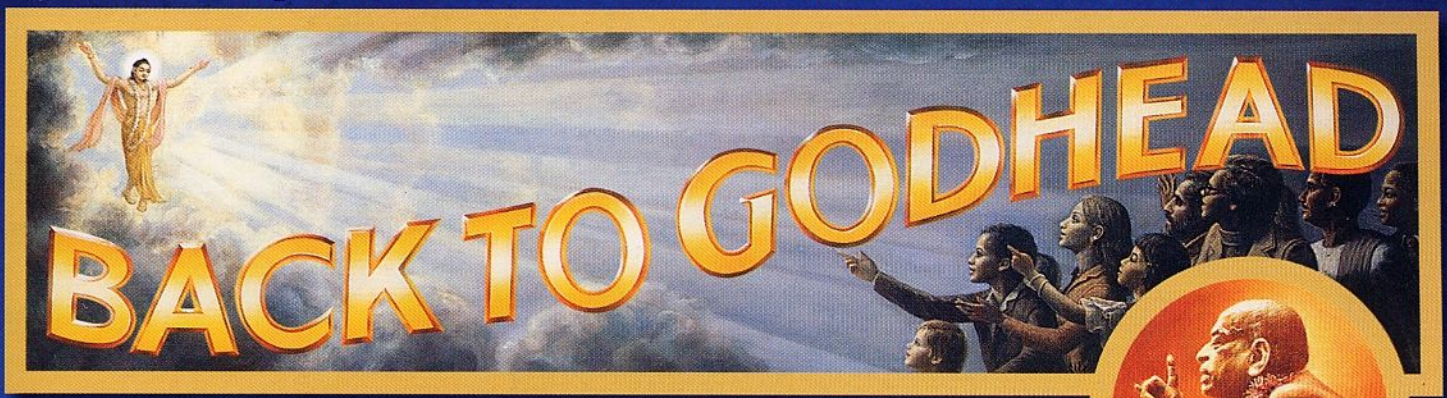


Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.



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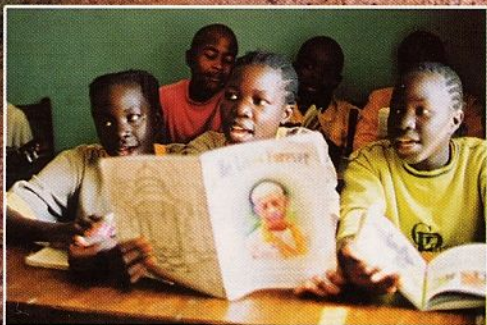


When the Road Becomes a Temple

CanWalk II: Across Canada with
Bhaktimārga Swami



Initiation into Spiritual Life (p. 12)



Another Moon Rises Over East Africa (p. 16)

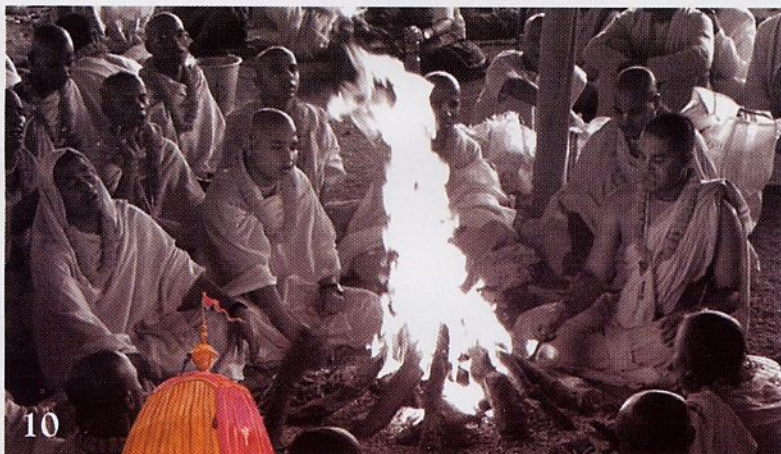
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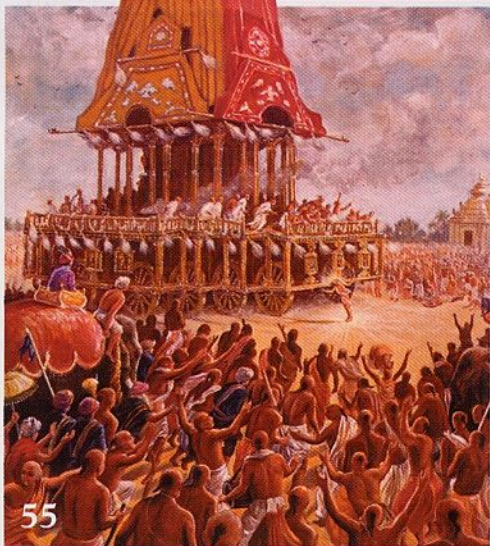
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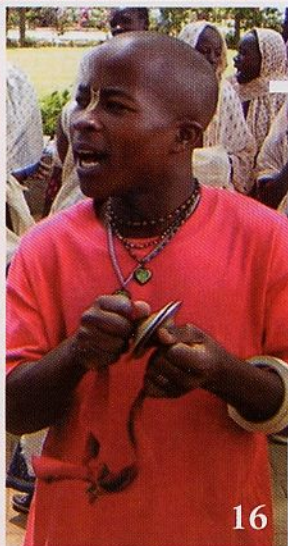
Founded 1944 • Vol. 38, No. 3 • May / June 2004



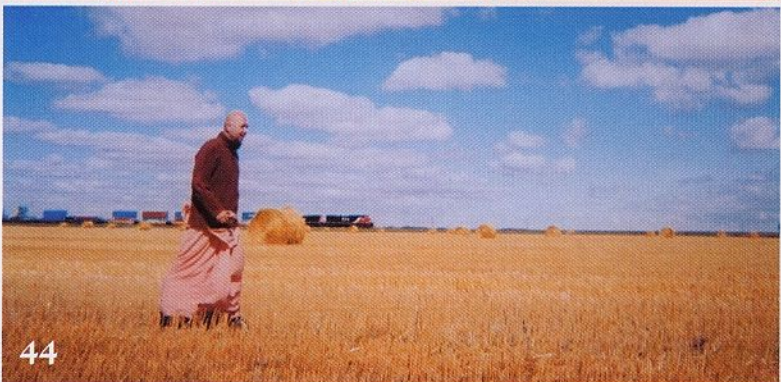
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Śrīla Prabhupāda explains how the Vedic literature gives fearlessness by raising us above material existence.

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37 Let Go and Let Kṛṣṇa

The root of our anxiety is often a lack of trust in Kṛṣṇa's plan for us.

44 When the Road Becomes a Temple

Bhaktimārga Swami makes many new friends as he shares Kṛṣṇa on his second cross-Canada walk.

55 Marvels of Mahāprabhu

Because Lord Caitanya is Kṛṣṇa Himself, He can easily appear in seven places at once, revive the nearly dead, and make animals dance and chant.

ead

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COVER The contemplative solitude of the open road is one of the rewards Bhaktimārga Swami rediscovered on his second walk across Canada. Please see the article beginning on page 44. (Photo by Tattva-darśana Dāsa.)

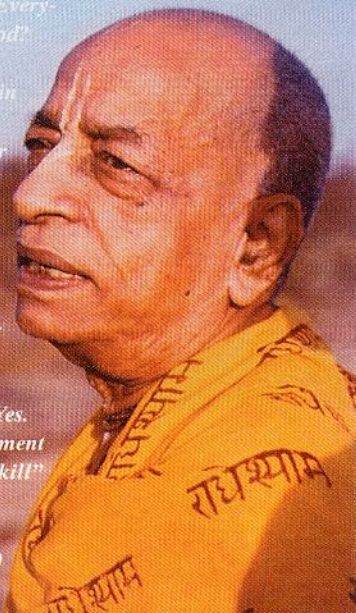
Śrīla Prabhupāda: *Everybody is going to God?*

Guest: *Yes. Everybody who believes in God and leads a good life, does their best in this world.*

Śrīla Prabhupāda: *Then the question comes, “What is a ‘good life?’”*

Jesuit Priest: *Obeying the commandments of God.*

Śrīla Prabhupāda: *Yes. So if the commandment is “Thou shalt not kill” and if somebody kills, so that is a “good life?”—p.40*



WELCOME



IN THIS ISSUE we accompany Canadian-born Bhaktimārga Swami on his second walk across Canada, and we follow a group of Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees on their annual touring festival

through East Africa. Both the swami and the tour group took to the road for the same reason—to introduce people to the philosophy and practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, especially the chanting of the holy names of the Lord. Bhaktimārga Swami reminded Canadians to slow down and think about the important questions of life, and the East Africa tour brought a spiritual message that can help eliminate the scourge of HIV from that part of the world.

Though the horror of a disease like HIV affects relatively few of us, we all suffer at least some degree of fear and anxiety. Two articles in this issue address that topic: Śrīla Prabhupāda talks about “Freedom from Fear,” and family therapist Arcana-siddhī Devī Dāsī tells us the solution is to “Let Go and Let Kṛṣṇa.”

Connecting with Kṛṣṇa requires connecting with His pure devotee. In “Initiation Into Spiritual Life,” we hear about making the formal link with a spiritual master. The prerogative to make that decision separates us from the animals and answers the question posed in the title of another article: “Are We Special?”

Hare Kṛṣṇa.—Nāgarāja Dāsa, Editor

OUR PURPOSES

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



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



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



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

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The Magazine of the
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(under the direction of His Divine Grace
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INDIA: PUBLISHING COORDINATOR Yudhiṣṭhira
Dāsa • **PRODUCTION** Sac-cid-ānanda Dāsa • **AC-
COUNTS** Sahadeva Dāsa • **SUBSCRIBER SERVICES**
Mañjarī Devī Dāsi, Trivikrama Dāsa

EDITORIAL OFFICES Send editorial correspondence
to BTG, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, FL 32616, USA. Phone:
(386) 462-7794. Fax: (386) 462-1761. Or BTG, 33 Janki
Kutir, Next to State Bank of Hyderabad, Juhu, Mumbai
400 049, India. Phone: (022) 2618-1718. Fax: (022) 2618-
4827. E-mail: editors@krishna.com

SUBSCRIPTIONS *Back to Godhead* is published six
times a year. For a one-year subscription (US and Canada)
send \$24 to Back to Godhead, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, FL
32616, USA. Or call toll-free: 1-800-800-3284.

For subscriptions outside the US and Canada add
\$3. Payment in US funds (payable on a US bank) must
accompany your order.

In the UK send £18.99 to BTG UK Ltd., Bhakti-
vedānta Manor, Dharam Marg, Hilfield Lane, Watford,
Herts. WD2 8EZ.

In South Africa send R240 to Back to Godhead, P. O.
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PREPRESS & PRINTING Interprint, Clearwater,
Florida, USA

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tional. All rights reserved. (Trustee for The Bhakti-
vedānta Book Trust: Svavāsa Dāsa.) *Back to Godhead*
(ISSN 0005-3643, USPS 604-170) is published bi-monthly
(six times a year) for \$24 per year by Back To Godhead,
18024 NW 112th Blvd., Alachua, FL 32615. Periodicals
postage paid at Alachua, Florida, and additional mailing
offices.

CANADA POST AGREEMENT #: 0571016
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Back to God-
head, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, FL 32616.

Letters

A Guiding Light

There have been many times when, living in this world, something has me down. It seems that around that time, I've had BTG suddenly arrive at my doorstep. Every issue is a guiding light, a path in the direction of our sweet Lord and provider.

I thank you for being there for me, and with Kṛṣṇa's help you will be there for many years to come.

Bob Koenig
Levittown, New York

Spreading the Mahā-mantra

Thank you for showing how Hare Kṛṣṇa youth are combining an incredible service with fun by touring North America in a bus: performing *kirtanas*, assisting the Festival of

India, and enjoying respites along the way (Jan/Feb). I wish ISKCON could have lots of traveling parties with the purpose of reaching the nooks and crannies across the globe and fulfilling the prophecy that the *mahā-mantra* will be heard in every town and village.

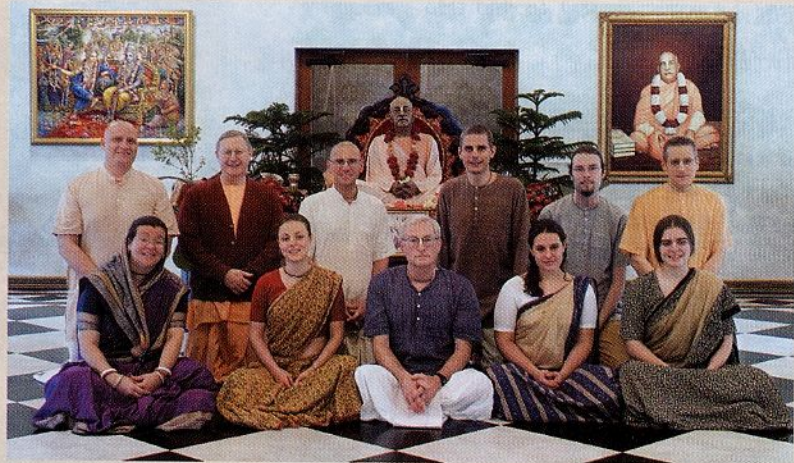
Rūpacandra Devī Dāsi
Bonners Ferry, Idaho

Nothing Sweeter

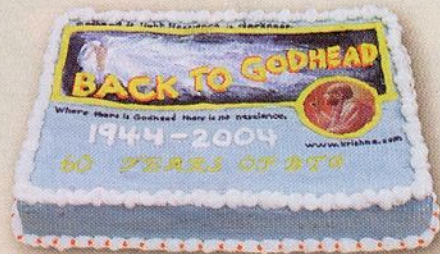
I am writing to thank the BTG staff for the wonderful issue of Jan/Feb 2004, which really touched the core of my conditioned mind and heart.

Indradyumna Swami really touches us with so many wonderful Vaiṣṇava stories, as he shared in "Post-Woodstock Bliss." His story about the man who read Śrīla Prabhupāda's books—especially about Rathayātrā

Celebrating BTG's Sixtieth Anniversary



The Alachua, Florida, staff of
BTG and Krishna.com. Front
row (from left): Lokasākṣini
Devī Dāsi, Gaṅgā Devī Dāsi,
Ijya Dāsa, Ananda Lilā Devī
Dāsi, Kṛṣṇā Devī Dāsi. Back
row: Tāmraparṇi Dāsa, Puṅya
Kīrti Dāsa, Nāgarāja Dāsa,
Manu Dāsa, Balarāma Dāsa,
Yamarāja Dāsa.



and Lord Caitanya's dancing in front of Lord Jagannātha—really touched my heart, causing me to cry.

Awakening to our spirit-soul reality through devotee association is truly a mercy bestowed by Śrīla Prabhupāda. I had lost hope, felt abandoned, and deeply thought I could never receive the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa again in this lifetime, but by the eternal mercy of a bona fide spiritual master, I also know that nothing is sweeter than Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Rāmacandra Dāsa
Angie, Louisiana

Perfect Timing

I just read the latest issue of BTG. I couldn't put it down. I've had several people question why I don't eat eggs. They can understand meat but not eggs. My feeble attempts to establish

eggs as a life force or equal to a woman's egg (hence her menstrual cycle) fell on deaf ears. But this issue included a detailed explanation in Letters. What timing!

I've also been wondering about Kṛṣṇa's disappearance, which I hadn't been able to locate in any of the books I have. Then here come articles on Somnath and the *Uddhava Gitā*. What timing again!

This is the first issue I've ever been able to read in one sitting. You and your staff have brought me that much closer to Kṛṣṇa today. I thank you.

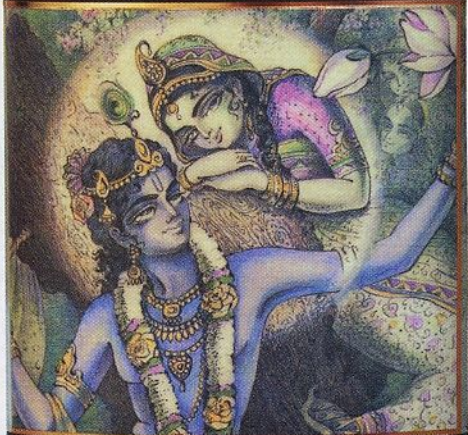
Gerald Schutt
San Antonio, Texas ☸

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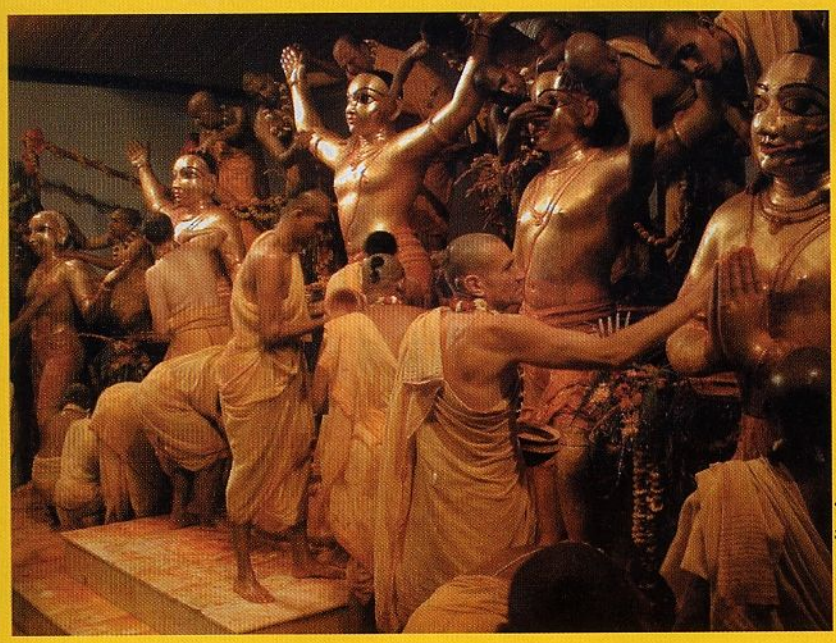
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- SRI ISOPANISAD,
- NECTAR OF DEVOTION,
- KRSNA BOOK,
- AND MANY MORE.

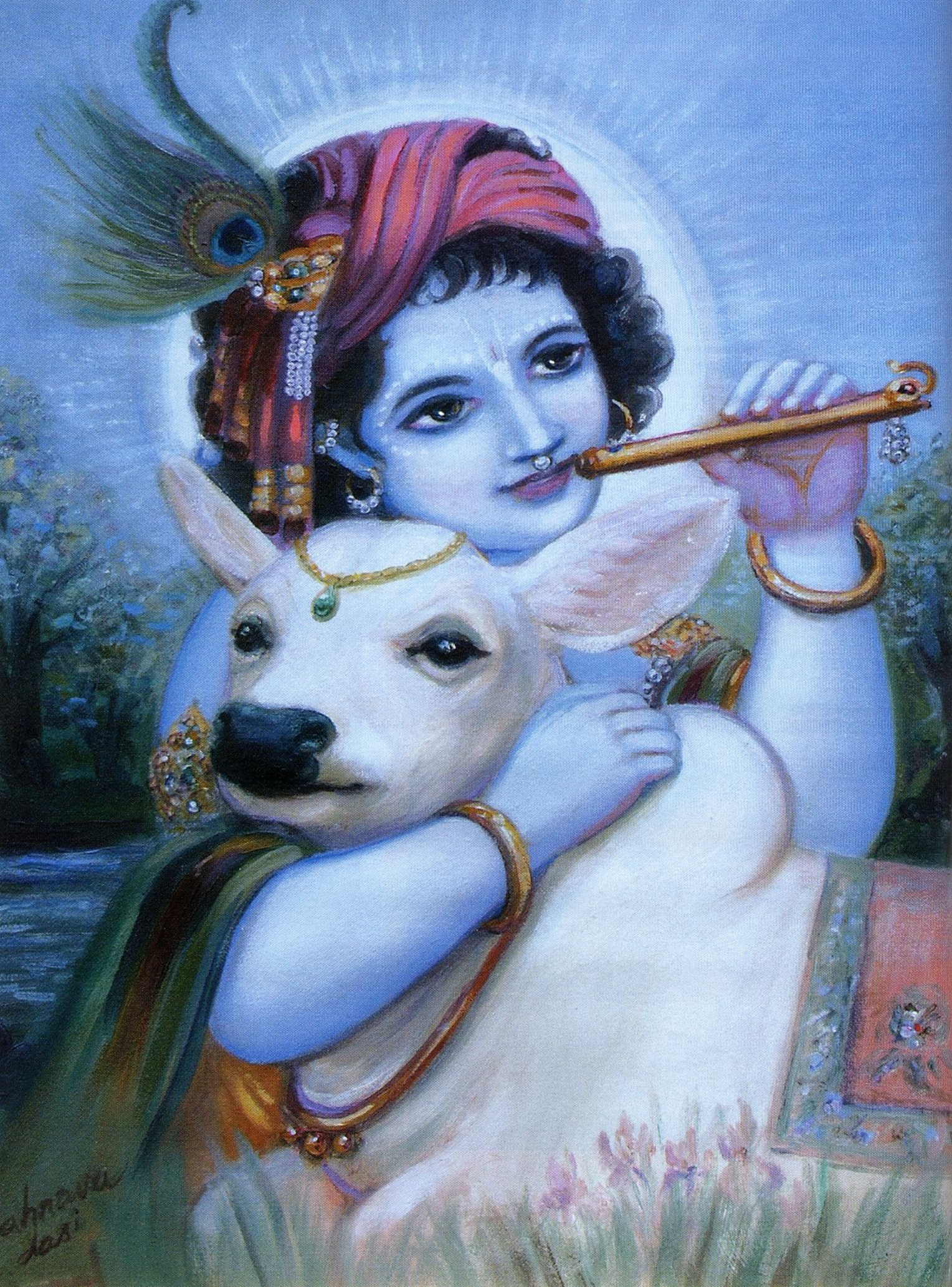
यभाक् ॥ इत्यं परस्य निज

Special Issue Next Time!

The next issue of BTG will be filled with articles related to the installation of Śrī Pañca-tattva in Māyāpur. Don't miss it!



Nitya-īrīṇa Devī Dāsī



Shri
Dasi

FREEDOM FROM FEAR

*The key to fearlessness is to rise above material existence
by connecting with the supreme controller.*

by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

*tasmād bhārata sarvātmā
bhagavān īśvaro hariḥ
śrotavyaḥ kīrtitavyaś ca
smartavyaś cecchatābhayam*

“O descendant of Bharata, one who desires to be free from all miseries must hear about, glorify, and also remember the Personality of Godhead, who is the Supersoul, the controller, and the savior from all miseries.”—*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.1.5



The next position is that we require to eat something. Then after eating comes rest, sleeping. Then after rest, sex indulgence.

In today's verse it is implied that one who desires fearlessness and does not make any arrangement to get out of fearfulness is not a human being. Human beings always take precaution to save themselves. Although it is natural to be fearful, human beings still try to save themselves from the causes of fearfulness. Therefore it is said, *icchatā abhayam*.

WHO DOES NOT WANT *abhayam*? *Abhayam* means fearlessness. Everyone wants it. Covered by material nature, we have four positions. One position is to be always fearful: “What will happen next?” Even a big man like President Nixon is fearful: “What will happen next?” So many charges are brought against him. Although he is in a very exalted position as the President of the USA, he is also always fearful. That is the result of being under the material nature. Can anyone say that he is not fearful? Is it possible? Then what to speak of us.

Abhayam means no fear. If anyone wants to be fearful no more, then for him the prescribed duty is given in this verse.

Parīkṣit Mahārāja is addressed here as Bhārata, which means “descendant of Mahārāja Bharata.” Parīkṣit Mahārāja belonged to the dynasty of King Bharata, from whose name the word Bhāratavarṣa has come. This planet is called Bhāratavarṣa because it was ruled by King Bharata. At that time the world was ruled under the Āryan culture. Gradually, the original Āryan, or Vedic, culture was lost. You French

***Just as a man with sons can claim,
“They are all my sons,” Kṛṣṇa can claim,
“All entities are My sons.”***

• • •

people are also from the Āryan family, but the culture is lost now.

This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is reviving the original Āryan culture. We are all inhabitants of Bhāratavarṣa, and therefore we should be within the Āryan culture. But over time the Āryan culture has been lost, and Bhāratavarṣa has become divided. Now it is divided into so many countries: “This is India,” “This is France,” “This is Germany,” “This is this,” “This is this.” But formerly, the whole planet was known as Bhāratavarṣa. One culture: Vedic culture. One flag. Now they have increased hundreds and thousands of flags. If you want United Nations, unity, then you must take this culture, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and again become Bhārata, followers of the Vedic culture. That will save the situation.

“One culture” means politically one flag; religiously one God, Kṛṣṇa; to understand Kṛṣṇa, one scripture, the *Bhagavad-gītā*; and one work, simply to satisfy Kṛṣṇa. That is oneness. And if you want at least to become free from all fearful conditions, then you should always remember—whom? *Sarvātmā*.

Sarvātmā means the living force of everyone. He is called *sarvātmā*. There is a living force. I have got a living force, you have got a living force—everyone. But from where is the living force coming? From Kṛṣṇa. *Bijo 'ham sarva-bhūtānām* [*Bhagavad-gītā* 7.10]. Kṛṣṇa is the origin of the living force. He is the supreme living force. *Mamaivāṁśo . . . jīva-bhūtaḥ* [*Bhagavad-gītā* 15.7]. This is all stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: “All these living entities are My parts and parcels.” Just as a man with sons can claim, “They are all my sons,” Kṛṣṇa can claim, “All living entities are My sons.” That is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (14.4):

*sarva-yoniṣu kaunteya
mūrtayah sambhavanti yāḥ*

*tāsām brahma mahad yonir
aham bīja-pradaḥ pitā*

Kṛṣṇa says, “I am the seed-giving father of all living entities.” *Sarva-yoniṣu* means in all the forms or species of life.

VEDAS FOR FULL KNOWLEDGE

This outward dress, the body, is different from the self. Someone has become ant, and someone has become an elephant or, bigger than that, a fish. There is a kind of fish called *timīṅgila*. That perhaps we have not seen. Some have seen the whale. It is as big as a big house. The *timīṅgila* can swallow a whale as you might swallow a small nut.

