

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



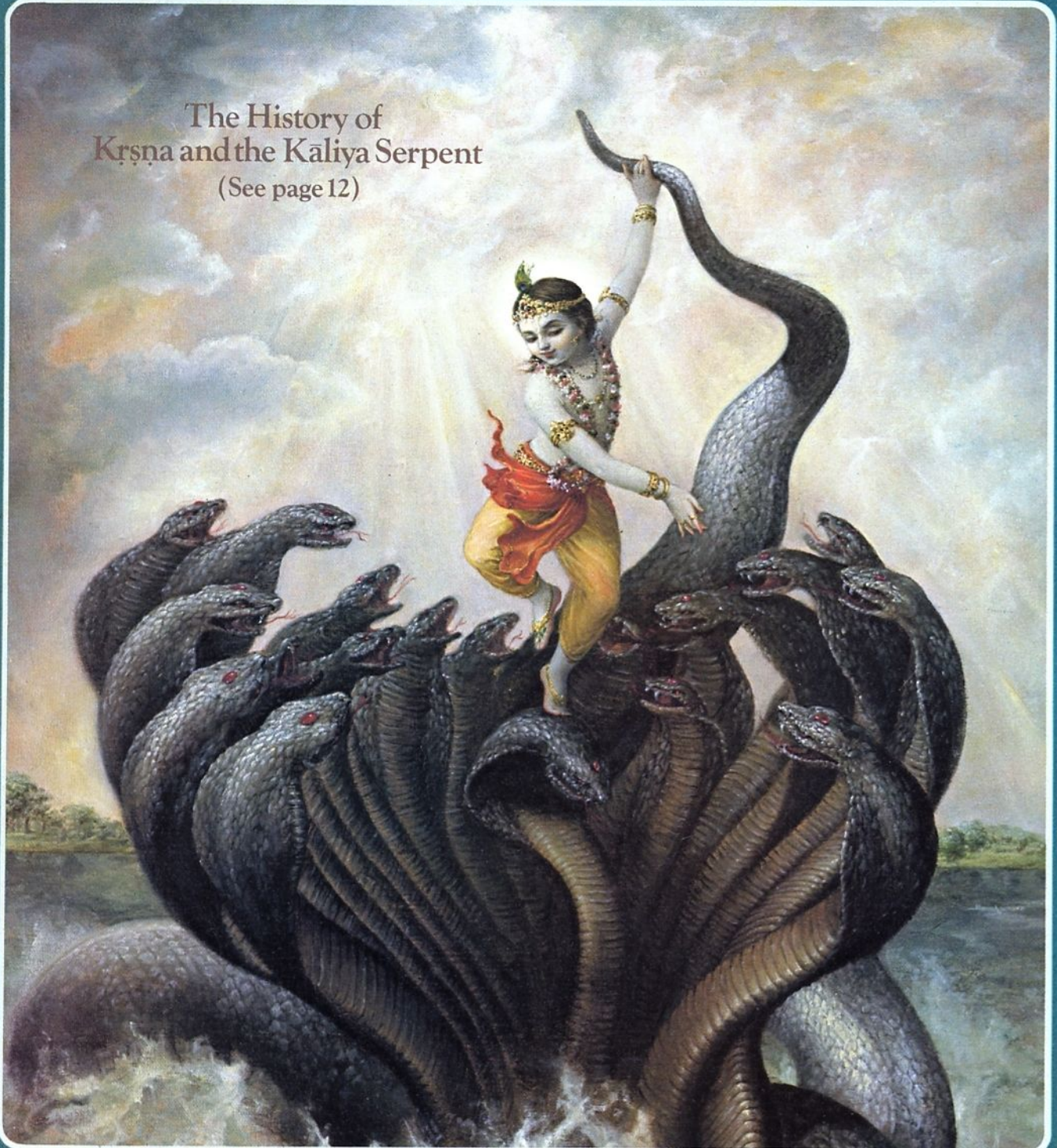
# BACK TO GODHEAD



Vol. 14 No. 6

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT

The History of  
Kṛṣṇa and the Kālīya Serpent  
(See page 12)





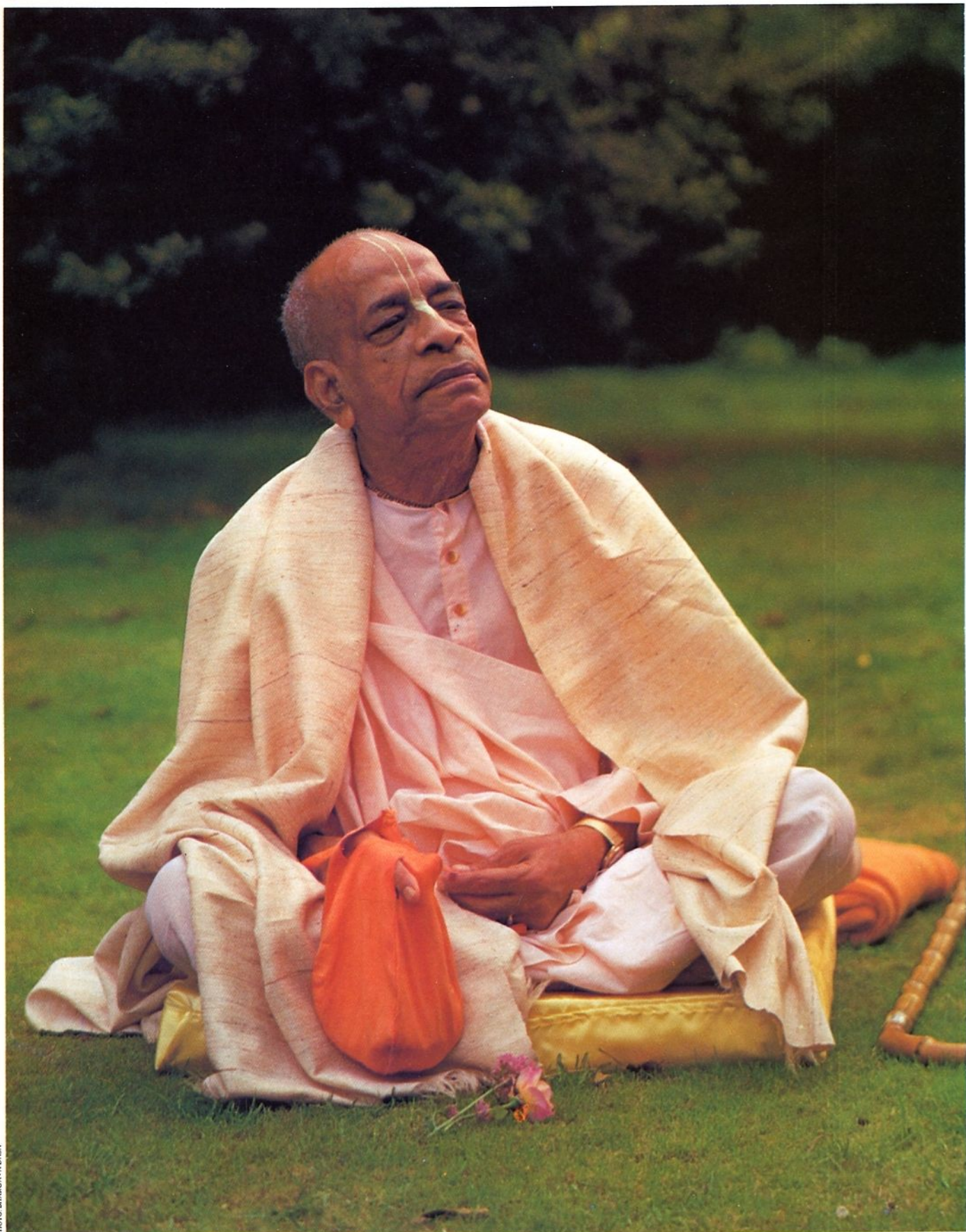


PHOTO: BHARGAVA DASA

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



# BACK TO GODHEAD

VOL. 14, NO. 6

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT

FOUNDED 1944

## FOUNDER

(under the direction of His Divine Grace  
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda)

### His Divine Grace

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PRONUNCIATION of Sanskrit words and names. BACK TO GODHEAD follows the international scholarly standard. Pronounce short **a** like the **u** in **but**, long **ā** like the **a** in **far** (and hold it twice as long as the short **a**). Pronounce **e** like the **a** in **evade**, long **ī** like the **i** in **pique**. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **ri** in **rim**, and **ṛ** like the **ch** in **chair**. Pronounce the aspirated consonants (**ch**, **jh**, **dh**, etc.) as in **staunch**-heart, **hedge**-hog, and **red**-hot. Finally, pronounce sibilants **ś** and **ṣ** like **sh**, and **s** like the **s** in **sun**. So for *Kṛṣṇa* say KRISHNA, and for *Caitanya* say CHAITANYA.

ABOUT SANSKRIT NAMES in by-lines, credits, and text. Members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness receive names of Lord Kṛṣṇa or His great devotees, combined with *dāsa* (*dāsi* for women), meaning "servant." For instance, the name *Kṛṣṇa dāsa* means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

◀ His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda came to America in 1965, at age seventy, to fulfill his spiritual master's request that he teach the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the English-speaking world. In a dozen years he published some seventy volumes of translation and commentary on India's Vedic literatures, and these are now standard in universities worldwide. Meanwhile, traveling almost nonstop, Śrīla Prabhupāda molded his international society into a worldwide confederation of *āśramas*, schools, temples, and farm communities. He passed away in 1977 in India's Vṛndāvana, the place most sacred to Lord Kṛṣṇa, and his disciples are carrying forward the movement he started.

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**COVER: Kṛṣṇa and the Kāliya Serpent.** Lord Kṛṣṇa the Supreme Personality of Godhead appears in this world periodically, to enliven His devotees and vanquish the demoniac. Fifty centuries ago He dancingly knocked some sense into Kāliya's hundred heads. (See page 12.) (Cover art: Dhṛti-devī dāsi.)

**ABOUT BACK TO GODHEAD:** "Godhead is light" has always been BACK TO GODHEAD's byword—"Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience." Godhead means the source of everything, and this journal is meant to assist readers in cultivating practical, scientific realization of Godhead. To this end BACK TO GODHEAD explores the ideas presented in ancient India's Vedic literatures, especially *Bhagavad-gītā*. As the *Gītā* itself informs us, "When one is enlightened with the knowledge by which nescience is destroyed, then his knowledge reveals everything, as the sun lights up everything in the daytime."







# THE PHYSICS OF THE SELF

During October of 1973, in the garden of the Los Angeles Kṛṣṇa center, Gregory Benford, Ph.D., visited His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. Dr. Benford is an associate professor of physics at the University of California, Irvine.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** What is the current scientific knowledge about the spirit soul?

**Dr. Benford:** We have virtually no scientific knowledge about the soul.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Therefore you have actually made no advancement in scientific knowledge.

**Dr. Benford:** Well, scientific knowledge is a different class of knowledge.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Perhaps. There are so many departments of knowledge: the medical study of the body, the psychological study of the mind, and ultimately there is spiritual, transcendental knowledge. The body and mind are simply the coverings of the spirit soul, just as your body is covered by this shirt and coat. If you simply take care of the shirt and coat and neglect the person who is covered by this shirt and coat, do you think that this is advancement of knowledge?

**Dr. Benford:** I think that there is no category of knowledge that is useless.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** We don't say that this scientific knowledge is useless. Mechanics, electronics—this is also knowledge. But different departments of knowledge differ in their comparative importance. For example, if someone wants to cook nicely, this is also a science. There are many different departments of knowledge, but the central point

is *ātma-jñāna*—self-knowledge, the knowledge of the soul.

**Dr. Benford:** The only form of knowledge that is verifiable—that is, verifiable in the sense of getting everybody to agree with it—is that which can be proved logically or experimentally.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** The science of the self can be verified logically.

**Dr. Benford:** How so?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Just consider your body. You once had the body of a child, but now you don't have that body anymore; you have a different body. Yet anyone can understand that you once had the body of a child. So your body has changed, but you are still remaining.

**Dr. Benford:** I am not so sure it is the same "I."

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes, you are the same "I." Just as the parents of a child will say, after he has grown up, "Oh, just see how our son has grown." He is the same person: his parents say so, his friends say so, his family says so—everyone says so. This is the evidence. You have to accept this point, because there is so much evidence. Your mother will deny that you are a different person, even though you have a different body.

**Dr. Benford:** But I may not be the same being that I was.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Correct. "Not the same" means, for example, that a young child may talk nonsense now, but when he gets an adult body he does not speak foolishly. Although he is the same person, along with his change in body he has developed different consciousness.

But the spirit soul, the person, is the same. He acts according to his body, that's all—according to his circumstances. A dog, for example, is also a spirit soul, but because he has a dog's body he lives and acts like a dog. Similarly the spirit soul, when he has a child's body, acts like a child. When he has a different body, the same soul acts like a man. According to circumstances his activities are changing, but he is the same. For example, now you are a scientist. In your childhood you were not a scientist, so your dealings at that time were not those of a scientist. One's dealings may change according to circumstances, but the person is the same.

Therefore, the conclusion is *tathā dehāntara-prāptir dhīras tatra na muhyati*: "When this body is finished, the soul gives it up and accepts another body." [Bhagavad-gītā 2.13] *Tathā dehāntara*. *Dehāntara* means "another body." This is our Sanskrit knowledge from the *Bhagavad-gītā*. When the spirit soul is injected into the womb of a woman, it forms a little body. Gradually, through the emulsification of secretions, the body develops to the size of a pea, because of the presence of the spirit soul. Gradually the body develops nine holes—eyes, ears, mouth, nostrils, genital, and rectum. In this way the body is developed to completion in seven months. Then consciousness comes.

**Dr. Benford:** At seven months?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. The child wants to come out. He feels uncomfortable; therefore he prays to God to kindly

**Our physical self**, the outer body, is always changing—from childhood to adulthood to old age, from lifetime to lifetime, and even from species to species. Yet our spiritual self, the inner spark or soul, is always the same.



release him from this bondage. He promises that when he gets out, he will become a devotee of God. So after nine months he comes out of the womb. But unless his parents are devotees, due to circumstances he forgets God. Only if the father and mother are devotees does he continue his God consciousness. Therefore, it is a great fortune to take birth in a family of Vaiṣṇavas, those who are God conscious. This God consciousness is real scientific knowledge.

**Dr. Benford:** Is it true that the children of all such parents are somewhat spiritually superior to the children of other parents?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Generally, yes. They get the opportunity of being trained by the mother and father. Fortunately, my father was a great devotee, so I received this training from the very beginning. Somehow or other I had this spark of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and my father detected it. Then I accepted my spiritual master. In this way I have come to this stage of *sannyāsa* [the renounced, monastic order]. I am very much indebted to my father, for he took care of me in such a way that I became perfectly Kṛṣṇa conscious. My father used to receive many saintly persons at our home, and to every one of them he used to say, "Kindly bless my son so that he may become a servant of Rādhārāṇī [Lord Kṛṣṇa's eternal consort]." That was his only ambition. He taught me how to play the *mṛdaṅga* drum, although sometimes my mother was not very satisfied. She would say, "Why are you teaching him to play *mṛdaṅga*?" But my father would say, "No, no, he must learn a little *mṛdaṅga*." My father was very affectionate to me. Therefore, if by his past pious activities one gets a good father and mother, that is a great chance for advancing in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

**Dr. Benford:** What will happen to you and your students next?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** We are going back to Kṛṣṇa. We have got everything: Kṛṣṇa's name, Kṛṣṇa's address, Kṛṣṇa's form, Kṛṣṇa's activities. We know everything, and we are going there. Kṛṣṇa promises this in the *Bhagavad-gītā* [4.9]:

*janma karma ca me divyam  
evam yo vetti tattvataḥ  
tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma  
naiti mām eti so 'rjuna*

"One who knows Me in truth, scientifically," Kṛṣṇa says, "is eligible to enter into the kingdom of God. Upon leaving the body, he does not take his birth again in this material world, but attains My eternal abode."

**Dr. Benford:** How do you know that

people return in some other form?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** We see that there are so many forms. Where do these different forms come from? The form of the dog, the form of the cat, the form of the tree, the form of the reptile, the forms of the insects, the forms of the fish? What is your explanation for all these different forms? That you do not know.

**Dr. Benford:** Evolution.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Not exactly. The different species are already existing. "Fish," "tiger," "man"—all of these

---

**"You have become  
a scientist by  
proper education.  
Similarly, the  
consciousness  
of God is in  
everyone. However,  
this education  
is not given in  
the universities."**

---

are already existing. It is just like the different types of apartments here in Los Angeles. You may occupy one of them according to your ability to pay rent, but all types of apartments are nevertheless existing at the same time. Similarly, the living entity, according to his *karma*, is given facility to occupy one of these bodily forms. But there is evolution, also—spiritual evolution. From the fish, the soul evolves to plant life. From plant forms the living entity enters an insect body. From the insect body the next stage is bird, then beast, and finally the spirit soul may evolve to the human form of life. And from the human form, if one becomes qualified, he may evolve further. Otherwise, he must again enter the evolutionary cycle. Therefore, this human form of life is an important juncture in the evolutionary development of the living entity.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* [9.25] Kṛṣṇa says,

*yānti deva-vratā devān  
pitṛn yānti pitṛ-vratāḥ  
bhūtāni yānti bhūtejya  
yānti mad-yājino 'pi mām*

In other words, whatever you like you

can achieve. There are different *lokas*, or planetary systems, and you can go to the higher planetary systems where the demigods live and take a body there, or you can go where the Pitās, or ancestors, live. You can take a body here in Bhuloka, the earthly planetary system, or you can go to the planet of God, Kṛṣṇaloka. This method of transferring oneself at the time of death to whatever planet one chooses is called *yoga*. There is a physical process of *yoga*, a philosophical process of *yoga*, and a devotional process of *yoga*. The devotees can go directly to the planet where Kṛṣṇa is.

## Departments of Animal Knowledge

**Dr. Benford:** Undoubtedly you are aware that there are a few people, both in Eastern and Western society, who feel it a bit more intellectually justifiable to be completely agnostic about matters of theology. They feel, more or less, that if God had wanted us to know something more about Him, then He would have made it more easily apprehendable.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Then you don't believe in God?

**Dr. Benford:** I don't *not* believe in God; I'm just not forming an opinion until I have some evidence.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** But do you think that there is a God or not?

**Dr. Benford:** I have a suspicion that there may be, but it is unverified.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** But you think sometimes that there may be God, do you not?

**Dr. Benford:** Yes.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** So you are in doubt, suspicion—you are not certain—but your inclination is that you think there is a God, is it not? Your knowledge being imperfect, you are in doubt, that's all. Otherwise you are inclined to think of God. But because you are a scientific man, unless you perceive it scientifically, you do not accept. That is your position. But from your side, you believe in God.

**Dr. Benford:** Sometimes.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. Sometimes, or at all times—it doesn't matter. That is the position of everyone. As long as one is in the human form of life, he has a dormant consciousness of God. It simply has to be developed by proper training. It is just like anything else in life. For example, you have become a scientist by proper training, proper education. Similarly, the dormant consciousness of God, or Kṛṣṇa, is there in everyone. It simply requires proper education to awaken it. However, this education is not given in the universities. That is the defect in modern education. Although the inclination to be Kṛṣṇa conscious is



there, the authorities are unfortunately not giving any education about God. Therefore people are becoming godless, and they are feeling baffled in obtaining the true joy and satisfaction of life.

In San Diego, some priestly orders are going to hold a meeting to investigate the reasons why people are becoming averse to religion and not coming to church. But the cause is simple. Because your government does not know that life, especially human life, is meant for understanding God, they are supporting all the departments of knowledge very nicely—except the principal department, God consciousness.

**Dr. Benford:** So, of course, the reason is separation of church and state.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Reasons there may be many, but the principal reason is that this age is the Kali-yuga [the age of quarrel and hypocrisy]. People are not very intelligent; therefore they are trying to avoid this department of knowledge, the most important department of knowledge. And they are simply busy in the departments of knowledge in which the animals are also busy. Your advancement of knowledge is comprised of four things—eating, sleeping, mating, and defending. For example, you are discovering so many lethal weapons, and the politicians are taking advantage of it for defending. You are discovering so many chemicals to check pregnancy, and they are using them to increase sex life.

