

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

BACK TO GODHEAD

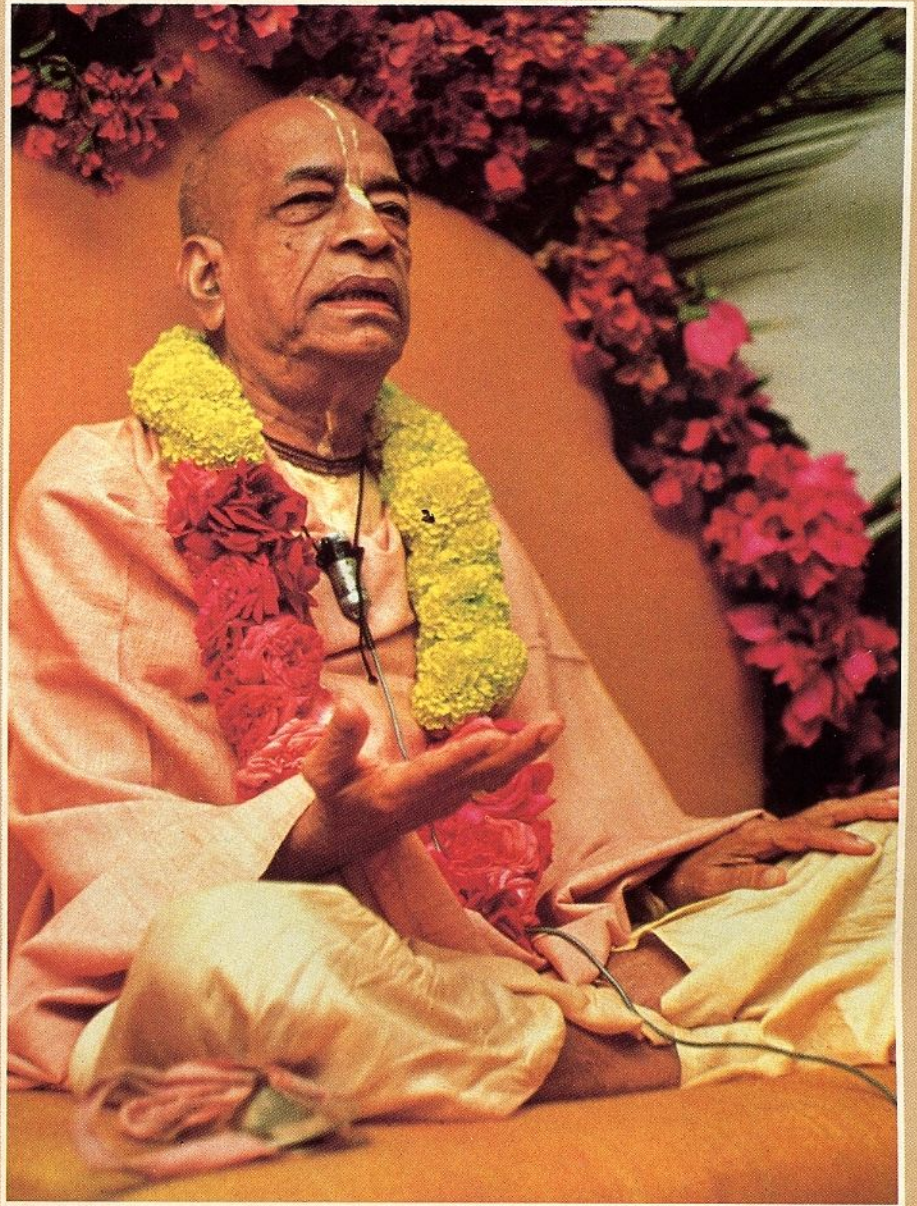
Vol. 18 No. 11

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT



**His Divine Grace A. C.
Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda,**

Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, came to America in 1965, at age sixty-nine, to fulfill his spiritual master's request that he teach the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the English-speaking world. In a dozen years he published some seventy volumes of translation and commentary on India's Vedic literature, and these are now standard in universities worldwide. Meanwhile, traveling almost nonstop, Śrīla Prabhupāda molded his international society into a worldwide confederation of *āśramas*, schools, temples, and farm communities. He passed away in 1977 in India's Vṛndāvana, the place most sacred to Lord Kṛṣṇa. His disciples are carrying forward the movement he started.



BACK TO GODHEAD is the monthly journal of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. When Śrīla Prabhupāda began the Society (in New York City, in 1966), he put into writing the purposes he wanted it to achieve. They are as follows:

1. To systematically propagate spiritual knowledge to society at large and to educate all peoples in the techniques of spiritual life in order to check the imbalance of values in life and to achieve real unity and peace in the world.
2. To propagate a consciousness of Kṛṣṇa, as it is revealed in *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.
3. To bring the members of the Society together with each other and nearer to Kṛṣṇa, the prime entity, thus developing the idea within the
- members, and humanity at large, that each soul is part and parcel of the quality of Godhead (Kṛṣṇa).
4. To teach and encourage the *saṅkīrtana* movement, congregational chanting of the holy names of God, as revealed in the teachings of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
5. To erect for the members and for society at large a holy place of transcendental pastimes dedicated to the personality of Kṛṣṇa.
6. To bring the members closer together for the purpose of teaching a simpler, more natural way of life.
7. With a view toward achieving the aforementioned purposes, to publish and distribute periodicals, books, and other writings.

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


SPIRITUAL NAMES. Members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness receive names of Lord Kṛṣṇa or His great devotees, combined with *dāsa* (*dāśī* for women), meaning "servant." For instance, the name *Kṛṣṇa dāsa* means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

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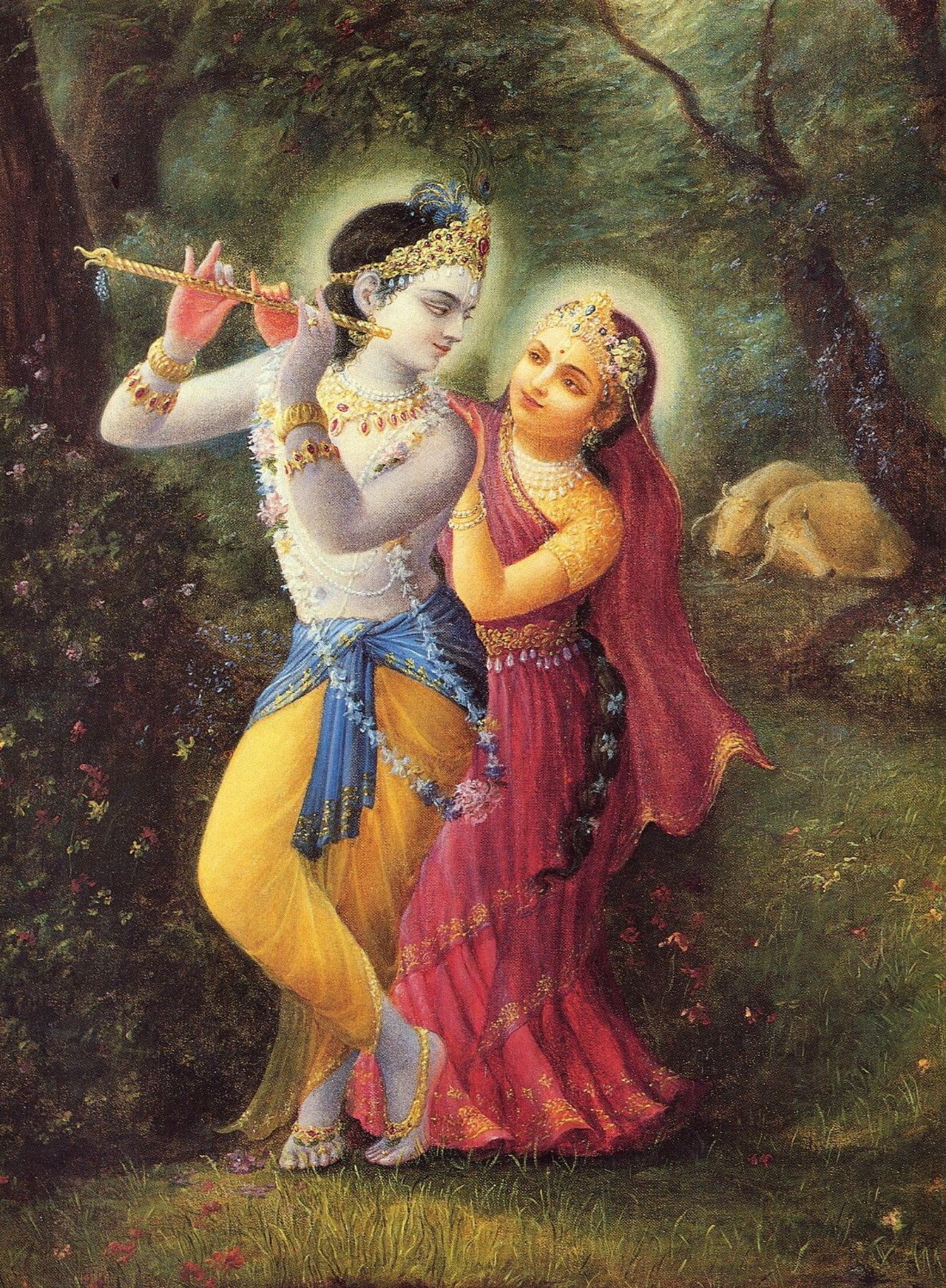
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COVER: Although Lord Kṛṣṇa is the original person and the oldest of all, He is devoted in the fresh bloom of youth, enjoying affectionate dealings with His devotees, whom He attracts with His unparalleled beauty and enchanting personality. In His spiritual abode, Goloka Vṛndāvana, He is served and adored not only by His friends and relatives but also by the cows, calves, and other animals, and even by the plants. Anyone who follows the example of the residents of Vṛndāvana will attain the perfection of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and one day join Kṛṣṇa in His eternal pastimes. (Painting: Dhruva Mahārāja dāsa)



MADANA- MOHANA

Supreme Enchanter Of the Soul

Cupid's arrows can no longer pierce our hearts
when we become attracted to Kṛṣṇa.

A lecture by
HIS DIVINE GRACE

A. C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA

Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

In this material world everyone is attracted by sex. This is a fact. As the *Srīmad-Bhāgavatam* says, *yan maithun-ādi-gṛhamedhi-sukhaṁ hi tuccham*: "The happiness—the so-called happiness—of household life begins from *maithuna*, or sexual intercourse."

Generally, a man marries to satisfy sex desire. Then he begets children. Then, when the children are grown up, the daughter marries a boy and the son marries a girl for the same purpose: sex. Then, grandchildren.

In this way, material happiness expands as *śry-aiśvarya-prajepsavaḥ*. *Śrī* means "beauty," *aiśvarya* means "wealth," and *prajā* means "children." People think they are successful if they have a beautiful wife, a good bank balance, and good sons, daughters, daughters-in-law, and so on. If one's family consists of beautiful women and riches and many children, one is supposed to be a most successful man.

What is this success? The *sāstra* [scripture] says this success is simply an expansion of sexual intercourse. That's all. We

may polish it in different ways, but this same sex happiness is also there in the hogs. The hogs eat the whole day, here and there—"Where is stool? Where is stool?"—and then have sex without any discrimination. The hog does not discriminate whether he has sex with his mother, sister, or daughter.

So, the *sāstra* says we are engaged in this material world only for sex. In other words, we are victims of Cupid. Cupid, or Madana, is the god of sex. Unless one is induced by Madana, one cannot be engrossed in sex life. And one of Kṛṣṇa's names is Madana-mohana, "He who vanquishes Cupid." In other words, one who is attracted to Kṛṣṇa will forget the pleasure derived from sex. This is the test of advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Another meaning of *madana* is "to intoxicate or madden." Everyone is maddened by the force of sex desire. The *Srīmad-Bhāgavatam* says, *puṁsaḥ striyā mithunī-bhāvam etaṁ tayor mitho hṛdaya-granthim āhuḥ*: "The whole material world is going on because of the attraction between male and female." A man is attracted by a woman, a woman is attracted by a man, and when they are united in sex their attachment for this material world increases more and more. After marriage, the man and woman seek a nice home and a job or

some land for farming, because they have to earn money to get food and other things. Then come *suta* (children), *āpta* (friends and relatives), and *vittaiḥ* (wealth). In this way the attraction for the material world becomes tighter and tighter. And it all begins with our attraction for *madana*, the pleasure of sex.

But our business is not to be attracted by the glimmer of this material world; our business is to be attracted by Kṛṣṇa. And when we become attracted by the beauty of Kṛṣṇa, we will lose our attraction for the false beauty of this material world. As Śrī Yāmuna-cārya says,

*yad-avadhi mama cetah kṛṣṇa-pādāravinde
nava-nava-rasa-dhāmany udyataṁ rantum āsīt
tad-avadhi bata nārī-saṅgame smaryamāṇe
bhavati mukha-vikāraḥ suṣṭhu niṣṭhivanaṁ ca*

"Since I have been attracted by the beauty of Kṛṣṇa and have begun to serve His lotus feet, I am getting newer and newer pleasure, and as soon as I think of sexual intercourse my mouth immediately turns aside and I spit."

So, Kṛṣṇa is Madana-mohana, the conquerer of Madana, or Cupid. Madana is attracting everyone, but when one is attracted by Kṛṣṇa, Madana is defeated. And as soon as Madana is defeated, we conquer this material world. Otherwise, it

Without a tinge of material lust, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, the Divine Couple, enjoy transcendental pastimes in the spiritual world. One who is attracted to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa will forget the pleasure derived from sex.

is very difficult. As Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* [7.14],

*daivī hy eṣā guṇamayī
mama māyā duratyayā
mām eva ye prapadyante
māyām etaṁ taranti te*

This material world is very difficult to overcome, but if one surrenders unto Kṛṣṇa and catches His lotus feet very strongly — “Kṛṣṇa, save me!” — Kṛṣṇa promises, “Yes, I’ll save you. Don’t worry, I shall save you.” *Kaunteya pratijānīhi na me bhaktaḥ pranaśyati*: “My dear Arjuna, you can declare to the world that I will protect My devotee who has no other desire but to serve Me.”

Unfortunately, people do not know that our only business is to take shelter of the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. We have no other business. Any other business we may do simply entangles us in this material world. The aim of human life is to get out of the clutches of the material world. But, as the *Bhāgavatam* says, *na te viduḥ svārtha-gatim hi viṣṇum*: “People do not know that their ultimate goal in life is to realize Viṣṇu, or Kṛṣṇa.”

So, it is very difficult to turn people to Kṛṣṇa consciousness in this age. Still, Caitanya Mahāprabhu* has ordered us to distribute this knowledge all over the world. So let us try. Even if the people do not take our instruction, that is no disqualification for us. Our only qualification is simply to try our best. *Māyā* [illusion] is very strong. Therefore to take the living entities out of the clutches of *māyā* is not a very easy thing. My Guru Mahārāja had so many temples all over India, and sometimes he would say, “If by selling all these temples I could turn one man to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, my mission would be successful.” He used to say that.

Our purpose is not to construct big, big buildings, although that is sometimes required for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness and for giving shelter to people. But our main business is to turn the faces of the bewildered conditioned souls toward Kṛṣṇa. That is our main purpose. Therefore Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and other Vaiṣṇavas have warned us to be careful about constructing too many big temples, because our attention may be diverted toward material things. In other words, we may become forgetful of Kṛṣṇa.

Of course, ultimately nothing is material. Thinking something is material is simply an illusion. Actually, there is nothing but spirit. How can there be anything material? The Supreme Lord is the Supreme

Spirit, and since everything is coming from Him, what we call the material energy is also coming from Him and is thus ultimately spiritual.

But the difficulty is that in this material world, Kṛṣṇa’s inferior energy, there is the possibility of forgetting Kṛṣṇa. People are engaged in so many activities — we can see this very clearly in the Western countries — and they are inventing so many modern facilities, but the result is that they are forgetting Kṛṣṇa. That is material — this forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa.

Actually, there is nothing except Kṛṣṇa and His energies. As Nārada Muni says, *idaṁ hi viśvaṁ bhagavān ivetarah*: “This world is Kṛṣṇa, Bhagavān.” But to those in

***It’s the dead of night,
and in front of
Haridāsa Ṭhākura
is a beautiful
young girl
proposing to
have sex with him.
But still he’s
steady, chanting
Hare Kṛṣṇa,
Hare Kṛṣṇa . . .***

ignorance it appears different from Bhagavān. For a *mahā-bhāgavata*, a pure devotee, there is no conception of material and spiritual, because he sees Kṛṣṇa everywhere. As soon as he sees anything we call material, he sees it as a transformation of Kṛṣṇa’s energy (*pariṇāma-vāda*). Lord Caitanya gave the following example:

*sthāvara-jaṅgama dekhe, nā dekhe tāra mūrti
sarvatra haya nija iṣṭa-deva-sphūrti*

A pure devotee may see a tree, but he forgets the tree and sees the energy of Kṛṣṇa. And as soon as he sees the energy of Kṛṣṇa, he sees Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, instead of seeing the tree he sees Kṛṣṇa.

Another example is the sun and the sunshine. As soon as you see the sunshine, you can immediately think of the sun. Is that not so? In the morning, as soon as you see the sunshine shining in your window, you can immediately remember the sun. You are confident the sun is there, because you know that without the sun there cannot be any sunshine. Similarly, when-

ever we see something, we should immediately think of Kṛṣṇa with reference to that particular thing, because that thing is a manifestation of Kṛṣṇa’s energy. And because the energy is not different from the energetic, those who have understood Kṛṣṇa along with His energies do not see anything except Kṛṣṇa. Therefore for them there is no material world. To a perfect devotee, everything is spiritual (*sarvaṁ khalv idaṁ brahma*).

So, we have to train our eyes to see Kṛṣṇa everywhere. And this training is devotional service to Kṛṣṇa, which is a process of purification:

*sarvopādhi-vinirmuktam
tat-paratvena nirmalam
hrṣīkeṣa hrṣīkeṣa-
sevanam bhaktir ucyate*

As soon as we are in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, we give up our false designations, and our seeing, touching, smelling, and so on become *nirmala*, or purified, by being engaged in the service of Kṛṣṇa. Then we can immediately see Kṛṣṇa everywhere. As long as our eyes are not purified we cannot see Kṛṣṇa, but as soon as they are purified by the process of devotional service, we will see nothing *but* Kṛṣṇa.

So, Cupid is one of the agents of the illusory, material energy, but if we are perfectly in Kṛṣṇa consciousness Cupid cannot pierce our heart with his arrows. It is not possible. A good example is Haridāsa Ṭhākura. When Haridāsa Ṭhākura was a young man, a nicely dressed young prostitute came to him in the middle of the night and revealed her desire to unite with him. Haridāsa Ṭhākura said, “Yes, please sit down. I shall fulfill your desire, but just let me finish my chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa.” Just see! It’s the dead of night, and in front of Haridāsa Ṭhākura is a beautiful young girl proposing to have sex with him. But still he’s steady, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. But he never finished his chanting, so her plan was unsuccessful.

