial, and impersonal rituals, whether at burials or cremations.

VEDIC CREMATIONS

I’ve seen that Hindu ceremonies for death in India are a different story. They still follow ancient edicts from the Vedic scriptures. Traditionally, dead bodies are carried in procession to a burning place, usually a ghat at a holy river, with all the loved ones of the deceased present. Seeing the body burn and then placing its ashes in the river shows participants dramatically that they must develop detachment for temporary, material things (like the body), that they should connect instead to the soul and focus on the permanent spiritual objective.

Another reason for burning the body (instead of burying it) is to ben-

We must be committed to acting with kindness and compassion as an important part of our spiritual practice.

• • •

efit the so-called deceased. Some souls stay attached to the body even when it's dead and refuse to leave it (remaining as ghosts). The *Vedas* inform us that ghosts are tormented souls living in their subtle, or astral, body, without the benefit of a physical body. Some people can sense ghosts through eerie feelings at graveyards or in old houses, or in others ways. Burning the body can help the soul move on to the next life.

Unfortunately, we tend to forget our impending death soon after witnessing a cremation. In Sanskrit this is called *śmaśāna-vairāgya*, or the temporary feelings of renunciation at the crematorium. To learn and remember these spiritual truths, we should repeatedly hear them from advanced holy teachers. Śrīla Prabhupāda reminds us not to forget the inevitability of physical death. Thinking about death is not “morbid,” as some would say. Rather, it's meant to remind us where our real shelter lies—with God—and not with the temporary.

Death is a doorway between lives. We must prepare for it by absorbing our life in pursuing spiritual truth. Our actions and motivations will determine what happens to us at death. Will we have to accept another material body, or will we return to God in His spiritual kingdom? The *Bhagavad-gītā* (8.6) says that what we primarily focus on because of our attachments will carry us to the next life at the time of death. What we do in life is tested at death.

JUSTICE AND COMPASSION

As I try to empathize with the victims of the Tri-State Crematory—the grieving family and friends—I remember that in my own father's death I was more fortunate than they. Even though he took his own life, in my sadness I

was at least able to sprinkle his ashes in the holy water of the Ganges River. Knowing that such an act, done with sincere prayers, would benefit him, I felt at peace. I did as much as I could for him in life, and then, at death, I was able to feel closure with our earthly relationship.

I wonder how I would have felt if I'd discovered that my father's so-called ashes were some other substance, and that his body lay decomposing in a shallow makeshift grave?

I'm sure I'd feel angry at being cheated, and disappointed that I hadn't helped my father leave this world. I'd want to see someone punished.

My indignation would have support. The *Vedas* say that civil laws and their consequences, though imperfect, help to lessen a person's karmic reaction for wrongdoings. In addition, punishing a guilty person gives some consolation to the victims.

To feel shock and outrage when we hear about reprehensible behavior, and to seek punishment for the guilty, is natural. But we must be careful to hate the sinful mentality and not the person. Otherwise, our heart will become closed and unable to feel compassion, an important spiritual quality.

Loving Kṛṣṇa includes loving His children, which we show by teaching them essential spiritual knowledge. That makes us dear to Kṛṣṇa. But if we don't care about others, how will we want to give them spiritual solutions?

In the Chinese language the symbol for danger also means opportunity. A dangerous mentality is an opportunity for spiritual growth. In the face of increasing inhumanity, insensitivity, and violence among human beings (and toward animals), as well as our own tendency to be lethargic and uncaring, we can decide to think and act

differently. We may not care as much as we'd like or act with great compassion, but we can pray for compassion and the desire to help others in distress. We can also become inspired by studying the saintly qualities of pure devotees, and by hearing about the lives of great compassionate devotees like Śrīla Prabhupāda, Prahāda Mahārāja, and Haridāsa Ṭhākura.

When we're with those in pain, we can sympathize and let them vent their distress. Then, according to our relationship with them, we can share the truth of the soul and God, the key to becoming free from suffering.

Kṛṣṇa reciprocates with our sincere desire. We must be committed to acting with kindness and compassion as an important part of our spiritual practice. If we do so while we seriously follow the principles of spiritual life given by Śrīla Prabhupāda, we'll make spiritual progress and develop the good qualities of the soul.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the process of converting our illusory bodily consciousness—the cause of our suffering—into our original blissful spiritual nature. Lord Caitanya came five hundred years ago to teach us how to do this practically by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra and living a pure life. Chanting the holy name and giving the rare treasure of the holy name to others are practices of real compassion, and the best contributions we can make to suffering humanity. 🌸

Karṇāmṛta Dāsa, a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda since 1970, lives with his wife, Arcana-siddhī Devī Dāsī (a frequent contributor to BTG), in Baltimore, Maryland. He works for a logistics company and, along with his wife, conducts therapy and workshops for couples.

“Independence Means You Can Do Whatever You Like”

Here we continue a conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and John Mize, a professor of philosophy. It took place in Los Angeles on June 23, 1975.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Independence means you can do whatever you like. That is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: *yathecchasi tathā kuru*.

[Turning to a disciple:] Find this verse in the Eighteenth Chapter.

That independence is there. After speaking the whole *Bhagavad-gītā* to Arjuna, Kṛṣṇa gave him independence—“Now whatever you like you can do.” Kṛṣṇa never forced him to accept the teachings of *Bhagavad-gītā*. He gave him independence. “Now whatever you like you can do.”

And Arjuna agreed. “Yes. Now my illusion is over. I shall act as You say.”

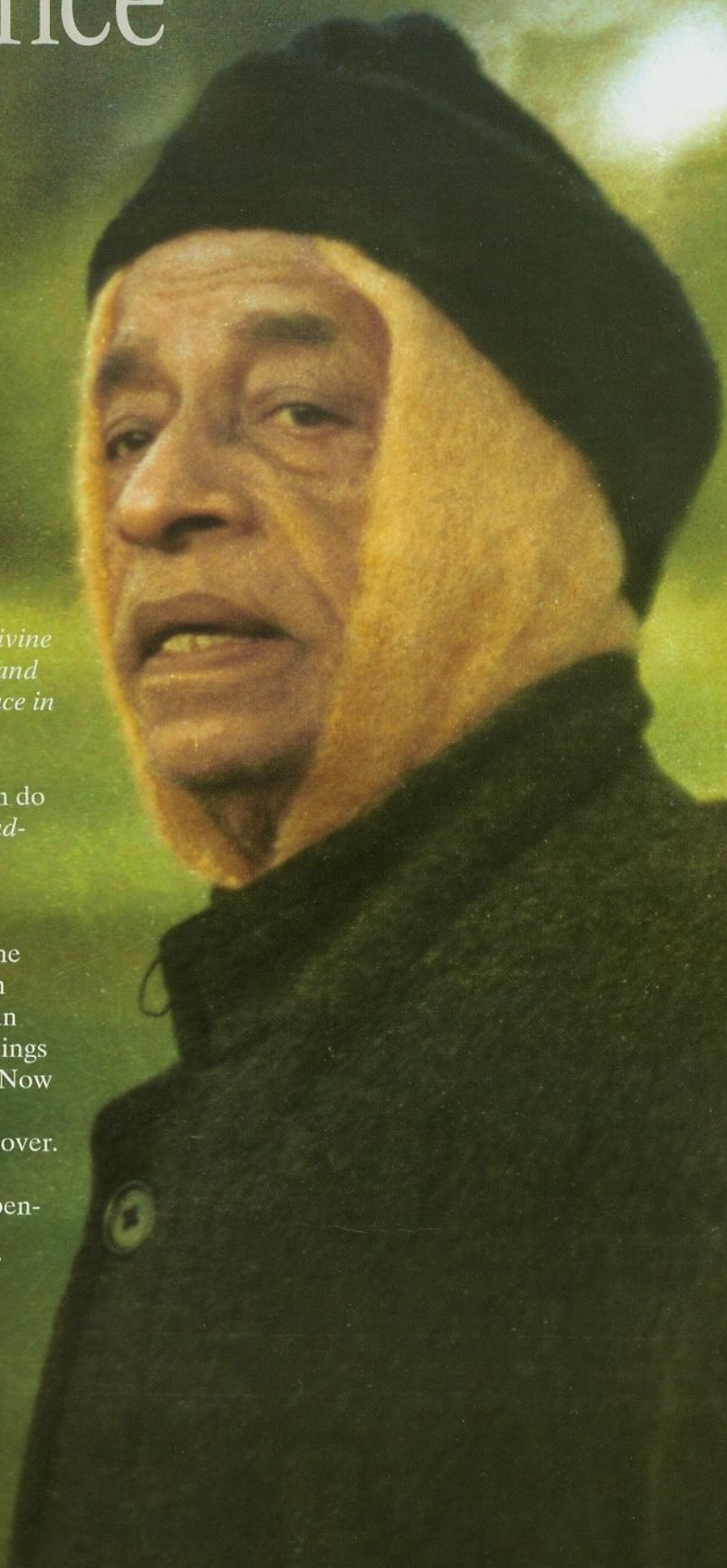
In *Bhagavad-gītā*, Arjuna had the same independence that we have.

[To the disciple, now ready with the requested verse:] Yes.

Disciple:

*iti te jñānam ākhyātam
guhyād guhyataram mayā
vimṛśyaitad aśeṣena
yathecchasi tathā kuru*

(please turn to page 30)





Śrīla Prabhupāda's Gifts to Malaysia

People in Malaysia today are reaping the benefits of Śrīla Prabhupāda's presence there thirty years ago.

by Ādi Puruṣa Kṛṣṇa Dāsa (Dr. Ananda Krishnan)

photos by Rādhā-Mādhava Dāsa and Bhakta Ravi Ayakannu

YEARNING TO spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the world, Śrīla Prabhupāda circled the globe fourteen times. His travels took him to parts of Southeast Asia, including Brunei, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and the Philippines. Some countries welcomed him with open arms and accorded him full honors. In Malaysia, for example, the sole Indian minister in the cabinet, Tun V. T. Sambanthan, took a personal interest in Śrīla Prabhupāda's travel schedule and offered to help in many ways.

Malaysia has a migrant population from South India of more than two million. The British brought Hindus to Malaysia during the colonial era to build roads and railways and work on plantations owned by private entrepreneurs. Remnants of Vedic traditions are still seen in many of their customs, such as marriages, the consecration of temples, house-warming ceremonies, and the offering of oblations to departed forefathers.

Śrīla Prabhupāda visited Malaysia from May 5 to May 9, 1971. Before his arrival, Vaiṣṇavism was not well known here. Soon after Śrīla Prabhupāda's visit, a group of *brahmācārīs* (celibate students), including a young Singaporean Chinese man who was later initiated by Śrīla Prabhupāda, spent at least



Devotees chant in front of Kuala Lumpur's Petronas Towers (opposite page), the world's tallest buildings. Above: the Kuala Lumpur ISKCON temple. Left: kīrtana in Teluk Intan.



six months touring the country and teaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The local people received them well, and their programs attracted capacity crowds. But the fruits of their untiring efforts were not to be realized until a decade later.

The early disciples set about explaining Lord Kṛṣṇa's actual position according to the scriptures and painstakingly helped clear up many misconceptions about Him. While many people turned away from Kṛṣṇa consciousness because of its strict prin-

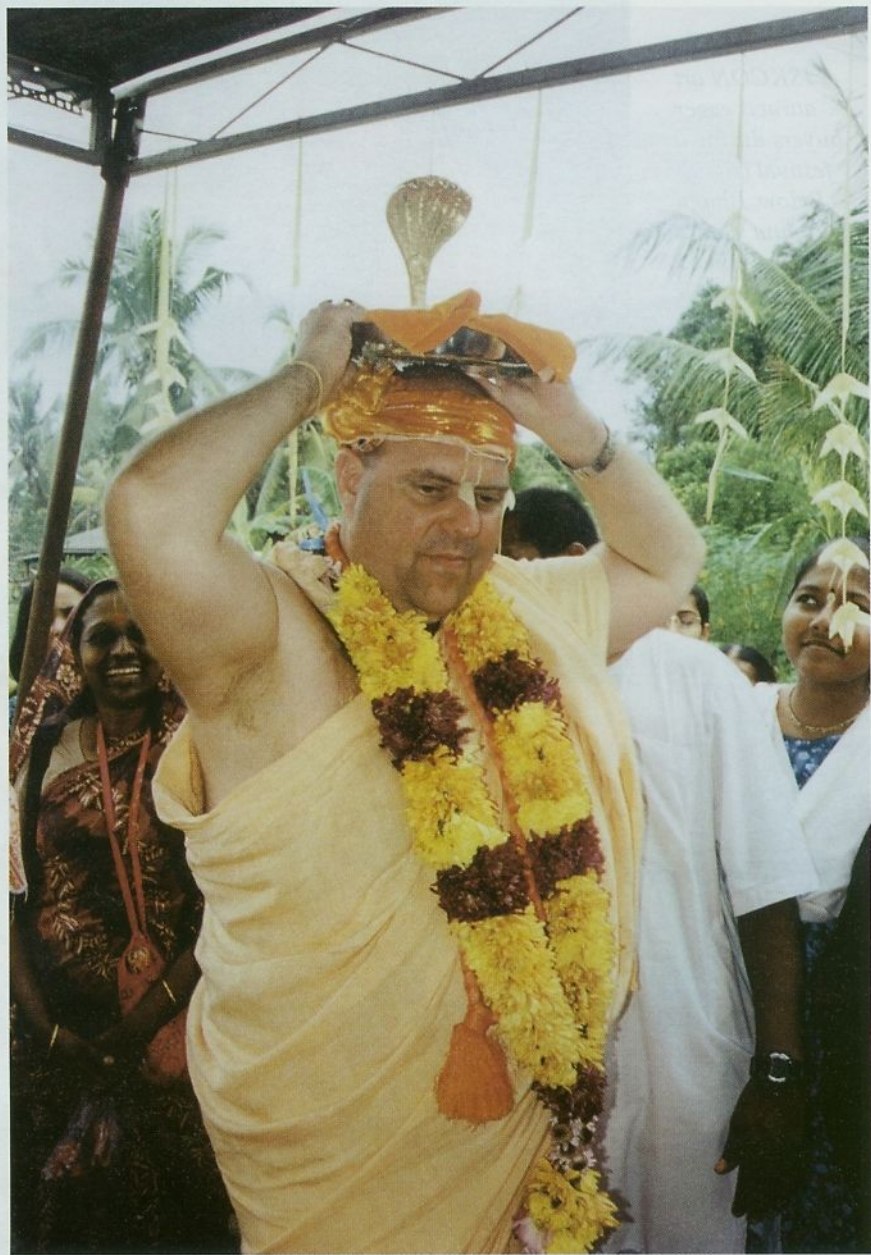
ciples, some were attracted for the same reason. Those who took it up began teaching friends, relatives, and family members, and to this day it is common to see families and their friends becoming adherents to Kṛṣṇa consciousness together.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's books transformed lives in Malaysia, just as they have all over the world. The Malaysian branch of the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust has published some of Prabhupāda books and helped translate some of them into the South Indian language

Tamil. During the various local Hindu festivals, there is always a great demand for Śrīla Prabhupāda's books.

CHANTING, PRASĀDAM, AND FESTIVALS

The chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, another gift of Śrīla Prabhupāda's, has greatly benefited the people of Malaysia. After taking up the chanting, many Malaysians have become vegetarians and given up bad habits.



Visiting sannyāsīs Jayapatāka Swami, Bhānu Swami, and Vrajendranandana Swami take part in the land purification ceremony (above) at the site for a new temple in Teluk Intan. During another part of the ceremony, Jayapatāka Swami carries a deity of Ananta Śeṣa (top right), an expansion of Kṛṣṇa upon whom the temple will rest. At right, Uttama Caitanya Dāsa, president of the Kuala Lumpur temple, addresses guests during a Sunday Feast.



ISKCON art attracts eager buyers during a festival (right). Below, Bhakti Vighna Vināśa Narasimha Swami arrives for a home blessing in Taiping, North Malaysia. Opposite page: an introduction to Śrīla Prabhupāda's books.





Śrīla Prabhupāda instructed his disciples to accept only Kṛṣṇa-*prasādam*, food prepared for and offered to Kṛṣṇa. This has become a standard practice all over the world. Likewise in Malaysia: One can walk into any ISKCON temple and expect to be served sumptuous Kṛṣṇa-*prasādam*. Outside the temple, *prasādam* distribution goes on through the ISKCON Food for Life program. Whenever there is a need for mass distribution of food—be it a festival or a disaster—Food for Life is ever ready to serve out piping hot meals. Devotees also regularly deliver *prasādam* to schools, or-

phanages, and retirement homes. Many benevolent and well-to-do members of the public contribute generously to this program. At markets, Chinese vendors of fresh vegetables readily agree to donate large amounts of their stock for this cause.

Yet another gift that has transformed people's lives in Malaysia is Hare Kṛṣṇa festivals. As a child in Calcutta, Śrīla Prabhupāda celebrated Rathayātrā, "The Chariot Festival." And as the spiritual master of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, he bade his disciples to rejoice in this festival in as many cities as possible. In Malaysia fifteen

Rathayātrās are held annually, probably the highest in the world. Many people, including non-Indians, are now familiar with the bright canopy of mixed hues hovering over the tropical sky. As the gaily decorated chariot winds its way through the streets, carrying the beaming deities of Lord Jagannātha, Lord Baladeva, and Subhadrā Devī, the instant response from the spectators is "Hare Kṛṣṇa!" Thus Śrīla Prabhupāda showed how to give the Lord's mercy to thousands of people even without their asking.

