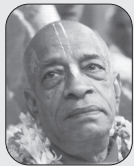


# C O N T E N T S

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**FOUNDER**

(under the direction of  
His Divine Grace

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta  
Sarasvatī Prabhupāda)

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

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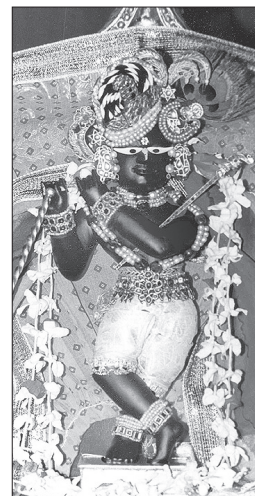
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### OUR PURPOSES

- 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 Supreme Personality of Godhead.

**BTG REACHING INMATES**

I am a second-generation Indian-American devotee. I was born in Gujarat state and raised in Atlanta, USA. I have been in prison for almost 3½ years and have about 3½ years to go, unless I am released earlier.

I cannot express in words what BTG means to me and what impact this magazine has had on people’s lives in prison. There are so many testimonials of “BTG-*līlā*” in prisons that I could give you. Here are just a few:

Once, a South American inmate started chanting and dancing when he saw my BTG and found out that I am a devotee. The other Latino inmates smiled and listened attentively as he told us how his old girlfriend in his native Uruguay was a devotee, how he went to the temple, ate *prasādam*, etc. He told me, “You have a real good culture, real good religion.”

Another time, at another prison, another Latino inmate saw the BTG in my hands and immediately started chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and dancing in ecstasy. I hadn’t mentioned a thing, and we hadn’t even introduced ourselves to each other. He told me how he used to go to the Laguna Beach temple, how nice the devotees were, how he liked the programs and the food. He immediately took the BTG. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s BTG has a transcendental life of its own.

Another time, I was moved into an open dorm, where I knew only one person out of eighty or so inmates. I had the BTG issue of Śrī Pañca-tattva in Māyāpura and another issue, which had His Holiness Śrīdhara Swami’s life story. I hadn’t even set my mattress and belongings down when a crowd of people immediately started picking up and looking through the BTGs, saying they wanted to read them. They felt a spontaneous attraction.

It seems that no matter what religion, viewpoint, opinions, background, experiences, culture, or knowledge a person has, there is something for everybody in BTG. I want to thank you and the staff Vaiṣṇavas for writing and producing such an excellent, interesting, spiritually entertaining, and enlightening magazine.

Hardik Kaswala  
Calhoun State Prison,  
Morgan, Georgia

**BTG-INSPIRED BHAKTI**

I am a twenty-four-year-old man incarcerated in Florida. The first contact I ever had with this wonderful movement was in January of 2002. I had written Muktakeśa Dāsa of the ISKCON Prison Ministry and asked a few questions. His reply came with two copies of BTG. When I opened the pages and laid my eyes on a picture of Lord Kṛṣṇa, I was instantly hooked. Since then, I’ve stayed in contact with devotees regularly, and I practice the philosophy to the best of my ability.

I just wanted to send a big thank you and to let you know that I’ve very grateful for the service you provide.

Bobby Glover  
Hardee Correctional Institute  
Bowling Green, Florida

Write to us at: BTG, 3rd Floor, 302, Amrut Industrial Estate, Western Express Highway, Mira Road (E) 401 104.  
E-mail: ed.btgindia@pamho.net.

**VEDIC  
THOUGHTS**

The Supreme Person, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, who is the life of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and is the Lord of the universe in creation, maintenance, and annihilation, appears as Gaura [Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu], O Maheśvarī.

—Lord Ananta Śeṣa  
Ananta Samhitā

A person who worships the demigods and gives up Lord Vāsudeva [Kṛṣṇa] is like a man who gives up the protection of his mother for the shelter of a witch.

—Skanda Purāṇa

Men become strong and stout by eating sufficient grains, but the devotee who simply eats ordinary grains but does not taste the transcendental pastimes of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Kṛṣṇa gradually becomes weak and falls down from the transcendental position.

—Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī  
Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 25.278



# Three Yogas Three Results

*Of the three main types of yoga discussed in the Gītā,  
only one gives complete knowledge.*

by His Divine Grace

**A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda**

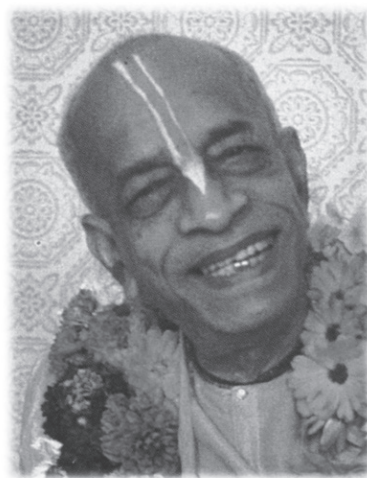
Founder-Ācārya of The International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca  
mayy āsakta-manāḥ pārtha  
yogaṁ yuñjan mad-āśrayaḥ  
asamśayaṁ samagraṁ māṁ  
yathā jñāsyasi tac chṛṇu*

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Now hear, O son of Pṛthā, how by practicing yoga in full consciousness of Me, with mind attached to Me, you can know Me in full, free from doubt.”

—*Bhagavad-gītā* 7.1

**W**E ARE SPEAKING from the *Bhagavad-gītā*. I think most of you know this book. The *Gītā* is sometimes translated



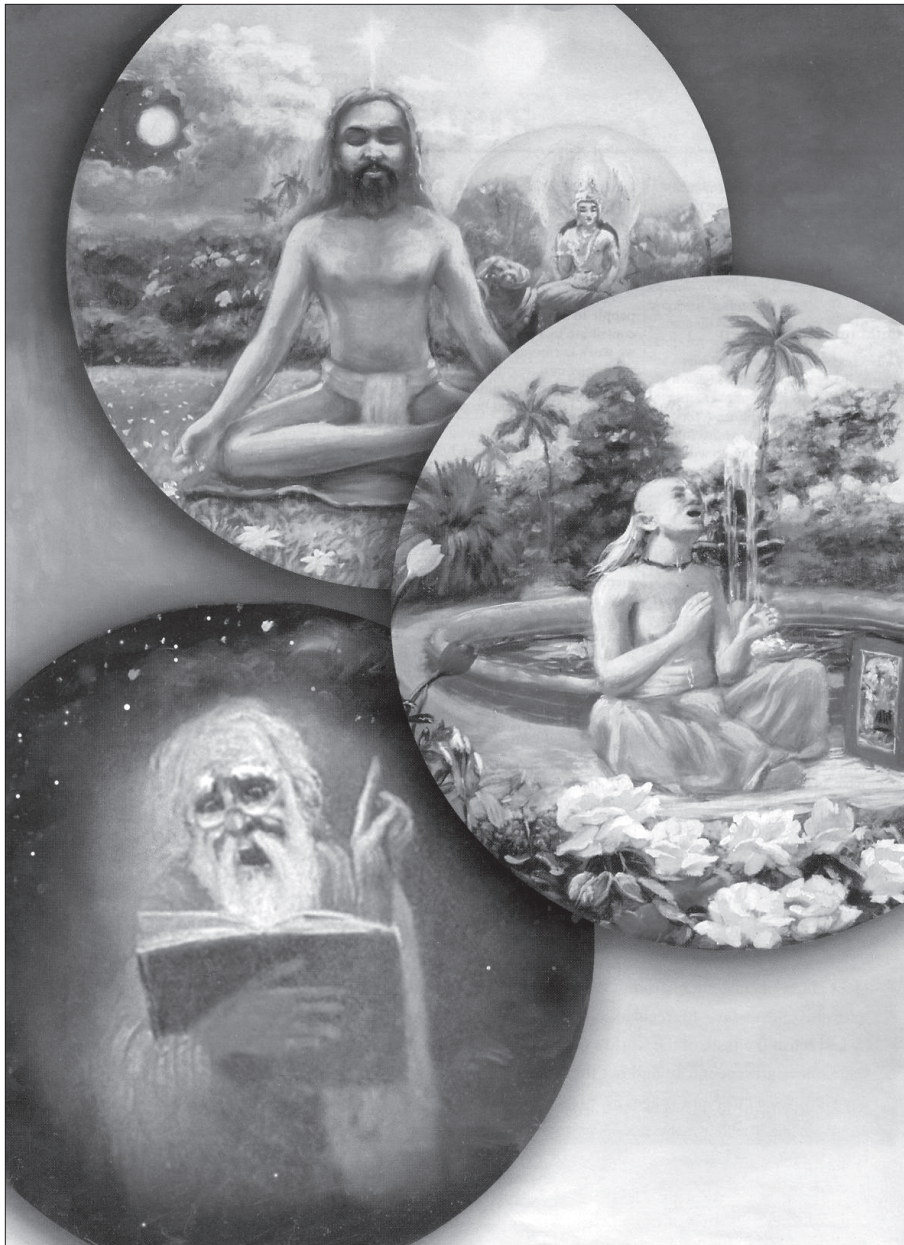
in foreign languages as The Song of God. In other words, God Himself is speaking.

We cannot understand God

by mental speculation. Even in this material world we cannot understand what is present in the planetary systems. Our knowledge is very, very limited. Besides that, we have four deficiencies. One deficiency is that we commit mistakes. Anyone, any big man of this material world, commits mistakes.

And he is illusioned. Illusion means to accept something that is not a fact. For example, if we accept the body as the self, that is called illusion. According to Vedic understanding, anyone who thinks of the body as the self is an animal. A dog thinks he is the body. Similarly, if a man





Clockwise from top: Haṭha-yoga, bhakti-yoga, and jñāna-yoga

life is conditional life.

With imperfect senses we cannot understand God. The most useful sense to understand God is the ear. When a man is sleeping and some enemy comes to attack him or kill him, if some friend cries, “Mr. Such-and-such, wake up, wake up! Here is your enemy. He’ll kill you!” the man can rise up. So when all other senses are useless, the ear can work. Therefore, to understand God we have to use the ear. We have to receive the sound vibration, and it will act.

### FIRST-CLASS YOGA

You ladies and gentleman are interested in the yoga system. The first-class yoga system is *bhakti-yoga*. In this *Bhagavad-gītā* I am trying to explain the first verse of the Seventh Chapter. In the Sixth Chapter, the yoga system has been explained. It is said that one has to select a very sacred, secluded place. He has to sit down there in a perpendicular posture, with the neck and body in a straight line. And then he has to think of Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu. The thinking should be carefully done. One cannot divert his attention to any other subject. In the *Patañjali* yoga system it is said, *yoga indriya-saṁyama*: yoga means to control all the senses. Unless the senses are controlled, the mind will flicker, go this way and that way. The mind is the leader of all other senses. If you control the mind, concentrate on the feature of the Supreme Lord, that is the yoga system.

Therefore, describing the yoga system, Kṛṣṇa prescribes so many methods, but after hearing the system of practicing yoga, Arjuna replies, “Kṛṣṇa, this system is so difficult I cannot practice it.”

Arjuna was not an ordinary person. He was specifically the friend

thinks he is the body—that he is American or Indian or French or German or Hindu or Muslim—according to the Vedic understanding this conception is the animal’s conception. That is called illusion.

The next deficiency is cheating. Cheating means that with imperfect knowledge one takes the role of a teacher.

And the last deficiency is that our senses are imperfect. Our senses are not independent. Still, we are

very much proud of our senses. For example, the atheist asks, “Can you show me God?” He does not consider whether he has any power to see. We can see only when conditions are fulfilled. If someone turns off the light here, we won’t be able to see one another. So what is the value of these eyes? You simply see under certain conditions. You simply smell under certain conditions. You can hear under certain conditions. Therefore your materialistic



of Kṛṣṇa. He said, “This practice of yoga, *haṭha-yoga*, is not possible by me.”

So Kṛṣṇa concluded His instructions on the yoga system by saying, “Don’t be uncertain. There is another yoga system, the *bhakti-yoga* system. You can adopt it.”

*Bhakti-yoga* is summarized in the Sixth Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā* [6.47]:

*yoginām api sarveṣāṃ  
mad-gatenāntar-ātmanā  
śraddhāvān bhajate yo mām  
sa me yuktatamo mataḥ*

This is the topmost system of yoga: *bhakti-yoga*, always thinking of Kṛṣṇa. That system is being described in the current verse.