### Real Problems, Real Questions

**Dr. Benford:** What do you think about the moon mission?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That is also sleeping. You have spent so much money to go there and sleep, that's all. Otherwise, what can you do there?

**Dr. Benford:** You can go there and learn.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** You go there and sleep, that's all. Sleeping. You are spending billions and getting nothing in return.

**Dr. Benford:** It's worth more than that.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** No, nothing more, because these four principles—eating, sleeping, mating, and defending—are the background. If you have no knowledge beyond this body, you cannot go beyond this bodily jurisdiction. You may have very gorgeous, polished bodily knowledge, but your whole range of activities is within these four principles of eating, sleeping, mating, and defending. This knowledge is prevalent among the lower animals, also. They know how to eat, how to sleep, how to have sexual intercourse, and how to defend.

**Dr. Benford:** But they don't know anything about nuclear physics!

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That does not mean

that you are improved over the animals. It is the same thing—only polished. You are improving from the bullock cart to the car, that's all—simply a transformation of material knowledge.

**Dr. Benford:** There is knowledge about the structure of the physical world.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** But it is a waste of energy, because in your activities you cannot go beyond this bodily jurisdiction of eating, sleeping, mating, and defending. The dog may sleep on the ground, and you may sleep in a very nice apart-

---

“I don't want  
unhappiness, but  
unhappiness comes.  
I don't want death,  
but death comes.  
I don't want  
disease, but  
disease comes.  
Who is enforcing  
these things?”

---

ment, but when you sleep your enjoyment and the dog's enjoyment are the same. You may have so many electrical appliances and other material conveniences, but when you sleep you forget everything. Therefore this gorgeous sleeping accommodation is simply a waste of time.

**Dr. Benford:** You seem to place emphasis on what knowledge does for you. What about the sheer joy of discovering how nature works? For example, now we think that we understand matter like this [pointing to the grass]. We think that we know from experiments, theory, and analysis that it is made up of particles that we cannot see, and we can analyze the properties of it through experiment. We know that it is made up of molecules. We understand some of the forces that hold it together, and this is the first time we knew this. We didn't know it before.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** But what is the benefit? Even if you knew every particle of this grass, what would be the benefit? The grass is growing. It will grow with or without your knowledge. You may know it or not know it, but it will not make any difference. Anything you like you may

study from a material, analytical point of view. Any nonsense thing you take you can study and study and compile a voluminous book. But what will be the use of it?

**Dr. Benford:** I seem to view the world as the sum of its component parts.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Suppose I take this grass. I can write volumes of books—when it came into existence, when it died, what the fibers are, what the molecules are. In so many ways I can describe this insignificant foliage. But what is the use of it?

**Dr. Benford:** If it has no use, why did God put it there? Isn't it worthwhile studying?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Our point is that you would rather study the insignificant grass than the God who has created everything. If you could understand Him, then automatically you would understand the grass. But you want to separate His grass from Him, to study it separately. In this way you can compile volumes and volumes on the subject, but why waste your intelligence in that way? The branch of a tree is beautiful as long as it is attached to the main trunk, but as soon as you cut it off it will dry up. Therefore, what is the use of studying the dried-up branch? It is a waste of intelligence.

**Dr. Benford:** But why is it a waste?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Certainly it is a waste, because the result is not useful.

**Dr. Benford:** Well, what is “useful”?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** It is useful to know yourself—what you are.

**Dr. Benford:** Why is knowledge of myself better than knowledge of a plant?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** If you understand what you are, then you understand other things. That is called *ātma-tattva*, *ātma-jñāna*, self-knowledge. That is important. I am a spirit soul, and I am passing through so many species of life. But what is my position? I don't wish to die, because I am afraid to change bodies. Therefore, I am afraid of death. This question should be raised first: I don't want unhappiness, but unhappiness comes. I don't want death, but death comes. I don't want disease, but disease comes. I don't want to become an old man, but old age comes anyway. What is the reason that these things are coming by force? Who is enforcing these things? These things I do not know, but these are the real problems. I don't want excessive heat, but there is excessive heat. Why? Who is enforcing these things? Why are they being enforced? I don't want this heat; what have I done? These are real questions, not just studying foliage and writing volumes of books. That is a waste of energy. *Study yourself.*





*On July 8, 1974, after much hunting, Nityānanda signed the papers for a two-hundred-acre farm. "As we stood out in the yard watching the sun set behind the pine forests, we wondered what we were going to do next."*



A full-page photograph of a person standing in a field at sunset. The person is on the left, silhouetted against the bright orange and yellow sky. The sky is filled with soft, wispy clouds. The horizon line is low, with dark silhouettes of trees and bushes in the background.

IN THE VEDIC TRADITION

# TOWARD APPROPRIATE LIVING

The beginnings of New Talavan, ISKCON's farming  
community in Southern Mississippi.

TEXT BY DRUTAKARMA DĀSA  
PHOTOS BY MURALĪVADANA DĀSA



When Nico Kuyt was growing up, he lived in small towns in Canada and the northern United States. "I never lived on a farm, though," he recalls. "My father did engineering for big mining companies. But I always liked the woods, the country."

In 1968, while studying at the State University of New York (at Buffalo), Nico attended a philosophy course taught by Rūpānuga dāsa, a leader of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. Rūpānuga lectured from the *Bhagavad-gītā*, and hearing him, Nico became intrigued enough to visit the Buffalo Hare Kṛṣṇa center a number of times.

During summer vacation, Nico went to Boulder, Colorado, to spend some time in the mountains. As the sun rose each morning over the Rocky Mountain peaks, he would meditate on the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra and study the *Bhagavad-gītā*. "I just wanted to see if there was anything to it," he says.

Apparently there was. When Nico returned to the East Coast, he joined the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement in Buffalo and soon received the name Nityānanda dāsa. From Buffalo, Nityānanda dāsa traveled south to New Orleans, where he spent the next few years establishing a thriving Kṛṣṇa conscious center.

Then, in March 1974, Nityānanda traveled to India for the yearly Hare Kṛṣṇa International Festival, in Māyāpur,\* West Bengal.

Early each morning Śrīla Prabhupāda, the founder and spiritual preceptor of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, would take a walk with some of his leading disciples and answer their questions about spiritual life and the practicalities of managing a worldwide society.

Using his 8mm movie camera as an excuse, Nityānanda got permission to go along. As the group strolled on the bank of the Ganges in the predawn mists, he filmed them and listened intently to his spiritual master's words.

On these walks Śrīla Prabhupāda told his disciples that he wanted to start farm projects all over the world. For many years the devotees had been trying to get people to accept the concepts of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, as they appear in books like *Bhagavad-gītā*. "But," Śrīla Prabhupāda said, "if the people are in chaos, how will they be able to accept this great philosophy?" He told them that urban-industrial civilization left little scope for spiritual growth. Life in the country would be more favorable.



Make the farm self-sufficient, Śrīla Prabhupāda tells Nityānanda (third from right, above). Sorghum (right) yields a sweet syrup that replaces sugar. The crushed stalks become fodder.

Beyond this, he pointed to the likelihood of a nuclear war that would clear away the mad civilization of cities and machines. Afterward, millions would be looking for a new way to live.

To Nityānanda these ideas were a revelation. "Now we were to purchase land in the country and start farms! All of a sudden, I could see that we could bring the lost Vedic civilization back if we simply started Kṛṣṇa conscious farming villages all over the countryside. People would live simply and peacefully again and cultivate spiritual awareness. My mind was running with excitement."

### From Bengal to Mississippi

As soon as Nityānanda got back from India, he began studying books on agriculture, animal husbandry, and village crafts. Then he decided to go out and find a piece of land. It wasn't easy. To the east, west, and south, New Orleans was bordered by swamps. To the north there was farmland, but it was too crowded. The only area left north of New Orleans was in southern Mississippi, around a town called Picayune.

On July 8, 1974, after much hunting, Nityānanda signed the papers for a two-hundred-acre farm. "As we stood out in the yard watching the sun set behind the pine forests, we wondered what we were going to do next."

"At first we got off onto some side trips," he recalls. They went heavily into machinery and established a modern dairy, hoping to sell the milk commercially. "Before long we realized we were just increasing our headaches. We had come out to the farm to live simply, but we wound up worrying all the time about our big shiny red tractors, wagons, chop-

pers, blowers, grinders, loaders, and unloaders.

"At one point, I became very discouraged," Nityānanda says. "Then I saw that I had to get a broader vision of what the farm was all about. I started meditating on what we were trying to accomplish."

Also, he consulted with other devotees who were developing farms in other parts of the country.

"But the biggest inspiration was Śrīla Prabhupāda," he remembers. In March 1975, Śrīla Prabhupāda was traveling through America, and Nityānanda flew to Dallas to meet with him. Late one evening, he showed his spiritual master some 8mm films he'd taken at the farm. During the showing, Śrīla Prabhupāda remained pensive and quiet, but afterward he eagerly questioned Nityānanda about the farm and offered many practical suggestions.

"Śrīla Prabhupāda emphasized the need for self-sufficiency," says Nityānanda. "He said that we should obtain everything locally rather than from distant factories and cities. Śrīla Prabhupāda wasn't looking toward the modern machine civilization for his ideas." Instead, he was taking them from India's ancient, agriculturally-based spiritual civilization (remnants of which still exist in Bengal and Orissa).

The novice farmers should grow their own grain, fruit, and vegetables, said Śrīla Prabhupāda. They should keep cows for milk—which they could then turn into yogurt, butter, and curd. They should use oxen to plow the fields. They should grow sugar cane for sweetener. They should grow castor beans and use their oil to burn in lamps; that way they would be able to get along without

\*Māyāpur is famous as the birthplace of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. Five centuries ago, Lord Caitanya (an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa) appeared there and taught everyone to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.









**Cows provide more than enough** milk, butter, and cheese. Class is outdoors today for New Talavan's children (right). Visitors lodge in the comfortable guesthouse at rear.

electric lights. They should grow cotton, spin it into thread, and weave their own cloth on handlooms. For building materials they should use logs and bricks. "Become self-sufficient," Śrīla Prabhupāda said again and again. "There is no need to go thirty or fifty miles to work." Finally, he encouraged Nityānanda to build a magnificent temple as the center of the community. "Be patient, determined, and always enthusiastic," Śrīla Prabhupāda told his disciple. "Be convinced of success; then Kṛṣṇa will surely help you."

Later that year, in July, Śrīla Prabhupāda visited the farm. "It's just like Bengal," he said, looking out over the fields. Earlier, Śrīla Prabhupāda had spoken mainly of self-sufficiency, but now he gave Nityānanda practical







instructions about organizing the community. "Avoid machines. Keep everyone employed as a *brāhmaṇa* [priestly teacher], *kṣatriya* [administrator], *vaiśya* [farmer], or *śūdra* [laborer]. Nobody should sit idle." He was explaining India's ancient social system, natural divisions that allow people to make the most of their special aptitudes and inclinations.

"The *brāhmaṇas*," said Śrīla Prabhupāda, "study transcendental literature, such as *Bhagavad-gītā* and the *Upaniṣads*. And they lecture and instruct, as well as worship the Deity in the temple. They should have ideal character," he said, "and the other classes provide food and shelter out of appreciation for their guidance." The *kṣatriyas*, taking advice from the *brāhmaṇas*, manage and govern the village; also, they apportion land to the *vaiśyas*. The *vaiśyas* use the land to produce grains, fruits, and vegetables and to raise cows for milk. They give twenty-five percent of their produce or earnings to the *kṣatriyas*, who spend it for village projects. The *śūdras*, the artisans



"We're getting ready for the day when thousands of people will come here," says Nityānanda. Now only four percent of America's population live on farms, but how long can people go on living the way they are in the cities?

and craftsmen, assist the other three classes.

"This is an ideal society," Śrīla Prabhupāda affirmed. To begin with, everyone works in an area that perfectly suits his psychophysical nature. If someone likes intellectual activities, he works as a *brāhmaṇa*. If someone likes managing and organizing, he works as a *kṣatriya*. If someone likes business and agriculture, he works as a *vaiśya*. And if someone likes the arts and crafts, he works as a *śūdra*.

All four classes are needed. Like the human body, the social body requires a brain (the *brāhmaṇas*) to give guidance, arms (the *kṣatriyas*) to organize and defend, a stomach (the *vaiśyas*) to produce energy, and legs (the *śūdras*) to offer support. When all four classes cooperate, everyone is employed and the society runs smoothly.

### Closer to Self-sufficiency

"We are not against machines," Śrīla Prabhupāda told Nityānanda as they walked around the farm. "If we can use machines, that is good—but not at the risk of keeping men unemployed. These modern administrators are rascals—they do not realize that by using so many machines they are keeping millions of men unemployed. And the welfare department is paying them. The government is paying them to become hippies, criminals, and prostitutes. A boy keeps a girl friend; the girl is getting welfare; and he is using the money to buy drugs."

"It was obvious he wasn't talking about some vague, theoretical philosophy," says Nityānanda. "He was showing us that we could take the insights of the Vedic culture and put them to practical use on this farm in southern Mississippi. After that visit, my vision for developing the farm became strong and clear."

Right after Śrīla Prabhupāda left, Nityānanda started getting rid of most of the machines. And now, three years later, he's brought the farm many steps closer to the goal of self-sufficiency. "For heat and hot water we use wood stoves," he says. "We cut oak and pine in our woodlands. We're growing our own vegetables. Last summer we had more eggplants than we could eat and good crops of potatoes, spinach, and squash. We have lots of pecan trees. We produce all our own milk, butter, and yogurt—we haven't bought any in five years, and usually we have enough extra to send to the temple in New Orleans. We grow all our own hay for the cows, and we milk them by hand. We're not dependent on milking machines; that's another step we've taken.

"We don't buy any chemical fertilizers, herbicides, or insecticides," he continues. "All our farming is completely natural. For fertilizer we use cow manure. Instead of putting up barbed wire fences, we plant thorny hedges. We wash all our clothes by hand. We still have an electric pump for our well, but this year we'll replace it with a windmill.

"We'll gladly give two to five acres to families who will use it for growing crops or carrying on a craft or trade," Nityānanda adds. "And we'll give them free materials and help them build a house. We have a first-rate school for the children, and the parents can come to the temple and learn about the science of self-realization.

"We're getting ready for the day when thousands of people will come here," he says. "Civilization as we know it will be finished some day soon—by economic disaster or war. People won't be listening to their former leaders; they'll be looking for a better way to live. And when that happens, we'll be ready with Kṛṣṇa conscious farming villages like this one."



# The History of Kṛṣṇa And the Kāliya Serpent

After fifty centuries, the encounter between Lord Kṛṣṇa and His hundred-headed adversary is still celebrated.

by DRUTAKARMĀ DĀSA

Last summer I went to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art to see "The Sensuous Immortals," a sculpture exhibit from the Pan Asian Collection. Among the pieces were many Viṣṇu and Kṛṣṇa Deities. Some came from Angkor Wat, the great ruined temple complex in Cambodia. Others were from as far away as Indonesia. At one time, the archaeological record shows, the Vedic culture extended in a huge arc: from Java to Indochina, throughout India (of course), and west to the Iranian border.

A little girl was surveying a bronze figure—Kṛṣṇa playing His flute and dancing on the head of a huge serpent.

"Is that God?" she inquired of her well-attired mother.

Perhaps remembering a college art history course, the lady said, "Yes, dear, that's God."

"What's His name?" the girl persisted.

Casting a glance at the identifying card, she said, "Kṛṣṇa. It's a form of Kṛṣṇa."

"Why is He dancing on the snake's head?"

"It doesn't say."

"The Sensuous Immortals." I liked the title. (Of course, Lord Kṛṣṇa isn't sensuous, but He is sentient.) Many people believe that after death we all



PHOTO BHARGAVA DĀSA

merge into the Supreme and lose our individuality and sensation. A more careful reading of the *Vedas*, however, reveals that the individual self is immortal and after "death" acts through spiritual senses. And among all the immortals, one is supreme. Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord, pervades the entire universe and simultaneously exists in a humanlike form with transcendental senses.

Periodically, Kṛṣṇa descends to earth to display His *līlā*, or pastimes, and invites us to take part in them. Somehow, we have come to this less-than-ideal world to enact our own "pastimes" (getting old, getting sick, dying, and taking new bodies, sometimes even animal

A *kadamba tree* (above) marks the spot where Kṛṣṇa battled Kāliya. Before the Yamunā's course shifted, pilgrims would descend the steps to bathe in the sacred waters.

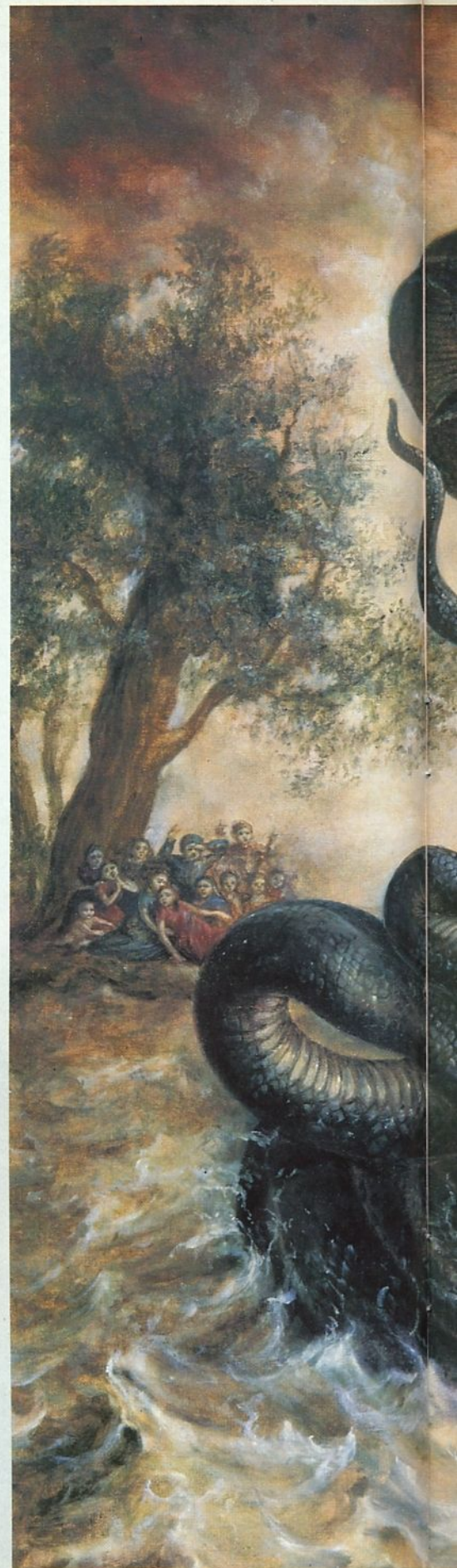


ILLUSTRATION: DHIRTI-DEVIDASI





bodies). But by meditating on Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, we prepare ourselves for reentering them.

Fifty centuries ago, Lord Kṛṣṇa made His appearance in Mathurā, a district about ninety miles south of New Delhi, on the way to Agra (the site of the Taj Mahal). The Greek geographer Ptolemy called it *Modoura*, the city of the gods. The historian Arrian referred to it as *Me-thoras*, the capital of the *Souraseni*, the descendants of King Surasena (Kṛṣṇa's grandfather). As soon as Kṛṣṇa appeared there, however, His father Vasudeva carried Him across the river Yamunā to Vṛndāvana to save Him from King Kāṁsa, who wanted to kill Him.

In his *Ancient Geography of India* (1871), a British major general named Alexander Cunningham relates, "*Vṛndāvana* means the 'grove of basil [*tulasī*] trees,' but the earlier name of the place was *Kāliyāvarta*, or Kāliya's whirlpool, because the serpent Kāliya was fabled to have taken up his abode just above the town... [near]... a *kadamba* tree overhanging the Jumna. Here he was attacked by Kṛṣṇa." The spot is still there. This past spring I happened to visit it while on pilgrimage.

Things haven't changed so very much since the time Kṛṣṇa played in Vṛndāvana as a cowherd boy. On the outskirts, in Ramaṇa Reti, peacocks still dance beneath the trees. If you're not careful, monkeys will steal fruit from your room. Cowherd boys lead white cows along dusty paths to graze for the afternoon in the shade of tall trees. Everywhere you can hear songbirds. And beyond the wheat fields, flower gardens, and orchards, the river Yamunā shimmers invitingly.

