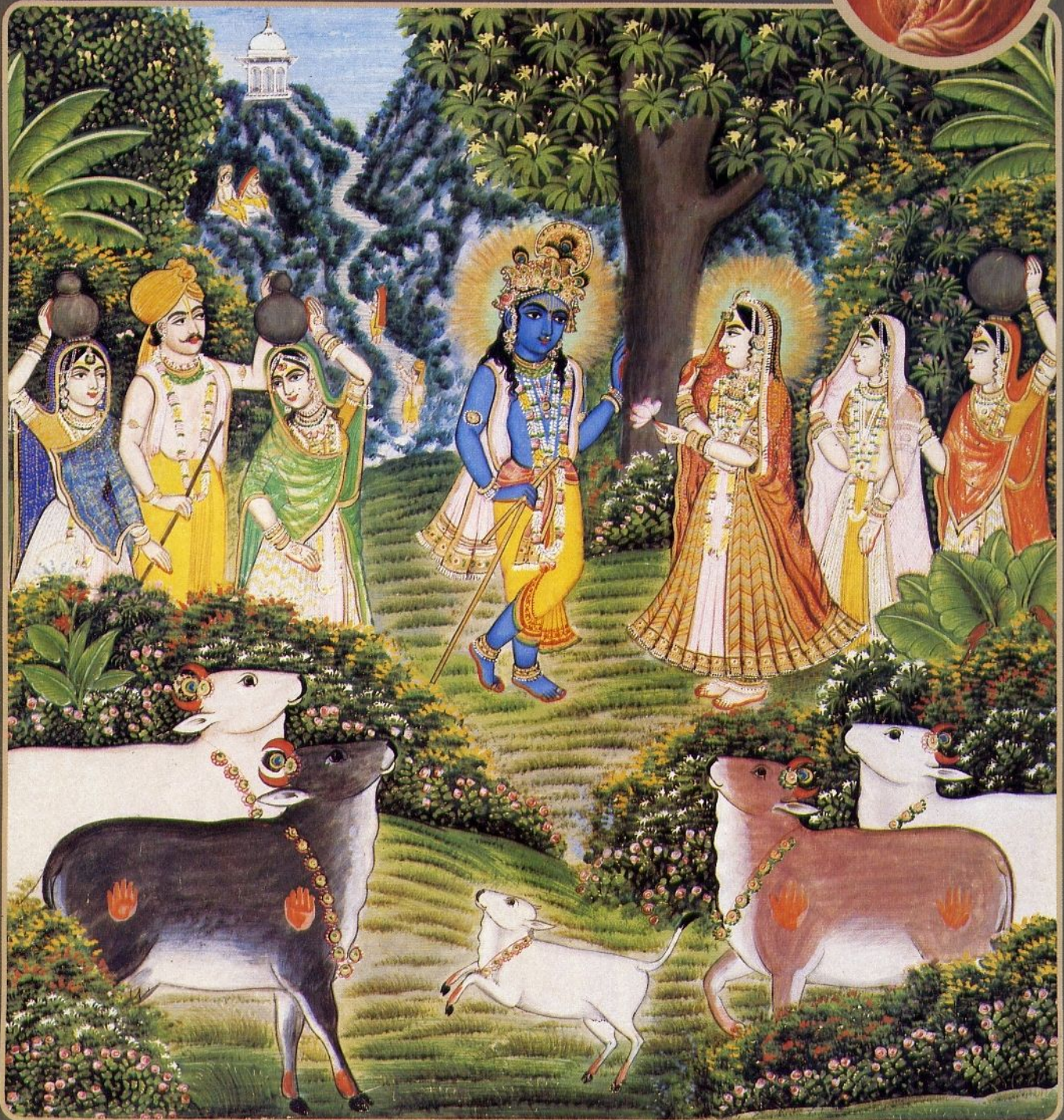


Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.

