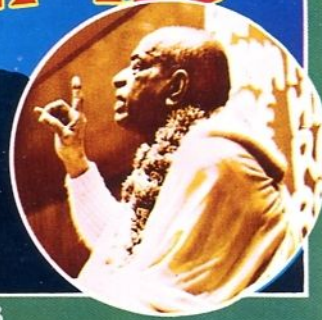


GODHEAD IS LIGHT. NESCIENCE IS DARKNESS. WHERE THERE IS GODHEAD THERE IS NO NESCIENCE.

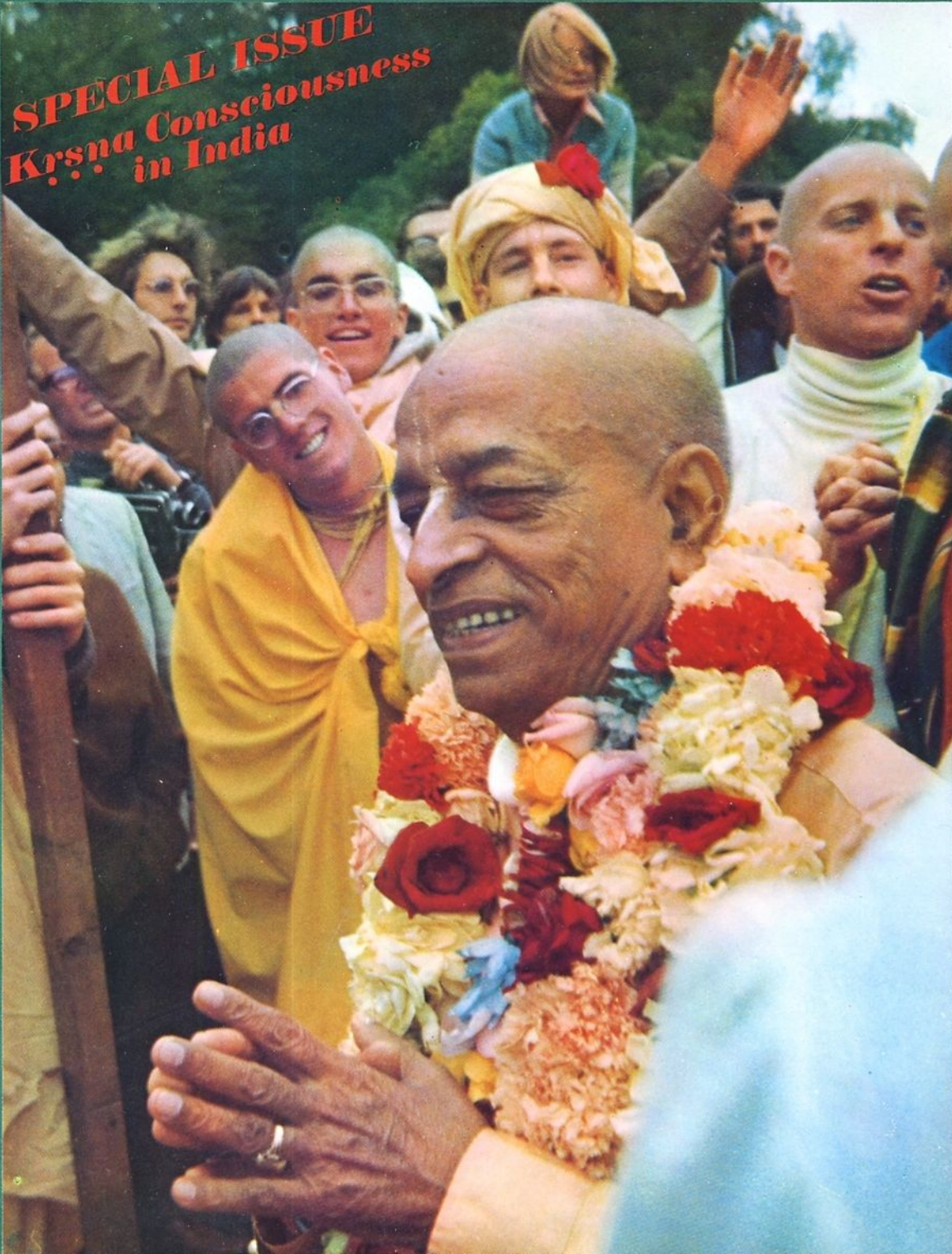


# BACK TO GODHEAD



THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT No. 43

**SPECIAL ISSUE**  
*Kṛṣṇa Consciousness  
in India*





## Books By His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

**KṚṢṆA, The Supreme Personality of Godhead** The supremely rich, powerful, famous and beautiful Personality of Godhead, who is free from all material attachment, is now available in book form. *KṚṢṆA, The Supreme Personality of Godhead*, 750 pages of transcendental reading matter, opulently illustrated with 82 full-color plates, presents the eternal, blissful pastimes of the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa as they are revealed in the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the ripened fruit of all the Sanskrit Vedic literatures.

The activities of Kṛṣṇa, which appear to be like those of an ordinary man, can only be properly understood with the help of a bona fide spiritual master fully realized in the knowledge of the transcendental nature. His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda is such a spiritual master. *KṚṢṆA, The Supreme Personality of Godhead*, potent in message and rich in design, offers mankind the opportunity to attain the highest benefit by understanding the true nature of the pastimes of the Supreme Lord. Everyone would do well to procure this deluxe two-volume set to read and keep at home as a great treasure.

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**TEACHINGS OF LORD CAITANYA** The conditioned soul, being engrossed in the material body, increases the pages of the history of material activity. The teachings of Lord Caitanya,

who is the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself appearing in the role of His own devotee, can help human society to stop such unnecessary and temporary activities and can elevate one to the topmost platform of spiritual activities, which begin after liberation from material bondage. *Teachings of Lord Caitanya*, the instructions of this most munificent incarnation of the Supreme Lord, thus opens the field of activities of the pure soul. Such liberated activities in Kṛṣṇa consciousness are the goal of human perfection.

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# Try to Understand the Basic Principles of the Great Movement "Kṛṣṇa Consciousness"

the perfection of life and be liberated from all suffering. His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda is passing on Kṛṣṇa's teaching in its full potency, as it is, so that everyone can attain to his rightful position, full of bliss and knowledge.

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The essence of religion, or, for that matter, the very purpose of life itself, is to develop love of God. We desire to provide for all people the gift of knowing how to love God, and we are dedicated to awakening the love of God which is dormant in the heart of everyone, regardless of race, creed or color. The program offered by the International Society for Krishna Consciousness is designed so that each and every person, while remaining in his occupation or station in life, may adopt the simple and direct methods of *bhakti-yoga* (devotion) under the direction of a bona fide spiritual master and offer whatever capacity or talent he has by utilizing it in the service of the Supreme Lord. The writer may write articles for Kṛṣṇa. Householders raise children in the science of God, and husband and wife live in mutual cooperation for spiritual progress. A businessman may enroll as a life member and thus participate in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement without abandoning his occupation.

Only by the recognition of God as the supreme father can there be brotherhood, peace and prosperity. In this materialistic world, the temples of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness are like oases in the desert where parched men may seek the nectar of happiness. We invite one and all to stop at our temples, listed below, and take part in our programs of classes, festivals, chanting, feasting and worship. The temples are open for you. Please visit them and inquire into this sublime and easy process for finding perfect happiness.

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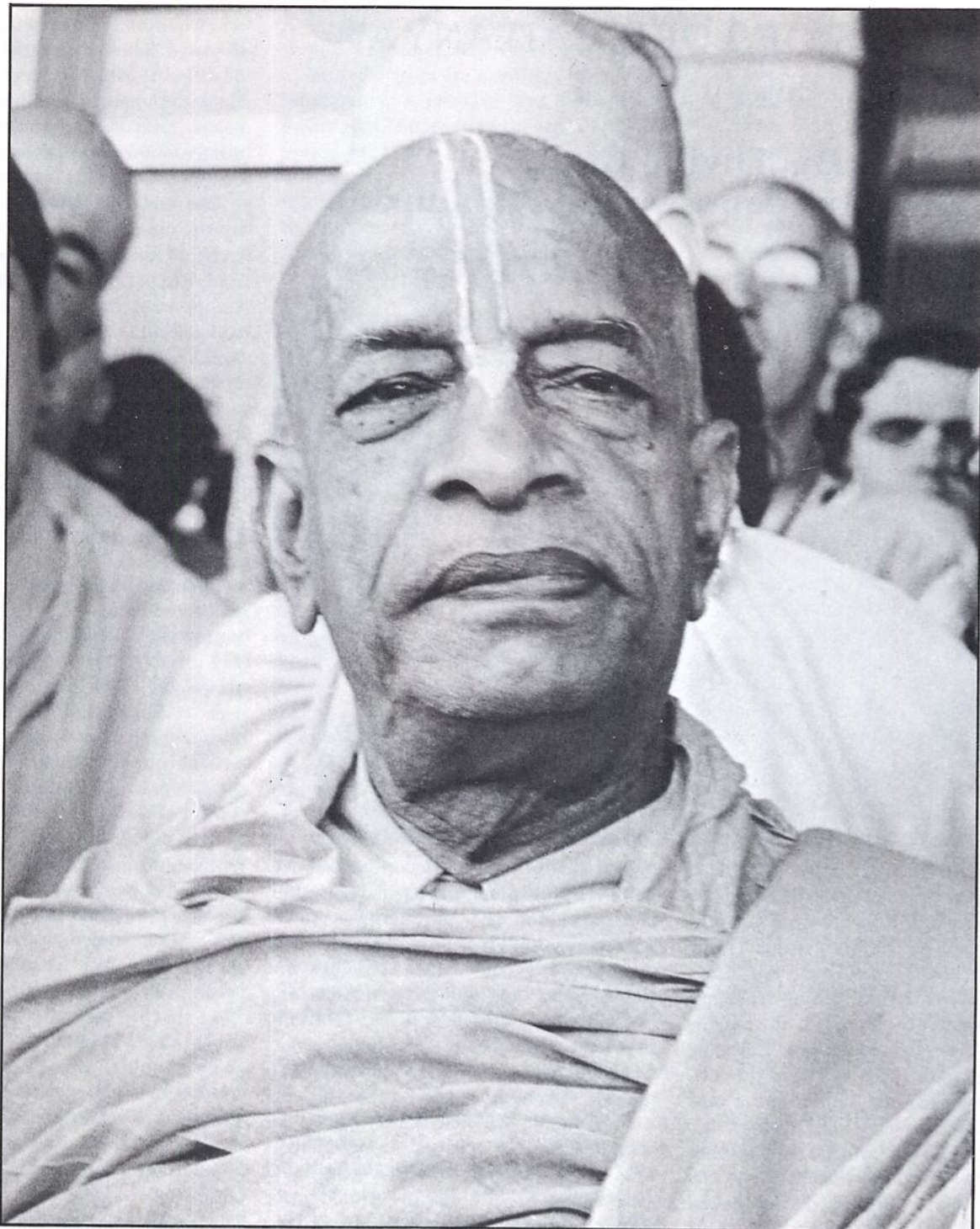
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**His Divine Grace**  
**A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda**  
*Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness*

*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-śalākayā  
cakṣur unmīlitaṁ yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

“I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, who, with the torchlight of knowledge, has opened my eyes, which were blinded by the darkness of ignorance.”

# TEACHINGS OF LORD CAITANYA

TRANSCRIPTION OF A LECTURE BY

## His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda



The greatest spiritual master of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, Caitanya Mahāprabhu, asked His disciple Rūpa Gosvāmī to go to Vṛndāvana and preach His mission. This is disciplic succession. One should not think, "I have understood everything from my spiritual master; now let me sit down tightly." This is also nice, but Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission is to spread the cult. He was a very learned scholar and a very beautiful young man. He had a very beautiful wife and very affectionate mother and was a respectable *brāhmaṇa*. Everyone looked up to Him; by His one command He could gather hundreds of thousands of men to start a civil disobedience movement. However, in spite of such a sublime position in householder life, He took *sannyāsa*, the renounced order of life, at the age of twenty-four years. He could have satisfied Himself with sense gratification—"Let Me remain very peacefully at home. I have My good wife, My mother, and the public." But He took *sannyāsa*. That is Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Kṛṣṇa wanted everyone to surrender unto Him, so Kṛṣṇa came Himself as Caitanya Mahāprabhu to teach how to

preach this process of devotional service. Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Kṛṣṇa Himself, in the incarnation of a pure devotee, so He set the example. Not only did He Himself show how to become Kṛṣṇa conscious, but His disciples also did so. After teaching His principal disciple, Rūpa Gosvāmī, about the principles of devotional service, Lord Caitanya said, "It is your duty to go preach." When a disciple receives instruction from his spiritual master he has an obligation to the spiritual master. This is called *guru-dakṣiṇā*. After being initiated and instructed, the disciple should offer service: "My dear master, what can I do for you?" I also asked my spiritual master what I could do, and he asked me to try to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the Western world. This is the duty of the disciple. He should not only receive instruction; he becomes indebted to his spiritual master for the knowledge imparted. Therefore he must also serve him. Caitanya Mahāprabhu instructs that Kṛṣṇa consciousness means to serve Kṛṣṇa and the spiritual master simultaneously, because we are elevated by the mercy of these two personalities, Kṛṣṇa and the spiritual mas-

ter. When one is very sincere, Kṛṣṇa, who is seated in everyone's heart, gives him a qualified spiritual master. By the grace of Kṛṣṇa one can have a bona fide spiritual master, and by the grace of the spiritual master one makes advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This is the process.

The seed of devotional service is achieved by the combined mercy of Kṛṣṇa and the spiritual master. Therefore Lord Caitanya told Rūpa Gosvāmī, "It is your duty to accept what I say. Please go to Vṛndāvana and execute My order. I have given you hints; now expand upon them." Caitanya Mahāprabhu was the greatest spiritual master, and now He and Rūpa Gosvāmī were being separated, and it was not known when they would meet again. Therefore Lord Caitanya pacified him. "Don't be sorry. You will again come to Jagannātha Purī, and we shall meet again." Rūpa Gosvāmī could not deny this, but he was so afflicted that as soon as Lord Caitanya embraced him and got on a boat to start across the river, Rūpa Gosvāmī could not say anything but at once fainted and fell down due to feelings of separation. There was a Mahārāṣṭrian *brāhmaṇa* who was also a great devotee of Lord Caitanya and was also present there. Somehow or other he lifted Rūpa Gosvāmī and took him to his own house.

Rūpa Gosvāmī was accompanied by Anupama, his younger brother. Anupama's son is Jīva Gosvāmī, the celebrated scholar in the line of disciplic succession. When his father and uncle went away from home, this Jīva Gosvāmī was only ten years old, but he was such an intelligent boy that he decided, "My father and my uncle have left home to understand Kṛṣṇa. Why should I remain at home?" So he also left home at the age of ten years. But he knew that because he was a young boy he would not be of much help. "If I go to my father or uncle, what shall I do there?" He knew that they had gone to Vṛndavana on a great mission for Caitanya Mahāprabhu. "If I go to live there, then I must be qualified to assist them." Therefore Jīva Gosvāmī went to Benares and became a very great scholar and philosopher. He was an accredited scholar both in literature and philosophy, so when he was a young man, after being fully educated, he went to Rūpa Gosvāmī, his uncle. In the meantime, he could not see his father, but his uncle was there, so Jīva Gosvāmī became his disciple, and he proved himself the greatest scholar and philosopher in the world. A great Sanskrit scholar in Calcutta

once declared in a meeting that there has never been a philosopher and scholar like Jīva Gosvāmī in the world, nor in the future will there ever be one. His erudition is admitted by all scholarly circles. Even the Māyāvādī school, who are against our Vaiṣṇava philosophy, also study the theses of Jīva Gosvāmī. When I was in Bombay there was a very influential Māyāvādī *sannyāsī* who told me at a meeting, “I am studying Jīva Gosvāmī’s philosophy.” I said, “Very good.” He was a Māyāvādī *sannyāsī*, yet within his heart he had studied him very carefully—in fact, he was a devotee of Kṛṣṇa. I went to his *āśrama*, and I saw that he was worshiping Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Deities. This very great scholar could present everything very nicely, and in public he would speak Māyāvādī philosophy, impersonalism, but secretly, despite his sectarian view, he was worshiping Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. In the last meeting I declared to the audience, “Your spiritual master is speaking impersonalism here, but secretly he is worshiping Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa at home. You should see. He has very good devotion for Kṛṣṇa; he has Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Deities and is worshiping nicely.” Jīva Gosvāmī was such a scholar that the greatest scholars among the Śāṅkarite impersonalists admit his superiority. Śāṅkara’s philosophy has so much word jugglery that it is very difficult for an ordinary man to understand, so generally the Śāṅkarites are mostly scholars. But nevertheless they admit defeat before Jīva Gosvāmī. This Jīva Gosvāmī was Rūpa Gosvāmī’s nephew.

#### THE LORD’S RECEPTION

When Lord Caitanya went to Benares (Vārāṇasī), one of his disciples, Candraśekhara Ācārya, who was by caste considered a *śūdra*, gladly received Him. Although Candraśekhara Ācārya was not a *brāhmaṇa*, whenever Lord Caitanya visited Benares, He used to stop at Candraśekhara’s house. Before Lord Caitanya came to Benares, Candraśekhara Ācārya dreamt that the Lord had already come, so in the morning he went out and met Lord Caitanya. When he saw Lord Caitanya he was so glad that he fell down at His feet, and he received Him very obediently at his home. There was another devotee, Tapana Miśra, who was a very learned scholar, and as soon as he heard that Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu had arrived, he invited Him to take His meals at his house.

