

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

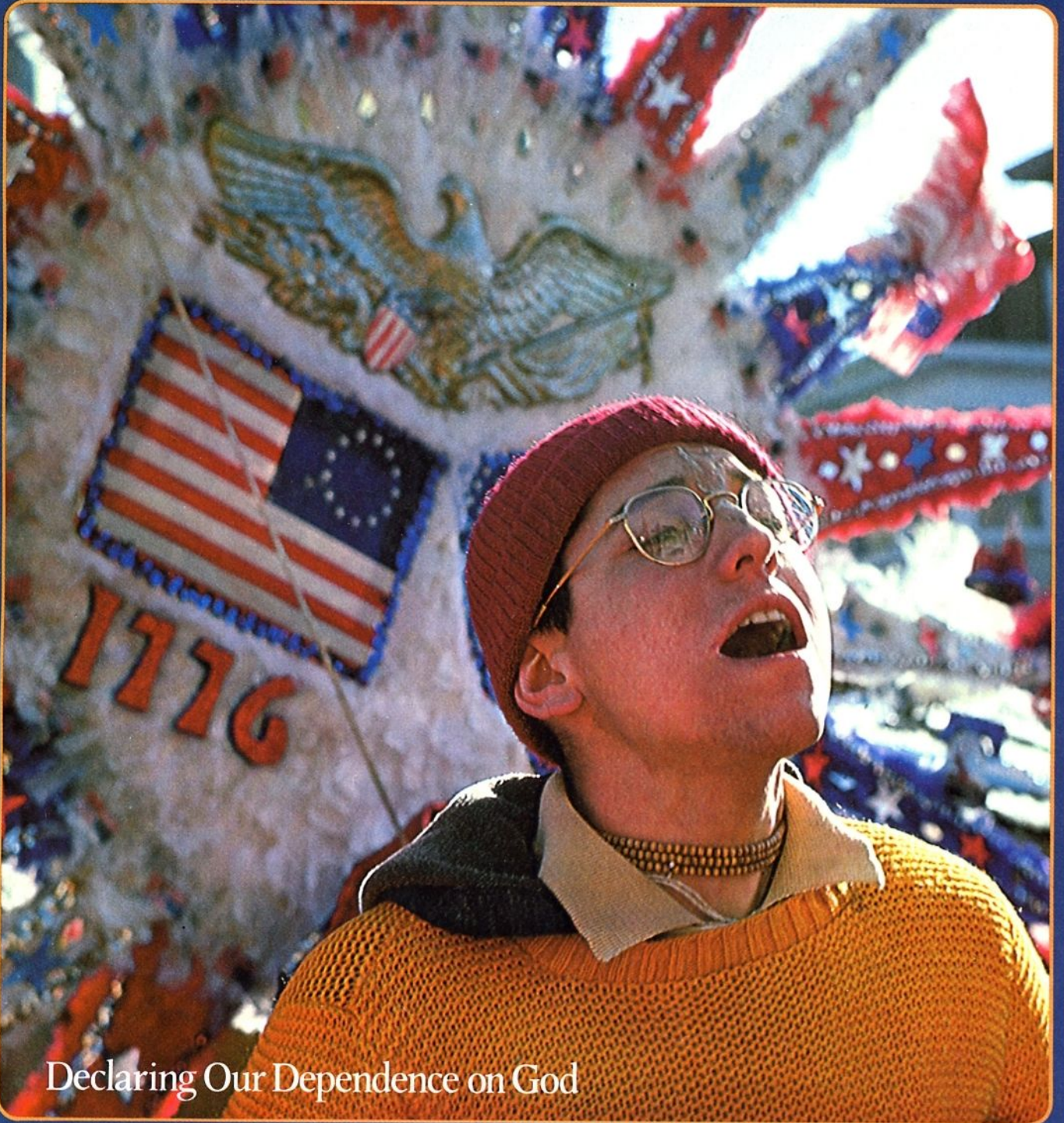


BACK TO GODHEAD



Vol.11 No.7

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT



Declaring Our Dependence on God

A short statement of the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) is a worldwide community of devotees practicing bhakti-yoga, the eternal science of loving service to God. The Society was founded in 1966 by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, a pure devotee of God representing an unbroken chain of spiritual masters originating with Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself. The following eight principles are the basis of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

We invite all our readers to consider them with an open mind and then visit one of the ISKCON centers to see how they are being applied in everyday life.

1. By sincerely cultivating a bona fide spiritual science, we can be free from anxiety and come to a state of pure, unending, blissful consciousness in this lifetime.
2. We are not our bodies but eternal spirit souls, parts and parcels of God (Kṛṣṇa). As such, we are all brothers, and Kṛṣṇa is ultimately our common father.
3. Kṛṣṇa is the eternal, all-knowing, omnipresent, all-powerful, and all-attractive Personality of Godhead. He is the seed-giving father of all living beings, and He is the sustaining energy of the entire cosmic creation.
4. The Absolute Truth is contained in all the great scriptures of the world. However, the oldest known revealed scriptures in existence are the Vedic literatures, most notably the *Bhagavad-gītā*, which is the literal record of God's actual words.
5. We should learn the Vedic knowledge from a genuine spiritual master—one who has no selfish motives and whose mind is firmly fixed on Kṛṣṇa.
6. Before we eat, we should offer to the Lord the food that sustains us. Then Kṛṣṇa becomes the offering and purifies us.
7. We should perform all our actions as offerings to Kṛṣṇa and do nothing for our own sense gratification.
8. The recommended means for achieving the mature stage of love of God in this age of Kali, or quarrel, is to chant the holy names of the Lord. The easiest method for most people is to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*:

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



Photo: Muralivadana dāsa

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



God has an unlimited variety of names. Some of them—Jehovah, Adonai, Buddha, and Allah—are familiar to us, while the names Kṛṣṇa and Rāma may be less so. However, whatever name of God we may accept, all scriptures enjoin us to chant it for spiritual purification.

Muhammad counseled, “Glorify the name of your Lord, the most high” (Koran 87.2). Saint Paul said, “Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved” (Romans 10:13).

Lord Buddha declared, “All who sincerely call upon my name will come to me after death, and I will take them to Paradise” (*Vows of Amida Buddha* 18). King David preached, “From the rising of the sun to its setting, the name of the Lord is to be praised” (Psalms 113:3). And the world’s oldest scriptures, the *Vedas* of India, emphatically state, “Chant the holy name, chant the holy name, chant the holy name of the Lord. In this age of quarrel there is no

other way, no other way, no other way to attain spiritual enlightenment” (*Bṛhan-nāradya Purāṇa*).

The special design of the Hare Kṛṣṇa chant makes it easy to repeat and pleasant to hear. Spoken or sung, by yourself or in a group, *Hare Kṛṣṇa* invariably produces a joyful state of spiritual awareness—Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Find out more about Kṛṣṇa consciousness in this issue of BACK TO GODHEAD magazine.

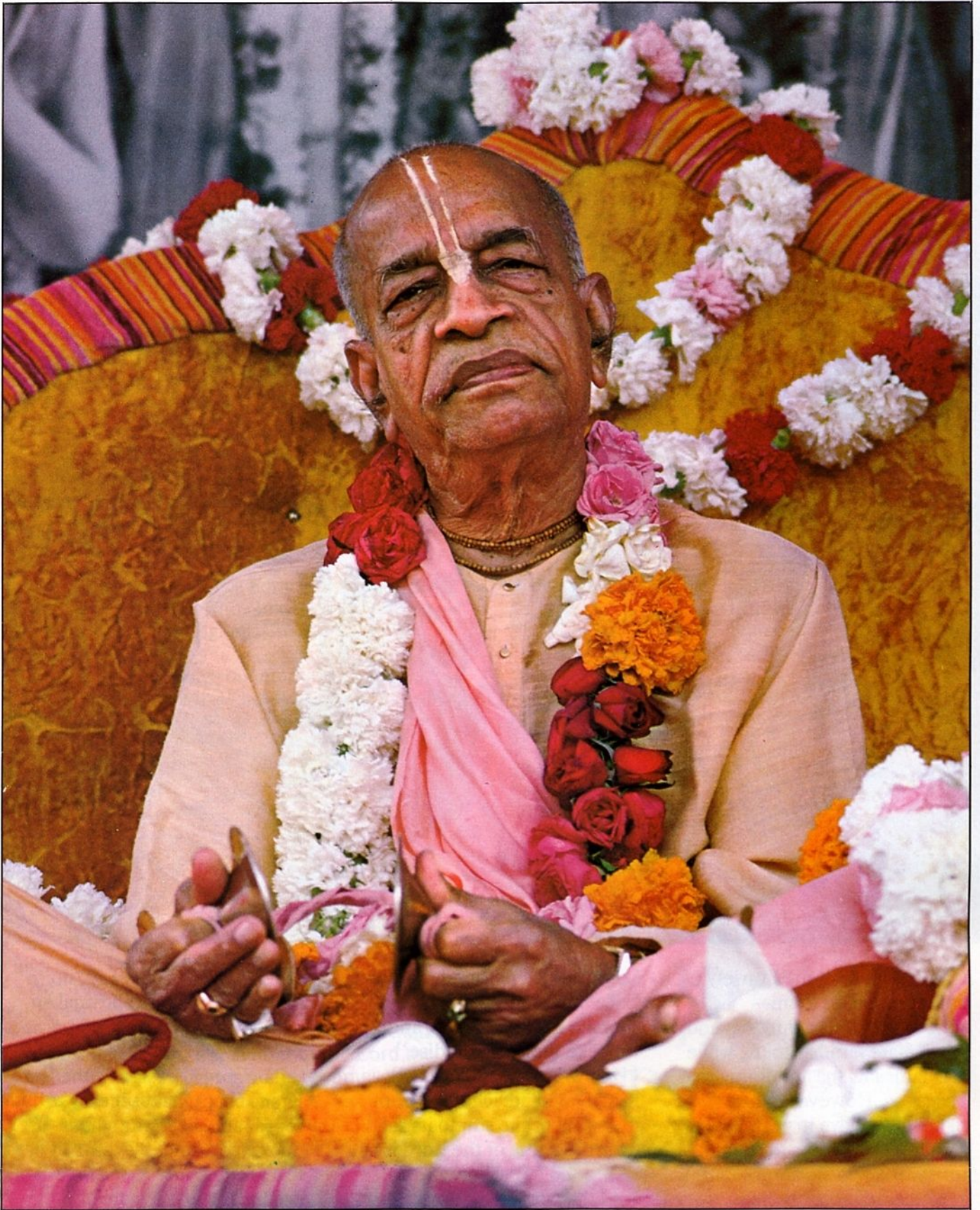


Photo: Viśākhā-devī dāśī (San Diego)

His Divine Grace

A.C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA

Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

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THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT

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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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PRONUNCIATION OF SANSKRIT WORDS

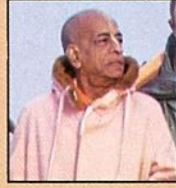
Sanskrit words and names in BACK TO GODHEAD are spelled according to a system that scholars throughout the world use to show how to pronounce each word. Vowels in Sanskrit are pronounced almost as in Italian. The sound of the short *a* is like the *u* in *but*. The long *ā* is like the *a* in *far* and held twice as long as the short *a*, and *e* is like the *a* in *evade*. Long *ī* is like the *i* in *pike*. The vowel *rī* is pronounced like the *ri* in the English word *rim*. The *c* is pronounced as in the English word *chair*. The aspirated consonants (*ch*, *jh*, *dh*, etc.) are pronounced as in *staunch-heart*, *hedg-hog* and *red-hot*. The two spirants *ś* and *ṣ* are like the English *sh*, and *s* is like the *s* in *sun*. So pronounce *Kṛṣṇa* as KRISHNA and *Caitanya* as CHAITANYA.

◀ The founder and original editor

of BACK TO GODHEAD is His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. Śrīla Prabhupāda first came to the United States in September of 1965, and by July of 1966 he had begun the International Society for Krishna Consciousness in a small storefront in New York City.

From the beginning, BACK TO GODHEAD magazine was an integral part of ISKCON. In fact, it has often been called "the backbone of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement" by Śrīla Prabhupāda, who began writing, printing and distributing it himself in 1944. Over the years, BACK TO GODHEAD has changed in many ways, but its purpose has remained one: to present topics concerning Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for the spiritual enlightenment of its readers.

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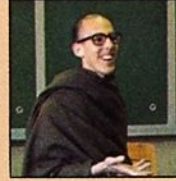
Taking a transcendental outlook on the ideals of the American Revolution, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda calls for the creation of a spiritual culture in which all social classes—including the leaders—would serve God.



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Chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa in the cities, teaching philosophy in the schools, and building Vedic villages in the countryside, ISKCON devotees begin their second decade of spirited service to Kṛṣṇa and humanity. A special pictorial report by the BACK TO GODHEAD staff.



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After committing criminal acts, political leaders have rarely earned more than token forgiveness from those they sought to exploit. One exception was King Dhṛtarāṣṭra. By the kindness of Kṛṣṇa's devotees, he attained the peace of spiritual liberation.

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The continuing presentation of India's great spiritual classic. Translation and commentary by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.



ON THE COVER

With an urgency reminiscent of Paul Revere, an ISKCON devotee in Philadelphia chants Hare Kṛṣṇa to awaken people to revolution. But his is a revolution in consciousness: he and others like him strive to free the country and the world from spiritual ignorance. Their battle cry: "Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and your life will be sublime." Photograph by Muralīvadana dāsa.

Two hundred years ago, Americans fought the War of Independence to assure life, liberty, and happiness in a fledgling nation. In a conversation with the BACK TO GODHEAD staff, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda explains that Americans can actually achieve these things only by maintaining a God conscious society, with God conscious leaders.

Declaring Our Dependence on God

BTG: Thomas Jefferson put the basic philosophy of the American Revolution into the Declaration of Independence. The important men of the day who signed this document agreed that there are certain very obvious or self-evident truths, the first of which is that all men are created equal. By this they meant that all men are equal before the law and have an equal opportunity to be protected by the law.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, in that sense men are, as you say, created equal.

BTG: Another point in the Declaration of Independence is that all men are endowed by God with certain natural rights that cannot be taken away from them. These are the rights of life, liberty, and—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But animals also have the right to life. Why don't animals also have the right to live? The rabbits, for instance, are living in their own way in the forest. Why does the government allow hunters to go and shoot them?

BTG: They were simply talking about human beings.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Then they have no real philosophy. The narrow idea that my family or my brother is good, and that I can kill others, is criminal. Suppose that for my family's sake I kill your father. Is that philosophy? Real philosophy is *suhrdam sarva-bhūtānām*: friendly to all living entities. Certainly this applies to human beings, but even if you unnecessarily kill one animal, I shall immediately protest, "What nonsense are you doing?"

BTG: The founders of America said that another natural right is the right to liberty, or freedom. Freedom in the sense that the government doesn't have the right to tell you what kind of job you have to do.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: If the government is not perfect, it should not be allowed

to tell people what to do. But if the government is perfect, then it can.

BTG: The third natural right they mentioned was that every human being has the right to pursue happiness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. But your standard of happiness may be different from my standard. You may like to eat meat; I hate it. How can your standard of happiness be equal to mine?

BTG: So should everyone be free to try to achieve whatever standard of happiness he wants?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, the standard of happiness should be prescribed according to the qualities of the person. You must divide the whole society into four groups: those with *brāhmaṇa* qualities,

those with *ksatriya* qualities, those with *vaiśya* qualities, and those with *sūdra* qualities.* Everyone should have good facility to work according to his natural qualities.

You cannot engage a bull in the business of a horse, nor can you engage a horse in the business of a bull. Today practically everyone is getting a college education. But what is taught at these colleges? Mostly technical knowledge, which is *sūdra* education. Real higher education means learning Vedic wisdom. This is meant for the *brāhmaṇas*. Alone,



sūdra education leads to a chaotic condition. Everyone should be tested to find out which education he is suited for. Some *sūdras* may be given technical education, but most *sūdras* should work on the farms. Because everyone is coming to the cities to get an education, thinking "We can get more money," the

* *Brāhmaṇas* are the learned and pious teachers (and leaders) of society, *ksatriyas* are the warriors and administrators, *vaiśvas* are the farmers and merchants, and *sūdras* are the laborers.

agriculture is being neglected. Now there is scarcity because no one is engaged in producing nice foodstuffs. All these anomalies have been caused by bad government. It is the duty of the government to see that everyone is engaged according to his natural qualities. Then people will be happy.

BTG: So if the government artificially puts all men into one class, then there can't be happiness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, that is unnatural and will cause chaos.

BTG: America's founding fathers didn't like classes because they'd had such bad experience with them. Before the revolution, Americans had been ruled by monarchs, but the monarchs would always become tyrannical and unjust.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Because they weren't trained to be saintly monarchs. In Vedic civilization, boys were trained from the very beginning of life as first class *brahmacārīs* [celibate students]. They went to the *guru-kula*, the school of the spiritual master, and learned self-control, cleanliness, truthfulness, and many other saintly qualities. The best of them were later fit to rule the country.

The American Revolution has no special significance. The point is that when people become un-

happy, they revolt. That was done in America, that was done in France, and that was done in Russia.

BTG: The American revolutionaries said that if a government fails to rule the people properly, then the people have the right to dissolve that government.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Just as in Nixon's case: they pulled him down. But if they replace Nixon with another Nixon, then what is the value? They must know how to replace Nixon with a saintly leader. Because people do not have that training and that culture, they will go on electing one Nixon after another and never become happy. People can be happy. The formula for happiness is there in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. The first thing they must know is that the land belongs to God. Why do Americans claim that the land belongs to them? When the first settlers went to America, they said, "This land belongs to God; therefore we have a right to live here." So why are they now not allowing others to settle on the land? What is their philosophy? There are so many overpopulated countries. The American government should let the people go to America and should give them facility to cultivate the land and produce grains. Why are they not doing that? They have taken others' property by force, and by force they are checking others from going there. What is the philosophy behind this?