There are so many varieties of life. We do not know them all. But we know about them from the *sāstra*, the scriptures. Therefore we should consult Vedic literature to have full knowledge. In the Vedic literature it is said, *jalajā nava-lakṣāṇi*: “In the water there are 900,000 species of life.” Now, who can deny it? If you deny, then I shall tell you, “Go and count.” [*Laughs.*] But we can get full knowledge from the *sāstra*. That is the quality of Vedic knowledge. Everything is complete.

Learn from the Vedic literature. All information is there. And all the Vedic literature is summarized in this *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. *Nigama-kalpa-taror galitam phalam* [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.1.3]. The Vedic literature is compared to a desire tree. Every word used in the Vedic literature is peculiar to the ordinary man. The ordinary man has no experience of the desire tree. But there is a tree called the desire tree, *kalpa-taru*. What is the business of the desire tree? Whatever you desire you get from that tree. The desire tree is there in Kṛṣṇa’s *loka*, Kṛṣṇa’s abode. In the spiritual world there are trees, but each

tree is a desire tree. You can get anything from that tree. The *Vedas* are considered a desire tree. That means that any kind of knowledge you want, either spiritual or material, is there completely and perfectly in the *Vedas*.

There is *Dhanur-veda*, *Āyur-veda*, *Jyotir-veda*. *Veda* means knowledge. So for military art, if you want to consult Vedic literature you will get complete information, perfect. Similarly, *Jyotir-veda*. *Jyoti* means the luminaries in the sky, the stars. You can get information about them in the *Jyotir-veda*. We are trying to go to the moon and wasting our time and energy, but if you consult the *Vedas*, you get full information of the moon, the sun, or any other planet. There are millions and trillions of planets. You can get information on planets up Brahmaloka, the topmost planet. And *Āyur-veda*. *Āyuh* means duration of life. Nobody wants to be diseased. So the medical science is given fully in the *Āyur-veda*.

THE FATHER OF EVERYONE

Because material life means we are all full of fear, in today’s verse the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is giving the prescription for becoming fearless: “Hear about, glorify, and also remember the Personality of Godhead, who is the Supersoul . . .” Kṛṣṇa is *sarvātmā*, the supreme father of everyone, of all living entities, in all forms. He says in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, “I am the seed-giving father of all living entities.” The father impregnates the mother by giving the seed. Similarly, this huge material cosmic manifestation is considered the mother, and the father is God, or Kṛṣṇa, who impregnates her with the seed of the living entities. When there is creation, they come out as children of this material world. Just as a woman is impregnated and the child comes out,

this material world is impregnated by the seed-giving father and the living entities come out.

Women cannot produce children automatically, without being impregnated. Similarly, to produce all the living entities in different forms of life, the seed-giving father is required, and that is God, Kṛṣṇa. Is there any bad logic in that? There is confirmation in the *śāstra*. Kṛṣṇa says, *aham bīja-pradaḥ pitā*: "I am the seed-giving father." [Bhagavad-gītā 14.4] Is it possible to produce life without the father? Is it possible? Then why do the rascal scientists say, "Now we shall produce life"? How can you do it? It is not possible. This is rascaldom.

In the Christian world the Supreme Lord God is accepted as the supreme father. "O father, give us our daily bread." To accept the Supreme Lord, the supreme father, is very good. Everyone must accept Him. That is human life. That is human knowledge. That is common-sense knowledge: "If I am produced by my father, where have so many living entities come from? They have come from the supreme father." He is called *sarvātmā*.

STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE

Today's verse is about freedom from fearfulness or material existence. Material existence means the struggle for existence. Everyone has to struggle: "I want to stay." In your country there has been so much fighting, such as the French Revolution and so many fights between the Protestants and the Catholics. And your Napoleon Bonaparte fought. Fighting is called the struggle for existence. Everyone wants to exist, and so he has to fight. And if there is no fighting, at least we must fight with the winter season or the summer season. Without fighting, you cannot stay in this world. That is called the struggle for existence and survival of the fittest. You must be fit. That is the nature of life in the material world. And in the spiritual world there is no fight—simply friendship, that's all. That is the spiritual world, which is called *Vaikunṭha*. *Kunṭha* means "anxiety," and *vaikunṭha* means "without anxiety."

We have been put into this place of anxiety on account of our rebellion against God. That is the cause of all material existence. We should know this. Why are we put into this condition of fearfulness, anxiety, and always struggling for existence? We don't want it. When this inquiry comes, then one is a human being. As long as this "Why?" does not come, one is an animal. The animal does not ask, "Why am I put into the slaughterhouse? Why have I been brought here to be slaughtered?" Similarly, a human being is like an animal if he does not understand, "I have been put into this material world for being slaughtered by the laws of material nature. Never mind whether I am Napoleon or an ordinary man, I will be slaughtered."

This world is called *martya-loka*, "the universe of being slaughtered." Nobody wants to be slaughtered. The animal does not want to be slaughtered, but by force it is slaughtered. Similarly, nobody wants death, but we are forced. Even such a big man as Napoleon—he wanted to complete that arch, but he was slaughtered before his desire was fulfilled. That is material nature. You must be slaughtered before your desire is fulfilled. That is material nature. You must be slaughtered as soon as required.

Therefore it is said here, *icchatā abhayam*: "Anyone who wants fearlessness, who wants to be saved from being slaughtered, must do this." What is that? One must hear about, glorify, and remember *sarvātmā bhagavān īśvaraḥ*, "the Supreme Lord, the origin of all living entities, Bhagavān."

BHAGAVĀN AND ĪŚVARA

Bhagavān means "all-powerful" and "possessor of all-opulences." *Bhagavān* can do anything and everything. He is not like the imitation rascals who claim "I am God" but cannot do anything. He is not that kind of *Bhagavān*. *Bhagavān* means all-powerful. Whatever He likes, He can do. *Ṣaḍ-aiśvarya-pūrṇa*, full of six opulences. That is *Bhagavān*.

*aiśvaryasya samagrasya
vīryasya yaśasaḥ śriyah*

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 **r** like the **ri** in **rim**, and **e** 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."

**All living entities, being children of God,
must voluntarily put themselves under the control
of God. That is the perfection of life.**

• • •

*jñāna-vairāgyayoś caiva
ṣaṅṅāṁ bhaga itīṅganā
[Viṣṇu Purāna 6.5.47]*

This is the definition of Bhagavān. Everything has a definition. Nothing should be accepted blindly. First mentioned is *aiśvarya*, wealth. Bhagavān means the person who has the complete riches. Now, I have some money, you have some money, he has some money, but nobody can claim, "I have all the money." No, that is not possible. One who possesses all the money is Bhagavān. And He possesses all strength, beauty, intelligence, fame, and renunciation.

You can find some very big rich man in this material world, but you cannot say that he is the supreme richest man. That is not possible. You will find another man richer than him. And then you will find someone richer than that man. In this way, by research, when you actually come to the richest person, He is Bhagavān. He is God.

If you have the energy you can search for such a person, and He is Bhagavān. It is not difficult. The definition of God is there in *sāstra*. But here in the material world, there is competition for His position. God is known not only as Bhagavān but also as *īśvara*, "controller." Everyone is *īśvara*. I am controlling this institution. Somebody is controlling his office, his factory, his kingdom. President Nixon is controlling the United States. So all of us, more or less, are *īśvara*, controllers. This mother is controlling the small child. So she is also *īśvara*, because she is controlling.

God has given everyone a little controlling power. In that sense every one of us is *īśvara*. But here it is said, *bhagavān īśvaraḥ*: "the supreme controller." We are controllers, but we are

controlled by somebody else. But the Bhagavān *Īśvara* is not controlled by anyone. That is *Kṛṣṇa. Īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ*: "The supreme controller is *Kṛṣṇa*." [*Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.1].

We are being controlled. Foolishly we are thinking, "I am free." How can we be free? The biggest personality in this country, Napoleon Bonaparte, was not free. How can you be free? This is a misconception. Nobody can be free. Everyone is controlled.

But we rebel. "No, I don't want to. I don't want to be controlled." But you will be controlled. For example, if you don't want to be controlled by the state laws, the state will force you into the prison to be controlled. This is our position. We cannot be free. Therefore freedom is not good for us. If a child is given freedom, he will simply create havoc. So he is not to be given freedom; he must be controlled. Similarly, all living entities, being children of God, must voluntarily put themselves under the control of God. That is the perfection of life. Don't try to be falsely free. That is not possible. The mother will never give freedom to the child, because that is not good for him. Anyone who is weak must not be given freedom.

Similarly, we are weak. God is great. God is all-powerful. We are very tiny. We have no power. Therefore our normal life is to voluntarily accept the controlling power of God. That is human life. And God comes and He pleads, "My dear boy, why are you struggling here? You will never be happy." *Sarvadharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṅaṁ vraja*. [*Bhagavad-gītā* 18.66] "You have manufactured so many plans to be happy, but you will never be happy. Therefore your only business is to come under My control, and then you will be happy." *Ahaṁ tvām sarva-*

pāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ. [*Bhagavad-gītā* 18.66] "I will give you all happiness."

That is the sum and substance of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. And when anyone agrees to be controlled, then success of life begins from that point. Unfortunately, at the present moment the whole world population has been taught in such a way that they do not want to be controlled. Therefore there is always a chaotic condition.

READ THESE BOOKS

Here is the solution: If you want to be saved from the chaotic condition of life, if you want to be free from all anxieties, then your business is *śrotavyaḥ*: "Hear about the supreme controller, *Kṛṣṇa*." And for hearing about the supreme controller, we have got eighty books. Not one, two, three, four—eighty books. If you are actually intelligent, if you are actually a scientist, if you are actually a philosopher, read these books. That is called *śrotavyaḥ*: Hear about the supreme controller. Not simply, "God is there." Just try to understand how God is there. That you will find in this literature. There is no other literature like it throughout the world.

And after you hear from this literature, spread this knowledge. *Kīrtitavyaḥ*: "My dear sir, there is God. God is like this. I have heard from the authority." That is called *kīrtitavyaś ca*, preaching. First of all hearing. Without hearing, how will you preach? And *smartavyaḥ*. As soon as you become an expert hearer and an expert chanter, you will remember always. And as soon as you always remember *Kṛṣṇa*, there is no more fear. Finished. That is life.

Thank you very much. ☸

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. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

Bhakti-yoga—linking with the Supreme Lord through devotional service.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu—the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa who appeared five hundred years ago to teach the chanting of the names of God as the religion for the present age.

Dharma—(1) ordained duties or religious principles; (2) one's eternal, natural occupation (i.e., devotional service to the Lord).

Godhead—the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Reality, progressively realized first as the impersonal all-pervasive oneness, more fully as the Supersoul within the heart of every living being, and ultimately as the all-opulent Supreme Person.

Gurukula—a school where children learn the philosophy and practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness along with regular academic subjects (literally "the place of the guru").

Hare Kṛṣṇa—the great mantra Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

ISKCON—the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Japa—individual chanting of names of God, usually while counting on beads.

Kali-yuga—in the endlessly repeated cycle of four cosmic ages, the present and worst age, the Age of Quarrel, of which 5,000 of 432,000 years have passed.

Karma—material action; its inevitable reaction; or the law by which such action and reaction are governed.

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. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam—the most important of the eighteen *Purāṇas*, which tells of the nature and pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa 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*.

Varṇāśrama—the Vedic social system. It organizes society into four occupational and four spiritual divisions (*varṇas* and *āśramas*). The members of the four *varṇas* are the *brāhmaṇas* (intellectuals and priests), the *kṣatriyas* (administrators and soldiers), the *vaiśyas* (farmers and businessmen), and the *sūdras* (laborers and artisans). The members of the four *āśramas* are the *brahmacārīs* (celibate students), *gṛhasthas* (married people), *vānaprasthas* (retired people), and *sannyāsīs* (renunciants).

Vṛndāvana—the transcendental abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa, mirrored on earth as the town in India where Kṛṣṇa appeared five thousand years ago.

Vaiṣṇava—a devotee of the Supreme Lord (from the word *Viṣṇu*).

Vedas—the hymns of knowledge revealed by the Lord Himself at the beginning of creation.

Vedic—pertaining to the culture in which the *Vedas* and related scriptures guide all aspects of human life.

Viṣṇu—any form of the Personality of Godhead (see "Godhead"); the forms the Lord manifests to create and sustain the material world.

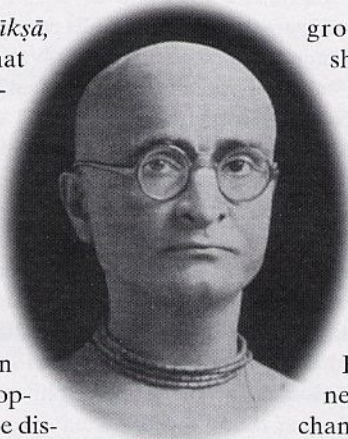
INITIATION INTO SPIRITUAL LIFE

*“Initiation is never altogether futile.
It changes the outlook of the disciple on life.”*

by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura

THE ceremony of *dīkṣā*, or initiation, is that by which the spiritual preceptor admits one to the status of a neophyte on the path of spiritual endeavor. The ceremony tends to confer spiritual enlightenment by abrogating sinfulness. Its actual effect depends on the degree of willing cooperation on the part of the disciple and is, therefore, not the same in all cases. It does not preclude the possibility of reversion by the novice to the non-spiritual state if he slackens in his effort or misbehaves.

Initiation puts a person on the true track and also imparts an initial impulse to go ahead. It cannot, however, keep one going for good unless one chooses to put forth his own voluntary effort. The nature of the initial impulse also varies in accordance with the condition of the recipient. But although the mercy of the good preceptor enables us to have a glimpse of the Absolute and of the path of His attainment, the seed that is thus sown requires very careful tending under the direction of the preceptor if it is to germinate and



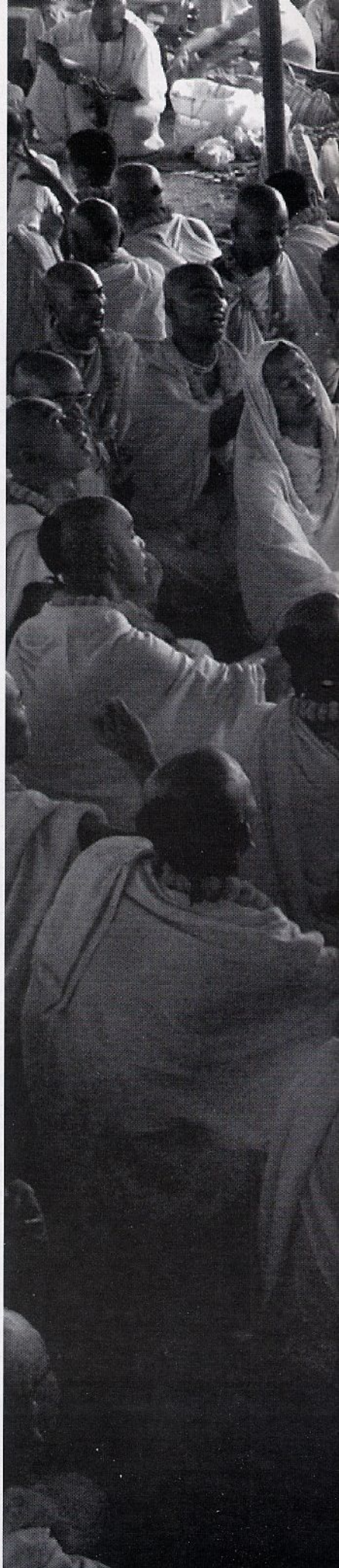
grow into the fruit-and-shade-giving tree.

Unless our soul of his own accord chooses to serve Kṛṣṇa after obtaining a working idea of his real nature, he cannot long retain the spiritual vision. The soul is never compelled by Kṛṣṇa to serve Him. But initiation is never altogether futile. It changes the outlook of the disciple on life. If he sins after initiation, he may fall into greater depths of degradation than the uninitiated. But although even after initiation temporary set-backs may occur, they do not ordinarily prevent the final deliverance. The faintest glimmering of the real knowledge of the Absolute has sufficient power to change radically and for good the whole of our mental and physical constitution, and this glimmering is incapable of being totally extinguished, except in extraordinarily unfortunate cases.

RELUCTANCE IN FOLLOWING

It is undoubtedly practicable for the initiated, if only he is willing, to follow

From the December, 1931, issue of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's magazine The Harmonist.





The evil that results from our neglect of the ailments of the soul is of a nature that paralyzes and deludes our understanding.

• • •

the directions of the preceptor that lead by slow degrees to the Absolute. The good preceptor is verily the savior of fallen souls. It is, however, very rarely that a person with modern culture feels inclined to submit to the guidance of another specifically in spiritual matters. But the very same person submits readily enough to the direction of a physician for being cured of his bodily ailments, because these cannot be ignored without consequences that are patent to everybody.

The evil that results from our neglect of the ailments of the soul is of a nature that paralyzes and deludes our understanding and prevents the recognition of itself. Its gravity is not recognized because it does not apparently stand in the way of our worldly activities with the same directness as physical ailments. The average cultured man is, therefore, at liberty to ask questions without realizing any pressing necessity of submitting to the treatment of spiritual maladies at the hands of a really competent physician.

WHY FORMAL INITIATION?

The questions that are frequently asked are like these: "Why should it be at all necessary to submit to any particular person or to subscribe to any particular ceremony for the purpose of realizing the Absolute, who by His nature is unconditioned? Why should Kṛṣṇa require our formal declaration of submission to Him? Would it not be more generous and logical to permit us to live a life of freedom in accordance with the principles of our perverted nature, which is also His creation? Admitting that it is our duty to serve Kṛṣṇa, why should we have to be introduced to Him by a third party? Why is it impossible for one to serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa directly?"

In understanding the scriptures, it

would no doubt be highly convenient and helpful to be instructed by a good preceptor who is well-versed in the scriptures. But one should never submit to another to an extent that may furnish a rascal with an opportunity of really doing harm. The bad preceptor is a familiar character. It is inexplicable how those gurus who live in open sin contrive nevertheless to retain the unquestioning allegiance of the cultured portion of their disciples.

Such being the case, can we blame any person who hesitates to submit unconditionally to a preceptor, whether he is good or bad? It is of course necessary to be quite sure of the bonafides of a person before we accept him even tentatively as our spiritual guide. A preceptor should be a person who appears likely to possess those qualities that will enable him to improve our spiritual condition.

Those and similar thoughts are likely to occur to most persons who have received an English education, when they are asked to accept the help of any particular person as their spiritual preceptor. The literature, science, and art of the West put forward the principle of the liberty of the individual and denounce the mentality that leads one to surrender—to however superior a person—his right of choosing his own course. They inculcate the necessity and high value of having faith in oneself.

CONDITION OF SURRENDER

But the good preceptor claims our sincere and complete allegiance. The good disciple makes a complete surrender of himself at the feet of the preceptor. But the submission of the disciple is neither irrational nor blind. It is complete on condition that the preceptor himself continues to be altogether good. The disciple retains the

right of renouncing his allegiance to the preceptor the moment he is satisfied that the preceptor is a fallible creature like himself.

Nor does a good preceptor accept anyone as his disciple unless the latter is prepared to submit to him freely. A good preceptor is duty bound to renounce a disciple who is not sincerely willing to follow his instructions fully. If a preceptor accepts as his disciple one who refuses to be wholly guided by him, or if a disciple submits to a preceptor who is not wholly good, such preceptor and such disciple are, both of them, doomed to fall from their spiritual state.

SUBMISSION TO THE ABSOLUTE

No one is a good preceptor who has not realized the Absolute. One who has realized the Absolute is saved from the necessity of walking on the worldly path. The good preceptor who lives the spiritual life is, therefore, bound to be wholly good. He should be wholly free from any desire for anything of this world, whether good or bad.

The categories of good and bad do not exist in the Absolute. In the Absolute everything is good. We can have no idea in our present state of this absolute goodness. Submission to the Absolute is not real unless it is also itself absolute. It is on the plane of the Absolute that the disciple is required to submit completely to the good preceptor. On the material plane there can be no such thing as complete submission. The pretence of complete submission to the bad preceptor is responsible for the corruptions that are found in the relationship of the ordinary worldly guru and his equally worldly-minded disciples.

All honest thinkers will realize the
(please turn to page 41)

“What Is ‘A Good Life?’”

Here we continue a conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and the mother of one of his students, along with a Jesuit priest. It took place in the garden at Bhaktivedanta Manor, near London, England, on July 25, 1973.

Mother (to Śrīla Prabhupāda:): Yes, Father. Education should prepare the student for the next life. But also, in this life, he must also learn to fit in.

Jesuit Priest: All the Catholic universities all over the world are doing it. That’s our main purpose—to teach the young man and the young girl the success in this world, but above all is the success in the next, which means union with God for eternity. That’s top priority. And following Christ’s words “Seek ye first the kingdom of God,” then all the other things are

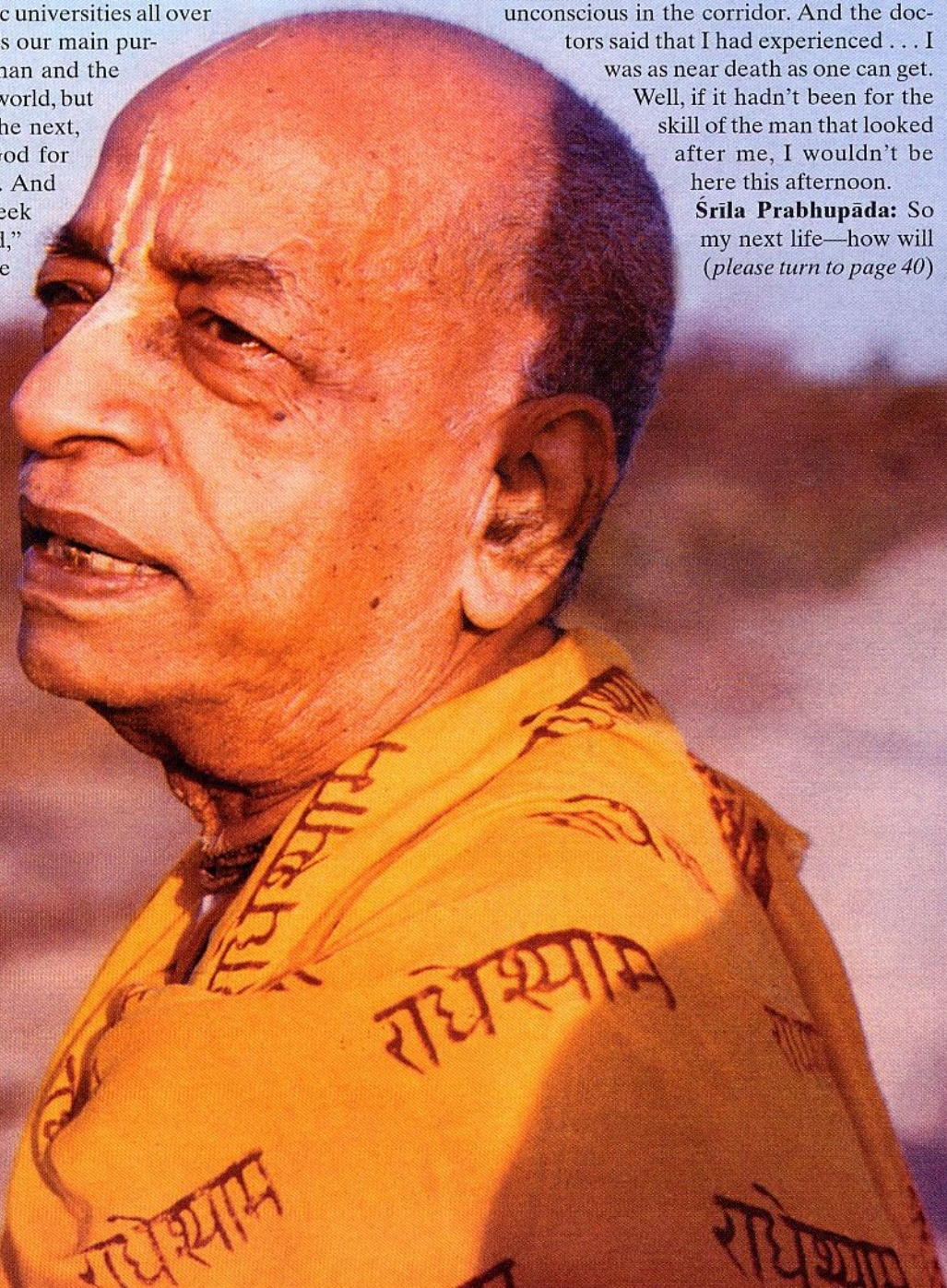
of very minor importance. It’s closeness to God and return to be one with the beatific vision in heaven. That’s the top priority, that’s our aim in education, and that’s what Michael was taught when he was at Sunnyhurst.

And that he does well and gets a degree . . . yes, very good thing. He could be a doctor or an architect or a leader in commerce, what have you—all of which are essential for the well-being of the world.

This time last year, I was dead. I was picked up as unconscious in the corridor. And the doctors said that I had experienced . . . I was as near death as one can get.