According to the Māyāvādīs, a *sannyāsī* should not cook. Therefore, anywhere a *sannyāsī* goes in a village, the village inhabitants, especially the householder *brāhmaṇas*, invite him to come and take *prasādam*. It is a rule that a *sannyāsī* cannot touch fire. (As far as we are concerned, we never touch fire for ourselves. We touch fire for Kṛṣṇa. As *sannyāsīs* we should not touch fire, but because we have to cook for Kṛṣṇa, the situation is different.)

After Caitanya Mahāprabhu had taken a meal at his house, Tapana Miśra requested Him, “My dear sir, I beg to request that as long as You remain at Vārāṇasī, please do not accept anyone else’s invitation. That is my request.”

#### IMPERSONALISTS AVOIDED

Lord Caitanya knew that He would stay at Benares for four or five days, and He did not want to accept invitations from the Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs*. Benares is full of Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs*—there is not a single Vaiṣṇava *sannyāsī*. Not just Benares, anywhere. In the United States, when I first came, I was perhaps the only Vaiṣṇava *sannyāsī*. There were so many *svāmīs* who came, but they were all Māyāvādīs. Vaiṣṇava *sannyāsīs* are very rare, but Caitanya Mahāprabhu did not accept any invitation to dine with the Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs*. Generally we also follow that course. Because the Māyāvādīs do not believe in God, we call them atheists, although they are very learned scholars. Therefore we almost never accept an invitation from a Māyāvādī *sannyāsī*. Lord Caitanya made it a point to reside at Candraśekhara’s house, and He accepted the proposal that He take His meals at Tapana Miśra’s. Another friend, a *brāhmaṇa*, also learned that Caitanya Mahāprabhu had returned to Benares, so he also came and offered his respects. There were many admirers and devotees, respectable *kṣatriyas* and *brāhmaṇas*, and they began to come to see Caitanya Mahāprabhu. These events are described in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī. In closing the chapter describing the talks between Rūpa Gosvāmī and Caitanya Mahāprabhu, he offers his blessings to us and affirms that anyone who hears this dialogue with faith and devotion will surely develop in spiritual life. He offers loving affection and obeisances to the feet of the *gosvāmīs*, especially Rūpa Gosvāmī.

In describing the activities of Lord Caitanya, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja writes that His activities delivered even the *mlecchas*, or those who don’t follow the *Vedas*. Just as those who don’t follow the Christian Bible are called heathens, those who don’t follow the *Vedas* are called *mlecchas*, and even those people Caitanya Mahāprabhu delivered from nescience. But He could not deliver the Māyāvādīs. Therefore they are less than *mlecchas*. The word Māyāvādī is composed of two elements—*māyā*, matter, and *vādī*, one who sticks to this principle. Matter extends to the point of intelligence. The grossest materialist is the sense gratifier, and above him is the mental speculator. And the attempt to reach spiritual perfection by physical exercise, by making the proper physical adjustments to concentrate the mind, is also material. Therefore neither the process of *karma*, whereby the *karmī* works hard for sense gratification, nor the process of *jñāna*, whereby the philosopher seeks a solution by speculation, nor *yoga*, whereby perfection is sought by exercise, is on the spiritual platform. The spiritualist is he who knows that he is constitutionally spiritual and acts that way. Devotees know that they are part and parcel of the Supreme Spirit and that to engage in service is spiritualism. Both the Śāṅkarites and the Buddhists are Māyāvādīs. Formerly there was no animosity between the Buddhists and the Hindus. Lord Buddha started meditation near Gayā, which is near Benares. The Buddhists were Hindus, but since Buddhism was driven out of India it has been considered a different sect.

#### THE GREATEST PERSONALITY

When Lord Caitanya was on His way to Vṛndāvana, He never made His headquarters anywhere but in Jagannātha Purī. But He stopped at Benares and resided with Candraśekhara and took *prasādam* with Tapana Miśra. His only propaganda was Hare Kṛṣṇa, and when He passed on the road all the people joined Him. Even when insignificant people saw Him they liked to chant, and He drew crowds. In three or four days He became famous. The propaganda of the young *sannyāsī* reached the Māyāvādīs, who indulged in backbiting. “Here is a *sannyāsī*, and He is dancing.” Dancing and singing were strictly forbidden to Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs*. (It appears, however, that *kīrtana*, chanting, is recommended in the Bible, and today even Māyāvādīs



Śrīla Prabhupāda and devotees hold *saṅkīrtana* exactly as taught by Lord Caitanya.

photo by John Griesser

are taking to it.) They said of Lord Caitanya: "Here is a *sannyāsī* dancing and singing. He doesn't give attention to studying *Vedānta*." Sometimes Kṛṣṇa conscious devotees are considered foolish because they have no stock but chanting. People want to talk of philosophy, but simply by chanting all is complete. Criticism was going on: "There are other sentimentalists who are also foolish and ignorant; therefore they are following this *sannyāsī*." When Lord Caitanya was criticized in that way, He smiled. "What can I do?" He said. He was very grave: "Let them criticize, and let Me continue My activities. That's all." Because He was anxious to visit Vṛndāvana, He did not care. He left Benares after three or four days. Although He was criticized, He did not challenge, but went to Vṛndāvana.

Lord Caitanya came back to Benares, however, on His way from Mathurā to Jagannātha Purī, and again He stayed at the house of Candraśekhara, although he was not a *brāhmaṇa* but a *śūdra*. Why? Because He is completely independent.

Because He is Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa sometimes takes the incarnation of a hog. The hog is considered to be the lowest of animals because it eats stool. Just as those who are dog-eaters are considered the lowest of human society, similarly amongst the animals the hog is considered the lowest because it eats stool. But Kṛṣṇa took the appearance of a hog. That does not mean, however, that Kṛṣṇa became a hog. He is fully independent. What sort of hog was He? That hog was so big that He covered almost half of the universe. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* there is a very nice explanation of the hog incarnation. The residents of the three highest planets—Janaloka, Tapoloka and Satyaloka—are the most pious within the material world. They were praying, and when the hog incarnation sprinkled water upon those three planets by shaking His body, the residents thought, "We are becoming purified." Although they are considered to be the most pious and purified residents of this material world, still they prayed, "We are becoming purified."

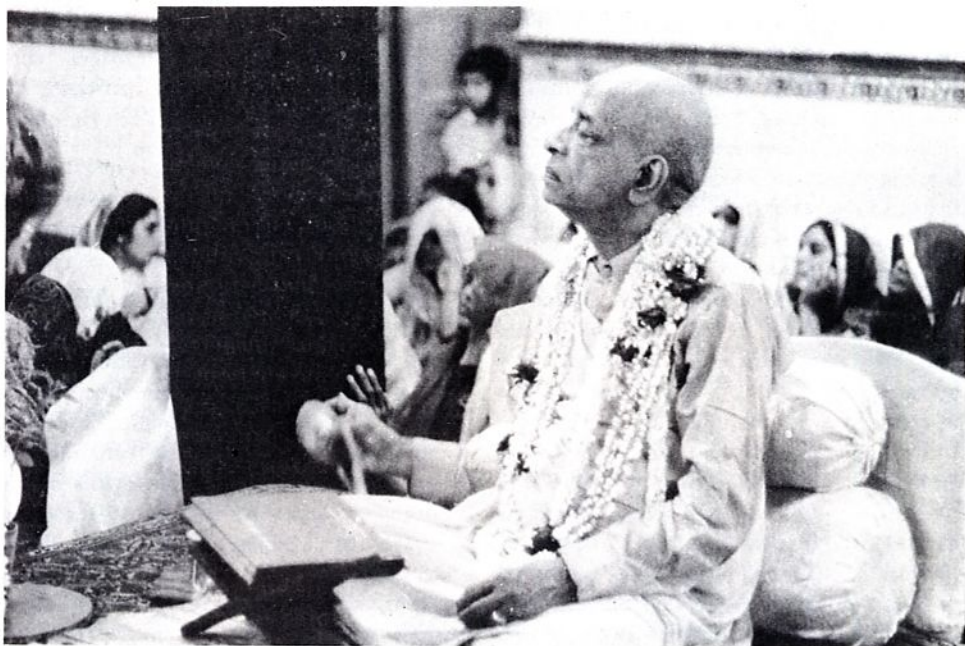
Kṛṣṇa and His devotees are independent. They are not under the rules and regulations of this material world. Therefore Caitanya Mahāprabhu set an example by staying at a place which was considered abominable by other *sannyāsīs*. Candraśekhara was a clerk. The clerical occupation was offered to the *śūdras*, the laborer class. Recently in Calcutta, at a European firm, there was a strike of the clerks. Their chief man met with the manager and asked, "Do you want to compromise with us?" But the manager said, "No, I don't want to compromise with you. I don't care about you because you are educated laborers." He gave that title to the clerks—educated laborers. Actually in Hindu society the clerks were called educated laborers—*lekhak śūdras*. But spiritually there is no such distinction. We should always remember that materially, in every society and every country, there are always higher and lower classes, but spiritually there is no such consideration. That is Caitanya Mahāprabhu's propaganda. He made Haridāsa Ṭhākura, a Mohammedan,



the spiritual master for *saṅkīrtana*, and He picked up Sanātana Gosvāmī and Rūpa Gosvāmī, who were rejected by Hindu society, and made them *gōsvāmīs*. That is Caitanya Mahāprabhu's distinctive feature. Here we see that He honored a laborer, a *śūdra* clerk who was inferior in society, by staying at his home. Ramānanda Rāya was also a *śūdra*, and he was a householder and a politician, a governor, but Caitanya Mahāprabhu took instruction from him. Caitanya Mahāprabhu gave him the preference of being His teacher. Ramānanda Rāya was hesitating: "Sir, You are a *sannyāsī* in the highest stage of elevation, and in Your former life You belonged to the *brāhmaṇa* sect, so You belong to the highest class. And I am a *śūdra*, a householder and a politician. How low I am in comparison to You, yet You are taking instruction from me. So I am feeling hesitation." Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, "No, don't feel hesitation. It doesn't matter whether a man is a laborer, a *brāhmaṇa*, a *sannyāsī*, or a householder. Anyone who knows the science of Kṛṣṇa is a spiritual master." Anyone—that is Caitanya Mahāprabhu's highest recommendation, especially for the Hindus who have so much caste consciousness. Caitanya Mahāprabhu broke all the barriers. His simple teaching was that anyone who is Kṛṣṇa conscious is the greatest personality in the world. He did not care what people would say because He was staying at a *śūdra*'s house. He stayed with a *śūdra* and took meals with another *brāhmaṇa* who was not *sannyāsī*, and in this way He resided in Benares.

#### DEVOTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

While Lord Caitanya was in Benares He met Sanātana Gosvāmī and instructed him for two months about Kṛṣṇa consciousness and how it should be executed. But Tapanā Miśra and Candrasēkhara submitted with great regret that the Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs* were criticizing His activities. "Because You are chanting and You do not give much attention to the reading of *Vedānta* philosophy, they are criticizing, 'What kind of *sannyāsī* is He? He does not take part in studying *Vedānta* philosophy. On sentiment He is chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare, and some innocent people are following Him.'" It is the duty of a devotee to be intolerant of blasphemy, so they told the Lord, "The



"Lord Caitanya said, 'It is your duty to go preach.'"

criticism by the Māyāvādīs has become unbearable. Something must be done, otherwise we shall die or commit suicide."

There are three kinds of devotees—those who are in the lowest status, those who are in the intermediate status and those who are in the highest status. Those who are in the lowest status are beginners. Such devotees go to the temple, church or mosque and offer prayers to the Lord with great devotion and faith, but they have no knowledge about other devotees, nor do they know their duty to others. A devotee should not be satisfied simply with elevating himself in spiritual advancement; he has other duties also. There are innocent persons who have forgotten their relationship with God, and it is the duty of a devotee to enlighten them. That is required. Just like Lord Jesus Christ. He also preached the science of God, Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This is the duty of a devotee, or a good son of God. But those who are in the neophyte status have not developed the consciousness that one has to preach the philosophy of God consciousness or Kṛṣṇa consciousness to others. They are simply satisfied in themselves. They go to the church or mosque or temple and offer their prayers in devotion. That's all.

One who has advanced spiritually to the next stage sees four objects of vision—the atheist, the innocent, God, and God's devotees. Therefore a person who has elevated himself to this stage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness has four kinds of dealings. Firstly, because he knows God, he therefore loves

God. This is called *premā*. His only lovable object is God or Kṛṣṇa. Secondly, because he loves God, he makes friendship with devotees of God. But God is always the center. If one loves God, then one can love others also, perfectly. For example, suppose a girl is married to a boy and the boy has a father, mother, brothers and other relatives. As soon as the girl comes to the house of her husband, the father of the husband becomes her father-in-law, and the mother of the husband becomes her mother-in-law. Therefore, although before marriage she had no connection with all these people, now she has a permanent relationship with the father-in-law, the mother-in-law, the brother-in-law, etc. Similarly, as soon as we make our connection with Kṛṣṇa, that connection is permanent. Our relationship with Kṛṣṇa or God is eternal. We have forgotten, but as soon as it is revived—"I am part and parcel of the Supreme." or "I am son of the Supreme."—then our relationship with other sons of God becomes clear. That is universal brotherhood. One who is in the second stage of development knows God and loves God, and in relationship with God he loves the devotees of God and makes friendships with them. And as far as the innocent are concerned, the innocent are those who are not offenders but do not know what is God. They are ordinary men. The person who is in the second stage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness has the duty to enlighten them. And those who are atheists, who are purposely against God,

he avoids. Therefore there are four kinds of dealings for the person who is in the intermediate position. Those who are in the highest status of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, however, do not see anyone as being against God. Their vision is that everyone is engaged in God's service. They make no distinctions. That is a very elevated stage and should not be imitated.

Tapana Miśra and Candraśekhara, hearing the criticism against Lord Caitanya, placed themselves in the lower status and said, "We cannot bear it." They felt sorry because they did not have sufficient power to refute the arguments of the other party. Unless one is conversant with logic, arguments and Vedic literature, it is very difficult to defend oneself. The more one can defend himself from the attacks of atheists, the more one is understood to be advanced in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The atheists will undoubtedly attack, but devotees have to defend themselves. That is the business of those who are in the intermediate position.

#### COINCIDENCE

While Lord Caitanya and His two devotees were talking, a *brāhmaṇa* came in to invite Lord Caitanya, as he had invited all the other *sannyāsīs*, to dine at his house. The *brāhmaṇa* fell at the feet of Caitanya Mahāprabhu and requested Him, "I have come to beg one thing from You. Please be so kind as to agree to this. I know that You do not associate Yourself with the Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs*, but nevertheless I have come to invite You. Please accept my request." Although Caitanya Mahāprabhu was in the renounced order of life, *sannyāsa*, He avoided the company of the Māyāvādī impersonalists because Caitanya Mahāprabhu was a personalist. Generally that is still the system. As soon as impersonalists see a personalist, they begin to attack with arguments, so those who are not very highly developed avoid them, but those who are conversant argue.

While Caitanya Mahāprabhu was staying at Benares, He was not very enthusiastic to meet with the Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs*, yet this *brāhmaṇa* who had invited all the other *sannyāsīs* for dinner also came to Caitanya Mahāprabhu and invited Him. Lord Caitanya's two devotees were very sorry that the Māyāvādīs were criticizing Him, and while they were discussing this, the *brāhmaṇa* came with his invitation, so it was coincidence. Caitanya Mahāprabhu thought this a good opportunity to meet with the Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs* and talk with

them about their criticism of the personalists. Previously He did not associate with them, but to please His devotees, who were very sorry to hear the criticism, He accepted the invitation so that He could meet them and talk with them.

#### "I AM NOT FIT"

The next day the Lord went to the house of the *brāhmaṇa*, and He saw that there were many other Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs* sitting together. Just see the behavior of Lord Caitanya. Although Caitanya Mahāprabhu was not in agreement with them, because they were *sannyāsīs* in the renounced order of life, He offered his respects by bowing down before them. According to the customs of the Vedic system, it is the duty of everyone to at once offer his respect as soon as he sees a *sannyāsī*. If he does not do so, then it is enjoined that he should fast for a day as punishment. He should not eat. "I saw a *sannyāsī*, but I did not offer my respect. Therefore the penance should be that I should fast for a day." This is the injunction. Although Caitanya Mahāprabhu was God Himself, His behavior and etiquette were excellent. As soon as He saw the *sannyāsīs*, He offered His respects.

It is the system that when one comes from outside he has to wash his feet before he enters a room. This is especially so for *sannyāsīs*. Lord Caitanya washed His feet and sat down a little apart from where the other *sannyāsīs* were sitting, just in the place where He had washed His feet. He was very beautiful, only twenty-four or twenty-five years old, His complexion was very fair, and He had accepted the *sannyāsa* order. With His saffron cloth and with *tilaka*, He looked so very beautiful that the other *sannyāsīs* began to be attracted: "He is very nice." The other *sannyāsīs*, all attracted by the very nice boy *sannyāsī*, were so pleased that they automatically stood up to show Him respect.

The chief of the *sannyāsīs* who were sitting there was Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī. *Sannyāsīs* have various titles. According to the impersonalists there are ten titles, but according to the Vaiṣṇavas there are 108. The ten titles which the impersonalists claim—Sarasvatī, Bhāratī, Vāna, etc.—are included in those of the Vaiṣṇavas. My spiritual master was a *sannyāsī*, and his title was Sarasvatī. The chief *sannyāsī* at that meeting was Prakāśānanda. He was a great scholar. Offering respect to Lord

Caitanya, he said, "My dear sir, why are You sitting at such a distant and filthy place? Please come here. Sit with us." Caitanya Mahāprabhu had heard that Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī had criticized, "This Caitanya Mahāprabhu who has come to Benares is not very learned." Thus Caitanya Mahāprabhu replied to him, "I belong among the lower class *sannyāsīs*; therefore I am sitting in this filthy place. You had better sit in higher places. I am not fit to sit with you." Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī was a learned man, and he could understand the hint given by Lord Caitanya. Therefore he himself went personally to Caitanya Mahāprabhu and took His hand. "Please come sit with us. Why are You sitting here?"