BTG: There is no philosophy.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Rogueism is their philosophy. They take the property by force, and then they make a law that no one can take another's property by force.

So they are

thieves. They cannot restrict God's property from being occupied by God's sons. America and the other countries in the United Nations should agree that wherever there is enough land, it may be utilized by the human society for producing food. The government can say, "All right, you are overpopulated. Your people can come here. We will give them land, and they can produce food." We would see a wonderful result. But will they do that? No. Then what is their philosophy? Rogueism. "I will take the land by force, and then I won't allow others to come here."

BTG: One American motto is, "One nation under God."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, that is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. There should be one nation under God, and one world government under God as well. Everything belongs to God, and we are all His sons. That philosophy is wanted.

BTG: But in America people are very much afraid of a central government, because they think that whenever there's a strong government there will always be tyranny.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: If the leaders are properly trained, there cannot be tyranny.

BTG: But one of the premises of the American system of government is that if a leader has too much power, he will inevitably become corrupt.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: You have train him in such a way that he cannot become corrupt!

BTG: What is that training process?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That training is the *varṇāśrama-dharma*.^{*} Divide the society according to quality and train people in the principle that everything belongs to God and should be used in the service of God. Then there really can be "one nation under God."

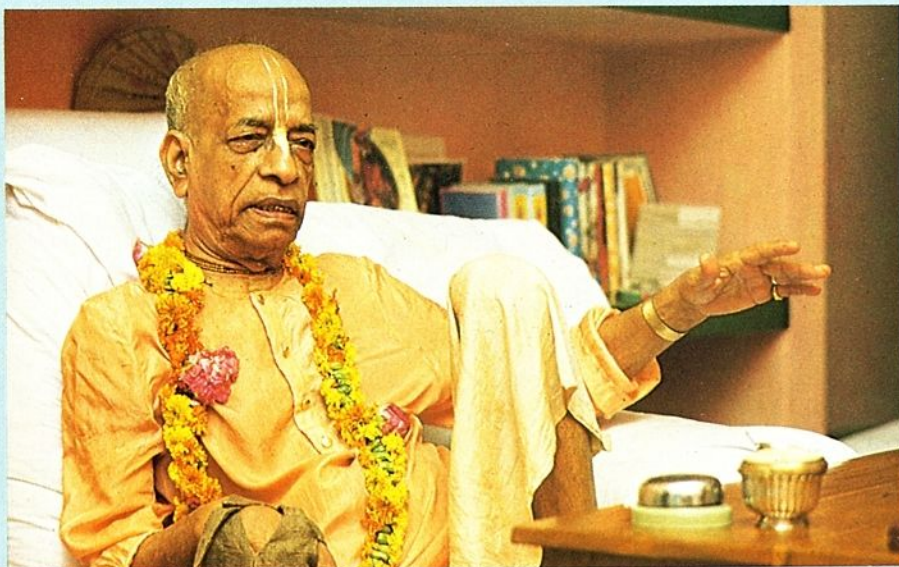
BTG: But if society is divided into different groups, won't there be envy?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, no. Just as in my body there are different parts that work together, so the society can have different parts working for the same goal. My hand is different from my leg. But when I tell the hand, "Bring a glass of water," the leg will help. The leg is required, and the hand is required.

BTG: But in the Western world we have a working class and a capitalist class, and there is always warfare going on between the two.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. The capitalist class is required, and the working class is also required.

^{*}A system of dividing society into four social and four spiritual orders according to people's natural qualities.



“The actual duty of government is to understand what God wants, and to see that society works toward that aim.”

BTG: But they are fighting.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Because they are not trained up; they have no common cause. The hand and the leg work differently, but the common cause is to maintain the body. So if you find out the common cause for both the capitalists and the workers, then there will be no fighting. But if you do not know the common cause, then there will always be fighting.

BTG: Revolution?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes.

BTG: Then the most important thing is to find the common cause that people can unite on?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, just like in our Kṛṣṇa conscious society you come to consult me about every activity because I can give you the common cause. Otherwise, there will be fighting. The government should be very expert to know the aim of life—the common cause—and they should train the people to work for the common cause. Then they will be happy and peaceful. But if people simply elect rascals like Nixon, they will never find a common cause. Any rascal can secure votes by some arrangement, and then he becomes the head of the government. The candidates are bribing, they are cheating, they are making propaganda to win votes. Somehow or other they get votes and capture the prime post. This system is bad.

BTG: So if we don't choose our leaders by popular election, how will society be governed?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: You require *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas*, and *sūdras*. Just as when you want to construct a building, you require engineers. You don't want sweepers. Isn't that so? What will the sweeper do? No, there must be engineers. So if you follow the division of *varṇāśrama*, only *kṣatriyas* are allowed to govern. And for the legislative as-

sembly—the senators—only qualified *brāhmaṇas*. Now the butcher is in the legislative assembly. What does he know about making laws? He is a butcher, but by winning votes he becomes a senator. At the present moment, by the principle of *vox populi*, a butcher goes to the legislature. So everything depends on training. In our Kṛṣṇa conscious society, we're actually doing that, but in the case of politics, they forget it. There cannot be just one class. That is foolishness, because we have to engage different classes of men in different activities. If we do not know the art, then we will fail, because unless there is a division of work, there will be havoc. We have discussed all the responsibilities of the king in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The different classes in society should cooperate exactly as the different parts of the body do. Although each part is meant for a different purpose, they all work for one cause: to maintain the body properly.

BTG: What is the actual duty of the government?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: To understand what God wants, and to see that society works toward that aim. Then people will be happy. But if the people work in the wrong direction, how can they be happy? The government's duty is to see that they are working in the right direction. The right direction is to know God and to act according to His instructions. But if the leaders themselves do not believe in the supremacy of God, and if they do not know what God wants to do, or what He wants us to do, then how can there be good government? The leaders are misled, and they are misleading others. That is the chaotic condition in the world today.

BTG: In the United States there has traditionally been the separation of church and state.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: I am not talking about the church. Church or no church—that is not the point. The main thing is that the leaders have to accept that there is a supreme controller. How can they deny it? Everything in nature is going on under the Supreme Lord's control. The leaders cannot control nature, so why don't they accept a supreme controller? That is the defect in society. In every respect, the leaders are feeling that there must be a supreme controller, and yet they are still denying Him.

BTG: But suppose the government is atheistic...

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Then there cannot be good government. The Americans say they trust in God. But without the science of God, that trust is simply fictitious. First take the science of God very seriously, then put your trust in Him. They do not know what God is, but we do. We actually trust in God.

They're manufacturing their own way of governing. And that is their defect. They will never be successful. They are imperfect, and if they go on manufacturing their own ways and means, they will remain imperfect. There will always be revolutions—one after another. There will be no peace.

BTG: Who determines the regulative principles of religion that people should follow?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: God. God is perfect. He does that. According to the Vedic version, God is the leader of all living entities (*nityo nityānām cetanaś cetanānām*). We are different from Him because He is all-perfect, and we are not. We are very small. We have the qualities of God, but in very small quantity. Therefore we have only a little knowledge—that's all. With a little knowledge you can manufacture a 747 airplane, but you cannot manufacture a mosquito.





Simple Living, High Thinking

by Dharmādhyakṣa dāsa

“The cause of it [the world’s malady] is spiritual. We are suffering from having sold our souls to the pursuit of an objective which is both spiritually wrong and practically unobtainable. We have to reconsider our objective and change it. And until we do this, we shall not have peace, either amongst ourselves or within each of us.”

— Arnold Toynbee
London *Observer*
25 October 1972

The reason for Mr. Toynbee’s remark is that, at present, governmental plans for social development around the world rely solely on economics, technology, science, and material education. His disapproval of one-sided, materialistic culture finds confirmation in sociologist Pitirim Sorokin’s statistical analysis of the past twenty-five hundred years of human history. Dr. Sorokin writes, “We are living in the most scientific, most technological, and most schooled century; and the same century happens to be the bloodiest of all the preceding recorded twenty-five centuries.”

Obviously, then, the materialistic plans for social development are failing. Paradoxically, the materially advanced nations are just as frustrated as the developing nations, if not more so. The people in the few areas where materialism has produced the greatest wealth suffer from the greatest psychological distress and highest crime rates. If both the rich man and the poor man are suffering, then clearly their problem is not material, but must stem from the need for something *other* than material. Historian Theodore Roszak defines that need as follows: “Technological achievements are . . . *meaningless* in the absence of a transcendent correspondence.

They leave ungratified that dimension of the self which reaches out into the world for enduring purpose, undying value." Psychologist Abraham Maslow shows how a sole reliance on materialistic theories actually inhibits all human progress: "... the major motivation theories by which most men live can lead him only to depression and cynicism."

The alternative to this bleak scene is a spiritually conscious society. This proposal, however, usually provokes two objections: one, that religion is always dogmatic and inevitably leads to "holy wars"; two, that a spiritual society is impractical.

Those aware of only Western religious history would readily agree with the first objection. However, the history of the Vedic civilization of India proves that people in a genuine spiritual society live in the greatest mood of tolerance. Even today, the followers of Vedic culture respect all views, be they Christian, Buddhist, Muhammadan, or whatever. The other objection (that a spiritual society is impractical) also withers before Vedic history. In fact, the oldest civilization in the world (the Vedic civilization) is also the most spiritual. Dr. Sorokin's study of history shows that organizations based on a materialistic ideology, whether they be businesses, nations, or any other, have a maximum life span of only a few hundred years. On the other hand, he has this to say about spiritual organizations: "The longest existing organizations are the great ethical-religious organizations—Taoism, Confucianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Muhammadanism, and the like. They have already lived more than one or two or three millennia." Longevity (which means practicality and strength) results from the satisfaction of people's basic spiritual needs.

At present the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), founded by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, is approaching our pressing social problems with a spiritual solution. Based on the world's largest operational body of spiritual knowledge, the Vedas, ISKCON maintains over one hundred microcosmic spiritual communities throughout the world. Social scientists and government officials, including the former prime minister of India, Śrī Lal Bahadur Shastri, have praised ISKCON's practical efforts to improve the human condition. Dr. John B. Orr, Director of the School of Religion at the University of Southern California, appraised ISKCON's social implications in this way: "Perhaps your movement is

the revolution we've all been waiting for."

Why did Dr. Orr call the Kṛṣṇa consciousness society revolutionary? Perhaps because Kṛṣṇa consciousness strikes at the heart of humanity's problems, our forgotten relationship with the Supreme Being. Specifically, awareness of our relationship with God generates knowledge of the natural laws that govern the successful organization of society. Therefore, although Kṛṣṇa consciousness is primarily a system for rectifying our spiritual predicament, it solves our material problems as well.

Science attempts to discover general patterns that rule its object of study. By applying the scientific laws of social development found in the Vedas, ISKCON is proving that patterns for harmonious living do exist. Rather than vainly treating symptoms of the social disease, now the world's governments can observe Kṛṣṇa conscious communities and learn how to treat the real cause of their troubles (the spiritual void in people's lives) by following the laws of nature and of God.

The First Step

To comprehend how a spiritual society works, we must first understand, at least theoretically, man's spiritual identity and his spiritual needs. Then the feasibilities, desirabilities, and actualities of a spiritual society will become readily apparent.

The Vedic literature describes man as a marginal being who lives on two planes simultaneously. First, we dwell in material energy, gross and subtle, that comprises our physical body and environment. The material energies include solid matter, liquids, radiant energy, gas, space, mind, intelligence, and material ego. Our four "animal" needs—food, rest, sex, and defense (including shelter)—spring from this plane. The material energies are mechanical, unconscious entities governed by the laws of cause and effect. Like an automobile, which requires a conscious driver to operate it, the inert material energies require a conscious person to activate them. Even the highly esteemed human brain is simply a masterful computer that still requires a qualitatively different energy, a conscious energy, to work it.

The material energies are inferior to the second plane of man's existence, his consciousness, or spiritual energy. A primary characteristic of spiritual energy is continuity, or permanence. In the Vedic handbook of self-knowledge, the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Lord Kṛṣṇa emphasizes

this point: "As the embodied soul [consciousness] continually passes, in this body, from boyhood, to youth, to old age, the soul similarly passes into another body at death" (Bg. 2.13).

To grasp the truth of Lord Kṛṣṇa's statement, we may reflect on the nature and functions of our bodies, mental processes, and consciousness. A helpful analogy is what commonly happens in a movie theater. Suppose the movie is a biography, showing a great man's birth, trials, achievements, and passing. During the movie, thousands upon thousands of images flash upon the screen. Yet, when the movie is over and the curtain closes, the screen that permitted us to see the movie remains unchanged, exactly as it was before the movie began. Consciousness (our soul) is like the movie screen, and the movie itself is like the sensations and thoughts we experience throughout our lifetime. And after the "movie" of one lifetime is over, our consciousness remains intact and immediately enters another body to experience a new set of thoughts and sense impressions.

Material scientists have tried ardently to disprove this view. They realize that the continuity of identity within the ever-changing body and mind defies one ironclad law of material energy, namely, that matter is endlessly changing. If every living being has a permanent identity, this would offer the strongest evidence for the existence of a nonmaterial, or spiritual, energy, something material scientists are reluctant to admit. Until recently many scientists had pinned their hopes on finding some physical substance in the brain, which they hypothetically termed the memory trace, or *engram*. Supposedly, the engram would have accounted for our continuous sense of identity during the life of the body, but it would die along with the body. The engram would then have relegated identity to the temporary status of a material thing. The December, 1975, issue of *Harper's* magazine reports on the complete bankruptcy of the search for the engram. Science could not find the memory trace, and one of its most ardent advocates, Dr. Karl Lashley, who had spent thirty years searching, "ended by laughing cynically at his own foolishness in thinking that it existed."

To put it simply, material science is simply baffled by consciousness. Why? Because, as Dr. Oliver Sacks (of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in the Bronx, New York) noted in the same issue of *Harper's*, "Consciousness does not yield to dissection or analysis." The

best Dr. Sacks and other scientists can do is to "suggest its nature by metaphors and images."

But by thoughtful observation, we can understand the qualitative differences between the spiritual and the material energies, and thereby directly perceive consciousness. First, examine the gross material elements—solid matter, liquids, radiant energy, gases, and space—from which all chemical compounds and bodies originate. They are ignorant, insentient, lifeless. They remain inert unless acted upon by a living, conscious being. Next, we can think of our bodies and how they are animated by consciousness. We can examine our own consciousness (our feelings, thoughts, and aspirations) and consider our free will (our ability to move and make choices) and our capacity to inquire into our identity, our origin, our destiny.

As we can see, there certainly is a gulf of difference between the material body and the conscious person. We live in two worlds: the outer world of matter, which gives us a material body and a field of activities, and the inner world of consciousness, which provides us with our very life energy. It follows that a perfect society should satisfy both these aspects of man's nature.

Social Policy

Spiritual realization dramatically changes the focus of human effort. The materialistic conception of life multiplies material desires, which lead to the overdevelopment of industry and technology, and to a ravenous, urban-consumer economy. Social scientists are nearly unanimous in warning us that the continuation of this trend will lead to ecological and social disaster. Therefore, the return to a simpler life style (one in harmony with nature's laws) has emerged as the highest priority. A spiritual society automatically achieves this end by offering people higher and more enduring satisfactions. Hence, the motto of Vedic civilization is "Simple living and high thinking."

ISKCON's more than thirty centers in the United States practically demonstrate the guideline of simple living and high thinking. Most of the members come from middle- to upper-class families with average annual incomes of \$17,000. These very same people are now members of families that average \$4,000 a year. (The income of ISKCON's farm-project families is considerably less.) Despite this substantial drop in income, however, ISKCON de-

votes attest to being happier and more satisfied with their lives. How is this possible? The simple explanation is that by reducing their material aspirations, the devotees have increased the time and energy available to advance in the truly meaningful and pleasurable occupation of life, namely, the development of self-realization and spiritual culture.

The example of a fish out of water is appropriate here. If you take a fish out of the ocean and put it on land, it will flop around in great anguish until you throw it back in. Similarly, when human beings are out of their natural spiritual environment, they also feel a deep-rooted anxiety that they can relieve only by returning to the life-sustaining atmosphere of a spiritual society.

The following verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (the source book on spiritual civilization, translated from the Sanskrit by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda) differentiates the spiritual from the material conception of society. "The city of Dvārakā Purī was filled with the opulences of all seasons. Everywhere were hermitages, orchards, flower gardens, parks, and reservoirs of water breeding lotus flowers." This well-constructed

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city had regular planned roads, streets, and lanes. The city was full of residential homes, assembly houses, and temples, all displaying varieties of architectural beauty.

In commenting on Dvārakā, Śrīla Prabhupāda further mentions that

all the people depended on nature's gifts of fruits and flowers, without industrial enterprises promoting filthy huts and slums for residential quarters. Advancement of civilization is estimated not on the growth of mills and factories to deteriorate the finer instincts of the human being, but it rests on developing the potent spiritual instincts of human beings and giving them a chance to go back to Godhead. . . . Human energy should be properly utilized in developing the finer senses for spiritual understanding, in which lies the solution of life. Fruits, flowers, beautiful gardens, parks, reservoirs of waters with ducks and swans playing in the midst of lotus flowers, and cows giving sufficient milk and butter are essential for developing the finer tissues of the human body.

