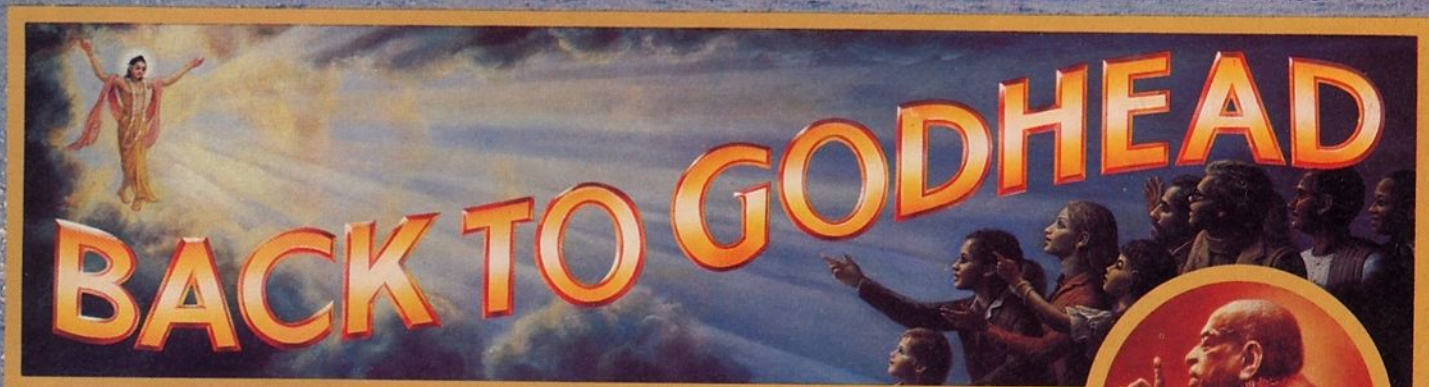


Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.



Vol.21 No.9

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT

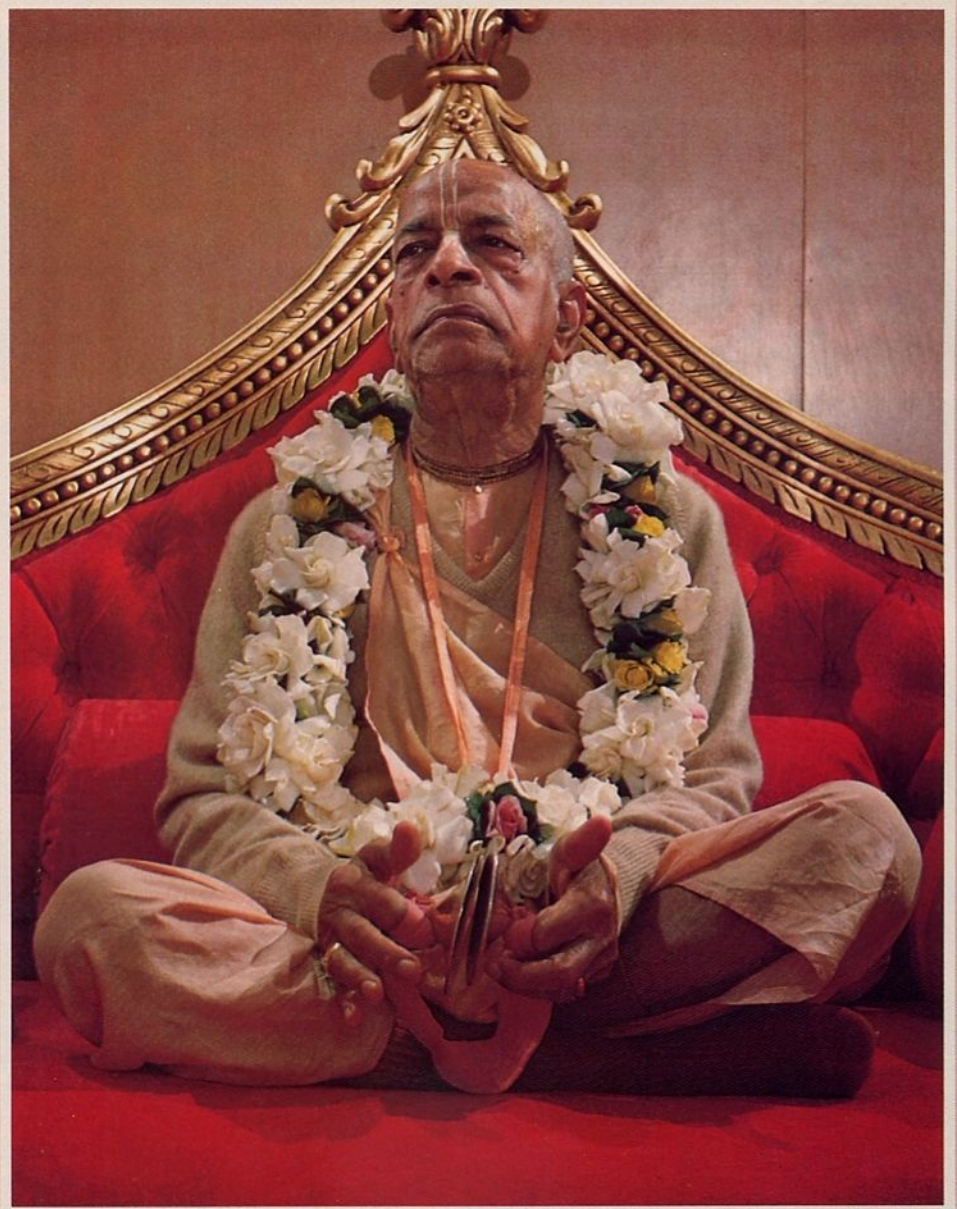
SAILING FOR KRSNA IN THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

On Board the
Jaladuta II: An Update
(See page 26)



**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

BACK TO GODHEAD

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(under the direction of His Divine Grace
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His Divine Grace
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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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PREPARE FOR YOUR NEXT LIFE 2

The question is, If I am eternal, why have I been put into this temporary life? Śrīla Prabhupāda answers.

THE BRAHMACĀRĪ ĀŚRAMA: FRATERNITY IN KṚṢṆA CONSCIOUSNESS 5

The first step for single men serious about spiritual life.

BASEBALL, CASTE, AND THE WHOLE-HOG SYNDROME 8

India's modern caste system makes about as much sense as hereditary baseball.

Lord Kṛṣṇa's Cuisine

DIETING THE HARE KṚṢṆA WAY 12

Solving America's weighty problem.

Book Section

ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM 15

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

Spiritual Places

SETTING SAIL WITH TRANSCENDENTAL TREASURES 26

Bearing Śrīla Prabhupāda's eternal gifts, the *Jaladuta II* carries Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the Hawaiian Islands.

THE INTRUDER 33

Claiming God's property as our own, we're suffering at the hands of nature. But Śaṅkha-cūḍa had the distinction of being punished by the Lord's own fist.

THE VEDIC OBSERVER 24

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT 14

FOR YOUR INFORMATION 22

EVERY TOWN AND VILLAGE 23

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR 36

COVER: The *Jaladuta II*, the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement's fifty-three-foot teakwood ketch, rounds Makapuu Point on the Hawaiian Island of Oahu and heads northwest toward Kaneohe Bay, where guests will board for a transcendental day of singing, feasting, and sailing adventure. Please see article on page 26. (Photo by Viśākhā-devī dāsi.)

PREPARE FOR YOUR NEXT LIFE

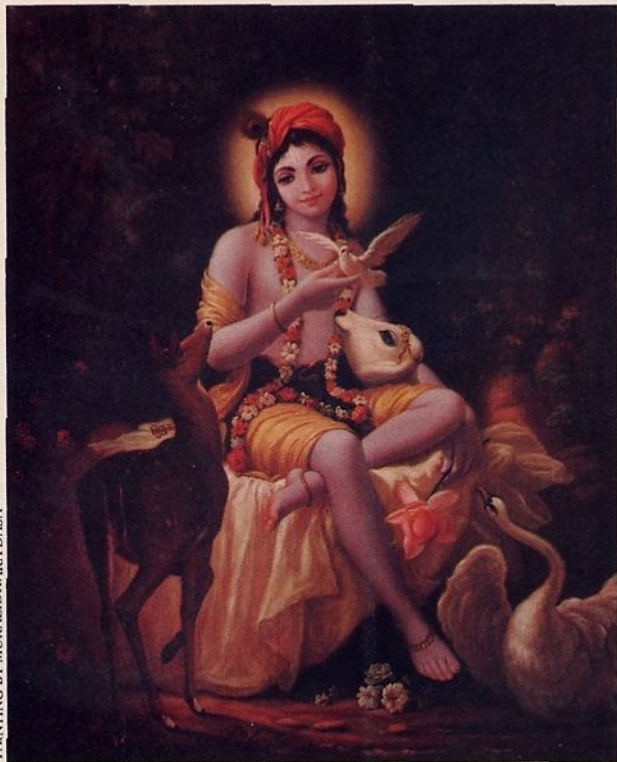
When we understand who we are, we can easily
solve the mysteries of reincarnation.

A lecture in London in 1973

by HIS DIVINE GRACE

A. C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA

Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

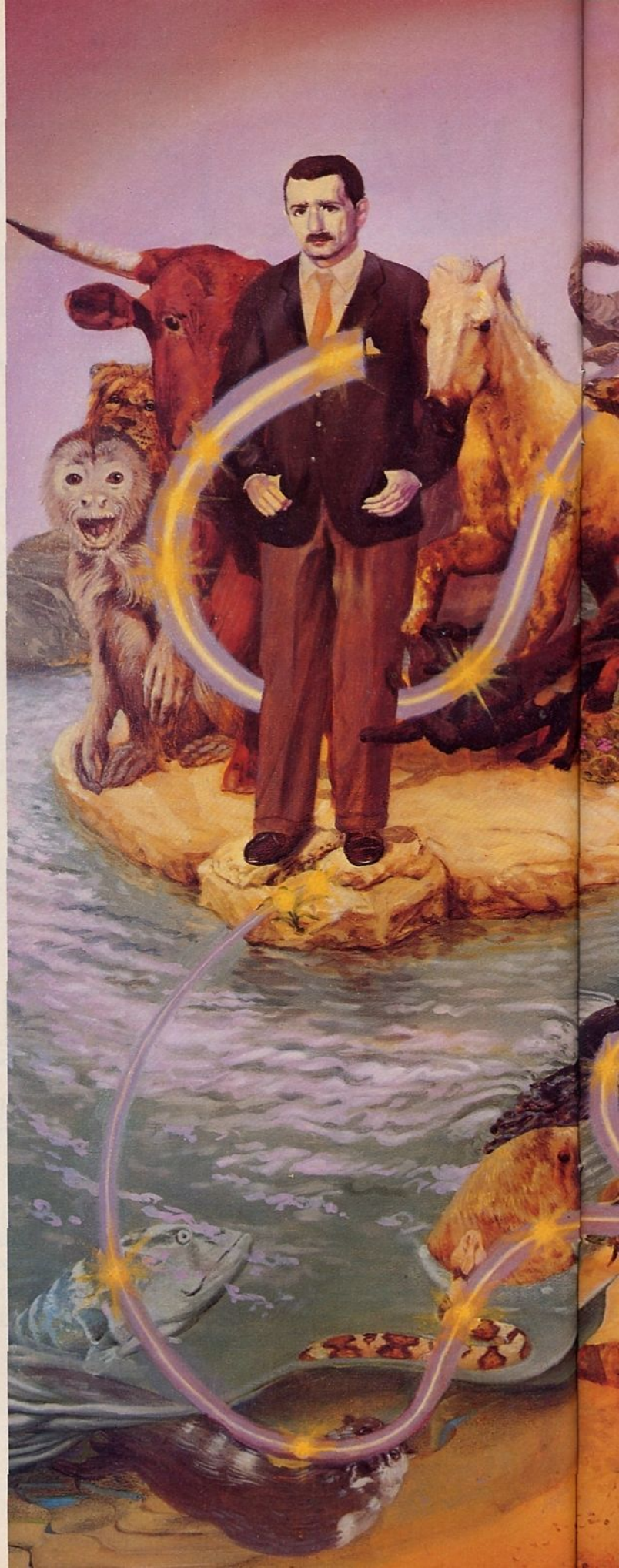


PAINTING BY MURALIDHARA DĀSA

*dehino 'smiṇ yathā dehe
kaumāraṁ yauvanaṁ jarā
tathā dehāntara-prāptir
dhīras tatra na muhyati*

“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.”
(*Bhagavad-gītā* 2.13)

Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead (above), has an eternal body that never changes, even when He comes to the material world. The individual spirit souls, however, transmigrate in the cycle of birth and death from species to species (right). Human life affords the soul a chance to regain his eternal life beyond birth and death.





PAINTING BY YADURĀNĪ DEVĪ DĀSĪ

Most people cannot understand this simple instruction of Lord Kṛṣṇa's. Therefore Kṛṣṇa says here, *dhīras tatra na muhyati*: "A sober person is not bewildered by the change of bodies at death." And *adhīra* means just the opposite—a fourth-class man, a rascal. So, those who are not gentlemen, who are uncultured, uneducated rascals, cannot understand the transmigration of the spirit soul. Otherwise, where is the difficulty?

Any sober-headed, cool-headed person can understand that I, the spirit soul, am different from the body. For example, I can remember how I have changed my body throughout my life. I can remember how, when I was a boy, I was playing and jumping. Then I became a young man, and I was enjoying life with friends and family. Now I am an old man. So, my body has changed so much, but I am still the same person, remaining. That I am different from my body is indicated in this verse by the words *dehinaḥ* and *deha*, which are very significant. *Dehinaḥ* means "proprietor of the body," and *deha* means "the body."

In the previous verse Kṛṣṇa said to Arjuna, "All of us—you, Me, and all these soldiers and kings present here—we existed in the past, we are existing now, and we shall continue to exist in the future." This was Lord Kṛṣṇa's statement. But rascals will challenge: "How was I existing in the past? I was born only in such-and-such year. Before that I was not existing. At the present time I am existing; that's all right. But as soon as I die, I will not exist. So how can Kṛṣṇa say that all of us existed, we are existing, and we shall continue to exist? Isn't that false?"

No, it is not false. It is fact. As spirit souls, we are existing in different bodies, and we shall continue to exist in different bodies in the future. As Kṛṣṇa says, *tathā dehāntara-prāptiḥ*: "At death the soul transmigrates to another body." This is to be understood. I may not remember my life in a previous body, but that is another thing. Forgetfulness is our nature. But because I have forgotten something, that does not mean it did not take place. No. In my childhood I did so many things that I do not remember. But my father and mother remember. No, forgetting does not mean that things did not take place.

Similarly, death simply means forgetting what one was in the past life. That is death. Otherwise, as spirit souls, we have no death. Suppose I change my clothes. In my boyhood I wore one kind of clothes, in my youth I wore a different kind of clothes, and now in my old age, as a *sannyāsī*, I am wearing different clothes. So, one's clothes may change, but that does not mean the owner of the clothes is dead and gone. No. By this simple example, Kṛṣṇa explains the transmigration of the soul.

All of us are individuals. There is no question of our mixing together. God is an eternal individual, and we are also eternal individuals: *nityo nityānām cetanaś cetanānām*. But while God does not change His body, we change ours—at least while in this material world. When we go to the spiritual world, there is no more change of body. Kṛṣṇa has His eternal body, an eternal form full of bliss and knowledge, *sac-cid-ānanda-*

vigraha. Similarly, when we go back home, back to Godhead, we get a similar body.

When Kṛṣṇa comes to this material world, He does not change His body. Therefore His name is Acyuta, "He who never falls down." Kṛṣṇa never falls into *māyā* [illusion], because He is the controller of *māyā*. That is the difference between Kṛṣṇa and us. We are controlled by the material energy, but Kṛṣṇa is the controller of the material energy. Not only the material energy, but also the spiritual energy. All energies. Everything we see, everything manifested—that is Kṛṣṇa's energy, just as heat and light are the energy of the sun.

Kṛṣṇa has many energies, but they have been divided into three principal ones: the external energy, the internal energy, and the marginal energy. We living entities are the marginal energy. This means we may remain under the external energy or under the spiritual energy, as we like. This is our independence. As Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā*, *yatheccasi tathā kuru*: "Whatever you like, you can do." Kṛṣṇa gives this independence to Arjuna after speaking the *Bhagavad-gītā*. He does not force Arjuna. Force is not good, because a decision made under force will not stand. For example, we advise our students to rise early in the morning. But I do not force anyone. I may force them for one or two days, but if they do not practice it, then force is useless.

Similarly, Kṛṣṇa does not force anyone to leave this material world. Here we are all conditioned souls under the influence of the material energy. Kṛṣṇa comes here to deliver us from the clutches of the material energy. He sees that we are suffering so much, unnecessarily. Why unnecessarily? Because we are all part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa.

Now, if the son is in difficulty, the father suffers also. Suppose a son has become mad—or, nowadays, suppose he has become a hippy. The father is very sorry that his son is not living like a gentleman, that he is living like a wretch. Similarly, we conditioned souls in this material world are suffering so much, living like wretches and rascals. So Kṛṣṇa is not happy. Therefore He comes personally to teach us, *yadā yadā hi dharmasya glānir bhavati . . . tadāt-mānam sṛjāmy aham*.

When Kṛṣṇa comes, He comes in His original form. But unfortunately we understand Kṛṣṇa as one of us. In one sense He is one of us, because He is the father and we are His sons. But He is the chief living entity: *nityo nityānām cetanaś cetanānām*. While we have a little power, He is the most powerful—supremely powerful. That is the difference between Kṛṣṇa and us. No one can be equal to Kṛṣṇa or greater than Him. Everyone is under Kṛṣṇa; therefore everyone is a servant of Kṛṣṇa: *ekale*

īsvara kṛṣṇa, āra saba bhṛtya. As Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *bhoktāraṁ yajna-tapasāṁ, sarva-loka-maheśvaram*: "I am the enjoyer; I am the proprietor of everything." That is the fact.

So, we are changing our bodies, but Kṛṣṇa does not change His. One should understand this. The proof is that Kṛṣṇa says, *vedāhaṁ samatītāni vartamānāni cārjuna bhaviṣyāni*: "I know the past, present, and future." For example, in the fourth chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā* you will find that Kṛṣṇa says, "I spoke this philosophy of the *Bhagavad-gītā* to the sun-god millions of years ago." How could Kṛṣṇa remember? Because He does not change His body. This is a simple fact.