#### IMPORTANT QUESTION

When Lord Caitanya was seated, Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī said, "I think Your name is Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya and You have accepted this renounced order of life from Keśava Bhāratī." Although Caitanya Mahāprabhu was initiated by a Vaiṣṇava, devotee, He took *sannyāsa* from Keśava Bhāratī, who belonged to the Śāṅkara sect. The rule is if one wishes to accept the renounced order of life, there is an initiation ceremony and that ceremony must be performed by a bona fide member of the renounced order. It is not that one can take one's cloth, dye the color, and in one day become a *sannyāsī*. No. There is a ceremony. Caitanya Mahāprabhu took *sannyāsa* from Keśava Bhāratī, who belonged to the Śāṅkara disciplic succession. Therefore Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī, who also belonged to this Śāṅkara line, said, "I understand that Your name is Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya." There are different names for *brahmacārī* students also, who are under the guidance of a *sannyāsī*. A *brahmacārī* who is under the guidance of Bhāratī is named Caitanya. Although Caitanya Mahāprabhu was a *sannyāsī*, He did not change His *brahmacārī* name. That is also very significant. As soon as a Māyāvādī takes *sannyāsa*, he thinks, "I have become Nārāyaṇa. I have become God." Therefore although Caitanya Mahāprabhu was a *sannyāsī*, He did not change His *brahmacārī* name. A *brahmacārī* is meant to serve the spiritual master, so He continued to be a servitor.

Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī asked, "You are a *sannyāsī* of our line because You have accepted the renounced order from Keśava Bhāratī, so what is the reason that You do

not mix with us?” That was his first question. And another complaint was: “Because You are a *sannyāsī*, You should devote Your time to discussing Śaṅkara philosophy and *Vedānta-sūtra*. You should understand why You have taken *sannyāsa*. Why are You simply dancing and chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare?” This was his question. Caitanya Mahāprabhu was simply dancing and chanting. This was the specific contribution of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. But amongst the Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs*, dancing and singing is considered to be a sin. A *sannyāsī* is supposed to stop sense gratification, and according to them, that is also a kind of sense gratification. They took it to be ordinary singing. Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī asked Caitanya Mahāprabhu, “Why do You follow this sentimentalism, chanting and dancing.” Prakāśānanda said, “As far as I can see from Your bodily features You appear to be very glorious.” Because He was a boy and Prakāśānanda was very elderly—Caitanya Mahāprabhu was only twenty-four years old—he appreciated Him: “From Your face it appears that You are very learned, advanced and intelligent. Why, then, do You indulge in this sentimentalism?” This is a very important question for the *saṅkīrtana* movement, and the answer is very significant.

#### 99.9% FOOLS

Caitanya Mahāprabhu replied: “Yes, you are right, my dear Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī, but there is a reason why I do it. Now I can explain to you. When I took *sannyāsa* from My spiritual master, he found Me a rascal, a number one fool, and therefore he chastised Me. He called Me foolish, uneducated and illiterate. ‘It is not possible for You to understand *Vedānta*. Therefore, You simply chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare. That will make You all right.’ ” Now here is the point: Was Caitanya Mahāprabhu a foolish person? No, He was not. In His childhood He was known as Nimai Pandit. He was greatly learned; even when He was sixteen years old He defeated a very reputable scholar from Kasmere. Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī also knew that Caitanya Mahāprabhu was a teacher logic in His household life and was a very learned man. They all knew it. But Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, “My spiritual master found Me a fool. Therefore he said, ‘You have no chance to understand *Vedānta*. You just take to this principle: simply

chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare.’ ” What was His purpose in presenting Himself as a fool and a rascal? The idea is that in this age, 99.9% of the people are fools and rascals. Therefore it is very difficult for them to understand what is the purpose of *Vedānta*. Lord Caitanya represented Himself as one of them. According to Caitanya Mahāprabhu the so-called learned scholars of *Vedānta* are not actually *Vedānta* scholars; they are all fools. *Vedānta-sūtra* is very difficult to understand. The author of *Vedānta-sūtra* is Vyāsadeva, and he himself thought it wise to write a commentary on *Vedānta-sūtra* so that in the future people would not misunderstand and misuse it.

#### CHANTING

In this connection there is a speech delivered in Chicago by an impersonalist who was the first *svāmī* to come from India to preach Hindu philosophy. It is very surprising. Even a clergyman from this country was surprised. “You come from India, and you are decrying God in this way? I am surprised.” He has simply decried God: “Why do you care for God? Throw Him away. You are God.” In this way he has spoken. Caitanya Mahāprabhu knew 500 years ago that in the future all these rascals would misinterpret *Vedānta-sūtra*; therefore He presented Himself as a fool.

Since *Vedānta-sūtra* is not a very easy subject, Vyāsadeva explained *Vedānta-sūtra* in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The first aphorism of *Vedānta-sūtra* is *janmādyasya*. “Now is the time to understand what is Brahman, the Absolute Truth.” The next *sūtra* is: “What is Brahman?” The next answer is: “Brahman is that from which everything emanates.” Vyāsadeva gives a lucid explanation of the *janmādyasya* verse. We can consider this first aphorism of *Vedānta-sūtra*: “Brahman is that Absolute Truth from which everything emanates or everything is born.” (*Janma* means birth, *sthiti* means maintenance, and *pralaya* means dissolution.) This material world has a death to its existence, just as our body has a death. It stays for some time, and again there is death, dissolution. Consider the history of everything material—whether this body or this world or the empire or America. All have a death to their being. Now America is staying, but a day will come when there will be no more Americans. We should know it. That is nature’s law. Everything is born, it stays

for some time, and then there is dissolution and it dissolves. That is explained in *Bhagavad-gītā*. All these material manifestations are just like bubbles in the ocean. There are millions and millions of bubbles created in one second, and in the next second they are finished. This is the manifestation of the material creation, but behind this manifestation is spirit. That spirit is called Brahman.

Now what is the nature of that Brahman? Is it impersonal or personal? Vyāsadeva says that the Supreme Truth is cognizant; He knows. *Bhagavad-gītā* also confirms this. The Lord says, “I know everything.” Unless He is cognizant, unless behind this cosmic manifestation there is a brain, how could everything be regulated and timed so nicely? Everything is working, the planets are working—do you think that there is no brain behind it? There must be. Therefore *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* says, “Yes. He is cognizant. He is a person. He also educated Brahmā, who is considered to be the first created being in this universe. He impregnated Brahmā with the Vedic knowledge.” These are explanations of *Vedānta*. But there are so many foolish rascals who misinterpret the *Vedānta-sūtra* in different ways. Therefore Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu very cunningly said, “I am a great fool. Therefore My spiritual master chastised Me: ‘You rascal, you fool, You cannot understand *Vedānta-sūtra*! You had better take this *mantra*.’ ” In other words, at the present time the circumstances are so awkward that it is not possible to understand *Vedānta-sūtra*. If we indulge in *Vedānta-sūtra* it will be very difficult for us. Therefore Caitanya’s contribution is that we should just chant. That will make everything progressive.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu represented Himself as the chief of the fools and rascals: “My spiritual master ordered Me: ‘You had better chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. That will



make You happy and progressive and will help You one day understand what is *Vedānta*.” Now one may question, “By understanding *Vedānta-sūtra* one is liberated from this material entanglement, but you are asking me simply to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. Will that same purpose be served?” Lord Caitanya’s spiritual master said, “Yes, if You continue chanting this Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, there will be a day when You will come to the perfectional stage. Then You will be liberated. The same result that one gets by studying *Vedānta* philosophy or *sāṅkhya* philosophy can also be obtained simply by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa. Furthermore, the *Vedāntist* sometimes cannot attain the Kṛṣṇa planet. But Your advantage will be You will not only be liberated, but You will achieve the highest planetary kingdom—the kingdom of God.”

Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, “This Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa is the only universal religious principle in this age. No other religious process will be effective because

people in this age are distracted in so many different ways. This is the common formula, and it is the most effective. There is no alternative for self-realization in this age of Kali than to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. It is the essence of all scriptures. There are different hymns and *mantras*, but this is the topmost of all. Therefore My spiritual master asked Me to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.”

#### THE HIGHEST GOAL

Caitanya Mahāprabhu told Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī, “My spiritual master has given Me this chanting, and he has given Me one verse from authoritative Vedic literature and asked Me to always keep this verse within my throat and always chant it.” That verse is a quotation from the *Bṛhan-Nārādīya Purāṇa*. There are four *Vedas*, and as supplements to the *Vedas*, there are also eighteen *Purāṇas*. In one of the *Purāṇas*, which is called the *Bṛhan-Nārādīya Purāṇa*, this quotation is found: “*Harer nāma harer nāma harer namaiva kevalam/kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatir*

*anyathā*.” *Kalau* means this age of Kali, the age of disagreement, quarrel, misunderstanding, deceit, and diminished intelligence, mercy and life span. It is explicitly stated in *Bṛhan-Nārādīya Purāṇa* that in this age of Kali there is no other alternative, no other alternative to chanting the holy name. Thrice. When we want to stress a point we say it thrice: Do this! Do this! Do this! Similarly, in the *Bṛhan-Nārādīya Purāṇa*, it has been thrice emphasized that one must take to this *harer nāma*—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare. Why? Why must one take it? Because there is no other alternative than this for self-realization. If one at all wants to know himself, if one at all wants to become perfect, or if one at all wants to reach the goal of human life, then he must, he must, he must chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. “My spiritual master,” Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, “asked Me to keep this verse within My throat. ‘Go on chanting, and I give You my blessing that You will be liberated. Not only will You be liberated, but You will reach the highest goal—the abode of Kṛṣṇa.’”

END



“If you continue chanting this Hare Kṛṣṇa, there will be a day when you will come to the perfectional stage.”

# INTRODUCTION TO THE ALL-INDIA ISSUE

India has always been known as a holy land long before the advent of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who originated the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement 500 years ago. Lord Rāmacandra, who was the incarnation of the Supreme Lord in the role of the perfect king, actually walked on this land millions of years ago when it extended as the kingdom of the whole world. His activities are recounted in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, which is accepted by all transcendental authorities as authentic scripture. The most pious and learned devotees of the Lord have resided in India and taught there. The appearance of the incarnation of Lord Buddha was foretold in the First Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Chapter Three, verse 24, written 2,000 years before Buddha's birth: "In the beginning of the Kali-yuga, the Lord will appear as Lord Buddha, the son of Añjana, in the province of Gayā, for the purpose of deluding persons envious of the faithful theist." India is therefore the land where the religion of Buddhism sprang forth. For his special mission, Lord Buddha rejected the *Vedas*, and therefore the authority of the scriptures had to be reaffirmed. This was done by the great spiritual master Śāṅkarācārya, who drove Buddhism from the land of India by his brilliant explanations based on the Vedic literature. According to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* Lord Kṛṣṇa is Himself the source of all the incarnations. The self-same Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared in His original form, also on Indian soil, 5,000 years ago when He exhibited full-fledged activities as the Personality of Godhead in the provinces of Vṛndāvana and Mathurā. As it is said, God is great. The true vision of His pastimes and His greatness was then displayed to all living entities on this planet, and it is all recorded in the book *Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead*, by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda. It is even stated in a recent book called the Aquarian Gospel that Lord Jesus Christ, declared by the New Testament of the Holy Bible to be the son of God, also spent some time in India and worshiped in Jagannātha Purī. India is naturally pious, and throughout the villages of India the people still remain God conscious. But this present age is an impious age. It can be

checked only by dependence on the Lord and His devotees and by following the benediction of this age. The leaders of India have in recent history rejected the transcendental culture of the *Vedas*, which points out that everything is actually spiritual. This material world is simply temporary and is inherently miserable, due to birth, death, disease and old age. The human form of life is therefore meant for realizing God, even by working at one's occupation; the whole society has to aim at realization of God through its activities. Instead of following this path, called *varṇāśrama-dharma*, the Indians, influenced by the attraction of foreign city life, have rejected their original culture and tried to be happy by following the materialistic ways of the great countries of the West such as the United States. The danger in their rejecting this Kṛṣṇa consciousness while in the human form of life is expressed in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. One may slip down to the lower forms of life in the future births. We are all spiritual by nature, but we have become covered, like a mirror becomes covered by dust. Especially for this age, Lord Caitanya, the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa who is appearing as a devotee in order to teach, has given a very simple method. Everyone should chant the holy name of God, and everyone can do it in any position of life. He has especially stated that anyone born in India has the responsibility to take up this chanting and spread it, and He has quoted scripture to state that there is no alternative for spiritual realization in this age than chanting the holy name of God. It is therefore concluded that spiritual life is urgently needed, and this method should be taken. It is very easy and is being taught by Kṛṣṇa Himself, yet it has been rejected in India. By the line of disciplic succession, the Brahma-sampradāya has passed down this information; despite the corruption of the present age, it remains pure and intact. Since the incarnation of Lord Caitanya, the spiritual masters in this line are Rūpa Gosvāmī, Raghunātha, Jīva, Kṛṣṇadāsa, Narottama, Viśvanātha, Jagannātha, Bhaktivinode, Gaura Kiśora, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī and now His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda. Although the teachings are intact, unfortu-

nately the philosophers of the impersonal school have misinterpreted the Vedic philosophy to deny the existence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. They have given all attention to the impersonal aspect and thus have wreaked havoc. This is not a theoretical disagreement on theology, but it concerns all humanity. If there is no understanding that God is the Supreme Person, then people in general are led to believe that there is no God, or they are told that if there is any spiritual existence at all, then this implies that every man is God, and that he can do as he likes, without worshiping the supreme authority of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the impersonal philosophy of the Absolute Truth there is no ultimate love. There is no reason to stay on the spiritual platform; therefore intoxication and sex life enter and take over, and both the impersonalist teachers and their students glide to the hellish path. There are real spiritual individualities and spiritual activities according to the *Bhagavad-gītā*, but if one does not take to them then one must take to material individuality, which is temporary and leads to lower births. Seeking to become one with the Supreme in *nirvāṇa* is not a substitute for the permanent positive happiness which the spirit soul is seeking. One has to engage in spiritual life in service of the Supreme Lord under the direction of a spiritual master, or else he must return to the material platform. Thus it is stated that in order to wipe out impersonalism and to present an easy to perform process of devotional service to the people in this age, Lord Caitanya appeared. In *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa states, "Just surrender to Me," but Lord Caitanya was even more merciful. His movement is simply joyful. His program is listening to *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and feasting on *prasādam* (spiritual food). The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is not a Hindu or national culture, but it is the worship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead who is the father of all living entities. The attainment of the eternal, peaceful, happy state of loving service taught by Lord Caitanya can bring the solution to all the problems of life that has not been attained by technology, politics

or modern science. Śrīla Prabhupāda, on the order of his spiritual master, came to the United States in 1966 to teach this message. Due to Śrīla Prabhupāda's all-attractive transcendental nature as spiritual

master and due to the solid teachings of scriptures and the cleansing experience of chanting the *mahāmantra*, and eating *prasādam*, spiritual foodstuffs, this message quickly gained support. Temples began

opening here in the United States in 1966, and now, in 1970, with 50 temples open, when Śrīla Prabhupāda returned to India his reception was overwhelmingly favorable. END



Wherever the devotees went in India they were favorably received by great crowds.

## PRESS CONFERENCE IN SURAT

by Hamsadūta dāsa Adhikārī (World Saikīrtana Party)

On December 16, 1970, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda arrived in Surat at 6:00 A.M., accompanied by twenty-five of his American, European and Japanese disciples. They observed fasting until noon to celebrate the Disappearance Day of His Divine Grace's spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī. Vaiṣṇavas, or devotees of Kṛṣṇa, take every opportunity to glorify the Lord's representatives, the blessed spiritual masters, who can implant love of God in everyone's heart. In the spiritual world there is no difference between appearance and disappearance because spirit soul is transcendental to birth and death. The spiritual master is considered to be descending from the spiritual world, and therefore like Kṛṣṇa's, his appearance and disappearance are transcendental and glorious. This is confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (8.6): "One who knows the transcendental nature of My appearance and disappearance and activities does not, upon leaving the body, take his birth again in this material world, but attains My abode." In this way the Vaiṣṇavas actually fulfill the ultimate goal of human life, to return home, back to Godhead, which was explained by Śrīla Prabhupāda later in the day to a crowd of reporters at a press conference arranged by Mr. Jariwala, our host in Surat.

Instead of the reporters' asking questions, Śrīla Prabhupāda immediately captured the attention of all parties by asking, "What is the ultimate goal of life?" Everyone had something to say on this point, but no one could respond conclusively. Śrīla Prabhupāda explained, "The members of society should engage their lives, money, intelligence and words in *śrīya*. So what is *śrīya*? *Śrīya* means the ultimate goal of life. What is the ultimate goal of life that no one knows? In the *Bhagavad-gītā* it is said by Kṛṣṇa that the ultimate goal of life is to surrender to Him only. 'Give up all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me, and in return I shall protect you from all sinful reactions. Therefore you have nothing to fear.'" Śrīla Prabhupāda continued, "For that purpose



"Śrīla Prabhupāda asked the reporters, 'What is the ultimate goal of life?'"

we have formed this International Society for Krishna Consciousness—to enlighten the people in general about the ultimate goal of life. This movement is being accepted in the Western world and in India, yet nowadays Indians are erroneously thinking that the goal of life is something else.