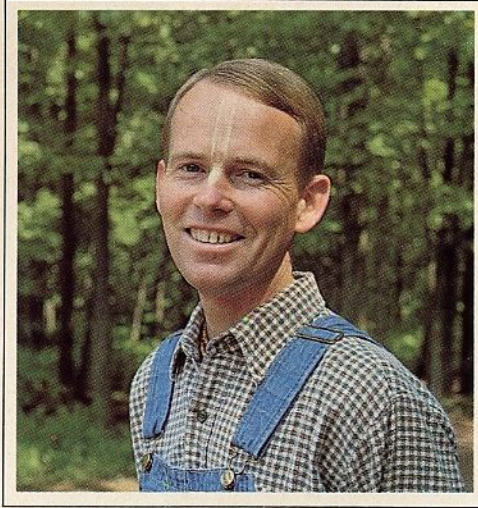
So, Cupid cannot pierce our heart when we are fully absorbed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. There may be thousands of beautiful women before a devotee, but they cannot disturb him. He sees them as energies of Kṛṣṇa. He thinks, “They are Kṛṣṇa’s; they are meant for His enjoyment.”

A devotee’s duty is to try to engage all beautiful women in the service of Kṛṣṇa, not to try to enjoy them. A devotee is not pierced by the arrows of Cupid, because he sees everything in relationship with Kṛṣṇa. That is real renunciation. He does not accept anything for his own sense gratification but engages everything and everyone in the service of Kṛṣṇa. This is the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Thank you very much.

*Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Kṛṣṇa Himself in the role of His own devotee. He appeared in Bengal, India, five hundred years ago to teach love of God through the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

Simple Living, High Thinking



Kṛṣṇa's Bread-and-Butter Economics

A back-to-basics solution to our unemployment crisis, energy shortage, and spiritual bankruptcy.

by SUREŚVARA DĀSA

Being a bread-and-butter man, whenever I used to visit a Hare Kṛṣṇa farm I'd marvel at the farm-fresh bread and butter. Unbelievable. Good enough even to offer to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Now that I've moved to a Hare Kṛṣṇa farm myself, Kṛṣṇa has given me a good look at this simple treasure's source—the land, the cows, and, naturally, Himself.

* * *

At dawn, the sunglow reveals the cows grazing in the upper pasture. A young man on an ox-cart carries the morning's milking down a dirt road to the kitchen.

Inside, a young woman labors over a ten-gallon churning pot. She pulls on the end of a rope wound around a wooden paddle, and the rotating paddle churns the cream. Soon the cream expands and thickens into whipped cream. Her hair loosening, the woman keeps working the rope to and fro. After twenty minutes the whipped cream turns golden, and small buttery lumps begin to appear. The woman strains as the butter thickens (to and fro, *Hare Kṛṣṇa!*), and when finally she hears splashing, she stops. She wipes her brow and sees that the cream has separated into buttermilk and butter.

"These women trying to shape up in health spas—they should churn butter and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa," chides Caraṇāravinda dāsi, a real country cook. "The Lord

would be pleased, and they'd be in better shape than Jane Fonda."

For another twenty-five minutes, Caraṇāravinda squeezes out the remaining buttermilk and shapes the butter into large golden spheres, their rich color a measure of the lush pasture. Filling up a huge bucket are butter balls weighing a pound each. To get a similar stock from the Land O' Lakes Indian princess, you'd have to pay upwards of \$70. But this butter, although costing only pennies a pound, is priceless, because a devotee has churned it especially for Kṛṣṇa.

"Mother Yaśodā* used to graze her cows on grasses that would specially flavor the milk for Kṛṣṇa," says Caraṇāravinda. "Whatever milk was left over she'd turn into yogurt, and whatever yogurt was left she'd churn into butter. The extra butter she'd clarify, and clarified butter, the perfect cooking medium, keeps for years. She used every drop of milk. And so do we."

To get bread for the butter, the devotees harness the bull. Bulls, gelded and trained as oxen, help to plow the wheat fields, sow the seed, and cultivate and harvest the crop. And they even grind the grains. Walking in a circle, four oxen turn a drive-shaft that activates a pulley.

*A great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa who played the part of His mother when the Lord sported in Vṛndāvana village some fifty centuries ago.

And while a man pours wheat kernels into the hopper, the ox-powered driveshaft and pulley turn a grinder that crushes the kernels into flour.

Besides food, cows and bulls provide other valuable gifts. After the cow has died a natural death, the skin makes first-rate shoe leather, the horns can be blown, the tail can become a whisk, and for those who insist on eating meat, the carcass remains. Even the urine of a cow is a time-tested medicine for curing liver diseases, and cow dung contains methane gas, perfect for cooking, lighting, and heating—all the prime energy needs of a simple home. Surplus methane-generated electricity may be sold to the power company (it's legally obliged to buy), and dung minus methane still has all the nutrients necessary to make the grass grow green.

And let's not forget the land. Besides providing grasses and grains for the cows and an immense variety of food for us humans, the land yields minerals, jewels, and flowers. The land gives us fiber for our clothing, raw materials for our shelter, and even herbs for our medicine. Indeed, long before the pharmaceutical industry and its hidden persuaders hooked us on their pills, people knew how to forage healing herbs in their own backyards.

Unfortunately, today even many farmers have forgotten how to be self-sufficient. One dairy farmer I know sells his own

cows' milk for \$1 a gallon while his wife pays \$1.80 for the man-handled, store-bought stuff. Most vegetable farmers trade their harvest for inedible paper. This paper money buys complex machinery that they hope will save them time and bring in more paper money. But greed never pays. In a recent national study of 130 stressful occupations, the job of farm manager ranked twelfth. Farmers are going out of business at the rate of one thousand per week, because the cost of farming has become greater than the profits. And since the industrialization of agriculture, the number of American families who live on farms has shrunk from 30% in 1920 to 2.5% today.

Nevertheless, Secretary of Agriculture John Block claims the industrialization of agriculture has "enabled the vast majority of Americans to engage in other economic activities that have produced the vast array of necessities and consumer goods which make possible the high standard of living Americans enjoy today."

"But have people really become healthier or happier," challenges Hare Kṛṣṇa Governing Body Commissioner Rūpānuga dāsa, "by developing such a high-tech, dependent, urbanized life-style? Has the quality of life really improved? Has it been a fair trade, fresh water for the recycled chemicals and sewage called city water? Or clean air for the manmade gaseous substances now substituting for air? Or fresh fruits, vegetables, and milk for the canned, preserved, frozen, flavorless, watered-down products sold as eatables in the markets?"

"Is it prosperity to have two locks on the door instead of one, special hot-lines to the police, fire, and riot squads, and a gun in every house? Or motorcycles and cars screeching into the morning hours? Or high-school seniors graduating with their brains 'washed' by fifteen thousand hours of television? And ten thousand Russian megatons inspired by American expertise now aimed at Americans' living rooms? The answer must be a resounding NO! if we are to be honest."

Although Lord Kṛṣṇa gave us the land and the cows as our natural economic base, we don't find much talk about them in *Business Week*, *Money*, or *Fortune*. We find, instead, the latest bank rates and high-tech investments, bargains in wines and personal computers, and speculation that gold may soar to \$4,000 an ounce by 1986.

But others, like financial adviser Howard Ruff and survivalist Sally Harrington, are more down to earth. In a world spinning toward political, economic, and ecological disaster, Ruff explains why grains and beans are at least as good an investment as silver and gold.

"You spend hundreds of dollars every year to insure your cars against the accident you fully expect not to have," says Ruff, "and you can't eat the cancelled checks. Your money is wasted unless you're 'lucky' enough to have an accident. Food storage is the insurance you can eat."


Adds Harrington, "Wheat, if kept dry and protected from rodents and insects, will last for two or three thousand years. Some that was found in King Tut's tomb

was still edible, and it even germinated."

Of course, in this world nothing is forever, not even land and cows. That's why the devotee's real wealth is in the heart, where Lord Kṛṣṇa lives. Whether a devotee serves Kṛṣṇa on a farm or in the city, he aims all his activities at reawakening his awareness of Kṛṣṇa and his love for Him. Because both the Lord and the soul are eternal, this Kṛṣṇa consciousness is also eternal and is the devotee's actual wealth.

But even if right now our hearts aren't aware of Kṛṣṇa, He can make us aware through bread and butter. That same tongue which we seek to gratify at all costs, if it tastes simple foods offered to Kṛṣṇa and vibrates His transcendental names, can open up a whole world in which everything—the light of the sun, the fragrance of the earth, and, yes, bread and butter—becomes a blissful occasion for remembering Him and an impetus for returning to His eternal kingdom.

God's personal abode, our real home, is free of any taint of scarcity. "That abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa is full of palaces made of touchstones," writes the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement's founder and spiritual guide, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. "The trees there yield anything one desires, and the cows give unlimited quantities of milk. There the Lord plays His flute, His eyes are like lotus petals, and the color of His body is like that of a beautiful cloud. He is so attractive that He excels thousands of Cupids."

That's Lord Kṛṣṇa, the source of everything, and the real treasure. 

We welcome your letters. Write to
BACK TO GODHEAD
51 West Allens Lane
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19119

LETTERS

I'd like to say your magazine is fantastic. Every page is nectar, from cover to cover. My favorites are Śrīla Prabhupāda's lectures and "Śrīla Prabhupāda Speaks Out," but truly the whole magazine is great. The artwork I feel cannot be matched, nor the photographs, editorials, or anything else. I'd like to go on forever, telling you how much I love Prabhupāda and the teachings he has brought forth. They have changed every aspect of my life for the better.

Robert Gilpin
Farmingville, New York

* * *


I'm hoping you can make something clear to me. As I read Śrīla Prabhupāda's books (especially Lord Caitanya's pastimes), everything seems to whisper, "Just chant, just chant, just chant Hare Kṛṣṇa!" So I'm

feeling great. I can become a devotee at home, within my present situations, job, etc. But then, as I read on and on, I learn that I must be initiated by a spiritual master. So I become discouraged, because if I don't live at a temple how can I have a spiritual master as you do? I feel I can't go back to Godhead unless I actually live at a temple.

Can you please clear up my confusion once and for all so I may get on with my journey back home, back to Kṛṣṇa? Do I have to give up my present situation? Do I have to be initiated and live at a temple in order to become a pure devotee, in order to see Kṛṣṇa face to face and become His eternal servant? Or do I just keep chanting?

Glenda Bird
Desert Hot Springs, California

OUR REPLY: It's true that to reach the perfection of Kṛṣṇa consciousness you have to take shelter of a bona fide spiritual master. This is stated throughout the Vedic literature. In the beginning, before initiation by a spiritual master, you may develop some faith in devotional service to God and in the chanting of His holy names. Then you may associate with devotees and become attracted to the idea of returning to the spiritual world. But if you don't accept initiation from a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa and carefully follow his instructions and his example, you won't be able to make further progress.

This doesn't necessarily mean, however, that you have to give up your job and home and live in a temple. You can observe the principles of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, including accepting a spiritual master and following his orders, while living at home. Living in a temple gives you the undeniable advantage of being in the company of Kṛṣṇa's devotees constantly, but it's not absolutely required. Initiation by a bona fide spiritual master is. 

CHANT!



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

What is a *mantra*? In Sanskrit, *man* means “mind” and *tra* means “freeing.” So a *mantra* is a combination of transcendental sounds that frees our minds from the anxieties of living in the material world.

Ancient India’s Vedic literatures single out one *mantra* as the *mahā* (supreme) *mantra*. The *Kalī-santarāṇa Upaniṣad* explains, “These sixteen words—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare—are especially meant for counteracting the ill effects of the present age of quarrel and anxiety.”

The *Nārada-pañcarātra* adds, “All *mantras*

and all processes for self-realization are compressed into the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*.”

Five centuries ago, while spreading the *mahā-mantra* throughout the Indian subcontinent, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu prayed, “O Supreme Personality of Godhead, in Your name You have invested all Your transcendental energies.”

The name *Kṛṣṇa* means “the all-attractive one,” the name *Rāma* means “the all-pleasing one,” and the name *Hare* is an address to the Lord’s devotional energy. So the *mahā-mantra* means, “O all-attractive, all-pleasing Lord, O energy of the Lord, please engage me in Your devotional service.” Chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* and your life will be sublime.

PHOTO BY BHĀRGAVA DĀSA

THE VEDIC

Transcendental Commenta

ABORTION'S TRIAL— AND ERROR

by Mathureśa dāsa

Despite being a layman in the matter of law, I would like to step forward and apply a few commonsense legal rules of thumb to one of this century's most fiercely debated issues: abortion.

Even most proabortionists would agree that, biologically speaking, life begins at conception, when the sperm mixes with the ovum in one of the fallopian tubes. But the abortion debate hinges on the question not of when *life* begins but of when *human* life begins. When does the fertilized egg, fetus, or child in the womb become a human being, a person entitled to full protection under the law?

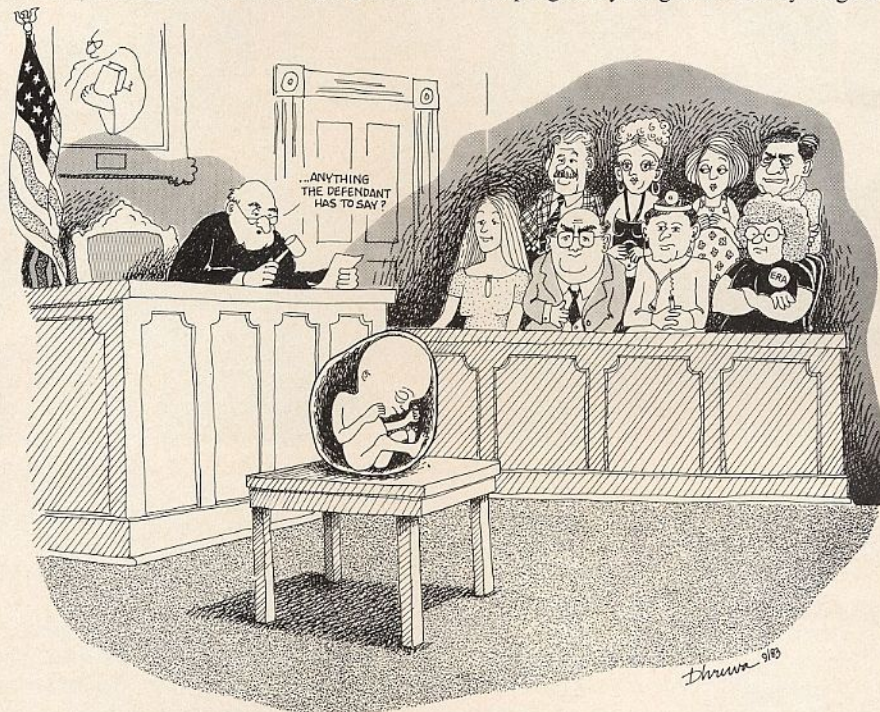
There is little consensus on the answer to this essential question. Scientists, philosophers, and theologians show up on both sides of the debate, some claiming that human life begins at conception, others asserting that it doesn't begin until birth, or even later. Various medical authorities have designated each stage of pregnancy between conception and birth as the beginning of human life. Implantation, when the fertilized egg becomes embedded in the wall of the uterus (about a week after conception); the start of a regular fetal heartbeat (about thirty days after conception); the point at which brainwaves appear on an electroencephalograph (about forty-five days); and viability, the stage at which the fetus can survive outside the womb—all are likely candidates for the start of human life.

Faced with this broad range of conflicting opinions, the U.S. Supreme Court admitted in the 1973 case of *Roe v. Wade* that it was unable "to resolve the difficult question of when [human] life begins." The Court confirmed that if the fetus were indeed a person, his right to life would have to be guaranteed. But who was to answer the crucial question? Justice Blackmun, author of the majority opinion, wrote: "When those trained in the respective disciplines of medicine, philosophy, and theology are unable to arrive at any consensus, the judiciary, at this point in the develop-

ment of man's knowledge, is not in a position to speculate as to the answer."

At this point the lawyer in me begins to stir. Justice Blackmun's statement clearly acknowledges that the fetus might be a person. It would seem to follow that we shouldn't risk destroying it until we find out for sure. Every Perry Mason fan knows that a defendant is innocent until proven guilty "beyond a reasonable doubt." This protects the defendant from unjust punishment, especially if his life is at stake. Although we are not trying to de-

the states to forbid abortion after the sixth month of pregnancy—unless pregnancy threatens the woman's health. The Court failed to define "health," however, thus leaving a gaping loophole in would-be state restrictions. According to the World Health Organization, health is "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, not simply the absence of illness and disease." On the basis of this or other broad definitions, any woman, with the assistance of an obliging doctor, could have her pregnancy diagnosed at any stage as a



cide whether the fetus is innocent or guilty but whether it is human or not, the same principle applies: to protect the fetal "defendant" we have to assume he's a person. If we go ahead and allow abortion, we risk being guilty, as the proliferers say, of murder.

Anyone at all familiar with the abortion issue knows, however, that *Roe v. Wade* was the landmark decision that overturned all existing abortion laws and cleared the way for mass abortions. Even though the Court had indirectly admitted that the fetus might be a person, the decision made abortion legal from the day of conception right up to the day of birth. In a concession to antiabortion forces, the Court allowed

threat to her health.

The *Roe v. Wade* decision was so contradictory that even some leaders of the proabortion movement were a little dismayed. Why hadn't the Court gone ahead and defined human life as beginning at birth? Instead, it had admitted that human life might begin in the womb—and then legalized abortion anyway. The liberalization of abortion laws was welcome, but the logical grounds for the Court's decision were flimsy at best.

On the other side, leaders of the anti-abortion movement, outraged by the decision, sought to nullify it by introducing a constitutional amendment called the

OBSERVER

ary on the Issues of the Day

Helms-Hyde bill. This bill attempted to answer the question the Court had so carefully skirted: "For the purpose of enforcing the obligation of the states under the fourteenth Amendment not to deprive persons of life without due process of law, human life shall be deemed to exist from conception." The bill was defeated in Congress, and *Roe v. Wade* remains the standard for abortion up to the present day.

But critics, President Reagan among them, continue to underline the decision's basic flaw. In a 1981 press conference Reagan said: "Until we make to the best of our ability a determination of when life begins, we've been opting on the basis that 'Well, let's consider they're not alive.' I think that everything in our society calls for opting that they might be alive."

From the Vedic viewpoint, the Court's decision in *Roe v. Wade*, while untenable, was not surprising. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the topmost Vedic literature, explains that when a society considers sensual enjoyment the goal of life, the result is bound to be madness. According to the *Bhāgavatam*, the desire for unrestricted sensual pleasure drives materialistic societies to perform activities that defy even common sense and betray a collective mentality more base than that of the dogs and pigs. To attain the goal of sensual pleasure, a materialistic society can sacrifice everything else, including life itself.

Modern materialistic societies have invested virtually all their time and energy in the pursuit of sensual pleasure, especially sex, and the unborn child is a most serious threat to that investment. Justice Blackmun put it like this: "Maternity, or additional offspring, may force upon a woman a distressful life in the future. Psychological harm may be imminent. Mental and physical health may be taxed by child care. There is also the distress, for all concerned, associated with the unwanted child, and there is the problem of bringing the child into a family already unable, psychologically and otherwise, to care for it."

Justice Blackmun would have been more direct if he'd said that the child in the womb interferes with a carefree life of sexual intercourse without responsibility and consequences. Pregnancy is long and troublesome; birth is usually painful and

expensive. The newborn child requires constant care and attention and creates a financial burden for the parents—or for the government—that may last for twenty years or more. And more often than not the unborn child is a social embarrassment as well: seventy-five percent of the women who have abortions are unmarried; sixty-six percent are between fifteen and twenty-four years old.

