

BACK TO GODHEAD

BACK TO



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no 30

The Magazine of The Hare Krishna Movement.

SPECIAL ISSUE
THE HOLY
RATHAYATRA
FESTIVAL



TOP: Sri Sri Radha
Krishna Deities at Los
Angeles ISKCON.

BOTTOM: His Divine
Grace A.C. Bhaktive-
danta Swami Prabhu-
pada, the Founder-
Acharya of ISKCON.



Inside back cover—
TOP: His Divine Grace
delivers the Rathaya-
tra Festival address at
the Family Dog audi-
torium in San Francis-
co.

BOTTOM: His Divine
Grace seated on the
Rathayatra Car.



GARY



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INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS

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BACK TO GODHEAD is published by ISKCON BOOKS, an organ of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, 61 Second Avenue, New York, N.Y. All materials copyright © 1969, ISKCON Books. Printed in Japan.

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WHAT IS THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR
KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS?

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness was formed in 1966 by Prabhupada A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, who came from India on the order of his Spiritual Master to preach love of God to the people of the West. Prabhupada is in a line of disciplic succession going back directly 500 years to the time when Lord Chaitanya appeared in India, and from there back still further—5000 years—to the time when Krishna first spoke The Bhagavad Gita to His disciple Arjuna.

Krishna Consciousness is experienced as a process of self purification. Its means and end are an open secret, and there is no financial charge for learning Krishna Consciousness or receiving initiation into the chanting of Hare Krishna. The gist of devotional service to Krishna is that one takes whatever capacity or talent he or she has and dovetails it with the interests of the Supreme Enjoyer, the Lord, Sri Krishna. The writer writes articles for Krishna, and we publish periodicals in this way. The businessman does business in order to establish many temples across the country. The householders raised children in the science of God, and husband and wife live in mutual co-operation for spiritual progress. These activities are done under the sanction of the expert Spiritual Master, and in line with the Scriptures. Devotional service in Krishna Consciousness means regular chanting in the temple, hearing talks about the Pastimes of Krishna from Srimad Bhagwatam, and taking foodstuffs prepared for and offered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

By books, literature and records, the Society is dedicated to awakening the worldwide public to the normal, ecstatic state of Krishna Consciousness, so that all may regain their eternal position of favorably serving the will of Krishna. Sankirtan—congregational chanting—is carried to the people: in public parks, schools, on t.v., in the theater, on the streets. Krishna Consciousness is not an idler's philosophy. Rather by chanting and by engagement in the service of Krishna, anyone who takes part will experience the state of "Samadhi," ecstatic absorption in God-consciousness, 24 hours a day!

As the philosophy of Krishna Consciousness is non-sectarian, any man, Hindu or Christian, will become better in his faith by chanting the Holy Name of God and by hearing The Bhagavad Gita. Without knowledge and realization and loving service to the One Supreme God, there can be no religion. Let everyone rejoice in the Sankirtan Movement, and we may see the fulfillment of the prediction made by Lord Chaitanya 500 years ago: that the chanting of the Holy Names of God, Hare Krishna, would be carried to every town and village of the world. Only in this way can real peace prevail. It is sublime and easy.

HARE KRISHNA, HARE KRISHNA,
KRISHNA KRISHNA, HARE HARE/
HARE RAMA, HARE RAMA,
RAMA RAMA, HARE HARE

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER OF
ISKCON WRITE: ISKCON—NEW YORK FOR FURTHER DE-
TAILS.

RATHAYATRA PARADE

San Francisco

by Purushottam Das Brahmachary
and Sudama Das Adhikary

(ISKCON Los Angeles)

On July 27th, 1969, at the corner of Haight and Ashbury, a massive three ton car stood above a huge crowd of people; they had gathered from all around the country to witness the third annual Rathayatra Car Festival held by the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. The Krishna Consciousness devotees had constructed the two and a half stories high car, called a *ratha*, which was to transport the Deities Lord Jagannath, His Sister Subhadra, and Brother Balaram to the ocean. The three Deities were already on the upper level of the car and were smiling upon all members of the crowd.

The bottom level contained several devotee-musicians and loudspeaker equipment. The second level consisted of a narrow walkway running around the one and a half story high Orissan dome, which was covered in magenta-pink silk and embellished with a giant, golden lotus. All sides of the cart were decorated with trappings of silks, satin, and heavy brocades in different colors. From the second level, two huge pots were spewing transcendental flavored clouds of frankincense over the crowd. Thirty twenty-five foot long garlands of carnations, gardenias and roses were wound around the gold railings and around the columned first level.

The chanting of the Hare Krishna Mantra was already nicely under way as everyone stood around the car on Haight Street, anxiously awaiting the arrival of the spiritual master, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami. Suddenly the Krishna Consciousness devotees began madly jumping up and down in an extraordinary ecstasy, crying out "Prabhupada! Prabhupada! All Glories to Sri Guru! All Glories to Srila Prabhupad! Haribol! Haribol!" Then His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada emerged from a car which had cautiously nuzzled its way through the crowds up to the side of the great *ratha* car. Purple velvet steps were lowered onto the street by the devotees, and the Golden Guru rose up onto the *ratha*'s opulent throne, just below the Deities. Garlands of roses and gardenias were



placed around his neck, and quantities of rose petals were tossed at his lotus feet. Then hundreds of people fell down on the ground, paying their humble obeisances and respects to His Divine Grace, for the inevitable ecstasy which was to take place on that Holy Day. Beneath the Lotus Feet of Lord Jagannath, the Lord of the Universe, His Divine Grace spoke the following words:

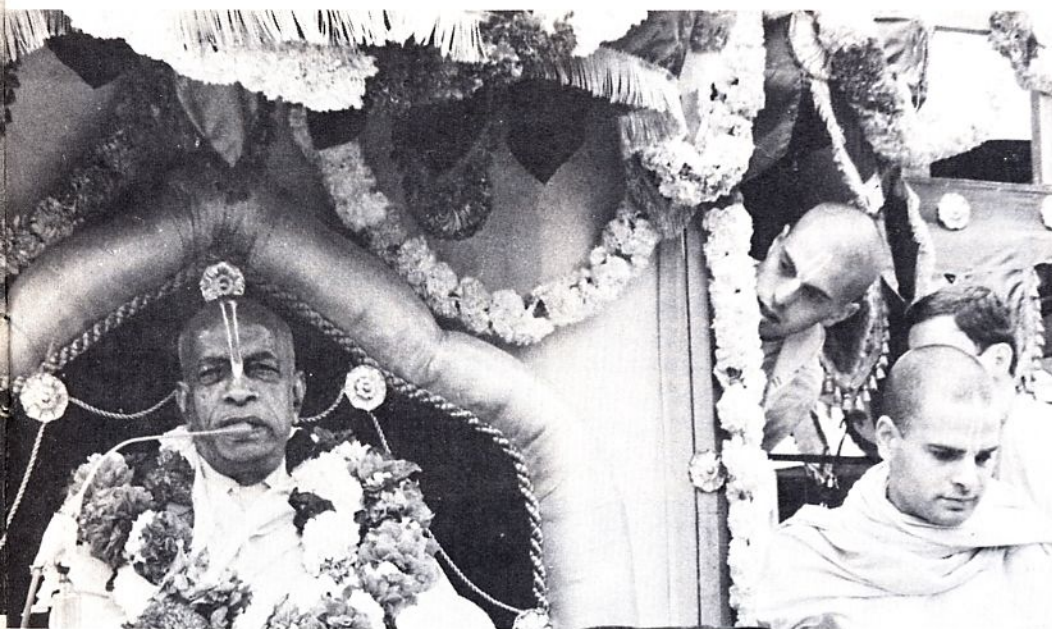
"This ceremony that we are performing today is performed every year at this time in Jagannath Puri. The temple there is very tall, and from the historians' point of view it is more than 2,000 years old. I was reading a book called the Aquarian Gospel. From that book I can understand that Lord Jesus Christ also lived in the Jagannath Temple for some time. So it is to be concluded that Lord Jagannath was worshipable even by Lord Jesus Christ, and Lord Jesus was attending this Rathayatra Festival in Jagannath Puri. It is also learned from this book, Aquarian Gospel, that Lord Jesus Christ got his spiritual inspiration from Lord Jagannath. So Lord Jagannath is so pleased that He has come to your country. Because Lord Jesus Christ loved Him, and because Lord Jagannath loved Lord Jesus Christ, therefore He has come to your country. Please receive Him adequately. You will be happy.

"Another special significance of Lord Jagannath is that when Lord Chaitanya renounced His family life at the age of 24 years, His mother requested that He

make His headquarters at Jagannath Puri. So Lord Chaitanya had quarters at Jagannath Puri and lived there for 18 years. He took *sannyas* at 24 years old. For six years He travelled all over India, and the last 18 years He lived at Jagannath Puri. He was regularly attending this Jagannath Car Festival every year, and many thousands of devotees assembled in that Festival wherein Lord Chaitanya and His devotees chanted the Hare Krishna Mantra.

"This inauguration of Rathayatra Ceremony will bring a new chapter in the history of the world—it is that potent. It is stated in the Vedic literature that anyone who sees Lord Jagannath seated on this car will no more have to take birth within this miserable material world.

"Perhaps you saw in the San Francisco Chronicle that when I landed at San Francisco airport a reporter asked me my opinion of the landing of your American people on the moon. I asked him whether I should give my frank opinion. He said, "Yes." So I replied that it is "simply a waste of time." If you actually want to transfer yourself from this planet to another planet, then you must follow the principles of the Bhagavad Gita. In the Bhagavad Gita you will find a nice verse which says that there are innumerable planets, not only in this one universe, but there are innumerable universes also. In each of these universes there are millions and trillions of planets, and each planet has a different atmosphere. So even if you go to



the moon, you will not be happy there, because everywhere in the material universes the four principles of material conditioning are always present. They are birth, death, old age and disease. But Krishna says that, if one goes back to My Supreme Planet, which is called Goloka Vrindaban, he will never have to come back to this miserable condition of life. This Krishna consciousness movement is to take you to the highest state of eternal bliss and knowledge. It is not a sentimental movement, but is the practical means of perfect spiritual realization. If within this life you practice Krishna consciousness, then you will very easily be able to go to Goloka Vrindaban and have your blissful life, eternal and full of knowledge. You should start this process today. Simply chant Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. I request you to follow this car of Lord Jagannath, and make progress in your life to Goloka Vrindaban, instead of wasting your time for the moon planet. Thank you very much."

After this divine message was presented, there were shouts of "All Glories to Prabhupada, the Golden Vaishnava! Jai! Jai!" and obeisances were again offered. The ratha then began to roll down Haight Street towards its destination, through Golden Gate Park to the Great Ocean Highway. Thousands present began chanting Hare Krishna, the Great Chanting for Deliverance: Hare

Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. Approximately 100 Krishna devotees were dispersed among the constantly increasing crowd, some holding flags, banners and instruments. A 10 foot high picture of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the Incarnation of Krishna who inaugurated the Hare Krishna Movement 500 years ago in India, was being carried 100 feet in front of the ratha. On the ratha the musicians and singers were leading the ecstatic chanting with mridungas, kartals and harmoniums. The ratha was being pulled by many men, by means of long ropes which extended in front of the car; and ropes behind the car were used to slow it down while going downhill.

As the joyous procession proceeded through Golden Gate Park, the crowd increased to about 8,000 persons, many of whom had, by chance, been in the park and were drawn by the transcendental sights and sounds of the parade. The ecstasy in all hearts culminated when the mighty ratha halted at the entrance of a bridge above the road in the park. Thousands swarmed into the echoing bridge and breathlessly beheld His Divine Grace stand up from his throne. With arms upraised, he began to dance before the Lord of the Universe. Namah Om Vishnu Padaya Krishna Presthaya Bhutale/ Srimate Bhaktivedanta Swamin Iti Namine. Everyone was then crying and screaming out the Hare Krishna Mantra, along with fervently felt obeisances to His Divine Grace. There can

be no adequate description given here of the splendrous dance done by His Divine Grace at this time, or of the joy experienced by all of those who witnessed this holy scene. As Prabhupada has often instructed—and proven—to his disciples throughout the world, the constitutional position of every living entity is to be ecstatic and joyous in glorifying and rendering loving service unto Krishna (one of whose Names is Jagannath). The many persons who were for the first time coming into contact with the Hare Krishna Movement also got a taste of the nectar pouring forth from Krishna Consciousness.

The ratha then proceeded past the bridge and along its pilgrimage to the ocean. At the ocean, another 2,000 people who had been awaiting the arrival of the car joined the crowd, now numbering approximately 10,000. When the ratha finally came to a halt, Prabhupada delivered another message regarding the importance of developing spiritual life.

