

GODHEAD IS LIGHT. NESCIENCE IS DARKNESS. WHERE THERE IS GODHEAD THERE IS NO NESCIENCE.



BACK TO GODHEAD



THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT

No. 45



Journey to the Real Self
page 9

The sublime path to pure consciousness



The Sankirtana Movement:
The chanting of the Names of God

Hare Kṛṣṇa
Hare Kṛṣṇa
Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa
Hare Hare

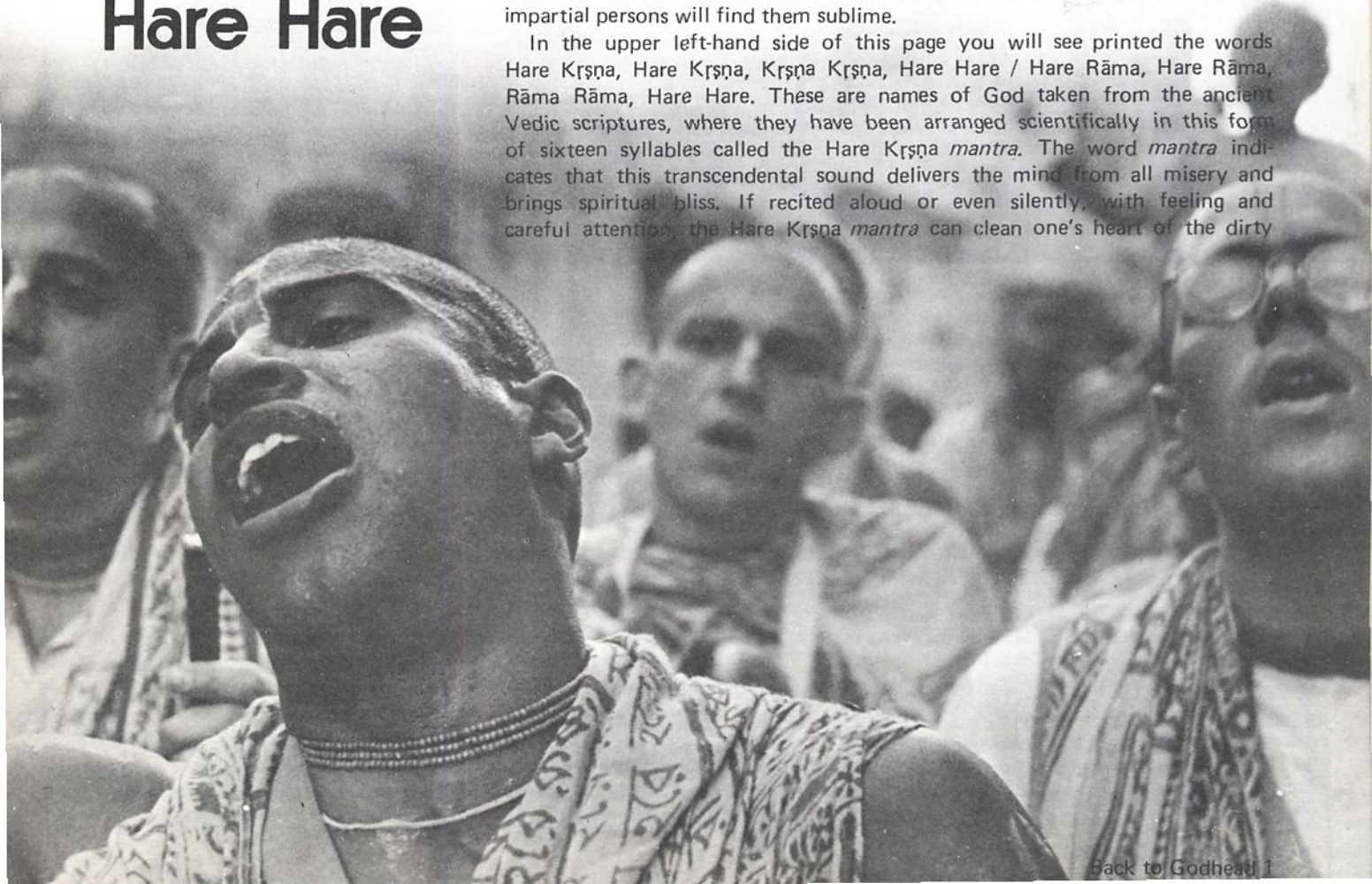
Hare Rāma
Hare Rāma
Rāma Rāma
Hare Hare

Back to Godhead is about Kṛṣṇa (pronounced "Krishna"), the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Kṛṣṇa is a Sanskrit word meaning God, the All-Attractive. Our magazine is intended to bring a revival of God consciousness to people of modern civilization, most of whom have forgotten what God is or who think God to be dead, impersonal or void. Because Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Person, appeared in India, many people think Kṛṣṇa to be a Hindu god. But He is not. Kṛṣṇa is God. He is not Christian, nor Muslim, nor Buddhist nor Jewish. He is universal. As the cause of all existence, Kṛṣṇa, or God, is the actual substance of life.

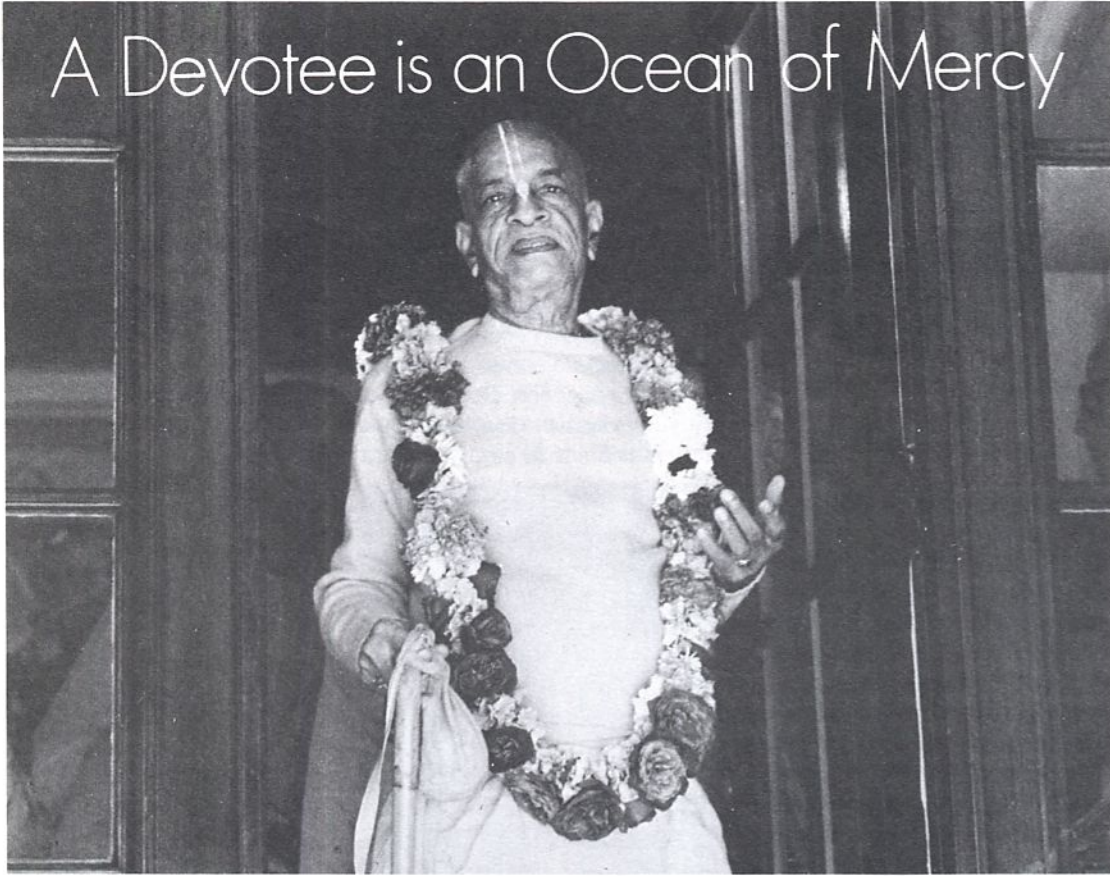
Just as there are magazines about sports, business and other topics, this is a magazine about the science of God. *Back to Godhead* educates humanity of its divine nature and trains the mind. Most magazines offer what the editors think the public might like, such as sex, crime and amusements, but our method is to present the real substance of life. We present 100% Kṛṣṇa, without ordinary tricks and commercial formulas. We receive the information we print about Kṛṣṇa from the most authorized sources, the genuine spiritual master and the Vedic scriptures. The Vedic literatures are philosophically so perfect and clear that simply by carefully reading them one will know God perfectly well and will be sufficiently educated to defend himself from the argumentative onslaughts of atheists. Beyond that, the reader will be able to convert others to accepting God as the highest pleasure and the most concrete principle of life.

Our spiritual master, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, understands that more and more people are growing tired of hackneyed mundane topics and are developing a taste instead for transcendental literature. Therefore he has instructed his disciples, the members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, to distribute *Back to Godhead* as widely as possible, by the hundreds of thousands. Please read the article written by His Divine Grace and the articles by his disciples. We believe that serious and impartial persons will find them sublime.

In the upper left-hand side of this page you will see printed the words Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare / Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. These are names of God taken from the ancient Vedic scriptures, where they have been arranged scientifically in this form of sixteen syllables called the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*. The word *mantra* indicates that this transcendental sound delivers the mind from all misery and brings spiritual bliss. If recited aloud or even silently, with feeling and careful attention, the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* can clean one's heart of the dirty



A Devotee is an Ocean of Mercy



His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Today I shall speak to you about the glorification of the holy name of God. This was discussed between Mahārāja Parīkṣit and Śukadeva Gosvāmī in connection with a *brāhmaṇa* who was very fallen and addicted to all kinds of sinful activities but was saved simply by chanting the holy name. This is found in the Sixth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

The universal planetary systems are very nicely explained in the Fifth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Within the universe there are some planets which are hellish. Actually, not only the *Bhāgavatam* but all religious scriptures contain descriptions of hell and heaven. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* you can find out where those hellish planets are and how distant they are from this planet, just as you can obtain information from modern astronomy. Astronomers have

calculated how far the moon is from here and what the distance is between this planet and the sun; similarly, the *Bhāgavatam* contains descriptions of the hellish planets.

We have experience of different atmospheric conditions even on this planet. In the western countries near the North Pole, the climate is different than in India, which is near the equator. Just as there are differences in atmosphere and living conditions on this planet, similarly there are many planets which have different atmospheres and conditions of life.

After hearing a description of the hellish planets from Śukadeva Gosvāmī, Parīkṣit Mahārāja said, *adhuneha mahābhāge yathaiva narakānnaṛaḥ / nānograyātānānneyātanme vyākhyātumarhasi*: "Sir, I have heard from you about

the hellish planets. Men who are very sinful are sent to those planets." Parīkṣit Mahārāja is a Vaiṣṇava (devotee), and a Vaiṣṇava always feels compassion for others' distress. He is very afflicted by the miseries of others. When Lord Jesus Christ presented himself, for instance, he was greatly afflicted by the miserable conditions of the people. Regardless of which country or sect they belong to, all Vaiṣṇavas or devotees—any people who are God conscious or Kṛṣṇa conscious—are thus compassionate. Therefore to blaspheme a Vaiṣṇava, a preacher of God's glories, is a great offense.

Kṛṣṇa, God, is never tolerant of offenses committed at the lotus feet of a Vaiṣṇava. *Kṛpāmbudhi*: A Vaiṣṇava is an ocean of mercy. *Vāncā-kalpa-taru*: Everyone has desires, but a Vaiṣṇava can

fulfill all desires. *Kalpa-taru* means desire tree. There is a tree in the spiritual world which is called a desire tree. In this material world, you get a particular type of fruit from a particular type of tree, but in Kṛṣṇaloka as well as in all the Vaikuṅṭha planets, all the trees are spiritual and will fulfill all your desires. That is described in the *Brahma-saṁhitā: cintāmaṇi-prakara-sadmasu kalpa-vṛkṣa*.

A Vaiṣṇava is addressed as *mahābhāga*, which means "fortunate." One who becomes a Vaiṣṇava and is God conscious is understood to be greatly fortunate.



Caitanya Mahāprabhu has explained that the living entities are rotating in different species of life, in different planetary systems all over the universe. A living entity can go anywhere—to hell or heaven—as he likes and as he prepares himself. There are many heavenly planets, many hellish planets and many species of life. There are 8,400,000 species of life. The living entity is rotating, wandering through these species and creating bodies according to his mentality in the present life. As you sow, so shall you reap.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu says that out of all these numberless living entities who are traveling in the material world, one is fortunate, not everyone. If everyone were fortunate, they would all have taken to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It is being distributed freely everywhere. But why are people not taking it? Because they are unfortunate. Therefore Caitanya Mahāprabhu says that only those who are fortunate take to this Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and they get hopeful life, pleasant life, blissful life, a life of knowledge.

It is the duty of a Vaiṣṇava to go door to door to make the unfortunate people fortunate. A Vaiṣṇava thinks, "How can these people be delivered from their hellish life?" That was Parīkṣit Mahārāja's inquiry. "Sir," he said, "you have described that on account of one's sinful activities he is put into a hellish condition of life or in a hellish planetary system. Now, what are the counter methods by which such persons can be saved?" This is the question. When a Vaiṣṇava comes, when God Himself comes, or when God's son or His very confidential devotees come, their only mission is to save the sinful

to be always Kṛṣṇa conscious." Because he is Kṛṣṇa conscious, he is confident that in his next life he is going to Kṛṣṇa. It is stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* that if one executes the Kṛṣṇa conscious regulative principles carefully, it is certain that he will reach the supreme destination in his next life.

Prahlāda Mahārāja continues: "There is only one source of anxiety for me." Just see—although he had no anxiety for himself, he still had anxiety. He says, *śoce tato vimukha-cetasa*: "I am anxious for those persons who are not Kṛṣṇa conscious. That is my anxiety. For myself I have no anxiety, but I am thinking of those who are not Kṛṣṇa conscious." Why aren't they Kṛṣṇa conscious? *Māyā-sukhāya bharamudvahato vimūḍhān*. These rascals have created a humbug civilization for temporary happiness.

Māyā-sukhāya. Actually this is a fact. We have a humbug civilization. So many cars are being manufactured every year, and for that purpose so many roads have to be excavated and prepared. This creates problem after problem. Therefore it is *māyā-sukhāya*, illusory happiness, and yet we are trying to be happy in this way. We are trying to manufacture some way to be happy, but this only creates other problems.

In your country you have the greatest number of cars, but that does not solve any problems. You have manufactured cars to help solve the problems of life, but I have experienced that this also creates more problems. When my disciple Dayānanda wanted to take me to a doctor in Los Angeles, I had to take the trouble to travel thirty miles before I could even consult the doctor. Once you create cars, then you must travel thirty or forty miles to meet your friends.

You can go from New York to Boston in one hour, but it takes even longer than that just to get to the airport. This situation is called *māyā-sukhāya*. *Māyā* means false, illusory. We are trying to create some very comfortable situation, but we have created another uncomfortable situation. This is the way of the material world; if we are not satisfied by the natural comforts offered by God and nature and we want to create artificial comforts, then we have to

men who are suffering. They have knowledge of how to do this.

When Prahlāda Mahārāja met Nṛsiṁhadeva, he said:

*naivodvije para duratyaya vaitaraṇyās
tvadvīrya gāyana mahāmṛta-magnacittāḥ*

*śoce tato vimukha-cetasa indriyārtha
māyā-sukhāya bharamudvahato vimūḍhān*

"My dear Lord," Prahlāda says, "I am not very anxious for my own deliverance." Māyāvādī philosophers are very careful that their personal salvation is not interrupted. They think, "If I go to preach in association with others, I may fall down, and my realization will be finished." Therefore they do not come. Only the Vaiṣṇavas come, at the risk of fall-down—but they do not fall down. They may even go to hell to deliver the conditioned souls. This is Prahlāda Mahārāja's mission. He says, *naivodvije udvije*: "I am not very anxious about living in this material world."

Prahlāda Mahārāja says further, "I have no anxiety for myself because somehow or other I have been trained

create some discomfort also. Most people do not know that. They think that they are creating a very comfortable situation, but actually they are traveling fifty miles to go to the office to earn a livelihood and fifty miles to come back. In Hawaii, one boy, Gaur Sundar, was working to maintain our temple. Unfortunately he had to go fifty miles from the temple to work. I was very sorry to see that this boy had to go fifty miles for Kṛṣṇa's sake, but now Kṛṣṇa has given us the facility so that we don't have to work. Because of such conditions, Prahāda Mahārāja says that these *vimūḍhāns*—these materialistic persons, these rascals—have created an unnecessary burden on themselves simply for temporary happiness. *Vimūḍhān, māyā-sukhāya bharamudvahato*. Therefore, in Vedic civilization, it is recommended that one free himself from material life, take *sannyāsa*, the renounced order of life, and prosecute spiritual life with absolutely no anxiety.