Faced with this threat to its considerable investment in sexual enjoyment, a materialistic society arranges to eliminate the child before he leaves the womb. When a society is caught in the passionate grip of sexual attraction, its decision to sanction abortion doesn't rest ultimately on philosophical, theological, or scientific considerations. No, abortion is just plain good business. In a society suffering from madness, even the highest judicial body may either ignore the fact that abortion could be murder, or just not care.

Here again it doesn't take a lawyer to expose a flagrant violation of a very basic principle of justice. From merely reading the morning papers, one can learn to what lengths the American judiciary will go to select an unprejudiced jury. This is especially true when the defendant is both well known and disliked. John W. Hinckley, for example, was so infamous that the court had to devote an extraordinary amount of time to finding impartial jurors. Many attorneys believe trials are frequently won or lost during jury selection.

And yet, in the trial of perhaps the best known and most disliked defendant of all—the unwanted fetus—no one has tried to find an impartial jury. Why has the fetal defendant been judged nonhuman despite strong evidence to the contrary? Because the "jury"—in this case, a society insanely addicted to sex—is strongly biased against him. It has everything to gain by judging the child nonhuman, everything to lose if he's judged human.

To set the abortion issue straight, therefore, we need to select an impartial jury—a group of men and women to whom the unborn child is not a threat. The jurors must be persons who have the highest reverence for human life, who feel that although the mother's physical and mental health may be strained by bearing and

raising offspring, these hardships alone are no justification for destroying the child in the womb. In other words, an impartial jury must consist of men and women who, understanding that the highest goal of human life is self-realization, have permanently set aside the maddening, piggish life of sense enjoyment.

OUT OF THE KOREAN JETLINER TRAGEDY: A PEACE FORMULA

by Satyarāja dāsa

During a family get-together at my brother's house last September, the topic of discussion was the Korean jetliner downed by the Soviets on August 31. Although the tragedy is now history, the repercussions continue. President Reagan's comments left little doubt that future dealings between the United States and the Soviet Union would be more strained than ever. Said Reagan: "What can be the scope of legitimate mutual discourse with a state whose values permit such atrocities?"

Certainly negotiations for new arms agreements will be impeded. Fresh talks on cultural exchange and consular agreements, which had been regarded as a sign of warming relations between the superpowers, will be held up. And prospects for a Reagan-Andropov summit next spring have dwindled. To quote former White House National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, "How will it be possible for Reagan to sit down at the table with a man responsible for the deaths of thirty or so Americans?"

As I heard these words coming from my brother's TV, I pictured Reagan sitting at a table with Andropov and contrasted this with my own experience a few minutes earlier, when I had been sitting at the dinner table with my family. There had been disagreements, to be sure, but like most families we were always forgiving and for the most part downright warm and loving.

I concluded that if everyone were to acknowledge God as the father of all living entities, we would all sit peacefully

(continued on page 30)

From “THE FORCE” to the SUPREME PERSON

Penetrating the clouds of mystery
surrounding the personhood of God.

by MANDALEŚVARA DĀSA

Is God a person who lives far away in His own spiritual land? Or is He very near, residing in the hearts of everyone? Or is He just plain everything?

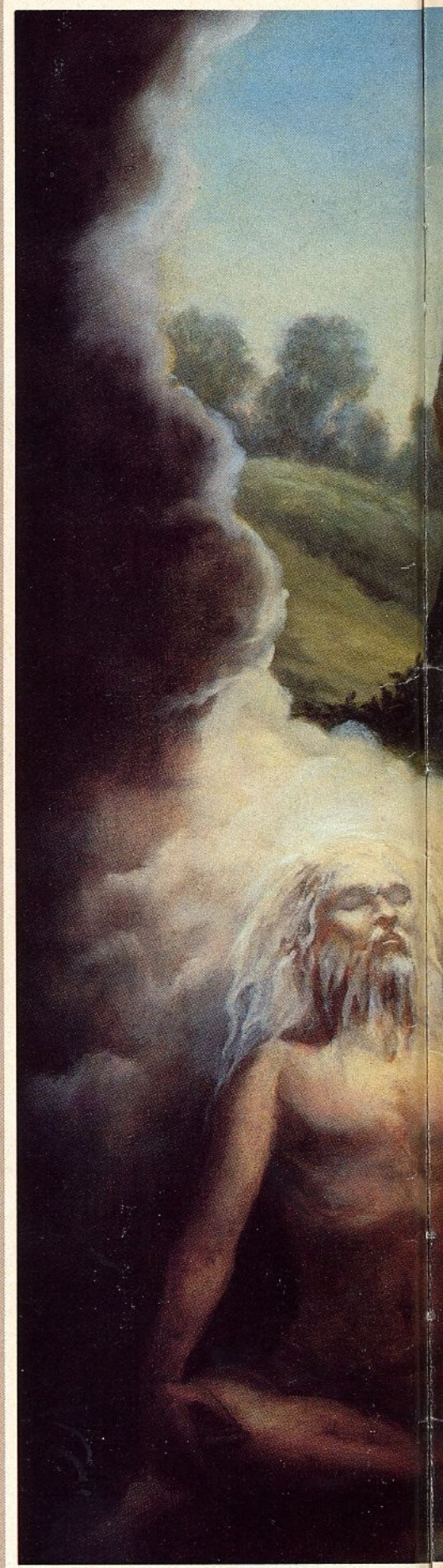
What would you say to these questions? Or, to put it another way, what do you think of when you think of God?

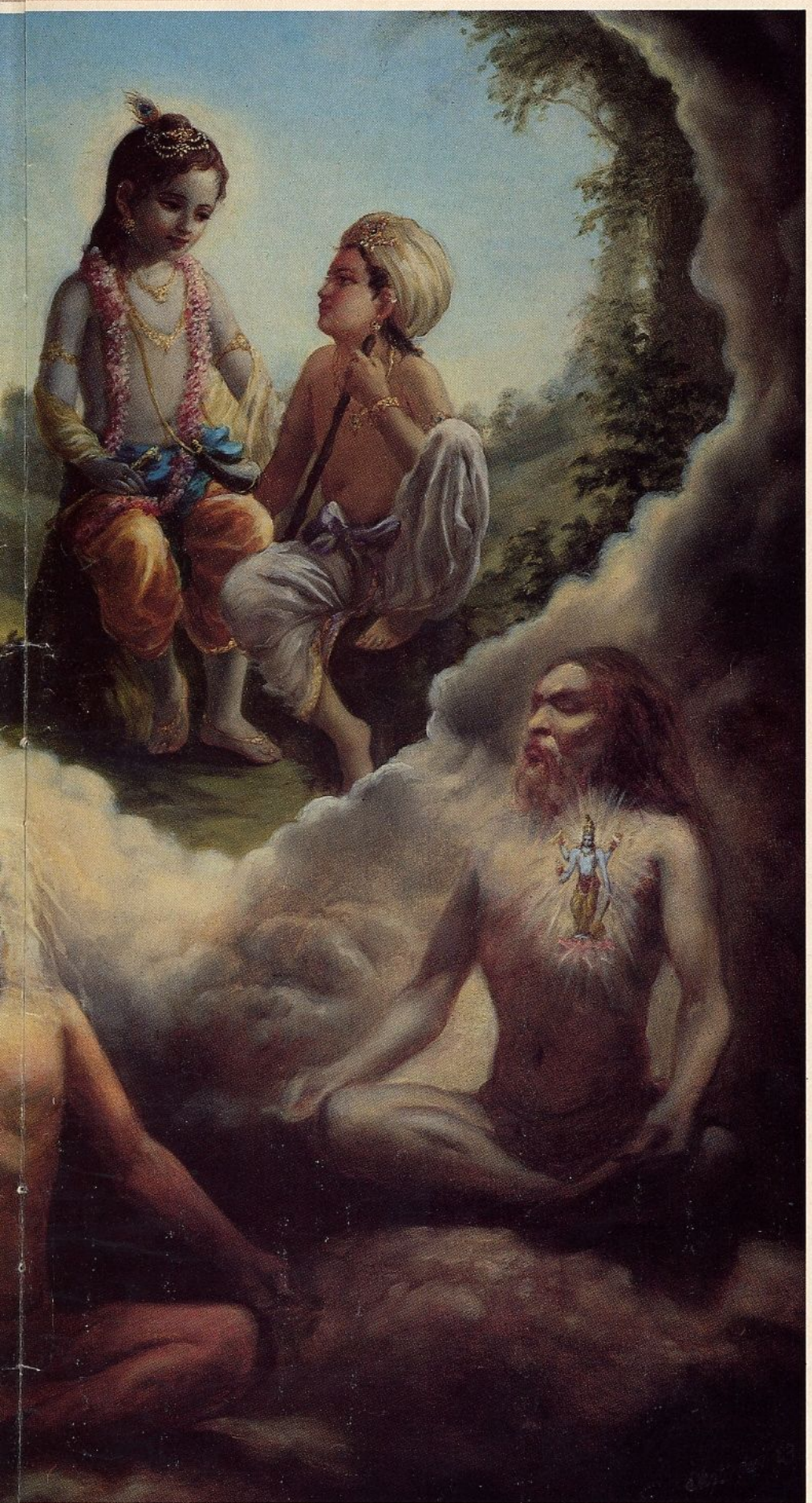
You're not alone if you find these questions hard to answer. Most people have only vague notions of what God might be like. People I've asked often say that while they think of God as having certain personal characteristics, such as beauty, power, and wisdom, they also think He must be everything or be within everything, like an all-pervasive energy—"The Force." This is a revealing disparity, because it indicates that while many people believe God is a person, they realize that thinking of Him as a person in the strictest and most literal sense would limit Him. They're afraid they might end up with an anthropomorphic conception of God, a "God" who is subject to all (or at least some of) the limitations and imperfections of ordinary persons.

In Christianity, for example, we have descriptions of God as Father—certainly a personal epithet. But what does our father who art in heaven look like? On the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel there's Michelangelo's painting of God as an old man creating Adam, who, by the way, looks healthier and more handsome than God.

So as I was saying, most educated people don't like to think too strictly of God as a person. Unintelligent, simple folk may do that, or an artist, in his fertile imagination, may fancy some personal form of God. But sophisticated worshipers, priests, and theologians don't like to take that phrase "God the father" too literally; they'd like to avoid the stigma of being considered aboriginal.

There was a time in my own life also when my conceptions of God as a person proved inadequate. Back in 1966, during my sophomore year of college, I took my first philosophy course, Introduction to Philosophy. From that point I began to reexamine all I had been taught, and my ideas of God and religion quickly began to change. I *wanted* like anything for God to be everywhere, in everything and every situation, because at every turn I was beset with ugly reality. Time was a relentless destroyer—seasons changed, leaves fell, flowers faded, memory failed, dust accumulated, and true love proved false. The rust of time showed on every building, on every creature, and corroded every philosophy and art. It hung in the air and entered the blood through the lungs. Nothing endured, except . . . *I* endured. I had to. How could *I* be destroyed? I wanted to *live*, to exist through the fall, through the winter, and to again behold the spring, on and on eternally. The earth would die, the sun would burn out, certainly my body





PAINTING BY DHRTI-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

would disintegrate, but *I* would endure. I was eternal.

And the spiritual essence I intuited within all transient phenomena was also eternal. And that essence was also I. The sense of “I,” however, was illusory, I concluded, a temporary phenomenon of the temporary, ever-fluctuating, rusting world around me, a world I had come to regard as illusion. From my readings and speculations I concluded that I *existed*, but not as a unique, individual entity. In reading Śaṅkara’s *Crest Jewel of Discrimination*, I came across the Sanskrit phrase *tat tvam asi*: “You are that.” My reading convinced me that by meditation and study “I” was to break out of the subject-object dichotomy, out of the illusion of selfhood and ego, and merge into the all-pervading, eternal, spiritual reality that was the only true existence and the only true identity. All else was illusion.

My situation wasn’t unusual—to realize that the casual understanding of God that I’d grown up with was superficial, sentimental, and philosophically weak. I was trying to increase my awareness of God. I wanted a Theology, a Metaphysics, a *Weltanschauung* that I could believe in, not just a religious sentiment that would crumble in the crucible of academic scrutiny.

So in my own unformalized way I came up with a layman’s version of what the Vedic literature refers to as Brahman realization. This is the first of three classically discussed levels of God realization, each level more clear and accurate than the former. Perhaps I can best explain this with an analogy.

I used to live in Los Angeles, and on a clear day, usually just after a heavy rain, I could see in the distance, just beyond the city, the San Gabriel Mountains. But usually they looked hazy and nondescript, appearing more like clouds or aberrations in the atmosphere. Then one Sunday I took my wife and three-year-old son on a picnic to Mt. Wilson. We got into the car and started driving, and soon we could see the mountains quite clearly. Within another fifteen minutes or so, we were actually driving along the Angeles Crest Highway, seeing the homes, ranches, and little cross-road villages. The San Gabriel Mountains were no longer a distant, nondescript presence on the horizon but a tangible reality,

The three stages of God realization. By austerity and meditation, we may come to realize God as Brahman—the all-pervasive, self-luminous Oneness. A further realization is God as Paramātmā, the four-armed Supersoul within the heart. But the highest understanding of God—which includes Brahman and Paramātmā realizations—is as Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Person. Only by pure devotion can we realize Him, and when we do we can enter into His eternal loving pastimes in the spiritual world.

full of life and activity. People lived there and worked there. We hiked along a footpath, climbing over boulders, discovering pockets of snow, and experiencing the unusual vegetation. We even visited the Mt. Wilson Observatory. Things we had previously only been able to speculate about we were now able to see firsthand.

So in this analogy, my sophomoric version of God as an all-pervasive, eternal spiritual existence is like my hazy view of the San Gabriel Mountains through twenty miles of smog. The mountains appeared as a nondescript presence on the horizon. The second level of God realization (technically known as Paramātmā realization) is like a closer, clearer look at the mountains. But the final level (Bhagavān realization) is like a picnic, a hiking trip, and a tour of the Mt. Wilson Observatory all in one. I've already discussed the first level, now to understand the second level consider the following scenario. . . .

High in the Himalayas a skinny, wizened *yogī* of indecipherable age sits cross-legged, his eyes half-closed in meditation. His diet is simple, light, and highly regulated. He has long ago given up all touch with civilization, and his mind is peaceful. No hankering to return to the comforts and sensory titillations of the city disturbs him. He is completely free from sexual interests. He has no family affection to distract him, no financial cares or responsibilities. He has no affection for the country of his birth, so he is without patriotic sentiments and obligations. He has no worldly ambition and doesn't even care to inform others of his mastery of the *yoga* discipline he has been practicing for so many years. He could, of course, return to civilization and display his prowess. He could become a famous *guru*, exhibit his mystic powers, attract many followers, and perhaps advertise himself as an incarnation of God. But he knows that such materialistic desires are the downfall of the serious student of *yoga*.

What's he doing? He's trying to go beyond the limitations of the hazy, distant, impersonal Brahman conception of the Absolute Truth. He's been trained to meditate within. The process is extremely difficult, requiring unswerving determination, perfect health, patience, great mental power and clarity, and a long life. Now, at long last, he has detached himself from all material conditioning and awareness and, in spiritual joy, beholds within his heart the perfect form of eternity, knowledge, and bliss, the four-armed Viṣṇu-mūrti, Lord Paramātmā.

Our consummate *yogī*, absorbed in meditation on this feature of the Absolute Truth, is more advanced in his understanding than a transcendentalist fixed only in Brahman realization. Whereas all-

pervasive Brahman is the bodily effulgence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Paramātmā is His personal expansion. The Supreme Person is inconceivably powerful, and He has expanded Himself in innumerable forms, each one perfect and complete. This is Paramātmā, the witness, controller, and friend within the heart of every living being. In our San Gabriel Mountains analogy, our Paramātmā-realized *yogī* is like a person who is near enough to the mountains to clearly see them, though not in detail. He has realized the Absolute Truth, but not in fullness. He has yet to realize the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This final realiza-

In seeking an egoless state, I was courting spiritual suicide. I was denying that I had any individual spiritual identity and denying that God could be an individual. In fact, I was trying to usurp His position—I thought I was God!

tion is referred to in the Vedic literature as Bhagavān realization.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead (Bhagavān) is Kṛṣṇa, and one who understands this has surpassed the other, incomplete stages of God realization. Bhagavān realization, however, is not possible by philosophical speculation or yogic meditation. Rather, it is possible only when one receives special favor from the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself, through His representative, the pure devotee.

A pure devotee of God has already attained the stage of Bhagavān realization and has no business within the material world except for executing the mission of the Lord by disseminating the Lord's special favor to others. The Bhagavān-realized person has entered the absolute, spiritual world, where he eternally engages in the transcendental service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. But he descends to this material world to give others the opportunity to come to the

highest level of God realization and thus perfect their lives.

Once a transcendentalist has completed the arduous path of realizing the Absolute Truth as impersonal, all-pervasive Brahman (step one) and as Lord Paramātmā in the heart (step two), then he must surrender to a pure devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, to one who has already fully realized Bhagavān and who is at one with the Absolute Truth, being engaged in His absolute devotional service. Thus, by taking guidance from such a Bhagavān-realized person, a transcendentalist can complete his course and come to the third and final level of God realization.

But what if one is not already advanced in philosophical speculation and yogic meditation? Is he at a disadvantage for realizing the highest truth?

No. The favor of the pure devotee is so powerful that anyone who receives it can enter the spiritual reality of serving the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Bhagavān-realized pure devotee of God serves as a spiritual master, guiding the aspiring transcendentalist toward perfection. He instructs him in the science of the Absolute Truth and acquaints him fully with the transcendental forms, qualities, activities, and names of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, although these are beyond the material world and beyond the purview of the material mind and senses. This is the special power and authority of the pure devotee of the Supreme Person: being of the transcendental world, he can introduce that eternal reality to any sincere, submissive servant, especially by training him in the chanting of the Supreme Lord's transcendental names: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

Because the Bhagavān-realized spiritual master perfectly understands his eternal position as the servant of God, he can perfectly impart this understanding to his student, elevating him to the position of transcendental, loving service. Thus the student learns that although he is one with God, that oneness is in quality, not in quantity. The Lord is great, but he is small. The Lord is master, but he is servant.

Now the whole picture of the Absolute Truth comes into focus, and the lower stages of God realization are seen in their proper perspective—in relation to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Take, for example, those impersonalistic views I formulated back in college. I had a conception of God as all-pervasive spiritual reality, and I asserted that I was spiritual and eternal, persisting through all the changes of this material world. This much was right. But on certain key points I was wrong.

And where I was wrong, boy was I

wrong! In my eagerness to go beyond the ephemeral, I had rejected not only the false ego that I was this material body—born in south Mississippi, son of Mr. and Mrs. George C. Bosworth—but I had also rejected the prospect of real ego. I see now that the little spiritual learning I had then was a dangerous thing. Although to deny my material identity was good, to disregard the possibility of spiritual identity was like throwing out the baby with the bath water. In seeking an egoless state, I was courting spiritual suicide. I was denying that I had any individual spiritual identity and denying that God could be an individual. Thus, in an attempt to make God unlimited, I had restricted Him: “God can’t have a personality, a form, desires.” And not only was I restricting God, but I was trying to usurp His position.

That’s right. You see, with no distinctions between me as spiritual self and God as an individual spiritual person, then all was one and one was all. In other words, I thought I was God! And believe me, the books I was reading were really feeding me that line. While espousing humility and service, these so-called *gurus* were flattering me into thinking I was God. (But where’s the possibility of being humble if you’re thinking you’re the Supreme?)