"*Vedānta* answers what is the Absolute Truth and what is the nature of the greatest, of Brahman. His nature is that He is the cause of everything, the cause of all causes. In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* we find: *īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ*, and with that understanding we have published our booklet, *The Cause of All Causes*. Kṛṣṇa imparted the Vedic knowledge unto the heart of Brahmājī, the first created living being in this material world. Brahmā is the chief engineer of the material universe, and for his work of creating different planets and living entities he is specifically empowered by the Lord. Brahmā admits that although he is so advanced in knowledge, still it should be understood that he is not independent. His position is stated in the hymns of

*Brahma-saṁhitā*, where he sings: '*Cintāmaṇi-prakara-sadmasu kalpa-vṛkṣa-lakṣāvṛteṣu . . . govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi.*' He says, 'I worship Govinda, the cowherd boy, who is in His own abode in the spiritual world, which is made of *cintāmaṇi*, or touchstone, and is known as Goloka Vṛndāvana, the supermost planet

in the spiritual sky. There the Supreme Lord, the Absolute Truth, is playing on His flute and wears a peacock feather in His hair.' This transcendental Vedic knowledge was received by Brahmājī from the Lord, and thus Brahmā is the first disciple in the *Guru-Paramparā*, or authorized disciplic succession for distribution of Vedic knowledge. This line is known as Brahma-Gauḍīya-Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya. Brahmā is the original initiator, Gauḍīya designates Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu's birthplace, the province of Gauḍa, and Vaiṣṇava means one who worships Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu."

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda asked the reporters to ventilate the message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in their newspapers, thus engaging the newspapers in the service of Kṛṣṇa. This is the qualification of the *ācārya*; he adjusts the transcendental message so that anything in any particular time and place can be transformed to spiritual energy by being utilizing in the service of the Supreme Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Thus the

ultimate goal of life can be realized by the mercy of a pure devotee or fully realized soul, such as His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

Śrīla Prabhupāda continued the press conference by explaining the process of attaining this ultimate goal of life. He said, "A person should engage his life,

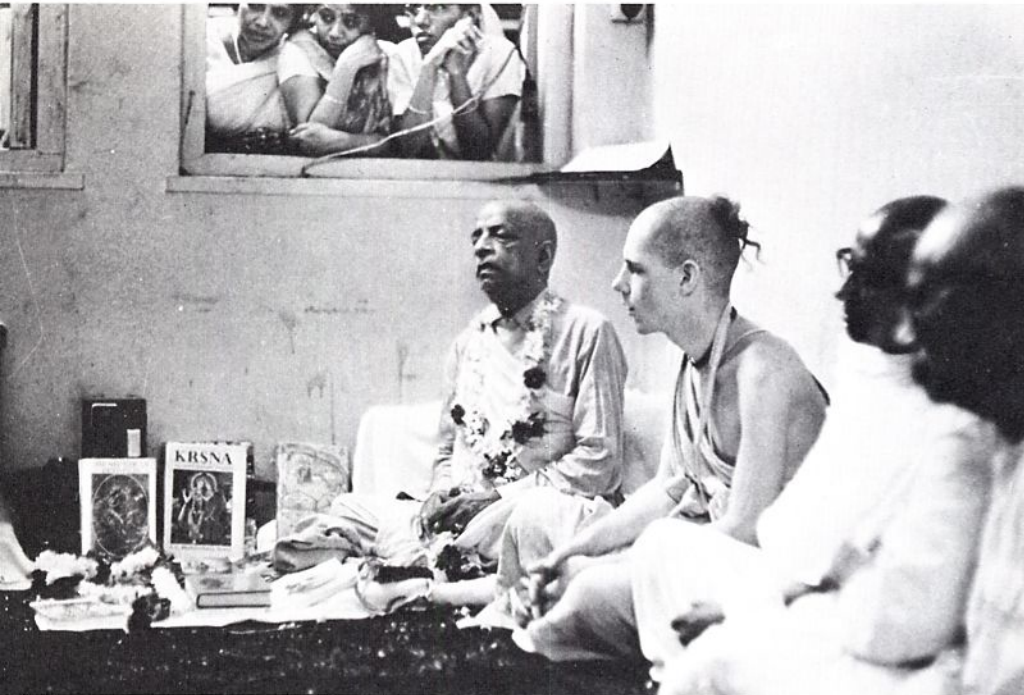
Kṛṣṇa is the absolute whole, and in *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa claims all living entities as His eternal parts and parcels. If a screw is in its rightful place on the machine, then it has value; but the same screw, separated from the machine, no longer has value. So society at the present moment has no value. Its purpose is not

surrender unto Me; that is the ultimate goal of life. After many, many births the wise man surrenders unto Me, Vāsudeva [Kṛṣṇa], knowing Me to be everything.' So why wait? Immediately surrender unto Kṛṣṇa and achieve the ultimate goal of life.

"These boys and girls are not satisfied with material life. For example, you can not take a fish out of water and satisfy it by laying it down on a velvet cloth. Similarly the living entity cannot be satisfied in the material atmosphere. He is meant to enjoy eternal life in an atmosphere of pure devotional service to the Lord. This is his eternal position."

Some of the reporters asked about Christianity. One of Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples answered, "Christ taught to love God. So we are learning to love God. Do not look for awkward formalities; just try and see the result. These boys and girls are loving God. The effectiveness of any religion one practices is proved by the result: love of God." Śrīla Prabhupāda explained that if by one's religious practice one develops love for God, then it is perfect religion, otherwise it is useless labor.

The Indian reporter asked why Americans and Europeans are becoming Hindus. Śrīla Prabhupāda said, "Kṛṣṇa is not Hindu—you won't find the word Hindu anywhere in Vedic literature. This Hindu is another material designation. Kṛṣṇa is for everyone—if He's God then He's for everyone." Once at another meeting in Indore, when Śrīla Prabhupāda was asked what is his special contribution as *ācārya* of such a great movement, Śrīla Prabhupāda replied, "I am showing that Kṛṣṇa is for everyone." Although it is common sense that God cannot be nationalized or designated in any material way, the conditioned souls cannot understand God, despite His personal appearance from time to time. Therefore in *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa gives a warning to such foolish men. He says, "The foolish mock at My descending like a human being. They think that I have assumed this form and personality; they do not know My transcendental nature and My supreme dominion over all that be." Although Kṛṣṇa appears Himself and speaks instructions to human society in the shape of *Bhagavad-gītā*, He also distributes Himself as the Paramātmā or Supersoul sitting in the heart of every living creature. Furthermore, He sends His bona fide representative in the form of the spiritual master just to guide the conditioned souls back to their original con-



"Śrīla Prabhupāda replied, 'I am showing that Kṛṣṇa is for everyone.'"

wealth, intelligence and words in the service of this sublime *saṅkīrtana* movement, which is authorized by revealed scripture and initiated by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is Kṛṣṇa Himself." He explained that, if nothing else, they all can engage their words for Kṛṣṇa: "If Kṛṣṇa says, 'Surrender unto Me,' and I say surrender unto Kṛṣṇa, then I am a spiritual master. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa says, 'Whoever explains this supreme secret to the devotees, I consider to be most dear to Me, and never will there be anyone more dear to Me in this world than he.' So if you newspapermen serve the purpose of Kṛṣṇa, you become devotees immediately. But if you say that it is not to Kṛṣṇa that we have to surrender, then it is nonsense. We can continue our present occupations with the addition of doing our work for Kṛṣṇa. This will be our great success."

In this way Śrīla Prabhupāda explained that anyone in any position or occupation can advance in spiritual life and go back home, back to Godhead, realizing the ultimate goal of life.

Kṛṣṇa; therefore we are all suffering. Just as a flower attached to the tree remains beautiful and fragrant, but detach the flower from the tree and immediately it dries up. Modern society, detached from the tree of Kṛṣṇa, is like a dried flower. This movement started by Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu is meant to revive the lost consciousness of one's eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa and thus enable one to realize the real fruit of human life—love of God.

"The inner urge is happiness," replied Prabhupāda to a question put by one of the reporters. "But we do not know how to attain that happiness. If you understand that Kṛṣṇa is the only enjoyer, then your inner urge for happiness can be satisfied. We want to love, but we do not know whom to love. We learn that from the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana; their only business was to love Kṛṣṇa. The students of this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement are Japanese, German, American, French, but in Kṛṣṇa consciousness they have become one. That oneness can be attained when one agrees to serve Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa says, 'Give up all other engagements and just



sciousness. Śrīla Prabhupāda is delivering Kṛṣṇa to the entire world, whereas formerly it was misconceived that Kṛṣṇa is only for the Hindus. "Just see these boys and girls—Japanese, German, American, French and English. Do you think they are interested in being Hindus? No! They understand that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord, the

father of everyone, and they have surrendered everything for His service. Therefore they are realizing the ultimate goal of life—love of God," added Śrīla Prabhupāda.

At Indore His Divine Grace delivered a lecture to the members of the Lions Club. At one point he bluntly told the audience, "In three years I accomplished

one hundred times more than all the *svāmīs* and *yogīs* who have come to the West in the past century." This is a fact. Since Śrīla Prabhupāda has come to the west in 1965, he has published over fifteen books, including *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Teachings of Lord Caitanya* and *Nectar of Devotion*.



"Japanese, German, American, French, English. Do you think they are interested in being Hindus? No! They understand Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord, the father of everyone, and they have surrendered everything for His service."

His most recent gift to the world is *Kṛṣṇa, The Supreme Personality of Godhead*, in two volumes, profusely illustrated by his disciples, showing the transcendental pastimes of the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa and His transcendental brother Balarāma. His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda has opened more than forty-five branches of ISKCON in countries like Japan, Germany, Australia, Fiji, Canada, the United States and South America. He has created thousands of

Kṛṣṇa devotees just by teaching them the message that Caitanya Mahāprabhu delivered 500 years back: "Simply chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, and your life will be sublime." His Divine Grace was asked why he went abroad to preach Caitanya's message of *Nāma-saṅkīrtana*, chanting of the holy name: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Rāma. He immediately replied, "Because you accept everything foreign. If it is made in England you think, 'Oh! It is very good.' I thought

that since everyone is following the Americans, if I can convince some American boys and girls about the importance of this movement then the whole world will follow and you will take it. And it is working. This is why you have come to see me—because I have brought so many foreign-made disciples." Everyone laughed, but it is a fact. Hundreds and thousands of people flock to see His Divine Grace and his disciples wher-

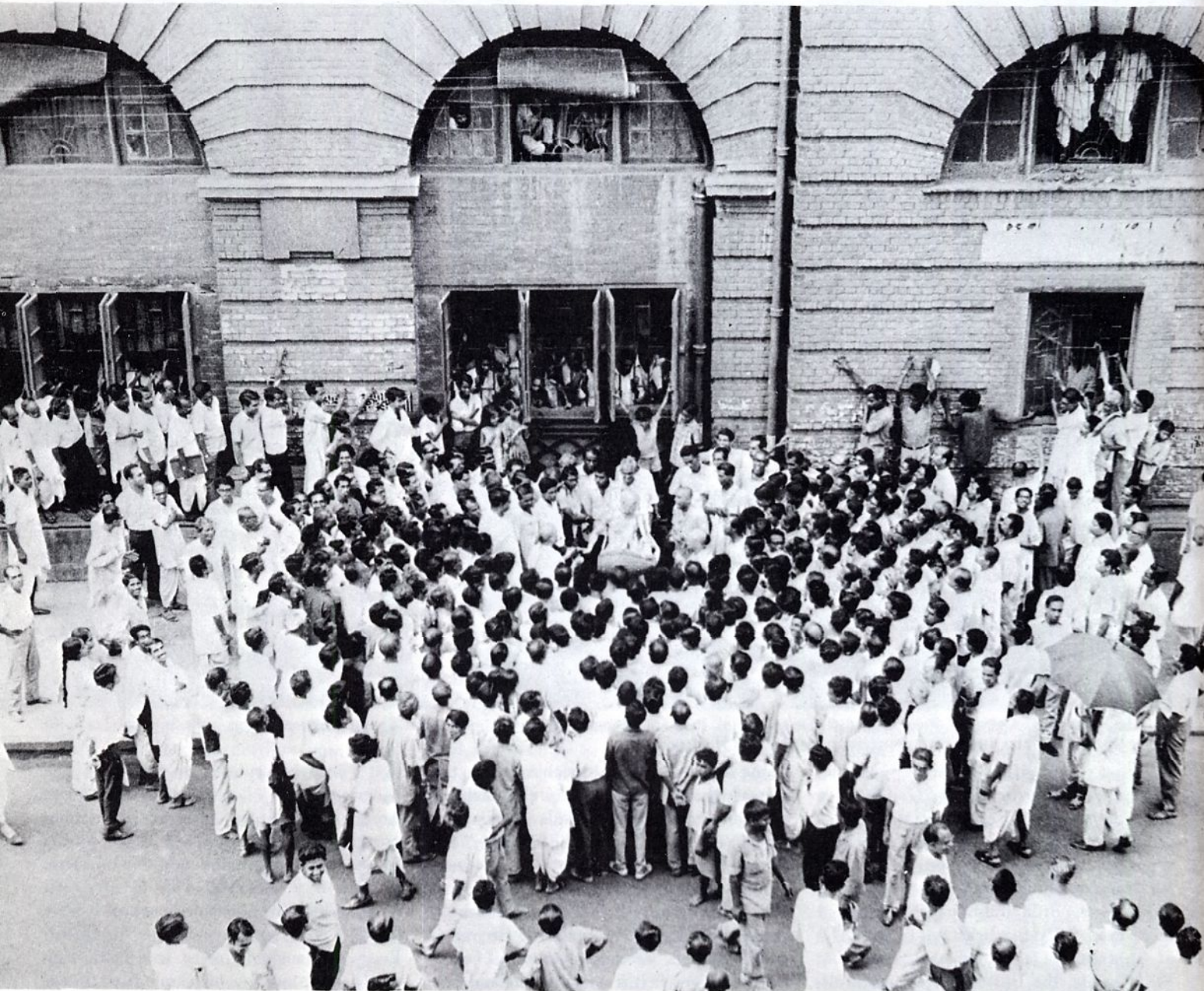
ever they go. Śrīla Prabhupāda calls his devotees “Kṛṣṇītes,” and he is personally leading his party of foreign devotees all over the world just to show how this process of chanting the holy names and dancing is universally practical.

Without rendering service to the supreme truth, the Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, it is not possible to have a taste of that sweet transcendental nectar our souls are seeking. The example is given of a hand that does not serve the stomach. The hand cannot succeed by artificially attempting to eat independently, just as a tree will not be nourished if water is poured only on the leaves and branches.

The process is for the hand to give food to the stomach and for the tree to be watered at the root. By this process the natural energy is automatically distributed to all the parts of the whole. Similarly the living entity is eternally part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa, the supreme whole. A society devoid of devotional service to the Lord is not society at all. Rather, it is animal life. Human life is not meant to be spoiled by indulging only in the animal propensities of eating, sleeping, mating and defending. Human life requires giving our energy to the root cause of all existence, Kṛṣṇa, and one can thereby realize the real goal of human life—love of God.

Thus one gets free from the miserable conditions of birth, old age, disease, and death. Kṛṣṇa says, “Always think of Me, give your love to Me, bow down to Me, worship Me, and surely you will come to Me.” Here is the real program for the human society—to go back home, back to Godhead. With the purpose of taking everyone back home, His Divine Grace, by his causeless mercy, placed the following advertisement in the local Indore newspaper: “Wanted: Qualified *brāhmaṇas* to preach *Bhagavad-gītā* all over the world. Educated candidates accepted without discrimination of caste, color or creed. Apply ISKCON.”

END



*Saṅkīrtana* in Dalhousie Square, downtown Calcutta. Indians are curious at the American devotees' fervor.

# KṚṢṆITES TEACH THE REAL VEDIC CULTURE TO INDIA

The tour of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda throughout India attracted much daily news coverage, and many major magazines ran features about Śrīla Prabhupāda and his foreign disciples. The *Times Weekly* of Bombay published a long front-cover article in November, 1970, describing a 10,000 strong crowd who attended a meeting at which Śrīla Prabhupāda spoke and where he induced everyone in the huge crowd

including policemen and pressmen to join in chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. There were subsequent letters to the newspaper on the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. One man wrote in a letter, "As far as my knowledge goes, these foreign Hindus of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement cannot be equal to the native original *brāhmanas* and Hindus. They will have to be relegated to the lower castes. It is significant to see one of the newly converted *sādhus*, Śrī Gopāla dāsa,

formerly Charles Polan of Chicago, stated that he was a construction worker formerly. Doing *sūdras'* work, it would thus become necessary to allot the three lower castes to these foreign converts according to their profession." In another letter, an Indian gentleman wrote: "The Hare Kṛṣṇa movement is just a sporadic fad of sentimentalists." In order to rectify the misinformation of statements of this sort, answering letters were written by the disciples of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, which were duly published in the *Times*. The letters are published here in their entirety.

Letter by Śyāmasundara dāsa Adhikārī (ISKCON—Bombay)

Since the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement devotees have come to India, many kinds of discussions have taken place amongst various types of readers. I, the undersigned, one of the members of the Governing Body, wish to clear up the situation for public understanding.

This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is not some manufactured ideology, as is the fashion of the modern age. This movement is based on the philosophy of *Bhagavad-gītā*. If we accept *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is, then this movement has been in existence since the time of Manu, which is calculated at not less than 400,000,000 years ago. Vaivasvata Manu, or the son of the sun-god Vivasvān, is the present Manu. Also, from the historical point of view, the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is current since the last 5,000 years; that is to say, when Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke this philosophy on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra. As such, this movement is not for any particular sect—Hindu, Muslim, Christian, etc.—but is meant for all living entities, including the animals.

