

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

BACK TO GODHEAD

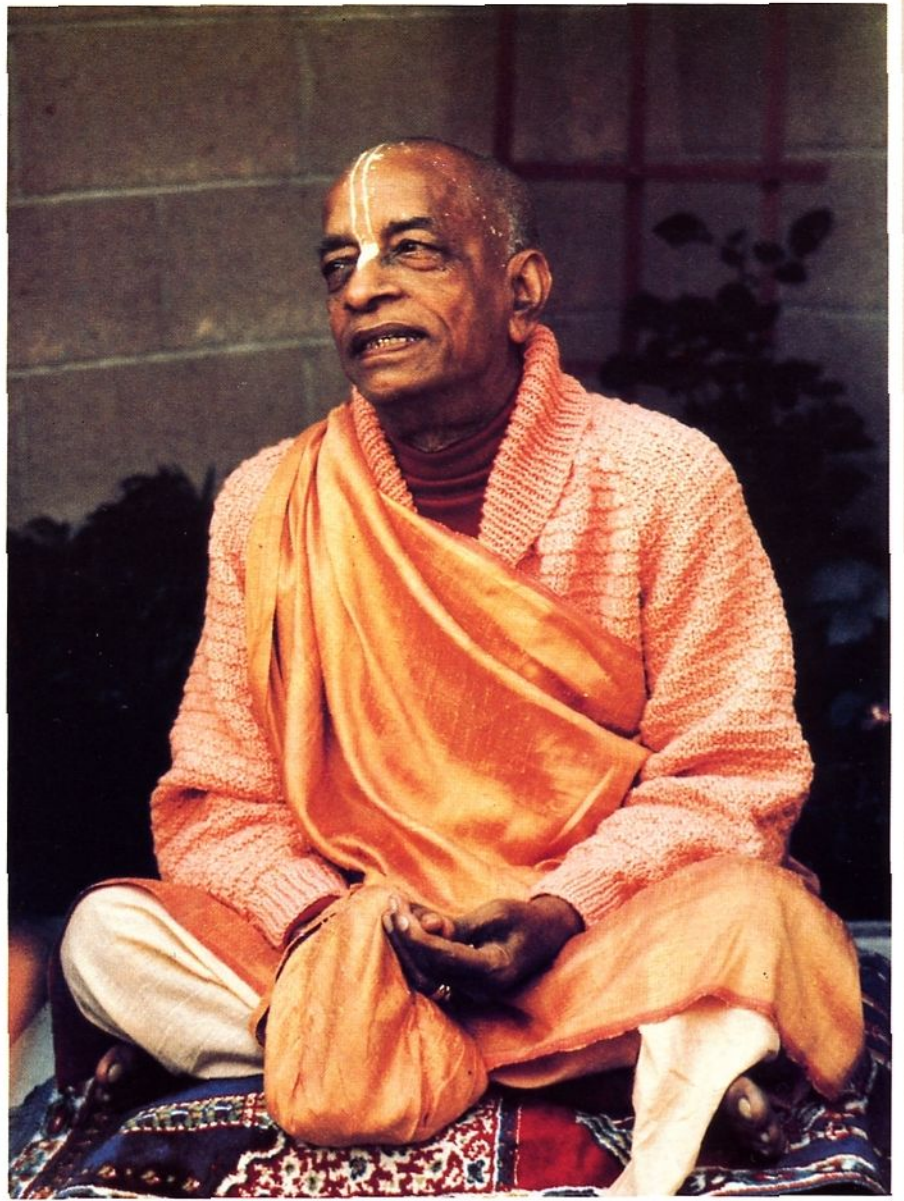
Vol. 22 No.2-3

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT



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

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

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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 **r** like the **ri** in **rim**, and **ch** like the **ch** in **chair**. Pronounce the aspirated consonants (**ch**, **jh**, **dh**, etc.) as in **staunch-heart**, **hedgehog**, and **red-hot**. Finally, pronounce the sibilants **ś** and **ṣ** like **sh**. So for *Kṛṣṇa* say **KRISHNA**, and for *Caitanya* say **CHAITANYA**.

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

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COVER: Many people believe that God is formless. They reason that if God possessed a form, He would be limited. The Vedic literature, however, describes God's unlimited, transcendental form of eternal knowledge and bliss. As the reservoir of all beauty, His form is the source of the attractive features of this world, and thus He is known as Kṛṣṇa, "the all-attractive person." The *Brahma-saṁhitā* states, "I worship Govinda [Kṛṣṇa], the primeval Lord, who plays on His transcendental flute. His eyes are like lotus flowers, He is decorated with peacock plumes, and His bodily color resembles the color of a fresh black cloud, although His bodily features are more beautiful than millions of Cupids." (Detail of a painting by Puṣkara dāsa.)



A Body Free From Suffering

Life after life you have acquired a new material body—automatically and naturally. Acquiring a spiritual body takes practice.

A lecture in Mexico City in February 1975 by
HIS DIVINE GRACE A. C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA,
founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

*na tv evāhaṁ jātu nāsaṁ
na tvam neme janādhīpāḥ
na caiva na bhaviṣyāmaḥ
sarve vayam ataḥ param*

“Never was there a time when I did not exist, nor you, nor all these kings; nor in the future shall any of us cease to be.” (*Bhagavad-gītā* 2.12)

From this verse it is to be concluded that we are not going to die. Kṛṣṇa says here that not only He, but also Arjuna and all others who were present on the battlefield will continue to exist. How shall we exist? As spirit souls, we are existing now—we’ve accepted a certain type of material body and are existing—and similarly, after finishing this body we’ll accept another body and continue to exist.

Now, the question is, “What kind of body shall I exist in after finishing this body?” That is explained elsewhere in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. If we like, Kṛṣṇa says, we can exist in the higher planetary system, where the duration of life is very, very long and sense enjoyment is much better than in this world. This we can have if we like. We can also exist in lower-grade species like cats, dogs, insects, trees, or aquatics. We can also exist in

Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, enjoys with His friends in the spiritual world. To take part in these intimate, ecstatic pastimes, we must uncover our original spiritual bodies by developing Kṛṣṇa consciousness through the steadfast practice of spiritual activities.

the same way as we are existing now. Or we can exist exactly as God does, enjoying an eternal life of bliss and knowledge.

Attaining an eternal life of bliss and knowledge means attaining a spiritual body. The body we possess now—a material body—is neither eternal nor blissful nor full of knowledge. Every one of us knows that one day this material body will be finished. And it is full of ignorance. For instance, we cannot know anything about what is beyond this world. We have senses, but they’re all limited, imperfect. Sometimes we are very proud and challenge, “Can you show me God?” But we forget how weak our power of seeing is. As soon as the light is gone, our power of seeing is gone. So, the material body is imperfect and full of ignorance.

But a spiritual body is full of knowledge—just the opposite. We can get a spiritual body in our next life, but we have to develop the proper consciousness. We can develop our consciousness so that our next body will be in the higher planetary system, or so that our body will be a cat’s or dog’s body, or so that our body will be eternal, blissful, and full of knowledge.

The most intelligent person will try to get an eternal body full of bliss and knowledge. Then he will not have to return to this material world: *yad gatvā na nivartante tad dhāma paramaṁ mama* [Bg. 15.6]. Even if you are promoted to Brahmāloka, the highest planet in the material world, you’ll still have to come back. But if you try your best to go to the spiritual world—back home, back to Godhead—you will not come back here to

accept a material body.

Now, the question may be raised, "If I am eternal, why are there so many miserable conditions of life? Why am I subjected to birth, old age, disease, and death?" These are actually intelligent questions. Kṛṣṇa instructs that these miserable conditions of life are due to the material body, and that if in the future we can attain a spiritual body in His kingdom, we will be free of this suffering. Those who are engaged only in sense gratification do not care for the future; they simply want immediate facilities to enjoy this life. They are like children without the care of their parents. Children simply play the whole day, not caring for their future life, not caring to get an education.

But in the human form of life, if we are actually intelligent, we should try our best to get that kind of body in which we will not suffer birth, old age, disease, and death. This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is educating people for that purpose.

Now, one may ask, "If I simply devote myself to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, how will my material necessities be supplied?" The answer is there in the *Bhagavad-gītā* [9.22], where Kṛṣṇa says, *ananyās cintayanto mām ye janāḥ paryupāsate . . . yoga-kṣemaṁ vahāmy aham*: "For a devotee who is always engaged in My service, I supply his necessities of life." Kṛṣṇa is already looking after everyone's maintenance. *Eko bahūnām yo vidadhāti kāmān*: "The one Supreme Person is supplying the necessities of all living entities." So for a devotee who is trying to go back home, back to Godhead, there will be no scarcity. Rest assured.

The practical example is this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. We now have about 100 centers all over the world, with from 25 to 250 devotees in each. We have no fixed means of income, but we are spending in all the branches \$80,000 per month. By the grace of Kṛṣṇa we have no scarcity. Everything is supplied. People sometimes wonder, "These Hare Kṛṣṇa people do not work, they do not have any profession. They simply chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. How do they live?" The answer is that if cats and dogs can live by the mercy of God, His devotees can certainly live very comfortably by His mercy. There is no question of scarcity.

But for the devotee who thinks, "I have taken to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, yet I am still suffering in so many ways," Kṛṣṇa gives this instruction [Bg. 2.14]:

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

"Pains and pleasures are just like the winter and summer seasons. Try to tolerate them." In the winter, cold water is painful,

but in the summer the same water is pleasing. So, what is the effect of cold water? Is it painful, or pleasing? It is neither, but in different seasons, when it touches the skin, cold water seems painful or pleasing. Such pains and pleasures are coming and going; they are not permanent. Kṛṣṇa therefore advises, *tāms titikṣasva bhārata*: "Just tolerate." But do not forget your real business, Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Of course, if there are pains we should try our best to counteract them, but even if we cannot, we should not be diverted from our devotional practices.

So, one of the main devotional qualities is tolerance. One should learn to tolerate every condition of life. For example, in India those who are actually *brāhmaṇas* (now we have created some *brāhmaṇas* in the Western countries) do not neglect to take a bath early in the morning simply

After finishing
this body,
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have to accept
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of spiritual life
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agine how painful
that will be!

because the weather is pinching cold. Similarly, in the scorching heat of the summer season, one should not decide, "I shall stop cooking." The kitchen may be too hot, but still we cannot give up cooking. This tolerance comes by practice. Something may be painful for one or two days, but if you practice, soon it will no longer be painful.

In the practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one must follow all the rules and regulations. Sometimes this may be a little painful, but we cannot give them up. We have to learn to tolerate. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has also advised us that to advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one should be tolerant. *Tṛṇād api sunīcena*: "Become humbler than the grass." So many people trample the grass, yet it does not protest. *And taror iva sahiṣṇunā*: "Be more tolerant than a tree." Somebody may break a tree's branches, somebody may snatch its fruits, somebody may cut it down, but still the

tree is giving you shelter, wood, fruits, and flowers. A tree is a very good example of tolerance. And then, *amāninā mānadena*: "For oneself one should desire no respect, but one should offer all respect to others." So, anyone desiring to go back home, back to Godhead, has to learn to be tolerant and forbearing. That is the instruction of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

If we practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness in this way, we will become fit for going back home, back to Godhead. Kṛṣṇa explains this in the next verse [2.15]:

*yam hi na vyathayanty ete
puruṣaṁ puruṣarṣabha
sama-duḥkha-sukhaṁ dhīraṁ
so 'mṛtatvāya kalpate*

"One who is tolerant of pains and pleasures becomes fit for going back home, back to Godhead." It is simply a question of practice. In Bengal it is said, *śarīre nam mahasaya jasa habe tayse*: "By practice you can train your body to tolerate almost anything." For example, in the morning, when we go for our walk, we see so many people running. I cannot run. But if I practice for some days, I will also be able to run. If you practice enough, you'll be successful at anything.

So, if by practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness you can go back home, back to Godhead, why should you neglect it? That will solve all your problems. The real problems are birth, old age, disease, and death. If you can solve these problems simply by practicing some regulative principles, why don't you do it?

We are opening hundreds of centers just to give training to people so that they can practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness and go back home, back to Godhead. You cannot go home, back to Godhead, so cheaply. You have to practice certain regulative principles; then you will be fit to go. They are not very difficult. In the beginning, just chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*. Then you'll become fit for more practice.

So, now we have a center in your city, and I request you to take full advantage of this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement and be successful in your life. Rest assured that after finishing this body, every one of us will have to accept another body. If we neglect the rules and regulations of spiritual life and are forced to accept the body of a dog, just imagine how painful that will be! But if we follow the principles of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then, as Kṛṣṇa says, *yānti mad-yājino 'pi mām*: "Anyone engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness comes to Me." So, practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness and go back home, back to Godhead.

Any questions?

Devotee [Translating from Spanish]: Can you explain a little more about developing a spiritual body?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Your spiritual body is

already there; it is simply covered by your material body. You have to purify your consciousness, and then you will get your original, spiritual body. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a purifying process that cures a person of the disease of material life. Suppose one has a fever. The fever is not permanent. Cure the fever, and you become healthy. Similarly, cure the fever of material attachment, and you will attain your original healthy, spiritual body.

Devotee: You were saying that one can take birth even as a dog. How long must one reincarnate as a dog? How many births?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: As long as you are unable to go back home, back to Godhead, you have to accept a body of a dog or a cat or some other species. There are 8,400,000 bodily forms, and you have to accept one after another. Now, make your decision whether you want to accept these different types of body or you want to get your original, spiritual body. In the spiritual body there is no more birth, old age, disease, and death, while in the material body these four miseries are continually occurring. You can get your spiritual body simply by a little cultivation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in this human form of life. But if your next life is other than human, you will have to wait perhaps millions of years to come again to this human form of life. After all, we are under the grip of the stringent laws of nature. You cannot escape them unless you come to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Devotee: Are our reincarnations progressive or regressive?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Both.

Devotee: Why would we take birth as an animal?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Because you act like an animal.

Devotee: If one behaves badly in school, one has to stay where he is—he cannot progress. But he does not go back.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, sometimes one is demoted, also. That is quite natural.

Devotee: Some people don't believe that one can lose the human form and be degraded to animal life.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: They may not believe in the law, but the law will be enforced. Suppose somebody says, "I can commit any criminal act because I don't believe in the court's judgment." Is that sensible? You may believe or not believe, but the law will act. For example, if you contract some infectious disease, you must develop that disease. That is the law of nature. So, we are contaminating ourselves by performing so many sinful activities, and according to the laws of nature we will have to accept the appropriate material body. The material laws are not under your control; you are under the control of the material laws.

Devotee: Who is in charge of giving us our next body?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: God. *Īśvaraḥ sarva-bhūtānāṃ hṛd-deśe 'rjuna tiṣṭhati:* God, in His Supersoul feature, is situated in everyone's heart, and He is seeing all our activities and awarding us different kinds of bodies. So, we have to accept that we are fully under control. If we childishly claim to be independent, that is foolishness.

Devotee: Do the senses—the material senses we now have—originally belong to the soul, which has been covered by the material body?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. For instance, if a man in a normal condition becomes mad, his original senses are still there, but they

act abnormally. Similarly, when we are in this material world, we use our senses in an abnormal way. But when we purify our senses of material contamination by using them to serve Kṛṣṇa, that is our normal condition. *Sarvopādhi-vinirmuktam tatparaivena nirmalam.* When we give up all material designations and become purified, we come to our normal condition.

Devotee: What are the characteristics of a person who has realized that he's not this body?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: He engages cent per cent in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He doesn't know anything but Kṛṣṇa and service to Kṛṣṇa. That is our normal condition.

Thank you very much.

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ON CHANTING

Whether one chants meditatively on beads or exuberantly with musical instruments, the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* is the easiest and most potent means to spiritual advancement.

