

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



The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement • May/June 2005 • \$4.00/£2.50

# Suva Welcomes The Emperor Of Sweetness

*In the capital of Fiji,  
Lord Kṛṣṇa is enthroned  
in ISKCON's largest  
temple outside India.*

AND:

## Tsunami Relief



*Devotees bring prasādam,  
the holy name, and hope to  
thousands in the aftermath  
of disaster.*



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# Back to Godh

Founded 1944 • Vol. 39, No. 3 • May/June 2005



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# ead

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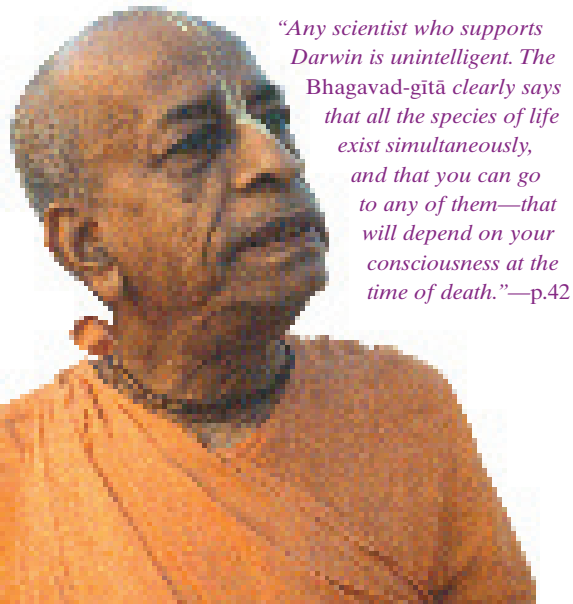
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**COVER** Residents and guests celebrate as the crowning *cakra* (the disc symbol of Lord Viṣṇu) is placed on the dome above the new ISKCON temple in Suva, Fiji. Please see the article on the temple opening, beginning on page 16.



*“Any scientist who supports Darwin is unintelligent. The Bhagavad-gītā clearly says that all the species of life exist simultaneously, and that you can go to any of them—that will depend on your consciousness at the time of death.”—p.42*

## WELCOME



**IN THIS ISSUE**, like the last one, we witness a success of cooperation as Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees open another impressive temple, this time in Suva, the capital of Fiji. Devotees from diverse

nationalities and ethnicities took part in the dedication ceremonies, which were a panoply traditional Vedic rites.

Also in this issue is a report on Hare Kṛṣṇa tsunami relief in Sri Lanka, where ISKCON has a center in the capital, Colombo. Indradyumna Swami traveled there with a group of devotees and organized distribution of spiritually and materially nourishing food as well as Lord Kṛṣṇa's holy names.

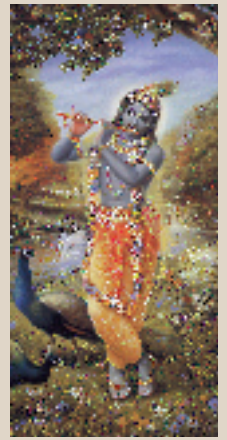
Tragedies like the tsunami remind us of the inevitability of death. In this issue, Bhrāntī Devī Dāsī writes of how Lord Kṛṣṇa's words in the *Bhagavad-gītā* helped her deal with the sudden death of her son. Arcana Siddhī Devī Dāsī tells how her own son gained valuable lessons while witnessing the passing of one of her Godsisters.

This issue corresponds with the appearance anniversary of Lord Nṛsimha—and the blessed death of the demonic Hiraṇyakaśipu at His hands. As Satyarāja Dāsa's article makes clear, even a plan for physical immortality as ingenious as Hiraṇyakaśipu's must fail. Fortunately, we souls can cross the border into spiritual life and gain eternal life in full happiness and enlightenment.

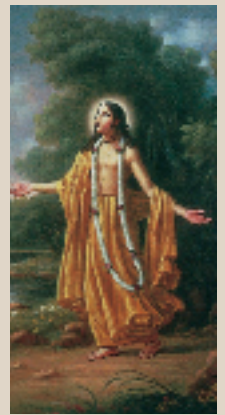
Hare Kṛṣṇa.—Nāgarāja Dāsa, Editor

## OUR PURPOSES

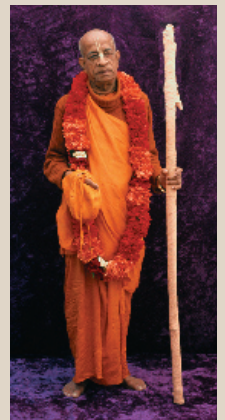
- To help all people discern reality from illusion, spirit from matter, the eternal from the temporary.
- To expose the faults of materialism.
- To offer guidance in the Vedic techniques of spiritual life.
- To preserve and spread the Vedic culture.
- To celebrate the chanting of the holy names of God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



*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*



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



# BACK TO GODHEAD

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Hare Krishna Movement



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# Letters

## Chanting as Sacrifice

I am currently reading the excerpt from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in this month's BTG (January/February): "Satī Gives Up Her Body." On page 32 of the magazine, Śrīla Prabhupāda's purport states that it is a sacrifice to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra in this age. Why is the chanting process considered a sacrifice? My understanding is this: To sacrifice means to give up something, usually to obtain something else for oneself or for another. What are we giving up when we chant? I know what we are obtaining—that is clear.

Emily Benjamin  
Via the Internet

**OUR REPLY:** We are sacrificing our time to fix our ears, tongue, and mind on Kṛṣṇa in the form of His holy name. We are giving up whatever we previously spent the 1½–2½ hours doing each day instead of chanting sixteen rounds of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. And Kṛṣṇa is very pleased to see we are giving up some useless activity to focus our consciousness on Him. Perfection in Kṛṣṇa consciousness means to do all our activities for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure without any other consideration.

## Why "Servant"?

Why does Kṛṣṇa want us to be His servant? Isn't that a bit cruel? Why does He say "surrender" unto Him? I don't get it.

Sonul  
Via the Internet

**OUR REPLY:** Existentially, God is always in a superior position to us, so we're naturally subservient to Him. In the material world, people might mistreat their servants, but God treats His servants so well they enjoy serving Him and are

completely satisfied in His service.

Besides, the master-servant relationship is just one of the ways we can serve Kṛṣṇa, all of them fully satisfying for us. We can also be His "servant" by being His friend, superior (such as a parent), or lover.

Because Kṛṣṇa's intelligence is superior to ours, to surrender to His direction is our true self-interest. Or, to put it another way, Kṛṣṇa is asking us to surrender to, or accept, His love, because that's the best thing for us.

## Smoking and Chanting

I want to chant the *mahā-mantra*, but I smoke cigarettes. I want to quit smoking. Do I need to wait until I have quit before I start chanting?

Ellie  
Via the Internet

**OUR REPLY:** You may immediately begin chanting the unlimitedly auspicious Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, and you might find that you automatically quit smoking cigarettes. Many people have. Just keep in mind that as long as we maintain attachments to material things, we cannot achieve the perfection of chanting, so ultimately we have to give up such things. If you chant with great concentration, you will find it more effective.

## Which God?

I am a Hindu and religious. I belong to a group of about twenty-five young people who do *bhajan*s and *kirtan*s together.

We are having some problems between us about the right track to follow. I just want you to give me some advice about which god to pray to and follow.

Sanjeet Ramanaick  
Mauritius



OUR REPLY: It is not difficult to select a worshipable deity if you accept *Bhagavad-gītā* as truth. Kṛṣṇa says in verse 7.7 that there is no truth superior to Him. In verse 10.8, He says that He is the source of all spiritual and material worlds and that the wise who know this worship Him with all their hearts. In verse 18.66, He says, "Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender to Me. I will protect you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear." In verses 9.34 and 18.65, He states that the most confidential knowledge is to always think of Him, become His devotee, bow down to Him, and glorify Him. In verse 9.23, He states that the worshipers of the demigods, or *devas*, get impermanent results by their worship, but His devotees attain His supreme eternal abode.

### Troubling Studies

I study in the field of bioinformatics. I know that the soul forms the body of the organism. Then how do I concentrate on bioinformatics, which deals with amino acid and protein. This causes lots of trouble for me.

Prasad Dehedkar  
Mumbai, India

OUR REPLY: We should all try to use our situations to glorify Kṛṣṇa. You can do this by looking at your field of study in a Kṛṣṇa conscious way. How is it that the amino acids are so nicely arranged into proteins and the proteins are arranged into cells so that cellular growth, maintenance, and reproduction are going on? It is so complicated that only a fool could deny the arrangement of God. Otherwise, how without guidance could such a complicated arrangement take place. Who but God has constructed machines (living organisms) that change size while they are operating and can produce copies of themselves? Truly miraculous—an opportunity to meditate on

the wonder of Kṛṣṇa.

When you finish your degree, you can get a job and support your favorite Kṛṣṇa temple. Unless you would really rather study the scriptures and teach them to others as a lifetime monk and you have the determination to do it, then your situation is not so bad. You have to perform some kind of work. Why not stick it out?

### Nārāyaṇa and Kṛṣṇa

Why did Prahāda Mahārāja teach Nārāyaṇa consciousness and not Kṛṣṇa consciousness?

Anuradha  
Via the Internet

OUR REPLY: There is no significant difference between Nārāyaṇa and Kṛṣṇa because They are both Viṣṇu-tattva, God Himself. Technically Kṛṣṇa is the source of Nārāyaṇa, and Kṛṣṇa has some uniquely attractive qualities. Still you should know that Prahāda Mahārāja also spoke of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in addition to Nārāyaṇa consciousness. One of his more famous verses begins *matir na kṛṣṇe (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 7.5.30)*. In this verse he explains how people too addicted to sense enjoyment can never become Kṛṣṇa conscious.

### Fear and Fearlessness

I have a question in regards to fear and fearlessness in spiritual life. Śrīla Prabhupāda quotes, *padam padam yad vipadam*: "There is danger at every step."

How to see this warning through the eyes of scripture? In *Bhagavad-gītā*, it is said that one should be devoid of fear (6.14) and that fearlessness belongs to godly men endowed with divine nature (16.3); and, of course: "Abandon all varieties of  
(please turn to page 42)



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# SEEING GOD ON HIS TERMS

*We cannot demand to see God but must act  
in such a way that He will reveal Himself to us.*

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

Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

*iśāvāsyam idaṁ sarvaṁ  
yat kiñca jagatyāṁ jagat  
tena tyaktena bhuñjīthā  
mā gṛdhaḥ kasya svid dhanam*

Everything animate or inanimate that is within the universe is controlled and owned by the Lord. One should therefore accept only those things necessary for himself, which are set aside as his quota, and one should not accept other things, knowing well to whom they belong.

—*Śrī Īsopaniṣad*, Mantra 1

Here is a statement that everything animate or inanimate within the universe is controlled and owned by the Lord. What are you, inanimate or animate?

**Devotees:** Animate.

**Prabhupāda:** Animate. Do you think you are controlled or not controlled?

**Devotees:** Controlled.

**Prabhupāda:** Is there any person here who is not controlled?



**Devotees:** No.

**Prabhupāda:** Or is there anyone anywhere within the universe who is not controlled? Can anyone say, "I am not controlled"? Nobody can say that. So if you are controlled, then why would you declare, "I am uncontrolled. I am independent. I am God"? Why this nonsense?

Does being God mean that He is controlled? People are claiming, "I am God." Is there any meaning to their claim? If I am controlled, then how can I be God? This is common sense.

The Māyāvāda philosopher says, "Everyone is God. I am God; you are God." But God is never controlled. If somebody is controlled, he is not God. This is a simple definition of God. God is not controlled. If somebody claims that he is God, then first of all ask, "Are you controlled or not controlled?"

Common sense. Nobody can say that he's not controlled. I have seen a rascal who has his own society, and he is preaching, "I am God." But one day I saw him, and he had a toothache. He was

*Left: Mādhavendra Puri's pure devotion attracted Kṛṣṇa to appear before him to deliver him milk.*

# *If you want to know God, or if you want to see God, then first you must know the characteristics of God.*

• • •

moaning, “Ohhh!” [Laughter.] So I asked him, “You claim that you are God, and now you are under the control of a toothache. So what kind of God are you?” [Laughter.]

You see. If someone claims, “I am God, you are God, everyone is God,” you immediately should know he’s a rascal.

## **FLOATING THE SUN AND THE EARTH**

Nobody is uncontrolled. The earth is a small planet, and still you’ll see on this planet that there are big oceans like the Atlantic and the Pacific, and there are big mountains and skyscrapers. With all this load, the earth is floating in the air just like a swab of cotton. Who is controlling it? Can you float even a small piece of grain in the air? You can say “law of gravity” and so many other things, but you cannot utilize it. Or you can—the airplane is moving in the air—but only as long as the machine is working. As soon as your petrol is finished, the airplane will fall down.

The sun is fourteen hundred thousand times bigger than this planet. We can see that the sun is floating in one corner of this big space. So how can you say that it is not controlled? Is it floating on its own? No. The answer is there in the *Bhagavad-gītā* [15.13]. Kṛṣṇa says, “I enter into the material planets, and I keep them floating.”

The pilot, not the machine itself, is keeping the airplane floating. This is simple truth. So since this planet is floating, somebody must have entered it. Kṛṣṇa says, “I have entered it.” What is the difficulty in understanding how it is floating? The analogy is there. Everyone can understand that the big airplane is floating in the sky because the pilot has entered within

it. Similarly, if this planet is floating, then somebody—either you or somebody, God—has entered it. And that answer is there in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: “I enter into these planets, and I keep them floating.” That is our answer.

The scientists say “the law of gravity.” But we have to take knowledge from Kṛṣṇa. That is our process. We don’t accept any other process of knowledge. Our process is to receive knowledge from the authority and accept it as fact. That is first-class knowledge. If you get an authority who can speak on the subject, and if you take that knowledge, that is perfect.

## **“CAN YOU SHOW ME GOD?”**

There are three processes to receive knowledge. The first is direct sense perception, *pratyakṣa*. Somebody asks, “Can you show me God?” That means he is a *Pratyakṣavādī*. He wants to see everything directly, experience everything directly. This class of men says, “Can you show me God?” But this is not first-class knowledge.

Suppose you ask me, “Can you show me God?”

I say, “Yes, I can show you God.”

“Show me.”

“I’ll show you. This microphone is God.”

Will you believe it? Why not?

**Disciple:** It doesn’t have the qualifications.

**Prabhupāda:** No, if you ask me, “Can you show me God?” then I can show anything. “Yes, here He is—God.”

Or why God? Suppose you go to a store and ask, “Can you give me gold?” The storekeeper may give you a scrap of iron and say, “Yes, here it is—gold. Take it.” What you will say? You do not know where to purchase gold, but you are in need of some gold, and

you go to a storekeeper and ask him, “Have you got gold in stock?”

So he’ll immediately understand, “He is a fool, because he has come to purchase gold in an ordinary store. If one wants to purchase gold, he must go where gold is sold. But he has come to an ordinary store to purchase it; therefore he’s a first-class rascal.”

He’ll try to cheat him: “Here is gold.” He gives him a piece of iron. Then what will the person say? Will he accept the iron as gold? Why not? He does not know what gold is, and he has gone to a store to purchase it. The storekeeper gives him a piece of iron and says, “Here is gold.” So he’ll purchase it. He’ll be cheated.

Similarly, those rascals who ask, “Can you show me God?” must know what God is; otherwise they’ll be cheated. That is being done.

If you want to purchase gold, you must have at least some preliminary knowledge of what gold is. You must know its characteristics. A chemist tests chemicals or drugs for certain characteristics: the color is like this, the constitution is like this, the reaction is like this, the taste is like this. If a chemist in the laboratory can corroborate the characteristics, then he accepts it: “Yes, it is soda bicarb.”

Similarly, if you want to know God, or if you want to see God, then first you must know the characteristics of God. Otherwise, if you go to another rascal and ask him, “Can you show me God?” and he shows you something nonsense and you accept it as God, is that a very nice thing? But that is going on: “I want to see God.” What qualification have you got to see God? People do not consider whether they are qualified to see God.

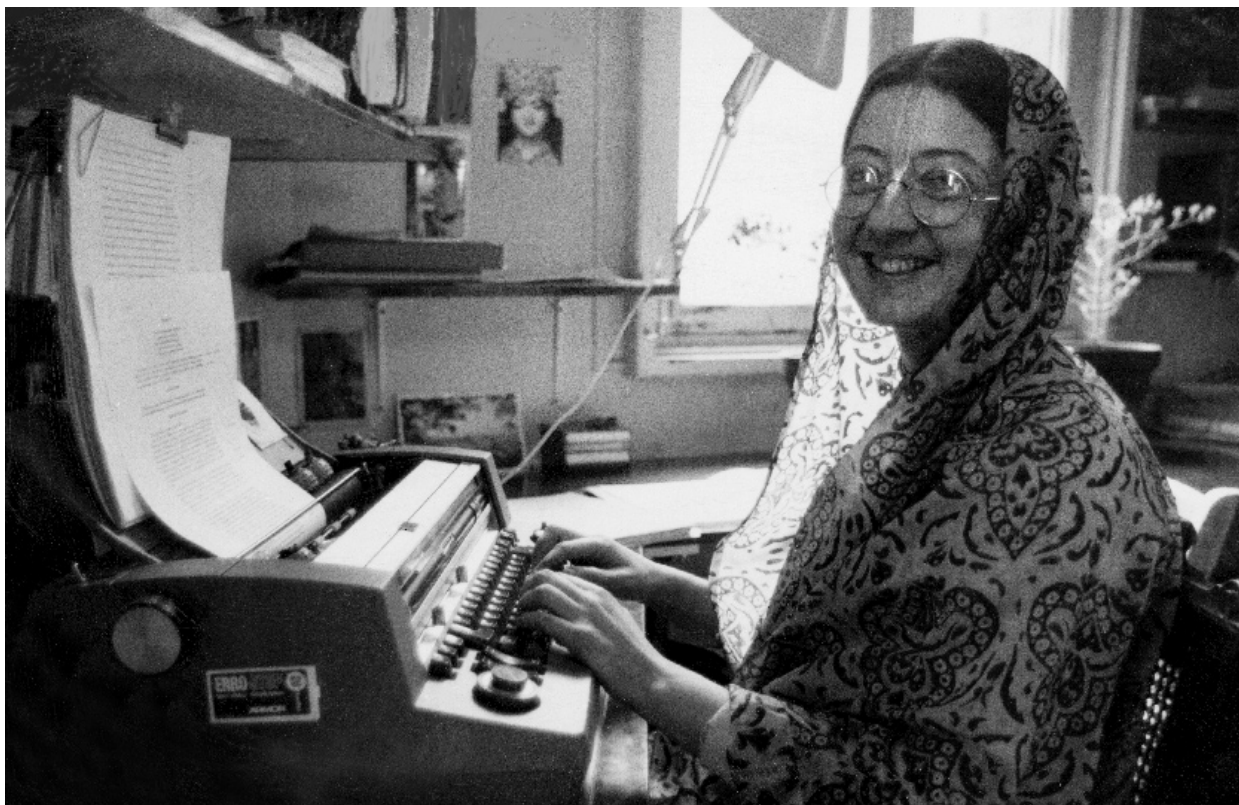
We do not teach such cheap things.  
*(please turn to page 56)*



# DYING TO TEACH

*While passing from this world, a Kṛṣṇa conscious teacher gives her most important lesson.*

by Arcana Siddhī Devī Dāsī



*In Paris, 1974, Ārādhya Devī Dāsī helps with the publication of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books in French.*

WHEN MY son, Nārāyaṇa, was seven or eight years old, I once left him home alone while I ran down the street to pick up a few groceries. He was engrossed in playing with a new Lego set, so he begged me to let him stay home. We lived in an apartment and our neighbors were home, so I agreed.

When I returned, Nārāyaṇa was sitting outside, sobbing.

“What happened?” I asked as I gathered him up in my arms.

His reply came through uncontrollable sobs.

“Hanumān died.”

I was a bit surprised that he would be so upset about the death of a gerbil. Getting the gerbil was one of his impulsive desires where the novelty quickly wore off and the brunt of the responsibility for the gerbil's care ended up with my husband and me. Sometime before this, Hanumān had bit Nārāyaṇa, and that was the last time Nārāyaṇa really paid him any attention.

*If we are open to receiving guidance from nature,  
we will constantly be seeing things  
that corroborate and reinforce Vedic teachings.*

• • •

Nevertheless, I said, “You’re feeling so sad because the gerbil died.” Continuing to cry, between gasps for air he said, “He couldn’t breathe. He was jumping around trying to breathe, but he couldn’t breathe.”

I held Nārāyaṇa tightly and waited to hear more.

He finished by saying, “And one day I’m going to have to die, and I won’t be able to breathe, just like the gerbil.”

He held me tighter and continued to cry.

It was a perfect teaching opportunity. I told him we were all going to have to die but how we’d die would depend on how we’d lived. Our chanting and other devotional service would help us leave this world without too much suffering. In fact, if we could become completely Kṛṣṇa conscious, it would be like walking from one room into another.