“My dear Arjuna, just try to divert your attachment to Me.” We have attachment. Everyone has attachment to something. The *bhakti-yoga* system means simply to divert the attachment to Kṛṣṇa. That’s all. When the mind is fully diverted for increasing attachment to Kṛṣṇa, that is called *bhakti-yoga*.

*Yogaṃ yuñjan mad-āśrayaḥ*: “This yoga system should be practiced under my direct supervision.” *Mad-āśrayaḥ* means “under My direct supervision.”

This means that the yoga system is not impersonal. Therefore the words used are *bhagavān uvāca*: “the Supreme Personality of Godhead said.” *Bhagavān*, the Absolute Truth, is a person. There are many who think the Absolute Truth is impersonal. But the Absolute Truth is a person. Impersonal realization of the Absolute Truth is partial. It is not complete realization. Therefore it is mentioned here *asamśayam*, “without any doubt,” and *samagram*, “in full.”

After all, yoga means an endeavor to understand the Absolute

Truth. Yoga means “linking,” “connecting.” When you connect with the Absolute Truth, that is called yoga. Another meaning is “plus,” adding something else. Like two plus two. That is also called yoga. Similarly, God is one; I am also one. When we join together, that is called yoga.

There are many methods of yoga practice, but the direct method is *bhakti-yoga*. I am a person, and God is also a person. When we join together, that is called *bhakti-yoga*. *Bhakti* means the process of connecting with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As soon as we use the word *bhakti*,

The Absolute Truth is the ultimate truth, *tattva*. *Tattva* means Absolute Truth. Those who are aware of the Absolute Truth say that the Absolute Truth is one but He’s realized in three angles of vision, namely *Brahman*, *Paramātmā* and *Bhagavān*. Those who are trying to speculate to understand the Absolute Truth can realize up to impersonal *Brahman*. Generally, speculators, big, big philosophers, can understand the impersonal *Brahman*. These impersonalists are generally known as *jñānīs*. *Jñānīs* are wise men, or persons very much aware of everything. They can understand the impersonal feature of

**Everyone has attachment to something. The *bhakti-yoga* system means simply to divert the attachment to Kṛṣṇa.**

which means the process of devotion, there must be *bhakta* [devotee] and *Bhagavān*. *Bhagavān* is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and the *bhakta* here is Arjuna. *Bhagavān* is personally teaching Arjuna the process to understand Him fully and without any doubt. Therefore it is mentioned here, *bhagavān uvāca*: “the Supreme Personality of Godhead said.”

### THREE ANGLES OF VISION

The Absolute Truth is realized in three angles of vision. It is said in the Vedic literature [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.2.11],

*vadanti tat tattva-vidas  
tattvaṃ yaj jñānam advayam  
brahmeti paramāmeti  
bhagavān iti śabdyate*

the Absolute Truth.

Another class is the yogis. The yogis can understand the *Paramātmā* feature of the Absolute Truth. *Paramātmā* means the Supersoul situated within everyone’s heart.

The personal feature of the Lord is realized by the *bhaktas*, or the devotees.

The *jñānīs* and *yogis* cannot understand perfectly what is God. God is transcendental, *sat-cit-ānanda*, a combination of eternity, knowledge, and bliss. If we realize the Absolute Truth partially—simply knowledge of eternity—that is called *brahma-jñāna*. And when one is further advanced and realizes by yoga practice the Absolute Truth as the localized aspect, *Paramātmā*, or Lord Viṣṇu within everyone’s heart, that is called



*paramātma-jñāna*. The objective is one, but there are different degrees of understanding. One example can be given in this connection, that of the sun globe, the sun-god, and the sunshine. The sunshine is light and temperature, the sun globe is light and temperature, and within the sun globe is the personality known as the sun-god, who is also light and temperature. But all this light and temperature is present in different degrees. The temperature and light of the sunshine is less than that of the sun globe, and the temperature and light of the sun globe is less than that of the sun-god.

When you reach the sun-god, then you understand the complete temperature and light. That completeness is realized by the word *bhagavān*. Therefore these words are used here: *asamśayam samagram*. “You can understand Me in full and without any doubt—*asamśayam*.”

If you are interested to understand the Absolute Truth, God, then you must take to *bhakti-yoga*. And if you want to understand the Absolute Truth with some doubt, and not completely, then you may take to *jñāna-yoga* or *dhyāna-yoga*.

### COMPLETE UNDERSTANDING

This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is meant for understanding the Absolute Truth completely—without any doubt and without any incompleteness. The Eighteenth Chapter confirms that if you want to know God completely and without any doubt, then you have to take to the *bhakti-yoga* process. It is said,

*bhaktyā mām abhijānāti  
yāvān yaś cāsmi tattvataḥ  
tato mām tattvato jñātvā  
viśate tad-anantaram*

“One can understand Me only by the *bhakti-yoga* process. And when one is fully aware of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, then he becomes fit to enter into the kingdom of God.” (Bg. 18.55)

The purpose of yoga practice is to leave this material atmosphere and enter into the spiritual atmosphere. The *jñāna-yogī* remains in the impersonal feature of the Absolute Truth. The *dhyāna-yogī* is practicing to realize the localized aspect of the Absolute Truth, but the *bhakti-yogī* is promoted directly to the planet called Goloka Vṛndāvana, and there he associates with the Supreme Personality of Godhead and enjoys life blissfully, eternally.

There are different planetary systems within the material world. Where we are situated is called *Bhūloka*. Above this is *Bhūvarloka*. Above that are *Svarloka*, *Janaloka*, *Maharloka*, and *Satyalo*. There are seven steps of planetary systems up and, similarly, seven planetary systems down. By *jñāna-yoga*, *bhakti-yoga*, or *dhyāna-yoga*, which means the mystic yoga system, we can be promoted to the higher systems, but if we practice *bhakti-yoga* then we go to the transcendental world directly and associate with the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

The *dhyāna-yogī* and *jñāna-yogī* can go to the *brahmajyoti*, but there is the chance of falling down again to this material world. Generally, *jñāna-yogīs* remain speculators within the material world, and *dhyāna-yogīs*, as soon as they get some material power to perform miracles they become implicated with this power and fail to achieve the spiritual world. But the *bhakti-yogī*, being the perfect yogi—the topmost yogi—can enter the kingdom of God, or the planet where

God is.

God is everywhere, but He has a special planet, called Goloka Vṛndāvana. You can enter there and mix with the Supreme Lord, just as we are here, mixing with one another. I can see you, and you can see me. Similarly, you can go directly, see God and live with Him, dance with Him, play with Him, eat with Him. That is the perfection of life.

This perfection of yoga can be achieved by practicing *bhakti-yoga* as recommended here: *mayy āsakta-manāḥ pārtha yogam yuñjan mad-āśrayaḥ*—under the guidance of the Supreme Personality of Godhead or His bona fide representative. If you practice this yoga, then you can understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead completely, without any doubt. If you practice this yoga in this life and try to understand Kṛṣṇa, then after giving up this body—you have to give up this body today or tomorrow—then you go directly to Kṛṣṇa.

It is therefore explained in the Fourth Chapter, ninth verse:

*janma karma ca me divyam  
evam yo vetti tattvataḥ  
tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma  
naiti mām eti so 'rjuna*

“My dear Arjuna, if anyone simply tries to understand why I come to this material world—what is My mission, what do I do—then he immediately becomes fit for being transferred to the spiritual world.”

So our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is meant to educate people to understand Kṛṣṇa and then make their lives perfect.

Thank you very much. ❁







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**Kedarnath** : The Sri Kedarnathji shrine, one of the 12 Jyotirlingas of Lord Shiva, is a scenic spot situated, against the backdrop of the majestic Sri Kedarnathji range. At an altitude of 3,581 mts. It is a 14 kms. trek from Gaurikund.



**Gangotri** : The district is mentioned in Skand Puran as Kedar Kshetra (sacred region) and contains the origins of the most sacred rivers of India, the Ganga and the Yamuna. The Ganga is believed to have first descended to earth at Gangotri 99 km from Uttrakashi. A shrine dedicated to the Goddess was built some 250 years ago by Amar Bahadur Thapa, the Gorkha Commander.



**Yamunotri** : The Garhwal Himalayas have been blessed with some of the holiest Hindu pilgrimage sites and Yamunotri is one such. One of the Char Dhams according to Hindu mythology, Yamunotri is the origin of the sacred river Yamuna. Famous for its thermal springs and glaciers, it is one of the most important stopovers on the itinerary of the Hindu pilgrim.



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Discover  
Kṛṣṇa's law of  
attraction, the  
real power  
behind the  
latest rage in  
the self-  
improvement  
marketplace.

# *The Secret*

*Behind "The Secret"*

by Arcana Siddhi Devī Dāsī



**T**he Secret, a recently released book and DVD by Rhonda Byrne, is getting a lot of attention as sales soar. The author claims that if we apply the principles she lays out, we can achieve whatever we desire. People from all walks of life are excitedly latching on to her ideas.

In the beginning of the DVD, ancient-looking texts in a medieval ambience invite us

to discover  
s e c r e t  
knowledge.

Flickering touchlights and pulsating music prelude the disclosure of the secret to getting that new BMW.

Byrne then tells us about the universal law of attraction, or “like attracts like.”

By understanding this law and using it to our advantage, we can obtain whatever we want. Although a host of predecessor authors have been say-

ing the same thing for the past two centuries, Byrne’s savvy marketing strategies have put old wine in a new bottle. She’s cashing in on people’s yearning to find a process that will lead them to perfect happiness.

To illustrate the law of attraction, scenes from the DVD include a young woman longingly looking at an expensive necklace through a jewelry store window. In the next scene her efforts are rewarded as her boyfriend garlands her with the same necklace that captivated her senses. In another scene, a young man sits in his living-room chair vividly imagining himself driving the car of his dreams. Predictably, in the following scene a BMW sits parked in

his driveway.

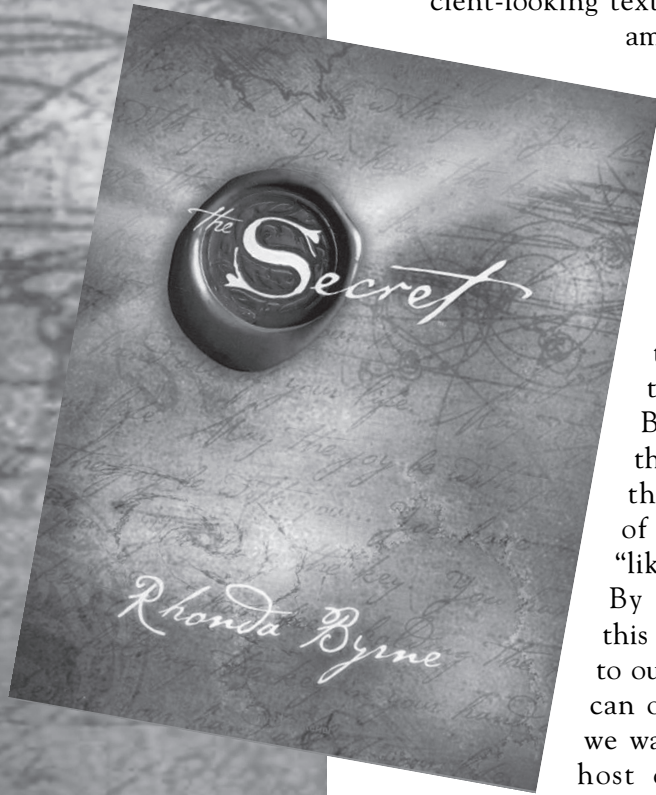
The next scene shows the flipside to the law of attraction. A young man chains his bicycle to a pole. Noticeably anxious about the safety of his bike, he walks away to his destination. When he returns, his bike is gone.

Following these opening fictitious scenes are real-life testimonials from successful people verifying the validity of the law of attraction in their own lives. Jack Canfield, the author of a number of best-selling books, relates how he attracted into his life an abundance of money and success when he started to focus on what he wanted. An entrepreneur shares his story of cutting out a picture of his dream house from a magazine and putting it on his “vision board.” Five years later when he is moving into his new house, his son asks what is inside a particular box. The entrepreneur opens it to reveal his vision board. Tears well up in his eyes as he looks at the board and sees that he is moving into the same house he had cut out of the magazine five years earlier.