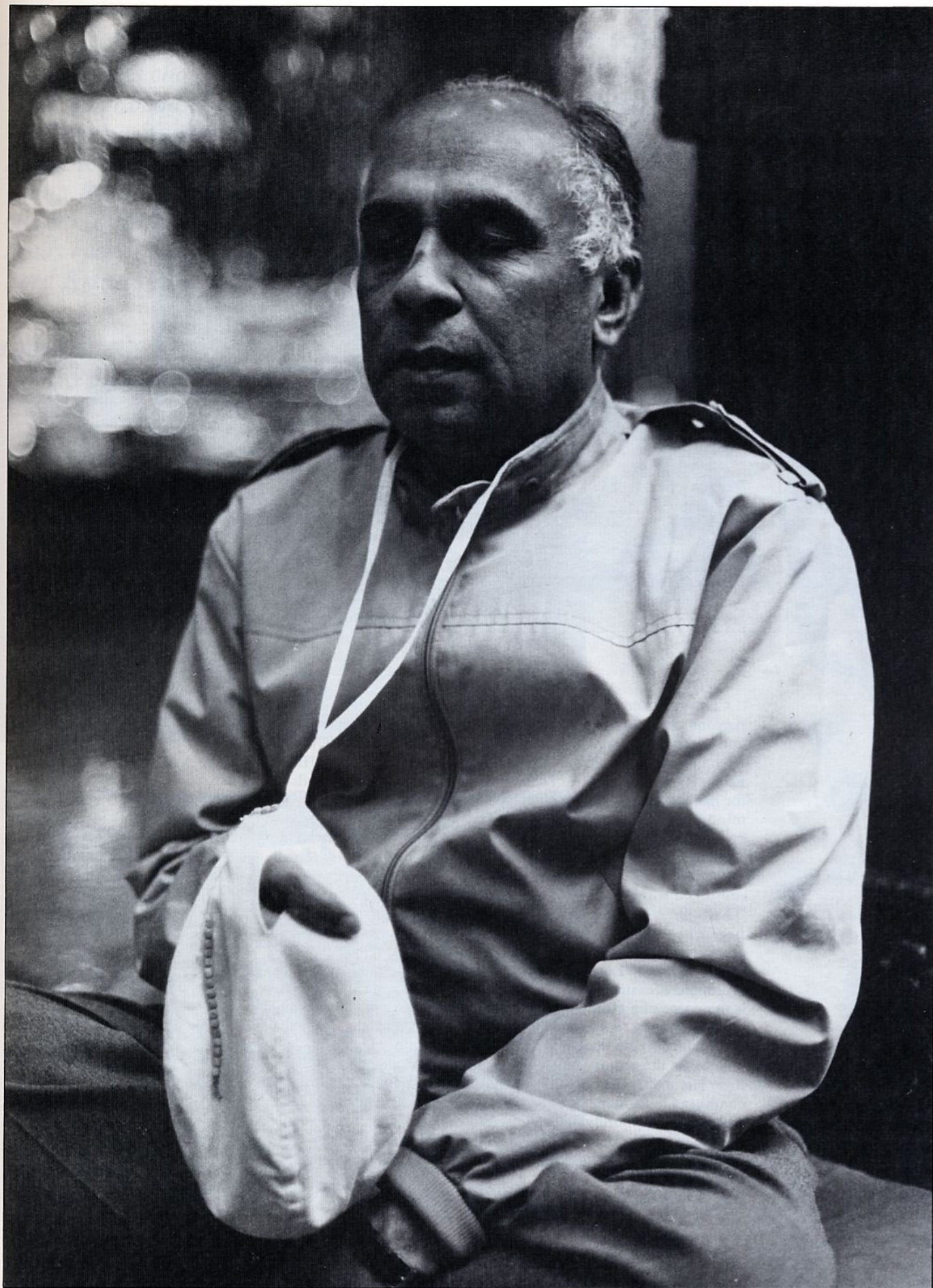
Text and photos by VIŚĀKHĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ



“O my Lord, Your holy name alone can render all benediction to living beings, and thus You have millions of names, like Kṛṣṇa and Govinda. In these transcendental names You have invested all Your transcendental energies. There are not even hard and fast rules for chanting these names. O my Lord, out of kindness You enable us to easily approach You by Your holy names, but I am so unfortunate that I have no attraction for them.”

—*Śikṣāṣṭaka*, Verse 2

Śrīla Prabhupāda was once amused by a cartoon portraying a woman imploring her husband “Chant, chant, chant,” and then the man replying “Can’t, can’t, can’t.” “This is the situation,” Śrīla Prabhupāda explained. “Chanting is so easy and the benefits of chanting are so great, yet simply out of stubbornness, people refuse to chant.”





Chanting is easy. As Lord Caitanya* says, there are no hard and fast rules. Anyone can chant at any time, in any place, under any circumstances, and without any previous qualification. All that's required is to repeat Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. These sixteen transcendental sounds compose the *mahā-mantra*—the supreme combination of sounds for freeing one's mind from anxiety. The *Nārada-pañcarātra* states that all *mantras* and processes for self-realization are compressed into the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda explains that the name *Kṛṣṇa* means "the all-attractive one," and the name *Rāma* means "the all-pleasing one." When combined with *Hare*, the Lord's devotional energy, the words mean "O all-attractive, all-pleasing Lord, kindly engage me in Your service." In other words, Kṛṣṇa, Rāma, and Hare are not sectarian names but are spiritual, surpassing all material strata—sensual, mental, and intellectual. The Lord is one, yet He has unlimited names, owing to His unlimited activities and unlimited qualities. "If you think that Kṛṣṇa is the name of a Hindu God," Śrīla Prabhupāda said, "then you can chant any bona fide name of the Lord—Allah, Buddha, Jehovah. We chant Hare Kṛṣṇa because that's what's recommended in the scriptures."

Because the omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient Lord is nondifferent from His name, the benefits from chanting defy the imagination. By chanting God's names we can revive our spiritual consciousness, and when we chant purely, the Lord is present, dancing on our tongue. This quality of the Lord, to personally and fully appear when His name is vibrated, is unknown to nondevotees. And even among devotees, there is much

*In the fifteenth century, Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared as Lord Caitanya, a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, to teach the glories of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Devotees chant on a string of 108 beads, fingering each bead as they softly repeat the sixteen-word mahā-mantra: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. Initiated devotees chant a minimum of sixteen rounds of the 108 beads every day, a devotional meditation on Lord Kṛṣṇa that takes about two hours.



(Sṅgād-Bhāgavatīm 1.8.26, purport)



to be realized. The scripture *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* tells that in Candapura, India, five centuries ago, a number of scholars were once discussing the glories of chanting. "By chanting the holy name of the Lord," some of them said, "one is freed from the reactions of sinful life." Others said, "Simply by chanting the holy name of the Lord, a living being is liberated from material bondage."

Also present at the gathering was Haridāsa Ṭhākura, the great devotee whose life exemplified the perfection of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. Haridāsa Ṭhākura objected to the opinions of the scholars, saying, "These two benedictions are not the true result of chanting the holy name. By chanting the holy name without offenses, one awakens his ecstatic love for the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. Liberation and extinction of the reactions of sinful life are two concomitant by-products of chanting the holy name of the Lord."

Haridāsa explained that just as the first hint of sunlight dissipates the darkness of night, similarly the first hint of offenseless chanting dissipates the reactions of sinful activities immediately. And, as when the sun is present everything is visible, similarly when one chants the holy name offenselessly, ecstatic love of God manifests within the heart.

So, perfection is available through pure sound. The only difficulty is that either we refuse to chant, or if we do chant, we chant offensively. Refusal may come from a lack of interest or faith in spiritual life. Offenses are due to a lack of purity. But one can overcome these difficulties simply by seriously and sincerely chanting, for the holy name is self-sufficient.

Rupa Gosvāmī, an exalted devotee and personal associate of Lord Caitanya, expressed his appreciation of the effects of chanting the holy name: "I do not know how much nectar the two syllables *Kṛṣṇa* have produced. When the holy name of Kṛṣṇa is chanted, it appears to dance within the mouth. We then desire many, many mouths. And when that name enters the holes of the ears, we desire many millions of ears."

Except for stubbornness, there is no reason why one can't chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. Chanting is so easy that even if you can't chant audibly for some reason, you can still chant within your mind and experience the potency of transcendental vibrations. And as you chant, your taste and desire to chant will increase. And your love for God will increase. So who can't chant? Only one who doesn't chant thinks "can't." ❀





Whatever one's frame of mind or physical circumstances, one can benefit spiritually by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa; no one is disqualified. In fact, a devotee in distress may be in an advantageous position, for he can call out to Kṛṣṇa with true feeling. As Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, "A helpless man can feelingly utter the holy name of the Lord, whereas a man who utters the same holy name in great material satisfaction cannot be so sincere" (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.8.26, purport).



Lord Kṛṣṇa's Cuisine

Modern Times And Muddled Menus

Cook for Kṛṣṇa and rise above religious dogmas
and cultural turbulence.

by VIŚĀKHĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

I was browsing in the cookery section of our local library the other day when I came across three passages that revealed a sour irony:

1. "Although thousands of years old, man's natural diet has been slandered, ridiculed, and feared by people throughout the ages. And despite its proven economy, nutritional benefits, and harmlessness toward life, the vegetarian diet has been largely ignored in the West in favor of one containing meat" (*Eating for Life*, by Nathaniel Altman).

2. "Flesh-eating by humans is unnecessary, irrational, anatomically unsound, unhealthy, unhygienic, uneconomical,

unaesthetic, unkind and unethical" (*Simple Food for the Good Life*, by Helen Nearing).

3. "Another friend was a Muslim from Uttar Pradesh, known to bring beef cooked with spinach, all deliciously flavoured. . . . Many of us were Hindus and not supposed to eat beef. So we just pretended not to know what it was. Our fingers would work busily around the tender meat that covered the bones and our cheeks would hollow as we sucked up the spicy marrow from the marrow bones" (*Indian Cooking*, by Madhur Jaffrey).

The irony? On the one hand, Westerners have given up their inherited cuisine

(which, some say, is harder than changing marriage partners), to embrace vegetarianism, while on the other hand, an Indian has rejected her traditional vegetarian diet as unsubstantiated religious dogma and has delved into meat-eating with the zeal of a giddy young girl on her first date.

I can understand Madhur Jaffrey's girlish "excitement" in breaking the tenets of her religion. My father (Jewish) and my mother (Anglican) told me that when they were children they had to follow strict religious regulation. My Jewish grandmother kept two sets of silverware, turned the lights off at five on Fridays, and insisted that my father master Hebrew. My Anglican grandmother had my mother go to Church each Sunday to pray and confess, lest she risk eternal damnation. When my parents became adults, they both broke free from the grip of religious ritual and became atheists. As Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, "Religion without philosophy is sentiment, or sometimes fanaticism. . . ." Being untrained in the philosophical aspect of religion, and being neither sentimental nor fanatical, my parents, like Madhur Jaffrey, decided that religious practices were optional.

When one gives up religious tenets, however, and decides intellectually and philosophically what should and should not be eaten, the menu becomes most muddled. In fact, there is a growing war over the dinner table. Marilyn Marter, food writer for the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, writes, "Your next gourmet delight may be another person's passionate political cause. . . . The protesters find the practices involved in the procurement of frogs' legs and production of foie gras no less disdainful than the clubbing of baby seals. . . ." Protesters cite the cruelty of lopping off the legs of live frogs and the disruption of the ecological balance by rampant frog-killing as reasons for abstaining from frog's meat. Most people, they claim, can't distinguish frog's meat from chicken anyway.

Another group, known as FARM, objects to the mass methods used to raise such "edible animals" as chickens, cows, pigs, and turkeys. "These methods," they protest, "treat food animals no differently from feed grain—something to be planted, fertilized, watered, and harvested."

Even vegetarians, like Altman and Nearing (quoted above), wrangle. Nearing favors raw foods and avoids eggs, salt, and milk. Milk, she says, is meant for the calf, not for humans. (But she admits to occasionally succumbing to the ice-cream-eating binges she relished as a child.) On the other hand, Altman doesn't mention raw foods, and the recipes in his

(continued on page 32)

(Recipes from *The Hare Krishna Book of Vegetarian Cooking*, by Ādi-rāja dāsa)

Saffron Rice with Cheese Balls (Kesar panīr pulao)

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

1 cup good-quality long-grain rice
¼ cup raisins
4 ounces pressed panīr (milk curd)
¼ teaspoon powdered saffron,
or 10 to 15 saffron strands
2 teaspoons sugar
½ cup warm milk
2 tablespoons butter
2½ cups water
2 teaspoons salt
¼ cup blanched almonds or
cashew nuts, toasted

1. Wash the rice, soak it for 15 to 20 minutes in cold water, and let it drain. Knead the panīr until it is soft, and roll it into small balls. (Or press it and cut it into cubes.) Deep-fry the panīr balls until they are browned all over. Drain. Dissolve the saffron and sugar in the warm milk, and put the raisins and deep-fried panīr balls in the saffron-milk to soak.

2. Melt a tablespoon of butter in a large saucepan over a medium flame and stir-fry the rice for 3 minutes. When the grains become lightly toasted, pour the water and salt into the rice, bring to a boil, and cook covered over a very low flame. After 10 minutes, remove the cover and gently stir in the nuts and the saffron milk (set the panīr balls aside). Be careful not to break the grains. Cover the pot and cook for 10 minutes more or until the rice is completely cooked. Then remove the cover and allow the rest of the water to evaporate by cooking it another 2 or 3 minutes.

3. Finally, dot the rice with butter and mix gently with a fork. Garnish with the panīr balls and offer to Kṛṣṇa hot.

Dāl Croquettes in Yogurt (Urad dāl bara)

Preparation time: 30 minutes
Servings: 4–6

1½ cups urad dāl,
soaked in water overnight
2 fresh chilies, minced
¼ teaspoon asafetida
1 teaspoon baking soda
6 teaspoons salt
3½ cups warm water
ghee (clarified butter) or
vegetable oil for deep-frying
2 cups plain yogurt
1 teaspoon cumin seeds,
toasted and ground

1. Drain the dāl and blend it in an electric blender (or a grinder) with the minced chilies,

asafetida, baking soda, and 1 teaspoon of the salt until it is a smooth paste. Add a little water and beat the mixture vigorously until it is so light that a drop will float on water. Set aside. Reserve ½ teaspoon of the salt and dissolve the rest in the warm water.

2. Heat the ghee in a wok or pot until it is hot but not smoking. Drop lumps of the batter, one after another, into the ghee. In seconds the baras will become round and float and begin sizzling. Fry them on all sides. They should become nicely browned in 5 or 6 minutes. Then drain them and put them in the salt water to soak. Add the remaining ½ teaspoon of salt to the yogurt, mix well, and set the yogurt aside.

3. After 20 to 30 minutes, when the baras begin to become light-colored, gently remove them and squeeze the excess water out of each one. Place them in a serving dish, cover with yogurt, and garnish with ground cumin. Offer to Kṛṣṇa. Serve urad dāl baras as part of a main meal or as a special treat.

Fresh Mint Chutney (Pudina chatni)

Preparation time: 15 minutes
Servings: 4–6

2 ounces fresh mint leaves
1 tablespoon fresh ginger, grated
2 fresh chilies, minced
4 tablespoons lemon juice
1 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons sugar

Wash the mint leaves thoroughly and shake them dry. Use only the leaves and the thinnest stalks; discard the thick stems. Blend all the ingredients together in an electric blender, with just enough water to make a smooth paste. Chill and offer to Kṛṣṇa.

For a tasty chutney using both mint and coriander leaves, mix the same ingredients, but use only 3 ounces of mint leaves. Add 3 ounces of coriander leaves, 6 ounces of roasted or deep-fried peanuts, and 4 ounces of tamarind pulp. Chill and offer to Kṛṣṇa.

