

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

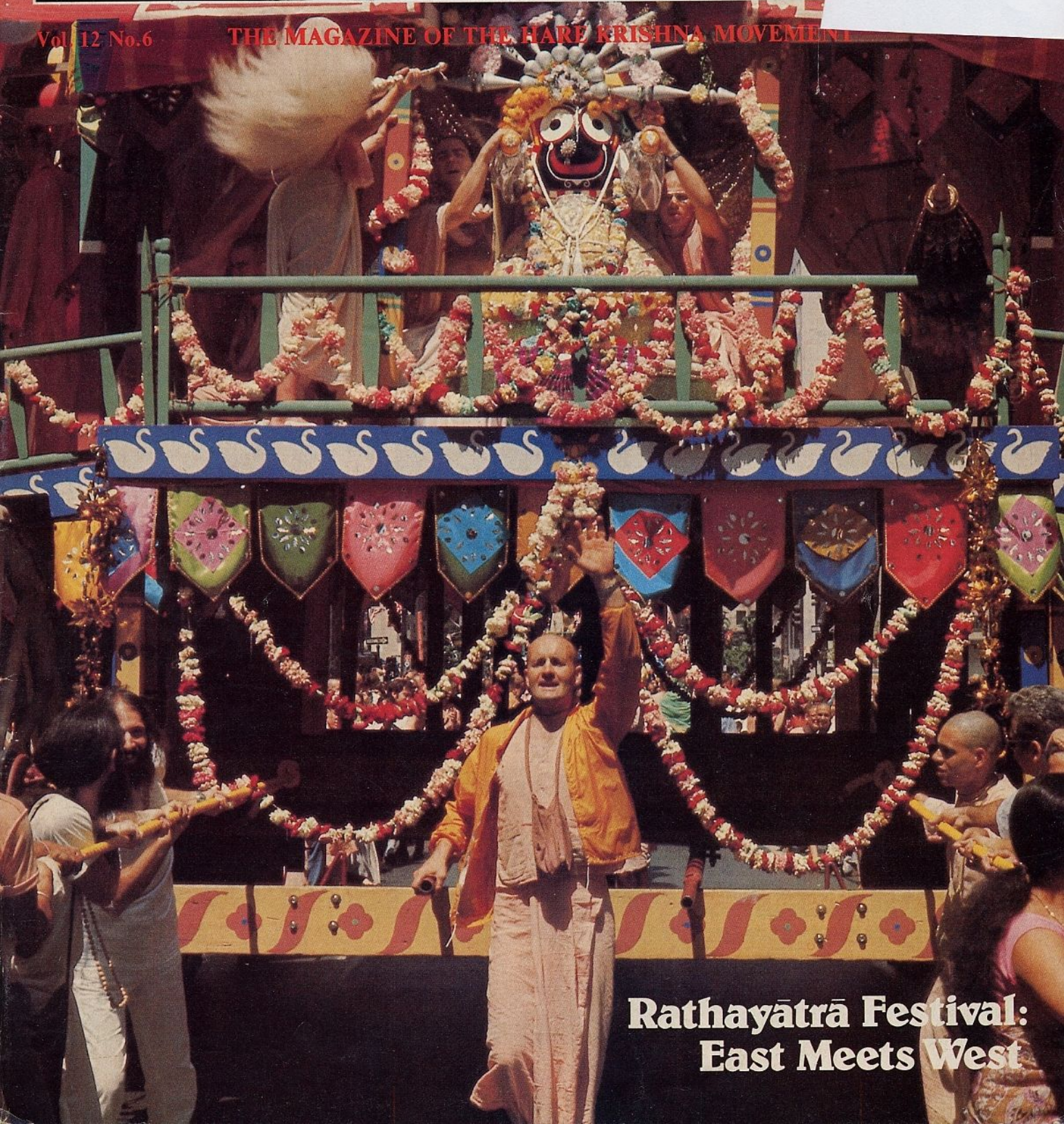


BACK TO GODHEAD



Vol. 12 No. 6

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT



**Rathayātrā Festival:
East Meets West**



A short statement of the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness

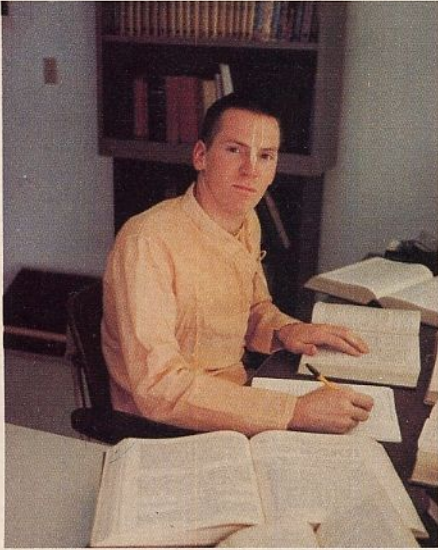
The International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) is a worldwide community of devotees practicing bhakti-yoga, the eternal science of loving service to God. The Society was founded in 1966 by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, a pure devotee of God representing an unbroken 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.

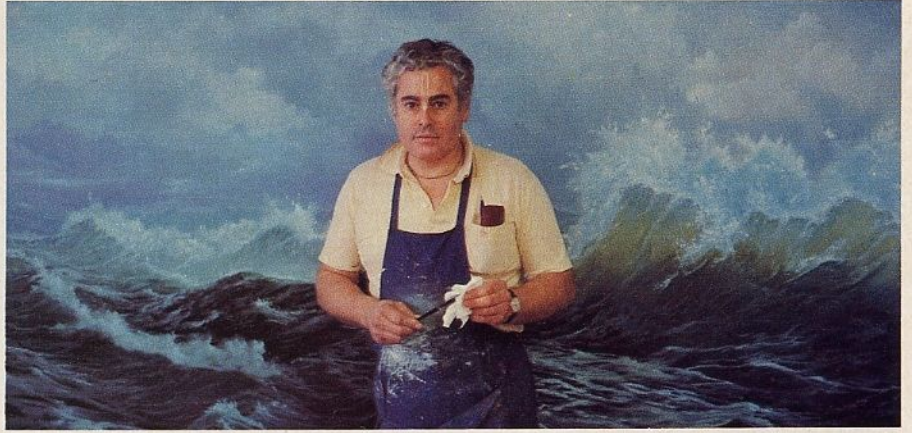
1. By sincerely cultivating a bona fide spiritual science, we can be free from anxiety and come to a state of pure, unending, blissful consciousness in this lifetime.
2. We are not our bodies but eternal spirit souls, parts and parcels of God (Kṛṣṇa). As such, we are all brothers, and Kṛṣṇa is ultimately 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

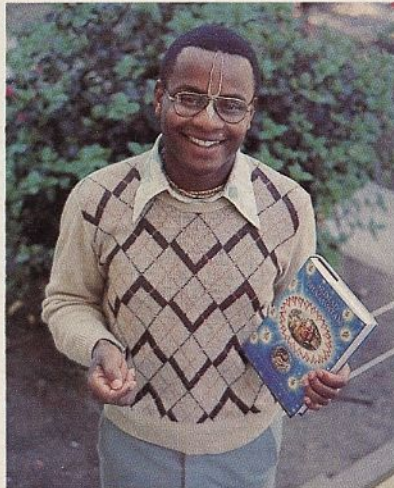
Chant and be happy...



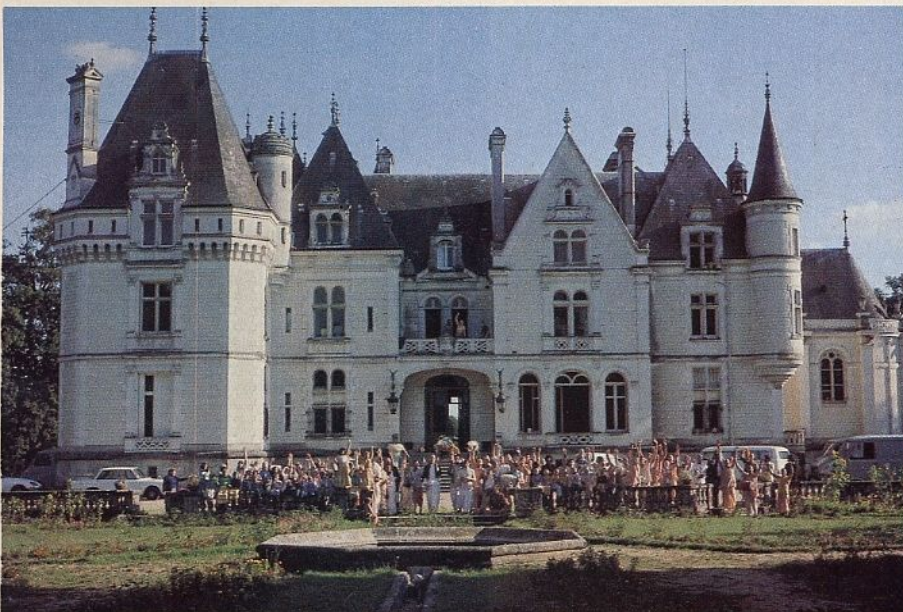
Jagannātha dāsa, Sanskrit student: "There are thousands of verses in the Sanskrit scriptures that explain the unlimited, eternal benefit we gain by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. According to the *Kalīśantaraṇa Upaniṣad*, there's no better process of self-realization. That's also the verdict of thousands of great self-realized souls who've reached the topmost spiritual platform (*prema*—pure love of God). And out of kindness they've written volumes praising the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra and urging us to try it. If we follow the process carefully and regularly, as directed by the previous sages, certainly we can also attain perfection."



Hector Salas, artist: "Chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa gives me peace and comfort that I couldn't find before. Chanting reassures me that there's something higher than just trying to make a living. I can definitely feel spiritual energy when I chant."



Gurūttama dāsa, book distributor: "I've been chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and reading authorized books about Kṛṣṇa consciousness for four years, and now I'm finding a higher happiness than I've ever experienced before. Chanting and reading give me the conviction to introduce this experience to others. My work takes me to public places where I meet all types of people, working so hard to achieve their goals—fame, money, power, beauty, knowledge. But what they don't know is that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the source of all these opulences. So, what I've learned can benefit everyone. They can have their goal of life by linking up with Kṛṣṇa through chanting His name."



Here at ISKCON's farm community in Indre, France, everyone chants the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, including the children. Chanting is simple to understand. It isn't anything artificial to be imposed on the mind—it's something sublime to purify our hearts. We're all originally Kṛṣṇa-conscious spiritual entities, and chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa is the easiest method for reviving our dormant, pure state of God consciousness.

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

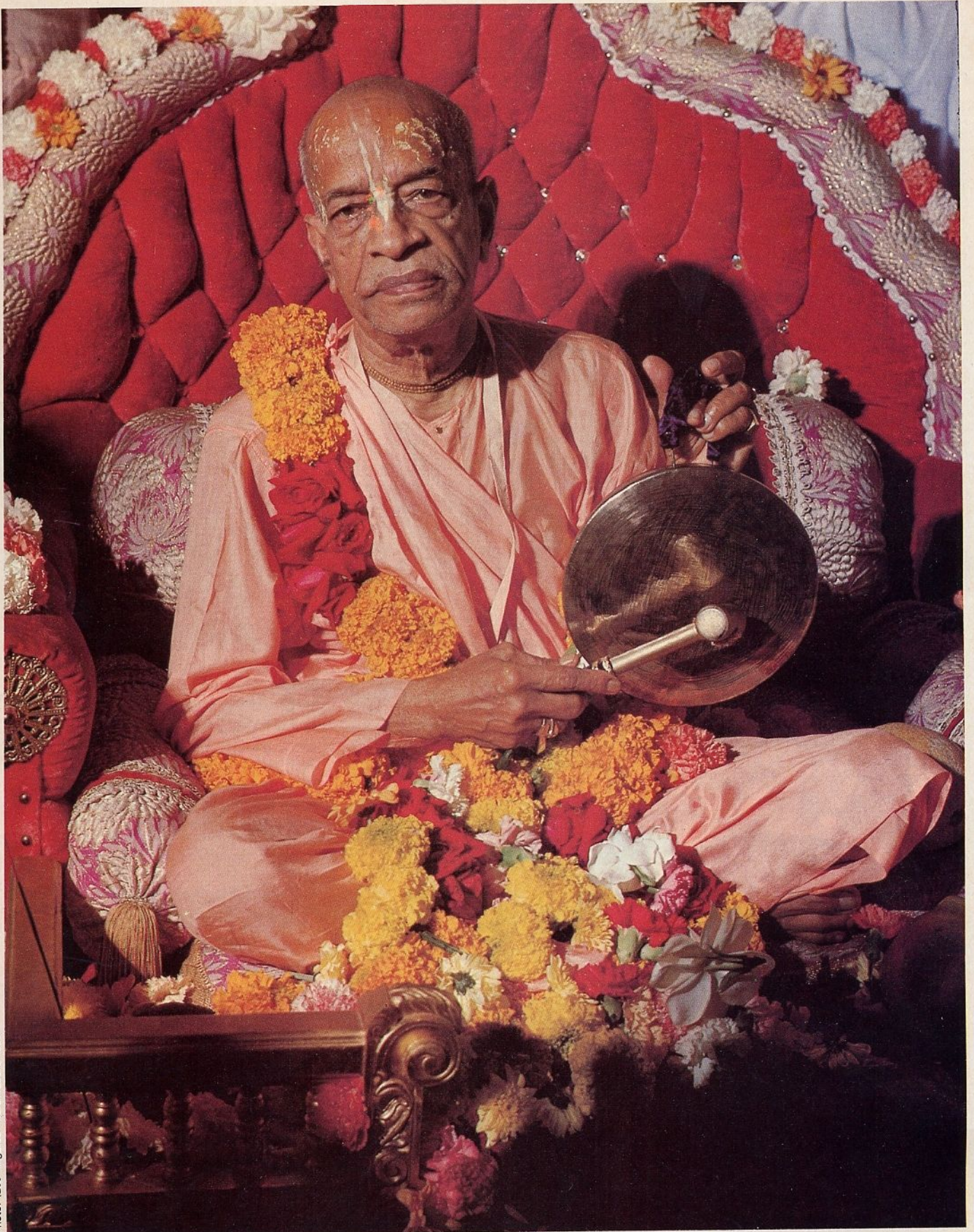


Photo: (Los Angeles) Muralivadana dāsa

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

Vol. 12 No. 6

FOUNDER

(under the direction of His Divine Grace
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda)

His Divine Grace

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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 **i** is like the **i** in **pique**. The vowel **ī** is pronounced like the **ri** in the English word **rim**. The **ai** is pronounced as in the English word **chair**. The aspirated consonants (**ch**, **jh**, **dh**, etc.) are pronounced as in **staunch**, **hedgehog** 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**.

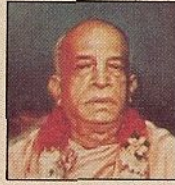
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◀ **The founder and original editor** of BACK TO GODHEAD is His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. In September, 1965, Śrīla Prabhupāda arrived in the United States. In July, 1966, in a storefront in New York City, he began the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. And from those beginning days, BACK TO GODHEAD has been an integral part of ISKCON.

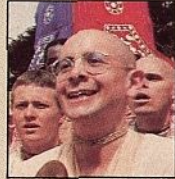
In fact, since 1944, when he started writing, editing, printing, and distributing BACK TO GODHEAD, Śrīla Prabhupāda has often called it "the backbone of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement." Although over the years it has changed in some ways, BACK TO GODHEAD remains, in Śrīla Prabhupāda's words, "an instrument for training the mind and educating human nature to rise up to the plane of the spirit soul."

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"Verily, even the greatest I found all too human," Nietzsche lamented. "Now do we desire the superman to live." But, says His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, supermen have long been living among us, and now we can learn their secret.



The Festival of the Chariots 8

The Festival of the Chariots—"overwhelming," "irresistible," said the first Westerners who saw it. But, of course, "East is East, West is West, and never the twain shall meet." Yet now people everywhere are taking Rathayātrā to heart. It's truly a festival to cherish.



Breaking the Bonds of False Fatherhood 19

All too often, a father doesn't try to save his child from the misery of reincarnation—repeated birth and death. He may even try to stop the spiritual master (the spiritual father) from setting the child free, as in this age-old episode recounted by Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami.



The Science of God-Realization 24

To learn material science—how ordinary things interact—you have to study your "required reading." To learn God-realization—how you and God interact—you have to study the Vedic literatures, as Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami bears out in this conversation with Professor Alphonso Verdu.

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Special Center Section:

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

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



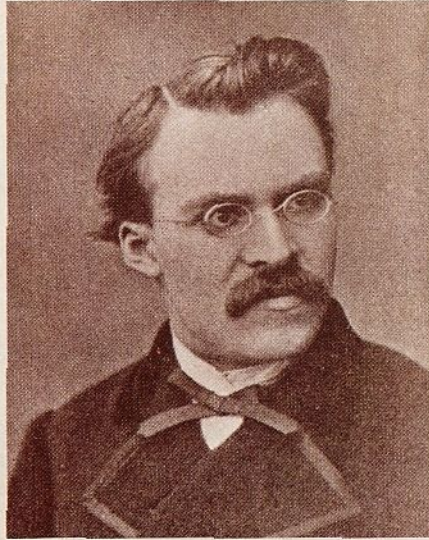
ON THE COVER

In 1967 His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda gave the West a special gift: Rathayātrā, the ancient Indian "Festival of the Chariots." From the very first, his beloved disciple Jayānanda dāsa engineered the huge chariots of Lord Jagannātha, the Lord of the Universe. In this photo (New York, 1976) Jayānanda steers one of the many chariots he built through the years. As we were going to press, Jayānanda's Godbrothers and God sisters celebrated his thirty-eighth birthday. Despite his leukemia-stricken condition, he said he was "just thinking about Lord Jagannātha and all the festivals through the years." Only four days later Jayānanda passed away, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, thinking of the Lord he'd served during his life. (Photo: Viśānta dāsa)

The Secret of the “Superman”

Hayagrīva dāsa: Friedrich Nietzsche was a German philosopher and poet of the last century who has become very influential in modern philosophy. Schopenhauer spoke of the “blind will” of the individual as being the basic propelling force that keeps the soul tied to material existence, to transmigration from body to body. Nietzsche, on the other hand, spoke of *der Wille zur Macht*, the “will to power,” which is a different kind of will. This will is not used for subjugating others but for mastering one’s lower self. It is characterized by self-control and an interest in art and philosophy. Most people are envious of others, but it is the duty of the noble man, the philosopher, to transcend this envy by sheer willpower. In Nietzsche’s own words, the philosopher “shakes off with one shrug much vermin that would have buried itself deep in others.” When the philosopher has rid himself of resentment and envy, he can even embrace his enemies with a kind of Christian love.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: This is called spiritual power. Envy is a symptom of conditioned life. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is stated that the neophyte who wants to understand the Vedic literatures should not be envious. In this material world, everyone is envious. People are even envious of God and His instructions. Consequently people do not like to accept Kṛṣṇa’s instructions. Although Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and is accepted as such by all the *ācāryas* [self-realized teachers], there are nonetheless foolish men called *mūḍhas* who either reject Kṛṣṇa’s instructions or try to screw out some contrary meaning from them. This envy is symptomatic of conditioned souls. Unless we are liberated from conditioned life, we will remain confused under the influence of the external material energy. Until we come to the spiritual platform, there is no possibility of escaping from envy and pride by so-called willpower. A person in



Friedrich Nietzsche thought of the “superman” as someone totally self-controlled, unafraid, simple, aware, self-reliant... and nonexistent. But here His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda tells us about real supermen — who they are and how they get that way.

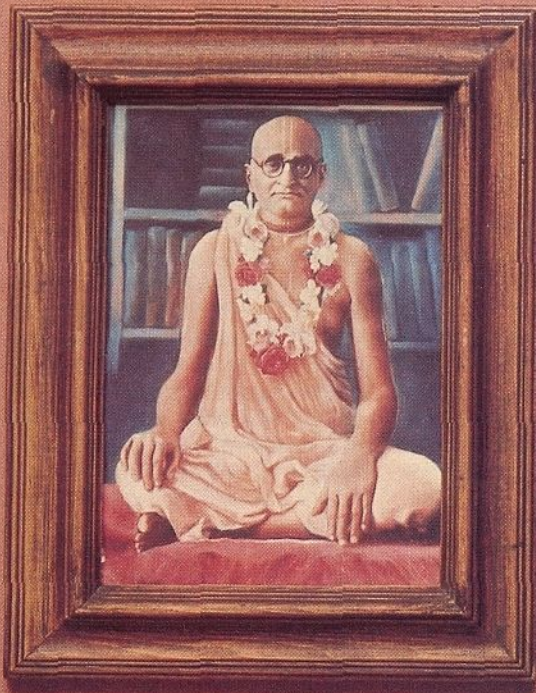
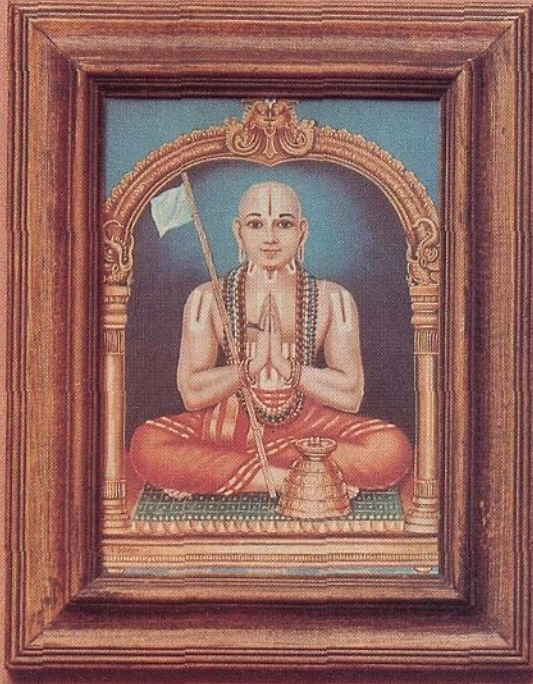
the transcendental (*brahma-bhūta*) stage is described in *Bhagavad-gītā* [18.54] as *samaḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu*: He can look at everyone with the same spiritual understanding.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Nietzsche calls the man who possesses spiritual power the *Übermensch*, a word meaning literally “above-man” and often translated as “superman.” The *Übermensch* is totally self-controlled, unafraid of death, simple, aware, and self-reliant. He is so powerful that he can change the lives of others simply on contact. Nietzsche never referred to any historical person as the *Übermensch*, nor did he consider himself such.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: We accept the *guru* as the genuine superman because he is worshiped like God. *Yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādah*: “By the mercy of the superman one can get in touch with the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” Caitanya Mahāprabhu also accepts this: *guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bija*: “By the mercy of Kṛṣṇa and the *guru* [the superman, or *Übermensch*], one receives information about spiritual life so that he can return home, back to Godhead.” Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu requested everyone to become *gurus*, or supermen. The superman distributes transcendental knowledge strictly according to the authorized version he has received from his superior. This is called *paramparā*, the disciplic succession. One superman delivers this supreme knowledge to another superman, and this knowledge was originally delivered by God Himself.