## NATURAL GURUS

After some time, he became pacified and we had a little funeral for Hanumān. Nārāyaṇa told me he’d chanted Hare Kṛṣṇa while Hanumān left this world. I thought about how the gerbil was a kind of guru for Nārāyaṇa. There are different types of gurus described in the scriptures. The *varṇa-pradarśaka-guru* introduces us to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The *dikṣā-guru* initiates us into the chanting of the Lord’s holy names. And there are the *śikṣā-gurus*, or instructing gurus. The term generally refers to a spiritual teacher who is very influential in helping us in our spiritual journey, but it can refer to any person or thing that instructs us in spiritual life.

If we allow the environment to speak to us, we’ll find spiritual guid-

ance everywhere. In the Eleventh Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Lord Kṛṣṇa tells His dear friend Uddhava about a conversation between King Yadu and a *brāhmaṇa* who had become spiritually advanced by extracting lessons from his surroundings. The *brāhmaṇa* identifies twenty-four teachers he had encountered that had taught him some important spiritual lesson: air, water, fire, the earth, the moon, the sun, a pigeon, a python, the sea, a moth, a honey thief, an elephant, a honey bee, a deer, a fish, a prostitute, a *kurara* bird, a child, a young girl, an arrow maker, a serpent, a spider, and a wasp.

If we are open to receiving guidance from nature, we will constantly be seeing things that corroborate and reinforce the teachings of the Vedic literature. Every rising and setting of the sun can remind us of impending death, every tree can teach tolerance, and the grass can instruct us about humility.

## LESSONS FROM A GODSISTER

Hanumān served as a *śikṣā-guru* to my son by bringing the reality of death to his doorstep. Recently Nārāyaṇa (now almost twenty-two) and I had the opportunity to see this lesson played out further by the passing of my Godsister Ārādhyā Devī Dāsī, a beloved member of our Hare Kṛṣṇa community in Sandy Ridge, North Carolina. Three days before her departure from this world, her lungs had filled with fluid and she was rushed to the hospital. The doctors were able to partially drain the fluid from her lungs, but they would again fill up, so she was sent home with a hospital bed and oxygen tanks to complete her stay in her present body.

About a month earlier Ārādhyā was diagnosed with cancer. Cancer cells with no identifiable source or originating tumor infested her body. She had refused procedures such as chemotherapy and radiation. She opted for alternative healing methods and was under the care of a naturopathic doctor. Just before her recent health crisis, there had been some signs of improvement, giving her family and friends hope for a miraculous healing. But we all had to remind ourselves that the real miracle could be in her passing from the world while absorbed in remembering Kṛṣṇa. As one devotee, a truck driver, said to her, “What’s better—leaving this world and going to the heavenly planets, at the very least, or staying here and driving for Yellow Freight?”

Before leaving the hospital, Ārādhyā told me that she had been able to detach herself from her family and felt ready to leave the world. We thought of a verse spoken by Queen Kuntī to Lord Kṛṣṇa: “O Lord of Madhu, as the Ganges forever flows to the sea without hindrance, let my attraction be constantly drawn unto You without being diverted to anyone else. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.8.42)

All of our spiritual practices are meant for this purpose. As we chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* each day on our beads, we rehearse focusing our mind on the Lord. So many extraneous thoughts infiltrate our meditation. So many attachments to this body divert our mind away from thinking of our Lord. Yet we continue to practice and to pray in the mood of Queen Kuntī. It is at the time of death that we realize how crucial it is to have such exclusive devotion, for it is our thoughts at the time of death that take us to our next destination.

(please turn to page 14)



# 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 Kurukshetra**—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. Bhaktivedanta 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.

**Kīrtana**—congregational singing of names of God, usually accompanied by cymbals (*karatālas*) and drums (*mṛdaṅgas*).

**Kṛṣṇa**—the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His original transcendental 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.

**Māyā**—illusion; the energy of the Supreme Lord that deludes living entities into forgetting their spiritual nature and forgetting God.

**Māyāvādi**—one who regards the Absolute Truth as ultimately impersonal.

**Modes of nature**—the three qualities (goodness, passion, and ignorance) that hold sway over all actions 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 Puri, 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. Bhaktivedanta 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 and 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), *gṛhasthas* (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.

SRILA  
PRABHUPADA



ANNIVERSARY  
CELEBRATIONS

# ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀ

## A Lover of Festivals

by Lokanāth Swami

By introducing a variety of festivals, Śrīla Prabhupāda gave ISKCON a wonderful, colorful culture. Now, to glorify Śrīla Prabhupāda on his 108th anniversary, ISKCON celebrates many special festivals in his honor.

As the golden early morning sun filters through the palm trees in the garden here at ISKCON's center in Māyāpur, West Bengal, hundreds of devotees from all corners of the world sweetly sing and dance. Next to the temple of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Mādhava, the Lord's carrier, Garuḍa, presides over the ceremony to raise the Garuḍa flag to begin ISKCON's annual Māyāpur Festival. As the flag unfurls at the top of the pole, multi-colored flower petals shower down upon the devotees. *Brāhmaṇas* chant mantras as auspicious coconuts are broken, spraying devotees. Drums beat, hand cymbals ring, and devotees cheer. A trumpet blasts. As the colorful *kīrtana* procession returns to the temple, smiling devotees stand in the gateway of the garden, freely distributing Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava's *mahā-prasādam* sweets to all.

The Garuḍa flag signifies that everything here during the Māyāpur Festival is for the pleasure of Viṣṇu. The festival is special because we are all here together as a family to glorify Śrīla Prabhupāda on his 108th birth anniversary. I feel that Lord Kṛṣṇa is smiling to see this

grand festival to honor His pure devotee.

Walking on the pleasant flower-lined pathways that surround the temple, I ponder how all the wonderful festivals we so gratefully take part in throughout the Kṛṣṇa conscious movement are the mercy of Śrīla Prabhupāda. He is the founder of all our festivals, and a lover of festivals himself.

*Utsava priya mānavaḥ*, the saying goes. "People love festivals." We are inherently attracted to festivals because every day is a festival in the spiritual world—every step a dance, every word a song. Śrīla Prabhupāda conceived many festivals, starting with weekly Sunday festivals, which he called "The Sunday Love Feast." Festivals celebrating the appearance days of the Lord, His incarnations, and His devotees soon followed—Janmāṣṭamī, Rādhāṣṭamī, Rathayātrās all over the world, and even traveling Padayātrā festivals with bullock carts. Of course, the greatest of all festivals is the annual Māyāpur/Vṛndāvana Festival. Śrīla Prabhupāda said that he could give us a Vaiṣṇava festival for every day on the calendar.

### Reviving Bhakti Devī

Nārada Muni, the universal traveling preacher, has a similar strategy spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Five thousand years ago began the current age of Kali, during which religion declines. Because of the influence of this degraded age, Bhakti Devī (personified devotion to the Lord) became old and ill. Her two sons Jñāna (knowledge) and Virā-

gya (renunciation) were exhausted and on the verge of death.

The three of them met Nārada Muni in Vṛndāvana.

"O Bhakti Devī," Nārada Muni said, "don't be distressed. Through festivals, I'm going to place you in every home, in every nook and corner of the world."

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in the disciplic succession of Śrīla Nārada Muni, followed in Nārada Muni's



MAY HIS FAME SPR



# DA 108 CELEBRATION

footsteps by launching festivals of Kṛṣṇa consciousness all across the globe. To celebrate Prabhupāda's 108th birth anniversary, devotees of the Hare Krishna movement have organized numerous festivals to honor and please Śrīla Prabhupāda.

## “108 Celebration” Festivals

Highlights of this commemorative year's festivals so far include:

The inaugural function of Śrīla Prabhupāda's 108th Anniversary Celebrations was the Pañcattva Installation here in Māyāpur Dhāma. This was followed by Śrī-

la Prabhupāda's Vyāsa Pūjā, during which he was ceremoniously bathed with water from 108 holy places. Since then, Rathayātrās around the world have centered on the theme of the 108 Celebration.

In Russia, the Hare Kṛṣṇa festival in Divnomorsk, on the Black Sea, drew four thousand devotees, the best attendance ever for this annual event. In India, a special Śrīla Prabhupāda 108 offering was the National Youth Festival hosted by ISKCON Pune. It attracted more than four thousand college students from all across India.

“Prabhupāda's Legacy Lives!” was the theme of the Cross Maiden Festival in Mumbai. The festival commemorated the first festival Śrīla Prabhupāda organized in Mumbai, in 1971. The ten-day event drew thousands and was televised globally.

Festivals celebrated temple openings in Suva, Fiji; Pandharpur, India; and Auckland, New Zealand.

During the Gīta Jayanti Festival and Śrīla Prabhupāda Book Distribution Marathon, devotees distributed over four million books and magazines for Śrīla Prabhupāda's pleasure.

India Padayātrā's twentieth anniversary coincided with Śrīla Prabhupāda's 108th anniversary. To celebrate, devotees did Padayātrā from Jansi to Chirgoan, literally following in the footsteps of Śrīla Prabhupāda, who walk this same route approximately fifty years ago.

While writing this article, I am in Māyāpur, celebrating Śrīla Prabhupāda's Family Reunion.

## Festivals for the Age

I would like to thank ISKCON leaders, members, and supporters for their enthusiastic participation in glorifying Śrīla Prabhupāda during his 108 anniversary year. May he bless and empower us all to carry on his mission in this world, which is to establish the principles of dharma in the age of Kali. The festivals he inaugurated, and which his followers carry on, are a perfect way to spread the dharma of the age, the congregational chanting of the holy names of the Lord: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

*Please visit [www.prabhupada108.net](http://www.prabhupada108.net) for more information.*



*Śrīla Prabhupāda at the San Francisco Rathayātrā, 1970.*

# READ EVERYWHERE!

## 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 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 **ī** like the **i** in **pique**. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **ri** in **rim**, and **ṛ** like the **ch** in **chair**. Pronounce consonants like **ch**, **jh**, and **dh** as in **staunch-heart**, **hedgehog**, and **red-hot**. Pronounce **ś** and **ṣ** like **sh**. So for *Kṛṣṇa* say KRISHNA, for *Caitanya* say CHAITANYA.

## Spiritual Names

ISKCON members receive names of Lord Kṛṣṇa or His great devotees, combined with Dāsa, for men, or Dāsī, for women, both of which mean “servant.” For instance, the name Kṛṣṇa Dāsa means “servant of Kṛṣṇa.”

## DYING TO TEACH

(continued from page 10)

Ārādhyā had some residual concern about how her husband and daughter would do without her. I tried my best to assure her that Kṛṣṇa had orchestrated this event not only for her spiritual progress but for theirs as well. She seemed to appreciate that. I also told her that we were only a step behind her and she would be showing us what it's like to leave this world. Ārādhyā had distinguished herself in the Hare Kṛṣṇa community as a *gurukula* teacher. Now she would be teaching all of us her final lesson. We embraced each other, and she got ready to leave the hospital to return home.

## WITH DEVOTEES AND THE HOLY NAME

That night, at her home, many devotees from the community squeezed into her room to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and sing songs about the Lord's sweet pastimes. The next morning her family members began arriving and the devotees came in shifts, sometimes reading to her and sometimes chanting. Ārādhyā had become very weak and could no longer hold a conversation. We would have to press our ear close to her mouth to decipher her short requests. She responded to our questions with a yes or no nod of her head. Sometimes we could see her lips move as she chanted along with the *kīrtana*.

Each devotee had meaningful personal exchanges with her during this time. While there was a collective experience, we each had our own unique impressions and realizations. One devotee came with her five-week-old infant. Both the baby and Ārādhyā were totally dependent beings at this stage of their lives, yet the infant was coming into the world and Ārādhyā was departing. It wasn't long ago that the newborn child, now in a fresh new body, was in a dying condition. The ABCs of *Bhagavada-gītā*—how we are not this material body—unfolded before us in this experiential learning session. Prabhupāda's daunting words resounded in my head: “Don't think

this won't happen to you.”

Sensing that the end was near, some devotees stayed with Ārādhyā throughout the night, singing soft, melodious *kīrtana*. Devotees also perched themselves on either side of her bed, chanting loud *japa* into her ears. Although outwardly unresponsive on the final day, Ārādhyā at one point placed her hands together in a gesture of prayer during the chanting of “Yaśomatī Nandana.” There were other indications throughout the day that she was conscious. She didn't want anything to interfere with her ability to remember the Lord, so despite feeling a lot of pain during her final days, she had refused any pain medication. This was particularly astounding to me, since she didn't so much as wince throughout her last days.

At 9:16 P.M. on September 27, 2004, Ārādhyā Devī Dāsī took three shallow breaths and departed from the world. My son watched her departure, chanting on his beads. The quiet *kīrtana* erupted into a divine symphony of loud voices rejoicing at her wonderful departure. It was the anniversary of the passing of Haridāsa Thākura, an associate of Lord Caitanya's who had taught the glories of chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra—another sign of the blessedness of her passing.

I couldn't help but remember Nārāyaṇa's reaction to his gerbil's death. I asked him what he was thinking as he watched this dear Vaiṣṇava depart from the world.

“I just wish I could have gone with her,” he replied.

In the past fourteen years he had gone from fear of dying to having faith in the glory of dying in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

How fortunate we are to have the Vedic teachings to help us understand the nature of matter and spirit. And how fortunate we are to have these teachings come to life as we each apply them and share them in our journeys back home, back to Godhead. 🌸

*Arcana Siddhī Devī Dāsī was initiated by Śrīla Prabhupāda in 1976. She lives with her husband and son in Sandy Ridge, North Carolina, where she works as a family therapist.*



# Evolution: The Soul's Upward Transmigration

*This conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and one of his disciples, Dr. Thoudam Singh (now Bhakti Svarūpa Dāmodara Swami), took place during an early-morning walk on Venice Beach in Los Angeles.*

**Dr. Singh:** Your Divine Grace, are all the species of life created simultaneously?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. The species already exist, and the living entity simply transfers himself from one womb to the next, just as a man transfers himself from one apartment to another. Suppose a person comes from a lower-class apartment to a first-class apartment. The person is the same, but now, according to his capacity for payment—according to his karma—he is able to occupy a higher-class apartment. Evolution does not mean physical development, but development of consciousness. Do you follow?

**Dr. Singh:** I think so. Do you mean that evolution is actually the soul's transmigration from the lower species of life up to the higher species?

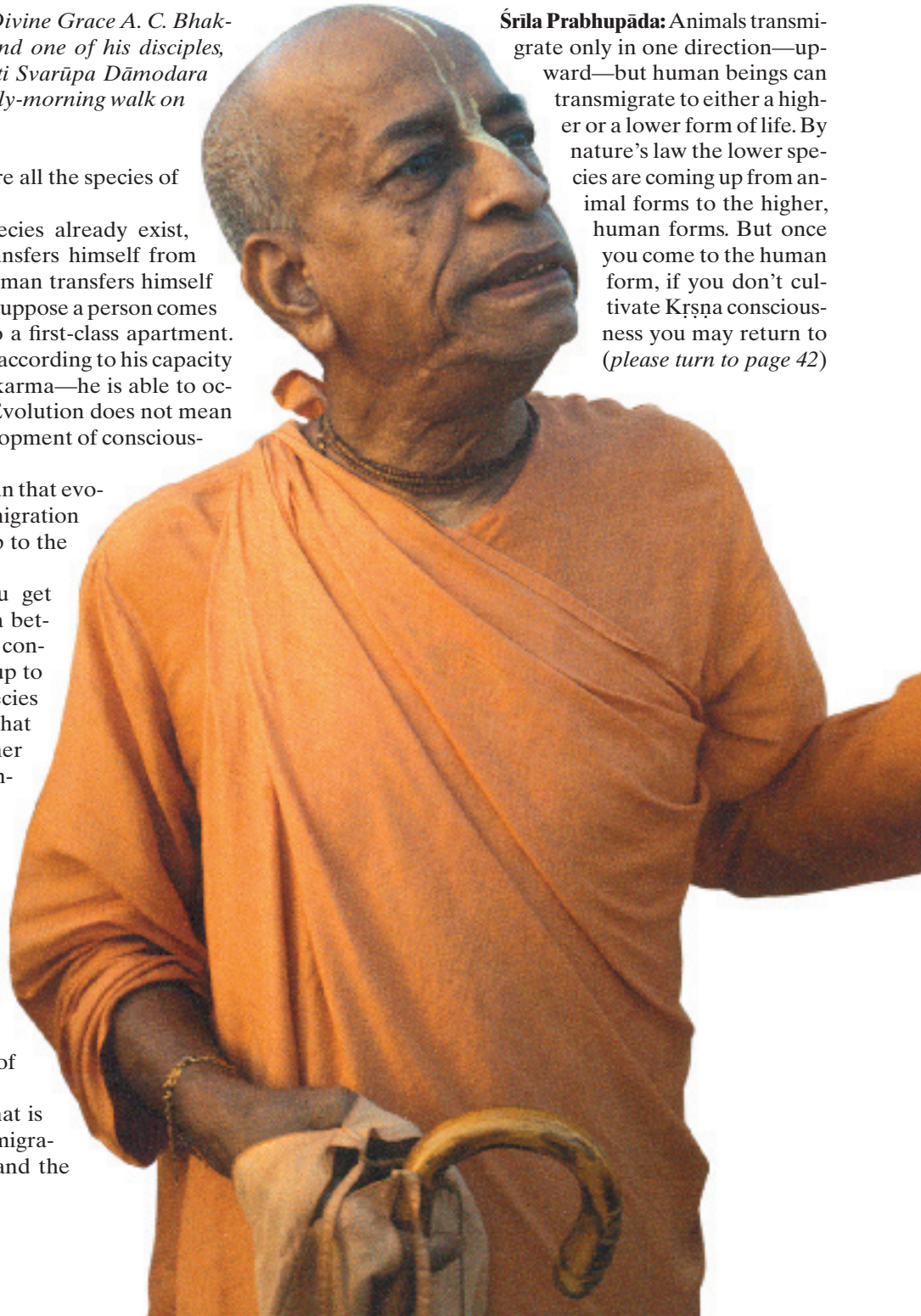
**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. As you get more money you can move to a better apartment. Similarly, as your consciousness develops, you move up to a higher species of life. The species already exist, however. It is not that the lower species become higher species—that is Darwin's nonsensical theory.

**Dr. Singh:** And each living entity is made to live in a particular type of body according to his desires?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. God knows the various desires of all the living entities in the material world. Therefore, to accommodate all the conditioned souls, He creates the 8,400,000 species of life from the very beginning.

**Dr. Singh:** Śrīla Prabhupāda, what is the difference between the transmigration of souls in animal bodies and the transmigration of human souls?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Animals transmigrate only in one direction—upward—but human beings can transmigrate to either a higher or a lower form of life. By nature's law the lower species are coming up from animal forms to the higher, human forms. But once you come to the human form, if you don't cultivate Kṛṣṇa consciousness you may return to *(please turn to page 42)*





SPIRITUAL PLACES

SUVA WELCOMES

# The Emperor

*In the capital of Fiji, Lord Kṛṣṇa is enthroned*



*Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Golokabihārī (top) offer Their audience to devotees in Their new temple in Suva (right). Above, Ānanda Tīrtha Dāsa performs a fire sacrifice during the temple-opening ceremonies.*

All photos in this article are by Bir Kṛṣṇa Goswami, Jagannātha Dāsa, and Jayaśrī Devi Dāsi.



# of Sweetness

*in ISKCON's largest temple outside India.*



by Ūrmilā Devī Dāsī

based on interviews  
with Bīr Kṛṣṇa Goswami and  
Kṛṣṇa-priyā Devī Dāsī

THE OPENING ceremonies for ISKCON's new temple in Suva, Fiji, are in full swing. Milk, honey, fruit juices, clarified butter, and scented water flow over deities of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Their closest cowherd-girl associates, Lalitā and Viśākhā. "An ocean of bliss is at the feet of the damsels of Vṛndāvana," our venerable *ācārya* Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has written. Perhaps the sweet mixture at their feet today won't fill an ocean, but it does fill many buckets. And after the bathing ceremony thousands of guests will vie to taste a few drops.

The process of installing the deity, or welcoming the Lord, can be as simple as chanting Kṛṣṇa's names. But here in Suva, Fiji's capital, all traditional intricacies are being minutely followed. Since the qualification for worship is devotion and purity, not body or birth, both male and female priests perform the ceremonies. And they are of diverse nationalities and ethnicities: Fijian, Indian, Australian, European, American, African, New Zealanders. Some have traveled halfway around the world to have the benefit of readying the temple complex and greeting the Lord.

Most of those helping, however, live in Fiji, home to many devotees of Kṛṣṇa. Having ten thousand ISKCON members in a country of 800,000 has a significant effect on the country. ISKCON's Kṛṣṇa-Kāliya tem-



*A temple spire (right) is lowered into place by a crane. Śrī Kāmā Devī Dāsi (below) polishes a copper spire before it is to be gold-leafed. Below, right, Rāma Rāghava Dāsa, Bhakta Anil, and Navadvīpa Dāsa work on a dome where a spire will be attached.*







As part of the sacred bathing ceremony (left), devotees apply fragrant oil to the deities of *Sītā-Rāma*, *Lakṣmaṇa*, and *Hanumān*. Below, *Śrīla Prabhupāda* is carried in procession around the temple property.



## Śrīlā Prabhupāda And Tamal Kṛṣṇa Goswami in Fiji

by Bir Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Goswami

WHEN Śrīla Prabhupāda visited Fiji, he invoked the presence of Kṛṣṇa and planted the seed that was later to fructify into what is there today. The scriptures say that even a moment's association with a great soul like Śrīla Prabhupāda can give one perfection. Even though Prabhupāda's visits to Fiji were short, they showed the truth of this statement.

