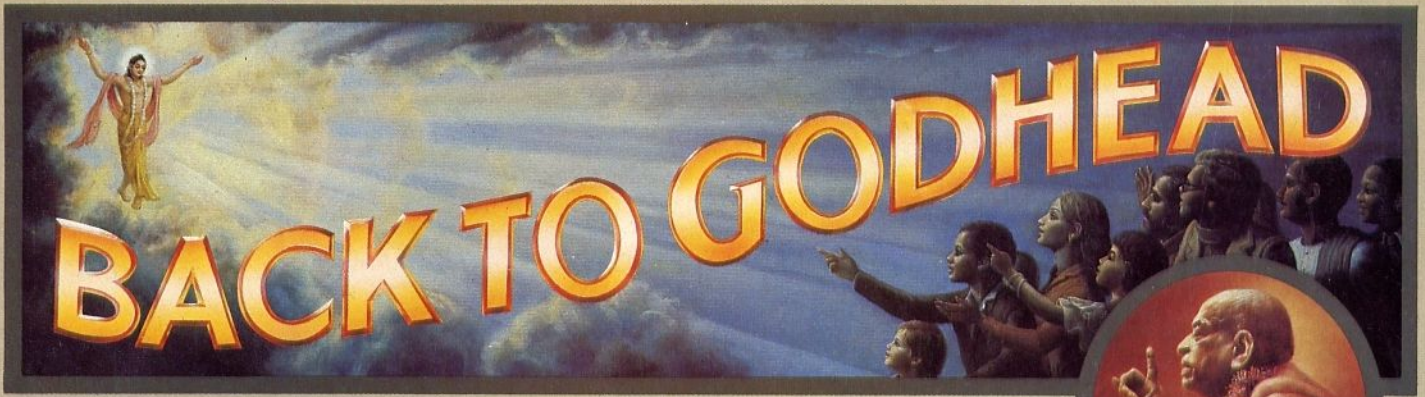


Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.



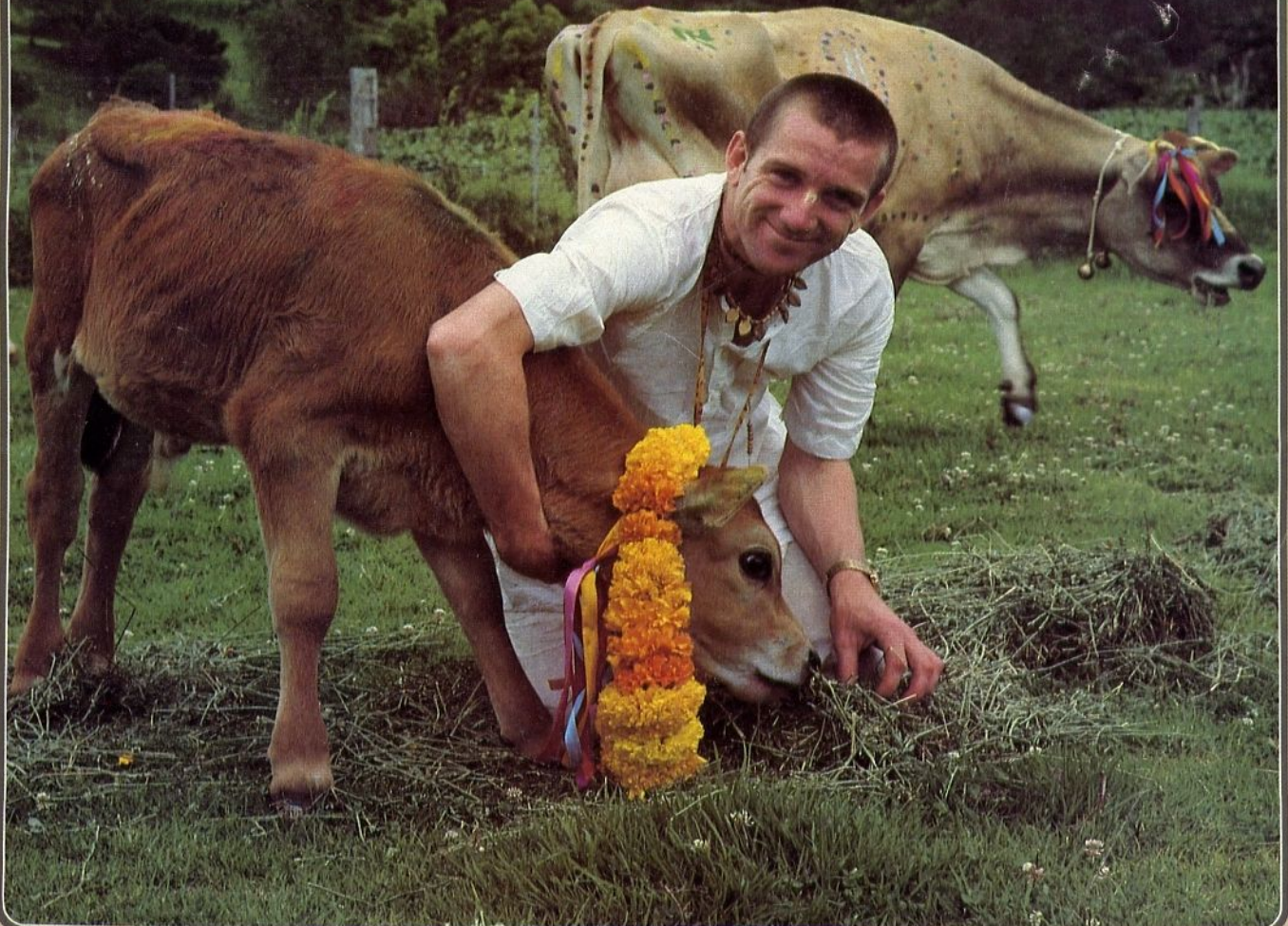
Vol.15 No.3-4 THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT

The temples . . . the farms . . .
The drug-rehabilitation program . . .

Kṛṣṇa Consciousness In Australia And New Zealand

Also in this issue:

A Pilgrimage Journal
Fighting Religious Defamation
The Most Confidential Knowledge



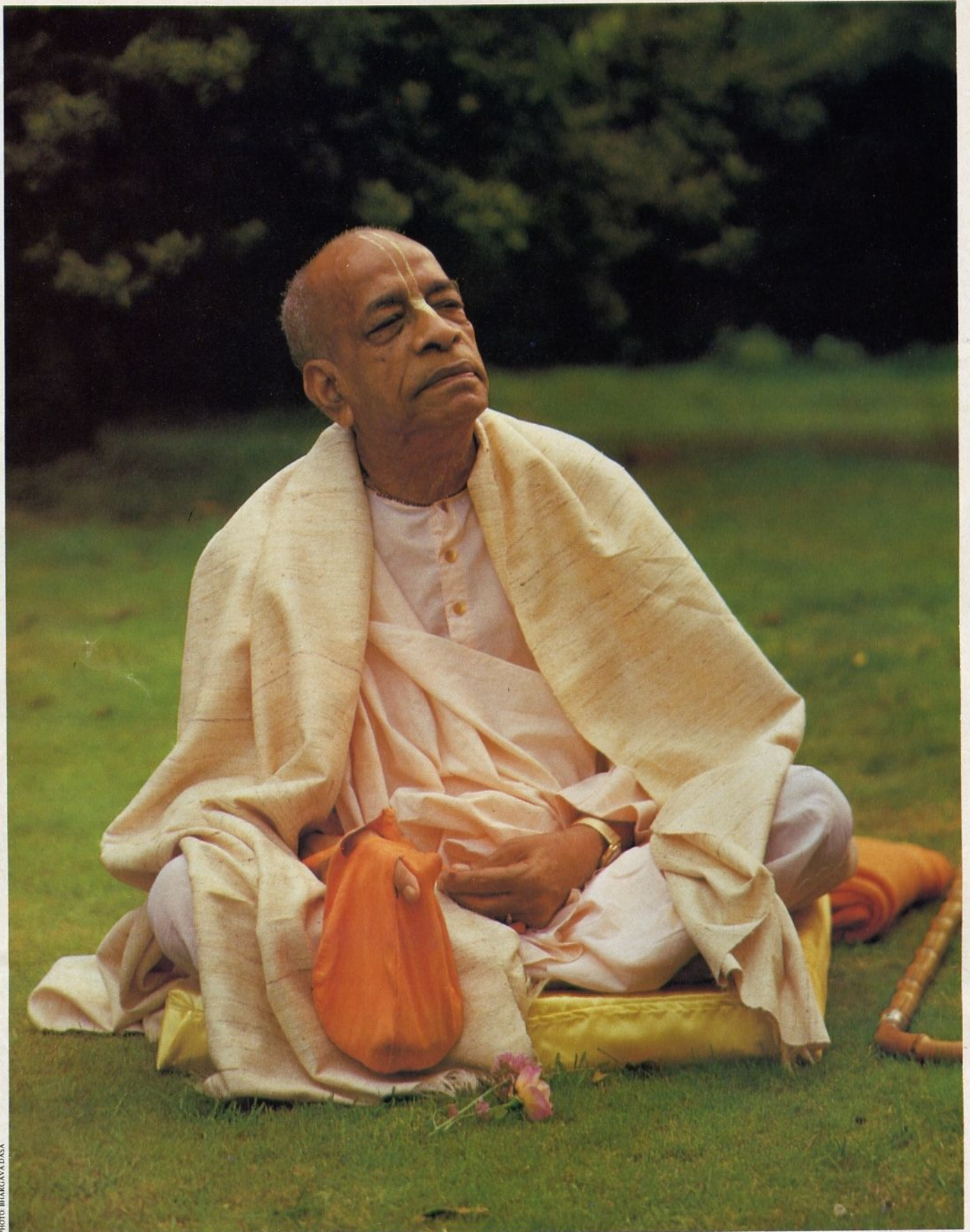


PHOTO: BHARGAVA DĀSA

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

BACK TO GODHEAD

VOL. 15 NO. 3-4

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
A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda

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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 **plique**. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **ri** in **rim**, and **e**
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* (*dāśī* 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: Australia's Real Wealth: Land, Cows, and God Consciousness. Devotees
at ISKCON's farm near Murwillumbah have decorated the cows for an annual
festival that celebrates the natural bounty supplied by God. Says Cittahārī dāsa,
shown here, "Our farm projects display the principle that everyone will have full
employment, a full diet, and full spiritual satisfaction if they just get back to the
land, the cows, and Kṛṣṇa."

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 PERFECTION OF YOGA

WHEN GOD REVEALS HIMSELF

A lecture by HIS DIVINE GRACE

A.C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA

Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

*jñāna-vijñāna-triptātmā
kūṭa-stho vijitendriyaḥ
yukta ity ucyate yogī
sama-loṣṭāśma-kāñcanaḥ*

“A person is said to be established in self-realization and is called a *yogī* [or mystic] when he is fully satisfied by virtue of acquired knowledge and realization. Such a person is situated in transcendence and is self-controlled. He sees everything—whether it be pebbles, stones, or gold—as the same.” [Bhagavad-gītā 6.8]

Book knowledge without realization of the Supreme Truth is useless. In the *Padma Purāṇa* this is stated as follows:

*ataḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi
na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ
sevonmukhe hi jihvādau
svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ*

“No one can understand the transcendental nature of the name, form, qualities, and pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa through materially contaminated senses. Only when one becomes spiritually saturated by transcendental service to the Lord are the transcendental name, form, quality, and pastimes of the Lord revealed to him.”

This point is very important. Now, we accept Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Lord. And

Realization of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the final goal of all *yoga* practice. But only to His pure devotees, the *bhakti-yogīs*, does the Lord reveal this most beautiful and attractive form.

why do we accept Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Lord? Because it is stated in the Vedic literature. The *Brahma-saṁhitā*, for example, says, *īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ*: “The Supreme Controller is Kṛṣṇa, who has an eternal, blissful, spiritual body.” Those who are in passion and ignorance, the lower modes of material nature, simply imagine the form of God. And when they are confused they say, “Oh, there is no personal God. The Absolute is impersonal or void.” This idea is a product of frustration. Actually, God has a form. Why not? The *Veḍānta-sūtra* says, *janmādy asya yataḥ*: “The Supreme Absolute Truth is that from whom [or from which] everything emanates.” Now, we have forms. And not only we but all the different kinds of living entities have forms. Wherefrom have they come? Wherefrom have these forms originated? If God is not a person, then how have His sons become persons? If my father is not a person, how have I become a person? If my father has no form, wherefrom did I get my form? These are commonsense questions. Nonetheless, when people are frustrated, when they see that their bodily forms are troublesome, they develop an opposite conception of form and imagine that God must be formless. But the *Brahma-saṁhitā* says no. God has a form, but His form is eternal, full of knowledge and bliss (*īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ*). *Sat* means “eternal,” *cit* means “knowledge,” and *ānanda* means “pleasure.” So God has a form, but His form is full of pleasure, full of knowledge, and eternal.

If we compare our body to God’s, we see

that our body is neither eternal nor full of pleasure nor full of knowledge. So our form is clearly different from God’s. Unfortunately, as soon as we think of form, we usually think the form must be like ours. Therefore, we think that since God must be the opposite of us, He must have no form. This is speculation, however, not knowledge. Again, the *Padma Purāṇa* says, *ataḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ*: “One cannot understand the form, name, quality, or paraphernalia of God with one’s material senses.” Our senses are imperfect, so how can we speculate on the Supreme Perfect? It is not possible.

Then how is it possible to see Him? *Sevonmukhe hi jihvādau*. If we train our senses, if we purify our senses, those purified senses will help us see God. It is just as if we had cataracts on our eyes. When our eyes are suffering from cataracts, we cannot see. But this does not mean that there is nothing to be seen—only that we cannot see. Similarly, now we cannot conceive of the form of God, but if our “cataracts,” our ignorance, are removed we can see Him. The *Brahma-saṁhitā* says, *premāñjana-cchurita-bhakti-vilocanena/santaḥ sadaiva hṛdayeṣu vilokayanti*: “The devotees whose eyes are anointed with the love-of-God ointment see God, Kṛṣṇa, within their hearts twenty-four hours a day.” So we need to purify our senses. Then we’ll be able to understand what the form of God is, what the name of God is, what the qualities of God are, and what the paraphernalia of God is. Then we’ll be able to see God in everything.

The Vedic literature is full of references

to God's form. For example, it is said that God has no hands or legs but that He can accept anything you offer (*apāṇi-pādo javano grahītā*). Also, it is said that God has no eyes or ears but that He can see everything and hear everything. These are apparent contradictions, because whenever we think of someone seeing, we think he must have eyes like ours. This is our material conception. Factually, however, God does have eyes, but His eyes are different from ours. He can see even in the darkness, but we cannot. God can hear, also. God is in His kingdom, which is millions and millions of miles away, but if we are whispering something in a conspiracy, He can hear it, because He is sitting within us.

So we cannot avoid God's seeing or God's hearing or God's touching. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa says,

*patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyam
yo me bhaktyā prayacchati
tad ahaṁ bhakty-upahṛtam
aśnāmi prayātāmanah*

"If somebody offers Me flowers, fruits, vegetables, or milk with devotional love, I accept and eat it." How is He eating? We cannot see Him eat, but He is eating. We experience this daily: when we offer Kṛṣṇa food according to the Vedic ritualistic process, we see that the taste of the food changes immediately. This is practical.

Thus God eats, but because He is full in Himself, He does not eat like us. If someone offers me a plate of food and I eat it, the food is gone. But God is not hungry, so when He eats He leaves the things as they are. *Pūrṇasya pūrṇam ādāya pūrṇam evāvaśiṣyate*: God is so full that He can eat all the food that we offer but still it remains as it is. He can eat even with His eyes. This is stated in the *Brahma-saṁhītā*. *Angāni yasya sakalendriya-vṛttimanti*: "Every limb of the body of God has all the potencies of the other limbs." Although we can see with our eyes, we cannot eat with our eyes. But if God simply sees the food we have offered, that is His eating.

Of course, we cannot understand this at the present moment. Therefore the *Padma Purāṇa* says that only when one becomes spiritually saturated by transcendental service to the Lord are the transcendental name, form, qualities, and pastimes of the Lord revealed. We cannot understand God by our own endeavor, but God can reveal Himself to us. Trying to see God by our own efforts is just like trying to see the sun when it is dark outside. If we say, "I have a very strong flashlight, and I shall search out the sun," we will not be able to see it. But in the morning, when the sun rises by its own will, we can easily see it. Similarly, we cannot see God by our own endeavor,

because our senses are all imperfect. We have to purify our senses and wait for the time when God will be pleased to reveal Himself before us. This is the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We cannot challenge, "My dear Lord, my dear Kṛṣṇa, You must come before me so I can see You." No, God is not our order supplier, our servant. When He is pleased with us, we'll see Him.

Therefore in our *yoga* process (*bhakti-*

**Anyone can say,
"I am God," and
some rascal will
accept him as God.
The man who says,
"I am God" is a
rascal, and the
man who accepts
him as God
is also a rascal.**

yoga), we try to please God so that He will be revealed to us. That is the real *yoga* process. Without this process, people are accepting so many nonsensical "Gods." Because people cannot see God, anybody who says "I am God" is accepted. No one knows who God is. Somebody may say, "I am searching after the truth," but he must know what the truth is. Otherwise, how will he search it out? Suppose I want to purchase gold. I must know what gold is, or at least have some experience of it. Otherwise people will cheat me. So people are being cheated—accepting so many rascals as God—because they do not know what God is. Anyone can come and say, "I am God," and some rascal will accept him as God. The man who says, "I am God" is a rascal, and the man who accepts him as God is also a rascal. God cannot be known like this. One has to qualify himself to see God and to understand God. That is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. *Sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ*. If we engage ourselves in the service of the Lord, then we'll become qualified to see God. Otherwise it is not possible.