Hayagrīva dāsa: In *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Nietzsche concludes that all men want power. At the top of this hierarchy in the quest for power is the *Übermensch*. Thus the *Übermensch* would be one who has conquered his passions and attained all good qualifications. His actions are creative, and he does not envy others. He is constantly aware that death is always present, and he is so superior to others that he is almost like God in the world.

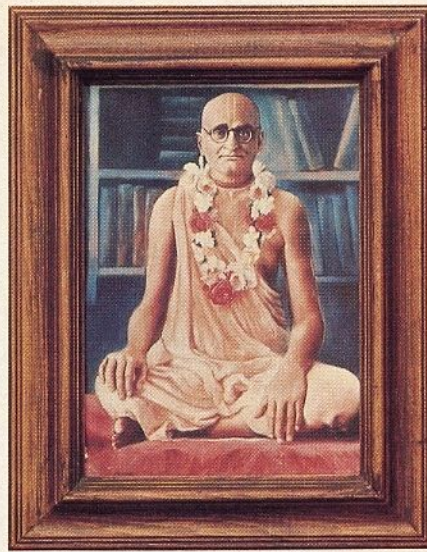
Śrīla Prabhupāda: In Sanskrit the real *Übermensch* or superman is called a *svāmī* or *gosvāmī*, who is described by Rūpa Gosvāmī as one who can control his words, mind, anger, tongue, belly, and genitals. These are the six forces that drive men to commit sinful activities. A *gosvāmī* can control these forces, especially the genitals, belly, and tongue, which are very hard to control. *Bhakti-vinoda Ṭhākura* says, *tāra madhye jihvā ati-lobhamaya sudurmati*: The force of the tongue is very great, and for its gratification we create many artificial



“One superman delivers this supreme knowledge to another superman, and this knowledge was originally delivered by God Himself.” Supermen throughout history (from upper left to lower right):

Śrī Rāmānuja (A.D. 1017–1137), Śrī Madhva (A.D. 1239–1319), Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī (1874–1936), and, today, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swamī Prabhupāda.

“No one can be the teacher of the Truth except the devotee of God.” — Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī



edibles. Nonsensical habits like smoking, drinking, and meat eating have entered society simply due to the urges of the tongue. Actually, there is no need for these things. A person does not die simply because he cannot smoke, eat meat, or drink liquor. Rather, *without* these indulgences he can elevate himself to the highest platform. It is therefore said that one who can control the tongue can control the urges of the other senses also. One who can control all the senses—beginning with the tongue—is called a *gōsvāmī*, or, as Nietzsche would say, the *Übermensch*. But this is impossible for an ordinary man.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Nietzsche believed that everyone has a “will to power,” but that the weak seek power vainly. For instance, in his will to power, Hitler sought to subjugate as much of the world as possible, but he was ultimately unsuccessful, and he brought disaster upon himself and Germany. Instead of trying to conquer himself, he attempted to conquer others, and this is the will to power misdirected or misinterpreted.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Men like Hitler are not able to control the force of anger. A king or national leader has to use anger properly. Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura says that we should control our powers and apply them in the proper cases. We may become angry, but our anger must be controlled. For example, although Caitanya Mahāprabhu taught that we should be very submissive—humbler than the grass and more tolerant than a tree—He became angry upon seeing His dear devotee Nityānanda Prabhu hurt by Jagāi and Mādhāi. Everything can be properly utilized in the service of Kṛṣṇa, but not for personal aggrandizement. In the material world, everyone is certainly after power, but the real superman is not after power for himself. He himself is a mendicant, a *sannyāsī*, but he acquires power for the service of the Lord. For instance, I came to America not to acquire material power but to distribute Kṛṣṇa consciousness. By the grace of Kṛṣṇa, all facilities have been afforded, and now, from the material point of view, I have become somewhat powerful. But this is not for my personal sense gratification; it

is all for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The conclusion is that power for Kṛṣṇa’s service is very valuable, but power for our own sense gratification is condemned.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Hitler twisted Nietzsche’s philosophy, claiming that he was the *Übermensch*, although Nietzsche clearly says that the *Übermensch* is not intent on subjugating others but on subjugating his own passions. Such a superman is beyond good and evil and is not subject to mundane dualities.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, because the superman acts on behalf of God, he is transcendental. At the beginning of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Arjuna was thinking like an ordinary person in his reluctance to fight. From the material point of view, nonviolence is a good qualification. Arjuna was excusing his enemies, although they had insulted him and his wife and usurped his kingdom. He pleaded before Kṛṣṇa that it would be better to let them enjoy his kingdom—“I am not going to fight.” Materially this appeared very laudable, but spiritually it was not, because Kṛṣṇa wanted him to fight. Finally Arjuna carried out Kṛṣṇa’s order and fought. Clearly, this kind of fighting was not for personal aggrandizement but for the service of Kṛṣṇa. So by using his power for the service of the Lord, Arjuna became a superman.

Hayagrīva dāsa: In his writings on religion, Nietzsche expressed a dislike for the nihilism of the Buddhists and the caste system of the Hindus, especially the Hindu treatment of the untouchables.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is a later concoction by the caste Hindus. The true Vedic religion does not speak of untouchables. Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself demonstrated His system by accepting so-called untouchables like Haridāsa Ṭhākura, who was born in a Mohammedan family. Although Hari-

dāsa Ṭhākura was not accepted by Hindu society, Caitanya Mahāprabhu personally indicated that he was most exalted. Haridāsa Ṭhākura would not enter the temple of Lord Jagannātha because he did not want to create a commotion, but Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself came to see Haridāsa every day. It is a basic principle of the Vedic religion that one should not be envious of anyone. Kṛṣṇa Himself says in *Bhagavad-gītā* [9.32]:

*mām hi pārtha vyapāśritya
ye 'pi syuḥ pāpa-yonayah
striyo vaiśyās tathā śūdrās
te 'pi yānti parām gatim*

“O son of Prthā, those who take shelter of Me, though they be of lower birth—women, *vaiśyas* [merchants], as well as *śūdras* [workers]—can approach the supreme destination.” So despite birth in a lower family, if one is a devotee he is eligible to return home, back to Godhead. The *sāstras* [scriptures] do not speak of untouchables. Everyone is eligible to practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness and return to the Godhead, provided the necessary spiritual qualifications are there.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Nietzsche believed that by stressing the value of going to the transcendental world, a person would come to resent this world. He therefore personally rejected all formal religions.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: This material world is described as a place of suffering (*duḥkha-ālaya*). We do not know whether Nietzsche realized this or not, but if one actually understands the soul, he can realize that this material world is a place of suffering. Being part and parcel of God, the soul has the same qualities possessed by God. God is *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*, eternal, full of knowledge and bliss, and the living entities in the spiritual world have the same nature. But in material life their eternality, knowledge, and bliss are absent. It is therefore better that we learn to detest material existence and try to give it up (*parām dṛṣṭvā nivartate*). The *Vedas* enjoin that we understand the spiritual world and try to return there (*tamaso mā jyotir gamaya*). The spiritual world is the kingdom of light, and this material world is the kingdom of darkness. The sooner we learn to avoid the world of darkness and return to the kingdom of light, the better it is.

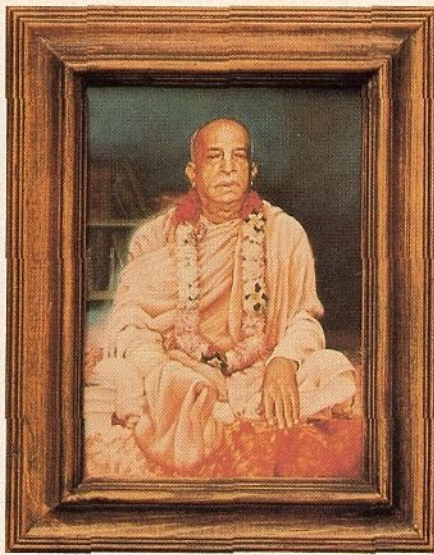
Hayagrīva dāsa: Nietzsche was greatly influenced by the Greeks, and he was astounded that out of so few men, so many great individuals emerged. He attributed this to their struggling with their evil instincts, and he thought that even today, with the help of favorable measures, great individuals might be reared who would surpass all others. Thus Nietzsche believed that mankind ought to be constantly striving to

produce great men—this and nothing else is man's duty.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Everyone is trying to be a great man, but one's greatness is genuine when he becomes God-realized. The word *veda* means "knowledge," and a person is great when he is conversant with the lessons of the *Vedas*. The object of knowledge, as described by *Bhagavad-gītā*, is God or the self. There are different methods for self-realization. However, since every individual is part and parcel of God, if one realizes God, he automatically realizes himself. God is compared to the sun. If the sun is out, we can see everything very clearly. Similarly, in the *Vedas* it is said, *yasmin vijñāte sarvaṁ evaṁ vijñātaṁ bhavati*: "By understanding God, we understand all other things." Then we automatically become jolly (*brahma-bhūtaḥ prasann-ātmā*). The word *prasannātmā* means "jolly." At that time, we can see that everyone is exactly like ourselves (*samaḥ sarveṣu-bhūteṣu*), for everyone is part and parcel of the Supreme Lord. At this point, service of the Lord begins, and we attain the platform of knowledge, bliss, and eternity.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Nietzsche was emphatic in stating that there has never yet been a superman. He writes, "All too similar are men to each other. Verily, even the greatest I found all too human." Nor does the superman evolve in the Darwinian sense. Nietzsche thought the *Übermensch* a possibility at present if man uses all his spiritual and physical energies. He wrote, "Dead are all the gods; now do we desire the superman to live." But how is the *Übermensch* possible without an object for his spiritual energies?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: We become supermen if we engage in the service of the Supreme Person. The Supreme Being is a person, and the superman is also a person. *Nityo nityānām cetanaś cetanānām*: "God is the chief amongst all personalities." The superman has no other business than carrying out the orders of the Supreme Being. Kṛṣṇa, or God, wants to make everyone a superman. He therefore orders: *Sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja*: "Give up everything and simply surrender to Me" [Bg. 18.66]. If we can understand and follow this instruction, we are supermen. The ordinary man thinks, "I have my independence and can do something myself. Why should I surrender?" However, as soon as he realizes that his only duty is to surrender to Kṛṣṇa, that he has no other duty in this material world, he becomes the superman. This consciousness is attained after many, many births (*bahūnām janmanām ante*). After many lifetimes, when one actually attains full knowledge of Kṛṣṇa, he surrenders unto Him. As soon as he surrenders, he becomes the superman.



Hayagrīva dāsa: Nietzsche would reject dependence on anything exterior to the superman himself. In other words, he would reject "props." But isn't it impossible for a man to elevate himself to that platform without depending on the Supreme Lord?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Of course, and therefore Kṛṣṇa says, "Depend upon Me." You have to be dependent, and if you do not depend on Kṛṣṇa, you have to depend on the dictations of *māyā*, illusion. There are many philosophers and politicians who depend on others or on their own whimsical ideas, but we should depend on the perfect instructions of God. The fact is that every living being is dependent; he cannot be independent. If he voluntarily depends on the instructions of God, he becomes the genuine superman, or *Übermensch*.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Nietzsche's superman appears to resemble the *haṭha-yogī*, who elevates himself by his own efforts, seemingly independent of God.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, *seemingly*. As soon as a *haṭha-yogī* gets some extraordinary mystic powers, he thinks that he has become God. This is another mistake, for no one can become God. A *yogī* may attain some mystical powers by practice or by the favor of the Lord, but these powers are not sufficient to enable him to *become* God. There are many who think that through meditation or *haṭha-yoga* it is possible to become equal to God, but this is another illusion, another dictation of *māyā*. *Māyā* is always saying, "Why depend on God? You can become God yourself."

Hayagrīva dāsa: Independence seems to be central to Nietzsche's philosophy. In a sense, his superman is somewhat like Hiraṇyakaśipu, who performed so many penances to gain immortality and who made the demigods tremble to see his austerities.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, and ultimately

**"If one becomes a devout servant of God, he becomes the superman automatically."
—Śrīla Prabhupāda**

he was outwitted by the Supreme Himself. Actually, it is not good to struggle for material power and control over others. If one becomes a devout servant of God, he becomes the superman automatically and acquires many sincere followers. One does not have to undergo severe austerities; everything can be mastered in one stroke.

Hayagrīva dāsa: And what of sense control?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: If one becomes a devotee of the Supreme Lord, he controls his senses automatically, but he never thinks that he has become God, or the supreme controller.

Hayagrīva dāsa: One last point on Nietzsche. He believed in what is called eternal recurrence—that is, after this universe has been destroyed, it will be repeated again after many eons.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: In *Bhagavad-gītā* it is stated, *bhūtvā bhūtvā pralīyate*: "This material world is created at a certain point, maintained for a certain period, and then destroyed" [Bg. 8.19]. This material world is created for the conditioned soul, who is put here in order to learn his position as the eternal servant of God. Lord Brahmā, the first created being in the universe, is given the Vedic instructions, and he distributes them through the disciplic succession, which descends from Brahmā to Nārada, from Nārada to Vyāsadeva, from Vyāsadeva to Śukadeva Gosvāmī, and so on. These instructions enjoin the conditioned soul to return home, back to Godhead. If the conditioned soul rejects these instructions, he remains in the material world until it is annihilated. At that time he remains in an unconscious state, just like a child within the womb of his mother. In due course of time his consciousness revives, and he again takes birth. The point is that anyone can take advantage of the Vedic instructions, become a superman or *Übermensch*, and go back to Godhead. Unfortunately, the conditioned living entities are so attached to the material world that they repeatedly want to take up material bodies. In this way history actually repeats itself, and there is again creation, maintenance, and destruction. ❀

The Festival of the Chariots

A Festival to Cherish

by Dāmodara dāsa and Nalinī-kaṇṭha dāsa

“East is East and West is West,” said Kipling, “and never the twain shall meet.” But in Rathā-yātrā, the Festival of the Chariots, East and West are not only meeting but becoming fast friends.



Photo: Muralivadana dāsa

Every summer in dozens of cities across the earth, Rathā-yātrā—the Festival of the Chariots—blossoms like a multicolored lotus flower. Red, yellow, and green silk canopies tower above the chariots and sway serenely. Their silver decorations glitter in the sunlight. Colossal wooden wheels creak on their axles as singing celebrants haul the ancient vehicles along the parade route, tugging on thick hawsers. By their spirited service they invoke the mercy of Jagannātha, the Lord of the Universe. He is Kṛṣṇa Himself, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and He has come along for the ride, sitting on the lead cart in His form as Dāru-brahman (God manifested through wood). His big round eyes and blissful smile shower benedictions upon everyone. In the next two chariots sit the Lord's brother and sister, Balarāma and Subhadrā. The three vehicles are flower-decked boats rocking on an ocean of friends and devo-

tees, thousands strong, waves of lovers of God singing and dancing. At the parade's end (a park or a beach) the crowd enjoys a vegetarian feast and entertainment by musicians and dramatists until sunset, and everyone goes home saturated with transcendental peace and joy.

How ancient is the Festival of the Chariots? It's hard to say exactly, but Rathā-yātrā is one of the world's oldest religious festivals. At the 1976 New York Rathā-yātrā, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda explained its origins:

“Five thousand years ago Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma, and Subhadrā visited Kurukṣetra in Their chariot on the occasion of a solar eclipse. One king, Indradyumna, then became very anxious to establish a temple of Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma, and Subhadrā. Therefore he got a sculptor to carve the Deities.

“But there was a contract between the

Photo: Bhārgava dāsa

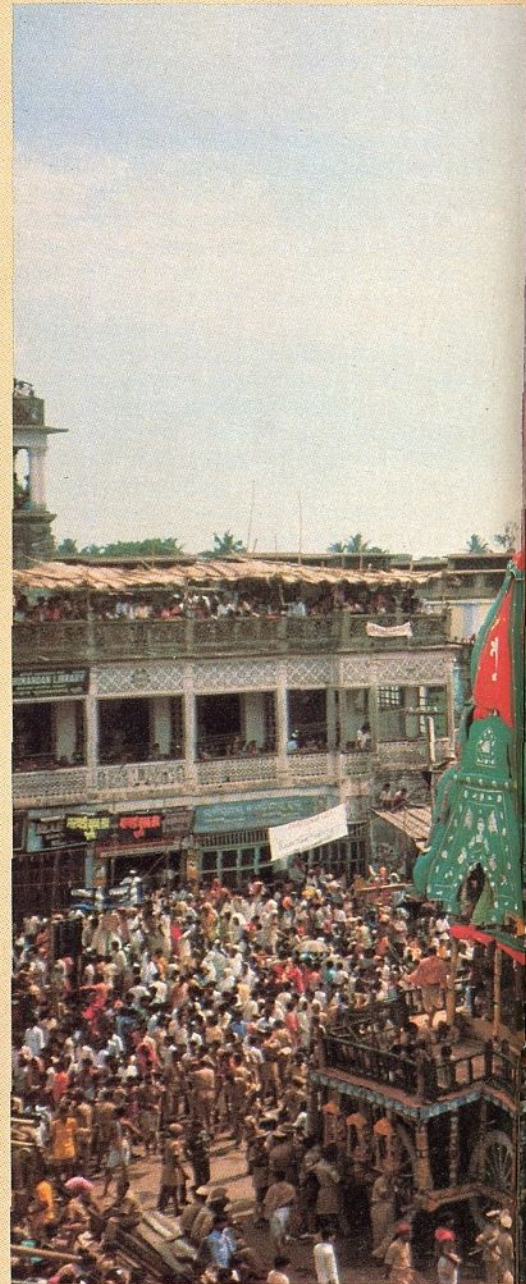
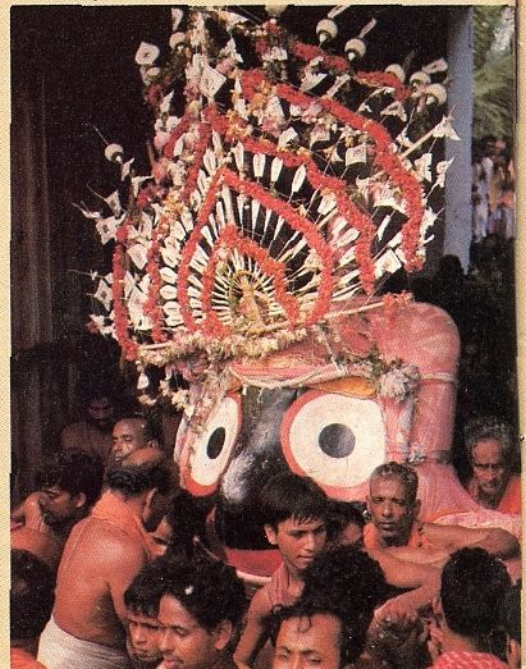


Photo: Bhārgava dāsa





Above: in Puri, India, the chariots of Lord Jagannātha, Lady Subhadrā, and Lord Balarāma are ready to roll. **Far left:** after leaving New York's Central Park, Lord Jagannātha and His friends and well-wishers journey down Fifth Avenue to Washington Square. **Next right:** Lord Jagannātha's attendants in Puri escort Him to His waiting chariot. **Left:** in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park, eager arms tug hard to help Lord Jagannātha's six-ton chariot get going.

sculptor and the king that the sculptor would work behind closed doors and the king could not disturb him. When many days had passed the king thought, ‘What is this worker doing?’ So he forcibly opened the door, and he saw that the forms were unfinished. But after that the sculptor would not finish carving the Deities. Therefore the king said, ‘Never mind; I shall worship this unfinished Deity.’

“So you see Jagannātha in this form because King Indradyumna wanted to worship Him in this form. And the king started the temple of Jagannātha in Orissa, at Purī. It is a very old temple—according to modern calculation not less than two thousand years old. The Jagannātha Deity is there. So Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma and Subhadrā went to Kurukṣetra for the festival, and at Ratha-yātrā we also are observing this festival.”

Until very recently, Ratha-yātrā was a strictly Indian celebration. It made its way indirectly into Western culture when the British first watched it in Purī and coined the term *juggernaut*, after the chariots of Jagannātha, to indicate an overwhelming, irresistible force. They felt moved by the immensity of the canopies and wheels, and by the fervor of the devotees’ exultant chanting of the holy names of the Lord. However, the name Jagannātha does not directly mean what *juggernaut* means. *Jagan-nātha* indicates “the Lord of the Universe”—the Lord not just of India and Indians but of the whole universe and all living beings. Therefore, a hundred years ago a devotee of Jagannātha known as Bhaktivinoda Thākura started writing books about Kṛṣṇa consciousness in English and sending the books to libraries in the West. His son, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswami, carried on the international educational program. The fruition came in 1966, when the Goswami’s most dedicated disciple, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founded the International Society for Krishna Consciousness in New York City.

In the summer of 1967, the city of San Francisco saw the Western world’s first Ratha-yātrā. Although earlier many other swamis and yogis had journeyed to the West, none of them had brought the purity and devotion of Śrīla Prabhupāda. And none of them had had the vision of Śrīla Prabhupāda: to establish ancient India’s Kṛṣṇa conscious culture around the world *on its own terms*—not watered down, but as it is. Thus, Śrīla Prabhupāda introduced Lord Jagannātha as He

is, in the original format of the ancient and glorious Festival of the Chariots. Before, no one had dared think it possible, but Śrīla Prabhupāda dared and was triumphant.

Jayānanda dāsa, one of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s early disciples, took part in every San Francisco Ratha-yātrā since the first one back in 1967—and an unusually active part at that. In fact, his expert engineering of the huge chariots used in the San Francisco festivals earned him the nickname “Mr. Ratha-yātrā.” For each of the first four Ratha-yātrās, Jayānanda built the chariots from the ground up. And although in the last few festivals the same vehicles were used each year, still he continued to improve them. To find out the inside story on Ratha-yātrā past, present, and future, BACK TO GODHEAD interviewed Jayānanda.

Inside Ratha-yātrā . . . With an Old Insider

BTG: Jayānanda, how did you first get involved in Kṛṣṇa consciousness?

Jayānanda dāsa: I heard Śrīla Prabhupāda speaking in San Francisco, and somehow I knew he didn’t want to cheat me. So I just wanted to work for him.

BTG: And now for ten years you’ve worked on the Ratha-yātrā carts.

Jayānanda dāsa: Yes.

BTG: What were the first Ratha-yātrās like?

Jayānanda dāsa: The first year, 1967, we just rented a flatbed truck and started out in the Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco. We decorated the truck with flowers and put the Deities on the back, and the girls passed out fruit. A good crowd walked along with us at the beginning, and when we turned off Haight Street a smaller group of maybe fifty people came with us and we went all the way to the beach.

The second year we made our own cart, with saffron silk canopies, small ones. And we had the parade through Golden Gate Park to the beach. By that time the San Francisco temple had grown a little—we had maybe thirty devotees—and about one hundred people came with us through the park. The chanting was very nice that year.