Ptolemy knew this river as *Diamouna*; Pliny's Latin name for her was *Jomanes*. Over the centuries the course of the Yamunā has shifted somewhat. Now the old riverbed is part of a pilgrimage path that encircles Vṛndāvana village. Along the path you walk past many small temples that mark the places of Kṛṣṇa's adventures. One cool evening late in March, before the onset of the hot season, I was walking the path with other Western devotees, passing village women who balanced brass water jugs on their heads, old farmers who drove bullock carts, and Indian pilgrims who greeted us with Kṛṣṇa's names.

With the sun just setting, we came upon the place called *Kāliya-ghāṭa*. In the shade of ancient trees stood a modest stone temple. As we peered into a small shrine, we could see the Kṛṣṇa Deity playing His flute and dancing on the hoods of a many-headed serpent. The Deity was not at all unlike the one in Los





Angeles, except that here the temple priests were performing age-old rites of worship. Patita-pāvana dāsa, an American devotee who had lived on the sub-continent for several years, began recounting the battle between Lord Kṛṣṇa and the great serpent Kāliya.

While tending their cows, Kṛṣṇa and His friends sometimes came to the bank of the Yamunā. One summer's day the boys and cows felt exceptionally thirsty and started drinking the water. But the river was tainted with Kāliya's venom, and the boys and cows fell to the ground, apparently dead. The venomous vapors had even dried up the nearby trees and grasses, and when birds flew overhead they fell into the water and died. But Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, restored everyone and everything to life by His mere glance. I couldn't help thinking that environmentalists would appreciate this. The Supreme fights water pollution.

In any case, now Kṛṣṇa turned His gaze on Kāliya. First Kṛṣṇa climbed up into a huge, yellow-flowered *kadamba* tree (the one mentioned by Major General Cunningham). Then He

jumped out of the tree and into the water. Kāliya surfaced and angrily grabbed Kṛṣṇa in his coils. Seeing their beloved friend in such danger, the cowherd boys became overwhelmed with anxiety. They wanted to help Kṛṣṇa, but they could only stand on the bank and cry.

Meanwhile, the earth trembled and meteors fell from the sky. Looking on from a distance, Kṛṣṇa's foster father Nanda Mahārāja and the other cowherd men of Vṛndāvana were horrified. "Kṛṣṇa is in danger!"

Ordinarily, we think of God as our all-provident father and approach Him in a mood of supplication. But the residents of Vṛndāvana saw Kṛṣṇa as their friend and child and so approached Him with unalloyed devotion. This is life's highest attainment—pure love of God.

All the residents of Vṛndāvana—men, women, children, and even animals—rushed to the bank of the Yamunā to see Kṛṣṇa. But Kṛṣṇa's older brother Balarāma simply stood there smiling. He knew that Kṛṣṇa was supremely powerful and that He could easily defeat the serpent. Balarāma could tell that Kṛṣṇa



PHOTO: BHARGAVA DASA

**The wives of Kāliya (above)** beseech Kṛṣṇa to spare their husband's life. This Deity is found at Kṣīra-ghāṭa in Vṛndāvana. At left, Kṛṣṇa revives His friends, who had fallen lifeless after drinking water poisoned by the serpent.

was just allowing the residents of Vṛndāvana to increase their love for Him. (In the Vedic tradition, God is seen as the central object of love, because all other love—for friends, family, or country—is temporary.)

When Kṛṣṇa's mother Yaśodā arrived, she wanted to jump into the river, but her friends stopped her. So she stood and watched, transfixed with grief for her beloved child. (Of course, in the strict sense the Lord has no mother, but He allows a devotee who loves Him with motherly affection to act in that capacity. In much the same way, one can approach Kṛṣṇa in the mood of friendship or conjugal love.)

For two hours Kṛṣṇa remained in the grip of Kāliya's coils. But when all the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana were practically at the point of death out of affection for Him, Kṛṣṇa broke free. Then He jumped atop the serpent's hoods and danced on them. Kāliya tried to knock Kṛṣṇa down with the rest of his hoods (he had a hundred), but Kṛṣṇa eluded them all. Kṛṣṇa danced with sublime aesthetic grace, all the while striking Kāliya harder and harder. Soon the enraged serpent spewed poison and fire. He was struggling for his very life.

When Kāliya raised a hood in one last attempt to kill Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa kicked it down. Finally Kāliya began to realize who Kṛṣṇa was, and the serpent's wives

(continued on page 33)

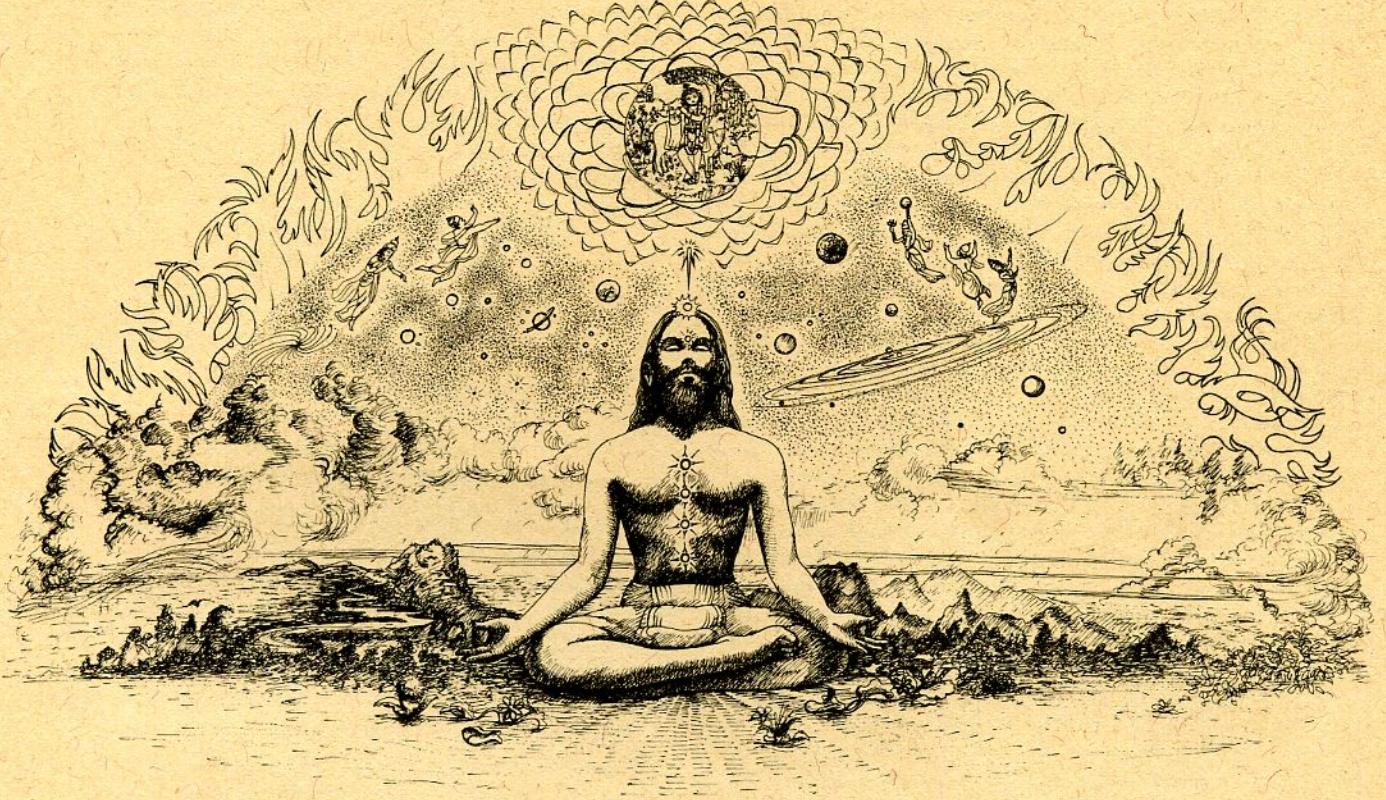


The Beautiful Story of the Personality of Godhead

# ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

Translation and commentary by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda  
Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

## Second Canto: "The Cosmic Manifestation"



### CHAPTER TWO

#### The Lord in the Heart

In this part of our continuing presentation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, we learn how the perfect yogī concentrates his mind on the form of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and thus transcends the boundaries of limited material existence.

#### TEXT 12

अदीनलीलाहसितेक्ष्णोल्लसद्-  
भ्रूभङ्गसंसृचितभूर्यनुग्रहम् ।  
ईक्षेत चिन्तामयमेनमीश्वरं  
यावन्मनो धारणयावतिष्ठते ॥१२॥

adīna-līlā-hasitekṣaṇollasad-  
bhṛū-bhaṅga-samsūcīta-bhūrī-anugrahaṁ  
ikṣeta cintāmayam enam īśvaraṁ  
yāvan mano dhāraṇayāvatiṣṭhate

adīna—very magnanimous; līlā—pastimes; hasita—smiling; ikṣaṇa—by glancing over; ullasat—glowing; bhrū-bhaṅga—signals of the eyebrow; saṁsūcīta—indicated; bhūrī—extensive; anugrahaṁ—benediction; ikṣeta—one must concentrate on; cintāmayam—transcendental; enam—this particular; īśvaraṁ—the Supreme Lord; yāvat—as long as; manaḥ—the mind; dhāraṇayā—by meditation; avatiṣṭhate—can be fixed.

#### TRANSLATION

The Lord's magnanimous pastimes and the glowing glancing of His smiling face are all indications of His extensive benedictions. One must therefore concentrate on this transcendental form of the Lord, as long as the mind can be fixed on Him by meditation.

#### PURPORT

In *Bhagavad-gītā* (12.5) it is said that the impersonalist undergoes a series of difficult programs on account of his impersonal meditation. But the devotee, due to the Lord's personal service, progresses very easily. Impersonal meditation is therefore a source of suffering for the impersonalist. Here, the devotee has an advantage over the impersonalist philosopher. The impersonalist is doubtful about the personal feature of the



Lord, and therefore he always tries to meditate upon something which is not objective. For this reason there is an authentic statement in the *Bhāgavatam* regarding the positive concentration of the mind on the factual form of the Lord.

The process of meditation recommended herein is *bhakti-yoga*, or the process of devotional service after one is liberated from the material conditions. *Jñāna-yoga* is the process of liberation from the material conditions. After one is liberated from the conditions of material existence, i.e., when one is *nivṛtta*, as previously stated herein, or when one is freed from all material necessities, one becomes qualified to discharge the process of *bhakti-yoga*. Therefore *bhakti-yoga* includes *jñāna-yoga*, or, in other words, the process of pure devotional service simultaneously serves the purpose of *jñāna-yoga*; liberation from material conditions is automatically achieved by the gradual development of pure devotional service. These effects of *bhakti-yoga* are called *anartha-nivṛtti*. Things which are artificially acquired gradually disappear along with the progress of *bhakti-yoga*. Meditation on the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead, the first processional step, must show its effect by *anartha-nivṛtti*. The grossest type of *anartha* which binds the conditioned soul in material existence is sex desire, and this sex desire gradually develops in the union of the male and female. When the male and female are united, the sex desire is further aggravated by the accumulation of buildings, children, friends, relatives and wealth. When all these are acquired, the conditioned soul becomes overwhelmed by such entanglements, and the false sense of egoism, or the sense of "myself" and "mine," becomes prominent, and the sex desire expands to various political, social, altruistic, philanthropic and many other unwanted engagements, resembling the foam of the sea waves, which becomes very prominent at one time and at the next moment vanishes as quickly as a cloud in the sky. The conditioned soul is encircled by such products, as well as products of sex desire, and therefore *bhakti-yoga* leads to gradual evaporation of the sex desire, which is summarized in three headings, namely *profit*, *adoration* and *distinction*. All conditioned souls are mad after these different forms of sex desire, and one shall see for himself how much he has been freed from such material hankerings based primarily on the sex desire. As a person feels his hunger satisfied after eating each morsel of foodstuff, he must similarly be able to see the degree to which he has been freed from sex desire. The sex desire is diminished along with its various forms by the process of *bhakti-yoga* because *bhakti-yoga* automatically, by the grace of the Lord, effectively results in knowledge and renunciation, even if the devotee is not materially very well educated. Knowledge means knowing things as they are, and if by deliberation it is found that there are things which are at all unnecessary, naturally the person who has acquired knowledge leaves aside such unwanted things. When the conditioned soul finds by culture of knowledge that material necessities are unwanted things, he becomes detached from such unwanted things. This stage of knowledge is called *vairāgya*, or detachment from unwanted things. We have previously discussed that the transcendentalist is required to be self-sufficient and should not beg from the rich blind persons to fulfill the bare necessities of life. Śukadeva Gosvāmī has suggested some alternatives for the bare necessities of life, namely the problem of eating, sleeping and shelter, but he has not suggested any alternative for sex satisfaction. One who has the sex desire still with him should not at all try to accept the renounced order of life. For one who has not attained to this stage, there is no question of a renounced order of life. So by the gradual process of devotional service under the guidance of a proper spiritual master, and following the principles of the *Bhāgavatam*, one must be able at least to control the gross sex desire before one accepts the renounced order of life factually.

So purification means getting free gradually from sex desire, and this is attained by meditation on the person of the Lord as described herein, beginning from the feet. One should not try to go upwards artificially without seeing for himself how much he has been released from the sex desire. The smiling face of the Lord is the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and there are many upstarts who at once try to begin with the Tenth Canto and especially with the five chapters which delineate the *rāsa-līlā* of the Lord. This is certainly improper. By such improper study

or hearing of *Bhāgavatam*, the material opportunists have played havoc by indulgence in sex life in the name of *Bhāgavatam*. This vilification of *Bhāgavatam* is rendered by the acts of the so-called devotees; one should be free from all kinds of sex desire before he tries to make a show of recital of *Bhāgavatam*. Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura clearly defines the import of purification as cessation from sex indulgence. He says, *yathā yathā dhīḥ ca śuddhyati viṣaya-lāmpaṭyaṁ tyajati, tathā tathā dhārayet iti citta-śuddhi-tāratamyenaiva dhyāna-tāratamyam uktam*. And as one gets free from the intoxication of sex indulgence by purification of intelligence, one should step forward for the next meditation, or in other words, the progress of meditation on the different limbs of the transcendental body of the Lord should be enhanced in proportion to the progress of purification of the heart. The conclusion is that those who are still entrapped by sex indulgence should never progress to meditation above the feet of the Lord; therefore recital of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* by them should be restricted to the First and Second Cantos of the great literature. One must complete the purificatory process by assimilating the contents of the first nine cantos. Then one should be admitted into the realm of the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

### TEXT 13

एकैकशोऽङ्गानि धियानुभावयेत्  
पादादि यावद्भसितं गदाभृताः ।  
जितं जितं स्थानमपोह धारयेत्  
परं परं शुद्ध्यति धीर्यथा यथा ॥१३॥

ekaikaśo 'ṅgāni dhiyānubhāvayet  
pādādi yāvad dhasitaṁ gadābhṛtaḥ  
jitaṁ jitaṁ sthānam apohya dhārayet  
param param śuddhyati dhīr yathā yathā

*eka-ekaśaḥ*—one to one, or one after another; *aṅgāni*—limbs; *dhiyā*—by attention; *anubhāvayet*—meditate upon; *pāda-ādi*—legs, etc.; *yāvat*—until; *hasitaṁ*—smiling; *gadā-bhṛtaḥ*—the Personality of Godhead; *jitaṁ jitaṁ*—gradually controlling the mind; *sthānam*—place; *apohya*—leaving; *dhārayet*—meditate upon; *param param*—higher and higher; *śuddhyati*—purified; *dhīḥ*—intelligence; *yathā yathā*—as much as.

### TRANSLATION

The process of meditation should begin from the lotus feet of the Lord and progress to His smiling face. The meditation should be concentrated upon the lotus feet, then the calves, then the thighs, and in this way higher and higher. The more the mind becomes fixed upon the different parts of the limbs, one after another, the more the intelligence becomes purified.

### PURPORT

The process of meditation recommended in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is not to fix one's attention on something impersonal or void. The meditation should concentrate on the Person of the Supreme Godhead, either in His *virāt-rūpa*, the gigantic universal form, or in His *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*, as described in the scriptures. There are authorized descriptions of Viṣṇu forms, and there are authorized representations of Deities in the temples. Thus one can practice meditating upon the Deity, concentrating his mind on the lotus feet of the Lord and gradually rising higher and higher, up to His smiling face.

According to the *Bhāgavata* school, the Lord's *rāsa* dancing is the smiling face of the Lord. Since it is recommended in this verse that one should gradually progress from the lotus feet up to the smiling face, we shall not jump at once to understand the Lord's pastimes in the *rāsa* dance. It is better to practice concentrating our attention by offering flowers and *tulasī* to the lotus feet of the Lord. In this way, we gradually become purified by the *arcāṇā* process. We dress the Lord, bathe Him, etc., and all these transcendental activities help us purify our existence.



When we reach the higher standard of purification, if we see the smiling face of the Lord or hear the *rāsa* dance pastimes of the Lord, then we can relish His activities. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, therefore, the *rāsa* dance pastimes are delineated in the Tenth Canto (Chapters 29–34).

The more one concentrates on the transcendental form of the Lord, either on the lotus feet, the calves, the thighs or the chest, the more one becomes purified. In this verse it is clearly stated, “the more the intelligence becomes purified,” which means the more one becomes detached from sense gratification. Our intelligence in the present conditioned state of life is impure due to being engaged in sense gratification. The result of meditation on the transcendental form of the Lord will be manifested by one’s detachment from sense gratification. Therefore, the ultimate purpose of meditation is purification of one’s intelligence.

Those who are too engrossed in sense gratification cannot be allowed to participate in *arcanā* or to touch the transcendental form of the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu Deities. For them it is better to meditate upon the gigantic *virāt-rūpa* of the Lord, as recommended in the next verse. The impersonalists and the voidists are therefore recommended to meditate upon the universal form of the Lord, whereas the devotees are recommended to meditate on the Deity worship in the temple. Because the impersonalists and the voidists are not sufficiently purified in their spiritual activities, *arcanā* is not meant for them.

## TEXT 14

यावन्न जायेत परावरेऽस्मिन्  
विश्वेश्वरे द्रष्टरि भक्तियोगः ।  
तावत् स्थावीयः पुरुषस्य रूपं  
क्रियावासाने प्रयतः स्मरेत् ॥१४॥

yāvan na jāyeta parāvare ’smiṇ  
viśveśvare draṣṭari bhakti-yogaḥ  
tāvat sthāvīyaḥ puruṣasya rūpaṁ  
kriyāvasāne prayataḥ smareta

*yāvat*—as long as; *na*—does not; *jāyeta*—develop; *para*—transcendental; *avare*—mundane; *asmiṇ*—in this form of; *viśva-īśvare*—the Lord of all worlds; *draṣṭari*—unto the seer; *bhakti-yogaḥ*—devotional service; *tāvat*—so long; *sthāvīyaḥ*—the gross materialist; *puruṣasya*—of the *virāt-puruṣa*; *rūpaṁ*—universal form; *kriyā-avasāne*—at the end of one’s prescribed duties; *prayataḥ*—with proper attention; *smareta*—one should remember.

## TRANSLATION

Unless the gross materialist develops a sense of loving service unto the Supreme Lord, the seer of both the transcendental and material worlds, he should remember or meditate upon the universal form of the Lord at the end of his prescribed duties.

