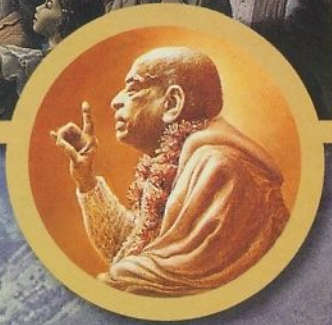


Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.

BACK TO GODHEAD



The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement • Nov/Dec 2001 • \$4.00/£2.50



The Trail To Muktinath

A Pilgrimage from Bengal
To the High Himalayas

ALSO:

Reactions to the
Terrorist Attacks

News of the "I" Within

Vaiṣṇava Compassion

From "Tourist" to "Pilgrim"

Historic Ramakeli



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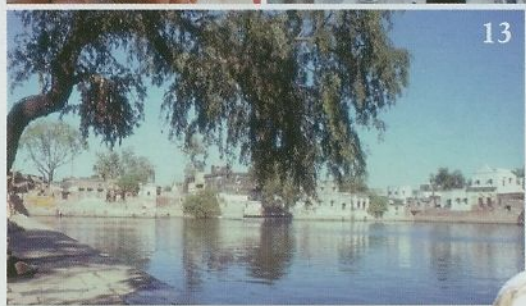
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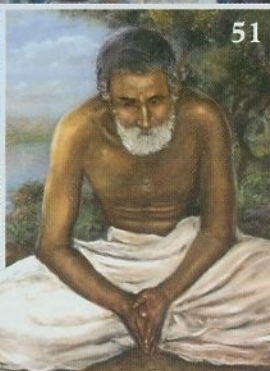
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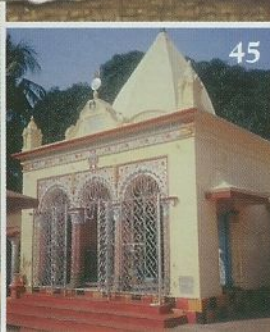
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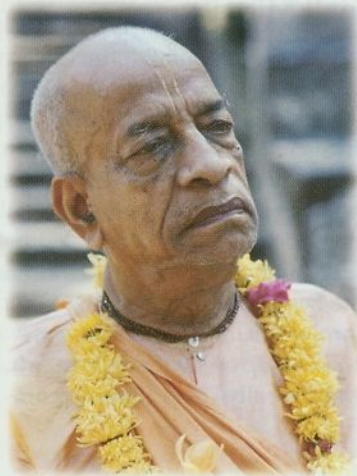
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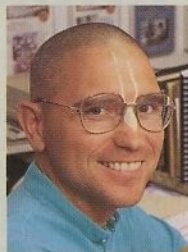
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COVER Students from ISKCON’s Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula Village in Māyāpur, West Bengal, rest amid the splendor of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s creation as they make their way to Muktinath in the Himalayas of Nepal. (Photo by Hariścandra Dāsa.)



“The basic wrong is, the leaders have become godless animals. That’s all. The only method for reform is this Kṛṣṇa consciousness. There is no second method. You cannot raise anybody to high qualities unless he is God conscious. That is a fact.—p. 15

WELCOME



THIS ISSUE was in its final stages of production the day terror struck in New York and Washington. At the *Back to Godhead* office, we watched as one of the twin towers collapsed on live television. We knew at once that thousands had died.

Although I hesitated to throw the magazine off schedule, I felt that BTG couldn’t wait to say something about this tragedy. Then we began receiving submissions from devotees who had spontaneously written about the attacks and the consequent suffering. We decided to free up some pages (including my editorial page) to bring you the thoughts of some devotees in the wake of the events.

The three related articles appear under the title “Feelings and Philosophy: Responses to the Terrorist Attacks.” The first is a letter from Hridayānanda Dāsa Goswami to his disciples, stressing the need for true compassion in response to the events. Yogeśvara Dāsa, who works in Manhattan and was there the morning of the attacks, gives his perspective as both a New Yorker and a devotee of Kṛṣṇa. Finally, Kālakaṅṭha Dāsa sent us an essay he wrote originally for his own benefit—a kind of therapy, he said.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.—*Nāgarāja Dāsa, Editor*

OUR PURPOSES

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



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



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



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

BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the
Hare Krishna Movement

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(under the direction of His Divine Grace
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His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta
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Letters

Inspired to Subscribe

I just wanted to drop a note to say how much I enjoyed the July/August issue of BTG. Ūrmilā Devī Dāsī's article on humility was honest and thoughtful and made me want to practice that same honesty and thoughtfulness on myself. I also enjoyed the article on deity worship. The picture of the New Delhi deities is beautiful and helped me to understand the spiritual significance of the *ārati* ceremony. I actually got a subscription after reading this issue!

L. Hardison
Via the Internet

Humble Thanks

The first edition of BTG we received was the July/August 2001 issue, with the most beautiful painting of Rādhārāṇī on the cover. All the articles were very good and interesting. But I was particularly inspired with one article by Ūrmilā Devī Dāsī titled "Real Humility." Before I received that BTG, like many others I had spent considerable thought on humility. It was so important, yet I did not have a clear understanding of what it meant. I tried various ways to "become humble"—by denying even the genuine compliments I got, refusing to admit that I had made any progress at all, trying to be meek and submissive—but all the while I knew that something was wrong in my idea of humility because my consciousness remained as rebellious and proud as always. Ūrmilā Devī Dāsī's article cleared all my misconceptions. It is indeed a joy to be humble or even try to become humble. Thank you very much and keep up the good work.

Annapurna Adiraju
Chicago, Illinois

Seeing Kṛṣṇa's Mercy

[To Ūrmilā Devī Dāsī:] The article you wrote in BTG, March/April 2001,

about karma helped me through my sufferings of the last three years. I never understood what was happening to me. After reading your article, I accepted that everything was the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa. I felt very relieved. Through your words I finally came to the conclusion that my only shelter in this material world is Śrīlā Prabhupāda and the devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa. You gave me so much, I don't have the words to thank you. The only thing I'm begging for is to love Lord Kṛṣṇa, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, and the Vaiṣṇavas with my whole heart. I'm forever indebted to you.

Asha Sietaram
The Hague, Holland

Changed Opinion

All of the articles are just great. They have helped me when I've felt weak or lonely. The latest issue [July/August] is stupendous. I have a co-worker who believed we are sexist. So I copied the article "Rādhārāṇī: The Feminine Side of God" and gave it to her. Now she views the movement differently. Thank you. I came to Kṛṣṇa almost two years ago. He has definitely changed my life.

Now I chant every day, read, and try to remember Him at all times. I still have to fight *māyā* at every turn. But I'm trying my best.

Luis Vargas
Miami, Florida

A Small Miracle

I wanted to share a small miracle that occurred in my life today, all thanks to Lord Kṛṣṇa's mercy and Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* movement.

Like many new devotees, I am sure, I have been trying to go clean up past wreckage of my life. Two years ago, before becoming a devotee, I had a run-in with the law and was placed on two years probation, and the main terms were to keep up on my fine payments, which were really steep. Since becom-

What Is the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement?

Founded in 1966 by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) carries on in the modern world a great ancient tradition rooted in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the teachings Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke five millenniums ago. The *Gītā* and the other Vedic scriptures declare Kṛṣṇa to be the original person, God Himself, who appears periodically in this world to liberate all living beings.

Only five hundred years ago, Kṛṣṇa descended as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to teach the most subtle and effective means of meditation for the present day: the chanting of the names of God, especially as found in the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

Today members of ISKCON continue Lord Caitanya's movement by distributing the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra all over the world.

Pronunciation

We spell Sanskrit words and names by a phonetic system that lets you know how to say each word. Pronounce short **a** like the **u** in **but**, long **ā** like the **a** in **far** (and held twice as long as the short **a**). Pronounce **e** like the **a** in **evade**, long **ī** like the **i** in **pique**. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **ri** in **rim**, and **ṛ** like the **ch** in **chair**. Pronounce consonants like **ch**, **jh**, and **dh** as in **staunch-heart**, **hedgehog**, and **red-hot**. Pronounce ś and ṣ like **sh**. So for *Kṛṣṇa* say KRISHNA, for *Caitanya* say CHAITANYA.

Spiritual Names

ISKCON members receive names of Lord Kṛṣṇa or His great devotees, combined with Dāsa, for men, or Dāsī, for women, both of which mean "servant." For instance, the name Kṛṣṇa Dāsa means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

ing a devotee, I have had a hard time trying to figure out what I would like to do for work, as my experience is in food service and I no longer want to work with meat, fish, or eggs. I fell behind in my court payments and got a one-month extension, hoping to find work by then. That was last month.

The whole time I was struggling to do what I could to fix the situation and not leaving it up to Kṛṣṇa. I could not focus while I chanted, and I began to isolate myself from devotees, wallowing in my depression. Last Thursday I exclaimed utter defeat to Kṛṣṇa. I told Him I was tired of trying and spent the day chanting as best I could.

The next day I got a call from a devotee's friend who owns a business making vegetarian salads and sandwiches. I was to interview Monday. But on Saturday I received a notice that my probation was to be revoked and that I faced thirty days in jail.

Well, I could see that Kṛṣṇa did fine with the job, and I had to trust and keep my faith in Him. I got the job, and my grandmother-in-law offered to pay off the rest of my fines and told me I could pay her back when I could. Amazing—because she is usually a stickler when it comes to money.

Today I went to court and faced the same judge I had two years ago. Before going in I promised Kṛṣṇa I would give the judge a *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* as a thank-you gift—if things worked out in my favor.

Despite my having paid everything, the judge still wanted to revoke my probation and send me to jail for thirty days. Before it was final, I spoke up and told him that due to the court's intervention two years back, and due to having God in my life now, I have been able to turn my life completely around. I am not even close to the person I was back then. I told him about my job, my new wife, and my new friends in fellowship in the spiritual organization I belong to.

He paused, asked for a few details,

paused again, and then dismissed the case and ended my probation, calling it successfully completed!

I kept my promise and wrote a quick thank-you note and gave the book to the clerks for Judge Ackerman. I hope he reads it and gets as much out of it as I do.

Bhakta Neal
Via the Internet

Right on Time

I have noticed that this kind of thing has happened to me many times over the years: I will be feeling the pangs of material life, and then Kṛṣṇa will get my attention somehow or another, and most always I will then receive my latest issue of BTG in the mail right on time. Kṛṣṇa knows and cares enough to send me the ways and means to get me out of *māyā's* grip.

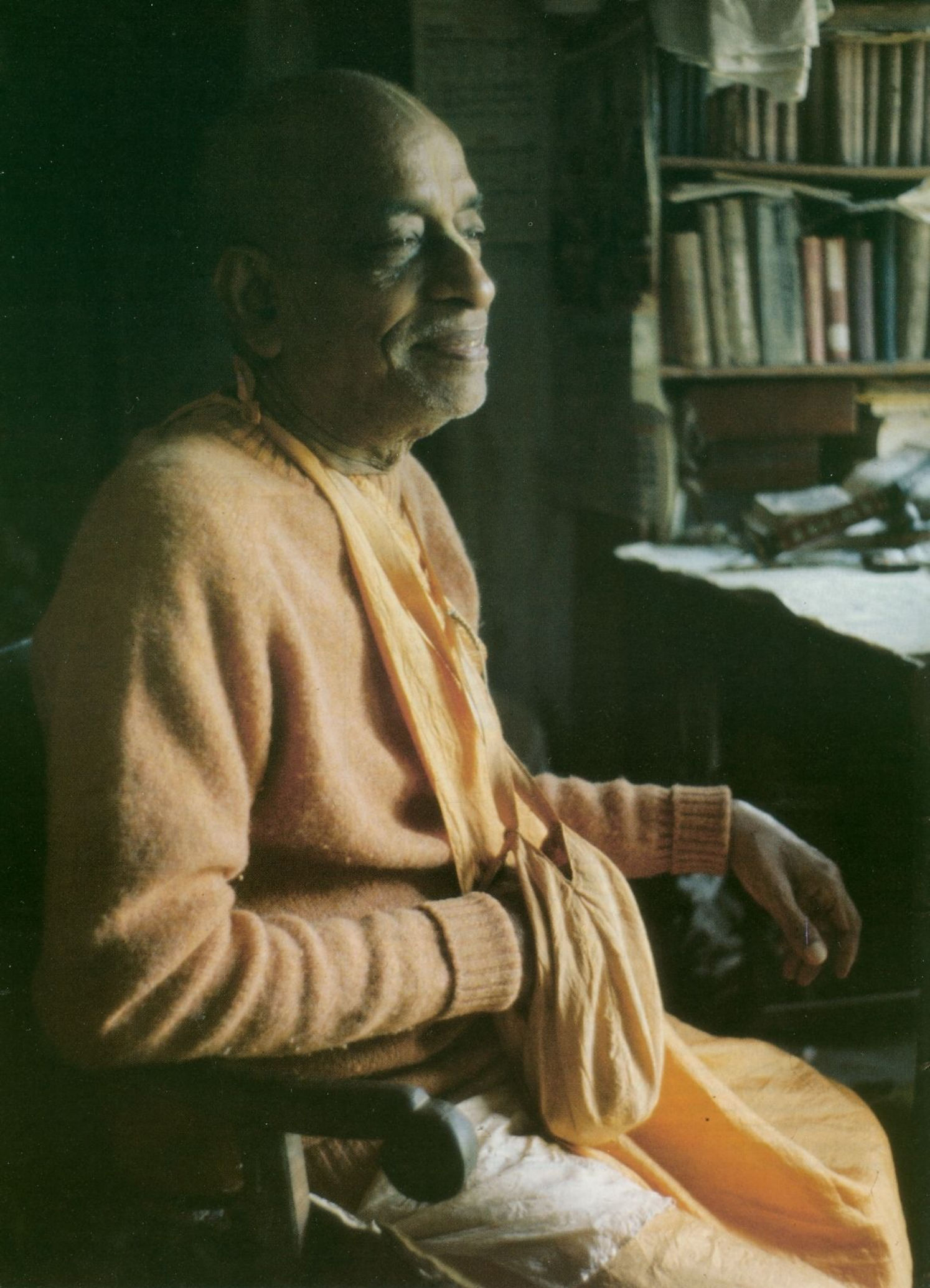
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CORRECTIONS

We failed to mention that the article about Śrīmān Jayānanda Dāsa ("A Modern Saint," May/June) relied heavily on the book *Radha-Damodar Vilasa*, by Vaiyāsaki Dāsa. We apologize to Vaiyāsaki Dāsa for the omission. *Radha-Damodar Vilasa* is an exciting, thoroughly researched work on Jayānanda Dāsa, Viṣṇujana Swami, ISKCON's Rādhā-Dāmodara Deities, and the early days of ISKCON. It is available from the Hare Kṛṣṇa Bazaar (page 64).

In the article "Temple of the Supreme Enchanter" (July/August), the deity Madana-Mohana was said to have been taken from the home of Purushottama Chobey. The devotee's name was actually Damodar Chobey.



NEWS OF THE “I” WITHIN

*Overwhelmed by useless information,
we fail to hear about life's most important topic.*

by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

*śrotavyādīni rājendra
nṛṇāṃ santi sahasraśaḥ
apaśyatām ātma-tattvaṃ
grheṣu grha-medhinām*

“Those persons who are materially engrossed, being blind to the knowledge of ultimate truth, have many subject matters for hearing in human society, O Emperor.”—*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.1.2

ABOUT SIXTY, SEVENTY years ago a big politician of India came to see my Guru Mahārāja, inquiring about our activities. He was informed, among other things, that my Guru Mahārāja was publishing papers monthly in English, Bengali, Hindi, Oriya, and Assamese, and a Bengali daily, *Nadiya Prakash*. The politician was surprised.

“Oh, you are publishing every day a Bengali paper?”

“Yes. Why are you surprised?”

He was surprised. He was a politician, and he was

thinking, “What can one speak of God, or Kṛṣṇa, daily in a paper?” He was surprised because people generally think, “Sometimes we go to the temple and pray ‘God, give us our daily bread,’” and then their business with God is finished.

My Guru Mahārāja replied, “Why are you surprised? This Calcutta city is a most insignificant part of the universe, and it is producing so many papers.”

Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, “The whole material world is situated in one part of My energy.” *Ekāṁśena sthito jagat*. When Arjuna asked about the opulence of Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa described some of the material world. Then He summarized:

*atha vā bahunāitena
kiṃ jñātena tavārjuna
viṣṭabhyāham idaṃ kṛtsnam
ekāṁśena sthito jagat*

“How much shall I go on speaking to you? Just try to understand My potency: This whole material world is sustained by one part of My energy.” [*Bhagavad-gītā*]

Napoleon was conquering all over Europe, and he thought he would be able to enjoy his conquests. But where is Napoleon?

• • •

10.42] The spiritual world is the three-fourths part. Suppose one unit of Kṛṣṇa's energy is acting. So out of that one-fourth unit is exhibited the material world. What is that material world?

*yasya prabhā prabhavato jagad-aṅḍa-koṭi-
koṭīṣv aśeṣa-vasudhādi-vibhūti-
bhinnam
tad brahma niṣkalam anantam aśeṣa-
bhūtam
govindam ādi-puruṣam tam aham
bhajāmi*

[*Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.40]

In some corner of the Brahman effulgence is *mahat-tattva*, material energy. And that material energy is described in another place:

*yasyaika-niṣvasita-kālam
athāvalambya
jīvanti loma-vilajā jagad-aṅḍa-nāthāḥ
viṣṇur mahān sa iha yasya kalā-viśeṣo
govindam ādi-puruṣam tam aham
bhajāmi*

[*Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.48]

The material world means the innumerable universes coming out through the breathing of Mahā-Viṣṇu. Innumerable universes. We cannot account for the one universe in which we live, and there are innumerable planets. Everyone has experience in seeing the stars and planets. This is one universe. And such universes are coming out—millions—through the breathing of Mahā-Viṣṇu. When He exhales they come out; when He inhales they go within. That accounts for the states of creation and non-creation.

The material world is only a manifestation, an exhibition, of one-fourth of the energy of Kṛṣṇa. Within the material world there are so many uni-

verses, and within each universe there are so many planets. We are living on one of those planets. And on this planet there are so many cities—Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Delhi, Paris, London, and so many hundreds and thousands of others. In every city there are newspapers. And each newspaper is publishing three, four editions daily. This is the most insignificant planet, and still there is so much news to hear.

Therefore it is said here, *śrotavyā-dīni rājendra nṛṇām santi sahasraśaḥ*: “There are millions and millions of subjects for hearing.” That is a fact. Every paper is publishing three, four editions daily, especially in the Western countries. So if they have got so much news in the material world on this insignificant planet, just imagine how much news is there in the three-fourths manifestation of God's energy.

So my Guru Mahārāja said, “You are surprised, sir, that we are publishing a paper daily. But we can publish a paper every minute. Unfortunately, there are no customers.”

They have customers for their newspapers, but for our news we have to canvass, “Will you kindly take this? Will you kindly take this?”

They are not interested. They're interested in material news—radio, paper, magazine, edition after edition. They have no time to read the little news we are giving about God in *Back to Godhead*. Why? *Apaśyatām ātma-tattvam*. They do not know what is *ātmā*, the active principle of all these activities. They do not know. *Na te viduḥ svārtha-gatiṁ hi viṣṇum durāśayā ye bahir-artha-māninaḥ* [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.5.31]. *Durāśayā* means that they have so much news to hear with the hope that they will be able to exist here and be happy. *Durāśayā* means “useless hope.”

Take, for example, your Napoleon

Arch. Napoleon was conquering all over Europe, and he thought he would be able to enjoy his conquests. But where is Napoleon? The arch is there, that's all. This is the position. But he worked so hard. Not only he—everyone is working. The arch will remain, because it's a stone, but he's finished. He's finished.

This is called *apaśyatām ātma-tattvam*. People do not know what is reality. They are simply after so-called reality. It is a very important point. Try to understand. *Ātma-tattvam*. One who does not know what is *ātmā*—what is soul, the nature of soul—does not know what is reality.

ARJUNA'S FIRST LESSON

Therefore, in the *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa begins by explaining the constitution of the *ātmā*, or spirit soul. When He began to teach Arjuna *Bhagavad-gītā*, the A-B-C-D lesson was to convince him about the soul within the body. That is called *ātma-tattvam*. Nobody knows about this. Therefore, *bahir-artha-māninaḥ*: they are accepting the external feature. We can understand very easily that the body is the external feature. The real “I” is within. As soon as I go away from this body, the external feature becomes as good as garbage in the street. People do not understand that. They are busy piling garbage. “Bring more garbage, more garbage.” They think, “This garbage will save me.”

On the other hand, *ātma-tattvam* means to think, “I am now within this garbage for the present. And after leaving this garbage, I pile up so many other garbages. And in this way, working uselessly my whole life, then I transmigrate from this body to another garbage body.”

Apaśyatām ātma-tattvam refers to those who do not know this. *Apaśyatām* means “not seeing.” *A* means “not,” and *paśyatām* means “seeing,” or “one who sees.” He’s seeing in this way: “This garbage is everything.” He does not see *ātma-tattvam*.

Apaśyatām ātma-tattvaṁ grheṣu. *Gṛha* means “home.” You can take the body as home, because we are living within the body. And we are living on this planet and within this universe. These are also home. Or I may have a little home, an apartment, ten feet square, that’s all. That is also home. We have attachment for this home, ten feet by ten feet or millions of feet by millions of feet.

DOGLIKE “FREEDOM”

We living entities are within this home. The whole universe is home because we’re living here. And we are moving from this place to that place. From Bombay I have come to Paris. This is all within the home—within the universe or within this planet. We see that people are very busy, driving cars at seventy miles per hour. But within Paris they may go seventy miles or eighty miles, but they cannot go beyond. One of our countrymen, the poet Rabindranath Tagore, was in London, and he saw that people walk very fast. So he remarked, “These people are walking very fast. But this is a very small country. They’ll fall into the sea.”

You see? This is going on. [*Laughs.*] A dog in the park is jumping and running. But as soon as the master says, “Come on. Come on,” the dog must obey: “Yes, sir.”