Then in 1969 we built a much bigger cart, with a tall silk canopy, like the ones they build in Jagannātha Purī in India. But in 1970 we worked for two months straight and built the three big carts,

The morning of the festival. Below: Śrīla Prabhupāda inspects a wheel. Next down: devotees pull the chariots crosstown to their starting place in Central Park. Bottom: Jayānanda readies Lord Jagannātha’s chariot for the trip through Golden Gate Park.

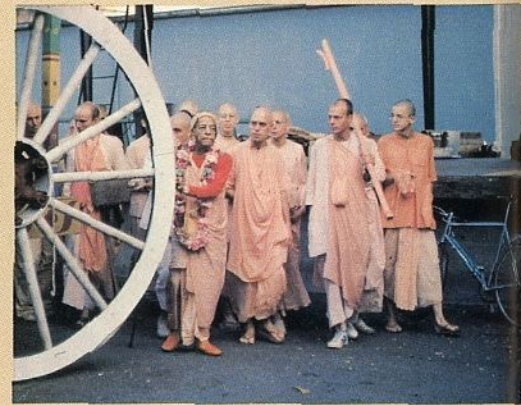


Photo: Muralivadana dāsa



Photo: Muralivadana dāsa

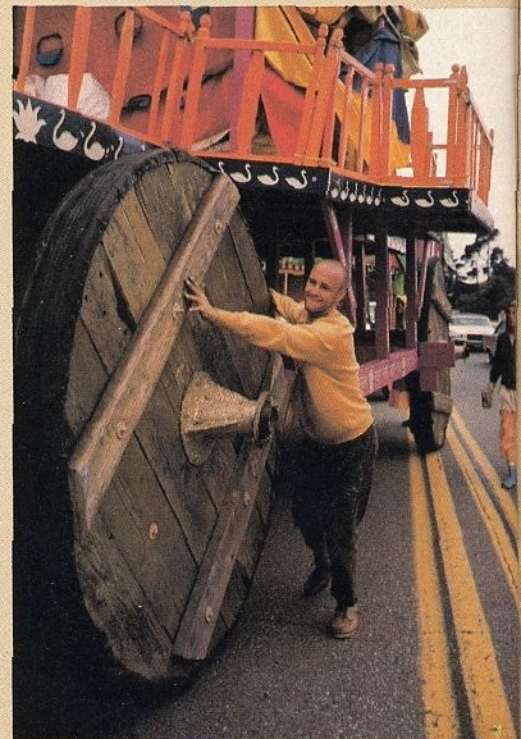


Photo: Muralivadana dāsa

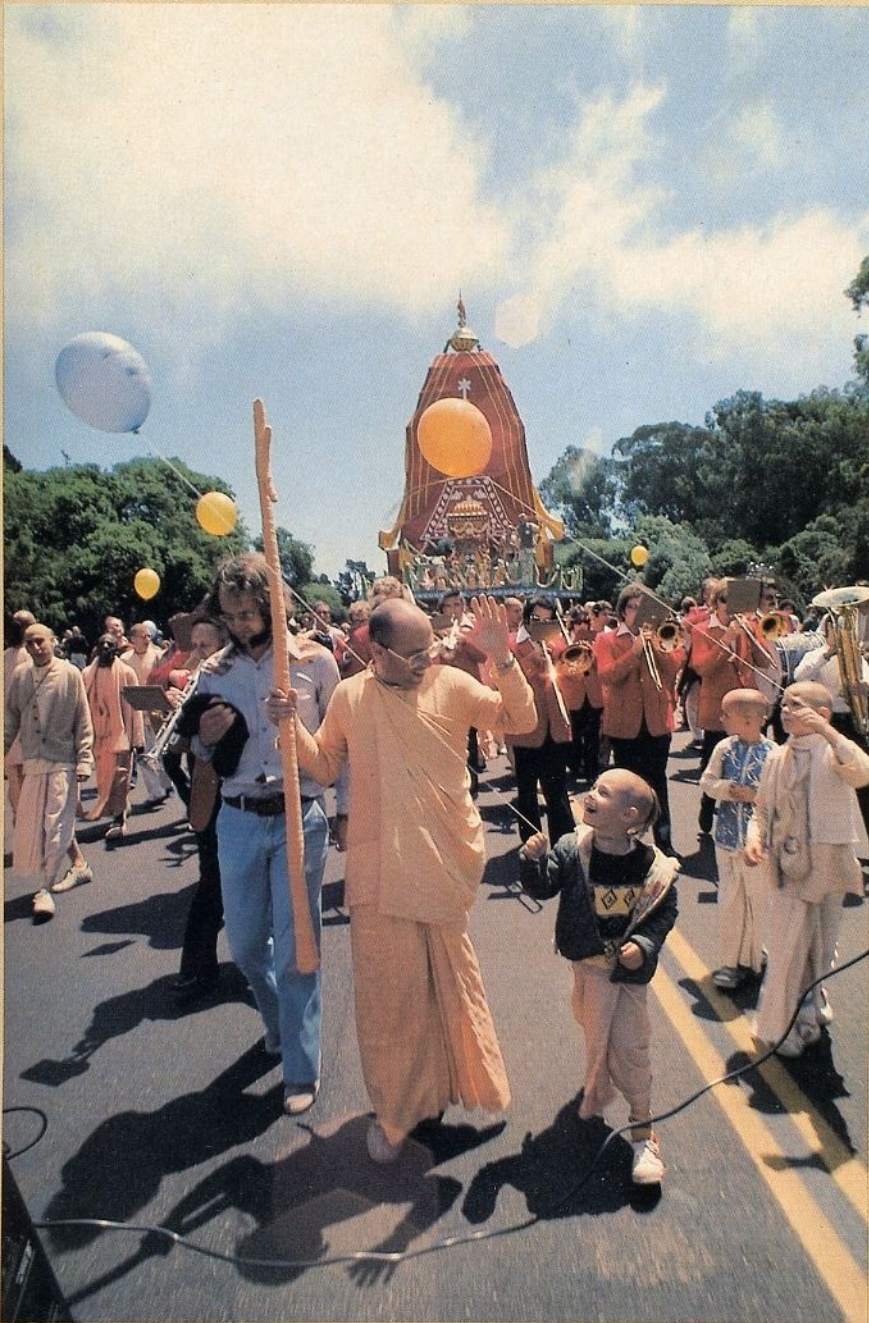


Photo: Vilāsa-vigraha dāsa

Left: with the band playing a Hare Kṛṣṇa march (horns and drums to the tune of the mahā-mantra), the chariots roll through Golden Gate Park. Below: in London, with Śrīla Prabhupāda sitting beneath Lord Jagannātha, the chariot makes its way from Regent Street to Trafalgar Square.

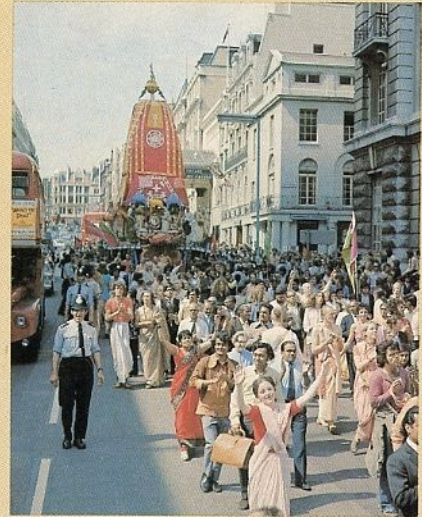


Photo: Bhārgava dāsa



Photo: Vilāsa-vigraha dāsa



Photo: Muralivadana dāsa

Left: in San Francisco (and everywhere else) Ratha-yātrā brings out thousands of people. Above: also, as Jayānanda said, “It brings out the best in people to see Lord Jagannātha smiling at them. I tell you, at first their faces looked like they hadn’t changed in twenty-five years, and then all of a sudden it was like glass cracking, and you’d see the whole face transformed. . . .”

basically the same ones we use now. Also we had all kinds of publicity—TV, billboards, posters. And Śrīla Prabhupāda came to that Ratha-yātrā. So a lot of people came, maybe twelve thousand people. It was big—a tremendous success. We had a few mishaps, though. One cart broke down in the middle of the parade. And it was a bitter cold day. But even though it was so cold at the beach, thousands of people stayed there with us and ate a lot of Kṛṣṇa prasāda (spiritual food offered to Kṛṣṇa). We brought twenty fifty-gallon barrels of prasāda, and they ate it all.

Later that year the auditorium we used at the beach was torn down. So in 1971 we decided to end the parade in the park, at Lindley Meadow. That year, and in 1972 and 1973, the parade was a little smaller than in 1970.

In 1974 Bhakta dāsa came to San Francisco to be temple president, and he decided to expand the Ratha-yātrā. He spent more money on it than before, and maybe twenty thousand people attended that year. The police remarked that we were the only group that could get such a large gathering together without creating a problem for them. Śrīla Prabhupāda came that year and gave a speech at the Meadow. He was sitting beneath the Jagannātha Deities on Their opulent three-tiered stage. Even without much understanding everyone could appreciate that here was a majestic, awe-inspiring celebration. Another wonderful thing we started that year was the fairground-type booths at the Meadow. You could see the unlimited scope of the Vedic culture. We had a Deity workshop booth, a transcendental art booth, a literature booth, and of course many booths selling food. Now that's become a regular feature of the festival.

In 1975 I tried out making steel wheels, but the chariots were so heavy they flattened the steel and made the ride very bumpy for the Deities. So now we're back to the standard wooden wheels.

BTG: What instructions has Śrīla Prabhupāda given you about Ratha-yātrā?

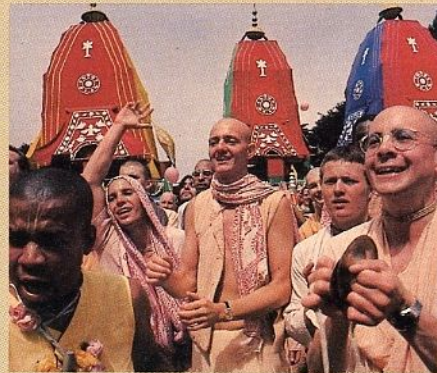
Jayānanda dāsa: I never got much personal instruction. He just told me to make everything strong. I'm not a real visionary about it—I just built the carts.

BTG: Which Ratha-yātrā do you think has been the best so far?

Jayānanda dāsa: In New York last year—that was the most festive. Not until then had I experienced so many of

“Chanting and Dancing . . . Feasting for Thousands”—that's what the billboards and posters have announced through the years. Below: you can be sure that the devotees will take care of chanting and dancing to the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, and that thousands more will join in. Right: another kind of chanting—a talk on the Bhagavad-gītā, the Song of God. (The scene for this and the other shots on this spread: Golden Gate Park's Lindley Meadow.) With Lord Jagannātha above him, Śrīla Prabhupāda speaks from the dais, and thousands listen.

Photo: Vilāsa-vigraha dāsa



the transcendental qualities of Ratha-yātrā. You know—for a parade there's nothing like Fifth Avenue; it's the most important street in the world. And when we went to Washington Square Park to pull the carts home, hours after the parade had finished, thousands of people were still there chanting. They were everywhere. People were coming out of their apartments and coming out of bars shouting “Hare Kṛṣṇa!” Only in New York could you get such a response.

BTG: Tell us, from your own experience, what the public gets out of Ratha-yātrā.

Jayānanda dāsa: The impact is so powerful that everyone's affected. In New York there were thousands of people out on the streets, and they were astounded. It's not that I'm claiming it; the people were interviewed on TV and that's what they said. Also I remember one man with his girl friend (she didn't like us at all) who told me some time after the festival that when he saw the carts coming down the street he felt a

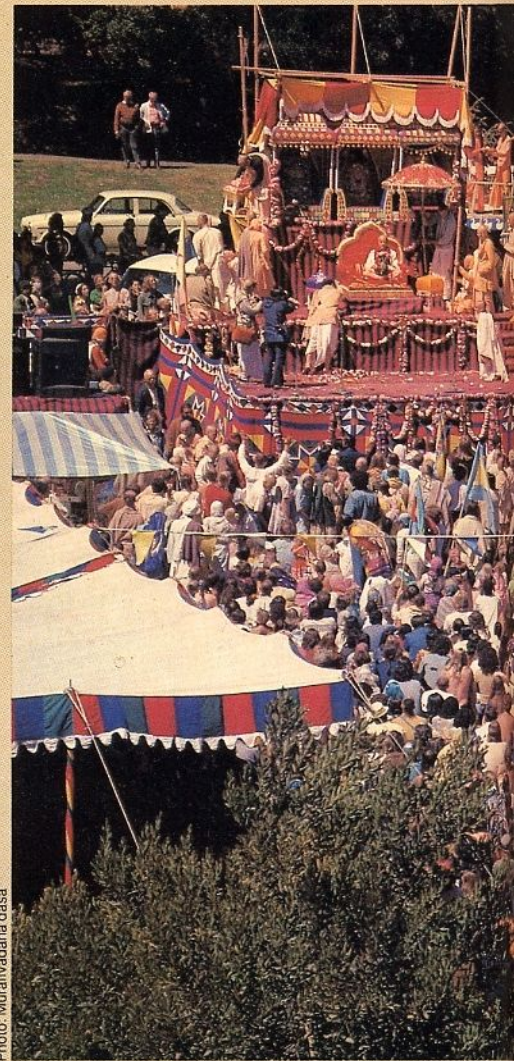


Photo: Muralivadana dāsa

parade had just come down from heaven, and that he often remembers the carts and the chanting with pleasure. So people are hit by it. It's so far beyond their usual experience. You can't measure the impact. All year long they do more or less the same things. Maybe they catch a few parades, like the Thanksgiving Day parade. They stand and watch some big balloons go by. But it's all the same. Then, when you have a whole troupe of devotees singing and dancing around these lofty, transcendental chariots—then the people are transformed. They used to be mundane creatures, but when they see the Ratha-yātrā, they're angels. It brings out the best in people to see Lord Jagannātha smiling at them. I tell you, at first their faces looked like they hadn't changed in twenty-five years, and then all of a sudden it was like glass cracking, and you'd see the whole face transformed just by a few moment's association.

And what to speak of those who take part? Ratha-yātrā encourages



Photo: Muralivadana dāsa

After the people have heard the talk on the Bhagavad-gītā (the source book of self-realization), and after they've seen a transcendental drama about the Lord's pastimes, they like to taste prasāda ("Kṛṣṇa's mercy," food offered to Him). Below, left: you can sit down and the devotees will serve you. Below: also you can visit one of the booths for special sweets and savories. Amazingly, self-realization begins with the tongue—chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and tasting prasāda.

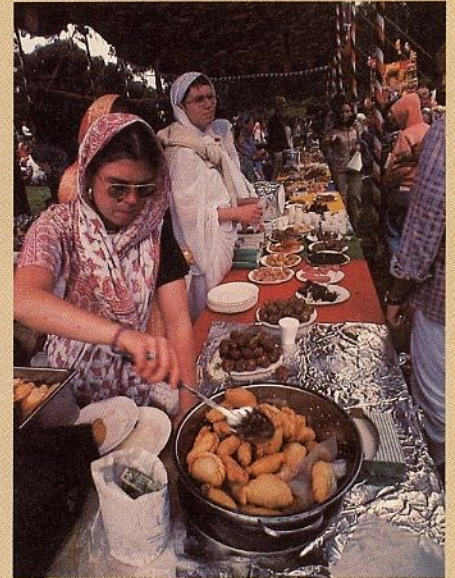


Photo: Vilāsa-vigraha dāsa

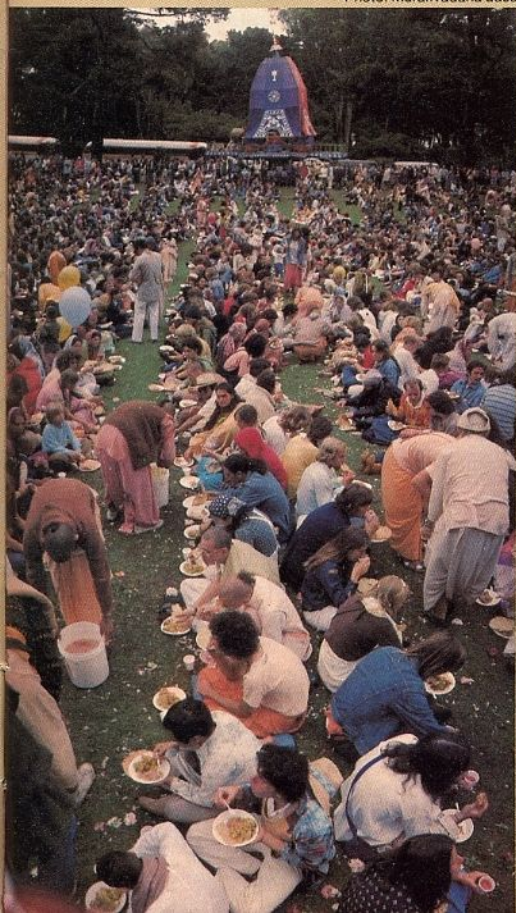


Photo: Vilāsa-vigraha dāsa



Above: at parade's end, Lord Jagannātha takes a palanquin ride to the dais; from there He can cherish the sights and sounds of thousands chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and feasting on prasāda. As Jayānanda put it, "People don't come to the temple so much. . . . Now here's a chance for them to advance in spiritual life—here comes the festival!"

everybody to take part. "Come on, walk with us, dance, grab a rope and pull." We don't say, "Don't touch." No—"Join in, have fun." By our nature we all want to participate. Nobody wants to be a bystander. And those who take part are purified of all their sinful karmic reactions just by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and seeing Lord Jagannātha.

BTG: Are there people who regard it as idol worship?

Jayānanda dāsa: Yes—they may feel that *before*, but the impact of the

festival is so strong that after it they feel otherwise. They see Lord Jagannātha, and they see how merciful He is, and they can feel that it's not idol worship. And if they read Śrīla Prabhupāda's books, then they'll understand logically how Lord Jagannātha is not an idol. Of course, at the festival there are always a few faultfinders. Last year in New York one of them had a bullhorn and was shouting, so one of our men poured water down it and that stopped him.

BTG: What is your understanding of

the purpose of Ratha-yātrā?

Jayānanda dāsa: To celebrate the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa's so kind; He comes to earth and displays so many wonderful pastimes. Ratha-yātrā celebrates His going to Kurukṣetra with Balarāma and Subhadrā, and His meeting there with the residents of Vṛndāvana, where He was born. The expressions of love shared between the Lord and His devotees make that one of the sweetest pastimes. Ratha-yātrā offers a chance for so many people to be engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. People don't come to our temples much, but millions are out on the streets. Now here's a chance for them to advance in spiritual life—here comes Lord Jagannātha's festival! They're touched—they become part of the transcendental vibration, and they're purified.

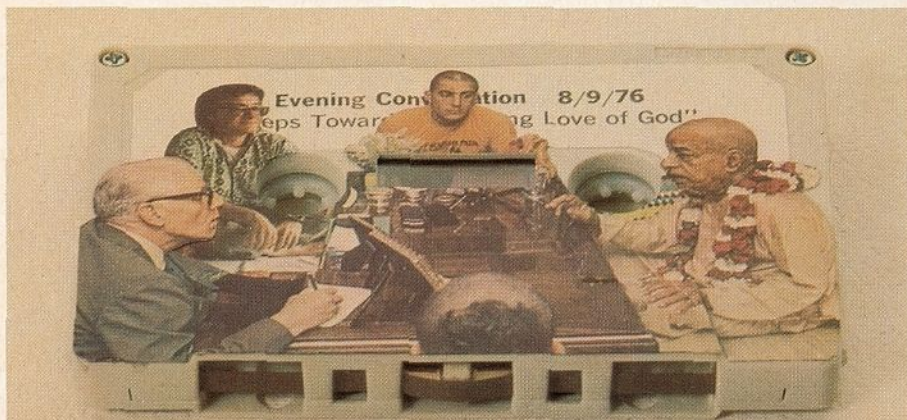
Also, for the devotees it's very beneficial—maybe more for me; Ratha-yātrā is the service that's given me so many of my realizations, the flowering of whatever Kṛṣṇa consciousness I have. It's not a long-term occupation. It happens all at once, like a big explosion, in the summer. It brings together so many devotees all working together under the spiritual master with one plan. And all the transcendental paraphernalia is there—the Deities, the *prasāda*, the chanting, the booths, the theater—it's such a surcharged atmosphere. You never forget it. For a devotee to be able to participate in Ratha-yātrā is very good for his Kṛṣṇa consciousness. When you have these festivals, it gives you a big, powerful event to look forward to, and to work towards. It helps your devotion.

BTG: How about the future growth of Ratha-yātrā?

Jayānanda dāsa: One thing that's important is that all the temples should celebrate this wonderful festival. But it isn't practical for each center to construct three carts. So now in Los Angeles we're putting together a traveling party that can go from city to city, with displays and carts that you can assemble and take apart. Then the great expense will be eliminated. Also, we'll have year-round Ratha-yātrās—the South in the winter, the North in the summer. It can be expanded so people will be hearing about Ratha-yātrā all year round—and that will be the perfection of their lives!

BTG: It sounds wonderful. Thank you very much, Jayānanda.

Jayānanda dāsa: Thank you. Hare Kṛṣṇa.



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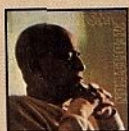


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First Canto "Creation"

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Lord Kṛṣṇa's Entrance into Dvārakā

(continued from previous issue)

TEXT 14

सम्मार्जितमहामार्गस्थ्यापणकचत्वराम् ।
सिक्तां गन्धजलैरुक्तां फलपुष्पाक्षताङ्कुरैः ॥१४॥

*sammārjita-mahā-mārga-
rathyāṇaka-catvarām
siktām gandha-jalair uptām
phala-puṣpākṣatāṅkuraiḥ*

sammārjita—thoroughly cleansed; *mahā-mārga*—highways; *rathya*—lanes and subways; *āṇaka*—shopping marketplaces; *catvarām*—public meeting places; *siktām*—moistened with; *gandha-jalaiḥ*—scented water; *uptām*—was strewn with; *phala*—fruits; *puṣpa*—flowers; *akṣata*—unbroken; *aṅkuraiḥ*—seeds.

TRANSLATION

The highways, subways, lanes, markets and public meeting places were all thoroughly cleansed and then moistened with scented water. And to welcome the Lord, fruits, flowers and unbroken seeds were strewn everywhere.

PURPORT

Scented waters prepared by distilling flowers like rose and *keora* were requisitioned to wet the roads, streets and lanes of Dvārakādhāma. Such places, along with the marketplace and public meeting places, were thoroughly cleansed. From the above description, it appears that the city of Dvārakādhāma was considerably big, containing many highways, streets and public meeting places with parks, gardens and reservoirs of water, all very nicely decorated with flowers and fruits. And to welcome the Lord such flowers and fruits with unbroken seeds of grain were also

strewn over the public places. Unbroken seeds of grain or fruits in the seedling stage were considered auspicious, and they are still so used by the Hindus in general on festival days.