Śrīla Prabhupāda empowered his representatives Vāsudeva Dāsa, Bhuvan Mohan, and Bhāgavatī Devī Dāsī to further give out the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. They did this with great success and opened up the magnificent Kṛṣṇa-Kāliya temple in Lautoka.

Then Prabhupāda sent his dear disciple Tamāl Kṛṣṇa

Goswami to give the devotees a vision of a transcendental culture. Tamāl Kṛṣṇa Goswami traveled throughout the islands and convinced thousands of people of the veracity of the Vedic teachings, engaging them in the service of the Lord. Sometimes he sent people by horseback to remote villages where now the entire population is devotees.

Prabhupāda and Tamāl Kṛṣṇa Goswami had a vision for the Suva temple. They wanted it to be a spiritual beacon for all of Fiji. They wanted it to serve as a base from which to distribute spiritual knowledge, spiritual food, and the holy names. And they wanted the deities to attract everyone away from the mundane world.

ple in Lautoka, Fiji, which opened in 1976, was the movement's first temple built outside of India. The new Suva temple is now ISKCON's largest outside India. Twelve deities are being installed.

Situated in the middle of the capital district, a five minute drive from the main shopping area, the Suva temple establishes the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement as the primary representative of the Vedic tradition. The Vedic culture remains tangible in the Fijian islands, where nearly half of the population has roots in India. Hospitality and respect are hallmarks of the people. A visitor to the temple quickly feels like part of a large family. This feeling may be somewhat due to the fact that it is common for entire families—husband, wife, parents, children, aunts, and uncles—to join ISKCON together. The atmosphere, programs, and goals inherent in ISKCON temples are a welcome part of the general culture. Yet it is not only those of Indian decent who embrace the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement in Fiji. Some members have their roots in Fiji's indigenous cultures. Races and cultures find unity in diversity when Lord Kṛṣṇa is the center.

When those helping with the temple preparations went downtown to shop, everyone smiled, waved, and asked when the grand opening would





*The new temple overflows with devotees on opening day (above). At left, Veda-vyāsapriya Swami passes out prasādam to eager hands. Above, right: Gaura-Nitāi, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī; far right: Sītā-Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa; right: Śrī Hanumānjī.*





be. There's a love among the people for hearing about Kṛṣṇa, chanting His holy names, and eating *prasādam*. (Devotees run six restaurants in Fiji, including one in the new Suva temple.) Perhaps the original culture of the people has been somewhat preserved, in part, because television—one of the chief generals of this degraded age—has been in the country for only six or seven years.

With the temple's prime location, it is common for government officials, including ambassadors and members

of parliament, to come regularly to see the deities and take *prasādam*. The temple's golden spires, like ones in the royal Indian city of Jaipur, can be seen for miles away. They beckon to businessmen, who stop by and worship the Lord before work in the morning. Many initiated devotees hold prominent positions in society. An example is Kīṣorī Devī Dāśī, one of the group who carried the golden *cakras* (discs of Lord Viṣṇu) to the top of the domes during the temple's opening ceremonies. She's a gold medal winner at the



Fiji School of Medicine.

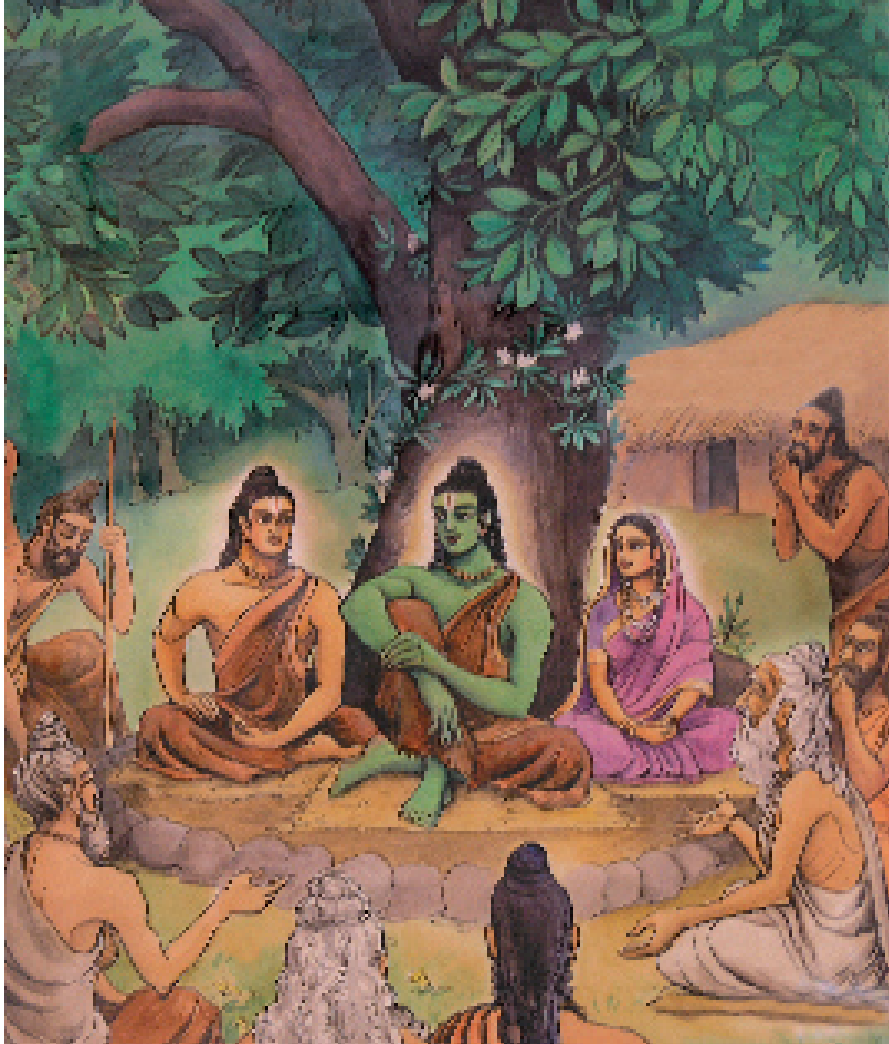
Cooperation among devotees to prepare the buildings was sweet and tangible. Regardless of externals such as differing occupations, social classes, nationalities, and gender, all worked together with great happiness to make the installation ceremony a success. Henry Ford's great-grandson Alfred, also known as Ambarīṣa Dāsa, served alongside doctors and construction workers. Assisting with everything from management to menial labor were three ISKCON leaders in the renounced order: Bhakti Cāru Swami, Vedavyāsapriya Swami, and Bīr Kṛṣṇa Goswami. Designations faded as devotees spent days grinding sandalwood into paste to offer to Kṛṣṇa.

Gold-leafing the *kalashas* (the ornaments, resembling large stacked balls, that crown the temple domes) was a huge project, demanding ingenuity and team effort. Before gold leaf will stick to a copper surface, the copper has to be absolutely clean and free of tarnish. Tamarind water, normally used to polish copper in Fiji, took too long. So Bīr Kṛṣṇa Goswami, ISKCON's governing body commissioner for Fiji, researched on the Internet to discover how to concoct his own solution—a mixture of lemon juice, salt, and laundry soap. After the polishing, the devotees had to put on two coats of primer and one coat of yellow paint before starting the detailed work of applying the gold. Finally, a crane lifted the *kalashes* into place, where they now glimmer in the tropical sunshine. What a change from the small metal building used as a temple here for the last ten years!

Coming to the island a month or even two weeks before the scheduled

(please turn to page 57)

## EMPEROR OF SWEETNESS



*Paintings about Lord Rāma's pastimes (top), by Mādhava-priyā Devī Dāsi, grace the temple walls. Above, Devakī Devī Dāsi (left) and her daughter Kiśorī Dāsi, a gold medal winner at the Fiji School of Medicine.*







*Preparing the temple-opening feast (left and below left) required the help of many volunteers. Below, a tamāl tree planted in honor of His Holiness Tamāl Kṛṣṇa Goswami adorns the front entrance of the new temple. At bottom, new initiates take part in a fire sacrifice to consecrate their vows. Sixty-four devotees received initiation the day after the temple opening.*





# NEITHER HERE NOR THERE

## Exploring Borders with Lord Nṛsimha

*A delayed border crossing and a long-nailed woman  
spark thoughts of Kṛṣṇa's fiercest incarnation.*

by Satyarāja Dāsa

THE COLD WINTER day was offset by my warm compartment on the train. I could see snow from my snug window seat, but a soft pillow assured me that this would be a pleasant trip. I so wanted this long, relaxing ride. The Toronto American Academy of Religion conference had been intense. Now I would spend nearly a full day returning home. I could read, chant, and nap, and my plan was to do exactly those things, and in that order.

In the seat to my right was an elderly woman with unusually long nails. She seemed obsessed with polishing them—with bright red nail polish. I was torn between spying on her cosmetic chore, which she tended to with enthusiasm, and admiring the oncoming evening sky. It was twilight, with the sun already over the horizon. It reminded me of the cover of *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*. In that battlefield scene, highlighted by Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna on their chariot, the background reveals a dusky sky, with bits of

yellow, red, and ever darker shades of blue.

Just then, the conductor announced that we would soon be stopping for some time at the Canada-New York border; customs wanted to be sure that no terrorists were on the train. Within five minutes, we were there, sitting at what would turn out to be a protracted stop.

“Where are we?” I asked the woman sitting next to me. “Is this considered New York or Canada?”

“We’re in both,” she said, taking a moment to forsake her nails. “Or,” she added with a wry smile, “maybe we’re in neither.”

As we both enjoyed her thought-provoking comment, and as I gazed at her long red nails, I began to think of Nṛsimhadeva, the prominent incarnation of Kṛṣṇa who is half man and half lion. Lord Nṛsimha’s nails are also described as long and scary looking.

But it was more than her nails. It’s my habit to think of this particular incarnation of Kṛṣṇa

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*Right: Deities of Śrī Prahlāda-Nṛsimha at the ISKCON rural community  
in Germany known as Nava Jiyada Nrisimha Kshetra.*







***“Even I,” said Brahmā, who has a  
life span lasting many millions of years,  
“must one day die.”***

• • •

when things seem suspicious or frightening, like a customs check for terrorists. The Vedic scriptures describe that Lord Nṛsiṃha protects His devotees from all manner of calamity. But there was still more than the nails and the protection factor. It was that it was dusk and we were at the border of Canada and New York. Let me explain.

### **NṚSĪMHADEVA: SOME BACKGROUND**

*Nṛ* means “man,” *siṃha* means “lion,” and *deva* means “God” or “godly.” Nṛsiṃhadeva is indeed a man-lion. But really He is so much more. His four arms identify Him as Viṣṇu, an expansion of Kṛṣṇa, and He is listed in Purāṇic scriptures as a genuine manifestation of the Supreme Lord. Yet He is unlike any other incarnation.

First of all, Nṛsiṃha is ferocious: His sharp, thirsty teeth, His long, frightening nails (which would be the envy of my co-passenger!), His deafening cries for the blood of the infamous demon-king Hiraṇyakaśipu—all these distinguish Him among incarnations of Viṣṇu.

His ferocity, reserved for demons like Hiraṇyakaśipu, is often juxtaposed with His beauty and benevolence, traits more obvious to His devotees. When He revealed Himself to rid the world of Hiraṇyakaśipu, millennia ago, His gleaming fangs were the features with which the demon became most acquainted. The Lord’s quivering tongue and innumerable arms (He sometimes showed four, sometimes more) were increasingly visible when Hiraṇyakaśipu moved closer, in a vain attempt to do battle with Him. The demon became all-too-intimate with Nṛsiṃhadeva’s razor-sharp claws.

As a result of performing the most

severe austerities, Hiraṇyakaśipu developed untold mystic powers, but he used them only for his own selfish ends. He defeated all who vied for his post and, with great arrogance, mocked all who challenged him. Intoxicated with his well-earned excellence, he challenged every worthy being in the universe to any number and variety of duels, and he always won.

There was a reason not only for his success but for his confidence: As a result of his austerities, he was offered a boon—anything he wanted—from Lord Brahmā, the first created being. Initially, he asked Brahmā for immortality. But Brahmā explained to him that this was not possible.

“Even I,” said Brahmā, who has a life span lasting many millions of years, “must one day die.”

So Hiraṇyakaśipu asked Brahmā for the following assurances: That he could never be slain indoors or outdoors, on the ground or in the air, by day or by night, by man or by beast, or by any weapon known to man. In this way, when Brahmā agreed, the demon thought he had tricked the creator-god into securing his immortality. And so he went on conquering and terrorizing the universe.

However, the saintly little boy Prahlāda, Hiraṇyakaśipu’s son, was a thorn in the demon’s side. Although their family was notoriously demonic—burdening the world with a series of evil kings with political agendas and lascivious lifestyles—Prahlāda was highly devotional, a pious boy with no interest other than serving the Lord. In school, at the age of five, he would encourage his friends to sing and dance in spiritual ecstasy. This frustrated Hiraṇyakaśipu to no end, leading him to make attempts on his own son’s life. Each attempt failed, however, because Viṣṇu Himself invariably arranged for the boy’s rescue.

### **THE MAN-LION APPEARS**

Completely vexed, the demon-king thought he might reason with his child.

“You worship someone as Lord, someone you think is greater than I? Where is He? Show me this God of yours.”

Prahlāda merely answered that His sweet Lord is everywhere.

“Even in this pillar?” asked Hiraṇyakaśipu.

When Prahlāda affirmed that because God is all-pervading He was also in the pillar right in front of them, the demon could hear no more, and, drawing his sword, smacked the pillar with all his strength. At that moment Nṛsiṃhadeva, the half-man and half-lion form of God, jumped out of the pillar and toward Hiraṇyakaśipu.

Fearful of the Lord’s intense ferociousness, the demon nonetheless attacked Him with determined enthusiasm. Appearing like a meager wasp in the presence of Lord Nṛsiṃha, he raised his sword and shield and was ready for combat. Lord Nṛsiṃha had no weapons—only His long lion nails on all four hands, His deafening growl, and His sharp teeth.

### **THE BOONS FALL SHORT**

The battle with Hiraṇyakaśipu was no challenge for the Lord of all. Nṛsiṃhadeva snatched him up, as a cat might capture a mouse. Incensed by the demon’s arrogance and offended by the way he had treated Prahlāda, the Lord was a sight to behold.

Nṛsiṃhadeva’s eyes, which glistered with wrath, resembled molten gold, as did His dress and crown. His teeth reflected the deadly dread in Hiraṇyakaśipu’s eyes. His nostrils and mouth appeared like the caves of a huge mountain. His jaws part-



ed fearfully, and His claws beckoned Hiraṇyakaśipu, who saw in them his inevitable demise. In one quick motion, the Lord placed the demon on His lap and, in the doorway of the assembly hall, tore him to pieces with the nails of His hands.

The Lord's mouth and mane were sprinkled with the demon's blood, and His fierce eyes, full of anger, were impossible to look at. Licking the edge of His mouth with His tongue, Lord Nṛsiṃha, decorated with a garland of intestines ripped from Hiraṇyakaśipu's abdomen, resembled a lion that has just killed its prey.

Lord Brahmā's boon was never violated: Hiraṇyakaśipu was killed neither by man nor by beast, but by Nṛsiṃhadeva, who was God as a hybrid entity: part man, part beast. Nor was he killed inside or outside, but at the threshold of the assembly hall. It was neither day nor night, but twilight. The death did not occur in the air or on the ground, but in Nṛsiṃhadeva's lap. And Hiraṇyakaśipu was not killed by any weapon known to man, but by the naked claws of the divine man-lion.

## BACK TO THE BORDER

And so there I was, between day and night, at dusk; not on land or water, but on a train; not in New York or Canada, but on the border. The long red nails in front of me, and the fear of terrorists on the train, brought the story home. As I contemplated Lord Nṛsiṃha, I shared the story with the woman next to me.

I also spoke to her about the thought-provoking nature of borders. In philosophy, this is called the principle of liminality—existence at the threshold, an in-between state that is neither here nor there, or both here and there.

The Nṛsiṃha story, I told her, includes numerous layers of such in-betweens. Prahlāda, for example, is from a family of demons, and yet he is honored among devotees. Even Kṛṣṇa says, in *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.30), “Of Daityas, I am Prahlāda.” The Daityas were a race of enemies of the celestial *devas*, more in line with Hiraṇyakaśipu's demeanor than that

of his son Prahlāda. So, Prahlāda is both: He is born a Daitya, but is also, by qualification, a *deva*, or godlike devotee.

Another example of a liminal state: Hiraṇyakaśipu is both a hedonistic sensualist and an accomplished ascetic. He was inclined to barbarism and selfishness and yet had the determination, albeit for the wrong reasons, to acquire the boons described in the story. This accomplishment showed a tremendous display of penance and austerity. So while he was clearly a self-centered demon on one hand, he warranted Lord Brahmā's favor on the other.

Lord Nṛsiṃha Himself is part man and part lion, which can be seen as another example of liminality. Also, He emerges from a pillar—cold, hard matter—and yet He is the supreme spirit. Ultimately, the conditions of Hiraṇyakaśipu's death are a virtual study of liminal states, with twilight, threshold, and so on.

## THE IN-BETWEEN NATURE OF THE SOUL

The train started to pull out of the station. My neighbor was enthralled by the Nṛsiṃha story.

“Amazing,” she said. “But how does this apply to us? I mean, now we walk away from this threshold scene, and our interaction with borders is only temporary.”

“Exactly,” I told her, “because we are not God, and our life in this world is temporary and limited, unlike Lord Nṛsiṃha's. Being God, His story is

eternal and unlimited.”

As we parted at Penn Station in New York, I left her with some concluding words: “There is a sense in which we can take this border idea with us. In the Vedic literature, we living beings are described as *taṭastha-śakti*, or marginal energy. *Taṭastha* means ‘situated on the shore,’ or more specifically, situated on that imaginary line that separates land and sea. It's considered ‘imaginary’ because it is indefinable, perpetually pulling back and moving out towards sea. In the same way, the living being is essentially spiritual but has a tendency to fluctuate between matter and spirit, leaning toward one or the other at various times.”

She shook her head: “This is deep.”

“Right,” I said. “So always remember that you are a spirit soul temporarily caught in a material world, and that Lord Nṛsiṃha is the Supreme Godhead.”

We stopped in front of a bookstore as she smiled and waved goodbye, her long red nails a reminder of our spiritual discussion. She then pointed to a canopy above her head, indicating that she was entering a store named “Borders.” We laughed one last time, and went our separate ways. ☀

*Satyarāja Dāsa is a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda and a regular contributor to BTG. He has written over twenty books on Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He lives with his wife and daughter near New York City.*

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# “SURELY YOU WILL COME TO ME”

The Divine, Eternal Promises of the Lord

*After losing a child, a mother finds solace  
in Lord Kṛṣṇa’s words.*

by Bhrāntī Devī Dāsī

IN THE SUMMER of the year 2000, something happened that would drastically change the lives of my family and me. It would also test our faith in Kṛṣṇa and make us view life with a new awareness—an awareness of death.

We were traveling across America when, in the open country of Wyoming, the back tire on our minivan shredded and flew off. The car went out of control and after flipping over several times, landed upside down.

One of my sons, Keśava Kumāra, sustained a head injury that would take his life the following day. He was only twelve years old. We did all we could to prepare him spiritually for his passing. He left this world marked and anointed with *tilaka*, Yamunā water, and Vṛndāvana dust, and with his hands resting on Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books.

Time seemed to lose all meaning, as we were one day on a family vacation, one day at the hospital, and one day at the crematorium. When the doctor had informed us that he would not survive his injury, my first thought had been, “This life is ruined for me.” The bubble of illusion of a happy life in this world had been popped. I had never before felt so disoriented. How was this possible? Seven months earlier we had been in Vṛndāvana-dhāma and had plans to return there after the summer. This seemed to be a nightmare that just couldn’t be true.

At Keśava’s bedside we had desperately struggled to take shelter of the verses describing the immortality of the soul in the Second Chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. The sudden loss of a loved one must be the most bewildering thing. It took months for me to grasp the reality of it.

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*Left: Lord Kṛṣṇa assures us that by awakening our natural love for Him we can return to enjoy with Him in His eternal home.*

***Lord Kṛṣṇa declares that we are eternally  
joined to Him. He speaks words of love and assurance,  
shining like a lighthouse in the dark.***

• • •

Intense grief can be very isolating, as it is rare that anyone around you can understand the depth of your pain.

Later, as I reread the *Gītā* and prayed to Śrīla Prabhupāda to help me through this, I noticed that so many of the verses spoken by the Lord are in the form of promises, divine and eternal. Lord Kṛṣṇa declares that we are eternally joined to Him. He speaks words of love and assurance, shining like a lighthouse in the dark. Dictionaries define a promise as “a verbal commitment,” “a pact,” “grounds for expectation.” Any promise is a precious agreement, but how much more precious when it comes from the heart of God and is eternal. As He is omnipotent, there is no possibility that He will be unable to fulfill His promises, as may be the case with a human promise, however sincere. It occurs to me that a promise is a gift—one that is spoken. I held fast to these assurances of the Lord, taking heart in them and receiving solace and comfort.

I thought, “If I am eternally joined to the Supreme Lord, then so is my son—so is everyone.”