If one can execute Kṛṣṇa consciousness in family life, that is very good. Bhaktivinode Ṭhākura was a family man, a magistrate, and still he executed devotional service so nicely. Dhruva Mahārāja and Prahāda Mahārāja were *ghasthas*, householders, but they trained themselves in such a way that even as householders they were faced with no interruption in their service. Therefore, Prahāda Mahārāja says, "I have learned the art of always remaining in Kṛṣṇa consciousness." What is that art? *Tvadvīrya gāyama mahāmṛta-magna-cittāḥ*. Simply glorifying the victorious activities and pastimes of the Lord. *Vīrya* means "very heroic."

Kṛṣṇa's activities are heroic. You can read about them in *Kṛṣṇa Book*. Kṛṣṇa's name, His fame, His activities, His associates and everything else are heroic. Prahāda Mahārāja says in this connection, "I am certain that wherever I go, I can glorify Your heroic activities and be safe. There is no question of my falling down. But I am simply anxious for these persons who have created a type of civilization in which they are always busy working hard. I am thinking of them."

Prahāda says further:
prāyeṇa deva munyaḥ sva-vimukti-kāmā

maunaṁ caranti vijane na parārthaniṣṭāḥ
naitān vihāya kṛpāṇān vimumukṣa eko
nānyaṁ tvadasya śaraṇaṁ bramato
'nupaśye

"My dear Lord, there are many saintly persons and sages who are very interested in their own liberation." *Munayaḥ* means saintly persons or philosophers. *Prāyeṇa deva munayaḥ sva-vimukti-kāmā*: they are very interested in their own liberation. They try to live in solitary places like the Himalayan mountains. They do not talk to anyone, and they are always afraid of mixing with ordinary people in the city and becoming

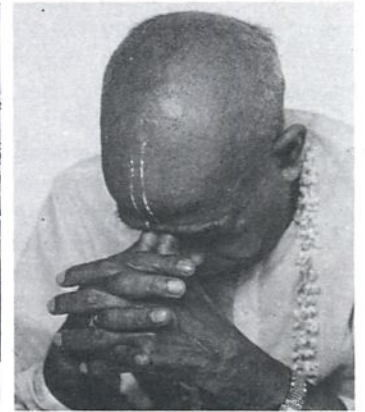


ing disturbed or maybe even falling down. They think, "Better let me save myself."

Prahāda Mahārāja regrets that these great saintly persons do not come to the city, where people have manufactured a civilization of very hard work all day and night. Such saints are not very compassionate. He says, "I am anxious for these fallen people who are unnecessarily working so hard simply for sense gratification."

Even if there were some point in working that hard, such people do not know what it is. All they know is sex. Either they go to a naked dance or to a naked club or to this or that. Prahāda Mahārāja says, *naitān vihāye kṛpāṇān vimumukṣa eko*. "My Lord, I do not need salvation alone. Unless I take all these fools with me, I shall not go." He refuses to go to the kingdom of God without taking all these fallen souls with him. This is a Vaiṣṇava. *Nānyaṁ tvadasya śaraṇaṁ bramato 'nupaśye*: "I simply want to teach them how to surrender unto You. That's all. That is my goal."

The Vaiṣṇava knows that as soon as one surrenders, one's path is clear. *Naivodviḥ para duratyayavai taraṇyās-tvadvīrya gāyana mahāmṛta-magna-cittāḥ*: "Simply, somehow or other, let them bow down before Kṛṣṇa. This is a simple method. All you have to do is bow down before Kṛṣṇa with faith and say, "My Lord Kṛṣṇa, I was forgetful of You for so long, for so many lives. Now I have come to consciousness; please accept me." That's all. If one simply learns this technique and sincerely surrenders himself to the Lord, his path is immediately open. These are the philosophical thoughts of a Vaiṣṇava.



A Vaiṣṇava is always thinking about how the fallen conditioned souls can be delivered. They are always involved in making plans in that way, just like the Gosvāmīs. What was the business of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana, Lord Caitanya's direct disciples? That is stated by Śrīnivāsa Ācārya:

nāna śāstra-vicāraṇaika-nipuṇau sad-dharma-saṁsthapākau
lokānāṁ hitakāriṇau tribhuvane mān-yau śaraṇyākaraṇau
rādhā-kṛṣṇa-padāravinda bhajānānandena mattālikau
vande rūpa-saṅātānau raghu-yugau śrī-jīva-gopālakau

"The six Gosvāmīs, namely, Śrī Saṅātāna Gosvāmī, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrī Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, Śrī Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī and Śrī Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, are very expert in scrutinizingly studying the revealed scriptures with the aim of establishing eternal religious principles for the benefit of all human beings. They are always absorbed in the mood of the *gopīs* and are engaged in the transcendental loving service of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa."

With similar Vaiṣṇava compassion, Parīkṣit Mahārāja says to Śukadeva Gosvāmī, "You have described the different types of hellish conditions of life. Now, tell me how those who are suffering can be delivered. Kindly explain this to me." *Adhuneha mahābhāga yathaiva narakānnaṛaḥ/ nānogra-yātan-ānneyātanme.* Nara means human beings, those who are fallen. *Narakānnaṛaḥ nānogra-yātan-ānneyātanme:* "How can they be delivered from their fierce miseries and horrible pains?" That is a Vaiṣṇava heart. Mahārāja Parīkṣit says, "Somehow or other they have fallen down to this hellish life. But that does not mean that they should remain in that condition. There must be some means by which they can be delivered, so kindly explain that."

Śukadeva Gosvāmī replied:
*na cedihāvāpacitiṁ yathāmhasaḥ
 kṛtasya kuryānmanauktipāṇibhīḥ
 dhruvaṁ sa vai pretya narakānupaiti
 ye kīrtitā me bhavatastigmayātanāḥ*
 "Yes, I've already described the different types of hellish conditions and very severe painful life, but one has to counteract it."

How can this be done? Sinful activities are committed in various ways. We can commit sinful activity and thus make a plan—"I shall kill that man"—that is still sinful. When the mind is thinking, feeling and willing, then there is action.

The other day I was reading in a book that if someone's dog barks at you when you are passing on the road, then that is an offense on the part of the dog-owner, according to law. No one should have to be scared by dogs barking, so one should take care of his dog.

I read this. It is a law in your country. The dog is simply barking, but it is sinful. The dog is not responsible because it is an animal, but because the owner of the animal has made the dog his best friend, he is responsible by law. If an outside dog enters your house, it may not be killed, but the owners of the dog may be prosecuted.

Just as the barking of the dog is unlawful, so when you speak something offensive to others, that is also sinful. That is just like barking. Therefore sinful activities are committed in so many ways. Whether we think of sinful activities, or we speak something sinful, or we actually commit a sinful activity, they are all considered sinful activities. *Dhruvaṁ sa vai pretya narakānupaiti.* One has to suffer punishment for such sinful activities.

People do not believe in a next life because they want to avoid this botheration. But we cannot avoid it. We must act according to the law, or we will be punished. Similarly, I cannot avoid God's law. That is not possible. I can cheat others, commit theft and hide myself, thereby saving myself from the punishment of the state law, but I cannot save myself from the superior law, the law of nature. It is very difficult. There are so many witnesses. The daylight is witness, the moonlight is witness, and Kṛṣṇa is the supreme witness. You cannot say, "I am committing this sin, but no one can see me."

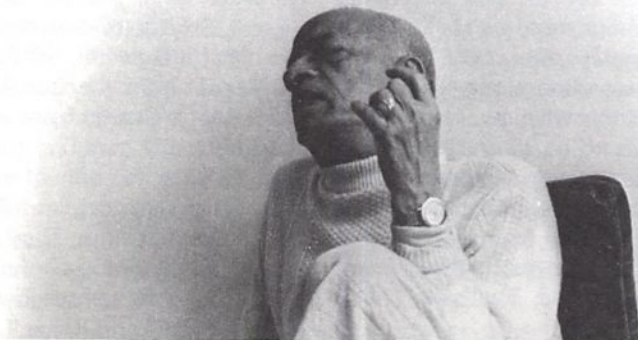
Kṛṣṇa is the supreme witness sitting within your heart. He notes down what you are thinking and what you are doing. He also gives facility. If you want to do something to satisfy your senses, Kṛṣṇa gives the facility for that action.

That is stated in *Bhagavad-gītā. Sarvasya cāhaṁ hṛdi sanniviṣṭo:* "I am sitting in everyone's heart." *Mattaḥ smṛtir-jñānam-apohanam ca:* "From Me come remembrance, knowledge and forgetfulness."

In this way Kṛṣṇa gives us a chance. If you want Kṛṣṇa, then He will give you a chance to have Him, and if you don't want Kṛṣṇa, then He will give you a chance to forget Him. If you want to enjoy life forgetting Kṛṣṇa, forgetting God, then Kṛṣṇa will give you all facility so that you can forget, and if you want to enjoy life with Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then Kṛṣṇa will give you the chance to make progress in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That is up to you.

If you think that you can be happy without Kṛṣṇa consciousness, Kṛṣṇa does not object to that. *Yatheccchasi tathā kuru.* After advising Arjuna, He simply said, "Now I have explained everything to you. Whatever you desire you can do." Arjuna replied immediately, *kariṣye vacanaṁ tava:* "Now I shall execute Your order." That is Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

God does not interfere with your little independence. If you want to act according to the order of God, then God will help you. Even if you fall down sometimes, if you become sincere—"From this time on I shall remain Kṛṣṇa conscious and execute His orders"—then Kṛṣṇa will help you. In all respects, even if you fall down, He will excuse you and give you more intelligence. This intelligence will say, "Don't do this. Now go on with your duty." But if you want to forget Kṛṣṇa, if you want to become happy without Kṛṣṇa, He will give you so many chances that you will forget Kṛṣṇa life after life.



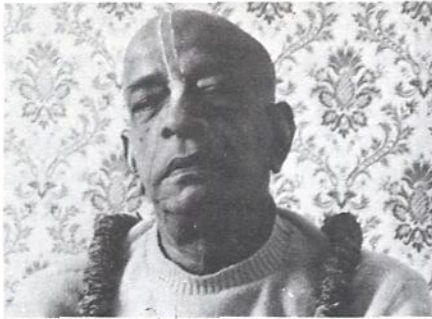
Parīkṣit Mahārāja says here, "It is not that if I say there is no God then there will be no God or I will not be responsible for what I do." That is the atheistic theory. Atheists do not want God because they are always sinful—if they thought that there were God, then they would be forced to shudder at the thought of punishment. Therefore they deny the existence of God. That is their process. They think that if they do not accept God then there is no punishment and they can do whatever they like.

When rabbits are being attacked by bigger animals, they close their eyes and think, "I am not going to be killed." But they are killed anyway. Similarly, we may deny the existence of God and the law of God, but still God and His law are there. In the high court you may say, "I don't care for the law of the government," but you will be forced to accept the government law. If you deny the state law, then you will be put into prison and be caused to suffer. Similarly, I may foolishly decry the existence of God—"There is no God" or "I am God"—but, nevertheless, you are responsible for all your actions, both good and bad.

There are two kinds of activities—good and bad. If you act nicely and perform pious activities, then you get good fortune, and if you act sinfully, then you have to suffer. Therefore Śukadeva Gosvāmī says:

*tasmāt-puraivāśviha pāpa-niṣkṛtau
yateta mṛtyoravipadyatā "tmañā
doṣasya dṛṣṭvā guru-lāghavaṁ yathā
bhiṣak cikitseta rujāṁ nidāhavit*

There are different kinds of atonement. If you commit some sin and counteract



it by something else, that is atonement. There are examples of this in the Christian Bible. Śukadeva Gosvāmī says, "You should know that you are responsible, and according to the gravity of sinful life, you should accept some type of atonement as described in the *śāstras*, the scriptures."

Actually, just as when one is diseased he must go to a doctor and pay doctor bills as a form of atonement, according to the Vedic way of life there is a class of *brāhmaṇas* to whom one should go for the prescribed atonement according to the sins one commits.

Śukadeva Gosvāmī says that one has to execute the prescribed atonement according to the gravity of one's sinful life. He continues the example: *doṣasya dṛṣṭvā guru-lāghavaṁ yathā bhiṣak cikitseta rujāṁ nidānavit*. When you consult a physician, he prescribes an inexpensive medicine or a costly medicine according to the gravity of the disease. If you simply have a headache he may prescribe an aspirin, but if you have something very severe, he immediately prescribes a surgical operation which will cost a thousand dollars. Similarly, sinful life is a diseased condition, so one must follow the prescribed cure to become healthy.

Acceptance of the chain of birth and death is a diseased condition of the soul. The soul has no birth and death and no disease because it is spirit. Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā*: *na jāyate*, the soul has no birth, and *mṛīyate*, it has no death. *Nityaḥ śāśvato 'yamimna hanyate hanyamāne śarīre*. The soul is eternal and everlasting. It is not lost with the dissolution of this body. *Na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre*. *Na hanyate* means that it is not killed or destroyed, even after the destruction of this body.

The missing point of modern civilization is that there is no educational sys-

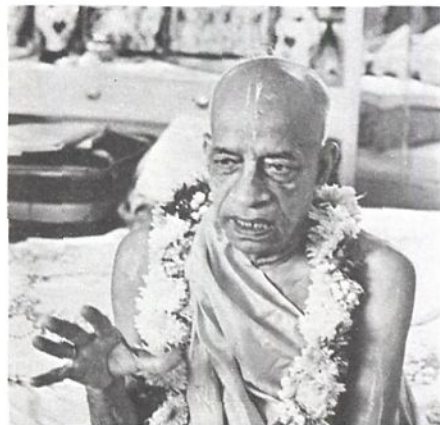
tem to instruct people on what happens after death. Thus we have the most defective education because without this knowledge of what happens after death, one dies like an animal. The animal does not know that he is going to have another body; he has no such knowledge.

Human life is not meant for becoming an animal. One should not simply be interested in eating, sleeping, sex life and defense. You may have a very nice arrangement for eating, or many nice buildings for sleeping, or a very good arrangement for sex life, or a very good defense force to protect you, but that does not mean that you are a human being. That type of civilization is animal life. Animals are also interested in eating, sleeping and sex life, and according to their own methods they defend also. Where, then, is the distinction between human life and animal life if you simply engage in these four principles of bodily nature?

The distinction is made when a human being is inquisitive—"Why have I been put into this miserable condition? Is there any remedy for it? Is there any perpetual eternal life? I do not want to die. I want to live very happily and peacefully. Is there a chance of this? What is that method? What is that science?" When these inquiries are there and steps are taken to answer these questions, that is human civilization; otherwise it is doggish civilization, animal civilization.

Animals are satisfied if they can eat, sleep, have some sex life and have some defense. Actually there is no defense because no one can protect himself from the hands of cruel death. Hiraṇyakaśipu, for instance, wanted to live forever, and so he underwent severe austerities. So-called scientists are now saying that we shall stop death by scientific methods. This is also another crazy utterance. That is not possible. You may make great advancement in scientific knowledge, but there is no scientific solution to these four problems of birth, death, old age and disease.

One who is intelligent will be eager to solve these four prime problems. No one wants to die. But there is no remedy. I have to die. Everyone is very anxious



to stop the increase of population by employing so many contraceptive methods, but still, birth is going on. So there is no stoppage of birth. You may invent up-to-date medicines by your scientific methods, but you cannot stop disease. It is not possible just to take a tablet to put an end to disease.

In *Bhagavad-gītā* it is said, *janma-mṛtyu-jarā-vyādhi-duḥkha-doṣānudarśanam*: One might think that he has solved all the problems of his life, but where is the solution to these four prob-

lems of birth, death, old age and disease? That solution is Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Kṛṣṇa also says in the same book, *janma karma ca me divyam evaṁ yo vetti tattvataḥ tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma naiti mām eti so 'rjuna*. Every one of us is giving up our body at every moment. The last phase of giving up this body is called death. But Kṛṣṇa says, "If anyone understands My appearance and disappearance and My activities—not superficially but in truth—after giving up this body he never again

accepts a material body."

What happens to such a person? *Mām eti*—he returns to Kṛṣṇa. If you are to go to Kṛṣṇa, then you have to prepare your spiritual body. That is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If you keep yourself in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then gradually you prepare your next body, a spiritual body, which will carry you immediately to Kṛṣṇaloka, and you will become happy. You will live there perpetually and blissfully.

END

Clearing the Pain

Jamadaṅgi dāsa

(ISKCON—Boston)



O I have kissed the feet
Of stony woman in town
Gast as my mother sweet
And dragged my father down
The list of my sins is carved
On the faces of all I see,
Whose fearful hearts are scarred
For knowledge but they lack eternity
But, O spiritual master pure,
Your Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda,
You have come to save us who are poor
By bringing deathless love of God.
So fallen I lie on the ground,
Homeless I sleep in the street,
And crying do wait for the sound
Of your voice or your lotus feet.

His Divine
Grace A.C.
Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupāda
Has saved us
Who fell
From the darkness
Of hell.
Prabhupāda
Gave us life,
Sang of God
In the strife
With a voice
Filled with love,
Brought a choice
From above
In a song
Full of bliss,
Singing long
For the kiss
Of our sweet
Loving Lord.
Touch his feet,
Climb aboard,
Dance and sing,
Chant the name,
Hear it ring
In the sky!
Serve forever,
Never die.

O I am poor of heart;
A wandering beggar, I,
Bereft of common sense,
Do cheat and steal and lie.

My evil thoughts and deeds
Swarm like angry flies,
Lay their sticky eggs
Upon my mind, then die.

But though I wander lost
And full deserve my fate,
You've come to pay the cost
Before it is too late.

