

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

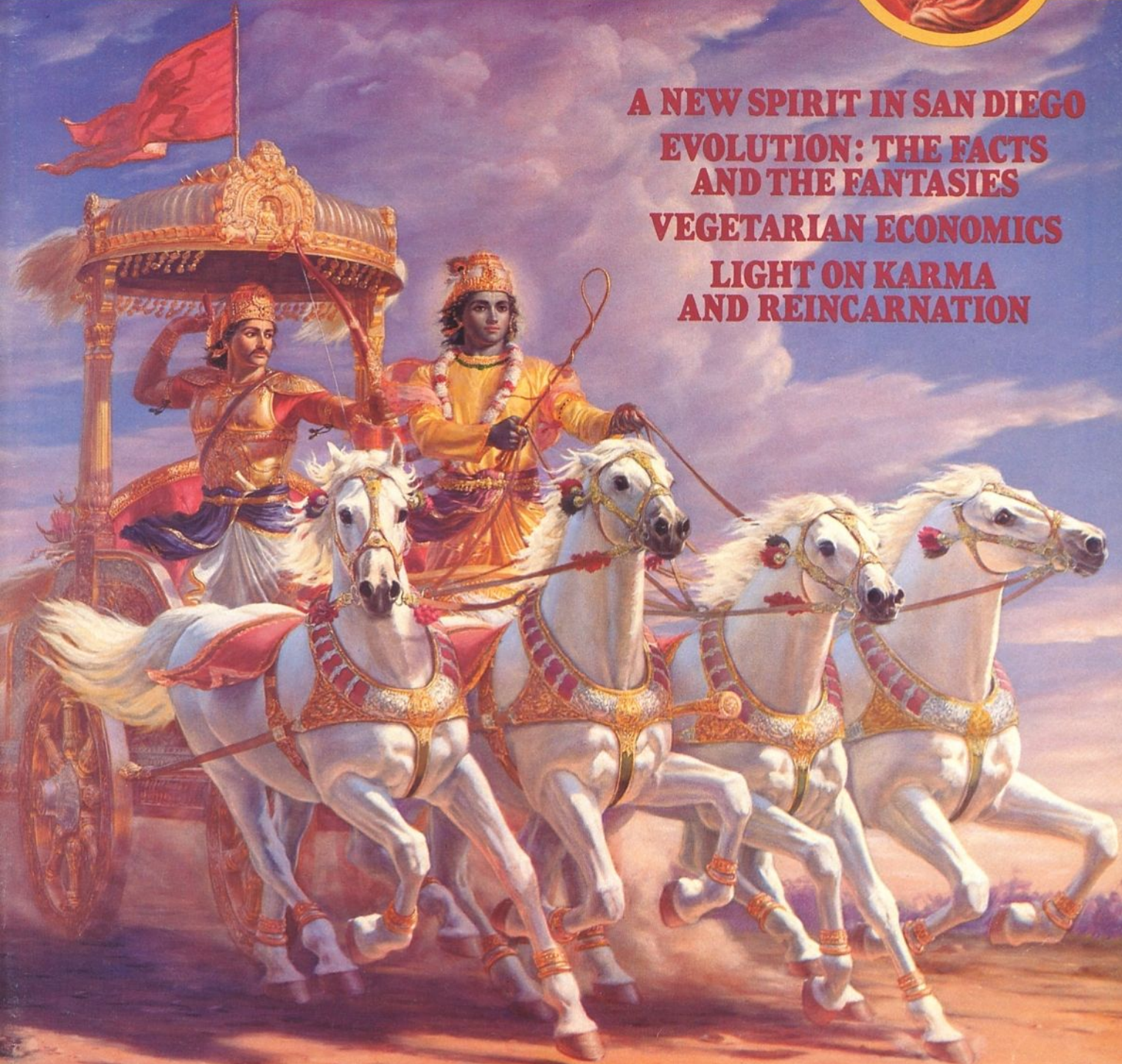
BACK TO GODHEAD

Vol.20 No.2-3

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT

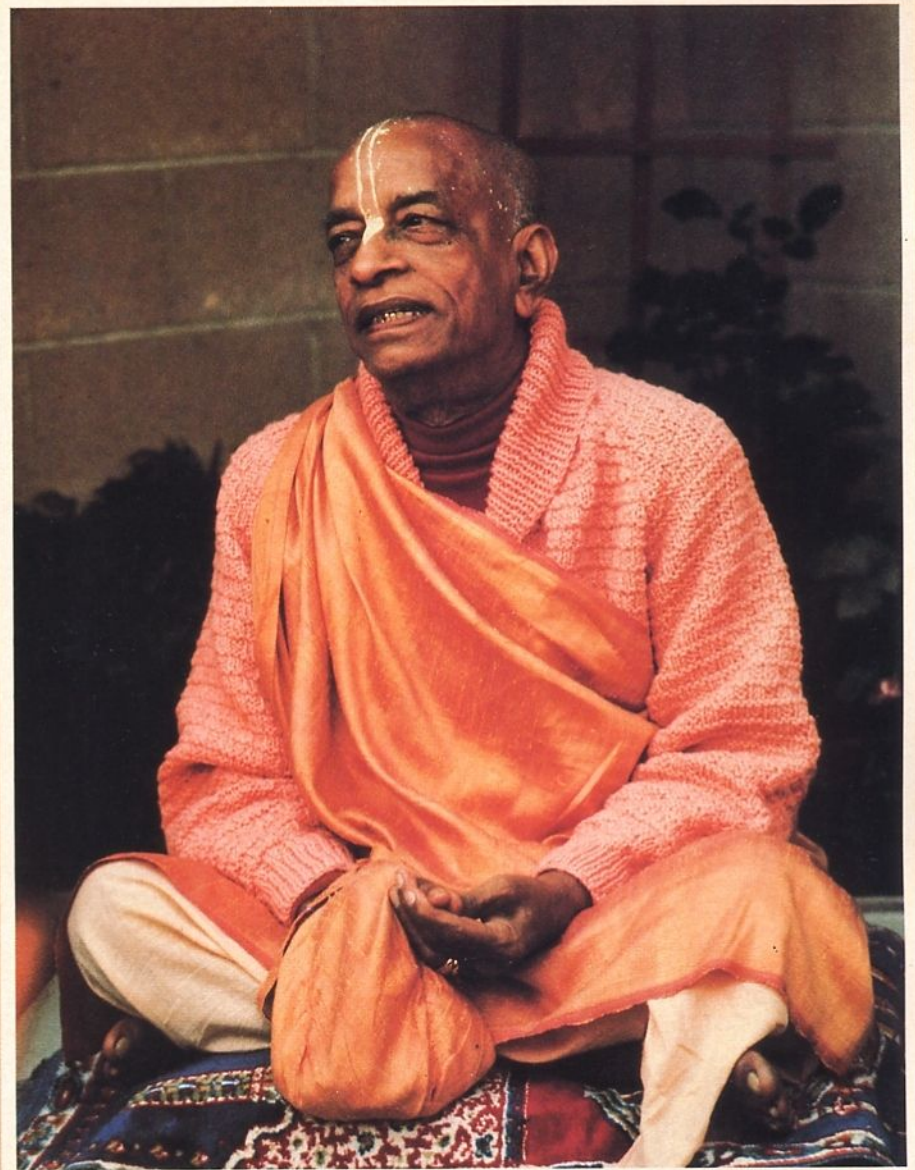


**A NEW SPIRIT IN SAN DIEGO
EVOLUTION: THE FACTS
AND THE FANTASIES
VEGETARIAN ECONOMICS
LIGHT ON KARMA
AND REINCARNATION**



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. Advanced disciples throughout the world have been authorized to serve in the position of spiritual master, initiating disciples of their own. And these disciples, in turn, become linked with Śrīla Prabhupāda through the transcendental system of disciplic succession.



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.

The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement

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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* (*dāsi* for women), meaning "servant." For instance, the name *Kṛṣṇa dāsa* means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

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COVER: Five thousand years ago, on the sacred Kurukṣetra plain in northern India, Arjuna leads his army into battle against the Kurus. Lord Kṛṣṇa has taken up the reins of His devotee's chariot, and together the invincible pair are determined to restore just rule to the world. There is little doubt that they will, for as the *Bhagavad-gītā* says, "Wherever there are Kṛṣṇa, the master of all mystic power, and Arjuna, the supreme archer, there will certainly be victory, opulence, extraordinary power, and morality." (Painting: Parikṣit dāsa)

EVOLUTION

In Fact and Fantasy

A conversation in Los Angeles in June 1972 with
His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda,
Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Devotee: Darwin tried to show how the origin of living species could be fully explained by the purely mechanical, unplanned action of natural forces. By the process he called “natural selection,” all the higher, complex forms of life gradually evolved from more primitive and rudimentary ones. In a given animal population, for example, some individuals will have traits that make them adapt better to their environment; these more fit individuals will survive to pass on their favorable traits to their offspring. The unfit will gradually be weeded out naturally. Thus, a cold climate will favor those who have, say, long hair or fatty tissue, and the species will then gradually evolve in that direction.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: The question is that in the development of the body, is there any plan that a particular kind of body—with, as you say, long hair or fatty tissue—should exist under certain natural conditions? Who has made these arrangements? That is the question.

Devotee: No one. Modern evolutionists ultimately base their theory on the existence of chance variations.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is nonsense. There is no chance. If they say “chance,” then they are nonsense. Our question remains. Who has created the different circumstances for the existence of different kinds of animals?

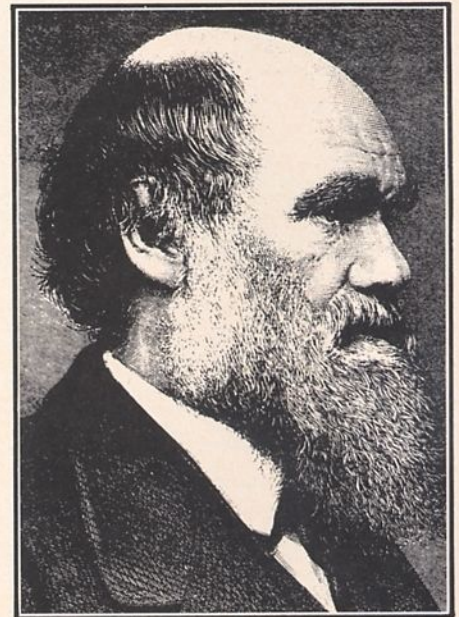
Devotee: For example, a frog may lay hundreds or thousands of eggs, but out of all of them only a few may survive to adult-

hood. Those who do are more fit than the others, who do not. If the environment did not favorably select the fittest, then too many frogs—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, frogs and many other animals lay eggs by the hundreds. A snake gives birth to scores of snakes at a time, and if all were allowed to exist, there would be a great disturbance. Therefore, big snakes devour the small snakes. That is nature’s law. But behind nature’s law is a brain. That is our proposition. Nature’s law is not blind, for behind it there is a brain, and that brain is God. We learn this from the *Bhagavad-gītā* [9.10]: *mayādhyakṣeṇa prakṛtiḥ sūyate sa-carācaram*. Whatever is taking place in material nature is being directed by the Supreme Lord, who maintains everything in order. So the snake lays eggs by the score, and if they are not killed, the world would be overwhelmed by snakes. Similarly, male tigers kill the cubs. The economic theory of Malthus states that whenever there is overpopulation, there must be an outbreak of war, epidemic, famine, or the like to curb it. These natural activities do not take place by chance but are planned. Anyone who says they are a matter of chance has insufficient knowledge.

Devotee: But Darwin has a huge amount of evidence—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Evidence? That is all right. We also have got evidence. Evidence must be there. But as soon as there

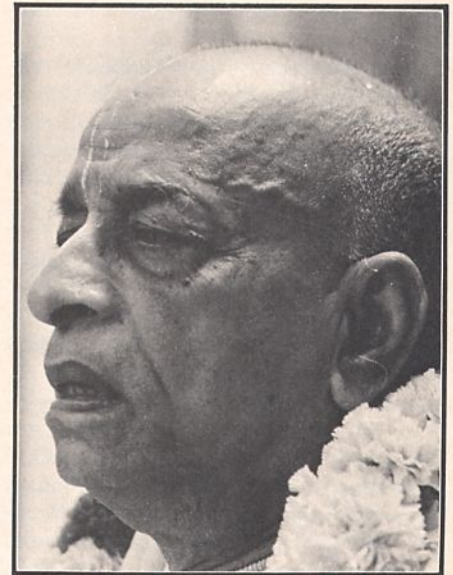


“There seems to be no more design in the variability of organic beings, and in the action of natural selection, than in the course which the wind blows.”

—Charles Darwin



The Vedic literature states that there are 8,400,000 species and that they have all existed since the beginning of the universe, having been created by the Supreme Lord, the “common ancestor” of all living beings. The innumerable bodies in the various species are animated by individual spirit souls, which are part and parcel of the Supreme. Each soul transmigrates from the aquatic species to the plants to the birds and lower animals, until it at last takes a human birth. With the help of the Vedic literature, a human being gets the opportunity to realize his spiritual identity and to escape from the painful cycle of birth and death by worshiping the Supreme Father, the origin of all living entities. That is the perfection of evolution.



“The sun rises exactly on the minute, the second. It is not by chance, but by minute plan. So everything in nature has a design, and behind it is a brain, a very big brain.”

—Śrīla Prabhupāda

is evidence, there should be no talk of "chance."

Devotee: For example, out of millions of frogs, one may happen to be better adapted to living in the water.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But that is not by chance! That is by plan! He doesn't know that. As soon as one says "chance," it means his knowledge is imperfect. A man says "chance" when he cannot explain. It is evasive. Therefore, he is without perfect knowledge and therefore unfit for giving any knowledge. He is cheating, that's all.

Devotee: Well, Darwin sees a "plan" or "design" in a sense, but—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: If he sees a plan or design, then whose design? As soon as you recognize a design, you must acknowledge a designer. If you see a plan, then you must accept a planner. That he does not know.

Devotee: But the "plan" is only the involuntary working of nature.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Nonsense. There is a plan. The sun rises daily according to exact calculation. It does not follow our calculation; rather, we calculate according to the sun. Experiencing that in such-and-such season the sun rises at such-and-such time, we learn that according to the season the sun rises exactly on the minute, the second. It is not by whimsy or chance but by minute plan.

Devotee: But can't you say it's just mechanical?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Then who made it mechanical? If something is mechanical, then there must be a mechanic, a brain, who made the machine. Here is something mechanical [points to a Telex machine]: Who made it? This machine has not come out by itself. It is made of iron, and the iron did not mold itself into a machine; there is a brain who made the machine possible. So everything in nature has a plan or design, and behind that plan or design there is a brain, a very big brain.

Devotee: Darwin tried to make the appearance and disappearance of living forms seem so natural and involuntary that God is removed from the picture. Evolutionary theory makes it appear as if combinations of material ingredients created life, and then various species evolved one from another naturally.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is foolishness. Combination means God. God is combining. Combination does not take place automatically. Suppose I am cooking. There are many ingredients gathered for cooking, but they do not combine together by themselves. I am the cooker, and in cooking I combine together oil, spices, rice, *dāl*, and so on; and in this way, nice dishes are produced. Similarly, the combination of ingredients in nature requires God. Otherwise, how does the moment arise in which the combination takes place? Do you place all the ingredients in the kitchen

and in an hour come back and say, "Oh, where is my meal?" Nonsense! Who will cook your meal? You'll starve. But take help of a living being, and then we'll cook and we can eat. This is our experience. So if there is combination, then who is combining? They are fools not to know how combination takes place.

Devotee: Scientists now say life arose out of four basic elements: carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, oxygen.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: If the basic principle is chemicals, who made the chemicals? That question should be asked.

Devotee: Isn't it possible that one day science will discover the source of these chemicals?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: There is no question of discovering: the answer is already known, although it may not be known to you. We

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know. The *Vedānta* says, *janmādy asya yataḥ*: the original source of everything is Brahman, Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa says, *aham sarvasya prabhavo mattaḥ sarvaṁ pravartate*: "I am the origin of everything" [Bg. 10.8]. So we know that there is a big brain who is doing everything. We know. The scientists may not know; that is their foolishness.

Devotee: They might say the same thing about us.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, they cannot say the same thing about us. We accept Kṛṣṇa, but not blindly. Our predecessors, the great *ācāryas* and learned scholars, have accepted Kṛṣṇa, so we are not following blindly. We claim that Kṛṣṇa is the origin, but what claim can the scientist make? As soon as he says "chance," it means that he has no knowledge. We don't say chance. We have an original cause; but he says "chance." Therefore he has no knowledge.

Devotee: They try to trace back the origin by means of excavation. And they have found that gradually through the years the animal forms are evolving toward increasingly more complex and specialized forms, from invertebrates to fishes, then to amphibians, then to reptiles and insects, to mammals and birds, and finally to humans. In that process many species, like the dinosaurs, appeared, flourished, and then disappeared forever, became extinct. Eventually, primitive apelike creatures appeared, and from them man gradually developed.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Is the theory that the human body comes from the monkeys?

Devotee: Humans and monkeys are related. They come from the same—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Related? Everything is related; that is another thing. But if the monkey body is developing into a human body, then why, after the human body is developed, why doesn't the monkey species cease to exist?

Devotee: The humans and the monkeys are branches of the same tree.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, and both are now existing. Similarly, we say that at the time the evolutionists say life began, at that time there were human beings existing.

Devotee: They find no evidence for that.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Why no evidence?

Devotee: In the ground. By excavation. They find no evidence in the ground.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Is the ground the only evidence? Is there no other evidence?

Devotee: They accept only the testimony of the senses as evidence.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But they still cannot prove that there was no human being at the time they say life originated. They cannot prove that.

Devotee: It appears that in certain layers of earth there are remains of apelike men—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Apelike men or manlike apes are still existing now, alongside human beings. If one thing has been developed by the transformation of another thing, then that original thing should no longer be in existence. When in this way a cause has produced its effect, the cause ceases to exist. But in this case we see that the cause is still present, that there are still monkeys and apes . . .

Devotee: But monkeys did not cause men; both came from the same common ancestor. That is their account.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: We say that we *all* come from God, the same ancestor, the same father. The original father is Kṛṣṇa. As Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* [14.5], *sarva-yoniṣu kaunteya*, "Of as many forms as there are," *aham bīja-pradaḥ pitā*, "I am the seed-giving father." So what is your objection to this?

Devotee: Well, if I examine the layers of earth, I find in the deepest layers no evidence—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: You are packed up with layers of earth, that's all. That is the boundary of your knowledge. But that is not knowledge; there are many other evidences.

Devotee: But surely if men were living millions of years ago, they would have left evidence, tangible evidence, behind them. I could see their remains.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: So I say that in human society bodies are burned after death, cremated. So where does your excavator get his bones?

Devotee: Well, that's possible, but—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: According to our Vedic system, the body is burned to ashes after death. Where, therefore, would the rascal get the bones? Animals are not burned; their bones remain. But human beings are burned, and therefore they cannot find their bones.

Devotee: I'm just saying that it appears, through layer after layer of deposits in the earth, that biological forms tend to progress from simple and primitive forms to more and more complex and specialized ones, until finally civilized man appears.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But at the present moment both simple and complex forms are existing. One did not develop into the other. For example, my childhood body has developed into my adult body, and the child's body is no longer there. So if the higher, complex species developed from the simpler, lower species, then we should see no simple species. But all species are now existing simultaneously.

When I see all 8,400,000 species of life existing, what is the question of development? Each species exists now, and it existed long ago. You might not have seen it, but you have no proper source of knowledge. You might have missed it. That is another thing.

Devotee: But all the evidence shows otherwise. Five hundred million years ago there were no land animals; there were only aquatics.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is nonsense. You cannot give a history of five hundred million years! Where is the history of five hundred million years? You are simply imagining. You say historical evidence, but where is your evidence? You cannot give a history for more than three thousand years, and you are speaking about five hundred million. This is all nonsense.

Devotee: If I dig far into the ground, layer by layer—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: By dirt you are calculating five hundred million years? It could be *ten* years. You cannot give the history of human society past three thousand years, so how can you speak of four hundred or five hundred million years ago? Where were you then? Were you there, so you can say that all these species were not there? This is imagination. In this way everyone can imagine and say some nonsense.

We accept evolution, but not that the forms of the species are changing. The bodies are all already there, but the soul is evolving by changing bodies and by transmigrating from one body to another. I have evolved from my childhood body to my adult body, and now my childhood body is extinct. But there are many other children. Similarly, all the species are now existing simultaneously, and they were all there in the past.

For example, if you are traveling in a train, you find first class, second class, third class; they are all existing. If you pay a higher fare and enter the first-class carriage, you cannot say, "Now the first class is created." It was always existing. So the defect of the evolutionists is that they have no information of the soul. The soul is evolving, transmigrating, from one com-

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partment to another compartment, simply changing place. The *Paṇḍa Purāna* says that there are 8,400,000 species of life, and the soul evolves through them. This evolutionary process we accept: The soul evolves from aquatics to plants, to insects, to birds, to animals, and then to the human forms. But all these forms are already there. They do not change. One does not become extinct and another survive. All of them are existing simultaneously.