As the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa claims that He is the original father of all species of living entities (Bg. 14.4). If God is not the father of all living entities, how can he be God? And because Kṛṣṇa claims to be so, He is God. So Kṛṣṇa consciousness means God consciousness. Any religion of the civilized world has a connection with God consciousness, with God realization, and according to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, any religion which teaches how to love God is first class. It does not matter what religion one may follow, but if he has developed God consciousness, he is to be considered a follower of a first class religion. Actually this

Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is a post-graduate religious institution wherein one can practically learn how to love God or Kṛṣṇa. When we speak of Kṛṣṇa we speak of God.

God has many thousands of names according to the realization of the God conscious person. Out of these thousands of names, the word Kṛṣṇa is the primal name according to Vedic scripture because in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* compiled by Lord Brahmā it is said: *īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ*. This statement that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord is also supported in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.3.28): *kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*.

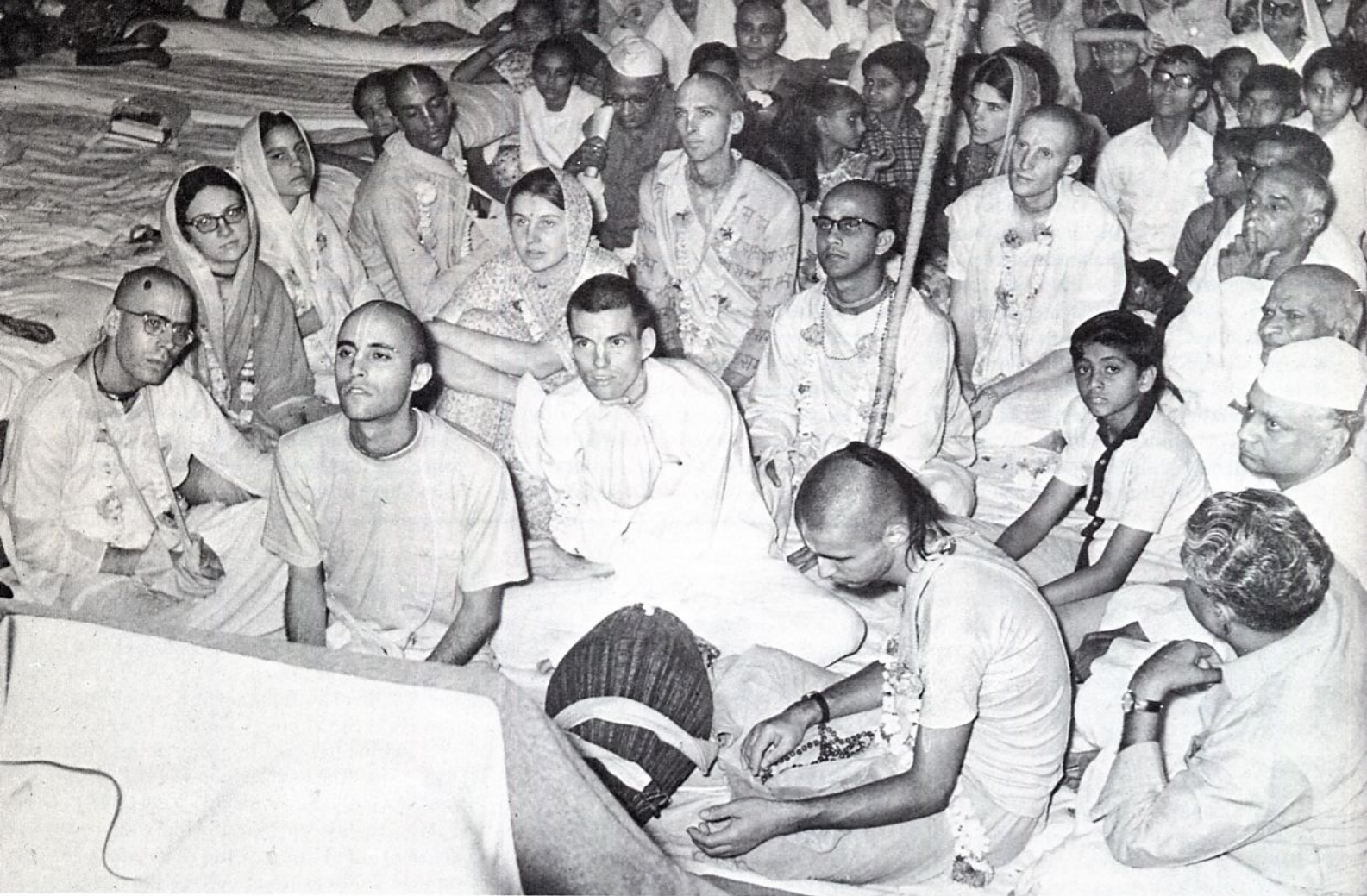
The meaning of the word Kṛṣṇa is "all-attractive." When Kṛṣṇa was present on this planet, He exhibited His all-attractive features, namely wealth, power, influence, beauty, knowledge and renunciation. These six items are called opulence or *bhaga*. Anyone who possesses these six items completely is called *bhagavān*. *Vān* means one who possesses. So these two words *bhaga* and *vān* combined indicate *Bhagavān*, or God. No one can compete with God in the matter of possessing the above six opulences. Lord Kṛṣṇa proved while He was present on this planet that no one in the history of the world has been able to compete with Him in this respect. We can find many men who possess some of these six opulences in some limited capacity, but no one has possessed all these six opulences completely in the history of the world. Thus from historical point of view also, no one has equalled or excelled Kṛṣṇa.

God is one; there cannot be two Gods. And that one God is great. How can one be great? By possessing these six opulences

completely. Because Kṛṣṇa has this qualification, therefore He is God. Everyone has these six opulences in small quantity, so they can be called small gods. But no one has them in full except Kṛṣṇa. Therefore He is the Supreme God. In *Bhagavad-gītā*, Arjuna has said this very thing while addressing Kṛṣṇa: "No one is equal to or greater than Your Lordship." (Bg. 11.43)

Modern history cannot supply any evidence of the religion of the civilized world prior to 3,000 years ago. From the historical point of view, the Buddhist religion is calculated to be 2,600 years old, the Christian religion is 2,000 years old, the Mohammedan religion is still more recent, but no one can say how old is *sanātana-dharma* because *sanātana-dharma* has no beginning and no end, just as God has no beginning and no end. Similarly the living entity has no beginning or end. In *Bhagavad-gītā* it is said, *na jāyate mriyate vā*: The living entity does not take birth or die. (Bg. 2.20) So the living entity is eternal, as God is eternal, and the relationship between God and the living entity is also eternal.

Lord Caitanya says that the eternal relationship is that God is supreme and the living entities are His eternal servants. This is also confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā* (Bg. 15.7): *mamaivāṁśo jīva-loke jīva-bhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ*. The living entities are parts and parcels of God, or Kṛṣṇa. Therefore it is the duty of all living entities to render service in love to the Supreme Person. The living entities who are struggling very hard in this material world are actually always in threefold miserable conditions of life. Thus, they are transmigrating from one body to another and from one planet to another. This is the material-



When Śrīla Prabhupāda speaks . . .

ly diseased condition of the living entity. But by developing Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one can go back home, back to Godhead, to attain to eternal life, all bliss and full knowledge.

Therefore this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is meant for everyone, especially for the civilized human being. Instead of trying to understand this movement by mental concoction, one should try to understand the philosophy which we are presenting in different books in the English language, such as *Kṛṣṇa, The Supreme Personality of Godhead*; *The Nectar of Devotion*; *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*; *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (12 cantos); *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*; *The Teachings of Lord Caitanya* and so many others.

According to the authority of *Bhagavad-gītā*, all the American, European, Canadian, Australian and Japanese boys and girls who are accepting this cult belong to the topmost *brāhmaṇa* class. According to *Bhagavad-gītā* there is no caste system by birth. This is confirmed in various other Vedic literatures. The stress is given to the quality and practical life. The *brahminical* regulative principles are as follows:

no meat-eating, no illicit sex life, no intoxicants, including coffee, tea, pan and cigarettes, and no gambling. These American and foreign devotees are strictly following these four regulative principles. Twenty-four hours daily they chant the

*mahāmantra*: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. They worship the Deity of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa according to Vaiṣṇava formulas. Whether the Indian *brāhmaṇas* will accept them as

Food offered before the altar of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Deities.





Indians reach eagerly for *prasādam* (spiritual food) distributed by Śyāmasundara dāsa, an American disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda's. *photo by John Griesser*

*brāhmaṇas* or not does not matter. In India even amongst the *brāhmaṇas* in different provinces there is no social intercourse.

So if they are socially accepted or not doesn't matter. For example, amongst

the qualified legal practitioners in different provinces there may not be social intercourse, but that does not mean they are not qualified lawyers. This a cultural movement, and if the whole world accepts this cult, even though Indian *brāhmaṇas*

do not accept, it will do no harm at all. The tendency now is generally that even without changing their status as Hindus, Muslim, etc., people are having a social intercourse with others. The religious or national bar does not hamper social intercourse. We are not striving for social or political unity, but if Kṛṣṇa consciousness is accepted there will automatically be political, social and religious unity.

This has been proved already. The disciples are from many walks of life but are one in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The fact that one of our boys was a construction worker does not mean that he belongs to the *śūdra* community. The *śūdra* community is the less intelligent class or illiterate class who have no information of the value of life. In America even the highest cultured and educated person can go to work as an ordinary construction worker because they accept the dignity of labor. So although a boy was working as a construction worker in America, he is not a *śūdra*.

But even if he is accepted as a *śūdra*, Lord Kṛṣṇa says that anyone who comes to Him is eligible to be elevated to the highest position of going back home, back

Śrīla Prabhupāda holds lecture and chanting before a large school assembly.



to Godhead (Bg. 9.32). This movement is not dependent upon Indian conceptions of *śūdra* or *brāhmaṇa*; everyone who takes to Kṛṣṇa consciousness becomes more than a *brāhmaṇa* by quality and action. *Bhagavad-gītā* is spoken for the welfare of everyone, even for people of lower classes than the *śūdras*, so anyone is welcome to accept the principles of *Bhagavad-gītā*. That is our movement. We welcome any inquiries in this regard from people in general and shall be glad to reply to all questions in this connection.

How the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* can purify a devotee is like this: Kṛṣṇa, or God, is Absolute Truth. In the relative world there is a difference between the name and the object. For example, if one is thirsty, the object is water. The name "water," being different from the substance, cannot satisfy one's thirst. But in the spiritual world, everything is absolute or spiritual. There is no difference between the object and the name. In the spiritual world the Lord, His name, His form, His quality, His associates—everything—is spiritual, as good as the Lord. Therefore when the holy name of Kṛṣṇa is vibrated by the devotee, the devotee is associating with Kṛṣṇa, and thus one can constantly associate with Kṛṣṇa by chanting the *mahāmantra*: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. One is purified simply by such association. It is like this: If one puts an iron rod in fire it becomes warmer, warmer, at last red hot; it is fire, although superficially one can see that it is an iron rod. So a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa, simply by chanting His holy name, becomes gradually spiritualized. At that time he acts only spiritually. There is no longer any material activity. The devotees are not even interested in drinking coffee or tea, smoking cigarettes, or going to the cinema, what to speak of gambling and so many other distractions. For example these American and European boys were so addicted to material activities three or four years ago, but at present they have no other interests but Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And this has been possible only by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahāmantra*: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

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Letter by Girirāja dāsa Brahmācārī

(ISKCON—Bombay)

As a member of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness and a



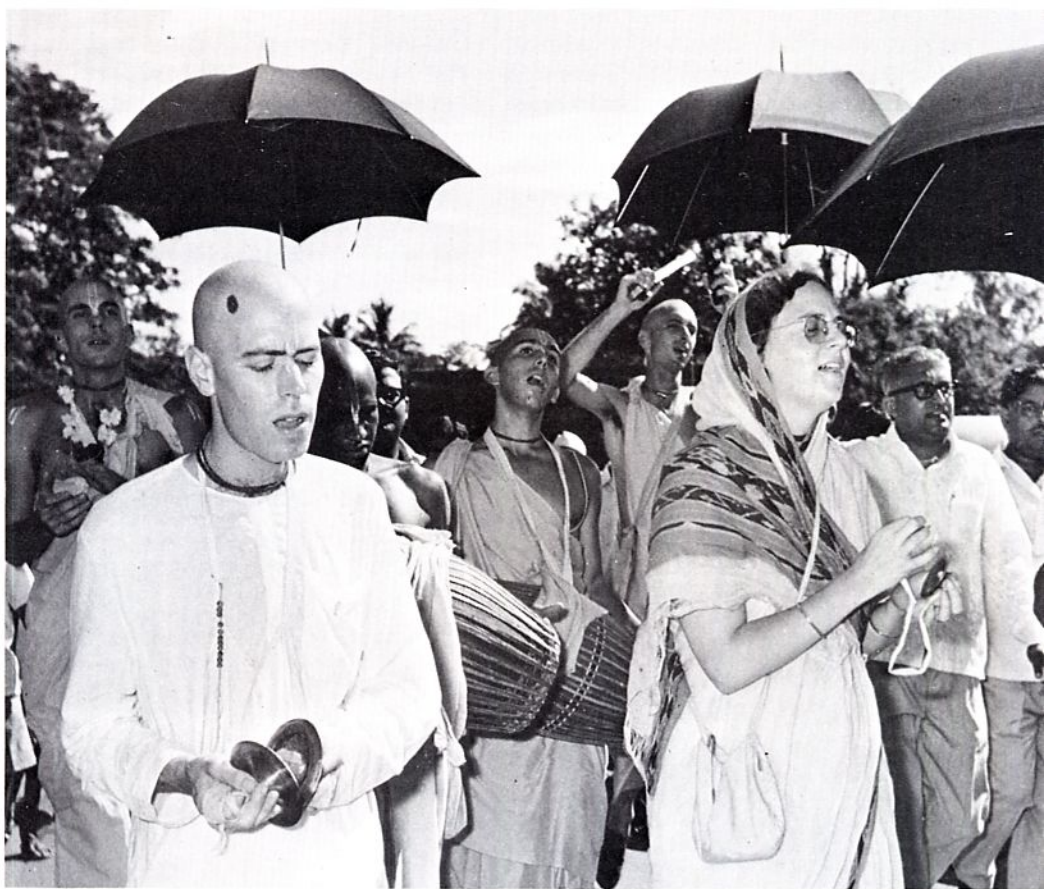
In some instances, whole villages turned out and joined the chanting parties.

student of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, I wish to reply to several letters which have appeared concerning our Hare Kṛṣṇa movement and the work of our spiritual master.

The main point is that our Society is teaching, "here is God," and some people do not like that. Generally people are trying to kill God, to push Him out of the picture. But we are advertizing for God: "Here is Kṛṣṇa." Therefore persons who are envious of God, who want to be God, become our enemies. They see that we are publishing books, acquiring property and gaining members, and they find fault. But our movement is authorized, scientific and practical, and it will continue to grow no matter how many speculators raise arguments against us.

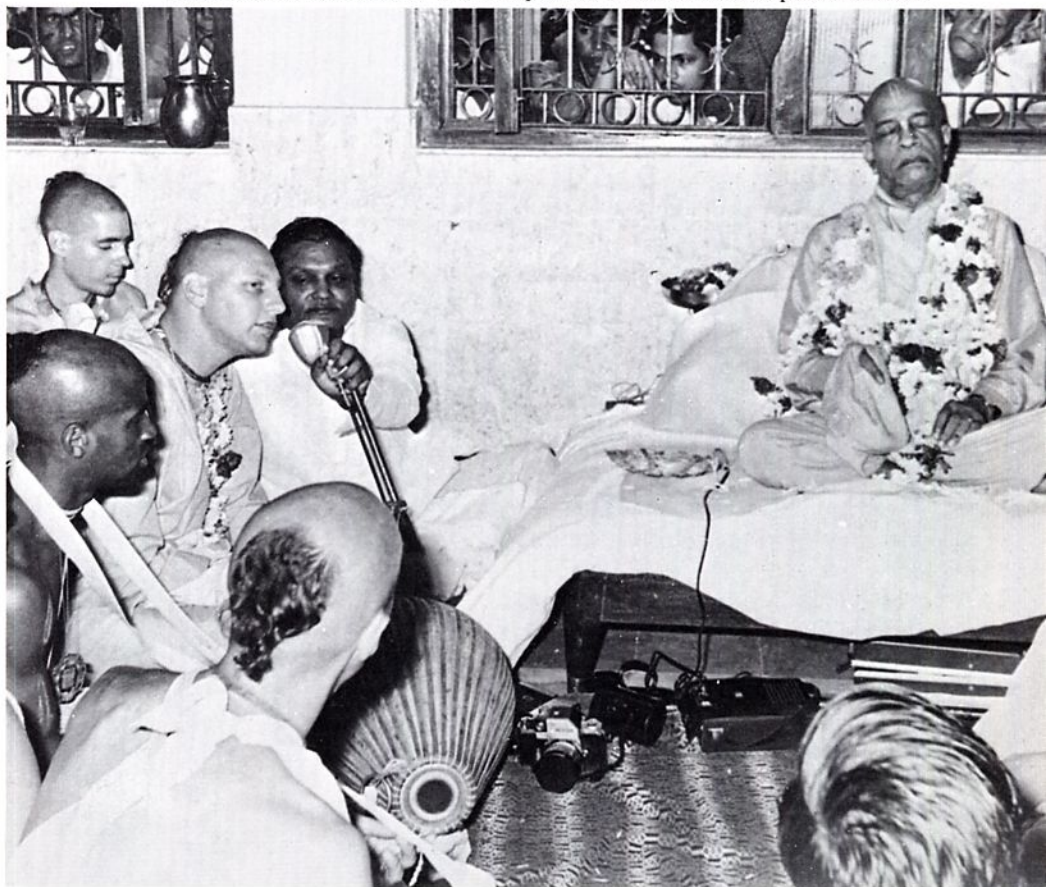
In His instructions in the *Gītā Śrī Kṛṣṇa* authorizes devotional service to the Lord as the only way to realize God, and He demonstrates how to practice devotional service in this age in His incarnation of Lord Caitanya. According to *Bhāgavatam*, "the path of religion is directly enuciated by the Lord" and is passed on through the *paramparā* chain of spiritual masters, from Kṛṣṇa, Brahmā, Nārada, and Vyāsa on through Lord Caitanya, Rūpa Gosvāmī, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, and now His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and is therefore the supreme authority on religion. As the present *ācārya* of the Gauḍīya-Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya, His Divine Grace is simply passing on the perfect teachings of his predecessors, without change or interpretation, save that he is now making these teachings available to the whole world. This eternal science of Kṛṣṇa or God is universal and nonsectarian and has nothing to do with any of the faiths that have some historical beginning or end. Kṛṣṇa is God; God is God; He is not "Hindu" or any other faith.