Vegetable and Cheese Stew (Matar alu tarkari)

Preparation time: 40 minutes
Servings: 4–6

1 tablespoon ghee or vegetable oil
6 cloves
2 cinnamon sticks, 3 inches long
½ teaspoon ground cardamom seeds
3 bay leaves
4 potatoes, peeled and cubed
1 pound fresh peas, shelled
1 teaspoon turmeric
1½ cups water
5 medium-size tomatoes,
washed and quartered
1 teaspoon fresh ginger, grated

¼ teaspoon fresh nutmeg,
grated
½ teaspoon brown sugar
2 teaspoons salt
½ cup sour cream
1 tablespoon chopped fresh coriander
or parsley leaves
½ cup almonds, lightly toasted
8 ounces panīr, cubed and
deep-fried

1. Heat the ghee in a large saucepan over a medium flame. When it begins to smoke, toss in the cloves, cinnamon sticks, ground cardamom, and bay leaves. Stir-fry for about 30 seconds; then put in the potatoes. Fry them for 5 minutes, frequently scraping the bottom of the pan with a spatula, until they are lightly browned. Add the peas and turmeric. Stir once, pour in the water, and cook for 10 minutes with the pot covered. Then add the tomatoes, along with the grated ginger, nutmeg, sugar, and salt. Stir to mix, and cook covered for 5 more minutes.

2. Now fold in the sour cream, coriander, almonds, and the fried panīr cubes. Remove the whole spices. Offer to Kṛṣṇa.

Tomato Soup (Tamatar ka soup)

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

4½ pounds firm red tomatoes
6 tablespoons ghee or vegetable oil
1 teaspoon ground coriander
¼ teaspoon asafetida
1 teaspoon salt
4 tablespoons chopped fresh
coriander leaves
1½ tablespoons white or brown
sugar
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 cup milk
2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons white flour
1 tablespoon lemon juice

1. Wash the tomatoes and cut each one into 8 wedges. Heat the ghee in a heavy saucepan and fry the ground coriander and asafetida for a few seconds. Add the tomatoes and ½ teaspoon of salt. Adjust the flame to medium-low and cook the tomatoes for 20 to 25 minutes, or until they appear pulpy and the skins become loose.

2. Blend the tomatoes in an electric blender, or press them through a sieve, and put them back in the pan. Add the chopped coriander, sugar, pepper, cayenne, ½ teaspoon of salt, and milk.

3. Heat the butter in another saucepan and stir-fry the flour over a low flame to brown it lightly. Now slowly add the soup and continue to cook (while stirring continuously) to prevent lumps from forming) until the soup thickens. Add the lemon juice and offer to Kṛṣṇa hot.

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

Spiritual Civilization: Practical and to the Point

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, this is our traditional system: to live simply, treat all the Lord's creatures kindly, and then, at life's end, go back to the spiritual world. And what is the modern rascals' system? To live lavishly, treat animals and unborn babies cruelly, and then go to hell. Their system is not practical for us. We cannot follow their system.

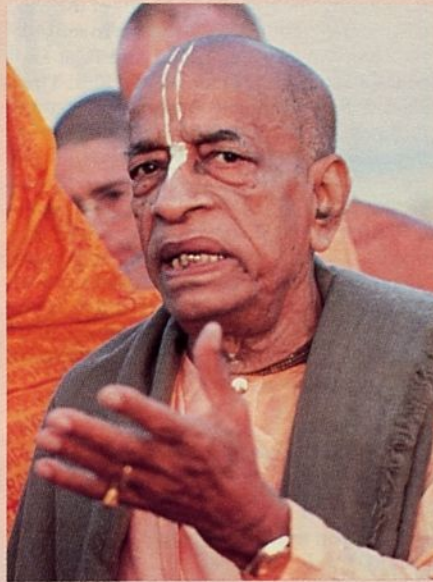
But anyway, if you can maintain a perfect community based on simple living and high thinking, that will be sufficient. There is no need to canvass. People will see gradually for themselves that this traditional way of life really is convenient, most practical.

Now you have received this jewel: spiritual, peaceful life. So utilize it properly. Make your life perfect. *Brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva, guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde paya bhakti-latā bīja:* "After wandering through many universes for many lifetimes, the fortunate soul gets the mercy of a bona fide spiritual master and of Kṛṣṇa—and the seed of the Lord's eternal devotional service."

Now, we don't tell people, "Spiritual civilization means that you starve—you unnecessarily give trouble to your body." No. "Eat nicely. Live nicely. But live simply, so that you save time for advancing in God consciousness." That is our program. And anyone can learn it if he at all desires.

After all, even these modern rascals are human beings, endowed with human intelligence. They can learn. So we'll go on speaking the truth. But practicing it personally—that is our main business. Whether or not one of my students has a propensity for preaching, let him preach by the way he lives. Let his personal life be perfect. Let him teach by his life.

The secret is to make the Lord the center of all that you do. Become preoccupied with Kṛṣṇa. Then naturally you'll not be preoccupied with your material body. Lavish your affection upon Kṛṣṇa. Then you'll not lavish excessive affection upon



the material body, which is, after all, temporary and not your real self.

Because people today are caught up in this misconception that the material body is the self, therefore they're misspending so much time and effort and money. Isn't that so? All on something that cannot last. Why not transfer your love to your real, spiritual self and to the Supreme Self—make Him your beloved and enjoy life with Him forever. That is our system of civilization.

Disciple: Śrīla Prabhupāda, you've said that if you glorify Kṛṣṇa, then your heart will become glorious and you'll feel satisfied.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. This system of civilization is not simply a fashion or a whim. It is for our benefit. By seeing and hearing Kṛṣṇa glorified, you'll be satisfied. That is natural: You'll feel satisfied because factually you are a spiritual being, part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa.

So show people how they can serve and glorify the Lord in their everyday life. Then they will be rid of the propensity, "Let me go to the market and find some nice new gadget or some nice new rag to glorify myself." Finished. Millions and billions of people—by glorifying the Lord, they'll feel satisfied. This is our system of civilization: everyone satisfied.

These animals who live with us on our farms—even they are satisfied. They are not afraid. If they are resting and some of

my students come near, they do not stir and become fearful. They have come to know, "These people love us. They'll not harm us. We are safe. We are at home." Any animal, be he bird or beast, can be taught this sense of safety and friendship.

Take these cows. They know all of you are their friends. Animals can understand this. You can make friends even with lions and tigers. Yes, I have seen it. At the World's Fair in New York, a man was embracing a lion, and the lion was playing with him the way a dog plays with his master. I've seen it.

Disciple: Often you see that kind of thing at the circus, as well—a man putting his head in a lion's mouth.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes.

Disciple: If you haven't fed him, then it is dangerous. But as long as you keep him well fed, you can even put your head into his mouth.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Naturally. *Animal* means "living being, spiritual being," not some dead stone. So he can understand, "This man is giving me food—he's my friend." The feeling of love, friendship—everything is there, even in the animals.

Disciple: Everything is there except God consciousness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Generally the soul can come to God consciousness only in the human form of life. But even in an animal form he can become God conscious, by associating with someone who is God conscious.

Disciple: Śrīla Prabhupāda, I thought you'd once said love is impossible between humans and animals, because they belong to different species.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Being in the same species is very conducive to love. But love is possible between any living entity and any other—because every living entity is a spirit, part and parcel of God, the Supreme Spirit.

So genuine love requires that we center our love on God, on Kṛṣṇa. That love can make this world as blissful as Vṛndāvana, as blissful as the spiritual world, where the human beings love Kṛṣṇa, the animals love Kṛṣṇa, the trees love Kṛṣṇa, everyone loves Kṛṣṇa—where everyone loves everyone, because Kṛṣṇa is the central point. That is the perfection of civilization, the perfection of love.

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 *purāna*, 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 FIFTEEN

Description of the Kingdom of God

In this installment of our continuing presentation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Lord Brahmā, the first created being of the universe, describes the cursing of two gatekeepers of Vaikuṅṭha (the kingdom of God) by the Kumāras, the four boy-sages.

PURPORT

(continued from Text 25)

Brahmāji confirms herewith that only persons who have developed the desirable qualities can enter into the kingdom of God. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, the devotee’s desirable qualities are described to be twenty-six in number. They are stated as follows: He is very kind; he does not quarrel with anyone; he accepts Kṛṣṇa consciousness as the highest goal of life; he is equal to everyone; no one can find fault in his character; he is magnanimous, mild and always clean, internally and externally; he does not profess to possess anything in this material world; he is a benefactor to all living entities; he is peaceful and is a soul completely surrendered to Kṛṣṇa; he has no material desire to fulfill; he is meek and humble, always steady, and has conquered the sensual activities; he does not eat more than required to maintain body and soul together; he is never mad after material identity; he is respectful to all others and does not demand respect for himself; he is very grave, very compassionate and very friendly; he is poetic; he is expert in all activities, and he is silent in nonsense. Similarly, in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Third Canto, Twenty-fifth Chapter, verse 21, the qualifications of a saintly person are mentioned. It is said there that a saintly person eligible to enter into the kingdom of God is very tolerant and very kind to all living entities. He is not partial; he is kind both to human beings and to animals. He is not such a fool that he will kill a goat Nārāyaṇa to feed a human Nārāyaṇa, or *daridra-nārāyaṇa*. He is very kind to all living entities; therefore he has no enemy. He is very peaceful. These are the qualities of persons who are eligible to enter into the kingdom of God. That such a person gradually becomes liberated and enters the kingdom of God is confirmed in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Fifth Canto, Fifth Chapter, verse 2. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Second Canto, Third Chapter, verse 24, also states that if a person does not cry or exhibit bodily changes after chanting the holy name of God without offense, it is to be understood that he is hardhearted and that therefore his heart does not change even after he chants the holy name of God, Hare Kṛṣṇa. These bodily changes can take place due to ecstasy when we offenselessly chant the holy names of God: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

It may be noted that there are ten offenses we should avoid. The first offense is to decry persons who try in their lives to broadcast the glories of the Lord. People must be educated in understanding the glories of the Supreme; therefore the devotees who engage in preaching the glories of the Lord are never to be decried. It is the greatest offense. Furthermore, the holy name of Viṣṇu is the most auspicious name, and His pastimes are also nondifferent from the holy name of the Lord. There are many foolish persons who say that one can chant Hare Kṛṣṇa or chant the name of Kālī or Durgā or Śiva because they are all the same. If one thinks that

the holy name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the names and activities of the demigods are on the same level, or if one accepts the holy name of Viṣṇu to be a material sound vibration, that is also an offense. The third offense is to think of the spiritual master who spreads the glories of the Lord as an ordinary human being. The fourth offense is to consider the Vedic literatures, such as the *Purāṇas* or other transcendently revealed scriptures, to be ordinary books of knowledge. The fifth offense is to think that devotees have given artificial importance to the holy name of God. The actual fact is that the Lord is nondifferent from His name. The highest realization of spiritual value is to chant the holy name of God, as prescribed for the age—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. The sixth offense is to give some interpretation on the holy name of God. The seventh offense is to act sinfully on the strength of chanting the holy name of God. It is understood that one can be freed from all sinful reaction simply by chanting the holy name of God, but if one thinks that he is therefore at liberty to commit all kinds of sinful acts, that is a symptom of offense. The eighth offense is to equate the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa with other spiritual activities, such as meditation, austerity, penance or sacrifice. They cannot be equated at any level. The ninth offense is to specifically glorify the importance of the holy name before persons who have no interest. The tenth offense is to be attached to the misconception of possessing something, or to accept the body as one’s self, while executing the process of spiritual cultivation.

When one is free from all ten of these offenses in chanting the holy name of God, he develops the ecstatic bodily features called *pulakāśru*. *Pulaka* means “symptoms of happiness,” and *āśru* means “tears in the eyes.” The symptoms of happiness and tears in the eyes must appear in a person who has chanted the holy name offenselessly. Here in this verse it is stated that those who have actually developed the symptoms of happiness and tears in the eyes by chanting the glories of the Lord are eligible to enter the kingdom of God. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* it is said that if one does not develop these symptoms while chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, it is to be understood that he is still offensive. *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* suggests a nice remedy in this connection. There it is said in verse 31, Chapter Eight, of *Ādi-līlā*, that if anyone takes shelter of Lord Caitanya and just chants the holy name of the Lord, Hare Kṛṣṇa, he becomes freed from all offenses.

TEXT 26

तद्विश्वगुर्वधिकृतं भुवनैकवन्द्यं
दिव्यं विचित्रविद्युद्धान्यविमानशोचिः ।
आपुः परां मुदमपूर्वमुपेत्य योग-
मायावलेन मुनयस्तदथो विकुण्ठम् ॥२६॥

*tad viśva-gurv-adhikṛtaṁ bhuvanaika-vandyaṁ
divyaṁ vicitra-vibudhāgrya-vimāna-śociḥ
āpuḥ parāṁ mudam apūrvam upetya yoga-
māyā-balena munayas tad atho vikunṭham*

tat—then; *viśva-guru*—by the teacher of the universe, the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *adhikṛtam*—predominated; *bhuvana*—of the planets; *eka*—alone; *vandyaṁ*—worthy to be worshiped; *divyam*—spiritual; *vicitra*—highly decorated; *vibudha-agrya*—of the devotees

(who are the best of the learned); *vimāna*—of the airplanes; *śocih*—illuminated; *āpuḥ*—attained; *parām*—the highest; *mudam*—happiness; *apūrvam*—unprecedented; *upetya*—having attained; *yoga-māyā*—by spiritual potency; *balena*—by the influence; *munayaḥ*—the sages; *tat*—Vaikuṅṭha; *atho*—that; *vikunṭham*—Viṣṇu.

TRANSLATION

Thus the great sages, Sanaka, Sanātana, Sanandana and Sanat-kumāra, upon reaching the above-mentioned Vaikuṅṭha in the spiritual world by dint of their mystic yoga performance, perceived unprecedented happiness. They found that the spiritual sky was illuminated by highly decorated airplanes piloted by the best devotees of Vaikuṅṭha and was predominated by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

PURPORT

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is one without a second. He is above everyone. No one is equal to Him, nor is anyone greater than Him. Therefore He is described here as *viśva-guru*. He is the prime living entity of the entire material and spiritual creation and is *bhuvanaika-vandya*, the only worshipable personality in the three worlds. The airplanes in the spiritual sky are self-illuminated and are piloted by great devotees of the Lord. In other words, in the Vaikuṅṭha planets there is no scarcity of the things which are available in the material world; they are available, but they are more valuable because they are spiritual and therefore eternal and blissful. The sages felt an unprecedented happiness because Vaikuṅṭha was not predominated by an ordinary man. The Vaikuṅṭha planets are predominated by expansions of Kṛṣṇa, who are differently named as Madhusūdana, Mādhava, Nārāyaṇa, Pradyumna, etc. These transcendental planets are worshipable because the Personality of Godhead personally rules them. It is said here that the sages reached the transcendental spiritual sky by dint of their mystic power. That is the perfection of the *yoga* system. The breathing exercises and disciplines to keep health in proper order are not the ultimate goals of *yoga* perfection. The *yoga* system as generally understood is *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*, or *siddhi*, eightfold perfection in *yoga*. By dint of perfection in *yoga* one can become lighter than the lightest and heavier than the heaviest; one can go wherever he likes and can achieve opulences as he likes. There are eight such perfections. The ṛṣis, the four Kumāras, reached Vaikuṅṭha by becoming lighter than the lightest and thus passing over the space of the material world. Modern mechanical space vehicles are unsuccessful because they cannot go to the highest region of this material creation, and they certainly cannot enter the spiritual sky. But by perfection of the *yoga* system one not only can travel through material space, but can surpass material space and enter the spiritual sky. We learn this fact also from an incident concerning Durvāsā Muni and Mahārāja Ambariṣa. It is understood that in one year Durvāsā Muni traveled everywhere and went into the spiritual sky to meet the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa. By present standards, scientists calculate that if one could travel at the speed of light, it would take forty thousand years to reach the highest planet of this material world. But the *yoga* system can carry one without limitation or difficulty. The word *yogamāyā* is used in this verse. *Yoga-māyā-balena vikunṭham*. The transcendental happiness exhibited in the spiritual world and all other spiritual manifestations there are made possible by the influence of *yogamāyā*, the internal potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 27

तस्मिन्नतीत्य मुनयः षडसज्जमानाः

कक्षाः समानवयसावथ सप्तमायाम् ।

देवावचक्षत गृहीतगदौ परार्ध्य-

केयूरकुण्डलकिरीटविटङ्कवेपौ ॥२७॥

*tasminn atītya munayaḥ ṣaḍ asajjāmānāḥ
kākṣāḥ samāna-vayasāv atha saptamāyām
devāv acakṣata gr̥hīta-gadāu parārdhya-
keyūra-kuṇḍala-kirīṭa-viṭaṅka-veṣau*

tasmin—in that Vaikuṅṭha; *atītya*—after passing through; *munayaḥ*—the great sages; *ṣaḍ*—six; *asajjāmānāḥ*—without being much attracted; *kākṣāḥ*—walls; *samāna*—equal; *vayasau*—age; *atha*—thereafter; *saptamāyām*—at the seventh gate; *devau*—two Vaikuṅṭha doormen; *acakṣata*—saw; *gr̥hīta*—carrying; *gadāu*—maces; *parārdhya*—most valuable; *keyūra*—bracelets; *kuṇḍala*—earrings; *kirīṭa*—helmets; *viṭaṅka*—beautiful; *veṣau*—garments.