## PURPORT

The Supreme Lord is the seer of all worlds, both material and transcendental. In other words, the Supreme Lord is the ultimate beneficiary and enjoyer of all worlds, as confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (5.29). The spiritual world is the manifestation of His internal potency, and the material world is the manifestation of His external potency. The living entities are also His marginal potency, and by their own choice they can live in either the transcendental or material worlds. The material world is not a fit place for living entities because they are spiritually one with the Lord and in the material world the living entities become conditioned by the laws of the material world. The Lord wants all living entities, who are His parts and parcels, to live with Him in the transcendental world, and for enlightening conditioned souls in the material world, all the *Vedas* and the revealed scriptures are there—expressly to recall the conditioned souls back home, back to Godhead. Unfortunately, the conditioned living entities, although suffering continually the threefold miseries of conditioned life, are not very serious about going back to Godhead. It is due to

their misguided way of living, complicated by sins and virtues. Some of them who are virtuous by deeds begin to reestablish the lost relation with the Lord, but they are unable to understand the personal feature of the Lord. The real purpose of life is to make contact with the Lord and be engaged in His service. That is the natural position of living entities. But those who are impersonalists and are unable to render any loving service to the Lord have been advised to meditate upon His impersonal feature, the *virāt-rūpa*, or universal form. Some way or other, one must try to reestablish one’s forgotten relation with the Lord if one at all desires to gain real happiness in life, and to reclaim his natural unfettered condition. For the less intelligent beginners, meditation on the impersonal feature, the *virāt-rūpa*, or universal form of the Lord, will gradually qualify one to rise to personal contact. One is advised herewith to meditate upon the *virāt-rūpa* specified in the previous chapters in order to understand how the different planets, seas, mountains, rivers, birds, beasts, human beings, demigods and all that we can conceive are but different parts and limbs of the Lord’s *virāt* form. This sort of thinking is also a type of meditation on the Absolute Truth, and as soon as such meditation begins, one develops one’s godly qualities, and the whole world appears to be a happy and peaceful residence for all the people of the world. Without such meditation on God, either personal or impersonal, all good qualities of the human being become covered with misconceptions regarding his constitutional position, and without such advanced knowledge, the whole world becomes a hell for the human being.

## TEXT 15

स्थिरं सुखं चासनमास्थितो यति-  
र्यदा जिहासुरिममङ्ग लोकम् ।  
काले च देशे च मनो न सज्जयेत्  
प्राणान् नियच्छेन्मनसा जितासुः ॥१५॥

sthiram sukham cāsanam āsthito yatir  
yadā jihāsur imam aṅga lokam  
kāle ca deśe ca mano na sajjayet  
prāṇān niyacchen manasā jitasuḥ

*sthiram*—without being disturbed; *sukham*—comfortable; *ca*—also; *āsanam*—sitting accommodation; *āsthitaḥ*—being situated; *yatir*—the sage; *yadā*—whenever; *jihāsuḥ*—desires to give up; *imam*—this; *aṅga*—O King; *lokam*—this body; *kāle*—in time; *ca*—and; *deśe*—in a proper place; *ca*—also; *manaḥ*—the mind; *na*—not; *sajjayet*—may not be perplexed; *prāṇān*—the senses; *niyacchet*—must control; *manasā*—by the mind; *jita-asuḥ*—conquering the life air.

## TRANSLATION

O King, whenever the yogī desires to leave this planet of human beings, he should not be perplexed about the proper time or place, but should comfortably sit without being disturbed and, regulating the life air, should control the senses by the mind.

## PURPORT

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (8.14) it is clearly stated that a person who is totally engaged in the transcendental loving service of the Lord, and who constantly remembers Him at every step, easily obtains the mercy of the Lord by entering into His personal contact. Such devotees do not need to seek an opportune moment to leave the present body. But those who are mixed devotees, alloyed with fruitive action or empirical philosophical speculation, require an opportune moment for quitting this body. For them the opportune moments are stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (8.23–26). But these opportune moments are not as important as one’s being a successful *yogī* who is able to quit his body as he likes. Such a *yogī* must be competent to control his senses by the mind. The mind is easily conquered simply by engaging it at the lotus feet of the Lord. Gradually, by



such service, all the senses become automatically engaged in the service of the Lord. That is the way of merging into the Supreme Absolute.

## TEXT 16

मनः स्वबुद्ध्यामलया नियम्य  
क्षेत्रज्ञ एतां निनयेत् तमात्मनि ।  
आत्मानमात्मन्यवरुध्य धीरो  
लब्धोपशान्तिर्विरमेत कृत्यात् ॥१६॥

*manaḥ sva-buddhyāmalayā niyamya  
kṣetra-jña etān ninayet tam ātmani  
ātmānam ātmany avarudhya dhīro  
labdhopśāntir virameta kṛtyāt*

*manaḥ*—the mind; *sva-buddhyā*—by his own intelligence; *amalayā*—unalloyed; *niyamya*—by regulating; *kṣetra-jñe*—unto the living entity; *etām*—all of them; *ninayet*—merge; *tam*—that; *ātmani*—the self; *ātmānam*—the self; *ātmani*—in the Superself; *avarudhya*—being locked up; *dhīraḥ*—the fully satisfied; *labdha-upaśāntiḥ*—one who has attained full bliss; *virameta*—ceases from; *kṛtyāt*—all other activities.

## TRANSLATION

Thereafter, the yogi should merge his mind, by his unalloyed intelligence, into the living entity, and then merge the living entity into the Superself. And by doing this, the fully satisfied living entity becomes situated in the supreme stage of satisfaction, so that he ceases from all other activities.

## PURPORT

The functions of the mind are thinking, feeling and willing. When the mind is materialistic, or absorbed in material contact, it acts for material advancement of knowledge, destructively ending in discovery of nuclear weapons. But when the mind acts under spiritual urge, it acts wonderfully for going back home, back to Godhead, for life in complete bliss and eternity. Therefore the mind has to be manipulated by good and unalloyed intelligence. Perfect intelligence is to render service unto the Lord. One should be intelligent enough to understand that the living being is, in all circumstances, a servant of the circumstances. Every living being is serving the dictates of desire, anger, lust, illusion, insanity and enviousness—all materially affected. But even while executing such dictations of different temperaments, he is perpetually unhappy. When one actually feels this and turns his intelligence to inquiring about it from the right sources, he gets information of the transcendental loving service of the Lord. Instead of serving materially for the above-mentioned different humors of the body, the living entity's intelligence then becomes freed from the unhappy illusion of materialistic temperament, and thus, by unalloyed intelligence, the mind is brought into the service of the Lord. The Lord and His service are identical, being on the absolute plane. Therefore the unalloyed intelligence and the mind are merged into the Lord, and thus the living entity does not remain a seer himself but becomes seen by the Lord transcendently. When the living entity is directly seen by the Lord, the Lord dictates to him to act according to His desire, and when the living entity follows Him perfectly, the living entity ceases to discharge any other duty for his illusory satisfaction. In his pure unalloyed state, the living being attains the stage of full bliss, *labdhopśānti*, and ceases all material hankerings.

## TEXT 17

न यत्र कालोऽनिमिषां परः प्रभुः  
कुतो नु देवा जगतां य ईश्वरे ।  
न यत्र सत्त्वं न रजस्तमश्च  
न वै विकारो न महान् प्रधानम् ॥१७॥

*na yatra kālo 'nimiṣān paraḥ prabhuḥ  
kuto nu devā jagatām ya īṣire  
na yatra sattvaḥ na rajas tamaś ca  
na vai vikāro na mahān pradhānam*

*na*—not; *yatra*—wherein; *kālāḥ*—destructive time; *animiṣām*—of the heavenly demigods; *paraḥ*—superior; *prabhuḥ*—controller; *kutaḥ*—where is there; *nu*—certainly; *devāḥ*—the demigods; *jagatām*—the mundane creatures; *ye*—those; *īṣire*—rules; *na*—not; *yatra*—therein; *sattvaḥ*—mundane goodness; *na*—nor; *rajaḥ*—mundane passion; *tamaḥ*—mundane ignorance; *ca*—also; *na*—nor; *vai*—certainly; *vikāraḥ*—transformation; *na*—nor; *mahān*—the material Causal Ocean; *pradhānam*—material nature.

## TRANSLATION

In that transcendental state of *labdhopśānti*, there is no supremacy of devastating time, which controls even the celestial demigods who are empowered to rule over mundane creatures. (And what to speak of the demigods themselves?) Nor is there the mode of material goodness, nor passion, nor ignorance, nor even the false ego, nor the material Causal Ocean, nor the material nature.

## PURPORT

Devastating time, which controls even the celestial demigods by its manifestations of past, present and future, does not act on the transcendental plane. The influence of time is exhibited by the symptoms of birth, death, old age and disease, and these four principles of material conditions are present everywhere in any part of the material cosmos up to the planet Brahmaloka, where the duration of life of the inhabitants appears to us to be fabulous. Insurmountable time even brings about the death of Brahmā, so what to speak of other demigods like Indra, Candra, Sūrya, Vāyu and Varuṇa? The astronomical influence directed by the different demigods over mundane creatures is also conspicuous by its absence. In material existence, the living entities are afraid of Satanic influence, but for a devotee on the transcendental plane there is no such fear at all. The living entities change their material bodies in different shapes and forms under the influence of the different modes of material nature, but in the transcendental state the devotee is *guṇātīta*, or above the material modes of goodness, passion and ignorance. Thus the false ego of "I am the lord of all I survey" does not arise there. In the material world the false ego of the living being trying to lord it over the material nature is something like the moth's falling in a blazing fire. The moth is captivated by the glaring beauty of the fire, and when he comes to enjoy it, the blazing fire consumes him. In the transcendental state the living being is pure in his consciousness, and as such he has no false ego to lord it over the material nature. Rather, his pure consciousness directs him to surrender unto the Supreme Lord, as stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.19): *vāsudevaḥ sarvaṁ iti sa mahātmā sudurlabhaḥ*. All this indicates that in the transcendental state there is neither material creation nor the Causal Ocean for material nature.

The above-mentioned state of affairs is factual on the transcendental plane, but is factually revealed in a transcendentalist's knowledge of the advanced state of pure consciousness. Such transcendentalists are of two types, namely the impersonalists and the devotees. For the impersonalist the ultimate goal or destination is the *brahmajyoti* of the spiritual sky, but for the devotees the ultimate goal is the Vaikuṇṭha planets. The devotees experience the above-mentioned state of affairs by attainment of spiritual forms for activity in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. But the impersonalist, because of his neglecting the association of the Lord, does not develop a spiritual body for spiritual activity, but remains a spiritual spark only, merged in the effulgent spiritual rays of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Lord is the full-fledged form of eternity, bliss and knowledge, but the formless *brahmajyoti* is simply eternity and knowledge. The Vaikuṇṭha planets are also forms of eternity, bliss and knowledge, and therefore the devotees of the Lord, who are admitted into the abode of the Lord, also get bodies of eternity, bliss and knowledge. As such there is no difference between one and another.



The Lord's abode, name, fame, entourage, etc., are of the same transcendental quality, and how this transcendental quality differs from the material world is explained herewith in this verse. In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, three principal subjects have been explained by Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, namely *karma-yoga*, *jñāna-yoga* and *bhakti-yoga*, but one can reach the *Vaikuṇṭha* planets by the practice of *bhakti-yoga* only. The other two are incompetent in helping one reach the *Vaikuṇṭhalokas*, although they can, however, conveniently take one to the effulgent *brahmajyoti*, as described above.

## TEXT 18

परं पदं वैष्णवमामनन्ति तद्  
यन्नेति नेतीत्यतदुत्सिर्क्षवाहः ।  
विमुज्य दौरात्म्यमनन्यसौहृदा  
हृदोपगुह्यार्हपदं पदे पदे ॥१८॥

*param padam vaiṣṇavam āmananti tad  
yan neti netīty atad utsirṣkṣavaḥ  
visrjya daurātmīyam ananya-sauhṛdā  
hrdopaguhyārha-padam pade pade*

*param*—the supreme; *padam*—situation; *vaiṣṇavam*—in relation with the Personality of Godhead; *āmananti*—do they know; *tad*—that; *yad*—which; *na iti*—not this; *na iti*—not this; *iti*—thus; *atat*—godless; *utsirṣkṣavaḥ*—those who desire to avoid; *visrjya*—giving it up completely; *daurātmīyam*—perplexities; *ananya*—absolutely; *sauhṛdāḥ*—in good will; *hrdā upaguhyā*—taking them into his heart; *arha*—that which is only worshipable; *padam*—lotus feet; *pade pade*—at every moment.

## TRANSLATION

The transcendentalists desire to avoid everything godless, for they know that supreme situation in which everything is related with the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu. Therefore a pure devotee who is in absolute harmony with the Lord does not create perplexities, but worships the lotus feet of the Lord at every moment, taking them into his heart.

## PURPORT

In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *mad-dhāma* ("My abode") is mentioned several times, and according to the version of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa there exists the unlimited spiritual sky, wherein the planets are called *Vaikuṇṭhas*, or the abode of the Personality of Godhead. In that sky, which is far, far beyond the material sky and its sevenfold coverings, there is no need of the sun or the moon, nor is there necessity of electricity for illumination, because the planets are self-illuminating and more brilliant than the material suns. Pure devotees of the Lord are absolutely in harmony with the Personality of Godhead, or in other words, they always think of the Lord as their only dependable friend and well-wisher. They do not care for any mundane creature, up to the status of *Brahmā*, the lord of the universe. Only they can definitely have a clear vision of the *Vaikuṇṭha* planets. Such pure devotees, being perfectly directed by the Supreme Lord, do not create any artificial perplexity in the matter of transcendental understanding by wasting time in discussing what is Brahman and what is non-Brahman, or *māyā*, nor do they falsely think of themselves as one with the Lord, or argue that there is no existence of the Lord separately, or that there is no God at all, or that living beings are themselves God, or that when God incarnates Himself He assumes a material body. Nor do they concern themselves with many obscure speculative theories, which are in actuality so many stumbling blocks on the path of transcendental understanding. Apart from the class of impersonalists or nondevotees, there are also classes who pose themselves as devotees of the Lord but at heart maintain the idea of salvation by becoming one with the impersonal Brahman. They wrongly manufacture their own way of devotional service by open debauchery and mislead others who are simpletons or debauchees like themselves. All these nondevotees and debauchees are, according to Viṣṇuānātha Cakravartī, *durātmās*, or crooked souls in the dress of

*mahātmās*, or great souls. Such nondevotees and debauchees are completely excluded from the list of transcendentalists by the presentation of this particular verse by Śukadeva Gosvāmī.

So the *Vaikuṇṭha* planets are factually the supreme residential places called the *param padam*. The impersonal *brahmajyoti* is also called the *param padam* due to its being the rays of the *Vaikuṇṭha* planets, as the sun rays are the rays of the sun. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (14.27) it is clearly said that the impersonal *brahmajyoti* rests on the person of the Lord, and because everything rests on the *brahmajyoti* directly and indirectly, everything is generated from the Lord, everything rests on Him, and after annihilation, everything is merged in Him only. Therefore, nothing is independent of Him. A pure devotee of the Lord no longer wastes valuable time in discriminating the Brahman from non-Brahman because he knows perfectly well that the Lord Parabrahman, by His Brahman energy, is interwoven in everything, and thus everything is looked upon by a devotee as the property of the Lord. The devotee tries to engage everything in His service and does not create perplexities by falsely lording it over the creation of the Lord. He is so faithful that he engages himself, as well as everything else, in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. In everything, the devotee sees the Lord, and he sees everything in the Lord. The specific disturbance created by a *durātmā*, or crooked soul, is due to his maintaining that the transcendental form of the Lord is something material.

## TEXT 19

इत्थं मुनिस्तुपरमेद् व्यवस्थितो  
विज्ञानद्विर्वीर्यसुरन्धिताशयः ।  
स्वपार्श्विनापीड्य गुदं ततोऽनिलं  
स्थानेषु षट्सन्नमयेजितक्लमः ॥१९॥

*ittham munis tūparamed vyavasthito  
vijñāna-dṛk-vīrya-surandhitāśayaḥ  
sva-pārśvina-pīḍya guḍam tato 'nīlam  
sthāneṣu ṣaṭśūnnamayej jita-klamaḥ*

*ittham*—thus, by Brahman realization; *munih*—the philosopher; *tu*—but; *uparamet*—should retire; *vyavasthitaḥ*—well situated; *vijñāna-dṛk*—by scientific knowledge; *vīrya*—strength; *su-randhita*—well regulated; *āśayaḥ*—aim of life; *sva-pārśvina*—with the heel of one's foot; *pīḍya*—by blocking; *guḍam*—the air hole; *tataḥ*—thereafter; *anīlam*—life air; *sthāneṣu*—in the places; *ṣaṭsu*—six primary; *unnamayet*—must be lifted; *jita-klamaḥ*—by extinguishing material desires.

## TRANSLATION

By the strength of scientific knowledge, one should be well situated in absolute realization and thus be able to extinguish all material desires. One should then give up the material body by blocking the air hole [through which stool is evacuated] with the heel of one's foot and by lifting the life air from one place to another in the six primary places.

## PURPORT

There are many *durātmās* who claim to have realized themselves as Brahman and yet are unable to conquer material desires. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.54) it is clearly explained that an absolutely self-realized soul becomes completely aloof from all material desires. Material desires are based on the false ego of the living being and are exhibited by his childish and useless activities to conquer the laws of material nature and by his desire to lord it over the resources of the five elements. With such a mentality, one is led to believe in the strength of material science, with its discovery of atomic energy and space travel by mechanical vehicles, and by such tiny advancements in material science the false egoist tries to challenge even the strength of the Supreme Lord, who can finish all man's tiny endeavors in less than a second. The well-situated self, or Brahman-realized soul, perfectly understands that the Supreme Brah-



man, or the Personality of Godhead, is the all-powerful Vāsudeva and that he (the self-realized living being) is a part and parcel of the supreme whole. As such, his constitutional position is to cooperate with Him in all respects in the transcendental relation of the served and the servitor. Such a self-realized soul ceases to exhibit his useless activities of attempting to lord it over material nature. Being scientifically well informed, he fully engages himself in faithful devotion to the Lord.

The expert *yogī* who has thoroughly practiced the control of the life air by the prescribed method of the *yoga* system is advised to quit the body as follows. He should plug up the evacuating hole with the heel of the foot and then progressively move the life air on and on to six places: the navel, abdomen, heart, chest, palate, eyebrows and cerebral pit. Controlling the life air by the prescribed yogic process is mechanical, and the practice is more or less a physical endeavor for spiritual perfection. In olden days such practice was very common for the transcendentalist, for the mode of life and character in those days were favorable. But in modern days, when the influence of Kali Age is so disturbing, practically everyone is untrained in this art of bodily exercise. Concentration of the mind is more easily attained in these days by the chanting of the holy name of the Lord. The results are more effective than those derived from the inner exercise of the life air.

## TEXT 20

नाभ्यां स्थितं हृद्यधिरोप्य तस्मा-  
दुदानगत्योरसि तं नयेन्मुनिः ।  
ततोऽनुसन्धाय धिया मनस्वी  
खतालुमूलं शनकैर्नयेत् ॥२०॥

*nābhyām sthitam hr̥dy adhiropya tasmā  
udāna-gatyorasi taṁ nayaṁ muniḥ  
tato 'nusandhāya dhīyā manasvī  
sva-tālu-mūlaṁ śanakair nayeṭa*

*nābhyām*—on the navel; *sthitam*—situated; *hr̥di*—in the heart; *adhiropya*—by placing; *tasmāt*—from there; *udāna*—soaring; *gatyā*—force; *urasi*—on the chest; *taṁ*—thereafter; *nayet*—should draw; *muniḥ*—the meditative devotee; *tataḥ*—them; *anusandhāya*—just to search out; *dhīyā*—by intelligence; *manasvī*—the meditative; *sva-tālu-mūlam*—at the root of the palate; *śanakair*—slowly; *nayeṭa*—may be brought in.

## TRANSLATION

The meditative devotee should slowly push up the life air from the navel to the heart, from there to the chest and from there to the root of the palate. He should search out the proper places with intelligence.

## PURPORT

There are six circles of the movement of the life air, and the intelligent *bhakti-yogī* should search out these places with intelligence and in a meditative mood. Among these, mentioned above is the *svādhiṣṭhāna-cakra*, or the powerhouse of the life air, and above this, just below the abdomen and navel, is the *maṇi-pūraka-cakra*. When upper space is further searched out in the heart, one reaches the *anāhata-cakra*, and further up, when the life air is placed at the root of the palate, one reaches the *viśuddhi-cakra*.