Dear Prabhupāda, you bring
Sweet music to my life.
Who else but you can sing
Amidst the death and strife?

Who else can show the way,
Lead me from the night?
Your golden moonlike ray
Has given back my sight.

You danced within my heart
Where no one ever came,
Loved me from the start
And sang the holy name.

Your voice is filled with love.
It stirs my sleeping soul.
Your singing fills the night
Within this wretched hole.

So I am Yours eternally,
I, trembling, hold your hand.
I'll serve you all my life.
With love we'll leave this land.

GROSS BODY DEFINED

The spiritual body, which is our real identity, is covered by the gross body composed of earth, water, fire, air and ether, and by the subtle body composed of mind, intelligence and ego. Bones, flesh and muscle are composed mainly of water. Fire is the energy agent that aids in digestion and motivates the system to action. Air is the breath force supplying oxygen to the grosser elements, and ether is a more subtle form of air principally circulating in the brain to give vivacity to the mind functions. Combined, these comprise the gross body, which is the vehicle for action. The mind itself works the senses and makes them assert themselves in such and such a way. It also receives and retains impressions through the senses. The mind thinks, perceives and feels, and is the conjurer of desires. The intelligence is the controller of the mind and is the intellectual force that can distinguish between matter and spirit. By the intelligence one has the ability to learn or understand from experience, reason, and discrimination. As one's intelligence develops, he progresses up the evolutionary scale. In the body, the intelligence is the monarch, and the mind is the viceroy serving as intermediary between the intelligence and the phenomenal world. Intelligence is more subtle than mind (it is more difficult to perceive materially), and more subtle than intelligence is ego. Ego is the self identity by which the individual distinguishes himself from others. It is the subtle substance on which experience is superimposed. In introspection it recognizes a series of acts and mental states which the gross body experiences. It is the web of individuality uniting all other components. This ego is not merely an intellectual conception. It can be directly perceived. For example, in large crowds of people we do not lose our sense of self identity and confuse our body with the bodies of others. Also, in dreams, for instance, we often feel ourselves present as an individual distinct from other individuals in the dream. In fact, in some dreams we may inhabit different bodies but still retain that singular sense of "I," and yet in other dreams we may have no bodies at all but may simply be a presence witnessing action.

TRANSMIGRATION OF THE SUBTLE BODY

As long as we do not attain liberation, we are covered by the gross body. At death the subtle body, composed of the mind, intelligence and ego, shuffles off the mortal coil composed of the grosser elements and carries impressions and proclivities into another gross body. "The living entity in the material world carries his different conceptions of life,

as the air carries aromas. Thus does he take one kind of body, and again quit it to take another." (Bg. 15.8) Therefore this rebirth is like a change of dress. Consciously the subtle body may forget its previous life in that it may forget particular actions, but nonetheless these actions determine the next body that is being assumed. Actually the impressions are always there, and in some rare cases, by the will and grace of the Divine, one can remember certain actions of his previous life, and the desires experienced in that life are carried over from body to body by the mind, intelligence and ego.

All of us have practical experience of how the subtle body extends and travels beyond the gross body. When we are sleeping, the subtle body can travel to places far distant and to times past or future, and when we are awake we may think of a friend or place and their images appear. How often

does the school boy frolic at the seashore while sitting at his desk! Such daydreams are examples of the ability of the subtle body to travel beyond the gross body. In recent years millions of Americans have been enjoying traveling in their subtle bodies through the use of LSD and other psychedelic drugs. These

serve as a catalyst to sever the subtle body from the gross body. They are enjoyable for one who takes them because the experiences encountered by the liberated subtle body while traveling are much more vivid and bizarre than daydreams. In such states one can experience the mental bliss of freedom and can soar to great heights of intellectual exhilaration. But these states are temporary. Although they seem to be eternal while one is in them, the subtle body comes down and returns to its original abode of pain.

PREPARATION OF FUTURE BODIES

We are now utilizing a gross body, and when it becomes useless we will transfer to another body. We are now preparing our next body by our actions. Such preparation is called *karma*. We also can prepare to transfer our bodies to other planets if we so desire. The *Vedas* and other scriptures recommend certain pious activities, penances, sacrifices, etc., as means for transferral to higher planets. However, after the results of these pious activities are exhausted, the subtle body must return to a middle planet like the earth and acquire a gross body in order to aggrandize more good *karma* to become re-elevated. And so this cycle goes on. "Those who study the *Vedas* and drink the *soma* juice worship Me indirectly, seeking the heavenly planets. They take birth on the Indraloka where they enjoy godly delights. When they have thus enjoyed heavenly sense pleasure, they return to this mortal planet again. Thus, through the Vedic principles, they achieve only flickering happiness." (Bg. 9.20-21)



From the point of view of spiritual intelligence, such activities are useless. Like Indra, at one moment one may be a demigod, and at the next moment he may be a hog. This change of dress is very painful because in each case one has to endure the pains of birth, old age, disease and death. He has not only to bear the burdens of one body but of countless ones.

TRANSFERRAL TO THE SPIRITUAL BODY

According to Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, if one transfers himself to the planet where Kṛṣṇa resides he does not have to take on another material body. "From the highest planet in the material world, down to the lowest, all are places of misery, where repeated birth and death take place. But one who attains to My abode, O son of Kuntī, never takes birth again." (Bg. 8.16) It is the duty of the individual to learn how to transfer himself to that spiritual sky where he will not be subject to rebirth. The real identity of the individual is beyond both the gross and subtle bodies. It is beyond the material universe, beyond the mind, intelligence and ego. It exists eternally in the spiritual sky. When all material hankerings are severed, one is able to regain his original pure uncontaminated form of consciousness which is his spiritual body full of *sac-cid-ānanda*, eternal bliss, being and knowledge. It is by cultivating one's Kṛṣṇa consciousness that the gross and subtle bodies can be transcended. Then one can enter the spiritual sky and there attain his true form.

AWAKENING FROM THE BONDAGE OF BODIES

When the subtle body enters a gross body, he enters the abode of darkness. When we fall down a tunnel we can no longer see the light of day. So this gross body and the world perceived by it are considered to be darkness and ignorance by those who have Vedic knowledge, that is to say by those who remember their previous illuminated existence. The taking on of a gross body is also likened to falling asleep and dreaming. When one falls asleep he leaves his actual environment and travels to a land of make-believe which is full of insubstantialities. But when he awakes he is once again in his original environment. If his dream is pleasant he may yearn to dream again, but if it is horrible he may be glad to awake. In either case, the dreaming condition is temporary, and in no case would one want to permanently remain in that situation. Liberation is simply realizing that one is asleep and waking up.

One who wakes up enters the spiritual sky where there is no need for artificial illumination by sun or moon. There all the planets are self-luminous. The inhabitants are established in bliss and knowledge, and life is eternal.

Those who are caught in the dream of the gross body are suffering so many material miseries. Actually they don't want to grow old. They don't want to die. But all this is being forced upon them. They are not aware of their position outside of the dream. They institute universities in which they discuss phenomena within the dream, but in no way are they interested in a curriculum devoted to waking up.

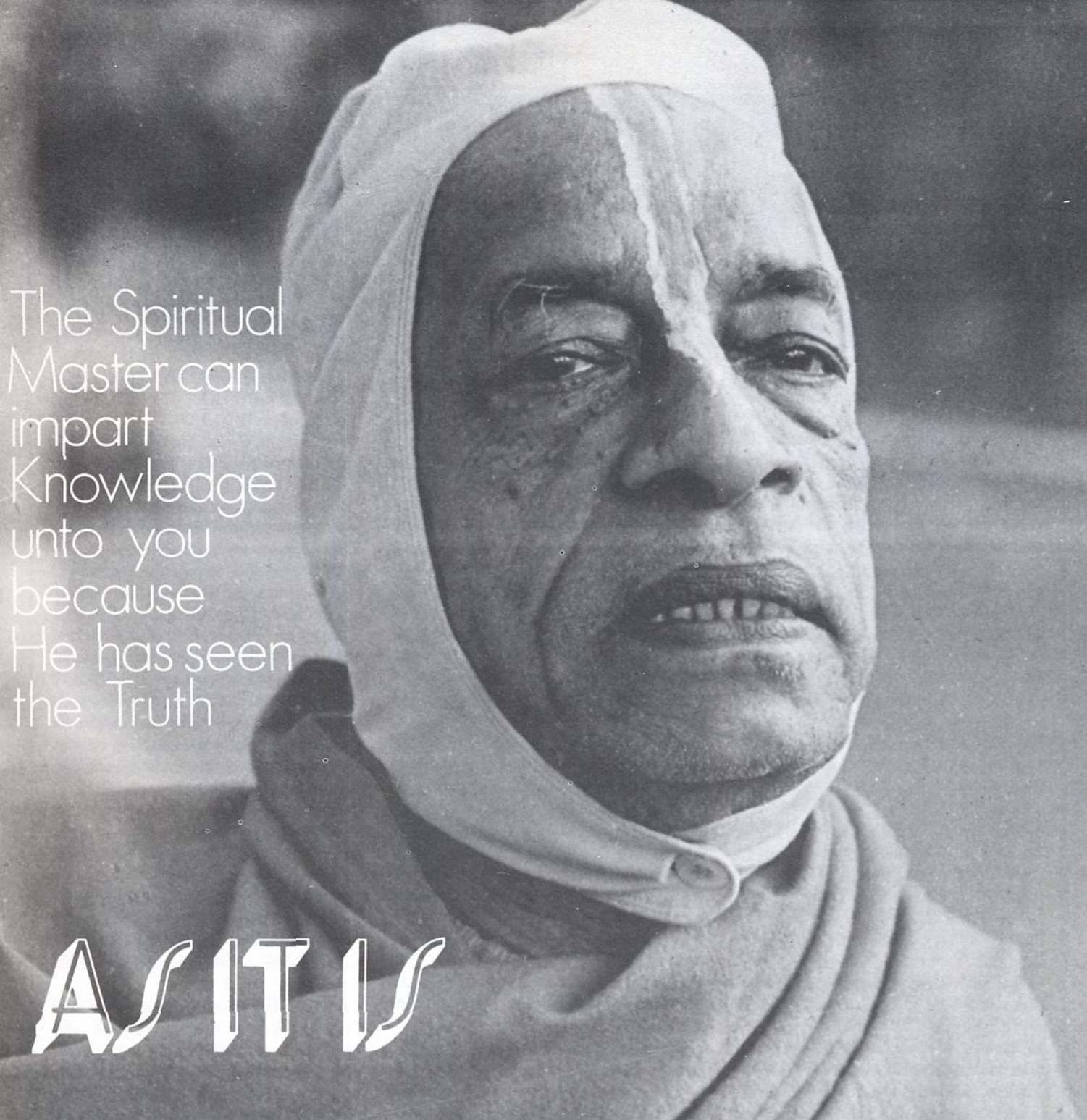
Students study their dream subjects so hard and get very upset when they fail, but they are in no way concerned about a much more important subject which the university doesn't even offer. And so there are dream universities and dream instructors and dream courses and dream students and not a speck of reality on campus. There are science faculties in chemistry, biology, physics, botany, geology, astronomy, zoology and so on, but no department is teaching the science of God. Theology departments may be teaching the science of religion, but they are not teaching anyone how to leave his gross material body and pierce the tenfold coverings of the material universe and enter the self-luminous sky.

If one judges man from the point of view of the gross material body, he is not superior to the animals. In fact most animals are stronger, faster, more self-reliant and more capable of surviving in nature. Man's body may appear more aesthetic, but from the practical point of view it is not as useful as the gorilla's. However, man is superior, and he dominates because he has a more highly developed mind and intelligence that distinguish him from animal life. And it is by his mind and intelligence that he can understand what he is and inquire into the meaning of his existence. It is not that he is superior because he can use these faculties to exploit material nature for the glorification of his gross body. Any animal more or less can do that. He is superior because he can understand the transcendental science by which he can transfer himself out of the gross body into the spiritual sky.

The most systematic presentation of this transcendental science is given concisely in *Bhagavad-gītā*, which is a preliminary study for self-realization. What is self-realization? Self-realization is realizing oneself apart from the body in one's constitutional nonmaterial position. One realizes this position by becoming conscious of the totality of existence and entering into a relationship with it. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* this totality is called Kṛṣṇa. In the *Gītā*, Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate person who contains everything and a lot more besides. "I am being and nonbeing and that which is beyond both," Kṛṣṇa asserts.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Kṛṣṇa sets forth a curriculum for the encaged soul. Three principal courses are offered: the course of action, the course of meditation and the course of devotion, respectively called *karma-yoga*, *jñāna-yoga* and *bhakti-yoga*. These three sciences deal with the constitutional position of the self, and by studying them the student can learn how he is entangled in the material body, how he can become detached from the material body and where he can go after leaving it. These questions are asked by Arjuna, who is thinking in bodily terms, and answered by his professor Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In the very beginning of the course Śrī Kṛṣṇa teaches Arjuna that he is not that body. He informs him that the soul passes into another body at death just as it passes from boyhood to youth to old age while in the body. The man who knows his constitutional position apart from the body is not bewildered by such changes. Kṛṣṇa then asserts the immutable eternity of the soul apart from the body, then exhorts Arjuna to perform action in a spirit of detachment and devotion. As the course progresses, Śrī Kṛṣṇa elaborates

(continued on page 22)



The Spiritual
Master can
impart
Knowledge
unto you
because
He has seen
the Truth

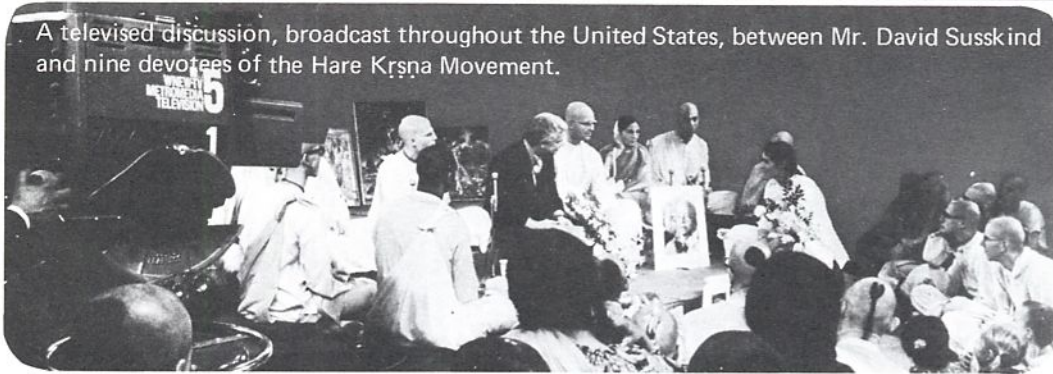
AS IT IS

Bhagavad-gītā As It Is

His Divine Grace
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Published by
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A televised discussion, broadcast throughout the United States, between Mr. David Susskind and nine devotees of the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement.



Mr. Susskind: A particularly colorful group, often seen dancing and chanting in the major cities of this country—New York and Chicago and Detroit and Pittsburgh—is called the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. Because their names are extremely difficult to pronounce, I'm going to ask my guests to introduce themselves. What is your name?

Rūpānuga: My name is Rūpānuga. *Anuga* means follower, and Rūpa Gosvāmī is a great *ācārya* or spiritual teacher in our line. So it means I follow Rūpa Gosvāmī.

Mr. Susskind: Right. And yes ma'am?

Kāḷindī: My name is Kāḷindī. It's one of Kṛṣṇa's favorite rivers.

Mr. Susskind: Right.

Yogeśvara: My name is Yogeśvara dasa. That means that I'm the servant of Kṛṣṇa, who is the master of all mystic powers.

Bharadrāja: My name is Bharadrāja dāsa, and it's another name of the Supreme Lord, and I'm His servant.

Rukmiṇī: My name is Rukmiṇī.

Mr. Susskind: Rukmiṇī.

Rukmiṇī: I'm a servant of Kṛṣṇa's wife, Rukmiṇī.

Maṅgalamāyā: My name is Maṅgalamāyā dāsa, and Maṅgalamāyā means full of auspiciousness.

Jayādvaīta: My name's Jāyadvaita dāsa. *Jaya* means victory, and Advaita is the devotee who requested the Supreme Lord to come to this world and spread this chanting.

Satsvarūpa: My name is Satsvarūpa dāsa. That means God has an eternal form that doesn't die, and I'm His servant.

Yogamāyā: My name is Yogamāyā dāsī. *Yogamāyā* is the internal potency of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa has different energies. The

external potency is the inferior energy, and the internal is the superior energy, and that's *yogamāyā*. And I'm the servant of this potency, of this energy.

Mr. Susskind: You're the servant of this potency?

Yogamāyā: Yes. Kṛṣṇa displays Himself in different energies, and everything on the absolute platform is equal. It's all absolute, and it's all actually spiritual. So this is His spiritual energy, *yogamāyā*.

Mr. Susskind: Yes, sir.

Bhagavān: My name is Bhagavān dāsa. *Bhagavān* refers to the fact that God is full of opulence, and *dāsa* means servant.

Mr. Susskind: You're a servant of opulence.

Bhagavān: Servant of one who *possesses* all opulence.

Mr. Susskind: Right. Now, what instrument do you have there and for what purpose?

Bharadrāja: This is called a harmonium, and this instrument is used in *kīrtana*. *Kīrtana* means joyous singing to glorify the Lord.