We forget things because we are changing our bodies at every moment. That is confirmed by medical science. At every second we are changing the cells in our body, and so the body is changing imperceptibly. For example, the father and

**Due to my
ignorance I am
taking birth,
I am becoming
diseased, I
am growing old,
and I am
dying. These are
real problems.**

mother cannot see how the body of their child is changing, but when a third person comes and sees the child, he says, "Oh, you have grown so big."

So, our body is changing imperceptibly. But *I*, the spiritual soul, am not changing. That is to be understood. We are all individual souls and we are eternal, but because we are changing bodies we are experiencing birth, old age, disease, and death.

Our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is meant to get us out of this changing position and bring us to the permanent position. We are eternal, so why should we be in a changing position? We should try to answer that question. Everyone wants to live eternally; nobody wants to die. If I come before you with a revolver and say, "I shall kill you," you will immediately cry out, because you do not want to die. That is not a very good business—to die and take birth again. It is very troublesome.

That I know subconsciously. I know that if I die, I will have to again enter the womb of a mother, and nowadays mothers are killing their children within the womb. Then again I will be forced to enter the womb of another mother. This process is going on. So, to be killed, to live within the womb of a mother—these things are very troublesome. Because we have a recollection of all this trouble in the subconsciousness, we do not want to die.

Therefore the question is, Since I am eternal, why have I been put into this temporary life? This is our real problem. But the rascals have set aside the real problem. They are thinking of how to eat, how to sleep, how to have sex, how to defend. Even if you eat nicely and sleep nicely, ultimately you will have to die. That problem remains. But they don't care about this real problem, although they are very much alert to solve the temporary problems of eating, sleeping, mating, and defending. These are not real problems. The birds and beasts also eat, sleep, have sexual intercourse, and defend themselves. If they know how to do all these things without having an education or a so-called civilization, what is our problem? These things are not problems. The real problem is that I do not want to die, but death comes. Why? This is our real problem.

The rascals do not know of the real problem. They think these temporary problems are most important. That Kṛṣṇa explains in the next verse:

*mātrā-sparśās tu kaunteya
śītoṣṇa-sukha-duhkha-dāḥ
āgamāpāyino 'nityās
tāms titikṣasva bhārata*

We are faced with so many temporary problems, which we must simply tolerate. Suppose there is severe cold. This is a problem. We have to search out nice food and a fireplace, and if they are not available we are in distress. But this problem is temporary. Severe cold, winter—these come and go. They are not permanent.

My permanent problem is that due to my ignorance I am taking birth, I am becoming diseased, I am growing old, and I am dying. These are real problems. Therefore Kṛṣṇa says, *janma-mṛtyu-jarā-vyādhiduhkha-doṣānudarśanam*: "Those in knowledge should always see the miseries of birth, death, old age, and disease."

So, our real problem is how to end transmigration from one body to another (*tathā dehāntara-prāptiḥ*). Kṛṣṇa says we existed in a different body in the past, we are existing now, and in the future we shall also exist in a different body. In this way we are transmigrating from one body to another. The intelligent person asks, "What kind of body am I going to get in my next life?" That is intelligence. And if

(continued on page 34)

THE BRAHMACĀRĪ ĀŚRAMA

Fraternity in Kṛṣṇa Consciousness

“As I began to spend more time with the *brahmacārīs*, I noticed an unusual trait. They seemed to be always joyful, beyond the moody ups and downs that had plagued my spiritual quest.”

by KĀLAKANṬHA DĀSA



YAMARAJA DĀSA

What would happen to me if I wanted to become a Hare Kṛṣṇa devotee?” a young man recently asked me. The first step, I told him, would be to enter the *brahmacārī āśrama*, the status of life for single men serious about spiritual advancement. Though I am now happily married, the conversation reminded me of the years I spent as a *brahmacārī*.

My first encounter with *brahmacārīs* came in 1972 in Portland, Oregon. Although my parents had kindly offered me many good opportunities to establish a professional career, I kept finding “higher education” empty and unsatisfying. So, at the time, I was maintaining myself with a simple job, using my spare time to indulge my fascination with the Bible and other spiritual teachings.

One day as I was rushing around downtown Portland delivering office supplies, I

was shocked by the sight of seven or eight shaven-headed, saffron-clad men dancing, playing cymbals and drums, and singing the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. I pulled over to watch, and after a few minutes one of the young men approached me with a smile and a book, *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*. I gave him a dollar and gratefully accepted the book.

That night in my apartment I sat down to read the *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*. It was intriguing because it was apparently speaking to me from a higher platform. But it was also bewildering. It seemed difficult and foreign, as were many of the other spiritual texts I had tried to read.

But this text had something extra: a person to explain it! I called the local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple and arranged to meet the

young man who had sold me the book.

Carrying no intentions of changing my dress or hairstyle, I entered the temple, a two-story brick house in a pleasant neighborhood. I met my exotic-looking friend and sat with him on the carpeted floor of the reception room, where we discussed *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*. Soon the text began to make sense to me, and I became curious about my friend’s peculiar mode of life. He explained that he was a *brahmacārī*, a celibate student devoted to spiritual study. He lived and worked under the tutelage of his guru, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder and spiritual master of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. Curious, I asked him to tell me more about the *brahmacārī*’s life.

“Oh, I can do better than that,” he said. “Come on.” And he took me to the *brahmacārī* quarters, a spotlessly clean bedroom

full of bunks and lockers. On each bunk was a bookrack sporting many of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. Pictures of Kṛṣṇa and neat, hand-printed verses from the *Bhagavad-gītā* decorated the walls.

"*Brahmacārīs* live as simply as possible," my friend said. The shaven head and saffron robes, he explained, indicate (to an informed observer) the status of a celibate monk. The *brahmacārī's* appearance is traditional and designed for cleanliness and simplicity.

Later I read from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, a five-thousand year old Sanskrit text, about the classical definition of *brahmacārī* life:

The *brahmacārī* should live under the care of the true spiritual master, giving him sincere respect and obeisances, acting as his menial servant and carrying out his order. The *brahmacārī* should engage himself in spiritual activities and study the Vedic literature under the direction of the spiritual master. He should collect alms daily in the morning and in the evening. Whatever alms he has collected he should offer to the spiritual master. The *brahmacārī* should be satisfied with eating what is absolutely necessary, he should be very expert in executing responsibilities, he should be faithful, and he should control his senses and try to avoid the association of the opposite sex as far as possible.

It didn't take long for me to observe some differences between the lives of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *brahmacārīs* and those of their traditional Vedic predecessors. Although they were enthusiastic to minimize their corporeal demands and to study and discuss the scriptures, my Hare Kṛṣṇa friends also drove cars, used washing machines, and conducted an incense business to "collect alms." "Such materialism in a spiritual movement," I thought.

But was it materialism? As I learned more about the Vedic philosophy of *yukta-vairāgya* (practical renunciation), I came to see that the *brahmacārīs'* seeming materialism was fully spiritual. Śrīla Prabhupāda explains that material things are material only if they are used for self-gratification. If the same material thing is used for serving God, Kṛṣṇa, it becomes spiritualized. Although traditionally a *brahmacārī's* life is one of obvious renunciation and austerity, a *brahmacārī*, for better serving his *guru*, will utilize the latest advancements in technology and will live within materialistic society. By utilizing material things only in the spiritual service of Lord Kṛṣṇa, he remains aloof and transcendental. When I understood that, my *brahmacārī* friends' wristwatches, sleeping bags, tape players, and electric shavers never bothered me again.

Then I noticed another apparent discrepancy. Traditionally one *guru* would train ten or twelve *brahmacārīs*. But Śrīla

Prabhupāda had accepted thousands of *brahmacārī* disciples (what to speak of female and married disciples) all over the world. How could he offer the same intimate training to so many? I soon discovered Śrīla Prabhupāda's method: he regularly corresponded with and met with his senior disciples and temple presidents. Younger disciples were directed to take instruction from them. (This system has continued since Śrīla Prabhupāda's passing in 1977, with his senior disciples now initiating and training their own disciples all over the world.) More importantly, Śrīla Prabhupāda was busily producing his English translations and commentaries on the Vedic scriptures. Through his prolific writings (he eventually published over eighty books), Śrīla Prabhupāda was reaching thousands around the world.

As I began to spend more time with the *brahmacārīs*, I noticed an unusual trait.

**I was impressed
with the vigor with
which the brahmacārīs
attacked their
daily services. They
did not look
forward to getting
weekends off.**

They seemed to be always joyful, far beyond the moody ups and downs that had plagued my spiritual quest. They were always eager to talk with me about Kṛṣṇa, and they spoke with impressive conviction and insight. Their discussions about spiritual advancement were clear and comprehensible, not the uncertain, sentimental, or sometimes fanatical stuff I always seemed to get elsewhere.

These *brahmacārīs* were more than dry, austere *yogīs*. They performed *kīrtana* (congregational chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*) with authentic Indian musical instruments: *mṛdaṅgas* (two-headed clay drums), *karatālas* (brass hand cymbals), and a harmonium (a small hand-pumped reed organ). As devotees played those instruments and chanted the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* to beautiful Bengali melodies, the rock and roll musician in me came out. I decided to learn all these fascinating spiritual instruments.

Some of the *brahmacārīs* were expert cooks. On Sundays they churned out huge

pots and vats full of pleasantly spiced vegetable dishes, *purīs* (a whole-wheat bread deep-fried in clarified butter), strawberry *mālpura* (soft, sweet cakes floating in fruit-flavored yogurt), and various unimaginably delightful drinks, savories, chutneys, and sweets. My self-imposed vegetarian regime of millet, rice, and sprouts couldn't compare. I had no idea spiritual life could be full of such delicious variety!

As I spent more time at the temple, I was impressed with the vigor and enthusiasm with which the *brahmacārīs* attacked their daily services. One *brahmacārī* was in charge of purchasing. Another kept the temple accounts. Another led the daily chanting party and gave lectures in the temple. Unlike myself, they did not seem to look forward to getting the weekends off. They put in a full day every day, and they seemed to be genuinely enjoying themselves in the process.

My *brahmacārī* friend taught me about *japa* (chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* while counting on a strand of one-hundred eight beads, one *mantra* per bead.) And he explained to me the four regulative principles (abstinence from meat-eating, gambling, intoxication, and illicit sex). I began practicing these prerequisites at home and soon moved into the temple. After several months I was recommended by the temple president for formal initiation. A short time later Śrīla Prabhupāda accepted me as his duly initiated *brahmacārī* disciple. Though I met with Śrīla Prabhupāda only occasionally, through his books and senior disciples I developed a deep and personal relationship with him.

Recently I met a young man who told me of his experiences with another "guru." He had spent \$250 (and three days sleeping in his car) for the privilege of receiving "knowledge"—a swat on the head with a peacock fan. Thus he had been "initiated." This poor fellow further explained that the more \$250 swats he received, the more enlightened he would become.

How simple. A kind of freeze-dried enlightenment! No commitments. No follow-up. No personal care required. It is very easy to find a *guru* who can take away your money, but very hard to find one who can take your material desires. This young man's unfortunate contact with pseudo-spiritual life made me appreciate how well Śrīla Prabhupāda and his disciples who have become *gurus* take care of their disciples.

I never regretted my decision to become a Hare Kṛṣṇa *brahmacārī*. Over the next ten years I drank deeply of the sublime Kṛṣṇa conscious philosophy, learning Sanskrit and Bengali verses and putting them into daily practice. I learned to cook, play instruments, manage groups of peo-

ple, deliver public lectures, and perform dozens of other skills. Although I worked always without pay, my basic needs were met, and my service took me throughout America, Europe, and India. I enjoyed the opportunity of sharing Kṛṣṇa consciousness with all kinds of people—the rich, the poor, the learned, the simple. I've become acquainted with hundreds of other members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness from all over the world; thus I find friends nearly everywhere I go.

As much as I loved my *brahmacārī* years, eventually I realized that I was not cut out to remain a single, celibate monk throughout life.

Brahmacārī Principles In Married Life

Celibacy ties in well with the goals of *brahmacārī* life. Preserving sexual energies endows one with a clear mind, a powerful memory, and the determination to conquer bad habits. Traditionally, *brahmacārī* life should begin at age five, and last until twenty-five. Then the *brahmacārī* may decide whether to remain celibate or to marry.

When I began to look into Kṛṣṇa conscious marriage, I learned that I could put my *brahmacārī* training to good use. Married (*gṛhastha*) life should be led very

simply, and scriptural study should continue. One should continue to work under the direction of the *guru*, and one should refrain from sex except for conceiving children. One who observes such a regulated life is known as a *gṛhastha-brahmacārī*.

You might wonder what traditional Vedic culture has against sex. Isn't sex natural? Yes. But it must be regulated. Most members of the animal kingdom mate only during certain seasons, with the goal of procreation. They do not use synthetic devices or pills to prevent pregnancy, nor do they terminate inconvenient pregnancies. They are regulated through nature's laws. Human life is unique in that we must voluntarily accept the regulation of God's laws for humanity. In a vain attempt to replace spiritual happiness with natural sex pleasure, human beings go to unnatural extremes. *Brahmacārī* life makes the conquest of sex desire both achievable and enjoyable by replacing it with the superior pleasure of spiritual awakening.

When I was considering marriage, it was good to know that, though celibacy is highly valued, a *brahmacārī* does not have to lose his spiritual qualifications if he marries. Nevertheless, a strong esprit de corps among the Hare Kṛṣṇa *brahmacārīs* helps them refrain from marriage as long

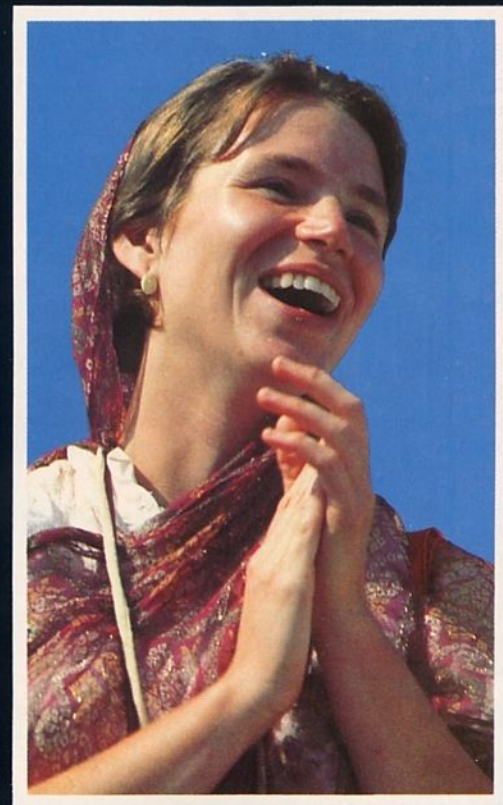
as possible.

With some adaptations, the same principles of *brahmacārī* life also apply to single women, who are known as *brahmacārīṇīs*. Śrīla Prabhupāda has left a unique legacy: a spiritual institution in the modern, materialistic world that freely gives personal, profound spiritual training to young men and women.

Why Be a Brahmacārī?

When I became a *brahmacārī*, my parents were displeased and accused me of the ultimate self-indulgence: "What good does it do the world for you to sit and meditate all day?" Eventually, though, they observed that Hare Kṛṣṇa *brahmacārīs* work hard at what they do. It's not lotus postures and *nirvāṇa* all day and night. Rather, *brahmacārīs* study, practice, and distribute Śrīla Prabhupāda's teachings according to their sincere conviction.

Like to do some good for the world? Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, who fathered the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement in Bengal five hundred years ago, gave the recommendation: "First become perfect, then teach." Shouldn't social reform and welfare work begin at home? By learning about *brahmacārī* life, or just by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, we can begin to perfect our own lives. And won't that make the whole world a little better off?



CHANT!

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

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

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

The *Nārada-pañcarātra* adds, "All *mantras* and all processes for self-realization are compressed into the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*."

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

BASEBALL, CASTE, AND THE WHOLE-HOG SYNDROME

Confusing “cast” with “caste” is an innocent error, but mistaking Lord Kṛṣṇa’s *varṇāśrama* system for an oppressive, hereditary class structure is a far more serious blunder.

by MATHUREŚA DĀSA

Baseball, to most anyone’s mind, has little in common with the Indian caste system, which rigidly divides society into four hereditary classes. But for me there’s a subtle link between the two, as the result of an injury I sustained while at bat during an impromptu after-dinner game in the early spring of 1967. My schoolfriend Bill Lightbody was pitching, his sister and two brothers fielded, and the three Lightbody family dogs ran noisily after whoever had the ball. Selecting a likely pitch, I zeroed in and swung hard. My torso turned gracefully with the swing, but my left foot stuck tightly in some early-spring mud. The combination of twisting torso and stuck foot gracefully tore a ligament in my left knee.

Next morning the doctor drained half a cup of fluid from the swollen joint and set my leg, thigh to ankle, in a plaster cast that chafed and itched me to distraction. Three weeks later, when the doctor removed the cast, I found that my leg, though healed, was weak and shrunken from disuse and had turned an unsightly pale brown. Although a month or so of special exercises returned me to form, nevertheless I had missed most of the spring backyard season, sidelined by a freak accident and an ungainly hunk of plaster.

Indian castes also sidelined people—for life. At least that’s the understanding I had gleaned from grade school courses in world history. In the caste system you were by birth either a *brāhmaṇa* (intellectual or priest), *kṣatriya* (soldier or administrator), *vaiśya* (farmer or merchant), or *śūdra* (artisan or laborer). Caste kids, I learned, were never asked, “What do you want to be when you grow up? A fireman? A doctor? A baseball player? The President?” If Dad was a ditch-digger, caste kids dug ditches; if he was a pencil-pusher, they pushed pencils. And, cruelest of all, if a ditch-digger’s son and a pencil-pusher’s daughter got a crush on each other, forget it. No inter-caste marriages. In so many ways, caste designations, which were freak accidents of heredity, kept people from playing the game of life. It’s not that I spent the spring evenings of 1967 silently commiserating with caste-bound Indians, but camouflaged in the underbrush of my unspoken thoughts, “cast” and “caste” walked hand in hand.

