

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

BACK TO GODHEAD

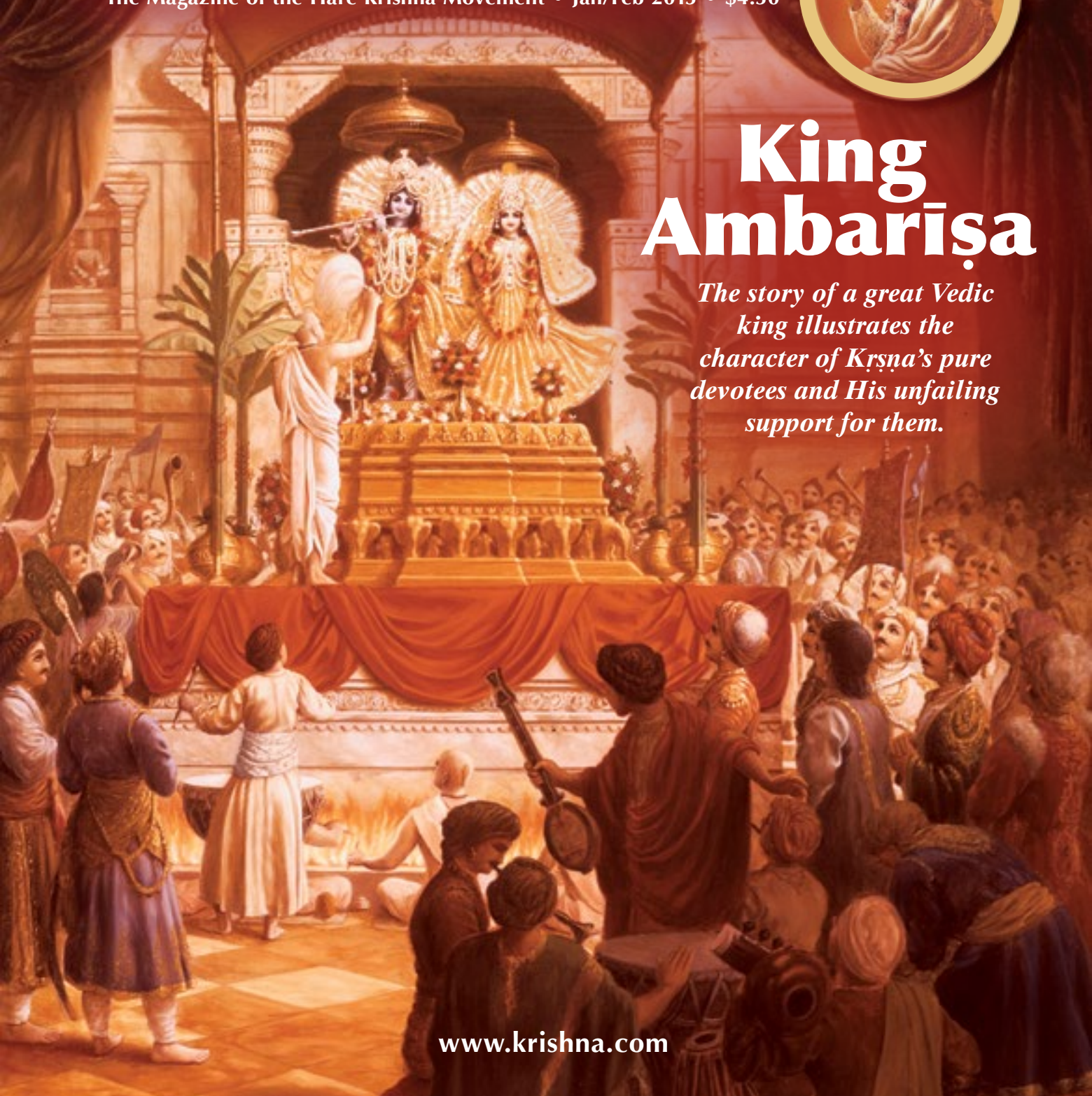


The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement • Jan/Feb 2015 • \$4.50



King Ambariṣa

*The story of a great Vedic
king illustrates the
character of Kṛṣṇa's pure
devotees and His unfailing
support for them.*



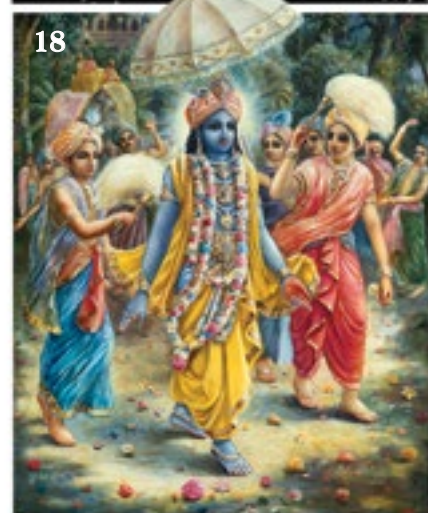
Assisting you in your quest for the Absolute Truth

BACK to GODHEAD

Founded 1944 • Vol. 49, No. 1 • January / February, 2015



12



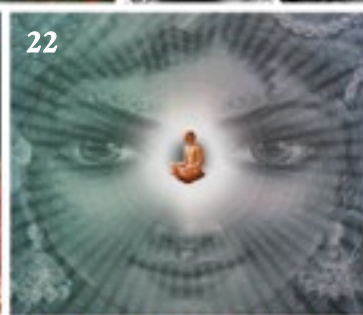
18



33



44



22



48

FEATURES

Founder's Lecture

6 Approved Inquiry

Śrīla Prabhupāda explains that we can derive true benefit only by addressing the most important questions to authorized spiritual teachers.

12 The Nature of the Self: A Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Understanding

The *Upaniṣads* say we're one with God; they also say we're different from Him. Can both statements be true?

18 Rasa: The Taste of Devotion

Only Kṛṣṇa can fully satisfy our natural desire to savor the pleasure of experiences and relationships.

22 What Does God Sound Like?

References from various scriptures can give us some idea of God's voice.

34 Fulfilling Our Longing for Love

Five reasons why loving Kṛṣṇa is the answer to the question of love.

How I Came to Kṛṣṇa Consciousness

39 Making Progress Toward Seeing the Lord

Loss of eyesight fails to deter a young man's search for God.

Book Excerpt

44 A Sheltered King

Lord Viṣṇu protects King Ambarīṣa from a fiery demon conjured up by an angry ascetic.

48 Kṛṣṇa, the Reservoir of Compassion

Both Lord Kṛṣṇa and His pure devotees display compassion of the highest standard.

52 Can God Be Immoral?

Why we worship Kṛṣṇa even though He steals things, dances with others' wives, and performs other seemingly immoral acts.

DEPARTMENTS

Letters 4

Glossary 11

e-Krishna 17

Calendar 25

Book Section: Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 27

The Sages Take Action

Śrīla Prabhupāda Speaks Out 31

Dallying with Material Enjoyment

Hare Kṛṣṇa Mahā-Mantra 33

Centers Around the World 57

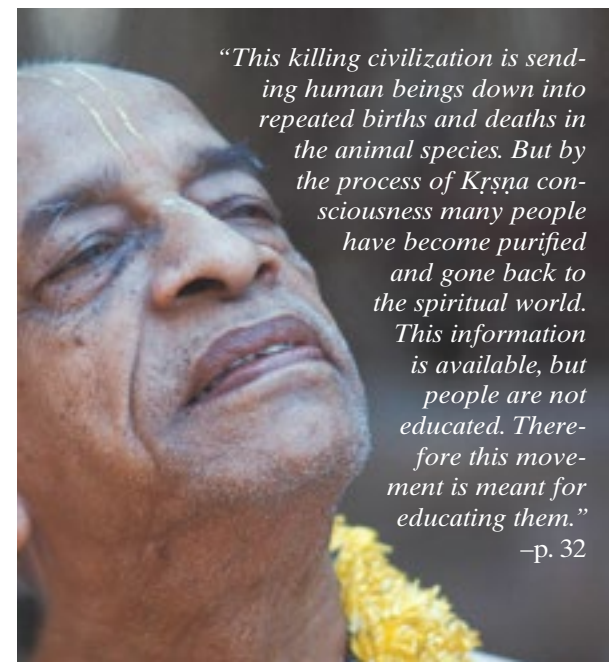
From the Editor 62

Our Happy Self

Krishna.com Store 63

Vedic Thoughts 67

COVER The Vedic king Ambarīṣa engaged his mind, senses, and kingdom in devotional service to the Lord, who by protecting him from mortal danger showed the greatness of God's pure devotees. Please see the article beginning on page 44. (Painting by Muralidhara Dāsa.)



"This killing civilization is sending human beings down into repeated births and deaths in the animal species. But by the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness many people have become purified and gone back to the spiritual world. This information is available, but people are not educated. Therefore this movement is meant for educating them."

—p. 32

WELCOME



The Vedic literature tells of bygone ages when godly kings ruled the world. Guided by self-realized souls, they used their positions to engage the citizens in the primary

aim of human life: the awakening of pure love for God, now lying dormant within each of us. In this issue, the book excerpt *A Sheltered King* tells about one such exemplary king, Ambarīṣa Mahārāja, whose power of devotion to God defeated the mystic power of an irate sage.

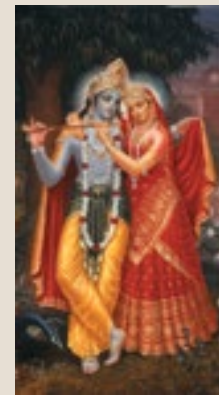
Today, the idea of a God-centered government disturbs people, one reason being competing concepts of God. In this magazine, with support from the Vedic scriptures, we champion Lord Kṛṣṇa as God. People unfamiliar with Kṛṣṇa naturally balk at this idea, but even those who know something about Him may challenge the logic of worshipping a God who seems to perform immoral acts. In "Can God Be Immoral?" Mukunda-mālā Dāsa responds to this challenge.

Two other articles in this issue provide insight into Kṛṣṇa's supremacy. "Fulfilling Our Longing for Love," Caitanya Carāṇa Dāsa explains, can be attained only in a relationship with Kṛṣṇa. And Rāsa Puruṣa Dāsa, who passed away before seeing his article in print, explains how Kṛṣṇa is the reservoir of compassion.

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.



Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa are together the one Supreme Absolute Truth.



Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the combined incarnation of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, inaugurated the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa five hundred years ago.



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

BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the
Hare Krishna Movement



FOUNDER (under the direction of His Divine Grace Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda)
His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda (1896–1977)

BHAKTIVEDANTA BOOK TRUST REPRESENTATIVE Govardhana Dāsa • **EDITOR** Nāgarāja Dāsa • **GENERAL MANAGER** Prema-mañjarī Devī Dāsī • **ASSOCIATE EDITORS** Caitanya Carāṇa Dāsa, Drutakarmā Dāsa, Satyarāja Dāsa, Ūrmilā Devī Dāsī, Viśākhā Devī Dāsī • **DESIGN/LAYOUT** Yamārāja Dāsa • **PROOFREADERS** Gadāgrāja Dāsa, Keśīhanta Dāsa, Kṛṣṇa-kṛpā Dāsa, Mahāmāyā Devī Dāsī, Vegavatī Devī Dāsī, Geoffrey Wood • **ARCHIVES** Ekanātha Dāsa • **CUSTOMER SERVICE** Ijya Dāsa, Radika Priya Haberland, Śālagrāma Śilā Devī Dāsī, Taralākṣī Devī Dāsī • **ACCOUNTS** Rañjita Dāsa • **WEBSITE** Hari Bhakti Vilas Jagarnauth, Jivana Wilhoit, Manorāma Dāsa, Uddhava Marcotte, Uttama Day

INDIA: PUBLISHER Yudhiṣṭhira Dāsa • **PRODUCTION** Sac-cid-ānanda Dāsa, Sundara Rūpa Dāsa • **GENERAL MANAGER & CIRCULATION** Pāṇḍurāṅga Dāsa • **ACCOUNTS** Sahadeva Dāsa • **SUBSCRIBER SERVICES** Mañjarī Devī Dāsī

EDITORIAL OFFICES Send editorial correspondence to BTG, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, FL 32616, USA. Phone: (386) 462-7794. Email: editors@krishna.com. Or BTG, 3rd Floor, 302, Amrut Industrial Estate, Western Express Hwy., Mira Rd. (E), Mumbai 401104, India. Phone: (022) 32556701. Email: btgindia@pamho.net

SUBSCRIPTIONS *Back to Godhead* is published six times a year. For a one-year subscription (US and Canada) send \$19.95 to BTG, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, FL 32616, USA. Or call toll-free: 1-800-800-3284. For subscriptions outside the US and Canada add \$10. Payment in US funds (payable on a US bank) must accompany your order. In the UK send £18.99 to BTG UK Ltd., Bhaktivedanta Manor, Dharam Marg, Hilfield Lane, Watford, Herts. WD25 8EZ. In South Africa send R240 to Back to Godhead, P. O. Box 56003, Chatsworth 4030.

SUBSCRIBER SERVICE To change your address or clear up any questions about your subscription, write to BTG Service Center, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, FL 32616, USA. Or call 1-800-800-3284. Or email btgsubs@krishna.com. We can answer your questions faster if you send a recent mailing label or invoice. Please allow eight weeks for changes to show on your label.

PREPRESS & PRINTING Magna Graphics (I) Pvt. Ltd., Mumbai.

© 2015 The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust International. All rights reserved. (Trustee for The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust: Svavāsa Dāsa.) *Back to Godhead* (ISSN 0005-3643, USPS 604-170) is published bimonthly (six times a year) for \$19.95 per year by Back to Godhead, 18024 NW 112th Blvd., Alachua, FL 32615. Periodicals postage paid at Alachua, Florida, and additional mailing offices. CANADA POST AGREEMENT #: 40612608. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Back to Godhead, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, FL 32616. Canada Returns to be sent to Pitney Bowes, P. O. Box 25542, London, ON N6C 6B2

Letters

Spiritual Life Hampered

When all things go well, then our spiritual life also goes well. But why is our spiritual life hampered when we fall into some material difficulties?

Modim Verma
Via the Internet

Our reply: Even if we've taken to the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, we still have to face the consequences of our previous actions; we still suffer difficulties because of karma. It's important for aspiring devotees to have the right attitude in the face of difficulties. As Śrīla Prabhupāda writes in his purport to *Bhagavad-gītā* (12.13–14): "Whenever a devotee is in distress or has fallen into difficulty, he thinks that it is the Lord's mercy upon him. He thinks, 'Thanks to my past misdeeds I should suffer far, far greater than I am suffering now. So it is by the mercy of the Supreme Lord that I am not getting all the punishment I am due. I am just getting a little, by the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.'"

I should think that any difficulties Kṛṣṇa is sending my way are for my spiritual benefit. Maybe you've heard this principle but are having a hard time understanding it. Difficulties seem to make spiritual life more difficult, you wonder, so how is that helpful?

There are many possible answers. One is that we can make spiritual progress just by acknowledging that the difficulties are Kṛṣṇa-sent, because seeing Kṛṣṇa in everything is an important aspect of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Material difficulties can also inspire us to become more serious about Kṛṣṇa consciousness so we can leave this material world forever. Difficulties that seem to hinder our spiritual practices can in fact strengthen our desire for our spiritual practices, and that's purifying. Sometimes hindrances to

specific practices can force us to take shelter of other practices. For example, if something in my life makes regular temple attendance difficult, I can look for other ways to increase and improve my chanting and hearing about Kṛṣṇa.

We must have faith that Kṛṣṇa wants to help us. Difficulties are one way He can get our attention and inspire us to turn to Him and cry out, "Dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, please help!" That kind of heartfelt plea is the key to our spiritual progress.

It's important to guard against the tendency to resent Kṛṣṇa for sending difficulties. We should always feel that Kṛṣṇa loves us more deeply than we can understand, that He has unlimited intelligence, and that whatever He sends our way is meant to draw us closer to Him.

Devotees' Apparent Sorrows

Why does it seem that intense sorrow follows all those blessed with a personal association with the Lord – Daśaratha, Rādhārāṇī, Yaśoda, Devakī, Śacī, and Sītā, to name a few. And why should I really aspire for such likelihood?

Harkumar Singh
Via the Internet

Our reply: We should not make the mistake of equating the experiences of the Lord's most exalted devotees with our own. Everything about these devotees takes place on the transcendental platform, the essence of which is pure love for God, or *prema*. The quality of *prema* is ecstatic spiritual bliss. Everything that goes on in the relationship between the Lord and His liberated devotee is of the nature of pure happiness.

Because we are conditioned souls bound by the material energy, our vision is defective and we see sorrow in spiritual existence. But

there is no sorrow there, only various flavors of happiness.

In the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*Madhya* 9.240), Śrīla Vṛndāvana Dāsa Ṭhākura writes, "Know for certain that whatever worldly distress is seen in a Vaiṣṇava is actually spiritual happiness." In his commentary, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura writes, "By seeing a fully engaged devotee's scarcity rather than external opulence, sickness rather than good health, poverty rather than wealth, and ignorance rather than scholarship, those who consider such a Vaiṣṇava afflicted by various deficiencies and who therefore hanker after gold, women, and fame, like the *karmīs* – and thus consider him distressed – should be understood to have lost their intelligence."

The word *Vaiṣṇava* here means pure devotees of the Lord. If we think their experiences are the same as ours, we are mistaken. Pure Vaiṣṇavas are far beyond the reach of mundane sorrow. To fully appreciate this truth, we must purify ourselves

through the practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness (*bhakti-yoga*) as given to us by Śrīla Prabhupāda. When we attain the transcendental state of pure love for Kṛṣṇa, we too will taste the uninterrupted spiritual happiness of our eternal relationship with Him.

The Position of Lord Śiva

Why is Bhagavān Śiva considered the most powerful of the Trimūrti: Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva? No matter who you speak with, the general idea is that Bhagavān Śiva can give his sincere devotees powers that even Kṛṣṇa cannot. So, doesn't that make Bhagavān Śiva the Supreme Personality of Godhead?

Pranay Sherke
Via the Internet

Our reply: No doubt Lord Śiva is very powerful. He is in charge of the destruction of the material world. Many people consider the power of destruction to be the greatest power.

Because they are afraid of the material energy, they regard Lord Śiva as the most powerful because he can destroy that energy.

But consider this: The president of a country appoints a minister who appears to be very powerful to those in the area of his jurisdiction, but in fact the president who appointed the minister is even more powerful. Although he may not be obviously in control, he is behind the scenes controlling everything. Such is the position of Kṛṣṇa, who appears in the Trimūrti as Viṣṇu, His plenary expansion.

What you will hear depends on who you ask. You say "no matter who you speak with," but when I look in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* or the *Bhagavad-gītā*, I don't learn that Lord Śiva is the most powerful. Lord Brahmā, in *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.1), clearly says, "Kṛṣṇa, who is known as Govinda, is the Supreme Godhead. He has an eternal blissful spiritual body. He is the origin of (please turn to page 38)



Start your day with a smile!

Join the **Krishna.com** Ebook Club

... and read a page a day from a devotional book – including *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, *Kṛṣṇa*, and *Teachings of Lord Caitanya* – emailed to your inbox.

"I look forward to your daily *Bhagavad-gītā* texts and Srila Prabhupada's translations and purports thereon. I'm a financial comptroller at a large bank. I start my workday by first reading your emails prior to other emails. This gives me the right frame of mind to start my daily activities in this maya-laden material world."
—Vijay, Australia

Krishna.com/newsletters

Photo: © Pixattitude | Dreamstime.com

FOUNDER'S LECTURE

Paris, France – June 9, 1974

Approved Inquiry

by His Divine Grace A. C.
Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Founder-Ācārya of the International Society
for Krishna Consciousness

*Self-realized
souls direct us
to the most
profitable subject
for life's endless
questions and
answers.*

*śrī-śuka uvāca
varīyān eṣa te praśnaḥ
kṛto loka-hitam nṛpa
ātmavit-sammataḥ puṁsām
śrotavyādiṣu yaḥ paraḥ*

“Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King, your question is glorious because it is very beneficial to all kinds of people. The answer to this question is the prime subject matter of hearing, and it is approved by all transcendentalists.”

– Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 2.1.1

ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM is in the format of questions and answers. First of all it was narrated by Vyāsadeva and heard by his son, Śukadeva Gosvāmī. Then Śukadeva Gosvāmī narrated it to Parīkṣit Mahārāja at the time of



Parikṣit's death. Sūta Gosvāmī also heard it at that time. That is the way of the *paramparā* system, the system of disciplic succession.

Kṛṣṇa says in the Fourth Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.1–2):

*imam vivasvate yogam
proktavān aham avyayam
vivasvān manave prāha
manur ikṣvākave 'bravit*

*evam paramparā-prāptam
imam rājarṣayo viduḥ
sa kāleneha mahatā
yogo naṣṭaḥ parantapa*

“I instructed this imperishable science of yoga to the sun-god, Vivasvān, and Vivasvān instructed it to Manu, the father of mankind,

*jānāti tattvaṁ bhagavan-mahimno
na cānya eko 'pi ciram vicinvan*

“My Lord, if one is favored by even a slight trace of the mercy of Your lotus feet, he can understand the greatness of Your personality. But those who speculate to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead are unable to know You, even though they continue to study the *Vedas* for many years.” *Ciram vicinvan*. Even if you speculate for millions of years to understand God, it is not possible to understand Him that way. He is not a subject for speculative knowledge. Knowledge of God is to be received through the right source, by the deductive process, not the inductive process. Because our senses are limited,

Even if you speculate for millions of years to understand God, it is not possible to understand Him that way.

and Manu in turn instructed it to Ikṣvāku. This supreme science was thus received through the chain of disciplic succession, and the saintly kings understood it in that way. But in course of time the succession was broken, and therefore the science as it is appears to be lost.” These verses refer to the *paramparā* system.

Our Bhāgavata system, or Vedic system, unlike, for example, the system of the Theosophists, is not a matter of research work. They're searching for God. Since the beginning, they've been searching. So many leaders of their movement have come and gone, but the Theosophists are still searching. And they will go on searching for lifetimes. But God is not something to be searched out. He is not an ordinary thing, not a material thing.

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.14.29) Lord Brahmā says,

*athāpi te deva padāmbuja-dvaya-
prasāda-leśānughṛta eva hi*

we cannot have any perfect idea of God by relying on our senses and the inductive process.

There are two ways to acquire knowledge: *āroha-panthā* and *avaroha-panthā*. *Āroha-panthā* means to know something by the ascending process. People are trying to know the moon, Venus, and other planets. They're literally ascending into space to try to understand them. But they've been doing this for the last twenty years, and still they do not know the actual situation of the moon planet. They're going and returning. Actually, it is questionable whether they have gone. From the situation, it is understood they're not going. Maybe they are going to some other planet.

That is my opinion, because their description of the moon does not tally with the information we have from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The moon is one of the heavenly planets. The demigods, who are of a higher class than human beings, live

there. One who is elevated to the moon lives there for ten thousand years. There, one day is equal to our six months and the duration of life is ten thousand years of such days. The *karma-kāṇḍīyas* who perform Vedic ritualistic ceremonies very nicely are promoted to the moon.

There are seven upper planetary systems and seven lower planetary systems. We are living in Bhūrloka, in the middle. Above this is Bhuvārloka, then Svarloka, Janaloka, Maharloka, Tapoloka, and Brahmaloaka. According to the *sāstra*, the Vedic literature, you can go to higher planets such as Brahmaloaka or the sun only with the necessary qualifications. You are seeing the sun every day, but you cannot go there. You have no right.

Rascals say, “I shall go by my own strength. I shall know everything by dint of my own knowledge, my research work.” That is not possible.

So what to speak of understanding God? You cannot understand even what is in your presence, the material world, and the spiritual world is beyond the material sky. *Paras tasmāt tu bhāvaḥ anyaḥ* (*Gītā* 8.20). There is another sky. You have no estimation of that other sky. Even in the material world, you are seeing only one sky in one universe, but there are innumerable universes. And beyond the material world is the spiritual sky. There are also spiritual planets, Vaikuṅṭha planets. And above these Vaikuṅṭha planets is Kṛṣṇaloka, Kṛṣṇa's abode.

You cannot understand Kṛṣṇa – God – or His abode by the speculative, ascending process. That is not possible. You have to inquire from the proper authority.

The Duty of the Dying

Parikṣit Mahārāja inquired from Śukadeva Gosvāmī, “What is my duty now that I am going to die?”

Parikṣit Mahārāja was cursed by a *brāhmaṇa* boy to die in seven days. Parikṣit Mahārāja was quite competent to counteract the curse of the *brāhmaṇa* boy, but he decided, “I shall die.” He thought, “I

offended the boy's father, a *ṛṣi*, by placing a dead snake around his neck. His son has become angry and cursed me: ‘You have insulted my father, so die with this snake.’”

Parikṣit Mahārāja accepted the curse. He immediately left his kingdom, family, and everything and went down to the bank of the river Ganges. Because he was the king, many big, big men, great saintly persons, and even demigods came to see him at the last stage of his life, the last seven days.

Parikṣit Mahārāja was a devotee of Kṛṣṇa from childhood, so he asked Śukadeva Gosvāmī, “What is my duty in reference to knowing about Kṛṣṇa?”

His question is here being welcomed by Śukadeva Gosvāmī: “Your question – an inquiry about Kṛṣṇa – is very much welcome.”

Variyān eṣa te praśnaḥ. Praśna means question. “You have asked a question about Kṛṣṇa. It is very, very good.” Why? *Kṛto loka-hitam nṛpa*: “It is good for all of human society. Because you have inquired about Kṛṣṇa, I'll have to reply. People will hear, it will be recorded, and people will be benefitted.” *Loka-hitam*.

King Parikṣit is inquiring and Śukadeva Gosvāmī is answering. In another place, great saintly persons inquired and Sūta Gosvāmī replied. This kind of question and answer is *ātmavit-sammataḥ*. *Ātmavit* means self-realized. One who does not know what the self is, who does not know what he is, is an animal. “What am I? Am I this body? Or am I something other than this body?” If this inquiry is not there, one is not a human being; he's an animal. Animals cannot inquire. Cats and dogs cannot inquire, “What am I?”

Everyone who has a material body is suffering. That is the condition. If you have a material body, you must suffer. It is not a question of being European or American or white or black. Whether you are an animal or a man, as soon as you have a material body you must suffer. That is the material condition. Therefore our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is not meant for mitigat-

ing the so-called sufferings of the body. When there is a body, there must be suffering.

We should not be very much disturbed by the sufferings of the body. You'll have to suffer, even though you make a very nice arrangement. In European cities we see so many nice arrangements, with big, big houses, big, big roads, nice cars. If some Indian comes from an Indian village, he'll see, “It is heaven – such nice houses, such nice buildings, such nice cars.” But do you think you are not suffering? The rascal may think, “Here is heaven.” But those who are residing in this heaven know what kind of heaven it is. Suffering must be there as soon as you get a material body.

“Suffering? We are enjoying.”

What are you enjoying? Is there any guarantee that you'll enjoy? You have a nice building, a nice road, a nice car. That's all right. You are thinking you are enjoying. But is there any guarantee that you will enjoy? Any moment you'll be finished. Any moment. There is no guarantee.

A Strong Foundation

That is not enjoyment. Real enjoyment is permanent enjoyment. When a man constructs a house, he makes the foundation very strong.

“But what is *your* foundation, sir? Is it very strong? You can be taken away at any moment. Why don't you make your foundation strong to be able to live here permanently?”

But that intelligence he hasn't got. He'll waste time making the house foundation very strong, but not his own foundation. His foundation is tottering and may collapse at any second.

Persons with this kind of intelligence are called animals. The dog will live for six or ten years, but he is very proud: “I have a very nice master. *Gow! Gow!*” You see? This kind of intelligence is no good.

Therefore it is said here, *ātmavit-sammataḥ*. A question like Parikṣit's is approved by persons who are self-realized. *Ātmavit* means “one

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 millennia 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.”

BACK TO GODHEAD

Subscriber Service Information

Your satisfaction is our highest priority.

LET OUR BTG SERVICE CENTER HELP YOU WITH:

Renewing:

We will automatically notify you by mail when it's time to renew. If you prefer, you can even renew your subscription by calling us toll-free.

Gift Subscriptions:

An easy way to send a thoughtful gift! You can send a gift subscription of BTG to friends and family any time of the year. We'll also include an attractive gift card announcing your gift.

Change of Address:

If you are moving or taking a vacation, we'd be happy to change your address or suspend service temporarily.

Other Questions:

We'll gladly help you with these and any other questions you may have concerning your BTG subscription.

CONTACT US:

1-800-800-3284

BTG Service Center
P. O. Box 430
Alachua, FL 32616, USA
E-mail: btgsubs@krishna.com



<http://btg.krishna.com/subscriber-services>

who knows what he is." *Sammataḥ* means "approved."

Ātmavit sammataḥ puṁsāṁ śrotavyādiṣu yaḥ paraḥ. Paraḥ means "superior." We are accustomed to hear so many things. We are hankering to hear the radio or the record album or the news from the newspaper. We are always anxious, very anxious, to hear the news. In your country especially, millions of big newspapers are printed just to satisfy the desire to hear what is going on in the world. But after seeing one or two pages, you throw it away, because the news is hackneyed. You know there was political strife, there was a fire, there was a burglary, there was this, there was that. The same story. *Carvita-carvaṇānām*: chewing the chewed.

This kind of hearing will not give me pleasure. Therefore here it is said, *śrotavyādiṣu yaḥ paraḥ*. This *kṛṣṇa-praśna* – questions and answers about Kṛṣṇa – is not ordinary questions and answers. It is not ordinary hearing. It is *ātmavit-sammataḥ*. The self-realized will understand its value; they will approve of it, because it is transcendental: *śrotavyādiṣu yaḥ paraḥ*.

Someone may say, "There are many subjects for hearing, and this is just one of them."

Śukadeva Gosvāmī says, "No, this is *paraḥ*, transcendental, the most superior questions and answers for hearing."

In the next verse Śukadeva Gosvāmī says,

*śrotavyādīni rājendra
nṛṇāṁ santi sahasraśaḥ
apaśyatām ātma-tattvaṁ
grheṣu grha-medhinām*

"Those persons who are materially engrossed, being blind to the knowledge of ultimate truth, have many subject matters for hearing in human society, O Emperor." *Rājendra* means "the best of kings." Parikṣit Mahārāja was the best of kings. He is preparing for death. He does not think, "I am now the king. I'll die, and I shall again become the king." He does not think foolishly

like that. He knows, "I may be the king in this life, and in the next life I may be a dog."

He's *ātmavit*: he knows *ātmā*, the soul. The destination of the soul after death is under the control of nature. You cannot say, "This time I am a very good-looking French boy or girl. In the next life I shall become the same."

Crows Worshiping Napoleon

Everyone has love for his country. That is the modern civilization. In your country, Napoleon loved his country so much. Now you do not know where he is. You simply have a statue. And you are thinking, "I am worshiping Napoleon."

You do not actually worship him. Real worship is as we are doing here in this temple. If you want to worship Napoleon, you must keep him in this way, as we are keeping the deity. But no, you keep him on the street, and the crows pass stool on him. That is not worship; that is insult.