When his young son asks why he is crying, he replies that he has finally understood the law of attraction: ask-believe-receive. These seductive scenes suggest that by our desires alone we can get everything we want. The universe is our perpetual order supplier, and all we have to do is focus on what we want and avoid thinking about what we don’t want. When asked why this law doesn’t work for everyone, one of the film’s pundits answers that people give up too early. They might be on the brink of obtaining their goal, but they stop.

### IS DESIRE ENOUGH?

In the ancient Vedic literature we find a much more comprehensive answer to why some people achieve their desires and others don’t. Everyone in the material field of activities is acting according to the reactions of their past deeds. As you sow, so you shall reap. What *The Secret* fails to acknowledge



et

or understand is our accountability as souls for things we have done not only in this life but in our past lives as well. The universal law of karma dictates that everything we do has a reaction, which may be good or bad, depending on the quality of the act. Good deeds yield good results such as fame and fortune. Bad deeds produce unwanted material situations such as poverty, infamy, and disease.

Successful people, Oprah Winfrey, for example, endorse *The Secret* by saying that they have used the law of attraction most of their lives. But according to the Vedic view, they're merely drawing from a bank account of previous good deeds. Without remembering their past lives, such people think that

our character and influence how we move in this world. Ultimately, at the time of death our thoughts carry us to our next destination—that's how important and powerful they are.

#### TRULY POSITIVE THINKING

Since we can change the way we think, we should start thinking and desiring spiritually, for permanent results. *The Secret* emphasizes using the law of attraction for material acquisition, good health, and maybe some altruism. The more mature perspective is to see that the real purpose of the law of attraction, like all of God's laws, is to dispel our material consciousness and revive our original spiritual nature. This means using our thoughts and

Lord, we can use the law of attraction to serve Kṛṣṇa in this world by desiring to transform both our consciousness and that of others. Śrīla Prabhupāda exemplified how Kṛṣṇa's law of attraction works in the material realm for spiritual attainment. Although he landed in New York City with no money or help, one acquaintance in New York recalled, "He seemed to know that he would have temples filled up with devotees. He would look out and say, 'I am not a poor man. I am rich. There are temples and books. They are existing, they are there, but the time is separating us from them.'"

When walking in the city, he would look at the big buildings and imagine that some day they could be used in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Prabhupāda was a pure devotee completely free of karma; he was under the direct protection of the Lord. Because his desires were one with Kṛṣṇa's desires, within a short time of starting his ISKCON society he had many temples filled with devotees and many books being distributed all over the world.

**Becoming free of material desire doesn't mean giving up desire; it means desire things for our and others' eternal benefit.**

all they have to do is desire and their wish will be fulfilled. So naturally they conclude that others should be able to get the same result by changing how they think.

But can people choose to change the way they think? To some extent, yes. Our past actions influence our current thoughts, but our freely chosen responses to our present situation—including our present thoughts and attitudes—reformat our thoughts, and our thoughts influence our future. Although people may be inclined toward negative thoughts, hearing something like *The Secret* might inspire them to change the way they think. Our thoughts define

desires to become free of material thoughts and desires. That may sound unattractive to the entrepreneur who wants a \$20 million house, or the musician looking for her latest CD to hit the top of the charts. But becoming free of material desire doesn't mean giving up desire; it means desire things for our and others' eternal benefit.

In the spiritual dimension, where all desires are for the Lord's service and pleasure, desires are fulfilled instantaneously. The desire for things separate from the Lord's service pollutes our consciousness and causes us to suffer and remain hostage to the material energy.

As aspiring devotees of the

#### WHY DOESN'T KRṢṆA FULFILL ALL DESIRES?

Every desire is a kind of prayer, because Kṛṣṇa is in our heart, listening. Out of love for us He has expanded Himself into the hearts of all living beings. He fulfills our desires throughout our stay in the material world.

But Kṛṣṇa doesn't give us whatever we want, because His goal is to guide us back to our eternal home. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* tells us that whether we are full of desires or have no desires, we should approach Kṛṣṇa. And, for aspiring devotees at least, if our desires will help us to advance spiritually, then Kṛṣṇa will gladly fulfill them. But



He won't fulfill our desires if the result will hinder our spiritual progress. Rather, He'll help us give up harmful desires by giving us a taste of spiritual truth.

Aspiring transcendentalists receive direct help from the Lord, and whatever happens is for their highest good, as illustrated in the following story.

Sanātana Gosvāmī, a prominent disciple of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, lived under a tree as a renunciant. Once, a poor *brāhmaṇa* heard that Sanātana possessed a stone that could turn anything it touched into gold. The *brāhmaṇa* eagerly went to ask Sanātana for the stone. Without the least hesitancy Sanātana told the *brāhmaṇa* he could have the stone; it was in a rubbish heap nearby. The elated *brāhmaṇa* found the stone but, being intelligent, began to consider the situation. Why would Sanātana discard something so valuable unless he had something better? When he asked Sanātana about it, Sanātana said that he would give him the most valuable thing but first the *brāhmaṇa* would have to throw the magical stone into the river. To discard the stone was a test for the *brāhmaṇa*, but after some deliberation he complied with Sanātana's condition, and Sanātana gave him the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*.

The effects of chanting this *mantra* are unlimited; one achieves so much more than a necklace or BMW. Serious chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa brings freedom from all material suffering—no more birth, death, disease, or old age. And it gives realization of our eternal spiritual identity, full of unlimited joy and knowledge. People who understand their real spiritual nature and relationship with Lord become completely satisfied. Their

only desire is service to the Lord.

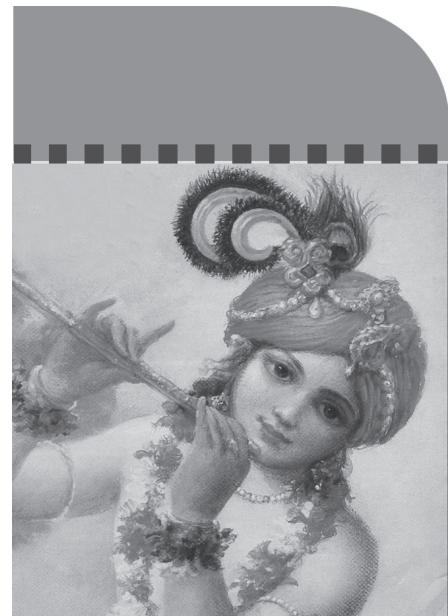
Desires fulfilled in this material plane of existence are temporary—here today and gone tomorrow. Material acquisitions generally fuel our desire for more things rather than bringing a sense of happiness and fulfillment. The *brāhmaṇa* made an intelligent decision and became the benefactor of the complete secret.

### THE BEST SECRET OF ALL

In the Ninth Chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Lord Kṛṣṇa reveals to Arjuna—and ultimately to anyone fortunate enough to read His words—the most secret of all secrets. The essence of this chapter is in the final verse, where the Lord gives Arjuna four confidential instructions: always think of Him, become His devotee, worship Him, and bow down before Him. These four practices attract Kṛṣṇa. He has designed all of nature's laws to help us souls find our way back to our eternal home. When we use the law of attraction for material purposes, it keeps us in the material realm of repeated birth and death. When we use the law to be absorbed in thoughts of Kṛṣṇa, then surely we will go to Him. The great devotee Queen Kuntī applies the law of attraction in an ideal way when she offers this prayer to Kṛṣṇa:

*“O Lord of Madhu, as the Ganges forever flows to the sea without hindrance, let my attraction be constantly drawn unto You without being diverted to anyone else.”*  
(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.18.42)☪

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



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Between

# Life and Death

by Rādhārāja Murāri Dāsa

*Life and death are common phenomenon for a doctor;  
till one day—when he is caught between them.*

**M**y name is Dr. Rādhārāj Murāri Dāsa (Rajesh Rajan) presently working as a doctor at Keral institute of Medical science (KIMS). A stranger may think: “Oh, here is a doctor with enough money and no pain in his life. See how lucky he is!” But the actual truth is known to only to me and my family.

Before telling my experience let me tell you one incident. Once I was assisting in an open-heart surgery on a 6 month old baby. During the surgery my chief accidentally cut open an old scar in the heart resulting in profuse bleeding. We tried to repair it and operated for six hours, but everyone felt that the child would not survive. I felt awful and rang my wife, explaining the tragedy. My wife had suffered a



*The author*

miscarriage recently and both of us were just coming out of that grief,

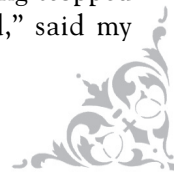
so this news was especially traumatic.

“I will chant for this baby,” my wife said.

“You may go home,” my head of department advised. “We cannot save this child. It may take some hours for the inevitable, but it is sure. There is no history of anyone surviving after such a fatal mistake.”

The next morning when I entered ICCU the parents of that baby were standing outside. I asked the sister why they were there. She smiled and said, “There are here for their child.”

“What!” I exclaimed and rushed inside the ICCU. The monitor attached to the tiny baby beeped, a steady rhythm of life. “A few hours after you left, the bleeding stopped and the baby was saved,” said my





colleague.

I immediately realized the power of chanting. My wife was praying for that child, the whole night. Kṛṣṇa showed me that He can do anything any time. *Kṛṣṇa is the best surgeon in the world*, I thought.

### IN RUSSIA

The winter was coming to an end and spring was beginning to show its colours. Myself and my wife Nikuñca Gopī Devī Dāsī were moving home. I had been suffering from severe cough and weakness for many days, but we still moved, while I continued to attend my post-graduate classes in cardiovascular surgery. One day, after assisting a surgery I became very weak and had to take rest in the doctor's room. My colleague advised me to take a blood test and X-ray. "How long did you have this?" the X-ray technician asked after looking at my X-ray film. I was surprised to hear this. "I don't have any problem, perhaps there is some mistake," I replied. He took another X-ray. I was really confused. I started chanting but I found that I could not concentrate.

A few minutes later the doctor showed me the X-ray. "There is something in your chest," she said, pointing to an area near the great big blood vessels. "It can be anything," she said. Cancer was the first diagnosis that came to my mind. I nearly broke down; somehow I composed myself and called my teacher.

"Don't worry," she comforted me, "it may be tuberculosis."

At home I didn't disclose anything to my wife or friends. The next day I went to a tuberculosis center and did some tests. I was to return three days later for the results. In those days I was chanting

but could not concentrate. On the third day the doctor disclosed the results, "See this is tuberculosis and the infection is high— you should be admitted today."

TB is considered to be very serious in Moscow. One has to be treated in a center outside Moscow, and if he doesn't do so, the police takes you by force. I became worried about my wife. Dispensary is two hours journey from my house and if I had gone there at my stage, I would have been kept there for two months or more. I begged my teacher for help. Finally she agreed to treat me personally. If the government would have come to know, she would have been thrown out of her job.

Later one evening, I was driv-

ing to see if the TB bacteria were present in my sputum. I was worried that I might transmit this disease to my wife and others. So when I would go to ISKCON center I would stay back in my car. Devotees questioned my motives. Many began saying that I was going away from Krishna. Only I knew the reality.

Everyday my teachers and friends advised me to take eggs, meat, and fish. They even tried to force me, "You are doctor. You know what TB is. Your body needs protein and you should take meat and non-vegetarian food, otherwise you will die. Take them as a medicine. . . Stop this foolish Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Kṛṣṇa won't come and help you." Nikuñca Gopī was adamant and she used to fight with

**My colleague advised me to take a blood test and x-ray. "How long do you have this?" the x-ray technician asked after looking at my x-ray film.**

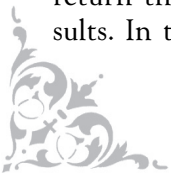
ing with my wife beside me. I felt something coming out of my nose so I wiped it with my handkerchief. It was blood. I tried to mask it from my wife but failed because of the heavy blood flow. I stopped the car. She started crying. I tried to console her, but she understood something was wrong, so I relented and I told her everything.