Festivals such Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī and Rāma Navamī were already being





Lord Jagannātha, Subhadrā Devī, and Lord Balarāma (at left, from right to left) preside at the ISKCON temple in Kuala Lumpur (below). Bhakti Vighna Vināśa Narasiṃha Swami offers āratī at the temple in another Malaysian city (opposite page, bottom).



celebrated in the Hindu community on a small scale, but with the advent of Śrīla Prabhupāda these festivals were solemnized with greater pomp and splendor. For instance, at the annual Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī celebration in Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaysia, at least five thousand people line up to see the worship.

The Vedic philosophy advocates a life of simplicity and tells us how to solve modern economic ills by protecting the cows and depending on Mother Earth's natural fertility. To demonstrate the practical values of "simple living and high thinking," Śrīla Prabhupāda started farms all over the world. Malaysia has a large farm outside Kuala Lumpur. Devotees dismayed with life in the cities, which are becoming increasingly hellish, opt to go there for a homespun life. While some have dedicated their lives to this cause, others take a break from the rat-race and spend a few days at the farm enjoying

the wonders of nature.

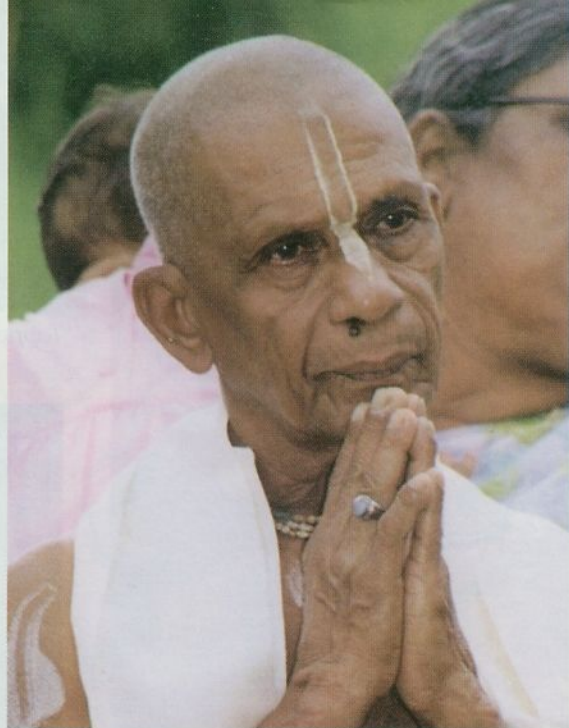
With the burgeoning of centers all over the country and the rapid increase of congregation members, a new phenomenon has developed in ISKCON Malaysia: the annual National Convention. It offers an opportunity for devotees from all over the country to take part in dramas, dances, *bhajan*s, seminars, and spiritual discourses. A recent convention, held at the seaside resort of Port Dickson, drew devotees from as far as China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. The number of participants—835—made it one of the largest festivals after ISKCON's international Gaura Pūrṇimā Festival in Māyāpur.

COUNTRYWIDE CONGREGATION

Because Śrīla Prabhupāda's teachings are universal, transcending man-made boundaries like race, religion, and language, they attract people all

over the world. Malaysia is no exception to this transcendental exercise. Apart from the Indians, members of the Chinese community are also coming forward to join the movement.

As a tribute to the success of Śrīla Prabhupāda and his movement, a temple stands in the capital city of Kuala Lumpur, and nearly all other major towns have either temples or organized congregations where weekly classes on the *Bhagavad-gītā* are held. The temples offer a program by which aspirants can enroll and seek spiritual progress at different levels. The congregational groups—of which there are more than a hundred around the country—help guide genuine seekers. Congregation members take part in a host of activities, such as festivals, house programs, book distribution, and Food for Life. Senior congregation members interact with newcomers in a loving and caring spirit and offer supervision when needed.



The Malaysian government has officially recognized the need to help young Indian residents who are increasingly taking to a life of crime and gangsterism. ISKCON is now working closely with Malaysian Hindu Sangam, the official body authorized to discuss with the government all matters concerning Hinduism. Thanks to this alliance, ISKCON devotees counsel convicts in prisons and drug addicts at rehabilitation centers.

When Kṛṣṇa consciousness first arrived in Malaysia, many considered it a queer religion and the behavior of its followers strange. But over the years

Fifteen Jagannātha Rathayātrā festivals are held each year in various Malaysian cities (above and right). At one festival, a participant (top) gazes upon the Lord with devotion. Opposite page, top: A small Rathayātrā makes its way through the streets of a town in northern Malaysia.

that opinion has reversed. People of different occupations and walks of life—students, teachers, doctors, lawyers—are becoming active members of the movement. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s disciples and grand-disciples are carrying on his work. In Malaysia, Hare Kṛṣṇa is here to stay. ❁

Ādi Puruṣa Kṛṣṇa Dāsa and his wife, Lokānandini Devī Dāsī (Dr. Latha Anand), are medical doctors and disciples of His Holiness Jayapatāka Swami. They have been serving ISKCON in Malaysia for twenty years. Ādi Puruṣa Kṛṣṇa was a leader in the campaign to open the temple of Śrī Śrī Doyāl Nītāi-Gaurahari in Teluk Intan last year. He now serves as an advisor to the temple committee.





TEACHINGS 4 & 5

RESOLUTE
IN PURPOSE

*Lord Caitanya says that to attain the goal
of pure love of God, we need fixed determination.*

by Satyarāja Dāsa

This is the fourth installment 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.

*na dhanam na janam na sundarim
kavitam va jagad-isa kamaye
mama janmani jamanisvare
bhavatad bhaktir ahaituki tvayi*

O ALMIGHTY LORD, I have no desire to accumulate wealth, nor do I desire beautiful women, nor do I want any number of followers. I only want Your causeless devotional service, birth after birth."

This verse establishes the exclusivity of purpose necessary for proper chanting of the holy name. Single-minded determination. The *Gītā* also says that one must be *vyavasāya-ātmikā*, or "resolute on the path of God consciousness."

*bhogaiśvarya-prasaktānām
tayāpahṛta-cetasām
vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ
samādhau na vidhīyate*

"In the minds of those who are too attached to sense enjoyment and material opulence, and who are bewildered by such things, the resolute determination for devotional service to the Supreme Lord Godhead does not take place." (*Bhagavad-gītā* 2.44)

This is like a sister verse to Caitanya Mahāprabhu's fourth verse—it contains all of the same elements. Caitanya Mahāprabhu says that He doesn't want money, He doesn't want followers, He doesn't want beautiful women. No. He doesn't want any material enjoyment at all. Why? Because if He did want such enjoyment, then the resolute determination for practicing devotional service would not take place. And He only wants pure devotional service. He is showing the resolute determination required. If we are divided, if we have some separate interest, we are finished. We will not get the desired goal. We want *prema-bhakti*, love of God. We want *ahaituki-bhakti*, totally unmotivated and uninterrupted devotional service.

In His conversations with Rāmānanda Rāya, Caitanya Mahāprabhu rejects *svadharmā-ācaraṇa*, or external religious observances; He rejects *kṛṣṇa-karmārpaṇa*, or offering the results of our fruitive activities to Kṛṣṇa; He rejects *karma-miśra-bhakti*, or devotion mixed with fruitive intentions; He even

This traditional Indian painting of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu shows Him during His married life, before He accepted the renounced order and stunned His devotees by cutting off His beautiful hair.

rejects *jñāna-miśra-bhakti*, or devotion polluted by a preponderance of knowledge. These things are laudable, no doubt, but Lord Caitanya was only able to endorse pure, unmotivated spiritual love, completely unalloyed—not polluted by even the most subtle tinge of needless knowledge.

That's what He is endorsing in this verse. *Mama janmani jamanīśvare*: "Birth after birth, let me just serve Your lotus feet." In what way? How would I like to serve You? *Bhavatād bhaktir ahaituki tvayi*: "Let me serve You without any ulterior motive. Let me serve You in a completely pure way."

Question: But it can't be artificial. What if I want to pursue spiritual life but I'm not ready to be totally devoted? What if I do have separate interests but I nonetheless want to try the chanting process?

Satya-rāja Dāsa: There's no harm. Caitanya Mahāprabhu has already said that there are no hard and fast rules. In fact, unless one begins—and in the beginning it's likely one will chant offensively—how can one possibly

graduate to higher levels of spiritual attainment?

So we must begin. Whatever level we're on, that's all right. But Caitanya Mahāprabhu is showing us a higher level. And, in fact, if we are maturing properly, we will see that we are gradually losing our taste for sense enjoyment and developing a taste for spiritual pleasure, a taste for the divine name, for sacred vegetarian food, for spiritual painting, for Deity worship, for *kīrtana*, divinely inspired song and dance.

That's what Caitanya Mahāprabhu is showing in this verse: If you are actually developing a taste for the holy name, you will naturally develop a distaste for material enjoyment. Your material fever goes down. In this way you can ascertain your progress. Just like when you're sick—if your fever goes down, you know you're getting well. Kṛṣṇa says:

*viṣayā vinivartante
nirāhārasya dehinaḥ
rasa-varjaṁ raso 'py asya
paraṁ dṛṣṭvā nivartate*

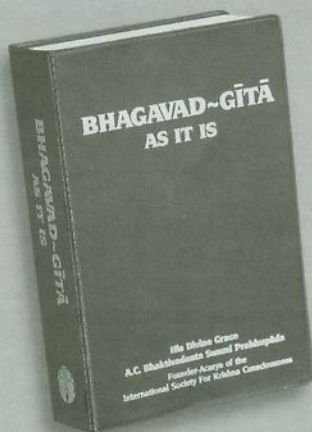
"Although an embodied soul may restrict himself from sense enjoyment, the taste for it remains. He can genuinely give up the lower taste only when he has experienced the higher taste." (*Bhagavad-gītā* 2.59)

So, this is the point. When one understands the need for spiritual life and the need to curtail material excesses, one begins to practice certain penance and austerity. People may become vegetarian. Or they may fast on certain days. They may chant a prescribed number of holy names on the rosary—whatever. But they are doing it by using their higher intelligence, not because it necessarily "feels good." It is a calculated austerity. One foregoes some short-range pleasure in favor of a considerably more promising and substantial long-range pleasure. That's the beginning of spiritual life.

But then something interesting happens. *Paraṁ dṛṣṭvā nivartate*: One experiences a higher taste. Then, as Caitanya Mahāprabhu says in this verse, one doesn't care for money, fame, recognition, or the opposite sex. No. Enjoying these things is like chewing the

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

—*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.38

Lord Caitanya is commiserating, showing us that He understands and that we can still attain the supreme destination, even in our very fallen condition.



chewed. They have lost their flavor. Rather, one's senses are now alive to spiritual life. They perceive new dimensions. They can now embrace reality in a more substantial way. You're finally awake! Alive! Vibrant! The entire spiritual world opens up, and now, possibly for the first time, you can see the material world in perspective. So this is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This is the initial effect of the holy name.

Question: What is the ultimate effect of the holy name?

Satyarāja Dāsa: To develop pure love of God.

HOPE FOR THE FALLEN

Now we'll go on to the fifth verse:

*ayi nanda-tanuja kinikaram
patitam mām viṣame bhavāmbudhau
kṛpayā tava pāda-paṅkaja-
sthita-dhūli-saḍṛśam vicintaya*

“O Son of Mahārāja Nanda [Kṛṣṇa], I am Your eternal servitor, yet somehow or other I have fallen into the ocean of birth and death. Please pick me up from this ocean of death and place me as one of the atoms of Your lotus feet.”

I would like to begin with a word of caution: Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Kṛṣṇa Himself—God—but to teach the highest path of spiritual mysticism, devotional service, He comes in the form of His own devotee. Therefore, in this verse, especially, He speaks as if He were an ordinary, conditioned soul. This is His special mercy. He is commiserating, showing us that He understands and that we can still attain the supreme destination, even in our very fallen condition.

You see, Kṛṣṇa came at the end of Dvāpara-yuga, about five thousand years ago, and He spoke *Bhagavad-gītā* for the enlightenment of all living beings. Many people misunderstood His teachings, however, and so He came

again, in Kali-yuga, about five hundred years ago, just to show us by His own example how one can live according to the principles of the *Gītā*. Caitanya Mahāprabhu showed the practical application of His own teachings.

But make no mistake: If the teacher shows the student how to practice writing the alphabet by his own example, we should not think he is doing it to learn himself. Although Caitanya Mahāprabhu, in this verse, posed as a devotee bewildered about his place in this world—He says He is *bhava-ambudhah*, or “in the ocean of nescience”—we should know that He is just showing us how to admit our own fallen condition. He is teaching by His own example. That's quite clear, for the scriptures themselves and advanced spiritual masters throughout history vouch for Caitanya Mahāprabhu's total divinity. So we shouldn't be bewildered by His apparent splashing in “the ocean of nescience.”

It's highly significant that this verse begins *ayi nanda-tanuja*, for the Lord always likes to be remembered in relation to His devotees, and so Caitanya Mahāprabhu is showing how to do this. He's calling Kṛṣṇa the son of Mahārāja Nanda. When Śrī Kṛṣṇa descended to earth five thousand years ago, He came, as always, with His associates and paraphernalia and abode. So the devotee Nanda always plays the role of Kṛṣṇa's father. In this way, Kṛṣṇa relishes a relationship with this particular devotee. In the ultimate analysis, of course, Kṛṣṇa is eternal, and so the terms “father” and “mother” lose all meaning, at least as we relate to such concepts here in this realm.

But such relationships exist here because they have their original counterpart in that realm, in the spiritual realm. This is called *rasa* theology, and it is very developed in our Caitanya Vaiṣṇavism. Briefly stated, in one's original, or constitutional, spiritual posi-

tion, one may interact with God in one of five primary relationships. For example, one can relate as a neutral party, in a relationship called *sānta-rasa*; as a servant in *dāsyā-rasa*; as a friend in *sakhya-rasa*; as a parent in *vātsalya-rasa*; or as a transcendental lover in *mādhurya-rasa*. *Rasa* theology is a very important tenet of Caitanya Mahāprabhu's teachings, and it is dealt with at length in the writings of the Gosvāmīs.

EXEMPLARY HUMILITY

In this, the fifth verse of *Śikṣāṣṭaka*, Caitanya Mahāprabhu is addressing Kṛṣṇa in relationship to His great devotee Nanda Mahārāja, who is in *vātsalya-rasa*, parenthood, and this form of address brings great pleasure to the Lord. But what does Caitanya Mahāprabhu tell Kṛṣṇa, the divine son of Nanda Mahārāja? He says, “I am Your fallen servant, eternally.”

Yes. We are eternally Kṛṣṇa's servants. We are part of God. And Caitanya Mahāprabhu is bringing out a logical conclusion: “Since I am originally Śrī Kṛṣṇa's servant, I should return to His service. That's my natural, constitutional position.”

And I should return to that service in a humble way. Caitanya Mahāprabhu says *kṛpayā tava pāda-paṅkaja-sthita-dhūli-saḍṛśam vicintaya*: “Please be merciful unto me and allow me to be a particle of dust at Your lotus feet.” This is the mood. We should not think, “All right. I'll be Your servant. But only if I can make an important place for myself among Your devotees, only if I can take a prominent role.” No. Caitanya Mahāprabhu has taught the proper mood: *gopī-bhartuḥ pada-kamalayor dāsa-dāsānudāsaḥ*. We aspire to be servants of the servants of the servants of Kṛṣṇa, the maintainer of the *gopīs*, the revered cowherd maidens. We are removed, indirect servants. The more removed, the better. It is a

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humble position. "Oh, the servants of Kṛṣṇa are so great. I'm not worthy of their shoes, not even the dust from their feet." Caitanya Mahāprabhu teaches us to approach God with this humility—*dhūli-sadṛśam*, like a particle of dust.

Many exalted devotees in the annals of Vaiṣṇava history have prayed in this way. For example, Lord Brahmā, the first created being and the founder of Caitanya Mahāprabhu's lineage, prayed to take birth as anything—a rock, a leaf—in the forest of Vṛndāvana. Why? So the great devotees of Kṛṣṇa who always reside in Vṛndāvana might perchance step on him and he could get the dust of their feet. Brahmā's prayer is recorded in the Tenth Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Uddhava, too, wanted such a benediction. He was the greatest of the Yādavas, Kṛṣṇa's relatives, but still he knew that the love of the *gopīs* was superior to his. For this reason he wanted to take the dust from their feet on his head. But he was too humble to ask them. So he also prayed to be born as a creeper in the land of Vṛndāvana. He thought that the *gopīs* would per-

haps dance on his head and he would receive the mercy of Kṛṣṇa.

It should be understood that whether one is an atom of dust at Śrī Kṛṣṇa's feet, as Caitanya Mahāprabhu prays to become, or an atom of dust at the feet of Kṛṣṇa's pure devotee, there is no difference. It is this mood of humility that is sought by the devotees, and by attaining this level of humility, they can attain the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Brahmā received the benediction of being born as Haridāsa Ṭhākura, one of Caitanya Mahāprabhu's most intimate followers and the great teacher of the holy name. And Uddhava was born as Paramānanda Purī, one of the peers of Caitanya Mahāprabhu's spiritual master. So they received the topmost benediction: They gained entrance into the pastimes of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. ❀

Satyarāja Dāsa is a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda and a regular contributor to Back to Godhead. He has written several books on Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the latest of which is The Four Principles of Freedom. He and his wife live near New York City.

"INDEPENDENCE . . ."

(continued from page 15)

"Thus I have explained to you the most confidential of all knowledge. Deliberate on this fully, and then do what you wish to do."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Now, if you say, "Why should the soul become so foolish?" that is his misuse of his independence. An intelligent father has got an intelligent son, but sometimes the son becomes a fool. So what is the reason? He is part and parcel of the father—he should have become exactly like the father. But he does not.

I have seen. In Allahabad there was a big lawyer or barrister, Mr. Bannerjee. His eldest son was also a barrister. But his youngest son—on account of bad association, he became an *ekala wala*. In India there is a carriage drawn by one horse. So he liked to be an *ekala wala*. That means he fell in love with a low-class woman, and by her association, he became an *ekala*. There are many instances. Take Ajāmila. He was a *brāhmaṇa*, but then he fell down very

low. So this freedom to misuse our independence is always there.