Bhagavad-gītā is a transcendental science—the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. So no one can become Kṛṣṇa conscious simply by mundane scholarship.

Simply because one has some titles—M.A., B.A., Ph.D.—that does not mean he'll understand *Bhagavad-gītā*. This is a transcendental science, and one requires transcendental senses to understand it. Therefore one has to purify his senses by rendering service to the Lord. Otherwise, even if one is a great scholar he will make mistakes in trying to find out what Kṛṣṇa is. He will not understand—it is not possible. This is why Kṛṣṇa appears in the material world. Although He is unborn (*ajo 'pi sann avyayātma*), He comes to let us know who God is. But since He is not personally present now, to know Him one must be fortunate enough to associate with a devotee who is in pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness. By the grace of Kṛṣṇa a devotee gets realized knowledge. So we have to acquire the grace of Kṛṣṇa. Then we can understand Kṛṣṇa, then we can see Kṛṣṇa, then we can talk with Kṛṣṇa—then we can do everything.

Kṛṣṇa is a *person*. He is the supreme *person*. That is the Vedic injunction. *Nityo nityānām cetanaś cetanānām*: "We are all eternal persons, and God is the supreme eternal person." Now, being encaged within this body, we are meeting birth and death. But actually we have no birth and death, because we are eternal spirit souls. According to our work, according to our desire, we are transmigrating from one kind of body to another, another, and another. But in reality we have no birth and death. As explained in *Bhagavad-gītā* [2.20], *na jāyate mriyate vā*: "The living entity never takes birth and never dies." Similarly, God is also eternal. *Nityo nityānām cetanaś cetanānām*: "God is the supreme living entity among all living entities, and He is the supreme eternal person among all eternal persons." By practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness, by purifying our senses, we can reestablish our eternal relationship with the supreme, complete, eternal person. Then we will see God.

By realized, transcendental knowledge one becomes perfect and can remain steady in his convictions, but by mere academic knowledge one can be easily deluded and confused by apparent contradictions. It is the realized soul who is actually self-controlled, because he is surrendered to Kṛṣṇa. And it is the realized soul who is transcendental, because he has nothing to do with mundane scholarship. For him, mundane scholarship and mental speculation, which may be as good as gold to others, are of no greater value than pebbles or stones.

Even if one is illiterate, even if he does not know the ABCs, he can realize God—provided he engages himself in submissive, transcendental loving service to God. On

(continued on page 7)

FIGHTING RELIGIOUS DEFAMATION

HARE KṚṢṆA CONFRONTS B'NAI B'RITH

B'nai B'rith, the world's largest Jewish service organization, has a long and distinguished history of philanthropic achievement. In particular, its Anti-Defamation League has been a pioneer in working against racial and religious prejudice.

Devotees of Kṛṣṇa were surprised, therefore, when they recently found a B'nai B'rith pamphlet rife with stereotypes of Kṛṣṇa devotees as cultists and brain-washed robots. Such caricatures, the devotees thought, had been discredited long ago.

The correspondence below ensued.

*Back to Godhead Magazine
340 West 55th Street
New York, New York 10019
November 25, 1979*

Mrs. Esther Wein Deitz
Director, "The Cults Project"
B'nai B'rith International
1640 Rhode Island Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036


Dear Mrs. Deitz:

I have read with interest the B'nai B'rith pamphlet that asks the pointed question, "How much do you really know about those new 'religious' groups?"


In regard to its depiction of the Hare Krishna movement, I suggest that your pamphlet makes use of the same unethical techniques of defamation that the Jewish people have been victims of for centuries — the unprincipled use of unsupported derogatory generalizations, emotion-filled pejoratives, demeaning graphic caricatures, inflammatory rhetoric, appeals to bigoted pseudoscientific authorities, and out-and-out falsehoods.

You label the Hare Krishna movement a "cult," a snarl word with heavy pejorative color, or else you describe it as

Are they really Religions?



HOW MUCH DO YOU REALLY KNOW ABOUT THOSE NEW "RELIGIOUS" GROUPS?



66You can call it a cult. But I know my leader has been sent by God to lead us to truth and beauty. When my family or friends criticize my leader and my new beliefs, they are agents of the devil. 66

Hidden behind the tranquil facade of the new "religious" movements rests a real threat to freedom. These movements revolve around allegiance to a leader with absolute power within the group. Unlimited power to do good or evil. All too often, as Lord Acton's dictum warns, "Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely."

The lure of a non-traditional lifestyle attracts thousands of young people each year, a disproportionate percentage of them Jewish (estimates range from 12 to 40%). Once drawn into this new lifestyle, young people are alienated from their families and friends through isolation and other manipulative techniques.

For most of its 143-year history, B'nai B'rith has spoken out and defended all people from discrimination, pain and suffering, and demonstrated a deep commitment to the youth of our community. With this tradition of service, B'nai B'rith now addresses itself to the menace of the new "religious" movements.

"religious" within sneering, abusive quotation marks.

You erroneously describe our religious tradition as "new" and indiscriminately lump it in with a host of disreputable groups adhering to recently concocted doctrines.

Yet the Hare Krishna movement, in contrast to these other groups, represents a genuine religious tradition with a history going back thousands of years, a respected body of ancient theological literature, millions of followers and supporters, and an authenticity affirmed by hundreds of the world's most prominent scholars of philosophy and religion.

All this leads us to ask, How much do you really know about our religion? For that matter, how much do you really know about your own? Is belittling and verbally

spitting upon our religion really a part of the Jewish way of life?

For decades, B'nai B'rith has protested stereotyped graphic depictions of Jews. Yet now you apparently feel no qualms about presenting demeaning caricatures of Hare Krishna devotees.

You say the Hare Krishna movement revolves around "allegiance to a leader with absolute power within the group." This is an utter falsehood. If such an all-powerful leader actually exists, you ought to be able to name him — or else you ought to be able to admit that you are wrong.

As is common in the literature of prejudice, you have also fallen into the two logical fallacies known as "appeal to an unqualified authority" and "appeal to an authority outside his field of expertise."

To give only one of several possible

examples, you offer a derisive quotation from a psychiatrist named Dr. John G. Clark. Could this be the same Dr. John G. Clark who certified an adult Hare Krishna devotee mentally incompetent—without even having clinically examined him—and had him confined in an insane asylum against his will? Could this be the same Dr. Clark who—again, without benefit of a legitimate clinical examination—testified to a court of law that the young man was “brainwashed” and mentally incompetent, although a panel of court-appointed experts (nominated by Dr. Clark himself) later concluded, after more than a week of exhaustive clinical tests, that the young man was entirely normal?

Doesn't such a misuse of psychiatry sound familiar? Aren't you aware of how these same techniques were used against Jews in Nazi Germany and are still being used against Jews and dissenters in the Soviet Union today?

The motive behind your pamphlet is obvious: you are distressed because the Jewish community is losing its young Jews. But is this enough to justify abandoning the lofty ideals B'nai B'rith has always stood for? Is it sufficient cause for you to take up the same weapons so long used against Jews and wield them yourself against others? In short, is it enough to justify hypocrisy?

Certainly, thousands of Jews are abandoning their religious tradition—with or without joining the Hare Krishna movement. And irresponsible attacks on a legitimate religious tradition can only hasten the process.

Jews are leaving their religion—for secularism, atheism, agnosticism, materialism, and just about every other ism there is. So you have a problem. Do you think that attacking the Hare Krishna movement will make your problem go away?

Certainly many young Jews are becoming disenchanted with their Jewish upbringing and are joining the Hare Krishna movement. And certainly it's easy to say that they join us because the Hare Krishna zombies paralyze their minds, hypnotize them, and turn them into obedient jelly-brained robots.

How much more difficult and painful it would be for you to admit that these young people are already disenchanted with what they see in modern Judaism: a Judaism so closely aligned with modern materialism and consumerism that it fails to meet their spiritual needs, a Judaism enervated by hypocrisy, a superficial (or, in Rabbi Blank's apt word, “trivialized”) Judaism that offers them bagels and lox and swanky bar mitzvahs but fails to endow them with understanding of who they are, who God is, and how they can ultimately bring forth their love for Him.

These are serious problems for the Jewish people, and they are the problems to which serious Jewish thinkers are drawing your attention. For you to divert your valuable energy to making unjust, ignorant, irresponsible attacks on the Hare Krishna movement can only make those problems worse. After all, Mrs. Deitz, I think you most likely know as well as I that if there's one thing a sensitive young person can't stomach it's hypocrisy.

As it is said in the Vedic scriptures, “The highest religion a man can follow is that by which he develops his unalloyed, unmotivated love for God. But if one adheres to religious allegiances without developing such love, his religion is but a useless waste of time.” Only a relationship of pure love for God can fully satisfy a living being. The Krishna consciousness movement teaches that if one finds this relationship through Judaism, Christianity, or whatever, that is perfectly good. But if one who seriously desires such a relationship finds that the religious milieu of his birth has been co-opted by materialism and has lost sight of what he is looking for, we cannot help but advise him to chant Hare Krishna and understand God in a profound, scientific yet personal way through the teachings of *Bhagavad-gita*.

In support of what I have said about the Hare Krishna movement, I enclose an article written by Dr. Diana L. Eck, Assistant Professor of Hindu Religion in the Department of Sanskrit and Indian Studies and the Comparative Study of Religion at Harvard University. In this article, Dr. Eck explains the Hare Krishna movement's authenticity and significance. I hope you will take the time to read and consider it carefully. Then if you still feel that I have improperly stated the qualifications of the Hare Krishna movement or that any of the other points in this letter are improper, I humbly request you to point out where you feel I have erred, and I will certainly be willing to reply. Otherwise, I respectfully request you to acknowledge the authenticity of this ancient religious tradition and assure me that B'nai B'rith will repudiate the errors and injustices that appear in this pamphlet and never lend its good name to them again.

I understand that your pamphlet was originally assembled not by B'nai B'rith but by a self-styled “anti-cult” group in California. They seem to have misled you. I would like to think that somehow a well-meaning group of people within B'nai B'rith has maligned the Hare Krishna movement unwittingly. I hope you will write to me to confirm that this is so.

Some groups and individuals, when confronted with even the most glaring errors and injustices in their publications, have neither the integrity to change them nor

the courtesy to reply. I hope that from your good self, in contrast, I may receive a prompt response.

Hoping this finds you in good health,

Sincerely,
Jayādvaita Swami
(J. Elliot Israel)
Senior Editor

December 4, 1979

Dear Mr. Israel:

In response to your letter of November 25, I wish to point out that Dr. John Clark is only one of many respected physicians and scholars who have questioned the recruitment and retention methods used by several groups in the American community.

We will certainly take seriously your comments about the distortion of Jewish values in evidence among some of our people and continue to do what we can through the various B'nai B'rith departments to ameliorate this problem. We will constantly examine our educational process and our behavior to be certain that it does not do discredit to our beliefs.

Sincerely,
Esther Deitz

December 10, 1979

Dear Mrs. Deitz:

Thank you for your gracious reply to my letter of November 25. It is gratifying to know that you will take seriously my comments about Jewish values and that you are always on the lookout for inconsistency between your beliefs and your behavior.

Yet I was disappointed that you were silent about the main point of my letter—specifically, that B'nai B'rith is perpetuating an injustice against the exponents of a legitimate religious tradition by publishing tracts that defame the devotees of Krishna and the traditional religious practices of the Hare Krishna movement. I pointed out that this defamation involves the use of derogatory generalizations, demeaning graphics, and other such devices that B'nai B'rith has traditionally deplored. I appealed to you to stop this injustice, but you have not yet responded.

Thank you for your comments about Dr. Clark. With you, I believe that respected physicians and scholars do a great service by raising questions about how various groups in America conduct themselves. But raising honest questions is quite different from denigrating a religious group one has never scientifically studied. And it is still further different from committing sane adults to mental institutions

to try to wrench them from their religious affiliations and beliefs. The prestige of the medical profession should not be an excuse for bigotry, and certainly not for persecution.

Among the religious scholars and mental health professionals who have studied the Hare Krishna movement in depth and without bias, the overwhelming consensus has been that, regardless of what other groups may do, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness is a legitimate religious organization that wins and retains its adherents through straightforward traditional means. We do not practice hypnosis or "brainwashing" any more than Jews grow horns.

Again, I appeal to you to make a proper distinction between the International Society for Krishna Consciousness and the other groups mentioned in your pamphlet. And I appeal to you, as a representative of B'nai B'rith, to assure me that B'nai B'rith will no longer take part in defaming the ancient and respected religious tradition of which our Society is the world's leading exponent.

Should you need further evidence about the authenticity of our movement or the freedom of choice its members enjoy, I would urge you to get in touch with the following religious scholars and mental health professionals, all of whom (in

contrast to the people quoted in your pamphlet) have studied our movement in depth. [The original letter included their telephone numbers and complete addresses.]

Dr. Harvey Cox
Chairman, Department of Applied
Theology
The Divinity School
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Dr. Thomas J. Hopkins
Chairman, Department of Religious
Studies
Franklin and Marshall College
Lancaster, Pennsylvania

Dr. Allen Gerson
Clinical Psychologist
Encino, California

Dr. Alan Waterman
Clinical Professor of Psychiatry
Trenton State College
Trenton, New Jersey

Dr. Diana L. Eck
Assistant Professor of Hindu Religion
Committee on the Study of Religion
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Dr. J. Stillson Judah
Professor Emeritus of the History of
Religions, Graduate Theological Union
Berkeley, California

Dr. Sanford Rosenzweig
Clinical Psychologist
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Dr. Marshall Schechter
Director of the Division of Child and
Adolescent Psychiatry, University of
Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Should you need still further information, I am prepared to supply it in abundance.

Again, as you have kindly responded promptly to my longer and more strongly worded letter, I hope I may ask you the favor of responding promptly to this humble request.

I shall await your early reply.

Hoping this finds you in good health,

Sincerely,
Jayādvaita Swami
(J. Elliot Israel)

We regret that as this magazine goes to press, in late February of 1980, we have received from Mrs. Deitz no further response.

—Jayādvaita Swami

GOD REVEALS

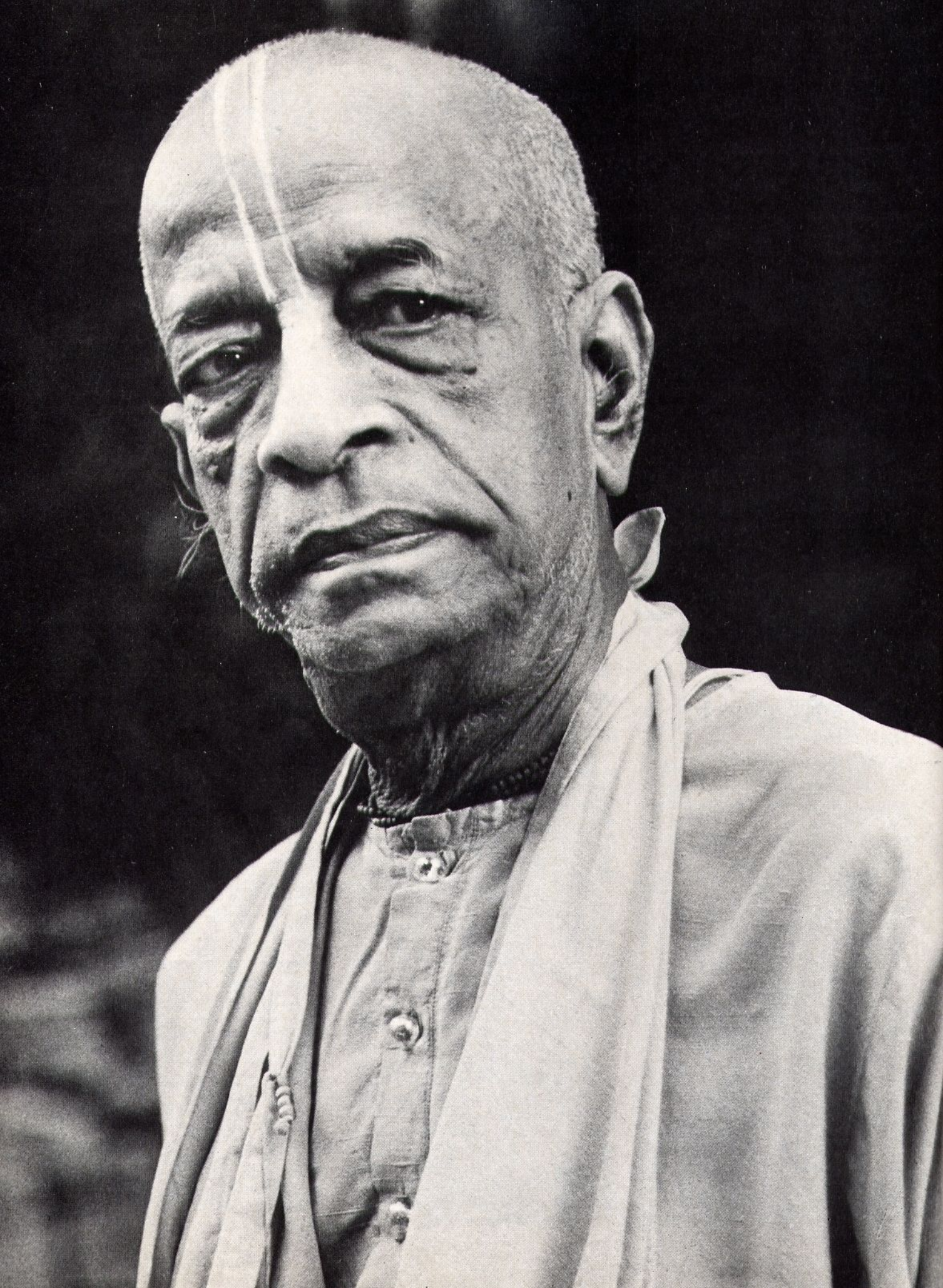
(continued from page 4)

the other hand, a very learned scholar may not be able to realize God. God is not subject to any material condition, because He is the Supreme Spirit. Similarly, the process of realizing God is also not subject to any material condition. It is not true that because one is a poor man he cannot realize God or because one is a very rich man he shall realize God. No. God is unconditional (*apratihatā*). In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* [1.2.6] it is said, *sa vai puṁsāṁ paro dharmo yato bhaktir adhokṣaje*: "That religion is first-class which helps one advance his devotional service and love of God." The *Bhāgavatam* does not mention that the Hindu religion is first class or that the Christian religion is first class or that the Mohammedan religion is first class. The *Bhāgavatam* says, "That religion is first class which helps one advance his devotional service and love of God." That's all. This is the definition of a first-class religion. We do not arbitrarily designate one religion as first class and another religion as last class. Of course, there are three qualities in the material

world (goodness, passion, and ignorance), and religious conceptions are created according to these qualities. But the *purpose* of religion is to understand God, and to learn how to love God. *Any* religious system, if it teaches one how to love God, is first class. Otherwise it is useless. One may prosecute his religious principles very rigidly and very nicely, but if his love of God is nil, if his love of matter is simply enhanced, then his religion is no religion.

