

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



The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement • Nov/Dec 1998 • \$4.00 / £4.50

# HAPPINESS BEYOND THE SENSES

ALSO:

**KURUKSHETRA**

Land of Dharma

**Y2K: A Blessing  
In Disguise?**

**BEST FRIENDS**

The Meaning  
Of Kṛṣṇa's Love

**TRUE EQUALITY**

The Vision of the  
Pure Devotee

**SWEPT AWAY  
BY THE SWEEPS**

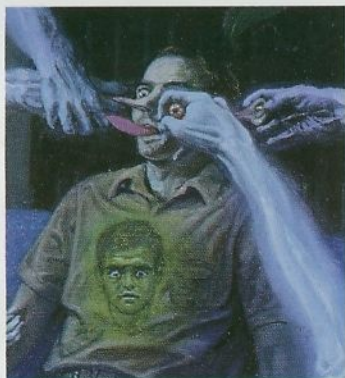
Risking Your Life



Assisting you in your quest for the Absolute Truth

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## Happiness Beyond the Senses

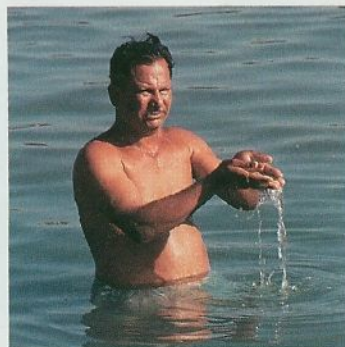
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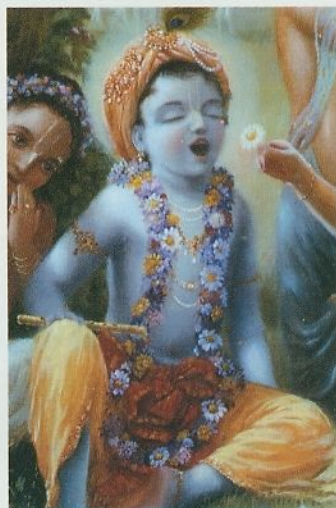
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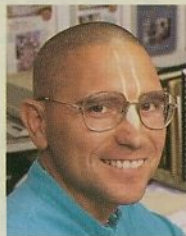
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*Don't Be Shy—Chant!*

## COVER

The Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, the Lord's eternal consort and the personification of His pleasure-giving potency. (Painting by Jāhnavā Devī Dāsī.)

## WELCOME



Some commentators have opined that the *Bhagavad-gītā* is an allegory. For example, the “Kurukshetra” mentioned in the first verse, they say, is a symbol for the body.

But His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, spoke out strongly against such opinions. If you make the *Gītā* an allegory, he taught, Lord Kṛṣṇa's words lose their absolute authority, allowing you to conclude that when Kṛṣṇa says, “Surrender unto Me,” perhaps He (or whatever He represents) means something else.

While arguing against speculative interpretations of the *Gītā*, Śrīla Prabhupāda would often point out that Kurukshetra does in fact exist. And our photo story this issue takes you there.

For fully self-realized souls, Lord Kṛṣṇa is not a symbol or an idea, but the unlimitedly attractive Supreme Person, visible in their hearts at every moment. Śrīla Prabhupāda was one such soul who walked among us. In the article “Śrīla Prabhupāda's Equal Vision” in this issue, you can read about Śrīla Prabhupāda in action, defending Lord Kṛṣṇa and His enlightening teachings.

If you're new to *Back to Godhead* or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, our Glossary on page 15 should help you get oriented.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

*Nāgarāja Dāsa*  
Managing Editor



*Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead and source of all material and spiritual worlds*



*Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Kṛṣṇa's most recent incarnation, taught Kṛṣṇa consciousness through the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa*

## OUR PURPOSES

- To help all people discern reality from illusion, spirit from matter, the eternal from the temporary.
- To expose the faults of materialism.
- To offer guidance in the Vedic techniques of spiritual life.
- To preserve and spread the Vedic culture.
- To celebrate the chanting of the holy names of God as taught by Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
- To help every living being remember and serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead.



*His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness*

# BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the  
Hare Krishna Movement

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(under the direction of His Divine Grace  
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# Letters

## Six-day Creation

Please allow me to compliment you on your beautiful and inspirational magazine. I have a couple of questions: (1) Three world religions, namely Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, say that God created the world in six days. What does this mean? Is there an explanation to be found in the Vedic scriptures? (2) Why do Kṛṣṇa's avatāras always appear on Indian soil?

Keshen Mathura  
via the Internet

**OUR REPLY:** The complexity of the Vedic descriptions of creation and the time spans involved would suggest that the six-day creation is a simpler explanation for people in general. The idea of a six-day creation naturally raises questions. For example, what "days" are we talking about? The *Vedas* say that on the heavenly planets one day is equal to our six months. And if we were to use Lord Brahmā's days (he is the empowered creator), each one would be 4.3 billion years long. So, even assuming the creation took six days, if those were God's days the creation would have taken a very long time from our perspective.

As for Lord Kṛṣṇa's avatāras always choosing India, the *Vedas* say that Bhāratavarṣa (India) is a pious land favored by the Lord. Kṛṣṇa is a person, so by favoring a particular place when He descends, He's simply displaying His prerogative.

## Vedic Astronomy

Thank you for your well-presented research article "Advanced Astronomy in the Ancient Vedas" in BTG Nov/Dec 1997 showing how the ancient Vedic text *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* seems to give an accurate map of the planetary orbits known to modern astronomy.

Towards the end of the article Sadāpūta Dāsa summarizes by saying,

"It would seem that Bhūmaṅḍala can be interpreted as a realistic map of the solar system, showing how the planets move relative to the earth."

Although he seems to show convincingly that the *Bhāgavatam* corroborates modern astronomy, he seems to bring up an even bigger inconsistency. Modern astronomy seems to show that there are many suns and many similar disk-shaped solar systems observable through our telescopes, all contained within this same universe. That seems to be at odds with the *Bhāgavatam* presentation, which says that the plane of Bhūmaṅḍala, our solar system, extends out to the edge of a self-contained *brahmāṅḍa*, or a universe enclosed by a thick shell of elements surrounding only one sun.

Mahā Viṣṇu Swami  
Katmandu, Nepal

**SADĀPŪTA DĀSA REPLIES:** We can see that the *Bhāgavatam* is describing the solar system. Even if we ignore my analysis in the "Advanced Astronomy" article, we can make the simple observation that 4 billion miles is a reasonable figure for the size of the solar system, but it is utterly insignificant compared with the distance to the nearest star, according to modern astronomy.

We should be realistic and recognize that the *Bhāgavatam* is describing the solar system, not the universe of stars and galaxies. The point of my article is that the *Bhāgavatam* is describing the solar system very accurately.

The *Bhāgavatam* mentions stars, but they do not fit into the solar system map I discussed in the "Advanced Astronomy" article. I did not discuss stars in the article, so let me make a few observations about them here:

First of all, the *Bhāgavatam* places the stars *within* the shell of the *brahmāṅḍa*. This means they must be closer to us than about 2 billion miles. According to modern astronomy, the nearest star is about 4 light-years

## What Is the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement?

Founded in 1966 by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) carries on in the modern world a great ancient tradition rooted in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the teachings Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke five millenniums ago. The *Gītā* and the other Vedic scriptures declare Kṛṣṇa to be the original person, God Himself, who appears periodically in this world to liberate all living beings.

Only five hundred years ago, Kṛṣṇa descended as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to teach the most sublime and effective means of meditation for the present day: the chanting of the names of God, especially as found in the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

Today members of ISKCON continue Lord Caitanya's movement by distributing the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra all over the world.

## 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 **i** 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**, **hedgehog**, and **red-hot**. Pronounce ś and ṣ like **sh**. So for *Kṛṣṇa* say KRISHNA, 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."

away. This comes to about 23 trillion miles, or 11,500 times the distance to the shell of the *brahmāṇḍa*. Most stars are much farther away than this. Clearly, the *Bhāgavatam* differs from modern astronomy regarding the distances to stars. Taken literally, the *Bhāgavatam* does not give us a good map of the stars in three-dimensional space.

So, how are we to understand this?

One option is to suppose that the *Bhāgavatam* is not giving literal distances to stars. But in that case, how is the *Bhāgavatam* treating stars? To answer this, I must introduce some background material.

Consider, first of all, the 28 *nakṣatras*, said in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (5.22.11) to be 200,000 *yojanas* (eight miles/*yojana*) above the moon. There is a large literature on the 28 *nakṣatras*. They are generally called "lunar mansions" in English, since they mark the daily positions of the moon as it completes its orbit. It takes the moon about 27.3 days to complete one orbit relative to the stars. The *nakṣatras* serve as a system of markers, like hour markings on a clock, that can be used to measure time using the motion of the moon. The *nakṣatra* intervals are associated with star constellations, and one can see what *nakṣatra* the moon is in by observing the stars near the moon.

In this application, the distances to the *nakṣatra* stars in 3D space are not important. What is important is that the *nakṣatras* form a backdrop in 2D against which the motion of the moon can be measured. Therefore, it is significant that the *nakṣatras* are placed in the layer just above the moon in *Bhāgavatam* 5.22.11. This is like placing the plate with hour markings just behind the hands of a clock. I propose that this is how the *Bhāgavatam* is presenting the *nakṣatras*.

In medieval Western astronomy, the signs of the zodiac and their corresponding stars were treated as marks on the surface of a universal

shell (the sphere of fixed stars). They served as a set of reference markers for measuring the movements of the moon and planets (especially in astrology). The *Bhāgavatam* places the *nakṣatras* on a plate rather than on the shell, but it uses the *nakṣatras* in essentially the same way medieval Western astronomy used the signs of the zodiac. Of course, the *Bhāgavatam* also mentions the signs (called *rāśis*).

Apart from the 28 *nakṣatras*, the *Bhāgavatam* mentions the Seven Ṛṣis (the Big Dipper), Dhruvaloka (Polaris), and the stars making up the Śīsumāra constellation. These stars are also treated in the *Bhāgavatam* as markers indicating the passage of time. The Śīsumāra is like a great clock—an essentially two-dimensional construct. The Śīsumāra's three-dimensional structure is not described. All we have are statements giving the heights of the Seven Ṛṣis and Dhruvaloka as, respectively, 20,800,000 miles and 31,200,000 miles above Bhūmaṇḍala—less than the distance between Mercury and the sun. There is no mention of the modern astronomical finding that stars vary in distance from the earth by many light years. There is no mention that the Milky Way (Akāśa Gaṅgā) is a vast disk of stars with a diameter of about 100,000 light years. There is also no mention of many galaxies like the Milky Way distributed over millions of light years of outer space. Do we wish to deny all these things? The *Bhāgavatam* certainly does not refer to them.

I therefore argue that the *Bhāgavatam* is giving an excellent description of the solar system, in the spirit of the ancient and medieval systems. But like them, it is not describing the universe of stars and galaxies. It is treating stars in an essentially 2D fashion. ☸

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# HAPPINESS BEYOND THE SENSES

*We can never be fully satisfied  
even with unrivaled material pleasures.*

...

A lecture given in London on August 8, 1973

by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

*na hi prapaśyāmi mamāpanudyād  
yac chokam ucchoṣaṇam indriyāṅṅam  
avāpya bhūmāv asapatnam ṛddham  
rājyaṁ surāṅṅam api cādhipatyam*

“I can find no means to drive away this grief which is drying up my senses. I will not be able to dispel it if even if I win a prosperous, unrivaled kingdom on the earth with sovereignty like the demigods in heaven.”—*Bhagavad-gītā* 2.8



say, “Trust no future, however pleasant.” That is the actual position.

Therefore Arjuna has approached Kṛṣṇa. *Śiṣyas te 'ham*: “Now I am Your *śiṣya*, Your disciple.”

“Why you have come to Me?”

“Because I know that no one else can save me from this dangerous position.”

This is real sense.

## THE SUPREME HAPPINESS

**T**HIS IS THE position of material existence. We are sometimes in difficulty. Not sometimes—we are always in difficulty. But we say “sometimes” because we make some attempt to get over the difficulty and that is taken as happiness. Actually there is no happiness in material existence. But sometimes we hope, “By this attempt I shall become happy.”

That is how the so-called scientists are dreaming: “In the future we shall have no death.” So many of them are dreaming in that way. But sane persons

*Yac chokam ucchoṣaṇam indriyāṅṅam. Ucchoṣaṇam* means “dried up.” When we are put into great difficulty, the situation dries up our senses. Then no sense enjoyment can make us happy. *Ucchoṣaṇam indriyāṅṅam*. Here in the material world, happiness means sense gratification. But actually that is not happiness. Real happiness is described in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: *sukham ātyantikam yat tad. . . atīndriyam*. Real happiness—*ātyantikam*—the supreme happiness, is not enjoyed by the senses. *Aīndriya* means “surpassing or transcendental to

*Left: Promising pleasure, our material senses constantly demand our attention. But real pleasure is found only by engaging our true, spiritual senses in the service of the Lord.*

# Real senses are spiritual senses.

So we have to awaken our spiritual consciousness.

Then by spiritual senses we can enjoy.

• • •

the senses.” That is real happiness. But we have taken happiness as sense enjoyment.

By sense enjoyment no one can become happy, because we are in material existence and our senses are false senses. Real senses are spiritual senses. So we have to awaken our spiritual consciousness. Then by spiritual senses we can enjoy.

Our material senses cover our real senses. I’m not this body; I’m spirit soul. But this body covers my real body, the spiritual body. The spiritual body has spiritual senses. Not that we are *nirākāra*, formless. Why *nirākāra*? When my hand is covered by some cloth, the cloth also gets the shape of a hand. Because I have a hand, the cloth has a hand. Because I have legs, my pants have legs. Similarly, the material body has form because the spiritual body has form.

It is common sense. From where has the body come? The *Bhagavad-gītā* describes the body as *vāsānśi*, a garment. A garment is cut according to the body, not that the body is made according to the garment. My body—this garment—has hands and legs; therefore originally, spiritually, I have hands and legs. Otherwise, how has the body developed?

Originally we are all persons. Kṛṣṇa says, “These soldiers, these kings, you and I, My dear Arjuna, it is not that we did not exist in the past. Neither is it that in the future we shall cease to exist. I, you, and all these kings and soldiers who have assembled here existed before. As we are existing now as individual persons, we existed in the past as individual persons. And in the future we shall exist as individual persons.” So where is the question of impersonality?

The principle given in this verse is that to understand things in reality one

has to approach Kṛṣṇa as Arjuna approached Him. *Śiṣyas te ’ham*: “Now I am Your disciple; just teach me.” *Śādhi mām prapannam*: “I am surrendering. I am not trying to talk with You on an equal level.”

To take a guru means that whatever the guru says you have to accept. Don’t take a guru just to be fashionable. You must be ready. That is called *prapannam*, “surrender.”

*Tad viddhi praṇipātena*. You can understand spiritual truth simply by surrendering. You should not try to test the guru: “I shall test him to see how much he knows.” Then what is the use of approaching the guru? Therefore Arjuna says, “Besides You, no one can satisfy me in this perplexed condition.” *Yac chokam ucchoṣaṇam indriyāṇām*: “My senses are drying up.”

Arjuna is referring to the superficial senses, not the actual senses. The real senses are within. *Hṛṣīkeṇa hṛṣīkeśa-sevanam*: We have to serve Kṛṣṇa, Hṛṣīkeśa, with our senses. Kṛṣṇa is real, and we have to come to the position or reality of serving Him. *Tat paratvena nirmalam*. When our senses are purified, we can serve Him.

## WAYS OF GAINING KNOWLEDGE

*Indriyāṇi parāṇy āhur indriyebhyaḥ paraṁ manaḥ, manasas tu paro bud-dhir*. These are different stages—sensual, mental, intellectual, and so on. The bodily concept of life is on the sensual stage. When you transcend the bodily senses, you come to the mental platform. When you transcend the mental platform, you come to the intellectual platform. When you transcend the intellectual platform, you come to the spiritual platform, where there is spiritual form.

There are different grades and steps.

On the gross bodily platform we demand *pratyakṣa-jñāna*, knowledge through direct perception. *Pratyakṣa* means “direct perception.” There are different stages of knowledge: *pratyakṣa*, *parokṣa*, *aparokṣa*, *adhokṣaja*, and *aprākṛta*. Knowledge acquired on the bodily platform, through direct perception, is not real knowledge. Therefore, we can challenge the so-called scientists. Their basic principle of knowledge is in the bodily concept of life, *pratyakṣa*, experimental knowledge. Experimental knowledge is on the stage of gross sense perception. Everyone says, “We do not see God.” But God is not a subject you can see with *pratyakṣa*, direct perception.

In this room we do not see the sun directly, but we know there is sun outside. It is daytime. How do we know? Because there are other ways by which we can experience it. That process of knowledge is called *aparokṣa*.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is *adhokṣaja* and *aprākṛta*—knowledge beyond the senses. How can we perceive what is beyond our direct perception? Through the process called *śrota-panthā*, or *śruti*—taking knowledge from the *Vedas*. And the Vedic knowledge is explained by the guru. Therefore one has to take shelter of Kṛṣṇa as the supreme guru or of Kṛṣṇa’s representative. Then all one’s troubles, arising out of ignorance, can be dissipated.

## UNRIVALED KINGDOM

In this verse Arjuna is replying to something Kṛṣṇa might say to him: “Go on fighting. And when you get the kingdom, you’ll be happy. There is no need of accepting Me as guru.”

Ordinary men think, “I am earning so much money. What is the use of accepting a guru? I can understand everything in my own way.”



Another rascal says, "Yes, *yata mata tata patha*. Any opinion is all right. You can make your own opinion."

That is going on: You can make your own opinion to understand God. So foolish rascals are making their own opinions. But getting knowledge is not possible in that way.

Arjuna says: *avāpya bhūmāv asapatnam ṛddham*: "Even if I win a prosperous, unrivaled kingdom on earth . . ." *Sapatni* means "rival wife, co-wife." In the material world, if a man has more than one wife there is rivalry. One wife is snatching him: "Come to my room." Another wife is snatching: "Come to my room." So he's perplexed. Similarly we have these wives—the senses. The eyes are dragging: "Please come to the cinema." The tongue is dragging: "Please come to the restaurant." The hand is dragging somewhere else. The leg is dragging somewhere else. Our position is like that.

In the analogy, the man with different wives is being dragged to different rooms. Why? Because the wives are rivals. But here Arjuna is speaking of an unrivaled kingdom. If there are many kings to claim one's property, there is difficulty. But Arjuna says, *avāpya bhūmāv asapatnam ṛddham*: "Even if I get a kingdom and riches for which there is no other claimant, I won't be able to dispel my grief."

Arjuna speaks not only of a kingdom of this world but also of a kingdom of the higher planetary systems. Men are now trying to go to the moon. That is also a kingdom, which belongs to higher living entities known as demigods. They are very powerful. The demigod Indra, for example, is the powerful controller of the rains. He wields the thunderbolt.

People do not believe this, but we believe what is described in the Vedic literature. Not "believe"—this is fact. From where is the thunderbolt coming? Who is arranging for the rain? There must be some director. Just as there are so many departmental managers in the state government, there must be many directors in God's government. These directors are called demigods.

The demigods supply us by the order of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore there are sacrifices for satisfying the different



## • KRṢṂA ON THE NET •

URLs for the main Kṛṣṇa conscious sites on the World Wide Web

<http://www.krsna.com> or <http://www.krsna.com/~btg>

### BACK TO GODHEAD ONLINE

Site for BTG, the Bhaktivedanta Archives, the Hare Kṛṣṇa Catalog, and the full text of *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*.

<http://www.shamantaka.org> or <http://www.iskcon.org>

### HARE KRṢṂA, THE COMPLETE PICTURE

A visually dynamic site from the North European BBT.

<http://www.harekrishna.com/>

### HARE KRṢṂA HOME PAGE

Book excerpts and more from the BBT in Los Angeles.

<http://www.iskcon.org/hkindex/>

### THE HARE KRṢṂA INDEX

Leads you to any ISKCON-affiliated site on the Web.

### THE BTG MAILING LIST

An e-mail group where readers, writers, and staff talk about the topics found in *Back to Godhead*.

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**NEW!**

# *In this age, only one yajña is recommended: chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra and dance in ecstasy.*



demigods. Indra supplies us rain. Kṛṣṇa once stopped the Indra *yajña*, the sacrifice to Indra. When Kṛṣṇa's father, Nanda Mahārāja, was arranging for the *yajña*, Kṛṣṇa said, "My dear father, there is no need of an Indra *yajña*."

Kṛṣṇa was showing that for anyone who is Kṛṣṇa conscious there is no need of any *yajña*. Especially in this age, Kali-yuga, it is very difficult to perform different kinds of *yajña*. That was possible in the Tretā-yuga, millions of years ago. *Kṛte yad dhyāyato viṣṇuṁ tretāyām yajato makhaiḥ. Makhaiḥ* means to perform *yajña*. In this age no one follows the directions for performing *yajña*. That is not possible in this age. Therefore the scriptural injunction is *yajñaiḥ saṅkīrtanair prāyair yajanti hi sumedhasaḥ*: "Instead of bothering with so many other things, people with good brain substance should perform *saṅkīrtana-yajña*, the chanting of the holy names of the Lord."

These are the statements in the scripture:

*krṣṇa-varṇam tviṣākṛṣṇam  
saṅgopaṅgāstra-pārṣadam  
yajñaiḥ saṅkīrtanaiḥ prāyair  
yajanti hi sumedhasaḥ*

*Kṛṣṇa-varṇam tviṣākṛṣṇam*. Here in this temple we have the Deity of Lord Caitanya. He is Kṛṣṇa Himself, but His complexion is *akṛṣṇa*, "not blackish." *Tviṣa* means "by complexion." *Akṛṣṇa*: "yellowish." *Saṅgopaṅgāstra-pārṣadam*. And He's accompanied by His associates: Nityānanda Prabhu, Advaita Prabhu, Śrīvāsa, and other devotees.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the worshipable Deity in this age. *Kṛṣṇa-varṇam tviṣākṛṣṇa*. So what is the process of worship? *Yajñaiḥ saṅkīrtanair prāyair yajanti hi sumedhasaḥ*. The *saṅkīrtana-yajña* as we are performing

it before Lord Caitanya, Nityānanda, and others is the perfect performance of *yajña* in this age. Therefore it is becoming successful. This is the only prescribed *yajña*. There are so many *yajñas*, and sometimes Indian people perform so-called *yajñas*. They collect some money, that's all. Their *yajñas* cannot be successful because at present there are no *yājñic brāhmaṇas*.

The *yājñic brāhmaṇas* used to test the pronunciation of Vedic mantras for the sacrifice. The test was that an animal would be put into the fire and if the mantras were chanted correctly the animal would come out of the fire with a fresh young body. But where are such *brāhmaṇas* in this age? Therefore no *yajña* is recommended. This is the only *yajña*: chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra and dance in ecstasy.

## KṚṢṆA COMES

*Rājyaṁ surāṅām api cādhipatyam*. Formerly there were many demons who conquered over the kingdom of the demigods. The demon Hiraṇyakaśipu spread his authority even over the kingdom of Indra.