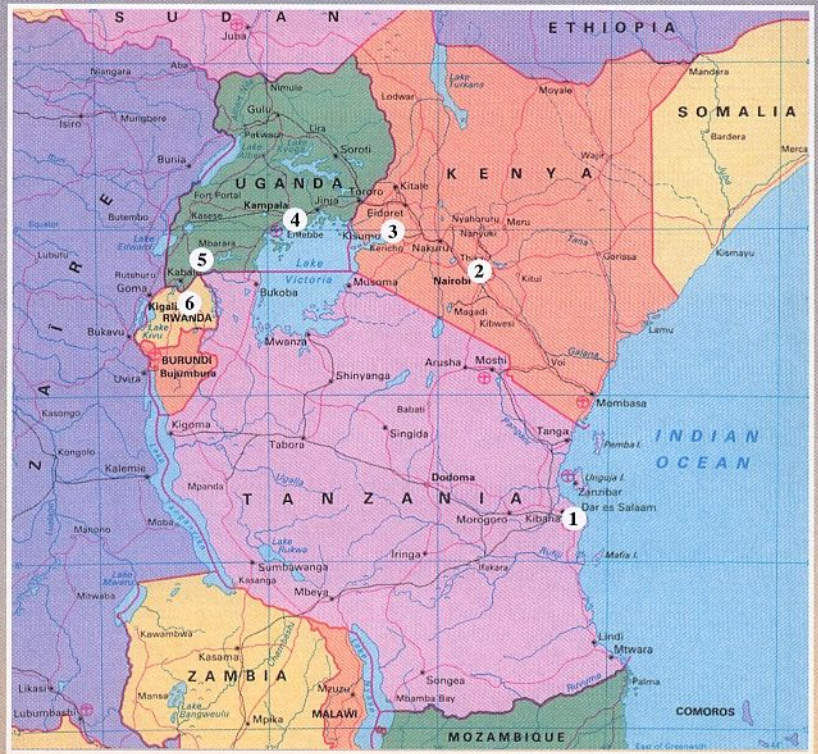
Well, if it hadn’t been for the skill of the man that looked after me, I wouldn’t be here this afternoon.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: So my next life—how will (please turn to page 40)





Tribhuvanātha Dāsa (above) started the East African festival tour in 1995. The tour route in 2004 included (1) Dar es Salaam, (2) Nairobi, (3) Kisumu, (4) Kampala, (5) Mbarara, and (6) Kigali. Background: A sunset in Kenya.



ON NEW YEAR'S EVE, 2003, the Metropolitan Police of London closed streets to traffic, and people partied. Dancing Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees joined in with four drums a'thumping, and they played sax and accordion riffs and sang melodic choruses of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. This inspired the rowdy youth to dance. Before the House of Commons, people watched Big Ben's minute hand approach midnight. Then sparkways of fireworks lit the sky. The chanting party—and the next three days of great

effort to finish preparations for a tour of East Africa—made for an exciting start of a new year.


The 2004 East African festival tour was the tenth inspired by Tribhuvanātha Dāsa, one of the first devotees in England, whose body succumbed to cancer in 2001. Tribhuvanātha was continuing the adventure of Śrīla Prabhupāda, his spiritual master, of teaching the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa to the African people, with the help of the Indian people. The first Gujarati in Nairobi to assist Śrīla Prabhupāda was

Haresh Pandit; his father was the mayor during British rule, and now his son is the vice president of ISKCON Nairobi. When Śrīla Prabhupāda visited Kenya in September 1971, a reporter asked him whether his disciples would be making special efforts to reach the Africans rather than the Hindus. He answered that the method would be the same but the method is so powerful that it appeals to everyone. Śrīla Prabhupāda added that Indians have a duty to share their spiritual culture.

Another Moon Rises Over East Africa

*East Africans are attaining freedom from material life,
thanks to Lord Caitanya's moon of chanting and dancing.*

by Tattvavit Dāsa



Among the Gujaratis originally from East Africa who now help sponsor the festivals there is the UK's largest exporter of Nokia phones to Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. Being invited to join the tour, I visited his office and also the home of an investor sponsoring Swahili editions of Prabhupāda's books. Finally, in the evening on January 3, I flew from Heathrow with six devotees.

In Nairobi, I had a day and a half to rest, shop, and prepare, before riding a bus south for advance work. Giridhārī

Dāsa, the tour organizer, and I wrote a press release about the name of this year's tour: the One Love Spiritual Festival Tour. "One Love" (from a Bob Marley song) means, spiritually, that God, or Kṛṣṇa, attracts the attention of all religions, and, socially, that anyone wanting to beat HIV is better off with just one partner. Seven percent of Kenya's population has HIV. A tribal person may regard it as a witch doctor's curse more than as a disease to avoid by changing his or her behavior. So to help the situation, ISKCON—like

other faith-based organizations—inspires people to follow principles like abstinence and helps get young people off the streets.

THE MOOD OF DAR ES SALAAM

I left for Dar es Salaam, twelve hours away on Tanzania's coast, with Colin, a devotee from Ireland who has advertised Tribhūvanātha's festivals in the UK and Africa for several years. Some people on the bus made calls on

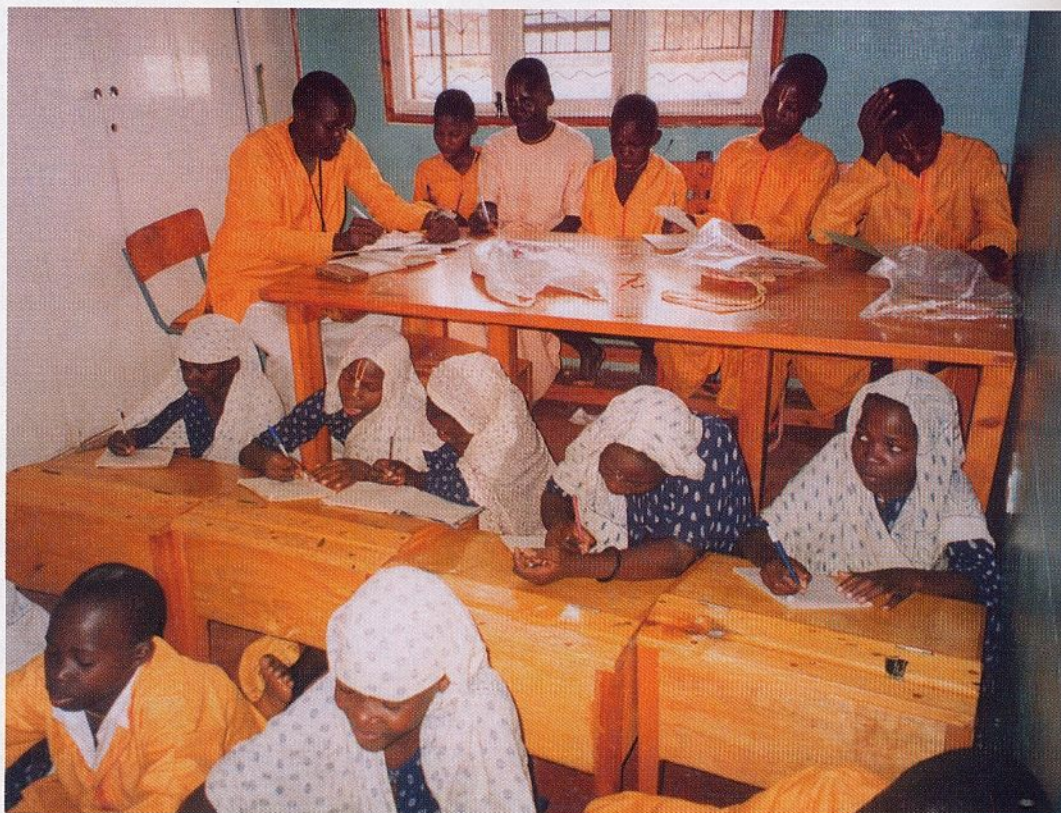
cellular phones and then read newspapers. We had a wide-open view. Most trucks use other roads for commercial reasons. There were few cars and no motorcycles, bicycles, people, or animals on the road, as in India. Nairobi, though on the equator, is on a plateau, so the temperature is cool. Once off the plateau, we felt the temperature rise. We saw Mount Kilimanjaro and pineapple orchards. At sunset, as we neared the coast, beautiful East Africa became lit by the lamp of the waxing moon.

Colin knew Dar es Salaam and some people there. After meeting up at a guesthouse with two African devotees, we ate breakfast with Dilip and his family. Each year they cook and serve daily

meals to the visiting devotees because they knew Tribhuvanātha. Theirs is a simple and musical family—the five children can play instruments and lead chanting.

At the Cable TV Network office, the Indian manager agreed to broadcast our new DVD featuring Hare Kṛṣṇa activities in East Africa. Two segments—about beating HIV, and life on the African streets—are presented by Ishmael, a devotee-rapper whose HIV rap frequently appeared on TV a year ago. He accompanies the tour and dances with boys from Little Gokul, an informal education center in Kisumu (Kenya has more than a million AIDS orphans). Little Go-Kool, their stage name, is a pun on Gokula, Kṛṣṇa's earthly abode. The DVD also contains shots of African youth chanting Bengali devotional songs. The soundtrack at one point sings: "Lord Caitanya's moon is rising; no, it's not at all surprising." Africans are attaining freedom from the material condition of life by taking shelter of Lord Caitanya, the great teacher of the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa.

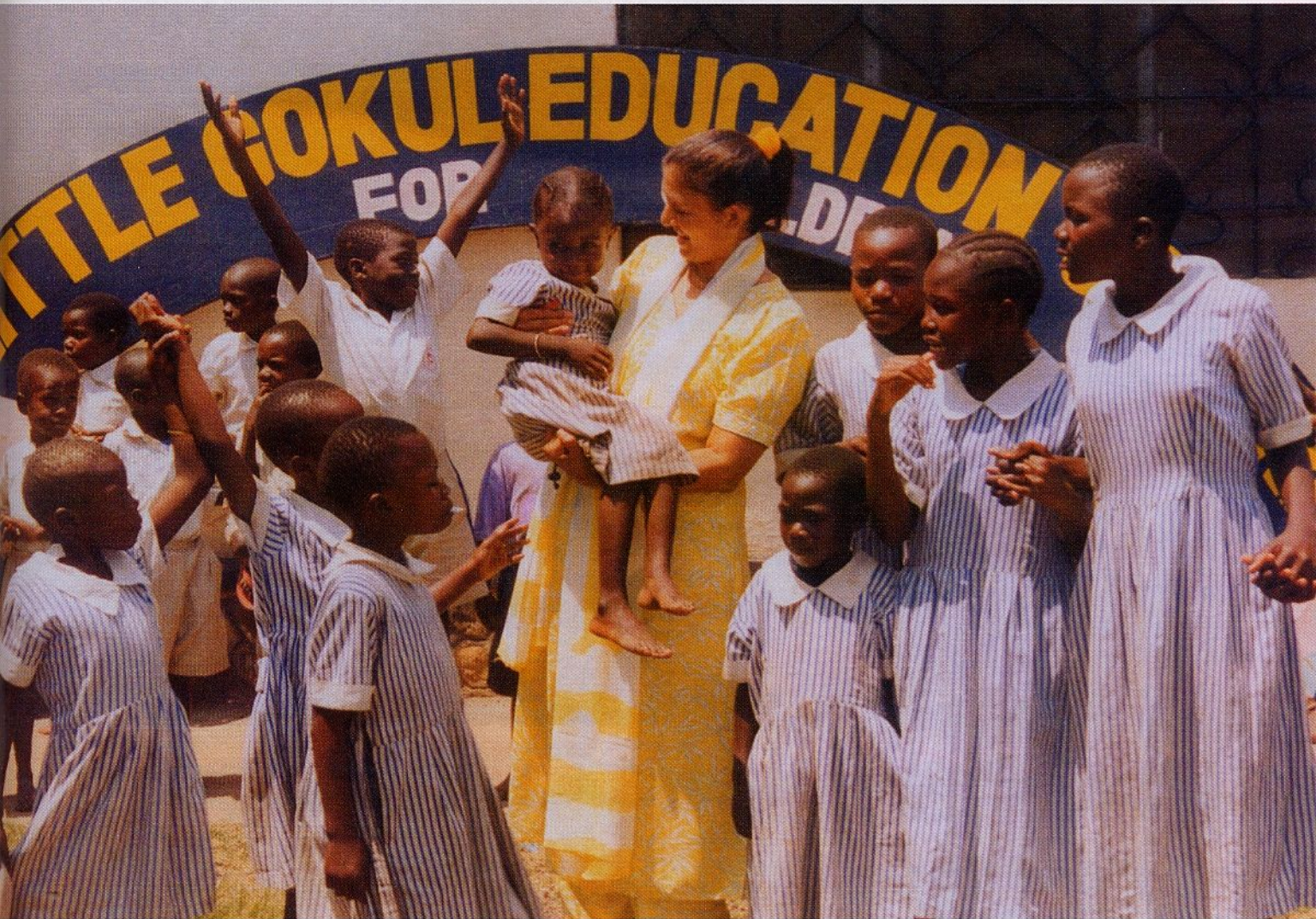
Our seven-ton truck arrived from



Bhaktia Vaughn



Children attend class at Little Gokul Education Center (above) and meet Kṛṣṇa-māyī Devī Dāsī (above, right), the school's founder. At left, devotees prepare samosas for a Hare Kṛṣṇa festival at a Nairobi school.



Nairobi with Vṛndā Devī Dāsī, an English woman inspired by Tribhūvanātha to look after a temple and a nursery school in Kampala, Uganda. She decorates the stage during the tours. The first festival was held at the Sanatan-Dharma Mandir, one of several temples in Dar es Salaam's official Hindu district. Some Tanzanians but mostly Indian families attended. The next day some of these families took us to a beach for a picnic. Mahāviṣṇu Swami, a co-director of ISKCON in East Africa, brings an accordion everywhere, and his chanting on the beach swayed the souls of swarthy bathers. They danced even without understanding the language of the mantra.

The next two afternoons, the One-Love festival brought people to a park for talks, chanting, a drama, and rap dancing. Everyone received a free

book and a bagful of hot rice and beans. Our friends Rajesh and Tulsi took a turn preparing our lunch. Another day, we chanted and then relaxed over lunch at a seaside home and temple with Harideva Dāsa, the family grandfather, and Suniti Devī Dāsī, his daughter-in-law. That evening the Jethwas hosted us and Indian families who desire an ISKCON temple in their city.

NAIROBI STUDENTS

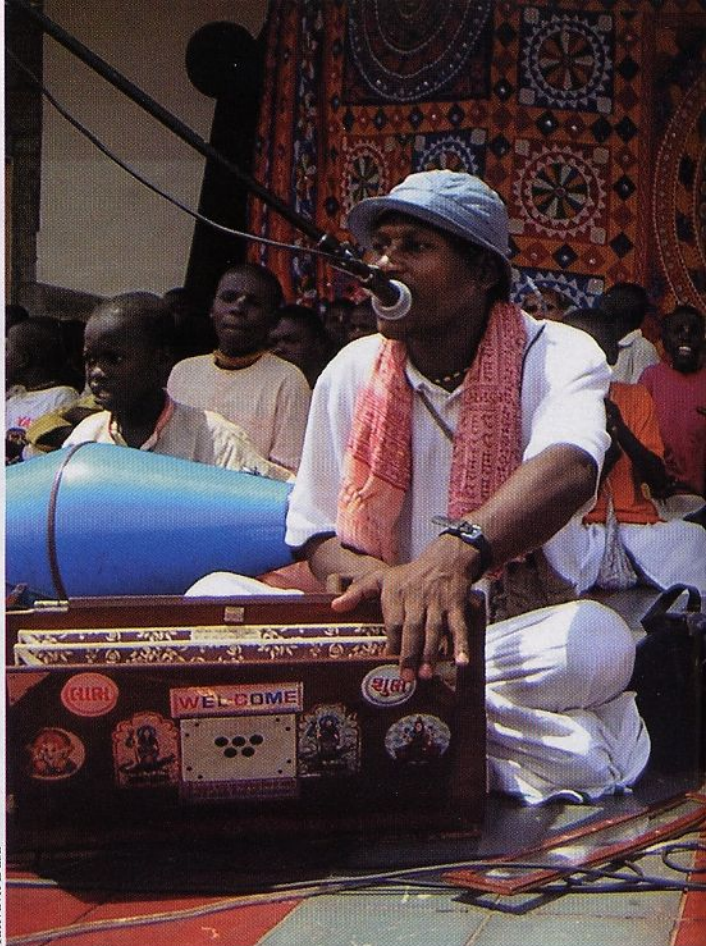
Nairobi has a grand ISKCON temple, and two hundred students attended a Saturday program. They were in a good mood and had questions and wonderful appetites. For three days, One Love visited schools. Young African men—Christians and Muslims—live at Nairobi School's tree-lined campus. Giridhārī said in his introduc-

tion that we are not trying to convert anyone, but only presenting the natural activity of the living entity. Five hundred students heard us chant and talk and saw three presentations: a play about Mṛgārī, a hunter who half-killed prey, until a sage reformed him; a slide show about controlling the mind and senses; and rap dances. At the exits we offered everyone a *samosa*. About forty boys bought our books. At Oshwal High, five hundred boys and girls, mostly Jains, absorbed a documentary about reincarnation and liked the rap dances. And five hundred Aga Khan High students, mostly Muslims, became excited by a similar supernatural cocktail.

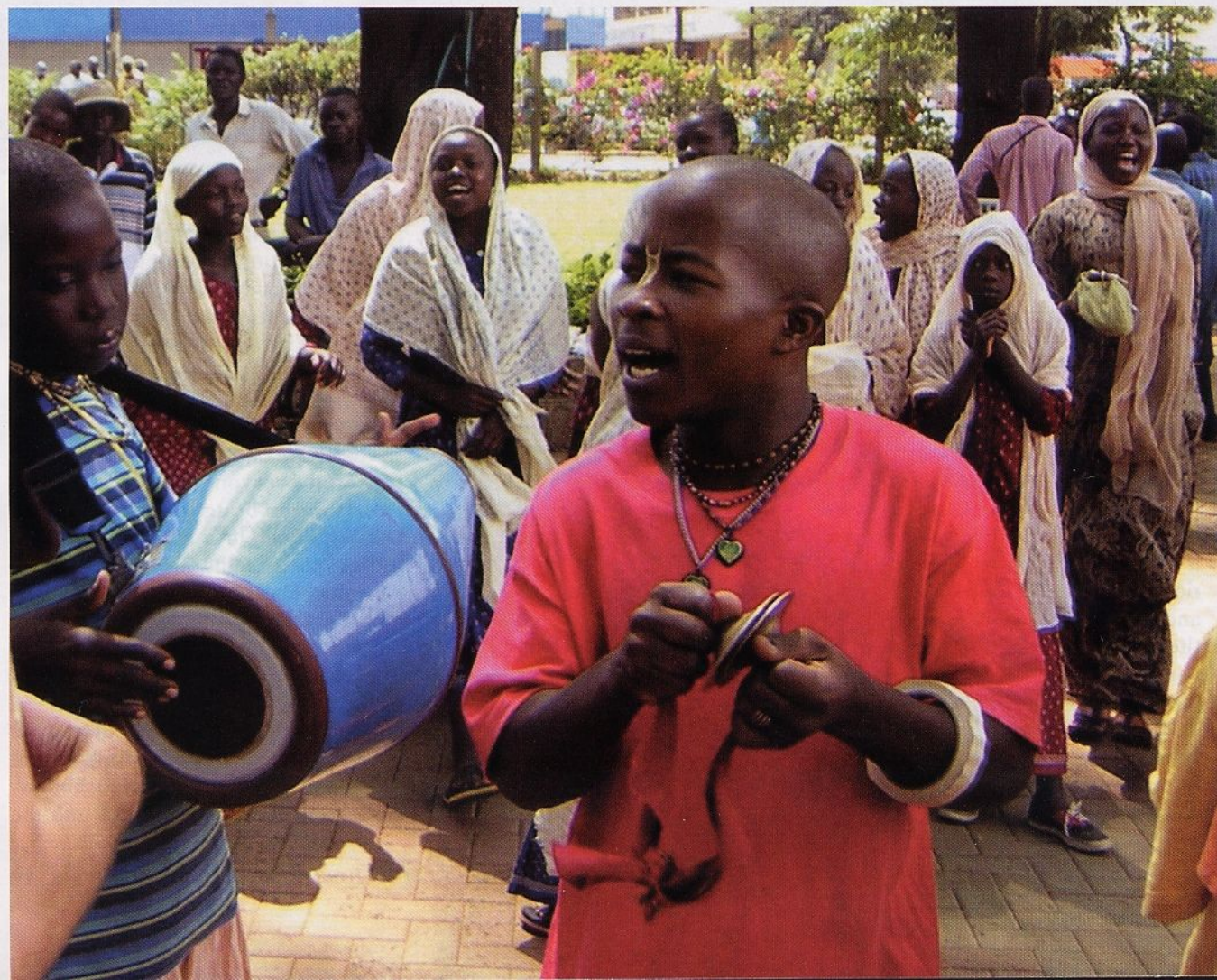
One evening we drove out past the new, relocated American Embassy (al Qaeda bombed the first one). Following the side wall, we turned into the



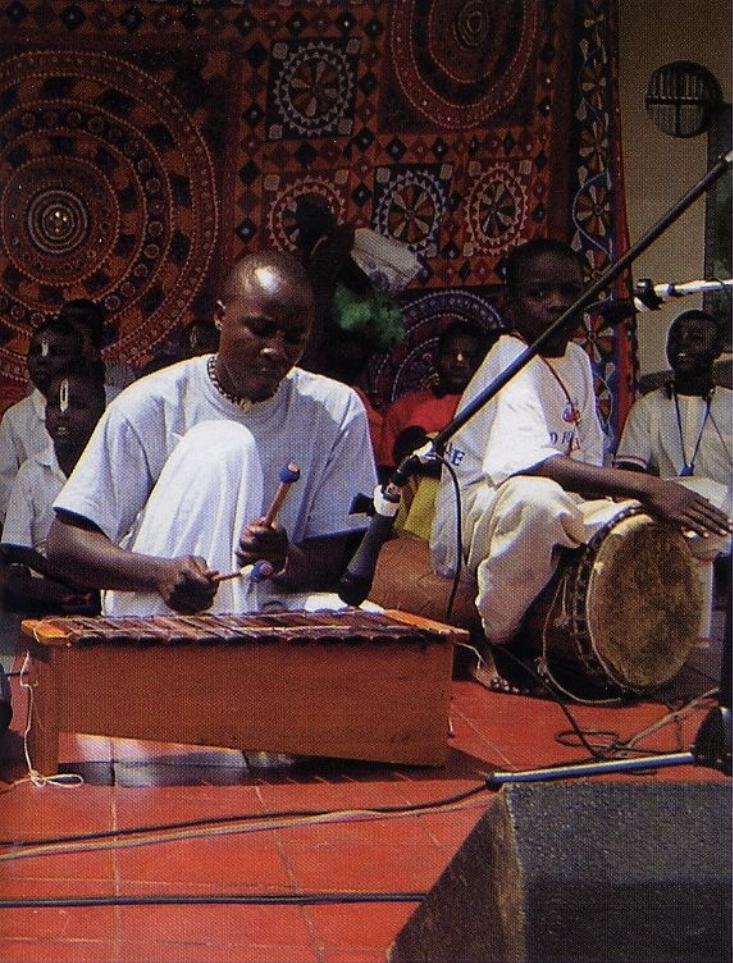
Tattvavit Dasa



Tattvavit Dasa

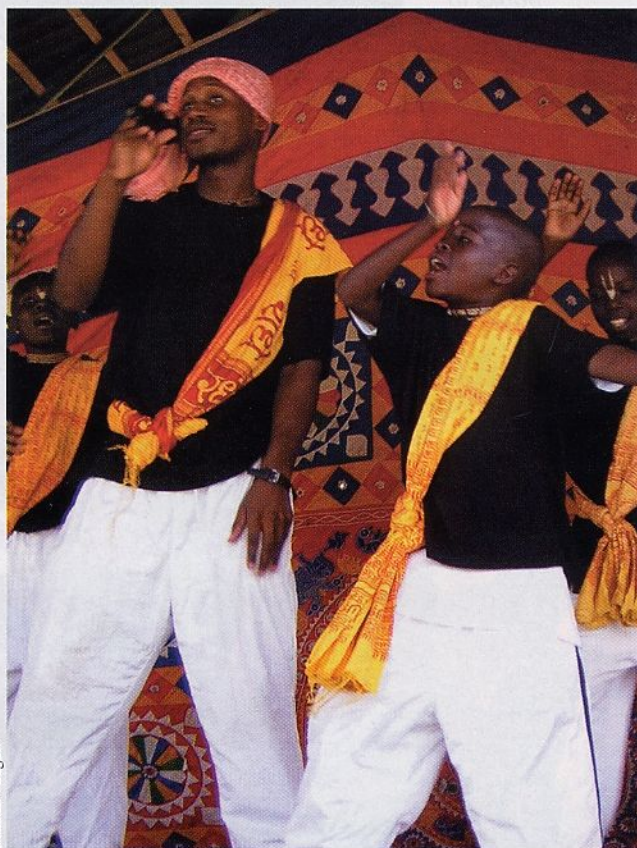
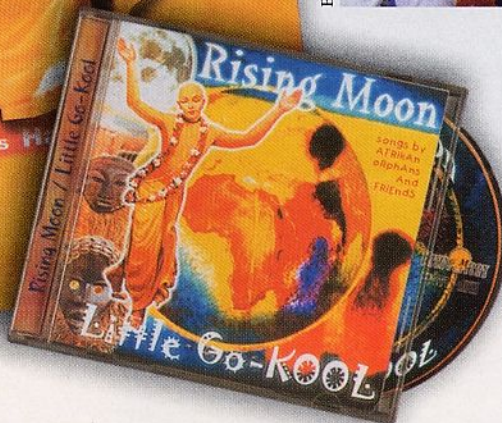
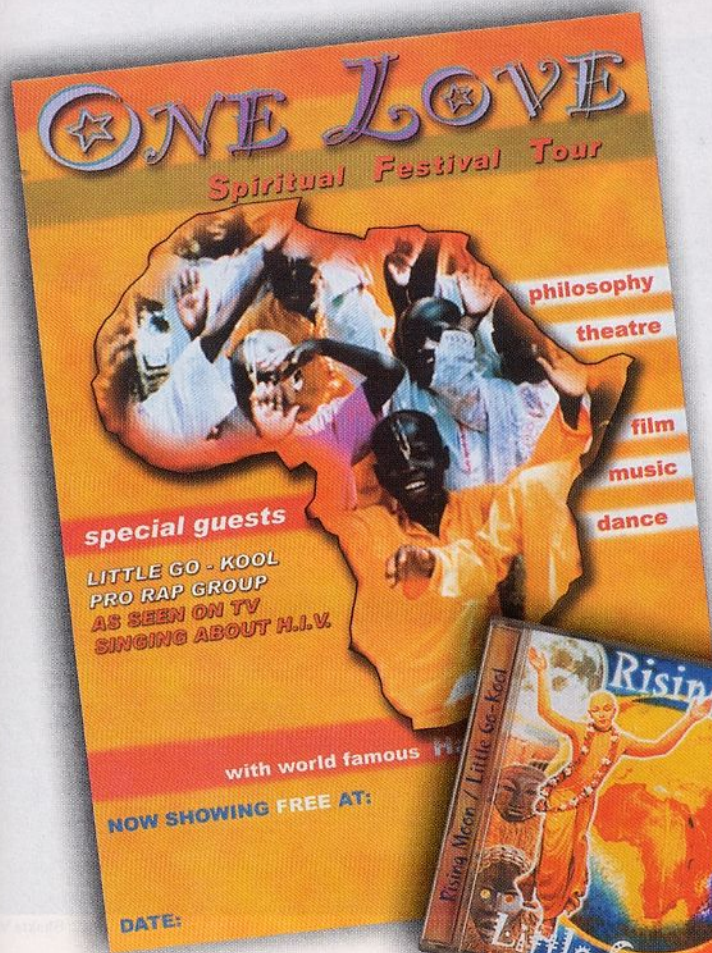


Tattvavit Dasa



Kīrtanas in Kisumu (opposite page and left) draw enthusiastic participation. Below, left: the festival poster and the Little Go-Kool CD. Ishmael and Kush (below, right) perform with their Little Go-Kool rap group in Dar es Salaam.

next driveway and arrived at the home of Rajan Jani, a financial consultant and a main supporter of this tour. He and Kirti, his wife, came out to greet us. In the kitchen, two maids were preparing pizza and chips for thirty devotees. Rajan owned his property a few years before America bought the adjacent land, and hired a young Indian architect to design his contemporary mansion and temple. His son, twenty, and daughter, fourteen, played *mṛdaṅga* and harmonium with us. It was Rajan who, in 2001, insisted that Tribhūvanātha take medical tests. And when the tests showed advanced stomach cancer, it was he who broke “the good news” to Tribhūvanātha: “You will be in Goloka—Kṛṣṇa’s eternal abode—in three months.” Rajan drove Tribhūva-



Bhaktia Vaughn

nātha around Nairobi for a few hours to let this sink in, and he told us that Tribhūvanātha raised many philosophical considerations. When we left the city, Kirti organized snacks for our panoramic trip to Kisumu, on Lake Victoria, two hundred miles away, over hills and green tea fields.