In the same verse the *Bhāgavatam* says that real religion must be *ahaitukī* and *apratihatā*: without selfish motivation and without any impediment. If we can practice such a system of religious principles, then we'll find that we are happy in all respects. Otherwise there is no possibility of happiness. *Sa vai puṁsāṁ paro dharmo yato bhaktir adhokṣaje*. One of God's names is *Adhokṣaja*. *Adhokṣaja* means "one who conquers all materialistic attempts to be seen." *Akṣaja* means "direct perception by experimental knowledge," and *adhaḥ* means "unreachable." So, we cannot understand God by experimental knowledge. No. We have to learn of Him in a different way—by submissive aural reception of transcendental sound, and by the rendering of transcendental loving service. Then we can understand God.

Therefore, a religious principle is perfect if it teaches us how to develop our love for God. But our love must be without selfish motive. If I say, "I love God because He supplies me very nice things for my sense gratification," that is not love. Real love is without any selfish motive (*ahaitukī*). We must simply think, "God is great; God is my father. It is my duty to love Him." That's all. *No exchange*—"God gives me my daily bread; therefore I love Him." No. God gives daily bread even to the animals—the cats and dogs. God is the father of everyone, and He supplies food to everyone. So appreciating God because He gives me bread—that is not love. Love is without motive. I must think, "Even if God does not supply me my daily bread, I'll love Him." This is real love. As Caitanya Mahāprabhu says, *āśliṣya vā pāda-ratāṁ piṇaṣṭu mām adarśanān marma-hatāṁ karotu vā*: "O Lord, You may embrace me, or You may trample me down with Your feet, or You may never come before me, so that I become brokenhearted because of not seeing You. Still, I love you." This is pure love of God. When we come to this stage of loving God, then we'll find ourselves full of pleasure. Just as God is full of pleasure, we'll also be full of pleasure. This is perfection.



TAKING ON ALL COMERS

by ŚRĪLA SATSVARŪPA DĀSA GOSWAMI

Eager to fulfill his spiritual master's request that he teach the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness to Westerners, Śrīla Prabhupāda welcomed anyone and everyone into his little storefront temple on the Lower East Side.

As Prabhupāda retired through the rear door, back up to his apartment, his guests would disappear through the front door, back into the city. Don and Raphael would turn out the lights, lock the front door, and go to sleep on the floor in their blankets.

Don and Raphael had needed a place to stay, when they heard about the Swami's place. Prabhupāda had a policy that any boy who expressed even a little interest in becoming his student could stay in the storefront and make it his home. Of course, Prabhupāda would ask them to contribute towards the rent and meals, but if, like Don and Raphael, they had no money, then it was still all right, provided they helped in other ways.

Don and Raphael were the first two boys to take advantage of Prabhupāda's offer. They were attracted to Prabhupāda and the chanting, but they weren't serious about his philosophy or the disciplines of devotional life. They had no jobs and no money, their hair was long and unkempt, and they lived and slept in the same clothes day after day. Prabhupāda stipulated that at least while they were on the premises they could not break his rules—no intoxication, illicit sex, meat-eating, or gambling. He knew these two boarders weren't serious students, but he allowed them to stay, in hopes that they would become Kṛṣṇa conscious and help him sometimes.

Often, some wayfaring stranger would stop by, looking for a place to stay the night, and Don and Raphael would welcome him. An old white-bearded Indian-turned-Christian who was on a walking mission proclaiming the end of the world, and whose feet were covered with bandages, once slept for a few nights on a wooden bench in the storefront. Some nights as many as ten drifters would seek shelter at the storefront, and Don and Raphael would admit them, explaining

that the Swami didn't object, as long as they got up early. Even drifters whose only interest was a free meal could stay, and after the morning class and breakfast they would usually drift off again into *māyā*.

Don and Raphael were the Swami's steady boarders, although during the day they also went out, returning only for meals, sleep, and evening chanting. Occasionally they would bathe, and then they would use the Swami's bathroom up in his apartment. Sometimes they would hang out in the storefront during the day, and if someone stopped by, asking about the Swami's classes, they would tell the person all they knew (which wasn't much). They admitted that they weren't really into the Swami's philosophy, and they didn't claim to be his followers. If someone persisted in inquiring about the Swami's teachings, Don and Raphael would suggest, "Why don't you go up and talk to him? The Swami lives in the apartment building out back. Why don't you go up and see him?"

Prabhupāda usually stayed in his apartment. Occasionally he might look out his window and see that the light in the closet-sized bathroom had needlessly been left burning. Coming down to ask the boys to turn it off and not waste electricity, he might find a few boys lying on the floor talking or reading. Prabhupāda would stand gravely, asking them not to leave the light on, stressing the seriousness of wasting Kṛṣṇa's energy and money. He would stand dressed in *khādī*, that coarse handloomed cotton woven from handspun threads, a cloth that to Americans appears somehow exotic. Even the saffron color of Prabhupāda's *dhotī* and *chādar* was exotic; produced from the traditional Indian rock dye, it was a dull, uneven color, different from anything Western. After Prabhupāda turned off the light, the boys seemed to have nothing to say and nothing more appropriate to do than look with interest at him for a long awkward moment, and Prabhupāda would leave without saying anything more.

Money was scarce. From his evening meetings he would usually collect about five or six dollars in change and bills. Don

talked of going up to New England to pick apples and bring money back for the Swami. Raphael said something about some money coming. Śrīla Prabhupāda waited, and depended on Kṛṣṇa. Sometimes he would walk back and forth in the courtyard between the buildings. Appearing mysterious to the neighbors, he would chant on his beads, his hand deep in his bead bag.

Mostly he kept to his room, working. As he had said during a lecture when living on the Bowery, "I am here always working at something, reading or writing, some kind of reading or writing—twenty-four hours." His mission of translating *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, of presenting the complete work in sixty volumes of four hundred pages each, could alone occupy all his days and nights. He worked at it whenever possible, sitting at his portable typewriter or translating the Sanskrit into English. He especially worked in the very early hours of the morning, when he would not be interrupted. He would comb through the Sanskrit and Bengali commentaries of the great *ācāryas*, following their explanations, selecting passages from them, adding his own knowledge and realization, and then weaving it all together and typing out his Bhaktivedanta purports. He had no means or immediate plans for financing the publishing of further volumes, but he continued in the faith that somehow they would be published.

He had a broad mission, broader even than translating *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and so he gave much of his time and energy to meeting visitors. Had his aim been only to write, there would have been no need of his taking the risk and trouble of coming to America. Now many people were coming, and an important part of his mission was to talk to them and convince them of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. His visitors were usually young men who had recently come to live on the Lower East Side. He had no secretary to screen his visitors, nor did he have scheduled visiting hours. Whenever anyone happened by—at any time, from early morning to ten at night—Prabhupāda would stop his typing or translation and speak with them. It was an open

neighborhood, and many visitors would come in right off the street. Some were serious, but many were not; some even came intoxicated. Often they came not to inquire submissively, but to challenge.

Once a young hippie on an LSD trip found his way upstairs and sat opposite Prabhupāda: "Right now I am higher than you are," he announced. "I am God." Prabhupāda bowed his head slightly, his palms folded: "Please accept my obeisances," he said. Then he asked "God" to leave. Others admitted frankly that they were crazy or haunted by ghosts and were searching for relief from their mental suffering.

I was looking for spiritual centers—places where one can go, not like stores where they ask you to leave, but where you can actually talk to people and try to understand the ultimate truth. I would come to the Swami's, knowing it was definitely a spiritual center. There was definitely something there. I was on drugs and disturbed with the notion that I must be God, or some very important personality way out of proportion to my actual situation. I was actually in trouble, mentally deranged because of so much suffering, and I would kind of blow in to see him whenever I felt the whim to do so. I didn't make a point of going to his meetings, but a lot of times I would just come. One time I came and spent the night there. I was always welcome at any time to sleep in the storefront. I wanted to show the Swami what a sad case I was, so he should definitely do something for me. He told me to join him and he could solve my problems. But I wasn't ready.

I was really into sex, and I wanted to know what he meant by illicit sex—what was his definition. He said to me, "This means sex outside of marriage." But I wasn't satisfied with the answer, and I asked him for more details. He told me to first consider the answer he had given me and then come back the next day and he would tell me more.

Then I showed up with a girl. The Swami came to the door and said, "I am very busy. I have my work, I have my translating. I cannot talk with you now." Well, that was the only time he didn't offer me full hospitality and full attention and talk with me as many questions I had. So I left immediately with the girl. He was correct in his perception that I was simply going to see him just to try to impress the girl. He saw through it right away, and he rejected that type of association.

But every time I came and I was in trouble, he always helped me.

Sometimes young men would come with scholarly pretensions to test Prabhupāda's knowledge of *Bhagavad-gītā*. "You have read the *Gītā*," Prabhupāda would say, "so

what is your conclusion? If you claim to know the *Gītā*, then you should know the conclusion that Kṛṣṇa is presenting." But most people didn't think there was supposed to be a definite conclusion to the *Gītā*. And even if there was such a conclusion, that didn't mean they were supposed to arrange their life around it. The *Gītā* was a *spiritual* book, and you didn't have to follow it.

One young man approached Prabhupāda asking, "What book will you lecture from next week? Will you be teaching the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*?" as if the Swami would teach spirituality like a college survey course in World Religions. "Everything is there in *Bhagavad-gītā*," Prabhupāda replied. "We could study one verse for three months."

And there were other such questions: "What about Camus?"

"What is his philosophy?" Prabhupāda would ask.

"He says everything is absurd and the only philosophical question is whether to commit suicide."

"That means everything is absurd for him. The material world is absurd, but there is a spiritual world beyond this one. That means he does not know the soul. The soul cannot be killed."

Adherents of different thinkers approached him: "What about Nietzsche? Kafka? Timothy Leary? Bob Dylan?" Prabhupāda would ask what each of their philosophies was, and the particular follower would have to explain and defend his favorite intellectual hero.

"They are all mental speculators," Prabhupāda would say. "Here in this material world we are all conditioned souls. Your knowledge is imperfect. Your senses are blunt. What good is your opinion? We have to hear from the perfect authority, Kṛṣṇa."

"Do you mean to say that none of the great thinkers are God conscious?" a boy asked.

"Their sincerity is their God consciousness. But if we want perfect knowledge of God, then we have to consult *śāstra*."

Often there were challenges, but under the Swami's piercing gaze and hard logic, the challenger would usually trail off into thoughtful silence.

"Is the spiritual knowledge of China advanced?"

Prabhupāda would sometimes answer simply by making a sour face.

"Well, I am a follower of Vedānta myself."

"Do you know what 'Vedānta' means? What is the first aphorism of the *Vedānta-sūtra*? Do you know?"

"No, I . . ."

"Then how can you speak of Vedānta? *Vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyāḥ*: Kṛṣṇa

says that He is the goal of Vedānta. So if you are a Vedāntist, then you must become Kṛṣṇa conscious."

"What about the Buddha?"

"Do you follow him?"

"No."

"No, you just talk. Why don't you follow? Follow Kṛṣṇa, follow Christ, follow Buddha. But don't just talk."

"This sounds the same as Christianity. How is it any different?"

"It is the same: love of God. But who is a Christian? Who follows? The Bible teaches, 'Thou shalt not kill,' but all over the world, Christians are expert in killing. Do you know that? I believe the Christians say that Jesus Christ died for our sins—so why are you still sinning?"

Although Prabhupāda was a stranger to America, they were strangers to absolute knowledge. Whenever anyone would come to see him, Prabhupāda wouldn't waste time—he talked philosophy, reason, and argument. He constantly argued against atheism and impersonalism. He spoke strongly to prove the existence of God and the universality of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He talked often and vigorously, day and night, meeting all kinds of questions and philosophies.

He would listen also, and he heard a wide range of local testimonies. He heard the dissatisfaction of young Americans with the war and with American society. One boy told him he didn't want to get married because he couldn't find a chaste girl; it was better to go with prostitutes. Another confided that his mother had planned to abort him but at the last moment his grandmother had convinced her not to. He heard from homosexuals. Someone told him that a set of New Yorkers considered it chic to eat the flesh of aborted babies. And in every case, he told them all the truth.

He talked with Marxists and explained that although Marx says everything is the property of the State, in fact everything is the property of God. Only "spiritual communism," which puts God in the center, can really be successful. He discounted LSD visions as hallucinations and explained how God can actually be seen and what He looks like.

Although many of these visitors came one time and went away, a few new friends began to stay on, watching the Swami deal with the various guests. They began to appreciate the Swami's arguments, his concern for people, and his devotion to Kṛṣṇa. He seemed actually to know how to help people, and he invariably offered them Kṛṣṇa consciousness—as much as they could take—as the solution to their problems. A few began to appreciate his message seriously.

(To be continued)

IMPRESSIONS OF INDIA

Might I be viewed as some sort of intercultural interloper?
I didn't know, but was curious to find out . . .

by ŚUBHĀNANDA DĀSA

As I boarded the Taj Express, I was immersed in philosophical reflection and overpowered by an extraordinary combination of emotions, both mournful and blissful. I took my seat in a second-class compartment of the Delhi-bound train along with my traveling companion, Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami. Peering out the window of the train, I absorbed the intense sights and sounds of Mathurā Junction: people, individually and in groups, rushing to catch crowded trains; the sing-song calls of food vendors, the loud whistles of arriving and departing trains, entire families sprawled out on makeshift beds on the floor of the station, waiting long hours for delayed trains. It was the early morning of a warm autumn day, and people were involved in their worldly routines.

As I gazed out the window, my mind returned to nearby Vṛndāvana, from where I had just come. Events of the past two weeks had made a powerful imprint upon my consciousness, and scenes flashed through my mind in quick succession. I had been present at the passing of my beloved spiritual master, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, and my mind was now exhausted from the mixture of appalling sadness and transcendental exultation surrounding that event. Across from me sat Satsvarūpa Goswami, his face bathed in the morning sunlight. He was absorbed in writing in his journal. I wanted to ask him to share with me his thoughts and realizations, but he was clearly in a contemplative mood, and I did not want to distract him. I meditated on my spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, greatly desiring his transcendental presence. I recalled the instructive words of one scholarly disciple: "Vyakta, avyakta—manifest and unmanifest—the spiritual master may be physically present or not, but he is always present in the heart of the disciple through his *vāñī*, his words. The relationship between *guru* and disciple is not dependent on physical proximity." I

knew, deeper than ever, that my relationship with Śrīla Prabhupāda was a sublime spiritual fact.

A loud, piercing whistle and a sudden jolt of the train shattered my meditations. A well-dressed man across from me was intoning devotional prayers under his breath. Soon the train was moving rapidly through the Indian countryside.

I was now on my way to Delhi to book a return flight to New York. Where would I stay while in Delhi? I could, of course, stay at our ISKCON center, but what if it was full with devotees in transit to and from Vṛndāvana? I then recalled a surprise encounter, on the flight from New York, with a good friend of mine, an Indian scientist from Denver, Dr. Brahma Sharma. He was on his way to visit his elder brother, Tribhuvanatha, who lived with his family in a Delhi suburb. Brahma had invited me to visit him at his brother's house if at all possible, assuring me that I would be a welcome guest. At that time I had declined his offer, speculating that it was unlikely that I'd be free. Now, however, I was feeling slightly ill and decided that if our Delhi center was too crowded, I would take Brahma up on his kind invitation. Although I had been to India several times before, I had never actually lived with an Indian family. Although I had largely become assimilated into Indian spiritual culture as a *brahmacārī*, a renounced monk, would I be well received at Tribhuvanatha's home, or might I be viewed as some sort of intercultural interloper? I didn't know, but was curious to find out.

As the train glided through rural India, I took in the passing scene with great interest. The train passed remote villages separated by distances great and small. People working in the fields and plowing the land with large muscular oxen, small children deftly manipulating small herds of cows, village women and girls fetching fresh water from ancient wells, villagers engaged in a great variety of agricultural

activities and crafts—these passed through my field of vision like a fast-motion movie.

I got kicked in the head. A little man had been sleeping in the luggage rack above my head, and he was trying to climb down. He apologized, profusely begging my forgiveness until I became embarrassed.

My vision was again drawn to the rapidly passing countryside, lush and green from the rainy season: young children playing, old women conversing by a well, families gathering for the morning meal, water buffalo submerging their big black bodies in cooling mud. I began to reflect on this mysterious Indian culture, the culture of spiritual India.

It is an entirely different realm of consciousness. Here (in spite of the ravages of passionate consumerism advertised as "modernization") most people have a deeply philosophical perspective on life, a spiritual-philosophical aptitude and demeanor rare in the West.