“Give me your neck.”

“Yes, sir.”

The dog is thinking he’s free, but as soon as the master calls he has to submit. That is our position. We are very busy, but the master is the material nature. *Daivī hy eṣā guṇa-mayī mama māyā duratyayā*. [*Bhagavad-gītā* 7.14] The fact is that we are under the stringent laws of material nature. We have no freedom. That we do not know. We are struggling so much. War has been waged all over the world, especially in Europe, for freedom. You have that freedom statue. And in America, also, there is freedom. But where is the

freedom, sir? That they do not know. Why? *Apaśyatām ātma-tattvam*. They do not know what freedom is. Therefore they have created so many newspapers for freedom, so-called freedom. But there is no freedom. Even big, big leaders have no freedom, so what to speak of us.

Therefore Kṛṣṇa points out in the *Bhagavad-gītā* [13.9] that real freedom is when you get freedom from four problems: *janma-mṛtyu-jarā-vyādhiduhkha-doṣānudarśanam*. If you get freedom from these four things—birth, death, old age, and disease—that is freedom. But where is that freedom? The so-called scientists, big, big scientists, have very scientifically advanced, but they have no freedom from death. They have to die on a fixed date. Professor Einstein or any other big scientist could not manufacture any scientific instrument and keep it in the custody of his student: “As soon as I die, just apply this machine. I shall come alive again.” Where is that freedom?

So-called scientific improvement, advancement in civilization, is just like the jumping of a dog. That’s all. It has no value. Real value is to understand *ātma-tattvam*: “What am I? Why is death imposed upon me? I do not wish to die. Why is old age imposed upon me? I do not wish to become an old man or an old woman. I wish to remain beautiful, young.”

“No, sir, that is not possible.”

Then where is your freedom? Why are you jumping so much? As soon as the master will call, then: “Yes, sir. Bind me.”

You are completely under nature’s control. Nature is pulling you by the ear.

“Come here.”

“Yes, sir.”

“Come here.”

“Yes, sir.”

And you’re thinking you are free. You are completely under the control of the modes of material nature.

*prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni
guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ
ahaṅkāra-vimūḍhātmā
kartāham iti manyate*

“The spirit soul bewildered by the influence of false ego thinks himself the

BACK TO GODHEAD

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doer of activities that are in actuality carried out by the three modes of material nature.” [Bhagavad-gītā 3.27] This is called false egotism: “I am something.” “I am Napoleon Bonaparte.” “I am Mussolini.” “I am Hitler.” This is *ahankāra-vimūḍhātmā*. Fools and rascals think like that.

“No freedom, sir. No freedom.”

Being puffed-up with false prestige, a person is thinking, “I am something. I can do something.” This is the disease. So for such persons these newspapers are very useful. But for one who is fixed up in *ātma-tattvam*, there is no need of this so-called news.

ACCESSIBLE KṚṢṆA

“I am Brahman. I am not anything of this material world.” Persons who know this should try to understand Kṛṣṇa. That is the only business. There is no other business. And how will you understand Kṛṣṇa? By service. Kṛṣṇa has agreed: “I’ll accept your service.” Therefore He has come as the deity in the temple. You cannot serve Kṛṣṇa in His universal form. You have limited potency, but Kṛṣṇa has agreed to come in a such way that you can touch Him. You can touch His lotus feet. You can make clothing

for Kṛṣṇa with devotion. You can dress Kṛṣṇa. You can prepare food according to your capacity. You can offer the preparations to Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa will eat. He says,

*patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyam
yo me bhaktyā prayacchati
tad ahaṁ bhakty-upahṛtam
aśnāmi prayatātmanaḥ*

“If one offers Me with love and devotion a leaf, a flower, a fruit, or water, I will accept it.” [Bhagavad-gītā 9.26]. Kṛṣṇa is so kind that although He is all-pervading, universal, He has agreed to accept your service just to give you liberation from this misunderstanding, this lack of *ātma-tattvam*. The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is meant to help everyone serve Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa, God, is great. How great He is you cannot imagine. But still He has agreed to accept your service, becoming small. That is greatness. In the material world something very big cannot become small. The elephant is a very big animal.

You ask the elephant, “Please become like an ant.”

“Oh, that is not possible, sir. That is not possible.”

But God is so great that although He’s universal, He can enter into the

atom. *Aṅor aṅīyān mahato mahīyān*: “Greater than the greatest, smaller than the smallest.” That is God. In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.35) it is said,

*eko 'py asau racayituṁ jagad-aṅḍa-koṭim
yac-chaktir asti jagad-aṅḍa-cayā yad-antaḥ
aṅḍāntara-stha-paramāṅḡu-cayāntara-sthaṁ
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

Just to create this material world, one portion of Kṛṣṇa, Paramātmā, has entered into the *mahat-tattva* as Mahā-Viṣṇu and into the universe as Garbhodakaśāyī-Viṣṇu. He has entered everyone’s heart as Supersoul, Kṣīrodakaśāyī-Viṣṇu, and He has entered into the atom—although He is so great.

It is Kṛṣṇa’s mercy that He can become smaller than the smallest and greater than the greatest. We cannot capture the one who is greater than the greatest. That is not possible. Therefore it is His kindness that He has become just suitable to be handled by you. The deity in the temple is called *arcā-mūrti* or *arcā-vigraha*. Deity worship is *arcanam*. It is one of the nine items of devotional service. You can hear about Kṛṣṇa, chant about Kṛṣṇa, remember Kṛṣṇa, worship the deity of Kṛṣṇa, offer prayers to Kṛṣṇa. There are nine different ways. Just try to understand Kṛṣṇa by these nine processes, by some of the processes, or by even one of them. Kṛṣṇa will agree. Kṛṣṇa is so kind. And as soon as you understand Kṛṣṇa’s nature, then you become liberated. *Tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma naiti mām eti so 'rjuna*. [Bhagavad-gītā 4.9] That is the process.

The real problem is how to get out of material existence. If we remain attached to material existence—whether to the body or the society or the nation—that is our bondage. One should be careful to understand the position of the soul and how to go back home, back to Godhead, to again meet the Supersoul, Kṛṣṇa, and live there permanently with a blissful life, full of knowledge. That is wanted.

Thank you very much. 🌸



HARE KRISHNA WORLD

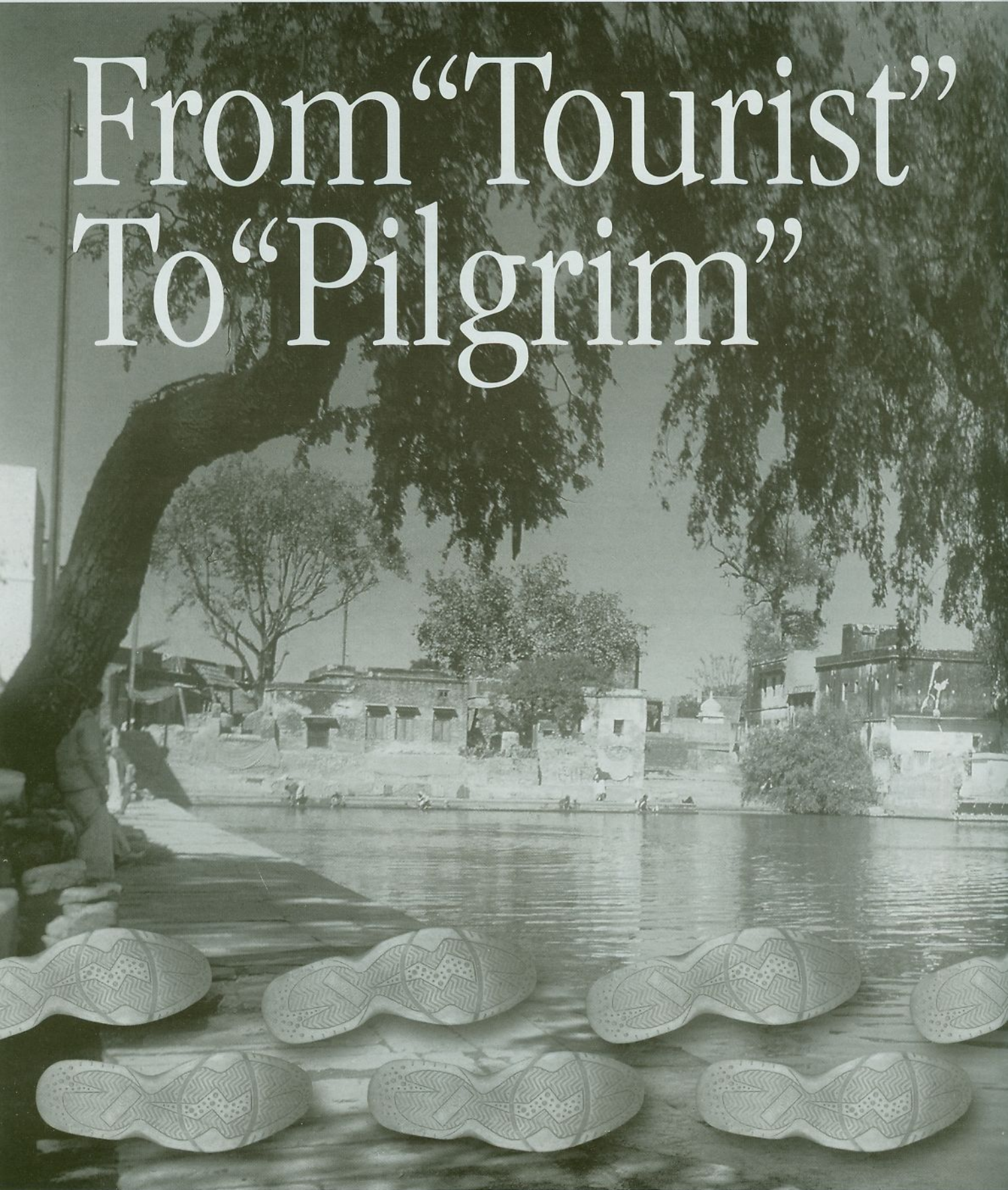
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Glossary

- Ācārya**—a spiritual master who teaches by example.
- Balarāma**—Lord Kṛṣṇa's first expansion, who acts in the role of Lord Kṛṣṇa's elder brother.
- Battle of Kurukshetra**—an epic battle for rule of the world, fought five thousand years ago.
- Bhagavad-gītā**—the sacred book in which Lord Kṛṣṇa gives the essence of knowledge to His friend and disciple Arjuna.
- Bhakti**—devotional service to the Supreme Lord.
- Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura**—the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda.
- Bhakti-yoga**—linking with the Supreme Lord through devotional service.
- Caitanya Mahāprabhu**—the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa who appeared five hundred years ago to teach the chanting of the names of God as the religion for the present age.
- Dharma**—(1) ordained duties or religious principles; (2) one's eternal, natural occupation (i.e., devotional service to the Lord).
- Godhead**—the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Reality, progressively realized first as the impersonal all-pervasive oneness, more fully as the Supersoul within the heart of every living being, and ultimately as the all-opulent Supreme Person.
- Gurukula**—a school where children learn the philosophy and practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness along with regular academic subjects (literally "the place of the guru").
- Hare Kṛṣṇa**—the great mantra Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.
- ISKCON**—the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.
- Japa**—individual chanting of names of God, usually while counting on beads.
- Kali-yuga**—in the endlessly repeated cycle of four cosmic ages, the present and worst age, the Age of Quarrel, of which 5,000 of 432,000 years have passed.
- Karma**—material action; its inevitable reaction; or the law by which such action and reaction are governed.
- Kirtana**—congregational singing of names of God, usually accompanied by cymbals (*karatālas*) and drums (*mṛdaṅgas*).
- Kṛṣṇa**—the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His original transcendental form (see "Godhead").
- Mahābhārata**—the epic history of ancient India, a history in which the *Bhagavad-gītā* appears as the most important and well-known text.
- Māyā**—illusion; the energy of the Supreme Lord that deludes living entities into forgetting their spiritual nature and forgetting God.
- Māyāvādī**—one who regards the Absolute Truth as ultimately impersonal.
- Modes of nature**—the three qualities (goodness, passion, and ignorance) that hold sway over all action in the material world.
- Nityānanda**—the incarnation of Lord Balarāma who appeared with Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
- Prasādam**—vegetarian food that has been prepared for the Lord and offered to Him with devotion (literally "mercy").
- Purāṇas**—Vedic histories.
- Radhārāṇī**—Lord Kṛṣṇa's consort and pleasure potency.
- Rathayātrā**—"chariot festival": a festival in which the form of Kṛṣṇa is borne in procession on a large canopy-topped chariot or float, especially the festival originating in Puri, India, for Jagannātha (Lord Kṛṣṇa, "the Lord of the universe").
- Sannyāsa**—the renounced life of a man who relinquishes home to dedicate himself fully to the Supreme.
- Śrī**—an honorific meaning "opulent" (similarly: Śrīla, Śrīmad, Śrīmān, Śrīmatī).
- Śrīla Prabhupāda**—His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.
- Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam**—the most important of the eighteen *Purāṇas*, which tells of the nature and pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa and His devotees.
- Supersoul**—the form of the Lord who resides in every heart along with the individual soul.
- Upaniṣads**—the 108 essential philosophical treatises that appear within the *Vedas*.
- Varṇāśrama**—the Vedic social system. It organizes society into four occupational and four spiritual divisions (*varṇas* and *āśramas*). The members of the four *varṇas* are the *brāhmaṇas* (intellectuals and priests), the *kṣatriyas* (administrators and soldiers), the *vaiśyas* (farmers and businessmen), and the *śūdras* (laborers and artisans). The members of the four *āśramas* are the *brahmacārīs* (celibate students), *gṛhasthas* (married people), *vānaprasthas* (retired people), and *sannyāsīs* (renunciants).
- Vṛndāvana**—the transcendental abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa, mirrored on earth as the town in India where Kṛṣṇa appeared five thousand years ago.
- Vaiṣṇava**—a devotee of the Supreme Lord (from the word *Viṣṇu*).
- Vedas**—the hymns of knowledge revealed by the Lord Himself at the beginning of creation.
- Vedic**—pertaining to the culture in which the *Vedas* and related scriptures guide all aspects of human life.
- Viṣṇu**—any form of the Personality of Godhead (see "Godhead"); the forms the Lord manifests to create and sustain the material world.

From "Tourist" To "Pilgrim"



*With the help of a well-informed guide,
two American visitors to India
discover its hidden riches.*

by Indradyumna Swami

ON FEBRUARY 13 I arrived in New Delhi from Moscow with Śrī Prahlāda Dāsa and his wife, Rukmiṇī Priyā Devī Dāsī. We will be spending ten days in India, resting and recuperating from our trip to Russia.

After spending one precious day in Vṛndāvana, I traveled south to Udaipur to join my son, Gaura Śakti Dāsa, and two of his business associates, Mickey and Sherry Goldman, all of whom are on a business and recreation trip in Rajasthan. After meeting Mickey and Sherry, I was a little apprehensive about spending a planned five days with them; our initial conversations didn't go much beyond the daily news and the weather. Mickey and Sherry are both older than I am and come from conservative Jewish backgrounds, and I could sense they felt a little uncomfortable around a Hare Kṛṣṇa devotee in saffron robes. But it appeared that Kṛṣṇa had a plan for them, which gradually unfolded as the days went by.

When I suggested to Mickey and Sherry that they begin by visiting Udaipur Palace, they asked if I would come along. Though the palace is of little spiritual interest, I agreed, hoping to develop a deeper relationship with them through which I might be able to inspire them in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

At the palace we made our way through the inner chambers. When we reached the renowned Room of Mirrors, a young American man, seeing my saffron cloth, approached and asked if he could speak with

*Left: The holiest of holy spots,
Radha Kunda in Vṛndāvana, India.*



I wondered if I had made the right decision to invite them along. How would they, as members of the Jewish faith, relate to deity worship?

• • •

me. With folded hands he said, “Hari om,” and asked if I had ever read the *Bhagavad-gītā*. When I replied that I had, a lively conversation began, wherein we debated whether God is a person or an energy.

Mickey and Sherry listened intently as I presented arguments for the existence of a personal God. My arguments seemed to impress them, and as the day wore on they began asking questions of a spiritual nature. Last night over dinner we discussed a number of spiritual topics, and our conversation seemed to make them more relaxed in my presence. At the end of the evening Mickey concluded by saying that it is unfortunate that in America Kṛṣṇa consciousness is sometimes thought of as a cult, when in fact it is an ancient religion.

A HARD-EARNED DARŚANA

Pleased with our visit to Udaipur Palace yesterday, Mickey and Sherry ask me to recommend another place to go. I was planning to visit the temple of Śrī Nāthjī in Nathdwara, about fifty kilometers north of Udaipur, and offered to take them along. They were excited about the opportunity, as it was a journey off the general tourist route. But afterwards I wondered if I had made the right decision to invite them along. How would they, as members of the Jewish faith, relate to deity worship?

I explained that in the Vedic tradition, the deity is carved from stone, marble, or wood, and after installation according to authorized scriptures, is accepted as identical with the Lord.

Grappling with the new idea, at first they seemed confused.

Mickey said, “We were taught that worshipping such statues is idol worship.”

Then to my surprise, Sherry spoke up and said that because God is pres-

ent everywhere, there is no reason He couldn't be in the deity while at the same time not being limited to that form. Mickey nodded his head in agreement. Confident that my new friends had made a little progress in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, I opened the door of the taxi as it arrived, and we began our journey to Nathdwara.

Mickey and Sherry were obviously pleased with the exotic atmosphere of Nathdwara, with its colorful flags, banners, and *shantai* bands that welcome thousands of pilgrims. Approaching the Śrī Nāthjī temple, we saw many pilgrims waiting for the doors to open, the men at one set of doors, the women at another. The custom at the temple is that when the doors are opened, the pilgrims charge forward to have the best vantage point for seeing Śrī Nāthjī. The women are directed to the front of the temple, and the men toward the back.

I told Mickey and Sherry that it would be “every man for himself” when the doors opened and that they should try their best to get inside the temple and see the deity. We would meet outside after the thirty-minute *darśana* [viewing] was over. There wasn't much else I could do. I knew from experience that *darśana* of Śrī Nāthjī was like a transcendental football match, with hundreds of pilgrims pushing and shoving to see Him in a very limited space.

Sure enough, when the conch sounded and the doors opened, hundreds of men and women surged forward to get Śrī Nāthjī's *darśana*. Sherry's eyes opened wide as she was suddenly swept into the temple with a wave of women. I grabbed Mickey by the arm as the men's group tumbled into the *darśana* hall. As the crowd surged forward, Mickey and I were shoved backward and forward, while simultaneously being spun around, as everyone clamored to see Kṛṣṇa.

My few moments of meditation on Śrī Nāthjī were broken when the huge crowd, heaving with hundreds of devotees, suddenly spilled Mickey and me back out onto the stone steps in front of the temple.

While gathering ourselves, I looked anxiously at Mickey, wondering how he had fared with his first *darśana* of the Lord in a temple. Buttoning up his shirt and rearranging his disheveled clothes, he looked at me and said with a surprised look on his face, “I made it!” It wasn't exactly the reaction I had hoped for.

A few moments later Sherry emerged from the temple with a blissful look on her face. With a big smile she said, “Mahārāja, I got some of the sacred water, and I also ate the little green leaves the priest gave me!”

As we walked back to the car, she excitedly told us how she had been “right in front of the deity” and began explaining in detail how beautiful He looked. As she described His big eyes, His charming smile, and His curious form “bent in three places,” I smiled, remembering my apprehension as to how she and her husband would understand what a deity was. A few days ago they had come to India as simple tourists, but by the Lord's mercy had already begun to understand some aspects of the all-beautiful Lord.

MERCY FROM GOVINDAJĪ

Our entourage of Gaura Śakti, Mickey and Sherry Goldman, and I reached Jaipur on the morning of February 18. We were joined by Śrī Prahāda and Rukmiṇī Priyā, arriving from Vṛndāvana. Mickey and Sherry were eager to see the sights of the Pink City constructed by Maharaja Jai Sing II as a fortress to protect Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's deities, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govindajī, who left Vṛndāvana when
(please turn to page 35)

“If the Leaders Do Something Wrong, Others Will Follow”

Here we conclude an exchange between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and Australia’s director of research for the Department of Social Welfare. It took place at the Melbourne ISKCON center on May 21, 1975.

Director: Actually, I haven’t come here for “treatment.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Otherwise, why have you come?

Director: I was invited.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Just to get some ideas to help your social-welfare activities, you have come to take some suggestion from us. But when we give the suggestion, you reject it.

Director: If I were to come and join your movement, then I would accept your prescription.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No. You may join or not join, but you have come here to consult us, to see whether we can help your activities. But when we prescribe, you do not accept.

Disciple: Śrīla Prabhupāda, the Director is scheduled to return to his office fairly soon.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Then just give him a nice plate of *prasāda*. [Returning to the Director:] So to make the whole human society happy, this God consciousness movement must spread.

Director: Well, I’ll surely report back with that message. Thank you very much for seeing me.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Please wait for a moment.

Disciple: We want you to enjoy some *prasāda*, some delicious vegetarian dishes that we’ve offered to Kṛṣṇa. It’s

the Vedic custom. Śrīla Prabhupāda says to give *prasāda* to everyone.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: It is our custom that if anyone comes, he should be offered a nice seat and given some eatables. Yes.

Director: Have you seen many people in Melbourne?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: There are daily one

you want them.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. That is making us successful. We do not make any compromise. This is our method. If you like, you take it. If you don’t like, you go away. We don’t mind.

Director: If you can convince the society to change, then the public servants will change.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, we are working hard within the society, and we are inviting everyone, and they are coming. Gradually, they are becoming converted to this genuine spiritual culture. My hope rests on these young boys. They will do my work.