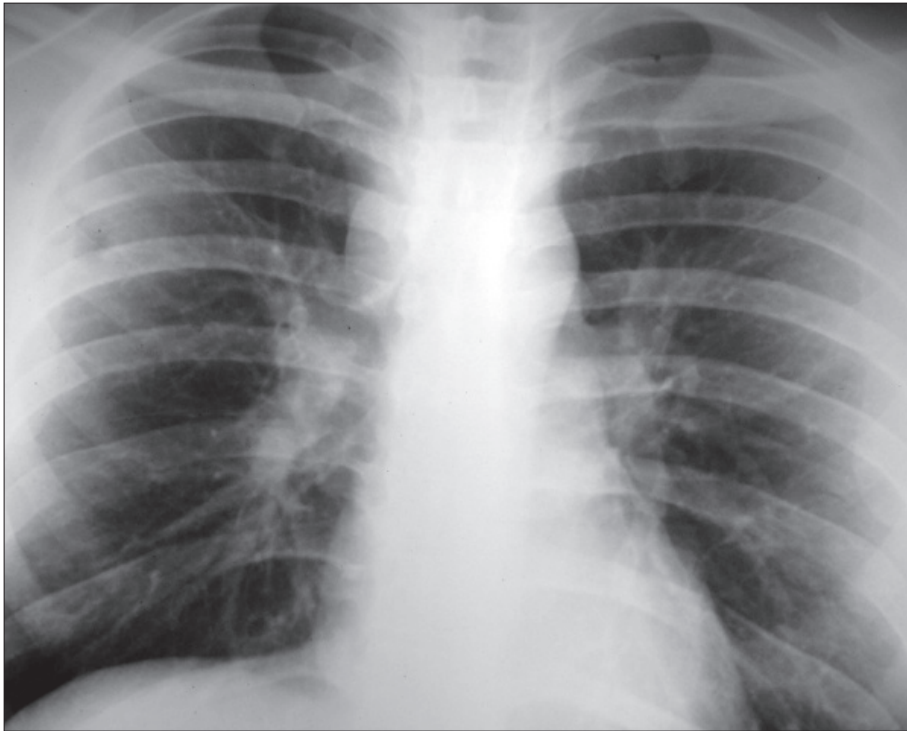
When I began treatment, she prayed all day and started doing daily *abhiṣeka* to our Gaura Nitāi Deities and I would take the *caraṇāmṛta*. I was asked not to attend surgeries anymore. As my disease was undisclosed and I was not hospitalized I couldn't be tested to

these people. I too decided to show these people how to treat TB without taking meat.

After one month my symptoms were a little less, but I was still not well. I had another X-ray and was shocked—the mass was increasing in size! My boss sent me to the professor of the tuberculosis department. After examining me, he suggested that my disease could be sarcoidosis, a disease that mimics TB. I gave blood to confirm the diagnosis but again confusion! "It is not sarcoidosis," said the doctor, "It's something else." I got really depressed.

My teacher called me and ad-





X-ray of Rādhārāja Murāri Dāsa

vised me to do a CT scan of the chest and consult an oncologist. I was shocked, “Why an oncologist?” I used to call my teacher Mama, and I pleaded with her. “Mama, do you suspect anything like cancer?” She consoled me, “There is no need to worry; everything has treatment nowadays.”

The next day I went to the oncologist and he admitted me that day. He suspected something like a lymphoma—a cancer, or some other kind of tumor. I came outside the hospital and broke down. I sat there for about two hours, thinking about my wife, my parents, and family. “Life is going to finish,” I thought.

I took my mobile, and bravely explained things to my wife. I prayed to Kṛṣṇa and cried. I went directly to my travel agent to enquire about the next flight to India. It was high season, so my chance of getting a seat soon was slim but after some checking he said, “There are two seats for

tomorrow’s flight.”

I didn’t think for a second and purchased both tickets and informed my wife about the departure. We had only sixteen hours. We left all our belongings including car, and the household items. We took some clothes, our Deities Śrī Śrī Gaura Nitāi. Temple devotees arranged a special *ārati* for me before my departure. I still remember how all the devotees helped me that time. Rajendran and his wife came and packed my things. Rahim Prabhu, a Muslim devotee, drove me till airport. Sādhupriya arranged special *pūjas* in the temple and came with us till immigration; because of his mercy we saved around 25 kg without paying extra money. I saw how Śrīla Prabhupāda made a house where whole world can live and all devotees are like relatives. Many times I felt devotees’ love is more than our relatives.

#### INDIAN TRIAL

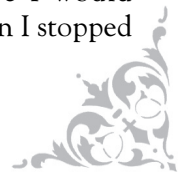
Back in India, we decided to do

a biopsy of the growth. Before the test I went to ISKCON Trivandrum and had *darśana* of Trivandrum Deities. The temple president, Sarvaiśvarya Dāsa, an IIT graduate, told me with confidence, “Don’t worry! Just take *caraṇāmṛta* everyday and you will be ok.”

I thought, “Yes! Before death taking *caraṇāmṛta* will surely purify my body, but my disease?” When I met temple secretary Jagatsākṣī Dāsa, I blurted out, “If I am alive then we will meet again.” He was shocked to hear this, but he just smiled and replied, “Surely we will meet again, Kṛṣṇa will make all the arrangements.”

The biopsy was a major operation. The doctors opened my chest and took a piece of the mass for testing. I was in ICCU for two days. My parents were not informed about the seriousness of the surgery. “Doctors are just taking a biopsy with a needle,” I told them. So they were not that tensed, but my father-in-law some how understood the severity. Even though he is a busy businessman, he left everything aside to stay with us for a week. My wife was praying and chanting all the day and arranged *prasādam* and *caraṇāmṛta* inside the hospital too. She strongly believed that nothing will go wrong and would say, “Surrender everything to Kṛṣṇa, then He will take care the rest.”

By seeing our conviction and faith, both our parents thought we were mad in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. During those few months my wife seemed bolder than myself with strong faith in Kṛṣṇa and intense chanting. I was also looking at photos of His Holiness Bhakti Tirtha Mahārāja’s final days on this planet, and received the sad news when he passed away. I too started thinking of my death and where I would go—heaven or hell? Then I stopped





all thoughts and waited for the biopsy result. Finally the doctor came smilingly and said, "It is TB. No need to worry. Just take the necessary treatment for one year."

I was so happy and thanked Kṛṣṇa for extending my visa. My wife was not surprised; she was confident that by her chanting and *sādhana* nothing would happen to me. The experience had a real effect on our parents—they stopped criticizing ISKCON. We later came to know that one of the parents confided in our uncle, "I know he got out of this disease not by doctors' talent or any other things, but only by his wife's strong belief in Kṛṣṇa." But this parent never accepted this publicly.

Then the real trouble started. Our parents started forcing me to take meat, egg, fish, etc. They started scolding Nikuñca Gopī saying, "You will kill our son!" She would fight back by explaining about karma. I told everyone, including my doctor that I would only take vegetarian food.

### STAR POWER

One day we went to an astrologer. After checking my horoscope he asked us whether the owner of this horoscope was alive or dead. He explained *śani daśa* and its bad influence on us, and I understood that this was my second birth. I thanked Lord Kṛṣṇa for extending my life.

The astrologer added that I was alive only by the mercy of God and someone's prayers. I looked at Nikuñca; she broke down. Next day a senior devotee advised me to take initiation as early as possible. I decided to dedicate this second life or my rebirth to Lord Kṛṣṇa. I wrote to His Holiness Jaypatāka Mahārāja and learnt that the very next day He was giving initiation at Bangalore. I had only twenty hours to reach Bangalore.

I called my travel agent and enquired about the flights to Bangalore and found that there was only one flight and only one seat. The flight reached just 1 hour before the initiation ceremony.

Another problem arose. I had no money. I couldn't



Above: The author Rādhārāja Murāri Dāsa with His Holiness Jayapatāka Swami Mahārāja (top right) and with wife Nikuñca Gopī Devī Dāsī (above)





# Medical College Hospital

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R

- ① Chanting of Holyname 16 rounds <sup>8 morning 8 evening</sup>
- ② Chavnamrit 2 teaspoon thrice daily
- ③ Prasadam three times per OS
- ④ Reading Holy Books 1 hour daily
- ⑤ Association of Vaishnavas SOS
- ⑥ Review after 8 days in any of the ISKCON

Dr. RAJESH RAJAN  
 MD  
 Reg. No. 12/01/2007  
 Dr. Radharaj Murari Das. MD. MS  
 EXPS

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## Prescription for the soul

for any disease in the world is *caranāmṛta*, eating offered food (*prasādam*), surrendering yourself to Lord Kṛṣṇa and, most importantly, chanting Kṛṣṇa's holy names:

hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa  
 kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare  
 hare rāma hare rāma  
 rāma rāma hare hare

Now my prescription to all of you is  
Rx

1. Chanting holy names: 8 rounds before 6 a.m. and 8 rounds in the evening.
2. *Caranāmṛta*: 2 teaspoons three times a day.
3. *Prasādam*: three times daily
4. Reading Śrīla Prabhupāda's books: 1 hour daily
5. Association of Vaiṣṇavas: SOS  
Review after 6 days in any ISKCON temple. ☸

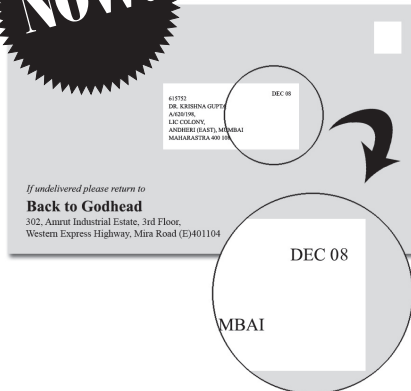
Dr. Rādhārāja Murāri Dāsa is a disciple of His Holiness Jayapatāka Swami Mahārāja. He can be contacted at [ayurveda@pamho.net](mailto:ayurveda@pamho.net)

ask my parents because they were not supportive. Again Kṛṣṇa showed me a way. My sister-in-law Nirupamā Nandinī Devī Dāsī pledged her golden bangle and got some money. I made it before the ceremony, but I didn't have dhoti for the ceremony. Seeing my poor condition, the temple poojari gave me all the things. I finally got initiation.

I returned to Trivandrum with all this blessing. As I was recuperating from the illness, I volunteered to supervise workers working on the renovation of the ISKCON temple.

Now I know the best medicine

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# Two-Point Formula for Happiness

*Learn how to direct ambitions for achieving lasting goals.*

by Caitanya Caraṇa Dāsa

**B**e ambitious”, the world goads us. A huge flat, row-house, bungalow, mansion, villa. When does the ambitious chase after the mirages of material pleasures end? Never. All that we get is endless labor and perpetual dissatisfaction. Worse still, we live tormented by anxiety because our self-worth (happiness?) depends entirely on unpredictable, uncontrollable externals. The neighbor gets a jazzier mobile than ours, the shares we have invested in crash. And worst of all, struggling to achieve our self-created (“society-imposed” describes it better) goals leaves us with no time for our spiritual nourishment. Greed, stress, envy, worry, spiritual starvation—where is happiness?

## THE WAR WITHIN

To find real happiness, we need to recognize that all of us have two conflicting forces within our psyche—a centrifugal force that directs our quest for enjoyment outwards to the endless parade of sense objects and a centripetal force that directs us inwards to the all-attractive reservoir of all pleasure, God, Kṛṣṇa, residing in our own hearts.

In most people the centrifugal force is so overwhelmingly powerful that their centripetal force becomes almost imperceptible.

Our society, culture, media, billboards—continuously adds vectors to the centrifugal force already raging within us. Will we become happy by earning more and accumulating more? Never. Because, no matter how much we have, the centrifugal force will keep dragging us outwards to get still more.

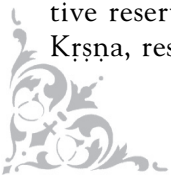
To find satisfaction, we need to change our lifestyle from centrifugal to centripetal. The first step in bringing about this lifestyle change is education, spiritual education. The *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.13) explains that our present existence is two-dimensional: We are souls, spiritual beings, animating material bodies, like drivers animating their cars. Ambassador, Fiat, Maruti, Mercedes are certainly different kinds of cars. But imagine two persons: One has a posh Mercedes, but is lost, not knowing there is a home even, and is spending all his time just furnishing and polishing his car. The other person has a simple Fiat, but knows the way home and is heading straight there. Who's bet-

ter off?

## LESS IS MORE

To sustain the intelligence necessary for a centripetal lifestyle, we need to regularly associate with centripetally-oriented scientists—spiritual activists devoted to the service of God and the welfare of humanity—and to see for ourselves how less is more; how their seeming lack of external possessions is more than compensated for by internal enrichment. These spiritual scientists will offer us periodic centripetal pushes.