Devotee: But Darwin says there are many species, like dinosaurs, that are seen to be extinct.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: What has he seen? He is not so powerful that he can see everywhere or everything. His power to see is limited, and by that limited power he cannot conclude that one species is extinct. That is not possible. No scientist will accept that. After all, all the senses by which you

gather knowledge are limited, so how can you say this is finished or that is extinct? You cannot see. You cannot search out. The earth's circumference is twenty-five thousand miles; have you searched through all the layers of rock and soil over the whole earth? Have you excavated all those places?

Devotee: No.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Therefore our first charge against Darwin is this: He says there were no human beings millions of years ago. That is not a fact. We now see human beings existing along with all other species, and it should be concluded that this situation always existed. Human life has always been there. Darwin cannot say there was no human life.

Devotee: We don't see any dinosaurs existing.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: You do not see because you have no power to see. Your senses are very limited, so what you see or don't see cannot be authoritative. So many people—the majority of people—say, "I don't see God." Shall we accept, then, that there is no God? Are we crazy for being devotees of God?

Devotee: No, but dinosaurs—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But simply by dinosaurs being missing you cannot make your case. What about all the other species?

Devotee: Many, many others are also extinct.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Say I accept that many are extinct—because the evolutionary process means that as an earlier species gradually changes into a later species, the earlier vanishes, becomes extinct. But we see that many monkeys are still here. Man evolves from the simians, but simians have not disappeared. Monkeys are here, and men are here.

Devotee: But still I'm not convinced. If we make geological investigations all over the world, not just here and there, but in many parts of the world, and in every case we find the same thing—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But I say you have not studied all over the world. Has Darwin studied all the continents on this planet? Has he gone down into the depths of the seas and there excavated all the layers of the earth? No. So his knowledge is imperfect. This is the relative world, and here everyone speaks with relative knowledge. Therefore we should accept knowledge from a person who is not within this relativity.

Devotee: Actually, Darwin hit upon his theory because of what he observed on his voyage in 1835 to the Galápagos Islands, off the coast of South America. He found there species that exist nowhere else—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That means he has not seen all the species. He has not traveled all over the universe. He has seen one island, (continued on page 9)



The Glories of LORD CAITANYA

Part 2: The Birth of God

“Of course, it is bewildering, O soul of the universe,
that You take birth, though You are the vital force and the unborn.”

—*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.8.30)

by MAṆDALEŚVARA DĀSA

Continuing a special series of articles commemorating the five-hundredth anniversary of Lord Caitanya's appearance in Māyāpur, West Bengal. By His life and teachings, He inaugurated the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who was born 499 years ago in West Bengal, India, to Jagannātha Mīśra and Śrīmatī Śacīdevī, and who propagated the chanting of the names of God, is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

You won't find that last part stated in the encyclopedias and history books where Lord Caitanya's name and biographical sketch are given, but after all, what can encyclopedias and history books teach us about the science of God? Perhaps persons whose interest in God and spiritual life is but superficial might find satisfaction in some academic biographical sketch. But those who want to know the truth about the identity of Lord Caitanya and the transcendental nature of His birth and activities will have to consult the Vedic literature. Although usually associated with the grand civilization of ancient India, the Vedic literature is for all people

Lord Caitanya's appearance as the son of Jagannātha Mīśra and Śrīmatī Śacīdevī was a transcendental event.

and for all times. Provided we study it respectfully and intelligently under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master, it is fully applicable today. And there's really no other way of understanding the deep, mystical concepts of the science of God.

Often, when people hear that we accept Lord Caitanya as God, they immediately pose certain questions about Him, trying, understandably, to get a handle on what to them is a new religious concept. They want to know where and when He was born, what His teachings and activities were, and so on.

You've had the experience—you try to fit a new idea into your scheme of things. So you may try to evaluate Lord Caitanya in terms of, say, what was going on in Europe at the time: Renaissance, Reformation, Columbus, or what have you. The natural tendency will be to see Lord Caitanya as a social or historical phenomenon, a product of His times and a reaction to them, just as was Luther, Thomas Aquinas, or any other important religious figure. When you hear that Lord Caitanya was born fifteen centuries after Christ, you conclude that Lord Caitanya's is a new religion. And when you remind yourself that you never discussed Lord Caitanya or read about Him in school and

haven't really heard of Him before, you conclude that He is of minor significance.

But wait a minute. To understand a personality of the stature and magnitude of Lord Caitanya, you will have to break from your conventional ways of considering new ideas. You will have to broaden your outlook and admit information from new sources (new to you, that is). True, you need at first a few quick answers, some superficial facts. To be sure, someone did the same for me fourteen years ago, when I first began integrating myself into the spiritual movement started by Lord Caitanya and disseminated by His pure devotee, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder and spiritual master of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. But superficial facts, although handy for a fill-in-the-blank quiz, tell us little of the transcendental nature of Lord Caitanya's birth and activities. That's why, as I was saying, we have to consult the Vedic literature.

Birth of the Unborn

According to the Vedic literature and to the rigorous philosophical and devotional tradition known as Gauḍīya-Vaiṣṇavism, Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself. The main distinction between Lord

Kṛṣṇa and Lord Caitanya is that when Kṛṣṇa appears as Himself, He reveals Himself as God, whereas when He appears as Lord Caitanya, He plays the part of a pure devotee of God. To understand the transcendental nature of Lord Caitanya's birth, therefore, we can do no better than to refer to the fourth chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, wherein Lord Kṛṣṇa explains the transcendental nature of His own birth. In other words, although in the *Gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa is speaking of His own transcendental birth, since He and Lord Caitanya are one and the same, the philosophy stated there is as applicable to Lord Caitanya as it is to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

In the *Gītā* the Lord says that He does not actually take birth; He is unborn (*ajah*), although He appears in the material world at various times. What to speak of God, even ordinary beings like you and me do not take birth. Just as God is eternal, so we, being part and parcel of Him, are also eternal. Of course, birth is a common, everyday occurrence, but what is that birth, really? You, I, and all other living beings are eternal spirit souls, transmigrating from one body to another, one species to another—birth after birth. And in each birth we forget entirely our previous material identity. Thus, in one life we may be an American, in the next a Russian; in one life we may be a human being, in the next an animal or plant. Yes, unborn and eternal we are, but we take birth again and again in the sense that we assume completely new material identities again and again.

Lord Caitanya, however, exists beyond this world of birth and death, in His own eternal identity. When He takes birth within this material world, therefore, His birth is not like ours; He appears in His transcendental form of eternity, bliss, and knowledge.

The transcendental body of Lord Caitanya is described in the Sanskrit language as *avyayātmā*. *Avyaya* means "eternal, indestructible," and *ātmā* refers to body, mind, and also soul. So, here we have an important distinction between our birth and the birth of Lord Caitanya. Although we are eternal, we inhabit a temporary material body. For Lord Caitanya, however, body and soul are one; both are spiritual. Therefore, of the Lord it is said, *ajo 'pi sann avyayātmā*: He is unborn, and His body is not material, but is transcendental and eternal.

Perhaps we can better understand the Lord's transcendental birth with an analogy: the sun. The sun is always present in the sky, but it is not always visible to us. At sunset the earth comes between our eyes and the sun. Then twelve or so hours later, at sunrise, we can again see the sun. So although the sun may appear to be coming and going—taking birth and dying, according to some primitive peoples—it is always

present. And like the sun, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is also always present. But because of our limited position, sometimes we see Him and sometimes we do not. When we speak of Lord Caitanya's appearing some five hundred years ago, we say He took birth. But actually, He had always been existing in His eternal, spiritual form and always will be. Thus the Lord's birth is transcendental. In the Vedic literature the Lord is addressed as follows: "Of course, it is bewildering, O soul of the universe, that You take birth, though You are the vital force and the unborn" (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.8.30).

Now what about the fact that Lord Caitanya appeared as an infant and then grew to childhood, to youth, and to man-

***Ages ago, when the
Lord appeared as
half man, half lion,
Nṛsimhadeva,
He burst forth in one
explosive moment
from a stone pillar;
towering and
terrifying, He shook
the entire universe
with His almighty
power and rage.***

hood? Does this mean that His body was ordinary, temporary, and material? No, not at all. The Lord is never afflicted by the material energy and is not subject to material laws. We, however, are under the illusion of matter, so much so that we view the Lord's birth and activities as material. Again, for a clear understanding let's refer to our analogy of the sun.

Metaphysical Handicap

Which is greater, a cloud or the sun? The sun, of course. In fact, the sun creates the cloud. And yet at times a cloud may appear to cover the sun. This does not, however, attest to the sun's limitation but to ours. We, not the sun, are covered by the cloud. Similarly, matter is a creation of God, and like a cloud, it prevents us from seeing Him. What to speak of God, even our very selves we cannot see, for we too are spirit (although at present, because of the covering of material illusion, *māyā*, we

can see only matter). When, for whatever reason, we judge the form or the activities or the birth of God to be material, that is because we, in our finite position, cannot see beyond the cloud of matter. It is our vision, and not the Lord, that is material.

Now what this should all come down to is the humbling realization that we are eminently unqualified to see or to know spirit, to comprehend the eternal form of God, to understand the transcendental birth of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. This metaphysical handicap plagues all living beings and would prevent us from ever rising out of our suffering repeated birth and death. But compassionately, Lord Caitanya appeared on earth five centuries ago so that we, despite our limited senses and mind, could perceive His gorgeous form, hear His incomparable teachings, grasp His transcendental meaning, and thus be lifted out of the muck of material illusion. To consider His birth material, therefore, would be imprudent.

Another analogy: The chief of state may enter a government prison, but that does not make him a prisoner. Only a fool would scoff, "Ha! The president is a prisoner, like me." Not only is the president not a prisoner, but he has the authority to free one who is. Similarly, because of our rebelling against God since time immemorial, this material world has become our prison, and we are incarcerated within these material bodies, serving a life-after-life sentence. When Lord Caitanya, the supreme ruler of this prison (as well as of the eternally liberated realm beyond) comes here to free us, it behooves us to acknowledge His exalted position and not, like so many coarse prisoners, try to drag Him down to our level. By properly understanding the birth of Lord Caitanya, we will attain the perfection of life. Therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa explains in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.9), "One who understands the transcendental nature of My appearance and activities does not, upon leaving the body, take birth again in this material world, but attains My eternal abode."

Lord Caitanya's taking birth seemingly like an ordinary infant is one of the most relishable topics for the Lord's pure devotees. Of course, most people tend to fixate on a conception of God as the Almighty, the Creator. But hurling worlds into orbit and parting seas do not constitute the greatest glories of God. A much higher and more intimate understanding of God is revealed in His humanlike birth and activities. Certainly Lord Caitanya did not need to take birth as an infant; He could have simply manifested Himself, without any so-called mother or father. After all, He is the father of all living beings and of all existence. Ages ago, when the Lord appeared as the half man, half lion, Nṛsimha-

deva, He burst forth in one explosive moment from a stone pillar; towering and terrifying, He shook the entire universe with His power and rage. But in His appearance as Lord Caitanya, a golden infant on the lap of His enraptured mother, He was no less God. In fact, experts in the *bhakti* science have ascertained that the Lord's appearance as the child of two of His most exalted devotees displays the greatest mercy, both for His parents and for those so fortunate as to hear about His birth and childhood pastimes.

Divine Purpose

Lord Caitanya came to this prison of the material world not like you and me, forced by the inexorable law of *karma*, but of His own free will. This is always the case when God descends. Forty-five centuries before Lord Caitanya, Lord Kṛṣṇa had enunciated the essence of spiritual instruction in His *Bhagavad-gītā*: "Give up all religious

duties and spiritual paths and simply surrender to Me." Lord Caitanya also came to teach surrender to Kṛṣṇa, but, by perfectly playing the role of a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa, He not only *taught* surrender but also *demonstrated* it, specifically through chanting the holy names of God. Lord Caitanya had other reasons for appearing, but these are beyond the scope of our present discussion. His propagation of the chanting of the holy names, however, was central to His mission.

According to the Vedic literature, Lord Caitanya appeared during this present degraded age called Kali-yuga to establish the specific religious principle for all humanity. As the Sanskrit scriptures say, He came to establish the *yuga-dharma*, "the religion for the age." And the *yuga-dharma* is the chanting of the holy names of God: *kāla tad dhari-kīrtanāt*. It is most fitting, therefore, that on the night of Lord Caitanya's birth, the holy name also advented.

On that night there occurred a full lunar eclipse, and as was the custom among strict followers of Vedic culture, millions of sincere devotees of God took their sacred bath standing waist-deep in the sea or in a holy river such as the Ganges. Throughout the duration of the eclipse, everyone remained standing in the water and, as was also the custom, chanted the holy names: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. Even those who did not understand began mocking the chanting, until practically the whole of India resounded with the holy names.

This, of course, was no coincidence, but was an arrangement by the Lord to indicate the special significance of His birth: "I have come out of My mercy to lead the world back to Godhead. Everyone chant the holy names: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare." 🌸

EVOLUTION

(continued from page 5)

but he has not seen the whole creation. So how can he determine what species exist and don't exist? He has studied one part of this earth, but there are many millions of planets. He has not seen all of them; he has not excavated the depths of all the planets. So how can he conclude, "This is nature"? He has not seen everything, nor is it possible for anyone to.

Devotee: Let's just confine ourselves to this planet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, why should we? Nature is not only on this planet.

Devotee: Because you said that on this planet there were complex forms of living beings millions and millions of years ago.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: We are not talking about this planet, but about anywhere. You are referring to nature. Nature is not limited or confined to this planet. You cannot say that. Nature, material nature, includes millions of universes, and in each and every universe there are millions of planets. If you have studied only this planet, your knowledge is insufficient.

Devotee: But you said before that millions of years ago on this planet there were horses, elephants, civilized men—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, yes.

Devotee: But from hundreds of different sources there is no evidence.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: I say they are existing now—men, horses, snakes, insects, trees. So why not millions of years ago?

Devotee: Because there is no evidence.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That doesn't mean—! You limit your study to one planet. That is not full knowledge.

Devotee: I just want to find out for the

time being about—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Why the time being? If you are not perfect in your knowledge, then why should I accept your theory? That is my point.

Devotee: Well, if you claim that millions of years ago there were complex forms of life on this planet . . .

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Whether on this planet or on another planet, that is not the point. The point is that all species exist and keep on existing by the arrangement of nature. We learn from the Vedic texts that there are 8,400,000 species established. They may be in your neighborhood or they may be in my neighborhood—the number and types are fixed. But if you simply study your neighborhood, it is not perfect knowledge. Evolution we admit. But your evolutionary theory is not perfect. Our theory of evolution is perfect. From the *Vedas* we know that there are 8,400,000 forms of bodies provided by nature, but the soul is the same in all, in spite of the different types of body. There is no change in the soul, and therefore the *Bhagavad-gītā* [5.18] says that one who is wise, a *pañḍita*, does not see the species or the class; he sees oneness, equality. *Pañḍitāḥ sama-darśinaḥ*. One who sees to the bottom sees the soul, and he does not find there any difference between all these species.

Devotee: So Darwin and other material scientists who have no information about the soul—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: They're missing the whole point.

Devotee: They say that all living things tend to evolve from lower to higher. In the history of the earth—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That may be accepted. For example, in an apartment building

there are different kinds of apartments: first-class apartments, second-class apartments, third-class apartments. According to your desire and qualification, as you are fit to pay the rent, you are allowed to move up to the better apartments. But the different apartments are already there. They are not evolving. The residents are evolving by moving to new apartments as they desire.

Devotee: As they desire.

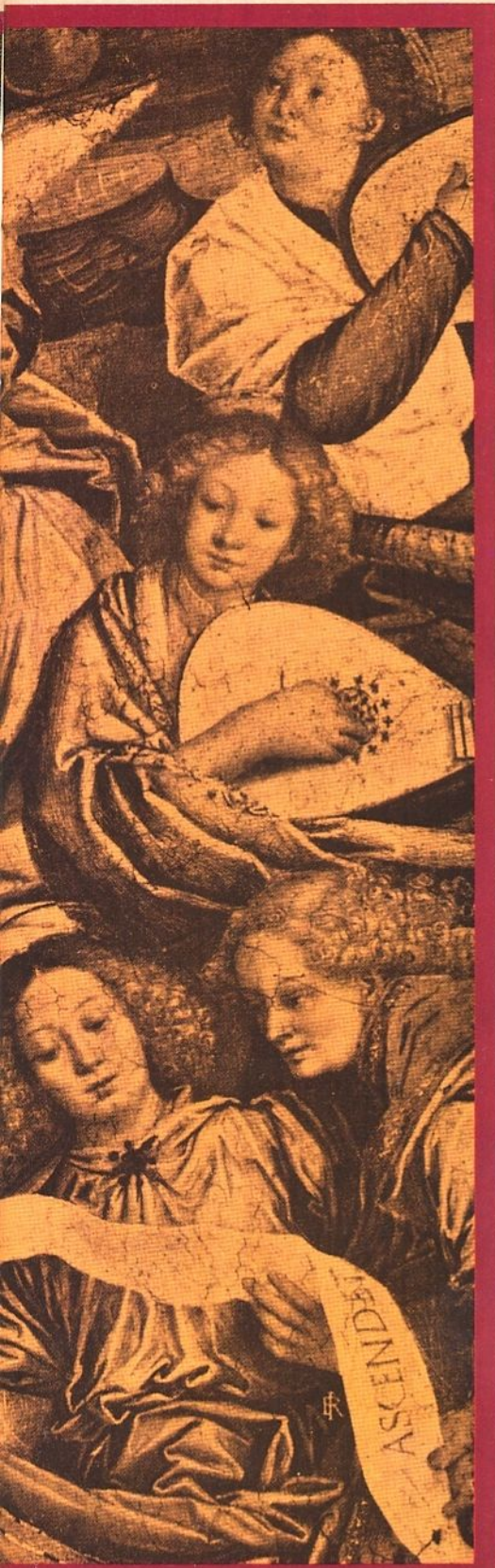
Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. According to our mentality at the time of death, we get another "apartment," another body. But the "apartment" is already there, not that I'm creating the "apartment."

And the classes of "apartments" are fixed at 8,400,000. Just like the hotel-keeper: He has experience of his customers coming and wanting different kinds of facilities. So he has made all sorts of accommodations to oblige all kinds of customers. Similarly, this is God's creation. He knows how far a living entity can think, so He has made all these different species accordingly. When God thinks, "Come on, come here," nature obliges. *Prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni guṇaiḥ karmāṇi* [Bg. 3.27]: Nature is offering facility. God, Kṛṣṇa, is sitting in the heart of the living entity as Paramātmā, and He knows, "He wants this." So the Lord orders nature, "Give him this apartment," and nature obliges. "Yes, come on; here is your apartment." This is the real explanation.

Devotee: I understand and accept that. But I'm still puzzled as to why there is no geological evidence that in former times on this planet there were more complex forms.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Why are you taking
(continued on page 34)





DETAIL FROM A PAINTING BY GAUDENZIO FERRARI

Hallowed Be Thy Name

Vedic knowledge can elevate a simple religious sentiment to a profound transcendental realization.

by KUNḌALĪ DĀSA

The Bible has nearly a hundred verses that praise the power, glory, and excellence of God's hallow'd name. The Bible's authors obviously considered the holy name of the Lord very important. If we ask, however, *why* the name of the Lord is so glorious and praiseworthy, the Bible offers no explanation. The Vedic scriptures, on the other hand, not only glorify the holy name but also offer a systematic philosophical explanation of it and instruct us in its practical realization as well.

One may argue that for the person who faithfully accepts the authority of scripture, no rigorous theological explanation of the Lord's holy name is required. This is certainly true. Nevertheless, it is a fact of our times that very few such persons exist. Most people do require some philosophical groundwork to support their religious convictions. Rarely indeed do we come across a person who accepts the scriptural injunctions with unshakable faith and yet doesn't come off as an unreasonable, frothy-mouthed dogmatist or a syrupy sentimentalist.

Moreover, with the prevailing popularity of atheistic science, God and religion have become almost synonymous with superstition and tomfoolery. This situation has come about primarily because religious folk, especially in the Western world, are unable to put forward well-

reasoned philosophical and scientific arguments to support their conclusions. Consequently, the task of convincing people in general about the efficacy of the holy name is more difficult than ever. We need a religious system that is both philosophically sound and scientifically verifiable. Without such a system, it is virtually impossible to combat the obstacles to faith in God and His holy name imposed by atheistic science and various speculative philosophies.

Clearly, a scriptural tradition that can stand the tests of philosophic scrutiny and scientific investigation would be superior to one that can't. If, therefore, an objective analysis reveals one scriptural tradition to be more thorough and convincing than the others, then we should accept it, without being swayed by sectarian leanings. The idea is not one-upmanship; the idea is to destroy ignorance with the torch of knowledge. After all, light from any source is still light.

Nevertheless, experience tells me that persons with a sectarian religious outlook will write off my statements as sectarian. That attitude has a certain merit for such people: it makes their view the correct one, a priori, thus saving them the toil and bother of any further investigation. Others, however, will want to shelve partisan feelings and reservations pending a thorough analysis of the

Kṛṣṇa conscious precepts on this important matter.