And as for worship, that was all right, but on a higher level it made no sense. After all, the idea that I was a separate identity from God was supposed to be illusory, so why all the hullabaloo over worship? Worship was for the less intelligent, the anthropomorphists, the aborigines. Of course, worship could be helpful—as long as you kept your wits about you and didn’t fall back into the subject-object dichotomy. Thus my new-found sophistry gradually twisted all my praise of God into the devotionless, even disrespectful utterances of a sycophant. *Tat tvam asi*: “You are that.” Yes, I was it. I was really it.

You might well wonder why the scriptures bother to describe the impersonal feature at all. Why not skip on over to the highest realization, the Supreme Personality of Godhead? Well, there’s a reason. The first lesson in spiritual life is to understand that God and spiritual reality are the exact opposite of material reality. If God is presented to our grossly materialistic mentalities as a person, we’ll think that He’s an ordinary person (anthropomorphism). So the scriptures describe God as being without form and qualities, because He is without *material* form and qualities. But the natural tendency of the neophyte is to do as I did, and throw the baby out with the bath water.

From Vedic literatures, like *Bhagavad-gītā*, and from the teachings of my spiritual master, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, I now under-

stand what true spiritual oneness is. You don’t have to subscribe to the philosophy of anthropomorphism to hold a personal conception of God. Anthropomorphism refers to human beings’ theoretically ascribing personal characteristics to the Supreme. This is only speculative imagination, however, and cannot help one realize the Supreme Personality of Godhead. When one attains the highest stage of God realization, Lord Kṛṣṇa *reveals* Himself as a person; it is not a question of imagining God as having personal attributes, as in the painting by Michelangelo. God creates man in His own image, not vice versa. God’s image is fully spiritual, transcen-

How God manifests Himself everywhere without losing His individual personality is a transcendental mystery one can understand only by engaging in His loving service under the guidance of a Bhagavān-realized spiritual master.

dental, eternal; man’s image is material and temporary.

And you don’t have to succumb to the vain self-flattery and covered blasphemy of impersonalistic philosophy to achieve liberation from illusion and to affirm that God is unlimited and that there is spiritual oneness. As one in the highest stage of God realization understands, God is a unique, individual person, and at the same time He is everything.

Consider the analogy of fire. Although it’s in one spot, say your fireplace, it permeates and pervades the entire room by its energies: heat and light. Heat and light are simultaneously fire and not fire. Similarly, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, although an individual person in His spiritual abode far beyond the material creation, is present everywhere by His energies: matter and spirit. His energies are simultaneously one with Him and different from Him. There is no meaning to the Supreme without His energies and no

meaning to His energies without Him. In fact, nothing exists but the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His energies. A person in the highest stage of God realization, therefore, sees simultaneous spiritual oneness and spiritual diversity.

So, getting back to my original questions, if you said God was everything, you were right—partly. And if you said God was an individual person, you were also partly right. But just how God reconciles these apparent contradictions and manifests Himself everywhere without losing His individual personality is a transcendental mystery that can be understood only by one engaged in the Supreme Lord’s loving service under the guidance of a Bhagavān-realized spiritual master.

Now, if you said that God is living within everyone’s heart, again you were partly right. Lord Kṛṣṇa expands Himself not only by His energies but by His personal transcendental form of Paramātmā as well. Lord Paramātmā, in the heart of every living being, is Kṛṣṇa Himself, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but the Paramātmā-realized *yogī* doesn’t fully realize this. Because he doesn’t have the benefit of devotional service, he may consider himself one with Paramātmā, much as the Brahman-realized person considers himself one with Brahman. Only by the grace of a pure devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead can the Paramātmā-realized *yogī* (or anyone else) enter into the Lord’s transcendental service and understand Him in full.

The Paramātmā, however, is eager to fully reveal Himself—His transcendental names, activities, and forms—to the sincere transcendentalist. Vedic literature, therefore, describes an external manifestation of the Lord in the Heart, and this is the Bhagavān-realized spiritual master. By submissively hearing and serving the spiritual master, one contacts the Paramātmā and becomes qualified to receive His directions and enlightenment from within the heart. Thus one engaged in devotional service under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master has already achieved Paramātmā realization. But without taking guidance from God’s representative from without, one should not expect to receive direct revelation of God from within.

So if you’re serious about God realization, the key is to seek the shelter of a Bhagavān-realized spiritual master. As Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.34), “Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire submissively and render service unto him. The God-realized souls, having seen the Truth, can impart knowledge unto you.” So don’t expect to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead without the guidance of

(continued on page 10)

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

On Service, the Soul, and the Supreme

The following exchange between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and a Jesuit priest took place in May 1975 at the Hare Kṛṣṇa center in Melbourne.

Priest: Do you have what I might call a training in contemplation?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: We worship God in nine ways. One is *smaraṇam*, remembering God's activities. That is contemplation.

Priest: You know, in Christian mysticism we have a process of contemplation that St. Theresa of Avila described in her book *Interior Mansion*. Anybody is able to make an ordinary prayer, but the real mystic prayer is not given to everyone.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Our mystic prayer is to think of God's activities. Anyone can do it.

Priest: Ours is not so much thinking of God's activities as just being open to receive love, getting to that real stillness and quiet in which—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No. Devotional service, or *bhakti-yoga*, is not stillness. Stillness is the neutral stage of love of God, when you stop your material activities.

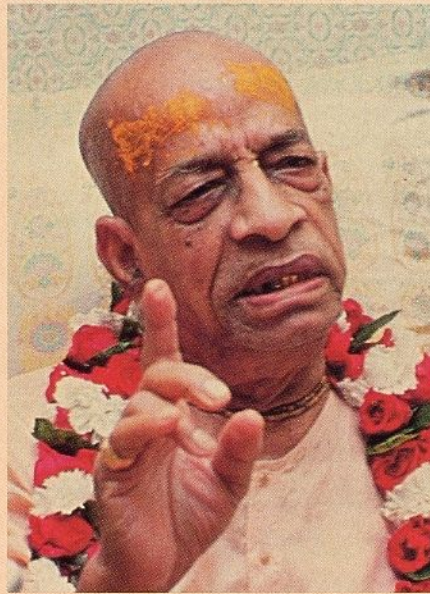
Priest: Could you further describe this neutrality?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: It is simply the stage of realizing that God is great. That is neutrality. But real devotional service begins when one understands, "Because God is so great, I should serve Him. Why am I uselessly rendering service to this world? Why not render service to God?" That stage is called *dāsyam*, or servitude. That is the beginning of *bhakti-yoga*.

Material activity simply entangles us in the repetition of birth and death. This is called *pravṛtti-mārga*, "activity for sense enjoyment." Everyone is busy working for sense enjoyment. The tiger is busy. The hog is busy. The dog is busy. And if a man also becomes busy for sense enjoyment like the tigers and hogs and dogs, then in his next life he may become one of those species of life.

Priest: When one reaches a higher stage of activity, when he really loves all mankind—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is a concoction—mental speculation. Why should you love only mankind? Why not love the



tigers, the dogs, and all other species of life?

Priest: Because human beings are my brothers and sisters.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But the tigers and dogs are also your brothers and sisters, because you all have a common father—God. Lord Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* [5.18],

*vidyā-vinaya-sampanne
brāhmaṇe gavi hastini
suṇi caiva śvapāke ca
pañḍitāḥ sama-darśināḥ*

Priest: What does that mean?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That a truly learned man sees every living being with equal vision. In other words, he doesn't make any spiritual distinction between you and a dog. You have a soul that is covered by a human body, and a dog has a soul covered by a dog's body. But both of you are souls—part and parcel of God.

Priest: Would you say that souls are of different values?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, all souls are of the same value.

Priest: That I find hard to accept, because, as I understand it, the soul of man is immortal but the soul of an animal is not. An animal's "soul" is not really a soul at all but a principle of life, something Aristotle called a *psyche*. Therefore, man has higher value than the animals.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, spiritually they are of equal value, although materially their bodies may be of different gradations. It is just like the different gradations of motorcars. A man sitting in a Rolls Royce thinks he is very important, and a man sitting in a Ford or Chevrolet thinks he is poor. But as men both of them are equal. Similarly, the body of a human being and the body of a dog are just different machines, but the souls are of the same quality—part and parcel of the Supreme Soul, Kṛṣṇa.

Priest: That is hard to understand—that my soul and your soul are part of the Supreme Soul—because the Supreme Soul is infinite and we are finite. Therefore we cannot, added up together, make God.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, I don't say that. We are finite, and God is infinite. If all souls were combined together, they would still be finite, not infinite. Ninety billion zeroes cannot make one. So, I don't say that combined together we shall be equal to God. But the *quality* of God is there in all souls. God is like the vast ocean, and we are like drops of ocean water. The drops contain the same chemicals as the vast ocean, but in minute degree.

Priest: So we have God's qualities in imitation.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Not imitation. Actually, all souls *do* have God's qualities, just as a particle of gold has the same qualities as the gold in the mine. A small fragment of gold is certainly gold, but it is not equal to all the gold in the gold mine. So our philosophy is *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*, "the inconceivable simultaneous oneness and difference of God and His energies." In other words, we are one with God in quality but different from Him in quantity.

God has creative power, and we also have creative power. But God has created millions of planets that float in space, and we have created the 747 that floats in the air. Yet we want to take more credit.

Priest: That is the sin of pride.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, that is false pride. Modern scientists are taking false pride in their accomplishments and saying there is no need of God—"There is no God. We can do everything." This is their foolishness.

ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the “cream of the Vedic literatures” of ancient India. Five thousand years ago the great sage Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa composed this *purāṇa*, or history, to explain the essence of spiritual knowledge. The original Sanskrit text is presented here with transliteration, word meanings, translation, and purports by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Third Canto: “The Status Quo”

CHAPTER TWO

Remembrance of Lord Kṛṣṇa

In this installment of our continuing presentation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Lord Kṛṣṇa's intimate associate Uddhava tells the great devotee Vidura about His childhood pastimes—humanlike activities in which the Lord brought welfare to the earth by annihilating demons and delighting His devotees in many ways.

TEXT 24

मन्येऽसुरान् भागवतांस्त्र्यधीशे
संरम्भमार्गाभिनिविष्टचित्तान् ।
ये संयुगेऽचक्षत तार्क्ष्यपुत्र-
मंसे सुनाभायुग्रमापतन्तम् ॥२४॥

manye 'surān bhāgavatāms tryadhīše
samrambha-mārgābhiniviṣṭa-cittān
ye saṁyuge 'cakṣata tārṣya-putram
aṁse sunābhāyudham āpatantam

manye—I think; *asurān*—the demons; *bhāgavatān*—great devotees; *tri-adhīše*—unto the Lord of the threes; *samrambha*—enmity; *mārga*—by the way of; *abhiniviṣṭa-cittān*—absorbed in thought; *ye*—those; *saṁyuge*—in the fight; *acakṣata*—could see; *tārṣya-putram*—Garuḍa, the carrier of the Lord; *aṁse*—on the shoulder; *sunābha*—the wheel; *āyudham*—one who carries the weapon; *āpatantam*—coming forward.

TRANSLATION

I consider the demons, who are inimical toward the Lord, to be more than the devotees because while fighting with the Lord, absorbed in thoughts of enmity, they are able to see the Lord carried on the shoulder of Garuḍa, the son of Tārṣya [Kāsyapa], and carrying the wheel weapon in His hand.

PURPORT

The *asuras* who fought against the Lord face to face got salvation due to their being killed by the Lord. This salvation of the demons is not due to their being devotees of the Lord; it is because of the Lord's causeless mercy. Anyone who is slightly in touch with the Lord, somehow or other, is greatly benefited, even to the point of salvation, due to the excellence of the Lord. He is so kind that He awards salvation even to His enemies because they come into contact with Him and are indirectly absorbed in Him by their inimical thoughts. Actually, the demons can never be equal to the pure devotees, but Uddhava was thinking in that way because of his feelings of separation. He was thinking that at the last stage of his life he might not be able to see the Lord face to face as did the demons. The fact is that the devotees who are always engaged in the devotional service of the Lord in transcendental love are rewarded many hundreds and thousands of times more than the demons by being elevated to the spiritual planets, where they remain with the Lord in eternal, blissful

existence. The demons and impersonalists are awarded the facility of merging in the *brahmajyoti* effulgence of the Lord, whereas the devotees are admitted into the spiritual planets. For comparison, one can just imagine the difference between floating in space and residing in one of the planets in the sky. The pleasure of the living entities on the planets is greater than that of those who have no body and who merge with the molecules of the sun's rays. The impersonalists, therefore, are no more favored than the enemies of the Lord; rather, they are both on the same level of spiritual salvation.

TEXT 25

वसुदेवस्य देवक्यां जातो भोजेन्द्रबन्धने ।
चिकीर्षुर्भगवानस्याः शमजेनाभियाचितः ॥२५॥

vasudevasya devakyām
jāto bhojendra-bandhane
cikīrṣur bhagavān asyāḥ
śam ajenābhīyācītaḥ

vasudevasya—of the wife of Vasudeva; *devakyām*—in the womb of Devakī; *jātaḥ*—born of; *bhoja-indra*—of the King of the Bhojas; *bandhane*—in the prison house; *cikīrṣuḥ*—for doing; *bhagavān*—the Personality of Godhead; *asyāḥ*—of the earth; *śam*—welfare; *ajena*—by Brahmā; *abhīyācītaḥ*—being prayed for.

TRANSLATION

The Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, being prayed to by Brahmā to bring welfare to the earth, was begotten by Vasudeva in the womb of his wife Devakī in the prison of the King of Bhoja.

PURPORT

Although there is no difference between the Lord's pastimes of appearance and disappearance, the devotees of the Lord do not generally discuss the subject matter of His disappearance. Vidura inquired indirectly from Uddhava about the incident of the Lord's disappearance by asking him to relate *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, or topics on the history of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Thus Uddhava began the topics from the very beginning of His appearance as the son of Vasudeva and Devakī in the prison of Kāṁsa, the King of the Bhojas, at Mathurā. The Lord has no business in this world, but when He is so requested by devotees like Brahmā, He descends on the earth for the welfare of the entire universe. This is stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.8): *paritrāṇāya sādḥūnām vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām/ dharma-saṁsthāpanārthāya sambhavāmi yuge yuge*.

TEXT 26

ततो नन्दव्रजमितः पित्रा कंसद्विविभ्यता ।
एकादश समास्तत्र गूढाचिः सवलोजसत् ॥२६॥

tato nanda-vrajam itaḥ
pitṛā kamsād vibibhyata
ekādaśa samās tatra
gūdhāciḥ sa-balo 'vasat

tataḥ—thereafter; *nanda-vrajam*—cow pastures of Nanda Mahārāja; *itah*—being brought up; *pitṛā*—by His father; *kāmsāt*—from Kāṁsa; *vibhīyatā*—being afraid of; *ekādāsa*—eleven; *samāh*—years; *tatra*—therein; *gūḍha-arcīḥ*—covered fire; *sa-balaḥ*—with Baladeva; *avasat*—resided.

TRANSLATION

Thereafter, His father, being afraid of Kāṁsa, brought Him to the cow pastures of Mahārāja Nanda, and there He lived for eleven years like a covered flame with His elder brother, Baladeva.

PURPORT

There was no necessity of the Lord's being dispatched to the house of Nanda Mahārāja out of fear of Kāṁsa's determination to kill Him as soon as He appeared. It is the business of the *asuras* to try to kill the Supreme Personality of Godhead or to prove by all means that there is no God or that Kṛṣṇa is an ordinary human being and not God. Lord Kṛṣṇa is not affected by such determination of men of Kāṁsa's class, but in order to play the role of a child He agreed to be carried by His father to the cow pastures of Nanda Mahārāja because Vasudeva was afraid of Kāṁsa. Nanda Mahārāja was due to receive Him as his child, and Yaśodāmayī was also to enjoy the childhood pastimes of the Lord, and therefore to fulfill everyone's desire, He was carried from Mathurā to Vṛndāvana just after His appearance in the prison house of Kāṁsa. He lived there for eleven years and completed all His fascinating pastimes of childhood, boyhood and adolescence with His elder brother, Lord Baladeva, His first expansion. Vasudeva's thought of protecting Kṛṣṇa from the wrath of Kāṁsa is part of a transcendental relationship. The Lord enjoys more when someone takes Him as his subordinate son who needs the protection of a father than He does when someone accepts Him as the Supreme Lord. He is the father of everyone, and He protects everyone, but when His devotee takes it for granted that the Lord is to be protected by the devotee's care, it is a transcendental joy for the Lord. Thus when Vasudeva, out of fear of Kāṁsa, carried Him to Vṛndāvana, the Lord enjoyed it; otherwise, He had no fear from Kāṁsa or anyone else.

TEXT 27

परीतो वत्सपैर्वत्सांश्चारयन् व्यहरद्विभुः ।
यमुनोपवने कूजद्विजसंकुलिताङ्घ्रिपे ॥२७॥

parīto vatsapair vatsāṁś
cārayan vyaharad vibhuḥ
yamunopavane kūja-
dvija-saṅkulitāṅghripe

parītaḥ—surrounded by; *vatsapaiḥ*—cowherd boys; *vatsān*—calves; *cārayan*—herding, tending; *vyaharat*—enjoyed by traveling; *vibhuḥ*—the Almighty; *yamunā*—the Yamunā River; *upavane*—gardens on the shore; *kūjat*—vibrated by the voice; *dvija*—the twice-born birds; *saṅkulīta*—densely situated; *aṅghripe*—in the trees.

TRANSLATION

In His childhood, the Almighty Lord was surrounded by cowherd boys and calves, and thus He traveled on the shore of the Yamunā River, through gardens densely covered with trees and filled with vibrations of chirping birds.

PURPORT

Nanda Mahārāja was a landholder for King Kāṁsa, but because by caste he was a *vaiśya*, a member of the mercantile and agricultural community, he maintained thousands of cows. It is the duty of the *vaiśyas* to give protection to the cows, just as the *kṣatriyas* are to give protection to the human beings. Because the Lord was a child, He was put in charge of the calves with His cowherd boy friends. These cowherd boys were

great *ṛṣis* and *yogīs* in their previous births, and after many such pious births, they gained the association of the Lord and could play with Him on equal terms. Such cowherd boys never cared to know who Kṛṣṇa was, but they played with Him as a most intimate and lovable friend. They were so fond of the Lord that at night they would only think of the next morning when they would be able to meet the Lord and go together to the forests for cowherding.

The forests on the shore of the Yamunā are all beautiful gardens full of trees of mango, jackfruit, apples, guava, oranges, grapes, berries, palmfruit and so many other plants and fragrant flowers. And because the forest was on the bank of the Yamunā, naturally there were ducks, cranes and peacocks on the branches of the trees. All these trees and birds and beasts were pious living entities born in the transcendental abode of Vṛndāvana just to give pleasure to the Lord and His eternal associates, the cowherd boys.

While playing like a small child with His associates, the Lord killed many demons, including Aghāsura, Bakāsura, Pralambāsura and Gardabhāsura. Although He appeared at Vṛndāvana just as a boy, He was actually like the covered flames of a fire. As a small particle of fire can kindle a great fire with fuel, so the Lord killed all these great demons, beginning from His babyhood in the house of Nanda Mahārāja. The land of Vṛndāvana, the Lord's childhood playground, still remains today, and anyone who visits these places enjoys the same transcendental bliss, although the Lord is not physically visible to our imperfect eyes. Lord Caitanya recommended this land of the Lord as identical with the Lord and therefore worshipable by the devotees. This instruction is taken up especially by the followers of Lord Caitanya known as the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas. And because the land is identical with the Lord, devotees like Uddhava and Vidura visited these places five thousand years ago in order to have direct contact with the Lord, visible or not visible. Thousands of devotees of the Lord are still wandering in these sacred places of Vṛndāvana, and all of them are preparing themselves to go back home, back to Godhead.