The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and other Vedic literatures explain that there is a complete arrangement in nature for our maintenance. However, when we exploit nature for excessive material enjoyment, we disturb that natural arrangement, and scarcities and unfair distribution of wealth result. The individual can enjoy life only by dovetailing his desires and activities for the benefit of the complete whole, just as our hand is normal and useful only as long as it is attached to the complete body and serves the needs of the complete body. If the hand were severed from the body, it might still appear like a hand, but it would have none of the potencies of an actual hand. Similarly, we are parts and parcels of the complete whole (God, or Kṛṣṇa), but if we detach ourselves from the interests of the complete whole, social chaos results.

The Vedic literature prescribes the *varṇāśrama* system as the means to integrate the parts of human society with the complete whole. *Varṇāśrama* is a comprehensive social organization designed to raise everyone to the platform of spiritual understanding. First, to satisfy material needs, society has four main groups, or *varṇas*: highly learned intellectuals, administrators and military men, farmers and merchants, and the assistants to the other three groups. "Such divisions are in terms of educational qualifications, not birth," writes today's foremost Vedic authority, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Intellectuals, scholars, and teachers make up the first group, called *brāhmaṇas*. Providing the overall direction and education for the other three

groups, the *brāhmaṇas* are like the brain of the social body. As Lord Kṛṣṇa states in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.21), "Whatever action is performed by a great man, common men follow in his footsteps. And whatever standards he sets by exemplary acts, all the world pursues." Naturally, corruption of the *brāhmaṇas* leads to corruption and chaos throughout the society. To counteract this possibility, the *varṇāśrama* system prescribes that the *brāhmaṇas* live simply, without even taking a salary. The other *varṇas* freely provide the *brāhmaṇas* with the basic necessities of life. Thus relieved from material complexities, the *brāhmaṇas* are free to devote themselves to studying the standard books of Vedic knowledge. This literature fully describes how to organize society for the common good and how to elevate everyone to spiritual consciousness, Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The *brāhmaṇas* distribute this knowledge without charge to the people in general, and to the government leaders in particular. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.42) Lord Kṛṣṇa describes how the *brāhmaṇas* conduct themselves: "Peacefulness, self-control, austerity, purity, tolerance, honesty, wisdom, knowledge, and religiousness—these are the qualities by which the *brāhmaṇas* work." Because of the *brāhmaṇas*' virtue and disinterest in personal advantage, the other *varṇas* respect and follow them. This mutual trust frees Vedic society from the class exploitations and struggles that so mar our modern world.

"Heroism, power, determination, resourcefulness, courage in battle, generosity, and leadership are the qualities of work for the *kṣatriyas*" (Bg. 18.43). The *kṣatriyas* are the administrative and military men. Their responsibility is to execute the *brāhmaṇas*' instructions, enforce the codes of standard ethics, and protect all living entities (including animals and plants) from danger. Thus, the *kṣatriyas* are like the arms of the social body.

The name for the chief executive of Vedic government is *rājarsi*. *Rāja* means "political head," and *ṛṣi* means "sage." Besides knowing the science of government, the *rājarsi* must also be learned in spiritual matters. He provides the perfect example of the ideal citizen, thus inspiring all the other citizens to be unselfish and cooperative in their dealings with each other. A healthy society shuns idleness. Therefore, one major function of the *rājarsi* is to see that each citizen is gainfully employed in one of the four groups.

"Farming, cow protection, and business are the qualities of work for the

vaiśyas. . . ." (Bg. 18.44). The *vaiśyas*, or the productive group, provide the economic base for society through dairy farming, business, and agriculture. Because the *vaiśyas* produce the material necessities of life, they are like the stomach of the social body.

Business includes trade and manufacturing. Although we may maintain certain technological advances, we should significantly reduce the scale of industrialization. Mechanized industry causes unemployment, bad working and living conditions, and pollution. Śrīla Prabhupāda gives this explanation of the inherent difficulties of mechanization:

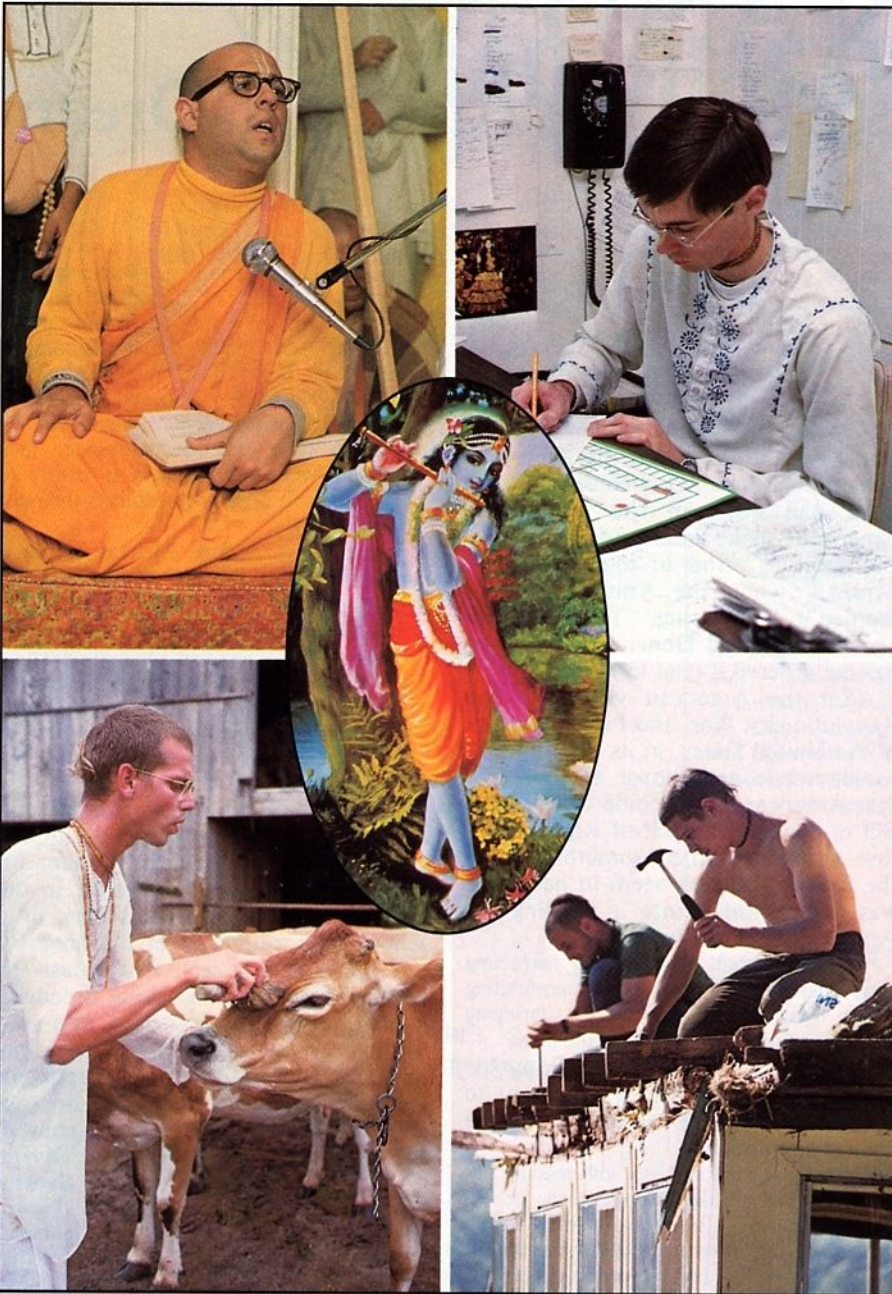
When one machine works for a hundred men, the hundred men become unemployed, and one technician gets all the salaries. The expert computer technician makes a \$30,000 salary, and others go unemployed. Many people think this is advancement of civilization. But does advancement of civilization mean to become happy by exploiting others? Let *everyone* be happy. This is Vedic civilization.

A Kṛṣṇa conscious society guarantees full employment by returning to a decentralized economy stressing cottage industries and hand craftsmanship. A spiritual society utilizes certain modern advancements like electricity and printing, but because the general population returns to a materially simple life, the amount of industry retained presents no environmental problems.

"For the *sūdras* there is labor and service to others" (Bg. 18.44). The *sūdras* assist the other *varṇas* in performing their duties. Thus the *sūdras* are like the legs of the social body. Since the leaders are spiritually conscious, they organize the society's work and distribute its wealth for the benefit of the entire social body. Because they are satisfied, the *sūdras* do not resort to strikes, riots, and revolutions.

Just like a human body, a social body requires a brain, arms, a stomach, and legs to function. No single part should artificially dominate and exploit the other parts. Rather, by working together, all the parts can maintain the body's health.

To achieve cooperation in human society, we have essentially this choice: the gun or the tongue. By violence a tyrant can force people to cooperate. However, as Dr. Sorokin pointed out, this method succeeds only briefly and precipitates further violence. On the other hand, "the tongue" (or spiritual education) awakens the loving social cooperation characteristic of ISKCON communities. The message of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, that we are all



Integrating human society with Kṛṣṇa: (upper left) intellectuals provide overall direction, (upper right) administrators execute their instructions, (lower left) farmers and merchants provide the economic base, and (lower right) laborers help the others.

parts and parcels of the complete whole (Kṛṣṇa, or God), evokes the noblest responses from the human heart. Kṛṣṇa consciousness melts material selfishness, the one roadblock on our path from present-day chaos to perfect social order.

As we have seen, the *varṇa* aspect of the *varṇāśrama* system furthers the material well-being of society. As we shall see, the *āśrama* aspect of the *varṇāśrama* system furthers society's spiritual well-being. *Āśrama* refers to a spiritual order of life, and the *varṇāśrama* system has four such orders: student life, house-

holder life, retired life, and devotional life. Space permits us to touch only on student life.

Primarily, Vedic education aims to develop young people's total potential. Students cultivate sense and mind control, spiritual intelligence, and love for Kṛṣṇa (God). The Kṛṣṇa conscious school, called a *guru-kula* (home of the spiritual teacher), teaches students an occupational skill, but makes character-building the first order of business. Mr. Randy Gribbin, a sixth-grade teacher in an advanced school in northern Texas, studied the ISKCON Gurukula in Dal-

las. When asked, "What do you observe as the effect of this spiritual discipline?" Mr. Gribbin replied,

I see strong children who'll be able to live anywhere, under any conditions. They're not lazy. They're healthy and bright. If anyone goes to a recognized public school and then comes to Gurukula, he'll immediately see the difference. The children at Gurukula are all wide-eyed and alert, and they concentrate on their studies. Most public-school kids are busy dressing up to attract the opposite sex, passing notes, and smoking marijuana.

Every school administrator recognizes the need for discipline and hard work. Indeed, all countries want to instill these virtues in their youth. In this most important respect, how can ISKCON's humble schools surpass multibillion-dollar education programs? Again, the answer lies not in technology or buildings, but in approach. ISKCON's instructors practice their spiritual teachings in full-time association with the students. Thus, the students see not just theory but practical example. Although they receive no salaries, the Gurukula teachers are enthusiastic and dedicated, their motive being love. Śrīla Prabhupāda describes Gurukula's basic philosophy in this way:

Everything should be done on the basis of love. Strictness is not very good. The students should act automatically out of love. Superficially, strictness may be necessary—some material laws or basic principles—and if they don't follow, they'll be reprimanded. But they should develop the idea of love.

Great leaders (such as Lord Jesus in the West and Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu in the East) have organized millions of people through spiritual love. Spiritual love unifies people most effectively, because it transforms people into ideal human beings. As taught in ISKCON's schools, spiritual love has no material substitute. Uniquely potent to stimulate social cooperation, spiritual love derives from nonsectarian spiritual life (Kṛṣṇa consciousness).

Conclusion

The *varṇāśrama* system provides for perfect social organization by fulfilling both the material and the spiritual needs of human society. Our modern world confirms the Vedic conclusion that without such a system, anomie and disorder reign supreme. Therefore, ISKCON is presenting *varṇāśrama*—as a preliminary stage to establish the proper social atmosphere for spiritual realization, the actual goal of human life. 🌸

THEN AND NOW

The Right to Distribute the American Dream

by Jagajivana dāsa

In 1776, when the American Dream was very new, you could expect to find out about the latest inspiration of Tom Paine, Sam Adams, or Alexander Hamilton when you walked along Main Street, stepped into the town square, or answered your doorbell.

Not that you would take wisdom for granted, but you could expect to find out about it. The first American settlers had come to get away from political and religious oppression, to search out a new land rich in freedom and God consciousness. As far back as the early 1600's, John Winthrop and the other settlers of Jamestown and New Salem had cherished the right to dream of a free and God-conscious country and to share their dream with their neighbors:

Now the only way to avoid this shipwreck and to provide for our posterity is . . . to do justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with our God. For this end, . . . we must hold each other in brotherly affection; we must uphold a familiar commerce together in all meekness, gentleness, patience, and liberality [Winthrop's "A Model of Christian Charity," 1630].

To Americans it had always been natural to take in the day's news together with "the good news," whether from the pulpit, the pamphlet, the town crier, or the Gospel flier (or the newspaper or magazine). In his tract *A Christian at His Calling* (Boston, 1701), Cotton Mather had sounded a theme that Americans of every denomination and persuasion have often heard, namely, that "the good life" and the good news of God consciousness go together:

. . . Thus, thou art careful to do the business that must be done for the relief of thy bodily wants. It is well; do it, do it. But, thy soul, thy soul, the salvation of thy soul, . . . this is the *one thing* that is needful. . . Wherefore, be your business never so much, yet use prayer with meditation on the Word of God, every day, both by yourselves and with your families, and this both morning and evening. . . And be assured, all your business will go on the better, all the day, for your being thus faithful to God.

Since Americans had long been accustomed to distributing and receiving God-conscious ideas through tracts and talks, through leaflets and lectures, naturally they continued the tradition during their hour of crisis. Thus, if you had been living in almost any town in Pennsylvania late in December of 1776, you would have seen a copy of Tom Paine's "The American Crisis":

. . . Let it be told to the future world that in the depth of winter, when nothing but hope and virtue could survive, that the city and country, alarmed at one common danger, came forth to meet and to repulse it. . . Throw not the burden of the day upon Providence, but "show your faith by good works," that God may bless you. . .

Yes, from the very first, the American Dream had been God-conscious; the Lord had been in the ideas that Americans spoke and heard, distributed and received. And in that "depth of winter," when the American cause seemed to be faltering, "The American Crisis" so stirred General Washington that he ordered it read to his troops.

After the American victory in the Revolutionary War, the First Congress of the United States, in its first session, passed ten constitutional amendments that Americans have come to call their Bill of Rights. The Bill of Rights' very first article presented something that, the founding fathers seem to have felt, was of first importance in keeping the American Dream alive:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press. . .

In 1866, the Thirty-ninth Congress passed the Fourteenth Amendment to insure that the States would uphold the First Amendment:

No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States. . . nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

In recent years, although a different enemy has taunted America and the rest of the world with the tag line "God is dead," the United States Supreme Court has confirmed the First and Fourteenth Amendments. Although some Americans may at first have been disgruntled, the Court has upheld the God-conscious American Dream. In *Murdock v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (1943), Justice William O. Douglas affirmed that "hand distribution of religious tracts is an age-old form of missionary evangelism," and that "the mere fact that the religious literature is 'sold' by itinerant preachers rather than 'donated' does not transform evangelism into a commercial enterprise. . . It should be remembered that the pamphlets of Thomas Paine were not distributed free of charge."

In *Martin v. City of Struthers, Ohio* (1943), Justice Black delivered the

Supreme Court's ruling:

The right of freedom of speech and press has broad scope. The authors of the First Amendment knew that novel and unconventional ideas might disturb the complacent, but they chose to encourage a freedom which they believed essential if vigorous enlightenment was ever to triumph over slothful ignorance. This freedom embraces the right to distribute literature and necessarily protects the right to receive it. . .

In concurring, Justice Murray made a further statement, in which Justice Rutledge and Justice Douglas joined:

I believe that nothing enjoys a higher estate in our society than the right given by the First and Fourteenth Amendments freely to practice and proclaim one's religious convictions. . . Distribution of such circulars on the streets cannot be prohibited. . .

Thanks to these rulings, we can still expect to receive inspiration about the God-conscious American Dream on Main Street (or at the airport), in the town square (or in a local park or a school auditorium), or at the door (of our home or our car). In the last ten years, if you've walked along Broadway in New York or San Francisco, or passed through Los Angeles International Airport or O'Hare International Airport, or taken a course in sociology or psychology, you may have seen a copy of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda:

Human society, at the present moment, is not in the darkness of oblivion. It has made rapid progress in the field of material comforts, education, and economic development throughout the entire world. But there is a pinprick somewhere in the social body at large, and therefore there are large-scale quarrels, even over less important issues. There is need of a clue as to how humanity can become one in peace, friendship, and prosperity with a common cause. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* will fill this need, for it is a cultural presentation for the spiritualization of the entire human society. . .

Perhaps now we can understand why Justice Murray ended his statement on *Martin v. City of Struthers* with these words: "Freedom of religion has a higher dignity than municipal or personal convenience. In these days free men have no loftier responsibility than the preservation of that freedom. A nation dedicated to that ideal will not suffer but will prosper in its observance." ❀

ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

The Beautiful Story of the Personality of Godhead

This is the continuing presentation of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, India's great spiritual classic written 5,000 years ago by Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa, and now presented in a new translation with commentary by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* provides the key to how humanity can become united in peace, prosperity and friendship around a common cause. That common cause is the spiritual oneness of all living beings, and the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* presents a revolutionary ideology which can serve as the basis for the re-spiritualization of society. There is no lack of mundane scientific advancement in today's world, but what is lacking is knowledge of the science of God. Therefore, in a world suffering from universal discord, anxiety and confusion, there is no more important literature than this brilliant *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. If you would like to obtain any single volume or the entire series of the *Bhāgavatam* currently in print, use coupon on last page.