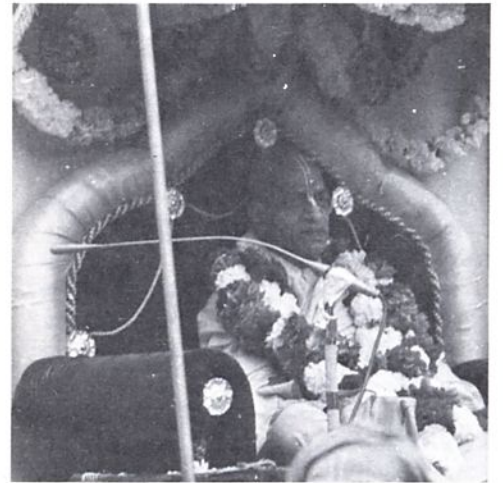
"My dear American boys and girls, I thank you very much for your taking part in this great ceremony known as Lord Jagannath's Rathayatra Ceremony. This ceremony is performed every year for the last 2,000 years or more in India, and in your country perhaps this is the third year of performing this great Rathayatra Ceremony. We are also performing this ceremony in Boston, London, New York and Columbus. The purpose for this Krishna consciousness movement is for invoking your dormant love for Jagannath, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Every one of us, not only human beings but every living entity including birds, beasts and aquatics, is part and parcel of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. And just like a son has the right to inherit the property of his father, so we have the prerogative to achieve the status of our Father, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This status is called Sat-Chit-Ananda Vighraha. Sat means eternal, chit means complete in knowledge, ananda means bliss, and vighraha means person. As we are all persons, so the Supreme Personality of Godhead is also another Person, but He is very, very great. And He being the greatest, He supplies the needs of all other individual persons. We have a relationship with Lord Jagannath, and we are meant to participate in His quali-

ties of Sat-Chit-Ananda Vighraha. This material life is just the opposite conception of our life with Lord Jagannath. This body is full of misery, it is temporary, and there is no complete knowledge. This Hare Krishna Mantra will gradually lead you to the status of your Supreme Father, Krishna. Don't think this is any sectarian movement. It is the postgraduate study of all religions. In the Srimad Bhagavatam it is said that the first-class religion is that which teaches you to invoke your dormant love of Godhead. Now our love is distributed in so many different channels, but this

love should all be concentrated upon Krishna, the Supreme Lord. Kindly chant this Hare Krishna Mantra—we do not charge anything. This is not a business; we are giving you everything for free. So please take part in this movement. Come with us. We simply request you to chant Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, and come with us; and you will see how your life will be sublime. You will feel eternity, all blissfulness, and you will know everything. I have spoken about landing on the moon; but if you come

to Krishna consciousness, you will know not only what is on the moon, but you will know the condition of all the planets in the material sky, and you will want to go back to Goloka Vrindaban in the Spiritual Sky.

"If you would like to understand this science of Krishna consciousness, we have many books, such as Bhagavad Gita As It Is, Srimad Bhagavatam, Teachings of Lord Chaitanya, Nectar of Devotion, plus we have a monthly magazine, 'Back To Godhead.' But if you have no time to read, kindly chant Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna,



Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. In this mantra the whole spiritual power is given. It is for everyone. Our only request is that in whatever condition of life you are in—it doesn't matter—you don't have to dress like us, no; wherever you are, remain there, but just chant this Hare Krishna Mantra. Thank you very much."

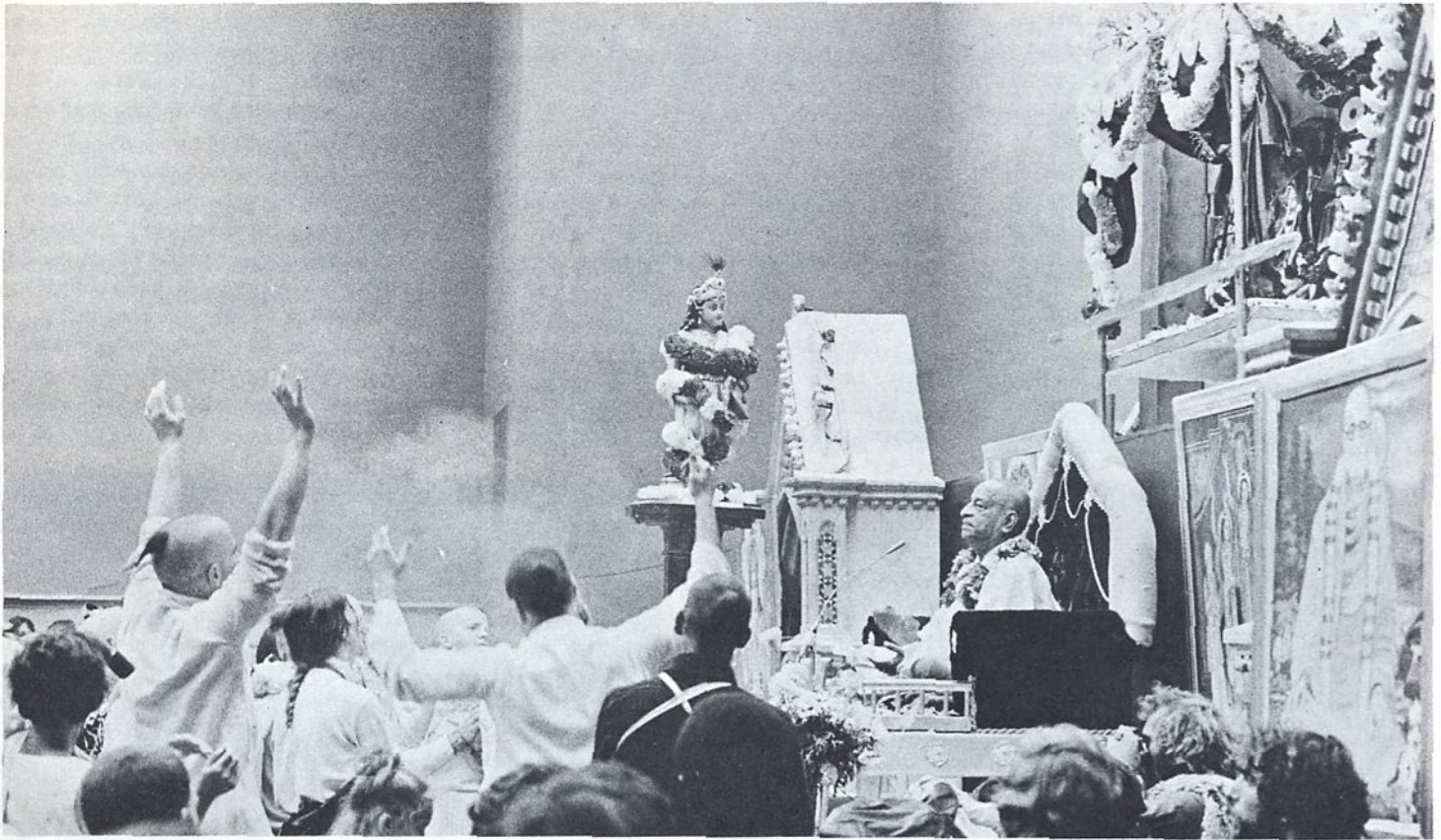
Many of the Krishna devotees had been at the ocean for several hours and had managed to put together 10,000 plates of delicious, sumptuous, transcendental Krishna Prasadam—foodstuffs offered

to and eaten by Jagannath and left as Divine Remnants for His part and parcel children to taste in bliss. While many of the crowd's members went to the shore to bask in the glory of chanting beneath the open sky, several thousand others gathered into the Family Dog Auditorium where His Divine Grace had been escorted. He was seated on a stage that had been transformed into an altar to Krishna, complete with pictures, incense, candles, and throne. Kirtan was held and all the people who were newly exposed to the chanting actually felt spiritual bliss. The chanting by the ocean

proceeded into the night, and finally the crowd began to disperse. Since this Rathayatra Day Ceremony, many new people have decided to dedicate their lives to the pursuit of Krishna Consciousness, and it is hoped that by the Mercy of Lord Jagannath many more will come to understand the reality and the utmost importance of spiritual life in Krishna Consciousness.

END





RATHAYATRA LECTURE
by His Divine Grace A. C.
Bhaktivedanta Prabhupada

(Delivered at The Family Dog
Auditorium, San Francisco-)

My dear boys and girls, I thank you very much for joining us on this Rathayatra Ceremony. I am going to sing an Indian song and then I will explain it. Even if you don't understand the language of the song, still, if you kindly hear patiently, the sound vibration will act. The song begins

Sri Krishna Chaitanya Prabhu
Dayanoramoray.

The author's name is Narottam Das Thakur. He wrote many songs. We are gradually translating them into English, and will have them in our magazine, "Back To Godhead." The purport of this song is—Sri Krishna Chaitanya Prabhu Dayanoramoray—my dear Lord Chaitanya, please be merciful upon me. I do not find anyone as merciful as You. You can see the picture of Lord Chaitanya on the altar—that is Lord Chaitanya dancing. He, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, appeared as a devotee. You have heard of the Bhagavad Gita. In that

scripture the last instruction given by Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is that He is asking everyone, "My dear sons, please understand, God is Father." That is accepted in every religion. Especially in your Christian religion: God is the Supreme Father. In the Vedas also it is said, nitya nityanam chaitanyas chaitanaram, etc. The Supreme Absolute is also a living entity like us. Your material father, from whom you have this body, he is also a person, and you are also a person. You are the son of your father. Similarly, although you cannot see God, you can understand from the version of the Vedas and authoritative scriptures that, if God is the Father, then He must be a Person. He must be a Person, because I am person. We have to study by analogy, by our reason, our intelligence. You have experience in this life that your father is a person, and you are also a person. The relationship is that I am his son, he is my father, yet both of us are persons. None of us is imperson. Such a conclusion is nonsense. How can my father become imperson if I am a person? This idea is nonsense. Therefore the knowledge of those who are impersonalists is not yet perfect. They do not

actually know what is the situation of their Father.

The Supreme Father is a Person. It is confirmed in the Vedas, nitya nityanam chaitanyas chaitanaram; He is the Supreme Eternal of all eternals. We are all eternal. Each living entity is eternal. Death means the end of this body. We are dying at every moment as our bodies change. So this death means death of this body, not of the spirit-soul. The spirit-soul is eternal. God is eternal, and I am His son, you are His son; you are also eternal. Just as a small particle of gold is also gold, similarly the part and parcel of the Supreme Lord is also God. It is said that we are partly God, and He is the Supreme God. That is stated in the Vedas: nitya nityanam chaitanyas chaitanaram; He is the Supreme Eternal among all the eternals, and He is the Supreme Living Creature among all living creatures. Supreme, that is the difference. The quality of God and the quality of you and I is the same. If you chemically analyze a small portion of the ocean water, you will find the same chemical composition as in the vast ocean. Similarly, as a living entity you have all the qualities of God in minute portion. Therefore He is Supreme.

We have all the qualities of God, but in very minute portions. So He is Supreme. We are subordinate. Therefore in the Vedas it is said that the living entities are maintained by the Supreme Lord. That you can understand by your practical experience. There are millions and trillions of living creatures. The human society is only a small portion of all the living species. If you take a portion of a drop of the Pacific Ocean, how many aquatics are there? There are, in total, 900,000 species of aquatics. There are 8,400,000 species of living creatures, and all of them are being maintained by God, the Supreme Lord. We are also being maintained: but because we have become "advanced in knowledge," therefore, the result is we have forgotten God. This is the result of our education. The more you become advanced in so-called knowledge the more you forget your relationship with God. Actually, this is not knowledge. In the Bhagavad Gita it is said that the knowledge is already taken away by Maya from those who are atheists, or Godless. They are so-called men of knowledge, wise men. But actually they are fools, rascals—the atheists. This is the statement of Bhagavad Gita. They are called Naradhamas, the lowest of mankind. Nara means man, and adhamas means lowest. The lowest grade of man denies the existence of God. As we are forgetting our eternal relationship with God, so we are gradually degraded to the lowest position of living creatures. Our knowledge has no value. Anyone who is atheist, who has no knowledge of God, has no good qualifications. These are the statements from the scriptures.