TEXT 28

कौमारीं दर्शयंश्रेष्ठां प्रेक्षणीयां ब्रजौकसाम् ।
रुदनिव हसन्मुग्धवालसिंहावलोकनः ॥२८॥

kaumārīm darśayaṁś ceṣṭām
prekṣaṇīyāṁ vrajaukasām
rudann iva hasan mugdha-
bāla-siṁhāvalokanaḥ

kaumārīm—just suitable to childhood; *darśayan*—while showing; *ceṣṭām*—activities; *prekṣaṇīyām*—worthy to be seen; *vraja-okasām*—by the inhabitants of the land of Vṛndāvana; *rudan*—crying; *iva*—just like; *hasan*—laughing; *mugdha*—struck with wonder; *bāla-siṁha*—lion cub; *avalokanaḥ*—looking like that.

TRANSLATION

When the Lord displayed His activities just suitable for childhood, He was visible only to the residents of Vṛndāvana. Sometimes He would cry and sometimes laugh, just like a child, and while so doing He would appear like a lion cub.

PURPORT

If anyone wants to enjoy the childhood pastimes of the Lord, then he has to follow in the footsteps of the residents of Vraja like Nanda, Upananda and other parental inhabitants. A child may insist on having something and cry like anything to get it, disturbing the whole neighborhood, and then immediately after achieving the desired thing, he laughs. Such crying and laughing is enjoyable to the parents and elderly members of the family, so the Lord would simultaneously cry and laugh in this way and merge His devotee-parents in the humor of transcendental

pleasure. These incidents are enjoyable only by the residents of Vraja like Nanda Mahārāja, and not by the impersonalist worshipers of Brahman or Paramātmā. Sometimes when attacked in the forest by demons, Kṛṣṇa would appear struck with wonder, but He looked on them like the cub of a lion and killed them. His childhood companions would also be struck with wonder, and when they came back home they would narrate the story to their parents, and everyone would appreciate the qualities of their Kṛṣṇa. Child Kṛṣṇa did not belong only to His parents, Nanda and Yaśodā; He was the son of all the elderly inhabitants of Vṛndāvana and the friend of all contemporary boys and girls. Everyone loved Kṛṣṇa. He was the life and soul of everyone, including the animals, the cows and the calves.

TEXT 29

स एव गोधनं लक्ष्म्या निकेतं सितगोवृषम् ।
चारयन्ननुगान् गोपान् रणद्वेषुररीरमत् ॥२९॥

sa eva go-dhanam lakṣmyā
niketaṁ sīta-go-vṛṣam
cārayann anugān gopān
raṇad-veṣur arīramat

saḥ—He (Lord Kṛṣṇa); eva—certainly; go-dhanam—the treasure of cows; lakṣmyāḥ—by opulence; niketaṁ—reservoir; sīta-go-vṛṣam—beautiful cows and bulls; cārayan—herding; anugān—the followers; gopān—cowherd boys; ranat—blowing; veṣuḥ—flute; arīramat—enlivened.

TRANSLATION

While herding the very beautiful bulls, the Lord, who was the reservoir of all opulence and fortune, used to blow His flute, and thus He enlivened His faithful followers, the cowherd boys.

PURPORT

As He grew to six and seven years old, the Lord was given charge of looking after the cows and bulls in the grazing grounds. He was the son of a well-to-do landholder who owned hundreds and thousands of cows, and according to Vedic economics, one is considered to be a rich man by the strength of his store of grains and cows. With only these two things, cows and grain, humanity can solve its eating problem. Human society needs only sufficient grain and sufficient cows to solve its economic problems. All other things but these two are artificial necessities created by man to kill his valuable life at the human level and waste his time in things which are not needed. Lord Kṛṣṇa, as the teacher of human society, personally showed by His acts that the mercantile community, or the vaiśyas, should herd cows and bulls and thus give protection to the valuable animals. According to smṛti regulation, the cow is the mother and the bull the father of the human being. The cow is the mother because just as one sucks the breast of one's mother, human society takes cow's milk. Similarly, the bull is the father of human society because the father earns for the children just as the bull tills the ground to produce food grains. Human society will kill its spirit of life by killing the father and the mother. It is mentioned herein that the beautiful cows and bulls were of various checkered colors—red, black, green, yellow, ash, etc. And because of their colors and healthy smiling features, the atmosphere was enlivening.

Over and above all, the Lord used to play His celebrated flute. The sound vibrated by His flute would give His friends such transcendental pleasure that they would forget all the talks of the brahmānanda which is so praised by the impersonalists. These cowherd boys, as will be explained by Śukadeva Gosvāmī, were living entities who had accumulated heaps of pious acts and thus were enjoying with the Lord in person and were hearing His transcendental flute. The Brahma-saṁhītā (5.30) confirms the Lord's blowing His transcendental flute.

veṣuḥ kvaṇantam aravinda-dalāyatākṣam
barhāvataṁsam asitāmbuda-sundarāṅgam
kandarpa-koṭi-kamīṇya-viśeṣa-śobham
govindam ādi-puruṣam tam aham bhajāmi

Brahmāji said, "I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who plays on His transcendental flute. His eyes are like lotus flowers, He is decorated with peacock plumes, and His bodily color resembles a fresh black cloud although His bodily features are more beautiful than millions of cupids." These are the special features of the Lord.

TEXT 30

प्रयुक्तान् भोजराजेन मायिनः कामरूपिणः ।
लीलया व्यनुदत्तास्तान् बालः क्रीडनकानिव ॥३०॥

prayuktān bhoja-rājena
māyinaḥ kāma-rūpiṇaḥ
līlayā vyanudat tāms tān
bālah kṛīḍanakān iva

prayuktān—engaged; bhoja-rājena—by King Kaṁsa; māyinaḥ—great wizards; kāma-rūpiṇaḥ—who could assume any form they liked; līlayā—in the course of the pastimes; vyanudat—killed; tān—them; tān—as they came there; bālah—the child; kṛīḍanakān—dolls; iva—like that.

TRANSLATION

The great wizards who were able to assume any form were engaged by the King of Bhoja, Kaṁsa, to kill Kṛṣṇa, but in the course of His pastimes the Lord killed them as easily as a child breaks dolls.

PURPORT

The atheist Kaṁsa wanted to kill Kṛṣṇa just after His birth. He failed to do so, but later on he got information that Kṛṣṇa was living in Vṛndāvana at the house of Nanda Mahārāja. He therefore engaged many wizards who could perform wonderful acts and assume any form they liked. All of them appeared before the child-Lord in various forms, like Agha, Baka, Pūtanā, Śakata, Tṛṇāvarta, Dhenuka and Gardabha, and they tried to kill the Lord at every opportunity. But one after another, all of them were killed by the Lord as if He were only playing with dolls. Children play with toy lions, elephants, boars and many similar dolls, which are broken by the children in the course of their playing with them. Before the Almighty Lord, any powerful living being is just like a toy lion in the hands of a playing child. No one can excel God in any capacity, and therefore no one can be equal to or greater than Him, nor can anyone attain the stage of equality with God by any kind of endeavor. Jñāna, yoga and bhakti are three recognized processes of spiritual realization. The perfection of such processes can lead one to the desired goal of life in spiritual value, but that does not mean that one can attain a perfection equal to the Lord's by such endeavors. The Lord is the Lord at every stage. When He was playing just like a child on the lap of His mother Yaśodāmayī or just like a cowherd boy with His transcendental friends, He continued to remain God, without the slightest diminution of His six opulences. Thus He is always unrivaled.

TEXT 31

विपन्नान् विषपानेन निगृह्य भुजगाधिपम् ।
उत्थाप्यापाययद्वावस्तचोयं प्रकृतिस्थितम् ॥३१॥

vipannān viṣa-pānena
nigṛhya bhujagādhipam
utthāpyāpāyayad gāvast
tat toyam prakṛti-sthitam

vipannān—perplexed in great difficulties; *viṣa-pānena*—by drinking poison; *nigrhya*—subduing; *bhujaga-adhipam*—the chief of the reptiles; *utthāpya*—after coming out; *apāyayat*—caused to drink; *gāvah*—the cows; *tat*—that; *toyam*—water; *prakṛti*—natural; *sthitam*—situated.

TRANSLATION

The inhabitants of Vṛndāvana were perplexed by great difficulties because a certain portion of the Yamunā was poisoned by the chief of the reptiles [Kāliya]. The Lord chastised the snakeking within the water and drove him away, and after coming out of the river, He caused the cows to drink the water and proved that the water was again in its natural state.

TEXT 32

अयाजयद्रोसवेन गोपराजं द्विजोत्तमैः ।
वित्तस्य चोरुभारस्य चिकीर्षन् सद्व्ययं विभुः ॥३२॥

ayājayat go-savena
gopa-rājam dvijottamaih
vittasya coru-bhārasya
cikīrṣan sad-vyayam vibhuḥ

ayājayat—made to perform; *go-savena*—by worship of the cows; *gopa-rājam*—the king of the cowherds; *dvija-uttamaih*—by the learned brāhmaṇas; *vittasya*—of the wealth; *ca*—also; *uru-bhārasya*—great opulence; *cikīrṣan*—desiring to act; *sat-vyayam*—proper utilization; *vibhuḥ*—the great.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, desired to utilize the opulent financial strength of Mahārāja Nanda for worship of the cows, and also He wanted to give a lesson to Indra, the King of heaven. Thus He advised His father to perform worship of *go*, or the pasturing land and the cows, with the help of learned brāhmaṇas.

PURPORT

Since He is the teacher of everyone, the Lord also taught His father, Nanda Mahārāja. Nanda Mahārāja was a well-to-do landholder and owner of many cows, and, as was the custom, he used to perform yearly worship of Indra, the King of heaven, with great opulence. This worship of demigods by the general populace is also advised in the Vedic literature just so people can accept the superior power of the Lord. The demigods are servants of the Lord deputed to look after the management of various activities of universal affairs. Therefore it is advised in the Vedic scriptures that one should perform *yajñas* to appease the demigods. But one who is devoted to the Supreme Lord has no need to appease the demigods. Worship of the demigods by common people is an arrangement for acknowledging the supremacy of the Supreme Lord, but it is not necessary. Such appeasement is generally recommended for material gains only. As we have already discussed in the Second Canto of this literature, one who admits the supremacy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead does not need to worship the secondary demigods. Sometimes, being worshiped and adored by less intelligent living beings, the demigods become puffed up with power and forget the supremacy of the Lord. This happened when Lord Kṛṣṇa was present in the universe, and thus the Lord wanted to give a lesson to the King of heaven, Indra. He therefore asked Mahārāja Nanda to stop the sacrifice offered to Indra and to use the money properly by performing a ceremony worshiping the cows and the pasturing ground on the hill of Govardhana. By this act Lord Kṛṣṇa taught human society, as He has instructed in the *Bhagavad-*

gītā also, that one should worship the Supreme Lord by all acts and by all their results. That will bring about the desired success. The *vaiśyas* are specifically advised to give protection to the cows and their pasturing ground or agricultural land instead of squandering their hard-earned money. That will satisfy the Lord. The perfection of one's occupational duty, whether in the sphere of duty to oneself, one's community or one's nation, is judged by the degree to which the Lord is satisfied.

TEXT 33

वर्षतीन्द्रे व्रजः कोपाद्भ्रममानेऽतिविह्वलः ।
गोत्रलीलातपत्रेण व्रातो भद्रानुग्रहता ॥३३॥

varṣatindre vrajaḥ kopād
bhagnamāne 'tivilhvalaḥ
gotra-līlātapatreṇa
vraṭo bhadrānugrḥṇatā

varṣati—in pouring water; *indre*—by the King of heaven, Indra; *vrajaḥ*—the land of cows (Vṛndāvana); *kopād bhagnamāne*—having been in anger on being insulted; *ati*—highly; *vihvalaḥ*—perturbed; *gotra*—the hill for the cows; *līlā-ātapatreṇa*—by the pastime umbrella; *vraṭaḥ*—were protected; *bhadra*—O sober one; *anugrḥṇatā*—by the merciful Lord.

TRANSLATION

O sober Vidura, King Indra, his honor having been insulted, poured water incessantly on Vṛndāvana, and thus the inhabitants of Vraja, the land of cows, were greatly distressed. But the compassionate Lord Kṛṣṇa saved them from danger with His pastime umbrella, the Govardhana Hill.

TEXT 34

शरच्छशिकरैर्मृष्टं मानयन् रजनीमुखम् ।
गायन् कलपदं रेमे स्त्रीणां मण्डलमण्डनः ॥३४॥

śarac-chāsi-karair mṛṣṭam
mānayan rajanī-mukham
gāyan kala-padam reme
strīṇāṃ maṇḍala-maṇḍanaḥ

śarat—autumn; *śāsi*—of the moon; *karaiḥ*—by the shining; *mṛṣṭam*—brightened; *mānayan*—thinking so; *rajanī-mukham*—the face of the night; *gāyan*—singing; *kala-padam*—pleasing songs; *reme*—enjoyed; *strīṇām*—of the women; *maṇḍala-maṇḍanaḥ*—as the central beauty of the assembly of women.

TRANSLATION

In the third season of the year, the Lord enjoyed as the central beauty of the assembly of women by attracting them with His pleasing songs in an autumn night brightened by moonshine.

PURPORT

Before leaving the land of cows, Vṛndāvana, the Lord pleased His young girl friends, the transcendental *gopīs*, in His *rāsa-līlā* pastimes. Here Uddhava stopped his description of the Lord's activities.

Thus end the Bhaktivedanta purports of the Third Canto, Second Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled "Remembrance of Lord Kṛṣṇa."

(continued in next issue)



Every Town and Village

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

Pope John Paul II Gets Polish Books on Kṛṣṇa



ARTURO MARI / L'ESPRESSO / ROMANO CITTA DEL VATICANO

At the Vatican recently, Pope John Paul II received from Kīrtirāja dāsa Polish editions of Śrīla Prabhupāda's *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* and *Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead*. Said the pontiff: "Thank you very much. They're very beautiful."

Eight-Day Superfestival Held in Italy

Viareggio, Italy—A spectacular eight-day festival celebrated here and at Villa Vṛndāvana, ISKCON's rural center near Florence, combined the third annual Italian Ratha-yātrā Chariot Festival, the installation of Italy's first Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Deities (Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Vrajasundara), and the appearance-day celebration of His Divine Grace Bhagavān dāsa Goswami Gurudeva, an ISKCON spiritual master and Governing Body Commissioner.

With more than one thousand devotees present, it was the largest Hare Kṛṣṇa assembly ever to gather in Europe.

The boulevard Viareggio, after which the city is named, literally means "The Avenue of Kings," and while a crowd of

100,000 watched Lord Jagannātha ("Lord of the Universe"), Śrīmatī Subhadrā, and Lord Balarāma ride in three majestic carts along the parade route, the full meaning of the road's name was realized.

The carts moved slowly and gracefully in what appeared to be an ocean of devotees, flags, and festoons bobbing up and down to the rhythm of the blissful chanting. People left their homes and office workers put aside their duties to catch a glimpse of the deities as they passed by.

In a speech broadcast throughout Italy by radio, Śrīla Gurudeva asked that Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees be given a chance to run the Italian government, which has changed hands forty times since the end of World



In Florence, the Hare Krishna balloon took celebrants aloft for a bird's-eye view of the city.

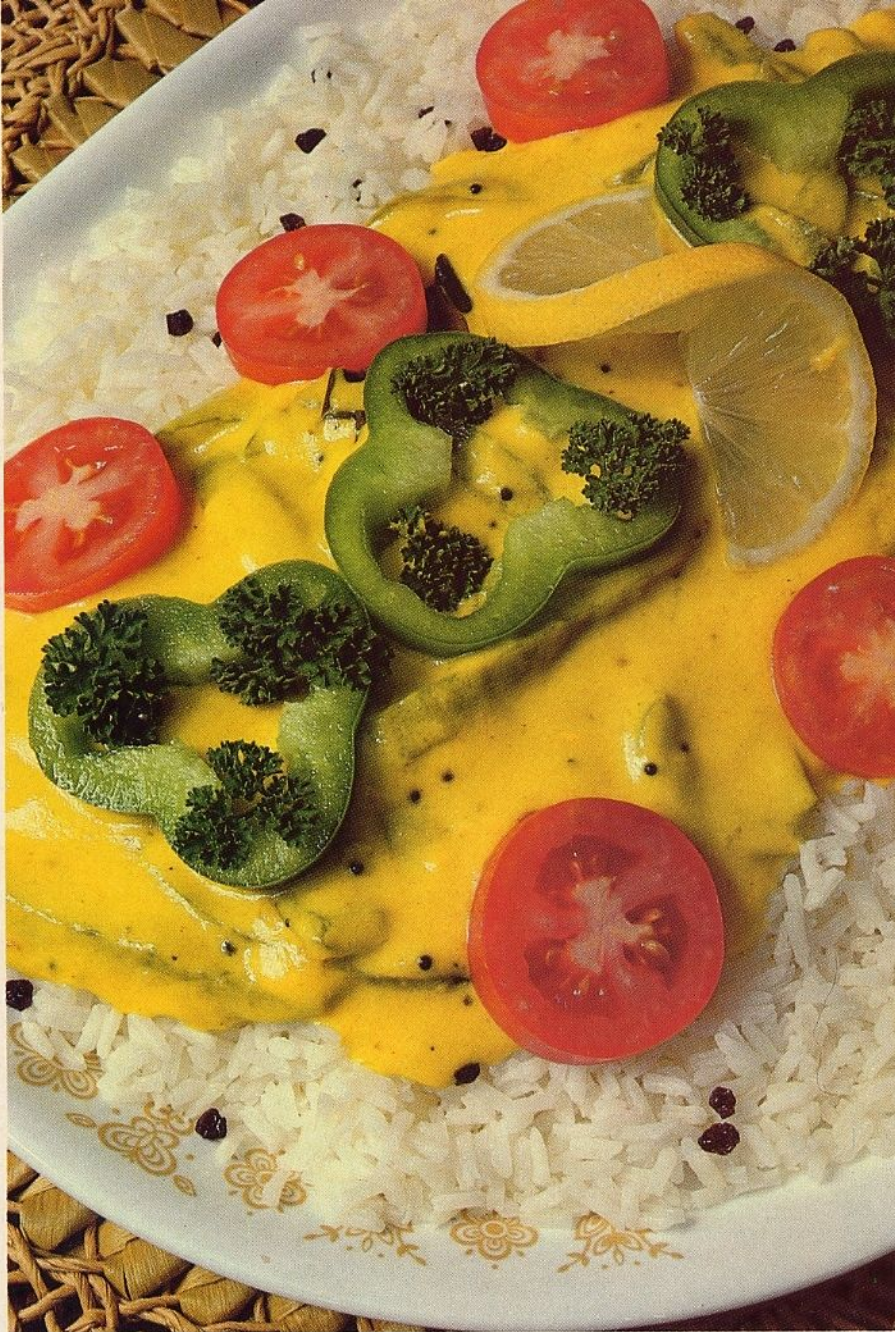
War II. "You've tried all the others," he said. "Why not try this God consciousness movement? Even if you give us only one week, you'll see the difference."