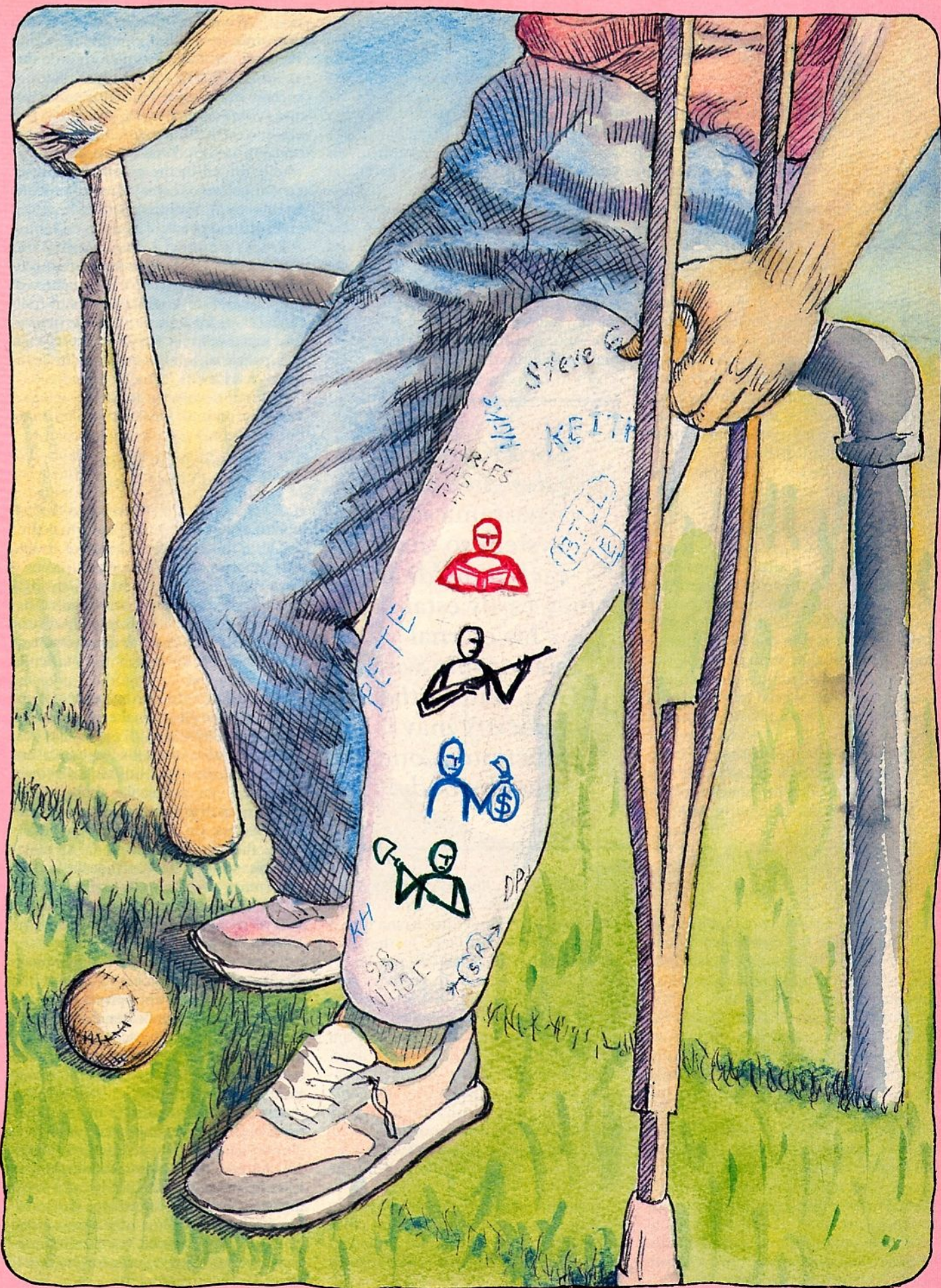
Yes, I know, the words “cast,” as in “itchy plaster cast,” and “caste,” as in “oppressive Indian caste system,” have completely different origins. They are homophones—words that sound the same but share no etymological roots. “Cast” de-

rives from the Middle English *casten*, “to throw,” while “caste” derives from the Portuguese *casta*, meaning “race,” “lineage,” or “breed.” But so what? A lot of people make the same mistake. Only a couple of centuries ago the two words had exactly the same spelling. And besides, even now, years after my own etymological enlightenment, I can’t think of anything that better conveys the idea of the stifled hopes, shattered dreams, wasted abilities, and frustrated ambitions for which the caste system is allegedly responsible than the image of a weak, shriveled, discolored limb wrapped tightly in gauze and plaster of Paris. Cast vividly illustrates caste. Not bad for a homophone.

Correcting a Castely Mistake

Although confusing one word with another may sometimes be educational, confusing the Indian caste system with the four-class social system described in

In the Bhagavad-gītā, Lord Kṛṣṇa explains that He has created four natural divisions in human society (drawn on the cast at right, from top to bottom): intellectuals, administrators, merchants, and laborers. One’s social position is not cast at birth, however, as is the practice of the modern caste system.



India's ancient Vedic literatures is a serious blunder.

How so? Because the Vedic literatures do not advocate a hereditary class system. Rather, they point out that in every civilized human society there is a *natural* division of intellectuals, administrators, businessmen, and laborers. Whether we look at ancient India or at modern Western nations, the four general occupational divisions are present, functioning within society like parts of the same body. They exist whether we recognize them or not.

The intellectual class, composed of scholars, scientists, and members of all the learned professions, is the head of the social body, providing advice, direction, and knowledge. The administrative class is the arms, organizing, policing, and protecting. The mercantile class is the stomach, nourishing the body through agriculture and trade. And the working class is the legs, serving the other classes with skilled and unskilled labor.

Service, however, is the *dharma*, or inherent function, of *all* classes, not just of the workers. As the parts of our physical body cooperate for the well-being of the entire body, so each class serves society with its particular skills and capacities. Although we might correctly assert that the head is the most important part of any body, no sensible person cares only for his head. As I lay on the ground beside home plate on that spring evening, my throbbing knee had my full attention, and it continued to get special treatment until I was back on my feet and fit to play again. Pain in any part of the body draws the immediate attention of the total person. Similarly, disturbance in any of the four classes should draw the concern of the entire social body, beginning with the head.

From the *Bhagavad-gītā* we learn that the four-class social system, known as *varṇāśrama*, exists in all places and at all times because it was created by Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, simultaneous with the creation of human society itself. Just as many theists hold that the design of the universe indicates a supreme designer and creator, so proponents of *varṇāśrama* point to the existence of a universal four-class social structure throughout history. This, they say, confirms Kṛṣṇa's statement that these classes are not chance occurrences but His doing.

Kṛṣṇa also informs us in the *Gītā* that the two primary criteria for identifying the four social classes are not birth and family tradition but qualification and work. For example, in our everyday experience a person who knows how to build with wood (qualification) and who regularly uses this skill to, say, construct houses (work) is known as a carpenter. That is his

occupational service to society, his *dharma*. Similarly, a person who knows medical science and spends his time trying to cure diseases or to repair the torn ligaments of backyard athletes is called a doctor. Continuing in this way, we could survey any society and define innumerable classes simply by discovering the qualifications and activities required to fulfill particular social functions—banker, baker, candlestick maker, baseball player, and so on.

Easy enough. And nothing so very new. The unique contribution of the *Gītā* and other Vedic literature is, first of all, to point out the four general occupational categories and, secondly, to recommend standards of ideal behavior for each category. The essence of all these ideal standards is that every human being should become

**Lord Kṛṣṇa has
designed the
varṇāśrama social
system so that
each individual
may easily establish
his eternal
relationship with
God, and so that
society may
function as one
healthy body.**

self-realized by devoting his occupational skill to the service of Kṛṣṇa, or God. Devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa immediately raises the devotee to the transcendental platform, above the bodily conception of the self. In ordinary consciousness we think, "I am this body. I am a carpenter, a doctor, an athlete, a man, a woman. I am young, or I am old. I am Hindu, Muslim, Christian." But in devotional consciousness, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, we are able to grasp the *Gītā*'s instruction that we are not the temporary body but are the eternal individual souls within the body, and that as such we are eternal parts of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the supreme soul.

While our ordinary *dharma* may be to serve society with our occupational skills, our *sanātana* (eternal) *dharma* begins with using those same skills to directly satisfy the Supreme Lord. In the *Gītā* Kṛṣṇa ad-

vises, "Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer or give way, and whatever austerities you perform—do that as an offering to Me." Lord Kṛṣṇa has specifically designed the *varṇāśrama* social system so that each individual can easily reestablish his or her eternal relationship with God and so that society as a whole, united in the common cause of devotional service, may function as one healthy body, fulfilling both its material and spiritual needs.

Proper use of the *varṇāśrama* divisions results neither in divisiveness nor in occupational immobility, but in a oneness of purpose and in the full exercise of individual skills for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure. In *varṇāśrama*, everyone has not merely an occupation or job but a calling in devotional service.

Without devotees and devotional service, the natural four-class social body has no life.

Hereditary Baseball And Other Legacies

Whether we're talking of class distinction or of spiritual elevation, birth counts for little in the Vedic scheme of things. Nevertheless, Vedic authorities acknowledge that family tradition may strongly influence one's choice of occupation. After all, it's not unusual for a boy to aspire to be "just like Daddy" and to take advantage of his father's experience in a particular field.

A baseball field, for example. Of the 1,147 men who played in the major leagues during the 1980 season, 47 (4 percent) were the sons of former major-league players. If you consider that millions of young men were competing for those major-league spots, it turns out that sons of baseball players are fifty times more likely than others to play pro ball. Of all major American sports, baseball has the highest percentage of father-son pairs. Hockey and football are next, with basketball in last place. ("The Natural Choice," *Psychology Today*, August 1985.)

Caste baseball? Hardly. Not if ninety-six percent of all major leaguers are first generation. Moreover, sports buffs say that the high degree of career following in baseball is due to a legacy of knowledge and experience, not to genes. Baseball sons can tag along with dad to spring training, hang around the ballpark and dugout, rub shoulders with their father's friends, and thus begin to refine their own abilities at an early age. Inherited physical characteristics, experts claim, are far less important than knowledge and training. And, I can add, knowledge and training are simply means of passing along genuine qualifications, because no matter what else you have going for you, you'll never make the majors if you can't hit or

throw a baseball, or if you rarely play the game. The same goes for any occupation. We're not going to allow a surgeon's son to operate on us simply out of deference to his father. When I injured my knee on that fateful night in 1967, I went to our long-time family doctor. As the *Gītā* confirms, qualification and work are what count most.

The legacy of Vedic knowledge directs the members of society, regardless of occupation or class, to devote themselves to the Personality of Godhead, thus qualifying themselves to purely love Him. Family heritage, public and private education, and cultural tradition are only incidental. In any setting, devotion imbues an individual with transcendental qualities.

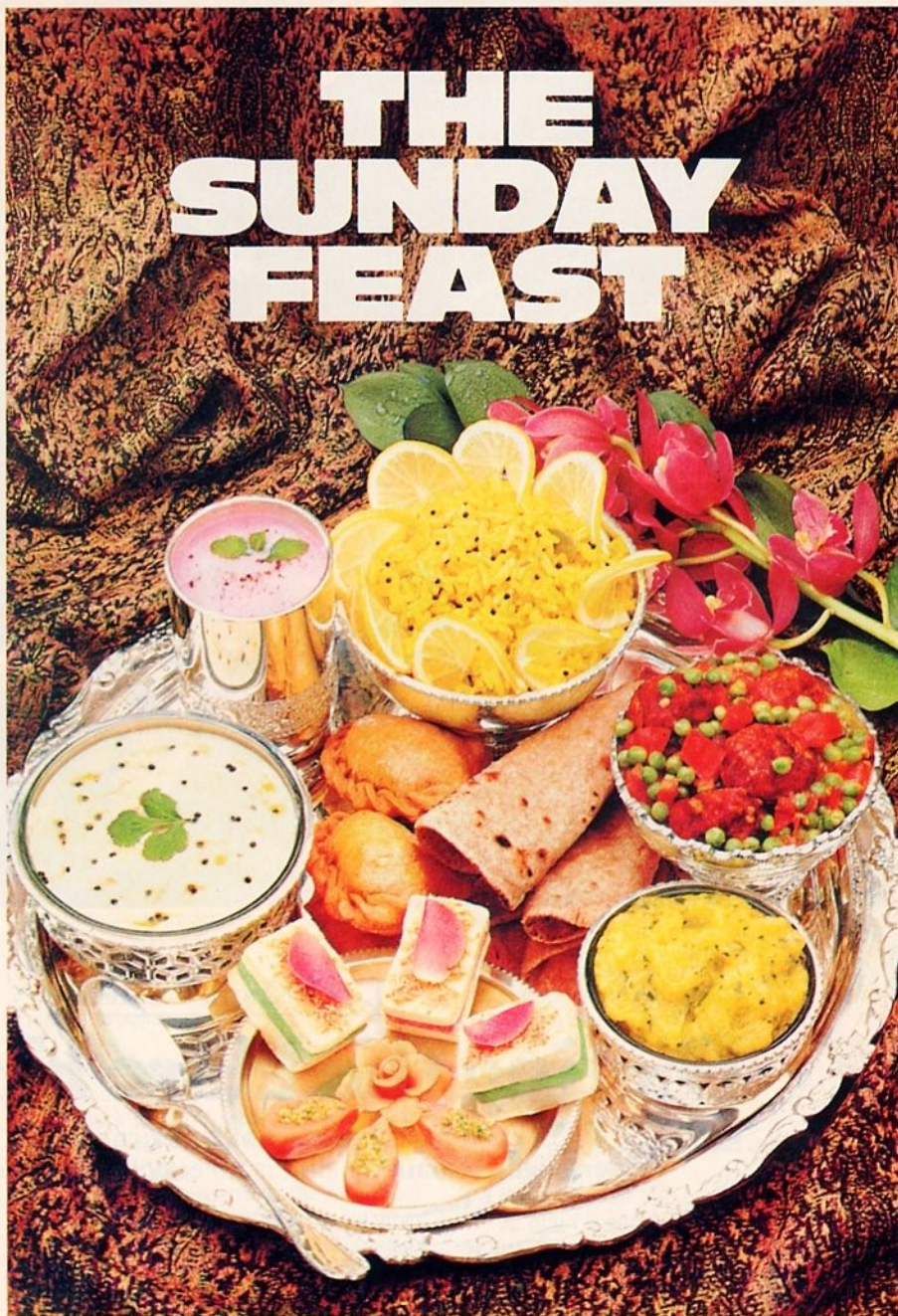
Within this overall devotional context, however, the Vedic literature recommends standards of behavior for each social class.

Most importantly, the *Gītā* enjoins intellectuals to cultivate, among other things, peacefulness, self-control, austerity, and wisdom. Even a schoolboy doing his homework, what to speak of a scholar or scientist engaged in research work, requires a peaceful, controlled mind. Beyond this, a learned man should know the difference between the self and the body and should therefore understand that to feverishly gratify the body, as lower animals do, is not the purpose of human life. Animals are interested only in eating, sleeping, mating, and defending. While human beings also must fulfill these needs, the primary necessity of human society is self-realization. Without realization of the self and God, a human being's behavior can be no better than an animal's. As the brains of the social body, the intellectual class has a responsibility to keep human society human.

When the social brain is not self-controlled and self-realized, the rest of the social body, following suit, goes whole hog for sense gratification. This is just the opposite of devotional service. In a society centered on devotional service, everyone works cooperatively to satisfy Kṛṣṇa, whereas in a whole-hog society it's ultimately every man for himself, every nation for itself, at the trough of material enjoyment. The conflicts human society faces today—between individuals, between classes, between nations—are whole-hog conflicts stemming from ignorance of the eternal soul and from the consequent animalistic greed to dominate the resources of this planet.

A four-class *varṇāśrama* society headed by a class of learned, self-controlled individuals has the potential to transform whole hogs into self-realized souls and devotees of the Supreme Person. This would eliminate, or greatly reduce, the present level of conflict. ❀

THE SUNDAY FEAST



What's multicolored, multicourse, carefully prepared from the purest, freshest vegetarian ingredients, mildly seasoned with herbs and spices, offered to Lord Kṛṣṇa with love and devotion, and served free to all comers in a blissful, genial atmosphere until no one can eat another bite?

For the answer, visit your local Hare Kṛṣṇa center (see pages 20–21) every Sunday afternoon. And come hungry.



Lord Kṛṣṇa's Cuisine

Dieting the Hare Kṛṣṇa Way

When ninety percent of Americans think they are overweight, remaining slim is no easy thing. Here's how we do it.

by VIŚĀKHĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

"Sixty-five million people are on a diet at any given time in America. Millions are going on and off diets, losing weight, gaining it back, giving up, feeling desperate. . . ." ("Wellness Letter," University of California at Berkeley, Volume 1, Issue 12)

Some years ago I was with a group of devotees who were chanting, dancing, and distributing Kṛṣṇa conscious books and magazines near Wall Street in New York City. Many businessmen were sitting and strolling outside, enjoying their lunch hour in the spring weather. *Back to Godhead* in hand, I approached one middle-aged businessman who was watching our chanting party. Before I said a word, he said, "All you people are so trim. I don't think I've ever seen a fat Hare

Kṛṣṇa. How do you do it?" It had never occurred to me before, but I reflected that it was true—generally devotees aren't overweight.

How do devotees do it? Certainly not by following any popular diet program. In fact, registered dieticians Dr. Michele Fisher and Dr. Paul Lachance of Rutgers University recently analyzed eleven popular diets and found that they may well endanger the health of dieters because of nutritional inadequacies or excesses. All the diets fell short—some in important vitamins and minerals, others in protein, fiber, fat, or carbohydrates. Still others were too high in cholesterol and sodium. What is the use of diets that sacrifice health to lose pounds?

Americans, especially, go to phenomenal lengths to lose fat. According to a *Bet-*

ter Homes and Gardens survey, ninety percent of Americans think of themselves as overweight. To battle the bulge, Americans spent about five billion dollars in 1985 alone on diet and fitness guides, over-the-counter diet drugs, low-calorie foods, and the like. Yet by now (a year later), ninety percent of those shed pounds have resettled on the same American hips, thighs, and paunches from where they came, keeping the population of the U.S. the world's fattest. No wonder my Wall Street businessman wondered about the devotees' physique: it's practically un-American to be normal-looking and not to be dieting.

A partial explanation of why devotees aren't overweight is their vegetarian diet. Although devotees are vegetarian not
(continued on page 34)

(Shown on the opposite page, clockwise from the top, recipes from *The Hare Krishna Book of Vegetarian Cooking*, by Ādi-rāja dāsa.)