First Canto "Creation"

CHAPTER SIX

Conversation

Between Nārada and Vyāsa

(continued)

TEXT 36

सर्वं तदिदमाख्यातं यत्पृष्टोऽहं त्वयानघ ।
जन्मकर्मरहस्यं मे भवतश्चात्मतोषणम् ॥३६॥

*sarvaṁ tad idam ākhyātaṁ
yat-pṛṣṭo 'haṁ tvayānagha
janma-karma-rahasyaṁ me
bhavataś cātma-toṣaṇam*

sarvam—all; *tat*—that; *idam*—this; *ākhyātam*—described; *yat*—whatever; *pṛṣṭaḥ*—asked by; *aham*—myself; *tvayā*—by yourself; *anagha*—without any sins; *janma*—birth; *karma*—activities; *rahasyam*—mysteries; *me*—mine; *bhavataḥ*—your; *ca*—and; *ātma*—self; *toṣaṇam*—satisfaction.

TRANSLATION

O Vyāsadeva, you are freed from all sins. Thus I have explained my birth and activities for self-realization, as you asked. All this will be conducive for your personal satisfaction also.

PURPORT

The process of devotional activities from the beginning to the stage of transcendence is all duly explained to satisfy the enquiries of Vyāsadeva. He has explained how the seeds of devotional service were sown by transcendental association and how they gradually developed by hearing the sages. The result of such hearing is detachment from worldliness, so much so that even a small boy could receive the death news of his mother, who was his only caretaker, as the blessing of God. And at once he took the opportunity to search out the Lord. A sincere urge for having an interview with the Lord was also granted to him, although it is not possible for anyone to see the Lord with mundane eyes. He also explained how by

execution of pure transcendental service one can get rid of fruitive action of accumulated work and how he transformed his material body into a spiritual one. The spiritual body is alone able to enter into the spiritual realm of the Lord, and no one but a pure devotee is eligible to enter into the kingdom of God. All the mysteries of transcendental realization are duly experienced by Nārada Muni himself, and therefore by hearing such an authority one can have some idea of the results of devotional life, which are hardly delineated even in the original texts of the *Vedas*. In the *Vedas* and *Upaniṣads* there are only indirect hints to all this. Nothing is directly explained there, and therefore *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the mature fruit of all the Vedic trees of literatures.

TEXT 37

सूत उवाच

एवं सम्भाष्य भगवान्नारदो वासवीसुतम् ।
आमन्त्र्य वीणां रणयन् ययौ यादृच्छिको मुनिः ॥३७॥

*sūta uvāca
evaṁ sambhāṣya bhagavān
nārado vāsavīsutam
āmantrya vīṇāṁ raṇayan
yayau yādṛcchiko muniḥ*

sūtaḥ—Sūta Gosvāmī; *uvāca*—said; *evaṁ*—thus; *sambhāṣya*—addressing; *bhagavān*—transcendentally powerful; *nāradaḥ*—Nārada Muni; *vāsavī*—named Vāsavī (Satyavati); *sutam*—son; *āmantrya*—inviting; *vīṇām*—instrument; *raṇayan*—vibrating; *yayau*—went; *yādṛk*—wherever; *icchikāḥ*—willing; *muniḥ*—sage.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī said: Thus addressing Vyāsadeva, Śrīla Nārada Muni took leave of him, and vibrating on his vīṇā instrument, he left to wander at his free will.

PURPORT

Every living being is anxious for full freedom because that is his transcendental nature. And this freedom is obtained only through the transcendental service of the Lord. Illusioned by the external energy, everyone thinks that he is free, but actually he is bound up by the laws of nature. A conditioned soul cannot freely move from one place to another even on this earth, and what to speak of one planet to another. But a full-fledged free soul like Nārada, always engaged in chanting the Lord's glory, is free to move not only on earth but also in any part of the universe, as well as in any part of the spiritual sky. We can just imagine the extent and unlimitedness of his freedom, which is as good as that of the Supreme Lord. There is no reason or obligation for his travelling, and no one can stop him from his free movement. Similarly, the transcendental system of devotional service is also free. It may or may not develop in a particular

person even after undergoing all the detailed formulas. Similarly, the association of the devotee is also free. One may be fortunate to have it, or one may not have it even after thousands of endeavors. Therefore, in all spheres of devotional service, freedom is the main pivot. Without freedom there is no execution of devotional service. The freedom surrendered to the Lord does not mean that the devotee becomes dependent in every respect. To surrender unto the Lord through the transparent medium of the spiritual master is to attain complete freedom of life.

TEXT 38

अहो देवर्षिर्न्योऽयं यत्कीर्तिं शार्ङ्गधन्वनः ।
गायन्माद्यन्निदं तन्त्र्या रमयत्यातुरं जगत् ॥३८॥

aho devarṣir dhanyo 'yaṁ
yat kīrtim śāṅgadhavanahaḥ
gāyan mādyann idam tantryā
ramayatya āturam jagat

aho—all glory to; devarṣiḥ—the sage of the gods; dhanyaḥ—all success; ayam-yat—one who; kīrtim—glories; śāṅgadhavanahaḥ—of the Personality of Godhead; gāyan—singing; mādyan—taking pleasure in; idam—this; tantryā—by means of the instrument; ramayati—enlivens; āturam—distressed; jagat—world.

TRANSLATION

All glory and success to Śrīla Nārada Muni because he glorifies the activities of the Personality of Godhead, and so doing he himself takes pleasure and also enlivens all the distressed souls of the universe.

PURPORT

Śrī Nārada Muni plays on his instrument to glorify the transcendental activities of the Lord and to give relief to all miserable living entities of the universe. No one is happy here within the universe, and what is felt as happiness is māyā's illusion. The illusory energy of the Lord is so strong that even the hog who lives on filthy stool feels happy. No one can be truly happy within the material world. Śrīla Nārada Muni, in order to enlighten the miserable inhabitants, wanders everywhere. His mission is to get them back home, back to Godhead. That is the mission of all genuine devotees of the Lord following the footsteps of that great sage.

Thus end the Bhaktivedanta purports of the First Canto, Sixth Chapter, of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled "Conversation Between Nārada and Vyāsa."

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Son of Droṇa Punished

TEXT 1

शौनक उवाच

निर्गते नारदे स्रुत भगवान् बादरायणः ।
श्रुतवांस्तदभिप्रेतं ततः किमकरोद्विभुः ॥ १ ॥

śaunaka uvāca
nirgate nārade sūta
bhagavān bādārāyaṇaḥ
śrutavāms tad-abhipretam
tataḥ kim akarod vibhuḥ

śaunakaḥ—Śrī Śaunaka; uvāca—said; nirgate—having gone; nārade—Nārada Muni; sūta—O Sūta; bhagavān—the transcendently powerful; bādārāyaṇaḥ—Vedavyāsa; śrutavān—who heard; tat—his; abhipretam—de-

sire of the mind; tataḥ—thereafter; kim—what; akarot—did he do; vibhuḥ—the great.

TRANSLATION

R̥ṣi Śaunaka asked: O Sūta, the great and transcendently powerful Vyāsadeva heard everything from Śrī Nārada Muni. So after his departure, what did he do?

PURPORT

In this chapter the clue for describing Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is picked up as Mahārāja Parīkṣit is miraculously saved in the womb of his mother. This was caused by Drauṇi (Āsvatthāmā), son of Ācārya Droṇa, who killed the five sons of Draupadī while they were asleep, for which he was punished by Arjuna. Before commencing the great epic Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Śrī Vyāsadeva realized the whole truth by trance in devotion.

TEXT 2

सूत उवाच

ब्रह्मनद्यां सरस्वत्यामाश्रमः पश्चिमे तटे ।
शम्याप्रास इति प्रोक्त ऋषीणां सत्रवर्धनः ॥ २ ॥

sūta uvāca
brahma-nadyāṁ sarasvatyāṁ
āśramaḥ paścime taṭe
śamyāprāsa iti prokta
ṛṣīṇāṁ satra-varadhanāḥ

sūtaḥ—Śrī Sūta; uvāca—said; brahmanadyāṁ—on the bank of the river intimately related with Vedas, brāhmaṇas, saints, and the Lord; sarasvatyāṁ—Sarasvatī; āśramaḥ—cottage for meditation; paścime—on the west; taṭe—bank; śamyāprāsaḥ—the place named Śamyāprāsa; iti—thus; proktaḥ—said to be; ṛṣīṇāṁ—of the sages; satra-varadhanāḥ—that which enlivens activities.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Sūta said: On the western bank of the River Sarasvatī, which is intimately related with the Vedas, there is a cottage for meditation at Śamyāprāsa which enlivens the transcendental activities of the sages.

PURPORT

For spiritual advancement of knowledge a suitable place and atmosphere are definitely required. The place on the western bank of the Sarasvatī is especially suitable for this purpose. And there is the āśrama of Vyāsadeva at Śamyāprāsa. Śrīla Vyāsadeva was a householder, yet his residential place is called an āśrama. An āśrama is a place where spiritual culture is always foremost. It does not matter whether the place belongs to a householder or a mendicant. The whole varṇāśrama system is so designed that each and every status of life is called an āśrama. This means that spiritual culture is the common factor for all. The brahmacārīs, the gṛhasthas, the vānaprasthas and the sannyāsīs all belong to the same mission of life, namely, realization of the Supreme. Therefore none of them are less important as far as spiritual culture is concerned. The difference is a matter of formality on the strength of renunciation. The sannyāsīs are held in high estimation on the strength of practical renunciation.

TEXT 3

तस्मिन् स्व आश्रमे व्यासो बदरीषण्डमण्डिते ।
आसीनोऽप उपस्पृश्य प्रणिदध्द्यौ मनः स्वयम् ॥ ३ ॥

tasmin sva-āśrame vyāso
badarī-ṣaṇḍa-maṇḍite
āsīno 'pa upaspr̥śya
pranidadhdyau manaḥ svayam

tasmin—in that (*āśrama*); *sva*—own; *āśrame*—in the cottage; *vyāsaḥ*—Vyāsadeva; *badarī*—berry; *ṣaṇḍa*—trees; *maṇḍite*—surrounded by; *āsīnaḥ* *apaḥ*—sitting; *upaspr̥śya*—touching water; *prañidadhya*—concentrated; *manaḥ*—the mind; *svayam*—himself.

TRANSLATION

In that place, Śrīla Vyāsadeva, in his own āśrama, which was surrounded by berry trees, sat down to meditate after touching water for purification.

PURPORT

Under instruction of his spiritual master Śrīla Nārada Muni, Vyāsadeva concentrated his mind in that transcendental place of meditation.

TEXT 4

भक्तियोगेन मनसि सम्यक् प्रणिहितेऽमले ।
अपश्यत्पुरुषं पूर्णं मायां च तदपाश्रयम् ॥ ४ ॥

bhakti-yogena manasi
samyak praṇihite 'male
apaśyat puruṣam pūrṇam
māyāṁ ca tad-apāśrayam

bhakti—devotional service; *yogena*—by the process of linking up; *manasi*—upon the mind; *samyak*—perfectly; *praṇihite*—engaged in and fixed upon; *amale*—without any matter; *apaśyat*—saw; *puruṣam*—the Personality of Godhead; *pūrṇam*—absolute; *māyāṁ*—energy; *ca*—also; *tat*—His; *apāśrayam*—under full control.

TRANSLATION

Thus he fixed his mind, perfectly engaging it by linking it in devotional service [bhakti-yoga] without any tinge of materialism, and thus he saw the Absolute Personality of Godhead along with His external energy, which was under full control.

PURPORT

Perfect vision of the Absolute Truth is possible only by the linking process of devotional service. This is also confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. One can perfectly realize the Absolute Truth Personality of Godhead only by the process of devotional service, and one can enter into the kingdom of God by such perfect knowledge. Imperfect realization of the Absolute by the partial approach of the impersonal Brahman or localized Paramātmā does not permit anyone to enter into the kingdom of God. Śrī Nārada advised Śrīla Vyāsadeva to become absorbed in transcendental meditation on the Personality of Godhead and His activities. Śrīla Vyāsadeva did not take notice of the effulgence of Brahman because that is not absolute vision. The absolute vision is the Personality of Godhead, as it is confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: *Vāsudevaḥ sarvaṁ iti*. In the *Upaniṣads* also it is confirmed that Vāsudeva, the Personality of Godhead, is covered by the golden glowing *hiraṇmayena pātreṇa* veil of impersonal Brahman, and when that curtain is removed by the mercy of the Lord the real face of the Absolute is seen. The Absolute is mentioned here as the *puruṣa* or person. The Absolute Personality of Godhead is mentioned in so many Vedic literatures, and in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the *puruṣa* is confirmed as the eternal and original person. The Absolute Personality of Godhead is the perfect person. The Supreme Person has manifold energies, out of which the internal, external and marginal energies are specifically important. The energy mentioned here is the external energy, as will be clear from the statements of her activities. The internal energy is there along with the Absolute Person as the moonlight is there with the moon. The external energy is compared with darkness because it keeps the living entities in the darkness of ignorance. The word *apāśrayam* suggests that this energy of the Lord is under full control. The internal potency or superior energy is also called *māyā*, but it is spiritual *māyā*, or energy exhibited in the absolute realm. When one is under the shelter of this internal potency, the darkness of material ignorance is at once dissipated. And even those who

are *ātmārāma*, or fixed in trance, take shelter of this *māyā* or internal energy. Devotional service, or *bhakti-yoga*, is the function of the internal energy; thus there is no place for the inferior energy or material energy, just as there is no place for darkness in the effulgence of spiritual light. Such internal energy is even superior to the spiritual bliss attainable in the conception of impersonal Brahman. It is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that the impersonal Brahman effulgence is also an emanation from the Absolute Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The *Parama-Puruṣa* cannot be anyone except Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, as it will be explained in the later *śloka*.

TEXT 5

यया सम्मोहितो जीव आत्मानं त्रिगुणात्मकम् ।
परोऽपि मनुतेऽनर्थं तत्कृतं चाभिपद्यते ॥ ५ ॥

yayā sammohito jīva
ātmānaṁ tri-guṇātmakam
paro 'pi manute 'nartham
tat-kṛtam cābhipadyate

yayā—by whom; *sammohitaḥ*—illusioned; *jīvaḥ*—the living entities; *ātmānaṁ*—self; *tri-guṇātmakam*—conditioned by the three modes of nature, or a product of matter; *paraḥ*—transcendental; *api*—in spite of; *manute*—takes it for granted; *anartham*—things not wanted; *tat*—by that; *kṛtam ca*—reaction; *abhipadyate*—undergoes thereof.

TRANSLATION

Due to this external energy, the living entity, although transcendental to the three modes of material nature, thinks of himself as a material product and thus undergoes the reactions of material miseries.

PURPORT

The root cause of suffering by the materialistic living beings is pointed out with remedial measures which are to be undertaken and also the ultimate perfection to be gained. All this is mentioned in this particular verse. The living being is by constitution transcendental to material engagement, but he is now imprisoned by the external energy, and therefore he thinks himself one of the material products. And due to this unholy contact, the pure spiritual entity suffers material miseries under the modes of material nature. The living entity misunderstands himself to be a material product. This means that the present perverted way of thinking, feeling and willing, under material conditions, is not natural for him. But he has his normal way of thinking, feeling and willing. The living being in his original state is not without thinking, willing and feeling power. It is also confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that the actual knowledge of the conditioned soul is now covered by nescience. Thus the theory that a living being is absolute impersonal Brahman is refuted herein. This cannot be, because the living entity has his own way of thinking in his original unconditional state also. The present conditional state is due to the influence of the external energy, which means that the illusory energy takes the initiative while the Supreme Lord is aloof. The Lord does not desire that a living being be illusioned by external energy. The external energy is aware of this fact, but still she accepts a thankless task of keeping the forgotten soul under illusion by her bewildering influence. The Lord does not interfere with the task of the illusory energy because such performances of the illusory energy are also necessary for reformation of the conditioned soul. An affectionate father does not like his children to be chastised by another agent, yet he puts his disobedient children under the custody of a severe man just to bring them to order. But the all-affectionate Almighty Father desires at the same time relief for the conditioned soul, relief from the clutches of the illusory energy. The king puts the disobedient citizens within the walls of the jail, but sometimes the king, desiring the prisoners' relief, personally goes there and pleads for reformation, and on doing so the prisoners are set free. Similarly, the Supreme Lord descends from His kingdom upon the kingdom of illusory energy and personally gives relief in the form of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, wherein He personally suggests that the ways of illusory energy are very stiff to overcome, but one who surrenders

unto the lotus feet of the Lord is set free by the order of the Supreme. This surrendering process is the remedial measure for getting relief from the bewildering ways of the illusory energy. The surrendering process is completed by the influence of association. The Lord has suggested, therefore, that by the influence of the speeches of saintly persons who have actually realized the Supreme, men are engaged in His transcendental loving service. The conditioned soul gets a taste for hearing about the Lord, and by such hearing only he is gradually elevated to the platform of respect, devotion and attachment for the Lord. The whole thing is completed by the surrendering process. Herein also the same suggestion is made by the Lord in His incarnation of Vyāsadeva. This means that the conditioned souls are being reclaimed by the Lord both ways, namely by the process of punishment by the external energy of the Lord, and by Himself as the spiritual master within and without. Within the heart of every living being the Lord Himself as the Supersoul Paramātmā becomes the spiritual master, and from without He becomes the spiritual master in the shape of scriptures, saints and initiator spiritual master. This is still more explicitly explained in the next *śloka*.