Sri Krishna Chaitanya Prabhu Dayanoramoray. In this age we ask the Mercy of Lord Chaitanya because we have all forgotten our relationship with God. We still have dormant love for God. Just as a son and father—the son may forget, he may become a crazy fellow and go out of home, but that does not mean that his relationship with his father is broken. That is not possible. Even if he is a crazy fellow, when the father dies the son may still have the right to inherit the property of the father. The relationship is that strong. We may try to forget God due to our craziness, but the relationship cannot be broken. God is so kind, He comes Himself, He sends His bona fide servant, He sends His son. In

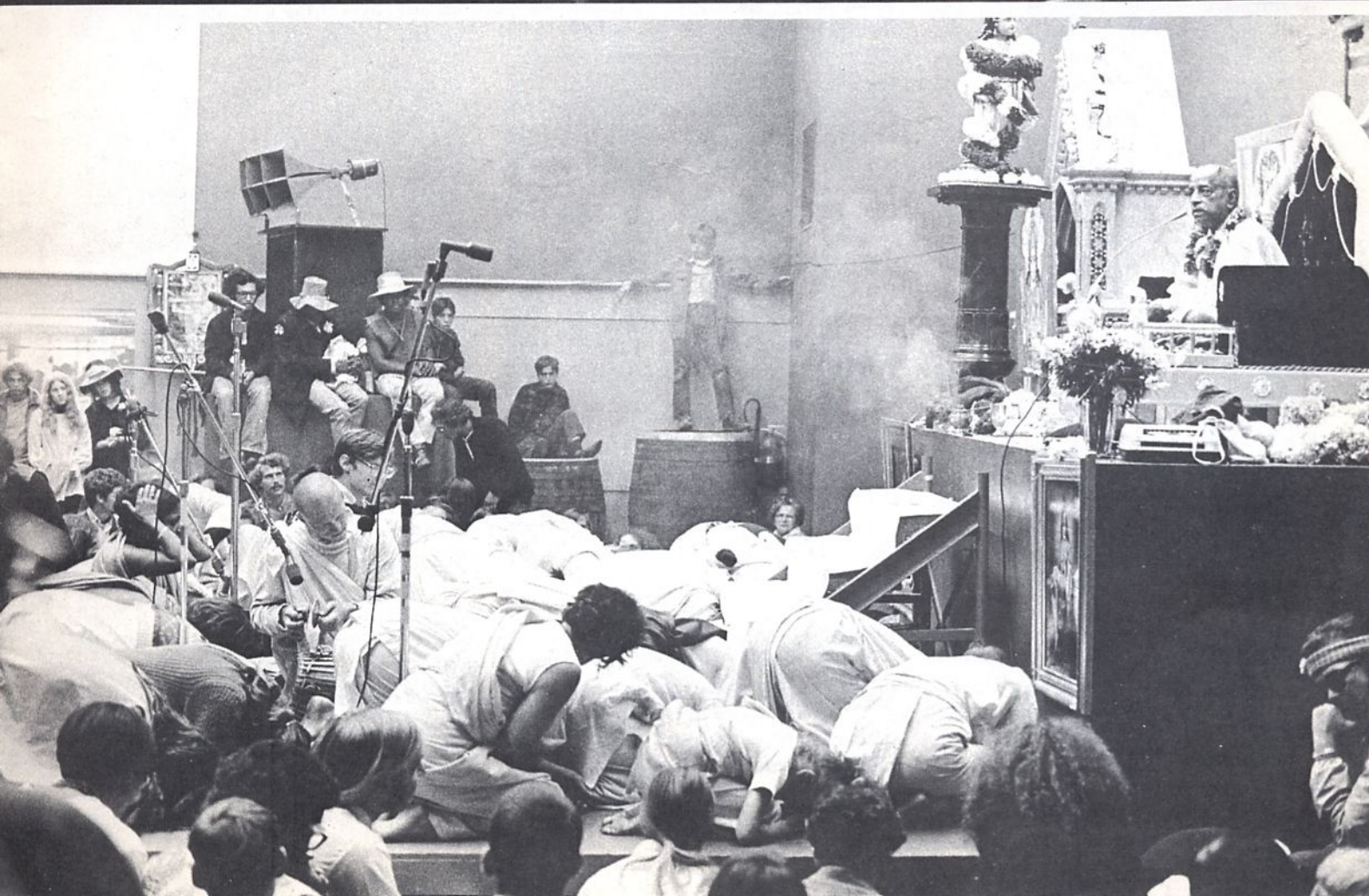
so many ways He is always canvassing, "My dear sons, do not suffer in this abominable condition of material existence. Come back to Me. Come back to Home. Enjoy eternal life, blissful life, life of knowledge." That is God's business, therefore He is all-merciful. In spite of our being disobedient and forgetful, He does not forget. He says, "Whenever there are discrepancies in the religious processes, and when there is predominance of irreligiousness—I incarnate." As for what is religion and what is irreligion, that is stated in the Bhagavad Gita. Krishna says, "I come to establish religion," and again He says, "Give up all sorts of irreligion." Religion means surrendering to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Any other religion is not religion, but is bogus. We have concocted so many religious principles, but real religion is that which teaches to surrender to God, to love God. That is real religion. That is what we are teaching. Our Krishna consciousness movement is no sectarian movement. We don't say that this is Christian religion or Hindu religion or Mohammedan religion or Buddhist religion. These religions develop in different parts of the world under different conditions. They give some idea of our relationship with God. But real religion is that which teaches how to love God. If by following certain religious principles you develop your dormant love of God, then that is first-class religion. That development is without any reason. It is not that you love God because He supplies bread: "Oh God, give us our daily bread." No, there is no exchange like that. There is no reason why I should ask. God is great, I am His part and parcel; it is my duty to love Him. When you develop this consciousness, it is called Krishna consciousness. Try to understand this philosophy of Krishna consciousness.

It is not a new thing. Krishna consciousness philosophy was taught 5,000 years ago. Bhagavad Gita is the philosophy of Krishna consciousness. Although it was written down 5,000 years ago in history, within the Bhagavad Gita it is stated that it was spoken some millions of years ago to the Sun-god. Apart from that reference Bhagavad Gita is eternal, because it teaches what is your relationship with God, what is your eternal duty to God, and what is the ultimate end of

life. The last instruction of the Bhagavad Gita is that one has to give up all sorts of rascaldom or concocted religion. One simply has to surrender to God. That is religion. We have developed this human form of life after passing through many millions of lower grades of life, and now we have to develop this Krishna consciousness, love of God. Take this Krishna consciousness movement very seriously—we have volumes of books to convince you of your relationship with God, and what is your duty, what is your ultimate goal of life—these things are all very nicely explained in the Bhagavad Gita. But, unfortunately, so-called scholars and so-called wise men misinterpret the whole thing. That is why the Lord appeared as Lord Chaitanya 500 years ago, to establish the correct principles of Bhagavad Gita. He showed that even if you do not understand the process of religion, then simply chant Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. The results are practical. For example, when we were chanting Hare Krishna, all the members who were assembled here were joining in, but now when I am talking about philosophy, some are leaving. It is very practical, you can see. The Hare Krishna Mantra is so enchanting that anyone can take part in any condition and if he continues to chant, gradually he will develop his dormant love of God. His heart will be cleansed of all dirty things and gradually he will be freed from the material concept of life, and he will be joyful. He will see everyone as sons of God, and then he will begin his loving transcendental service to Krishna. Our only request is that you try to understand this Krishna consciousness movement. It is very simple. We are requesting everyone to chant the Hare Krishna Mantra and take Prasadam. When you are tired of chanting, the Prasadam is ready. You can immediately take Prasadam. And if you dance, then all bodily exercise is Krishnized; and all of the attempts of the yoga processes are attained by this simple process. So chant, dance, take Prasadam—even if you do not at first hear this philosophy, it will act, and you will be elevated to the highest platform of perfection. Thank you very much.

END





HOLY RATHAYATRA

Lord Jagannath's Triumphal Ride To The Sea

—by Nara-Narayan Viswakarma

Suddenly, at noon on the 27th of July, a frenzied storm of 10,000 young and old chanters startled the heart of San Francisco. A sea of people poured around the corner of Haight and Ashbury Streets in the dazzling noonday sun, completely surrounding the thirty-five foot high, brilliantly decorated Rathayatra car. The brightly painted wooden vehicle had wheels eight feet high and a twenty foot tall magenta satin dome decorated with gold, painted with lotus flowers and topped with a fringed flag on a spire. Below, amidst multi-colored wooden columns decorated with gold lotuses, fringed flags and swinging strings of Vedic cowbells, sat a dozen musicians playing drums, cymbals and a hand organ, filling the whole area for blocks around with amplified chanting of Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. The car rolled heavily to the intersection and stopped—emitting clouds of fragrant frankincense and myrrh from large sensors on the car's second level, high above the crowd. At the front of the car, up on a palanquin decorated with a gold-scalloped canopy and magenta draw-curtains, were the beloved Jagannath Deities: Krishna, Subhadra and Balaram. Smiling, Their Arms extended and Eyes blazing, the three Deities presided over the chanting mass of people; Their garlanded silk-clad Forms welcomed all who had come to pay Them homage. The car had stopped for an important reason, although the excited crowd almost pulled it away several times in their anxiety to begin dancing all the way to the sea. They were, however, persuaded to wait, as the spiritual master of the Krishna consciousness movement, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami—saffron-robed and smiling—stepped from a nearby automobile. He was at once guided through two protective rows of robed devotees toward velvet-cushioned, rose-petalled steps extending up to a giant red throne set on golden lions' claws. The spiritual master's throne was decorated with hundreds of roses and carnations and covered with a gold-fringed magenta canopy. The whole front

of the car, consisting of a large platform holding the throne, was upholstered with pink satin and draped with carnations, rich bunting and flags. As His Divine Grace stepped up the stairs, his ecstatic, weeping disciples pressed their heads on the petalled cushions where his feet had walked. They cried out, "Prabhupada!" a name which indicates a soul so great that even great spiritual masters can take shelter at his lotus feet. He sat down on the throne, located right under the three Jagannath Deities on the front of the car, and gazed over the wildly chanting devotees and participants. Spectators were gathering to witness the Festival. Many stopped their cars, left their parcels and baby-carriages and approached to find out what was attracting so many people. The spiritual master pressed his palms together, and, after smiling his Blessing on the assembled crowd, began to speak as follows: "My dear American boys and girls, I thank you very much for taking part in this great ceremony known as Lord Jagannath's Rathayatra. This ceremony is performed every year for the last two thousand years or more in India. Today this inauguration of Rathayatra ceremony will bring a new chapter in the history of the world. It is stated in the Vedic literature that anyone who sees Lord Jagannath seated on this car will no more have to take birth within this miserable world. It is that potent. This Krishna consciousness movement is to take you to the highest state of eternal bliss and knowledge. It is not a sentimental movement, but is the practical means of perfect spiritual realization. If within this life you practice Krishna consciousness, then you will very easily be able to go to Goloka Vrindaban, and you will have your blissful life, eternal and full of knowledge. So today you should start this process. Simply chant Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. I request you that you follow this car of Lord Jagannath, and make progress in your life to Goloka Vrindaban, instead of wasting your time for the moon planet. Thank you very much."

When he had finished speaking, a signal was given and the crowd picked up the thick ropes fore and aft of the car and surged forward, guided by the enthusiastic directions of saffron-robed devotees. Thus the tilting and creaking

8,000 pound wooden car began its ponderous five mile journey to the sea.

As the car found its way up Haight Street to the entrance of Golden Gate Park, His Divine Grace's voice soared in resonant tones leading the chanting of Hare Krishna, Hare Rama, accompanied by the musicians inside the car. The turbulent, dancing crowd was swaying in the power of the mantra, walking backwards, unable to take their eyes off the magnificent car shimmering in the sunlight or the Divine Passengers riding in glory above their heads. Certainly this day "opened a new chapter in the history of the world." The spiritual master was hailed and glorified, and that alone brought an epoch of hope to the benumbed and frustrated world, so torn as it is with false hopes and desires. Higher and higher his voice rose announcing to all sentient beings the all-protecting nature of the Lotus Feet of Lord Sri Krishna, the factual Refuge for all in this miserable world. "Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna," the crowd chanted back, bewildered, yet grasping at this ray of hope, bliss, eternal supreme knowledge. A devotee with a peacock fan fanned Lord Krishna on the second level of the car, and the all-pervasive incense curled in wafts through the confused, yet thrilled throng. Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna. Groups had started to dance in circles in the midst of the river of people, and everywhere sticks of incense were sending up thin trails of smoke and fragrance. Hare Krishna! Bobbing heads were chanting everywhere, and incense sticks were seen moving up and down in the hands of shaved-headed devotees. Hare Krishna flags and banners waved above the heads of the crowds. The giant voices were amplified so loud that it seemed the car itself was chanting. Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. Waves of transcendental emotion flowed through the thousands, each exposed to the direct vibration of the mantra.

Rejoice, rejoice in the Lord! Out of the nihilistic hearts of today's youth flowed the nectar of love, Hare Krishna, Hare Rama. Washed and washed with the shudders of transcendental ecstasy, the many-voiced crowd seemed to chant with one voice. The mantra was sung first, like nectar, from the lips of the spiritual master, and then the reply



came from thousands of mouths chanting in reply—Hare Krishna, Hare Rama. Where was the end to all this? No matter how ecstatically one chanted, there always seemed to be a higher level to which one could go; and the chanting rose and rose in the sublime. There were no enemies that day. Stolid-looking citizens walked side by side with stooped and bearded youths, while small children rode on the shoulders of their fathers or asked to ride upon the car. Elderly ladies also rode upon the car, swaying back and forth, their eyes closed and hands clapping softly, singing the transcendental words. Overhead the cow bells clanged their varied tones. To the side, the mounted policemen astride their chestnut horses eyed the spectacle with genuine wonder. The car, the chanting, the wild yet stately procession, the joyful people, the richly decorated and garlanded Deities smeared with fragrant oils and fanned with a peacock feather fan—what was it all about? The spiritual master seated with his legs folded beneath him upon the sumptuous red and golden throne sat perfectly serene in knowledge of it all, of all that had been done and was yet to be done.

Who was he? He sat clapping his hands slightly, eyes almost shut, his form exasperatingly yet exquisitely beyond the mental grasp of the mundane mind. Looking around the crowd, one could see that he was the object of it all. His divine glance had brought us all. We were once like blind and stumbling refugees; now we knew that happiness lay in the glorification of the Transcendental Lord.