Chanting and dancing with forty of

Rwanda (right), the fourth country on the tour, is known as the land of a thousand hills. Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Bankebihāri (far right) preside at the ISKCON temple in Nairobi. At a village festival in Wayeye, Uganda (below), devotees present books to schoolteachers.



Bhakta Vaughn



Bhakta Vaughn

our schoolchildren in a Kisumu park made me smile a lot. The credit goes to Kṛṣṇa-māyī Devī Dāsī, a businesswoman who felt inspired by Tribhūvanātha to save abandoned children for a better future by starting the Little Gokul Education Center, in June 2001. During our festival at Jomo Kenyatta Grounds, we saw less lucky street kids sniffing glue. The Hare Kṛṣṇa center stands on a corner property renovated

followers spread the chanting whether someone asked for it or not, similarly we chanted—devotees from Africa, England, India, and America—for people on crowded streets, for students at Makerere University, for the villagers of Wayeye, and for souls of the Baganda tribe (Uganda’s largest, with three million people).

When we visited the Baganda tribal temple, located in the hilly countryside, many people sang a song (written by a few young tribesmen who visit our temple in Kampala) that incorporates Kṛṣṇa’s name and Prabhupāda’s name. A fire was burning, and we took our places on a clean red rug behind a low railing of upright spears. The M.C. introduced their seated leader, John Musoke, who came alone to this place in 1989 and is said to be a medium for an ancestral spirit. When we chanted, the huge crowd sang and danced, peaceful and happy. Volunteers passed out a thousand plates of our rice-and-beans *prasādam*. The unhurried congregation planned to stay up all night. Two days later, Florence Kauma received the spiritual name Veda-priyā Devī Dāsī when she became the first citizen of Uganda to accept initiation within ISKCON. She is twenty-two. Four years ago, she worked as a cleaner in the Kampala temple.

LAST STOPS

In Mbarara, Uganda, the full moon descended while I chanted on my beads in the early morning. At dawn the prehistoric-looking *kaloli* cranes awoke and began flying over the courtyard of the Sikh temple, where we stayed. The temple reader told me that in the Granth (their scripture) that morning the Lord said, “Always pray to Me.” A similar message was conveyed in a Radio West interview with our artist Ishmael and a few Go-Kool boys. Here our festival had its best outdoor location: a hedge-enclosed

lawn with a stage, at the Agip Hotel. At Mbarara University we did the highest humanitarian work: teaching Kṛṣṇa’s explanation of the soul’s transmigration.

Finally, the festival tour stopped for the first time in the country of Rwanda, land of a thousand hills. Mayur Khagram, who owns Computer Plus in Kigali, the capital, and his family and friends arranged halls and showed us hospitality (his sister runs Little Gokul). The four-hundred Indian families in Kigali have no temple, and some hope that ISKCON will open one. The Khagrams said that their Hindu practices are regarded as witchcraft by uneducated local people. The African students at our festival apparently knew nothing about Kṛṣṇa and the *Bhagavad-gītā*, but they asked questions and learned more than all the other students who packed TV rooms during our tour to watch international soccer matches. “Rwanda TV” included festival highlights on the evening news.

Śrīla Prabhupāda said that Kṛṣṇa is not just for Hindus. In this age, Kali-yuga, spiritual knowledge is covered by material advancement, mental speculation, even Hindu rituals. But sometimes the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra is heard. I felt fortunate to be part of the international team of devotees touring East Africa with the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra and lending a hand to the local devotees and Indians from East Africa. They are eager to give Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the natives of their homelands. ❁

Tattvavit Dāsa, for the past two academic years, tutored students in essay writing at the new Bhaktivedanta College, in Radhadesh, Belgium. Now he is in Italy editing a book of photos of the deities in ISKCON temples, which the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust will print this summer. He is grateful to Colin, the festival advertiser, for inviting him to write this article.

People can annually help support the East Africa festival tour by contacting Giridhārī Dāsa at giricom@yahoo.co.uk or Hare Krishna Festivals, 26 Crofters Road, Northwood, Middlesex HA63ED, England. Visit HKfest.com.



five years ago. Its street-side walls enclose lawns and gardens, with arches and benches, and a marble temple room. The Gujarati president and his wife, Pundarika Dāsa and Rādhākuṅḍa Devī Dāsī, served us a splendid lunch at their house. Pundarika talked about donated land on Lake Victoria’s northeast shore that awaits development as an adult education center.

Near the northwest side of Lake Victoria is Kampala, Uganda’s capital, where we started holding festivals on February 1. Trucking there, we crossed over the wide source of the Nile River, in Jinja. Mukesh Sukhla is building a ground-floor restaurant in our Hare Kṛṣṇa center, but in the backyard a new building, with four guestrooms, was all ready. Just as Lord Caitanya and His

ARE WE SPECIAL?

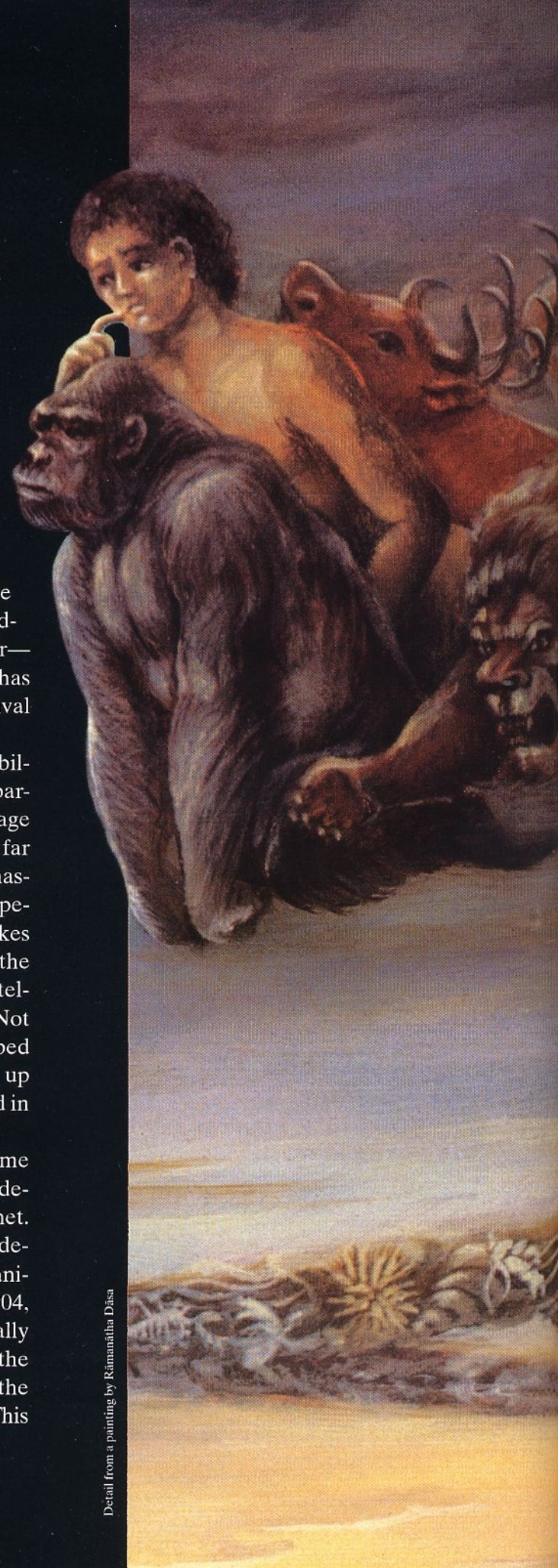
Our human intelligence places us above the animals, but its misuse poses the greatest threat.

by Caitanya Carāṇa Dāsa

THE IMPENETRABLE SHELL of the tortoise, the breathtaking swiftness of the leopard, the incredible ability of the chameleon to change its color—the variety in nature is amazing. Every species of life has a special gift from nature, an ability vital for its survival and success in the struggle for existence.

Human beings have no extraordinary physical ability; their bodies are soft and vulnerable, they are not particularly fleet-footed, and they can do little to camouflage themselves when in danger. And yet humans stand far above all other species. A puny human can tame a massive elephant and encage a ferocious lion. What is the special gift of nature to humans, the unique ability that makes them superior to all other species? Undoubtedly it is the advanced human intelligence. Empowered by their intelligence, humans have subjugated all the lower species. Not only that, humans have also built civilizations, developed cultures, devised languages, written literature, come up with fine arts, inquired into metaphysics, and advanced in science and technology.

Strangely enough, in the modern times, by that same intelligence, humans have created weapons of mass destruction, which threaten to wipe out all life on the planet. Furthermore by that same intelligence, humans have developed perverted ideologies, by which they foster animosity and hatred for others of their own species. In 1904, the philosopher William James said, “Man, biologically considered and whatever else he may be, is simply the most formidable of the beasts of prey, and, indeed, the only one that preys systematically on its own species.” This



Detail from a painting by Rāmanātha Dāsa



Although the reality of consciousness is undeniable, modern science has done precious little to understand it.



then is the irony of the present condition of humanity: The very source of protection for the human race—its advanced intelligence—threatens to destroy it.

ADVANCING IN ANIMALISM

Let's look at the situation from another perspective. All living beings are driven by a craving for pleasure. All subhuman species search for pleasure through the bodily activities of eating, sleeping, mating, and defending. Humans do the same, but in more refined ways. For example, a bird lives in the same type of nest year after year, generation after generation, but humans try to improve their residences—from huts, to apartments, to bungalows, to villas. A cow eats grass all its life, but humans choose their food from a large variety of cuisine.

Modern scientific advancement has given a sophisticated look to human activities; humans move about in cars, fly around in planes, work on computers, and communicate globally through the Internet. Despite all their scientific progress, humans still seek pleasure through food, sex, sleep, and shows of strength just like animals. Animals may gorge on refuse in a garbage pile, whereas humans may titillate their tongues with processed, packaged food. Animals may mate in the middle of the street, whereas humans may cultivate erotic fantasies through magazines, television, movies, and the Internet before indulging in carnal revelry. Animals may sleep on the hard street, whereas humans may sink into oblivion on a soft bed in an air-conditioned room. Animals may snarl and show their teeth, whereas humans may brandish weapons of mass destruction. Thus scientific advancement may have changed the forms of human activity, but it has hardly changed the purpose.

Hence it is no surprise that worldwide most of the funds for scientific research come from the military (a hi-tech arrangement for defending) and the consumer industry (which offers sophisticated methods for eating, sleeping, and sex).

Despite all these complicated arrangements, are modern humans better off than the animals? Animals don't die of starvation because of artificial shortages created by others of their own species, animals don't suffer from insomnia, animals don't suffer heartbreaks because of betrayed love, animals don't feel stressed because of overwork and loneliness, animals don't fall prey to addictions, and animals don't commit suicide. Mark Twain commented, "Man is the only animal that blushes. Or needs to."

THE OPPORTUNITY OF HUMAN LIFE

The Vedic texts offer some interesting insights into this strange irony. They agree that humans are endowed with a higher intelligence that makes them unique among all forms of life. They further state that this higher human intelligence is meant for a purpose far loftier than searching for better ways to obtain bodily pleasures. Equipped with their special intelligence, humans are meant to probe into the deepest mysteries of life. The Vedic texts thus urge intelligent humans to explore the spiritual frontier of life.

For the enterprising spiritual scientists, the Vedic texts present a cogent, consistent, and comprehensive body of knowledge that answers all the fundamental questions of life. In essence, they explain that a non-material self, known as the *ātmā*, or the soul, animates the body and a similar non-material Supreme Being, known as the *Paramātmā*, or the Supersoul, animates

the cosmos. When the soul and the Supersoul are in harmony, the soul can experience the fullness of life. When the soul is in a subhuman body, it has no opportunity to achieve this fullness, as the undeveloped consciousness of the animal body allows no access to the spiritual dimension. Only in the human body does the soul have the intelligence to penetrate the superficial world of matter and perceive the spiritual energy within the cosmos. Humans alone can harmonize themselves not only with the cosmic energies, but also with the supreme energetic person, the source and the basis of the cosmos.

THE MASSIVE BLUNDER

In modern times, humans have exercised their intellects tirelessly to understand the world of matter. This has resulted in significant advances in science and technology. But modern science has been dogmatically reluctant to investigate the spiritual dimension of life. A thinking person can easily perceive that life has an aspect higher than the material. Can electrons think? Can atoms have emotions? Can molecules desire? Can chemicals love? Obviously not. Indeed, within the framework of material science there is no explanation whatsoever for the phenomenon of consciousness. Although the reality of consciousness is undeniable, modern science has done precious little to understand it; indeed most scientists have religiously restricted themselves to the study of matter.

The Vedic literature asserts that to keep the human intellect locked within the realm of matter is gross underutilization of the potential of human life. Worse still, when deprived of access to the spiritual realm, human beings cannot enjoy the fullness they intrinsically long for. They frantically search for that fullness by manipulat-

ing matter in newer and newer ways, but to no avail. The resulting frustration stunts, throttles, and distorts them. Overindulgence in matter and negligence of spirit backfires and results in disharmony, distress, and disaster.

Over the last five centuries, the widespread acceptance of the scientific worldview and the concomitant negligence or rejection of spirituality has resulted in a colossal imbalance of material and spiritual values. The modern world is witnessing the catastrophic consequences of disharmonious living. Individually there is an increase in dissatisfaction, stress, depression, addiction, and suicide, and globally there is an increase in unrest, crime, violence, and terrorism.

HAPPINESS BEYOND THE SENSES

The Vedic texts explain that real happiness comes not by sensual titillation, but by selfless love. And the perfection of love comes when it is reposed in such a way that it is never limited or thwarted. Every soul has an eternal loving relationship with the Supreme Person in a higher-dimensional deathless realm. Human life, with its developed consciousness, provides the soul the opportunity to revive that relationship. Therefore the Vedic texts urge intelligent humans to focus their energies not on pandering to the demands of the mortal body, but on awakening the loving nature of the immortal soul.

To achieve this divine harmony of love, the Vedic texts delineate a systematic program centered on meditation on divine sound, especially the chanting of the *mahā-mantra*: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. A human being advancing on the way to harmony gains access, in this very life, to a whole new world of profound knowledge, thrilling experience, and ever-increasing happiness, along with indifference to the hankering of the flesh. This sweet harmony of divine love culminates in the return of the soul to the spiritual milieu, to rejoice eternally in endless love with the Supreme.

The essence of a living being is desire; our desires direct and determine

our entire life. People may have seemingly special externals—fancy hairstyles, fashionable clothing, hi-tech mobile phones, flashy cars, and so on. But if their desires are the same as those of the ordinary animals—to attract the opposite sex, to seek titillation of the tongue, and so on—they are nothing more than sophisticated animals. Śrīla Prabhupāda would poignantly remark that a dog may move on four legs and a human in a car with four wheels, but if the essential purpose for which both are moving is the same—seeking bodily pleasures—how is the human superior to the dog?

Human beings become truly special only when their desires are higher than those of the animals. They then dare to desire the highest happiness, which genuine spirituality alone can provide. Being connoisseurs of pleasure, they reject the pleasures the animals seek, considering these pleasures unworthy of developed intelligence. They wisely refuse to tread the beaten track that all other living beings pursue, a path that leads to old age, disease, and death. The *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.3) declares that a human being in this consciousness is very special and rare—one among millions.

Therefore the onus is on each of us to choose our desires. Will we continue to be just ordinary creatures, with the same desires of eating, sleeping, mating, and defending as those of the millions and billions of life forms all over the globe? Will we continue to be just another figure in the meaningless statistics of this world? Or will we be bold enough to be special, by pursuing lofty spiritual goals in life? Will we take up the challenge of pioneering an ongoing global spiritual awakening that is the only hope for the modern misdirected civilization? The world is waiting to see. ☸

Caitanya Carāṇa Dāsa, 26, is a disciple of His Holiness Rādhānātha Swami. He holds a degree in electronics and telecommunications engineering and serves full-time at ISKCON Pune. He runs a free cyber magazine, The Spiritual Scientist, which gives a scientific presentation of Kṛṣṇa conscious philosophy. To receive new issues as they come out, write to iyfpune@vsnl.com.

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THE VEDIC OBSE

THE BAD BRAINS BEHIND MAD COW DISEASE

by Satyarāja Dāsa

The writing is on the wall. As of January 2, 2004, it became clear that meat-eating is risky business. An MSNBC report—picked up by the Associated Press, thus finding its way into newspapers and magazines around the world—let us know in glaring terms that mad cow disease is here to stay and that meat is dangerous. Plain and simple.

The same message came through in a recent *Time* magazine article (January 12). The title: “How Now, Mad Cow?” The lead-in: “Big beef was doing fine until disease felled a heifer. Will consumer anxiety cripple the industry?” That week’s issue of *Newsweek* ran a similar article, entitled, “Mad Cow: What’s Safe Now?” The lead-in for that article: “They hoped it wouldn’t happen here, then it did. Now U.S. officials are rewriting rules and assuring consumers that beef won’t make them sick.”

We first heard of this little terror in the 1980s, when tons of Brits gave up meat during England’s first mad-cow outbreak. In 1996, former Montana cattle rancher Howard Lyman appeared on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, proclaiming the harsh realities of the disease and its imminent outbreak worldwide. Lyman had sworn off meat and was advising others to do the same. In his book *Mad Cowboy* (1998), Lyman predicted the disease would migrate to the States, which it did in 2003.

Lyman points out that most cows, kept for milk and leather, are treated not like living beings but like machines, and that profit-driven cattle ranchers make these animals’ lives a living hell. The living conditions on factory farms have been the subject of numerous studies. One particular aspect of these deplorable conditions has led to mad cow disease: the practice of mixing rotting animal parts into animal feed.

As a reaction to factory farm horrors, many, including Lyman, recommend a simpler way of life. Lyman, no doubt, would applaud Śrīla Prabhupāda’s proposals for a simplified, holistic way of life in which both humans and the animals that serve them live naturally and peacefully, and in good health.

With the recent outbreak in America, mad cow disease hits close to home for me. I’ve been a vegetarian for more than thirty years, but after the discovery of an infected cow in Washington state, I started to get calls from old friends and family members: “Maybe I shouldn’t be eating meat.” “You were right all along.”

I’ve been “right all along” because I follow the instructions of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who recommends vegetarianism in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.26) and in other Vedic texts. Kṛṣṇa says that man’s proper diet consists of fruits, nuts, grains, dairy, and vegetables, offered to Him with love and devotion. Eating food offered to Kṛṣṇa is called taking *prasādam* (“mercy”). Since Kṛṣṇa Himself doesn’t recommend that we eat meat, something must be wrong with it, at least for human beings.

Prominent authorities on health and nutrition also say we should lay off. The American Dietetic Association officially recommends vegetarianism, and medical practitioners in the public eye such as Dean Ornish and John Robbins highly recommend the meatless way of life. So maybe we shouldn’t be eating

the flesh of animals. *The flesh of animals*. That’s exactly what it really is—no matter how you dress it up, package it, or serve it. Don’t delude yourself into thinking it’s anything other than what it is—because that would just be a lot of bull.

WHAT IS MAD COW DISEASE?

Unfortunately, meat-eaters still outnumber vegetarians, especially in Western countries. And odds are good that sometime in their life meat-eaters will have a run in with strokes, cancer, salmonella, *E. coli*, campylobacter, heart disease, or high blood pressure, and they’ll probably have a weight problem too. Vegetarians, it is true, are besieged by many of these same diseases, but not as frequently, as medical experts have amply shown. In addition, meat-eaters are now exposed to mad cow, mad chicken, mad fish, mad pig, and mad turkey disease. Any animal can have the disease—a spongy brain (spongiform encephalopathy) that tortures its host beyond imagination and then moves on to those who eat the animal. Scientists have already identified strains of the disease in sheep, mink, cows, elk, deer, cats, and humans.

In December 2003, the U.S. government announced that a dairy cow in Washington state was infected with mad cow disease, technically known as Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE). All government reports issued immediately after the finding boasted a plan to contain the disease, but it appears that the plans were more public relations hype than anything else; a practical resolution for protecting public health seems far away indeed. Newspapers report that the meat from that Washington cow, killed December 9, traveled through three processing plants before the problem was discovered thirteen days later.

RIVER

Transcendental Commentary On the Issues of the Day

Put simply, spongiform encephalopathy is caused by malformed proteins called prions. The bovine version of the disease has been traced to the cost-cutting practice of mixing neural tissue from dead sheep into the feed of cows, which naturally eat only plants. Cows that eat BSE-infected brains or brains of sheep suffering from a disease called scrapie can develop mad cow disease. When people eat infected animals, thus far mainly cows, they can develop the human version of the disease. Millions of cattle suspected of being infected with BSE in England,

Scotland, Ireland, France, Belgium, Italy, and other countries have been brutally killed. Though various safeguards against BSE have been instituted, few have been adopted in the U.S.

While Japan performs BSE tests on every cow that goes to slaughter, and the European Union tests 70% of its cattle, the U.S. tested only 20,000 cows out of the 35 million killed for meat in 2002. This is only .06%, which is unconscionable when one considers the possible ramifications of this neglect. As of right now, there is little improve-

ment. In time, perhaps with a human outbreak in the United States, the message will be heard in unmistakable tones. And *Time* tells us that there is a trend toward vegetarianism, perhaps because of fear of mad cow. Telling, isn't it, that it takes the fear of God, so to speak, to get us to stop eating meat. Threatened by the prospect of some torturous, inconceivable disease, we begin to reconsider our palate. We never hear the cries of the creatures, never consider plights other than our own.

THE VEDIC ALTERNATIVE

The People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) have a sensible solution: "Since spongy brains have been found in cats, dogs, sheep, mink, deer, and elk, as well as in cows and people, you may not be protecting yourself by avoiding beef alone. When there are so many delicious vegetarian alternatives available at virtually every restaurant and grocery store, why gamble?" In other words, vegetarianism is a no-brainer.

But vegetarianism doesn't get to the root of the problem. It simply gives us a method for avoiding the disease ourselves. If we analyze the cause of mad cow disease, we see farmers and businessmen looking for shortcuts—feeding all kinds of inedible waste, including diseased brains, to their dependent and vulnerable animals. In short, creating monsters. Unless we address the underlying mentality—the diseased brains behind the diseased brains—similar problems will continue to arise. What is called for, then, is a change in consciousness as well as diet.

The Vedic scriptures state clearly that the preferred diet for man includes only vegetarian foods—in endless delectable combinations, both raw and cooked—and that, before eating, these edibles should be offered to Kṛṣṇa with



Yamarāja Dāsa



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

PRONUNCIATION: ha-ray, krish-na, ra-ma (rhymes with "drama")

love and devotion, as mentioned above. By association with God through this process, the food becomes purifying, gradually changing the consciousness of those who cook it, eat it, and serve it. Thus, *prasādam* addresses both concerns: diet and consciousness.

Moreover, devotees of Kṛṣṇa feel for the suffering of others. We don't abstain from eating animal flesh just to avoid a terrible disease. We want to live peacefully with all of God's creatures, and not merely because it serves our purposes. By taking *prasādam*, we move a long way from mad cow, and into the realm of happy cow.

THE KURU DISEASE

Coincidentally, one member of the spongiform encephalopathy family of diseases is known as kuru. In the *Mahābhārata*, the Pāṇḍavas are the heroes, the protectors of the righteous, and their cousins, the Kurus, are their evil adversaries. The Pāṇḍavas defeat their pernicious cousins not merely by their own strength but by siding with Kṛṣṇa. Similarly, the evil disease kuru can be defeated not merely by vegetarianism but by a change of consciousness.

Symbolically, this truth can be detected in the word *vegetarianism* itself, a word that in common parlance has come to mean "eater of vegetables." Originally, however, it comes from the Latin *vegetus*, meaning "whole, sound, fresh, and lively." Similarly, the Pāṇḍavas had to see beyond ordinary piety and righteousness, beyond ordinary definitions of duty. They had to adopt a more holistic conception of life, wherein the dualities of good and evil fall away like so many diseased animals. They surrendered to Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and in so doing conquered the dreaded Kurus once and for all. ☸

Satyaarāja Dāsa is a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda and a regular contributor to BTG. He has written twenty books on Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and is the editor of the recently published Holy War: Violence and the Bhagavad Gita. He lives with his wife and daughter near New York City.

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.