Similarly the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the scientific process for realizing God in this age of quarrel; it is not a sentimental pastime, as has been suggested. Lord Caitanya was the greatest scholar in India, and He converted many Māyāvādīs and *jñānīs* to His cult of *bhakti* by logical argument and scriptural reference. He cited evidence in the *Bṛhan-Nāradya-Purāṇa* that "in this age of Kali the only way to realize God is to chant the holy name of God," and the *Nārada-pañcarātra*, that "all Vedic *mantras*, rituals and understanding are compressed into



"When the holy name is vibrated by the devotee, the devotee is associating with Kṛṣṇa."

Student Guru dāsa Adhikārī answers questions on behalf of the spiritual master.



eight words—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare.” While chanting is a practical way for everyone to reach God, for those who are so inclined there is vast philosophical literature, and His Divine Grace is now making this transcendental knowledge available to the world and has translated fifteen big books into English already.

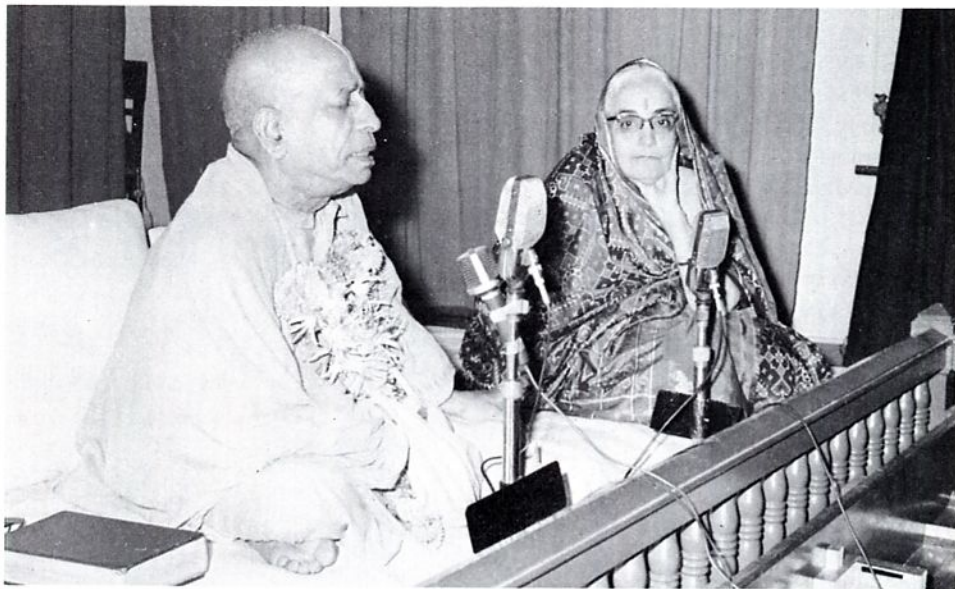
Lord Caitanya also taught that one is a *brāhmaṇa* by qualification, not by birth, as has been suggested. In *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa states: “Peacefulness, self-control, austerity, pruity, tolerance, honesty, wisdom, knowledge, and religiousness—these are the qualities by which the *brāhmaṇas* work.” Rūpa Gosvāmī further cites the *Padma Purāna*: “Everyone has the right to exectue devotional service, just as he has the right to take early bath. . . Lower caste people who are considered less than *sūdras* are also initiated into the Vaiṣṇava cult. . . They surpass the ordinary *brāhmaṇas*.” Actually the Vaiṣṇava, who is transcendental, is better than a *brāhmaṇa*, who may be conditioned by goodness. But we accept the proposal of Lord Caitanya: “I am neither Hindu, nor *brāhmaṇa*, nor *sannyāsī*—I am the servant of the servant of the servant of God.”

We are Vaiṣṇavas because we act like Vaiṣṇavas, not because we have taken to wearing saris and churning butter. We are very serious in our endeavor; this is not a sporadic fad of sentimentalists, as has been suggested. How can our movement be sporadic when this science was taught in the *Gītā* five thousand years ago and instructed to the sun-god millions of years before that? How can it be called sporadic when our activity is *sanātana-dharma*, the eternal occupation of the living entity? Would faddists give up all meat-eating, intoxicants, illicit sex and gambling for over five years now? Would faddists give up friends, family and money and get up at 4:00 A.M. daily, ready to go to any country in the world and preach in any conditions immediately on the request of their spiritual master?

To become a devotee of the Lord is a rare thing, and everyone knows that there will never be a problem of too many people taking to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Actually there can be no scarcity in God’s creation: the only scarcity can be Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Therefore we urge people to change their consciousness, not their occupations. In our ISKCON communities we are following the teachings of Lord

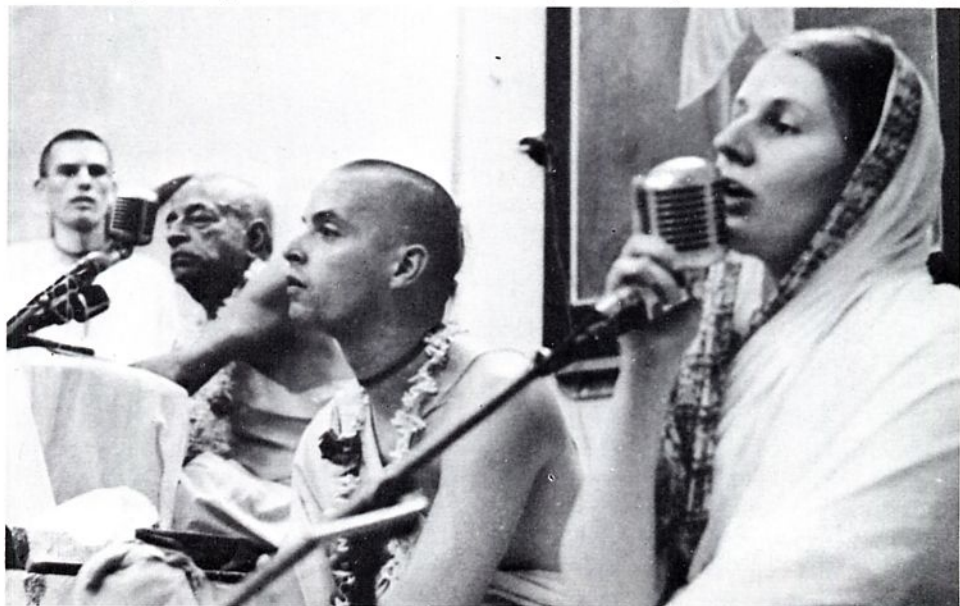
Caitanya practically both individually and collectively, and we are being satisfied spiritually and materially. We are working, each person according to his natural capacity, for the pleasure of the Supreme Lord. Thus some are running our printing presses and some teaching university courses in Kṛṣṇa consciousness; some are operating an ideal farm community modeled after Vṛndāvana and sheltering hundreds of cows in the U.S.A., while others are preparing the Kṛṣṇa *prasādam* we serve to thousands of persons daily; some are on *saṅkīrtana* and circulating 500,000 *Back to Godhead* magazines per month in six languages, and still

others are maintaining our fifty centers with Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Deity worship all over the world. Actually we are working harder than anyone, but because we are working for Kṛṣṇa, and not *māyā*, our work is joyful and free from anxiety. Thousands of new Vaiṣṇavas, who are considered already liberated, are doing the work of India, which is to present the gift of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and thereby save the world from gliding to hell. Not only can everyone do this, but they must do it. For this reason we are traveling to all countries of the world and begging all people to revive their love of God and sing the glories of His name. END



Śrīla Prabhupāda with leading Indian industrialist Śrīmatī Sumati Morarji, whose Scindia Steamship Lines first financed Śrīla Prabhupāda’s journey to the U.S.A. in 1965.

Śrīmatī Haimavatī devī dāsī, initiated disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s, lecturing to women present at one of the large meetings in India. l to r—Hamsadūta dāsa, Śrīla Prabhupāda and Kīrtanānanda Svāmī.





# KṚṢṆA RETURNS TO INDIA

by Girirāja dāsa Brahmācārī (ISKCON-Bombay)

When the Hare Kṛṣṇa chanters first appeared in America five years ago, Americans were surprised. Dressed in "Indian" *dhotis* and *saris* and chanting "Hindu" chants in Sanskrit, they were a novelty, but when they braved the winter snow and freezing temperatures to perform their *saṅkīrtana*, people had to take them seriously.

Now it is time for the Indians to be surprised. For the first time in many years, Indians in the downtown sectors of her major cities are seeing this same performance of *saṅkīrtana*, as taught and popularized by Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who advented Himself in India, in West Bengal, 480 years ago. Yet instead of seeing Indians chanting, as one would expect in India, the Indians are astonished to see that the chanters are actually Americans and Europeans, dressed in the traditional garb of Indian *sādhus* or holymen. These American and European devotees are following the Vedic system even more strictly than the Indians. By dint of the determination and eagerness to chant the Lord's praises, Indians are beginning to understand the purpose of their chanting. No longer are the devotees viewed as curiosities or public entertainment, as they were taken to be when first appearing in the West. The serious purpose of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is a wonderful and welcome surprise to all.

These surprises are the mercy of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who came to America five years ago from India and just recently has returned to India from the West. As *ācārya* or teacher for this modern age and founder of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), Śrīla Prabhupāda has been spreading the prime benediction for humanity—Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* movement—to peoples of all countries. As a pure devotee of the Lord, he is taken as His personal representative on this planet. He enjoys the direct association of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and due to his transcendental position, is a constant source of surprise.

Śrīla Prabhupāda has surprised the world with all his God-centered activities. The pure devotee shares in the qualities of Godhead, and therefore His Divine Grace

is *acintya*, inconceivable, just like Kṛṣṇa. His actions cannot be predicted. At the same time he is *acyuta*, infallible, for the pure devotee shares in none of the defects of the ordinary conditioned soul. The surprises provided by Śrīla Prabhupāda are actually the surprises of the Supreme

Personality of Godhead for whom Śrīla Prabhupāda is the most confidential sērvitor and instrument. These surprises have actually been predicted by the great *ācāryas* in disciplic succession, for such holy souls know something of the inner workings of the Lord.

Five hundred years ago Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the *avatāra* or appearance of Kṛṣṇa in this age, predicted that His name would be sung in every country, village and town throughout the world. Śrīla

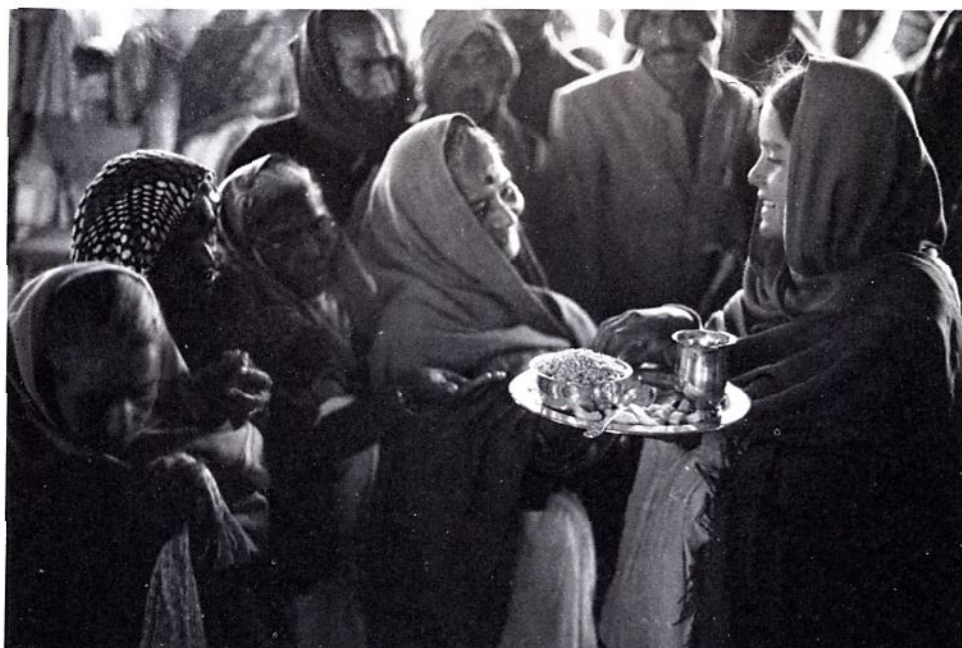


photo by John Griesser

Simply by accepting *prasādam*, food offered to Kṛṣṇa, one can gain spiritual strength.

Gala welcome for Śrīla Prabhupāda in Bombay.





Auspicious gathering: India's Prime Minister, Śrīmatī Indira Gandhi, meets with Śrīla Prabhupāda's international *saṅkīrtana* disciples and accepts a *Back to Godhead Magazine*.

Prabhupāda is specifically fulfilling that prediction. Thirty-five years ago Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja, the spiritual master of Śrīla Prabhupāda, ordered his student to bring Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the Western world. Śrīla Prabhupāda has already fulfilled that order. Furthermore, at the turn of this century, Śrīla Bhaktivinode Thākura, father of Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī and *ācārya* of the time, predicted that the preaching of Kṛṣṇa consciousness would one day come back to India from the West. Śrīla Prabhupāda is now in India fulfilling that surprising prophecy.

When His Divine Grace came to the United States, he told us, "You are living in the greatest country in the world. If you take to this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, the whole world will follow your example." Śrīla Prabhupāda's plan has come true. Having left India on the instruction of his spiritual master at a time when the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa was unknown outside of India, Śrīla Prabhupāda has made "Hare Kṛṣṇa" a household term in innumerable homes throughout the world to the degree that he is now in the position of bringing Hare Kṛṣṇa back to India from the outside. There have been Kṛṣṇa conscious hit records, television



His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda delivering a lecture at a spiritual convention in Ballyganj. Two thousand people attended and participated in chanting and dancing. (American and European disciples in front of stage.)

appearances, feature stories, and praise from the government, the churches, and the elite. Most importantly, there has been the publication of twenty books on the science of Kṛṣṇa in the English language as well as the establishment of *Back*

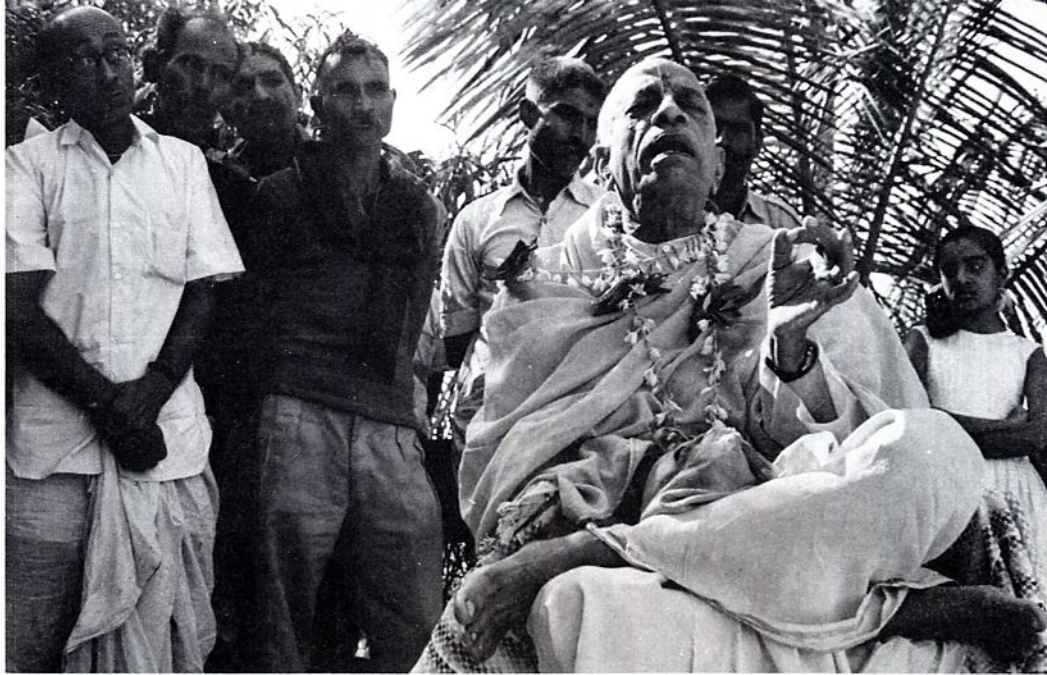
*to Godhead Magazine* in six different languages with a monthly circulation of one half million. Thus Śrīla Prabhupāda, who left India with only five dollars and a carton of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatams*, is returning to India having fulfilled the order of his

spiritual master in just five years. With him he is bringing thirty of his Western disciples, 100,000 books, and the most amazing success story in the recent history of Western spiritualism, just to show the Indians how the West has taken to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and how practical Kṛṣṇa consciousness really is.