The most sustainable centripetal propeller for our steady inner journey is the holy name like the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. The holy name not only effectively counters the centrifugal passions, but also efficaciously kindles our dormant zeal for centripetal research. This centripetal research culminates in the greatest discovery of our lives—the discovery of Kṛṣṇa, the source of all happiness. And then we won't need to demand the Nobel Prize to reassure ourselves of our success—for that will be another centrifugal illusion. Instead we will nobly share our prize with everyone by inspiring and guiding them  
(please turn to page 29)



## Māyā Devī's Menu Card

by Yugāvatāra Dāsa

This year, the Gaura Pūrṇimā festival in our temple started a day before Gaura Pūrṇimā. I set off for the temple in a city bus. As usual, I purchased my regular ticket for Rs. 8. I suddenly realised that a new ticket for Rs. 20 was launched with which one could roam throughout the day anywhere in the city in on any bus. Although I was chanting, my mind started lamenting—*Oh! I should have purchased that twenty-rupee ticket as I was scheduled to come to the temple in the evening also. With this ticket I could have shuttled as many times between my home and the temple.*

By now, I had finished four rounds of chanting. I say “finished” because my disturbed mind had nearly finished off the credits of chanting these four rounds. Now, I paused my chanting and took a break for self-counselling: “How foolish and sticky this mind is! It is lamenting for an insignificant loss of Rs. 15-20 as if I had lost crores. And this lamentation has messed up my four rounds of chant-

ing. What is a greater loss than this? Money can be procured again but who can reimburse those four rounds of chanting the holy name?”

I realised that Māyā-devī had again tricked me. As soon as a devotee starts chanting, she appears before him like a waiter appears before us when we enter a restaurant.

The waiter carries with him a menu card. On this menu card are listed the names of various attractive items available and ready to be served. Also, besides each item we

find its price (e.g. Paneer Palak—Rs. 50/-, Cheese Pizza—Rs 225/-). Similarly, māyā appears before us with her menu card as soon as we start chanting. Her menu card also has many attractive items along with their prices. (*See the menu card below*)

We, like fools, prefer to feast on Māyā-devī's items instead of relishing the holy name. Māyā-devī knows very well that if chant sincerely we will go back to Godhead. So she keeps alluring us with her menu (*please turn to page 19*)

Māyā's Menu card	
Items to be done while chanting	Price
Talking	1 round
Using Cell-phone	2 rounds
Planning the day	16 rounds
Thinking of profit-loss	8 rounds
Offending devotees	All rounds chanted till now

# Ānanda

**Coventry, UK:** I had the great fortune to go out on a *harināma* on Lord Nityānanda's appearance day. A pleasant gentleman called Robert, who was with his young daughter, wanted to talk with us. Both he and his daughter loved the *harināma* and wanted to know more about Hare Kṛṣṇas. We were surprised when he told us his daughter's name was Ānanda, an unusual name for an English girl. He told us the story behind her name: Many years ago he and his wife were devastated to learn that they would never be able to have a child for medical reasons. Some years later when Robert was working in India, he and his wife visited a holy place where there was a pool that formed when Lord Kṛṣṇa dropped a flower there.

While walking around they passed a *sādhu* who lived next to the pool. Without any prompting the *sādhu* told them that they would have a child. The couple became upset by this and explained that they could not. The *sādhu* said they would and that when the child was born they should bring it back to be blessed by him. Robert and his wife were astounded when she later became pregnant and gave birth to a little girl, whom they called Ānanda, 'bliss'. Remembering the *sādhu's* request, they went back to India with Ānanda, and the *sādhu* duly blessed her. Robert told us that little Ānanda became very interested in Eastern religions from an early age and wanted to know all

about the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement when she saw and heard us on the *harināma*. They took a book and copies of CDs of devotional music that I had made to hand out to people, and they gave us a donation. The fact that we all met when the devotees were celebrating Lord Nityānanda's appearance day, and that the little girl's name was Ānanda astonished us all. Robert and his daughter turned up at the temple that evening and had a wonderful time. Ānanda danced with the ladies and did not want to leave. She even loved spicy Indian food, unusual for a little English girl, so she and her father stayed to enjoy the *prasādam*.

Robert said they would definitely come again for the Sunday evening program when they had chance, as both he and his daughter loved the ethos and philosophy. Two very special souls thus received the incredible mercy of Lord Nityānanda on his appearance day!

by Mahātmā Dāsa

**SURAT:** A book fair was held here in the first week of February, where congregational devotees put a book stall of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. In the 80 hours that the fair lasted, we were able to sell approximately 4000 books—one book every 1.20 minutes.

by Rādheśa Dāsa

**PUNE:** While giving a book distribution seminar in Pune, India, recently, I mentioned that a man may

receive a book from a devotee and never read it. But he may put it on his bookshelf, and when he eventually leaves his body and his son inherits the house, the son may read the book and become a devotee. After the class, a devotee raised his hand and said his father had bought a *Bhagavad-gītā* and Kṛṣṇa book from a devotee and put it on the bookcase at home. Seventeen years after his father purchased the book, he read them, and became a devotee.

by Vijaya Dāsa

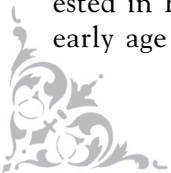


## Māyā Devī...

(Continued from page 18)

card. She has a tailor-made menu card for every one. All these items stop the soul's journey to the spiritual world as they are filled up infective agents which keep us chronically infected with inattentiveness and insincerity. So, if you want to enjoy the fruits of the nutritive holy name, just ignore this Māyā-devī's menu card as it will lead to indigestion of the holy name. The only way to not get allured by Māyā's menu card is the thorough conviction that no work is more important than attentive chanting. ❁

*Yugāvatāra Dāsa is a lecturer in anatomy in a medical college in Mumbai. He is a regular contributor to the Marathi edition of BTG.*





# NOT AN UNFEELING OBJECT

*If we spend time with the animals we can see that they not only obey basic commands but also understand fear, happiness, and even friendship.*

by Chāyā Devī Dāsī

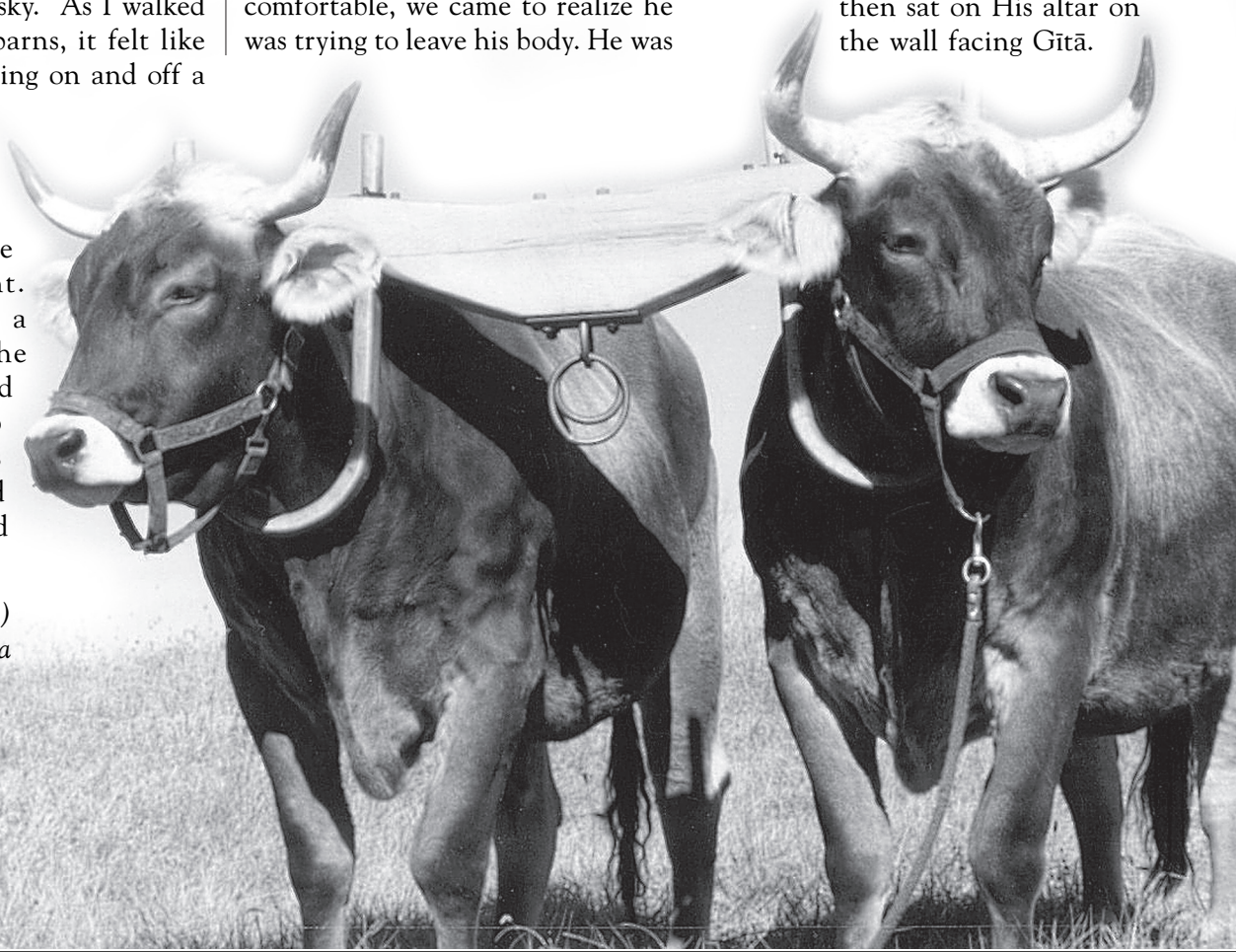
**G**ītā, one of our oxen, passed away early today on Lord Nityānanda's Appearance day, February 18, 2008. Last night strong winds were carrying warm air while they moved billowy clouds swiftly across the sky. As I walked to and from the barns, it felt like someone was turning on and off a floodlight until I realized it was the clouds passing over the white bright moon. The stars were bright. There was a presence in the night: the wind personified to bring Gītā away as he thrust his head into the air and

opened his mouth.

At first I said, "Don't do that Gītā! Don't stress yourself!" Then I would put his head down. After a couple of hours of Caitanya Bhāgavata and I trying to make him comfortable, we came to realize he was trying to leave his body. He was

opening his mouth so his soul could leave upward. We had given him Gaṅgā water, placed the CD player of Śrīla Prabhupāda chanting next to him, and on his head we placed *Govardhana-śilā*. *Govardhana-śilā* then sat on His altar on the wall facing Gītā.

*Gītā (on the right)  
and Vraja*



*There are those who say there is no soul or consciousness in an ox such as Gītā. Have they spent any time with such an animal while he lived and while he died? If they did, they would realize that not only does the ox understand friendship, basic commands, fear, and happiness, but he also understands when it is time to leave his material body.*

Gītā had arthritis for several years and each year it became more and more difficult for him to walk. This winter we put him in the geriatric barn so it would be easier for him to access his food and move around. Gītā was one of our oldest oxen. He turned 18 years old recently. His twin brother, Vraja, died last summer. He also had arthritis. Together they plowed our fields, led many *Rathayātrā* parades in the United States, and appeared at many events. They greeted guests with their handsome appearance and endearing personalities. In this way, they presented cow protection to the public.

Around February 9, Gītā was not able to get up. He did not have the power in his back legs to push up his large body. Since he was an old ox, we expected that he would leave his body in the near future. We kept him as comfortable as possible and fed him as much as he wanted to eat and drink. In preparation for parting, he daily listened to Śrīla Prabhupāda's sacred chanting and received holy Gaṅgā water.