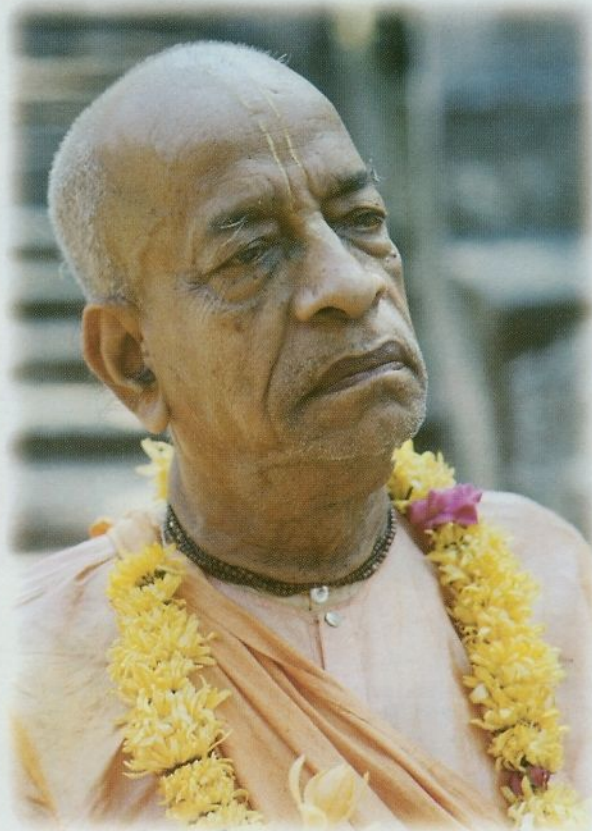
Take the whole plate. It is fruit and other sweet things. It is very nice. *Patraṁ puṣpam phalaṁ toyam*: in *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa instructs, “Just offer Me, with devotion, fruits and vegetables and flowers.” This kind of foodstuffs is meant for the human being—the fruits and vegetables. For instance, the tigers will not even eat the fruits. The tigers, with their huge teeth—they will not like the fruits. We human beings have got a different kind of teeth, for eating fruit.

Director: It’s very nice and sweet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: So we have got grains. We have got fruits

and vegetables. We have got milk. By the combination of fruits, vegetables, milk products, and grains, we can prepare so many nice, palatable dishes, full of vitamins. Why should we kill some poor animal? Let the animal live, and take her milk and prepare nice food, full of vitamins. Milk is nothing but a

(please turn to page 38)



or two gentlemen. Like you, they are coming, but they find our prescription very strict. [Laughter.] But we are not going to change it. We are not beholden to vox populi. Public opinion is not our concern. We have got our standard method.

Director: Yeah. Sure. I believe that you should have these standards if

Muktinath: Abode

Equipped with Kṛṣṇa's books and His holy name, a group of students go on pilgrim



of Liberation

age from the plains of Bengal to the high Himalayas.



The Kagbeni-Muktinath trail (far left) offered some of the most challenging climbs of the trek. In Katmandu (left), locals come to worship Lord Nṛsiṃha at a streetside temple.

by Phālguna Dāsa

photos by Phālguna Dāsa and Hariścandra Dāsa

August 3, 2000, Māyāpur, West Bengal

EIGHT BOYS, AGES twelve to sixteen, join me on a northbound bus headed for the temple of Muktinath in the Himalayas. They are students at ISKCON's boys school in Māyāpur, where I teach. Most of them have never been out of Bengal. They're excited about the trip, of course, but they're also looking forward to another kind of adventure: the chance to introduce people to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

August 11, Katmandu, Nepal

So much has happened already. When we crossed into Nepal, we had to wait several hours for our bus con-

nection, so we decided to pass the time at a nearby Hanumān temple. The priest in charge was very friendly and treated us like honored guests.

We decided to try to distribute some of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. Without even leaving the temple, we unexpectedly sold six *Bhagavad-gītās*. We couldn't speak Nepali, and most of the boys had never done book distribution before. I felt that Kṛṣṇa was inspiring people to come and get His words.

I found Nepalis to be religious, devotional people. They were quite interested to speak to a Western devotee of Kṛṣṇa (I'm from South America). Their pride in their Vedic heritage was particularly apparent at Durbar Square,

a striking assembly of ancient temples and palaces where Nepali kings are crowned and their coronations solemnized. The boys and I set about distributing some of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books, which were well received by both local people and tourists.

August 16, Bhaktapura

We went to this town near Katmandu during the festival of Gayatra. Many Nepalis joined our chanting procession as part of similar events surrounding the festival.

August 18, Katmandu

One young lady named Veronica had just arrived from Austria. She said she was fed up with the materialistic

joying book distribution.”

A particularly good philosophy student, Hariścandra was honored one morning with an invitation to give the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class in the ISKCON Katmandu temple.

August 24 (Śrīla Prabhupāda's Vyāsa Pūjā), Katmandu

After the wonderful celebration at the ISKCON temple, I went to walk and chant in the hills overlooking Katmandu and the Vishnumati River. It is a beautiful place to chant. After being immersed for some time in the chanting, I saw a smiling young man coming toward me. He told me his name was Vinoj, and he invited me to his house, so we climbed the hill to it.



“rat-race, exploitive society” and had come to Nepal seeking higher knowledge. She eagerly accepted Prabhupāda's books and discussed Kṛṣṇa consciousness with us at length.

One of my students, sixteen-year-old Hariścandra, had his first taste of book distribution.

“I had no idea what to do,” he told me. “But I found that the people were friendly and generous. There were some rough people, but most would listen, and I found myself greatly en-

Vinoj, his brother Svaraj, and his sister Manju then hosted me with great care.

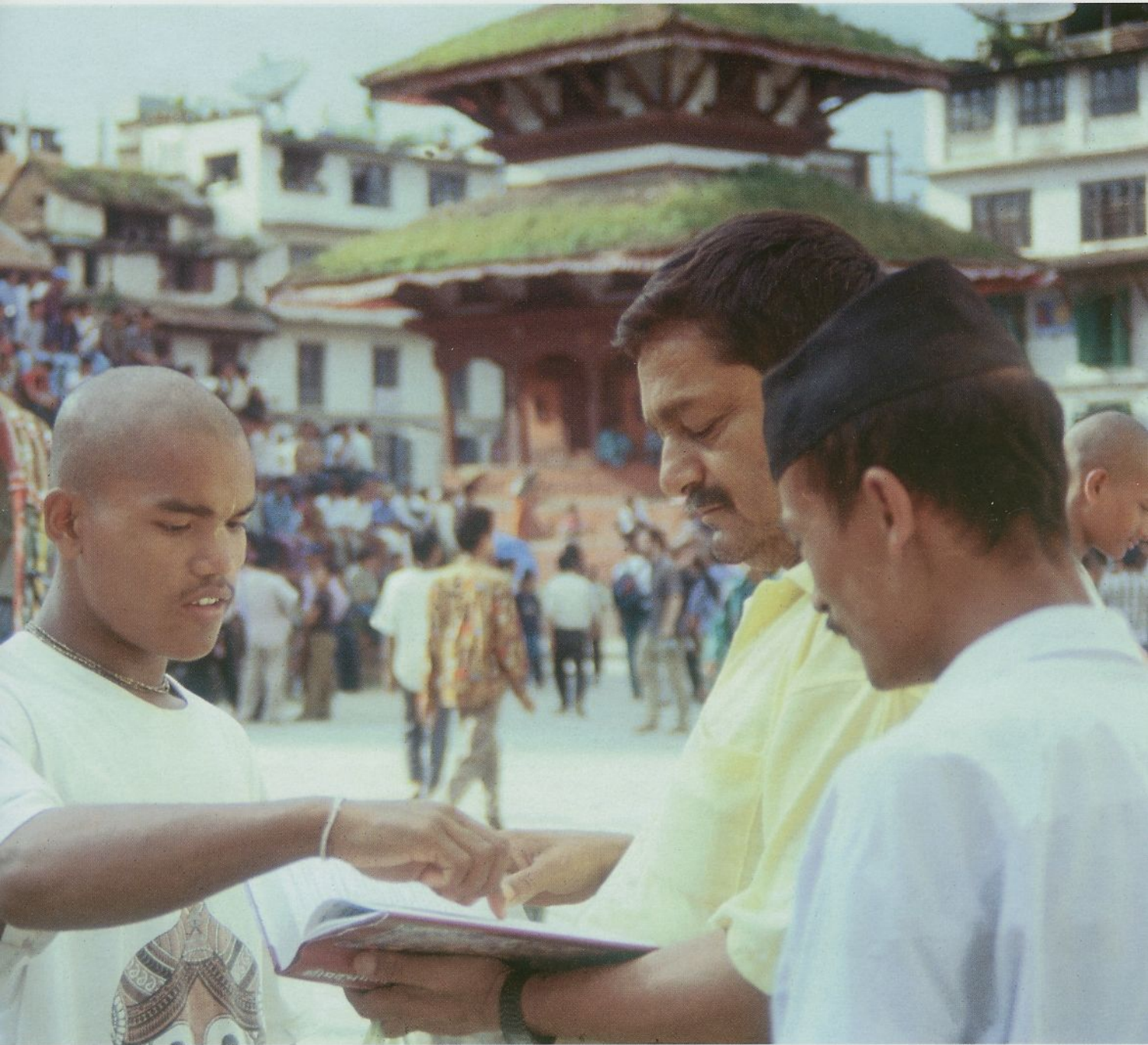
The encounter helped me understand how Kṛṣṇa enters the hearts of people through the mercy of devotees. Sometime ago a devotee from Māyāpur had come through here and planted the seed of *bhakti*. I was able to witness of how the seed was gradually becoming a creeper. Vinoj and his brother and sister showed me posters of Rādhā-Mādhava (the deities of ISKCON Māyāpur), their special

guests. They told me they often read Śrīla Prabhupāda's book *Kṛṣṇa*.

August 26, Pokora

Our destination, Muktinath, is a famous holy place high in the Himalayas. The *Mahābhārata* mentions it as Śālagrāma. Only those willing to trek the steep trail can reach it.

Soon after setting out from Kathmandu, we encountered the remains of a big landslide. The boys joined some local devotees in chanting their way



At the ISKCON Katmandu temple (opposite page), Māyāpur student Hariścandra Dāsa conducts the morning Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam class. Above, a student shows one of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books in a busy section of Katmandu. At left, in a village along the way, a decorated donkey carries his load, heading into the higher mountains.



over the rubble. Without much delay, we reached our first destination, a small ISKCON temple at Pokora. Here we enjoyed a striking view of the Ceti-Gandaki River.

August 28, The Trek Begins

We made it to Beni, a small town that's as far as the buses can go. From here on it's either by foot or by mule. We chose to go by foot.

The day started out rainy as we set out for Muktinath from the south.

Reaching Muktinath has always been difficult. Although the trail has been made relatively safe in recent years, many pilgrims have lost their lives negotiating the ancient path rimming the world's deepest and steepest river gorge.

Here the men employ mules for hauling on the steep mountainsides. Although accustomed to seeing pilgrims, the men seemed quite interested in our unusual party. They were simple and kind.

August 29, Along the Gandaki

We came across several obstacles, such as rivers and steep climbs. The Gandaki River roared with its dark waters, breaking up the mountains. We sometimes walked around cliffs tempting us to fall into the sacred waters.

I reflected on how strange all this must appear to these young devotees, whose lives to this point had been entirely spent on the perfectly flat terrain of West Bengal. They seemed



In Pokara (above), Mahāviṣṇu Swami, who accompanied the students for part of the trek, chants on his beads while overlooking the Ceti-Gandaki River. A village woman spins yarn (top, right), and her child looks for amusement. A rainy day (right) tests the pilgrims' determination.

fascinated as they soldiered on up the steep trail.

We walked on through wonderful forests. Suddenly I noticed a huge cloud rolling in from behind us. Within minutes it had swallowed the sky above us and the mountains ahead. One of the boys commented innocently, “We are touching the clouds.” It sounded so logical and true that it stuck in my mind. Yes, we were walking in the clouds here, three thousand meters above our ashram home in Māyāpur.

More imposing than the physical challenges were the constant mental demands. My mind seemed to constantly chant, “What is the use of this austerity?” I talked with the boys to help us keep up our determination. We were rewarded with exquisite views of Kṛṣṇa’s hand in nature.

August 30

We passed several small villages where the people had special sympathy for the chanting of the holy name. There are many Hindu and Buddhist temples, shrines, and prayer wheels.

September 1, Kagbeni to Muktinath

We approached Muktinath with sore feet and inspired hearts. The well-beaten path had been set for us by countless pilgrims, each completing the rigorous climb to worship and view the sacred deity of Muktinath. The arduous task of traveling to this holy site and undertaking personal austerity on the way made the prospective *darśana* (viewing of the deity) extraordinarily exciting.

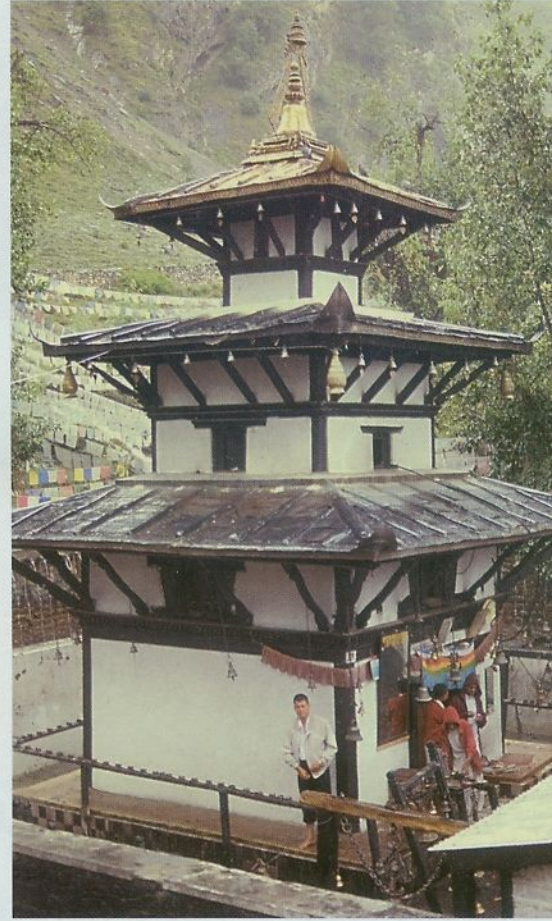


Our day began with a beautiful view of the path of the Kali-Gandaki River between the mountains and of the Muktinath River joining it. But our determination to ascend to the holy shrine was tested by the steepest hills of our journey. Our ascent was demanding. We arrived after several hours of arduous climbing to that magnificent place glorified throughout the centuries.

Before one goes to the main temple for *darśana* of the deity of Lord Viṣṇu called Muktinātha (“The Master of Liberation”), the custom is to bathe



The author and a student (left) take a break during the first leg of the trek. One hundred and eight spigots of ice-cold water (opposite page, bottom) purify pilgrims for the audience of Lord Muktinātha. Below: the Muktinath temple.



first under 108 water spouts, an act said to award liberation. The spouts are arranged in a semi-circle, and the pilgrim should step under each of them, taking the water on his head. Most people begin with the intention of going under each spout, but the water is freezing, so after three or four spouts they start running, without considering if they've touched them all.

Only born Hindus are allowed to enter the temple, but one member of our group talked with the priest, and he agreed to let me in. Inside, the place of worship is lit with oil lamps. The

soft light gives a feeling of intimacy with the Lord, seated in a beautiful yoga posture. Śrī Muktinath is a brass deity with the most wonderful sweet expression. Very merciful. He is accompanied by Śrī Mahā-Lakṣmī, the goddess Sarasvatī, and Garuḍa.

After a minute I realized that I was the only pilgrim at that time. The priest closed the door and let me stay for a long time. I offered mantras and prayers to the Lord, asking Him to bestow his unlimited mercy on us. Then the doors opened, and the rays of the outside world rushed in. I understood that

it was time for me to go out.

The next day we headed down, another trek filled with experiences.

September 3, Ghasa

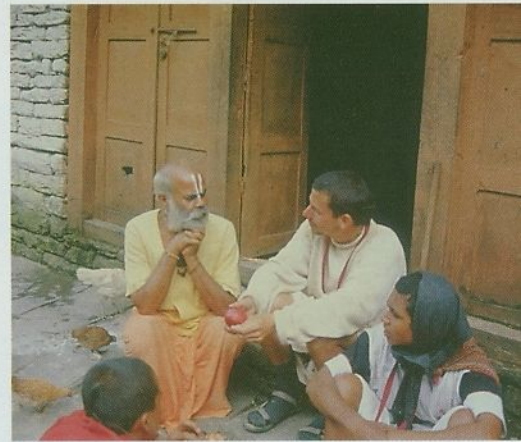
On the outskirts of Ghasa, an elderly monk greeted us with sweet words and invited us to his simple ashram for a cup of milk. We thanked him and reciprocated by offering him an apple. He gladly accepted it and then, stepping into his ashram, returned with an armful of apples and handed one to each of us.

We sat with the elderly sadhu and





A lively chanting party (left) makes its way through the streets of Katmandu. On the outskirts of Ghasa (below), a sadhu offered the trekkers apples, warm hats, and conversation about Kṛṣṇa.



discussed *bhakti*. He said that he spent much of his time chanting, and that in his heart there was only one name, that of Śrī Rādhā, who is devotion to Kṛṣṇa personified. His life, he said, was meant for serving the devotees on pilgrimage to Muktinath.

I felt so touched by his simple kindness that I gave him a valuable warm wool *chaddar* (wrap). He accepted it graciously, then again stepped into his tiny ashram. This time he came out with an armful of wool hats and presented one to each of the boys. They watched the exchange and remembered our discussions on the importance of *prīti-lakṣaṇam*: loving exchanges between devotees of Kṛṣṇa.

September 6, Kathmandu

The trek to Muktinath had taken four days, but we made it back down in three—just in time to observe Rādhāṣṭamī, the appearance day of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, at the Kathmandu ISKCON temple. ☸

Phālguna Dāsa, a disciple of His Holiness Mahāviṣṇu Swami, is originally from Colombia, South America. He joined ISKCON in 1995 and has been teaching at the Māyāpur boys school since 1999.



VAISNAVA COMPASSION

*A natural human sentiment,
compassion finds its highest expression
in the works of devotees of the Lord.*

by Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami

“The tenderness of the heart experienced toward Kṛṣṇa is known as *bhakti*. All other *jīvas* are servants of Kṛṣṇa. When one experiences tenderness of heart toward them, it is known as *dayā*, compassion. Therefore, compassion is included within *bhakti*.”

—Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, *Jaiva Dharma*, p. 179

I WAS AWARE OF THE CONCEPT of compassion before I met Śrīla Prabhupāda. While studying at Brooklyn College, I took a philosophy course in which we studied the writings of Bertrand Russell. In particular, I remember how he presented Nietzsche in comparison to Buddha. He gave a synopsis of Buddha’s philosophy, compared it to Nietzsche’s approach to humankind, and said in effect, “Which do you think is better?” Russell was obviously taken with Buddha’s compassion for living beings, and considered a Buddha superior to a philosopher who worked with humanity as an idea. That was my introduction to how compassion was meant to be a heartfelt sentiment.

Just before I entered the Navy, I went to Confession at a Staten Island church. I told the priest I had begun to doubt the sacrament of

At left: An enlightened devotee of the Lord sees beyond the body to the soul and understands that the solution to all suffering rests in reuniting the soul with God.

I realized early that I could make no real impact on my clients' lives, and that material welfare work could not lift these people above their suffering.

• • •

Confession. When he invited me to meet him at the rectory, I poured out my concerns—the injustice whites were perpetrating against blacks, the senseless Korean War, and the complete materialism of standard American values.

The priest said simply, “I see you have a lot of love in you.”

I was flattered, but I knew what I was really saying: How could a loving God allow so many injustices in the world? I was losing faith. The world seemed cold-hearted, competition-based, and loveless. Most of my friends agreed with this analysis. Thinking back, I see now that the priest was acknowledging my sentiment but recognizing that I had no idea how to express my love properly.

Being in the Navy did not help develop such sentiments. Upon discharge, I accepted a job in the Welfare Department. This is usually considered a compassionate field. I didn't take the position because I felt any particular sentiment for the poor, however; rather, I took it because it was an easy job for a college graduate to get.

There were people working in the Welfare Department who actually cared about their clients, but I saw right away that such concern was difficult to maintain. So many of these clients were simply trying to beat the system; few of them were interested in improving their lives. Many used the money to buy alcohol or drugs or engage in activities that degraded them. I felt my heart grow hard while working with those people. I think what really affected me was that there was no way out for them. The welfare system provided only a subsistence lifestyle, and many of these people were genuinely needy. It was going to take more than a new refrigerator or a few dollars to lift them out of both their poverty and the mental-

ity that prevented them from being able to do more with their lives.

I could see that the Welfare Department was bailing a boat with a leaky bucket. My experience is probably common in the professionally compassionate fields. Later, I would hear Prabhupāda quote Vidyāpati in another context: When you are dying of thirst in a desert, what good is one drop of water? I realized early that I could make no real impact on my clients' lives, and that material welfare work could not lift these people above their suffering.

DIMINISHING COMPASSION

Later, in 1966, I broke my heels in a fall and was confined to bed for six weeks. I used the time to read books on Eastern philosophy and religion, including the *Upaniṣads* and other Vedic books, and books on Buddhism. I still remember one book in particular—*The Compassionate Buddha*—because I liked the idea of being compassionate. Although selfishness is a natural characteristic of conditioned souls in Kali-yuga, few of us are born without a natural sense of compassion. Still, Śrīla Prabhupāda states that that natural compassion is becoming more and more covered in this age:

But in this age—it is called Kali-yuga—we are reducing our bodily strength, our memory, power of memorizing, our feelings of sympathy for others, compassion, age, duration of life, religious propensities. . . . Formerly if somebody is attacked by another man, many persons will come to help him: “Why is this man attacked?” But at the present moment if one man is attacked, the passersby will not care for it because they have lost their sympathy or mercifulness for others. Our neighbor may

starve, but we don't care for it. . . . This is Kali-yuga.

—New Vrindaban,
September 2, 1972

Even those who manage to retain their compassionate sentiments into adulthood are deluged by the media with images of suffering. Gradually, we become jaded, our sentiments dulled. It is normal to hear that fifty thousand were killed here, twenty thousand there, two million in such-and-such earthquake, ten thousand homeless from such-and-such flood—again and again and again—and *all* of it is horrible. We are helpless in the light of so much suffering. Over time, we back away from the world's pain to experience or sidestep the suffering we can find in our own backyards. It just seems too much to try for more.