Every living being, every soul, has an intrinsic, eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa. In the *Gītā* the Lord speaks timeless wisdom to Arjuna, and it is meant for all souls, for all time. I would like to share with you six of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s promises. I hope that you will find encouragement in these eternal promises of love, given to everyone by the Supreme Lord Himself.

**SIX PROMISES  
BY LORD KṚṢṆA**

(1) Śrī Kṛṣṇa promises: “Therefore, Arjuna, you should always think of Me in the form of Kṛṣṇa and at the same time carry out your prescribed duty of fighting. With your activities

dedicated to Me and your mind and intelligence fixed on Me, you will attain Me without doubt.” (8.7)

This is not a vague promise, but a clear and concrete statement. The First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* presents a similarly clear statement on the result of hearing about the glories of the Lord: “Loving service unto the Personality of Godhead is established as an irrevocable fact.” Irrevocable: permanent, cannot be changed. Whatever we do for Kṛṣṇa in this life is permanent and will stay with us even after the demise of this one body and this one temporary life.

(2) Śrī Kṛṣṇa promises: “Engage your mind always in thinking of Me, become My devotee, offer obeisances to Me, and worship Me. Being completely absorbed in Me, surely you will come to Me.” (9.34)

This is such a beautiful promise. Śrīla Prabhupāda states in the purport to this verse that we should be thinking of Kṛṣṇa in devotional love and continually cultivating knowledge of Him. This is our part in a very real and reciprocal relationship.

In writing about the reciprocal relationship between the Lord and the devotee, Śrīla Prabhupāda uses beautiful imagery in the purport of verse 9.29: “The Lord and the living entities eternally glitter, and when a living entity becomes inclined towards the service of the Supreme Lord he looks like gold. The Lord is a diamond, so this combination is very nice.”

(3) Śrī Kṛṣṇa promises: “To those who are constantly devoted to serving Me with love, I give the understanding by which they can come to Me.” (10.10)

The words used here are “constantly devoted,” which indicate devotion without pause or cessation, continu-

ally flowing. Many people may worship God for some material benefit, and that is pious, as they are submitting their prayers to Him. But here in this verse Kṛṣṇa speaks about those persons who desire only Him.

We cannot go to Kṛṣṇa on our own power. If He is pleased with us, He gives us passage. From the beginning of the universe, the *Vedas* are there as guides, and down through the ages the Lord continually sends incarnations and saintly persons to bring transcendental knowledge to the *jīva* souls.

That we must take shelter of a bona fide guru completely devoted to the Lord is a very important point and cannot be overestimated. Arjuna’s accepting Kṛṣṇa as his guru is a great turning point in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. After exhibiting apparent grief, lamentation, and bewilderment, Arjuna says, “I am a soul surrendered unto you. Please instruct me.” (2.7) Our modern society places great emphasis on credentials, but people tend to take advice on spiritual matters from anyone who writes an interesting book on the subject. But life is temporary, and our connection with God is the most important area of study. We have to take care in selecting a teacher, just as we take care in selecting a doctor. We wouldn’t trust our surgical operation to a doctor who has no other qualification than being a good storyteller.

(4) Śrī Kṛṣṇa promises: “My dear Arjuna, he who engages in My pure devotional service, free from the contaminations of fruitive activities and mental speculation, he who works for Me, who makes Me the supreme goal of his life, and who is friendly to every living being—he certainly comes to Me.” (11.55)

*(please turn to page 55)*





# Purpose for the Inventive Spirit

*Modern man seems to be able to invent anything  
—except the key to happiness.*

by Kṛṣṇa Rāginī Devī Dāsī

BACK IN 1876, the telephone was an exciting invention. Although able to connect only two locations, the first telephone brought to people's lives the amazement of sound transmitted to a distant place through electricity. Little by little it spread across a country, over a continent, and across the ocean, until it ended up as an accessory as common as a toothbrush. The "miracle" of sound transmission that produced such a thrill in the beginning became as unnoticed in its everyday use as the blinking of an eye.

As ever-active spirit souls, we cannot stand the boring nature of things we come in contact with in this world. Because our natural desire is to relish the ever-fresh variety of the spiritual world, we always try to find something new in the wrong place—the material world. So, we had to invent another phone: the mobile phone. Like children in front of a new toy, people wanted to see it, to use it, to own it. It broke the old boundaries of communication that confined speakers to a certain place, giving us an illusory feeling of victory. But it too has become common. The

video phone is here now, along with newer and faster cars, computers, and airplanes. But no new eyes for people to see that all these inventions—which absorb so much human effort and intelligence—never change the disappointing nature of material achievement.

My father was a famous inventor in my country, Romania. He had more than seventy mechanical inventions, most of them having to do with servomotors. He received gold medals at exhibitions and worldwide recognition. After building up a career—born, like all prestigious careers, out of the mode of passion—he gradually came to a deeper understanding.

"You know," he used to tell us children, "this fame and glory, these successes and achievements, just come and go. It's not worth looking for such things in life."

That was the most valuable lesson he ever taught me. It impressed upon me that pursuing material purposes was pointless. Human life is perfectly endowed for self-realization. Being able to experience both the satisfaction of fulfilled

## *We look for happiness in things like new inventions, not being aware that it already exists in our true nature.*

• • •

desires and the dissatisfaction of their temporary results, we can come to understand what this world is about and eventually turn to our real happiness in the spiritual realm.

As spirit souls, we are meant for eternal happiness and full knowledge. We look for this happiness in things like new inventions, not being aware that it already exists in our true nature. We are like a sick person who can't taste palatable food but won't take the cure that would reawaken his taste buds.

Our innate desire is to play with Kṛṣṇa to our heart's content, but we falsely hope to find that happiness in things like movies, television, and computer games. Deluded, we mistake a copy for the original. The desire to enjoy matter impels us to accept such copies as real happiness and to come under their sway.

Technology makes us fascinated with technique and form, and we lose sight of the content or deep meaning of things. A well-done movie or video clip will draw our attention and appreciation, even if it promotes things that degrade the human condition.

### **TECHNOLOGY FALLS SHORT**

Kṛṣṇa Himself showed that technology is not worthy of our undying fascination. In destroying the demon Śālva and his magnificent airplane—which could even disappear—Kṛṣṇa revealed that His own technology supersedes all others. After all, He creates the universe and the laws that make it work.

The tendency of modern man to enthrone technology as the undisputed king of the world resembles Śālva's mentality. But Kṛṣṇa, in the form of time, "destroys" technological innovations one by one by making them uninteresting and old fashioned.

When Lord Kṛṣṇa came here five hundred years ago as Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu, He didn't destroy tech-

nology, per se, but he destroyed the delusion that makes us think that technology is the key to happiness. His transcendental weapon to accomplish this is the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. Chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa is a spiritual technology. Unlike material inventions, it never has to be updated. It is imported not from another country, but from the spiritual world. If one uses it correctly, with care and attention, one never tires of it. In fact, one enjoys it more and more. Chanting takes us on a spiritual journey to a place unreachable by any material aircraft—the spiritual world.

### **LORD BRAHMĀ'S EXAMPLE**

The feeling of emptiness that accompanies existence in this world was present even in Lord Brahmā, the first engineer, at the very beginning of creation. Unsure of the purpose of his existence, he meditated and prayed. Lord Kṛṣṇa enlightened him and empowered him to create the wonders of the universe.

Because of his spiritual stature, Brahmā did not become proud of his technological mastery. He understood that He was using Kṛṣṇa's energy in Kṛṣṇa's service. We, on the other hand, create one small machine and think it's ours to fully enjoy. Thoughtful people, however, see that such attempts to enjoy are futile. And they want to know how to find true happiness.

Our God-given intelligence and ingenuity allow us to understand the laws of nature and use them to surpass the limitations of our bodies. We fly in the sky with planes and swim underwater with air tanks. But all achievements are of no real value if not used for a higher purpose. I recall my father saying that we should keep the body healthy and live long but that a long life should be spent for a noble cause. He said that a long life lived in vain, with the empty feeling of not

knowing what it is lived for, can be more painful than a short one.

The human intelligence capable of inventing so many new and ingenious things can also perceive the longing of the soul for its real position in relationship with Kṛṣṇa. That is why no invention can really satisfy us in the long run, why everything that seems fresh in the beginning becomes stale in the end. The lack of a spiritual purpose renders things stale and futile. If inventions do indeed save us time and energy, we can give them purpose by using that savings for cultivating spiritual life.

But instead, people misuse saved time by inventing newer and newer things for sense gratification, for improving how we eat, sleep, mate, and defend—animal activities. Unlike animals, human beings can control themselves for higher pursuits. We shouldn't let technology become such a distraction that we lose sight of the goal of life. Even my father had to admit that inventions "come and go."

The purpose of life transcends anything that comes and goes, even "the progress of humankind through science and technology"—the slogan of the inventor. By serving matter and neglecting its cause, the Supreme Spirit, we remain perpetually involved with the temporary, including inventions that will some day be good enough only for the history of technology.

If we are to dedicate ourselves to a goal, it should be the highest goal. If we are to serve, we should serve the greatest. My father's inventions will be of eternal benefit if they happen to promote even once the devotional service of the Lord. ❀

*Kṛṣṇa Rāgini Devī Dāsī joined ISKCON in Romania in 1991. A disciple of His Holiness Suhotra Swami, she serves with the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, translating Śrīla Prabhupāda's books into Romanian.*



Referred to as “the ripe fruit of the tree of Vedic literature,” *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the most complete and authoritative exposition of Vedic knowledge. Five thousand years ago the great sage Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa composed this *purāna*, or history, to explain the essence of spiritual knowledge. Here we present *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in serialized form, with the original Sanskrit text, transliteration, word meanings, translation, and purports by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

# THE DESTRUCTION OF DAKṢA'S SACRIFICE

*To avenge the death of Satī, Lord Śiva's followers destroy the sacrificial arena and attack Dakṣa and his associates.*

## CANTO 4: CHAPTER 5

8 वाता न वान्ति न हि सन्ति दस्यवः  
प्राचीनबर्हिर्जीवति होग्रदण्डः  
गावो न कात्यन्त इदं कुतो रजो  
लोकोऽधुना किं प्रलयाय कल्पते

*vātā na vānti na hi santi dasyavaḥ  
prācīna-barhir jīvati hogra-daṇḍaḥ  
gāvo na kālyanta idam kuto rajo  
loko 'dhunā kiṁ pralayāya kalpate*

*vātāḥ*—the winds; *na vānti*—are not blowing; *na*—not; *hi*—because; *santi*—are possible; *dasyavaḥ*—plunderers; *prācīna-barhiḥ*—old King Barhi; *jīvati*—is living; *ha*—still; *ugra-daṇḍaḥ*—who would sternly punish; *gāvaḥ*—the cows; *na kālyante*—are not being driven; *idam*—this; *kutaḥ*—from where; *rajaḥ*—dust; *lokaḥ*—the planet; *ad-*

*hunā*—now; *kim*—is it; *pralayāya*—for dissolution; *kalpate*—to be considered ready.

**Conjecturing on the origin of the storm, they said: There is no wind blowing, and no cows are passing, nor is it possible that this dust storm could be raised by plunderers, for there is still the strong King Barhi, who would punish them. Where is this dust storm blowing from? Is the dissolution of the planet now to occur?**

PURPORT: Specifically significant in this verse is *prācīna-barhir jīvati*. The king of that part of the land was known as Barhi, and although he was old, he was still living, and he was a very strong ruler. Thus there was no possibility of an invasion by thieves and plunderers. ❶ Indirectly it is stated here that thieves, plunderers, rogues, and unwanted

**(1) In what kind of state can thieves, plunderers, rogues, and unwanted population exist?**

population can exist only in a state or kingdom where there is no strong ruler. When, in the name of justice, thieves are allowed liberty, the state and kingdom are disturbed by such plunderers and unwanted population.

The dust storm created by the soldiers and assistants of Lord Śiva resembled the situation at the time of the dissolution of this world. When there is a need for the dissolution of the material creation, this function is conducted by Lord Śiva. ❷ Therefore the situation now created by him resembled the dissolution of the cosmic manifestation.

9 प्रसूतिमिश्राः स्त्रिय उद्विग्नचित्ता  
 ऊचुर्विपाको वृजिनस्यैव तस्य  
 यत्पश्यन्तीनां दुहितृणां प्रजेशः  
 सुतां सतीमवदध्यावनागाम्

*prasūti-miśrāḥ striya udvigna-cittā  
 ūcur vipāko vṛjinasyaiva tasya  
 yat paśyantīnām duhitṛṇām prajeśaḥ  
 sutām satim avadadhyāv anāgām*

*prasūti-miśrāḥ*—headed by Prasūti; *striyaḥ*—the women; *udvigna-cittāḥ*—being very anxious; *ūcuḥ*—said; *vipākaḥ*—the resultant danger; *vṛjinasya*—of the sinful activity; *eva*—indeed; *tasya*—his (Dakṣa’s); *yat*—because; *paśyantīnām*—who were looking on; *duhitṛṇām*—of her sisters; *prajeśaḥ*—the lord of the created beings (Dakṣa); *sutam*—his daughter; *satim*—Sati; *avadadhyau*—insulted; *anāgām*—completely innocent.

**Prasūti, the wife of Dakṣa, along with the other women assembled, became very anxious and said: This danger has been created by Dakṣa because of the death of Sati, who, even though completely innocent, quit her body as her sisters looked on.**

PURPORT: ❸ Prasūti, being a softhearted woman, could immediately understand that the imminent danger ap-

- (2) What did the situation created by Lord Śiva’s followers resemble?
- (3) What did Prasūti understand to be the cause of the imminent danger approaching?
- (4) What is the last phase of universal dissolution, and how is it caused?
- (5) Besides neglecting his daughter, what else had Dakṣa done to invite danger?

proaching was due to the impious activity of hardhearted Prajāpati Dakṣa. He was so cruel that he would not save her youngest daughter, Sati, from the act of committing suicide in the presence of her sisters. Sati’s mother could understand how much Sati had been pained by the insult of her father. Sati had been present along with the other daughters, and Dakṣa had purposely received all of them but her because she happened to be the wife of Lord Śiva. This consideration convinced the wife of Dakṣa of the danger which was now ahead, and thus she knew that Dakṣa must be prepared to die for his heinous act.

10 यस्त्वन्तकाले व्युप्तजटाकलापः  
 स्वशूलसूच्यर्पितदिग्गजेन्द्रः  
 वितत्य नृत्यत्युदितास्रदोर्ध्वजा-  
 नुच्चाद्दहासस्तनयित्नुभिन्नदिक्

*yas tv anta-kāle vyupta-jaṭā-kalāpaḥ  
 sva-śūla-sūcy-arpita-dig-gajendraḥ  
 vitaty nṛtyaty uditāstra-dor-dhvajān  
 uccāṭṭa-hāsa-stanayitnu-bhinna-dik*

*yaḥ*—who (Lord Śiva); *tu*—but; *anta-kāle*—at the time of dissolution; *vyupta*—having scattered; *jaṭā-kalāpaḥ*—his bunch of hair; *sva-śūla*—his own trident; *sūci*—on the points; *arpita*—pierced; *dik-gajendraḥ*—the rulers of the different directions; *vitaty*—scattering; *nṛtyati*—dances; *udita*—upraised; *astra*—weapons; *doḥ*—hands; *dhvajān*—flags; *ucca*—loud; *aṭṭa-hāsa*—laughing; *stanayitnu*—by the thundering sound; *bhinna*—divided; *dik*—the directions.

**At the time of dissolution, Lord Śiva’s hair is scattered, and he pierces the rulers of the different directions with his trident. He laughs and dances proudly, scattering their hands like flags, as thunder scatters the clouds all over the world.**

PURPORT: Prasūti, who appreciated the power and strength of her son-in-law, Lord Śiva, is describing what he does at the time of dissolution. This description indicates that the strength of Lord Śiva is so great that Dakṣa’s power could not be set in comparison to it. At the time of dissolution, Lord Śiva, with his trident in hand, dances over the rulers of the different planets, and his hair is scattered, just as the clouds are scattered over all directions in order to plunge the different planets into incessant torrents of rain. ❹ In the last phase of dissolution, all the planets become inundated with water, and that inundation is caused by the dancing of Lord Śiva. This dance is called the *pralaya* dance, or dance of dissolution. ❺ Prasūti could understand that the dangers



ahead resulted not only from Dakṣa's having neglected her daughter, but also because of his neglecting the prestige and honor of Lord Śiva.

11 अमर्षयित्वा तमसह्यतेजसं  
मन्युप्लुतं दुर्निरिक्ष्यं भ्रुकुट्या  
करालदंष्ट्राभिरुदस्तभागणं  
स्यात्स्वस्ति किं कोपयतो विधातुः

*amarṣayitvā tam asahya-tejasam  
manyu-plutam durnirikṣyam bhru-kuṭyā  
karāla-daṁṣṭrābhir udasta-bhāgaṇam  
syāt svasti kiṁ kopayato vidhātuḥ*

*amarṣayitvā*—after causing to become angry; *tam*—him (Lord Śiva); *asahya-tejasam*—with an unbearable effulgence; *manyu-plutam*—filled with anger; *durnirikṣyam*—not able to be looked at; *bhru-kuṭyā*—by the movement of his brows; *karāla-daṁṣṭrābhiḥ*—by his fearful teeth; *udasta-bhāgaṇam*—having scattered the luminaries; *syāt*—there should be; *svasti*—good fortune; *kiṁ*—how; *kopayataḥ*—causing (Lord Śiva) to be angry; *vidhātuḥ*—of Brahmā.

**The gigantic black man bared his fearful teeth. By the movements of his brows he scattered the luminaries all over the sky, and he covered them with his strong, piercing effulgence. Because of the misbehavior of Dakṣa, even Lord Brahmā, Dakṣa's father, could not have been saved from the great exhibition of anger.**

12 बह्वेवमुद्विग्नदृशोच्यमाने  
जनेन दक्षस्य मुहुर्महात्मनः  
उत्पेतुरुत्पाततमाः सहस्रशो  
भयावहा दिवि भूमौ च पर्यक्

*bahv evam udvigna-dṛśocyamāne  
janena dakṣasya muhur mahātmanah  
utpetur utpātata māḥ sahasraśo  
bhayāvahā divi bhūmau ca paryak*

*bahu*—much; *evam*—in this manner; *udvigna-dṛśā*—with nervous glances; *ucyamāne*—while this was being said; *janena*—by the persons (assembled at the sacrifice); *dakṣasya*—of Dakṣa; *muhuḥ*—again and again; *mahā-ātmanah*—stronghearted; *utpetuḥ*—appeared; *utpāta-tamāḥ*—very powerful symptoms; *saahasraśah*—by the thousands; *bhaya-āvahāḥ*—producing fear; *divi*—in the sky; *bhūmau*—on the earth; *ca*—and; *paryak*—from all sides.

**While all the people talked amongst themselves, Dakṣa saw dangerous omens from all sides, from the earth, and from the sky.**

**PURPORT:** In this verse Dakṣa has been described as *mahātmā*. The word *mahātmā* has been commented upon by different commentators in various manners. Virarāghava Ācārya has indicated that this word *mahātmā* means “steady in heart.” That is to say that Dakṣa was so stronghearted that even when his beloved daughter was prepared to lay down her life, he was steady and unshaken. But in spite of his being so stronghearted, he was perturbed when he saw the various disturbances created by the gigantic black demon.

Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura remarks in this connection that even if one is called *mahātmā*, a great soul, unless he exhibits the symptoms of a *mahātmā*, he should be considered a *durātmā*, or a degraded soul. ❹ In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.13) the word *mahātmā* describes the pure devotee of the Lord: *mahātmānas tu mām pārtha daivīm prakṛtim āśritāḥ*. A *mahātmā* is always under the guidance of the internal energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and thus how could such a misbehaved person as Dakṣa be a *mahātmā*? ❺ A *mahātmā* is supposed to have all the good qualities of the demigods, and thus Dakṣa, lacking those qualities, could not be called a *mahātmā*; he should instead be called *durātmā*, a degraded soul. The word *mahātmā* to describe the qualifications of Dakṣa is used sarcastically.

13 तावत्स रुद्रानुचरैर्महामखो  
नानायुधैर्वा मनकैरुदायुधैः  
पिङ्गैः पिशङ्गैर्मकरोदराननैः  
पर्याद्रवद्विर्विदुरान्वरुध्यत

*tāvat sa rudrānucarair mahā-makho  
nānāyudhair vāmanakair udāyudhaiḥ  
piṅgaiḥ piṣaṅgair makarodarānaniḥ  
paryādravadbhir vidurānvarudhyata*

*tāvat*—very quickly; *saḥ*—that; *rudra-anucaraiḥ*—by the followers of Lord Śiva; *mahā-makhaḥ*—the arena of the great sacrifice; *nānā*—various kinds; *āyudhaiḥ*—with weapons; *vāmanakaiḥ*—of short stature; *udāyudhaiḥ*—upraised; *piṅgaiḥ*—blackish; *piṣaṅgaiḥ*—yellowish; *makara-udara-ānaniḥ*—with bellies and faces like sharks'; *paryādravadbhiḥ*—running all around; *vidura*—O Vidura; *anvarudhyata*—was surrounded.

**(6) In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, what does the word *mahātmā* describe?**

**(7) Why was Dakṣa not a real *mahātmā*?**

My dear Vidura, all the followers of Lord Śiva surrounded the arena of sacrifice. They were of short stature and were equipped with various kinds of weapons; their bodies appeared to be like those of sharks, blackish and yellowish. They ran all around the sacrificial arena and thus began to create disturbances.