SATĪ CONFRONTS HER FATHER

*Despite her husband's warnings, Satī, the wife of Lord Śiva,
leaves home to go to her father's sacrifice.*

CANTO 4: CHAPTER 4

3 ततो विनिःश्वस्य सती विहाय तं
शोकेन रोषेण च दूयता हृदा
पित्रोरगात्स्त्रैणविमूढधीर्गृहान्
प्रेम्णात्मनो योऽर्धमदात्सतां प्रियः

*tato viniṣvasya satī vihāya taṁ
śokena roṣeṇa ca dūyatā hṛdā
pitrōr agāt straiṇa-vimūḍha-dhīr gṛhān
premnātmāno yo 'rdham adāt satām priyaḥ*

tataḥ—then; *viniṣvasya*—breathing very heavily; *satī*—Satī; *vihāya*—leaving; *taṁ*—him (Lord Śiva); *śokena*—by bereavement; *roṣeṇa*—by anger; *ca*—and; *dūyatā*—afflicted; *hṛdā*—with the heart; *pitroḥ*—of her father; *agāt*—she went; *straiṇa*—by her womanly nature; *vimūḍha*—deluded; *dhīḥ*—intelligence; *gṛhān*—to the house; *premnā*—due to affection; *ātmanāḥ*—of his body; *yaḥ*—who; *ardham*—half; *adāt*—gave; *satām*—to the saintly; *priyaḥ*—dear.

Thereafter Satī left her husband, Lord Śiva, who had given her half his body due to affection. Breathing very heavily because of anger and bereavement, she went to the house of her father. This less intelligent act was due to her being a weak woman.

PURPORT: According to the Vedic conception of family life, the husband gives half his body to his wife, and the wife gives half of her body to her husband. In other words, a husband without a wife or a wife without a husband is incomplete. Vedic marital relationship existed between Lord Śiva and Satī, but sometimes, due to weakness, a woman becomes very much attracted by the members of her father's house, and this happened to Satī. In this verse it is specifically mentioned that she wanted to leave such a great husband as Śiva because of her womanly weakness. In other words, womanly weakness exists even in the relationship between husband and wife. Generally, separation between husband and wife is due to womanly behavior; divorce takes place due to womanly weakness. The best course for a woman is to abide by the orders of her husband. That makes family life very peaceful. Sometimes there may be misunderstandings between husband and wife, as found even in such an elevated family relationship as that of Satī and Lord Śiva, but a wife should not leave her husband's protection because of such a misunderstanding. If she does so, it is understood to be due to her womanly weakness.

4 तामन्वगच्छन् द्रुतविक्रमां सती-
मेकां त्रिनेत्रानुचराः सहस्रशः
सपार्षदयक्षा मणिमन्मदादयः
पुरोवृषेन्द्रास्तरसा गतव्यथाः

*tām anvagacchan druta-vikramān satīm
ekām tri-netrānucarāḥ sahasraśaḥ
sa-pārśada-yakṣā maṇiman-madādayaḥ
puro-vṛṣendrās tarasā gata-vyathāḥ*

tām—her (Satī); *anvagacchan*—followed; *druta-vikramām*—leaving rapidly; *satīm*—Satī; *ekām*—alone; *tri-netra*—of Lord Śiva (who has three eyes); *anucarāḥ*—the followers; *sahasraśaḥ*—by thousands; *sa-pārśada-yakṣāḥ*—accompanied by his personal associates and the Yakṣas; *maṇimat-mada-ādayaḥ*—Maṇimān, Mada, etc.; *purah-vṛṣa-indrāḥ*—having the Nandī bull in front; *tarasā*—swiftly; *gata-vyathāḥ*—without fear.

When they saw Satī leaving alone very rapidly, thousands of Lord Śiva’s disciples, headed by Maṇimān and Mada, quickly followed her with his bull Nandī in front and accompanied by the Yakṣas.

PURPORT: Satī was going very fast so that she might not be checked by her husband, but she was immediately followed by the many thousands of disciples of Lord Śiva, headed by the Yakṣas, Maṇimān, and Mada. The word *gata-vyathāḥ*, used in this connection, means “without fear.” Satī did not care that she was going alone; therefore she was almost fearless. The word *anucarāḥ* is also significant, for it indicates that Lord Śiva’s disciples were always ready to sacrifice anything for Lord Śiva. All of them could understand the desire of Śiva, who did not want Satī to go alone. ❶ *Anucarāḥ* means “those who can immediately understand the purpose of their master.”

5 तां सारिकाकन्दुकदर्पणाम्बुज-
श्वेतातपत्रव्यजनस्रगादिभिः
गीतायनैर्दुन्दुभिश्चवेणुभि-
र्वृषेन्द्रमारोप्य विटङ्किता ययुः

*tām sārīkā-kanduka-darpaṇāmbuja-
śvetātapatra-vyajana-srag-ādibhiḥ
gītāyanair dundubhi-śaṅkha-veṇubhir
vṛṣendram āropyā viṭaṅkitā yayuḥ*

tām—her (Satī); *sārīkā*—pet bird; *kanduka*—ball; *darpaṇa*—mirror; *ambuja*—lotus flower; *śveta-ātapatra*—white umbrella; *vyajana*—chowrie; *srag*—garland; *ādibhiḥ*—and others; *gita-ayanaiḥ*—accompanied with music; *dundubhi*—drums; *śaṅkha*—conchshells; *veṇubhiḥ*—with flutes; *vṛṣa-*

(1) What is the meaning of *anucarāḥ*?

indram—on the bull; *āropyā*—placing; *viṭaṅkitāḥ*—decorated; *yayuh*—they went.

The disciples of Lord Śiva arranged for Satī to be seated on the back of a bull and gave her the bird which was her pet. They bore a lotus flower, a mirror, and all such paraphernalia for her enjoyment and covered her with a great canopy. Followed by a singing party with drums, conch shells, and bugles, the entire procession was as pompous as a royal parade.

6 आब्रह्मघोषोर्जितयज्ञवैशमं
विप्रर्षिजुष्टं विबुधैश्च सर्वशः
मृदार्वयःकाञ्चनदर्भचर्मभि-
र्निसृष्टभाण्डं यजनं समाविशत्

*ābrahma-ghoṣorjita-yajña-vaiśasaṁ
viprarṣi-juṣṭam vibudhaiś ca sarvaśaḥ
mṛd-dārv-ayaḥ-kāñcana-darbha-carmabhir
nīsṛṣṭa-bhāṇḍam yajanam samāviśat*

ā—from all sides; *brahma-ghoṣa*—with the sounds of the Vedic hymns; *ūrjita*—decorated; *yajña*—sacrifice; *vaiśasam*—destruction of animals; *viprarṣi-juṣṭam*—attended by the great sages; *vibudhaiḥ*—with demigods; *ca*—and; *sarvaśaḥ*—on all sides; *mṛt*—clay; *dāru*—wood; *ayaḥ*—iron; *kāñcana*—gold; *darbha*—*kuśa* grass; *carmabhiḥ*—skins; *nīsṛṣṭa*—made of; *bhāṇḍam*—sacrificial animals and pots; *yajanam*—sacrifice; *samāviśat*—entered.

She then reached her father’s house, where the sacrifice was being performed, and entered the arena where everyone was chanting the Vedic hymns. The great sages, *brāhmaṇas*, and demigods were all assembled there, and there were many sacrificial animals, as well as pots made of clay, stone, gold, grass, and skin, which were all requisite for the sacrifice.

PURPORT: When learned sages and *brāhmaṇas* assemble to chant Vedic mantras, some of them also engage in arguing about the conclusion of the scriptures. Thus some of the sages and *brāhmaṇas* were arguing, and some of them were chanting the Vedic mantras, so the entire atmosphere was surcharged with transcendental sound vibration. This transcendental sound vibration has been simplified in the transcendental vibration Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. In this age, no one is expected to be highly educated in the Vedic ways of understanding because people are very slow, lazy, and unfortunate. Therefore Lord Caitanya has recommended the sound vibration Hare Kṛṣṇa, and in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.5.32) it is also recommended: *yajñaiḥ saṅkirtana-prāyair yajanti hi sumedhasaḥ*.

② At the present moment it is impossible to gather sacrificial necessities because of the poverty of the population and their lack of knowledge in Vedic mantras. Therefore for this age it is recommended that people gather together and chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is accompanied by His associates. Indirectly this indicates Lord Caitanya, who is accompanied by His associates Nityānanda, Advaita, and others. That is the process of performing *yajña* in this age.

Another significant point in this verse is that there were animals for sacrifice. That these animals were meant for sacrifice does not mean that they were meant to be killed. The great sages and realized souls assembled were performing *yajñas*, and their realization was tested by animal sacrifice, just as, in modern science, tests are made on animals to determine the effectiveness of a particular medicine. ③ The *brāhmaṇas* entrusted with the performance of *yajña* were very realized souls, and to test their realization an old animal was offered in the fire and rejuvenated. That was the test of a Vedic mantra. The animals gathered were not meant to be killed and eaten. The real purpose of a sacrifice was not to replace a slaughterhouse but to test a Vedic mantra by giving an animal new life. Animals were used to test the power of Vedic mantras, not for meat.

7 तामागतां तत्र न कश्चनद्रियद्
विमानितां यज्ञकृतो भयाङ्गनः
ऋते स्वसृर्वै जननीं च सादराः
प्रेमाश्रुकण्ठ्यः परिष्वजुर्मुदा

*tām āgatām tatra na kaścānādrīyad
vimānitām yajña-kṛto bhayaṅgaṅ
ṛte svasṛvai jananiṁ ca sādaraḥ
premaśru-kaṅṭhyaḥ pariśvasvajuṛmudā*

tām—her (Satī); *āgatām*—having arrived; *tatra*—there; *na*—not; *kaścāna*—anyone; *ādrīyat*—received; *vimānitām*—not receiving respect; *yajña-kṛtaḥ*—of the performer of the sacrifice (Dakṣa); *bhayaṅgaṅ*—from fear; *janaḥ*—person; *ṛte*—except; *svasṛḥ*—her own sisters; *vai*—indeed; *jananiṁ*—mother; *ca*—and; *sa-ādarāḥ*—with respect; *prema-śru-kaṅṭhyaḥ*—whose throats were filled with tears of affection; *pariśvasvajuḥ*—embraced; *mudā*—with glad faces.

When Satī, with her followers, reached the arena, because all the people assembled were afraid of Dakṣa, none of them received her well. No one welcomed her but her mother and sisters, who, with tears in their eyes and with glad faces, welcomed her and talked with her very pleasantly.

PURPORT: The mother and sisters of Satī could not follow the others, who did not receive Satī very well. Due to natu-

ral affection, they immediately embraced her with tears in their eyes and with loving feelings. ④ This shows that women as a class are very softhearted; their natural affection and love cannot be checked by artificial means. Although the men present were very learned *brāhmaṇas* and demigods, they were afraid of their superior, Dakṣa, and because they knew that their welcoming Satī would displease him, although in their minds they wanted to receive her, they could not do so. Women are naturally softhearted, but men are sometimes very hardhearted.

8 सौदर्यसम्प्रश्नसमर्थवार्तया
मात्रा च मातृष्वसृभिश्च सादरम्
दत्तां सपर्यां वरमासनं च सा
नादत्त पित्राप्रतिनन्दिता सती

*saudarya-sampraśna-samartha-vārtayā
mātrā ca mātṛ-śvasṛbhiḥ ca sādaram
dattām saparyāṁ varam āsanam ca sā
nādatta pitrāpratinanditā satī*

saudarya—of her sisters; *sampraśna*—with the greetings; *samartha*—proper; *vārtayā*—tidings; *mātrā*—by her mother; *ca*—and; *mātṛ-śvasṛbhiḥ*—by her aunts; *ca*—and; *sa-ādarām*—along with respect; *dattām*—which was offered; *saparyām*—worship, adoration; *varam*—presents; *āsanam*—a seat; *ca*—and; *sā*—she (Satī); *na ādatta*—did not accept; *pitrā*—by her father; *apratinanditā*—not being welcomed; *satī*—Satī.

Although she was received by her sisters and mother, she did not reply to their words of reception, and although she was offered a seat and presents, she did not accept anything, for her father neither talked with her nor welcomed her by asking about her welfare.

PURPORT: ⑤ Satī did not accept the greetings offered by her sisters and mother, for she was not at all satisfied by

- (2) In this age, why is it impossible to gather sacrificial necessities?
- (3) In Vedic culture, what was the purpose of sacrificing animals?
- (4) What does Satī's reception by her mother and sisters indicate about women as a class?
- (5) Why did Satī not accept the greetings offered by her sisters and mother?

her father's silence. Satī was the youngest child of Dakṣa, and she knew that she was his pet. ❹ But now, because of her association with Lord Śiva, Dakṣa forgot all his affection for his daughter, and this very much aggrieved her. The material bodily conception is so polluted that even upon slight provocation all our relationships of love and affection are nullified. Bodily relationships are so transient that even though one is affectionate towards someone in a bodily relationship, a slight provocation terminates this intimacy.

9 अरुद्रभागं तमवेक्ष्य चाध्वरं
पित्रा च देवे कृतहेलनं विभौ
अनादृता यज्ञसदस्यधीश्वरी
चुकोप लोकानिव धक्ष्यती रुषा

*arudra-bhāgaṁ tam avekṣya cādhvaram
pitṛā ca deve kṛta-helanam vibhau
anāḍṛtā yajña-sadasy adhiśvari
cukopa lokān iva dhakṣyati ruṣā*

arudra-bhāgam—having no oblations for Lord Śiva; *tam*—that; *avekṣya*—seeing; *ca*—and; *adhvaram*—place of sacrifice; *pitṛā*—by her father; *ca*—and; *deve*—to Lord Śiva; *kṛta-helanam*—contempt having been shown; *vibhau*—to the lord; *anāḍṛtā*—not being received; *yajña-sadasi*—in the assembly of the sacrifice; *adhiśvari*—Satī; *cukopa*—became greatly angry; *lokān*—the fourteen worlds; *iva*—as if; *dhakṣyati*—burning; *ruṣā*—with anger.

Present in the arena of sacrifice, Satī saw that there were no oblations for her husband, Lord Śiva. Next she realized that not only had her father failed to invite Lord Śiva, but when he saw Lord Śiva's exalted wife, Dakṣa did not receive her either. Thus she became greatly angry, so much so that she looked at her father as if she were going to burn him with her eyes.

PURPORT: By offering oblations in the fire while chanting the Vedic mantra *svāhā*, one offers respect to all the demigods, great sages, and Pitās, including Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva, and Lord Viṣṇu. It is customary that Śiva is one of those who are offered respects, but Satī, while personally

- (6) Why did Dakṣa forget his affection for Satī?
(7) Why did Satī become angry at her father?
(8) Why is Lord Viṣṇu called Yajñeśa?

present in the arena, saw that the *brāhmaṇas* did not utter the mantra offering oblations to Lord Śiva, *namaḥ śivāya svāhā*. She was not sorry for herself, for she was ready to come to her father's house without being invited, but she wanted to see whether or not her husband was being respected. To see her relatives, her sisters and mother, was not so important; even when she was received by her mother and sisters she did not care, for she was most concerned that her husband was being insulted in the sacrifice. ❺ When she marked the insult, she became greatly angry, and she looked at her father so angrily that Dakṣa appeared to burn in her vision.

10 जगर्ह सामर्षविपन्नया गिरा
शिवद्विषं धूमपथश्रमस्मयम्
स्वतेजसा भूतगणान् समुत्थितान्
निगृह्य देवी जगतोऽभिश्ृण्वतः

*jagarha sāmārṣa-vipannayā girā
śiva-dviṣam dhūma-patha-śrama-smayam
sva-tejasā bhūta-gaṇān samutthitān
nigṛhya devī jagato 'bhiśṛṇvataḥ*

jagarha—began to condemn; *sā*—she; *amārṣa-vipannayā*—indistinct through anger; *girā*—with words; *śiva-dviṣam*—the enemy of Lord Śiva; *dhūma-patha*—in sacrifices; *śrama*—by troubles; *smayam*—very proud; *sva-tejasā*—by her order; *bhūta-gaṇān*—the ghosts; *samutthitān*—ready (to injure Dakṣa); *nigṛhya*—stopped; *devī*—Satī; *jagataḥ*—in the presence of all; *abhiśṛṇvataḥ*—being heard.

The followers of Lord Śiva, the ghosts, were ready to injure or kill Dakṣa, but Satī stopped them by her order. She was very angry and sorrowful, and in that mood she began to condemn the process of sacrificial fruitive activities and persons who are very proud of such unnecessary and troublesome sacrifices. She especially condemned her father, speaking against him in the presence of all.

PURPORT: ❹ The process of offering sacrifices is especially meant to satisfy Viṣṇu, who is called Yajñeśa because He is the enjoyer of the fruits of all sacrifice. *Bhagavad-gītā* (5.29) also confirms this fact. The Lord says, *bhoktāraṁ yajña-tapasām*. He is the actual beneficiary of all sacrifices. Not knowing this fact, less intelligent men offer sacrifices for some material benefit. To derive personal material benefits for sense gratification is the reason persons like Dakṣa and his followers perform sacrifices. Such sacrifices are condemned here as a labor of love without actual profit.

[continued in the next issue]

Bhaktivedanta College Vaishnava Theological Seminary

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Let Go And Let Kṛṣṇa

*Because the origin of all fear and anxiety is separation
from Kṛṣṇa, the cure is to take shelter of Him.*

by Arcana-siddhī Devī Dāsī

I REMEMBER AS A CHILD climbing up the metal ladder of what seemed like a towering playground slide. With each step up, my legs quivered uncontrollably and my heart beat rapidly. When I reached the top rung, I stared down at the ground, feeling dizzy and overwhelmed with fright. What had started out as excitement now turned to panic. My father, standing at the bottom of the slide, urged me to slide down, but fear paralyzed my muscles, and I stood frozen. I thought of climbing back down, but several children were now perched on the rungs, anxiously waiting for me to take my turn. They began to shout tauntingly, hoping to make me move. Feeling trapped by overpowering fear, I began to cry.

My father, realizing that I was beyond prodding, crawled up the slide and rescued me. Relieved but embarrassed, I looked back at the slide, which seemed an insurmountable mountain. This was one of my first recollections of being consumed by the irresistible power of fear.

Now, over forty years later, I often work with clients whose quality of life is greatly diminished by fear or anxiety. Sometimes the fear is circumscribed by a single object or event, such as elevators, flying, snakes, or dead bodies. But in many cases, the anxious feelings pervade their lives, making even the simplest tasks difficult. Afraid of making the wrong decision, of saying something inappropriate, of being judged, they

weave a cocoon of anxious strands around their subtle bodies, restricting their ability to live happily and peacefully.

PHYSICIAN, HEAL THYSELF

Many self-help books target this most debilitating disorder. One of the most popular is *The Anxiety and Phobia Workbook*, by psychologist Dr. Edmund Bourne. Having suffered from a severe anxiety disorder, he compiled this workbook of techniques ranging from relaxation to desensitization. Readers found varying degrees of relief, and Dr. Bourne became a well-known authority on the subject.

Some time after his popular book came out, Dr. Bourne himself became incapacitated by anxiety. All the practices he prescribed in his book did little to help him find respite from his scorching psychic pain. Finding no material solution, he sought relief from spiritual practices. In his latest book, *Freedom from Fear*, he shares his journey to his partial recovery. In essence, he recognizes that the underlying cause of anxiety is lack of trust in a higher power.

His realization is corroborated in all the major scriptures of the world. In the Vedic scriptures the eternal spiritual world is called Vaikuṅṭha, "free from anxiety." All the residents there act for the pleasure of the Lord. Their every action is motivated by their deep love for

We have tried to become independent of God and in the process have become lost from our very source of solace and comfort.

• • •

God. Having no separate interest from His, they experience freedom from all worry.

In the material world, most of us are focused on gratifying our own senses. We act independent of our creator and try to enjoy separately from Him. This separation is the origin of our anxiety.

Recently I was watching a toddler assert his independence from his mother by running away from her. He was laughing and enjoying his newfound power. But when she hid from his view, he became very anxious and started to cry. The mother, seeing his anguish, appeared before him and assuaged his fears.

In many ways we are like that small child; we have tried to become independent of God and in the process have become lost from our very source of solace and comfort. But unlike the child, who knew he wanted to find his mother, we don't know what we have lost or what to look for. In our distress, we look for other solutions, many of them destructive and against our real self-interest. When we realize the futility of all material solutions, we can turn to the Lord for shelter.

SEEING THE POSITIVE

Kṛṣṇa has expertly designed the material world to rectify our separatist mentality. If we decide to live in line with the purpose of the creator, then we'll see the environment as favorable for our spiritual progress. We'll see things, good or bad, as coming from the Lord, and we'll understand how to use them in ways that will assist us on our path of self-realization.

Much of the anxiety we experience is unnecessary and obstructs our emotional well-being and spiritual progress. But anxiety and fear can also help us navigate this temporal existence. Had I not felt some anxiety about failing in college, I might never have gone to my

classes and obtained a degree. Fear of dangerous situations has helped to protect me from an untimely death. Most important, my anxiety about finding meaning and purpose in my life and my fear of death and beyond brought me into the association of devotees.

After practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness for over twenty-seven years, am I free from toxic material anxieties and fears? No, I've made significant progress, but I'm still confronted with situations that test my dependence on the Lord. Recently my husband and I put our house up for sale after starting to build a home at Prabhupada Village in Sandy Ridge, North Carolina. We planned things so that we would have a smooth transition from our house in Baltimore to our new home. Our house sold on the first day it went on the market, but the buyers were willing to rent it back to us for two months, while our new house was being built. But our new house progressed slowly, and it soon became evident that we were going to be homeless and would have to rely on the generosity of friends and relatives.

My anxiety became intense, and I had trouble sleeping at night. I was able to easily diagnose my problem as a lack of trust in Kṛṣṇa's plan for us. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa tells us to depend on Him in all our endeavors, and I was clearly negligent in following that instruction. As a result, I was suffering from an unhealthy anxiety.

FOCUS ON CHANTING

Since I have experienced such lack of dependence on Kṛṣṇa in many situations, I have had many opportunities to practice reversing my consciousness, and here was another chance. My initial reaction was to resist the anxious feelings, but experience has taught me to sit with the feelings and allow them to be what they are. Fight-

ing against the nervous energy will generally intensify the feelings. I have learned to breathe deeply, which relaxes my body, calms my mind, and allows me to focus on chanting the Lord's holy names in a prayerful mood. To chant with attention, I bargain with my mind to allow me to hear the holy name without nagging distractions. In exchange I agree to give my full attention to the problem after I'm done. I generally have to renegotiate this agreement several times throughout the course of my *japa* meditation.

While the ultimate purpose of our chanting is to free us from material identification, uncover our spiritual identity, and awaken our love for Kṛṣṇa, we must deal with the immediate problems that impede our progress. A good chanting session has always helped me see things in proper perspective and remember my ultimate purpose in life—to fully trust and depend on my Lord Kṛṣṇa, a prerequisite to developing pure love for Him.

I also repeatedly tell myself, "Kṛṣṇa is my dearest friend and well-wisher, and everything He does is for my highest good." A favorite saying in God-centered self-help groups is "Let go and let God." This is a high ideal for any practitioner of a spiritual path.

In the *Mahābhārata* we find the famous story Draupadī and the gambling match. Draupadī was the beautiful and chaste wife of the exalted Pāṇḍavas. In an effort to bring shame and ruin to her spotless reputation, the Pāṇḍavas' envious cousins tried to disrobe her in a public forum. Because of the politics of the time, no one could stop the atrocity.

As the wicked Duṣṣāsana licentiously pulled at her sari, Draupadī, filled with fear, held onto the cloth with one hand and petitioned Kṛṣṇa with the other. Realizing she had no other shelter than the Lord, she literally and
(please turn to page 58)

CALENDAR

This calendar is calculated for Māyāpur, 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 Madhusūdana (April 6–May 4)

MAY

1—Mohinī Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

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

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

4—Nṛsimha Caturdaśī, appearance anniversary of Lord Nṛsimhadeva, Lord Kṛṣṇa's half-man, half-lion incarnation. Fasting till dusk, followed by feasting. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, a follower of the six Gosvāmīs. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī, the spiritual master of Lord Caitanya's spiritual master (Īśvara Purī).

Month of Trivikrama

(May 5–June 3)

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

14—Aparā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

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

29—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, a prominent spiritual master in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya* (disciplic succession), and the author of *Govinda-bhāṣya*, an important commentary on *Vedānta-sūtra*. Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Gaṅgāmātā Gosvāmiṇī, a prominent woman spiritual master in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*.

30—Pāṇḍava Nirjalā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

JUNE

1—Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī's chipped-rice-and-yogurt festival at Panihati.

Month of Vāmana

(June 4–July 2)

4—Disappearance of Śyāmānanda Paṇḍita, one of the principal followers of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

12—Disappearance anniversary of Śrī Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, one of the principal associates of Lord Caitanya.

13—Yoginī Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

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

18—Guṇḍicā-mārjana. Festival of cleansing the Gundicha temple in Jagannatha Puri, India.

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

29—Trisrṣā Mahādvādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans for Śayanā Ekādaśī.

JULY

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

Month of Śrīdhara

(July 3–17; August 17–30)

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

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

10—Anniversary of incorporation of ISKCON, in New York City, 1966.

13—Kāmikā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

“WHAT IS ‘A GOOD LIFE?’”

(continued from page 15)

it be ascertained? What kind of body am I going to in my next life?

Jesuit Priest: I don't think it matters very much. I couldn't care less what's happening after I'm dead. All I know . . . there's not annihilation. I'm going to be joined with Almighty God.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No. Our faith cannot be blind.

Mother: We're going to Almighty God. That's all.

Jesuit Priest: Not that I want another life.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Eh?

Mother: We're going to Almighty God when we die. We don't have to worry.

Jesuit Priest: That's in His hands.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: So what is the qualification?

Mother: We know. We . . .

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Everybody is going to God?

Mother: Yes. Everybody who believes in God . . . yes . . . and leads a good life, does their best in this world. And that is truth for me.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Then the question comes, “What is a ‘good life?’”

Jesuit Priest: Obeying the commandments of God.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. So if the commandment is “Thou shalt not kill” and if somebody kills, so that is a “good life”?