Disciple: Śrīla Prabhupāda, here in this material world, in our materially contaminated state, when we behave foolishly or madly, we know that *tamas*, the mode of ignorance, is acting upon us. But in the spiritual sky—when the living entity is in his pure state of consciousness—what acts upon him? Does something act upon him to make him illusioned at that point, also?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Take, for instance, the gatekeepers Jaya and Vijaya. They committed an offense. They did not allow the four Kumāras to enter the spiritual world. That was their fault. And the Kumāras became very sorry. Then they cursed Jaya and Vijaya: "You are not fit to remain in this place."

So we sometimes commit a mistake. That is also misuse of our independence. In general, we are prone to fall down, because we are small. Just like a small fragment of fire—although it is fire, it is prone to be extinguished. The big fire does not become extinguished.

“If you make it one way only—that you cannot become fallen down—that is not independence.”

• • •

So Kṛṣṇa is the big fire, and we are part and parcel of the big fire—sparks, very small. So within the fire there are sparks—*fft, fft*—there are so many. But if the sparks fall down, then they are extinguished.

Coming to this material world is like that. Fall-down means coming to this material world. There are three different grades: *tamo-guṇa*, or the mode of darkness; *rajo-guṇa*, or the mode of passion; and *sattva-guṇa*, or the mode of goodness.

For instance, when a spark falls down, if it falls upon dry grass the grass becomes ablaze—so the fiery quality is still maintained, even though the spark has fallen down. On account of the atmosphere of the dry grass, the spark makes another fire, and its fiery quality maintains. That is *sattva-guṇa*. And if the spark falls down on green grass, then it is extinguished—yet when the green grass becomes dry, there is a chance that the spark will again come to the stage of blazing. But if the spark falls onto water, then it is very difficult.

Similarly, when the soul comes into the material world, there are three *guṇas*, or modes. So if he comes into contact with *tamo-guṇa*—with darkness, laziness, and delusion—then he is in the most abominable condition. If he falls down and associates with *rajo-guṇa*, the mode of passion, then there is a little activity; for instance, most people are working. And if he falls down into the *sattva-guṇa*, then he at least keeps himself in the knowledge that “I am fire—I do not belong to this dull matter.”

So we have to bring the soul again to the *sattva-guṇa*, the mode of goodness—brahminical qualification—so that he can understand, *aham brahmāsmi*: “I am spirit soul. I am not this matter.” Then his spiritual activity begins. Coming to the platform of *sattva-guṇa* means giving up the business of *rajo-guṇa* and *tamo-guṇa*—no meat-eating, no illicit sex, no intoxication, no

gambling, so many nos—to protect the soul from the influence of material qualities. Then, once he is situated in the *sattva-guṇa* and remains on this platform of goodness, the base qualities of passion and ignorance cannot disturb him. So *tadā rajas-tamo-bhāvāḥ kāma-lobhādayaś ca ye*: we want to see that one is free from at least these base qualities, namely *kāma*, or lusty desires, and greediness.

In the material world, generally, people are under these base qualities, meaning they are always filled up with lusty desires and are not satisfied—greedy. So when we conquer over these base qualities, then we become happy. *Tadā rajas-tamo-bhāvāḥ kāma-lobhādayaś ca ye, ceta etair anāvid-dham*. When one’s consciousness is not influenced by these base qualities and when—*sthitaṁ sattve prasīdati*—he is situated on the platform of *sattva-guṇa*, then he feels happy.

That is the beginning of spiritual life. So long as the mind is disturbed by lusty desires and greediness, there is no question of spiritual life. Therefore, the first business is how to control the mind, so that it may not be influenced by the base qualities, lusty desires and greediness. We have seen in Paris that even an old man, seventy-five years old—he is going to a night club. Why? Because lusty desires are there. He pays fifty dollars for entering the club, and then he pays further for other things. So even though he is seventy-five years old, lusty desires are there.

Professor Mize: Did all the souls that were in the spiritual sky fall out of the spiritual sky at once or at different times? Or are there any souls that are always good? They’re not foolish—they don’t fall down?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, not all the souls have fallen out of the spiritual sky. The majority—in fact, ninety percent—are always good. They never fall down.

Professor Mize: So we’re among the ten percent.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Or less than that. In the whole material world, all the living entities are as if in a prison house. In a prison house there are some people, but they are not the majority. The majority of the population—they are outside the prison house. Similarly, the majority of living entities—being part and parcel of God, they are in the spiritual world. Only a few fall down.

Professor Mize: Does Kṛṣṇa know ahead of time that a soul is going to be foolish and fall?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Kṛṣṇa? Yes, Kṛṣṇa may know, because He is omniscient.


Professor Mize: Are more souls falling all the time?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Not all the time. But there is the tendency of fall-down. Not that all fall down, but there is independence. Of course, not everyone likes to misuse his independence. The same example: a government constructing a city also constructs a prison house—because the government knows that some persons will be criminals, so their shelter must also be constructed. It is very easy to understand. Not that cent percent of the population will be criminals, but the government knows that some of them will be. Otherwise, why do they construct the prison house? One may say, “You are constructing a prison house, but where are the criminals?” The government knows—there will be criminals. So if the ordinary government can know, why can’t God know? Because there is the tendency.

Professor Mize: What is the origin of that tendency? From where does that tendency come?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: “Tendency” means independence. Everyone can know that independence means one can use it properly or one can misuse it. That is independence. If you make it one way only—that you cannot become fallen down—that is not independence. That is force. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa says, *yathechasi tathā kuru*: “Now you do whatever you like.” ☸





Does Religion Cause War?

Questioning the dubious link between religion and violence.

by Caitanya Caraṇa Dāsa

MANY PEOPLE FEEL that the world would be better off without religion. We can understand their sentiments when we consider that modern times have seen large-scale violence in the name of religion. But is religion the only cause of violence? If it were, then parts of the world dominated by atheistic views should have been absolutely peaceful. But history shows that violence has touched all parts of the world more or less equally, independent of the theological beliefs of the people. In fact, most of the wars throughout history, including World Wars I and II, were fought for purely secular political, economic, or ideological reasons; religion was not an issue at all.

Whenever wars were fought in the name of religion, the real issue was the same: the increase of wealth and power. Religion was just a convenient scapegoat for the powers that be to mask their grossly materialistic mo-

tives. And even such “religious” violence has been only a tiny fraction of the secular violence witnessed by the world in recent times.

IS RELIGION DISPENSABLE?

The protest that religion leads to violence implies that religion is bad and should be rejected. But can the human being do without religion? The universally accepted goal of life is the quest for happiness. When man neglects or rejects religion, consciously or unconsciously his conception of his own self becomes “a lump of chemicals that has by chance come alive.” The quest for happiness then degenerates into a savage struggle for carnal enjoyment. Wealth, wine, and women become the only goals of life. Such a conception of life is individually frustrating and globally disastrous.

The fundamental need of the individual is love; everyone wants to love

Genuine spirituality is meant to awaken us to our original spiritual identity through a harmony of philosophy and religion.



and be loved. But in the material conception of life there can be no such thing as real love. People put up a façade of love for another person as long as they get sensual pleasure in return. When that stops, they dispose of their object of “love” just as fast as they would dump a broken TV.

In their heart of hearts, people know that no one loves them, no one cares for them. Naturally they feel lonely, rejected, insecure, and frustrated. These feelings are the root of stress, depression, addictions, delinquency, hypertension, criminality, and even suicide. Studies in psychology have confirmed that there is no better insurance against self-destructive behavior (including drinking, substance abuse, and suicide) than strong religious faith.

At a global level the rejection of religion leads to a setting wherein love, ethics, morality, and selflessness become meaningless. Although the anti-religionist may feebly urge the masses to “be good,” such an appeal has no substance. “If the goal of life is to enjoy and I’m here for who knows how long and there is no life after death, then why wait? I should just enjoy. Beg, borrow, steal, or even kill, but enjoy.” By making religion dispensable, we court global disaster.

THE VEDIC DEFINITION OF RELIGION

What is this mysterious phenomenon known as religion—a phenomenon that causes millions of people to congregate annually at Jagannatha Puri, Tirupati, Badrinath, Mecca, and the Vatican, braving the weather, the crowds, and all the other troubles of a pilgrimage?

The Vedic texts of ancient India give an understanding of religion quite different from the common understanding. (To avoid the negative connota-

tions the word *religion* inevitably brings, I’ll use the word *spirituality* to designate the Vedic understanding of what is commonly called religion. I’ll discuss the difference between the two terms later.)

According to the Vedic texts, spirituality imparts the vision to see the cosmos in the proper perspective and to live in harmony with it. The basic teaching of the Vedic texts is that the cosmos is not just matter; it has a spiritual dimension. The *Bhagavad-gītā* (13.27) states, “Know that whatever you see in existence, both the moving and the nonmoving, is only a combination of the field of activities [matter] and the knower of the field [spirit].” Modern scientific research in fields such as past-life memories, near-death experiences (NDEs), and consciousness studies also strongly suggests a spiritual part of our being that continues to exist even after bodily death.

The Vedic texts explain that our real self is not material; a spiritual particle called the *ātmanā*, the soul, animates our material body. The supreme spiritual being who animates the entire cosmos is called the Paramātmā, or the Supersoul. And the relationship between the two—the soul and the Supersoul—is loving service, like the relationship between a parent and a child. This loving relationship exists eternally in the highest realm, called the spiritual world. The soul’s refusal to harmonize with the will of the Supreme temporarily obscures the relationship. The soul is then placed in the realm of matter, where we all now reside.

The Vedic texts further explain that genuine spirituality is meant to awaken us to our original spiritual identity through a harmony of philosophy and religion, the two rails on which spirituality runs. The philosophical aspect of spirituality involves the study and understanding of matter, spirit, and the

controller of both—the Supreme Lord. And the religious aspect involves following rules and regulations that bring about realization and experience of the spiritual realm.

HIGHER-DIMENSIONAL SCIENCE

We can note the striking similarity between this definition of spirituality and the approach of modern science. Science involves the formulation of hypotheses to explain the observable phenomena within the universe (similar to the philosophical aspect of spirituality). It also involves following rules that regulate the laboratory environment to verify the validity of the hypotheses (similar to the religious aspect of spirituality). Spirituality thus constitutes a higher-dimensional science; it deals with realms of reality higher than the mundane.

The spiritual scientist, by dint of systematic practice of both philosophy and religion, understands the nature of the cosmos and learns to live in harmony with it. Having realized his own identity as an eternal spiritual being and his loving relationship with the Supreme Being, a mature spiritual scientist sees all living beings as his brothers. His vision of universal brotherhood leads him to spontaneous, selfless, and holistic service to all living beings.

About such a spiritual welfare activist, the *Śrī Īsopaniṣad* (Mantra 2) states, “One may aspire to live for hundreds of years if he continuously goes on working in that way, for that sort of work will not bind him to the law of karma. There is no alternative to this way for man.” Thus genuine spirituality, far from being the cause of violence, is the source of harmony—within and without. A true spiritualist is self-satisfied and helps others become self-satisfied. There is no question of

violence in a society of self-satisfied persons.

What then, from the Vedic perspective, is the cause of violence?

Imbalance occurs in the cosmic order when humankind lives in disharmony with either of the energies of the cosmos. When the material concept of life prevails over the spiritual, *dharmasya glāniḥ*, the decline of spirituality, results. Spirituality may decline when one neglects its religious aspect, its philosophical aspect, or both. Śrīla Prabhupāda remarks, "Religion without philosophy is sentiment, or sometimes fanaticism, while philosophy without religion is mental speculation." And the absence of both religion and philosophy marks the degeneration of the human species to the animal platform.

When humanity degenerates to the animal platform, the law of the jungle—survival of the fittest—prevails. And just as peace is impossible in a jungle, peace remains a utopian dream in the concrete jungles of today, despite all sorts of "landmark summit meetings."

Therefore violence is caused not by spirituality but by the perversion of spirituality, which has divested the human being of his humanity. So the way to restore peace is not by rejecting spirituality but by reforming it. This will pave the way for humanity to once again develop human qualities such as love, contentment, continence, selflessness, and humility, which alone can engender lasting peace.

We can compare the defects that have crept into spirituality to a cataract in the eye. To cure the eye, we must remove the cataract, not pluck out the eye. Similarly, we have to arrest the decline in spirituality, not reject spirituality itself. Just as plucking out the eye causes blindness, rejecting spirituality will rob humanity of the precious eyes of divine wisdom, resulting in disharmony and disaster. The spiraling rates of crime and violence all over the globe give us a glimpse of the anarchy in store if humanity continues to neglect spirituality.

CORRECTING CHAOS

When cosmic disorder occurs, the Supreme Being descends to the ma-

terial realm to reestablish spirituality, by which humankind can once again learn to live in harmony with the cosmos.

In the present age, *dharmasya glāniḥ* prevails, since all the aspirations and achievements of most of humankind are within the realm of matter. Most people have no interest in philosophy. And those with some interest pursue it mainly as a means to an academic career or for intellectual growth and not as a zealous search for the Truth. Unable to understand the truths of the cosmos, they mislead others.

Similarly, most people are not religiously inclined. The somewhat religious are mostly ritualistic and mechanical in their religious practices; they have little scientific understanding of what they are doing or why. People often claim to be fighting to protect their religion, but if questioned they don't even know its fundamental tenets. And even if they know them, they're not interested in following them. Such pseudo religionists are interested only in their own profit and use religion as a tool to promote it. Thus the present age of iron is characterized by an almost total decline in spirituality or a perversion of it.

To correct the enormous disorder prevalent in the modern times, the Supreme Being descends in a form that transcends all restrictions of time and space. He descends in His holy names, which always stay with us, irrespective of time, place, and circumstance. That

is why we see that the major religions of the world enjoin their followers to chant the holy names of God. Chanting is the universal religion for the current age. And among the innumerable names of God, the Vedic scriptures assert that the most potent is the *mahā-mantra*, "the great chant for deliverance": Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

The Supreme Being has also given a concise yet complete manual for the present age in the form of *Bhagavad-gītā*, the essence of Vedic wisdom. It is the ideal textbook for the aspiring spiritual scientist. About *Bhagavad-gītā*, Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, "I owed a magnificent day to the *Bhagavad-gītā*. It was the first of books; it was as if an empire spoke 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 which exercise us."

A CALL TO MY FELLOW YOUTH OF INDIA

Eminent thinkers throughout the world, including leading scientists such as Nobel Laureate Richard R. Ernst, peace workers such as Nobel Laureates Oscar Arias Sanchez and Betty Williams, and spiritualists such as Nobel Laureate the Dalai Lama, firmly believe that only a synthesis of science and spirituality can lead the world out

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of the present troubled times.

As a person who grew up in India, I'd like to appeal especially to the youth of India, who have a unique position in the world. By virtue of birth in the holy land of India, they inherit

the priceless wealth of spiritual knowledge expounded in the Vedic texts. And by virtue of their education and training, they have developed the scientific spirit of rational inquiry. Thus they are best suited to bring about the much-

needed synthesis of science and spirituality that thinkers all over the world are searching for.

The late Professor Arthur Ellison, a mechanical and electrical engineer, stated, "Surely the great and unique contribution that India has made and must continue to make to the world's progress is in the field of religion—of truth and reality. . . . India can most certainly help the West to find the spiritual way back towards reality, which is essential for all real progress."

Unfortunately, most young Indians today are enamored by the razzle-dazzle of Western culture—blue jeans, supermarkets, Big Macs, Disney "fun," rock music, Hollywood movies, and the like. But before embracing Western culture, wouldn't it be worthwhile to study the condition of those who are growing up in it? According to the 1999 edition of *Vital Statistics of the United States*, one young person, on average, commits suicide every two hours in the U.S.A. For every completed youth suicide, there are an estimated 100–200 attempts. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among college students and the third-leading cause of death among youth overall.

Yet for most Indians, America is the land of their dreams. Śrīla Prabhupāda would lament that modern Indians are sitting on jewels and begging for broken glass.

Let the intelligent youth of India become selfless spiritual scientists dedicated to saving the world from its suicidal course. Let them, in the true spirit of science, study the theory of spirituality with all seriousness and at the same time perform the experiment of mantra meditation. Those who take up this challenge will become living spiritual scientists and will help usher in an era of peace, harmony, and understanding. ☸

Caitanya Caraṇa Dāsa, 25, is a disciple of His Holiness Rādhānātha Swami. He holds a degree in electronics & telecommunications engineering and joined ISKCON Pune full-time in 1999. He runs a free cyber magazine, The Spiritual Scientist, which gives a scientific presentation of Kṛṣṇa conscious philosophy. He also assists in publishing, communications, and youth programs.

Māyāpur Festival 2003

Śrī Māyāpur Chandrodaya Mandir, Māyāpur, West Bengal, India

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 15—Shantipur Festival

March 18—Gaura Pūrṇimā

March 19—Jagannātha Miśra Feast. Festival Ends

March 20—Kolkata (Calcutta) Mahā-Nagar Saṅkīrtana

FESTIVITIES, EVENTS, AND SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS

- Śrī Gaurāṅga Sahasra Kalaśa Mahā Abhiṣeka (bathing of Lord Caitanya with 1,000 pots of water)
 - 517-Lamp Offering for the 517th Appearance Anniversary of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu
 - Gaṅgā Pūjā, Śrīla Prabhupāda Gaṅgā bath, and immersion of the ashes of departed souls in the Gaṅgā
 - 72-Hour Harināma Yajña
- Śrī Śrī Jagannātha, Baladeva, and Subhadrā Rathayātrā
 - Elephant Procession
 - Fire Sacrifice for World Peace
- Drama by the Bhaktivedanta Players (London)
 - Programs for international groups
 - Cultural camp for children
 - Kṛṣṇa Educational Fest for children
 - Float, Diorama Exhibition, and Video Shows
 - Other Exhibitions
- Transportation service every day from the Parikramā site to Māyāpur for those who prefer not to stay in Parikramā camps
 - Newly expanded temple room
- Free rooms in dormitories (prior booking required) and free meals

— Dedication —

The festival is dedicated to Śrīla Prabhupāda on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of his passing, and to Śrīla Tamāl Krishna Goswami.