This modern civilization has no common sense. If you are worshiping Napoleon, why do you keep him like that? We are worshiping Kṛṣṇa, and we are keeping Him in a nice place.

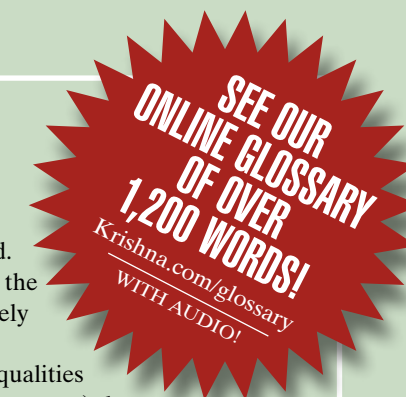
They will say, "It is idol worship. These foolish people are worshiping an idol."

And they are worshiping Napoleon very nicely. Just see their intelligence.

The opinion of persons who are not *ātmavit* has no value. We don't care for their opinion. Approval should be from persons who are self-realized. Their opinion has value. A rascal says, "In my opinion." What is the value of your opinion? We don't accept your opinion. We take the opinion of Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa's devotee.

Śukadeva Gosvāmī says, "My dear King, the subject for hearing by ordinary, common men, is many thousands of questions and answers." That is life. A businessman asks, "What is the rate of this commodity?" And another man *(please turn to page 26)*

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. (Cited as *Gītā*.)
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.
Darśana—"viewing," audience with a deity or saintly person.
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.
Māyāvādī—one who regards the Absolute Truth as ultimately impersonal.
Modes of nature—the three qualities (goodness, passion, and ignorance) that hold sway over all action in the material world.
Nityānanda—the incarnation of Lord Balarāma who appeared with Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
Prasāda—vegetarian food that has been prepared for the Lord and offered to Him with devotion.
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.
Śāstra—scriptures, especially the Vedic scriptures of India.
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. (Cited as *Bhāg.*)
Supersoul—the form of the Lord who resides in every heart along with the individual soul.
Vaiṣṇava—a devotee of the Supreme Lord (from the word *Viṣṇu*).
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 *sūdras* (laborers and artisans). The members of the four *āśramas* are the *brahmacārīs* (celibate students), *gṛhasthas* (married people), *vānaprasthas* (retired people), and *sannyāsīs* (renunciants).
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.
Vṛndāvana—the transcendental abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa, mirrored on earth as the town in India where Kṛṣṇa appeared five thousand years ago.

THE NATURE OF THE SELF

A Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Understanding

Vaiṣṇava Vedānta resolves an apparent contradiction in the Upaniṣads, which assert both the identity of the individual soul and the Supreme Soul and the difference between them.

by Ravindra Svarūpa Dāsa



The Sparks of God

THE SOUL, or self (*ātmā*), is described as a separated, minute fragment of God, the Supersoul (*paramātmā*). God is like a fire; the individual souls, sparks of the fire. As the analogy suggests, the self and the Superself are simultaneously one with and different from each other. They are the same in quality, for both the soul and the Supersoul are *brahman*, spirit. Yet they differ in quantity, since the Superself (*param brahman* – “supreme *brahman*” – in *Bhagavad-gītā* 10.12) is infinitely great while the individual selves are infinitesimally small.

In the *Upaniṣads* some texts assert the identity of the individual soul and the Supreme Soul, while others speak of the difference between them. The way the Vaiṣṇava Vedānta resolves this apparent contradiction recognizes identity and difference as equally real.

Such a reconciliation is conveyed in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (2.2.13) in the words *nityo nityānām cetanaś cetanānām eko bahūnām yo vidadhāti kāmān*: “There is one eternal being out of many eternal, one conscious being out of many conscious beings. It is the one who provides for the needs of the many.” This text states, in effect, that there is a class division in transcendence. It says that there are two categorically different types of eternal, conscious – hence, spiritual – beings. One category is singular in number (*nityo*), a set with only one member. This, then, is the category of God, who is one without a second. The other class is plural (*nityānām*), containing innumerable members. This is the category of the souls. The members of both classes are *brahman*, spirit. Yet one of them is unique, peerless, in a class by Himself, for He is the singular, independent self-sustaining sustainer of all others. Each of the others possesses a multitude of peers, and all of them alike are intrinsically dependent upon the one. The one is absolute; the many are relative.

The Energies of the Absolute

Fundamental to the Vaiṣṇava Vedānta is the doctrine that the Absolute Truth possesses energies. (The impersonalistic Advaita Vedānta, in contrast,

denies the reality of the energies.) The energies are divided into different categories; one of them comprises the innumerable individual souls.

The “Absolute Truth” denotes that from which everything emanates, by which it is sustained, and to which it finally returns. The products of the Absolute are thought of as its *śakti*, its energy or potency. Heat and light, for example, are considered the “energies” of fire. Just as the sun projects itself everywhere by its radiation yet remains apart, so the Absolute expands its own energies to produce (and, in a fashion, to become) the world while remaining separate from it. Unlike the sun, the Absolute can emanate

original home is the spiritual kingdom. Almost all souls dwell there. These are called eternally liberated souls. Only a tiny minority of souls inhabit this material world. These are called fallen, or conditioned, souls.

Souls are small samples of God. Hence they possess a minute quantity of that freedom which God possesses in full. Although they are eternal, full of knowledge and bliss, and although their dharma, or essential nature, is to serve God, they may still, in the exercise of that freedom, willfully turn away from divine service. Thereupon these souls fall into the inhospitable realm of the external, material energy.

Souls are small samples of God. Hence they possess a minute quantity of that freedom which God possesses in full.

unlimited energy and remain undiminished. (The arithmetic of the Absolute: one minus one equals one.) In short, while nothing is different from God, God is different from everything.

The host of souls makes up the category of divine energy called the *taṭasthā-śakti*. *Taṭasthā* means “bank,” as of a river or lake. *Taṭasthā* means “situated on the bank.” The souls are characterized as marginal or borderline energy because they are, as it were, between two worlds. They can dwell within either of the other two major energies, the internal (*antaraṅgā-śakti*) and the external (*bahiraṅgā-śakti*). The internal potency is also known as the spiritual energy (*cit-śakti*), and the external potency is also called the material energy (*māyā-śakti*). The internal potency expands as the transcendental realm, the eternal kingdom of God. The external potency expands as the material world, which is sometimes manifest and sometimes unmanifest.

Because souls are spiritual, their

Because souls are constitutionally servants, even the rebellious souls remain under God’s control, but that control is now exercised indirectly and unfavorably through the agency of material nature. Souls do not have the freedom not to be controlled by God, but they do choose freely how they wish to be controlled. Those who will not voluntarily be controlled by the Lord are controlled involuntarily by material nature. For this reason spiritual souls become incarcerated within matter. Under the superintendence of the Lord there is a confluence of the marginal and the external energies, and the creation arises.

Spirits in the Material World

The presence of spirit within the material world is disclosed immediately to us by consciousness. Consciousness is the symptom of the soul. It is the current or the energy of the soul. Consciousness does not arise as a byproduct of the material

energy. A material object like a table or chair is entirely an object and in no way a subject. It does not undergo experiences. It has no significance for itself. An embodied soul, a living being, on the other hand, is a subject; it has significance for itself as well as for others; it undergoes experiences. The claim that the soul is a “metaphysical entity” beyond all possible experience is simply false. Not only do we experience the soul; the soul is the very condition for our having any experiences at all.

Thus, souls are fundamental, irreducible entities in the world. Each living, conscious being is of a different category from the material energy which embodies and surrounds it. The *Upaniṣads* declare *ahaṁ brahmāsmi*: “I am brahman; I am spirit.” The corollary is: “I am not matter.” And further: “I am not this body.” Human beings achieve their full potential when they realize this.

The material elements, of which living bodies are made, are traditionally given as eight: earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence, and false ego. They are arranged in sequence from the grossest to the subtlest, that is, from the most apparent to our senses to the least. The first five are the gross elements (*mahā-bhūtas*); the last three, the subtle elements (*sukṣma-bhūtas*). The gross elements become more intelligible to us when translated as: solids, liquids, gases, radiant energy, and space. The subtle elements, taken together, make up what we in the West generally call the “mind.” The subtle element *manas*, or mind, is the locus of habit, of normal thinking, feeling, and willing according to one’s established mind-set. *Buddhi*, or intelligence, is the higher faculty of discrimination and judgment; it determines mind-sets and comes to the fore when we undergo conversions or paradigm shifts. *Ahaṅkāra*, or the sense of self, is the faculty by which the embodied soul assumes a false or illusory identity in the material world.

Conditioned souls attain human form after transmigrating upward

through the scale of beings; thereupon they become capable of self-realization and liberation. Liberation means giving up the false identification of the self with the gross and subtle material coils and regaining one’s original spiritual form as a servant of God.

Even in the conditioned state, the soul always remains a spiritual being. Like a dreamer who projects his identity onto an illusory dream-self, the conditioned soul acquires a false self of matter. Although the self is by nature eternal, full of knowledge and full of bliss, this nature becomes covered by illusion. Identifying with the material body, the soul is plunged into the nightmare of history, trapped in the revolutions of repeated birth and death (*mṛtyu-saṁsāra*). This false identification by the embodied souls with their psychophysical coverings is the cause of all their suffering.

The quest by conditioned souls for happiness in this world inevitably fails. The eternal souls naturally seek eternal happiness, yet they seek it where all happiness is temporary. The fulfillment of the most common and basic desire, that of self-preservation, has not once met with success. Indeed, the deluded souls do not know that matters are just the opposite of the way they seem. Gratification of the senses is in fact the generator of suffering, not happiness. This is because each act of sense gratification intensifies the soul’s false identification with the body. Consequently, when the body undergoes disease, senescence, and death, the materially absorbed living beings experience all these as happening to themselves. Death is an illusion they have imposed upon themselves owing to their desire to enjoy in this world. So enjoying, their agony continues unabated. A mind brimming with unfulfilled yearnings propels them, at the time of death, into new material bodies, to begin yet another round.

Recovering the Authentic Self

Fallen souls have been granted a false material identity because

they reject their authentic spiritual identity. The traces of that rejection are found everywhere. We see that all organisms, from microbes on up, are driven by the mechanism of desire and hate, by “approach” and “avoidance.” This duality is the reverberation of the original sinful will that propelled them into this world. The original sinful desire is “Why can’t I be God?” And the original sinful hate, “Why should Kṛṣṇa be God?”

When souls evince the desire to become the Lord, the Lord responds by granting them the illusion of independent lordship. They enter the material kingdom, to be provided with a sequence of false identities – costumes fabricated out of material energy – along with

an inventory of objects which they think they can dominate and enjoy. Even so, the Lord accompanies them in their wanderings, dwelling in their hearts as He works to bring about their eventual rectification and return from exile. When the soul in the depth of his being again turns to God, the Lord makes all arrangements for his inauthentic, illusory life to end.

The renovation of real life is called *bhakti-yoga* – reconnecting the soul with the Supersoul (yoga) by loving devotional service (*bhakti*). *Bhakti* rests upon the principle that desire and activity are not in themselves bad. The soul itself is the source of desire and activity. The original, pure desire of the soul is to satisfy the senses of the

60



years

of Back to Godhead magazine

ONLY
\$19.95

NOW AVAILABLE ON DVD!

- Includes every issue from 1944 to 2004
- View over 14,000 pages from 342 issues as Adobe PDF files
- Index of magazine covers
- Index of over 3,000 articles
- Index of authors
- Do word and string searches
- 1 double-sided DVD-ROM disk with over 6 GBs of information
- Compatible with both PC and Mac



Order online at www.Krishna.com/store, or call 800-800-3284

Lord. This is called *prema*, or love. When souls contact matter, their love becomes transformed into lust (*kāma*), which is the desire to satisfy one's own senses. The practice of *bhakti-yoga* reconverts lust into love. Desire is not suppressed or repressed; it is purified. One may call this "sublimation," but it should be understood that when desire is thus sublimated it returns to its own natural and aboriginal state.

The world, the body with its senses, and the sense objects are not to be enjoyed, but neither are they to be renounced. The world is God's energy, and it should not be decried as false or evil. Rather, the elements of this world are to be engaged in divine service. When that is done, the veil of illusion is lifted, and everything and everyone is

desires, there is no further birth for them in this world. Instead, they attain their original spiritual forms in the kingdom of God, spiritual bodies suitable for pastimes of love with the Lord.

Spirits in the Spiritual World

The Absolute Truth has both an impersonal and a personal feature, but the personal feature is the last word in Godhead. To say the Absolute is a person is to say that it has senses (*indriyas*). Traditionally, the senses are ten: those through which the world acts upon us (instruments of hearing, touching, seeing, tasting, and smelling), and those through which we act upon the world (instruments of manipulation, locomotion, sound production, repro-

duction, and evacuation). The mind is often considered the eleventh sense. A body, accordingly, may be thought of as an array of senses organized around a center of consciousness. Thus, to say that the Absolute is a person is to say that the Absolute has body or form.

The body of God is not material. It is a spiritual or transcendental form – *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*, an eternal form of bliss and knowledge. Though differentiated by limbs or parts, a spiritual body is nevertheless completely unified and identical with its own possessor. Therefore, in God there is no difference between body and soul, mind and body, soul and mind. Every limb or part of that body can perform all functions of every other limb.

Because the Absolute is a person, the souls, the offspring of God, are also persons, and they fully manifest their authentic identity only in relationship with the Supreme Person. When conditioned souls act under the impetus of sense gratification, their bodies evolve materially. But when the souls act in their constitutional position, their love toward God displays itself as the souls' proper spiritual bodies. Thus, the selves achieve their full personal identity and self-expression as lovers of God.

All relationships in this world are dim and perverted reflections of their real prototypes in the kingdom of God. The taste or flavor of a relationship is called *rasa* (literally, "juice"). It is said that there are five primary *rasas* a soul can have with the Lord. In order of increasing intimacy, they are passive adoration, servitorship, and fraternal, parental, and conjugal love.

God and His devotees engage in eternal pastimes of loving exchanges in spiritual forms that are sheer embodiments of *rasa*. Such bodies are the unmediated concrete expressions of spiritual ecstasies. These unceasing, un-

interrupted, ever-increasing variegated ecstasies are nondifferent from the souls and from the spiritual bodies that bear them. The forms and activities of the Lord and His devotees all possess transcendental specificity and variegatedness. The forms of love are not abstractions and their relations are not allegories. In the kingdom of God life is infinitely more full, vivid, and real than anything of the thin shadows that flicker here, on and off. Here, we are not what we are. There, we are truly ourselves again because we are truly God's. 🙏

Ravindra Svarūpa Dāsa, an ISKCON initiating guru and emeritus member of the Society's Governing Body Commission, holds a Ph.D. in religion from Temple University in Philadelphia. He lives in Potomac, Maryland.

This article was originally a paper presented at a Vaiṣṇava-Christian conference in the U.K.

The body of God is not material. It is a spiritual or transcendental form – *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*, an eternal form of bliss and knowledge.

seen in its true identity: in relationship to God. The way to see divinity everywhere and in everything is to use everything in the Lord's service. God is the first of fact, but our materially contaminated senses cannot perceive Him. When, however, the senses become purified by being engaged in the Lord's service, they regain their capacity to perceive God directly.

Such purified souls are fully joyful. They neither hanker nor lament. Their happiness does not depend upon the course of circumstance. They see all living beings as the same. They see that all the agony and hopelessness of the world is exorcised when the illusion that has rendered us oblivious of our own identity is dispelled, and they engage themselves in the highest welfare work of rousing sleeping souls from their nightmare. For themselves, they take no mind of what becomes of the future of their lives.

Because they have no material

e-Krishna

Profiles of Kṛṣṇa-related websites



www.gitadaily.com is an online version of the book *The Gita for Daily Enrichment*, by Back to Godhead associate editor Caitanya Carāṇa Dāsa. The aim of the site is to present insights from the *Bhagavad-gītā* for your daily reflection. Each article is based on a verse and a theme from the *Gītā*. As each article is only around three hundred words long, it can easily be read in a few minutes. As an added bonus many of the daily articles come with a video offering further insights into the *Gītā* verses.

If you know someone interested in delving into the wisdom of the *Gītā*, or if you want a way to start your day with the illumination of Vedic knowledge, then you will find this website a valuable addition to your Internet bookmarks.

When you open the site, the latest *Gītā* verse and article are at the top of the page. You can scroll down and look at the verses and associated articles from previous days. If you click on the verse number, highlighted in red, you can view previous articles about that verse.

By clicking on the numbers across the top of the page, you can browse for insights into your favorite chapters. There is also a search box that allows you to use key words to find information you may be interested in.

At any point, you can always get back to the home page by clicking on the title bar at the top of every page.

In the column on the right of the page are links to a number of articles about the *Gītā* and Śrīla Prabhupāda, as well as information about the author of the site. Under the section *Subscribe for Gita Daily*, you can enter your email address and receive a verse and insights for your reflection in your inbox every day.

There is also a handy Sanskrit pronunciation guide that shows you where the tongue should be on your palate to correctly make each sound.

Further down the right-hand column there are more browsing tools that let you find articles from a particular month or day or on a particular verse.

In the *Recent Comments* section you can read the thoughts and insights of other readers.

At the end of the column, you can click to buy a copy of the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, or get your own copy of *The Gita for Daily Enrichment*.

Down at the very bottom of the page is a list of featured articles describing important points made in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. There is also a list of random daily articles that changes every time you load the page.

It's hard to wait to receive one article each day when there is so much of interest to look at. You could easily spend hours using this website to reflect on the vast wisdom presented by Lord Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

– Antony Brennan

RASA

The Taste of Devotion

Only in our relationship with Kṛṣṇa can we achieve the full satisfaction that escapes us in the temporary things of this world.

by Navīna Śyāma Dāsa

THE CONCEPT of *rasa* is pivotal to understanding Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava philosophy, but it is elusive and often misunderstood. Śrīla Prabhupāda followed the example of his guru, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, and translated this Sanskrit term (a noun) as “mellow.” In American slang, mellow is an adjective meaning “laid back” or “relaxed.” Both *ācāryas* use it as a noun, perhaps drawing on the word’s standard definition as “soft, sweet, and full-flavored from ripeness, as fruit.” With this understanding, a more functional (albeit less poetic) translation of *rasa* – and one Śrīla Prabhupāda also used – is “taste.” Although the overtones of sweetness and liquidity are thus lost, in the interest of clarity I will use the term

taste rather than *mellow* throughout most of this article.

By *taste* we do not indicate merely the flavor of food, but taste in the broadest sense of the word. *Rasa* is the pleasure we derive from an experience or relationship. As such, it is the impetus for everything we do; in all our endeavors, we act out of the desire to relish a particular *rasa*. In the mundane world, *rasa* is experienced both physically and socially. Our five senses elicit *rasa* by coming in contact with desirable objects. For example, I can experience a certain taste by eating a juicy peach, by looking at the full moon rising over Niagara Falls, or by scratching the warm body of a baby calf. Each of these activities produces a distinctive feeling and provides a unique type of pleasure. These feelings exemplify *rasa* on the physical level.

We also experience *rasa* through relationships. By conversing with an old friend or helping teach my young child to walk, I also “taste” something. Notice, however, that the experience varies from one relationship to another. I might describe myself as happy in both cases, but it’s not the same kind of happiness. This kind of *rasa* can be considered social, in that it involves interactions with other people rather than merely with objects. Of course, the physical pleasures described in the last paragraph may also evoke social *rasa* (the moon might remind me of camping with my family as a child), and social pleasures may also involve physical *rasa* (I might enjoy the sensation of

holding my child’s hand while she walks), but one dimension or the other usually characterizes our experience more strongly.

The Source of Rasas

What is the source of these various *rasas*, and of our incessant desire to taste them? Vaiṣṇava philosophy holds that the physical and social *rasas* of this world are merely reflections of the original *rasas* of the transcendental realm, the pursuit of which is the natural proclivity of the soul. And what is the object from which (or, more accurately, whom) we elicit this sublimely pleasurable taste? It is Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the *akhila rasāmṛta mūrti* – the embodiment of all wonderful ambrosial *rasas*. By taking a closer look at the process of relishing spiritual *rasa* centered on Kṛṣṇa, we will be able to more clearly understand how mundane *rasa* operates and how it falls short of its perfect original counterpart.

As living beings, we are dependent and incomplete emanations from Kṛṣṇa, the perfectly independent and eternally complete origin of everything. Like Him, we are inherently pleasure-seeking, but, unlike Him, we are not self-satisfied, and our only happiness lies in maintaining our connection with Him. And, in our natural state, we are indeed able to derive unending spiritual *rasa* by engaging in loving exchanges with the Lord. Of course, there are many flavors of this *rasa*, and no two living entities enjoy quite the same blend. Each of us has an eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa in which we enjoy a particular taste. We may be in an inactive, neutral relationship with Him, or we may be His servant, friend, parent, or lover. Within each of these basic designations, further variety is introduced through seven kinds of interaction one may have with the Lord, in which one can experience laughter, astonishment, chivalry, lamentation, anger, fear, dread, or some combination of these. As a result, *rasa* comes in infinite flavors. (It is important

Devotees related to Lord Kṛṣṇa as servants (left) fan Him with cāmaras as He enters Dwarka, His capital city. Right: In the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.12.11) Śukadeva Gosvāmī has observed, “The cowherd boys, having accumulated the results of pious activities for many lives, were able to associate in this way with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. How can one explain their great fortune?”



Paintings by Puṣkara Dāsa (left) and Dhṛti Devi Dāsi (right)

to note the inclusion of supposedly negative emotions in the above list. In the absolute world, even these give pleasure rather than pain.)

So much for our natural situation in the kingdom of God. Down here, our innate propensity to seek pleasure through tasting *rasa* is misdirected. Without Kṛṣṇa in the picture, we turn to material objects and mundane relationships as independent sources of happiness. The process, however, remains the same. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura gives the example of eating a rasgulla, a pop-

ular Bengali sweet. He explains that the rasgulla takes the place of Kṛṣṇa as the object we are depending on to find pleasure. Just as living beings in the spiritual world elicit various tastes from Kṛṣṇa by serving Him in different relationships and moods, we elicit various forms of pleasure from the rasgulla by using our different senses: With our eyes we enjoy its white roundness, with our nose we enjoy its rosy scent, with our fingers we enjoy its soft squishiness, and with our tongue we enjoy its scrump-

tious taste. The same applies for social *rasa*. When we find pleasure through everyday interactions with friends and family members, we are using them as substitutes for Kṛṣṇa.

Corrupted Rasa

At this point, one may wonder how it is possible for us to derive any kind of *rasa* from matter or other tiny living entities. It is one thing to get pleasure from Kṛṣṇa, the complete whole and original embodiment of all *rasas*, but what can these

inferior replacements offer? On their own, nothing. Nevertheless, out of His kindness, Kṛṣṇa imbues them with a tiny portion of His energy – His illusory external energy – so that we fallen souls can find, in some small degree and in a distorted form, that which we abandoned the spiritual world for in search of pleasure without Him.

As might be expected, however, given our original spiritual identity, the corrupted and indirect *rasa* we taste by thus lording it over matter is nowhere near as satisfying as the

genuine *rasa* that comes from serving the Lord. Indeed, that is the lesson to be learned in this world. Any pleasure we derive from mundane objects and relationships is only the insubstantial shadow of what Kṛṣṇa can offer us. We simply have to let Him back into the picture and reawaken our dormant loving relationship with Him. Once we do, even our interactions with objects and other people will become spiritualized, and we'll enjoy an unending cascade of flavorful mellows of every variety. As the Vedic apho-

rism states, *raso vai saḥ, rasam̐ hy evāyam̐ labdhvānandī bhavati*: “He Himself is *rasa*. And certainly one who achieves this *rasa* becomes *ānandī*, filled with bliss.” (*Taittirīya Upaniṣad* 2.7.1) 🌸

Navīna Śyāma Dāsa is a disciple of His Holiness Bhakti Cāru Swami. His family lives in ISKCON's Radha Kalachandji community in Dallas, where he is an attorney with the United States Department of Labor and where his daughter attends TKG Academy.

Paintings by Muralidhara Dāsa (left) and Dhṛti Devi Dāsi (right)

Nanda Mahārāja and Yaśoda-mayī (left) serve Lord Kṛṣṇa as His parents, and the Lord acts like an ordinary, dependent child. Right: In the mood of amorous love, Kṛṣṇa enjoys the most intimate loving exchanges with Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and Her gopī friends.



What Does GOD Sound Like?

“O lotus-eyed one, Your sweet voice and charming words, which attract the minds of the intelligent, are bewildering us more and more.”

– Gopīs to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.31.8

by Satyarāja Dāsa

IT MIGHT SEEM NAIVE to wonder what God sounds like, to speculate about the tone of His voice and the language He employs when communicating with those near and dear. Because He is transcendental, we know He is beyond mundane sounds. Most religious people would simply say that when God communicates, He does so in unmistakable tones, and they leave it at that. Extrapolating freely, we can say that He speaks the language of love, and anyone who communicates with Him purely, sincerely – in any language, any pitch – will be understood and can have a back-and-forth with Him based on their own devotion. And this is certainly true as far as it goes.

And yet, historically, God has communicated in specific ways with those who love Him. In the West, Judaeo-Christian scholarship theorizes an ancient divine language, a spiritual proto-dialect that predates human speech. Jews and Christians have traditionally wondered about the language of Adam, who gave names to all living things (Genesis 2:19). It is usually suggested that the early form of language he used deviated slightly from God’s very own system of verbalization. In the early books of the Bible, God uses language during creation, a language medieval



By pure chanting, we can experience Kṛṣṇa in the sound of His names, which are identical with Him and which can thus reveal not only the sound of His voice, but His form, qualities, activities, and so on.

CALENDAR

This calendar is calculated for Mayapur, West Bengal, India. The dates, derived from a lunar calendar, may vary by one day for other locations. For the exact dates for your area, go to www.krishnadays.com.

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 Nārāyaṇa (December 7–January 5)

JANUARY

1 – Putradā Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

Month of Mādhava (January 6–February 3)

10 – Appearance anniversary of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

11 – Disappearance anniversary of Jayadeva Gosvāmī, a great spiritual master and author of *Gīta-govinda*.

12 – Disappearance anniversary of Locana Dāsa Ṭhākura, a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa known for his Bengali devotional songs.

17 – Ṣaṭ-tilā Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

24 – Appearance anniversary of Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana. Disappearance anniversary of Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, a Vaiṣṇava spiritual master and author who appeared in the sev-

enteenth century. Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Viṣṇu-priyā Devī, the consort of Lord Caitanya.

26 – Appearance anniversary of Śrī Advaita Ācārya, an incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa's expansion Mahā-Viṣṇu and a close associate of Lord Caitanya. Fasting till noon.

28 – Disappearance anniversary of Śrīpāda Madhvācārya, a Vaiṣṇava philosopher and spiritual master who appeared in the thirteenth century.

29 – Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Rāmānujācārya, an eleventh-century philosopher and spiritual master.

30 – Bhaimī Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans. Fasting till noon for Lord Varāha's appearance day tomorrow. Feast tomorrow.

31 – Appearance of Lord Varāha, Lord Kṛṣṇa's boar incarnation.

FEBRUARY

1 – Appearance anniversary of Lord Nityānanda Prabhu, a close associate of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and an incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa's elder brother, Lord Balarāma. Fasting till noon.

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

Month of Govinda (February 4–March 5)

9 – Appearance anniversary of Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, the spiritual master of A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Fasting till noon, then feasting.

15 – Vijayā Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

16 – Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Īśvara Purī, Lord Caitanya's spiritual master.

18 – Śrī Śiva Rātri, a day in honor of Lord Śiva.

19 – Disappearance anniversary of Jagannātha Dāsa Bābāji, the great devotee in the disciplic line from Lord Caitanya who confirmed Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's discovery of Caitanya's birthplace.

MARCH

1 – Amalaki-vrata Ekādaśī Fasting from grains and beans.

2 – Disappearance anniversary of Mādhavendra Purī, the spiritual master of Lord Caitanya's spiritual master.

5 – Śrī Gaura Pūrṇimā, the appearance anniversary of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is Kṛṣṇa Himself in the role of His own devotee. Fasting till moonrise.

Jewish authorities assumed was Hebrew. Since it is clearly indicated that He uses language, some have pondered related questions: Is His voice deep or high? Would it always please the ear?

Christian scholars say that Jesus spoke Aramaic as his primary language and probably knew Hebrew and Greek as well. Because of Jesus's intimate relationship with God, Christian scholars often say that his language must be the same one that God uses. But there is no evidence for this in biblical literature.

When we turn to Vedic sources, as in, for example, the *R̥g Veda* (1.164.45), we learn of four kinds of sound: *parā, paśyanti, madhyama,* and *vaikhari*. These correlate with four states of consciousness: *turiya*

for chanting this *mahā-mantra*. It springs automatically from the spiritual platform, and as such, anyone can take part in the chanting without any previous qualification, and dance in ecstasy." Prabhupāda is essentially saying that the sound of Kṛṣṇa's name is transcendental, or of the *turiya* variety, without any connection to the three lower forms of sound.

Since Kṛṣṇa is absolute, His form and the sound of His name are identical. And so, because the *mahā-mantra* is Kṛṣṇa in the form of sound, hearing or uttering that sound with a pure heart gives practitioners an auditory experience of Him. This is true of any selfless prayer chanted with devotion. By perfecting one's chanting, one can come to see the Lord in all His glory.

Sanskrit language, which is spoken in the cities of the demigods – as well as other worldly languages, including those of the animals – is called a wonderful linguist. It appears from this statement that Kṛṣṇa can also speak and understand the languages of the animals. An old woman in Vṛndāvana, present at the time of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, once stated in surprise, "How wonderful it is that Kṛṣṇa, who owns the hearts of all the young girls of Vrajabhūmi, can nicely speak the language of Vrajabhūmi with the *gopīs*, while in Sanskrit He speaks with the demigods, and in the language of the animals He can even speak with the cows and buffalo! Similarly, in the language of the Kashmir Province, and with the parrots and other birds, as well

as in most common languages, Kṛṣṇa is so expressive!" She inquired from the *gopīs* as to how Kṛṣṇa had become so expert in speaking so many different types of languages.

In other words, Kṛṣṇa speaks all languages. This fact harkens back to a more general conception of God – that He hears and understands whatever we say, especially if we communicate with Him in a mood of love and devotion. But here we learn specifically how Kṛṣṇa employs this talent and of some instances when He does so.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī wrote many books besides *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, including dramas. In these, Kṛṣṇa is depicted as speaking with some people in Prākṛta (the language of ordinary people) and with others in Sanskrit. Prabhupāda said that when Kṛṣṇa was in Vraja, some five thousand years ago, He spoke Vraja-bhāṣa, the local language of the cowherds spoken even today. And yet when conversing with Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, He spoke in poetic Sanskrit, as both scholars and demigods still do when they find it

Unlike other religious traditions, Vaiṣṇavism affords a scientific procedure of just how to do this, and a close study of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books, all gleaned from the Vedic literature, will disclose methods of practice that put one in direct touch with the Supreme Lord. The specificity or particularity of Vaiṣṇavism's divine revelation of God through sound is unparalleled in the history of religion. We get to know who God is and, through intimate proximity, what He sounds like.