Mr. Susskind: Right. Let's see what that's like.

[Bharadrāja leads an ecstatic five-minute *kīrtana*—100 devotees singing and dancing—and ends with the shout "All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda!" Then the questions resume.]

Mr. Susskind: What is your movement all about? Are you Americans?

Rūpānuga: Yes. Born here in the United States. Not all of us were born here in the United States, but most of us.

Mr. Susskind: And you had another religion once? You were Catholic or Protestant?

Rūpānuga: Yes.

Mr. Susskind: What made you disillusioned about that religion? What made you come to Kṛṣṇa?

Rūpānuga: Because Kṛṣṇa gives us a taste that satisfies us. It makes us happy chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Mr. Susskind: But what does it do in productive terms? I mean you sing and dance in the streets. To what purpose?

Rūpānuga: To inform people, to remind people about the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. In this age everyone is forgetful of God. It's a godless age, and people come into the material world in the first place to forget God.

Mr. Susskind: Couldn't you serve God by functioning, by growing crops, by *doing* something purposeful?

Kāḷindī: But we *are* doing something. The root of all problems—the lack of foodstuffs, the war and the strife and the hypocrisy that exist in the world today—is a lack of God consciousness. So simply if you cure the disease in Biafra, then you have a Pakistan. After you have a Pakistan you have something else. So therefore there's no cure—no *material* cure—to the problem. The cure is spiritual.

Mr. Susskind: What do you stand for? I know you don't eat meat, fish or eggs. You don't gamble. You don't believe in sex, except on a very limited basis. You don't believe in intoxicants. You don't take tea or drugs or coffee. What does that add up to? What purposeful—what thing do you produce?

Bharadrāja: It purifies us.

Mr. Susskind: But now you're purified—for what purpose?

Bharadrāja: To love Kṛṣṇa. Because Kṛṣṇa is the supreme pure.

Introducing Ourselves to a Nation

Mr. Susskind: Couldn't you love God as a Catholic or a Protestant or a Jew?

Bharadrāja: Yes, you can.

Mr. Susskind: But why didn't you do it in those terms?

Bharadrāja: I don't know. But Kṛṣṇa has come, and this message of Kṛṣṇa has come—so pure that it is changing the faces of all the youth all over the world.

Mr. Susskind: How did Kṛṣṇa's message come to you?

Bharadrāja (pointing to a picture of Śrīla Prabhupāda): My spiritual master.

Mr. Susskind: What were you doing when Kṛṣṇa came to you?

Bharadrāja: I was playing harmonica in a blues band. [laughter]

Mr. Susskind: And one night you were playing, and where did Kṛṣṇa appear?

Bharadrāja: I was playing at an opening of a temple. Because I wanted to do some *good*. We were doing everything for nothing. And so by chance I happened to play for an opening of the temple in Montreal.

Mr. Susskind: A Jewish temple?

Bharadrāja: No. Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Temple, universal temple, a temple of love of God. They needed some money in order to help get the place going.

Mr. Susskind: At that time you were Protestant?

Bharadrāja: No.

Mr. Susskind: What were you? Atheist?

Bharadrāja: Yes.

Mr. Susskind: Atheist.

Bharadrāja: And so I played, and they were chanting. They said, "Let's chant," and so we chanted.

Mr. Susskind: The way they chanted now?

Bharadrāja: Just now, just like that.

Mr. Susskind: Something about that chant, and bliss began?

Bharadrāja: I didn't know at the time, but it stayed with me—for two years.

Mr. Susskind: Why? I watched it, and it seemed like another form of revivalism or something.

Bharadrāja: Well, we *are* reviving.

Yogeśvara: Yes, that's a correct description, but it's not limited in its definition.

When we chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, this is not any kind of an artificial imposition on anyone. By nature we are all spiritual living beings. But because we've come in contact with material nature, therefore this original consciousness is covered, and as a result we're constantly engaged



in waging a hard struggle for existence against this material nature. But that original, dormant Kṛṣṇa or God consciousness can be revived by this chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa. This is the recommended means.



Mr. Susskind: Why? How?

Yogamāyā: This chanting is spiritual sound, and because we're spiritual beings, it's attractive to our soul as well as to our ear.

Mr. Susskind: Do you feel euphoria?

Yogamāyā: Oh, yes. It's called transcendental bliss or transcendental ecstasy.

Mr. Susskind: Were you in bliss? I was watching you.

Yogamāyā: Yes. [happy laughter from the audience] This is a much higher ecstasy than any material pleasure that you can experience because it's ever increasing. It gets nicer all the time. As you chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, the more you chant, the more you want to chant.

Mr. Susskind: Well, why is that ecstasy-producing?

Yogamāyā: Because you're being put in direct association with God. God is actually present in His name. God incarnates in many, many different forms—

millions of different forms. And this is the sound incarnation of God. God invests all of His energies in His name. He's nondifferent from His name. If we have names. . . You're David. . . If I call you David, you're different—your body is different from David the person. You're different from your name. But God is not different from His name. And He's not imperson. We don't call Him just "God." We call Him by His name. Just as we don't call you "man"—we call you David Susskind or Mr. Susskind. So we call God Kṛṣṇa because that's His name. That's one of His names.

Mr. Susskind: Yet people have called Him Jesus, people have called Him Buddha, people have called Him Mohammed. . .

Jayādvaita: We're saying that people should *call* Him.

Maṅgalamāyā: He has millions of names.

Mr. Susskind: But why couldn't you call Him through the religions of your birth?

Jayādvaita: You can.

Mr. Susskind: But you didn't.

Jayādvaita: Right. Because no one's teaching us to do that.

Mr. Susskind: Didn't your father and mother teach you?

Jayādvaita: No.

Mr. Susskind: Your priest?

Jayādvaita: No. But *we're* preaching that.

Mr. Susskind: Do any of you work?

Jayādvaita: Some of us, yes. We have people who are accountants, we have people who are electrical engineers.

Mr. Susskind: You go to work with this costume?

Jayādvaita: No, no. Most of us don't go to work. We go out chanting, and we go out preaching to people, "Please don't forget God. Remember God. Remember your relationship with God. Chant the name of God."

Bhagavān: That's an important part of the social body. Just like you have a body, there's also a social body. The head of that body is considered the priestly class of people, who instruct the others about offering everything back to God. That's a basic principle of one who is spiritual. He understands that nothing is his. As soon as you claim something is yours—whether it's your watch or your shoes. . .

Mr. Susskind: How about your wife?

(continued on page 29)

The Advent of Lord Kṛṣṇa

Madhupurī devī dāsī



the world had great disturbance
Caused by the ruling of demoniac kings.
Though they posed as righteous rulers,
Only calamities did they bring.

Much aggrieved by such confusion,
The form of a cow did Bhūmī take.
Before Lord Brahmā, eyes o'erflowing,
Her obeisances did she make.

Weeping to invoke the Lord's compassion,
Earth's position she then stated.
All the demoniac activities
To Lord Brahmā she related.

Brahmā hastened to the milk-white ocean
With a host of demigods headed by Śiva.
There resides the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu
On the island *Śvetadvīpa*.

Arriving at the ocean shoreline,
They offered the *Puruṣa-sūkta* prayer.
No response from Kṣīrodakaśāyī-Viṣṇu
Caused Brahmā to sit in meditation there.

From the Supreme Personality of Godhead
Came a message-transmission to Brahmā's heart.
Brahmā spoke this Vedic knowledge
And for Brahmāloka did depart.

The message imparted by Lord Viṣṇu
Gave instruction simple and clear:
Demigods should take birth on this planet;
Soon Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself would appear.

Thus spoke the father of all *prajāpatis*
(Progenitors of universal population).
Four-armed Brahmā clearly delivered
This transcendental information.

Now the pious King Śūrasena
Ruled the country known as Mathurā,
Where Śrī Kṛṣṇa lives forever
Just as He always lives in Dvārakā.

Vasudeva, son of King Śūrasena,
Member of the Yadu dynasty,
Wed Devakā's maiden daughter
Devakī—calm and gentle purity.

400 elephants adorned with golden garlands,
15,000 horses, trappings blazing,
Brilliant chariots with gold equipment,
Dancing maidservants, jewelry dangling—

Thus the dowry of Devakī
Passed like brilliant sunset clouds.
Conchshells, drums, bugles resounded,
Vibrating the most pleasing sounds.

Kaṁsa, descendant of the the Bhoja dynasty,
Son of the pious Ugrasena,
Demon brother of pure Devakī,
Drove the wedding chariot.

In the midst of such rejoicing
Came a celestial sound vibration
Pronouncing Kaṁsa no more than a fool
And giving further information:

"You are driving the chariot of Vasudeva
Thinking your sister kind and true,
Yet the child of this same sister
Will be the cause of death to you!"

In great rage Kaṁsa drew his sword
And gripped Devakī by the hair.
So degraded was this brother
He would have killed her then and there.

Vasudeva was rightly astonished,
And he spoke with great conviction;
To prevent such shameful killing,
He argued with determined reason.

"Dear Kaṁsa, you are a most famous king.
You are a Bhoja *kṣatriya* bold.
Why should you stoop to kill a woman?
What is this fear of death you hold?"



"Death and birth are born together—
From the day of birth you began to die.
You cannot outwit this basic process.
Death is inevitable; do not try.

"The living entity is conditioned
And trapped by action and reaction.
The material nature has us captured,
Binding us by false attraction.

"When the mind is speculative
It is attracted by sense desire.
Form, taste, smell, sound and touch—
To material contamination we aspire.

"So the material nature,
Solely by Lord Kṛṣṇa's mercy;
According to our mental desire,
Offers another material body.

"Luminaries are sometimes reflected
On reservoirs of water, oil or ghee;
Although they may appear to be moving,
Planets maintain a separate identity.

"Similarly, because of illusion,
Enchanted by the influence of *māyā*,
The living being forgets his true self
And identifies with this gross body."

Thus spoke Vasudeva to Kaṁsa
To save the life of his wife Devakī.
He begged Kaṁsa not to be overwhelmed
By the dictates of mind and body.

Vasudeva gave good instruction
And philosophical discrimination,
But Kaṁsa would not be pacified
Because of demoniac association.

A demon never cares for good instruction.
He has no use for morality.
He cannot accept truthful teachings,
However authorized they may be.

Thus the difference between demigod and demon
Is here explained quite clearly.
A demigod accepts this teaching
And applies it to his life sincerely.

Vasudeva thought as follows:
"Let me now save Devakī's life."
(After all it is a husband's duty
To maintain and protect his wife.)

Vasudeva then spoke again to Kaṁsa
With flattery and great respect,
For that is the science of diplomacy,
In which Vasudeva was most perfect.

"My dear brother-in-law, please consider
That there is no danger from my wife.
Because of some strange prophecy,
You are fearful for your life.

"But the prophecy has spoken only
Of the male children of your sister.
Please note, therefore, my good Kaṁsa:
There may not be sons in the future.

"But I give my word of honor:
All my sons I will bring to you,
And at such a time you may decide
Exactly what you shall do."

When Devakī gave birth to children,
A male child was the first-born.
Vasudeva delivered the infant to Kaṁsa
Just as he had previously sworn.

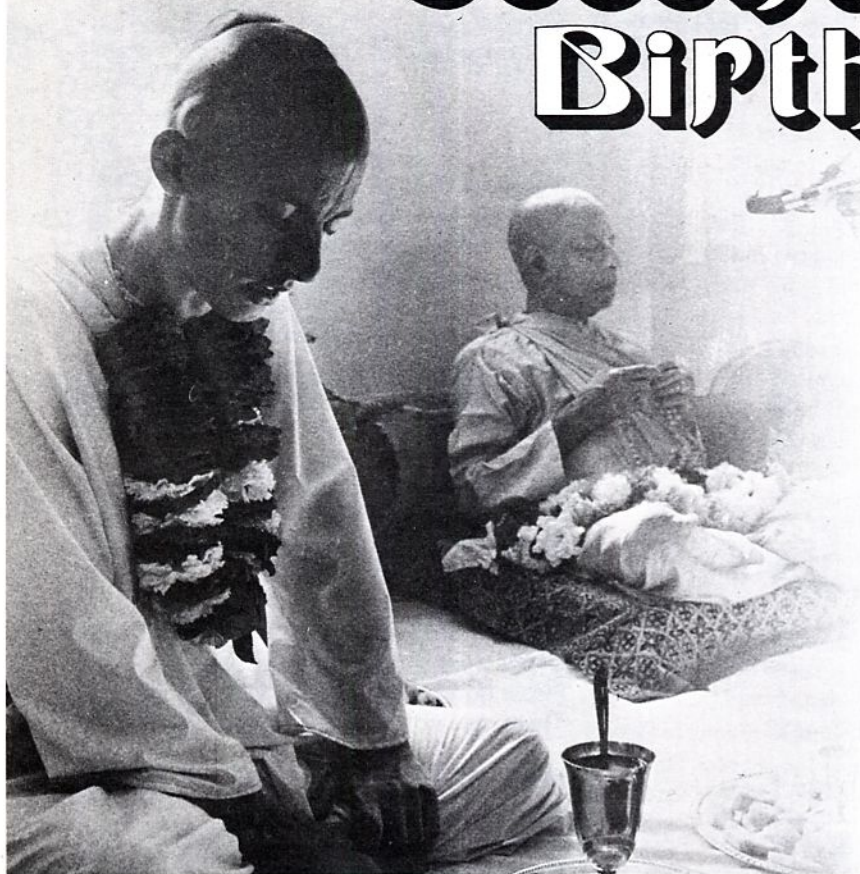
For a great soul like Vasudeva
Nothing can be considered painful
In carrying out prescribed duties,
No matter how distasteful.

Then to the faithless Kaṁsa
Came the sage Nārada Muni.
He told Kaṁsa of the preparations
Made for Kṛṣṇa as son of Devakī.

Nārada informed Kaṁsa that everyone
Was preparing for the Lord's appearance.
After this warning from Nārada,
Kaṁsa lost all his confidence.

He imprisoned Vasudeva and Devakī,
Killing each child year after year.
Knowing the demigods were on earth,
Kaṁsa acted out of fear.

Second Birth



I graduated from Brooklyn College in 1961, spent two years on an aircraft carrier in the Navy, and subsequently returned to the New York City's Lower East Side and its LSD, marijuana and "free" sex. When I ran out of money I took a job as a social worker. However, such vague descriptions of my life are of little value because they neglect the inner self. My inner self was very much present and used to wonder, "Who am I?" but I had no guidance in finding out. Certainly my parents could not guide me; they were interested only in external matters: television, good grades, and a successful job and family. My teachers and professors were not willing to sit down and talk with me—and even if they were willing to do so, they had no understanding of what life was all

about. So I took solace in friends who were bound together by their rejection of life.

The latter experiences are not very outstanding or unusual. What is significant is that somehow I got out of the disillusionment by which they were symptomized. I found someone who knew the path of satisfaction, and he was able to show me real peace and happiness—a hope of eternal life. How I found these treasures of life and how I rid myself of the uncomfortable task of trying to live honestly in a false world is of the greatest value to tell. This resurgence of life will be explained by first telling you about the guide, the spiritual master. When one thinks of the *guru*, the mind immediately conjures up pictures of bogus teachers who

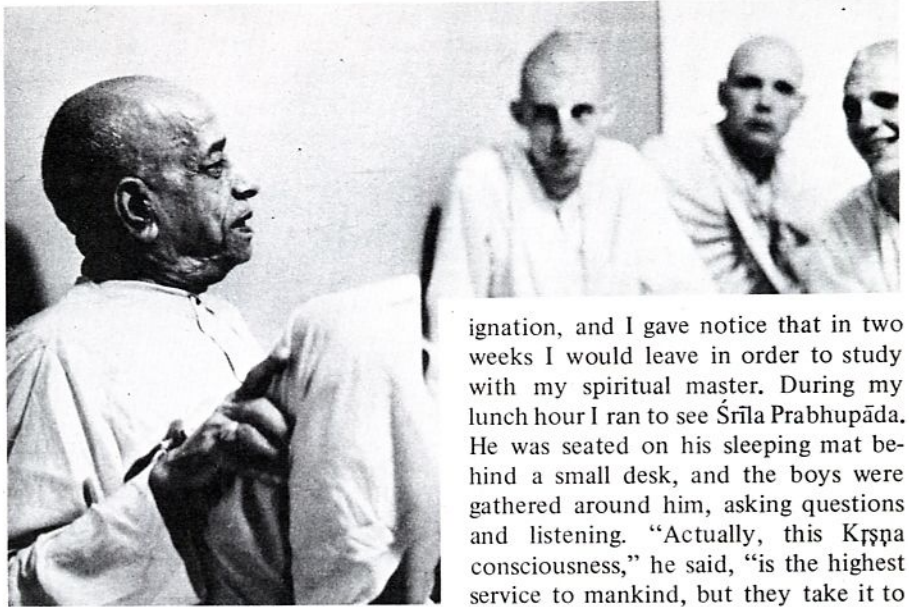
mystify and hypnotize our honesty and fill us with the unreality of pseudo-*yoga*, who take our money, encourage us to escape into meditation, and who preach renunciation of personal life. "Personal life is unreal; it's alien and unloving." But so are they, these false rascals, and so I rejected them too. But I want to talk of the real guide, the pure devotee of God who showers unlimited love and mercy upon all living entities because he is the dearest representative of God. The Lord states in the scriptures: "The spiritual master is to be worshiped as My very Self." This is the version of all revealed scriptures. Do you doubt the existence of a person, who can impart the knowledge of the science of God realization pursuant to love of God? I have met him, and hundreds of others have also.