Lord Jagannath! Lord of the Universe! Hari Hari Vol! There was no doubt as the chanting reached new peaks, for every heart could hear beyond its limited reach—at least on that one day. Each person knew that beyond material woe lay the divine nectar released for once by the chanting of the Holy Name. His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami purified us all with the chanting of Hare Krishna, personally distributing the Holy Name of the Lord, offering to everyone the nectar of love of God. Shining and pure, the Holy Jagannath car directed its ponderous self through the churning, swaying throng. Rumbling and trembling, seemingly fixed in place, it moved with great resolve to the sea. To the sea! Would we ever get there? Miles and miles the massive domed car rolled on.

No one knew if he was really tired. It was hard to say. The hot crowds, the endless marching, dancing, labored breathing; yet the chant constantly suspended us and carried us on. Such ecstasy! Everyone was a bit surprised. Who had ever done such a thing before? Were we all bewitched? But No. It was easy to see. This was no satanic orgy or bohemian cavort, nor was it a college frolic. Rather it was a transcendental event never before seen in this whole land, a giant colorful festival solely for the pleasure of the Supreme Lord. Unlikely perhaps, but there it was, as lovely as could be!

About halfway through the park, when the chanting had reached its peak, the whole procession came upon the low arch of a bridge spanning the roadway. Somehow, above the roar of the chanting, the order was given just in time: "Stop the car!" The car stopped, and everyone looked relieved. The devotees who had been there the year before smiled to themselves as they saw the baffled crowd gazing at the thirty-five foot car in front of the fourteen foot opening. No one knew what to do! Some laughed and others cried, while the majority never let up

on the chanting of the Holy Name. The devotees from last year smiled again as they remembered how the car had been a bit too tall, and, while the devotees had leaped and chanted hoping for a miracle, one had climbed up and lowered the top with a saw. This year everyone gathered around the car and clapped their hands. The chanting crescendoed and melted the hearts of everyone present. When nothing could be heard but waves of Hare Krishna, Hare Rama, Prabhupada stood up on the front of the car, his garlands swaying back and forth. He began to dance and then leap up and down, exhorting the now-whirling mass of devotees by his stance and gesture. In this whirling ecstasy akin to madness he was leading us higher and higher, dragging us out of our sins and reviving our Krishna consciousness. By his divine example we were soaring in transcendental bliss. Each gesture revealed new truth, and as our appetite for self-knowledge grew, so did the vibrancy of his leading chant. Greater and greater rose the chanting, Hare Krishna, Hare Rama. How perfect he is, and how fallen we are. *We let loose our hearts and shouted, "Hari Vol [chant the Name]!"* Through the chanting few noticed that an internal mechanism had lowered the dome of the car, and with the spire adjusted to the side the car barely made it under the bridge. When Prabhupada had seated himself once again in his blissful composure, the car started under the bridge, with Hare Krishna echoing forever under the tunnel. On the other side, there was the sun again and the freely moving ecstasy picked up with no more anxiety. As the ocean appeared before us, some of us recalled that the gopis paying their obeisances to Krishna is compared to the thundering of the ocean waves on the shore. And through our minds flowed the remembrance of the great prayer to the spiritual master: "The spiritual master is always engaged in chanting and hearing the Message of Lord Chaitanya (Hare Krishna Mantra), and sometimes he is dancing in ecstasy. Sometimes he feels quivering in his body on account of spiritual trance. I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such spiritual master." Down the Great Highway the car swept on, the sea breeze billowing the magenta dome and causing the flags to flap in wild array. It was quite ordinary now to see cars stop by the side of the road, fascinated

drivers climbing out from behind the wheel to join in the tumultuous, jubilant procession. On and on we went, the cymbals clashing and drums thundering through the hidden speakers on the car; and Prabhupada's voice leading us onward, onward.

The oceanside dance hall showed just ahead, with crowds already gathering at the doors, waiting for the promised mass-chanting, and especially the feasting. The day before, the women devotees spent long hours into the night preparing spiced sweet rice, "simply wonderful" (powdered milk, sugar and butter, rolled into balls with nuts and raisins and spices), hot spiced apple chutney, fresh fruit salad and a huge piece of watermelon for every plate. During this preparation, the last decorations were being put on the car by the brahmacharies while thousands of flowers were strung.

On the cart's arrival at the ocean auditorium, the doors opened and the feast was seen in the courtyard. Fifteen thousand paper plates loaded with relishable foodstuffs ranged along the walls and in numerous rows over the entire courtyard. Guests swarmed into the giant hall where an altar had been set up with the Deities presiding in Their palanquin, and Prabhupada seated on the red throne. No one seemed willing to stop chanting, and His Divine Grace Swami Bhaktivedanta led everyone again in chanting Hare Krishna, Hare Rama. Meanwhile many of the guests congregated on the beach around large bonfires, where watermelons were cut open and plates were distributed. Even hours later guests were delightedly distributing simply wonderfuls to the incredulous Sunday beachcombers. Back at the auditorium, Prabhupada finished the chanting and gave a short talk on the importance of Krishna consciousness as a means of achieving the supreme goal—love of God. Then everyone feasted, and gazed with admiring glances at Prabhupada and the magnificent altar. No one had feasted like that before. So many people ate sumptuously, yet not a single animal had been killed. Everything was prepared from food grains, vegetables and milk products, yet no one was dissatisfied. It was glorious and abundant. Again the devotees recalled the prayer to the spiritual master: "The spiritual master is always offering four kinds of delicious foodstuffs, analyzed

as that which is chewed, licked up, drank and swallowed. Four kinds of prasadam are offered to Krishna, and when the devotees are eating Bhagavad Prasadam, the spiritual master is satisfied. I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such spiritual master." Everyone was satisfied.

Note on Krishna Consciousness:

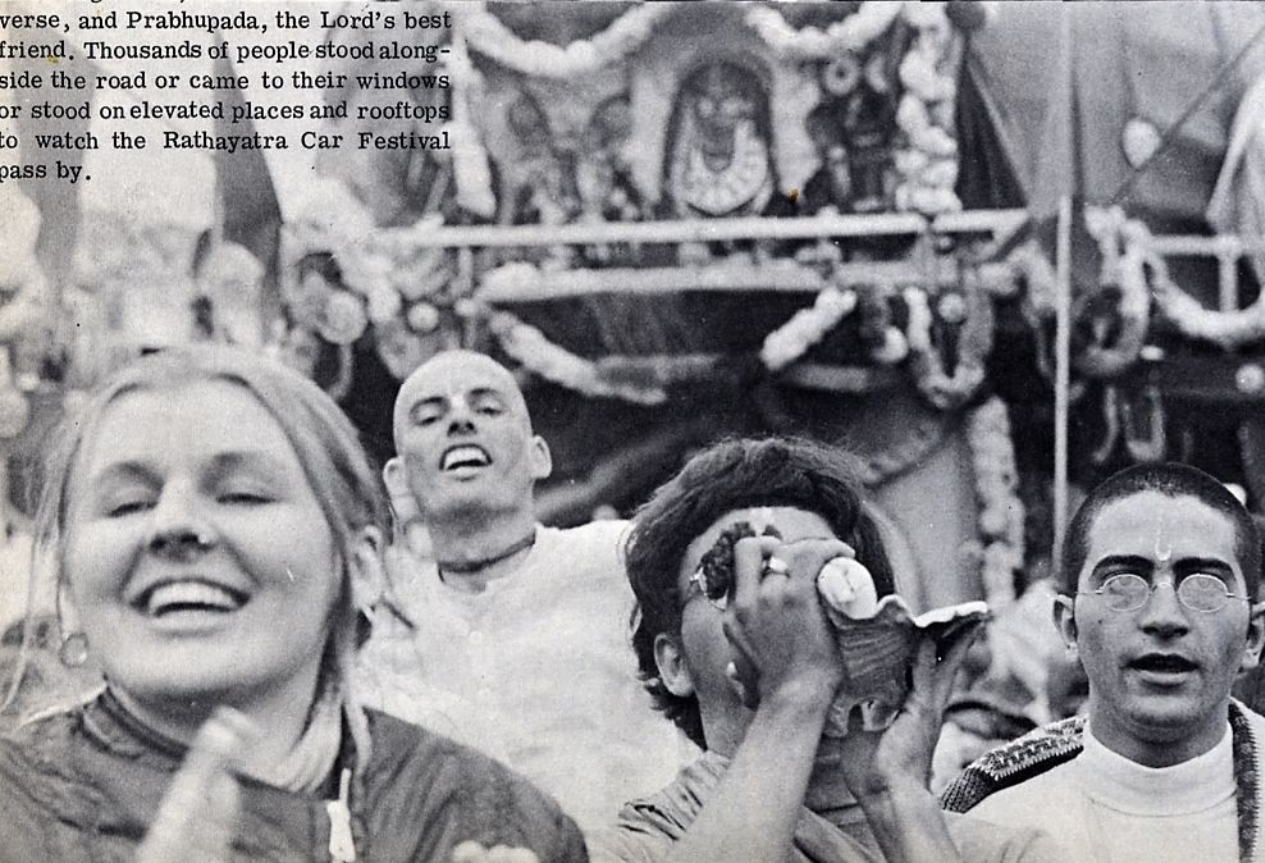
The International Society for Krishna Consciousness is a group of mostly young people who are dedicating their lives to living the teachings of the top-most Vedic transcendental scripture, The Bhagavad Gita As It Is, under the direction of their spiritual master; His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada came from Vrindaban, India three years ago just to impart this knowledge to the Western world. Hitherto the Bhagavad Gita, as well as other Vedic teachings, were beyond the scope of comprehension as presenting a practical way of life for the average American. But when His Divine Grace, who is acharya (one who teaches divine life by example), came to this country, his scholarly knowledge as well as his ability to perfectly live the divine scriptures immediately drew hundreds of disciples to him. The Rathayatra Car Festival is only one of many such occurrences which are emerging untainted from the scriptures under his masterful guidance. The huge crowds that gathered chanting Hare Krishna and dancing in ecstasy are an excellent example of the magnetism of these transcendental festivals. Everyone had a glorious time; the festival and feast were over only eight hours after the beginning of the march to the sea. The guests all went home at peace with themselves, carrying to their various abodes the transcendental vibration, Hare Krishna, Hare Rama, the endless song of Krishna's Abode. As for the devotees, they were already planning the next festivities to be held, in Los Angeles, in New York, in Boston—and throughout the twenty-five Krishna conscious centers around the world, which are all being carefully guided by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami.

"The spiritual master is receiving benediction from the ocean of mercy. Just like the cloud pours water on the forest fire to extinguish it, so the spiritual master extinguishes the blazing fire of material existence. I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such spiritual master." END





Prabhupada writes in Nectar of Devotion, "...as it is said in the Brahmanda Purana, 'A person who sees the Lord's Rathayatra Car Festival, and then stands up to receive the Lord, can curb down all kinds of sinful results from his body.'" Many people stood that day, July 27th, when Prabhupada's devotees and many other young people pulled the Rathayatra Car through the streets of San Francisco. On the car sat Lord Jagannath, the Lord of the Universe, and Prabhupada, the Lord's best friend. Thousands of people stood alongside the road or came to their windows or stood on elevated places and rooftops to watch the Rathayatra Car Festival pass by.



"A person who is in jubilant spirit and with profound devotional ecstasy while dancing before Me [Krishna], manifesting different features of bodily expression, can burn away all the accumulated sinful reactions he has stocked up for many, many thousands of years."