In India, spiritual vision is not mere armchair philosophy. It is not the domain of complacent university philosophers and theologians interested in creating a reputation for themselves in the history of ideas. It is deeply ingrained in the common man. In India, even a street sweeper knows that he is an eternal, spiritual soul reaping the fruits of *karma*, materially motivated actions. He *knows* that there is a transcendental, spiritual world beyond this one, and his goal is ultimate liberation from this temporary world of illusion and suffering.

Still, India is not a paradise. One should not romanticize. In India, natural disasters such as drought and monsoon floods bring on famine. The government is notoriously bureaucratic and beset, like other governments, with endless political intrigue. Poverty haunts the cities. The modern caste system is a corrupt and exploitative perversion of an ancient and enlightened system of social organization. India, largely, has fallen victim to this age of materialism,

this age of moral and intellectual degradation the ancient Vedic scriptures call the *Kali-yuga*. Now India appears only a dim reflection of the ancient and majestic Vedic culture still so much an enigma to modern empiric researchers.

The clearest records of this civilization are not archaeological but literary. A complete and graphic record of Vedic civilization can be found inscribed in the pages of India's ancient Vedic literature, especially its monumental epics, such as the *Mahābhārata*, the *Rāmāyaṇa*, and the eighteen *Purāṇas*. These comprise a vast and profound literature and provide remarkable insight into an ancient culture whose roots are not in mundane, relative time, but in eternal transcendence. Vedic culture is primeval and primordial.

Although Vedic culture has flourished, historically, on the Indian subcontinent, it represents a universal principle that transcends relative cultural orientations. It is not "Indian"—it is *human*. Vedic civilization is conceived on the principle that human life, both individually and collectively, should be organized around the absolute necessity of human spiritual development, without neglect of man's basic material needs. Human society should be organized socially, economically, and politically so that in this life a person can live simply and peacefully and without lack of basic material requirements but simultaneously cultivate spiritual awareness so that at the end of life he can return to the spiritual world. Civilization *means* Vedic civilization. It is not a product of historical and cultural circumstance but the basis of it. Vedic culture is universal and transcendental.

And this is why it is not "artificial" (as some have suggested) for a Westerner to take to Vedic culture. Such a voluntary transformation does not represent a mere switching of cultural loyalties. We devotees are not mere culture buffs who find India a quaint fascination, or heady romanticists lured by the ethereal and the mystical. Nor are we apologists for contemporary Indian society. The luminous wisdom, the philosophical and theological beauty of India's ancient *Vedas* call not only Indians but all souls to the divine life, irrespective of culture, race, nationality, or religion.

Spirituality transcends cultural relativity; it goes beyond "East" and "West." God, truth, wisdom, knowledge: these are not relative commodities. They are universal principles. If something is really "true," its veracity is sustained in all places and at all times. God is not Indian or American. He existed long before the establishment of such temporal geographical and political demarcations. Religion is not "Eastern" or "Western." It simply *is*. And I, a shaven-headed, saffron-robed American on

pilgrimage in India, was living proof!

A man approached us and said, "I am most saddened to hear that your *guru* has now left this world. He was one of our greatest saints. He was the only one who spread India's spiritual wealth all over the world. He has delivered India's *sanātana-dharma*, her eternal religion, to the people of the world. You are most fortunate to be his disciples." He pressed our hands and continued on his way.

They seldom met Americans, what to speak of an American with shaven head and saffron robes. I was suddenly an object of awe and delight.

We were nearing Delhi. I had dozed off briefly but was awakened by the movement of passengers to the exits. We arrived at New Delhi station. Śatsvarūpa dāsa Goswami had decided, during the journey, to reserve a seat on a flight for New York leaving in seven days and to return to holy Vṛndāvana for an extra week. I decided to proceed with my plans to return immediately. We parted ways. He went to the ISKCON temple in New Delhi, and I proceeded to the Pan Am ticket office. The next available flight was not until two days from now. I reserved a seat. I had to wait it out in New Delhi. I flagged down a tiny yellow and black three-wheeled scooter-taxi, one of thousands that buzz around New Delhi like giant bumblebees. I climbed in and began to give the address of our local temple. The driver, a large-turbaned Sikh, stopped me in mid-sentence and said, "I know, I know," and promptly delivered me to the doorstep of the ISKCON temple. As I had anticipated, the temple was a bit overcrowded. I hungered for quiet and solitude. I decided to visit my friend Brahma Sharma, who was staying with his elder brother in suburban Delhi.

When I arrived by three-wheeler at Tribhuvanatha's home, his wife, Rama, a large, smiling woman, the prototype Indian

mātāji (mother), greeted me like a mother welcoming her long-lost son. I asked for Brahma, and she responded in Hindi. Seeing my quizzical look, she retreated into her house and momentarily returned with her teenage daughter, Neelam, who smiled shyly and, in passable English, invited me into their modest home. Once inside, I was offered a seat and immediately brought a plate of cut fruit and a glass of cold water, a welcome refreshment. I already felt very much at home. The house was rather compact, consisting of a small sitting room in front, a bedroom, a tiny kitchen, and a bathroom in the back. It was small but homey and comfortable. Neelam explained that just the previous day my friend Brahma had gone to visit a brother in Lucknow, several hundred miles away, and that he was not expected for several days. Until then I should please stay. I explained that I was leaving Delhi in only two days, but she only repeated her request that I stay.

One after another, the Sharmas' other children—Meera, Ravi, Bharati, Arati, and Raju—returned from school, and each was amazed and delighted to find an American "sādhu" sitting in their living room. It was not often that they came into close contact with Americans, what to speak of an American with shaven head and saffron robes. I was suddenly an object of awe and delight. Shortly thereafter, Tribhuvanatha Sharma arrived home and was hurriedly met outside by Neelam, who told him the news of the strange visitor. Entering his home, he offered his heartfelt greetings and embraced me warmly. "Brahma told me you might kindly visit us. It is our great fortune that you have come. It is a great blessing on my home and my family. Brahma has gone to Lucknow to visit one of our brothers, but I will call him, and he will return at once." I told Tribhuvanatha that I didn't want to interfere with Brahma's family visit, but he insisted that Brahma would want very much to see me. Tribhuvanatha's English was excellent, so we spoke for a long time. He was a deeply religious and good-hearted man who exuded great fatherly warmth, genteel humility, and an unceasing flow of good cheer.

After a dinner of deliciously cooked vegetarian food, the entire family prepared to visit the local temple, as was the nightly custom, and requested me to accompany them. During the brief walk to the temple, Tribhuvanatha explained that although the community in which he lived, Malviya Nagar, was a suburb of New Delhi, it retained an intimate, small-village atmosphere. This seemed apparent, for warm mutual exchanges occurred whenever almost anyone passed us by on foot. After a brief jaunt down the main street, we arrived at the temple, a sizable structure

wherein were installed the divine forms of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, Sītā-Rāma, and Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa, worshiped according to timeless Indian scriptural regulations. We walked into an adjoining auditorium wherein several hundred people were quietly hearing a *paṇḍita*, a scholar learned in sacred texts, recite and explain the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the ancient epic story of King Rāmacandra, the perfect king and incarnation of God who had appeared on earth in a bygone age. We quietly entered the large hall and sat down in the back, inconspicuously. A moment later, however, the *paṇḍita* looked up from his sacred text, motioned to a man sitting near him at the front, then pointed towards me. The man in front came at once to where I was sitting, led me through the assembly to the raised platform in front on which the *paṇḍita* sat, and sat me down on a raised cushion while another man garlanded me. What was happening? There must have been some mistake! I could then understand that it was simply out of respect for a saffron-robed *sādhu* that I was receiving this honor. But, frankly, I am no *sādhu*. I fear that I am not all that holy. At least, as a spiritual neophyte, I try to cultivate a sense of humility, to curb down the tendency toward egoistic pride. But this undeserved attention and honor was not going to be any help.

Momentarily, the *paṇḍita* concluded his discourse and turned to Tribhuvanatha, who had accompanied me to the front, and the two of them spoke together briefly in whispers. "Paṇḍīji," as he was called, then delivered what I later found out from Tribhuvanatha was a rousing, dramatic introduction to "this foreigner from America who at the young age of eighteen completely renounced a life of material comfort and with a pure heart began to seek after God. He is a disciple of the great spiritual master Śrīla Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, and he is staying with Tribhuvanatha Sharma and his family for some time to bless us with his divine presence. Let us now hear his words of enlightenment." If I had understood Hindi, I would have been overcome by embarrassment. Paṇḍīji then asked me, through our interpreter, Mr. Sharma, to speak to the large assembly. Within my mind, I earnestly prayed to my spiritual master for inspiration and began to speak as Mr. Sharma translated, sentence by sentence, into Hindi:

"Is it not strange that I am sitting here before all of you, asked to speak for your edification? I was born and educated in a country where materialism is the standard of life. In my youth, I never heard the divine names 'Kṛṣṇa' or 'Rāma.' I thought that the whimsical gratification of this temporary material body and mind was the goal of life. I had no idea of an eternal

spiritual existence beyond this temporary fleeting life. I had no *jñāna*, transcendental knowledge, no *bhakti*, devotion to God. I was, from your point of view, more or less uncivilized.

"You, on the other hand, are all pious, religious people, educated in the lofty spiritual principles of your ancient Vedic culture. You live lives, most of you, free from vice. Purity of heart and devotion to God is your way of life. From childhood,

**For several days,
neighborhood
people came to
seek spiritual
guidance from
their resident
"American *sādhu*,"
who did the
best he could.**

you have heard the *paṇḍitas* and *sādhus* recite the spiritually auspicious stories of *Mahābhārata*, *Rāmāyaṇa*, and *Bhāgavatam*. All in all, you are people whose lives are deeply touched by the hand of God.

"Considering our difference, then, how is it possible that I am sitting before you to speak, you thinking that I am some kind of *sādhu*, a holy person? How is it that one who was without spiritual assets and sinful in every way is now given a seat of honor and asked to address pious Hindus on the goal of life? This is the extraordinary miracle effected by my spiritual master, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, one of India's greatest saints. By his holy influence thousands of Westerners have given up lives of materialistic self-indulgence and become fully dedicated to self-realization and devotional service to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Is this not a miracle of modern history? The transcendental and universal quality of your ancient Vedic culture is thus being practically demonstrated for the first time, on a massive scale. Such is the glory of my spiritual master, His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda.

"Five hundred years ago in Bengal, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who was Kṛṣṇa Himself in the form of a great *bhakta*, a great devotee, predicted that the chanting

of the *mahā-mantra* (Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare) would spread to every town and village and that there would be a great revival of spirituality in this world. Now we see this prediction being fulfilled, as in most countries of the world there is hardly a person who has not heard these divine names of God from the members of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. I pray that you will bless us in our endeavor and will help us in a practical way to spread this movement to every corner of India and the entire world."

When I had finished speaking, Paṇḍīji spoke with great animation and said, as Tribhuvanatha later told me, "We should be ashamed of ourselves! Nowadays we are running after material things, influenced by the West. But this young *sādhu* himself has come from the West. He had everything material one could desire, but he did not find satisfaction in these things. So he gave it all up and has become a real *sādhu* and has taken our holy scriptures as his guide in life. We should take this as a great inspiration and seek only after spiritual perfection, Kṛṣṇa consciousness." He also announced that I would be staying with the Sharmas for some days and would be available for *sat-saṅga* (spiritual discussions and counseling). Paṇḍīji then asked me to lead *kīrtana*, devotional chanting. Playing a small harmonium (a kind of hand organ), I led all present in congregational chanting of the *mahā-mantra*: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. Afterwards, Paṇḍīji adjourned the meeting. As the assembly began to disperse, many approached the stage, offering respects both to Paṇḍīji and to me. I felt a little awkward when some people began to garland me and present various offerings such as fruit and flowers. Feeling very humble, I mentally offered these simple gifts to my spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for whom they were actually meant. Many of the people approached Tribhuvanatha and Rama Sharma requesting their permission to go to their home and visit with the new honored guest. I did not feel right accepting this honor and attention, but viewed it as a chance to speak about Śrīla Prabhupāda and the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

From that night onwards, I was treated as a spiritual V.I.P. My friend Brahma returned from Lucknow the next day and persuaded me to remain with the Sharmas several days longer. During the next several days, neighborhood people came to visit the Sharmas, seeking spiritual guidance from their resident "American *sādhu*," who did the best he could.

When the day for my departure came, I had to leave the Sharma household about 3 a.m. to catch an early-morning flight
(continued on page 30)

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

Chemical Evolution? Where Do the Chemicals Come From?

This exchange between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, a guest, and a disciple named Dr. Thoudam D. Singh took place in December of 1973, during a morning walk at Venice Beach, in Los Angeles.

Dr. Singh: The scientists say that at one point the earth was composed of dust particles floating in some gaseous material. Then in due course this colloidal suspension condensed and formed the earth.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That may be, but where did the gas come from?

Dr. Singh: They say it just existed!

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Lord Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā* [7.4].

*bhūmir āpo 'nalo vāyuh
kham mano buddhir eva ca
ahaṅkāra itīyaṁ me
bhinnā prakṛtir aṣṭadhā*

"Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence, and false ego—all together these eight comprise My separated material energies."

Here Kṛṣṇa explains that *vāyu* (gas) came from Him. And finer than *vāyu* is *kham* (ether), finer than ether is mind, finer than mind is intelligence, finer than intelligence is false ego, and finer than false ego is the soul. But the scientists do not know this. They understand only gross things. They mention gas, but where does the gas come from?

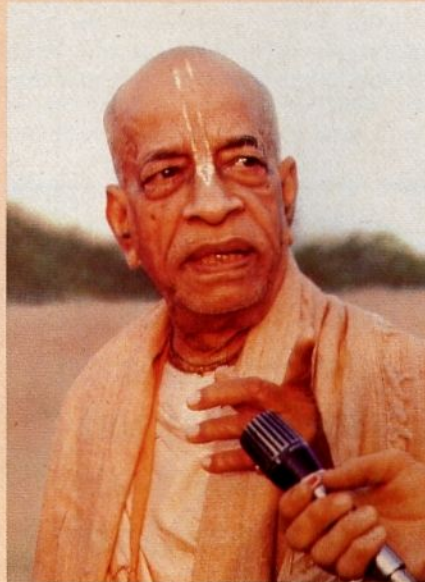
Dr. Singh: That they cannot answer.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But *we* can answer. From *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* we know that gas has come from *kham*, or ether, ether comes from mind, mind comes from intelligence, intelligence comes from false ego, and false ego comes from the soul.

Dr. Singh: The scientists argue that before Darwin's biophysical type of evolution could take place, there had to be what they call "prebiotic chemistry," or chemical evolution.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. And the term "chemical evolution" means that chemicals have an origin, and that origin is spirit, or life. A lemon produces citric acid, and our bodies produce many chemicals in urine, blood, perspiration, and other bodily secretions. This is proof that life produces chemicals, not that chemicals produce life.

Dr. Singh: Scientists say that once the seed of life is present in the cells, then the liv-



ing entity automatically develops and functions.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, but who gives the seed? In the *Bhagavad-gītā* [7.10] Kṛṣṇa answers this question. *Bjāṁ māṁ sarva-bhūtānāṁ viddhi pārtha sanātanam*: "O son of Pṛthā, know that I am the original seed of all existences." And later [14.4] Kṛṣṇa says,

*sarva-yoniṣu kaunteya
mūrtayaḥ sambhavanti yāḥ
tāsāṁ brahma mahad yonir
ahaṁ bīja-pradaḥ pitā*

"It should be understood that all species of life, O son of Kuntī, are made possible by birth in this material nature, and that I am the seed-giving father."

Dr. Wolf-Rottkay: But in all humility, Śrīla Prabhupāda, suppose the scientists actually succeed in artificially creating a living organism, or even a living cell. What would you say?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: What would be their credit? They would only be imitating what already exists in nature. People are very fond of imitations. If a man in a nightclub imitates a dog, people will go and pay money to watch him. But when they see a real dog barking, they don't pay any attention to it.

Dr. Singh: Śrīla Prabhupāda, the idea of chemical evolution came from a Russian biologist in 1920. He demonstrated that before biochemical evolution, the earth's atmosphere was in a state of reduction. In other words, it was mostly full of hydrogen,

with very little oxygen. Then, in due course, the sun's radiation caused these hydrogen molecules to form into different chemicals.

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

Perhaps the scientists can create imitations of nature, but why should we give them credit? We should give credit to the original creator, God; that is our philosophy.

Dr. Singh: When a scientist discovers some natural law, he usually names it after himself.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, exactly. The law is already there in nature, but the rascal wants to take credit for it.

Dr. Singh: They are actually fighting against the laws of nature, but often they take a certain kind of pleasure in the struggle.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That pleasure is childish. Suppose a child builds a sand castle on the beach with great effort. He may take pleasure in it, but that is childish pleasure. That is not a grown man's pleasure. Materialistic men have created a standard of false happiness. They have created a gorgeous arrangement for maintaining a comfortable civilization, but it is all false because they cannot create a situation in which they will be able to enjoy it permanently. At any moment, anyone can be kicked out by death, and all his enjoyment will be finished.

Dr. Singh: That is why they say that God hasn't given us everything—because we are not able to live here forever.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But God has given them everything necessary to live peacefully, and everything necessary to understand Him. So why will they not inquire about God? Instead, they do things that help them forget God.

ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

With the original Sanskrit text, its Roman transliteration, synonyms, translation and elaborate purports by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Second Canto: "The Cosmic Manifestation"

CHAPTER FOUR

The Process of Creation

As our serialized presentation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam continues, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, a fully realized devotee, offers prayers to the Supreme Lord and then tells of the spiritual questions posed to Brahmā, the firstborn living being, by his disciple Nārada.