In 1966 I stumbled into twenty-six Second Avenue, New York City, where, at the time, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda held classes in *bhakti-yoga* and chanted the transcendental sound vibration *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare* | *Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*. The boys chanted, and Śrīla Prabhupāda sat on a straw mat leading. I was swept up into praise of the Lord by this song, which wipes all the dust from the mind. It is true that the *mahāmantra* is the great chant for deliverance because the *mantra* reveals one to be the deathless loving servant of God by nature. Doubts still plague the mind. The prejudices and the countless births and deaths that we have gone through are all so painful. If we only realized this and surrendered unto Kṛṣṇa, the eternal God, then relief would be assured, and even in this lifetime we would always relish nectar by singing His praises.

The first night I heard that song of God, I took it home. Although I was still indulging in the inebrieties of Lower East Side life and was still without hope beyond death, things were different. I did not want to fool myself into believing that everything was now

Satsvarūpa dāsa

(ISKCON—Dallas)



blissful because of my chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa in that little storefront—but nevertheless the song of Hare Kṛṣṇa was not an unhappy addition to my consciousness. To remember it during the day, while in the office, was like the coming of spring after the long winter. I looked forward to going back to chant with Śrīla Prabhupāda and the boys who gathered there. I sat at my desk as a social worker, answering phone calls, writing out checks for welfare clients, listening to the advice of my boss and to office jokes, and then I recalled Śrīla Prabhupāda's talking. I recalled him saying, "How can there be any progress as long as the scientists, technologists, reformers and politicians cannot find a solution to these four things—birth, death, disease and old age?" He proposed that there was an actual solution to birth, death, disease, and old age and that until we had it we could not claim to be happy or progressing. How could one be happy amidst such disadvantages? He told the story of a person in a hospital who was visited by a friend. The patient was sick in bed, unable to move. He was being fed intravenously, and his body stank. He had to urinate in a bed pan, and the nurses had to aid him in moving. Yet when a friend came and asked him, "How are you?" he answered, "I'm all right." But what kind of all right is that? He is in an abominable state, unable even to move, and is surrounded by bad smells, yet he says that he is all right! Similarly, under the spell of illusion, a person in material life, although suffering, says that everything is all right and that he is happy, although in fact he is suffering in so many ways.

Śrīla Prabhupāda said that the solution to all suffering is Lord Kṛṣṇa. Who is Kṛṣṇa? Kṛṣṇa is God, the supreme controller, who does everything so expertly that it seems to happen automat-

ically. Every autumn Kṛṣṇa changes all the leaves to gold within a few days; if a painter were to attempt the same thing, it would take months. Kṛṣṇa also directs the movements of the planets and galaxies and holds up the sun in a corner of the sky. The atheists foolishly claim that God is dead, yet the whole universe is God's body. So how can He be dead if His body is working and moving so nicely? Śrīla Prabhupāda also said that our real self, each of us, is a spiritual spark of the same quality as the spiritual whole, Kṛṣṇa, and that to engage in loving service to the spiritual whole is the natural, blissful, constitutional occupation of each living entity.

Śrīla Prabhupāda gave me typing tasks, typing up his manuscripts for publication. I understood this typing to be *yoga* (linking with God), and so I sat at the typewriter hour after hour, meditating and working. After attending classes, I decided that I could no longer keep my job, which entailed being eight hours a day away from the association of Śrīla Prabhupāda. The other boys, who had no jobs, could see him all day. They would sit around him in his clean, sunny apartment while he talked about Kṛṣṇa, the most relishable Supreme Personality of Godhead. He asked them to help him spread this love of Kṛṣṇa, God, and together they made plans. I wanted to join and renounce the material world with its birth, death, disease and old age. I filled out my res-

ignation, and I gave notice that in two weeks I would leave in order to study with my spiritual master. During my lunch hour I ran to see Śrīla Prabhupāda. He was seated on his sleeping mat behind a small desk, and the boys were gathered around him, asking questions and listening. "Actually, this Kṛṣṇa consciousness," he said, "is the highest service to mankind, but they take it to be some sentimental religion, mere singing and dancing."

"I want to quit my job," I told him.

"Oh? Why is that? You are offering such nice service."

"But I want to come daily and be part of the camp. I want to learn Kṛṣṇa consciousness."

Seeing my predicament, the boys present said that they would take jobs and let me spend more time listening to the spiritual master. They suggested alternating their employment. But Śrīla Prabhupāda kept my attention and told me a story. He told me that there was once a faithful wife who had an ugly husband with a morose disposition. One day his wife asked, "Why are you morose? I do anything you want, and still you feel morose. Why is that?" "I wish to have sex with a certain prostitute," he admitted, "but she costs thousands of dollars just for a night, and I cannot afford her." The faithful wife said to him, "Don't worry. I shall arrange it." She immediately went to the prostitute's house and began to personally attend her, cleaning her room and performing other such services. When the prostitute came and noticed her activity, the faithful wife explained, "My husband desires to enjoy you, and I hope that you will take my services as payment, so that he might spend a night with you." The prostitute laughed, "Don't you realize that I cost ten thousand dollars a night? How can you ever raise the money?"



So in addition to serving the prostitute, the wife herself turned to prostitution and eventually raised the required amount of money. She returned to her husband and said, "All right. You can go to that prostitute now," and he went at once.

Śrīla Prabhupāda said that although people may say that the wife was crazy and immoral, nevertheless she was unquestionably faithful. He asked me to keep my job, even though the association was abominably boring and

kept me away from him all day, and said that by contributing the earnings from my job, I was rendering the best service possible. I reported back to my office and told them that I had changed my mind and would keep the job. That afternoon, visiting clients on my job, I walked through the streets in the bliss of responsibility. I felt deeply entrusted with a duty from my father, my spiritual master, and to discharge it faithfully was my eternal duty. Due to his words I could work at my ordinary

civil service job with a firm sense of eternal life because it was God's work, as confirmed by the spiritual master.

Morning classes at the storefront temple were at 6 a.m. The devotees began with the chanting of *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*. The chanting was followed by a talk about Kṛṣṇa's pastimes and about Lord Caitanya, the most liberal and munificent incarnation of Kṛṣṇa. I used to go to work chanting on my beads,

with the words of the Absolute Truth in my ears and the vision of the spiritual master's holy form fresh in my mind's eye.

Very easily I took to the four regulative principles. As I engaged more in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, I no longer hankered after intoxicants or illicit sex. Daily at noon, I would leave the office and hurry to the temple for *prasādam*. Śrīla Prabhupāda would be in his upstairs room with the boys gathered. The food would be placed in open pots before a small table. This table served as his altar and displayed a picture of Lord Caitanya and His eternal associates. It was decorated with vases of flowers. Śrīla Prabhupāda would suddenly bow all the way down to the floor, onto his hands and knees, and we would all follow suit. We repeated the following

strength. Usually on a weekday we took *dahl*, rice and *chapātis*, and it was always very, very delicious. *Chapātis* looked like pancakes, but they were made simply with whole wheat and water, with a little salt and butter. *Dahl* is spiced soup, made with split peas. Śrīla Prabhupāda encouraged us to "take more," including rice, always seasoned with turmeric, and vegetables. The foodstuff was always honored as being non-different from Kṛṣṇa Himself.

My existence was becoming rarefied, and yet it was practical. Just by my eating *prasādam* and working in the office with the knowledge that my paycheck would support the temple, and by my chanting and hearing the lectures, all the filth and wolf-like viciousness in my heart was being cleansed away. I didn't need a certificate to tell me that I was

emphasized that just by adding the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* to his life, anyone can feel this purification in mind and spirit, without renouncing his job, family or way of life. This chanting is recommended by the Vedic scriptures and by the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, Lord Caitanya, who appeared 500 years ago and from whom Śrīla Prabhupāda descends in a line of successive disciples or spiritual masters. "Just try chanting," he said. "If you are a businessman, remain a businessman; if you are a doctor, remain a doctor; if you are a student, housewife, etc., remain in your station. But try chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa as a regular daily function and reading *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*. These will help anyone realize the fulfillment of real pleasure and eventually achieve the purpose of life, which is to love God."



prayer after him and thus offered the foodstuffs to Kṛṣṇa, who accepts the offering made by His pure devotee:

This material body is a lump of ignorance, and the senses are networks of paths unto death. We have fallen into the ocean of material sense enjoyment, and of all the senses the tongue is the most voracious and difficult to control. It is very difficult to conquer over the tongue in this world, but Kṛṣṇa is very kind to us. He has sent us this nice *prasādam* to control the tongue. Now let us take this *prasādam* to our full satisfaction and glorify Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and in love call for Lord Caitanya and Nityānanda to help us.

Food offered to Kṛṣṇa is called *prasādam*. Eating this food gives spiritual

enrolled in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Just as a hungry man feels satisfied when eating and doesn't have to be told, so I knew the change taking place. It cleansed me and refreshed my whole being and engaged me in work of consequence. It revived my whole person.

Weeks went by, and as I heard and chanted, my desire for hearing and chanting increased. One of the boys attending the classes painted a picture of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Rādhārāṇī is the girl always seen with Kṛṣṇa, and She is His greatest eternal devotee, who teaches us how to love Kṛṣṇa. She can help us to reach Him through pure affection or transcendental loving service. Chanting on beads, fingering each bead while saying the *mantra* aloud, brought concentration to hearing and touching, while looking at the picture of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa brought concentration to seeing. Having all the senses thus totally engaged brought me into blissful meditation upon Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Prabhupāda

After several months, Śrīla Prabhupāda announced that he would hold initiations, which would make us his disciples in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and connect us with the disciplic succession. I personally did not feel I was ready for such a commitment, and so on the day that initiations were held I stayed at home and instead dutifully performed the task of typing essays for Śrīla Prabhupāda. The next day I brought two completed essays to his apartment. I knocked on his door. He opened it to let me in: "You didn't come yesterday for initiation?"

"No," I said.

"That's all right," he said kindly, and let me inside. When he sat down at his mat, I then placed before him the two essays, and he thanked me. He then invited me to a wedding of two of his disciples that was to be held the following night. I was very happy that he had personally made sure that I would attend. He gave me more manuscripts for

typing, and I began to take my leave. Śrīla Prabhupāda walked me to the door of his apartment and then said, "This is not automatic, not simply taking this work and doing it mechanically." I knew what he meant. Then he said, "If you love me, then I'll love you." I cannot remember if I said anything in reply, but I left him and ran down the stairs and onto the street. I was so happy! Why? Just because he had said, "You love me, and I'll love you." I realized that he loved me, just as Kṛṣṇa loves everyone. We rot and sulk in this material world, maneuvering to become God. But, if we are willing to have personal exchange with Kṛṣṇa through His representative, the spiritual master, then we will feel released from stoneheartedness, the dried-up joylessness, false ego and hallucinations of grandeur. In short, we get relief by being loved. To be loved is only half of the exchange. Śrīla Prabhupāda is certainly loving us now, still, freely giving us *prasādam*, giving us Kṛṣṇa philosophy, chanting and dancing. As persons, we can also give love. When the love is felt, it can overcome the entire material universe in a second. From that moment on, my desire to take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness greatly increased; I was determined not to let anything hinder me from engaging in transcendental loving service for the pleasure of my spiritual master.

The bona fide spiritual master is coming from God. We must have a little initial faith in this process. Śrīla Prabhupāda has all the credentials of the spiritual master. This can be seen by the example he sets. He is called, in the Sanskrit language, *ācārya*. An *ācārya* is one who teaches by example. So his good example was apparent in those first days and has endured to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the world. This process of *bhakti-yoga*, devotional service to God, is distributed through his literature, his words and his actions. One will always find him talking about Kṛṣṇa, and what he says is in complete accord with scripture. Kṛṣṇa says, "Surrender to Me," and the pure devotee says the same thing: "Surrender to Kṛṣṇa." The spiritual master is fixed in love of God. Every Sunday in Tompkins Square Park he chanted with us for one and a half hours, and after a break, we chanted for

another hour and a half, while he played the drum. He talked to everyone and anyone—cab drivers, priests, newsmen, politicians, children—about Kṛṣṇa, and he handled their questions with grave concern. One night I bought him mangos, and he accepted one from my hand before a roomful of his students. He said, "Very good boy!" in a humorous way, treating me like a four-year-old boy, which gave those assembled a good laugh. But then he said seriously, "No. This is a token of love. This is Kṛṣṇa consciousness." And he praised me for my meager efforts at donating money and typing. In this way I entered into the nectar of devotion, the ocean of bliss. My spiritual master assured me from the beginning that Kṛṣṇa was blessing me in my personal efforts to serve Him through the spiritual master, and I never doubted it. I was undergoing a change in heart, from a self-centered imitation god to an agent of God working under the direction of a master.

At the next opportunity, which was on the appearance day of Rādhārāṇī in 1966, I was accepted by Śrīla Prabhupāda as his disciple. He chanted on my beads and asked me to always chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, and I bowed down and repeated, *nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa preṣṭhāya bhūtale/śrīmate bhaktivedanta svāmin iti nāmine*. "I offer my respectful obeisances to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who is very dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa, having taken shelter at His lotus feet." "Your name," he said, "is Satsvarūpa dāsa Brahma-cārī."

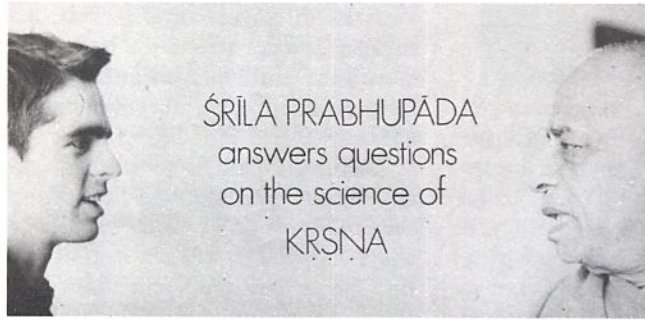
Later, in a lecture, he described the significance of initiation. "Lord Caitanya asked His disciple Rūpa Gosvāmī to go to Vṛndāvana to preach and sustain His mission. This is disciplic succession. Not that one thinks, 'I have understood everything from my spiritual master; let me now sit tight.' That is also nice, but no. Lord Caitanya's mission is to spread the teaching . . . It is your duty. When a disciple receives instruction from the spiritual master, he has an obligation to the spiritual master to do the same. After being instructed, the disciple will offer, 'My dear master, what can I do for you?' I am indebted to my spiritual master for the knowledge that was given to me; therefore, I must serve him." When I heard this, I was as-

tounded. In Kṛṣṇa consciousness the spiritual master is always revealing new knowledge about the nature of devotional service. Just when one thinks himself sufficiently engaged in the Lord's service, the spiritual master reveals how to serve infinitely more in an entirely new capacity. One wonders, "How can I do that much? How can I surrender to Kṛṣṇa? What will happen to me? How can I expand my personality to meet this task?" But Śrīla Prabhupāda says, "All it takes is sincerity. Simply follow the instructions and be humble."

This science of God can be taken personally and applied to anyone's life. The householder can make a little altar with pictures of Kṛṣṇa, and without interruption to family life, all can become Kṛṣṇa conscious. Indeed, without God consciousness one cannot be a qualified family man. In the same way, the student can extend his sincere desire to learn beyond good grades. He can read scriptures and their commentaries by transcendental scholars on the nature of the Absolute Truth, and he can introduce it into his classes. A big businessman can chant to relieve tension and donate his earnings to become a life member of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. The offer of reciprocation or exchange can be taken up by anyone who preaches Kṛṣṇa consciousness at every opportunity, such as with friends and colleagues.

The essence of this philosophy will hold true in any time or place because the Truth revealed is absolute. Questions such as what is the self, what is God and what is the purpose of life, as well as how to become happy, are answered. It is beyond the sectarian religious designations, such as Christian, Hindu, Jew, etc. It is for everyone, regardless of sect. What I have related is not a fleeting encounter. It is the description of my second birth. The first birth occurs when one is born of his mother and father. But a second birth is required for complete happiness and fulfillment. The second birth occurs when one accepts a spiritual master and begins his eternal occupation as a servant of God. Such a renewal of energy, the rebirth of transcendental loving service, awaits every one of us. You can have this highest love just by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.

From the Reservoir of Knowledge



Asking questions of a bona fide spiritual master is an important part of *bhakti-yoga*. It is stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*, “Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized soul can impart knowledge unto you because he has seen the truth.” The following questions and answers were recorded during actual class sessions taught by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda at various centers of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Question: How long does it take to attain Kṛṣṇa consciousness?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: A second. You simply have to agree.

Question: Do you become conscious of everything?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, because Kṛṣṇa is everything. For example, if you are in touch with the main powerhouse of electricity in New York City, then you are in touch with all the lights everywhere in the city.

Question: But how can you attain it in one second?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: It is simply a matter of surrender. If you accept the process, it begins immediately. It is like a creeper; as soon as you sow the seed, it begins to grow. The watering of the seed is hearing, and gradually the creeper fructifies. It begins as soon as you accept it.