The Vedic scriptures describe a complete theology of the holy name, encompassing its attributes, its effects, its practice, and its propagation. One fundamental precept of that theology is that because God is unlimited He has innumerable names. In other words, for each of His unlimited attributes and pastimes He has a name. For instance, He is called Jagannātha, the Lord of the universe; Paramātmā, the Supersoul; Īśvara, the supreme controller; and Kṛṣṇa, the all-attractive person. In the Western tradition God also has many names: Yahweh, Jehovah, Shadday, Adonai, and Elohim, to name a few. They mean “the possessor of infinite wisdom,” “the possessor of infinite intelligence,” “the Supreme Lord,” “the Almighty,” and “God” respectively. These names are unfamiliar to most of us because translations of the Bible use in the main only “Lord” and “God.”

Another fundamental Vedic precept regarding the holy name is that the Lord and His names are identical. Unlike us, He is fully present in His transcendental names. How is that possible? The Lord is by definition unlimited and absolute. That means His name is also unlimited and absolute. To put it another way, God is perfect and complete and so is everything in relation to Him, including His holy name. “Perfect and complete” means that all the qualities we attribute to God are also found in His divine names.

That the Lord and His names are nondifferent and equally potent is confirmed in the *Sikṣāṣṭaka*, an eight-verse prayer composed by Caitanya Mahāprabhu.* He explains that any of the Lord’s names can bestow all good fortune upon a sincere chanter because the Lord, out of His mercy, has invested all His transcendental potencies in the sound of His name. Through His names He has made Himself easily available to everyone. Accordingly, the holy name is called the sound incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

The essential elements of this aspect of the theology are summed up in the following verse from the *Padma Purāna*:

*Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Kṛṣṇa Himself in the role of His own devotee. He appeared in India five hundred years ago. Please see “The Glories of Lord Caitanya” on page seven to learn more.

The holy name of Kṛṣṇa [God] is transcendently blissful. It bestows all spiritual benedictions, for it is Kṛṣṇa Himself, the reservoir of all pleasure. It is not a material vibration under any condition, and it is no less powerful than Kṛṣṇa Himself. Since Kṛṣṇa’s name is not contaminated by any material qualities, there is no question of its being involved with the mundane world. Kṛṣṇa’s name is always liberated and spiritual; it is never conditioned by the laws of material nature. This is because the name of Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa Himself are identical.

As a fire burns dry grass to ashes, so God’s name, whether chanted knowingly or unknowingly, burns to ashes, without fail, all the reactions of one’s sinful activities.

If a person unaware of the effective potency of a certain medicine takes that medicine or is forced to take it, it will act even without his knowledge because its potency does not depend on the patient’s understanding. Similarly, even though one does not know the value of chanting the holy name of the Lord, if one chants it, knowingly or unknowingly, the chanting will be very effective.



SCULPTURE BY AGOSTINO DI DUCIO

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO

Being identical with Kṛṣṇa, the all-pure, the holy name can purify anyone who comes in contact with it. The example is sometimes given that just as the powerful sun can purify urine and filth and not become contaminated, so contact with the supremely pure holy name of God can purify the heart of even the most sinful, abominable person. This purifying power of the holy names is explained in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (6.2.18–19):

These two verses clearly indicate that the chanting of God’s hallow’d names is not only the most purifying activity, but it is also nonsectarian. It is a universal and absolutely beneficial spiritual exercise. The merciful holy name makes no distinction of gender, caste, culture, or creed. Lord Caitanya therefore praised the chanting process as “the prime benediction for humanity.”

How does it work? What are its effects? Regular hearing and chanting of the Lord’s holy names removes selfish desires from the heart. The pure, spiritual desire to render loving service to the Supreme Lord replaces them.

When an irrevocable desire for loving service is established in the heart of a sincere chanter, pernicious qualities such as lust, anger, envy, greed, lamentation, and illusion are destroyed. In that purified state he realizes the Personality of Godhead. In other words, he sees the Supreme Lord face to face. As the Bible says, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God” (Mt. 5:8). Because the power of the holy name is verifiable in this way, the Vedic literatures describe chanting as *vijñāna*, a scientific process.

Ultimately, perfection in chanting the holy name promotes the chanter to the spiritual world, the kingdom of God. There, in a spiritual body, he engages in direct devotional service to the Lord forever. This attainment is the professed goal of all the world’s

major religions.

In addition to giving direct realization of the Lord and elevation to His transcendental abode, the chanting of the holy names of the Lord can immerse the chanter in a profound state of spiritual rapture. Sometimes these ecstatic states produce transformations in the body of an elevated devotee. Weeping and stammering are two of the symptoms of ecstatic love of God. Advanced devotees, however, do not wish

to draw attention to themselves, so they try to contain these manifestations of their ecstasy.

The scriptures warn us against imitating exalted states of devotional ecstasy, explaining that a steady state of intense transcendental bliss is possible only for

those who have progressed through all the antecedent stages in the chanting process.

Lord Caitanya taught us how to derive the maximum benefit from chanting the holy name:

One should chant the holy name of the Lord in a humble state of mind, thinking oneself

lower than a straw in the street; one should be more tolerant than a tree, devoid of all sense of false prestige, and ready to offer all respect to others. In such a humble state of mind one can chant the holy names of the Lord constantly.

Following this teaching, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the founder and spiritual master of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, has advised us that “the great chanting for deliverance” should be done “like the genuine cry of a child for its mother.” Calling on the name of the Lord in this manner is sure to deliver the sincere chanter back home, back to Godhead. It should be noted, however, that the chanting still goes on even after one attains the liberated state.

Like the Bible, the Vedic scriptures attach utmost importance to the glorification of God’s divine names. Lord Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, “Of sacrifices I am *japa*, chanting of the holy names.” The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* says that although this quarrelsome age is an ocean of faults, it has one saving grace: by chanting the holy names of the Lord one can become free from material bondage and go back to the spiritual world. And the *Bṛhan-nāradya Purāṇa* emphatically states that there is no means of God realization in this age save and except “chanting the holy name, chanting the holy name, chanting the holy name of the Lord.”

As for propagation of the holy name, the scriptures declare that chanters who work to this end are the nearest and dearest among the Lord’s devoted servants. They are described as the most munificent welfare workers in human society because their contribution is for everyone’s eternal well-being. Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu therefore ordered that the chanting of the holy names be distributed to every town and village on the globe.

In pursuance of His order, the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is determinedly preaching the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* all over the world. This particular combination of names—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare—is recommended because it is especially effective in purifying the heart. However, any genuine name or combination of God’s names will produce the desired effect.

From the preceding discussion, a discerning reader can easily understand that the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness gives profound depth and meaning to the familiar phrase “hallowed be Thy name.” The natural result of this understanding is that one feels inspiration to dedicate oneself to the practice and propagation of the holy name. Gradually, with perseverance and practice, one will get first-hand realization of its meaning.

Kṛṣṇa or Christ— The Name Is the Same

The following conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and Father Emmanuel Jungclaussen, a Benedictine monk from Niederalteich Monastery, took place in the spring of 1974 in Frankfurt.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: What is the meaning of the word *Christ*?

Father Emmanuel: *Christ* comes from the Greek word *Christos*, meaning “the anointed one.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: *Christos* is the Greek version of the word *Kṛṣṇa*.

Father Emmanuel: That is very interesting.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: When an Indian person calls on Kṛṣṇa, he often says, “Kṛṣṭa.” *Kṛṣṭa* is a Sanskrit word meaning “attraction.” So when we address God as “Christ,” “Kṛṣṭa,” or “Kṛṣṇa,” we indicate the same Supreme Personality of Godhead. When Jesus said, “Our Father, who art in heaven, sanctified be Thy name,” that name of God was “Kṛṣṭa” or “Kṛṣṇa.” Do you agree?

Father Emmanuel: I think Jesus, as the son of God, has revealed to us the actual name of God: Christ. We can call God “Father,” but if we want to address Him by His actual name, we have to say “Christ.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. “Christ” is another way of saying *Kṛṣṭa*, and “Kṛṣṭa” is another way of pronouncing *Kṛṣṇa*, the name of God. Jesus said that one should glorify the name of God, but yesterday I heard one theologian say that God has no name—that we can call Him only “Father.” A son may call his father “Father,” but the father also has a specific name. Similarly, “God” is the general name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose specific name is Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, whether you call God “Christ,” “Kṛṣṭa,” or “Kṛṣṇa,” ultimately you are addressing the same all-attractive Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Father Emmanuel: Yes, if we speak of God’s actual name, then we must say “Christos.” In our religion, we have the Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We believe we can know the name of God only by revelation from the Son of God. Jesus Christ revealed the name of the father, and therefore we take the name Christ as the revealed name of God.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: It doesn’t matter—Kṛṣṇa or Christ—the name is the same. The main point is to follow the injunctions of the Vedic scriptures that recommend chanting the name

of God in this age.

I have come to the West only to request you to please chant the name of God. And the Bible also demands this of you. So let’s kindly cooperate and chant, and if you have a prejudice against the name “Kṛṣṇa,” then chant “Christos” or “Kṛṣṭa”—there is no difference. Śrī Caitanya said: *nāmnām akāri bahudhā nija-sarva-śaktiḥ*. God has millions and millions of names, and because there is no difference between God’s name and Himself, each one of these names has the same potency as God.” Therefore, even if you accept designations like “Hindu,” “Christian,” or “Muhammadan,” if you simply chant the name of God found in your own scriptures, you will attain the spiritual platform. Human life is meant for becoming self-realized—learning how to love God. That is the actual beauty of man. Whether you discharge this duty as a Hindu, a Christian, or a Muhammadan, it doesn’t matter—but discharge it!

Father Emmanuel: I agree.

Śrīla Prabhupāda [*pointing to a string of 108 meditation beads*]: We always have these beads, just as you have your rosary. You are chanting, but why don’t the other Christians also chant? Why should they miss this opportunity as human beings? Cats and dogs cannot chant, but we can, because we have a human tongue. If we chant the holy names of God, we cannot lose anything; on the contrary, we gain greatly. My disciples practice chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa constantly. They could also go to the cinema or do so many other things, but they have given everything up. They eat neither fish nor meat nor eggs, they don’t take intoxicants, they don’t drink, they don’t smoke, they don’t partake in gambling; they don’t speculate, and they don’t maintain illicit sexual connections. But they do chant the holy name of God. If you would like to cooperate with us, then go to the churches and chant “Christ,” “Kṛṣṭa,” or “Kṛṣṇa.” What could be the objection?

Father Emmanuel: There is none. For my part, I would be glad to join you . . .

Śrīla Prabhupāda: I think the Christian priests should cooperate with this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. They should chant the name Christ or Christos and should stop condoning the slaughter of animals. This program follows the teachings of the Bible; it is not my philosophy. Please act accordingly and you will see how the world situation will improve.

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

Servant of the Senses

The following conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and Dr. Chaturbhai P. Patel took place in Bombay on March 23, 1974.

Dr. Patel: The other morning, when a young lady told you, “I am practicing medicine and serving people,” you said, in effect, “You are a fool.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. She is not serving. Of course, as they say, “Everyone is serving”—serving money. Everyone is serving, but unless he gets paid, no service. That is not service. Everyone in the material world is serving somebody. Because by nature he is a servant.

Dr. Patel: He’s serving everyone.

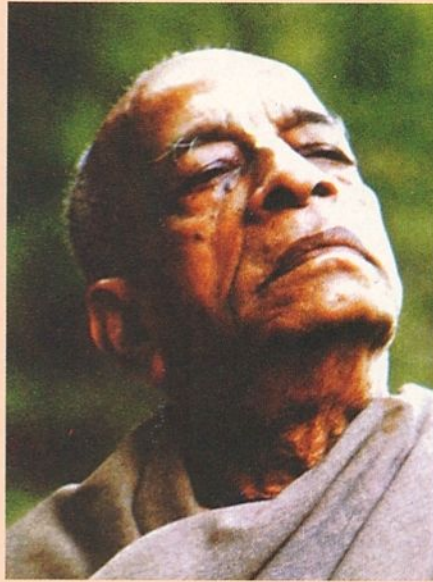
Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, no. As the English proverb says, “Everyone’s servant is no one’s servant.” Anyway, service is required. You cannot live without serving. That is not possible. Every one of us is serving somebody. But the result of this material service is disagreeable. I have given before the example that Mahatma Gandhi gave so much service. But the result was he was killed. He was killed. That person who killed him did not think, “Oh, this old gentleman has given so much service to us. Even if I do not agree with him, how can I kill him?” But people are so very ungrateful—you see?—that whatever service you may render, they’ll never be satisfied.

Dr. Patel: Gandhi’s service—he was doing his prescribed duty.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, actually. But first of all, let us define service. What is service? Service means there is a servant and a master. And service is the transaction between the servant and his master. But we have created so many unprescribed masters. The wife master, the family master, the country master, the legislative master, this master, that master—you see? And we are giving service. “Oh, it is my duty. I am giving service.” But ask any of these masters, “Are you satisfied?” He’ll say, “What have you done?”

Dr. Patel: The master won’t be satisfied.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No. These self-created masters will never be satisfied. And really, by serving them we are trying to serve and satisfy our own senses. I am giving service to my wife because I think she will satisfy my senses. Therefore I’m not giving service to my wife—I’m giving service to my senses. So ultimately, we are servants of



our own senses. We are nobody’s servants. This is our material position. Yes, ultimately, we are servants of our senses.

Constitutionally, I am a servant, but at the present moment, being conditioned by the material nature, I am giving service to my senses. But my senses are not independent. They are totally dependent. For instance, I am now moving my hands, but if the true master of my hand, Kṛṣṇa, paralyzes it—no more moving. Nor can I revive the moving capacity of my hand. So although I am claiming I am master of my hand, master of my leg, and so on, actually I am not. The master is different.

One of Kṛṣṇa’s other names is Hṛṣīkeśa, “the creator and master of all senses.” Therefore we should transfer our service to Lord Kṛṣṇa. *Hṛṣīkena hṛṣīkeśa-sevanam bhaktir ucyate*: we have tried in so many ways to serve our senses, but when we engage our senses in serving the master of the senses, we get the spiritual satisfaction of *bhakti*, devotion. Devotional service to Kṛṣṇa is also service, but it is not service to the inert senses—it is service to the living master of the senses. This is real satisfaction. So constitutionally I am a servant. I cannot become the master. My position is that I have to serve. And if I don’t serve the master of the senses, then I will have to serve the senses and go unsatisfied.

Dr. Patel: Now, the fact remains that each man does have prescribed duties to wife, family, country, and government.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes.

Dr. Patel: We have different kinds of bodies and senses, also, and that gives us different duties. One man has to act as a priest or teacher, another as an administrator or military man, another as a farmer or merchant, and still another as a laborer or craftsman. And when a man does his duty without expectation of any fruits, this is as good as devotion to the Lord.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, no. Not expecting any fruits is not enough. You must do more than that. You must give the fruits unto Kṛṣṇa. Give the result of your prescribed duties to Kṛṣṇa. You can earn a million dollars, but don’t simply take it all yourself or lavish it on your family. Give this fruit to Kṛṣṇa. That is real service.

Just like you are working as a medical practitioner. So give your earnings to Kṛṣṇa. Then you become perfect. We simply have to see that by our work Kṛṣṇa is satisfied. Kṛṣṇa says *yat karoṣi*: “Never mind what you are doing.” *Tat kuruṣva mad-arpaṇam*: “Give Me it.” [*Śrīla Prabhupāda laughs.*] And people say, “No, no, no, sir. I am serving You, but the money is in my pocket.”

Dr. Patel: Everything is Kṛṣṇa’s. How can you give anything? Even a leaf?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Oh, yes, yes. Just like these boys and girls are giving. They are giving their whole life. They do not ask me for money: “My dear sir, please give me some money; I will go to the cinema.” They are serving, and they have given everything. This is service. They are not poor. They’re earning, but everything for Kṛṣṇa.

If you divide your income partially—“Some percentage for Kṛṣṇa, some percentage for my sense gratification”—then Kṛṣṇa says, *ye yathā mām prapadyante tāms tathaiva bhajāmy aham*: “As all surrender unto Me, I reward them accordingly, proportionately.” If you have spent cent percent of your energy for Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa is cent percent for you. And if you have spent one percent for Kṛṣṇa, He is one percent for you. Responsive cooperation.

This movement has advanced so much all over the world because we have these boys and girls who have dedicated everything for Kṛṣṇa. Therefore it has so quickly advanced. They do not think of anything personal. Only how to serve Kṛṣṇa. *Saṁsiddhir hari-toṣaṇam*: the highest perfection is to please the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

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 SIX

Creation of the Universal Form

In this installment of our continuing presentation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, the great sage Maitreya tells Vidura, an eternal associate of Lord Kṛṣṇa, how nicely the greatly learned sages have written about the activities and glories of the Supreme Lord, whose power is immeasurable.

TEXT 34

एते वर्णाः स्वधर्मेण यजन्ति स्वगुरुं हरिम् ।
श्रद्धयात्मविशुद्धयर्थं यज्ञाताः सह वृत्तिभिः ॥३४॥

*ete varṇāḥ sva-dharmaṇa
yajanti sva-gurum harim
śraddhayātma-viśuddhy-arthaṁ
yaj-jātāḥ saha vṛttibhiḥ*

ete—all these; *varṇāḥ*—orders of society; *sva-dharmaṇa*—by one’s own occupational duties; *yajanti*—worship; *sva-gurum*—with the spiritual master; *harim*—the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *śraddhayā*—with faith and devotion; *ātma*—self; *viśuddhi-arthaṁ*—for purifying; *yaj*—from whom; *jātāḥ*—born; *saha*—along with; *vṛttibhiḥ*—occupational duty.

TRANSLATION

All these different social divisions are born, with their occupational duties and living conditions, from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus for unconditional life and self-realization one has to worship the Supreme Lord under the direction of the spiritual master.

PURPORT

Since they are born from different parts of the body of the Supreme Lord in His gigantic form, all living entities in all parts of the entire universe are supposed to be eternal servitors of the supreme body. Every part of our own body, such as the mouth, hands, thighs and legs, is meant to render service to the whole. That is their constitutional position. In subhuman life the living entities are not conscious of this constitutional position, but in the human form of life they are supposed to know this through the system of the *varṇas*, the social orders. As above mentioned, the *brāhmaṇa* is the spiritual master of all the orders of society, and thus brahminical culture, culminating in the transcendental service of the Lord, is the basic principle for purifying the soul.

In conditioned life the soul is under the impression that he can become the lord of the universe, and the last point of this misconception is to think oneself the Supreme. The foolish conditioned soul does not take into account that the Supreme cannot be conditioned by *māyā*, or illusion. If the Supreme were to become conditioned by illusion, where would be His supremacy? In that case, *māyā*, or illusion, would be the Supreme. Therefore, because the living entities are conditioned, they

cannot be supreme. The actual position of the conditioned soul is explained in this verse: all the conditioned souls are impure due to contact with the material energy in three modes of nature. Therefore it is necessary that they purify themselves under the guidance of the bona fide spiritual master, who not only is a *brāhmaṇa* by qualification but must also be a Vaiṣṇava. The only self-purifying process mentioned herein is to worship the Lord under the recognized method—under the guidance of the bona fide spiritual master. That is the natural way of purification, and no other method is recommended as bona fide. The other methods of purification may be helpful to come to this stage of life, but ultimately one has to come to this last point before he attains actual perfection. *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.19) confirms this truth as follows:

*bahūnāṁ janmanām ante
jñānavān mām prapadyate
vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti
sa mahātmā sudurlabhaḥ*

TEXT 35

एतत्क्षत्तर्भगवतो दैवकर्मात्मरूपिणः ।
कः श्रद्धयादुपाकर्तुं योगमायाबलोदयम् ॥३५॥

*etat kṣattar bhagavato
daiva-karmātma-rūpiṇaḥ
kaḥ śraddadhyāt upākartum
yogamāyā-balodayam*

etat—this; *kṣattar*—O Vidura; *bhagavataḥ*—of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *daiva-karma-ātma-rūpiṇaḥ*—of the gigantic form of transcendental work, time and nature; *kaḥ*—who else; *śraddadhyāt*—can aspire; *upākartum*—measure in totality; *yogamāyā*—internal potency; *bala-udayam*—manifested by the strength of.

TRANSLATION

O Vidura, who can estimate or measure the transcendental time, work and potency of the gigantic form manifested by the internal potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead?

PURPORT

The froggish philosophers may go on with their mental speculations on the subject matter of the *virāt*, the gigantic form exhibited by the *yogamāyā* internal potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but factually no one can measure such a vast exhibition. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (11.16), Arjuna, the recognized devotee of the Lord, says:

*aneka-bāhūdara-vaktra-netraṁ
paśyāmi tvām sarvato 'nanta-rūpam
nāntaṁ na madhyam na punas tavādīṁ
paśyāmi viśveśvara viśva-rūpa*

“O my Lord, O gigantic *viśva-rūpa* form, O master of the universe, I see innumerable hands, bodies, mouths and eyes in all directions, and they are all unlimited. I cannot find the end of this manifestation, nor do I see the middle, nor the beginning.”