# BACK TO GODHEAD

Vol.15 No.10 THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT





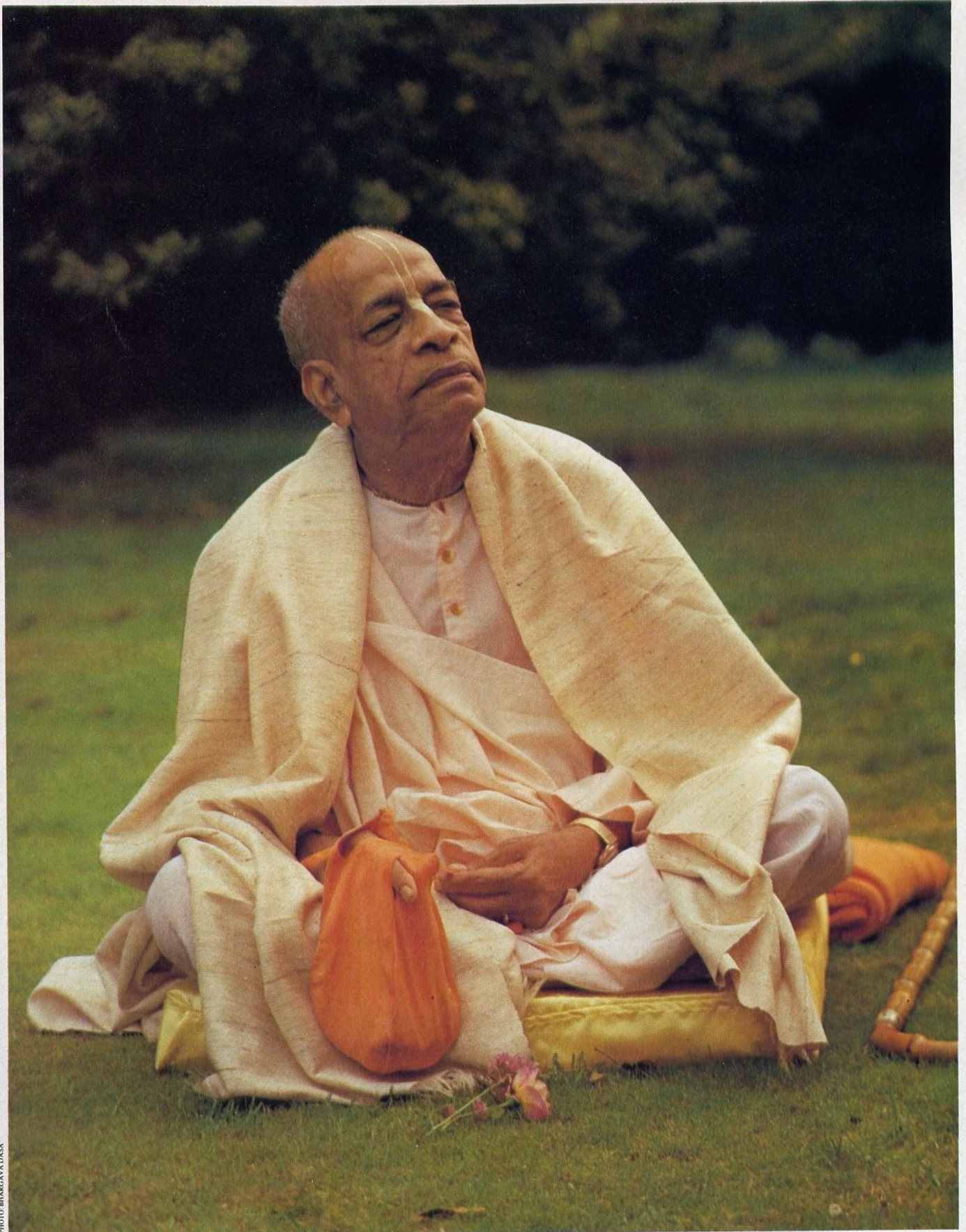


PHOTO: BHARGAVA DĀSA

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



# BACK TO GODHEAD

VOL. 15, NO. 10

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 **a** like the **a** in **far** (and hold it twice as long as the short **a**). Pronounce **e** like the **a** in **evade**, long **i** like the **i** in **plique**. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **ri** in **rlm**, and **ṛ** like the **ch** in **chair**. Pronounce the aspirated consonants (**ch**, **ḥ**, **dh**, etc.) as in **staunch-heart**, **hedge-hog**, and **red-hot**. Finally, pronounce the 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.

Published eleven times a year (monthly except April) by the Bhaktivedānta Book Trust, a nonprofit organization. Send \$8.00 (\$10.00 outside USA) for a one-year subscription.

Subscription Offices: 3764 Watska Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90034.

Editorial Offices: The Hare Krishna Building, 340 W. 55th Street, New York, N.Y. 10019

European Subscription Offices: BBT, Croome Court, Severn Stoke, Worcester, WR8 9DW, England.

Indian Subscription Offices: BBT, Hare Krishna Land, Juhu, Bombay 400 054, India.

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ISSN 0005-3643

**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."

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**COVER:** Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is seen in this nineteenth-century Rājasthānī painting sporting with His consort, Rādhārāṇī, the personification of loving devotion to Him. The setting is Vṛndāvana, the village where Lord Kṛṣṇa performed His pastimes five thousand years ago to reveal His divine nature and attract the conditioned souls of this world to return to Him in the eternal, spiritual realm. (From the collection of Alan Kallman, New York)



# BECOMING EAGER TO SEE KṚṢṆA

A lecture by HIS DIVINE GRACE  
A.C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA  
Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

*tac chraddadhānā munayo  
jñāna-vairāgya-yuktayā  
paśyanty ātmani cātmānaḥ  
bhaktyā śruta-grhītayā*

"The seriously inquisitive student or sage, well equipped with knowledge and detachment, realizes the Absolute Truth by rendering devotional service in terms of what he has heard from the Vedic literature, *Vedānta-śruti*." [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.2.12]

People sometimes ask, "Have you seen God?" or "Can you show me God?" Sometimes we meet these questions. So the answer is "Yes, I am seeing God. You can also see God; everyone can see God. But you must have the qualification." Suppose something is wrong with a motorcar; it is not running. Everyone is seeing it, but a mechanic sees it differently. He's qualified to see it with greater understanding. So he replaces some missing part, and immediately the car runs. But although for seeing a machine we require so much qualification, we want to see God without

any qualification. Just see the folly. People are such rascals, they are such fools, that they want to see God with their imagined qualifications.

Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *nāhaṁ prakāśaḥ sarvasya yogamāya-samāvṛtaḥ*: "I am not exposed to everyone. My energy, *yogamāya*, is covering Me from their vision." So how can you see God? But this rascaldom is going on—this "Can you show me God?" "Have you seen God?" God has become just like a plaything, so that cheaters advertise some ordinary man by saying, "Here is God. Here is an incarnation of God."

*Na mām duṣkṛtino mūḍhāḥ prapadyante narādhamāḥ*. Sinful rascals, fools, the lowest of mankind—they inquire like that: "Can you show me God?" What qualification have you acquired by which you can see God? Here is the qualification: *tac chraddadhānā munayaḥ*. One must first of all be faithful (*śraddadhāna*). One must actually be very much eager to see God. Not that one takes it as a frivolous thing—"Can you show me God?"—or as some magic. They think God is magic. No. One

must be very serious and think, "Yes, I have been informed about God. So if there is a God, I must see Him."

There is a story in this connection. It is very instructive, so try to hear. One professional reciter was publicly reciting the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and he was describing that Kṛṣṇa is very highly decorated with all kinds of jewels when He goes to tend the cows in the forest. So, there was a thief in that meeting, and he thought, "Why not go to Vṛndāvana and plunder this boy? He's in the forest with so many valuable jewels. I can go there and catch the child and take all the jewels." This was his intention. So he was serious. "I must

**Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead**, reveals Himself in His original form only to those who strive to serve Him with eagerness and devotion. Under the guidance of a fully self-realized spiritual master and in the association of other aspiring devotees, a candidate for Kṛṣṇa consciousness cultivates the desire to know the Supreme Lord as He is, shown here standing in His characteristic threefold-bending way on the bank of the River Yamunā in His eternal abode, Vṛndāvana.







find that boy," he thought. "Then in one night I shall become a millionaire."

The thief's qualification was his feeling: "I must see Kṛṣṇa! I must see Kṛṣṇa!" That anxiety, that eagerness, made it possible for him to actually see Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana. He saw Kṛṣṇa in just the same way as the *Bhāgavatam* reader had described. Then the thief said, "Oh, You are such a nice boy, Kṛṣṇa." He began to flatter Him; he thought that by flattering Him he would easily take all the jewels. Then he proposed his real business: "May I take some of these ornaments? You are so rich."

"No, no, no," said Kṛṣṇa. "My mother will be angry! I cannot give them away." Kṛṣṇa was playing just like a child.

So the thief became more and more eager for Kṛṣṇa to give Him the jewels, but by Kṛṣṇa's association he was becoming purified. Then at last Kṛṣṇa said, "All right, you can take them." Then the thief became a devotee immediately, because by Kṛṣṇa's association he had been completely purified. So somehow or other you should come in contact with Kṛṣṇa. Then you'll be purified.