TEXT 23

भूतैर्महद्भिर् य इमाः पुरो विभु-
निर्माय शेते यदमृषु पूरुषः ।
भुङ्क्ते गुणान् षोडश षोडशात्मकः
सोऽलङ्कृषीष्ट भगवान् वचांसि मे ॥२३॥

*bhūtair mahadbhir ya imāḥ puro vibhu-
nirmāya śete yad amṛṣu pūruṣaḥ
bhunkte guṇān ṣoḍaśa ṣoḍaśātmakāḥ
so 'laṅkṛṣīṣṭa bhagavān vacāṁsi me*

bhūtaiḥ—by the elements; *mahadbhiḥ*—of material creation; *yaḥ*—He who; *imāḥ*—all these; *puruṣaḥ*—bodies; *vibhuḥ*—of the Lord; *nirmāya*—for being set up; *śete*—lie down; *yad amṛṣu*—one who incarnated; *pūruṣaḥ*—Lord Viṣṇu; *bhunkte*—causes to be subjected; *guṇān*—the three modes of nature; *ṣoḍaśa*—in sixteen divisions; *ṣoḍaśa-ātmakāḥ*—being the generator of these sixteen; *saḥ*—He; *alaṅkṛṣīṣṭa*—may decorate; *bhagavān*—the Personality of Godhead; *vacāṁsi*—statements; *me*—mine.

TRANSLATION

May the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who enlivens the materially created bodies of the elements by lying down within the universe, and who in His puruṣa incarnation causes the living being to be subjected to the sixteen divisions of material modes which are his generator, be pleased to decorate my statements.

PURPORT

As a fully dependent devotee, Śukadeva Gosvāmī (unlike a mundane man who is proud of his own capability) invokes the pleasure of the Personality of Godhead so that his statements may be successful and be appreciated by the hearers. The devotee always thinks of himself as instrumental for anything successfully carried out, and he declines to take credit for anything done by himself. The godless atheist wants to take all credit for activities, not knowing that even a blade of grass cannot move without the sanction of the Supreme Spirit, the Personality of Godhead.

Śukadeva Gosvāmī therefore wants to move by the direction of the Supreme Lord, who inspired Brahmā to speak the Vedic wisdom. The truths described in the Vedic literatures are not theories of mundane imagination, nor are they fictitious, as the less intelligent class of men sometimes think. The Vedic truths are all perfect descriptions of the factual truth without any mistake or illusion, and Śukadeva Gosvāmī wants to present the truths of creation not as a metaphysical theory of philosophical speculation, but as the actual facts and figures of the subject, since he would be dictated to by the Lord exactly in the same manner as Brahmāji was inspired. As stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.15), the Lord is Himself the father of the *Vedānta* knowledge, and it is He only who knows the factual purport of the *Vedānta* philosophy. So there is no greater truth than the principles of religion mentioned in the *Vedas*. Such Vedic knowledge or religion is disseminated by authorities like Śukadeva Gosvāmī because he is a humble devotional servitor of the Lord who has no desire to become a self-appointed interpreter without authority. That is the way of explaining the Vedic knowledge, technically known as the *paramparā* system, or descending process.

The intelligent man can see without mistake that any material creation (whether one's own body or a fruit or flower) cannot beautifully grow up without the spiritual touch. The greatest intelligent man of the world or the greatest man of science can present everything very beautifully only insofar as the spirit life is there or inasmuch as the spiritual touch is there. Therefore the source of all truths is the Supreme Spirit, and not gross matter as wrongly conceived by the gross materialist. We get information from the Vedic literature that the Lord Himself first entered the vacuum of the material universe, and thus all things gradually developed one after another. Similarly, the Lord is situated as localized Paramātmā in every individual being; hence everything is done by Him very beautifully. The sixteen principal creative elements, namely earth, water, fire, air, sky, and the eleven sense organs, first developed from the Lord Himself and were thereby shared by the living entities. Thus the material elements were created for the enjoyment of the living entities. The beautiful arrangement behind all material manifestations is therefore made possible by the energy of the Lord, and the individual living entity can only pray to the Lord to understand it properly. Since the Lord is the supreme entity, different from Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the prayer can be offered to Him. The Lord helps the living entity to enjoy material creation, but He is aloof from such false enjoyment. Śukadeva prays for the mercy of the Lord, not only for being helped personally in presenting the truth, but also for helping others to whom he would like to speak.

TEXT 24

नमस्तस्मै भगवते वासुदेवाय वेधसे ।
पपुर्ज्ञानमयं सौम्या यन्मुखात्सुहृदासवम् ॥२४॥

*namas tasmai bhagavate
vāsudevāya vedhase*

*papur jñānam ayam saumyā
yan-mukhāmburūhāsavam*

namaḥ—my obeisances; *tasmai*—unto Him; *bhagavate*—unto the Personality of Godhead; *vāsudevāya*—unto Vāsudeva or His incarnations; *vedhase*—the compiler of the Vedic literatures; *papuḥ*—drunk; *jñānam*—knowledge; *ayam*—this Vedic knowledge; *saumyāḥ*—the devotees, especially the consorts of Lord Kṛṣṇa; *yat*—from whose; *mukha-amburuha*—the lotuslike mouth; *āsavam*—nectar from His mouth.

TRANSLATION

I offer my respectful obeisances unto Śrīla Vyāsadeva, the incarnation of Vāsudeva who compiled the Vedic scriptures. The pure devotees drink up the nectarean transcendental knowledge dropping from the lotuslike mouth of the Lord.

PURPORT

In pursuance of the specific utterance *vedhase*, or “the compiler of the system of transcendental knowledge,” Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has commented that the respectful obeisances are offered to Śrīla Vyāsadeva, who is the incarnation of Vāsudeva. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has agreed to this, but Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura has made a further advance, namely that the nectar from the mouth of Lord Kṛṣṇa is transferred to His different consorts, and thus they learn the finer arts of music, dance, dressing, decorations and all such things which are relished by the Lord. Such music, dance and decorations enjoyed by the Lord are certainly not anything mundane, because the Lord is addressed in the very beginning as *para*, or transcendental. This transcendental knowledge is unknown to the forgotten conditioned souls. Śrīla Vyāsadeva, who is the incarnation of the Lord, thus compiled the Vedic literatures to revive the lost memory of the conditioned souls about their eternal relation with the Lord. One should therefore try to understand the Vedic scriptures, or the nectar transferred by the Lord to His consorts in the conjugal humor, from the lotuslike mouth of Vyāsadeva or Śukadeva. By gradual development of transcendental knowledge, one can rise to the stage of the transcendental arts of music and dance displayed by the Lord in His *rāsa-līlā*. But without having the Vedic knowledge one can hardly understand the transcendental nature of the Lord’s *rāsa* dance and music. The pure devotees of the Lord, however, can equally relish the nectar in the form of the profound philosophical discourses and in the form of kissing by the Lord in the *rāsa* dance, as there is no mundane distinction between the two.

TEXT 25

एतदेवात्मभू राजन् नारदाय विप्रच्छते ।
वेदगर्भोऽभ्यधात्साक्षाद् यदाह हरिरात्मनः ॥२५॥

*etad evātma-bhū rājan
nāradāya viprcchate
veda-garbho 'bhyadhāt sākṣād
yad āha harir ātmanah*

etad—on this matter; *eva*—exactly; *ātma-bhūḥ*—the firstborn (Brahmāji); *rājan*—my dear King; *nāradāya*—unto Nārada Muni; *viprcchate*—having inquired about it from; *veda-garbhah*—one who is impregnated with Vedic knowledge from birth; *abhyadhāt*—apprised; *sākṣāt*—directly; *yat āha*—what he spoke; *hariḥ*—the Lord; *ātmanah*—unto His own (Brahmā).

TRANSLATION

My dear King, Brahmā, the firstborn, on being questioned by Nārada, exactly apprised him on this subject, as it was directly spoken by the Lord to His own son, who was impregnated with Vedic knowledge from his very birth.

PURPORT

As soon as Brahmā was born of the abdominal lotus petals of Viṣṇu, he was impregnated with Vedic knowledge, and therefore he is known as *veda-garbha*, or a Vedāntist from the embryo. Without Vedic knowledge, or perfect, infallible knowledge, no one can create anything. All scientific knowledge and perfect knowledge are Vedic. One can get all types of information from the *Vedas*, and as such, Brahmā was impregnated with all-perfect knowledge so that it was possible for him to create. Thus Brahmā knew the perfect description of creation, as it was exactly apprised to him by the Supreme Lord Hari. Brahmā, on being questioned by Nārada, told Nārada exactly what he had heard directly from the Lord. Nārada again told exactly the same thing to Vyāsa, and Vyāsa also told Śukadeva exactly what he heard from Nārada. And Śukadeva was going to repeat the same statements as he had heard them from Vyāsa. That is the way of Vedic understanding. The language of the *Vedas* can be revealed only by the above-mentioned disciplic succession, and not otherwise.

There is no use in theories. Knowledge must be factual. There are many things that are complicated, and one cannot understand them unless they are explained by one who knows. The Vedic knowledge is also very difficult to know and must be learned by the above-mentioned system; otherwise it is not at all understood.

Śukadeva Gosvāmī, therefore, prayed for the mercy of the Lord so that he might be able to repeat the very same message that was spoken directly by the Lord to Brahmā, or what was directly spoken by Brahmā to Nārada. Therefore the statements of creation explained by Śukadeva Gosvāmī are not at all, as the mundaners suggest, theoretical, but are perfectly correct. One who hears these messages and tries to assimilate them gets perfect information of the material creation.

Thus end the Bhaktivedanta purports of the Second Canto, Fourth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “The Process of Creation.”

CHAPTER FIVE

The Cause of All Causes

TEXT 1

नारद उवाच

देवदेव नमस्तेऽस्तु भूतभावन पूर्वज ।
तद् विजानीहि यज्ज्ञानमात्मतत्त्वनिदर्शनम् ॥ १ ॥

*nārada uvāca
deva-deva namas te 'stu
bhūta-bhāvana pūrvaja
tad vijānīhi yaj jñānam
ātma-tattva-nidarśanam*

nāradaḥ uvāca—Śrī Nārada said; *deva*—of all demigods; *deva*—the demigod; *namaḥ*—obeisances; *te*—unto you as; *astu*—are; *bhūta-bhāvana*—the generator of all living beings; *pūrvaja*—the firstborn; *tad vijānīhi*—please explain that knowledge; *yaj jñānam*—which knowledge; *ātma-tattva*—transcendental; *nidarśanam*—specifically directs.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Nārada Muni asked Brahmāji: O chief amongst the demigods, O firstborn living entity, I beg to offer my respectful obeisances unto you. Please tell me that transcendental knowledge which specifically directs one to the truth of the individual soul and the Supersoul.

PURPORT

The perfection of the *paramparā* system, or the path of disciplic succession, is further confirmed. In the previous chapter it has been established that Brahmāji, the firstborn living entity, received knowledge directly from the Supreme Lord, and the same knowledge was imparted to Nārada, the next disciple. Nārada asked to receive the knowledge, and Brahmāji imparted it upon being asked. Therefore, asking for transcendental knowledge from the right person and receiving it properly is the regulation of the disciplic succession. This process is recommended in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.2). The inquisitive student must approach a qualified spiritual master to receive transcendental knowledge by surrender, submissive inquiries and service. Knowledge received by submissive inquiries and service is more effective than knowledge received in exchange for money. A spiritual master in the line of disciplic succession from Brahmā and Nārada has no demand for dollars and cents. A bona fide student has to satisfy him by sincere service to obtain knowledge of the relation and nature of the individual soul and the Supersoul.

TEXT 2

यद्दृपं यदधिष्ठानं यतः सुष्टमिदं प्रमो ।
यत्संस्थं यत्परं यच्च तत् तत्त्वं वद तत्त्वतः ॥ २ ॥

*yad rūpaṁ yad adhiṣṭhānaṁ
yataḥ sṛṣṭam idaṁ praḥbo
yat saṁstham yat paraṁ yac ca
tat tattvaṁ vada tattvataḥ*

yat—what; *rūpaṁ*—the symptoms of manifestation; *yat*—what; *adhiṣṭhānaṁ*—background; *yataḥ*—from where; *sṛṣṭam*—created; *idaṁ*—this world; *praḥbo*—O my father; *yat*—in which; *saṁstham*—conserved; *yat*—what; *paraṁ*—under control; *yac*—and; *tat*—of this; *tattvam*—the symptoms; *vada*—please describe; *tattvataḥ*—factually.

TRANSLATION

My dear father, please describe factually the symptoms of this manifest world. What is its background? How is it created? How is it conserved? And under whose control is all this being done?

PURPORT

The inquiries by Nārada Muni on the basis of factual cause and effect appear very reasonable. The atheists, however, put forward many self-made theories without any touch of cause and effect. The manifested world, as well as the spirit soul, is still unexplained by the godless atheists through the medium of experimental knowledge, although they have put forward many theories manufactured by their fertile brains. Contrary to such mental speculative theories of creation, however, Nārada Muni wanted to know all the facts of creation in truth, and not by theories.

Transcendental knowledge regarding the soul and the Supersoul includes knowledge of the phenomenal world and the basis of its creation. In the phenomenal world three things are factually observed by any intelligent man: the living beings, the manifest world, and the ultimate control over them. The intelligent man can see that neither the living entity nor the phenomenal world are creations of chance. The symmetry of creation and its regulative actions and reactions suggests the plan of an intelligent brain behind them, and by genuine inquiry one may find out the ultimate cause with the help of one who knows them factually.

TEXT 3

सर्वं ह्येतद् भवान् वेद भूतमन्यमवत्प्रभुः ।
करामलकवद् विश्वं विज्ञानावसितं तव ॥ ३ ॥

*sarvaṁ hy etad bhavān veda
bhūta-bhavya-bhavat-prabhuḥ
karāmalaka-vad viśvaṁ
vijñānāvāsitaṁ tava*

sarvaṁ—all and everything; *hi*—certainly; *etat*—this; *bhavān*—your good self; *veda*—know; *bhūta*—all that is created or born; *bhavya*—all that will be created or born; *bhavat*—all that is being created; *prabhuḥ*—you, the master of everything; *kara-āmalaka-vat*—just like a walnut within your grip; *viśvaṁ*—the universe; *vijñāna-avasitaṁ*—within your knowledge scientifically; *tava*—your.

TRANSLATION

My dear father, all this is known to you scientifically because whatever was created in the past, whatever will be created in the future, or whatever is being created at present, as well as everything within the universe, is within your grip, just like a walnut.

PURPORT

Brahmā is the direct creator of the manifested universe and everything within the universe. He therefore knows what happened in the past, what will happen in the future, and what is happening at present. Three principal items, namely the living being, the phenomenal world and the controller, are all in continuous action—past, present and future—and the direct manager is supposed to know everything of such actions and reactions, as one knows about a walnut within the grip of one's palm. The direct manufacturer of a particular thing is supposed to know how he learned the art of manufacturing, where he got the ingredients, how he set it up and how the products in the manufacturing process are being turned out. Because Brahmā is the firstborn living being, naturally he is supposed to know everything about creative functions.

TEXT 4

यद्विज्ञानो यदाधारो यत्परस्त्वं यदात्मकः ।
एकः सृजसि भूतानि भूतैरेवात्ममायया ॥ ४ ॥

*yad-vijñāno yad-ādhāro
yat-paras tvam yad-ātmakaḥ
ekaḥ sṛjasi bhūtāni
bhūtair evāṭma-māyayā*

yad-vijñānaḥ—the source of knowledge; *yad-ādhāraḥ*—under whose protection; *yat-paraḥ*—under whose subordination; *tvam*—you; *yad-ātmakaḥ*—in what capacity; *ekaḥ*—alone; *sṛjasi*—you are creating; *bhūtāni*—the living entities; *bhūtaiḥ*—with the help of the material elements; *eva*—certainly; *ātma*—self; *māyayā*—by potency.

TRANSLATION

My dear father, what is the source of your knowledge? Under whose protection are you standing? And under whom are you working? What is your real position? Do you alone create all entities with material elements by your personal energy?

PURPORT

It was known to Śrī Nārada Muni that Lord Brahmā attained creative energy by undergoing severe austerities. As such, he could understand that there was someone else superior to Brahmāji who invested Brahmā with the power of creation. Therefore he asked all the above questions. Discoveries of progressive scientific achievements are therefore not independent. The scientist has to attain the knowledge of a thing already existing by means of the wonderful brain made by someone else. A scientist can work with the help of such an awarded brain, but it is not possible for the scientist to create his own or a similar brain. Therefore no one is

independent in the matter of any creation, nor is such creation automatic.

TEXT 5

आत्मन् भावयसे तानि न पराभावयन् स्वयम् ।
आत्मशक्तिमवष्टभ्य उर्गनामिरिवाक्लमः ॥ ५ ॥

ātman bhāvayase tāni
na parābhāvayan svayam
ātma-śaktim avaṣṭabhya
ūrṇanābhir ivāklamaḥ

ātman (ātmani)—by self; bhāvayase—manifest; tāni—all those; na—not; parābhāvayan—being defeated; svayam—yourself; ātma-śaktim—self-sufficient power; avaṣṭabhya—being employed; ūrṇa-nābhiḥ—the spider; iva—like; aklamaḥ—without help.

TRANSLATION

As the spider very easily creates the network of its cobweb and manifests its power of creation without being defeated by others, so also you yourself, by employment of your self-sufficient energy, create without any other's help.

PURPORT

The best example of self-sufficiency is the sun. The sun does not require to be illuminated by any other body. Rather, it is the sun which helps all other illuminating agents, for in the presence of the sun no other illuminating agent becomes prominent. Nārada compared the position of Brahmā to the self-sufficiency of the spider, who creates its own field of activities without any other's help by employment of its own energetic creation of saliva.

