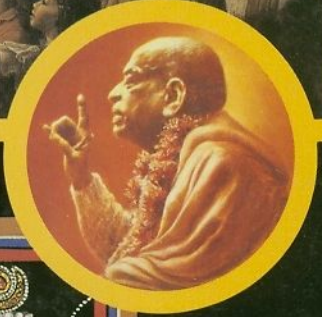


GODHEAD IS LIGHT. NESCIENCE IS DARKNESS. WHERE THERE IS GODHEAD THERE IS NO NESCIENCE.

BACK TO GODHEAD

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 1992 • \$4.00 / £2.50



Śrīnāthajī: Lord Kṛṣṇa, Lifter of Govardhana Hill



Painting by R. B. Sharma. (From the collection of N. C. Shah)

The Divine River Yamunā Personified

The Yamunā flows through Vṛndāvana, where Lord Kṛṣṇa performs His eternal pastimes.

The devotees of Kṛṣṇa in His form as Śrīnāthajī especially revere Śrī Yamunā.

The great saint Vallabhācārya prays, “I bow down to Śrī Yamunājī, who joyfully gives all devotional perfections. Unlike the powers gained from mere practice of yoga, the devotional powers granted by Śrī Yamunājī enable one to taste the nectar of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement

Founded 1944 • Vol. 26, No. 6 • November / December 1992

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COVER: Lord Kṛṣṇa in His form as Śrīnāthajī is worshiped at Nathdwara, in the Indian state of Rajasthan. Please see the article beginning on page 24. (Painting by R. B. Sharma. From the collection of N. C. Shah.)

BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement

FOUNDER

(under the direction of His Divine Grace
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda)

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda

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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 held twice as long as the short **a**). Pronounce **e** like the **a** in **evade**, long **ī** like the **i** in **pique**. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **ri** in **rim**, and **ṛ** like the **ch** in **chair**. Pronounce consonants like **ch**, **jh**, and **dh** as in **staunch**-heart, **hedge**-hog, and **red**-hot. Pronounce **ṣ** 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 (Dāsī for women), meaning "servant." For instance, the name Kṛṣṇa Dāsa means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

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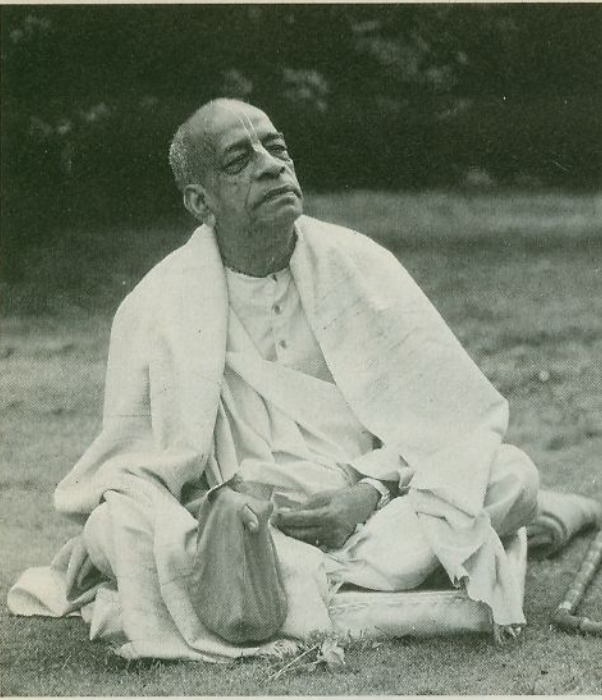
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His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda

Founder-Ācārya of the
International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Statement of Purposes

Back to Godhead magazine is a cultural presentation to respiritualize human society. It aims at achieving the following purposes:

1. To help all people distinguish more clearly between reality and illusion, spirit and matter, the eternal and the temporary.
2. To present Kṛṣṇa consciousness as taught in *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.
3. To help every living being remember and serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead.
4. To offer guidance in the techniques of spiritual life.
5. To expose the faults of materialism.
6. To promote a balanced, natural way of life, informed by spiritual values.
7. To increase spiritual fellowship among all living beings, in relationship with Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.
8. To perpetuate and spread the Vedic culture.
9. To celebrate the chanting of the holy names of God through the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

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

FROM THE EDITOR

With the Help of Lord Śrīnāthajī

THIS ISSUE OF BTG takes us to Nathdwara, the sacred town in Rajasthan where Lord Kṛṣṇa resides as the celebrated Deity known as Śrīnāthajī.

Our feature on Nathdwara started small and quickly grew. I suspect that Lord Śrīnāthajī Himself had a hand in it.

We were planning to lead off this issue with something else. But when that “something else” fell through, we turned to other stories on hand. Our top pick was the article by Bhakti Vikāśa Swami that starts on page 25.

We felt that he and his camera-toting companion Mahā-Viṣṇu Dāsa had done well in capturing the mood of Nathdwara. Yet we wished we could tell still more about the Deity, His devotees, and His worship. What was there to tell? We weren't sure.

Two days later in San Francisco, I ran into the right person to fill us in. Yaśo-matīnandana Dāsa has for years been in charge of ISKCON's centers in the Indian state of Gujarat. He's a learned devotee, he's Gujarati, and with Gujarat only a short way from Nathdwara, the Deity of Śrīnāthajī plays a big part in Gujarati devotional life.

Yaśo, as we call him, agreed to give us what we were looking for. He sat down with a tape recorder and gave us the article you'll find on page 31.

Now I was satisfied. I had the joy of an editor who has gotten what he needs.

Then I got a call from Govinda Dāsī, a devotee I'd first met nearly twenty-five

years ago in my first year in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Now she'd heard we were doing an article on Nathdwara, and she had close friends in the *puṣṭi-mārga*, the line of devotees in charge of Śrīnāthajī's worship. By chance, she told me, she had just arrived for a week or so in San Diego. Would I be willing to let her get involved?

As it turned out, Govinda Dāsī's help was invaluable. One of her friends, a *puṣṭi-mārga* scholar in San Diego, agreed to check the facts in our articles—and gave us still more nectar to enrich what we already had.

Finally, Govinda Dāsī told us that still another friend, Navnit Shah of Ocean Township, New Jersey, had many beautiful paintings of Lord Śrīnāthajī. She was sure he'd have something splendid for our cover.

By yet another seeming coincidence, in a day or so Navnit Shah would be flying on business to Los Angeles. He agreed to bring some paintings with him and even offered to drive them down to San Diego. And so we gained not only our cover picture but also the charming painting of Yamunājī on our inside cover. (To top things off, another ISKCON devotee from Gujarat, a lifelong devotee of Śrīnāthajī, came forward to pay for the high-quality transparencies our printer would need to reproduce the art.)

So by Lord Śrīnāthajī's own arrangement we're pleased to bring you this issue of *Back to Godhead*.

—Jayādvaita Swami

Śrīla Prabhupāda's

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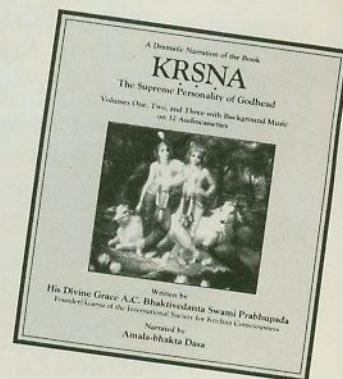
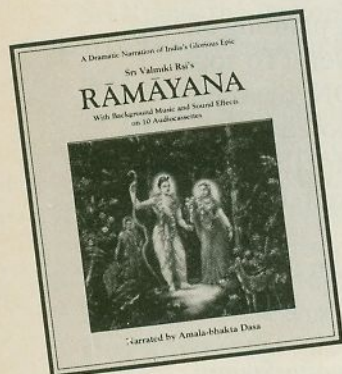
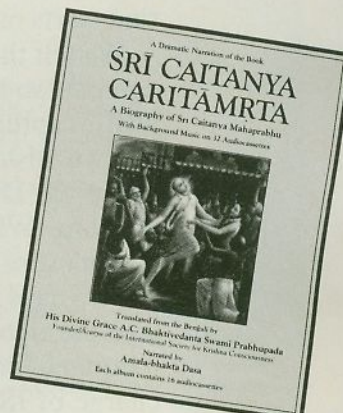
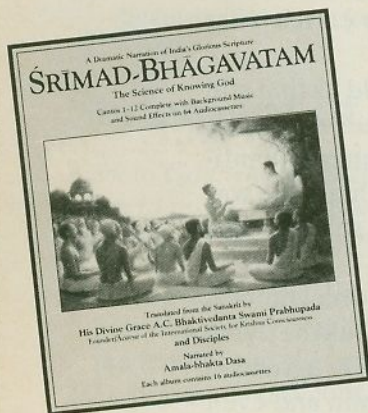
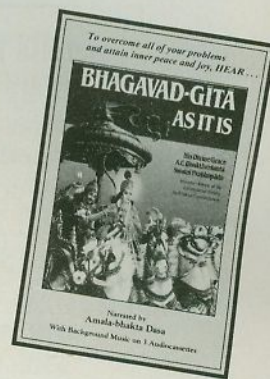
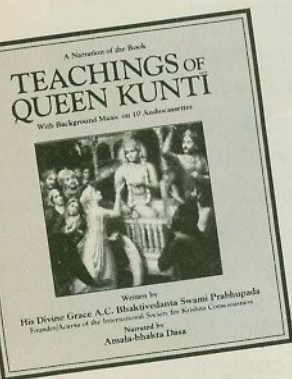
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LETTERS

“Smog” Too Heavy?

I just finished reading your editorial [“Fighting in the Smog,” July/August] and was shocked by the coarse, insensitive manner used to convince your readers to surrender to Kṛṣṇa. Your article presented you as a most uncarving, cold Ayatollah Khomeini type, hardly inspiring a loving attitude in anyone.

Devi Dāsī

Manhattan Beach, California

What you’ve stated in the editorial may not be “wrong.” It’s true that whatever we do in the material world (except for cooperating in even the smallest way with Sri Kṛṣṇa sankīrtana) goes up in smoke, or worse. But the Vaiṣṇava understands that he is no better than the lowest of the low and that going back to Godhead does not mean *escape* from witnessing the tragic misuse of human life. Now we may be initiated and on the right path. But by having misused our lives in previous births, or even earlier in *this* birth, we have helped to create the thick layers of karma we now see from a different vantage point.

We don’t need to move out; we, especially, need to move in and let people know we’re here to help, not with swords, guns, and fire but with the holy name, books, and prasadam. The other articles do this so nicely; what a shame to give such a preface to an otherwise wise and compassionate issue of Srīla Prabhupāda’s magazine.

Sarasvatī Devī Dāsī

Quakerstown, Pennsylvania

Apart from being dismayed by my heartlessness, several readers brought up another point. I’d said that Lord Ananta, a form of Lord Kṛṣṇa, sometimes gets so angry He feels like torching the entire universe. Is that my own idea? Where does it appear in scripture? Answer: Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 5.25.6, and Prabhupāda’s purport. —S

BTG Really Helps!

Hare Kṛṣṇa! I love BTG. It has helped me in so many ways. I go to public

school and get teased about being Kṛṣṇa conscious. Several of your articles have helped. I’m in junior high and kids can be so cruel. BTG really keeps me in touch with what’s going on all over the world in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Keep up the great work!

Nārāyaṇī Devī Dāsī

Lombard, Illinois

Hard-Hitting Vic’s OK

I’d like to address the letter by G. S. Senan [July/August] in relation to Bhakta Vic’s articles.

I am an “older generation” devotee and can understand why a gentleman like Mr. Senan (obviously with a highly cultured background) would express a sense of disturbance in regards to the mode of approach used by Bhakta Vic in his articles, but let’s look a little beyond the mode of presentation and see the truths he is addressing.

It is a fact that some readers may feel some shock or even a sense of abhorrence at Bhakta Vic’s mode of address, but BTG is a magazine for everyone who has interest in the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and that includes readers who would very much appreciate Bhakta Vic’s mode of approach, and who through that mode of approach can understand the philosophy better.

Lord Caitanya is called Patita Pavana, and He empowers different devotees to preach His message in different ways so that persons of all character and diversified backgrounds can take up the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I can attest to the fact from my own experiences in preaching to different types of people that in certain cases the very graphic, direct, hard-hitting approach is more effective in getting the message across to certain people, as opposed to the approach which uses “good taste,” “subtlety,” “grace,” and “tact.”

Mahāvegavatī Dāsī

Buffalo, New York

Sukanya’s Example Impractical

I felt such anger and fear after

reading Mula-prakṛti and Visakha dasī’s article [“Light for the Dark Well,” July/August] that I had to sit down and write you this letter. They live in a world very different from mine. For me it wasn’t enlivening to read about the selfless qualities of a wife for a husband who didn’t care for her. I would have been more inspired and hopeful if they would have talked in detail about her path in Krishna consciousness, her courage and love for Krishna.

I admit I don’t appreciate or understand the lesson of Sukanya, perhaps simply because all I know of the story is what little was mentioned in the article. I don’t think anyone can do what she did in this day and age. There’s no training, love, or guidance. Mula-prakṛti and Visakha may be fortunate to have good marriages, but for the majority, yes, majority of women, I think it completely unrealistic to ask them to be like Sukanya. Why don’t the men write articles on how men should treat their wives?

Rose Maylie

Los Angeles, California

Mūlaprakṛti Devī Dāsī and Viśākhā Devī Dāsī reply: Thank you for your frank and heartfelt letter. We are sorry you and perhaps others felt discouraged by the seemingly impractical standards of our article. We agree that the responsibilities and qualities men require in marriage were not stressed enough—we do need men to write about this. We never intended to endorse women’s being abused or unloved. Relationships with men are often difficult. Therefore discrimination is needed in choosing a trustworthy man. There is so much we all need to learn in developing healthy and happy relationships. We have found that this is best done when devotees of the same sex support one another with honesty, commitment, confidentiality, and good examples. This is of utmost importance.

We welcome your letters. Send correspondence to The Editors, Back to Godhead, P. O. Box 90946, San Diego, CA 92169, USA.



His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja

KRSNA'S EMISSARY

A lecture by His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Founder-Ācārya of the International Society
For Krishna Consciousness

Los Angeles, December 9, 1969—
Disappearance Day of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja

THERE IS A NICE STORY about a sage giving different blessings to different types of persons. To a prince, he blessed, *rāja-putra ciram jīva*: “You are a king’s son, a prince. May you live forever.” And he blessed the son of a saintly person, *muni putra mā jīva*: “Don’t live.” And the *sādhu*, the devotee, he blessed, *jīva vā maro vā*: “Either you live or you die—as you like.” And there was a butcher. The sage blessed him, *mā jīva mā mara*: “Don’t die, don’t live.”

These words are very significant. A prince is enjoying his senses, that’s all. He has enough facility for sense enjoyment. So his next life will be hellish, because if you indulge in unrestricted sex life, Kṛṣṇa will give you facility to have sex three times in an hour, just like the pigeons, the monkeys, the sparrows.

Princes are after sense enjoyment. So the sage blessed the prince, “Better you live forever, because after your death you do not know what is going to happen to you. You are going to get a hellish life. Better you live for some time. Go on with your enjoyment.”

And *muni-putra mā jīva*. The *brahmacārī* student working under the strict disciplinary guidance of a spiritual master is blessed, *mā jīva*: “You’d better die. You are trained so as to enter

into the kingdom of God, so why should you take so much trouble? Better you die and go back to Godhead.”

The sage blessed the devotee, *jīva vā maro vā*: “My dear devotee, either you live or die,” because for a devotee it’s the same.

And the butcher the sage blessed, *mā jīva mā mara*: “Don’t live, don’t die.” What’s a butcher to do? His life is so abominable. From the morning, he has to slaughter so many animals, see the blood stains, the ghastly scenes. That is his livelihood. What a horrible life this is! So “Don’t live. And don’t die also.” Because after death—oh, he is going to be in such a hellish condition, nobody can describe it. So both conditions—life and death—are horrible.

Apart from the others, for the devotee both birth and death, appearance and disappearance, are the same.

My spiritual master appeared at Jagannātha Purī. He was the son of a very big government officer, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, who was a magistrate. In those days a magistrate was a big officer in the government, practically next to governor. And Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was in charge of the Jagannātha temple. That is the system in Jagannātha Purī. The manager in

We should try to carry out the instruction, the specific instruction of the spiritual master, very rigidly, without caring for our personal benefit or loss.

• • •

charge of the temple is the district magistrate.

Once during the Rathayātrā festival, Lord Jagannātha's car stopped in front of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's house. At that time, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, my Guru Mahārāja [spiritual master], was a child in the lap of his mother. So the mother took the opportunity to come onto the car. Because she was the magistrate's wife, people gave way so she could go onto the car and place the child at the lotus feet of Jagannātha. There were many garlands, and one garland fell upon Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, blessing him.

When he was a child two or three years old, he ate a mango which was kept for offering to the Deity. His father mildly rebuked him, "Oh, you have done a very wrong thing. It was meant for the Deity, and you have taken it. You should not have done it."

The child was two or three years old, but he took it so seriously that after that he never ate a mango. Whenever we offered him one he would say, "No, I am an offender. I cannot take mangoes." He was thinking like that, you see. Never in his life did he take a mango. He was thinking, "I offended in my childhood by taking the mango of the Deity."

This is the characteristic of *ācāryas*. They teach by their life's action that one should be so determined. A child took the mango—there was no offense. But he took that vow.

Another instance, in my presence. At that time, I was a young man. One of my Godbrothers, Dr. Oudh Bihari Lal Kapoor, was also young man, and his wife was also young. We were sitting together, talking with Guru Mahārāja, and the girl proposed, "My dear master, I want to speak with you."

Guru Mahārāja said, "Yes, you can say whatever you like."

She said, "I want to talk with you privately, not in everyone's presence."

Guru Mahārāja said, "No. I cannot

talk with you privately. You can talk in the presence of my other disciples."

Even though the girl was like his granddaughter by age, he refused to talk with a young woman in a private place.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura had many other sons. Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī was the fifth son. And he did not marry. From childhood he was a strict *brahmācārī* [celibate]. And he underwent very severe penances for starting this worldwide movement. That was his mission.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura wanted to do this. In 1896 Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura wanted to introduce the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement by sending the book *Shree Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, His Life and Precepts* to the West. Fortunately, that year was my birth year.

By Kṛṣṇa's arrangement I came in contact with my Guru Mahārāja. We were born in different families. Who knew that I would come to his protection? Who knew that I would come to America? Who knew that you American boys would come to me? These are all Kṛṣṇa's arrangements. We cannot understand how things are taking place.

In 1936, thirty-two years ago, I was doing business in Bombay. At that time, Guru Mahārāja was a little indisposed, and he was staying at Jagannātha Purī, on the seashore. So I wrote him a letter. "My dear master, your other disciples—*brahmācārīs*, *sannyāsīs*—they are rendering you direct service. And I am a householder. I cannot live with you. I cannot serve you nicely. So I do not know how I can serve you."

Simply an idea. I was thinking of serving him. "How can I serve him seriously?"

The reply was dated 13th December, 1936. He wrote, "My dear such and such, I am very glad to receive your letter. I think you should try to push our movement in English. And that will do good to you and to the people who will help you." That was his instruction. And

then on the 31st of December—that means just a fortnight after writing this letter—he passed away.

I took that order of my spiritual master very seriously. But I did not think that I'd have to do such and such things. I was at that time a householder. But this is the arrangement of Kṛṣṇa. If we strictly try to serve the spiritual master's order, then Kṛṣṇa will give us all facilities. That is the secret.

I took my spiritual master's order a little seriously by studying a commentary by Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura on the *Bhagavad-gītā*. In connection with the verse *vyavasāyātmikā-buddhiḥ ekeha kuru-nandana*, Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura comments that we should take up the words from the spiritual master as our life and soul. We should try to carry out the instruction, the specific instruction of the spiritual master, very rigidly, without caring for our personal benefit or loss.

So I tried a little bit in that spirit. And he has given me all facilities to serve him. Things have come to this stage, that in my old age I have come to your country and you are also taking this movement seriously, trying to understand it. We have got some books now. So there is a little foothold for this movement.

So on this occasion of my spiritual master's departure, as I am trying to execute his will I shall also request you to execute the same order through my will. I am an old man. I can pass away at any moment. That is nature's law; nobody can check it. That I may die is not very astonishing. But this is my appeal to you on this auspicious day of the departure of my Guru Mahārāja: At least to some extent you have understood the essence of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. You should try to push it on.

People are suffering for want of this consciousness. As we daily pray about devotees, (please turn to page 62)



Begging for the Nectar of the Holy Name

by Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami

RECENTLY I TOOK time out from traveling and lecturing to work on my practice of *japa* (quiet chanting on beads). Although I have been following Śrīla Prabhupāda's order to chant at least sixteen rounds of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* daily, I knew my *japa* had become poor and needed special care. I tried doubling the minimum quota and chanted in the early-morning hours in the company of other chanters, but my first discovery was that the more I chanted, the more dry it felt. And I could not control my mind.

I began reading statements in Prabhupāda's books that glorified the holy names of Kṛṣṇa. The scriptural claims that chanting is easy and full of nectar seemed to contradict my own experience. But as I went on chanting and reading, I began to understand that my gut feeling about my own *japa* was not the last word in understanding the holy names.

The more I read, the more I became encouraged about the glories of the holy name. Was I wrong to think I was benefitting from the holy name, even if I felt no ecstasy while chanting? No. To be encouraged in that way is not wrong.

Śrīla Prabhupāda states that the change of heart that comes by chanting should appear in one's daily activities. He quotes Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, who says that detachment from material life is itself an important symptom of the good result of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. Tears and other such bodily ecstatic symptoms are not always shown even by the most advanced devotees, and those symptoms may even be imitated by a pseudo devotee (*prākṛta-sahajiyā*).

Therefore, Prabhupāda mentions symptoms of "steady ecstasy" as results to watch for in effective chant-

ing. Those symptoms, mentioned in *The Nectar of Devotion*, include pridelessness, intense utilization of time, forbearance, attraction for chanting, attachment to living in Kṛṣṇa's holy abode, and always expecting Kṛṣṇa's mercy.

So it isn't wrong to believe we are benefitting when we chant our rounds, even in the beginning. I decided to be optimistic and be grateful for even the simple gains of staying alert and awake, hearing the correct pronunciation of the *mantra*, sitting up straight, and chanting at a brisk pace.

Devotees at every ISKCON temple are making significant progress during the *japa* hours, as long as those devotees are sincerely trying. And not just in the temple buildings but wherever devotees chant their *japa* and strive to utter and hear the holy names, gains are being made. When we chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, either privately or in public, benefit comes not only to the individual chanters but to the nonchanters also. Among the benefits that come to human society from chanting the holy name, Śrīla Prabhupāda mentions peace, material prosperity, political progress, and all-around good fortune.

Even when we don't notice the good qualities developing in a chanter or in society, we should have faith that the holy name is all-powerful and that its influence is improving everyone's life.

For the person who chants, sinful reactions are vanquished. Therefore he gives up illicit sex, intoxication, meat-eating, and gambling. And even if one cannot completely give up all traces of bad habits, one is released from past *karma*.

Great benefits come to anyone who utters the holy names. Whether I feel dry or "wet" when I am chanting, the chanting works to destroy sins, pro-

vided I don't deliberately commit sins on the strength of chanting. "If one chants the holy name of the Lord, even in a helpless condition or without desiring to do so, all the reactions of his sinful life depart, just as when a lion roars all the small animals flee in fear." (*Garuḍa Purāṇa*)

I want to improve. I want to avoid offenses and chant with attention and devotion. But even when my rascal mind roams out of control, the holy name reigns supreme. I chant with this faith: "If a person unaware of the effective potency of a certain medicine takes that medicine or is forced to take it, it will act even without his knowledge because its potency does not depend on the patient's understanding. Similarly, even though one does not know the value of chanting the holy name of the Lord, if one chants knowingly or unknowingly, the chanting will be very effective" (*Bhāgavatam* 6.2.18-19).

When I gave special attention to my chanting by raising the quota, the results were unspectacular. But rather than dwell on my own inadequacy, I turned to the scriptures and I began to feel grateful for the gift Śrīla Prabhupāda has given us. Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, "We had fallen into abominable lives as meat-eaters, drunkards, and woman-hunters who performed all kinds of sinful activities, but now we have been given the opportunity to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*. Therefore, we should always appreciate this opportunity" (*Bhāgavatam* 6.2.34).

I found it helpful to remember the personal mercy of Śrīla Prabhupāda, who had saved me from a suicidal course. Prabhupāda himself did not take credit. He said it was the mercy of the holy name, which he brought to us on the order of his spiritual master.