The *gopīs* are another example of great eagerness to see Kṛṣṇa. The *gopīs* came to Kṛṣṇa, being captivated by His beautiful features. They were young girls, and Kṛṣṇa was so beautiful. Actually they were lusty when they came to Kṛṣṇa, but Kṛṣṇa is so pure that they became first-class devotees. There is no comparison to the *gopīs'* devotion, because they loved Kṛṣṇa with heart and soul. That is the qualification. They loved Kṛṣṇa so much that they didn't care for family or reputation when they went out in the dead of night. Kṛṣṇa's flute was sounding, and they were all fleeing their homes. Their fathers, their brothers, their husbands all said, "Where are you going? Where are you going in this dead of night?" But the *gopīs* didn't care. They neglected their children, their family, everything. Their only thought was "We must go to Kṛṣṇa."

This eagerness is required. We must be very, very eager to see Kṛṣṇa. Many *gopīs* who were forcibly stopped from going to Kṛṣṇa lost their lives because of their great feelings of separation. So this eagerness is wanted; then you can see God. Whether you are lusty or a thief or a murderer or whatever it may be—somehow or other you must develop this eagerness, this desire: "I must see Kṛṣṇa." Then Kṛṣṇa will be seen.

The first thing Kṛṣṇa is looking for is how eager you are to see Him. Kṛṣṇa will respond. If you are actually eager to see Kṛṣṇa—whether you are lusty, or you want to steal His ornaments, or some way or other you have become attracted to

Kṛṣṇa—then it is sure your efforts will be successful.

But you must desire Kṛṣṇa *only*. In this connection, Rūpa Gosvāmī has written a verse:

*smerāṁ bhaṅgī-traya-paricitāṁ sāci-  
vistīrṇa-dṛṣṭim  
vaṁśī-nyastādharma-kīśalayāṁ ujjalāṁ  
candrakeṇa  
govindākhyāṁ hari-tanum itaḥ keśi-  
tīrthopakaṅthe  
māprekṣiṣṭhās tava yadi sakhe bandhu-  
saṅge 'sti raṅgaḥ*

---

**If you're eager  
to see Kṛṣṇa,  
regardless of  
whatever motive  
you have,  
somehow or other  
due to your  
eagerness  
you'll see Kṛṣṇa.  
That is the only  
qualification.**

---

The idea is that one *gopī* is advising another *gopī*, "My dear friend, there is one boy—His name is Govinda. He is standing on the bank of the Yamunā near the Keśi-gḥāṭa, and He is playing on His flute. He is so beautiful, especially during this full-moon night. If you have any intention to enjoy in this material world with your children, husband, or other family members, then please do not go there." *Bhaṅgī-traya*: Kṛṣṇa always stands in a three-curved way with His flute. That is Kṛṣṇa's *tri-bhaṅga* form, bending in three places. So the one *gopī* says to the other, "If you think that you'll enjoy your life more in this material world, then do not go to see Kṛṣṇa. Do not go there." The idea is that if you once see Kṛṣṇa, then you'll forget all this nonsensical materialistic enjoyment. That is seeing Kṛṣṇa.

When Dhruva Mahārāja saw Kṛṣṇa, he said, *svāmin kṛtārtho 'smi varam na yāce*: "My dear Lord, I don't want anything else." Dhruva Mahārāja went to see Kṛṣṇa to get the kingdom of his father, and when he saw Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa offered, "Now, whatever

benediction you want, you take." Dhruva said, "My dear Lord, I no longer have any desire." That is seeing Kṛṣṇa.

So, if you're eager to see Kṛṣṇa, regardless of whatever motive you have, somehow or other due to your eagerness you'll see Kṛṣṇa. That is the only qualification.

In another verse, Rūpa Gosvāmī says, *kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa-bhāvitā matiḥ kṛiyatām yadi kuto 'pi labhyate*. (I have translated the words *Kṛṣṇa consciousness* from *kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa-bhāvitā*.) So here Rūpa Gosvāmī advises, "If Kṛṣṇa consciousness is available, please purchase it immediately. Don't delay. It is a very nice thing."


Yes, Kṛṣṇa consciousness is available. You can purchase it from this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. But what is the price? It is such a nice thing, but you have to pay the price. What is that? *Tatra laulyam api mūlyam ekalam*: simply your eagerness. That is the price. You have to pay this price. Then you get Kṛṣṇa, immediately. Kṛṣṇa is not poor, and the Kṛṣṇa-seller—the Kṛṣṇa devotee—he's also not poor. He can distribute Kṛṣṇa free. And he's doing that. You simply have to purchase Him by your eagerness.

Someone may say, "Oh, eagerness? I have eagerness." Ah-h-h . . . but it is not so easy. *Janma-koṭi-sukṛtair na labhyate*: this eagerness cannot be achieved even by executing pious activities for millions of births. If you simply go on performing pious activities, still this eagerness is not available.

So, this eagerness is a very important thing, but it can be awakened only by the association of devotees. Therefore we are giving everyone a chance to invoke that eagerness; then you'll see God, face to face.

This life is meant for seeing Kṛṣṇa. It is not meant for becoming dogs and hogs. Unfortunately, the whole modern civilization is training people to become dogs and hogs. It is only this institution—this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement—that is teaching people how to see Kṛṣṇa. It is so important.

*Tac chraddadhānā munayo jñāna-vairāgya-yuktayā*. By eagerness, you'll automatically be enriched with knowledge and detachment. Knowledge does not mean "Now we have discovered this atomic bomb." That is not knowledge. What knowledge is that? People are already dying, and you have discovered something that will accelerate death. But we are giving knowledge to *stop* death. That is Kṛṣṇa consciousness; that is knowledge. *Jñāna-vairāgya-yuktayā*. And as soon as you get this knowledge, automatically you become detached from all this nonsensical materialistic happiness.

Thank you very much. 



# HARE KRISHNA PALACE OF GOLD HONORED

by WILLIAM ROBBINS  
Reprinted from *The New York Times*

**Limestone, W. Va., Aug. 5—** The men in saffron robes, in denims and faded shirts, heads shaven and unshaven, the women in saris of many colors, the Hare Krishna devotees came in twos and threes and troops, afoot and in Jeeps and in panel trucks and old cars.

And as they rounded a bend in the narrow mountain road they beheld, rising like a mirage above the trees here in rural West Virginia, the gold-leafed domes and spires of a vision of spectacular opulence, the Palace of Gold, whose construction they had come to celebrate.

From across the United States and from Canada, Mexico and India as well, many of these members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness were arriving to join a 300-member community of the faithful here for the second annual Prabhupada Summer Festival, which ends tomorrow.