During the day of the Ratha-yātrā festival, at least 100,000 people saw the procession, 10,000 took *prasādam* (food offered to Kṛṣṇa), and devotees passed out more than 200,000 pieces of transcendental literature. The country's top national newspapers and TV stations covered the event.

The next day, the transcendental festivities moved to ISKCON's temple in Florence. Known as Villa Vṛndāvana, the building was once owned by the renowned political theorist Machiavelli.

In a huge tent outside Villa Vṛndāvana, while devotees chanted and danced with overwhelming enthusiasm, Śrīla Gurudeva installed the Deities Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Vrajasundara, bathing Them with yogurt, milk, honey, and fruit juices. After the bathing ceremony devotees carried Their Lordships into Their beautiful new marble temple, designed and built by the world-famous interior designer Matsya-avatāra dāsa (Marco Ferrini), a disciple of Śrīla Gurudeva's.

Śrīla Gurudeva's appearance-day celebration, an initiation ceremony for one hundred and fifty of his new disciples, and a Vedic wedding also highlighted the festivities at Villa Vṛndāvana.



Lord Kṛṣṇa's Cuisine

Healthy, Wealthy, and Wise

Spicy, yogurty *karhi* sauce offered to Lord Kṛṣṇa: complete protein for pennies, and priceless spiritual benefit.

Text and photo by
VIŚĀKHĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

You probably know that protein is an essential substance in your body, but you may not know all the reasons why. It's needed not only for building and repairing tissues but also for synthesizing enzymes that start the body's many chemical reactions, for serving as building blocks for hormones and antibodies, for supplying energy, and for many other things. Various proteins take part in every life process, and some are lost through these processes.

So to maintain our health, we must eat enough protein daily.

How much of what kinds of protein to eat is a question anyone concerned about his health must answer. And because of the wide variety of protein-rich foods, the question can look complicated. While all living bodies—from human beings down to viruses—are built of proteins, these proteins are of innumerable kinds, which are determined by the patterns and ratios

of the amino acids that make them up. Because the proteins in animals are similar to those in humans, animal flesh provides all the amino acids we need in the proper proportions. So animal proteins are generally classified as “complete,” while plant proteins, which have amino acids suitable for plants' needs, are classified as “incomplete.” At first glance, then, what the meat lobby says seems true: “Meat is the best source of complete protein, so you should eat plenty of meat to stay healthy.”

However, when we combine various kinds of vegetarian foods, the amino acids of their incomplete proteins complement each other, and then these incomplete proteins become complete. Nutrition researchers have shown that a daily diet rich in a variety of whole grains, legumes, fruits, vegetables, and dairy products will easily provide enough protein (along with all other essential nutrients). The proof that the researchers are right is that millions of vegetarians the world over easily fulfill their protein needs and enjoy radiant health.

This month we're presenting an excellent vegetarian source of protein: *karhi* sauce. It contains yogurt, a complete protein, and chickpea flour, an incomplete protein that becomes complete in conjunction with yogurt. You can eat *karhi* sauce as an alternative to *dāl* (the bean soup that's a protein staple in Kṛṣṇa's cuisine), and, as with *dāl*, you won't have to worry about ingesting the toxins, pesticides, carcinogenic wastes, and cholesterol-producing fats that meat contains. Yet from *karhi* sauce you'll get complete protein, just as you would from meat.

But getting enough protein and other nutrients isn't the only health reason for eating *karhi* sauce. Once you've offered it to Lord Kṛṣṇa, *karhi* sauce has many properties you can't know about just by reading books on health foods and nutrition.

If we simply keep our bodies healthy, that's good, but incomplete. It's like keeping a birdcage in excellent shape but neglecting to feed the bird inside. What you'll soon have is a beautiful cage—and a very sick bird. Similarly, if we keep our body in tip-top condition but neglect the spirit soul inside, then we're actually in the most unhealthy condition imaginable, because we're doomed to undergo the syndrome of birth, old age, disease, and death, in body after body. So physical health without spiritual health is useless.

There are many ways to become spiritually healthy, and one of the most pleasurable is by eating *kṛṣṇa-prasādam* (food that's been offered to Kṛṣṇa). In this connection, Śrīla Prabhupāda explains, “*Prasādam* means ‘favor.’ One should consider *prasādam* a favor of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is very kind. In this material world we are all very attached to tasting various types of

(Recipes by Yamunā-devī dāsi)

Braised Green Peppers in Creamy Yogurt Gravy (*Bada Mirch Dahi Karhi*)

Preparation time: about 1 hour
Servings: 4 or 5

Ingredients for paste seasoning:

½ tablespoon coriander seeds
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
4 black peppercorns
3 tablespoons dried or fresh powdered coconut
¼ to 1 small hot green chili
½ tablespoon fresh ginger root, peeled and minced fine
6 tablespoons water

Ingredients for the *chaunce* and vegetables:

1 teaspoon black mustard seeds
½ tablespoon split, skinned *urad dāl* (try an Indian grocery)
8 to 10 broken fresh or dried curry (*sweet nim*) leaves
2½ tablespoons ghee (clarified butter) or vegetable oil
2 medium-size sweet green or red peppers

Ingredients for the *karhi* sauce:

2½ cups plain yogurt or thick cultured buttermilk
1½ cups water or whey
3½ tablespoons chickpea flour
1¼ teaspoons salt
1¼ teaspoons turmeric

To prepare the paste seasoning:

Combine the coriander seeds, cumin seeds, black peppercorns, and coconut in a blender and grind to a coarse powder. Add the chilies, ginger, and water; then cover and blend for 3 to 4 minutes, or until the ingredients are reduced to a smooth paste. Set aside.

To prepare the *chaunce*, vegetables, and *karhi* sauce:

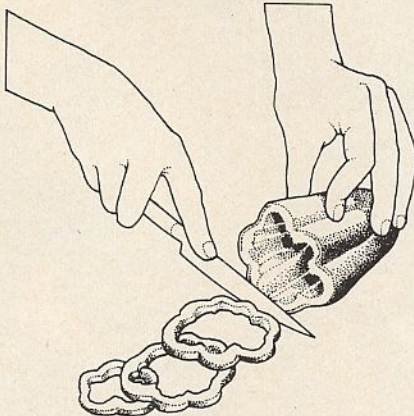
1. Wash, core, and seed the peppers, and then cut them crosswise into thin disks.
2. Sieve the chickpea flour into a 1½-quart mixing bowl. Add a little of the water or whey to make a smooth batter. Pour in the remaining water and the yogurt, salt, turmeric, and

paste seasoning. Then whisk to thoroughly mix all the ingredients.

3. In a 10- to 12-inch frying pan heat the ghee or vegetable oil over a medium-high flame until a drop of water flicked into the pan sputters instantly. Add the black mustard seeds and *urad dāl*, and fry until the seeds pop and sputter. Drop in the sweet *nim* leaves and immediately add the sliced green peppers. Now stir-fry until the vegetables are half tender and slightly brown.

4. Pour the yogurt sauce into the frying pan and, while stirring constantly, allow the mixture to come to a boil. Reduce the flame to medium or medium-low and simmer for 12 to 15 minutes, or until the vegetables are tender and the gravy thick.

5. Remove from the flame, cover with a tight-fitting lid, and keep warm until you're ready to offer the dish to Kṛṣṇa.



Variation:

Follow the above recipe, but omit the green peppers and substitute ¾ pound eggplant cut into ½-inch cubes. Increase the ghee to 3½ tablespoons so you can slightly brown and partially cook the eggplant.

Green Peas in Coconut-Yogurt Gravy (*Mattar Dahi Karhi*)

Preparation time: about 1 hour
Servings: 5 or 6

Ingredients for the paste seasoning:

½ cup (packed tight) dried coconut, either

powdered or ribboned
1½ teaspoons cumin seeds
¼ to 1 small green chili, seeded
½ tablespoon fresh peeled ginger root, minced fine
½ cup water or whey

Ingredients for the *karhi* sauce:

4 tablespoons chickpea flour
1½ cups water or whey
2 cups yogurt or thick cultured buttermilk
1¼ teaspoons salt
1¼ teaspoons turmeric powder
1 cup steamed or boiled peas

Ingredients for the *chaunce*:

2½ tablespoons ghee or vegetable oil
1 teaspoon black mustard seeds
8 to 10 broken fresh or dried curry (*sweet nim*) leaves

To prepare the paste seasoning:

Place the coconut and cumin seeds in a blender, cover, and pulverize to a coarse powder. Add the chili, ginger, and liquid. Then cover and blend until the ingredients are reduced to a smooth paste. Scrape all the paste into a small bowl and set aside.

To prepare the *karhi* sauce:

1. Sieve the chickpea flour into a 1½-quart mixing bowl. Add a little of the water to make a smooth, thick batter. Pour in the remaining water and the yogurt, salt, and turmeric, and churn until smooth.

2. In a 2-quart saucepan, heat the ghee or oil over a medium-high flame until a drop of water flicked into the pan sputters instantly. Drop in the mustard seeds and fry until they sputter and pop. Then add the sweet *nim* leaves and the coconut paste, and fry for about 2 minutes.

3. Pour in the *karhi* sauce and, while stirring frequently, bring to a boil. Reduce the flame and simmer for 5 to 7 minutes.

4. Add the steamed vegetables and simmer until thick. Remove from the flame, cover well, and keep warm until you're ready to offer the dish to Kṛṣṇa.

Variation:

Omit the green peas and add 1 cup of corn kernels or chopped steamed broccoli.

food. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa eats many nice varieties of food and offers the food back to the devotees. Not only are your demands for various tastes satisfied, but by eating *prasādam* you make advancement in spiritual life. Therefore, we should never consider ordinary food to be on an equal level with *prasādam*." So, when we eat *karhi* sauce that's been offered to Lord Kṛṣṇa with love and devotion, we become healthy physically and spiritually. Such a spiritualized dish is actually complete.

Eating *karhi*-sauce *prasādam* will make us not only healthy but also wealthy. First, it's a lot cheaper than meat, especially if you make your own yogurt. So you'll save a lot on your weekly grocery bill if *karhi* sauce

rather than meat is your major source of protein.

But more importantly, you'll become spiritually wealthy, that is, more and more attracted to Kṛṣṇa and everything related to Him. When this attraction increases to the highest pitch, it's called *prema-dhana*, "the treasure of love of God." This love destroys all material miseries and immerses one in an ocean of transcendental bliss, eternally. What could be more valuable than that?

Finally, eating *karhi*-sauce *prasādam* will make us wise. A developed moral sense is one aspect of wisdom, and eating the flesh of slaughtered animals destroys our finer moral sentiments; it's most im-

moral. So by substituting *karhi* sauce for meat as your source of protein, you'll become wise by avoiding the crime of animal slaughter.

But beyond this, you'll attain spiritual wisdom. By eating *kṛṣṇa-prasādam*, we easily and happily become attached to Kṛṣṇa, His devotees, and His devotional service. And when by serving Kṛṣṇa we realize that He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the cause of all causes, we'll be actually wise—spiritually wise. At this point, we'll always chant the holy names of the Lord, serve Him and His devotees, and eat nothing but His *prasādam*. Then our health, wealth, and wisdom will be complete. ❀

The Two Lives

A political activist becomes a mo

by MELVIN

Reprinted with permission from

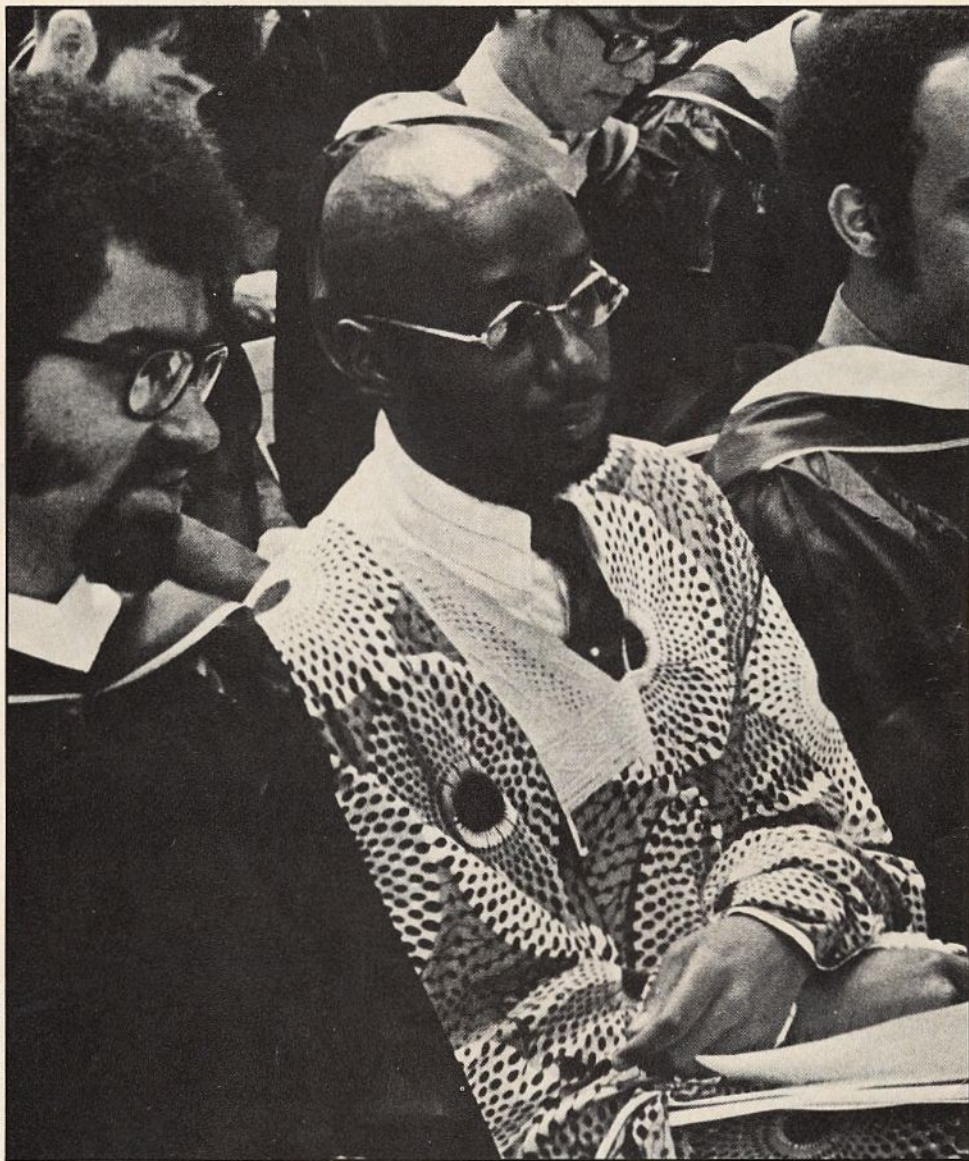
I saw John Favors for the first time in the fall of 1970, at the introductory meeting of Princeton's Association of Black Collegians. As ABC's president, he delivered an impassioned speech on the role of blacks at Princeton. Though only five feet nine inches, he was an imposing figure in his leopard-print dashiki and matching fez-like hat, with walking stick, pipe, bushy afro, and full beard. At that time he called himself Toshombe Abdul, and he spoke with the force and dynamism of Malcolm X.

Favors reminded us that we were products of the black community and argued that blacks were now being admitted to Ivy League universities mainly because of the demonstrations and riots of the '60s. He insisted that those struggles gave us a responsibility to return to the community and help rebuild it. His audience of 200 black students, mostly freshmen, was enthralled by his charismatic delivery and filled McCosh 30 with thunderous applause.

I barely recognized Favors when I ran into him nine years later at a vegetarian restaurant in New York City. His face and scalp were cleanshaven and he was dressed in an orange robe-like garment. He held a cloth pouch in one hand and a long cloth-covered staff in the other. Much to my surprise, John Favors, alias Toshombe Abdul, had become Bhaktitirtha Swami of the Hare Krishna movement. He had set aside the politics of the revolution and adopted the life of a monk in what is formally known as the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON).

My curiosity aroused, I questioned him at length about this metamorphosis. My first impression was of a man who had swung from one tangent to the other with no consistency of purpose, his joining the Hare Krishnas being just the latest in a series of dramatic personality changes. But as our conversation progressed, I realized that this was not the case. There was, in fact, an inner constancy that guided his transition from revolutionary to spiritualist. His was a story of evolution rather than abrupt transformation.

Favors was born in Cleveland, Ohio, in February 1950, the youngest of six children in what he describes as an impoverished but deeply religious family. The combina-



John Favors, 1972

tion prompted him to adopt "a very humanitarian, socialistic posture." As a teen-ager he was active in local politics. He tutored in neighborhood centers, and at the age of 14 he became president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference's midwest student division.

After graduating from Cleveland's East Technical High School, Favors received a scholarship to attend the Hawken Academy

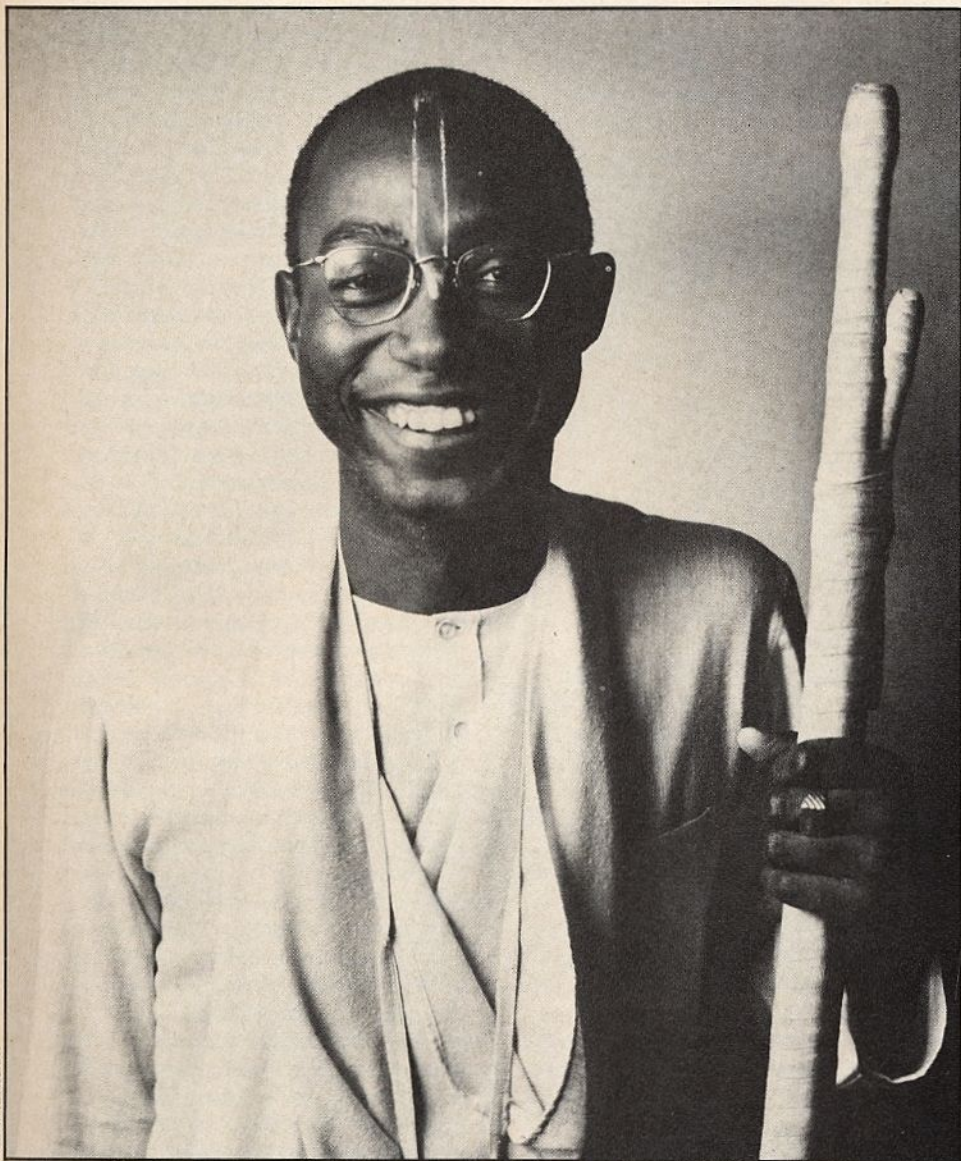
for an additional year of college preparation. By the time he arrived at Princeton in 1968, he had developed an enthusiasm for intellectual inquiry and a desire to improve the material circumstances of his fellow man in general and blacks in particular. "Because I had seen so much poverty," he says, "I was interested in doing something for myself and others."