Nevertheless, I received that gift from my spiritual master. As an attempt to repay him (*guru-dakṣiṇā*), I will go on chanting and telling others about the chanting. When people ask me how I feel when chanting, I may admit that I feel dry due to my offenses against the holy name. But I will also point out that the medicine of the holy name is working.

Spending extra time trying to improve my chanting has convinced me that I have a lot of work to do, and that this is the most important area of my practice. As taught by Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa is the best and only means for deliverance of all souls in Kali-yuga, the present degraded age.

Since this chanting is so important to Lord Caitanya and to Śrīla Prabhupāda, how can I dare neglect it? The holy name is the most munificent person, Kṛṣṇa, who is eagerly waiting to give us all the benefits of His direct association. Faith in God, purity of heart, and ultimately love of God are all direct results of proper chanting of the holy names.

So as stated in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Ādi-līlā* 8.28), “As a result of chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, one makes such great advancement in spiritual life that simultaneously his material existence terminates and he receives love of Godhead. The holy name of Kṛṣṇa is so powerful that by chanting even one

name, one very easily achieves these transcendental riches.”

We have all heard similar powerful and inspiring statements from the scriptures about the glories of the holy name. It is good to accept them as axiomatic, regardless of our own limits in spiritual experience. But that is not enough. Chanting is worth working on so that the day will come when not only will we quote the scriptures as a matter of policy but we will say with full conviction, “Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, and your life will be sublime.”

Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami is the author of more than two dozen books, including a six-volume biography of Śrīla Prabhupāda.



LORD KRṢṂA'S CUISINE

COOKING CLASS: LESSON FOUR

Introduction to Dāl: Bāḍi— Sun-Dried Legume Nuggets

by Yamuna Devi

I WAS AWAY FROM MY COLUMN last issue, but I'm glad to be back. Continuing on with our study of *dāl*, I'll open with a story.

November 1970. The large iron key, sent by registered post, fell heavy onto the sandstone roof of Delhi Dharmashala. Ten hands darted to retrieve it. We passed it around respectfully, knowing that it was our passport into Vṛndāvana, Lord Kṛṣṇa's eternal abode, whose counterpart in this world lay only ninety miles south.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's hand-written note that came with it told our small group to travel to Vṛndāvana and clean his quarters in the Rādhā-Dāmodara temple compound. The rooms had been vacant for two years. He described them as two rooms—a kitchen and a bedroom-study—separated by a veranda. These rooms were his eternal quarters in Vṛndāvana, he wrote. They had been his

residence just before he had come to the West and introduced Kṛṣṇa consciousness. With great eagerness we made arrangements for our first visit to Vṛndāvana.

The gray wooden door to the kitchen swung open slowly, iron hinges groaning from disuse and the weight of the door. Shafts of sunlight shone through carved window shutters and fell on shades of silvery grey. The scene was like a still life from a previous century. Every surface was coated with two inches of powdery Vṛndāvana sand that obliterated corners and angles and made all forms look ethereal.

Sweltering in ninety-degree heat, we took hours to remove bucket after bucket of sand. It was late afternoon by the time we could inspect the contents of the kitchen. The equipment was sparse—spoons, metal plates, two clay jugs for water, an iron griddle for *capātis*, a bowl-shaped

karai frying pan, and a Bengali knife, the kind that's held between one's feet for cutting vegetables. A pair of reading glasses and a paper notebook rested alone in a tiny niche in the wall.

The shelf for dry goods was empty save for a few jars of spices and one jar with a screw-on lid. The contents of this jar were strange to us—rock-hard golden dollops the size and shape of Hershey's chocolate kisses. Curious to know what they were, I set the jar aside for later. By the time we'd finished washing everything, evening was upon us.

Leaving the temple, we crossed paths with Sarajini Devi, a longtime Vṛndāvana resident who had sometimes helped Śrīla Prabhupāda in his cooking by shopping, building coal fires, or washing dishes. I showed her the jar and asked about its contents.

With a toothy grin she answered, “*Mūṅg bāḍi, mūṅg bāḍi*, one of

Bhaktivedanta Swami's favorites, especially with potatoes in a soup."

Delighted with the information, I was eager to learn how it was made and everything else about *bāḍi*.

With a letter of introduction, the next day we called on Dr. O. B. L. Kapoor, one of Śrīla Prabhupāda's Godbrothers. During our pleasant visit, I asked about *mūṅg bāḍi* and showed him the jar. He explained that *bāḍi* was made from wet-ground legume pastes, seasoned, shaped, and dried until brittle. He then ushered us into his kitchen and showed us three homemade varieties: *mūṅg bāḍi* with green chilies; spicy *ūrad bāḍi*, Punjabi style; and *mūṅg bāḍi* with tomato mixed with *ūrad bāḍi* with pepper-corns.

On the spot I got a detailed lesson on how they are made and stored and several ideas for usage. Dr. Kapoor insisted we stay for lunch, featuring a *bāḍi* dish. The meal included fresh wheat *capāṭi* flatbreads, a yogurt salad, and a dish we called "Vṛndāvana Bāḍi Sabji."

Which brings us to the present. *Bāḍi*, also called *wārian* and *wāḍi*, is India's equivalent to TVP, textured vegetable protein. Aside from adding toothsome texture to a dish, it is a fat-free protein source with varied flavor.

It is easy (though time-consuming) to make at home, and you can freeze it for up to one year. The good news for busy cooks is that *bāḍi* is available ready-made at larger Indian grocery stores.

Aside from *bāḍi*'s traditional use in Indian cuisine, I have added pan-toasted *bāḍi* bits to everything from chili to potato salad to taco stuffing to Spanish rice.

Try the following recipe. To experiment further with the versatility of *bāḍis*, check the index in *Lord Krishna's Cuisine* or *The Best of Lord Krishna's Cuisine* and work through several more dishes. Then come up with a few creations of your own.

VRNDĀVANA POTATO-BĀḌI STEW (Serves 6)

For an everyday meal, Sunday brunch, or company dinner, try this dish with flame-toasted *capāṭi* flatbreads and a salad.

- 1 cup yellow *mūṅg bāḍi*
- 2 tablespoons *ghee* or cold-pressed corn oil
- 2 tablespoons grated ginger root
- 1 teaspoon cumin seed
- ½ teaspoon turmeric

- ¼ teaspoon cayenne, or as desired
- 4 medium-size tomatoes (about 1 pound), chopped
- 3 medium-size potatoes, peeled and cut into ½-inch cubes
- 6 cups water
- ¼ cup chopped cilantro or parsley
- salt and pepper

Crush the *bāḍi* into roughly ½-inch bits. Heat the *ghee* or oil over moderate heat in a heavy casserole. Add the *bāḍi* and pan-fry until lightly browned. Remove with a slotted spoon and set aside.

Add the ginger and cumin and fry them until the seeds darken a few shades. Stir in the turmeric, cayenne, and tomatoes. Cook, stirring occasionally, until slightly pulpy, about 10 minutes.

Add the *bāḍi*, potatoes, water, and half the herbs. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook about 30 minutes, until the potatoes are tender. Add the remaining herbs, season with salt and pepper, and set aside covered for 10 minutes before serving.

Yamuna Devi is the author of Lord Krishna's Cuisine: The Art of Indian Vegetarian Cooking and is a regular contributor to The Washington Post.



INDIA'S HERITAGE

What Is the Secret?

by Kṛṣṇa Smaraṇa Dāsa

THROUGH ASSOCIATION with the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, many people move into its temples and significantly change their way of life. Some make their home into a temple, and others go to the Sunday feast every week. Still others give time, money, and energy to various projects.

People come to the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement even though it doesn't offer them monetary or other material compensation. The movement's leaders never promise that if you become a devotee the movement will send your kids through college or

pay your mortgage. No. Still, people take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, sometimes leaving behind luxurious lives. Why do people all over the world from all walks of life join the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement? What inspires them to do so? What is the secret?

My first glimpse of this secret came in 1983, on Janmāṣṭamī, the appearance day of Lord Kṛṣṇa. One of my friends coaxed me to go to the Atlanta Hare Kṛṣṇa temple. Even as we approached the temple, I was attracted by the sweet sound of the drums and *karatālas* (small cymbals).

My steps quickened to the temple room—packed and utterly captivating! The devotees, absorbed in the chanting, danced in a circle.

I watched a tall devotee with glasses (Paramparā Dāsa)—he had a smile from ear to ear. Every now and then he would raise his arms high in the air and lose himself in the *kīrtana*. How happy he looked! I was moved by his expression of joy and devotion.

After some time the *kīrtana* ended, and the next item—reading from *Kṛṣṇa* book—brought back old memories.

My thoughts went back to my

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heritage. I was born and raised in a large family, rich in the tradition of the Śrī Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya, and my parents had taught me how to celebrate religious occasions such as Janmāṣṭamī. We'd decorate the house with flowers, *ghee* lamps, and other items. My mother would draw tiny pairs of footprints with rice flour from the entrance doorstep to the altar to show the way for baby Kṛṣṇa. We'd recite prayers and read Kṛṣṇa stories till late at night.

We'd also sing songs about Kṛṣṇa. My father would make a huge offering to Kṛṣṇa of fruits, sweets, savories, vegetables, rice, condensed milk, and many other delicacies. Finally, we'd have the *ārati*, and my mother and sisters would sing.

I never expected this in a Hare Kṛṣṇa temple. The devotees did everything strictly in accordance with the Vedic standards I'd been used to. And what devotion they had for Kṛṣṇa! So powerful that in a flash my long-forgotten training came lucidly back to my mind.

I'd been a victim of false propaganda by newspapers, movies, and people who had no clear idea of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. This negative bias was soon to give way to a genuine respect for the devotees, who were truly representing the Vedic culture.

After I got married in 1987, my wife and I began visiting the temple more, and I was increasingly impressed by the devotees. They reminded me of my own early spiritual upbringing, which I had rejected in favor of satisfying my materialistic goals.

The Hare Kṛṣṇa temple became our favorite place. We'd go there almost every weekend. There I was able to think of God peacefully. We

loved the *prasādam*, the *kīrtanas*, the Deities, the devotees, the books, the morning programs, the classes. And above all, we felt fortunate to be getting a full dose of our own culture, which we had left behind long ago. Who would have expected that the Hare Kṛṣṇas would perfectly adopt our culture and teach it again to us?

Years ago I had received spiritual initiation into the Rāmānuja Sampradāya. I had taken vows to practice regulative principles of devotional life and try to remember Lord Nārāyaṇa in all my activities. But because of dwindling spiritual association during college, I eventually forgot.

The devotees, aware of the illusory potency of the Lord, were sympathetic and explained how I could fulfill my earlier vows. They said Lord Caitanya was giving me another chance to taste the bliss of devotional service.

As we visited other ISKCON temples, whether in the midst of the bustling traffic of New York City or in the quiet woods of North Carolina or on the beaches of Miami, we found the same mood of devotional service to Kṛṣṇa. Rising early in the morning, the devotees went about their devotional duties with great dedication. Sometimes we felt the spiritual aura for blocks around the temple.

Still, clouds of doubt would at times hang over my head. In spite of a good upbringing, I was having trouble maintaining my spiritual life. Yet these devotees, even though born and raised in a non-Vedic culture, seemed easily able to follow the path of *bhakti-yoga*. How was this possible?

I tried to rationalize in many ways. Perhaps they were also more easily prone to fall down. After all, this was their newly discovered religion. So it wasn't surprising they were showing

so much interest. They were like children enjoying a new toy. Surely, I surmised, in time they'd leave Kṛṣṇa behind.

These doubts, and others like them, scattered as I read and heard Śrīla Prabhupāda presenting the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. His teachings followed right in line from Lord Kṛṣṇa, Brahmā, Madhva, and Lord Caitanya.

Besides the philosophy, I couldn't ignore the devotees' deep commitment to Kṛṣṇa and Śrīla Prabhupāda. Nor could I ignore Kṛṣṇa's personal reciprocation with His devotees. I was especially touched by the devotees' sincere efforts to spread Lord Caitanya's message. In return, I saw, Kṛṣṇa gave the devotees the strength and intelligence to carry on with their service.

I soon realized that trying to understand the devotees' secret by guessing was like trying to taste honey by licking the jar. To understand would require humble submission. I'd have to go after the nectar like a bumble bee.

Soon my wife and I started chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* regularly, and our taste for devotional service grew. We found that the Hare Kṛṣṇa temple provided a simple method for satisfying our senses in the service of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Our senses were no longer satisfied by materialistic engagements. Gradually, by hearing from the devotees, our consciousness was becoming purified. And we knew we were hooked by Kṛṣṇa. Whatever the secret, it didn't matter. We were going for it.

Today, as my appreciation for Śrīla Prabhupāda's teachings keeps growing, I'm able to understand the secret of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement more and more. Strictly following the Vedic

scriptures, Śrīla Prabhupāda created ISKCON, a society for devotees of the Lord, to help them grow together in spiritual life. Recognizing that *māyā*, illusion, is strong and the individual soul tiny, Śrīla Prabhupāda, out of his great compassion, wanted to give us a chance to go back to God-head together.

Even though the Śrī Sampradāya is much older than ISKCON, only because ISKCON provided a society of devotees in all parts of the world was I able to carry on. I find that in ISKCON even weak devotees become fixed in devotional service quickly by

associating with strong devotees. Even the beginning devotee is able to act on the platform of purity and taste the nectar of devotional service.

Lord Caitanya's special oceanic mercy can make anyone chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa and dance in ecstatic love of Kṛṣṇa. He freely distributes the holy name to everyone. And Śrīla Prabhupāda is His specially chosen devotee. Through the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement Lord Caitanya is pouring His mercy on all of us, without discrimination. This mercy is so powerful it can flood the entire universe with *Kṛṣṇa-prema*, love of God.

Perhaps this special mercy was what I saw doing its work on that Janmā-ṣṭamī day.

Kṛṣṇa Smaraṇa Dāsa (Krishan V. Pagalthivarthi) earned his Ph.D. in mechanical engineering from Georgia Tech. After teaching at Georgia Tech, he was senior research engineer for Southwest Research Institute. Originally from South India, he and his wife, Kṛṣṇāṅgī Devī Dāsī, are disciples of ISKCON leader Romapāda Swami. Kṛṣṇa Smaraṇa is now vice president and development director of the ISKCON temple in Houston, Texas.



SCHOOLING KṚṢṆA'S CHILDREN

“Do You Force Your Children?”

by Urmilā Devī Dāsī

WE SIT IN THE Calcutta Airport waiting for an announcement, the flight three hours late. The many ceiling fans do little to refresh the air, polluted by cigarette smoke and hundreds of bodies. My ten-year-old son and I sit by a door, opened a crack but with negligible effect. I talk with a blue-saried nun from Puna who wishes us the best in our spiritual journey. Then I talk with a couple who supervise testing for students seeking admission to European and American schools.

Then, from an Indian gentleman, the inevitable questions.

“Is this your son?”

“Yes, and we have a seventeen-year-old son and a thirteen-year-old daughter.”

“Are they also practicing Hare Kṛṣṇa?”

“Oh, yes.”

“Do you force them?”

I take one of the last drinks from my bottle of mineral water and lean forward.

Force. Everyone wants to know if we force. The devotees at our project in Māyāpur discussed this with me at length, and here it is again. Our three children certainly do not feel forced. Yet we expect, and to some degree require, their active and willing parti-

cipation in our spiritual life, especially the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*. But how can one require willing participation? I've explained it countless times, and again I beg the Lord to give me intelligence and the ability to ignore the second-hand tobacco smoke.

“I don't like the word *force*,” I say at last. “Don't parents ‘force’ their children to brush their teeth and wear clean clothes? Yet neither parents nor children generally see this as force. Why?”

“Well, we try to explain the reasons.”

“Yes, and we set an example.”

“And habit?”

“Yes, we try to develop spiritual habits in the children. Of course, spiritual life and a love for Kṛṣṇa's name are natural for the soul, so these things are not externally imposed by habit. But developing habits in children brings them to take as natural what is actually natural.”

“Like—you wake up early, right?”

“Yes, three-thirty. So to our children that's simply a normal time to wake up. They see six o'clock as late. In the same way, a normal person likes clean air and clean lungs. Not like this room.”

We both lean back, and my son Keśava continues to chant on his beads.

“Mātā,” he asks me, “I want to see if I can leave this area and walk around the airport.”

“Sure.”

I turn to the gentleman. “It may sometimes appear that we demand things of the children, but the point is to awaken their natural attraction for Kṛṣṇa. It's like training children to brush their teeth regularly so they'll come to feel uncomfortable with an unclean mouth.”

My acquaintance is satisfied and turns to his newspaper.

Just how do we instill in our children love for spiritual life? First, we should surround them with spiritual activities, especially the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, and protect them from all opportunities to grow fond of the modes of passion and ignorance. These precautions won't narrow children. Doing these things is as reasonable as surrounding children with a clean house and getting rid of dirt from clothes, floors, and furniture. Letting children live with dirt won't broaden them.

We sit our children by us when we chant, and we expect them to chant

too, just as we put clean clothes in their drawers and expect them to wear them. We teach our children the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, show them how to finger the beads and play musical instruments, and guide them daily, as much as we check every day to see if they're dressed for the weather or have finished their chores.

It's easy to understand how to teach the mechanical, external aspects, but is it even possible to teach the internal, the feelings?

Just by teaching the externals, of course, we give a powerful yet subtle message: "This is important." For

example, when a mother, during her *japa* chanting time, always insists that her young child play quietly, the child realizes the seriousness with which his mother approaches her chanting. So the child will naturally imitate.

Beyond that, one can set the example of a deep commitment to spiritual perfection throughout one's life. The children should see that this is a joyful commitment, free from hypocrisy and self-righteousness. The children need to be inspired by regularly hearing the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And, finally, we can pray to Kṛṣṇa, who is in the heart of our children, to

reveal His glories to them.

With this program and the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa, as our children mature they will voluntarily choose to work for the ultimate treasure, love of God.

Urmilā Devī Dāsi became a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda in 1973. She has been involved in ISKCON education for the last seven years, primarily as the principal of the Detroit gurukula. She recently moved with her husband and their three children to the ISKCON community in Hillsborough, North Carolina, where she is working to establish a model of spiritual education.



STRAIGHT TALK

Self-Esteem

by Bhakta Vic of 108

NOT SO LONG AGO I wrote a column—I don't know if you'll remember it—about "Mr. Sex-Is-Great." I got some funny feedback about that. Just last night I gave a class in Baltimore on the same subject—and I got the same response:

People say I'm messing up their self-esteem.

They say that when you stress how the body is a tourniquet of pain, a bowl of blood and bones . . . when you stress the stupidity of being attracted to the opposite sex . . . when you point out the insanity of seeking protection in material relationships . . . they say this makes people get all downcast and negative about themselves.

And when I sometimes hear even *devotees* say this, it freaks out my brain.

Why do people object to a plain statement of *facts*? The body is a vehicle of torture, and to get involved in material love affairs is stupid. This is basic reality. If that hurts us to hear, we're out of touch.

Yeah, you might find what I say more comfy if I put the whole thing in sofa-cushion words or pad it with New Age fluff. Then what's being said will be vague, and even if we're fuzzy about what it means, we can all pretend we agree.

I'd rather be blunt and make sure I make my point.

Anyway, why such a pained response? Neither my article nor my class stressed the "negative" aspects of the body. My main theme was positive: that loving Kṛṣṇa is the way to solve all problems. But as soon as you mention something negative about the body, everything else you say is forgotten. Why is that?

Again and again I was told that "harping" on the yukky facts about this body and this world will make people get all twisted and sullen. But one simple thing is being overlooked, so simple it's totally basic—as in the most *basic*:

You're not this body. You're not of this world.

If hearing the bad news about the body and world gets you down on yourself, it's because you still think the body is your self and that you're part of this world.

I'm not at all against self-esteem. But the point is: You can't get genuine self-esteem from something that ain't your self.

Being real "happy" with "who you are" (in other words, with your body and mind) . . . smiling all peachy and being "positive" about the material world . . . It's a hallucination, a drug.

You can put fancy makeup over the ugly facts, but don't expect it to last through the hard cold shower of reality.

The body stinks, to be attached to it is dumb, and we're torturing ourselves if we're prolonging our petty material relationships. Finessing these facts won't make us feel good. It'll wind us up getting our faces slammed against the dark sidewalk of ignorance. Can we pretend it's not true?

I'm not chopping down self-esteem. What I'm down on is false esteem. Real self-esteem we want and need. *Real* self-esteem comes from the *real* self. Yes, this body is a cesspool. But I'm not this body.

Who am I in the smiling land of Vṛndāvana? What unique artistic talents will I engage in loving worship of the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-candra? Will my singing voice charm Them? Will I dance with grace and enthusiasm, delighting the unlimited spiritual minds of the divine couple?

I am the dear servant of the servant of the most wonderful loving persons in existence. *That* is self-esteem.

Anything else is self-deception.

Bhakta Vic of 108 joined the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement about two years ago. He and his band (called 108) are based at ISKCON's temple in Washington, D.C.



Mantras in Your Home

by Rohiṇinandana Dāsa

MY FAMILY AND I spend a few minutes each morning memorizing Sanskrit verses, or *ślokas*. One of us recites a *śloka* line by line, and the rest of us repeat. We've followed this simple practice for a year now, and already I can see some good effects. Our home is becoming more spiritualized, more "Kṛṣṇa-ized."

Śrīla Prabhupāda explains in *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* that the practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness respiritualize us. A transcendental flow of sound in the form of *mantras* can animate our spiritually inert minds.

The Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* is the chief of all *mantras*. And the verses of the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* are all considered *mantras*. Kṛṣṇa's own words and the descriptions of His qualities and activities are on the same absolute platform as Kṛṣṇa Himself. They are therefore known as *śabdabrahma*, transcendental sound.

Learning verses helps us remember Kṛṣṇa at various times of the day. When the moon floats in the sky or the sun rises, we can remember, *prabhāsmi śaśi-sūrayaḥ*: "I am the light of the sun and the moon" (*Bhagavad-gītā* 7.8). When we drink—*raso 'ham apsu kaunteya*: "I am the taste of water" (*Bhagavad-gītā* 7.8). When we cook—*patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyam yo me bhaktyā prayacchati*: "If one offers Me with love and devotion a leaf, a flower, fruit, or water, I will accept it." (*Bhagavad-gītā* 9.26). When we go to work—*karmaṇy evādhikāras te mā phaleṣu kadācana*: "You have a right to perform your prescribed duty, but you are not entitled to the fruits of work" (*Bhagavad-gītā* 2.47). Or when our mind feels disturbed—*asaṁśayaṁ mahā-bāho mano durnigrahaṁ calam/ abhyāsena tu kaunteya vairāgyeṇa ca gṛhyate*: "O mighty-armed son of Kuntī, it is undoubtedly very difficult to curb the restless mind, but it is possible by

suitable practice and by detachment" (*Bhagavad-gītā* 6.35).

Lord Kṛṣṇa in the form of sound can be with us in all phases of our life. Kṛṣṇa is already with us, but we have lost touch with Him. Learning verses is an effective way to remember Him again.

Learning verses will also help us become purified of the muddy covering of Māyā, the goddess of illusion, who uses her charms to distract us

from life's purpose of spiritual perfection. Māyā allures everyone in gross and subtle ways. TV, music, football, computers, sex, gossip, a new mountain-bike, the beauty of nature—all these temporary shadows of reality are apt to distract us from our eternal connection with Kṛṣṇa. But the challenge of learning a new verse will help our wandering mind concentrate on something real and strengthen our ability to distinguish reality from

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illusion. Through the eyes of scripture (*sāstra-cakṣuḥ*) we'll see the world for what it is.

Learning verses is fun, too. As a family, we have a lot of fun quizzing one another and bringing verses into our conversations.

Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted his followers to learn verses. The verses he learned as a child proved useful in his preaching later on. And your children too, by learning some verses, will later in life be able to draw upon a storehouse of essential knowledge in concise form.

The Vedic culture is preserved mainly through sound. So the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, through sound, is trying to establish spiritual

culture in every home. One way we can take part in this great effort is by being repositories of *mantras*. Our attempt to understand Kṛṣṇa consciousness and spread it to others will be enhanced when supported by the sound of scripture.