Bhagavad-gītā was specifically spoken to Arjuna, and the *viśva-rūpa* was exhibited before him at his request. He was awarded the specific eyes to see this *viśva-rūpa*, yet although he was able to see the Lord's innumerable hands and mouths, he was unable to see Him completely. Since Arjuna was unable to estimate the length and breadth of the potency of the Lord, who else would be able to do so? One may only indulge in miscalculation like the frog-philosopher. The frog-philosopher wanted to estimate the length and breadth of the Pacific Ocean by his experience of a well three cubic feet large, and thus he began to puff himself up to become as big as the Pacific Ocean, but at last he burst and died by this process. This story is applicable to the mental philosophers who, under the illusion of the Lord's external energy, indulge in estimating the length and breadth of the Supreme Lord. The best path is to become a coolheaded, submissive devotee of the Lord, try to hear about the Lord from the bona fide spiritual master, and thus serve the Lord in transcendental loving service, as suggested in the previous verse.

TEXT 36

तथापि कीर्तयाम्यङ्ग यथामति यथाश्रुतम् ।
कीर्तिं हरेः स्वां सत्कर्तुं गिरमन्यामिघासतीम् ॥३६॥

tathāpi kīrtayāmyaṅga
yathā-mati yathā-śrutam
kīrtim hareḥ svām sat-kartum
giram anyābhīdhāsatīm

tathā—therefore; *api*—although it is so; *kīrtayāmi*—I do describe; *aṅga*—O Vidura; *yathā*—as much as; *matī*—intelligence; *yathā*—as much as; *śrutam*—heard; *kīrtim*—glories; *hareḥ*—of the Lord; *svām*—own; *sat-kartum*—just purify; *giram*—speeches; *anyābhīdhā*—otherwise; *asatīm*—unchaste.

TRANSLATION

In spite of my inability, whatever I have been able to hear [from the spiritual master] and whatever I could assimilate I am now describing in glorification of the Lord by pure speech, for otherwise my power of speaking would remain unchaste.

PURPORT

The purification of the conditioned soul necessitates purification of his consciousness. By the presence of consciousness, the presence of the transcendental soul is verified, and as soon as consciousness leaves the body, the material body is not active. Consciousness is perceived, therefore, by activities. The theory put forward by empiric philosophers that consciousness can remain in an inactive state is the proof of their poor fund of knowledge. One should not become unchaste by stopping the activities of pure consciousness. If the activities of pure consciousness are stopped, certainly the conscious living force will be otherwise engaged because unless engaged the consciousness has no standing. Consciousness cannot be silent, even for a moment. When the body does not act, the consciousness acts in the form of dreams. Unconsciousness is artificial; by induced extraneous help it remains for a limited period, but when the intoxication of the drug is finished or when one is awake, the consciousness again acts earnestly.

Maitreya's statement is that in order to avoid unchaste conscious activities, he was trying to describe the unlimited glories of the Lord, although he did not have the ability to describe them perfectly. This glorification of the Lord is not a product of research, but the result of hearing submissively from the authority of the spiritual master. It is also not possible to repeat all that one has heard from his spiritual master, but one can narrate as far as possible by one's honest endeavor. It does not matter whether the Lord's glories are fully explained or not. One must

attempt to engage one's bodily, mental and verbal activities in the transcendental glorification of the Lord, otherwise such activities will remain unchaste and impure. The existence of the conditioned soul can be purified only by the method of engaging mind and speech in the service of the Lord. The *tridaṇḍī-sannyāsī* of the Vaiṣṇava school accepts three rods, representing the vow to engage in the service of the Lord with body, mind and speech, whereas the *ekadaṇḍī-sannyāsī* takes the vow to become one with the Supreme. Since the Lord is the Absolute, there is no distinction between Him and His glories. The glories of the Lord as chanted by the Vaiṣṇava *sannyāsī* are as substantial as the Lord Himself, and thus while glorifying the Lord the devotee becomes one with Him in transcendental interest, although he remains eternally a transcendental servitor. This simultaneously one and different position of the devotee makes him eternally purified, and thus his life becomes a complete success.

TEXT 37

एकान्तलाभं वचसो नु पुंसं
सुश्लोकमौलेर्गुणवादमाहुः ।
श्रुतेषु विद्वद्भिरुपाकृत्यां
कथसुधायाम्पसम्प्रयोगम् ॥३७॥

ekānta-lābham vacaso nu puṁsām
suśloka-mauler guṇa-vādam āhuḥ
śruteḥ ca vidvadbhir upākṛtyām
kathā-sudhāyām upasamprayogam

eka-anta—the one which has no comparison; *lābham*—gain; *vacasaḥ*—by discussions; *nu puṁsām*—after the Supreme Person; *suśloka*—pious; *mauleḥ*—activities; *guṇa-vādam*—glorification; *āhuḥ*—it is so said; *śruteḥ*—of the ear; *ca*—also; *vidvadbhiḥ*—by the learned; *upākṛtyām*—being so edited; *kathā-sudhāyām*—in the nectar of such a transcendental message; *upasamprayogam*—serves the real purpose, being nearer to.

TRANSLATION

The highest perfectional gain of humanity is to engage in discussions of the activities and glories of the Pious Actor. Such activities are so nicely arranged in writing by the greatly learned sages that the actual purpose of the ear is served just by being near them.

PURPORT

The impersonalists are very much afraid of hearing the activities of the Lord because they think that the happiness derived from the transcendental situation of Brahman is the ultimate goal of life; they think that anyone's activity, even that of the Personality of Godhead, is mundane. But the idea of happiness indicated in this verse is different because it relates to the activities of the Supreme Personality, who has transcendental qualities. The word *guṇa-vādam* is significant because the qualities of the Lord and His activities and pastimes are the subject matter for the discussions of devotees. A ṛṣi like Maitreya is certainly not interested in discussing anything pertaining to mundane qualities, yet he says that the highest perfectional stage of transcendental realization is to discuss the Lord's activities. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, therefore, concludes that topics regarding the transcendental activities of the Lord are far beyond the transcendental realization of *kaivalya* happiness. These transcendental activities of the Lord are so arranged in writing by the great sages that simply by hearing of those narrations one becomes perfectly self-realized, and the proper use of the ear and the tongue is also achieved. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is one of such great literatures, and the highest perfectional state of life is attained simply by hearing and reciting its contents.

TEXT 38

आत्मनोऽवसितो वत्स महिमा कविनादिना ।
संवत्सरसहस्रान्ते धिया योगविपकृया ॥३८॥

ātmano 'vasito vatsa
mahimā kavinādinā
saṁvatsara-sahasrānte
dhiyā yoga-vipakkayā

ātmanaḥ—of the Supreme Soul; avasitaḥ—known; vatsa—O my dear son; mahimā—glories; kavinā—by the poet Brahmā; ādinā—original; saṁvatsara—celestial years; hasra-ante—at the end of one thousand; dhiyā—by intelligence; yoga-vipakkayā—by matured meditation.

TRANSLATION

O my son, the original poet, Brahmā, after mature meditation for one thousand celestial years, could know only that the glories of the Supreme Soul are inconceivable.

PURPORT

There are some froggish philosophers who want to know the Supreme Soul by means of philosophy and mental speculation. And when the devotees, who are to some extent in knowledge of the Supreme Lord, admit that the glories of the Lord are inestimable or inconceivable, the froggish philosophers adversely criticize them. These philosophers, like the frog in the well who tried to estimate the measurement of the Pacific Ocean, like to take trouble over fruitless mental speculation instead of taking instructions from devotees like the original poet, namely, Brahmā. Lord Brahmā underwent a severe type of meditation for one thousand celestial years, yet he said that the glories of the Lord are inconceivable. Therefore what can the froggish philosophers hope to gain from their mental speculations?

It is said in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* that the mental speculator may fly through the sky of speculation with the velocity of the mind or the wind for thousands of millions of years, and still he will find it inconceivable. The devotees, however, do not waste time in such vain searching after knowledge of the Supreme, but they submissively hear the glories of the Lord from bona fide devotees. Thus they transcendently enjoy the process of hearing and chanting. The Lord approves of the devotional activities of the devotees or *mahātmās*, and He says:

mahātmānas tu mām pārtha
daiivīm prakṛtim āśrītāḥ
bhajanty ananya-manaso
jñātvā bhūtādim avyayam

satataṁ kīrtayanto mām
yatantaś ca dṛḍha-vratāḥ
namasyantaś ca mām bhaktyā
nītya-yuktā upāsate
(Bg. 9.13-14)

The pure devotees of the Lord take shelter of the *parā prakṛti*, the internal potency of the Lord called Lakṣmīdevī, Sitādevī, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī or Śrīmatī Rukmiṇīdevī, and thus they become actual *mahātmās*, or great souls. *Mahātmās* are not fond of indulging in mental speculations, but they actually take to the devotional service of the Lord, without the slightest deviation. Devotional service is manifested by the primary process of hearing and chanting about the activities of the Lord. This transcendental method practiced by the *mahātmās* gives them sufficient knowledge of the Lord because if the Lord can at all be known to some extent, it is only through the means of devotional service and no other way. One may go on speculating and waste the valuable time of his human life, but that will not help anyone to enter into the precincts of the Lord. The *mahātmās*, however, are not concerned with knowing the Lord by mental speculation because they enjoy hearing about His glorious activities in His transcendental dealings with His devotees or with the demons. The devotees take pleasure in both and are happy in this life and the life after.

TEXT 39

अतो भगवतो माया मायिनामपि मोहिनी ।
यत्स्वयं चात्मवर्त्मात्मा न वेद किमुतापरे ॥३९॥

ataḥ bhagavato māyā
māyinām api mohini
yat svayaṁ cātma-vartmātmā
na veda kim utāpare

ataḥ—therefore; bhagavataḥ—godly; māyā—potencies; māyinām—of the jugglers; api—even; mohini—enchanted; yat—that which; svayam—personally; ca—also; ātma-vartma—self-sufficient; ātmā—self; na—does not; veda—know; kim—what; uta—to speak of; apare—others.

TRANSLATION

The wonderful potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is bewildering even to the jugglers. That potential power is unknown even to the self-sufficient Lord, so it is certainly unknown to others.

PURPORT

The froggish philosophers and mundane wranglers in science and mathematical calculation may not believe in the inconceivable potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but they are sometimes puzzled by the wonderful jugglery of man and nature. Such jugglers and magicians of the mundane world are actually puzzled by the jugglery of the Lord in His transcendental activities, but they try to adjust their bewilderment by saying that it is all mythology. There is, however, nothing impossible or mythological in the Supreme Omnipotent Person. The most wonderful puzzle for the mundane wranglers is that while they remain calculating the length and breadth of the unlimited potency of the Supreme Person, His faithful devotees are set free from the bondage of material engagement simply by appreciating the wonderful jugglery of the Supreme in the practical field. The devotees of the Lord see the wonderful dexterity in everything with which they come in contact in all circumstances of eating, sleeping, working, etc. A small banyan fruit contains thousands of small seeds, and each seed holds the potency of another tree, which again holds the potency of many millions of such fruits as causes and effects. So the trees and seeds engage the devotees in meditation about the activities of the Lord, while the mundane wranglers waste time in dry speculation and mental concoction, which are fruitless in both this life and the next. In spite of their pride in speculation, they can never appreciate the simple potential activities of the banyan tree. Such speculators are poor souls destined to remain in matter perpetually.

TEXT 40

यतोऽप्राप्य न्यवर्तन्त वाचश्च मनसा सह ।
अहं चान्य इमे देवास्तस्मै भगवते नमः ॥४०॥

yato 'prāpya nyavartanta
vācaś ca manasā saha
ahaṁ cānya ime devāḥ
tasmai bhagavate namaḥ

yataḥ—from whom; aprāpya—being unable to measure; nyavartanta—cease to try; vācaḥ—words; ca—also; manasā—with the mind; saha—with; aham ca—also the ego; anye—other; ime—all these; devāḥ—demigods; tasmai—unto Him; bhagavate—unto the Personality of Godhead; namaḥ—offer obeisances.

TRANSLATION

Words, mind and ego, with their respective controlling demigods, have failed to achieve success in knowing the Supreme

Personality of Godhead. Therefore, we simply have to offer our respectful obeisances unto Him as a matter of sanity.

PURPORT

The froggish calculator may raise the objection that if the Absolute is unknowable even by the controlling deities of speech, mind and ego, namely the *Vedās*, *Brahmā*, *Rudra* and all the demigods headed by *Bṛhaspati*, then why should the devotees be so interested in this unknown object? The answer is that the transcendental ecstasy enjoyed by the devotees in delineating the pastimes of the Lord is certainly unknown to nondevotees and mental speculators. Unless one relishes transcendental joy, naturally one will come back from his speculations and concocted conclusions because he will see them as neither factual nor enjoyable. The devotees can at least know that the Absolute Truth is the Supreme Personality of Godhead *Viṣṇu*, as the Vedic hymns confirm: *om tad viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padaṁ sadā paśyanti sūrayaḥ. Bhagavad-gītā* (15.15) also confirms this fact: *vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyāḥ*. By culture of Vedic knowledge one must know Lord *Kṛṣṇa* and should not falsely speculate on the word *aham*, or "I." The only method for understanding the Supreme Truth is devotional service, as stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.55): *bhaktiā mām abhijānāti yāvān yaś cāsmi tattvataḥ*. Only by devotional service can one know that the ultimate truth is the Personality of Godhead and that *Brahman* and *Paramātmā* are only His partial features. This is confirmed in this verse by the great sage *Maitreya*. With devotion he offers his sincere surrender, *namaḥ*, to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, *bhagavate*. One has to follow in the footsteps of great sages and devotees like *Maitreya* and *Vidura*, *Mahārāja Parikṣit* and *Śukadeva Gosvāmī*, and engage in the transcendental devotional service of the Lord if one would know His ultimate feature, which is above *Brahman* and *Paramātmā*.

Thus end the *Bhaktivedānta purports* of the Third Canto, Sixth Chapter, of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, entitled "Creation of the Universal Form."

CHAPTER SEVEN Further Inquiries by Vidura

TEXT 1

श्रीशुक उवाच

एवं ब्रुवाणं मैत्रेयं द्वैपायनसुतो बुधः ।
प्रीणयन्निव भारत्या विदुरः प्रत्यभाषत ॥ १ ॥

śrī-śuka uvāca
evam bruvāṇam maitreyaṁ
dvaipāyana-suto budhaḥ
prīṇayann iva bhāratyā
viduraḥ pratyabhāṣata

śrī-śukaḥ uvāca—Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; *evam*—thus; *bruvāṇam*—speaking; *maitreyaṁ*—unto the sage *Maitreya*; *dvaipāyana-sutaḥ*—the son of *Dvaipāyana*; *budhaḥ*—learned; *prīṇayan*—in a pleasing manner; *iva*—as it was; *bhāratyā*—in the manner of a request; *viduraḥ*—*Vidura*; *pratyabhāṣata*—expressed.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, while *Maitreya*, the great sage, was thus speaking, *Vidura*, the learned son of *Dvaipāyana Vyāsa*, expressed a request in a pleasing manner by asking this question.

TEXT 2

विदुर उवाच

ब्रह्मन् कथं भगवतश्चिन्मात्रस्त्वाविकारिणः ।
लीलया चापि युज्येरन्निर्गुणस्य गुणाः क्रियाः ॥ २ ॥

vidura uvāca
brahman katham bhagavataś
cit-mātrasyāvīkāriṇaḥ
līlayā cāpi yujyeraṁ
nirguṇasya guṇāḥ kriyāḥ

viduraḥ uvāca—*Vidura* said; *brahman*—O *brāhmaṇa*; *katham*—how; *bhagavataḥ*—of the Personality of Godhead; *cit-mātrasya*—of the complete spiritual whole; *avīkāriṇaḥ*—of the unchangeable; *līlayā*—by His pastime; *ca*—either; *api*—even though it is so; *yujyeraṁ*—take place; *nirguṇasya*—who is without the modes of nature; *guṇāḥ*—modes of nature; *kriyāḥ*—activities.

TRANSLATION

Śrī *Vidura* said: O great *brāhmaṇa*, since the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the complete spiritual whole and is unchangeable, how is He connected with the material modes of nature and their activities? If this is His pastime, how do the activities of the unchangeable take place and exhibit qualities without the modes of nature?

PURPORT

As described in the previous chapter, the difference between the Supersoul, the Supreme Lord, and the living entities is that the activities of the Lord in creating the cosmic manifestation are performed by the Lord through the agency of His multifarious energies, but this manifestation is bewildering to the living entities. The Lord is therefore the master of the energies, whereas the living entities are subjugated by them. By asking various questions about transcendental activities, *Vidura* is clearing the misconception that when the Lord either descends on the earth in His incarnation or appears Himself with all His potencies, He too is subjected to the influence of *māyā*, just like an ordinary living entity. This is generally the calculation of less intelligent philosophers who consider the position of the Lord and that of the living entities to be on the same level. *Vidura* is hearing the great sage *Maitreya* refute these arguments. The Lord is described in this verse as *cit-mātra*, or completely spiritual. The Personality of Godhead has unlimited potencies to create and manifest many wonderful things, both temporary and permanent. Because this material world is the creation of His external energy, it thus appears to be temporary; it is manifested at certain intervals, maintained for some time, and again dissolved and conserved in His own energy. As described in *Bhagavad-gītā* (8.19), *bhūtvā bhūtvā pralīyate*. But the creation of His internal potency, the spiritual world, is not a temporary manifestation like the material world, but is eternal and full of transcendental knowledge, opulence, energy, strength, beauties and glories. Such manifestations of the Lord's potencies are eternal and are therefore called *nirguṇa*, or free from all tinges of the modes of material nature, even up to the mode of material goodness. The spiritual world is transcendental even to material goodness and thus is unchangeable. Since the Supreme Lord of such eternal and unchangeable qualities is never subjugated by anything like material influence, how can His activities and form be conceived to be under the influence of illusory *māyā*, as is the case with the living entities?

A juggler or magician displays many wonders with his acts and arts. He can become a cow by his magical tactics, and yet he is not that cow; but at the same time, the cow displayed by the magician is not different from him. Similarly, the material potency is not different from the Lord because it is an emanation from Him, but at the same time, that manifestation of potency is not the Supreme Lord. The Lord's transcendental knowledge and potency always remain the same; they do not change, even when displayed in the material world. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*, the Lord descends on the earth by His own internal potency, and therefore there is no question of His becoming materially contaminated, changed or otherwise affected by the modes of material nature. The Lord is *saguṇa* by His own internal potency, but at the same time He is *nirguṇa*, since He is not in touch with the material energy. The restrictions of the prison house are applicable to prisoners who are condemned by the king's law, but the king is never affected by such implications, although he may visit the prison house out of his good will. In

the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* the six opulences of the Lord are stated to be non-different from Him. The opulences of transcendental knowledge, strength, opulence, potency, beauty and renunciation are all identical with the Personality of Godhead. When He personally displays such opulences in the material world, they have no connection with the modes of material nature. The very word *cin-mātrava* is the guarantee that the Lord's activities are always transcendental, even when displayed in the material world. His activities are as good as the Supreme Personality Himself, otherwise liberated devotees like Śukadeva Gosvāmī would not have been attracted by them. Vidura inquired how the Lord's activities can be in the modes of material nature, as is sometimes miscalculated by persons with a poor fund of knowledge. The inebriety of the material qualities is due to the difference between the material body and the spirit soul. The conditioned soul's activities are displayed through the medium of the modes of material nature and are therefore perverted in appearance. However, the Lord's body and the Lord Himself are one and the same, and when the Lord's activities are displayed, they are certainly nondifferent from the Lord in all respects. The conclusion is that persons who consider the Lord's activities material are certainly mistaken.

TEXT 3

क्रीडायामुद्यमोऽर्भस्य कामश्चिक्रीडियान्यतः ।
स्वतस्तृप्तस्य च कथं निवृत्तस्य सदान्यतः ॥ ३ ॥

*krīḍāyām udyamo 'rbhasya
kāmaś cikrīḍiṣānyataḥ
svatas-trptasya ca katham
nivr̥ttasya sadānyataḥ*

krīḍāyām—in the matter of playing; *udyamaḥ*—enthusiasm; *arbhasya*—of the boys; *kāmaḥ*—desire; *cikrīḍiṣā*—willingness to play; *anyataḥ*—with other boys; *svataḥ-trptasya*—for one who is self-satisfied; *ca*—also; *katham*—what for; *nivr̥ttasya*—one who is detached; *sadā*—at all times; *anyataḥ*—otherwise.

TRANSLATION

Boys are enthusiastic to play with other boys or with various diversions because they are encouraged by desire. But there is no possibility of such desire for the Lord because He is self-satisfied and detached from everything at all times.

PURPORT

Since the Supreme Personality of Godhead is one without a second, there is no possibility that anything besides Him can exist. He expands Himself by His energies in multiforms of self-expansions and separated expansions as well, just as fire expands itself by heat and light. Since there is no other existence besides the Lord Himself, the Lord's association with anything manifests His association with Himself. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.4) the Lord says:

*mayā tatam idaṁ sarvaṁ
jagad avyakta-mūrtinā
mat-sthāni sarva-bhūtāni
na cāhaṁ teṣu avasthitaḥ*

“The complete manifestation of the cosmic situation is an expansion of the Lord Himself in His impersonal feature. All things are situated in Him only, yet He is not in them.” That is the opulence of the Lord's attachment and detachment. He is attached to everything, yet He is detached from all.