*Indrāri-vyākulaṁ lokam mṛdayanti yuge yuge. Indrāri* means "the enemy of Indra." Indra is the king of the heavenly planets, and the demons are his enemies. We also have many enemies. Because we are chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, there are so many critics and enemies. They do not like us. There are always demons, but now the number has increased. Formerly, there were some. Now there are many. *Indrāri-vyākulaṁ lokam*. When the demonic population increases, then *vyākulaṁ lokam*: people become perplexed. *Mṛdayanti yuge yuge*: at that time Kṛṣṇa comes.

*Ete cāmśa-kalāḥ puṁsaḥ kṛṣṇas tu bhagavānsvayam. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*

lists the names of the incarnations of Kṛṣṇa, or God. After mentioning all the names, the *Bhāgavatam* says, "All the incarnations listed herewith are partial representations of Kṛṣṇa. But Kṛṣṇa is the original Personality of Godhead." *Kṛṣṇas tu bhagavānsvayam*. And when people are too harassed by the onslaught of the demons, He comes.

The *Bhāgavad-gītā* confirms what *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* says. Kṛṣṇa says:

*yadā yadā hi dharmasya  
glānir bhavati bhārata  
abhyuṭthānam adharmasya  
tadātmānaṁ sṛjāmy aham*

"Whenever and wherever there is a decline in religious practice, O descendant of Bharata, and a predominant rise of irreligion—at that time I descend Myself."

In this age, Kali-yuga, people are so much disturbed; therefore Kṛṣṇa has come in the form of His name: Hare Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa has come not personally but by His name. But because Kṛṣṇa is absolute, there is no difference between His name and Himself. *Abhinnavān nāma-nāminoḥ*. As Kṛṣṇa is full, complete, similarly Kṛṣṇa's name is also full, complete. *Suddha*: It is not a material thing. *Nityaḥ*: It is eternal. As Kṛṣṇa is eternal, His name is also eternal. *Pūrṇaḥ suddhaḥ nitya-muktaḥ*. There is no material conception in chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. *Abhinnavān nāma-nāminoḥ*: "The holy name and the Lord are *abhinna*, identical."

*Rājyaṁ surāṅām api cādhipatyam*. So even if we get the kingdom of the demigods—*asapatnam*, without any rival—still we cannot be happy as long as we have the material conception of life. It is not possible. That is explained in this verse.

Thank you very much. 🌸



## The Power of Initiation

by Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami

WHENEVER I READ about Nārada Muni in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, I am reminded of the power of initiation into Kṛṣṇa conscious life. Nārada was only five when his spiritual masters came to spend the rainy season at his mother's inn. They stayed four months, and after they left, he never saw them again. While they were there, he was able to serve them, hear from them, and accept initiation from them. Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, "There was a tangible change in his life, although he was only a boy of five years." His encounter with these sages was so brief that we are left to wonder what it was they gave him that produced such a lasting change.

The sages imparted *vijñāna*, realized knowledge of their Kṛṣṇa conscious teachings. This is the real gift the spiritual master gives a disciple at initiation. Anyone can read the scriptures to gain knowledge, and chanting is so easy that anyone can do that too. But only the spiritual master can provide both knowledge and the service exchange by which realization of the knowledge becomes possible. Realization implies that we live what we have learned. Thus we see that when someone accepts initiation in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, his life changes.

It becomes obvious by Nārada's behavior that he internalized his gift of realized knowledge. His story reminds me of Śrīla Prabhupāda's experience when he met his spiritual master for the first time. "Such a nice saintly person I have met. Now I know that Lord Caitanya's mission is

in expert hands." Although it was some years before Prabhupāda actually accepted initiation, he at once desired to serve his spiritual master's mission. For Śrīla Prabhupāda, meeting his guru didn't seem to cause sweeping changes in the externals of his life—he didn't suddenly give up his family or reject his business—but his internal life changed in a significant way. He later told us that after that meeting, the spiritual training his father had given him now became solidified by his guru.

For those born in the West, the changes we experience are usually more obvious. We give up illicit sex, intoxication, meat-eating, and gambling. We begin to chant the holy name. We come to accept a beautiful bluish boy as the Absolute Truth. How could any of that be possible for those born in this culture? It's a sign we have been given a gift of realization.

Another piece of realized knowledge we come to understand almost miraculously when we accept a spiritual master is that we are not the body but eternal servants of Kṛṣṇa. This realization grows in depth as our willingness to serve guru and Kṛṣṇa increases.

Sometimes people assume that initiation is external, something done to join an institution. When initiation is approached with the proper motives, however, there is nothing external about it. The significance of initiation goes far beyond institutional status, and those who take initiation only to achieve such status are inevitably disappointed. By taking

true shelter of a spiritual master, we develop the strength and discipline to open ourselves to a Kṛṣṇa conscious inner life. The real heart of the initiation relationship is the disciple's desire to become a devotee of Kṛṣṇa and the spiritual master's willingness to help the disciple achieve that goal.

Initiation is based on faith. The support of an initiated devotee's life is his or her relationship with other devotees and with the vows he or she has accepted—that is, the relationship with chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and with living a clean, Kṛṣṇa conscious life. Hearing from scripture is also essential. To understand these practices as necessary aspects of the guru-disciple relationship is important, because initiation is only the beginning. By continued service to the spiritual master, we are prodded into an ever-deepening understanding of Kṛṣṇa and our relationship with Him. This prodding does not depend on the guru's physical presence, but on the service attitude toward the spiritual master in the disciple's heart. Nārada spent only four months out of his entire life with his spiritual masters, and Śrīla Prabhupāda met his spiritual master only a dozen times, but both were great, empowered devotees. Our success may be smaller, but it is of the same nature. By entering into a committed relationship with the spiritual master, we can attain Kṛṣṇa.

*Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami is the author of many books, including a six-volume biography of Śrīla Prabhupāda.*



## Class Dismissed

by Yamuna Devi

**B**ACK TO GODHEAD'S first cooking column was penned by author and photographer Viśākhā Devī Dāsī. Seasoned with wit and wisdom, her columns consistently served us with food for spiritual thought and practice. When she stopped writing the column, I was asked to take over. Now, seven years later, this column is my last.

### Reflections

From the beginning I felt unqualified to write the column. Though at the time I had been teaching spiritual cooking for years, had written national magazine articles and two cookbooks, and was a special food writer for the *Washington Post*, I viewed these qualifications as insignificant for this task. *Back to Godhead* is Śrīla Prabhupāda's magazine—dedicated to uplifting and spiritualizing humanity—and to write for it requires different acumen. From the onset I turned to prayer, and have kept doing so.

My columns assumed a mainly cooking-class format, following sequential topics in the class textbook, *Lord Krishna's Cuisine*. Along with culinary principles of how, where, when, and why, I offered some detailed instructions I learned while serving as Śrīla Prabhupāda's cook. I wanted newcomers to learn essential cooking techniques and take those techniques on a journey exploring devotional cooking. I wanted expert

cooks to improve the purity and quality of everything related to cooking.

Now that the cooking course has reached the end of *Lord Krishna's Cuisine*, I've decided to stop writing the column and devote my energy to other projects I'm involved in for serving Śrīla Prabhupāda.

### Class Graduation

If you cooked through the entire class series—job well done! Accept my congratulations along with a mentally sent Completion of Class certificate. By now you are attached to the means and the end, and are likely sharing the process with others.

Now your postgraduate home-

work: Vow that for the rest of your life, as far as possible, everyone you meet will receive at least a taste of Kṛṣṇa-*prasādam*. And do your part to help inundate every town and village with Kṛṣṇa-*prasādam* and the holy name.

### Final Topic: Beverages

Water is the universal beverage of choice—no liquid quenches thirst and aids digestion quite like it. Ayurveda warns against drinking ice-cold water or other beverages; they're too shocking to the fire of digestion. Hot water or herbal tea after a meal helps with digestion. Water or tea sipped before and during a meal should be tepid or cool.

The class textbook has thirty-four beverage recipes, divided into three categories: Fruit Juices and Syrups, Chilled Dairy Drinks, and Warming Drinks. Most are a snap to make, so you won't need much time or effort to work through them.

For the letters I've received with exciting stories of revelation and appreciation, a heartfelt thank you. And for now, a farewell to all my readers. Thank you for the honor of sharing time with you in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

*Yamuna Devi is the author of the award-winning cookbooks Lord Krishna's Cuisine: The Art of Indian Vegetarian Cooking and Yamuna's Table. She is a regular contributor to The Washington Post and Vegetarian Times.*

### FENNEL-GINGER TEA

Herbal tea is popular as a refreshment or for its medicinal value. This recipe is for one of my favorite sipping teas, good for most constitutions and at any time of the day.

Serves 2

2 cups water  
 ½ teaspoon fennel seeds  
 1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger  
 honey to taste

Bring the water to a boil and add the fennel seeds and ginger. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer 4–5 minutes. Strain into a warmed cup and sweeten with honey. Offer to Kṛṣṇa.



# Meditation— While Watching Children?

by Ūrmilā Devī Dāsī

**I**T'S 5:20 IN THE MORNING. For twenty minutes I've been chanting the mahā-mantra on my beads: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. A group of children aged five through twelve had been sitting around me in a circle, also chanting. Forty minutes remain for my personal mantra meditation.

I lean over and unlock a wooden cabinet with my left hand.

"Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa . . ."

*Please, Lord, let me realize that You are fully present in Your holy name. Let me try to hear Your name—without my mind wandering—for at least a minute.*

" . . . Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare."

Jāhnu, my grandson, sees the cabinet open and shuffles over in his funny, awkward run. From out of the cabinet, Arjuna and Nimāi grab the pictures of Kṛṣṇa they've been coloring.

" . . . Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare . . ."

*Lord, let me be Your servant.*

Balarāma walks over to get the picture of Lord Viṣṇu he's been coloring (so far, in one solid color), speaking to Cintāmaṇi in his jumbled English-Spanish with intensity. I close my eyes.

" . . . Hare Hare . . ."

Jāhnu has sat down by the markers with his picture of demons taunting the saint Prahlāda. I open my eyes. For each marker he opens, I have to make sure he closes the lid tightly and puts the marker back. This I do with my left hand around his tiny palms. I am trying to teach him how to do this himself, as I did with Balarāma two years ago.

My right hand continues to go from bead to bead.

"Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa . . ."

*Please remove my envy so I can serve You nicely. Help me to fix my mind on the sound.*

" . . . Rāma Rāma . . ."

Lalitā Mādhava and Sītārāṇī are throwing markers instead of coloring, distracting some of the adults who surround us, chanting with an intense desire for purification and love of God. I must not let the children disturb them. If I can get the girls' attention and then slightly shake my head "No" while bending my eyebrows, I can continue to hear—pray to deeply hear—the Lord's names.

For years I wondered whether caring for children during much of my chanting time would greatly impede my spiritual progress. Finally I understood: If we serve Lord Kṛṣṇa's devotees, Kṛṣṇa is more pleased than when we just serve Him directly.

With an awkward tilt like a wooden puppet on strings, Jāhnu now runs across the room to Subhadra, who has a bag of stuffed-animal toys. No longer having to help him close pens, I chance shutting my eyes and hope for a long, uninterrupted time to hear.

" . . . Hare Hare; Hare Kṛṣṇa . . ."

Unfortunately, in my inner playground my mind jumps down slides, and swings into the sky. I think about what I need to do today. I think about how this morning's chanting session would be a good inspiration for this column.

*No—away flickering thoughts! Just hear.*

" . . . Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare."

Arjuna and Nimāi are fighting because Nimāi started to color Arjuna's picture. They've had enough of color-

ing and are now taking copies of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books and looking at the pictures. Both can read, and Arjuna can read well enough to understand most of what's in the book in his hand. Still, right now they just look at pictures, one book after another. Balarāma also stops coloring and gets his own book. He's now old enough to know not to put the book on his feet or the floor.

" . . . Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa . . ."

*The sound of Your holy name is so sweet. When will I become fully absorbed, fully meditating on the sound of Your name?*

"Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa . . ."

Now Jāhnu has toddled back to the cabinet. On the way, he has babbled to several of the adults in the temple room, smiling, and nodding his blond curls. Following with her pull-hands/drag-legs crawl, Subhadra also approaches the cabinet. We must watch her closely; if she takes the tops off the markers, she will put the ink into her mouth. She may also crumble the other children's pictures.

This time, Jāhnu points to a book. We get out a children's version of the story of Kṛṣṇa killing Aghāsura. There's a color picture on every page. The book goes on top of a mat so as not to be on the floor, and I turn the pages with my left hand while Jāhnu and Subhadra look, enthralled.

" . . . Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa . . ."

*Kṛṣṇa is so beautiful. Someday may I enter into His pastimes.*

*Ūrmilā Devī Dāsī and her family run a school in North Carolina. She is the major author and compiler of Vaidik Children, a guide to Kṛṣṇa conscious education for children.*



# Mercy in the Factories

compiled by Navina Nirada Dāsa

**H**ERE ARE SOME experiences and realizations of devotees who give people Kṛṣṇa consciousness through books by Śrīla Prabhupāda and his followers.

## Śrīla Prabhupāda's Blessings

I was distributing books in a factory and had just signed up one hundred workers to each take a set of books (fifteen books in each set). When I went to see the director for payment, he sent me to the chief accountant, but she refused to give me the money, saying she had nothing in the treasury.

A few days later was the anniversary of Śrīla Prabhupāda passing, so we had a big festival at the temple. I thought that to really get the mercy of Śrīla Prabhupāda I should go to the factory and see the chief accountant to get the payment so that the workers could get Śrīla Prabhupāda's books.

When I got to the factory, the chief accountant told me there was no chance of my getting the money that day because it was Friday; I should come back on Monday. But I knew that day was special, and I really wanted to please Śrīla Prabhupāda. So I sat down in her office, pulled out a picture of Śrīla Prabhupāda, placed it on the table, and began to pray intensely to Śrīla Prabhupāda.

After a while all attention turned to me. The chief accountant was quite concerned and asked me what was wrong.

"Today is the anniversary of the departure of my grandfather," I told

her. "I'm praying to him to help me."

She left her office and came back with a paper in her hand—a release for the money for the books.

"You'll get the money today," she said. "I promise."

By now it was late in the afternoon, and the bank was closing in twenty minutes. We ran to her car and sped off to the bank. When we returned to the factory, she was concerned that the workers hadn't gotten their books. It was already too late for me to pick up the books from the temple and make it back before the workers went home. So she made an announcement over the intercom:

"All workers who were to receive books must go to the Hare Kṛṣṇa temple tonight and collect them."

When I returned to the temple later, I was amazed to see a long line of people entering and walking out with boxes of books. The temple was full of workers from the factory. They all received the mercy of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

—Jagadīśa Dāsa, CIS

## Transformed Boss

In Lithuania, Nityānanda Rāma Dāsa went to sell sets of books at a factory where the director was feared by all the employees. The director was like a gangster and would beat people and throw them out of the company. When Nityānanda Rāma came in with the books, the workers told him not to go anywhere near the director. But Nityānanda Rāma wasn't deterred. He went in, showed the director the books, and fearlessly

preached to him with determination.

The man looked at the books and read a little. He appreciated that Nityānanda Rāma was taking time to explain the books and talk to him. As the saying goes, "It's lonely at the top." No one would ever talk with him, so he was lonely.

The director called all the department heads to his office and told them, "Everyone is going to buy a set of these books."

No one dared say no. The director let Nityānanda Rāma go through the company selling books, with his recommendation.

Nityānanda Rāma collected many signatures authorizing payment, and a few days later he returned to deliver the books. The director had assembled all the workers and department heads in a large hall. He then gave a speech.

"Today is a very important day, because you all have the chance to get these wonderful books. You may ask yourself why I'm doing this, since you all know I've been an atheist all my life. But since I've met this interesting person and read these books, I'm convinced there's something more than just material life. And I want God—up there—to know that I, Valdimier Zuchenkof, have given His books to the workers of my factory."

Everyone applauded, and he started handing out the books.

—Navina Nirada Dāsa

*Navina Nirada Dāsa heads ISKCON's book-distribution ministry and travels worldwide to train and inspire book distributors.*

# Glossary

- Ācārya**—a spiritual master who teaches by example.
- Balarāma**—Lord Kṛṣṇa's first expansion, who acts in the role of Lord Kṛṣṇa's elder brother.
- Battle of Kurukṣetra**—an epic battle for rule of the world, fought five thousand years ago.
- Bhagavad-gītā**—the sacred book in which Lord Kṛṣṇa gives the essence of knowledge to His friend and disciple Arjuna.
- Bhakti**—devotional service to the Supreme Lord.
- Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura**—the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda.
- Bhakti-yoga**—linking with the Supreme Lord through devotional service.
- Caitanya Mahāprabhu**—the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa who appeared five hundred years ago to teach the chanting of the names of God as the religion for the present age.
- Dharma**—(1) ordained duties or religious principles; (2) one's eternal, natural occupation (i.e., devotional service to the Lord).
- Godhead**—the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Reality, progressively realized first as the impersonal all-pervasive oneness, more fully as the Supersoul within the heart of every living being, and ultimately as the all-opulent Supreme Person.
- Gurukula**—a school where children learn the philosophy and practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness along with regular academic subjects (literally “the place of the guru”).
- Hare Kṛṣṇa**—the great mantra Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.
- ISKCON**—the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.
- Japa**—individual chanting of names of God, usually while counting on beads.
- Kali-yuga**—in the endlessly repeated cycle of four cosmic ages, the present and worst age, the Age of Quarrel, of which 5,000 of 432,000 years have passed.
- Karma**—material action; its inevitable reaction; or the law by which such action and reaction are governed.
- Kirtana**—congregational singing of names of God, usually accompanied by cymbals (*karatālas*) and drums (*mṛdaṅgas*).
- Kṛṣṇa**—the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His original transcendent form (see “Godhead”).
- Mahābhārata**—the epic history of ancient India, a history in which the *Bhagavad-gītā* appears as the most important and well-known text.
- Mayā**—illusion; the energy of the Supreme Lord that deludes living entities into forgetting their spiritual nature and forgetting God.
- Māyāvādī**—one who regards the Absolute Truth as ultimately impersonal or void.
- Modes of nature**—the three qualities (goodness, passion, and ignorance) that hold sway over all action in the material world.
- Nityānanda**—the incarnation of Lord Balarāma who appeared with Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
- Prasādam**—vegetarian food that has been prepared for the Lord and offered to Him with devotion (literally “mercy”).
- Purāṇas**—Vedic histories.
- Rādhārāṇī**—Lord Kṛṣṇa's consort and pleasure potency.
- Rathayātrā**—“chariot festival”; a festival in which the form of Kṛṣṇa is borne in procession on a large canopy-topped chariot or float, especially the festival originating in Purī, India, for Jagannātha (Lord Kṛṣṇa, “the Lord of the universe”).
- Sannyāsa**—the renounced life of a man who relinquishes home to dedicate himself fully to the Supreme.
- Śrī**—an honorific meaning “opulent” (similarly: Śrīla, Śrīmad, Śrīmān, Śrīmatī).
- Śrīla Prabhupāda**—His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.
- Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam**—the most important of the eighteen *Purāṇas*, which tells of the nature and pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa and His devotees.
- Supersoul**—the form of the Lord who resides in every heart along with the individual soul.
- Upaniṣads**—the 108 essential philosophical treatises that appear within the *Vedas*.
- Varṇāśrama**—the Vedic social system. It organizes society into four occupational and four spiritual divisions (*varṇas* and *āśramas*). The members of the four *varṇas* are the *brāhmaṇas* (intellectuals, priests), the *kṣatriyas* (administrators and soldiers), the *vaiśyas* (farmers and businessmen), and the *śūdras* (laborers and artisans). The members of the four *āśramas* are the *brahmacāris* (celibate students), *grhasthas* (married people), *vānaprasthas* (retired people), and *sannyāsīs* (renunciants).
- Vṛndāvana**—the transcendental abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa, mirrored on earth as the town in India where Kṛṣṇa appeared five thousand years ago.
- Vaiṣṇava**—a devotee of the Supreme Lord (from the word *Viṣṇu*).
- Vedas**—the hymns of knowledge revealed by the Lord Himself at the beginning of creation.
- Vedic**—pertaining to the culture in which the *Vedas* and related scriptures guide all aspects of human life.
- Viṣṇu**—any form of the Personality of Godhead (see “Godhead”); the forms the Lord manifests to create and sustain the material world.

# KURUKSHETRA

## The Land of Dharma

*War and pious deeds have often come together at this ancient North Indian site.*

by Lokanāth Swami

photos by Mahā Viṣṇu Dāsa and Yamarāja Dāsa

**K**URUKSHETRA, about one hundred miles north of New Delhi, is best known as the place where the great battle of the *Mahābhārata* was fought and Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā*. But long before that, Kurukshetra had played a dominant role in the history and culture of ancient India. For thousands of years it was a hub around which the Vedic civilization spun in its full glory. Kurukshetra's religious importance is described in many scriptures, including the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the *Mahābhārata*, and various *Upaniṣads* and *Purāṇas*. The scriptures refer to it as a place of meditation and an abode of demigods. The atmosphere of Kurukshetra is still

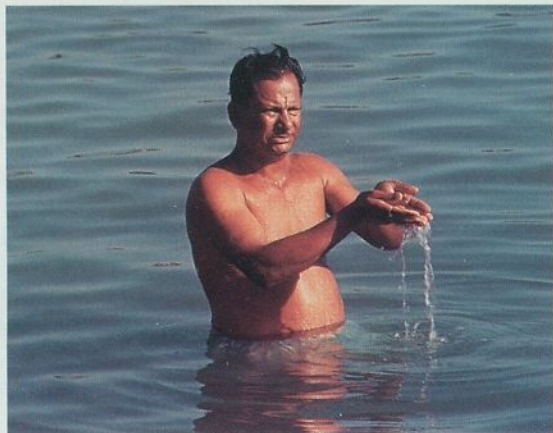
charged with the chanting of Vedic hymns, especially the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

The first verse of the *Gītā* refers to Kurukshetra as *dharma-kṣetra*, or "the field of dharma," indicating that it was already known as a holy place. Today one can find many ancient temples and sacred lakes at Kurukshetra, an area of about one hundred square miles between the sacred rivers Sarasvatī and Dīṣādvatī in Haryana state.