When I met Śrīla Prabhupāda, I came to understand real compassion. I also came to understand how truly rare a compassionate person is. Compassion is not a material quality but an extension of our spiritual consciousness. The dictionary defines it as “a feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for another's suffering or misfortune, accompanied by a desire to alleviate the pain or remove its cause.” Synonyms: commiseration, tenderness, heart, clemency. Antonyms: mercilessness, indifference.

Sympathy: “Harmony of or agreement in feeling, as between persons or on the part of one person with respect to another; a quality of mutual relations between people or things whereby whatever affects one also affects the other; the ability to share the feelings of another, esp. in sorrow or trouble; compassion or commiseration; *sympathies*: feelings or impulses of compassion.”

Here is a list of Sanskrit terms that

Supreme Compassion

“My dear Lord, let me suffer perpetually in a hellish condition, accepting all the sinful reactions of all living entities. Please finish their diseased material life.”

—Spoken by Śrīla Vāsudeva Datta. From *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 15.163

FROM THE PURPORT by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda:

A Vaiṣṇava is so liberal that he is prepared to risk everything to rescue the conditioned souls from material existence. Śrīla Vāsudeva Datta Ṭhākura is universal love itself, for he was willing to sacrifice everything and fully engage in the service of the Supreme Lord. . . .

Vāsudeva Datta’s example is unique not only within this world but within the universe. It is beyond the conception of fruitive actors or the speculation of mundane philosophers. Due to being illusioned by the external energy and due to a poor fund of knowledge, people tend to envy one another. Because of this they are entangled in fruitive activity, and they try to escape this fruitive activity by mental speculation. Consequently neither *karmīs* [fruitive workers] nor *jñānīs* [mental speculators] are purified. In the words of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Ṭhākura, they are *kukarmīs* and *kujñānīs*—bad fruitive actors and bad speculators. The Māyāvādīs and *karmīs* should therefore turn their attention to the magnanimous Vāsudeva Datta, who wanted to suffer for others in a hellish condition.

No one should consider Vāsudeva Datta a mundane philanthropist or welfare worker. Nor was he interested in merging into

the Brahman effulgence or in gaining material honor or reputation. He was far, far above philanthropists, philosophers, and fruitive actors. He was the most exalted personality to ever show mercy to the conditioned souls. This is not an exaggeration of his transcendental qualities. It is perfectly true.

Actually, there cannot be any comparison to Vāsudeva Datta. As the perfect Vaiṣṇava, he was *para-duḥkha-duḥkhī*, very much aggrieved to see others suffer. The entire world is purified simply by the appearance of such a great devotee. Indeed, by his transcendental presence the whole world is glorified and all conditioned souls are also glorified. As Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura confirms, Vāsudeva Datta is the ideal devotee of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu:

*gaurāṅgera saṅgi-gaṇe
nitya-siddha kori’ māne
se jāy brajendra-suta-pās*

One who executes Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s mission must be considered eternally liberated. He is a transcendental person and does not belong to this material world. Such a devotee, engaging in the deliverance of the total population, is as magnanimous as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself.

*namo mahā-vadānyāya
kṛṣṇa-prema-pradāya te
kṛṣṇaya kṛṣṇa-caitanya-
nāmne gaura-tiṣṭhe namaḥ*
[Cc. *Madhya* 19.53]

Such a personality factually represents Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu because his heart is always filled with compassion for all conditioned souls.

further divide the sentiments of compassion:

anukampāna—sympathy, compassion
anugraha—favor, kindness, conferring benefits upon, promoting the good objective of, gracious toward
karuṇa—compassion; the pathetic sentiment in poetry

kṛpā—compassion accompanied by tenderness, pity (*kṛpālu*); specifically refers to compassion expressed toward those whom one knows
dayā—widespread or generalized feelings of mercy or sympathy. (In the *Bhāgavatam*, *Dayā* is the daughter of Dakṣa (Expertise) and the mother of Abhaya (Fearlessness).)

THE COMPASSION OF GREAT SOULS

Compassion means we think beyond our own troubles and feel sympathy and heartfelt sorrow for the troubles of others. There are those who are compassionate toward those they know—their friends, relatives, countrymen, or fellow religionists; and there are those great souls who are compassionate toward all spirit souls. Prabhupāda was such a great soul. Prabhupāda’s heart bled to see our suffering, and he dedicated his life to helping us overcome it. What makes him rarer still is that not only was he willing to dedicate his life to alleviating our pain; he actually knew the panacea.

And he asked us to repay him by helping those whom *we* met.

But what if we don’t share the depth of his compassion? What if we don’t feel any compassion at all? We can still enlist in his mission. By working for someone compassionate, we can develop compassion. By serving others, and by serving Śrīla Prabhupāda’s compassionate heart, we can give up selfishness and become big-hearted.

Some devotees may hear this and wonder how this could be true. If Śrīla Prabhupāda began a compassionate movement, and if we have been working for him all these years, why didn’t *we* become compassionate? Or perhaps it can be argued that we did become compassionate, but only toward those who had not yet contacted Kṛṣṇa consciousness. But why didn’t our

compassion spill over in our relationships with other devotees?

I won't pretend to have the single answer to that question, but I think it is healthy to ask it. There was a time in ISKCON when we presumed we were the most compassionate people in the world; after all, we were distributing the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, the greatest benediction ever to be given to humankind. The scriptures define Kṛṣṇa consciousness as the best welfare work for humanity. It is supposed to be better than the Peace Corps, better than the Cancer Research Society—better than any other idea anyone else has ever had about how to free people from suffering. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is also universal, and there is nothing to bar anyone from taking part. It is *sarvatra sarvadā*, suitable to be practiced in all times, all places, and under all circumstances. Śrīla Prabhupāda writes:

Men do not know that the ultimate goal of life is Viṣṇu . . . due to being bewildered by the glaring reflection in the darkness, and as such everyone is entering into the darkest region of material existence, driven by the uncontrolled senses. The whole material existence has sprung up because of sense gratification . . . principally . . . sex desire, and the result is that in spite of all advancement of knowledge, the final goal of all the activities of the living entities is sense gratification. . . . Universal consciousness is factually achieved by coordinated service of all concerned to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and that alone can insure total perfection. Therefore even the great scientists, the great philosophers, the great mental speculators, the great politicians, the great industrialists, the great social reformers, etc., cannot give any relief to the restless society of the material world because

they do not know the secret of success . . . namely, that one must know the mystery of *bhakti-yoga*. . . . The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* therefore says again and again that without attainment of the status of *bhakti-yoga*, all the activities of human society are to be considered absolute failures only.

—*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.9.36,
Purport

That we have such a great, compassionate gift to offer others, however, does not mean that we are ourselves the most compassionate of workers. It also does not mean that those who are working in less glorious ways but who are giving more selflessly of themselves are not expressing compassion. In fact, they may be expressing more compassion toward others than we are. Many grassroots workers in this world sacrifice their lives for their chosen causes, even though those causes may offer only temporary relief to those whom they are trying to help. What could be motivating them except a sense of compassion? Still, we devotees tend to think we are better simply because we have access to the highest welfare.

Real compassion is not achieved automatically upon joining the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Compassion is not a line of work but an expansion of heart. Śrīla Prabhupāda genuinely understood the suffering of material life and the pain of rebirth. He knew and taught his followers that only by awakening the people's dormant Kṛṣṇa consciousness could they be freed from the cycle of birth and death. It is not enough, he said, to alleviate people's material hunger and thirst. It is not enough to alleviate their suffering for this lifetime only. He wanted his followers to save not only the drowning man's coat but the drowning man himself. ❁

Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami, one of Śrīla Prabhupāda's first disciples, is a former editor of BTG and the author of many books on Kṛṣṇa consciousness, including a six-volume biography of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Adapted from the Introduction to *Vaiṣṇava Compassion*, just published by Gita Nagari Press and available from the Hare Kṛṣṇa Bazaar (page 64).

COMING
SOON!



A New
BBT/BTG
Website

Back to Godhead and the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust International have built a team to create a new website where you'll find everything about Kṛṣṇa. We're creating hundreds of pages of new art, interactive experiences, and information about Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Log on now to www.krishna.com, and register to get regular news of progress and the launch date. Take part in the poll there to make sure your voice is heard and the site serves your needs.

A renovated Hare Kṛṣṇa Bazaar (krishna.com/bazaar) will launch on December 1, 2001, in time for holiday shopping. View new products, get benefits for becoming a registered member, and experience a whole new shopping experience. Register at www.krishna.com to claim your forwarding e-mail address: yourname@krishna.com.

Want to help? Use your skills to take part in this important project by logging on to www.backtogodhead.com. See how you can help from your own home through our VirtualSeva network.

(Like BTG's current site, the new combined site will be called krishna.com.)

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

DEVAHŪTI ATTAINS TRANSCENDENTAL BLISS

*Devahūti, the mother of Kapiladeva,
an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, fixes her mind in meditation
on the Lord and attains the highest happiness.*

CANTO 3: CHAPTER 33

26 ब्रह्मण्यवस्थितमतिर्भगवत्यात्मसंश्रये
निवृत्तजीवापत्तिवात्क्षीणकृशाप्तनिर्वृतिः

*brahmaṇy avasthīta-matir
bhagavaty ātma-saṁśraye
nivr̥tta-jīvāpattivāt
kṣiṇa-kleśāpta-nirvṛtiḥ*

brahmaṇi—in Brahman; *avasthīta*—situated; *matih*—her mind; *bhagavati*—in the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *ātma-saṁśraye*—residing in all living entities; *nivr̥tta*—freed; *jīva*—of the *jīva* soul; *āpattivāt*—from the unfortunate condition; *kṣiṇa*—disappeared; *kleśa*—material pangs; *āpta*—attained; *nirvṛtiḥ*—transcendental bliss.

Her mind became completely engaged in the Supreme Lord, and she automatically realized the knowledge of the impersonal Brahman. As a Brahman-realized soul, she was freed from the designations of the materialistic concept of life. Thus all material pangs disappeared, and she attained transcendental bliss.

PURPORT: The previous verse states that Devahūti was already conversant with the Absolute Truth. It may be questioned why she was meditating. The explanation is that when one theoretically discusses the Absolute Truth, one becomes situated in the impersonal concept of the Absolute Truth. Similarly, when one seriously discusses the subject matter of the form, qualities, pastimes, and entourage of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one becomes situated in meditation on Him. If one has complete knowledge of the Supreme Lord, then knowledge of the impersonal Brahman is automatically realized. The Absolute Truth is

realized by the knower according to three different angles of vision, namely impersonal Brahman, localized Supersoul, and ultimately the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If one is situated, therefore, in knowledge of the Supreme Person, this implies that one is already situated in the concept of the Supersoul and impersonal Brahman.

In *Bhagavad-gītā* it is said, *brahma-bhūtaḥ prasannātmā* [Bg. 18.54]. This means that unless one is freed from the material entanglement and situated in Brahman, there is no question of entering into the understanding of devotional service or engaging in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. One who is engaged in devotional service to Kṛṣṇa is understood to be already realized in the Brahman concept of life because transcendental knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead includes knowledge of Brahman. This is confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā*. *Brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhāham* [Bg. 14.27]: the concept of the Personality of Godhead does not depend on Brahman. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* also confirms that one who has taken shelter of the all-auspicious Supreme Lord is already situated in the understanding of Brahman. In other words, one who is a Vaiṣṇava is already a *brāhmaṇa*.

Another significant point of this verse is that one has to observe the prescribed rules and regulations. As confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā*, *yuktāhāra-vihārasya*. When one engages in devotional service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he still has to eat, sleep, defend, and mate because these are necessities of the body. But he performs such activities in a regulated way. He has to eat *kṛṣṇa-prasāda*. He has to sleep according to regulative principles. The principle is to reduce the duration of sleep and to reduce eating, taking only what is needed to keep the body fit. In short, the goal is spiritual advancement, not sense gratification. Similarly, sex life must be reduced. ❶ Sex life is meant only for begetting Kṛṣṇa conscious children. Otherwise, there is no necessity for sex life. Nothing is prohibited, but everything is made *yukta*, regulated, with the higher purpose always in mind. By following all these rules and regulations of living, one becomes purified, and all misconceptions due to ignorance become nil. It is specifically mentioned here that the causes of material entanglement are completely vanquished.

The Sanskrit statement *anartha-nivṛtti* indicates that this body is unwanted. We are spirit soul, and there was never any need of this material body. ❷ But because we wanted to enjoy the material body, we have this body, through the material energy, under the direction of the Supreme Per-

sonality of Godhead. As soon as we are reestablished in our original position of servitorship to the Supreme Lord, we begin to forget the necessities of the body, and at last we forget the body.

Sometimes in a dream we get a particular type of body with which to work in the dream. I may dream that I am flying in the sky or that I have gone into the forest or some unknown place. But as soon as I am awake I forget all these bodies. Similarly, when one is Kṛṣṇa conscious, fully devoted, he forgets all his changes of body. We are always changing bodies, beginning at birth from the womb of our mother. But when we are awakened to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, we forget all these bodies. The bodily necessities become secondary, for the primary necessity is the engagement of the soul in real, spiritual life. The activities of devotional service in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness are the cause of our being situated in transcendence. The words *bhagavatya ātma-saṁśraye* denote the Personality of Godhead as the Supreme Soul, or the soul of everyone. In *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa says, *bijaṁ mām sarva-bhūtānām*: “I am the seed of all entities.” By taking shelter of the Supreme Being by the process of devotional service, one becomes fully situated in the concept of the Personality of Godhead. As described by Kapila, *mad-guṇa-śruti-mātreṇa*: one who is fully Kṛṣṇa conscious, situated in the Personality of Godhead, is immediately saturated with love of God as soon as he hears about the transcendental qualities of the Lord.

Devahūti was fully instructed by her son, Kapiladeva, on how to concentrate her mind on the Viṣṇu form in full detail. Following the instructions of her son in the matter of devotional service, she contemplated the form of the Lord within herself with great devotional love. That is the perfection of Brahman realization or the mystic yoga system or devotional service. ❸ At the ultimate issue, when one is fully absorbed in thought of the Supreme Lord and meditates on Him constantly, that is the highest perfection. *Bhagavad-gītā* confirms that one who is always absorbed in such a way is to be considered the topmost yogi.

❹ The real purpose of all processes of transcendental realization—*jñāna-yoga*, *dhyāna-yoga*, or *bhakti-yoga*—is to arrive at the point of devotional service. If one endeavors simply to achieve knowledge of the Absolute Truth or the Supersoul but has no devotional service, he labors without gaining the real result. This is compared to beating the husks of wheat after the grains have already been removed. Unless one understands the Supreme Personality of Godhead to be the ultimate goal, it is valueless simply to speculate or perform mystic yoga practice. In the *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* system, the seventh stage of perfection is *dhyāna*. This *dhyāna* is the third stage in devotional service. There are nine stages of devotional service. The first is hearing, and then comes chanting and then contemplating. By executing devotional service, therefore, one automatically becomes an expert *jñāni* and an expert yogi. In other words, *jñāna* and *yoga* are different preliminary stages of devotional service.

- (1) What is the purpose of sex in Kṛṣṇa consciousness?
- (2) Why does a soul acquire a material body?
- (3) In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, who is said to be the highest yogi?
- (4) What is the real purpose of all processes of transcendental realization?

Devahūti was expert in accepting the real substance; she contemplated the form of Viṣṇu in detail as advised by her smiling son, Kapiladeva. ⑤ At the same time, she was thinking of Kapiladeva, who is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and therefore she completely perfected her austerities, penances, and transcendental realization.

27 नित्यारूढसमाधित्वात्परावृत्तगुणभ्रमा न स्मरन् तदात्मानं स्वप्ने दृष्टमिवोत्थितः

*nityārūḍha-samādhivāt
parāvṛtta-guṇa-bhramā
na sasmāra tadātmānaṁ
svapne dṛṣṭam ivotthitah*

nitya—eternal; *ārūḍha*—situated in; *samādhivāt*—from trance; *parāvṛtta*—freed from; *guṇa*—of the modes of material nature; *bhramā*—illusion; *na sasmāra*—she did not remember; *tadā*—then; *ātmānam*—her material body; *svapne*—in a dream; *dṛṣṭam*—seen; *iva*—just as; *utthitah*—one who has arisen.

Situated in eternal trance and freed from illusion impelled by the modes of material nature, she forgot her material body, just as one forgets his different bodies in a dream.

PURPORT: A great Vaiṣṇava said that he who has no remembrance of his body is not bound to material existence. As long as we are conscious of our bodily existence, it is to be understood that we are living conditionally, under the three modes of material nature. When one forgets his bodily existence, his conditional, material life is over. This forgetfulness is actually possible when we engage our senses in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. In the conditional state, one engages his senses as a member of a family or as a member of a society or country. But when one forgets all such membership in material circumstances and realizes that he is an eternal servant of the Supreme Lord, that is actual forgetfulness of material existence.

This forgetfulness actually occurs when one renders service unto the Lord. A devotee no longer works with the body for sense gratification with family, society, country, humanity, and so on. He simply works for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. That is perfect Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

⑥ A devotee always merges in transcendental happiness, and therefore he has no experience of material distresses. This transcendental happiness is called eternal bliss.

⑦ According to the opinion of devotees, constant remembrance of the Supreme Lord is called *samādhi*, or trance. If one is constantly in trance, there is no possibility of his being attacked or even touched by the modes of material nature. As soon as one is freed from the contamination of the three material modes, he no longer has to take birth

to transmigrate from one form to another in this material world.

28 तद्देहः परतःपोषोऽप्यकुशश्चध्यसम्भवात् बभौ मलैरवच्छन्नः सधूम इव पावकः

*tad-dehah parataḥ poṣo
'py akṛśaś cādhy-asambhavāt
babhau malair avacchannah
sadhūma iva pāvakah*

tad-dehah—her body; *parataḥ*—by others (the damsels created by Kardama); *poṣah*—maintained; *api*—although; *akṛśah*—not thin; *ca*—and; *ādhi*—anxiety; *asambhavāt*—from not occurring; *babhau*—shone; *malaiḥ*—by dust; *avacchannah*—covered; *sa-dhūmah*—surrounded with smoke; *iva*—like; *pāvakah*—a fire.

Her body was being taken care of by the spiritual damsels created by her husband, Kardama, and since she had no mental anxiety at that time, her body did not become thin. She appeared just like a fire surrounded by smoke.

PURPORT: Because she was always in trance in transcendental bliss, the thought of the Personality of Godhead was always carefully fixed in her mind. She did not become thin, for she was taken care of by the celestial maidservants created by her husband. It is said, according to the Āyurvedic medical science, that if one is free from anxieties he generally becomes fat. Devahūti, being situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, had no mental anxieties, and therefore her body did not become thin. It is customary in the renounced order of life that one should not take any service from a servant or maid, but Devahūti was being served by the celestial maidservants. This may appear to be against the spiritual concept of life, but just as fire is still beautiful even when surrounded by smoke, she looked completely pure although it seemed that she was living in a luxurious way.

29 स्वाङ्गं तपोयोगमयं मुक्तकेशं गताम्बरम् दैवगुप्तं न बुबुधे वासुदेवप्रविष्टधीः

*svāṅgaṁ tapo-yogamayam
mukta-keśam gatāmbaram*

(5) How did Devahūti perfect her austerities, penances, and transcendental realization.

(6) Why does a pure devotee have no experience of material distresses?

(7) How do devotees define the word *samādhi*?

*daiva-guptam na bubudhe
vāsudeva-praviṣṭa-dhīḥ*

sva-aṅgam—her body; *tapah*—austerity; *yoga*—yoga practice; *mayam*—fully engaged in; *mukta*—loosened; *keśam*—her hair; *gata*—disarrayed; *ambaram*—her garments; *daiva*—by the Lord; *guptam*—protected; *na*—not; *bubudhe*—she was aware of; *vāsudeva*—in the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *praviṣṭa*—absorbed; *dhīḥ*—her thoughts.

Because she was always absorbed in the thought of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, she was not aware that her hair was sometimes loosened or her garments were disarrayed.

PURPORT: In this verse the word *daiva-guptam*, “protected by the Supreme Personality of Godhead,” is very significant. ❸ Once one surrenders unto the service of the Supreme Lord, the Lord takes charge of the maintenance of the devotee’s body, and there is no need of anxiety for its protection. It is said in the Second Chapter, Second Canto, of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that a fully surrendered soul has no anxiety about the maintenance of his body. The Supreme Lord takes care of the maintenance of innumerable species of bodies; therefore, one who fully engages in His service will not go unprotected by the Supreme Lord. Devahūti was naturally unmindful of the protection of her body, which was being taken care of by the Supreme Person.

30 एवं सा कपिलोक्तेन मार्गेणाचिरतः परम्
आत्मानं ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं भगवन्तमवाप ह

*evam sā kapiloktena
mārgeṇācirataḥ param
ātmānam brahma-nirvāṇam
bhagavantam avāpa ha*

evam—thus; *sā*—she (Devahūti); *kapila*—by Kapila; *uktena*—instructed; *mārgeṇa*—by the path; *acirataḥ*—soon; *param*—supreme; *ātmānam*—Supersoul; *brahma*—Brahman; *nirvāṇam*—cessation of materialistic existence; *bhagavantam*—the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *avāpa*—she achieved; *ha*—certainly.

(8) Why does a soul surrendered to the Lord no longer have to worry about protecting his body?

(9) What is the meaning of *nirvāṇa*?

(10) Which spiritual planet did Devahūti attain?

My dear Vidura, by following the principles instructed by Kapila, Devahūti soon became liberated from material bondage, and she achieved the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as Supersoul, without difficulty.