## TEXT 21

तस्माद् भ्रुवोरन्तरमुभयेत  
निरुद्धसप्तायतनोऽनपेक्षः ।  
स्थित्वा मुहूर्तार्धमकुण्ठादृष्टि-  
निर्मिद्य मूर्धन् विसृजेत्परं गतः ॥२१॥

*tasmād bhruvor antaram unnayeta  
niruddha-saptāyatano 'napekṣaḥ  
sthitvā muhūrtārdham akunṭha-dr̥ṣṭir  
nirbhīdya mūrdhan visrjet param gataḥ*

*tasmāt*—from there; *bhruvoh*—of the eyebrows; *antaram*—in between; *unnayeta*—should be brought in; *niruddha*—by blocking; *sapta*—seven; *āyatanah*—outlets of the life air; *anapekṣaḥ*—independent of all material enjoyment; *sthitvā*—by keeping; *muhūrta*—of a moment; *ardham*—half; *akunṭha*—back home, back to Godhead; *dr̥ṣṭiḥ*—one whose aim is targeted like that; *nirbhīdya*—punching; *mūrdhan*—the cerebral hole; *visrjet*—should give up his body; *param*—the Supreme; *gataḥ*—having gone to.

## TRANSLATION

Thereafter the *bhakti-yogī* should push the life air up between the eyebrows, and then, blocking the seven outlets of the life air, he should maintain his aim for going back home, back to Godhead. If he is completely free from all desires for material enjoyment, he should then reach the cerebral hole and give up his material connections, having gone to the Supreme.

## PURPORT

The process of giving up all material connections and returning home, back to Godhead, the Supreme, is recommended herein. The condition is that one should be completely freed from desire for material enjoyment. There are different grades of material enjoyments in respect to duration of life and sensual gratification. The highest plane of sensual enjoyment for the longest period of life is mentioned in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.20). All are but material enjoyments, and one should be thoroughly convinced that he has no need of such a long duration of life, even in the Brahmaloṇa planet. He must return home, back to Godhead, and must not be attracted by any amount of material facilities. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.59) it is said that this sort of material detachment is possible to attain when one is acquainted with the supreme association of life. *Param dr̥ṣṭvā nivartate*. One cannot be freed from material attraction unless he has complete understanding of the nature of spiritual life. The propaganda by a certain class of impersonalists that spiritual life is void of all varieties is dangerous propaganda to mislead the living beings into becoming more and more attracted by material enjoyments. As such, persons with a poor fund of knowledge cannot have any conception of the *param*, the Supreme; they try to stick to the varieties of material enjoyments, although they may flatter themselves as being Brahman-realized souls. Such less intelligent persons cannot have any conception of the *param*, as mentioned in this verse, and therefore they cannot reach the Supreme. The devotees have full knowledge of the spiritual world, the Personality of Godhead and His transcendental association in unlimited spiritual planets called *Vaikuṇṭhalokas*. Herein *akunṭha-dr̥ṣṭiḥ* is mentioned. *Akunṭha* and *vaikuṇṭha* convey the same import, and only one who has his aim fixed upon that spiritual world and personal association with the Godhead can give up his material connections even while living in the material world. This *param* and the *param dhāma* mentioned in several places in the *Bhagavad-gītā* are one and the same thing. One who goes to the *param dhāma* does not return to the material world. This freedom is not possible even by reaching the topmost *loka* of the material world.

The life air passes through seven openings, namely two eyes, two nostrils, two ears and one mouth. Generally it passes through the mouth at the time of an ordinary man's death. But the *yogī*, as above mentioned, who controls the life air in his own way, generally releases the life air by puncturing the cerebral hole in the head. The *yogī* therefore blocks up all the above-mentioned seven openings, so that the life air will naturally burst forth through the cerebral hole. This is the sure sign of a great devotee's leaving the material connection.



## TEXT 22

यदि प्रयास्यन् नृप पारमेष्ठ्यं  
वैहायसानामुत यद् विहारम् ।  
अष्टाधिपत्यं गुणसन्निवाये  
सहैव गच्छेन्मनसेन्द्रियैश्च ॥२२॥

yadi prayāsyān nṛpa pārameṣṭhyam  
vaihāyasānām uta yad vihāram  
aṣṭādhipatyam guṇa-sannivāye  
sahaiva gacchen manasendriyaiś ca

yadi—however; prayāsyān—maintaining a desire; nṛpa—O King; pārameṣṭhyam—the governing planet of the material world; vaihāyasānām—of the beings known as the Vaihāyasas; uta—it is said; yat—what is; vihāram—place of enjoyment; aṣṭa-ādhipatyam—lording it over with eightfold achievements; guṇa-sannivāye—in the world of three modes of nature; saha—along with; eva—certainly; gacchet—should go; manasā—accompanied by the mind; indriyaiḥ—and the senses; ca—also.

## TRANSLATION

However, O King, if a yogī maintains a desire for improved material enjoyments, like transference to the topmost planet, Brahmaloḥa, or the achievement of the eightfold perfections, travel in outer space with the Vaihāyasas, or a situation in one of the millions of planets, then he has to take away with him the materially molded mind and senses.

## PURPORT

In the upper status of the planetary systems there are facilities thousands and thousands of times greater for material enjoyments than in the lower planetary systems. The topmost planetary systems consist of planets like Brahmaloḥa and Dhruvaloka (the polestar), and all of them are situated beyond Maharloḥa. The inhabitants of those planets are empowered with eightfold achievements of mystic perfection. They do not have to learn and practice the mystic processes of yoga perfection and achieve the power of becoming small like a particle (*ānimā-siddhi*), or lighter than a soft feather (*laghimā-siddhi*). They do not have to get anything and everything from anywhere and everywhere (*prāpti-siddhi*), to become heavier than the heaviest (*mahimā-siddhi*), to act freely even to create something wonderful or to annihilate anything at will (*īśitva-siddhi*), to control all material elements (*vaśitva-siddhi*), to possess such power as will never be frustrated in any desire (*prākāmya-siddhi*), or to assume any shape or form one may even whimsically desire (*kāmāvasāyitā-siddhi*). All these expedencies are as common as natural gifts for the inhabitants of those higher planets. They do not require any mechanical help to travel in outer space, and they can move and travel at will from one planet to any other planet within no time. The inhabitants of the earth cannot move even to the nearest planet except by mechanical vehicles like spacecraft, but the highly talented inhabitants of such higher planets can do everything very easily.

Since a materialist is generally inquisitive to experience what is actually in such planetary systems, he wants to see everything personally. As inquisitive persons tour all over the world to gain direct local experience, the less intelligent transcendentalist similarly desires to have some experience of those planets about which he has heard so many wonderful things. The yogī can, however, easily fulfill his desire by going there with the present materialistic mind and senses. The prime inclination of the materialistic mind is to lord it over the material world, and all the *siddhis* mentioned above are features of domination over the world. The devotees of the Lord are not ambitious to dominate a false and temporary phenomenon. On the contrary, a devotee wants to be dominated by the supreme predominator, the Lord. A desire to serve the Lord, the supreme predominator, is spiritual or transcendental, and one has to attain this purification of the mind and the senses to get admission into the

spiritual kingdom. With the materialistic mind one can reach the best planet in the universe, but no one can enter into the kingdom of God. Senses are called spiritually purified when they are not involved in sense gratification. Senses require engagements, and when the senses are engaged totally in the transcendental loving service of the Lord, they have no chance to become contaminated by material infections.

## TEXT 23

योगेश्वराणां गतिमाहुरन्त-  
र्बहिस्त्रिलोक्याः पवनान्तरात्मनाम् ।  
न कर्मभिस्तां गतिमान्नुवन्ति  
विद्यातपोयोगसमाधिभाजाम् ॥२३॥

yogeśvarāṇām gatim āhur antar-  
bahis-tri-lokyāḥ pavanāntar-ātmanām  
na karmabhis tāṁ gatim āpnuvanti  
vidyā-tapo-yoga-samādhi-bhājām

yoga-īśvarāṇām—of the great saints and devotees; gatim—destination; āhuh—it is said; antah—within; bahiḥ—without; tri-lokyāḥ—of the three planetary systems; pavana-antah—within the air; ātmanām—of the subtle body; na—never; karmabhiḥ—by fruitive activities; tāṁ—that; gatim—speed; āpnuvanti—achieve; vidyā—devotional service; tapah—austerities; yoga—mystic power; samādhi—knowledge; bhājām—of those who entertain.

## TRANSLATION

The transcendentalists are concerned with the spiritual body. As such, by the strength of their devotional service, austerities, mystic power and transcendental knowledge, their movements are unrestricted, within and beyond the material worlds. The fruitive workers, or the gross materialists, can never move in such an unrestricted manner.

## PURPORT

The materialistic scientist's endeavor to reach other planets by mechanical vehicles is only a futile attempt. One can, however, reach heavenly planets by virtuous activities, but one can never expect to go beyond Svarga or Janaloka by such mechanical or materialistic activities, either gross or subtle. The transcendentalists who have nothing to do with the gross material body can move anywhere within or beyond the material worlds. Within the material worlds they move in the planetary systems of the Mahar-, Janas-, Tapas- and Satya-loka, and beyond the material worlds they can move in the Vaikuṇṭhas as unrestricted spacemen. Nārada Muni is one of the examples of such spacemen, and Durvāsā Muni is one of such mystics. By the strength of devotional service, austerities, mystic powers and transcendental knowledge, everyone can move like Nārada Muni or Durvāsā Muni. It is said that Durvāsā Muni traveled throughout the entirety of material space and part of spiritual space within one year only. The speed of the transcendentalists can never be attained by the gross or subtle materialists.

## TEXT 24

वैश्वानरं याति विहायसा गतः  
सुषुम्णया ब्रह्मपथेन शोचिषा ।  
विधूतकल्कोऽथ हरेरुदस्तात्  
प्रयाति चक्रं नृप शैशुमारम् ॥२४॥

vaiśvānaram yāti vihāyasā gataḥ  
suṣuṁṇayā brahma-pathena śociṣā  
vidhūta-kalko 'tha harer udstāt  
prayāti cakram nṛpa śaiśumāram



*vaiśvānaram*—the controlling deity of fire; *yāti*—goes; *vihāyasā*—by the path in the sky (the Milky Way); *gataḥ*—by passing over; *suṣumṇayā*—by the *Suṣumṇā*; *brahma*—Brahmaloka; *pathena*—on the way to; *śociṣā*—illuminating; *vidhūta*—being washed off; *kalkaḥ*—dirt; *atha*—thereafter; *hareḥ*—of Lord Hari; *udastāt*—upwards; *prayāti*—does reach; *cakram*—circle; *nṛpa*—O King; *śaiśumāram*—named Śaiśumāra.

## TRANSLATION

O King, when such a mystic passes over the Milky Way by the illuminating *Suṣumṇā* to reach the highest planet, Brahmaloka, he goes first to *Vaiśvānara*, the planet of the deity of fire, wherein he becomes completely cleansed of all contaminations, and thereafter he still goes higher, to the circle of Śaiśumāra, to relate with Lord Hari, the Personality of Godhead.

## PURPORT

The polar star of the universe and the circle thereof is called the Śaiśumāra circle, and therein the local residential planet of the Personality of Godhead (Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu) is situated. Before reaching there, the mystic passes over the Milky Way to reach Brahmaloka, and while going there he first reaches *Vaiśvānara-loka*, where the demigod controls fire. On *Vaiśvānara-loka* the *yogī* becomes completely cleansed of all dirty sins acquired while in contact with the material world. The Milky Way in the sky is indicated herein as the way leading to Brahmaloka, the highest planet of the universe.

## TEXT 25

तद् विश्वनाभिं त्वतिवर्त्य विष्णो-  
रणीयसा विरजेनात्मनैकः ।  
नमस्कृतं ब्रह्मविदासुपैति  
कल्पायुषो यद् विबुधा रमन्ते ॥२५॥

*tad viśva-nābhim tv ativartya viṣṇor*  
*aṇīyasā virajenātmanaikaḥ*  
*namaskṛtaṁ brahma-vidāṁ upaiti*  
*kalpāyuso yad vibudhā ramante*

*tat*—that; *viśva-nābhim*—navel of the universal Personality of Godhead; *tu*—but; *ativartya*—crossing over; *viṣṇoḥ*—of Lord Viṣṇu, the Personality of Godhead; *aṇīyasā*—due to mystic perfection; *virajena*—by the purified; *ātmanā*—by the living entity; *ekaḥ*—alone; *namaskṛtaṁ*—worshipable; *brahma-vidāṁ*—by those who are transcendently situated; *upaiti*—reaches; *kalpa-āyusaḥ*—a period of 4,300,000,000 solar years; *yat*—the place; *vibudhāḥ*—self-realized souls; *ramante*—do enjoy.

## TRANSLATION

This Śaiśumāra is the pivot for the turning of the complete universe, and it is called the navel of Viṣṇu [Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu]. The *yogī* alone goes beyond this circle of Śaiśumāra and attains the planet [Maharloka] where purified saints like Bhṛgu enjoy a duration of life of 4,300,000,000 solar years. This planet is worshipable even for the saints who are transcendently situated.

## TEXT 26

अथो अनन्तस्य मुखानलेन  
दन्दद्वयमानं स निरीक्ष्य विश्वम् ।

निर्याति सिद्धेश्वरयुष्टधिष्यं  
यद् द्वैपराच्यं तद् पारमेष्ठ्यम् ॥२६॥

*atho anantasya mukhānalena*  
*dandahyamānaṁ sa nirikṣya viśvaṁ*  
*niryāti siddheśvara-yuṣṭa-dhiṣṇyaṁ*  
*yad dvai-parārdhyaṁ tad u pārameṣṭhyam*

*atho*—thereupon; *anantasya*—of Ananta, the resting incarnation of Godhead; *mukha-analena*—by the fire emanating from His mouth; *dandahyamānaṁ*—burning to ashes; *saḥ*—he; *nirikṣya*—by seeing this; *viśvaṁ*—the universe; *niryāti*—goes out; *siddheśvara-yuṣṭa-dhiṣṇyaṁ*—airplanes used by the great purified souls; *yat*—the place; *dvai-parārdhyaṁ*—15,480,000,000,000 solar years; *tat*—that; *u*—the exalted; *pārameṣṭhyam*—Satyaloka, where Brahṁā resides.

## TRANSLATION

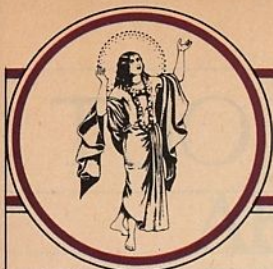
At the time of the final devastation of the complete universe [the end of the duration of Brahṁā's life], a flame of fire emanates from the mouth of Ananta [from the bottom of the universe]. The *yogī* sees all the planets of the universe burning to ashes, and thus he leaves for Satyaloka by airplanes used by the great purified souls. The duration of life in Satyaloka is calculated to be 15,480,000,000,000 years.

## PURPORT

It is indicated herein that the residents of Maharloka, where the purified living entities or demigods possess a duration of life calculated to be 4,300,000,000 solar years, have airships by which they reach Satyaloka, the topmost planet of the universe. In other words, the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* gives us many clues about other planets far, far away from us which modern planes and spacecraft cannot reach, even by imaginary speeds. The statements of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* are accepted by great *ācāryas* like Śrīdhara Svāmī, Rāmānujācārya and Vallabhācārya. Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu specifically accepts *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as the spotless Vedic authority, and as such no sane man can ignore the statements of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* when it is spoken by the self-realized soul Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī, who follows in the footsteps of his great father, Śrīla Vyāsadeva, the compiler of all Vedic literatures. In the creation of the Lord there are many wonderful things we can see with our own eyes every day and night, but we are unable to reach them equipped by modern materialistic science. We should not, therefore, depend on the fragmentary authority of materialistic science for knowing things beyond the range of scientific purview. For a common man, both modern science and Vedic wisdom are simply to be accepted because none of the statements either of modern science or of Vedic literature can be verified by him. The alternative for a common man is to believe either of them or both of them. The Vedic way of understanding, however, is more authentic because it has been accepted by the *ācāryas*, who are not only faithful and learned men, but are also liberated souls without any of the flaws of conditioned souls. The modern scientists, however, are conditioned souls liable to so many errors and mistakes; therefore the safe side is to accept the authentic version of Vedic literatures, like *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which is accepted unanimously by the great *ācāryas*.

(continued in next issue)





# Every Town and Village

A look at the worldwide activities of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

## CITY HAILS KṚṢṆA RESTAURANT



"A launch pad for positive inner action in the presence of previous negativism."

**Cleveland**—The City Council recently passed a resolution congratulating ISKCON for opening a budget vegetarian restaurant in the heart of a deprived section of the inner city.

The resolution affirmed that Govinda's Restaurant, where patrons receive all the nourishing vegetarian food they can eat for 99¢, is "a benefit for the poor, for the elderly, men and women, black and white."

Lonnie L. Burten, Councilman for the 12th Ward, where the restaurant is located, said he was happy to see the Hare Kṛṣṇa members helping to restore vitality to a dying area of the city. The City Council's resolution characterized Govinda's as "a launch pad for positive inner action in the presence of previous negativism."

In the past few years, ISKCON has opened two other Govinda's Restaurants in suburban Cleveland. All three feature a delicious menu of *prasāda*—vegetarian foods offered to Kṛṣṇa. Dishes include *sabji* (spiced vegetables), *dahl* (protein-rich mung bean soup), *capātis* (flat, round, whole wheat breads), rice, fruit drinks, and traditional Indian sweets.

But food is only part of the attraction at Govinda's. Patrons frequently discuss topics such as *karma*, reincarnation, and *mantra* meditation with their hosts.

## Noted Archaeologist Applauds Translation Of Sanskrit Classic

Recently Dr. H. D. Sankalia, one of India's leading archaeologists, had this to say about His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda's English translation of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*:

"People all over the world, particularly in the West, show increasing dissatisfaction with their lives. In spite of increasing and unimaginable material comforts, they do not feel happy. They have begun to understand that true happiness comes only from within. How to achieve this inner happiness is best taught by the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

"Hence it has been described, for the last five thousand years at least, as the ripened fruit of Vedantic philosophy. All the early teachings found in the *Vedas*, the *Upaniṣads*, and the *Brahma-sūtras* of Vyāsadeva are as dry as dust, whereas the teachings of the *Bhāgavatam* are as sweet as nectar. That is why it has become popular all over India.

"I am indeed glad, in fact overjoyed, to see that this ripe fruit of the wish-fulfilling tree of Vedic knowledge—this essence of all philosophy, which hitherto was available only in Indian languages

and Sanskrit—is now rendered into English by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. This is not merely a simple translation. The original text is printed in beautiful Sanskrit letters and is accompanied by Roman transliteration, synonyms, translation, and elaborate explanation by Śrīla Prabhupāda. Thus for the first time this sweet fruit can be tasted by people all over the world. For this great service to humanity we should ever remain grateful to Śrīla Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement and Lord Kṛṣṇa's pure devotee. His encyclopedic and useful *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* should find a place in every home and library."

## New York New Home for BTG

BACK TO GODHEAD has moved its principal editorial and production offices from Los Angeles to the fourth floor of the Hare Krishna Building, on West Fifty-fifth Street in New York City.

It was in New York City, in 1966, that His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda began publishing BACK TO GODHEAD in the West. He had founded the magazine in India in 1944, and after coming to America he continued the publication with the help of his first American disciples.

The magazine's offices have moved back to New York so that the staff members may work more closely with the editor-in-chief, His Divine Grace Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami, whose work keeps him mostly on the East Coast.

BACK TO GODHEAD's subscription offices will remain in Los Angeles.

## Hare Kṛṣṇa Calendar

Kṛṣṇa conscious devotees follow a spiritual calendar that divides the year into twelve months, each named for a different form of Kṛṣṇa. The devotees at the ISKCON center nearest you will gladly tell you about the meaning of the festivals listed here.

Year 493 Caitanya Era Vaiṣṇava month of Vṛṣabha (June 11-July 13, 1979)			
July 4 Return Kāṭhā-yātri of Lord Jagannāthadeva	July 6 Sayanā-ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans). Beginning of Citrāyā-māsa if started from Ekādaśī	July 9 Disappearance of Śrīla Sandīpaṇa Gosvāmī. Beginning of Citrāyā-māsa if started from Pūrṇimā	July 13 The Founding of ISKCON by Śrīla Prabhupāda in 1966.
Vaiṣṇava month of Śrīdhara (July 14-August 8, 1979)			
July 14 Disappearance of Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī	July 17 Disappearance of Śrīla Lokānātha Gosvāmī	July 20 Kṛmāṣā-ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans)	July 28 Disappearance of Śrīla Vāṇīkīṣa Bhaṭṭa Mahārāja



# ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

## “This Material World Is Zero”

This exchange between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and a graduate student took place in Los Angeles, near the shore of the Pacific Ocean, during January of 1974.