You may be finding all this a bit daunting. When you hear a class at a temple or listen to a taped lecture by Śrīla Prabhupāda, you may sometimes feel lost in a maze of unfamiliar verses and unfamiliar words. But as you hear more, you'll pick up certain words that appear regularly. Besides the names of Lord Kṛṣṇa, you'll often hear words like *karma*, *jñāna*, *bhakti*, *tattva*, *jīva*, and *dharma*. As these words become familiar, your knowl-

edge will expand until you feel at ease reading Śrīla Prabhupāda's books or hearing him or his devotees speak.

If you have a big block about Sanskrit, it's fine to simply learn the verses—or at least the ideas—in English. The pure sound of the Sanskrit language has benefit, but as Śrīla Prabhupāda explained, the thoughts behind the language are its most important feature.

Somehow or other, add *mantras* to your life.

Rohiṇinandana Dāsa lives in southern England with his wife and their three children. Write to him at Woodgate Cottage, Beckley Nr. Rye, E. Sussex TN31 6UH, UK.



THE LAND, THE COWS, AND KRṢṆA

The Farmer and Kṛṣṇa

by Hare Kṛṣṇa Devī Dāsī

I'VE TALKED ABOUT how farming declines when leaders make it hard for would-be farmers to get land. And even when the U.S. government made land easier to get, eventually cow slaughter and centralized agriculture made it nearly impossible for the small farmer to make a living.

Now let's look at the recent history of China, where the government gave farmers their own land and where farmers, by tradition, protected working oxen. Though I don't condone the extreme methods China used to change from centralized to family farming, a look at the history is informative.

Between 1949 and 1952, the new Communist regime took about forty-four percent of China's arable land from rich farmers and landlords and gave it to poor and landless peasants. Most of the land became family farms of about equal size. This land reform inspired farmers to work harder, and grain yields went up quickly.¹

By keeping some form of cow protection and putting farmers on the land, China improved the life of millions of its citizens. But two developments undermined self-sufficient

family farming: farm families gradually lost their land to collectivized production, and the Chinese became more willing to kill bulls for food. Tractors replaced bulls. And for tractor farming to pay off, landholdings had to be larger.

More subtle but perhaps even more important, the efforts at land reform had nothing to do with God.

Unless one nurtures one's essential relationship with God, farm work can quickly turn into drudgery. Then people lose their enthusiasm. So they run to jobs that pay them enough to buy new pleasures for their senses. As modern China turns more and more from the farm to the factory, she repeats the experience of other countries that have shifted from farming to industry—and the military. Consider this report from Song, a small Chinese village in the province of Henan:

Young people complain that there is another problem with Song. There is nothing to do here. "It's terribly boring here," complained Chen Yangmin, an 18-year-old native son. "Everybody wants to leave. . . ." For the young men of Song, the Army is a major escape route.²

And this report from the province of Guangdong:

One prosperous township brimming with companies is Houjie, . . . which has an official population of 75,000, mostly peasants who used to wade through surrounding rice paddies. But it is also a temporary home to more than 80,000 migrant laborers who work on assembly lines in the township's 900 factories. "There was nothing to do at home," Yan Jimei, a 20-year-old woman, said of her village in nearby Guanzi Province. "So I came here to look for a job. Life's much better here."³

Simple Living, Simply Boring

In the end, you'll find it hard to support yourself, sustain your farm, or practice permaculture without high thinking, or cultivating your eternal bond with the Supreme Lord. Simple living without high thinking is boring.

Seeing the misery caused when a few people hoard wealth, the Chinese Communists asked citizens to give up their greed and take only their given share. But if the search for pleasure is part of human nature, it can't be held down forever. "Just say no" is a motto



Children admire a decorated ox during the annual Govardhana Pūjā festival at Gītā Nāgarī Farm.

that won't work in the real world. As Kṛṣṇa Himself states, *nigrahaḥ kiṁ kariṣyati*: "What can repression accomplish?" Kṛṣṇa explains that the only lasting and effective way to get past sense pleasure is to get a higher taste. That higher taste comes from devotional service to the Lord, performed under the guidance of His envoys the *brāhmaṇas* (self-realized souls).

Sustainable, self-sufficient farming, therefore, calls for these three basics: The farmer must have land, he must protect and employ the cow and the bull, and he must be guided by qualified spiritual leaders.

Spiritual Leaders Ward Off Disaster

Spiritual leaders need a sound understanding of the scriptures to fulfill the role of reminding people of the will of the Lord. If spiritual leaders are unfit or not respected, they can't protect society.

For example, the Bible states, "Thou shall not kill," and even more specifically, "He that killeth an ox shall be as if he slew a man" (Isaiah 66.3). If early American spiritual leaders had truly grasped what this means, they could have warded off widespread social and ecological disaster—not to speak of senseless cruelty to millions of animals. But

they didn't. So farmers now find themselves boxed into unsustainable corners, and machine-heavy countries face the likelihood of an agricultural collapse just a few years down the road.

Spiritual Culture Motivates the Farmer

But spiritual leaders can't simply lay down prohibitions. "You shall not raise cows for slaughter. You shall not waste grain to make beer . . ." Beyond that, spiritual leaders must help farmers (and everyone else) come closer to the Supreme Lord and find satisfaction in devotional service.

This may sound abstract, so let me give some examples from my experience at Gītā Nāgarī Farm and the way the Lord's holidays are celebrated there. Though each holiday has its own special features, one of my favorites is Govardhana Pūjā. It commemorates Kṛṣṇa's lifting Govardhana Hill to shield the residents of Vṛndāvana from a devastating rain.

Early in the day many guests arrive to help make a huge feast for the Lord. They bring vegetables and flowers from their own gardens. Someone mixes up a huge batch of oats, wheat-flour, soymeal, and molasses, and the children make several hundred sticky molasses balls to feed the cows. Once

the kids are all washed off, they run to the barn to paint the cows with bright-colored hand prints. One special cow (often the milker's favorite) is decorated with golden hoofs and ankle bells, a bright silk blanket, and a feathered headdress. The whole barn is done up with bright-colored streamers and flags.

Back at the temple, the growing number of feast-makers listen to accounts of Kṛṣṇa's Govardhana pastimes. Other guests help decorate the ox-cart and the ox who will pull the Deities of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara to the barn to visit Their cows.

At last, as the chanting begins, the Deities in Their new jewelled outfits are placed onto the cart, and the ox pulls up the road to the barn amid the dancing and singing of the devotees. The Deities tour the barn and see all Their cows, to the constant chanting of the *kīrtana* party. Devotees then worship the Deities and the cow with incense, flowers, and water, just as Kṛṣṇa Himself did five thousand years ago. As the ceremony ends, the children dash for the boxes of molasses balls and make sure each cow gets a share (personal favorites get extra).

The ox-cart procession returns to the temple. Soon the time comes to worship Kṛṣṇa holding up Govardhana Hill. At Gītā Nāgarī the hill takes the

form of a large mound of sweet, but-
tery *halavā*, adorned with candy rocks,
bushes, and streams, and even candy
snakes. After the guests sing and walk
around the hill, they get to eat pieces
of it. Finally, everyone enjoys a great
feast that's been offered to the Lord.

From year to year, devotees add
new features to this wonderful cele-
bration of Kṛṣṇa's pastime among the
cows and cowherds of Vṛndāvana.
Sometimes devotees compete in saw-
ing firewood and in other games.
Sometimes the ox-workers read to the
Deities from a notebook listing ser-
vices the oxen have done during the
year.

The festival calls for a lot of extra
work. At the end of the day, everyone
is physically exhausted but spiritually
refreshed and satisfied.

No mundane festival can match the
natural simplicity and beauty of spiri-

tual festivals held in a country setting.
A festival for anything other than the
Supreme Lord and His pastimes can
never give the same satisfaction.
Kṛṣṇa is in the heart of all living
beings, even the cows and plants, and
He can reciprocate in a personal way
no one else can come close to. Devot-
ional service is Kṛṣṇa's internal
potency for pleasure, so nothing can
match the pleasure of serving Him.

The spiritual pleasure a person
feels by serving the Lord in a festival
like this is not like the pleasure one
gets from watching television or tak-
ing intoxicants. It's more like the
pleasure of drinking cool spring water
on a hot day. The pleasure we get
from serving Kṛṣṇa is a pure pleasure
we need to survive.

And if we can't get real pleasure
from serving Kṛṣṇa, we may have to
slave away in a hellish factory to get

money to buy some plastic unsatisfy-
ing pleasure. This is an important
lesson not only for China but for every-
one else too.

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SCIENCE: THE VEDIC VIEW

On God and Science

by Sadāpūta Dāsa

IN A RECENT BOOK REVIEW in
Scientific American, Harvard evolu-
tionist Stephen Jay Gould points out
that many scientists see no contradic-
tion between traditional religious
beliefs and the world view of modern
science. Noting that many evolution-
ists have been devout Christians, he
concludes, "Either half my colleagues
are enormously stupid, or else the
science of Darwinism is fully compat-
ible with conventional religious
beliefs—and equally compatible with
atheism, thus proving that the two
great realms of nature's factuality and
the source of human morality do not
strongly overlap."¹

The question of whether or not
science and religion are compatible
frequently comes up, and Gould him-
self points out that he is dealing with
it for the "umpteenth millionth time."
It is a question to which people are
prone to give muddled answers. Defi-
nitions of God and God's modes of
action in the world seem highly elas-

tic, and the desire to combine scien-
tific theories with religious doctrines
has impelled many sophisticated peo-
ple to stretch both to the limit. In the
end, something has to give.

To help us locate the snapping
point, let's look at what a few scien-
tists have said about God.

Dr. John A. O'Keefe, a NASA
astronomer and a practicing Catholic,
has said, "Among biologists, the
feeling has been since Darwin that all
of the intricate craftsmanship of life is
an accident, which arose because of
the operation of natural selection on
the chemicals of the earth's shell. This
is quite true. . . ."²

O'Keefe accepts that life devel-
oped on earth entirely through
physical processes of the kind envi-
sioned by Darwin. He stresses, how-
ever, that many features of the laws of
physics have just the right values to
allow for life as we know it. He con-
cludes from this that God created the
universe for man to live in—more

precisely, God did this at the moment
of the big bang, when the universe
and its physical laws sprang out of
nothing.

To support this idea, O'Keefe
quotes Pope Pius XII, who said in his
address to the Pontifical Academy of
Science in 1951:

In fact, it would seem that present-
day science, with one sweeping step
back across millions of centuries,
has succeeded in bearing witness to
the primordial *Fiat lux* ["Let there
be light"] uttered at the moment
when, along with matter, there burst
forth from nothing a sea of light and
radiation, while the particles of
chemical elements split and formed
into millions of galaxies.³

Now this might seem a reasonable
union of religion and science. God
creates the universe in a brief mo-
ment; then everything runs according
to accepted scientific principles. Of
the universe's fifteen-billion-year

*It would seem that O'Keefe, Gingerich,
and Dyson are advancing religious ideas that are scientifically
unacceptable. Unacceptable because they propose
an extra-scientific story for events that fall in the chosen domain
of science: the domain of all real phenomena.*

• • •

history, the first tiny fraction of a second is to be kept aside as sacred ground, roped off from scientific scrutiny. Will scientists agree not to trespass on this sacred territory?

Certainly not. Stephen Hawking, holder of Isaac Newton's chair at Cambridge University, once attended a conference on cosmology organized by Jesuits in the Vatican. The conference ended with an audience with the Pope. Hawking recalls:

He told us that it was all right to study the evolution of the universe after the big bang, but we should not inquire into the big bang itself because that was the moment of Creation and therefore the work of God. I was glad then that he did not know the subject of the talk I had just given at the conference—the possibility that space-time was finite but had no boundary, which means that it had no beginning, no moment of Creation.⁴

Whether or not Hawking's theory wins acceptance, this episode shows that science cannot allow any aspect of objective reality to lie outside its domain. We can get further insight into this by considering the views of Owen Gingerich of the Harvard Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics. In a lecture on modern cosmogony and Biblical creation, Gingerich also interpreted the big bang as God's act of creation. He went on to say that we are created in the image of God and that within us lie "a divine creative spark, a touch of the infinite consciousness, and conscience."⁵

What is this "divine spark"? Gingerich's words suggest that it is spiritual and gives rise to objectively observable behavior involving conscience. But mainstream science

rejects the idea of a nonphysical conscious entity that influences matter. Could "divine spark" be just another name for the brain, with its behavioral programming wired in by genetic and cultural evolution? If this is what Gingerich meant, he certainly chose misleading words to express it.

Freeman Dyson of Princeton's Institute for Advanced Studies arrived at ideas similar to those of Gingerich's, but from a non-Christian perspective.

I do not claim that the architecture of the universe proves the existence of God. I claim only that the architecture of the universe is consistent with the hypothesis that mind plays an essential role in its functioning. . . . Some of us may be willing to entertain the hypothesis that there exists a universal mind or world soul which underlies the manifestations of mind that we observe. . . . The existence of a world soul is a question that belongs to religion and not to science.⁶

Dyson fully accepts Darwin's theory of chance variation and natural selection. But he also explicitly grants mind an active role in the universe: "Our consciousness is not just a passive epiphenomenon carried along by chemical events in our brains, but an active agent forcing the molecular complexes to make choices between one quantum state and another."⁷ He also feels that the universe may, in a sense, have known we were coming and made preparations for our arrival.⁸

Dyson is verging on scientific heresy, and he cannot escape from this charge simply by saying he is talking about religion and not science. Quantum mechanics ties together

chance and the conscious observer. Dyson uses this as a loophole through which to introduce mind into the phenomena of nature. But if random quantum events follow quantum statistics as calculated by the laws of physics, then mind has no choice but to go along with the flow as a passive epiphenomenon. And if mind can make quantum events follow different statistics, then mind violates the laws of physics. Such violations are rejected not only by physicists but also by evolutionists, who definitely do not envision mind-generated happenings playing any significant role in the origin of species.

It would seem that O'Keefe, Gingerich, and Dyson are advancing religious ideas that are scientifically unacceptable. Unacceptable because they propose an extra-scientific story for events that fall in the chosen domain of science: the domain of all real phenomena.

To see what is scientifically acceptable, let us return to the remarks of Stephen Jay Gould. In his review in *Scientific American*, Gould says, "Science treats factual reality, while religion struggles with human morality."⁹ We can compare this to a statement by the eminent theologian Rudolf Bultmann: "The idea of God is imperative, not indicative; ethical and not factual."¹⁰

The point Gould and Bultmann make is that God has nothing to do with facts in the real world. God is involved not with what is but what ought to be, not with the phenomena of the world but people's ethical and moral values.

Of course, a spoken or written statement of what ought to be is part of what is. So if God is out of what is, He cannot be the source of statements

about what ought to be. These must simply be human statements, and so must all statements about God. As it's put by Don Cupitt, Cambridge philosopher of religion, "There is no longer anything out there for faith to correspond to, so the only test of faith now is the way it works out in life. The objects of faith, such as God, are seen as guiding spiritual ideals we live by, and not as beings."¹¹

This may sound like atheism, and so it is. But we shouldn't stop here. Human religious activity is part of the factual world, and so it also lies within the domain of science. While religious people "struggle with morality," inquisitive scientists struggle to explain man's religious behavior—unique in the animal kingdom—in terms of the Darwinian theory of evolution. This was foreshadowed by a remark made by Darwin himself in his early notes: "Love of the deity effect of organization, oh you materialist!"¹² Religious ideas, including love of God, must arise from the structure and conditioning of the brain, and these in turn must arise through genetic and cultural evolution. Darwin himself never tried to develop these ideas extensively, but in recent years sociobiologists such as Edward O. Wilson have.¹³

So is the science of Darwinism fully compatible with conventional religious beliefs? That depends on one's conventions. If by God you mean a real spiritual being who controls natural phenomena, even to a slight degree, then Darwinism utterly rejects your idea—not because science empirically disproves it, but because the idea goes against the fundamental scientific program of explaining all phenomena through the laws of physics. Religious beliefs are compatible with Darwinism only if they hold that God is simply a human idea having something to do with moral imperatives. But if this is what you believe, then instead of having religious beliefs, you have "scientific" beliefs about religion.

Judging from the theistic ideas of O'Keefe, Gingerich, and Dyson, many far-from-stupid scientists do believe in God and Darwinism. But in their efforts to combine truly incompatible ideas, they succumb to enormously muddled thinking. And so they commit scientific heresy in spite of themselves. If one is at all interested in knowledge of God, one should recognize that such knowledge is not compatible with mainstream science, and in particular not with Darwinism.

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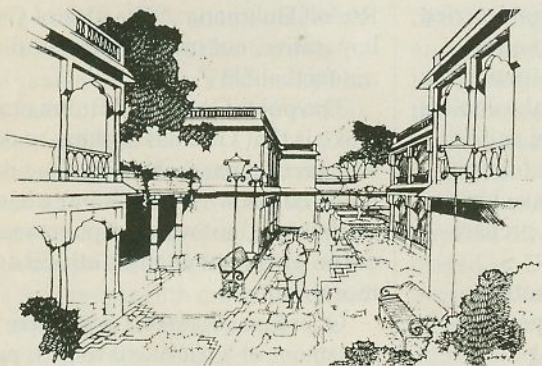
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THE SIX TREATISES OF ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪ

— AN OVERVIEW —

by Satya Nārāyaṇa Dāsa and Kuṇḍalī Dāsa

INTRODUCTION

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA considered the *Ṣaṭ Sandarbhas* (*Six Treatises*) the most scholarly and exacting of all texts on the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. They put forward a rigorous analysis of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. In this first installment of a seven-part series on the *Sandarbhās*, we shall give some background on the life of the author. Further, so that readers can better appreciate why the need arose for such an exacting work, we shall also give a sketch of the main philosophical systems of India.

Whoever hankers for a precise and flawless presentation of theology can find it in the *Sandarbhās*. In describing the transcendental abode of God and how its intricate affairs are conducted, the *Sandarbhās* go deeply into detail, leaving hardly a query or doubt left unanswered. No loose ends, no nettlesome inconsistencies. For the author, Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī, leaves nothing to chance. Indeed, in the nearly five hundred years since the *Sandarbhās* were written, no one has attempted to refute them, and no one seems ready to try.



Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī

Jīva Gosvāmī was born in 1511 in the village of Rāmakeli in Bengal. Anupama, his father, a sold-out pure devotee of Lord Rāmacandra, passed away while Jīva was still young.

When Lord Caitanya visited Jīva's uncles, Rūpa and Sanātana, Jīva was four or five years old. Later, when his uncles left Rāmakeli for Vṛndāvana, Jīva went to Navadvīpa, Bengal, where he met Lord Caitanya's associate Lord Nityānanda. Jīva was only fourteen. Lord Nityānanda took him on what became the first pilgrimage tour encircling Navadvīpa. Afterwards the Lord sent Jīva to join his two uncles in Vṛndāvana.

On his way to Vṛndāvana Jīva went first to Benares, which was and still is one of the great seats of learning in India. Jīva became a student of Madhusūdana Vacaspati, a renowned scholar in many branches of Vedic knowledge. This scholar is said to have been a disciple of Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, whom Lord Caitanya had defeated and converted in Jagannātha Purī.

Under Madhusūdana Vacaspati's tutelage Jīva Gosvāmī quickly mastered various Sanskrit grammars, the *Vedas*, astrology, the six systems of philosophy,

Jīva Gosvāmī would compose a verse in its entirety within his mind. Once he had it complete he would write it down, and he never edited or changed it.



and other fields of scholarship. When finished with his studies, Jīva went on to Vṛndāvana, where he became the editor for his uncles, Rūpa Gosvāmī and Sanātana. Later he wrote commentaries on some of their works and wrote numerous other works as well.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī was the most prolific of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana. His books together are said to equal the eighteen *Mahā-purāṇas*.

His way of writing is worthy of mention. He would compose a verse in its entirety within his mind. Once he had it complete he would write it down. It is said that he composed and wrote so rapidly that he would not wait for the ink to dry on the page; he would write the next verse on a new page while the first page was drying. By the time he finished the second verse, the first page would be dry, and he would write the third verse on the back of the first page. Once he committed a verse to paper, he never edited or changed it.

In beginning the *Ṣaṭ Sandarbhas*, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī says that another of the Gosvāmīs, Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, composed a work of this sort but did not complete it. Jīva, therefore, for the pleasure of Rūpa Gosvāmī and Sanātana, set out to complete the task.

To appreciate his motive fully, we need to know something of India's philosophical development up to Jīva's time, which coincides with the Renaissance in Europe.

Indian philosophy in the early sixteenth century was quite developed, compared to the philosophical traditions of the West. Even before Lord Buddha, who appeared five hundred years before Christ, Indian metaphysics was already far ahead of what was developing in Europe.

In India, philosophy is usually divided along two main lines, theistic and atheistic. Buddhist and Jain philosophy, and the materialistic philosophy of Carvāka Muni, are counted as atheistic

or unorthodox because they do not accept the *Vedas*. The *Vedas* are commonly accepted by their adherents as having originally emanated from God, not from any imperfect human intellect or speculative source. So in the Indian tradition any system of thought not grounded in the *Vedas*, even if it includes belief in God or gods, is automatically counted as atheistic.

Opposing the three atheistic systems, then, are the six theistic systems, which do accept the *Vedas*. These six systems are as follows:

1. *Sāṅkhya*. The central idea in this system is that a living being can become free from ignorance by understanding the twenty-four elements that constitute matter. (There are two types of Sāṅkhya philosophy—one theistic, the other atheistic.)

2. *Yoga*. In this system, mind is the cause of bondage and also the cause of salvation. By meditation, one should control the mind and thus transcend matter. This system was propounded by the sage Patañjali.

3. *Nyāya*. This is a system of logic. It states that there are twelve knowables and four means of knowing. With their help one should understand ultimate reality and attain salvation. Nyāya was propounded by Gautama Muni.

4. *Vaiśeṣika*. This system was developed by a sage called Kaṇāda. He taught that there are nine elements and twenty-four qualities and that understanding these leads to self-realization.

5. *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā*. The gist of this system, taught by Jaimini, is that one attains perfection by performing sacrifices according to the Vedic injunctions.

6. *Uttarā Mīmāṃsā*. This system is more commonly known as Vedānta, which means "the supreme end of knowledge." Its writings were compiled by Vedavyāsa, the *guru* of Jaimini. It has two branches. In one, devotion is the means to perfection. In the other, one realizes oneself by understanding

the all-pervading, impersonal Absolute Truth.

Because certain of the systems complement one another, the six systems are generally paired into three groups. Thus we have Sāṅkhya and Yoga, Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika, and Pūrva Mīmāṃsā and Uttarā Mīmāṃsā. Despite this arrangement, however, the Uttarā Mīmāṃsā, or *Vedānta-sūtra*, is widely accepted as the apex of all six systems because it deals exclusively with the Absolute Truth. It does not concern itself with any feature of the mundane world.

Originally the *Vedas* were too vast for a person to study and assimilate in a single lifetime, what to speak of discerning their conclusion. Therefore Śrīla Vyāsadeva, the compiler of the *Vedas*, summarized their essence in Sanskrit *sūtras*, terse codes. And so the *Vedānta-sūtras*, also known as the *Brahma-sūtras*, set forth the essence of Vedic wisdom.

Various thinkers have focused their attention on understanding and explaining the *Vedānta-sūtras* through elaborate commentaries. These commentators fall into two general categories—Advaita-vādīs and Dvaita-vādīs.

The Advaita-vādīs interpret the *sūtras* to mean that the Absolute Truth is formless. Having no personal attributes, the Absolute is an eternally conscious but otherwise featureless state of existence, to which all variegated manifestations are inferior. This view held by the Advaita-vādīs is called the impersonal conception. The favorite slogan of the Advaita-vādīs is *brahma satyaṁ jagan mithyā*: impersonal reality is the only truth, and all else is illusory or false.

Dvaita-vādīs interpret the same *sūtras* to reach the opposite conclusion: The Absolute Truth is a person. He has a spiritual form and many variegated attributes. The impersonal feature described above is but the brilliant light emanating from the transcendental body of this Absolute Person, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This is the personal conception

of the Absolute Truth.

Śrīla Vyāsadeva himself has written his explanation of Vedānta, the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Therein he establishes that the Absolute Truth is indeed a person. All who come in the line of Śrīla Vyāsadeva, including Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, accept, therefore, that the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the natural and authoritative commentary on the *Vedānta-sūtras*. It is the final word on the matter, having flowed from the pen of the original author. After all, who could know the mind of Vyāsa better than Vyāsa himself?

Yet the Sanskrit grammar of the *Bhāgavatam* is so complex that it lends itself to being twisted in any number of ways. Predictably, the members of the impersonalist school have gone in for such twisting.