It has also been proclaimed by some to be a grand opening of the palace, though their swami described it as only a preview for a grand opening scheduled for Labor Day weekend. The palace is the first of many religious shrines to be built here in a community the devotees have named New Vrindavan, for a sacred city of temples in India.

However they regarded the occasion, visitors stared with awe as if at a miracle of creation atop a ridge overlooking miles of forests and fields, foothills and valleys. But again their spiritual leader, Srila Kirtananda Bhaktipada, was more restrained.

"This was not a very difficult thing to do," he said in an interview. "Nothing is very difficult when the Lord is in your heart. Without Him it would be impossible."

The rain showers marred opening festi-



In Limestone, W. Va., young Hare Krishna devotees cool off in fountain in the gardens surrounding the group's Palace of Gold, a memorial to A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, who brought Krishna consciousness to the West.

ties late yesterday when an opening address by the swami and a vegetarian feast, both scheduled for the grassy hillsides, were driven under shelter. But today, unperturbed, the devotees resumed, from before dawn till after dark, their three days of rituals and seminars, interspersed with strolls to the palace and visits to a bazaar under a multicolored canopy, much like a country fair, where they could buy refreshments and visit educational booths and stalls selling their literature.

This is the second of three celebrations of the construction of the palace. The first, last September, was a dedication. When the third occurs, on the occasion of a festival named Janmastami over the Labor Day weekend, the finishing work will still be continuing, with devotees bending and carefully brushing gold leaf onto intricate relief work of walls, columns and steps.

On a site that was once a garbage dump, the devotees were climbing broad steps to walled terraces looking down on development of a Garden of Time to be dotted with fountains symbolic of phases of hu-

man life and out over construction work on a restaurant and museum toward broad acres on the ridge top where still another garden is to be created. As they walked they chanted the names of deities.

Over all this rises the ornate palace, built as a memorial to A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, the Indian scholar who brought his translations of ancient scriptures in 1965 and began the Hare Krishna movement in this country. Its black and gold leaf walls, inlaid with Italian onyx, are pierced through with intricately decorated stained glass windows, and they support gold and black domes, all an amalgam of Eastern

and Renaissance architecture.

Inside, crossing marble floors in geometric mosaics under mirrored ceilings, the devotees finished two shrines to Prabhupada, who died a few years ago.

One is a suite in which sits a couch he once used, adjoining a study where a lifelike figure of the sainted Prabhupada bends over a marble table as if to work on a translation. Adjoining is an onyx, teak, marble and gold bathroom.

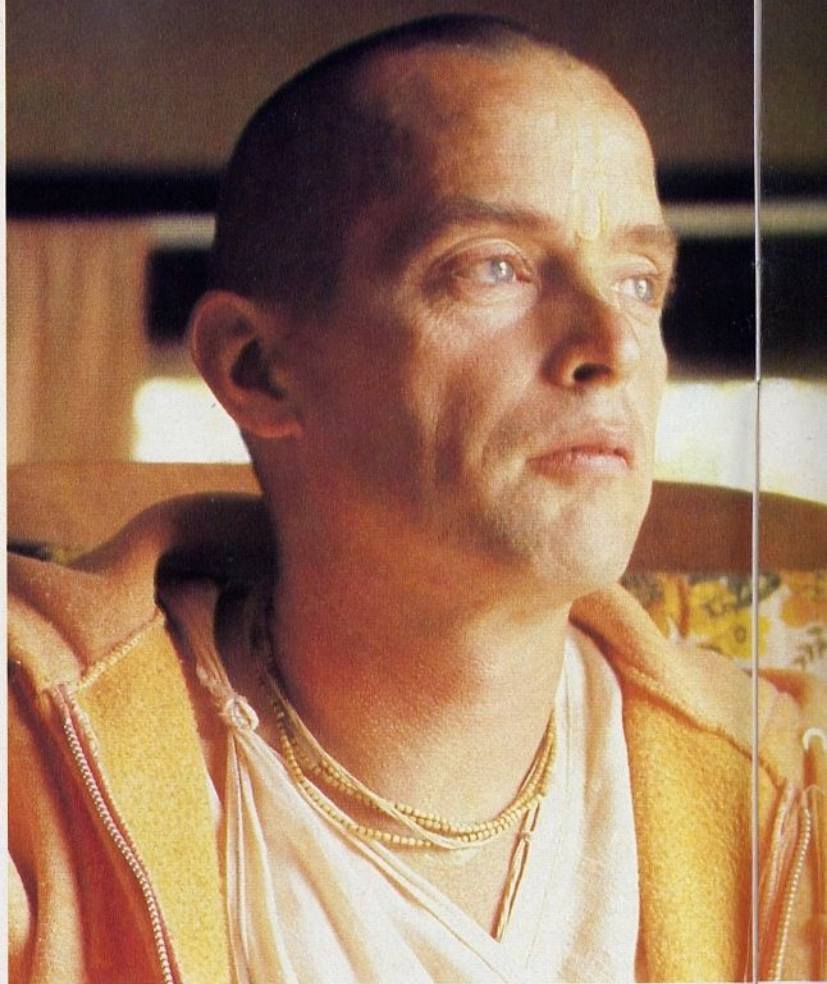
The other is a central court, a sacred room where the devotees in small groups knelt and prostrated themselves before another statue, a gold figure of Prabhupada seated on a gold throne under an ornately carved cupola. Overhead the domed ceiling is decorated with paintings depicting the life of their Lord Krishna, including one showing him casting out demons.

All the construction is the work of a small community living on 2,000 acres of the rural countryside and executed in their own craft shops. It has about 300 members now, who have raised by their own efforts the \$500,000 spent on it thus far.



# Defining The Religious Principle

Dr. Harvey Cox leads a group of scholars and theology students in an examination of Kṛṣṇa consciousness: How can what is apparently an Indian cultural package claim to represent a universal religion?



Śrīla Kīrtanānanda Swami Bhaktipāda

*This past summer, a group of graduate students from Harvard Divinity School and local West Virginia universities visited New Vrindaban, the Hare Kṛṣṇa rural community near Wheeling, West Virginia. There the students, led by Professor Harvey Cox of Harvard and Professor Mary Lee Daugherty of the West Virginia College for Graduate Studies, met with Śrīla Kīrtanānanda Swami Bhaktipāda, the community's spiritual leader.*

**Dr. Cox:** I first met Kīrtanānanda Swami in 1970, when I invited him and a group of devotees to come to Harvard Divinity School to do some chanting and make a presentation in the newly opened Rockefeller Hall. That was a memorable occasion. . . . So we're very happy you're here with us this morning.