PURPORT: Three words have been used in this connection to describe the achievement of Devahūti: *ātmānam*, *brahma-nirvāṇam*, and *bhagavantam*. These refer to the gradual process of discovery of the Absolute Truth, mentioned herein as the *bhagavantam*. The Supreme Personality of Godhead resides in various Vaikuṅṭha planets. ❹ *Nirvāṇa* means to extinguish the pangs of material existence. When one is able to enter into the spiritual kingdom or into spiritual realization, one is automatically freed from material pangs. That is called *brahma-nirvāṇa*. According to Vedic scripture, *nirvāṇa* means cessation of the materialistic way of life. *Ātmānam* means realization of the Supersoul within the heart. Ultimately, the highest perfection is realization of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. ❺ It is to be understood that Devahūti entered the planet which is called Kapila Vaikuṅṭha. There are innumerable Vaikuṅṭha planets predominated by the expansions of Viṣṇu. All the Vaikuṅṭha planets are known by a particular name of Viṣṇu. As we understand from *Brahma-saṁhitā*, *advaitam acyutam anādim ananta-rūpam* [Bs 5.33]. *Ananta* means “innumerable.” The Lord has innumerable expansions of His transcendental form, and according to the different positions of the symbolical representations in His four hands, He is known as Nārāyaṇa, Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Vāsudeva, etc. There is also a Vaikuṅṭha planet known as Kapila Vaikuṅṭha, to which Devahūti was promoted to meet Kapila and reside there eternally, enjoying the company of her transcendental son.

31 तद्वीरासीत्पुण्यतमं क्षेत्रं त्रैलोक्यविश्रुतम्
नाम्ना सिद्धपदं यत्र सा संसिद्धिमुपेयुषी

*tad vīrāsīt puṇyatamaṁ
kṣetram trailokya-viśrutam
nāmnā siddha-padam yatra
sā saṁsiddhim upeyuṣī*

tat—that; *vīra*—O brave Vidura; *āsīt*—was; *puṇya-tamam*—most sacred; *kṣetram*—place; *trai-lokya*—in the three worlds; *viśrutam*—known; *nāmnā*—by the name; *siddha-padam*—Siddhapada; *yatra*—where; *sā*—she (Devahūti); *saṁsiddhim*—perfection; *upeyuṣī*—achieved.

The palace where Devahūti achieved her perfection, my dear Vidura, is understood to be a most sacred spot. It is known all over the three worlds as Siddhapada.

(continued in the next issue)

“TOURIST” TO “PILGRIM”

(continued from page 14)

the Moguls invaded India in the late 1700s.

The temple of Rādhā-Govinda was naturally the first place to visit because of its being in the very center of the city. Thousands of people begin their day there by attending the early morning *maṅgala-ārati* or greeting the deities a little later in the morning.

I first came to Rādhā-Govinda’s temple as a new *sannyāsī* in 1979. I was traveling alone on my way to South India to visit the appearance site of Lord Nṛsiṃha in Ahovalam. When I entered Rādhā-Govinda’s temple early one morning, thousands of people were singing beautiful songs to Govindajī with intense emotion. With their hands together in *namaskara*, they swayed back and forth, appealing to the deity with love and devotion. I had been chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa for years, but I had never chanted with so much feeling. The fact that thousands of people were doing so simultaneously had an overwhelming effect on me. I realized that the holy names were the only means of deliverance in this age, and I witnessed that the beauty of Govindajī made those devotees call out to Him with love.

As Mickey and Sherry entered the Rādhā-Govinda temple with me, they seemed relieved that visiting a temple didn’t necessarily mean going through the pushing and shoving we encountered with the enthusiastic followers of Śrī Nāthjī in Nathdwara. Although thousands of people were coming to see Govindajī, there was ample space in the large temple. To my surprise, Mickey and Sherry went straight to the front to get a good view of Rādhā-Govinda and study Their transcendental forms. In Nathdwara they had only a glimpse of Śrī Nāthjī; here they wanted to see first-hand who all the commotion was about.

Our discussion about deity worship had evolved since our initial conversation, when they politely referred to it as “idol worship.” But they had witnessed something special at Śrī Nāthjī’s temple and were curious to know more. Their attitude reminded me of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s words at the installation of the first Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa

deities in Los Angeles.

“If you see these deities as brass,” he said, “They will remain like that to you forever. But if you approach Them with love and devotion, one day They will speak to you.”

Seeing Mickey and Sherry intently studying the forms of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, the head *pūjārī* [priest] did an amazing thing that only deepened my faith in the power of the deity to reciprocate with our approaches to Him. He called Mickey and Sherry forward to the front of the altar and had them stand only ten feet away from Rādhā-Govinda. Sherry had spontaneously bought a garland outside the temple, and now that she was in front of the deity, she gathered strength and slowly handed it to the *pūjārī*, indicating that he should give it to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Understanding the special moment, the *pūjārī* took the garland and gave it to Rādhārāni, and then took two garlands from Rādhārāni and *tulasī* leaves from the feet of Govindajī and came back and gave them to Mickey and Sherry. I and many pilgrims present watched in amazement.

When Mickey and Sherry came back from the altar, they garlanded themselves, ate the *tulasī* leaves, and folded their hands in *namaskara*, looking at Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Deciding that from this point on I

would have no hesitation in bringing them closer to the Lord, I gave them several of Govindajī’s huge sweetballs and suggested they distribute them. As soon as they held the *prasādam* out, they were deluged by pilgrims eager for mercy. Mickey was in bliss and turned to me to say, “It’s better to give than to receive.”

AWAKENING REALIZATIONS

We left very early the next day for Vṛndāvana. Mickey and Sherry were eager to go to Vṛndāvana because I had told them there were five thousand temples there.

During the ride, Mickey asked if there were deities in every temple.

“Yes, of course,” I said.

Then he asked if all the deities were black.

“Yes,” I replied, “most of Them are.”

When he asked, “Who is the girl always standing next to Kṛṣṇa?” I gave him a brief explanation.

As he started with yet another question, I had to say, “Mickey, let’s take a little rest now. We’ll talk about all this in Vṛndāvana. The atmosphere there is very conducive to these types of questions.”

For a few moments he was silent, and then like a young boy he asked

Prime Minister Vajpayee Congratulates ISKCON Russia

August 11, 2001—Indian Prime Minister Atal B. Vajpayee sent the following complimentary message on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of ISKCON in Russia.

“I am pleased to know that the International Society for Krishna Consciousness will be celebrating its thirtieth anniversary in Russia on August 12, which coincides with Krishna Janmastami. Over the last few decades, ISKCON has played an important role in popularizing the noble message of the Gita and the inspiring life of Lord Krishna in many foreign lands. It is a tribute to the resolute spirit of the followers of ISKCON that they have sustained their temple in Russia for so many years. This indeed shows that Krishna’s message is eternal and relevant to all people at all time.

“I compliment ISKCON Russia for this achievement. I hope that, in the years to come, it will continue to serve the people of Russia and Lord Krishna with the same fervor as it has done so far. On this occasion, I send my best wishes to the devotees of Lord Krishna in Russia.”

Although they were tourists in India, they were no longer interested in going to the spots where tourists generally go.

• • •

“How long will it take us to get to Vṛndāvana?”

I replied, “I don’t think it’s going to take *you* very long to get there, Mickey.”

“What’s that?” he asked.

“Nothing, Mickey. Let’s take rest,” I said.

I couldn’t believe the transformation that had taken place with our two guests from rural America. Only days before they’d had so many doubts about worshipping the deity of the Lord. Now they were expressing such eagerness to see Him. Kṛṣṇa is surely the supreme mystic.

Our small party entered Vṛndāvana early on the morning of February 20. In a sense, Mickey and Sherry had come to Vṛndāvana as pilgrims. Although they were tourists in India, they were no longer interested in going to the spots where tourists generally go. On the way to Vṛndāvana, they had taken a side trip to India’s ultimate tourist destination, the Taj Mahal. But upon entering Vṛndāvana, they could at once perceive the difference.

As we neared ISKCON’s Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Temple and the adjacent MVT buildings, where they would be staying, Mickey offered his first assessment of Vṛndāvana: “The Taj Mahal was dead compared with Vṛndāvana. There’s a special atmosphere here.”

We soon took rickshas into town to visit the Rādhā-Dāmodara temple, where I told Mickey and Sherry about Śrīla Prabhupāda’s coming to the West. The story so touched their hearts that when Śrī Prahlāda led *kīrtana* in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s room, they enthusiastically chanted Hare Kṛṣṇa with us. It was the first time they had chanted, and it seemed to me to be the beginning of the end of their material existence.

In the evening we visited the temple of Vraja-Mohana, the deity of Śrīla

Narottama Dāsa Thākura. After *kīrtana*, Mickey turned to me and said that he had heard that Vraja-Mohana was a special deity for me. I replied that it was true and that I was helping to reconstruct the temple. I mentioned that my Russian disciples, eager to help me in my service, had recently donated more than \$1,000 to paint the temple and make three new outfits for the Lord. I explained to Mickey that this is the real meaning of deity worship; it allows us to render personal, intimate service to the Lord.

Looking at Vraja-Mohana, Mickey said, “I think I understand now.”

When we all left the temple, Mickey wasn’t around, so I went back inside to find him. From a distance, I saw him with the priest. He was handing him a \$100 bill, pointing to the deity and indicating that it was for His service.

On February 21, we visited other prominent temples. As we headed into town that morning, I didn’t see Sherry, and I asked Mickey if she would be coming. He smiled and pointed to the group of women accompanying us. There I saw Sherry in a silk sari with a bindi on her forehead. She kept her head covered the whole day and offered her respects to all the deities in the temples we visited, folding her hands and sometimes praying. I also prayed to those same deities, amazed by Their potency to transform the hearts of my guests.

RARE FORTUNE

The next day I went out alone to visit some holy sites where I always feel inspiration. In the evening I returned to Vṛndāvana to make final preparations for my departure to Africa the next morning. When I arrived there, Mickey and Sherry came to see me. They asked where I had been during the day, and I said I’d been to Govar-

dhana Hill and Radha Kunda. Apparently, some devotees had told them about the glories of those places, and they lamented that they wouldn’t have a chance to see them before leaving India. Hearing their enthusiasm to go there, and considering that such a visit would be the crowning glory of their trip to India, I decided to take them to Radha Kunda on our way to Delhi to catch our flights.

Rising early the next day, Gaura Śakti, Mickey, Sherry, and I packed our belongings in the Tata Sumo van that would be taking us to the airport. As I loaded my things, I was already feeling separation from Vṛndāvana.

By the time we left, we were running late, but Mickey and Sherry were determined to see Govardhana Hill and Radha Kunda. After a quick *darśana* of Govardhana upon arriving, we proceeded to Radha Kunda, the most sacred of all holy places. Situated in a small rural village, Radha Kunda can be truly appreciated only by those advanced souls whose eyes are covered by the salve of love of God. Beginners can have some appreciation by the study of scriptures, but non-devotees can only be bewildered as to why someone would be eager to visit the two little ponds at the foot of Govardhana Hill called Syama Kunda and Radha Kunda.

I could see that I didn’t have to worry about Mickey and Sherry. They were eager to see Radha Kunda and appreciated that it was indeed special mercy for them. They had been groomed for this moment by the devotees, and no doubt by the Lord Himself. What tourists ever get *darśana* of Śrī Nāthjī in Nathdwara, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda in Jaipur, and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Śyamasundara in Vṛndāvana? What tourists live for ten days on the *mahā-prasādam* of the Lord? What tourists get the opportunity to give

their hard-earned money to Vraja-Mohana, the beloved deity of Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Thākura? The cumulative effect of all that mercy was evident in the awe and reverence Mickey and Sherry showed when they approached Radha Kunda and put her sacred waters upon their heads.

On the way back to the van, Mickey said to me, "Mahārāja, you've been so kind to us these ten days here in India. In particular, you and Śrī Prah-lāda have answered all our questions to our full satisfaction. But I have one question left, and this time I'm afraid that neither of you will be able to answer."

Thinking there might be a lingering doubt in Mickey's mind despite all the mercy he'd received, I asked, "What's that question, Mickey?"

"How will I be able to explain all of this to my friends back home?" he asked. "How does one put into words the wonders of what we've seen and done? How do you explain Vṛndāvana to those who've never met devotees like yourselves?"

"It's not easy, Mickey," I replied. "But devotees of the Lord carry Vṛndāvana in their hearts, and wherever they go they share that mercy with others. My spiritual master in particular took Vṛndāvana to the West. If people read his books, they'll get an idea of the special mercy available here."

As we got into the van, everyone had an empty feeling inside. We felt we were leaving our real home. As we drove down the road and out of Vraja, Mickey and Sherry looked back. From the look in their eyes, I knew one day they would return. ❁

His Holiness Indradyumna Swami travels around the world teaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In Poland each summer he oversees dozens of festivals. Since 1990 these festivals have introduced Kṛṣṇa to hundreds of thousands of people.

Adapted from the unpublished *Diary of a Traveling Preacher*, Volume 3, Chapters 22–24. To receive chapters as they come out regularly on e-mail, write to indradyumna.swami@pamho.net. (Volumes 1 and 2 are available from the Hare Kṛṣṇa Bazaar. Please see page 66.)

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—Bhagavad-gītā 4.38

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OTHERS WILL FOLLOW

(continued from page 15)

transformation of the animal's blood. So why do you take the blood by killing? Take the blood in a different form—milk. This is our program. Let the animal live peacefully, and if you are meat-eaters, let the animal die naturally, and then you can eat. There will be no charge for it.

To the meat-eaters we say, While taking the cows' milk, we will see that they are protected, and when they die naturally, we will call you meat-eaters and say, "Please take this." You can take the skin for free, you can take the bones for free, and then you can eat the meat. Just wait for the animals to die. They will die, after all.

That much of a concession I want. Let the animals live without any fear of being killed, so that they will supply more milk. Suppose you know that I am keeping you here for eventually being killed. Will you be very happy? Your mind will be always disturbed. We could not get good service from you. So the animals also understand, "They are going to kill us." Therefore, you don't get so much milk. But when they are assured that they will not be killed, they will give double the milk. People do not know the animals' psychology. This is going on.

Director: Thank you very much.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: So if you want to eat meat, let the animals die naturally. That is our program. If you like, you can accept. Thank you very much. [*The Director departs.*]

[*To disciples:*] Lust. This is the modern world's disease. For instance, the leaders want to keep the poor girls free for prostitution, so that they can enjoy. This is the main point. The Director has admitted as much. Keep the young girls "free." They also have sex desire, and so let us enjoy. This is the whole basic principle here in the Western world.

Disciple: Śrīla Prabhupāda, the Director was of a very ripe old age. Still, he was saying that . . .

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Ripe old age notwithstanding, up to the point of death one is sexually inclined. Up to the point of death, one is still looking for a young girl. That is natural. Unless one is trained up, that is natural. That is *māyā's* entrapping machine to keep the living entity within this material world.

Disciple: Sometimes when we offer young people Kṛṣṇa consciousness, they say, "When I get older, I won't be so attached to sex enjoyment, so then I can take up Kṛṣṇa consciousness."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: They generally think so, but that is not possible. In Paris very, very old men—seventy-five or eighty

years old—they are going to nightclubs, paying fifty dollars' entrance fee, and then they spend money for wine and women. And they stay there a few hours and go home, only to come back another night. They are all old men. So breaking this sex attachment is a very difficult job, but still, by Kṛṣṇa's grace you disciples are accepting this principle. That is the great mercy of Kṛṣṇa. Otherwise, it is very, very difficult.

One old man, the Marquis of Zetland—he proposed to one of my Godbrothers, "Can you make me a *brāhmaṇa*?"

"Oh, yes. You give up these lusty habits."

"Oh, that is impossible. That is impossible. These things are our life."

So in the Western countries, these things are their life—to have illicit sex, meat-eating, drinking, and gambling. And yet people are accepting this Kṛṣṇa conscious principle—young boys like you. It is Kṛṣṇa's mercy on us. Otherwise, it is impossible. Breaking these lusty habits is impossible, unless we enjoy with Kṛṣṇa.

No illicit sex. Sex we are not stopping. But sex is restricted to the *gṛhasthas*, the householders. We are not stopping sex. Sex is required. But under rules. If you enjoy illicit sex, then the whole society is spoiled. You make the innocent girls spoiled. And they have no other business than prostitution. That means you put the society into chaos. The young girls become cheap, and you enjoy them and become irresponsible. You stop maintaining the family structure. That is the situation. What is the reason for this welfare department? It is that the young boys enjoy the young girls, and the girls get children. So the government has to support the girls and their children.

Disciple: That's the cause of this whole problem.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. The welfare department is for that purpose only.

Disciple: And this gentleman is a big leader in the welfare department.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: And yet he does the very same thing—the same illicit sex that created the need for the welfare department in the first place. He does not know how to cure the problem.

Disciple: In so many words he said, "I

could not live without illicit sex.”
Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. The leaders themselves have created this “bachelor daddy” madness: young men posing themselves as bachelors, uninterested in having wives and children, simply interested in having sex. You see. And these leaders are accepted as standard. And if you want to reform this situa-

tion, then it is so difficult.
 The basic wrong is, the leaders have become godless animals. That’s all. The only method for reform is this Kṛṣṇa consciousness. There is no second method. *Harāv abhaktasya kuto mahad-guṇāḥ*: you cannot raise anybody to high qualities unless he is God conscious, Kṛṣṇa conscious. That is a

fact. And the proof is here. Because these boys have taken to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, they are ideal. All others—what is their value? That welfare director is a leader—and he says, “Yes, illicit sex is all right. By contraceptive methods we are enjoying it.” If the leaders do something wrong, others will follow. ❀

The Māyāpur Institute of Higher Education (MIHE)

2002 SCHEDULE

January 7—Beginning of the VTE (Vaiṣṇava Training and Education) Bhakti-śāstrī Course
February 14—First Week of the MIHE Semester*
February 19—Advaita Ācārya’s Appearance Day
February 21—Second Week of the MIHE Semester
February 25—Lord Nityānanda’s Appearance Day
February 28—Third Week of the MIHE Semester
March 1—GBC Meetings Begin
March 5—Bhakti-śāstrī Course Breaks Until April 8
March 7—Fourth Week of the MIHE Semester
March 12—GBC Meetings End
March 13—Fifth Week of the MIHE Semester
March 17—End of the MIHE Semester
March 18—Parikramā Leaves Māyāpur
March 24—Parikramā Returns to Māyāpur
March 28—Gaura Pūrṇimā
April 8—Bhakti-śāstrī Course Reconvenes
June 21—Bhakti-śāstrī Course Ends

As an experiment, the MIHE will offer the Vaiṣṇava Training and Education (VTE) Bhakti-śāstrī Course tuition free, relying on donations to cover operating expenses. Students must cover their expenses for room, board, and course materials. The instructors are Atul Kṛṣṇa Dāsa, Mādhavendra Purī Dāsa, Siddhi-lālasā Devī Dāsī, Śrīmate Devī Dāsī, Vidvān Gaurāṅga Dāsa, and Yadunandana Dāsa.

Courses Already Scheduled for the MIHE Semester

Tat-kṛpekṣaṇam: Expecting the Lord’s Mercy—Aniruddha Dāsa • *Communication Skills for Preachers*—Anuttama Dāsa • *Spoken Bengali for*

Beginners—Atul Kṛṣṇa Dāsa • *From Śraddhā to Premā*—B. V. V. Narasimha Swami • *Vraja Maṇḍala Parikramā (Yavat to Gokul)*—Dīna Bandhu Dāsa • *Vaiṣṇava Helping Skills*—Dhīra Govinda Dāsa • *The Pure Devotion of Uddhava*—Gopīparāṇadhana Dāsa • *Ayurvedic Self-healing*—Dr. Liladhar Gupta • *Pāñcarātrika Process of Deity Worship*—Jananivāsa Dāsa, Pañkajāṅghri Dāsa, and Nṛsimha Kavaca Dāsa • *The 8 Noble Truths of ISKCON Fundraising*—Kālakaṅṭha Dāsa • *Classical Hatha Yoga Taught in the Iyengar Tradition*—Krodhaśamanī Devī Dāsī • *Introduction to Oil Painting*—Murali Kṛṣṇa Dāsa • *From Neophyte to Preacher: Preaching as a Means of Perfection in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Movement*—Prahādānanda Swami • *VTE Teacher Training Course 1 & 2*—Rāsamaṇḍala Dāsa • *VTE Bhakti-śāstrī Teacher Training*—Rāsamaṇḍala Dāsa • *Of Gods, Saints, and Supermen*—Tāra Dāsa • *Comma Sutra: The Joys of Punctuation and Other Basics of Editing*—Tattvavit Dāsa • *In Service of the Absolute Truth*—Vedavyāsapriya Swami

Russian Medium Courses

6 Steps of Success in Devotional Service—Uttama Śloka Dāsa • *From Suffering to Bliss: Kṛṣṇa’s Special Mercy*—Vakreśvari Devī Dāsī • *Śrī Tattva Sandarbha*—Viśiṣṭha Dāsa

More courses are expected to be added. For details about courses, scheduling, and registration, check the MIHE website at www.mayapur.org/mihe, or write to mihe@pamho.net.

*Each week of the MIHE Semester consists of five days of classes. Courses will start throughout the semester, so students may enter the semester at the beginning of each week.

FEELINGS & PHIL

Reactions to the Terrorist Attacks

When terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon stunned the people of America, many devotees of Kṛṣṇa grieved along with their fellow Americans. Was that a proper response for persons trained in the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness? In the days following the attacks, many devotees pondered that question and similar ones, and not everyone reached the same conclusions. Here we present some thoughts by three members of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

Enlightened Compassion

by Hridayānanda Dāsa Goswami

[Originally written as a letter to disciples soon after the events.]

Surely by now you have all heard about the recent terrorist attacks in New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania. Since we aspire to be servants of the Lord, it is important that we not take a casual or dismissive attitude toward these events and say, for example, "It's just a fight among the materialists" or "People are just suffering their karma." Were this to be the full extent of our response to these events, I think we would be deficient in our devotion to God. Why do I think this way?

Lord Kṛṣṇa states in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (6.32) that a devotee should feel universal empathy. Śrīla Prabhupāda translates this verse as follows: "He is a perfect yogi who, by comparison to his own self, sees the true equality of all beings, in both their happiness and their distress, O Arjuna!"