To further complicate matters, the personalist schools, of which there are four, stand in broad agreement about the personal nature of the Absolute Truth yet differ on many fine details. Hence the need arose for a thorough going analysis of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that could put to rest the many thorny issues of interpretation.

Finally, five hundred years ago, Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu ordered His chief followers, the six Gosvāmīs, to write books about unalloyed devotion to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. So the Gosvāmīs wrote many books on the glories of pure devotional service, giving from many angles of vision the true purport of spiritual life.

Among these many texts, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī's six analytical treatises on the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* hold a special place. In his introductory words, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī says that he will now reveal the heart of Śrīla Vyāsadeva. He then proceeds to analyze the *Bhāgavatam* with such rigor that he leaves little room for doubt: *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* does reveal the highest feature of the Absolute Truth, who is indeed a person, and the identity of that person is Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

The *Sandarbhās* are so profoundly satisfying that no matter how many times one may have read the *Bhāgavatam* and relished it, reading it again in the light of Jīva's analysis puts the experience on an entirely different plane. It raises one to new heights of spiritual relish and de-

light. A single reading should be enough to convince one that *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is indeed a spotless revelation, with not a tint of mundane ideas or futile speculations.

As already mentioned, there are six parts or books, each delving into a different aspect of the *Bhāgavatam* philosophy. First is the *Tattva Sandarbha*, which has two divisions. In the first division Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī sets forth the *pramānas*, or the epistemology of the personalist school. Here he tackles such questions as What are the means of attaining knowledge? and What is the evidence or proof in support of those means? In the second division he gives the *prameya*; that is, he explains the object to be realized by knowledge.

Bhāgavata Sandarbha is the second book. Here Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī speaks about the Personality of Godhead, His abode, and His associates. In the *Paramātmā Sandarbha* Śrīla Jīva tells of the various Supersoul manifestations of the Supreme Lord and describes how the Supersoul is related with each individual soul in the material world. Śrīla Jīva also describes *māyā*, or the external potency of God.

In the *Kṛṣṇa Sandarbha* Śrīla Jīva shows that the form of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the original Personality of Godhead and explains why He is the object of loving devotional service. Then, in the *Bhakti Sandarbha*, Jīva establishes the path of devotion as the sole means to direct God realization. Finally, in the *Prīti Sandarbha*, he analyzes *prema-bhakti*, devotional service in pure love of God, and shows how it is the supreme goal of life for all living beings.

In the next installment we shall give a synopsis of parts one and two of the *Tattva Sandarbha*. 🌸

Satyā Nārāyaṇa Dāsa was born in a family of devotees in a village between Vṛndāvana and Delhi. He holds a post-graduate degree in engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology. While working in the United States as a computer software consultant, he joined ISKCON in 1981. He later received spiritual initiation from ISKCON leader Bhaktisvarūpa Dāmodara Swami. He now teaches Sanskrit at the Bhaktivedanta Swami International Gurukula in Vṛndāvana and is translating the Ṣaṭ Sandarbhas.

Kuṇḍalī Dāsa joined ISKCON in 1973 in New York City. He has taught Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the United States, India, the Middle East, and eastern and western Europe. He has written many articles for Back to Godhead and is now editing Satya Nārāyaṇa Dāsa's translation of the Ṣaṭ Sandarbhas.

CENTERS AROUND THE WORLD

UPDATE

We print a full list of centers in the January and July issues, and we send new subscribers the full list. In the other issues, we print changes to the list. Here are the changes since the last issue.

NEW LISTINGS

- Kracow, Poland** — ul. Ehrenberga 15, 31-309
Kracow/ Tel. +48 (12) 362885
- Denver, Colorado, USA (dining place)** —
Govinda's at ISKCON Denver
- Timisoara, Romania** — ISKCON, Porumbescu 92,
1900 Timisoara/ Tel. (40) 61 54776
- Tucson, Arizona, USA (restaurant)** — Govinda's at
ISKCON Tucson
- Port Elizabeth, South Africa** — 10 Skegnes Rd.,
Summerstrand/ Tel. +27 (41) 153-3353
- Vancouver, Canada (restaurant)** — The Hare
Krishna Place, 46 Begbie St., New Westminster

REVISED

- San Francisco, California, USA (restaurant)** —
Govinda's at ISKCON Berkeley/ Tel. (510) 644-
2777
- San Francisco, California, USA** — 84 Carl St.,
94117 Tel. (415) 661-7320
- Carriere, Mississippi, USA (New Talavan)** —
phone: (601) 798-6623
- Johannesburg, South Africa** — 14 Goldreich St.,
Hillbrow 2001, (mail: P.O. Box 10667,
Johannesburg 2000)/ Tel. +27 (11) 484-3273
- Mayapur, West Bengal, India** — phone: +91
(34762) 218 or 213
- Mulberry, Tennessee, USA (Murari-sevaka)** —
phone: (615) 759-6888
- Nairobi, Kenya** — phone: +254 (05) 744365
- New Delhi, India** — replacing Greater Kailash
address is: Sant Nagar Main Road (Garhi),
behind Nehru Place Complex (mail: P.O. Box
7061, New Delhi 110 065)/ Tel. (011) 641-9701
or 2058
- Osafia, Israel** — P.O. Box 1105, Osafia 30090/ Tel.
+972 (04) 390342
- North Sydney, Australia (temple & restaurant)** —
180 Falcon St., N. Sydney, NSW 2060/ Tel. (02)
959-4558
- Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujarat, India** — ISKCON,
Hare Krishna Land, 388120/ Tel. (02692) 30796
- Weimar, Germany** — phone: +49 (03643) 5954

CLOSED

- Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India (farm)**
Hardwar, U.P., India
**San Francisco restaurant (new location: ISKCON
Berkeley)**

NATHDWARA GATEWAY TO THE LORD

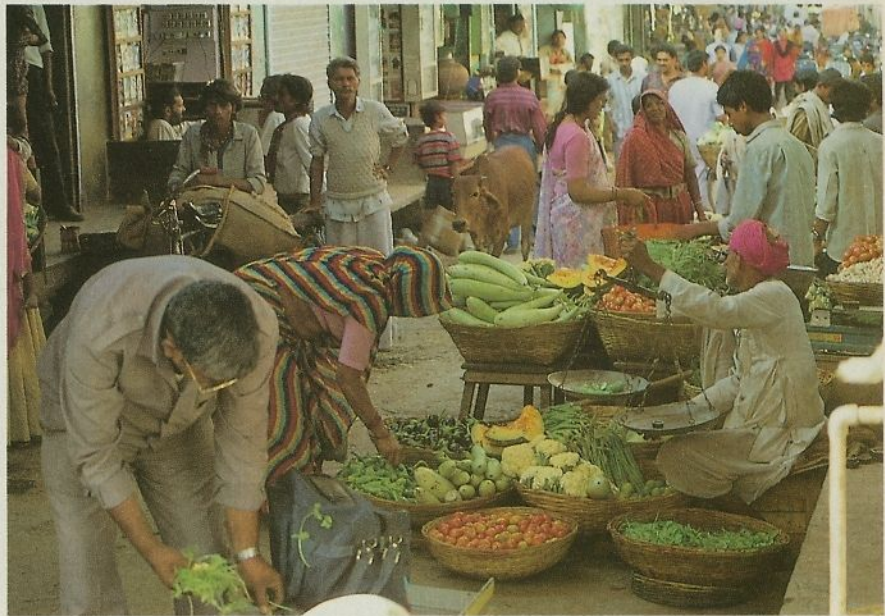
Lord Kṛṣṇa in His enchanting form as the lifter of Govardhana Hill draws thousands of pilgrims to one of India's most popular temples.

A popular Nathdwara painting shows Śrīnāthajī being worshiped by Vallabhācārya and Yamunājī.





Ornately painted elephants adorn the main entrance of the Śrīnāthajī temple (left). Below, pilgrims and locals shop for fresh produce in the busy market.



ON PILGRIMAGE AT NATHDWARA

by Bhakti Vikāśa Swami

photos by Mahā-Viṣṇu Dāsa

• • •

IN KALI-YUGA, the present age of quarrel and hypocrisy, so many bad qualities prevail, but when we reached Nathdwara we found the quality of devotion to Kṛṣṇa still strong.

Nathdwara is in the Indian state of Rajasthan, but most of the pilgrims who come here are from the state of Gujarat, whose border lies less than a hundred kilometers away. So the mood in

Nathdwara is very much influenced by the Gujaratis.

Gujaratis have gone all over India and all over the world, and they are a very successful kind of people, especially in business. Many are doctors, professors, and professionals. The Gujaratis are a cultured, sophisticated people. They are capable, modern, intelligent, “with it,” but at the same time they have

their devotion to Kṛṣṇa. It's an inseparable part of Gujarati life. So Gujaratis are sometimes said to be the most pious people in the world.

In Nathdwara we find Gujaratis not only from Gujarat but from Bombay (Gujaratis are the main business community there), and also Africa, England, and even America and Canada. You see them everywhere in the temples and on the streets, men wearing silk *kūrtas* and chains of *tulasī* and gold, and women in fine *sārīs*. The people have fine features.

Gujaratis are also famous for wonderful food, and this is reflected in Nathdwara. This is a holy place, but definitely not a place of austerity. Food that has first been offered to Kṛṣṇa is called *prasādam*, and this article could be titled "Nathdwara—Prasādam City." Nathdwara is famous for the Deity of Śrīnāthajī and maybe just as famous for the *prasādam* of Śrīnāthajī. I'll get back to that later.

"All glories to Lord Kṛṣṇa!"

Nathdwara is a town that lives around its Deity. It's a small town. You'd find it hard to say what the actual population is. When you ask people they give you different ideas, but I would guess around twenty thousand, though there must be an equal or greater number of visitors. Many of the people who live here are priests, temple workers, and merchants who sell flowers, fruit, and vegetables to offer to the Deity. Then there are those who sell *prasādam* and pictures of the Deity, others who sell tape cassettes with devotional songs, and others who cater to the needs of pilgrims by providing hostels and hotels, buses, autorikshas, and so on. Nathdwara has everything a good-sized town should have, but somehow or other nearly everything is connected with the Deity.

The standard greeting here is "*Jaya Śrī Kṛṣṇa!*" ("All glories to Lord Kṛṣṇa!") All about, you'll see written the words "*Jaya Śrī Kṛṣṇa!*" Sometimes you'll also see the *mantra* of the Vallabha Sampradāya, *śrī kṛṣṇa śaraṇam mama* ("Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is my shelter"). In Nathdwara the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement is well known, so often people greet us by saying "Hare Kṛṣṇa!"

The Rajasthani villagers in Nathdwara stand out brightly. They're a lively, robust people, with their own language,

their own food, and their own traditional dress. And they're deeply devoted to Lord Śrīnāthajī.

Early in the morning, a Rajasthani milk seller calls out in a deep, gutsy voice, "*Jaya Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Jaya Vamśī-dhārī.*" The high-powered devotion of the Rajasthanis and the gentle devotion of the Gujaratis makes an interesting contrast.

At quarter after five in the morning, a *shenai* band playing over loudspeakers calls everyone to the temple for *maṅgala-ārati*, the early-morning greeting of the Lord. The band itself sits on the arch above the main entrance to the temple, playing musical instruments and chanting. The sound creates a spiritual atmosphere as you walk in.

Until some years ago, foreigners were not allowed into the temple, but now they are. In any case, members of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement have always been welcome.

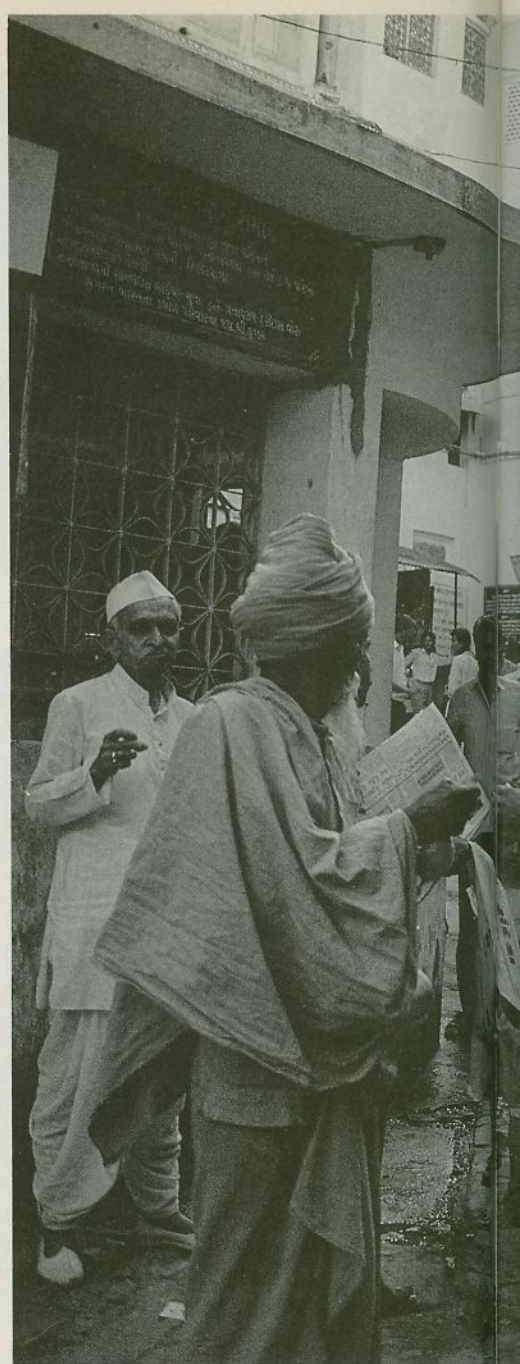
Getting to See the Lord

The *ārati* starts at 5:30. The temple doors open, and everyone just piles in. They may be sophisticated businessmen or whatever, but when it comes time to see the Lord it's "get in somehow or other."

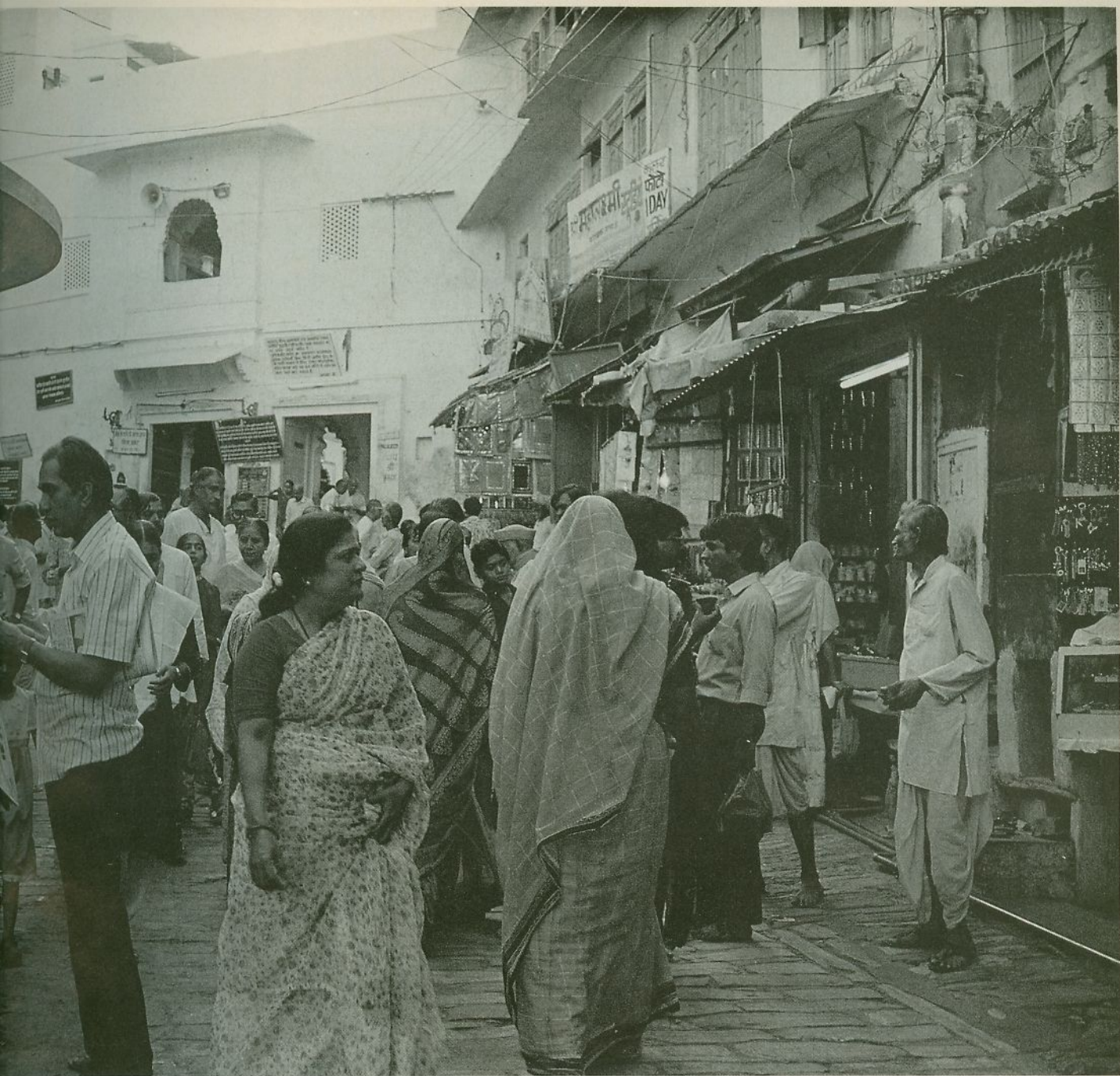
The hall for *darśana* (seeing the Deity) has a series of broad steplike platforms gradually going higher toward the back, as in a sports stadium. The entrance is on one side and the exit on the other. Women enter toward the front, men toward the back.

It's pretty rough and tumble. The temple staff at the doors and by the altar in front constantly move people on, saying, "*Calo Ji!*" ("Please keep moving"). The *sevakas*, or assistants, by the altar hang onto ropes with one hand to keep their balance and lean into the crowd, waving cloth *gamchās* in the other hand to whisk people on. Everyone is moving, saying their prayers, and at the same time being pushed and shoved. But for a few seconds before you get moved on you get a very nice, close *darśana* of Śrīnāthajī.

The self-manifested Deity of Śrīnāthajī appeared, it is said, from a big rock on Govardhana Hill in Vṛndāvana. Physically He appears as a bas-relief, the front of His form emerging from the stone. He is dressed with cloth wrapped about Him in a stylish and pleasing



There's always plenty of activity outside the temple, making it a great place for shopkeepers and newspaper-selling *sādhus*.



manner. His dress is changed several times throughout the day. The weather here, as in most of Rajasthan, is ferociously hot in the summer, cold in the winter. So in summer He is lightly dressed, and on winter mornings at *maṅgala-ārati* He is wrapped up so warmly you can only see His face.

Although the temple now has electric lights, torchbearers inside the temple still keep up the tradition of shedding light on the Lord with torches (thick sticks topped with cloth soaked in burning oil). When the Lord gives His

darśana, beneath His lips shines a large diamond, said to be a gift from the Muslim emperor Akbar himself.

After the *maṅgala-ārati*, *darśana* goes on and on. The *mukhiyajis*—as the priests here are known—close the curtain in front of the Deity, but everyone cries for more *darśana*. So the curtain is raised and lowered several times.

Finally the *mukhiyajis* close the door, but still people clamor for more *darśana*, and so it is opened again. People call out names of the Lord, “*Jaya Kānāiyālāla! Jaya Vamśidhārī!*” Then the door is

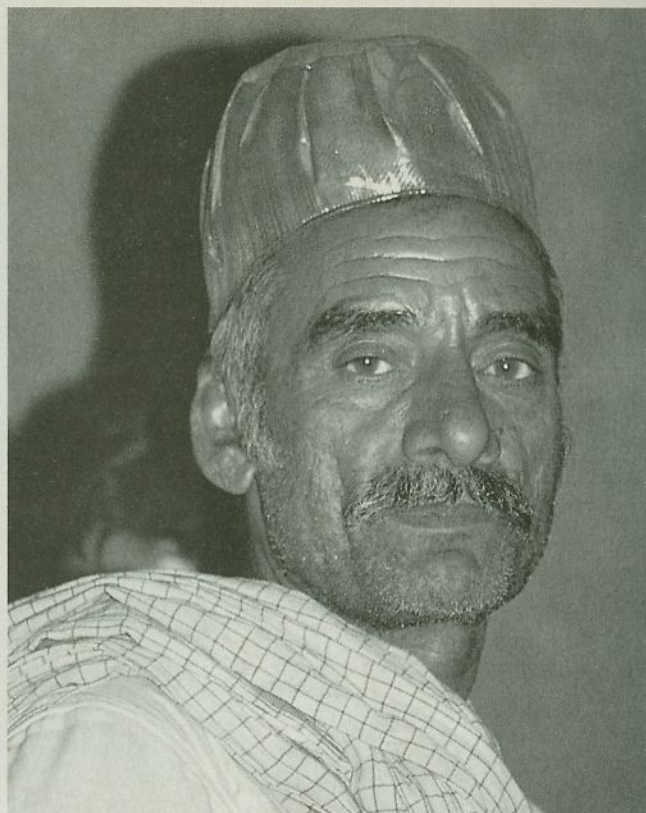
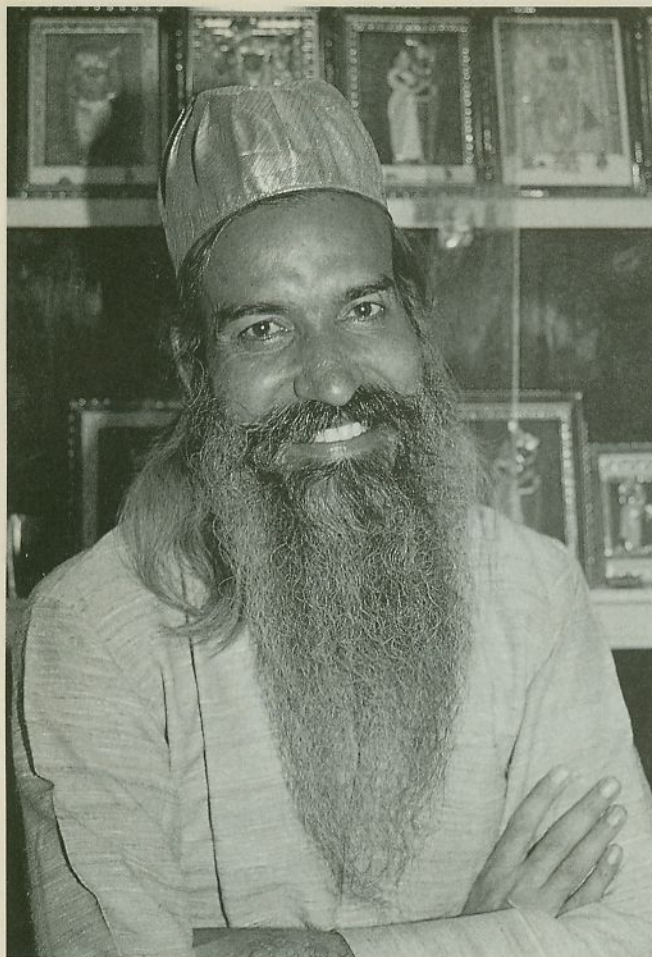
finally closed, and a curtain made of bamboo is let down in front of it, and that’s the end.

People at once offer obeisances and then take up brooms to sweep the temple and the adjoining courtyards. You can see that the people sweeping are not temple staff. They’re people who have taken up the work in the mood of *sevā*, devotional service.

The Mood of the Spiritual World

This mood of doing service for the Deity is a wonderful feature of Nath-

Temple assistants (left and below) with their characteristic hats.



dwara. When I entered the temple yesterday, there was a big pile of chopped-up logs for use in cooking for the Deity, and people from the temple staff were telling everyone to take it inside to the kitchen. *Sevā karo*: “Do service!” So people were doing it. I also was fortunate enough to get a chance to help.

And there’s all sorts of service you can do. There are places you can help chop vegetables, places to make garlands, places to churn milk, and so on. Even people coming from big rich families feel happy to do some menial service for the Deity.

Out in the courtyard people sit in circles, cutting vegetables in the early-morning sun. This group cuts one kind of vegetable, that group another. *Paṇḍitas* in the courtyard sit and read from scripture.

In another courtyard a cultured-looking *kīrtana* group sits chanting with various instruments, but few people are there to listen, because everyone is busy bringing things for the Deity or carrying wood or doing other service.

One might ask, “There are temples of Kṛṣṇa in Bombay, and people even have temples in their homes, so why should people come all the way here to do this service or see this Deity?” One answer is that people feel that this Deity is very special, powerful, and attractive.