For more information, contact Bhakti Puruṣottama Swami at bps@pamho.net. For room booking, contact Mayapur Guest House Booking at mghb@pamho.net.

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

THE APPEARANCE OF NARA-NĀRĀYAṆA ṚṢI

*While listing the descendants of the daughters
of the universal forefather Dakṣa, the sage Maitreya
tells Vidura of the appearance of the
Lord’s incarnation as the sage Nara-Nārāyaṇa.*

CANTO 4: CHAPTER 1

- 54 दिव्यवाचन्त तूर्याणि पेतुः कुसुमवृष्टयः
मुनयस्तुष्टुवस्तुष्टा जगुर्गन्धर्वकिन्नराः
55 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
āsīt parama-maṅgalam
devā brahmādayaḥ sarve
upatasthur abhiṣṭavaiḥ*

divi—in the heavenly planets; *avādyanta*—vibrated; *tūryāṇi*—a band of instruments; *petuḥ*—they showered; *kusuma*—of flowers; *vṛṣṭayaḥ*—showers; *munayaḥ*—the sages; *tuṣṭuvuḥ*—chanted Vedic prayers; *tuṣṭāḥ*—pacified; *jaguḥ*—be-

gan to sing; *gandharva*—the Gandharvas; *kinnarāḥ*—the Kinnaras; *nṛtyanti sma*—danced; *striyaḥ*—the beautiful damsels; *devyaḥ*—of the heavenly planets; *āsīt*—were visible; *parama-maṅgalam*—the highest good fortune; *devāḥ*—the demigods; *brahma-ādayaḥ*—Brahmā and others; *sarve*—all; *upatasthur*—worshiped; *abhiṣṭavaiḥ*—with respectful prayers.

In the heavenly planets, bands began to play, and they showed flowers from the sky. The pacified sages chanted Vedic prayers, the denizens of heaven known as the Gandharvas and Kinnaras sang, the beautiful damsels of the heavenly planets danced, and in this way, at the time of the appearance of Nara-Nārāyaṇa, all signs of good fortune were visible. Just at that time, great demigods like Brahmā also offered their respectful prayers.

- देवा ऊचुः
56 यो मायया विरचितं निजयात्मनीदं
खे रूपभेदमिव तत्प्रतिचक्षणाय
एतेन धर्मसदने ऋषिमूर्तिनाद्य
प्रादुश्चकार पुरुषाय नमः परस्मै

*devā ūcuḥ
yo māyayā viracitam nijayātmanīdam
khe rūpa-bhedam iva tat-praticakṣaṇāya
etena dharmā-sadane ṛṣi-mūrtinādya
prāduścakāra puruṣāya namaḥ parasmai*

devāḥ—the demigods; *ūcuḥ*—said; *yaḥ*—who; *māyayā*—by the external energy; *viracitam*—was created; *nijayā*—by His own; *ātmani*—being situated in Him; *idam*—this; *khe*—in the sky; *rūpa-bhedam*—bunches of clouds; *iva*—as if; *tat*—of Himself; *praticakṣaṇāya*—for manifesting; *etena*—with this; *dharmā-sadane*—in the house of Dharma; *ṛṣi-mūrtinā*—with the form of a sage; *adya*—today; *prāduścakāra*—appeared; *puruṣāya*—unto the Personality of Godhead; *namaḥ*—respectful obeisances; *parasmai*—the Supreme.

The demigods said: Let us offer our respectful obeisances unto the transcendental Personality of Godhead, who created as His external energy this cosmic manifestation, which is situated in Him as the air and clouds are situated in space, and who has now appeared in the form of Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi in the house of Dharma.

PURPORT: ① The universal form of the Lord is the cosmic manifestation, which is an exhibition of the external energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In space there are innumerable varieties of planets and also the air, and in the air there are variously colored clouds, and sometimes we see airplanes running from one place to another. Thus the entire cosmic manifestation is full of variety, but actually that variety is a manifestation of the external energy of the Lord, and that energy is situated in Him. Now the Lord Himself, after manifesting His energy, appeared within the creation of His energy, which is simultaneously one with and different from Himself, and therefore the demigods offered their respects to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who manifests Himself in such varieties.

There are some philosophers, called nondualists, who because of their impersonal conception think that varieties are false. In this verse it is specifically stated, *yo māyayā viracitam*. This indicates that the varieties are a manifestation of the energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

② Thus because the energy is nondifferent from the Godhead, the varieties are also factual. The material varieties may be temporary, but they are not false. They are a reflection of the spiritual varieties. Here the word *praticakṣaṇāya*, “there are varieties,” announces the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who appeared as Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi and who is the origin of all varieties of material nature.

- (1) What is the universal form of the Lord?**
(2) Why are the varieties in the cosmic manifestation understood to be factual?

57 सोऽयं स्थितिव्यतिकरोपशमाय सुष्ठान्
सत्त्वेन नः सुरगणाननुमेयतत्त्वः
दृश्याददभ्रकरुणेन विलोकनेन
यच्छ्रीनिकेतममलं क्षिपतारविन्दम्

*so 'yam sthiti-vyatikaropāśamāya sṛṣṭān
sattvena naḥ sura-gaṇān anumeya-tattvaḥ
dṛśyād adabhra-karuṇena vilokanena
yac chri-niketam amalān kṣipatāravindam*

saḥ—that; *ayaṁ*—He; *sthiti*—of the created world; *vyatikara*—calamities; *opāśamāya*—for destroying; *sṛṣṭān*—created; *sattvena*—by the mode of goodness; *naḥ*—us; *sura-gaṇān*—the demigods; *anumeya-tattvaḥ*—understood by the Vedas; *dṛśyāt*—glance over; *adabhra-karuṇena*—merciful; *vilokanena*—glance; *yac*—which; *śri-niketam*—the home of the goddess of fortune; *amalam*—spotless; *kṣipata*—supersedes; *aravindam*—lotus.

Let that Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is understood by truly authorized Vedic literature and who has created peace and prosperity to destroy all calamities of the created world, be kind enough to bestow His glance upon the demigods. His merciful glance can supersede the beauty of the spotless lotus flower which is the home of the goddess of fortune.

PURPORT: The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the origin of the cosmic manifestation, is covered by the wonderful activities of material nature, just as outer space or the illumination of the sun and moon is sometimes covered by clouds or dust. It is very difficult to find the origin of the cosmic manifestation; therefore material scientists conclude that nature is the ultimate cause of all manifestations. But from *śāstra*, or authentic literature like *Bhagavad-gītā* and other Vedic scriptures, we understand that behind this wonderful cosmic manifestation is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and in order to maintain the regular procedures of the cosmic manifestation and to be visible to the eyes of persons who are in the mode of goodness, the Lord appears. He is the cause of the creation and dissolution of the cosmic manifestation. The demigods therefore prayed for His merciful glance upon them in order to be blessed.

58 एवं सुरगणैस्तात भगवन्तावभिष्टुतौ
लब्धावलोकैर्ययतुरर्चितौ गन्धमादनम्

*evam sura-gaṇais tāta
bhagavantāv abhiṣṭutau
labdhāvalokair yayatur
arcitau gandhamādanam*

evam—thus; *sura-gaṇaiḥ*—by the demigods; *tāta*—O Vidura; *bhagavantau*—the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *abhiṣṭutau*—having been praised; *labdha*—having obtained; *avalokaiḥ*—the glance (of mercy); *yayatuḥ*—departed; *arcitau*—having been worshiped; *gandha mādanam*—to the Gandhamādana Hill.

[Maitreya said:] O Vidura, thus the demigods worshiped with prayers the Supreme Personality of Godhead appearing as the sage Nara-Nārāyaṇa. The Lord glanced upon them with mercy and then departed for Gandhamādana Hill.

59 ताविमौ वै भगवतो हरेरंशविहागतौ
भारव्ययाय च भुवः कृष्णौ यदुकुरुद्वहौ

*tāv imau vai bhagavato
harer aṁśāv ihāgatau
bhāra-vyayāya ca bhuvah
kṛṣṇau yadu-kurūdvahau*

tau—both; *imau*—these; *vai*—certainly; *bhagavataḥ*—of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *hareḥ*—of Hari; *aṁśau*—part and parcel expansion; *iha*—here (in this universe); *āgatau*—has appeared; *bhāra-vyayāya*—for mitigation of the burden; *ca*—and; *bhuvah*—of the world; *kṛṣṇau*—the two Kṛṣṇas (Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna); *yadu-kuru-udvahau*—who are the best of the Yadu and Kuru dynasties respectively.

That Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi, who is a partial expansion of Kṛṣṇa, has now appeared in the dynasties of Yadu and Kuru, in the forms of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna respectively, to mitigate the burden of the world.

PURPORT: Nārāyaṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and Nara is a part of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa. Thus the energy and the energetic together are the Supreme Personality of Godhead. ③ Maitreya informed Vidura that Nara, the portion of Nārāyaṇa, had appeared in the family of the Kurus and that Nārāyaṇa, the plenary expansion of Kṛṣṇa, had come as Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, with the purpose of delivering suffering humanity from the pangs of material burdens. In other words, Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi was now present in the world in the forms of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna.

60 स्वाहाभिमानिनश्चाग्नेरात्मजांस्त्रीनजीजनत्
पावकं पवमानं च शुचिं च हुतभोजनम्

*svāhābhīmāninaś cāgner
ātmajāns trīn ajiṇat
pāvakaṁ pavamānaṁ ca
śucim ca huta-bhojanam*

svāhā—Svāha, the wife of Agni; *abhimāninaḥ*—the presiding deity of fire; *ca*—and; *agneḥ*—from Agni; *ātmajān*—sons; *trīn*—three; *ajiṇat*—produced; *pāvakaṁ*—Pāvaka; *pavamānaṁ ca*—and Pavamāna; *śucim ca*—and Śuci; *huta-bhojanam*—eating the oblations of sacrifice.

The predominating deity of fire begot in his wife, Svāhā, three children, named Pāvaka, Pavamāna, and Śuci, who exist by eating the oblations offered to the fire of sacrifice.

PURPORT: After describing the descendants of the thirteen wives of Dharma, who were all daughters of Dakṣa, Maitreya now describes the fourteenth daughter of Dakṣa, Svāhā, and her three sons. ④ Oblations offered in the sacrificial fire are meant for the demigods, and on behalf of the demigods the three sons of Agni and Svāhā, namely Pāvaka, Pavamāna, and Śuci, accept the oblations.

61 तेभ्योऽग्र्यः समभवन् चत्वारिंशच्च पञ्च च
त एवैकोनपञ्चाशत्साकं पितृपितामहैः

*tebhyo 'gnayaḥ samabhavan
catvāriṁśac ca pañca ca
ta evaikonapañcāśat
sākaṁ pitr-pitāmahaiḥ*

tebhyah—from them; *agnayaḥ*—fire-gods; *samabhavan*—were produced; *catvāriṁśat*—forty; *ca*—and; *pañca*—five; *ca*—and; *te*—they; *eva*—certainly; *ekona-pañcāśat*—forty-nine; *sākaṁ*—along with; *pitṛ-pitāmahaiḥ*—with the fathers and grandfather.

From those three sons another forty-five descendants were generated, who are also fire-gods. The total number of fire-gods is therefore forty-nine, including the fathers and the grandfather.

PURPORT: The grandfather is Agni, and the sons are Pāvaka, Pavamāna, and Śuci. ⑤ Counting these four, plus forty-five grandsons, there are altogether forty-nine different fire-gods.

62 वैतानिके कर्मणि यन्नामभिर्ब्रह्मवादिभिः
आग्नेय्य इष्टयो यज्ञे निरूप्यन्तेऽग्र्यस्तु ते

- (3) In what forms was Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi present during the time of Vidura?
(4) Who accepts, on behalf of the demigods, oblations offered into the sacrificial fire?
(5) How many fire-gods are there?

*vaitānike karmaṇi yan-
nāmabhir brahma-vādibhiḥ
āgneyya iṣṭayo yajñe
nirūpyante 'gnayas tu te*

vaitānike—offering of oblations; *karmaṇi*—the activity; *yat*—of the fire-gods; *nāmabhiḥ*—by the names; *brahma-vādibhiḥ*—by impersonalist *brāhmaṇas*; *āgneyyaḥ*—for Agni; *iṣṭayaḥ*—sacrifices; *yajñe*—in the sacrifice; *nirūpyante*—are the objective; *agnayaḥ*—the forty-nine fire-gods; *tu*—but; *te*—those.

These forty-nine fire-gods are the beneficiaries of the oblations offered in the Vedic sacrificial fire by impersonalist brāhmaṇas.

PURPORT: Impersonalists who perform Vedic fruitive sacrifices are attracted to the various fire-gods and offer oblations in their name. The forty-nine fire-gods are described herewith.

**63 अग्निष्वात्ता बर्हिषदः सौम्याः पितर आज्यपाः
साग्रयोऽनग्रयस्तेषां पत्नी दाक्षायणी स्वधा**

*agniṣvāttā barhiṣadaḥ
saumyāḥ pitara ājyapāḥ
sāgnayo 'nagnayas teṣāṃ
patnī dākṣāyaṇī svadhā*

agniṣvāttāḥ—the Agniṣvāttas; *barhiṣadaḥ*—the Barhiṣadas; *saumyāḥ*—the Saumyas; *pitaraḥ*—the forefathers; *ājyapāḥ*—the Ājyapas; *sa-agnayaḥ*—those whose means is by fire; *anagnayaḥ*—those whose means is without fire; *teṣāṃ*—of them; *patnī*—the wife; *dākṣāyaṇī*—the daughter of Dakṣa; *svadhā*—Svadhā.

The Agniṣvāttas, the Barhiṣadas, the Saumyas, and the Ājyapas are the Pitās. They are either sāgnika or niragnika. The wife of all these Pitās is Svadhā, who is the daughter of King Dakṣa.

**64 तेभ्यो दधार कन्ये द्वे वयुनां धारिणी स्वधा
उभे ते ब्रह्मवादिन्यौ ज्ञानविज्ञानपारगे**

*tebhyo dadhāra kanye dve
vayunām dhāriṇīm svadhā
ubhe te brahma-vādinyau
jñāna-vijñāna-pārage*

tebhyāḥ—from them; *dadhāra*—produced; *kanye*—daughters; *dve*—two; *vayunām*—Vayunā; *dhāriṇīm*—Dhāriṇī;

svadhā—Svadhā; *ubhe*—both of them; *te*—they; *brahma-vādinyau*—impersonalists; *jñāna-vijñāna-pāra-ge*—expert in both transcendental and Vedic knowledge.

Svadhā, who was offered to the Pitās, begot two daughters named Vayunā and Dhāriṇī, both of whom were impersonalists and were expert in transcendental and Vedic knowledge.

**65 भवस्य पत्नी तु सती भवं देवमनुव्रता
आत्मनः सदृशं पुत्रं न लेभे गुणशीलतः**

*bhavasya patnī tu satī
bhavaṃ devam anuvratā
ātmanaḥ sadṛśaṃ putraṃ
na lebhe guṇa-śīlataḥ*

bhavasya—of Bhava (Lord Śiva); *patnī*—the wife; *tu*—but; *satī*—named Sati; *bhavaṃ*—to Bhava; *devam*—a demigod; *anuvratā*—faithfully engaged in service; *ātmanaḥ*—of herself; *sadṛśam*—similar; *putraṃ*—a son; *na lebhe*—did not obtain; *guṇa-śīlataḥ*—by good qualities and by character.

The sixteenth daughter, whose name was Sati, was the wife of Lord Śiva. She could not produce a child, although she always faithfully engaged in the service of her husband.

**66 पितर्यप्रतिरूपे स्वे भवायानागसे रुषा
अप्रौढैवात्मनात्मानमजहायोगसंयुता**

*pitary apratirūpe sve
bhavāyānāgase ruṣā
aprauḍhaivātmānām
ajahād yoga-saṃyutā*

pitari—as a father; *apratirūpe*—unfavorable; *sve*—her own; *bhavāya*—unto Lord Śiva; *anāgase*—faultless; *ruṣā*—with anger; *aprauḍhā*—before attaining maturity; *eva*—even; *ātmanā*—by herself; *ātmānam*—the body; *ajahāt*—gave up; *yoga-saṃyutā*—by mystic yoga.

The reason is that Sati's father, Dakṣa, used to rebuke Lord Śiva in spite of Śiva's faultlessness. 6 Consequently, before attaining a mature age, Sati gave up her body by dint of yogic mystic power.

(continued in the next issue)

(6) Why was Dakṣa's sixteenth daughter childless?