Kṛṣṇa the Linguist

For example, in Chapter 21 of Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, as summarized by Śrīla Prabhupāda in *The Nectar of Devotion*, we find details about Kṛṣṇa as a transcendental polyglot:

Rūpa Gosvāmī says that a person who knows the languages of different countries, especially the

Because the *mahā-mantra* is Kṛṣṇa in the form of sound, hearing or uttering that sound with a pure heart gives an auditory experience of Him.

(transcendental), *suśupti* (intellectual), *svapna* (mental), and *jāgrata* (physical). The first of these is spiritual, the next two are subtle, usually employed by beings on higher planets, and the final variety is grossly material, used by beings on lower and middle planets, such as earth. God, of course, can use any of these methods to communicate with beings of this world, and we in turn can use any to communicate with Him.

Śrīla Prabhupāda says that chanting the *mahā-mantra* – Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare – "is directly enacted from the spiritual platform, and thus this sound vibration surpasses all lower strata of consciousness – namely sensual, mental, and intellectual. There is no need, therefore, to understand the language of the mantra, nor is there any need for mental speculation or any intellectual adjustment

appropriate. In fact, as Prabhupāda informs us, Kṛṣṇa sometimes speaks this same sophisticated language on His own planet in the spiritual

world: "Yes, Sanskrit is spoken not only on Kṛṣṇaloka but also in higher planets of the demigods." (Letter, February 1, 1968)

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu revealed something even more specific about Kṛṣṇa's voice: (please turn to page 47)

APPROVED INQUIRY

(continued from page 10)

answers, “This is the price.” And he replies, “If it is favorable, purchase it.”

This is going on. But the exchange between Parīkṣit Mahārāja and Śukadeva Gosvāmī is not that kind of question and answer. Nor is it about a radio message or a football club or so many things. These things are meant for the common class of men, who have many, many thousands of questions and answers.

Why do they have so many topics for thousands of questions and answers when we have only one topic: Kṛṣṇa? That is answered by the word *grha-medhīnām*. In Vedic language there are two words for married people: *grhamedhī* and *grhashta*. *Grhashta* is the general word for those who are householders, living with family. In this age, and especially in western countries, to take *sannyāsa*, the renounced order of life, is very difficult. Actually, in this age *sannyāsa* is for-

bidden unless one is very strong spiritually. It is better to remain a *grhashta* and cultivate Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Don't accept *sannyāsa* whimsically and then do all kinds of nonsense.

But don't become a *grhamedhī*. A *grhamedhī* does not know anything other than supporting a family and living very comfortably. Life centers on the home. A *grhashta* knows Kṛṣṇa. A *grhamedhī* has thousands of questions and answers centered on family life. But a *grhashta* has one topic for questions and answers: Kṛṣṇa.

In our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement we don't talk of just anything. We simply talk of Kṛṣṇa. And if we talk of Kṛṣṇa for a hundred years, we will not be finished. We have so many books. If we try to understand one word of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, then it will take a hundred years. You can try to understand the opening words of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* – *janmādy asya yataḥ* – for one hundred years.

Go on reading both *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā* every day. The more you become realized, *ātmavit*, the more you'll see new meaning, new light. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is so nice.

What is the limit of learning? The limit is when you understand *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. No more knowledge required. Therefore it is called *śrotavyādiṣu yaḥ paraḥ*: the ultimate, first class.

Grhamedhīs do not know that there is the soul and the soul is permanent. We are hankering after happiness. For whose happiness? It is the soul's happiness. It is Kṛṣṇa's happiness. We try to protect the body. We are very fond of the body. Why? Because the soul is there. Everyone knows it. As soon as there is no soul in the body, it is kicked out. Throw it away in the street. Nobody cares for it. Suppose the bodies of a beautiful man and a beautiful girl are lying dead in the street. Who cares for them? But as long as the soul is there – “Oh, such a beautiful boy, such a beautiful girl.” The soul is important.

So actually, we love the soul. This is the fact. This is *ātmavit*. And why do we love the soul? Because we love Kṛṣṇa. The soul is part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa. So why are we so fond of the soul? Because it is part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore ultimately we love Kṛṣṇa. This is the conclusion. And if we do not love Kṛṣṇa, that is an abnormal stage. The normal stage is to love Kṛṣṇa.

Therefore we are trying to awaken people's Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As soon as one is fixed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and begins to love Kṛṣṇa, then he doesn't want to love anything separately. As Dhruva Mahārāja said: “Now I am fully satisfied.” Otherwise, we'll have many questions, many answers, as long as we are not self-realized. And our time will be spoiled.

Kṛṣṇa-praśna, inquiry about Kṛṣṇa, should continually go on. You'll find all the answers in the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Then simply by such questions and answers your life will be successful.

Thank you very much. 🙏

BOOK SECTION: ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

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 *purāṇa*, 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 SAGES TAKE ACTION

Out of compassion for the suffering citizens, the sages decide to deal with the wicked King Vena.

CANTO 4: CHAPTER 14

30 इति तेऽसत्कृतास्तेन द्विजाः पण्डितमनिना
भग्नायां भव्ययाज्ञायां तस्मै विदुर चुक्रुधुः

*iti te 'sat-kṛtās tena
dvijāḥ paṇḍita-māninā
bhagnāyām bhavya-yācñāyām
tasmai vidura cukrudhuḥ*

iti – thus; *te* – all the great sages; *asat-kṛtāḥ* – being insulted; *tena* – by the King; *dvijāḥ* – the *brāhmaṇas*; *paṇḍita-māninā* – thinking himself to be very learned; *bhagnāyām* – being broken; *bhavya* – auspicious; *yācñāyām* – their request; *tasmai* – at him; *vidura* – O Vidura; *cukrudhuḥ* – became very angry.

My dear Vidura, all good fortune unto you. The foolish King, who thought himself very learned, thus insulted the great sages, and the sages, being brokenhearted by the King's words, became very angry at him.

31 हन्यतां हन्यतामेष पापः प्रकृतिदारुणः
जीवञ्जगदसावाशु कुरुते भस्मसाद् ध्रुवम्

*hanyatām hanyatām eṣa
pāpaḥ prakṛti-dāruṇaḥ
jivāñ jagad asāv āśu
kurute bhasmasād dhruvam*

hanyatām – kill him; *hanyatām* – kill him; *eṣaḥ* – this king; *pāpaḥ* – representative of sin; *prakṛti* – by nature; *dāruṇaḥ* – most dreadful; *jivan* – while living; *jagat* – the whole world; *asau* – he; *āśu* – very soon; *kurute* – will make; *bhasmasāt* – into ashes; *dhruvam* – certainly.

All the great saintly sages immediately cried: Kill him! Kill him! He is the most dreadful, sinful person. If he lives, he will certainly turn the whole world into ashes in no time.

PURPORT: Saintly persons are generally very kind to all kinds of living entities, but they are not unhappy when a serpent or a scorpion is killed. It is not good for saintly persons to kill, but they are encouraged to kill demons, who are exactly like serpents and scorpions. Therefore all the saintly sages decided to kill King Vena, who was so dreadful and dangerous to all human society. We can appreciate the extent to which the saintly sages actually controlled the king. ❶ If the king or government becomes demonic, it is the duty of a saintly person to upset the government and replace it with deserving persons who follow the orders and instructions of saintly persons.

32 नायमर्हत्यसद्वृत्तो नरदेववरासनम्
योऽधियज्ञपतिं विष्णुं विनिन्दत्यनपत्रपः

1) What is the duty of a saintly person if the king or government becomes demonic?



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 get a taste of the world's oldest cultural tradition. Call your nearest center to find out the schedule for the Sunday Feast.

(See “Centers,” pages 57–61, or visit directory.krishna.com.)

*nāyam arhaty asad-vṛtto
naradeva-varāsanam
yo 'dhiyajña-patim viṣṇum
vinindaty anapatrapaḥ*

na – never; *ayam* – this man; *arhati* – deserves; *asad-vṛttaḥ* – full of impious activities; *nara-deva* – of the worldly king or worldly god; *vara-āsanam* – the exalted throne; *yaḥ* – he who; *adhiyajña-patim* – the master of all sacrifices; *viṣṇum* – Lord Viṣṇu; *vinindati* – insults; *anapatrapaḥ* – shameless.

The saintly sages continued: This impious, impudent man does not deserve to sit on the throne at all. He is so shameless that he even dared insult the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu.

PURPORT: One should not at any time tolerate blasphemy and insults against Lord Viṣṇu or His devotees. A devotee is generally very humble and meek, and he is reluctant to pick a quarrel with anyone. Nor does he envy anyone. 2 However, a pure devotee immediately becomes fiery with anger when he sees that Lord Viṣṇu or His devotee is insulted. This is the duty of a devotee. Although a devotee maintains an attitude of meekness and gentleness, it is a great fault on his part if he remains silent when the Lord or His devotee is blasphemed.

33 को वैनं परिचक्षीत वेनमेकमृतेऽशुभम्
प्राप्त ईदृशमैश्वर्यं यदनुग्रहभाजनः

*ko vainam paricakṣita
venam ekam ṛte 'subham
prāpta idṛśam aiśvaryaṁ
yad-anugraha-bhājanah*

kaḥ – who; *vā* – indeed; *enam* – the Lord; *paricakṣita* – would blaspheme; *venam* – King Vena; *ekam* – alone; *ṛte* – but for; *aśubham* – inauspicious; *prāptaḥ* – having obtained; *idṛśam* – like this; *aiśvaryaṁ* – opulence; *yad* – whose; *anugraha* – mercy; *bhājanah* – receiving.

But for King Vena, who is simply inauspicious, who would blaspheme the Supreme Personality of Godhead, by whose mercy one is awarded all kinds of fortune and opulence?

- 2) When does a pure devotee become “fiery”?
- 3) What is the destiny of a human society that becomes godless and blasphemes the authority of the Supreme Personality of Godhead?
- 4) What did the sages use to kill King Vena?
- 5) How did King Vena’s mother preserve his body?

PURPORT: 3 When human society individually or collectively becomes godless and blasphemes the authority of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, it is certainly destined for ruination. Such a civilization invites all kinds of bad fortune due to not appreciating the mercy of the Lord.

34 इत्थं व्यवसिता हन्तुमृषयो रूढमन्यवः
निजघ्नुर्इकृतैर्वेनं हतमच्युतनिन्दया

*ittham vyavasitā hantum
ṛṣayo rūḍha-manyavaḥ
nijaghnur huṅkṛtaiḥ venam
hatam acyuta-nindayā*

ittham – thus; *vyavasitāḥ* – decided; *hantum* – to kill; *ṛṣayaḥ* – the sages; *rūḍha* – manifested; *manyavaḥ* – their anger; *nijaghnur* – they killed; *hum-kṛtaiḥ* – by angry words or by sounds of *hum*; *venam* – King Vena; *hatam* – dead; *acyuta* – against the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *nindayā* – by blasphemy.

The great sages, thus manifesting their covert anger, immediately decided to kill the King. King Vena was already as good as dead due to his blasphemy against the Supreme Personality of Godhead. 4 Thus without using any weapons, the sages killed King Vena simply by high-sounding words.

35 ऋषिभिः स्वाश्रमपदं गते पुत्रकलेवरम्
सुनीथा पालयामास विद्यायोगेन शोचती

*ṛṣibhiḥ svāśrama-padam
gate putra-kalevaram
sunīthā pālayām āsa
vidyā-yogena śocatī*

ṛṣibhiḥ – by the sages; *sva-āśrama-padam* – to their own respective hermitages; *gate* – having returned; *putra* – of her son; *kalevaram* – the body; *sunīthā* – Sunīthā, the mother of King Vena; *pālayām āsa* – preserved; *vidyā-yogena* – by mantra and ingredients; *śocatī* – while lamenting.

After all the sages returned to their respective hermitages, the mother of King Vena, Sunīthā, became very much aggrieved because of her son’s death. 5 She decided to preserve the dead body of her son by the application of certain ingredients and by chanting mantras [mantra-yogena].

36 एकदा मुनयस्ते तु सरस्वत्सलिलाप्लुताः
हुत्वाग्नीन् सत्कथाश्चक्रुरुपविष्टाः सरित्ते

*ekadā munayas te tu
sarasvat-salilāplutāḥ*

*hutvāgnīn sat-kathāś cakrur
upaviṣṭāḥ sarit-taṭe*

ekadā – once upon a time; *munayaḥ* – all those great saintly persons; *te* – they; *tu* – then; *sarasvat* – of the River Sarasvatī; *salila* – in the water; *āplutāḥ* – bathed; *hutvā* – offering oblations; *agnīn* – into the fires; *sat-kathāḥ* – discussions about transcendental subject matters; *cakrur* – began to do; *upaviṣṭāḥ* – sitting; *sarit-taṭe* – by the side of the river.

Once upon a time, the same saintly persons, after taking their bath in the River Sarasvatī, began to perform their daily duties by offering oblations into the sacrificial fires. After this, sitting on the bank of the river, they began to talk about the transcendental person and His pastimes.

37 वीक्ष्योत्थितास्तदोत्पातानाहुर्लोकभयङ्करान्
अप्यभद्रमनाथाया दस्युभ्यो न भवेद्भुवः

*vīkṣyotthitāms tadoṭpātān
āhur loka-bhayaṅkarān
apy abhadram anāthāyā
dasyubhyo na bhaved bhuvah*

vīkṣya – having seen; *utthitān* – developed; *tadā* – then; *utpātān* – disturbances; *āhuh* – they began to say; *loka* – in society; *bhayaṁ-karān* – causing panic; *api* – whether; *abhadram* – misfortune; *anāthāyāḥ* – having no ruler; *dasyubhyaḥ* – from thieves and rogues; *na* – not; *bhaved* – may happen; *bhuvah* – of the world.

In those days there were various disturbances in the country that were creating a panic in society. Therefore all the sages began to talk amongst themselves: Since the King is dead and there is no protector in the world, misfortune may befall the people in general on account of rogues and thieves.

PURPORT: 6 Whenever there is a disturbance in the state, or a panic situation, the property and lives of the citizens become unsafe. This is caused by the uprising of various thieves and rogues. At such a time it is to be understood that the ruler, or the government, is dead. All of these misfortunes happened due to the death of King Vena. Thus the saintly persons became very anxious for the safety of the people in general. The conclusion is that even though saintly persons have no business in political affairs, they are always compassionate upon the people in general. Thus even though they are always aloof from society, out of mercy and compassion they consider how the citizens can peacefully execute their rituals and follow the rules and regulations of *varṇāśrama-dharma*. That was the concern of these sages. 7 In this age of Kali, everything is disturbed. Therefore saintly persons should take to the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, as recommended in the *śāstras*:

*harer nāma harer nāma
harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva
nāsty eva gatir anyathā*

Both for spiritual and material prosperity, everyone should devotedly chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

38 एवं मृशन्त ऋषयो धावतां सर्वतोदिशम्
पांसुः समुत्थितो भूरिश्वोराणामभिलुम्पताम्

*evam mṛśanta ṛṣayo
dhāvatām sarvato-diśam
pāmsuḥ samutthito bhūriś
corāṇām abhilumpatām*

evam – thus; *mṛśantaḥ* – while considering; *ṛṣayaḥ* – the great saintly persons; *dhāvatām* – running; *sarvato-diśam* – from all directions; *pāmsuḥ* – dust; *samutthitaḥ* – arose; *bhūriḥ* – much; *corāṇām* – from thieves and rogues; *abhilumpatām* – engaged in plundering.

When the great sages were carrying on their discussion in this way, they saw a dust storm arising from all directions. This storm was caused by the running of thieves and rogues, who were engaged in plundering the citizens.

PURPORT: Thieves and rogues simply await some political upset in order to take the opportunity to plunder the people in general. To keep thieves and rogues inactive in their profession, a strong government is always required.

39 तदुपद्रवमाज्ञाय लोकस्य वसु लुम्पताम्
भर्तयुपरते तस्मिन्नन्योन्यं च जिघांसताम्
40 चोरप्रायं जनपदं हीनसत्त्वमराजकम्
लोकान्नावारयञ्छक्ता अपि तद्दोषदर्शिनः

*tad upadravam ājñāya
lokasya vasu lumpatām
bhartary uparate tasminn
anyonyaṁ ca jighāmsatām*

*cora-prāyaṁ jana-padam
hīna-sattvam arājakam
lokān nāvārayaṁ chaktā
api tad-doṣa-darśinaḥ*

- 6) What can we understand about the government when there is an uprising of thieves and rogues?
- 7) What spiritual practice is recommended for this age, when everything is disturbed?

tat – at that time; *upadravam* – the disturbance; *ājñāya* – understanding; *lokasya* – of the people in general; *vasu* – riches; *lumpatām* – by those who were plundering; *bhartari* – the protector; *uparate* – being dead; *tasmin* – King Vena; *anyonyam* – one another; *ca* – also; *jighāṃsatām* – desiring to kill; *cora-prāyam* – full of thieves; *jana-padam* – the state; *hina* – bereft of; *sattvam* – regulation; *arājakam* – without a king; *lokān* – the thieves and rogues; *na* – not; *avārayan* – they subdued; *śaktāḥ* – able to do so; *api* – although; *tat-doṣa* – the fault of that; *darśinaḥ* – considering.

Upon seeing the dust storm, the saintly persons could understand that there were a great deal of irregularities due to the death of King Vena. Without government, the state was devoid of law and order, and consequently there was a great uprising of murderous thieves and rogues, who were plundering the riches of the people in general. Although the great sages could subdue the disturbance by their powers – just as they could kill the King – they considered it improper on their part to do so. Thus they did not attempt to stop the disturbance.

PURPORT: The saintly persons and great sages killed King Vena out of emergency, but they did not choose to take part in the government in order to subdue the uprising of thieves and rogues, which took place after the death of King Vena. 8 It is not the duty of *brāhmaṇas* and saintly persons to kill, although they may sometimes do so in the case of an emergency. They could kill all the thieves and rogues by the prowess of their mantras, but they thought it the duty of *kṣatriya* kings to do so. Thus they reluctantly did not take part in the killing business.

**41 ब्राह्मणः समदृक्शान्तो दीनानां समुपेक्षकः
स्रवते ब्रह्म तस्यापि भिन्नभाण्डात्पयो यथा**

*brāhmaṇaḥ sama-dṛk śānto
dīnānāṃ samupekṣakaḥ
sraivate brahma tasyāpi
bhinna-bhāṇḍāt payo yathā*

brāhmaṇaḥ – a *brāhmaṇa*; *sama-dṛk* – equiposed; *śāntaḥ* – peaceful; *dīnānām* – the poor; *samupekṣakaḥ* – grossly neglecting; *sraivate* – diminishes; *brahma* – spiritual power; *tasya* – his; *api* – certainly; *bhinna-bhāṇḍāt* – from a cracked pot; *payah* – water; *yathā* – just as.

8) Why did the sages decide not to subdue the uprising of thieves and rogues?

9) When does a *brāhmaṇa-panḍita* become a *brāhmaṇa-vaiṣṇava*?

The great sages began to think that although a *brāhmaṇa* is peaceful and impartial because he is equal to everyone, it is still not his duty to neglect poor humans. By such neglect, a *brāhmaṇa*'s spiritual power diminishes, just as water kept in a cracked pot leaks out.

PURPORT: *Brāhmaṇas*, the topmost section of human society, are mostly devotees. They are generally unaware of the happenings within the material world because they are always busy in their activities for spiritual advancement. Nonetheless, when there is a calamity in human society, they cannot remain impartial. If they do not do something to relieve the distressed condition of human society, it is said that due to such neglect their spiritual knowledge diminishes. Almost all the sages go to the Himalayas for their personal benefit, but Prahāda Mahārāja said that he did not want liberation alone. He decided to wait until he was able to deliver all the fallen souls of the world.

In their elevated condition, the *brāhmaṇas* are called *Vaiṣṇavas*. 9 There are two types of *brāhmaṇas* – namely, *brāhmaṇa-panḍita* and *brāhmaṇa-vaiṣṇava*. A qualified *brāhmaṇa* is naturally very learned, but when his learning is advanced in understanding the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he becomes a *brāhmaṇa-vaiṣṇava*. Unless one becomes a *Vaiṣṇava*, one's perfection of brahminical culture is incomplete.

The saintly persons considered very wisely that although King Vena was very sinful, he was born in a family descending from Dhruva Mahārāja. Therefore the semen in the family must be protected by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Keśava. As such, the sages wanted to take some steps to relieve the situation. For want of a king, everything was being disturbed and turned topsy-turvy.

**42 नाङ्गस्य वंशो राजर्षेरेष संस्थातुमर्हति
अमोघवीर्या हि नृपा वंशेऽस्मिन् केशवाश्रयाः**

*nāṅgasya vaṁśo rājarṣer
eṣa saṁsthātum arhati
amogha-vīryā hi nṛpā
vaṁśe 'smin keśavāśrayāḥ*

na – not; *aṅgasya* – of King Aṅga; *vaṁśaḥ* – family line; *rāja-ṛṣeḥ* – of the saintly King; *eṣaḥ* – this; *saṁsthātum* – to be stopped; *arhati* – ought; *amogha* – without sin, powerful; *vīryāḥ* – their semen; *hi* – because; *nṛpāḥ* – kings; *vaṁśe* – in the family; *asmin* – this; *keśava* – of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *āśrayāḥ* – under the shelter.

The sages decided that the descendants of the family of the saintly King Aṅga should not be stopped, for in this family the semen was very powerful and the children were prone to become devotees of the Lord.

[Continued in the next issue.]

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

Dallying With Material Enjoyment

The following conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and some of his disciples took place on May 30, 1974, during a morning walk in Rome.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: If people do not want to approach the Lord's devotees for spiritual enlightenment, what can be done? Just see this sparrow. Sex is always available to him. At any time sex is ready for him. The pigeons, also. Any time they want sex, sex is ready. *Viṣayaḥ khalu sarvataḥ syāt*: our only attachment for this material world is *viṣaya*, material sense gratification. The whole world over, people are fighting simply to gratify their bodily senses. "I must have nice eating, I must have nice sleeping, I must

have very good sex, and I should be defended by a big bank balance, by military soldiers, by a powerful police force, by atomic weapons.” This is going on all over the world. Take defense: the rascal does not understand, “In spite of all these defensive measures, at the end of this lifetime I will have to change bodies and go on suffering. The same sense gratification will be available again, in a different way – and also the same suffering.”

Take the tiny ants. They are very fond of intoxication. Did you know that? As soon as they get information, “At the top of this skyscraper, there is a grain of sugar,” they will go. [Laughter.] Wine is made from sugar, molasses. So sugar has the potency for intoxication, and if you

you have come to the human form of life. And although it too is temporary, nonetheless you can achieve the highest perfection. You can evolve from life in this temporary world of misery to life in the eternal world of bliss. So before your next death in this world, become a very adept student of spiritual perfection – and achieve it.”

Disciple: But people will say, “Then what about my sense enjoyment?”
Śrīla Prabhupāda: Don’t worry. *Viṣayaḥ khalu sarvataḥ syāt:* Your sense enjoyment will be available in any species of life. But this human form of life – spend it for this higher purpose. Don’t waste it simply for sense enjoyment, which you will get even if you become a cat or a dog. But in the cat’s or dog’s body,

the material body’s enjoyment. But *durāśayā:* it is simply a hope that will never be fulfilled. *Āśaya* means “hope,” and *dur* means “very difficult.” It is not going to happen.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is giving you everything in the right way, so that you can save your time, so that you do not waste your time dallying with material enjoyment and you can advance in spiritual consciousness. That is required. We don’t say, “Stop eating.” Eat. Take a little *kṛṣṇa-prasāda*. We don’t say, “Don’t sleep.” No, sleep, but you must rise early in the morning and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. This is our philosophy. Surely, we give proper place to eating, sleeping, and sex. We don’t say, “No sex life.” Yes, have sex. Get yourself a bona fide wife and live peacefully. And defense, also, we have. We never say, “Forgo all these things.” No, this is not our philosophy. But at the same time, take only as much material enjoyment as you absolutely require, not more than that. The balance of your time – save it for spiritual advancement.

Unfortunately, today people are engaged simply for eating, sleeping, mating, and defending. They have no time for Kṛṣṇa consciousness, no time for spiritual consciousness. This condemned civilization must be stopped. It is a killing civilization – a killing civilization. Human beings have the option of getting out of this material bondage – chewing the chewed again and again – but they are not being given the chance to exercise this special human option. Instead, they are being engaged more and more for the animal life of sense gratification. This killing civilization is sending human beings down into repeated births and deaths in the animal species. But by the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness – by renunciation and spiritual knowledge – many people have become purified and have gone back home, back to Godhead, the spiritual world.

All this information is available. But people are not educated. Therefore the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is meant for educating them. 🌸

Can you see any real difference between this so-called human civilization and the ant civilization, the dog civilization?

keep a grain of sugar out in this room, soon there will be thousands of ants. An ants’ gold rush.

So study. Can you see any real difference between this so-called human civilization and the ant civilization, the dog civilization? No difference. It is only a matter of outward configuration.

Disciple: Yes. At the Sunday Feast we usually make sweetballs, and there’s some sugar water left over. And the next day we find many drowned ants, because they went so wild for the sugar that they jumped into it and killed themselves.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: The Vedic literatures advise, “My dear human being, please note: You have attained this human form of life after many, many births. You had to go through the various forms of the aquatic life, 900,000 species; and you had to go through the various forms of birds and trees and plants, two million species. Consider how much time you have spent in this slow, painstaking evolution. Now

you have no opportunity to get out of this material existence.

Modern people are getting no education to understand this special chance they have in human life. Therefore we must give this education. We must induce them to read these transcendental books in their schools and colleges. Otherwise, they have no books to read about this transcendental realization. They have only Freud’s sex philosophy and Darwin’s monkey theory. All rascaldom, simply rascaldom. So let them read these transcendental books.

Disciple: Ordinary people are accepting theories that promise them better enjoyment. People like to hear someone promising, “You’ll get better sense gratification.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Politicians are promising, “You take this *-ism* or that *-ism*.” But nobody knows what is actually happiness. *Na te viduḥ svārtha-gatiṁ hi viṣṇuṁ durāśayā ye bahir-artha-māninaḥ:* people are trying to be happy by sense enjoyment,

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”). To hear Śrīla Prabhupāda chanting, go to krishna.com/hare-krishna-maha-mantra.



Photo: Yamarāja Dāsa

Fulfilling Our Longing For Love

Five reasons why loving Kṛṣṇa is the answer to the question of love.

by Caitanya Carāṇa Dāsa

LOVE IS OUR innermost longing. *Gītā* wisdom declares that our longing for love is best fulfilled when we learn to love Kṛṣṇa. Let's try to understand this central *Gītā* teaching by breaking it down into five parts:

- Loving Kṛṣṇa enables our love to break free from all limitations.
- Kṛṣṇa is eminently lovable.
- Kṛṣṇa loves all of us impartially.
- Kṛṣṇa's love for us is unconditional.
- Kṛṣṇa engages His omnipotence to help us when we choose to love Him.

Loving Kṛṣṇa enables our love to break free from all limitations.

Our love constantly longs to rush forth beyond all limitations. But as long as we love any material object or person, the flow of our love remains constrained by two often-subconscious fears:

1. We limit the love we offer to others, fearing it may be, at worst, rejected insensitively or, at best, reciprocated inadequately.
2. We also fear that focusing our love on one person may limit our capacity to love others.

When we consciously and consistently offer our love to Kṛṣṇa, however, we gradually discover that it breaks free from both these limitations. Here's why:

1. Kṛṣṇa notices attentively every drop of love we offer Him and recipro-



True fulfillment lies in awakening our eternal love for Kṛṣṇa – or, more specifically, for Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, the ultimate expression of the Absolute Truth.

cates perfectly by flooding our heart with fulfilling waves of love. When we experience His magnificent reciprocation, we feel inspired to offer Him all the love of our heart and more still.

2. As the source of everyone and everything, Kṛṣṇa encompasses all of existence; all living beings are His beloved children. So the love we offer Him doesn't stay stuck with Him, but returns through Him to embrace as many living beings as our heart desires. That's why, when we focus our love on Kṛṣṇa, we become increasingly capable of loving more and more people. The *Bhagavad-gītā* (12.13) points to this majestic expansion of our capacity to love when it states that devotees who love Kṛṣṇa become the benefactors of all living beings.

Thus, by loving Kṛṣṇa we let our love break free from its limitations and flow freely, bringing the supreme happiness into our own lives and the lives of many others.

Kṛṣṇa is eminently lovable.

Kṛṣṇa is so given to love that for its sake He conceals His godhood. To have intimate loving exchanges with His devotees, He chooses to act as if He were not God. His love for love makes Him eminently lovable.

Because Kṛṣṇa performs childhood pranks like stealing butter, many people who know about Kṛṣṇa through their culture or tradition consider Him amusing. However, the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.9) declares that by knowing Kṛṣṇa "in truth" we attain a result far greater than mere amusement – we attain liberation. Why? Because when we know Him, we fall in love with Him, thereby opening the door to liberation. When we actually understand Kṛṣṇa, we cannot but be amazed at how He chooses to take on the role of a sweet and naughty child just to reciprocate love with those who love Him.

Isn't it amazing that God, who is the eternal and ultimate father of all, becomes a tender child for the sake of love? Isn't it even more amazing that God renounces what everyone in this world longs to have – the majesty of godhood – just to relish the intimacy of love? And isn't it most amazing that

God, though He has the love of billions and billions of His devotees, considers our unique love for Him so invaluable and irreplaceable and indispensable that He descends to this world to invite us with His love call?

When the Lord is given to love and is supremely lovable, how can we not love Him? And when we choose to love Him, how can He stop Himself from fulfilling His heart's longing to take us back to Him and reinstate us in His world of love?

Thus, proper philosophical vision takes our understanding of Kṛṣṇa across the bridge from amusing to amazing. And when we thereby

When we try to love Him, He reciprocates by showering His love on us and by intervening to take special care of us.

If Kṛṣṇa exhibited stonelike neutrality towards all, there would be hardly any possibility of developing a loving relationship with Him. After all, who can love a stone?

If Kṛṣṇa were not reciprocal, love for Him would remain mostly an abstract intellectual concept. It is Kṛṣṇa's reciprocity that makes His personality emotionally tangible and eminently lovable. It is Kṛṣṇa's reciprocity that makes love for Him real.

As Kṛṣṇa is reciprocal, He is indeed partial to those who try to re-

of Kṛṣṇa's love and our subjective experience of His love.

Objectively, Kṛṣṇa loves all of us, whether we act piously or sinfully. No matter what we do, He still keeps residing in our heart and helping us as much as we allow Him. He never quits our heart; He never abandons us; He never gives up on us. Just as the sun gives light to everyone irrespective of their moral or immoral behavior, so does Kṛṣṇa give His love. Thus, His love is definitely unconditional.

But just as our eyes need to be open to see sunlight, our heart needs to be pure to feel His love. So what is conditional is not Kṛṣṇa's love, but our capacity to feel His love.

Just as the eyes' natural state – being open – is the prerequisite to see the sunshine, so the heart's natural state – being pure – is the prerequisite to feel Kṛṣṇa's unconditional love.