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** I'm very happy you've been so kind as to come visit us here at New Vrindaban.

**Student:** I'd be interested to know how you felt about your reception in 1970 at Harvard and in general how you see things as changing. Have you seen more receptiveness to the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement from educated people?

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** Amongst educated people our reception has really always been quite good. People who are familiar

with the tradition of Lord Caitanya, Vaiṣṇavism—they immediately understand that we are an authentic, bona fide movement. And in general the further you get away from that position of knowledge, the more they're susceptible to suspicion. Even in this area [W. Virginia] the neighbors that know us, that have dealings with us, they all like us. And the ones that have never had anything to do with us have the typical reaction of one who doesn't know: "Something strange has come into our environment." But certainly if one understands the religious principle—from any religion—then immediately he recognizes that same religious principle here. The religious principle is love of God.

**Student:** Right. I don't think a lot of people see that.

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** Because they don't recognize the religious principle in their own faith. We have to make a distinction between religious faith and religion. Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism—these are faiths. You can change your "faith." You may be born a Christian and then decide to become a Jew. But you cannot change your *religion*. The Sanskrit word is *dharma*, and that refers to inherent nature. The *dharma* of fire is to give off heat and light. You can't take that quality away. Our actual nature is that we are

part and parcel of God. That cannot be changed. And to develop that relationship—that is the religious principle. So one may be born a Christian, and if he actually *understands* this principle, then he'll recognize it anywhere. And if he doesn't recognize it other places, that means he doesn't recognize it in his own religion. He is simply following rituals and dogma.

**Dr. Daugherty:** Would you be willing to share with us something of your own personal journey? I think you told us once before when I was here that you had been raised in a Christian tradition.

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** Yes. My father was a Baptist minister.

**Dr. Daugherty:** How did you get from there to where you are now?

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** Sometimes it's difficult to look back and see how you came. Except you know that by the grace of Kṛṣṇa you came. But then again . . . As a child, of course, I was always very much absorbed in God consciousness. I remember as a child I used to get my playmates together and I would preach to them. When you're a child, people are always asking what you want to be when you grow up. I always said I wanted to be a missionary. So I guess I *am* a missionary.

**Dr. Cox:** Still getting your friends together



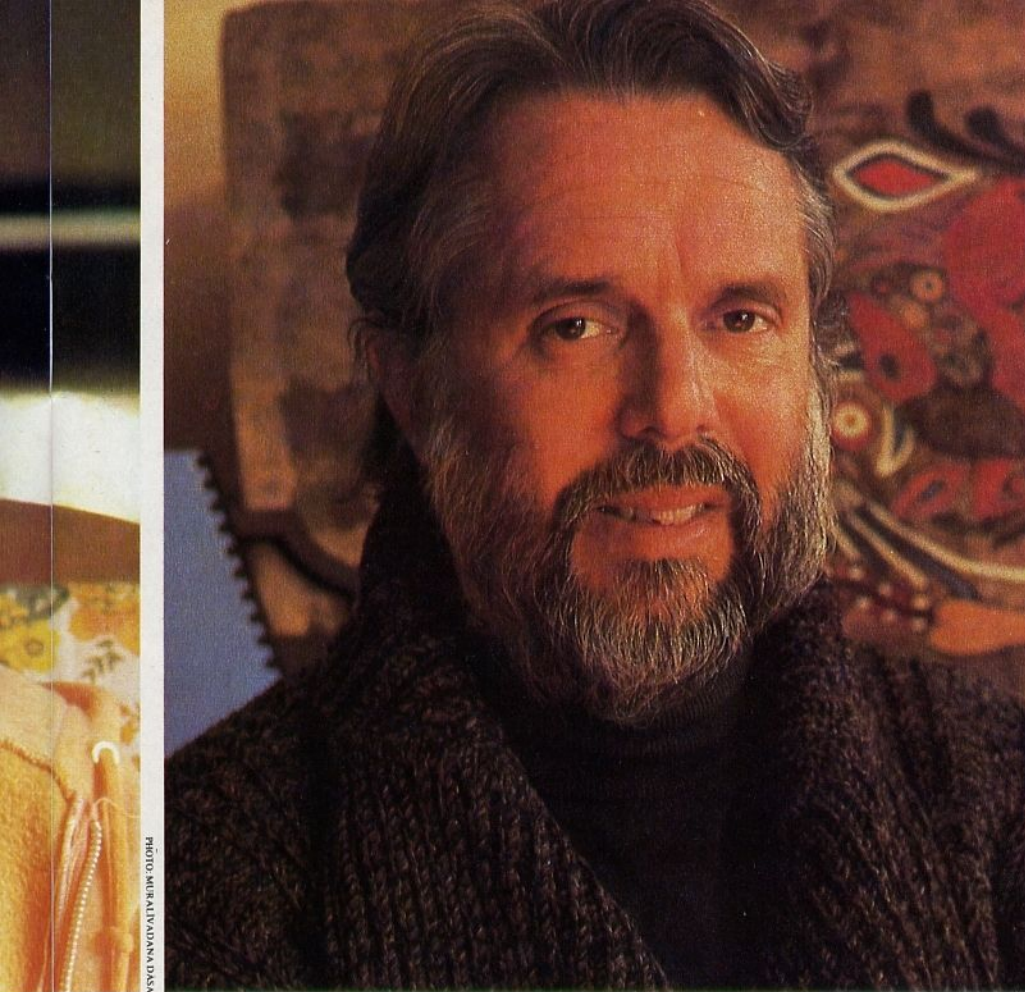


PHOTO: MURALI/ADARNA DASA

PHOTO: VIDYANANDA DASA

Dr. Harvey Cox

and preaching—here we are.

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** But as a teenager I went through a period of doubt and disillusionment and agnosticism. But that also was not satisfying. In graduate school I was working on my doctorate in American history. Still, I couldn't get away from the religious aspect. I chose as my dissertation topic "Religious Revivalism in the Old South." So the same thing was still there. But I was simply approaching it from the academic point of view, like trying to know the taste of honey by licking the bottle on the outside. So in the end I decided that rather than simply recording religious history, I would *make* religious history.

Religion is something you participate in; it's not a spectator sport. Because it is based on faith, there's no question of understanding it from the outside. Of course, it is not *blind* faith. It is reasonable faith. I have faith that you had a father and a mother, although I've not met them. That's certainly not unreasonable. Similarly, to understand that God is the cause of all causes is not unreasonable. We can see that everything is based on a cause. So there must be an original cause. *Govindam ādi-puruṣam tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*. Govinda, Kṛṣṇa, is the cause of all causes. *Ādi-puruṣam*—the original person.