TEXT 15

द्वारि द्वारि गृहाणां च दध्यक्षतफलेक्षुभिः ।
अलंकृतां पूर्णकुम्भैर्वलिभिर्धूपदीपकैः ॥१५॥

*dvāri dvāri gṛhāṇām ca
dadhy-akṣata-phalekṣubhiḥ
alankṛtām pūrṇa-kumbhair
balibhir dhūpa-dīpakaiḥ*

dvāri dvāri—the door of each and every house; *gṛhāṇām*—of all the residential buildings; *ca*—and; *dadhi*—curd; *akṣata*—unbroken; *phala*—fruit; *ikṣubhiḥ*—sugarcane; *alankṛtām*—decorated; *pūrṇa-kumbhaiḥ*—full water pots; *balibhiḥ*—along with articles for worship; *dhūpa*—incense; *dīpakaiḥ*—with lamps and candles.

TRANSLATION

In each and every door of the residential houses, auspicious things like curd, unbroken fruits, sugarcane and full waterpots with articles for worship, incense and candles were all displayed.

PURPORT

The process of reception according to Vedic rites is not at all dry. The reception was made not simply by decorating the roads and streets as above mentioned, but by worshiping the Lord with requisite ingredients like incense, lamps, flowers, sweets, fruits and other palatable eatables, according to one's capacity. All were offered to the Lord, and the remnants of the foodstuff were distributed amongst the gathering citizens. So it was not like a dry reception of these modern days. Each and every house was ready to receive the Lord in a similar way, and thus each and every house on the roads and streets distributed such remnants of food to the citizens, and therefore the festival was successful. Without distribution of food, no function is complete, and that is the way of Vedic culture.

TEXTS 16-17

निशम्य प्रेष्ठमायान्तं वसुदेवो महामनाः ।
अक्रूरश्चोपसेनश्च रामश्चाद्भुतविक्रमः ॥१६॥
प्रद्युम्नश्चारुदेष्णश्च साम्बो जाम्बवतीसुतः ।
प्रहर्षवेगोच्छशितशयनासनभोजनाः ॥१७॥

*nīsamya preṣṭham āyāntam
vasudevo mahā-manāḥ
akrūrās cograsenaś ca
rāmaś cādbhuta-vikramaḥ*

*pradyumnaś cārudeṣṇaś ca
sāmbho jāmbavatī-sutaḥ
prahaṛṣa-vegocchaśita-
śayanaśana-bhojanāḥ*

nīsamya—just hearing; *preṣṭham*—the dearest; *āyāntam*—coming home; *vasudevaḥ*—Vasudeva (the father of Kṛṣṇa); *mahā-manāḥ*—the magnanimous; *akrūrāḥ*—Akrūra; *ca*—and; *ugrasenaḥ*—Ugrasena; *ca*—and; *rāmaḥ*—Balarāma (the elder brother of Kṛṣṇa); *ca*—and; *adbhuta*—superhuman; *vikramaḥ*—prowess; *pradyumnaḥ*—Pradyumna; *cārudeṣṇaḥ*—Cārudeṣṇa; *ca*—and; *sāmbhaḥ*—Sāmba; *jāmbavatī-sutaḥ*—the son of Jāmbavatī; *prahaṛṣa*—extreme happiness; *vega*—force; *ucchaśita*—being influenced by; *śayana*—lying down; *śana*—sitting on; *bhojanāḥ*—dining.

TRANSLATION

On hearing that the most dear Kṛṣṇa was approaching Dvārakā-dhāma, magnanimous Vasudeva, Akrūra, Ugrasena, Balarāma (the superhumanly powerful), Pradyumna, Cārudeṣṇa and Sāmba the son of Jāmbavatī, all extremely happy, abandoned resting, sitting and dining.

PURPORT

Vasudeva: Son of King Śūrasena, husband of Devakī and father of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is the brother of Kuntī and father of Subhadrā. Subhadrā was married with her cousin Arjuna, and this system is still prevalent in some parts of India. Vasudeva was appointed minister of Ugrasena, and later on he married eight daughters of Ugrasena's brother Devaka. Devakī is only one of them. Kaiśa was his brother-in-law, and Vasudeva accepted voluntary imprisonment by Kaiśa on mutual agreement to deliver the eighth son of Devakī. This was foiled by the will of Kṛṣṇa. As maternal uncle of the Pāṇḍavas, he took active parts in the purificatory process of the Pāṇḍavas. He sent for the priest Kaśyapa at the Śatasṅga Parvata, and he executed the functions. When Kṛṣṇa appeared within the bars of Kaiśa's prison house, He was transferred by Vasudeva to the house of Nanda Mahārāja, the foster father of Kṛṣṇa, at Gokula. Kṛṣṇa disappeared along with Baladeva prior to the disappearance of Vasudeva, and Arjuna (Vasudeva's nephew) undertook the charge of the funeral ceremony after Vasudeva's disappearance.

Akrūra: The commander in chief of the Vṛṣṇi dynasty and a great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Akrūra attained success in devotional service to the Lord by the one single process of offering prayers. He was the husband of Sūtānī, daughter of Ahūka. He supported Arjuna when Arjuna took Subhadrā forcibly away by the will of Kṛṣṇa. Both Kṛṣṇa and Akrūra went to see Arjuna after his successful kidnapping of Subhadrā. Both of them presented dowries to Arjuna after this incidence. Akrūra was present also when Abhimanyu, the son of Subhadrā, was married with Uttarā, mother of Mahārāja Parikṣit. Ahūka, the father-in-law of Akrūra, was not on good terms with Akrūra. But both of them were devotees of the Lord.

Ugrasena: One of the powerful kings of the Vṛṣṇi dynasty and cousin of Mahārāja Kuntibhoja. His other name is Ahūka. His minister was Vasudeva, and his son was the powerful Kaiśa. This Kaiśa imprisoned his father and became the King of Mathurā. By the grace of Lord Kṛṣṇa and His brother, Lord Baladeva, Kaiśa was killed, and Ugrasena was reinstalled on the throne. When Śālva attacked the city of Dvārakā, Ugrasena fought very valiantly and repulsed the enemy. Ugrasena inquired from Nāradaḥ about the divinity of Lord Kṛṣṇa. When the Yadu dynasty was to be vanquished, Ugrasena was entrusted with the iron lump produced from the womb of Sāmba. He cut the iron lump into pieces and then pasted it and mixed it up with the sea water on the coast

of Dvārakā. After this, he ordered complete prohibition within the city of Dvārakā and the kingdom. He got salvation after his death.

Baladeva: He is the divine son of Vasudeva by his wife Rohiṇī. He is also known as Rohiṇī-nandana, the beloved son of Rohiṇī. He was also entrusted to Nanda Mahārāja along with His mother, Rohiṇī, when Vasudeva embraced imprisonment by mutual agreement with Kaiśa. So Nanda Mahārāja is also the foster father of Baladeva along with Lord Kṛṣṇa. Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Baladeva were constant companions from Their very childhood, although They were stepbrothers. He is the plenary manifestation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and therefore He is as good and powerful as Lord Kṛṣṇa. He belongs to the *viṣṇu-tattva* (the principle of Godhead). He attended the *svayamvara* ceremony of Draupadī along with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. When Subhadrā was kidnapped by Arjuna by the organized plan of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Baladeva was very angry with Arjuna and wanted to kill him at once. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, for the sake of His dear friend, fell at the feet of Lord Baladeva and implored Him not to be so angry. Śrī Baladeva was thus satisfied. Similarly, He was once very angry with the Kauravas, and He wanted to throw their whole city into the depths of the Yamunā. But the Kauravas satisfied Him by surrendering unto His divine lotus feet. He was actually the seventh son of Devakī prior to the birth of Lord Kṛṣṇa, but by the will of the Lord He was transferred to the womb of Rohiṇī to escape the wrath of Kaiśa. His other name is therefore Sankarṣaṇa, who is also the plenary portion of Śrī Baladeva. Because He is as powerful as Lord Kṛṣṇa and can bestow spiritual power to the devotees, He is therefore known as Baladeva. In the *Vedas* also it is enjoined that no one can know the Supreme Lord without being favored by Baladeva. *Bala* means spiritual strength not physical. Some less intelligent persons interpret *bala* as the strength of the body. But no one can have spiritual realization by physical strength. Physical strength ends with the end of the physical body, but spiritual strength follows the spirit soul to the next transmigrator, and therefore the strength obtained by Baladeva is never wasted. The strength is eternal, and thus Baladeva is the original spiritual master of all devotees.

Śrī Baladeva was also a class friend of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa as a student of Sāndipani Muni. In His childhood He killed many *asuras* along with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and specifically He killed the Dhenukāsura at Tālavana. During the Kurukṣetra battle, He remained neutral, and He tried His best not to bring about the fight. He was in favor of Duryodhana, but still He remained neutral. When there was a club-fight between Duryodhana and Bhīmasena, He was present on the spot. He was angry at Bhīmasena when the latter struck Duryodhana on the thigh or below the belt, and He wanted to retaliate the unfair action. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa saved Bhīma from His wrath. But He left the place at once, being disgusted at Bhīmasena, and after His departure Duryodhana fell to the ground to meet his death. The funeral ceremony of Abhimanyu, the son of Arjuna, was performed by Him, as He was the maternal uncle. It was impossible to be performed by any one of the Pāṇḍavas, who were all overwhelmed with grief. At the last stage, He departed from this world by producing a great white snake from His mouth, and thus He was carried by Śeṣanāga in the shape of a serpent.

Pradyumna: Incarnation of Kāmadeva or, according to others, incarnation of Sanat-kumāra, born as the son of the Personality of Godhead Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Lakṣmīdevī Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī, the principal queen at Dvārakā. He was one of those who went to congratulate Arjuna upon his marrying Subhadrā. He was one of the great generals who fought with Śālva, and while fighting with him he became unconscious on the battlefield. His charioteer brought him back to the camp from the battlefield, and for this action he was very sorry and rebuked his charioteer. However, he fought again with Śālva and was victorious. He heard all about the different demigods from Nāradaḥ. He is one of the four plenary expansions of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is the third one. He inquired from his father, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, about the glories of the *brāhmaṇas*. During the fratricidal war amongst the descendants of Yadu, he died at the hand of Bhoja, another king of the Vṛṣṇis. After his death, he was installed in his original position.

Cārudeṣṇa: Another son of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Rukmiṇīdevī. He was

also present during the *svayamvara* ceremony of Draupadī. He was a great warrior like his brothers and father. He fought with Vivinidhaka and killed him in the fight.

Sāmba: One of the great heroes of the Yadu dynasty and the son of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa by His wife Jāmbavatī. He learned the military art of throwing arrows from Arjuna, and he became a member of parliament during the time of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira. He was present during the Rājasūya-yajña of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira. When all the Vṛṣṇis were assembled during the time of Pravaśa-yajña, his glorious activities were narrated by Sātyaki before Lord Baladeva. He was also present along with his father, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, during the Aśvamedha-yajña performed by Yudhiṣṭhira. He was presented before some *ṛṣis* falsely dressed as a pregnant woman by his brothers, and in fun he asked the *ṛṣis* what he was going to deliver. The *ṛṣis* replied that he would deliver a lump of iron, which would be the cause of fratricidal war in the family of Yadu. The next day, in the morning, Sāmba delivered a large lump of iron, which was entrusted with Ugrasena for necessary action. Actually later on there was the foretold fratricidal war, and Sāmba died in that war.

So all these sons of Lord Kṛṣṇa left their respective palaces and leaving aside all engagements, including lying down, sitting and dining, hastened toward their exalted father.

TEXT 18

वारणेन्द्रं पुरस्कृत्य ब्राह्मणैः समुमङ्गलैः ।
शङ्खतूर्यनिनादेन ब्रह्मघोषेण चादताः ।
प्रत्युजग्मु रथैर्हृष्टाः प्रणयागतसाध्वसाः ॥१८॥

vāranendraṁ puraskṛtya
brāhmaṇaiḥ sasumaṅgalaiḥ
śaṅkha-tūrya-ninādena
brahma-ghoṣeṇa cādṛtāḥ
pratyujagmū rathair hṛṣṭāḥ
praṇayāgata-sādhvasāḥ

vāraṇa-indram—elephants on the auspicious mission; *puraskṛtya*—putting in the front; *brāhmaṇaiḥ*—by the *brāhmaṇas*; *sasumaṅgalaiḥ*—with all-auspicious signs; *śaṅkha*—conchshell; *tūrya*—bugle; *ninādena*—by the sound of; *brahma-ghoṣeṇa*—by chanting the hymns of the *Vedas*; *ca*—and; *ādṛtāḥ*—glorified; *prati*—towards; *ujagmuḥ*—proceeded hurriedly; *rathair*—on the chariots; *hṛṣṭāḥ*—in cheerfulness; *praṇayāgata*—saturated with affection; *sādhvasāḥ*—all-respectful.

TRANSLATION

They hastened toward the Lord on chariots with *brāhmaṇas* bearing flowers. Before them were elephants, emblems of good fortune. Conchshells and bugles were sounded, and Vedic hymns were chanted. Thus they offered their respects, which were saturated with affection.

PURPORT

The Vedic way of receiving a great personality creates an atmosphere of respect, which is saturated with affection and veneration for the person received. The auspicious atmosphere of such a reception depends on the paraphernalia described above, including conchshells, flowers, incense, decorated elephants, and the qualified *brāhmaṇas* reciting verses from the Vedic literatures. Such a program of reception is full of sincerity, on the part of both the receiver and the received.

TEXT 19

वारमुख्याश्च शतशो यानैस्तद्दर्शनोत्सुकाः ।
लसत्कुण्डलनिर्भातकपोलवदनश्रियः ॥१९॥

vāramukhyāś ca śataśo
yānais tad-darśanotsukāḥ
lasat-kuṇḍala-nirbhāta-
kapola-vadana-śriyaḥ

vāramukhyāḥ—well-known prostitutes; *ca*—and; *śataśaḥ*—hundreds of; *yānaiḥ*—by vehicles; *tad-darśana*—for meeting Him (Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa); *utsukāḥ*—very much anxious; *lasat*—hanging; *kuṇḍala*—earrings; *nirbhāta*—dazzling; *kapola*—forehead; *vadana*—face; *śriyaḥ*—beauty.

TRANSLATION

At the same time, many hundreds of well-known prostitutes began to proceed on various vehicles. They were all very eager to meet the Lord, and their beautiful faces were decorated with dazzling earrings, which enhanced the beauty of their foreheads.

PURPORT

We may not hate even the prostitutes if they are devotees of the Lord. Even to date there are many prostitutes in great cities of India who are sincere devotees of the Lord. By tricks of chance one may be obliged to adopt a profession which is not very adorable in society, but that does not hamper one in executing devotional service to the Lord. Devotional service to the Lord is uncheckable in all circumstances. It is understood herewith that even in those days, about five thousand years ago, there were prostitutes in a city like Dvārakā, where Lord Kṛṣṇa resided. This means that prostitutes are necessary citizens for the proper upkeep of society. The government opens wine shops, but this does not mean that the government encourages the drinking of wine. The idea is that there is a class of men who will drink at any cost, and it has been experienced that prohibition in great cities encouraged illicit smuggling of wine. Similarly, men who are not satisfied at home require such concessions, and if there is no prostitute, then such low men will induce others into prostitution. It is better that prostitutes be available in the marketplace so that the sanctity of society can be maintained. It is better to maintain a class of prostitutes than to encourage prostitutes within society. The real reformation is to enlighten all people to become devotees of the Lord, and that will check all kinds of deteriorating factors of life.

Śrī Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura, a great *ācārya* of the Viṣṇusvāmī Vaiṣṇava sect, in his householder life was overly attached to a prostitute who happened to be a devotee of the Lord. One night when the Ṭhākura came to Cintāmaṇi's house in torrents of rain and thunder, Cintāmaṇi was astonished to see how the Ṭhākura could come on such a dreadful night after crossing a foaming river which was full of waves. She said to Ṭhākura Bilvamaṅgala that his attraction for the flesh and bone of an insignificant woman like her would be properly utilized if it could be diverted to the devotional service of the Lord to achieve attraction for the transcendental beauty of the Lord. It was a momentous hour for the Ṭhākura, and he took a turn towards spiritual realization by the words of a prostitute. Later on the Ṭhākura accepted the prostitute as his spiritual master, and in several places of his literary works he has glorified the name of Cintāmaṇi, who showed him the right path.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.32) the Lord says, "O son of Pṛthā, even the low-born *caṇḍālas* and those who are born in a family of unbelievers, and even the prostitutes, shall attain perfection of life if they take shelter of unalloyed devotional service to Me, because in the path of devotional service there are no impediments due to degraded birth and occupation. The path is open for everyone who agrees to follow it."

It appears that the prostitutes of Dvārakā, who were so eager to meet the Lord, were all His unalloyed devotees, and thus they were all on the path of salvation according to the above version of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Therefore, the only reformation that is necessary in society is to make an organized effort to turn the citizens into devotees of the Lord, and thus all good qualities of the denizens of heaven will overtake them in their own way. On the other hand, those who are nondevotees have no good

qualifications whatsoever, however they may be materially advanced. The difference is that the devotees of the Lord are on the path of liberation, whereas the nondevotees are on the path of further entanglement in material bondage. The criterion of advancement of civilization is whether the people are educated and advanced on the path of salvation.

TEXT 20

नटनर्तकगन्धर्वाः स्रुतमागधवन्दिनः ।
गायन्ति चोत्तमश्लोकचरितान्यद्भुतानि च ॥२०॥

*naṭa-nartaka-gandharvāḥ
sūta-māgadha-vandināḥ
gāyanti cottamaśloka-
caritāny adbhutāni ca*

naṭa—dramatists; *nartaka*—dancers; *gandharvāḥ*—celestial singers; *sūta*—professional historians; *māgadha*—professional genealogists; *vandināḥ*—professional learned speakers; *gāyanti*—chant; *ca*—respectively; *uttamaśloka*—the Supreme Lord; *caritāni*—activities; *adbhutāni*—all superhuman; *ca*—and.

TRANSLATION

Expert dramatists, artists, dancers, singers, historians, genealogists and learned speakers all gave their respective contributions, being inspired by the superhuman pastimes of the Lord. Thus they proceeded on and on.

PURPORT

It appears that five thousand years ago the society also needed the services of the dramatists, artists, dancers, singers, historians, genealogists, public speakers, etc. Dancers, singers and dramatic artists mostly hailed from the *śūdra* community, whereas the learned historians, genealogists and public speakers hailed from the *brāhmaṇa* community. All of them belonged to a particular caste, and they became so trained in their respective families. Such dramatists, dancers, singers, historians, genealogists and public speakers would dwell on the subject of the Lord's superhuman activities in different ages and millenniums, and not on ordinary events. Nor were they in chronological order. All the *Purāṇas* are historical facts described only in relation with the Supreme Lord in different ages and times as well as on different planets also. Therefore, we do not find any chronological order. The modern historians, therefore, cannot catch up the link, and thus they unauthoritatively remark that the *Purāṇas* are all imaginary stories only.

Even one hundred years ago in India, all dramatic performances were centered around the superhuman activities of the Supreme Lord. The common people would be verily entertained by the performances of dramas, and *yātrā* parties played wonderfully on the superhuman activities of the Lord, and thus even the illiterate agriculturist would be a participant in the knowledge of Vedic literature, despite a considerable lack of academic qualifications. Therefore, expert players in drama, dancers, singers, speakers, etc., are required for the spiritual enlightenment of the common man. The genealogists would give account completely of the descendants of a particular family. Even at the present moment the guides in the pilgrimage sites of India submit a complete account of genealogical tables before a newcomer. This wonderful act sometimes attracts more customers to receive such important information.

TEXT 21

भगवांस्तत्र बन्धूनां पौराणामनुवर्तिनाम् ।
यथाविध्युपसंगम्य सर्वेषां मानमादधे ॥२१॥

*bhagavāms tatra bandhūnām
paurāṇām anuvartinām*

*yathā-vidhy upasaṅgamy
sarveṣāṁ mānam ādadhe*

bhagavān—Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead; *tatra*—in that place; *bandhūnām*—of the friends; *paurāṇām*—of the citizens; *anuvartinām*—those who approached Him to receive and welcome; *yathā-vidhi*—as it behooves; *upasaṅgamy*—going nearer; *sarveṣāṁ*—for each and every one; *mānam*—honor and respects; *ādadhe*—offered.

TRANSLATION

Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, approached them and offered due honor and respect to each and every one of the friends, relatives, citizens and all others who came to receive and welcome Him.

PURPORT

The Supreme Lord Personality of Godhead is neither impersonal nor an inert object unable to reciprocate the feelings of His devotees. Here the word *yathā-vidhi*, or "just as it behooves" is significant. He reciprocates "just as it behooves" with His different types of admirers and devotees. Of course, the pure devotees are of one type only because they have no other object for service but the Lord, and therefore the Lord also reciprocates with such pure devotees just as it behooves, namely, He is always attentive to all the matters of His pure devotees. There are others who designate Him as impersonal, and so the Lord also does not take any personal interest. He satisfies everyone in terms of one's development of spiritual consciousness, and a sample of such reciprocation is exhibited here with His different welcomers.

TEXT 22

प्रह्वामिवादानाश्लेषकरस्पर्शस्मितेक्षणैः ।
आश्वास्य चाश्वपाकेभ्यो वरैश्चामिमतेर्विभुः ॥२२॥

*prahvābhivādānaśleṣa-
kara-sparśa-smitekṣaṇaiḥ
āśvāsya cāśvapākebhyo
varaiś cābhimatāir vibhuḥ*

prahvā—by bowing His head; *abhivādāna*—by greeting with words; *āśleṣa*—embracing; *kara-sparśa*—shaking hands; *smitekṣaṇaiḥ*—by a glancing smile; *āśvāsya*—by encouragement; *ca*—and; *āśvapākebhyaḥ*—down to the lowest rank of dog-eaters; *varaiḥ*—by benedictions; *ca*—also; *abhimatāiḥ*—as desired by; *vibhuḥ*—the Almighty.

TRANSLATION

The Almighty Lord greeted everyone present by bowing His head, exchanging greetings, embracing, shaking hands, looking and smiling, giving assurances and awarding benedictions, even to the lowest in rank.

PURPORT

To receive the Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa there were all grades of population, beginning from Vasudeva, Ugrasena and Gargamuni—the father, grandfather and teacher—down to the prostitutes and *caṇḍālas*, who are accustomed to eat dogs. And every one of them was properly greeted by the Lord in terms of rank and position. As pure living entities, all are the separated parts and parcels of the Lord, and thus no one is alien by His eternal relation. Such pure living entities are graded differently in terms of contamination of the modes of material nature, but the Lord is equally affectionate to all His parts and parcels, despite material gradation. He descends only to recall these materialistic living beings back to His kingdom, and intelligent persons take advantage of this facility offered by the Personality of Godhead to all living beings. No one is rejected by

the Lord from the kingdom of God, and it remains with the living being to accept this or not.