14 केचिद्धमञ्जुः प्राग्वंशं पत्नीशालं तथापरे  
सद आग्नीध्रशालं च तद्विहारं महानसम्

*kecid babhañjuḥ prāg-vaiśaṁ  
patnī-śālāṁ tathāpare  
sada āgnīdhra-śālāṁ ca  
tat-vihāraṁ mahānasam*

*kecit*—some; *babhañjuḥ*—pulled down; *prāk-vaiśam*—the pillars of the sacrificial pandal; *patnī-śālām*—the female quarters; *tathā*—also; *apare*—others; *sadaḥ*—the sacrificial arena; *āgnīdhra-śālām*—the house of the priests; *ca*—and; *tat-vihāram*—the house of the chief of the sacrifice; *mahā-anasam*—the house of the kitchen department.

Some of the soldiers pulled down the pillars which were supporting the pandal of sacrifice, some of them entered the female quarters, some began destroying the sacrificial arena, and some entered the kitchen and the residential quarters.

15 रुरुजुर्यज्ञपात्राणि तथैकेऽग्निनाशयन्  
कुण्डेष्वमूत्रयन् केचिद्विभिदुर्वेदिमेखलाः

*rurujur yajña-pātrāṇi  
tathaike 'gnin anāśayan  
kuṇḍeṣv amūtrayan kecid  
bibhidur vedi-mekhalāḥ*

*rurujuḥ*—broke; *yajña-pātrāṇi*—the pots used in the sacrifice; *tathā*—so; *eke*—some; *agnin*—the sacrificial fires; *anāśayan*—extinguished; *kuṇḍeṣu*—on the sacrificial arenas; *amūtrayan*—passed urine; *kecit*—some; *bibhiduḥ*—tore down; *vedi-mekhalāḥ*—the boundary lines of the sacrificial arena.

They broke all the pots made for use in the sacrifice, and some of them began to extinguish the sacrificial fire. Some tore down the boundary line of the sacrificial arena, and some passed urine on the arena.

16 अबाधन्त मुनीन्ये एके पत्नीरतर्जयन्  
अपरे जगुहुर्देवान् प्रत्यासन्नान् पलायितान्

*abādhanta munīn anye  
eke patnīr atarjayan*

*apare jagṛhur devān  
pratyāsannān palāyitān*

*abādhanta*—blocked the way; *munīn*—the sages; *anye*—others; *eke*—some; *patnīḥ*—the women; *atarjayan*—threatened; *apare*—others; *jagṛhuḥ*—arrested; *devān*—the demigods; *pratyāsannān*—near at hand; *palāyitān*—who were fleeing.

Some blocked the way of the fleeing sages, some threatened the women assembled there, and some arrested the demigods who were fleeing the pandal.

17 भृगुं बबन्ध मणिमान् वीरभद्रः प्रजापतिम्  
चण्डेशः पूषणं देवं भगं नन्दीश्वरोऽग्रहीत्

*bhṛguṁ babandha maṇimān  
vīrabhadraḥ prajāpatim  
caṇḍeśaḥ pūṣaṇaṁ devam  
bhagaṁ nandīśvaro 'grahīt*

*bhṛgum*—Bhṛgu Muni; *babandha*—arrested; *maṇimān*—Maṇimān; *vīrabhadraḥ*—Vīrabhadra; *prajāpatim*—Prajāpati Dakṣa; *caṇḍeśaḥ*—Caṇḍeśa; *pūṣaṇam*—Pūṣā; *devam*—the demigod; *bhagam*—Bhaga; *nandīśvaraḥ*—Nandīśvara; *agrahīt*—arrested.

Maṇimān, one of the followers of Lord Śiva, arrested Bhṛgu Muni, and Virabhadra, the black demon, arrested Prajāpati Dakṣa. Another follower, who was named Caṇḍeśa, arrested Pūṣā. Nandīśvara arrested the demigod Bhaga.

18 सर्व एवर्त्विजो दृष्ट्वा सदस्याः सदिवौकसः  
तैरर्द्यमानाः सुभृशं ग्रावभिर्नैकधाद्रवन्

*sarva evartvijo dṛṣṭvā  
sadasyāḥ sa-divaukasaḥ  
tair ardyamānāḥ subhṛśaṁ  
grāvabhir naikadhādravan*

*sarve*—all; *eva*—certainly; *ṛtvijaḥ*—the priests; *dṛṣṭvā*—after seeing; *sadasyāḥ*—all the members assembled in the sacrifice; *sa-divaukasaḥ*—along with the demigods; *taiḥ*—by those (stones); *ardyamānāḥ*—being disturbed; *subhṛśam*—very greatly; *grāvabhiḥ*—by stones; *na ekadhā*—in different directions; *adravan*—began to disperse.

There was a continuous shower of stones, and all the priests and other members assembled at the sacrifice were put into immense misery. For fear of their lives, they dispersed in different directions.

[continued in the next issue]



“Cultivating Kṛṣṇa consciousness in Vṛndāvana is the best means of being liberated from material bondage, for in Vṛndāvana one can automatically meditate upon Kṛṣṇa.”

—Śrīla Prabhupāda, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 9.19.19, Purport

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# BETWEEN SPIRIT AND MATTER

*Many “paranormal” phenomena  
become much less mysterious when we  
accept the Vedic conception of the mind.*

by Navin Jani

ASA COLLEGE student, I can't help but notice that it's rather difficult to find a class on ghosts in the course catalog. Equally rare are course titles such as “Psychic Powers 101” or “Biology Lab on Alien Life Forms.” In fact, there appears to be almost no mainstream scholarly study of any kind of paranormal phenomena. Why is academia so reluctant to rigorously probe this increasingly undeniable aspect of reality? Perhaps it's because scholars think there are only two ways to understand such things as ghosts: Either they simply don't exist and are attributable to hoax, hallucination, and human error. Or they exist but are completely different from anything else we know and understand, and so they are a complete mystery. Neither view leaves much room for academic research or university-level instruction. This stalemate may have

something to do with how we understand the mind.

Since the time of Descartes, Western philosophy has wrestled with what is known as the “mind-body problem.” Is the mind merely an “emergent” property of the physical body that really has no existence of its own, as many modern philosophers would maintain? Or is the mind something completely different from matter, as the Cartesians (the followers of Descartes) would have us believe? To those who view mind as identical with matter, conscious experience must be accepted as a sort of illusion and altogether disregarded as an object of scientific inquiry. On the other hand, to those who subscribe to the second view (known as Cartesian dualism), the mind certainly exists but is more or less inscrutable. While the activities of the body must conform to the laws

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*Out-of-body experiences are one type of phenomena  
that could be studied within the theoretical framework provided  
by the Vedic conception of the subtle body.*







# *The mind is not completely transcendental to the laws that govern matter, yet neither is it subject to quite the same laws as the body.*

• • •

of physics, the mind is apparently unfettered by these laws. Whatever their differences, both views place the mind firmly beyond practical understanding and examination. And in the end, neither is intellectually satisfying or academically elegant.

The Vedic literature of ancient India presents a third option. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, explains to His friend Arjuna that mind, intelligence, and false ego are three of His eight material energies. Together they compose the subtle body, while His five other material energies (earth, water, air, fire, and ether) make up the gross, or physical, body. This concept of the “subtle body,” as the combined mind, intelligence, and false ego, is the Vedic analogue to the “mind” in Western philosophy. Understood in this way, the mind is not completely transcendental to the laws that govern matter, yet neither is it subject to quite the same laws as the body. That is to say, the activities of the mind *can* be measured and predicted, but modern mainstream science has neither the tools nor the theoretical knowledge base with which to do this.

So here we have three ways of conceiving the mind: as completely identical with matter (Modern Model), as completely opposed to matter (Cartesian Model), and as subtle matter between gross matter and pure spirit (Vedic Model).

Another way to understand the difference between these three models is to look at whom they point to as the actual self. The Modern Model indicates the body itself as the self, with no separate or higher extraneous entity. The Cartesian Model points to the mind as the self, with the body serving as a vehicle. The Vedic Model describes the self as a completely spiritual entity, who occupies, or is temporarily covered by, both the subtle and gross bodies. The Vedic Model

opens up opportunities for research into the workings of the subtle realm that are all but precluded by the other two models. Let’s take a look at how this might be so.

## **PSYCHIC POWERS**

Psychic abilities, such as the ability to read minds (telepathy) or to move objects with the mind (telekinesis), are currently relegated to the fringes of academic investigation. And it’s no wonder. Given current choices, we can either follow the Modern Model and simply deny the existence of psychic powers, even in the face of countless anecdotes and other evidence to the contrary, or we can follow the Cartesian Model and accept the existence of such abilities but not be able to explain them any better than simply calling them “miracles.” If we follow the Vedic Model, however, and understand the mind as just another type of matter, we can at least accept in theory that interactions between the mind and the physical realm are possible. All that remains is to experiment and determine what kind of laws regulate the activities of the mind (the subtle body), and how they differ from the laws that affect the gross body. The Vedic literature can of course help this exploration by providing a theoretical framework.

## **GHOSTS**

If the mind is just another type of body through which a person can act, is it possible that some people have only this kind of body, without the usual physical counterpart? This is precisely how the literature of ancient India explains ghosts—another phenomenon that the Vedic Model of the mind can demystify. The Modern Model simply rules out the possibility of ghosts completely. They can’t

be perceived by traditional means, so they don’t exist. The Cartesian Model, as an alternative, acknowledges an intangible reality beyond the body, so it has no problem accounting for ghosts in theory. In practice, however, ghosts must remain beyond rational scrutiny because the intangible reality they are a part of has nothing in common with matter. And matter, after all, is all our research instruments and scientific methods are prepared to handle. Here, again, the Vedic Model breaks open new ground. Ghosts can be understood as living entities who have a mind, or subtle body, but no physical form, or gross body. Such a view helps dispel the cloud of fear and mystery that otherwise surrounds these living beings. We can take comfort in the fact that, far from being magical or mythical, ghosts are not fundamentally different from you or me. They merely exist in another material state, which is yet to be fully understood by the scientific establishment.

## **ALIEN BEINGS**

If beings exactly like us can exist without the need for an external physical body that we can directly perceive, could there be other kinds of embodied beings beyond our sensual perception? The Vedic literature answers with an emphatic yes: The other planets of the universe are populated, but by beings with more advanced consciousness, and correspondingly more advanced bodies. The Modern Model attributes UFO sightings and other evidence of alien beings to forgery and figments of the imagination. The Cartesian Model relegates these entities to the angelic realm.

The Vedic Model, in contrast, supports a more positive and productive approach by simply extending the domain of the subtle body. Sentient life





*Our search for extraterrestrial intelligence needs to be upgraded with a new set of tools that go beyond the five traditional senses. They are indeed out there, and they can, in fact, be communicated with. We need to take advantage of the Vedic literature and refine our process.*

forms on other planets are understood to have, according to their status, either no gross bodies and only subtle bodies, or more refined gross bodies that exhibit characteristics akin to our subtle bodies. For example, many of them can fly and change shape at will, feats we humans can accomplish only in our thoughts and dreams (i.e., the realm of the mind/subtle body). Nevertheless, their bodies are still matter. These more sophisticated beings are not exempt, therefore, from the limitations that affect other materially embodied entities, including death. Nor are they precluded from interacting with more gross forms of matter (like our bodies). So human beings do not seek to make contact with aliens in vain. Armed with such a conception, our search for extraterrestrial intelligence merely needs to be upgraded with a new set of tools that go beyond the five traditional senses. They are indeed out there,

and they can, in fact, be communicated with. We merely need to take advantage of the Vedic literature and refine our process.

### BEYOND THE MIND

It's well and good to figure out the workings of the mind with the help of the Vedic Model, but, one might ask, what of the soul? Kṛṣṇa does, after all, speak of a superior energy of His beyond the eight material energies and unaffected by material laws. Having accepted the Vedic Model of the mind, one would surely want to explore the nature of this actual spiritual self in addition to understanding the temporary subtle and gross bodies. The *Vedas* urge us, in fact, to do just that. For those ready for that ultimate journey, the *Vedas* also provide the requisite knowledge and practical processes. But before our colleges and universities tackle such an ambitious

subject, perhaps they should start by studying that realm which lies between the physical world we understand so well and the spiritual reality that transcends our understanding. Perhaps the scientific community should delve into this subtle arena of the mind and broaden its understanding to include such phenomena as psychic powers, ghosts, and life on other planets. This pursuit would give knowledge that could be used to improve our material life on this planet, as well as provide a bridge for moving towards an understanding of our spiritual life beyond this mundane realm. In the mean time, I'll be scanning the course catalog . . . waiting. 🌻

*Navin Jani is working on a master's degree in city planning at the University of Florida. He and his wife, Kṛṣṇa-priyā Devī Dāśī, are members of the congregation of the New Raman Reti temple in Alachua, Florida.*

## EVOLUTION

(continued from page 15)

the body of a cat or dog.

**Dr. Singh:** The scientists have no information that evolution can operate in either direction.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Therefore, I say they are fools and rascals. They have no knowledge, yet they still claim to be scientists.

**Dr. Singh:** One of the prominent scientific arguments is that before Darwin's biophysical type of evolution could take place, there had to be something they call "prebiotic chemistry" or "chemical evolution."

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** But from what have the chemicals evolved? The term "chemical evolution" implies that chemicals have an origin. And we know from the Vedic science that the origin is spirit, or life. For example, a lemon tree produces citric acid. Also, our bodies produce many chemicals through our urine, blood, and bodily secretions. So there are many examples of how life produces chemicals, but there are no instances where chemicals have produced life.

**Dr. Singh:** A Russian biologist in 1920 developed the idea of chemical evolution. He demonstrated that before biochemical evolution, the earth's atmosphere was composed mostly of hy-

drogen, with very little oxygen. Then, in due course . . .

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** This is a side study. First of all, where did the hydrogen come from? The scientists simply study the middle of the process—they do not study the origin. You must know the beginning. There is an airplane [Śrīla Prabhupāda points to an airplane appearing on the horizon]. Would you say the origin of that machine is the sea? A foolish person might say that all of a sudden a light appeared in the sea, and that's how the airplane was created. But is that a scientific explanation? The scientists' theories are just like that. They say, "This existed, and then all of a sudden, simply by chance, that occurred." This is not real science. Real science must explain the original cause.

**Dr. Singh:** What you have been saying completely contradicts Darwin's theory of evolution. Darwin and his supporters say that life started from matter and evolved from unicellular organisms to multicellular organisms. They believe higher species like animals and men didn't exist at the beginning of creation.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Darwin and his followers are rascals. If the higher species have evolved from the lower species, then why do the lower species still exist? At the present moment we

see both the human species, with its advanced intelligence, and the foolish ass. Why do both these entities exist simultaneously? Why hasn't the ass form simply evolved into a higher species and thus become extinct? Darwin thought that human beings evolved from the monkeys. But why do we never see a monkey giving birth to a human being?

The Darwinists' theory that human life began in such-and-such an era is nonsense. The *Bhagavad-gītā* says that on leaving this present body you can directly transmigrate to any species of life, according to your karma. Sometimes I travel to America, sometimes to Australia, and sometimes to Africa. The countries already exist; I am simply traveling through them. It is not that because I have come to America I have created or become America. And there are many countries I have not yet seen. Does that mean they do not exist? Any scientist who supports Darwin is unintelligent. The *Bhagavad-gītā* clearly says that all the species of life exist simultaneously, and that you can go to any of them—that will depend on your consciousness at the time of death. If you become Kṛṣṇa conscious, you can even go up to the kingdom of God. Lord Kṛṣṇa explains all this very clearly in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. ❀

## LETTERS

(continued from page 5)

religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear." (18.66)

How can one be fearless and fearful at the same time? What is the happy medium at which one must arrive for success not only in the spiritual life but also in the day to day drudgery of, as Śrīla Prabhupāda puts it, the hard struggle for existence.

How can one both love and fear God? What is feared is certainly not loved.

Bruce Gatten  
Via the Internet

OUR REPLY: Lord Kṛṣṇa says, "O son of Pṛthā, that understanding by which one knows what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, what

is to be feared and what is not to be feared, what is binding and what is liberating, is in the mode of goodness." (*Bhagavad-gītā* 18.30)

In the mode of goodness spiritual knowledge becomes manifest, so there must be a good kind of fearfulness. A godly person fears degrading his soul. As Śrīla Prabhupāda says in his purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.6.1, "In all the schools, colleges, and universities, and at home, all children and youths should be taught to hear about the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In other words, they should be taught to hear the instructions of *Bhagavad-gītā*, to put them into practice in their lives, and thus to become strong in devotional service, free from fear of being degraded to animal life." This same idea is also mentioned in *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.40),

"Even a little advancement on this path can protect one from the most dangerous type of fear."

It is not a question of fearing God. God is all good, so a devotee never fears Him. Still he knows that the uncontrolled mind can lead him away from devotion to Kṛṣṇa for many lives, and he does not want to take the risk. So out of fear of his uncontrolled mind he takes shelter of the devotional service of the Lord, and by so doing he becomes convinced of the Lord's protection and thus becomes fearless. ❀

Please write to us at: BTG, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, FL 32616, USA. Email: editors@krishna.com.

Replies to the letters were written by Kṛṣṇa-kṛpā Dāsa.





# Getting Right With God

*His childhood experiences with religion planted seeds of spiritual inquiry along with haunting memories.*

by Devahotra Dāsa

**A**S A CHILD GROWING up in Tasmania, I was convinced that God wanted me to serve Him. I was raised as an Episcopalian, but between the ages of twelve and fourteen I was sexually molested by four priests. At an age when I was already experiencing unprecedented suffering, these very men who were supposed to uphold spiritual values compounded my suffering by abusing their spiritual office and principles.

Like Holocaust survivors, many victims of child abuse reject God and the spiritual quest. This is especially true when their abusers were supposed to be men of God. In my mid teens I left the Episcopal Church. Later, after a brief look into Kṛṣṇa consciousness, my comparative religious studies course in college led me to the Orthodox Church. This eastern form of Christianity seemed to hearken back to the early church, to the asceticism of the desert fathers. I embraced their writings, intrigued by their emphasis on celibacy, communion with God, and monastic vegetarianism.

My interest in eastern Christianity led me to look at Islam, with its austere iconoclasm and emphasis on community. Yet some answers were missing in Islam.

Who is God? What does He look like? What is His nature?

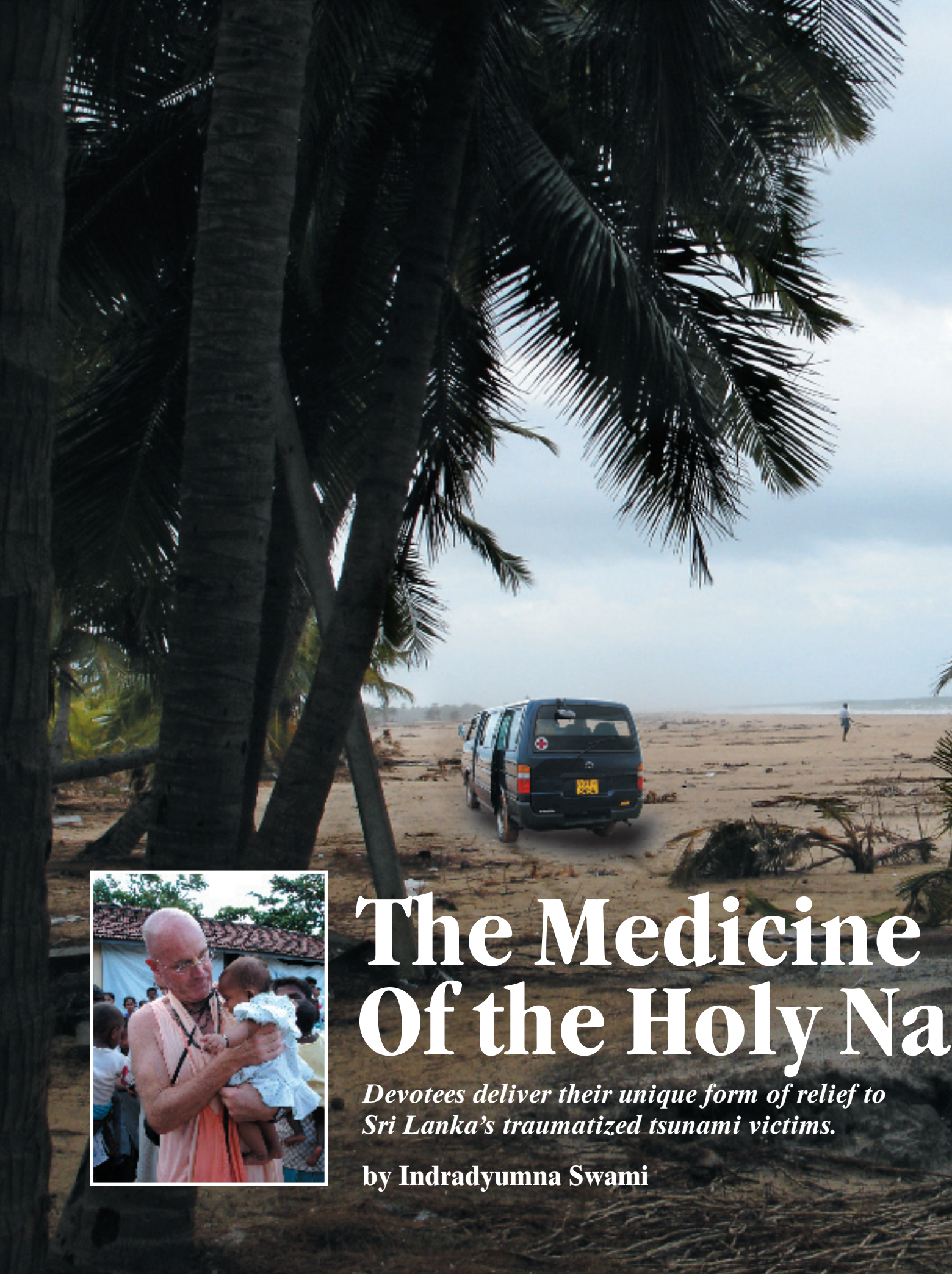
I also appreciated the meditation of Buddhism, as well as its monastic emphasis on the *saṅgha*, or spiritual association. The doctrine of transmigration of the soul was still alien to me, but curiosity impelled me to consider it more and more.