Kṛṣṇa is one, but the atmosphere generated in each temple is somewhat different. Here the atmosphere is certainly wonderful. So in many ways you feel like you’re entering part of the spiritual world, where everyone is serving Kṛṣṇa. The devotees who stay here and the devotees who visit create an atmosphere of service to Kṛṣṇa: “Come serve the Lord, take *darśana* of the Lord, take *prasādam* of the Lord, and be happy in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

A Well of Ghee

Another important part of *sevā* is giving things to the Lord. In front of the temple early in the morning, you can buy milk, flowers, vegetables, and fruits and bring them into the temple to offer to the Lord. People also give lots of

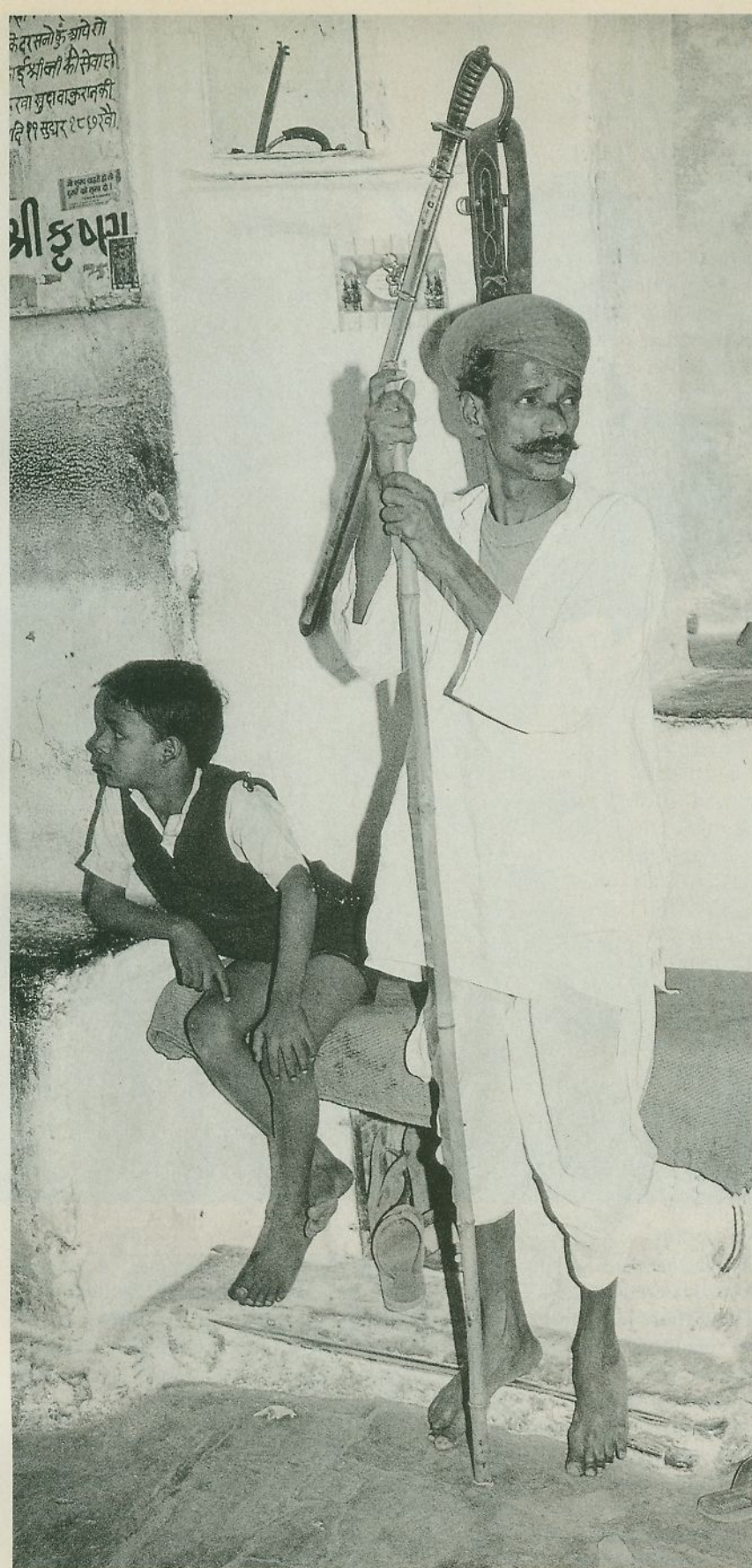
money. The temple of Śrīnāthajī is said to be the second richest in India, after the South Indian temple of Tirupati.

People also give *ghee* and grains. Most of the food prepared for the Deity is cooked in pure *ghee*. People give *ghee* in cans of ten, fifteen, or twenty kilos. Sometimes a whole train car full of *ghee* arrives in Nathdwara. The donor often prefers to stay anonymous. The shipment is simply marked, “From Śrīnāthajī. To Śrīnāthajī.”

The temple has a literal well of *ghee*. Cans of *ghee* are cut open and slightly heated, and the *ghee* is poured into the well. A pipeline extends from the well to the Deity’s kitchen—*ghee* on tap. *Ghee*, of course, is expensive. But money is no bar in the worship of Śrīnāthajī.

In the grain stockroom, everything is very orderly. All the grains that come in and go out are recorded. And when it goes out it goes only to the kitchen of Śrīnāthajī. Nothing given is ever resold in the market. It’s all used in the service of the Lord.

The temple has many storerooms



that pilgrims can see. One room is for keeping the Lord's clothing and jewels. Another room, just opposite the temple, is called Sri Krishna Bhandar, "Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Storeroom." (It's named after Kṛṣṇa Dāsa, the first manager of the temple.) This is the treasury and accounting office, and it's where gold, pearls, saffron, and expensive clothing are kept.

There's a room for flowers. There's a tailoring room where clothes are sewn for the Lord. Another room holds gold and silver pots. There's a rose room, where rosewater and rose scents are prepared. And there's a room where books are on hand, spiritual teaching is given, and new publications are put out.

There's a room for vegetables, a room for milk, cream, and butter, and a room for *misri* (rock sugar). There's a grinding room for grinding grains (it's still done with a big wooden mill, powered by bulls). Then there's a room where the ingredients for the Lord's meals are assembled before they are prepared and offered, and a room where offered food is kept just before it's distributed.

No One Goes Hungry

The *prasādam* from the Deity is distributed profusely. A portion of the *prasādam* goes to the *sevakas* and temple workers, many of whom sell it. Right after the early-morning *maṅgala-ārati* you'll find *pūjārīs* standing just outside the temple, holding steel plates bearing clay cups full of different kinds of liquid milk sweets. Later in the morning, *pūjārīs* go around to hotels and *dharma-shalas* with covered baskets full of varieties of *prasādam* to sell to pilgrims.

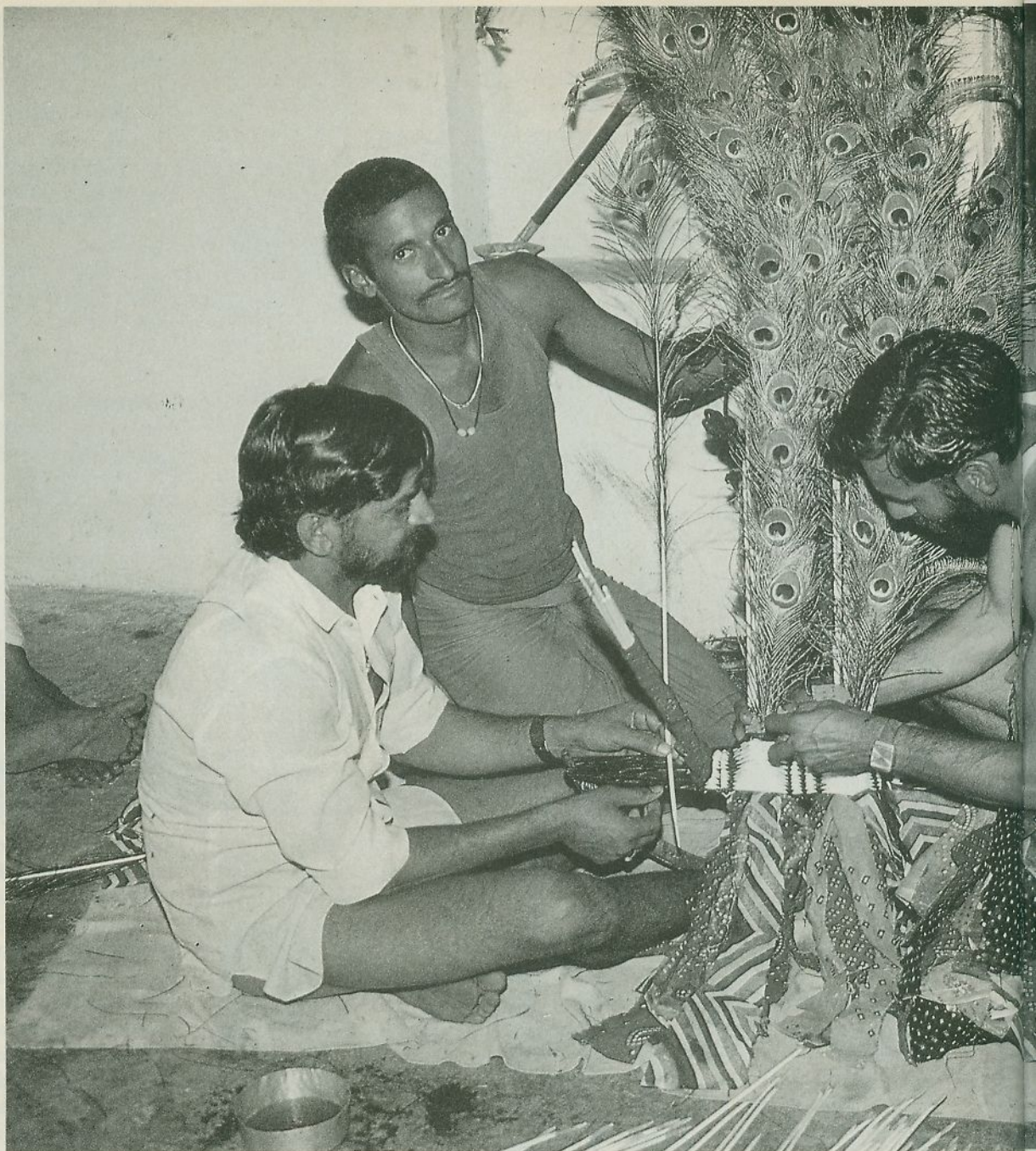
Apart from the *pūjārīs*, in the bazaar outside the temple you'll find shops where you can buy *prasādam*, and pushcarts selling *prasādam*, and people sitting on the street selling *prasādam*.

In *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* we find that the Deity Gopāla, the same Deity known as Śrīnāthajī, told Mādhavendra Purī, "In My village, no one goes hungry." Now, here in Nathdwara, where Gopāla has come, we see that this is true. Even the street dogs here are fat. I've traveled all over—in India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Burma—and never have I seen street dogs look so well fed. Here even the dogs get plenty of *prasādam*—lucky dogs.

Prasādam is available all through

A temple gatekeeper stands guard with his son, his traditional sword hanging ready behind him.

Craftsmen
prepare
peacock-
feather head-
dresses that
will be used to
decorate cows
for the annual
Govardhana
Pūjā festival.



the day, and in countless varieties—different kinds at different times. After the midday *rāja-bhoga* offering you can get a leaf-cup full of tasty vegetables for only one rupee (less than the cost of the ingredients themselves). You can get a leaf-cup of *acar* (pickle), again only a rupee. There are many kinds of chutneys, fruit salads, and a unique *raita* made with chopped fruit in thin yogurt spiced with mustard seeds. There are big *capātīs* full of *ghee* for two or three rupees, depending on the size. You'll find rice, *dāl*, curry sauce, fried vege-

tables, and *samosās* so huge that one is practically enough for a meal.

Then there are milk sweets and sweets made with grains and sugar, rich with *ghee*. You can buy big blocks of *laḍḍu*, made with grain, *ghee*, and sugar, for a hundred rupees. Some sweets include such costly ingredients as musk and saffron. People don't haggle much over prices. Whatever the shopkeepers say, people just accept it, and that's that.

Items like grain sweets and sugar-crusted fried *purīs* keep for months

without losing freshness. A pilgrim traveling abroad from Nathdwara may bring *prasādam* of Śrīnāthājī to his friends overseas. Like the Deity Himself, the *prasādam* of Śrīnāthājī is famous all over the world. ☀

Bhakti Vikāśa Swami is from England but has been teaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness in India for many years. When he's not traveling around India writing articles for BTG (which you'll be seeing more of in upcoming issues), he works with the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust in Bombay.

SERVING ŚRĪNĀTHAJĪ

by Yaśomatīnandana Dāsa

photos by Mahā-Viṣṇu Dāsa

• • •

SRI NATHDWARA MEANS “the gateway of Lord Śrīnāthajī.” The town was built in the seventeenth century for the Deity of Lord Śrīnāthajī, after He was brought to Rajasthan from the town of Jatipur, at the foot of Govardhana Hill in Vṛndāvana. Devotees from Jatipur had fled to Rajasthan with the Deity to protect Him from the destructive reign of the Muslim ruler Aurangzeb. Of course, the Lord doesn't have to flee from anywhere, but simply to give His devotees a chance to serve Him He engages in the pastime of fleeing from one place to another.

Nathdwara lies near Udaipur in the hills of Mewar, a brave and chivalrous area of Rajasthan. For centuries the armies of Mewar succeeded in resisting aggression by many Mogul kings and preserved the Vedic culture intact.

The great Mewar king Bappa Rawal thwarted assaults by the first Mogul attacker, Mohammad Bin Kasim. Later, Maharana Kumbh, Maharana Sangha, and other kings fought valiant battles against the Moguls,

royal family of Mewar were ardent devotees of Lord Śrīnāthajī, or, as He was known at Govardhana, Lord Gopāla. Initiated by Viṭṭhalanāthajī, the son of the revered teacher Vallabhācārya, they were anxious to have Śrīnāthajī in their kingdom, and they prayed to the Lord that He come there. But in the reign of King Akbar religious tolerance prevailed, so there was no need for the Deity to move. But fifty-three years after Akbar came the fanatical king Aurangzeb, who desecrated and destroyed Hindu temples, especially in the area of Vṛndāvana. And the forces of Aurangzeb also threatened Govardhana.

When the devotees saw the Mogul army advancing on Govardhana, they somehow showed the attackers the various titles and gifts given to the temple by the Mogul kings. Thus the devotees persuaded the leaders of the army that the temple had always been looked upon gracefully by the emperor of Delhi. So the army commander said, “We will not attack you. But move the Deity from here as soon as possible.” Thus Śrīnāthajī was allowed to move from Govardhana.

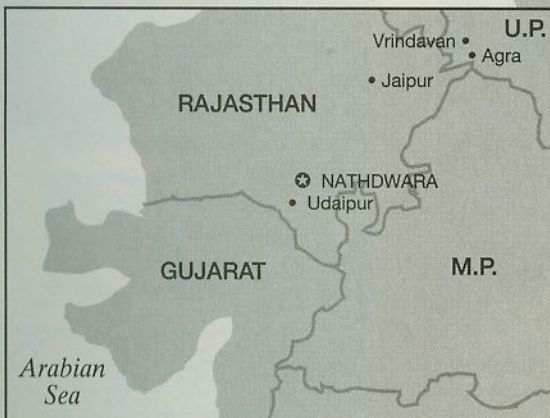
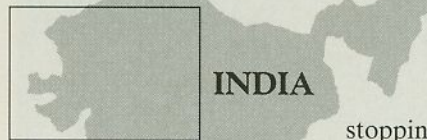
For almost six months the Deity stayed in Agra, where His devotees observed the Lord's festivals in secret. Then He set out for Mewar. In the places along the way, devotees were enthusiastic to welcome Śrīnāthajī, and they would oblige Him to stay with them, sometimes for as much as one or two months. Thus the journey from Govardhana to Mewar took some thirty-two months to complete.

In Mewar the Lord's chariot gradually reached the town called Sinhād, where a princess had resided who was a great devotee of the Lord. She had strongly desired that Lord Śrīnāthajī make this His home, and the Lord had promised her in a dream that He would do so. Now the princess had passed away, but the Lord inspired His devotees to build a beautiful temple there,

stopping them from taking over Mewar. Even the powerful emperor Akbar faced a great battle in Mewar, and only for a few years could he subjugate Mewar, until Maharana Pratap Singh chased the Moguls away.

The Founding Of Sri Nathdwara

At the time of King Akbar, several members of the



next to the Aravalli hills. This abode of the Lord, established around the year 1675, came to be known as Sri Nathdwara.

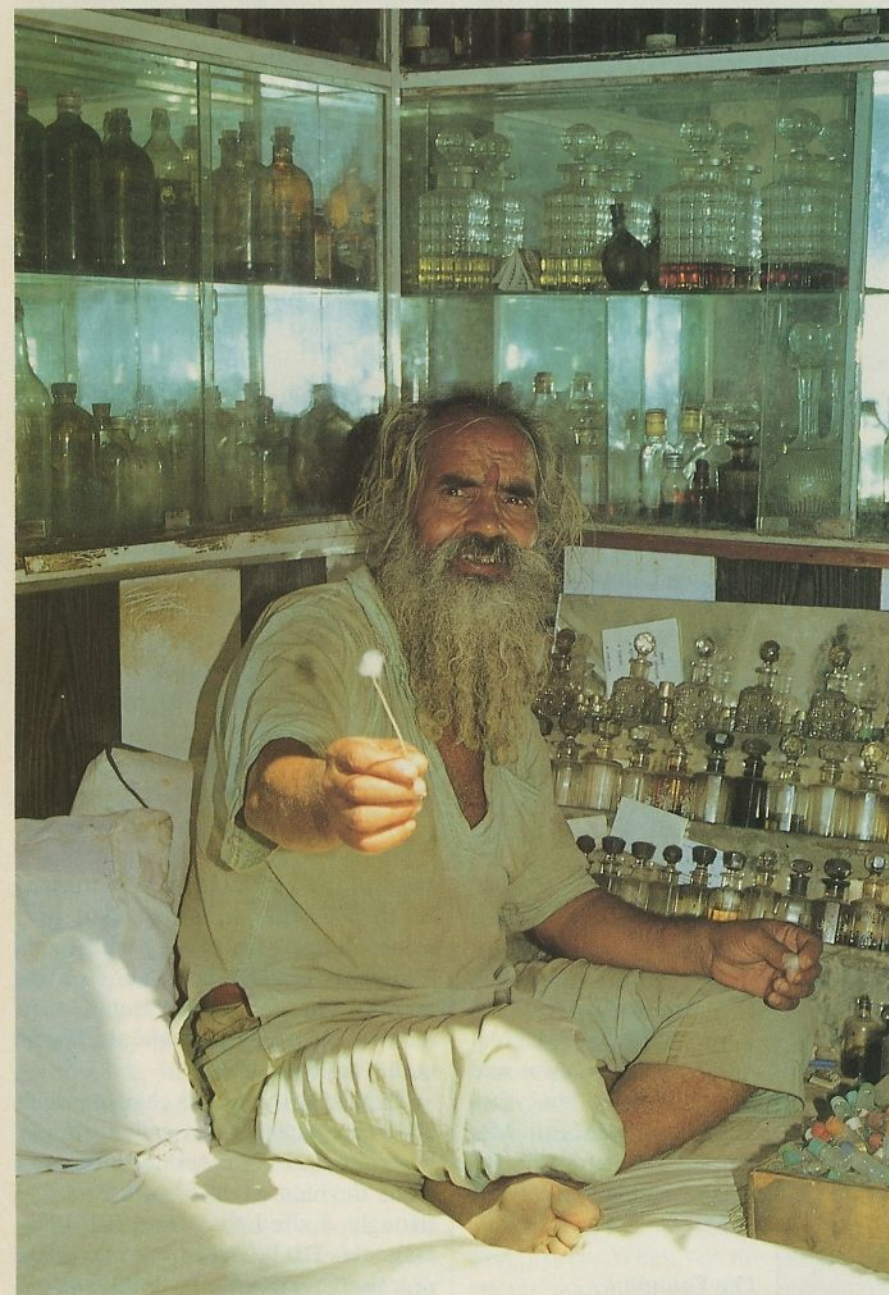
The atmosphere of Mewar calls to mind Vṛndāvana. Mewar has pleasant hills that resemble Govardhana, and the river Banās reminds one of the Yamunā.

The Temple

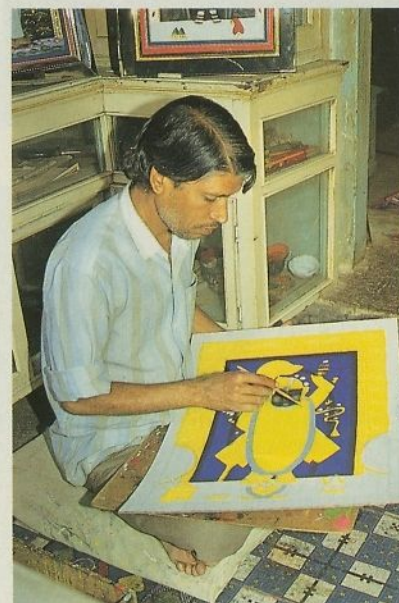
The temple of Śrīnāthajī differs in design from most of the temples of In-

dia. Most temples have large decorative domes called *śikharas*, conspicuous from a long distance. But the temple of Śrīnāthajī, and other places of worship for the followers of Vallabhācārya, are more like houses. Called *havelis* (Persian for “home”), they are made to suggest the Vṛndāvana house of Kṛṣṇa’s father, Nanda Mahārāja. The temple, therefore, is also known as Nanda Bhavān or Nandalāya, “the house of Nanda Mahārāja.”

Decorating the top of the Śrīnāthajī



Not exactly Saks Fifth Avenue. A shopkeeper (above) sells essential oils that pilgrims will offer to Śrīnāthajī. At right, one of Nathdwara’s many talented artists works on a painting of their favorite subject.





Śrīnāthajī paintings from small shops like this one will find their way into homes all over the world.

temple is a spire, or *kalāśa*, as well as the disc of Lord Viṣṇu and seven flags. A guard stands by the flags twenty-four hours a day, protecting them from the discourtesies of the birds.

The History of the Deity

According to the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, the Deity of Śrīnāthajī is none other than the Gopāla Deity who appeared in a dream to Mādhavendra Purī, the great spiritual forefather of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. The Deity had been lost, so in the dream the Deity told Mādhavendra Purī to find Him on Govardhana Hill, extricate Him from the thickets, and establish Him in a temple. "Please pull Me out of this forest, make a beautiful temple for Me, and hold a great festival."

Commanded by the Lord, Mādhavendra Purī inspired the local villagers to rediscover the Deity and perform the festival to install Him atop the hill. So the followers of Lord Caitanya and those of Śrī Vallabhācārya are united in adoring this Deity of Śrīnāthajī as the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

The Beautiful Form of Śrīnāthajī

Śrīnāthajī is Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa in His pastime of lifting Govardhana Hill. Thus the Lord's left hand is upraised. His right hand, closed in a fist, rests on His waist. It is also said that the Lord waves His devotees towards Him with His left hand and keeps the nectar of devotion in His right. His eyes look downward, guiding us to devote ourselves to His feet.

The Deity appears in a large black stone, from which His form emerges in bas-relief. The stone itself, surrounding the Deity, bears several marks: a parrot by the Lord's head, two sages seated on His right side and a third on His left, and below the sages a snake, two cows, another snake, a lion, and two peacocks. On the Lord's neck appears a flower garland, resembling a black snake.

Here is how the devotees understand these markings. The parrot symbolizes the sage Śukadeva Gosvāmī or the great poet Lilāśuka. The snake is the divine serpent Ananta Śeṣa, the sages are the devotees of the Lord, and the two cows stand for religion and the earth. The lion protects the Deity from being seen except through devotional service, and the peacocks symbolize pure love for



Happily serving Śrināthajī, a pilgrim (above) carries wood to fuel the stoves in the temple's kitchen. At right, a Rajasthani villager brings his produce to market.



Darśanas and Festivals

STARTING FROM EARLY in the morning, eight offerings and six *āratis* are performed for the Lord each day. The Lord has His last *darśana* in the evening and then takes rest. When He lifted Govardhana He was just a young boy, so He rests early.