TEXT 23

स्वयं च गुरुभिर्विप्रैः सदारैः स्थविरैरपि ।
आशीर्भिर्युज्यमानोऽन्यैर्वेन्दमिश्राविशत्पुरम् ॥२३॥

*svayaṁ ca gurubhir vipraiḥ
sadāraiḥ sthavirair api
āśirbhir yujyamāno 'nyair
vandibhiḥ cāviśat puram*

svayaṁ—Himself; *ca*—also; *gurubhiḥ*—by elderly relatives; *vipraiḥ*—by the *brāhmaṇas*; *sadāraiḥ*—with their wives; *sthaviraiḥ*—invalid; *api*—also; *āśirbhiḥ*—by the blessing of; *yujyamānaḥ*—being praised by; *anyaiḥ*—by others; *vandibhiḥ*—admirers; *ca*—and; *aviśat*—entered; *puram*—the city.

TRANSLATION

Then the Lord personally entered the city accompanied by elderly relatives and invalid *brāhmaṇas* with their wives, all offering benedictions and singing the glories of the Lord. Others also praised the glories of the Lord.

PURPORT

The *brāhmaṇas* in society were never attentive to banking money for future retired life. When they were old invalids, they used to approach the assembly of the kings, and simply by praising the glorious deeds performed by the kings, along with their wives, they would be provided with all necessities of life. Such *brāhmaṇas* were not, so to speak, flatterers of the kings, but the kings were actually glorified by their actions, and they were sincerely still more encouraged in pious acts by such *brāhmaṇas* in a dignified way. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is worthy of all glories, and the praying *brāhmaṇas* and others were glorified themselves by chanting the glories of the Lord.

TEXT 24

राजमार्गं गते कृष्णे द्वारकायाः कुलस्त्रियः ।
हर्म्याण्यारुरुहुर्विप्र तदीक्षणमहोत्सवाः ॥२४॥

*rāja-mārgaṁ gate kṛṣṇe
dvārakāyāḥ kula-striyaḥ
harmyāṇy āruruhur vipra
tad-iṣṭana-mahotsavāḥ*

rāja-mārgam—the public roads; *gate*—while passing over; *kṛṣṇe*—by Lord Kṛṣṇa; *dvārakāyāḥ*—of the city of Dvārakā; *kula-striyaḥ*—ladies of the respectable families; *harmyāṇi*—on the palaces; *āruruhuḥ*—got up; *vipra*—O *brāhmaṇas*; *tad-iṣṭana*—just to look upon Him (Kṛṣṇa); *mahā-utsavāḥ*—accepted as the greatest festival.

TRANSLATION

When Lord Kṛṣṇa passed over the public roads, all the ladies from the respectable families of Dvārakā went up to the roofs of their palaces just to have a look at the Lord. They considered this to be the greatest festival.

PURPORT

To have a look at the Lord is a great festive occasion undoubtedly, as it was considered by the metropolitan ladies of Dvārakā. This is still followed by the devout ladies of India. Especially during the days of the Jhulana and Janmāṣṭamī ceremonies, the ladies of India still throng up in the greatest number at the temple of the Lord, where His transcendental eternal form is worshiped. The transcendental form of the Lord installed in a temple is not different from the Lord personally. Such a form of the Lord is called *arca-vigraha*, or *arcā* incarnation, and is expanded by the

Lord by His internal potency just to facilitate the devotional service of His innumerable devotees who are in the material world. The material senses cannot perceive the spiritual nature of the Lord, and therefore the Lord accepts the *arca-vigraha*, which is apparently made of material elements like earth, wood and stone but actually there is no material contamination. The Lord being *kaivalya* (one alone), there is no matter in Him. He is one without a second, and therefore the Almighty Lord can appear in any form without being contaminated by the material conception. Therefore, festivities in the temple of the Lord, as held generally, are like festivals performed during the manifestive days of the Lord of Dvārakā, about five thousand years ago. The authorized *ācāryas*, who know the science perfectly, install such temples of the Lord under regulative principles just to offer facilities to the common man, but persons who are less intelligent, without being conversant with the science, mistake this great attempt to be *idol worship* and poke their nose into that to which they have no access. Therefore, the ladies or men who observe festivals in the temples of the Lord just to have a look at the transcendental form are a thousand times more glorious than those who are nonbelievers in the transcendental form of the Lord.

It appears from the verse that the inhabitants of Dvārakā were all owners of big palaces. This indicates the prosperity of the city. The ladies got up on the roofs just to have a look at the procession and the Lord. The ladies did not mix with the crowd on the street, and thus their respectability was perfectly observed. There was no artificial equality with the man. Female respectability is preserved more elegantly by keeping the woman separate from the man. The sexes should not mix unrestrictedly.

TEXT 25

नित्यं निरीक्षमाणानां यदपि द्वारकौकसाम् ।
न वितृप्यन्ति हि दृशः श्रियोधामाङ्गमच्युतम् ॥२५॥

*nītyaṁ nirīkṣamāṇānām
yad api dvārakaukasām
na vitṛpyanti hi dṛśaḥ
śriyo dhāmaṅgam acyutam*

nītyam—regularly, always; *nirīkṣamāṇānām*—of those who look at Him; *yad*—although; *api*—in spite of; *dvārakā-okasām*—the inhabitants of Dvārakā; *na*—never; *vitṛpyanti*—satisfied; *hi*—exactly; *dṛśaḥ*—sight; *śriyaḥ*—beauties; *dhāma-ṅgam*—the bodily reservoir; *acyutam*—the infallible.

TRANSLATION

The inhabitants of Dvārakā were regularly accustomed to look upon the reservoir of all beauty, the infallible Lord, yet they were never satiated.

PURPORT

When the ladies of the city of Dvārakā got up on the roofs of their palaces, they never thought that they had previously many times seen the beautiful body of the infallible Lord. This indicates that they had no satiation in desiring to see the Lord. Anything material seen for a number of times ultimately becomes unattractive by the law of satiation. The law of satiation acts materially, but there is no scope for it in the spiritual realm. The word infallible is significant here, because although the Lord has mercifully descended on earth, He is still infallible. The living entities are fallible because when they come in contact with the material world they lack their spiritual identity, and thus the body materially obtained becomes subjected to birth, growth, transformation, situation, deterioration and annihilation under the laws of nature. The Lord's body is not like that. He descends as He is and is never under the laws of the material modes. His body is the source of everything that be, the reservoir of all beauties beyond our experience. No one, therefore, is satiated by seeing the transcendental body of the Lord because there are always manifestations of newer and newer beauties. The transcendental name,

form, qualities, entourage, etc., are all spiritual manifestations, and there is no satiation in chanting the holy name of the Lord, there is no satiation in discussing the qualities of the Lord, and there is no limitation of the entourage of the Lord. He is the source of all and is limitless.

TEXT 26

श्रियो निवासो यस्योरः पानपात्रं मुखं दृशाम् ।

बाहवो लोकपालानां सारङ्गानां पदाम्बुजम् ॥२६॥

*śriyo nivāso yasyorah
pāna-pātram mukhaṁ dṛśām
bāhavo loka-pālānām
sāraṅgānām padāmbujam*

śriyaḥ—of the goddess of fortune; *nivāsaḥ*—residential place; *yasya*—one whose; *urah*—chest; *pāna-pātram*—the drinking pot; *mukham*—face; *dṛśām*—of eyes; *bāhavaḥ*—the arms; *loka-pālānām*—of the administrative demigods; *sāraṅgānām*—of the devotees who talk and sing of the essence or substance; *pada-ambujam*—the lotus feet.

TRANSLATION

The Lord's chest is the abode of the goddess of fortune. His moonlike face is the drinking vessel for eyes which hanker after all that is beautiful. His arms are the resting places for the administrative demigods. And His lotus feet are the refuge of pure devotees who never talk or sing of any subject except His Lordship.

PURPORT

There are different classes of human beings, all seeking different enjoyments from different objects. There are persons who are seeking after the favor of the goddess of fortune, and for them the Vedic literatures give information that the Lord is always served with all reverence by thousands and thousands of goddesses of fortune at the *cintāmaṇi-dhāma*,* the transcendental abode of the Lord where the trees are all desire trees and the buildings are made of touchstone. The Lord Govinda is engaged there in herding the *surabhi* cows as His natural occupation. These goddesses of fortune can be seen automatically if we are attracted by the bodily features of the Lord. The impersonalists cannot observe such goddesses of fortune because of their dry speculative habit. And those who are artists, overtaken by the beautiful creation, should better see to the beautiful face of the Lord for complete satisfaction. The face of the Lord is the embodiment of beauty. What they call beautiful nature is but His smile, and what they call the sweet songs of the birds are but specimens of the whispering voice of the Lord. There are administrative demigods in charge of departmental service of cosmic management, and there are tiny administrative gods in the state service. They are always afraid of other competitors, but if they take shelter of the arms of the Lord, the Lord can protect them always from the attacks of enemies. A faithful servant of the Lord engaged in the service of administration is the ideal executive head and can well protect the interest of the people in general. Other so-called administrators are symbols of anachronisms leading to the acute distress of the people who are governed by them. The administrators can remain safely under the protection of the arms of the Lord. The essence of everything is the Supreme Lord: He is called the *sāram*. And those who sing and talk about Him are called the *sāraṅgas*, or the pure devotees. The pure devotees are always hankering after the lotus feet of the Lord. The lotus has a kind of honey which is transcendently relished by the devotees. They are like the bees who are always after the honey. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, the great devotee *ācārya* of the

**cintāmaṇi-prakara-sadmasu kalpa-vṛkṣa-lakṣāvṛteṣu surabhīr abhipālayantam lakṣmī-sahasra-sata-sambhrama-sevyaṁānam govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi* (Bs. 5.29)

Gauḍiya-Vaiṣṇava-sampradāya, has sung a song about this lotus honey, comparing himself to the bee: "O my Lord Kṛṣṇa, I beg to offer my prayers unto You. My mind is like the bee, and it is after some honey. Kindly, therefore, give my bee-mind a place at Your lotus feet, which are the resources for all transcendental honey. I know that even big demigods like Brahmā do not see the rays of the nails of Your lotus feet, even though they are engaged in deep meditation for years together. Still, O infallible one, my ambition is such, for You are very merciful to your surrendered devotees. O Mādhava, I know also that I have no genuine devotion for the service of Your lotus feet, but because Your Lordship is inconceivably powerful, You can do what is impossible to be done. Your lotus feet can deride even the nectar of the heavenly kingdom, and therefore I am very much attracted by them. O supreme eternal, please, therefore, let my mind be fixed at Your lotus feet so that eternally I may be able to relish the taste of Your transcendental service." The devotees are satisfied with being placed at the lotus feet of the Lord and have no ambition to see His all-beautiful face or aspire for the protection of the strong arms of the Lord. They are humble by nature, and the Lord is always leaning towards such humble devotees.

TEXT 27

सितातपत्रव्यजनैरुपस्कृतः

प्रसूनवर्षैरभिवर्षितः पथि ।

पिशङ्गवासा वनमालया बभौ

घनो यथाकोडुपचापवैद्युतैः ॥२७॥

*sitātapatra-vyajanaṁ upaskṛtaḥ
prasūna-varṣair abhivaṛṣitaḥ pathi
piśaṅga-vāsā vana-mālayā babhau
ghano yathārkoḍupa-cāpa-vaidyutaiḥ*

sitā-ātapatra—white umbrella; *vyajanaḥ*—with a *cāmara* fan; *upaskṛtaḥ*—being served by; *prasūna*—flowers; *varṣaiḥ*—by the showers; *abhivaṛṣitaḥ*—thus being covered; *pathi*—on the road; *piśaṅga-vāsā*—by the yellow garments; *vana-mālayā*—by the flower garlands; *babhau*—thus it became; *ghanaḥ*—cloud; *yathā*—as if; *arka*—the sun; *udupa*—the moon; *cāpa*—the rainbow; *vaidyutaiḥ*—by the lightning.

TRANSLATION

As the Lord passed along the public road of Dvārakā, His head was protected from the sunshine by a white umbrella. White feathered fans moved in semicircles, and showers of flowers fell upon the road. His yellow garments and garlands of flowers made it appear as if a dark cloud were surrounded simultaneously by sun, moon, lightning and rainbows.

PURPORT

The sun, moon, rainbow and lightning do not appear in the sky simultaneously. When there is sun, the moonlight becomes insignificant, and if there are clouds and a rainbow, there is no manifestation of lightning. The Lord's bodily hue is just like a new monsoon cloud. He is compared herein to the cloud. The white umbrella over His head is compared to the sun. The movement of the bunch-hair fan of flukes is compared to the moon. The showers of flowers are compared to the stars. His yellow garments are compared to the rainbow. So all these activities of the firmament, being impossible simultaneous factors, cannot be adjusted by comparison. The adjustment is possible only when we think of the inconceivable potency of the Lord. The Lord is all-powerful, and in His presence anything impossible can be made possible by His inconceivable energy. But the situation created at the time of His passing on the roads of Dvārakā was beautiful and could not be compared to anything besides the description of natural phenomena.

TEXT 28

प्रविष्टस्तु गृहं पित्रोः परिष्वक्तः स्वमातृभिः ।
ववन्दे शिरसा सप्त देवकीप्रमुखा मुदा ॥२८॥

*praviṣṭas tu grhaṁ pitroḥ
pariṣvaktah sva-mātr̥bhiḥ
vavande śirasā sapta
devakī-pramukhā mudā*

praviṣṭah—after entering; *tu*—but; *grham*—houses; *pitroḥ*—of the father; *pariṣvaktah*—embraced; *sva-mātr̥bhiḥ*—by His own mothers; *vavande*—offered obeisances; *śirasā*—His head; *sapta*—seven; *devakī*—Devakī; *pramukhā*—headed by; *mudā*—gladly.

TRANSLATION

After entering the house of His father, He was embraced by the mothers present, and the Lord offered His obeisances unto them by placing His head at their feet. The mothers were headed by Devakī [His real mother].

PURPORT

It appears that Vasudeva, the father of Lord Kṛṣṇa, had completely separate residential quarters where he lived with his eighteen wives, out of whom Śrīmatī Devakī is the real mother of Lord Kṛṣṇa. But in spite of this, all other stepmothers were equally affectionate to Him, as will be evident from the following verse. Lord Kṛṣṇa also did not distinguish His real mother from His stepmothers, and He equally offered His obeisances unto all the wives of Vasudeva present on the occasion. According to scriptures also, there are seven mothers: (1) the real mother, (2) the wife of the spiritual master, (3) the wife of a *brāhmaṇa*, (4) the wife of the king, (5) the cow, (6) the nurse, and (7) the earth. All of them are mothers. Even by this injunction of the *sāstras*, the stepmother, who is the wife of the father, is also as good as the mother because the father is also one of the spiritual masters. Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the universe, plays the part of an ideal son just to teach others how to treat their stepmothers.

TEXT 29

ताः पुत्रमङ्कमारोप्य स्नेहस्रुतपयोधराः ।
हर्षविह्वलितात्मानः सिषिचुर्नेत्रजैर्जलैः ॥२९॥

*tāḥ putram aṅkam āropya
sneha-sruta-payodharāḥ
harṣa-vihvalitātmānaḥ
siṣicur netrajair jalaiḥ*

tāḥ—all of them; *putram*—the son; *aṅkam*—the lap; *āropya*—having placed on; *sneha-sruta*—moistened by affection; *payodharāḥ*—breasts filled up; *harṣa*—delight; *vihvalita-ātmānaḥ*—overwhelmed by; *siṣicuh*—wet; *netrajaiḥ*—from the eyes; *jalaiḥ*—water.

TRANSLATION

The mothers, after embracing their son, sat Him on their laps. Due to pure affection, milk sprang from their breasts. They were overwhelmed with delight, and the tears from their eyes wetted the Lord.

PURPORT

When Lord Kṛṣṇa was at Vṛndāvana even the cows would become moistened by affection towards Him, and He would draw milk from the nipples of every affectionate living being, so what to speak of the stepmothers who were already as good as His own mother.

*athāviṣat sva-bhavanam
sarva-kāmam anuttamam*

*prāsādā yatra patnīnām
sahasrāṇi ca ṣoḍaśa*

atha—thereafter; *aviṣat*—entered; *sva-bhavanam*—personal palaces; *sarva*—all; *kāmam*—desires; *anuttamam*—perfect to the fullest extent; *prāsādāḥ*—palaces; *yatra*—where; *patnīnām*—of the wives numbering; *sahasrāṇi*—thousands; *ca*—over and above; *ṣoḍaśa*—sixteen.

TRANSLATION

Thereafter, the Lord entered His palaces, which were perfect to the fullest extent. His wives lived in them, and they numbered over sixteen thousand.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa had 16,108 wives, and for each and every one of them there was a fully equipped palace complete with necessary compounds and gardens. Full description of these palaces is given in the Tenth Canto. All the palaces were made of the best marble stone. They were illuminated by jewels and decorated by curtains and carpets of velvet and silk, nicely bedecked and embroidered with gold lace. The Personality of Godhead means one who is full with all power, all energy, all opulences, all beauties, all knowledge and all renunciation. Therefore, in the palaces of the Lord there was nothing wanting for fulfilling all desires of the Lord. The Lord is unlimited, and therefore His desires are also unlimited, and the supply is also unlimited. Everything being unlimited, it is concisely described here as *sarva-kāmam*, or full with all desirable equipment.

TEXT 31

पत्न्यः पतिं प्रोष्य गृहानुपागतं
विलोक्य संजातमनोमहोत्सवाः ।
उत्स्युरारात् सहस्रासनाश्रयात्
साकं व्रतैर्व्रीडितलोचनाननाः ॥३१॥

*patnyaḥ patiṁ proṣya grhānupāgataṁ
vilokya sañjāta-mano-mahotsavāḥ
uttasthur ārāt sahasāsanāśrayāt
sākaṁ vratair vṛīḍita-locanānānaḥ*

patnyaḥ—the ladies (wives of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa); *patiṁ*—husband; *proṣya*—who was away from home; *grha-anupāgataṁ*—now returned home; *vilokya*—thus seeing; *sañjāta*—having developed; *manaḥ-mahā-utsavāḥ*—a sense of joyful ceremony within the mind; *uttasthuḥ*—got up; *ārāt*—from a distance; *sahasā*—all of a sudden; *āsanā*—from the seats; *āśayāt*—from the state of meditation; *sākaṁ*—along with; *vrataiḥ*—the vow; *vṛīḍita*—looking coyly; *locana*—eyes; *ānānaḥ*—with such faces.

TRANSLATION

The queens of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa rejoiced within their minds to see their husband home after a long period abroad. The queens got up at once from their seats and meditations. As was socially customary, they covered their faces shyly and looked about coyly.

PURPORT

As mentioned above, the Lord entered His home palaces occupied by 16,108 queens. This means that the Lord at once expanded Himself in as many plenary expansions as there were queens and palaces and entered in each and every one of them simultaneously and separately. Here is another manifestation of the feature of His internal potency. He can expand Himself in as many forms of spiritual identity as He desires, even though He is one without a second. It is confirmed by the *Śruti-mantra* that the Absolute is one alone, and yet He becomes many as soon as He so

desires. These manifold expansions of the Supreme Lord are manifested as plenary and separated portions. The separated portions are representations of His energy, and the plenary portions are manifestations of His Personality. Thus the Personality of Godhead manifested Himself in 16,108 plenary expansions and simultaneously entered into each and every one of the palaces of the queens. This is called *vaibhava*, or the transcendental potency of the Lord. And because He can do so, He is also known as *Yogeśvara*. Ordinarily, a *yogī* or mystic living being is able to expand himself at utmost to tenfold expansions of his body, but the Lord can do so to the extent of as many thousands or infinitely, as He likes. Unbelievers become astonished to learn that Lord Kṛṣṇa married more than 16,000 queens because they think of Lord Kṛṣṇa as one of them and measure the potency of the Lord by their own limited potency. One should know, therefore, that the Lord is never on the level of the living beings, who are but expansions of His marginal potency, and one should never equalize the potent and the potency, although there is very little difference of quality between the potent and the potency. The queens were also expansions of His internal potency, and thus the potent and potencies are perpetually exchanging transcendental pleasures, known as pastimes of the Lord. One should not, therefore, become astonished to learn that the Lord married so many wives. On the contrary, one should affirm that even if the Lord marries sixteen thousand million wives, He is not completely manifesting His unlimited and inexhaustible potency. He married *only* 16,000 wives and entered in each and every one of the different palaces just to impress in the history of the human beings on the surface of the earth that the Lord is never equal to or less than any human being, however powerful he may be. No one, therefore, is either equal to or greater than the Lord. The Lord is always great in all respects. "God is great" is eternal truth.

Therefore, as soon as the queens saw from a distance their husband, who was away from home for long periods due to the Battle of Kurukṣetra, they all arose from the slumber of meditation and prepared to receive their most beloved. According to Yājñavalkya's religious injunctions, a woman whose husband is away from home should not take part in any social functions, should not decorate her body, should not laugh and should not go to any relative's house in any circumstance. This is the vow of the ladies whose husbands are away from home. At the same time, it is also enjoined that a wife should never present herself before the husband in an unclean state. She must decorate herself with ornaments and good dress and should always be present before the husband in a happy and joyous mood. The queens of Lord Kṛṣṇa were all in meditation, thinking of the Lord's absence, and were always meditating upon Him. The Lord's devotees cannot live for a moment without meditating on the Lord, and what to speak of the queens, who were all goddesses of fortune incarnated as queens in the pastimes of the Lord at Dvārakā. They can never be separated from the Lord, either by presence or by trance. The *gopīs* at Vṛndāvana could not forget the Lord when the Lord was away in the forest cow herding. When the Lord boy Kṛṣṇa was absent from the village, the *gopīs* at home used to worry about Him traversing the rough ground with His soft lotus feet. By thinking thus, they were sometimes overwhelmed in trance and mortified in the heart. Such is the condition of the pure associates of the Lord. They are always in trance, and so the queens also were in trance during the absence of the Lord. Presently, having seen the Lord from a distance, they at once gave up all their engagements, including the vows of women as described above. According to Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, there was a regular psychological reaction on the occasion. First of all, rising from their seats, although they wanted to see their husband, they were deterred because of feminine shyness. But due to strong ecstasy, they overcame that stage of weakness and became caught up with the idea of embracing the Lord, and this thought factually made them unconscious of their surrounding environment. This prime state of ecstasy annihilated all other formalities and social conventions, and thus they escaped all stumbling blocks on the path of meeting the Lord. And that is the perfect stage of meeting the Lord of the soul, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 32

तमात्मजैर्दृष्टिभिरन्तरात्मना
दुरन्तभावाः परिरेभिरे पतिम् ।
निरुद्धमप्यास्रवदम्बु नेत्रयो-
विलज्जतीनां भृगुवर्ष वैक्लवात् ॥३२॥

*am ātmajair dṛṣṭibhir antarātmānā
duranta-bhāvāḥ parirebhīre patim
niruddham apy āsra vad ambu netrayor
vilajjatīnām bhrgu-varya vaiklavāt*

am—Him (the Lord); *ātma-jaiḥ*—by the sons; *dṛṣṭibhiḥ*—by the sight; *antara-ātmānā*—by the innermost part of the heart; *duranta-bhāvāḥ*—insuperable ecstasy; *parirebhīre*—embraced; *patim*—husband; *niruddham*—choked up; *api*—in spite of; *āsra vad*—tears; *ambu*—like drops of water; *netrayoḥ*—from the eyes; *vilajjatīnām*—of those situated in shyness; *bhrgu-varya*—O chief of the Bhṛgus; *vaiklavāt*—inadvertently.