This verse, among other meanings,

Does the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness demand only indifference to the tragic events of this world?



recommends a kind of universal empathy. In his purport Śrīla Prabhupāda stresses the point of empathy: "One who is Kṛṣṇa conscious is a perfect yogi; he is aware of everyone's happiness and distress by dint of his own personal experience. In other words, a devotee of the Lord always looks to the welfare of all living entities, and in this way he is factually the friend of everyone."

DEVOTIONAL EMPATHY

We find another explicit, powerful call for devotional empathy in the *Bhāgavatam* (6.10.9): "If one is un-

happy to see the distress of other living beings and happy to see their happiness, his religious principles are appreciated as imperishable by exalted persons who are considered pious and benevolent."

This is how we can apply such empathy in the case of the recent terrorist attacks:

First, we can imagine what it would have felt like for us to have been on one of the four planes that were hijacked and destroyed, or in one of the three attacked buildings. There is ample information available so that we can be quite specific and explicit in imagining the experience.

Second, we will probably have to

OSOPHY

honestly admit that we would feel significant discomfort, pain, or anxiety in such a situation. If we are capable of deep empathy, if we are able, as Śrīla Prabhupāda states, to understand the experiences of others by comparing them to our own experiences, and

great suffering, are not actually demonstrating advanced detachment in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but rather they are demonstrating a disturbing lack of common empathy, and are in fact embarrassing our movement by their neophyte response.

Zuma Press



we are “factually the friend of everyone,” then we experience true Vaiṣṇava compassion.

In other words, we should not be more detached from the suffering of others than we are from our own suffering. We should not arrogantly dismiss the anguish of others, as if we are beyond anguish. A devotee who is truly transcendental to material suffering, and who would not have suffered at all in one of those four airplanes, or in one of those three buildings, would be a most exalted pure devotee and as such would feel great compassion for the fallen conditioned souls. Those who are not compassionate, and who dismiss as trivial or unimportant such

IDENTIFYING EVIL

ISKCON devotees oppose animal slaughter. How can we not oppose human slaughter? If one says, “It’s their karma,” then we reply that the same is true for cows and other animals that are slaughtered. If one says, “This is just a political fight among materialists,” I would reply that in the *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa clearly distinguishes between acts in the different modes of nature, and He specifically describes certain acts as not only materialistic, but as evil and demonic. It is surely evil and demonic to murder thousands of innocent persons. Let us remember that in Vedic culture we are required

to treat people according to their innocence and guilt in this life. God will take care of their past karma. We are not allowed in Vedic culture to abuse people, harm or kill them, and then say, “It must have been their karma.” Vedic culture is not moral anarchy in the name of karma. We should be above mundane morality, not below it.

During the Bangladesh War in the early 1970s, Śrīla Prabhupāda strongly condemned the Muslim atrocities against the Hindus, and indeed against other Muslims, in Bangladesh. Of course, in every country on earth there are tragedies, and the devotees will benefit themselves personally, and greatly enhance their preaching, if they are able to achieve a real state of deep empathy, not in the cause of materialism or the bodily concept of life, but as a symptom of a budding self-realization that leads one to feel liberated compassion for all suffering beings.

Hridayānanda Dāsa Goswami is an editorial advisor for Back to Godhead.

The View From the Bridge

by Yogeśvara Dāsa

Somehow I managed to get out before New York City was shut down. Moving at a snail’s pace across the Fifty-ninth Street Bridge, my car was one of the few vehicles in an exodus of pedestrians crossing to safety in Long Island City. I looked south from the bridge into a cloud of gray smoke and ash that covered lower Manhattan. Those of us close enough to feel the tremor or see two mountains of concrete and glass crumble went into a dreamlike daze, like sitting in the front row of a disaster film, surrendering rational thought to energies and

What came to mind at that moment on the bridge was how naively we define ourselves by impermanent surroundings.

• • •

sensations way beyond our control. The impossible was playing itself out in front of our eyes. The World Trade Towers were an inevitability on the skyline of New York, an immovable permanence—and they just disappeared, as if someone had passed over them with a giant eraser. It was one of the world's most feared nightmares.

Truth be told, we've always known it might happen. The Towers held a place in our collective subconscious as one of the few targets whose destruction would instantly sever America's main financial artery, garner headlines on every front page and newscast in the world, and make an indelible mark on history. What terrorist could possibly fail to envision their destruction?

CHIMERIC LANDSCAPE

What came to mind at that moment on the bridge was how naively we define ourselves by our impermanent surroundings. We are New Yorkers, so we expect to see the Towers when we look up at the skyline of our world. Yet the landscape of reality anywhere in the world is no more than a chimera, a gleaming semblance of truth that induces a false security, dulls our senses, puts us to sleep. The constructs of our petty lives, both physical and psychological, are like a Hollywood movie set that exists for a while, then gets struck with a few blows from a hammer, deconstructed, and put back into storage.

The risk in awakening to the impermanence of the world is an erroneous assumption that action is consequently irrelevant. What does it matter how we live, what we eat, whether we extend ourselves to others or not? It's all illusion. The *Bhagavad-gītā* clarifies this mistaken impression.

“Not by merely abstaining from work can one achieve freedom from reaction, nor by renunciation alone

can one attain freedom.” (3.4)

“On the other hand, if a sincere person tries to control the active senses by the mind and begins karma-yoga [in Kṛṣṇa consciousness] without attachment, he is by far superior.” (3.7)

“Whatever action a great person performs, common people follow. And whatever standard he sets by exemplary acts, all the world pursues.” (3.21)

“One who is unattached to the fruits of work and who works as he is obligated is in the renounced order of life, and he is the true mystic—not he who lights no fire and performs no duty.” (6.1)

“Acts of sacrifice, charity and penance are not to be given up; they must be performed. Indeed, sacrifice, charity and penance purify even the great souls.” (18.5)

SENSITIVE TO SUFFERING

How do devotees respond to such crisis? The people I am privileged to call friends in Kṛṣṇa consciousness wept copiously for the victims of the tragedy, for their families and friends. Knowing, as devotees do, that everyone in this world struggles to make sense of his or her life softens the heart, makes people more sensitive to the suffering of others. On an action level, the Krishna Foundation, a nonprofit organization formed to support and strengthen the mission of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, is serving as a conduit for contributions from temple communities worldwide, with all funds going to appropriate New York relief agencies. Devotee educators and child development professionals are preparing a booklet for people working with children, offering recommendations and suggestions for frequently asked questions. And the Oxford Center for Vaisnava-Hindu Studies is editing a special edition of the *ISKCON Communications Journal*

addressing issues raised by the recent tragedies.

SPIRITUAL COMMITMENT

On a personal level, I feel that we as a spiritual collective must move up a notch in our seriousness and commitment to devotional practices. What more startling proof could we ever witness to substantiate the urgency of nurturing our spiritual life? This was a rude, shocking wake-up call, and we can be grateful for being among the tiny handful of people graced with the knowledge that there is something else; that when the dust of our petty dreams and stubborn enterprises finally settles, there will be Kṛṣṇa, ready to welcome us home.

Yogeśvara Dāsa is senior vice president at Ruder Finn, New York's largest public relations and communications firm. His office is forty-eight blocks from the former World Trade Center.

Twin Towers of Material Life

by Kālakaṇṭha Dāsa

The sickening images of two hijacked passenger jets smashing down two huge office towers knots my gut and floods me with raw, confusing feelings.

Sorrow. For the terrified, doomed passengers, the thousands of unsuspecting office workers buried or burned alive, and the hundreds of heroic firefighters crushed when the mighty steel-framed edifices melted and collapsed on them within an hour. For their devastated children, spouses, parents, brothers, sisters, and friends.

(please turn to page 58)



2001 Festival of the Chariots, New York

HARE KṚṢṂA, HARE KṚṢṂA
KṚṢṂA KṚṢṂA, HARE HARE
HARE RĀMA, HARE RĀMA
RĀMA RĀMA, HARE HARE

PRONUNCIATION: *ha-ray, krish-na, ra-ma* (rhymes with “drama”)

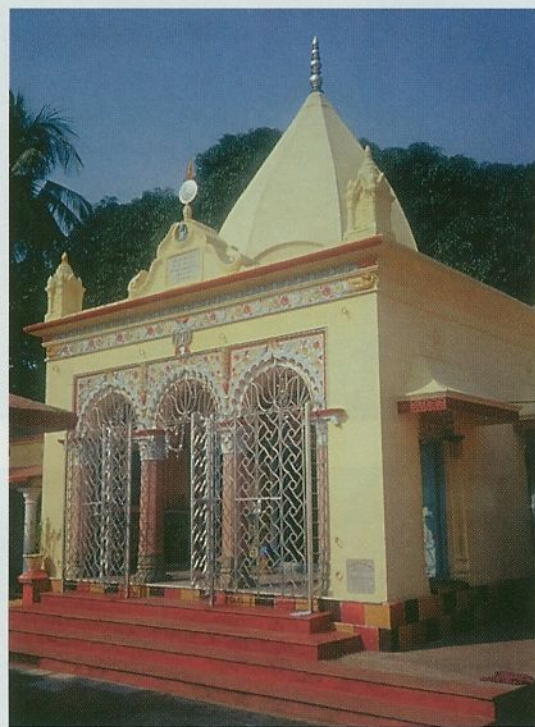


Ramakeli

Historic Home of Rūpa and Sanātana

Two leaders of Lord Caitanya's movement once lived here as ministers to the Muslim ruler.

Text and photos by Vṛndāvanī Devī Dāsī



Head priest Purna Chandra Panigrahi (opposite page) greets visitors from inside the sanctuary of Śrī Rādhā-Madana-Mohana, the deities of Rūpa and Sanātana. Above: Śrī Rādhā-Madana-Mohana. At left: their temple, built in 1930.

RECENTLY I FULFILLED a long-cherished desire to visit Ramakeli, in northern West Bengal. It was once home to Rūpa Gosvāmī and Sanātana Gosvāmī, direct disciples of Lord Caitanya and leaders in His Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. Ramakeli is a small village, where groups of cows and goats are more common than cars on the dusty roads. There are no

shops, and water is available only from hand pumps. It appears that little has changed here for hundreds of years.

I stayed with friends at the home of Amalendranath Maitra, a well-known advocate in nearby Malda. He arranged a car to take us on a tour of Ramakeli, some fifteen kilometers from Malda.

We arrived at the gateway of the

Rādhā-Madana-Mohana temple, founded by Rūpa and Sanātana and later managed by their nephew Jīva Gosvāmī, another pillar of Lord Caitanya's movement. After Jīva left to join his uncles in Vṛndāvana, the area became plagued with cholera. The deities were kept closed within the temple until Jitendranath Maitra, in the disciple line from Jīva Gosvāmī,



started the worship again three hundred years later.

In 1930, Amalendranath Maitra's father, Upendranath Maitra, came to Ramakeli, and the local people, who were very poor, asked him to repair the temple. He told them he would go home and think about it. That night he dreamt of Rādhā-Madana-Mohana, who asked him to build a new temple for Them. Without hesitation Upendranath Maitra arranged for all the building materials, and within a month a new temple was built.

**FROM MINISTERS
TO GOSVĀMĪS**

As we sat looking at the beautiful deities of Rādhā-Madana-Mohana, the

head priest, Purna Chandra Panigrahi, related the following history of Rūpa and Sanātana:

Five hundred years ago the area was governed by the Muslim ruler Nawab Hussein Shah, who controlled Bengal, Orissa, and Bihar. At that time Rūpa and Sanātana (then known as Amara and Santosh) were living in Ramakeli. They were highly respected in the *brāhmaṇa* community. Noting their incredible intelligence, the Nawab forced the brothers to work in his government. He made Rūpa his treasurer and Sanātana the prime minister. The government thrived under their expertise, and in appreciation the Nawab showered them with immense wealth.

Being great devotees of Kṛṣṇa, Rūpa and Sanātana cared nothing for





Under the Nawab's order, Sanātana Gosvāmī spent more than a year and a half in prison (left). A small shrine (bottom, left) memorializes the spot where Lord Nityānanda sat. A tree near the shrine (bottom) was grown from the tree under which Lord Caitanya initiated Rūpa and Sanātana. Deities of Lord Caitanya, Lord Nityānanda, and Śrī Advaita (below) are worshiped in the main temple.



their wealth and positions and yearned for the time when they would be freed from their predicament. They frequently wrote letters to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, asking for His help so that they could dedicate their lives to Him.

In 1514, Lord Caitanya, on the excuse of going to Vṛndāvana, visited Ramakeli only to see His eternal associates Rūpa and Sanātana. He was accompanied by thousands of devotees. He initiated the brothers and told them that Kṛṣṇa would soon release them from their government posts.

Rūpa and Sanātana had been living at the Nawab's house, but after meeting Lord Caitanya they started worshipping the deities of Rādhā-Madana-Mohana and lived near Them. They could no longer tolerate working for the Nawab. Rūpa gave his wealth to his family and the *brāhmaṇa* community and made his way to Vṛndāvana.

Sanātana, being the prime minister, stayed for some time but told the Nawab he was too sick to work. The Nawab became suspicious and sent his doctor to find out what was wrong. When the doctor arrived at Sanātana's house, he saw that he had made it into a devotional ashram with daily scriptural classes going on. The Nawab was furious. Seeing that Rūpa had already left, he ordered Sanātana to do more work for him. When Sanātana told him he was now resigning, the Nawab had him imprisoned.

Meanwhile, in Vṛndāvana, Rūpa Gosvāmī dreamt that Sanātana was in jail. He managed to get a letter to him informing him that he had deposited ten thousand gold coins with a local shopkeeper for the service of devotees. With seven thousand of these coins, Sanātana was able to bribe the jailkeeper to release him, enabling him to join Lord Caitanya. Jiva Gosvāmī joined Rūpa and Sanātana later, after the death of his mother.

GUPTA VRNDĀVANA

When the priest finished his narration, we were served *mahā-prasādam*, food offered to the deities, on banana leaves. After lunch we went to see Radha Kunda and Syama Kunda, two lakes next to the temple. Rūpa and



Sanātana built the lakes, replicas of Radha Kunda and Syama Kunda in Vṛndāvana, to use their wealth and pacify their minds in separation from Vṛndāvana. The area surrounding the lakes is known as Gupta (“Hidden”) Vṛndāvana. I filled a small container with sacred soil here as a souvenir.

The main priest then took us to see the sitting place of Lord Nityānanda, which faces two trees. The larger tree is said to be six hundred years old and is next to a tiny temple containing Lord Caitanya’s footprints. The other tree was grown from a branch of the tree under which Lord Caitanya initiated Rūpa and Sanātana and their brother Vallabha, who became Anupama. Jīva Gosvāmī, then a young boy, hid behind a tree, watching. Nearby stands a temple of a beautiful deity of Lord Caitanya worshiped by Jīva Gosvāmī.

AROUND RAMAKELI

After thanking the priest for showing us all these places, we went back to the car to see the rest of the village. Ramakeli is very beautiful, covered with lush vegetation interspersed with many tranquil lakes and thatched cottages. The area has been famous since ancient times for silk and excellently flavored mangoes. Coconut trees and date palms tower gracefully above the other greenery.

We passed the remains of Nawab Hussain Shah’s government building. His horses and elephants would graze on the expansive grassy slope nearby.

A short ride along the road brought us to the prison where Sanātana Gosvāmī was held. Slowly making our way through the many cows grazing outside, we entered the building. The inside shape reminded me of the Rādhā-Govinda temple in Vṛndāvana. The tall building with its arched brick ceiling was built without any supports. Modern builders are baffled at how it stays up. Walking back outside, I was thinking how

Sanātana Gosvāmī would have come through the same doorway to be released after spending seventeen months and nineteen days inside.

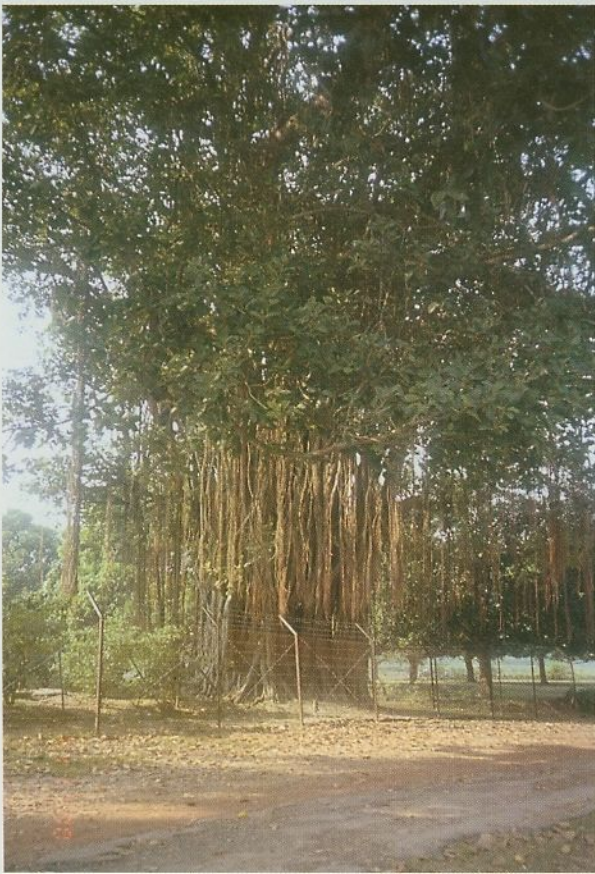
Ramakeli got its name to commemorate a visit by Lord Rāma. Our last stop was the lake where Sītā, the wife of Lord Rāmacandra, performed *piṇḍa* (oblations for departed souls) for her mother. Nearby is a tree said to be five thousand years old. Many thousands of people come once a year from Bihar to perform *piṇḍa* here and worship the tree, known as Bala Briksha. It is certainly the largest tree I have ever seen, with fronds hanging from huge branches almost to the ground.

As we drove back to Malda, I considered how fortunate I was to have visited this village touched by the feet of Lord Caitanya. Here He recruited three towering spiritual figures: Rūpa Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī, and Jīva Gosvāmī. They built the foundation upon which the present Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement was built. All of us who have been blessed by this movement are eternally indebted to them. ❁

Vṛndāvanī Devī Dāsī joined ISKCON in 1980. She lives with her family near Bhaktivedanta Manor in England and handles the mailing of Back to Godhead to our readers in the U.K.

In spiritual longing, Rūpa and Sanātana built replicas of Vṛndāvana’s sacred Radha Kund (right) and Syama Kund (below). Before following his uncles Rūpa and Sanātana to Vṛndāvana, Jīva Gosvāmī worshiped a deity of Lord Caitanya in Ramakeli (opposite, bottom right). Many pilgrims visit Ramakeli yearly to perform rituals for departed ancestors at an ancient banyan tree (opposite, bottom left).







Divine Madness

The Life of Gaura-kiśora Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja

by Satyarāja Dāsa

*namo gaura-kiśorāya sākṣād-vairāgya-mūrtaye
vipralambha-rasāmbhode pādāmbujāya te namaḥ*

“I offer my respectful obeisances unto Gaura-kiśora Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, who is renunciation personified. He is always merged in a feeling of separation and intense love of Kṛṣṇa.”

HIS DIVINE GRACE A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, comes in a long line of spiritual teachers. While all of these masters lived extraordinary lives, the most unconventional is probably that of Gaura-kiśora Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, the spiritual master of Prabhupāda’s teacher, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura.

Gaura-kiśora Dāsa Bābājī appeared in the early 1830s in the village of Vagyana, Faridapura district, East Bengal (currently Bangladesh).* The

*Gaura-kiśora Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja’s life and activities were compiled by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta in *Sajjana Toṣaṇi*, a monthly journal dedicated to the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He called the series of essays *Amār Prabhur Kathā* (“The Story of My Master”) and released them first in the 1917 editions of his journal and later as a separate booklet. The religious biographer Haridāsa Dāsa then took this information and used it for his entry on Bābājī Mahārāja in his encyclopedic work *Śrī Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Jivana*.

son of a merchant, young Vamśidāsa (later Gaura-kiśora Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja) married early and lived a conventional life for more than twenty years, working as a grain broker. But as time passed he found himself looking for something more in life, and his passion for spiritual truth increased each year.

After his wife passed away, Vamśidāsa left his business and went to Vṛndāvana, the land of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Here he hoped to find spiritual fulfillment under the tutelage of great religious masters. He soon found himself studying under various self-realized souls and developing a deep appreciation for Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *siddhānta*, or Kṛṣṇa conscious philosophical truths as presented by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He gradually became known as a prominent practitioner, for he uncompromisingly lived according to Vaiṣṇava teachings.

After some years of intense practice, Vamśidāsa approached Śrīla Bhāgavata Dāsa Bābājī, one of the foremost disciples of Śrīla Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja—the leading Kṛṣṇa conscious teacher of his time—and accepted from him the exalted initiation of Vaiṣṇava Bābājī. This initiation demanded total commitment to high standards of renunciation and austerity, with the singular goal of developing love of God.

Excelling in this practice, Gaura-kiśora Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja became completely renounced, residing under trees in diverse parts of the Vṛndāvana landscape and depending on God alone for his sustenance.

Living in Vṛndāvana for some thirty years as a wandering ascetic, he left only to travel periodically to other holy places in northern and western India. He also regularly made pilgrimage to Gaura-maṇḍala (the area of Navadvīpa, West Bengal), where Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the dual incarnation of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, exhibited His earthly manifestation some five hundred years ago. When visiting Jagannātha Puri, in Orissa, Gaura-kiśora Dāsa Bābājī associated with Śrīla Svarūpa Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, a renowned devotee who exhibited symptoms of ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Svarūpa Dāsa Bābājī’s activities were recounted in the autobiography of Śrīla Bhaktivīnoda Ṭhākura, whom Gaura-kiśora Dāsa Bābājī also met during his travels to east

Learned authorities were able to ascertain that Gaura-kiṣora's eccentric behavior was in fact symptoms of the highest stage of love of God.

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India. He developed a deep and abiding relationship with Bhaktivinoda, whom he saw as his guru.

SPIRITUAL PERFECTION

Śrīla Gaura-kiṣora Dāsa Bābāji became famous among the great devotees of Vṛndāvana and was awarded the exalted title Bhajanānandī, which refers to one who has achieved ultimate bliss and accomplishment in solitary meditation.