TEXT 4

अस्राक्षीद्भगवान् विश्वं गुणमय्यात्ममायया ।
तया संस्थापयत्येतद्भूयः प्रत्यपिषास्यति ॥ ४ ॥

*asrākṣīd bhagavān viśvaṁ
guṇa-mayyātma-māyayā
tayā saṁsthāpayaty etad
bhūyaḥ pratyapidhāsyati*

asrākṣīd—caused to create; *bhagavān*—the Personality of Godhead; *viśvaṁ*—the universe; *guṇa-mayyā*—endowed with three modes of material nature; *ātma*—self; *māyayā*—by the potency; *tayā*—by her; *saṁsthāpayati*—maintains; *etat*—all these; *bhūyaḥ*—then again; *pratyapidhāsyati*—conversely dissolves also.

TRANSLATION

By His self-sheltered potency of the three modes of material nature, the Lord has caused the creation of this universe. By her He maintains the creation and conversely dissolves it, again and again.

PURPORT

This cosmic universe is created by the Lord for those living entities who are carried away by the illusory thought of becoming one with Him by imitation. The three modes of material nature are for the further bewilderment of the conditioned souls. The conditioned living entity, bewildered by the illusory energy, considers himself a part of the material creation due to forgetfulness of his spiritual identity, and thus he becomes entangled in material activities life after life. This material world is not for the purpose of the Lord Himself, but is for the conditioned souls who wanted to be controllers due to misuse of their God-gifted minute independence. Thus the conditioned souls are subjected to repeated birth and death.

TEXT 5

देशतः कालतो योऽसाववस्थातः स्वतोऽन्यतः ।
अविलुप्तभावोधात्मा स युज्येताजया कथम् ॥ ५ ॥

*deśataḥ kālato yo 'sāv
avasthātaḥ svato 'nyataḥ
aviluptāvabodhātmā
sa yujyetajayā katham*

deśataḥ—circumstantial; *kālataḥ*—by the influence of time; *yaḥ*—one who; *asau*—the living entity; *avasthātaḥ*—by situation; *svataḥ*—by dream; *anyataḥ*—by others; *avilupta*—extinct; *avabodha*—consciousness; *ātmā*—pure self; *saḥ*—he; *yujyeta*—engaged; *ajayā*—with nescience; *katham*—how is it so.

TRANSLATION

The pure soul is pure consciousness and is never out of consciousness, either due to circumstances, time, situations, dreams or other causes. How then does he become engaged in nescience?

PURPORT

The consciousness of the living being is always present and never changes under any circumstances, as above mentioned. When a living man moves from one place to another, he is conscious that he has changed his position. He is always present in the past, present and future, like electricity. One can remember incidents from his past and can conjecture about his future also on the basis of past experience. He never forgets his personal identity, even though he is placed in awkward circumstances. How then can the living entity become forgetful of his real identity as pure spirit soul and identify with matter unless influenced by something beyond himself? The conclusion is that the living entity is influenced by the *avidyā* potency, as confirmed in both the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* and the beginning of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The living entity is mentioned in *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.5) as *parā prakṛti*, and in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* he is mentioned as the *parā śakti*. He is part and parcel of the Supreme Lord as potency and not as the potent. The potent can exhibit many potencies, but the potency cannot equal the potent at any stage. One potency may be overcome by another potency, but to the potent, all potencies are under control. The *jīva* potency, or the *ṣetra-jñā-śakti* of the Lord, has the tendency to be overpowered by the external potency, *avidyā-karma-saṁjñā*, and in this way he is placed in the awkward circumstances of material existence. The living entity cannot be forgetful of his real identity unless influenced by the *avidyā* potency. Because the living entity is prone to the influence of the *avidyā* potency, he can never equal the supreme potent.

(continued in next issue)

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Melbourne—197 Danks St., Albert Park, Victoria 3205 (mail: P.O. Box 125/ (03) 699-5122
Perth—590 William St., Mt. Lawley, West Australia 6050 (mail: P.O. Box 598, West Perth, W.A. 6005/ (09) 328-9171
Surfer's Paradise—2804 Gold Coast Highway, Surfer's Paradise, Q'land. 4217/ (075) 38-5060
Sydney—112 Darlinghurst Rd., Darlinghurst, New South Wales 2010 (mail: P.O. Box 159, Kings Cross, N.S.W. 2011/ (02) 357-5162

FARM COMMUNITIES

Colo (Bhaktivandana Ashram)—Upper Colo Rd., Central Colo, New South Wales 2756 (mail: Lot 11 Upper Colo Rd., Colo, N.S.W. 2756/ (045) 75-5284
Murwillumbah (New Govardhana)—'Eungella,' Tyalgum Rd. via Murwillumbah, New South Wales 2484 (mail: P.O. Box 687/ (066) 72-1903
Riverina (New Gaudades)—Old Renmark Rd., via Wentworth, New South Wales 2648 (mail: P.O. Box 2446, Mildura, Victoria 3500/ (050) 27-8226

RESTAURANTS

Adelaide—Govinda's (at ISKCON Adelaide)
Cairns—Gopal's (at ISKCON Cairns)
Melbourne—Gopal's, 139 Swanston St., / (03) 63-1578

Krishna Consciousness AND THE WORLD

C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Melbourne—Crossways, 1st Fl., 11-15 Elizabeth St./ (03) 62-2800
Surfer's Paradise—Gopal's, 2995 Gold Coast Hwy./ (075) 38-5060
Sydney—Gopal's, 18-A Darcy St., Parramatta/ (02) 635-0638
Sydney—Govinda's and Govinda's Take-away (both at ISKCON Sydney)
Sydney—Hare Kṛṣṇa Free Food Centre, Victoria St., King's Cross

NEW ZEALAND AND FIJI

Auckland, New Zealand (New Varshan)—Hwy. 18, Riverhead (next to Huapai Golf Course)
(mail: c/o R.D. 2, Kumeu, Auckland/ 412-8075)
Christchurch, New Zealand—83 Bealey Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 2298, Christchurch/ 61-965)
Lautoka, Fiji—5 Tavewa Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 125/ 61-633, ext. 48)
Suva, Fiji—P.O. Box 6376, Nasinu/ 391-282
Wellington, New Zealand—9 Shalimar Crescent, Khandallah, Wellington
(mail: P.O. Box 2753, Wellington/ 79-6157)

RESTAURANT

Auckland, New Zealand—Gopal's, 1st fl., Civic House, 291 Queen St./ 3-4885

AFRICA

Abeokuta, Nigeria—Ibadan Rd., Obantoko, behind NET (mail: P.O. Box 5177)
Accra, Ghana—582 Blk. 20, Odokor, Official Town (mail: P.O. Box 01568, Osu)
Benin City, Nigeria—Karo Estate Rd., off Upper Mission Rd., (mail: P.O. Box 3681)
Buea, Cameroon—Southwest Province (mail: c/o Yuh Laban Nkesah, P and T, VHS)
Durban (Natal), S. Africa—P.O. Box 212, Cato Ridge, Natal 3680/ (325) 219-19
Ibadan, Nigeria—P.O. Box 9996 U.I.
Kitwe, Zambia—P.O. Box 20242
Lagos, Nigeria—No. 2 Murtala Mohammed International Airport Expressway, Mafaluku
(mail: P.O. Box 8793, Lagos)
Mauritius—White House, Celicourt Antelme St., Quartre Bornes (mail: P.O. Box 108,
Quartre Bornes, Mauritius/ 46804)
Mombasa, Kenya—Hare Krishna House, Sauti Ya Kenya and Kisumu Rds. (mail: P.O. Box 82224,
Mombasa/ 312248)
Nkawkaw, Ghana—P.O. Box 329, Nkawkaw
Nairobi, Kenya—Muhuroni Close, off West Nagara Rd. (mail: P.O. Box 28946, Nairobi/ 744365)
Port Harcourt, Nigeria—2 Eligbam Rd. (corner of Obana Obhan St.), G.R.A. II
(mail: P.O. Box 4429, Trans Amadi)
Takoradi, Ghana—64 Windy Ridge (mail: P.O. Box 328)

FARM COMMUNITY

Mauritius (ISKCON Vedic Farm)—Beau Bois, Bon Accueil

ASIA

Ahmedabad, Gujarat—7, Kailas Society, Ashram Rd., 380 009/ 449935
Bambore, Gujarat—N.H. 8-B, Surendranagar (city office: 32 Ananta Nagar, Kalavad Rd.,
Rajkot 360 003)
Bangalore, Karnataka—34/A, 9th 'B' Cross, West of Chord Rd., Mahalaxmi Layout, 560 086
(mail: P.O. Box 5181/ 80418)
Baroda, Gujarat—18, Sujata Society, Gotri Rd., 390 015/ 66499
Bhubaneswar, Orissa—National Highway No. 5, Nayapali, 751 001/ 53125
Bombay, Maharashtra—Hare Krishna Land, Juhu 400 054/ 626-860
Calcutta, W. Bengal—3 Albert Rd., 700 017/ 443757
Chandigarh, Punjab—Hare Krishna Land, Dakshin Marg, Sector 36-B, 160 036/ 26674
Chhaygharia (Haridaspur), W. Bengal—Thakur Haridas Sripratbari Sevashram, P.O. Chhaygharia,
P.S. Bongaon, Dist. 24 Pargonas
Gauhati, Assam—Post Bag No. 127, 781 001
Hyderabad, A.P.—Hare Krishna Land, Nampally Station Rd., 500 001/ 51018
Imphal, Manipur—Hare Krishna Land, Airport Road, 795 001
Madras, Tamil Nadu—232 Kilpaik Garden Road, Madras 600 010/ 662286
Mâyâpur, W. Bengal—Shree Mâyâpur Chandrodya Mandir, P.O. Shree Mâyâpur Dham (Dist. Nadia)
New Delhi—M-119 Greater Kailash I, 110 048/ 642058
Pandharpur, Maharashtra—Hare Kṛṣṇa Āśrama, across Chandrabhaga River, Dist. Sholapur, 413304
Pune, Maharashtra—4 Tarapur Rd.
Silchar, Assam—Mahaprabhu Colony, Malugram, Cachar District, 788002
Surat, Gujarat—Rander Rd., Jahangirpura, Surat, 395005/ 84215
Tirupati, A.P.—No. 37, B Type, T. T. D. Qrs., Vinayaka Nagar, K. T. Rd., 517501/ 2285
Trivandrum, Kerala—TC224/1485, W/C Hospital Rd., Thycaud, 695014/ 68197
Vrindavan, U.P.—Krishna-Balarām Mandir, Bhaktivedanta Swami Marg, Raman Reti, Mathurā/ 178

FARM COMMUNITIES

Hyderabad, A.P.—P.O. Dabilpur Village, Medchal Taluk, Hyderabad District, 501 401

Mâyâpur, W. Bengal—(contact Mâyâpur)

RESTAURANTS

Bombay—Govinda's (at Hare Krishna Land)
Vrindavan—Krishna-Balarām Mandir Guesthouse

OTHER COUNTRIES

Bali, Indonesia—Jalan Sagamona 17, Renon, Denpasar
Bangkok, Thailand—139, Soi Puttha-Osoth, New Road/ 233-2488
Hong Kong—5 Homanin St., Flat 23, Kowloon/ 3-7122630
Jakarta, Indonesia—Yayasan Kesadaran Kṛṣṇa Indonesia, Jl. Kambōja 10-12, Tomang Raya/ 599 301
Kathmandu, Nepal—Sri Kunj, Kamaladi
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia—Lot. 23 Jalan 18/22, Taman Kanagapuram, Petaling Jaya
Manila, Philippines—41 Guevarra St., San Francisco—Delmonte, Quezon City, P.I./ 971760
Taipei, Taiwan—(mail: c/o ISKCON Hong Kong)
Tehran, Iran—Keshavarz, Dehkedeh Ave., Kamran St., No. 58
Tel Aviv, Israel—P.O. Box 48163, Tel Aviv 61480
Tokyo, Japan—2-41-12 Izumi, Suginami-ku, Tokyo T168/ (3) 327-1541

FARM COMMUNITY

Cebu, Philippines (Hare Kṛṣṇa Paradise)—231 Pagsabungan Rd., Basak, Mandaue City/ 83254

RESTAURANT

Cebu, Philippines—Govinda's, 26 Sanchiango St.

LATIN AMERICA

BRAZIL

Belem, PA—Av. Gentil Bitencourt, Passagem McDowell, 96 (entre Dr. Moraes e Benj. Constant)
Belo Horizonte, MG—Av. Getúlio Vargas, 167, Funcionários/ 223-2776
Brasília, DF—MSPW Quadra 13, conj. 6, Casa 8/ 553-1173
Campo Grande, MS—Av. Julio de Castilhos, 1762, Santo Amaro
Curitiba, PR—Av. Sete de Setembro, 1594, Alto da Rua Quinze
Florianópolis, SC—Rua Ivo Reis Montenegro, 421, Itaguacú
Fortaleza, CE—Rua José Lourenço, 2114, Aldeota
Manaus, AM—Rua Leopoldo Neves, 387, B. São Raimundo
Porto Alegre, RS—Rua Tomas Flores, 327, Bonfim/ 27-3078
Recife, PE—Av. Pamamirim, 329, Pamamirim/ (081) 268-1908
Ribeirão Preto, SP—Rua Campos Sales, 542, Centro
Rio de Janeiro, RJ—Ladeira da Glória, 98, Glória/ 285-5643
Salvador, BA—Rua Alvaro Adorno, 17, Brotas/ (071) 244-1072
Santos, SP—C. P. 2125, Gonzaga
São Luis, MA—Av. Casemiro Junior, 564, Anil
São Paulo, SP—Rua Bom Pastor, 798, Ipiranga (mail: C. P. 4855-01000)/ 63-1674
São Paulo, SP—Rua Paraíso, 642, Paraíso
Teresópolis, RJ—Vrajabhum/ 742-3011
Vitória, ES—Rua César Helal, 288, Bento Ferreira

FARM COMMUNITY

Pindamonhangaba, SP (New Gokula)—Ribeiro Grande (mail: C.P. 108, 12.400 Pinda)

MEXICO

Guadalajara—Morelos No. 1514 Sector Hildago, Jalisco/ 26-12-78
Mexico City—Gob. Tiburcio Montiel 45, San Miguel Chapultepec, Mexico, D.F. 18/ (905) 271-0132
Monterrey—General Albino Espinoza, 345 Pte., Zona Centro, Monterrey, N.L./ 42-67-66
Morelia—Ticatem No. 52 pte., Col. Selix Ireta 58070, Morelia, Mich.
Puebla—Rio Nazas 5016, Col. San Manuel/ 459047
Vera Cruz—Calle 3, Carebelas No. 784, Fraccionamiento Reforma/ 50759

FARM COMMUNITY

Tulancingo, Hidalgo (Nueva Gauda-Mañdala Bhūmi)—(contact Mexico City)

PERU

Arequipa—Jerusalem 402/ 229523
Cuzco—Calle Plaza San Francisco No. 360 (altos)
Chosica—Jr. Chile 136
Huancayo—Av. Giraldez 652
Lima—Avenida San Martin 135/ 670405
Miraflores—Av. Schell 630/ 442505
Trujillo—Jr. Bolívar 768

FARM COMMUNITY

Gauranga Sevak—Bellavista, Hvallaga, San Martin

RESTAURANTS

Arequipa—(at ISKCON Arequipa)
Barranco—Av. Grav 137
Cuzco—Calle Espáderos 128 (near Plaza de Armas)
Lima—Jr. Azangaro 149
Miraflores—Av. Schell 603

OTHER COUNTRIES

Buenos Aires, Argentina—Centro Bhaktivedanta, Andronaegui 2054, (1431) Buenos Aires
Cali, Colombia—Avenida 9 Norte, 17-33/ 621688
Caracas, Venezuela—Calle Luis Roche 61, Colinas de los Chaguaramos/ 751-3026
Cochabamba, Bolivia—P.O. Box 3988/ 46441
Concepción, Chile—Nonguen, 588/ 23150
Córdoba, Argentina—Ramirez de Arellano 680, (5000) Alta Córdoba
Crabwood Creek, Guyana—Grant 1803, Sec. D, Corentyne, Berbice
Georgetown, Guyana—24 Utrivlugt Front, West Coast Demerara
Guayaquil, Ecuador—V. E. Estrada 110, Circunvalacion Norte/ 382439
La Paz, Bolivia—Avenida Herando Siles 6239 (mail: Casilla 10278 Obrajes)/ 785023
Medellin, Colombia—Calle 56 (Bolivia), Parque de Bolívar
Montevideo, Uruguay—Casilla 10,531, Suc. Pluna
Panama, Republic of Panama—Via las Cumbres, entrada Villa Zaita, frente a INPSA No. 10
(mail: P.O. Box 6-29-54, Panama)/ 681070
Quito, Ecuador—Carron 641 Amazonas/ 520466
San Jose, Costa Rica—100 mtrs. sureste de aptos Torre Blanca Urbanización Carmiol, Montes
de Oca, Casa No. 49 (mail: P.O. Box 166, Paseo Estudiantes, Z-1002)
San Salvador, El Salvador—67 Avenida Sur No. 15, Colonia Escalon
Santiago, Chile—Estudiantes, 150
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic—Calle Cayetano Rodriguez No. 254/ (809) 688-7242
Trinidad and Tobago, West Indies—Prabhupada Ave., Longdenville, Chaguanas

FARM COMMUNITIES

Guayaquil, Ecuador (Nuevo Nilálaca)—(contact Guayaquil)

Guyana—Seawell Village, Corentyne, East Berbice

San Salvador, El Salvador—Carretera a Santa Ana, Km. 34, Canton Los Indios, Zapotitán,
Dpto. de La Libertad

RESTAURANTS

Buenos Aires, Argentina—Madre Tierra, Mendoza 2320, (1428) Buenos Aires
Guayaquil, Ecuador—Govinda's (contact Guayaquil)
Quito, Ecuador—Govinda's, Esmeracacos 853 y Venezuela/ 511083
San José, Costa Rica—50 metros al este de la casa amarilla, Avenida 7, No. 1325
San Salvador, El Salvador—Govinda's, 7ª Calle Oriente No. 155/ 218035
Santiago, Chile—Govinda's (contact Santiago)

For Your Information

FESTIVALS & 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 Mādhava (January 8–February 5)

February 1—Bhaimī Ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans; fasting for the appearance anniversary of Lord Varāha).

February 2—Appearance anniversary of Lord Varāha, Lord Kṛṣṇa's boar incarnation.

February 3—Appearance anniversary of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, a close associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and an incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa's brother Balarāma (fasting till moonrise).

February 5—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Narottama dāsa Thākura, the famous spiritual master who composed many devotional songs in Bengali and who is part of the disciplic line from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Month of Govinda (February 6–March 7)

February 10—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī, the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda (fasting till noon, followed by feasting).

February 15—Vijayā Ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans).

February 16—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Īśvara Purī Gosvāmī, the spiritual master of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

February 18—Śrī Śiva-rātri (appearance anniversary of Lord Śiva).

February 20—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī, the great devotee in the disciplic line from Lord Caitanya who confirmed Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura's discovery of Lord Caitanya's birthplace.

March 3—Āmalakī Ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans).

March 4—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī, the spiritual master of the spiritual master of Lord Caitanya.

March 7—Śrī Gaura-pūrṇimā, appearance anniversary of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is Kṛṣṇa Himself in the role of His

own devotee. He appeared in Bengal, India, five hundred years ago and taught love of Godhead through the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. Devotees throughout the world join together for ISKCON's annual three-week pilgrimage to Māyāpur, Lord Caitanya's birthsite, and Vṛndāvana, where Lord Kṛṣṇa enacted His childhood pastimes. (Fasting till moonrise, followed by feasting).

RESOURCES

Now your television can bring you closer to Kṛṣṇa. Videocassettes from ITV (ISKCON Television) bring the spiritual vision of Kṛṣṇa into your home.

See the pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Rāma . . . Visit the centers of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement around the world . . . Attend classes given by Śrīla Prabhupāda himself . . . Relish the life story of Śrīla Prabhupāda in *Your Ever Well-Wisher*.

Almost 100 shows to choose from. Top-quality, low-priced videocassettes. Available in 1/2-inch, 3/4-inch, NTSC (American), and PAL (overseas).

For a free, full-color catalog, write to ITV, 3764 Watseka Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90034.

Kṛṣṇa Conscious Tape Cassettes

In the *yoga* system of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the most important method of spiritual advancement is to hear the transcendental sound of Kṛṣṇa's holy name and teachings. By hearing this sound from a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa, you can make strong and steady progress on the path back to Godhead.

ISKCON Educational Services offers a treasure of recordings on high-quality C-60 and C-90 cassettes: Śrīla Prabhupāda leading the congregational chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, Śrīla Prabhupāda singing traditional songs of God realization and explaining their meaning, Śrīla Prabhupāda's classes on *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, his conversations about transcendental enlightenment with devotees and guests.

For a current catalog, write to ISKCON Educational Services, 3764 Watseka Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90034.

Going to Bombay?

Visit the ISKCON cultural center—Hare Krishna Land, in beautiful Juhu Beach. A short ride from the Bombay airports, Hare Krishna Land features a gorgeous traditional Kṛṣṇa temple, together with a multistory modern guesthouse, Govinda's pure vegetarian *prasādam* restaurant, musical and theatrical performances in the 425-seat auditorium, and a sublime atmosphere of spiritual realization in the association of Kṛṣṇa's devotees.