Ever present in my mind was the question “If I fail to get my relationship with God right in this life, am I doomed to hell?” I yearned for a vibrant spiritual community that was missing in the tiny émigré Russian Orthodox Church I worshiped in.

## **BTG AND A STEP FORWARD**

Most of this took place after my first contact with Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In 1977 I bought a copy of *Back to Godhead* magazine in a health food store. I was at once drawn to Śrīla Prabhupāda. I read about how he had come to the United States with forty rupees and a trunk full of spiritual books. I remembered having heard about the *Vedas* in comparative religious studies. *Back to Godhead* was providing answers, supported  
(please turn to page 56)





# The Medicine Of the Holy Na

*Devotees deliver their unique form of relief to  
Sri Lanka's traumatized tsunami victims.*

**by Indradyumna Swami**





mes



*The author headed up a team of Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees who traveled to Sri Lanka to help with tsunami relief efforts last January and February. This article is adapted from the third part of his three-part report. In parts one and two, the author described what led to his decision to go to Sri Lanka, his road trip through the devastation on the southern coast of that country, and the devotees' meeting with government representatives to discuss coordinating ISKCON's contribution to the relief work.*

THE DAY AFTER returning to Colombo from our trip to Matara, on the southern tip of Sri Lanka, we quickly busied ourselves for the relief work ahead. We used funds donated from overseas to buy the basics required for cooking: tons of rice, beans, and vegetables, as well as spices, five huge new pots, and various cooking utensils. Ten devotees loaded everything on a government truck, piled in a van, and returned to southern Sri Lanka, ready to begin serving daily *prasādam* to five thousand displaced persons.

The same day, I took three devotees in another van to the east coast of Sri Lanka, scouting for opportunities to distribute *prasādam* there. The thirteen-hour drive would take us through a hilly area and across a 100-km plain to the ocean.

Much of Sri Lanka's east coast is controlled by the Tamil Tigers. The rebel force had fought the Sinhalese government for thirty years before agreeing to a ceasefire three years ago. The ceasefire had held, but the government had recently warned that it could not guarantee the safety of humanitarian workers going into rebel-controlled areas.

"If you go to distribute *prasādam* and have *kīrtana*, they won't bother you," said Mahākartā Dāsa, president of the Colombo ISKCON temple. "In fact, they'll welcome you. Most of the tsunami aid given to Sri Lan-

*A van carrying Hare Kṛṣṇa relief workers stops along the southern coast of Sri Lanka (left). Indradyumna Swami (left, inset) holds one of many babies handed to him for his blessings. Above: three Russian devotees who flew in to help with the huge task of cooking.*





ka is being distributed in the southern region, controlled by the government.”

The horrors I had witnessed along the southern coast seemed far away as we drove through the picturesque interior jungle. The winding road took us through some of the most beautiful scenery I have ever seen.

After several hours, I asked the driver, “How do we know when we’re in Tamil Tiger territory?”

“You’ll know,” he said with a laugh.

Hours later, as twilight was set-

ting in and just as I had drifted off to sleep, I was shaken awake by the jerking motion of our car bouncing up and down on the road.

“What’s going on?” I asked the driver.

“We’re now in Tamil Tiger territory,” he grinned.

Sticking my head outside the window, I saw potholes in the road every few meters. The asphalt was cracking everywhere, and there were few road signs giving proper directions.

“It’s a different world from here on,” our driver said. “Some parts of

the area are patrolled by government forces, and others by Tamil Tigers.”

Sure enough, within minutes we came to a government army checkpoint barricaded in barbed wire. Soldiers came over to our van and shined their flashlights in. Not knowing exactly what to do, I simply smiled. To my surprise they all smiled back.

“They know you’re here for relief work,” said the driver. “Few tourists come this way anymore.”

“I can understand why,” I replied.

The soldiers let us pass.





## PEOPLE IN SHOCK

Just after midnight we arrived at our destination: a small village near Batticaloa on the far-eastern shore of Sri Lanka.

We soon met a local Hindu priest with whom we had an arranged meeting. He took us to a wedding hall across from a Gaṇeśa temple, where we were to rest that night. Inside there was a small light shining, and I was surprised to see many men sleeping on the floor.

“They’re fishermen who lost their homes and families in the tsunami,” the priest said.

As I set up my mosquito net, huge

clashes of thunder pounded outside. Soon rain started pouring down. I quickly fell asleep, exhausted by the day’s long journey.

The next morning we went with the local priest, our translator, to check the camps for displaced persons. As we approached the first camp, I asked the priest if the people were getting enough food.

“Food is not the problem here,” he told us. “Although the government has done little to help us, our people from the interior, unaffected by the tsunami, have been giving sufficient rice and beans. The Indian government has also sent several shiploads of the same.”



*Tāra Dāsa, from the USA, shakes hands (far left) with Major General Kulatuga, who coordinated the relief efforts on the southern coast. Also in the photo is Lakṣmīnātha Dāsa, head of Hare Krishna Food for Life in Durban, South Africa. At left, Indradyumna Swami inspects a Tamil Tiger ID tag. Below, children of ISKCON’s orphanage in Colombo give the swami an enthusiastic greeting.*



“The real problem here is that most of the victims of the tsunami are suffering from trauma. People are still in shock. At least twice a week rumors circulate that another tsunami is coming, and people panic. They grab their children and belongings and run out of the camps screaming.”

“Are you trained in dealing with trauma?” he asked me.

“No,” I replied, “but we have a special medicine for such things.”

“A special medicine?”

“Yes, wait and see.”

As we walked into the first camp, I



noticed a distinct difference from those on the south coast. Some seven hundred people milled about. Things appeared much less orderly. There were no Red Cross representatives or army personnel. People seemed disoriented. A number had bandaged injuries. One woman's face was just beginning to heal from a bad burn. Sadness seemed to hover over the camp like a dark monsoon cloud.

Walking straight into the middle of the camp, I asked for a chair and sat down. The people, curious, started to gather around us. The devotees sat near me. Taking our drum in my hands, I started to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. Within moments the whole camp was listening carefully. As the tempo built up, I indicated that the people should clap along, which they began to do enthusiastically. After ten minutes I stopped.

Turning to the priest I said, "They're clapping, but they're not chanting."

He leaned over and whispered, "They don't know Kṛṣṇa here. But they know Rāmacandra. After all, this is Lanka, where Rāvaṇa lived."

Smiling, I began *kīrtana* again, singing "Raghupati Rāghava Rāja Rāma, Patita Pāvaṇa Sītā Rāma." Immediately the people responded by smiling and singing along. As the *kīrtana* got faster, some people started dancing. After twenty minutes I brought the *kīrtana* to a close. The atmosphere was like Vaikuṅṭha, the spiritual world.

Astonished, the priest said, "They all look so happy!"

Turning to him with a smile, I said, "It's the medicine of the holy names."

After the crowd settled down I began telling stories from the *Rāmāyaṇa*. It was obvious by the way they nodded their heads that they knew the pastimes, but they drank the nectar of Rāma's life as if it was their first taste. After forty-five minutes I called all the children forward and asked a few

*Refugees at a camp on the eastern shore (above) happily call out the names of Lord Rāmacandra. At right, Indradyumna Swami passes out some of his own traveling prasādam—granola bars. At far right, refugees bid farewell to their visitors.*







simple questions: Who is Lord Rāma's wife? What color is Lord Rāma? Who is His most faithful servant? When a child answered correctly, I would give him or her a little card with a picture of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and a calendar on the back. From the enthusiasm of the children, it seemed that those colorful cards were as good as gold.

Then I taught them the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, and the blissful atmosphere expanded as they chanted along.

As we got up to leave, many of the women came rushing forward to put their babies in my arms. I wasn't exactly sure what to do, so I just chanted Hare Kṛṣṇa in each infant's ear. There were many babies, and it took quite some time.

As we walked toward the gate, the entire camp followed us. They appeared very grateful: everyone waved and some even cried as we got into our van to go to the next camp. It was more evidence for me that *kīrtana* and talks about Kṛṣṇa are the panacea for all problems in Kali-yuga.

### WORD FROM THE SOUTH COAST

As we drove to the next camp, I got a call from Tāra Dāsa, who was directing the *prasādam* distribution in the Matara district to the south.

"It's going well, Mahārāja," Tāra said. "Yesterday we distributed four thousand plates. It's just the beginning. Many people in the camp enjoy helping us gather wood for cooking, and they also help us cut vegetables. The major has arranged trucks for us to go out and distribute *prasādam* to several camps in the area each day."

"More devotees will be arriving from Russia soon," he continued, "and we'll begin distributing *prasādam* in other parts of the country as well."

As we continued driving to the next camp, the priest turned to me and said, "The most traumatized are the people still on the beach. Although their homes were destroyed, some won't leave. Do you think you could visit there before we go any farther? They really need help."

"Okay," I said. "Let's go."

Within a few minutes we were at the beach. As we got out of the car,





*On the south coast (right), Dhruva Dāsa (in front), from the USA, and Nitāi Dāsa, from London, get a first-hand look at some of the devastation. Below, the elderly man in the center is singing about Lord Rāma as Indradyumna Swami and his team prepare to leave a refugee camp.*



I felt as if my eyes were tricking me. Everything was devastated as far as one could see. The destruction seemed even more extensive than in the southern part of the country. The tsunami had flattened practically every house. Cars, bicycles, chairs, sofas, toys, clothes—a seemingly unlimited assortment of paraphernalia—were strewn everywhere. And there was the awful stench of death. I covered my mouth with a cloth.

“Mostly dead animals,” the priest said, “but we are still finding human bodies. They’re under the rubble of the houses and also wash up periodically on the shore.”

On our drive along the southern coast I had seen the destruction only from a distance. Now I was walking through it. We had to step carefully through the ravaged area, over shards of broken glass, chunks of concrete, and jagged pieces of wood and wire—and bones, already bleached white by the tropical sun. Nearby I saw volunteers from a humanitarian organization spraying everything in sight with disinfectant.

“By God’s grace there has been no epidemic yet,” said the priest.

Walking through one neighborhood destroyed by the tsunami, we came across two distraught men sitting in the rubble of what used to be a house.

As we approached, one of them looked up and, sobbing uncontrollably, said, “I was on top of the house, and I saw my mother swept away before my eyes.”

“I lost both my children,” said the other man, standing. “They were torn

from my arms as I sat right here.”

Grabbing my shirt, he screamed, “Why has God allowed this? I am not a bad man!”

For the moment there was nothing to say; no words could offer reason to one in such distress. I simply put my arm around him.

After two minutes, as our group turned to go, I said to him softly, “Hare Kṛṣṇa.”

Nodding his head, he looked to the sky, silently accepting his destiny and the will of providence.

A few minutes later we approached a severely damaged temple that was deserted.

“Where is the priest?” I inquired.

“He died in the tsunami,” said our priest. “Hardly anyone survived in this area. We burned his body and spread the ashes over there near the sea.”

### A FAMILY LOST

Just then I saw a young man wandering aimlessly through the rubble nearby. I asked the priest to call him over.

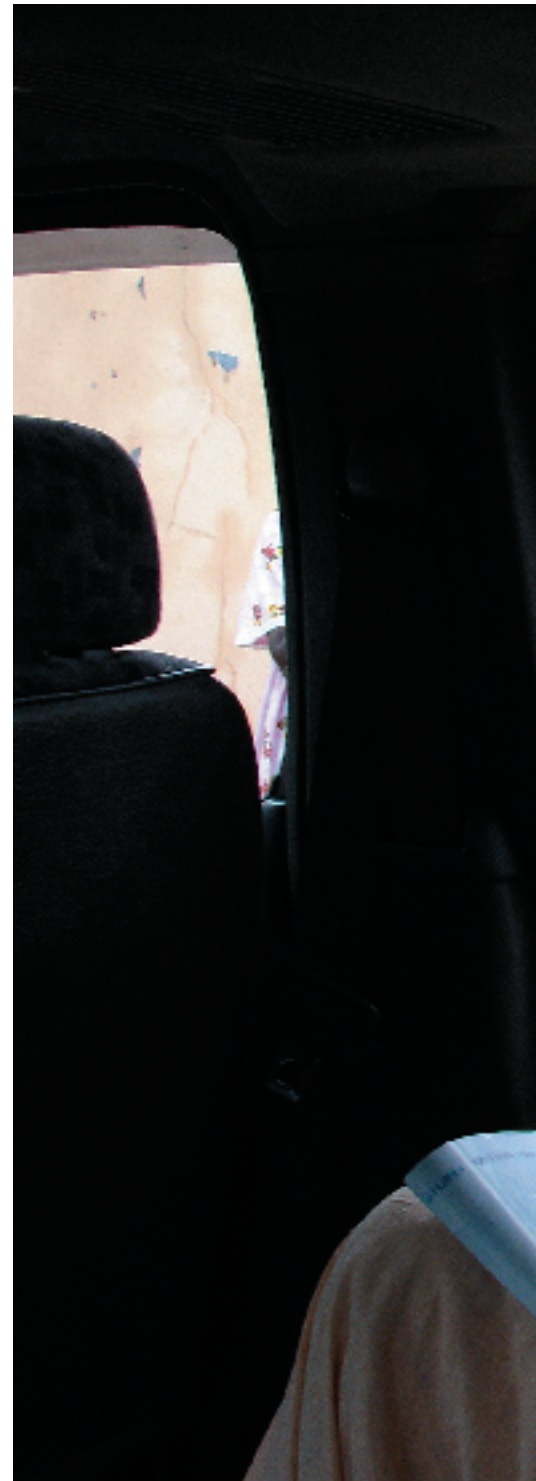
“What are you doing here?” I asked him. “School started a few days ago.”

“I’m looking for the bodies of my mother, father, three brothers, and four sisters,” he said with a dazed expression. “The terrible ocean took them away.”

I sat him down and put my hand on his shoulder.

“The body is temporary,” I said, “but the soul is eternal and never dies.”

Those few words calmed him, so I continued.





"Your mother, father, brothers, and sisters are elsewhere now. You won't see them again in this life."

I asked where he was living.

"With my auntie," he replied.

"Don't come back here," I said.

"Your mother would have wanted you in school now. Am I right?"

"Yes," he agreed, and as he turned to go he said, "Thank you."

Just as he left, a distressed woman came running up to me and grabbed my arm. She was speaking in Tamil, so I couldn't understand her.

"She said she lost her husband and

eight-year-old daughter in the tsunami," the priest said. "And her three-year-old boy is in the hospital. She has no money to feed him. She's asking if you can give her some."

I reached into my pocket, and taking out two thousand rupees put it in her hand. Still crying, she went to sit in the ruins of her home.

We spent several hours among the devastation near the beach, talking to people and trying to comfort them as much as we could. Sometimes I would offer transcendental knowledge, but more often it was a simple

embrace that gave a person the solace they needed.

## CHEERING UP THE CHILDREN

On the way back to our van we stopped at the local school, which was not much more than a steel frame left standing after the tsunami. Going inside, I watched as the teachers gave thirty or forty kids a lesson in mathematics.

When the children noticed me they all ran up close, staring. I spent sev-





The steps in preparing the packaged prasādam (right). Opposite page: Indradyumna Swami and Priyavrata Dāsa, the international coordinator for Hare Krishna Food for Life, pass out prasādam packages in the Matara district on the south coast.



eral minutes shaking their hands, asking them their names and pulling on the girls' pigtaails.

I taught the children to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, and after a short *kīrtana* we departed.

As we left, the teacher said, "Thank you. They'll never forget your visit."

Walking back to our van, I said to the priest, "There's years of work to be done, just in this one village."

"Can you stay a little longer?" he asked.

"I'm afraid I have to move on," I replied, "but I'll be sending a group of devotees here in a few days to distribute *prasādam* and chant with the people. And I'll spread the word. Perhaps there are devotees overseas who can spare a little time and come here as well."

Stopping, the priest took both my hands and said, "Tell them we would be most appreciative. Even if they came for just a few days."

We visited several more camps and the next day started the long drive back to Colombo.

## ISKCON'S ORPHANAGE

As we neared our base in Colombo late that afternoon, our driver reminded me of a promise I had made to visit an orphanage just outside the city, run by the local ISKCON temple.

Seeing that I was tired and so a little hesitant, he said, "They're wonderful little devotees."

"Devotees?" I asked.

"Yes. It's more than just an orphanage. Shall we go?"



"All right," I agreed.

When we arrived at the orphanage, I met Nandarāṇī Dāsī, Mahākartā's wife, who started the project seven years ago.

"We have seventy-nine children at the moment," she said, "most of them orphans from the war. But recently the government has asked us to take seventy-five more children orphaned by the tsunami. We've just begun building a new dormitory for that purpose."

As she took me on a tour of the property, I was amazed at how clean and well-organized everything was.

"We also run a school for the children," she said with a smile.

"It must be difficult raising orphans who've experienced the horrors of war," I suggested.

"Many saw their parents killed," she said soberly. "It was a technique used by soldiers on both sides. But through the years, these children have come to terms with all they saw in the war."

"How is that?"

"Through Kṛṣṇa consciousness," she replied. "Come, I'll show you."

She took me to the temple, where all the children were eagerly waiting to meet me. When I walked in, they all paid obeisances and then excitedly gathered around me.

"They want to hear stories about Kṛṣṇa," she said, "and then have *kīrtana*. It's their life and soul."

I began telling them Kṛṣṇa conscious stories, and after an hour I picked up a drum and started *kīrtana*. Once again, I witnessed the merciful nature of the holy names as the children danced wildly with abandon, their big smiles radiating with youthful enthusiasm. I took the *kīrtana* outside, and we chanted and danced all over the property. They were beside themselves with happiness. After an hour and a half I was exhausted and brought the *kīrtana* party back into the temple. But they wanted more, so I kept going, praying for the strength to ful-



fill their taste for the holy names. When we finally finished, I sat on the floor with all the children around me, blissful smiles still decorating their innocent faces.

“Am I in a war-torn country, recently ravaged by a tsunami, or am I in Vaikuṅṭha?” I wondered to myself in amazement. Looking again at the blissful children, I knew: “For the moment, I’m in Vaikuṅṭha.”

That night I began putting the final touches on the infrastructure I had set up for our relief work on the island. I would be leaving in a few days, but devotees who had come with me from overseas would continue the work for at least another two months.

Before retiring for the night, I remembered my promise to the priest on the east coast. I wrote emails to several Godbrothers, asking if they

could spare some time to come and help the villagers deal with the tragedy of the tsunami.

I got an instant reply.

“I don’t know how much help I could be,” one Godbrother wrote. “I don’t have money, I’m not a doctor, and I don’t have experience in counseling.”

I wrote back, “Just come with the holy names. They’re what’s needed most here now.”

May Kṛṣṇa’s holy name, which is a reservoir of all transcendental happiness, the destruction of Kali-yuga’s sins, the most purifying of all purifying things, the saintly person’s food as he traverses the path to the spiritual world, the pleasure-garden where the voices of the greatest saints, philosophers, and poets play, the life of the righteous,

and the seed of the tree of religion, bring transcendental auspiciousness to you all.”

—Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, *Padyāvālī* 19 ❁

*His Holiness Indradyumna Swami travels around the world teaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness.*

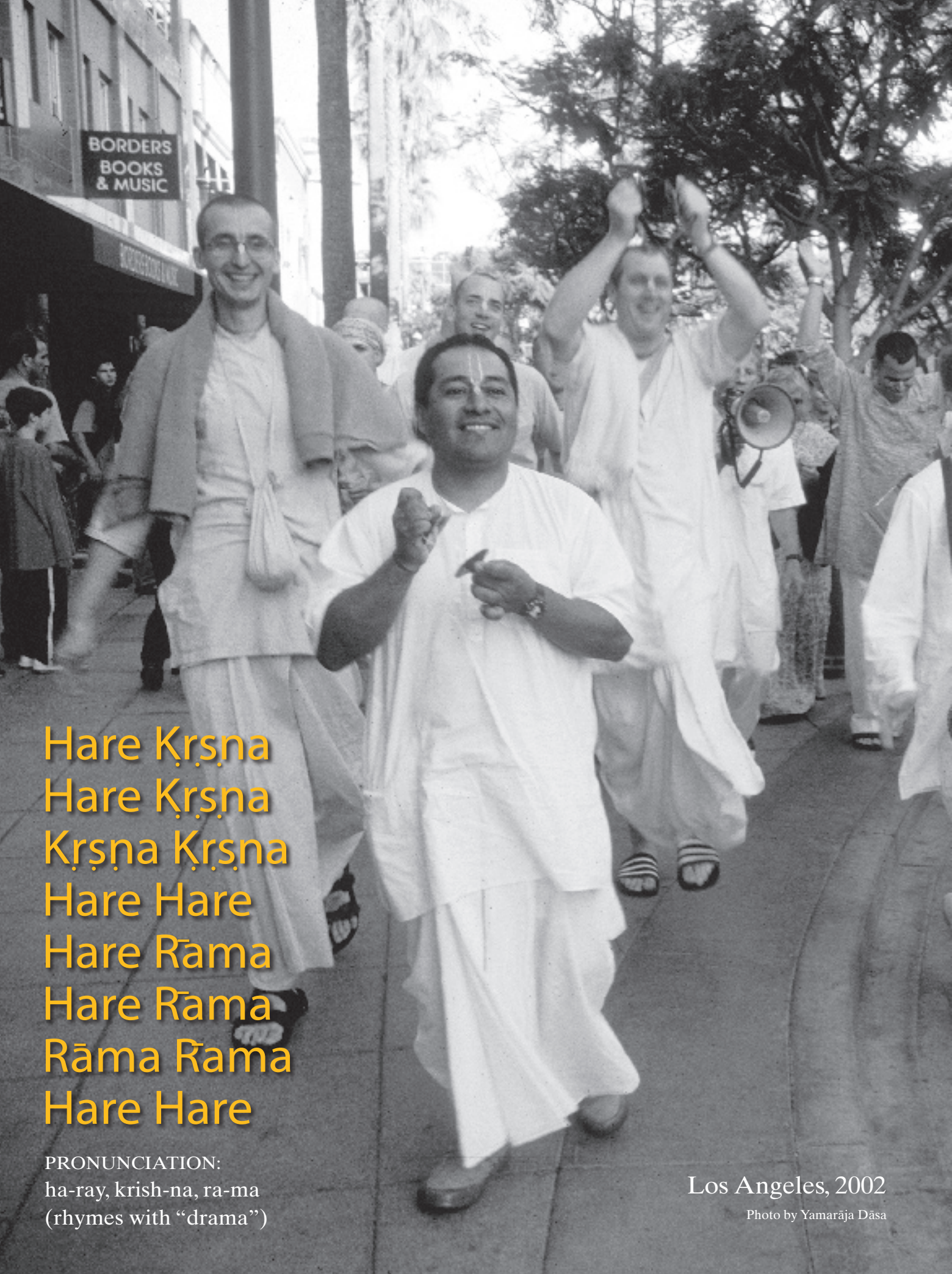
Adapted from *Diary of a Traveling Preacher, Volume 6*, Chapter 4. To receive chapters by e-mail as they come out regularly, write to [indradyumna.swami@pamho.net](mailto:indradyumna.swami@pamho.net) (Volumes 3 and 4 are available from the Krishna.com Store.)

#### ONLINE EXTRA

For more information and additional photos and videos of the Sri Lanka tsunami relief effort, please visit [www.krishna.com/393](http://www.krishna.com/393).







BORDERS  
BOOKS  
& MUSIC

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

PRONUNCIATION:  
ha-ray, krish-na, ra-ma  
(rhymes with “drama”)

Los Angeles, 2002

Photo by Yamarāja Dāsa



## “YOU WILL COME TO ME”

(continued from page 30)

Śrīla Prabhupāda says in the purport to this verse that anyone who wants to be intimately connected to Kṛṣṇa must take to the formula Kṛṣṇa presents here. He goes on to say that this verse is the essence of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Lord Kṛṣṇa here describes the devotee as someone friendly to every living being. In a song praising the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana, Śrīnivāsa Ācārya says they were “popular with both the gentle and the ruffians, because they were not envious of anyone.”

How can we exhibit real caring and friendliness toward everyone? By spreading Lord Kṛṣṇa’s formula, so that people won’t miss the extremely valuable opportunity afforded by the human form of life, and so that they can become freed from all the miseries in this world. We can even benefit those souls not presently in human bodies by loudly chanting the holy name and by giving them *prasādam*, food offered to the Supreme Lord.

(5) Śrī Kṛṣṇa promises: “Just fix your mind on Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and engage all your intelligence in Me. Thus you will live in Me always, without a doubt.” (12.8)

As in 8.7, the Lord is again using the reassuring phrase “without a doubt.” In the purport Śrīla Prabhupāda states: “One who is engaged in Lord Kṛṣṇa’s devotional service lives in a direct relationship with the Supreme Lord, so there is no doubt that his position is transcendental from the very beginning. A devotee does not live on the material plane—he lives in Kṛṣṇa.”

(6) Śrī Kṛṣṇa promises: “Always think of Me, become My devotee, worship Me, and offer your homage unto Me. Thus you will come to Me without fail. I promise you this because you are My very dear friend.” (18.65)

I chose this verse for a memorial plaque placed in front of a young oak tree at the last school Keśava attended, in Alachua, Florida. I find this promise from the Supreme Lord to be so comforting, so personal—He really does

know every one of us, and He really does want us to come to Him.

In the purport Śrīla Prabhupāda refers to this particular message from Kṛṣṇa as a promise. It is a surely a very personal, reassuring message. “Because you are My very dear friend—because you are connected with Me in a relationship—I am revealing these secrets to you.”

The most confidential knowledge is how to become reestablished in our original relationship with Kṛṣṇa. That is the most secret of all secrets. In *Vṛndāvana Mahimāmṛta* Śrīla Prabhodhānanda Sarasvatī writes, “I desire to achieve the highest mood [of love for God], which is a secret even to the *Vedas*.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda also tells us in the purport to this promise that we should concentrate our mind on the form of Kṛṣṇa as described in the *Brahmasaṁhitā*: a blackish boy with two hands, a beautiful lotuslike face, a flute, and peacock feathers in His crown. This is the form of Śyāmasundara, a form so attractive that it attracts the minds and hearts of everyone.

The grief resulting from the loss of a child puts your very sanity to the test. Arjuna experiences symptoms of grief by even contemplating the loss of family members, and does go on to lose one of his sons in the battle. The loss of my son turned my world upside down. But Kṛṣṇa’s promises are precious lifelines that I trust. They have saved me from despair time and time again. I pray to be able to perform my part in divine reciprocation with the Lord, and to have unshakable faith that His eternal promises will be fulfilled, in every glorious aspect.

“You will come to Me without fail. I promise you this because you are My very dear friend.” (18.65) ❀

*Bhrāntī Devī Dāsī, a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupada, joined the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement in Gainesville, Florida, in 1975. She makes deity ornaments (mukuts) and paraphernalia and has worked at this craft for thirty years. She is currently working on a book on grief and loss and is residing in Vṛndāvana.*



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. 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,” pages 59–61.)

## GETTING RIGHT WITH GOD

(continued from page 43)

by the *Vedas*, about the name, identity, and personality of God. I had long felt that the Christian Trinitarian notion of God was incomplete. Who is the Father really?

I then went to the library and got the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. I immediately appreciated Śukadeva Gosvāmī's exposition on the Absolute Truth.

And so it was that, at age seventeen, during my final year in high school, I jumped on a plane to visit the Melbourne temple. I was impressed by the beautiful forms of Rādhā-Vallabha, the enthusiastic *brahmacārīs*, the incredible *prasādam*. But I still bore the emotional residue of my Christian upbringing, and I ran out of the temple in tears, overwhelmed and uncertain.

Still, my attraction for Kṛṣṇa grew, as from time to time I came across one of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. My appreciation was that of an armchair admirer—it came from the head and not the heart.

That began to change when I met Puri Dāsa, who held a Sunday Feast in his tiny flat. His warmth and compassion, and his desire to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness, touched me. (He passed away several years later in a car accident while traveling to distribute Śrīla Prabhupāda's books.)

But I still wasn't quite ready to commit to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In 1982, after my mother's death, I entered an Anglican Benedictine mon-

astery. My life in some ways mirrored *brahmacārī* life—rising at 3.30 A.M., prayer, meditation, study.

I spent over a year there before returning to Tasmania to enter the university, where I met Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees running a cooking club. I learned there was now a temple in Hobart. I became a regular at the Sunday Feast and enjoyed the classes by the temple president, Bṛhaspati Dāsa. Alas, this temple was to close in 1984, leaving me without devotees.

I gravitated back to the Christian path for the next ten years, until in 1996 my wife and I went to western Australia on vacation. One day we ran into devotees handing out flyers for their Perth center, and along we went. I learned that some devotee families had moved to Tasmania, and so I went and took lunch with them on my return.

Finally, with my own *japa* beads, I took to regularly chanting the holy name and attending *maṅgala-ārati* at the seaside home of one family. My Kṛṣṇa consciousness was finally taking off. I attribute my desire to serve the Lord at this point to the mercy of those devotees, whose love, instruction, wonderful *prasādam*, and clearly evident love of Prabhupāda affected my whole being.

Gradually my chanting and other spiritual practices increased, and I tried more seriously to connect to Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions. My desire to share this wonderful knowledge grew, and I took part with other devotees in

presenting Kṛṣṇa conscious programs in public halls and people's homes. While my wife could not embrace Kṛṣṇa consciousness at this point, she became a vegetarian and supported me in my spiritual journey.

In 2000 we visited Vṛndāvanadhāma. I was mesmerised by the living fidelity to the Vedic tradition. I saw *bābājīs* (renunciants) embracing trees that Kṛṣṇa had walked by. At ISKCON's Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir, I saw the emotion of hundreds of people at 4:00 A.M. as they waited to see the most beautiful deities in the world. I knew that I had come home—to the house that Prabhupāda had built.

I received spiritual initiation at Bhaktivedanta Manor in 2000 and entered a new family of godbrothers and godsisters. I met devotees whose serious pursuit of sanctity was self-evident.

After two years of cooking for Rādhā-Gopinātha at ISKCON Sydney and enjoying that vibrant community, I came home to Tasmania.

Now with a daughter, Lilā Tulasī, I see that the next chapter in my Kṛṣṇa consciousness is unfolding. I aspire to see a community of devotees grow in Tasmania and to re-open the temple that closed twenty years ago. 🌸

*Devotee families interested in helping develop Kṛṣṇa consciousness in Tasmania can reach Devahotra Dāsa at devahotra@hotmail.com.*

## SEEING GOD ON HIS TERMS

(continued from page 8)

The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement does not present something nonsense or cheap. If you want to see God face to face, then you must follow the rules and regulation. You must chant; you must purify yourself. Then gradually the time will come. When you are purified, you'll see God.

### GOD AS THE DEITY

You can't see Him immediately, in your present position. But God is so kind, Kṛṣṇa is so kind, that even in your present position He is pres-

ent as *arcā-vigraha*, the deity in the temple. He's open to be seen by everyone, whether the person knows or does not know what is God.

The *arcā-vigraha* is not an idol. He's not the product of someone's imagination. Knowledge of Kṛṣṇa's form is received from the superior *ācāryas*. In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.30) Lord Brahmā says, *veṅṇuṁ kvaṅṅantam aravinda-dalāyatākṣam*: Kṛṣṇa holds the flute and has eyes like lotus petals. Kṛṣṇa's description is there in scripture.

With your blunt senses you cannot immediately perceive God's form, His name, His qualities, His paraphernalia. Our present senses are blunt. In

the present civilization, people have become godless, because they have no power to understand God. Nor are they guided by persons who can make them understand what is God. Therefore people are becoming godless, atheistic. But if you read all these Vedic literatures under superior guidance, if you follow the rules and regulations, then *svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ*: God will be revealed unto you. You cannot see God or understand God by your own endeavor. You have to surrender to the process by which God can be known. Then He will be revealed, not otherwise.

God is the supreme controller.



You are controlled. So how can you control God? “O God, please come here. I will see You.” No, no. God is not so cheap that by your order He will come and be seen by you. No. That is not possible. You must always

know: “He’s the supreme controller and I am controlled. So if I can please God by my service, then He’ll reveal Himself to me.” That is the process of knowing God.

Thank you very much. ❁

(continued from page 22)

ceremony, one would have doubted that everything would be ready on time. But it was—down to the details. Commissioned paintings by Mādhava-priyā Devī Dāsī decorate the temple walls. Also on display are her paintings that tell the story of the *Rāmāyaṇa*—especially appropriate since Kṛṣṇa in His form of Rāmacandra, with Sītā, Lakṣmaṇa, and Hanumān, was being installed. The *Rāmāyaṇa* is very popular in Fiji. Lord Rāma not only inspires divine love, but also sets an example for all people in matters of morality, ethics, and righteous government.

## FIVE THOUSAND GUESTS

When the three-day festival finally began, young men trained at ISKCON’s center in Māyāpur, West Bengal, performed the traditional Vastu Pūjā. Several sacrificial areas were prepared, two with sacred fires into which participants threw grains, symbolic of their offering their hearts to Kṛṣṇa. The five thousand guests chanted the holy names and danced with great happiness. More than forty people took initiation from three spiritual masters, promising to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra and give up intoxication, illicit sex, gambling, and the eating of meat, fish, and eggs.

Some devotees had the great fortune to unwrap the deities’ eyes (part of the installation ritual), bath the deities, massage them, and put them into beds the night before the final function. These devotees felt they were in the spiritual world. One of them, Ambariṣa Dāsa, says it’s the best experience in deity worship. As Rādhā-Golokabihārī lay in their beds, Bīr Kṛṣṇa Goswami sang to them of the places and residents of Vṛndāvana. Only a faint light illumined the space behind the altar. In this sweet atmo-

sphere, devotees found an increased awareness of the Lord’s presence in the deity form.

One of the many mysteries of serving Kṛṣṇa is that those who serve His servants get the same experience as those who serve directly. The truth of this scriptural statement was obvious when the crowd of five thousand sang for two hours after the final public bathing ceremony as they waited for the deities, being dressed behind closed curtains, to be revealed.

As the curtains slowly parted, the crowd gasped and squealed with delight and intense spiritual pleasure. The deities wore garlands of locally grown plumerias, the petals delicately folded over before being strung together. The opulence of the temple was overshadowed by the glorious sweetness of the deities. Wave after wave of a nectar ocean of happiness, beyond the body and mind, carried to all at least a taste of the delight which is the natural state of all souls in connection with the Absolute Truth.

More than seventy devotees have volunteered for various services to the deities. Over time, as they perform the regular daily worship, the joy they felt at the installation will increase until it becomes fixed in their hearts, removing all mundane duality. Material desires, lamentations, and the pains of this world will be swept aside as if insignificant in the cleansing and purifying devotional service to the Lord.



*Ūrmilā Devī Dāsī, a BTG associate editor, is a member of the Hare Kṛṣṇa community in Hillsborough, North Carolina, of which Bīr Kṛṣṇa Goswami is ISKCON’s govern body commissioner and Kṛṣṇa-priyā Devī Dāsī is the former temple president.*

*A DVD of the temple opening is available at [www.krishna.com/store](http://www.krishna.com/store).*

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# CALENDAR

This calendar is calculated for Māyāpur, West Bengal, India. The dates, derived from a lunar calendar, may vary by one day for other locations. Consult your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for the exact dates for your area.

Because the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement comes in disciplic line from Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the calendar includes not only dates relevant to all followers of the Vedic tradition but also dates relating to Lord Caitanya's associates and prominent spiritual masters in His disciplic succession.

## Month of Madhusūdana (April 25–May 23)

### MAY

**3**—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Vṛndāvana Dāsa Ṭhākura, the author of *Śrī Caitanya Bhāgavata*, a biography on Lord Caitanya.

**4**—Varūthinī Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

**8**—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Gadādhara Paṇḍita, one of Lord Caitanya's principal associates.

**11**—Beginning of Candana Yātrā, the festival of anointing Lord Jagannātha with sandalwood pulp for twenty-one days.

**17**—Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Sitā Devī, the consort of Lord Rāmacandra. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Madhu Paṇḍita, a great devotee of Lord Caitanya.

**18**—Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Jāhnavā Devī, the consort of Lord Nityānanda Prabhu.

**20**—Mohinī Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

**21**—Rukmiṇī Dvādaśī, the appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī Devī, the consort of Lord Kṛṣṇa as Dvārakādhīśa, the Lord of Dvārakā.

**22**—Nṛsimha Caturdaśī, appearance anniversary of Lord Nṛsimhadeva, Lord Kṛṣṇa's half-man, half-lion incarnation. Fasting till dusk, followed by feasting. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jayānanda Prabhu, a dedicated disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda who helped him bring the Rathayātrā festival to the Western world.

**23**—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, a follower of the six Gosvāmīs. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī, the spiritual master of Lord Caitanya's spiritual master (Īśvara Purī).

## Month of Trivikrama (May 24–June 22)

**28**—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Rāmananda Rāya, an intimate associate of Lord Caitanya.

### JUNE

**2**—Aparā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

**3**—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Vṛndāvana Dāsa Ṭhākura, author of *Śrī Caitanya Bhāgavata*, a biography on Lord Caitanya.

**17**—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, a prominent spiritual master in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya* (disciplic succession), and the author of *Govindabhāṣya*, an important commentary on *Vedānta-sūtra*. Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Gaṅgāmātā Gosvāmī, a promi-

nent woman spiritual master in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*.

**18**—Pāṇḍava Nirjalā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

## Month of Vāmana (June 23–July 21)

**23**—Disappearance of Śyāmānanda Paṇḍita, one of the principal followers of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

### JULY

**1**—Disappearance anniversary of Śrī Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, one of the principal associates of Lord Caitanya.

**2**—Yoginī Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

**6**—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Gadādhara Paṇḍita, one of the principal associates of Lord Caitanya. Also, disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Fasting till noon, then feasting.

**7**—Guṇḍicā-mārjana. Festival of cleansing the Gundicha temple in Jagannātha Puri, India.

**8**—Lord Jagannātha's Rathayātrā in Jagannātha Puri. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara and Śrīla Śivānanda Sena, intimate associates of Lord Caitanya.

**18**—Trispr̥ṣā Mahādvādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans for Śayanā Ekādaśī.

**21**—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana. First month of Cāturmāsya begins (fasting from green leafy vegetables).