Question: That is the start, but that’s not Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is it?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It simply has to develop. Immediately after sexual intercourse the child is the size of a pea, but that is actually a child. The beginning is there. Surrender, that’s all. It is not a material process—it is spiritual. It involves no impediments of material conditioning. It develops in proportion to one’s seriousness; we can attain the whole thing in one second. King Kaṭvāṅga went to assist the demigods, and he was rewarded. When asked what he wanted, he replied, “I want to know how long I shall live.” “Not very long,” they said. “A second.” He at once transferred his thoughts to Kṛṣṇa and surrendered. If we sincerely take Kṛṣṇa consciousness, we have it.

Question: Does one need a spiritual master to become Kṛṣṇa conscious?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Unless we go to a spiritual master, how can we understand?

Question: Just by chanting?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Chanting will help us—it is from the source—but if we take guidance it is more helpful. Why should we deny help if we are serious about the goal?

Question: What is the focal point of this religion?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: This is not religion; this is philosophy.

Question: Philosophy? Like metaphysics?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, the first principle of metaphysics is that we are not this body.

Question: Isn’t it a little bit like Catholicism?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Not just Catholicism, but all religions: Hindu, Jewish, Christian, Mohammedan. The first principle of all religions is that we are not this body.

Question: Does Kṛṣṇa take the spirit and leave the material when you offer Him food?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, He takes the spirit.

Question: And leaves the matter? What is left?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Everything is spirit. He doesn’t take matter, He doesn’t leave matter. The devotee prays over the food, and it becomes spiritualized. It is practical. Eat this spiritual food, and you’ll get spiritual strength.

Question: What is the duty of a person who does not believe in the scriptures?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: His duty is to go to hell.

Question: How can it be changed for him?

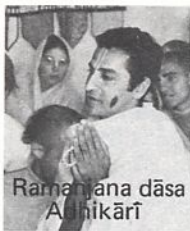
Śrīla Prabhupāda: By coming here and chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Question: What can you do if they don’t come?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: What can you do? One must be willing. If we won’t take medicine, we can’t be cured. Material disease is thinking, “I am everything. I am perfect. Whatever I think is all right.” That is disease. Lord Caitanya said, “My spiritual master taught that I’m a great fool.” Think like that, humbly, and study scripture from a bona fide spiritual master.

Question: If we become servants of Kṛṣṇa, will He provide our physical needs?

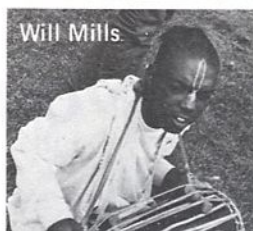
Śrīla Prabhupāda: It is not a question of whether we “become” servants of Kṛṣṇa—we already are. For example, a citizen of the United States is already under obligation to the government; it is his madness to think that he is not. We are already servants of God, but we declare, “I am not a servant of God; I am a servant of dog.” All our needs are supplied as servants of dog—do you not think that God will supply the necessities of servants of God? Why do you think like that? If we are sincere, God will supply our every need. We must believe that Kṛṣṇa is our master. He is supplying everything, but He cannot be our order supplier. Those who go to God for sense enjoyment become frustrated and say there is no God if they do not get everything for their senses. But we are meant for satisfying God’s senses. The impersonalist philosophers say He has no senses, and therefore they think, “I don’t have to supply anything to God,” but that is nonsense. Only in the perfectional stage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness does Kṛṣṇa become dependent on His devotee and say, “My dear father, will you give Me something to eat?” That is the platform of pure love of God. By such love everything is possible.



Ramanjana dāsa
Adhikārī



Jananivāsa dāsa
Brahmācārī



Will Mills

Our spiritual master, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, and his disciples of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, acknowledge the loss to our movement, within recent months, of two prominent disciples, Ramanjana dāsa Adhikārī and Jananivāsa dāsa Brahmācārī, and of an uninitiated Kṛṣṇa conscious devotee, Will Mills.

Of course, the passing away of a devotee engaged in devotional service is not comparable to the passing away of someone engaged in ordinary affairs.

We can understand from *Bhagavad-gītā* that even if he has not reached the perfectional stage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, a devotee is still in an advantageous position at the time of death. If he is advanced on the spiritual path, he will go to Kṛṣṇa, and if he is not so advanced, he will take an auspicious birth in a family of wealthy aristocrats or devotees and thus have the opportunity to continue developing his Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the next lifetime.

Ramanjana dāsa, who received his education at Georgia University and

later accepted a post as Professor of Anthropology at the Oregon College of Education, met His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda in January of 1971, was initiated in August of that year, and engaged as a devotee in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement until his untimely death. He was killed in an automobile accident.

Jananivāsa dāsa, who was initiated on August 19, 1969, was President of the Columbus, Ohio, center of ISKCON and a contributor to *Back to Godhead*. He and a devotee companion, Will Mills, an uninitiated disciple, were killed in an automobile accident. Śrīla Prabhupāda commented, "On one side we have to be very sorry if our dear friends are taken from this world, but on the other we should be satisfied, for a pure devotee is never lost."

(continued from page 10)

Journey to the Real Self

on the relationship between the individual finite soul and the Supersoul and sets forth various methods by which the finite can realize the Infinite. These methods of attainment involve action which is unattached, renunciation of material consciousness, cultivation of the knowledge of the soul and the Supersoul, meditation on the Supersoul through the control of bodily organs, realization of the opulence of the Absolute and of the nature of the Absolute, the function of the three modes of material nature, goodness, passion and ignorance, the qualities of men and their faiths, the perfection of renunciation and the transcendental process of devotional service. At the end of this discourse Arjuna is enlightened as to his position and course of action and decides to surrender to the will of that absolute person who instructed him.

UTOPIA OF THE MATERIALLY DETACHED

If such a curriculum were offered in our universities, we would not have dream schools but real centers of knowledge. And our students would not emerge as automatons, hippies and fanatics, but as men like Arjuna, men who embody the highest qualities. Indeed they would emerge as demigods, for the Divine would be expressed through their thoughts and actions. They would be the bravest of men because they would know that the soul is there even after the destruction of the body, and knowing this, they would be magnanimous, for they would not be living under a bodily conception but a spiritual one. Because they would not identify with their bodies, they would not consider themselves Americans or Chinese or Germans or Russians. They would consider these as designations given to objects perceived in dreams, and they would feel compassionate toward those who are still dreaming and who are caught in the nightmare of duality. They would exist on the earth as the water lily on water. They would not be touched by one drop of material consciousness, and they would see all the men and women, all the towns and cities, all the nations and continents and planets and the vast universe itself as "solitude as egoless, as image-

less, as the sky, as sunlight, as darkness, as a phantom, as a dream, as a flash of lightning, as a bubble." (Lord Buddha, Discourse on *Prajña-pāramitā*.) Seeing everything material in this way, they would factually be situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

ACTUAL EDUCATION

Buddhi means intelligence. It is by intelligence that I can understand that this body is not mine. I may say, "My hand, my head, my arm," but the use of the possessive pronoun indicates that these are my possessions and that I am situated apart from them. In order to understand the difference between the possessions and the individual who possesses them, we have to understand the difference between matter and spirit. This understanding should be the function of education. The etymology of the word "education" is significant here. It stems from the Latin word *educere*; *e* means out, and *ducere* means to lead, draw or bring. So education means to lead, draw or bring out. The purpose of education should be to lead one out of the darkness of material consciousness, to draw the very best thing, which is spirit soul, out of its bodily encagement, and to bring it to the light of knowledge which is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This is real education, and this is the greatest service that can be rendered to the individual and the society. Education which is concerned with the gross body does not deserve the name education. It is merely a kind of folklore which teaches people how to decorate cadavers, how to nourish cadavers, and how to serve and worship cadavers. No wonder then that the universities are dead.

The whole curriculum of mankind can be enlivened by the propagation of the message of *Bhagavad-gītā*. This great science of the soul can emancipate the entire race if it is introduced on a wide scale. Śrī Kṛṣṇa invites us: "Listen to My supreme word, which I shall impart to you for your benefit and which will give you great joy." Is there anyone who would refuse to listen?

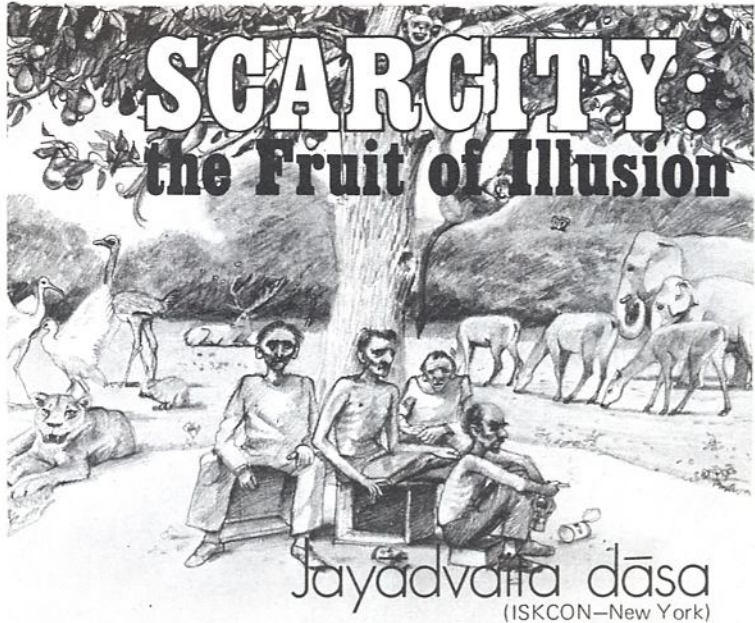
END

Ecologists, economists, sociologists, etc., are greatly concerned with the population explosion, for they hypothesize that as the population continues to increase by leaps and bounds, the eventual result will be insufficient natural resources for the minimum needs of society. Some countries of the world appear to have already been overtaken by this problem, and for other more prosperous nations the problem, although still theoretical, is a cause of serious concern.

Although the general sociological and ecological approach is to examine the problem of increasing population and decreasing resources from the quantitative angle, the Vedic analysis—which presents important ideas which should be seriously considered by modern social planners—stresses the qualitative aspect of the problem. Regardless of census figures, it's the *quality* of the population that is important.

The idea that the earth is unable to provide sufficient resources to keep up with an increasing world population fails to give proper credit to the laws of nature. By nature's laws there is already sufficient food and shelter provided for all creatures. The ant eats merely a few grains in a day, whereas an elephant may consume hundreds of pounds to maintain itself. Who is providing for them? There is no government agency required for the maintenance and sustenance of these creatures—or any others—for their needs are automatically fulfilled by the wonderfully complex and efficient laws of nature.

Similarly, there is sufficient food allotted by nature to feed every human being also. If the population of certain countries is starving, it is not due to any lack of supply on the part of nature, but to gross mismanagement by the leaders of the nations of the world. For the sake of maintaining a particular economic standard, the United States government disposes of tons of foodstuffs daily, which are badly needed by the starving population of other countries. But, the government authorities argue, if these measures were not taken, it would be the Americans who would suffer economic decline and consequent starvation. Thus there is a merry-go-round of economic jugglery and eco-



nomie entanglement for the sake of insuring the basic necessities which for animals are automatically provided by nature without complicated governmental intervention.

The problem is a matter of lack of knowledge. If one understands the laws of nature and lives in harmony with these laws, he can live simply and peacefully—or opulently and peacefully—without much difficulty. But if one tries to exploit the laws of nature without proper knowledge of how these laws are acting, the result is that he becomes increasingly entangled in nature's complexities, and suffering for himself and his community is the inevitable result.

The first principle of understanding nature is to understand that there is a force behind nature by which she is controlled. The material scientists postulate different evolutionary theories to explain the complex laws of universal harmony. These theories, however, are constantly changing, and therefore they must be considered unreliable. They are merely wonderful concoctions to avoid the obvious conclusion: nature is controlled by a superior intelligence—God.

Reliance on the limited reasoning power of the brains of material science results only in confusion and complication, for one speculator never fully agrees with another. If, however, one accepts the simple explanation which stares us in the face—that nature dis-

plays an intelligent order because it is controlled by an intelligent person—then the laws of nature are easy to understand. If everything is created by God, then everything belongs to God, and therefore everything should be used according to His laws.

The Vedic literature confirms this supposition as a basic fact of nature. Among all the living beings, there is one supreme eternal living being who provides the necessities of the others. This can be observed by anyone in his practical daily life. We are living by the grace of the sun, the water, the air, etc., none of which are provided by government agencies or scientific research teams. They are all provided by the Supreme Lord, and therefore they are all the property of the Lord and are to be used according to His injunctions.

The truth of God's existence is accepted by Kṛṣṇa conscious analysts as axiomatic. For those who wish logical evidence and proof, there is ample explanation in the literature of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, which is both reasonable and convincing, but space does not allow for exposition of this theme here, nor is this our purpose. For the purpose of understanding the Vedic system of social planning, it is expedient to at least theoretically accept the existence of God as an axiomatic fact.

If we accept that there is God, then we are like citizens in a beautiful garden

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in a public park. Anyone is free to enjoy the natural beauty of a public park, but if one disobeys the laws of the Parks Department, which are very liberal and are meant for the benefit of all the citizens, then his privileges are revoked, and he is punished by the laws of the state. Thus misuse of independence results in misfortune.

Similarly, as human beings we all have independence. We are free to act as we choose. But there are two kinds of citizens—those who are law-abiding and those who are outlaws, who defy the authority of God. The duty of the God conscious person is clear—to live a simple life of plain living and high thinking, taking whatever he needs to live in health and happiness, and devote his essential energy to the development of God realization. This is the purpose of the laws of nature. There is sufficient provision by nature for all human beings to live in this simple and uncomplicated manner and develop God consciousness, but those who are against God consciousness create a disturbance in the laws of nature and thus cause suffering for themselves and others.

The basic problem of the population explosion is not that there are too many people, but that there are too many outlaws. As already pointed out, material nature is sufficiently opulent to provide whatever is needed for the maintenance of all living beings who are placed under her charge. But, on the other hand, she is also capable of withholding her resources from those who break her stringent laws by trying to take more than they need.

If we understand the purpose of nature and the laws of nature, we can easily live in harmony with nature in a world of peace and prosperity. But if we are ignorant of nature's laws and purpose, we will simply create chaos. Modern civilization has created worldwide chaos only because of ignorance of the laws of nature or the laws of God, which are very simple but which have to be understood, with all reasoning and logic, from a properly informed spiritual source. The basic principles of God consciousness—agreed upon by members of all religions and sects—is that God is the Supreme Person, we are all His servants, and the resources of na-

ture are all His property. It is very simple and clear.

We are all boastful of our so-called advancement of material civilization, but unless there is actual peace in the minds of the citizens of the world, there can be no real claim of advancement. And without God consciousness, there can be no peace, but only a hard struggle for existence in a world of selfish competition for supremacy among nations and among men. Therefore, any civilization which is not established on the principles of God consciousness is not civilization at all.

The difficulty is that neither the leadership of the world nor the followers of the world leaders are educated in the science of God consciousness, and therefore they are unable to offer practical suggestions for successful management of their nations or the world. Therefore, there is great need for a worldwide program to educate people in general regarding the science of God consciousness, and this educational attempt should be spearheaded by the intelligentsia of society. It is the duty of all intelligent and responsible men in society to seriously consider the problems of the world in the light of spiritual knowledge, since the citizens of the world are in reality spiritual living entities.

Because world leadership is acting under the misconception of ownership of property and resources which actually belong to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, it is acting in illusion. For example, I may be invited to a friend's house to stay for some days, but if I somehow come to think that the house is mine, this is called illusion, and the result of such illusion is that I must be in anxiety due to the falseness of my claim. Similarly, one who thinks that the natural resources of the world are his to exploit is in illusion, and since this illusion is predominant all over the world, we are living in worldwide illusory consciousness and consequent worldwide tension.

Sectarian religious efforts cannot be effective in achieving a solution to this problem because no sectarian religion can offer a universal platform of God consciousness which can be acceptable to the members of other religious sects.

In this connection, however, Kṛṣṇa consciousness is offering a unique program because it is a completely non-sectarian spiritual science which can be easily understood and adopted by all the people of the world, regardless of religious conviction or faith.

The basic principle of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness philosophy is that the greatest need of world civilization is a *systematic program to broadcast the glories of the Supreme Lord by every available means*. Because the Supreme Lord is transcendental to the confusion and anxiety of the material world, glorification of the Lord is similarly transcendental. The Supreme Lord is situated within the hearts of all living entities, and since all living entities are parts and parcels of God and therefore originally God conscious living beings, as soon as one hears the transcendental sound vibration of glorification of the Lord, the Lord acts from within to purify his consciousness and revive his original purity of mind and purpose.

The media of the world are overburdened with mundane propaganda glorifying the temporary and flickering tidings of the material world, but such news cannot act for the real benefit of the citizens of the world. The spiritually realized person can see that all living entities are parts and parcels of the Supreme Lord. He sees everyone as a spirit soul and serves him as such. The mundane philanthropist can offer only temporary solutions which pertain to the outer covering of the living being, the material body. This bodily welfare work does not, however, solve the real problem, any more than cleaning the cage of a starving bird acts to satisfy the bird's hunger.