TRANSLATION

After passing through the six entrances of Vaikuṅṭha-purī, the Lord's residence, without feeling astonishment at all the decorations, they saw at the seventh gate two shining beings of the same age, armed with maces and adorned with most valuable jewelry, earrings, diamonds, helmets, garments, etc.

PURPORT

The sages were so eager to see the Lord within Vaikuṅṭha-purī that they did not care to see the transcendental decorations of the six gates which they passed by one after another. But at the seventh door they found two doormen of the same age. The significance of the doormen's being of the same age is that in the Vaikuṅṭha planets there is no old age, so one cannot distinguish who is older than whom. The inhabitants of Vaikuṅṭha are decorated like the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, with *śaṅkha*, *cakra*, *gadā* and *padma* (conch, wheel, club and lotus).

TEXT 28

मत्तद्विरेफवनमालिकया निवीतौ

विन्यस्तयासितचतुष्टयबाहुमध्ये ।

वक्त्रं भ्रुवा कुटिलया स्फुटनिर्गमाभ्यां

रक्तेक्षणैश्च मनाग्रमसं दधानौ ॥२८॥

*matta-dvirepha-vanamālikayā nivītau
vinyastayāsita-catuṣṭaya-bāhu-madhye
vaktraṁ bhruvā kuṭilayā sphuṭa-nirgamābhyām
raktekṣaṇena ca manāgramaṁ dadhānu*

matta—intoxicated; *dvi-repha*—bees; *vana-mālikayā*—with a garland of fresh flowers; *nivītau*—hanging on the neck; *vinyastayā*—placed around; *asita*—blue; *catuṣṭaya*—four; *bāhu*—hands; *madhye*—between; *vaktraṁ*—face; *bhruvā*—with their eyebrows; *kuṭilayā*—arched; *sphuṭa*—snorting; *nirgamābhyām*—breathing; *rakta*—reddish; *ikṣaṇena*—with eyes; *ca*—and; *manāk*—somewhat; *rabhasam*—agitated; *dadhānu*—glanced over.

TRANSLATION

The two doormen were garlanded with fresh flowers which attracted intoxicated bees and which were placed around their necks and between their four blue arms. From their arched eyebrows, discontented nostrils and reddish eyes, they appeared somewhat agitated.

PURPORT

Their garlands attracted swarms of bees because they were garlands of fresh flowers. In the Vaikuṅṭha world everything is fresh, new and transcendental. The inhabitants of Vaikuṅṭha have bodies of bluish color and four hands like Nārāyaṇa.

TEXT 29

द्वार्येतयोर्निविविशुर्मिषतोरपृष्ट्वा

पूर्वा यथा पुरटवज्रकपाटिका याः ।

सर्वत्र तेऽविषमया मुनयः स्वदृष्ट्या

ये सञ्चरन्त्यविहता विगतामिशङ्काः ॥२९॥

*dvārye tayor niviviṣur miṣator aprṣṭvā
pūrvā yathā puraṭa-vajra-kapāṭikā yāḥ*

*sarvatra te 'viṣamayā munayaḥ sva-dṛṣṭyā
ye sañcaranti avihatā vigatābhiṣāṅkāḥ*

dvāri—in the door; *etayoḥ*—both doorkeepers; *niviviśuḥ*—entered; *miśatoḥ*—while seeing; *apṛṣṭvā*—without asking; *pūrvāḥ*—as before; *yathā*—as; *purata*—made of gold; *vajra*—and diamond; *kapāṭikāḥ*—the doors; *yāḥ*—which; *sarvatra*—everywhere; *te*—they; *aviṣamayā*—without any sense of discrimination; *munayaḥ*—the great sages; *sva-dṛṣṭyā*—out of their own will; *ye*—who; *sañcaranti*—move; *avihatāḥ*—without being checked; *vigata*—without; *abhiṣāṅkāḥ*—doubt.

TRANSLATION

The great sages, headed by Sanaka, had opened doors everywhere. They had no idea of “ours” and “theirs.” With open minds, they entered the seventh door out of their own will, just as they had passed through the six other doors, which were made of gold and diamonds.

PURPORT

The great sages—namely, Sanaka, Sanātana, Sanandana and Sanat-kumāra—although very old in years, maintained themselves eternally as small children. They were not at all duplicitous, and they entered the doors exactly as little children enter places without any idea of what it is to trespass. That is a child’s nature. A child can enter any place, and no one checks him. Indeed, a child is generally welcome in his attempts to go places, but if it so happens that a child is checked from entering a door, he naturally becomes very sorry and angry. That is the nature of a child. In this case, the same thing happened. The childlike saintly personalities entered all the six doors of the palace, and no one checked them; therefore when they attempted to enter the seventh door and were forbidden by the doormen, who checked them with their sticks, they naturally became very angry and sorrowful. An ordinary child would cry, but because these were not ordinary children, they immediately made preparations to punish the doormen, for the doormen had committed a great offense. Even to this day a saintly person is never checked from entering anyone’s door in India.

TEXT 30

तान् वीक्ष्य वातरशनांश्चतुरः कुमारान्
वृद्धान्दशार्धवयसो विदितात्मतत्त्वान् ।
वेत्रेण चास्वलयतामतदर्हणांस्तौ
तेजो विहस्य भगवत्प्रतिकूलशीलौ ॥३०॥

*tān vikṣya vāta-raśanāṁś caturaḥ kumārān
vṛddhān daśārdha-vayasō viditātma-tattvān
vetreṇa cāskhalayatām atad-arhaṇāṁś tau
tejo vihasya bhagavat-pratikūla-śilau*

tān—them; *vikṣya*—after seeing; *vāta-raśanān*—naked; *caturaḥ*—four; *kumārān*—boys; *vṛddhān*—aged; *daśa-ardha*—five years; *vayasah*—appearing as of the age; *vidita*—had realized; *ātma-tattvān*—the truth of the self; *vetreṇa*—with their staffs; *ca*—also; *askhalayatām*—forbade; *a-tat-arhaṇān*—not deserving such from them; *tau*—those two porters; *tejaḥ*—glories; *vihasya*—disregarding the etiquette; *bhagavat-pratikūla-śilau*—having a nature displeasing to the Lord.

TRANSLATION

The four boy-sages, who had nothing to cover their bodies but the atmosphere, looked only five years old, even though they were the oldest of all living creatures and had realized the truth of the self. But when the porters, who happened to possess a disposition quite unpalatable to the Lord, saw the sages, they blocked their way with their staffs, despising their glories, although the sages did not deserve such treatment at their hands.

PURPORT

The four sages were the first-born sons of Brahmā. Therefore all other living entities, including Lord Śiva, are born later and are therefore younger than the four Kumāras. Although they looked like five-year-old boys and traveled naked, the Kumāras were older than all other living creatures and had realized the truth of the self. Such saints were not to be forbidden to enter the kingdom of Vaikuṅṭha, but by chance the doormen objected to their entrance. This was not fitting. The Lord is always anxious to serve sages like the Kumāras, but in spite of knowing this fact, the doormen, astonishingly and outrageously, prohibited them from entering.

TEXT 31

ताभ्यां मिषत्स्वनिमिषेषु निषिच्यमानाः
स्वर्हत्तमा ह्यपि हरेः प्रतिहारपाभ्याम् ।
ऊचुः सुहृत्तमदिदृक्षितमङ्ग ईष-
त्कामानुजेन सहसा त उपप्लुताक्षाः ॥३१॥

*tābhyām miṣatsv animiṣeṣu niṣidhyamānāḥ
svarhattamā hy api hareḥ pratihāra-pābhyām
ūcuḥ suhṛttama-didṛkṣita-bhaṅga īṣat
kāmanujena sahasā ta upaplutākṣāḥ*

tābhyām—by those two porters; *miṣatsu*—while looking on; *animiṣeṣu*—demigods living in Vaikuṅṭha; *niṣidhyamānāḥ*—being forbidden; *su-arhattamāḥ*—by far the fittest persons; *hi api*—although; *hareḥ*—of Hari, the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *pratihāra-pābhyām*—by the two doorkeepers; *ūcuḥ*—said; *suhṛt-tama*—most beloved; *didṛkṣita*—eagerness to see; *bhaṅge*—hindrance; *īṣat*—slight; *kāma-anujena*—by the younger brother of lust (anger); *saahasā*—suddenly; *te*—those great sages; *upapluta*—agitated; *akṣāḥ*—eyes.

TRANSLATION

When the Kumāras, although by far the fittest persons, were thus forbidden entrance by the two chief doorkeepers of Śri Hari while other divinities looked on, their eyes suddenly turned red because of anger due to their great eagerness to see their most beloved master, Śri Hari, the Personality of Godhead.

PURPORT

According to the Vedic system, a *sannyāsī*, a person in the renounced order of life, is dressed in saffron-colored garments. This saffron dress is practically a passport for the mendicant and *sannyāsī* to go anywhere. The *sannyāsī*’s duty is to enlighten people in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Those in the renounced order of life have no other business but preaching the glories and supremacy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore the Vedic sociological conception is that a *sannyāsī* should not be restricted; he is allowed to go anywhere and everywhere he wants, and he is not refused any gift he might demand from a householder. The four Kumāras came to see the Supreme Personality of Godhead Nārāyaṇa. The word *suhṛttama*, “best of all friends,” is important. As Lord Kṛṣṇa states in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, He is the best friend of all living entities. *Suhṛdam sarva-bhūtānām*. No one can be a greater well-wishing friend to any living entity than the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is so kindly disposed towards everyone that in spite of our completely forgetting our relationship with the Supreme Lord, He comes Himself—sometimes personally, as Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared on this earth, and sometimes as His devotee, as did Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu—and sometimes He sends His bona fide devotees to reclaim all the fallen souls. Therefore, He is the greatest well-wishing friend of everyone, and the Kumāras wanted to see Him. The doorkeepers should have known that the four sages had no other business, and therefore to restrict them from entering the palace was not apt.

In this verse it is figuratively stated that the younger brother of desire suddenly appeared in person when the sages were forbidden to see their most beloved Personality of Godhead. The younger brother of desire is anger. If one’s desire is not fulfilled, the younger brother, anger, follows.

Here we can mark that even great saintly persons like the Kumāras were also angry, but they were not angry for their personal interests. They were angry because they were forbidden to enter the palace to see the Personality of Godhead. Therefore the theory that in the perfectional stage one should not have anger is not supported in this verse. Anger will continue even in the liberated stage. These four mendicant brothers, the Kumāras, were considered liberated persons, but still they were angry because they were restricted in their service to the Lord. The difference between the anger of an ordinary person and that of a liberated person is that an ordinary person becomes angry because his sense desires are not being fulfilled, whereas a liberated person like the Kumāras becomes angry when restricted in the discharge of duties for serving the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

In the previous verse it has been clearly mentioned that the Kumāras were liberated persons. *Viditātmata-ttva* means "one who understands the truth of self-realization." One who does not understand the truth of self-realization is called ignorant, but one who understands the self, the Superself, their interrelation, and activities in self-realization is called *viditātmata-ttva*. Although the Kumāras were already liberated persons, they nevertheless became angry. This point is very important. Becoming liberated does not necessitate losing one's sensual activities. Sense activities continue even in the liberated stage. The difference is, however, that sense activities in liberation are accepted only in connection with Kṛṣṇa consciousness, whereas sense activities in the conditioned stage are enacted for personal sense gratification.

TEXT 32

मुनय ऊचुः

को वामिहैत्य भगवत्परिचर्योच्चै-
स्तद्धर्मिणां निवसतां विषमः स्वभावः ।
तस्मिन् प्रशान्तपुरुषे गतविग्रहे वां
को वात्मवत्कुहकयोः परिशङ्कनीयः ॥३२॥

munaya ūcuḥ

ko vām ihaitya bhagavat-paricaryayoccais
tad-dharmiṇāṃ nivasatāṃ viṣamaḥ svabhāvaḥ
tasmin praśānta-puruṣe gata-vigrahe vāṃ
ko vātmavat kuhakayoḥ pariśaṅkanīyaḥ

munayaḥ—the great sages; *ūcuḥ*—said; *kaḥ*—who; *vām*—you two; *iha*—in Vaikuṅṭha; *etya*—having attained; *bhagavat*—of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *paricaryayā*—by the service; *uccaiḥ*—having been developed by past pious actions; *tad-dharmiṇāṃ*—of the devotees; *nivasatām*—dwelling in Vaikuṅṭha; *viṣamaḥ*—discordant; *svabhāvaḥ*—mentality; *tasmin*—in the Supreme Lord; *praśānta-puruṣe*—without anxieties; *gata-vigrahe*—without any enemy; *vām*—of you two; *kaḥ*—who; *vā*—or; *ātma-vat*—like yourselves; *kuhakayoḥ*—maintaining duplicity; *pariśaṅkanīyaḥ*—not becoming trustworthy.

TRANSLATION

The sages said: Who are these two persons who have developed such a discordant mentality even though they are posted in the service of the Lord in the highest position and are expected to have developed the same qualities as the Lord? How are these two persons living in Vaikuṅṭha? Where is the possibility of an enemy's coming into this kingdom of God? The Supreme Personality of Godhead has no enemy. Who could be envious of Him? Probably these two persons are imposters; therefore they suspect others to be like themselves.

PURPORT

The difference between the inhabitants of a Vaikuṅṭha planet and those of a material planet is that in Vaikuṅṭha all the residents engage in the service of the Lord Himself and are equipped with all His good qualities. It has been analyzed by great personalities that when a conditioned soul is liberated and becomes a devotee, about seventy-nine percent of all the good qualities of the Lord develop in his person. Therefore

in the Vaikuṅṭha world there is no question of enmity between the Lord and the residents. Here in this material world the citizens may be inimical to the chief executives or heads of state, but in Vaikuṅṭha there is no such mentality. One is not allowed to enter Vaikuṅṭha unless he has completely developed the good qualities. The basic principle of goodness is to accept subordination to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The sages, therefore, were surprised to see that the two doormen who checked them from entering the palace were not exactly like the residents of Vaikuṅṭhaloka. It may be said that a doorman's duty is to determine who should be allowed to enter the palace and who should not. But that is not relevant in this matter because no one is allowed to enter the Vaikuṅṭha planets unless he has developed one hundred percent his mentality of devotional service to the Supreme Lord. No enemy of the Lord can enter Vaikuṅṭhaloka. The Kumāras concluded that the only reason for the doormen's checking them was that the doormen themselves were imposters.