**Student:** Today's scientists and philosophers and psychologists—they say the only authority they can accept is their own mind.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** In Sanskrit they are called *mano-dharmī*—mental speculators.

**Student:** But don't we have to experiment with different mental perspectives if we're going to understand the world?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Actually, mental speculators have been condemned—*mano-rathenāsati dhāvato bahiḥ* [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 5.18.12]—because they are simply carried away by the chariot of the mind. The mind is flickering, always changing. *Saṅkalpa-vikalpa*: the mind's business is to accept something and again reject it. All these mental speculators are doing just that. Somebody's putting forward some theory, and after a few years he will himself reject it, or somebody else will reject it. So by mental speculation you will remain on the material, changing platform. You cannot get any lasting idea.

**Student:** But the scientists feel strongly about their research. They're convinced they've done some real good for the world.

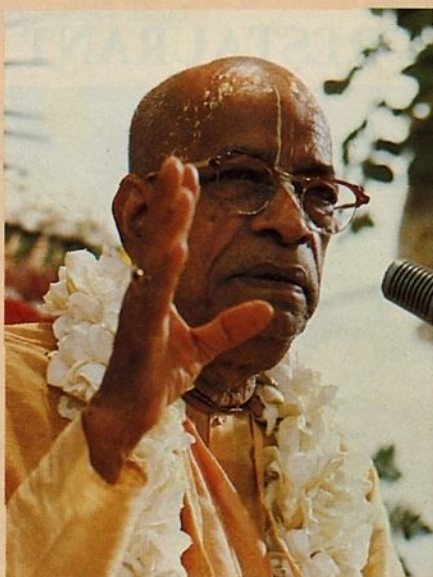
**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** They think, “This is bad; that is good.” But they do not know that in this material world, saying, “This is bad” and “That is good” is all mental speculation, all a mistake. They do not know that in this material world, “bad” and “good” are the same thing—because both are simply matter.

**Student:** How can you say that “bad” and “good” are the same thing?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** For instance, when we are walking on this road, sometimes we say, “This is very good,” and sometimes we say, “This is very bad.” But the road is the same. So how is it both “good” and “bad”? This is simply speculation. Today we may say, “This road is dry; it is dusty. Bad.” Tomorrow we may say, “This road is dry; it is not at all muddy. Good.” It is simply mental speculation.

**Student:** It's still a bit hard to understand what you're saying.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Here is another ex-



ample. In India the villagers pass stool out in the open fields. By the end of the day, the sun has left the top part of the stool dry. So when some fool sees the dry part of the stool, he may say, “Oh, this part is very nice.” He forgets that after all, it is stool—so what is the difference whether it is dry or moist? In the same way, the scientists are making great advancement, but death is still there. So we have to ask, “What is the difference whether you make advancement or no advancement? One who has not advanced in science will die, and you so-called advanced people will also die. Then what is the use?” Neither the scientist nor the ordinary person can protect himself from death. Then what is the meaning of “good”—“This is good,” “This is advancement”—or “This is not advancement”?

**Student:** But I think the distinction between “good” and “bad” depends on the consciousness of the individual.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** “Relativity”—the “law of relativity”: “One man's food is another man's poison.” So how can you distinguish whether this is “food” or “poison”? One man will say, “No, it is food!” Another man will say, “It is poison!” So how will you distinguish? You see? This “good” and “bad” is simply mental speculation. Because it is on the material platform, there is nothing good. All that the scientists and philosophers are doing is cheating. They say, “We are advancing.” In what way

are you advancing? The problem of birth and death is still there—so what is the meaning of your advancement?

**Student:** So we have to get off the chariot of the mind?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. If you remain on the chariot of the mind, then whatever you accept you'll have to reject again. And that is just what they are doing. The so-called scientists and philosophers—they are putting forward some theory, and after some time they reject it. So if you remain on the mental platform, then this business of accepting and rejecting will go on. You'll never come to a lasting conclusion. One has to rise to the spiritual platform. That is *nityaḥ śāśvato 'yam*—eternal, everlasting.

**Student:** Are you saying everything in this world is worthless?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Just try to understand. . . . It can have value and meaning. For instance, you can add thousands of 0's together, one after another, but the value will still be 0. It will never become 1. But by the side of 0, if you bring 1, immediately that becomes 10. . . . Add another 0, immediately you have 100. You have increased it ten times. But that 1 must be there—that 1 is *ekam brahma*, the one Supreme Spirit. Then 0 increases in its value. Similarly, this material world is zero. Bad. But if there is Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then it has value. Then it has value.

**Student:** Doesn't the chariot of the mind have any value at all?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** No. It has no value.

**Student:** But the whole Western philosophical—

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** *Mano-rathenāsati dhāvato bahiḥ*: by mental speculation you'll remain in this temporary field. *Asat* means “that which does not exist.” You take anything in this material world—some day it will not exist. Anyone knows it. A skyscraper is constructed, but everyone knows that it will not exist; some day it will fall down. Everyone knows. It will not endure. Therefore Prahlaḍa Mahārāja says, *māyā-sukhāya bharam udvahato vimūḍhān*: for illusory happiness people are making huge, gorgeous arrangements and working day and night. For something that will be zero. It has begun as zero, and it will end as zero; in the middle they're busy. Just see! Therefore they're *vimūḍhān*—fools and rascals. 🌸



# Abortion and the Hypocritical Oath

by JAGAJĪVANA DĀSA

My sister was just back from Europe and just hearing for the first time about a Southern California obstetrician named William Waddill. I told her that after an unsuccessful abortion, Dr. Waddill had allegedly strangled the baby.

"What? Oh, how awful!"

"The amazing thing," I told my sister, "was that *Newsweek* asked, 'Was it abortion or murder?' As if there were any difference."

"Well, that's a matter of opinion."

"No, it's not," I said, a bit stunned at the way the media can persuade.

In the practical everyday sense, of course, abortion surely is a matter of opinion. And the powers that be surely know how to sidestep and manipulate that opinion. With public opinion at its most sensitive, during the era of the Nuremburg trials, members of the United Nations' World Health Organization vowed in their Geneva Declaration, "I will maintain the utmost respect for human life from the time of conception; even under threat I will not use my medical knowledge contrary to the laws of humanity." And in 1959, in their declaration of human rights, the U.N. gave us this assuring message: "The child, by reason of its physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection before as well as after birth."

Yet despite these avowals, in 1948 Julian Huxley, the first Director General of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) had already taken a different kind of oath in *UNESCO: Its Purpose and Its Philosophy*:

... even though it is quite true that any radical eugenic policy will be for many years politically and psychologically impossible, it will be important for UNESCO to see that the eugenic problem is examined with the greatest care, and that the public mind is informed of the issues at stake, so that much that is now unthinkable may at last become thinkable.

Later, in the essay "Too Many People!" (*Our Crowded Planet, Essays on the Pressures of Population*), Huxley asserted,

[It is] the duty of the United Nations, supported by the technologically developed nations, to carry out research on human reproduction and its control. . . .

Already a few countries have an official policy of population control. . . but they need world encouragement and their policies should be integrated into a general and official world policy.

Public opinion is ready for this.

Ah, but we're not quite ready—yet—to see this survival-of-the-fittest policy in the hands of Dr. Waddill. So *Newsweek* had to ask, "Was it abortion or murder?" (to keep us thinking there just might be some kind of difference).

## Time and Newspeak

Nonetheless, public opinion is fast getting "ready." Remember that in May of 1973, four months after the landmark Supreme Court ruling, *Time* raised a few eyebrows when it quoted Nobel Prize winner James D. Watson as saying, "If a child were not declared alive until three days after birth, then . . . the doctor could allow the child to die if the parents so choose and save a lot of misery and suffering. I believe this view is the only rational, compassionate attitude to have."

One university's chief of pediatrics had the nerve to suggest a system whereby "well-born or minorly defective children can be exterminated before the twelfth month of post-gestational life without causing concern to the society as a whole." Scarcely anyone complained.

Back in September of 1970, in their not-really-for-public-consumption journal, the California Medical Association leaked the game plan:

The traditional Western ethic has always placed great emphasis on the intrinsic worth and value of every human life. This ethic has had the blessing of the Judeo-Christian heritage and has been the basis for most of our laws and much of our social policy and has also been a keystone of Western medicine. . . . This traditional ethic is still clearly dominant, but there is much to suggest that it is being eroded at its core and may eventually be abandoned. . . .

Since the old ethic has not yet been fully displaced, it has been necessary to separate the idea of abortion from the idea of killing, which continues to be socially abhorrent. The result has been a curious avoidance of the scientific fact, which everyone really knows, that human life begins at conception and is continuous whether intra- or extra-uterine until death. The very considerable semantic gymnastics which are required to rationalize abortion as anything but taking a human life would be ludicrous if they were not often put forth under socially impeccable auspices. It is suggested that this schizophrenic sort of subterfuge is necessary, because while a new ethic is being accepted, the old one has not yet been rejected.

Medicine's role with respect to changing attitudes toward abortion may well be a prototype of what is to occur. . . . One may anticipate further development of these roles as the problems of birth control and birth selection are extended inevitably to death selection and death control whether by the individual or by society. . . . It is not too early for our profession to examine the new ethic, and prepare to apply it in a rational development for the fulfillment and betterment of mankind in what is almost certain to be a biologically oriented world society.

So here's what the people in high places are accomplishing with all those "very considerable semantic gymnastics which are required to rationalize abortion as anything but taking a human life." They're making us "biologically oriented" (as opposed to spiritually oriented). They're making us see a living human being and a dead body as practically the same thing—just two different phases of one biochemical process. They'll have a tough time bringing it off, though, because anyone who can think a little logically can see that there's no way you can reverse the process—no chemical you can add to change a dead body back into a living human being. Something's missing, and that is the spiritual element, the soul. What's more, the soul who is now giving life to an "intra-uterine" body is the same soul who will some day give life to a big "extra-

(continued on page 33)





# Universal Bank of Karma

DATE OF PREVIOUS STATEMENT 03/30/19--	DATE OF THIS STATEMENT 04/30/19--	
ACCOUNT NUMBER 52-12-3938		
DISPOSITION CODE M	NUMBER OF ENCLOSURES 1	PAGE NO. 1

ACCOUNT NAME:

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

## KARMIC ACCOUNT ACTIVITY

BAD KARMA AND OTHER DEBITS				GOOD KARMA AND OTHER CREDITS				LOW BALANCE				AVERAGE BALANCE				SERVICE CHARGE		PREVIOUS BALANCE			
NO.		AMOUNT		NO.		AMOUNT															
7		80 918 382 00		2		26 149 786 00		-867 078 486 00		-847 909 184 00				10		-811 049 188 00					
TRANSACTION DESCRIPTION				AMOUNT				DATE				RUNNING BALANCE				DATE					
ABORTIONS				-11	498	854	00	4 2				-822	548	042	00	4 2					
COW SLAUGHTER				-19	245	123	00	4 2				-841	193	165	00	4 5					
GAMBLING				-2	163	055	00	4 11				-843	956	220	00	4 11					
DRUG USE				-5	720	819	00	4 14				-849	677	039	00	4 14					
SERVICE CHARGE							10	4 15				-849	677	039	10	4 15					
SUNDAY WORSHIP				+14	013	571	00	4 16				-835	664	448	10	4 16					
HUMANITARIAN ACTIVITIES				+12	136	215	00	4 17				-823	527	253	10	4 17					
ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION				-4	565	123	00	4 22				-828	092	376	10	4 22					
ILLICIT SEX				-38	986	110	00	4 29				-867	078	486	10	4 29					

ACCOUNT OVERDRAWN  
SEVERE REACTIONS  
UNLESS PROPER BALANCE RESTORED



# AMERICA'S KARMA

## "A Little Negative"

His Divine Grace Hṛdayānanda dāsa Goswami talks with guests  
at the New Orleans Kṛṣṇa center.

They say all roads lead to Rome, but right now all roads lead to America. I've been traveling all over South America, all over Europe and Asia also, and frankly, everyone just imitates the Americans. Whatever we do, people think, "Oh, this must be what we should do." And that's why everyone is having so much trouble. "Follow the leader." The leader goes this way, touches the tree, so you touch the tree. Then he goes here and jumps over the stone, so you jump over the stone. Then the next thing you know he accidentally falls over a cliff. . . .

Or it's like the lemmings. As soon as one gets brave enough to jump into the sea, thousands of others simply follow him. Yes, so at the present time we Americans—we are the head lemming. Of course, it's not the ordinary people but the bigshots—the political, industrial, and scientific leaders—they're doing so many crazy, horrible things. They're simply dragging the whole country and the whole world down. Why don't they stop harassing people?

For instance, the last time I drove to the Gainesville airport, I saw one sign that said, "Don't Drink." A nice government billboard: "Don't Drink Alcohol. Please Don't Drink." And then as soon as you passed that one you saw fifteen billboards for whiskey companies (who, of course, pay the government lots of taxes). Now, if ten thousand times a day you see "Drink This," "Smoke That," "Eat This," "Buy That," then you're going to go crazy. If someone is always whispering into your ear, "Do this, do this, do this," finally you'll say, "Yes—I'll do it." So the government allows all this vicious propa-

ganda, and the government-employed scientists come along and tell us, "Yes, you can do it. It's all right. Don't worry. It's all approved by us. It's authorized. You can slaughter animals and kill unborn babies. You can do anything you like. Don't worry about it. Just give us your tax money."

These rascals are very flagrantly and openly rejecting God—"God is dead," "God is useless," "He is the opiate of the people"—just kicking Him out. And everything is science, technology, sex, drugs. "We can do whatever we like." Yes, that's all right. So you build everything up very nicely, and then God—Kṛṣṇa—will come and in ten seconds He will kick it all down. Yes, that's already being prepared. All these bombs they're stocking. The government thinks they are making them! Actually Kṛṣṇa is making them. By His deluding potency He is ordering, "Make these nice bombs. They're good for you." "Oh, yes! They're good for us!"

So they make all the bombs, stock them up, and then Kṛṣṇa will just use these bombs and these other nasty things they've made, and He will simply kick everything down and break it all to pieces. Ah, then everyone will cry. Just like a child doing so many crazy things in the basement—lighting fires, torturing insects—until finally his father comes and just kicks everything down. So that's the modern civilization, that's all. The time is coming when everything is going to simply be broken to pieces. So if we don't want this to happen, we should voluntarily stop all of this nonsensical materialistic life.

Of course, everyone will remain an eternal soul, even after everything

around them is broken. People will get another chance, another body. But for sure they'll get kicked out of their present body. So if we want to do things peacefully, then we have to stop this foolishness of "I can do whatever I like," "I'm independent," "There is no authority over me," "I feel like doing it." People have become so arrogant. "I feel like doing this." "It feels good to me; therefore I can do it." "No, you can't tell me." This is such a childish attitude. It has to be broken. Madness, arrogance. You can't think like this—that you're independent. If the sun doesn't come up in the morning, then will you be independent? If there is no air, if there is no water . . . All these things are being given so kindly by God, and people have become so arrogant that they insult Him. They can't go on like this. It's not possible. It has to be stopped. It's come to the point where the father tells the child, "Either you stop this voluntarily or I'll stop it."

So don't think this modern so-called culture is going to go on—that we can just spend the next thousand years driving around in our vans, listening to our stereos and smoking hashish and eating slaughtered animals and doing whatever we like. It can't go on like that. It's not possible. It's not possible. So Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā* [18.66], *sarva-dharmāṇaṁ paritijaya māṁ ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja*: "You've done so many nonsensical things that your karma is a little negative at the present time, and therefore in the future you're going to have to suffer in so many ways. . . ." (For instance, America's karma is a little bit on the dark side right now—every day killing millions of animals and babies. Yes,



these things are all registered. So our *karma* is becoming a little negative. We're going to have to suffer the reaction.) But Kṛṣṇa says, "It doesn't matter. Whatever you've done—it doesn't matter. Just surrender to Me. Accept what you really are—a spiritual being, eternally related to Me. Don't pretend that you are something else," Kṛṣṇa says. "Just chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. Just start serving again and relating to Me. And then it will all be rectified peacefully."

After all, why is someone born in Vietnam underneath some bomb, or why is someone born in Siberia? Why do these things happen? That's *karma*. If you think we're just threatening people—"Oh, you're going to go to hell"—no, you don't have to look to some other place for hell. Kṛṣṇa is so kind that just to convince you, He shows you hell while you're on this planet. He let's you see it even on this planet. Why do you think that someone has taken birth in a hellish condition on earth and you, for example, have beauty, money, and a leisurely life? These things are all good *karma*—to have personal beauty, to have money, to be born in a country where the government is not always breaking your head. So, why are you born here in these conditions while someone else is born in a horrible situation? That's *karma*.

So next time you'll switch places. Say you're a child and you've behaved nicely—your mother is embracing you—and yet because your brother or sister has done some crazy thing, your mother is just smashing him or her. That doesn't mean your mother loves you more. But because you have acted nicely, you are being rewarded and the other one is being punished. So if you've been born in America and some other soul has been born in some crazy country, it doesn't mean that God loves you more, but that the other one is being punished. And if you also act crazy, you'll also be punished.

So it is not a matter of simply frightening people, but these things *are* frightening. We shouldn't be just idiots, like an ostrich that puts his head in the sand... or like a rabbit. If some fox comes to eat the rabbit, the rabbit tries to get away, and when he's finally cornered, when there's nowhere else to go, then his ultimate weapon—he closes his eyes. "There's no more fox! No more fox!"

On the one hand, we don't want to surrender to God just out of fear—because we have to love Him. But on the other hand, we can't just be like dumb

animals and close our eyes to the disaster that is around the corner. We see the American leaders—you've read that perhaps drugs have even found their way into the White House. And in Russia, or course, who knows how much vodka they drink every day. So you have all these intoxicated people, these people who are very openly rotten. They're drinking their vodka and smoking whatever they're smoking and playing with all these buttons and lights and colors and maps, and it's all going to

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**“How could people  
think God will  
permit this? . . .  
that you drag in  
millions of poor  
innocent animals  
that are crying  
and screaming, and  
you take big knives  
and kill them?”**

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blow up. Unless the leaders become God conscious, it's going to blow up. And this is all *karma*, also . . . because at the present time you can hardly find any country in the world where people are actually serious about God. You cannot. Therefore it's all going to be kicked over.

**Guest:** Could I ask a question? You were saying that your *karma* can make you "switch places" in your next life?

**Śrīla Hridayānanda dāsa Goswami:** That's a fact.

**Guest:** Then if you're connected with animal slaughter, in your next life you'll be an animal and you'll be slaughtered?

**Śrīla Hridayānanda dāsa Goswami:** That's right. Yesterday's ranchers are today's beef cattle.

**Guest:** But so many people kill animals or butcher or sell them or at least buy and eat them. Then they'll have to be cows?

**Śrīla Hridayānanda dāsa Goswami:** You just drive down the road in the rural areas, and all you see is one beef farm after the other. They're just killing cows—big business.

**Guest:** So all these beef cattle are, like,

the truckers who ship the meat, and the people who prepare the meat?

**Śrīla Hridayānanda dāsa Goswami:** Yes. If someone is a little advanced in spiritual awareness, he doesn't just see a cow and a tree and a barn. No. He can see who's who—who has done what. I mean, how could people think that God will permit this? . . . that you build a big slaughterhouse, you drag in millions and millions of poor innocent animals that are crying and screaming, and you simply take big knives and kill them? How can you think that this is going to go unpunished? These fools, these so-called government leaders, may be fond of thinking that they can simply pass some law—"Yes, we approve." Boom—they stamp it, everyone signs, they give out the fountain pens. "Yes, it is now legal to do this." No. These fools can say whatever they want, but God is not a fool like them. They may be very proud—"I am a U.S. senator." "I am a congressman." But God will simply take this rascal, and when he dies, He'll stick him on a beef farm, too. "You think it's so nice. Now you try it." This is only fair, isn't it?