—Dwarka
Mahatmya







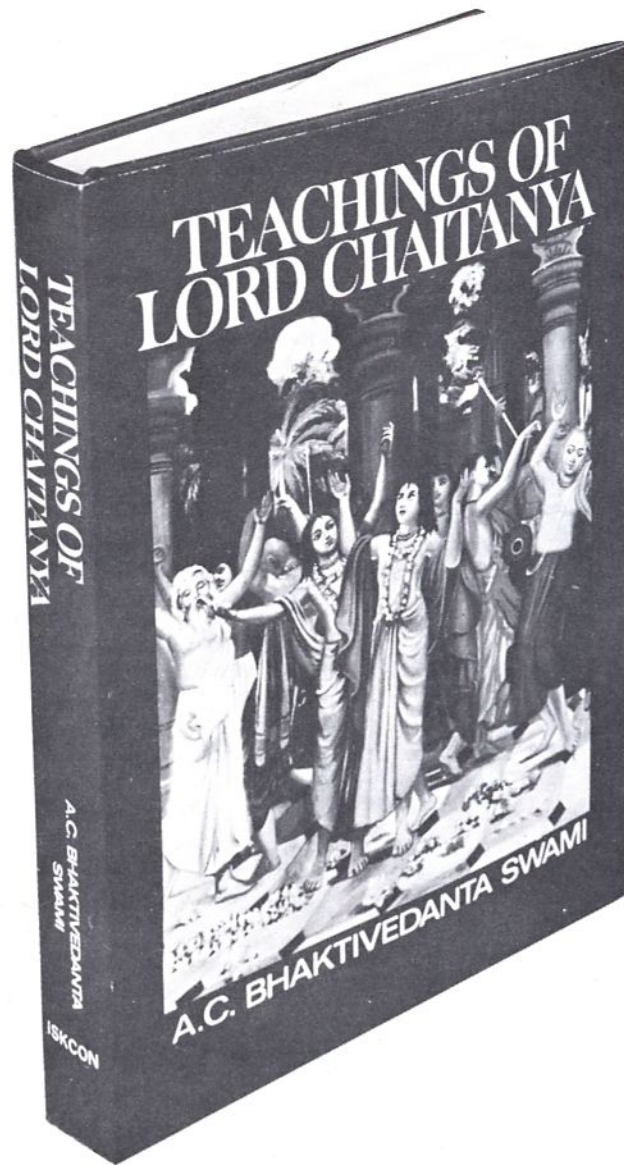
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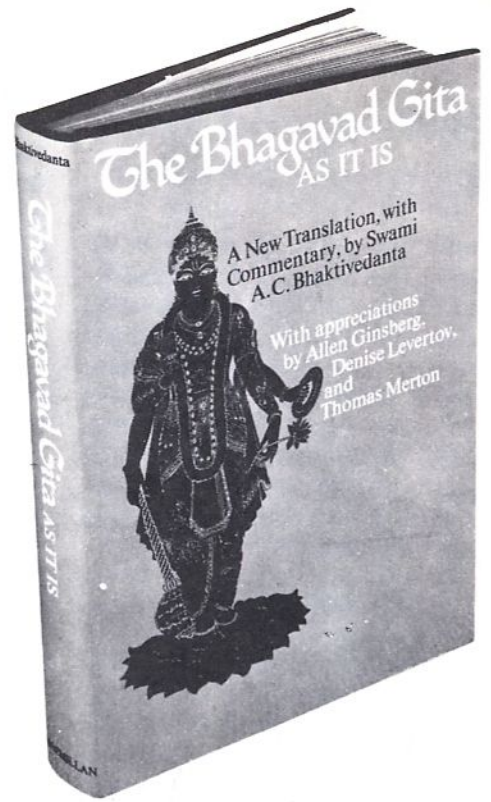


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JOURNEY TO THE SEA

—by Sukadeva Das Brahmachary
(ISKCON—Los Angeles)

There was great excitement in the San Francisco temple. A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, affectionately known as Prabhupada, had given a lecture the night before, and the chants had been sung with much enthusiasm. Now today was the Jagannath Car Festival. Through the mercy of the spiritual master the disciples are able to enjoy transcendental bliss, and therefore the temple was very much elated.

Food was being prepared in large, shining-new barrels, as there were no pots large enough to hold all the prasadam. Prasadam means spiritual food because it has been offered to God. The scriptures state that food which has been offered to Krishna takes on all His power. So we were prepared to distribute Krishna to thousands.

The women's quarters were filled with carnations and gardenias, to be for garlanding the large car. And a special garland would be made to be placed around the neck of our spiritual master.

Everyone was busily working to make

sure that everything was perfect. All the last minute details were checked. This year our ingenious Godbrother Nara-Narayan Das had installed a movable top which could be raised and lowered; the previous year there had been trouble with the top of the cart hitting telephone wires.

The car was being moved by 11:00 a.m. On top of the car were placed the Jagannath Deities. According to the sanskrit scriptures, there are two types of Deity worship, nirguna and saguna. Nirguna worship means without possessing the power of the Supreme, or idol worship, (the word nirguna also means that Krishna's qualities are beyond estimation), and saguna means possessing the powers of the Supreme. Krishna consciousness engages in saguna Deity worship; therefore, by the mercy of the Supreme, the Deities have all the power of the Supreme Lord Krishna.

Lord "Jagannath" means He is the Lord of the universe. Along with His Brother and Sister, Jagannath was placed on top of the car where a devotee undertook the auspicious assignment of fanning Them with a peacock feather fan.

On the car's topmost level, devotees passed along a walkway adding final

decorations.

Below the Jagannath Deities was a magnificent throne for His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami. Someone might ask, "Why is there a throne for the spiritual master? Does he think that he is God?" The answer is definitely "No." The spiritual master is honored and worshiped with all the honor due to the Supreme Lord only because he is a bona fide representative of the Lord. His Divine Grace never states that he is Lord Krishna. He has always made plain to his devotees that he is a servant of Lord Krishna. This is one of the symptoms of a pure devotee. The throne that His Divine Grace sat upon was a deep velvety red and as the day was relatively clear it could be seen for quite a distance.

Directly behind the throne of His Divine Grace there was a large section for the musicians. Included in the ensemble were harmoniums, kartals (hand cymbals), mridangas (sweet drums) and singers of the Hare Krishna Mantra. To enhance the music of these performers there were microphones and amplifiers, and the chanting could be heard very clearly and for a considerable distance.

The large steel barrels of food,



dozens of watermelons, thousands of "simply wonderfuls" (the name given to a favorite recipe of the devotees by His Divine Grace), as well as other assortments of fine Indian vegetarian foods cooked in savory butter, were already moved to their destination. Everything done in Krishna consciousness is acted through the sanction of higher authorities as revealed in the scriptures. The prasadam was cooked directly from recipes found in Vedic scriptures, and the effort and care taken by the devotee-cooks was primarily for pleasing the transcendental Senses of the Supreme Lord Krishna. All of this food was taken to the Family Dog Auditorium, the site of the feast. Rathayatra Festival is also called the march to the sea. The festival-march was to start at Haight and Ashbury streets and to end at the seaside auditorium.

Right on schedule the cart began moving at Haight and Ashbury Streets. Meanwhile the prasadam, which had already been taken by truck to the ocean auditorium, was being arranged for mass-serving. Inside the auditorium devotees were sweeping the floor and decorating the stage with flowers. A place onstage was reserved for the throne of His Divine Grace. The auditorium was brilliant with red and white flowers, all carefully placed.

The Radha Krishna temple was empty and silent save for a few people. Outside the temple, the Jagannath Car had been moved to the designated place to wait for union with His Divine Grace. Everyone was waiting for Srila Prabhupada to arrive, and the assembled devotees could feel the auspiciousness of this event.

His Divine Grace was driven by auto to Haight and Ashbury Streets, and a giant hush fell over the crowd as his car pulled up beside the Jagannath Cart. The devotees immediately bowed on sight of him and paid their obeisances to the eternal guru. Prabhupada was helped up to the altar. He took his seat and sat with a majestic stature. Prabhupada always has this majestic presence, projecting his confidence in his movement and his confidence that Sri Krishna will help him spread Krishna consciousness.

The streets were filled to capacity and at first the predominant sound was the wind. San Francisco is very windy and that was the prevailing sound whistling through the hills; but then His

Divine Grace's voice was heard. He spoke in calm yet commanding tones. His words are always precise and clear every time he speaks. He speaks like a surgeon, cutting away all unnecessary words and speaking only of the Supreme Absolute Truth, Sri Krishna. Prabhupada never speaks nonsense.

After a short lecture, the march to the sea began. People were dancing and singing the Hare Krishna Mantra all the way to the sea. The entire atmosphere was one of happiness and bliss, and His Divine Grace exhibited his most wondrous smile. Working together as a team, the devotees pulled the car slowly and smoothly over the route. The leader of the car expertly guided it through the streets, spreading the glories of Krishna by singing His Holy Name. At certain points along the route devotees were seen dancing in flower patches, and flowers were continually distributed. As with the foodstuffs, the flowers were offered to Krishna, and thus they were spiritualized, prasadam. They had all the power of Krishna. Anyone who took a flower would have his door to liberation opened wide, even without his knowing it. According to the Vedic authorities, the chanting of Hare Krishna is the special Mercy given by Lord Krishna to the people of this Age of Kali. People are not capable in this age of going to the woods and meditating for a hundred or a thousand years or following the rules and austerities of the bona fide Yoga system. Krishna has said that by chanting the Holy Name, Hare Krishna,—or just by taking prasadam—you can very soon become self-realized. On the day described, thousands took part in the special dispensation of the Holy Name and thousands accepted prasadam of foodstuffs and flowers.

The car joyously reached the auditorium, and His Divine Grace gave another lecture. During his talk he sang a special chant which he does not usually sing. Then the auditorium was filled with the transcendental sound vibration of Hare Krishna. Any person of any sensitivity could surely feel the vast amount of energy and happiness that was radiated by the chanting of the Holy Names of the Lord.

As the chanting gradually subsided, the prasadam was served by the devotees. While the foodstuffs were being distributed a lovely girl devotee was singing a prayer to the spiritual master:

Namah Om Vishnupadaya Krishna
Presthaya Bhutale
Srimate Bhaktivedanta Swamin Iti
Namine.

"I offer my respectful obeisances to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami who is very dear to Krishna on this earth due to his taking shelter of the transcendental Lord." This young girl's voice was dominant over the murmur of the crowd, and one could feel her overwhelming affection for her spiritual master. Another devotee sat with Srila Prabhupada's shoes in his hands until Prabhupada was ready to leave.

One may ask, "Why are these people being so humble and subservient to their spiritual master?" Some examples may be cited: If a servant of a king does his duties and sweeps the palace and is always there when the king calls for him, then the king will give him nice foodstuffs, nice shelter, and thus the servant is enjoying; only by satisfying the king can the servant be happy. Or, if a man is working in an office and he reports to work on time, never makes any mistakes on the forms, is willing to do anything for his boss, then he gets monetary gain and respect and prestige in his company. Similarly, if the spiritual master is satisfied, he will bestow his mercy upon you and you will advance spiritually. It is stated throughout the Vedic scriptures that there is no spiritual advancement without the mercy of the spiritual master.

This Car Festival is only one of the many festivals that are held throughout the year in different cities. Each Sunday at 4:00 in Los Angeles there is a love feast comprised of 15 courses of vegetarian foodstuffs prepared directly from the holy scriptures.

Krishna consciousness is more than a religion. It is the postgraduate of all religions. All religions are trying to become aware and conscious of God. All religions are trying to become Krishna conscious. The devotees of all the Krishna consciousness temples humbly request that if anyone has any questions, no matter how mundane, please go to one of the temples and inquire about this transcendental science. Please also look forward to the festivals that will also be taking place in the future. If you can do none of these we humbly request you simply chant Hare Krishna and your life will be sublime. Hare Krishna. END

**EYES SMEARED WITH THE
OINTMENT OF LOVE**
Another Version of the
Rathayatra Festival

—by Lalita Devi Dasi
(ISKCON—Los Angeles)

On July 27th, 1969 in San Francisco the most powerful spiritual celebration the bay area has ever known, the Rathayatra Festival, took place. I cannot do justice to the splendor and power of this magnificent celebration in a written article, for words cannot describe the nectarean beauty of the holy day glorifying the Jagannath Deities. I will try, however, to reflect a glimmer of what took place.

Every year for the past 2,000 years the Rathayatra Car Festival has taken place in Jagannath Puri, India. The transcendental Rathayatra Car carries worshipable Forms of Lord Krishna who is Lord Jagannath, accompanied by His Brother Balaram and His Sister Su-



bhadra. The brightly colored Deities are enchanting to behold; and on this auspicious day they are brought out from the temple and carried on the carts from the town to the ocean, with millions of souls chanting and dancing and beholding the splendor of God on His jaunt to the ocean. Sometimes many devotees are so carried away that they throw themselves under the wooden wheels of the cart and kill themselves. Actually, no one dies; only the body is killed. The soul lives eternally and is unchanging. Actually everything rests in Krishna and He is in full control of everything. It is simply His causeless mercy that He allows His devotees to pull Him regally to the sea for Rathayatra, so that countless living entities can get the chance for liberation by viewing the cart, singing, dancing and taking His prasadam.

Through the mercy of our spiritual master, A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, this wonderful celebration of God is becoming popular in the United States. This



is the third year in a row that the Rathayatra Festival has taken place in San Francisco. We fortunate souls who are able to take part in such heavenly celebrations are truly grateful.

The day of the festival was, at first, a bit foggy, but warm. At noon, hundreds of people were gathered at Haight and Ashbury Streets, waiting for the wonderful celebration to begin. All of a sudden the sounds of kartals, drums and chanting could be heard; then out of the blue the most beautiful sight came moving down the street. A huge 5,000 pound wooden cart, with a purple silk canopy and a golden lotus flower decorating the front, was carrying the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His relations and devotees. Multicolored flags fringed with gold tassels were dangling all around the cart. Pictures of Krishna and Prabhupada were on the cart, and these were carried in the hands of devotees. They came marching joyfully along the street with saffron robes and gleaming shaven heads, chanting Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. Pulling the cart were the world's greatest men, who had worked heart and soul to create this cart for God to ride upon. This is confirmed in the Vedic scriptures, that the greatest are they who have become devotees of the Supreme Brahman—Lord Krishna—and who constantly engage their energy in His transcendental loving service.