TRANSLATION

The insuperable ecstasy was so strong that the queens, who were shy, first embraced the Lord in the innermost recesses of their hearts. Then they embraced Him visually, and then they sent their sons to embrace Him [which is equal to personal embracing]. But, O chief amongst the Bhṛgus, though they tried to restrain their feelings, they inadvertently shed tears.

PURPORT

Although due to feminine shyness there were many hindrances to embracing the dear husband, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the queens performed that act by seeing Him, by putting Him in the cores of their hearts, and by sending their sons to embrace Him. Still, the act remained unfinished, and tears rolled down their cheeks despite all endeavors to check them. One indirectly embraces the husband by sending the son to embrace him because the son is developed as part of the mother's body. The embrace of the son is not exactly the embrace of husband and wife from the sexual point of view, but the embrace is satisfaction from the affectionate point of view. The embrace of the eyes is more effective in the conjugal relation, and thus according to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī there is nothing wrong in such an exchange of feeling between husband and wife.

(continued in next issue)

Vaiṣṇava 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 at the ISKCON center nearest you will gladly tell you about the meaning of these festivals.

Year 491, Caitanya Era Vaiṣṇava months of Vāmana (June 2–June 16, 1977) and Puruṣottama (June 17–July 16, 1977)			
June 12 (Vāmana 11)	June 13 (Vāmana 12)	June 16 (Vāmana 15)	June 27 (Puruṣottama 11)
Yoginī-ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans).	Ekādaśī break-fast after sunrise and before 9:22 A.M.	Disappearance of Śrīla Gadādhara Paṇḍita and Śrīla Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.	Ekādaśī
June 28 (Puruṣottama 72)	July 12 (Puruṣottama 26)	July 13 (Puruṣottama 27)	
Ekādaśī break-fast after sunrise and before 9:25 A.M.	Ekādaśī (North America, Central America, Hawaii observe Ekādaśī on July 11)	Ekādaśī break-fast after sunrise and before 8:23 A.M.	



Every Town and Village

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

Determined Devotee Foils "Deprogrammers"



Jubilant newlyweds Megha-devi dāsi and Ekeśvara dāsa enjoy a walk at ISKCON's 15-acre Potomac, Maryland, farm after her escape from "deprogrammers."

On April 20, 1977, *The Washington Post* reported yet another victory for a Kṛṣṇa-conscious devotee over "deprogramming" adversaries. Titled "Deprogramming Failure," the *Post* article recounts twenty-four-year-old Megha-devi dāsi's kidnapping, her attempted "deprogramming," and her successful effort to fool her captors and return to the Washington, D.C., Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa temple.

The ordeal began last February 26, when Megha and her fiancé (Ekeśvara dāsa) went to Baltimore to attend a bridal shower for them, hosted by her widowed mother and sister.

"They welcomed me and told me how well I looked," Megha told reporters at a press conference after her escape. But there was no shower. Instead, Megha was hustled off to a Baltimore motel, where "several 'deprogrammers' locked me into a room with the windows nailed shut. . . ." Inside the room the "deprogrammers" ("a lot of big men") told her they had legal custody over her. Sadly, they were telling the truth. Two days

earlier Megha's mother had obtained a temporary conservatorship order from Montgomery County Circuit Court Judge Richard B. Latham. It paved the way for Megha's "legal" kidnapping.

"They yelled and screamed at me," Megha recalled. "They very much blasphemed my spiritual master. . . . They burned my sacred prayer beads right in my face." They also forced her to change from her traditional *sari* into ill-fitting blue jeans and repeatedly told her that ISKCON had brainwashed her. They even made her read tracts about "mind control."

"I was treated exactly like a prisoner. It reminded me of what it must feel like in the Iron Curtain Communist countries, where freedom of thought is so limited."

On March 1 she convinced her captors that her loyalty to Kṛṣṇa had been shaken, and they took her to a private "rehabilitation center" in Bradford, New Hampshire.

"They kept telling me I should adjust to the 'real world,' but their 'real world' was full of meaninglessness and sinful activities like meat-eating."

On March 27, after nearly four weeks,

the "deprogrammers" permitted Megha to go to her sister's house in Baltimore. "I kept begging them, 'Let me go home! Let me go home!' when all the time I simply wanted to return to the temple," Megha related.

The next day, Judge Latham dissolved the conservatorship order, and on the 30th Megha made her escape. "I was finally allowed to go shopping with a girl friend. I left her trying on dresses in a dressing room and took a bus to the [Kṛṣṇa] center in Baltimore. That was the end of it. From there I called my fiancé and he came and got me."

On April 16, one day after her 24th birthday, Megha married Ekeśvara dāsa at ISKCON's 15-acre Potomac, Maryland, farm (New Hastināpura).

Since her abduction, Megha has had no contact with her mother or sisters. "I expect them to come to me," she said. "The fault is on their part; the mistakes are theirs. . . . They didn't understand or respect my devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa. . . . But I don't hate my mother or hold what she's done against her."

Megha, meanwhile, is very happy to be back at New Hastinapura, where she spends her days cooking, distributing books about Kṛṣṇa, and teaching Sunday school.

French Professor Praises Bhagavad-gītā As It Is

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness embodies the essence of what is commonly known as Hinduism—a religion practiced by more than five hundred million people. Dr. Jean Varenne, Professor of Sanskrit Studies at the University of Aix-en-Provence in Marseilles, France, explains ISKCON's authenticity in the following review of the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

"It is Indian tradition that all important spiritual masters explain for their disciples the fundamental text of Hinduism, the *Bhagavad-gītā*. . . . The founder of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement (Hare Kṛṣṇa) has followed this tradition; and now we have the French translation of the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*.

"As for the teachings of Śrīla Prabhupāda, they are obviously faithful to those of Caitanya, the celebrated apostle of a

renaissance in *bhakti* (ardent devotion to Kṛṣṇa), who appeared in the sixteenth century. From this point of view, this magnificently presented book is of inestimable value, for the West knows little of this major current in Hinduism. For many reasons, until now it has been the *Vedānta* of Śaṅkara or the yoga of Patañjali which has been the most easily accessible to us. These are, however, far from a complete representation of this multi-faceted, complex religion. The Hindus themselves, however, profess that all these paths converge and ultimately become one. Untiringly, Swami Bhaktivedanta insists on this one path as being *bhakti*, and that *bhakti* is the surest path of salvation (a conclusion supported everywhere in the *Gītā* itself). One cannot help but enthusiastically recommend that others read such a work, which, from so many points of view, merits applause."

Śrīla Prabhupāda Speaks Out

On “The Hare Krishna Puzzle”

[The following conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and Satsvarūpa dāsa Gosvāmī took place in Calcutta, India, in January 1977.]

Satsvarūpa Gosvāmī: Śrīla Prabhupāda, a newspaper came today from America—the *Boston Globe*—with a long article titled “The Hare Krishna Puzzle.” A statement by one woman describes the devotees as “parasites.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: We are not parasites. We are publishing the best literature in the world. Does this literature come from illiterate hippies? We are accepted by so many scholars—how are we parasites? An intelligent person is not supposed to work like an ass. If we are parasites, then a high-court judge is also a parasite. A rascal sees a judge sitting—talking a little and getting a high salary—so he calls the judge a parasite.

Satsvarūpa Gosvāmī: A parasite is one who lives off others.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: If I enjoy another’s property without his approval, then I’m a parasite. But we aren’t doing that; we are enjoying our father’s property. Kṛṣṇa is the proprietor. We are good children of Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa says to everyone who takes shelter of Him, “Don’t worry, I shall give you everything.” *Sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaranam vraja:* “You just surrender to Me; I will give you protection.” Why do they say we are “parasites”?

Satsvarūpa Gosvāmī: They are referring to the devotees’ begging in the streets.

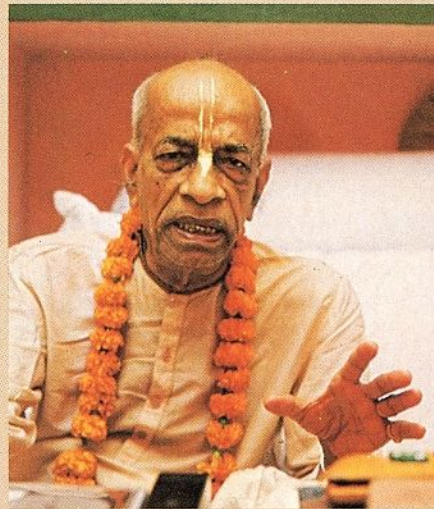
Śrīla Prabhupāda: What we are doing is not begging; it is humbleness. People are puffed up, so we are approaching them in humbleness. Besides, if I sell a book about Kṛṣṇa, is that begging?

Satsvarūpa Gosvāmī: They see it as begging.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, it is humbleness. In India many highly scholarly persons beg. They are titled *bhikṣu-tridaṇḍi-svāmī*. They beg to learn pridelessness and humility. In Vedic culture it is allowed; the *brahmacāris*, *sannyāsīs*, and *brāhmaṇas* are allowed to beg alms.

Satsvarūpa Gosvāmī: But what if the culture is entirely different, as in the West?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, your culture is different, and therefore the youth are be-



coming hippies, and the mothers are killing their own children in the womb—all in the name of “freedom.” Actually, there is no culture in the West; therefore, the whole atmosphere is abominable. But in a civilized culture a young boy may beg, as a discipline, just to learn humbleness. Even though he may be from a big family, he begs in order to become meek. And Christ said, “To the meek God is available.” You are right when you say you have an entirely different culture. You don’t know real culture. You have a culture that kills children, so how will you understand the higher Vedic culture? Our disciples are going out and selling books on Kṛṣṇa consciousness just to give you a chance to understand what real, spiritual culture is—and you are calling them “parasites.” . . . What else are they saying?

Satsvarūpa Gosvāmī: The opposition is claiming that joining Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not an exercise of freedom of religion, but that we are guilty of “mind control.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Him whose mind is already in Kṛṣṇa consciousness the “de-programmers” want to control by force. They are guilty of mind control, not we. They kidnap him and force him to think like them.

Satsvarūpa Gosvāmī: Many times our opposition consists of businessmen and parents of devotees. They are very alarmed.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: They should be alarmed. If the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement goes on, their culture is finished. Now

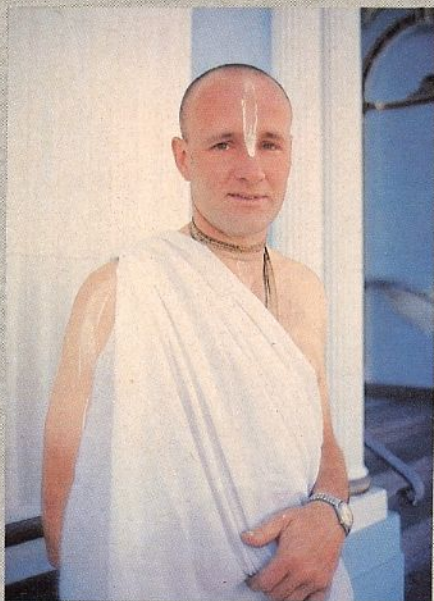
we are being recognized as the enemy of *māyā* [illusion]. A fight is a fight. They are using their tactics; we are using ours. We will prove that they have no intelligence. As long as they don’t know Kṛṣṇa, they remain fools.

Satsvarūpa Gosvāmī: One man was challenging, “What if everyone became like you devotees?” He was worried. He thought the economy would collapse if everyone took to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Well, anyway, *he* will not take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and the materialistic economy will go on. As long as there is a class of men like him, there is no problem—the economy will go on. “If the prisoners become reformed, how will the prison continue?” Is that a very intelligent question? Their thinking is like that. We are giving up meat, and the slaughterhouse proprietors are sorry—“How will the business go on?”—as if that were a very wonderful business. The sooner you close that business, the better. That will be good for you. Liquor shops, breweries, cigarette factories—they are all worried how business will go on. Cow slaughter is the greatest sinful activity. They don’t know what they are doing. Therefore, a thorough overhaul is required; otherwise their stool-bound brains can’t be cleansed. Yes, we are washing your brain, because you have so much stool in your brain. We are sweepers engaged on behalf of God to wash the stool from your brain. We have to do it. You modern civilized atheists can’t even sleep peacefully—which a dog can do—yet you claim education. We are teaching that if you have illicit sex life you’ll be implicated in so many ways. So if I say, “No illicit sex,” what is the harm? But you are so sinful that you are killing your own children, and you don’t even know it is sinful. We have to wash your brain.

Satsvarūpa Gosvāmī: This article from the *Boston Globe* says it is a great puzzle whether the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement is good or bad.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: At least they are now considering. Formerly they said it was bad. Now they have come to the marginal point—whether the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement is good or bad. Finally the day will come when they say, “Yes, it is good.”



On May 1, just four days after his thirty-eighth birthday, Śrīla Prabhupāda's very dear disciple Jayānanda dāsa passed away in his quarters at the Los Angeles Temple complex (New Dvārakā). For the last few months his body had been ravaged by leukemia, and recently he had abandoned all attempts at recovery and, preparing for the crucial time of death, moved to New Dvārakā to immerse himself in the pure association

of Lord Kṛṣṇa's Deity and His devotees.

Jayānanda joined the San Francisco Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Temple early in 1967, just after it opened and less than a year after Śrīla Prabhupāda founded the International Society for Krishna Consciousness in New York City. Though he had both an engineering degree from Ohio State University and a San Francisco State Teachers College degree, Jayānanda was then supporting himself by driving a taxicab. He was looking for a way to make life simple. At twenty-eight, he became the senior devotee in San Francisco, and soon the temple president.

Mukunda dāsa, who was there at the time, told us about Jayānanda's rare qualities: "He proved himself to be the most responsible and selfless person. You could never detect even the most subtle type of wish to satisfy his own personal needs. He had that very unique attribute—whatever needed to be done, he would do. He was driving his taxicab fifteen hours a day or more to get overtime to pay the temple's rent and various other expenses, and he was looking after fifteen or twenty new *brahmachārīs* [celibate students]."

Over the years Jayānanda took special interest in the annual Ratha-yātrā festival (please see "The Festival of the

Chariots," page eight). He would plan the festival, build the carts, cook and distribute the *prasāda* (spiritual food offered in love to Lord Kṛṣṇa). During his last days he was always planning how to expand Ratha-yātrā so that more temples could participate. Incapacitated as he was, he still helped design the special carts now being built in Los Angeles, which can be disassembled for easy transportation from city to city.

Back in 1967 Jayānanda gave Śrīla Prabhupāda his life savings of five thousand dollars, and then again, with his last letter to Śrīla Prabhupāda, Jayānanda enclosed a second gift of five thousand dollars—money that had been earmarked for medical expenses. Jayānanda was so anxious to serve Śrīla Prabhupāda that he even gave up the desire to go back to the spiritual world. "When I leave my body," he said near the end, "I want very much to come back to continue serving Śrīla Prabhupāda in this world." These are the sentiments of Kṛṣṇa's most exalted devotees (Vaiṣṇavas), of whom Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Thākura, our great-great-grand-spiritual master, once wrote:

He reasons ill who says that Vaiṣṇavas die
When thou art living still in sound!
The Vaiṣṇavas die to live, and living try
To spread the holy name around.

The following letter, dated May 5, arrived from Śrīla Prabhupāda just before we went to press:

My dear Jayananda,

Please accept my blessings.

I am feeling very intensely your separation. In 1967 you joined me in San Francisco. You were driving my car and chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. You were the first man to give me some contribution (\$5,000) for printing my Bhagavad-gīta. After that, you have rendered very favorable service to Kṛṣṇa in different ways. I so hope that at the time of your death you were remembering Kṛṣṇa, and as such, that you have been promoted to the eternal association of Kṛṣṇa. If not--if you had any tinge of material desire--you have gone to the celestial kingdom to live with the demigods for many thousands of years and enjoy the most opulent life of material existence. From there you can promote yourself to the spiritual world. But even if one fails to promote himself to the spiritual world, at that time [at the end of one's life in the celestial kingdom] he comes down again to the surface of this

globe and takes birth in a big family like a yogi's or a brahmana's, or an aristocratic family, where there is again chance of reviving Kṛṣṇa Consciousness. But as you were hearing Kṛṣṇa-kīrtana [the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa], I am sure that you were directly promoted to Kṛṣṇa-loka. Janma karma ca me divyam evam yo vetti tattvatah/ tyaktva deham punar janma naiti mam eti so'rjuna: ["One who knows the transcendental nature of My [Kṛṣṇa's] appearance and activities does not, upon leaving the body, take his birth again in this material world, but attains My eternal abode, O Arjuna" (Bhagavad-gīta, 4.9).] Kṛṣṇa has done a great favor to you by not continuing your diseased body and has given you a suitable place for your service. Thank you very much.

Your ever well-wisher,


A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami



Breaking the Bonds of False Fatherhood

An enlightened father is glad when a bona fide spiritual master takes his son as a disciple. But an ignorant father sees the spiritual master as his enemy . . .

by Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami

When a young person joins the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, his parents often doubt the wisdom of his decision. Admittedly, to join the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement is to commit oneself to values completely contrary to the “normal” way of life in today’s Western civilization. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person strictly avoids the four pillars of sinful life—meat eating, illicit sex, intoxication, and gambling—which the average Westerner takes to be life’s basic necessities. Yet after observing the fine character their sons and daughters attain through spiritual discipline, most parents of devotees adjust to their acceptance of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. However, a small group of parents, especially in America, consider the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement a great evil and are violently opposed to their adult children’s choice of living in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. These parents’ attempts to recover their sons and daughters by kidnapping and “deprogramming,” as well as their accusations of “brainwashing” directed against Kṛṣṇa conscious preachers, have ignited a major civil rights issue: whether parental control can take precedence over the individual’s right to freely choose his own course in life.*

This bitter conflict is not new. We find a similar case in the five-thousand-year-old Vedic history *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. There we read of a very powerful father named Dakṣa, who became outraged when his sons renounced material

life to follow the teachings of a Kṛṣṇa-conscious sage, Nārada Muni.** In light of the modern controversy, the account of how Nārada preached to the young men to convince them to give up family life, how Dakṣa cursed Nārada, and how Nārada persisted in his Kṛṣṇa conscious mission makes a revealing case history.

Our story begins at the dawn of creation. The Supreme Personality of Godhead has instructed Brahmā, the first living entity in the universe, to increase human population through his married sons, the Prajāpatis (progenitors). One of the chief progenitors was the demigod Dakṣa. *Dakṣa* means “expert,” and this particular Dakṣa was expert in producing offspring through sexual intercourse. In union with his wife Pāñcajanī he fathered ten thousand sons, known as the Haryaśvas. Dakṣa intended that they also marry and increase progeny, following their father. Being devoutly religious, Dakṣa wanted to train his sons in the disciplines of Vedic culture to make them responsible, productive householders. So he sent them on pilgrimage to a holy place named Nārāyaṇa-saras, where, in the past, many saints and sages had meditated and performed other religious practices.

In that holy place, the Haryaśvas began regularly touching the lake’s waters and bathing in them, gradually becoming very purified. They became inclined toward activities of the *paramahansas* (the most highly advanced, renounced saints). Nevertheless, because their father had ordered them to increase the population, they performed severe austerities to fulfill his desires.

One day the great sage Nārada Muni entered Nārāyaṇa-saras. Seeing the boys performing such fine austerities, Nārada approached them. He saw that although Dakṣa’s ten thousand sons were preparing for materialistic family life, they were simultaneously becoming eligible to hear of the path of liberation due to their austerities. Nārada thought, “Why should they become entangled in family life, which is so dark that once one enters it, he cannot leave?” (Generally, when one becomes too involved in his material environment, he does not look within the core of his heart to find the situation of the soul and the Supreme Soul.) One may argue that since

*In a landmark judicial decision handed down last March 17, New York State Supreme Court Justice John J. Leahy threw out indictments charging two leaders of ISKCON’s New York chapter with attempted extortion and illegal imprisonment of members through “brainwashing.” Declared the judge, “The entire and basic issue before this court is whether or not [the Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees] will be allowed to practice the religion of their choice—and this must be answered with a resounding affirmative.”

**Nārada Muni is a direct representative of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Throughout Vedic history Nārada helps the conditioned souls by teaching the topmost science of *bhakti-yoga*, or love of God. His disciples include many great devotees, like Prahlāda Mahārāja, Dhruva Mahārāja, and Śrīla Vyāsadeva. His mission, the mission of the Supreme Lord, is to deliver humanity from the cycle of birth and death.

“The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is preaching this higher knowledge of retiring from materialistic life to return to Godhead, but unfortunately many parents are not satisfied with this movement. . . .

increasing progeny is also a necessary function of the material creation, why should Nārada disturb these boys in their preparation? Later, Dakṣa put forth this very argument when he confronted Nārada. However, Nārada had no doubt that eternal liberation is of far greater value to a person than good progeny. Therefore, he approached the Haryaśvas to divert their attention towards spiritual life.

Nārada intrigued them by speaking in an allegorical way: “My dear Haryaśvas, you have not seen the extremities of the earth. There is a kingdom where only one man lives and where there is a hole from which, having entered, no one emerges. A woman there who is extremely unchaste adorns herself with various attractive dresses, and the man who lives there is her husband. You have not seen all this, and therefore you are inexperienced boys without advanced knowledge. Alas, your father is omniscient, but you do not know his actual order. Without knowing the actual purpose of your father, how will you create progeny?”

The Haryaśvas could understand the meaning of Nārada’s allegory. When he said that they did not know the earth’s extremities, they knew he meant the “earth” of the body, or the field of material activities. Every one of us is an eternal spirit soul, encaged in material bodies life after life. But out of ignorance we take each body to be our real self. The Haryaśvas immediately understood that Nārada wanted them to become enlightened about the self—not to continue in perpetual bondage, taking material bodies birth after birth, but to use this human life for becoming free from this engagement.