**Dr. Daugherty:** Are we to understand that

you perceive in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, in the Vedic scriptures, a fuller revelation of what it means to be a devotee of God, a revelation that preceded the Judeo-Christian tradition, and that this is why you now find it more meaningful?

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** It's a question of developing intensity of love. In the Bible also: "God is love." But how to develop that loving relationship? You see? How do individuals develop a loving relationship? By association. It's developed by getting to know each other. If a person's actually lovable, the more you know him the more you love him. God is the most lovable person, so naturally the more we know about Him the more we love Him.

And the Vedic revelation *is* the most complete. In the Vedic revelation you will find thousands of God's names, you'll find a description of God's form, you'll find knowledge of God's pastimes—you will find everything about Him. In the Bible you will find a synopsis. For instance: "In the beginning God created heaven and earth." That is a fact. But exactly how did He do it? In the Vedic scriptures you will find an exact scientific analysis—how the whole creation takes place. The knowledge is not contradictory. It's like the difference between a pocket dictionary and an unabridged dictionary. There is no con-

flict, but one presents the information completely.

Therefore, on the basis of this Vedic knowledge we can become free from all material entanglements. We can see God as He is, as the most lovable person, and when our love has fully developed, there's no problem in giving up this material world. Our attachment to this material world is simply due to our not knowing Kṛṣṇa.

If a child is holding on to something and you want him to give it up, the best way is simply giving him something that he wants more. Then he drops what he was previously holding on to so tightly. This material world is not very relishable—birth, death, old age, and disease. Anything you have, it's only temporary, and as soon as you see its temporary nature, immediately you lose your attachment for it. You have to give it up anyway. So when we see the nature of Kṛṣṇa, when we see the eternal beauty of Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa's eternal form, then we become attached to Kṛṣṇa. There's no question of having both at the same time. Just like Christ said, you cannot love God and Mammon at the same time. Developing attachment to God means detachment from matter.

**Student:** I have a question. You had mentioned that within the Judaic and Christian traditions if one realizes that what it's all about is love of God, then that's a legitimate way of approaching God. But why was it that within your experience within the Baptist tradition you missed that sort of consciousness?

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** Because there was no spiritual master in that tradition who could present it to me. You have to learn at the feet of one who *knows*. By Kṛṣṇa's arrangement, I met a pure devotee. He is a devotee of Kṛṣṇa. So I'm also a devotee of Kṛṣṇa.

**Student:** Is reality in our perception or in things in themselves?

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** Reality is defined in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Kṛṣṇa says, "Those who are seers of the truth have concluded that of the nonexistent there is no endurance, and of the eternal there is no cessation." So reality means "that which is eternal." The happiness of sense perception is not eternal. But the happiness that is derived by serving Kṛṣṇa—that is eternal.

**Student:** Then the reality is in the things in themselves?

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** The reality is *God*. Everything that is in relationship to God has reality. Actions which are performed without relationship to God—they are material; they are unreal. Actions which are performed in loving relationship with God—they are real; they are eternal.

**Student:** What I'm trying to get at... Immanuel Kant says we can never know a thing in itself. And it seems that you're



saying that perhaps we can.

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** We can know *everything* if we know Kṛṣṇa, because Kṛṣṇa is the center of all existence. All things exist in Him; therefore in Him you will know all things. Suppose on this side of the room we have a mirror and on the other side of the room we have so many objects. When we look into the mirror, we see all of these objects, but they are not real; they're only real *reflections*, not the real thing. The real thing is over here, on the other side. In God we see the reality, but in material life we see the reflection.

**Student:** You spoke about knowing Kṛṣṇa, knowing God. Correct me if I'm wrong, but you seemed to indicate before that you can know God completely? Is that what you said?

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** Well, it's like knowing the ocean completely. You can take a sample of the ocean. So we can know God by His qualities, but we can never know the extent of God.

**Student:** All right, so in applying that to the way you lead your life, your everyday life . . . Recognizing the fact that while you are a creation of God you are not with God but are still apart from Him—this to me creates some sense of doubt about what the will of God is, and that leads me to a sense of faith and of doing the will of God, although never knowing completely what that will is.

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** Therefore Kṛṣṇa is very kind. He comes personally, He leaves His instructions in the form of scripture, and He is present as *guru*. *Guru* is also an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa. He's not God, but he's a representative of God. After all, God is within your heart, within the heart of every living entity. But so long as we have material desires, we cannot perceive Him. In that stage, one must take instructions from the external manifestations of God—the *guru* and scripture.

Therefore Kṛṣṇa says, *tad viddhi praṇipātena paripraśnena sevayā*: "Approach a bona fide spiritual master and inquire from him. He will instruct you in the matter of the Absolute Truth." Truth is not a matter of speculation. There's no question of speculating about how to go to New York. Consult the road map. Not that I can set out anywhere, in any direction, and go to New York. I can't go to the airport and buy any ticket to any place and think I'll end up in New York. You pay your money to go to the right destination, and you get on the right plane and you go. So in spiritual life the same principle applies. The idea that you can do any old damn thing you want and you'll get the same result in the end—this is not logical. Nor is it confirmed by Kṛṣṇa in *Bhagavad-gītā*. If one has all kinds of material desires and he performs materially motivated worship,

he gets a material result. But if one becomes a pure devotee, he can go to the kingdom of God.

**Student:** What I still cannot really understand is the relationship between your theology and Indian culture, which obviously seems very important for your whole endeavor. I was talking to some Indian people who were recently here. They feel there isn't too much difference between what they have in India and what they find here, and I understand that this comes close to what you intend. Could you explain how you perceive the world of Indian culture and how you reconcile the emphasis on the cultural issue with what you previously said about the religious principle which is, so to say, underlying the different forms of faith?

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** First of all, we're not trying to institute Indian culture. We're after Kṛṣṇa conscious culture. We want culture that makes us think of Kṛṣṇa. That's all. We don't care whether it's Indian or American or whatever. If we think of Kṛṣṇa, that is what is important. Now, a policeman wears a uniform, but actually he's a policeman whether he has his uniform on or not. In one sense, the uniform's not at all important. But in another sense it is important. What is the importance? The importance is that he immediately identifies himself with a certain role, and other people can also identify him with that role. So it is important. A doctor is a doctor whether or not he has his white uniform on, but it is important. If you're looking for a doctor and it's an emergency, it's important—there he is. He's right there in the hall in the white suit. You see? A devotee is not a devotee because he wears this cloth. But it is helpful to a devotee to wear this cloth, because it helps him remain Kṛṣṇa conscious. It helps him to understand, "I'm different." God's people are always a chosen people, a separate people. "I have called you out from among them, saith the Lord." "Many are called, but few are chosen." Because only a few *respond* to the call. By the response they have been chosen.