In profound humility, Śrīla Prabhupāda attributes all his success to his Guru Mahārāja. He says that his only greatness is that he has not adulterated the teachings of the scriptures and his Guru Mahārāja, but has presented them as they are, without personal motivation or interpretation, as they have been passed down through disciplic succession from Kṛṣṇa Himself. He has taken as the prime duty of his life the fulfilling of the instructions of his Guru Mahārāja, who, as a bona fide spiritual master, is a direct representative of Kṛṣṇa. Here is the secret of his success. He has followed the instructions of his Guru Mahārāja explicitly, not expecting personal results. For this selfless service and love, he has been granted complete success by guru and by God. Any student who undertakes to fulfill the order of his guru, assured that his guru is a bona fide representative in the disciplic succession, is guaranteed success in his endeavors because the bona fide spiritual master is a representative of God. As the direct representative of the supreme authority, whatever instruction the spiritual master gives is backed up by the Supreme Personality, just as an agreement signed by a bona fide representative of a company is binding on the corporation, and the corporation is responsible for commitments made by its representative. Thus Śrīla Prabhupāda was assured his surprising success by strictly following the order of his Guru Mahārāja, who is in direct succession from the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Still, Śrīla Prabhupāda is endlessly exciting and ingenious, ever fresh and original and completely unpredictable in his plans to please the Lord and guru. How fortunate we are to witness the magnificence of his devotional service, as this chanting process turns this pandemonium of hell, our confusing material world, into Vaikunṭha, the blissful spiritual abode of Kṛṣṇa.

"We are so grateful to you for coming to us and showing us what you have learned. You have taken to this process—even greater than we have." "Yes, we feel ashamed that you have had to come here



Śrīla Prabhupāda tirelessly spoke—sometimes at three or four meetings a day—in praise of Kṛṣṇa.

Devotees lead Indian school children in Hare Kṛṣṇa chanting and dancing.



to teach us our own religion." "Yes, but what I want to know is what your parents think of your converting." These reactions have been common among many Indians we have met in India.

Indians are very anxiously observing the example of the West, desirous of becoming materially advanced like the Westerners, and they are forgetting Kṛṣṇa. But we tell them that the West is disgusted with so-called material happiness and is now looking to India for spiritual guidance. In the past, India sent so many swamis who taught corrupt philosophies, preaching, "I am God, you are God, everybody is God, dog is God," or "All is one, all is void; do

whatever you want, and just transcend." Such philosophies do not satisfy the spirit soul. But now the West has received a real source of transcendental knowledge and a respectable representative of Indian spiritual culture—His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. He has given to the West what no other *yogī* has—the spiritual bliss of personalism, Kṛṣṇa *premā*. Under his expert guidance, Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples are very quickly advancing to the platform of transcendental ecstasy. They are living proof in India that where money, sex, alcohol, divorce, coffee, cigarettes, washing machines, telephones, electric can openers, newspapers, schools,

poverty programs, hamburgers and milk shakes, TV dinners, caterers, hedonism, impersonalism, altruism, baseball, etc., have failed to bring happiness, Kṛṣṇa has succeeded. Kṛṣṇa is always successful because He is God. Now His pure representative has returned to India, to remind the people of their blissful heritage. Once again, this great nation is taking to the spiritual pathway of devotional service to God. Misconceptions about Kṛṣṇa are rampant in India, but these can be cleared away by reference to revealed scripture.

#### HE IS ALL ATTRACTIVE

Is Kṛṣṇa a Hindu God? No, for God is God, and though He is absolute, He has many names. One characteristic of God is that He is all-attractive, and the name Kṛṣṇa denotes that all-attractive quality. So Kṛṣṇa means God, and He is ultimately the same God worshiped by all religions everywhere. He is called Kṛṣṇa in *Bhagavad-gītā*, Yahweh in the *Old Testament*, and Jehovah in the *New Testament*. Lord Caitanya taught that God has invested all His potencies in all His names, and we should not consider that one name is any better than another.

Kṛṣṇa is God, and He appeared on earth in His all-attractive feature or personal form to attract all species of life. In the *Gītā*, (14.4), Kṛṣṇa clearly states, "It should be understood that all species of life, O son of Kuntī, are made possible by birth in this material nature, and that I am the seed-giving father." Thus He is the God not only of Hindus, Christians and Jews, but also of lions, fish and trees. Just as the sun, although it rises in the East, cannot be called an Indian sun, similarly Kṛṣṇa appeared in India, but in no way can He be called an eastern God. He is always present everywhere. Nowhere does He ever claim that He is a Hindu God, or that He can take birth only in India. Kṛṣṇa belongs to everyone. How else could so many persons in America relish transcendental bliss in Kṛṣṇa consciousness? Kṛṣṇa consciousness was unknown there five years ago and is just beginning to be recognized as a religion.

When Lord Caitanya, an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, appeared in India five hundred years ago, he made lions, tigers, elephants—all animals—jump in ecstatic love for God. Just by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* and by hearing these sacred names of God, all living entities become purified.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the eternal science of God, the living entity and nature. This science is true in all places and at all times, and, being transcendental, it is beyond the temporary designations of material time and space.

Many people ask if Hinduism is an Indian religion. The term "Hindu" itself is foreign to India and has nothing to do with the religion. The term "Hindu" was used by the Muslims to refer to the people living beyond the Indus River, or the "Hindus" River as they called it, since they were unable to pronounce the "I" at the beginning of "Indus." Another term for Kṛṣṇa consciousness is *sanātana-dharma*, or the eternal occupation of the living entity, namely to render service. Every bona fide religion teaches us to serve God. But since the term "Hindu" is unrelated to the actual practices of the worshipers across the Indus, it has been applied to any number of beliefs and practices in India, only some of which are in harmony with this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

If one's goal is God, he will adopt whatever means are necessary to reach that end. Just as in material life, if one's goal is to learn advanced technology and the best facilities for learning technology are in America, one will arrange to enroll in an American school. Similarly, if one's goal is God, one must seek out that best process for realizing God in order to be successful. The Vedic literatures provide the most complete information about God in the world. According to the *Vedas*, the chanting of the holy name is the easiest means for contacting God in the present age. Therefore one must be practical and test out which process is actually bringing love of God, both by personal experience and by the results of others. Then one will find success.

#### GOD IS ONE

"Yes, yes. We worship all the gods—Rāma, Śiva, Kṛṣṇa, Durgā, Bala. They are all different names for the same Kṛṣṇa. We are actually all God, so why limit yourself just to Kṛṣṇa?" Just as in America there are so many Christians in name only, similarly in India there are many sentimental Hindus who have accepted their religion as tradition from their parents, but who are not acquainted with the actual science of Kṛṣṇa presented by the disciple succession according to the *Vedas*.

Are all the gods on the same level? No. The *Vedānta-sūtra* defines the Absolute Truth as that from which everything emanates. The concept of the Absolute Truth is even superior to the concept God, or He who controls everything. The first verse of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the natural commentary on *Vedānta-sūtra*, states that Kṛṣṇa is that Absolute Truth, and in the *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa Himself says, "I am the source of everything; from Me the entire creation flows." (Bg. 10.8) Arjuna, who is receiving this knowledge from Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, responds, "You are the invincible source, the cause of all causes." At the same time, Kṛṣṇa is worshiped as the Supreme Godhead in the first verse of *Brahma-saṁhitā* (*īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ*). In the *Gītā*, Kṛṣṇa confirms, "The whole cosmic order is under Me," (9.8) and Arjuna exclaims, "You are the Supreme controller." (11.39). Thus Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Godhead, surpasses even the concept of God and is called the Absolute Truth.

#### HE APPEARS IN MANY INCARNATIONS

Nevertheless, Kṛṣṇa manifests Himself in different forms. He is like the original candle from which many other candles of equal brightness and warmth are lit. Expansions of Kṛṣṇa are also counted as God. They are actually Kṛṣṇa, but the original form of Kṛṣṇa is the source of all other forms. This is confirmed in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The Lord manifests Himself as Nṛsiṁha, Vāmana, Rāma, Balarāma, etc., for different purposes, yet all the above-mentioned incarnations are either plenary portions or portions of the plenary portions of the Lord. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, however, is the original Personality of Godhead: "*Kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*." Similarly Kṛṣṇa is like the many-faceted Vaidurya stone, which, although one, reflects its many facets in many different colors. Rāma acts as an ideal king, Nṛsiṁha reflects the feature of anger, but Kṛṣṇa acts as the Supreme Personality of Godhead and is therefore the complete whole.

What is the relation between Kṛṣṇa and Christ? Kṛṣṇa is the father, and Christ is the son. In *Bhagavad-gītā*, Kṛṣṇa claims that He is the seed-giving father of all living entities. In the Holy Bible, Jesus claims that he is the son of God, so there is no contradiction. Actually God appears either directly or indirectly, either by

descending Himself or by sending a representative. Both types of beings who descend from the spiritual world for the sake of reclaiming the fallen souls are called *avatāras*, or incarnations. The direct *avatāras* are direct expansions of the Lord and are *Viṣṇu-tattva* or God, while the indirect incarnations are *jīva-tattva* or minute living entities who have been especially empowered by Kṛṣṇa for some purpose. For example, Nārada is a *jīva* soul in the feature of devotional service, Vyāsa is considered a literary incarnation of the Lord, and Brahmā is empowered with creative potency. But all *jīva-tattvas*, even incarnations, are the energy of God and therefore the servants of God. Still they may receive all the respect ordinarily paid to God because they are His pure representatives.

Some indirect incarnations descend to teach us about God, while others employed by Kṛṣṇa to administrate the affairs of the universe, are called demigods. Kṛṣṇa is like a king, and the demigods are like His cabinet ministers. For example, Brahmā is in charge of creation, Indra is in charge of the weather, and Durgā is in charge of the material energy. In different ways, the demigods perform devotional service to Kṛṣṇa with powers granted by Kṛṣṇa. Śiva is in charge of destruction and is a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa, though not exactly an ordinary living entity. But in the *Gītā* Kṛṣṇa says, "Men of small intelligence worship the demigods, and their fruits are limited and temporary. Those who worship the demigods go to the planets of the demigods, but My devotees reach My supreme abode." (7.23) Therefore it is a mistake to think that by worshiping any of the demigods or by chanting the names of the demigods one will achieve the same result as by worshiping Kṛṣṇa. "Whatever a man may sacrifice to other gods, O son of Kuntī, is really meant for Me alone, offered without true understanding. For I am the only enjoyer and the only object of sacrifice. They fall down who do not recognize My true transcendental nature." (Bg. 9.22-23) *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* explains that one who has surrendered to Kṛṣṇa has no obligations either to demigods, sages, or people in general; just as watering the root of a tree automatically nourishes all the leaves, twigs and branches, so by serving the Supreme Lord one automatically satisfies all the demigods. Lord Jesus says, "Love God," and Kṛṣṇa says "Love Me," so what



His Holiness Acyutānanda Mahārāja, a disciple of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, lectures daily to a large gathering of people at a bathing ghat on the Ganges River.

is the contradiction? The true representatives of God tell us to surrender to God, just as Kṛṣṇa tells us to surrender to Him. Therefore there is complete harmony of thought expressed in all the teachings.

Are we God? No. We are the energy of God, eternally related to God. We are like the sunshine, and God is like the sun globe; wherever there is sun there is sunshine, and wherever there is sunshine there is sun. But the sunshine is not the same as the sun globe. We are infinitesimal, and God is infinite; therefore we are qualitatively one with God but quantitatively different. Now, however, our qualitative oneness with God is covered, due to our association with matter, and we must purify ourselves to realize our spiritual nature as part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa says, "The living entities are My parts and parcels eternally" (Bg. 15.7), so how can the part be equal to the whole? How can we be God?

Lord Caitanya taught that our constitutional position is that we are eternal servants of Kṛṣṇa. In the conditioned state and in the liberated state we are eternally Kṛṣṇa's servants; we never become God. Liberation means to realize our constitutional position as servants of God. The hand is part of the body, and as it feeds the stomach it automatically becomes satisfied; but if the hand thinks, "Why should the stomach be all-in-all; I want to enjoy for myself," and it sticks itself in some

food and does not feed the stomach, then it will wither. We are pure spirit soul, part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa, and our purpose in life is to serve the complete whole, the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa.

God always remains God. He is God when He is playing on the lap of Mother Yaśodā; He is God when He kills the Putanā demon at the age of six months; He is God displaying His universal form on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra. He did not have to become God by meditation, penance or austerity, or by following the rules and regulations. God is substantially God. His manifestation is always present. As explained by Śrīla Prabhupāda, "Kṛṣṇa has nothing to do. If anyone has to do something to become God, he is a dog. He is not God. This one can easily understand. If someone advertises that by meditation he has become God, or by worshiping such and such deity he has become God, you can immediately take it that he is a dog. The Vedic definition says that God does not have to do anything to become God. Therefore God is substantially God."

Actually we are all in the material world because we wanted to forget Kṛṣṇa. Therefore certain comments are not at all a surprise: "Because you come from a rich country, you can afford to spend your time chanting like this. When we become rich like you, we'll do this too." "Yes, why don't you go back to your country and leave us alone? These philosophies

have kept us back long enough. It is fine for you to chant, but what about the starving masses? It is hard to meditate on an empty stomach.”

When someone comes along to remind us of Kṛṣṇa, we may use every excuse to avoid becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious. Most people are used to thinking of themselves as the controllers, but to love God, one must concede that God is the supreme controller in all ways. No problem can exist independently of Him, nor can a solution be found without Him. Even economics is not a subject unrelated to Kṛṣṇa. Problems such as poverty, starvation, poor housing, etc., are simply reflections of our forgetfulness of God. If the material necessities of life are used according to God’s instructions, economic problems will disappear. In *Śrī Iṣopaniṣad* we learn that each person has an allotted quota of all necessities provided by the supreme father. Therefore, situations where one has too little or too much are due to ignorance of the laws which God has so mercifully revealed to us.

#### “WHY IS THERE SUFFERING?”

Because God is always ready to give us what we desire, He has created the material world where we can assume the false position of controller, life after life, for as long as we like. Yet this material creation is marked by unpleasant conditions—birth, death, old age and disease—so that we may question, “Why am I suffering?” The search for an answer to such questions leads us to spiritual life and finally freedom from the cares of material existence. A nice example is given: The king may have all wealth in his kingdom, but the prisoners in the prison house never know it. Similarly, Kṛṣṇa has His eternal, blissful, spiritual kingdom, but we are suffering in the material world due to our wanting to forget Him. The intelligent person will endeavor to get out of prison, to transfer to the spiritual world, rather than waste his time trying to make patchwork temporary adjustments to life in prison. “From the highest planet in the material world, down to the lowest, all are places of misery where repeated birth and death take place. But one who attains My abode, O son of Kuntī, never takes birth again.” (Bg. 8.16)

Relatively happy and prosperous societies have existed within this world. But these rare societies were due to the grace of the Lord and His representative kings who followed the scientific Vedic system of organizing society. Such rulers were

pure devotees or saintly kings like Lord Rāma and Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira. The kingdoms of the devotee kings knew material opulence far beyond anything we know today, and everyone was happy because they were working and receiving consciousness of God at the same time. In the materialistic societies people are not only unhappy and anxious due to their forgetfulness of God, but whatever wealth they do have is taken away by God’s agency of inexhaustible time. “Of subduers I am time.” (Bg. 10.30) Due to misusing God’s property, people in the United States will end up starving in poverty, whereas that society which recognized God’s proprietorship over all and appeals to Him, even if it be for material things will flourish.

Material existence is like a blazing forest fire which can be extinguished only by the raincloud of mercy from the bona fide spiritual master. No one starts a forest fire, yet automatically fires appear. Similarly, no one wants unhappiness in the material world, but automatically problems arise. But just as rainfall easily puts out a blazing forest fire, so the representative of God extinguishes our material suffering. Neither our own efforts nor those of family, friends, planning commissions and governing bodies can save us from misery and death. Only the ocean of mercy, Kṛṣṇa, and His representative, the bona fide spiritual master, who pours forth mercy as a raincloud emits water, can extinguish our material existence. Theoretically we can understand that we cannot solve the problems of material life without God, and historically we can see that no society has been happy without God. “I am the goal, the upholder, the master, witness, home, shelter, and the dearest friend.” (Bg. 9.18)

#### USE KṚṢṆA’S THINGS IN HIS SERVICE

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not contrary to life with material comforts; the point is to love God in whatever we are doing. Kṛṣṇa instructed Arjuna in the *Gītā*, “O Arjuna, surrendering all your works unto Me, with mind intent on Me, without desire for gain, and free from egoism and lethargy, fight.” (Bg. 3.30) The idea is that we should perform our prescribed duties only for the satisfaction of the Supreme Lord, with our consciousness fixed on the Lord. But even if we cannot surrender fully to the Lord, we can offer some of the fruits of our activities to God and remember Him while working by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Thus money, airplanes, tape recorders, printing presses—all modern facilities—can be used for Kṛṣṇa. But if our material facilities are used without reference to God, we are doomed. If one gives a bird a beautiful cage, keeps it clean, polishes and decorates it, and then never feeds the bird, the bird will certainly be unhappy and ultimately die. Similarly, if we use our modern civilization only to gratify, prolong, decorate and patch up the body, never feeding the soul within it, then surely the living entity will suffer and die. Therefore, Śrīla Prabhupāda said to us in America, “You have wealth, beauty, friends, education—but they are all zeros. But if you put a one in front of all those zeros, you get millions, and that one is Kṛṣṇa.” The point is not to give up anything; the point is to add love of God.