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 8—Śrī Advaita Ācārya's Appearance Day
February 9–13—Second week of MIHE semester
February 14–19—Third week of MIHE semester
February 15—Lord Nityānanda's Appearance Day
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 2–6—Fifth week of the MIHE semester
March 2–7—VTE Teacher Training Course 2
March 7–13—Gaura Maṇḍala Parikramā
March 13–17—VTE Bhakti-śāstrī Teacher Training Course
March 18—Gaura Pūrṇimā
March 20–24—VTE Teacher Training Course 4

VTE BHAKTI-ŚĀSTRĪ COURSE INSTRUCTORS

MEN'S SECTION:

- Bhagavad-gītā 1–9*—Atul Kṛṣṇa Dāsa
Bhagavad-gītā 10–18—BVV Narasimha Swami
Śrī Īsopaniṣad—Keśava Dāsa
The Nectar of Devotion—Atul Kṛṣṇa Dāsa
The Nectar of Instruction—Mādhavendra Purī Dāsa

WOMEN'S SECTION:

- Bhagavad-gītā*—Śrīmate Devī Dāsī
Śrī Īsopaniṣad—Siddhī-lālasā Devī Dāsī
The Nectar of Devotion—Siddhī-lālasā Devī Dāsī
The Nectar of Instruction—Suvarṇa Kṛṣṇa Lilā Devī Dāsī

MIHE COURSES

- Basic Photography Skills*—Amogha Dāsa • *Working with Photos*—Amogha Dāsa • *Leadership and Management Skills for the 21st Century*—Anuttama Dāsa • *Spoken Bengali for Beginners*—Atul Kṛṣṇa Dāsa
• *Cow Protection: Fulfilling Śrīla Prabhupāda's Vision*—Balabhadra Dāsa, Sureśvara Dāsa • *Learning the Skill and Benefits of Forgiving Those Who Hurt You the Most*—Bhaktitīrtha Swami • *Uttama-bhakti*—Bhānu Swami
• *Cracking a Western City: How the Combination of Book Distribution and Innovative Preaching Centers Can Turn a City from Darkness to Light*—Devāmṛta Swami • *Vraja Maṇḍala Parikramā (Vishram Ghat to Yavat)*—Dīna Bandhu Dāsa • *Modern Science and Kṛṣṇa Consciousness*—Drutakarmā Dāsa • *Śaraṅgātī: Songs of Surrender*—Gīrīdhārī Swami • *Prema Bhakti: The Highest Goal of Life*—Gopīparāṇadhana Dāsa • *Ayurvedic Self-Healing*—Dr. Liladhar Gupta • *Pāñcarātrika Process of Deity Worship*—Jananivāsa Dāsa, Pañkajāṅghrī Dāsa • *Preaching from the News*—Jayādvaita Swami • *Hospice Care for Departing Vaiṣṇavas*—Joṣaniyā Devī Dāsī, Śacī Devī Dāsī, Saṅgītā Devī Dāsī • *Classical Haṭha Yoga in the Iyengar Tradition*—Krodhasamanī Devī Dāsī, Kīśora Dāsa • *Of Gods, Saints, and Supermen (Part 2)*—Prahāda Nṛsimha Dāsa, Tāra Dāsa • *Caring for Devotees: The Secret of Successful Community Building*—Rādhānātha Swami • *Bhakti-śāstrī Teacher Training*—Rāsamaṇḍala Dāsa, Atul Kṛṣṇa Dāsa, Śrīmate Devī Dāsī • *VTE Teacher Training Course 1*—Rāsamaṇḍala Dāsa
• *VTE Teacher Training Course 2*—Rāsamaṇḍala Dāsa, Atul Kṛṣṇa Dāsa • *VTE Teacher Training Course 4*—Rāsamaṇḍala Dāsa • *Overcoming Māyāvāda Philosophy: A Practical Guide*—Ravīndra Svarūpa Dāsa • *Preaching Is the Essence: Essential Skills for Effective Preaching*—Śacinandana Swami • *Nṛsimhadeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead*—Śrīdhara Swami • *Two Lines, Four Lines: Realization Through Lifewriting*—Tulasī-priyā Devī Dāsī • *Introduction to Harmonium and Mṛdaṅga*—Uttama Bhakta Dāsa • *From Śraddhā to Premā*—Vedavyāsa Priya Swami

The Congregational Development Ministry and the MIHE have established the ISKCON Pastoral School (IPS) to inspire devotees to qualify themselves as spiritual guides for their congregations. The IPS will train devotees in pastoral skills and philosophical and internal development. The training will include hands-on service in the preaching field under the tutelage of an experienced preacher. The IPS awards credits for most MIHE courses to devotees who desire certification as ISKCON pastors. Candidates qualified for the IPS who can't afford to attend the courses may apply for sponsorships.

*Newly arriving students may register just prior to the beginning of each week of the MIHE semester.

**Students will have only one Bhakti-śāstrī *Bhagavad-gītā* class per day during the MIHE semester, giving them time for MIHE courses. New courses begin each week, so students may attend 1 to 5 weeks of courses.

Visit <http://www.mayapur.org/mihe/> for more information on registration, fees, updates, etc.

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 Dāmodara

(October 22–November 20)

NOVEMBER

1—Ramā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.



Kṛṣṇa lifts Govardhana Hill

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. Bhakti-

vedanta 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.

15—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Gaurakiśora Dāsa Bābājī, the spiritual master of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, who was Śrīla Prabhupāda's spiritual master. Fasting till noon.

16—Pakṣavardhinī Mahādvādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans for Utthānā Ekādaśī.

19—Śrī Kṛṣṇa Rāsa-yātrā. Last day of Dāmodara-vrata and Cāturmāsya.

Month of Keśava

(November 21–December 19)

30—Uṭpannā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

DECEMBER

15—Mokṣadā Ekādaśī. Fasting from

grains and beans. Also, the anniversary of the day on which Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Month of Nārāyaṇa

(December 20–January 18)

23—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, the spiritual master of Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

30—Saphalā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

JANUARY

3—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Locana Dāsa Ṭhākura, a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa known for his Bengali devotional songs.

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

14—Putradā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

Month of Mādhava

(January 19–February 16)

23—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jayadeva Gosvāmī, a great spiritual master and author of *Gīta-govinda*.

24—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Locana Dāsa Ṭhākura, a great spiritual master whose Bengali devotional songs perpetuate the simple Kṛṣṇa conscious method of self-realization.

28—Ṣaṭ-tilā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.



Prague, Czech Republic, 2002

*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”)

Lifting Zulu Spirits

Hearts brighten when devotees deliver nourishing spiritual food and the Lord's holy names to villages of South Africa's largest tribe.

by Indradyumna Swami

photos by Śrī Nāthjī Dāsa

SINCE MY ARRIVAL IN South Africa [January 19, 2002], my Indian disciple Lakṣmīnātha Dāsa has been inviting me to take part in one of his daily Food for Life programs. For more than five years he has practically single-handedly cooked and distributed over fifty thousand plates of *prasādam* each week in the rural areas north of Durban. Known as KwaZulu-Natal, the region is inhabited by Zulus, the largest tribe in South Africa. Many Zulus live in utter poverty. Knowing that crime is rampant in the area, and that the presence of white people in the South African townships is not appreciated by those who suffered under apartheid, I hesitated to go.

Last month, Lakṣmīnātha's Food for Life van was hijacked at gunpoint in broad daylight. He had stopped to give some *prasādam* to a few young children on the side of the road when three men pulled up in a car, jumped out, and aimed an AK-47 at him while demanding the keys to his van. Lakṣmīnātha got out of the van slowly and stepped to the side. The men jumped in the van and sped off—with a quarter ton of *prasādam* inside. When the police found the van five hours later in a nearby township, it







had been stripped of everything—the engine, doors, windows, tires, and even the *prasādam*.

Since then another group of men tried to hijack his new van. He was driving through a township when a gang blocked the road. Several men came forward and again demanded the keys to the van. Not seeing any weapons this time, Lakṣmīnātha refused.

“I’m feeding your people. Why do you want to stop me?”

One of the men replied, “Where do you get the money to feed us?”

“From God,” Lakṣmīnātha answered.

“Why doesn’t God take care of me?” the man shot back.

Lakṣmīnātha screamed at him, “If you call out to Him, maybe He will. Why don’t you chant Hare Kṛṣṇa!”

Startled, the man stepped back and said to his friends, “Let him go.”

Lakṣmīnātha drove off, but he stopped a few hundred meters away.

Taking the big pots from the back of the van, he yelled, “Hare Kṛṣṇa! Come and get *prasādam*!”

Soon several hundred people gathered with bowls in their hands to receive the Lord’s mercy.

His boldness and determination have made Hare Kṛṣṇa a household word among the Zulus. Wherever you drive in the greater Durban area, little Zulu children are often seen begging at stop lights. Whenever a devotee drives up, they start jumping up and down excitedly, calling out, “Hare Kṛṣṇa! Hare Kṛṣṇa!” But instead of asking for money, they ask for *prasādam*. Their enthusiasm alone is evidence of Lakṣmīnātha’s service.

Once Śrīla Prabhupāda was walking on the beach in Mumbai with some of his disciples. At one point, a little girl walked by and with folded hands said to Śrīla Prabhupāda, “Hare Kṛṣṇa!”

Śrīla Prabhupāda smiled, turned to his disciples, and said, “You see how successful our movement is?”

Confused, one devotee asked, “Successful?”

“Yes,” Śrīla Prabhupāda replied, “if you take just one drop of the ocean and taste it, you can understand what the

whole ocean tastes like. Similarly, by this one girl greeting us with Hare Kṛṣṇa, we can appreciate how far the chanting of the Lord’s name has spread.”

SAFE WITH SERGEANT SINGH

A few days ago, wanting to reciprocate with Lakṣmīnātha’s service, I agreed to accompany him into a Zulu township. The next morning, I was napping after the temple program when I heard a knock on my door.

Half asleep, I called out, “Who’s there?”

“Sergeant Singh. Durban Police,” came the official reply.

Still a little jittery about the idea of going into a Zulu township, I jumped up and answered the door.

“Oh, Sergeant Singh, thank you for coming. Would you like to come in for a moment?”

“No, Swami,” he replied. “Lakṣmīnātha and the boys are waiting for us at the Food for Life kitchen. Let’s go.”

Grabbing my chanting beads, a

shoulder bag, and my *danḍa* [renunciant's staff], I followed Sergeant Singh to his police car. He opened the trunk and put my bag inside. Before closing it, he pulled out his service belt, which held a Tanfoglio 9mm semiautomatic. Taking the gun out of the holster, he checked the chamber and clip to see if it was full of ammunition.

Looking at me he said, "It holds fifteen rounds. But don't worry, I probably won't have to use it. The Zulus in the townships love Lakṣmīnātha. He's got *carte blanche* to go into the African areas where no Indian or white man would dare go. But resentment against the former apartheid regime still runs deep in the townships, and we can't take any chances. Since he was hijacked a couple of weeks ago, we go with him anytime he calls us. You've always got the oddballs out there—and the desperate. They're mighty poor folk."

With the lights flashing on top of the police car, we pulled out of the temple complex with Lakṣmīnātha and a few other Indian boys in his Food for Life van behind us. Another car with four women devotees also followed.

Sergeant Singh smiled and said, "A police car with flashing lights gives an

air of importance to the mission, don't you think?"

"Yes, officer," I replied. "You're welcome anytime."

We drove north out of Durban for an hour through sugarcane fields to Kwa Mashu, the native land of the Zulus. After another hour, we pulled up along a ridge overlooking a beautiful valley.

Sergeant Singh said, "A few hundred kilometers north of here the Boers defeated the Zulus in the Battle of Blood River in December of 1838. The river was previously called the Ncome River, but so many Zulu warriors were repulsed into the river and killed in that battle that the water turned red. This huge valley once provided the Zulus who lived here all they required for their livelihood. Now many of them have left to live in cities like Durban and Johannesburg. The land lies barren, and those who are left live in shacks."

As I surveyed the ridge sloping down into the valley, I saw small dwellings assembled from all sorts of material—planks of wood, and sheets of plastic, pieces of old corrugated metal—all bound together in various shapes and forms. I couldn't imagine

life inside such shacks.

Sergeant Singh continued, "To many nineteenth-century Europeans, the Zulu epitomized the romantic notion of the 'noble savage.' While they may indeed have been noble, they were far from savages. Their warfare was characterized by iron-willed discipline, and their society by a sophisticated culture influenced by the environment in which they lived. Even though most Zulus have become Westernized, many of them adhere to their traditional customs, rituals, and ceremonies. Just look over there, coming up the path. That's an *isangoma*—a traditional healer."

I looked at the path coming up the valley and saw a stocky woman with a headdress of hundreds of colored beads.

"She's the village doctor," said Sergeant Singh. "Look closely and you'll see a dried goat bladder plaited into the beadwork of her headdress. She's also carrying the traditional wildebeest-tail fly whisk. They say *isangomas* can communicate with the village ancestors. They're masters of a form of natural medicine using a vast range of herbs, plants, and roots."

As she walked by our car I smiled at her, but she didn't seem to notice me.

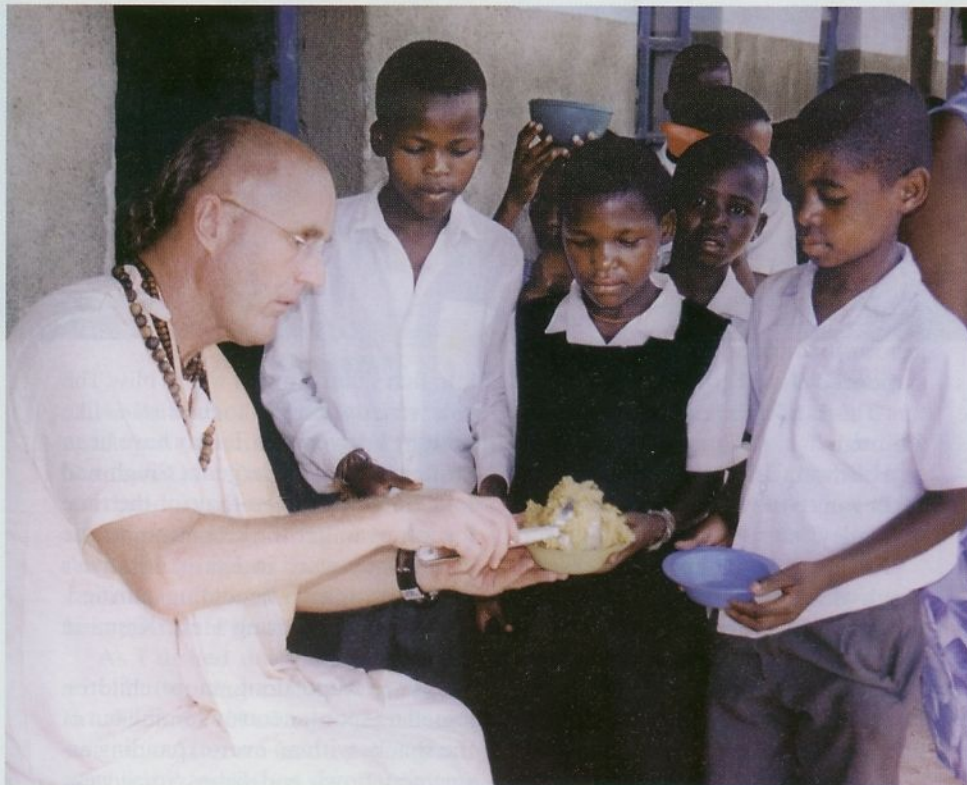
"They're often in a kind of trance," said Sergeant Singh. "Unfortunately, the original Zulu culture still exists only here in the rural areas. In the cities, they are prone to drinking, fighting, and stealing. In Durban the crime rate among Zulus is escalating out of control, and over half of them have been found to be HIV positive."

"Good candidates for Lord Caitanya's mercy," I said.

DRAWN BY THE BEAT

Lakṣmīnātha's van, parked behind us, came alongside, and Lakṣmīnātha, a big smile of anticipation on his face, said, "Let's do *harināma* [chanting] from this spot down into the valley. I'll drive the van in front of the *kīrtana* party, and Sergeant Singh can follow behind. We'll distribute *prasādam* at the bottom."

Picking up a *mṛdanga* drum,



I adjusted the strap and began warming up, playing a few beats on the heads.

“When we get there,” I asked Lakṣmīnātha, “how will the people know we’re distributing *prasādam*?”

He replied, “This is not the first time we’ve been here. The sound of your drum will announce everything. Just look what a few beats have done!”

Turning my head, I was startled to see hundreds of Zulu children, most of

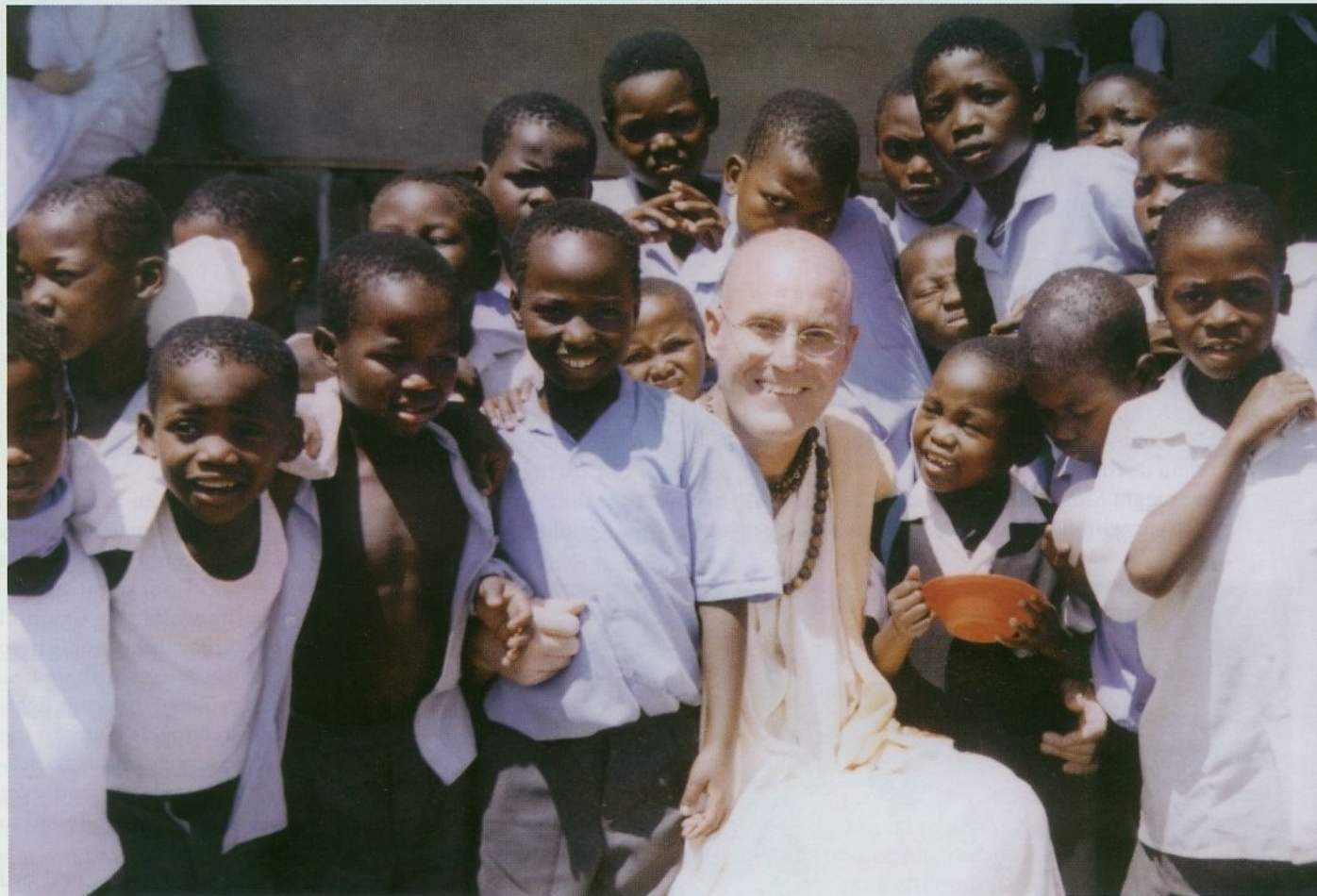
in the *kirtana*, they began dancing.