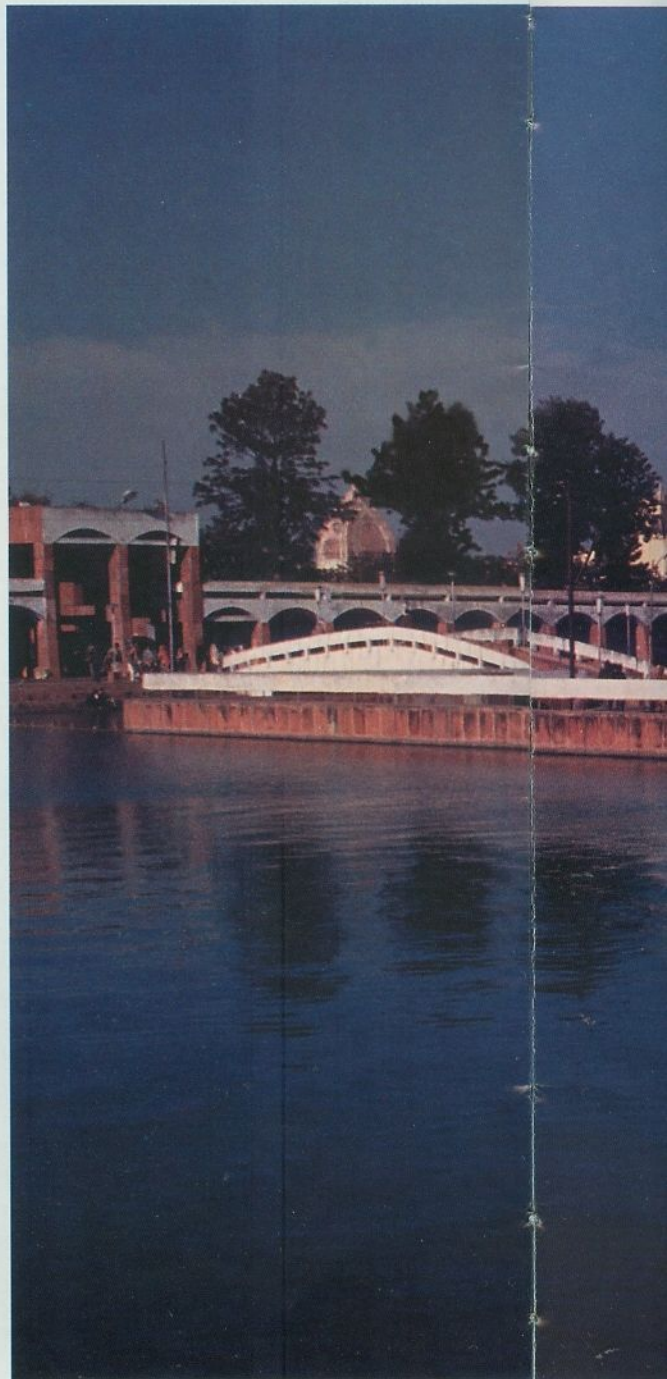
### THE GREAT KING KURU

Kurukshetra was formerly known as Brahmakṣetra, Bṛghukṣetra, Āryavarta, and Samanta Pañcaka. It became known as Kurukshetra because

*At Kurukshetra a pilgrim worships Brahma Sarovar by offering back to the lake its own sacred water.*

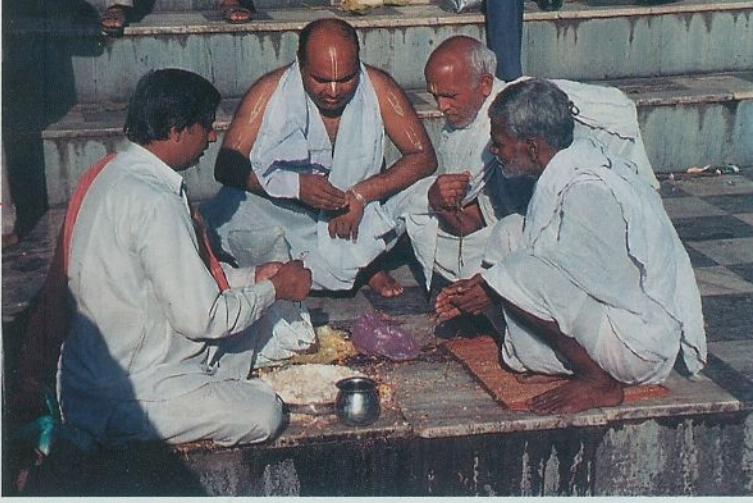


Mahā Viṣṇu Dāsa



Mahā Viṣṇu Dāsa



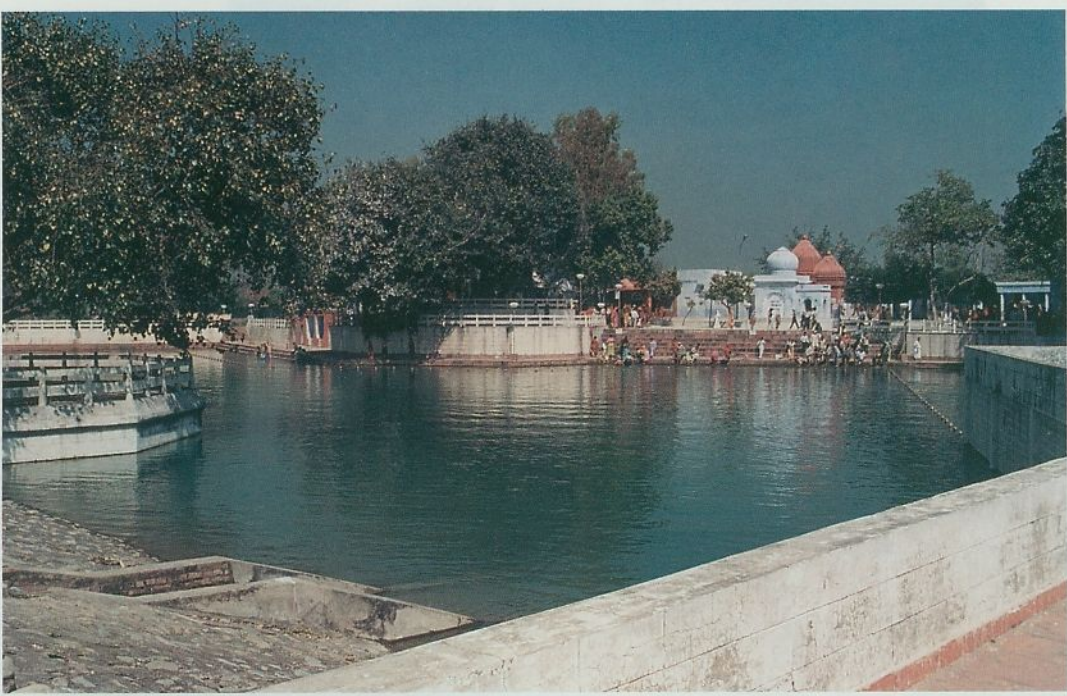


Mahā Viṣṇu Dāsa

*Priests assist a pilgrim (left) in performing a ritual at Brahma Sarovar. Below, a temple sits within Brahma Sarovar, connected to the shore by a footbridge.*



Pilgrims come to bathe in a sacred lake near the spot where Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke the Bhagavad-gītā.



Mahā Viṣṇu Dāsa

## Śrīla Prabhupāda at Kurukshetra

SUMATI MORARJI [see “Departures,” page 32], who in 1965 gave Śrīla Prabhupāda free passage to America on her steamship Jaladuta, remembered meeting Śrīla Prabhupāda at Kurukshetra for the first time during the 1950s. Śrīla Prabhupāda was sitting under a tree, chanting on beads. Sensing that he was a distinguished sādhu, Sumati Morarji approached him. She was impressed with his humility and devotion, and she mentioned this when Śrīla Prabhupāda went to see her in Bombay to ask her help in getting to America.

In October 1970, Śrīla Prabhupāda was traveling to Amritsar by train with a group of disciples. As the train arrived in Kurukshetra station, he said, “Just here, Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke *Bhagavad-gītā* five thousand years ago. People say that it does not exist, that it’s a mythological place, a symbol of the field of the body and the senses. They say it

is an allegorical place. But here we are at the Kurukshetra station.”

As he spoke, the sun was setting, and a bright orange sky shone over the flat land.

“How can they say Kurukshetra is not a real place?” he continued. “Here it is before us, and it has been a historical place for a long, long time.”

On December 1, 1975, Śrīla Prabhupāda went to Kurukshetra with several disciples. Before returning to Delhi, he decided to visit a less developed area of Kurukshetra called Jyotisar, the actual place where Lord Kṛṣṇa had spoken the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Śrīla Prabhupāda walked about and thoroughly inspected the area. After ten minutes he asked the devotees what they thought of it. Everyone expressed enthusiasm about the place, which they sensed as spiritually vibrant. A deep, timeless wisdom and serenity seemed to permeate the atmosphere. Śrīla

Prabhupāda told the devotees that ISKCON should build a temple of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna there.

In 1996, the Śrīla Prabhupāda Centennial year, devotees made a special effort to obtain a parcel of land in Jyotisar. By the grace of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna they succeeded in acquiring six acres, just a hundred yards away from the spot where the *Bhagavad-gītā* was spoken. In April 1998, the governor of Haryana presided over the ceremony dedicating the ground for the temple. At present, ISKCON runs a small temple in Thanesar, a couple of miles from Brahma Sarovar. The devotees are planning, designing, and raising funds for the complex that Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted in Jyotisar.

Also during the Śrīla Prabhupāda Centennial year, a prominent square in the town of Kurukshetra was named after Śrīla Prabhupāda: Bhaktivedanta Swami Chouk [Square].

The governor of Haryana state (right, accompanied by His Holiness Gopāl Kṛṣṇa Goswami) arrives to preside over the ceremony dedicating the ground for ISKCON's new temple at Kurukshetra. Below, a Deity of Lord Viṣṇu seated on His carrier, Garuḍa, is worshiped in a temple at Brahma Sarovar.



Mahā Viṣṇu Dāsa



Mahā Viṣṇu Dāsa

of the work of King Kuru.

The *Mahābhārata* tells of how King Kuru, a prominent ancestor of the Pāṇḍavas, made the land a great center of spiritual culture. King Kuru went there on a golden chariot and used the chariot's gold to make a plow. He then borrowed Lord Śiva's bull and Yama-rāja's buffalo and started plowing. When Indra arrived and asked Kuru what he was doing, Kuru replied that he was preparing the land for growing the eight religious virtues: truth, yoga, kindness, purity, charity, forgiveness, austerity, and celibacy.

Indra asked the king to request a boon. Kuru asked that the land ever remain a holy place named after himself, and that anyone dying there go to heaven regardless of his sins or virtues. Indra laughed at the requests.

Undaunted, Kuru performed great penance and continued to plow. Gradually, Indra was won over, but other demigods expressed doubts. They said



Mahā Viṣṇu Dāsa

that death without sacrifice did not merit a place in heaven. Finally, Kuru and Indra arrived at a compromise: Indra would admit into heaven anyone who died there while fighting or performing penance. So Kurukshetra became both a battlefield and a land of piety.

## THE MAHĀBHĀRATA BATTLE

When the Pāṇḍavas claimed their legitimate share of their paternal kingdom from their uncle Dhṛtarāṣṭra and his sons, the Kauravas, they were given the Khāṇḍava Forest in the south of the Kuru kingdom. There they built a magnificent city called Indraprastha, located where Delhi is today. The Kauravas kept Hastināpura, situated to the northeast of Delhi, as their capital.

Later, the Pāṇḍavas were exiled for thirteen years after Yudhiṣṭhira's defeat in a game of dice. After the exile, the Pāṇḍavas demanded the return of their kingdom. On behalf of the Pāṇḍavas, Lord Kṛṣṇa went to Duryodhana,



Mahā Viṣṇu Dāsa

*Under an ancient banyan tree (left), where Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke the Bhagavad-gītā, pilgrims view sculptures (above) of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna on a chariot.*

## Kurukshetra's Holy Sites

The *Vāmana Purāna* says that nine sacred rivers and seven sacred forests exist in the region.

### *Sarasvatī River*

The beds of all the rivers except the Sarasvatī are difficult to find at Kurukshetra. But the Sarasvatī flows during the rainy season, and its bed is visible at other times.

### *Jyotisar*

At Jyotisar, Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke the *Gītā*, the spot marked by a marble chariot under a banyan tree. The tree is said to be more than five thousand years old, making it the oldest witness to Lord Kṛṣṇa's immortal conversation with Arjuna. Jyotisar is on the bank of the Sarasvatī, about five miles from the town of Kurukshetra.

### *Brahma Sarovar*

Lord Brahmā is said to have created the earth here. During solar eclipses hundreds of thousands of pilgrims come to take a holy dip in Brahma Sarovar, observing an ancient tradition. The beautiful Brahma Sarovar is larger than the other lakes in the area and is well maintained by the Kurukshetra Development Board. It has become the center of interest for pilgrims coming to Kurukshetra.

On the northern banks of Brahma Sarovar sits a Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa temple of the Gaudiya Math, the institution founded by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura, the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. The Gaudiya Math temple was built to commemorate the reunion between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa that took place at Kurukshetra five thousand years ago.

### *Samanta Pañcaka*

Kurukshetra is known as Samanta Pañcaka ("five lakes") because here Lord Paraśurāma, an incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa, made five lakes from the blood of *kṣatriyas* he killed. (Lord Paraśurāma purged the earth of wicked kings and warriors twenty-one times.) Śrīla Prabhupāda said that the blood later turned into water.

One of the lakes is called Sannihit ("assembly"). On the new-moon day all the holy places personified are said to assemble in the lake. At the time of a solar eclipse, pilgrims are first led to Sannihit Lake, known as an abode of Lord Viṣṇu.

### *Ban Ganga*

Ban Ganga, or Bhishma Kund, is a holy place about three miles from Kurukshetra. During the Battle of Kurukshetra, Bhīṣmadeva, the grand-uncle of the Pāṇḍavas, lay here on his deathbed, made of arrows piercing his body. When he asked Arjuna to quench his thirst, Arjuna knew that the great Bhīṣma did not thirst for water of this world. So Arjuna pierced the earth with an arrow, and Ganges water gushed out like a fountain. Bhīṣma drank the holy water and thanked Arjuna for his great deed. Bhīṣma then instructed Yudhiṣṭhira on the path of dharma.

Pilgrims to Ban Ganga can worship a Deity of Lord Kṛṣṇa in His universal form and a 26-foot-high deity of Hanumān.

### *Ban Ganga (Dayalpur)*

This is a small village a couple of miles from Brahma Sarovar. Here Arjuna also brought forth the Ganges by shooting an arrow into the ground, this time to

provide drinking water for his chariot horses during his single combat with Jayadratha.

### *Karnavadha*

Karnavadha is a long trench where the wheels of Karṇa's chariot were stuck before Arjuna killed him.

### *Parasar/Dvaipain*

Paraśara Muni, the father of Śrīla Vyāsadeva, had his āśrama here, about twenty-five miles south of the town of Thaneswar. Duryodhana hid in the lake here after running away from battle at the end of the *Mahābhārata* war. He came out of the water when the Pāṇḍavas challenged him to fight.

### *Pehowa*

Pehowa, seventeen miles west of Thaneswar, was formerly known as Prithudak, "the pool of Pṛthū." King Pṛthū, an incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa's ruling potency, performed last rites for his father here. Hundreds of pilgrims visit Pehowa every day to offer oblations to their ancestors.

### *Chakravyuha*

At Chakravyuha, eight kilometers south of Thaneswar, the general Droṇācārya organized his army in the shape of a discus (*cakra*). It is also where Abhimanyu, the son of Arjuna and Subhadra, was killed.

### *Dadhichi Tirtha*

At Dadhichi Tirtha, on the bank of the Sarasvatī, the sage Dadhīci had his āśrama long ago. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* relates that Indra once asked Dadhīci to give his bones to be made into a weapon for fighting the demons. Dadhīci complied with the request and gave up his life.



## Kurukshetra Pilgrimage

### How to Get There

Kurukshetra, located in the state of Haryana, is a four-hour train ride from Delhi. There are also direct trains from Mumbai, Agra, Baroda, Chandigarh, and Simla.

### Where to Stay

Kurukshetra has several inexpensive or free guest houses (*dharmshalas*). The rooms are generally clean and are adequate if you don't mind roughing it a little. Otherwise, the best hotel in town is the centrally located Neelkanthi Krishna Dham Yatri Niwas. In Jyotisar, try the secluded Canal Guest House.

(This information comes from *Holy Places and Temples of India*, by Jada Bharata Dasa, available through The Hare Kṛṣṇa Catalog.)

*Handbound books (above) contain the names of visitors to Kurukshetra over the last one hundred years. At right, statues depict an ancient incident at Kurukshetra during which Lord Viṣṇu appeared.*



Mahā Viṣṇu Dāsa

Mahā Viṣṇu Dāsa





*Devotees from ISKCON's center in Māyāpur, West Bengal, perform part of an elaborate fire sacrifice to prepare the site for ISKCON's new temple at Kurukshetra.*

the eldest Kaurava, and begged for five villages for the five Pāṇḍavas. But proud Duryodhana refused to give any land. "I won't even give them enough land to fit on the tip of a pin," he said.

The war was therefore unavoidable, and the Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas decided to fight at Kurukshetra, because it was large, uninhabited, and abundant with water and fuel-wood.

The Pāṇḍavas won the Battle of Kurukshetra, which lasted only eighteen days.

### **THE BIRTH OF THE GĪTĀ**

The Battle of Kurukshetra began on the day known as Mokṣadā Ekādaśī. (Ekādaśī is the eleventh day of

either the waxing or waning moon, and *mokṣadā* means "giver of liberation.") On that day, Kṛṣṇa enlightened Arjuna with the knowledge of *Bhagavad-gītā*, liberating him. Now every year on that day—considered the birthday of *Bhagavad-gītā*—festivals in honor of the *Gītā* are held at Kurukshetra and many other places in India. The grand festival in Jyotisar, the spot where the *Gītā* was spoken, is organized as a state function, with chief ministers and governors presiding. Coincidentally, this is also the time of ISKCON's annual Prabhupāda Book Marathon, when devotees distribute hundreds and thousands of copies of Śrīla Prabhupāda's *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* in India and around the world.

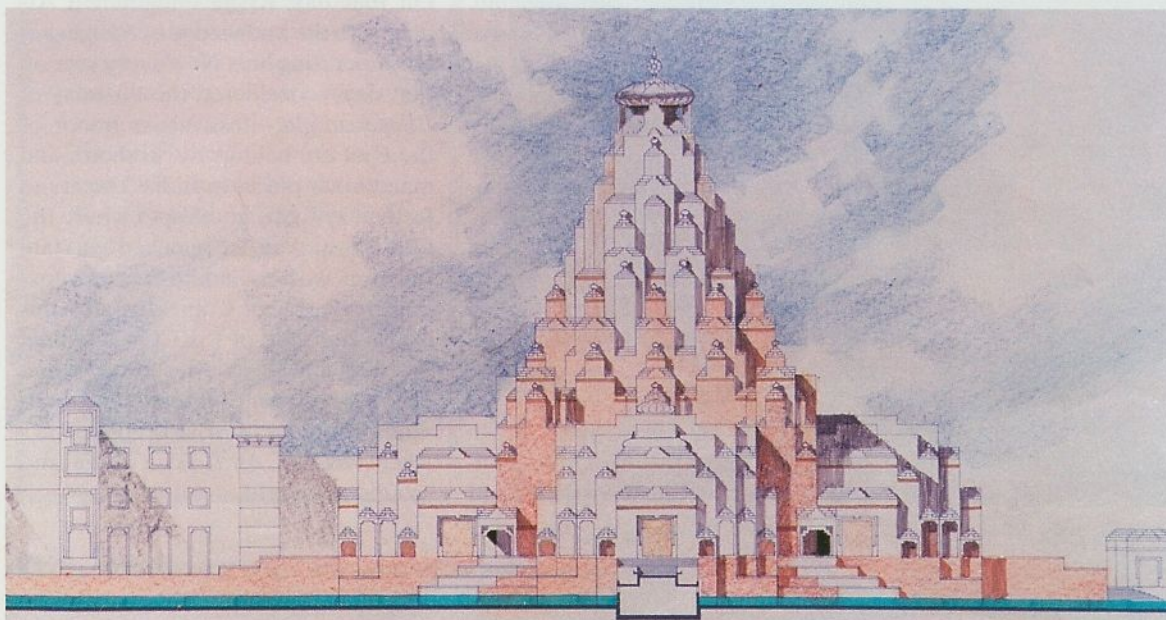
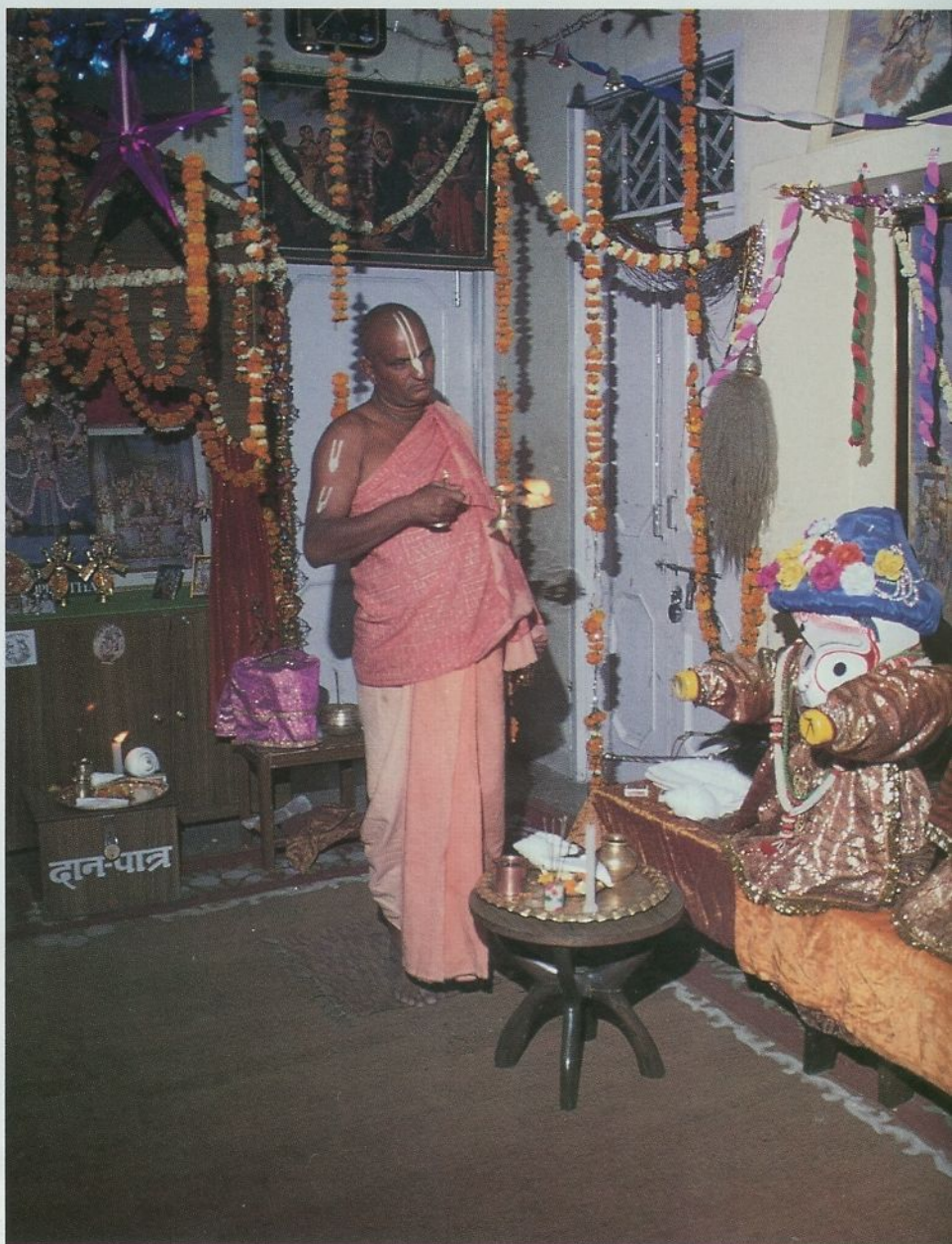
## RATHAYĀTRĀ'S KURUKSHETRA ROOTS

Once, when Kṛṣṇa was preparing to go to Kurukshetra at the time of a solar eclipse, He invited the *gopīs* (cowherd girls) and other residents of Vṛndāvana to meet Him at Kurukshetra. When He had left Vṛndāvana in His youth, He had promised to return very soon. But He had been away for a long time (about a hundred years), so out of intense spiritual love, the residents of Vṛndāvana had always felt ecstatic longing to see Him again.