Personal superintendence of the illusory energy is confirmed in the *Vedas* (the *Keṇa Upaniṣad*) in relation to the demigods' controlling power. Herein also it is clearly stated that the living entity is controlled by the external energy in a personal capacity. The living being thus subject to the control of external energy is differently situated. It is clear, however, from the present statement of *Bhāgavatam* that the same external energy is situated in the inferior position before the Personality of Godhead or the perfect being. The perfect being, or the Lord, cannot be approached even by the illusory energy, who can only work on the living entities. Therefore it is sheer imagination that the Supreme Lord is illusioned by the illusory energy and thus becomes a living being. If the living being and the Lord would have been in the same category, then it would have been quite possible for Vyāsadeva to see it, and there would have been no question of material distress on the part of the illusioned being because the Supreme Being is fully cognizant. So there are so many unscrupulous imaginations on the part of the monists to endeavor to put both the Lord and the living being in the same category. Had it been so, then Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī would not have taken the trouble to describe the transcendental pastimes of the Lord, if they were all manifestations of illusory energy.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the *summum bonum* remedy for the suffering humanity in the clutches of *māyā*. Śrīla Vyāsadeva therefore first of all diagnosed the actual disease of the conditioned souls, i.e. their being illusioned by the external energy. He also saw the perfect Supreme Being from whom illusory energy is far removed, though He saw both the diseased conditioned souls and also the cause of the disease. And the remedial measures are suggested in the next verse. Both the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the living beings are undoubtedly qualitatively one, but the Lord is the controller of the illusory energy, whereas the living entity is controlled by the illusory energy. Thus the Lord and the living beings are simultaneously one and different. Another point is distinct herein: that eternal relation between the Lord and the living being is transcendental, otherwise the Lord would not have taken the trouble to reclaim the conditioned souls from the clutches of *māyā*. In the same way the living entity is also required to revive his natural love and affection for the Lord, and that is the highest perfection of the living entity. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* treats the conditioned soul with an aim to that goal of life.

TEXT 6

अनर्थोपशमं साक्षाद्भक्तियोगमधोक्षजे ।
लोकस्वाज्ञानतो विद्वान्भक्ते सात्वतसंहिताम् ॥ ६ ॥

*anarthopasamaṁ sākṣād-
bhakti-yogam adhokṣaje
lokasyājānato vidvān-
cakre sāvata-saṁhitām*

anartha—things which are superfluous; *upasamaṁ*—mitigation; *sākṣāt*—directly; *bhakti-yogam*—the linking process of devotional service; *adhokṣaje*—unto the Transcendence; *lokasya*—of the general mass of men; *ajānataḥ*—those who are unaware of; *vidvān*—the supremely learned; *cakre*—compiled; *sāvata*—in relation with the Supreme Truth; *saṁhitām*—Vedic literature.

TRANSLATION

The material miseries of the living entity, which are superfluous to him, can be directly mitigated by the linking process of devotional service. But the mass of people do not know this, and therefore the learned Vyāsadeva compiled this Vedic literature, which is in relation to the Supreme Truth.

PURPORT

Śrīla Vyāsadeva was the all-perfect Personality of Godhead. The statement suggests that the complete unit of the Personality of Godhead includes His parts and parcels also. He saw, therefore, His different energies, namely the internal energy, the marginal energy and the external energy. He saw also His different plenary portions and parts of the plenary portions, namely His different incarnations also, and he specifically observed the unwanted miseries of the conditioned souls who are bewildered by the external energy. And at last he saw the remedial measure for the conditioned souls, namely, the process of devotional service. It is a great transcendental science and begins with the process of hearing and chanting the name, fame, glory, etc., of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Revival of the dormant affection or love of Godhead does not depend on the mechanical system of hearing and chanting, but it solely and wholly depends on the causeless mercy of the Lord. When the Lord is fully satisfied with the sincere efforts of the devotee, He may endow him with His loving transcendental service. But even with the prescribed forms of hearing and chanting, there is at once mitigation of the superfluous and unwanted miseries of material existence. Such mitigation of material affection does not wait for development of transcendental knowledge. Rather, knowledge is dependent on devotional service for ultimate realization of the Supreme Truth.

TEXT 7

यस्यां वै श्रूयमाणायां कृष्णे परमपूरुषे ।
भक्तिरूपद्यते पुंसः शोकमोहभयापहा ॥ ७ ॥

*yasyām vai śrūyamāṇāyām
kṛṣṇe parama-pūruṣe
bhaktir utpadyate puṁsaḥ
śoka-moha-bhayāpahā*

yasyām—this Vedic literature; *vai*—certainly; *śrūyamāṇāyām*—simply by giving aural reception; *kṛṣṇe*—unto Lord Kṛṣṇa; *parama*—supreme; *pūruṣe*—unto the Personality of Godhead; *bhaktiḥ*—feelings of devotional service; *utpadyate*—sprout up; *puṁsaḥ*—of the living being; *śoka*—lamentation; *moha*—illusion; *bhaya*—fearfulness; *apahā*—that which extinguishes.

TRANSLATION

Simply by hearing this Vedic literature, the feeling for loving devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, sprouts up at once to extinguish the fire of lamentation, illusion and fearfulness.

PURPORT

There are various senses, of which the ear is the most effective. This sense works even when a man is deep asleep. One can protect himself from the hands of an enemy while awake, but while asleep one is protected by the ear only. The importance of hearing is mentioned here in connection with attaining the highest perfection of life, namely, getting free from three material pangs. Everyone is full of lamentation at every moment; he is after the mirage of illusory things and is always afraid of his supposed enemy. These are the primary symptoms of material disease. And it is definitely suggested herein that simply by hearing the message of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* one gets attachment for the Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and as soon as this is effected the symptoms of the material diseases disappear. Śrīla Vyāsadeva was the all-perfect Personality of Godhead, and in this statement the all-perfect Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa is clearly confirmed.

The ultimate result of devotional service is to develop genuine love for the Supreme Personality. Love is a word which is often used in relation with man and woman. And love is the only word that can be properly

used to indicate the relation between Lord Kṛṣṇa and the living entities. The living entities are mentioned as *prakṛti* in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, and in Sanskrit *prakṛti* is a feminine object. The Lord is always described as the *Parama-Puruṣa* or the supreme male personality. Thus the affection between the Lord and the living entities is something like that between the male and the female. Therefore the term love of Godhead is quite appropriate.

Loving devotional service of the Lord begins with hearing about the Lord. There is no difference between the Lord and the subject matter heard about Him. The Lord is absolute in all respects, and thus there is no difference between Him and the subject matter heard about Him. Therefore, hearing about Him means immediate contact with Him by the process of vibration of the transcendental sound. And the transcendental sound is so effective that it acts at once by removing all material affections mentioned above. As mentioned before, a living entity develops a sort of complexity by material association, and the illusory engagement of the material body is accepted as an actual fact. Under such false complexity, the living beings under different categories of life become illusioned in different ways. Even in the most developed stage of human life, the same illusion prevails in the form of many isms and divides the loving relation with the Lord and thereby divides the loving relation between man and man. By hearing the subject matter of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* this false complexity of materialism is removed, and real peace in society begins, which politicians aspire for so eagerly in so many political situations. The politicians want a peaceful situation between man and man, and nation and nation, but at the same time, because of too much attachment for material domination, there is illusion and fearfulness. Therefore the politicians' peace conferences cannot bring about peace in society. It can only be done by hearing the subject matter described in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* about the Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The foolish politicians may go on holding peace and summit conferences for hundreds of years, but they will fail to achieve success. Until we reach the stage of reestablishing our lost relation with Kṛṣṇa, the illusion of accepting the body as the self will prevail, and thus fearfulness will also prevail. As for validity of Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, there are hundreds and thousands of evidences from revealed scriptures, and there are hundreds and thousands of evidences from personal experiences of devotees in various places like Vṛndāvana, Navadvīpa and Purī. Even in the *Kaumadi Dictionary* the synonyms of Kṛṣṇa are given as the son of Yaśodā and the Supreme Personality of Godhead Parambrahman. The conclusion is that simply by hearing the Vedic literature *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, one can have direct connection with the Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and thereby one can attain the highest perfection of life by transcending worldly miseries, illusion and fearfulness. These are practical tests for one who has actually given a submissive hearing to the readings of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

TEXT 8

स संहितां भागवतीं कृत्वानुक्रम्य चात्मजम् ।
शुकमध्यापयामास निवृत्तिनिरतं मुनिः ॥ ८ ॥

sa saṁhitām bhāgavatīm
kṛtvānukramya cātma-jam
śukam adhyāpayāmāsa
nivṛtti-nirataṁ munīḥ

saḥ—that; saṁhitām—Vedic literature; bhāgavatīm—in relation with the Personality of Godhead; kṛtvā—having done; anukramya—by correction and repetition; ca—and; ātma-jam—his own son; śukam—Śukadeva Gosvāmī; adhyāpayāmāsa—thought; nivṛtti—path of self-realization; nirataṁ—engaged; munīḥ—the sage.

TRANSLATION

The great sage Vyāsadeva, after compiling the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and revising it, taught it to his own son, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, who was already engaged in self-realization.

PURPORT

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the natural commentation on the *Brahma-sūtras* compiled by the same author. This *Brahma-sūtra* or *Vedānta-sūtra* is meant for those who are already engaged in self-realization. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*

is so made that one becomes at once engaged in the path of self-realization simply by hearing the topics. Although it is especially meant for the *paramahamsas*, or those who are totally engaged in self-realization, it works into the depth of the heart of those who may be worldly men. Worldly men are all engaged in sense gratification. But even such men will find in this Vedic literature a remedial measure for their material diseases. Śukadeva Gosvāmī was a liberated soul from the very beginning of his birth, and his father taught him *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Amongst mundane scholars, there is some diversity of opinion as to the date of compilation of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. It is, however, certain from the text of the *Bhāgavatam* that it was compiled before the disappearance of King Parīkṣit and after the departure of Lord Kṛṣṇa. When Mahārāja Parīkṣit was ruling the world as the King of Bhāratavarṣa, he chastised the personality of Kali. According to revealed scriptures and astrological calculation, the age of Kali is in its 5,000th year. Therefore, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* was compiled not less than five thousand years ago. *Mahābhārata* was compiled before *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and the *Purāṇas* were compiled before *Mahābhārata*. That is an estimation of the date of compilation of the different Vedic literatures. The synopsis of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* was given before the detailed description under instruction of Nārada. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the science for following the path of *niṛtti-mārga*. The path of *pravṛtti-mārga* was condemned by Nārada. That is the natural inclination for all conditioned souls. The theme of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the cure of the materialistic disease of the human being, or stopping completely the pangs of material existence.

TEXT 9

शौनक उवाच

स वै निवृत्तिनिरतः सर्वत्रोपेक्षको मुनिः ।
कस्य वा बृहतीमेतामात्मारामः समभ्यसत् ॥ ९ ॥

śaunaka uvāca
sa vai nivṛtti-nirataḥ
sarvatroppekṣako munīḥ
kasya vā bṛhatīm etām
ātmārāmaḥ samabhyasat

śaunakaḥ uvāca—Śrī Śaunaka asked; saḥ—he; vai—of course; nivṛtti—on the path of self-realization; nirataḥ—always engaged; sarvatra—in every respect; upekṣakaḥ—indifferent; munīḥ—sage; kasya—for what reason; vā—or; bṛhatīm—vast; etām—this; ātmārāmaḥ—one who is pleased in himself; samabhyasat—undergo the studies.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Śaunaka asked Sūta Gosvāmī: Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī was already on the path of self-realization, and thus he was pleased with his own self. So why did he take the trouble to undergo the study of such a vast literature?

PURPORT

For the people in general the highest perfection of life is to cease from material activities and be fixed on the path of self-realization. Those who take pleasure in sense enjoyment, or those who are fixed in material bodily welfare work, are called *karmīs*. Out of thousands and millions of such *karmīs*, one may become an *ātmārāma* by self-realization. *Ātmā* means self, and *rāma* means to take pleasure. Everyone is searching after the highest pleasure, but the standard of pleasure of one may be different from the standard of another. Therefore, the standard of pleasure enjoyed by the *karmīs* is different from that of the *ātmārāmas*. The *ātmārāmas* are completely indifferent to material enjoyment in every respect. Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī had already attained that stage, and still he was attracted to undergo the trouble of studying the great *Bhāgavatam* literature. This means that *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is postgraduate study even for the *ātmārāmas*, who have surpassed all the studies of Vedic knowledge.

TEXT 10

सूत उवाच

आत्मारामाश्च मुनयो निर्ग्रन्था अप्युरुक्रमे ।
कुर्वन्त्यहैतुकीं भक्तिमित्यम्भूतगुणो हरिः ॥१०॥

sūta uvāca
 ātmārāmās ca munayo
 nirgranthā apy urukrame
 kurvanti ahaitukīm bhaktim
 ittham-bhūta-guṇo hariḥ

sūtaḥ uvāca—Sūta Gosvāmī said; ātmārāmāḥ—those who take pleasure in ātmā (generally, spirit self); ca—also; munayaḥ—sages; nirgranthāḥ—freed from all bondage; api—in spite of; urukrame—unto the great adventurer; kurvanti—do; ahaitukīm—unalloyed; bhaktim—devotional service; ittham-bhūta—such wonderful; guṇaḥ—qualities; hariḥ—of the Lord.

TRANSLATION

All different varieties of ātmārāmas [those who take pleasure in ātmā, or spirit self], especially those established on the path of self-realization, though freed from all kinds of material bondage, desire to render unalloyed devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead. This means that the Lord possesses transcendental qualities and therefore can attract everyone, including liberated souls.

PURPORT

Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu explained this ātmārāma śloka very vividly before His chief devotee Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī. He points out eleven factors in the śloka, namely 1) ātmārāma, 2) munayaḥ, 3) nirgrantha, 4) api, 5) ca, 6) urukrama, 7) kurvanti, 8) ahaitukīm, 9) bhaktim, 10) ittham-bhūta-guṇaḥ, and 11) hariḥ. According to the *Viśva-Prakāśa Sanskrit Dictionary*, there are seven synonyms for the word ātmārāma, which are as follows: 1) Brahman (the Absolute Truth), 2) body, 3) mind, 4) endeavor, 5) endurance, 6) intelligence, and 7) personal habits.

The word *munayaḥ* refers to 1) those who are thoughtful, 2) those who are grave or silent, 3) ascetics, 4) the persistent, 5) mendicants, 6) sages, and 7) saints.

The word *nirgrantha* conveys these ideas: 1) one who is liberated from necience, 2) one who has no connection with scriptural injunction, i.e., who is freed from the obligation of the rules and regulations mentioned in the revealed scriptures like ethics, *Vedas*, philosophy, psychology, metaphysics, etc., (in other words the fools, illiterate, urchins, etc., who have no connection with regulative principles), 3) a capitalist, and also 4) one who is penniless.

According to the *Śabda-kośa Dictionary*, the affix *ni* is used in the sense of 1) certainty, 2) counting, 3) building, and 4) forbiddance, and the word *grantha* is used in the sense of wealth, thesis, vocabulary, etc.

The word *urukrama* means the one whose activities are glorious. *Krama* means step. This word *urukrama* specifically indicates the Lord's incarnation as Vāmana, who covered the whole universe by immeasurable steps. Lord Viṣṇu is powerful, and His activities are so glorious that He has created the spiritual world by His internal potency and the material world by His external potency. By His all-pervading features He is everywhere present as the Supreme Truth, and in His personal feature He is always present in His transcendental abode of Goloka Vṛndāvana where He displays His transcendental pastimes in all variegatedness. His activities cannot be compared with anyone else's, and therefore the word *urukrama* is just applicable to Him only.

According to Sanskrit verbal arrangement, *kurvanti* means to do things for someone else. Therefore, it means that the ātmārāmas render devotional service unto the Lord not for personal interest but for the pleasure of the Lord, Urukrama.

Hetu means causal. There are many causes for one's sense satisfaction, and they can be chiefly classified as material enjoyment, mystic powers and liberation, which are generally desired by progressive persons. As far as material enjoyments are concerned, they are innumerable, and the materialists are eager to increase them more and more because they are under the illusory energy. There is no end to the list of material enjoyments, nor can anyone in the material universe have all of them. As far as the mystic powers are concerned, they are eight in all (such as to become the minutist in form, to become weightless, to have anything one desires, to lord it over the material nature, to control other living beings, to throw earthly globes in outer space, etc.). These mystic powers are mentioned in the *Bhāgavatam* (11.15). The forms of liberation are five in number.

Therefore, unalloyed devotion means service to the Lord without desire for the above-mentioned personal benefits. And the powerful Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa can be fully satisfied by such unalloyed devotees free from all sorts of desires for personal benefit.

Unalloyed devotional service of the Lord progresses in different stages. Practice of devotional service in the material field is of eighty-one different qualities, and above such activities there is the transcendental practice of devotional service, which is one and is called *sādhana-bhakti*. When unalloyed practice of *sādhana-bhakti* is matured into transcendental love for the Lord, the transcendental loving service of the Lord begins gradually developing into nine progressive stages of loving service under the headings of attachment, love, affection, feelings, affinity, adherence, following, ecstasy and intense feelings of separation.

The attachment of an inactive devotee develops up to the stage of transcendental love of God. Attachment of an active servitor develops up to the stage of adherence, and that for a friendly devotee develops up to the stage of following, and the same is also the case for the paternal devotees. Devotees in conjugal love develop ecstasy up to the stage of intense feelings of separation. These are some of the features of unalloyed devotional service of the Lord.