TEXT 33

न ह्यन्तरं भगवतीह समस्तकुक्ष-
वात्मानमात्मनि नभो नभसीव घीराः ।
पश्यन्ति यत्र युवयोः सुरलिङ्गिनोः किं
व्युत्पादितं बुदरभेदि भयं यतोऽस्य ॥३३॥

na hy antaram bhagavatiha samasta-kuṅṣāv
ātmanam ātmani nabho nabhasīva dhīrāḥ
paśyanti yatra yuvayoḥ sura-liṅginoh kim
vyutpāditam hy udara-bhedi bhayam yato 'sya

na—not; *hi*—because; *antaram*—distinction; *bhagavati*—in the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *iha*—here; *samasta-kuṅṣāv*—everything is within the abdomen; *ātmanam*—the living entity; *ātmani*—in the Supersoul; *nabhaḥ*—the small quantity of air; *nabhasi*—within the whole air; *iva*—as; *dhīrāḥ*—the learned; *paśyanti*—see; *yatra*—in whom; *yuvayoḥ*—of you two; *sura-liṅginoh*—dressed like inhabitants of Vaikuṅṭha; *kim*—how; *vyutpāditam*—awakened, developed; *hi*—certainly; *udara-bhedi*—distinction between the body and the soul; *bhayam*—fearfulness; *yataḥ*—wherefrom; *asya*—of the Supreme Lord.

TRANSLATION

In the Vaikuṅṭha world there is complete harmony between the residents and the Supreme Personality of Godhead, just as there is complete harmony within space between the big and the small skies. Why then is there a seed of fear in this field of harmony? These two persons are dressed like inhabitants of Vaikuṅṭha, but wherefrom can their disharmony come into existence?

PURPORT

Just as there are different departments in each state in this material world—the civil department and the criminal department—so, in God's creation, there are two departments of existence. As in the material world we find that the criminal department is far, far smaller than the civil department, so this material world, which is considered the criminal department, is one fourth of the entire creation of the Lord. All living entities who are residents of the material universes are considered to be more or less criminals because they do not wish to abide by the order of the Lord or they are against the harmonious activities of God's will. The principle of creation is that the Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead, is by nature joyful, and He becomes many in order to enhance His transcendental joy. The living entities like ourselves, being part and parcel of the Supreme Lord, are meant to satisfy the senses of the Lord. Thus, whenever there is a discrepancy in that harmony, immediately the living entity is entrapped by *māyā*, or illusion.

The external energy of the Lord is called the material world, and the kingdom of the internal energy of the Lord is called Vaikuṅṭha, or the kingdom of God. In the Vaikuṅṭha world there is no disharmony between the Lord and the residents. Therefore God's creation in the Vaikuṅṭha world is perfect. There is no cause of fear. The entire kingdom of God is

such a completely harmonious unit that there is no possibility of enmity. Everything there is absolute. Just as there are many physiological constructions within the body yet they work in one order for the satisfaction of the stomach, and just as in a machine there are hundreds and thousands of parts yet they run in harmony to fulfill the function of the machine, in the Vaikuṅṭha planets the Lord is perfect, and the inhabitants also perfectly engage in the service of the Lord.

The Māyāvādī philosophers, the impersonalists, interpret this verse of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* to mean that the small sky and the big sky are one, but this idea cannot stand. The example of the big sky and the small skies is also applicable within a person's body. The big sky is the body itself, and the intestines and other parts of the body occupy the small sky. Each and every part of the body has individuality, even though occupying a small part of the total body. Similarly, the whole creation is the body of the Supreme Lord, and we created beings, or anything that is created, are but a small part of that body. The parts of the body are never equal to the whole. This is never possible. In *Bhagavad-gītā* it is said that the living entities, who are parts and parcels of the Supreme Lord, are eternally parts and parcels. According to the Māyāvādī philosophers, the living entity in illusion considers himself part and parcel although he is actually one and the same as the supreme whole. This theory is not valid. The oneness of the whole and the part is in their quality. The qualitative oneness of the small and large portions of the sky does not imply that the small sky becomes the big sky.

There is no cause for the politics of divide and rule in the Vaikuṅṭha planets; there is no fear, because of the united interests of the Lord and the residents. *Māyā* means disharmony between the living entities and the Supreme Lord, and Vaikuṅṭha means harmony between them. Actually all living entities are provided for and maintained by the Lord because He is the supreme living entity. But foolish creatures, although actually under the control of the supreme living entity, defy His existence, and that state is called *māyā*. Sometimes they deny that there is such a being as God. They say, "Everything is void." And sometimes they deny Him in a different way: "There may be a God, but He has no form." Both these conceptions arise from the rebellious condition of the living entity. As long as this rebellious condition prevails, the material world will continue in disharmony.

Harmony or disharmony is realized because of the law and order of a particular place. Religion is the law and order of the Supreme Lord. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavad-gītā* we find that religion means devotional service, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Kṛṣṇa says, "Give up all other religious principles and simply become a soul surrendered unto Me." This is religion. When one is fully conscious that Kṛṣṇa is the supreme enjoyer and Supreme Lord and one acts accordingly, that is real religion. Anything which goes against this principle is not religion. Kṛṣṇa therefore says: "Just give up all other religious principles." In the spiritual world this religious principle of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is maintained in harmony, and therefore that world is called Vaikuṅṭha. If the same principles can be adopted here, wholly or partially, then it is also Vaikuṅṭha. So it is with any society, such as the International Society for Krishna Consciousness: If the members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, putting faith in Kṛṣṇa as the center, live in harmony according to the order and principles of *Bhagavad-gītā*, then they are living in Vaikuṅṭha, not in this material world.

TEXT 34

तद्राममुष्य परमस्य विकुण्ठमर्तुः
कर्तुं प्रकृष्टमिह धीमहि मन्दधीभ्याम् ।
लोकानितो व्रजतमन्तरभावदृष्ट्या
पापीयसस्य इमे रिपवोऽस्य यत्र ॥३४॥

tad vām amuṣya paramasya vikunṭha-bhartuḥ
kartuṁ prakṛṣṭam iha dhīmahī manda-dhibhyām
lokān ito vrajatam antara-bhāva-dṛṣṭyā
pāpīyasas trayā ime ripavo 'sya yatra

tat—therefore; vām—unto these two; amuṣya—of Him; paramasya—the Supreme; vikunṭha-bhartuḥ—the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha; kartum—to bestow; prakṛṣṭam—benefit; iha—in the matter of this offense; dhīmahī—let us consider; manda-dhibhyām—those whose intelligence is not very nice; lokān—to the material world; itaḥ—from this place (Vaikuṅṭha); vrajatam—go; antara-bhāva—duality; dṛṣṭyā—on account of seeing; pāpīyasas—sinful; trayas—three; ime—these; ripavaḥ—enemies; asya—of a living entity; yatra—where.

TRANSLATION

Therefore let us consider how these two contaminated persons should be punished. The punishment should be apt, for thus benefit can eventually be bestowed upon them. Since they find duality in the existence of Vaikuṅṭha life, they are contaminated and should be removed from this place to the material world, where the living entities have three kinds of enemies.

PURPORT

The reason why pure souls come into the existential circumstances of the material world, which is considered to be the criminal department of the Supreme Lord, is stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*, Seventh Chapter, verse 27. It is stated that as long as a living entity is pure, he is in complete harmony with the desires of the Supreme Lord, but as soon as he becomes impure he is in disharmony with the desires of the Lord. By contamination he is forced to transfer to this material world, where the living entities have three enemies, namely desire, anger and lust. These three enemies force the living entities to continue material existence, and when one is free from them he is eligible to enter the kingdom of God. One should not, therefore, be angry in the absence of an opportunity for sense gratification, and one should not be lusty to acquire more than necessary. In this verse it is clearly stated that the two doormen should be sent into the material world, where criminals are allowed to reside. Since the basic principles of criminality are sense gratification, anger and unnecessary lust, persons conducted by these three enemies of the living entity are never promoted to Vaikuṅṭhaloka. People should learn *Bhagavad-gītā* and accept the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, as the Lord of everything; they should practice satisfying the senses of the Supreme Lord instead of trying to satisfy their own senses. Training in Kṛṣṇa consciousness will help one be promoted to Vaikuṅṭha.

TEXT 35

तेषामितीरितमुभावधर्यं घोरं
तं ब्रह्मदण्डमनिवारणमस्त्रपूगैः ।
सद्यो हरेनुचरावुरु बिभ्यतस्तत्-
पादग्रहावपततामतिकतारेण ॥३५॥

teṣām itīritam ubhāv avadhārya ghoram
tam brahma-daṇḍam anivāraṇam astra-pūgaiḥ
sadyo harer anucarāv uru bibhyatas tat-
pāda-grahāv apatatām atikātareṇa

teṣām—of the four Kumāras; itī—thus; itīritam—uttered; ubhau—both doorkeepers; avadhārya—understanding; ghoram—terrible; tam—that; brahma-daṇḍam—curse of a brāhmaṇa; anivāraṇam—not able to be counteracted; astra-pūgaiḥ—by any kind of weapon; sadyaḥ—at once; hareḥ—of the Supreme Lord; anucarau—devotees; uru—very much; bibhyataḥ—became fearful; tat-pāda-grahau—grasping their feet; apatatām—fell down; atikātareṇa—in great anxiety.

TRANSLATION

When the doormen of Vaikuṅṭhaloka, who were certainly devotees of the Lord, found that they were going to be cursed by the brāhmaṇas, they at once became very much afraid and fell down at the feet of the brāhmaṇas in great anxiety, for a brāhmaṇa's curse cannot be counteracted by any kind of weapon.

(continued in next issue)

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Lima—Av. Grau 137, Barranco
Lima—Av. Schell 634, Miraflores

OTHER COUNTRIES

Bogota, Colombia—Carrera 44A, No 22D-bis-57/ 269-3118
Buenos Aires, Argentina—Centro Bhaktivedanta, Andonagui 2054, (1431) Buenos Aires
Calí, Colombia—Avenida 9 Norte, 17-33/ 621688
Caracas, Venezuela—1° Trans. de Bello Monte, Quinta #8, El Recreo/ (2) 710760
Christ Church, Barbados—31 Goodland Park/ (809) 42-84209
Cochabamba, Bolivia—P.O. Box 3988/ 46441
Concepción, Chile—Nro. 20-A de Concepción/ 23150
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Cuenca, Ecuador—Pje. Paucarabamba & Gral. Veintimilla Barrio-las-Chirimollas/ (07) 82-93-98
Guatemala, Guatemala—Apartado Postal 1534, Ciudad de Guatemala
Georgetown, Guyana—24 Uirvlugt Front, West Coast Demerara
Guayaquil, Ecuador—Velez 1915 (between Carchi & Tulcan)/ 36-16-47
La Paz, Bolivia—Calle 16 Obrajes 460, (mail: P.O. Box 10278)/ 783556
Medellin, Colombia—Calle 56 (Bolivia), Parque de Bolívar
Montevideo, Uruguay—Pablo de Maria 1427
Panama, Republic of Panama—Via las Cumbres, entrada Villa Zaita, frente a INPSA No. 10 (mail: P.O. Box 6-29-54, Panama)/ 681070
Quito, Ecuador—Carron 641 Amazonas/ 520466
Rosario, Argentina—Centro Bhaktivedanta, Corrientes 925, Rosario 2000
San Jose, Costa Rica—100 mtrs. sureste de aptos. Torre Blanca, Urbanización Carmiol, Montes de Oca, Casa No. 49 (mail: P.O. Box 166, Paseo Estudiantes, Z-1002)
San Salvador, El Salvador—Avenida Universitaria 1132, Media Quadra al sur de la Embajada Americana, San Salvador (mail: P.O. Box 15066/ 25-96-17)
Santiago, Chile—Manuel Carvallo 771, Nunoa/ 392734
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic—Calle Cayetano Rodriguez No. 254
Trinidad and Tobago, West Indies—Prabhupada Ave., Longdenville, Chaguanas
FARM COMMUNITIES
Guayaquil, Ecuador (Nuevo Nilacala)—(contact ISKCON Guayaquil)
Guyana—Seawell Village, Corentyne, East Berbice
San Salvador, El Salvador—Carretera a Santa Ana, Km. 34, Canton Los Indios, Zapotitán, Dpto. de La Libertad

RESTAURANTS

Cuenca, Ecuador—Govinda's, Anexo Hotel, Crespo
Guayaquil, Ecuador—Govinda's (contact ISKCON Guayaquil)
Guatemala, Guatemala—Callejor Santander a una cuadra abajo de Guatel. Panajachel Solola
San Salvador, El Salvador—25 Avenida Norte 1132
Santiago, Chile—Govinda's (contact ISKCON Santiago)

For Your Information

RESOURCES

Enjoy the writings of Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami, the author of a six-volume biography of Śrīla Prabhupāda. He continues to produce essays, poems, and other writings for everyone interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. For a list of publications, write The Gītānāgarī Press, P.O. Box 149, Line Lexington, PA 18932.

Listen to transcendental dramatic narrations of stories about *avatāras* and saints, recorded by Amala-bhakta dāsa with musical accompaniment, on audio cassette—an excellent way to develop spiritual awareness while walking, working, housekeeping, exercising, or just relaxing. For a free catalog, write to Krishna Productions, 3305 Cardiff Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90034, or call (213) 838-4474.

“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.

Own a full set of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books. Now you can have a full library of the Vedic classics in your home. Translated and explained by the world’s foremost scholar and devotee, these books open up new realms of spiritual life. Each book is a deluxe, beautifully illustrated hardbound volume. And now we make it far easier for you than ever before to get a full set of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books. For details, check with the Hare Kṛṣṇa center nearest you.

Tired of media stereotypes of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement? Want to understand who the Hare Kṛṣṇa people really are and what they’re about? Then read *Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna: Five Distinguished Scholars on the Krishna Movement in the West*, a collection of interviews with Harvey Cox, Larry Shinn, Thomas Hopkins, A. L. Basham, and Srivatsa Goswami conducted by the book’s editor, Steven J. Gelberg, the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement’s director for interreligious affairs. Together, these dialogues shed much light on relevant historical, sociological, psychological, and theological issues surrounding the movement. This book will help you understand the logic and appeal of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

276 pages, softbound.

Order from a bookstore or check the gift shop of the Hare Kṛṣṇa center nearest you.

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

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

245 pages, softbound.

For your copy, check with the gift store at the Hare Kṛṣṇa center nearest you.

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FESTIVALS & CALENDAR

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

Month of Mādhava (January 16–February 13)

February 3—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṇḍāvana, direct followers of Lord Caitanya. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, a Vaiṣṇava *ācārya* and author who appeared in the seventeenth century. Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Viṣṇupriyā-devī, consort of Lord Caitanya.

February 5—Appearance anniversary of Śrī Advaita Ācārya, an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa’s expansion Mahā-Viṣṇu and a close associate of Lord Caitanya. Fasting till noon, followed by feasting.

February 7—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīpāda Madhvācārya, a famous Vaiṣṇava philosopher and spiritual master who appeared in the thirteenth century.

February 8—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Rāmānujācārya, a famous eleventh-century philosopher and spiritual master.

February 9—Bhaimī Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans. (Fasting for appearance of Lord Varāha.)

February 10—Appearance anniversary of Lord Varāha, Lord Kṛṣṇa’s boar incarnation.

February 11—Appearance anniversary of Lord Nityānanda Prabhu, a close associate of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and an incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s elder brother, Lord Balarāma.

February 13—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, the famous spiritual master who composed many devotional songs in Bengali and who is part of the disciplic line from Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Month of Govinda (February 14–March 15)

February 18—Appearance anniversary of Oṃ Viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī, the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda. Fasting till noon, followed by feasting.

February 24—Vijayā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

February 25—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Īśvara Purī Gosvāmī, the spiritual master of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

February 27—Śrī Śiva-rātri (appearance anniversary of Lord Śiva).

February 28—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Babāji, the great devotee in the disciplic line from Lord Caitanya who confirmed Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura’s discovery of Lord Caitanya’s birthplace.

March 11—Āmardakī Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

March 12—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī, the spiritual master of the spiritual master of Lord Caitanya.

March 15—Śrī Gaura-pūrṇimā, appearance anniversary of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is Kṛṣṇa Himself in the role of His own devotee. He appeared in Bengal, India, five hundred years ago and taught love of Godhead through the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*. Devotees throughout the world join together for ISKCON’s annual three-week pilgrimage to Māyāpur, Lord Caitanya’s birthsite, and Vṇḍāvana, where Lord Kṛṣṇa enacted His childhood pastimes. Fasting till moonrise, followed by feasting.