The residents of Dvārakā (a majestic city) arrived at Kurukshetra on chariots; the residents of Vṛndāvana (a simple cowherd village), on ox carts. Because the families of Vṛndāvana and Dvārakā were related, a joyful reunion took place.

Of all the residents of Vṛndāvana, the leading *gopī*, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, had felt the pangs of separation from Kṛṣṇa more than anyone else. She and the other *gopīs* were determined to bring Kṛṣṇa back to Vṛndāvana. The loving exchange between Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* at Kurukshetra is the esoteric meaning behind the festival known as Rathayātrā (“Festival of the Chariots”). So whenever Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees put on Rathayātrās in cities around the world, they are proclaiming the glories of Kurukshetra. ❀

*Lokanāth Swami is the director of ISKCON Padayātrās (“walking festivals”) worldwide and ISKCON’s minister for social development information.*



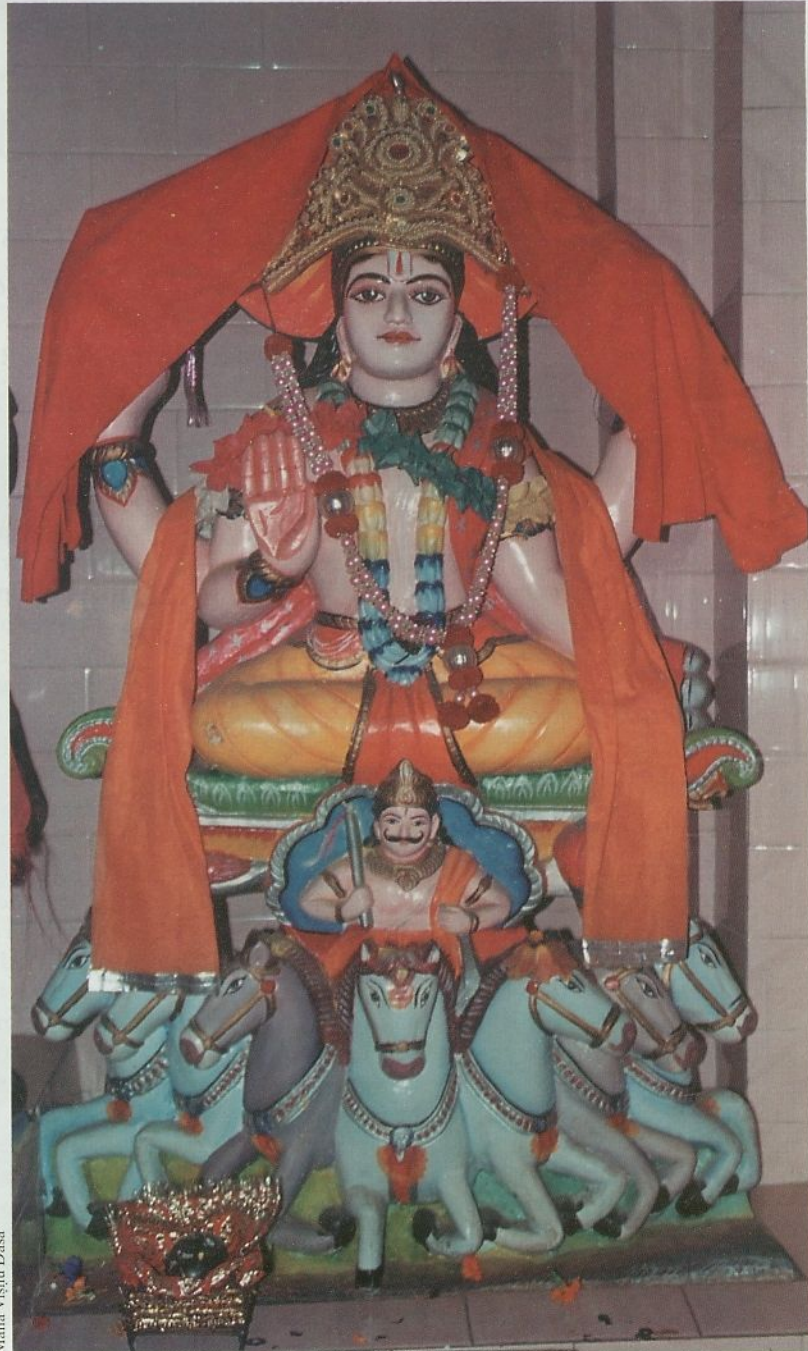
*A preliminary drawing (left) of ISKCON’s new temple at Kurukshetra. At right, Sarasvatī Devī, the goddess of learning, graces a temple courtyard on the shore of Brahma Sarovar.*





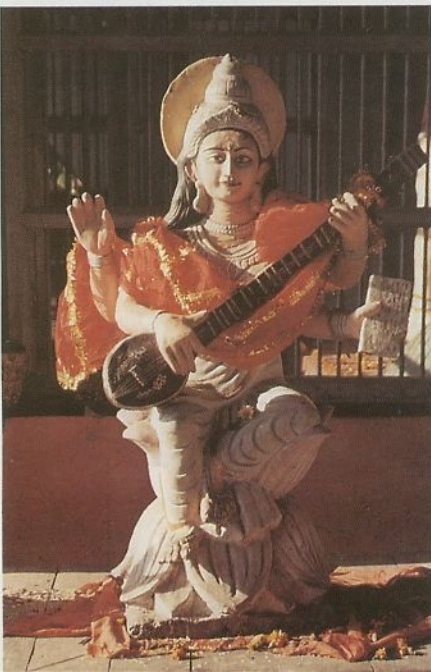
Yamaraġġa Dāsa

*A devotee worships the Deities (left) at ISKCON's present temple at Kurukshetra. Below, Lord Viṣṇu at a temple bordering Brahma Sarovar.*



Mahā Viṣṇu Dāsa

Mahā Viṣṇu Dāsa



# Bhīma Fights Jarāsandha

*The tyrant Jarāsandha accepts a challenge  
from the mightiest of the Pāṇḍava brothers.*

Translated from Sanskrit  
by Hridayānanda Dāsa Goswami

• • •

*The sage Vaiśampāyana is telling the history of the Pāṇḍavas to their great-grandson, King Janamejaya. As the narration continues, Kṛṣṇa and the Pāṇḍavas Bhīma and Arjuna have challenged the evil king Jarāsandha to a fight. The defeat of Jarāsandha, who holds many kings hostage, will entitle Yudhiṣṭhira to perform the Rājasūya sacrifice and become world emperor. Now Jarāsandha responds to the challenge. [Abridged from the original translation.]*

**K**ING JARĀSANDHA, eager to fight with his foes of awesome deeds, then authorized the coronation of his son Sahadeva. Now that the fight had come, O best of the Bhāratas, the king remembered the two leaders of his armies, Kauśika and Citrasena, who were known in this world by the names Haṁsa and Dībhaka, names that in the past had been celebrated in human society and honored by the world.

O king, Jarāsandha was the best of the strong and as courageous as a tiger, and his prowess was awesome in the world. Lord Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma's infallible younger brother, remembered that [by Lord Brahmā's order] to kill Jarāsandha was another's ordained lot. True to His word, Lord

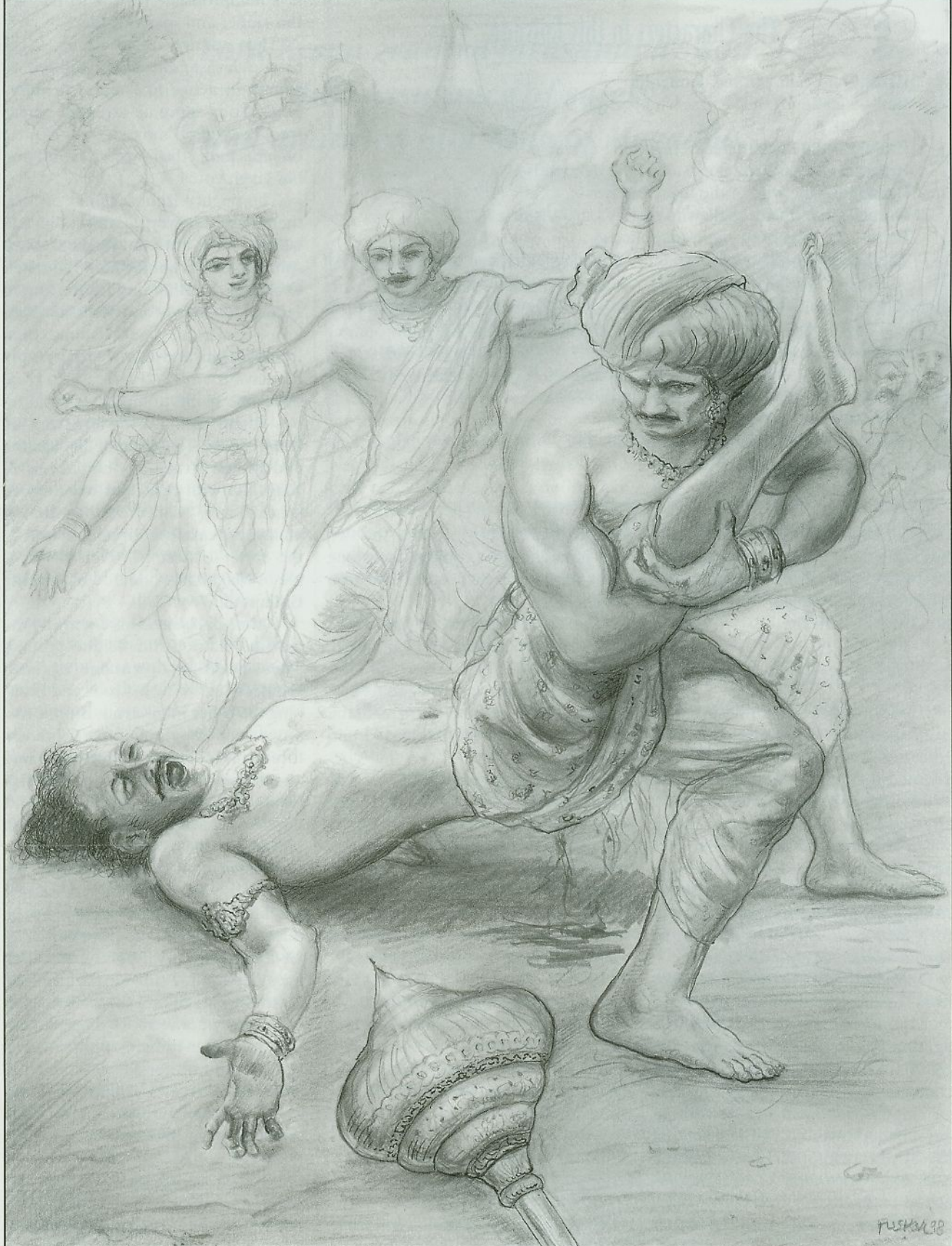
Kṛṣṇa, the maintainer of the world, respected the order of Brahmā and so did not wish to kill Jarāsandha personally.

Thereupon the eloquent and infallible Lord Kṛṣṇa, the joy of the Yadu dynasty, said to King Jarāsandha, who had made up his mind to fight, "Of the three of us, O king, whom are you inclined to fight? Which of us should prepare himself for battle?"

O king, when Kṛṣṇa had addressed him thus, Jarāsandha, the splendid ruler of Magadha, chose to fight with Bhīmasena. The royal priest, bearing the finest medicines, painkillers, and restoratives, waited upon Jarāsandha, who was eager for battle. A renowned *brāhmaṇa* performed all the auspicious rituals for Jarāsandha, who was ever devoted to the warrior's path. After fastening his full armor, Jarāsandha took off his crown and carefully combed his hair. He then rose up like the ocean overflowing its shores.

The astute king Jarāsandha said to Bhīma, of awesome feats, "Bhīma, I will fight with you. It is good for you to be defeated by a superior."

Having thus spoken to Bhīmasena, the mighty Jarāsandha, tamer of foes, went toward his foe like



*Bhīma puts the fatal move on Jarāsandha.*

## The Characters in this Episode

**Asura**—an enemy of the demigods

**Bali**—a leader of the Asuras who became a great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa

**Brahmā**—the first created being in the universe

**Bṛhaspati**—the spiritual master of the demigods

**Draupadi**—the wife of the five Pāṇḍavas

**Garuḍa**—the divine eagle who carries Lord Viṣṇu

**Indra**—the king of the heavenly planets

**The Pāṇḍavas**—Though the name *Pāṇḍava* means “son of Pāṇḍu,” the five Pāṇḍavas were sired by demigods—the three eldest Pāṇḍavas (Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīma, and Arjuna) in the womb of King Pāṇḍu’s wife Kuntī, and the youngest (the twins, Nakula and Sahadeva) in the womb of Pāṇḍu’s wife Mādri. The Pāṇḍavas are sometimes called “Bhārata” or “best of the Bhāratas,” because they come in the dynasty of King Bhārata.

**Subhadra**—Lord Kṛṣṇa’s sister

**Vṛtra**—a powerful demon once defeated by Indra (Vṛtra was in fact a devotee cursed to be a demon for one lifetime.)

the Asura Bali confronting Indra. Then, having taken counsel with Kṛṣṇa, mighty Bhīmasena, blessed with auspicious rites and eager to fight, approached Jarāsandha.

### THE FIGHT BEGINS

Those two tigers of men met in battle, using their bare arms as weapons. Heroic and supremely excited, each yearned to conquer the other. As the two struck each other’s arms and seized, stretched, and held each other, there was a ferocious din like thunderbolts striking mountains. Both men were euphoric in battle and fought with extraordinary strength. Hungry for victory, they each sought an opening to win an advantage over the other.

That contest of the two mighty warriors was like the duel between Vṛtra and Indra. Indeed, so fierce was the fighting, O king, that it drove away the crowd that had gathered near. As each combatant pushed and pulled his foe, striking his opponent’s chest with an open hand, dragging and tearing, the two struggled intensely and slammed each other with their knees. They rebuked each other with mighty voices and belted each other with blows that landed like crashing stones. Broad-

chested and expert in battle, the two foes joined in close combat, their long arms falling on each other like iron bludgeons.

The battle began on the first day of the month of Kārttika and continued, day and night, without rest. For thirteen full days those mighty souls battled on, but on the fourteenth night the king of Magadha felt exhausted and stopped.

Your majesty, when Śrī Kṛṣṇa saw that the king was exhausted, He addressed Bhīma to alert him fully: “O son of Kuntī, it is not proper to harass an exhausted enemy in battle. Certainly if he is fully harassed, he could give up his life. Therefore, Kaunteya, you must not harass the monarch. Fight him with your arms, O best of the Bhāratas.”

From these words of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s, the son of Pāṇḍu, killer of hostile heroes, understood that Jarāsandha was vulnerable and made up his mind to kill him. Thereupon, to conquer the unconquered one, Bhīma let his fury rise and seized Jarāsandha.

### JARĀSANDHA TORN APART

Eager to slay Jarāsandha and using his ample intelligence, Bhīmasena said

to Kṛṣṇa, the joy of the Yadus, “Kṛṣṇa, it is inappropriate for me to pamper this sinner and spare his life.”

Thus addressed, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, eager to see Jarāsandha slain, replied to Bhīma in a tigerlike mood to hurry him: “Your supreme strength comes from the gods, Bhīma, so show at once on Jarāsandha the power the wind-god has given you!”

The mighty Bhīma, tamer of foes, then hoisted powerful Jarāsandha and whirled him around, O king. After spinning him around a hundred times, O best of the Bhāratas, Bhīma hurled Jarāsandha down and with his bare arms broke his back. Bhīma then trampled him and let out a roar. As the Pāṇḍava roared and Jarāsandha cried out while being trampled, a tumultuous sound went forth, terrifying all living things. The cries of Jarāsandha and Bhīma struck all the citizens of Magadha with fear, and women had miscarriages. “Can it be that the Himalayan peaks are ripping apart? Is the earth shattering?” Thus the people of Magadha wondered on hearing Bhīmasena’s roar.

Bhīma had seized his enemy by the feet and hurled him to the ground. Then, pressing down one of Jarāsandha’s legs with his foot and grabbing the other in his arms, Bhīma, like a great elephant ripping apart a branch, tore Jarāsandha apart from his anus, and the people saw the two bodily fragments, each with one leg, thigh, testicle, hip, breast, back, and nostril, along with one arm, eye, eyebrow, and ear.\*

That night Kṛṣṇa, Bhīma, and Arjuna, those tamers of foes, discarded the lifeless king, who seemed to be asleep, at the gate of the main road leading to the royal palace, and then they departed. Lord Kṛṣṇa arranged for the yoking of Jarāsandha’s chariot, which was adorned with flags and ensign, and after bringing on board His two cousin-brothers, Bhīma and Arjuna, He set free His relatives—kings who had been imprisoned by Jarāsandha. Those liberated lords of the

\*Jarāsandha had been born in two parts, which were then joined by a witch named Jara. Kṛṣṇa hinted to Bhīma that Jarāsandha was vulnerable to being split apart.

# Lord Kṛṣṇa granted Jarāsandha's son full assurance of safety and anointed him King of Magadha.



earth then approached Śrī Kṛṣṇa and bestowed riches upon Him, who is worthy of riches, for the Lord had freed those kings from great fear.

## THE GREAT CHARIOT

Then Kṛṣṇa, uninjured, equipped with weapons, victorious over the enemy, and mounting His celestial chariot, left with the kings the capital of Girivraja, with its circle of mountains and green pastures. With Lord Kṛṣṇa at the reins and His two warrior brothers on board that fabulous war chariot, so carefully crafted for killing, everyone could now clearly see that even all the kings of the world could not conquer it. Indeed, bearing the two warriors Bhīma and Arjuna, and with Lord Kṛṣṇa holding the reins, that chariot shone with beauty, and all the world's archers could not conquer it. It was on this chariot that Indra and Viṣṇu had ridden in the battle for Tārakā, the wife of Bṛhaspati, and now Lord Kṛṣṇa, having mounted it, made ready to depart.

Upon that triumphant and deadly car, bright like molten gold, thundering like a cloud, and adorned with circlets of bells, Indra had once slain nine times ninety demons, and now those best of men, having won it, rejoiced. Thereupon, the Magadha people became astonished to see mighty-armed Kṛṣṇa standing on the chariot with His two cousin-brothers. When Lord Kṛṣṇa stood upon that chariot yoked with divine horses and as swift as the wind, it shone with utmost beauty. On this excellent chariot the Lord arranged for a beautiful free-flying flag to be raised that was visible for eight miles. Indeed, it shone as bright as a rainbow stretched across the sky like the rain-god's bow.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa thought of Garuḍa, and so he came. At that very moment [by the presence of Garuḍa on the chariot's flag] the chariot stood tall like a great temple pillar. Garuḍa, devourer of serpents, stood on that excellent chariot with other creatures, who rested on the flag with wide-open mouths roaring great sounds. Garuḍa shone with such distinctly superior prowess that it was difficult for ordinary creatures to gaze upon him, blazing as he was like the midday sun basking in its thousands of rays. O king, that divine and excellent banner, seen by gods and humans alike, did not get entangled in trees, nor could weapons damage it. Standing firm on the divine car, which resounded like a rain cloud, the infallible, tigerlike Kṛṣṇa departed with the two Pāṇḍavas.

The celebrated and mighty-armed Lord Kṛṣṇa, whose eyes are as delicate as lotus petals, then departed Girivraja, but He stopped outside the city on a plain. There, O king, all the citizens reverently approached Him, with the *brāhmaṇas* in the lead, and they behaved in accord with the sacred rules. So also did the kings freed from bondage worship Lord Madhusūdana, Kṛṣṇa, gently speaking these words: "O mighty-armed one, O son of Devakī, it is not surprising that You, together with Bhīma and Arjuna, have carefully protected the principles of religion. Today You have lifted up all the kings who had sunk into the miserable mud of the horrible lake of Jarāsandha. O Viṣṇu, O Supreme Person, thanks to Providence You have freed us kings who were languishing in that dreadful mountain fort, and thus You have achieved shining fame. O tiger among men, O most noble one, tell us what deed we can do for You, even if difficult, for we

kings must know this."

The great-minded Lord Kṛṣṇa, master of the senses, then encouraged the kings with these words: "Yudhiṣṭhira wishes to perform the Rājasūya rite. He is always dedicated to justice, and now he wishes to establish his sovereignty. All of you should help him with his sacrificial performance." At this, O noble Bhārata, the kings were delighted, and all of them happily agreed and promised, "So shall it be!"

Those lords of the earth then presented Lord Kṛṣṇa with riches, and out of compassion for the kings, the Lord reluctantly accepted their gifts. And even the son of Jarāsandha, the mighty chariot warrior Sahadeva, came out with his people and ministers in a procession headed by priests. Becoming meek and humble, he also presented many valuable gifts and then stood near Lord Vāsudeva, Kṛṣṇa, the God of mankind. O noble Ārya, as Jarāsandha's son Sahadeva stood fearfully before Him, Lord Kṛṣṇa granted him full assurance of safety and right there anointed him king of Magadha. Having allied himself with Lord Kṛṣṇa and having been honored by the two sons of Pṛthā, the wise king entered the city of his father and grandfather. Then lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa, glowing with supreme opulence, took the varieties of riches and departed with Pṛthā's two sons.

## RETURN TO INDRAPRASTHA

After arriving in the city of Indraprastha, the infallible Lord and the two sons of Pāṇḍu approached Dharmarāja Yudhiṣṭhira, and the Lord addressed him with pleasure: "By good fortune, Bhīma has brought down

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# Bhaktivedanta Institute Of Vedic Studies

**Gaura Pūrṇimā Semester 1999**

JANUARY 20–FEBRUARY 16

Śrīdhām Māyāpur, West Bengal

*Science of Mind*—Bhānu Swami

*Deity Worship*—Bhaktividyā Pūrṇa Swami

*To be announced*—Dānavīr Goswami

*Congregational Development*—Jayapatāka Swami

*Vedānta Philosophy*—Puruṣatrāya Swami

*Philosophy of Religion*—Airāvata Dāsa

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*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*—Dayārāma Dāsa

*Practical Aspects of Deity Worship*—Jananivāsa Dāsa

*Bhagavad-gītā (Chapters 1–6)*—Mādhavendra Purī Dāsa

*Sanskrit for Preachers*—Patrapatī Dāsa

*Management*—Tyāga Caitanya Dāsa

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**The International Society for Krishna Consciousness**

Founder-Ācārya His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

powerful Jarāsandha, and the kings have been freed from bondage, most noble monarch. And also by good fortune these two virtuous men, Bhīmasena and Dhanañjaya Arjuna, have come back to their city uninjured, O Bhārata.”