There is a well-known story that Śrīnāthajī once tore His garment while rushing back to the temple to be on time for *darśana*. From that day on, it has been a custom to blow the conch and then wait several minutes before opening the altar doors. That way, Śrīnāthajī may return leisurely to His temple from wherever He may be sporting in the land of Vṛndāvana.

Practically every day there is a festival in the temple. There are swing festivals, processions, flower festivals, boat festivals, and festivals in which thousands of mangos are offered.

In April, roses are abundant, so there is a rose festival. The Deity is sprinkled with rose water and rose scent, and beautiful flower decorations are arranged.

In May the appearance day of Vallabhācārya is observed with great pomp.

In the hot summer season, a courtyard in the temple is filled with water. Pilgrims can stand on a ledge at the back and see the Deity without getting wet, but most devotees enjoy coming forward and standing in water up to their knees. Lord Śrīnāthajī is sprayed with scented water, smeared with sandalwood, and adorned with many garlands. Music plays, and because of the water everything is cool, and the people are happy.

Toward the end of the hot season comes the Rathayātrā. The Lord is taken around in a silver chariot, and 100,000 mangos are offered.

In the afternoon in the rainy season (June–July), the Lord is swung on a big swing. There are many swings for the Lord—a golden swing, a silver swing, a swing of glass,

one of flowers, and a swing made of leaves such as sandalwood.

On Janmāṣṭamī, the appearance day of the Lord, which comes in August or September, the Lord is bathed in five kinds of nectar and honored by a 21-gun salute. The next day, known as Nandotsava, is also celebrated with great joy.

The Annakūṭa Festival

One of the largest festivals in Nathdwara is known as Annakūṭa. It celebrates the pastime in which the people of Vṛndāvana worshiped Lord Kṛṣṇa by worshiping Govardhana Hill. The Annakūṭa festival of Śrīnāthajī draws people from all over India. Many come in special trains, and all the guesthouses are full. Even the aborigines from the surrounding hills come to take part with great enthusiasm, wearing only a loincloth or a garment down to their knees. Groups of people wander about in the town, chanting and dancing in praise of the Lord.

In the late afternoon, in a special courtyard called the Govardhana Pūjā Chowk, a replica of Govardhana Hill is made of cow dung, and beautiful ceremonies are arranged. Many cowherds bring cows and feed them, cows are worshiped, and two cows are led to walk over the hill. People throng the roadsides, windows, and terraces to see the unique scene.

As part of the celebrations, a hill of rice is offered to the Lord—2,500 kilos. Then the temple gates are closed.

In the evening the gates are opened for the *darśana* of Śrīnāthajī, and as soon as they open the people start looting the rice *prasādam* from the Govardhana Hill. While the aborigine women stand at the door, their men grab rice from the hill, fill up their shoulder bags, pass the rice on to the women, and then go back for more. All this adds to the festive scene.—YD

the Lord and detachment from material things. The stone slabs represent Govardhana Hill and the groves of Vṛndāvana.

Once when Śrī Vallabhācārya defeated a large group of impersonalist scholars at Vidyanagar, King Krishnadeva Raya gave him a gift of many gold coins. Śrī Vallabhācārya gave most of these to the local *brāhmaṇas* and kept only seven. Those seven coins were then made into an ornament for Śrīnāthajī. It is still used to adorn the Lord today.

The servitors of Śrīnāthajī say that the Deity is the original form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, known as Nikuṅja Nayaka, “the Lord of the Celestial Bower.” Since this form of Lord Kṛṣṇa includes all others,

His devotees see Him both as Śrī Rādhānātha (the Lord of Rādhā) and as child Kṛṣṇa. The Deity, therefore, is sometimes entertained with childish toys like spinning tops and silver animals and sometimes offered a herding stick meant for a cowherd boy. Śrīnāthajī is most renowned for His amorous pastimes with the *gopīs*, the dairymaids of Vṛndāvana. Although much of the poetry sung before Him tells of His childhood pastimes, most of it depicts these exchanges with the *gopīs*.

Temple Management

The temple is under the management of the main *ācārya* (spiritual leader) of the Vallabha Sampradāya.

He is called the Tilakayata and is the head of the temple. He is assisted by a committee of prominent devotees who help him run the temple and make major decisions. He is the chairman of the committee. They approve most of the expenses.

The monthly expenses of the temple come to some 500,000 rupees, but the income is more. At least ten million rupees are kept as a savings fund.

In recent times the government of Rajasthan has taken charge of the temple, but the Tilakayata is still the authority on all the details of worship.

The holdings of the temple include 829 shops and buildings and six thousand acres of land, with many farms and



cow pastures. The temple has a dairy with five hundred cows, one of which, called “Śrīnāthajī’s cow,” comes from a lineage that has served the Deity for generation after generation. The milk from this cow goes only for Śrīnāthajī to drink. Milk from other cows makes various sweets for the Deity.

The way of devotional service taught by Vallabhācārya is known as *puṣṭi-mārga*, “the path of nourishment.” In Sri Nathdwara the devotees nourish the Lord, and, even more, the Lord nourishes the love of His devotees.

Śrī Vallabhācārya

We can scarcely think of the holy

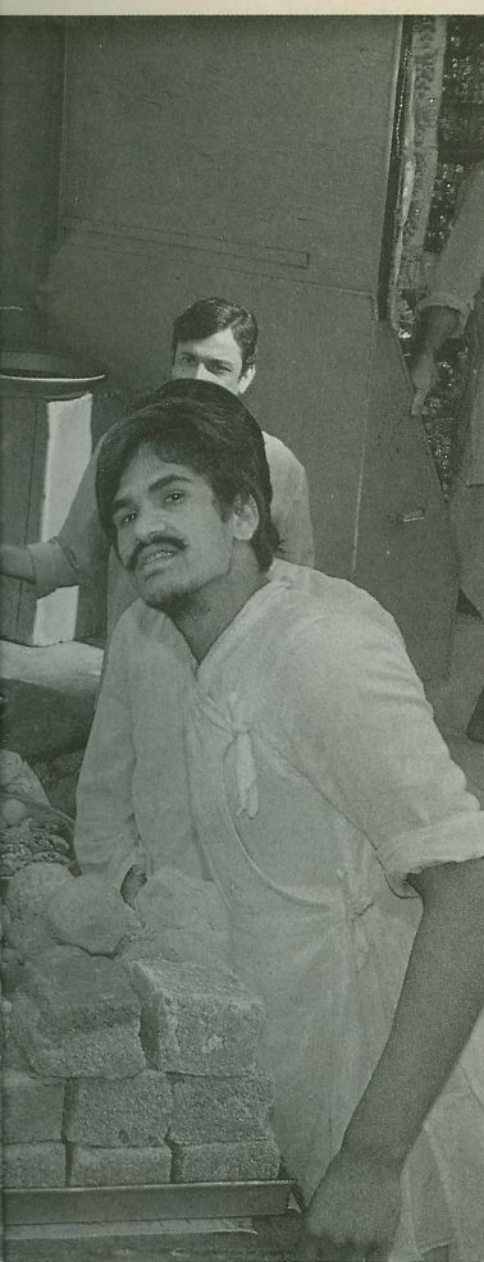
town of Nathdwara without Śrī Vallabhācārya, the great religious reformer and teacher. His *puṣṭi-mārga* has brought millions of people in western India to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Śrī Vallabhācārya was born in 1479 in the forest of Campāranya, near the present city of Raipur, in central India, while his parents were returning from pilgrimage. His father, Lakṣmaṇa Bhaṭṭa, a renowned scholar from a *brāhmaṇa* family of South India, died while Vallabha was still a child. His mother therefore stayed at the home of her parents, and Vallabha soon went to study at Vārāṇasī, where he became a great scholar. He studied under the

saint Mādhavendra Purī.

Vallabha realized that since the world comes from Brahman, the Supreme Absolute Truth—Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa—the world cannot be false. As the ornaments fashioned from gold must be golden, the world created by Brahman, the supreme reality, must be real.

After studying in Vārāṇasī, Śrī Vallabhācārya began traveling all over India, speaking about the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and teaching sublime devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa. The eighty-four “seats,” or places where he taught, are held in great esteem by his followers. These *baithaks*, as the seats are known, are marked by shrines where he is



Above: King-size sweets in the land of kings. Right: The temple's kitchens will use these thousands of gallons of ghee in one month.

offered daily homage. As part of the worship, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is placed upon the seat, for it is felt that Śrī Vallabhācārya stays there to this day, revealing from the *Bhāgavatam* the glories of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Śrī Vallabhācārya once visited the great city Vidyanagara, on the bank of the River Tungabhadra. There he enlightened Krishnadeva Raya, the great South Indian king, and defeated the impersonal Śāṅkarite philosophy. This victory moved the other scholars to glorify him with a grand procession.

At the time of Śrī Vallabhācārya, India's religious life had been torn by the Mogul invasion. Spiritual practices had worn down, and the schools of Buddha and Śāṅkara had brought confusion. Śrī Vallabhācārya spread the true spirit of the *Vedas* through dialogues and debates at many of the eighty-four seats.

He taught, "The one scripture is *Bhagavad-gītā*, the Supreme Godhead is Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the supreme *mantra* is Śrī Kṛṣṇa's name, and the best work is His service."

The strong personal devotion taught by Śrī Vallabhācārya closely resembles the spirit of the followers of Lord Caitanya. Lord Caitanya's followers point more toward public congregational chanting of the holy name of the Lord, while the tradition of Vallabhācārya centers more on private chanting, worshipping the Deity of Lord Kṛṣṇa

within the home, and singing devotional songs for the Deity's pleasure.

Śrī Vallabhācārya urged his followers toward humility and told them to rely on Lord Kṛṣṇa's grace. If there is a means to get the Lord's grace, he taught, it is humility.

Vallabhācārya's book known as *Śoḍaśa-graṇṭha*, his *Anubhāṣya* commentary on *Vedānta-sūtra*, and his *Subodhini* commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* are among the most famous of the many books he wrote.

Śrī Viṭṭhalanāthajī

One of Śrī Vallabhācārya's two sons was Śrī Viṭṭhalanāthajī. He brought a wealth of devotional art, music, and culture into the *puṣṭi-mārga* and raised the worship of Śrīnāthajī to a very high standard. He arranged for the Deity to be adorned every day according to the seasons and festive occasions.

With the changing of the seasons and the time of day, the Lord wears different fabrics and colors, and different types of *rāgas* and poems are used to praise Him. The foods chosen for the Lord also vary, following the Āyurvedic scriptures. In the hot season, for example, cool foods like *mūng* sprouts are offered, and in the cold season the Lord enjoys a spicy milk sweet called *svadhsont*.

Viṭṭhalanāthajī was also famous for attracting many kings to the service of the Lord. He converted the king of Mewar, Udai Singh, and since that time



the royal family of Mewar have been *puṣṭi-mārga* devotees. Even the great Mogul emperor Akbar was drawn to Viṭṭhalanāthajī and gave large tracts of land for the service of the Deity.

The Lord's "Eight Friends"

During the time of Vallabhācārya and Śrī Viṭṭhalanāthajī, the *aṣṭa capa* poets (literally, the Lord's "eight friends") were selected to sing the praises of Śrīnāthajī at each of His eight daily *darśanas*. These famous poets left a wealth of verses glorifying the Lord. These are still sung daily before the

Deity. Sūra Dāsa, perhaps the most famous among the poets, is said to have written more than 100,000 verses. In one well-known poem, another of the *aṣṭa capa* poets, Caturbhujā Dāsa, sings of Śrīnāthajī's splendor:

*Today He is something.
Tomorrow He is something more.
Every day Śrīnāthajī is totally fresh
and new!*

Helping Śrīla Prabhupāda

We disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda are grateful to the *puṣṭi-mārga* devotees

because they aided Śrīla Prabhupāda early in his mission. Srimati Sumati Morarji, a lifelong follower of Śrī Vallabhācārya, was a main trustee of the Śrīnāthajī temple. She helped Śrīla Prabhupāda print his books and served as a patron for him in Bombay. As the head of a shipping company, she arranged for his original passage to New York on one of her ships, the *Jaladuta*. And since that time, faithful followers of Śrī Vallabhācārya have helped Śrīla Prabhupāda's efforts to spread Śrī Kṛṣṇa's glories throughout India and the rest of the world. ☀

"Always Remember Kṛṣṇa"

These four well-known verses by Śrī Vallabhācārya present the essence of his teachings.

*sarvadā sarva-bhāvena
bhajanīyo vrajādhipaḥ
svasyāyam eva dharmo hi
nānyaḥ kvāpi kadācana*

*evaṁ sadā sma kartavyaṁ
svayam eva kariṣyati
prabhu sarva-samartho hi
tato niścintatāṁ vrajet*

*yadi śrī-gokulādhiśo
dhyetaḥ sarvātmanā hṛdi
tataḥ kim aparāṁ brūhi
laukikair vedikair api*

*ataḥ sarvātmanā śaśvad
gokuleśvara-pādayoḥ
smaraṇaṁ bhajanaṁ cāpi
na tyājyam iti me matiḥ*

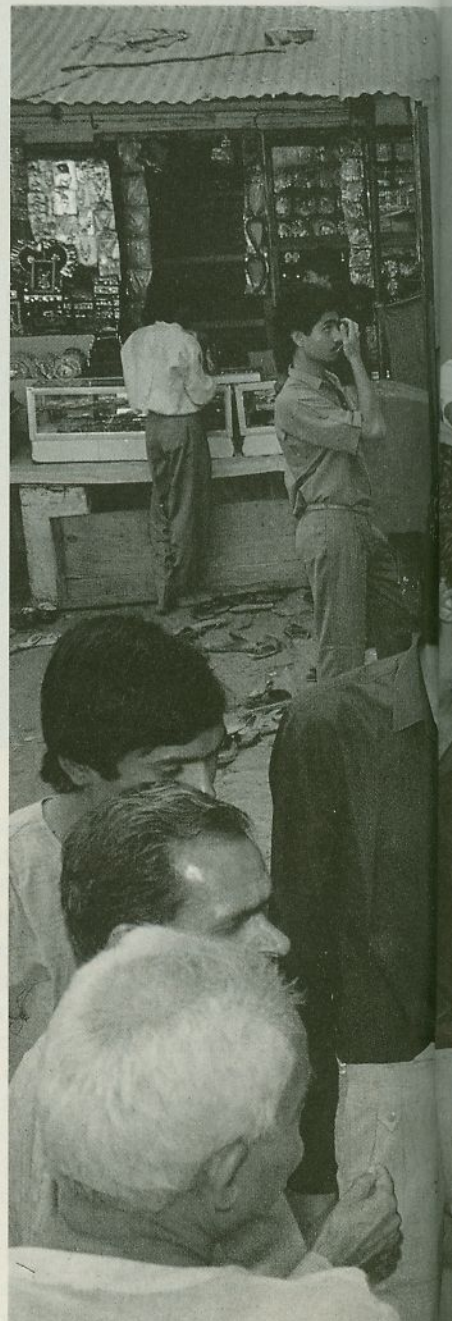
"Always worship Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Vraja, with all your feelings. This is the true *dharma*. There is no other at any time or place.

"Always remember this, and Kṛṣṇa will accomplish the rest. He is all-powerful, so have no anxiety.

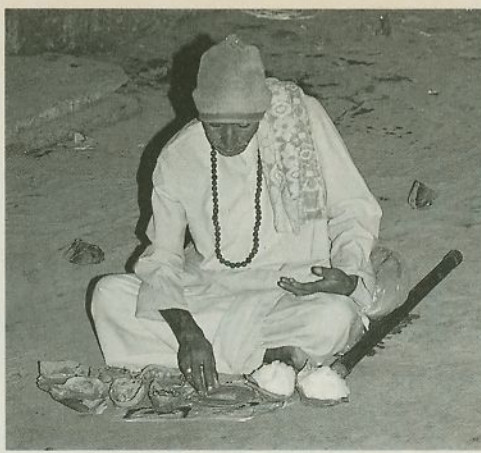
"If Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Gokula, resides within your heart, enabling you to experience Him everywhere, what else is there to attain from the world or the scriptures?

"Therefore, always have full devotion for Lord Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. It is my view that you should never leave His remembrance or His worship."

*Pilgrims stock
up on mahā-
prasādam
sweets, most
likely to share
with grateful
family and
friends back
home.*



Yaśomatinandana Dāsa, a Gujarati devotee, joined the International Society for Krishna Consciousness in Detroit in 1972. Inspired first by the Detroit devotees and then personally by Śrīla Prabhupāda, he gave up his career in engineering to engage full time in the service of Kṛṣṇa. He was later sent by Śrīla Prabhupada to Gujarat to open Kṛṣṇa conscious centers. Now, under Yaśomatinandana's leadership, there are four main temples in Gujarat—in Ahmedabad, Baroda, Surat, and Vallabha Vidyanagara. In all these places, beautiful temples have been erected.



A pilgrim relishes a nutritious, spiritually uplifting meal of Śrīnāthaji's prasādam.



ISKCON Celebrates 25 Years Of Growth

*A look at the past, present, and future
of the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement.*

by Drutakarmā Dāsa

...

*Reprinted from India West Magazine,
July 3, 1992*

IN 1965, AN ELDERLY swami arrived in New York aboard the *Jaladuta*, a freighter of the Scindia Steamship Company. His only possessions were his saffron robes, forty rupees, his translations of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*), and unflinching devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa. The *sādhu's* name was A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

A year later, Śrīla Prabhupāda, as his disciples fondly called him, founded the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) at a small storefront center in New York City. Over the next twenty-five years, ISKCON grew into a world network of more than three hundred temples, *āśramas*, schools, institutes, and farm communities, serving the spiritual needs of people around the world.

This year ISKCON celebrates its twenty-fifth anniversary and looks forward to 1996, the hundredth anniversary of Prabhupāda's birth.

Mission

Śrīla Prabhupāda was born on September 1, 1896, in Calcutta, the son of

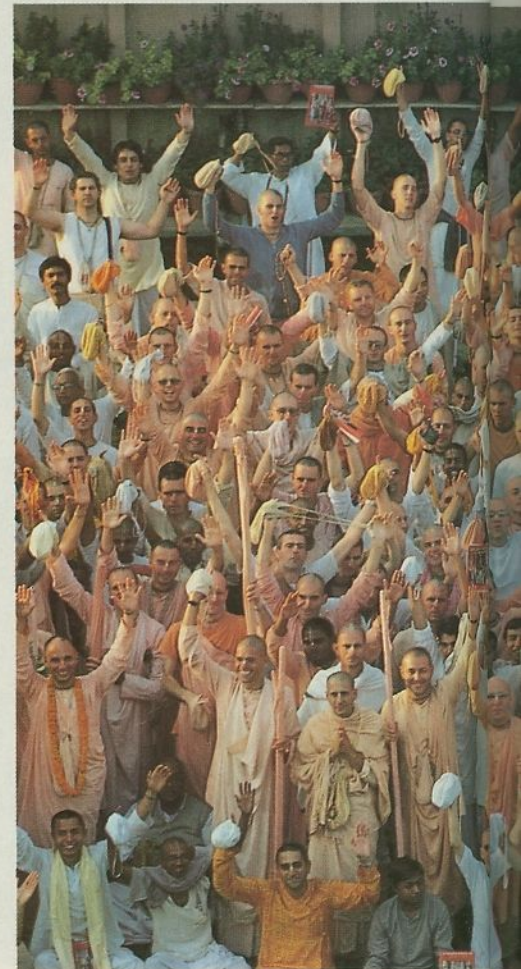
Gour Mohan De, a cloth merchant. Prabhupāda was raised a strict Vaiṣṇava. He later graduated from Scottish Churches College, but as a follower of Gandhi he refused his degree. One of his classmates was Subhash Chandra Bose.

In 1922, at age twenty-six, Śrīla Prabhupāda met his spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, a Vaiṣṇava *ācārya* in the line from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who spread the movement of *bhakti*, or devotion, appeared at Māyāpur, West Bengal, in 1486. During the forty-eight years of His presence, Caitanya Mahāprabhu spread the congregational chanting of the holy names of the Lord (Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Rāma) all over the Indian subcontinent. He predicted that the same chanting would spread to every town and village in the world.

Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, eager to see the prophecy fulfilled, asked Prabhupāda to spread the teachings of Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Lord Kṛṣṇa to the Western world.

In 1944, Prabhupāda started a fortnightly English paper called *Back to Godhead*. In 1954, he retired from family life, and in 1959 formally accepted





*Left—The early days: London.
Below—Today: devotees from
around the world at the annual
festival in Māyāpur.*



sannyāsa, the renounced order. Taking up residence in the holy town of Vṛndāvana, where Lord Kṛṣṇa had appeared several thousand years before, Prabhupāda began translating the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

In 1965, with the first three volumes printed, he departed alone for the United States.

Growth of ISKCON

At first Śrīla Prabhupāda found his warmest welcome among young educated Americans dissatisfied with what they saw as a materialistic culture. Many gave up promising careers to join the fledgling Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

After a few years, in which ISKCON spread rapidly throughout North America and Europe, Prabhupāda returned to India. There he began large temple projects in Bombay, Vṛndāvana, and Māyāpur (West Bengal). During this time, many leading citizens of India became life members of ISKCON. And many Indian young people also became Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples.

Of course, all was not sweetness and light. Some caste-conscious people thought that Prabhupāda was violating Vedic rules by initiating non-Hindus as *brāhmaṇas*. To such critics, Prabhupāda responded by giving much evidence that people from any part of the world can become Vaiṣṇavas and *brāhmaṇas* if they come to the proper standard of behavior.

Still other critics debated ISKCON's commitment to Hinduism. In this regard, Śrīla Prabhupāda emphasized the universality of the Hindu or Vedic teachings, with their message of love for God as the highest goal of life. He did not take a narrow sectarian view. He often said that one should be ready to recognize love of God wherever it was displayed—be it among Hindus, Christians, Muslims, or Jews.

Meanwhile, back in America, Europe, and other parts of the world,

ISKCON and Its Accomplishments

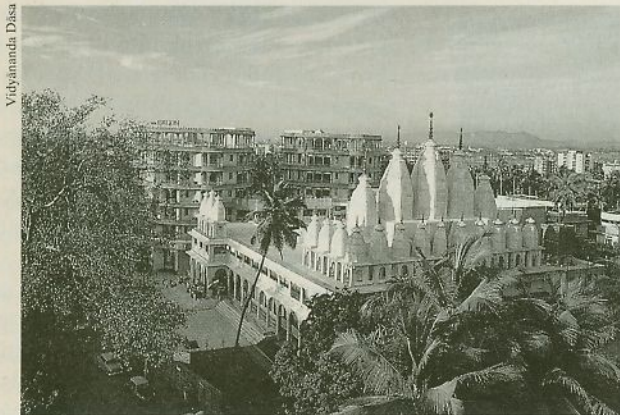
ISKCON BELIEVES THAT PEOPLE everywhere need Vedic knowledge to break free from illusion and the suffering it brings.

To spread this knowledge, ISKCON's sister organization, the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, has become the world's largest publisher of books on the Vedic teachings. It has sold more than 400 million books in over ninety languages.



**THE
BHAKTIVEDANTA
BOOK TRUST**

ISKCON members, through Project Matsya, have toured India making microfilm copies of thousands of rare Vedic manuscripts that were in danger of being lost. ISKCON's Bhaktivedanta Institute studies modern science in the light of Vedic knowledge—and presents Vedic knowledge from a scientific point of view. The institute is now planning a Vedic Planetarium and Science Museum.



ISKCON temple at Juhu, Bombay.

The 280 major ISKCON temples serve as cultural, religious, and educational centers for millions of Indians and others drawn to Vedic culture.

In ISKCON temples, beautiful Deities are worshiped with love and devotion. Full-time *pūjārīs* (priests) perform five to seven *āratīs* and *bhoga* offerings daily. ISKCON temples provide *darśana*, *pūjā*, discourses, and *saṁskāras* (weddings, grain ceremonies, etc.), purifying the lives



Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gīrīdhārī at ISKCON San Diego.

of millions of devotees and other interested souls.

ISKCON has set in place more than forty temples and cultural complexes in India, such as Hare Krishna Land at Juhu Beach in Bombay, the Krishna-Balarām temple in Vṛndāvana, and the Caitanya Chandrodaya Mandir in Māyāpur, West Bengal. ISKCON has also been active in renovating temples and shrines at pilgrimage places all over India.



Students with one of many protected cows at ISKCON Vṛndāvana.

At ISKCON's forty-one farming communities around the world, devotees are giving loving care to cows, bulls, and calves.

More than 900 million plates of *prasādam*, spiritual vegetarian food, have been served through ISKCON's temples, festivals, restaurants, and food relief programs.