Green Beans in Chickpea-Flour Sauce (Phansi kadhi)

Preparation time: 30–40 minutes
Servings: 4–6

1½ pounds fresh green beans
3½ cups water
1 cup plain yogurt
3 ounces sifted chickpea flour
1 tablespoon ghee (clarified butter) or vegetable oil
1 teaspoon black mustard seeds
½ teaspoon fresh ginger, grated
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
½ teaspoon asafoetida
1 teaspoon turmeric
1 teaspoon sugar
2 teaspoons lemon juice
2 teaspoons salt
1 lemon, washed and quartered
2 tomatoes, each cut into 8 wedges

1. Wash and trim the beans, then snap them in half. Cover the bottom of a medium-size saucepan with 1 inch of water. Insert a basket steamer, then add the beans. Bring the water to a boil and cover the pan to trap the steam. Cook for about 10 minutes, until the beans darken and become tender. Drain the beans and put them aside.

2. Add the chickpea flour to the boiling water while stirring rapidly with a whisk. Then add the yogurt and bring to a second boil, stirring constantly. Boil rapidly for 15 minutes.

3. Heat the ghee in a small saucepan, and fry the mustard seeds. When they sputter, add the grated ginger, cayenne pepper, and asafoetida. Turn with a spoon for a few seconds, then pour the ghee and seasonings into the *kadhi* sauce. Add the turmeric, sugar, lemon juice, and salt. Mix well. Reduce the heat and simmer for 5 minutes, stirring more frequently as the mixture thickens. Then fold in the beans and heat to serving temperature, stirring constantly. Garnish with wedges of lemon and tomato. Offer to Kṛṣṇa.

Scrambled Cheese with Fried Tomatoes (Tamatar panir malai)

Preparation time: 40 minutes
Servings: 4–6

1 pound *panir* (milk curd)
4 medium-size tomatoes,
each cut into 8 wedges
2 tablespoons ghee or vegetable oil
1½ teaspoons cumin seeds
1 teaspoon turmeric
2 teaspoons salt
½ teaspoon pepper
½ cup sour cream
1 tablespoon chopped coriander or
parsley leaves

1. Keeping the *panir* in the cheesecloth, rinse it under cold water for a moment, and

then squeeze out some of the water.

2. While the *panir* is still moist, break it into 1-inch cubes and set aside. Heat the ghee in a wok or medium-size saucepan. Add the cumin seeds, and as soon as they darken (about 30 seconds) add the tomato wedges. Turn the tomato wedges gently until they are lightly browned. Put in the chunks of *panir*. Season with the turmeric, salt, and pepper and stir-fry gently for 2 or 3 minutes, taking care not to break the pieces of *panir* and tomato.

3. Finally, fold in the sour cream. Garnish with chopped coriander leaves. Offer to Kṛṣṇa hot.

Bitter-Melon Stew (Sukta)

Preparation time: 45 minutes
Servings: 4–6

2 or 3 bitter melons (*karela*), green and firm
1 pound cauliflower flowerets
1 pound potatoes, peeled and cubed
1 pound squash or eggplants, cubed
1 pound fresh peas or green beans,
cut into 2-inch pieces
3 tablespoons ghee or vegetable oil
1 teaspoon fenugreek seeds
6 curry or bay leaves
1½ cups water
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
2 teaspoons fresh ginger, grated
1 or 2 fresh chilies, seeded and minced
½ teaspoon turmeric
2 teaspoons coriander
½ teaspoon asafoetida
1 cup plain yogurt
2½ teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon *pañca masālā* (see below)

1. To make *pañca masālā*, mix together 2 tablespoons each of cumin seeds, black cumin seeds, black mustard seeds, anise or fennel seeds, and 1 tablespoon of fenugreek seeds. Store in an air-tight jar.

2. Remove the seeds from the bitter melons. Cut the bitter melons into 1-inch cubes. In a large saucepan, heat 2 tablespoons of ghee over a medium flame and fry the fenugreek seeds for 30 seconds, then add the cut vegetables. Add the curry leaves and stir-fry the vegetables for 5 minutes, turning them gently with a wooden spoon. Pour in the water, cover the pan, and cook for 10 minutes.

3. Meanwhile, use a mortar and pestle or a blender to grind together the cumin seeds, grated ginger, minced chilies, turmeric, and a few drops of water to make a smooth *masālā* paste. Heat the remaining tablespoon of ghee in a small saucepan and stir-fry the *masālā* paste for a minute or two. Then add the *pañca masālā*, ground coriander, and asafoetida. Stir for a few seconds. Pour the remaining water into the seasonings and boil for 1 minute. Empty the liquid *masālā* into the cooking vegetables and continue cooking for 15 to 20 minutes, stirring every now and then until the vegetables are slightly tender.

4. Lift the lid, add the yogurt and the salt. Stir and toss gently to mix the spices and sauce evenly with the vegetables. Simmer for a few minutes uncovered. Offer to Kṛṣṇa.

Steamed Spinach with Fresh Cheese (Panir sak)

Preparation time: 30 minutes
Servings: 4–6

1 pound fresh spinach,
stemmed, washed, and drained
1 tablespoon ghee or vegetable oil
2 teaspoons ground coriander
½ teaspoon turmeric
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 pinch asafoetida
3 tablespoons water
½ cup sour cream (optional)
8 ounces *panir*, cubed
1 teaspoon salt
½ cup sugar

1. Chop the washed and drained spinach leaves into small pieces. Heat the ghee in a saucepan over a medium flame and fry the powdered spices. Put the chopped spinach into the saucepan with the 3 tablespoons of water. Cover, and cook over a low flame for 10 minutes, until the spinach is tender.

2. Now fold in the sour cream and the cubes of *panir*. Add the salt and sugar, stir well, and continue cooking over a low flame for 5 more minutes. Offer to Kṛṣṇa.

Cauliflower and Potatoes in Yogurt Sauce (Alu phul gobhi ki bhaji)

Preparation time: 25 minutes
Servings: 4–6

1 medium-size cauliflower
2 tablespoons ghee or vegetable oil
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
1 or 2 dried chilies, crushed
1 teaspoon ground coriander
1 teaspoon turmeric
¼ teaspoon asafoetida
1 pound potatoes, peeled and cubed
4 tablespoons water
1½ teaspoons salt
½ cup plain yogurt
¾ teaspoon *garam masālā*
2 firm ripe tomatoes, each cut into 8 wedges
1 lemon or lime

1. Trim the cauliflower and cut it into flowerets 1½ inches long by 1-inch thick. Rinse them in a colander and let drain.

2. Heat the ghee in a heavy saucepan over a medium flame. Drop in the cumin seeds and crushed chilies and fry them for 30 to 45 seconds, until the cumin seeds turn golden-brown. Add the powdered spices, fry a few seconds longer, then immediately add the cubed potatoes. Turn the potatoes for 2 or 3 minutes, letting them brown in spots. Add the cauliflower and stir-fry for another 2 or 3 minutes. Then add the water and salt and put the lid on the pan to trap the steam. Cook, shaking the pan occasionally, for 10 minutes until the vegetables are tender but still firm.

3. Stir in the yogurt and simmer for 3 minutes, until the sauce is thick. Sprinkle with *garam masālā* and stir gently to mix. Garnish a serving with slices of tomato and a twist of lemon, and offer to Kṛṣṇa.

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

Back to the Simple Life and Simple Truth

This conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and some of his disciples took place at ISKCON's farming village in New Vrindaban, West Virginia, on June 24, 1976.

Disciple: Śrīla Prabhupāda, once you said, "The tractor—this is the cause of all the trouble. It took all the young men's farm work. It forced them to go into the city and become entangled in sensuality." You said people had to leave the country and the simple life of goodness and God consciousness. And so they went to the city and got caught up in the anxious life, the mode of passion.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. In the city, people must naturally fall into the mode of passion: constant anxiety due to needless lusting and striving. In the city we are surrounded by all sorts of artificial things for agitating our mind and senses. And naturally, when we have this facility we become lusty. We take to this passionate mode and become filled with anxiety.

Disciple: The country is more peaceful. It's easier to think of spiritual life.

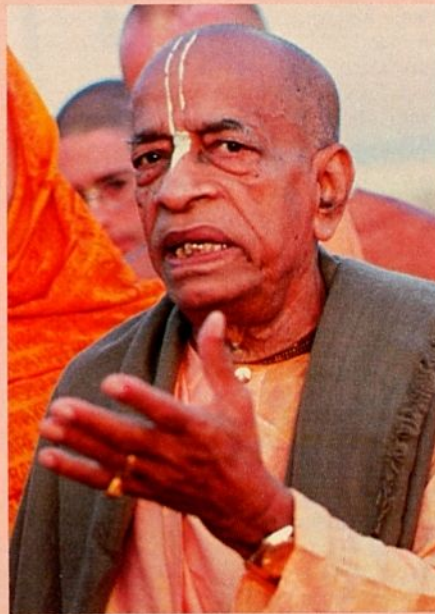
Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. There is less disease. Everything is less brain-taxing. In the country the pangs of this material world are less. So you can arrange your life for real profit. Spiritual profit. Realize God; become Kṛṣṇa conscious. And if you have got a temple in your home or near your home, you have a very happy life. You work just a little—just for your food—in the spring a month and a half or so for planting, in the fall a month and a half for harvesting. And in your remaining time, you become culturally enriched. You engage all your talents and energies for realizing God. Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This is ideal life.

You see the minute fibers on this flower? No other manufacturing process in this world can do this—such small fibers. And how brilliant is the color! If you study only one flower, you will become God conscious.

There is a mechanism that we call "nature." And from it is coming everything we see around us. Now, how is it that this mechanism is so perfect? And who is it that has devised this mechanism?

Disciple: Once in London you said, "People do not know that flowers are painted. Kṛṣṇa paints them with thoughts."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Most people think that by itself, unconnected with a painter,



this flower has become beautiful. This is foolishness. "Nature has done it." Whose nature? Everything is being done by the natural mechanism of Kṛṣṇa. *Parāśya śaktir vividhaiva śrūyate*: the Lord is orchestrating everything by His innumerable, inconceivable energies.

Anyway, learn to love this natural mode of life, life in a wide-open space. Produce your own grain. Produce your own milk. Save time. Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. Glorify the Lord's holy names. At life's end, go back to the spiritual world to live forever. Plain living, high thinking—ideal life.

Modern, artificial "necessities of life" may seem to increase your so-called comfort. But if you forget life's real aim, that is suicidal. We want to stop this suicidal policy. We don't directly attempt to stop the modern advancement of technology. The so-called advancement of technology is suicidal, but we don't always talk of this. [Laughter.]

People today are extremely attached to this so-called advancement. Therefore when Lord Caitanya appeared five hundred years ago, He gave a simple formula: chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. Even in your technological factory, you can chant. You go on pushing and pulling with your machine, and chant, "Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa." You can devote yourself to God. What is the wrong there?

Disciple: The leaders know that once a person starts chanting God's names, in time he'll lose his taste for this anxious life

of technology.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is natural.

Disciple: So the leaders know you are sowing the seeds of their destruction.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Where is the "destruction"? Rather, it is construction: devote yourself to God, and live forever. This is the proper path. Follow it. You will live forever.

By our method, *tyaktvā dehaṃ punar janma naiti*: after leaving your present material body, you don't get any more material bodies. You regain your spiritual body and go back to the spiritual world. And without this spiritual realization, *tathā dehāntara-prāptiḥ*: when you leave your present material body, you'll have to accept another material body.

So consider the two methods of living. Which is better? The "advanced" method—accepting more material bodies. Or our "old-fashioned" method—accepting no more material bodies. Which is better?

As soon as you accept a material body, you have to suffer: birth, old age, disease, death. The material body means suffering. Therefore, if we prepare so that on leaving this present body we undergo no more suffering, that is intelligent. But if we prepare to receive another material body for more suffering, is that intelligent? Unless you understand the Lord, unless you understand Kṛṣṇa, you'll have to stay in this material world and accept another body. There is no alternative.

Now our method. We understand, first, that *na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre*: when the body is finished, the soul goes on living. Unfortunately, many people have become so dull-brained that they cannot understand this simple truth.

Every day of their lives, people see that a soul in an infant body is going to take on a childhood body, then a teenage body, next an adult body, and later an aged body. People see, with their own eyes, how the soul is transmigrating from one body to another body to still another body.

Nevertheless, with their dull brains they cannot understand that at death, when the aged body is finished, the soul goes on to yet another body, material or spiritual. But people cannot understand this. They are so dull-brained. They cannot make the simple distinction between the body and the soul. It will take five hundred years to teach them this simple truth—their education is so advanced.

(To be continued.)

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 THIRTEEN

The Appearance of Lord Varāha

In this installment of our continuing presentation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, the great sage Maitreya, speaking to Vidura, an eternal associate of the Lord, concludes his description of the lifting of the earth planet by the Lord's boar incarnation. Maitreya now begins to describe the history of Lord Boar's battle with the demon Hiranyākṣa.

TEXT 41

त्रयीमयं रूपमिदं च सौकरं
भूमण्डलेनाथ दत्ता धृतेन ते ।
चकास्ति शृङ्गोदधनेन भूयसा
कुलाचलेन्द्रस्य यथैव विभ्रमः ॥४१॥

trayīmayam rūpam idaṃ ca saukaram
bhū-maṇḍalenātha datā dhṛtena te
cakāsti śṛṅgoḍha-ghanena bhūyasā
kulācalendrasya yathaiḥ vibhramah

trayī-mayam—Vedas personified; rūpam—form; idaṃ—this; ca—also; saukaram—the boar; bhū-maṇḍalena—by the earth planet; atha—now; datā—by the tusk; dhṛtena—sustained by; te—Your; cakāsti—is glowing; śṛṅga-ūḍha—sustained by the peaks; ghanena—by the clouds; bhūyasā—more glorified; kula-acala-indrasya—of the great mountains; yathā—as much as; eva—certainly; vibhramah—decoration.

TRANSLATION

O Lord, as the peaks of great mountains become beautiful when decorated with clouds, Your transcendental body has become beautiful because of Your lifting the earth on the edge of Your tusks.

PURPORT

The word *vibhramah* is significant. *Vibhramah* means “illusion” as well as “beauty.” When a cloud rests on the peak of a great mountain, it appears to be sustained by the mountain, and at the same time it looks very beautiful. Similarly, the Lord has no need to sustain the earth on His tusks, but when He does so the world becomes beautiful, just as the Lord becomes more beautiful because of His pure devotees on the earth. Although the Lord is the transcendental personification of the Vedic hymns, He has become more beautiful because of His appearance to sustain the earth.

TEXT 42

संस्थापयैनां जगतां सतस्थुषां
लोकाय पत्नीमसि मातरं पिता ।
विधेम चास्यै नमसा सह त्वया
यस्यां खतेजोऽग्निमिवारणावधाः ॥४२॥

saṁsthāpayainām jagatām sa-tasthuṣām
lokāya patnīm asi mātaram pitā
vidhema cāsyai namasā saha tvayā
yasyām sva-tejo 'gnim ivāraṇāv adhāh

saṁsthāpaya enām—raise this earth; jagatām—both the moving and; sa-tasthuṣām—nonmoving; lokāya—for their residence; patnīm—wife; asi—You are; mātaram—the mother; pitā—the father; vidhema—do we offer; ca—also; asyai—unto the mother; namasā—with all obeisances; saha—along with; tvayā—with You; yasyām—in whom; sva-tejah—by Your own potency; agnim—fire; iva—likened; araṇau—in the araṇi wood; adhāh—invested.

TRANSLATION

O Lord, for the residential purposes of all inhabitants, both moving and nonmoving, this earth is Your wife, and You are the supreme father. We offer our respectful obeisances unto You, along with mother earth, in whom You have invested Your own potency, just as an expert sacrificer puts fire in the araṇi wood.

PURPORT

The so-called law of gravitation which sustains the planets is described herein as the potency of the Lord. This potency is invested by the Lord in the way that an expert sacrificial *brāhmaṇa* puts fire in the araṇi wood by the potency of Vedic *mantras*. By this arrangement the world becomes habitable for both the moving and nonmoving creatures. The conditioned souls, who are residents of the material world, are put in the womb of mother earth in the same way the seed of a child is put by the father in the womb of the mother. This conception of the Lord and the earth as father and mother is explained in *Bhagavad-gītā* (14.4). Conditioned souls are devoted to the motherland in which they take their birth, but they do not know their father. The mother is not independent in producing children. Similarly, material nature cannot produce living creatures unless in contact with the supreme father, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* teaches us to offer obeisances unto the mother along with the Father, the Supreme Lord, because it is the Father only who impregnates the mother with all energies for the sustenance and maintenance of all living beings, both moving and nonmoving.

TEXT 43

कः श्रद्धीतान्यतमस्तव प्रभो
रसां गताया भुव उद्विबर्हणम् ।
न विस्मयोऽसौ त्वयि विश्वविसये
यो माययेदं सत्सृजेऽतिविस्मयम् ॥४३॥

kaḥ śraddadhītananyatamas tava prabho
rasāṃ gatāyā bhuva udvibarhaṇam
na vismayo 'sau tvayi viśva-vismaye
yo māyayedāṁ sarje 'tivismayam

kaḥ—who else; *śraddadhīta*—can endeavor; *anyatamaḥ*—anyone besides Yourself; *tava*—Your; *prabho*—O Lord; *rasām*—in the water; *gatāyāḥ*—while lying in; *bhuvāḥ*—of the earth; *udvibarhaṇam*—deliverance; *na*—never; *vismayaḥ*—wonderful; *asau*—such an act; *tvayi*—unto You; *viśva*—universal; *vismaye*—full of wonders; *yaḥ*—one who; *māyayā*—by potencies; *idam*—this; *sasṛje*—created; *atīvismayam*—surpassing all wonders.

TRANSLATION

Who else but You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, could deliver the earth from within the water? It is not very wonderful for You, however, because You acted most wonderfully in the creation of the universe. By Your energy You have created this wonderful cosmic manifestation.

PURPORT

When a scientist discovers something impressive to the ignorant mass of people, the common man, without inquiry, accepts such a discovery as wonderful. But the intelligent man is not struck with wonder by such discoveries. He gives all credit to the person who created the wonderful brain of the scientist. A common man is also struck with wonder by the wonderful action of material nature, and he gives all credit to the cosmic manifestation. The learned Kṛṣṇa conscious person, however, knows well that behind the cosmic manifestation is the brain of Kṛṣṇa, as confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.10): *mayādhyakṣeṇa prakṛtiḥ sūyate sa-carācaram*. Since Kṛṣṇa can direct the wonderful cosmic manifestation, it is not at all wonderful for Him to assume the gigantic form of a boar and thus deliver the earth from the mire of the water. A devotee is therefore not astonished to see the wonderful boar because he knows that the Lord is able to act far more wonderfully by His potencies, which are inconceivable to the brain of even the most erudite scientist.