Sergeant Singh said, “They love the drum beats. It’s in their blood. Wait till you hear them sing. Zulus have beautiful voices!”

Hearing that, I asked the kids, through a small sound system, to repeat the *mahā-mantra* after me as I sang. As they all responded in unison, I was struck with wonder. They really did have beautiful voices. Harmonizing naturally, they sounded like an ex-

shacks along the way started lining the road. Most smiled and waved, but I noticed some hard glares among the older youth. I kept looking back at Sergeant Singh, and as I did he would flash the blue lights of his police car.

I kept the *kirtana* going strong, playing the drum as hard as I could and chanting loudly. The sound reverberated off the nearby hills, announcing our descent into the valley. Although there may have been some risk going



them half naked, running toward us along the dirt road leading into the valley. They had all kinds of receptacles in their hands for getting *prasādam*—bowls, cups, pots, dishes, and even big garbage bins. They were running and calling out, “Hare Kṛṣṇa! Hare Kṛṣṇa! Hare Kṛṣṇa!”

I kept playing the drum and began singing Hare Kṛṣṇa. The three boys who had come in Lakṣmīnātha’s van joined in playing *karatālas* [cymbals]. Within moments, all the children had surrounded us. Immediately swept up

perienched choral group.

“This is a *kirtana* man’s paradise!” I thought.

Following Lakṣmīnātha’s lead, we all began to move down the road into the valley.

As he went to his car, Sergeant Singh whispered in my ear, “It’s all very fun, but remember that you’re an uninvited guest in a hostile environment. And you’re white. Don’t go off the beaten track, and always keep your eyes on me.”

As we chanted, the Zulus in the

into that shanty town, I was in bliss. The kids were responding to the *kirtana* like nothing I’d ever seen. It may have been in their blood, as Sergeant Singh had said, but the fact was that for the time it took us to get to the bottom of the valley, they were in Lord Caitanya’s *saṅkirtana* party, becoming purified, dancing and chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa in delight.

As we went along, more children joined us, spontaneously coming out of the shacks with an ever-expanding assortment bowls and dishes. Some were

so poor they had only cardboard boxes from which to eat. But every one of them was swept up in the nectar of *saṅkīrtana*. The happy mood contrasted with the dirt and filth of the township. Garbage lay everywhere, and an open sewer often crossed the dirt path we were following.

It was also very hot and humid. As the sun beat down on us, I lamented that I hadn't brought a hat. After an hour I was exhausted, but tasting so much nectar with the huge crowd of children that I couldn't stop.

Finally, two hours later, we reached the bottom of the valley, where hundreds more people were waiting for *prasādam*. I kept the *kīrtana* going, though, as the children couldn't seem to get enough. They kept dancing madly, and a few of them even rolled about on the ground.

Eventually I brought it to a close, and they all swarmed around me. They were speaking excitedly in Zulu, of which I couldn't understand a word.

Sergeant Singh smiled and said, "They say they want more *kīrtana*."

Because I didn't continue, they spontaneously started chanting, "Zulu! Zulu! Zulu!"

I thought, "Oh, I'd better bring them back to the transcendental platform."

I told Lakṣmīnātha to open the van and start distributing *prasādam*.

STAMPEDE FOR PRASĀDAM

As he opened the doors, there was a stampede of children toward the van. Several of the Zulu men stepped forward and commanded the children to form lines and wait patiently. After a few tense moments things were under control, and I jumped inside the van to help distribute *prasādam*.

As I dished out the *kicchari*, rich with butter and various vegetables, the children kept asking for ever larger portions. After an hour, a big group of children motioned to me to come

and sit with them on the grass. I got down from the van and went over with Sergeant Singh.

There were well over a hundred children sitting tightly in a circle, and as I sat down they all pressed forward to be near to me. When I noticed that most of them were suffering from one form of skin disease or another—ringworm, impetigo, scabies—I moved back a little.

All eyes were on me. At first they were silent, then one girl at the back said something, and the young boy closest to me reached out and ran his index finger down my arm. Holding up his finger, he shook his head and laughed. At that, all the children started laughing. Sergeant Singh was also laughing, and I asked him what was so funny.

"The little ones have never been this close to a white man before. They thought you painted yourself white," he said. "It's a custom among Zulus to sometimes cover themselves with a whitish cream. It's seen as a sign of beauty."

Then the boy proudly held up his black arm and, pointing to it, started chanting, "Zulu! Zulu! Zulu!" Suddenly all the kids started chanting the same thing.

I interrupted and asked the kids to be silent for a moment. With Sergeant Singh translating, I told them how actually we're not these bodies but our real identity is the soul inside, which is an eternal servant of God. They all stared back at me with blank faces, and I realized I wasn't going to get far trying to impress upon these young Zulu children even the ABCs of *Bhagavad-gītā*. But by their enthusiasm for *kīrtana* and *prasādam*, they had already proven themselves worthy of Lord Caitanya's mercy. So I picked up the drum, and even before I started playing it they were already moving their bodies to an expected beat. When several of them called out "Hare Kṛṣṇa," the rest quickly followed.

Soon we were back in the spiritual world, chanting and dancing without cessation—hundreds of small black bodies jumping and twirling in bliss. Many of the children's parents were on the side, also moving to the sound of the *mṛdaṅga* and chanting the holy

names. I thought how Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* movement is indeed the perfect formula for developing love of God in any part of the world. Nearby, just over 150 years ago, fierce battles for land took place between Europeans and Zulus. Now, by the mercy of Lord Caitanya, white men and Zulus were happily dancing together, their combined voices echoing the holy names of God throughout the valley.

After a while, Sergeant Singh caught my eye and motioned that the sun was setting. As much fun as we were having, it was too dangerous to stay in the township after dark. I reluctantly finished the *kīrtana* and got into the police car. A multitude of sad faces looked on as we ascended the hill.

"I can't remember the last time I enjoyed a *kīrtana* so much," I said to Sergeant Singh. "I'll never forget these kids."

"They'll probably never forget you either," he said. "You'll always be welcome back, and you won't need me next time. There's plenty more work to be done here, Swami. There are ten million Zulus in KwaZulu-Natal, and they all have sweet voices!"

One who is untouched by any piety, who is completely absorbed in irreligion, or who has never received the merciful glance of the devotees or been to any holy place sanctified by them will still ecstatically dance, loudly sing, and even roll about on the ground when he becomes intoxicated by tasting the nectar of the transcendental mellows of pure love of God given by Lord Caitanya. Let me therefore glorify that Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

—Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī,
Caitanya-candrāmṛta 1.2

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 4*. To receive chapters by e-mail as they come out regularly, write to indradyumna.swami@pamho.net. (Volume 1 is available from the Krishna.com Store. Please see page 64.)



The Bittersweet Taste of

SPIRITUAL SEPARATION

*Devotees find the deepest pleasure in their
anguished longings for the company of Lord Kṛṣṇa.*

by Kālakanṭha Dāsa

WHEN THE NOTED scholar and political leader Rāmānanda Rāya asked Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to point out the most painful thing in the world, He replied that nothing in this world is unbearable except separation from the Vaiṣṇava, the devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Śrī Caitanya's disciplic descendant Narotama Dāsa expressed a sense of separation like this: "I will smash my head against rock and enter into fire. Where has that great dancer, Lord Gaurāṅga [Caitanya], suddenly gone?"

Fellowship of Vaiṣṇavas, devotees of Kṛṣṇa, makes sense out of a senseless world. Vaiṣṇavas bless our lives with Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In their presence problems vanish and hurdles shrink. Having lived with such persons, how can one live without them?

Because pure devotees remind everyone about Kṛṣṇa, separation from them and separation from Kṛṣṇa Himself are equally distressing. Yet this distress produces ecstasy, for separation from Kṛṣṇa immerses one in thoughts of Kṛṣṇa—the highest pleasure of the soul. Spiritual separa-

tion, in that respect, is the polar opposite of material separation, which produces only grief. In separation from Kṛṣṇa one can savor the finest moods of spiritual fulfillment.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam tells of Kṛṣṇa's life and of His departure from this world. The following verse rendition of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam's* First Canto, Chapters 14 and 15, portrays devotees' intense separation from Kṛṣṇa.

With Kṛṣṇa's help, King Yudhiṣṭhira, the eldest Pāṇḍava brother, has won the throne of the earth. Now, his reign established and his grandson Parīkṣit in training to eventually inherit the throne, Yudhiṣṭhira dispatches his younger brother Arjuna to consult with Kṛṣṇa at Dvārakā, the Lord's coastal kingdom.

Because the sage Nārada had earlier hinted about Kṛṣṇa's departure, Yudhiṣṭhira feels anxious. When Arjuna does not return on time, Yudhiṣṭhira's anxiety increases. He calls another brother, Bhīma, for a discussion. Then Arjuna returns with the wrenching news of Lord Kṛṣṇa's departure, confessing his own shocking weakness in Kṛṣṇa's absence. How will Yudhiṣṭhira respond?

Opposite page: King Yudhiṣṭhira fears that Lord Kṛṣṇa has departed from the earth and tells Bhīma about the ominous signs he is observing. Next spread: On returning to Yudhiṣṭhira with confirmation of Lord Kṛṣṇa's departure, Arjuna recalls the wondrous acts he was able to perform when empowered by the Lord.



Arjuna traveled westward to that kingdom by the sea,
to meet the Lord and others of the Yadu dynasty.
A string of evil omens sparked King Yudhiṣṭhira's concern
as he counted off the days and hoped Arjuna would return.

Just after Yudhiṣṭhira dispatched his trusted younger brother,
the weather due in one season turned up within another.
Good citizens transformed, becoming greedy, angry mobs
and cheated for their livelihood, neglecting honest jobs.

Beloved, trusted friends practiced deceit on one another,
and quarrels manifested between fathers, sons, and mothers.
Malicious disagreements broke the bonds of man and wife.
King Yudhiṣṭhira had never seen his subjects in such strife.

As citizens degraded to unrighteous, troubled ways,
King Yudhiṣṭhira concluded something must have gone astray.
He thought his reign was pious and this trouble undeserved,
so Yudhiṣṭhira called Bhīma to his chambers and observed:

“Arjuna went for Kṛṣṇa's counsel. Seven months have passed,
and in his absence many evil omens have amassed.
I wonder if Lord Kṛṣṇa has departed from our lives
as Nārada predicted. Has the time so soon arrived?

“The left side of my body, for the past eleven days,
has constantly been trembling in an inauspicious way.
My heart is palpitating due to vague, uneasy fear.
These signs imply an evil time is quickly drawing near.

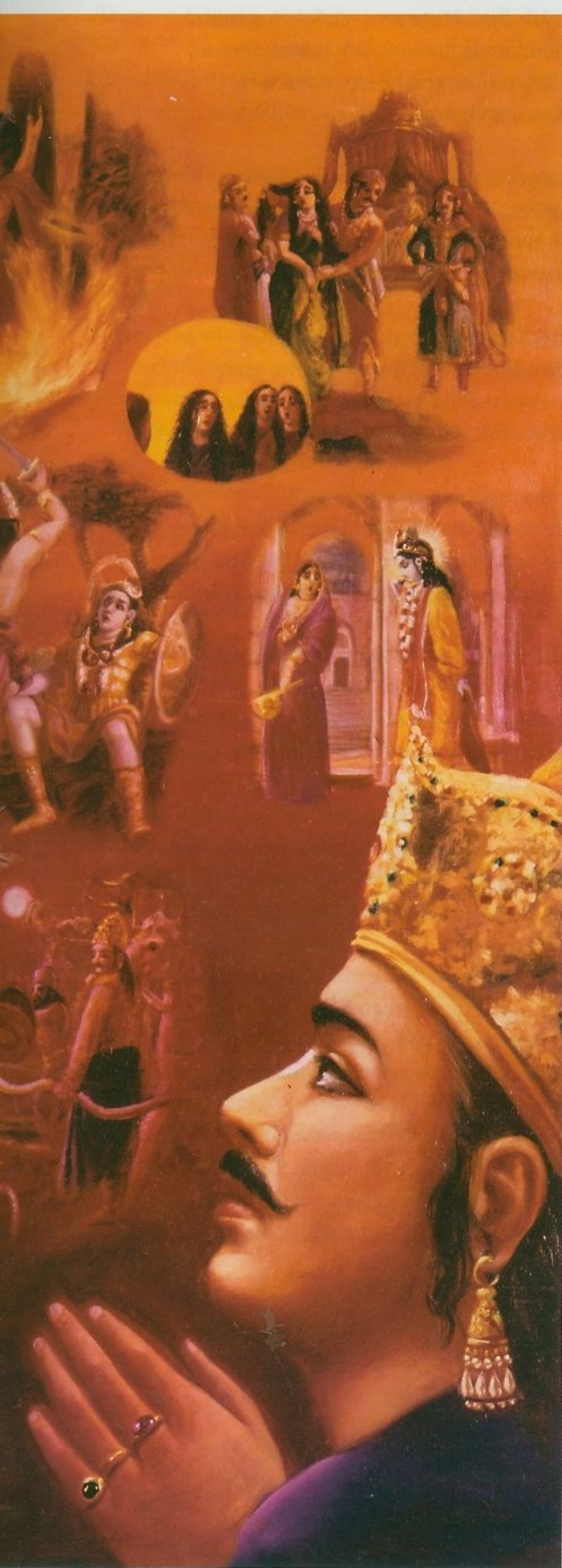
“The jackal-bitch rebukes the moon while spewing acrid flame,
and barking dogs harass me without fear, respect, or shame!
The donkey walks around me, while my horse appears bereft.
Auspicious beasts like cows now pass me only on my left.

“Just see! The pigeon heralds news of detriment and doom,
while shrieking owls and ravens fill my heart with dread and gloom.
These birds foretell the world will fall into some great abyss.
O Bhīma, have you noticed how the world all seems amiss?

“The earth and mountains throb beneath an evil, smoky sky,
while lightening bolts from cloudless thunder shock and mystify.
When clouds appear they shower blood in terrible monsoon,
while violent winds hurl dust about and dim the sky at noon.

“The sun recedes quite early, turning evening into night,
revealing stars that seem to be engaged in bitter fights.
I'm not the only one who holds such pessimistic views,
for everyone I see is shedding tears and quite confused.





“The rivers, lakes, and reservoirs rise ominously higher,
and ghee no longer sets ablaze the sacrificial fire.
My mind is weak and seems to grow increasingly disturbed.
What is this strange, perplexing time, and what is to occur?”

“The cows no longer nurse their calves. They cry all day and night.
The bulls out in the pastures can no longer find delight.
The deities appear to weep and want to leave their shrines.
Our lovely towns are ugly now. Is this the end of time?”

As Yudhiṣṭhira expressed his fears to Bhīma in this way,
it happened that Arjuna came back home that very day.
Arjuna came before him, and King Yudhiṣṭhira surmised
his brother was consumed with grief, for tears obscured his eyes.

The King was shocked to see Arjuna sickly, weak, and pale.
“The prophecies of Nārada,” he thought, “shall never fail.”
As many friends arrived and sensed the dread within the room,
The King inquired of Arjuna that fateful afternoon:

“Welcome home, dear brother! Speak of Kṛṣṇa. How is He
who loves the cows, the *brāhmaṇas*, and His faithful devotees?
Since Kṛṣṇa and His brother grace Their kingdom by the sea,
these must be days of pleasure for the Yadu dynasty!”

King Yudhiṣṭhira asked further of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s friends and wives,
but all could see Arjuna didn’t meet his brother’s eyes.
At last the King inquired, “Dear Arjuna, are you sick?
Did somebody mistreat you as you made your lengthy trip?”

“Did someone speak unkindly words or dare to threaten you?
Could you not give in charity or pay some sort of dues?
You always guard the cows, the priests, the women, and the weak;
have you now disappointed them? Arjuna, can you speak?”

Arjuna barely heard the King spell out his speculations
for he was numb and struck with grief from Kṛṣṇa’s separation.
His handsome mouth and fluid heart appeared to have gone dry.
His body pale, Arjuna failed to utter a reply.