During the turbulent late '60s and early

of John Favors

nk in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

R. McCRAY
The Princeton Alumni Weekly



Bhaktirirtha Swami, 1983

'70s, Princeton saw its share of civil disobedience. In the spring of 1969, a coalition of students barricaded themselves in the New South building to protest the university's investments in South Africa. A year later students clashed with local police while demonstrating at the Institute for Defense Analysis. In the fall of 1970, black students occupied Firestone Library to press their demand for a Third World

Center. During the early years of the new decade, Stokely Carmichael, Angela Davis, Dick Gregory, and Huey Newton all addressed large audiences at Princeton.

Favors joined the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, the Black Panther Party, and other activist groups. He developed an ideology that stressed his African roots, and he began traveling extensively in black nationalist and socialist

circles in the U.S. and abroad. It was during this time that he adopted the name Toshombe Abdul.

Eventually Favors became disenchanted with political activism, feeling that it was bringing little or no progress. "I traveled to a few other countries and saw how so many revolutionary leaders who had good intentions became exploitative once they got into power. Sometimes they were more exploitative than the previous regime. I saw racism and class struggles and started to realize that it's not just one political paradigm versus another that is going to bring man equanimity, peace of mind, and a more just order."

He concluded that other approaches must be tried to attack such seemingly unsolvable problems as the depletion of natural resources, the widening gap between rich and poor, the threat of nuclear war, and man's inhumanity to man. "If you put a very exploitative man in a socialist environment," Favors decided, "he's still going to find some way to exploit. What we really need is for man to have a change of consciousness." So Favors, a psychology major, began doing research on hypnosis, mental telepathy, clairvoyance, and dreams. He also studied the writings of Plato, Aristotle, Emerson, Thoreau, and Schopenhauer on sense perception, consciousness, and the nature of reality.

Favors turned next to Eastern religions, attracted by their emphasis on expansion of consciousness and purification of the senses as well as their ideal of service to God and man. He started reading the Vedas and the Bhagavad-Gita, the scriptures of Hinduism, and was intrigued by what he calls their "scientific" approach to the mastery of life. He wondered if these mystical philosophies could succeed where political action had failed in bringing about a more just world order.

While still at Princeton, he undertook formal lessons with Sri Chinmoy, Swami Satchidananda, and other Indian gurus who related Hindu philosophy to the Western world. Favors continued his political activism at the same time that he began pursuing these spiritual inquiries: "I would leave a Black Panther rally or an ABC meeting and go to New York and study

meditation for a couple of days with some swamis."

The conflicting demands of his double life came to a head at graduation, in June 1972. He was awarded a scholarship to attend the University of Tanzania, where he could become more directly involved in third-world political and social activities. "But I wasn't sure whether I really wanted to continue working in politics," he says, "or whether I wanted to become more contemplative and introspective." He put off this decision by taking a job in the office of New Jersey Public Defender Stanley Van Ness, where he worked on penal-reform projects, while also taking lessons in Vedic philosophy at the Hare Krishna temple in New York City. "It gave me a chance to scrutinize the different polarities in myself, the political and the spiritual."

Favors believed that Hare Krishna devotees were following the original Vedic teachings more closely than any other sect, but he was not convinced yet that he wanted to commit himself to a totally spiritual life, nor was he sure the Hare Krishnas would be the right choice for him. "The first time I saw a Hare Krishna," he says, "was up in Harvard Square at a football game. It was very cold, and a group of them were standing on the corner chanting. I looked at them and thought, 'This is the epitome of absurdity.' I presumed they were rich white students just out looking for some different kind of drug or alternate experience. But when I passed by again two hours later, they were still on the corner chanting in the cold. I knew then there was something extraordinary about them. Years later I was shocked to find that those people ringing cymbals and playing drums in the street possessed an intense philosophy about God."

Though Favors was doing quite well financially, and felt his job directing prison programs was an important one, he still was dissatisfied. After working with Van Ness for a year he decided to leave. "He knew I was a little unusual," Favors says, "because I would go to parties and never drink or eat meat. I told him that I was becoming a member of a religious organization, and that we had a school in Dallas where I was being called to do some teaching. It was an unusual situation. Just overnight I knew I had to leave. I knew at that point my whole life was going to change. I gave all my possessions away. I took a razor and shaved my head. The next morning I got on a plane and went to Dallas."

Americans have come to know the Hare Krishnas by their street chanting, airport book-selling, and portrayal in the media as a religious cult. It is not generally known that they are an international organization with several thousand members and centers in many of the world's major cities. Even less is known about their reli-

gious beliefs, based on the 5,000-year-old Vedas, which teach the worship of one supreme God and many of the same concepts presented in the Ten Commandments. The name Krishna means "all-attractive one," and is used to describe the supreme qualities of God. The chant—"Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare"—is a prayer which means, "O Lord, please engage me in Your service."

The religion of the Hare Krishnas is basically the same as the Hinduism practiced by 600 million Indians. The notable difference is that the Krishnas follow the Vedic interpretations of A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, who founded the Hare Krishna movement to spread Krishna con-

"I've been celibate for ten years. How can a young man in his prime take to such a lifestyle? When you develop a higher taste, it becomes easy."

sciousness to the English-speaking world. He arrived in America in 1965, at the age of 69, and began teaching that the Vedas specify the Hare Krishna mantra as the most effective method of spiritual realization in this age. The chant, therefore, is at the core of the sect's religious practices. Not all followers of Vedic scriptures, however, give such prominence to this particular mantra over other Vedic chants.

The negative reaction of most Americans to this religious doctrine was understandable, given the country's deep-rooted cultural biases against such beliefs, dress, and behavior. Many parents and the religious community as a whole remain alarmed at the proliferation of cultlike religious organizations that attract large numbers of young persons. Favors's decision to join the Hare Krishnas was received with chagrin by most of his family, friends, and classmates.

At first he taught academic courses in the ISKCON school in Dallas. Later he was assigned to the organization's Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, the largest publisher of books on Hindu philosophy and religion in the world. Its primary function is to

print and distribute more than 70 volumes of translations of and commentaries on the Vedic scriptures by Swami Prabhupada. In fact, with over 60 million volumes distributed, ISKCON derives most of its income from the sale of these books.

For his first seven years in the organization, Favors undertook a rigorous study of Indian philosophy and Sanskrit literature. Meanwhile, he was moving up rapidly in the ISKCON hierarchy. "I was sort of taken under the wings of the leading swamis," he says.

Then, in 1979, Favors became a sannyasi, which means renunciant, or monk. He's one of two black swamis in the Vaishnava order and one of two dozen leaders directing the work of the Hare Krishna movement. At that time he was renamed Bhakti-tirtha Swami, which means "one in whom others can take shelter." Not all Hare Krishnas are encouraged to become monks; in fact, most marry and raise families. Even within the hierarchy, priesthood is a radical step. "I've been celibate for ten years," he notes. "One may ask how it is that a young man who is at his prime, when sexual tendencies are very active, could take to such a lifestyle. But obviously enjoyment must be there. When you are developing a higher taste, then it becomes easy to give up something else."

For the last four years he has been helping to direct ISKCON's activities in Africa—especially in Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, Zimbabwe, and Zambia. Favors has received enthusiastic support from the Africans he has met, which he attributes to his spiritual posture. "Once you are out of America," he says, "there is a whole different mood of how a spiritualist is treated. In America people may say, 'Look at this weird guy.' But in Africa they know immediately that my dress indicates a very high priest. I can meet with ambassadors, chiefs, princes, and I can get funds just based on the programs and the posture that I represent." Backing up his words is the fact that most of the land ISKCON operates on in Africa has been donated by government or private sources.

Some of Favors's classmates might question the validity of spreading a religious philosophy from India among Africans. Why should Krishna consciousness be any more relevant than indigenous African religions or for that matter the Western religious doctrines which are taught there? According to Favors, the Vedic religion has been acceptable to the Africans he has encountered because of its similarity to their own. "To a certain extent, the principles we follow are not much different from what a spiritualist in Ghana or a person in the Yoruba tribe would follow: the same hierarchy, the same concepts of life after death, and the same

(continued on page 30)

Coming to Kṛṣṇa

“Now I Know Why”

A young journalism student's path to Kṛṣṇa consciousness takes her from curiosity to conviction.

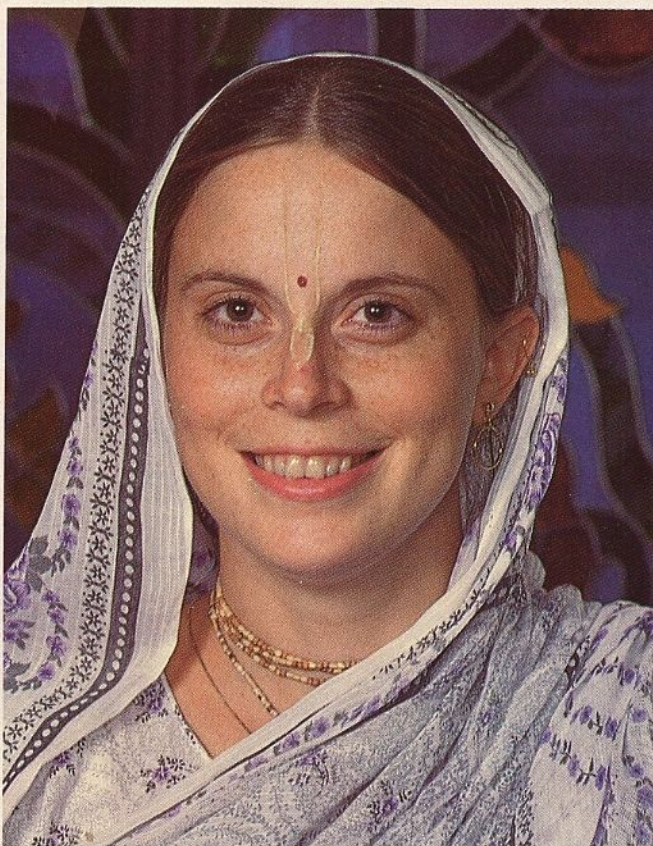
by KRṢṆAMAYĪ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

It was 4:15 in the morning. On the north side of Chicago, not even the birds were up. But I was. And not only was I up, but I was chanting and dancing around a room with thirty other people, all members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

To most Americans, the scene would have appeared odd, to say the least. The men wore either white or saffron Indian *dhotis*, and we women were dressed in bright *sāris*. On our foreheads we all wore *tilaka*, the white, V-shaped clay markings indicating devotion to God, and around our necks we wore strands of beads indicating dedication to God and the spiritual master.

Saṁsāra dāvānala lidhā-loka . . . It was *maṅgala-ārati*, the ceremony that begins each day for Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees. The men, filling the front of the room, faced the Deity forms of Lord Kṛṣṇa and His consort, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Some men played Indian drums, producing exotic, throbbing rhythms. Others clashed small hand cymbals with a regular one-two-three, one-two-three. The women, clustered at the back of the room, clapped and danced to the rhythm of the drums, cymbals, and chanting. *Vande guruḥ śrī-carāṅāravindam . . .*

Several times that morning I asked myself, Why am I here? I was a “normal” college junior doing well in school. I wasn't consciously searching for any kind of supreme truth, the way I'd always heard people did before they got involved with the Hare Kṛṣṇas. Yet, although it was



spring break, I wasn't in Fort Lauderdale or any of the other fun spots that cater to college students. I was at the Chicago Hare Kṛṣṇa temple.

Why? Why was I involved in worshiping God, Kṛṣṇa, in this way? Well, as yet even I didn't know the answer to that one. I didn't know if I was acting out a fantasy, if I was just curious, or if I really wanted to believe as the devotees did. All I knew for sure was that I enjoyed spending time with them and that I respected them for their strong faith and their courage in sticking with beliefs society frowns on as alien.

The story of my interest in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement goes back to when I was a seventeen-year-old freshman at South-

ern Illinois University, in Carbondale. When those strange-looking people with the orange robes and shaved heads first appeared on campus, I had no idea who they were. But I was curious. So I overcame my timidity and talked to them. Then I reported what I'd found to my friends, and a well-meaning roommate threw at me the frightening word *cult*.

But I, always the rebellious one in our family, wanted to see for myself whether the reported “brainwashing” would take place for me. It never did. And because I had expected a bit of magic, I was a little disappointed. But I did keep talking to the devotees whenever they came to Carbondale, and though their beliefs were hard to understand at first, after a year or so of questioning and studying the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, I began to find

it more acceptable; it all began to make sense. And I found my admiration for the devotees growing—for their spiritual knowledge, their strength of character, and their high moral standards.

After two years of chance meetings with devotees, I learned that a small Hare Kṛṣṇa center was opening in town. I was thrilled. I loved the *prasādam* (the spicy, sanctified food they served), the beautiful *sāris* the women wore, and the feeling of being part of a worldwide, growing movement. The center soon gathered a few followers, including myself. But my following was only tentative, sporadic, and very cautious. Playing at being a devotee was fine, I thought, but I certainly wasn't ready to give up my



The Bathing of Baby Kṛṣṇa
(Parikṣit dāsa, 1977)

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plans of being wealthy and worldly-wise.

Then, during spring break, the center's director, Dāmodara Paṇḍita, decided to take his wife and their two-year-old son to the Chicago temple for a week. A few people went with them, and I followed several days later with some friends.

The group of us making the trip got in late at night—late, that is, for devotees, whose days start at 3:30 A.M. Dāmodara Paṇḍita was waiting for us at the temple and took us two blocks down an alley to the apartment we were to share with his wife. Since she was staying there just temporarily, it was bare except for bunk beds along the walls.

When 3:30 came, I was already awake. I excitedly jumped out of bed and took my turn in a quick shower, tied my hair back into a braid, carefully applied the clay *tilaka* markings, covered my head (as a sign of chastity), and stepped out into cold, predawn Chicago.

It's one thing to be told that the early-morning hours are best for spiritual practices. It's quite another to experience it. I could almost touch the stillness in the damp, thick air as we walked through the alley. The late spring air chilled us, and soon we were walking faster and faster, finally breaking into a run the last few yards before we reached the temple building.

After scurrying up three flights of stairs, we entered a dimly lit room as big as a basketball court. We clanged a bell hanging by the door to announce our presence to the Deities, sank to our knees and offered obeisances by touching our foreheads to the checkerboard marble floor.

The Deity forms of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa smiled down from a lighted chamber along one wall of the room. Ancient Vedic scriptures say that if the Deities are installed in the temple with the proper ceremonies, God will consent to reside within Them. But bowing down before the Deities is one thing some people can't understand; it seems degrading. But I enjoyed it. Thanks to rituals learned during childhood judo lessons, I had never thought myself too good to bow to a superior. And God, I thought, is as superior as you can get.

When the *maṅgala-ārati* ceremony was over, it was time for individual chanting. Each devotee carries around his or her neck a cloth bag containing a string of 108 *japa* beads, similar to a rosary. While turning each bead between the thumb and second finger, the devotee chants the *mantra* Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

Hare means "O energy of God," and *Kṛṣṇa* and *Rāma* are names of God. Chanting is a spiritual call for the Lord and His energy to give protection to the conditioned soul and engage him in the Lord's service. And, since God is absolute, He

and His names are nondifferent. I actually felt His presence while chanting.

When all 108 beads have been told, a "round" is done. Sixteen rounds are required every day from each initiated devotee. But I, with a poor early-morning attention span, was having a difficult time concentrating. I looked around at some of the older devotees, a few of whom had been in the movement for ten or twelve years, and saw them chanting easily and with pleasure. Some paced as they chanted, some sat still, and some rocked back and forth, but all had looks of deep concentration on their faces. Inspired (and not wanting to appear too much of a novice), I closed my eyes and began again. This time

I knew that devotees regard Christ as an empowered representative of God and that they worship him as a spiritual master. It's too bad most people can't understand that devotees of Kṛṣṇa aren't enemies of Christianity.

it was easier, and I started to savor the words of the chant.

I opened my eyes and looked around, feeling a warmth slowly spread through my body. The temple seemed almost like home. I knew that an outsider might see it as segregated—men were generally aloof from the women—but that was because distractions had to be minimized so one could concentrate on spiritual life. Both sexes seemed to want it that way. And when we did get together, to watch video tapes or to discuss the day's activities, I sensed comfortable relationships without the strain of flirting.

After a ceremony in which we worshiped the *guru*, we had a forty-five-minute philosophy class on an ancient Sanskrit spiritual classic called the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The morning ended with a delicious breakfast of fruit, cereal, chickpeas, and hot milk.

After breakfast, a six-year-old girl devotee and I started walking back to the apart-

ment together. Halfway down the alley, we were surprised by two little boys who popped out of their backyard and began to scream at us. "We believe in Jesus Christ," they yelled, making faces, "not your blankety-blank old God!" The little girl looked at me, bewilderment and hurt glistening in her wide eyes. "But I believe in Jesus, too," she said. I held her hand tighter. How do you explain religious prejudice to a child? "Don't worry, it's okay," I told her. "Those boys are just envious because they're not as happy as you are. They don't look very happy, do they?" She agreed they didn't, and we walked on.

The boys weren't acting like followers of Christ, I thought. Where was the mercy, the compassion, the love he taught? I could see these clearly in the devotees, and they expressed them toward people of *all* faiths. I knew that devotees regard Christ as an empowered representative of God and that they actually worship him as a pure devotee, a spiritual master. It's too bad most people can't understand that devotees of Kṛṣṇa aren't enemies of Christianity.

Devotees don't eat meat (following "Thou shalt not kill" closer than the vast majority of Christians), and they don't use intoxicants, have illicit sex, or gamble either. What genuine Christian could fault the devotees for abstaining from these sins? I had to admire the devotees for their self-control, even though I wasn't ready to follow all those regulations at that time.

All in all, I could see why the Hare Kṛṣṇa religion was attracting so many admirers. Its purity, combined with incidents like the one with the little boys, made me want to defend it for all the goodness I knew to be there. I still had my doubts about parts of the philosophy, but just being around devotees made it easier to believe. More than anything, I realized suddenly, I wanted to belong to this movement. Maybe not just then, but someday.

At the end of my visit, as I expected, the devotees invited me to stay. But I felt an insistent need to get back to journalism school, my boyfriend, my job, and my plans. I just wasn't ready to make that kind of commitment.

So I left. But even though I drove out of Chicago, I didn't really leave the movement. I kept visiting the St. Louis temple (it was the closest one to Carbondale), and one by one my doubts and questions were answered, especially when on one of my visits I met my spiritual master, His Divine Grace Śrīla Rāmeśvara Swami.