Jesuit Priest: No, no, no. Father, you're being a bit unfair. It isn't . . . There has to be interpretation. “Thou shalt not kill”: thou shalt not unjustly take away life. If a man walks in this afternoon through those bushes with a revolver, I have every right . . . I'm not saying I'm going to do it . . . but I have every right to defend myself against that unjust aggressor. And if I kill him . . .

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, you can. You can protect yourself.

Jesuit Priest: . . . that is justified.

Mother: Yes.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: You can kill the aggressor—but when you kill an innocent animal, what is the reason?

Jesuit Priest: Oh, well, then . . . yes. Well, again, that's got to be interpreted. We wouldn't be able to . . . What food . . . How would we live on food? How do we live if we don't eat?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: How are *we* living?

Jesuit Priest: Pardon?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: How are *we* living?

Jesuit Priest: Well, I don't know.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: We don't kill animals.

Jesuit Priest: I don't know what your food is, but . . .

Mother: No, but you have a vegetarian diet . . .

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes.

Mother: . . . which is . . .

Jesuit Priest: Well, all right.

Mother: A lot of people have that.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But that is not killing.

Jesuit Priest: No, Father, look at it this way. You've just said a few minutes ago there are eight million different kinds of life. Would you agree that the apple, the cabbage . . .

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes.

Jesuit Priest: . . . and what have you also has a life?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes.

Jesuit Priest: Because there's vegetative life, there's sensitive life, there's rational life, . . .

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That's all right.

Jesuit Priest: . . . there's supernatural life, and there's a life of God.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes.

Jesuit Priest: All right. And therefore—I'm not being facetious—when you make a dessert and boil those apples, you are taking away the life of that apple.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: So what is your philosophy? That you can take any life?

Jesuit Priest: But you said, “Thou shall not kill.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. “Thou shall not kill.” That's all right.

Jesuit Priest: But you kill the apple.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Now, suppose there is an apple and there is your child. So would you like to kill your child in preference to the apple?

Mother: No, no.

Jesuit Priest: You've not answered my question.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Why this discrimination?

Jesuit Priest: Why you've not answered my question?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, I am answering you—that you are to kill, but you have to discriminate what kind of killing you shall do.

Jesuit Priest: Well, I've just said that. I gave the example of the chap who comes to you with a revolver. I can maybe protect myself. You said . . . you're implying . . .

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, no. When some-



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body comes with a revolver, you defend. That is another thing. But if somebody's innocent, why should you kill?

Jesuit Priest: And I say I shouldn't. God said, "Thou shalt not kill."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Then why are you killing animals?

Jesuit Priest: Well, you're doing it when you eat your apple.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No. The apple is not an animal.

Jesuit Priest: It's vegetation, life.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No. The apple is not an animal, not a life. It is a fruit.

Jesuit Priest: Is that tree alive?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: The apple is simply a fruit.

Jesuit Priest: Is that tree alive?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes.

Jesuit Priest: Has it got life?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes.

Jesuit Priest: Are you doing anything wrong when you cut it down . . . ?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes.

Jesuit Priest: . . . to provide . . . ?

MOVING?

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Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes.

Jesuit Priest: To provide . . . ?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Yes. Yes.

Jesuit Priest: You are doing something wrong?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: We don't cut trees down unnecessarily. Unnecessarily.

Jesuit Priest: No, but . . . But, uh . . . I don't kill.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No. But I have asked

this question to so many people: Why are you killing although it is prohibited—"Thou shall not kill"? They cannot give me any satisfactory answer.

Jesuit Priest: Well, I think I've given you one. I'm just thinking in a way . . .

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Killing innocent animals and taking an apple from the tree, you are making equalized. It is not very logical. ☸

INITIATION

(continued from page 14)

logical propriety of the position set forth above. But most persons will be disposed to believe that a good preceptor in the above sense may not be found in this world. This is really so. Both the good preceptor and his disciple belong to the spiritual realm. But spiritual discipleship is nevertheless capable of being realized by persons who belong to this world. Otherwise there would be no religion at all in the world. But because the spiritual life happens to be realizable in this world, it does not follow that it is the worldly existence which is capable of being improved into the spiritual. In fact, the one is perfectly incompatible with the other. They are categorically different from one another. The good preceptor, although he appears to belong to this world, is not really of this world. No one who belongs to this world can deliver us from worldliness. The good preceptor is a denizen of the spiritual world who has been enabled by the will of God to appear in this world in order to enable us to realize the spiritual existence.

The much vaunted individual liberty is a figment of the diseased imagination. We are bound willingly or unwillingly to submit to the laws of God in the material as well as in the spiritual world. The hankering for freedom in defiance of His laws is the cause of all our miseries. The total abjuration of all hankering for such freedom is the condition of admission to the spiritual realm. In this world we desire this freedom but are compelled against our will to submit to the inexorable laws of physical nature. This is the unnatural state. Such forced submission does not admit us into the spiritual realm.

In this world the moral principle indeed claims our willing submission. But even morality also is a curtailment of freedom necessitated by the peculiar circumstances of this world. The soul, who does not belong to this world, is in a state of open rebellion against submission to an alien domination. He is by his very constitution capable of submitting willingly only to the Absolute.

The good preceptor asks the struggling soul to submit not to the laws of this world, which will only rivet his chains, but to the higher law of the

spiritual realm. The pretence of submission to the laws of the spiritual realm without the intention of really carrying them out in practice is often mistaken for genuine submission by reason of the absence of fullness of conviction. In this world the fully convinced state is non-existent. We are, therefore, compelled in all cases to act on make-believes, or the so-called working hypotheses.

The good preceptor tells us to change this method of activity that we have learned from our experience of this world. He invites us first of all to be really and fully informed of the nature and laws of the other world, which happens to be eternally and categorically different from this phenomenal world. If we do not sincerely submit to be instructed in the alphabets of the life eternal but go on perversely asserting, however unconsciously, our present processes and so-called convictions against the instructions of the preceptor in the period of novitiate, we are bound to remain where we are. This also will amount to the practical rejection of all advice, because the two worlds have nothing in common,

Kṛṣṇa Himself sends to us the good preceptor at the moment when we are at all likely to benefit by his instructions.

• • •

though at the same time we naturally fail to understand this, believing all the time, in accordance with our accustomed methods, that we are at any rate partially following the preceptor. But as a matter of fact when we reserve the right of choice, we really follow ourselves, because even when we seem to agree to follow the preceptor, it is because he appears to be in agreement with ourselves. But as the two worlds have absolutely nothing in common, we are only under a delusion when we suppose that we really understand the method or the object of the preceptor or, in other words, when we reserve the right of assertion of the apparent self.

Faith in the scriptures can alone help us in this otherwise unpracticable endeavor. We believe in the preceptor with the help of the scriptures when we understand neither. As soon as we are fully convinced of the necessity of submitting unambiguously to the good preceptor, it is then and only then that he is enabled to show us the way into the spiritual world in accordance with the method laid down in the scriptures. He can apply that method properly and without perpetrating a fatal blunder in as much as he himself happens to belong to the realm of the spirit.

NECESSITY AND CHOICE

The crux of the matter lies not in the external nature of the ceremony of initiation as it appears to us, because that is bound to be unintelligible to us, being an affair of the other world, but in the conviction of the necessity of, and the successful choice of, a really good preceptor. We can attain to the conviction of the necessity of the help of a good preceptor by the exercise of our unbiased reason in the light of our ordinary experience. When once this conviction has been truly formed, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself helps us in finding the really good preceptor in two ways. In

the first place he instructs us as regards the character and functions of a good preceptor through the revealed scriptures. In the second place He Himself sends to us the good preceptor at the moment when we are at all likely to benefit by his instructions.

The good preceptor also comes to us when we reject him. In such cases also it is certainly Kṛṣṇa who sends him to us for no reason whatsoever. Kṛṣṇa has revealed from eternity the tidings of the spiritual realm in the form of transcendental sounds that have been handed down in the records of the spiritual scriptures all over the world. The spiritual scriptures help all those who are prepared to exercise reason for the purpose of finding not the relative but the Absolute Truth. The scriptures help them to find out the proper instructor in accordance with scriptural directions. The only good preceptor is he who can make us really understand the spiritual scriptures, which enable us to realize the necessity and the nature of submission to the processes laid down in them.

But there is still every chance of foul play. A very clever man or a magician may pass himself off as a person who can properly explain the scriptures by means of his greater knowledge or deceptive arts. It is very important, therefore, that we should be on our guard against such tricks. The scholar as well as the magician pretend to explain the scriptures only in terms of the objects or happenings of this world. But the scriptures themselves declare that they do not tell us at all of the things of this world. Those who are liable to be deluded by the arts of false yogis persuade themselves into believing that the spiritual is identical with the perversion, distortion, or defiance of the laws of physical nature. The laws of physical nature are not unreal. They govern the relation of all relative existences. In our present state it is there-

fore always possible for one who possesses the power or the knowledge to demonstrate the merely tentative character of what we choose to regard as our deepest convictions—by exposing their insufficiency or inapplicability. But such surprises as these belong to the realm of the phenomenal, having nothing to do with the Absolute.

Those who have an unspiritual partiality for scholarship or for magic fall into the clutches of the pseudo-religionists. The serious plight of these victims of their own perversity will be realized from the fact that no one can be delivered from the state of ignorance by the method of compulsion. It is not possible to save the man who refuses on principle to listen to the voice of reason. The empiric pedants are no exception to this rule.

The plain meaning of the scriptures should, therefore, be our only guide in the search for the good preceptor when we actually feel the need of his guidance. The scriptures have defined the good preceptor as one who himself leads the spiritual life. It is not any worldly qualifications that make the good preceptor.

It is by unreserved submission to such a preceptor that we can be helped to reenter the realm that is our real home but which unfortunately is veritable *terra incognita* to almost all of us at present. That realm is also impossible to access by the body and mind that are the result of the disease of abuse of our faculty of free reason and the consequent accumulation of a killing load of worldly experiences that we have learned to regard as the very stuff of our existence. ☸

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura is the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda and the founder of the Gauḍīya Maṭha institution. He passed from this world in 1936.

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When the Road Becomes a Temple

*Finding spiritual inspiration and giving it to others,
a Hare Kṛṣṇa swami completes his second cross-Canada trek.*

Text by Bhaktimārga Swami

Photos by Shane Ford and Tattva-darśana Dāsa



I JOINED KRṢṢNA CONSCIOUSNESS thirty years ago and recently turned fifty. On these two counts I had a reason to celebrate and do what I like to do—WALK, long and hard. The road is an open invitation to social interaction to learning, to purging, and to worshipping. You can call the road a pilgrim's playground, or perhaps a temple.

So I set out again on a cross-Canada trek. Last time, in 1996, I walked from West to East. This time I reversed the direction, walking sometimes with friends, but mostly alone.

After six months of pounding on 7,200 kilometers of pavement (or sometimes gravel), wearing out 4 pairs of shoes, and shedding 12 kilograms, I was happy to relax, put pen to paper, and expand on diary notes I'd made during the journey. The whole trip was enriching, every moment of it, and I like to think that my humble effort contributed to shaping a more spiritually-minded world.

Here are some samplings of the pilgrimage—one diary excerpt for each Canadian province I passed through.

DAY 1

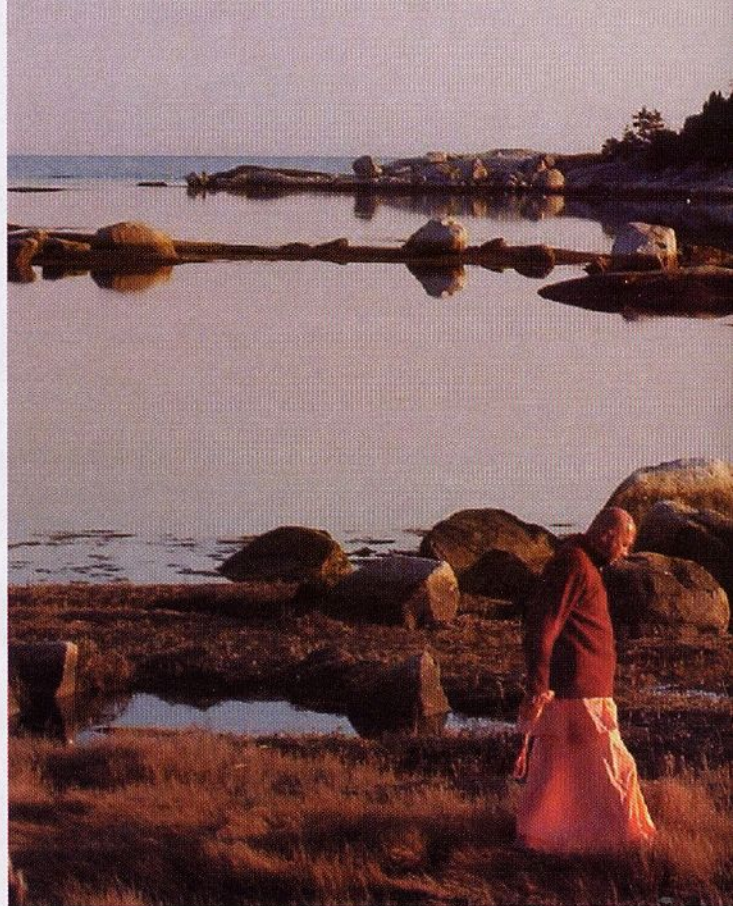
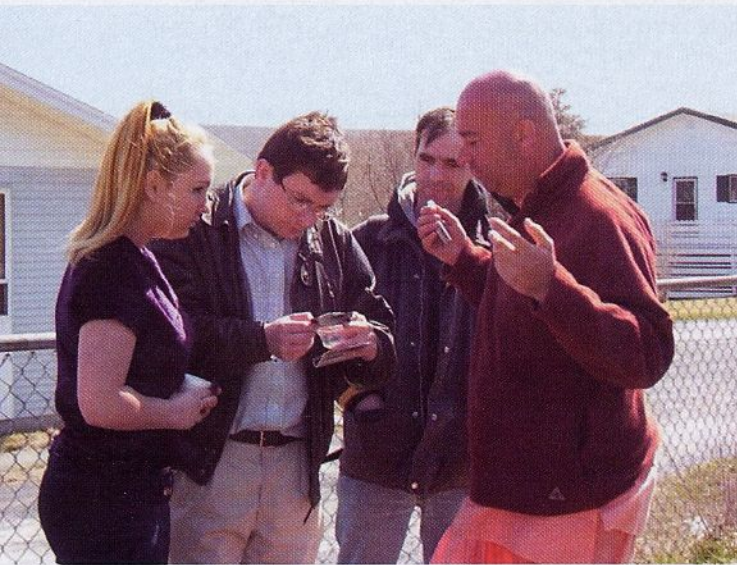
Cape Spear, Newfoundland

Saturday, May 3, 2003

I'm at the easternmost point of North America, the rugged coastline where whales as long as 100 feet swim and play, and icebergs as old as 10,000 years can be spotted—a dramatic launching point for a second walk across Canada. While massive waves crash thunderously against the rock, local Newfoundlanders watch a Vedic ceremony. As ad hoc priest, I slam a coconut against the firm ground before me, triggering the sound of a conch shell, the drumming of African *djembes*, and the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.



A couple of weeks into the walk (right), Bhaktimārga Swami treads soggy ground in Peggys Cove, Nova Scotia, one of Canada's Atlantic Provinces. Below, he makes new friends along the road near Marysville, Newfoundland. In Moncton, New Brunswick (bottom, right), the stop-and-go of city walking contrasts with the pace of the open road.



Headlines from Newspapers Across Canada

Monk Urges Return to Spiritual Roots On Second Cross-Canada Trek

The Daily News—Kamloops, British Columbia

Monk on a Spiritual Journey

The Southwest Booster—Southwest Saskatchewan

Spiritual Walk Across Canada

Times Herald—Moosejaw, Saskatchewan

Monk Making Friends on Walk

Brandon Sun—Brandon, Manitoba

Monk Covers 45 Kms a Day On "Spiritual Healing Walk for Canada"

The Sault Star—Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario

"More Walking, Less Squawking," Suggests Monk

Guelph Mercury—Guelph & Wellington County, Ontario

Spiritual Trek Brings Monk Through Town

Cochrane Times—Cochrane, Alberta

On the Path to Delivering a Spiritual Awakening

This Week—Durham Region, Ontario

The walk begins.

Westward I go with enthusiastic companions to Dead Man's Cove, a convenient access for receiving a few ocean drops on the forehead, a gesture for summoning blessings. Indeed we are twice blessed because the day brings with it another form of water: It rains and rains and rains. The whole day is a real soaker, and only Benjamin, who's spirit is not dampened, stays with me from Cape Spear, through the city of St. John's, to historic landmark Signal Hill, where Marconi received the world's first wire message, and finally to Conception Bay. Our sincerity is being tested for sure. We ask ourselves, "Do we have the heart, determination and guts for more deluges of this kind?"

Distance covered so far: 35 kilometers

DAY 14

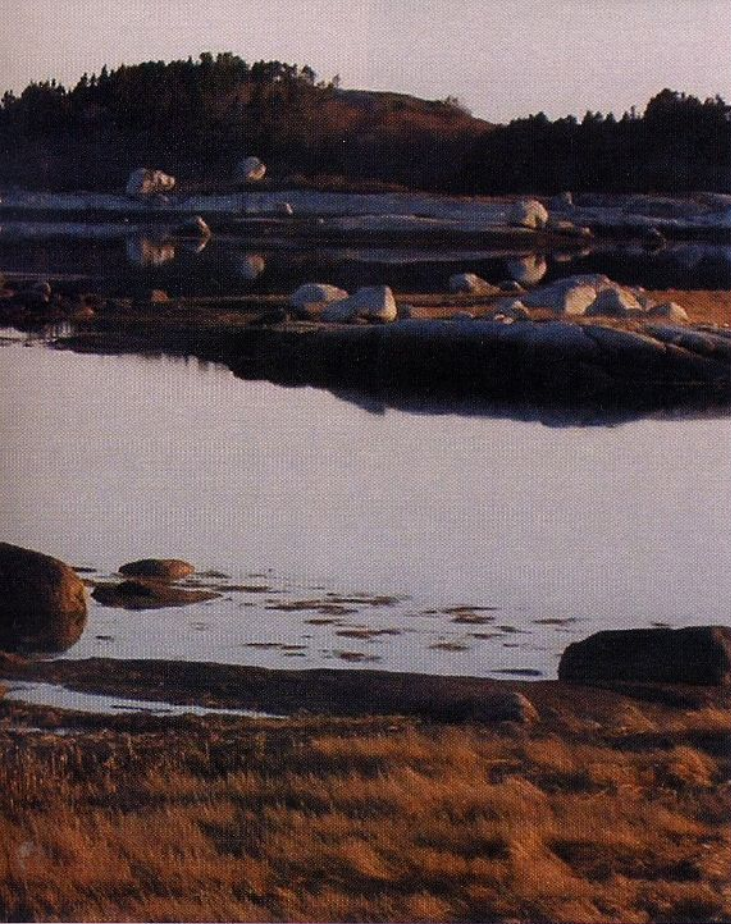
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Saturday, May 17

A day of sunshine! Great! I tackle the road alone.

Halifax is a vibrant city that has had its share of human tragedy. I walk next to a cemetery, passing row upon row of tombstones of Titanic victims. I take a few minutes to reflect. That disaster occurred in 1912 near the coast of Canada. A second mishap took place in the city's harbor when a Belgian ship and a French ship collided, setting off an explosion that claimed 2,000 lives and injured 9,000. I'm reminded of Lord Kṛṣṇa's words in *Bhagavad-gītā*: "I am all-devouring death."

Journalists and photographers from local newspapers come to enquire about the long trek.



Then a boy, about 4, walks by, hand in hand with his dad. Impressionable as he is, the boy notices me and is totally struck by my saffron robes.

“That’s how they were in the old days!” He shouts in innocent spontaneity, to which the father responds by educating his son about the ways of the traveling monk.

Distance covered so far: 602 kilometers

DAY 15

Highway 1, Prince Edward Island

Monday, May 19

Starting from the ferry dock, I head west towards Charlottetown, observing a rolling terrain and a neat patchwork of fields interspersed with trees. God’s country! A radio blares out music from a rural home: “Roses are red my love, Violets are blue.” I composed my own version, substituting Kṛṣṇa for the violets and adding, “Walking is sweet, my Lord, and chanting is too.”

While buffeting the roar of mechanical monsters in the form of semi-trailer trucks that whip by, crushing my pride, I spark a conversation with some folks tending a garden. We all agree that the world needs to slow down and take time to smell the roses.

Word gets around that I’m walking for awareness and spiritual well-being. Even the local mounties [provincial police] get quickly informed about the Hare Kṛṣṇa monk on a long, long journey.

The evening takes me to the home of Dr. Hariharan, where I conduct a discussion on Chapter Nine, verse twenty-nine, of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. An attentive group of guests seems satisfied.

Distance covered so far: 642 kilometers

DAY 24

Highway 102, New Brunswick

Wednesday, May 28

“Good luck!”

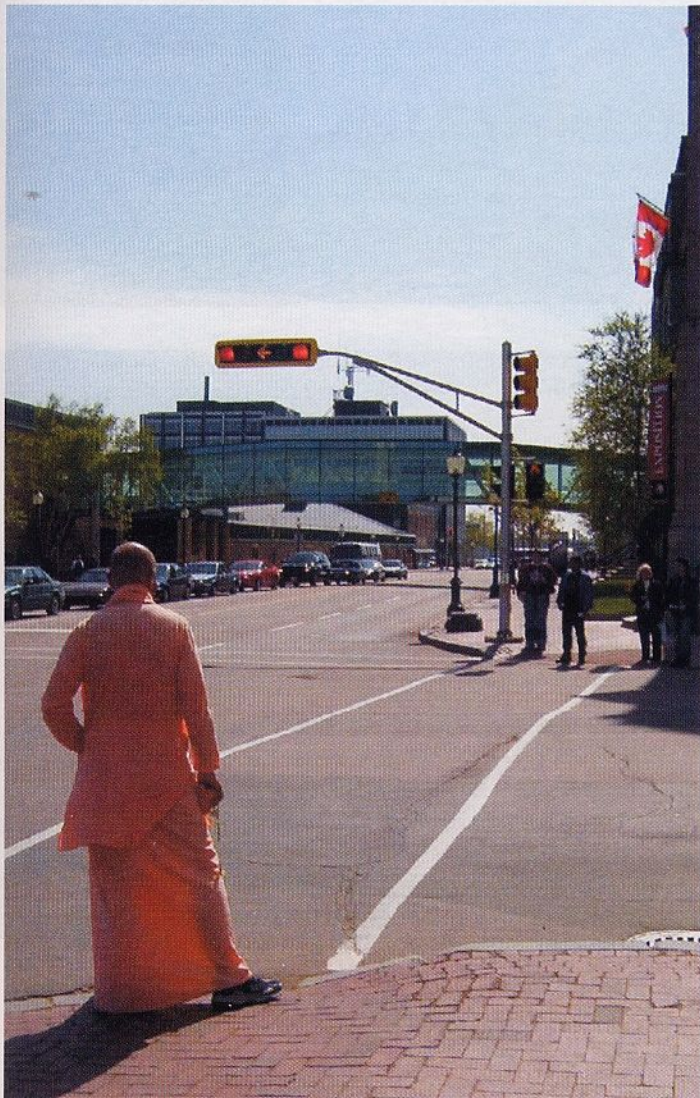
It’s becoming the most common expression. Suddenly I realize I have a large number of well-wishers.

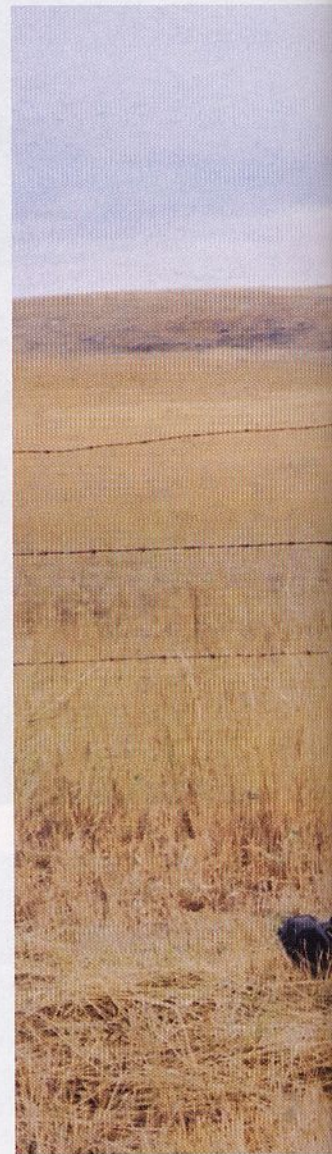
Dave, 62, is sweeping the sidewalk outside his workplace and is ecstatic upon us meeting, especially since he hadn’t seen Hare Kṛṣṇas since Boston in the sixties.

“I just want to wish you a ‘Good luck!’”

A woman comes out of the office to wish me a “Good luck!” Another woman, relaxing out on her veranda, cheers a “Good luck!” A bus driver pulls over his operation to extend his “Good luck!” An elderly couple on their way to the golf range stops their car; they come out, give me a big hug and congratulations: “I think it’s just great what you’re doing. Good luck!” And a jovial police officer has this to say: “Holy smokes! I couldn’t do what you’re doing. Now I’ve got an idea. On your walk, you pick up all the empty beer bottles in the ditch, trade them in, and you’ll finance your whole program.” We both laugh. “Anyways, good luck!”

At night I hang up my shoes and step into the culinary





On the Manitoba prairie (above), land meets the sky, and abundant rolls of hay provide natural refuge (right). At left: the Swami stands humbled by the marvels of Kṛṣṇa's nature in the British Columbia rainforest. In Quebec City (bottom right), a thumping kīrtana breaks out in the apartment of Sebastian, a local flute-player.



mode. Local country-western singer Doug Kennedy and his son join our devotee backup team to a sumptuous organic *prasādam* meal. The big hit on the menu is the *pakorās* (fritters) made of dandelion flowers the boys harvested. No one could believe that this wild weed could taste so good.