TEXT 6

नाहं वेद परं ह्यस्मिन्नापरं न समं विमो ।
नामरूपगुणैर्मान्यं सदसत् किञ्चिदन्यतः ॥ ६ ॥

nāhaṁ veda paraṁ hy asmin
nāparaṁ na samaṁ vibho
nāma-rūpa-guṇair bhāvyaṁ
sad-asat kiñcid anyataḥ

na—do not; aham—myself; veda—know; param—superior; hi—for; asmin—in this world; na—neither; aparam—inferior; na—nor; samam—equal; vibho—O great one; nāma—name; rūpa—characteristics; guṇaiḥ—by qualification; bhāvyaṁ—all that is created; sat—eternal; asat—temporary; kiñcid—or anything like that; anyataḥ—from any other source.

TRANSLATION

Whatever we can understand by the nomenclature, characteristics and features of a particular thing—superior, inferior or equal, eternal or temporary—is not created from any source other than that of Your Lordship, thou so great.

PURPORT

The manifested world is full of varieties of created beings in 8,400,000 species of life, and some of them are superior and inferior to others. In human society the human being is considered to be the superior living being, and amongst the human beings there are also different varieties: good, bad, equal, etc. But Nārada Muni took for granted that none of them has any source of generation besides his father, Brahmāji. Therefore he wanted to know all about them from Lord Brahmā.

TEXT 7

स भवानचरद् घोरं यत् तपः सुसमाहितः ।
तेन खेदयसे नस्त्वं पराशङ्कां च यच्छसि ॥ ७ ॥

sa bhavān acarad ghoram
yat tapaḥ susamāhitaḥ
tena khedayase naḥ tvam
parā-śaṅkāṁ ca yacchasi

saḥ—he; bhavān—your good self; acarad—undertook; ghoram—severe; yat tapaḥ—meditation; su-samāhitaḥ—in perfect discipline; tena—for that reason; khedayase—gives pain; naḥ—ourselves; tvam—your good self; parā—the ultimate truth; śaṅkāṁ—doubts; ca—and; yacchasi—giving us a chance.

TRANSLATION

Yet we are moved to wonder about the existence of someone more powerful than you when we think of your great austerities in perfect discipline, although your good self is so powerful in the matter of creation.

PURPORT

Following in the footsteps of Śrī Nārada Muni, one should not blindly accept his spiritual master as God Himself. A spiritual master is duly respected on a par with God, but a spiritual master claiming to be God Himself should at once be rejected. Nārada Muni accepted Brahmā as the Supreme due to Lord Brahmā's wonderful acts in creation, but doubts arose in him when he saw that Lord Brahmā also worshiped some superior authority. The Supreme is supreme, and He has no worshipable superior. The *ahaṅgrahopāsītā*, or the one who worships himself with the idea of becoming God Himself, is misleading, but the intelligent disciple can at once detect that the Supreme God does not need to worship anyone, including Himself, in order to become God. *Ahaṅgrahopāsānā* may be one of the processes for transcendental realization, but the *ahaṅgrahopāsītā* can never be God Himself. No one becomes God by undergoing a process of transcendental realization. Nārada Muni thought of Brahmāji as the Supreme Person, but when he saw Brahmāji engaged in the process of transcendental realization, doubts arose in him. So he wanted to be clearly informed.

TEXT 8

एतन्मे पृच्छतः सर्वं सर्वज्ञ सकलेश्वर ।
विजानीहि यथैवेदमहं बुध्येऽनुशासितः ॥ ८ ॥

etat me pṛcchataḥ sarvaṁ
sarva-jña sakaleśvara
vijānihi yathavedam
ahaṁ budhye 'nuśāsitaḥ

etat—all those; me—unto me; pṛcchataḥ—inquisitive; sarvaṁ—all that is inquired; sarva-jña—one who knows everything; sakala—over all; īśvara—the controller; vijānihi—kindly explain; yathā—as; eva—they are; idam—this; aham—myself; budhye—can understand; anuśāsitaḥ—just learning from you.

TRANSLATION

My dear father, you know everything, and you are the controller of all. Therefore may all that I have inquired from you be kindly instructed to me so that I may be able to understand it as your student.

PURPORT

The inquiries made by Nārada Muni are very important for everyone concerned, and as such Nārada requested Brahmāji to deem them suitable so that all others who may come in the line of disciplic succession of the Brahma-sampradāya may also know them properly without any difficulty.

(continued in next issue)



THE MOST CONFIDENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

Our colleges and universities have neglected the essential subject.

by MATHUREŚA DĀSA

In the Ninth Chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.34) Lord Kṛṣṇa explains that the most confidential of all knowledge culminates in the activities of devotional service:

“Engage your mind always in thinking of Me and become My devotee. Offer obeisances and worship Me. Being completely absorbed in Me, surely you will come to Me.”

Who is Kṛṣṇa that absorption in thought of Him is the most confidential knowledge? The *Bhagavad-gītā*, and indeed all the Vedic literatures, answer: Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Person. The *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.1) states,

“The supreme controller is Kṛṣṇa. He has an eternal, blissful, all-cognizant spiritual body. He is without beginning. He is the origin of everything, and He is the cause of all causes.”

As living entities we are each part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa and therefore eternally connected with Him. Thus our most intimate, most confidential relationship is our relationship with the Supreme Lord.

For most people who profess some religion, an intimate relationship with God is a vague idea at best. They worship God only as the supreme father and the supplier of necessities. And in this age many people do not even believe in God, what to speak of being aware of their confidential relationship with Him. They say that God is dead or that He is merely a product of man’s imagination. Or they say that belief

in a Supreme Person is a superstition of primitive cultures. Just to clear up these and other misconceptions, Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke the *Gītā* to His friend and disciple Arjuna.

Arjuna knew Kṛṣṇa to be the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and therefore he accepted Kṛṣṇa’s every word as fact. To understand the *Gītā* we should follow in Arjuna’s footsteps and accept, at least theoretically, that Kṛṣṇa is the supreme person, the supreme authority. One might object that this is blind faith. But there is no need of blind faith. We can remain aloof and think, “Let me theoretically accept that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the ultimate authority. Then what are the implications of His instructions in the *Bhagavad-gītā*?”

The *Gītā* itself recommends this process of understanding. When we purchase some prescription medicine, a label on the bottle tells us how to take it. “Two pills every four hours,” the label might read. If we take two pills every eight hours, the medicine will be ineffective, and if we take two every hour, the overdose may make our illness worse. Similarly, in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.3) we learn of Arjuna’s qualifications for understanding Kṛṣṇa’s instructions:

“That very ancient science of the relationship with the Supreme is today told by Me to you because you are My devotee as well as my friend; therefore you can understand the transcendental mystery of this science.”

This is the *Gītā*’s “label,” so to speak, and

if we study it in this way, accepting Kṛṣṇa as the supreme authority, as Arjuna did, then our study becomes very rewarding. Just as we confide only in someone we can trust, Kṛṣṇa reveals the confidential meaning of the *Gītā* only to those who approach Him with a devotional mood.

In the Second Chapter of the *Gītā* Kṛṣṇa elaborately explains the difference between the body and the self. Understanding of this difference—understanding that “I am not this body”—is the beginning of confidential knowledge.

Kṛṣṇa explains that although the body changes from childhood to youth to old age, the person within the body does not change. A grown man can remember his childhood body, although it is long gone. Who is remembering? The person *within* the body—the self, or soul. We customarily say “my hand,” “my leg,” or “my mind,” indicating that these are our possessions; they are not we ourselves. Similarly, we can say “my body,” indicating that we are not the body but that it belongs to us, to the living soul within it.

The body is like an automobile, which requires an intelligent person to drive it. A car is simply a pile of inert metal, rubber, glass, and so on, and without a driver it remains parked at the side of the road. Only with an intelligent driver at the wheel does it move from place to place. No one but a fool would think the car is moving by itself. Similarly, the body is only a lump of dead matter that *appears* alive and active only as long as the living entity, the self, is present within it. When the individual

living soul leaves the body, the body dies. But, says the *Gītā* (2.20), for the self there is no death:

“For the soul there is never birth or death. Nor, having once been, does he ever cease to be. He is unborn, eternal, ever-existing, undying, and primeval. He is not slain when the body is slain.”

The body has a beginning and an end; but we, the spirit soul within each body, are eternal. This is the beginning of confidential knowledge: to understand our eternal identity apart from the body.

As mentioned above, confidential knowledge culminates in absorption in thinking about Kṛṣṇa and serving Him. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.2) Lord Kṛṣṇa calls this the “king of education.” Real education begins with understanding the difference between the body and the self, or soul, and ends with our full surrender to the Supreme Soul, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Unfortunately, modern educational institutions almost completely neglect these topics.

No modern educational institution has a department for understanding the difference between the body and the self. Institutions of higher learning are interested in the sciences of physics, chemistry, sociology, psychology, politics, astronomy, anthropology, and so on, which focus exclusively on the body and its extensions but neglect the spirit soul. But of what relevance are these sciences to a dead body? A dead body takes no interest in them, nor can any scientist revive the body. These sciences are valuable only when the body is alive, and the life within the body depends on the presence of the soul. Therefore the science of the soul is the most important science, the “king of education.”

When a body passes from life to death, something has radically changed. What, exactly, is missing in the dead body? Is it a certain chemical? A certain atomic or subatomic particle? If so, then what is that chemical or particle? Even if we deny the existence of an eternal soul, our educational interest should still focus on finding that element within the body which causes the living symptoms. This is essential, for without life our education has no meaning.

Without knowing what *life* is, a person cannot properly say what *he* is. One may say, for example, “I am Mr. Bob Jones, a twenty-eight-year-old lawyer.” But when the life leaves his body, we will say that Mr. Jones is “dead and gone,” or that he has “passed away.” Mr. Jones’s dead body may still be lying in the casket, but we know that Mr. Jones himself is gone. One way or another, whether we are spirit souls or combinations of chemicals, when our body dies we will no longer be present. So to be in ignorance of the exact difference

between a living body and a dead body is to be in ignorance of who we are.

As we have seen, the path of intellectual research through the various material sciences is limited and faulty. Indeed, after many thousands of years of this research, no one can say with assurance what life is. One school of thought may rise to prominence for some time, but in due course it is rejected and another school established. The intellectual skyline is always changing.

When a body passes from life to death, something has radically changed. What, exactly, is missing in the dead body?


To call this change “progress” is misleading, for each school is in turn rejected as faulty, and therefore we are left with only a progression of mistakes. Two centuries ago no one had heard of Darwin or Freud, and two centuries from now they will be all but forgotten. Thus the path of material research is never safe or certain.

We must conclude, therefore, that our present research tools are themselves inadequate for finding out the nature and origin of life. If life originated in chemicals, we could find its source in the chemical laboratory. And if life and consciousness were a function of our mental activity, we could fully explain them by psychology. But since the origin of life and consciousness is the eternal spirit soul, who is beyond the material body and mind, our material sciences have not succeeded and never will succeed in reaching satisfactory conclusions in this field. The *Bhagavad-gītā* therefore proclaims that after many lifetimes spent pursuing knowledge on the path of intellectual research, an intelligent man at last surrenders to Kṛṣṇa and accepts the path of devotional service.

Being a spiritual process, devotional service is the proper context in which to study life and consciousness. As spirit souls we are part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Soul, just as the hand is part and parcel of the body. The hand’s natural

position is to serve the body by supplying food to the stomach. Then both the hand and the body as a whole are nourished. The hand cannot directly benefit from the food; it can get nourishment and energy only by feeding the stomach. Similarly, if we satisfy Kṛṣṇa by our service, we ourselves will automatically feel satisfied.

To experience this satisfaction directly, we must engage in devotional service to Kṛṣṇa. There are nine methods of devotional service: hearing about Kṛṣṇa, chanting His glories, remembering Him, serving Him, praying to Him, worshiping Him, befriending Him, carrying out His orders, and surrendering everything to Him. By executing even one of these processes, we begin to reestablish our relationship with the Supreme Lord. For example, we can hear Kṛṣṇa’s own words from the *Bhagavad-gītā*, and we can hear about Kṛṣṇa from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (the foremost of the Vedic literatures known as *Purāṇas*, ancient histories). Then we can discuss what we have heard, and we can also chant the names of God: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. By hearing and chanting in this way we can reawaken our remembrance of Kṛṣṇa, and as our knowledge of God develops we will want to render service by worshiping, carrying out His orders, and so on. We can also cook for Kṛṣṇa. Devotees offer sumptuous vegetarian dishes to Kṛṣṇa, as He Himself requests in the *Gītā* (9.27): “If one offers Me with devotion a leaf, a flower, fruit, or water, I will accept it.” After offering the dishes to Kṛṣṇa, the devotees partake of the delicious remnants, which are called *kṛṣṇa-prasāda* (the Lord’s mercy). All these activities are easily and joyfully performed.

This is spiritual education, and we can directly perceive and judge the results. In an ordinary university the student requires periodic examinations to confirm that he’s learning something. Otherwise, he might doubt that he is getting an education—or others might doubt it. But in the spiritual education of devotional service, we directly perceive our advancement. When a hungry man eats a hearty meal, he feels satisfaction directly; he doesn’t need anyone to tell him he’s satisfied. Similarly, we don’t need diplomas to confirm that we’re getting a spiritual education, because the outcome of a spiritual education is that one becomes happy and satisfied in every way. This is the result of pleasing Kṛṣṇa with our service. Anyone who participates in the activities of devotional service feels transcendental pleasure. The purpose of the centers of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in cities and towns around the world is to give people an opportunity to culture the most confidential knowledge and participate in this happiness of serving Kṛṣṇa. 



Every Town and Village

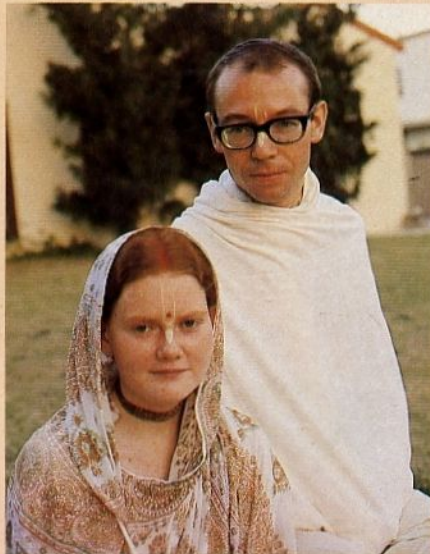
A look at the worldwide activities of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Kṛṣṇa People Defeat Deprogrammers

Los Angeles (AP)—Recently a federal judge approved a settlement awarding the International Society for Krishna Consciousness and one of its members \$10,000 and court costs in a deprogramming case.

U.S. District Court Judge David Williams signed the order ending a case that began more than three years ago when Madonna Slavin Walford, a Hare Krishna devotee, was abducted from her parents' home in Arcadia, California, and driven to Northern California for a deprogramming.

After the settlement Mrs. Walford said, "I appeal to Americans everywhere, and particularly to parents of Hare Krishna devotees throughout this nation, to understand that this is not a cult. I am practicing a religion that is more than five thousand years old, a religion whose book of truth, the *Bhagavad-gītā*, is sacred to more than six hundred million people on this planet."



Edward and Madonna Slavin Walford at the Los Angeles Hare Kṛṣṇa center.

Scholars, Clergy Praise Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement in Australia

Melbourne—Many prominent figures in the religious and academic fields in Australia have appreciated the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement and have strongly affirmed its historical and religious authenticity, as well as its contribution to the intellectual, social, and cultural life of contemporary Australia. The following are samples of their appreciations.

"The Hare Kṛṣṇa movement is a genuine representative of one of the well-known schools of Indian personal theism. The literature of the movement, especially the works of the founder, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are scholarly translations and expositions of that tradition. It is thus unfortunate that the general public tends to lump together all unusual religious movements as "cults," thus judging the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement on the same level as, for example, the 'Moonies,' the Scientologists, Jim Jones' tragic 'People's Temple,' or the Ananda Marg. The followers of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, on the contrary, should be regarded as genuine missionaries of a genuine and well-authenticated Hindu tradition.

"The Hare Kṛṣṇa movement demands and receives from its devotees extremely high moral standards, for example in the areas of sex, drugs, and alcohol. Indeed, a considerable part of the attraction of the

movement lies in the fact that it encourages a simplicity and self-discipline of life-style which appeals to many fine young people who are in revolt against the extravagance of the society in which they live.

"I myself spent twenty years as a Christian missionary in India. I know what it is like to witness to one's faith in a different cultural environment. As one who enjoyed religious freedom in India, I feel it is essential that we in Australia should ensure similar freedom to people of all faiths. It is very important for the freedom of religion, not only in Australia but in India and elsewhere, that no legislation should be passed which might infringe this liberty. The success of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement in the Western world is a challenge to Christians to listen, to understand, to learn, and then to reexamine their own faith. To react by encouraging repressive legislation would be a denial of the liberty which we claim for ourselves, and which we must share with others."