If only a small percentage of the world's leaders understand the importance of acting in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the entire face of the world can be changed. The public media—the radio, the press, television—are all in actuality the property of God because they exist by God's energy. The ether through which television and radio waves travel and the trees which provide the paper on which newspapers are printed are not created by man, but by the Supreme Lord. Therefore, the claim of any man, syndicate or nation to have proprietor-

ship of any of the public media must be considered an illusion only. Because these media exist on God's resources, they are therefore the property of God, and they should be used for the glorification of God.

The headlines should announce the glories of God, the radios should broadcast the name of God, television should present the pastimes of God. The mass media is now acting as a worldwide disservice. The newspaper is a chronicle of birth, death, disease and old age which is distributed in the millions and thrown in the streets as rubbish the next day in exchange for that day's news, which is really nothing new, but only the same static mundane tidings. Similarly, radio and television are polluting the world with mundane sound vibrations which are of no benefit to the spiritual advancement of civilization. The newspapermen and television commentators of the world are sleeping, and what can a sleeping man report? We

call on the leaders of the mass media to wake up and broadcast the name, fame, qualities and pastimes of the Supreme Lord for the benefit of all living entities. We call upon the scientists of the world to learn the greatest science, the science of the spirit soul, the active principle within everything, which is moving the material world. We call upon the politicians to organize political structures within their jurisdiction for the advancement of spiritual knowledge, instead of mundane sense gratification for their own personal and extended selfish interests. We call upon the theologians of the world to learn the universal science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which is relevant for men of all religions because it is the postgraduate science of religion, the complete practical science of how everyone can actually develop love of God. We call upon writers to write of God, singers to sing of God, workers to work for God, and we call upon every human being to revive his dormant

relationship with God by the practical method of hearing about Kṛṣṇa from His devotees.

The supreme omnipotent Lord has full potency to provide for the prosperity of millions and billions of universes. Therefore, the only real scarcity is a scarcity of genuine God consciousness. It is the mission of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness to counteract this scarcity, for that will automatically adjust all other problems.



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by

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Śrī Janārdana

ISKCON Press, New York.

Letters

The editors of *Back to Godhead* welcome correspondence pertaining to the subject matter of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. All letters will be personally replied, and correspondence of special interest will be published regularly.

Dear Citsukānanda dāsa:

I wanted to send this letter to you to express my deep appreciation for your concern during my recent stay in San Francisco. My trip to California was for the purpose of seeing some friends and relaxing a little after the very strenuous meeting of the National Federation of Priests' Councils Executive Board. We have been trying very hard to change the priorities of the Catholic Church and to educate our people to a deeper concern for the things of God. It seems that our efforts are meeting with some success, but God is the provider, and He will give what is necessary when it is time.

When I first saw the devotees on Market Street I was fascinated by the chanting and the youth of those who were dancing and singing. One of the girls gave me a copy of the magazine and invited me to the temple. As you know I spent many hours watching and enjoying this wonderful phenomenon. Having seen many false things in my life as a Catholic and as a priest, I wanted to be sure that what I saw was genuine. I came to the temple not so much for curiosity as for the purpose of learning something of the secret of the joy and peace I saw in the eyes of those devoted to Kṛṣṇa. My heart was overjoyed to find what I found. The chanting and dancing are so simple and yet so meaningful in their approach to God.

While in San Francisco I thought of nothing more than of Kṛṣṇa and His devotees. Since I have returned to Pennsylvania I have thought of little else. I have been reading the *Gītā* and cherishing the thoughts contained there. I am in the process of thinking of the connection between Kṛṣṇa and Christ and Catholic teaching. By no means am I a follower of the false Christ which has been taught for so long in so many churches. I have long known that God has a deep cosmic significance which has been overlooked for so long. Some of the things I have been reading in archaeology, scripture, and human behavior have led me to a consciousness of the overwhelming goodness of God and of His great love for us.

I recall the words of St. Paul in one of the New Testament Epistles: "O how

great are the riches and the depths of the knowledge of God; how inscrutable His ways." Here was a man caught up into the seventh heaven of God consciousness who abandoned everything he ever was to bring awareness of God to mankind. I see so many similarities in the two scriptures, and I can only think that perhaps God speaks to men according to their own condition and for too long we have tried to say that one way is God's. Who are we to try to limit God: The all-important thing is God consciousness. All things follow from that. Whether one follows the prayers of the Catholic Mass or the prayers of the African native, one always seeks God.

There are so very many questions that I have wanted to ask you, but did not because I was not willing to interrupt the chanting or any of the work of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness by taking all your time. I was grateful to you for taking time on Friday to speak to me. May I ask you some of these personal questions which to me give an idea of the value that Kṛṣṇa has for the devotee. First, I am wondering about the place of sex in the life of devotees such as the young men and women of the temple. As a Catholic priest who lives a life of celibacy in dedication to Christ, I am interested to know what the devotee of Kṛṣṇa thinks about celibacy. Is this any problem for those trying to follow Kṛṣṇa? Do the devotees accept celibacy for life or for a period of time only? What is the attitude of the devotee towards sex? Is sex a good thing or something evil? Does Kṛṣṇa demand abstinence from sex as a sacrifice or as a way of being free from material attachments?

Also I would like to ask you about the matter of money. I know that in any society money is necessary to maintain a church or a temple. One of the devotees told me that the spiritual master provides for the students. This is a very real problem for me since I know for us how many millions of dollars must be spent on buildings and how much on personal living expenses: food, clothing, car fuel, etc.

There are so many mundane things to talk about, but I feel that I must know some of these things in order to place

all doubts about the personal motivations of the devotees in abeyance. Would you be so kind as to answer these questions sincerely. I would appreciate knowing many, many things about the devotees of Kṛṣṇa because I believe in the transcendental value of such devotion and must be able to answer the objections of those with whom I speak. Already the people I have told this to have many questions. Quite soon my classes will begin, and I will have an opportunity to talk of Kṛṣṇa consciousness to this group of people anxious to know about God. Likewise I intend to talk about my wonderful experience with you in my church at Mass. I will do this after I receive the record I ordered from Boston.

May I thank you for the feeling of warmth and friendship and love which I felt while with you. I know that this is the warmth, friendship and love of Kṛṣṇa which shines through you. Please be assured of my constant prayers for all of you to Lord Jesus that he may grant to you the fullness of Kṛṣṇa and all good things which come from Him.

Hare Kṛṣṇa!
Father Ernest P. Kish

Dear Father Kish,

Please accept my greetings. The San Francisco temple has sent us your letter in hopes that we could print it so that all could read and share in your inspiring response to the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. They have also requested that, as editors of the magazine, we answer the questions which are in your letter.

Your feelings of spiritual joy on witnessing the devotees chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa in the streets and in the temple are symptoms of love of God, the pure, original feelings of the human being. Love of God, as demonstrated by the chanting, is not a sectarian concern. It is the essence of religion to call on Him, and who can object? Certainly there is no objection from the spiritual point of view; the only objection is from the viewpoint of material prejudice. God Himself is understood as transcendental to sects; He is not the God of merely the Christian people, or the Hindus, or Muslims, or Jews or any sect. In the

scripture *Bhagavad-gītā*, which you are reading, Kṛṣṇa, who is accepted in all Vedic literature as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, declares, "I am the father of all living entities." There is thus no question of His being the father of only one sect; He is the father even of the lower animals, the trees and all life, regardless of one's particular religious faith. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, another Vedic scripture, the devotee-sage Śukadeva Gosvāmī was asked what the first-class religion among all religions is. He replied, "That religion is first-class which invokes our natural love of God." He did not say, "The best religion is Hindu," or "Christianity is the best." The test of first-class religion is whether the followers are developing love of God; it does not matter what the religion is. Your letter reflects awareness of this standard, based on pure feelings of love of God, and that is why it is so refreshing and encouraging.

You write that you want to ask many questions "in order to place all doubts about the personal motivations of the devotees in abeyance." I can reply for all those devotees of ISKCON who are fully and sincerely engaged twenty-four hours daily in this practice of devotional service that our only motivation is to please our spiritual master, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who is a pure devotee of the Lord. As for the motive of Śrīla Prabhupāda himself, that is certain: he is engaging all the activities of his mind, words and heart in the worldwide propaganda of pure love of God. All that you saw in San Francisco which so moved you, such as the spontaneous joy of the devotees engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is only due to the causeless mercy of our spiritual master. Whatever God consciousness we have developed and we are practicing comes from the instruction of the bona fide spiritual master. He is passing it down to us so kindly, from an unbroken line of disciplic succession going back 5,000 years to the time when *Bhagavad-gītā* was spoken by Lord Kṛṣṇa. Whatever is in the *Gītā* is confirmed by our spiritual master, without misinterpretation, change or addition. Thus we can answer your questions on the basis of the authority of our

spiritual master and upon the words of Kṛṣṇa spoken in *Bhagavad-gītā*.

You have asked about the place of sex life in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. What is the Kṛṣṇa conscious devotee's attitude toward celibacy? According to the Vedic system there are four orders in spiritual life, and in all but one of them complete celibacy is the rule. The first order is called *brahmacharya*, or student life. The unmarried student spends his entire time in study and service to the spiritual master. In this country, as you have seen, both boys and girls have adopted this life and are strictly following it; they do not indulge in illicit sex in any way whatsoever. And, as you saw in their behavior, they are not suffering any inconvenience from such restriction. When one is able to taste the transcendental bliss of devotional service, *bhakti-yoga*, there is no question of hankering for material pleasure. Our real eternal self is spiritual, and once this eternal relationship to the Supreme Spirit, or Kṛṣṇa, is invoked in the heart of the aspiring devotee, he constantly wants to feel that transcendental pleasure of service to God, without stoppage, and he considers sex life to be abominable because of its inferior quality. This is true for the girls as well as the boys. It is no less than miraculous that in this age, when the whole materialistic society is concentrating on sex life as the ultimate goal of life, ISKCON devotees are refraining from such practices so easily.

After receiving training as a *brahmachārī* for some time, the student may, with the sanction of the spiritual master, get married and live peacefully as a householder in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa declares, "I am sex life according to religious principles." What kind of sex life is religious? That which is only for producing children is acceptable; otherwise it is forbidden as much for the householders as for the single students. To raise a child in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a great service, and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, the *guru* (spiritual master) of our spiritual master, who was a strict celibate throughout his entire life, said, "I would be prepared to have sex a hundred times if I could raise Kṛṣṇa conscious children."

Śrīla Prabhupāda is very fond of his married couples. The principle of marriage in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not sense gratification but mutual cooperation, for man and wife help each other to become Kṛṣṇa conscious. Such pure couples are going all over the world chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and opening Kṛṣṇa conscious centers.

If a single student does not feel the need to be married, he may eventually take *sannyāsa*, which is the renounced order of life, dedicating all his energy to preaching according to the order of the spiritual master. It is said that fifty percent of liberation is achieved if one can become free of mundane sex life. Since spiritual life means to become liberated from this material world of misery, illicit sex life is not good, since it is the single greatest attraction drawing us to material life. If we can rid ourselves of the desire to remain in this temporary world of death, we can become eligible to experience transcendental bliss.

The matter of money is best explained by the founder and spiritual master of ISKCON in a commentary to his translation of *Bhagavad-gītā*: "Every endeavor requires a place to stay, some capital to use, some labor and some organization to make propaganda, so the same is required in the service of Kṛṣṇa. The only difference is that materialism means to work for sense gratification. The same work, however, can be performed for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa. That is spiritual activity." The fact is that the devotee has actually abolished his own account; for his own maintenance he uses only what is necessary to keep body and soul together, but for the spreading of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the topmost welfare work for all humanity, huge sums of money are required. From sales of books and magazines, the money is put entirely, *one-hundred percent*, into printing more books and future issues of the magazine. The maintenance of the many temples is supported by private income, from householder devotees who work at jobs and contribute their income, as well as from sales of Spiritual Sky incense and private donations.

All of us are living entities completely dependent on Kṛṣṇa for our mainte-

nance. Man proposes and God disposes. Because Kṛṣṇa is maintaining the animals and the nondevotees, we are confident that, as we endeavor to manage efficiently whatever is given to us, Kṛṣṇa will surely provide for those engaged in His pure devotional service.

I hope that this has answered some of the many questions you have asked about Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Our spiritual master is currently making a world tour and promises soon to be in the New York-Philadelphia area. We will keep in touch with you as to when you could most likely meet him. It would be very wonderful if you could meet with His Divine Grace and speak of some of the feelings which you have expressed in your letter about Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And, since you are living in Philadelphia, we humbly invite you to visit and associate with the devotees there and attend their classes and Sunday feasts if possible. Thank you again for giving us spiritual encouragement to carry on our work for the Supreme Lord and His pure devotee.

Your servant,
Satsvarūpa dāsa Adhikārī
Editor, *Back to Godhead*

(continued from page 13)

Bhagavān: Or your wife or your child. . .

Mr. Susskind: Your wife is not yours?

Bhagavān: She is Kṛṣṇa's. I am Kṛṣṇa's, and you are Kṛṣṇa's.

Mr. Susskind: Is your wife your wife?

Bhagavān: My wife is Kṛṣṇa's.

Mr. Susskind: Is your child yours?

Bhagavān: Everything belongs to God. You can't substantiate your proprietary claim.

Mr. Susskind: Well then what is your relationship to your wife and child?

Bhagavān: We're all serving Kṛṣṇa.

Mr. Susskind: What does that mean?

Yogeśvara: It's one of love. But that love is not ill-founded. Kṛṣṇa's at the center. Therefore that love endures. I think if you look at the statistics you'll find that most relationships terminate rather quickly, and even if they're prolonged, at most they can last until the end of one lifetime.

Rukmiṇī: Actually, love is based on the spirit soul. When someone's lying dead, his mother's crying over him, "John is gone, John is gone! My boy is gone!"

So that means she's loving the spirit.

Yogesvara: The body's still there, but John is gone.

Mr. Susskind: Well, you marry. You do marry.

Rukmiṇī (pointing to Bharadrāja): We're married.

Mr. Susskind: So you *did* take one to the other.

Rukmiṇī: But in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Mr. Susskind: What does that mean?

Rukmiṇī: That means that we married in order to better facilitate our serving Kṛṣṇa.

Bhagavān: That is in everyone's interest.

Mr. Susskind: Did somebody ordain the marriage?

Bharadrāja: Yes, our spiritual master, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

[The audience cheers, "Jaya! Jaya!" ("Victory! All glories!") in appreciation.]

Bharadrāja: The founder of this movement.

Mr. Susskind: His Holiness ordained your marriage. He called you and said, "I want you to marry this woman."

Bharadrāja: Well. . .

Rukmiṇī: He said it would be a perfect marriage.

Mr. Susskind: How did he know? Had you ever met?

Bharadrāja: We met just a little while before we were married.

Yogeśvara: I think what we're trying to get at is this—that the marriages that are taking place in Kṛṣṇa consciousness are not based on one's attraction for the other in terms of common interests or sex life or something like that.

Mr. Susskind: Shouldn't they be?

Yogeśvara: Well, if you want it to be a short relationship, that's fine.

Rūpānuga: Well, we're all eternal as it is, you see. We *all* are eternal living beings, spirit souls, and it's just a temporary body, so we don't marry for some temporary bodily relationship. We marry to help each other become more Kṛṣṇa conscious, have more consciousness of God. And then when the body drops, that's just the beginning, actually. Because we can change from these bodies into another material body, or we can take a spiritual body. It's not difficult. It depends on what we want.

Yogeśvara: If you really love somebody,

you'll help them find out who they are. Mr. Susskind to Kāliṇī: You will have a child when he [Rūpānuga] bids you to?

Rukmiṇī: Well, Yogeśvara made a very nice point just now—that if you really love someone, then you'll help him become really happy and find out who he is. Just like you asked at the beginning, "What do your parents think of this?" Well, my parents say they *love* me, so because they see that I'm becoming very happy, they're very pleased. Because they know that previously I wasn't.

Mr. Susskind: But could this be another phase that you're in?

Rukmiṇī: It could be, but Rūpānuga Prabhu has been chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa* for over four years. I've been chanting for three and a half years—so many devotees here for such a long time—and we're feeling rather than some decrease, rather than stagnation—we're feeling ever-increasing transcendental bliss. Ever-increasing bliss.

Satsvarūpa: Please don't take us as a sect. This applies to everyone, these things we're talking about.

Mr. Susskind: Why do you paint this thing on the front?

Satsvarūpa: Because this marks us as devotees of Kṛṣṇa. The whole thing is to remind our brothers and sisters, just as you are our brother: brotherly love is based on the fact that God is our father.



We want to remind everyone of their relationship to the one God. So we're preachers. This dress, this marking, is all to remind you: "Oh, there goes a Kṛṣṇa person." And then he has to think of his own relationship to Kṛṣṇa or God.

Mr. Susskind: What is the tuft of hair? Each of you has a little. . .

Satsvarūpa: Yes. This is called a *sikha*. This is done for the pleasure of our



spiritual master. It's the same thing. Spiritual markings to make one understand, "Here's a devotee, and I can ask him about my relationship with God." Because when one dresses like this it means that twenty-four hours he's serving Kṛṣṇa and trying to spread this very nice consciousness.

Mr. Susskind: Aren't you over-dressing to explain yourselves to God? I mean, with the little thing of hair and the paint on the front. . .

Satsvarūpa: God? No, He knows very well.