So we're not at all attached to any national culture. But we're creating an atmosphere which makes it easy to remember Kṛṣṇa. That is the injunction of Rūpa Gosvāmī. "Things favorable to devotional service should be accepted, and things unfavorable should be rejected." Herein lie all the rules and regulations of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

**Dr. Cox:** Well, yes, but that doesn't quite answer the question, I think. I mean, it's not just vegetarian food that we're eating—it's *Indian-style* vegetarian food. It's not just a beautiful Kṛṣṇa temple—it's an Indian architectural expression.

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** Because this helps us to think of Kṛṣṇa. When Kṛṣṇa appeared five thousand years ago, Kṛṣṇa actually did come to India.

**Dr. Cox:** So the fact that Kṛṣṇa came to India and that His tradition is an Indian tradition makes it important to make this an Indian cultural package.

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** The importance is the relationship to Kṛṣṇa, not the relationship to India. For example, we read in *Bhagavad-gītā* about the Battle of Kurukṣetra. We're not interested in Kurukṣetra because it's a battlefield—we're interested in Kurukṣetra because on that battlefield Kṛṣṇa was personally present driving His devotee's chariot.

**Dr. Cox:** Would you say that the Indian flavor and quality here is a means of—

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** Of remembering Kṛṣṇa. If you go and look at our temple, it is not strictly Indian architecture at all. You'll also find a lot of Renaissance architecture in it. But it creates this atmosphere of remembering Kṛṣṇa. Therefore we accept it. We use so many modern things. We use tape recorders, movie projectors. Why? Because they're useful for serving Kṛṣṇa, for remembering Kṛṣṇa. So you can't say that we're simply trying to create an Indian environment or Indian culture. It is selective, to produce a Kṛṣṇa conscious atmosphere.

**Student:** You distinguish between the Indian culture and the Vedic culture.

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** Yes. Vedic culture means the culture arising out of this transcendental knowledge.

**Student:** Could you discuss that?

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** After all, you'll find so many things in Indian culture that we don't have anything to do with. The whole realm of demigod worship and all the holidays connected with that—we don't have anything to do with it. The Indian system of caste is not at all our system of *varṇāśrama-dharma*, the Vedic social system. The Vedic system is not at all based on birth; it is based on qualification.

**Dr. Cox:** So it's a selective use of those elements in Indian culture which help in—

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** In remembering Kṛṣṇa.

**Dr. Cox:** And if there are elements in the cultural ambiance or environment here that would be helpful, you would—

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** We'd incorporate those, yes. Over and over in *Bhagavad-gītā*, Kṛṣṇa says, *man-manā bhava mad-bhaktaḥ*: "Always think of Me." So whatever is useful for thinking of Kṛṣṇa, that we want.

**Dr. Cox:** I'd like to raise one point. It's a point that keeps coming up when I find myself in philosophical discussions with members of ISKCON. From what I've seen, it seems to me that the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement generally focuses

(continued on page 29)

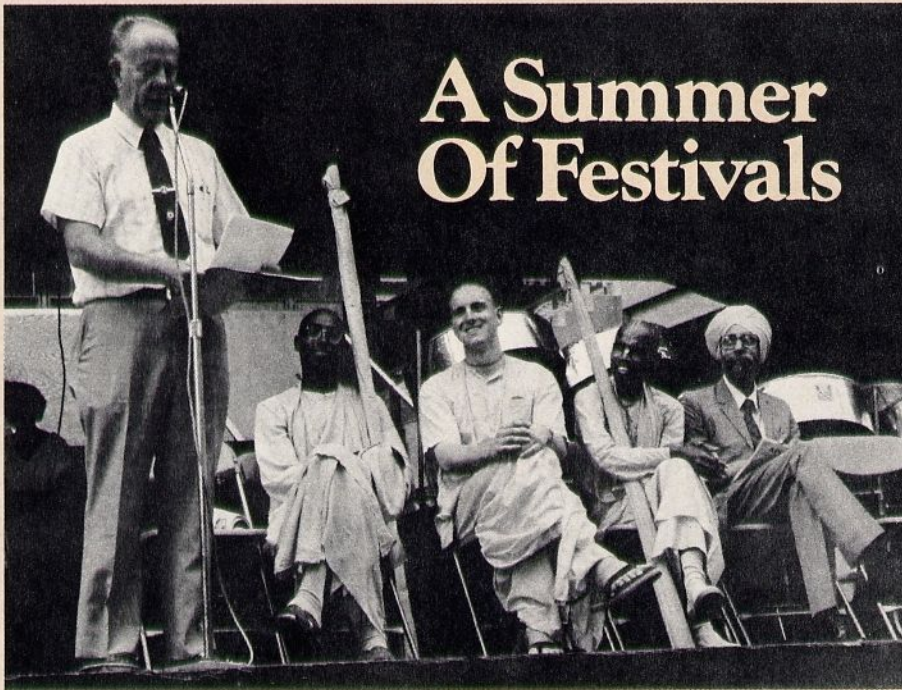




# Every Town and Village

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

## A Summer Of Festivals



In Baltimore, Mayor William Schaefer lauded ISKCON's cultural exhibition at the city's recent East/West Indies Festival. Seated from left to right are His Holiness Bhakti-tīrtha Swami, director of ISKCON's Urban Spiritual Development project and regional secretary for east and west Africa; Mahākrama dāsa, director of ISKCON's Baltimore center; His Holiness Lokanātha Swami, director of ISKCON's New Delhi center; and Mr. Gurbaksh Singh, Educational Advisor to the Indian Embassy.

Devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa organized public gatherings in several major cities this summer to celebrate traditional Kṛṣṇa conscious festivals.

In Natal, South Africa, home of the largest Hindu community outside India, a crowd of twenty thousand turned out to follow three fifty-foot-high chariots down the city's main streets in a three-mile procession celebrating Ratha-yātrā, the "Festival of the Chariots." Organized by the more than five thousand Kṛṣṇa devotees of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness in South Africa, the festival appeared on local television and ended with a lecture by Śrīla Jayatīrtha Goswami, the Society's coordinator for South Africa and the U.K.