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- New Delhi — 14/63, Punjabi Bagh (West), 110 026/ Tel. (011) 25109851 or 25167478/  
Fax: (011) 25167448/ E-mail: samba@pamho.net
- Noida, UP — B-4, Sector 31, 201 301/ Tel. (095120) 245-4912 or 245-5015/  
E-mail: vraja.bhakti.vilas.lok@pamho.net
- Pandharpur, Maharashtra — Hare Krishna Ashram (across Chandrabhaga River),  
Dist. Sholapur, 413 304/ Tel. (02186) 267241 or 267242/ Email: iskconpdr@rediff.com
- Patna, Bihar — Arya Kumar Rd., Rajendra Nagar, 800 016/ Tel. (0612) 687637 or 685081/  
Fax: (0612) 687635/ E-mail: krishna.kripa.jps@pamho.net
- Pune, Maharashtra — 4 Tarapoor Rd., Camp, 411 001/ Tel. (020) 2633-2328 or 2636-1855/  
E-mail: iyfpune@vsnl.com
- Puri, Orissa — Bhakti Kuti, Swargadwar, 752 001/ Tel. (06752) 231440
- Raipur, Chhatisgarh — Hare Krishna Land, Aloi Nagar, Opposite Maharshi Vidyalaya, Tatibandh,  
Raipur 492 001/ Tel. (0771) 5037555/ E-mail: iskconraipur@yahoo.com
- Ranaghat, West Bengal — Gourdam, Habiapur, Ranaghat, Dist. Nadia 741 403/ Tel. (03473)  
281 150 or 281226/ E-mail: shyamrup@pamho.net
- Salem, TN — ISKCON, Hare Krishna Land, Rajaram Nagar, Salem 636 007/ Tel. (0427) 2418245/  
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- Siliguri, WB — ISKCON Road, Gitalpara, 734 406/ Tel. (0353) 426619, 539046, or 539082/  
Fax: (0353) 526130
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- Sri Rangam, TN — 93 Anna Mandapam Rd., A-1 Caitanya Apartments, 620 006/  
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- Surat, Gujarat — Rander Rd., Jahangirpura, 395 005/ Tel. (0261) 765891, 765516, or 773386/  
E-mail: surat@pamho.net
- Thiruvananthapuram (Trivandrum), Kerala — T.C. 224/1485, WC Hospital Rd., Thycaud, 695 014/  
Tel. (0471) 328197/ E-mail: sarvaisvarya.jps@pamho.net
- Tirupati, AP — K.T. Rd., Vinayaka Nagar, 517 507/ Tel. (0877) 2230114 or 2230009/  
E-mail: revati.raman.jps@pamho.net
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- Ujjain, MP — Community Center, Mahanandanagar 456010/ Tel. (0734) 2521020/  
Email: iskcon.ujjain@pamho.net
- Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujarat — ISKCON, Opposite Polytechnic, 388 121/ Tel. (02692) 230796  
or 233012
- Varanasi, UP — ISKCON, B 27/80 Durgakund Rd., Near Durgakund Police Station, Varanasi 221 010/  
Tel. (0542) 246422 or 222617
- Vijayawada, AP — Venkatapalem Karakatta Rd., Undavalli Village, Tadepalli Mandaal, Vijayawada,  
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- Vishakapatnam, AP — ISKCON, 7-5-108 Pandurangapuram Beach Rd., 530 003/ Tel. (0891)  
2528376/ E-mail: nitaisevini@hotmail.com
- ◆ Vrindavan, UP — Krishna-Balaram Mandir, Bhaktivedanta Swami Marg, Raman Reti, Mathura Dist.,  
281 124/ Tel. (0565) 254-0021/ Fax: (0565) 2540-053/ E-mail: vrindavan@pamho.net;  
(Guesthouse) Tel. (0565) 254-0022; ramamani@sancharnet.in
- Warangal, AP — Mulugu Rd., Ayappa Pidipally, 506 007/ Tel. (08712) 426182

## RURAL COMMUNITIES

- Ahmedabad District, Gujarat (Hare Krishna Farm) — Katwada (contact ISKCON Ahmedabad)
- Assam — Karnamadh, Dist. Karimganj
- Chamorshi, Maharashtra — 78 Krishnanagar Dham, Dist. Gadchiroli, 442 603/ Tel. (0218) 623473
- Hyderabad, AP (New Naimisaranya Farm) — P. O. Dabilpur Village, Medchal Tq., R.R. Dist.,  
501 401/ Tel. (040) 4742018
- Indore, MP (Krishna-Balarama Mandir) — Hare Krishna Vihar, Nipania Village/ Tel. (731) 572794
- Karnataka (Bhaktivedanta Eco-Village) — Nagodi P.O., Vollur Valley, Hosanagar Taluq, Shivmoga  
District, 577 425 (mail: Garuda Guha, Kollur, D.K. District, 576 220)
- Mayapur, WB — (contact ISKCON Mayapur)
- Puri, Orissa — ISKCON, Bhaktivedanta Ashram, Sipasirubuli, 752 001/ Tel. (06752) 230494
- Surat, Gujarat — Bhaktivedanta Rajavidyalaya, Krishnalok, Surat-Bardoli Rd. Gangapur,  
P. O. Gangadhara, Dist. Surat, 394 310/ Tel. (02622) 63546
- Vrindavan, UP — Vrinda Kund, Nandagaon, Dist. Mathura, U.P./ E-mail: vrinda@aol.com

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- Calgary, Alberta — 313 Fourth St. N.E., T2E 3S3/ Tel. (403) 265-3302/ Fax: (403) 547-0795/  
E-mail: vamanstones@shaw.ca
- Edmonton, Alberta — 9353 35th Ave., T6E 5R5/ Tel. (780) 439-9999/ E-mail: edmonton@iskcon.ca
- Montreal, Quebec — 1626 Pie IX Boulevard, H1V 2C5/ Tel. & fax: (514) 521-1301/  
E-mail: iskconmontreal@bellnet.ca
- ◆ Ottawa, Ontario — 212 Somerset St. E., K1N 6V4/ Tel. (613) 565-6544/ Fax: (613) 565-2575/  
E-mail: iskconottawa@sympatico.ca
- Regina, Saskatchewan — 1279 Retallack St., S4T 2H8/ Tel. (306) 525-1640

Note for international phone calls: When dialing from outside the country, drop the "0" that begins most city codes (the numbers shown in parentheses).

Exception: For Russia, drop the initial "8." Telephone numbers include country codes, identified by a +. To save space, we've skipped the codes for North America (1) and India (91). ◆ Temples with restaurants or dining ★ New listing ● Revised listing

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Fax: (250) 453-2622 [attn: (250) 453-2397]/ E-mail: saranagativillage@hotmail.com

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- Alachua, Florida — 17306 N.W. 112th Blvd., 32615 (mail: P.O. Box 819, 32616)/ Tel. (386) 462-2017/ Fax: (386) 462-3468/ E-mail: alachuatemple@alltel.net
- ◆ Atlanta, Georgia — 1287 South Ponce de Leon Ave., N.E., 30306/ Tel. & fax: (404) 377-8680/  
E-mail: bala108@earthlink.net
- Austin, Texas — 10700 Jonwood Way, 78753/ Tel. (512) 835-2121/ Fax: (512) 835-8479/  
E-mail: harekrishna@swbell.net
- Baltimore, Maryland — 200 Bloomsbury Ave., Catonsville, 21228/ Tel. & fax: (410) 744-4069/  
Fax: (410) 744 1624/ E-mail: info@baltimorekrishna.com
- Berkeley, California — 2334 Stuart Street, 94705/ Tel. (510) 649-8619/ Fax: (510) 665-9366/  
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- Boise, Idaho — 1615 Martha St., 83706/ Tel. (208) 344-4274/ E-mail: boise\_temple@yahoo.com
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E-mail: radhagopi@juno.com
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- Columbus, Ohio — 379 W. Eighth Ave., 43201/ Tel. (614) 421-1661/ Fax: (614) 294-0545/  
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E-mail: txkrishnas@aol.com; restaurant: vegetarianataste@aol.com
- ◆ Denver, Colorado — 1400 Cherry St., 80220/ Tel. (303) 333-5461/ Fax: (303) 321-9052/  
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E-mail: gjirgovardhana@hotmail.com
- Gainesville, Florida — 214 N.W. 14th St., 32603/ Tel. (352) 336-4183/ Fax: (775) 206-9478/  
E-mail: info@krishnalunch.com
- Hartford, Connecticut — 1683 Main St., E. Hartford, 06108/ Tel. & fax: (860) 289-7252/  
E-mail: pyari@sbcglobal.net
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- Houston, Texas — 1320 W. 34th St., 77018/ Tel. (713) 686-4482/ Fax: (713) 956-9968/  
E-mail: management@iskconhouston.org
- Kansas City, Missouri — Rupanuga Vedic College (Men's Seminary), 5201 The Paseo, 64110/  
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- ◆ Laguna Beach, California — 285 Legion St., 92651/ Tel. (949) 494-7029/ E-mail:  
tuka108@hotmail.com
- Las Vegas, Nevada — 5226 Sandstone Dr., 89142/ Tel. (702) 440-4998/ E-mail:  
surapala@pamho.net
- ◆ Los Angeles, California — 3764 Watseka Ave., 90034/ Tel. (310) 836-2676/ Fax: (310) 839-2715/ E-mail: niranantara@juno.com; restaurant: arcita@webcom.com
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or 799-1354/ Fax: (601) 799-2924/ E-mail: talavan@mypicayune.com
- Gurabo, Puerto Rico (New Govardhana Hill) — Carr. 181, Km. 16.3, Bo. Santa Rita, Gurabo

- (mail: HC-01, Box 8440, Gurabo, PR 00778)/ (Office) Tel. & fax: (787) 737-4265/ (Temple) Tel. (787) 712-0358/ E-mail: iskconpr@hotmail.com
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- Moundsville, West Virginia (New Vrindaban) — R.D. No. 1, Box 319, Hare Krishna Ridge, 26041/  
Tel. (304) 843-1600; Guest House, (304) 845-5905/ Fax: (304) 854-0023/  
E-mail: mail@newvrindaban.com
- Mulberry, Tennessee (Murari-sevaka) — Rt. No. 1, Box 146-A, 37359/ Tel. (931) 759-6888/  
E-mail: visnujana@hotmail.com
- Port Royal, Pennsylvania (Gita Nagari) — R.D. No. 1, Box 839, 17082/ Tel. & fax: (717) 527-4101/  
E-mail: vrajajila@acsworld.net
- Sandy Ridge, North Carolina — 1264 Prabhupada Rd., 27046/ Tel. (336) 593-9888

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- San Juan, Puerto Rico — Gopal, 2018 Calle Tetuan, Viejo San Juan, 00901/ Tel. (787) 724-0229
  - Seattle, Washington — My Sweet Lord, 5521 University Way, 98105/ Tel. (425) 643-4664
  - Tallahassee, Florida — Higher Taste, 411 St. Francis St., 32301/ Tel. (850) 894-4296
- ## UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND
- Belfast, Northern Ireland — Brooklands, 140 Upper Dunmurray Lane, BT17 OHE/  
Tel. +44 (028) 9062 0530
  - Coventry, England — Kingfield Rd., Coventry (mail: 19 Gloucester St., Coventry CV1 3BZ)/  
Tel. +44 (024) 7655 2822 or 5420/ E-mail: haridas.kds@pamho.net
  - Glasgow, Scotland — Karuna Bhavan, Bankhouse Rd., Lesmahagow, Lanarkshire, ML11 0ES/  
Tel. +44 (01555) 894790/ Fax: +44 (01555) 894526/ E-mail: karunabhavan@aol.com
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7439-3606; shop, 7287-0269; Govinda's Restaurant, 7437-4928/ Fax: +44 (020) 7439-1127/  
E-mail: london@pamho.net
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manor@pamho.net; (for accommodations:) accommodations.requests@pamho.net
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  - London, England (north) — 176 Royal College St., Camden, NW10SP/ Tel. +44 (0207) 485 4188  
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  - Romford, England — 3 Rowan Walk, Hornchurch, RM11 2JA/ tel. +44 (01708) 454092

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- Lisnaskea, Northern Ireland — Govindadvipa Dhama, Inisrath Island, Co. Fermanagh, BT92 9GN/  
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E-mail: govind\_das@hotmail.com

## AUSTRALASIA

### AUSTRALIA

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- Brisbane — 95 Bank Rd., Graceville (mail: P.O. Box 83, Indurupilly), QLD 4068/  
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- Melbourne — 197 Danks St. (mail: P.O. Box 125), Albert Park, VIC 3206/ Tel. +61 (03) 9699-5122/  
Fax: +61 (03) 9690-4093/ E-mail: iskcon@bigpond.net.au
- Newcastle — 28, Bull St., Mayfield, NSW 2304/ Tel. +61 (02) 4967-7000/  
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- Sydney — 180 Falcon St., North Sydney, NSW 2060 (mail: P.O. Box 459, Cammeray, NSW 2062)/  
Tel. +61 (02) 9959-4558/ Fax: +61 (02) 9957-1893/ E-mail: sradiucp@sraddha.dialix.oz.au

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- Bambra (New Nandagram) — 50 Seaches Outlet, off 1265 Winchelsea Deans Marsh Rd., Bambra VIC 3241/ Tel. +61 (03) 5288-7383/ E-mail: iskcon@bigpond.net.au
- Cessnock, NSW — New Gokula Farm, Lewis Lane (off Mount View Rd., Millfield, near Cessnock  
[mail: P.O. Box 399, Cessnock]), NSW 2325/ Tel. +61 (02)4998-800/ Fax: (Sydney temple)
- Murwillumbah (New Govardhana) — Tyalgum Rd., Eungella (mail: P.O. Box 685), NSW 2484/  
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- Adelaide — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 79 Hindley St., SA 5000/ Tel. +61 (08) 8231-5258
- Brisbane — Govinda's, 99 Elizabeth St., 1st floor, QLD 4000/ Tel. +61 (07) 3210-0255
- Melbourne — Crossways, 1st Floor, 123 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (03) 9650-2939
- Melbourne — Gopal's, 139 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (03) 9650-1578



# CENTERS AROUND THE WORLD

New Castle — Krishna's Vegetarian Cafe, 110 King Street, corner of King & Wolf Streets, NSW 2300 Tel. +61 (02) 4929-6900  
 Perth — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 200 William St., Northbridge, WA 6003/Tel. +61 (08) 9227-1684/ E-mail: perth@pamho.net  
 Sydney — Govinda's Upstairs, 112 Darlinghurst Road, Darlinghurst NSW 2010/ Tel. +61 (02) 9380-5155  
 Sydney — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 529B King St., Newtown, NSW 2042/ Tel. +61 (02) 9550-6524

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 Labasa, Fiji — Delailabasa (mail: P.O. Box 133)/Tel. +679 812912  
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 Suva, Fiji — Joyce Place, Off Pilling Rd., Nasinu 7½ miles (mail: P.O. Box 2183, Govt. Bldgs./Tel. +679 393 599/ Fax: +679 314 583/ E-mail: vdas@govnet.gov.fj  
 Wellington, NZ — 105 Newlands Rd., Newlands (mail: P.O. Box 2753)/Tel. +64 (04) 478-4108/ E-mail: jageevandas.mvnm@paradise.net.nz

## RURAL COMMUNITY

Auckland, NZ (New Varshan) — Hwy. 28, Riverhead, next to Huapai Golf Course (mail: R.D. 2, Kumeu, Auckland)/Tel. +64 (09) 412-8075/ Fax: +64 (09) 412-7130

RESTAURANTS

Auckland, NZ — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 268 Karangahape Rd./Tel. +64 (09) 300-7585  
 Hamilton, NZ — Gaura's Place Vegetarian Restaurant, 555 Victoria St./Tel. +64 (07) 839-3558/ E-mail: yatrafamily@paradise.net.nz  
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 Suva, Fiji — Hare Krishna Vegetarian Restaurant, Opposite University of the South Pacific, Laucala Bay Rd./Tel. +679 311683/ E-mail: vdas@govnet.gov.fj  
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The full list appears in the January/February and July/August issues. ◆ Temples with restaurants or dining ★ New listing ● Revised listing.

## Purely Devotees

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA would sometimes refer to his disciples as pure devotees. Anyone who has read his books or been in the company of his followers for any length of time knows that the term “pure devotee” generally refers to someone who loves Kṛṣṇa fully and is free of all material desires. It’s who we want to become. So we ordinary mortals who are surely still works in progress wonder, “Why would Prabhupāda call us pure devotees?”

It seems to me that Prabhupāda is implying that anyone who has accepted pure love for Kṛṣṇa as the goal of life and is pursuing it under the direction of a bona fide guru can be considered a pure devotee. Prabhupāda’s followers have rejected all other ultimate goals, as well as the means for attaining them. We know that as spirit souls we will not find fulfillment in any way except by awakening our love for Kṛṣṇa. That’s our conviction.

That conviction distinguishes us from almost everyone else, and it shows in the spiritual practices we perform under Prabhupāda’s guidance. When Prabhupāda’s followers go to his temples, we do things meant for only one purpose: becoming Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Our endeavors for perfection don’t include things done by *karmīs*, *jñānīs*, or yogis.

The Vedic literature tell us that all human beings can be classified into four groups according to their goals and activities: *karmīs*, *jñānīs*, yogis, and *bhaktas*. Most people are *karmīs*. Their only goal is happiness in the material world, either here on earth or in the heavenly planets after death. That’s what they work for. Better than *karmīs*, from the spiritual point of view, are *jñānīs*, or philosophers. The high-

est aim of *jñānīs* is to merge into spiritual oneness, in effect annihilating themselves to avoid the inevitable suffering of material existence. The yogis, at best, try to find something spiritual through sitting postures, controlled breathing, meditation, and so on. They sometimes get sidetracked by powers achieved through yoga. In any case, they generally have only a vague idea of what they hope to accomplish, and in essence theirs is a selfish quest.

*Bhaktas*, or devotees, just want to love Kṛṣṇa. They know that’s all they need. Through devotion to Kṛṣṇa one can achieve anything that can be gained through any other process—karma, *jñāna*, or yoga. But devotees are indifferent to those rewards.

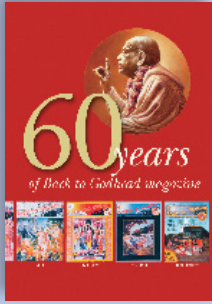
The spiritual practices Prabhupāda gave us don’t include karma, *jñāna*, or yoga devoid of a *bhakti* connection. In his temples we don’t pray to *devas* for wealth or material happiness, we don’t guess about philosophical topics, and we don’t practice yoga *āsanas* for enlightenment. We chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, worship the deity of Kṛṣṇa, hear about Kṛṣṇa and pure devotion to Him, honor Kṛṣṇa’s greatest devotees, like Śrīla Prabhupāda, and strive to be like them.

Our heroes love Kṛṣṇa without personal motive. We may have residual material attraction, but we know better. We’re convinced that pure love for Kṛṣṇa is ultimately the only desirable thing. Despite our shortcomings, if we hold on to our conviction and adhere to spiritual practices of pure *bhakti*, we are, in Prabhupāda’s view, pure devotees—or, to put it another way, purely devotees.

—Nāgarāja Dāsa



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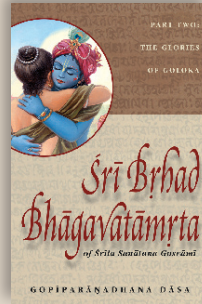


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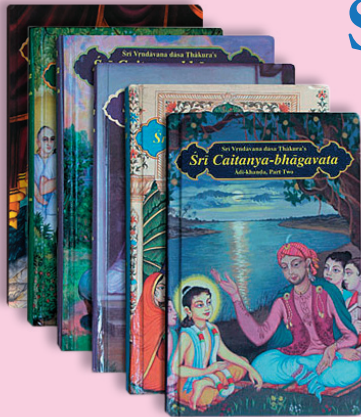
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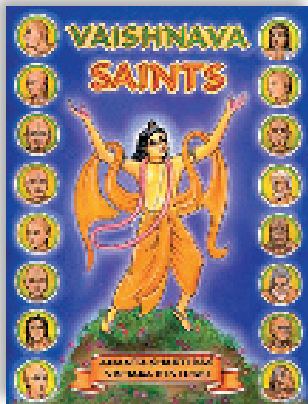
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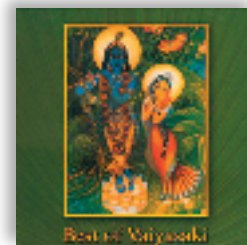
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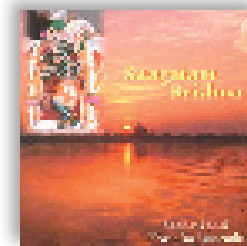
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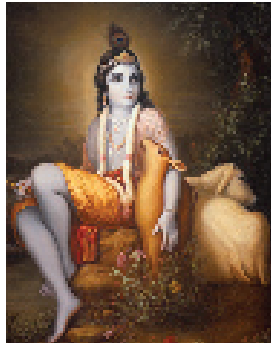
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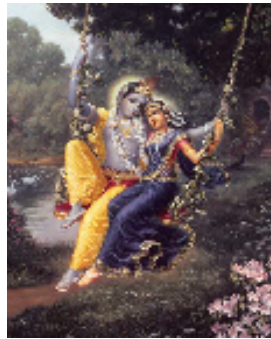
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# Vedic Thoughts

If one can develop his unflinching love for the transcendental Supreme Personality of Godhead, that can give complete satisfaction; otherwise there is no possibility of satisfaction in the material world or anywhere else.

His Divine Grace  
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda  
*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.4.28, Purport

One is immediately freed from the clutches of *māyā* if he seriously and sincerely says, “My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, although I have forgotten You for so many long years in the material world, today I am surrendering unto You. I am Your sincere and serious servant. Please engage me in Your service.”

Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu  
*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 22.33

Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto the original Personality of Godhead, Govinda [Kṛṣṇa], who regulates the sufferings and enjoyments due to fruitive activity. He does this for everyone—from the heavenly king Indra down to the smallest insect [*indra-gopa*]. That very Personality of Godhead destroys the karmic reactions of one engaged in devotional service.

Lord Brahmā  
*Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.54

Lord Kṛṣṇa is the embodiment of all-ecstatic bliss; He is the reservoir of all pleasure. Having derived ecstasy from Him, the individual souls become blissful. For who indeed could breathe, who could be alive, if this blissful Lord were not present within the hearts of all souls? He alone bestows ecstasy.

*Taittirīya Upaniṣad* 2.7

The topmost person is he who achieves the Supreme Lord through devotional service. He enjoys food and sports in the abode of the Lord. The demigods worship that Supreme Lord.

*Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 8.12

The Supreme Personality of Godhead appeared in His original form as a cowherd boy. Cheated and bewildered by His illusory potency, the world could not understand His true identity.

*Śrī Kṛṣṇa Upaniṣad* 1.10

Persons who hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* regularly and are always taking the matter very seriously will have the Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifested in their hearts within a short time.

Mahārāja Parīkṣit  
*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.8.4

# Festival of India 2005



*Vancouver Rathayātrā, Canada, 2004. Photo: Jaya Govinda Dāsa*



## Schedule for North America

**May 21:** Baltimore Rathayātrā

**June 11:** New York City Rathayātrā

**June 17–19:** Atlanta, Panihati Festival

**June 25:** Cleveland Rathayātrā

**July 3–4:** Washington, D.C., Rathayātrā

**July 9–10:** Montreal Rathayātrā

**July 16–17:** Toronto Rathayātrā

**July 24:** Detroit Rathayātrā

**July 30:** Calgary Rathayātrā

**August 6–7:** Los Angeles Rathayātrā

**August 14:** San Francisco Rathayātrā

**August 20–21:** Vancouver Rathayātrā

**August 26–27:** Vancouver,  
Janmāṣṭamī/Vyāsa Pūjā Festival

**September 3–5:** Seattle Rathayātrā

**September 11:** Portland Rathayātrā

**September 17:** Newark, N.J., Rathayātrā

**September 24:** Chicago Rathayātrā

**October 15:** Washington, D.C.,

Śrī Rāmacandra Vijaya Festival

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Some of these dates are not yet confirmed. Before scheduling your travel, be sure to verify the festival date with the ISKCON temple in the city where the festival is to be held. Or email Festival Of India: [madhuha@festivalofindia.org](mailto:madhuha@festivalofindia.org).