To understand this point better, let's get a sense of

the word *conditional* by looking at two of its meanings. First, *conditional* can refer to a requirement that needs to be met for something to be valid, as in "Your job appointment is conditional on (i.e., requires) your passing the graduation exam." Second, it can refer to the state of a thing, as in "Our ability to think clearly is conditional on (i.e., depends on) the state of our mind at the moment."

Is Kṛṣṇa's love conditional in the "demand" sense of the word? No, because He doesn't place any demands that we have to first meet before He starts loving us. He loves us always.

Is Kṛṣṇa's love conditional in the "depend" sense of the word? No and yes. No, because Kṛṣṇa's love for us doesn't depend on the state of our heart. Yes, because our ability to feel His love depends on our heart's being in a particular state, the state of purity.

Still, we might argue, "Kṛṣṇa, unlike the sun, is omnipotent. So He can make me feel His love even when my heart is not in the right

reciprocate love with Him – His devotees. He offers them special protection and grace. But as He is universally reciprocal, He allows everyone to love Him and thereby benefit from His partiality. In fact, He publicly declares His partiality so that everyone will become attracted to Him and come to benefit from it.

Thus, Kṛṣṇa is impartially partial: He impartially leaves the doors to partiality open for everyone.

Kṛṣṇa's love for us is unconditional.

At this point we may wonder, "If Kṛṣṇa loves all of us impartially, then why can't we feel His love now? If we can feel it only after becoming pure, then doesn't that make His love conditional, dependent on the condition of purity?"

Gītā wisdom answers that Kṛṣṇa's love is unconditional but our capacity to experience His love is conditional. And the conditionality of this capacity is also evidence of His love for us.

First we need to understand the difference between the objective fact

fall in love with Him, He helps us cross the far greater bridge from the material world to the spiritual world.

Kṛṣṇa loves all of us impartially.

The *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.29) reveals two paradoxical features of Kṛṣṇa's nature:

1. He is equal to all and does not consider anyone an object of aversion or affection.

2. For those who offer themselves to Him and worship Him with devotion, He offers Himself to them in return.

These two features suggest that Kṛṣṇa is both partial and impartial. How can that be?

The key to understanding Kṛṣṇa's mysterious nature is to remember that He is not an impersonal principle but a sentient person. Being a person, He is neither neutral nor partial; He is reciprocal. When we try to avoid Him, He reciprocates by not interfering in our lives and by letting us stay under the supervision of the impartial law of karma.

The key to understanding Kṛṣṇa's mysterious nature is to remember that He is not an impersonal principle but a sentient person.

state. Why doesn't He do that?"

Because He loves us. That Kṛṣṇa doesn't force us to feel His love in our present state is a sign of His love. Out of His love for us, He has given us free will. By our misuse of free will, we have chosen to replace Him, with various substitutes, as the object of our love. When we have thus shown our apathy or even antipathy towards Him, for Him to force us to feel His love would be to disrespect our free will. And respect is a basic prerequisite for love. Out of respect for us as individuals with independent will, He never forces us to feel His love. Thus, Kṛṣṇa's respecting our free will is also a sign of His love for us.

Kṛṣṇa engages His omnipotence to help us when we choose to love Him.

At the same time, Kṛṣṇa does use His omnipotence to help us if we express the desire to love Him. We can understand this by acknowledg-

ing how Kṛṣṇa helps us in two ways: (1) He makes Himself constantly available to us, and (2) He accommodates us when we falter in our attempts to love Him.

1. Availability. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.15) Kṛṣṇa states that He resides in our heart to guide us to our ultimate good. He uses His omnipotence to manifest Himself in innumerable expansions as the Supersoul, who resides in the heart of every living being. The Supersoul acts like Kṛṣṇa's personalized incarnation for each of us. He waits for us to voluntarily express our love for Him or at least our desire to love Him. We can express this desire by rendering devotional service according to scriptural guidelines. When He sees our sincere desire, He reciprocates by using His omnipotence to remove the roadblocks on our path to purity.

From His strategic vantage point in our heart, Kṛṣṇa observes our misadventures in material existence and strives to bring them to an adventurous, auspicious ending. Let's see how.

Kṛṣṇa is ever waiting: If one friend neglects another for a long time, the neglected friend may naturally and reasonably give up the neglecting friend. But Kṛṣṇa's love for us far exceeds the bounds of the natural and the reasonable; although we have neglected Him for many lifetimes, He neglects our neglect and waits patiently for us to renew our friendship with Him.

Kṛṣṇa is ever willing: If a person not only neglects but also offends a friend, the offended friend is entirely justified to sever the friendship. But Kṛṣṇa is such an unfailing and unflinching friend that, despite our many misdeeds through which we have repeatedly offended Him, He remains ever willing to resume our relationship with Him.

Kṛṣṇa is ever working: Being God, Kṛṣṇa is perfect and complete. He has no work to do and nothing to gain from His relationship with us. Yet due to His selfless and tireless love for us, He voluntarily and constantly works to help us return

LOOKING FOR NEWS OF THE HARE KRṢṆA MOVEMENT?

Log on to www.iskconnews.org



The Internet is the ideal place for timely news, and iskcon.com, run by ISKCON Communications, maintains an active news page. So whether you want to see what's happening in ISKCON or have some news to report, log on to www.iskconnews.org.

to Him and thereby become eternally happy. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (8.3.17) states that Kṛṣṇa is tireless (*alayāya*) in His endeavors to help us. Śrīla Prabhupāda elucidates this in his commentary: “He [Kṛṣṇa] is within our hearts and is not at all inattentive. His only aim is to deliver us from material life. It is not that He becomes attentive to us only when we offer prayers to Him. Even before we offer our prayers, He incessantly tries to deliver us. He is never lazy in regard to our deliverance.”

When we understand how much Kṛṣṇa loves us and to what lengths

He is ready to go in His love for us, how can we not reciprocate?

2. Accommodation. When we strive to love Kṛṣṇa, we often falter and fall due to our attachments and weaknesses. Kṛṣṇa accommodates us despite our lapses, as is movingly demonstrated through a two-verse sequence in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.30–31).

First (9.30) Kṛṣṇa urges us to recognize as saintly a devotee who, though guilty of grievous misconduct, is still determined to serve Him. Next (9.31) He assures that the devotee will soon reform, and then proclaims that, due to His

unfailing love, He will forever protect the devotee.

The first verse offers a glimpse of the unconditional nature of Kṛṣṇa’s love: nothing we can ever do, no matter how vicious, can stop Kṛṣṇa from loving us.

At the same time, though love can be unilateral, a loving relationship cannot; it must always be bilateral. That’s why the second verse (9.31) indirectly urges one who has made a mistake to return to a virtuous, devotional life that will engender a pure heart receptive to Kṛṣṇa’s love. The verse does so by first unequivocally reassuring us that such a change of heart is definitely possible, even inevitable and imminent (*kṣipram bhavati dharmātmā*). Then, knowing that an inner battle is necessary to attain that state, the verse inspires us to fight by declaring that Kṛṣṇa with all His omnipotence will protect us (*na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati*).

If, by expressing our desire to love Him, we let Kṛṣṇa help us, He will expertly guide us to overcome all inner and outer obstacles, to grow, and to go towards His eternal abode, the world of endless love.

To summarize, when we choose to love Kṛṣṇa, our love breaks free of all limitations and finds the most eminently lovable object of love, who loves us impartially and unconditionally, and engages His omnipotence to help us love Him.

No wonder *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.6) declares that when we learn to love Kṛṣṇa purely, the result is *yayātmā suprasīdati*: our heart and soul become content fully and forever. 🌐

Caitanya Caraṇa Dāsa is a disciple of His Holiness Rādhānāth Swami. He holds a degree in electronic and telecommunications engineering and serves full time at ISKCON Pune. He is the author of eleven books. To read his other articles or to receive his daily reflection on the Bhagavad-gītā, “Gita-Daily,” visit thespiritualscientist.com.

might obtain by their worship.

In spiritual matters it is very important to hear from reliable, realized, and learned sources guided by the Vedic scriptures.

By worshipping Lord Kṛṣṇa one makes Lord Śiva very happy, because Lord Śiva also worships Lord Kṛṣṇa. In fact, the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (12.13.16) says *vaiṣṇavānāṁ yathā sambhuḥ*: “Lord Śiva is the greatest Vaiṣṇava.” 🌐

Please write to us at: BTG, PO Box 430, Alachua, Florida 32616, USA. Email: editors@krishna.com.

LETTERS (continued from page 5) all. He has no other origin, and He is the prime cause of all causes.”

The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.3.28) says, *ete cāmśa-kalāḥ puṁsaḥ kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*: “All of the above-mentioned incarnations are either plenary portions or portions of the plenary portions of the Lord, but Lord Kṛṣṇa is the original Personality of Godhead.”

In the Seventh Chapter of the *Gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa says that He is the origin of all the demigods (including Śiva), the source of their power, and the bestower of any reward one

TEMPLE OF THE VEDIC PLANETARIUM

Mayapur, West Bengal, India

The largest Vedic temple to be built in thousands of years. To learn about the project, keep track of its progress, and see how you can get involved, visit www.tovp.org.
www.facebook.com/tovp.mayapur
www.youtube.com/user/tovpinfo



HOW I CAME TO KṚṢṆA CONSCIOUSNESS

MAKING PROGRESS TOWARD SEEING THE LORD

He could not see the Lord, but the Lord, seeing him, drew him close after his long search for truth.

by Ravikant Jagtap

RIGHT FROM MY childhood I had serious health problems. At five I had severe ear pain and asthma. At thirteen I developed a brain tumor that took me to several hospitals. Some friendly Christians approached me during that time and suggested I come to church and attend their prayer sessions. Their love and care moved my heart, and their prayers and concern for my health comforted me and uplifted my spirits. But after some time, they started blaspheming various *devas* of our Vedic tradition. They criticized the Vedic scriptures and the devotional practices described in them. I soon realized that all their pleasing talks were a covert attempt to convert me to their faith. I gave up all connections with them.

While in school I enrolled in a reiki course in Mumbai, and much to my astonishment the twelve-year-old daughter of my instructor diagnosed my illness and pointed out the exact location of the tumor inside my brain – without any prior knowledge of my ailments. This experience gave me a profound realization: there are higher

powers beyond our sense perception. Our physical senses are limited and incapable of providing us complete knowledge of our self and the universe around us.

Several questions started brewing up in my mind, and my quest for spirituality began. I delved into various spiritual, quasi-spiritual, and metaphysical practices. One spiritual leader in a small town in Maharashtra really inspired me – his talks ignited my curiosity to know more about the existence of God. My whole family got attracted to him, and within six months we all took initiation from him. I also got involved in the weekly programs of an organization where I got lots of love and my first exposure to the

Bhagavad-gītā. I would also regularly hear the talks of a prominent woman guru who convinced me that the Vedic literatures were not mere books of mythology, as falsely taught in modern history textbooks, but describe historical facts of bygone ages, millions of years ago. Her *kīrtanas* and philosophical presentations impressed me.

Darkness in My Life

In 2001 calamity struck again and darkness loomed into my life – literally. While studying for my HSC board exams (standardized exams for class 12 students), I realized that I could not read my textbooks properly. Within ten days I lost my

eyesight completely – both my eyes were shut and my eyeballs would not move. I then lost the ability to speak, eat, or drink, and developed unbearable headaches. Any liquid I would take would come out through my nose.

After two unsuccessful biopsies, the doctors wanted to open up my skull and check for a tumor. But my father protested: “I will let my child die in peace instead of becoming an object of doctors’ experiments.” We felt disappointed and hopeless.

I had heard the saying “When God shuts one door, He opens another.” And in 2002 a door of hope opened when a specialist doctor suggested I take Panchagavya Chikitsa treatment, based on cow urine and other cow products. By practicing yoga and Ayurvedic processes of body purification along with this new treatment, I experienced some miraculous results: within two or three months I started speaking a few short words and eating a little food. My headaches subsided, my eyes opened, and my eyeballs started moving. Most of the disease was cured within two years, although I did not regain my eyesight.

Continuing the Search for Truth

My health almost regained, I resumed my spiritual quest. One famous spiritual leader from North India explained Brahman by saying that God is ultimately impersonal. I heard him carefully, but I wasn’t satisfied at heart with his explanation. Another leader, from Mumbai, talked about the imminent Third World War and how only his followers were going to be saved. When he declared that he ate meat and smoked cigarettes, people applauded. Disgusted, I left the place, never to return.

I visited several other yogis and teachers. One taught how to invoke the *kuṇḍalinī* and the various *cakras* within the body. A yogi in Maharashtra was able to miraculously solve the problems of his followers, and thus the followers considered

him God. A yogi in South India produced gold chains out of ash. Millions thronged to see him and hear from him. I was not impressed by their abilities, because I felt that attaining them is not the goal of life. Self-realization is the ultimate goal, and one needs to be careful not to get distracted by various mystic powers one may achieve while practicing spiritual disciplines. I appreciated his social service but could not accept his philosophy.

Questions in my mind continued to haunt me. I met a group of yogis and yoginis who predicted that Kali-yuga, the current age, would end soon and that their brand of yoga was the only saving grace for humanity. They blasphemed the Vedic scriptures, alleging they were man-made. These *yogis* claimed that the knowledge they give comes directly from God. I used to ask them many questions, but I rarely got a reasonable or satisfying answer. As with others, I left disgusted.

Another leader sounded logical and rational in his discourses, but he condemned the worship of God in temples as bogus. I felt hurt when he rejected as superstitious the worship of Lord Viṭṭhala, the famous Viṣṇu deity in Pandharpur, Maharashtra. I was particularly dissatisfied with his dismissal of the experiences of renowned saints with Lord Viṭṭhala as mere illusions, and traditional religious observances such as Ekādaśī and pilgrimage to Pandharpur as superstitions. I recalled my visits to Pandharpur some years back, and how my heart had been drawn to the simplicity of the pilgrims and their unalloyed devotion to Viṭṭhala. The sweet singing of the *abhaṅgas* (devotional poems) of Tukārāma, the famous sixteenth-century devotee of Lord Viṭṭhala, had invoked a deep sense of devotion in me. Upon hearing his blasphemy of this age-old tradition, I rejected this pseudo religious leader outright.

Although my encounters with most religious leaders and yogis were disappointing and frustrating, some teachers inspired me and kept alive my hopes of meeting a genu-

ine saint. One, whose simple teachings and clear focus impressed me, taught me to remain detached from pleasant and unpleasant sensations triggered by the mind, to witness all events with neutrality, and to remain equipoised in success and failure, happiness and distress. He emphasized avoiding sinful activities, increasing piety, and purifying one’s mind.

My physical disability allowed me to meet several prominent spiritual leaders. I felt humble and grateful, but still my heart hankered for something more.

An Introduction to Bhagavad-gītā As It Is

As the potpourri of my spiritual experiences was cooking, my friend

I decided to check other translations of the same verse, and I saw that all other writers gave the opposite translation – that God is ultimately impersonal – thus confirming my doubts that ISKCON is wrong.

But deep within I felt my friend was right. When I read Śrīla Prabhupāda’s commentary on various *Gītā* verses, my impersonal barriers started to crumble and I slowly began to realize that God is ultimately a person, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He can have a divine form and be unlimited and omnipresent simultaneously.

Although Śrīla Prabhupāda’s writings convinced me of Kṛṣṇa’s divinity and the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the behavior

I prayed to God: “I don’t know if You are a person or ultimately impersonal. Please guide me and show me the right path.”

Sharad became a member of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON). We would have soulful discussions on spiritual topics for hours together. Our discussions would eventually end in argument about God’s nature and form – does He have a form, or is He formless and impersonal? Most of the time I prevailed, until one day my friend stunned me by showing me a verse from the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.24): “Unintelligent men, who do not know Me perfectly, think that I, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, was impersonal before and have now assumed this personality. Due to their small knowledge, they do not know My higher nature, which is imperishable and supreme.” All these years I had learned that God is impersonal and takes a personal form for His devotee.

How can He have a form and be present everywhere at the same time? I thought. *God is unlimited, and having a form would limit Him.*

of some devotees put me off, and I continued my search.

Although I met many other teachers, I couldn’t commit myself to any of their paths. Either the teachers were unimpressive or the philosophies were unconvincing, sometimes even bewildering. Feeling distraught, I eagerly looked for someone who could answer my questions.

I prayed to God: “I don’t know if You are a person or ultimately impersonal. Please guide me and show me the right path.”

Divine Intervention

I am sure the Lord heard my prayers and answered my call. No, I did not have a divine vision or a mystical experience. But I was confident that God was personally guiding me and making me meet His representatives.

I met a spiritual leader who was a staunch devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. His



MAYAPUR INSTITUTE

— Systematic Śāstric Studies and Training —

Gaura Pūrṇimā Courses—February 20, 2015 – March 10, 2015

Teacher Training Course 1 (separate classes for men and women),
Teacher Training Course 2 (men and women), *Bhakti-śāstri* Teacher
Training Course (men and women), *ISKCON Disciples Course* (women),
ISKCON Disciples Course (men and women)

Anuttama Dāsa • Atul Kṛṣṇa Dāsa • Lakṣmīmāṇī Devī Dāśī
Su-gītā Vāṇī Devī Dāśī • Śyāmala Sakhī Devī Dāśī

**Graduation Ceremonies for the
Bhakti-śāstri & Bhaktivaibhava Courses** — February 20, 2015

For more information, to register, and to get your preliminary
self-study student handbook, please visit www.mayapurinstitute.org,
or write to info@mayapurinstitute.org.

STAY INFORMED & INSPIRED

Sign up for these free email services from Krishna.com

“Krishna.com Newsletter”

Keep up with the new pages on Krishna.com. We're always adding more.

“Thought-a-week”

Spiritual candy for the inquisitive mind.

“Sri Prabhupada Meditations”

Weekly quotes, remembrances, photos, audio/video.

“Krishna Meditations Weekly”

Short and sweet inspiring words about Krishna and His pastimes.

“Picture-a-week”

Windows on the spiritual world.

“Back to Godhead Newsletter”

Learn more about the magazine that's assisting you in your quest for the Absolute Truth.

Go to www.krishna.com/emailnews to sign up. It's easy!

lectures were logical and strictly based on the Vedic scriptures. Quoting from various scriptures, he soundly defeated all opposing arguments and established the Vedic conclusions thoroughly. He convinced me that *bhakti*, the path of love, is the topmost method of self-realization. In his presence I felt easily drawn to Lord Kṛṣṇa and His pastimes. This was a beacon of hope for me.

But soon I encountered a problem that created serious doubts in me: He emphasized *guru-bhakti*, the need to surrender oneself to a guru, but he himself had never accepted a guru. His followers defended him by saying that no one was qualified enough to be his guru. But, I wondered, if Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Caitanya accepted a guru, why can't this person? Then more discordant factors came up. He emphasized *smaraṇam*, or meditation on the Lord's pastimes, but belittled the importance of *kirtana*, the chanting of the holy names, even though

all scriptures recommend it for this age. He said that a real guru never shows his ecstasies, but his ecstasies were broadcast on television. He said that one should perform devotional practice in the mood of the *gopis*, but I felt that was too difficult for most of us, who have so much contamination in our heart. Around that time, I heard a recorded lecture by Śrīla Prabhupāda that touched me. He mentioned that one should gradually elevate one's consciousness by first serving the Lord in the mood of a surrendered servant. When one is sufficiently purified, devotion in higher relationships with Kṛṣṇa automatically manifests.

When followers of the other spiritual leader proclaimed that he was nondifferent from Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, I ended my connection with him. I knew that nothing could be further from the truth.

I felt disheartened, unable to find proper shelter and guidance. I was attracted to Caitanya Mahāprabhu,

so I thought I would try ISKCON again, although my experiences with the organization had been disappointing. Still, I had found no aberration in the philosophy of ISKCON. Śrīla Prabhupāda, with his genius and vision, established a wonderful platform for practicing spirituality.

Especially conducive for spiritual growth were the temples, which were full of devotees with whom one could consult any time. I started visiting the Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsabihārī temple at Juhu, Mumbai, and participated in the *kirtanas*.

I had a heart-transforming experience when a devotee approached me and asked, “Why do you come to the temple if you cannot see?”

I had no answer. So he provided the answer.

“You should say that I may not be able to see the Lord but the Lord can see that I have come to see Him.”

His answer satisfied my heart to the core. I had never felt like this before. Until then, I did not really know the goal of my quest for spiritual truths. But his answer made me realize that the goal was to satisfy the Lord. And the realization came in a simple yet heart-touching way. I wiped tears from my face. The memory of this experience inspires and rejuvenates me even today.

After this incident I became more devoted to ISKCON and soon started chanting sixteen rounds of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. The *Śikṣā-ṣṭaka* prayers of Lord Caitanya deeply moved me, especially the third verse, which emphasizes the need for humility to properly chant the holy names. Then I heard talks by His Holiness Rādhānāth Swami Mahārāja where he repeatedly quoted this verse. Upon closely observing him, I felt he exemplified the verse's message. His unpretentious, unassuming nature attracted me.

“A real sadhu,” I once heard him say, “is not one who takes a higher position to uplift fallen souls. A real sadhu takes a lower position than the most fallen soul and gently pushes him up.”

This statement changed my outlook toward life.

Getting a Positive Point of View

In July 2007 I started getting epileptic seizures, up to twenty a day. The physical and psychological pain agonized me and left me feeling gloomy and empty. Once, Gaura Gopāla Dāsa, lecturing at the Chowpatty temple in Mumbai, mentioned the importance of prayer. One striking point of the lecture was that if Kṛṣṇa is giving us problems in life, that means He is trying to say, “My dear friend, this material world is not for you. Please return to Me quickly.” I was enlivened to hear this. The point was so pertinent. What happened next is deeply etched into my heart, and I pray it stays for the rest of my life.

Gaura Gopāla Dāsa started leading the *kirtana*. There were hundreds of young men in the temple, all swaying rhythmically. The intensity of the frustration of my physical and mental pains piqued my emotions, and I burst out crying and praying.

Some devotees took me to the center of the temple hall and said, “Come on, friend. Please don't waste your tears. Dance with us.”

They graciously taught me the dance steps. I was greatly moved by their kind gesture and by Kṛṣṇa's mercy. During the whole *kirtana*, I cried and danced.

The next day, after an attack occurred I remembered my experience in the temple and chanted intensely. This practice gave me the strength to fight the frustration and anxiety and psychological pains.

The most inspiring aspect of ISKCON's philosophy is its practicality. Unlike in other organizations, no one gave me false hopes of prosperity and recovery from illness. By studying Śrīla Prabhupāda's teachings, I understood how Kṛṣṇa consciousness helps you transcend worldly problems. By the power of *bhakti*, material problems become insignificant. Now whenever I think of my physical problems, I don't get discouraged.

People in other organizations used to allure me by saying that if I did this or that I would regain my eyesight. But in Kṛṣṇa consciousness nobody told me that by chanting I'd regain my vision. Rather, I was encouraged to accept the benefit of being unable to see this tempting world. Still, in the initial days I felt bad that I could not see the Chowpatty deities, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gopināthajī, the glories of whose beauty devotees always used to sing. Now I go in front of the deities so that They can see me, and I ask devotees around me to describe how They look.

I have full faith that the Lord and His holy names are identical, and that if I chant without offense, someday the Lord, through His names, will reveal to me His transcendental form. 🙏

Ravikant Jagtap is married and has two children. He lives in Mumbai and teaches Kṛṣṇa consciousness to young couples and college students.

A Pause for Prayer



Lord Śrī Rāmacandra (Appearance Day: March 28)

[Priests conducting a sacrifice on behalf of Lord Rāmacandra prayed:]

“O Lord, You are the master of the entire universe. What have You not given to us? You have entered the core of our hearts and dissipated the darkness of our ignorance by Your effulgence. This is the supreme gift. We do not need a material donation.

O Lord, You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who have accepted the *brāhmaṇas* as Your worshipable deity. Your knowledge and memory are never disturbed by anxiety. You are the chief of all famous persons within this world, and Your lotus feet are worshiped by sages who are beyond the jurisdiction of punishment. O Lord Rāmacandra, let us offer our respectful obeisances unto You.”

– Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 9.11.6–7

A Sheltered KING

The story of a great Vedic king illustrates the character of Kṛṣṇa's pure devotees and His unfailing support for them.

by Krishna Dharma

Canto 8, Chapter 4:
Ambariṣa Offended by
Durvāsā Muni

KING AMBARIṢA ruled over the entire world and achieved inexhaustible, unlimited opulence and prosperity. Advanced in spiritual knowledge, the king cared little for all of this, realizing it to be exactly like a dream. He knew that attachment to material wealth simply leads one onto the path of darkness, and he therefore considered the whole universe to be no more desirable than a piece of stone. As a staunch devotee of Viṣṇu, he desired only the Lord's service and the association of other devotees. The saintly king was an emblem of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, with his mind and senses continuously engaged in the Lord's service. For Viṣṇu's pleasure and the



good of the world he performed many great sacrifices supervised by sages such as Vasiṣṭha, Asita, and Gautama. Within Ambariṣa's kingdom all the citizens were pious and dedicated to divine service. They were not greedy or envious and lived peacefully and harmoniously.

The king himself lived simply and had no attachment to worldly position or wealth. He saw it all as temporary and material, affording no real happiness. Viṣṇu became greatly pleased with Ambariṣa and bestowed upon him His *cakra* weapon, which protected him from all enemies and adversity.

Once the king and his wife decided to follow the vow of Ekādaśī for one full year. When the vow was complete, he wor-



Painting by Rāmadāsa, Abhirāma Dāsa

Adapted from Brilliant As The Sun: A Summary of Srimad Bhagavatam, the Complete Science of God (Kindle and Kobo Editions). We've added Sanskrit diacritics and made minor changes to match BTG's style. The 800-page ebook is available here: www.krishnadharma.com.

shipped Viṣṇu and bathed in the Yamuna. After giving charity to *brāhmaṇas* and feeding them sumptuously, Ambariṣa was about to break his fast when the sage Durvāsā suddenly appeared.

King Ambariṣa graciously received Durvāsā and said, "Please be seated and allow me to arrange for your meal."

Durvāsā said, "I shall accept your hospitality, but first I must bathe."

The sage left for the Yamuna and the king waited patiently. A long time passed as Durvāsā sat half-submerged in the river, his mind absorbed in Brahman. The time for Ambariṣa to break his fast was passing. If he did not eat soon, his entire vow would be rendered useless and he would become an offender to the Lord. How, though, could he eat before Durvāsā returned and thereby offend that sage? The king consulted his priests. They were confused as to how to respond, some saying that he should continue fasting and others that he should eat.

Ambariṣa reached his own conclusion.

"Certainly I must break my fast to avoid transgressing the rules of the Ekādaśī vow. Yet this will disrespect Durvāsā. I think therefore that I will take just a little water."

Drinking water would be considered both eating and not eating, and in this way the king would satisfy both requirements. Ambariṣa swallowed a mouthful of water, and not long after, Durvāsā returned. By his mystic power the sage could immediately understand that the king had drunk water. He was furious.

Frowning, his body trembling with rage and his mouth pursed, the sage said, "What is this? This king is proud of

The angry sage Durvāsā creates a fiery demon to attack the saintly king Ambariṣa.

being a Vaiṣṇava but is nothing of the sort. Puffed up with his wealth and power, he thinks he is God and can freely transgress religious principles.”

As the red-faced sage castigated Ambariṣa, the king stood silently before him with folded hands.

Durvāsā continued, “You have invited me to eat as your guest and then eaten before me. I shall now punish you!”

The sage tore a handful of hair from his head and hurled it to the ground. He uttered a mantra, and suddenly from the scattered hair a frightful demon rose up like the fire of devastation. He roared terribly and bore in his hand a great trident. Ambariṣa remained placid and unafraid even as the monster

trollers, including Śiva and I, bow our heads before Him and carry out His orders. How can we save you from His *cakra*?”

Durvāsā had no time to waste. He rushed off, with the *cakra* right behind him, heading for Śiva’s abode in Kailāsa Mountain. Śiva responded in the same way as Brahmā.

“I and the other gods who rotate within the universe, caught up in the idea of our greatness, cannot exhibit any power to compare with that of Viṣṇu. Innumerable universes are created and destroyed simply by His will.”

Durvāsā dashed off and went as far as Vaikuṅṭha, falling at the feet of Nārāyaṇa Himself.

“Save me, save me! I take shelter of You!” he cried. “Without know-

Seeing that the same fate which had befallen his created demon now threatened him, the sage swiftly took to his heels.

advanced toward him. Instantly, however, the Lord’s *cakra* weapon appeared and enveloped the demon in a sheet of fierce flames. In a few moments all that remained of him was a heap of ashes scattering in the wind. The *cakra* then turned its attention toward Durvāsā, whose eyes widened in horror. Seeing that the same fate which had befallen his created demon now threatened him, the sage swiftly took to his heels. The *cakra* followed close behind. Feeling its scorching heat, Durvāsā sped away, but the disc stayed right behind him. He fled everywhere, to hills, caves, beneath the sea, to other planets, and even to heaven, but could not escape. Still the *cakra* came for him.

Finally he went before Brahmā and begged, “My dear lord, please save me.”

Brahmā expressed his inability to assist the panic-stricken sage.

“By a mere flick of His eyebrows Viṣṇu vanquishes the entire universe. All gods and universal con-

ing Your unlimited power, I have offended Your dear devotee. Please deliver me from the terrible reaction. Surely one is freed even from hell simply by remembering Your name!”

Although not a devotee himself, the sage was aware of Viṣṇu’s power. He stood before Him with folded palms, glancing fearfully over his shoulder as he spoke.

Nārāyaṇa smiled and said, “I am completely under the control of My devotees; indeed I am not independent. Because My devotees are devoid of material desires, I sit within their hearts and am at their disposal. They are very dear to Me, as is anyone who is dear to them.”

The Lord said that He could not enjoy His own opulence and spiritual bliss without His pure devotees.

“Such persons abandon everything for my sake – homes, wives, children, riches, and even their lives. How can I forsake them? As they know nothing but Me, I know only them.”

Nārāyaṇa advised Durvāsā that his only recourse was to return at once to Ambariṣa and seek his forgiveness.

“Offending a devotee harms one’s own self. Austerity and knowledge are great assets, but when acquired by those who are not gentle, they are the opposite.”

Durvāsā could understand that his only hope for deliverance was to appease Ambariṣa. He raced back as fast as he could, with the *cakra* closely pursuing him.

Chapter 5: Durvāsā Muni’s Life Spared

When Durvāsā reached the king again, he immediately fell before him and clasped his feet.

“Forgive me, great king. I have offended you,” he pleaded.

Ambariṣa was horrified to see the sage in such imminent danger. Feeling himself to be at fault, he began to offer prayers to Sudarśana.

“Greatly auspicious *cakra*, you are fire, you are the most powerful sun, and you are the moon, master of all luminaries. You are water, earth, sky, air, the senses, and the sense objects. You are religion, truth, and sacrifice. You maintain the entire universe, and you are the supreme transcendental prowess of God.”

Understanding that Viṣṇu and His potencies are nondifferent, Ambariṣa offered many prayers, finally asking that Durvāsā be spared. Satisfied with this offering, Sudarśana desisted from chasing the sage.