TEXT 44

विधुन्वता वेदमयं निजं वपु-
र्जनस्तपःसत्यनिवासिनो वयम् ।
सदाशिखोद्भूतशिवाम्बुबिन्दुभि-
र्विमृज्यमाना भृशमीश पविताः ॥४४॥

vidhunvatā vedamayam nijam vapurjanas-tapaḥ-satya-nivāsino vayam saṭā-sikhoddhūta-śivāmbu-bindubhir vimṛjyamānā bhṛśam īśa pavitāḥ

vidhunvatā—while shaking; *veda-mayam*—personified *Vedas*; *nijam*—own; *vapuh*—body; *janah*—the Janaloka planetary system; *tapaḥ*—the Tapaloka planetary system; *satya*—the Satyaloka planetary system; *nivāsinaḥ*—the inhabitants; *vayam*—we; *saṭā*—hairs on the shoulder; *śikha-uddhūta*—sustained by the tip of the hair; *śiva*—auspicious; *ambu*—water; *bindubhiḥ*—by the particles; *vimṛjyamānāḥ*—we are thus sprinkled by; *bhṛśam*—highly; *īśa*—O Supreme Lord; *pavitāḥ*—purified.

TRANSLATION

O Supreme Lord, undoubtedly we are inhabitants of the most pious planets—the Jana, Tapas and Satya lokas—but still we have been purified by the drops of water sprinkled from Your shoulder hairs by the shaking of Your body.

PURPORT

Ordinarily the body of a hog is considered impure, but one should not consider that the hog incarnation assumed by the Lord is also impure. That form of the Lord is the personified *Vedas* and is transcendental. The inhabitants of the Jana, Tapas and Satya lokas are the most pious persons in the material world, but because those planets are situated in the material world, there are so many material impurities there also. Therefore,

when the drops of water from the tips of the Lord's shoulder hairs were sprinkled upon the bodies of the inhabitants of the higher planets, they felt purified. The Ganges water is pure because of its emanating from the toe of the Lord, and there is no difference between the water emanating from the toe and that from the tips of the hair on the shoulder of Lord Boar. They are both absolute and transcendental.

TEXT 45

स वै बत भ्रष्टमतिस्तवैषते
यः कर्मणां पारमपारकर्मणः ।
यद्योगमायागुणयोगमोहितं
विश्वं समस्तं भगवन् विधेहि शम् ॥४५॥

sa vai bata bhraṣṭa-matis tavaīṣate yaḥ karmaṇām pāram apāra-karmaṇaḥ yad-yogamāyā-guṇa-yoga-mohitam viśvaṁ samastam bhagavan vidhehi śam

saḥ—he; *vai*—certainly; *bata*—alas; *bhraṣṭa-matiḥ*—nonsense; *tava*—Your; *ēṣate*—desires; *yaḥ*—one who; *karmaṇām*—of activities; *pāram*—limit; *apāra-karmaṇaḥ*—of one who has unlimited activities; *yat*—by whom; *yoga*—mystic power; *māyā*—potency; *guṇa*—modes of material nature; *yoga*—mystic power; *mohitam*—bewildered; *viśvam*—the universe; *samastam*—in total; *bhagavan*—O Supreme Personality of Godhead; *vidhehi*—just be pleased to bestow; *śam*—good fortune.

TRANSLATION

O Lord, there is no limit to Your wonderful activities. Anyone who desires to know the limit of Your activities is certainly nonsensical. Everyone in this world is conditioned by the powerful mystic potencies. Please bestow Your causeless mercy upon these conditioned souls.

PURPORT

Mental speculators who want to understand the limit of the Unlimited are certainly nonsensical. Every one of them is captivated by the external potencies of the Lord. The best thing for them is to surrender unto Him, knowing Him to be inconceivable, for thus they can receive His causeless mercy. This prayer was offered by the inhabitants of the higher planetary systems, namely the Jana, Tapas and Satya lokas, who are far more intelligent and powerful than humans.

Viśvaṁ samastam is very significant here. There are the material world and the spiritual world. The sages pray: "Both worlds are bewildered by Your different energies. Those who are in the spiritual world are absorbed in Your loving service, forgetting themselves and You also, and those in the material world are absorbed in material sense gratification and therefore also forget You. No one can know You, because You are unlimited. It is best not to try to know You by unnecessary mental speculation. Rather, kindly bless us so that we can worship You with causeless devotional service."

TEXT 46

मैत्रेय उवाच
इत्युपस्थीयमानोऽसौ मुनिभिर्ब्रह्मवादिभिः ।
सलिले खलुराक्रान्त उपाधत्तावितावनिम् ॥४६॥

maitreya uvāca ity upasthīyamāno 'sau munibhir brahma-vādibhiḥ salile sva-khurākrānta upādhattāvītavanim

maitreyaḥ uvāca—the sage Maitreya said; *iti*—thus; *upasthīyamānaḥ*—being praised by; *asau*—Lord Boar; *munibhiḥ*—by the great sages; *brahma-vādibhiḥ*—by the transcendentalists; *salile*—on the

water; *sva-khura-ākrānte*—touched by His own hooves; *upādhatta*—placed; *avitā*—the maintainer; *avanim*—the earth.

TRANSLATION

The sage Maitreya said: The Lord, being thus worshiped by all the great sages and transcendentalists, touched the earth with His hooves and placed it on the water.

PURPORT

The earth was placed on the water by His inconceivable potency. The Lord is all-powerful, and therefore He can sustain the huge planets either on the water or in the air, as He likes. The tiny human brain cannot conceive how these potencies of the Lord can act. Man can give some vague explanation of the laws by which such phenomena are made possible, but actually the tiny human brain is unable to conceive of the activities of the Lord, which are therefore called inconceivable. Yet the frog-philosophers still try to give some imaginary explanation.

TEXT 47

स इत्थं भगवानुर्वीं विष्वक्सेनः प्रजापतिः ।
रसाया लीलयोन्नीतामप्सु न्यस्य ययौ हरिः ॥४७॥

*sa itham bhagavān urvīm
viṣvaksenaḥ prajāpatiḥ
rasāyā līlayonnūtām
apsu nyasya yayau hariḥ*

saḥ—He; *itham*—in this manner; *bhagavān*—the Personality of Godhead; *urvīm*—the earth; *viṣvaksenaḥ*—another name of Viṣṇu; *prajā-patiḥ*—the Lord of the living entities; *rasāyāḥ*—from within the water; *līlayā*—very easily; *unnūtām*—raised; *apsu*—on the water; *nyasya*—placing; *yayau*—returned to His own abode; *hariḥ*—the Personality of Godhead.

TRANSLATION

In this manner the Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu, the maintainer of all living entities, raised the earth from within the water, and having placed it afloat on the water, He returned to His own abode.

PURPORT

The Personality of Godhead Lord Viṣṇu descends by His will to the material planets in His innumerable incarnations for particular purposes, and again He goes back to His own abode. When He descends He is called an *avatāra* because *avatāra* means “one who descends.” Neither the Lord Himself nor His specific devotees who come to this earth are ordinary living entities like us.

TEXT 48

य एवमेतां हरिमेधसो हरेः
कथां सुमद्रां कथनीयमायिनः ।
शृण्वीत भक्त्या श्रवयेत वोशतीं
जनार्दनोऽस्याशु हृदि प्रसीदति ॥४८॥

*ya evam etām hari-medhaso hareḥ
kathām subhadrām kathaniya-māyinaḥ
śṛṇvīta bhaktyā śravayeta vośatīm
janārdano 'syāśu hṛdi prasīdati*

yaḥ—one who; *evam*—thus; *etām*—this; *hari-medhasaḥ*—who destroys the material existence of the devotee; *hareḥ*—of the Personality of Godhead; *kathām*—narration; *su-bhadrām*—auspicious; *kathaniya*—worthy to narrate; *māyinaḥ*—of the merciful by His internal potency; *śṛṇvīta*—hears; *bhaktyā*—in devotion; *śravayeta*—also allows others to hear; *vā*—either; *uśatīm*—very pleasing; *janārdanaḥ*—the Lord; *asya*—his; *āśu*—very soon; *hṛdi*—within the heart; *prasīdati*—becomes very pleased.

TRANSLATION

If one hears and describes in a devotional service attitude this auspicious narration of Lord Boar, which is worthy of description, the Lord, who is within the heart of everyone, is very pleased.

PURPORT

In His various incarnations, the Lord appears, acts and leaves behind Him a narrative history which is as transcendental as He Himself. Every one of us is fond of hearing some wonderful narration, but most stories are neither auspicious nor worth hearing because they are of the inferior quality of material nature. Every living entity is of superior quality, spirit soul, and nothing material can be auspicious for him. Intelligent persons should therefore hear personally and cause others to hear the descriptive narrations of the Lord's activities, for that will destroy the pangs of material existence. Out of His causeless mercy only, the Lord comes to this earth and leaves behind His merciful activities so that the devotees may derive transcendental benefit.

TEXT 49

तस्मिन् प्रसन्ने सकलाशिषां प्रभौ
किं दुर्लभं ताभिरलं लवात्मभिः ।
अनन्यदृष्ट्या मजतां गुहाशयः
स्वयं विद्यते स्वर्गतिं परः पराम् ॥४९॥

*tasmin prasanne sakalāśiṣām prabhau
kim durlabham tābhiḥ alam lavātmabhiḥ
ananya-dṛṣṭyā bhajatām guhāśayaḥ
svayam vidhate sv-gatim paraḥ parām*

tasmin—unto Him; *prasanne*—being pleased; *sakala-āśiṣām*—of all benediction; *prabhau*—unto the Lord; *kim*—what is that; *durlabham*—very difficult to obtain; *tābhiḥ*—with them; *alam*—away; *lava-ātmabhiḥ*—with insignificant gains; *ananya-dṛṣṭyā*—by nothing but devotional service; *bhajatām*—of those who are engaged in devotional service; *guhā-āśayaḥ*—residing within the heart; *svayam*—personally; *vidhate*—executes; *sva-gatim*—in His own abode; *paraḥ*—the supreme; *parām*—transcendental.

TRANSLATION

Nothing remains unachieved when the Supreme Personality of Godhead is pleased with someone. By transcendental achievement one understands everything else to be insignificant. One who engages in transcendental loving service is elevated to the highest perfectional stage by the Lord Himself, who is seated in everyone's heart.

PURPORT

As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.10), the Lord gives intelligence to the pure devotees so that they may be elevated to the highest perfectional stage. It is confirmed herein that a pure devotee, who constantly engages in the loving service of the Lord, is awarded all knowledge necessary to reach the Supreme Personality of Godhead. For such a devotee there is nothing valuable to be achieved but the Lord's service. If one serves faithfully, there is no possibility of frustration because the Lord Himself takes charge of the devotee's advancement. The Lord is seated in everyone's heart, and He knows the devotee's motive and arranges everything achievable. In other words, the pseudo devotee, who is anxious to achieve material gains, cannot attain the highest perfectional stage because the Lord is in knowledge of his motive. One merely has to become sincere in his purpose, and then the Lord is there to help in every way.

TEXT 50

को नाम लोके पुरुषार्थसारवित्
पुराकथानां भगवत्कथासुधाम् ।

आपीय कर्णाञ्जलिभिर्वापहा-
महो विरज्येत विना नरेतरम् ॥५०॥

ko nāma loke puruṣārtha-sāravī
purā-kathānām bhagavat-kathā-sudhām
āpīya karnāñjalibhir bhavāpahām
aho virajyeta vinā naretaram

kaḥ—who; nāma—indeed; loke—in the world; puruṣa-*artha*—goal of life; sāra-*vit*—one who knows the essence of; purā-*kathānām*—of all past histories; bhagavat—regarding the Personality of Godhead; kathā-*sudhām*—the nectar of the narrations about the Personality of Godhead; āpīya—by drinking; karnā-*añjalibhiḥ*—by aural reception; bhava-*apahām*—that which kills all material pangs; aho—alas; virajyeta—could refuse; vinā—except; nara-*itarām*—other than the human being.

TRANSLATION

Who, other than one who is not a human being, can exist in this world and not be interested in the ultimate goal of life? Who can refuse the nectar of narrations about the Personality of Godhead's activities, which by itself can deliver one from all material pangs?

PURPORT

The narration of the activities of the Personality of Godhead is like a constant flow of nectar. No one can refuse to drink such nectar except one who is not a human being. Devotional service to the Lord is the highest goal of life for every human being, and such devotional service begins by hearing about the transcendental activities of the Personality of Godhead. Only an animal, or a man who is almost an animal in behavior, can refuse to take an interest in hearing the transcendental message of the Lord. There are many books of stories and histories in the world, but except for the histories or narrations on the topics of the Personality of Godhead, none are capable of diminishing the burden of material pangs. Therefore one who is serious about eliminating material existence must chant and hear of the transcendental activities of the Personality of Godhead. Otherwise one must be compared to the nonhumans.

Thus end the Bhaktivedanta purports of the Third Canto, Thirteenth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled "The Appearance of Lord Varāha."

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Pregnancy of Diti in the Evening

TEXT 1

श्रीशुक उवाच
निश्चयं कौषारविणोपवर्णितां
हरेः कथां कारणसूकरात्मनः ।
पुनः स पप्रच्छ तमुद्यताञ्जलि-
र्न चातिवृत्तो विदुरो धृतव्रतः ॥ १ ॥

śrī-śuka uvāca
niśamya kauṣāraviṇopavarṇitām
hareḥ kathām kāraṇa-sūkarātmanaḥ
punaḥ sa papraccha tam udyatāñjalir
na cātīrpto viduro dhṛta-vrataḥ

śrī-śukaḥ uvāca—Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; niśamya—after hearing; kauṣāraviṇā—by the sage Maitreya; upavarṇitām—described; hareḥ—of the Personality of Godhead; kathām—narrations; kāraṇa—for the reason of lifting the earth; sūkara-*ātmanaḥ*—of the boar incarnation; punaḥ—again; saḥ—he; papraccha—inquired; tam—from him

(Maitreya); udyata-*añjalih*—with folded hands; na—never; ca—also; ati-*tīrptah*—very much satisfied; viduraḥ—Vidura; dhṛta-*vrataḥ*—taken to a vow.

TRANSLATION

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: After hearing from the great sage Maitreya about the Lord's incarnation as Varāha, Vidura, who had taken a vow, begged him with folded hands to please narrate further transcendental activities of the Lord, since he [Vidura] did not yet feel satisfied.

TEXT 2

विदुर उवाच
तेनैव तु मुनिश्रेष्ठ हरिणा यज्ञमूर्तिना ।
आदिदैत्यो हिरण्याक्षो हत इत्यनुशुश्रुम् ॥ २ ॥

vidura uvāca
tenaiva tu muni-śreṣṭha
harinā yajña-mūrtinā
ādi-daiṭyo hiraṇyākṣo
hata ity anuśuśrūma

viduraḥ uvāca—Śrī Vidura said; tena—by Him; eva—certainly; tu—but; muni-*śreṣṭha*—O chief among the sages; harinā—by the Personality of Godhead; yajña-*mūrtinā*—the form of sacrifices; ādi—original; daiṭyaḥ—demon; hiraṇyākṣaḥ—by the name Hiraṇyākṣa; hataḥ—slain; iti—thus; anuśuśrūma—heard in succession.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Vidura said: O chief amongst the great sages, I have heard by disciplic succession that Hiraṇyākṣa, the original demon, was slain by the same form of sacrifices, the Personality of Godhead [Lord Boar].

PURPORT

As referred to previously, the boar incarnation was manifested in two millenniums—namely Svāyambhuva and Cākṣuṣa. In both millenniums there was a boar incarnation of the Lord, but in the Svāyambhuva millennium He lifted the earth from within the water of the universe, whereas in the Cākṣuṣa millennium He killed the first demon, Hiraṇyākṣa. In the Svāyambhuva millennium He assumed the color white, and in the Cākṣuṣa millennium He assumed the color red. Vidura had already heard about one of them, and he proposed to hear about the other. The two different boar incarnations described are the one Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 3

तस्य चोद्धरतः श्वौणीं खदंष्ट्राग्रेण लीलया ।
दैत्यराजस्य च ब्रह्मन् कस्माद्देतोरभून्मृधः ॥ ३ ॥

tasya coddharataḥ kṣauṇīm
sva-damṣṭrāgreṇa līlayā
daiṭya-rājasya ca brahman
kasmād hetor abhūn mṛdhaḥ

tasya—His; ca—also; uddharataḥ—while lifting; kṣauṇīm—the earth planet; svā-damṣṭra-*agreṇa*—by the edge of His tusks; līlayā—in His pastimes; daiṭya-*rājasya*—of the king of demons; ca—and; brahman—O brāhmaṇa; kasmāt—from what; hetoḥ—reason; abhūt—there was; mṛdhaḥ—fight.

TRANSLATION

What was the reason, O brāhmaṇa, for the fight between the demon king and Lord Boar while the Lord was lifting the earth as His pastime?

TEXT 4

श्रद्धधानाय भक्ताय ब्रूहि तज्जन्मविस्तरम् ।
ऋषे न तृप्यति मनः परं कौतूहलं हि मे ॥ ४ ॥

*śraddadhānāya bhaktāya
brūhi taj-janma-vistaram
ṛṣe na tṛpyati manaḥ
paraṁ kautūhalaṁ hi me*

śraddadhānāya—unto a faithful person; *bhaktāya*—unto a devotee; *brūhi*—please narrate; *taj*—His; *janma*—appearance; *vistaram*—in detail; *ṛṣe*—O great sage; *na*—not; *tṛpyati*—become satisfied; *manaḥ*—mind; *paraṁ*—very much; *kautūhalaṁ*—inquisitive; *hi*—certainly; *me*—my.

TRANSLATION

My mind has become very inquisitive, and therefore I am not satisfied with hearing the narration of the Lord's appearance. Please, therefore, speak more and more to a devotee who is faithful.

PURPORT

One who is actually faithful and inquisitive is qualified to hear the transcendental pastimes of the appearance and disappearance of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Vidura was a suitable candidate to receive such transcendental messages.