Every Town and Village

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

Bhagavad-gītā As It Is for 180 Million



Detail from the cover painting of the new Indonesian *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*.

Jakarta, Indonesia—Śrīla Prabhupāda's *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* was recently published here in Indonesian, the language spoken by 150 million Indonesians and 30 million Malaysians. The publication is a triumph for the devotees who have worked diligently to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness in Indonesia despite severe opposition from the government. Although Śrīla Prabhupāda's books have been banned

here, the devotees have taken great risk to assure that the books are available to the thousands who are eager to hear about Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Gaura Maṇḍala Bhūmi dāsa, the leader of the devotees here, translated the book into Indonesian, supervised its production, set up a press, and oversaw the printing. After the successful publication of the *Gītā*, Gaura Maṇḍala Bhūmi was deported.

Children's Padayātrā in the Catskill Mountains

Lake Huntington, New York—Eighty-five elementary schoolchildren and forty adults recently took part in a historic six-mile *padayātrā* (walking pilgrimage) here. The procession included an ox cart, Deities of Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda, distribution of *prasādam* (sanctified food), and exuberant chanting of Kṛṣṇa's holy names.

ISKCON elementary schoolteacher Kṛṣṇa Kumārī-devī dāsī described the event: "Lake Huntington is a small town—a post office, a bar, and a gas station. On a normal drive through, you

might see one or two residents. Hoping the locals would be out, we began at 10 A.M. Before we'd gone half a mile, we'd seen more neighbors than we knew we had. Even ladies in curlers and bathrobes were running out of their homes, smiling to see us. It was the sound of the *kīrtana* that brought them. The chanting was melodious and fervent.

"As we approached the town, where the houses were close together, a group of the children began running from house to house with *Back to Godhead* magazines and small bags of *prasādam*.

No need to ring doorbells today—everyone was already at their door or on their porch or lawn. From the lakeside cottages entire families came pouring toward the road. As we turned onto the main street, people were lined up waiting for us.

"On the eastern side of the lake are a couple of senior citizen communities. As we approached, the residents came out—caning, wheelchairs, leaning on the arms of the nurses. They waved and smiled. Some of them even cried and hugged us.

"Soon our ranks had swelled with many neighbors who put their children on the ox cart and walked along with us. When we got back to the farm, everyone enjoyed a big feast."

The Lake Huntington *padayātrā* was modeled after ISKCON's Indian *padayātrā*, which has been traveling throughout India for the past two years and will eventually travel to Europe and America.

Govinda's Canteen Opens in Madras

Madras, India—Devotees here recently opened a vegetarian cafeteria on the campus of D. G. Vaiṣṇava College. Mr. P. Haridas, managing trustee of the exclusive Vaiṣṇava college, invited the devotees to take up the management of the cafeteria, which supplies daily meals to the school's two thousand students.

The cafeteria, known as Govinda's Canteen, received a favorable review from the Madras daily newspaper *The Hindu*: "The place strikes any visitor by its cleanliness. . . . And what is more, melodious strains pour into the hall from the speakers, as classical music and special bhajans and kirtans on Krishna are played constantly."

The students appreciate the delicious food, which is prepared for and offered to Lord Kṛṣṇa before being served. The food is not only free of all meat, fish, or eggs, but in accordance with Vaiṣṇava regulations, it also contains no mushrooms, garlic, or onions.

Mr. Haridas, a strict vegetarian and follower of Śrī Vallabhācārya, offered ISKCON the cafeteria with a view toward inspiring students in spiritual goals. In a corner of the large hall, the books of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda are available in English and Tamil.

THE VEDIC

Transcendental Comment

AN EYE FOR A NOSE

by Sītā-devī dāsī

“What if scientists could distinguish scents with their eyes?” queries a recent report in one popular magazine. Researchers, the article goes on to explain, are trying to do just that. By using electrical and chemical sensors that mimick the action of our olfactory nerves, scientists may be able to “see” a scent by its chemical configuration.

Upon reading this, I immediately recalled the ancient prayers of Lord Brahmā. Lord Brahmā is the creator-engineer of our particular universe, and the *Brahma-saṁhitā* is his collection of verses in praise of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. One verse explains that each of the senses of the transcendental body of the Supreme Personality of Godhead possesses “the full-fledged functions of all the organs.” In other words, the supreme scientist, Kṛṣṇa, can smell with His eyes or taste with His eyes or do anything with any of His senses without any limitation or restriction.

Naturally, we try to imitate that Supreme Person. We want to experience life perfectly and fully. We long for unlimited sensual prowess, strength, and beauty, and for various powers and abilities. Frustrated by our fettered existence, we are titillated and challenged by the prospects of increased freedom. If we can learn to smell with our eyes, the article concludes, this development could “revolutionize such industries as wine, perfume, and entertainment.”

Whether or not scientists will succeed in this endeavor is of little consequence, since our senses will remain limited—even if we can smell with our eyes. One wonders if our erudite scientists will ever learn to see past their noses, so to speak. Unlimited sensory freedom will be realized only when we turn from the limited activities of sense gratification to the unlimited activities of devotional service.

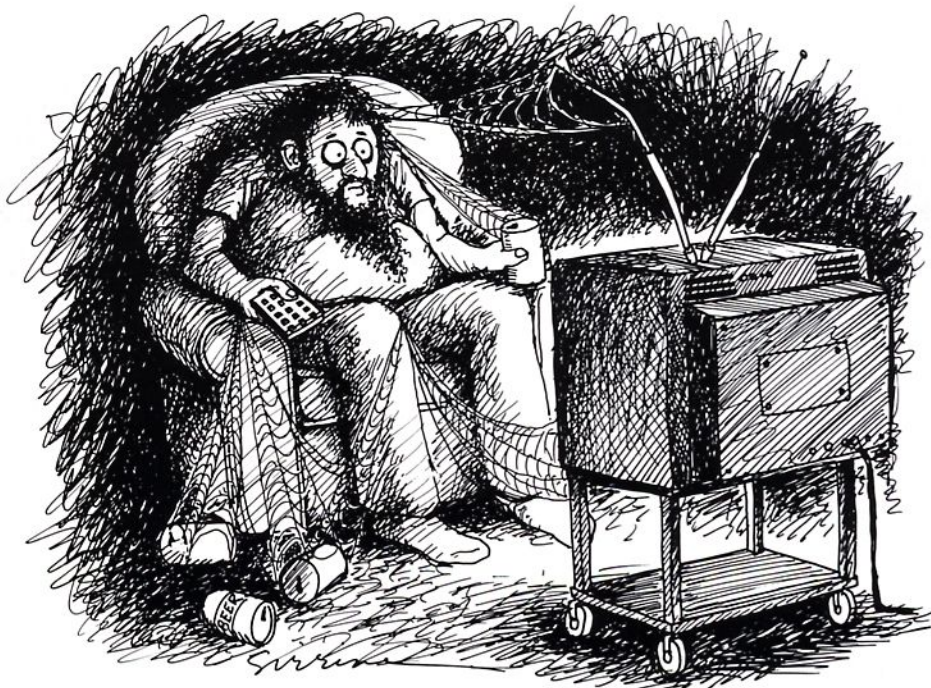
God has designed our bodies and senses, limited as they are, to be used in His service. We can use our eyes for be-

holding the form of the Lord, our ears for hearing topics of self-realization, and our tongue for praising God and His activities. Though our senses are at present limited, Lord Kṛṣṇa is offering us the chance to engage in the pure spiritual activity of devotional service, an opportunity with unlimited potential.

to his more than forty hours of inertia.

You’re right, couch fever isn’t all that new; it’s at least as old as television.

It’s also a fictitious disease, Blue Cross reveals, a creation of concerned health experts who want to make a serious point: Prolonged inactivity can cause critical health problems.



COUCH FEVER

by Mathureśa dāsa

A newsletter from the Blue Cross Medical Association warning of a deadly new disease called couch fever prompts me to draw some rough parallels between physical and spiritual health.

Doctors reported a near epidemic of couch fever during the holiday season last year. In one severe case a forty-year-old man with no previous health problems woke up on New Year’s Day, plopped himself down on the sofa in front of his TV, watched three consecutive football games, then went to bed for the night. He was soon in the hospital with a blood clot in his lung, a condition doctors attributed

Oddly enough, sports fans are particularly susceptible. Watching athletes chase balls across field and court tends to transform TV spectators into most unathletic worms. Captivated sports buffs lie half-buried in couch or recliner, ingesting whatever snacks are close at hand, squirming a bit with each good play.

Not everyone falls for this television catatonia, of course. Not professional athletes, who make a living from physical skill and exertion. Not the millions of health conscious persons for whom jogging is a chosen preoccupation.

But even intense physical activity is a kind of catatonia if we forget that our physical bodies are but temporary vehicles for our eternal, spiritual selves. Just as you don’t get much exercise driving your car

OBSERVER

ary on the Issues of the Day

around town, so the self, or soul, remains inactive while driving the body.

We are but witnesses, observing the body's physical movements through our senses of sight, smell, touch, taste, and hearing, much as the couch-bound sports fan observes his favorite team on a television screen. The soul is even *less* active than television viewers or automobile drivers, who can at least press a remote-control button or turn a steering wheel. Between our will to bodily action and the actions themselves, the material nature, working under the supervision of the Supreme Lord, stands as the insuperable intermediary.

The *Gītā* explains: "The spirit soul bewildered by the influence of false ego thinks himself the doer of activities that are in actuality carried out by the three modes of material nature."

Falsely identifying with our bodies, we fail to understand that, aside from willing or desiring, our spiritual selves do nothing at all in the material arena.

How do we put an end to this spiritual inactivity? By using our bodies and minds to serve Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Person. Or even by desiring to do so. Using our senses to please Kṛṣṇa's senses is called *bhakti-yoga*, or devotional service.

From a material perspective, yes, the *bhakti-yogī* still does nothing at all. But employing the senses in Kṛṣṇa's service gradually awakens and activates the soul's transcendental body. Furthermore, Lord Kṛṣṇa appreciates the spiritual sentiments, not merely the physical efforts, of His servants, and He readily extends His own spiritual senses to reciprocate with us. Even the slightest attempt at devotional service is spiritual activity and is bound to improve our spiritual health.

Just *how* slight an attempt? The doctors and advisers at Blue Cross inspire another parallel.

Dr. Thomas Farrell, an ophthalmologist, suggests that to prevent your corneas from drying out during TV stupors, don't forget to blink every couple of seconds.

Dr. William R. Francis, an orthopedist, says you can avoid back problems by standing up during commercials.

And Dr. Edward J. Resnick advises that

to stimulate your circulation and thus avoid blood clots—you should at least take off your shoes and wiggle your toes!

Well, it just so happens that a start in *bhakti-yoga* is as easy as wiggling your toes. Lord Caitanya, the father of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, simply asked everyone to chant the holy names of God. And Lord Caitanya's followers have published many provocative books on the science of spiritual health.

So the next time you get a minute's break from life's cathode tube, why not chant and turn a few pages. Then if the spirit moves you, try skipping a Sunday game or two so you can drop by your local Hare Kṛṣṇa health center.

LONGING FOR LONGEVITY

by Nāgarāja dāsa

Respected members of the scientific community are now coming right out and saying what we thought was on their minds all along: Science can make us immortal. Gerald J. Sussman, a professor at MIT, says, "Everyone would like

to be immortal. I don't think the time is quite right, but it's close. I'm afraid, unfortunately, that I'm in the last generation to die."

And Professor Sussman is not alone in his beliefs. Scientists in the fields of cryonics (freezing bodies), artificial intelligence, genetics, and others are beginning to speak more and more confidently about the prospects of someday stopping disease, aging, and even death.

Perhaps it will be of some consolation to Professor Sussman to learn from the Vedic literatures that his generation will definitely *not* be the last to die. All generations before him have died, and all those after him will die. This unyielding law of nature will not succumb to the attacks of well-wishing scientists who want to liberate mankind from the throes of death.

How can I speak so confidently? Because I accept the words of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who says in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, "I am all-devouring death." And, "Time I am, destroyer of the worlds, and I have come to engage all men."

My confidence is also based on practical observation: Throughout history no
(continued on page 32)





SCIENCE,
THE BOMB, AND
THE
BHAGAVAD
GĪTĀ

“Following such conclusions,
the demoniac, who are lost to themselves and
who have no intelligence, engage in unbeneficial,
horrible works meant to destroy the world.”
(*Bhagavad-gītā* 16.9)

by DRUTAKARMĀ DĀSA

The age of atomic weaponry began before dawn on July 16, 1945, with a blinding flash on the desert flats near Alamogordo, New Mexico. Dr. Robert Oppenheimer, who had organized the intense scientific effort that led to the explosion, instantly thought of lines from one of his favorite books—the immortal *Bhagavad-gītā*: “The Blessed Lord said, ‘Time I am, destroyer of the worlds . . .’”

Today this image from the *Gītā* retains its frightening warning power. But a closer reading of the *Gītā* reveals a deep wisdom that may help us avoid the holocaust. The *Bhagavad-gītā* and

PAINTING BY BHŪTA-BHĀVANA DĀSA

other Vedic literature allow us to see that nuclear weapons are not an abnormal development in an otherwise healthy state of affairs. Rather, they are the inevitable fruit of the tree of modern civilization, which is firmly rooted in a thoroughly mechanistic and materialistic scientific world view.

Since nuclear weapons and the problems of nuclear war are the natural products of our science-based civilization, we must thoroughly reexamine the materialistic assumptions underlying modern science if the world is to ever become free from the threat of nuclear annihilation. Already many scientists are themselves beginning to question whether materialistic principles are really adequate to explain basic features of reality.

Limits of Science

Consider, for example, consciousness. John C. Eccles, a Nobel-prize-winning neurobiologist, states, "The ultimate problem relates to the origin of the self, how each of us as a self-conscious being comes to exist as a unique self associated with a brain. This is the mystery of personal existence." Eccles is convinced that "... the uniqueness each of us experiences can be sufficiently explained only by recourse to some supernatural origin."

According to the *Bhagavad-gītā*, our unique sense of individual experience results from the presence within the material body of an eternal spiritual particle, the symptom of which is consciousness.

But today, influenced by scientific theories that deny the existence of a non-material conscious self, people identify heavily with the body, thinking, "I am American," "I am Russian," "I am Israeli," "I am Palestinian," etc. Virulent nationalism and conflict are the inevitable result.

"Nationalism and chauvinism have developed in different parts of the world," writes Śrīla Prabhupāda, "due to the cultivation of nescience by the general people. Such foolish people are drawing up various plans to render national demarcations as perfect as possible. This is ultimately ridiculous. For this purpose, each and every nation has become a source of anxiety for others. More than fifty percent of a nation's energy is devoted to defense measures and thus spoiled."

If knowledge of the factual nature of the conscious self were firmly integrated into our educational and cultural institutions, people of different nationalities could appreciate their unity on the spiritual platform. Furthermore, the overwhelming impetus toward the domination and exploitation of matter that underlies industrial civilization and culminates in the building of weapons of mass destruction would certainly be lessened. Un-

fortunately, modern scientists persist in ruling out, in advance, any kind of non-materialistic explanation of consciousness and selfhood.

Laws of Karma

Some scientists, however, are beginning to expand their conception of laws of nature. The studies of Roger Sperry, a Nobel-prize-winning brain scientist, have led him to conclude that the principle of causation has to be broadened: "We have to recognize ... different levels and types of causation, including higher kinds of causal control involving mental and vital forces that material science has always rejected."

The laws of *karma*, integral to Indian philosophy, would be one example of

When we understand the laws of karma we can more fully appreciate Einstein's statement that "all our lauded technological progress—our very civilization—is like the axe in the hand of the pathological criminal."

such a higher law. Huston Smith, a professor of philosophy at MIT, stated, "Science has alerted the Western world to the importance of causal relationships in the physical world. Every physical event, we are inclined to believe, has its causes, and every cause will have its determinate effects. India extends this concept of universal causation to include man's moral and spiritual life as well."