The cart, with devotees surrounding it, stopped and waited on the corner of Haight and Ashbury for the spiritual master, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, to make his appearance. He is the only spiritual master who is offering pure love of God, Bhaktiyoga. He has taken us fallen souls under his fatherly arm and given us jewels of love and truth. Blessed be this pure devotee of God. Prabhupada stepped out of his auto and spoke a few words about Krishna consciousness and about men landing on the moon. He said going to the moon was a waste of time, because the only planets worth going to were Krishna Loka and the Vaikunthas, which are impossible to reach by material pursuits. They can only be reached by pure devotees of Krishna. One should hanker for the Kingdom of God, Krishna Loka, not landings on material planets which are

temporary and destined for annihilation, as are all material universes. Only spiritual planets are eternal, as is the nature of our soul. The sound of the spiritual master's voice can enlighten one more and more each time one hears it, as it is coming straight from the transcendental world.

Prabhupada mounted his throne and his lovely neck was bedecked with sweet-smelling flower garlands. Then the cart began to move down Haight Street. The procession entered Golden Gate Park, and we danced, with the chanting building louder, and everyone constantly stealing glances at the Deities and Prabhupada. When we got to the tunnel the cart stopped at the entrance and there seemed to be hundreds more people now. Prabhupada stood up before the tunnel-bridge and spoke, then chanted and then began to jump up and down. His ecstasy is purely transcendental, as if God is lifting him in His own Arms. Prabhupada is so merciful to let us behold his joy for God in that manner. All the people in the tunnel and all around began to jump up and down chanting Hare Krishna. Krishna's love seemed to be pouring all around the area like falling rain, washing away the dust in our hearts and bringing in new light, pure joy of the sound of God's Name, Hare Krishna, Hare Rama.

At times I pulled the rope to the cart and felt a renewed closeness with my Godsisters and Godbrothers. We later marched down Irving Street and passed the house where I grew up. Life seemed to flood fuller into my heart, for I was once a lost little girl crying for a love that was pure, and now through Prabhupada I have found a way to love God—who is the purest. I lifted my eyes and arms to the skies in a prayer of thankfulness.

When we got closer to the beach it seemed as if thousands more had joined in. All the people had literally danced and chanted the whole way, about three miles, not growing tired, but being reborn from the energy given off by resounding God's Name. The more you chant God's Name the more love and energy He gives you.

At the beach the holy cart found a resting place after much going back and forth. Prabhupada went into the auditorium to lecture on Krishna consciousness and to hold kirtan. Some of the

devotees went inside while the other devotees served spiritual prasadam on the ocean wall. Barrels and barrels of sweet rice, simply wonderfols, fruit salad and apple chutney were served to thousands of people. It seemed as if the entire city was being served prasadam by devotees. I never saw so many eating together. Everyone had blissful expressions on their faces, because they were tasting the most delicious food-stuffs, Krishna's mercy.

Inside the Family Dog Auditorium, Prabhupada was imparting the essence of Krishna consciousness to the audience and telling them the importance of the Hare Krishna Maha Mantra, the benediction moon in this Age of Kali. He was humbly requesting everyone to take part in this movement and to see how nice it is. The devotees were on a platform facing Prabhupada, and all sang and danced as Prabhupada led kirtan.

Seeing Prabhupada sitting there and beholding his beauty and chanting to him my humble obeisances brought me mounting pleasure. More and more I could realize that only Prabhupada's teachings can save our fallen souls from misery and lift us to the spiritual platform of loving service to Krishna. Prabhupada is a bona fide representative of God on this planet earth, and we must surrender fully to him—and only then can we begin to know Krishna.

Next there was a beautiful puppet show about Krishna and His friends and some demons who try to kill Krishna. The puppets sang Hare Krishna and were accompanied on flute so beautifully sounding, as if Krishna Himself were playing in Vrindaban Forest in the spiritual sky.

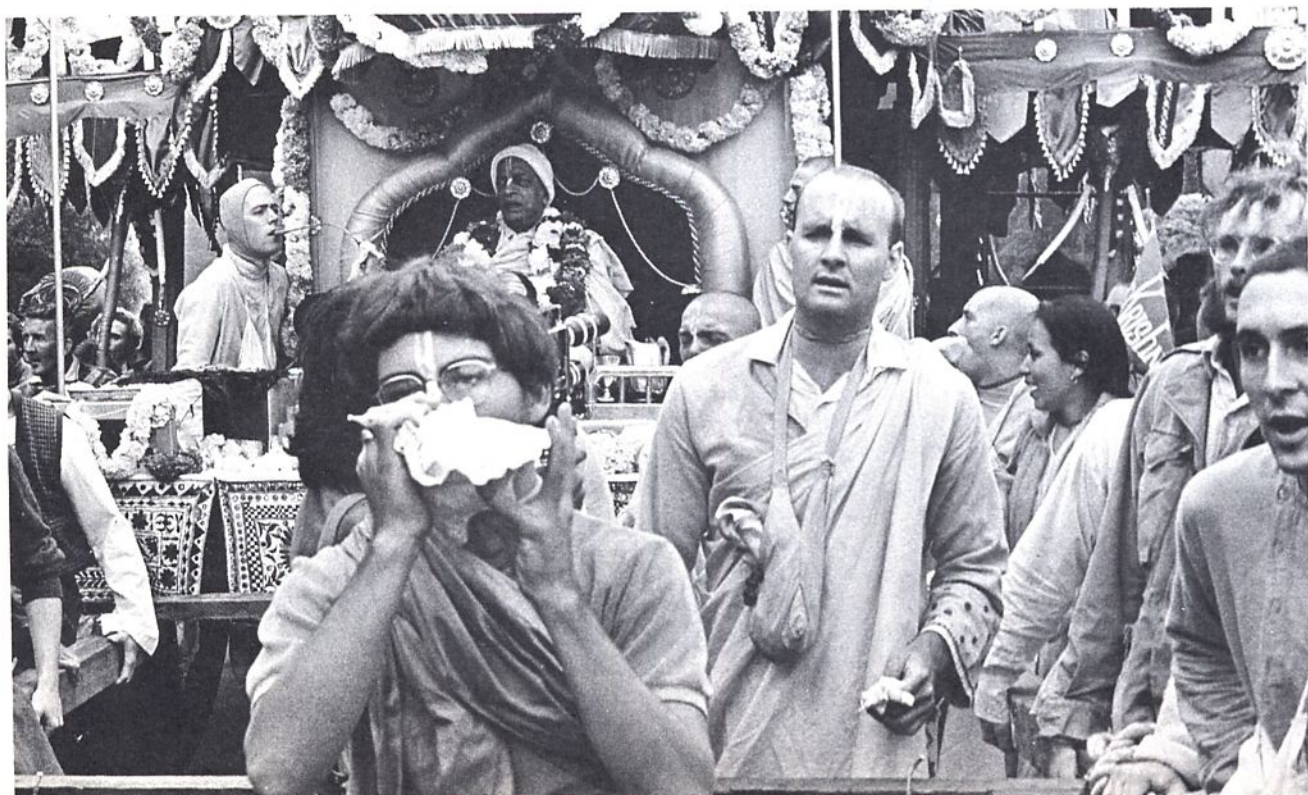
Prabhupada left after the puppet show, and the feasting and chanting continued in the auditorium and on the beach.

When I left I caressed the transcendental cart of Lord Jagannath and did not want to part from it, for this colorful transcendental creation was Krishna Himself. I will never forget this Rathayatra Festival, for it brought me closer to my most dearly beloved spiritual master, to Radha Krishna and to the dear devotees—and the whole world.

Next year I pray it will be a worldwide festival so all of God's children can behold the truth and beauty of their Creator and begin the march back to home, back to Godhead. END



In Nectar of Devotion Prabhupada says, "It is stated in the Bhavisya Pu-rana: 'A person who follows the Rathayatra Car while passing the rathas in front or from behind, even if born of a lower grade family, will surely be elevated to the position of achieving equal opulences as Vishnu.'" Thousands of people stood and watched the Rathayatra Car Festival pass by and thousands more followed the car, chanting and shouting and dancing Hare Krishna all the way from Haight and Ashbury to the beach. As Prabhupada explains to us, it is not necessary to understand how it is that when you touch fire you get burned; whether you understand or not the result is the same, you still get burned. Similarly, when one stands up while the Rathayatra Car is passing or one follows the Rathayatra Car Festival one gets liberated whether he understands or not.



RATHAYATRA, LONDON

LONDON IMPRESSIONS,
JULY 27, 1969

—by Ramatanu Das Brahmachary
(ISKCON—London)

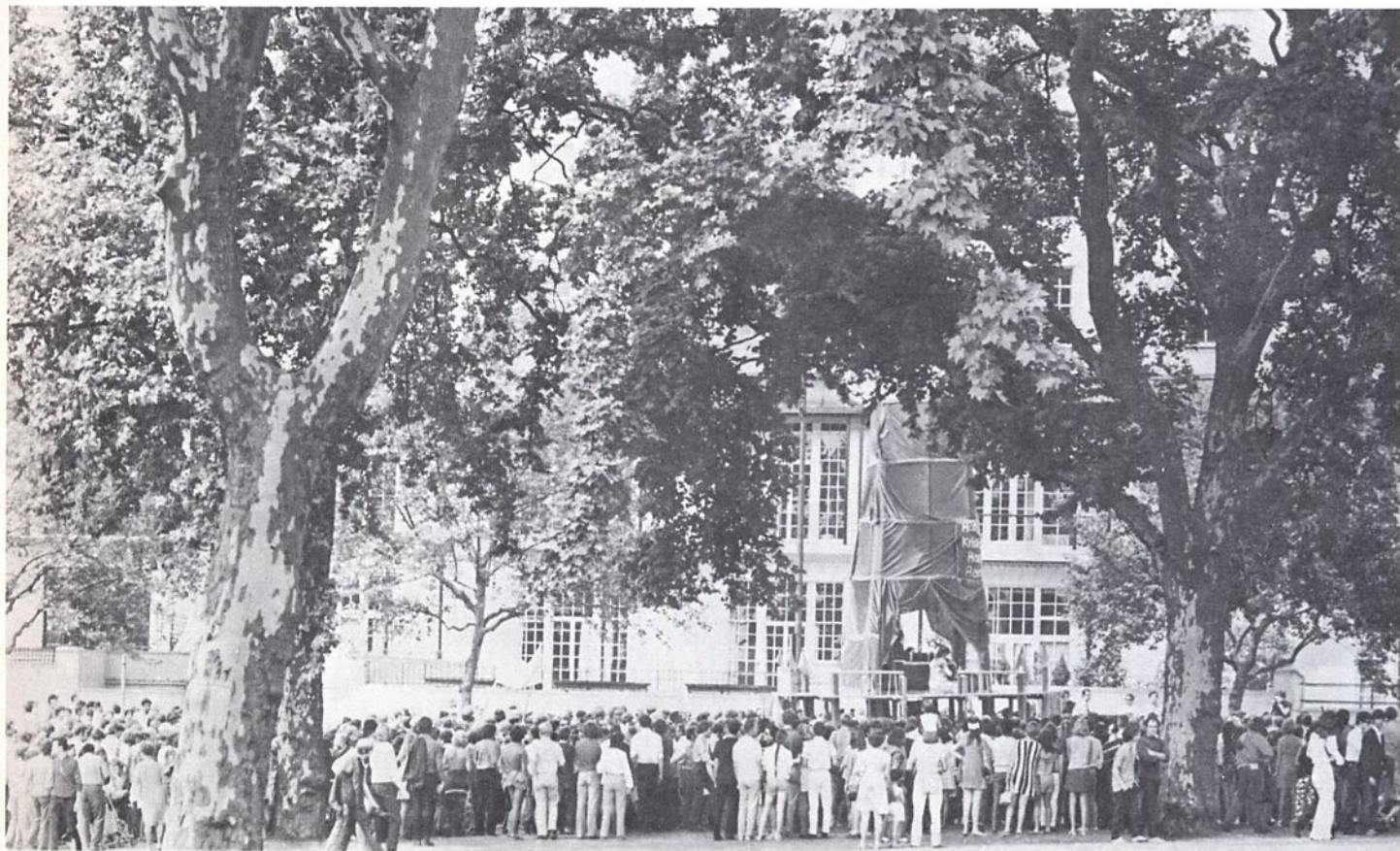
A tree waiting patiently for so many years in a quiet English forest, a green spark of Krishna consciousness wishing somehow to serve the Primeval Lord. Then of a sudden, this tree, humble and anonymous, patient and silent, by the grace of Sri Krishna is transformed into wooden planks, and the strong work-worn hands of Prabhu Shyamasundar begin, with the knowledge of having carved so many nice Jagannath murtis, to transform these boards into the mighty holy car of Lord Jagannath.