The greatly relieved Durvāsā repeatedly thanked Ambariṣa.

“My dear king, today I have experienced the greatness of Viṣṇu’s devotees, for despite my offense, you prayed for my good fortune. For those who have achieved Viṣṇu, what is impossible to do or to give up? You have saved my life, and I am deeply indebted to you.”

The sage had been gone for a full year, during which time Ambariṣa had been patiently awaiting his return without taking any food. He had only drunk water. Feeling he had offended Durvāsā and expect-

ing him to return soon, he wanted to first offer food to the sage before taking his own.

When Durvāsā came before him, Ambariṣa fell flat before Durvāsā and said, “Please be seated. Accept my worship and take your meal.”

Durvāsā had never seen such a demonstration of tolerance and forgiveness. He sat down and was served a large variety of first-class preparations.

When he had eaten, he said to the king, “You must eat also. Mistakenly I considered you to be an ordinary man, but I now see that you are an elevated soul. Simply by seeing you and touching your feet, I

have become pleased and satisfied.”

Durvāsā said that the king’s fame would be spread throughout heaven and earth. Continuously praising Ambariṣa, he rose up into the skyways and went to Brahmāloka, the highest material planet.

Although Ambariṣa could understand that by Viṣṇu’s grace he had become powerful, he was not interested in material opulence. He wanted only to serve the Lord. By that service the king had fully realized the Absolute Truth. For him even the highest material planet is no better than hell. Absorbed in thoughts of Viṣṇu, he accepted the *vānaprastha* order to engage only in

spiritual practice. After handing over the kingdom to his sons, he dressed in simple clothes and made his way to the forest.

Śukadeva Gosvāmī concluded the narration by saying, “Anyone who recites or even remembers this history of King Ambariṣa will attain pure devotional service to Kṛṣṇa without delay.”

Krishna Dharma is the author of the world’s best-selling English editions of the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyaṇa. He lives in London with his family. Find out more about him and read more of his writing at www.krishnadharma.com.

WHAT DOES GOD SOUND LIKE? (continued from page 25)

My dear friend, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, has a voice as deep as a cloud resounding in the sky. . . . Kṛṣṇa’s deep voice is more resonant than newly arrived clouds, and His sweet song defeats even the sweet voice of the cuckoo. Indeed, His song is so sweet that even one particle of its sound can inundate the entire world. If such a particle enters

one’s ear, one is immediately bereft of all other types of hearing. (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya* 17.40–41)

In Chapter 21 of *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, Rūpa Gosvāmī also describes Kṛṣṇa’s voice as deep.

Sounds for Loving Exchanges

In the end, the voice of God manifests variously, embodying, we might

say, limitless inflections. Sometimes He speaks to us without words – through a trying situation, the morning dew, a sunset, a stranger’s smile, a loving child, a physical ailment. He comes to us in numerous forms, and we need to be ready to hear Him, regardless of our expectations or preconceptions.

That being said, the Vedic literature tells us of His ultimate form and reveals that we can perceive Him when we truly love Him with

heart and soul. Kṛṣṇa sounds different for different people. But for pure devotees there is a certain uniformity of experience as well. To be sure, they perceive Him according to their unique, subjective relationship with Him, but they all hear the call of His alluring flute, relish His deep, resonant voice, and communicate with Him in languages that enable the deepest of loving exchanges.

Satyarāja Dāsa, a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda, is a BTG associate editor and founding editor of the Journal of Vaishnava Studies. He has written more than thirty books on Kṛṣṇa consciousness and lives near New York City.

Can't chant at the temple every day?

Join a *japa* tele-conference and chant with other devotees. The *japa* session is followed by a class, discussion, or reading.

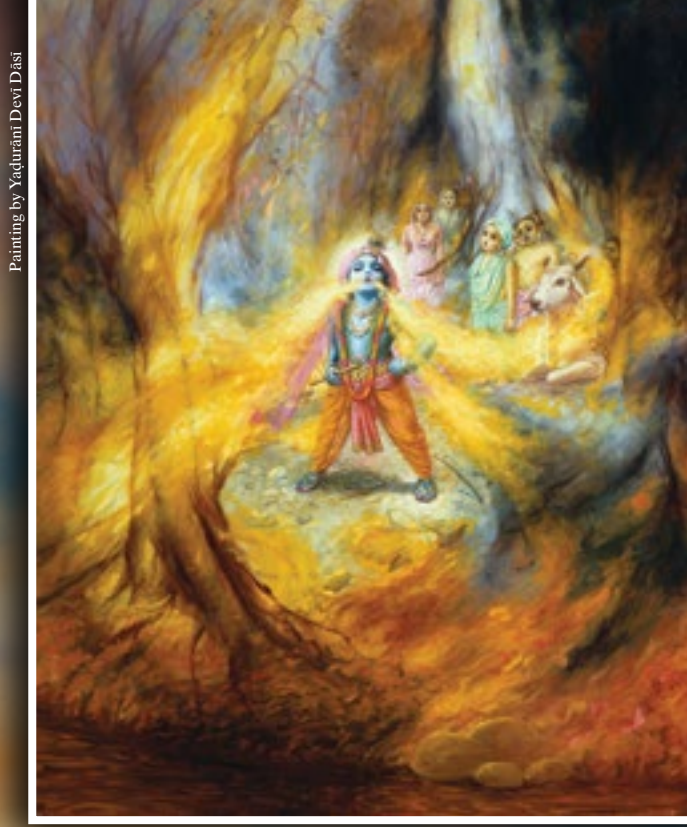
For more information and instructions on how to join the conference, go to www.everydaychant.com and click on the About tab.

Kṛṣṇa

The Reservoir of Compassion

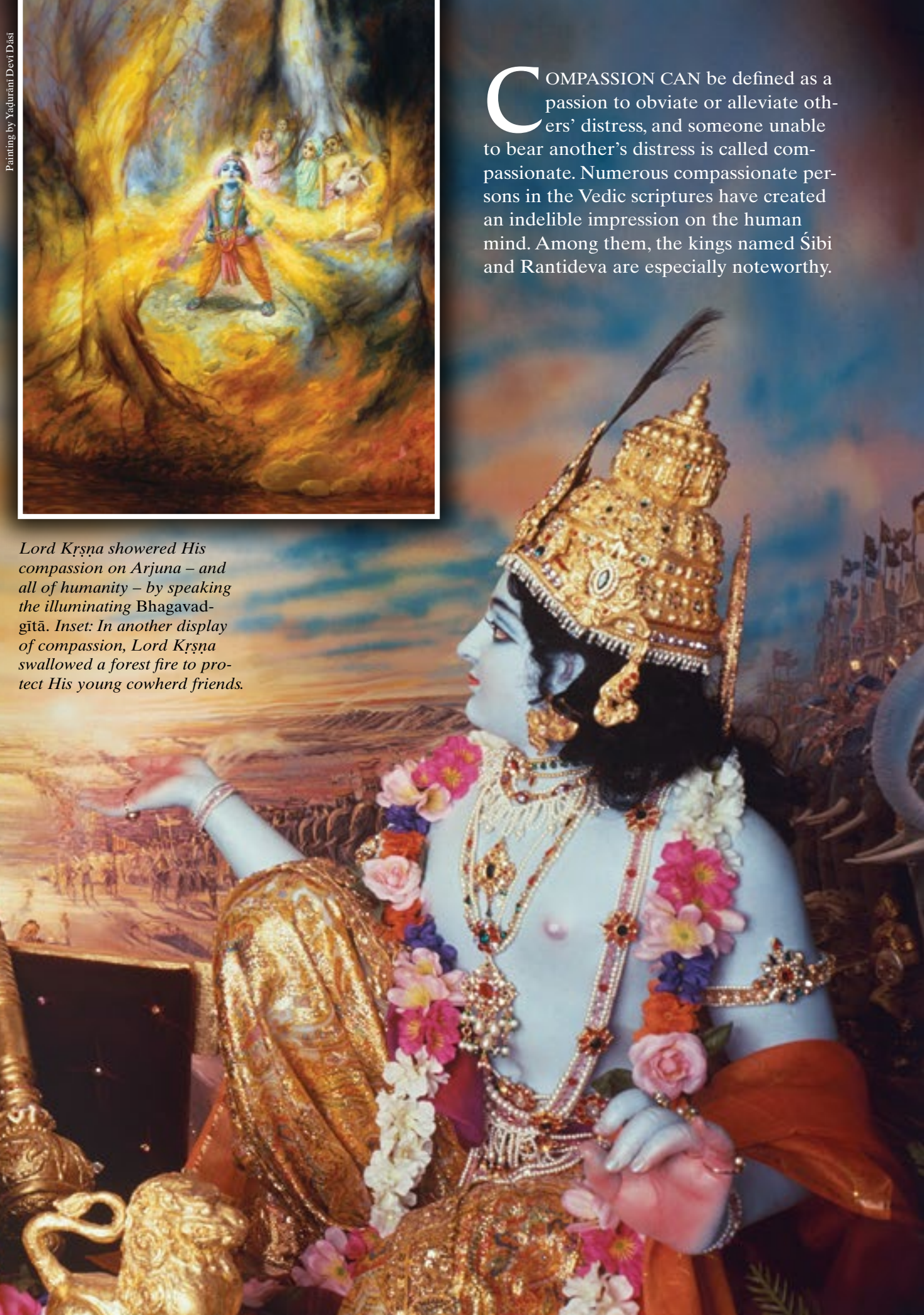
Lord Kṛṣṇa enters the battlefield of Kurukshetra overtly as the charioteer of Arjuna but covertly as the apostle of compassion.

by Rāsa Puruṣa Dāsa



Painting by Yaḍurāni Devi Dāsi

Lord Kṛṣṇa showered His compassion on Arjuna – and all of humanity – by speaking the illuminating Bhagavad-gītā. Inset: In another display of compassion, Lord Kṛṣṇa swallowed a forest fire to protect His young cowherd friends.



COMPASSION CAN be defined as a passion to obviate or alleviate others' distress, and someone unable to bear another's distress is called compassionate. Numerous compassionate persons in the Vedic scriptures have created an indelible impression on the human mind. Among them, the kings named Śibi and Rantideva are especially noteworthy.

King Śibi and the Hawk

The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the *Rāmāyaṇa*, and the *Mahābhārata* all relate the story of King Śibi, the ruler of a South Indian kingdom known for his philanthropy. One day, Indra and Agni came to test the limits of the king's generosity, disguising themselves as a hawk and a dove. The hawk chased the dove, which landed on King Śibi's lap, trembling with fear. The hawk demanded the king surrender the dove, its prey. But the king refused, saying that the dove had sought his shelter and he would not betray the rules of sanctuary. After a great deal of argument, the hawk agreed to leave the dove alone if, to feed the hawk, the king would carve a chunk of his own flesh equal to the

Rantideva perceived the presence of God in the heart of every living being and believed that every living being deserved to be treated with due respect and compassion. Because of this perception, he did not discriminate in his treatment of *brāhmaṇas*, lower-caste *sūdras*, or *caṇḍālas* (dog-eaters or outcastes). He even considered humans and animals to be on the same platform. One time, after fasting for forty-eight days, the king settled down to consume a sumptuous meal with his family. A *brāhmaṇa* guest arrived, and the king felt honored to receive the exalted guest and gave him a share of the food. The *brāhmaṇa* ate and left.

The king divided the remaining food among his family members; but when he was just about to begin

four superexcellent qualities of Kṛṣṇa listed by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*. Living entities, being infinitesimal parts of Kṛṣṇa, receive the gift of compassion as a legacy of Kṛṣṇa. In the conditional souls this gift remains in a dormant state on account of their association with the illusory energy of the Lord (*māyā*), whereas liberated souls like King Śibi and King Rantideva not only distinctly exhibited the gift of compassion in their day-to-day life, but also passed the tests of the controllers of the universe.

Two Descents by Compassionate Kṛṣṇa

Kṛṣṇa is a reservoir of compassion. Some five thousand years ago, during His earthly sojourn of 125 years, He enacted pastimes copiously adorned with compassion. Episodes that highlight Lord Kṛṣṇa's compassionate trait include His swallowing a fierce forest fire to save the cowherd

boys, and His lifting Govardhan Hill on the little finger of His left hand for seven days to serve as an umbrella to protect the residents of Vrindavan from the onslaught of rain and hail.

In the *Mahābhārata* Lord Kṛṣṇa entered the battlefield of Kurukshetra overtly as the charioteer of Arjuna but covertly as an apostle of compassion. With His compassionate glance, He liberated from material bondage every living entity that died during the battle. He also cast His compassionate glance on grandsire Bhīṣmadeva, who, sixty days after falling in the battle, breathed his last in the presence of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead. And earlier, when Arjuna got confused after scanning his foes on the battlefield, the compassionate Kṛṣṇa, in his ostensible mission of enlightening Arjuna, delivered the immortal *Bhagavad-gītā* for the ultimate good of humanity.

eating, a *sūdra* guest arrived, and the king gave him a share of the food.

A *caṇḍāla* guest accompanied by dogs then arrived. He told the king that he and his dogs were hungry and wanted something to eat. The king offered the remaining food to the dogs and their master with respect and also offered his obeisances to them.

All that was left of the meal was enough water to quench the king's thirst. But just as the king moved to drink, a poor, fatigued, and thirsty *caṇḍāla* arrived and begged some water. Due to his soberness and generosity, the king, now on the verge of death from fasting and lack of water, did not hesitate to offer the remnant water to the *caṇḍāla*.

As it turned out, Lord Viṣṇu, Lord Brahmā, and Lord Śiva had come in disguise to deprive the king of his meals and thus show the world the depth of his compassion.

Compassion is one of the sixty-

The hawk agreed to leave the dove alone if, to feed the hawk, the king would carve a chunk of his own flesh equal to the dove's weight.

dove's weight. After endlessly slicing his flesh and placing it on the scale, however, he could not equal the dove's weight. He then threw his entire body onto the scale, but even then the scale tipped in favor of the dove. At this point the hawk and the dove revealed their true identities and blessed the king for his compassionate traits.

Rantideva Passes the Test

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam tells us the story of another Vedic king, Rantideva, who had no material ambitions and hence did not enjoy the opulence of his position. He did not struggle to accumulate wealth but accepted whatever came his way by the mercy of providence. When guests appeared before him, he would offer them whatever he had on his dining menu. On account of this charitable impulse, he and his family would often undergo inadvertent fasting.

in the *Kali-santaraṇa Upaniṣad* of the *Kṛṣṇa-yajur-veda*. Pointing it out as the *mahā-mantra* – the great chant for deliverance – Lord Caitanya dedicated it to the baneful souls of Kali-yuga, the present spiritually degraded age.

Chanting the sixteen words of the *mahā-mantra* is the most potent instrument for deliverance in this age. As an indication of the compassionate nature of the *mahā-mantra*, the word *Hare* found therein is the vocative form of Harā, a name for Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. The supreme

internal potency of Lord Kṛṣṇa, She also represents His compassionate nature.

In Chapter 22 of *The Nectar of Devotion*, Śrīla Prabhupāda offers a befitting tribute to Lord Kṛṣṇa's compassion under the subhead "32. Compassionate," which concludes: "Because Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, it is very difficult to approach Him. But the devotees, taking advantage of His compassionate nature, which is represented by Rādhārāṇī, always pray to Rādhārāṇī for Kṛṣṇa's compassion."

All this and a lot more make *Kṛṣṇa* a byword for ultimate compassion.

Our Potential For Compassion

Kṛṣṇa is a paragon of compassion, and the living entities, being part of Kṛṣṇa, are potentially compassionate. However degraded a person may be externally, internally he bustles with potential compassion. For example, I have often observed that after a road accident, a dreadful or sinful person will run to rescue the injured. We need to revive our latent, ingrained compassionate impulse by practicing it in our daily life.

Like love, the emotion of compassion is contagious. We may remember the saying "Love begets love" but forget that "Compassion begets compassion" – a truth we should wake up to every morning and clutch to our heart every night. 🌸

Rāsa Puruṣa Dāsa, a disciple of His Holiness Gopāla Kṛṣṇa Goswami, passed away while this article was being prepared for publication. He was a chartered civil engineer retired from the government of Haryana and living in Mumbai. We offer our condolences to his family and friends.



Risking his life, King Rantideva exhibited the pinnacle of compassion by offering all his food and water to uninvited guests.

Can God Be Immoral?

Great spiritual authorities like Vyāsadeva and Śukadeva Gosvāmī praise Lord Kṛṣṇa's apparently immoral acts.

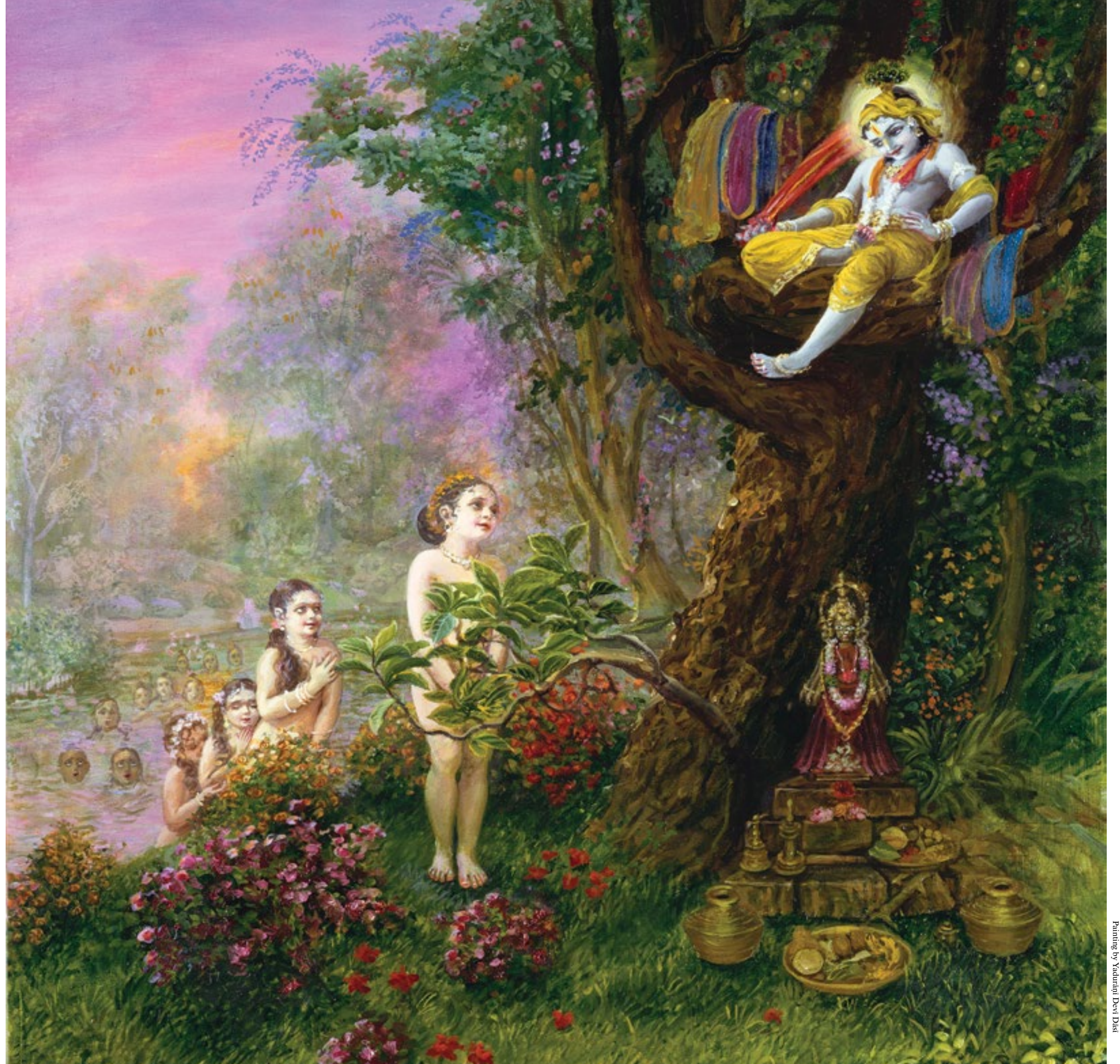
by Mukundamālā Dāsa

WHEN WE TELL someone that we worship Lord Kṛṣṇa, they are often taken by surprise: “How can you worship a God who is immoral?” They refer to Kṛṣṇa's stealing the garments of the young *gopīs* (the cowherd damsels of Vrindavan) and later dancing with them. How could Kṛṣṇa dare to take away the clothes of young girls and force them to stand naked before Him? How could He dance with other men's wives in the middle of the night? And for all this, He is worshiped as God? That's outrageous!

This argument is not totally unfounded, because India has been the home of many ideologies that encouraged some of the most perverted forms of sexual exploitation. In the name of spirituality many pseudo yogis and spiritual teachers have indulged in all kinds of illicit relationships with women and even encouraged their followers to do so. Falsely claiming to be on the highest spiritual platform, such people justify their activities by saying they are following Lord Kṛṣṇa, the “god of love.” This has led to much confusion and misunderstanding.

The activities of Kṛṣṇa with the *gopīs* are some of the most misunderstood pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, a great nineteenth-century saint, predicted that one of the challenges for the modern person in understanding the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* would be the Tenth Canto, where Kṛṣṇa's loving pastimes with the *gopīs* are discussed. One may wonder, how can a book that is considered the *summum bonum*, the culmination of all philosophical understanding and the highest wisdom of a tradition, glorify such activities as most worshipable? Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura answers this question by posing a counter-question: If a layperson can know that such activities are abominable, wouldn't Vyāsadeva, the author of the *Bhāgavatam*, and Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the narrator of

Though misunderstood by many, Lord Kṛṣṇa's act of stealing the young gopīs' clothes is an example of His unfailing response to His devotees' love.



Painting by Yadurajī Dasi Dāsī

the *Bhāgavatam*, know this fact? Vyāsadeva was the literary incarnation of God, and Śukadeva Gosvāmī was a *paramahansa*, a person in the highest renounced order of life. Why would they discuss immoral topics?

Throughout the first nine cantos of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Vyāsadeva condemns material attachment and the degrading power of lust. Through the stories of Ajāmila, Saubhari, and Purūravā, for example, we learn of the dangers of illicit and immoral sex. Therefore, when Vyāsadeva introduces Kṛṣṇa’s apparent immorality in the Tenth Canto, we should realize that this is something drastically different from what we

ilarly Lakṣmī and Sītā) is God in identity but without the personality of God. She has a female form and a female mood, and in that way she exchanges love with Kṛṣṇa. So Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme God, and Rādhārāṇī is the same God in the form of His topmost devotee. Rādhārāṇī’s confidential associates, the *gopīs* and *sakhīs*, are Her female expansions who assist Her in Her service to Kṛṣṇa. They too are not God in identity but devotees of God.

Before we can understand and appreciate the esoteric exchanges between the male and female divine forms, we need to understand that because we are spirit souls dis-

tinct from the body, our material identity as male or female has no spiritual significance. And therefore we can never judge Kṛṣṇa’s activities based on the activities of men and women in this world.

The *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.1) explains that everything in the material world is a perverted reflection of things in the spiritual world, where everything exists in its original pure state. The human male and female forms are fashioned according to the divine male and female forms of God. God and the spiritual world are perfect and complete, but their reflected forms in the material world are influenced by the three modes of material nature: goodness, passion, and ignorance. As we see, one of the strongest relationships in this world is the one between a male and a female, and the whole world is moving under its spell. Unfortunately, this relationship often takes many ugly and horrible forms under the spell of the modes. The spiritual world, being free from the influence of the modes, presents this relationship in its pristine form.

The Gopīs’ Love For Kṛṣṇa Is Supreme

Before introducing Kṛṣṇa’s loving pastimes with the *gopīs*, the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* discusses Kṛṣṇa’s intimate love for many other devotees in His various incarnations to show how love is the main ingredient that attracts the Lord, not the external, physical form. Described in great detail are Lord Narasimhadeva’s love for Prahlāda, Lord Rāma’s love for Hanumān, Lord Viṣṇu’s love for the residents of Vaikuṅṭha, Lord Kṛṣṇa’s love for the Pāṇḍavas and Parīkṣit, and His love for His cowherd boyfriends and His parents Nanda and Yaśodā. Great sages like Nārada Muni and the four Kumāras, demigods like Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva, and kings like Ambariṣa and Bharata have expressed their deep devotion through their prayers. In this way, through the multiplicity of human-divine relationships, the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* reminds us about God’s unlimited love for us – to inspire us to give up our attachment to the temporary world of matter and instead cultivate our lost love for the Supreme Lord. The focus is not on male-female relationships alone, but on the relationship between God and His devotee. Whether Lord Narasimhadeva embraces Prahlāda, or Lord Rāma embraces Hanumān, or Kṛṣṇa embraces the *gopīs*, all such dealings are based on pure spiritual love. Despite dramatic differences among devotees, their devotional mood is always the common element that comes out of each story.

Once we understand this fundamental principle behind each narration of the *Bhāgavatam*, we can safely venture into understanding Kṛṣṇa’s dealings with the *gopīs*. Kṛṣṇa is not an ordinary male but the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and the *gopīs*, headed by Rādhārāṇī, are not ordinary women but the topmost devotees of Kṛṣṇa. This of course does not mean that the male and female forms, or any other form in the spiritual world, are unimportant. Once we under-

stand that spiritual dealings are untainted by material contamination, and once we appreciate the substance of devotion, the *Bhāgavatam* then reveals the higher reality about various levels of devotion.

Ordinarily we would say that lust, or the desire to satisfy one’s own senses, is selfish, so naturally love would mean selflessness. But to distinguish love from lust, Kṛṣṇa-dāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī goes one step further. He writes:

*ātmendriya-prīti-vāñchā—
tāre bali ‘kāma’
kṛṣṇendriya-prīti-icchā
dhare ‘prema’ nāma*

“The desire to gratify one’s own senses is *kāma* [lust], but the desire to please the senses of Lord Kṛṣṇa is *prema* [love].” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi* 4.165)

The important thing to note in this definition is that Kṛṣṇa has senses, just as we have ours. God is not just an abstract impersonal concept; He has eyes, ears, and other senses. More than getting over the selfish desire to satisfy one’s own senses, the desire to satisfy Kṛṣṇa’s senses is the complete definition of love. The highest summit of selflessness is when our desires are God-centered.

There are five primary devotional mellows (relationships or flavors) in which devotees serve Kṛṣṇa: *śānta* (neutrality), *dāsya* (servitorship), *sakhya* (friendship), *vātsalya* (parenthood), and *mādhurya* (amorous love). Each mellow, or *rasa*, is meant to give Kṛṣṇa pleasure in a specific way, and each devotee in the spiritual world serves Kṛṣṇa in one of these *rasas*. Even the *śānta-rasa* – the lowest in the transcendental hierarchy – is characterized by complete detachment from material desire, which means the love is not based on the external appearance as a male or female.

Among the five *rasas*, the *mādhurya-rasa* is considered the highest, and the devotees serving Kṛṣṇa in this *rasa* are the topmost. The *gopīs* want to offer the best food and drinks to Kṛṣṇa, they dec-

orate themselves beautifully so Kṛṣṇa is happy looking at them, they sing the best songs to please Kṛṣṇa, they dance for Kṛṣṇa’s pleasure, and in this way they try to satisfy Kṛṣṇa in all possible ways. Rādhārāṇī, the *gopīs*, and all the devotees have their individual spiritual forms, and they please Kṛṣṇa in their own ways.

This is the real point of transcendence. Spiritual life is a living, loving reality, where every individual has a specific mood and form. What we see in this world hints at the reality of the spiritual world. The human female is suited to offer the best service to the human male. Modern women may reject this as male chauvinism, but a look at the robust traditional family units in India will reveal this to be true. When love and trust exist in a relationship, there is no exploitation. The male-female relationship is based on mutual service, but the service the male offers the female differs from the service the female offers the male. This cooperative and loving relationship has its origin in the spiritual relationship between the male and female forms of God.

The selfless nature of the *gopīs’* love was proved when once Kṛṣṇa pretended to be sick and no physician could cure Him.

“If I put the dust from the feet of My devotees on my head,” Kṛṣṇa

said, “I can be cured.”

But who would dare to put his or her foot-dust on Kṛṣṇa’s head? Everyone refused – except the *gopīs*. When they learned of Kṛṣṇa’s suffering and how to relieve it, they immediately agreed to take the dust from their feet and put it on His head. They didn’t care about the consequences, and they were prepared to suffer in hell for the rest of eternity if they could give a moment’s pleasure to Kṛṣṇa. This selfless nature of the *gopīs* qualifies them as the topmost devotees of Kṛṣṇa, and their female forms allow them to offer the highest service in *mādhurya-rasa*.

Kṛṣṇa Upholds Morality

Many young *gopīs* had worshiped the goddess Kātyāyanī to get Kṛṣṇa as their husband. They didn’t want to marry anyone else, and they eagerly hoped that Kṛṣṇa would marry them. Understanding the hearts of the *gopīs*, Kṛṣṇa decided to fulfill their desire. One day as the *gopīs* entered the Yamuna’s waters, leaving their clothes on the riverbank, Kṛṣṇa suddenly appeared there, took all their garments, and climbed a nearby *kadamba* tree. He demanded that to get their clothes back, the *gopīs* would have to come out naked and collect them.

In commenting on this pastime, Śrīla Prabhupāda explains that in

Because we are spirit souls distinct from the body, our material identity as male or female has no spiritual significance.

have encountered so far. These activities must be special – supramundane and transcendental.

Lust and Love: The Perversion and the Original

The Vedic understanding is that God has both a male and female aspect of divinity. This divinity manifests in the form of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa, Sītā-Rāma, and other expansions and incarnations of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. The *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Ādi* 4.56) explains:

*rādhā-kṛṣṇa eka ātmā,
dui dehadhari’
anyonye vilase rasa
āsvādana kari’*

“Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are one and the same, but They have assumed two bodies. Thus They enjoy each other, tasting the mellows of love.”

Both members of the divine couple are God in identity, but both are not God in personality. One person manifests two personalities. The female form Rādhārāṇī (and sim-

How to Put BTG in Your Will

After providing for their families and loved ones, subscribers may want to put *Back to Godhead* in their wills, thus helping to assure the long-term future of this work. In the USA, bequests are free of estate tax and can substantially reduce the amount of your assets claimed by the government.* You can give needed support for *Back to Godhead* by simply including the following words in your will: *I give, devise, and bequeath to Back to Godhead, 18024 NW 112th Blvd., Alachua, FL 32615 (insert amount being given here) to be used to support Back to Godhead and its related activities, including the Krishna.com website.* A bequest can be a specific dollar amount, a specific piece of property, a percentage of an estate, or all or part of the residue of an estate. You can also name BTG as a contingency beneficiary in the event someone named in your will is no longer living. It is recommended that a lawyer help in drafting or amending a will.

*If you live outside the USA, check the estate tax laws for your country.

the Vedic culture a woman's wealth is her chastity. She can appear unclothed only in front of her husband. When Kṛṣṇa demanded that the *gopis* appear naked in front of Him, He was not hankering to enjoy their naked beauty – if that were His intention, He could have exploited them without returning their clothes. Instead He was eager to fulfill their desires and accept them as His wives. He was accepting the mood and purpose behind their act.