Yudhiṣṭhira fittingly honored Kṛṣṇa and then joyfully embraced Bhīmasena and Arjuna. His two brothers having destroyed Jarāsandha and achieved victory, King Yudhiṣṭhira, known as Ajātaśatru, or “one who has no enemy,” sat with them and rejoiced. Yudhiṣṭhira also met with the freed kings in order of seniority, and having shown them hospitality and honor, he granted them their leave. With Yudhiṣṭhira’s permission those kings departed at once and with great joy traveled to their own countries on their many vehicles.

Thus the vastly wise Lord Janārdana, Kṛṣṇa, slew the enemy Jarāsandha with the Pāṇḍavas’ help. Having slain Jarāsandha with the use of intelligence, Lord Kṛṣṇa, tamer of the enemy, took His leave from Dharmarāja Yudhiṣṭhira, Kuntī, and Draupadī, and also from Subhadrā, Bhīmasena, Arjuna, and the twins, Nakula and Sahadeva. Then, O noble Bhārata, Yudhiṣṭhira and the other Pāṇḍavas respectfully circumambulated Lord Kṛṣṇa of indefatigable deeds. After begging permission from the priest Dhaumya, Kṛṣṇa departed toward His city on that very best of chariots, which was as radiant as the newly risen sun and which was a gift from the king of justice, Yudhiṣṭhira. With that celestial car He made the world resound in all directions.

Their power vastly increased by their great victory and their rescue of the kings, the Pāṇḍavas inspired the greatest love and pleasure in Draupadī. King Yudhiṣṭhira, celebrated for his protection of the realm, then did all that was proper for the goodness, pleasure, and prosperity of the world, and he did all this in terms of sacred law. ❁

*Hridayānanda Dāsa Goswami, who holds a Ph.D. in Indology from Harvard University, occasionally teaches at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California, and has been a visiting lecturer at the University of California at Los Angeles.*



# EVERY TOWN & VILLAGE

*The worldwide activities of the International Society  
for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON)*

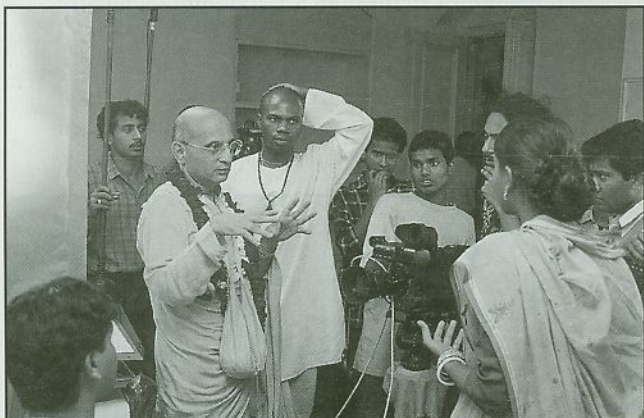
## WORLD NEWS

### North America

#### **The Bhaktivedanta Archives**

**released** its upgraded version of the Bhaktivedanta VedaBase in August, on Janmāṣṭamī, Lord Kṛṣṇa's appearance day. The new version, available for Windows 95/98/NT only, has many new features, including a section containing biographical works on ṛīla Prabhupāda by disciples and many other books. For more information, see The Hare Kṛṣṇa Catalog on page 63.

**India's television series "Abhay Charan" is currently filming** in New York City. The first twenty-six episodes, covering ṛīla Prabhupāda's life in India before he traveled to America, have aired on the Doordarshan national television network. The series, now off the air, will resume when a year's worth of shows have been produced. Originally shot in Hindi, the series is being dubbed in English, Dutch, French, Tamil, German, Spanish, and Italian for sale on video-cassettes.



*Bhakti Caru Swami instructs the cast of "Abhay Charan."*

**ISKCON Detroit held** its annual Rathayātrā ("Chariot Festival") in August on Belle Isle, an island park in the Detroit River. Michigan gubernatorial candidate Geoffrey Fieger campaigned at the festival and accepted a

packet of Kṛṣṇa-prasādam. The day before the festival, the *Detroit Free Press* ran a front-page article, with three color photos, announcing the festival and discussing the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

**The 1998 National Geographic Garden Book highlighted** New Vrindavan's Palace Rose Garden, at Prabhupada's Palace of Gold. For the seventh straight year, the garden won an All-American Rose Selections Award for outstanding rose gardens.



*Award-winning gardens at New Vrindavan's Palace of Gold.*

**The first in-depth documentary on the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement in nearly twenty years is now available** from ISKCON Television (ITV). Three years in the making, "The New Hare Krishna World" comes on two 60-minute video-cassettes. (Available from the Hare Kṛṣṇa Catalog, page 63.)

### United Kingdom

**Janmāṣṭamī marked** the twenty-fifth anniversary of ṛīla Prabhupāda's installation of ṛī ṛī Rādhā-Gokulānanda, the Rādhā-

Kṛṣṇa Deities at Bhaktivedanta Manor, ISKCON's center outside London.

**Rain and mud failed to keep** devotees from distributing—or festival-goers from trudging to receive—ten thousand plates of *prasādam* last June at the annual Glastonbury, England, music festival. Devotees also braved sometimes knee-deep mud to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa throughout the festival grounds.

**Europe** **Eleven thousand young people attended a** Hare Kṛṣṇa concert at the ISKCON site during Poland's annual "Woodstock" festival, held in August. The Hare Kṛṣṇa site included twenty-seven tents—the main one the size of a football field. Ten thousand people a day received plates of Kṛṣṇa-*prasādam*.

**The North European branch of the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust (BBT) reports** the following English-language books now in production: *Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta* (complete in two volumes), *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (complete in three volumes), *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (complete in two volumes), and *Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāmṛta* (translation in progress, including commentaries by Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*).

The North European BBT publishes books in forty-five languages.

**Commonwealth of Independent States** **The chief minister of** **New Delhi visited** ISKCON's temple in Moscow last July. The chief minister, Sri Sahib Singh Verma, delivered a short speech, during which he stressed the importance of

spreading the message of the *Bhagavad-gītā* in Russia. He encouraged devotees to build a Vedic temple in Moscow and have millions of Moscovites chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.

**Twenty-five hundred devotees from the CIS gathered** at ISKCON's temple in Sukharevo, outside Moscow, in July for a week of lectures, seminars, *kīrtanas*, and fellowship.

**Summer Rathayātrās:** Moscow and Novosibirsk, Russia, in June; Odessa, Ukraine, in July.

**Africa** **Back to Godhead** **associate editor** **Drutakarmā Dāsa (Michael A. Cremo) will present** a paper at the Fourth World Archeological Congress, to be held in January at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. His paper is titled "Forbidden Archeology of the Early and Middle Pleistocene: Evidence for Physiologically and Culturally Advanced Humans." Drutakarmā Dāsa co-authored, with Sadāpūta Dāsa (Richard L. Thompson), *Forbidden Archeology*, which challenges modern evolutionary theory by citing suppressed or ignored archeological evidence of the antiquity of modern man.



Drutakarmā Dāsa

## PADAYĀTRĀ NEWS

**Devotees are halfway through** a 1,700-mile Padayātrā ("walking festival") from Buenos Aires, Argentina, to Sao Paulo, Brazil. They started early this year and are walking with an ox-powered Deity cart that serves as a bookstall, lecture stage, and conveyance for items used to put on Hare Kṛṣṇa festivals at the many stops along the way.



Padayātrā in Argentina on the way to Brazil.

## DEPARTURES

SUMATI MORARJI, the former director of the Scindia steamship line who provided Śrīla Prabhupāda free passage to America in 1965, passed away last July in Mumbai. Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote regularly to Mrs. Morarji, especially while starting his mission in the West, keeping her informed of his activities. She assisted him in various ways over the years, and Śrīla Prabhupāda often expressed his appreciation for her help. The millions of souls who have benefited from Śrīla Prabhupāda's arrival in the West are indebted to her for her generous act of helping him come to America. Her example shows that any service to a great devotee can bring inestimable good results.



# PROJECT PROFILE

## Children of Krishna, Inc.

*Here's a Kṛṣṇa  
conscious project  
you might like to  
support or get  
involved in.*

### HOW YOU CAN HELP

Children of Krishna links young people in need with adults willing and able to help. If you know any young devotees who could use assistance, tell them about CKI, or phone CKI at the number below. Children of Krishna operates solely on contributions. To make a pledge or contribution, contact:

Jāhnavī Dāsī  
Managing Director, CKI  
P. O. Box 2458  
Alachua, Florida 32616, U.S.A.  
Phone: (904) 462-1081  
E-mail: afn56839@afn.org

### MOTTO

"Helping Hare Kṛṣṇa Youth Help Themselves"

### HEADQUARTERS

Alachua, Florida, U.S.A.

### PROJECT DIRECTORS

Anuttama Dāsa, Badrinārāyaṇa Dāsa, Dhīra Govinda Dāsa, Jāhnavī Devī Dāsī, Kṛṣṇa Avatāra Dāsa, Manu Dāsa, Sanātana Dāsa (Four directors are from ISKCON's second generation.)

### MISSION

Children of Krishna, Inc., supports, furthers, and protects the educational, economic, emotional, and spiritual development of the children of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

### GOALS

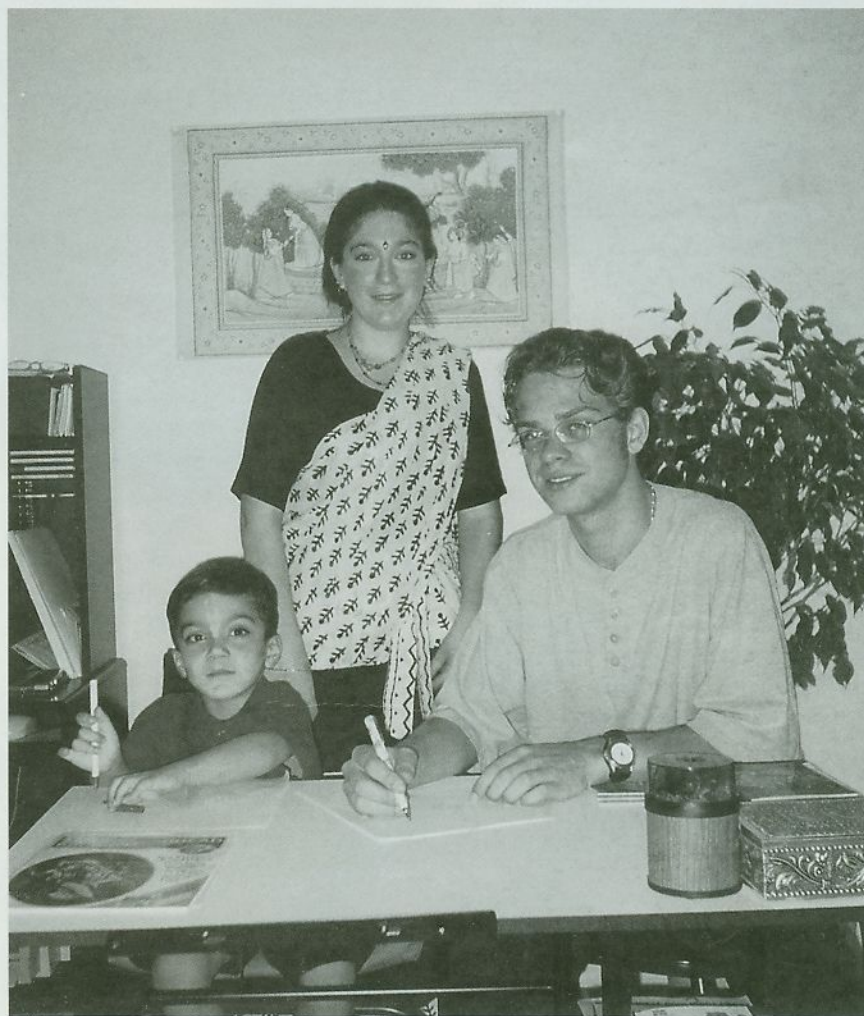
Children of Krishna aims to help the leaders of ISKCON achieve the following:

- Create a loving environment for our children and protect them from harm;
- Provide our students a first-class, well-rounded education through trained professional teachers and exceptional schools;
- Give our young adults the transitional training and support they need to become productive and happy members of society.

### DETAILS

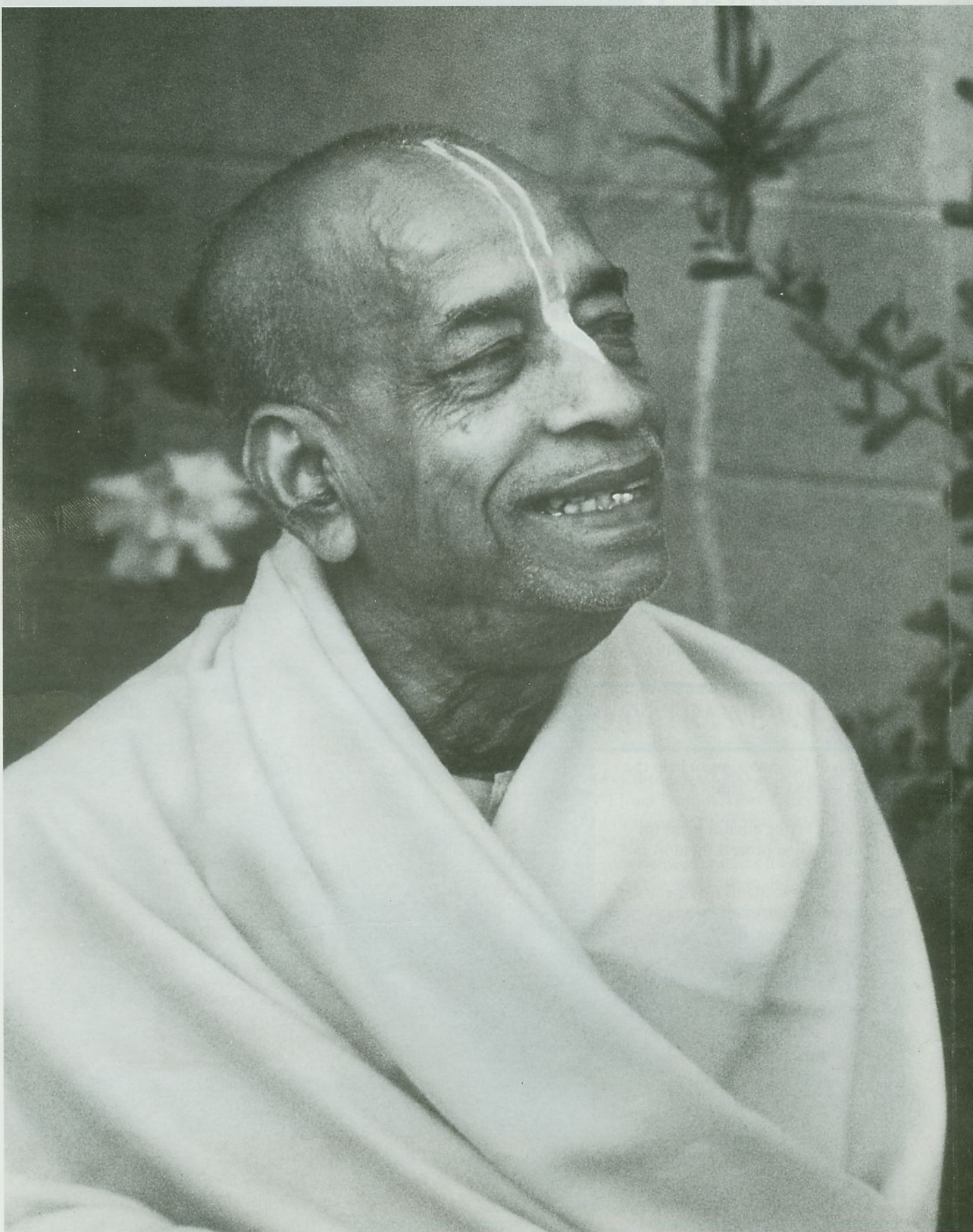
Children of Krishna, Inc., was formed in 1996 during the annual meeting of ISKCON's North American leaders. CKI assists young men and women who grew up in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement by providing grants and

loans for continuing education and for personal and occupational development. Grants have supported internships, counseling, reunions, university tuitions, youth publications, and the purchase of computer equipment for ISKCON-affiliated schools. Thanks to the generous contributions of ISKCON members and friends, CKI has given out more than \$30,000 to young devotees.



*CKI managing director Jāhnavī Devī Dāsī with her son, Abhimanyu Dāsa, and Kartāmāsa Dāsa, who has received a CKI grant for an internship. The internship, which involves working with Hare Kṛṣṇa children, goes toward a degree in human resource and development from the University of Florida.*

Bhakti Eddie



# Śrīla Prabhupāda's EQUAL VISION

*He wanted the whole world to know Kṛṣṇa.*

by Girirāja Swami

**U**PON THE invitation of the Gita Bhavan (“Gita Center”), in December 1970 Śrīla Prabhupāda and a party of disciples traveled to Indore, in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh, to take part in the week-long celebration of the anniversary of the day on which Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Most of the other speakers were Māyāvādī impersonalists, who did not preach *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is or present Kṛṣṇa as He is.

In Indore many gentlemen would come to meet Śrīla Prabhupāda in his room, usually with their own ideas of spiritual life. Śrīla Prabhupāda complained, “They come to the guru with their own opinions to see if the guru will agree. If the guru agrees, he is very good. But if the guru disagrees, they think, ‘He is not good.’”

One argument between Prabhupāda and some guests was especially instructive. On the previous night, Prabhupāda had delivered a lecture at the Gita Samiti [“Society”] Hall and was appalled to find there was no picture of Kṛṣṇa. The next day Prabhupāda raised the issue with his guests to make the point that people don’t properly understand and present *Bhagavad-gītā* and its speaker, Lord Kṛṣṇa. Prabhupāda said that his mission was to present *Bhagavad-gītā* properly—as it is—and to expose those who do not.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** A bona fide spiritual master is one who carries out the order of higher authorities. We are carrying out the order of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, or Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa taught *Bhagavad-gītā*, and He stated, “Anyone who preaches the confidential message of *Bhagavad-gītā* is very dear to Me.”

**Guest (1):** We believe in an incorporeal God, *nirākāra*.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Who says “incorporeal”? Who says?

**Guest (1):** You find it all over India, that incorporeal form, *jyotir-līnga*.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** You are bringing something else besides *Bhagavad-gītā*. Just try to understand. In this International Society for Krishna Consciousness, we are preaching *Bhagavad-gītā*. *Jyotir-līnga*—these theories may be in other literature, but we are particularly interested in preaching *Bhagavad-gītā*. And because the *Gīta* is being preached wrongly all over the world with nonsense commentary, we want to rectify it. Therefore our society is especially named “Krishna Consciousness.”

**Guest (1):** What is wrongly preached about *Gītā*?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Here is an example: Yesterday I went to that Gita Samiti. There is a lamp. Why is there a lamp instead of Kṛṣṇa? Kṛṣṇa is a lamp? Therefore I say it is being wrongly preached. Why is there a

# You're Invited!

## The Sunday Feast

Most Hare Kṛṣṇa centers around the world put on a special festival every Sunday—for regulars as well as newcomers. You're invited to join in the festival of music, dance, and spiritual discourse and then sharing hearty plates of savories, sweets, and vegetable extravaganzas. Come by and relish the taste of the world's oldest cultural tradition. Call your nearest center to find out the schedule for the Sunday Feast. (See "Centers," page 59.)

lamp? *Bhagavad-gītā* is spoken by Kṛṣṇa. So why is there no picture of Kṛṣṇa? That means you have not understood Kṛṣṇa. Therefore your so-called Gita Society is not bona fide.

Even in ordinary affairs, if there is some political meeting, you keep Gandhi's photo, Nehru's photo, because they are the political leaders. Gita Samiti is preaching *Bhagavad-gītā*, and there is not a single picture of Kṛṣṇa. This is misguided.

Gita Bhavan has invited me because we are teaching *Bhagavad-gītā*. But they celebrate *Gītā's jayantī* and the speaker of *Gītā* is not present? Therefore I say there are so many places, even here, which are wrongly representing *Bhagavad-gītā*. So our position is to rectify that wrong propaganda.

**Guest (2):** What is that wrong propaganda?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** There are many examples. In the ninth chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Lord Kṛṣṇa says, *man-manā bhava mad-bhaktō mad-yājī māṁ namaskuru*: "Engage your mind always in thinking of Me, become My devotee, offer obeisances to Me, and worship Me." But one well-known commentator says, "It is not the person Kṛṣṇa to whom you must surrender." Where does he get this nonsense idea?

**Guest (1):** No, [an influential impersonalist] also has said that.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Therefore I say they are all nonsense. They are all nonsense who deviate from the original text of the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

The guests challenged Śrīla Prabhupāda's statement that his presentation of *Bhagavad-gītā* was correct while the presentations of others were not. They said he should see and treat others with "equal vision."

**Guest (3):** If each person has an individual identity of soul above the body, you must treat everyone as equal.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** They are not equal. There are three *guṇas*, or modes of material nature, and *Bhagavad-gītā* analyzes: "These persons are in *sattva-guṇa* [goodness], these persons are in *rajo-guṇa* [passion], these persons are in *tamo-guṇa* [ignorance]."

**Guest (3):** That is not the personality of the *ātmā*. The *ātmā* is everyone's soul. You have the potency to rise and go higher and higher.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** You are not in the *ātmā* stage; I am not in the *ātmā* stage. You are in the bodily stage.

Still, if you see everyone equally, why do you find fault in me? If you are in the *ātmā* stage, you have no argument with me. *Paṇḍitāḥ sama-darśinaḥ*. This is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*:

*vidyā-vinaya-sampanne  
brāhmaṇe gavi hastini  
śunī caiva śva-pāke ca  
paṇḍitāḥ sama-darśinaḥ*

[The humble sages, by virtue of true knowledge, see with equal vision a learned and gentle *brāhmaṇa*, a cow, an elephant, a dog, and a dog-eater (outcaste).]

**Guest (4):** That is the correct position. **Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That is the correct position, but if you find that "Swamiji is not on the standard," that means you are not in the position—*sama-darśinaḥ*, equal vision.

**Guest (4):** But what if a person commits a murder?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** In the very high stage of *sama-darśinaḥ*, there is no distinction between sin and virtue. As soon as you see, "This is virtue and this is sin," it is not *sama-darśinaḥ*. Here it is said clearly, *vidyā-vinaya-sampanne brāhmaṇe*. A *brāhmaṇa* is learned and *vinaya*, "very humble"—these are signs of goodness. *Śunī* means "dog." He sees a dog and a learned *brāhmaṇa* the same. Now, the dog is supposed to be sinful, and the learned *brāhmaṇa* is supposed to be virtuous. Therefore in his vision the virtuous and the sinful are the same. That is *sama-darśi*.

**Guest (1):** I think they have made many mistakes in writing the *ślokas* [verses].

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Now you are finding faults in Vyāsa. Who can talk with you? Please excuse me. Please go out. You are finding fault with Vyāsa.

**Guest (5):** We only want you to be understood here.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda** [*shouting*]: I am not *sama-darśi*. I don't say I am *sama-darśi*. You say you are *sama-darśi*.

**Guest (2):** You should be *sama-darśi*.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** But I'm not in that stage. I say that because you don't surrender to Kṛṣṇa, you are sinful. That is my *darśana* [vision].