Mr. Susskind: But doesn't the average civilian walking down the street reading the *Daily News* or the *Chicago Tribune*. . .

Satsvarūpa: He doesn't know about Kṛṣṇa. What does he see in the *Chicago Tribune*? Birth, death, disease, old age. Then he looks up, and he sees a devotee, and there's Kṛṣṇa. [Audience: "Jaya!"]

Mr. Susskind: Tell me, what's your day like? When do you get up in the morning?

Rukmiṇī: Very early. I get up at three in the morning.

Mr. Susskind: Why?

Rukmiṇī: Our spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, instructed us that that's the best time for self-realization.

Mr. Susskind: Three o'clock in the morning?

Rukmiṇī: Yes.

Bharadrāja: Actually, happiness is to be awake. If you're asleep you're missing out on so many things.

Mr. Susskind: You get up at three o'clock in the morning. Right. And the whole city is dark. What do you do?

Bharadrāja: We chant.

Kāliṇī: We chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Mr. Susskind: At three o'clock in the morning you chant?

Rukmiṇī: Yes. We have a ceremony called *ārātrika*, which is worshiping the Lord. *Ārātrika* means to receive the Lord. So we all chant at this *ārātrika* ceremony and play nice instruments, like this harmonium and *mṛdaṅga* (the drum you saw) and nice *karatālas*. It's

very beautiful, very early in the morning.

Rūpānuga: And we study. We study. We have very nice books, literatures, the *Kṛṣṇa Book*, the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. We study the pastimes of God. This is the specific contribution of our movement—that we are explaining to the world what God looks like, what He's doing, who His associates are, His clothes. . .

Mr. Susskind: What does He look like? What does God look like?

Rūpānuga: Here's Kṛṣṇa here.

[Rūpānuga brings forth a picture of Śyāmasundara, Kṛṣṇa in His original form.]

Mr. Susskind: With lakes and ducks and. . .

Yogamāyā: That's the spiritual world. We have descriptions in our literature of the spiritual world.

Mr. Susskind: Right. And who are His associates? Animals and flowers and. . .?

Jayādvaita: All of His pure devotees.

Rūpānuga: All of His pure devotees. He has a family. You see, everything in this material world is a reflection of the spiritual world. The Supreme Personality of Godhead has a mother, a father, He has a brother, friends, servants—everything that we see here is simply a reflection of that. That's why the love here in this material world is temporary. Actual love means without end. Continuous.

Mr. Susskind: Why do you have to get up at three in the morning to do your devotions?

Maṅgalamāyā: Those hours are called the auspicious hours of the day. They're the best hours and the most conducive for spiritual realization.

Mr. Susskind: What time do you go to sleep?

Maṅgalamāyā: Nine-thirty.

Rūpānuga: We don't even like to go to sleep. Some of the greatest spiritual masters in our line used to forget to go to sleep. They were so much in love with Kṛṣṇa. They'd forget to eat sometimes. We're so busy in the material world trying to sleep—we think sleep is a recreation. But we think sleeping is death. We want to be awake, wide awake and conscious of Kṛṣṇa all the time.

Yogeśvara: Therefore this chanting in the street. People are asleep, and we're trying to wake them up.

Mr. Susskind: Do you have any desires? Rūpānuga: Yes. Our desires are always fulfilled. Because our desires are fulfilled by Kṛṣṇa directly, not indirectly. We don't want that indirect relationship with God—we want to be fully conscious of God and serve Him.

Mr. Susskind: Did God in any way say don't eat fish, don't eat meat?

Jayādvaita: It's there in the scriptures.

Kāliṇī: Jesus Christ said, "Thou shalt not kill." That was one of his commandments. We have said, "We shouldn't kill people." But why should we kill animals?

Bhagavān: Just like if you had a nice plate like this and a cow here, what would you do? Would you kill the cow or would you eat that food?

Mr. Susskind: Oh, I'd go right for the cow.

Rūpānuga: For the milk, hopefully. You don't have to kill the cow to take the milk. Why cause the animal pain? Do you have to chop a tree down to get the apple? No. You can take the fruit that God has provided. He's providing this light even. He's providing everything.

Mr. Susskind: No. No, that's Consolidated Edison.

Jayādvaita: But where do they get it?

Rūpānuga: It's coming from the sun. The sun's coming from Kṛṣṇa. It's all coming from Kṛṣṇa. Everything is emanating from Kṛṣṇa. So all we're doing. . . One little trick we've learned to be happy: that we *accept*, joyfully we accept, because it's Kṛṣṇa's mercy. But we give *back*. Because it's His.



Yogeśvara: That's a very interesting example that you just gave when you said that this light is coming from Con Edison. That's the point of this movement—to change the vision that people have from one of material consciousness, or consciousness of simply what their senses are dictating to them, to one which is tempered by knowledge coming down through the line of teachers, of spiritual masters.

Mr. Susskind: I did that research about

your movement, and it said that after you got permission to marry, you do in fact marry, and there's a kind of lovely ceremony that goes on. Then you don't need permission to have children, but your sexual activities are pre-ordained by this Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Rūpānuga: It's called family planning. We plan to have children, not to avoid having children. We *want* to have children so that we can raise them in Kṛṣṇa's service.

Mr. Susskind: But when you have children you have to precede it by five hours of chanting?

Rūpānuga: We're always chanting. Like today, we preceded the show by several hours of chanting before we came here.

Mr. Susskind: But five hours of singing. . .

Jayādvaīta: Not singing. On beads. You can chant any way. There are no hard and fast rules for chanting. But by chanting for that time, what are you thinking of? Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa.

Mr. Susskind: Shouldn't you be thinking of Miriam, Miriam, Miriam?

Jayādvaīta: No.

Bhagavān: It's not that chanting is labor.

Mr. Susskind: Does Miriam or Martha ever take over from Kṛṣṇa?

Rūpānuga: Wait, wait, let's talk about Miriam for a second. Everybody in the world is very much after sex life be-

cause sex life is the highest pleasure in the material world.

Mr. Susskind: Well, it's a contender.

Rūpānuga: Until we get too old. It's a very nice pleasure. Now, the thing is that everyone has plenty of that. Everyone has plenty of sex life, yet no one's happy.

Mr. Susskind: Wait a minute. You can't make categorical statements like that.

Rūpānuga: All right, then what is happiness?

Mr. Susskind: What do you mean no one's happy?

Rūpānuga: What is happiness?

Mr. Susskind: Happiness is a condition of fulfillment or self-realization or pleasure, a feeling. . .

Satsvarūpa: That never ends.

Mr. Susskind: . . .of happiness, of ecstasy. . .

Rūpānuga: But no come down.

Mr. Susskind: Oh, sure you come down from that.

Rūpānuga: Oh, no.

Whole panel: No, no.

Jayādvaīta: That's not happiness.

Yogēśvara: Happiness is eternal.

Rūpānuga: That's because it's a different high. We're talking about a spiritual high. You should stay high forever, but you just must chant.

Mr. Susskind: Does your wife never say, "Knock off the chanting and love me?"

Rūpānuga: She says, "Chant if you love me."

Mr. Susskind: Chant if you love me. Right. Is there a limit on the family that you can have? Can you have as many children as you want?

Satsvarūpa: The limit is that no one should have a child unless he can raise the child to be free from death. We're all heading for death. Maybe in a moment or maybe ten years. But if you can raise your children and yourself to be free of death—this is actually possible by love of God.

Mr. Susskind: All right. Now the people are crossing the streets in Chicago, in Pittsburgh, Detroit, L.A., San Francisco, and they see you. What would you like them to think? Because they think it's a very strange sight. I mean I've passed you in New York and wondered, "What the *devil* are they doing?"

Rūpānuga: Well, we want them to stop speculating on us and *ask* us what we're doing. That's our whole business.

Mr. Susskind: And then they say, maybe you're cop-outs.

Rūpānuga: But we're actually not. We're drop-ins. We're back in! We're really in. This Hare Kṛṣṇa movement is the in thing [laughter], and we're simply asking that every intelligent person take a look at what we're saying. Not that they say, "Oh, they're chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa." But what's behind it? END



The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, appeared in India 5,000 years ago in the town of Vṛndāvana. He came down from the spiritual sky with His eternal associates, pastimes and paraphernalia—and He brought His eternal abode with Him. There is no difference between the Vṛndāvana on this earth and the Vṛndāvana in the spiritual sky, for when Kṛṣṇa comes He brings His eternal abode with Him. As recorded in the scripture *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, for 125 years Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa displayed His loving pastimes in the natural setting of Vṛndāvana with His cowherd girl friends, His consort Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, His cowherd boy friends and other associates. These pastimes are described in the *Kṛṣṇa Books* by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

The land of Vṛndāvana is still existing in India, and 500 years ago Lord Caitanya sent His intimate disciples the Gosvāmīs to identify the places where Kṛṣṇa performed His pastimes, such as the River Yamunā where He fought the demon Kāliya, the forest where He danced with the *gopīs*,

and the famous Goverdhana Hill which He lifted to protect the residents of Vṛndāvana. Vṛndāvana, however, remained little known to the people of the rest of the world.

Before coming to the United States in 1965 on the order of his spiritual master, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda stayed in the Rādhā-Dāmodara Temple established in Vṛndāvana by the Gosvāmī followers of Lord Caitanya and there worked on his translations of Vedic literature. Now, since 1965, he has been traveling, especially in the western part of the world. In the last two years, devotees of ISKCON, led by Śrīla Prabhupāda, have gone to India to establish centers, and recently Śrīla Prabhupāda went with a group of devotees to visit Vṛndāvana and show them through the eyes of a pure devotee the place of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes.

The residents of present-day Vṛndāvana greeted Śrīla Prabhupāda with great pride. Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote in a letter, "The officials and residents of Vṛndāvana have greeted us very nicely, and they are simply astounded to see our

saṅkīrtana party chanting with great jubilation through the city streets. Before I went to the Western countries, no one there knew about Vṛndāvana. Now hundreds of visitors from the U.S. come here to see Kṛṣṇa's place."

In his purports to *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Śrīla Prabhupāda has written: "In Vṛndāvana, all the inhabitants are Vaiṣṇavas [devotees of Kṛṣṇa]. They are all auspicious because somehow or other they always chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. Even though some of them do not strictly follow the rules and regulations of devotional service, on the whole they are

devoted to Kṛṣṇa and chant His name, directly or indirectly. Purposely or without purpose, even when they are passing on the street they are fortunate enough to exchange greetings by saying the name of Rādhā or Kṛṣṇa. So directly or indirectly they are auspicious. The inhabitants of Vṛndāvana do not know anything but the worship of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa."

The addresses of welcome printed on this and the following pages were offered to Śrīla Prabhupāda by the prominent residents of Vṛndāvana when His Divine Grace visited the city during his tour of November 1971.

A Flower of Ecstasy

handed unto the lotus palm of His Divine Grace 108 Śrī Śrīmad Swami Śrī Bhaktivedantajī Mahārāja

O preacher of the *Saṅkīrtana* Movement,

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it has been declared that chanting of the holy name of the Lord is the essence of all Vedic literature, and there is no alternative method of delivering the fallen souls of this age, known as Kali-yuga.

You are acting in exact accord with this message of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in the line of disciplic succession, and it is a glorious attempt that you have undertaken in preaching the magnificent action of the holy name of the Lord. May this determination of yours be blessed with success all over the universe. That is the prayer of all Vaiṣṇavas in Vṛndāvana. We sincerely hope that your noble attempt in this line of action will be crowned with laurels.

This is an attempt to unify the whole world on the one platform of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. At present, all political movement is centered around the idealism of the United Nations. Men are talking of internationalism, but by practical experience it is found that no other attempt but this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement will be able to unite all nations of the world. None of the political dreamers have become as successful as you.

Seeing the results of your activities, every one of us now believes that in the very near future all the nations of the world will be overwhelmed by the transcendental vibrations of the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*. Through this movement, men forget their artificial and inimical concepts

of life. Gradually they will take to this auspicious movement, breaking all artificial barriers and limitations of human understanding. We firmly believe that through this movement everyone will become a lover of the Supreme Lord and thus a lover not only of all society but of all other living entities.

O Great Soul,

Today we, the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana known as Vrajabhāsīs, all combinedly offer our humble welcome to Your Holiness in this holy place of Vṛndāvana, and in doing so we feel very proud. We all pray to the Supreme Queen of Vraja Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, the principal figure in the transcendental *rāsa* dance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, that She may be pleased with you and bestow upon you at least 100 years of age. Thus may Rādhārāṇī's most lovable Kṛṣṇa, who is also known as Śyāmasundara, bless Your Holiness to go on continually preaching the transcendental glories of the Lord, for in this way the entire universe may constantly chant His holy name, after receiving it from your mouth, and thus surcharge the entire atmosphere with purity and love of God. By this method the polluted atmosphere of the world will be completely changed, and the situation of pure love and ecstasy will prevail without a doubt.

We beg to remain all Yours sincerely,
the Inhabitants of Vrajabhūmi
Sd. Govinda Pathak

An Address of Welcome

to the most exalted, unlimitedly decorated Śrī Śrīmad Swami Bhaktivedantajī Mahārāja

O most revered Svāmījī,

India is well known as the land of religion, and the heart of this transcendental land is Śrī Vṛndāvana. This is the place of the pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhārāṇī, the central figure of the *rāsa* dance, and of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the worshipable Lord of Rādhārāṇī. Thus, this transcendental holy land of Vṛndāvana is the center for cultivation of religion, culture, austerity and devotional service. It is not that Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma is so accepted in modern days alone—it has existed as such since time immemorial. In this holy land of Vṛndāvana, we the

inhabitants of Vṛndāvana, who are known as Vrajabhāsīs, hereby welcome you and offer you this humble address.

O perfect devotee of Lord Viṣṇu,

According to the Vedic system there are three ways for self-realization. They are known as knowledge, fruitive activities and devotional service. We have an immense treasure house of transcendental knowledge in the form of four *Vedas*, 108 *Upaniṣads* and eighteen *Purāṇas*, over and above the *Mahābārata* and *Vedānta-sūtras*. They are so important that by taking a fractional portion of this treasure of tran-



scendental knowledge, other countries all over the world have become proud of their spiritual understanding. We know that you have full authority in the treasure house of spiritual knowledge, yet still you have taken shelter of the most exalted process of devotional service.

O chief of understanding transcendental mellowness,

It is needless to mention that the devotional service in Vṛndāvana is the topmost of its kind because it is based on *mādhurya-rāsa*, or conjugal love between Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa. Certainly this transcendental mellowness is mentioned in the *Upaniṣads*, where it is indicated that Kṛṣṇa is the reservoir of all pleasure. This Vedic injunction is fully manifested in the devotional service of conjugal love in Vṛndāvana in every street, lane and temple of Vṛndāvana and most perfectly in Vamśīvaṭa and Keśī Ghat or in the temples of Śrī Govindajī, Śrī Madana-Mohanajī, Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodarajī and the many other temples of the Lord. All these places are undoubtedly places of pilgrimage for many liberated devotees. We know that for many years you sat in the Rādhā-Dāmodara Temple and worshiped Her Majesty Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī in a meditative mood, and thus you now have the transcendental vision to deliver the entire world. As proof of your perfection, we can see these foreign devotees before us, and we feel very proud to see how you have transformed them into such pure devotees.

O great preacher of Vedic culture,

Formerly, a great many *svāmīs* went to foreign countries, but now you have wonderfully preached the *saṅkīrtana*

movement and the sublime philosophy of the *bhakti* cult in the Western countries, and that is the only means for giving peace and prosperity to all people of the world in this age. For preaching religion and culture, your holy name will remain ever dazzling.

O most revered Svāmījī,

To speak frankly, we feel a very intimate relationship with you, and we feel perfect satisfaction at this time to be privileged to present to you this address of welcome. We take it for granted that you are one of us in Vṛndāvana. We are sure that wherever you travel you must carry with you the impression of Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma. In other words, the culture, religion, philosophy and transcendental existence of Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma travel with you. Through the great message that Your Holiness carries, all the people of the world are now becoming very intimately related with Vṛndāvana-dhāma. The relationship between Vṛndāvana and the people of the world is actually the highest perfection of religious and cultural life because the message of the mercy of Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa is the topmost of all knowledge. We are certainly sure that through your preaching alone the transcendental message of Vṛndāvana will spread all over the world. May you be crowned with success in these noble activities.

We beg to remain Yours most obediently,
Chairman of the Vṛndāvana Municipality, Its Members and Secretaries, and the Citizens of Vṛndāvana-dhāma

29 November 1971



KṚṢṆA

The Supreme Personality of Godhead

"**T**he flames increased as the wind blew very quickly and it appeared that everything movable and immovable would be devoured. All the cows and the boys became very frightened, and they looked towards Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. The Supreme Personality of Godhead heard the appealing voices of His friends, and casting a pleasing glance over them, He began to answer. By speaking through His eyes, He impressed His friends that there was no cause for fear. Then Kṛṣṇa, the supreme mystic, the

powerful Personality of Godhead, immediately swallowed up all the flames of the fire. The cows and boys were thus saved from imminent danger. Out of fear, the boys were almost unconscious, but when they regained their consciousness and opened their eyes, they saw that they were again in the forest with Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and the cows. They were astonished to see that they were completely free from the attack of the blazing fire and that the cows were saved. They secretly thought that Kṛṣṇa must not be an ordinary boy."

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