In the *Mahābhārata*, when the Kauravas attempted to insult Draupadī in an open assembly, Kṛṣṇa miraculously appeared and protected her chastity by supplying her an unlimited amount of cloth. He

read about the wives of the ritualistic *brāhmaṇas*. When they heard that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma and Their cowherd boyfriends were hungry, they immediately collected all the food they'd prepared for their husbands' sacrifice and took it to where Kṛṣṇa was. Disregarding all the threats from their husbands and elders, they approached Lord Kṛṣṇa and pleaded with Him to accept them as His surrendered servants. In other words, they transcended all social customs and achieved the perfection of life by surrendering everything to Kṛṣṇa. Interestingly, Kṛṣṇa advised them to go back to their homes and follow their household duties. He assured

sidered immoral and scandalous, because her action is based on selfish sensual pleasure. But in transcendental immorality, one gives up morality for the sake of serving Kṛṣṇa, and that is supremely glorious. Giving up sinful activities and selfish temptations is certainly good, but giving up even pious activities and our attachment to the good of this world for the sake of devotion to God is the highest good, the supreme religion. The *gopis* exemplified this quality to its perfection.

Lord Kṛṣṇa Proves His Godhood

Śukadeva Gosvāmī explains to Parikṣit Mahārāja that Kṛṣṇa's violation of moral principles for the sake of His devotees proves His position as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If He were bound by moral codes of human society, how could He be called God? Kṛṣṇa is above all morality and

immorality, not vice versa. When He appears to violate morality, He is not being immoral but is demonstrating His supremacy over morality. Unlike us, who may break moral principles under the force of alluring temptations, Kṛṣṇa is never motivated by selfish desire. He is always motivated by love, and everyone gets the supreme benefit whenever He breaks any moral principle.

We can understand from the activities of Kṛṣṇa and the *gopis* that neither morality nor God reigns supreme. Love reigns supreme, even above God. Kṛṣṇa does not care to display His supreme divinity in front of His most confidential devotees. The residents of Vrindavan do not like to treat Kṛṣṇa as God. All they know is that Kṛṣṇa is their most lovable object. Under such circumstances, Kṛṣṇa is forced to conceal His divinity. And as a result, He feels free to exchange the most loving relations in the sweetest possible manner. 🌸

Mukundamālā Dāsa is a member of the BTG India editorial team.

Kṛṣṇa's violation of moral principles for the sake of His devotees proves His position as the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

protects and upholds the morality of His devotees.

Kṛṣṇa Demands Transcendental Morality

Following moral principles, though superior to immorality, is not the perfection of spiritual life. Kṛṣṇa demands that one transcend all morality for the sake of achieving transcendence, which is beyond the confines of even moral principles.

After instructing Arjuna on many subjects, Kṛṣṇa towards the end of the *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.66) urges him to give up all varieties of religion and surrender to Him completely:

*sarva-dharmān parityajya
mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja
ahaṁ tvāṁ sarva-pāpebhyo
mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ*

“Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear.”

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* we

them that they need not fear rejection from their families. They could remain united with Him by constantly remembering and chanting His glories.

When the *gopis* came to dance with Kṛṣṇa in the middle of the night, He similarly advised them to return to their homes. Like the *brāhmaṇas'* wives, the *gopis* too had disregarded their elders to serve Kṛṣṇa. They were ready even to give up their chastity in relation to their husbands and risk being ostracized from society. Unlike the *brāhmaṇas'* wives, however, out of their intense love for Kṛṣṇa they could not follow His order to return home. And Kṛṣṇa could not refuse to accept their love.

The *gopis* thus demonstrated the supreme level of renunciation, and that is why they are known as the greatest devotees of Kṛṣṇa. They transcended all moral obligations and surrendered their lives completely to Him.

In ordinary human dealings, a woman who gives up her husband to go with her paramour is con-

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness CENTERS AROUND THE WORLD

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

ASIA

INDIA

- Agartala, Tripura** — Radha Govinda Temple, Matchowmohani, 799 001/ Tel. (381) 2327053 or 9436167045/ Fax: (381) 2384780/ premadatadas@rediffmail.com
- Ahmedabad, Gujarat** — Satellite Rd., Sarkhej Gandhinagar Highway, Bopal Crossing, 380 059/ Tel. (79) 2686-1945, -1644, or -2350/ iskcon.ahmedabad@pamho.net (Guesthouse: guesthouse.ahmedabad@pamho.net)
- Allahabad, UP** — Hare Krishna Dham, 161 Kashi Raj Nagar, Baluaghat 211 003/ Tel. (532) 2416718/ iskcon.allahabad@pamho.net
- Amravati, Maharashtra** — Saraswati Colony, Rathi Nagar 444 603/ Tel. (721) 2666849 or 9421805105/ iskconamravati@ymail.com
- Amritsar, Punjab** — Chowk Moni Bazar, Laxmansar, 143 001/ Tel. (183) 2540177
- Aravade, Maharashtra** — Hare Krishna Gram, Tal. Tasgaon, Dist. Sangli/ Tel. (2346) 255766 or 255515, or 09371163955/ iskcon.aravade@pamho.net
- Bangalore, Karnataka** — Hare Krishna Hill, Chord Rd., 560 010/ Tel. (80) 23471956 or 23578346/ Fax: (80) 23578625/ manjunath36@iskconbangalore.org
- Bangalore, Karnataka** — ISKCON Sri Jagannath Mandir, No. 5 Sripuram, 1st cross, Sheshadripuram, Bangalore 560 020/ Tel. 9901060738 or 9886709603/ varada.krsna.jps@pamho.net
- Baroda, Gujarat** — Hare Krishna Land, Gotri Rd., 390 021/ Tel. (265) 2310630 or 2331012/ iskcon.baroda@pamho.net
- Beed, Maharashtra** — Saint Sawata Mali Chowk, Mondha Road, Beed 431 122/ Tel. (2442) 231799 or 233054
- Belgaum, Karnataka** — Shukravar Peth, Tilak Wadi, 590 006/ Tel. (831) 2436267 or 2400108/ devamrita.rns@pamho.net
- ♦ **Bhubaneswar, Odisha** — N.H. No. 5, IRC Village, 751 015/ Tel. (674) 2553517, 2553475, or 2554283/ devamrita.rns@pamho.net
- Brahmapur, Odisha** — Hare Krishna Temple, NH-5, Brahmapur, Dist. Ganjam, 760 008/ Tel. (680) 2116100 or 9437179400/ pancharatna.gkg@pamho.net
- Brahmapur, Odisha** — Sri Ram Govinda Mandir, Aska Rd., at Post Ankuspur, Brahmapur, Dist. Ganjam, 761 100/ Tel. (680) 2485720/ srigopalcccd@yahoo.co.in
- Chamorshi, Maharashtra** — 78, Krishna Nagar, Chamorshi 264 403, Dist. Gadchiroli/ Tel. 09423422914
- Chandigarh, Punjab** — Hare Krishna Dham, Sector 36-B, 160 036/ Tel. (172) 2601590 or 2603232/ iskcon.chandigarh@pamho.net
- Chennai, TN** — Hare Krishna Land, off ECR, Akkarai, Sholinganallur, Chennai 600 119/ Tel. (44) 24530921 or 24530923/ iskconchennai@gmail.com
- Coimbatore, TN** — Jagannath Mandir, Hare Krishna Land, Aerodrome P.O., Opp. CIT, 641 014/ Tel. (422) 2574508, 2574812, or 2574813/ info@iskcon-coimbatore.org
- Dwarka, Gujarat** — Bharatiya Bhavan, Devi Bhavan Rd., 361 335/ Tel. (2892) 34606/ Fax: (2892) 34319
- Gadei Girl, Odisha** — Post Alalob Via Balikuda, Dist. Jagatsinghpur, 754 108/ (6724) 238112/ srigopalcccd@yahoo.co.in
- Ghaziabad, UP** — Hare Krishna Marg, R-11/35, Raj Nagar, 201 002/ Tel. 9312438001 or 9312438000/ iskcon.ghaziabad@pamho.net
- Guntur, AP** — Opp. Sivalayam, Peda Kakani 522 509
- Guwahati, Assam** — Ulubari Chariiali, South Sarania, 781 007/ Tel. (361) 2525963
- Hanumkonda, AP** — Neeladri Rd., Kapuwada, 506 011/ Tel. (8712) 77399
- Haridaspur, WB** — P.O. Chhaygharia, Bongaon, 24 Parganas 743 704/ Tel. (3215) 57856
- Haridwar, Uttaranchal** — Sri Prabhupada Ashram, G. House, Nai Basti, Mahadev Nagar, Bhihgoda, 249 401/ Tel. (1334) 260818
- Hyderabad, AP** — Hare Krishna Land, Nampally Station Rd., 500 001/ Tel. 8106130279 or (40) 24744969/ iskcon.hyderabad@pamho.net; Guesthouse: guesthouse.iskconhyd@pamho.net
- Imphal, Manipur** — Hare Krishna Land, Airport Rd., 795 001/ Tel. (385) 2455693/ manimandir@sancharnet.in
- Indore, MP** — Hare Krishna Vihar, Nipania, Indore 452 010/ Tel. 9300474043/ mahaman.acbsp@pamho.net
- Jaipur, Rajasthan** — ISKCON, Giridhari Dauji Temple, ISKCON Rd., Opp. Vijay Path, Mansarovar, Jaipur 302 020 (mail: 84/230, Sant Namdev Marg, Opp. K.V. No. 5, Mansarovar, Jaipur 302 020) Tel. (141) 2782765 or 2781860/ jaipur@pamho.net
- Jammu, J&K** — Sri Prabhupada Ashram, c/o Shankar Charitable Trust, Shakti Nagar 180 001, Near AG Office/ Tel. (191) 2582306
- Jhansi, UP** — Inside Sainyar Gate, Near Kali Badi, 284 002/ Tel. (510) 2443602
- Kanpur, UP** — Mainawati Marg, Bithur Rd., Nawabganj, 208 002/ Tel. 9037188117, 9198707801, or 9198707804/ iskcon.kanpur@pamho.net
- Katra, J&K** — Sri Prabhupada Ashram, Sri Kalika Mata Mandir, Katra Vaishnodevi, 182 101/ Tel. (1991) 233047
- Kolkata, WB** — 3C Albert Rd. (behind Minto Park, opp. Birla High School), 700 017/ Tel. (33) 2287-3757 or -6075/ iskcon.calcutta@pamho.net
- Kurukshetra, Haryana** — ISKCON, Main Bazaar, 136 118/ Tel. (1744) 234806 or 235529
- Lucknow, UP** — 1 Ashok Nagar, Guru Govind Singh Marg, 226 018/ Tel. (522) 2635000, 2630026; or 9415235050/ iskcon.lucknow@pamho.net
- Ludhiana, Punjab** — Sterling Tower, Vrindavan Rd., Civil Lines, 141001/ Tel. 9316970600 or (161) 2770600/ iskcon.ludhiana@pamho.net
- Madurai, TN** — 37 Maninagar Main Road, 625 001/ Tel. (452) 274-6472

- Mangalore, Karnataka** — ISKCON Sri Jagannath Mandir, near Hotel Woodlands, Bunts Hostel Rd., 575 003/ Tel. (824) 2423326 or 2442756, or 9844325616
- ♦ **Mayapur, WB** — ISKCON, Shree Mayapur Chandrodya Mandir, Mayapur Dham, Dist. Nadia, 741313/ Tel. (3472) 245620, 245240 or 245355/ Fax: (3472) 245238/ mayapur.chandrodya@pamho.net
- Moirang, Manipur** — Nongban Enkhoh, Tidim Rd./ Tel. (3879) 795133
- ♦ **Mumbai, Maharashtra** — Hare Krishna Land, Juhu 400 049/ Tel. (22) 26206860/ Fax: (22) 26205214/ info@iskconmumbai.com; guesthouse.mumbai@pamho.net
- ♦ **Mumbai, Maharashtra** — 7 K. M. Munshi Marg, Chowpatty 400 007/ Tel. (22) 23665500/ Fax: (22) 23665555/ info@radhagopinath.com
- Mumbai, Maharashtra** — Shristhi Complex, Mira Rd. (E), opposite Royal College, Dist. Thane, 401 107/ Tel. (22) 28454667 or 28454672/ Fax: (22) 28454981/ jagjivan.gkg@pamho.net
- Mysore, Karnataka** — #31, 18th Cross, Jayanagar, 570 014/ Tel. (821) 2500582 or 6567333/ mysore.iskcon@gmail.com
- Nagpur, Maharashtra** — Bharatwada Road, Near Golmohar Nagar, Ramanuja Nagar, Kalamana Market, Nagpur 440 008/ Tel. 937015638, 9371064102 or 9423635311/ iskcon.nagpur@pamho.net
- Nellore, AP** — ISKCON City, Hare Krishna Rd., 524 004/ Tel. (861) 2314577 or (92155) 36589/ sukadevaswami@gmail.com
- ♦ **New Delhi** — Hare Krishna Hill, Sant Nagar Main Rd., East of Kailash, 110 065/ Tel. (11) 2623-5133, 4, 5, 6 or 7/ Fax: (11) 2621-5421/ delhi@pamho.net; Guesthouse: guesthouse.newdelhi@pamho.net
- New Delhi** — 41/77, Punjabi Bagh (West), 110 026/ Tel. (11) 25222851 or 25227478/ iskcon.punjabi.bagh@pamho.net
- Noida, UP** — A-5, Sector-33, 201 301 (Opposite NTPC office)/ Tel. (120) 2506211
- Pandharpur, Maharashtra** — Hare Krishna Dhama, East Bank of Chandrabhaga River, Pandharpur, Dist. Solapur, 413 304/ Tel. (2186) 267242 or 267266, or 9423335991/ iskcon.pandharpur@pamho.net
- Patna, Bihar** — Sri Sri Banke Biharji Mandir, Golok Dham, Budha Marg, 800 001/ Tel. (612) 2220794, 2687637, or 2685081; or 09431021881/ krishna.kripa.jps@pamho.net
- Pune, Maharashtra** — 4 Tarapur Rd., Camp, 411 001/ Tel. (20) 41033222 or 41033223/ nvcc@iskconpune.in
- Pune, Maharashtra** — New Vedic Cultural Center, Katraj-Kondwa Bypass, 411 048/ Tel. (20) 41033222 or 3/ nvcc@iskconpune.in
- Puri, Odisha** — Bhakti Kuti, Swargadwar, 752 001/ Tel. (6752) 231440
- Rajahmundry, AP** — Hare Krishna Land, Goutami Ghat, 533 101/ Tel. (883) 2442277 or 2442288/ gopinathdas@yahoo.com
- Rajkot, Gujarat** — Sri Sri Radha Neelmadhav Dham, Kalawad Rd., opposite Kankot Patiya, Mota Mava, 360 005/ Tel. 9898550185/ vaishnavseva@yahoo.co.in
- Raipur, Chhatisgarh** — Hare Krishna Land, Alopi Nagar, Opposite Maharshi Vidyalaya, Tatibandh, Raipur 492 001/ Tel. (771) 5037555
- Ranaghat, WB** — Gourdham, Habibpur, Ranaghat, Dist. Nadia, 741 403/ Tel. (3473) 281150 or 281226/ shyamrup.jps@pamho.net
- Salem, TN** — ISKCON, Hare Krishna Land, Karuppur 636 012/ Tel. (427) 2001686/ iskcon.salem@pamho.net
- Secunderabad, AP** — 27 St. John's Rd., 500 026/ Tel. (40) 780-5232/ Fax: (40) 814021
- Silchar, Assam** — Ambikapatti, Silchar, Dist. Cachar, 788 004/ Tel. (3842) 34615
- Siliguri, WB** — ISKCON Road, Gitalpara, 734 406/ Tel. (353) 426619, 539046, or 539082/ Fax: (353) 526130
- Solapur, Maharashtra** — Amruta Apartment, Old Akalkot Nagar, Dist. Solapur, 413 005/ Tel. 9371178393/ shursendas@yahoo.co.in
- Srirangam, TN** — 103 Amma Mandapam Rd., Srirangam, Trichy 620 006/ Tel. (431) 2433945/ iskcon_srirangam@yahoo.co.in
- Surat, Gujarat** — Ashram Rd., Jahangirpura, 395 005/ Tel. (261) 276-5891 or 276-5516/ surat@pamho.net
- Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala** — Hospital Rd., Thycaud, 695 014/ Tel. (471) 2328197/ jsdas@yahoo.co.in
- Tirunelveli, TN** — 10B Tiruvananthapuram, Near Vannarapettai Circle, 627 002/ Tel. (462) 2501640
- Tirupati, AP** — K.T. Rd., Vinayaka Nagar, 517 507/ Tel. (877) 2231760 or 2230009/ revati.raman.jps@pamho.net; Guesthouse: guesthouse.tirupati@pamho.net
- Udhampur, J&K** — Sri Prabhupada Ashram, Sri Prabhupada Marg, Sri Prabhupada Nagar, 182 101/ Tel. (1992) 270298/ info@iskconudhampur.com
- Ujjain, MP** — 35-37 Hare Krishna Land, Bharatpuri, 456 010/ Tel. (734) 2535000 or 2531000, or 9300969016/ Fax: (734) 2536000/ iskcon.ujjain@pamho.net
- Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujarat** — Opp. B&B Polytechnic, Mota Bazaar, Dist. Anand, 388 120/ Tel. (26192) 230796 or 233012/ iskcon.vvnagar@pamho.net
- Varanasi, UP** — ISKCON, B 27/80 Durgakund Rd., Near Durgakund Police Station, Varanasi 221 010/ Tel. (542) 276422 or 222617
- Vellore, TN** — Chennai Ext. Centre, 10-12, 10th East Cross Rd., Gandhi Nagar, 632 006
- Vijayawada, AP** — Venkatapalem Karakatta Rd., Undavalli Village, Tadepalli Mandal, Vijayawada, Guntur Dist., 522 501/ Tel. (8645) 272513/ mmdasiskconvijayawada@gmail.com
- Visakhapatnam, AP** — Hare Krishna Land, Sagarangar-45 (City office and mail: Plot No. 52, Pandurangapuram Beach Rd., Visakhapatnam 530 043) Tel. (891) 2528376 or 6537625/ samba.jps@pamho.net; Guesthouse: guesthouse.vizag@pamho.net
- ♦ **Vrindavan, UP** — Krishna-Balaram Mandir, Bhaktivedanta Swami Marg, Raman Reti, Mathura Dist., 281 124/ Tel. & fax: (565) 2540728/ iskcon.vrindavan@pamho.net; (Guesthouse) Tel. (565) 2540022/ ramamani@sancharnet.in
- Warangal, AP** — Mulugu Rd., Ayappa Pidipally, 506 007/ Tel. (8712) 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. (218) 623473
- Hyderabad, AP (New Naimisaranya Farm)** — P. O. Dabilpur Village, Medchal Tq., R.R. Dist., 501 401/ Tel. (40) 65520070 or 9440057263

CENTERS AROUND THE WORLD

Indore, MP (Krishna-Balarama Mandir) — Hare Krishna Vihar, Nipania Village/ Tel. (731) 572794
Mayapur, WB — (contact ISKCON Mayapur)
Puri, Odisha — ISKCON, Bhaktivadanta Ashram, Sipasirubuli, 752 001/ Tel. (6752) 230494
Surat, Gujarat — Bhaktivadanta 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.
Yamunanagar, Haryana — Hare Krishna Dham, Sri Sri Radha Kunj Bihari Mandir, Near Lal Dwara Road, Opposite Raghunathpuri, Lal Dwara Colony, Near Gopal Motor Garage, 135003/ Tel. 9996001817/ kumarstainless@yahoo.in

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANT

Kolkata, WB — Govinda's, ISKCON House, 22 Gurusaday Rd., 700 019/ Tel. (33) 24866922 or 24866009

MALAYSIA

Bahau — 156 Taman Sornam, Bahau 72100, Negeri Sembilan/ Tel. +60 (6) 481-4350 or 454-8982/ paramanandakp@yahoo.com
Bukit Mertajam — 429 Jalan Sungai Rambai, 14000 Bukit Mertajam/ Tel. +60 (4) 538-1276/ arumugam@notes.asemal.com.my
Ipoh — 15-H Jalan Lang, Jalan Padang, Tembak, 30000 Ipoh Perak, Darul Ridzuan/ Tel. +60 (5) 506-1601
Kiang — No. 20, Lorong Besi 4, Off JI. Teluk Pulai, Selangor D.E., 41100/ Tel. +60 (12) 6342464, (12) 3179206 or (603) 33712060/ ramram991@yahoo.com
Kuala Lumpur — Lot 9901, Jalan Awan Jawa, Taman Yari, 58200 Kuala Lumpur/ Tel. +60 (3) 7980-7355/ Fax: +60 (3) 7987-9901/ president@iskonkl.com
Kuching — Lot 680, Block 250, Lorong Ketitir 3, Batu Kawa, 93250 Kuching, Sarawak/ Tel. +60 (82) 688-708
Penang — 43A Jalan Kebun Bunga, 11350 Penang/ Tel. +60 (4) 229-5958/ isana_gauranga@hotmail.com
Prai — 3051 Lorong Jelawat 4, Seberang Jaya, 13700 Prai/ Tel. +60 43808897 or 43809989/ Fax: 43808898/ kaleshadass@gmail.com
Seremban — 28/7J Taman Desa, Temiang, 70200 Seremban, Negeri Sembilan (mail: 14 RJ 1/1, Taman Rasah Jaya, 70300 Seremban, Negeri Sembilan)/ Tel. +60 (6) 765-1379/ ppnada@tm.net.my
Sungei Petani — Lot 46, Jalan 1/6, Taman Sri Wang, 08000 Sungei Petani/ abbay_143@hotmail.com
Taiping — 24 Lorong Panglima (Gator Ave.), Assam Kumbang, 34000 Taiping, Perak D.R. (mail: 590 Jalan Wat Siam, Kampung Pinang, 34600 Kamunting, Taiping, Perak)/ Tel. +60 (5) 807-9702 or 808-1475
Teluk Intan — Jalan Sungai Manik, 36000 Teluk Intan, Perak/ Tel. +63 (32) 83254

OTHER COUNTRIES

Alaminos, Philippines — 3rd/4th Floors, Donato's Trading Building, F. Fule Street, Alaminos, Laguna 4001/ Tel. +63 (49) 5672104 or 9106576483
Bangkok, Thailand — Soi 3, Tanon Itsarapap, Toonburi/ Tel. +66 29445346, 814455401 or 897810623/ swami.bvv.narasimha@pamho.net
Chittagong, Bangladesh — Caitanya Cultural Society, 23 Nandan Kanan, N. N. Paul Blvd./ Tel. + 880 (31) 610822
Chittagong, Bangladesh — Sri Krishna Mandir, in front of Afmi Plaza, Prabartak Sangha (mail: P. O. Box 440)/ Tel. +880 (31) 2551950, 610822; or 1819395948/ iskoncctg@gmail.com
Colombo, Sri Lanka — 188 New Chetty St., Colombo 13/ Tel. +94 (11) 2433325/ Fax: +94 (11) 2471099/ iskon@slt.lk
Denpasar, Indonesia — Radha-Rasesvara Mandir, Jl. Tanah Putih, Gg. Tanah Ayu, Blumbungan, Sibang Gede, Abiansenang, Badung, Bali, 80352/ Tel. +62 (361) 228391, 462596, or 3145052/ Fax: (361) 467722/ iskon_id@yahoo.com
Dhaka, Bangladesh — 5 Chandra Mohon Basak St., Banagram, 1203/ Tel. +880 (2) 236249/ Fax: (2) 837287/ iskon_bangladesh@yahoo.com
Dhaka, Bangladesh — 79 Swamibag, Dhaka-11/ Tel. +880 (2) 7122747 or 7122488/ info@iskonbd.org
Hong Kong — 6/F Oceanview Court, 27 Chatham Rd. South (mail: P.O. Box 98919)/ Tel. +852 2739-6818/ Fax: +852 3909-3950/ iskonhk@iskonhk.org
Jakarta, Indonesia — Yayasan Radha-Govinda, P.O. Box 2694, Jakarta Pusat 10001/ Tel. +62 (21) 489-9646/ matsyads@bogor.wasantara.net.id
Jessore, Bangladesh — Nitai Gaur Mandir, Kathakhali Bazaar P. O., Panjia
Jessore, Bangladesh — Sri Rup-Sanatan Smriti Tirtha Mandir, Ramshara, Magurahat P. O., Abhaynagar
Kathmandu, Nepal — Budhanilkantha (mail: GPO Box 3520)/ Tel. +977 (1) 4373790 or 4373786/ Fax: (1) 414409 (Attn: ISKCON)/ iskonkathmandu@gmail.com
Mandalay, Myanmar — ISKCON Sri Krishna Temple, Corner of 19th Thukha St., Nanshe, Mandalay/ sds108@hotmail.com
Manila, Philippines — #9105 Banuyo St., San Antonio Village, Makati City/ Tel. & fax: +63 (2) 8901947; Tel. +63 (2) 8963357/ iskonmanila@yahoo.com
Myitkyina, Myanmar — ISKCON Sri Jagannath Temple, Bogyoke St., Shansu Taung, Myitkyina, Kachin State/ mahanadi@mptmail.net.mm
Osafia, Israel — P. O. Box 2232, Osafia Village 30090/ Tel. +972 (4) 839-2876
Osaka, Japan — 1-1-17 Katamachi, Miyakojima-ku, Osaka 534-0025/ Tel. +81 (6) 6352-0729
Sylhet, Bangladesh — Yugal Tila, Kajalshah, Opp. Osmani Medical College, Gate No. 1, Sylhet 03100/ Tel. +880 821721358, 1711478190, or 1718781144/ info@iskonksylhet.com
Tai Pei City, Taiwan — Zhong Xiao East Rd., Sec. 2, Lane 39, Alley 2, No. 3, 2F/ Tel. +886 (2) 2395-6010 or 2395-6715/ bhavna@ms22.ninet.net
Tokyo, Japan — 2-23-4 Funabori, Edogawa-ku, Tokyo 134-0091/ Tel. +81 (3) 3877-3000/ iskon.new.gaya.japan@gmail.com
Yogyakarta, Indonesia — P. O. Box 25, Babarsari YK, DIY

RURAL COMMUNITIES

Bangladesh (Kulaura) — Rangirkul Bidyashram, Kulaura, Dist. Moulvibazar/ Fax: +880 (8624) 88035
Bangladesh (Sri Pundarika Dhama) — Mekhla, Hathazari, Dist. Chittagong/ Tel. +880 (31) 610822
Bangladesh (Comilla) — Jagannathpur, Comilla
Indonesia (Govinda Kunja) — (contact ISKCON Jakarta)

RESTAURANTS

Tokyo — Vegetable-Kitchen Govinda's, 5-17-10 Nakano, Nakano-ku, Tokyo 164-0001/ Tel. +81 (3) 3387-8998/ govindas_murata@yahoo.co.jp
Tokyo — Devadeva Cafe, 2-14-7 Kichijoji-Honcho, Musashino-City, Tokyo/ Tel. +81 (422) 21-6220; info@devadevacafe.com

NORTH AMERICA CANADA

Brampton, Ontario — 6 George Street South, 2nd Floor, L6Y 1P3/ Tel. (416) 648-3312/ iskonbrampton@gmail.com
Calgary, Alberta — 313 Fourth St. N.E., T2E 3S3/ Tel. (403) 265-3302/ Fax: (403) 547-0795/ vamanstones@shaw.ca
Edmonton, Alberta — 9353 35th Ave. NW, T6E 5R5/ Tel. (780) 439-9999/ harekrishna.edmonton@gmail.com
Montreal, Quebec — 1626 Pie IX Blvd., H1V 2C5/ Tel. & fax: (514) 521-1301/ iskonmontreal@gmail.com
Ottawa, Ontario — 212 Somerset St. E., K1N 6V4/ Tel. (613) 565-6544/ Fax: (613) 565-2575/ iskonottawa@sympatico.ca
Regina, Saskatchewan — 1279 Retallack St., S4T 2H8/ Tel. (306) 525-0002 or -6461/ jagadishadas@yahoo.com
Toronto, Ontario — 243 Avenue Rd., M5R 2J6/ Tel. (416) 922-5415/ Fax: (416) 922-1021/ info@torontokrishna.com
Vancouver, B.C. — 5462 S.E. Marine Dr., Burnaby V5J 3G8/ Tel. (604) 433-9728/ Fax: (604) 648-8715/ ISKCONVancouver@gmail.com; Govinda's Bookstore & Cafe/ Tel. (604) 433-7100 or 1-888-433-8722