**Guest (3):** You should also be seeing as *sama-darśinaḥ*.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** No, why shall I? I am not in that position. I am simply repeating the words of Kṛṣṇa. That is my point. I may be *sama-darśi*, I may not be *sama-darśi*. My position is simply to repeat. That's all.

In his books Śrīla Prabhupāda explains that a person on the highest platform does not make distinctions; he sees everyone as being engaged in the service of the Lord. But when one takes the position of guru, he must make distinctions for the sake of instructing and delivering others. Even the best devotee has to act on that platform when he teaches. Although he sees

everyone as servant of Kṛṣṇa, he also sees differences:

*keha māne, keha nā māne, saba tānra dāsa  
ye nā māne, tāra haya sei pāpe nāsa*

“Some accept Him, whereas others do not, yet everyone is His servant. One who does not accept Him, however, will be ruined by his sinful activities.” (Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 6.85)

I thought of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s strong criticism of people still in the bodily concept of life who try to imitate the highest devotee, the *uttama-adhikārī*. In his purport to *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*, Mantra 6, Prabhupāda writes: “The *uttama-adhikārī* knows that there is no difference between a vastly learned *brāhmaṇa* and a dog in the street because both of them are part and parcel of the Lord, although they are embodied differently according to the qualities of material nature. . . . Such a learned devotee is not misled by material bodies but is attracted by the spiritual spark within the respective entities. Not considering the respective actions of the *brāhmaṇa* and the dog, the *uttama-adhikārī* tries to do good to both.

“Those who imitate an *uttama-adhikārī* by flaunting a sense of oneness or fellowship but who behave on the bodily platform are actually false philanthropists.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda’s arguments in this purport to *Śrī Īsopaniṣad* closely parallel his discussion with the gentlemen in Indore.

Because Śrīla Prabhupāda had said his position is simply to repeat, another guest raised the ultimate question.

**Guest (6):** But every successive teacher has added some interpretations of the knowledge, no?

**Guest (5):** You are the successor of somebody.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes.

**Guest (3):** Then what is your contribution? That is what we are asking. What is your *sama-darśi*? Have you become *sama-darśi*?

**Guest (6):** You are instructing others to be *sama-darśi*, but are you *sama-darśi*?

How Śrīla Prabhupāda had to fight for Kṛṣṇa! Preaching really means

fighting, and Prabhupāda was always fighting for Kṛṣṇa. He was a real spiritual warrior.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** My *sama-darśi* is, Why should only Hindus know Kṛṣṇa? The whole world should know Kṛṣṇa. But if you, the Hindus, refuse to know, what can I do?

Śrīla Prabhupāda had answered

their challenge: By his practical work he had made Kṛṣṇa consciousness available to everyone, all over the world. That was his equal vision. And that was his contribution—to his predecessors and to us. Prabhupāda had presented Kṛṣṇa and *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is, and people all over the world were accepting and becoming Kṛṣṇa’s devotees. Now if the guests wanted, they could also follow and benefit. ☸

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# THE PLIGHT OF THE SINFUL

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 Kapila, an incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa, is teaching His mother, Devahūti, about Sāṅkhya, the analytical study of all existence. As the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam continues, Lord Kapila describes the punishment after death for people who have wasted their lives in sense gratification.*

## THIRD CANTO / CHAPTER 30

19 यमदूतौ तदा प्राप्तौ भीमौ सरभसेक्षणौ ।

स दृष्ट्वा त्रस्तहृदयः शकुन्मूत्रं विमुञ्चति ॥१९॥

*yama-dūtau tadā prāptau  
bhīmau sarabhasekṣaṇau  
sa dṛṣṭvā trasta-hṛdayaḥ  
śakṛn-mūtraṁ vimuñcati*

*yama-dūtau*—two messengers of Yamarāja; *tadā*—at that time; *prāptau*—arrived; *bhīmau*—terrible; *sa-rabhasa*—full of wrath; *ikṣaṇau*—their eyes; *saḥ*—he; *dṛṣṭvā*—seeing; *trasta*—frightened; *hṛdayaḥ*—his heart; *śakṛt*—stool; *mūtraṁ*—urine; *vimuñcati*—he passes.

**At death, he sees the messengers of the lord of death come before him, their eyes full of wrath, and in great fear he passes stool and urine.**

**PURPORT:** There are two kinds of transmigration of a living entity after passing away from the present body. One kind of transmigration is to go to the controller of sinful activities,

who is known as Yamarāja, and the other is to go to the higher planets, up to Vaikuṅṭha. Here Lord Kapila describes how persons engaged in activities of sense gratification to maintain a family are treated by the messengers of Yamarāja, called Yamadūtas. At the time of death the Yamadūtas become the custodians of those persons who have strongly gratified their senses. They take charge of the dying man and take him to the planet where Yamarāja resides. The conditions there are described in the following verses.

20 यातनादेह आवृत्य पाशैर्बद्ध्वा गले बलात् ।

नयतो दीर्घमध्वानं दण्ड्यं राजभटा यथा ॥२०॥

*yātanā-deha āvṛtya  
pāśair baddhvā gale balāt  
nayato dīrgham adhvānaṁ  
daṇḍyaṁ rāja-bhaṭā yathā*

*yātanā*—for punishment; *dehe*—his body; *āvṛtya*—covering; *pāśaiḥ*—with ropes; *baddhvā*—binding; *gale*—by the neck; *balāt*—by force; *nayataḥ*—they lead; *dīrgham*—long; *advhānaṁ*—distance; *daṇḍyam*—a criminal; *rāja-bhaṭāḥ*—the king's soldiers; *yathā*—as.

**As a criminal is arrested for punishment by the constables of the state, a person engaged in criminal sense gratification is similarly arrested by the Yamadūtas, who bind him by the neck with strong rope and cover his subtle body so that he may undergo severe punishment.**

PURPORT: Every living entity is covered by a subtle and gross body. The subtle body is the covering of mind, ego, intelligence, and consciousness. It is said in the scriptures that the constables of Yamarāja cover the subtle body of the culprit and take him to the abode of Yamarāja to be punished in a way that he is able to tolerate. He does not die from this punishment because if he died, then who would suffer the punishment? It is not the business of the constables of Yamarāja to put one to death. In fact, it is not possible to kill a living entity because he is eternal; he simply has to suffer the consequences of his activities of sense gratification.

The process of punishment is explained in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. Formerly the king's men would take a criminal in a boat in the middle of the river. They would dunk him by grasping a bunch of his hair and thrusting him completely underwater, and when he was almost suffocated, the king's constables would take him out of the water and allow him to breathe for some time, and then they would again dunk him in the water to suffocate. This sort of punishment is inflicted upon the forgotten soul by Yamarāja, as will be described in the following verses.

21 तयोर्निर्मिन्नहृदयस्तर्जनैर्जातवेपथुः ।

पथि श्वमिर्भक्ष्यमाण आर्तोऽर्घं स्वमनुसरन् ॥२१॥

*tayor nirbhinna-hṛdayas  
tarjanair jāta-vepathuh  
pathi śvabhīr bhakṣyamāṇa  
ārto 'ghaṁ svam anusmaran*

*tayoh*—of the Yamadūtas; *nirbhinna*—broken; *hṛdayaḥ*—his heart; *tarjanaiḥ*—by the threatening; *jāta*—arisen; *vepathuh*—trembling; *pathi*—on the road; *śvabhīḥ*—by dogs; *bhakṣyamāṇaḥ*—being bitten; *ārtaḥ*—distressed; *agham*—sins; *svam*—his; *anusmaran*—remembering.

While carried by the constables of Yamarāja, he is overwhelmed and trembles in their hands. While passing on the road he is bitten by dogs, and he can remember the sinful activities of his life. He is thus terribly distressed.

PURPORT: It appears from this verse that while passing from this planet to the planet of Yamarāja, the culprit arrested by Yamarāja's constables meets many dogs, which bark and bite just to remind him of his criminal activities of sense gratification. It is said in *Bhagavad-gītā* that one becomes almost blind and is bereft of all sense when he is infuriated by the desire for sense gratification. He forgets everything. *Kāmais tais tair hrta jñānāḥ*. One is bereft of all intelligence when he is too attracted by sense gratification, and he forgets that he has to suffer the consequences also. Here the chance for recounting his activities of sense gratification is given by the dogs engaged by Yamarāja. While we live in the gross body, such activities of sense gratification are encouraged even by modern government regulations. In every state all over the world, such activities are encouraged

by the government in the form of birth control. Women are supplied pills, and they are allowed to go to a clinical laboratory to get assistance for abortions. This is going on as a result of sense gratification. Actually sex life is meant for begetting a good child, but because people have no control over the senses and there is no institution to train them to control the senses, the poor fellows fall victim to the criminal offenses of sense gratification, and they are punished after death as described in these pages of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

22 क्षुत्तृपरीतोऽर्कदवानलानिलैः

सन्तप्यमानः पथि तप्तवालुके ।

कृच्छ्रेण पृष्ठे कशया च ताडित-

श्रलत्यशक्तोऽपि निराश्रमोदके ॥२२॥

*kṣut-tṛṭ-parīto 'rka-davānalānilaiḥ  
santapyamānaḥ pathi tapta-vāluke  
kṛcchreṇa pṛṣṭhe kaśayā ca tāḍitaś  
calaty aśakto 'pi nirāśramodake*

*kṣut-tṛṭ*—by hunger and thirst; *parītaḥ*—afflicted; *arka*—sun; *dava-anala*—forest fires; *anilaiḥ*—by winds; *santapyamānaḥ*—being scorched; *pathi*—on a road; *tapta-vāluke*—of hot sand; *kṛcchreṇa*—painfully; *pṛṣṭhe*—on the back; *kaśayā*—with a whip; *ca*—and; *tāḍitaḥ*—beaten; *calati*—he moves; *aśaktaḥ*—unable; *api*—although; *nirāśramo-udake*—without shelter or water.

Under the scorching sun, the criminal has to pass through roads of hot sand with forest fires on both sides. He is whipped on the back by the constables because of his inability to walk, and he is afflicted by hunger and thirst, but unfortunately there is no drinking water, no shelter, and no place for rest on the road.

23 तत्र तत्र पतञ्छ्रान्तो मूर्च्छितः पुनरुत्थितः ।

पथा पापीयसा नीतस्तरसा यमसादनम् ॥२३॥

*tatra tatra patañ chrānto  
mūrccchitaḥ punar utthitaḥ  
pathā pāpīyasā nītas  
tarasā yama-sādanam*

*tatra tatra*—here and there; *patañ*—falling; *śrāntaḥ*—fatigued; *mūrccchitaḥ*—unconscious; *punaḥ*—again; *utthitaḥ*—risen; *pathā*—by the road; *pāpīyasā*—very inauspicious; *nītaḥ*—brought; *tarasā*—quickly; *yama-sādanam*—to the presence of Yamarāja.

While passing on that road to the abode of Yamarāja, he falls down in fatigue, and sometimes he becomes unconscious, but he is forced to rise again. In this way he is very quickly brought to the presence of Yamarāja.



24 योजनानां सहस्राणि नवति नव चाध्वनः ।  
त्रिमिर्मुहूर्तैर्द्वाभ्यां वा नीतः प्राप्नोति यातनाः ॥२४॥

*yojanānām sahasrāṇi  
navatīm nava cādhvanāḥ  
tribhir muhūrtair dvābhyām vā  
nītaḥ prāpnoti yātanāḥ*

*yojanānām*—of *yojanas*; *sahasrāṇi*—thousands; *navatīm*—ninety; *nava*—nine; *ca*—and; *adhvanāḥ*—from a distance; *tribhiḥ*—three; *muhūrtaiḥ*—within moments; *dvābhyām*—two; *vā*—or; *nītaḥ*—brought; *prāpnoti*—he receives; *yātanāḥ*—punishments.

**Thus he has to pass ninety-nine thousand yojanas within two or three moments, and then he is at once engaged in the torturous punishment which he is destined to suffer.**

PURPORT: One *yojana* is calculated to be eight miles, and he has to pass along a road which is therefore as much as 792,000 miles. Such a long distance is passed over within a few moments only. The subtle body is covered by the constables so that the living entity can pass such a long distance quickly and at the same time tolerate the suffering. This covering, although material, is of such fine elements that material scientists cannot discover what the coverings are made of. To pass 792,000 miles within a few moments seems wonderful to the modern space travelers. They have so far traveled at a speed of 18,000 miles per hour, but here we see that a criminal passes 792,000 miles within a few seconds only, although the process is not spiritual but material.

25 आदीपनं स्वगात्राणां वेष्टयित्त्वोल्मुकादिभिः ।  
आत्ममांसादनं कापि स्वकृत् परतोऽपि वा ॥२५॥

*ādīpanam sva-gātrāṇām  
veṣṭayitvolumukāḍibhiḥ  
ātma-māmsādanam kvāpi  
sva-kṛtam parato 'pi vā*

*ādīpanam*—setting on fire; *sva-gātrāṇām*—of his own limbs; *veṣṭayitvā*—having been surrounded; *ulmuka-āḍibhiḥ*—by pieces of burning wood and so on; *ātma-māmsa*—of his own flesh; *adanam*—eating; *kva api*—sometimes; *sva-kṛtam*—done by himself; *parataḥ*—by others; *api*—else; *vā*—or.

**He is placed in the midst of burning pieces of wood, and his limbs are set on fire. In some cases he is made to eat his own flesh or have it eaten by others.**

PURPORT: From this verse through the next three verses the description of punishment will be narrated. The first description is that the criminal has to eat his own flesh, burning with fire, or allow others like himself who are present there to eat. In the last great war, people in concen-

tration camps sometimes ate their own stool, so there is no wonder that in the *Yamasādana*, the abode of *Yamarāja*, one who had a very enjoyable life eating others' flesh has to eat his own flesh.

26 जीवतश्चान्त्राम्युद्धारः श्वगृध्रैर्मसादने ।  
सर्पवृश्चिकदंशाद्यैर्दशङ्घिश्चात्मवैशसम् ॥२६॥

*jīvataś cāntrābhyuddhāraḥ  
śva-gr̥dhrair yama-sādane  
sarpa-vṛścika-daṁśādyair  
daśadbhiḥ cātma-vaiśasam*

*jīvataḥ*—alive; *ca*—and; *antra*—of his entrails; *abhyuddhāraḥ*—pulling out; *śva-gr̥dhrāiḥ*—by dogs and vultures; *yama-sādane*—in the abode of *Yamarāja*; *sarpa*—by serpents; *vṛścika*—scorpions; *daṁśa*—gnats; *ādyaiḥ*—and so on; *daśadbhiḥ*—biting; *ca*—and; *ātma-vaiśasam*—torment of himself.

**His entrails are pulled out by the hounds and vultures of hell, even though he is still able to see it, and he is subjected to torment by serpents, scorpions, gnats, and other creatures that bite him.**

27 कृन्तनं चावयवशो गजादिभ्यो मिदापनम् ।  
पातनं गिरिशृङ्गेभ्यो रोधनं चाम्बुगर्तयोः ॥२७॥

*kṛntanam cāvayavaśo  
gajāḍibhyo bhidāpanam  
pātanam giri-śṛṅgebhyo  
rodhanam cāmbu-gartayoḥ*

*kṛntanam*—cutting off; *ca*—and; *avayavaśaḥ*—limb by limb; *gaja-āḍibhyaḥ*—by elephants and so on; *bhidāpanam*—tearing; *pātanam*—hurling down; *giri*—of hills; *śṛṅgebhyaḥ*—from the tops; *rodhanam*—enclosing; *ca*—and; *ambu-gartayoḥ*—in water or in a cave.

**Next his limbs are lopped off and torn asunder by elephants. He is hurled down from hilltops, and he is also held captive either in water or in a cave.**

28 यास्तामिस्रान्धतामिस्रा रौरवाद्याश्च यातनाः ।  
भुङ्क्ते नरो वा नारी वा मिथः सङ्गेन निर्मिताः ॥२८॥

*yās tāmisrāndha-tāmisrā  
rauravādyās ca yātanāḥ  
bhuṅkte naro vā nārī vā  
mithaḥ saṅgena nirmitāḥ*

*yāḥ*—which; *tāmisra*—the name of a hell; *andha-tāmisrāḥ*—the name of a hell; *raurava*—the name of a hell; *ādyāḥ*—and so on; *ca*—and; *yātanāḥ*—punishments; *bhuṅkte*—under-

goes; *naraḥ*—man; *vā*—or; *nārī*—woman; *vā*—or; *mithaḥ*—mutual; *saṅgena*—by association; *nirmitāḥ*—caused.

**Men and women whose lives were built upon indulgence in illicit sex life are put into many kinds of miserable conditions in the hells known as Tāmīśra, Andha-tāmīśra and Raurava.**

PURPORT: Materialistic life is based on sex life. The existence of all the materialistic people, who are undergoing severe tribulation in the struggle for existence, is based on sex. Therefore, in the Vedic civilization sex life is allowed only in a restricted way; it is for the married couple and only for begetting children. But when sex life is indulged in for sense gratification illegally and illicitly, both the man and the woman await severe punishment in this world or after death. In this world also they are punished by virulent diseases like syphilis and gonorrhoea, and in the next life, as we see in this passage of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, they are put into different kinds of hellish conditions to suffer. In *Bhagavad-gītā*, First Chapter, illicit sex life is also very much condemned, and it is said that one who produces children by illicit sex life is sent to hell. It is confirmed here in the *Bhāgavatam* that such offenders are put into hellish conditions of life in Tāmīśra, Andha-tāmīśra, and Raurava.

29 अत्रैव नरकः स्वर्ग इति मातः प्रचक्षते ।  
या यातना वै नारक्यस्ता इहाप्युपलक्षिताः ॥२९॥

*atraiva narakaḥ svarga  
iti mātaḥ pracakṣate  
yā yātanā vai nārakyas  
tā ihāpy upalakṣitāḥ*

*atra*—in this world; *eva*—even; *narakaḥ*—hell; *svargaḥ*—heaven; *iti*—thus; *mātaḥ*—O mother; *pracakṣate*—they say; *yāḥ*—which; *yātanāḥ*—punishments; *vai*—certainly; *nārakyaḥ*—hellish; *tāḥ*—they; *iha*—here; *api*—also; *upalakṣitāḥ*—visible.

**Lord Kapila continued: My dear mother, it is sometimes said that we experience hell or heaven on this planet, for hellish punishments are sometimes visible on this planet also.**

PURPORT: Sometimes unbelievers do not accept these statements of scripture regarding hell. They disregard such authorized descriptions. Lord Kapila therefore confirms them by saying that these hellish conditions are also visible on this planet. It is not that they are only on the planet where Yamarāja lives. On the planet of Yamarāja, the sinful man is given the chance to practice living in the hellish conditions which he will have to endure in the next life, and then he is given a chance to take birth on another planet to continue his hellish life. For example, if a man is to be punished to remain in hell and eat stool and urine, then first of all he practices such habits on the planet of Yamarāja, and then he

is given a particular type of body, that of a hog, so that he can eat stool and think that he is enjoying life. It is stated previously that in any hellish condition, the conditioned soul thinks he is happy. Otherwise, it would not be possible for him to suffer hellish life.

30 एवं कुटुम्बं विभ्राण उदरम्भर एव वा ।  
विसृज्येहोमयं प्रेत्य भुङ्क्ते तत्फलमीदृशम् ॥३०॥

*evam kuṭumbam bibhrāṇa  
udaram bhara eva vā  
visṛjyehobhayaṁ pretya  
bhuṅkte tat-phalam idṛśam*

*evam*—in this way; *kuṭumbam*—family; *bibhrāṇaḥ*—he who maintained; *udaram*—stomach; *bharaḥ*—he who maintained; *eva*—only; *vā*—or; *visṛjya*—after giving up; *iha*—here; *ubhayaṁ*—both of them; *pretya*—after death; *bhuṅkte*—he undergoes; *tat*—of that; *phalam*—result; *idṛśam*—such.

**After leaving this body, the man who maintained himself and his family members by sinful activities suffers a hellish life, and his relatives suffer also.**

PURPORT: The mistake of modern civilization is that man does not believe in the next life. But whether he believes or not, the next life is there, and one has to suffer if one does not lead a responsible life in terms of the injunctions of authoritative scriptures like the *Vedas* and *Purāṇas*. Species lower than human beings are not responsible for their actions because they are made to act in a certain way, but in the developed life of human consciousness, if one is not responsible for his activities, then he is sure to get a hellish life, as described herein.

31 एकः प्रपद्यते ध्वान्तं हित्वेदं स्वकलेवरम् ।  
कुशलेतरपाथेयो भूतद्रोहेण यद् भूतम् ॥३१॥

*ekaḥ prapadyate dhvāntam  
hitvedaṁ sva-kalevaram  
kuśaletara-pātheyo  
bhūta-droheṇa yad bhṛtam*

*ekaḥ*—alone; *prapadyate*—he enters; *dhvāntam*—darkness; *hitvā*—after quitting; *idam*—this; *sva*—his; *kalevaram*—body; *kuśala-itara*—sin; *pātheyaḥ*—his passage money; *bhūta*—to other living entities; *droheṇa*—by injury; *yad*—which body; *bhṛtam*—was maintained.

**He goes alone to the darkest regions of hell after quitting the present body, and the money he acquired by envying other living entities is the passage money with which he leaves this world.**

(continued in the next issue)

# Śrīla Prabhupāda Speaks Out

## President Big Pig

Here we conclude an exchange between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and some of his disciples, which took place in Fiji on May 1, 1976.

**Disciple:** Well, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that's society's problem. We do vaguely sense, I have a soul—but we don't know, I am a soul. Nearly everything we hear from our cultural and political leaders makes us think, "I'm really just this material body, these cravings." And with our thoughts so degraded, naturally our actions become degraded. But even with all the crime and chaos, these leaders keep pushing their darkness on us as if it were enlightenment.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That is modern society's defect. Therefore, our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is so essential. People are being misled into accepting ignorance as knowledge.

Take, for example, Darwin's theory: Somehow matter, which is dull and dead, has produced us, who are conscious and living. This is simply speculation based on ignorance. And yet people are accepting it as knowledge.

Or take Freud's sex philosophy: Humanity's problems will end when people learn how to enjoy sex. Even the hogs and dogs know how to enjoy sex. These ideas are the business of the hogs and dogs, and yet people are accepting them as high philosophy. Based on sex, Freud wrote his so-called philosophy.

Is all this really science and philosophy? Find this verse in *Bhagavad-gītā*, thirteenth chapter; one of the phrases is *tattva-jñānārtha-darśanam*.

**Disciple:** Here it is, Śrīla Prabhupāda. *Adhyātma-jñāna-niyatvaṁ tattva-jñānārtha-darśanam/ etaj jñānam iti proktam ajñānam yad ato 'nyathā*. The Lord says, "Accepting the importance of self-realization, philosophical search for the Absolute Truth—this I declare to be knowledge. And besides this, whatever there may be is ignorance."