It is the backyard of an ordinary English neighborhood. But soon the red-headed five-year-old who lives next door begins to repeat after us as we affix oversized wooden carriage wheels to the frame...“Hare Kr---ishna”...smiling, feeling the devotion, asking his mother if he can join our procession. Sometimes Prabhu Malati sends down orange drink and prasad and Indian boys stop after their day's work to paint a wheel

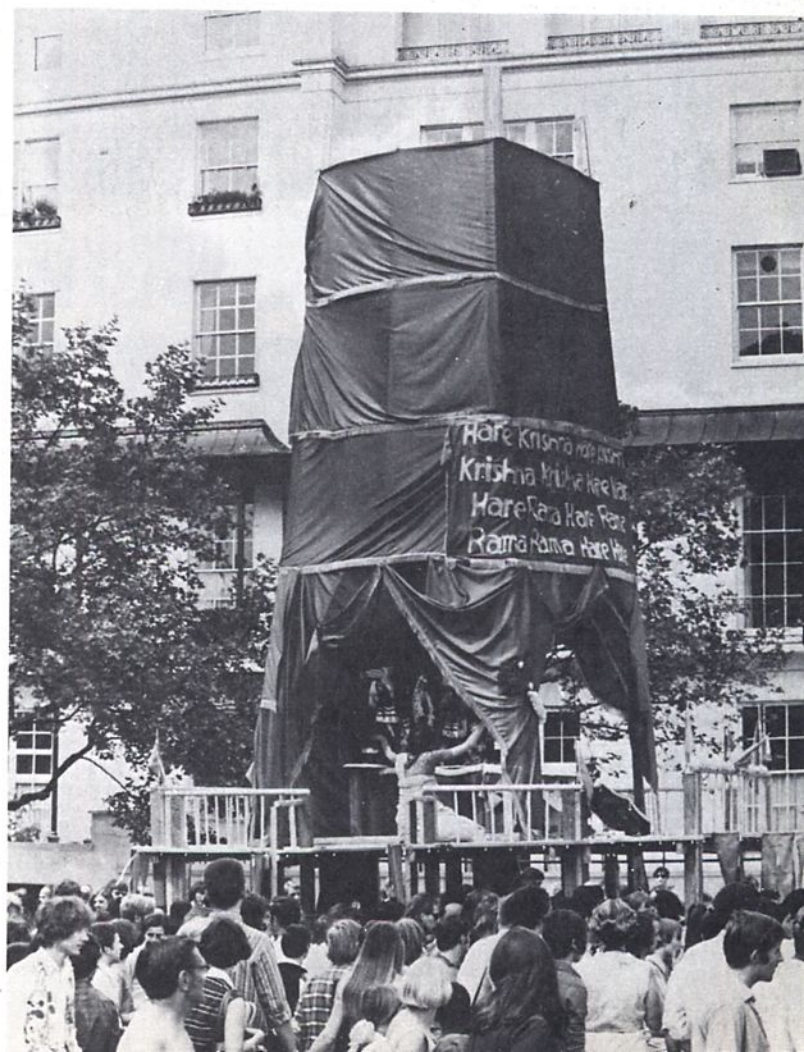
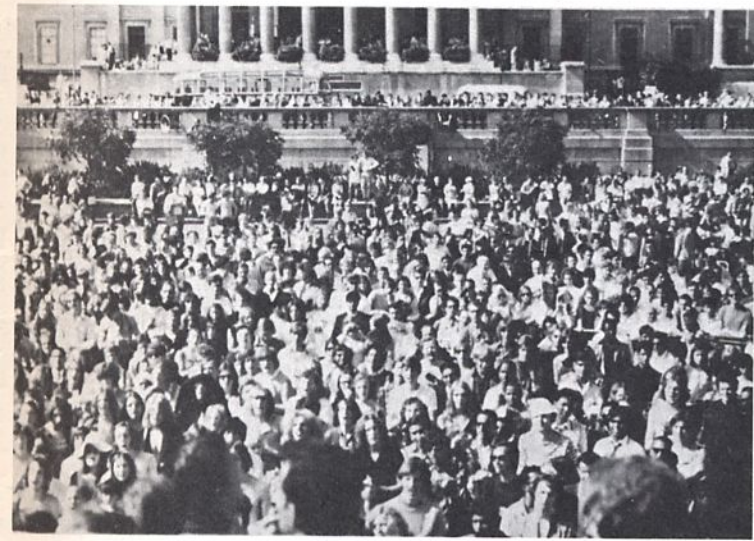
or sand the frame. To work directly for Krishna is so irresistible that it is not work at all! Such a large noble creation being pushed through the twilight streets, first in the western world, this car bearing the ever brightly smiling Personality of Godhead. Then after six hours journey over the historic bridges we arrive at Hyde Park, and humbly lay the garlanded flowers at the Lotus Feet of the Deities, the frame swaying as we place the ladder against it to staple the red and yellow satin, the Hare Krishna banner and the other bunting of this most happy of vehicles. People from everywhere gather about to take pictures, other banners of Indian communities being carried in, east and west singing to Lord Krishna. Small children and grey-haired grandmothers with tilok all wanting to pull the rope that will send dancing the grand Lord of the Universe. Then the conch is sounded (she who was laid so nicely upon the shore just for this service of being sounded for the Lord) and with the transcendental broom sweeping away the material dust, we dance towards Trafalgar Square, the street resounding with “Hari Vol! All

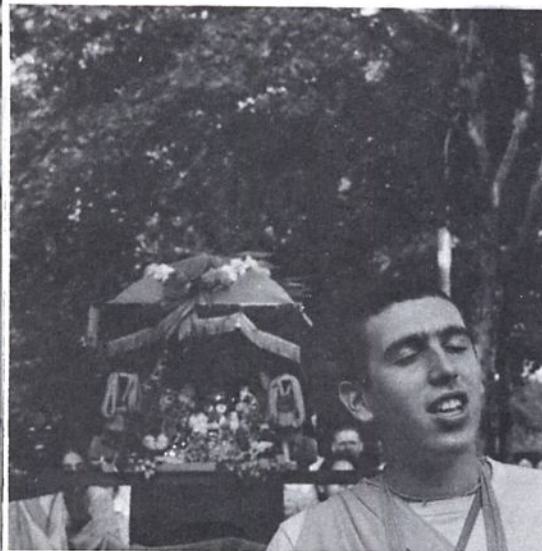
Glories to Lord Jagannath!” Prasadam is given freely to all and all become friends of Sri Krishna—the sweetest and most loving of friends. People in cars who may have been thinking only of this mundane world hear the chant and see the devotees, arms upraised ecstatically, calling to the Father and to Srila Prabhupada, and they become relieved of all anxiety. Prabhu Mataji from eternal Vrindaban, her eyes closed, shawl overhead with her friends around her, also chants the Maha Mantra, as so many cameras record the joy that cannot be manufactured but which must come by pleasing God in full surrender.

Such a glorious massive samkirtan through central London that when we arrive with the hundreds and thousands in Trafalgar Square we want only to chant and chant. We see many leading happy kirtans, many dancing and savoring transcendental bliss...so involved, so uplifted that at dusk, still full of the strength which the blessed Lord constantly renews, we finally thank our so kind brothers and sisters and leave for our dwelling places with but one thought...O dear Krishna, let me ever be refreshed by the nectar of serving You!



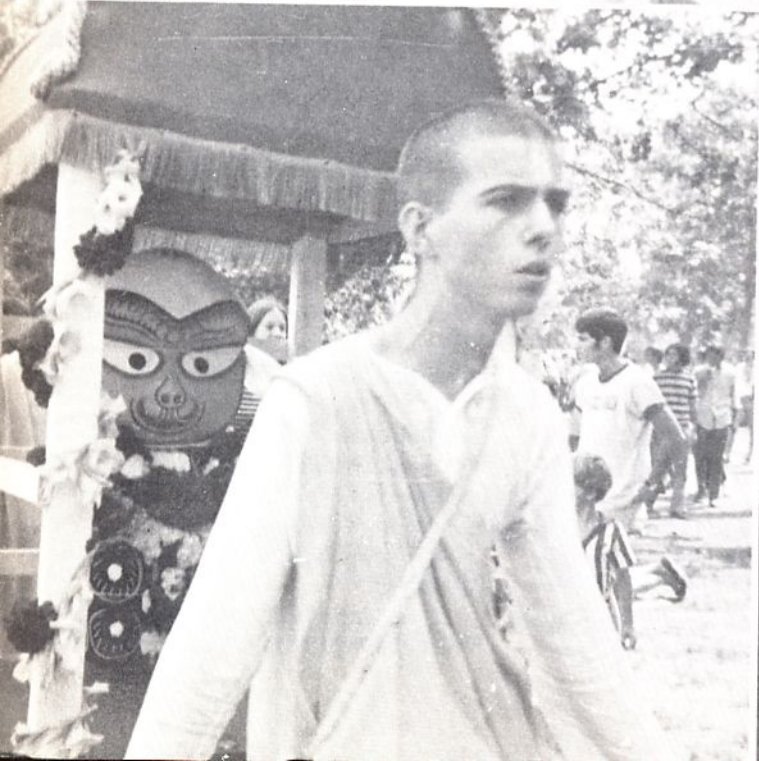
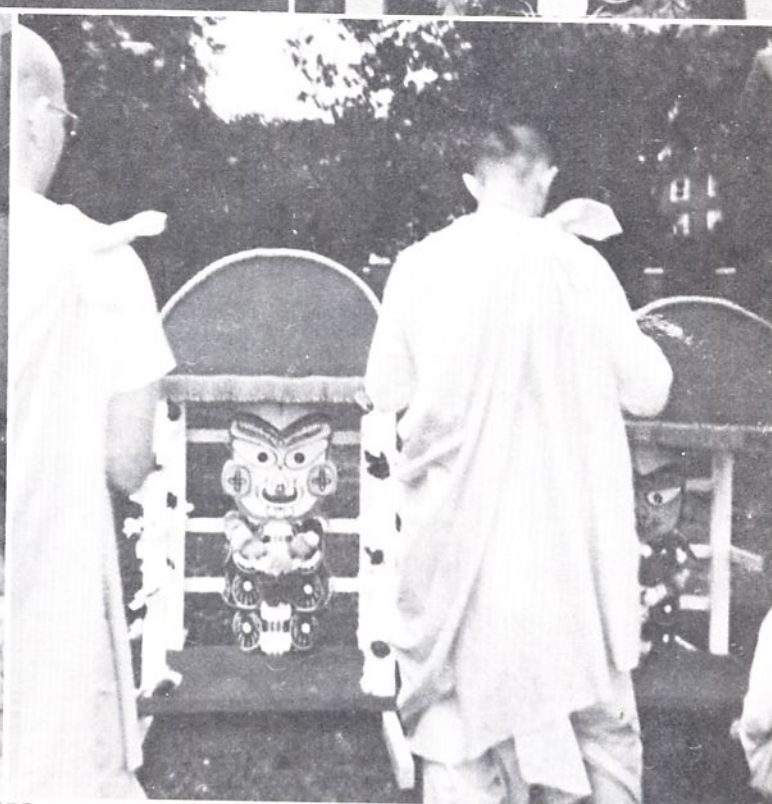
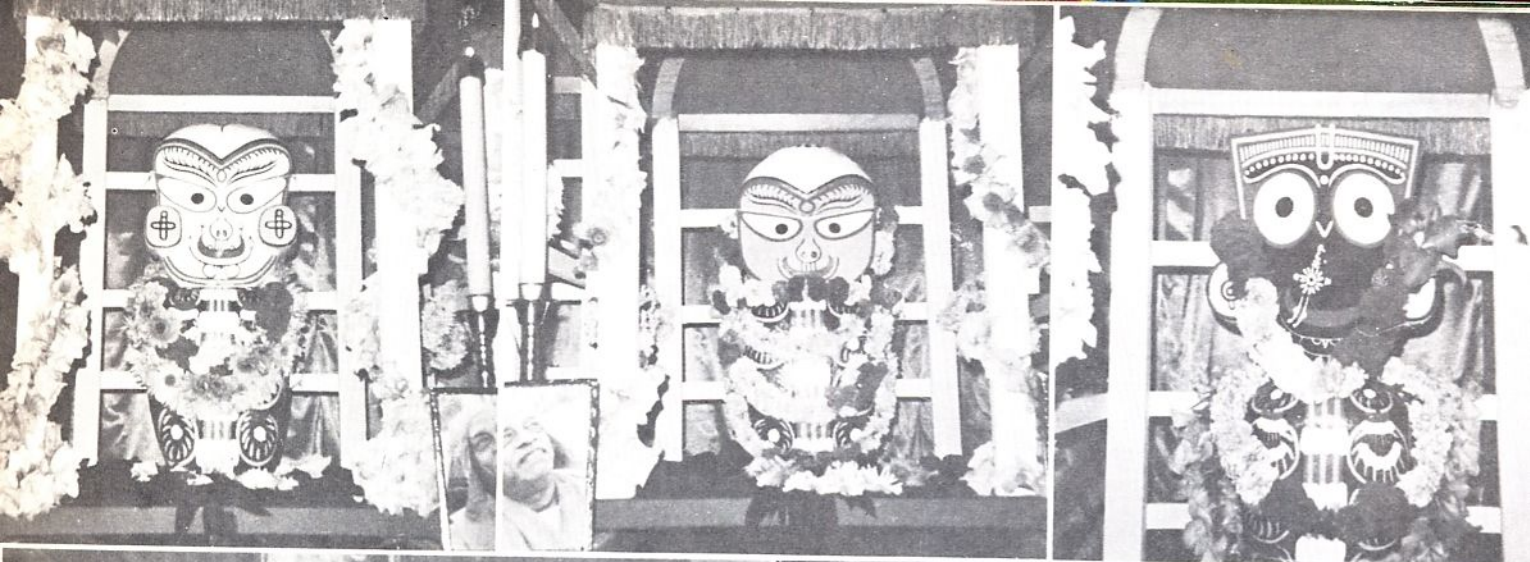






RATHAYATRA

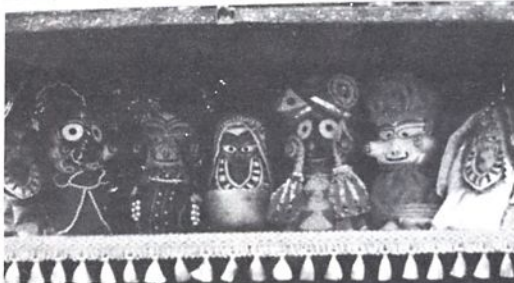
New York
and
Boston



**LORD JAGANNATH IS
KRISHNA HIMSELF**
—by Satsvarupa Das Adhikary

The nature of God is that He has unlimited qualities. It is not that He is without qualities. In the Bhagavad Gita, the Supreme Person describes Himself: "Of all that is material and all that is spiritual in this world, know for certain that I am both its origin and dissolution." In the Sanskrit of the Vedic scriptures His qualities are described as "nirguna," that is, they are beyond estimation. We can at least know that everything which we are seeing now is His quality, His energy. Therefore earth, stone and wood are His energy, and all colors are His energy. They are described as belonging to the Lord's external or inferior, material energy. But when this energy of the material world is combined according to authoritative direction, and a shape of the Supreme Lord is carved or shaped from it, then it is no longer material, it is spiritual. That is the version of all Vedic literatures. In this way, by the Mercy of the Absolute, a firm, easily worshipable link can be set up between the spiritual kingdom and those spirit souls who have temporarily fallen into the ignorance of material suffering.