Karma has important implications regarding the threat of nuclear holocaust. A basic principle of the law of *karma* is that every act of violence sets off a chain of events that will eventually end in a violent reaction. In this regard, those who understand the subtle law of *karma* are very apprehensive about the effects of such widespread acts of violence as the killing of billions of innocent animals each year

in slaughterhouses and the killing of upwards of fifty million unborn children each year by abortion.

Specifically relating animal slaughter to the threat of nuclear war, Śrīla Prabhupāda declares, "Those who kill animals and give them unnecessary pain ... will be killed in a similar way in the next life and in many lives to come. ... Therefore occasionally there are great wars. Masses of such people go out onto battlefields and kill themselves. Presently they have discovered the atomic bomb, which is simply awaiting wholesale destruction."

When we understand the laws of *karma*, we can more fully appreciate Einstein's statement that "all our lauded technological progress—our very civilization—is like the axe in the hand of the pathological criminal." Can this pathological mentality be changed? Only by a radical revision of the world's present intellectual consensus.

In his book *Where the Wasteland Ends*, Theodore Roszak calls for "a wholly new science, transformed from the psychic ground up." Roszak says, "No one who is not lying himself blind to the obvious can help but despair of the well-being that a reductionist science and power-ridden technology can bring. ... On that level, we 'progress' only toward technocratic elitism, affluent alienation, environmental blight, nuclear suicide. ... But there is another progress that is not a cheat and a folly; the progress that has always been possible at every moment. It goes by many names. St. Bonaventura called it 'the journey of the mind to God'. ... The way back. To the source from which the adventure of human culture takes its beginning."

Śrīla Prabhupāda, recognizing the absolute necessity of the quest for the divine, titled the monthly journal he started in 1944 *Back to Godhead*. Analyzing the situation of a world at war, Śrīla Prabhupāda proclaimed, "This is actually the civilization of nescience, or illusion, and therefore civilization has been turned into militarization." He quoted the Archbishop of Canterbury: "In every quarter of the earth men long to be delivered from the curse of war. ... But all our plans will come to shipwreck on the rock of human selfishness unless we turn to God. Back to God, that is the chief need of England and every other nation." Śrīla Prabhupāda repeated the phrase "back to Godhead" thousands of times in his writings and speeches, making plain the importance he attached to this slogan.

Robert Heilbroner also proposes that modern civilization is in need of a drastic overhaul. He says this would imply "the end of the giant factory, the huge office,

(continued on page 33)

WHAT KṚṢṆA CONSCIOUSNESS MEANS TO A SECULAR YOUTH

A young reader of *Back to Godhead*
expresses his realizations.

by CHRISTOPHER STEWART

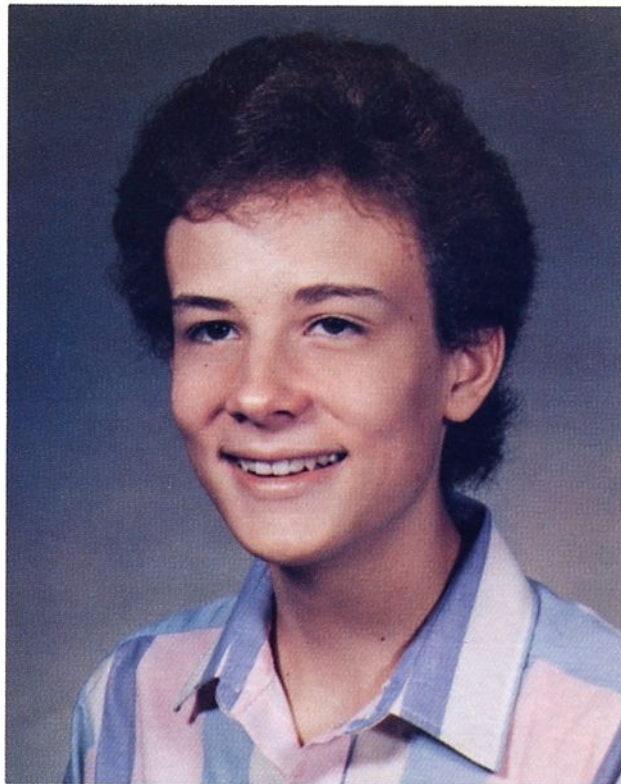
What is the purpose of living? Why are we here, and what should we do with our lives? These questions often plague the minds of youth. In America, where materialism is especially widespread, alienation from purposeful living is quite frequent.

As a sixteen-year-old American, I know about purposelessness firsthand. I know that there is much despair and a terrible sense of worthlessness in my generation. These negative emotions cause people to plunge deeper into that which is the very source of their trouble—materialism.

The true nature of the soul is *sac-cid-ānanda*: eternal, full of knowledge, and full of bliss.

Confusion and unhappiness are not normal conditions, but these feelings arise when we forget our constitutional position as servants of God.

Secular youth tend to think the universe revolves around them. They falsely believe, more or less, that they are God. Such foolishness is called *māyā*, or illusion. Our true home is in the spiritual sky with the Lord and His eternal associates, not within this material world. Being trapped within mundane existence instead of enjoying that for which we are intended, we naturally become perplexed. And perplexity leads to further identification with



transient, material things, such as drugs, sex, possessions, and escapism. You cannot escape by diving headlong into material existence.

So how do you escape? When Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared in India five hundred years ago as Lord Caitanya, He stressed the chanting of the holy names of God. The highest form of these names is manifest in the *mahā-mantra*: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. By chanting these sixteen most holy words, we revive our latent memory of our true constitutional relation-

ship to Kṛṣṇa. By performing *bhakti*, or devotional service, we can purify our desires and prepare to go back to Godhead to be with Kṛṣṇa in the spiritual sky. We are servants of the Lord, and even though He is seated in our hearts in His four-armed Viṣṇu form of Paramātmā, we always remain subservient to Him. Realizing this fact is the first step to realizing Kṛṣṇa. When we have fully realized Kṛṣṇa, we have fulfilled the purpose of our lives and need not ever take birth in the material universes again. Thus, by the mercy of the Supreme Lord, all sorrow is eradicated.

Realizing this, the purpose of human existence, has been the most momentous and uplifting experience in my life. Learning that I must seek Kṛṣṇa and work for Him in devotion is surely my most important discovery.

I was immersed in a sea of ignorance, but Kṛṣṇa extended mercy to me and permitted me to come into contact with His pure devotees and their noble way of life. I am now planning how to best serve Kṛṣṇa with my life. I pray that with His mercy I will do His wishes and that I will attain Him. I know that others are as confused as I was, and I pray that they too will come to this glorious knowledge of God and escape the bewilderment that maintains their souls in *māyā*. ❀

What Do You Look For

Adventure • Intrigue • Struggle • Romance • Drama • Valor •



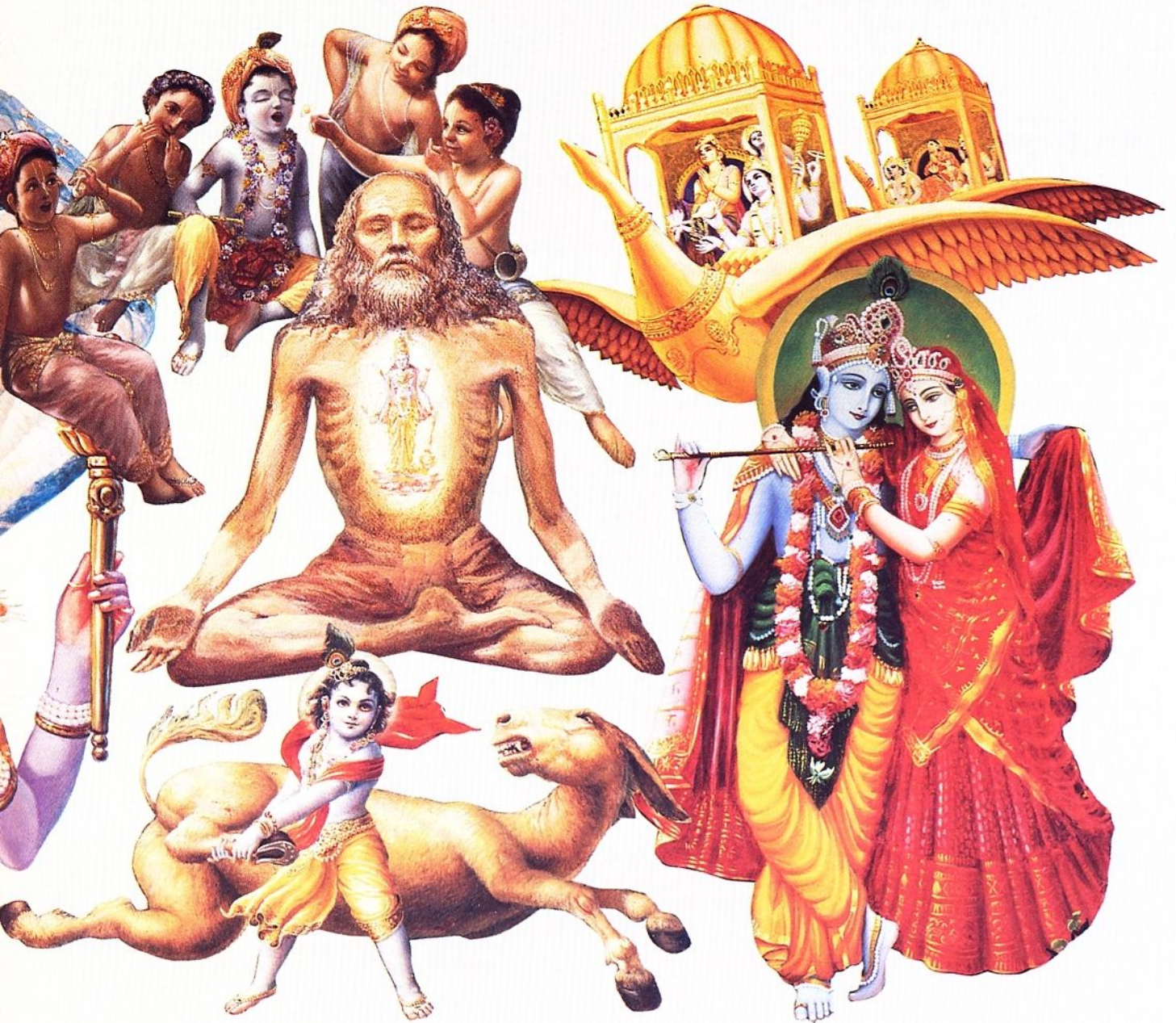
To feed the world's insatiable appetite for interesting reading, writers ceaselessly turn out copy in every language on a staggering array of topics. So accustomed have we become to worldly topics that we doubt whether spiritual literature could ever compare to, say, *Romeo and Juliet*, with its romance, or to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, with their heroism and adventure.

But spiritual literature surpasses even the

greatest literature of this world. For all pleasures, all wonderful and magnificent things, are present most fully and completely in God. Since God is unsurpassable, He is called Bhagavān, or the one who fully possesses (vān) the six opulences (bhaga)—wealth, power, fame, beauty, knowledge, and renunciation. That's why *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the beautiful book of Bhagavān, contains everything you ever wanted in a book—and much more.

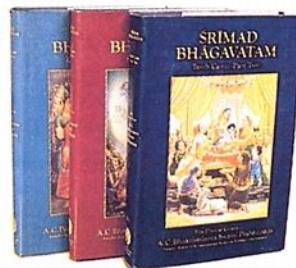
or In A Good Book?

• Mystery • Knowledge • Humor • Beauty • Enlightenment



Reading the beautiful book of Bhagavān actually frees you from material bondage, delivers you permanently from all the turmoils and troubles of this world, from birth, from death. Even the most absorbing "escape reading" of this world will never do that.

Make a change. Make it real.
Read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.



For more information inquire at your local ISKCON center or write *Back to Godhead*, P.O. Box 133, Line Lexington, PA 18932-0133 for a catalog and price list.

Muddled Menus

(continued from page 12)

book include eggs, salt, and milk.

For Śrīla Prabhupāda, his predecessors, and those who follow him on the spiritual path, these ideas about what to eat and what not to eat are mental speculation, a product of philosophy

without religion. "The ultimate goal is Kṛṣṇa," Śrīla Prabhupāda writes. And Kṛṣṇa's desire is the sole criterion that guides the lives of His devotees and governs their diet. Steeped in the science and philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, devotees of the Lord transcend emotional religious rituals and the opinions born of errant minds.

Dogma? Blind faith? Some may denigrate a devotee's faith. Yet a devotee's deep conviction rests on his educated acceptance of the Supreme Lord as the ultimate proprietor of everything, the supreme enjoyer, and the dearest friend of all beings. A devotee follows Lord Kṛṣṇa's direction and eats wholesome, well-balanced, delicious, and controversy-free meals. ❁

LONGEVITY

(continued from page 25)

one has been able to conquer death. Though modern scientists sometimes think their advanced discoveries hold the key to physical immortality, they also admit that there are innumerable factors involved in aging and death. They wonder, "How can we protect ourselves from all the advances of death?"

From the Vedic literature we learn of personalities possessing vast intelligence and stamina, and supported by the most advanced scientific knowledge, whose attempts to conquer death failed. The most famous example is the great materialist Hiranyakaśipu. He received the benediction that he would not be killed by any man or beast or weapon, not during the day or night, whether inside or outside. He thought he had covered all the options, but God Himself appeared in a form that was half man, half lion and killed Hiranyakaśipu with His divine nails on the thresh-

old of the demon's palace at twilight.

God has placed us in these bodies, and He decides when we'll change them. And change we must. Scientists generally do not accept that we must transfer at death from this body to another, because they cannot understand that the soul is different from the body. The soul animates the body for a fixed duration, and no one can extend a soul's term within a body.

Scientists manipulate the material elements in their attempts to find the secret of life. But despite repeated claims of breakthrough scientific discoveries, they have not been able to create life. Since life (the soul) is eternal, to "create life" is axiomatically impossible. Nor can there be "progress" toward an impossible goal. Scientists may be able to synthesize amino acids, but an amino acid is a far cry from a conscious being.

To God alone belongs the power and the privilege to produce life—or to prolong it. We may *apparently* extend a person's life, but in actuality, when our death

notice is served, no amount of medical technology can save us. Death strides through the doors of even the best hospitals, past the watchful eyes of the best physicians, and makes his indisputable claim.

Though death is inevitable, our rebellion against it has a special significance: It is a sign of our spiritual immortality. The body dies, but the soul lives on, transmigrating to his next incarnation. Because of our identification with the body, however, we think that the person dies with the body.

Rather than misusing our lives in the futile attempt to attain physical immortality, we should live to gain the immortal life of the soul in union with God. Otherwise, though we may live for hundreds of years, what will we actually gain? A tree may live for thousands of years, but the *value* of its life is insignificant compared to the life of a person who has developed love for God and done valuable work on His behalf all over the world. ❁

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

LETTERS

I am sixteen years old, and for some time I have been studying ISKCON and the Vaisnava way of life. I have come to the conclusion that such is the will of God and the best mode of life. Therefore I will seek it.

I am told by my instructors at school that I have an exceptional writing ability. I praise and thank Krishna for instilling this ability within me, and I wish to somehow utilize it to His glory. Therefore I have taken up writing for the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Enclosed you will find something I have written—not for my own benefit, but in the hope that it would encourage others to seek Krishna.

Christopher Stewart
Matheny, West Virginia

(See Christopher's article on page 29.)

* * *

It seems to me, after reading some of your *Back to Godhead* issues, that you are extremely prejudiced against the theory

of impersonal God. I find that your prejudice is based on ignorance and misinterpretation of the impersonal theory. Yes, the impersonal theory says that you are God, but by "you," here, is not meant the human body or the individual soul. By "you," here, is meant the impersonal self, the universal soul.

It is wrong to think that the personal theory of God is the only correct one. There are several roads to Rome. My point is, everyone should be tolerant. The objective of a true guru is not to say that this path is the only correct one and ridicule other paths, but to explain and describe each path, their merits and pitfalls, and let the sishya [disciple] choose according to his own nature and bent of mind.