The Reverend Dr. Robin H.S. Boyd (Former Presbyterian, Church of North India; Minister, Uniting Church of Australia)

"As a professional teacher of Asian civilizations and religious movements, I have been impressed, like many other Indologists, by the sincerity and devotion of your movement in Australia. It is

doubtless a beautiful transplantation of an ancient ideal of clean moral living, vegetarianism, devotional worship (*bhakti*), celibacy, and the study of scriptures. It appears to be in perfect conformity with the cultural and religious practices of age-old Vaiṣṇavite Hinduism. Yours is a movement which is open and catholic and devoid of frenzy and fanaticism, aggression and violence. I wish your movement all success and peaceful coexistence with everyone else in Australia." — Dr. S.D. Singh (Department of History, University of Queensland)

"The Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees are followers of a legitimate and ancient religion. I have quite some experience of Christian religious communities and can thus affirm that all that is best in Christian monastic virtues was present in the Melbourne headquarters of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, which I personally visited. There is no Christian doctrine which would deny holiness and sanctity to members of other religions, and holiness was certainly there in the Kṛṣṇa community, as was happiness and humanity. The request I would want to make of my fellow Christians is not to lump the Hare Kṛṣṇas into what we Australians would call 'The Ratbag Element' (translation: those who are fanatical and monomaniacal about an outlandish set of beliefs). The reason I would give for that request is the simplest one in the world—that is a category in which the Hare Kṛṣṇas definitely do *not* belong." — The Reverend Fr. Ian N. Hunter, M.Th. (Anglican priest; Chaplain, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology)

"I believe that the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement is here to stay, and will have an influence far beyond its actual membership in the years to come, making for gentleness in human relationships and faith in the fundamental goodness of the world in days of increasing tensions, in both social and individual life. I am glad that you are bringing Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the Western world, for it cannot but grow spiritually richer from what you are doing. As a human being, I must applaud the fact that your movement is bringing faith and joy back into the lives of many young people who have not been able to find those virtues in the religion and culture in which they were raised, and I wish you success in the good work you are doing."

—Dr. A.L. Basham (Professor and Head, Department of Asian Civilizations, The Australian National University, Canberra)



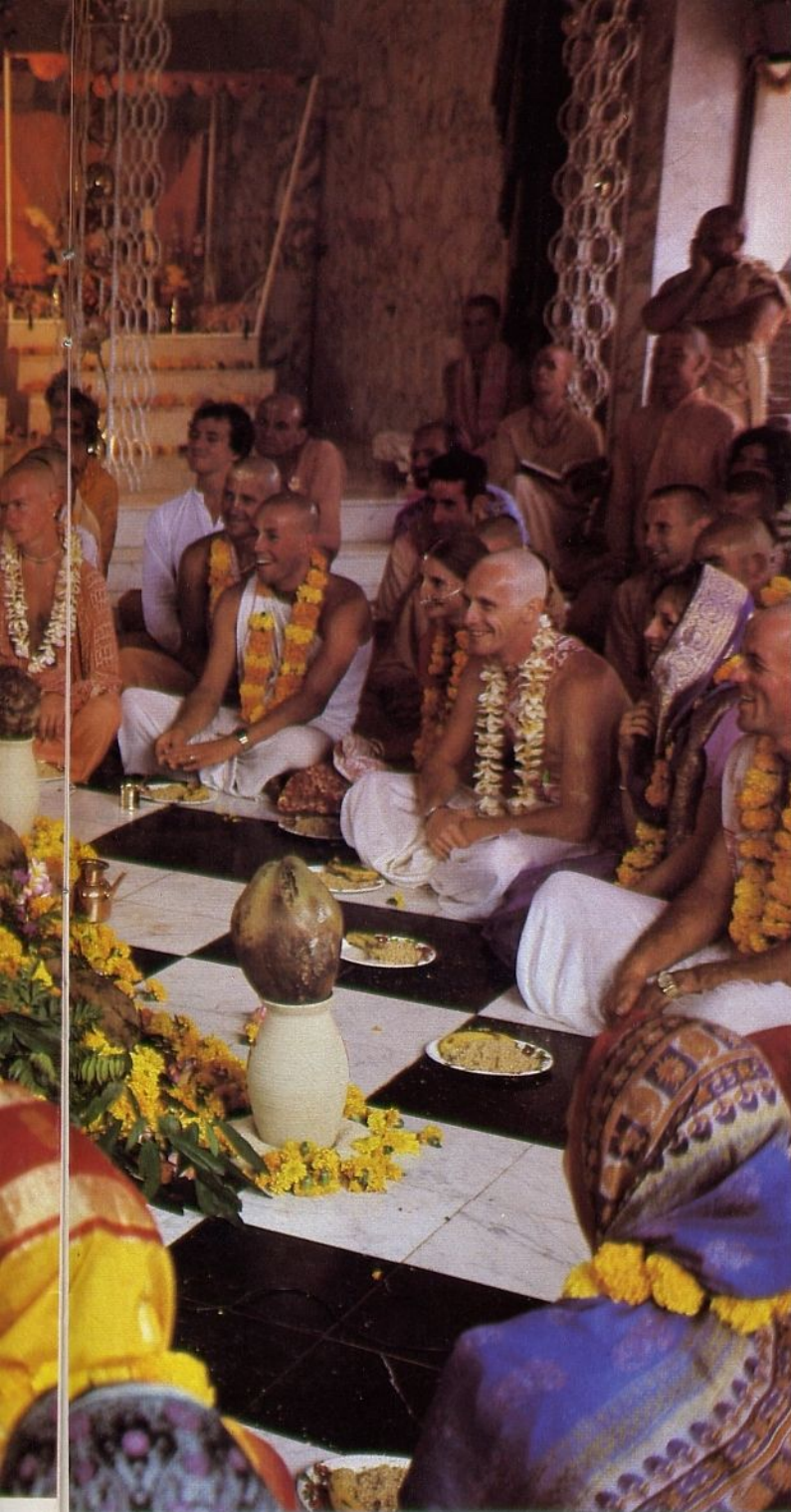
IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND
**A LIFE OF PURITY
AND PURPOSE**

An ancient spiritual culture offers new solutions
to persistent contemporary problems.

Text and photos by AMOGHA DĀSA
and VIŚĀKHĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

On May 9, 1971, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda stepped from an airliner at Sydney's International Airport into Australian history. Thirty disciples of the seventy-four-year-old spiritual master of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement greeted him in their traditional robes with garlands of flowers and the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, a practice that over the past year had become familiar to passersby on Sydney streets.

By June of 1974 the International Society

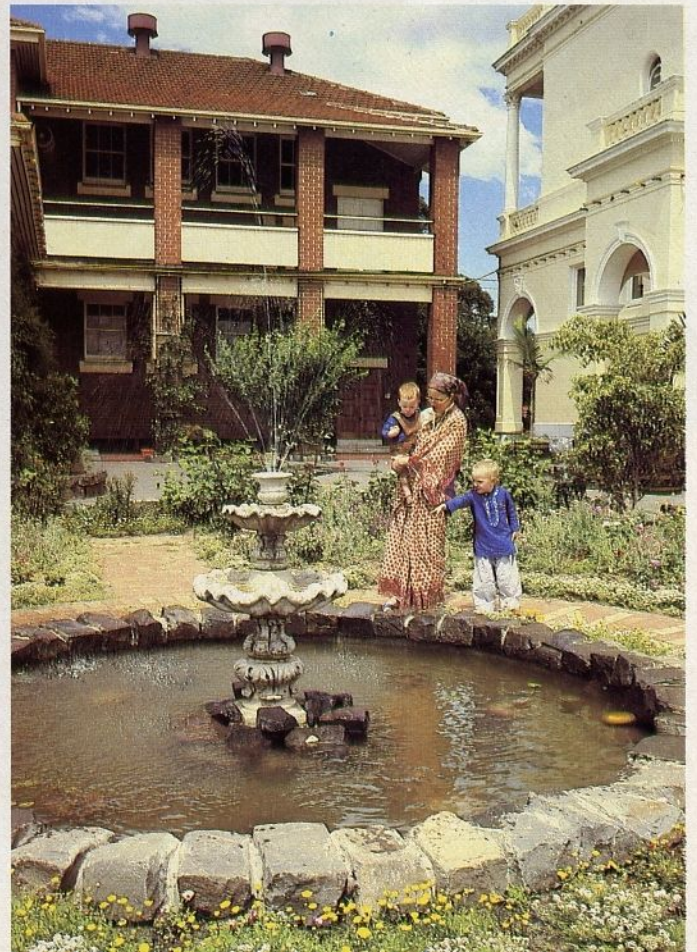


Initiation into Kṛṣṇa consciousness takes place during a joyful ceremony. At left, His Divine Grace Bhavānanda Goswami Viṣṇupāda initiates disciples at a temple devotees recently constructed at their New Govardhana farm in New South Wales. At lower left and below is the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement's headquarters in Melbourne.

for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) was recognized and registered by the federal government of Australia as a bona fide church. Several devotees became registered ministers of religion with the right to perform marriages as legal celebrants.

Today ISKCON in Australia and New Zealand includes four temples and three farms totaling more than 1,200 acres. It has opened four vegetarian restaurants, initiated two drug rehabilitation programs, and established the Ratha-yātrā chariot festival as a much anticipated summer event. A historic building in downtown Melbourne serves as ISKCON's Australian headquarters. The National Trust applauded the devotees for renovating the building (originally constructed in 1890) and especially commended them for the facade. The fifty devotees in the community conduct daily classes in the ancient Vedic literature, and hundreds of guests participate weekly in vegetarian feasts and seminars on *bhakti-yoga* (the *yoga* of devotion to God).

Also in downtown Melbourne, one block from Flinder's railway station, is Gopal's. This ornate restaurant serves a unique all-you-can-eat buffet of traditional vegetarian Indian dishes—absolutely free. Gopal's, devotees explain, introduces people to the philosophy of "simple living, high thinking" that underlies their diet of naturally grown fruits, vegetables, grains, and milk products.



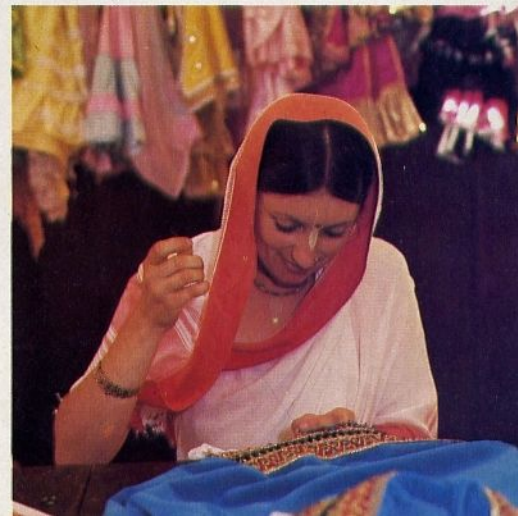


Devotees recently opened a second Gopal's in Prahran, one of Melbourne's largest suburbs. In Adelaide a third restaurant, Govinda's, satisfies hundreds of customers daily with spicy bean patties, fruit salad, vegetable fritters fried in clarified butter, Indian sweets, and fresh cheesecake. Managed by a husband-and-wife devotee couple, Govinda's has captured the culinary interest of Adelaide with a two-dollar all-you-can-eat menu.

There is yet another ISKCON restaurant in Melbourne, but this one has a different theme. "Mukunda's Drop-In" is in fact part of ISKCON's drug rehabilitation program

All-attractive Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and Sṛīmātī Rādhārāṇī, His eternal consort, reveal Their beauty at ISKCON's Melbourne temple. Kṛṣṇa appears in His manifest form to accept service from His devotees, like the seamstress at right.

located in St. Kilda, a district of very heavy drug traffic. Doctors and government officials have praised the Drop-In program for its effectiveness. Dr. Fraser McDonald, Chief Medical Superintendent at Auckland's Carrington Hospital, says,



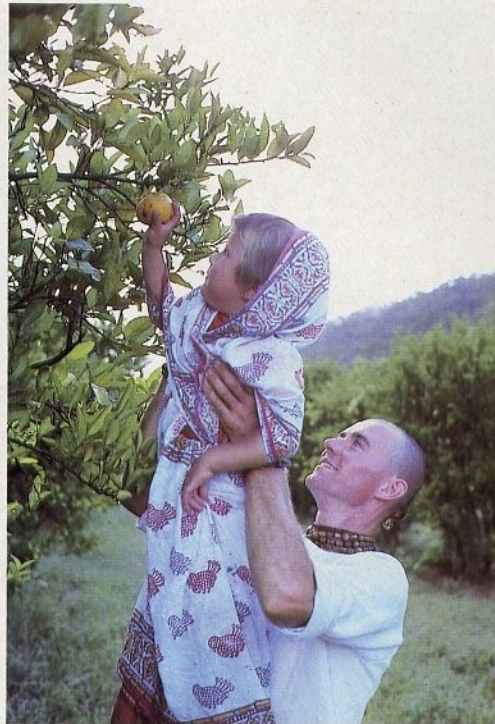


Delicious vegetarian foods first offered to the Lord are daily fare at ISKCON's restaurants in Melbourne (left) and Adelaide (above). At another ISKCON restaurant, Mukunda's Drop-In in Sydney (left, below), psychologist Jim Scarano recommends Kṛṣṇa consciousness as a positive alternative to drug abuse. Devotees also distribute sanctified food at public gatherings like the Nambassa Festival in New Zealand (above left).



"Medicine as it has been practiced in the West concentrates far too much on the purely mechanical, physical aspects of healing. Little attention is paid to the psychological aspects, and absolutely no attention is given to the religious or spiritual part of a person's being, for a variety of reasons. However, the result of this was that we at the Drug Clinic had to look around for people with expertise in a spiritual way of life so that we could offer this to our recovering drug addicts. And the Hare Kṛṣṇa people gave us a warm welcome. We discovered that the combination of our medical care and the spiritual care from the Hare Kṛṣṇa philosophy results in a very powerful tool indeed for the treatment of drug addiction, and for this we are very grateful."

The combination of a drug counseling center and restaurant has been most successful in King's Cross, Sydney. Here



Mukunda's Drop-In receives hundreds of people daily who aspire to live a purer life, free from drugs and other unwanted habits. Mukunda's manager is Vasuśreṣṭha dāsa. "At a drug rehabilitation course," he says, "we were told there is no known cure for drug addiction. I think the program at Mukunda's has proven them wrong. Kṛṣṇa consciousness provides not only a way to quit drugs—a healthy diet, personal spiritual guidance, and the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa—but also motivation to stay off drugs permanently. By learning how the soul within the body is eternal, a drug addict begins to see himself in a more dignified way. Rather than feeling like a recipient of charity, a person who comes to Mukunda's develops a spiritual vision of himself and the world."

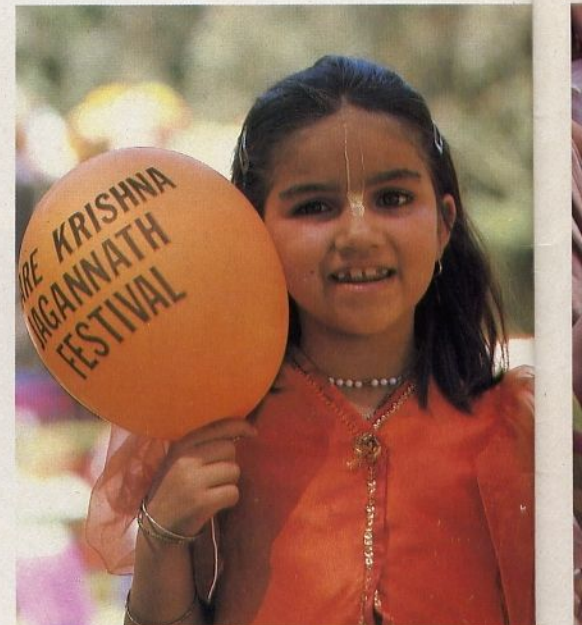
"The *bhakti-yoga* program the devotees offer is the best thing I've come across," comments Jim Scarano, Mukunda's drug counselor, a psychologist who earned his degree from MacQuarie University in Sydney. "Most programs try merely to return one to a 'normal' level of communication with society. But *bhakti-yoga* teaches him to respect himself spiritually and to see that progress doesn't end with

Devotees gather produce and flowers that will be offered to Kṛṣṇa and then distributed to guests and residents of ISKCON's farms. These nearly self-sufficient communities also supply foodstuffs for ISKCON's restaurants in Australasia. Oxen and horses serve as natural replacements for much energy-wasting machinery.





Guests and devotees share a noontday meal at Bhaktivedanta Ashram, an idyllic country retreat on the Colo River, near Windsor, N.S.W. With its 113 acres of farmland, orchards, and vegetable gardens, the natural and richly spiritual atmosphere provides a perfect setting for a commitment to a pure life.



getting a job or blending with the mainstream of society. More than one hundred people dine here every day. Many become vegetarian, and the number who come off drugs is startling. There is so much to indicate the effectiveness of the program."

For those who want to learn more about the ISKCON programs and principles, the devotees provide guest rooms at the Bhaktivedanta Ashram, a 113-acre farm at Colo, near Windsor, N.S.W. The Colo River flows by one boundary of the farm, nourishing the four hundred mandarin and other assorted fruit trees and vegetable gardens that grow there.

"ISKCON is dedicated to showing people how to live a simple, happy, God conscious life," explains Prabhupāda-krpā Goswami, who oversees the numerous ISKCON projects in Australasia. "Before Śrīla Prabhupāda passed away, he said he had established half of his work — millions of Kṛṣṇa conscious books were being printed and distributed—so now the Kṛṣṇa conscious farming communities should be developed. Our city temples introduce

Surprised and delighted, festival-goers (top) pitch in to help cook light traditional breads called *puris*. Above, devotees prepare hundreds of garlands for ISKCON's Festival of the Chariots, an annual event honoring Kṛṣṇa as Jagannātha, Lord of the Universe.

people to Kṛṣṇa philosophy, and now people can come to our farms and see how one should live in a simple, self-sufficient, God conscious manner.

"Nowadays the millions living in the cities depend on a handful in the country—those who do the farming," Prabhupāda-krpā Goswami explains. "But as long as food production relies on a few farmers dependent on machinery and oil, the position is precarious. Kṛṣṇa consciousness teaches that the gift of human intelligence should be used to reduce our material entanglements and assure real self-fulfillment. That means a simple, basically agrarian way of life. Śrīla Prabhupāda gave us a four-point program for our farms: 'Grow your own food, build your own homes, make your own cloth, and grow

your own medicines.' And whatever we do, we do as an offering to Lord Kṛṣṇa. This is natural life, the way human beings were meant to live and become happy."