*Although, it is the exception for an ox to do so much service to Lord Jagannātha and to listen to the chanting of the holy names, it is common for an ox to have given most of his life in service to humanity. However, humans have not given sufficient recognition to the cognitive powers possessed by an ox to do that*

*service.*

*“Remarkable cognitive abilities and cultural innovations have been revealed,” Christine Nicol, professor of animal welfare at Britain’s Bristol University, says. “Our challenge is to teach others that every farm animal is a complex individual, and to adjust our farming culture accordingly.”*

*Professor Donald Broom, from Cambridge University, studies the behavior of cows and states how cows can become excited by solving intellectual challenges. His team put them in a special pen which had a lever that, when pressed, would release the cows into a field with lots*

17, after Caitanya Bhāgavata fed him his grains, Gītā collapsed. From that point, he struggled to get upright. When he couldn't, Caitanya and I realized that we needed to flip him to get him into a better position but the two of us would not be strong enough to move his 900 kilo 7 foot tall body. Caitanya went to the temple to see what help he could get and forty-five minutes later came back with six devotees to help flip Gītā. We had four devotees on Gītā's legs and three at his head to make sure his head moved with his body. We expertly flipped Gītā and he landed sitting up. We braced him

**“Our challenge is to teach others that every farm animal is a complex individual, and to adjust our farming culture accordingly.”**

*of delicious food rewards. An electroencephalograph was used to measure their brainwaves.*

*The researchers found that when the cows worked out how to press the lever to reach the food, they showed signs of delight. “The brainwaves showed their excitement; their heartbeat went up and some even jumped into the air. We called it their Eureka moment,” Professor Broom told the BBC. He continued: “We need to have a certain amount of respect for these animals, and I think most people have more respect for an animal if they feel it’s aware of what’s going on.”*

Since Gītā could not get up we helped move him twice, each time he surprised us all and walked around. But once he sat down, he could not get up again. On February

with square bales of hay and then he tried to eat the bales. Enthusiastically, all the devotees ran to him with hay to eat. The cows ran to the gate to see. Everyone was very happy at what appeared to be a miraculous recovery. Joy permeated the atmosphere. I was inspired and moved to see the selfless service of the devotees and their joy at Gītā's recovery.

When I checked on Gītā later in the day, he was lying down obviously struggling again to get upright. However, this time he was near one of the barn poles and flipping him would not be possible. It was six o'clock and it would be dark at 6:30. As he struggled to get up I tried to brace his back with square bales, but he was too heavy and moved them away when he  
(please turn to page 28)





# A Suicidal Civilization

*This exchange between His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and some of his disciples and guests took place during a morning walk on the Berkeley campus of the University of California, in July of 1975.*

**Guest:** About a month ago, Śrīla Prabhupāda, there was a crazy story in the newspaper. It seems a young student went through the archives in the Washington, D.C., public library, and he compiled enough information to construct an atom bomb. So now many leaders are afraid that within a few years, any terrorist group will be able to make their own atom bomb.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes, that may be. . .

**Guest:** Oh, do you see that tower? Students here have been known to jump from it. Actually, at schools all over the country, a growing number of students are committing suicide.

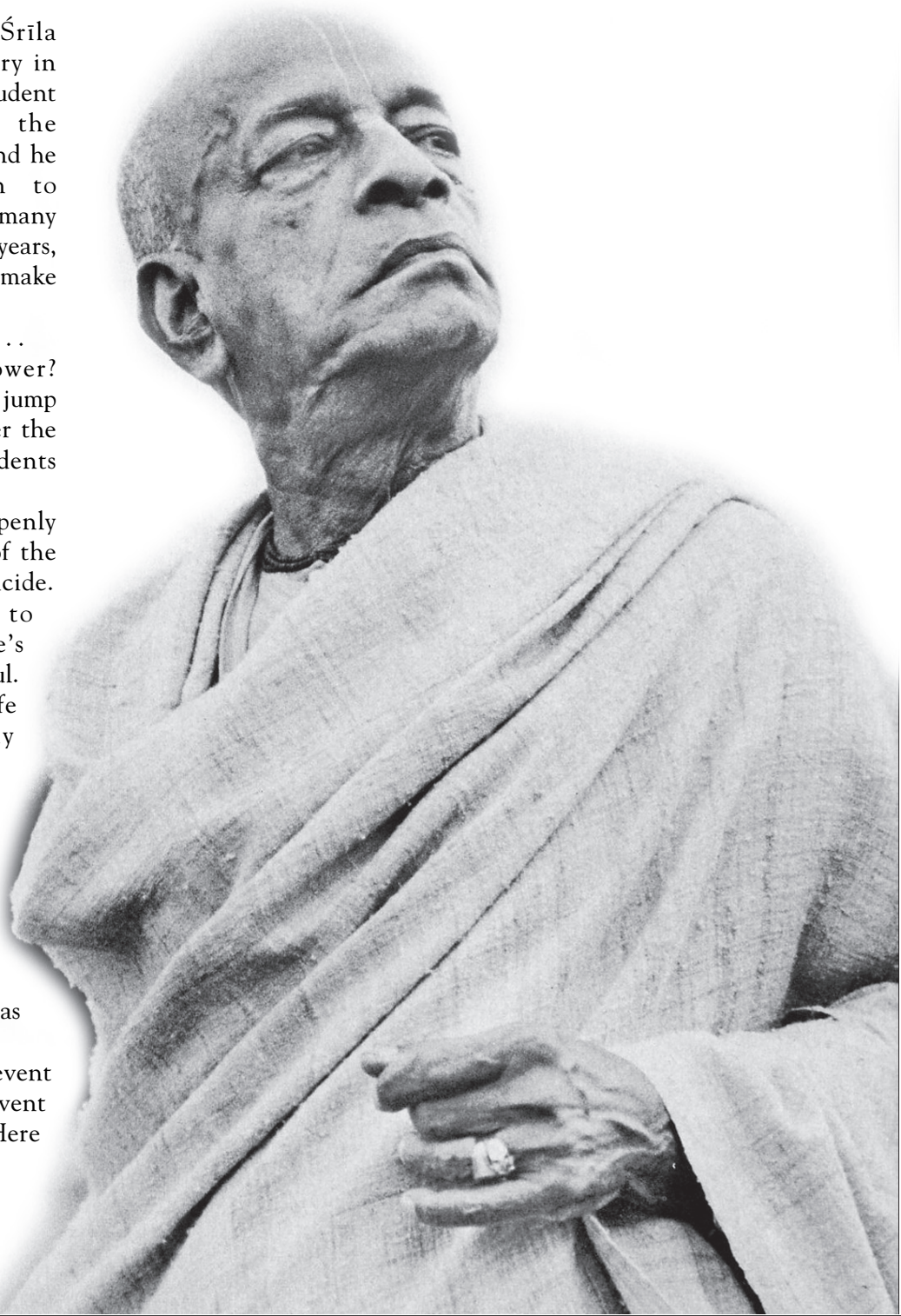
**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. They are openly committing suicide, and the rest of the people are covertly committing suicide. This man who found out how to construct an atom bomb—he's thinking that now his life is successful. But if he doesn't use his human life for trying to become spiritually realized, he is committing suicide.

**Guest:** How's that?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Because he won't be able to save himself from his own death and rebirth.

**Guest:** Interestingly enough, the scientists originally developed the atom bomb to prevent death—to end the Second World War as soon as possible.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** How can they prevent death? They do not know how to prevent it. They can accelerate it, that's all. Here





is your problem, Mr. Scientist: *janma-mṛtyu-jarā-vyādhi*—the cycle of birth, death, old age, and disease. Solve it! Where is the scientist who can do that? instead they take some childish problem and try to avoid the real problem. But they cannot avoid it, because Kṛṣṇa puts it openly before everyone: *janma-mṛtyu-jarā-vyādhi-duḥkha-doṣānudarśanam*—“The real seer will see to this problem of birth, death, old age, and disease.” But the scientists have no answer, no solution to this problem. Where is the biochemist or the psychologist or the nuclear physicist who can solve this problem?

**Disciple:** They have a theory nowadays that by the proliferation of atomic weapons—Russia has so many weapons, China has so many weapons, the United States has so many weapons—everyone will be afraid of using them.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** They will inevitably use them! That is nature’s arrangement. “You all die”—that is nature’s arrangement. For instance, in your country you have so many cars that even a poor man goes almost everywhere by car and hardly an inch on foot—because there are so many cars. So, because there are so many weapons now, they must be used. That is the natural sequence.

**Guest:** But every country knows that an atomic war would mean total destruction.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Well, total or partial—that we shall see. But the weapons will be used.... Everything can be solved by understanding these three items: God is the proprietor, He is the enjoyer, He is the friend of everyone. But the scientists and philosophers and politicians are acting with just the opposite understanding: “I am the

proprietor, I am the enjoyer, I am the friend—because I am God.” You see? And everyone who says he’s the people’s friend ultimately proves to be their enemy. President Nixon collected votes by pretending to be a friend, and later on he proved an enemy.... Everyone.... Gandhi pretended to be a friend, but he proved to be an enemy. Otherwise, why was he shot down? Unless some people regarded him as an enemy, why was he shot down? So nobody can be your actual friend, except Kṛṣṇa.

**Disciple:** But the Lord’s pure devotee—he’s also a friend to all....

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Because he carries the message of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is everyone’s friend, and the pure

real friendship. You are giving people the message of Lord Caitanya [Kṛṣṇa’s most recent incarnation, who appeared in India five centuries ago]: *kota nidrā yāo māyā-piśācīra kole ... enechi auśadhi māyā nāśibāra lāgi* / *hari-nāma mahā-mantra lao tumi māgi*: “People everywhere, you are sleeping under the spell of māyā, illusion. How long will you sleep and suffer in this world of death and rebirth? I’ve brought you this eternal, spiritual medicine. Take it and sleep no more.” *Hari-nāma mahā-mantra lao tumi māgi*: “Now take the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra—this is your medicine.”  
**Guest:** So all the relationships within this material world are based on enmity? But the scientists and

**How long will you sleep and suffer in this world of death and rebirth? I’ve brought you this eternal, spiritual medicine. Take it and sleep no more.**

devotee is carrying the friend’s message. Therefore he is a friend. If there is a nice friend, and if somebody gives information about that nice friend, he is also a friend. Therefore, nobody can be an actual friend except Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa’s representative. Materialistic life means, “I am your enemy, and you are my enemy.” Envy and enmity—this is the whole construction of the material world. So how can the enemy become a friend? This is pretension, cheating.

**Disciple:** When we go out to distribute your books, we’re letting people know that your disciples are actually their friends, also.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Oh, yes. That is

philosophers and politicians often speak highly of love.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That is not love. That is lust—“As soon as my lusty desire is not fulfilled, then you are my enemy.”

**Guest:** Sometimes, though, it seems these people really have our best interests at heart.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Sometimes we see a dog swimming in the water, and we may think, “Oh, let me capture his tail and I shall cross.” Similarly, those who are thinking the so-called scientists and philosophers or any other materialistic person will solve their problems—it is exactly like trying to cross the Pacific Ocean by capturing the tail of a dog.



# THE VEDIC

## Transcendental Commentary

### MY LAND, MY PEOPLE

*In a world torn by racial discrimination, the philosophy of the Vedic scriptures shows a way to harmonious living*

Recently a politician from Maharashtra declared that his state is for the Marathis alone, and people from other states should leave Maharashtra.

Perhaps this statement sounds familiar. You too might have been subjected to it. Discrimination on the basis of race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin is a global issue. Pubs in London, subways in Germany, offices in USA, and even government policies in many countries reflect this phenomenon. Emotions are roused by propaganda of fear and insecurity: “The ‘other man’ will take my job, my land, my wealth.” The only shelter appears to be politicians and social leaders who cry out loudly, “My land for my people!”

Man seeks security and shelter, and a cohort of individuals similar to him does appear to provide it. But what probably started as a primitive concept of making borders to guard against hostile strangers, has now evolved to attitudes of misconceived racial superiority, religious fanaticism, long running tension between nations, war, and global terrorism.

#### YOU ARE DIFFERENT

Let us try to analyze this theory

of ‘My land for my people’.

It makes one think that ‘my’ people are those who are my relatives, or those born in my caste, culture, region, religion, or tract of land. Everyone not sharing my designations is thus unfit to enjoy on equal footing.

Superficially one may find differences between one man and another. But deep inside we are all the same—our blood is red and bones are white, our hearts beat the same way, and the lungs breathe alike, the eyes, the brain, the cells, the physiology and anatomy, the heartfelt joy of love and the pain of loss—everything is identical in all the six billion people of the world. Our difference is just skin deep, or perhaps, it is just a difference in cultural practices.

Kindly ponder over the facts. Is this difference worth cultivating prejudice, hate, and violence?