Arjuna smeared his hands across his reddened, teary eyes
and thought of Kṛṣṇa’s love as he released a heavy sigh.
Remembering how Kṛṣṇa toughened him when he was weak,
Arjuna calmed himself, inhaled, and raised his head to speak.

“Lord Kṛṣṇa has departed. We’re alone now, Yudhiṣṭhira.
My strength in war, which stunned the gods, has also disappeared.
I must discuss Lord Kṛṣṇa first, for I feel such remorse,
the universe seems empty and as lifeless as a corpse.



“O Yudhiṣṭhira, I see His face, His warm, enchanting smile!
I hear His voice addressing me in sweet, informal style:
‘O son of Kuntī, my dear friend, great hero of the realm.’
As I remember Kṛṣṇa now, my heart is overwhelmed.

“Lord Kṛṣṇa dined, relaxed, and spoke with me, His friend, each day.
As I felt quite familiar, I would tease the Lord and say,
‘Oh, You are very truthful!’ as He made some clever ploy.
He’d smile at me exactly as a father to his boy.

“I am ‘the great Arjuna,’ so-called hero of such fame!
My bow and arrows, chariot and horses are the same!
Without Lord Kṛṣṇa, I’ve become as useless, in a flash,
as seeds cast over barren land or ghee poured over ash.

“When I gave up my duty in the Kurukṣetra war,
Lord Kṛṣṇa kindly counseled me until I felt restored.
The sweet and holy lessons that I heard the Lord impart
still fascinate my shattered mind and ease my burning heart.”

Recalling Kṛṣṇa’s sacred words with loving dedication,
Arjuna stopped abruptly and slipped into meditation.
By contemplating deeply what Lord Kṛṣṇa did and said,
Arjuna seemed to calm the storm that raged within his head.

Arjuna’s pain appeared to be unbearably intense
till Kṛṣṇa’s words returned to him, restoring common sense.
By consciousness of Kṛṣṇa, he transcended any doubt.
He saw the wheel of birth and death and readied to get out.

To Yudhiṣṭhira, the shocking news was worse than he had feared,
but he had long prepared to act when Kṛṣṇa disappeared.
That very instant he resolved to leave his worldly throne
and follow Kṛṣṇa back to His eternal, blissful home.

The Kali-age set in the day that Kṛṣṇa disappeared,
engulfing earth with hatred, lies, and poisoned atmosphere.
Unlike those modern leaders who hang on until they rot,
King Yudhiṣṭhira renounced his throne without a further thought.

For Yudhiṣṭhira had tutored young Parīkṣit like a son
to carry on the monarchy, and now that time had come.
Completing years of duty to his subjects, friends, and wife,
now Yudhiṣṭhira held rituals to give up family life.

Relinquishing his splendid jewels, silk, and royal belt,
and feeling more disinterested than he had ever felt,
the former king surrendered his whole body unto death
and blended, with the greater air, his body’s living breath.

Then Yudhiṣṭhira concluded, as a soul he had acquired
his earth-and-water body as the fruit of his desires.
Returning all these elements he'd borrowed for this spree,
he merged his life in spirit and behaved accordingly.

He dressed in ragged garments and untied his splendid hair,
and showed upon his face only a silent, vacant stare.
Without consulting anyone, he started walking north,
and thought only of Kṛṣṇa as he aimlessly went forth.

Observing what the king had done to greet the Kali age,
his younger brothers chose to do the same, for they could gauge
that irreligious Kali would extract a heavy toll,
infecting all the citizens with selfish, evil goals.

The saintly sons of Pāṇḍu had encountered many trials.
They always followed scripture and did everything worthwhile.
That day they took the final step that makes a life complete
and fixed their minds entirely on Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet.

Thus purified, the sons of Pāṇḍu kept themselves absorbed
in flawless meditation on their sweet, beloved Lord.
Lord Kṛṣṇa gave all five a gift not usually attained:
admission, in their bodies, to His personal domain.

The pastime of the Pāṇḍavas departing from this world
compares with Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, for it's absolutely pure.
A faithful soul who listens to it well from start to end
arouses pure devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa deep within.

EPILOGUE—In the renowned *Bhagavad-gītā*, when Arjuna struggled on the battlefield Kṛṣṇa urged him to do his duty, but with detachment. This final act of the Pāṇḍavas—renouncing the world of ordinary responsibility—does not contradict Kṛṣṇa's order. Such renunciation is itself a human duty, especially at the end of life. We may not be able to die to this world as thoroughly and abruptly as Yudhiṣṭhira and his brothers did. But we can die to it a little each day as we are born into loving separation from Lord Kṛṣṇa and His great devotees such as Śrīla Prabhupāda. For it is this materially bitter but spiritually sweet sense of separation that opens the door for us to Lord Kṛṣṇa's eternal, blissful abode. ☀

Kālakaṅṭha Dāsa is the author of 'The Song Divine' (a lyrical rendition of the Bhagavad-gītā). He is the resource development director for the Māyāpur Project. He and his wife and their two daughters are members of the Hare Kṛṣṇa community in Alachua, Florida.

Disciples and followers of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda will celebrate the twenty-fifty anniversary of his passing on November 8. (The date may vary by one day in various parts of the world. Consult your local Vaiṣṇava calendar or Hare Kṛṣṇa center.)



Gatherings

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

USA

ARIZONA: *Glendale — Om Tat Sat Center for Vedic Understanding (Jusaniya Devi Dāsi), (602) 978-9086, jusaniya@msn.com

CALIFORNIA: To find out about programs in **Anaheim Hills, Buena Park, Cerritos, Corona, Diamond Bar, Granada Hills, Laguna Niguel, Long Beach, Redlands, Santa Ana, Simi Valley**, and other southern California locations, call Svayambhava Dāsa at (310) 837-2430; **Alpine** — Rādhānātha Dāsa, (619) 659-5728; **Avalon** — Śyāmasundara Dāsa, (310) 510-0288 [Radio program on 88.7 FM, Tuesdays 8:00–10:00 P.M.]; **Burlingame** — Vaiṣeṣika Dāsa & Nirākula Devi Dāsi, (650) 344-2446; **Lancaster** — Premāṅṅṅa Dāsi, (661) 942-1859; **Ojai** — Urvaśi Devi Dāsi, (805) 646-7572; **Penn Valley** — Rick & Judy Gross, (530) 432-0854; **Placentia** — Sri Radha Raman Temple, (714) 996-7262; **Redwood Valley** — Prasanna Yoga Ashram (Ikṣvāku Dāsa), (707) 485-5592; **Sacramento** — Gaṇapati Dāsa & Mālati Devi Dāsi, (916) 929-4557; **San Jose/Santa Cruz** — Akṛūrānātha Dāsa & Jagarīṇi Devi Dāsi, (408) 353-9099; **Visalia** — Nagapatni Devi Dāsi, (559) 734-4463, nagapatni@aol.com

FLORIDA: **Coral Springs** — Institute for Gaudiya Vaishnavism, (954) 345-3456; **Orlando** — ISKCON Sunday Program, Shanti Mandir, [call Dīpa: (407) 788-7009]; Jaya Śīla Dāsa, (407) 290-1956; **West Palm Beach** — Śreṣṭha Devi Dāsi, (561) 712-8470

GEORGIA: **Atlanta** (Gypsy Market) — Mādhava Priya Devi Dāsi or Bhakta Christopher, (404) 584-0987; **Norcross** — Gītā Govinda Dāsa & Gītā Devi Dāsi, (770) 448-7556

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

ILLINOIS: *Champaign-Urbana — Pṛthūśrava Dāsa & Dānakeli Devi Dāsi, (217) 384-0699, krishnacenteruiuc@hotmail.com; **DeKalb/Rockford/Northern Illinois Area** — Tamohara Dāsa & Mantrinī Devi Dāsi, (815) 756-3456; **Des Plaines** — Rādhā-Gopāla Dāsa, (847) 768-9594; **Naperville** — Nirantara Dāsa and Premānanda Devi Dāsi, (630) 753-9676; **Ashok & Preethy Menon**, (630) 236-5747; **Suresh & Gulshan Khattar**, (630) 753-9857; **Palatine** — Nachiketa Lolla, (847) 368-9363; *Sacikūmāra Dāsa & Premataraṅgini Devi Dāsi, (847) 259-3703; **Schaumburg** — Amar Upadhyay, (847) 969-1029

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BTG Index, 2002

AUTHORS

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda
See FOUNDER'S LECTURE under FEATURES.
See also "Śrīla Prabhupāda Speaks Out" under DEPARTMENTS.
See also "Book Section: Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam" under DEPARTMENTS.

Ādikartā Dāsa

See SPIRITUAL PLACES under FEATURES.

Ādī Puruṣa Kṛṣṇa Dāsa

Prabhupāda's Gifts to Malaysia, November/December, page 17.

Arcana-siddhī Devī Dāsī

How Scared Should You Be? January/February, page 12.

Coming Back to Vṛndāvana, March/April, page 21.

Dealing with Depression, July/August, page 12.

Amala Bhakta Dāsa

The Appearance of Radha Kunda, September/October, page 53.

Bhakti Vikāśa Swamī

See SPIRITUAL PLACES under FEATURES.

Bhayahārī Dāsa

Destiny and Endeavor, January/February, page 38.

Bhūrijana Dāsa

Prayerful Reading, July/August, page 39.

Caitanya Caraṇa Dāsa

Does Religion Cause War? November/December, page 33.

Dvārakādhīśa Devī Dāsī,

See THE NINE PROCESSES OF BHAKTI-YOGA under FEATURES.

Dhīra Govinda Dāsa

Druze Sheikhs at Home in India, September/October, page 36.

Devāmṛta Swamī

Bad Karma and Superb Bhakti in Ukraine, May/June, page 45.

See also BOOK EXCERPT under FEATURES.

Gopīparāṇadhana Dāsa

Serving the Words of His Predecessors, July/August, page 42.

Gopāla Hari Dāsa

Cured for Service to Kṛṣṇa, September/October, page 49.

Govindarajan, P.

See "The Vedic Observer" under DEPARTMENTS.

Hare Kṛṣṇa Devī Dāsī

Doctors of Body and Soul, March/April, page 36.

Indradyumna Swamī

My Mother's Transformation, March/April, page 12.

A Siberian Gypsy Welcome, September/October, page 12.

Lifting Zulu Spirits, November/December, page 44.

Jayādvaita Swamī

"My Devotee Is Always Saintly," March/April, page 39.

Kālakaṇṭha Dāsa

The Bittersweet Taste of Spiritual Separation, November/December, page 50.

See also "Guest Editorial" under DEPARTMENTS.

Karṇāmṛta Dāsa

Lessons from Death, November/December, page 13.

Mahāprabhu Dāsa

See SPIRITUAL PLACES under FEATURES.

Mathureśa Dāsa

A King's Spiritual Yearning, May/June, page 23.

A King Becomes a Servant, July/August, page 51.

Nāgarāja Dāsa

See "From the Editor" under DEPARTMENTS.

Piyushkumar Mehta

Kṛṣṇa's Creation, Man's Amalgamation, May/June, page 12.

Sarvabhāuma Dāsa

Where to Die? January/February, page 24.

Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswamī

Facing Our Reality, Living with Our Ideals, January/February, page 17.

The Need for Faith, May/June, page 19.

Satyarāja Dāsa

"You Can Know a Tree by Its Fruits": The Devotional Life of Tamāl Krishna Goswami, July/August, page 16.

See also LORD CAITANYA'S EIGHT TEACHINGS under FEATURES.

Śyāmasundara Dāsa

My Sweet George, January/February, page 55.

Ūrmilā Devī Dāsī

Karṇa's Choice, March/April, page 24.

DEPARTMENTS

"Book Section: Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam"

Lord Kapila Departs, January/February, page 31.

The Lord of Sacrifice, March/April, page 31.

Gradations of Brahman, May/June, page 39.

The Appearance of Three Lords, July/August, page 39.

Increasing the Universal Population, September/October, page 31.

The Appearance of Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi, November/December, page 37.

"From the Editor"—Nāgarāja Dāsa

Getting to Know Kṛṣṇa, March/April, page 62.

Peace Proposal, July/August, page 62.

Evidence for Kṛṣṇa, September/October, page 62.

Greater Than God, November/December, page 62.

“Guest Editorial”

Kirtana with TKG, Kālakaṅṭha Dāsa, May/June, page 62.

“In Memoriam”

Tamāl Krishna Goswami, Vṛndāvanīśvarī Devī Dāsī, May/June, page 15.

“Śrīla Prabhupāda Speaks Out”

“Our Mission—Teach Everyone How to Love God,” January/February, page 15.

“God Himself Is Teaching God Consciousness,” March/April, page 15.

“Philosophy and Religion Should Be Combined,” May/June, page 43.

“We Want to Give Eyes to the People,” July/August, page 15.

“When the Soul Misuses His Independence,” September/October, page 15.

“Independence Means You Can Do Whatever You Like,” November/December, page 15.

“The Vedic Observer”

The Morality of Stem Cell Research, P. Govindarajan, May/June, page 16.

FEATURES

Bad Karma and Superb Bhakti in Ukraine, Devāmṛta Swami, May/June, page 45.

Beatle, The Spiritual, January/February, page 21.

BHAKTI-YOGA, THE NINE PROCESSES OF

6: Vandanam—Turning to Prayer, Dvārakadhīśa Devī Dāsī, May/June, page 30.

BOOK EXCERPT

When the West Loved India, Devāmṛta Swami, September/October, page 43.

Cured for Service to Kṛṣṇa, Gopāla Hari Dāsa, September/October, page 49.

Death, Lessons from, Karṇāmṛta Dāsa, November/December, page 13.

Depression, Dealing with, Arcana-siddhī Devī Dāsī, July/August, page 12.

Destiny and Endeavor, Bhayahārī Dāsa, January/February, page 38.

Die, Where to? Sarvabhāuma Dāsa, January/February, page 24.

Doctors of Body and Soul, Hare Kṛṣṇa Devī Dāsī, March/April, page 36.

Druze Sheikhs at Home in India, Dhīra Govinda Dāsa, September/October, page 36.

Facing Our Reality, Living with Our Ideals, Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami, January/February, page 17.

Faith, The Need for, Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami, May/June, page 19.

FOUNDER’S LECTURE—Śrīla Prabhupāda

The Most Confidential Knowledge, January/February, page 7.

The Devotional Form of Kṛṣṇa, March/April, page 7.

“Come to My Eternal Place,” May/June, page 7.

Three Yogas, Three Results, July/August, page 7.

The Missing Technology, September/October, page 7.

Two Souls in the Body, November/December, page 7.

George, My Sweet, Śyāmasundara Dāsa, January/February, page 55.

How Scared Should You Be? Arcana-siddhī Devī Dāsī, January/February, page 12.

Karṇa’s Choice, Ūrmilā Devī Dāsī, March/April, page 24.

A King Becomes a Servant, Mathureśa Dāsa, July/August, page 51.

A King’s Spiritual Yearning, Mathureśa Dāsa, May/June, page 23.

Kṛṣṇa’s Creation, Man’s Amalgamation, Piyushkumar Mehta, May/June, page 12.

LORD CAITANYA’S EIGHT TEACHINGS—

Satyarāja Dāsa

Introduction: A Prophecy Fulfilled, March/April, page 55.

Teaching 1: Seven Effects of Chanting, May/June, page 53.

Teachings 2&3: The All-Powerful Names of God, September/October, page 27.

Teachings 4&5: Resolute in Purpose, November/December, page 27.

“My Devotee Is Always Sainly,” Jayādvaīta Swami, March/April, page 39.

Prabhupāda’s Gifts to Malaysia, Ādi Puruṣa Kṛṣṇa Dāsa, November/December, page 17.

Radha Kunda, The Appearance of, Amala Bhakta Dāsa, September/October, page 53.

Reading, Prayerful, Bhūrijana Dāsa, July/August, page 39.

Serving the Words of His Predecessors, Gopīparāṇadhana Dāsa, July/August, page 42.

A Siberian Gypsy Welcome, Indradyumna Swami, September/October, page 12.

SPIRITUAL PLACES

Dakor: Home of Kṛṣṇa the Deserter, Bhakti Vikāśa Swami, January/February, page 44.

New Vraja Dhāma: Creating the Land of Kṛṣṇa in Hungary, Ādikartā Dāsa, March/April, page 45.

Radhadesh: A Spiritual Oasis, Mahāprabhu Dāsa, September/October, page 16.

Spiritual Separation, The Bittersweet Taste of, Kālakaṅṭha Dāsa, November/December, page 50.

Transformation, My Mother’s, Indradyumna Swami, March/April, page 12.

Vṛndāvana, Coming Back to, Arcana-siddhī Devī Dāsī, March/April, page 21.

War, Does Religion Cause, Caitanya Caraṇa Dāsa, November/December, page 33.

Web Site, A New, March/April, page 17.

“You Can Know a Tree by Its Fruits”: The Devotional Life of Tamāl Krishna Goswami, Satyarāja Dāsa, July/August, page 16.

Zulu Spirits, Lifting, Indradyumna Swami, November/December, page 44.