Nestled at the foot of Mount Warning, seventy-five miles south of Brisbane, is ISKCON's New Govardhana Farm, a thousand acres of mango trees, papayas, pineapples, apples, oranges, lemons, bananas,



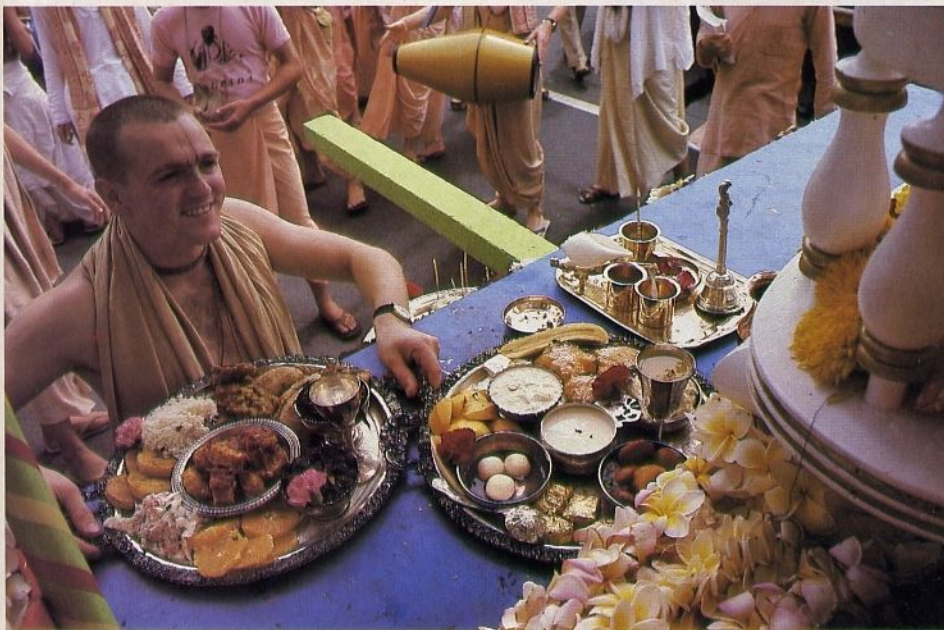
Downtown Sydney welcomes Kṛṣṇa's chariot (left) for a festival thousands of years old. Devotees serve a sumptuous feast to all, at the end of the parade. Below, a devotee offers the first plates to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Above, a festival-goer learns of ISKCON's farm projects at one of several photo displays.

where industrialization has come gently, New Varshana, which emphasizes independence from modern technology and reliance on a God-centered relationship with the environment, has proved a centerpoint of attraction for hundreds of visitors from many varied walks of life.

"The farms don't offer the sensual trappings of city life," says Hari Śauri, "but what they do offer is so much more satisfying that our communities are expanding rapidly. It's not just a question of living in the country. It's being in a situation which permits one to develop an appreciation for God and one's relationship with Him. Without the higher taste of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and cultivating God consciousness, village life alone will not satisfy anyone.

"The same principle applies to drug rehabilitation. So many groups do drug rehabilitation. They also feed people and give them counseling. But on the whole they fail to cure people of their addictions, because they don't know the actual purpose of life. All they can offer is a place in materialistic society, where one still ends up losing everything at death.

"But in Kṛṣṇa consciousness we give a person a positive alternative which lifts him completely from degrading materialistic activity. When he learns a little of the philosophy of *Bhagavad-gītā*, he understands who he is and the goal of his life. Then we offer him a program of practical work. As he works for Kṛṣṇa, all bad habits fall away. Many people actually want to lead a pure life, and Kṛṣṇa consciousness shows them how. The real disease is ignorance of our true spiritual identity and our relationship with Kṛṣṇa, or God. Once that is cured, all other diseases fade quickly away."



guavas, plums, avocados, and an equally rich variety of vegetables. "If three hundred people came here tomorrow, there would be work for all of them," says Śabhāpati dāsa, president of the farm. "Nearly half a million Australians receive government aid for unemployment. Here's a practical solution. We're planting orchards and building houses and temples, a

school, guest accommodations . . . enough work for everybody."

Another ISKCON farm is New Varshana, 100 acres situated just outside Auckland, New Zealand. In New Zealand a recent poll found that the number-one national pastime is reading. So the devotees here are finding a wide and favorable acceptance of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In a land

**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 anxiety.

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 present age of quarrel and anxiety."

Five centuries ago, while spreading the

mahā-mantra throughout India, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu prayed, "O Supreme Lord, in Your 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.

IMPRESSIONS

(continued from page 13)

back to America. When the taxi arrived, all the Sharmas arose from bed and came to see me off. They didn't want me to go, and I would have liked very much to stay longer with these wonderful and loving people who had fully accepted me as a family member, loving and caring for me as for a dear son and brother, but I had to return to responsibilities in the U.S. I embraced Tribhuvanatha, and offered respects to everyone else. "Hare Kṛṣṇa!" I called from the taxi. An enthusiastic "Hare Kṛṣṇa!" echoed back.

When I arrived at the airport, I was delighted to find Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami, accompanied by a few other devotees, there to catch the same plane. My great fortune! After surviving the usual hassles at Indian customs, we boarded our flight and headed for Frankfurt and New York.

In Frankfurt, we had a three-hour lay-over in the airport. Although I had been in India only three weeks, I experienced some degree of culture shock. Frankfurt International Airport seemed a microcosm of everything bad about the West. Walking about the airport, I encountered a huge duty-free shop offering a cornucopic display of alcoholic beverages and, to my disbelief, a large emporium called "Dr. Müller's Sex Shop." A great variety of shops selling a great variety of useless gadgets, gifts, and sundries competed for the attention and money of thousands of international transit passengers, who eyed one another nervously while passing in the vast airport corridors, walking and running to meet flights destined for points around the globe.

As I walked about the airport, I became the object of some very cold stares and the butt of a few insults and jokes. A woman passed me by with her young daughter, shielding her young gaze from the strange "Hare Kṛṣṇa" lest she be influenced by some kind of hypnotic evil power. I was reminded of those people in the West who view the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement as some kind of questionable new "cult." The press, either from ignorance or from malice, tends to merge us in with the growing number of new religious, quasi-religious, and pseudoreligious movements that abound in the West. How can people identify this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement with such ad hoc enterprises?

During the flight from Frankfurt to New York, I reflected on my experiences in India and meditated on my eternal spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda. How fortunate I was to have had the rare opportunity to sit at his feet and hear him speak, to view a living saint in action, even to speak with him personally and receive personal instructions from him on occasion. Feeling deeply moved by these sweet reminiscences, I pulled the blanket over me and wept.

Enhance Your Spiritual Life

For spiritual realization, all you really need is the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra. But to enhance your spiritual life, you may want to add the items listed below.

1 Mantra Meditation Beads: a string of 108 hand-carved "japa beads" — chanters use them as an aid to concentration during meditation on the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. Each string of beads comes with a cotton carrying bag and an instruction pamphlet. \$4.95.

2 Magazine Binder (for your copies of *Back to Godhead*): a handy way to keep each month's issue in excellent condition. Holds 12 issues. \$4.95.

3 Deity Poster: a full-color photo of the beautiful Deities at the Bhaktivedanta Manor, in England. Poster-size. \$2.00.

4 Karatālas: pure bell-metal hand cymbals used in chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. Imported from India. \$12.00/pair.

5 Mrdaṅga Drum: lightweight, double-headed Indian-style drum used in chanting the *mahā-mantra*. Unbreakable. Comes with an instruction book and cassette instruction tape. \$79.50.

6 SPECIAL: *The original Hare Kṛṣṇa Meditation Album*. In 1966 Śrīla Prabhupāda made this unique recording with his first disciples. On it Prabhupāda explains the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, and he and his disciples chant. A historic recording. C-60 cassette. \$4.00.

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NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Are You a Good Listener?

Are you a good listener or a bad one?

According to the Sperry Corporation (their products include computers and military guidance systems), the distinction is an important one. One of the corporation's promotional ads begins: "We understand how important it is to listen."

Says Sperry vice-president Richard L. Robertson, effective listening "is one of our greatest strengths in the marketplace." When employees listen ineffectively, money is lost, letters have to be retyped, orders reshipped, and so forth. When bad listening exists on the personnel level, "employees feel more and more distant, and ultimately alienated from top management."

Sperry enrolls its employees in workshops to improve their ability to listen and respond to others. They have freely offered the results of their listening research as a public service and have published a booklet, "Your Personal Listening Profile." I have applied their advice to the field of transcendental listening and would like to offer a little test to help you rate yourself. How good a listener are you?

The first test of a good listener is his ability to find points of interest in what is being said. The bad listener prematurely tunes out what he considers dry subjects, where the good listener looks to find out, "What's in it for me?" Suppose I say I am going to discuss self-realization as it is explained in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. A bad listener might feel that the topic does not apply to his own private life. But if one listens with a keen ear for his real self-interest, then self-realization becomes a profitable subject for understanding. Certainly everyone would like to be free of the miseries of the world—birth, death, disease, and old age—and everyone would like to live forever in happiness. And these are the benefits of self-realization. So an effective listener will tune in to the vital subject matter of self-realization as it is presented in the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

The next sign of an effective listener is his ability to "hold his fire." A bad listener tends to take an argumentative attitude as soon as he hears an idea he doesn't already accept, but a good listener hears all the facts before he decides to challenge or accept. Some listeners are just too conditioned; as soon as they hear the words "God" or "Kṛṣṇa" or "the soul," they don't want to hear anything more. Yet many

times these prejudices are due to a person's having heard only sentimental or unqualified discussions of God. Naively, these persons have decided that *any* presentation of God consciousness is sectarian or mythological, even when it is presented scientifically and philosophically, as in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. This is ineffective hearing. Such a person is acting on personal emotions and prejudices which preclude inquiry into the very idea that has been the most influential and enduring throughout human history.

Another sign of an effective listener is his willingness to exercise his mind. A bad listener shuns weighty philosophical topics in favor of light, recreational ones, but the good listener takes to heavy material as an exercise for the mind. Too much TV titillation, perhaps—absurd commercials, moronic programs; the brain has gone soft from lack of exercise. And consequently, deep introspection and philosophical research into the meaning of life seem too demanding.

Long before the advent of Sperry's new slogan, the Vedic sages were aware of people's tendency not to hear about the Absolute Truth. Śukadeva Gosvāmī stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, "In human society those persons who are materially engrossed, being blind to the knowledge of ultimate truth, have many subject matters for hearing." Śukadeva Gosvāmī described as folly the many activities of a materialistic person whose temporary busyness prevents him from seeing that death will soon come and end all his plans for happiness. He has no time to hear about life beyond death. "But one who desires to be free from all misery," says Śukadeva, "must hear about, glorify, and also remember the Personality of Godhead, the supreme controller and the savior from all miseries." So although the cost of inefficient listening in the business world may amount to millions of dollars, the loss from not listening to definitive discussion of the spiritual nature is far greater. As stated by Jesus Christ, "What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world but loses his immortal soul?"

With all thanks to the Sperry Corporation for their concern about effective listening, improved listening must ultimately go beyond what they have offered. Their commitment, after all, is based on the fact that good listening can be used as

a tool for financial gain. But according to *Vedānta-sūtra* ("Aphorisms of Ultimate Knowledge"), a person has to calculate his best self-interest in eternal terms, not temporary. Materially motivated listening, even though it be effective listening, is, like everything else material, temporary. But in this temporary lifetime, a human being has to inquire into his *eternal* nature. Only by listening to the eternal science of self-realization, as it is presented in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, can one cross over the darkness of suffering and death. At present, we may not know the answers to life's ultimate philosophical questions, but we must admit that this is the most important topic for hearing. Otherwise, although we may be effective listeners, and although we may take advantage of the latest advancements in communications, it is all of dubious value.

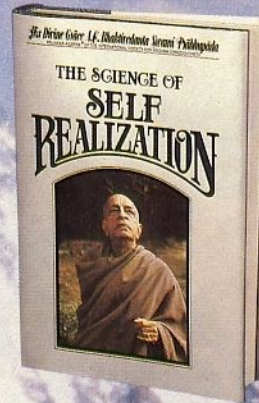
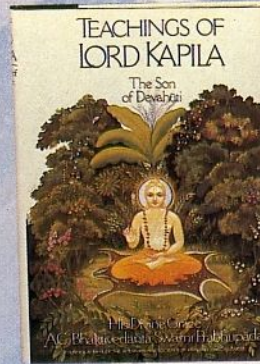
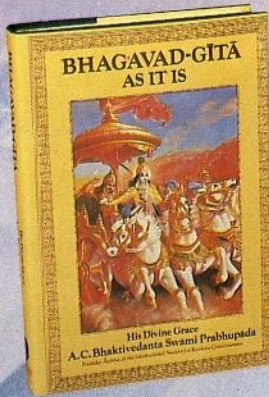
When, in the early nineteenth century, Henry David Thoreau heard that communication time between Boston and New York had been reduced to five hours, he asked skeptically whether there was anything of such importance that it had to be transported so quickly from the people of Boston to the people of New York. The Vedic literature points out that even animals have efficient systems of hearing and responding, but only the human being hears and comprehends the science of self-realization. The special qualification of the human being is that he can make a solution to the problems of life by hearing discussions of the Absolute Truth.

Vedic knowledge analyzes that the Absolute Truth cannot be learned from an ordinary person, because everyone within the material world is subject to four defects: we have a tendency to make mistakes, a tendency to be illusioned, and a tendency to cheat others, and we have limited senses. So just as important as effective listening is finding the right authority to listen to. Knowledge of the soul and God, by which man can become free of material bondage, can be gained only by hearing from perfect sources: revealed scriptures and God-realized sages. But, you might ask, is such perfection of knowledge possible? Before you glibly answer this question, I would suggest that you "hold your fire." First, why not make a serious inquiry into the Vedic literature, utilizing the principles of effective listening. —SDG

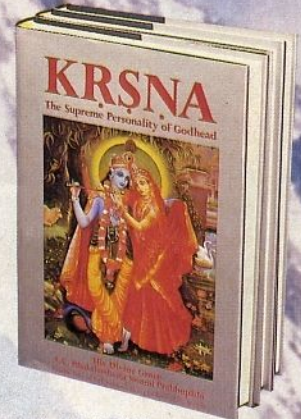
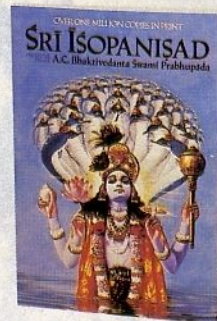
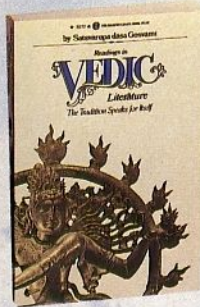
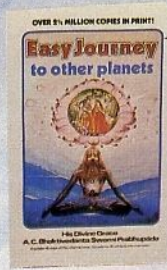
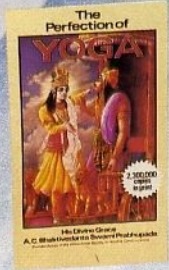
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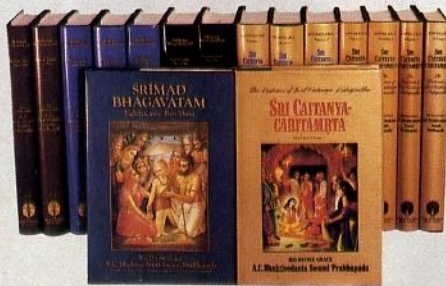
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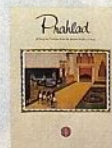
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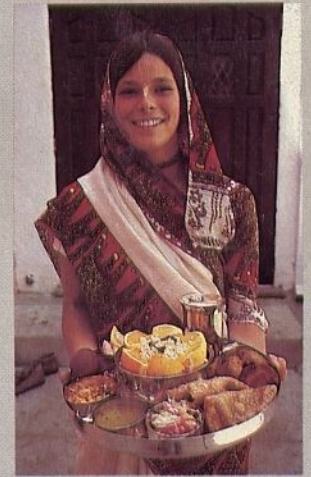
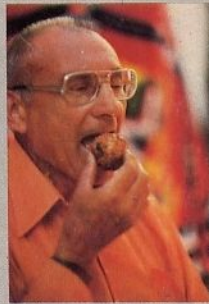
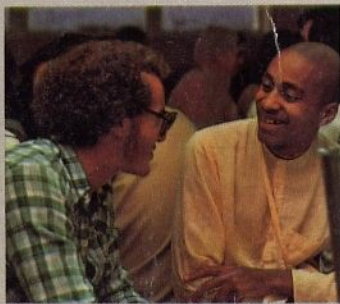
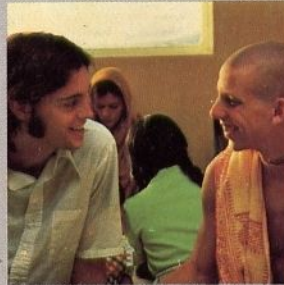
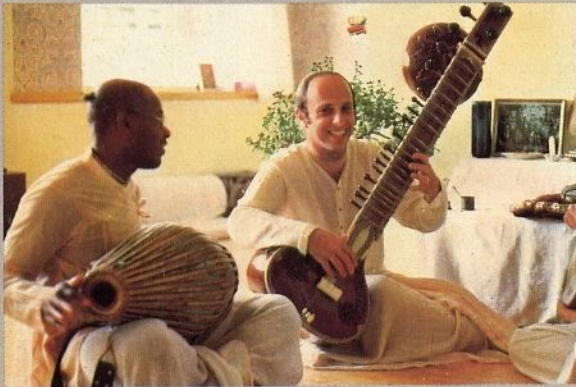
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