And then in your Purport you go on to say, "One should try his best to distribute real knowledge to the people, so that they may become enlightened and leave this material entanglement. . . . There are many research scholars and philosophers who study sex life or some other subject, but according to *Bhagavad-gītā*, such research work and philosophical speculation have no value. . . . One should make research, by philosophical discretion, into the nature of

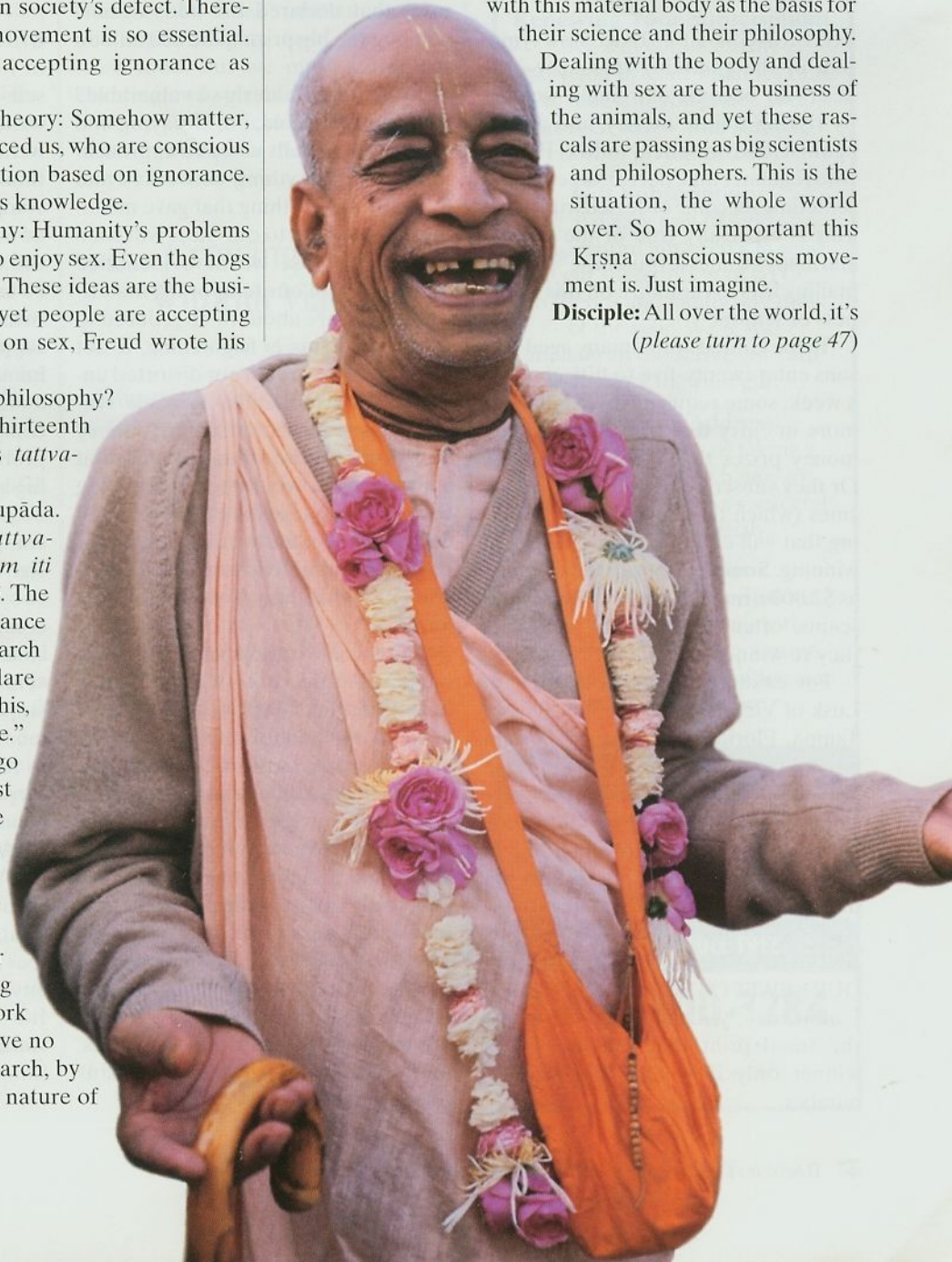
the soul. One should make research to understand the self. . . .

"As far as self-realization is concerned, it is clearly stated here that *bhakti-yoga* is especially practical. . . . One must consider the relationship between the Supersoul and the individual soul. The individual soul and the Supersoul cannot be one. . . . One should be humble and know that he is subordinate to the Supreme Lord. Due to rebellion against the Supreme Lord, one becomes subordinate to material nature. One must know and be convinced of this truth."

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Therefore, these rascal leaders are in *ajñāna*, or ignorance—dealing with sex, generally dealing with this material body as the basis for their science and their philosophy.

Dealing with the body and dealing with sex are the business of the animals, and yet these rascals are passing as big scientists and philosophers. This is the situation, the whole world over. So how important this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is. Just imagine.

**Disciple:** All over the world, it's  
(please turn to page 47)



# THE VEDIC O

*Transcendental Commentary on*

## Swept Away By the Sweeps

by Amala Bhakta Dāsa

ENTERING SWEEPSTAKES is a symptom of the gambling mentality—the desire to become extremely wealthy by risking a little money, and always against astronomical odds. People who regularly take part in sweepstakes sometimes become obsessed with them. This is especially true of the elderly, and many businesses purchase “sucker” mailing lists to capitalize on this weakness of seniors.

In the United States many aged persons enter twenty-five to fifty contests a week, some requiring five dollars or more in entry fees to collect the big-money prizes that seem guaranteed. Or they subscribe to numerous magazines (which they never read), thinking that will enhance their chances of winning. Some seniors spend as much as \$2,000 a month on sweepstakes and scams, often tricked into believing they're winners.

For example, 88-year-old Richard Lusk of Victorville, California, flew to Tampa, Florida, last January, certain he had won \$11 million dollars in the American Family Publishers Sweepstakes. He paid \$1,700 for an airline ticket so that he could hand-deliver his “winning” entry to the return address on the letter that stated: “RICHARD LUSK, FINAL RESULTS ARE IN AND THEY'RE OFFICIAL: YOU'RE OUR NEWEST \$11 MILLION WINNER.” Unfortunately, Lusk failed to notice the small print that said he was a winner only if he had the winning number.

According to Tampa airport officials, twenty people, most of them seniors, have flown there in recent years to collect their so-called fortunes. Most of them had never read the small print that declared the odds against winning the big prize to be 200 million to one.

Why are the elderly so vulnerable?

When we're old, our decaying and decrepit body tells us we're approaching death. Everything we worked and lived for—everything that gave meaning and purpose to our life—will soon be lost. Because we have identified ourselves with our temporary, material body, we are about to be reduced to a big zero. This is frightening, if not overwhelming. Yet in our distorted understanding, money has become synonymous with life, and much money with much life. So winning millions at a sweepstakes would be like winning back our disintegrating life. We could once again become secure, popular, important, admirable, lovable, enviable—and enjoy the illusion of feeling like a lord.

But when we know and experience ourselves as the soul—which is by nature eternal and blissful—and when we develop our relationship with the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, in loving devotional service, we don't need the prospect of winning a sweepstakes (or any contest, for that matter) to make us feel alive. In pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness, our every moment, even when our body is languishing, will be filled with the true thrill of life, as we perceive the Lord's loving presence in His books, His devotees, and in our own hearts. When we have that consciousness, we have everything, for it satisfies us completely.

## Y2K: Why to Care, or Millennium Nightmare?

by Keśhanta Dāsa

IN THE MID-SEVENTIES, when I was in high school, I thought my Mom's self-correcting IBM Selectric typewriter was the ultimate tool for my writing projects. Today I wouldn't think of using anything but a Pentium computer to write this article. Of course, now that I depend on word processors, the word comes out that they may all be crashing on January 1, 2000—along with the power, transportation, food supplies, and utilities we modern-day humans have come to expect.

Everyone agrees that the Year 2000 computer bug—known as “Y2K”—is a problem. The debate rages over how big a problem it will be. When the year 2000 rolls around, some computers and computer chips, restricted by short-sighted, space-saving planners to only two digits to designate the year, will compute that it is now 1900. This will cause a series of miscalculations that some say will freeze bank accounts, stop planes and traffic lights, and silence phones. Others say the problem is restricted to very old computers. Repairs are underway, they say, and experts will foil Y2K before it surfaces.

As there are two mundane sides to the Y2K debate, there are two Kṛṣṇa conscious positions to consider as well. First, as renounced yogis, why do devotees of Kṛṣṇa use computers, electricity, and airplanes in the first place? It's because of the principle of *yukta-vairāgya*—practical renunciation—that Śrīla Prabhupāda borrowed from the previous *ācāryas* and used with won-

# BSEERVER

*the Issues of the Day*

derful success to bring Kṛṣṇa consciousness west. You can use nearly anything for Kṛṣṇa if you intend to please Him. For spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the modern Hare Kṛṣṇa movement uses all sorts of amenities and services that Y2K could knock out. The mission would be disturbed.

On the other hand, since Prabhupāda warned against over dependence on artificial necessities, the Y2K problem could be a blessing in disguise. If indeed the amenities of modern life were unavailable, you and I would be forced to learn to live off the earth. We would either starve or learn to live by using oxen to plow, planting grains and vegetables, and milking cows. We would spin cotton or wool thread for our clothes, find medicinal herbs, and either stay at home or travel only short distances by animal power.

Imagine—a mere computer glitch forcing us to turn our attention to gardening, storing and preserving food, and finding alternative sources of water, clothes, shelter, and other necessities. How the mighty have fallen!

In fact, whether cyber-originated or not, calamities always trouble us in this life. Even if you're born in a comfortable situation, birth is painful, adolescence awkward, old age distressing, and death unavoidable. Over and above problems arising from our own bodies, we also suffer from natural disturbances and the actions of others. You could say that Y2K is a misery imposed on us all by the developers of computer technology.

Whether it's catastrophic or microscopic, a wake-up call or a wash, one thing is for sure: Y2K is yet another good reason to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. Why?

In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Lord Kṛṣṇa says to tolerate all kinds of adversity. Without a higher, spiritual taste within, how can anyone tolerate external misery? As Lord Caitanya taught, chanting the Lord's names awakens our natural, higher taste. So we can store food, but we must know that chanting and spiritual awakening are always a good precaution—for Y2K or anything else life in the material world may throw our way.

## Growing Old Without Viagra

by Ravi Gupta

WE WERE DEPRESSED, and they gave us Prozac. We began losing our hair, and they gave us Rogaine. Now we lose our vigor, and they give us Viagra. Life is a great chemical pill.

Viagra's all over the place—newspaper headlines, the evening news, doctors' offices, medicine cabinets.

A quote from a story in the *Idaho Statesman* proclaimed, "Doctors nationally have written 120,000 prescriptions for Viagra the first week of its release, [and it] is being touted as the most revolutionary medicine to hit the market since the birth control pill."

Revolutionary for what? Now every man can take the pill to renew his virility. Fifty-, sixty-, seventy-, eighty-year-old men become young once again.

But the Vedic scriptures give us a different perspective. Life is not meant just for revitalizing the body. There is a time for everything, and the *Vedas* lay this out very clearly.

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the ripened

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fruit of the Vedic scriptures, divides life into four stages—*brahmacarya*, *grhastha*, *vānaprastha*, and *sannyāsa*—each twenty-five years long.

The first quarter is spent as a student, studying under the guru, or spiritual master. This is a time of celibacy, character building, and intense spiritual training.

After graduating from *gurukula*—“the house of the guru”—the student may go on to married life, taking the spiritual values he has learned to maintain a God-centered family.

At the age of fifty, the *Vedas* say, the husband and wife should retire from active family life, leaving their grown children to care for themselves. The couple should focus their lives again on the true purposes of human life and slowly reduce the tie of affection

In this way, at the age of seventy-five they should completely dedicate themselves to worshiping the Lord and prepare for the final test.

According to the *Vedas*, the point of life is not to push one's sense gratification to the furthest limits, to find newer and newer means of beautifying, strengthening, and pampering the body—until it finally collapses. Such a life ethic is described in the *Bhagavad-gītā* as demonic:

“They believe that to gratify the senses is the prime necessity of human civilization. Thus until the end of life their anxiety is immeasurable. They are bound by a network of hundreds of thousands of desires and absorbed in lust and anger.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda explains: “The materialists, who have no concept of

God, think that they are advancing. They try to enjoy this material world to the utmost limit and therefore always engage in inventing something for sense gratification.”

The *Gītā* describes this world as changing and temporary. After all, how long can we keep our hairline intact? How long will the boost of Viagra last?

The real search in life, the *Gītā* says, should be to answer the questions that are truly vital to human life: Who am I? What am I doing here? Why am I suffering? How do I achieve supreme happiness?

Without asking these questions, we are no better than a royal edition of animals.

After all, wouldn't a chimpanzee love to have Viagra? ❁



Yamarāja Dāsa

Hare Kṛṣṇa  
Hare Kṛṣṇa  
Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa  
Hare Hare  
Hare Rāma  
Hare Rāma  
Rāma Rāma  
Hare Hare

# “People are electing a big animal as their president. And then, when the big animal begins to devour them, they protest.”

• • •

## SPEAKS OUT

(continued from page 43)

obvious people haven't a clue about the goal of knowledge. They don't know what information they should really be seeking.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** They do not know. And therefore they are animals. What will dogs understand? When there is a lady dog, a dozen male dogs will come and smell the best portion of the body. [Laughter.] This is the dogs' philosophy. So Freud did that—focusing on the best portion of the body, he wrote his philosophy.

**Disciple:** Books and books.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Just see. This is Freud's position. What a low taste. Dogs' and pigs' business—and he wrote philosophy about it. Still, his books are selling like anything.

**Disciple:** In the Purport we've just read, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you seem to say that when someone finally understands that he's not this body but a spirit soul, then at once he can also understand that there must be a Supersoul, sustaining him and deserving his devotional service.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. That I have already told you. Therefore, it is essential to understand, first, that you are not this material body.

**Disciple:** So, Prabhupāda, let's say someone is totally in material consciousness, thinking he's just this body. Then he can't possibly understand the Supersoul? He can't understand God? This suggests we've got to hear the analogies Kṛṣṇa gives us in the *Gītā* for seeing the difference between the soul and the body. For instance, the wearer and the garment, the tiller and the field, the operator and the machine.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes.

**Disciple:** All right. So if we're still thinking we're these bodies, then we can't understand God. Then, Prabhupāda,

what to make of all these religious organizations that have no clear understanding of the soul? Most religious groups today are, in a roundabout way, promoting the idea that “I am this body.”

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Therefore, they're not practicing religion. They're cheating. Their activity is not religion. It is cheating.

**Disciple:** So they're simply speaking empty words? God this and God that?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. Actually, today there is no religion. In the name of religion, some farce is going on.

**Disciple:** That's a fact. As you've noted in the past, it's the Devil citing scripture.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. These supposedly lofty, supposedly religious persons are eating the slaughtered flesh of God's other creatures. What to speak of religion—these people have no human sense, even. They haven't even the sense to understand, “I am cutting the throats of these poor animals placed under my protection. If somebody were to cut my throat, what excruciating pain I would feel. Yet I'm doing this same thing to these creatures, and then I'm claiming to be very religious, a lover of God? How can I even call myself a human being? I do not even have human compassion.”

Today cats and dogs are passing as scientists, philosophers, and religionists. The followers of Darwin and Freud—they're the leaders of society. But they're animals only. Cats and dogs. So how you can expect to receive any benefit from them?

*Śva-vid-varāhoṣṭra-kharaiḥ sam-stutaḥ puruṣaḥ paśuḥ:* The leaders are cats and dogs and pigs; still, they are very much worshiped. By whom? *Śva-vid-varāhoṣṭra-kharaiḥ:* By lesser dogs and pigs, as well as camels and asses. Suppose some pig is being praised by a band of lesser pigs, dogs, camels, and

asses. Naturally, they will praise him by saying things like, “Oh, sir, you are the king.” Does that mean he's really a king? He's an animal.

So this is going on. People are electing a big animal as their president. And then, when the big animal begins to devour *them*, they protest. “Oh! Now he's not a proper president! Get him down! Get him down!”

But why did you choose him in the first place?

“Because we are pigs; we have no other knowledge. Now we have to find another big pig and appoint him as our president.”

Everything is explained in the Vedic literature. If you can present all this information properly, it will act very strongly. The voters are *śva-vid-varāhoṣṭra-kharaiḥ*—pigs, dogs, camels, and asses. And the president is another animal, simply bigger. That's all. Modern society is simply a polished version of the animal kingdom. A big pig becomes the king of some lesser pigs, dogs, camels, and asses. So what sort of exalted transactions can you expect in such a society?

This is these people's real picture. One who is an actual human being—he's seeing how the animals are enjoying by voting and electing their president: “We are engaged in a very great business. We are electing our president.” [Chuckling.] This is going on.

Some day, when you warn these rascal pigs and dogs that their president will surely devour them, they will understand what kind of president they have elected.

But for now, this devouring by the big pig is happening even in the most advanced country, the U.S.A. And what to speak of other, less advanced animal kingdoms. So take these books and preach. ❀





# BEST FRIENDS

*In the broken remnants of a beautiful relationship, a young woman discovers the real meaning of friendship.*

by Dvārakādhīśa Devī Dāsī

**J**ONI LIVED IN THE HOUSE across the street. She had long blonde hair and could roller-skate better than anyone in the neighborhood. We spent our childhood together, clattering down the pavement on our steel roller-skates, dragging our dolls and their trappings from one house to the next, racing her four turtles on the back patio. We played long, involved games of make-believe that could continue for weeks. In summer Joni and I luxuriated for endless hours in backyard wading pools. In winter we tramped through the woods surrounding our neighborhood, careful to avoid the haunted house. We constantly plotted to escape our little sisters, and loyally stuck together when the big girls picked on us.

In high school Joni got a bright-orange Mustang convertible. Her blonde hair came from a bottle by this time, but no

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*Left: Kṛṣṇa and His friends play in the spiritual world, where friendship lasts forever.*

# *In our state of forgetfulness, we are blind to Kṛṣṇa's loving presence, and the idea that Kṛṣṇa is our best friend seems a lonely conclusion.*



one knew except me. We shared clothes, double-dated, and got part-time jobs scooping ice cream together. No one in the world knew me better than Joni did. Our friendship seemed so deeply ingrained in the pattern of my life that it never occurred to me it might someday end.

But it ended quickly when we graduated from high school. She got married, I went to college, and the comfortable rhythm of our friendship broke. The backdrop of shared experience disappeared, leaving us struggling to think of polite things to say to each other. When I saw her a few years ago, I didn't even recognize her.

And yet, when I hear the phrase "best friend" I can't help but think of Joni. I think of the time she refused to go to a party I was not invited to. I remember the way I sobbed when her boyfriend dumped her. I remember all the bowls of popcorn we shared in her basement, fueling serious conversations that sorted through the complex issues of our lives. No experience was complete until we discussed it thoroughly, no emotion too burdensome to be shared. The memory of the friendship and the comfort it brought has long outlived the friendship itself.

## **FOND REMEMBERING**

This is a common experience, this fond remembering of a lost friendship. Friendships fuse under many circumstances, but circumstances are predictably unpredictable. We lose our friends when they move away, or when our interests drag us apart, or when misunderstanding or betrayal blocks our heart connection. And there is the ultimate separation of death. But the comfort of friendship is so deep and so restoring we continually seek the intimacy we have repeatedly found and lost.

Śrīla Prabhupāda compares friend-

ship in this world to a drop of water in the desert. Friendship is something we crave, yearn for, search after. It's there, but in such a tiny quantity that our thirst for it cannot be satisfied.

"The idea of society, friendship, and love is not at all false," Śrīla Prabhupāda explains, "but the place where we search for it is false."

Yes, there is someone who can understand your deepest emotions, who cares about you through thick and thin, who sees your intrinsic beauty even in your darkest times, and who will never, ever leave you. That person is Kṛṣṇa.

This may seem a disappointment to those of us who have forgotten how dear we are to God. In our state of forgetfulness, we are blind to Kṛṣṇa's loving presence, and the idea that Kṛṣṇa is our best friend seems a lonely conclusion. When jocular companionship portrayed in beer commercials shapes our conception of friendship, understanding how friendship applies to the creator of the universe is difficult. But when we understand that Lord Kṛṣṇa is seated within our hearts, lifetime after lifetime, we get a better sense of true friendship. He is there whether we're embodied as kings or as dogs. Never giving up, never leaving us in disgust, He waits patiently for us to become frustrated with our search for pleasure in a world of falsity. He tolerates our blasphemy and our stubborn refusal to acknowledge His omnipresence. He forgives every atrocity. His love is unconditional. Who wouldn't want a friendship like that?

## **GLIMPSES OF KṚṢṆA'S FRIENDSHIP**

I have known some wonderful moments when I could catch a glimpse of Kṛṣṇa's eternal friendship. Some of those moments were deeply personal,

times when each breath was choked with pain and yet somehow I could feel the presence and solace of my dear, dear friend in my heart. Some of those moments were twisted with a private irony that could only be shared with someone who has witnessed my every thought. Sometimes I have seen Kṛṣṇa take away the proverbial keys to the car when I have been in no condition to drive. And other times I have felt Him pushing me past fears and regrets with the supreme encouragement of a most confident friend.

Understanding that Kṛṣṇa is our best friend doesn't mean we no longer feel any friendship for other living beings. Rather, that understanding intensifies our connection with everyone, because we know that our wonderful friend loves everyone deeply. No one was more loving and compassionate than Śrīla Prabhupāda, the perfect example of a fully realized soul. People who cared nothing for God were attracted to Śrīla Prabhupāda because he exuded genuine warmth and concern toward them. These are the natural qualities of a pure devotee.

So when we hear from the Vedic literature that there is no love in this world, that's not a cause for lamentation but an affirmation of what we already know in our hearts. Love and friendship simply cannot endure without the empowering central force of love for the Supreme Lord. In the same way that sunlight dwarfs the illuminating power of a tiny candle, our true loving relationship with God dwarfs our very best memories of material friendship. As Śrīla Prabhupāda promises, "If we make our friendship with Kṛṣṇa, it will never break." ❀

*Dvārakādhiṣa Devī Dāsī is a frequent contributor to Back to Godhead. She and her family are part of the Hare Kṛṣṇa community in Alachua, Florida.*

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# The Hare Kṛṣṇa Calendar

*This calendar is calculated for Śrīdhām Māyāpur, West Bengal, India. Dates may vary by one day for other locations. Consult your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for the exact dates for your area.*

## Month of Dāmodara

(October 6–November 4)

### NOVEMBER

**4** — Śrī Kṛṣṇa Rāsa-yātrā. Last day of Dāmodara-vrata and Cāturmāsya.

## Month of Keśava

(November 5–December 3)

**14** — Utpannā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

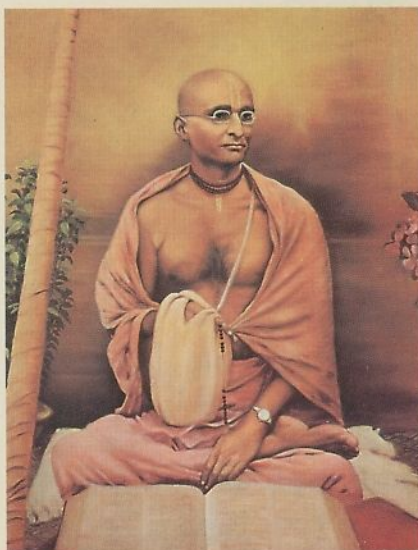
**30** — Mokṣadā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans. Also, the anniversary of the day on which Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

## Month of Nārāyaṇa

(December 4–January 2)

### DECEMBER

**7** — Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī



Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī

Ṭhākura, the spiritual master of Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda. Also, disappearance anniversary of Śrīpāda Gour Govinda Swami, a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda's and an ISKCON spiritual master.