TEXT 5

मैत्रेय उवाच

साधु वीर त्वया पृष्टमवतारकर्यां हरेः ।
यच्चं पृच्छसि मर्त्यानां मृत्युपाशविशतनीम् ॥ ५ ॥

*maitreya uvāca
sādhu vīra tvayā pṛṣṭam
avatāra-kathāṁ hareḥ
yat tvam pṛcchasi martyānāṁ
mṛtyu-pāśa-viśātanīm*

maitreyaḥ uvāca—Maitreya said; *sādhu*—devotee; *vīra*—O warrior; *tvayā*—by you; *pṛṣṭam*—inquired; *avatāra-kathāṁ*—topics on the incarnation of the Lord; *hareḥ*—of the Personality of Godhead; *yat*—that which; *tvam*—your good self; *pṛcchasi*—asking me; *martyānām*—of those who are destined for death; *mṛtyu-pāśa*—the chain of birth and death; *viśātanīm*—source of liberation.

TRANSLATION

The great sage Maitreya said: O warrior, the inquiry made by you is just befitting a devotee because it concerns the incarnation of the Personality of Godhead. He is the source of liberation from the chain of birth and death for all those who are otherwise destined to die.

PURPORT

The great sage Maitreya addressed Vidura as a warrior not only because Vidura belonged to the Kuru family but because he was anxious to hear about the chivalrous activities of the Lord in His incarnations of Varāha and Nṛsiṁha. Because the inquiries concerned the Lord, they were perfectly befitting a devotee. A devotee has no taste for hearing anything mundane. There are many topics of mundane warfare, but a devotee is not inclined to hear them. The topics of the warfare in which the Lord engages do not concern the war of death but the war against the chain of *māyā* which obliges one to accept repeated birth and death. In other words, one who takes delight in hearing the war topics of the Lord

is relieved from the chains of birth and death. Foolish people are suspicious of Kṛṣṇa's taking part in the Battle of Kurukṣetra, not knowing that His taking part insured liberation for all who were present on the battlefield. It is said by Bhīṣmadeva that all who were present on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra attained their original spiritual existences after death. Therefore, hearing the war topics of the Lord is as good as any other devotional service.

TEXT 6

ययोत्तानपदः पुत्रो मुनिना गीतयार्भकः ।
मृत्योः कृत्वैव मूर्ध्न्यङ्घ्रिमारोह हरेः पदम् ॥ ६ ॥

*yayottānapadaḥ putro
muninā gītayārbhakaḥ
mṛtyoḥ kṛtvāiva mūrdhny aṅghrim
āruroha hareḥ padam*

yayā—by which; *uttānapadaḥ*—of King Uttānapāda; *putraḥ*—son; *muninā*—by the sage; *gītayā*—being sung; *arbhakaḥ*—a child; *mṛtyoḥ*—of death; *kṛtvā*—placing; *eva*—certainly; *mūrdhni*—on the head; *aṅghrim*—feet; *āruroha*—ascended; *hareḥ*—of the Personality of Godhead; *padam*—to the abode.

TRANSLATION

By hearing these topics from the sage [Nārada], the son of King Uttānapāda [Dhruva] was enlightened regarding the Personality of Godhead, and he ascended to the abode of the Lord, placing his feet over the head of death.

PURPORT

While quitting his body, Mahārāja Dhruva, the son of King Uttānapāda, was attended by personalities like Sunanda and others, who received him in the kingdom of God. He left this world at an early age, as a young boy, although he had attained the throne of his father and had several children of his own. Because he was due to quit this world, death was waiting for him. He did not care for death, however, and even with his present body he boarded a spiritual airplane and went directly to the planet of Viṣṇu because of his association with the great sage Nārada, who had spoken to him the narration of the pastimes of the Lord.

TEXT 7

अथात्रापि तिहासोऽयं श्रुतो मे वर्णितः पुरा ।
ब्रह्मणा देवदेवेन देवानामनुपृच्छताम् ॥ ७ ॥

*athātrāpītihāso 'yaṁ
śruto me varṇitaḥ purā
brahmaṇā deva-devena
devānām anupṛcchatām*

atha—now; *atra*—in this matter; *api*—also; *itihāsaḥ*—history; *ayam*—this; *śrutaḥ*—heard; *me*—by me; *varṇitaḥ*—described; *purā*—years ago; *brahmaṇā*—by Brahmā; *deva-devena*—the foremost of the demigods; *devānām*—by the demigods; *anupṛcchatām*—asking.

TRANSLATION

This history of the fight between the Lord as a boar and the demon Hiraṇyākṣa was heard by me in a year long ago as it was described by the foremost of the demigods, Brahmā, when he was questioned by the other demigods.

(continued in next issue)

For Your Information

RESOURCES

Radio KHQN, ISKCON's Utah station, offers taped, serialized programs. Each series consists of from thirty to one hundred half-hour programs and is based on ISKCON publications and the Vedic literature. Programs include such topics as Kṛṣṇa, Śrīla Prabhupāda, *Mahābhārata*, *Rāmāyaṇa*, plus programs on diet, reincarnation, science, abortion, and issues of the day. A demo is available for \$1.50 that includes samples of each series. Cost is \$3.00 per sixty-minute tape (postage paid in U.S. only). Write KHQN, P.O. Box 379, Spanish Fork, UT 84660, or call (801) 798-3559.

"At present, it seems the more 'educated' one becomes, the less he believes in God, in God's law, and in the next life. . . . Thus modern education prepares men to become animals. If there is no education to teach a human being whether or not he is this body, he remains no better than an ass." Read the complete compilation of Śrīla Prabhupāda's words on *gurukula*, the Kṛṣṇa conscious educational system. *Śrīla Prabhupāda on Gurukula* is available from the ISKCON Ministry of Education, P.O. Box 11093, Dallas, TX 75223. \$3.50 plus \$1 postage; \$2 overseas postage.

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.

The Bhaktivedanta Tape Ministry 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

Teach your children songs about Kṛṣṇa. The book *Songs of India*, composed, written, and illustrated by Bhavatārīṇī-devī dāśī, contains sheet music, and pictures to color, and it's accompanied by a cassette tape of the songs. Available from Bhava Productions, 3764 Watseska Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90034.

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 Watseska Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90034.

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

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.

This year, visit Śrīla 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 and fall 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. Write Circulation Dept., P.O. Box 133, Line Lexington, PA 18932-0133/ (215) 822-0787. Please send a recent mailing label or invoice.

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 Hṛṣīkeśa
(August 20–September 18)

September 7—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Kīrtanānanda Swami Bhaktipāda, one of the present spiritual masters in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

September 9—Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Sītādevī, the consort of Śrī Advaita Ācārya.

September 11—Śrī Rādhāṣṭamī, the appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, Lord Kṛṣṇa's eternal consort. Fasting till noon.

September 14—Parsva Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans. Fasting till noon for Lord Vāmanadeva's appearance anniversary.

September 15—Śrī Vāmana-dvādaśī. Lord Vāmanadeva appeared at noon. Also, appearance anniversary of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the chief philosopher among the followers of Lord Caitanya.

September 16—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, the pioneer of modern-day Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Fasting till noon.

September 17—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura, the foremost teacher of the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*. Also, the anniversary of Śrīla Prabhupāda's arrival in the United States of America in 1965.

September 18—The start of the third month of Cāturmāsya. Fasting from milk.

Month of Padmanābha
(September 19–October 17)

September 29—Indirā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

October 7—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhavānanda Goswami Viṣṇupāda, one of the present spiritual masters in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

October 12—Śrī Rāma-vijaya. Lord Rāmacandra's victory over the demon Rāvaṇa. Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa center for schedule of events. Also, appearance anniversary of Śrīla Madhvācārya, a great teacher of devotional service.

October 13—Pāśāṅkuśā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

October 14—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, and Śrīla Kṛṣṇa-dāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, great associates and followers of Lord Caitanya.

October 17—Beginning of Dāmodara-vrata. Offering lamps for one month. Also, the fourth month of Cāturmāsya begins. Fasting from *urad dāl*.



Every Town and Village

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

President of Zanzibar Welcomes an ISKCON Guru



Zanzibar President Wakil receives a copy of Śrīla Prabhupāda's *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* from Śrīla Navayogendra Swami.

Zanzibar—On a recent tour of eastern and central Africa, Śrīla Navayogendra Swami met here with President Wakil. The president accepted copies of *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* and *Teachings of Lord Caitanya*.

The meeting, scheduled to last fifteen minutes, lasted one hour. Navayogendra Swami and President Wakil discussed the philosophy and practices of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement and the movement's activities in Africa. The meeting

with the president was broadcast on national television.

Navayogendra Swami had been visiting Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, when an Indian gentleman, inspired by Navayogendra Swami's lectures, had chartered a plane to fly the swami and a group of Hindus to Zanzibar to meet President Wakil. When the group arrived at the Zanzibar airport, members of Parliament, national television correspondents, and leading citizens welcomed Navayogendra Swami.

ment titled *My Sweet Lord*. Dr. Knott was commissioned by London University's Kings College to write the book as part of a series of texts on new religious movements.

Dr. Knott's writing is scholarly and objective, and her work provides a comprehensive introduction to the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. It also refutes some common misconceptions. She writes,

Looking beneath the surface of the movement has shown us three things. Hare Kṛṣṇa is not a new religious group, except in the most superficial sense; it is not stuck in the cultural and social groove of the 1960s; nor is it just one of many contemporary cults. . . . None of these stereotypes do justice to the Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees, their philosophy, and their way of life. Their religion is firmly rooted in Indian tradition. It is dynamic. It has characteristics which distinguish it from other contemporary religious groups and which qualify it to stand independently as a bona fide religion.

In researching ISKCON, Dr. Knott frequently visited the Society's centers in London and nearby Letchmore Heath. Her research convinced her of the validity and importance of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement and led her to take up its spiritual practices. She is now Kauśalyā-devī dāśī, an initiated disciple of Śrīla Bhagavān dāsa Goswami.

ISKCON Food Relief Expands in Africa

Lagos, Nigeria—ISKCON International Food Relief here recently fed an estimated 20,000 people from Nigeria and Ghana. Two hundred devotees from ISKCON centers in these two countries gathered to distribute the food.

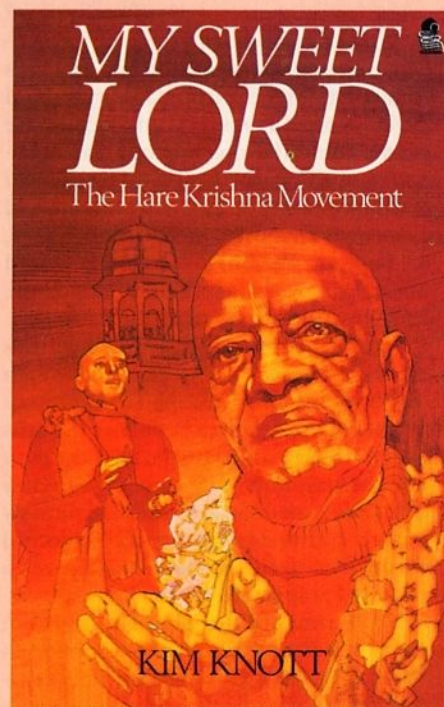
The distribution site resembled a festival ground, as the devotees gave out free books, chanted Hare Kṛṣṇa, and explained the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness with the help of many exhibits.

An announcer for the leading Nigerian

radio station told his audience, "One might think this was the second coming of Jesus, because just as he fed the masses, so the Hare Kṛṣṇas were feeding thousands of people."

Book on ISKCON Released in England

London—Dr. Kim Knott, a research fellow at the University of Leeds, recently released a study of the Hare Kṛṣṇa move-



THE VEDIC

Transcendental Comment

FOR GOD OR GUINNESS

by Dvārakādhīśa-devī dāsī

Ignoring nausea, blisters, and bruises, Asrita Furman valiantly pushed on. For ten and a half hours he fought to maintain philosophical detachment: "I am not my body; I am soul."

Repeatedly he plunged forward to meet the rough pavement in yet another somersault. And then another and another and another . . . eight thousand two hundred ninety in all. In this painful and peculiar fashion he covered more than twelve miles, following the reverse route of Paul Revere's famous ride.

What inspired Furman to such acrobatics? He claims the feat was an offering to his *guru*.

A disciple of an Indian *guru* for the past fifteen years, Furman was motivated by his *guru's* teaching that spiritual advancement is obtained by pushing the body to its limits. Eight thousand two hundred ninety consecutive somersaults on the side of the road seemed a suitable challenge.

Is this a valid process of self-realization? According to the Vedic science of self-realization, to advance spiritually means to understand the spiritual reality behind the material illusion of this world. We must understand not only our own spiritual nature but also the spiritual nature of that supreme being who is the origin of all existence. That supreme being is Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and we are His eternal servants. This is the essence of spiritual realization.

To enlighten us with spiritual knowledge, Lord Kṛṣṇa teaches us, both through the scriptures and through His representative, the bona fide *guru*. Just as the rails of a train track must run parallel, the *guru* and the scripture must agree. When they do, we are guided safely and accurately toward spiritual perfection. This accord between *guru* and scripture legitimizes a process for spiritual advancement.

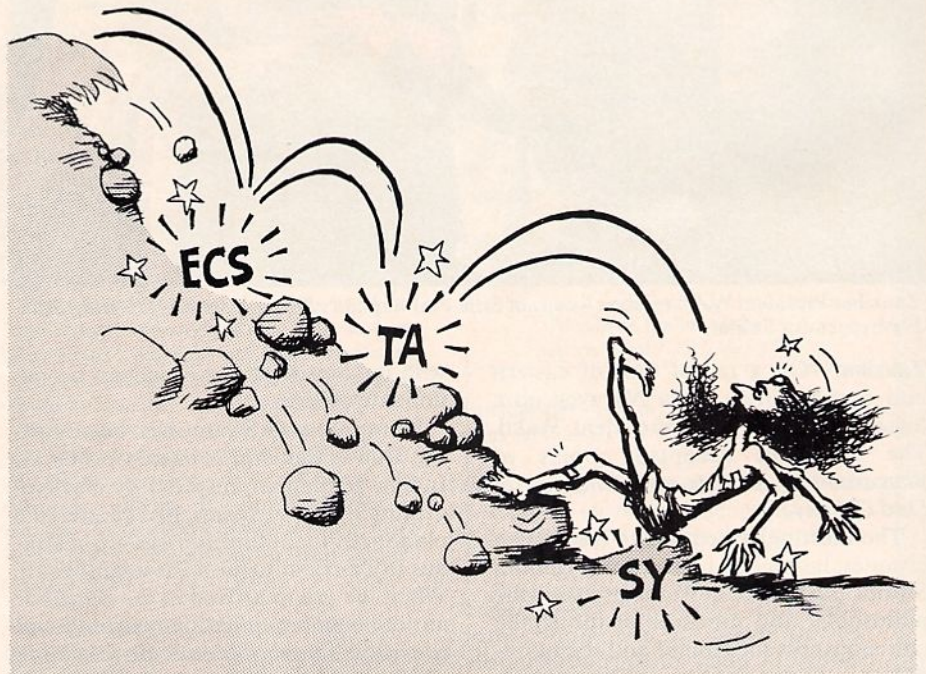
Mr. Furman did follow his *guru*, but since somersaulting is not authorized in the scripture as a legitimate spiritual practice, Furman's spiritual advancement is

dubious. Nowhere do the scriptures indicate that the Supreme Personality of Godhead rewards sweaty gymnastics with spiritual enlightenment. Indeed, *Bhagavad-gītā* (17.18–19) specifically warns against such whimsical austerities:

Penance performed out of pride and for the sake of gaining respect, honor, and worship is said to be in the mode of passion. It is neither stable nor permanent. Penance performed out of foolishness, with self-torture or to destroy or injure others is said to be in the mode of ignorance.

spiritual master, and superiors like the father and mother, and in cleanliness, simplicity, celibacy, and nonviolence. Austerity of the speech consists in speaking words that are truthful, beneficial, and not agitating to others, and also in regularly reciting Vedic literature. And satisfaction, simplicity, gravity, self-control, and purification of one's existence are austerities of the mind.

Had Furman's *guru* recommended these Vedic austerities to his devoted disciple, then how much more valuable his



There's nothing spiritual about enduring pain. People everywhere are tolerating miseries much greater than the bruises of Asrita Furman, and their forbearance does not necessarily bring them transcendental knowledge. We must receive transcendental knowledge by studying the revealed scriptures under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master. Otherwise we will be cheated.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (17.14–16) Lord Kṛṣṇa describes austerities that are essential for spiritual growth and are pleasing to Him:

Austerity of the body consists in worship of the Supreme Lord, the *brāhmaṇas*, the

determination would have been. This is not the first undertaking Furman has accepted for the pleasure of his *guru*. Previously he walked twenty-four miles with a milk bottle on his head, held a fifty-hour hand-clapping marathon, and trekked eleven and a half miles up the side of Mount Fuji—on a pogo stick!

Although Furman's exploits have not helped him gain the favor of God, they have helped him considerable attention in the media and earned him a place in the *Guinness Book of World Records*, thus increasing the prevalent misunderstanding about Vedic teachings and the nature and goal of spiritual life.

OBSERVER

ary on the Issues of the Day

THE ADAM BOMB

by Ravindra-svarūpa dāsa

This year the Reagan administration finally scrapped its observance of the unratified SALT II arms limitation treaty, while Congress allocated fresh billions for hatching a so-called "third generation" of nuclear weapons. These moves have prompted widespread fear of a steep acceleration in the arms race.

Brace yourself: we're in for it again. Here they come—more and more of 'em, and getting more scary all the time.

Nuclear weapons. What to do?

Nobody likes 'em. Everybody hates 'em. Yet somehow we just can't get rid of 'em. They're more tenacious than cockroaches. And considerably more dangerous. Like those irradiated arthropods escaped from the lab in a B-grade science fiction movie, they just keep on multiplying—and *evolving* as they do, into more and more nightmarish and diabolical forms.

But our real-life horror show with nuclear weapons is even weirder than the movie. Weirder, because we ourselves are churning out those weapons. We—who hate them, who abhor and abominate them, whose most fervent prayer is to get rid of them—we make them. And keep on making them. And on top of that, making these weapons is what you'd have to call a rational activity. Lots of hard thinking, planning, ingenuity, *cunning*, goes into it. We really apply ourselves.

We make them. So it's not like the SF films—nature gone amok and out of control. It's us!

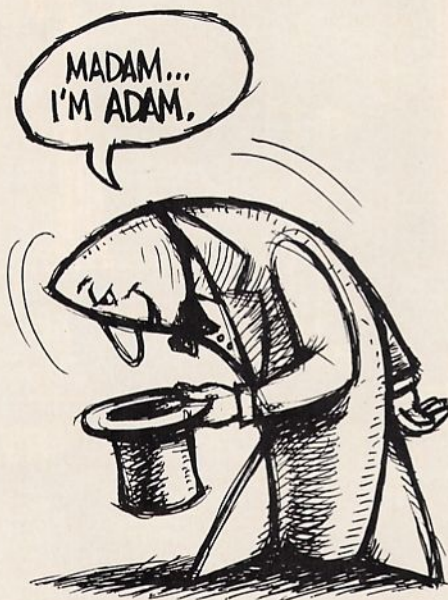
You'd have to say *we* have gone amok and out of control. In spite of all cool-headed, rational science and planning and organization, you'd have to say that.