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or 799-1354/ Fax: (601) 799-2924/ E-mail: talavan@fnbop.com

Gurabo, Puerto Rico (New Govardhana Hill) — Carr. 181, Km. 16.3, Bo. Santa Rita, Gurabo
(mail: HC-01, Box 8440, Gurabo, PR 00778)/ (Office) Tel. & fax: (787) 737-4265/ (Temple)

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Tel. (919) 732-6492/ Fax: (919) 732-8033/ E-mail: bkgoswami@compuserve.com

◆ **Moundsville, West Virginia (New Vrindaban)** — R.D. No. 1, Box 319, Hare Krishna Ridge, 26041/
Tel. (304) 843-1600; Guest House, (304) 845-5905/ Fax: (304) 854-0023/
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Port Royal, Pennsylvania (Gita Nagari) — R.D. No. 1, Box 839, 17082/ Tel. & fax: (717) 527-4101/
E-mail: vrajajilla@acsworld.net

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Gainesville, Florida — Vegetarian Palace, 2106 SW 34th St., 32608/ Tel. (352) 378-2955

Greensboro, North Carolina — Govinda's, 332 South Tate St./ Tel. (336) 373-8809

San Juan, Puerto Rico — Gopal, 2018 Calle Tetuan, Viejo San Juan, 00901/ Tel. (787) 724-0229

Tallahassee, Florida — Higher Taste, 411 St. Francis St., 32301/ Tel. (850) 894-4296

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Tel. +44 (028) 9062 0530

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Liverpool, England — 114 Bold St., L1 4HY/ Tel. +44 (01555) 894-790

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AUSTRALIA

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Tel. +61 (03) 5288-7383/ E-mail: gangadasa@telstra.easymail.com.au

Cessnock, NSW — New Gokula Farm, Lewis Lane (off Mount View Rd., Millfield, near Cessnock
[mail: P.O. Box 399, Cessnock]), NSW 2325/ Tel. +61 (02) 4998-800/ Fax: (Sydney temple)

Murwillumbah (New Govardhana) — Tyalgum Rd., Eungella (mail: P.O. Box 685), NSW 2484/
Tel. & fax: +61 (02) 6672-6579/ Fax: +61 (02) 6672-5498

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Adelaide — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 79 Hindley St., SA 5000/ Tel. +61 (08) 8231-5258

CENTERS AROUND THE WORLD

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Brisbane — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 190 Brunswick St., Fortitude Valley, QLD/
Tel. +61 (07) 3854-1016/ E-mail: brisbane@pamho.net

Melbourne — Crossways, 1st Floor, 123 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (03) 9650-2939

Melbourne — Gopal's, 139 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (03) 9650-1578

New Castle — Krishna's Vegetarian Cafe, 110 King Street, corner of King & Wolf Streets, NSW 2300
Tel. +61 (02) 4929-6900

Perth — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 200 William St., Northbridge, WA 6003/
Tel. +61 (08) 9227-1684/ E-mail: perth@pamho.net

Sydney — Govinda's Upstairs, 112 Darlinghurst Road, Darlinghurst NSW 2010/ Tel. +61 (02) 9380-5162

Sydney — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 529B King St., Newtown, NSW 2042/
Tel. +61 (02) 9550-6524

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Rakiraki, Fiji — Rewasa, Rakiraki (mail: P.O. Box 204)/ Tel. +679 694243

Suva, Fiji — Joyce Place, Off Pilling Rd., Nasinu 7½ miles (mail: P.O. Box 2183, Govt. Bldgs./
Tel. +679 393 599/ Fax: +679 314 583/ E-mail: vdas@govnet.gov.fj

Wellington, NZ — 105 Newlands Rd., Newlands (mail: P.O. Box 2753)/ Tel. +64 (04) 478-1414

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

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Auckland, NZ — Gopal's, 246 Queen St./ Tel. +64 (09) 306-4143

Labasa, Fiji — Hare Krishna Restaurant, Nasakula Road/ Tel. +679 811364

Lautoka, Fiji — Gopal's, Corner of Yasawa St. and Naviti St./ Tel. +679 662990

Suva, Fiji — Hare Krishna Vegetarian Restaurant, Dolphins FNPF Place, Victoria Parade/
Tel. +679 314154/ E-mail: vdas@govnet.gov.fj

Suva, Fiji — Hare Krishna Vegetarian Restaurant, Opposite University of the South Pacific,
Laulaca Bay Rd./ Tel. +679 311683/ E-mail: vdas@govnet.gov.fj

Suva, Fiji — Hare Krishna Vegetarian Restaurant, 18 Pratt St./ Tel. +679 314154

Suva, Fiji — Hare Krishna Vegetarian Restaurant, 82 Ratu Mara Rd., Samabula/ Tel. +679 386333

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Oslo — Krishna's Cuisine, Kirkeveien 59B, 0364/ Tel. +47 (02) 260-6250

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Greater Than God

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA sometimes told stories about a king in Bengal and his court jester, Gopal Ban.

One morning, when Gopal arrived for the king's daily amusement, the king asked him, "Gopal, what's the difference between you and a jack-ass?"

Guessing the distance between him and the king, Gopal replied, "Sir, the difference is about three feet."

The king laughed heartily, even though the joke was on him.

Śrīla Prabhupāda told this story to show that although God receives the highest honor and respect, He enjoys taking the role of a subordinate. He's more satisfied by intimate relationships than official ones.

In another story that illustrates the same point, Prabhupāda told of a British prime minister who had once kept a guest waiting outside his office while he played "horsey" for his grandson.

Lord Caitanya's followers combed the Vedic scriptures to draw out the most comprehensive description of God. In other places we may learn about God's omnipotence, but in the tradition of Kṛṣṇa consciousness we learn about God's personality—in striking detail. It's like the difference between knowing a judge in court and knowing him at home.

God in His majesty is God at work; Kṛṣṇa is God at home.

Lord Caitanya taught us to aspire to be with Kṛṣṇa in His eternal home, in the pure, relaxed atmosphere of Vṛndāvana. Whereas awe and reverence pervade other parts of the spiritual world, in Vṛndāvana love rules. Kṛṣṇa's devotees there don't

know, or care, that He is God. They love Him, that's all. And they're eager to serve Him.

We infinitesimal souls are all eternal servants of God. There's no escaping our role; it's our nature. We can serve God willingly, as devotees, or unwillingly, by serving His material energy, as we unwillingly grow old, get sick, die, and so on. In our rebellious spirit, the idea of servitude seems repulsive. But the pure souls in the spiritual world know service to be the source of unparalleled bliss. Why? Because, quite simply, the residents of Vṛndāvana serve Kṛṣṇa by being His friends, His relatives, His respected elders, and so on. What could be better than that? They serve Him by their relationship with Him, because that's what He wants.

Just as we like to enjoy a variety of relationships, so does God. A husband and wife may be happy in each other's company, and may have relationships with friends, subordinates, and superiors, but still they choose to have children and so create new relationships.

Because Kṛṣṇa is unlimited, He likes to enjoy an unlimited number of relationships, each unique. We each have a unique relationship with Kṛṣṇa, revealed when our love for Him matures. The relationships between Kṛṣṇa and His eternal associates are free of the hardships that plague the analogous relationships in the material world. In the spiritual world, all exchanges flow from pure love and are therefore perfect.

While impersonalists want to become one with God, devotees can attain the position of being greater than God. In the intimacy of pure love, they can tell God what do to, and He loves to hear it.

—Nāgarāja Dāsa

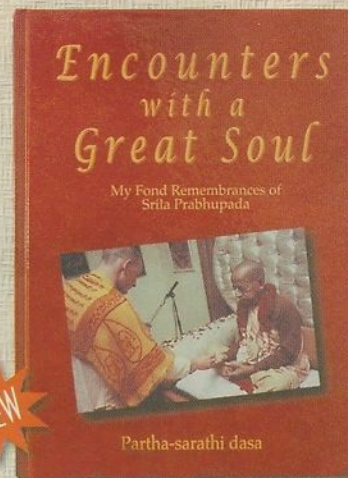
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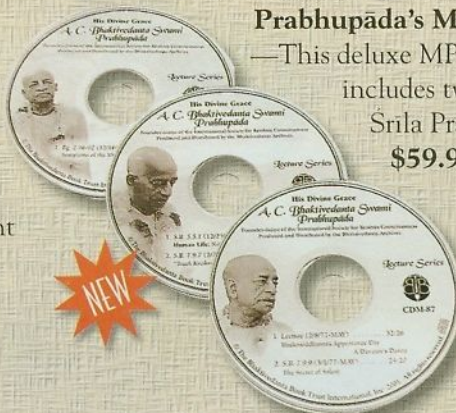
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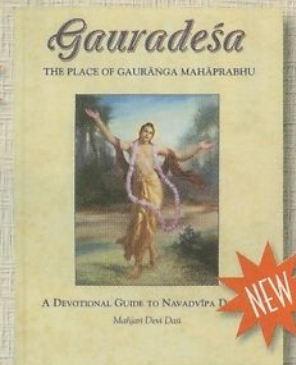
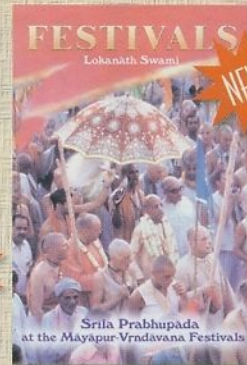
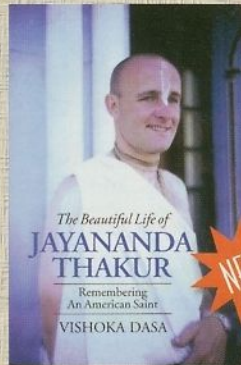
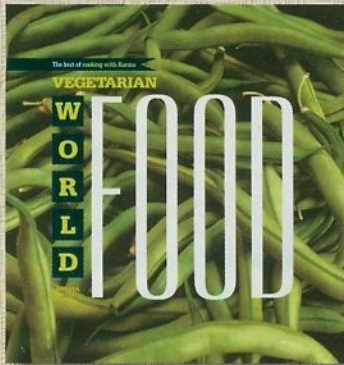
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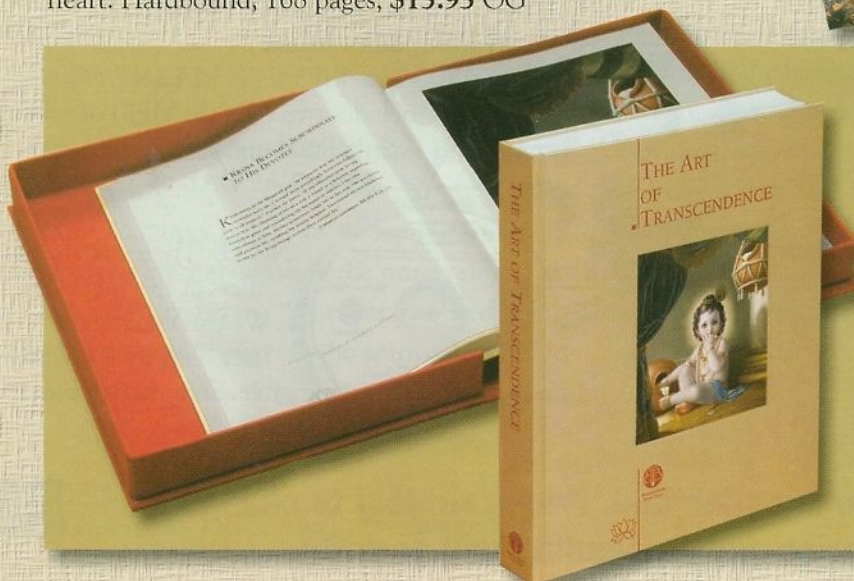
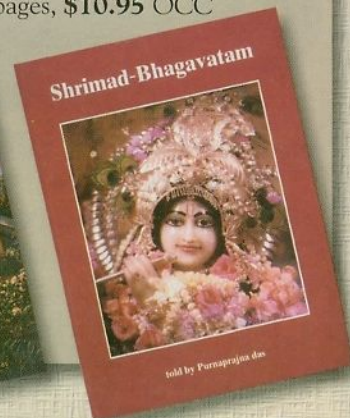
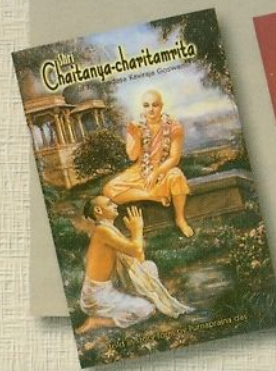
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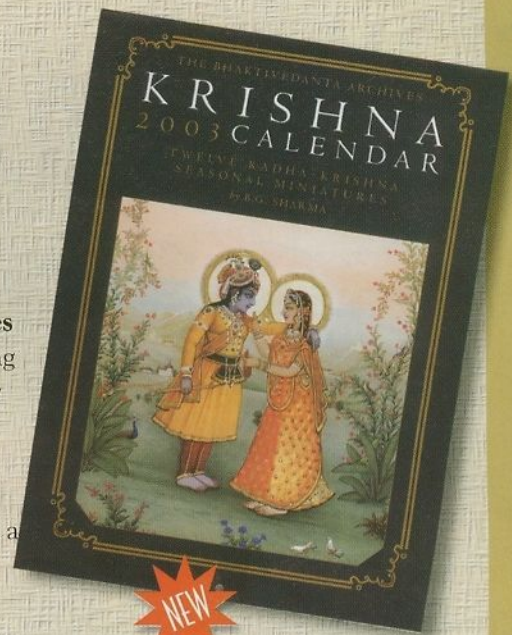
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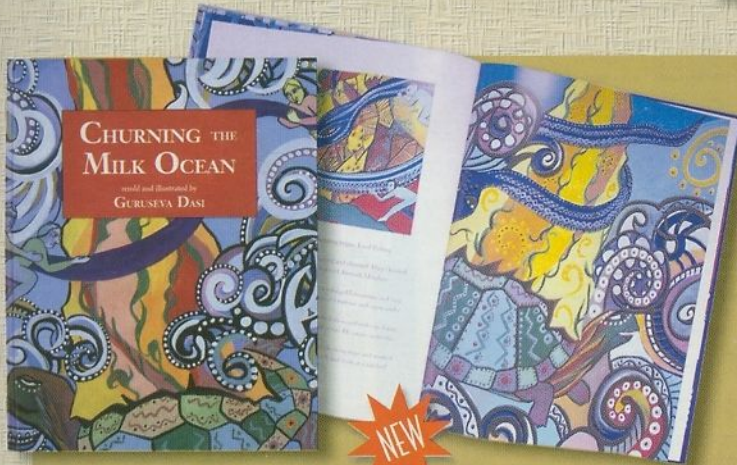
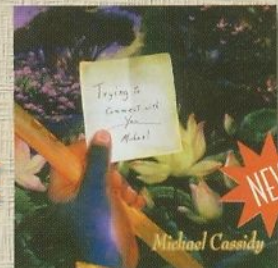
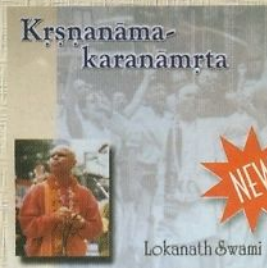
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Vedic Thoughts

By the mercy of the Lord even a layman can compose prayers of the highest spiritual perfection. Such spiritual perfection is not limited by material qualifications but is developed by dint of one's sincere endeavor to render transcendental service. Voluntary endeavor is the only qualification for spiritual perfection.

His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.9.38, Purport

The holy name of Kṛṣṇa is the sweetest of the sweet, the most auspicious of the auspicious. This transcendental fruit of all the *Vedas* is purely spiritual. Whoever chants it but once, whether with faith or with contempt, is liberated.

Skanda Purāṇa, Prabhāsa-khaṇḍa

Persons who are very expert and most intelligent in understanding things as they are engage in hearing narrations of the auspicious activities and pastimes of the Lord, which are worth chanting and worth hearing. Such persons do not care even for the highest material benediction, namely liberation, to say nothing of other less important benedictions like the material happiness of the heavenly kingdom.

The Four Kumāras
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.15.48

O Lord, only those devotees who have completely surrendered unto You are able to see Your opulence continuously, although you hide Yourself by Your *yoga-māyā*. Your opulence is beyond time, space, and any material object, and there is nothing equal or superior to it.

Śrī Yāmunācārya
Stotra Ratna 13

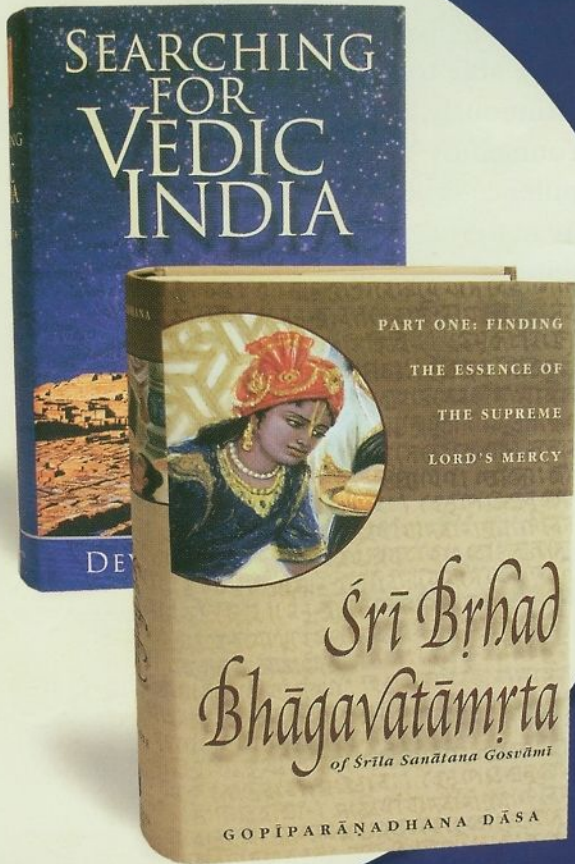
Any activities sanctioned in the revealed scriptures and aiming at the satisfaction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are accepted by saintly teachers as the regulative principles of devotional service. If one regularly executes such service unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead under the direction of a bona fide spiritual master, then gradually he rises to the platform of serving in pure love of God.

Śrī Nārada Muni
Nārada-pañcarātra

People may say that there are many qualified people in this world with tasteful pastimes and jewellike opulences, but the best of beautiful sages have ascertained that Kṛṣṇa, the prince of Vraja, is the only source of all this.

Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī
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