**14** — Saphalā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

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

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

**29** — Putradā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

## Month of Mādhava

(January 3–31)

### JANUARY

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

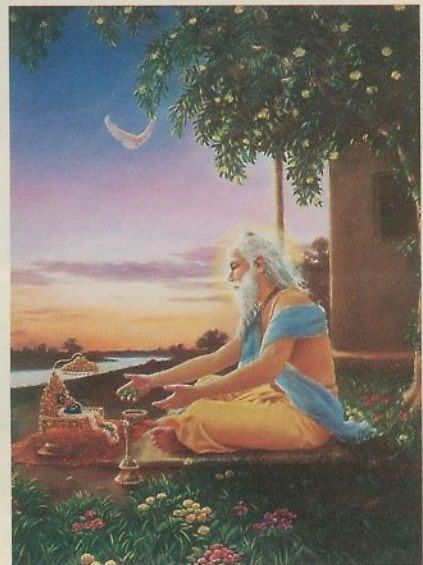
**7** — Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jayadeva Gosvāmī, a great spiritual master and author of *Gīta-govinda*.

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

**13** — Ṣaṭ-tilā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

**22** — Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, a Vaiṣṇava spiritual master and author who appeared in the seventeenth century. Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Viṣṇupriyā Devī, the consort of Lord Caitanya.

**24** — 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.



Śrī Advaita Ācārya

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

**27** — Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Rāmānujācārya, an eleventh-century philosopher and spiritual master.

**28** — Bhaimī Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans. Appearance anniversary of Lord Varāha, Lord Kṛṣṇa's boar incarnation. Fasting till noon, feasting tomorrow.

**29** — Appearance anniversary of Lord Nityānanda Prabhu, a close associate of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and an incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa's elder brother, Lord Balarama. Fasting till noon yesterday, feasting today.

**31** — Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura, a spiritual master in the disciplic line from Lord Caitanya who composed many devotional songs in Bengali.

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# Gatherings

The people listed here hold Kṛṣṇa conscious gatherings regularly in their homes—or they'd like to start. You're invited. Just give a call to find out when and where. If you hold Kṛṣṇa conscious gatherings and you'd like to be added to the list, please send your name, city, and phone number to Gatherings, BTG, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, FL 32616, USA.

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## A Devotee in Pink

by Hare Kṛṣṇa Devī Dāsī

**G**ET ALL YOUR NECESSITIES from the land," Śrīla Prabhupāda often told devotees. Rural self-sufficiency promotes simple living, which helps reduce material desires to make way for Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And rural living brings another benefit: On a farm we can engage many kinds of living entities in Kṛṣṇa's service.

Cows give their milk for Kṛṣṇa. Oxen plow the fields to offer Him grains. The dogs scare away ground-hogs who dig holes that can break an ox's leg. Cats catch mice and protect the grain supply for Kṛṣṇa's cows. All these creatures have their work to do for Kṛṣṇa. Graceful barn swallows eat flies that bite the cows. In the morning, song birds sing a melodic symphony to greet the Deities. During the day, the honeybees industriously gather honey to make special treats for Lord Balarāma.\* In the evening, tree frogs and crickets serenade the Deities as They rest.

In any devotee community you visit, if you take note you might see that even the trees in the forest are different. Somehow they seem to know they're serving Kṛṣṇa. They can sense they're lucky. The flowers are lucky: Big yellow marigolds make up Kṛṣṇa's garland. Tiny white matri-caria flowers decorate Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's hair. Fragrant pink rose petals scent the Deities' morning

bath. And what about the buzzing mosquito? How is she serving Kṛṣṇa? By her bite she reminds you, "There's always some kind of suffering in the material world, no matter how nice it seems. Better finish up your business here and go all the way back home, back to Godhead."

Because Śrīla Prabhupāda encouraged us to get as much of life's necessities from the land as possible, self-sufficiency means a chance for everyone to serve Kṛṣṇa. The slower pace of country life, combined with chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa to purify the heart, allows us to see our garden and woodland neighbors as servants of Kṛṣṇa. When that happens, their distinct personalities begin to emerge for us. Kṛṣṇa is the supreme personality, and when we see other living entities in relation to Him, their personalities become more apparent. We can see we're living in a place where we're surrounded by devotees of Kṛṣṇa in all forms of life.

This is the world we long for. This is the world that artists and animators vainly try to create in children's cartoons, which hold great attraction because of our natural desire to live in a place where everything is alive and conscious. But cartoons pale next to the real thing, because they lack the life-giving connection to Kṛṣṇa. The more you see the different living entities in terms of their service to Kṛṣṇa, the happier you become, because you see that you are always surrounded by well-wishing friends who can instantly remind you of Kṛṣṇa.

I had an experience recently that reminded me how lucky we are that Śrīla Prabhupāda has given us rural communities to train us in this awareness. I was riding on a bus from Boston to Maine. As we came into Maine I was pleased to see the long expanses of green pine forest. My mind began to drift peacefully. Then my eye caught a tiny glimpse of bright pink as the bus sped down the highway. Instantly my mind flashed to the Rādhā-Dāmodara Deities at Gītā Nāgarī Farm in Pennsylvania. That flash of pink was a wild rose, the same kind of rose we loved to put in the Deities' morning bath at Gītā Nāgarī. That rose was saying to me, "You remember me. I'm a servant of Rādhā-Dāmodara. It's nice that you appreciate the scenery. But don't forget who created it, and don't forget who the ultimate enjoyer is. It's Kṛṣṇa. In your appreciation of the beauty of nature, remember Him. Don't forget."

Thank you, dear rose. Thanks for reminding me of Kṛṣṇa. You are a true friend.

*Formerly the editor of Hare Kṛṣṇa Rural Life, Hare Kṛṣṇa Devī Dāsī is currently compiling a five-volume series of Śrīla Prabhupāda's teachings on varṇāśrama and farm community development. The first volume, "Speaking about Varṇāśrama" is due out this fall and will be available through The Hare Kṛṣṇa Catalog.*

\*In His incarnation as Lord Balarāma, Lord Kṛṣṇa is said to be very fond of honey.



## Don't Be Shy—Chant!

by Ravi Gupta

ON THE FIRST OF January this year, at our ISKCON center in Boise, Idaho, we held a “japathon”—an eight-hour session of *japa* (chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra on beads). It was a spiritually rejuvenating way to begin the New Year, and many in our mostly Indian congregation took part wholeheartedly. Some chanters completed seventy-four rounds,\* while others did sixty-four, fifty, thirty-two, sixteen, or just a few.

Chintu Mudumbi, a fifteen-year-old who chanted seventy rounds, said of his experience, “When you chant like this, you realize that chanting actually works. All doubts about the reality of spiritual existence just go away. You begin to wonder why anyone would not take to the process.”

Many other participants had similar thoughts. They felt the great power and pleasure in the holy name of Kṛṣṇa.

In India today *japa* is somewhat of a lost practice. Among a great variety of religious activities people perform, *japa* is almost always absent. Religious speakers promote many ways to express our devotion to God, but rarely does one hear the glories of the personal chanting of the holy names. *Japa* chanters are mostly devoted widows or renounced sādhus living in places of pilgrimage.

Chanting on *japa* beads can be embarrassing for some people. For example, when I was visiting India

my aunt remarked, “You don’t realize—if I went outside the house with *japa* beads in my hand, people would laugh at me and think I’d left the world to become a saint.”

Even Indians who perform other spiritual practices find it difficult to get themselves to chant *japa*.

“I can sing or listen to hours of *bhajan*s [devotional songs],” said an Indian guest at the temple. “I can cook a feast for the Deities or read scripture—but I just cannot sit down and do *japa*.”

Yet *japa* is an important part of our heritage, and the Vedic scriptures extol its virtues. Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura, an associate of Lord Caitanya, chanted 300,000 holy names every day. He is called *nāmācārya*, “the teacher of the holy name.” Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is Kṛṣṇa Himself, also chanted a fixed number of rounds every day. King Kulaśekhara, one of the great South Indian Ālvārs, writes in his *Mukunda-mālā-stotra, jihve śrī-kṛṣṇa-mantram japa japa satatam*: “O tongue, please constantly chant the mantra composed of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s names.” And in the *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa says that of all sacrifices He is *japa*.

While all types of devotional service should ideally be done with full concentration on Kṛṣṇa, we often derive secondary benefits from them, even when we’re distracted. For example, we might listen to *bhajan*s for the pleasing music, cook *prasādam* to fulfill the family’s needs, or read scripture out of intellectual curiosity. But chanting *japa* without focusing the mind on the holy names

tends not to give secondary benefits. So it is a test of our purity, sincerity, and absorption in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

We have to work toward pure chanting, which will gradually bring us to the stage of ecstatic love of God. We have to carefully avoid offending the holy name. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Śukadeva Gosvāmī tells Mahārāja Parīkṣit, “If one’s heart does not change, tears do not flow from his eyes, his body does not shiver, nor his hairs stand on end as he chants the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra, it should be understood that his heart is as hard as iron. This is due to his offenses at the lotus feet of the Lord’s holy name.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda required his disciples to chant at least sixteen rounds of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra every day. That would help them progress in the pure chanting of the holy names. Prabhupāda writes, “This chanting of sixteen rounds is absolutely necessary if one wants to remember Kṛṣṇa and not forget Him. Of all the regulative principles, the spiritual master’s order to chant at least sixteen rounds is most essential.”

So let us pick up our *japa* beads and chant in earnest—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

*Ravi Gupta, age sixteen, lives at the Hare Kṛṣṇa center in Boise, Idaho, USA. The center is run by his parents. Ravi, who was schooled at home, is a fourth-year student at Boise State University.*

\*Devotees chant on a string of 108 beads, reciting one Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra on each bead. One set of 108 mantras is called a round.

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## Signing Off

I HAVE DECIDED to resign as editor in chief.

The time has come for us at BTG to start handing the magazine over to a younger generation of devotees—the young people born and raised in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, and the disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s disciples.

A first step in this is for me to get out of the way and make room for others to move up.

Now, therefore, our managing editor, Nāgarāja Dāsa, is taking over as editor in chief. Really, he has been doing the main editorial work for quite a long time. But he has not had full freedom and responsibility to do it, because even while traveling away from the office, I was the remote-control chief. So now the full editorial responsibility will be his.

A team of devotees will be working with Nāgarāja on developing and implementing new editorial ideas.

A theme of high priority will be to bring younger devotees onto the BTG staff, involve them and train them, and gradually complete the transfer of responsibility from our own generation to the next.

Kālakaṅṭha Dāsa, our circulation man-

ager (who handles a lot more than circulation), will focus on recruiting and training new devotees to serve at BTG. He’ll be looking for people both for editing and for design, and for circulation as well.

I will continue to be involved in BTG as a trustee of the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust. I will have a hand in major financial decisions and other matters of publishing. I will be on call as an editorial consultant. I also hope to be personally involved with the recruiting and training for BTG of younger devotees.

I expect to continue assisting our BTG office in India, formed about two years ago, as well as our new BTG circulation office in the UK.

Though serving as editor in chief is not a material engagement one needs to renounce, still it seems sensible, at a mature age, to retire and make way for others. One is advised by Vedic scriptures to retire by the age of fifty. At forty-nine, I think I am on schedule.

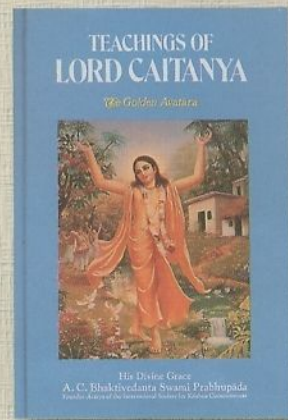
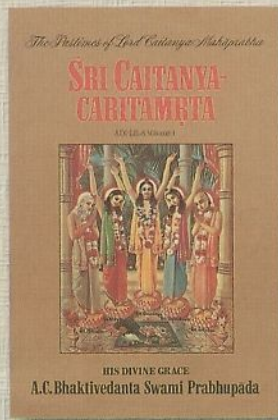
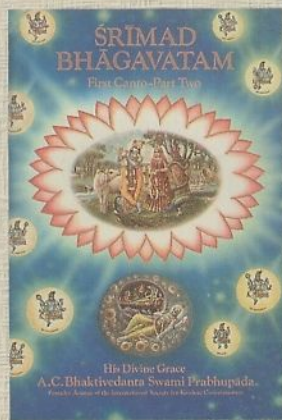
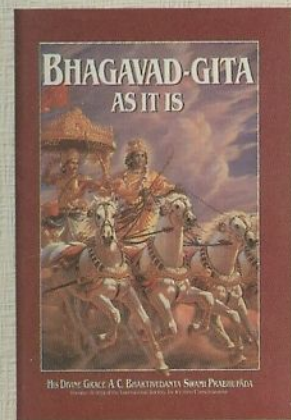
I hope you will all give your blessings and best wishes to me and your full support to our new editor in chief, Nāgarāja Dāsa.

Thank you very much. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

—Jayādvaita Swami

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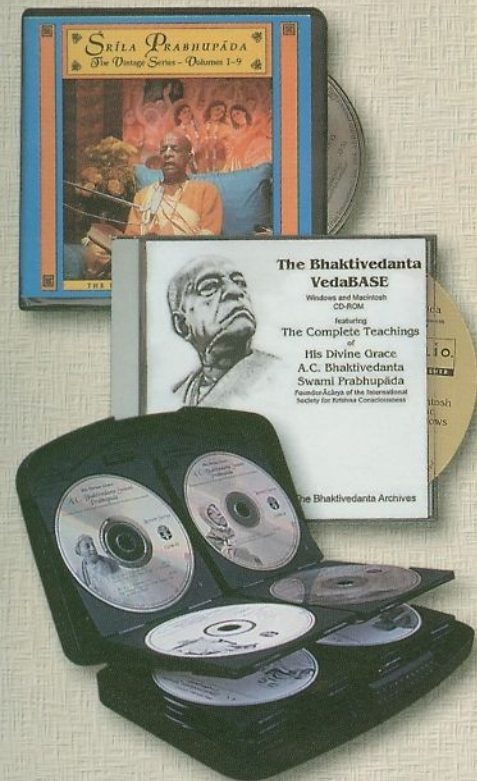
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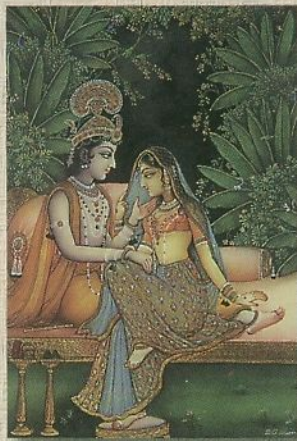
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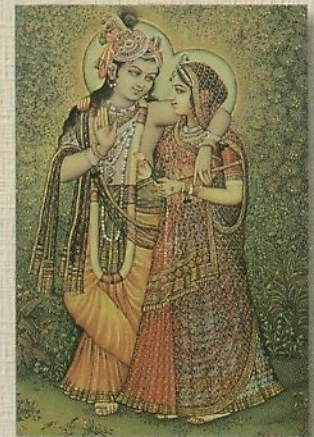
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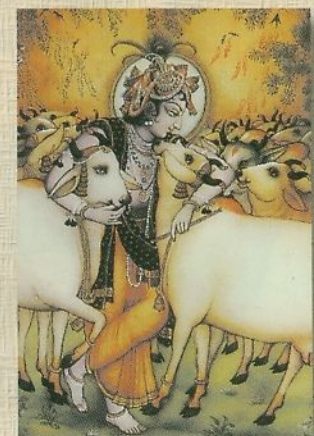
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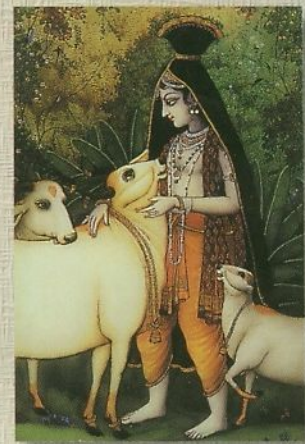
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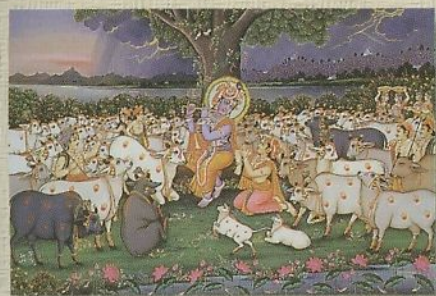
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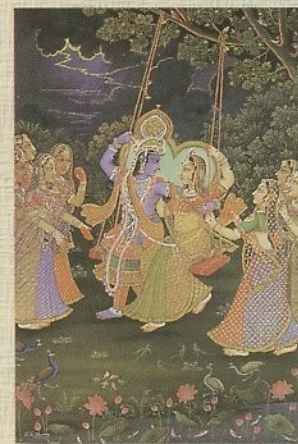
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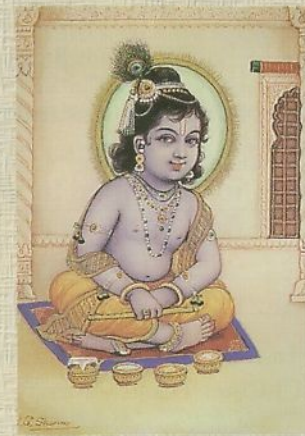
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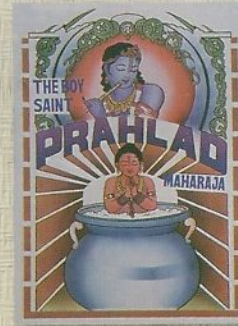
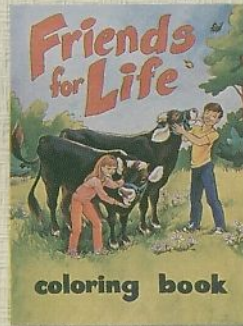
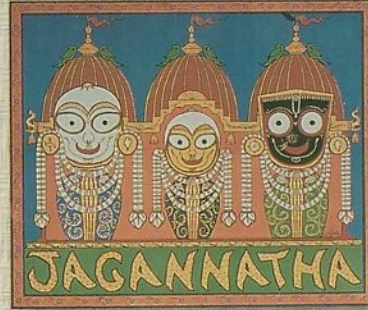
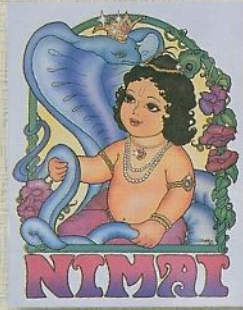
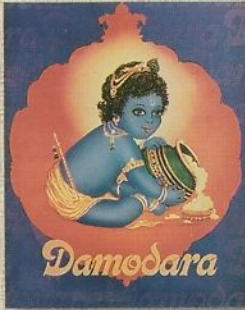
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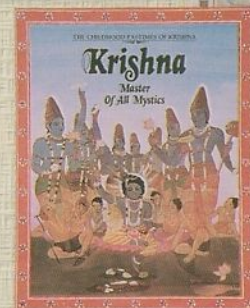
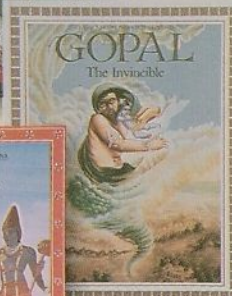
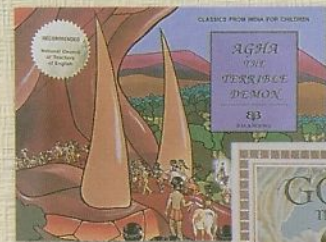
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# Vedic Thoughts

Kṛṣṇa is the supreme father,  
and all living entities  
within the material world are  
exactly like misled children of a  
wealthy man who have  
left home to loiter in the street.  
Therefore the greatest benefit  
one can bestow upon one's fellow  
human being is to give him  
Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

His Divine Grace  
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda  
*Teachings of Queen Kuntī*, p. 14

Persons who are impelled by  
pure devotional service  
in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and who  
therefore go to see the Deities of Viṣṇu  
in the temple will surely get  
relief from entering again  
into the prison of a mother's womb.

*Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya*

Those who are actually  
advanced in knowledge are able to  
appreciate the essential value  
of this age of Kali. Such enlightened  
persons worship Kali-yuga  
because in this fallen age all perfection  
of life can easily be achieved  
by the performance of *saṅkīrtana*,  
the congregational chanting of the  
Lord's holy names.

Śrī Karabhājana Muni  
*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.5.36

From association with devotees  
is born faith. From faith  
is born pure knowledge. From  
pure knowledge is born meditation.  
From meditation is born  
devotional service, which pleases  
Lord Kṛṣṇa and destroys all sufferings.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura  
*Śrī Datta-kaustubha*, Text 30

One may cleanse himself daily  
by taking a bath in water, but if one  
takes a bath even once in the  
sacred Ganges water of *Bhagavad-gītā*,  
for him the dirt of material life  
is altogether vanquished.

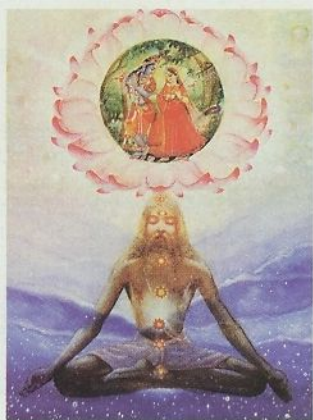
*Gītā-māhātmya* 3

Anyone who has developed  
the ecstasy of love for the Supreme  
Personality of Godhead,  
and who is always merged in  
transcendental bliss on account of  
that love, cannot even perceive  
the material happiness or distress  
coming from the body or mind.

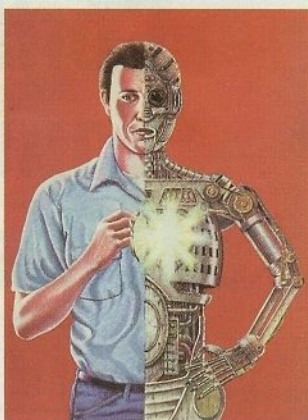
Lord Śiva  
*Nārada-pañcarātra*

Within the heart of a person  
overpowered by lamentation or anger,  
there is no possibility  
of Kṛṣṇa's being manifest.

*Padma Purāṇa*



Do you aspire  
for higher consciousness?



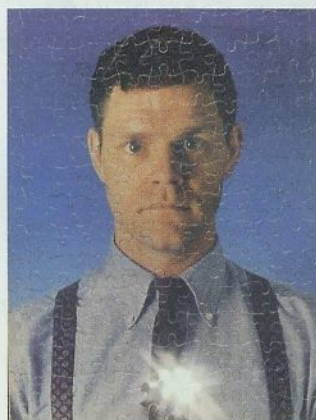
Would you say there's  
more to a person  
than just the biological  
machinery of the body?



Would you like  
to have a deeper  
understanding of karma  
and reincarnation?



Do you ever wonder  
what happens to a person  
after death?



Do you sometimes  
wonder who you  
really are?

If you answered YES to any of these,  
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