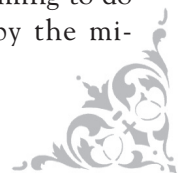
#### LAND AND MONEY

Recently I traveled to the holy town of Janakpur, the birthplace of Mother Sītā. The town lies in Nepal, and after a simple security-check we crossed the borders from India and stepped in to a ‘foreign land’. I looked around. The land

was same as we had seen on the Indian side of border—same colour, same grass, same trees. There was hardly any difference. As one travels further one may see more geographical variations, but barely do they correspond to political boundaries. Most states are created simply by drawing a line on a map. There is hardly any physical reality to the demarcation—except the barbed fences.

So what the world teaches me to consider ‘my land’ is a tract of land given to me on a very temporary basis. It existed before I came into existence, and it will continue to exist even when I am gone, supporting people that will have no connection with me. So why have a false sense of proprietorship? Why fight over it?

The Maharashtrian leader accuses the outsiders of taking over limited job options rendering the natives unemployed. But a look at the industry after mass-scale migrations of outsider laborers shows that their vacancies are still not filled by the locals. In some cases it is because the jobs require specialized training and in others it is because the locals are unwilling to do the menial jobs done by the mi-



# OBSERVER

## on the Issue of the Day

grants. So the industry suffers.

The migrants may also be accused of being parasites availing better facilities without contributing anything in tax-returns. But barely 15-20 percent of Indians pay taxes, and they support the remaining populations. The migrants may not pay direct taxes but by doing their job they do support the economy. Everyone can be employed based on the skills he possesses enabling him to be socio-economically productive. What about Maharashtrians working outside? Should we call them back?

### ANCIENT WISDOM SHOWS THE WAY

We can see by plain commonsense that the policy of discrimination against members of other states is not a mature understanding. Here we would like to present before the readers an insight into this problem based on Vedic wisdom.

The *Bhagavad-gītā* states that identifying ourselves with our physical and mental attributes is an incorrect understanding. Our real identity is that we are spirit souls, parts and parcels of God, the universal father.

*Śrī Īsopaniṣad*, another Vedic text states:

*īśāvāsyam idam sarvaṁ  
yat kiñca jagatyāṁ jagat  
tena tyaktena bhuñjīthā  
mā gṛdhaḥ kasya svid dhanam*

“Everything animate or inani-

mate that is within the universe is controlled and owned by the Lord. One should therefore accept only those things necessary for himself, which are set aside as his quota, and one should not accept other things, knowing well to whom they belong.” (Mantra One)

Based on these principles let’s try to find a holistic solution to the original problem.

When we are unaware of our real spiritual identity, our intelligence sways to the strong current of false identity created by this material body. So we begin to think I am a man, I am Indian, I am housewife, I am rich, I am *brāhmaṇa*. We think everything related to this body—my relatives, my house, my caste, my nation—is mine. This network of illusion expands and completely entwines the thinking power of a person. In this bound stage he can only think of ‘mine’ and ‘yours’, and this is the basis of discrimination.

But when we understand that we are spirit souls and God is the original father of all living entities then we can identify with a fellow being as our brother or sister. The distinction based on physical, cultural, and other differences melts away and a new relationship centered around pleasing Kṛṣṇa evolves.

Now we should apply the second principle as elaborated in *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*. When we consider God as the owner of everything and are satisfied with what we need, we will be happy to share the remaining

with others. Poverty is the result of greed of a few and exploitation of many. A simple life of satisfaction and sharing holds the key to poverty eradication. As the invocation of *Śrī Īsopaniṣad* states: “The Personality of Godhead is perfect and complete, and because He is completely perfect, all emanations from Him, such as this phenomenal world, are perfectly equipped as complete wholes . . .”

We can be assured that since God is perfect, His arrangements to care for the inhabitants of this world are also perfect. There is no need for a child of God to fear.

With the acceptance of these spiritual principles we find our hearts free from the narrow-minded concerns of the politics of this world. Hatred, tension, and differences cease to bother us. A spirit of love and care for our less fortunate brethren bathes our motives and guides our actions.

We can then easily identify with the teachings of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* which states:

*yasyātma-buddhiḥ  
kuṇape tri-dhātuke  
sva-dhiḥ kalatrādiṣu  
bhauma ijya-dhiḥ  
yat-tīrtha-buddhiḥ  
salile na karhicij  
janeṣv abhijñeṣu sa  
eva go-kharaḥ*

“A human being who identifies this body made of three elements (please turn to page 29)





# In your own words . . .



*What is the best Kṛṣṇa conscious lesson you have learned from someone?*

I LEARNT THE BEST Kṛṣṇa conscious lesson in a lecture by Satyavatī Devī Dāsī during the 9th Cetanā festival for girls in ISKCON Pune. She told a story of three merchants travelling for business. It was a moonless night and they reached a place full of stones when a celestial voice spoke to them: “Collect as many stones as you can. If you won’t do so it will please you now, but later you will lament.” The merchants considering all possibilities finally carried small stones with them as they were already carrying heavy luggage. The next morning upon opening their bags, they found stones of sapphire, emerald, gold, diamond, ruby and so on. They were overjoyed. But, then they lamented for carrying only small stones because of fear of becoming getting burdened. Similar is our case as devotees. Chanting 16 rounds, hearing, dancing, book distribution, etc., may appear as burden to us right now but we will realize their importance later when precious time would have slipped out of our hands.

Payal Kasat  
Solapur, Maharashtra

I AM A SCHOOLTEACHER. Years ago when I taught in Leicester, England, I was tidying my classroom at the end of the day. The door was open, and suddenly a female blackbird flew in noisily, im-

mediately followed by a male blackbird. The female flew towards a closed window, swerved at the last moment, and then flew out of the classroom door. The male was going so fast that he didn’t see the window and didn’t swerve in time. He hit the glass and dropped dead, his neck broken. I was stunned by this event and thought, “The male bird was so intent on sex that he didn’t see death approaching.” I resolved to become more determined in my pursuit of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and to chant better rounds, because, as the blackbird taught me, death can come to claim us at any moment. And when it does, we must be able to think of Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa Bhajana Dāsa  
Alachua, Florida, USA

I AM INSPIRED BY THE story where a son of a devotee is asked to offer *bhoga* to the Lord. The boy out of his ignorance and innocence calls out for Kṛṣṇa to come and eat, thinking that the Lord eats just like he does. Eventually he begins to cry pitifully begging Kṛṣṇa to come. Kṛṣṇa is moved by his innocence, and He sits and starts eating. But the priest and the devotees could not believe that Kṛṣṇa was eating at the request of the young child.

This is a different *bhāva* that is exhibited by a kid who has no idea of the scriptures or rituals. He merely calls the Lord sincerely from the depths of his soul. The kid was

actually giving orders to Kṛṣṇa, but Kṛṣṇa was pleased with him as He must have recognised this scolding and ordering as a form of devotional request.

Dr. Ramesh Kumaran  
Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu

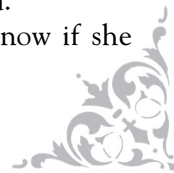
SINCE I STARTED VISITING the Hare Kṛṣṇa temple, I have been keeping a small online blog about my spiritual questions, musings, experiences, and difficulties. I use it to try and connect with other devotees to learn from them. I constantly struggle with breaking free from *māyā*, and it has been a great tool in helping me work things out and getting advice and suggested readings from other devotees.

One of my nondevotee friends is very interested in my progress and asked if she could read about it. I saw no problem with this and added her to my blog. She doesn’t understand all of it, but she does respect it, as she has also been trying to be more spiritual in her own life.

One night I was depressed because I was alone. There was no one around to talk to or be with. Feeling very sad and distressed, I suddenly had the instinct to write a post to my spiritual blog about how I was feeling.

My friend posted this one sentence in response: “You are not alone; Kṛṣṇa is with you.”

To this day I don’t know if she



was joking, being sarcastic, or really meant for me to realize that. But since that day, whenever I feel lonely or sad I try to remember this fact, thanks to her.

Stephanie Freitas  
Brooklyn, New York, USA

WHY AM I BORN AS A human being? What is the use and sanctity of this birth? Why am I not born as a tree or a plant or a worm or an animal? Any person who ponders over these questions will realise the philosophy of the cycle of birth and death. One who is irretrievably lost in material enjoyments and fails to attain spiritual knowledge is allowed to suffer the rigours and pains of the cycle. But, one who becomes conscious that the human form is precious, and revives his relation with the Lord through unflinching and selfless devotional service coveting to lie forever at His lotus feet as a speck of dirt, is bound to endear himself to the Lord and reach His abode in one life or the other.

Therefore, the avoidance of rebirth is one of the best Kṛṣṇa conscious lessons I have learned at the inimitable and supreme religious edifice of ISKCON.

R. M. Manoharan  
Chennai, Tamil Nadu

In the year 2000, my Guru Mahārāja, His Holiness Lokanāth Swami, was holding a seven-day *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam kathā* in Nagpur, India. As the last day fell on Janmāṣṭamī, the organizers had a little boy dressed as Kṛṣṇa come onto the stage. My Guru Mahārāja immediately bowed down and placed the little boy's hands on his head.

What we saw was a little boy dressed as Kṛṣṇa, but Guru Mahārāja saw only Kṛṣṇa.

This incident really made an impact on my mind. I pray that the day will come when I too can always see Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa Kumārī Dāsī  
Sydney, Australia

ONE FATEFUL MORNING, while my husband and I were out of town, our daughter Jyoti was caught in a terrible accident and received third degree burns. As she lay in the burn ward at a government hospital, I ran back and forth, taking care of her with little help. I had to manage all her dressings and bring her *prasādam* instead of the awful hospital food. The only solace was the occasional visits of devotees who came to see Jyoti.

When time permitted, I read *The Nectar of Devotion* to her, but strangely, the nurses would object to it. Soon I began hiding it under Jyoti's pillow as soon as I heard them coming. A month passed in this way, and the absence of a devotional atmosphere became unbearable. But when I asked the doctor when they would discharge Jyoti, he answered gravely, "These wounds don't heal fast, and negligence would be fatal. The patient will have to stay for at least one more month."

Devastated, I longed for *darśana* of the Deities, and for temple programs, which I missed dearly. I began to lose hope.

Finally, our counselor, Braja Dāsī, saw my anguish and asked, "Do you not pray to your spiritual master for mercy?"

Her words struck me. Immediately, I sat down, and through my tears, prayed fervently to my spiritual master Rādhānātha Swami that I wanted to get out of this hospital and spend more time in devotional service.

The next day, to my surprise, the

doctor informed me that Jyoti had been discharged.

Kauśalya Dāsī  
Mumbai

It is rather amazing to recall how at the fag end of my life of 68 years, I visited His Holiness Indradyumna Swamiji along with my youngest son. It was October of 2002 in Vṛndāvana *dhāma*. Until that moment I was totally ignorant of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, though my son and daughter had become life members from ISKCON Chennai. Swamiji questioned me about my zeal to join the ISKCON and to adapt sincerely all regulative principles viz. *śravaṇam*, chanting 16 rounds, reading *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā*, visiting holy *dhāmas* like Māyāpur, Purī, Dvāraka etc., and performing devotional services. I totally surrendered to all his wishes. I spent 15 days with him visiting all the glorious places of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes around Vṛndāvana.

Finally I was given initiation in November 2004 at the advanced age of 70. The main inspiration emanated from my Gurudeva who is a visible servant of Lord Kṛṣṇa in this Kali-yuga.

Śyāmasundara Dāsa,  
Pondicherry

## IN YOUR OWN WORDS

### QUESTIONS FOR THE FORTHCOMING ISSUES

What is your favourite type of devotional service?

Answers will be published  
in June, July & August.

Word limit: 150 words  
E-mail: ed.btgindia@pamho.net



Consciousness ....

(Continued from page 21)

would fall back. I knew Caitanya was coming to check on Gītā, and I tried to comfort Gītā by chanting softly the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra into his ear until Caitanya came.

“They are not unfeeling objects,” said Professor Marc Bekoff of the University of Colorado, US. He, Professor Donald Brown, Professor Christine Nicole, and others from around the globe spoke at the Compassion in World Farming Trust (CIWF Trust) conference in London in 2005.

The Bristol University researchers documented and reported at the conference how cows within a herd form friendship groups of between two and four animals with whom they spend most of their time, often grooming and licking each other. They will also dislike other cows, and can bear grudges for months or years.

“Talk of animal sentience is often brushed off as fluffy and sentimental—not the stuff of science or the real world. But perhaps we have been too hasty in our dismissal—perhaps consciousness does not peer through our eyes alone.” Julianna Kettlewell, BBC news science reporter at conference.