It's weird. Because when you picture those guys working, so calm and serious in their crisp white coats in crisp air-conditioned labs, scowling over print-outs and punching in data, exchanging information in terse bursts of jargon and dithering with some device so big and complex that maybe no one person understands all of it—seeing that, it doesn't look

like anyone's out of control or insane.

But then, why can't we keep from inflicting this ever-increasing terror upon ourselves? We're running out of control for sure, even though all that rationality sometimes makes it hard for some of us to see it clearly. But when we finally face up to it, we see that this rationality actually makes it worse. What we've got here is something very, very scary: the rational organization of insanity.

Think about that, and you'll realize that it means our problem lies really deep. There is some insanity, some corruption,



some *evil* rooted so deeply, so profoundly within us, that it can co-opt reason itself and enlist it in its service.

What is this hidden evil at the heart of the great nuclear weapons death race? What hidden diabolic energy forces us, as if against our will, to inflict upon ourselves those increasingly powerful engines of megadeath?

As it turns out, a seaman named Bill Bailey stumbled upon the answer to this question quite by accident, without even realizing it. He was shipboard in the Pacific in 1945 when word of the Hiroshima bomb reached him, and by a wonderful misunderstanding he put his finger right

on the real problem, at the very dawn of the atomic age. Bill Bailey's pregnant error is recorded for posterity in Studs Terkel's *The Good War*, an oral history of World War II. This is what our seaman—salty language and all—says:

We're on our way to Okinawa, when we got word that the atom bomb dropped. I thought it was Adam, A-D-A-M. Somebody dropped an Adam bomb. What kind a bomb is that? They said it wiped out a city. I said, "This son of a bitch of an Adam, who the hell is he?"

Well, I know who he is—he's our common ancestor, the primordial man of Eden, who transgressed the bounds set by God and brought us to grief. *That* Adam, the emblem of original sin. The maker of the Adam bomb.

Now, the old primer rhyme tells us, "In Adam's Fall/We sinned all." I accept that. But the idea of original sin depicts us as guilty for something we didn't do. It is our remote forebear's crime—not ours—but still we suffer for it, inheriting his fault like a genetic defect. That would be simply unjust, and I don't buy the idea.

I say that when the Bible talks about what Adam did, it's talking about what we ourselves did. We were there "in the beginning" ourselves, because, being God's offspring and made in His image, we are not material beings but spiritual beings. So we're eternal. That's the very nature of spirit: it never comes into being; it never goes out of being. That's why in the *Bhagavad-gītā* the soul is described not only as *ajah*, "unborn," and *nityah*, "eternal," but also as *purāṇah*, the oldest.

This means that all of us are primordial persons. When the Bible talks about Adam, then, it's actually talking about us. As a matter of fact, "adam" is simple Hebrew for "man." We can all step forward and introduce ourselves with that old palindrome: "Madam, I'm Adam."

So we're to blame. And what did we do? What's our sin at the root of it all?

We decided that we didn't want to serve God but wanted to become God ourselves. In other words, we became envious

(continued on page 35)



SETTING SAIL WITH TRANSCENDENTAL TREASURES

In the spirit of Śrīla Prabhupāda's voyage to America in 1965,
devotees are bringing Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the Hawaiian Islands.

Text and photos by
VIŚĀKHĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ



The large tilaka symbol
adorning the *Jaladuta II*'s
mainmast receives a touch-
up from French-Canadian
Gauracandra dāsa (below).



I awoke to the sound of waves lapping near my head. Through the two skylight windows above my bunk I could see wispy clouds that seemed to bob rhythmically in the blue. After a five-year absence, again I was in Hawaii and aboard the *Jaladuta II*, the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement's fifty-three-foot teakwood ketch.

In 1980, Narahari Swami had convinced the ship's owner to donate his handsome ketch to the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement so that devotees could travel from island to island and give people spiritual food, spiritual song, and spiritual knowledge, along with sailing, swimming, and snorkeling. On this particular Wednesday afternoon in early May 1986, Narahari Swami (now the ship's skipper), four devotee-crewmembers, and I were en route to Kona Bay on the "Big Island" for a Saturday cruise program, just like the one we had held on Oahu on the previous Saturday. Bracing myself against the six-foot swells that rocked our ship, and looking toward the horizon—which was unrelieved by any sign of land or life—I thought about Columbus, Magellan, and other early European explorers who had sailed for months without sighting land.

Some of those explorers were seeking a western route to India. Their aim was to fill their ships with India's treasures—spices, gems, gold, and silver—and heroically return home with a vast fortune. Although explorers eventually reached

Traditional Hawaiian outriggers flank the *Jaladuta II* as she leaves the Honolulu harbor for an evening cruise (above). Children receive an impromptu lesson about the ship's compass during a Saturday cruise (right).





It was remembrance of Śrīla Prabhupāda—his mission and journey—that inspired the devotees in Hawaii to name their ship the *Jaladuta II*. Just as Śrīla Prabhupāda brought spiritual life and imparted it to whomever he met, so the devotees in Hawaii, Śrīla Prabhupāda's representatives, wanted to continue carrying his message: "Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and make your life sublime."

Before he passed on in 1977, Śrīla Prabhupāda encouraged some of his disciples to use a boat to propagate Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In a letter, he wrote, "Your

The natural beauty of Hawaii and the excitement of sailing, combined with good company, good food, singing, and swimming, make for an ideal Kṛṣṇa conscious outing (opposite page). The *Jaladuta II* heels to starboard under a strong wind (left) as she sails along the southern shore of Oahu. Children get a ride on life preservers (below) just before a picnic lunch, served on deck.



Narahari Swami keeps in touch with ISKCON's farm community on Hawaii by radio (right), as crew members read from Prabhupāda's books during the hot hours of the day.



India, it wasn't until twenty years ago that India's treasure reached other lands. That treasure was carried not by an explorer but by a humble emissary of Lord Kṛṣṇa, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's aim was not to gain fortune or fame, but to give the process of self-realization. His courage was not in facing uncharted seas but in offering

spirituality to the hordes of materialists in the West. And it was in leaving his homeland, at the age of seventy for the first time, and in venturing to a land where no one knew him and where he had no support. On September 17, 1965, the steamship *Jaladuta* arrived in Boston Harbor. The lone mendicant aboard, who described himself as an "insignificant beggar," would, in the next twelve years, establish a worldwide spiritual movement that would astonish historians and scholars.

idea of having a large boat traveling from city to city is very encouraging. So if you have got the means, then go ahead and do it. Kṛṣṇa conscious men aboard ship and chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa is a very nice program, and the coastal people may take advantage of this transcendental vibration and be benefited."

In Hawaii a large percentage of those "coastal people" are the five million tourists who annually throng these sun-drenched shores. Many an unsuspecting, lei-graced visitor has looked out from the beach at Waikiki to see the *Jaladuta II*'s colorful mainsail with its three-foot high letters proclaiming: "Hare Kṛṣṇa."

Those transcendental words have also caught the attention of journalists. *Dharmayug*, a *Times of India* publication and the largest circulated weekly in India, published color pictures of the *Jaladuta II* in its center spread, along with an article in which the author, Lallan Prasada-yyas, wrote, "I believe that of all the spiritual movements based on Indian spiritualism, the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement is the strongest and is working for the welfare of mankind. . . . I will always remember the evening I spent on the Hare Kṛṣṇa boat,



KRISIN

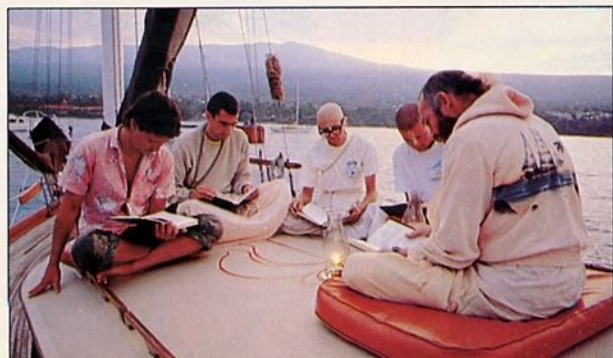




and on returning to India I sometimes remember the *Jaladuta II*. For me this boat was a means of experiencing great happiness."

Not long after the *Dharmayug* article appeared, the *Honolulu Advertiser* published a full-page article by staff writer Jay Hartwell. "What you find after sailing and talking to the Hare Kṛṣṇas," Mr. Hartwell wrote, "is that they are a polite, friendly

Narahari Swami
and the crew always
read from the
spiritual classic
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam
before a day of
sailing (right).





group that lives and works for God. . . .”

Mr. Hartwell also quoted Narahari Swami: “We use the best of material energy as much as possible for Krishna. By having something materially nice, we can get a full cross section of people. But if we’re sailing out in some dirty little barge, who’s going to come and associate with us? If it’s a nice opulent boat, then nice people will come.”

By now the verdant mountains of Hawaii island were on the horizon, rising out of the deep blue water. I was leaning against the mainmast, squinting in the brilliant sunshine and delighted by four sleek dolphins playing near the bow. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s voice sang over the ship’s speakers, and Charlie, the first mate, sat in the shade of the mainsail repairing a halyard.

Charlie had joined the *Jaladuta II*’s crew five years ago, after seeing an article about the ship in *Back to Godhead* magazine. Charlie, forty-three, is a licensed captain with twenty years’ boating experience. He has also had fifteen years of association with members of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. He is devoted to the *Jaladuta II*.

In Charlie’s eyes, the *Jaladuta II* has several main fronts for propagating Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It attracts newcomers, and offers a change of pace to devotees from landlocked temples. The *Jaladuta II*’s public cruises leave most passengers with a positive impression of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. ISKCON’s life members who come to Hawaii return home with pleasant sailing memories. And since Hawaii consists of a string of islands, the *Jaladuta II* is ideal for reaching people who would never go to the Honolulu temple or the Hare Kṛṣṇa farm on the island of Hawaii. For Charlie the *Jaladuta II* is a natural niche in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Both Narahari Swami and Charlie told me about Mārkaṇḍeya, a young Czechoslovakian whose experience on the *Jaladuta II* had convinced him to become a full-time devotee. When Śrīla Prabhupāda came to America for the first time, he brought with him (on the original *Jaladuta*) a trunk containing copies of the first three volumes of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, volumes he had written and published in India. During the next twelve years he translated and published twenty-six more volumes of this classic scripture. For one year Mārkaṇḍeya lived and served on the *Jaladuta II*, during which time he read the entire set of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatams*, as well



The lights of Waikiki and the pastels of dusk form a suitable backdrop for one of the *Jaladuta II*’s sunset cruises (left). Charlie, the first mate, whips a halyard with his sea-worn and sea-worthy hands (above).

as a few of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s other books. That period of reading, service, and association with devotees had convinced him to become an initiated devotee himself.

To Śrīla Prabhupāda, the publishing, widespread distribution, and assimilation of the timeless Kṛṣṇa conscious texts form the basis of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It is also the goal and sustenance of the

(continued on page 34)



One pleasant spring night,
Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma entered the forest
of Vṛndāvana to enjoy
the company of the *gopīs*, Their
cowherd girlfriends.
Suddenly, there appeared . . .

THE INTRUDER

by NĀGARĀJA DĀSA

In Vṛndāvana, Lord Kṛṣṇa's eternal abode, all the elements of nature combine to enhance the pleasure of the Lord's pastimes. When Kṛṣṇa descended five thousand years ago, His transcendental home, Vṛndāvana, descended with Him. His early pastimes, therefore, are like windows on the spiritual world. As a king travels in state, Kṛṣṇa travels surrounded by loving devotees and the transcendental atmosphere of Vṛndāvana, displaying His eternal pastimes for all to see.

In one of these pastimes, the deliverance of Śaṅkhacūḍa, Lord Kṛṣṇa encountered a powerful, envious materialist who mistook God's property to be his own. A mistake Kṛṣṇa corrected in a most dramatic and instructive way.

One pleasant spring night Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma entered the forest of Vṛndāvana to enjoy the company of the *gopīs*, Their cowherd girlfriends. The moon shone brightly amid glittering stars. Refreshing, fragrant breezes carried the aroma of *mallikā* flowers. The songs of the peacocks, *cakoras*, and cuckoos filled the air. And bees, intoxicated by the fragrance of the flowers, flew here and there.

These descriptions from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* reveal the variety and beauty of the spiritual world. Those who deny the existence of the spiritual world think that artists and poets have created it in their imaginations, drawing on the beautiful natural settings of the phenomenal world. The opulences of Lord Kṛṣṇa's abode, however, are transcendental reality. The first verse of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* states that the Lord's abode "is forever free from the illusory representations of the material world." That isn't to say the kingdom of God is devoid of variety, form, and

qualities. Whatever enjoyments the mundane world affords are but shadows of the untainted, unending, variegated bliss of the eternal abode of Kṛṣṇa.

When Kṛṣṇa entered the Vṛndāvana forest, the birds, the trees, the flowering plants, the animals—everything combined to produce the most pleasant atmosphere for His enjoyment. Among all the living entities in the Vṛndāvana forest on that spring evening, none were more concerned about Kṛṣṇa's pleasure than the *gopīs*. As they entered the forest they were not thinking of their own enjoyment. They were thinking only of how they could assist Kṛṣṇa in His pastimes. This is spiritual love, the love of the soul for the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

People sometimes confuse spiritual love with sexual love. But the exchange of pleasure between Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* is not sexual. In the material world, exploitation haunts the relationships between men and women. Thus, a man loves a woman because he has something to gain from her. If she stops fulfilling his needs, separation follows, and the so-called love turns to hate. In the spiritual world, however, love is pure and is exchanged between the soul and God. As long as we remain riveted to mundane consciousness, pure spiritual love will elude us.

Spiritual love is unconditional. That is, the lover and beloved are concerned only with the other's pleasure; they seek no gain. We too can love purely, but only when through devotional service we reawaken our love for God.

Originally we are all pure lovers of Kṛṣṇa, but we have turned away. Desperately we are searching for another lover to replace Him. But we never find that

perfect lover; no one can replace God.

By loving and serving Kṛṣṇa, the *gopīs* were fully satisfied. They did not want anyone but Kṛṣṇa, nor did they expect anything from Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa, therefore, was supremely satisfied with their devotion. People generally pray to Kṛṣṇa for the fulfillment of material desires, but the *gopīs* were such elevated transcendentalists that they prayed only to be engaged in Kṛṣṇa's service.

Since the loving affairs of Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* are far beyond the ken of materialistic persons, and since only the pure in heart are allowed to enter the transcendental realm of Vṛndāvana and participate in Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, we can readily understand the audacity of Śaṅkhacūḍa, who in the very presence of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma began abducting some of the *gopīs*.

Śaṅkhacūḍa was a demoniac person of great opulence, renowned for the valuable conchshell-shaped jewel adorning his forehead. Intoxicated by his own wealth, he thought Kṛṣṇa was an ordinary boy enjoying the company of young girls. He thought he, not Kṛṣṇa, should be enjoying these beautiful girls.

Śaṅkhacūḍa demonstrates the mentality of all rebellious souls. Choosing not to assist Kṛṣṇa in His pastimes, the envious living entity tries to compete with Kṛṣṇa and enjoy the opulence of Vṛndāvana for himself. But envy has no place in Vṛndāvana. Thus, driven by the desire to enjoy Kṛṣṇa's position, we fall to the material world.

Here, deluded by the illusory material energy, we try to enjoy God's property for ourselves. Kṛṣṇa created this world; He owns it. As long as we fail to recognize

that, we must remain here, trying in vain to perfectly and happily enjoy that which is not ours.

Śaṅkhacūḍa thought he could enjoy without recognizing Kṛṣṇa's position. But when he tried to take Kṛṣṇa's place by stealing His *gopīs*, he demonstrated the foolishness of such a mentality.

When Kṛṣṇa noticed Śaṅkhacūḍa leading the *gopīs* away, He immediately began chasing him. The *gopīs* cried out to Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, who picked up big logs as they pursued. Gradually Śaṅkhacūḍa began to realize that the two brothers were far more powerful than he had calculated. He left the *gopīs* and began to flee for his life. Now Śaṅkhacūḍa realized he was no match for God, who easily grabbed the

demon, struck him in the head with His fist, and killed him.

Kṛṣṇa's killing of demons like Śaṅkhacūḍa is sometimes criticized as unbefitting God. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, however, explains that because Kṛṣṇa is absolute, His killing demons is as transcendental as His loving the *gopīs*; both derive eternal benefit. Kṛṣṇa loves everyone. By killing Śaṅkhacūḍa, He liberated him from material existence and guaranteed his entrance into the spiritual sky. Such is the fortune of one who is touched by the hand of the Supreme Lord. Thus Kṛṣṇa extended His unlimited mercy to the envious Śaṅkhacūḍa.

Kṛṣṇa also extends His mercy to us. By hearing this divine pastime from the an-

cient Vedic literature, we can know that we are trapped in this material world with our Śaṅkhacūḍa-like mentalities. We can also know that, like Śaṅkhacūḍa, we are being touched by Kṛṣṇa—not by His absolute and merciful fist, but by His absolute and equally merciful form of *divya-līlā*, or transcendental pastime. Indeed, the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* extols hearing the transcendental pastimes of Kṛṣṇa as one of the most potent means of purification and spiritual realization. Continued and faithful hearing about the Lord from a pure devotee of the Lord will destroy our Śaṅkhacūḍa-like mentality and awaken our original mentality as humble, nonenvious, ecstatic servitors of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. ❀

Hare Kṛṣṇa Way

(continued from page 13)

because they want to be thin, their diet of milk and milk products, vegetables, fruits, and grains is generally less fattening than a diet that includes meat. The *Vegetarian Times* advocates “vegetarian tactics to get thin” and lists seven reasons why these tactics are preferred to nonvegetarian ones. A vegetarian diet (1) lowers cholesterol and triglyceride levels, (2) allows you to eat “no-nos” (potatoes, beans, rice), (3) provides better balance and more variety, (4) eliminates the dangerous chemical residues in meat, (5) increases energy and slows aging, (6) reduces high-calorie protein foods in the diet by fifty percent, and (7) is the oldest, most natural way to lose weight. Vegetarian diets, unlike modern diets, easily deliver all the important

vitamins and minerals, as well as protein, fiber, fat, and carbohydrates.