While Śrīla Gaura-kiṣora clearly deserved such an honor, others at that time engaged in solitary “meditation” merely to avoid being identified as the frauds they were. To check such deception and insincerity, great teachers recommended the path of the Goṣṭhyanandī: congregational chanting and preaching, or sharing one’s spiritual life with others.

Śrīla Gaura-kiṣora spoke out strongly against pseudo-renunciants, or less qualified “Bhajanānandīs.” He was entirely removed from cheating inclinations and performed his pure devotional practices alone, in a profound mood of devotional ecstasy. His integrity was unassailable.

In 1897, when he was in his sixties, Śrīla Gaura-kiṣora moved to Navadvīpa, relishing its spiritual identity with Kṛṣṇa’s holy land. In Navadvīpa as in Vṛndāvana, he lived by begging alms from householders. For cooking, he collected dry wood from the roadside, and for drinking and washing, he used earthen pots discarded by villagers near the river Ganges. To clothe himself he went to the shore of the holy river to collect and wash discarded cloth that had been used to cover corpses at the burning ghat. As his biographer Haridāsa Dāsa says, “It was him and God. And little else.”

Śrīla Gaura-kiṣora exhibited the highest standard of devotion to God, Kṛṣṇa, and because of his exemplary character he was recognized as the greatest among the greatest devotees. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, his only disciple, has written:

Many learned and educated persons came into contact with Śrīla Gaura-kiṣora Prabhu, yet they could not realize his true identity. This is indeed the mystic opulence of the devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Only they can recognize true devotion. Many people came to consult with Śrīla Gaura-kiṣora Prabhu about their insignificant, worldly desires. He would always try to help them, but his suggestions were usually the cause of their disappointment, for he was relentless in his attempt to get them to go further, to transcend their attached and compromised level of existence.

Many, too, accepted the Bābāji dress and acted as devotees of the Lord, but actually they were imposters, far away from being real sadhus. Śrīla Gaura-kiṣora never accepted such a false way of life; his sincerity was apparent in itself. His loving attitude was such that even when he obtained a very opulent offering, his renunciation predominated. He preferred a simple life in connection with God.

Śrīla Gaura-kiṣora was equal to all. He never displayed any distaste for those persons who were inimical to him, nor did he manifest any special affection for those very dear to him. He often said, “In this material world I am all alone in my service to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Still, I offer all respects to others—everyone is worshipable by me.”

In 1908, Śrīla Gaura-kiṣora lost his physical vision. When his eyesight started deteriorating, Bhaktisiddhānta

Sarasvatī requested him to go to Calcutta for treatment. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, too, for the same reason, repeatedly asked him to go there. But he was uninterested. “As long as I can see Kṛṣṇa in my heart of hearts, I do not need an eye doctor.”

THE JOY OF RAW EGGPLANT

Bābāji Mahārāja became renowned as the brightest gem among spiritual practitioners, but it was not always easy to understand his actions. He sometimes wore his begging bowl as a hat, worshiped in an outhouse, and beat with an umbrella those who wanted initiation from him. (In his humility, he could not entertain requests to be anyone’s spiritual authority.) He often roamed about naked or with his loin-cloth half tied.

His behavior was considered especially unusual in Navadvīpa, where many conservative priests and intellectuals resided at the time. His state of love of God bordered on divine madness, and yet his ecstatic symptoms could be corroborated by Vaiṣṇava scriptures. Learned authorities were able to ascertain that his seemingly eccentric behavior was in fact symptoms of the highest stage of love of God.

Sometimes, while in these exalted states, Bābāji Mahārāja found distasteful foods to be just like nectar. Oblivious to the external world, he would offer such food to Kṛṣṇa and then relish the remnants. For example, he would eat raw rice or other grains lightly soaked in water or in Ganges mud.

One day he picked up an unripe eggplant from the market and sat down

at the base of a jhao tree at Baganbari. He cut the eggplant into pieces and dipped them into Ganges water and put a *tulasī* leaf on them. He offered them to his *iṣṭadevata* [personal deity] and sang a song of offering: *Bhaja Patita Uddharana, Śrī Gaura Hari*—“O Lord Caitanya, please accept the worship of this fallen soul.” He then said to his Deity, “I don’t know the right method of cooking this, but please eat a little of this food.”

As soon as he said this, his voice became choked, and his body turned bright red and began to swell, while tears flowed from his eyes in streams, soaking his face and chest. Seeing these signs of love, Lalitā-dīdī [a close friend] was amazed. When the transcendental emotions subsided nearly an hour later, he again sang a song. Putting his deity to sleep, he ate the unripe eggplant. His face showed expressions of great pleasure and happiness, more intense than what one would make if tasting *pañcāmṛta* [a sweet drink, considered a delicacy].”

—From *Śrī Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Jivana*, by Haridāsa Dāsa

worship with Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura at the birthplace of Lord Caitanya, which had recently been discovered by Bhaktivinoda and restored with images of Lord Caitanya and his wife Viṣṇupriyā. The two unparalleled devotees would sing and dance before these deities, and their bodies would undergo the eight *sāttvika bhāvas*, or the ecstatic symptoms outlined in scripture that appear only in the most accomplished devotees.

A WORD OF CAUTION

Like Kṛṣṇa’s *gopīs* (cowherd girlfriends) and other supremely advanced

devotees, Śrīla Gaura-kiṣora had in-born devotional love, and its spontaneous nature was shown in his *aśāstriya* behavior—behavior that goes beyond scriptures or ordinary conventions. In his own life, he disregarded many Vaiṣṇava rules about purity and proper worship techniques. And yet he strongly recommended pure behavior and standard techniques for others. How might this be understood?

Śrīla Gaura-kiṣora was clearly not ordinary. For most people, standard religious rules and regulations serve a purpose, gradually bringing one to transcendence and heartfelt spontaneity. At this point, one can rise beyond

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Founded in 1978, the Bhaktivedanta Archives is the official repository for the films, photographs, documents, manuscripts, correspondence, audio recordings, and other memorabilia of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

The Bhaktivedanta Archives site www.Prabhupada.com shows some of the work and holdings of the Archives, including rare photographs of Śrīla Prabhupāda and conversations between him and prominent people. The site offers two free email newsletters and is updated regularly with interesting and stimulating images, articles, and information about Śrīla Prabhupāda.

The Bhaktivedanta VedaBase© website www.VedaBase.com supports the searchable database of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s teachings. The site provides product information and instructions. The new “forum” feature allows visitors to ask questions and get answers from experienced users.

Śrīla Gaura-kiṣora would dance along the roadside, calling out, “Jaya Rādhe!” (“All glories to Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa’s beloved.”), and the local people would think he was mad. The religious experts knew better, though. Little boys would run along behind him, and he would play with them. When he saw a boy who had a dark complexion, he would think of him as Kṛṣṇa, and a light-skinned boy would become Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

He often fell into trances, madly calling out the names of Kṛṣṇa with great love. Once, he shouted, “*Ha Kṛṣṇa Caitanya! Ha Kṛṣṇa Caitanya!*” over and over. Vaiṣṇavas in the vicinity heard him screaming these words hour after hour. They thought that unless they could change his mood, or otherwise stop him from shouting these divine names, he would hurt himself—his throat would become torn and bloody. Several of the assembled devotees shouted names of God that reflected other aspects of His divine nature. This distracted Śrīla Gaura-kiṣora, changing his spiritual mood, and his screaming subsided.

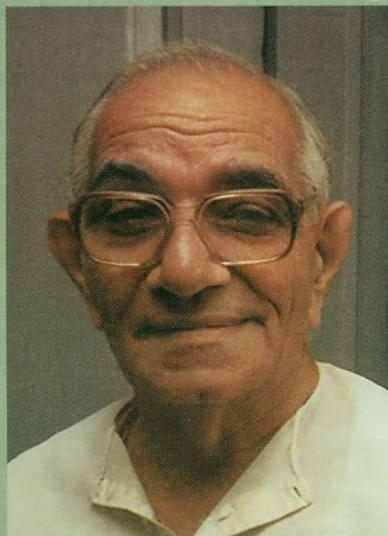
At times Bābājī Mahārāja would

Dr. O. B. L. Kapoor

DR. OUDH BIHARI Lal (O. B. L.) Kapoor, initiated as Ādi Keśava Dāsa, passed away on April 9 at the age of 92. A godbrother and friend of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Dr. Kapoor was initiated by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura in 1932.

Dr. Kapoor received his Ph.D. from Allahabad University in 1938. His dissertation focused on the philosophy and religion of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and was eventually published as a book. These words from Śrīla Prabhupāda appeared on the book's dust jacket:

I have read with great pleasure Dr. O. B. L. Kapoor's work entitled *The Philosophy and Religion of Sri Caitanya*. Packed extensively with quotes and notes, the treatise bears the hallmark of authentic research. It is, in my opinion, the first scientific delineation of the philosophy of Śrī Caitanya based primarily on His direct utterances, as contained in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and *Caitanya-bhāgavata*, and supported profusely by references to the vast literature left by His learned disciples, most of which



was written under His express command and on the basis of the guidelines provided by Him.

The book is written in elegant style. I am sure it will be acclaimed, not only by the Vaiṣṇavas in India, but by the members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness and lovers of philosophy and religion all over the world.

Dr. Kapoor held many important positions in educational institutions throughout India until his retirement in the 1960s. At that time he relocated to Vṛndāvana,

where he stayed until his passing. He wrote twenty-five books and was a contributor to *Back to Godhead* magazine. His three BTG articles—"Bhakti: The Perfect Science" (No. 53, 1973), "Vṛndāvana: The Highest Paradise" (No. 62, 1974), and "The Path of Bhakti" (No. 65, 1974)—were deeply appreciated by Śrīla Prabhupāda, who wrote to him in July 1973: "This writing is first-class preaching, and we want to publish more and more of your articles in *Back to Godhead*."

In 1998, *Back to Godhead* (Vol. 32, No. 2) ran an interview with Dr. Kapoor conducted by Hari Śauri Dāsa. The conversation reveals Dr. Kapoor's deep understanding of Vaiṣṇava thought and, more importantly, his deep appreciation of Lord Caitanya's mercy and his heartfelt feelings for Śrīla Prabhupāda, whom he saw as one of his dearest friends. He was convinced of Prabhupāda's purity and effectiveness as a representative of the Lord. Prabhupāda, he said in the interview, "had the blessings of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. It is the blessings of Mahāprabhu that made him Prabhupāda."

—Satyarāja Dāsa

conventions and the constrictions of neophyte practice. But unless one is totally absorbed in the Absolute—and this is exceedingly rare—one must assume that one's own spiritual level is still wanting, only to be enhanced by the instructions of a self-realized soul and by constant practice.

Śrīla Gaura-kiśora constantly medi-

tated on Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the mood of divine love, and this of course is what distinguished him from ordinary souls. Consequently, while Śrīla Gaura-kiśora should most definitely be appreciated, he should not be emulated. Unless one is on a spiritually advanced platform, one should not attempt to act like Bābājī Mahārāja. Unless one

reaches his level of spiritual absorption, one should not reach for an unripe eggplant.

Śrīla Prabhupāda writes in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 7.29): "There are many instances of devotional service rendered by pious *ācāryas* who did not care about social (please turn to page 61)

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E-mail: devadeva@wkpowlpowerlink.com

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Fax: (404) 373-3381/ E-mail: bala108@earthlink.net
- Austin, Texas** — 10700 Jonwood Way, 78753/ Tel. (512) 835-2121/
E-mail: harekrishna@swbell.net

Note for international phone calls: When dialing from outside the country, drop the "0" that begins most city codes (the numbers shown in parentheses). **Exceptions:**

For Russia, the number to drop is the initial "8". Telephone numbers include country codes, identified by a +. To save space, we've skipped the codes for North America (1) and India (91).

★ New listing ◆ Temples with restaurants or dining ● Revised listing

Baltimore, Maryland — 200 Bloomsbury Ave., Catonsville, 21228/ Tel. (410) 744-4069 or 719-6738/ Tel. & fax: (410) 744-1624/ E-mail: cshannon@mndo.net
Berkeley, California — 2334 Stuart Street, 94705/ Tel. (510) 540-9215/ E-mail: rasaraja@bvinstd.edu
Boise, Idaho — 1615 Martha St., 83706/ Tel. (208) 344-4274/ E-mail: boise_temple@yahoo.com

Boston, Massachusetts — 72 Commonweath Ave., 02116/ Tel. (617) 247-8611/ Fax: (617) 266-3744/ E-mail: premananda@juno.com

Charlotte, North Carolina — 9408-D Lexington Circle, 28213/ Tel. (704) 549-4603/ E-mail: syamadasi@yahoo.com

Chicago, Illinois — 1716 W. Lunt Ave., 60626/ Tel. (773) 973-0900/ Fax: (773) 973-0526/ E-mail: chicago@iskcon.net

Columbus, Ohio — 379 W. Eighth Ave., 43201/ Tel. (614) 421-1661/ Fax: (614) 294-0545/ E-mail: malati.acbsp@pamho.net

◆ **Dallas, Texas** — 5430 Gurley Ave., 75223/ Tel. (214) 827-6330/ Fax: (214) 823-7264

◆ **Denver, Colorado** — 1400 Cherry St., 80220/ Tel. (303) 333-5461/ Fax: (303) 321-9052/ E-mail: naikatma.acbsp@pamho.net

◆ **Detroit, Michigan** — 383 Lenox Ave., 48215/ Tel. (313) 824-6000/ Fax: (313) 822-3748/ E-mail: girigovardhana@hotmail.com

Gainesville, Florida — 214 N.W. 14th St., 32603/ Tel. (352) 336-4183/ E-mail: krishna@afn.org

Hartford, Connecticut — 1683 Main St., E. Hartford, 06108/ Tel. & fax: (860) 289-7252/ E-mail: pyarimohan@aol.com

◆ **Honolulu, Hawaii** — 51 Coelmo Way, 96817/ Tel. (808) 595-3947/ Fax: (808) 595-3433/ **Houston, Texas** — 1320 W. 34th St., 77018/ Tel. (713) 686-4482/ Fax: (713) 686-0669

Kansas City, Missouri — Rupanuga Vedic College (Men's Seminary), 5201 The Paseo, 64110/ Tel. (816) 361-6167 or (800) 340-5286/ Fax: (816) 361-0509/ E-mail: info@rvc.edu

◆ **Laguna Beach, California** — 285 Legion St., 92651/ Tel. (949) 494-7029/ E-mail: tuka108@hotmail.com

Long Island, New York — 197 S. Ocean Avenue, Freeport, 11520/ Tel. (516) 223-4909/ E-mail: garuda@optonline.net

◆ **Los Angeles, California** — 3764 Watska Ave., 90034/ Tel. (310) 836-2676/ Fax: (310) 839-2715/ E-mail: nirantara@juno.com

Los Angeles, California — 3520-3526 Slauson Ave., 90043/ Tel. (323) 295-1517/ E-mail: Mr.Wisdomla@aol.com

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New York, New York — 114-37 Lefferts Blvd., Queens 11420/ Tel. & fax: (718) 848-9010

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Philadelphia, Pennsylvania — 1408 South St., 19146/ Tel. (215) 985-9335/ E-mail: savecows@aol.com

Phoenix, Arizona — 100 S. Weber Dr., Chandler, 85226/ Tel. (480) 705-4900/ Fax: (480) 705-4901/ E-mail: svgd108@yahoo.com

Portland, Oregon — 2353 SE 54th Ave., 97215/ Tel. (503) 236-0417/ E-mail: portland_krishna@hotmail.com

◆ **St. Louis, Missouri** — 3926 Lindell Blvd., 63108/ Tel. (314) 535-8085/ Fax: (314) 535-0672/ E-mail: surapal@pamho.net

◆ **San Diego, California** — 1030 Grand Ave., Pacific Beach, 92109/ Tel. (858) 483-2500/ Fax: (858) 483-0941/ E-mail: gandharvika@pamho.net

San Jose, California — 2990 Union Ave., 95124/ Tel. (408) 559-3197/ E-mail: brian.odea@gwl.com

Seattle, Washington — 1420 228th Ave. S.E., Issaquah, 98027/ Tel. (425) 391-3293/ Fax: (425) 868-8928

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Tampa, Florida — 1205 E. Giddens Ave., 33603/ Tel. (813) 234-8841/ E-mail: krishnam108@hotmail.com

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Washington, D.C. — 10310 Oaklyn Dr., Potomac, Maryland 20854/ Tel. (301) 299-2100/ Fax: (301) 299-5025/ E-mail: sri.trikalajna@gmail.com

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Carriere, Mississippi (New Talavan) — 31492 Amner Road, 39426/ Tel. (601) 749-9460 or 799-1354/ Fax: (601) 799-2924/ E-mail: talavan@fnbop.com

Gurabo, Puerto Rico (New Govardhana Hill) — P.O. Box 1338, 00778/ Tel. (787) 737-3917/ **Hillsborough, North Carolina (New Goloka)** — 1032 Dimmocks Mill Rd., 27278/ Tel. (919) 732-6492/ Fax: (919) 732-8033/ E-mail: bkogswami@compuserve.com

◆ **Moundsville, West Virginia (New Vrindaban)** — R.D. No. 1, Box 319, Hare Krishna Ridge, 26041/

Tel. (304) 843-1600; Guest House, (304) 845-5905/ Fax: (304) 854-0023/ E-mail: newvrindaban@yahoo.com

Mulberry, Tennessee (Murari-sevaka) — 532 Murari Lane, 37359/ Tel. & fax: (931) 759-6888
Port Royal, Pennsylvania (Gita Nagari) — R.D. No. 1, Box 839, 17082/ Tel. & fax: (717) 527-4101

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Eugene, Oregon — Govinda's Vegetarian Buffet, 270 W. 8th St., 97401/ Tel. (503) 686-3531

Gainesville, Florida — Balaji Indian Cuisine, 2106 SW 34th St., 32608/ Tel. (352) 378-2955

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

San Juan, Puerto Rico — Gopal, 201B Calle Tetuan, Viejo San Juan, 00901/ Tel. (787) 724-0229

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Belfast, Northern Ireland — Brooklands, 140 Upper Dunmurray Lane, BT17 0HE/ Tel. +44 (0)1232 620530

Birmingham, England — 84 Stanmore Rd., Edgbaston, B16 9TB/ Tel. +44 (0)121 420-4999

Cardiff, Wales — 18 Greenfield Place, Caerphilly, Mid Glamorgan/ Tel. +44 (0)2920 831579

Coventry, England — Kingfield Rd., Radford, West Midlands (mail: 19 Gloucester St., CV1 3BZ)/ Tel. +44 (0)1203 552822 or 555420/ E-mail: hariadas.kds@pamho.net

Glasgow, Scotland — Karuna Bhavan, Bankhouse Rd., Lesmahagow, Lanarkshire, ML11 0ES/ Tel. +44 (0)1555 894790/ Fax: +44 (0)1555 894526/ E-mail: 106225.2716@compuserve.com

Leicester, England — 21/21A Thoresby St., North Evington, LE5 4GU/ Tel. & fax: +44 (0)116 236-7723/ E-mail: gauranga.sundara@pamho.net

Liverpool, England — 114A Bold St., Merseyside, L1 4HY/ Tel. +44 (0)151 512-9319

◆ **London, England (city)** — 9-10 Soho St., W1D 3DL/ Tel. +44 (0)20 437-3662; residential/pujaris, 7439-3606; shop, 7287-0269; Govinda's Restaurant, 7437-4928/ Fax: +44 (0)20 7439-1127/ E-mail: london@pamho.net

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Newcastle Emlyn, West Wales — Ger-y-nant, Penrhypwll, Rhydelewis, Near Newcastle Emlyn, SA44 5JQ/ Tel. & fax: +44 (0)1239 851178/ E-mail: mkramadasabc_uk@yahoo.co.uk

Newcastle upon Tyne, England — 304 Westgate Rd., NE4 6AR/ Tel. +44 (0)191 272-1911

Plymouth, England — 2 Windermere Crescent, Derriford, Devon, PL6 5HX/ Tel. (01752) 776708
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AUSTRALASIA

AUSTRALIA

Adelaide — 25 Le Hunte St., Kilburn, SA 5084/ Tel. +61 (08) 8359-5120/ Fax: (08) 8359-5149

Brisbane — 95 Bank Rd., Graceville (mail: P.O. Box 83, Indurupilly), QLD 4068/ Tel. +61 (07) 3379-5455/ Fax: +61 (07) 3379-5880

Canberra — 1 Quick St., Ainslie, ACT 2602 (mail: P.O. Box 1411, Canberra, ACT 2601)/ Tel. & fax: +61 (02) 6262-6208/ E-mail: adi@actweb.net

Melbourne — 197 Danks St. (mail: P.O. Box 125), Albert Park, VIC 3206/ Tel. +61 (03) 9699-5122/ Fax: +61 (03) 9690-4093/ E-mail: melbourne@pamho.net

Newcastle — 28 Bull St., Mayfield, NSW 2304/ Tel. +61 (02) 4967-7000

Perth — 144 Railway Parade (corner of The Strand) [mail: P.O. Box 102], Bayswater, WA 6053/ Tel. +61 (08) 9370-1552/ Fax: +61 (08) 9272-6636/ E-mail: perth@pamho.net

Sydney — 180 Falcon St., North Sydney, NSW 2060 (mail: P.O. Box 459, Cammeray, NSW 2062)/ Tel. +61 (02) 9959-4558/ Fax: +61 (02) 9957-1893/ E-mail: sraduucp@sradh.dialix.oz.au

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Bambra (New Nandagram) — Oak Hill, Dean's Marsh Rd., VIC 3241/ Tel. +61 (052) 887383/ Fax: +61 (052) 887309

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

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

RESTAURANTS

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

Brisbane — Govinda's, 99 Elizabeth St., 1st floor, QLD 4000/ Tel. +61 (07) 210-0255

Brisbane — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 190 Brunswick St., Fortitude Valley, QLD/ Tel. +61 (07) 854-1016/ E-mail: brisbane@pamho.net