In the Twelfth Chapter of Bhagavad Gita, Krishna the Supreme Personality of Godhead is asked by His disciple Arjuna, "Which form of worship is more perfect, devotional service unto Your Personal Form, or deliberation on Your impersonal unmanifested effulgence?" The Lord clearly declares, "He whose mind is fixed on My Personal Form, always engaged in worshiping Me with great and transcendental faith, is considered by Me to be most perfect." He further states, "For those whose minds are attached to the non-manifested, impersonal Feature of the Supreme, advancement is very troublesome. To make progress in that unmanifested discipline is always difficult for those who are embodied." Swami A. C. Bhaktivedanta elaborates on this point as follows: "It is very difficult for the embodied individual to simply theoretically understand that he is not the body. Therefore the Bhaktiyogi accepts the Deity of Krishna as worshipable because there is some bodily conception fixed in the mind of everyone, which can be applied. Of course, worship of the Supreme Lord in His Form within the temple is not idol worship. The Form of the Lord even in the material qualities, such as



when made of stone, wood, or oil paint, is not actually material. That is the Absolute Nature of the Supreme Lord.

"A crude example may be given here: We may find some mailboxes on the street, and if we post our letters in these boxes, they will naturally go to their destination without any difficulty. But any old box, or an imitation, which we may find somewhere, which is not authorized by the post office, will not do the work. Similarly, God has an authorized representation in the Deity Form, which is called "Archa Vighraha." This Archa Vighraha is an incarnation of the Supreme Lord. God will accept service through that Form. The Lord is omnipotent and all-powerful; therefore, by His incarnation as Archa Vighraha, He can accept the service of the devotee, just to make it convenient for the man in conditioned life."

So the transformation of matter into spirit in the Deity Form of the Lord is

an act done out of His kindness. In His Universal Form, as described in Chapter Eleven of the Gita, Lord Krishna manifests Himself as the entire cosmic manifestation, including all life and planetary systems. He is the Greatest of the great and He is also the Smallest of the small. For the ease of His parts and parcels who are estranged from Krishna Consciousness and trapped in the material world, He descends as incarnation in the Form of the most merciful Deity, such as Lord Jagannath. The Absolute Truth is inconceivable, beyond the reach of the philosophers' speculation, but the devotee who is willing to go back to Godhead can have easy access to Him. He can offer Him food-stuffs and eat the sanctified remnants, he can dress Him and glorify Him on the Rathayatra car journey. None of this is done whimsically or with any material sentiment, but strictly according to the rules chalked out by the great spiritual masters, who have themselves never disdained the presence of the Lord in the Deity Form. In a recent Deity installation ceremony at the Los Angeles temple, Swami A. C. Bhaktivedanta said, "The difference between idol worship and Deity worship is life. If there is no life, then it is idol worship, heathenism. And when there is life, feeling, then it is Krishna. We must think, 'Here is Krishna. I have to serve Him, I must do it very nicely.' If you think Jagannath is a wooden idol then He will remain a wooden idol to you forever. But if you elevate yourself to the higher platform of Krishna Consciousness, this Krishna will talk with you. At the time just after Lord Chaitanya, the Deity of Madan Mohan used to talk to the great devotee Sanatan Goswami. Sanatan had no temple. He was hanging his Deity on a tree. Madan Mohan was talking with him: 'Sanatan, you are bringing only a dry chapatti to offer Me, this chapatti is stale and if you don't give it a little salt, how can I eat?' Sanatan replied, 'Sir, where shall I go? Whatever I get I offer You. Kindly accept. I cannot move. I am an old man.' So Krishna had to eat whatever was offered. Because the devotee was offering, He could not refuse. Because the real thing is not what you offer, but your feeling: 'Krishna, kindly take. I have no qualification. I am rotten, false. But I have brought this thing for you, please take.' In that way it will be accepted."

Lord Jagannath is especially liberal and accessible to the aspirant devotee of

Godhead. As for the history of the Appearance of the merciful Lord Jagannath, our spiritual master, A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, has often told the incident: Five thousand years ago, a great devotee and king named Subal requested a sculptor from one of the upper material planets to carve him a Form of Krishna commemorating Krishna's Appearance on His chariot at Kurukshetra when He was joined with His Brother Valaram and Sister Subadra. The sculptor certainly accepted the commission, but stated one positive condition. He said he must work in absolute privacy in his studio. King Subal agreed, and the work began. The king, however, grew impatient after what he thought was too long a time, and finally he could wait no longer but approached the sculptor's place and actually forced open the door. On sight of the king, the demigod sculptor disappeared, leaving behind the Deity Forms of Jagannath, Valaram and Subadra exactly as we know them today from the Rathayatra Festival. The king simply accepted the Forms of the statues as complete: "These will be my worshipable Deities." In other words, the king was in Krishna Consciousness. As in so many of such incidents involving devotees and seeming accidents, the whole thing was an arrangement by the Lord. This is most significantly confirmed in that Lord Chaitanya, the Avatar of Krishna Himself as a Devotee, has solidly taken Lord Jagannath as nondifferent from the Absolute Truth. In his biography of the life of Lord Chaitanya, Swami A.C. Bhaktivedanta relates that "At Puri when He entered the temple of Jagannath He [Lord Chaitanya] became at once saturated with transcendental ecstasy and fell down on the floor of the temple unconscious." Prabhupada has said that Chaitanya was in such convulsive ecstasy that He could only utter, "Jag, Jaga," but He was thinking, "Oh, Krishna, for so long I have wanted to see You, and now I can see You." Bhaktivinode Thakur, the great household devotee in the line of disciplic succession from Lord Chaitanya, emphasized in an essay, "The Golden Avatar" (which appeared in issue number 25 of Back to Godhead), that he who can see the incarnation of the Deity within the shape of stone or wood is the perfect theist. And this is accessible not only to the stalwart realized saints, but to any person making a sincere offering with devotion.

On another occasion Bhaktivinode

Thakur conclusively affirmed the Jagannath Deity as nondifferent from the Form of Absolute Truth. Some hundred years ago, the devotee Bhaktivinode was the magistrate of the city of Puri in India. At that time a yogi was going around the city proclaiming that he was himself God, Sri Vishnu, and he was getting some less intelligent people to accept him as the Supreme Lord. The yogi had developed the useless talent of breathing fire from his mouth and he was getting a lot of attention. As magistrate, Bhaktivinode called the man before him. "You say you are Lord Vishnu?" "Yes I am," the man insisted. Bhaktivinode also held the position of caretaker of the large Jagannath temple at Puri and he therefore invited the yogi, "If you are Vishnu, then why don't you go live with Lord Jagannath at the temple?" "What?" the yogi was disdainful of the suggestion, "Go live with some wooden idols?" At this gross mistake in transcendental reasoning, Bhaktivinode was convinced the man before him was not God but an imposter, and he had him imprisoned for false teachings. It is further told that, immediately after imprisoning this false "Vishnu," Bhaktivinode's family members became seriously ill. This continued for one or two days, and the townspeople began to speculate that maybe the fire-breathing yogi was actually God and that Bhaktivinode had committed a great blasphemy. But the Thakur was unflinching in his faith and assured his family that all would be well. After a few days their illness passed and the yogi finally confessed from prison that he had been indeed an imposter.

Let us finally stop petty arguments and accept that the unlimited Supreme Lord can, if and when He likes, enter any Form and any place, and He is not prohibited from entrance simply by the desire of the atheists. So many people facilely declare that "God is everything" and "God is everywhere." Why then do they not admit that He is also present in the temple and in the sculptured or painted Form of Lord Jagannath? For this is the actual case, according to the foremost transcendental authorities, the scriptures and the spiritual masters of Vaishnavism.

By and large, the people of this age are unfit to enter into spiritual affairs with the Lord; they cannot see anything beyond matter. In the Srimad Bhagwatam, Swami A.C. Bhaktivedanta writes of Krishna's solution to the predicament:

"Because such fallen souls cannot see anything beyond matter, the Lord condescends to enter into each and every one of the innumerable universes as Garbhodakshayee Vishnu. The Lord grows a lotus stem from the lotus-like depression in the center of His transcendental abdomen and thus the first living being in the universe is born, by the name of Brahma. Therefore the Lord is known as 'Pankajanavi.' The Pankajanavi Lord accepts the Archa Vighraha—His transcendental Form—in different elements, such as a form within the mind, a form made of wood, a form made of earth, a form made of metal or jewel or painting or sand. All such forms of the Lord are always decorated with garlands of flowers in a soothing atmosphere in the temple of worship, in order to attract the attention of the non-devotees who are always engaged in material wranglings. All the great Acharyas have established such temples of worship in all places just to favor the non-devotees, and one should not pose himself as having transcended the stage of temple worship, while actually being in the lower grades of society."

We have it from the authoritative source of Srimad Bhagwatam that even the great impersonalist philosophers and yogis, who have already cut free from all bodily conception of self and fixed themselves in the Brahman conception of the Absolute Self, can become devotees of the Personal Form of Krishna simply by visiting the Archa Vighraha in the temple. This was the case with Sukdeva Goswami, who was fixed in the impersonal conception and later, as the narrator of Srimad Bhagwatam, became the number one speaker on the Pastimes of Lord Krishna. Also, the four Kumaras, who were accomplished yogis, traveled by mystic powers to the gates of the Spiritual Abode of Narayan, Lord Vishnu, in the Spiritual Sky; and although not qualified at first to enter into His Pastimes there, just by smelling the flavor of the dust of His Lotus Feet, their minds became changed and they became Personalist devotees of Godhead. This is the power of the merciful Lord and His Archa Vighraha incarnation. He is always ready to take the souls out of their endless attempts to speculate about Him and to instead fix them up as joyful eternal servitors in the perfection of spiritual consciousness. END

Records!

Records!

Records!



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The transcendental vibration established by the chanting of HARE KRISHNA, HARE KRISHNA, KRISHNA KRISHNA, HARE HARE/ HARE RAMA, HARE RAMA, RAMA RAMA, HARE HARE is the sublime method for reviving our transcendental consciousness. As living spiritual souls, we are all originally Krishna conscious entities, but due to our association with matter from time immemorial, our consciousness is now adulterated by the material atmosphere.

Hare Krishna is the transcendental process for reviving this original pure consciousness. By chanting this transcendental vibration, we can cleanse away all misgivings within our hearts. The basic principle of all such misgivings is the false consciousness that I am the lord of all I survey.

Krishna consciousness is not an artificial imposition on the mind. This consciousness is the original natural energy of the living entity. When we hear the transcendental vibration, this consciousness is revived. This simplest method is recommended for this age. By practical experience also, one can perceive that by the chanting of this Mantra, one can at once feel a transcendental ecstasy coming through from the spiritual stratum. There is no need to understand the language of the Mantra, nor is there any need for mental speculation, nor any intellectual adjustment for chanting this Maha Mantra. It is automatic, from the spiritual platform, and as such anyone can take part in vibrating this transcendental sound without any previous qualifications. One shows the first symptom of this in the urge to dance along with the chanting of the Mantra.

The word "Hare" is the form of addressing the energy of the Lord, and the words "Krishna" and "Rama" are forms of addressing the Lord Himself. Both Krishna and Rama means the Supreme Pleasure, and Hara is the Supreme Pleasure-Energy of the Lord. The Supreme Pleasure Energy of the Lord helps us to reach the Lord.

This chanting is exactly like the genuine cry of a child for its mother's presence. Mother Hara helps the devotee to achieve the Lord Father's Grace, and the Lord reveals Himself to the devotee who chants this Mantra sincerely.

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