If devotees are overweight, they manage their overweight condition through will power and moderation, the God-given weight-control mechanisms. They regulate their diet and abstain from certain foods. Devotees generally don't go on binges due to stress, loneliness, sexual conflicts, and frustration. They don't try to solve their problems with food, using it as an escape, sedative, or solace. Neither are they bored with it or with their lifestyle. A devotee's lifestyle is rigorous and Spartan in certain ways, and this is conducive to health and vitality. Binging, sloth, and self-indulgence do not affect a God-conscious person. Because devotees of Kṛṣṇa are practiced in sense control, they are automatically practiced in weight control.

Before a meal ISKCON devotees usually recite a prayer that expresses the quagmire that the overweight—and all of us—are in:

This material body is a place of ignorance, and the senses are a network of paths to death. We have fallen into this ocean of material sense enjoyment, and of all the senses, the most voracious and uncontrollable is the tongue.

Although to conquer the tongue is very difficult, You, dear Kṛṣṇa, are very kind and have sent us this *prasādam* just to help us. Now [at this meal] let us take this *prasādam* to our full satisfaction and glorify Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Trying to lose weight can seem like a Sisyphean punishment, but for one who tries his best and depends on the mercy of the Supreme Lord, anything is possible. ❀

TREASURES

(continued from page 31)

boating project. Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote: “I am very pleased that you are serious to embark on such a boating project, even though it will be a huge effort and expenditure to become successful. But never mind that; nothing is too much big if Kṛṣṇa desires it. So if you are very determined that your boating idea will succeed, then Kṛṣṇa will give you all en-

couragement and facility. . . . As for your maintenance, you have our books and literatures to distribute widely everywhere you go, so you should never lack for maintaining the boat.”

And in another letter: “I once had a dream like this: that we would have a moving temple on the water, going from town to town. So you are making that dream come true. Thank you very much. Do it nicely and maybe I will come and join you also.”

When the *Jaladuta II* docked in Kona Harbor, forty men, women, and children clambered aboard for a full day of sailing, *kīrtana*, as much *prasādam* as they could eat, and a long swim in the clear waters. That evening one of the guests said to me, “When the *Jaladuta II* begins sailing from port to port distributing Śrīla Prabhupāda's books and offering cruises to the public, I want to come too. I'd like to help make Śrīla Prabhupāda and his ship famous throughout Hawaii.” ❀

NEXT LIFE

(continued from page 4)

you prepare yourself, why should you be perplexed about transmigrating into a new body?

If in boyhood you prepare yourself nicely, if you become educated, then later you will get a nice job, a nice situation, and you will be happy. Similarly, if you prepare yourself in this life for going back

home, back to Godhead, then where is the perplexity? There is no perplexity. We should think, “I am going to Kṛṣṇa. I am going back home, back to Godhead. Then I will not have to accept another material body. I will have my spiritual body. I shall play with Kṛṣṇa, dance with Kṛṣṇa, eat with Kṛṣṇa.” This is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Prepare yourself for the next life.

A dying man cries because he knows his next life will be horrible. According to

the law of *karma*, those who are very, very sinful cry because they see horrible things at the time of death. But those who are pious, the devotees, die without anxiety.

Foolish people may say, “Sinful men are dying, and you devotees are also dying. So where is the difference?” But there is a difference. A cat catches its kitten in its mouth, and it also catches the mouse. But there is a difference in this catching. The kitten feels pleasure—“Oh, my

mother is carrying me." And the mouse is feeling its death knell—"Oh, now I am going to die!" This is the difference. Therefore, although devotees are dying and non-devotees are also dying, there is a difference of feeling at the time of death. Don't think that they are both dying in the same way.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* [4.9], Lord Kṛṣṇa says:

*janma karma ca me divyam
evam yo vetti tattvataḥ
tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma
naiti mām eti so 'rjuna*

If you simply try to understand Kṛṣṇa's appearance, Kṛṣṇa's activities, Kṛṣṇa's worship, Kṛṣṇa's temple, you will go back to Godhead. These are all divine, transcendental. Even if one does not understand them but simply *tries* to understand, he becomes liberated from birth and death. Kṛṣṇa promises this.

So become very serious to understand Kṛṣṇa and remain in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Then the problems of birth, old age, disease, and death will be solved, automatically and very easily.

Thank you very much. Hare Kṛṣṇa. ❁

THE ADAM BOMB

(continued from page 25)

of God and wanted to take His place. That is our fall. And we are still fallen to this day because we *still* have that attitude.

You see, as the offspring of God, made in His image, we inherit the qualities of God—like Him, we are eternal, full of knowledge and bliss. But we possess those divine qualities in minute quantity. For we are not God. God is great and One without a second. We, His creatures, are tiny and many without number. The creator is independent, and we are dependent. The dependent many are by constitution eternal servants of the independent One, and as long as we act as servants, we remain in the kingdom of God and enjoy full divine life with Him.

But some among the innumerable, dependent souls don't like that subordination. We thought—and still think—it better to *be* God. We rebellious souls are sent into the material world, a place created just for us to play out our fantasies. We cannot be God—the post is filled—but here we can forget Him and work on our own little God projects.

That's why this world is so crazy and hellish. It's chock-full of people trying to make it as God—driven to be the enjoyer and the controller; mad to be the lord of all they survey. And with such a desire naturally comes envy and hate, as we plunge into an unrelenting struggle to own and con-

trol the resources of matter, to seize what others have and annex it to ourselves, and to defend what we've snatched against the encroachment of others.

But all this springs from the *original* sinful will—the desire to become the Lord. All beings born into the material world, Kṛṣṇa explains in *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.27), show the taint of this original sin in the form of desire and hate. That desire and hate breaks out everywhere, but the original desire is, Why can't I be God? And the original hate, Why should Kṛṣṇa be God?

But we can change our will at any time. By fully acknowledging that God is the

proprietor of everything, the friend of everyone, and the enjoyer of all, we can end this stupid and vicious struggle to dominate and control each other and to possess this earth for ourselves. Now we have dedicated some of our best brains to furthering this struggle; and bestowed upon suffering humanity the ripe fruit of our original sin—the Adam bomb.

Kṛṣṇa predicts in *Bhagavad-gītā* (16.9) that persons who are envious of Him "engage in horrible works meant to destroy the world." It sure sounds like He's talking about us and our Adam bomb.

And it looks like we had better do something about it soon. ❁

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NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

The *Brāhmaṇas* of Boston and the World

While preparing for a recent visit to Boston, I spoke on the telephone with the president of our Kṛṣṇa consciousness temple there. He ambitiously advertises the temple's Sunday lectures, and since I was scheduled to speak, he asked me to give a title for my talk. I tried to find a catchy title and came up with "Boston *Brāhmaṇas*."

When Sunday came, however, and I found myself sitting in the Boston temple room before a hundred people, I realized that my "Boston *Brāhmaṇa*" theme was based on a misnomer.

The first written reference to Boston *brāhmaṇas* was made by Oliver Wendell Holmes. In an essay published in 1860 Holmes wrote of the "brahmin cast of New England . . . the harmless and innocent, untitled aristocracy." For more than a century the phrase "Boston brahmins" was used to refer to the more cultured elements of New England society.

But when people think of brahminism today, they probably think of it as part of the so-called caste system of Indian society, that infamous, ungainly descendant of the most highly evolved of all social systems, the ancient Vedic system of *varṇāśrama* (Please see "Baseball, Caste, and the Whole-Hog Syndrome," p. 8.).

According to the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the thoughts, actions, and propensities of everyone may be analyzed according to three modes of nature: goodness, passion, and ignorance. To the degree that people are affected by the different modes, their qualities and attributes naturally place them in one of the four social categories.

Those who are mostly influenced by the mode of goodness are *brāhmaṇas*. The *brāhmaṇa* is spiritually aware and devoted to God, *guru*, and the Vedic injunctions. Intellectually and philosophically inclined, he leads a life of renunciation, morality, study, and worship. He is qualified to lead others.

Those who are mostly influenced by the mode of passion are the *kṣatriyas*, or society's protectors and administrators.

Those who are impelled by a mixture of passion and ignorance are the *vaiśyas*, the merchants and farmers of society. And those who are influenced by the mode of ignorance are *śūdras*. The *śūdras* are not qualified with the higher characteristics but work as helpful servants to bring about the overall goals of society.

The overall goals of an ideally ordered society would not be simply to raise the standard of living—which is what today's

materialistic societies are mostly about—but, most importantly, to awaken spiritual consciousness. Elevation to the spiritual platform should be the goal of all social activity.

The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is not attempting to immediately change the topsy-turvy condition of society by introducing the authentic model of the four Vedic orders. This is not possible in the present age. The Vedic literature explains that in Kali-yuga (the present Age of Quarrel) people are so disqualified and disturbed that they are not able to follow the religious practices prescribed for other ages. Therefore, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, manifested Himself as Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu to introduce the chanting of the names of God. This simple process, known as *saṅkīrtana* (the congregational chanting of God's holy names), is a special dispensation for this unfortunate age.

The *varṇāśrama* system of social division allows the members of society to gradually elevate themselves to the spiritual platform under the direction of the *brāhmaṇas*. But Lord Caitanya offers anyone from any social position immediate access to the spiritual platform. The process is the same for everyone: chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. By chanting the holy names, by distributing spiritual food, by participating in spiritual festivals, and by worshiping the Deity of Kṛṣṇa, every sincere person can attain the highest platform of love of God.

This is the special system of *bhakti-yoga*. His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda brought to the West. Śrīla Prabhupāda did not teach that people had to first follow the rules and regulations of the four social orders as prescribed in the *varṇāśrama* system before they could be helped; rather, he began publicly chanting the holy names in New York City. In this way he elevated even the lowest and most degraded of people to live as Vaiṣṇavas, or pure devotees of the Lord.

Although Lord Caitanya's method provides a shortcut, the *varṇāśrama* system of social divisions need not be abandoned. Today there is a great need for *brāhmaṇas*. Even if society as a whole does not properly respect and use the *brāhmaṇas*, if even a few persons qualify themselves as *brāhmaṇas*, they will be benefited, and

they will be able to greatly benefit others.

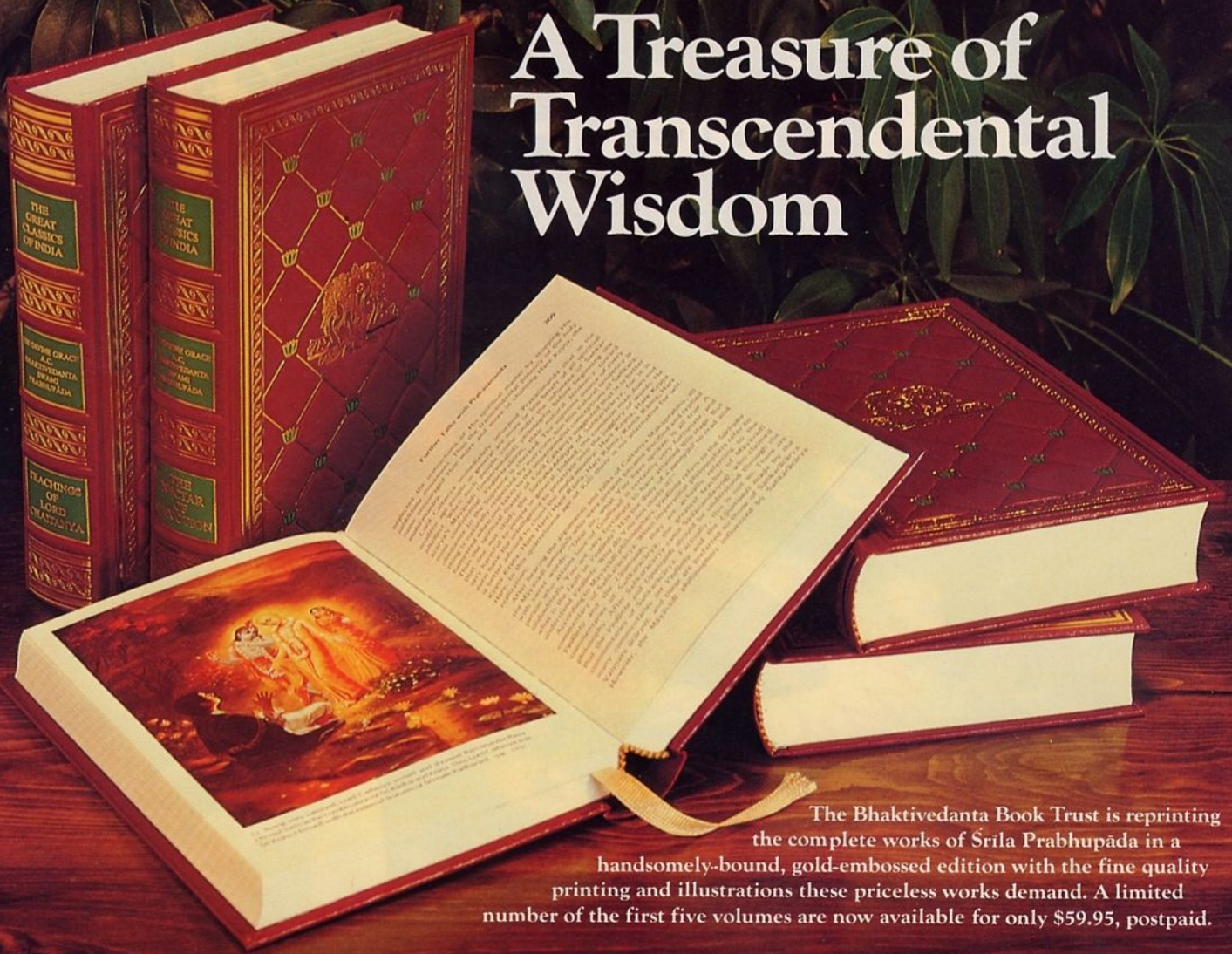
In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Lord Kṛṣṇa describes the qualities of a *brāhmaṇa*. "Peacefulness, self-control, austerity, purity, tolerance, honesty, knowledge, wisdom, and religiousness—these are the natural qualities by which the *brāhmaṇas* work" (Bg. 18.42). These qualities are all conducive to self-knowledge and spiritual life. Only those who possess these qualities can help others. Those who cannot develop these qualities can receive guidance from those who have developed them. The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, both by introducing *varṇāśrama* and by propagating the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, aims to re-spiritualize materialistic society.

A Kṛṣṇa conscious person who follows the principles of *bhakti-yoga* can become transcendental even to a *brāhmaṇa*. The *varṇāśrama* social divisions belong to this material world, but the qualities of the soul belong to the spiritual world and are eternal. One may be a *brāhmaṇa* in this lifetime, but unless one develops pure love of God, one will have to take birth again in the material world. Only the Lord's devotees are transcendental. And by Lord Caitanya's grace, everyone can become such a devotee and transcend altogether the modes of nature. The laborer, the businessman, and the administrator can each become a pure transcendentalist. The priestly and the pious can also advance from their preliminary concepts of religion to unalloyed love of God. Such are the transformations that can take place by the practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

The catchy title I chose for my Sunday lecture in Boston wasn't exactly a misnomer. Śrīla Prabhupāda has created true *brāhmaṇas* in Boston. And even today, whoever regularly chants the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* and follows the four regulative principles of Kṛṣṇa consciousness—no meat-eating, no gambling, no illicit sex, and no intoxication—can receive initiation, become a *brāhmaṇa*, and work to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the world. Such people are performing the highest welfare work of all and are the real *brāhmaṇas*—whether of Boston or any other place—and the world should recognize them for their contribution to humanity. We need not wait for the wholesale reintroduction of the Vedic social system, which isn't possible anyway in this fallen age. We can become *brāhmaṇas* and more by taking up the practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. —SDG

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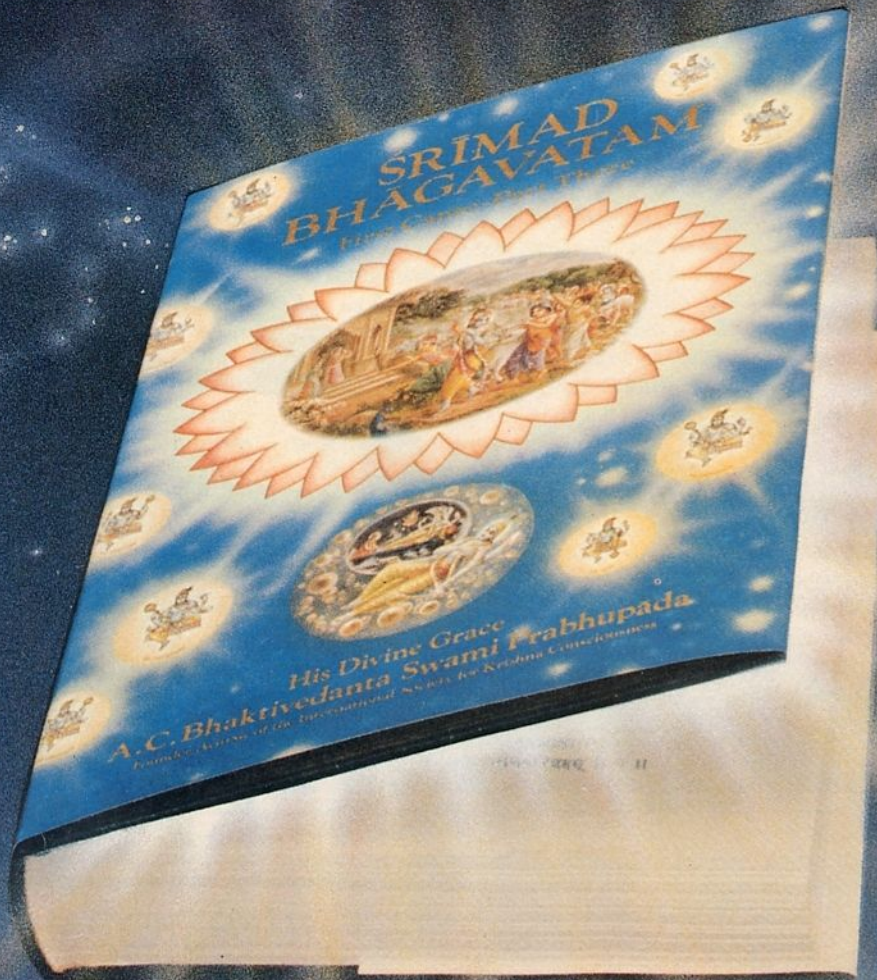
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