ISKCON has also celebrated more than five hundred Rathayātrās in the world's major cities, including London, New York, Moscow, Sydney, and Bombay.

In a new development, supporters of ISKCON—Indian and American—have formed the ISKCON Foundation. Its chairman is Alfred



Rathayātrā festival in Los Angeles.



Alfred Brush Ford (Ambarīśa Dāsa).

Brush Ford (Ambarīśa Dāsa), a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda and great-grandson of Henry Ford. Among the vice chairmen: Dr. Vibhakar J. Mody of Washington, D.C., Dr. Arvind Singh of Houston, Texas, and Mr. Dahyabhai Patel of Irvine, California.

The Foundation's purpose is to help ISKCON and its local communities work more effectively to achieve the many goals Śrīla Prabhupāda set out.

"The ISKCON Foundation is a vehicle to carry Śrīla Prabhupāda's movement into the next millennium," says Ford. "Only by offering people the genuine Vedic culture of India can we satisfy their desires for peace, prosperity, and spiritual fulfillment."

ISKCON believes it retains a certain uniqueness among Indian cultural and religious groups. It reaches beyond the Indian community to the world at large and has proven successful in getting non-Indians to adopt the undiluted values, teachings, and practices of the Vedic culture.



members of the Indian community began to visit the ISKCON temples in growing numbers.

In the early 1970s, when ISKCON was in the midst of its initial expansion, there were few Hindu temples in North America other than those of ISKCON. So there was nowhere else Indian immigrants of Vaiṣṇava background could see the Deities (*mūrtis*) of Lord Kṛṣṇa being worshiped.

“When I came to this country as a young student, I felt all alone,” says C. Patel of Chicago, now a successful businessman. “Then I found the Hare Kṛṣṇa temple. I felt so much at home there. The devotees were so kind to me and everyone else who came. I experienced much satisfaction seeing Lord Kṛṣṇa being so nicely worshiped. I vowed that someday, if I ever became successful, I would repay them.

“Years later I went to the temple and asked them what was the balance on their mortgage. When they told me, I wrote a check for the entire amount. I felt it was the least I could do. Not only was I paying back my own personal debt—I was also ensuring that the experiences that meant so much to me would continue to be available to others.”

The encounter between Indians and Westerners in ISKCON temples was not without some rough spots. Some of the Western disciples were a little suspicious of the Indian immigrants. By coming to the West, hadn't those Indians given up their spiritual heritage to chase after the illusion of material progress?

But most Western disciples were happy to receive the Indian visitors, many of whom were lifelong Vaiṣṇavas.

The Indians conferred respectability upon the fledgling Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, and their advice and contributions were welcome.

From the side of Indians, there were also mixed feelings. For one thing, ISKCON was a distinctly missionary movement. Prabhupāda came to America not just to lecture among Indians but to introduce Vedic philosophy and culture to everyone. It was a revolutionary idea, a seemingly impossible task. But somehow he was succeeding.

Yet, as one might expect, the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement encountered opposition. Some Western parents objected to their adult children taking up an alien religion and way of life. A few parents brought lawsuits against the movement. Other people objected to the aggressive presence of Hare Kṛṣṇa members in public places. Millions of people purchased copies of *Bhagavad-gītā* from the devotees, but other people were annoyed and turned off.

For many members of the Indian community, eager to get established in American society and not too eager to rock the boat, the negative press ISKCON sometimes received was troubling. To see young Westerners going vegetarian, giving up intoxicants, and taking to the discipline of *bhakti-yoga* was wonderful. But the notoriety of these enthusiastic young converts made many Indians uneasy.

After Prabhupāda's Passing

Inevitably, the movement also had its internal ups and downs, especially in the first years after Prabhupāda passed away, in 1977. Some successor *gurus* fell by the wayside. And New Vrindavana, the largest ISKCON community in

North America, was expelled from ISKCON after its leaders were implicated in crimes and started blending Vaiṣṇavism with Christianity. But as the years have passed, the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement appears to have weathered these tests, and it continues to expand.

As Prabhupāda envisioned, the administrative leadership of the movement has passed to a governing body of thirty members from around the world. And individual spiritual guidance is provided by a multiplicity of *gurus*, none of whom has a uniquely privileged status.

Continuing to Spread Vedic Culture

As ISKCON's leadership looks toward the next twenty years of growth, it hopes to build better relations with the Indian community.

Of course, the West now has many Indian cultural and religious groups to help preserve regional customs and traditions. And there are many Indian business, professional, and political groups to speak out on government policies that affect the Indian community.

But among these organizations, ISKCON believes it retains a certain uniqueness. It reaches beyond the Indian community to the world at large and has proven successful in getting non-Indians to adopt the undiluted values, teachings, and practices of the Vedic culture.

ISKCON is performing that duty in North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, and the islands of the Pacific. As a result, people of all nationalities and races have given up bad habits and taken to *bhakti-yoga*,

devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Under KGB oppression in the former Soviet Union, young men and women in ISKCON risked their lives to spread the teachings of *Bhagavad-gītā*. Many of these people—Russians, Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Armenians—went to prisons and labor camps rather than give up their devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Now that times have changed, ISKCON has established dozens of temples large and small in Russia and other former Soviet republics.

Yet even today, men and women of ISKCON are spreading the message of the *Gītā* and Vedic culture in places that cannot be mentioned, for fear of endangering the devotees' lives. It is this will-

ingness to sacrifice personal safety and comfort for the sake of other's spiritual welfare that guarantees ISKCON's second twenty-five years will be as inspiring and productive as the first. ❁

Drutakarmā Dāsa is an Associate Editor of Back to Godhead. He lives in San Diego.

PROFILE (continued from page 61)

I don't engage in meat-eating, illicit sex, gambling, and intoxication, not anymore. I chant Hare Kṛṣṇa several times a day. I also read and pray daily. I'll be sure to ask you any questions I may have because I want to know all there is to know about Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I've just begun to learn, and already I'm fascinated!

Bruce Henning
Ely State Prison
Ely, Nevada

I've been practicing my chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. It seems that once you start chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa it stays in your mind like a tune that captivates your mind. It seems that good things have started to flow out from Kṛṣṇa since I have started chanting and also since I have become a vegetarian and offer my food up as a sacrifice to Kṛṣṇa. The police no longer antagonize me with their crude comments. I have made

a little altar. I feel somewhat better and slightly more energetic since I have quit eating meat, fish, and eggs. I had no problems obtaining a vegetarian diet. I'm surprised. Usually anything like that requires two miles worth of red tape. I feel that Kṛṣṇa is pointing me in the right direction for getting out of prison.

Jeffrey Turner
Lima Correctional Institution
Lima, Ohio ❁

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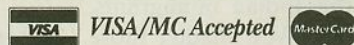
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SĀNKHYA: PHILOSOPHY FOR LIBERATION

Rendered from Sanskrit into English,
with commentary,
by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupāda,
Founder-Ācārya of the International Society
for Krishna Consciousness

Lord Kṛṣṇa has descended as Kapiladeva, the son of Kardama Muni and Devahūti. As the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam continues, Lord Kapila explains the purpose of His incarnation to Kardama, who is about to leave home for the forest. Kardama Muni leaves home for a life of full renunciation, having fulfilled his household duties and received permission from his divine son, Lord Kapiladeva.

THIRDCANTO/CHAPTER 24

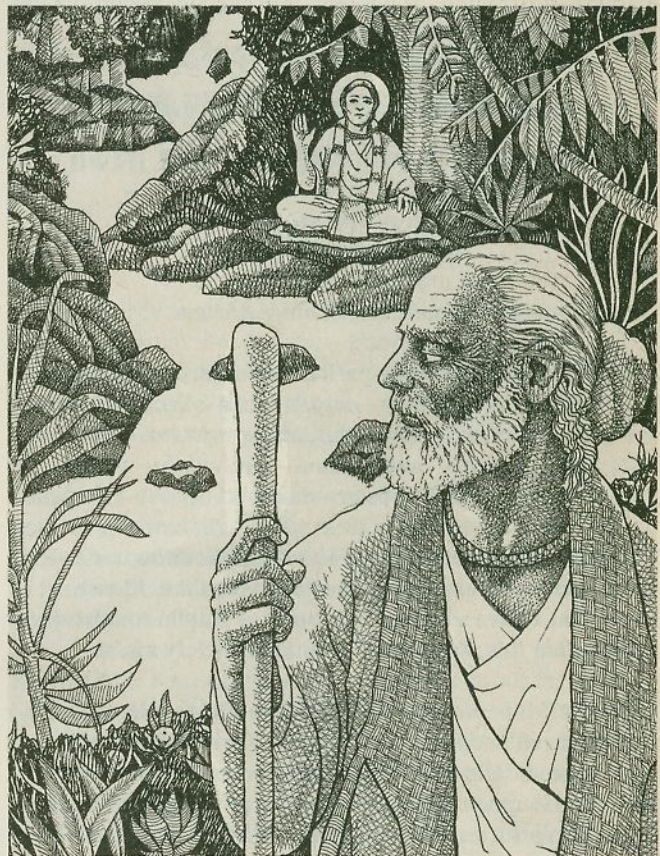
36 एतन्मे जन्म लोकेऽसिन्मुमुक्षूणां दुराशयात् ।
प्रसंख्यानाय तत्त्वानां सम्मतायात्मदर्शने ॥३६॥

etan me janma loke 'smin
mumukṣūṇāṁ durāśayāt
prasaṅkhyānāya tattvānāṁ
sammatāyātma-darśane

etat—this; me—My; janma—birth; loke—in the world; asmin—in this; mumukṣūṇām—by those great sages seeking liberation; durāśayāt—from unnecessary material desires; prasaṅkhyānāya—for explaining; tattvānām—of the truths; sammatāya—which is highly esteemed; ātma-darśane—in self-realization.

My appearance in this world is especially to explain the philosophy of Sāṅkhya, which is highly esteemed for self-realization by those desiring freedom from the entanglement of unnecessary material desires.

PURPORT: Here the word *durāśayāt* is very significant. *Dur* refers to trouble or *duḥkha*, miseries. *Śayāt* means “from



Kardama Muni leaves home for a life of renunciation, having received the blessings of his son, Lord Kapila.

the shelter.” We conditioned souls have taken shelter of the material body, which is full of troubles and miseries. Foolish people cannot understand the situation, and this is called ignorance, illusion, or the spell of *māyā*. Human

society should very seriously understand that the body itself is the source of all miserable life. Modern civilization is supposed to be making advancement in scientific knowledge, but what is this scientific knowledge? It is based on bodily comforts only, without knowledge that however comfortably one maintains his body, the body is destructible. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*, *antavanta ime dehāḥ*: these bodies are destined to be destroyed. *Nityasyoktāḥ śarīraṇaḥ* refers to the living soul, or the living spark, within the body. That soul is eternal, but the body is not eternal. For our activity we must have a body; without a body, without sense organs, there is no activity. But people are not inquiring whether it is possible to have an eternal body. Actually they aspire for an eternal body because even though they engage in sense enjoyment, that sense enjoyment is not eternal. They are therefore in want of something which they can enjoy eternally, but they do not understand how to attain that perfection. Sāṅkhya philosophy, therefore, as stated herein by Kapiladeva, is *tāt-tvānām*. The Sāṅkhya philosophy system is designed to afford understanding of the real truth. What is that real truth? The real truth is knowledge of how to get out of the material body, which is the source of all trouble. Lord Kapila's incarnation, or descent, is especially meant for this purpose. That is clearly stated here.

37 एष आत्मपथोऽव्यक्तो नष्टः कालेन भूयसा ।
तं प्रवर्तयितुं देहमिमं विद्धि मया भृतम् ॥३७॥

*eṣa ātma-patho 'vyakto
naṣṭaḥ kālena bhūyasā
taṁ pravartayitum deham
imam viddhi mayā bhṛtam*

eṣaḥ—this; *ātma-pathaḥ*—path of self-realization; *avyaktaḥ*—difficult to be known; *naṣṭaḥ*—lost; *kālena bhūyasā*—in the course of time; *taṁ*—this; *pravartayitum*—to introduce again; *deham*—body; *imam*—this; *viddhi*—please know; *mayā*—by Me; *bhṛtam*—assumed.

This path of self-realization, which is difficult to understand, has now been lost in the course of time. Please know that I have assumed this body of Kapila to introduce and explain this philosophy to human society again.

PURPORT: It is not true that Sāṅkhya philosophy is a new system of philosophy introduced by Kapila as material philosophers introduce new kinds of mental speculative thought to supersede that of another philosopher. On the material platform, everyone, especially the mental speculator, tries to be more prominent than others. The field of activity of the speculators is the mind; there is no limit to the different ways in which one can agitate the mind. The mind can be unlimitedly agitated, and thus one can put forward an unlimited number of theories. Sāṅkhya philosophy is not like that; it is not mental speculation. It is factual, but at the time of Kapila it was lost.

In due course of time, a particular type of knowledge may be lost or may be covered for the time being; that is the nature of this material world. A similar statement was made by Lord Kṛṣṇa in *Bhagavad-gītā*. *Sa kāleneha mahatā yogo naṣṭaḥ*: "In course of time the *yoga* system as stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* was lost." It was coming in *paramparā*, in disciplic succession, but due to the passage of time it was lost. The time factor is so pressing that in the course of time everything within this material world is spoiled or lost. The *yoga* system of *Bhagavad-gītā* was lost before the meeting of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna. Therefore Kṛṣṇa again enunciated the same ancient *yoga* system to Arjuna, who could actually understand *Bhagavad-gītā*. Similarly, Kapila also said that the system of Sāṅkhya philosophy was not exactly being introduced by Him; it was already current, but in course of time it was mysteriously lost, and therefore He appeared to reintroduce it. That is the purpose of the incarnation of Godhead. *Yadā yadā hi dharmasya glānir bhavati bhārata. Dharma* means the real occupation of the living entity. When there is discrepancy in the eternal occupation of the living entity, the Lord comes and introduces the real occupation of life. Any so-called religious system that is not in the line of devotional service is called *adharmasamsthāpana*. When people forget their eternal relationship with God and engage in something other than devotional service, their engagement is called irreligion. How one can get out of the miserable condition of material life is stated in Sāṅkhya philosophy, and the Lord Himself is explaining this sublime system.

38 गच्छ कामं मया पृष्टो मयि संन्यस्तकर्मणा ।
जित्वा सुदुर्जयं मृत्युममृतत्वाय मां मज ॥३८॥

*gaccha kāmam mayāpṛṣṭo
mayi sannyasta-karmanā
jivā sudurjayam mṛtyum
amṛtatvāya mām bhaja*

gaccha—go; *kāmam*—as you wish; *mayā*—by Me; *apṛṣṭaḥ*—sanctioned; *mayi*—to Me; *sannyasta*—completely surrendered; *karmanā*—with your activities; *jivā*—having conquered; *sudurjayam*—insurmountable; *mṛtyum*—death; *amṛtatvāya*—for eternal life; *mām*—unto Me; *bhaja*—engage in devotional service.

Now, being sanctioned by Me, go as you desire, surrendering all your activities to Me. Conquering insurmountable death, worship Me for eternal life.

PURPORT: The purpose of Sāṅkhya philosophy is stated herein. If anyone wants real, eternal life, he has to engage himself in devotional service, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness. To become free from birth and death is not an easy task. Birth and death are natural to this material body. *Sudurjayam* means "very, very difficult to overcome." The modern so-called scientists do not have sufficient means to understand the process of victory over birth and death. Therefore,

they set aside the question of birth and death; they do not consider it. They simply engage in the problems of the material body, which is transient and sure to end.

Actually, human life is meant for conquering the insurmountable process of birth and death. That can be done as stated here. *Mām bhaja*: one must engage in the devotional service of the Lord. In *Bhagavad-gītā* also the Lord says, *man-manā bhava mad-bhaktāḥ*: “Just become My devotee. Just worship Me.” But foolish so-called scholars say that it is not Kṛṣṇa whom we must worship and to whom we must surrender; it is something else. Without Kṛṣṇa’s mercy, therefore, no one can understand the Sāṅkhya philosophy or any philosophy which is especially meant for liberation. Vedic knowledge confirms that one becomes entangled in this material life because of ignorance and that one can become free from material embarrassment by becoming situated in factual knowledge. Sāṅkhya means that factual knowledge by which one can get out of the material entanglement.

39 मामात्मानं स्वयंज्योतिः सर्वभूतगुहाशयम् ।
आत्मन्येवात्मना वीक्ष्य विशोकोऽभयमृच्छसि ॥३९॥

*mām ātmānaṁ svayaṁ-jyotiḥ
sarva-bhūta-guhāśayam
ātmany evātmanā vīkṣya
viśoko 'bhayam ṛcchasi*

mām—Me; *ātmānam*—the Supreme Soul, or Paramātmā; *svayaṁ-jyotiḥ*—self-effulgent; *sarva-bhūta*—of all beings; *guhā*—in the hearts; *āśayam*—dwelling; *ātmani*—in your own heart; *eva*—indeed; *ātmanā*—through your intellect; *vīkṣya*—always seeing, always thinking; *viśokaḥ*—free from lamentation; *abhayam*—fearlessness; *ṛcchasi*—you will achieve.

In your own heart, through your intellect, you will always see Me, the supreme self-effulgent soul dwelling within the hearts of all living entities. Thus you will achieve the state of eternal life, free from all lamentation and fear.

PURPORT: People are very anxious to understand the Absolute Truth in various ways, especially by experiencing the *brahmajyoti*, or Brahman effulgence, by meditation and by mental speculation. But Kapiladeva uses the word *mām* to emphasize that the Personality of Godhead is the ultimate feature of the Absolute Truth. In *Bhagavad-gītā* the Personality of Godhead always says *mām*, “unto Me,” but the rascals misinterpret the clear meaning. *Mām* is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If one can see the Supreme Personality of Godhead as He appears in different incarnations and understand that He has not assumed a material body but is present in His own eternal, spiritual form, then one can understand the nature of the Personality of Godhead. Since the less intelligent cannot understand this point, it is stressed everywhere again and again. Simply by seeing the form of the Lord as He presents

Himself by His own internal potency as Kṛṣṇa or Rāma or Kapila, one can directly see the *brahmajyoti*, because the *brahmajyoti* is no more than the effulgence of His bodily luster. Since the sunshine is the luster of the sun planet, by seeing the sun one automatically sees the sunshine; similarly, by seeing the Supreme Personality of Godhead one simultaneously sees and experiences the Paramātmā feature as well as the impersonal Brahman feature of the Supreme.

The *Bhāgavatam* has already enunciated that the Absolute Truth is present in three features—in the beginning as the impersonal Brahman, in the next stage as the Paramātmā in everyone’s heart, and, at last, as the ultimate realization of the Absolute Truth, Bhagavān, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One who sees the Supreme Person can automatically realize the other features, namely the Paramātmā and Brahman features of the Lord. The words used here are *viśoko 'bhayam ṛcchasi*. Simply by seeing the Personality of Godhead one realizes everything, and the result is that one becomes situated on the platform where there is no lamentation and no fear. This can be attained simply by devotional service to the Personality of Godhead.

40 मात्रा आद्यात्मिकीं विद्यां शमनीं सर्वकर्मणाम् ।
वितरिष्ये यया चासौ भयं चातितरिष्यति ॥४०॥

*mātra ādhyātmikīṁ vidyāṁ
śamanīṁ sarva-karmaṇām
vitarīṣye yayā cāsau
bhayaṁ cātitarīṣyati*

mātre—to My mother; *ādhyātmikīṁ*—which opens the door of spiritual life; *vidyāṁ*—knowledge; *śamanīṁ*—ending; *sarva-karmaṇām*—all fruitive activities; *vitarīṣye*—I shall give; *yayā*—by which; *ca*—also; *asau*—she; *bhayaṁ*—fear; *ca*—also; *atitarīṣyati*—will overcome.

I shall also describe this sublime knowledge, which is the door to spiritual life, to My mother, so that she also can attain perfection and self-realization, ending all reactions to fruitive activities. Thus she also will be freed from all material fear.

PURPORT: Kardama Muni was anxious about his good wife, Devahūti, while leaving home, and so the worthy son promised that not only would Kardama Muni be freed from the material entanglement, but Devahūti would also be freed by receiving instruction from her son. A very good example is set here: the husband goes away, taking the *sannyāsa* order for self-realization, but his representative, the son, who is equally educated, remains at home to deliver the mother. A *sannyāsī* is not supposed to take his wife with him. At the *vānaprastha* stage of retired life, or the stage midway between householder life and renounced life, one may keep his wife as an assistant without sex relations, but in the *sannyāsa* order of life one cannot keep

his wife with him. Otherwise, a person like Kardama Muni could have kept his wife with him, and there would have been no hindrance to his prosecution of self-realization.

Kardama Muni followed the Vedic injunction that no one in *sannyāsa* life can have any kind of relationship with women. But what is the position of a woman who is left by her husband? She is entrusted to the son, and the son promises that he will deliver his mother from entanglement. A woman is not supposed to take *sannyāsa*. So-called spiritual societies concocted in modern times give *sannyāsa* even to women, although there is no sanction in the Vedic literature for a woman's accepting *sannyāsa*. Otherwise, if it were sanctioned, Kardama Muni could have taken his wife and given her *sannyāsa*. The woman must remain at home. She has only three stages of life: dependency on the father in childhood, dependency on the husband in youth, and, in old age, dependency on the grown-up son, such as Kapila. In old age the progress of woman depends on the grown-up son. The ideal son, Kapila Muni, is assuring His father of the deliverance of His mother so that His father may go peacefully without anxiety for his good wife.

मैत्रेय उवाच

41 एवं समुदितस्तेन कपिलेन प्रजापतिः ।

दक्षिणीकृत्य तं प्रीतो वनमेव जगाम ह ॥४१॥

maitreya uvāca
evam samuditas tena
kapilena prajāpatiḥ
dakṣiṇī-kṛtya taṁ prīto
vanam eva jagāma ha

maitreyaḥ uvāca—the great sage Maitreya said; *evam*—thus; *samuditaḥ*—addressed; *tena*—by Him; *kapilena*—by Kapila; *prajāpatiḥ*—the progenitor of human society; *dakṣiṇī-kṛtya*—having circumambulated; *taṁ*—Him; *prītaḥ*—being pacified; *vanam*—to the forest; *eva*—indeed; *jagāma*—he left; *ha*—then.

Śri Maitreya said: Thus when Kardama Muni, the progenitor of human society, was spoken to in fullness by his son, Kapila, he circumambulated Him, and with a good, pacified mind he at once left for the forest.

PURPORT: Going to the forest is compulsory for everyone. It is not a mental excursion upon which one person goes and another does not. Everyone should go to the forest at least as a *vānaprastha*. Forest-going means to take one-hundred-percent shelter of the Supreme Lord, as explained by Prahāda Mahārāja in his talks with his father. *Sadā*

samudvigna-dhiyām (SB. 7.5.5). People who have accepted a temporary, material body are always full of anxieties. One should not, therefore, be very much affected by this material body, but should try to be freed. The preliminary process to become freed is to go to the forest or give up family relationships and exclusively engage in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That is the purpose of going to the forest. Otherwise, the forest is only a place of monkeys and wild animals. To go to the forest does not mean to become a monkey or a ferocious animal. It means to accept exclusively the shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and engage oneself in full service. One does not actually have to go to the forest. At the present moment this is not at all advisable for a man who has spent his life all along in big cities. As explained by Prahāda Mahārāja (*hītvātma-pātaṁ grham andha-kūpam*), one should not remain always engaged in the responsibilities of family life because family life without Kṛṣṇa consciousness is just like a blind well. Alone in a field, if one falls into a blind well and no one is there to save him, he may cry for years, and no one will see or hear where the crying is coming from. Death is sure. Similarly, those who are forgetful of their eternal relationship with the Supreme Lord are in the blind well of family life; their position is very ominous. Prahāda Mahārāja advised that one should give up this well somehow or other and take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and thus be freed from material entanglement, which is full of anxieties.

42 व्रतं स आस्थितो मौनमात्मैकशरणो मुनिः ।

निःसङ्गो व्यचरत्क्षोणीमनशिरनिकेतनः ॥४२॥

vratam sa āsthito maunam
ātmaika-śaraṇo muniḥ
niḥsaṅgo vyacarat kṣoṇim
anagnir aniketanaḥ

vratam—vow; *saḥ*—he (Kardama); *āsthitaḥ*—accepted; *maunam*—silence; *ātma*—by the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *eka*—exclusively; *śaraṇaḥ*—being sheltered; *muniḥ*—the sage; *niḥsaṅgaḥ*—without association; *vyacarat*—he traveled; *kṣoṇim*—the earth; *anagnih*—without fire; *aniketanaḥ*—without shelter.