Distance covered so far: 1,014 kilometers

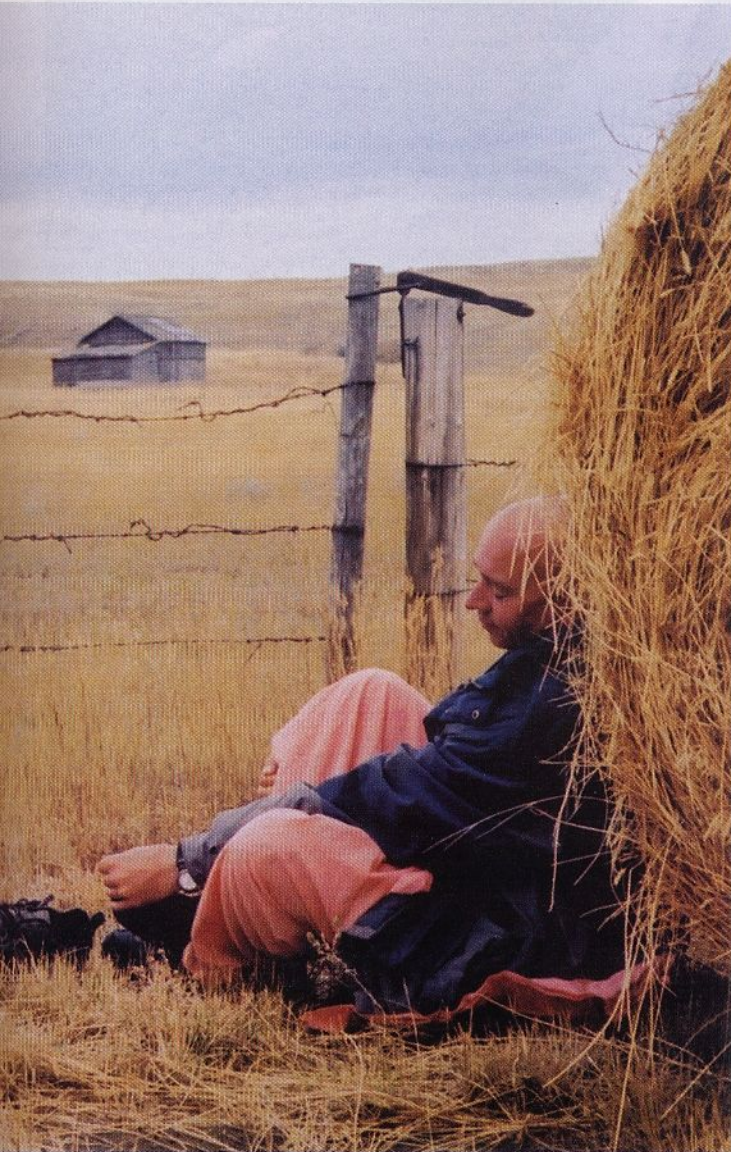
DAY 43

Quebec City, Quebec

Monday, June 16

I'm five minutes into my walk this morning when I meet a newspaper delivery man. He asks what I'm doing. His name is Jean Francois. He explains that he's reading Prabhupāda's *Gītā*, enjoying it immensely and gaining insight he was hoping to achieve.

At noon the CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) radio interviews me. The host is especially enthusiastic about the *mahā-mantra* being broadcast over the air



waves as a way to top off the interview.

In this spectacular-looking city, where the people speak French, the evening is spent at L'orange Bleu restaurant, where companion devotees and I are allotted one hour to chant with musical instruments, welcoming people from the street to join in.

They come, and so many friends are made. *Merveilleux!*
Distance covered so far: 1,832 kilometers

DAY 62
Port Hope, Ontario
Sunday, July 6

The road pulls unexpected friends together.

Reverend Terry Gallagher, a Catholic priest and acquaintance, spots me on Highway 2. He pulls over his car and let's out an exuberant "Swami!" Knowing the Vedic custom, he tries to touch my feet, and I reciprocate in the same way. Then it's pilgrim talk.

Further on the road, under an intense, baking sun, my walking companion, Barry Clark, and I witness a contented cow licking her calf just after giving birth in an open field. Intrigued, we stand there watching. A second cow objects, and in her own bovine way indicates, "Come on, Honey, let's take baby to the barn. We don't need these strangers staring at us." The three of them proudly plod off to the barn.

At Fleming Park, Peterborough, devotees from Toronto and I hold a *kīrtana*. A number of people take interest, including a priest from a satanic cult who claims that he just left his order.

"I think I'm going to check out this Kṛṣṇa consciousness," he says.

Another fellow, highly intoxicated, is attracted to the chanting.

"Hari! Hari!" he stammers as he struggles to sit down next to me on the grass.

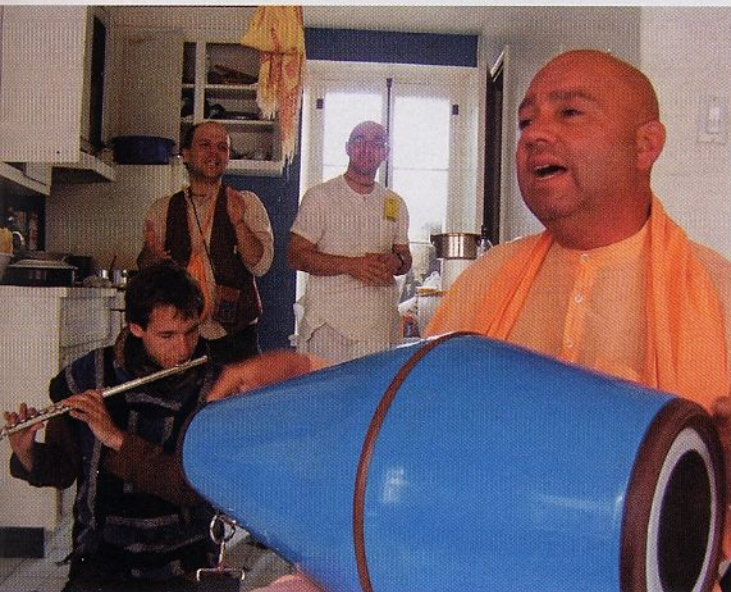
"How does one become a swami?" he asks.

"It starts by shunning intoxication," I tell him frankly.

With that remark he rolls his eyes, fumbling a quick exit while maintaining, "Hari! Hari! Hari . . ."

Rādhā, brought up in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, notices us in the park. She generously invites us to her home, where she manifests a delicious *prasādam* feast that puts a perfect closure to a most colorful day.

Distance covered so far: 2,609 kilometers



DAY 139
St. Francis Xavier, Manitoba
Labor Day, September 1

Melonic Matheson is a young grandmother whose father was the main engineer behind the paving of a passageway through the imposing mountains of British Columbia. She found out about my trek through a TV documentary, *The Longest Road*, detailing the history of the Trans-Canada Highway. When she saw my 1996 walk featured on the film, she became inspired to join me for some walking.

Doug Stead, a local Kṛṣṇa devotee, also joins our small

group as we take to the road, which penetrates the utter flatness of golden wheat fields. Doug is the real hero today because at age 60 and out of practice he conquers a tough 40 kilometers on foot. By now this is an easy task for me. I remind myself that Kṛṣṇa states, "I am the ability in everyone." He deserves all the credit.

Distance covered so far: 4,831 kilometers

DAY 127

**Regina, Saskatchewan
Monday, September 15**

It's 4:30 A.M. and very dark. I'm 30 kilometers west of this prairie city on the Trans-Canada Highway. I hear a heavy thump. It feels like a tremor. Red lights flash ahead.

As I get close, I can still barely see, but it's an obvious accident, a scene of rubble—a crushed vehicle tipped over on its side, and a second one totaled. I hear voices, a language, then a voice in despair.

"I'll spend my whole life paying for this!"

It's time for me to console, time to stop and talk.

"This is not the end of the world. You'll get over it."

There are two young chaps (traumatized), and one admits to falling asleep at the wheel. He was driving on the lonely highway, tired, and then—surprise!

Speaking of surprises, they didn't expect to find a robed creature turning up at pre-dawn in the middle of nowhere. Eventually the fellows become more calm. The ambulance reaches the scene. With my job done, I exit, leaving a curious group of people to wonder, "Who was that?"

The afternoon takes me for a drive, backtracking to city hall to meet Regina's mayor, Pat Fiacco. A former Canadian amateur boxing champion, he's a nice guy whose life motto is "family, friends, and faith." A good prescription. A great dialogue.

Distance covered so far: 5,440 kilometers

DAY 145

**Morley, Alberta
Friday, October 3**

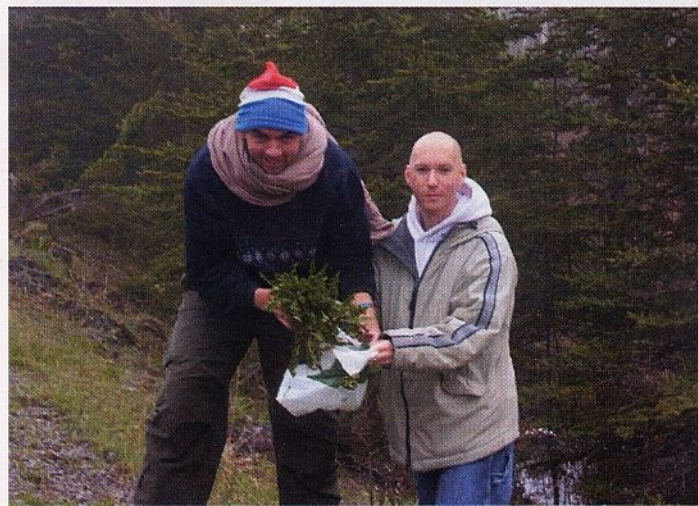
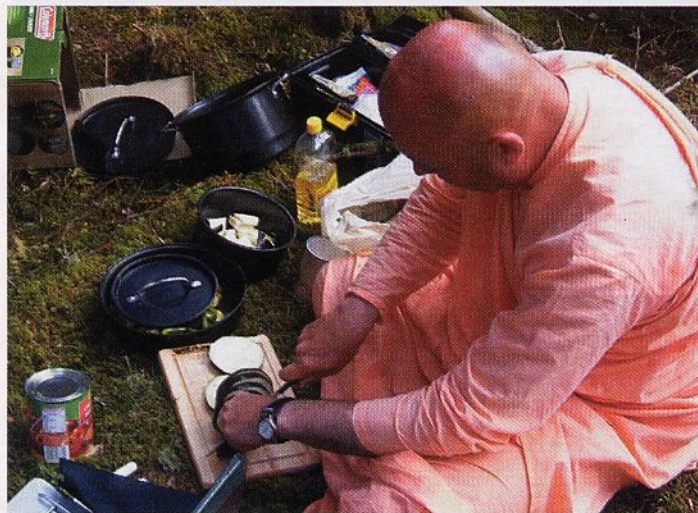
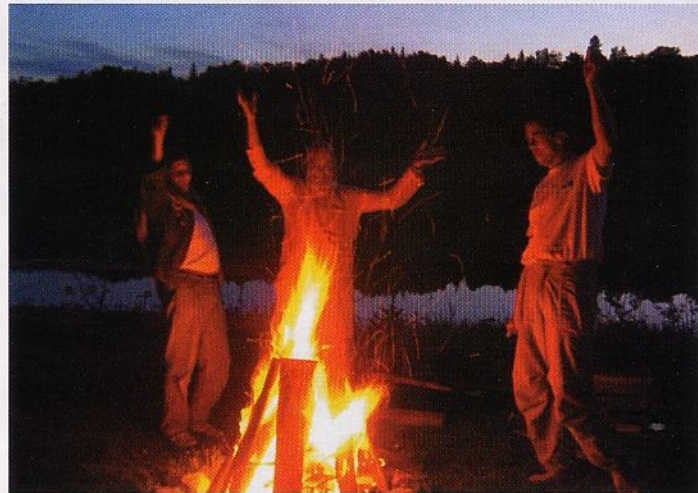
Frost has lightly hit the earth's surface. Winter-wear is necessary until the sun strikes in this foothills area.

Sanford is an Assiniboine native and a father of two sons, 16 and 17. He stands at the end of his driveway waiting for me.

"I understand your name is Swami. Do you know what 'swami' means in my language? It means 'lucky seven.' So maybe you can talk to my boys, who are always drugged up on something. Their mother left them years ago. I can't cope with it no more. Just talk to them."

I agree to the task and hope to make a positive impact, with Kṛṣṇa's mercy. So we talk and exchange hugs. When it's time to proceed down the road, I'm content to have made more friends.

Minutes pass, and I hear a loud, zealous "Hare Kṛṣṇa!" I turn to my right and see fifty young soldiers staring at me. I take the remark as a cue to mingle with these



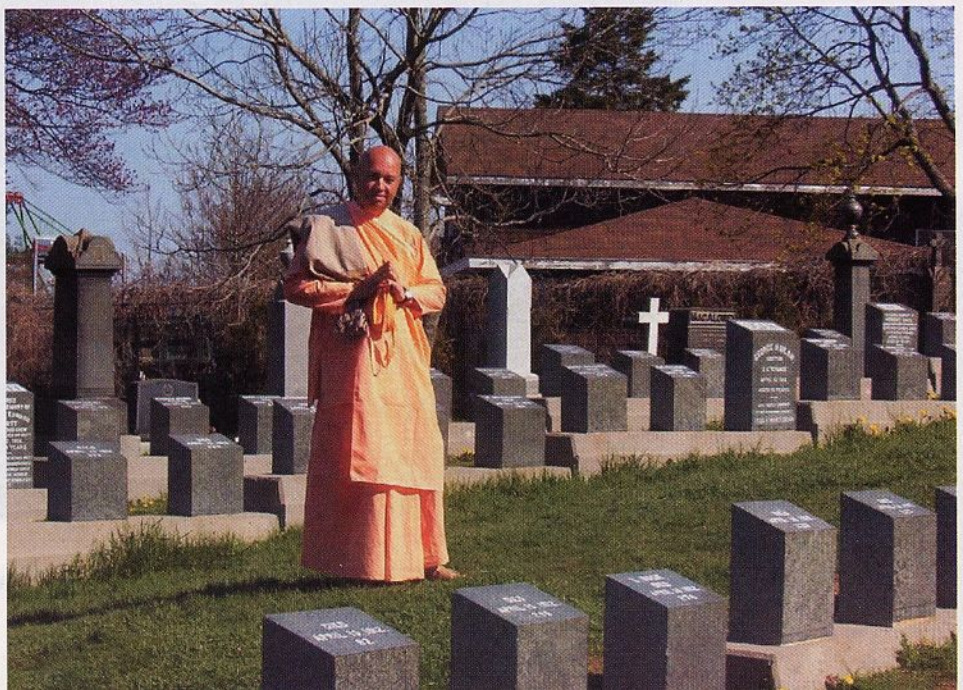


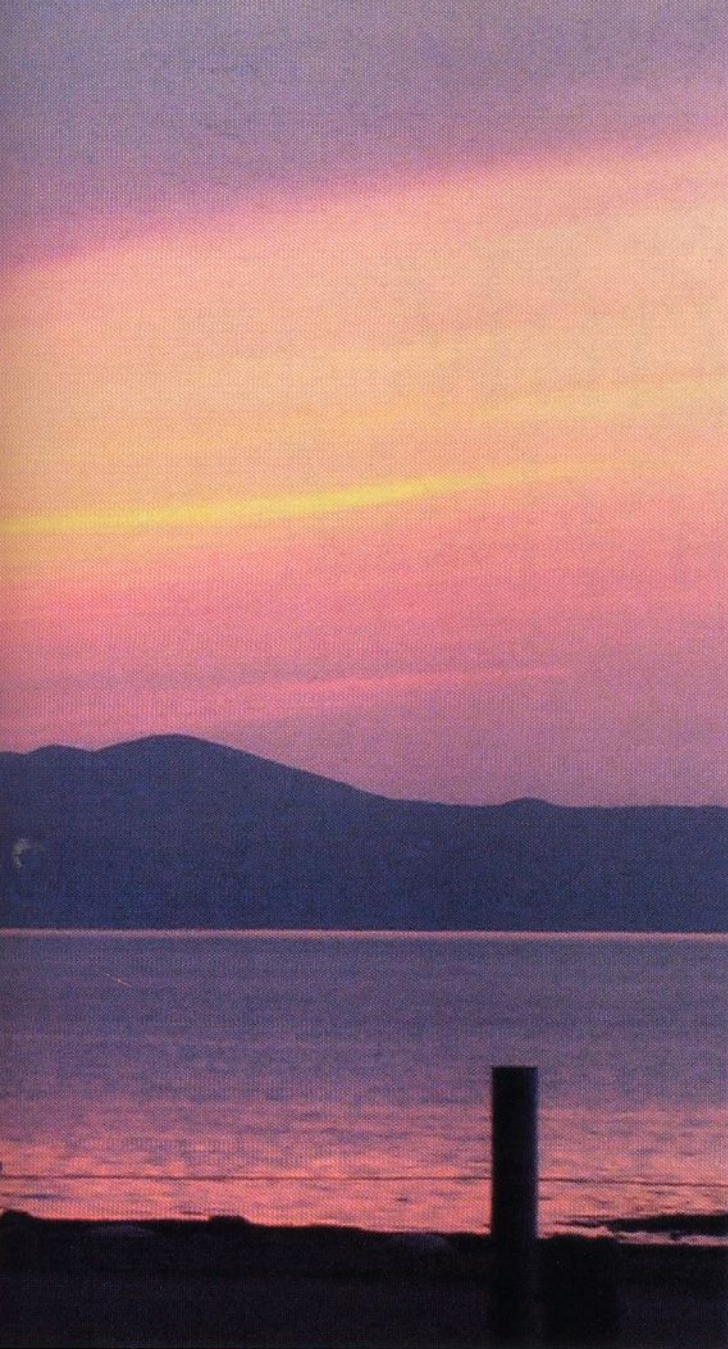
*The Swami and
sometime walking
companion Śrī
Īsopaniṣad Dāsa
pass through the
world's oldest rock
formation (above),
the Canadian Shield
in Ontario. Below, a
parks worker shares
his views on spiritu-
ality. Opposite page
(from top)—scenes
from the natural life
on the road: camping
along the breezy
shore of St. John
River in New
Brunswick; fireside
chanting in Perth
Andover, New
Brunswick; prepar-
ing a walker's meal
on the moss floor of
the forest; Benjamin
and Shane gathering
spring dandelions
for a delicious salad.*





The mighty St. Lawrence (above) provides a perfect setting for a restful day's end. At right, in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Bhaktimārga Swami visits the graves of Titanic victims. At far right: a moment of essential foot-care—tossing out a pesky pebble from a shoe.





warriors. They want to know what I'm doing.

"I'm a walking advocate. I believe in the policy of 'more walking and less squawking.' I'm a Hare Kṛṣṇa monk on pilgrimage."

On a triple-rope bridge fastened over a steep gorge, one by one each soldier cautiously challenges crossing over the river.

"What do you get out of this?" I ask.

"Discipline! Focus!"

"I guess we're on the same wavelength. Happy trails! Hare Kṛṣṇa!"

Distance covered so far: 6,241 kilometers

DAY 161

Fraser Valley, British Columbia

Friday, October 24

I'm road-bound by 3:15 A.M. and have completed a campsite shower (sometimes it's a lake or river bath). In six days I'll reach the end of my walk. It's somewhat relieving to think about it, although I don't see this ordeal as a trial at all. There is an element of *tapasya* (austerity), a venerable task for a monk, but I qualify it more as a doorway to freeness. After all, the walk is an offering to my divine spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

A coyote howls. The sound resonates through the narrow, deep valley. It's a call that seems not different from the loud "Haribol" that I let out, waiting for an echo.

Now a train can be heard in the distance; its drone sound is like a temple harmonium bellowing out a melodic mood.

And the infrequent vehicle casts long streaks of light that reveal the beauty of mountain cliffs. This is like an early morning *ārati*, where temple deities of stone stand radiant under spotlights.

I'm compelled to see such parallels.

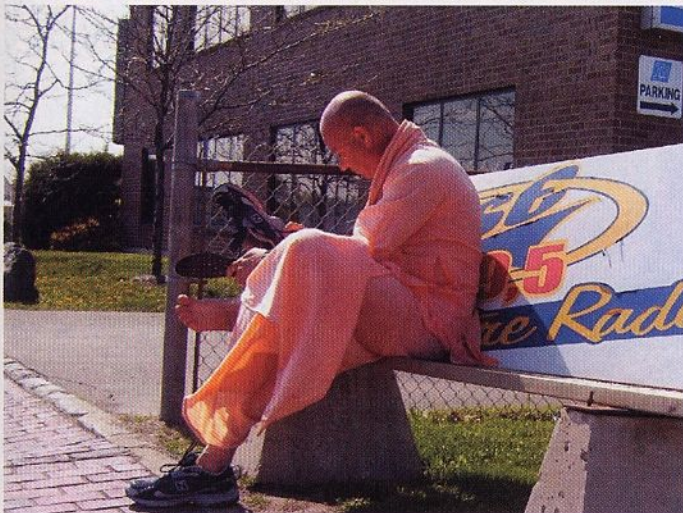
A motorist stops.

"Would you like a ride?"

"No thanks, I appreciate it though. I'm not taking any rides. I'm walking across Canada, a second time. It's a pilgrimage. I'm a Hare Kṛṣṇa monk from a very old tradition from India, and this is the kind of thing that monks do. They walk, talk, gain inspiration, and try to give some in return."

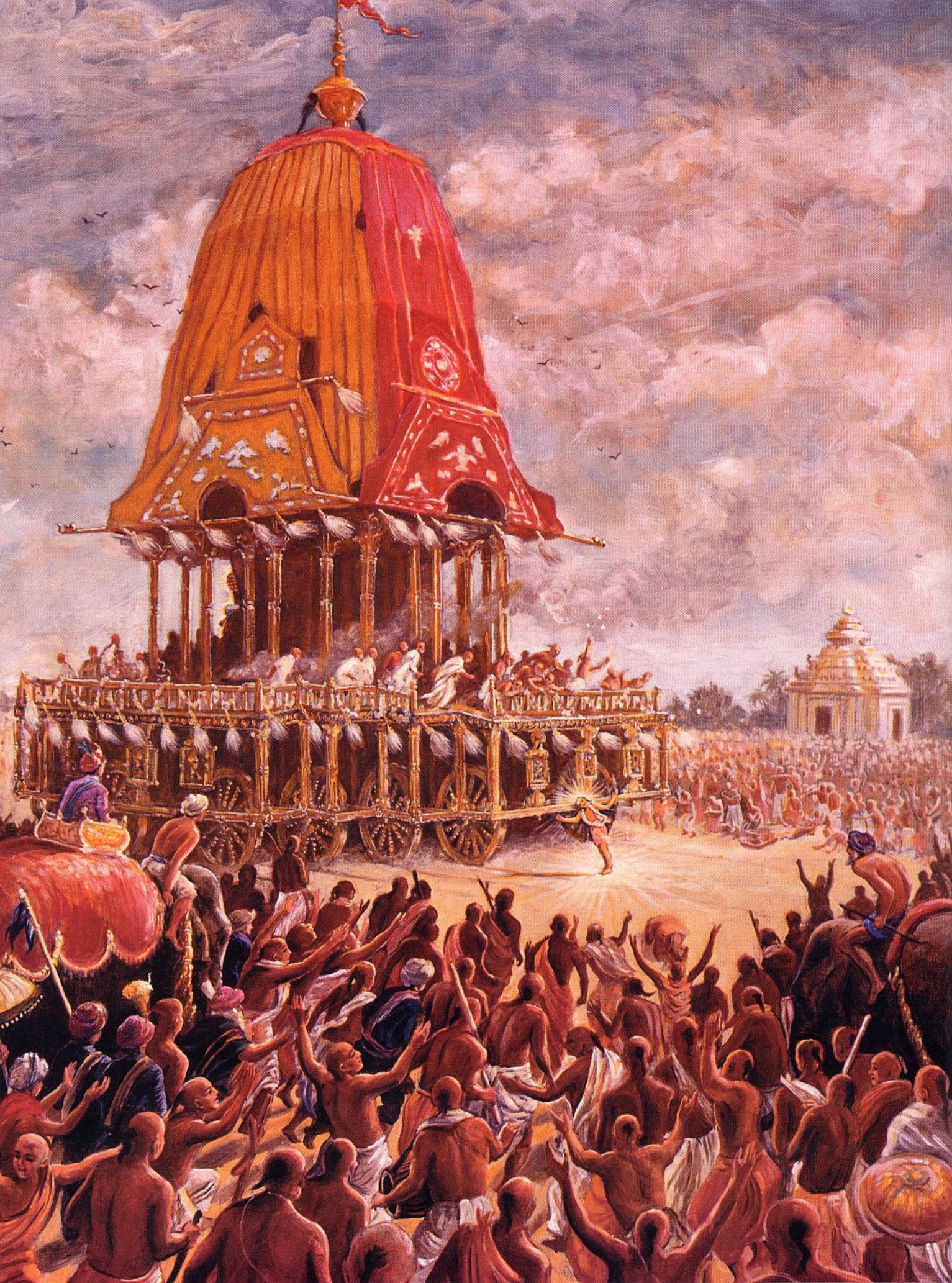
Distance covered so far: 7,029 kilometers

On October 30, I was greeted by the awesome waves of the Pacific on Vancouver Island in Victoria, now having gone full circle—across Canada and back. Lord Kṛṣṇa created us with half of our body made up of legs, so I believe in using them for Him. For me, walking is almost an obsession. I'm seriously thinking about a third walk—a chance to make more friends I can encourage on the spiritual path. ☸



ONLINE EXTRA

For more information about CanWalk II, along with more photos, please visit www.krishna.com/38-3.



Marvels of Mahāprabhu

Because Lord Caitanya is Kṛṣṇa Himself, He can easily appear in seven places at once, revive the nearly dead, and make animals dance and chant.

by Amala-bhakta Dāsa

This is the last in a series of three articles describing miraculous events in the life of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

WHEN LORD CAITANYA resided in Jagannātha Puri, His many devotees from West Bengal would usually visit Him during the four months of the rainy season (July–October). One of the big events that occurred during their stay was the Rathayātrā, or chariot festival, which they jubilantly took part in. This festival, still held annually, consists primarily of numerous people pulling by ropes three huge, gorgeously decorated chariots. On the chariots ride the temple deities—Lord Jagannātha (Kṛṣṇa), Lord Balarāma (Kṛṣṇa's brother), and Goddess Subhadrā Devī (Their sister). As they are pulled several miles through the streets, they shower their blessings on all who see them or march with them. During this colorful parade, many of the participants not only follow along or pull the carts, but also dance, sing, and play musical instruments, celebrating and glorifying the Lord's coveted return to His childhood village, Vṇḍāvana.