According to *Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya*, the import of the word *ittham-bhūta* is complete bliss. Transcendental bliss in the realization of impersonal Brahman becomes comparable with the scanty water contained in the pit made by a cow's hoof. It is nothing compared to the ocean of bliss of the vision of the Personality of Godhead. The personal form of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is so attractive that it comprehends all attraction, all bliss and all tastes (*rasas*). These attractions are so strong that *no one wants to exchange material enjoyment, mystic powers and liberation for them*. There is no need of logical arguments in support of this statement, but out of one's own nature one becomes attracted by the qualities of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. We must know for certain that the qualities of the Lord have nothing to do with mundane qualities. All of them are full of bliss, knowledge and eternity. There are innumerable qualities of the Lord, and one is attracted by one quality while another is attracted by another.

Great sages, such as the four bachelor devotees Sanaka, Sanātana, Sananda and Sanat-kumāra, are attracted by the fragrance of flowers and *tulasī* leaves anointed with the pulp of sandalwood offered at the lotus feet of the Lord. Similarly, Śukadeva Gosvāmī was attracted by the transcendental pastimes of the Lord. Śukadeva Gosvāmī was already situated in the liberated stage, yet he was attracted by the pastimes of the Lord. This proves that the quality of His pastimes has nothing to do with material affinity. Similarly, the young cowherd damsels were attracted by the bodily feature of the Lord, and Rukmīṇī was attracted by hearing about the glories of the Lord. Lord Kṛṣṇa attracts even the mind of the goddess of fortune. He attracts, in special cases, the minds of all young girls. He attracts the minds of the elderly ladies by paternal affection. He attracts the minds of the male in the humors of servitude and friendship.

The word *hari* conveys various meanings, but the chief import of the word is that He (the Lord) vanquishes everything inauspicious and takes away the mind of the devotee by awarding pure transcendental love. By remembering the Lord in acute distress one can be free from all varieties of miseries and anxieties. Gradually the Lord vanquishes all obstacles on the path of devotional service of a pure devotee, and the result of nine devotional activities, such as hearing, chanting, etc., becomes manifested.

By His personal features and transcendental attributes, the Lord attracts all psychological activities of a pure devotee. Such is the attractive power of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The attraction is so powerful that a pure devotee never hankers for any one of the four principles of religion. These are the attractive features of the transcendental attributes of the Lord. And adding to this the words *api* and *ca*, one can increase the imports unlimitedly. According to Sanskrit grammar there are seven synonyms for the word *api*.

So by interpreting each and every word of this śloka, one can see unlimited numbers of transcendental qualities of Lord Kṛṣṇa that attract the mind of a pure devotee.

TEXT 11

हरेर्गुणाक्षिप्तमतिर्भगवान् बादरायणिः ।
 अच्यगान्महदाख्यानं नित्यं विष्णुजनप्रियः ॥११॥

harer guṇākṣipta-matir
bhagavān bādarāyaṇiḥ
adhyagān mahad ākhyānaṁ
nityaṁ viṣṇu-jana-priyaḥ

hareḥ—of Hari, the Personality of Godhead; guṇa—transcendental attribute; ākṣipta—being absorbed in; matiḥ—mind; bhagavān—powerful; bādarāyaṇiḥ—son of Vyāsadeva; adhyagāt—underwent studies; mahat—great; ākhyānaṁ—narration; nityaṁ—regularly; viṣṇu-jana—devotees of the Lord; priyaḥ—beloved.

TRANSLATION

Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī, son of Śrīla Vyāsadeva, was not only transcendently powerful. He was also very dear to the devotees of the Lord. Thus he underwent the study of this great narration [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam].

PURPORT

According to *Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa*, Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī was a liberated soul even within the womb of his mother. Śrīla Vyāsadeva knew that the child, after his birth, would not stay at home. Therefore he (Vyāsadeva) impressed upon him the synopsis of the *Bhāgavatam* so that the child could be made attached to the transcendental activities of the Lord. After his birth, the child was still more educated in the subject of the *Bhāgavatam* by recitation of the actual poems.

The idea is that generally the liberated souls are attached to the feature of impersonal Brahman with a monistic view of becoming one with the supreme whole. But by the association of pure devotees like Vyāsadeva, even the liberated soul becomes attracted to the transcendental qualities of the Lord. By the mercy of Śrī Nārada, Śrīla Vyāsadeva was able to narrate the great epic of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and by the mercy of Vyāsadeva, Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī was able to grasp the import. The transcendental qualities of the Lord are so attractive that Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī became detached from being completely absorbed in impersonal Brahman and positively took up the personal activity of the Lord.

Practically he was thrown from the impersonal conception of the Absolute, thinking within himself that he had simply wasted so much time in devoting himself to the impersonal feature of the Supreme, or in other words, he realized more transcendental bliss with the personal feature than the impersonal. And from that time, not only he himself became very dear to the *Viṣṇu-jana* or the devotees of the Lord, but also the *Viṣṇu-jana* became very dear to him. The devotees of the Lord, who do not wish to kill the individuality of the living entities and who desire to become personal servitors of the Lord, do not very much like the impersonalists, and similarly the impersonalists, who desire to become one with the Supreme, are unable to evaluate the devotees of the Lord. Thus from time immemorial these two transcendental pilgrims have sometimes been competitors. In other words, each of them likes to keep separate from the other because of the ultimate personal and impersonal realizations. Therefore it appears that Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī also had no liking for the devotees. But since he himself became a saturated devotee, he desired always the transcendental association of the *Viṣṇu-jana*, and the *Viṣṇu-jana* also liked his association since he became a personal *Bhāgavata*. Thus both the son and the father were completely cognizant of the transcendental knowledge in Brahman, and afterwards both of them became absorbed in the personal features of the Supreme Lord. The question as to how Śukadeva Gosvāmī was attracted by the narration of the *Bhāgavatam* is thus completely answered by this *śloka*.

TEXT 12

परीक्षितोऽथ राजर्षेर्जन्मकर्मविलापनम् ।
संस्थां च पाण्डुपुत्राणां वक्ष्ये कृष्णकथोदयम् ॥१२॥

parīkṣito 'tha rājarṣer
janma-karma-vilāpanam
saṁsthāṁ ca pāṇḍu-putrāṇāṁ
vakṣye kṛṣṇa-kathodayaṁ

parīkṣitaḥ—of King Parīkṣit; atha—thus; rājarṣeḥ—of the King who was the ṛṣi among the kings; janma—birth; karma—activities; vilāpanam—deliverance; saṁsthāṁ—renunciation of the world; ca—and; pāṇḍu-putrāṇāṁ—of the sons of Pāṇḍu; vakṣye—I shall speak; kṛṣṇa-kathā-udayaṁ—that which gives rise to the transcendental narration of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī thus addressed the ṛṣis headed by Śaunaka: Now I shall begin the transcendental narration of the Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and topics of the birth, activities and deliverance of King Parīkṣit, the sage amongst kings, as well as topics of the renunciation of the worldly order by the sons of Pāṇḍu.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa is so kind to the fallen souls that He personally incarnates Himself amongst the different kinds of living entities and takes part with them in daily activities. Any historical fact old or new which has a connection with the activities of the Lord is to be understood as a transcendental narration of the Lord. Without Kṛṣṇa, all the supplementary literatures like the *Purāṇas* and *Mahābhārata* are simply stories or historical facts. But with Kṛṣṇa they become transcendental, and when we hear of them we at once become transcendently related with the Lord. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is also a *Purāṇa*, but the special significance of this *Purāṇa* is that the activities of the Lord are central and not just supplementary historical facts. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is thus recommended by Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu as the spotless *Purāṇa*. There is a class of less intelligent devotees of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* who desire to relish at once the activities of the Lord narrated in the Tenth Canto without first understanding the primary cantos. They are under the false impression that the other cantos are not concerned with Kṛṣṇa and thus more foolishly than intelligently take to the reading of the Tenth Canto. These readers are specifically told herein that the other cantos of the *Bhāgavatam* are as important as the Tenth Canto. No one should try to go into the matters of the Tenth Canto without having thoroughly understood the purport of the other nine cantos. Kṛṣṇa and His pure devotees like the Pāṇḍavas are on the same plane. Kṛṣṇa is not without His devotees of all the *rasas*, and the pure devotees like the Pāṇḍavas or others are not without Kṛṣṇa. The devotees and the Lord are interlinked, and they cannot be separated. Therefore talks about them are all *Kṛṣṇa-kathā*, or topics of the Lord.

TEXTS 13-14

यदा मृधे कौरवसुञ्जयानां
वीरेष्वथो वीरगतिं गतेषु ।
वृकोदराविद्गदाभिमर्श-
भयोरुदण्डे घृतराष्ट्रपुत्रे ॥१३॥
मर्तुः प्रियं द्रौणिरिति स पश्यन्
कृष्णासुतानां स्वपतां शिरसि ।
उपाहरद्विप्रियमेव तस्य
जुगुप्सितं कर्म विगर्हयन्ति ॥१४॥

yadā mṛdhe kaurava-sñjayānāṁ
vīreṣv atho vīra-gatiṁ gateṣu
vṛkodarāvīddha-gadābhimarśa-
bhagnorudaṇḍe dhṛtarāṣṭra-putre

bhartuḥ priyaṁ drauṇir iti sma paśyan
kṛṣṇā-sutanāṁ svapatāṁ śirāṁsi
upāharad vipriyam eva tasya
jugupsitaṁ karma vigarhayanti

yadā—when; mṛdhe—in the battlefield; kaurava—the party of Dhṛtarāṣṭra; sñjayānām—of the party of the Pāṇḍavas; vīreṣu—of the warriors; atho—

thus; *vīra-gatim*—destination deserved by the warriors; *gateṣu*—being obtained; *vykodara*—Bhīma (the second Pāṇḍava); *āviddha*—beaten; *gadā*—by the club; *abhimarṣa*—lamenting; *bhagna*—broken; *urudaṇḍa*—spinal cord; *dhṛtarāṣṭra-putre*—the son of King Dhṛtarāṣṭra; *bhartuḥ*—of the master; *priyam*—pleasing; *drauṇiḥ*—the son of Droṇācārya; *iti*—thus; *smā*—shall be; *paśyan*—seeing; *kṛṣṇā*—Draupadī; *sutānām*—of the sons; *svapatām*—while sleeping; *śīrūṁsi*—heads; *upāharat*—delivered as a prize; *vipriyam*—pleasing; *eva*—like; *tasya*—his; *jugupsitam*—most heinous; *karma*—act; *vigarhayanti*—disapproving.

TRANSLATION

When the respective warriors of both camps, namely the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas, were killed on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra and the dead warriors obtained their deserved destinations, and when the son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra fell down lamenting, his spine broken, being beaten by the club of Bhīmasena, the son of Droṇācārya [Aśvatthāmā] beheaded the five sleeping sons of Draupadī and delivered them as a prize to his master, foolishly thinking that he would be pleased. Duryodhana, however, disapproved of the heinous act, and he was not pleased in the least.

PURPORT

Transcendental topics on the activities of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam begin from the end of the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra where the Lord Himself spoke about Himself in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Therefore, both the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* are transcendental topics of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The *Gītā* is *Kṛṣṇa-kathā*, or topics of Kṛṣṇa, because it is spoken by the Lord, and the *Bhāgavatam* is also *Kṛṣṇa-kathā* because it is spoken about the Lord. Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu wanted everyone to be informed of both *Kṛṣṇa-kathās* by His order. Lord Kṛṣṇa Caitanya is Kṛṣṇa Himself in the garb of a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, and therefore the versions of both Lord Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu are identical. Lord Caitanya desired that all who are born in India seriously understand such *Kṛṣṇa-kathās* and then after full realization preach the transcendental message to everyone in all parts of the world. That will bring about the desired peace and prosperity of the stricken world.

TEXT 15

माता शिशूनां निधनं सुतानां
निशम्य घोरं परितप्यमाना ।
तदारुदद्वाक्पकलाकुलाक्षी
तां सान्त्वयन्नाह किरीटमाली ॥१५॥

*mātā śiṣūnāṃ nidhanam sutānāṃ
niśamya ghoram paritapyamānā
tadārudad vāṣpa-kalākulākṣī
tām sāntvayann āha kirīṭamālī*

mātā—the mother; *śiṣūnām*—of the children; *nidhanam*—massacre; *sutānām*—of the sons; *niśamya*—after hearing; *ghoram*—ghastly; *paritapyamānā*—lamenting; *tadā*—at that time; *arudat*—began to cry; *vāṣpa-kala-ākulākṣī*—with tears in the eyes; *tām*—her; *sāntvayan*—pacifying; *āha*—said; *kirīṭamālī*—Arjuna.

TRANSLATION

Draupadī, the mother of the five children of the Pāṇḍavas, after hearing of the massacre of her sons, began to cry in distress with eyes full of tears. Trying to pacify her in her great loss, Arjuna spoke to her thus:

TEXT 16

तदा शुचस्ते प्रमृजामि भद्रे
यद्ब्रह्मबन्धोः शिर आततायिनः ।
गाण्डीवमुक्तौर्विशिलेहपाहरे
त्वाऽऽक्रम्य यत्स्नास्यसि दग्धपुत्रा ॥१६॥

*tadā śucas te pramṛjāmi bhadre
yad brahma-bandhoḥ śira ātatāyinaḥ
gāṇḍīva-muktair viśikhair upāhare
tvā 'kramya yat snāsyasi dagdha-putrā*

tadā—at that time only; *śucaḥ*—tears in grief; *te*—your; *pramṛjāmi*—shall wipe out; *bhadre*—O gentle lady; *yat*—when; *brahma-bandhoḥ*—of a degraded *brāhmaṇa*; *śiraḥ*—head; *ātatāyinaḥ*—of the aggressor; *gāṇḍīva-muktauḥ*—shot by the bow named Gāṇḍīva; *viśikhaiḥ*—by the arrows; *upāhare*—shall present to you; *tvā*—yourself; *ākramya*—riding on it; *yat*—which; *snāsyasi*—take your bath; *dagdha-putrā*—after burning the sons.

TRANSLATION

O gentle lady, when I present you with the head of that brāhmaṇa, after beheading him with arrows from my Gāṇḍīva bow, I shall then wipe the tears from your eyes and pacify you. Then, after burning your sons' bodies, you can take your bath standing on his head.

PURPORT

An enemy who sets fire to the house, administers poison, attacks all of a sudden with deadly weapons, plunders wealth or usurps agricultural fields, or entices one's wife is called an aggressor. Such an aggressor, though he be a *brāhmaṇa* or a so-called son of a *brāhmaṇa*, has to be punished in all circumstances. When Arjuna promised to behead the aggressor named Aśvatthāmā, he knew well that Aśvatthāmā was the son of a *brāhmaṇa*, but because the so-called *brāhmaṇa* acted like a butcher, he was taken as such, and there was no question of sin in killing such a *brāhmaṇa*'s son who proved to be a villain.

TEXT 17

इति प्रियां वल्गुविचित्रजल्पैः
स सान्त्वयित्वाच्युतमित्रसूतः ।
अन्वद्रवद्दंशित उग्रधन्वा
कपिध्वजो गुरुपुत्रं रथेन ॥१७॥

*iti priyām valgu-vicitra-jalpaiḥ
sa sāntvayitvācyuta-mitra-sūtaḥ
anvādravat daṁśita ugra-dhanvā
kapi-dhvajo guru-putraṃ rathena*

iti—thus; *priyām*—unto the dear; *valgu*—sweet; *vicitra*—variegated; *jalpaiḥ*—by statements; *saḥ*—he; *sāntvayitvā*—satisfying; *acyuta-mitra-sūtaḥ*—Arjuna, who is guided by the infallible Lord as a friend and driver; *anvādravat*—followed; *daṁśitaḥ*—being protected by Kavaca; *ugra-dhanvā*—equipped with furious weapons; *kapi-dhvajaḥ*—Arjuna; *guru-putraṃ*—the son of the martial teacher; *rathena*—getting on the chariot.

TRANSLATION

Arjuna, who is guided by the infallible Lord as friend and driver, thus satisfied the dear lady by such statements. Then he dressed in armor and armed himself with furious weapons, and getting into his chariot, he set out to follow Aśvatthāmā, the son of his martial teacher.

(continued in next issue)



ISKCON NEWS

A look at the worldwide activities of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

ISKCON—Ten Years of Spreading Kṛṣṇa Consciousness

July 6, 1976, marks the tenth anniversary of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. In only a decade, ISKCON has grown into a worldwide confederation of more than one hundred *āśramas*, schools, temples, institutes, and farm communities.

Early in 1966, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda rented a small storefront at 26 Second Avenue, in New York City. A few young students joined him, and with their help Śrīla Prabhupāda formally incorporated ISKCON in July of that year. In this first Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa temple in the United States, Śrīla Prabhupāda lectured from the *Bhagavad-gītā*, distributed *prasāda* (food offered to Kṛṣṇa), and led his tiny group of disciples in chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. After training these first disciples to maintain both the temple and the chanting, Śrīla Prabhupāda flew from New York to San Francisco. There he again attracted a few serious followers and started his second temple. Soon the devotees started temples in Montreal, Boston, Buffalo, and other large cities throughout America and Canada.

In 1968 Śrīla Prabhupāda sent three married couples to London. They chanted on the streets, in clubs, and in

private homes, and soon they established a permanent center two blocks from the British Museum. Later they made a record of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra that became the country's number one song. Śrīla Prabhupāda then sent other disciples to Germany and France, and before long the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement was flourishing all over Europe. Today the movement extends to Africa, Australia, South America, Indonesia, and Japan as well.

Also in 1968, Śrīla Prabhupāda founded New Vrindaban, an experimental Vedic community in the hills of West Virginia. Inspired by thriving New Vrindaban (now spread over more than one thousand acres), his students have since founded several similar communities in the United States and abroad.

In 1972 His Divine Grace introduced the Vedic system of primary and secondary education into the West by founding the Gurukula (school of the spiritual master) in Dallas, Texas. Though it began with three children in 1972, the Gurukula now has an enrollment of several hundred. In addition to the original school in Dallas, there are now teaching facilities in Vancouver, British Columbia; Los Angeles, California; Port

Royal, Pennsylvania; Indre, France; and Śrīdhāma Māyāpur, India.