For further information, inquire at your local ISKCON center or get directly in touch with ISKCON in Bombay.

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. Here's your opportunity to give your child a strong spiritual foundation, in addition to standard academic knowledge.

For more information, write to Śrī Rāma dāsa, ISKCON Gurukula Education Office, P.O. Box 388, Lake Huntington, N.Y. 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 world's foremost scholar and devotee, these books open up new realms 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.

If you're a scientific person, apply your mind to the science of self-realization. Read *Mechanistic and Nonmechanistic Science*, an investigation into the nature of consciousness and form, by Richard L. Thompson.

In this book, Dr. Thompson shows how physics breaks down when it tries to deal with consciousness. He examines how biology runs in circles when it tries to account for complex forms of life. For scientists seeking a unified view of the world, he suggests looking beyond theories that boil everything down to impersonal arrangements of numbers. And he gives some revolutionary ideas of what science has yet to find. Includes rigorous technical sections you can read if they're for you, or skip over without hindrance if they're not.

245 pages, softbound.

For your copy, send \$6.60 (\$7.00 in Canada) to ISKCON Educational Services, 3764 Watseka Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90034.

This spring, visit Prabhupāda's Palace of Gold.

You'll find peace and inspiration in this spiritual place of pilgrimage. Tour the gardens, the gilded walkways, the marble halls and rooms. See the inspired works of devotee-painters, sculptors, and craftsmen. And enjoy delicious *kṛṣṇa-prasādam*, spiritual food, in the Palace of Gold Restaurant.

It's at New Vrindaban, the 3,000-acre Hare Kṛṣṇa community in the scenic West Virginia hills. Kṛṣṇa's devotees are here to welcome you, and we have a comfortable guesthouse where you can stay overnight.

The Palace of Gold is open throughout the year, with special festivals during the summer months. A schedule of festivals and events is available.

For more information, write to Prabhupāda's Palace of Gold, Hare Kṛṣṇa Ridge, New Vrindaban, West Virginia 26041. Or call (304) 843-1600.

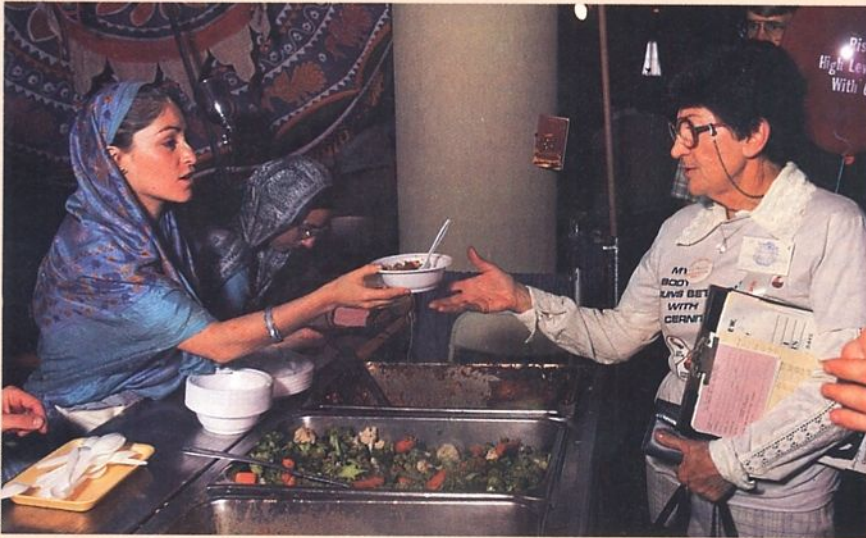
Note to Subscribers. Planning to move? Let us know when and where so we can keep your BACK TO GODHEAD coming without a break.

Every Town and Village

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



ISKCON a Popular Part of Whole Life Expo



Some thirty thousand people gathered at the Penta Hotel in Manhattan in November for the annual Whole Life Expo. Many saw an exhibit by ISKCON or tasted food offered to Kṛṣṇa (*prasādam*). ISKCON devotees had two booths, one for distributing *prasādam* and the other for showing Kṛṣṇa conscious videos and distributing Kṛṣṇa conscious literature.

ing, because obviously, when you're pulling the vegetables out of the ground you're killing them."

Asked about her involvement with Kṛṣṇa consciousness, Ms. Lennox replied, "It's a very positive and new involvement. The philosophy makes a great deal of sense to me in many ways. . . . It started to interest me when I saw that I could integrate it with my activities. At the moment it's an exploratory stage for me. I'm trying to follow principles, which are not so hard, actually. They make a great deal of sense."

Devotees Dine Author Umberto Eco

Brooklyn, New York—Umberto Eco, the author of the international best seller *Name of the Rose*, met Śrīla Rāmeśvara Swami, one of ISKCON's present spiritual masters, at the Hare Kṛṣṇa center here in November. During this visit Professor and Mrs. Eco saw Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda, the presiding Deities, and enjoyed a luncheon with Śrīla Rāmeśvara Swami, BACK TO GODHEAD writer Ravīndra-svarūpa dāsa, his wife Saudamaṇi-devī dāsī, temple president Lakṣmi-Nṛsiṃha dāsa, and public affairs director Nayanābhirāma dāsa, who arranged the meeting.

Mr. Eco enjoyed being entertained during lunch by boys from ISKCON's school in Lake Huntington, who chanted verses from the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Mr. Eco, professor of semiotics at the University of Bologna, was a visiting professor at Columbia University last autumn. He lives in Milan and looks forward to visiting the Hare Kṛṣṇa restaurant there when he returns. When he comes back to America this summer, he hopes to visit the Bhaktivedanta Cultural Center in Detroit.

Singer Annie Lennox Advocates Kṛṣṇa Conscious Diet in Vegetarian Times

The Bahamas—In a cover-story interview here on diet and society for the December issue of *Vegetarian Times*, Annie Lennox, the lead singer of the Eurythmics, expressed her understanding of the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Ms. Lennox quoted Śrīla Prabhupāda, ISKCON's founder and spiritual master, to explain the impact of meat-eating on society in terms of the law of *karma*—the moral law of action and reaction. She said that someone once asked Śrīla Prabhupāda "that if God was compassionate and kind, why was He allowing all those young men to go to Vietnam and become slaughtered? And he answered that when men stopped slaughtering animals, then we would stop having to send our sons to war."

"In the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement," Ms. Lennox also said, "one discovers that the cow was revered because it provides so many wonderful kinds of foodstuffs—milk, cheese, butter, and yogurt. . . . From a Kṛṣṇa consciousness point of view, devotees offer their food [to Kṛṣṇa], and in this way they stop the karmic reaction of kill-



ISKCON Opens Temple In South Africa

Chatsworth, South Africa—Thousands attended Diwali celebrations here recently at the nearly-completed Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rādhānātha temple. The temple, covering more than four hilltop acres, is the joint effort of ISKCON devotees and South Africa's Indian community.

A color picture of the new temple appeared on the front page of a *Durban Daily News* supplement, and the *Durban Sunday Tribune* featured a full-page photo. *The Daily News* also stated that the temple is destined to become a popular landmark in South Africa.



Scholar and novelist Umberto Eco receives gifts of Lord Kṛṣṇa's garland and Kṛṣṇa conscious literature at ISKCON's Brooklyn center.

THE VEDIC

Transcendental Comment

A MANTRA TO CURE MADNESS

by Kṛṣṇa-kṣetra dāsa

Recently, the front page of the *International Herald Tribune* carried the headline “One in 5 Americans Is Mentally Ill, Study Finds.” The article described a government-sponsored survey consisting of extensive interviews by the National Institute of Mental Health with ten thousand adults. Findings were based on strict criteria for mental disorder, and a mentally ill person was determined as “one in need of professional help.” The article said, “Nationwide projection of the data indicated that 18.7 percent of the adult popu-

but short lives. They are quarrelsome, lazy, misguided, unlucky and, above all, always disturbed.”

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder and spiritual master of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, proposed using a Vedic standard in determining mental disorder. His criterion was that anyone who identifies with the temporary material body, and thus works only for the satisfaction of the body and its extensions, disregarding the needs of the soul, is to be considered mentally ill. This definition of mental derangement fits practically everyone, indicating that the study by the National Institute of Mental Health found only the tip of the iceberg.

While the National Institute of Mental

Health, Study Finds.”

age. It is that simply by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra one can become free from material bondage and be promoted to the transcendental kingdom.”

To mental health officials, this proposal may sound like religious wishful thinking, if not downright madness. And certainly they should not accept such a proposal without careful investigation. To conduct an investigation, psychotherapists could include in every therapy session fifteen minutes of chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. We predict that they would be astounded at the results.

That’s a headline we’re waiting to read: “Chanting ‘Hare Krishna’ Increases Mental Health, Study Finds.”

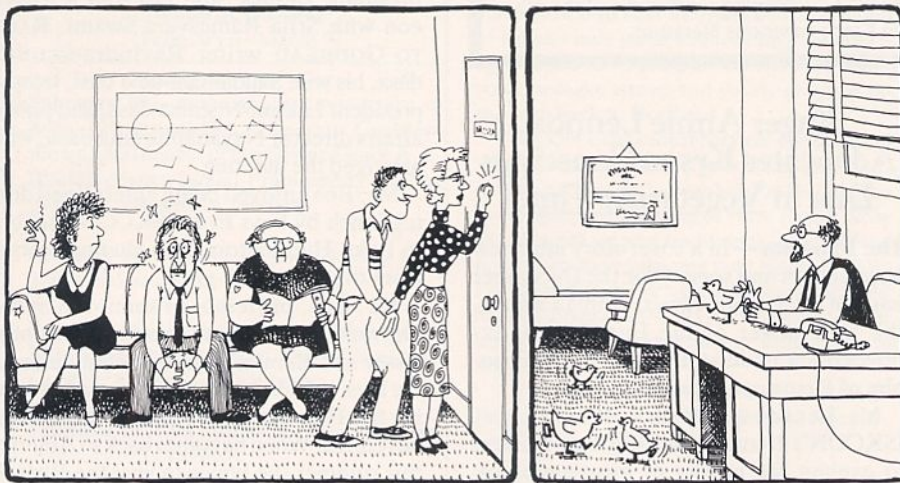
CHILD ABUSE: A FIRE OUT OF CONTROL

by Mathureśa dāsa

Taking notice of the rising concern over sexual abuse of children, thousands of schools across the country have initiated programs to teach students how to deal with sexually aggressive adults. The programs frequently include skits starring “Uncle Harry,” a character created by the Child Assault Prevention Project (CAP). In one skit Uncle Harry offers Sally, his seven-year-old niece, a Michael Jackson T-shirt if she’ll give him “one of those kisses I like.” Sally refuses—“I think I hear Aunt Mary coming home,” she says—and threatens to tell Mom and Aunt Mary about Uncle Harry’s passes.

Most programs encourage children to report any unusual physical advances by an adult, even if the adult has threatened the child. “An offender will scare a kid,” says a CAP worker, “and tell him his parents won’t love him anymore. So you have to diffuse this strategy ahead of time.”

Millions of children have seen skits and attended classes by CAP and other groups, and these programs seem to be starting to have an effect. In California, where the state government has passed an \$11.25-million bill to fund programs for combat-



lation suffers from at least one disorder of mental health. Anxiety disorders were found most common, affecting 8.3 percent of adults. Substance-abuse disorders, including alcohol abuse, were next at 6.4 percent.”

Whether determined by statistical study or by commonsense observation, whether in America or in any other modern culture, clearly mental illness is on the rise—a fact we take more or less for granted as a part of today’s way of life. Mental disorder is listed in the Vedic scripture *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.1.10) as one of the common characteristics of people in the present age: “In this iron age of Kali, men have

Health recognizes our growing need for professional help, today’s psychologists and psychiatrists are not fully qualified, because they lack a proper understanding of the spiritual malaise at the root of all mental disturbances. That malaise is ignorance of the spirit soul, our eternal self.

A sane proposal, therefore, is that mental health officials consult pure devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The devotees are aware of the Vedic literature’s sure and simple prescription for regaining full mental health: chanting the holy names of God. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (12.3.51) states, “Although Kali-yuga is an ocean of faults, there is still one good quality about this

OBSERVER

ary on the Issues of the Day

ting sexual abuse of children, reports of offenses have shot up forty-four percent. And in Maryland's Montgomery County, which has recently increased the anti-abuse curriculum in its public schools, reports have quadrupled.

On the one hand, these statistics are cause for optimism. Kids are learning to talk, to object, to resist. On the other hand, an increase in the reporting of sexual abuse of children doesn't exactly mean that abuse is decreasing, that offenders are getting discouraged. Is "Uncle Harry" really going to listen to a seven-year-old's threats, or worry about being incriminated by a child's testimony? Not always.

To put an end to sexual abuse of children, we need to look more closely at the nature of sex desire. The *Manu-samhitā*, part of the ancient Vedic literatures of India, compares sex desire to fire. Like fire, sex desire increases when supplied with "fuel." For example, a man and woman may feel satiated immediately after sexual intercourse; they may feel that their sexual fire has been extinguished. But that feeling is temporary. In time they will try to increase the frequency and intensity of their encounters—to enjoy unlimitedly.

That, of course, is impossible. Since one's physical capacity for sex is limited, the expansive fire of sexual desires can never be fulfilled. In other words, a primary product of sex enjoyment is dissatisfaction.

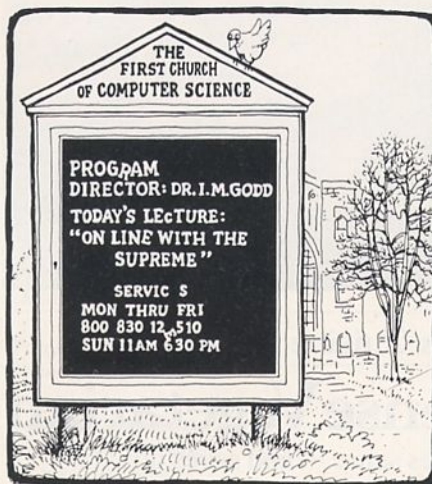
In the attempt to alleviate this dissatisfaction, one common tactic is to change partners. If we can't increase the frequency of sex, then at least we can increase the number of our mates. This tactic has, over the past few decades, resulted in the decay of the institution of marriage. Close to fifty percent of all marriages now end in divorce, with millions of men, women, and children getting severely burned in the process.

Changing partners only adds more fuel to the fire of sex desire, forcing frustrated individuals to seek further alternatives. If more sex with more partners proves dissatisfying, then what next? Well, how about changing the kind of partner? How about bisexuality, homosexuality, bestiality, incest? Get the sexual fire hot enough, and

anything goes—even child abuse.

So although a growing number of programs such as CAP evidences a sincere concern among teachers and parents, it also evidences a surprising naïveté. Attempting to stop child abuse by getting kids to tell Uncle Harry to cut it out is like trying to stop a forest fire with a garden hose. We need to significantly reduce the size of the fire if we seriously expect to protect our children from getting burned.

Although someone might propose that it is possible to fan the fire of sexual desire without becoming child molesters, that is a risky proposal. Until we learn that sex, like fire, has to be restricted and controlled, we can expect the conflagration of sexual abuse of children to continue blazing.



HIGH TECH'S HIGH PRIESTS

by Satyarāja dāsa

According to an article in a recent issue of *Omni*, science may soon be able to create an "immortal soul" by using the latest in computer technology.

New forms of intelligence are being encoded by computer scientists. Research is progressing on computer vision, speech recognition, tactile sensing, and other functions that resemble human physiology. But the scientists' main goal is to duplicate what they claim is the distinguishing qual-

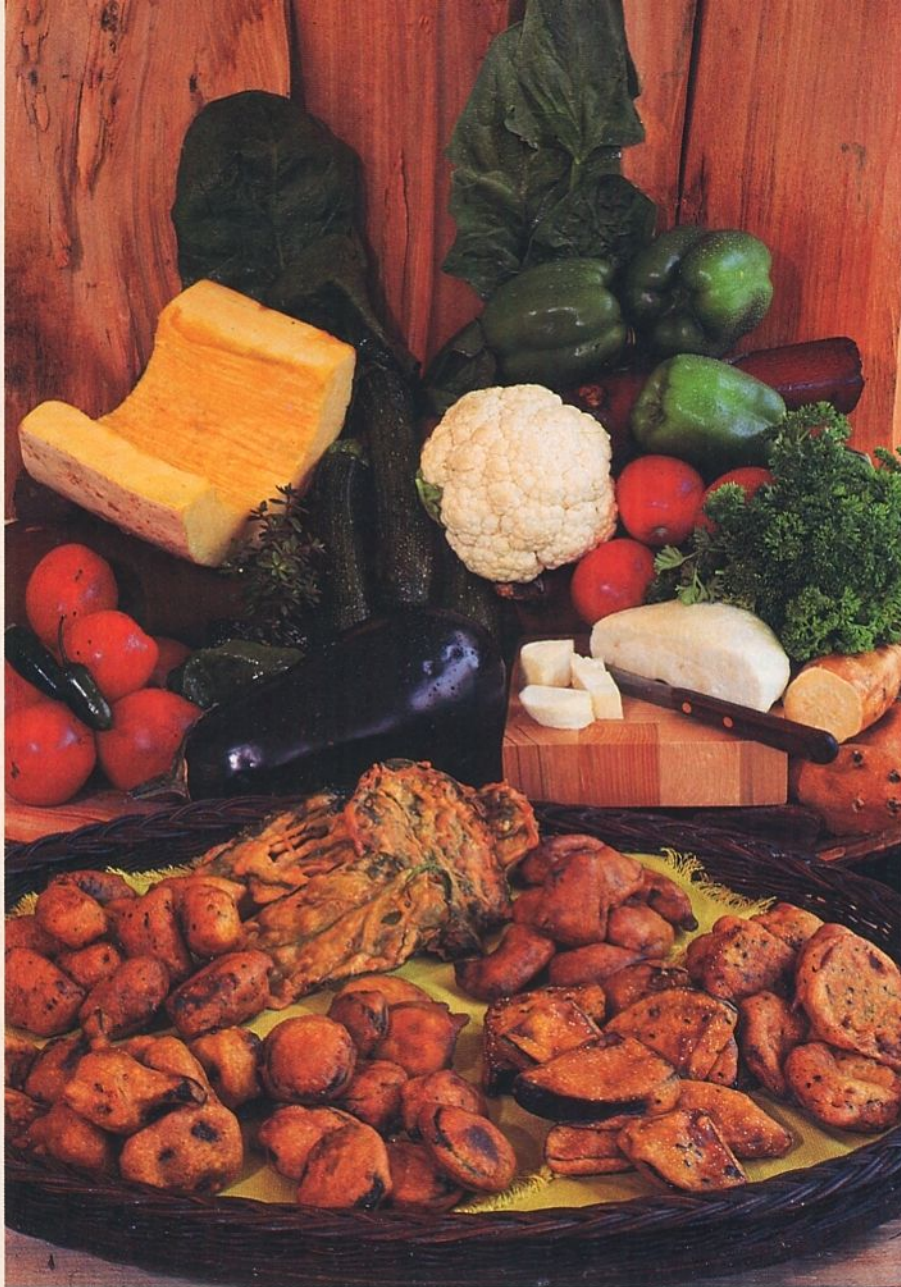
ity of the human species, the ability to think. And this achievement, they theorize, will allow them to create an immortal soul, an undying superperson.

Some scientists believe the coming generation will see such tremendous advances in computer science that the microchip and the neuron will become virtually interchangeable. Our brain's memory banks, they say, will neatly interface with a highly sophisticated computer program and will enter all their stored data, byte by byte, into a computer. The result: storable, copiable electronic clones of our "selves" that we can manipulate like any other software. Thus researchers are hoping to create, or at least to capture, an individual soul.

The philosophical and theological implications of all this are horrendous, as is so often the case when Science and Technology poke their noses into the realm of Spirituality. "In a philosophical sense, immortality would be a technical possibility," says Hans Moravec, a computer scientist at Pittsburgh's Carnegie-Mellon University. "The idea of personal death would disappear. We would design our successors. It may sound sacrilegious right now, but so did space travel in the twenties. Eventually these ideas will gain the same sort of acceptability." Once again a scientist is implying that everything can be explained mechanistically and reduced to numbers. And that science holds all the cards—and all the keys to the secrets of life and death.

All science fiction aside, however, science has not created so much as an ant (what to speak of an *eternal* ant) and has not been able to prevent death—not by any stretch of the imagination. Ironically, although computer scientists take it as a given that "the ability to think" is the distinguishing quality of the human species, anyone who has closely observed other life forms should see that the distinction is not so much in the *ability* to think but in *what one thinks about*. A human being can ponder spiritual questions, but animals are limited to the material sphere; they cannot understand what it means to be an eternal spirit soul.

(continued on page 35)



VISHAKHA-DEV/DAST

Lord Kṛṣṇa's Cuisine

The Commonsense Vegetarian

Here's a way of eating that makes sense—and saves dollars.