RURAL COMMUNITY

Ascroft, B.C. — Saranagati Dhama, Venables Valley (mail: P.O. Box 99, VOK 1A0)/ info@saranagati.ca
U.S.A.
Atlanta, Georgia — 1287 South Ponce de Leon Ave. N.E., 30306/ Tel. & fax: (404) 377-8680/ admin@atlantaharekrishnas.com
Austin, Texas — 10700 Jonwood Way, 78753/ Tel. (512) 835-2121/ Fax: (512) 835-8479/ sda@backtohome.com
Baltimore, Maryland — 200 Bloomsbury Ave., Catonsville, 21228/ Tel. (410) 744-1624/ contact@iskonbaltimore.org
Berkeley, California — 2334 Stuart St., 94705/ Tel. (510) 540-9215/ info@iskonberkeley.net
Boise, Idaho — 1615 Martha St., 83706/ Tel. (208) 344-4274/ boise_temple@yahoo.com
Boston, Massachusetts — 72 Commonwealth Ave., 02116/ Tel. (617) 247-8611/ Fax: (617) 909-5181/ info@iskonboston.org
Chicago, Illinois — 1716 W. Lunt Ave., 60626/ Tel. (773) 973-0900/ Fax: (773) 973-0526/ chicagoiskon@yahoo.com
Columbus, Ohio — 379 W. Eighth Ave., 43201/ Tel. (614) 421-1661/ premvilasdas.ms@gmail.com
Dallas, Texas — 5430 Gurlay Ave., 75223/ Tel. (214) 827-6330/ Fax: (214) 823-7264/ info@radhakalachandji.com
Denver, Colorado — 1400 Cherry St., 80220/ Tel. (303) 333-5461/ Fax: (303) 321-9052/ info@krishnadenver.com
Detroit, Michigan — 383 Lenox Ave., 48215/ Tel. (313) 824-6000/ gaurangi108@hotmail.com
Gainesville, Florida — 214 N.W. 14th St., 32603/ Tel. (352) 336-4183/ Fax: (352) 379-2927/ kalakantha.acbsp@pamho.net
Hartford, Connecticut — 1683 Main St., E. Hartford 06108/ Tel. & fax: (860) 289-7252/ pyari108@gmail.com
Honolulu, Hawaii — 51 Coelho Way, 96817/ Tel. (808) 595-4913/ hawaii.iskon@gmail.com
Houston, Texas — 1320 W. 34th St., 77018/ Tel. (713) 686-4482/ Fax: (713) 956-9968/ management@iskonhouston.org
Kansas City, Missouri — 5201 Paseo Blvd./ Tel. (816) 924-5619/ Fax: (816) 924-5640/ rvc@rvc.edu
Laguna Beach, California — 285 Legion St., 92651/ Tel. (949) 494-7029/ info@lagunatemple.com
Las Vegas, Nevada — 7181 Dean Martin Dr., 89118/ Tel. (702) 434-8332/ info@govindascenter.com
Los Angeles, California — 3764 Watske Ave., 90034/ Tel. (310) 836-2676/ Fax: (310) 839-2715/ membership@harekrishnala.com
Miami, Florida — 3220 Virginia St., 33133 (mail: 3109 Grand Ave. #491, Coconut Grove, FL 33133)/ Tel. (305) 461-1348/ devotionalservice@iskon-miami.org
New Orleans, Louisiana — 2936 Esplanade Ave., 70119/ Tel. (504) 304-0032 (office) or (504) 638-3244
New York, New York — 305 Schermerhorn St., Brooklyn 11217/ Tel. (718) 855-6714/ Fax: (718) 875-6127/ ramabhadr@aol.com
Orlando, Florida — 2651 Rouse Rd., 32817/ Tel. (407) 257-3865/ info@iskonorlando.com
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania — 41 West Allens Lane, 19119/ Tel. (215) 247-4600/ Fax: (215) 247-8702/ info@iskonphiladelphia.com
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania — 1408 South St., 19146/ Tel. (215) 985-9303/ govindasvegetarian@gmail.com
Phoenix, Arizona — 100 S. Weber Dr., Chandler, 85226/ Tel. (480) 705-4900/ Fax: (480) 705-4901/ premadhattrid@gmail.com
Portland, Oregon — 2095 NW Aloclek Dr., Suites 1107 & 1109, Hillsboro 97124/ Tel. (503) 675-5000/ info@iskonportland.com
St. Louis, Missouri — 3926 Lindell Blvd., 63108/ Tel. (314) 535-8085 or 534-1708/ Fax: (314) 535-0672/ rpsdas@gmail.com
Salt Lake City, Utah — 965 E. 3370 South, 84106/ Tel. (801) 487-4005/ utahkrishnas@gmail.com
San Antonio, Texas — 677 Oxford Trace, 78240/ Tel. (210) 420-1182/ aadasa@gmail.com
San Diego, California — 1030 Grand Ave., Pacific Beach 92109/ Tel. (858) 483-2500/ Fax: (858) 483-0941/ krishna.sandiego@gmail.com
San Jose, California — Mountain View, California, 1965 Latham St., 94040/ Tel. (408) 293-4959/ isvtemple108@gmail.com
Seattle, Washington — 1420 228th Ave. S.E., Sammamish 98075/ Tel. (425) 246-8436/ Fax: (425) 868-8928/ info@vedicculturalcenter.org
Spanish Fork, Utah — Krishna Temple Project & KHON Radio, 8628 S. State Rd., 84660/ Tel. (801) 798-3559/ Fax: (810) 798-9121/ carudas@earthlink.net
Tallahassee, Florida — 4601 Crawfordville Rd., 32305/ Tel. 850-727-5785/ tallahassee.iskon@gmail.com
Towaco, New Jersey — 100 Jacksonville Rd., 07082/ Tel. & fax: (973) 299-0970/ madhupati.jas@pamho.net
Tucson, Arizona — 711 E. Blacklidge Dr., 85719/ Tel. (520) 792-0630/ Fax: (520) 791-0906/ sandaminidd@cs.com
Washington, D.C. — 10310 Oaklyn Dr., Potomac, Maryland 20854/ Tel. (301) 299-2100/ Fax: (301) 299-5025/ info@iskonconfdc.org

RURAL COMMUNITIES

◆ **Alachua, Florida (New Raman Reti)** — 17306 N.W. 112th Blvd., 32615 (mail: P.O. Box 819, 32616)/ Tel. (386) 462-2017/ Fax: (386) 462-2641/alachuatemple@gmail.com
Carriere, Mississippi (New Talavan) — 31492 Anner Road, 39426/ Tel. (601) 749-9460 or 799-1354/ Fax: (601) 799-2924/ talavan@hughes.net
Gurabo, Puerto Rico (New Govardhana Hill) — Carr. 181, Km. 16.3, Bo. Santa Rita, Gurabo (mail: HC-01,

Box 8440, Gurabo, PR 00778)/ Tel. (787) 367-3530 or (787) 737-1722/ manonatha@gmail.com
Hillsborough, North Carolina (New Goloka) — 1032 Dimmocks Mill Rd., 27278/ Tel. (919) 732-6492/ bkgoswami@earthlink.net
◆ **Moundsville, West Virginia (New Vrindaban)** — 3759 McCrearys Ridge Rd., 26041/ Tel. (304) 843-1600 (Guesthouse extension: 111)/ mail@newvrindaban.com
Mulberry, Tennessee (Murari-sevaka) — 532 Murari Lane, 37359/ Tel. (931) 759-6888/ murari_sevaka@yahoo.com
Port Royal, Pennsylvania (Gita Nagari) — 534 Gita Nagari Rd./ Tel. (717) 527-4101/ dhruva.bts@pamho.net
Sandy Ridge, North Carolina — Prabhupada Village, 1283 Prabhupada Rd., 27046/ Tel. (336) 593-2322/ prabhupadavillage@gmail.com
ADDITIONAL RESTAURANT
Hato Rey, Puerto Rico — Tamal Krishna's Veggie Garden, 131 Eleanor Roosevelt, 00918/ Tel. (787) 754-6959/ Fax: (787) 756-7769/ tkveggiegarden@aol.com

EUROPE

UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND

Belfast, Northern Ireland — Sri Sri Radha-Madhava Mandir, Brooklands, 140 Upper Dunmurray Lane, BT17 OHE/ Tel. +44 (28) 9062 0530/ hk.temple108@gmail.com
Birmingham, England — 84 Stanmore Rd., Edgbaston B16 9TB/ Tel. +44 (121) 420 4999/ iskonbirmingham@gmail.com
◆ **Cardiff, Wales** — Cafe Atma / The Soul Centre, 40 Crvys Road, Cathays, CF24 4NN/ +44 (29) 20 390 391/ cafe.atma@gmail.com
Coventry, England — Kingfield Rd., Coventry (mail: 19 Gloucester St., Coventry CV1 3BZ)/ Tel. +44 (24) 7655 2822 or 5420/ hariadas.kds@pamho.net
◆ **Dublin, Ireland** — 83 Middle Abbey St., Dublin 1/ Tel. +353 (1) 661 5095/ dublin@krishna.ie; Govinda's: info@govindas.ie
Lesmahagow, Scotland — Karuna Bhavan, Bankhouse Rd., Lesmahagow, Lanarkshire, ML11 0ES/ Tel. +44 (1555) 894790/ Fax: +44 (1555) 894526/ karunabhavan@aol.com
Leicester, England — 31 Granby Street, LE1 6EP/ Tel. +44 (0) 7597 786 676/ pradyumna.jas@pamho.net
◆ **London, England (city)** — Radha-Krishna Temple, 10 Soho Street, London W1D 3DL/ Tel. +44 (20) 7437 3662; shop, 7440 5221; Govinda's Restaurant, 7440 5229/ info@iskon-london.org
◆ **London, England (country)** — Bhaktivadanta Manor, Dharam Marg, Hilfield Lane, Watford, Herts, WD25 8EZ/ Tel. +44 (1923) 851000/ Fax: +44 (1923) 851006/ info@krishnatemple.com; Guesthouse: bmguesthouse@krishna.com
London, England (south) — 42 Enmore Road, South Norwood, SE25 5NG/ Tel. +44 7988857530/ krishnaprema89@hotmail.com
London, England (Kings Cross) — 102 Caledonian Rd., Kings Cross, Islington, N1 9DN/ Tel. +44 (20) 7168 5732/ foodforalluk@aol.com
Manchester, England — 20 Mayfield Rd., Whalley Range, M16 8FT/ Tel. +44 (161) 226 4416/ contact@iskonmanchester.com
Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England — 304 Westgate Rd., NE4 6AR/ Tel. +44 (191) 272 1911
◆ **Swansea, Wales** — Govinda's, 8 Craddock Street, SA1 3EN/ +44 (1792) 468 469/ info@iskonwales.org.uk; restaurant, info@govindas.org.uk

RURAL COMMUNITIES

Upper Lough Erne, Northern Ireland — Govindadwipa Dhama, Inisrath Island, Derrylin, Co. Fermanagh, BT92 9GN/ Tel. +44 (28) 6772 3878/ govindadwipa@pamho.net
London, England — (contact Bhaktivadanta Manor) Programs are held regularly in more than forty other cities in the UK. For information, contact ISKCON Reader Services, P.O. Box 730, Watford WD25 8EZ, UK.
ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS
Dublin, Ireland — Govinda's, 4 Aungier St., Dublin 2/ Tel. +353 (1) 475 0309/ Fax: +353 (1) 478 6204/ info@govindas.ie
Nottingham, England — Govinda's Nottingham, 7-9 Thurland Street, NG1 3DR/ Tel. +44 115 985 9639/ marigolds16@live.co.uk

GERMANY

Abentheuer — Bückingstr. 4a-8, 55767 Abentheuer/ Tel. +49: (6782) 2214 or (6782) 109 845/ info@goloka-dhama.de
◆ **Cologne** — Taunusstr. 40, 51105/ Tel. +49 (221) 830 3778/ keshava.bbs@gauradesh.com
Hamburg — Bhakti Yoga Zentrum, Krummholzberg 9, 21073/ Tel. +49 (151) 10652236/ vaidyanath.acbsp@pamho.net
Meckesheim — Zuzenhauser Str. 13, 74909/ Tel. +49 (6226) 9530741/ info@iskon-heidelberg.de
Munich — Wachenheimer Strasse 1, 81539/ Tel. +49 (89) 6880 0288/ info@krishnatempel.de
Wiesbaden — Aarstrasse 8, 65329 Burg Hohenstein/ Tel. +49 (6120) 90 41 07 or (171) 144 5991/ iskonwiesbaden@pamho.net

RURAL COMMUNITY

Passau (Simhachalam) — Zielberg 20, 94118 Jandelsbrunn/ Tel. +49 (8583) 316/ info@simhachalam.de
ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS
Cologne — Govindam, Roonstrasse 3, 50674 Köln
Leipzig — Govinda Vegan & Vegetarisch, Merseburger Str. 95, 04177/ Tel. +49 (341) 351 389 83/ info@govinda-leipzig.de

HUNGARY

Budapest — III. Lehel Street 15-17 (Csillaghegy), 1039 Budapest/ Tel. +36 (1) 391-0435 or 397-5219/ Fax: (60) 514114/ budapest@pamho.net
Eger — Szechenyi u. 64, 3300 Eger/ Tel. +36 (36) 313-761/ eger@pamho.net
Pecs — Damjanich u. 22, 7624 Pecs/ Tel. +36 (72) 515-991/ Fax: (72) 313-771/ peccs@pamho.net
RURAL COMMUNITY
Somogyvamos — Krsna-völgy, Fő u. 38, 8699 Somogyvamos/ Tel. & fax: +36 (85) 540-002 or 340-185/ info@krisnavolgy.hu
ADDITIONAL RESTAURANT
Budapest — Govinda Restaurant, Vagyay Ferenc St. 4, 1051 Budapest/ Tel. +36 (1) 269-1625 or 302-2284/ Fax: (01) 473-1310

ITALY

Bergamo — Villaggio Hare Krishna (da Medolago strada per Terno d'Isola), 24040 Chignolo d'Isola (BG)/ Tel. +39 (035) 4940705/ Fax: +39 (035) 199622233/ villagio.hare.krsna@hare.krsna.it

◆ **Rome** — Centro Hare Krishna, Via Sardegna, 55 (traversa Via Veneto), 00187/ Tel. +39 (06) 68891540 or 3331976517/ info@iskonroma.it
Vicenza — via Roma 9, 36020 Albettonne (VI)/ Tel. +39 (0444) 790573/ Fax: +39 (0444) 790581/ prabhupadadesh@pamho.net
RURAL COMMUNITY
◆ **Florence (Villa Vrindavan)** — via Scopeti 108, 50026 San Casciano in Val di Pesa (FI)/ Tel. +39 (055) 820054/ Fax: +39 (055) 828470/ isvaripriya@libero.it

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANT

Milan — Govinda's, via Valpetrosa 5, 20123/ Tel. +39 (02) 862417

SPAIN

Barcelona — Plaza Reial 12, Entlo 2, 08002/ Tel. +34 93 302-5194/ templobcn@hotmail.com
Madrid — Espiritu Santo 19, 28004/ Tel. +34 91 521-3096
Málaga — Ctra. Alora, 3, Int., 29140 Churrriana/ Tel. +34 95 262-1038/ info@harekrishnamalaga.com

RURAL COMMUNITY

Brihuega (New Vraja Mandala) — (Santa Clara) 19411 Brihuega / Tel. +34 949 280436
SWEDEN
◆ **Gothenburg** — Karl Johansgatan 57, SE-414 55, Göteborg/ Tel. +46 (31) 421642/ info@harekrishnagotenburg.com
Grödinge — Radha-Krishna Temple, Korsnäs Gärd, 14792 Grödinge/ Tel. +46 (8) 53029800/ Fax: +46 (8) 53025062/ bmd@pamho.net

◆ **Lund** — Bredgatan 28, 222 21/ Tel. +46 (46) 399500; Restaurant: +46 (46) 120413/ Fax: +46 (46) 188804/ locan@bht.se
◆ **Stockholm** — Fridhemsgatan 22, 11240/ Tel. +46 (8) 654-9002/ Fax: +46 (8) 650-8813/ Restaurant: Tel. & fax: +46 (8) 654-9004/ lokanatha@hotmail.com

RURAL COMMUNITY

Järna — Almviks Gärd, 153 95/ Tel. +46 (8551) 52050/ Fax: +46 (8551) 52060/ info@almviksgard.se
ADDITIONAL RESTAURANT
Malmö — Govinda's, Brogatan 11, 211 44 Malmö/ Tel. +46 (732) 306663

OTHER COUNTRIES

Amsterdam, The Netherlands — Van Hilligaertstraat 17, 1072 JX/ Tel. +31 (20) 675-1404/ Fax: +31 (20) 675-1405/ amsterdam@pamho.net
◆ **Bratislava, Slovakia** — Sulovska 44, Bratislava 82105/ Tel. +421 (910) 907676/ paramesvara.kks@gmail.com
Cakovec, Croatia — Radnicka 2, Svaska ves, 40000 Cakovec/ Tel. & fax: +385 (40) 334312
Copenhagen, Denmark — Skjulhoj Alle 44, 2720 Vanløse, Copenhagen/ Tel. +45 4828 6446/ Fax: +45 4828 7331/ iskon.denmark@pamho.net
Helsinki, Finland — Malmi Manor, Latokartanontie 11, 00700/ Tel. +358 9 6949879/ info@krishna.fi
Karlovac, Croatia — Set. Dr. Franje Tudmana 5a, Karlovac 47000/ Tel. & fax: +385 (47) 600601/ info@avadhuta.hr
Kaunas, Lithuania — 37, Savanoryu pr., 3000/ Tel. +370 (7) 22-2574 or 26-8953/ Fax: +370 (7) 70-6642/ krsna.info@gmail.com
Kokosovce, Slovakia — Abranovce 60, 08252 Kokosovce/ Tel. +421 (51) 7798482
Langenthal, Switzerland — Gaura Bhaktiyoga Center, Dorfgasse 43, 4900 Langenthal/ Tel. +41 62 922 05 48/ gaura.bhaktiyoga.center@gmx.ch
◆ **Lisbon, Portugal** — Rua Dona Estefania, 91 R/C 1000 Lisboa/ Tel. & fax: +351 (1) 314-0314 or 352-0038

CENTERS AROUND THE WORLD

Poland (New Santipur) — Czarnow 21, 58-424 Piszarzowice, woj. dolnoslaskie/ Tel. +48 (75) 744-8892/ radhu@wp.pl

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS

Bratislava, Slovakia — Govinda, Obchodna 30, 811 06 Bratislava/ Tel. +421 (2) 5926 2366

Kosice, Slovakia — Govinda, Puskinova 8, 040 01 Kosice/ Tel. +421 (910) 947112

Locarno, Switzerland — Govinda Restaurant, Via Della Motta 10, Locarno 6600/ Tel. +41 (091) 7523852 or 796260804/ radhakanta@pamho.net

Ljubljana, Slovenia — Holyfood (snackbar), Igriska 5, 1000 Ljubljana/ Tel. +386 (1) 251 13 84 or (41) 32 37 19

Oslo, Norway — Krishna’s Cuisine, Sørkedalsveien 10, 0369 Oslo/ Tel. +47 (2) 269-2269

Prague, Czech Republic — Govinda’s, Soukenicka 27, 110 00 Prague 1/ Tel. +420 605 700 871 or 605 700 874/ info@govindarestaurace.cz

Prague, Czech Republic — Govinda’s, Na hrazi 5, 180 00 Prague 8–Liben/ Tel. +420 (2) 8482-3805/ restaurace@govinda.cz

Prague, Czech Republic — Balarama, Orlicka 9, 130 00 Prague 3–Vinohrady/ Tel. +420 (2) 2272 8885/ info@balarama.cz

Presov, Slovakia — Govinda, Hlavna 70, 08001/ Tel. +421 (910) 947108

Tallinn, Estonia — Damodara, Lauteri St. 1, 10114/ Tel. +372 6442650

Zurich, Switzerland — Mohini, Weinbergstr. 15, 8001 Zurich/ Tel. +41 44 252 52 11/ info@mohini.ch

COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES

RUSSIA

Astrahan — 141052, 8-59, Botvina St./ Tel. +7 (8512) 289431

Chiita — 27, Kurmatovskogo St./ Tel. +7 (3022) 234971 or 230911

Ekaterinburg — 620078, G. Ekaterinburg, per. Otdelnyi SDK VOG/ Tel. +7 (343) 2742200 or 2595262

Irkutsk — St. Krimskaya 6A/ Tel. +7 (3952) 387132 or 324062/ irkutsk@cis.pamho.net

Kazan — 13, Sortirovochnaya St. pos. Yudino/ Tel. +7 (843) 2552529 or 2429991

Krasnodar — 418, Stepnaya St., selo Elizavetinskoye, Krsnodarski kraï/ Tel. +7 (861) 2501694

Kurjinovo — 8, Shosseinaya St., pos. Ershovo, Urupski region, Karachayevo-Cherkessia

Moscow — Leningradsky Prospect, Vladenie 39 (mail: Begovaya str., 13, OPS 284, alya 17, 125284 Moscow)/ Tel. +7 (495) 7394377/ temple@veda.ru

Moscow — Sri Jagannath Mandir, Selskohozyaistvennaya St. 36, Building 1, Moscow 129323/ Tel. +7 (495) 6421084/ jaduradja@rambler.ru

Murmansk — 16, Frolova St. (mail: P.O. Box 5823)/ Tel. +7 (8152) 58-9284/ upendra@mun.rospac.ru

Nijny Novgorod — 14b, Chernigovskaya St., 603001/ Tel. +7 (8312) 305197 or 252592

Novorossiysk — 117, Shillerovskaya St./ Tel. +7 (8617) 438926 or 451415

Novosibirsk — ul. Gogolya 206/1-73/ Tel. +7 (383) 3447827

Omsk — 664099, 42 10th Severnaya St. (mail: P.O. Box 8741)/ Tel. +7 (3812) 245310 or 2414051

Perm — 76, Generala Chernyakhovskogo, 614000/ Tel. +7 (342) 2755002 or 2260681/ prema.vardhana.das@cis.pamho.net

Rostov-Na-Donu — 84/1, Saryana St., 344025 (mail: P.O. Box 64, 344007)/ Tel. & fax: +7 (48636) 2510456

Samara — 122, Aeroportovskoye sh., Zubchininovka/ Tel. +7 (846) 2970318 or 2970323

Simbirsk — 10, Glinki St., 432002/ Tel. +7 (842) 2414016

Sochi — 81a, Lesnaya St., Bythal/ Tel. +7 (8622) 985639/ Tel. & fax: +7 (8622) 972483

Ulan-Ude — Prirechnaya St. 23, 670013 (mail: P.O. Box 4268, 670000)/ Tel. +7 (3012) 30795/ ulan.ude@cis.pamho.net

Vladimir — Ul. Nikolo-Galeyskaya 56/25, 60000/ Tel. +7 (4922) 326726

Vladivostok — Pikhovaya St., 33/ Tel. +7 (4232) 35-30-26/ nram@list.ru

RESTAURANTS

Ekaterinburg — Sankirtana, 33 Bardina St./ Tel. +7 (343) 2412737

St. Petersburg — Govinda’s, 58, Angliysky pr., 190008/ Tel. +7 (812) 1137896

Vladivostok — Vedic Cuisine, 12, Oleansky pr./ Tel. +7 (4232) 26-89-43/ nram@list.ru

UKRAINE

Dnipropetrovsk — Spusk Kalininskiy 39, 320038/ Tel. +380 (56) 2423631 or 2454709

Donetsk — 22, Rubensa St., Makeyevka 339018/ Tel. +380 (62) 3491488/ premada@iskon.donetsk.ua

Kharkov — 43, Verknegievskaya St., Holodnaya Gora, 310015/ Tel. +380 (57) 7242167/ kharkov@cis.pamho.net

Kiev — 21V, Dmitrievskaya ap.13, 01054/ Tel. +380 (44) 4844042 or 4821041/ Tel. & fax +380 (44) 4840934

Kiev — 16, Zoryany pereulok. 04078/ Tel. +380 (44) 4338312, or 4347028, or 4345533

Nikolaev — 5-8, Sudostroitelny per., 327052/ Tel. +380 (51) 2479422

Odessa — Sukhoy Liman/ Tel. +380 (48) 7403271

Vinnica — 5, Chkalov St., 28601/ Tel. +380 (43) 2673171

OTHER COUNTRIES

Baku, Azerbaijan — 2A Sharifli, Nizami Dist., AZ1002/ Tel. +994 (12) 4228376/ baku.iskon@gmail.com

Bishkent, Kyrgyzstan — 5, Ormsky per., 720007/ Tel. +996 (312) 242230

Dushanbe, Tajikistan — 38, Anzob St., 734001/ Tel. +7 (372) 271920 or 273990/ gurupriya@cada.tajik.net

Kishinev, Moldova — M. Cogalnicanu 59/ Tel. +373 (22) 277837

Minsk, Belarus — 11, Pavlova St., 220053/ Tel. +375 (17) 2880629/ new.jaipur@cis.pamho.net

Sukhumi, Georgia — St. Pr-t Mira d 274/ Tel. +995 (122) 29954

Tashkent, Uzbekistan — 54, A. Kodirov St., Mirabad Tumani, 700005/ Tel. & fax: +998 (371) 2918501/ tashkentmandir@mail.ru

Tbilisi, Georgia — 16, Kacharava St., Avchalskoye sh., 380053/ Tel. +995 (32) 623326 or 985812

RESTAURANT

Almaty, Kazakhstan — Govinda’s, 39 Ablay Khan Ave., Almaty City 050004/ Tel. +7 (727) 2710836/ Fax: +7 (327) 2713235/ kazakh@pamho.net

AUSTRALASIA

AUSTRALIA

Adelaide — 25 Le Hunte St. (mail: P.O. Box 114, Kilburn, SA 5084)/ Tel. & fax: +61 (8) 8359-5120/ iskonসা@tpg.com.au

Brisbane — 32 Jennifer St., Seventeen Mile Rocks, QLD 4073 (mail: PO Box 525, Sherwood, QLD 4075)/ Tel. +61 (7) 3376 2388/ info@iskon.org.au

Canberra — 1 Quick St., Ainslie, ACT 2602 (mail: P.O. Box 1411, Canberra, ACT 2601)/ Tel. & fax: +61 (2) 6262-6208/ iskon@harekrishnacanberra.com

Melbourne — 197 Danks St. (mail: P.O. Box 125), Albert Park, VIC 3206/ Tel. +61 (3) 9699-5122/ Fax: +61 (3) 9690-4093/ melbourne@pamho.net

Newcastle — 28 Bull St., Mayfield, NSW 2304/ Tel. +61 (2) 4967-7000/ iskon_newcastle@yahoo.com.au

Perth — 155–159 Canning Rd., Kalamunda (mail: P.O. Box 201 Kalamunda 6076)/ Tel. +61 (8) 6293-1519/ perth@pamho.net

Sydney — 180 Falcon St., North Sydney, NSW 2060 (mail: P.O. Box 459, Cammeray, NSW 2062)/ Tel. +61 (2) 9959-4558/ Fax: +61 (2) 9957-1893/ admin@iskon.com.au

Sydney — Govinda’s Yoga & Meditation Centre, 112 Darlinghurst Rd., Darlinghurst NSW 2010 (mail: P.O. Box 174, Kings Cross 1340)/ Tel. +61 (2) 9380-5162/ Fax: +61 (2) 9360-1736/ sita@govindas.com.au

RURAL COMMUNITIES

Bambra, VIC (New Nandagram) — 50 Seaches Outlet, off 1265 Winchelsea Deans Marsh Rd., Bambra VIC 3241/ Tel. +61 (3) 5288-7383

Cessnock, NSW (New Gokula) — Lewis Lane (Off Mount View Road, Millfield, near Cessnock [mail: P.O. Box 399, Cessnock, NSW 2325])/ Tel. +61 (2) 4998-1800/ Fax: (Sydney temple)/ iskonconfarm@mac.com

Murwillumbah, NSW (New Govardhana) — Tyalgum Rd., Eungella (mail: P.O. Box 687), NSW 2484/ Tel. +61 (2) 6672-6579/ Fax: +61 (2) 6672-5498/ ajita@in.com.au

RESTAURANTS

Brisbane — Govinda’s, 99 Elizabeth St., 1st Floor, QLD 4000/ Tel. +61 (7) 3210-0255

Brisbane — Krishna’s Cafe, 1st Floor, 82 Vulture St., W. End, QLD 4000/ brisbane@pamho.net

Burleigh Heads — Govindas, 20 James St., Burleigh Heads, QLD 4220/ Tel. +61 (7) 5607-0782/ ajita@in.com.au

Maroochydore — Govinda’s Vegetarian Cafe, 2/7 First Ave., QLD 4558/ Tel. +61 (7) 5451-0299

Melbourne — Crossways, 1st Floor, 123 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (3) 9650-2939

Melbourne — Gopal’s, 139 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (3) 9650-1578

Newcastle — Govinda’s Vegetarian Cafe, 110 King St., corner of King & Wolf Streets, NSW 2300/ Tel. +61 (2) 4929-6900 / info@govindascafe.com.au

Perth — Govinda’s Restaurant, 194 William St., Northbridge, WA 6003/ Tel. +61 (8) 9227-1648/ perth@pamho.net

Perth — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 200 William St., Northbridge, WA 6003/ Tel. +61 (8) 9227-1684/ iskonperth@optusnet.com.au

NEW ZEALAND AND FIJI

Auckland, NZ — The Loft, 1st Floor, 103 Beach Rd./ Tel. +64 (9) 3797301

Christchurch, NZ — 83 Bealey Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 25-190)/ Tel. +64 (3) 366-5174/ Fax: +64 (3) 366-1965/ iskonchch@clear.net.nz

Hamilton, NZ — 188 Maui St., RD 8, Te Rapa/ Tel. +64 (7) 850-5108/ rmaster@wave.co.nz

Labasa, Fiji — Delailabasa (mail: P.O. Box 133)/ Tel. +679 812912

Lautoka, Fiji — 5 Tavewa Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 125)/ Tel. +679 666 4112/ regprakash@excite.com

Nausori, Fiji — Hare Krishna Cultural Centre, 2nd Floor, Shop & Save Building, 11 Gulam Nadi St., Nausori Town (mail: P.O. Box 2183, Govt. Bldgs., Suva)/ Tel. +679 9969748 or 3475097/ Fax: +679 3477436/ vdas@frca.org.fj

Rakiraki, Fiji — Rewasa (mail: P.O. Box 204)/ Tel. +679 694243

Sigatoka, Fiji — Sri Sri Radha Damodar Temple, Off Mission St., Sigatoka Town/ Tel. +679 9373703/ drgsmarna@connect.com.fj

Suva, Fiji — 166 Brewster St. (mail: P.O. Box 4229, Samabula)/ Tel. +679 331 8441/ Fax: +679 3100016/ iskonсуva@connect.com.fj

Wellington, NZ — 105 Newlands Rd., Newlands/ Tel. +64 (4) 472-2233

Wellington, NZ — Gaura Yoga Centre, 1st Floor, 175 Vivian St. (mail: P.O. Box 6271, Marion Square)/ Tel. +64 (4) 801-5500/ yoga@gaurayoga.co.nz

RURAL COMMUNITY

Auckland, NZ (New Varshan) — Hwy. 28, Riverhead, next to Huapai Golf Course (mail: R.D. 2, Kumeu)/ Tel. +64 (9) 412-8075/ Fax: +64 (9) 412-7130

RESTAURANTS

Auckland, NZ — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 268 Karangahape Rd./ Tel. +64 (9) 300-7585

Labasa, Fiji — Hare Krishna Restaurant, Naseakula Road/ Tel. +679 811364

Lautoka, Fiji — Gopal’s, Corner of Yasawa Street and Naviti Street/ Tel. +679 662990

Suva, Fiji — Hare Krishna Vegetarian Restaurant, Dolphins FNPF Place, Victoria Parade/ Tel. +679 314154/ vdas@govnet.gov.fj

Suva, Fiji — Hare Krishna Vegetarian Restaurant, Opposite University of the South Pacific, Laucala Bay Rd./ Tel. +679 311683/ vdas@govnet.gov.fj

Suva, Fiji — Hare Krishna Vegetarian Restaurant, 18 Pratt St./ Tel. +679 314154

Suva, Fiji — Hare Krishna Vegetarian Restaurant, 82 Ratu Mara Rd., Samabul/ Tel. +679 386333

Suva, Fiji — Hare Krishna Vegetarian Restaurant, Terry Walk, Cumming St./ Tel. +679 312295

Wellington, NZ — Higher Taste Hare Krishna Restaurant, Old Bank Arcade, Ground Flr., Corner Customhouse, Quay & Hunter St., Wellington/ Tel. +64 (4) 472-2233

AFRICA

GHANA

Accra — Samsam Rd., Off Accra-Nsawam Hwy., Medie, Accra North (mail: P.O. Box 11686)/ Tel. & fax +233 (21) 229988/ srivas_bts@yahoo.co.in

Kumasi — Twumduasi, near Boadi-Emina, off Kumasi-Accra Road, 3 km from Aniwaa Hospital, Emina, Kumasi/ Tel.+233 208320816/ gaurangainkumasi@gmail.com

Nkwawkaw — P. O. Box 69

Sunyani — Plot No. 146, South Ridge Estates (mail P.O. Box 685)

Takoradi — New Amanful, P.O. Box 328

Tarkwa — State Housing Estate, Cyanide

RURAL COMMUNITIES

Agona Swedru — Hare Krishna Village, Off Swedru-Winneba Highway, Agona Swedru, Central Region (mail: P.O. Box SW 953, Agonu Swedru 00233)/ Tel. +233 249969922 or 208318312

Eastern Region — Hare Krishna Farm Community, P. O. Box 15, Old Akrade

NIGERIA

Abeokuta — Ibadan Rd., Obanotoka (mail: P.O. Box 5177)

Benin City — 108, Lagos-Uselu Rd., Uselu/ Tel. +234 (52) 258636, +234 8023524924.or +234 8056283995

Enugu — 5/6, Destiny Layout, Old Abakaliki Rd., Near Enugu Airport, Emene (by Efemelunna Bus Stop)/ Tel. +234 8035822545

Ibadan — 700 meters from Iwo Rd., Ibadan-Lagos Express Way, University of Ibadan (mail: P.O. Box 9996)/ Tel. +234 8034687595/ salika108@hotmail.com

Jos — Gwarandok Rd., Near Air Force Base, Abattoir Rd., by Nammua, Giring Village (mail: P.O. Box 6557)/ Tel. +234 8034711933/ salika108@hotmail.com

Kaduna — Federal Housing Estate, Abuja Rd., Goningora Village (mail: P.O. Box 1121)/ Tel. +234 8035405080

Lagos — No. 23 Egbeyemi St., Off Coker Rd., Illupeju, Lagos (mail: P. O. Box 8793, Marina)/ Tel. +234 8069245577 or 7066011800/ iskonlagos@yahoo.com

Port Harcourt — Umuebule 11, 2nd tarred road, Etche (mail: P.O. Box 4429, Trans Amadi)/ Tel. +234 8033215096

Warri — Okwodiete Village, Kilo 8, Effurun/Orokope Rd. (mail: P.O. Box 1922)/ Tel. +234 8033451265/ kamalaksa@yahoo.com

SOUTH AFRICA

Cape Town — 17 St. Andrews Rd., Rondebosch 7700/ Tel. +27 (21) 6861179/ Fax: +27 (21) 686-8233/ cape.town@pamho.net

◆ **Durban** — 50 Bhaktivedanta Swami Circle, Unit 5 (mail: P.O. Box 56003), Chatsworth, 4030/ Tel. +27 (31) 403-3328/ Fax: +27 (31) 403-4429/ iskon.durban@pamho.net

Johannesburg — 7971 Capricorn Ave. (entrance on Nirvana Drive East), Ext. 9, Lenasia (mail: P.O. Box 926, Lenasia 1820)/ Tel. +27 (11) 854-1975 or -7969/ iskonjh@iafrica.com

Ladysmith — 19 Azalea Dr. 3370/ Tel. +27 (084) 6108666, (036) 6330968, or (036) 6333711/ jaya@uthukeladm.co.za

Phoenix — 72 Pandora St., Phoenix 4068 (mail: P. O. Box 60992, Phoenix 4060)/ Tel. +27 (31) 507-6559/ Fax: (031) 500-1923/ iskon.phoenix@pamho.net

Port Elizabeth — 22 Alexander Road, Newton Park, Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape Province 6045/ Tel. +27 (041) 365 5242/ vrajbaba@gmail.com

Pretoria — 1189 Church St., Hatfield 0083 (mail: P.O. Box 14077, Hatfield 0028)/ Tel. & fax: +27 (12) 342-6216/ iskon.pretoria@pamho.net

OTHER COUNTRIES

Abidjan, Cote D’Ivoire — Temple Hare Krishna (AICK-CI), Cocody-Angre, Cite Blanche, Villa 238/ Tel. +225 22423980, 05648329 or 08416770/ carudensabts@yahoo.fr

Baie du Cap, Mauritius — St. Martin/ Tel. +230 521-0028

Gaborone, Botswana — Plot 18678, West Phase 2, Gaborone (mail: P.O. Box 201003, Gaborone)/ Tel: +267 3901977 (Working hours) or 3934911/ devakinandan@iskon.co.bw

Kampala, Uganda — 9 Dewington Rd. (mail: P.O. Box 1647), Kampala/ Tel. +256 7564-2741

Kisumu, Kenya — Cairo Rd., P.O. Box 9

Our Happy Self

MOST PEOPLE WILL AGREE that the desire to be happy is the basic motive behind everything we do. We want satisfaction from our endeavors, be they the most obviously selfish ones or seemingly selfless acts of compassion and charity. When people are asked what they want out of life, a common reply is “I just want to be happy.”