Nārada mentioned a kingdom where there is only one king, with no competitor. The Haryaśvas understood him to mean the kingdom of God, which encompasses the complete spiritual world and all material universes, and where there is only one proprietor and enjoyer, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Although sometimes appearing within the creation by His own sweet will, the Supreme Lord is never forced to take birth like the infinitesimal living entities. He is completely transcendental, and thus He is never destroyed, even with the destruction of the universe. One who misunderstands this transcendental position of Kṛṣṇa is a fool, and his hopes for knowledge, wealth, and liberation are all baffled. The Haryaśvas realized, therefore, that their duty in human life was to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

When the sage Nārada spoke of entering a hole from which one does not return, the Haryaśvas could understand that he was referring to entering eternal, blissful Vaikuṅṭha (the spiritual planet). Kṛṣṇa teaches this same subject to Arjuna in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, where He says: “One who knows the transcendental nature of My appearance and activities does not, upon leaving the body, take his birth again in the material world, but attains my eternal abode, O Arjuna” (Bg. 4.9). The Haryaśvas agreed with Nārada’s instructions: “Yes, if there is a place from which, having gone, we will not have to return to

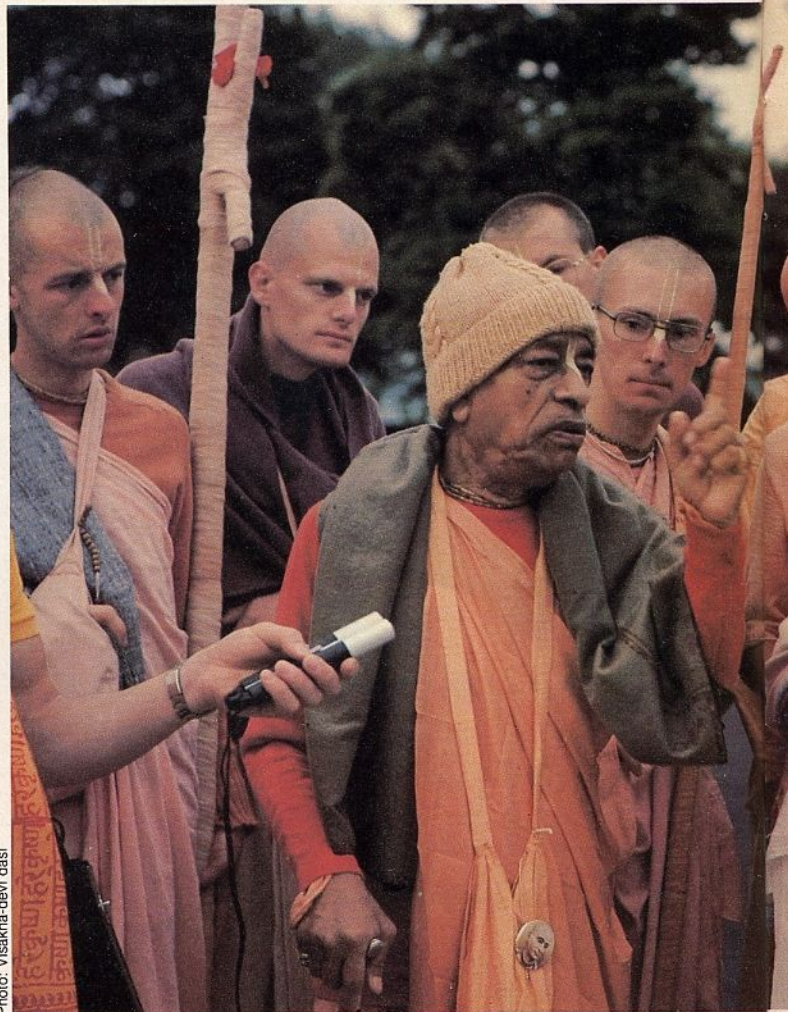


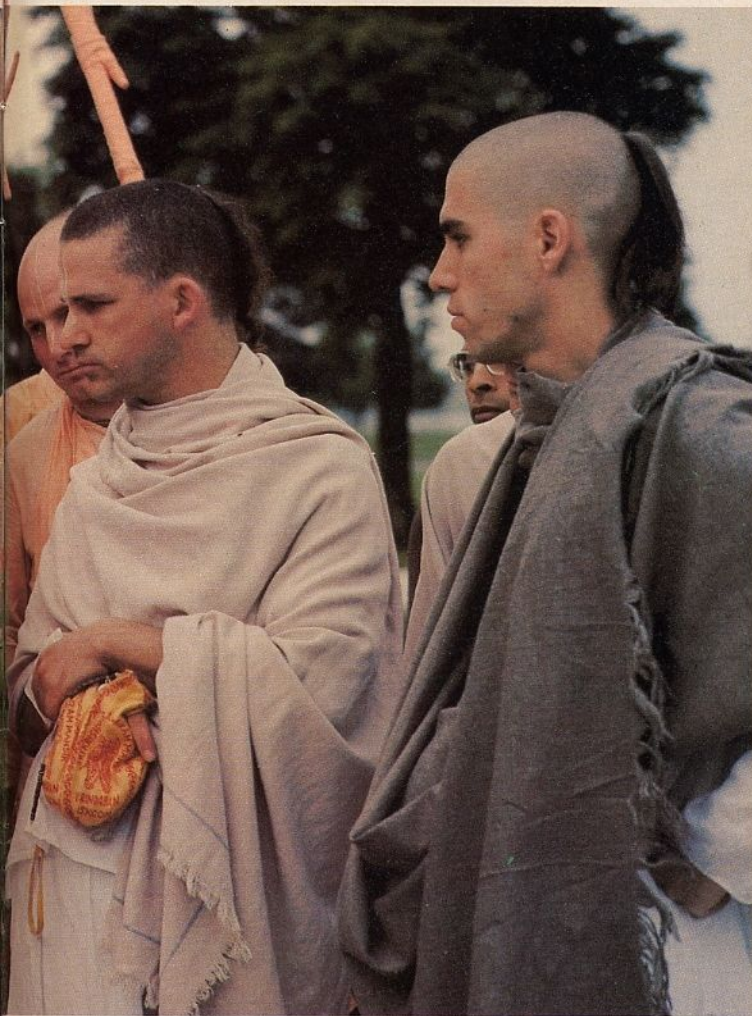
Photo: Viśakhā-devī dāśī

this miserable material life, what is the use of impermanent fruitive activities?”

Nārada had described a woman who was a professional prostitute. The Haryaśvas understood this woman to be the living entity’s unsteady intelligence. As a prostitute changes dress to attract a man’s attention for sense enjoyment, so, when one’s intelligence is not turned toward Kṛṣṇa consciousness, it is a prostituted intelligence and will force the living being to change bodies, one after another. If one becomes the husband of a prostitute he cannot be happy. Similarly, one who follows the dictates of material intelligence and material consciousness will never be at peace.

Nārada had said that the Haryaśvas did not know the order of their father. They understood that Nārada meant their *spiritual* father, the bona fide spiritual master, who imparts scriptural knowledge to the faithful disciple. Therefore, the spiritual master is the real father. The scriptures instruct that one should end his material way of life. The Haryaśvas expressed their enlightenment: “Yes, if one does not know the purpose of the father’s orders, the scriptures, he is ignorant. The words of a material father who endeavors to engage his son in material activities are not the real instructions of the father.”

This brings us to the crux of the parent-child issue. In every form of life, one takes birth from a mother and father. (Even cats and dogs have their kittens and puppies.) However, human life is more advanced than other forms, because in the human form one has the chance to escape from the misery of birth and death by accepting a spiritual master and being



However, we have no alternative other than to teach our disciples to free themselves from materialistic life. We must instruct them in the opposite of material life to save them from the repetition of birth and death.”

Lord Brahmā pacified him, and thereafter Dakṣa begot one thousand more sons in the womb of his wife Pāñcajanī. This time his sons were known as the Savalāśvas. Here we can see that, whereas Nārada was very expert in delivering all the conditioned souls back to home, back to Godhead, Prajāpati Dakṣa was expert in begetting children. Unfortunately, the material expert did not agree with the spiritual expert. Be that as it may, nothing could deter Nārada from chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra and imparting spiritual knowledge to his qualified disciples. In this regard His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda has written:

The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is preaching this higher knowledge of retiring from materialistic life to return to Godhead, but unfortunately many parents are not satisfied with this movement. . . . However, we have no alternative other than to teach our disciples to free themselves from materialistic life. We must instruct them in the opposite of material life to save them from the repetition of birth and death.

Ordered by Dakṣa to beget children, the Savalāśvas went to Nārāyaṇa-saras, the same holy place where, by the grace of Nārada, their brothers had previously attained perfection. One might wonder why Dakṣa risked sending his second set of sons to the same place where he had lost his first set. The answer is that, despite his materialistic outlook, Dakṣa was a dutiful father who followed the principles of Vedic culture. Therefore, he did not hesitate to let his sons receive spiritual instructions concerning the perfection of life. He allowed them to choose whether to return home, back to Godhead, or to remain in the material world, transmigrating life after life in various species. In all circumstances, the duty of a responsible father is to give a spiritual education to his children and then allow them to freely decide whether to adopt a spiritual or a material way of life.

The Savalāśvas performed the same penances as the Haryaśvas had. They bathed in holy water, and its touch cleansed away all the dirty material desires in their hearts. They also chanted sacred mantras and underwent a severe course of austerities. Soon, Nārada Muni approached the Savalāśvas and spoke enigmatic words to them, just as he had spoken to the Haryaśvas. Then, before departing, Nārada advised them to follow the same spiritual path as their beloved elder brothers. Deeply affected by the words of Nārada, the Savalāśvas also gave up the idea of producing children and took up Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

When Dakṣa heard that the Savalāśvas had also defied him, he became very angry at Nārada and almost fainted in despair. Nārada then approached Dakṣa, thinking that since Dakṣa was lamenting, he would be a suitable candidate to appreciate spiritual instructions. But when Nārada came before Dakṣa, the bereaved Prajāpati confronted him and angrily accused him, “Alas, Nārada Muni, you wear the dress of a saintly person, but you are not actually a saint. By showing my sons the

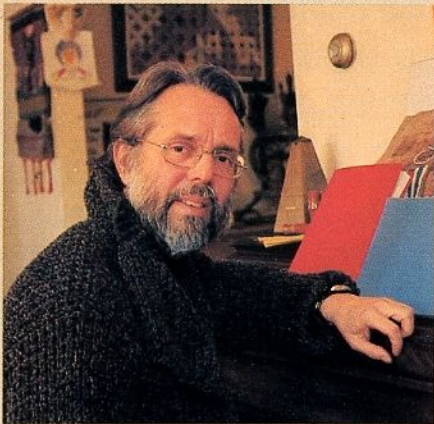
educated in scriptural knowledge. The material mother and father are important only if they are interested in educating their child to become free from the clutches of death. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the saintly king and father Ṛṣabhadeva advises his one hundred sons that no one should strive to become a parent if he cannot save his dependent from the imminent danger of death.

Therefore, parents who actually wish their children well will not object to their taking shelter of a bona fide spiritual master and getting the opportunity to achieve the perfection of life. Opposition is raised only by those parents who have no idea that the goal of human life is liberation from material bondage, and who, in ignorance—“good intentions” have no value—want to force their children to remain like themselves, trapped in the dark well of material life.

So, defying the orders of their materialistic father, Dakṣa, the Haryaśvas accepted Nārada Muni as their spiritual master. Dakṣa had instructed them to increase the population, but, after hearing the words of Nārada Muni, they could no longer heed that instruction. Rather, they followed Nārada’s advice to give up material life and become devotees of the Lord. (Incidentally, all the world’s scriptures advise relief from material life. In the Buddhist scriptures Lord Buddha advises that one achieve *nirvāṇa* by giving up the materialistic way of life. In the Bible one will find the same advice: cease materialistic life and return to the kingdom of God.)

Needless to say, Prajāpati Dakṣa was not very happy to hear that all his sons had defied his order and taken up Kṛṣṇa consciousness. When Dakṣa was lamenting for his lost children,

A CHRISTIAN TRIBUTE TO KRṢṂA CONSCIOUSNESS



The following is a statement by Dr. Harvey Cox, theologian at Harvard Divinity School, at a symposium titled "Krishna Consciousness and Religious Freedom," conducted at the Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard University, November 22, 1976.

Whenever a spiritual movement or a spiritual leader has emerged and has set forth a way of life which appears to be deviant or different from the conventional values or conventional religion of the time, a person who adheres to that way of life is almost always viewed with suspicion, generally is thought to be a little crazy, very often has the state authority brought down upon him or her, and generally has problems with his family.

Now, without appearing to be overpious, I would like to refer you to a section in the Gospel of Mark. It's the third chapter of the Gospel of Mark, recounting some of the early experiences in the life of Jesus. . . . It begins with the seventh verse of the third chapter of Mark, which we think is probably the oldest and maybe in some ways the most authentic of all the four gospels:

Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the sea, and a great multitude from Galilee followed him. And many who had diseases pressed in upon him to touch him. And he went up into the hills and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him. And he appointed twelve to be with him and sent them out to preach.

And then he came to his home town and the crowd came together, so many of them that they could not even eat. And when his family heard about this, they went out to seize him, for they said, "He is beside himself." And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebub and by the prince of demons."

And Jesus said to them, "If the house is divided against itself, that house will surely not be able to stand."

And then his mother and his brothers came, and standing outside the house where he was, they sent a message into him, calling him. And a crowd was sitting around him and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers are outside and they are asking for you." And Jesus replied, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" And looking around on those who sat about him he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and my sister and my mother."

Now, I don't read that passage to engage in any cheap proof-texting or to justify or to legitimize anything. It simply is to say that at the heart of the Biblical faith, the Christian faith, I think there is this tragic note: that the need for a personal decision about one's own lifestyle, one's own philosophy, one's own faith, one's own spiritual path, often results in tragic brokenness and pain in the relationships to those with whom one is close. This is the price that is required by any kind of freedom of choice. I think there's no one in this room who would want to deny that each one of us has eventually to make this ultimate choice, which we all have to make for ourselves—not to have it made for us by a family which is pressuring us, by policemen or "programmers" or "de-programmers" or "unprogrammers" or anybody else who is pressuring us, but somehow or other to be given the possibility and the dignity to make that choice ourselves. And that's not an easy thing to do. But I think all of us here would want to underline the need for that. And we can feel some empathy not only with Jesus, who, as a young man, was beginning to engage in his ministry, but perhaps also with his family and his friends and his brothers and sisters who were baffled and distressed by his activities.

Now, let me make just one other point. I've asked myself in recent weeks, as there has been more and more controversy about the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement (many devotees of which I've personally known and respected highly), "Why is it that suddenly this movement and other movements have come in for such attention, to the point that one might even begin to speak of harassment? Why is this? And I have to confess now, as a theologian mainly

committed to Christianity, that I think it indicates a feeling of guilt and a feeling of failure on the part of those who have tried to preserve something of the critical and creative spiritual possibilities that Christianity itself offers. Could it be that we have allowed Christianity itself and perhaps Judaism to be so identified with the values of accumulation, profit, performance, success, and material gain—which are, after all, the main values of our society—that it takes something as apparently esoteric and exotic as a movement coming from India to remind us that there is, in fact, another way of life, that there is a way of life that is not built on accumulating profit, property, success, and degrees, but has at its core a certain kind of simplicity and plainness of living, if you will? Isn't it strange that that message can now be presented to us by movements coming from so far away, when the prophets of our own tradition—the ones that we officially celebrate but often ignore—have a message so similar? Jesus of Nazareth; St. Francis of Assisi, who certainly worried *his* parents when he made his strange decision to put on a new kind of clothing, to go out to sing and dance in the streets and to talk to the birds; Baal-Schem-Tov, in the Chassidic Jewish tradition, who was viewed as a little strange, but who brought a kind of gaiety and affirmation to life and a rejection of the values of mere profit and accumulation.

Why is it, I asked myself, that we can't hear the voices of these prophets from our own tradition, and yet somehow people from as far away as India can bring a message which in some ways sounds so similar? Maybe this is a way that we are being called back to something more essential in our own tradition—a way that God has of reminding us of what we've left behind and forgotten and ignored. What is the meaning for us of this movement's coming into our midst in this century? I would put it in a very theological sense: What is God saying to us? What does it mean? Is it merely a legal issue? Is it merely an issue of civil liberties, however important that may be? Or is there something else which is happening here? Are we uncomfortable with some of these movements because at a certain level we're very uncomfortable with ourselves, with the kind of materialistic society we've built? Maybe one of the results of this Hare Kṛṣṇa movement will be to stimulate us to rediscover some things that we've ignored and suppressed in our own religious heritage. I think it may happen. And if it does, then I'm very grateful for the kind of gift that they bring.

Spiritual culture is not a matter of East or West; it is the eternal, inalienable right of every human being, for it leads to the perfection of life.

path of renunciation, you have done me an abominable injustice.”

Dakṣa finds his counterpart in today’s angry parents, who accuse Śrīla Prabhupāda of misleading their inexperienced children. Śrīla Prabhupāda replies,

We are instructing all the young boys and girls in the Western countries to follow the path of renunciation. We allow married life, but even a *gṛhastha* [a Kṛṣṇa conscious householder] has to give up so many bad habits that his parents think his life has been practically destroyed. We allow no meat eating, no illicit sex, no gambling, and no intoxication, and consequently the parents wonder how, if there are so many *no’s*, one’s life can be positive. In the Western countries especially, these four prohibited activities practically constitute the life and soul of the modern population. Therefore, parents sometimes dislike our movement, just as Prajāpati Dakṣa disliked the activities of Nārada and accused him of dishonesty. Nevertheless, although parents may be angry at us, we must perform our duty without hesitation, because we are in the disciplic succession from Nārada Muni.

The point is that every human being must prepare himself for his next life. It will not do simply to remain in materialistic household life without regulation or spiritual discipline. One cannot expect to be happy in this life or the next without following the injunctions of the scriptures.

Dakṣa next accused Nārada of obstructing his sons’ good fortune by making it impossible for them to repay their debts—especially their debt to Dakṣa. The Vedic culture recognizes that everyone is born a debtor, being obligated to great saints, to the demigods, and to his father. To liquidate one’s debt to his father, one must beget children. Similarly, today’s parents sometimes appeal to their children in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement: “Don’t you appreciate all we’ve done for you? Please return to your family.” However, scriptures such as the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* state that although everyone is indebted to his family, if he surrenders to Kṛṣṇa he is freed from all debts. Unfortunately, Dakṣa did not understand the great service rendered by Nārada Muni, so he called him a sinful person. Nārada Muni, however, being in reality a great saint, tolerated the accusations of Dakṣa, performed his duty, and delivered Dakṣa’s sons back home, back to Godhead.

Along these same lines, Dakṣa accused Nārada of breaking the natural ties of family affection. We have already pointed out that one may maintain an affectionate relationship with his mother and father—provided they help and not hinder him on the path of spiritual enlightenment. But since Dakṣa’s sole motive was to engage his sons in producing progeny, clearly the best course they could have followed for their Kṛṣṇa consciousness was to break their family ties with him. Today we find that many members of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement have left family situations beset with fighting, divorce, hypocrisy, and sin. Breaking such family connections cannot be considered bad. Sometimes modern parents also say that taking up Kṛṣṇa consciousness is bad because it destroys a young person’s budding career. But, again, if that career is one of materialistic ignorance—if it involves no consideration of

spiritual values—it is better to leave such a career and become Kṛṣṇa conscious. This does not mean that one should stop working at an honest occupation, but if the career is an impediment to spiritual advancement, better to leave it.

One may argue that although Nārada was a saint and his advice authoritative, still, this incident took place in a culture entirely different from our own; therefore its lessons cannot be applied to our modern situation. But spiritual culture is not a matter of East or West; it is the eternal, inalienable right of every human being, for it leads to the perfection of life. Certainly our Western culture differs from the Vedic culture. Ours is a culture that permits slaughter of the cow; that neither respects nor protects saintly persons (*brāhmaṇas*), who are much needed to guide society; that allows the murder of children within the womb; that encourages illicit sexual relations outside sanctified marriage; and that has a government which supports sinful activities like intoxication and gambling. So ours is certainly a different kind of culture from the Vedic one, but must we necessarily follow the culture in which we were born and raised, if it is so entirely opposed to the progressive values of life?

Finally, Dakṣa cursed Nārada: “You made me lose my sons once before, and now you have again done the same inauspicious thing. Therefore, you are a rascal who does not know how to behave toward others. You may travel all over the universe, but I curse you to have no fixed residence anywhere.” This curse was considered a great punishment by Dakṣa, who, as a householder, wanted to remain in one spot and enjoy family life. However, this “punishment” was a boon for a Kṛṣṇa conscious preacher like Nārada, because a preacher always travels for the benefit of human society. Thus, Nārada replied, “Yes, what you have said is good. I accept this curse.” Then Nārada Muni departed, and since that time he has been traveling throughout the spiritual and material worlds, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, playing his *vinā*, and enlightening everyone in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

EPILOGUE

We hope this narration from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* may stimulate the few parents who oppose Kṛṣṇa consciousness to reconsider their condemnation of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement for diverting their offspring from the material path. Unlike Dakṣa, many parents of devotees, as well as many important citizens, do appreciate the immense value of Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the younger generation and to people in general. Recently, Governor Jerry Brown of California personally called on the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement to help him bring spiritual encouragement to hospital patients in his state. Learned scholars in virtually every major university around the world have written warm appreciations of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books on Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In addition, many devotees’ parents have helped form organizations for the protection of their children’s right to practice the religion of their choice.

The small minority of modern-day Dakṣas who cannot or will not try to understand Kṛṣṇa consciousness may continue their efforts to hinder this movement and its preachers, but we shall not fear them. We shall simply go on humbly performing our duty, trying to follow the orders of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who has said, “Teach everyone to follow the instructions of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa as they are given in the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. In this way become a spiritual master and try to liberate everyone in the world.”

Can I take any spiritual path and arrive at the same goal? Is God a person or just energy? Can I become God? . . . When it comes to the science of God-realization, most people are pretty much in the dark. In this conversation with Professor Alphonso Verdu of the University of Kansas, Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna Swami uses ancient India's Vedic literatures — "the torchlight of knowledge" — to clear things up.

THE SCIENCE OF GOD-REALIZATION

Questions and Answers

This conversation took place on the program "Public Access," aired over Sunflower Cablevision of Lawrence, Kansas.

Professor Verdu: Maybe we could talk about the basis of your programs, ideals, religion, and philosophy. Earlier you were saying that your main goal is to attain Kṛṣṇa consciousness. What do you understand by *Kṛṣṇa*?

Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna Swami: *Kṛṣṇa* is a transcendental name of God which means "all-attractive." We understand that God may have many names, but ultimately He is one.

Professor Verdu: Now, the *Bhagavad-gītā* is one of the main works translated by your spiritual master. The *Bhagavad-gītā* talks about Kṛṣṇa as being an incarnation of Viṣṇu.

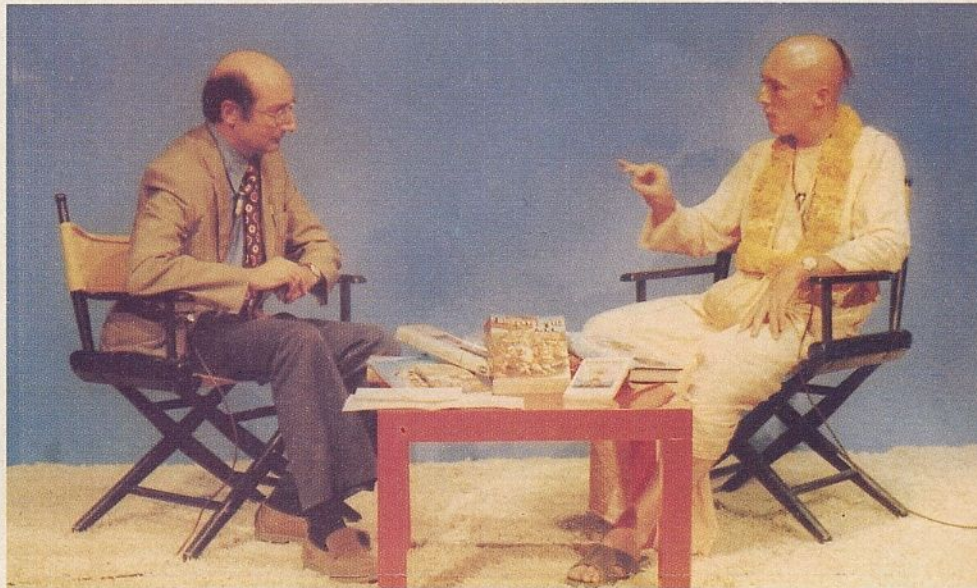
Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna Swami: No. Actually, according to the Vedic literature, Viṣṇu is an expansion of Kṛṣṇa. The *Brahma-samhitā* [5.48] states, "I adore the primeval Lord, Govinda, of whose subjective personality Mahā-Viṣṇu is the portion of a portion." Also, Śrīla Vyāsadeva himself, the author of the Vedic literatures, declares in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* [1.3.28]: *ete cāmśa-kalāḥ pumsaḥ kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*. After listing the different incarnations of God, Śrīla Vyāsadeva says that Kṛṣṇa is the original source.