Also, Śrīla Prabhupāda has seen to the construction of a large international center at Śrīdhāma Māyāpur, in West Bengal, India. (This is to be the nucleus of a Vedic village.) In 1975, Śrīla Prabhupāda opened the magnificent Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma temple and international guest house in Vṛndāvana, India. At these centers Westerners can live comfortably and gain firsthand experience of Vedic culture.

Yet Śrīla Prabhupāda considers his most significant contribution over the years to be his books on the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Since 1966, he has written more than fifty hard-bound and over a dozen soft-bound volumes. Highly regarded by the academic community for their authenticity, depth, and clarity, they have become standard textbooks in numerous college courses. Further, through translation, Śrīla Prabhupāda's writings now appear in eleven languages. As a result, the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust (established in 1972 to publish the works of His Divine Grace) has become the world's largest publisher of books in the field of Indian religion and philosophy.

Intellectual leaders have affirmed that Śrīla Prabhupāda's books are both authentic and appropriate for the modern world. Dr. John L. Mish, Chief of the New York Public Library's Oriental Division, had this to say: "The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust editions of famous religious classics of India, with new translations and commentaries, are an important addition to our expanding knowledge of spiritual India. The new edition of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is particularly welcome."

Dr. Samuel Atkins, Professor of Sanskrit at Princeton University, commented, "I am most impressed with A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda's scholarly and authoritative edition of *Bhagavad-gītā*. It is a most valuable work for the scholar as well as the layman and is of great utility as a reference book as well as a textbook. I promptly recommend this edition to my students. It is a beautifully done book."

Kṛṣṇa Conscious Calendar

Kṛṣṇa conscious devotees follow a spiritual calendar that divides the year into twelve months, each named for a different form of Kṛṣṇa. The year is full of Kṛṣṇa conscious festivals, and some of the upcoming ones are listed here. The devotees of the ISKCON center nearest you will gladly tell you about the meaning of these festivals.

July 3	July 7	July 8	July 9	July 11
Herā-pañcamī.	Lord Jagannātha's return Ratha-yātrā from the Gundīcā temple.	Śayanā Ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans). Cāturmāsya can be started from this date, as well as the 11th or the 16th. (Fast from spinach for the first month, from yogurt the second, from milk the third, and from urad and masura dahl the fourth.)	Break-fast after sunrise, before 9:28 A.M.	Disappearance of Sanātana Gosvāmī. Guru-pūrnimā. Full moon.
July 16	July 19	July 23	July 24	July 30
Disappearance of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī.	Disappearance of Lokanātha Gosvāmī.	Kāmikā Ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans).	Break-fast after 6:48 and before 9:48 A.M.	Disappearance of Vamīdāsa Bābājī and Raghunandana Ṭhākura.
				Jhulana-yātrā begins. Pavitrāropanī Ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans).
August 7	August 10	August 18	August 19	
Break-fast after sunrise, before 7:31 A.M. Disappearance of Rūpa Gosvāmī and Gaurīdāsa Paṇḍita.	Appearance of Lord Baladeva (fasting till noon). End of Jhulana-yātrā. Full Moon.	Janmāṣṭamī (fasting till midnight).	Nandotsava (the birth ceremony of child Kṛṣṇa performed by Nanda Mahārāja). Vyāsa-pūjā.	





KṚṢṆA CONSCIOUSNESS: THE SPIRIT OF '76!

You see them in almost every big city in the United States: devotees of Kṛṣṇa singing the holy names of God (Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare). In India, the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa has been going on for thousands upon thousands of years. During the American Bicentennial celebration this summer, there will be another cause for celebration: in the Western world, the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa has now been going on for ten years. And, two days after the two hundredth anniversary of the

United States of America on the Fourth of July, the devotees will commemorate the tenth anniversary of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness: "One nation under God"; yes, and one world under God. In ten years of service, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness has seen the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa spread all over the earth. In harmony with the teachings found in every faith throughout the world, these dedicated chanters feel that the spiritual sound of God's names will purify the atmosphere and refresh all the world's people.



Photo: Gaurāṅgī dāśa

Students, workers, and businessmen talk with devotees and hear the devotees talk about Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Like the other communities within the city, the devotional community has an important task to perform. “Kṛṣṇa means ‘the all-attractive one’; He is the most beloved friend of everyone,” say the devotees. “We’d like to introduce you to Kṛṣṇa.” Most people take a keen interest in hearing about the beautiful Lord and about our unbreakable link with Him. The devotees’ spiritual master, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, has



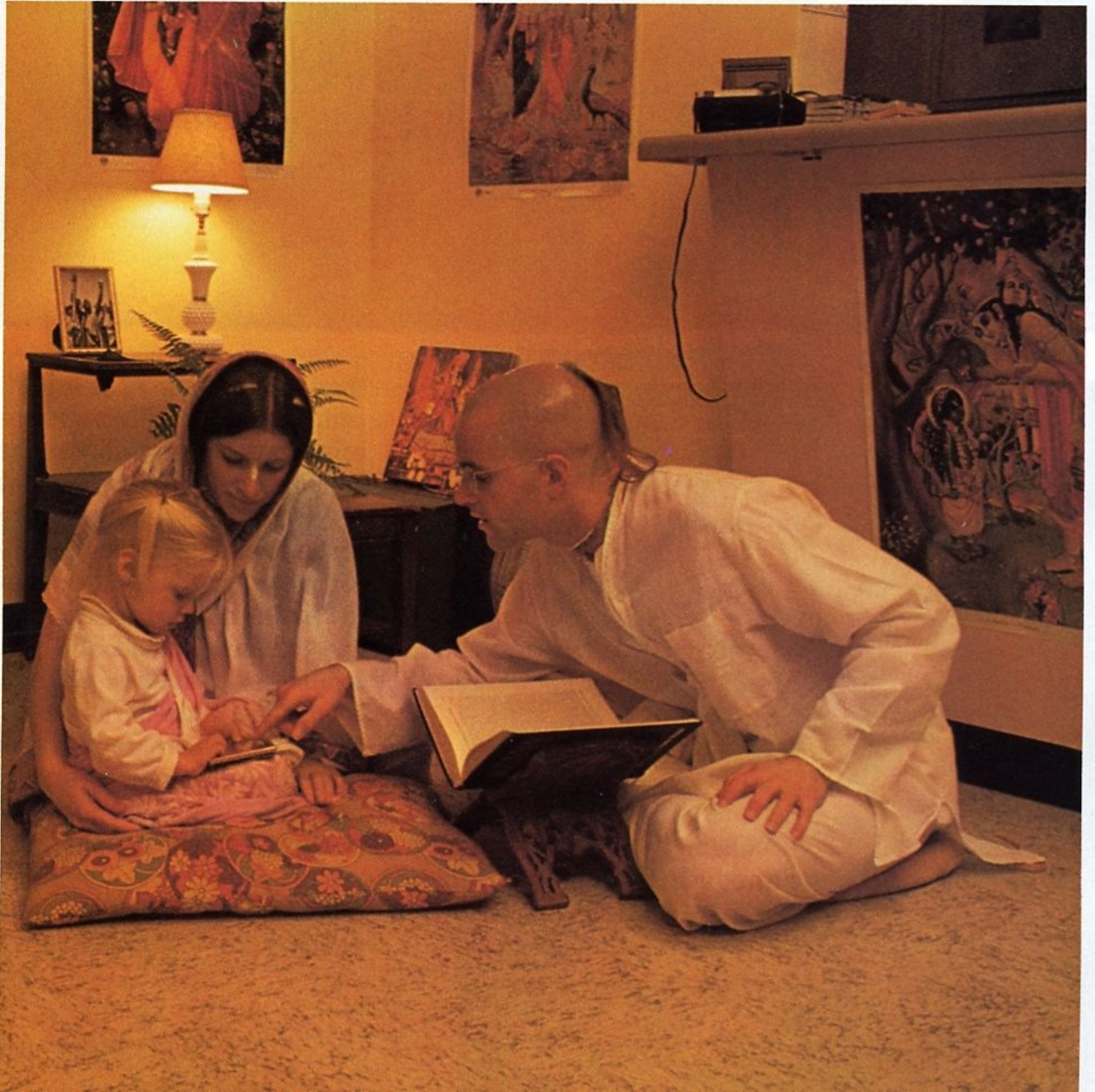


Photo: Jeni Davis



helped them to see that all people are devotees of the Lord; the only difference is that some are not remembering their identity and some are remembering their identity. That simple difference, in turn, means the difference between hatred and harmony, between distress and delight, throughout the world. Just as the whole tree enjoys health when we water its root, so the whole world will flourish when we all serve the Lord. By introducing (actually, reintroducing) people to Kṛṣṇa (in airports, classrooms, business districts—almost anywhere)

the devotees help to ease the pangs of material life and to bring their countrymen lasting happiness. Nor is the devotees' task a matter of sentimentality or wishful thinking. Śrīla Prabhupāda emphasizes that “books are the basis” of this nonsectarian movement to spread God consciousness. *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* come to us from the Vedic literatures, the most time-honored books in the human heritage. The subject matter: the science of linking ourselves with the original self, Kṛṣṇa.





In thirty-two cities within the United States and in forty-two other cities around the world, devotional communities flourish. Friendship, the arts, and spiritual growth contribute to the appeal of Kṛṣṇa conscious life for the thousands who've taken it up. Of course, the special joy of this life is to be conscious of

Kṛṣṇa, to feel the Lord's presence at every moment, in every activity. "Before my disciples took to Kṛṣṇa consciousness," Śrīla Prabhupāda recalls, "the pangs of material life made them gloomy. But now people say that they are bright-faced. Therefore, chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. You'll be happy, and you'll make everyone

happy." Guests are welcome at any time during the week. Yet the best time for visiting an ISKCON community is Sunday afternoon. Every Sunday the devotees have their traditional Love Feast, with vegetarian food, plays, movies, and good company (and, of course, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa).



Photo: Viśākhā devī dāśī

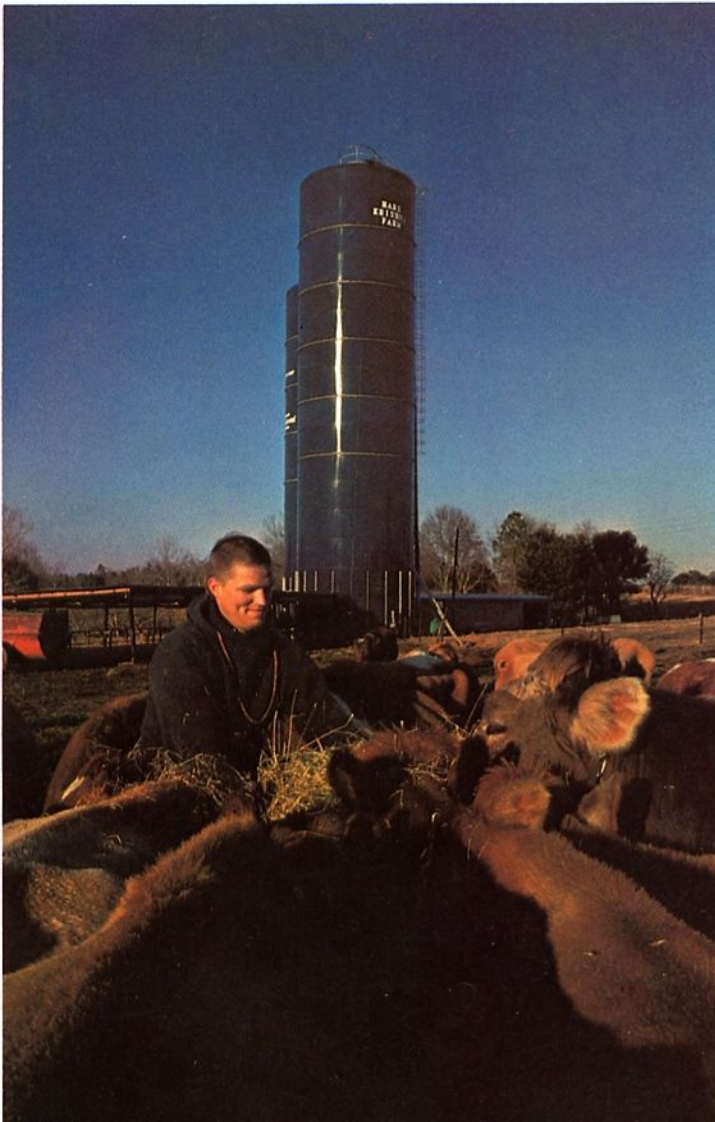


Photo: Muralīvadana dāśa

ISKCON country villages have sprung up at eleven farm sites worldwide. One of these self-sufficient communities, the Society's world headquarters in Māyāpur, India, is slated to grow into a mini-city of sixty thousand residents, with its own airport. The local government sees it as a big help to that area's economy. Elsewhere, as at these farms in West Virginia, Mississippi, and British Columbia, prize herds and fertile gardens yield food for both farm-working and city-dwelling devotees. Whether they live in the city, in the country, or in traveling buses, devotees of Kṛṣṇa look forward to a world filled with God consciousness. 🙏





CURING THE CRIMES OF A LIFETIME

by Bibhāvati-devī dāsī

Adapted from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, translation and commentary by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

With the recent disgrace of an American president still fresh in our minds, it is interesting to read of a similar case in ancient times. Five thousand years ago, a blind king named Dhṛtarāṣṭra dishonored his high post and caused the death of millions. His story is of special importance, even today, because he found an antidote to the crimes of a lifetime, and in his old age became self-realized.

King Dhṛtarāṣṭra was the acting monarch of Hastināpura, the capital of the Vedic kingdom of Bhārata, which five thousand years ago (according to the Vedic literature) spread over most of the planet. Hastināpura was on the banks of the Yamunā River, at the site of present-day Delhi. As its name indicates (*hasti* means “elephant”), it was a city full of opulently decorated elephants. Noblemen rode elaborate chariots past marble palaces inlaid with glittering jewels. The sweet smell of incense drifted out of latticed windows. Trees bearing fruits and flowers lined the wide streets, which were sprinkled with scented water. There was no hint of poverty or distress. Hastināpura was the crown jewel of the abundant Vedic civilization.

From the beginning, Dhṛtarāṣṭra’s position as king was never legal, for he was blind, and Vedic law ruled that a blind man could not be king. Thus the throne went to his younger brother Pāṇḍu. But when Pāṇḍu died in his young manhood, Dhṛtarāṣṭra began ruling on behalf of Pāṇḍu’s five sons, who were still children. In an age of great and honorable kings, Dhṛtarāṣṭra was an exception. Swayed by his eldest son Duryodhana’s ruthless lust for power, Dhṛtarāṣṭra began to abuse the guardianship of the Pāṇḍavas by closing his

already-blind eyes to the planned and purposeful efforts of Duryodhana to destroy the boys.

As the descendant of a great royal dynasty, Dhṛtarāṣṭra had the lineage and rearing of a proper monarch. But it seemed that he was as blind spiritually as he was physically. Although he admired and even loved the five fatherless princes, he began to contemplate taking away their kingdom and even their lives.

Yet Dhṛtarāṣṭra was not simply a ruthless monster preying on defenseless youths. There were great paradoxes in his nature. On the one hand, he appreciated the good counsel of his saintly younger brother, Mahātmā Vidura. On the other hand, he was weak enough to be swayed by his attachment to a son whom he knew to be dishonorable. Like many of us, though he knew right from wrong he felt powerless to stem the relentless tide of events—events that were to sweep him across the border between good and evil into a disastrous war.

Full of envy, the young Duryodhana and his brothers (the Kuru princes) watched their five cousins growing day by day into energetic, effulgent personalities loved by everyone. Yudhiṣṭhira, the eldest, was heir to the throne, and as he approached manhood, Duryodhana decided to murder him, his four brothers, and their mother, Queen Kuntī. Boyish rivalry had developed into a struggle for survival.

We do not know what doubts and guilts were in the mind of the old blind king when he heard the treacherous suggestions of his eldest son and his cunning ministers. But he liked something of what he heard. He himself wanted to seize the throne. So Dhṛtarāṣṭra asked

the Pāṇḍavas and their mother, Queen Kuntī, to visit a nearby city named Vāraṇāvata. There the conspirators planned to finish them off.

In the very presence of sympathetic figures like Vidura and Bhīṣma, the innocents were beset by a peril they could neither foretell nor fight against. Only the power of a few telling words from Mahātmā Vidura startled them into a realization of Dhṛtarāṣṭra’s treachery. As the five heroic youths were leaving Hastināpura with their beautiful and noble mother, Queen Kuntī, Vidura spoke some enigmatic words that eluded the rest of the royal family. His words were meant only for the ears of Yudhiṣṭhira.

“A weapon not made of steel or any other material element can be more than sharp enough to kill an enemy,” Vidura said. “He who knows this is never disturbed. Fire cannot extinguish the soul; it can merely annihilate the material body.” Although Mahātmā Vidura habitually lectured the royal family about spiritual matters, Queen Kuntī was puzzled by these words. “What did he mean?” she later asked Yudhiṣṭhira, and he explained to her precisely what Vidura had meant. The fine residential palace at Vāraṇāvata was to be their funeral pyre. They did in fact find that the walls of the new palace were made of combustible materials and shellac. Fire would be the weapon lurking in the walls of their new home.

When you are young and strong, no future seems altogether bleak. The Pāṇḍavas lived hopefully in the palace of shellac for almost a year. Then, one night, Vidura came to them in disguise and informed them that the housekeeper was going to set fire to the house on the

fourteenth night of the waning moon. Dhṛtarāṣṭra had been bidding his time, but now the Pāṇḍavas remembered with a jolt that he really intended to assassinate them.