A basic point of the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is that we can't be happy unless we know who we are.

Sanātana Gosvāmī expressed this idea when he asked Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, “Who am I? Why do the threefold miseries [caused by my body and mind, other living entities, and nature] always give me trouble? If I do not know this, how can I be benefited?” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya* 20.102)

Several verses later Lord Caitanya revealed to Sanātana the nature of the self: “It is the living entity's constitutional position to be an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa because he is the marginal energy of Kṛṣṇa and a manifestation simultaneously one with and different from the Lord, like a molecular particle of sunshine or fire.”

This exchange between the Lord and His devotee has far-reaching philosophical implications. Sanātana's question, first of all, should be asked by all of us. “Why do I suffer?” The happiness we seek is always just beyond our reach. We desire something we think will make us happy, but when we achieve it, it's not enough; we feel the need for something else. This constant state of dissatisfaction is one aspect of our state of suffering.

By revealing the nature of the self, Lord Caitanya implies the answer to the question of why we suffer. It's because we've forgotten who we are: eternal servants of Kṛṣṇa and integral parts of Him. We identify ourselves with our

material bodies, and all our suffering springs from that illusion. Our bodies get sick, grow old, and die, and we think, “This is happening to me.”

But as spiritual beings who are part of Kṛṣṇa, the source of all happiness, in our original pure state we too are happy. That's why, despite repeated frustration in our attempts at happiness in this world, we never give up trying.

The practices of *bhakti-yoga* are meant to return us to our pure state of existence, to cure us of our amnesia, our forgetfulness of our true identity. To begin the treatment, we must acknowledge our illness. Then, like any patient, for recovery we must follow the advice of the doctor – the guru.

The guru will tell us to do certain things and abstain from others. For example, medical treatments often include dietary restrictions. In the *bhakti-yoga* treatment for spiritual amnesia, we give up meat, fish, and eggs and accept a diet of *prasāda*, food prepared for Kṛṣṇa and offered to Him. We also give up gambling, intoxication, and sex other than for having children.

These aspects of the treatment ensure the effectiveness of the primary medicine: the chanting of Kṛṣṇa's holy names.

In their search for happiness, people sometimes shop for a religion that appeals to them. Unfortunately, they may base their choice on external factors and reject a path to God that prescribes what seem to them unnecessary or arbitrary restrictions.

We who follow the path of *bhakti-yoga*, however, accept the restrictions, knowing they lead to discovery of our real self and to the qualifications we need to enter the spiritual realm, the only situation where we can be truly happy and satisfied.

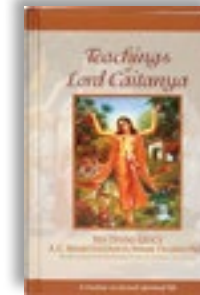
– Nāgarāja Dāsa

Śrīla Prabhupāda's Books

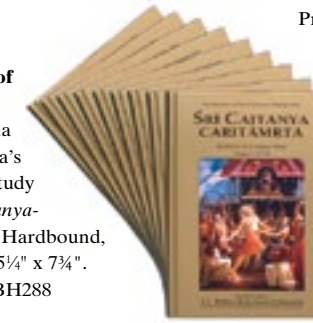
Except where noted, the books on this page are by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and are either original works or scriptural translations with commentary.



Bhagavad-gītā As It Is – The largest-selling edition of the *Gītā* in the western world, *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* is more than a book. It is alive with knowledge and devotion; thus it has the power to change your life for the better. Hardbound, 924 pages, 5½" x 9½". **\$9.95** BLBH214



Teachings of Lord Caitanya – Śrīla Prabhupāda's summary study of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. Hardbound, 391 pages, 5¼" x 7¾". **\$12.95** BLBH288

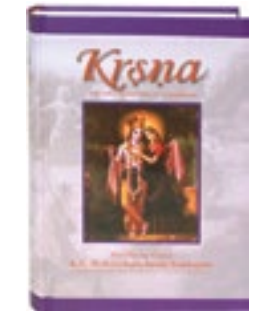
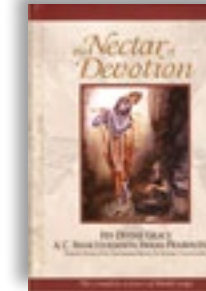


Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, 9-Volume Set – In the early sixteenth century the West was on one course, the East on another. In India, Caitanya Mahāprabhu was directing people inward, toward a scientific understanding of the highest knowledge of man's spiritual nature. Hardbound, 9 volumes, 7,379 total pages, 6" x 9". Printed in India. **\$139.95** BLBM318

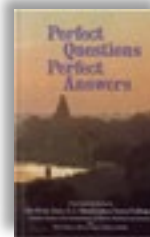
Śrī Īsopaniṣad – The 108 *Upaniṣads* are considered the essence of all the *Vedas*, and *Īsopaniṣad* is foremost among them. Discover the distilled essence of all knowledge in its eighteen enlightening verses. Softbound, 182 pages, 4" x 7". **\$1.95** BLBS277



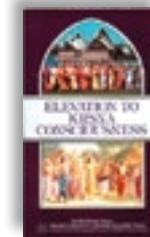
The Nectar of Devotion – Discover all the intricacies of spiritual love, *bhakti*, in this devotional classic. This is Śrīla Prabhupāda's summary study of *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, the Vaiṣṇava classic written by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī that analyzes the various stages of *bhakti* as a methodical practice resulting in love of God. Hardbound, 521 pages, 5¼" x 7¾". **\$9.95** BLBH257



Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead (1-Volume Edition) – A summary study of the Tenth Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, recounting the extraordinary activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Hardbound, 814 pages, 5½" x 7¾". **\$12.95** BLBH247



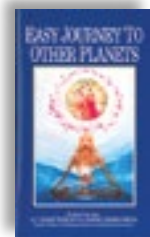
Perfect Questions, Perfect Answers – A series of discussions with Prabhupāda transforms the life of a Peace Corps worker. Softbound, 110 pages, 4¼" x 7". Printed in India. **\$1.49** BJBS331



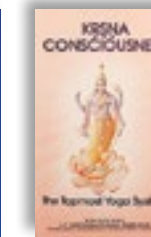
Elevation to Kṛṣṇa Consciousness – Spiritual evolution is a simple matter of reawakening our original God consciousness. Softbound, 106 pages, index, 4" x 7". **\$1.95** BLBS234



Beyond Birth and Death – This powerful book will allow you to break the cycle of pain we all experience in the material world. Softbound, 56 pages, 4" x 7". **\$1.50** BLBS208



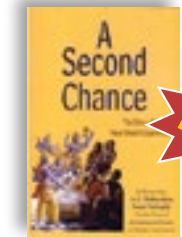
Easy Journey to Other Planets – Forget NASA's elaborate arrangements. Learn the easy way to move through the solar system. Softbound, 87 pages, index, glossary, 4" x 7". **\$1.95** BLBS233



Kṛṣṇa Consciousness: The Topmost Yoga System – The *Vedas* teach that no matter which yoga practice you choose, success is achieved only when *bhakti* is present, 4" x 7". **\$2.95** BLBS297



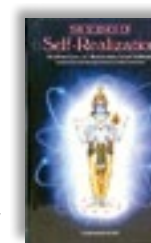
The Nectar of Instruction – Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's instructions will light your path and bring tears of love for God. Softbound, 130 pages, index, glossary, 4" x 7". **\$1.95** BLBS258



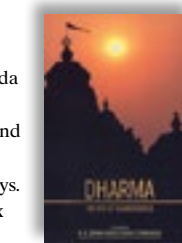
A Second Chance – What do near-death experiences teach us? The history of Ajāmila and the philosophical and metaphysical debates that punctuate his story interest those concerned with life's deepest questions. Softbound, 208 pages, index, 5½" x 8½". **\$5.95** BLBS203



The Journey of Self-Discovery – These 31 essays, talks, and conversations reveal the central point of self-knowledge. Hardbound, 300 pages, 5½" x 8½". **\$5.95** BLBH242



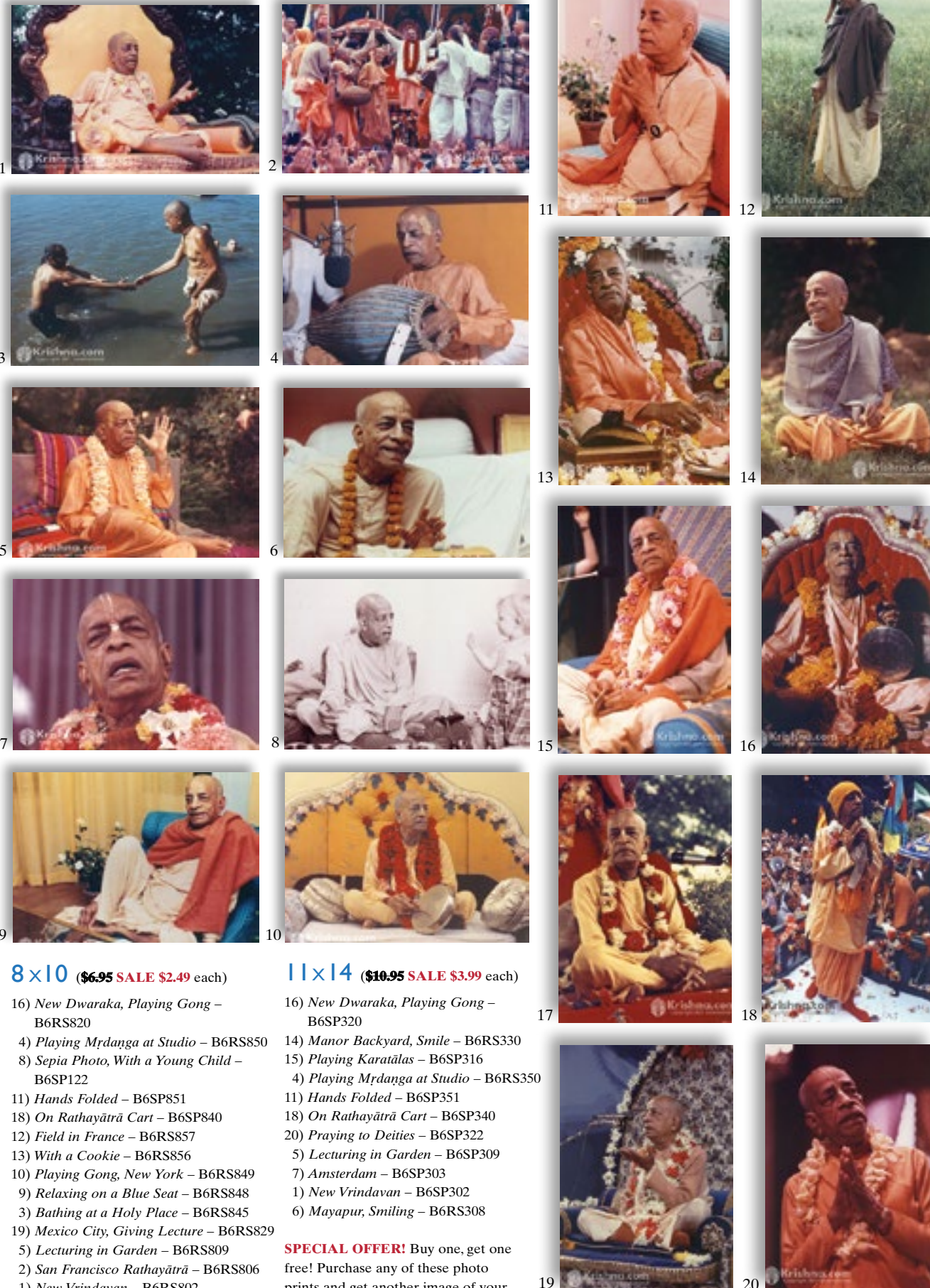
The Science of Self-Realization – This collection of articles by Śrīla Prabhupāda from *Back to Godhead* presents knowledge of the soul and the practice of *bhakti-yoga*. Interviews, lectures, and essays. Hardbound, 339 pages, 5¼" x 8½". **\$4.95** BLBH271



Dharma: The Way of Transcendence – The word *dharma* refers to the inherent characteristic of something. This book describes the essential, unchanging characteristics of the soul. Softbound, 137 pages, glossary, 5½" x 8½". **\$5.95** BLBH230



Śrīla Prabhupāda Photo Prints Sale!



8x10 (\$6.95 SALE \$2.49 each)

- 16) New Dwaraka, Playing Gong – B6RS820
- 4) Playing Mṛdāṅga at Studio – B6RS850
- 8) Sepia Photo, With a Young Child – B6SP122
- 11) Hands Folded – B6SP851
- 18) On Rathayātrā Cart – B6SP840
- 12) Field in France – B6RS857
- 13) With a Cookie – B6RS856
- 10) Playing Gong, New York – B6RS849
- 9) Relaxing on a Blue Seat – B6RS848
- 3) Bathing at a Holy Place – B6RS845
- 19) Mexico City, Giving Lecture – B6RS829
- 5) Lecturing in Garden – B6RS809
- 2) San Francisco Rathayātrā – B6RS806
- 1) New Vrindavan – B6RS802
- 17) Red Vyāsāsana – B6RS824

11x14 (\$10.95 SALE \$3.99 each)

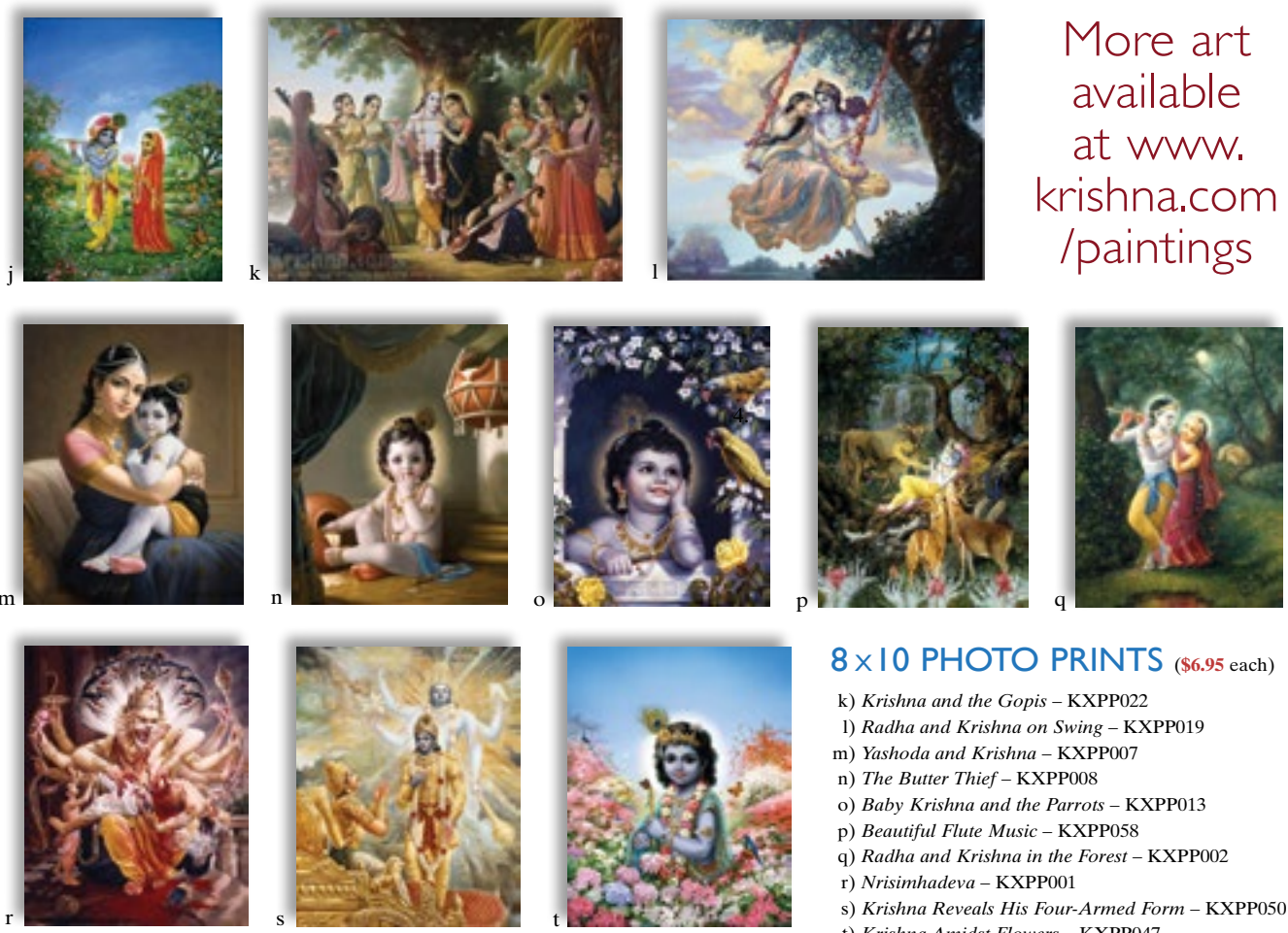
- 16) New Dwaraka, Playing Gong – B6SP320
 - 14) Manor Backyard, Smile – B6RS330
 - 15) Playing Karatālas – B6SP316
 - 4) Playing Mṛdāṅga at Studio – B6RS350
 - 11) Hands Folded – B6SP351
 - 18) On Rathayātrā Cart – B6SP340
 - 20) Praying to Deities – B6SP322
 - 5) Lecturing in Garden – B6SP309
 - 7) Amsterdam – B6SP303
 - 1) New Vrindavan – B6SP302
 - 6) Mayapur, Smiling – B6RS308
- SPECIAL OFFER!** Buy one, get one free! Purchase any of these photo prints and get another image of your choice in the same size, FREE!

Remastered Art

These images, archived on color slides for decades, have been remastered. To restore the images' original brilliance, the slides were scanned and converted to digital files, and technicians meticulously removed the flaws to prepare the images for printing on canvas in bright archival ink. With the look and feel of an original painting, these canvas reproductions are ideal for framing. The thick art-quality canvas has a matte finish and a UV protective coating. The poly-cotton blend makes the canvas ultra durable. All images have a 2" border of plain canvas for framing.

CANVAS

- a) *Gopinatha, the Lord of the Gopis* – 20" x 24", \$67.95 UPRC251
- b) *Lord Ramachandra's Triumphant Return to Ayodhya* – 16" x 20", \$52.95 UPRC253
- c) *Baby Krishna and the Parrots* – 8" x 10", \$27.95 UPRC013
- d) *Baby Krishna and the Parrots* – 10" x 12", \$31.95 UPRC113
- e) *Krishna Blesses the Fruit Vendor* – 10" x 12", \$31.95 UPRC059
- f) *Radha and Krishna on Swing* – 10" x 12", \$31.95 UPRC019
- g) *Krishna and Balarama Steal Butter from the Gopis* – 10" x 12", \$31.95 UPRC385
- h) *Radha and Krishna, the All-Attractive Couple* – 18" x 24", \$59.95 UPRC266
- i) *Krishna Lifts Govardhana Hill* – 10" x 12", \$31.95 UPRC805
- j) *Radhika Offering a Flower to Krishna* – 16" x 20", \$52.95 UPRC723



More art available at www.krishna.com/paintings

8x10 PHOTO PRINTS (\$6.95 each)

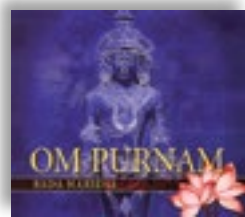
- k) *Krishna and the Gopis* – KXPP022
- l) *Radha and Krishna on Swing* – KXPP019
- m) *Yashoda and Krishna* – KXPP007
- n) *The Butter Thief* – KXPP008
- o) *Baby Krishna and the Parrots* – KXPP013
- p) *Beautiful Flute Music* – KXPP058
- q) *Radha and Krishna in the Forest* – KXPP002
- r) *Nrisimhadeva* – KXPP001
- s) *Krishna Reveals His Four-Armed Form* – KXPP050
- t) *Krishna Amidst Flowers* – KXPP047

Krishna.com store 1.800.800.3284 or 386.462.1241

Krishna.com store 1.800.800.3284 or 386.462.1241

Downloads

Visit our digital downloads store, where you can instantly get music, books, audiobooks, magazines, wallpapers, ringtones, crossword puzzles, and more. We're adding new items regularly.



ALBUMS

(Download the full album or individual tracks.)

Kirtan Yoga Bliss – By Amala Kirtan, **\$9.99**

Going Home – By Nagaraja Dasa, **\$9.99**

Om Purnam – By Bada Haridas, **\$9.99**

God Project – By Ekendra Dasa, **\$9.99**

Car Toons – By Ekendra Dasa, **\$9.99**

Chakram – By Kripamoya, **\$10.99**

Kripamoya: 30 Years of Kirtan – By Kripamoya, **\$8.99**

Take Me Home – By Gaura Mani & Vrajavadhus, **\$9.99**

Chants Encounter – By Laksmi Nrsimha Dasa, **\$9.99**

Blue – By Jagi Aragones, **\$5.99**

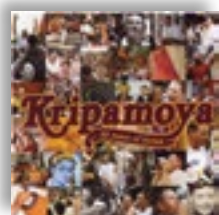
Radhe Shyam: Best of Gaurangi – By Gaurangi Dasi, **\$11.99**

Bhajan Kutir (Vol. 1) – By Various Artists, **\$9.99**

Bhajan Kutir (Vol. 2) – By Various Artists, **\$9.99**

Bhajan Kutir (Vol. 3) – By Various Artists, **\$9.99**

Krishna Meditations – By Śrīla Prabhupāda, **\$8.99**



KRISHNA.COM STORE

P. O. Box 430, Alachua, FL 32616, USA • (800) 800-3284
Outside USA & Canada: +1 (386) 462-1241 or fax (386) 462-1761
Email: store@krishna.com • Web: www.krishna.com/store

**Use this promotional code to get 10% off
your next online order: BTG49ID***

(Include item codes when ordering. Please print clearly.)

Please send me:	Qty.	Amount
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

(To order additional items, use a separate sheet.)

Subtotal _____

Payment method: S/H (\$6 plus 10% of order)** _____

Credit card Sales tax (Florida only) _____

Check / money order Amt. enclosed _____

Make checks payable to Krishna.com. (US funds only.) For subscriptions, make checks payable to Back to Godhead. We accept the following credit cards: VISA, MasterCard, American Express, Discover.

Name _____

Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Tel. _____ Email _____

Card no. _____ Exp. _____ S. C.*** _____

Signature _____

* Cannot be applied to previous orders. Excludes sale and clearance items, as well as shipping / handling charges. Expires March 1, 2015.

** Orders outside US, \$6 plus 25% of order. (For a more accurate shipping quote, please call or email us.)

*** Security code. Orders cannot be processed without 3-digit code on back of card (for AmEx: 4-digit code on front).

AUDIOBOOKS

Teachings of Lord Caitanya – **\$14.95**

A Second Chance: The Story of a Near Death

Experience – **\$14.95**

Śrī Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāmṛta (Vol. 1) – **\$15.00**

(Translation and Commentary)

Bhagavad-gītā As It Is – **\$9.95**

(Translation only, with background music)

Complete Bhagavad-gītā As It Is – **\$10.00**

(Sanskrit, Translation, and Purports)

Bhagavad-gītā As It Is (Spanish) – **\$9.95**

(Translation only, with background music)

Śaraṅāgati and Gītāvalī – **\$9.95**

The Nectar of Instruction – **\$9.95**

The Life of Tulasi Devī – **\$9.95**

Hari-nāma Cintāmaṇī – **\$9.95**

Śrī Isopaniṣad – **\$9.95**

(Translation and Purports, with background music)

Lives of the Vaiṣṇava Saints – **\$9.95**

Spiritual Stories – **\$14.95**

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam – **\$24.95**

(Translation only, with background music)

Krishna Stories – **\$11.99**

Children's Kṛṣṇa Book – **\$14.95**

BTG Magazines 2012–2014 – **\$4.50** each

VEDIC THOUGHTS

In the phenomenal world three things are factually observed by any intelligent man: the living beings, the manifest world, and the ultimate control over them. The intelligent man can see that neither the living entity nor the phenomenal world are creations of chance. The symmetry of creation and its regulative actions and reactions suggests the plan of an intelligent brain behind them, and by genuine inquiry one may find out the ultimate cause with the help of one who knows them factually.

His Divine Grace A. C.
Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 2.5.2, Purport

The forgetful conditioned soul is educated by Kṛṣṇa through the Vedic literatures, the realized spiritual master, and the Supersoul. Through these, he can understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead as He is, and he can understand that Lord Kṛṣṇa is his eternal master and deliverer from the clutches of *māyā*. In this way one can acquire real knowledge of his conditioned life and can come to understand how to attain liberation.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, *Madhya* 20.123

A faithful man who is dedicated to transcendental knowledge and who subdues his senses is eligible to achieve such knowledge, and having achieved it he quickly attains the supreme spiritual peace. But ignorant and

faithless persons who doubt the revealed scriptures do not attain God consciousness; they fall down. For the doubting soul there is happiness neither in this world nor in the next.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa
Bhagavad-gītā 4.39–40

My dear Lord, to understand those things beyond direct experience – such as spiritual liberation or the attainment of heaven and similar material enjoyments – and in general to understand the means and end of all things, it is imperative that the forefathers, demigods, and human beings consult the Vedic literatures, for these literatures, being Your own laws, constitute the highest evidence and revelation.

Śrī Uddhava
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.20.4

Pure love of God manifests as the most subtle consciousness, devoid of material qualities and material desires, increasing at every moment, and never interrupted.

Nārada-bhakti-sūtra 54

By offering prayers in the company of the Maruts and other demigods, I always please the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Govinda, whose form is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss, and who sits beneath a *kalpa-vṛkṣa* tree.

Lord Brahmā
Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad 1.38

BTG WAREHOUSE CLEARANCE SALE!



HELP ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPREAD THE MESSAGE OF BACK TO GODHEAD

On the order of his guru to teach Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the English-speaking world, Śrīla Prabhupāda started *Back to Godhead* magazine in 1944. Now, seventy years later, *Back to Godhead* is still a vital tool to introduce people to Lord Kṛṣṇa's valuable teachings and to nurture the spiritual life of people already familiar with those teachings. Unsold copies of BTG accumulate over time, and we now have around 9,000 magazines, going back about five years. We feel it's a shame for those magazines to lie in our warehouse rather than in the hands of people who can benefit from everything Kṛṣṇa consciousness has to offer. To encourage you to help us distribute these leftover magazines, we're offering past issues at drastically reduced prices:

Orders of 10–50: \$1.00 each, 51–500: \$0.75 each, 500+: \$0.60 each. (Shipping costs are extra.)

To order, contact the Krishna.com Store and let one of our Customer Service Representatives know you're interested in the "BTG Warehouse Clearance Sale." Because our inventory includes more than thirty different issues in various quantities, and because different issues may be mixed together in one carton, we will send you issues of our choosing, although we can try to fill requests for specific issues.