The sage Kardama accepted silence as a vow in order to think of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and take shelter of Him exclusively. Without association, he traveled over the surface of the globe as a *sannyāsi*, devoid of any relationship with fire or shelter.

(continued in the next issue)

Śrīla Prabhupāda Speaks Out

KṚṢṆA CONSCIOUSNESS IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR EVERYONE

This conversation between Śrīla Prabhupāda and the poet Allen Ginsberg took place on May 12, 1969, in Columbus, Ohio.

Allen Ginsberg: It's difficult for me to conceive everybody in America . . .

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Nothing is accepted by everybody.

Allen Ginsberg: Or even a vast, vast number of people living a Hindu-language-based, Hindu-food-based, monastic life in America. And many of us have been thinking what form of religious practice, what form of simple meditation exercises could be set forth in America that could be adopted by a great, great, great many people on a large scale. We haven't solved the problem. One thing I have noted is that the Kṛṣṇa temples have spread and are firmly rooted and solidly based. There are a number of them now. So that really is a very solid root. So I think that will continue.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes.

Allen Ginsberg: But I'm wondering what the future is there? What's the future of a religious observance so technical as this? So complicated as this? It re-

quires so much sophistication in terms of diet, daily ritual—the whole thing that you've been teaching. How far can that spread? By its very complexity . . .

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, it is complex. The whole idea is to keep the devotees always engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That is the program.

Allen Ginsberg: Well, the orthodox Jews have a very heavy, complicated, moment by moment ritual daily existence for the same purpose. It was to keep them conscious of their religious nature. And that has maintained a small group of Jews over the centuries as an integral unit. But this has tended to disappear in the later generations now simply because modern life does not allow that much Kṛṣṇa consciousness or Jewish consciousness or religious consciousness and attention, act by act throughout the day. So my question is how far can total Kṛṣṇa devotion, act by act all day, spread? How many people can that encompass in a place like America? Or are you intending only to get a few followers, like several hundred or a thousand who will be solid and permanent?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Yes. That is my program. Because Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not possible for everyone. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* we learn, *bahunām janmanām ante*: after many, many births one can come to this. So it is not possible that a mass of people, a large quantity of people, will be able to grasp it. You see? Another place in the *Bhagavad-gītā* it is said, *manuṣyāṅām sahasreṣu kaścid yatai siddhaye*: Among many thousands of men, one may be interested in how to liberate himself. And out of many such liberated persons, one may understand what is Kṛṣṇa. So understanding Kṛṣṇa is not a very easy thing. But Lord Caitanya is so munificent that He has given us a very easy process, the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa. Otherwise Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not



easy. Because Kṛṣṇa is the last word of the Absolute Truth.

Generally, people are just like animals. Out of many such persons, one becomes interested in the scriptures. And out of many such persons, if they're attracted to the scriptures they're attracted to the ritualistic ceremonies for improving their economic condition. You see? Not just Christians—everyone. They take up religion with the motive to improve their economic condition. *Dharma, artha. Dharma* means religion. *Artha* means money. And then why *artha*? To satisfy the senses. That is *kāma. Dharma, artha, kāma*. And when one becomes frustrated in sense gratification, then one desires liberation,

mokṣa—to merge. These four things are going on. *Dharma, artha, kāma, mokṣa*.

But the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* says that *dharma* is not meant for acquiring money. Money is not meant for satisfying the senses. Sense gratification should be accepted simply to maintain this body. That's all. The real business is *tattva-jijñāsa*, to understand the truth. The human form of life is meant for understanding the Absolute Truth. *Kāma*, sense gratification, does not mean that you have to increase the volume of sense gratification. No, you have to accept sense gratification only so far as to be able to live nicely. The real business is *tattva-jijñāsa*. Every

human being should be inquisitive to know the Absolute Truth. That is the real business of human life. So to come to that business, you won't find masses of people. It is not possible. You shouldn't expect it.

Allen Ginsberg: Your plan here in America, then, is to set up centers so that those who are concerned can pursue their studies and practice?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Personally, I have no ambition.

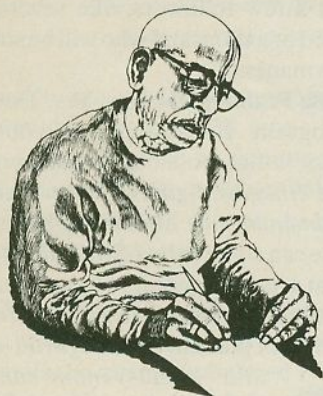
Allen Ginsberg: Yeah.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But the mission of human life is to come to that point. So at least there must be some center or institution that may give people this idea. It is not that everyone will come. ☸

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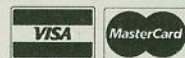
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WORLD NEWS

North America

Hurricane Andrew's 120-mile-per-hour winds

caused minor damage to the ISKCON temple in Miami, Florida—a broken window and some uprooted trees. Devotees were attending *maṅgala-ārati* when the heart of the hurricane, headed straight for Miami, turned south to Dade county, where the 150-mile-per-hour winds caused billions of dollars in damage.

Two devotees died when their small plane crashed less than a mile from the airport where they were supposed to land. The devotees, Uttama Sevā Dāsa Brahmācārī and Dāna-

vīra Nitāi Dāsa Brahmācārī, were returning from delivering *prasādam* to victims of hurricane Andrew in Louisiana. The two were mainstays of the New Orleans temple.

The “KrishnaFest” traveling party has been touring the U. S., presenting cultural programs with chanting, philosophy, *prasādam*, and a drama called “The Age of Kali.”

New temples are rising at two ISKCON farms—New Ramaṇa Reti in northern Florida and Gītā Nāgarī in southeastern Pennsylvania. The new temples will replace old ones now too small. The temples will both be Indian style.

ISKCON Detroit is building “Śrīnāthajī Hall,” a temple for the Deity Śrīnāthajī.



A scene from KrishnaFest's play “The Age of Kali.”



Ashok Hinduja (second from right) of the Hinduja Foundation and ISKCON's Gopāla Kṛṣṇa Goswami sign an agreement to work jointly to build a cultural center in New Delhi. Seated second from left is Srichand Hinduja.

India

The Hinduja Foundation is joining forces with ISKCON to build a cultural center in New Delhi. The center will include a temple, museum, library, park, and center for performing arts. Work has begun at the three-acre hilltop site, overlooking Nehru Place.

Twenty thousand people took part in the seventh annual Rathayātrā (Festival of the Chariots) in Bhubaneswar, capital of Orissa. The festival went on for nine days.

Paraméśvara Dāsa



Bhakti Abhay Carāṇa Swami (center, holding megaphone) leads devotees in chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa in a Managua market.



Nelson Mandela at ISKCON's Temple of Understanding in Durban, South Africa.

Africa

Dr. Nelson Mandela visited ISKCON's

Temple of Understanding in Durban, South Africa. He and twenty-five members of the African National Congress toured the temple and had lunch at its restaurant, Govinda's.

Latin America

Nicaragua is receiving visits again from devotees of

Kṛṣṇa. Long absent, devotees have lately been spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness in Managua, the capital.

Commonwealth of Independent States

Nearly 3,000 devotees gathered in Gorky Park in

July for Moscow's annual Festival of the Chariots.

PADAYĀTRĀ NEWS

Padayātrā America

Having walked through El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua, the devotees continue their journey south, through Costa Rica and Panama.

Padayātrā Worldwide

Countries that held summer or fall Padayātrās this year: England, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Mauritius, and Malaysia.

Confirmed for next year: New Zealand (January) and Hungary (summer).

"How to Start Your Own Padayātrā," a detailed manual, is now available from the Padayātrā Worldwide office in New Delhi. Cost: US \$16, plus \$4.00 for overseas postage.

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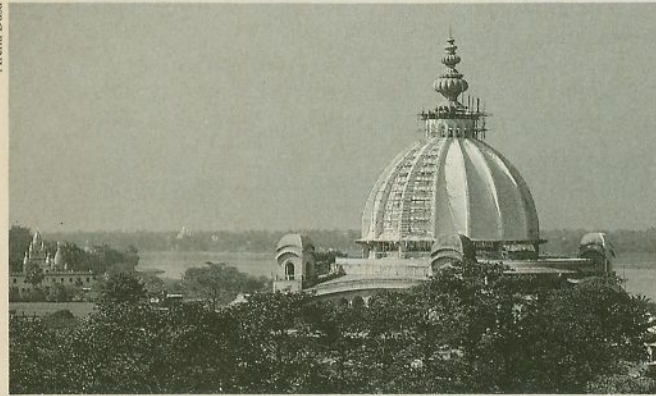
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PROJECT MEMBERS

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GOALS

To bring Kṛṣṇa consciousness to prisons around the world, to provide opportunities for inmates to practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and to guide inmates in their spiritual life.

In 1962 Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote as one of the goals in the prospectus for his League of Devotees (the precursor to ISKCON): "To take charge of moral upliftment by spiritual process even for the criminals and prisoners of state, and to accept all kinds of help and facilities from the police and government concerned."

DETAILS

ISKCON Prison Ministries continues the work of ISKCON devotees who have been helping inmates for at least fifteen years. Devotees worldwide are writing to inmates and visiting prisons. IPM is trying to expand and coordinate this work in North America and beyond.

The Ministries' preachers counsel and inspire inmates trying to become Kṛṣṇa conscious. IPM has been suc-

cessful in getting Śrīla Prabhupāda's books to inmates who want them. The Ministries' programs in prisons feature chanting, sharing *prasādam*, and studying and distributing Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. Some inmates quickly become vegetarian and understand that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As inmates refer other inmates to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the work expands.



Candraśekhara Dāsa with a painting of Śrīla Prabhupāda done by an inmate.

PLANS

To place Śrīla Prabhupāda's books in prison libraries worldwide, to start *The Freedom Journal*, a newspaper for inmates, to provide inmates a correspondence course on Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and to find devotees in each state in the U. S. to place books in prison libraries in their state.

OBSTACLES

Prison bureaucracy.

Shortage of devotees willing to start prison programs in countries around the world.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Write to prisoners. IPM has a list of inmates who would like a Kṛṣṇa conscious pen pal.
- Give books (new softbounds are best) or money for books.
- Give money for postage.
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To help in any way, to send a tax-deductible donation, or for more information, please contact:

Candraśekhara Dāsa
ISKCON Prison Ministries
P. O. Box 819
Alachua, FL 32615

LETTERS FROM INMATES (to Candraśekhara Dāsa)

Hare Kṛṣṇa. I received the books you sent. Thanks for the help. I've read *The Science of Self-Realization* and *Bhagavad-gita As It Is*. These books are the best thing that has happened in my material life and have helped me in so many ways in understanding my true self and my relationship with Kṛṣṇa. So many things have come to my understanding from this great literature. My life has become different in so many ways. It's hard for me to believe that I changed in so many ways. All glories to Kṛṣṇa!

Dale Billings
North Carolina State Prison
Sanford, North Carolina

I've been reading my *Gita* a lot lately. I love it! It's like reading the best novel of my life. I just can't put it down!

(please turn to page 44)

vāñchā-kalpatarubhyaś ca
kṛpā-sindhuhya eva ca
patitānāñ pāvanebhyo
vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ

When one is a Vaiṣṇava, or devotee of the Lord, his life is dedicated for the benefit of the people. You know—most of you belong to the Christian community—how Lord Jesus Christ said that for your sinful activities he sacrificed himself. That is the determination of devotees of the Lord. They don't care for personal comforts. They love Kṛṣṇa, or God, so they love all living entities, because all living entities are related with Kṛṣṇa. So similarly you should learn this. The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement means to become a Vaiṣṇava and feel for suffering humanity.

To feel for suffering humanity there are different angles of vision. Some people think of the suffering of humanity in terms of the bodily conception of life. They try to open hospitals to give relief from disease or try to distribute

food in poverty-stricken countries. These things are certainly very nice. But the actual suffering of humanity is due to lack of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Bodily sufferings are temporary, and cannot be checked. Suppose you distribute food in a poverty-stricken country. That does not solve the whole problem. The real beneficial work is to invoke every person's Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Suppose a rich man's son is loitering in the street, forgetting his father's opulence and property, and somebody, out of sympathy, gives him some food. But another person comes to him and says, "Oh, my dear boy, I know you. You are the son of such and such rich man. Why you are loitering in the street? Come on. I shall take you to your father." So if that gentleman takes the loitering boy to his father, the father is glad, the boy inherits his father's property, and his whole problem of life becomes solved.

Similarly, every living entity has been loitering within this universe in different bodies, in different planets, from time immemorial. And he doesn't know that he belongs to the kingdom of

ties, and sinful activities are caused by ignorance. Suppose a foreigner like me comes to America and does not know that cars are driven on the right side of the road. In India the car is driven on the left side. So suppose a person does not know and he drives the car on the left and gets involved in an accident. If he is taken into police custody and says, "Sir, I did not know that here the car is driven on the right side," that does not excuse him. The law will punish him.

So ignorance is the cause of sinful activities or breaking the law. And when you commit some sinful activity, you have to suffer the result. The whole world is in ignorance. And due to ignorance everyone is implicated in so many actions and reactions, either good or bad.

Ultimately, there is nothing good within this material world; everything is bad. We have manufactured something good and something bad. But in the *Bhagavad-gītā* we learn that this place is *duḥkhālayam aśāsvatam*, a place for misery. So in this miserable condition how can you say, "This is good" or "This is bad"? Everything is bad.

One should be very much pessimistic about the material world. Then one can make advancement in spiritual life. *Duḥkhālayam aśāsvatam*. This place is full of miseries. If you study analytically, you'll find simply miserable conditions.

Therefore we should give up our material conditional life, and in Kṛṣṇa consciousness we should try to elevate ourselves to the spiritual platform and thereby be promoted to the kingdom of Godhead. Having gone there, no one comes back to this miserable world. That is the supreme abode of the Lord.

This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is authorized and very important. Now, you American boys and girls who have taken to this movement, please take it more seriously. That is the mission of Lord Caitanya and my Guru Mahārāja. And I am also trying to execute their will by disciplic succession. You have come forward to help me. Although I shall go away, you shall live. I request you all: Don't give up pushing on this movement. Continue. You'll be blessed by Lord Caitanya and His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswami Prabhuṇātha.

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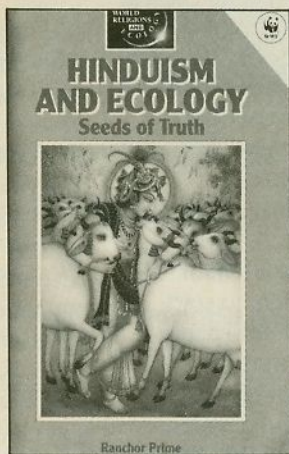
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God, that he is the direct son of Kṛṣṇa, God, that Kṛṣṇa is the proprietor of everything, and that he can enjoy his father's property and automatically solve the problems of material conditioned life.

If you become a rich man, if you can possess millions of dollars, then your poverty is automatically solved. Similarly, if you become Kṛṣṇa conscious and you act in that way, then all other problems in the material conditional life are solved.

In *Bhagavad-gītā* the Lord says that people's sufferings are due to their sinful activi-

The Hare Kṛṣṇa Calendar

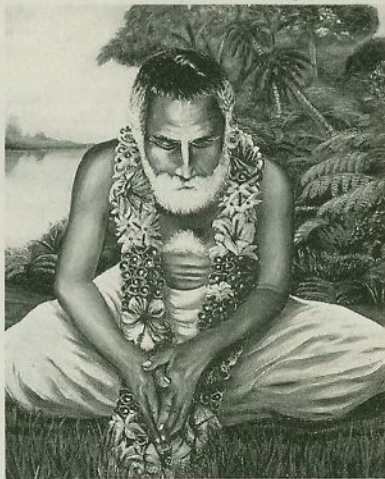
Month of Dāmodara (October 12–November 10)

NOVEMBER

2—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, a great follower of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

6—Uttānā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans. Also, the disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Gaurakīśora Dāsa Bābājī, the spiritual master of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, who was Śrīla Prabhupāda's spiritual master. Fasting till noon.

10—Śrī Kṛṣṇa Rāsayātrā. Last day of Dāmodara-vrata and Cāturmāsya.



Painting by Viṣṇu Dāsa

Śrīla Gaurakīśora Dāsa Bābājī

Month of Keśava (November 11–December 9)

20—Uṭpannā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

DECEMBER

6—Mokṣadā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

Month of Nārāyaṇa (December 10–January 8)

13—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, the spiritual master of Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swamī Prabhupāda.

21—Pakṣavardhinī Mahā-dvādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

25—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Locana Dāsa Ṭhākura, a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa known for his Bengali devotional songs.

Calendar calculated for Śrīdhām Māyāpur, West Bengal, India. Dates may vary for other locations. Consult your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for the exact dates for your area.

27—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

JANUARY

4—Putradā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

Month of Mādhava
(January 9–February 6)

12—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

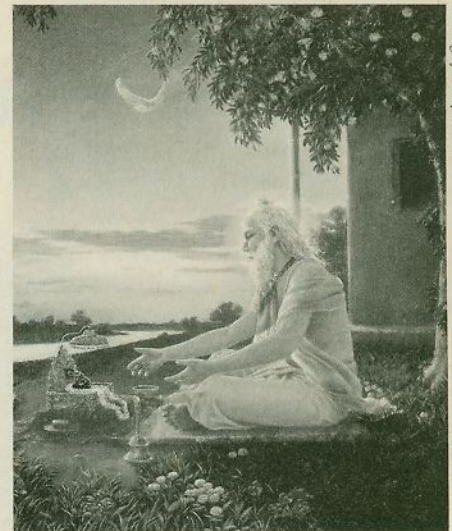
13—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jayadeva Gosvāmī, a great spiritual master and author of *Gīta-govinda*.

14—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Locana Dāsa Ṭhākura, a great spiritual master whose Bengali devotional songs perpetuate the simple Kṛṣṇa conscious method of self-realization.

18—Ṣaṭ-tilā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

28—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, a Vaiṣṇava ācārya and author who appeared in the seventeenth century. Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Viṣṇu-priyā Devī, the consort of Lord Caitanya.

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



Painting by Parikṣit Dāsa

Śrī Advaita Ācārya



Security police and devotees keep the eager crowd away from the stage as Ayodhyapati Dāsa encourages everyone to dance.

Boy George, onstage with the devotees, leads the crowd in chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.



Mahā-Mantra Rocks Moscow

MORE THAN 35,000 PEOPLE packed Moscow's Olympic Stadium in mid-July for a Hare Kṛṣṇa music festival, the climax of a week-long tour that had thousands chanting and dancing in St. Petersburg, Riga, and Kiev.

In each city, a traditional Bhārata Nāṭyam dance opened the program, which then moved on to devotional songs with Indian instruments. Then the Kṛṣṇa Vision multimedia show merged a Russian soundtrack with slides

from twelve projectors to tell of reincarnation and *karma*. And last the Gaurāṅga Bhajan Band, a *mantra*-rock music group, got the crowd chanting, dancing, jumping, and running hand-in-hand in joyful circles to the sound of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*.

In Moscow, popular musician Boy George headed the bill, and Olympic Stadium sold out. As large scoreboards flashed "Hare Kṛṣṇa" and "Hare Rama" in Cyrillic, Boy George sang songs like "My Sweet Lord" and "Bow Down

Mister" and then led the crowd in chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. The 35,000 people in the stadium formed the largest group ever assembled to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*.

Hare Kṛṣṇa leaders in Moscow say there are 15,000 dedicated Hare Kṛṣṇa people in the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltics. Millions more study Kṛṣṇa conscious books at home. Since 1990, devotees have sold more than five million books in Russian. ☸

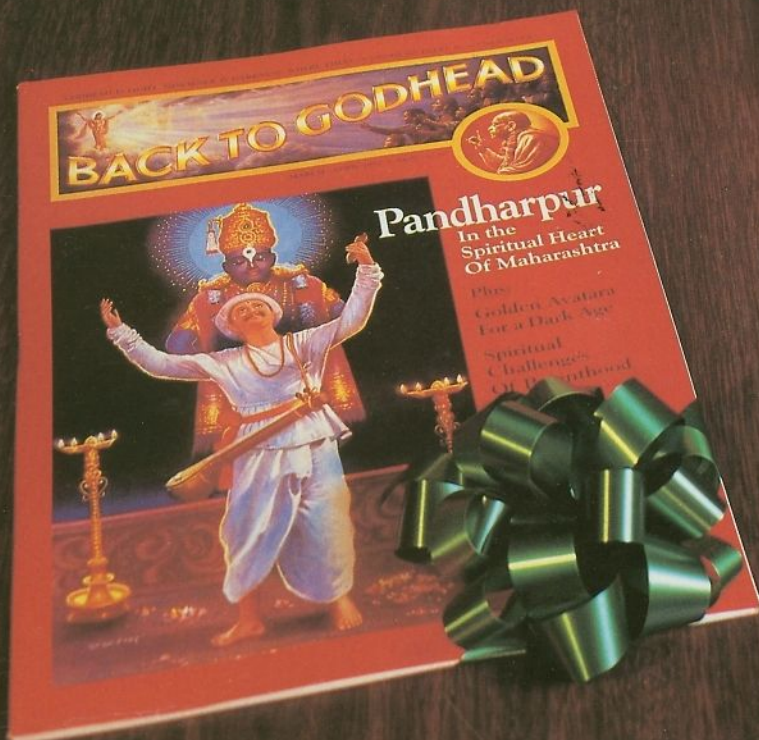
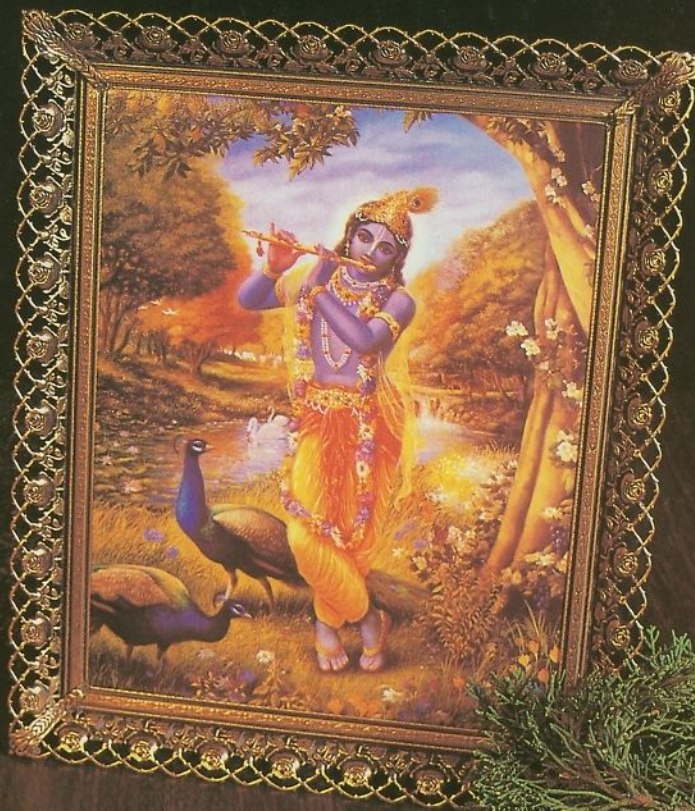
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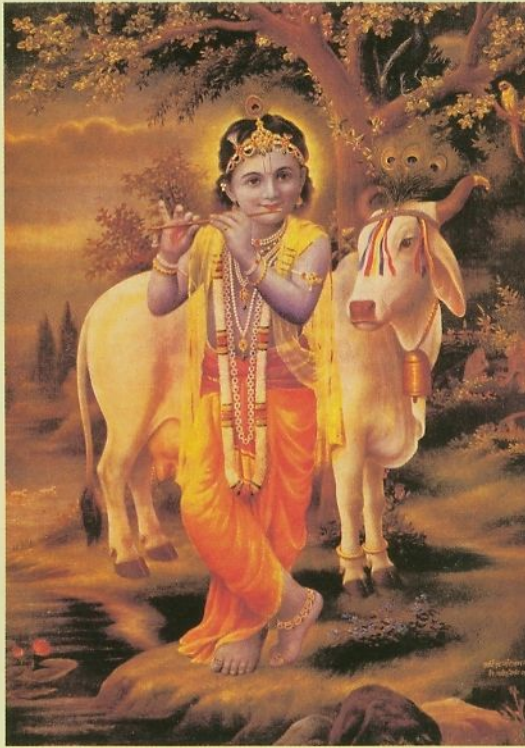
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