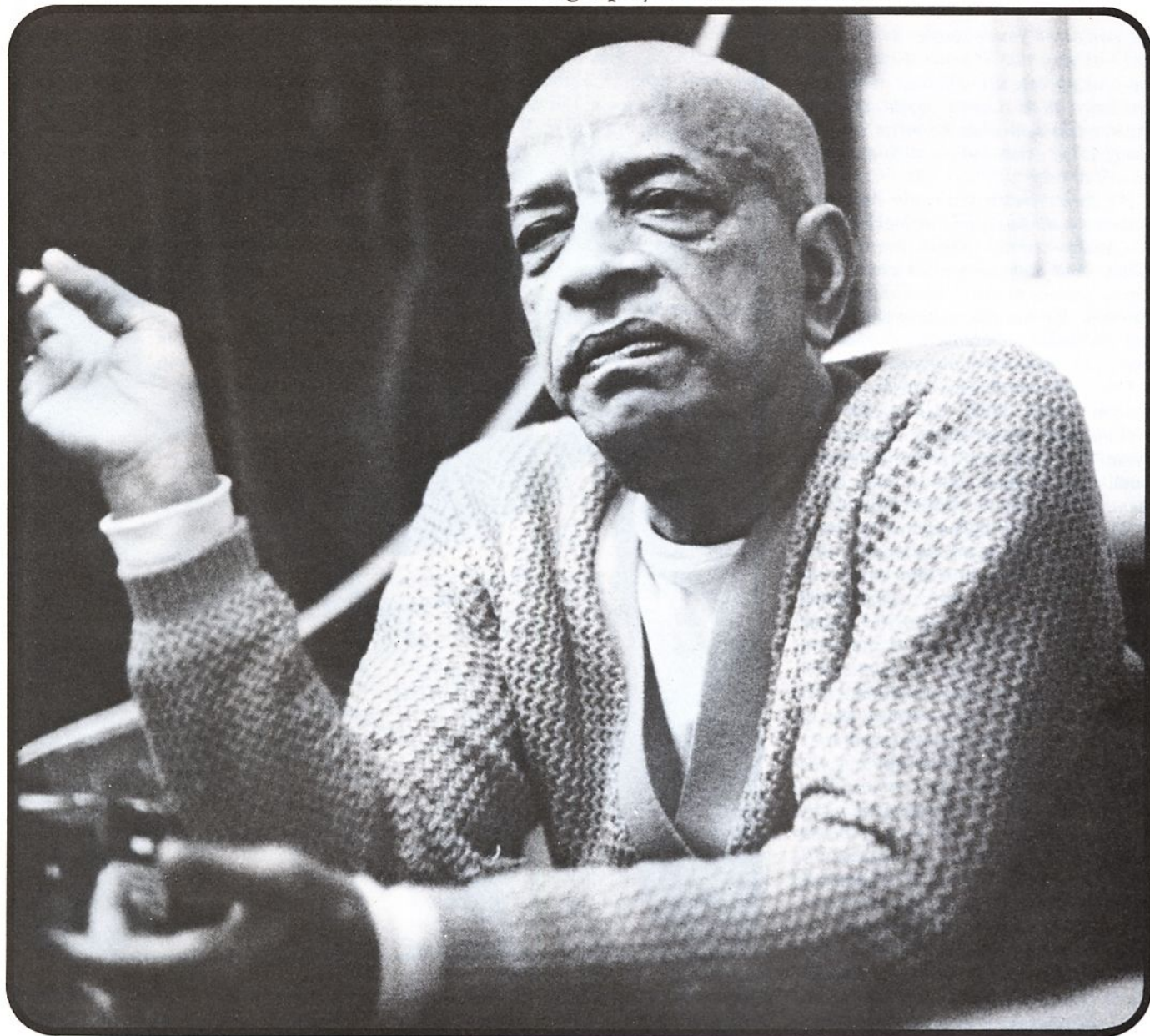
For example, if a mother comes and sees that her big child is simply harassing her small child and slapping him, she'll say, "Oh! Then I will slap you!" That's only fair. If one child is much bigger and he's simply slapping the smaller child, then the father or mother comes and . . . slap! . . . protects the smaller child. "Stop!" Isn't that natural? Is that unfair? Is there something wrong in that? Of course, a mother may slap her child and make him feel pain to punish him, but she will never actually do him any harm. So in the same way, even when you're "killed" you are not being killed. You just have to give up one body and accept another body. You're just being slapped.

**Guest:** You sound as though you know what God looks like and what He does, but how can anybody know these things?

**Śrīla Hridayānanda dāsa Goswami:** How can anyone *not* know? That's even harder to understand. God is your father. If you take a poll in America, how many people will know what their father looks like and how many people won't know? Who will be the majority? If someone says, "Oh, I know what my father looks like," that's not a big thing. So why should I care about that? But if someone says, "Oh, I've never seen my father," that's actually unusual. So if you say that you've never seen God, that's actually unusual. Because He's your father. To say that you can see

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# THE NEW GROUP

by SATSVARŪPA DĀSA GOSWAMI

One of the first American young people to take an interest in Prabhupāda was Robert Nelson. Although he had grown up in New York City, he was more like a slow, simple country boy with a lumbering, homespun manner. At that time he was about twenty years old and was receiving unemployment checks. Robert (or, as Prabhupāda called him, Mr. Nelson) was a loner. He was not part of the growing hippy youth movement, he did not take marijuana or other drugs, nor did he

socialize much. He'd had some technical education at Staten Island Community College and had tried his hand at a record manufacturing business, but without much success. He was interested in God and would attend various spiritual meetings around the city. In this way he had wandered several times into Dr. Misra's Yoga Society and had heard lectures. He remembers the night he first saw Śrīla Prabhupāda.

*Svāmī [Śrīla Prabhupāda] was sitting cross-legged on a bench. There was a meet-*

*ing, and Dr. Misra was standing up before a group of people. There were about fifty people coming there, and he talked on "I am consciousness." Dr. Misra talked and then gave Prabhupāda a grand introduction with a big smile. "Svāmījī is here," he said. And he swings around and waves his hand for a big introduction. It was beautiful. This was after Dr. Misra spoke for about an hour. Prabhupāda didn't speak; he sang a song.*

*I went up to Prabhupāda. He had a big smile and said, "Yes." Then he said that he*



likes young people to take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He was very serious about it. He wanted all young people. So I thought that was very nice. It made sense. He said the young people are different. When they get older it is like a waste of time. Prabhupāda said when he meets someone young it becomes entirely different. So I wanted to help.

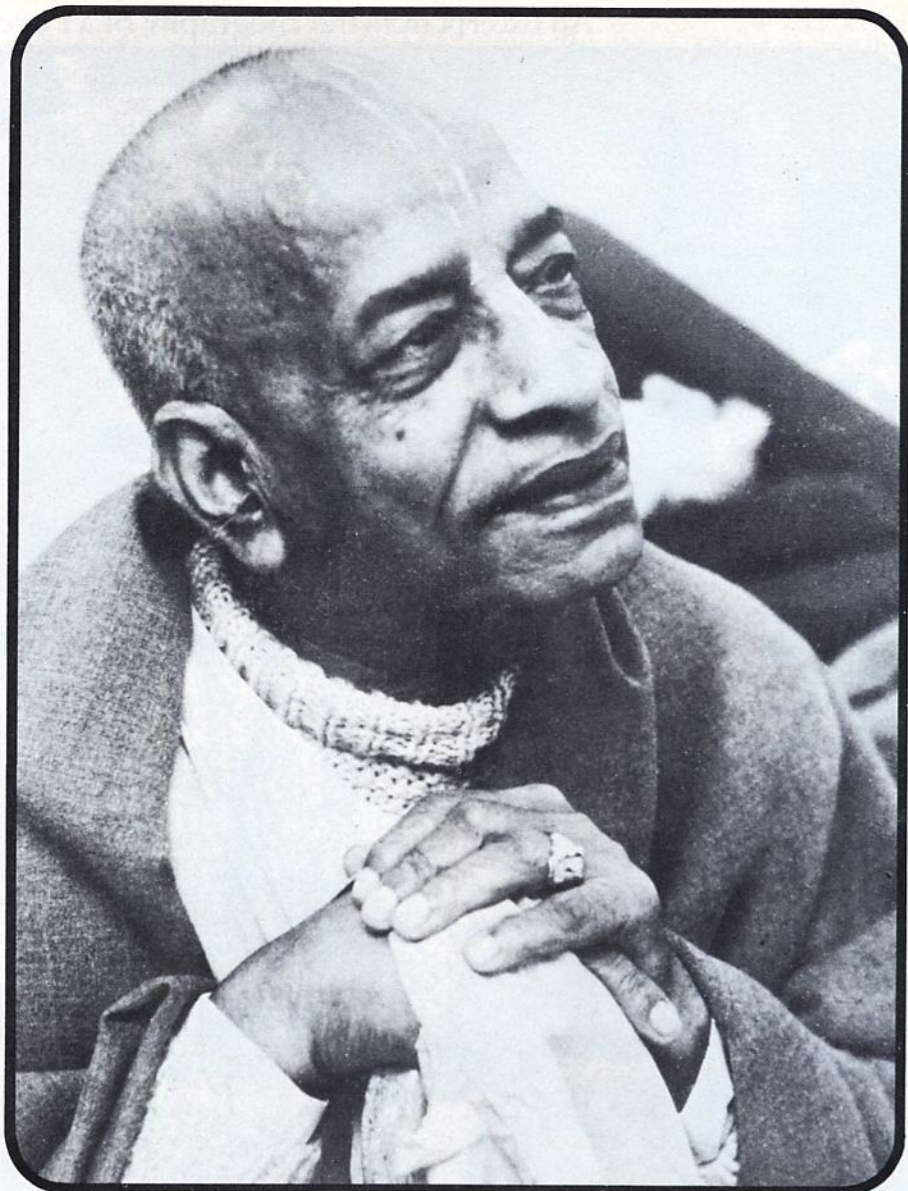
We stood there about an hour. Misra had a library in the back, and we looked at certain books—*Arjuna*, *Kṛṣṇa*, *chariots*, and things. And then we walked around. We looked at some of the pictures of *svāmīs* on the wall. By that time it was getting very late, and Prabhupāda said to come back the next day at ten to his office downstairs.

The next day, Robert Nelson went to Room 307 and knocked on Prabhupāda's door. He remembers the Svāmī inviting him in and handing him a small piece of paper with the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra printed on it. "While Svāmiji was handing it to me he had this big smile like he was handing me the world." Śrīla Prabhupāda showed Robert three volumes of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which Robert purchased for \$16.50. Robert remembers that the walls of the room were painted "a dark, dismal color." The place was clearly not intended to serve as a living quarters—there was no toilet, shower, chair, bed, or telephone.

So we spent the whole day together [Robert Nelson relates]. At one point Prabhupāda said, "We are going to take a sleep." So he laid down there by his little desk, and so I said, "I am tired too." So I laid down at the other end of the room and we rested. I just laid on the floor. It was the only place to do it. But he didn't rest that long—an hour and a half, I think—and then we spent the rest of the day together. He was talking about Lord Caitanya and the Lord's pastimes, and he showed me a small picture of Lord Caitanya, and then he started talking about the disciples of Lord Caitanya, Nityānanda, and Advaita. He had a picture of the five of them [Lord Kṛṣṇa's incarnation as Lord Caitanya, with His four principal associates] and a picture of his spiritual master. It wasn't much of a room, though. You'd really be disappointed if you saw it.

### Presents and Presentations

Robert Nelson couldn't give Prabhupāda the kind of assistance he needed. Lord Caitanya has stated that a person has at his command four things, of which he should give at least one to the service of God: he can give his whole life; or if he cannot do that, he can give his money; if he cannot give his money, he can give his intelligence; and if he does not have intelligence, he can at



least give his words, by telling others about the glories of God. Robert Nelson did not seem able to give his whole life to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and as for money, he had very little. His intelligence was also limited, he spoke unimpressively, and he did not have a wide range of friends or contacts with whom to speak. But he was affectionate toward Śrīla Prabhupāda, and out of the eight million people in the city, he was at this time almost the only one who showed personal interest and offered what little help he could.

Robert, with his experience in manufacturing records, had a scheme that he could make a record of Prabhupāda singing, so he tried to convince Prabhupāda to put out an album of devotional songs. One could put out an album with almost anything on it, he told Prabhupāda, and it would make money, or at least break even. An album that costs only thirty-five cents to make could always be put in

an assortment and sell for sixty cents, so it would be almost impossible to lose money. Robert thought this was a way he could help make Prabhupāda known, and he convinced Prabhupāda that it was worth making a presentation to a record manufacturer.

Me and Prabhupāda went around to this record company on Forty-sixth Street. We went in there, and I started talking, and the man was all business. He was all business and mean—they go together. So me and Prabhupāda went in there with the tape, and we tried talking to the man. Prabhupāda was talking, but the man said he couldn't put the tape out. I think he listened to the tape, but he wouldn't put it out. So we felt discouraged. Prabhupāda was discouraged, but he didn't say much about it. He wanted to have an album put out. It would have been so nice if that man had put out the album.

Robert Nelson and Śrīla Prabhupāda made an odd combination. Śrīla



Prabhupāda was elderly and dignified and was a deep scholar of the *Bhāgavatam* and the Sanskrit language, whereas Robert was artless in both Eastern and Western culture and inept in worldly ways. They walked together uptown on various adventures—Śrīla Prabhupāda wearing his winter coat (with its collar of imitation fur) along with his Indian *dhōtī* and white pointed shoes, Robert wearing old khaki pants and an old coat. Śrīla Prabhupāda walked with rapid, determined strides, outpacing the lumbering, rambling, heavyset boy who had befriended him.

Robert was supposed to help Śrīla Prabhupāda in making presentations to businessmen and real estate men, but he himself was hardly a slick fellow. He was quite innocent.

*Once we went over to this big office building on Forty-second Street, and we went in there. The rent was thousands of dollars for a whole floor. So I was standing there talking to the man, but I didn't understand how all this money would come, because Prabhupāda wanted a big place and I didn't know what to tell the man. The man was asking some big price just for the rent. That was between Sixth and Broadway on Forty-second Street. Some place to open Kṛṣṇa's temple! We went in and up to the second floor and saw the renting agent, and then we left. I think it was \$5,000 a month or \$10,000. We got to a certain point, and the money was too much. And then we left. When he brought up the prices, I figured we had better not, we had to stop. Previously I had seen a sign, and it was my idea to take Prabhupāda there.*

Another time Robert took Śrīla Prabhupāda to the Hotel Columbia, at 70 West Forty-sixth Street. The hotel had a suite that Śrīla Prabhupāda looked at for possible use as a temple, but again he found it too expensive.

Sometimes Robert would make purchases for Śrīla Prabhupāda with money from his unemployment checks. One time he bought orange-colored T-shirts. Another time he went to Woolworth's at Fiftieth Street between Sixth and Seventh Avenues and bought frying pans and picture frames for Prabhupāda's pictures of Lord Caitanya and his spiritual master.

"One time I wanted to know how to make *capātī* cakes," Robert said, "so Prabhupāda says, 'A hundred dollars, please, for the recipe. A hundred dollars, please.' So I went and got some money, but I couldn't get a hundred dollars. But he showed me anyway. He taught me to cook and would always repeat, 'Wash hands, wash hands,' 'You should only eat with your right hand.'"

Whoever met Śrīla Prabhupāda was

almost always impressed, Robert remembers. "They would start smiling back to him, and sometimes they would say funny things to each other that were nice. Prabhupāda's English was very technical always. I mean, he had a big vocabulary. But sometimes people had a little trouble understanding him, and you had to help sometimes."

Robert Nelson's observation that Prabhupāda liked young people to take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness is significant. Śrīla Prabhupāda was already seriously

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## A whole new phase of Prabhupāda's life in America began. Young seekers began to be attracted to him. "There's a new *svāmī*, and he's really fantastic!"

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considering that his message would be appreciated especially by the youth of America. In Bengal, Lord Caitanya had started His movement of *saṅkīrtana*, congregational chanting, when He was fifteen or sixteen years old, and many of His followers were also teenagers. In the *Bhāgavatam* a young boy devotee, Prahlāda, preaches to his schoolmates that they should take to spiritual life while very young, because as one grows older he becomes entangled in household life, and then spiritual life becomes impossible. Of course, Śrīla Prabhupāda was not discriminating, or thinking that only people of a certain age group should receive Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Indeed, it was mostly older people who had so far given him a hearing.

A man by the name of Harvey Cohen, who was then in his thirties, proved an important link with the young people of New York City. A commercial artist who lived on the Lower East Side, Harvey had seen Prabhupāda one evening at Dr. Misra's *yoga* studio, and he began to describe Śrīla Prabhupāda to some of his friends at the Paradox restaurant, at 64 East Seventh Street. It was Dr. Misra who had given Śrīla Prabhupāda shelter

uptown, where he had at least survived, but it was through Harvey Cohen and then others from the Paradox that a whole new phase of Prabhupāda's life in America began. Young seekers began to be attracted to him. A young friend of Harvey's named Bill Epstein, who was then in his early twenties, says his own coming to see Prabhupāda was due to Harvey Cohen and the Paradox restaurant: "Harvey Cohen came to me and said, 'I want to visit Misra, and there's a new *svāmī* there, and he's really fantastic!'"

The Paradox, a macrobiotic establishment, was a center for spiritual-cultural interests in the 1960s. Run by a man named Richard O'Kane, the Paradox served natural food based on the philosophy of George Osawa and the macrobiotic diet. It was a kind of meeting place reminiscent of Parisian cafes or Greenwich Village in the 1920s. In this storefront, one flight down from the sidewalk, small dining tables were placed around a room which was generally lit by candlelight. There was also a courtyard in the back, where people could sit at tables under trees. The food was inexpensive and well reputed. Tea was served free, as much as you liked. A person could spend the whole day at the Paradox without buying anything, and no one would chase him out.

For some, the people at the Paradox were like a mystical congregation. It was not merely a New York scene, but was frequented by people traveling from Europe and other parts of the world. The people at the Paradox were always interested in teachers from India or the East. The Paradox culture was originally not oriented toward LSD or other drugs, but was centered on internationalism, spiritual inquiry, and the Osawa diet. It gradually turned out, however, that people who had taken LSD were attracted to the restaurant, because of its atmosphere of mind expansion and mystical interest. "Even the mystics have to eat," said James Greene, who was then a thirty-year-old freelance carpenter teaching at Cooper Union and reading his way into Eastern philosophy. He was another who heard about Śrīla Prabhupāda while regularly taking his evening meal at the Paradox in the spring of 1966.

Bill Epstein was an employee at the Paradox, and once he became interested in Prabhupāda, he made Prabhupāda an ongoing topic of conversation. Quite in contrast to Robert Nelson, Bill Epstein was a dashing, romantic person with long, wavy dark hair and a beard. He was good-looking and effervescent and took upon himself a social role of informing people of the city's spiritual news. It was



through Harvey Cohen that he first met Śrīla Prabhupāda.

When Harvey Cohen came down to the Paradox [Bill Epstein relates], at first I couldn't care less. I was involved in macrobiotics and Buddhism, but Harvey was a winning and warm personality, and he seemed interested in this. He said, "Why don't you come uptown? I would like you to see this." So I went to one of the lectures on Seventy-second Street. I walked in there, and I could feel a certain presence from the Svāmī. He had a certain very concentrated intense appearance. He looked pale and kind of weak; I guess he had just come here and he had been through a lot of things. He was sitting there chanting on his beads, which he carried in a little bag. One of Dr. Misra's students was talking, and he finally got around to introducing the Svāmī. He said, "We are the moons to the Svāmī's sun." He introduced him in that way. The Svāmī got up and talked. I didn't know what to think about it.

So I went back to the Paradox and said, "Well, Harvey, I went to see the Svāmī." He said, "What did you think?" I said, "Well, you know, it is interesting." At that time the only steps I had taken in regard to Indian teaching was through Rama-krishna, but this was the first time that *bhakti* religion had come to America.

Then another time Harvey came to the Paradox, and I asked, "How is the Svāmī living? Where is he getting his money from?"

He said, "I don't know."

I asked, "Does he have food?"

He said, "I don't know if he's got anything up there."

I asked, "Have you gone to see him where he's living?"

He said, "Yes. He lives now on the third floor, in Room 307."

I said, "Well, you know what I think I'm going to do? I'm going to take him some food from here and bring it up there and see if he could use it."

He said, "Yes, that sounds like a good idea. I don't know how he's getting his food."