When Caitanya came, we spent a couple of hours trying to make Gītā comfortable and softly speaking to him caring and loving words that calmed him. The winds were very strong and loud and then there was a sudden change in Gītā. He started putting his head in the air and opening his mouth. He no longer reacted to our words. We felt he was in the process of leaving this material world and in another realm. By then it was late evening. A few hours away and it would be lord Nityānanda’s Appearance day.

## THE FINAL DAY

We had always called Gītā the *brāhmaṇa* of the twins. He was always the gentleman, sensitive to the feelings of others. Listening to Śrīla Prabhupāda chanting, tasting Gaṅgā water, with *Govardhana-śilā* in his sight, on Lord Nityānanda’s Appearance day, Gītā left his body.

*The humble sage, by virtue of true knowledge, sees with equal vision a learned and gentle brāhmaṇa, a cow, an elephant, a dog, and a dog-eater (outcaste).*

Bhagavad-gītā 5.18

*Chāyā Devī Dāsī was initiated by Śrīla Prabhupāda in 1971. She and her husband Balabhadra Dāsa incorporated the International Society for Cow Protection (ISCOWP). Her husband is the ISKCON Minister for Cow Protection and Agriculture. They live on the 165-acre ISCOWP farm in rural West Virginia, USA. For more information please refer to [www.iscowp.org](http://www.iscowp.org).*

### References:

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“Farm Animals Need Emotional TLC,” BBC News Online 4/05



### The Mango ....

(Continued from page 32)

through the discussions of authorized devotees.

Here is an example where material and spiritual ways of tasting are compared: The mango fruit is different from the name of the mango. One cannot taste the mango fruit simply by chanting, “Mango, mango, mango.” But the devotee who knows that there is no differ-

ence between the name and the form of the Lord chants Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, and realizes that he is always in Kṛṣṇa’s company.

The speculative process of empiric philosophy is as bitter as the fruit of the *nimba* tree. Tasting this fruit is the business of crows. In other words, the philosophical process of realizing the Absolute Truth is a process taken up by crow-like men. But the cuckoo-like devotees have very sweet voices with which to chant the holy name of the Lord and taste the sweet fruit of the mango tree of love of Godhead. Such devotees relish sweet mellows with the Lord.

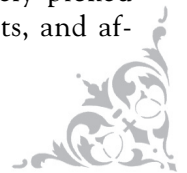
The unfortunate transcendentalists simply speculate on dry philosophy, whereas the transcendentalists who are in love with Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa enjoy fruit just like the cuckoo. Thus those who are devotees of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are most fortunate. The bitter *nimba* fruit is not at all eatable; it is simply full of dry speculation and is only fit for crow like philosophers. Mango seeds, however, are very relishable, and those in the devotional service of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa enjoy them.

We shall end this with a wonderful mango pastime:

One day Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu performed *saṅkīrtana* with all His devotees, and when they were greatly fatigued they sat down. The Lord then sowed a mango seed in the yard, and immediately the seed fructified into a tree and began to grow.

As people looked on, the tree became fully grown, with fruits that fully ripened. Thus everyone was struck with wonder.

The Lord immediately picked about two hundred fruits, and af-





ter washing them He offered them to Kṛṣṇa to eat. The fruits were all red and yellow, with no seed inside and no skin outside. They were full of nectarean juice and were so sweet that a man would be fully satisfied by eating only one.

In India a mango is considered best when it is red and yellow, its seed is very small, its skin is very thin, and it is so palatable that if a person eats one fruit he will be satisfied.

Seeing the quality of the mangoes, the Lord was greatly satisfied, and thus after eating first, He fed all the other devotees.

In this way, fruits grew on the tree every day throughout the twelve months of the year, and the Vaiṣṇavas used to eat them, to the Lord's great satisfaction.

In this way the Lord performed *saṅkīrtana* every day, and at the end of *saṅkīrtana* there was a mango-eating festival every day for twelve months. ❀

- Śyāmānanda Dāsa



### Two-point...

(Continued from page 17)

to become centripetal millionaires.

Therefore as intelligent people, let's chose to be spiritually ambitious. Then we will rediscover our spiritual peacefulness and joyfulness, re-awaken our innate love for God and become truly happy—in this life and the next.

To help us stay focused on our goal, the *Bhagavad-gītā* (5.21) recommends, "Detached from external sense pleasures, concentrating on inner spiritual happiness, a spiritualist progressively becomes situated on the spiritual platform and attains imperishable happiness." In

our cultural context, this two-point formula means:

1. Materially see those who are below us—having lower salaries, smaller houses, fewer or simpler gadgets—and be satisfied with what we have. 2. Spiritually see those who are above us—investing more time in meditation and chanting of holy names—and follow in their footsteps. ❀

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### My Land...

(Continued from page 25)

with his self, who considers the by-products of the body to be his kinsmen, who considers the land of birth worshipable, and who goes to the place of pilgrimage simply to take a bath rather than meet men of transcendental knowledge there, is to be considered like an ass or a cow." (SB 10.84.13)

Someone may say that unity is possible even at some material level. Caste, color, birth, nationality etc., can also unite people. We see, however, that differences do exist at a micro level even in an apparently united group. For example Maharashtrians may unite against people of other states, but they have internal differences between people coming from different areas in Maharashtra. Indians and Pakistanis may not see each other eye to eye in their homelands, but can gel as amicable friends in a white neighbourhood.

## A SPIRITUAL ATTACHMENT

Attachment for the land that supports us and the people whom we relate to is a natural human tendency. Is there a way we can spiritualize this need?

Looking for a solution I was reminded of an incident. I was performing a *parikramā* of Vṛndāvana alone. It was dusk and ahead of me were a simple Vrajavāsī family. The husband carried a baby boy on his shoulders and with his right hand held the hand of his elder child. The wife followed behind, her head covered. They spoke in Vraja *boli*, sang songs glorifying Lord Kṛṣṇa and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, and revealed to their children various holy spots on the pilgrimage path.

I followed them, an urbanite, educated in western methods, brought up in a sophisticated way that was far away from that rural reality. Culturally poles apart, and a complete stranger—yet in my heart I was feeling a strong bond of kinship with that simple Vrajavāsī family, a bond stronger than any connection that I had with anyone in this world.

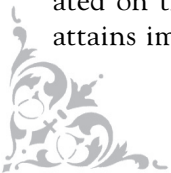
"What is the foundation of this bond?" I pondered. The answer unfolded in the words of Lord Caitanya: "*ārādhyo bhagavān vrajeṣa-tanayas tad-dhāma vṛndāvanam.*"

"Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda Mahārāja, in the Vṛndāvanadhāma of Vrajabhūmi, is the supreme worshipable Deity, and His place Vṛndāvana is similarly worshipable."

That day on that dusky path around the holy town of Vṛndavana, that Vrajavāsī family and I were united in our attraction and worship of the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa and His dearmost abode Vṛndāvana.

Perhaps this is the attachment that all of us need. ❀

By Murāri Gupta Dāsa



The International Society for Krishna Consciousness

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## Vaiṣṇava Calendar 1 May - 15 June 2008

**1 May:** Śrīla Vṛndāvana Dāsa Ṭhākura – Disappearance

**2 May:** Fasting for Varūthinī Ekādaśī

**3 May:** Break fast (Mumbai) 06:10 a.m. - 10:27 a.m.

**5 May:** Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita — Appearance

**8 May:** Candana Yātrā starts (Continues for 21 days)

**11 May:** Jāhnu Saptami

**13 May:** Śrīmatī Sitā Devī (consort of Lord Śrī Rāma) – Appearance, Śrī Madhu Paṇḍita – Disappearance, Śrīmatī Jāhnavā Devī – Appearance, End of Jala Dāna

**16 May:** Fasting for Mohini Ekādaśī, Rukmiṇī Dvādaśī

**17 May:** Break fast (Mumbai) 06:03 a.m. - 10:24 a.m., Śrī Jayānanda Prabhu – Disappearance

**18 May:** Nrsimha Caturdaśī: Appearance of Lord Nrsimhadeva (Fasting till dusk)

**19 May:** Kṛṣṇa Phula Ḍola, Salila Vihāra, Śrī Parameśvarī Dāsa Ṭhākura – Disappearance, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāmana Devajī – Appearance

**20 May:** Śrī Mādhavendra Purī – Appearance, Śrī Śrīnivāsa Ācārya – Appearance

**25 May:** Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya – Disappearance

**31 May:** Fasting for Aparā Ekādaśī

**1 June:** Break fast (Mumbai) 06:01 a.m. - 10:24 a.m. (Daylight saving not considered), Śrīla Vṛndāvana Dāsa Ṭhākura – Appearance

**13 June:** Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhāṣaṇa – Disappearance, Gaṅgā Pūjā, Śrīmatī Gaṅgāmātā Gosvāmīnī – Appearance

**14 June:** Fasting for Pāṇḍava Nirjalā Ekādaśī (Total fast, even from water)

**15 June:** Break fast (Mumbai) 06:01 a.m. - 10:26 a.m.



# THE MANGO SEASON

**M**ango—the king of fruits. A favourite fruit of Sanskrit poets for its metaphoric use. Let us see a few examples: Śrīla Prabhupāda once said that in its unripe stage a mango is considered a mango, and when it becomes ripe and relishable it is still a mango. So even when a newcomer begins to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa his activities are within the realm of love of God and are pleasing to Kṛṣṇa. But activities of *karma*, *jñāna*, and *yoga* are not pleasing to Kṛṣṇa unless they are dovetailed with *bhakti*.

*Bhakti* is more than a process leading to a result—it is the constitutional nature of the living being. As Lord Caitanya states in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 20.108): *jivera 'svarūpa' haya—kṛṣṇera 'nitya-dāsa'*: “It is the living entity’s constitutional position to be an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa.” Even in the beginning stages, *bhakti* is both the means and the end.

Another example concerns mango juice: the Sanskrit word *rasa* means juice, just like the juice of an orange or a mango. And the author of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* requests that you kindly try to taste the *rasa*, or juice, of the fruit of the *Bhāgavatam*.

Why should you taste the juice of the fruit of the *Bhāgavatam*?

Because it is the ripened fruit of the Vedic desire tree. As a desire tree, whatever you want you can have from the *Vedas*. *Veda* means knowledge. There are different branches of knowledge in the Vedic writings, including sociology, politics, medicine and military art. All these and other branches of knowledge required for human society are perfectly described in the *Vedas*. It is so complete that whether you want to enjoy this material world or you want to enjoy spiritual life, both kinds of knowledge are there. If you follow the Vedic principles, then you will be happy. This is like the codes of the state. If the citizens obey, then they will be happy, there will be no criminal trespassing, and they will enjoy life. And *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is considered to be the ripened fruit of this desire-fulfilling tree of the *Vedas*.

A tree is honoured by the production of its fruit.

For example, a mango tree is considered very valuable because it produces the king of all fruits, the mango. When the mango fruit becomes ripened it is the greatest gift of that tree, and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is similarly held to be the ripened fruit of the Vedic tree. And as ripened fruit becomes more relishable when first touched by the beak of a parrot, or Śuka, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* has become more relishable by being delivered through the transcendental mouth of Śukadeva Gosvāmi.

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* should be received in disciplic succession without any breakage. When a ripened fruit comes from the upper part of the tree onto the ground by the process of being handed down from a higher branch to a lower branch by persons in the tree, the fruit does not break. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, when received in the *paramparā* system, or disciplic succession, will likewise remain unbroken. It is stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* that the disciplic succession, or *paramparā*, is the way of receiving transcendental knowledge. Such knowledge must come down through the disciplic succession, through authorized persons who know the real purpose of the *śāstra*. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu recommended that one learn *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from the mouth of the self-realized person called *Bhāgavatam*. *Bhāgavatam* means “in relationship with the Personality of Godhead [*Bhagavān*].” So the devotee is sometimes called *Bhāgavatam*, and the book which is in relationship with devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead is also called *Bhāgavatam*. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu recommended that, in order to relish the real taste of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, one should take instruction from the person *Bhāgavatam*. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is relishable even by a liberated person. Śukadeva Gosvāmī admitted that although he was liberated from within the very womb of his mother, it was only after relishing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that he became a great devotee. Thus, one who is desirous of advancing in Kṛṣṇa consciousness should relish the purport of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (please turn to page 28)