#### EVERYONE IS WON BY KĪRTANA

We have traveled throughout India—to Calcutta, Bombay, Delhi, and to smaller cities too. We have been on the street, to conventions, in temples, and with the Prime Minister. Some people we have met have been convinced by our philosophy and some have not, but practically everybody is won by *kīrtana*—the sound representation of Kṛṣṇa. At religious conventions, monistic philosophers may rebuke us all day long, insisting that everyone is God—but by nightfall they are begging us to perform *kīrtana* for them. Everyone is impressed that Śrīla Prabhupāda has established his “New Vṇḍāvana” in West Virginia with cows, forests, and temples modeled after the original Vṇḍāvana of Lord Kṛṣṇa in India. They marvel at his fifty centers established throughout the world, at the fifty thousand participants at his Rathayātrā Festival in San Francisco, and at the monthly circulation of five hundred thousand *Back to Godhead*’s, to be increased to one million by the summer. The people of India, who are looking to the example of the West, are surprised to find Americans, Europeans, and Asians chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. Lord Caitanya, who is God Himself, is simply witnessing everything that He already knew would happen. His name is being sung in every village and town in all countries throughout the world; Kṛṣṇa consciousness is being brought back to India from the West, and those who are chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* are experiencing the ultimate goal of life: the transcendental bliss which comes from love of God. END

# WORLD SĀṆKĪRTANA PARTY—

“There is no other alternative in this age.”

text by Śyāmasundara dāsa Adhikārī  
(ISKCON—Bombay)

These events are historic in the annals of Vaiṣṇava history, since the whole town of Surat was situated on the *saṅkīrtana* platform. Everywhere we went, people chanted with us, and at nighttime they would construct a large planked stage on a street, and thousands of devotees would come and hear Śrīla Prabhupāda and chant with us. We would chant, weaving through the streets of the town, which seemed to be broken up into little villages.

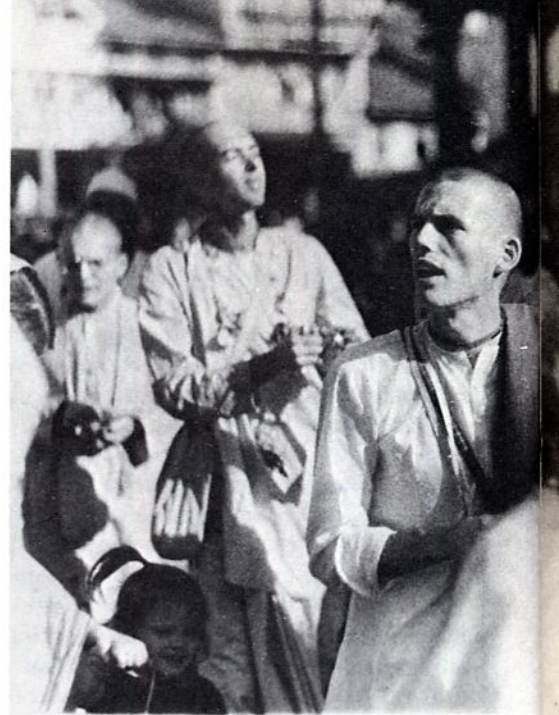
In Nagar our *saṅkīrtana* route was planned, and people lined the streets waiting for us. Sometimes they would put cloth on the ground or drape cloth overhead. They would throw rice and put sandalwood on our foreheads to cool us off, and then red *kumkum* would be applied also or thrown in the air in powdered form, and each few yards women would come and garland us, so much so that we would have to take the piled up garlands off, since there were so many of them that our vision would be impaired.



And when we threw the beautifully scented garlands to the air, waiting devotees of Surat scampered to have one of the flowers. The procession wove on, and Dīnānātha constantly threw flowers in the

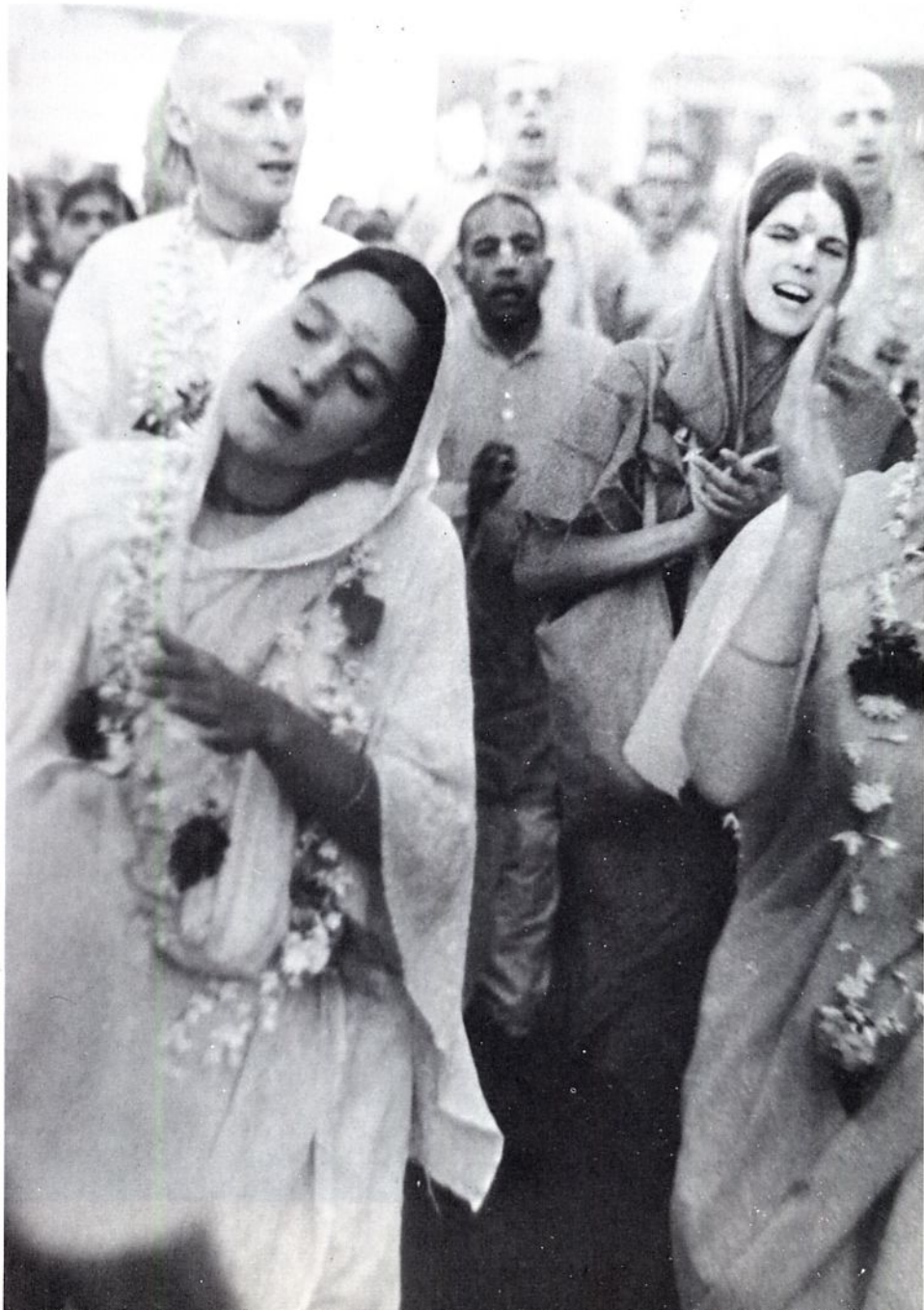
air, and Gopāla Dās took sandalwood and applied it to everyone who came to garland us. Yamunā and Kausalyā and Mādri Dāsī danced in little circles and transcendental pirouettes, shoulder to shoulder, in





and out, out and in, whirling to and fro, Hamsadūta drumming with Tamāla in pulsing fashion. Stokala from Hawaii danced up and down, Sarasvatī with her arms in the air shouted Haribol on Śyāmasundara's shoulders, the crowd embraced us from all sides. The intensity of the *kīrtana* increased and increased and increased, and everyone, due to the sheer numbers and enthusiasm of those present, took an active part. "East is east and west is west and never the twain shall meet" was rendered meaningless on these historic days of wonderful, vibrant *kīrtanas*.

When it was time for our program, we simply looked at Śrīla Prabhupāda, and he said, "Begin chanting," and we did. As usual the holy names filled up the lost groping hearts of all around, and even some of the impersonalists danced, and the faces of the people changed from grey to a nice reddish due to bright attentive joy. We got up from the stage and danced, and they got up from their seats and danced, a duplication of many such experiences in the United States and Europe. But here the people were reacting to something that was lost to them and now returned to them, as if some pure childhood experiences were filling their heads and hearts. We had only known Snow White meets Prince Charming, but they had known Hari Nāma Saikīrtana, and they were now experiencing this again after many years







abstinence. All over India they have been poisoned and have forgotten, and it is our task to bring them one-pointed purity as it is, to replace the quagmire of imaginary grasped-at happiness that now abounds. And then in the midst of our explosion of holy names, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda stood up and danced. The place was surcharged with spiritual energy, and even hard Westernized reporters cried in ecstasy. Śrīla Prabhupāda then gave a short ten minute talk about the value of *saṅkīrtana* and how it had changed our lives in the West. Like a proud father, he was showing us off.

His Divine Grace explained that *saṅkīrtana* is the purifying agent in this age. Śrīla Prabhupāda's talk was shorter than anyone else's, but more packed full of spiritual information.

The next day this Sadhu Samaj went on, but we were not invited back; rather, we were requested not to come back, since our *kīrtana* disrupted the mental speculators' verbose lectures, in which they belabor one fine point after another but never understand the spirit soul.

Śrīla Prabhupāda said about these kind of Vedāntists at another meeting, "They will labor so hard over one point without coming to any conclusion, and we will reach God by eating." (And he popped a piece of *prasādam* into his mouth as an example.)

END



# MEMBERSHIP

We read in Vedic literature about this present age that we are living in now, called the Age of Kali, the age of hypocrisy, quarrel and corruption. Aside from the statements of Vedic literature we can observe that the age is full of many vices; it is a veritable ocean of vices. There is widespread poverty, war, crime, and great attention given to intoxication and illicit sex life. Persons in this age have a very short duration of life, at least compared to descriptions we get of former ages; also, duration of memory, ability to concentrate, and interest in spiritual life were all formerly greater than in this current age. The reason this has come about is by the will of Kṛṣṇa. This material universe is divided into vast periods of time, and the present age is the most degraded. Long, long ago there was a golden age called Satya-yuga. At that time almost one hundred percent of the people were God conscious, but one after another the different ages came like seasons, and society became increasingly degraded. This age of Kali-yuga is as inevitable as the seasonal cycle, but just because Kali-yuga is inevitably going to be more and more degrading does not imply that the influential, responsible people, especially the devotees of the Supreme Lord, will sit aloof and ignore or grow callous to this age of quarrel as it increases in corruption. Sainly persons are like older brothers in society, and they have great concern over the disintegration of religious principles in humanity. A pure devotee knows that no one can be happy in a society where people neglect rendering devotional service to the source, Kṛṣṇa, or God.

## THE PRACTICAL SOLUTION

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a practical solution to the problems of the age of Kali. The age of Kali is symptomized by the absence of religious principles. In the Vedic scripture *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is described that 5,000 years ago the entrance of Kali was first observed by the pious king of that time, Mahārāja Parīkṣit. He was out inspecting his kingdom, and he saw a cow, the personification of religion, standing on one leg, being beaten by a very low-class man in the dress of a king. The pious king saw that the age of Kali was just beginning and three out of four of the cow's legs were broken. Since the cow is the emblem of religion, her legs are compared to the four basic religious principles

—austerity, cleanliness, mercy and truthfulness—which are one by one being destroyed in this age. Austerity means to undergo a little difficulty in order to get something higher, just as a student may stay home and study and miss some nice entertainment because he has a higher goal. Austerity for the highest purpose, to develop love of God, is not being practiced at all in this age, and the main reason according to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is that people are too proud of their money. Even a pauper becomes very proud and puffed up if he gets a little money; he thinks that he can buy everything he needs and that there is no need to hear about God consciousness. Pride wipes out austerity, and cleanliness is destroyed by illicit connections with women. Women and sex of course exist, but the perverted conception whereby the whole society, the whole civilization, is pinpointed simply on sex life is most degraded. And the principle of mercy is being destroyed by lying propaganda on the national, international and familial levels. Everyone has this lying propensity. The age of Kali, however, is described to be like the rainy season. Even though the rain has to come, this does not mean that one should not take precautions and go out with an umbrella.

## EVERYONE SHOULD HELP

In this age of Kali, when people are very unfortunate and distracted, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness has entered the picture. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not a new religion; it is the oldest—the eternal science of God. It was first brought to the United States in 1966 by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. According to Vedic literature, no material adjustment can solve the problems of man and society, but if spiritual education is propagated, then all ills will be removed. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is an educational institution, and we are trying to propagate very pure teachings. The government, of course, is not meant to be partial to a particular faith. But the government should not be indifferent to religious principles. How can a good government be in favor of wiping out corruption but not be in favor of religious principles? Such principles have nothing to do with a particular faith. There is no point in one's changing from Hindu to Christian or from Muslim

to Jew if one is not actually practicing religious principles. It does not matter which faith one belongs to, but the basic religious principles have to be followed because they lead to love of God, which alone can bring happiness and perfection for all humanity. The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is therefore teaching everyone their true position: all persons are spirit souls, part and parcel of God. We are teaching how to love Kṛṣṇa, and we want to propagate this teaching through all available media. All persons are asked to contribute in some way to the propagation of this message. It's not meant for only a few people; it's meant for everyone. We are publishing books with our press, but we need to expand. More and more books are needed all over the world. We propagate Kṛṣṇa consciousness by disseminating literature, by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, by distributing *prasādam* and broadcasting with the transcendental words coming from God Himself as recorded in the Vedic scriptures.

When we ask for donations, people often ask us, "What are you doing collecting money? What is it for?" They should know that our spiritual master keeps nothing for himself, nor for his disciples. Everything is being used in Kṛṣṇa's service because everything actually belongs to Kṛṣṇa. That's why we're telling people, "Please, don't think that whatever you have is yours. That is illusion. Everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa." Now, while we have this human form of life, let us engage it in Kṛṣṇa's service. This will actually bring us happiness and will benefit everyone because this is Kṛṣṇa's world. People should understand that everything belongs to God. It is God's property, even these bodies. Therefore everything should be used in Kṛṣṇa's service.

## IT IS SANCTIONED

The sanction and guidance to do this are received from a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa who comes and preaches to all classes of people. Please serve the Supreme Lord. Whatever money we get we use to publish more books and spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Also, we are opening temples whenever we can. In this material world, men are parched and are searching for some nectar and joy. The material world is like a desert; one cannot find relief. But just as in a desert, one can find an oasis, the temples are like oases in the material world.

We have about fifty temples all over the world, and every month more are being opened. But to help spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness, to open temples and publish books, we need the help of all people.

There is a story told about a man who was drowning in a river. Many people on the shore saw him drowning, and one man went out to save him. Everyone was anticipating a rescue, but the rescuer came back with only the man's shirt and pants. He was severely ridiculed: "You have not saved the man. You saved his shirt and pants." In this way, welfare activities of a mundane altruistic and philanthropic nature—opening hospitals but neglecting God consciousness—do not save the real man. This body, *Bhagavad-gītā* explains, is just a temporary manifestation. Our real self is the eternal spirit soul. People do not have to be great philosophers; they should just try this process of chanting the holy name of God, taking *prasādam*, and reading books like *Kṛṣṇa* and *Back to Godhead* magazine. This will revive the dormant love of God that is in everyone's heart.

To further this end, our spiritual master has now begun a life membership program. Many people want to take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but because of business and family commitments they are not able to come and live in the temple. They do, however, want to help. For those who want to help this movement in some way,

we have begun a program of life membership whereby a life member can receive all the books we have published so far and all that we will publish in the future. A life member also receives a lifetime subscription to *Back to Godhead*, and he can also stay at any one of our temples. All our temples now are arranging accommodations—guest rooms—where a life member can come and stay; he can take *prasādam* and stay as long as he likes, whether it be in Paris or London or Boston. Now everyone can prosecute their duty in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. A life membership costs \$1,111. The idea is to propagate Kṛṣṇa consciousness, produce more books and encourage someone who wants to commit himself to helping Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We do not expect the politicians and the leaders of the world to shave their heads and wear robes, but if they can take some advice from a pure devotee, that would be very helpful for everyone. It is stated in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that a pure devotee does not want a political post, nor does he want power, but his suggestions of how to propagate real peace and prosperity should be listened to. This is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. One can become a donor member in ISKCON and can receive all our books to date and a lifetime subscription to *Back to Godhead* for \$555.00. Actually all our programs are free. We ask a dollar for attendance at our Sunday feast, but if any-

one does not have a dollar, he does not go away; he can come anyway. Similarly, we freely distribute our magazine, *Back to Godhead*. One will notice that there is no price on this magazine. We ask a donation. If someone is interested and does not have anything, we invite him to take it and read about Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is free for everyone. But if one wishes to patronize this nice movement the opportunity is there. Become a life member, become a donor member, or become a subscriber for \$222.00 and receive *Back to Godhead* for life, or simply become a regular member and subscribe to the magazine for a year for \$4.50. Our spiritual master wants to spiritualize this planet, and engage everyone in any way—by their money, by their talent, by their advice. Or let us come to your home, give out *prasādam* and show a film and speak. People can gather their friends, and we will come and have *saṅkīrtana* in their home. If we do not spread this movement, someone else will. It is not that this work is going to be neglected. It is stated by Lord Caitanya, who is an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, that the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa will be heard in every town and village in the world. But if someone can take the opportunity and help in this mission of the Supreme Lord, it will be very auspicious for himself personally, and whatever he does will benefit all humanity. END

BACK COVER: Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared 500 years ago as Lord Caitanya, a pure devotee, just to teach us how to love Kṛṣṇa. His ecstatic method of *saṅkīrtana* (dancing and chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa) is the recommended way to achieve spiritual happiness in this present age of hypocrisy and quarrel. →

photo by John Greisser