Dibyendu Majumdeva
Surabaya, Indonesia

OUR REPLY: In refuting with strong language the theory of impersonalism, *Back to*

Godhead magazine follows the precedent set fifty centuries ago by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who said that those who think He is impersonal but has assumed a human form are *mūḍhas*, fools. Throughout the Vedic literature we find similar statements that reveal the unfortunate position of those who fall prey to the false conclusion that the Absolute Truth is ultimately impersonal.

As devotees of the Supreme Lord, we are not prejudiced; however, we accept the conclusions of the scriptures and must point out the fallacious and offensive "logic" of the impersonalists. The impersonalists, or Māyāvādīs, say that God exists but He has no form: no head, no face, no arms, no legs. In other words, God can't hear, He can't speak, He can't see, He can't walk. That is the same as saying that there is no God. Therefore, Lord Caitanya, who is Kṛṣṇa Himself appearing as His own devotee, says that the Māyāvādīs are offenders.

The conclusion that the Absolute Truth is impersonal is based on speculation, not on the teachings of the Vedic literatures, which clearly substantiate the Personality of Godhead's *transcendental* form. In the

Brahma-saṁhitā, for example, Lord Brahmā, the director of the universe, glorifies Kṛṣṇa as *sac-cid-ānanda vīgraha*, the eternal form of bliss and knowledge.

And Kṛṣṇa's form is His own individual form. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.12) Kṛṣṇa says that we will continue to possess our individual identities eternally. He tells Arjuna, "Never was there a time when I did not exist, nor you, nor all these kings. Nor in the future shall any of us cease to be." Kṛṣṇa clearly makes a distinction between the Supreme Self and the individual self. In the Thirteenth Chapter Kṛṣṇa describes two "knowers" within the body, the individual soul and the Super-soul. The *Upaniṣads* also state that there are "two birds within the tree of the body." As you have said, "you" doesn't mean the human body. But neither does "you" mean the universal soul. "You" means the individual spirit soul. And that individual soul can never be equal to God. The Vedic literatures clearly explain that God is infinite and we are infinitesimal. The impersonalists cannot understand this essential point.

Because we are small we are subject to the control of God's energy. God is called *acyuta*, infallible. He never falls under the influence of the material energy. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa says, *daivī hy eṣā guṇa-mayī mama māyā duratayā*: "The material energy is coming from Me, and the minute living entities cannot overcome it." If we were the same as Kṛṣṇa, we would not be bewildered by Kṛṣṇa's material energy, *māyā*.

Kṛṣṇa is never bewildered. He says in the Seventh Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā*, "I know everything that has happened in the past, all that is happening in the present, and all things that are yet to come. I also know all living entities; but Me no one knows." We cannot make such a claim.

Your statement "several roads to Rome" conveys a popular idea, but the statement is misleading. First we must understand what "Rome" is; then we can discuss whether there are various ways of getting there. By "Rome" I assume you mean the Absolute Truth. The highest aspect of the Absolute Truth, as explained in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, is the personal form of God, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who says in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *matuḥ parataram nānyat*: "There is no truth superior to Me." And, contrary to what others may claim, He says later that there are indeed different paths but they don't lead to the same place. "Those who worship the demigods go to the demigods. . . . Those who worship Me come to Me." Earlier, in the Fourth Chapter, Kṛṣṇa says that He rewards each of us according to our surrender. Not everyone gets the same result. Some roads lead to Rome, but some lead to the penitentiary.

The members of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement accept the words of Kṛṣṇa as irrefutable truth. All the great teachers in the Vedic tradition have accepted *Bhagavad-gītā* as authoritative Vedic literature. The *Bhagavad-gītā* is the essence of Vedic knowledge. The words of Kṛṣṇa—not our own bent of mind—are authority. The

real *guru* must present Kṛṣṇa's teachings without compromise, and the disciple must accept them as absolute truth. Arjuna demonstrates the proper way to accept the *guru*: He surrenders to Kṛṣṇa for instructions. And Kṛṣṇa Himself says that one must accept the spiritual master, inquire from him submissively, and render service to him because the spiritual master has seen the truth. If the *guru* actually possesses absolute knowledge, what right does the disciple have to pick and choose according to his "bent of mind"? The disciple is in ignorance. He must simply receive transcendental knowledge from the perfect spiritual master.

The members of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, under the guidance of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, accept only the direct purport of the Vedic literature as it has been explicitly enunciated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* by the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who says, *vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyah*: "By all the *Vedas* I am to be known."

The goal of life is to reawaken our original love for God. The Māyāvādī philosophy hinders the soul's progress by telling him that *he* is God. This is a grave injustice. One who carefully studies the Vedic literatures under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master, however, will surely understand that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and the ultimate goal of life. ❀

BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ

(continued from page 28)

perhaps of the urban complex." And even more important, he stresses it is likely "that the ethos of 'science,' so intimately linked with industrial application, would play a much reduced role." What would the new order be like? Heilbroner states, "It is therefore possible that a post-industrial society would also turn in the direction of many preindustrial societies—toward the exploration of inner states of experience rather than the outer world of fact and material accomplishment."

Like Roszak, Heilbroner, and others, Śrīla Prabhupāda believes that the problems of modern civilization are deeply rooted in its dangerous commitment to science-based technology and industry. "The gigantic industrial enterprises are products of a godless civilization," he writes, "and they cause the destruction of the noble aims of human life. . . . The natural gifts such as grains and vegetables, fruits, rivers, the hills of jewels and minerals, and the seas full of pearls are supplied by the order of the Supreme. . . . The

natural law is that the human being may take advantage of these godly gifts by nature and satisfactorily flourish on them without being captivated by the exploitative motive of lording it over material nature."

A New Direction

The solution to the problem of nuclear war is not going to be simple. Gradually, the goals and aspiration of humankind must be directed toward self-realization and genuine God consciousness. When this change of direction begins to take place, the unrestrained expansion of urban industrialism, with all its unfortunate by-products, such as the threat of nuclear annihilation, can begin to be controlled and even reversed.

The philosophy of ancient India, as expressed in books such as the *Bhagavad-gītā*, contain the essential ideas that could serve as the superstructure of a non-materialistic science capable of successfully challenging the materialistic world view now dominant throughout the world. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* and other Vedic books of knowledge can be found

ways of understanding the higher spiritual nature of man and the universe—not only by means of a consistent and detailed cosmology and psychology but also by a highly developed scientific system of meditational techniques, such as the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, that radically transforms consciousness and give experimental verification of the nonmaterial.

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness has also channeled resources and energies into building prototypes for a postindustrial civilization. Over the past twenty years, the Society has established more than forty successful agrarian communities worldwide. These are not merely places for growing crops and herding animals. They are communities in the full sense of the word, supporting a wide variety of arts, crafts, and appropriate technologies. A God conscious philosophy and natural way of life are both necessary if the world wants to become free from the threat of nuclear war. Anything short of this does not address the real causes of the impending catastrophe. ❀





Kṛṣṇa Meditation

“I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who resides in His own realm, Goloka, with Rādhā, who resembles His own spiritual figure and who embodies the ecstatic potency. Their companions are Her confidantes, who embody extensions of Her bodily form and who are imbued with ever-blissful spiritual *rasa* [tastes].”

—*Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.37

“Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is the repository of all good qualities and the crest jewel among all the lovely consorts of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The transcendental goddess Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is the direct counterpart of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. She is the central figure for all the goddesses of fortune. She possesses all the attractiveness to attract the all-attractive Personality of Godhead. She is the primeval internal potency of the Lord.”

—*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā* 4.69, 83

The *gopīs* assist Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Their transcendental pastimes, expertly using their talents to increase Their spiritual pleasure.

Painting by Muralidhara dāsa:
*Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa with the Eight
Principal Gopīs.*

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Admit Your Faults

In a recent article in *Newsweek* magazine, columnist Meg Greenfield protests our amoral dealings nowadays. Although we are in general quick to condemn others, says Greenfield, “where the concept of wrong is really important—as a guide to one’s own behavior or that of one’s own side in some dispute—it [our condemnation] is missing.” In other words, we don’t like to admit we’re wrong. Greenfield describes a number of evasive tactics we use to avoid owning up to our mistakes.

One tactic is to think that what you did was not bad or wrong—just stupid. Instead of admitting you did something wrong, you simply say you acted stupidly. You can still pride yourself on being right, while conceding to being imperfect and prone to human error. Another tactic is to excuse yourself by thinking you were not physically or mentally up to par. Or you might try to get off the hook by blaming the circumstances, or by saying the offended party “asked for it.” Greenfield concludes that the “‘still, small voice’ of conscience has become far too small—and utterly still.”

Although I appreciate Ms. Greenfield’s analysis, I find the solution she hints at—listening more to the “still, small voice” of conscience—to be simplistic. Some people, even while committing great mistakes, claim they are listening to the voice within. Mahatma Gandhi was a great advocate of heeding one’s inner voice. Yet he admitted to sometimes committing “Himalayan blunders,” and he at times sorrowfully regretted having listened to his inner guide.

Who is to say whether the mind’s inspirations and inclinations are actually morally right? The motives behind our actions may be very subtle and intricate. Moreover, moral opinions differ from person to person, culture to culture. Just desiring to “do good” and to “act right” does not guarantee that you will always be “good” and “right.”

The Vedic literature explains that a person should not depend only on conscience to determine right and wrong. Rather, there are three *objective* Vedic guidelines for right action: one’s own spiritual master, or *guru*; the Vedic literatures them-

selves; and the statements of great, self-realized saints throughout history. These three sources of guidance provide a natural system of checks and balances by which one can distinguish clearly right from wrong. When these three sources are consulted in a mature and responsible way, one can confidently chart a course of right action.

The first index reading one should take is the instruction of the spiritual master. Spiritual masters are of two types: the *guru* within the heart (God Himself) and the external *guru* (the pure devotee and representative of God). Although these two *gurus* are in accord, the instructions of the external *guru* should be one’s prime criterion. Here’s why.

After Kṛṣṇa creates the universe, He expands Himself as the Supersoul within the heart of every living entity. As Supersoul, Kṛṣṇa directs the movements of all living entities according to their desires and their previous activities (*karma*). Certainly God is within the heart of everyone, but this does not mean that every “small voice within” is divine, the will of God. Only a pure, very advanced transcendentalist, one who is determined to serve God with all his energies, can receive transcendental instructions from the Lord within his heart. Therefore, we should hear from the external spiritual master. Kṛṣṇa Himself instructs us in the *Bhagavad-gītā* to do so: “Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The spiritual master can impart knowledge unto you because he has seen the truth.” The spiritual master can confirm whether one’s plans and inspirations do in fact originate from the Supersoul and not one’s own mind.

The qualifications of the bona fide *guru*, or spiritual master, are described in the Vedic literatures. He has imbibed Kṛṣṇa consciousness in disciplic succession and is fully engaged in the service of Kṛṣṇa with his body, mind, and words. The spiritual master is completely free from all selfish desires. His only concern is to satisfy the desires of the Supreme Lord. He speaks only what is in the scriptures, and he takes responsibility for directing the

lives of his disciples back to Godhead.

Our second index reading is the Vedic literature. This is the standard “lawbook,” its codes forming the basis of right and wrong, as well as the basis for the words and deeds of a bona fide *guru*. The Vedic writings detail the myriad aspects of morality. They are based on the desires of God and are God’s instructions for guiding the fallen living entities back to Him. Through the *Vedas* God reveals His will for all mankind.

All of us in this material world are subject to four basic defects: (1) Our senses are imperfect. (2) We are subject to illusion. (3) We commit mistakes. (4) We have the tendency to cheat. The Vedic literature is transcendental sound, free from these defects. Although Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself and is therefore supremely independent to act in any way He pleases, He nevertheless refers to Vedic literature as the standard authority. In the *Gītā*, for instance, He cites the *Vedānta-sūtra*. As for those who act independently of scriptural injunctions, He warns, “But he who discards scriptural injunctions and acts according to his own whims attains neither perfection, nor happiness, nor the supreme destination” (Bg. 16.23).

The third source of Vedic moral instruction comprises the self-realized Vedic authorities, who live in strict accordance with the instructions of their *guru* and the injunctions of the Vedic literature. We naturally seek advice when making important decisions, and this is especially important in spiritual matters. It is important to confide in saintly persons and to hear their advice and suggestions on moral questions. By taking counsel from highly qualified, morally upright authorities, by consulting the revealed scriptures, and by hearing submissively from one’s own spiritual master, one is sure to always do what is morally right and pleasing to God.

We cannot, of course, be perfect. Mistakes will happen. And when we make mistakes, it is always best to honestly admit them. That is the sign of a good person, and it requires humility. We should not be so proud or so partisan that we cannot admit our wrongs. —SDG



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.

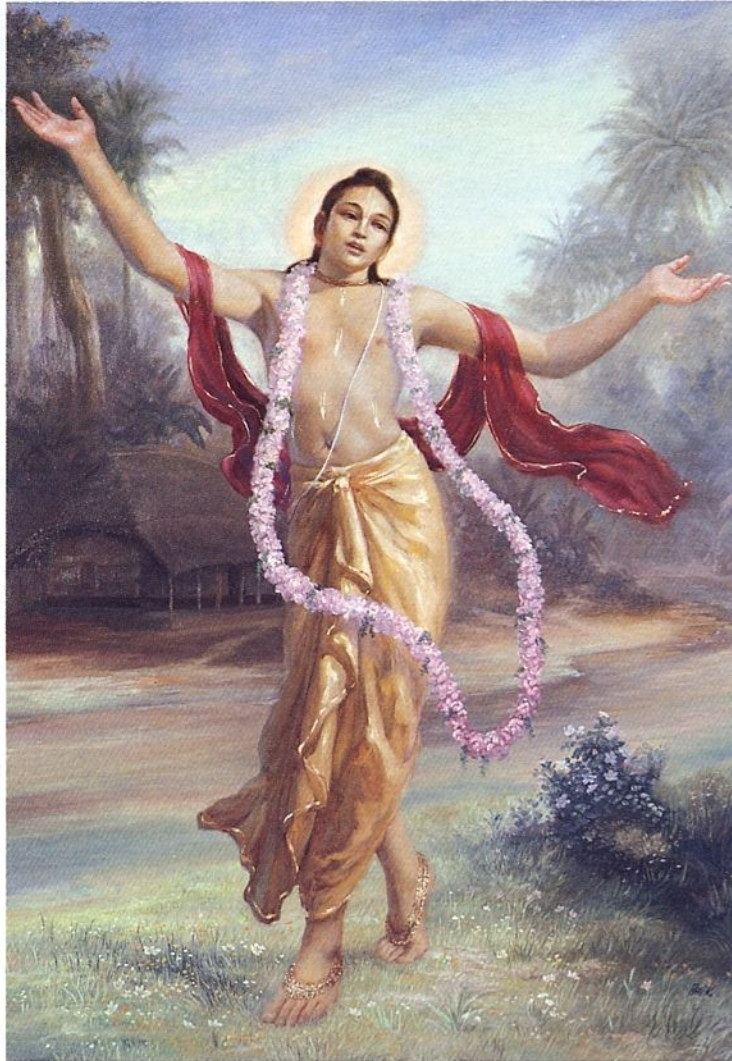
Ancient India’s Vedic literatures single out one *mantra* as the *mahā* (supreme) *mantra*. The *Kali-santaraṇa Upaniṣad* explains, “These sixteen words—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare—are especially meant for counteracting the ill effects of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

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

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

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

Photo by Yamarāja dāsa



Come and celebrate with us!

ŚRĪ GAURA-PŪRNIMĀ

The Appearance Anniversary of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu

Five hundred years ago, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, appeared on earth as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. As Kṛṣṇa's most merciful incarnation, Lord Caitanya introduced the easiest and most sublime method of God realization: the congregational chanting of the holy names of God. On March 15 devotees around the world will celebrate the Lord's appearance with grand festivals—and you're invited. Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa center for details. (See pages 20-21 for a list of centers around the world.)