Darlinghurst — Govinda's Upstairs, 12 Darlinghurst Road, NSW 2010/ Tel. +61 (02) 9380-5162

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

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

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

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

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Labasa, Fiji — Delailabasa (mail: P.O. Box 133)/ Tel. +679 812912/ E-mail: fiji@pamho.net

Lautoka, Fiji — 5 Tavewa Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 125)/ Tel. +679 664112/ Fax: +679 663039/
E-mail: fiji@pamho.net

Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea — Section 23, Lot 46, Gordonia St., Hohola (mail: P. O. Box 571,
POM NCD)/ Tel. +675 259213

Rakiraki, Fiji — Rewasa, Rakiraki (mail: P.O. Box 204)/ Tel. +679 694243/ E-mail: fiji@pamho.net

Suva, Fiji — Joyce Place, Off Pilling Rd. Nasinu 7½ miles, Samabula (mail: P.O. Box 2183,
Gov't Bldgs.)/ Tel. +679 393 599/ E-mail: vdas@govnet.gov.fj

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RURAL COMMUNITY

Auckland, NZ (New Varshan) — Hwy. 28, Riverhead, next to Huapai Golf Course
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RESTAURANTS

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

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

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

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

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

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

Suva, Fiji — Hare Krishna Vegetarian Restaurant, Terry Walk, Cumming St./ Tel. +679 312295

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E-mail: amsterdam@pamho.net

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d'Isola (BG)/ Tel. +39 (035) 494-0706/ Fax: +39 (035) 494-0705

Budapest — Mariaremetei u. 77, 1028 II/ Tel. & fax: +36 (01) 397-0435, 397-0436/
E-mail: budapest@pamho.net

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E-mail: iskcon.denmark@pamho.net

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◆ **Lisbon** — Rua Dona Estefânia, 91 R/C 1000 Lisboa/ Tel. & fax: +351(01) 314-0314 or 352-0038/
E-mail: dhira_krsna_das@mail.pt

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Paris — 31 rue du docteur Jean Vaquier, 93160 Noisy le Grand/ Tel. & fax: +33 (01) 4303-0951/
E-mail: nitai.gaurasundara.tkg@pamho.net

Prague — Jilova 290, Praha 5-Zlicin 155 21/ Tel. +42 (02) 5795-0391 or -0401/
Fax: +42 (02) 302-1628

◆ **Radhadesh, Belgium** — Chateau de Petite Somme, 6940 Septon-Durbuy/ Tel. +32 (086) 322926/
Fax: +32 (086) 322929/ E-mail: radhadesh@pamho.net

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Warszawa 130, P.O. Box 257)/ Tel. +48 (022) 750-7797 or -8248/ Fax: +48 (022) 750-8249

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E-mail: kgs@pamho.net

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Tel. +33 (02) 5440-2395/ Fax: +33 (02) 5440-2823/ E-mail: argm@wanadoo.fr

Germany (Nava Jiyada Nrsimha Ksetra) — Zielberg 20, 94118 Jandelsbrunn/ Tel. +49 (08583) 316/
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Hungary (New Vraja-dhama) — Krisna-völgy, 8699 Somogyvamos, Fö u. 38/ Tel. & fax: +36 (085)
540-002 or 340-185/ E-mail: krisna-volgy@pamho.net

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Tel. +39 (055) 820054/ Fax: +39 (055) 828470

Spain (New Vraja Mandala) — (Santa Clara) Brihuega, Guadalajara/ Tel. +34 949 280436

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Milan — Govinda's, Via Valpetrosa 5, 20123/ Tel. +39 (02) 862417

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

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Zürich — Preyergrasse 16, 8001/ Tel. +41 (01) 251-8859

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Fax: +7 (095) 945-3317

ASIA (partial list)*

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Fax: +852 (2) 724-2186/ E-mail: iskcon.hong.kong@pronto.pamho.net

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Manila, Philippines — 52 Copenhagen St., Merville Park Subdivision, Paranaque, Metro Manila
1700/ Tel. +63 (02) 824-5247/ E-mail: sridam.gds@pamho.net

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Kachin State/ E-mail: sdas108@hotmail.com

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Guayaquil, Ecuador — 6 de Marzo 226 or V. M. Rendon/ Tel. +593 (04) 308412 or 309420/
E-mail: guruman@ecua.net.ec

◆ **Lima, Peru** — Schell 634 Miraflores/ Tel. +51 (014) 444-2871

Mexico City, Mexico — Tiburcio Montiel 45, Colonia San Miguel, Chapultepec D.F., 11850/
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San Salvador, El Salvador — (mail: Apartado Postal 1506)/ Tel. +503 780799

São Paulo, Brazil — Av. Angelica, 2583, Santa Cecelia, CEP 01227 200/ Tel. +55 (011) 259-7352

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FEELINGS & PHILOSOPHY

(continued from page 42)

Anger. At the inhuman zealot hijackers and their lying masters. At pig-headed politicians on all sides who talk and spend money and never compromise. At the inevitable spiral of measures and countermeasures now sure to destroy peace and multiply the pain.

Frustration. With a society that mercilessly slaughters animals and the unborn, oblivious to the endless, horrific reactions.

Betrayal. By a billboarded mirage of enticements collapsed in a pile of smoldering rubble. By marketers of false material happiness and security who have cheated me and left me in pain with no customer-service desk in sight.

Detachment. I want to disaffiliate from this world. I'll do my duties and live my life, but after seeing this, how can I again believe that I or anyone else belongs in such a disgusting, hellish place?

Kṛṣṇa, the goal of life! What a good time to remember You!

The warrior Arjuna once pried a bit and asked to see his divine friend Kṛṣṇa's form as the material universe. Arjuna soon regretted it, for in His

universal form Kṛṣṇa opened His huge, ferocious, flaming mouth and sucked in everyone. His razor-sharp teeth sliced and chewed innumerable arms, legs, trunks, and heads, like those being picked today from the dusty New York rubble.

Seeing Kṛṣṇa as inevitable death, Arjuna changed his attitude toward Him. Arjuna cursed himself for being too familiar and begged Kṛṣṇa's forgiveness. He lost the sense of friendship and intimacy that Kṛṣṇa enjoyed. Instead, Arjuna recoiled into a more common pose of fear before God almighty.

Arjuna then begged Kṛṣṇa to withdraw His ugly, terrible material form and show Himself again as his beloved friend and charioteer. Kṛṣṇa happily complied.

Today I have seen Kṛṣṇa's horrible form of material nature. Let me be like Arjuna. Humbled, sobered, let me pray to see Kṛṣṇa in His eternal loving form. Let me forget my longstanding fascination with His material energy, for its backside is death.

Gratitude. I thank Śrīla Prabhupāda for giving me a chance to live my insignificant life in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

At a victims' memorial service at

the National Cathedral, Reverend Billy Graham, "America's Preacher," said, "I have been asked hundreds of times why God allows tragedy and suffering. I have to confess that I really do not know the answer totally, even to my own satisfaction. I have to accept, by faith, that God is sovereign and He is a God of love and mercy and compassion in the midst of suffering. The Bible says that God is not the author of evil. It speaks of evil as a 'mystery.'"

Reverend Graham is honest. I wonder if he would appreciate Prabhupāda's explanation of the Vedic answer. In a nutshell, it's this:

Evil exists because our purpose in coming to this world is selfish and godless and therefore evil. God is neutral; if we want to materially enjoy ourselves without Him, He lets us try. However, as spiritual beings we are built to love God, not matter. Material suffering reminds us of that fact. When one seeks and finds happiness in God, Kṛṣṇa, not in buildings and power and flesh, then material suffering becomes a great incentive for loving God, the true purpose of human life.

The happiness of loving God is not a beggar's banquet for material losers. It is an endless, varied feast, rich, healthy, and satisfying, unfettered by anxiety or guilt.

Philosophy aside, these terrorist attacks are a terrible tragedy. My heart goes out to all the victims and their families. Should I give blood or send a check? For now, I'm writing this in hopes that someday, by Kṛṣṇa's grace, some of them find comfort in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

To all who suffer over this disaster and its descendents: you may get retribution, but will it end your suffering? Enjoyment and suffering are the twin towers of material life. Please instead lovingly call out the name of God as you address Him. Or join us in chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. ☸

Kālakaṅṭha Dāsa is an associate editor for Back to Godhead.

For more reactions to the terrorist attacks, please visit our website, www.krishna.com.



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Most Hare Kṛṣṇa centers around the world put on a special festival every Sunday—for regulars as well as newcomers. Come by and relish the taste of the world's oldest cultural tradition. Call your nearest center to find out the schedule for the Sunday Feast. (See "Centers," page 55.)

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DIVINE MADNESS

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behavior when intensely absorbed in love for Kṛṣṇa. Unfortunately, as long as we are within this material world, we must observe social customs to avoid criticism by the general populace. This is Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's desire."

Vaiṣṇava tradition asserts that practitioners should follow the example of Śrīla Gaura-kiśora Dāsa Bābājī's essential Kṛṣṇa consciousness and not the particulars of his approach. In other words, he should be followed but not imitated. The distinction between following and imitating is brought out by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, who uses the Sanskrit terms *anukārinī* ("one who imitates") and *anuśārinī* ("one who follows"). In *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.294-296) he asks practitioners to follow the essential example of the great souls and not imitate their external behavior. This instruction certainly applies to how we should respond to the behavior of Bābājī Mahārāja.

THE FINAL INSTRUCTION

One day at sunrise, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta left Navadvīpa for the nearby mud hut where Śrīla Gaura-kiśora was staying. He knew that his master would soon depart. That day, November 16, 1915, Śrīla Gaura-kiśora entered the eternal pastimes of the Lord.

The head priests of Navadvīpa's temples and ashrams argued among themselves about where Śrīla Gaura-

kiśora's remains would be interred. There was an ulterior motive behind the dispute: the contending parties felt that establishing Śrīla Gaura-kiśora's tomb at their particular ashram or temple would popularize it and thus put them in a position to earn considerable money from tourists. But Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta, Gaura-kiśora Dāsa Bābājī's only disciple, opposed their illegitimate attempts, and in his outspoken way exposed their materialistic intentions.

Still, they challenged him in a public debate, claiming that they were advanced *sannyāsīs* while Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī was still only a young man. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta replied in a voice like thunder:

I am the sole disciple of Paramahansa Bābājī Mahārāja. Even though I have not yet accepted *sannyāsa*, I am a celibate *brahmacārī*, and by the grace of Bābājī Mahārāja I am not a hypocritical renunciant secretly addicted to abominable habits, as most of you are.

If there is someone here who is a renunciant of truly stainless character, then he can come forward and arrange for the much desired tomb. I have no objection to that. Anyone who within the last one year, or six months, three months, one month, or even three days has not indulged in illicit association with the opposite sex will be able to touch this spiritually blissful body. If anyone else touches it, he will be cursed forever.

—From *Bābājī Mahārāja*, by
 Karṇāmṛta Dāsa Adhikāri

The police commissioner had come to the debate expecting a riot. When he heard Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta's words, he asked, "How will the evidence for this be produced?"

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta replied, "I will take them at their word."

Sensing Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī's seriousness and strength of purpose, the pseudo spiritualists backed off. One by one they slowly turned and walked away in defeat. The police commissioner was dumbfounded.

On the following day, November 17, 1915, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī laid the body of his guru to rest on a newly formed sandbar of the Ganges at Kuliya-gram. The spot was near a place where Śrīla Gaura-kiśora loved to chant the names of Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Gaura-kiśora had reached the highest levels of love of God, and his disciple, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, vowed to give his disciples that same love. One disciple in particular, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swamī Prabhupāda, imbibed this love with full enthusiasm and continues to distribute it throughout the world through his International Society for Krishna Consciousness. ☪

Satyarāja Dāsa is a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda and a regular contributor to Back to Godhead. He has written several books on Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the latest of which is Gita on the Green: The Mystical Tradition Behind Bagger Vance. He and his wife live near New York City.

CALENDAR

This calendar is calculated for Mayapur, West Bengal, India. The dates, derived from a lunar calendar, may vary by one day for other locations. Consult your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for the exact dates for your area.

Because the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement comes in disciplic line from Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the calendar includes not only dates relevant to all followers of the Vedic tradition but also dates relating to Lord Caitanya's associates and prominent spiritual masters in His disciplic succession.

Month of Padmanābha

(continued)

(October 17–November 1)

NOVEMBER

1—Śrī Kṛṣṇa Śaradīyā Rāsa-yātrā. Disappearance anniversary of Śrī Murāri Gupta, an associate of Lord Caitanya. Beginning of Dāmodara-vrata. Offering lamps for one month. Also, the fourth month of Cāturmāsya begins (fasting from *ūrad dāl*).

Month of Dāmodara

(November 2–November 30)

6—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura, a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa known for his Bengali devotional songs.

11—Ramā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

15—Diwali, the festival of illuminating Kṛṣṇa's temples with lamps. Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for details.

16—Govardhana Pūjā, the festival commemorating the worship of Govardhana Hill by

the residents of Vṛndāvana and Kṛṣṇa's lifting the hill. Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for details.

19—Disappearance anniversary of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Devotees observe this day with personal remembrances of



Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta
Sarasvatī Ṭhākura

Śrīla Prabhupāda, readings from his biography, and fasting till noon, followed by feasting.

23—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, a great follower of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

26—Utthānā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans. Also, the disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Gaurakiśora Dāsa Bābājī, the spiritual master of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta

ta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, who was Śrīla Prabhupāda's spiritual master. Fasting till noon.

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

Month of Keśava

(December 1–30)

DECEMBER

1—Utpannā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

26—Mokṣadā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans. Also, the anniversary of the day on which Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Month of Nārāyaṇa

(December 31–January 28)

JANUARY

2—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, the spiritual master of Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. Also, disappearance anniversary of Śrīpāda Gour Govinda Swami, a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda's and an ISKCON spiritual master.

9—Saphalā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

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

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

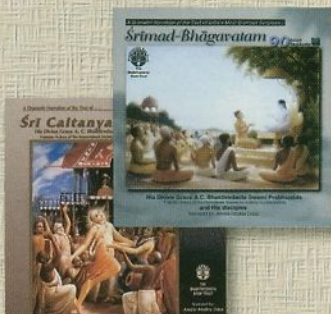
25—Putradā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

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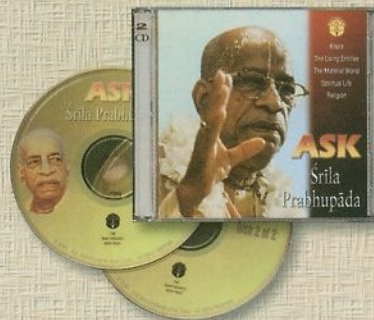
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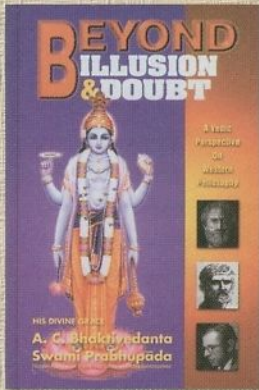
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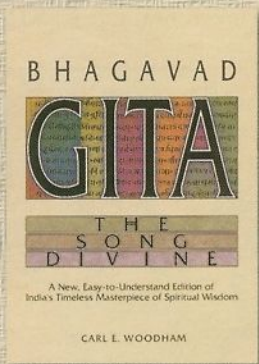
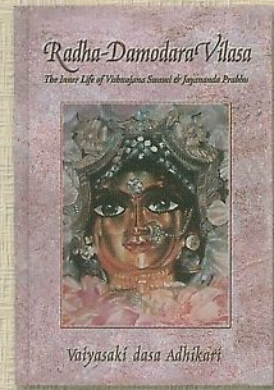


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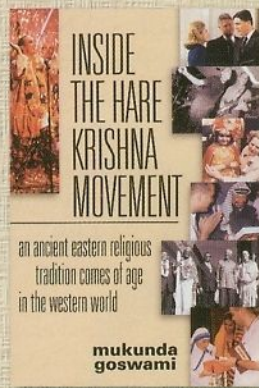
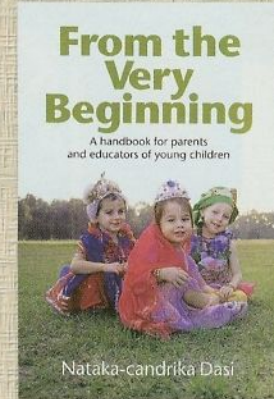
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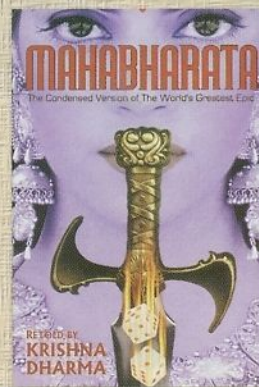
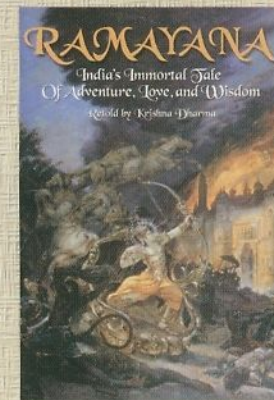
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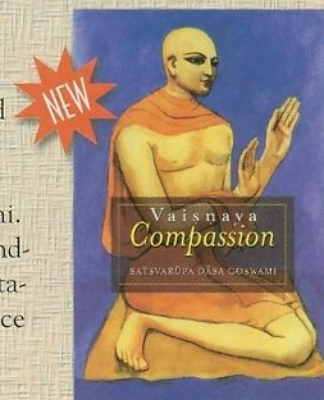
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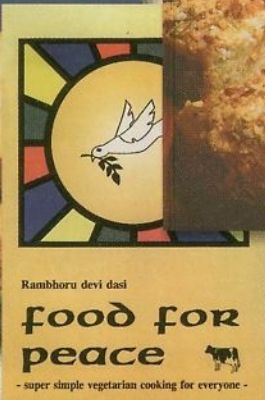
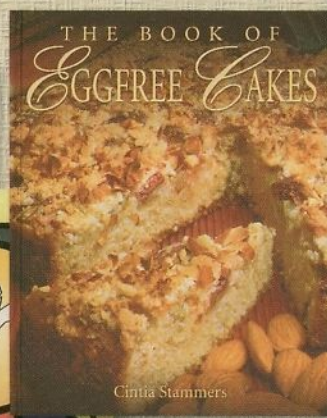
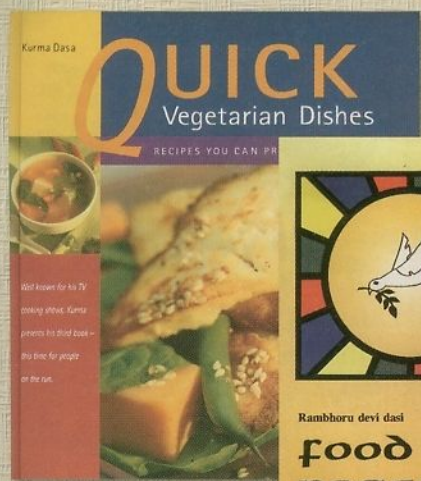
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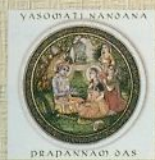
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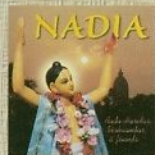
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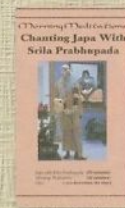
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Vedic Thoughts

Man and woman should live together as householders in relationship with Kṛṣṇa, only for the purpose of discharging duties in the service of Kṛṣṇa. Engage the children, engage the wife, and engage the husband, all in Kṛṣṇa conscious duties, and then all these bodily or material attachments will disappear. Since the via medium is Kṛṣṇa, the consciousness is pure, and there is no possibility of degradation at any time.

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupāda
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.31.42, Purport

In the spiritual world, the individual soul eats, plays, and enjoys.

Chāndogya Upaniṣad 8.12.3

The sixteen words of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra—
Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa,
Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma,
Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare—are especially meant for counteracting the sins of the age of Kali. To save oneself from the contamination of this age there is no alternative but to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra.

After searching through all the Vedic literature, one cannot find a method of religion for this age so sublime as the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Lord Brahmā
Kali-santaraṇa Upaniṣad 5.6

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

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu
Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka 5

When one understands that the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the individual spirit souls are eternally distinct entities, he becomes qualified for liberation and lives eternally in the spiritual world.

Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 1.6

One should fix one's mind on Kṛṣṇa by any means. All the rules and prohibitions mentioned in the scriptures should be the servants of this principle.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī
Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.4

The foolish with a poor fund of knowledge cannot know the transcendental nature of the forms, names, and activities of the Lord, who is playing like an actor in a drama. Nor can they express such things, neither in their speculations nor in their words.

Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.3.37

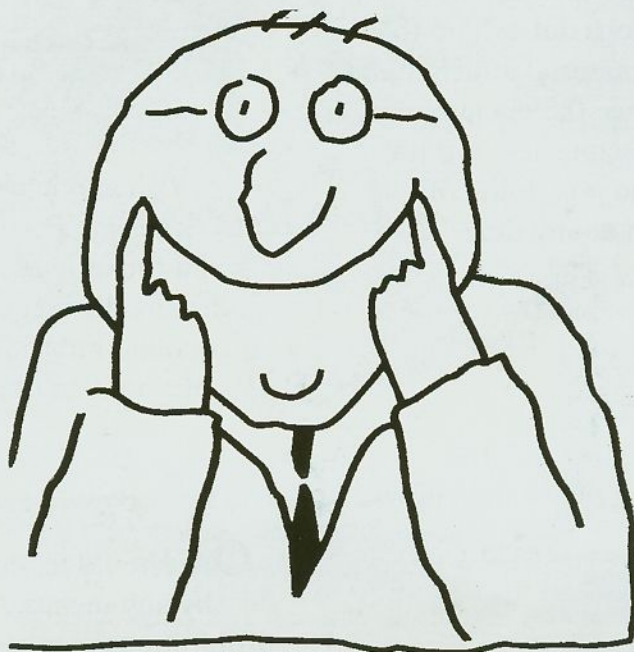
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