In an intricately plotted escape, the Pāṇḍavas entered a tunnel under the house, and as the house burned down they fled into the forest.

When Dhṛtarāṣṭra heard of the supposed death of his five nephews and their mother, he performed the funeral rites with great cheerfulness. The only other cheerful face was that of Vidura, who knew the facts.

While Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Vidura smiled and the relatives mourned, the Pāṇḍavas wandered in the forest, wondering how they had come to this predicament. Bhīma used his strong body to protect his mother, Kuntī, and his brothers from

all sorts of calamities. They took to begging for food and eventually disguised themselves as brahmans. The simple white dress of brahmans, however, could not cover the hearts of these warriors. When the Pāṇḍavas heard of the marriage contest for the Pañcāla princess, Draupadī, they were determined to see this wonderful event.

Draupadī had wanted to marry Arjuna, the most skillful bowman among the Pāṇḍavas, and her father had therefore contrived a test so difficult that only someone of Arjuna's greatness could pass it. The target was a fish hanging near the high ceiling of the palace. Just under it hung a wheel. The aspiring archer had to pierce the fish's eye through the spokes of the protecting wheel. Moreover, he'd have to do this without looking at the target! On the

ground was a water pot in which the fish and the wheel were reflected. The contestant had to fix his aim on the target by looking at the trembling water in the pot. Everyone was astonished when Arjuna, in the dress of a poor brahman, pierced the target. The contending princes offered stiff resistance to Arjuna, but he fought them off and gained the hand of Draupadī.

Arjuna took his new bride home to the humble hut where he stayed with his mother and brothers. On arriving, he called out joyfully for them to come and see his prize. Kuntī, thinking that Arjuna had obtained something to eat on his begging rounds, did not come out, but said, "Whatever you have, you must share it equally with your brothers." In this unusual way, Draupadī became the wife of not one but all five of the young princes.

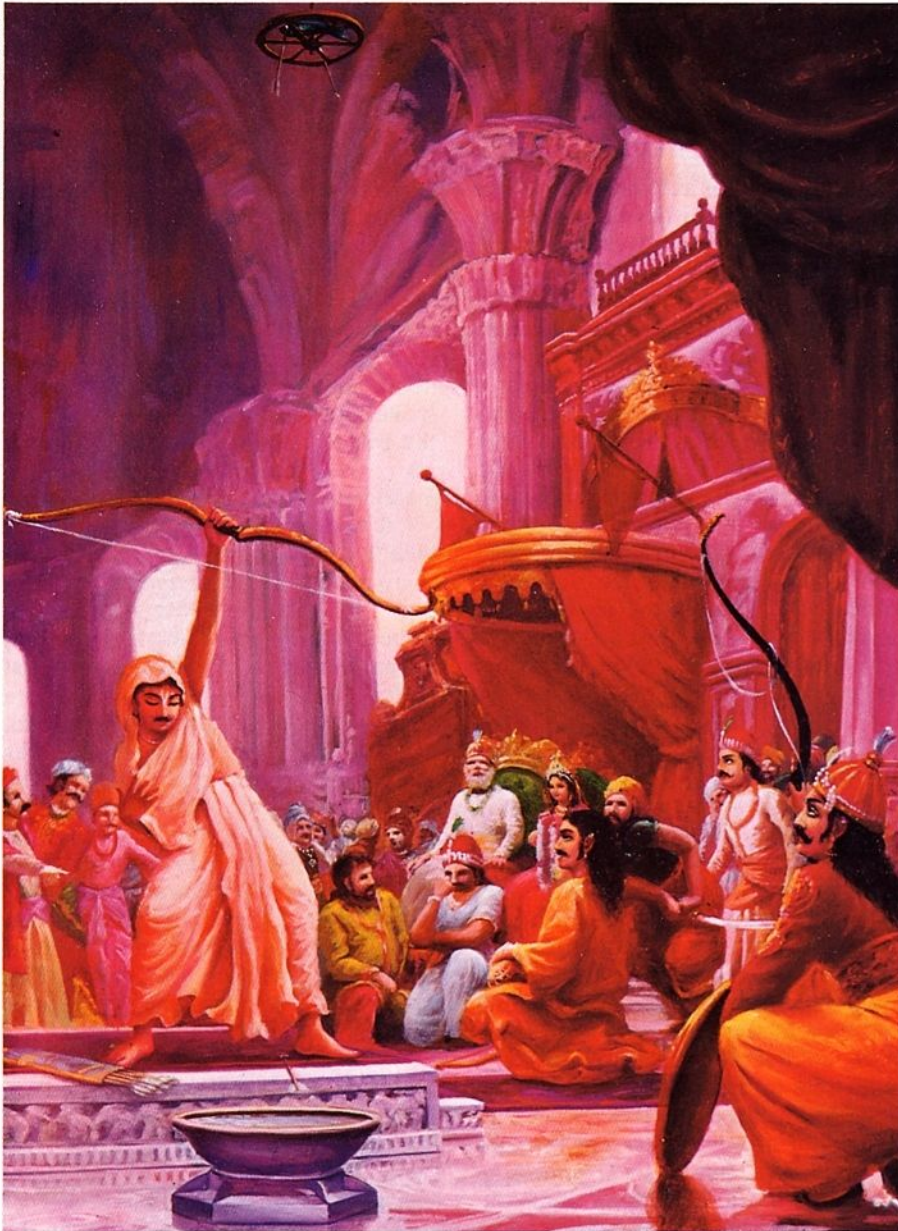
The hard days of living in a bamboo hut now passed away like a dream. All at once the Pāṇḍavas' fortunes changed with the startling speed of an arrow winging to its target. They took Draupadī, who was a wealthy and powerful princess, back with them to Hastināpura and set up residence at Indraprastha, a nearby city. Then they built a glittering palace with a mysterious defense system designed to bewilder enemies. The people of the kingdom worshiped the young princes as heroes, and they soon had amassed so much wealth and subordinated so many lesser princes that Yudhiṣṭhira decided to hold a Rājasūya sacrifice.

This sacrifice was a battle cry of sorts, since it required that all lesser kings and princes pay taxes to support the cost of the elaborate ceremony. King Yudhiṣṭhira (who was known as *aja-satru*, or one who has no enemies) fortunately had only one dissenting king, Jarāsandha, to deal with before he could declare himself qualified to hold the sacrifice and in effect become the emperor of the world.

If Yudhiṣṭhira was to be the most powerful king in the world, it was not for his own sake that he wanted to proclaim it. His real motive was to invite Lord Kṛṣṇa and please Him by offering Him the worship reserved for the most exalted person in the assembly.

King Yudhiṣṭhira, who was honor personified, invited all the elders: his teacher Droṇācārya, Bhīṣma (the grandfather of the Kurus), Mahātmā Vidura, and Dhṛtarāṣṭra. He also invited Duryodhana and all the other sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. Kings came from all over the world, and the ordinary citizens also visited the ceremony. In that setting the Pāṇḍavas openly declared to everyone

Illustration: Muralidhara dāsa



Everyone was astonished when Arjuna pierced the target.



Kṛṣṇa lengthened her sari without limit.

that Lord Kṛṣṇa was the Supreme Lord, and they offered Him their worship.

However, a trace of viciousness marred the luxuriant sacrifice. When Duryodhana saw that Yudhiṣṭhira had become overwhelmingly more famous and opulent than he, he began to burn with jealousy. He allowed his pride to poison everything he saw in connection with the Pāṇḍavas. Even the artful construction of Yudhiṣṭhira's new palace only kindled his rage. The defense system outside the castle consisted of moats so designed that it was impossible to tell water from dry land. Duryodhana approached some water, thinking it to be land, and fell in. Kṛṣṇa's queens laughed at him, but Duryodhana did not take it as a joke. His hair standing on end in anger, Duryodhana immediately left the palace in silence, with his head bowed. King Yudhiṣṭhira felt sorry, for he knew that inevitably this incident would increase the enmity between the two wings of the Kuru dynasty.

Soon afterward, Dhṛtarāṣṭra sent Yudhiṣṭhira an invitation to a gambling match. Yudhiṣṭhira well knew that this gambling match was meant to destroy him. Unhappily, he accepted the challenge; as a prince he could not honorably refuse. Duryodhana had asked Śakuni, a notorious cheater, to play dice with Yudhiṣṭhira. Very early in the game, Yudhiṣṭhira realized that

her. This tense scene was a seed that grew in time into the catastrophic Battle of Kurukṣetra.

As a result of the gambling match, Duryodhana banished the Pāṇḍavas to the forest for twelve years. He promised them that if they could spend the thirteenth year incognito, without being discovered by anyone, he would give back their kingdom. That feeble promise from their dangerous enemy was a shaky claim to the throne. But they had no other recourse. So, empty-handed, they walked out of Hastināpura into the shadow of exile. For twelve years they lived in the forest with Draupadī, and they also managed to survive the thirteenth without being discovered. Then they went to Hastināpura and reminded Dhṛtarāṣṭra of his son's promise to return their kingdom. Dhṛtarāṣṭra, whose character wavered between candor and mean trickery, tried to deny that promise. Finally, the Pāṇḍavas asked for only five villages to rule, one for each of them. According to the Vedic code of behavior for a warrior, they could not accept employment or go into business, but had to be rulers of some kind. Then, with no objection from Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Duryodhana said that he would not give them enough land to push a pin into. With that flippant remark, Duryodhana created a deadlock. The Pāṇḍavas had no kingdom. But Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme

Śakuni was cheating. His moral integrity, however, forced him to continue the game until Śakuni had won everything—including Yudhiṣṭhira's wealth, his kingdom, and even his wife, Draupadī. In a painful scene, Duryodhana's brother Duḥśāsana tried to strip Draupadī naked in front of the assembled warriors. We cannot imagine how shocking this act was to the chaste queen and her chivalrous husbands. Helplessly, Draupadī called on the Supreme Person, Lord Kṛṣṇa. By His mystic power, Kṛṣṇa lengthened her sari without limit, so that Duḥśāsana was unable to fully humiliate

Personality of Godhead, wanted the pious Pāṇḍavas to be more powerful than Dhṛtarāṣṭra and his sons. So now they had no recourse but to fight.

According to Vedic sources, the resulting battle—the famous Battle of Kurukṣetra—lasted for 18 days and took 640 million lives. Such a massacre as a result of a vendetta between two parts of one family may seem impossible. Yet the ancient records describe in considerable detail atomic weapons that could decimate entire armies. This great battle, although it took place five thousand years ago, involved weapons more subtle and more deadly than those that modern scientists have developed. Although the contending warriors rode in chariots drawn by horses, they could shoot (by mantra) arrows that could find a specific target. Huge elephants fell down like cut trees before air, water, and fire weapons unknown today.

When the storm of destruction finally abated, Dhṛtarāṣṭra was left with nothing but his burning conscience and his good wife, Gandharī. They had lost all their sons and grandsons. All the principal soldiers killed in the battle were related in some way or another; therefore the family members mourned together. Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, far from acting like a conqueror, felt great remorse. He was very conscious of his duty toward Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Gandharī, and he took care of them both in royal style.

An indication of King Yudhiṣṭhira's glorious character is that he felt the battle of Kurukṣetra to be his fault, even though the errors of Dhṛtarāṣṭra were colossal. For his part, Dhṛtarāṣṭra settled into the role of the honorable royal uncle, somehow resigning his conscience to the fact that because of his decision, millions of people had died within a few days.

Fortunately, while Dhṛtarāṣṭra was grasping at a life of skin-deep respectability, Vidura, his younger brother, returned to the palace after some years of pilgrimage. When he saw Dhṛtarāṣṭra living comfortably in the palace of Yudhiṣṭhira and callously forgetting his former acts of aggression, Vidura's saintly attitude turned hard as steel. *Sadhu* ("saint") means "one who cuts." So, with words, the sadhu Vidura began to cut away the false sense of security which Dhṛtarāṣṭra felt as he sat in the gorgeous palace of his nephew. Vidura saw that Dhṛtarāṣṭra was accepting the hospitality of Yudhiṣṭhira because he did not know what else to do. As his life passed imperceptibly away, Dhṛtarāṣṭra spent his old age in casual ease, surrounded by what was left of his family. To Vidura this looked like a crisis, and

he compassionately began to talk to him: "My dear king, please get out of here immediately. Do not delay. The Personality of Godhead in the form of time is approaching us all. Under the influence of time you must surrender your life, what to speak of other things, such as wealth, honor, children, land, and home." Vidura wanted to point out to Dhṛtarāṣṭra that the human form of life is meant for seeking the shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. So he spoke abrasively, trying to bring him to his senses. "You have been blind from your very birth, and recently you have become hard of hearing. Your memory is shortened, and your intelligence is disturbed. Your teeth are loose, your liver is defective, and you are coughing up mucus." He encouraged the aging king, who had become addicted to the rarefied atmosphere of the Pāṇḍava palace, to leave home without anxiety. "A first-class man wakes up and realizes the falsity and misery of this material world. He thus leaves home and depends fully on the Supreme Personality of Godhead within his heart. Please, therefore, leave for the North immediately without letting your relatives know."

The time had come for Dhṛtarāṣṭra to take his stand. Was he going to go on wasting his life, refusing to admit that his position at court was morally untenable? Or was he going to polish up his tar-

nished values during the last days of his life? The common practice in Vedic civilization was for a man to set aside the last part of his life for the sole purpose of self-realization and the attainment of salvation. Therefore, Vidura's good advice carried more weight than it would today.

Because Vidura was genuinely compassionate toward Dhṛtarāṣṭra, his words illuminated the consciousness that had been haunted by darkness for so many years. Dhṛtarāṣṭra clearly saw the truth in what Vidura was saying, and in an extraordinary display of resoluteness, left the palace without fanfare to set out on his lonely path. Gandharī followed her husband as an expression of her loyalty, although he did not ask her to do so.

They went to a place called Saptasrota, on the southern side of the Himalayan mountains, where the waters of the Ganges divide into seven parts. There Dhṛtarāṣṭra practiced mystic yoga, bathing three times daily, performing a fire sacrifice, and drinking only water. In this way he was able to control his mind and free it from thoughts of family life. He was able to lock up the Pandora's box of material desires and throw away the key, and he thus finally freed himself of the desire to play God with the lives of others.

Long before, when he had declined to cooperate with the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa,

Dhṛtarāṣṭra had simply increased the false egotism covering his real spiritual identity. Now, through the yogic process, he learned to concentrate all his senses on the Supreme and to understand himself as the Lord's eternal servitor. Thus he got free from the material propensities of hankering for power and wealth and attained his spiritual identity by the grace of his brother Vidura. Kṛṣṇa had shown his mercy upon Dhṛtarāṣṭra by sending Vidura, and when the old king was actually practicing the instructions of Vidura, the Lord directly helped him to attain the highest perfectional stage.

After some time, Dhṛtarāṣṭra quit his body by his developed mystic power, and the body burned to ashes. In this way, the king who could not live with honor died with honor. By the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa's devotee, he was able to make his life a success.

Kṛṣṇa is kind to everyone, everywhere. So the leaders of today's society can also benefit from His mercy, as much as the blind king did. The modern Vidura is His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, and the modern yoga process is chanting the names of God. They both stand ready to help our modern Dhṛtarāṣṭras come to Kṛṣṇa consciousness—either in retirement, or better yet in youth, to be able to lead others to the transcendental goal. 🙏

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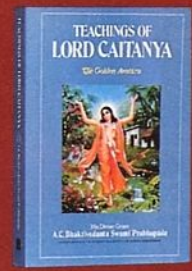
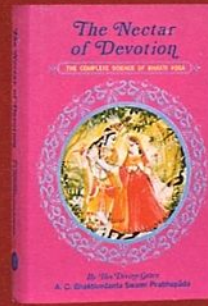
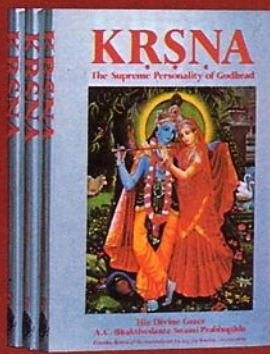
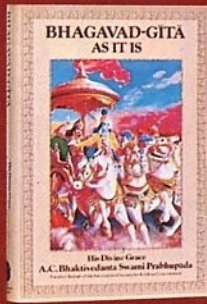
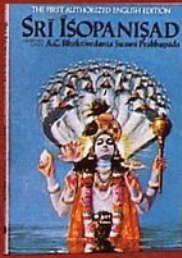


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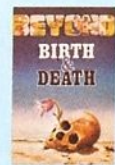
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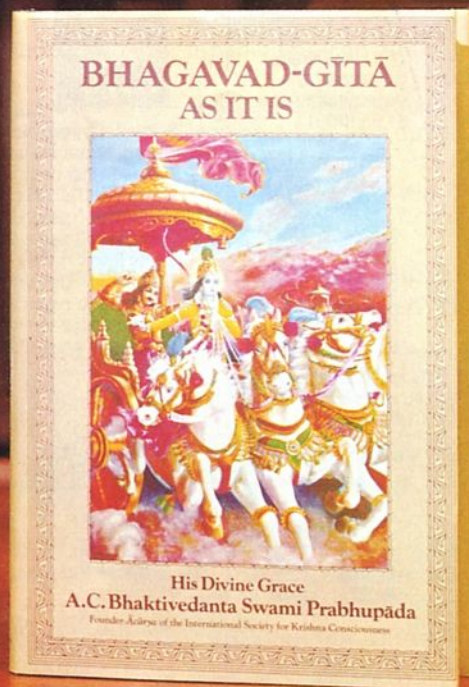
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