Professor Verdu: Oh.

Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna Swami: When many candles are lit by one original candle, the quality of each candle's light is the same, although they burn separately. Similarly, Kṛṣṇa is the original personality from whom all other incarnations come.

Professor Verdu: So how do you understand the text of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, where it says that Kṛṣṇa is the eighth incarnation of Viṣṇu, and that Kṛṣṇa is just a human, corporeal manifestation of Viṣṇu?

Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna Swami: This is not a



statement of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. In the eleventh chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Kṛṣṇa reveals His cosmic form to Arjuna, within which are contained all the universes. Then Arjuna sees the four-armed form of Viṣṇu, and finally the original, two-armed form of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa's body is never to be considered material. As stated in the *Brahma-samhitā* [5.1], *īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ*: "Kṛṣṇa, who is known as Govinda, is the supreme controller. He has an eternal, blissful body. He is the origin of all. He has no other origin, and He is the prime cause of all causes." Also, from an analytical examination of the personalities of Viṣṇu and Kṛṣṇa we can understand that, whereas Viṣṇu is worshiped with awe and reverence up to the relationship of servitude, only in Kṛṣṇa can you worship or adore God as your dearest friend, or even as your child, or ultimately engage with God in a reciprocal relationship of lover and beloved. These are found only in Kṛṣṇa.

Professor Verdu: Right. Yes.

Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna Swami: Therefore, because these are not displayed in Viṣṇu, Kṛṣṇa's form and personality are considered, in a sense, superior.

Professor Verdu: Yes. The *Bhagavad-gītā* talks about three different ways towards emancipation, or towards ultimate salvation—that is, *karma-yoga*, *jñāna-yoga*, and *bhakti-yoga*. First, what do you understand by *karma-yoga*? And what of *karma* itself?

Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna Swami: *Karma* means "action pertaining to the development of the material body." Just as we study in physics or chemistry that for every action there is a reaction, so the original pure consciousness of the soul is now covered by a material body in terms of his *karma*, or work. Good actions produce good results—such as physical beauty, good parentage, and less suffering—and bad actions produce bad results. "As a man sows, so shall he reap."

Professor Verdu: Now, this material body—do you include the mind as part of the material body, as the subtle body?

Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami: Yes. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* [7.4], Kṛṣṇa says:

*bhūmir āpo 'nalo vāyuh
kham mano buddhir eva ca
ahaṅkāra itiyam me
bhinnā prakṛtir aṣṭadhā*

This means that God has eight material energies: five gross (earth, water, fire, air, and space) and three subtle (mind, intelligence, and false ego). The material body is a combination of these elements. The specific form and qualities of each body are determined by the desire and activities of the individual soul (*jīva*), whose essential nature is superior to matter, being sentient and eternally unchanging.

Professor Verdu: The *Bhagavad-gītā* often talks about three qualities of matter—goodness (*sattva*), passion (*rajas*), and ignorance (*tamas*). What role do they play in your conception?

Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami: The mode of passion is characterized by hankering and by great endeavor for the results of one's activities, and by sense enjoyment. Ultimately it is characterized by sex life. Just like this nation—it is very passionate.

Professor Verdu: You would say, then, that Americans are predominantly overpowered by the passionate mode of nature?

Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami: Yes. And we see that the third mode, ignorance, is also present. Those in this mode are characterized by intoxication, too much sleep, uncleanliness, sloth, and lethargy.

Professor Verdu: Right, right.

Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami: Just like I have seen that many of my young brothers and sisters who are taking drugs have become very dirty and lazy. That means they are becoming...

Professor Verdu: Overpowered by *tamas*, ignorance—right! Even if they claim they are accumulating *sattva*—the element of light, the element of understanding and knowledge?

Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami: Yes. What they are perceiving is hallucination or illusion. We can understand a tree by its fruits. They may claim great enlightenment from taking some intoxicants, but then we see that they are performing the most degraded activities. That is not the mode of goodness.

Professor Verdu: Yes. Several of my own students have taken drugs for the sake of "experience" and so on, but they gradually realized that it was not the right way.

Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami: Great saints and mystics have spent their whole lives in penance and austerity, performing

sacrifices to realize God. To think that by simply taking some pill one can automatically understand God—this is a cheap understanding.

Professor Verdu: Yes, quite right. Now we've been talking about *karma*. What about *karma-yoga*?

Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami: Whether one is in goodness, passion, or ignorance, one is bound by the results of his activities. So if one gives up the results of his activities (although not necessarily the activities themselves) for the higher purpose of serving God, that is called *karma-yoga*.

Professor Verdu: What about *jñāna-yoga*, which means the *yoga* of pure intellectual knowledge?

Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami: Yes—*jñāna* means philosophical speculation to ascend to the impersonal understanding of God.

Professor Verdu: Yes. Now, wasn't Śaṅkarācārya an advocate of this state of mind, which is totally impersonal? Didn't he say that the ultimate state to be attained by the soul is the dissolution of personality, and ultimately the disintegration of individuality?

Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami: No, that is not the ultimate state.

Professor Verdu: But Śaṅkara proposed that as the ultimate state.

Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami: But we have to understand the class of men he was teaching. At the time, Buddhism was the predominant mode of thinking in India. Buddha drove the *Vedas* out of India. Śaṅkara meant to reestablish the Vedic authority, but he couldn't present the personal understanding, because the people were too impersonalistic. They were into the voidistic thought of Buddhism—*nirvāṇa*, nothing. So he thought to elevate them to accept the Vedic authority by presenting the *Vedas* in an impersonal way. But at the time of his leaving this material world, he himself told his disciples:

*bhaja govindam bhaja govindam
bhaja govindam mūḍha-mate
samprāpte sannihite kāle
na hi na hi rakṣati dukṛṅ-karaṇe*

"You fools and rascals, all your grammatical word jugglery and philosophical speculation will not save you at the time of death. Just worship Govinda, worship Govinda, worship Govinda." (Govinda is another name for Kṛṣṇa.) And Śaṅkara himself has written many poems glorifying Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme, transcendental to this cosmic manifestation: *nārāyaṇaḥ paro 'vyaktāt*. And he has admitted in his commentary on the *Bhagavad-gītā* that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme

Personality of Godhead, who appeared as the son of Vasudeva and Devakī.

Professor Verdu: Yes. But generally the system of Śaṅkarācārya is understood as a whole, taking into account all the commentaries he wrote on the *Upaniṣads* and on the *Vedānta-sūtra* of Bādarāyaṇa. He does propose a personal aspect of the divinity of Brahman, an aspect which appears as Īśvara, but he claims that that aspect is conditioned by the quality of *sattva*, and only in that sense does Brahman personalize itself. He says that the devotee's union with Īśvara, the personal manifestation, is a transitory state. This state, *bhakti*, is a state of loving union, but it contains a duality, because it implies a distinction between the worshiper and the Supreme Person of God. Śaṅkara said that in the ultimate state you have to transcend this distinction and enter into the total oneness of unity with Brahman. And that's why he called his own system *kevalādvaita*, which means unqualified, nondualistic, pure monism.

Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami: Yes. But this was Śaṅkarācārya's word jugglery.

Professor Verdu: Oh?

Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami: He was simply cheating the atheists, who want to deny God His individuality. Later, Rāmānujācārya and Madhvācārya, and ultimately Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, gave the complete understanding. Lord Caitanya explains that the Absolute Truth and the living entities are *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*—inconceivably one and different simultaneously. In other words, the living entity (the atomic soul), and God (the Supreme Soul), are one in quality, but they are *different in quantity*. We may possess a minute degree of knowledge, beauty, strength, wealth, fame, or renunciation, but God has all these opulences simultaneously, to an infinite degree. Thus we can never be equal to Him in all respects.

Professor Verdu: Are you saying, then, that the distinction between Brahman and the *jīva* soul is not qualitative, but quantitative?

Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami: Yes, and we are also saying that the impersonal Brahman is coming from, or is an emanation from, the *personal* Parabrahman, Kṛṣṇa.

Professor Verdu: This is Caitanya's conception.

Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami: It is the authentic Vedic version, as confirmed in the fourteenth chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā*: *brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhāham*: "I am the basis of the impersonal Brahman" [Bg. 14.27]. And it is also confirmed in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* [5.40], where Lord Brahmā states: "I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, whose effulgence is the

source of the nondifferentiated Brahman mentioned in the *Upaniṣads*, etc.”

Professor Verdu: Now, the third way of self-realization, and the highest according to the *Bhagavad-gītā*, is *bhakti-yoga*, the way of love.

Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami: Yes. God has three features: first, the impersonal; second, the localized Supersoul within the heart of every living entity; and ultimately, the Supreme Person. So by *jñāna-yoga* (or philosophical discrimination) and austerities, one may understand the impersonal feature. And by the practice of the Pantañjali system of eightfold mysticism, *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*, one may realize the localized Supersoul within the heart. But it is only by devotion and love and service that one can realize the personal, supreme feature of God. In the *Gītā*, Lord Kṛṣṇa says:

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

“One can understand the Supreme Personality as He is only by devotional service. And when one is in full consciousness of the Supreme Lord by such devotion, he can enter into the kingdom of God” [Bg. 18.55].

Professor Verdu: The *Bhagavad-gītā* tells us that *dhyāna-yoga*, or *jñāna-yoga*, which is the impersonal way, is cumbersome and difficult, whereas *bhakti-yoga* is the easy way. In what sense is it the easy way?

Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami: Because in *bhakti-yoga* the means, service to God, is the same as the ultimate end. And it is completely natural to every living thing; it’s natural to be personal and individual and to want to serve God. As Lord Caitanya said, *jīvera ‘svarūpa’ haya—kṛṣṇera ‘nitya-dāsa’*: “It is the living entity’s constitutional position to be an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa.” There are even examples of animals attaining love of God through *bhakti-yoga*.

Professor Verdu: What kinds of methods do you rely on in your practice of *yoga*? For instance, in *dhyāna-yoga* there has always been, since Upanishadic times, the stress upon repetition of certain sacred syllables—like *om*, which is supposed to be the supreme synthesis of all conscious things, and which therefore can be compared to white light, the synthesis of all the different colors. Now, you would not rely on the repetition of the syllable *om*, would you?

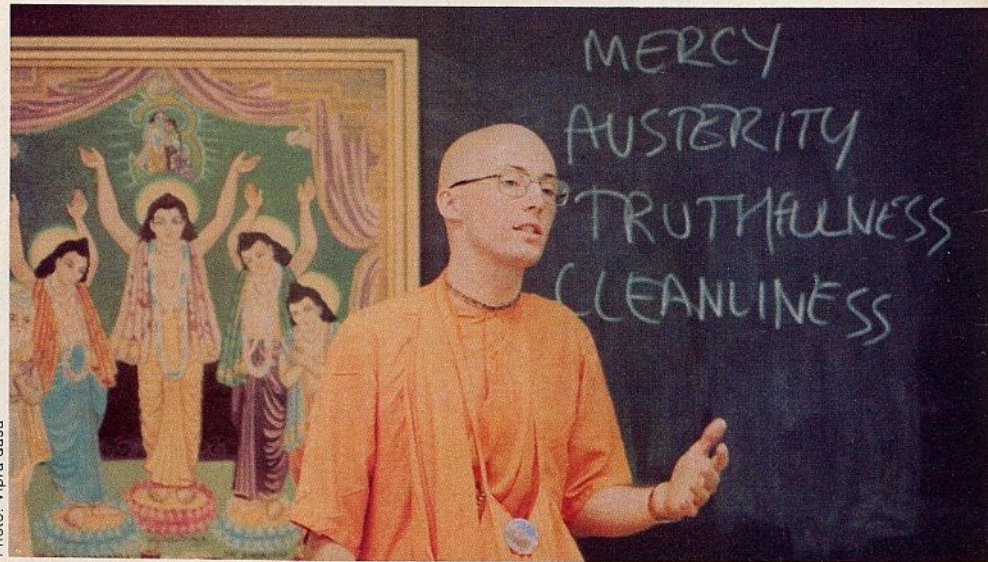
Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami: Kṛṣṇa says, *praṇavaḥ sarva-vedeṣu*: “Of all syllables, I am the syllable *om* in the Vedic

mantras.” This syllable *om* is the alphabetic representation of God and is used to address the Supreme Personality of Godhead. It’s like “O My Lord.”

Professor Verdu: What kind of mantras do you use?

Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami: We chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, which is the same as *om*, but which is also a more personal way of address: *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare! Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*. This means “O My Lord, O energy of the Lord, please engage me in Your service.”

Professor Verdu: Do you chant together or alone?



Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami: Both. We have our *japa* beads for private meditation . . .

Professor Verdu: Like a Catholic rosary . . .

Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami: Yes, for helping the concentration. We also chant together in a group, because in this age of quarrel and dissension the recommended process of God-realization—it doesn’t matter what religion you have, or what name of God you use, provided it is authorized—the recommended process is to glorify the holy name of God in the association of saintly persons.

Professor Verdu: For the effectiveness of this mantra in bringing about Kṛṣṇa consciousness, do you conceive of a need for relying on the grace of Kṛṣṇa to help you?

Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami: Yes. Because we are finite, we cannot understand the infinite by our own tiny endeavor. But the infinite has the power to descend to our plane of cognition and reveal Himself to us. Indeed, that is the only way of understanding the ultimate truth. The Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra is a prayer to the Supreme Lord and His energy to engage

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A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami

Prabhupāda since 1970,

Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami received sannyāsa (the renounced, scholarly order of life, signified by the title “swami”) in 1976.

the tiny soul in His eternal service. Our spiritual master, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, has told us not to be anxious to see God, but to act in such a way that God will want to come and see us. By chanting God’s name, the heart becomes cleansed. In the first of his eight verses on the holy name, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has said, “Let there be all victory for the chanting of the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa, which can cleanse the mirror of the heart and stop the miseries of the blazing fire of material existence. This chanting is the waxing moon that spreads the white lotus of good fortune for all living entities. It is the life and soul of all education. The chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa expands the blissful ocean of transcendental life. It gives a cooling effect to everyone and enables one to taste full nectar at every step.”

Professor Verdu: It seems we’re out of time. I think this has been a most interesting conversation, and I thank you very much for meeting together with me. I hope to meet you again.

Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami: Hare Kṛṣṇa! 🙏

LORD CAITANYA

The Joy of Mother Śacī

Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, appears within the material world in every age. Sometimes He appears as Lord Rāma or some other incarnation, and sometimes He appears in His original, supreme form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. But although He appears in different forms and different lands and among different peoples, His mission is always the same: to teach love of God as the prime necessity for humanity. Five hundred years ago He appeared in Bengal, India, as Lord Caitanya and showed the perfect example of devotion to Kṛṣṇa by adopting the role of Kṛṣṇa's pure devotee.

An especially touching instance of Lord Caitanya's exemplary behavior was His loving relationship with His mother, Śacīdevī. Their's was the ideal relationship between an enlightened, loving mother and her Kṛṣṇa-conscious son.

When Lord Caitanya was still a boy, His older brother Viśvarūpa accepted the renounced order of life (*sannyāsa*) and left home to travel as a missionary. Viśvarūpa's leaving greatly upset His parents, but Lord Caitanya assured them that by accepting *sannyāsa* Viśvarūpa was rendering the best service to His family. (The Vedic scriptures confirm that if one becomes Kṛṣṇa's pure devotee, his parents and many generations of his forefathers are liberated from material bondage and attain the kingdom of God.) To further comfort His parents, Lord Caitanya remained at home. And later, after His father's passing, He married.

However, at the age of twenty-four Lord Caitanya left His mother and young wife and also entered the renounced order. He wanted to expand His *saṅkīrtana* movement, to propagate more widely the congregational chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. The Lord immediately departed for Vṛndāvana, but being overwhelmed with ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa, He lost all awareness of the external world and wandered for three days on the banks of the Ganges at Navadvīpa. Finally, His chief associates, Śrī Advaita and Nityānanda Prabhus, induced Him to come to Advaita's home.

When the Lord went to Śrī Advaita's home, a meeting with His mother occurred that was surcharged with feelings of both joy and grief. Upon seeing one another, they both became overwhelmed with emotion. When Mother



Illustration: Pariṣit dāsa

Śacī saw the Lord's head without hair (a sign that He had taken *sannyāsa*), she became distressed. She kissed the Lord and tried to observe Him carefully, but because her eyes were filled with tears, she couldn't see. She implored Him, "Do not act like your elder brother Viśvarūpa, who took *sannyāsa* and never visited me again."

Lord Caitanya replied, "My dear mother, though I have accepted the renounced order, I shall never be indifferent to you."

So the Lord stayed at Śrī Advaita's house for many days, conversing with Śrī Advaita and other devotees by day, and at night chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa in divine ecstasy. During this time Mother Śacī took charge of cooking for her son. When the Lord danced in the *kīrtana* He would jump high in the air and sometimes fall to the ground, and Mother Śacī would pray that Lord Viṣṇu would protect her son from hurting Himself.

After some days the Lord assembled all His devotees and said, "My dear friends, as long as I remain manifest I shall never give you up. Nor shall I be able to give up My mother. But after accepting *sannyāsa*, a *sannyāsī* should not remain at his birthplace encircled by relatives. Please make some arrangement so that I may not leave you and at the same time people may not blame

Me for remaining at home after taking *sannyāsa*."

The devotees then approached Mother Śacī with the Lord's request. Mother Śacī said, "It will be a great happiness for me if Nimāi [Lord Caitanya] stays here in Navadvīpa. But at the same time, if someone blames Him, it will be my great unhappiness. So here is my proposal: Let Nimāi live at Jagannātha Purī. Then he will not leave any of us, and at the same time He can remain aloof as a *sannyāsī*. Since Jagannātha Purī and Navadvīpa are so close, I shall be able to get news of Nimāi frequently. I do not care for my personal happiness, but only for His happiness. Indeed, I accept His happiness as My happiness."

With these words Mother Śacī gave the example for all mothers whose sons turn to genuine spiritual life. His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda comments as follows:

"It is a great happiness for a mother if her son does not leave home to search out Kṛṣṇa but remains with her. At the same time, if a son does not search after Kṛṣṇa but simply remains at home, he is blamed by experienced saintly persons. Such blame certainly causes great unhappiness for a mother. If a mother wants her son to progress spiritually, she should allow him to go out searching for Kṛṣṇa. But if she does not allow her son to search for Kṛṣṇa, she is called *mā*, which indicates *māyā* (illusion). By allowing her son to become a *sannyāsī* and search for Kṛṣṇa, Śacīmātā instructs all mothers of the world. She indicates that all sons should become devotees of Kṛṣṇa and should not stay at home under the care of an affectionate mother."

Thus, except for six years in which he toured South India, Lord Caitanya stayed at Jagannātha Purī for the remaining twenty-four years of His life. Every year the devotees from Navadvīpa would come and visit the Lord, bringing food cooked by His mother. Lord Caitanya would also send *prasāda* (spiritual food) from the Jagannātha temple to His mother in Navadvīpa and ask her forgiveness for His entering the renounced order. In this way, despite their physical separation, Lord Caitanya and His mother associated spiritually. And the devotees glorify their eternal relationship of mother and son by chanting, "Jaya, Śacīnandana! Jaya, Śacīnandana! All glories to Lord Caitanya, the joy of Mother Śacī!"

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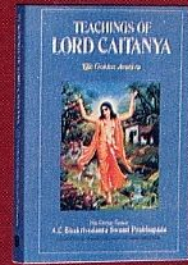
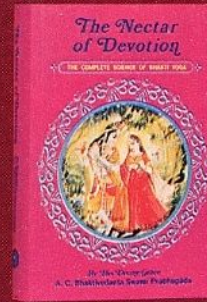
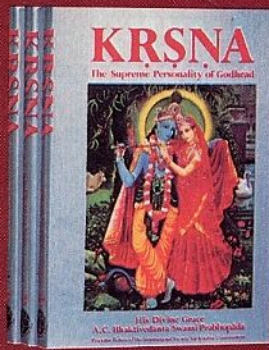
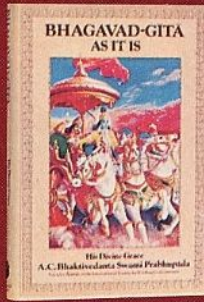
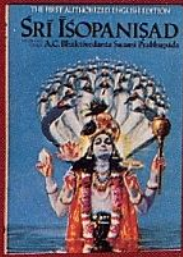
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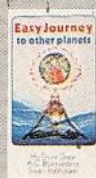
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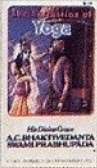


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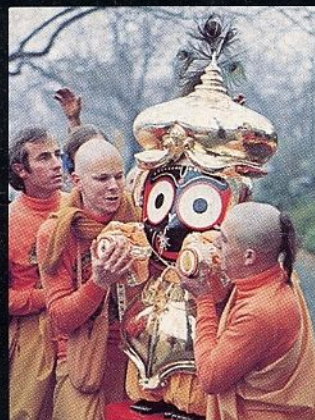
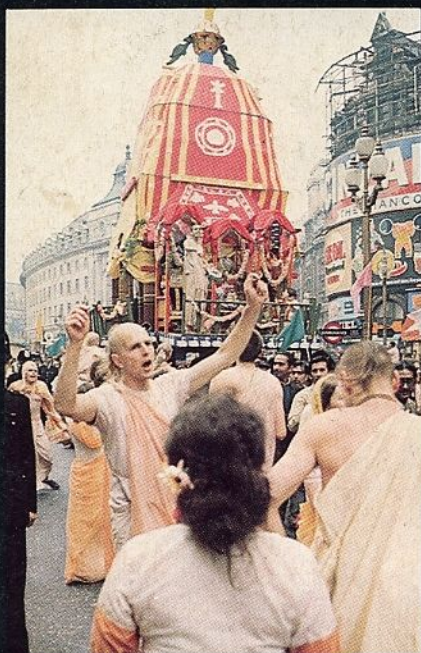
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Starts 12:00 noon, Bay St. at Santa
Monica Beach
Feast 3:00 P.M., Venice Beach