So I went in the back, and I asked Richard, the manager, "I'm going to take some food to the Svāmī. You don't mind, do you?" He said, "No. Take anything you want." So I took some brown rice and other stuff, and I brought it up there.

I went upstairs and I knocked on the door, and there was no answer. I knocked again, and I saw that the light was on—because it had a glass panel—and finally he answered. I was really scared, because I had never really accepted any teacher. He said, "Come in! Come in! Sit down." We started talking, and he said to me, "The first thing that people do when they meet is to show each other love. They exchange

names; they exchange something to eat." So he gave me a slice of apple, and he showed me the tape recorder he had, which probably Harvey Cohen gave him so he could record his chants. Then he said, "Have you ever chanted?" I said, "No, I haven't chanted before." So he played a chant, and then he spoke to me some more. He said, "You must come back." I said, "Well, if I come back I'll bring you some more food."

Almost all the people going up to see Śrīla Prabhupāda at this time were

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**"Most teachers  
from India had  
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right away to the  
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group of people."**

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coming from the Paradox. People taking their dinner in the restaurant would be approached by Bill Epstein or others with the proposal, "Let's go up to the Svāmī's." Whenever Bill Epstein went he would bring food and sit and chant. Some of the people who went thought that Prabhupāda was being too exclusive by saying that the only way to reach God was to sing Hare Kṛṣṇa. But because most of them were people who were open to experimenting with new things, they began chanting, and then they would like it. Those who had experienced the visit uptown to the Svāmī talked favorably about it at the restaurant to those who had never gone.

### Coming Downtown

Another sympathizer who met Śrīla Prabhupāda through the restaurant was James Greene. Older and more responsible, he had been living for eight years on the same block as the Paradox.

Initially we had gone to attend one of Dr. Misra's lectures [James Greene relates]. It was really Harvey and Bill Epstein who got things going. I remember one meeting at Misra's. Svāmījī was only a presence; he didn't speak. Misra's students seemed more into the bodily aspect of yoga. This seemed

to be one of Svāmījī's complaints.

His room on Seventy-second Street was quite small. He was living in a fairly narrow room. It must have been ten feet by fifteen feet. It had a door on one end, and Svāmījī had set himself up along one side, and we were rather closely packed. It may have been no more than eight feet wide, and it was rather dim. He sat on his thin mattress, and then we sat on the floor.

At that time we didn't chant. We would just come, and he would lecture. There was no direction other than the lecture on *Bhagavad-gītā*. I had read a lot of literature, and in my own shy way I was looking for a master, I think. I have no aggression in me or go-getting quality. I was really just a listener, and this seemed right—hearing the *Bhagavad-gītā*—so I kept coming. It just seemed as if things would grow from there. More and more people began coming. Then it got crowded, and he had to find another place.

Another of the first seekers who came to see Prabhupāda uptown was Paul Murray. Eighteen years old, he had just moved to the city, optimistically attracted by what he had read about experimentation with drugs. Paul remembers a clash between the Paradox group and the more conservative, older guests who had been attending Prabhupāda's classes. The young men, he says, found "a kind of fussy budgetary group of older women on the West Side" listening to Prabhupāda's lectures. At that time it was unusual for people to have long hair and beards, and when such people started coming to the West Side to visit Prabhupāda, some of the older people were alarmed. "Swami Bhaktivedanta began to pick up another kind of people," one of them says. "He picked them up at the Bowery or some attics. And they came with funny hats and grey blankets around themselves, and they startled me."

We weren't known as hippies then [Paul Murray relates]. But it was strange for the people who had originally been attracted to him. It was difficult for them to relate to this new group. I think most of the teachers from India up to that time had older followers, and sometimes wealthy widows would provide a source of income. But Svāmījī changed right away to the younger, poorer group of people.

The next thing that happened was that Bill Epstein and others began talking about how it would be better for the Svāmī to come downtown to the Lower East Side. Things were really happening down there, and somehow they weren't happening uptown. People downtown really needed him. Downtown was right and it was ripe. There was life down there. There was a lot of energy going around.



## The Vedic Observer

(continued from page 25)

uterine" body. So whether we destroy his extra-uterine body or his tiny intra-uterine body, it's not just some biochemical phenomenon. It's murder. We're ripping another person's body away from him. But once we forget the inner soul and become "biologically oriented," we can murder people we find inconsequential or inconvenient and call it the "new ethic."

In fact, once we submerge our spirituality and become "biologically oriented," we'll see that killing babies is our "new ethic" at its summit... "the only compassionate attitude to have." As American Civil Liberties Union lawyer Herman Schwartz pointed out in *The Humanist*, "...abortion proponents seek only to permit those who feel it necessary to destroy unborn organisms... with no discernible personality at all, in order to reduce human suffering." Biologically, what's wrong with that? Babies, of course, are not as biologically "viable" or "capable of meaningful life" as we are. So their suffering isn't really as "meaningful" or

as "human."

Biologically, this is surely "the only attitude to have," but let us suggest that our scientists and doctors and public policy-makers stop calling it "compassionate." Why not just say that once you've become "biologically oriented," you won't have to feel guilty about being selfish? Why lead a double life? Come out and shout it: "I'm a selfish animal."

No one expects an animal to be compassionate anyway, so at least be honest about it. All you scientific and sociopolitical movers and shakers who've so often told us how much we need to get in touch with our essential animality, why not unabashedly show us the way? Why go through all the strain and drain of wearing suits and ties and holding huge conferences on compassion and concern? Compassion is a human quality. If you have no compassion for human babies, then why persist in calling yourselves "humanists"? If you can't live with the name "animalists," perhaps it's because your God-given human intelligence is trying to tell you something. Something about your own essential spirituality, and that of the babies you've chalked off to your "biologically oriented world society." 🌸

## Kṛṣṇa and Kālīya

(continued from page 14)

begged Him to spare their husband's life. The Lord agreed, but ordered Kālīya to leave the Yamunā for the ocean. (Based on geographical descriptions in the *Vedas*, it is sometimes said that he went to Fiji, where to this day the natives tell of a black serpent inhabiting a lake in the mountainous interior.)

Sitting underneath the *kadamba* tree at Kālīya-ghāṭa at twilight, I meditated on this pastime, as cows wandered over the spot where it had taken place. That's what's so attractive about Vṛndāvana—it's easy to think of Kṛṣṇa. As the authors of the British *Imperial Gazetteer* noted in the nineteenth century, "The western side of the district [of Mathurā] is celebrated as Braj Maṇḍala [Vṛndāvana] or the country of Kṛṣṇa, and almost every grove, mound, and tank is associated with some episode in His life."

Suddenly I remembered the little girl in Los Angeles asking, "Why is Kṛṣṇa dancing on the snake's head?" This article is, in a sense, an answer to the question her mother couldn't answer. 🌸

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# AMERICA'S KARMA

(continued from page 28)

God—so what? God is your father. But if you say that you *haven't* seen God, that's actually hard to understand. Actually the Vedic scriptures are so elevated and so exalted that you'll never find a *guru* or saint in Vedic culture asking, "How is it possible to see God?" But Parikṣit

Mahārāja asked, "How is it possible that people *don't* see God?" He's not that hard to understand. Just like if someone says to you, "I've never seen my father." Oh, really? How is that? How is it you've never seen your father? So what do you think God is? He's not simply playing hide-and-seek.

What do people think God is doing? Do people think that He's simply up in the ionosphere or something, and He's

sitting on a big throne and just watching the play-by-play on the earth, and there are some angels hovering there, floating or playing trumpets, and God is just operating a big universal scoreboard? "Ah, one sin—click. Ah, one pious activity—click." Do they think that God has nothing else to do, that He just sits there for billions of years and keeps score? It's a crazy idea, isn't it?


And even more crazy, when people come before God (I've actually seen so-called religious tracts about this), they come before a throne and a huge faceless figure, and "God" demands, "Why didn't you serve Me?! Now I am going to throw you into a lake of fire for all eternity."

"No!" Then the person surrenders. "I'm sorry, God. Now I want to serve You. I'm sorry for what I did. Please accept me."

"No. I'm sorry. It's too late. I'm going to make you suffer forever. Ha, ha, ha!"

This is not actually how God is. There must be lakes of fire somewhere in the universe; that's a fact. But anyone who will sincerely surrender to God—he'll be liberated from his negative *karma*. And God—He's not like some neurotic parent who says, "I've given My whole life for My children," and who just sits there fretting over what we're doing. God has His own activities, His own friends, His own life, just as ordinary parents sometimes say—"I've given my life for my children, but now I must have my own life."

So Kṛṣṇa has His own life. He has His own planet and He has millions and billions of girl friends and boyfriends. They're all young, they're all eternal, they're all very beautiful... gorgeous. Everything there is conscious and eternal. Yes, and God never grows old. Actually He is very young. Young Kṛṣṇa.

So the point is that you're related to God—you can see Him and you can go back to His spiritual world to live with Him. But you have to love Him. That's all. The only requirement. You just have to stop being a rascal and a fool and thinking that you can do whatever you like. You have to become sincere. 

HIS DIVINE GRACE HRDAYĀNANDA DĀSA GOSWAMI is one of the spiritual masters that ISKCON's founder-ācārya Śrīla Prabhupāda selected to initiate new disciples. He came to the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in 1969, and in 1972 he received *sannyāsa* (the renounced order). He has lectured extensively at colleges and universities throughout the United States. Also, he speaks fluent Spanish and Portuguese and played a pioneering role in bringing Kṛṣṇa consciousness to Latin America. Currently he directs ISKCON projects in Brazil.

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

WHAT IS A MANTRA? In Sanskrit, *man* means "mind" and *tra* means "freeing." So a *mantra* is a combination of transcendental sounds that frees our minds from the anxieties of life in the material world.

Ancient India's Vedic literatures single out one *mantra* as the *mahā* (supreme) *mantra*. The *Kali-santarāṇa Upaniṣad* explains, "These sixteen words—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare / Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare—are especially meant for counteracting the ill effects of the present age of quarrel and anxiety."

The *Nārada-pañcarātra* adds, "All *mantras* and all processes for self-realization are compressed into the Hare

Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*."

Five centuries ago, while spreading the *mahā-mantra* throughout the Indian subcontinent, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu prayed, "O Supreme Personality of Godhead, in Your holy name You have invested all Your transcendental energies."

The name *Kṛṣṇa* means "the all-attractive one," the name *Rāma* means "the all-pleasing one," and the name *Hare* is an address to the Lord's devotional energy. So the *mahā-mantra* means, "O all-attractive, all-pleasing Lord, O energy of the Lord, please engage me in Your devotional service." Chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, and your life will be sublime.



# NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

## Anthropomorphism Revisited: God as Obstetrician

Astronomer Carl Sagan's theory of why man believes in God ("The Amniotic Universe," *Atlantic Monthly*, April 1979) is a rather old-fashioned speculation, but with a few new twists. Sagan says our ideas of God and the afterlife are no more than remembrances of states we experienced as infants emerging from our mother's womb.

Before elaborating on his birth theory, Sagan is quick to admit that anthropomorphism (which commonly means the idea that God was invented by man) is often simply a "desperate rationalist attempt to avoid a serious encounter with the mystical." He also rejects as implausible the idea that religious experience is a mere evolutionary "wiring defect in the brain," touched off in altered states of consciousness such as "near-death" and LSD experiences.

But Sagan's own "new" anthropomorphic theory is weak and implausible in the extreme. He says he got his idea from a psychotherapist named Stanislav Grof. Grof asked patients undergoing LSD therapy to recollect memories of their birth, and subsequently he broke the birth experience down into four stages: initial restfulness and complacency, intense pain during the womb's contractions, gradual passage into the light, and ultimate comfort, when the infant arrives in affectionate arms. Accepting Grof's analysis, Sagan offers us his anthropomorphic guess: the relief experienced by the infant as he leaves the womb and passes into the light has created man's notion of the kingdom of God, and the first figure who meets the newborn's eyes, the midwife or the obstetrician or the father, forms man's notion of God.

Has the astronomer, then, with one deft stroke invalidated the spiritual knowledge of Kṛṣṇa, Buddha, Christ, Muhammad, and all other great religious thinkers? Not likely. Sagan's attempt to explain it all away as purely physiological phenomena may please the atheistically predisposed, but it leaves the more objective observer a bit less than satisfied.

Why does Sagan attempt to explain man's noblest impulse—love of God—as no more than a remembrance of physical birth? Sagan admits to a frailty: he cannot reconcile belief in God with his belief in his own supremacy. "I would be delighted if there were life after death... but I am also a scientist...." Apparently he thinks that as a scientist, he has a right to demand that the Supreme Being come under his scrutiny, much as a butterfly comes under the microscope or a planet appears in the lens of a telescope.

But clearly the Supreme Personality of Godhead cannot be approached by such a mundane, materialistic method. So Sagan—

rather than turn to standard transcendental processes for approaching God, as taught by the great religious thinkers—has created his own explanation. Sagan cannot accept that God exists in truth, and so he seeks an alternative, a reason why so many "good and great people" believe in Him. He thinks he's found it in his birth theory, "the only alternative, as far as I can see." Is Lord Kṛṣṇa, the speaker of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, no more than a memory of an obstetrician? Are Jesus Christ's prayers to God the Father just an inadvertent expression of thanks to the many midwives who deliver babies? Or perhaps it's just Sagan who's in illusion... forgetting God, creating vain "alternatives."

Similar antireligious theories of God are discussed in the ancient Vedic scriptures. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa states, "I am never manifest to the foolish and unintelligent. For them I am covered by My deluding potency; and so the deluded world knows Me not, who am unborn and infallible.... Fools deride Me when I descend in the human form. They do not know My transcendental nature and My supreme dominion over all that be." How can an ordinary human being make independent research into the nature of God? We are all beset with human limitations such as imperfect sensory perception and the tendency to make mistakes, to cheat, and to be illusioned. Because the existence of the Absolute is beyond our material vision, it is impossible for us to understand Him unless we take to one of the standard paths of spiritual purification.

When the atheist attempts to mock the Supreme—saying He is no more than the friendly father or obstetrician who welcomes the baby out of the womb—it is not actually the Supreme who is being described (and mocked and rejected), but an imagination of the Supreme created by the mental speculator. The transcendental position of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is not perceivable by the conditioned souls, who are accustomed to judging everything according to material vision and who cannot understand that the Supreme exists in His own abode, which is beyond that vision. Even if a scientist could count all the atoms in the universe, he would still not be able to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Even if one tried to understand the Supreme for billions of years through the mental speculative process or by traveling at the speed of mind or the wind, still the Absolute Truth would remain inconceivable to him, because a materialistic person cannot measure the length and breadth of the Supreme Personality of Godhead's unlimited existence.

We have to approach God by inquiring from realized saints and from the scriptures.

This devotional method, *bhakti-yoga*, has its own scientific standards, its own theoretical and practical aspects of perception, and only if one takes to them can he come to realize his relationship with the Supreme. For example, in this age the Vedic literatures strongly recommend the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. If one chooses not to take to the bona fide process of understanding that which is spiritual, then he can never realize God. But whether one understands Him or not, nonetheless He is existing in His own spiritual potency, beyond the dabbings of the psychotherapist or the astronomer.

Carl Sagan is well known for his belief that superior life forms exist on other planets. He ends the exposition of his "birth theory" of God by predicting that "sooner or later [through space travel] we will find other intelligent beings." Sagan believes that most of the creatures we will find in outer space will be more advanced than present humanity. "In some very real sense they will appear to us as godlike." He concludes that perhaps these superior beings will give us superior knowledge of God and science. The Vedic sources also inform us that there is superior life on other planets within this material universe. At any rate, the astronomer's concession that his own theory is human speculation and may one day be improved by knowledge from higher beings has a seeming modesty. But why isn't Sagan modest enough to see that beyond the advanced intelligence that we may find in beings in outer space, there must be higher and higher stages of intelligence and ultimately the intelligence from which all intelligence is coming? This fundamental principle—that God is the original cause—is expressed in the Vedānta aphorism, "The Supreme is that from which everything is emanating." Even the small fragment of the universe we see around us is so complex and highly organized that we must conclude there is a great intelligence or brain behind it. We may speculate on which theory—"big bang," "steady state," "oscillation"—best explains the universe, but *whatever* way it has come about, it has come about and is evolving due to a supreme will and intelligence.

Nor do we have to wait for millions of years in the vain hope that ultimate knowledge will come to us only through a chance encounter with higher beings. For thousands of years compassionate, ultimate wisdom has been coming from the Supreme Being to the suffering beings in this material world, and even today the transmission continues. Unfortunately, a scientist like Sagan is too busy straining his own imperfect brain and senses and mouthing "alternatives" to God—too busy to be a little humble and give his ears a chance.

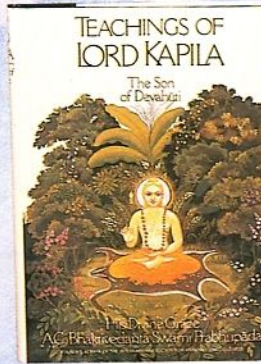
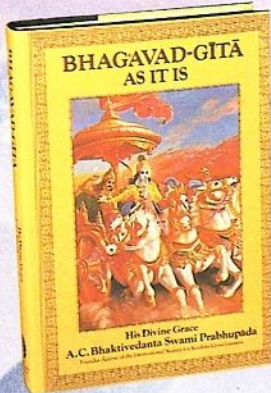
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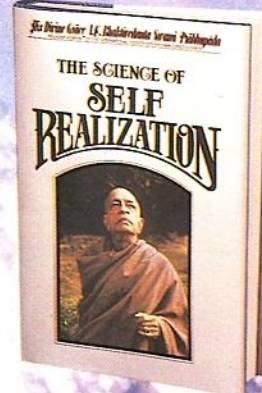
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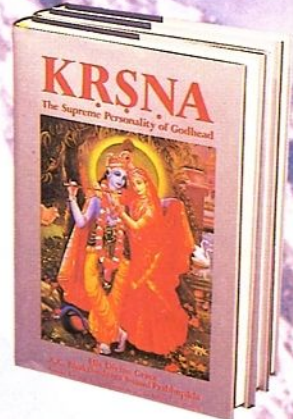
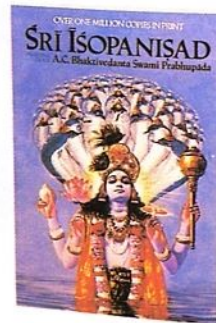
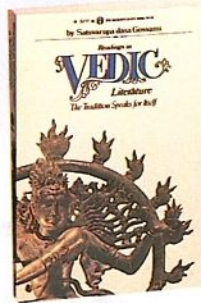
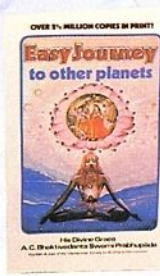
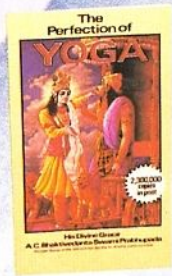


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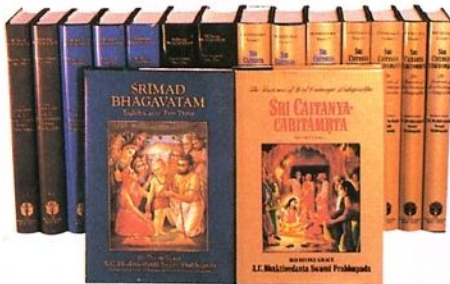
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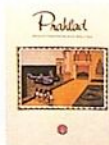
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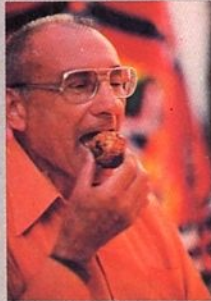
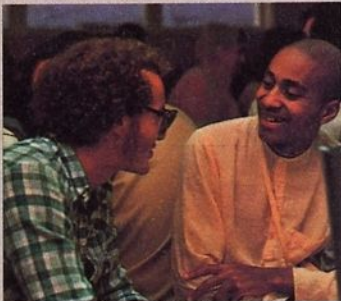
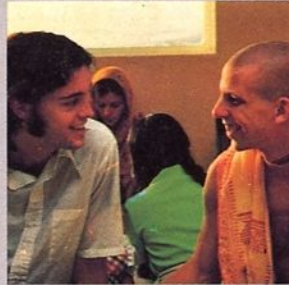
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