The principal reason members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness are vegetarian is that they eat only food that has been offered to Lord Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa won't accept offerings of nonvegetarian food. The devotee offers food to Lord Kṛṣṇa as an expression of love for Him, and by eating the remnants of those offerings the devotee en-

Adapted from The Higher Taste, a guide to vegetarian gourmet cooking, based on the teachings of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and published by the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust.

joys a transcendental reciprocation with the Lord. That is the perfection and the highest benefit of vegetarianism.

By God's arrangement, however, a vegetarian benefits in many other ways as well. Economically, for instance. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. feeds more than ninety percent of its grain to livestock—cows, pigs, lambs, and chickens. This practice, however—using grain to produce meat—is incredibly wasteful. As the USDA's Economic Research Service showed, we get one pound of beef for every sixteen pounds of grain.

In his book *Proteins: Their Chemistry*

and *Politics*, Dr. Aaron Altshul notes that in terms of calorie units per acre, a diet of grains, vegetables, and beans will support twenty times more people than a diet of meat. At present, about half the harvested acreage in America goes to feed animals. Were we to utilize the earth's arable land primarily for producing vegetarian foods, the planet could easily support a population of twenty billion or more.

The wastefulness of meat production is not a new discovery. In Plato's *Republic*, Socrates recommended a vegetarian diet because it would allow a country to make the most intelligent use of its agricultural resources. Socrates warned that if people began eating animals, there would be need for more pasturing land. "And the country which was enough to support the original inhabitants will be too small now, and not enough?" he asked Glaucon, who replied that this was indeed true. "And so we shall go to war, Glaucon, shall we not?" To which Glaucon replied, "Most certainly."

In the present day also we are faced with the possibility of mass conflict based on food. In August of 1974, the CIA published a report warning that in the near future there may not be enough food for the world's population "unless the affluent nations make quick and drastic cuts in their consumption of grain-fed animals."

Now, getting down to our own pocket-books, many vegetarian foods are dollar for dollar a better source of protein than meat is. A typical hundred-gram portion of meat contains about twenty grams of protein, whereas an equal amount of cheese or lentils yields about twenty-five grams. And one hundred grams of soybeans yields thirty-four grams of protein. Now, compare the costs. Sirloin steak runs at least \$3-\$4 a pound, whereas many vegetarian protein foods can be had for a small fraction of that amount. Becoming a vegetarian could save an individual shopper hundreds of dollars each year, and the total annual savings to America's consumers would be in the billions. Considering all this, it's hard to see how anyone could afford not to become a vegetarian.

The recipes we're featuring this month are for *pakorās*—deep-fried, batter-dipped vegetables that are perfect as snacks, as hors d'oeuvres, or as part of a full-course meal. For frying, you can use your favorite nut or vegetable oil, but since *pakorās* taste best when cooked in ghee (clarified butter), we've included a ghee recipe. Offer these delicious savories to Kṛṣṇa while they're still hot, along with a sour-cream dip or spicy tomato chutney. Then enjoy the results of your offering: the satisfaction of pleasing Kṛṣṇa, and the taste of the food He Himself has tasted. You'll reap not only the nutritional and economic benefits of being vegetarian, but also an incalculable spiritual benefit. 🙏

(Recipes by Yamunā-devī dāśī)

Clarified Butter (Ghee)

1. Place five pounds of unsalted butter into a large, heavy saucepan. Heat over a medium-high flame, stirring occasionally, until the butter melts and comes to a boil.

2. When the surface of the butter is covered with a frothy white foam, reduce the flame to very low. Simmer, uncovered and undisturbed, until a thin layer of crusty solids have formed on the surface and the gelatinous protein solids have collected on the bottom of the pan. The cooking time will be about three hours. The ideal finished ghee is of a transparent light amber color. Ghee becomes dark when cooked too long.

3. Skim off the thin surface crust and strain the ghee, one ladle at a time, through several layers of cheesecloth. Remove as much clear ghee as you can without disturbing the milky solids on the bottom of the pan. Ghee solids may be saved and used in breads and vegetable dishes. (If you use salted butter, the ghee solids are extremely salty and are best discarded.)

4. Be sure to cool ghee to room temperature before covering. Store in an airtight container in a cool, dark place, or refrigerate. Ghee that has been properly cooked, filtered, and stored will last for months.

Procedure for assembling and frying *pakorās*:

1. Mix all the batter ingredients with water to make a medium-thick batter. Beat until smooth.

2. Heat ghee or oil in a wok or frying pan to about 350°F. Dip the vegetable pieces, one at a time, into the batter until they are evenly coated, then place them in the hot ghee or oil. Fry 5 or 6 pieces at a time, stirring occasionally, for about 5 minutes, or until they are crisp and golden brown.

3. Remove with slotted spoon and drain. Offer to Kṛṣṇa immediately or keep warm, uncovered, in a 250°F oven for up to one hour.

Cauliflower *Pakorās* (*Gobi Pakorās*)

Preparation time: 30 minutes
Servings: 10

1½ cups chickpea flour
½–¾ cup water
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon cumin powder
1 tablespoon coriander powder
pinch of cayenne pepper
½ teaspoon turmeric
1 medium-size cauliflower

Zucchini *Pakorās* (*Louki Pakorās*)

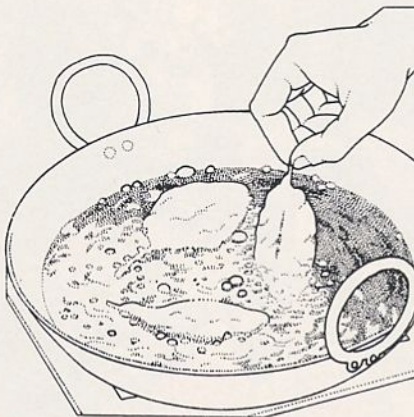
Preparation time: 30 minutes
Servings: 10

1 cup chickpea flour
½ teaspoon turmeric
½ teaspoon *garam masālā*
¼ teaspoon cayenne
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon baking soda
½–¾ cup cold water
½ pound fresh zucchini cut in round slices
¼-inch thick

Spinach *Pakorās* (*Palak Pakorās*)

Preparation time: 30 minutes
Servings: 10

1 cup chickpea flour
½ cup rice flour
½ teaspoon turmeric
½ teaspoon cayenne
1 teaspoon cumin powder
1 teaspoon coriander powder
1½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon baking soda
¾–¾ cup cold water
1 dozen large spinach leaves, washed



Pumpkin *Pakorās* (*Kaddu Pakorās*)

Preparation time: 1 hour
Servings: 10

1 cup chickpea flour
½ teaspoon turmeric
⅙ teaspoon hing
1 teaspoon cumin powder
1 teaspoon coriander powder
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon baking soda
2 tablespoons yogurt
½–¾ cup cold water
½ pound peeled, ripe pumpkin cut into
2-inch squares, ½-inch thick
Mix batter and let sit for 30 minutes.

Eggplant *Pakorās* (*Baigan Pakorās*)

Preparation time: 30 minutes
Servings: 10

1 cup chickpea flour

1 teaspoon turmeric
2 tablespoons white poppy seeds
½ teaspoon cayenne
1½ teaspoons salt
½ teaspoon sugar
½ teaspoon melted ghee
½–¾ cup cold water
½ pound eggplant cut into 2-inch squares,
¼-inch thick

Green Banana *Pakorās* (*Kacha Kela Pakorās*)

Preparation time: 30 minutes
Servings: 8

1 cup chickpea flour
1 teaspoon black cumin seed
¼ teaspoon fennel seed, ground
⅙ teaspoon hing
1½ teaspoons salt
½ teaspoon baking powder
½–¾ cup water
2 or 3 large green bananas, steamed until
tender
Peel the cooled, steamed bananas and slice
into ⅙-inch pieces.

Tomato *Pakorās* (*Tamatar Pakorās*)

Preparation time: 30 minutes
Servings: 10

1 cup chickpea flour
½ teaspoon turmeric
¼ teaspoon cayenne
1 teaspoon cumin powder
2 teaspoons coriander powder
⅙ teaspoon hing
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon baking powder
18 ¼-inch round slices of firm red or green
tomatoes

Tomato Chutney

Preparation time: 30 minutes
Servings: 8

6 ripe tomatoes, cut into small pieces
1 tablespoon ghee
1 small jalapeño chili, minced
½ tablespoon mustard seeds
1 teaspoon fresh ginger, grated
½ teaspoon salt
4 tablespoons sugar
1 tablespoon coriander powder

1. In a skillet heat ghee, then add mustard seeds, chili, and ginger and cook until mustard seeds finish popping.

2. Add tomato pieces. Cover and cook on medium heat for 15 minutes, or until the tomatoes become a chunky sauce.

3. Remove from flame and put sauce in a blender on low speed for five seconds.

4. Return sauce to skillet and add salt, sugar, and coriander powder. Cook for 3 minutes uncovered. Offer to Kṛṣṇa hot or cold.

Spiritual Places

A NEW SPIRIT IN SAN DIEGO

Devotees of Kṛṣṇa have become widely appreciated as a vital and colorful part of this city of economic opportunity and religious heritage.

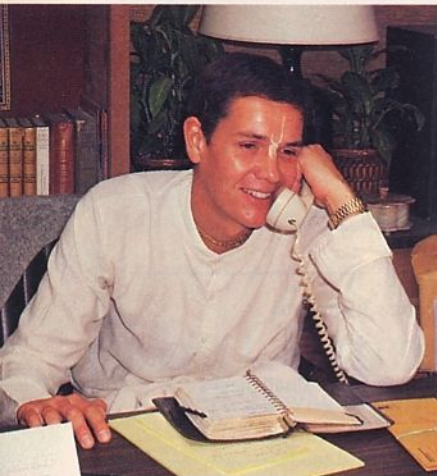
by DRUTAKARMĀ DĀSĀ

At the center of all activities for the devotees in San Diego are the Deities of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gīrīdhārī (right). The Deities are recognized as the temple proprietors, whereas the devotees see themselves as menial servants.

Worship begins at four each morning and continues on a regular schedule into the evening. Devotees decorate the Deities, offer Them opulent food, and congregationally chant Their holy names.



BHĀDRA-MĪDĀNĪCĀ DĀSĀ



NITYA-TRIPĀDĒVĪCĀ

Śrīla Rāmeśvara Swami (top), one of the present spiritual masters of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, oversees ISKCON's activities in San Diego and other cities in the western United States. Temple president Badīnārāyaṇa dāsa (above) keeps an eye on the varied temple projects, which include two restaurants, the charitable Food for Life program, and the distribution of transcendental literature.



San Diego, famous as a port for the U.S. Navy's Pacific fleet, as a resort town with a subtropical climate that draws winter tourists to its parks and beaches, and as a developing center for high-tech industries, began its history in 1769 as the first Spanish mission in California. Exactly two centuries later, in 1969, devotees of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness opened their first center and began their own missionary activities. During the past fifteen years they have made a

profound impact upon the cultural life of the city.

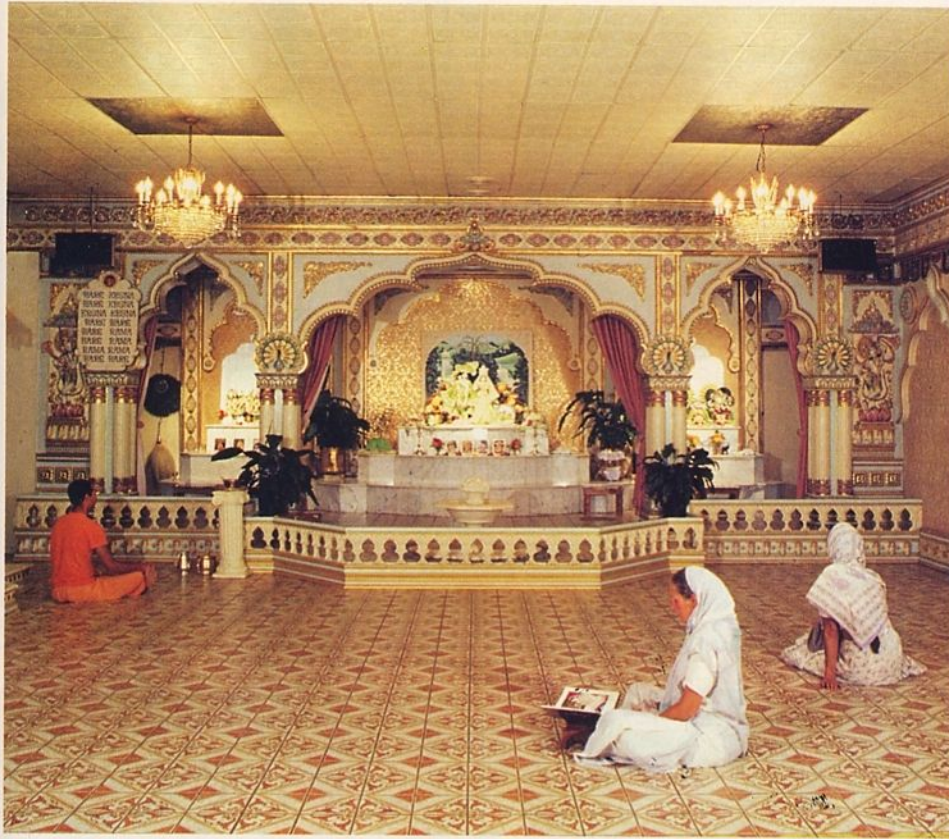
What is it that so many San Diegans find attractive about the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement? The food is one thing. Like many other Southern California residents, people in San Diego are becoming increasingly aware of the health benefits of a vegetarian diet. Through many food-related programs the members of San Diego's Kṛṣṇa consciousness community are at the forefront of the trend against meat-eating.

The Indian spiritual tradition represented by the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement rejects animal slaughter as needless, unethical violence.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, says, "If one offers to Me with love and devotion a leaf, a flower, a fruit, or water, I will accept it." Since time immemorial devotees have prepared vegetarian foods and offered them to Lord Kṛṣṇa as an act of devotion. Food so offered becomes spiritual in quality, and it is customary to distribute this consecrated food, called *prasādam*, to the general public.

Thus for many thousands of San Diegans, the first taste of Kṛṣṇa consciousness has been a plate of the delicious spiritual vegetarian food served at the movement's cultural festivals, nightly dinners, Sunday feasts, or two very popular Govinda's natural foods restaurants.

"A nonvegetarian who strolls into Govinda's, a comfortable, unpretentious establishment, may feel quite virtuous when he contemplates the eye-catching array of beautifully fresh and green vegetables spread out on the salad bar," wrote David Nelson, restaurant reviewer for the San Diego edition of the *Los Angeles Times*. Describing the entrées, he stated, "Most are colorful and all are impeccably fresh. Sesame seeds and wedges of beautifully red tomato floated atop the split yellow pea soup. . . . The most delicious foods here are the homemade breads, which are brought out hot several times during the course of the evening. . . . Indian music plays quietly over the sound system, and, for those so inclined, there is a video room in which guests may watch videotapes about various aspects of Indian culture." The boutiques and gift shops adjoining each



PORNA TATTA DASA



NITYA-TRIPĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ



NITYA-TRIPĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ



NITYA-TRIPĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

Ornate and pristine clean, the San Diego temple room (above) is an oasis for reading and for chanting God's holy names. A bas-relief of Lord Kṛṣṇa lifting Govardhana Hill (left) adorns a temple-room wall. Two young devotees (above left) enthusiastically join in the congregational chanting and dancing as their elders chant Hare Kṛṣṇa to the accompaniment of drums and hand cymbals.

restaurant offer transcendental literature, Indian fashions, silk paintings, oriental rugs, incense, and even Indian spices and bulk grains and flours for those interested in duplicating their favorite Govinda's restaurant recipes.



To let everyone know about the joys of spiritual life, devotees make the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa available in Balboa Park (above). The Festival of India (right) attracts many curious students at San Diego State University and the University of California.

Here are some sample comments from suggestion cards filled out by Govinda's customers: "It's a pleasure to come to a restaurant where you can be assured of nutritious well-prepared food in an atmosphere of respect for God. Keep up the good work!" . . . "I'm really against exploiting animals for food, and I'm glad to find an all-vegetarian restaurant with such good food and reasonable prices." . . . "Great! There should be as many Govinda's as 7-11's."

Guṇagrāhī Goswami, who founded the restaurants, says, "I'm happy that so many people here in San Diego are enjoying the elegant vegetarian dining experience we're working so hard to offer them at Govinda's. And we're also providing an opportunity for them to learn more about Kṛṣṇa consciousness. A good many of our patrons become very interested in the spiritual aspects of our approach to eating. They learn



how people definitely suffer a bad karmic reaction to killing animals. They inquire about how to prepare and offer their own food as a spiritual offering to Lord Kṛṣṇa."

The devotees of Kṛṣṇa are particularly concerned with the plight of San Diego's homeless and hungry. Through ISKCON's Hare Krishna Food for Life program,

which now operates throughout the world, the members of the San Diego Kṛṣṇa consciousness community are providing free noon meals to thousands. Leroy Martin, a district chief of the County of San Diego Department of Social Services, reported, "There is a tremendous amount of poverty in our community. Clients are seen in our



NITYA-TRPTĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ



NITYA-TRPTĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

Happy in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the girls at left enjoy much of their weekends playing together at ISKCON's Pacific Beach property. Below, regular customers enjoy the array of natural, nutritious vegetarian dishes at one of the San Diego temple's two fine restaurants. The lunch-hour crowd appreciates the restaurants for their efficient service, unique atmosphere, varied and tasty dishes, and unbeatable prices.



NITYA-TRPTĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ



NITYA-TRPTĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ



NITYA-TRPTĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

On the road. Guṇagrāhī Goswami (left) travels throughout the southwestern United States in his "temple on wheels" (above). As a renounced monk, he is fully dedicated to teaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness to others, often traveling in his motor home to visit people who have expressed an interest in spiritual life but live far from any temple.

office on a daily basis who have not eaten and are hungry." Speaking of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement's free-food program, he noted its "reliability and efficiency." He added, "Clients and community members anticipate them being here. . . . Some clients stated that they had walked a considerable distance specifically for the noon meal."

Mr. Logan observed that Hare Krishna Food for Life "is able to provide meals at a lower cost because of an all-volunteer staff." He concluded, "I would strongly recommend that the Hare Krishna Food for Life free meals program be expanded. I would also support their request for additional funds to operate their program. I think the Hare Krishna Food for Life workers have done an excellent job. Clients and community residents have appreciated their service."

But the most heartfelt words of appreciation come from those who actually receive the meals. Says Kenneth Cooley, thirty-three and unemployed, "This is great. If you people hadn't come today, I would not have had anything at all to eat."

Recently Hare Krishna Food for Life qualified to receive government food supplies. Large trucks regularly arrive at the Food for Life kitchen to drop off supplies that will be used to prepare meals for the hungry. A typical load: two thousand pounds of butter, a thousand pounds of powdered milk, and two hundred pounds of peanut butter.

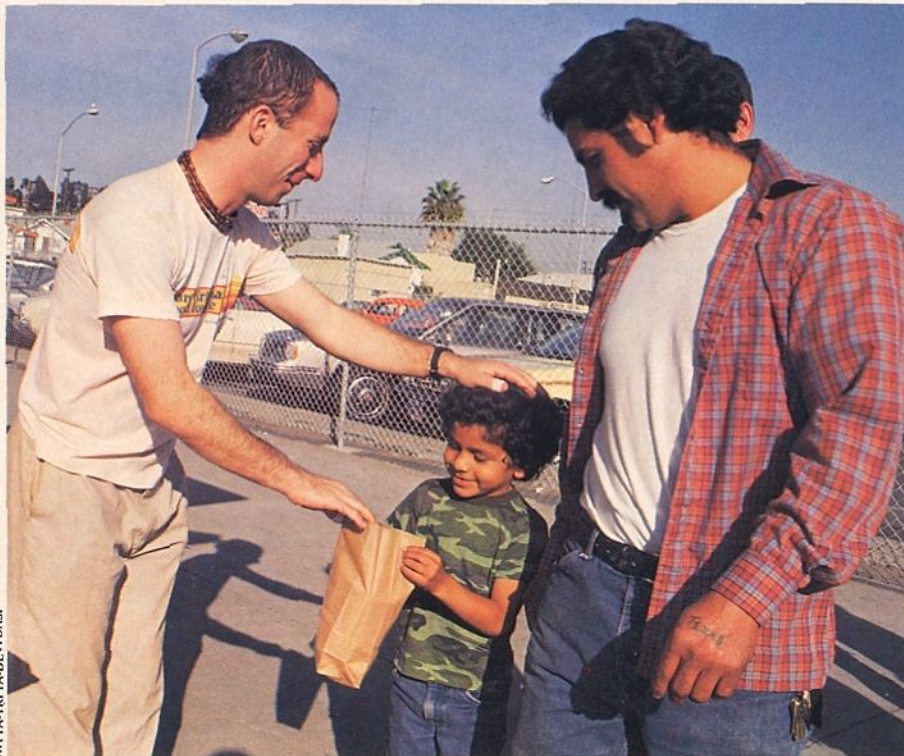
With the enthusiastic endorsement of Mexican officials, Hare Krishna Food for Life volunteers from San Diego are also

distributing free meals in the *barrios* of Tijuana. There the emphasis is on children. Mrs. Rosario Cecelia, head of a Tijuana neighborhood council, says, "There are many mothers in this neighborhood with six or more children who do not get enough food for themselves or their children. There is no way we can thank you enough for your help."