Back at school I worked my way up to a position as editor on the student newspaper, and after graduation I went on to work for several professional newspapers in the Midwest. Kṛṣṇa consciousness always remained a part of my life, and gradually the desire grew in me to make it

(continued on page 30)



PLAYFISH

Winston
America's Best

Cool

Cool

A Fish Out of Water

When you're out of your element, nothing seems to satisfy.

by DRUTAKARMĀ DĀSA

For years, Frederick J. Fish lived a very ordinary life beneath the waves of the blue Pacific Ocean off Malibu. But one day he noticed that up on the beach there were finless creatures who appeared to be having more fun. So he rode in on a wave and hopped up on the sun-drenched sand. Soon he was all fixed up to enjoy himself—beach chair, FM radio, a cold drink, sunglasses. But something was wrong. Gradually Fred's feeling of discomfort turned to panic. Finally, gasping for breath, he realized, "I'm out of my element!"

* * *

According to the sages of ancient India, we're all out of our element. Originally, we all lived blissfully in the spiritual world, rendering transcendental loving service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa. Since this material world is not our real home, no amount of material gratification can satisfy us.

People often ask, If we were so blissful, why would we choose to leave the spiritual world? The answer is that we mistakenly thought we could enjoy greater happiness away from the Supreme Lord. In the spiritual world, God is the center of everyone's attention. Everyone cooperates to serve Him. When a living being attempts to assume the position of God, he is forced to enter the material universe, where he can live out his fantasies of being the supreme enjoyer.

In the material world, a person tries to enjoy himself by becoming friends with the best sort of people, by picking the most attractive sex partner, by doing everything possible to guarantee a good future for himself and his family members. He dresses as sharp as he can, drives the most expensive car he can afford, takes vacations in posh resorts, buys a house in a good neighborhood. He gets a color television, a personal computer, a second home in the country. He eats at the best restaurants, savors his favorite intoxicants, and goes out to see first-run movies. But these material things can never completely satisfy the yearnings of the soul.

In a recent interview, Alfred Ford (Ambarīṣa dāsa), great-grandson of Henry Ford and now a member of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, spoke of the hopelessness of trying to buy happiness: "At a very early age, perhaps because I was born and raised in a very opulent situation, I began to notice that wealth alone can't make people happy, and that everything in the world, even the 'good things,' are temporary."

Sometimes people think that because devotees of Kṛṣṇa reject material happiness they must lead extremely dull lives. Actually, transcendentalists are the most discriminating connoisseurs of pleasure.

A person serious about enjoying himself will naturally

reject inferior pleasures and concentrate upon superior ones. In fact, he should be interested in finding the highest pleasure possible. Logically, a pleasure that never ends is superior to a pleasure that does. Also, pure pleasure is superior to pleasure mixed with some kind of unpleasantness. Finally, a pleasure that constantly increases is superior to one that is static, or that diminishes after a time.

Using this standard, we can see that any kind of pleasure derived from a material object is inferior to the spiritual pleasure obtainable from serving Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose very name means "the reservoir of all pleasure." Any person or object we try to enjoy in this material world will eventually be destroyed by the force of time, and the body with which we try to enjoy the material objects will also be destroyed. But the pleasure that comes from serving Kṛṣṇa is eternal, because both the Lord and the soul are eternal.

Furthermore, pleasures derived from material objects and relationships are always mixed with pain. For example, there is some pleasure in sexual relationships between a man and a woman, but that is always followed by the burdens and difficulties of marriage, divorce, jealousy, envy, pregnancy, abortion, venereal disease, unfaithfulness, and so on. But the pure spiritual relationship of the soul with Kṛṣṇa is purely blissful. *The Nectar of Devotion*, Śrīla Prabhupāda's summary study of a devotional classic called *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, describes the condition of one who has achieved love of God: "At that time one's heart becomes illuminated like the sun, and from his pure heart there is a diffusion of ecstatic love more glorious than the sunshine."

Finally, attempts to enjoy a material situation inevitably yield diminishing returns. The first ice-cream cone may taste delicious. The second may be just as good. But the third will be hard to eat, and the fourth may make you sick. At the very sight of the fifth, you'll feel nauseous. But love for Kṛṣṇa is like an ever-expanding ocean of transcendental bliss, and devotees pray to remain always immersed in its waves.

The Vedic literatures recommend a very simple process by which anyone can enter into this ocean of bliss: the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. This *mantra* is composed of Sanskrit names of God. Being Absolute, God's name is nondifferent from God Himself and possesses all His transcendental energies. Five centuries ago Kṛṣṇa appeared as Lord Caitanya and taught His followers: "The chanting of the holy name of God expands the blissful ocean of transcendental life." That's where we really belong, not washed up on the beach of material existence. ❀

“Now I Know Why”

(continued from page 27)


even more so. Then, one day in St. Louis, I made my decision. I was confident that moving into the temple community and serving Kṛṣṇa full time was the right thing to do.

Six months later, Śrīla Rāmeśvara Swami awarded me formal initiation and gave me the name Kṛṣṇamayī-devī dāsī,

meaning “servant of Rādhārāṇī.” My parents and some of my friends were astonished, but I never regretted my decision. I haven’t given up my plans to be a writer—in fact, the first articles I ever sold to a national magazine were written after I had become a full-time devotee. Only now my writing is devotional service to Kṛṣṇa, and it’s much more satisfying than writing for prestige.

Days still start before the birds are up.

Only now I know why I’m up that early and why I’m chanting before the beautiful Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Deities at the Dallas temple, where my husband and I live with our newborn child. I’m not just pretending to be a devotee anymore; I’m living a life based on the deep understanding that I’m a servant of God and that all I do should be done with devotion as an offering to Him.

And that kind of life is becoming more and more satisfying every day. 

JETLINER TRAGEDY

(continued from page 9)

together at the same table, so to speak, as one happy family. It seemed simple. Perhaps too simple, I thought, as I began discussing the idea with my brother.

Soon my whole family was involved, and they all admitted that universal recognition of the Supreme Father would unite the entire world as one great family, ending enmity between individuals, races, sexes, religions, and nations—at least *theoretically*. But how could it become a tangible reality?


My family members were naturally skeptical. They spoke of separation of church and state and pointed out historical evidence that religion has not only failed to unify the world but has rather *caused* conflict. Witness the Crusades, the Inquisition, the Hindu-Muslim riots in postwar India, the perennial fighting in Northern Ireland between Catholics and Protestants,

and the endless hostility between the Jews and their Moslem neighbors.

I explained that the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is a worldwide, nonsectarian organization dedicated to reminding people of their relationship with God. Kṛṣṇa consciousness emphasizes the spiritual nature of all beings and their eternal, loving relationship with God. Because the teachings of Kṛṣṇa consciousness reveal elaborate details about the nature of the soul and the proprietorship of the Supreme Lord, a student of these teachings doesn’t become bewildered by conceptions of “my land” and “your land.” All land belongs to Kṛṣṇa, and since we are all members of His universal family, we should all have access to His land—as long as we use it in His service. To use everything in the service of God, the proprietor of everything and father of everyone, is the central point of the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

After a long discussion, my family agreed

that the peace formula of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is sound and that it will work if enough people adopt it. Whereas at first they accepted it in theory but doubted its practicality, they now saw that having accepted it theoretically they had to adopt it in their own lives. In this way the formula for peace based on God consciousness would gradually gain wider and wider acceptance.

Now my whole family is reading about Kṛṣṇa and understanding more and more deeply the peace (individual and collective) that is possible through Kṛṣṇa consciousness. They know that although their activities may seem insignificant in the face of international strife, they are far more effective than big political talks that ignore the supreme proprietorship and fatherhood of God. Thus my family is taking steps toward the establishment of world peace. After all, as it is often said, a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. 


SUPREME PERSON

(continued from page 13)

the spiritual master. Even if you study the scriptures very carefully, you won’t be able to avoid the pitfalls of impersonalism. And don’t take that just as my advice, thinking that what happened to me years ago can’t happen to you. Take it as the conclusion of the revealed scriptures: Lord Kṛṣṇa states in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that only

by devotional service, under the guidance of the spiritual master, can one understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Under the spell of material illusion we have forgotten our eternal relationship with Lord Kṛṣṇa as His servants. Thus we are suffering birth and death repeatedly, life after life, in the material world. Sometimes we try to find happiness in gross sensual activities, as an animal or animalistic human being; sometimes we tire of this

futile attempt at imitating God and take to philosophical speculation, culminating in declaring ourselves to be God; and sometimes we seek happiness through yogic asceticism and meditation. But only when we take up the devotional service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are we able to end our material illusion and suffering for good and achieve the full, intimate understanding of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa. 

John Favors

(continued from page 24)


knowledge of psychic centers.

“Africans feel that Vedic teachings clarify beliefs they have long held. Our contribution is a scientific explanation of phenomena they have accepted for centuries without understanding. Rather than propose a change of culture, as the Christian missionaries did, Krishna consciousness suggests that people simply add an understanding of the scientific process of devotional service, as described in the *Bhagavad-Gīta*.”

Favors feels that African culture is being eroded by influences from the West, and the Vedic religious philosophy can strengthen native practices. “I am trying to get Africans to realize what great teachings they have—teachings that deal with man’s relationship to man in a very pure way. But Africa and all of the third world is becoming more and more Western in consciousness, so we are telling them, ‘Don’t take this materialism as a priority.’”

Encouraged by the warm reception he has received in Africa, Favors is planning a number of major projects, including hospitals, more schools, and expanded

food-distribution systems. He is actively recruiting people to run these programs from both inside and outside the Hare Krishna organization.

Looking back on his experience at Princeton, Favors says, “The educational experience I had was good in that it allowed you a certain amount of freedom and creative thinking. My experience at Princeton helped me to see that I didn’t want to be a materialist, but it was my education in the Hare Krishna movement that convinced me spiritual life is a meaningful, viable alternative not only for me—but for everyone.” 

FESTIVALS

and the Hare Kṛṣṇa Calendar

Kṛṣṇa conscious devotees follow a spiritual calendar that divides the year into twelve months, each named for a different form of Kṛṣṇa. The devotees at the Hare Kṛṣṇa center nearest you will gladly tell you more about the meaning of the festivals listed here.

Month of Dāmodara

(October 22–November 20)

November 1—Śrīramā Ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans).

November 4—Dīwālī (the festival of decorating Kṛṣṇa's temple with lamps). Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa center for details.

November 5—Govardhana-pūjā (festival celebrating the worship of Govardhana Hill by the residents of Vṛndāvana and Kṛṣṇa's lifting of the hill). Profuse distribution of sanctified food highlights this festival. Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa center for details.

November 8—Disappearance anniversary of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Devotees mark this day with personal remembrances of Śrīla Prabhupāda, readings from his biography, and fasting till noon, followed by feasting. Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa center for details. A special festival will take place in Vṛndāvana, India, where Śrīla Prabhupāda passed away.

November 9—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Hridayananda dāsa Goswami Ācāryadeva, one of the present spiritual masters in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. Also, Ratha-yātrā Chariot Festival in New Delhi. Contact the New Delhi Hare Kṛṣṇa center for details.

November 13—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, a great follower of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's.

November 16—Utthānā Ekādaśī. Also, disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Gaurakiśora dāsa Bābājī, spiritual master of Śrīla Prabhupāda's spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura (total fasting till noon; fasting all day from grains and beans).

November 20—Lord Kṛṣṇa's Rāsa Dance. Also, last day of Dāmodara-vrata and Cāturmāsya-vrata.

Month of Keśava

(November 21–December 20)

November 30—Utpannā Ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans). Also, the appearance anniversary of Śrīla Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami Gurupāda, one of the present spiritual masters in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

December 16—Mokṣadā Ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans).

RESOURCES

For life membership service inquiries and reports, please correspond with the International Life Membership Trust, 230A Kenton Road, Harrow, Middlesex HA3 8BY United Kingdom. The International Life Membership Trust is the coordinating body for life membership in ISKCON and operates under the auspices of the International Life Membership Committee, a committee of the Governing Body Commission.

Prepare your child to go back to Godhead. ISKCON now has more than twenty primary and secondary schools worldwide, and some of these schools are now prepared to accept students from outside their local communities.

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For more information, write to His Holiness Jagadīśa Goswami, Minister of Education, c/o ISKCON Gurukula, P.O. Box 388, Lake Huntington, New York 12752.

Own a full set of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. Now you can have a full library of the Vedic classics in your home. Translated and explained by the foremost scholar and devotee, these books open up new worlds of spiritual life. Each book is a deluxe, beautifully illustrated hardbound volume. And now we make it far easier for you than ever before to get a full set of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. For details, write ISKCON Educational Services, 3764 Watseka Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90034.

Enhance Your Spiritual Life

For spiritual realization, all you really need is the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra. But to enhance your spiritual life, you may want to add the items listed below.

1 Mantra Meditation Beads: a string of 108 hand-carved "japa beads"—chanters use them as an aid to concentration during meditation on the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra. Each string of beads comes with a cotton carrying bag and an instruction pamphlet. \$4.95.

2 Magazine Binder (for your copies of *Back to Godhead*): a handy way to keep each month's issue in excellent condition. Holds 12 issues. \$5.00.

3 Karatālas: pure bell-metal hand cymbals used in chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra. Imported from India. \$12.00/pair.

4 Mrdaṅga Drum: lightweight, double-headed Indian-style drum used in chanting the mahā-mantra. Unbreakable. Comes with an instruction book and cassette instruction tape. \$119.85.

5 Deity Poster: a full-color photo of the beautiful Deities at the Los Angeles Hare Kṛṣṇa center. Poster-size. \$2.50.

6 SPECIAL: The original Hare Kṛṣṇa Meditation Album. In 1966 Śrīla Prabhupāda made this unique recording with his first disciples. On it Prabhupāda explains the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, and he and his disciples chant. A historic recording. C-60 cassette. \$4.00.

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NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

What It's Like to Be a Devotee of Kṛṣṇa

Because of their unusual dress, the men's shaved heads, the behavior of chanting and dancing, and the preaching of a philosophy little known to most, devotees of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement appear strange to many Westerners. Yet if a person is somewhat broad-minded, he'll see that in many ways Kṛṣṇa conscious people are like other people.

In certain important ways, however, a devotee does see things differently from other people, and this unique difference is the most valuable thing a devotee has to share with the rest of the world. To live in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is to live in continuous awareness of God—certainly something worth sharing.

According to the Vedic scriptures and the realizations of saints throughout history, *everyone* is originally God conscious, or Kṛṣṇa conscious, but in this material world most of us are forgetful of this consciousness. A devotee is much like anyone else except that, having dedicated his body, mind, and words to God, he now experiences transcendental awareness.

When I think back to my life before I met my spiritual master, before I learned about devotional service from him, I think my past would have been better, happier, had I then had the benefit of chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* and engaging in devotional service. So many anxieties could have been relieved. Wasted years could have been spent with real purpose and hope. Acts I now understand to be harmful to myself and others could have been avoided. Comparing my life then with my life now, I want to testify that my new life is immeasurably better. The missionary desire I now feel to tell this to others is a result not only of the written order of the scriptures but also of my personal experience of the benefits of spiritual life.

Here are some examples of what it's like to live in God consciousness:

1. When a devotee does even ordinary things, like drinking water or seeing the sun, he's aware of the presence of God. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord

Kṛṣṇa states, "I am the taste of water. I am the light of the sun." When a devotee drinks water, therefore, he is aware that the water is the energy of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and the original pure taste of water reminds him of Kṛṣṇa. Because the devotee's conception of God is personal, he thanks the Lord for quenching his thirst. And when he perceives the sun in the sky, he remembers the source, understanding that only the Supreme Being can create such a mighty powerhouse of energy. These are simple practices for remaining God conscious, but if one adopts them they can have profound effects.

2. A devotee has a vision of equality, based on spiritual awareness. When he perceives human beings in different social classes—rich or poor, educated or uneducated—he sees them equally, because he sees within each human being (and even within the lower forms of life) the eternal spiritual soul. Mundane philosophers have tried to reach equal vision by relative means, but unless one understands equality on the basis of spiritual vision, there will always be conflicts of interest. Attempts at equality among the sexes or among the races and attempts to extend humane feelings even to the animals are best practiced not as ends in themselves but as by-products of self-realization and God consciousness.

3. A devotee sees his life as temporary. He knows that his body, his family, his worldly pursuits, and even the world itself are impermanent; therefore he avoids the frustration of trying to enjoy that which is temporary and miserable. While living peacefully in this world, he makes his material life moderate in its aims, concentrating his energy on attaining awareness of God and self-realization.

"I'm glad to hear it works that way for you," a nondevotee may say, "but that doesn't mean it will work for me. I would appreciate it if you wouldn't assume that yours is the only path to happiness. Let everyone find his or her own path."

To this statement I would reply by first acknowledging that each one of us

is a person with free will and individual choice; therefore, we may or may not adopt the life of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. But ultimately all paths must be judged by the standard of God consciousness, which devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa understand to be the prime necessity for everyone. One cannot even begin the life of God consciousness without recognizing the direction of a supreme intelligent being, that Supreme Controller who is the source of everything and the director of all destinies. We can either follow the directions of the Supreme or disobey Him, but in either case we are under His control. A devotee in God consciousness is one who acknowledges God's laws and obeys them.

As for how one should serve God, that may be expressed in as many different ways as there are different lives. One can serve Kṛṣṇa as a professional, as a shaven-headed monk, as a businessman, as a laborer, or in whatever state one finds himself and through whatever tendency one develops for self-expression. But one must understand that, regardless of his occupation, only through knowing, serving, and loving God can one realize his full human potential.

In trying to describe what it's like to be a devotee, I know I haven't fully conveyed the unique experience. His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda gives a full description of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in his extensive writings, yet he also concludes that Kṛṣṇa consciousness has to be experienced to be truly understood. We therefore invite people to chant the holy names of God, to hear the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and to associate with devotees. If instead a person tries to judge or analyze Kṛṣṇa consciousness from a distance, his attempt will be like trying to taste honey by licking the outside of the jar. Socrates said, "The unexamined life is not worth living." And in examining different qualities of life one should certainly give some serious attention to the experience and the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. —SDG

Enjoy the Taste of Spiritual Life

At the centers of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, you'll find classes in the science of self-realization, blissful chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, festivals, and—every Sunday afternoon—the famous Hare Kṛṣṇa feast. To find out more, call or visit the Hare Kṛṣṇa center nearest you.



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Edmonton, Alberta—8957 77th Ave., T5N 2N7/ (403) 466-9037
 Montreal, Quebec—1626 Pie IX Boulevard, H1V 2C5/ (514) 527-1101
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 Ottawa, Ontario—212 Somerset St. E., K1N 6V4/ (613) 233-1884
 Regina, Saskatchewan—2817 Victoria Ave., S4T 1K6/ (306) 522-4973
 Toronto, Ontario—243 Avenue Rd., M5R 2J6/ (416) 922-5415
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 Worcester, England—Chaitanya College at Croom Court, Severn Stoke, Worcester WR8 9DW/ (090 567) 214

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 Rome—Via di Tor Tre Teste 142, 00169 Roma/ (6) 263-157
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Florence (Villa Vrindavana)—Via Comunale degli Scopeti 108, S. Andrea in Percussina, 50026 San Casciano Val di Pesa (FI)/ (55) 820-054

(This list of worldwide Hare Kṛṣṇa centers continues on the inside back cover.)