During the festival, Lord Caitanya would generally divide His devotees into seven groups, eight main persons in a group; one would dance, one would lead the chanting, six would respond to the

chant. In each party, two men would beat drums, and when all fourteen drummers played together, the sound was thunderous. As the procession moved, Lord Caitanya would wander through all the groups, chanting the Lord's name, "Hari! Hari!"

One year He exhibited a miracle—He appeared simultaneously in each of the seven groups. The devotees in each group thought that the Lord had appeared exclusively in their group. Onlookers saw only a single form of the Lord. But a few of His most spiritually advanced companions were able to see this mystic display of seven forms.

Once, after the chariots had stopped moving for a while and it was again time to pull them, the people were unable to budge Lord Jagannātha's chariot. Massive wrestlers were asked to pull it, and although they tried with all their might, they also failed. Next, powerful elephants were harnessed to the chariot, and even though they strained with great effort, they too were unsuccessful. It seemed Lord Jagannātha was refusing to allow His car to be moved.

When Lord Caitanya, who had been resting in another area, heard about the problem, He went there with His devotees to solve it. First, He set the elephants free, and then He placed the ropes in His associates' hands. Next, He went to the rear of the car and pushed it with His head. The chariot finally

Left: When Lord Jagannātha's cart is stuck in place during the Rathayātrā festival in Puri, Lord Caitanya alone is able to move it, simply by pushing with His head.

moved, making a rattling sound. The people were struck with wonder, for they did not know that He who was moving the car was the same person who had stopped it. In this way, the Lord playfully enjoyed a game, or pastime, with Himself.

LORD CAITANYA CURES CHOLERA

One day Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, a great scholar, devotee, and close associate of Lord Caitanya, invited the Lord to his home for lunch. Out of great love and devotion, he prepared and served the Lord a large quantity and variety of scrumptious food. As Lord Caitanya relished it, Sārvabhauma's son-in-law, Amogha, a great blasphemer and faultfinder, criticized the Lord for overeating. The Lord did not regard the offense seriously, but Sārvabhauma expressed intense anger against Amogha.

Shortly after, Amogha fell sick with deadly cholera.

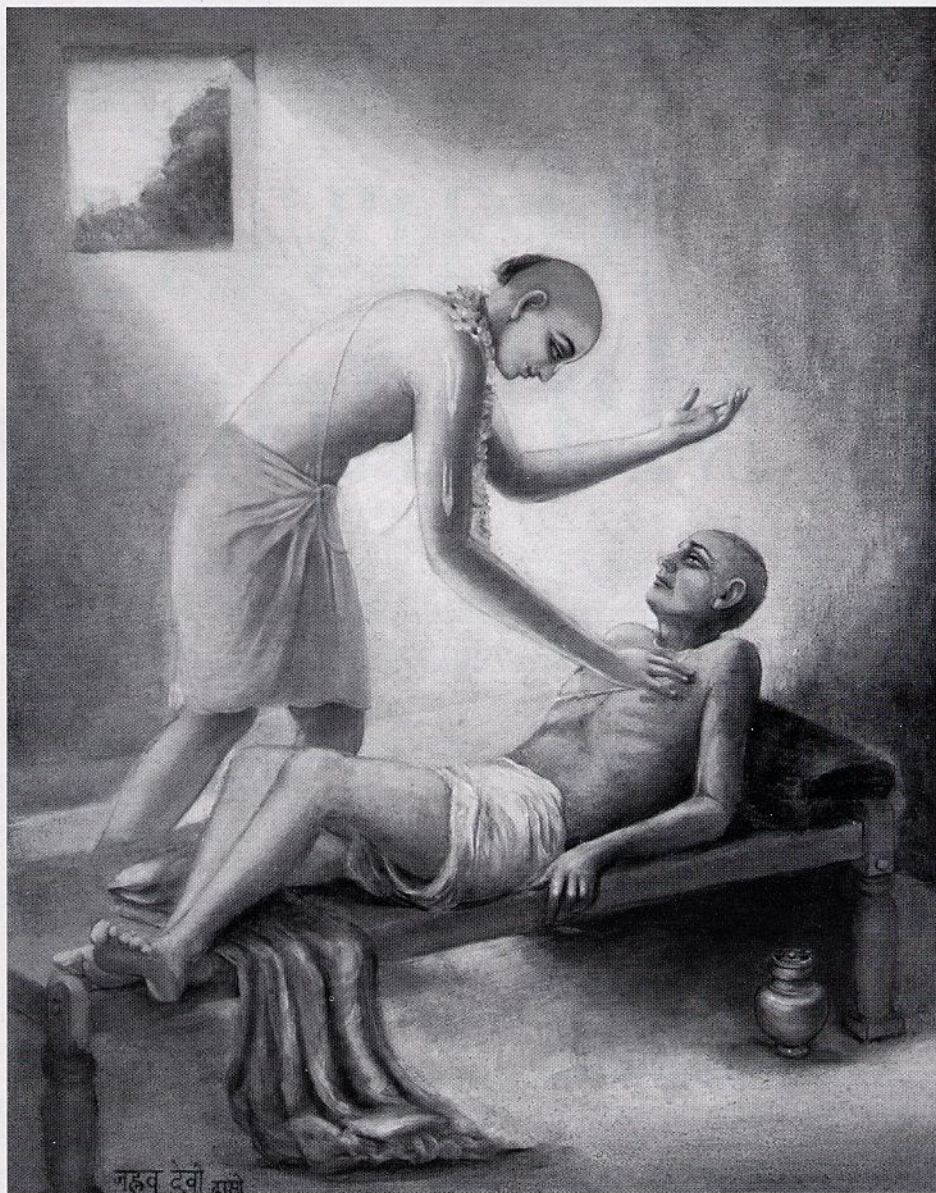
When Sārvabhauma heard about this, he said, "When one offends the Lord, karma immediately takes effect."

As soon as Lord Caitanya heard that Amogha was dying, He rushed to his bedside. Placing His hand on Amogha's chest, He said, "A *brāhmaṇa*'s heart is by nature very clean; thus it is the right place for Lord Kṛṣṇa to sit. Why have you allowed envy to also sit here? You have dirtied a pure place, but by your association with Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, all your dirt is now gone. When a person's heart is cleansed of all dirt, he can chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. So get up, Amogha, and chant it. If you do so, Kṛṣṇa will surely give you His mercy."

Amogha at once stood up and began chanting Kṛṣṇa's name. He became uplifted with ecstatic love and danced emotionally. Seeing this, Lord Caitanya laughed.

Amogha threw himself before the Lord's feet and humbly said, "O merciful Lord, please excuse my offense."

The Lord replied, "Amogha, always



Painting by Jahnava Devi Das

Lord Caitanya revises the dying Amogha by placing His hand on Amogha's chest and requesting him to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.

chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra and do not commit new offenses."

Thus, Amogha was cured of both his physical and spiritual disease by Lord Caitanya's grace. Thereafter he became a pure devotee of the Lord, often dancing in ecstasy and always chanting Kṛṣṇa's holy name.

ANIMALS CHANT AND DANCE

When Lord Caitanya, with two assistants, was traveling from Jagannatha Puri to Vṛndāvana, He went through the dangerous Jharikhanda forest. He

chose this scarcely used route because He wanted to be free of large crowds of people following Him.

As the Lord trekked, He continuously chanted the name *Kṛṣṇa* and felt intense ecstasy. Batches of wild boars, tigers, elephants, and rhinoceroses came towards Him. Needless to say, His assistants became terrified. But the Lord sauntered in the animals' direction, and they just stood aside to allow Him and His men to pass.

One day a tiger was lying on the path, and the blissful Lord touched the tiger with His feet and exclaimed, "Chant the holy name *Kṛṣṇa!*"

Amazingly, the tiger stood up and began to dance and roar, “Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!”

Another day, while the Lord was bathing in a river, a herd of maddened elephants arrived there to drink water.

The Lord splashed some water on them and said, “Chant ‘Kṛṣṇa!’”

The elephants then ecstatically danced and trumpeted, “Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!” Even the birds, trees, and creepers became jubilant on hearing the name *Kṛṣṇa*.

One day, when the Lord chanted very loudly, some deer, hearing His sweet voice, followed Him. Then about seven tigers joined the deer. When the Lord said to them, “Chant ‘Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa!’” the tigers and deer chanted, “Kṛṣṇa!” and danced. Soon the tigers and deer embraced and kissed one another. When Lord Caitanya saw all this fun, He smiled. Finally, He left them and continued His journey, His assistants marveling over those incredible sights.

THE LORD MERGES INTO HIS DEITY FORM

When God leaves this world, His departure is never referred to as death, chiefly because God never dies—He simply returns to His eternal abode in the spiritual world, where He continues His ecstatic activities with His devotees. Thus, the word “disappears” is used instead of “dies,” just as when the Lord enters this world, the word “appears” is used instead of “is born.”

Lord Caitanya’s disappearance from this world—of which there are at least two different accounts—was as mystical as His appearance. One account says that one day in 1534 He entered the Toṭa-Gopinātha temple in Jagannatha Puri. While *sankīrtana* was going on, in the height of His ecstasy He merged Himself into the Gopinātha deity, a form of Lord Kṛṣṇa. And to this day,

a golden streak is visible on the deity’s thigh.

Another account says that He entered the Jagannātha temple and merged Himself into the Jagannātha deity. Such is the account given by one of Lord Caitanya’s Oriyan disciples, who claimed to have been an eyewitness to His disappearance. He said that the Lord chanted the name of Rādhārāṇī, Lord Kṛṣṇa’s most intimate consort and greatest devotee, and, like a flash of lightening, entered the holy body of Lord Jagannātha.

Some of Lord Caitanya’s devotees believe that both versions of His

disappearance are true. Since, as mentioned above, He had the power to appear in seven *sankīrtana* parties simultaneously, then why could He not disappear into two deities simultaneously? Once we accept the principle that the Lord is omnipotent, then what miracle is He not capable of manifesting?

But even more important than the way Lord Caitanya disappeared is the valuable benediction He so mercifully left us. This can be summed up in several poetic lines written by Lord Caitanya’s glorious devotee Śrīla Bhakti-vinoda Ṭhākura (1838–1914):



Painting by Hecetar Salas

Lord Caitanya inspires wild animals to chant the names of God in spiritual ecstasy, while His assistant looks on in amazement.

Lord Gaurāṅga [Caitanya] is calling, "Wake up, sleeping souls!

"How long will you sleep in the lap of the witch called *māyā*?

"You have forgotten the way of devotional service and are lost in the world of birth and death.

"I have descended just to save you; other than Myself, you have no friend in this world.

"I have brought the medicine that will wipe out the disease of illusion from which you are suffering. Take this mantra: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare."

Śrīla Bhaktinoda Thākura says, "I fall at the Lord's feet, having accepted the *mahā-mantra*." ❀

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

LET GO AND LET KṚṢṆA

(continued from page 38)

figuratively let go and let God, raising both hands in supplication to Lord Kṛṣṇa. At the moment she stopped trying to control her situation and fully surrendered to the Lord's will, He gave her full protection by providing unlimited cloth.

My anxiety about our lack of a home subsided when I took shelter of my spiritual practices and the teachings of the scriptures. I was able to spiritually realign my consciousness and begin to face the problem of finding a place to live. My husband and I generated a list of options, and I tried to see the benefits of the situation. The most attractive benefit was the opportunity to spend more intimate time with friends and family. I also tried to understand what lessons I could learn from this anxiety-provoking situation. An obvious one was to depend on Kṛṣṇa in all circumstances; another was to be patient—a point I frequently have to revisit.

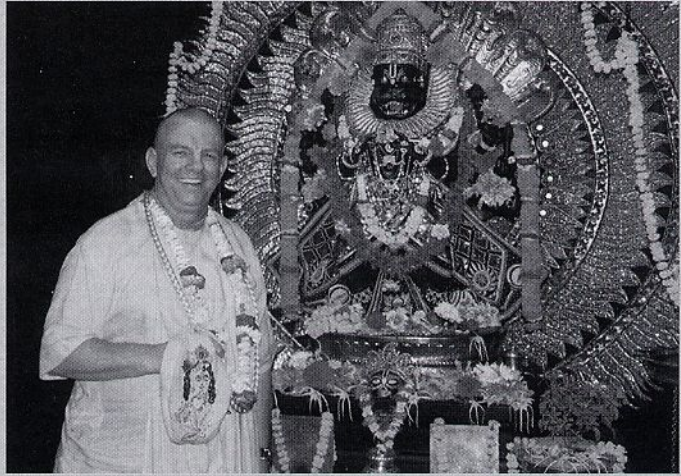
I find it helpful to keep a journal of situations in which I've been worried and fearful about the outcome. In retrospect I often see how ingeniously Kṛṣṇa orchestrated events to bring

about a favorable conclusion. These experiences serve to increase my faith that Kṛṣṇa loves me and that His actions are directed to bringing me back to Him. And I know that if I practice dealing with day-to-day anxieties in a Kṛṣṇa conscious way, that will help me face the inevitable problems of old age

and death, the ultimate fearful situation. ❀

Arcana-Siddhi Devī Dāsi was initiated by Śrīla Prabhupāda in 1976. She lives with her husband and son in Sandy Ridge, North Carolina, where she works as a family therapist.

IN MEMORIAM



His Holiness Śrīdhara Swami Māhārāja passed away in Māyāpur, West Bengal, on March 14. Affectionately known as "the jolly Swami," Śrīdhara Swami Māhārāja was an early disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda, from whom he accepted *sannyāsa*, the renounced order of life, in 1975. Originally from Canada, he spent many years teaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness in India. He was an ISKCON guru and emeritus member of ISKCON's governing body commission.

Śrīdhara Swami had been fighting liver cancer for several years. Knowing that his death was near, he had traveled to Māyāpur to attend the installation of Śrī Pañca-tattva and spend his final days in that sacred place. He passed away in clear consciousness while looking at photos of Śrīla Prabhupāda and Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

A feature article on his life will appear in an upcoming issue of *Back to Godhead*.

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- Chamorshi, Maharashtra** — 78 Krishnanagar Dham, Dist. Gadchiroli, 442 603/ Tel. (0218) 623473
- Hyderabad, AP (New Naimisaranya Farm)** — P. O. Dabilpur Village, Medchal Tq., R.R. Dist., 501 401/ Tel. (040) 4742018
- Indore, MP (Krishna-Balarama Mandir)** — Hare Krishna Vihar, Nipania Village/ Tel. (731) 572794
- Karnataka (Bhaktivedanta Eco-Village)** — Nagodi P.O., Voller Valley, Hosanagar Taluq, Shivmoga District, 577 425 (mail: Garuda Guha, Kollur, D.K. District, 576 220)
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Don't Preach to Me

OVERZEALOUS EVANGELISTS have given preaching a bad name. That's why, when I edit articles about the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement's attempts to spread the message of Lord Kṛṣṇa, I routinely replace the word *preach*, in its various forms, with less loaded words. We generally don't like being preached to, and we don't like the idea of religious people berating others to change their ways or beliefs. The word *preach* has come to imply an over-the-top presentation that makes people uncomfortable.

Although Śrīla Prabhupāda himself often used the word *preach*, he would also use *teach*, a much less intimidating word, and teaching is what he was encouraging his followers to do. Prabhupāda called Kṛṣṇa consciousness a science, and he wanted us to learn it and teach it. He was sure that if his disciples simply presented the wisdom of the *Bhagavad-gītā* without change, intelligent people would be attracted to it.

Prabhupāda sometimes used the discoveries of modern medical science as a metaphor for the imperative to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Someone who discovers the cure for a disease, he would say, doesn't hoard the information; he or she makes sure the whole world knows about it. Similarly, the world is suffering from "the material disease"—lack of God consciousness—and God's devotees are duty-bound to deliver the cure.

God Himself is the primary preacher. As the *Bhagavad-gītā* tells us, Kṛṣṇa and His representatives come to this world repeatedly with essentially the same message: Each of us is a spiritual being whose perfection, or salvation, lies in reestablishing our relationship with God, the supreme spiri-

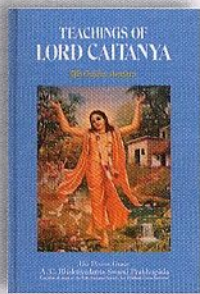
tual being. In fact, the material world itself is part of Kṛṣṇa's "preaching program." He has created the world so that we will turn to Him after realizing the futility of trying to enjoy separately from Him.

No one pleases Kṛṣṇa more than the devotee who assists Him in His mission of attracting the souls in this world back to Him and their eternal, spiritual home. Lord Kṛṣṇa says that for one who teaches the *Bhagavad-gītā*, "pure devotional service is guaranteed, and at the end he will come back to Me. There is no servant in this world more dear to Me than he, nor will there ever be one more dear."

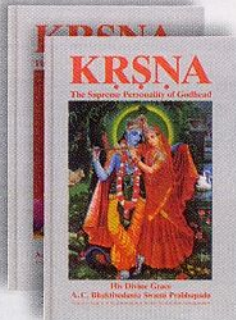
Lord Kṛṣṇa's most recent incarnation, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who appeared about five hundred years ago, is called the most merciful incarnation because He came to make love of God easily attainable. He was a preacher in the most admirable sense of the term. His heart overflowed with compassion for the suffering of the people of this age, and He brought the sure cure: the chanting of the names of God. The power of this spiritual medicine is unequalled. Śrīla Bhaktinoda Ṭhākura, a great spiritual master in the line of Lord Caitanya, has quoted Lord Caitanya in a song: "I have descended just to save you. Other than Myself, who else is your friend? I have brought the medicine for destroying illusion. Now pray for this Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* and take it."

When Lord Caitanya's followers assist Him in giving out the medicine of the holy names, they are not driven by a desire to recruit members to a sectarian religious faith. Rather, they are inspired by compassion for others and by a desire to please Lord Caitanya, who has appeared in this age out of His own infinite compassion.—*Nāgarāja Dāsa*

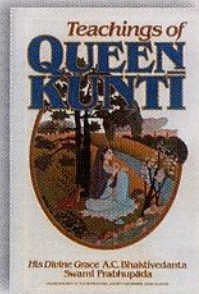
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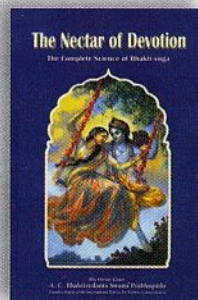
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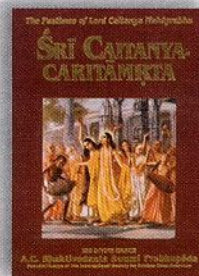
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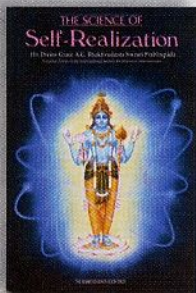
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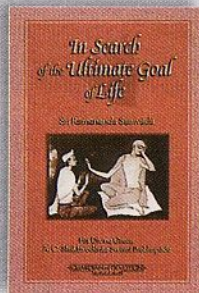
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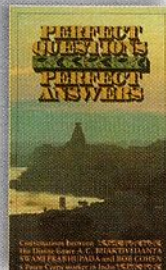
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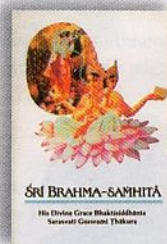
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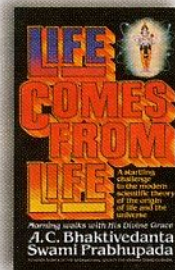
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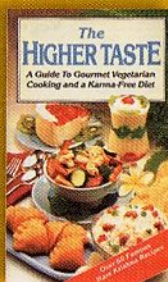
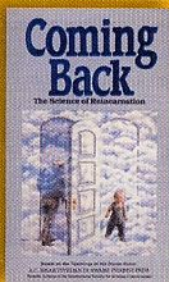
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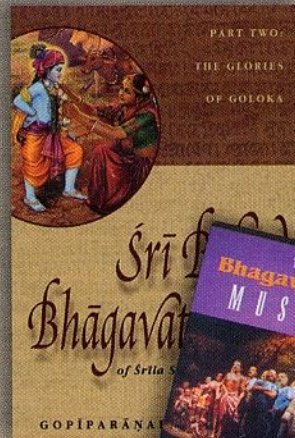
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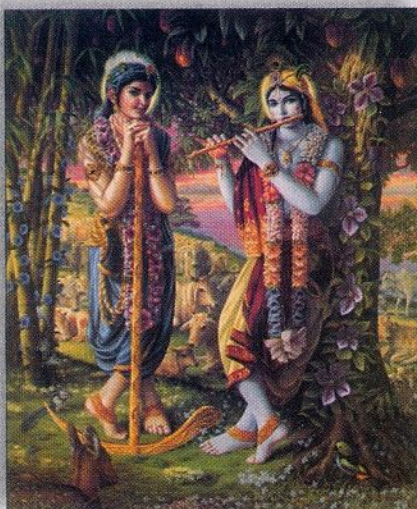


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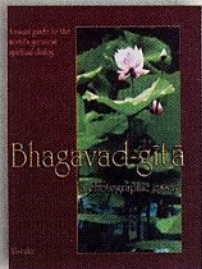
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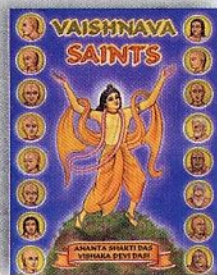
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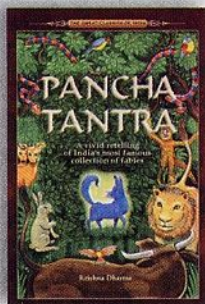
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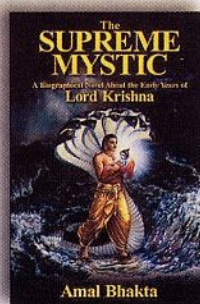
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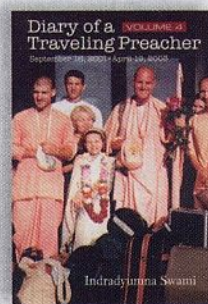
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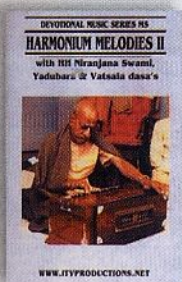


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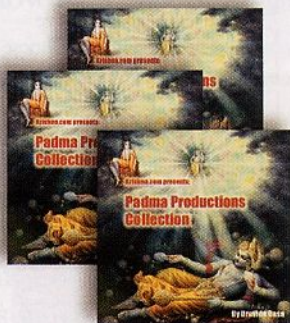


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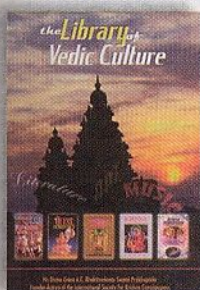


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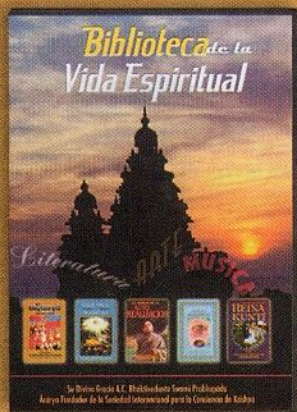
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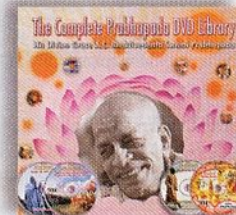
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Vedic Thoughts

Everyone is searching after peace of mind. This is obtainable only when one is completely freed from the desire for material sense gratification and is engaged in the devotional service of the Lord.

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupāda
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 5.7.11, Purport

♦

O my tongue, you are fond of sweet things and are of discriminating taste; I tell you the highest truth, which is also the most beneficial. Please just recite these sweet syllables: “Govinda,” “Dāmodara,” and “Mādhava.”

Śrīla Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura
Govinda Dāmodara Stotram 40

♦

Simply by chanting the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa, one can be freed from all undesirable habits. This is the means of awakening all good fortune and initiating the flow of waves of love for Kṛṣṇa.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya-līlā 20.11

♦

O son of Pṛthā, a transcendentalist engaged in auspicious activities does not meet with destruction either in this world or in the spiritual world; one who does good, My friend, is never overcome by evil.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa
Bhagavad-gītā 6.40

It is not possible for worldly persons to understand, unassisted, the nature of spiritual living, because it is categorically different from the life currently led by them. This difference between the two is not confined to this or that isolated aspect. It is to be found in every single detail of conduct. The change from worldly to spiritual life is not of the nature of reform, but is truly a complete revolution.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura
The Manifestation of Mercy (essay)

♦

For a person devoid of devotional service, birth in a great family or nation, knowledge of the revealed scripture, performance of austerities and penance, and chanting of Vedic mantras are all like ornaments on a dead body. Such ornaments simply serve the concocted pleasures of the general populace.

Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya 3.12

♦

It is true that by practicing restraint of the senses by the yoga system one can get relief from the disturbances of desire and lust, but this is not sufficient to give satisfaction for the soul, for this [satisfaction] is derived from devotional service to the Personality of Godhead.

Śrī Nārada Muni
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.6.35

FESTIVAL OF INDIA 2004



SCHEDULE FOR NORTH AMERICA

May 22: Baltimore Rathayātrā
June 5–6: Atlanta Rathayātrā & Panihati Festival
June 12: New York City Rathayātrā
June 19: Cleveland Rathayātrā
June 26: Chicago Rathayātrā
July 4: Washington, D.C., Rathayātrā
July 10–11: Montreal Rathayātrā
July 17–18: Toronto Rathayātrā
July 25: Detroit Rathayātrā
August 1: Los Angeles Rathayātrā

August 8: San Francisco Rathayātrā
August 14–15: Vancouver Rathayātrā
August 27–29: Seattle Rathayātrā
September 6: Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī, Vancouver
September 12: Liberty State Park, N.J., Rathayātrā
October 24: Rāmacandra Vijayotsava, Washington, D.C.

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Toronto Rathayātrā 2003