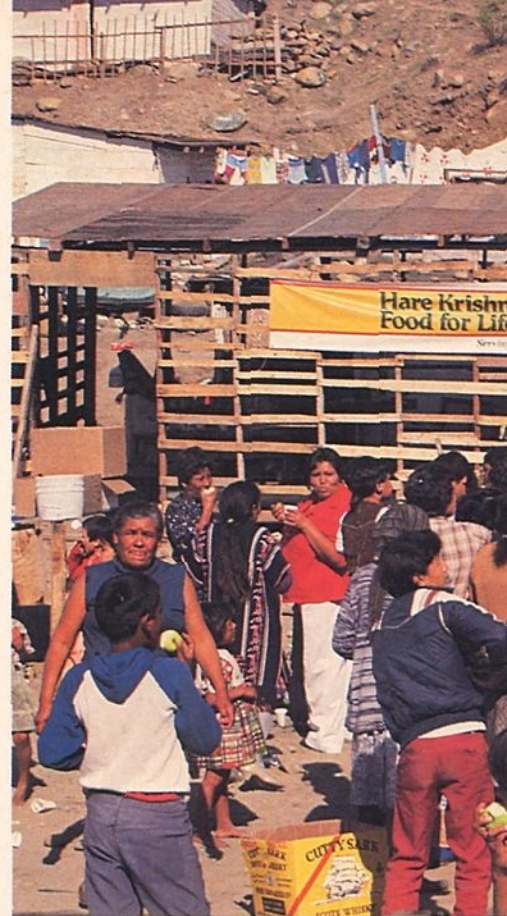
A Major Cultural Center

During the course of each year, tens of thousands of San Diego residents enjoy the Sunday evening Festival of India at the

Often, the highlight of the evening is a talk on the philosophy of the *Bhagavad-gītā* given by the resident spiritual master, Śrīla Rāmeśvara Swami, a member of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement's Governing Body Commission and a pioneer in spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness through book publication and distribution. Recently devotees delivered sixty thousand packages of free books to homes in the San Diego area. "We're making a valuable contribution to the city's cultural life," says Śrīla Rāmeśvara Swami. "We're offering people the most complete understanding of vegetarianism



NITYA-TRIPĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ



NITYA-TRIPĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ



DEVAHĪTĪ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

Food for Life, ISKCON's worldwide food distribution project, is very active in San Diego and nearby Tijuana. Free apples (top center) and powdered milk (right) draw crowds in the Tijuana *barrios*. In downtown San Diego, an appreciate father and son (above) receive government surplus from an ISKCON representative. At far right, Karuṇasindhu dāsa puts finishing touches on a sign for one of the restaurants.



NITYA-TRIPĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

Hare Kṛṣṇa movement's temple in Pacific Beach. This unique, multifaceted cultural experience brings alive the art, music, dance, and philosophy of ancient India's timeless Vedic culture. Stepping into the temple room, which is beautifully decorated with intricate bas-relief sculpture, classic Indian art, brilliant chandeliers, and a bubbling marble fountain, guests feel transported from San Diego to the enchanting, vibrant atmosphere of the spiritual world.





DEVAHŪTĪ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

and reincarnation. We are explaining to people how world events that affect every one of us, including the issues of war and peace, the environment, and the economy, are under the control of *karma*. We're offering a means for people to elevate their consciousness and more perfectly understand God and their personal relationship with Him."

For many years, devotees have also held a nightly vegetarian dinner. The guests include many students from the nearby San Diego campus of the University of California and quite a number of young professionals. "Kṛṣṇa consciousness always has had a special attraction for the students," explains the temple president, Badarīnārāyaṇa dāsa. "But now as we ourselves enter our thirties and forties, marry and raise families, and become involved in activities that require the same skills and talents that are required in business and the professions, we find that we're naturally attracting more people of our own age group. We have a lot of what you call 'yuppies' coming to the temple these days."

"San Diego is now the eighth biggest city in America," he adds. "After Houston and Phoenix, it's the fastest growing. It's Southern California's answer to Silicon



NĪTYA-TRĪPTĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ



At home at the Pacific Beach temple, devotees are busy welcoming guests. A relaxed conversation at the Sunday feast (above left) provokes smiles, and Mahātma dāsa (at left) talks with ISKCON life members, the Duvvuri family. In their home (above), congregational members enjoy an ISKCON video show on cable TV.

Valley. But there's still a very relaxed vacationland mood here. People are competitive, but they're also interested in enjoying themselves.

"So what Kṛṣṇa consciousness has to offer them is a powerful technique of meditation that fills the spiritual vacuum created by our overly materialistic society. The very word *Kṛṣṇa* means 'the reservoir of pleasure,' and by understanding our spiritual identity and our relationship with Kṛṣṇa, we can share in that higher pleasure.

This elevates the quality of our enjoyment of life.”

Tom Sepa, a career consultant who regularly attends the evening dinner, says, “The food is great, and the fact that it’s free from *karma* makes it even better. I like the people here. It’s a great alternative to the nightclub scene. I’m not into going to bars. The temple is part of my social life. I feel when I come here I can be myself without having to get involved in the usual games. I’m also glad for the opportunity to learn more about the teachings of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I’ve gotten a lot of peace of mind from coming here.”

Joanne Wooding, thirty-eight, who works as a secretary, says, “I’ve been coming to the temple for a couple of months. I immediately felt right at home. I’ve been a vegetarian for several years, so when I moved to San Diego a few months ago I found it difficult to eat anywhere or have any kind of social life, mainly because of the difficulties involved in being around people who eat meat. I really enjoy being with the Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees. I feel a lot less stress in my life since I’ve been visiting here. Instead of feeling I’m all by myself, I get a lot of reinforcement for my lifestyle. I used to be an animal rights activist, but I began to feel uncomfortable with a lot of people who make political agitation to save the whales and seals but who are themselves flesh-eaters. So I very much appreciate the Hare Kṛṣṇa people’s policy of protecting all of God’s creatures.”

“I always enjoy coming here,” says Barb Manning, twenty-five. “I’m very impressed with the delicious food, the peaceful atmosphere and the graceful service. I especially like how nice and clean it always is. Sometimes I stay after dinner and take part in the chanting and the philosophy class. The altar is very attractive, and I enjoy looking at the Deities. The temple is a place where

I can come and meditate upon God as a real person. Coming here has made me more conscious of my spiritual life.”

Many of these newcomers have become members of the temple’s growing congregation, the Friends of Lord Krishna (FOLK). While keeping their own jobs and homes, they practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness and contribute a portion of their income to the temple, much as any member of the more established churches would do.

Larry Gatpandan, who paints airplanes at the Naval Air Station on North Island, is a member of FOLK. “Kṛṣṇa consciousness,” he says, “has a very satisfying spiritual philosophy, a very clear conception of God’s personal nature and of how we can use our talents and abilities to serve Him.

“I’ve also learned to practice the world’s oldest and most powerful system of meditation—the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* on meditation beads. By doing this on a regular basis, I’ve developed a sense of inner satisfaction and peace of mind. I’m a better person because of it, a better husband, a better father.

“Now, when the people I meet learn that I’m a member of the Hare Kṛṣṇa religion, they aren’t as surprised as people used to be. It’s a sign of the times, I suppose, that the movement is expanding into the general population. The Hare Kṛṣṇa people are even on television now.”

It’s a fact—regular Kṛṣṇa conscious television programming is available to San Diego residents through local cable networks. Currently running is *Inside Hare Krishna*, a highly popular thirteen-part series giving a general introduction to the lifestyle, philosophy, and cultural contributions of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. Jody Catlow, community programming director for the Southwest Cable Network, says, “The quality of the devotees’ productions is so excellent that we’ll take

whatever they give us.”

San Diego also serves as the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement’s headquarters for adjacent areas of the Southwest. Guṇagrāhī Goswami, in a large motorhome he has outfitted as a traveling temple, periodically embarks on journeys that take him and his traveling companions far and wide for the special purpose of visiting people who are interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness but live far from any temple.

A highly visible sign of the authenticity of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is the regular attendance by members of San Diego’s Indian community at temple functions. Tirumalesa Duvvuri, an aeronautical engineer with the Cal-Space company, says, “Kṛṣṇa has been worshiped in temples throughout India for thousands of years. For myself and my family, I am very grateful to the Kṛṣṇa devotees for giving us the chance to worship God in the way to which we have been accustomed.”

The San Diego Hare Kṛṣṇa center regularly hosts visiting classes from local universities and colleges. Professor Lance Nelson, of the University of San Diego’s department of religious studies, recently wrote to the temple, “The love of Kṛṣṇa, which runs so deep in the heart of India, has produced some of the most elevated expressions of religious devotion in human history. We in San Diego are enriched in having representatives of this tradition like yourself as a part of our community. My students were particularly impressed by your lifestyle of dedication to spiritual ideals. Your example is an inspiration for those of us who are overly caught up in modern mass society, which tends to emphasize conspicuous and unnecessary material consumption at the expense of that which really counts, our relationship to God. I look forward to my next visit with you.”

EVOLUTION

(continued from page 9)

geological evidence as final? Is it final? Science is progressing. You cannot say it is final.

Devotee: But I have excavated all parts of the world, and every time—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No. You have not excavated all parts of the world.

Devotee: Well, on seven continents.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Seven continents is not the whole world. You say you have excavated the whole world, but we say no, not even an insignificant portion. So your knowledge is limited. Dr. Frog has examined his three-foot-wide well, and now he claims to know the ocean.

Experimental knowledge is always im-

perfect, because one experiments with imperfect senses. Therefore, scientific knowledge *must* be imperfect. Our source of knowledge is different. We do not depend on experimental knowledge.

Now you see no dinosaurs, nor have I seen all the 8,400,000 different forms of life. But my source of knowledge is different. You are an experimenter with imperfect senses. I have taken knowledge from the perfect, who has seen everything, who knows everything. Therefore, my knowledge is perfect.

Say, for example, that I receive knowledge from my mother: “Here is your father.” But you are trying to search out your father on your own. You don’t go to your mother and ask; you just search and search. Therefore, no matter how much

you search, your knowledge will always remain imperfect.

Devotee: And your knowledge says that millions of years ago there were higher forms of life on this planet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Oh, yes, because our Vedic information is that the first created being is the *most* intelligent, the most intellectual person within the universe—Lord Brahmā, the cosmic engineer. So how can we accept your theory that intellect develops by evolution? We have received our Vedic knowledge from Brahmā, who is so perfect.


Dr. Frog has studied his three-foot well, his little reservoir of water. The Atlantic Ocean is also a reservoir of water, but there is a vast difference. Dr. Frog cannot inform us about the Atlantic Ocean. But

we take knowledge from the one who has made the Atlantic Ocean. So our knowledge is perfect.

Devotee: But wouldn't there be evidence in the earth, some remains?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Our evidence is intelligence, not stones and bones. Our evidence is intelligence. We get Vedic information by disciplic succession from the most intelligent. It is coming down by *śruti*, hearing. Vyāsadeva heard from Nārada, Nārada heard from Brahmā—millions and millions of years ago. Millions and millions of our years pass, and it is not even one day for Brahmā. So millions and billions and trillions of years are not very astonishing to us, for that is not even one day of Brahmā. But Brahmā was born of Kṛṣṇa, and intelligent philosophy has been existing in our universe from the date of Brahmā's birth. Brahmā was first educated by God, and His knowledge is passed down to us in the Vedic literature. So we get in the *Vedas* such intelligent information.

But those so-called scientists and philosophers who do not follow this system of descending knowledge, who do not accept knowledge thus received from higher authorities—they can't have any perfect knowledge, no matter what research work they carry out with their blunt senses. So whatever they say, we take it as imperfect.

Our method is different from theirs. They are searching after dead bones, and we are searching after living brains. This point should be stressed. They are dealing with dead bones, and we are dealing with living brains. So which should be considered better? 

HIGH PRIESTS

(continued from page 25)

Neither can some scientists. But the difference between a scientist and an animal is that the scientist *is* human, and thus he has the potential to understand spiritual matters. If he approaches the right source, that is.

The ancient Vedic scriptures of India give detailed information about the nature of the immortal soul. If the scientists are so concerned about creating an immortal soul, let them approach the guidelines chalked out by the original creator, Lord Kṛṣṇa.

If they study the *Vedas*, they will find that the soul is *already* eternal, that knowledge *is* sustained, birth after birth. As Lord Kṛṣṇa explains in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.17), "That which pervades the entire body [consciousness] you should know to be indestructible. No one is able to destroy the imperishable soul." And further, "As the embodied soul continuously passes, in this body, from boyhood to youth to old age, the soul similarly passes into another


body at death. A sober person is not bewildered by such a change" (Bg. 2.13).

Thus the Vedic literature gives precise information about the eternal soul. Here are some more examples: "If we divide the tip of a hair into one hundred parts and then take one part and divide this into another one hundred parts, that ten-thousandth part is the dimension of the soul" (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 5.9).

And in the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (3.1.9): "The soul is atomic in size and can be perceived by perfect intelligence. This atomic soul is floating in the five kinds of air [*prāṇa, apāna, vyāna, samāna, and udāna*], is situated in the area of the heart, and

spreads its influence all over the body."

As long as we think we are the body, remaining unaware of our true, spiritual identity, we are in ignorance. And the results of this ignorance may manifest in many ways, such as in the popular notion that the material body, which is by nature temporary, can be made eternal. Nonsense. Whether you're a computer or a human being, your body must perish.

Still, our desire for immortality indicates that some essence is eternal within us, something that gives us the idea of infinity. What is that "something"? Well, fiddling with computers won't help us find it. Studying the Vedic literature will. 

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.

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NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Watch Your Language

Misconceptions about the aims and methods of spiritual life are common in the West. Part of the blame may be laid upon those Indian *svāmīs* and *yogīs* who first traveled to America at the turn of the century and introduced ideas and techniques that deviated from the standard spiritual practices given in the Vedic literature. And before them, American transcendentalists like Emerson and Thoreau were creating confusion, even as they fanned America's interest in Indian spirituality.

In the 1960s, when America was more open to new spiritual ideas, a second wave of Indian missionaries arrived, movements sprang up, and terms like *yoga*, *karma*, and *mantra* entered the American language. Beat-generation writer Jack Kerouac wrote *The Dharma Bums* and Allen Ginsberg wrote "Wichita Vortex Sutra," neither of which had much to do with the Vedic literature, from which the very words *dharma* and *sūtra* had been borrowed. The rock 'n' roll culture of the hippies also popularized terms of Vedic spirituality, simultaneously creating new misconceptions. And recently anticultists have misinterpreted Vedic spirituality as a sinister technique of mind control.

To clear up some of these misconceptions, I would like to offer some definitions and explanations of the basic, most-often misrepresented Vedic concepts. My definitions are not actually mine but come from the Vedic literatures introduced in the West by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

Mantra Meditation. While introducing a commercialized idea of meditation, some prominent purveyors of *mantra* meditation have put forward the notion that a *mantra* is a word or sound that has no particular meaning. One version of this idea—by now well known in America—is that one may simply meditate on any phrase at all, whether it be from the Vedic literature or not. This concept of *mantra* meditation even appears in certain psychotherapeutic methodologies, and patients are advised to think of any sound—"door," "cat," "God," "om"—and the results will come.

Actually, *mantra* meditation refers to the process of purifying the mind by absorption in the sound vibration of God's holy name. The names of God are identical with God Himself, and by chanting His holy names we enter into blissful, purifying union with Him. This cannot be achieved by simply

repeating any old sound.

Yoga. Often people think of *yoga* as a kind of physical exercise. According to the *Yoga-sūtra of Patañjali*, that part of *yoga* involving physical exercise is only a preliminary measure. By practicing the *yoga* postures (*āsanas*), one gradually comes to control the restless senses. Then one comes to control the mind, and finally the *yogī* meditates on the form of Kṛṣṇa in the heart. Some modern *yogīs*, however, teach only the *āsanas*, as if by physical exercises one could reach the Absolute Truth. Some have slandered *yoga* by transmogrifying it into a sex cult. Books such as *Naked Yoga* are not uncommon, and *yoga* often commingles with erotic massage among groups interested in peddling illicit sex as a form of "divine love." Ironically, the first principles of *yoga*—as described in the *Yoga-sūtra* and *Bhagavad-gītā*—are celibacy and sense control.

Yoga means "to link with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa." Certainly the *yoga* exercises performed in popular *yoga* classes cannot lead to this goal. In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Kṛṣṇa says that the best *yoga* is to think of Him and serve Him always. This is called *bhakti-yoga*, or the *yoga* of devotion, and it is the form of *yoga* most recommended for this age.

Reincarnation. The idea of reincarnation appeared originally in the Vedic literature, although many of us first encountered it in the writings of certain Greek philosophers or some of the early Christian thinkers. In recent years, many books have appeared about people remembering their past lives. Past-life recollection is rare, however, and is the subject of much speculation. It is not integral to the Vedic science of reincarnation.

Reincarnation is part of the science of the soul, the self. The first lesson taught by Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-gītā* is that we are not the body but are eternal souls. At the end of this life, we will reincarnate, or take birth in another body, according to our past activities. The main purpose of life is to get free from birth and death. To do this, one must first understand that he is passing through different lives. Then he must change his activities in this life so that he can get free from material desires and go back to Godhead. Reincarnation, therefore, is a very serious study. The current interest in reincarnation is good—provided it leads to the right understanding.

Today's sensational and inaccurate literatures on the subject become a disservice, however, when serious thinkers are repelled from what they have come to see as a kind of occultism or dilettantism. Reincarnation should be properly studied through the *Bhagavad-gītā* and not through different fads or through persons who have no authorized direction.

Karma. In the 1960s this term became a popular word in American hip jargon. We see such places as The Good Karma Restaurant; we have John Lennon's song *Instant Karma*; and we have rock bands like Bad Karma.

Karma is thought of as similar to fate; you can't do anything about it. And this much is true: *Karma* is an unbreakable law of nature that awards happiness and suffering to all living beings according to their pious or sinful acts. For example, animal slaughter and abortion are sinful, and persons implicated in these acts will reap suffering. This suffering may also come as a massive bad reaction throughout an entire nation.

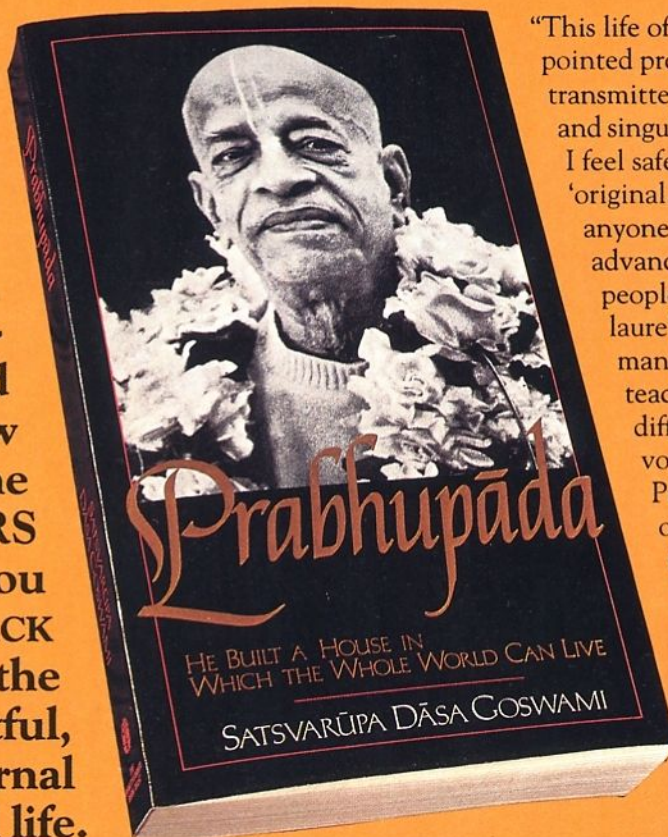
Ultimately, there is no good *karma*, because *karma* of any kind will force one to accept another material body to suffer birth, disease, old age, and death. But by the true practice of *bhakti-yoga* and *mantra* meditation, one can get free from all *karma*, become liberated, and go back to Godhead.

Seeing the distortions that these concepts have undergone, we can understand that one of the main purposes of the misleaders has been to fashion spiritual concepts into a commercial product. To sell *yoga*, they have adulterated it with health, beauty, and sexual pleasure. To sell meditation, they have devised the use of meaningless sounds and "personalized *mantras*" that one must purchase. Fifteen-minute "meditation sessions" are advertised as facilitating business success and sexual prowess. And to sell the deep, philosophical concept of reincarnation, purveyors have made it into a game. And always the motive is to sell a book or service or product.

In one sense, it is very good that these ideas have come into Western culture, since to even think of *karma* or meditation has its good aspects. But these ideas must be corrected. They belong to a valuable philosophy and way of life, but if we do not understand these terms, we cannot practice that philosophy properly. —SDG

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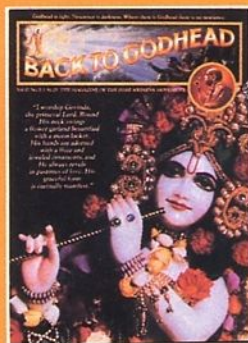
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