In Vancouver, Canada, Mayor Jack Volrich was guest speaker at the Chariot Festival organized by the Hare Kṛṣṇa temple and local Hindu organizations. Mayor Volrich said, "I hope this Festival of the Chariots, one of the greatest historic festivals in the world, will become an annual event in Vancouver . . . so we will be able to share some of the very important, sincere, and deep principles of morality that you espouse. . . . I think it is very ap-

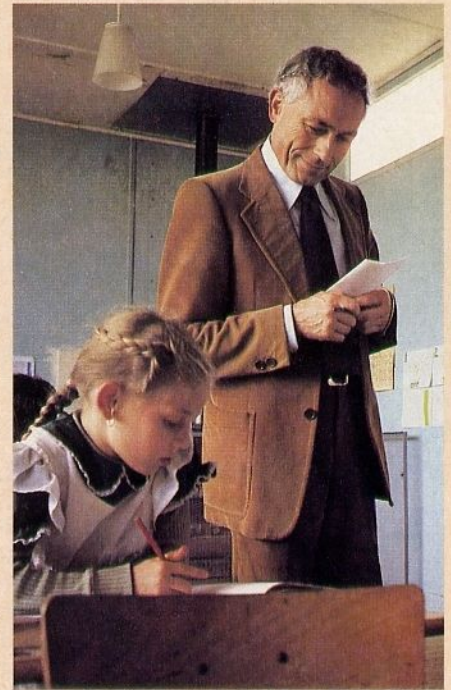
propriate that the city proclaim one day of the year as Ratha-yātrā Day."

Ratha-yātrā, a festival for the pleasure of Lord Kṛṣṇa, has been celebrated in Purī, India, for the last two thousand years. It annually attracts some twenty million to thirty million pilgrims. The International Society for Krishna Consciousness sponsored Ratha-yātrā festivals this year in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Toronto, Calcutta, and other major cities.

## French Gov't Endorses Hare Kṛṣṇa Schools

**Luçay-le-Mâle, France**—The Regional Inspector for the French Minister of Education recently awarded glowing appreciations and a certificate of authorization to the primary and secondary schools of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement in France.

The schools occupy five buildings and two of the 180 acres of the movement's farm in the fertile Indre region of central France. M. Conte, Regional Academic Inspector for the Education Ministry, commented after his visit, "I find here hard work and seriousness of purpose. This has



been a very encouraging visit for me." Mr. M. Conte of the French Ministry of Education examines a student's workbook at the Kṛṣṇa conscious elementary school in Indre.

been a very encouraging visit for me."

The primary school, covering instruction for children up to eleven years old, offers classes in reading, writing, mathematics, English, French, and Kṛṣṇa conscious devotional subjects. The older children attend additional classes in science, history, geography, and Sanskrit.

Mahābhāgavata dāsa, headmaster, directs a staff of seven in balancing academic training with spiritual instruction. He received his M.A. in mathematics and taught three years of public school before joining the movement.

## Hare Kṛṣṇa Calendar

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

Year 494 Caitanya Era—Month of Dāmodara		
November 8	November 9	November 11
Śrī Govardhana-pūjā. Appearance of Śrīla Rasikānanda Prabhu.	Disappearance of Śrīla Vāsudeva Ghoṣa Tṛhākura.	Disappearance of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda.
November 15	November 18	November 22
Gopāṣṭamī. Disappearance of Śrī Gadādhara Gosvāmī. Śrīla Dhanañjaya Paṅḍita, and Śrīla Śrīnivāsa Ācārya.	Uttānā Ekādāśī (fasting from grains and beans). Disappearance of Paramahansa Śrīla Gaurakīṣora-dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja.	End of Cāturmāsya-vrata and Kārtika-vrata. Rāsa dance of Lord Kṛṣṇa.



# JOURNEY TO A LOST CITY

A young American *svāmī* sets out to find an ancient pilgrimage site of his spiritual tradition.

by INDRADYUMNA SWAMI

Hyderabad, India—Leaving the airport in a taxi headed for the local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple, I was struck by familiar smells in the air. Fragrant flowers, pungent spices, a variety of incense and fruits all merged in the robust morning wind. Though not my first trip to India, this one was to take me to a place I had never known, a place, in fact, where few Westerners had ever gone. My destination was Ahovalam, a place of pilgrimage for devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa, a holy place high in the mountains of south India.

Ahovalam could not be found on official maps. I would need help to make the journey. With this in mind, I sought the advice of an old friend, Ānandamaya dāsa, with whom I had often traveled in the past. He was excited by the idea of seeing Ahovalam, and for my part I was glad to have him come along. He took me to meet local *brāhmaṇa* priests, who expressed concern for our safety. It would be an arduous journey, they said. Ahovalam lay three days to the south, perched high in the mountains amid rough terrain. The monsoon rains had just ended, and there was every chance that flood waters had damaged the roads.

None of these apparent hardships could dissuade us, but one other obstacle almost ended our journey before it began: language. Neither I nor Ānandamaya, who was French, spoke the regional dialect, Telegu, and without the possibility of verbal communication the trip seemed hopeless. Then, to our great relief, a friend of the Hare Kṛṣṇa temple in Hyderabad, Mr. T.N. Srinivas, stepped forward and offered to act as our interpreter. He was director of the largest public school in the

city and shared our excitement over visiting this ancient shrine of the Vaiṣṇava (Kṛṣṇa conscious) tradition. We secured provisions and started off early the next morning.

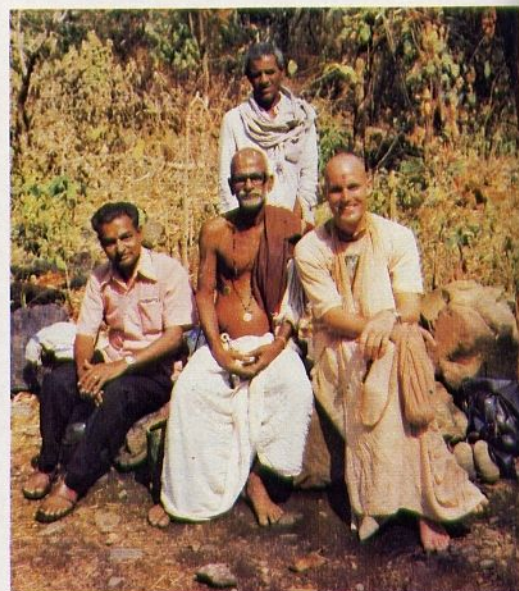
## A Jungle Crossing

At dawn we boarded the first train heading south. There were no first-class places available, so we rode second class—that is, fifth class, since we ended up sharing our eight-seat compartment with twelve passengers, three chickens, and a stowaway goat.

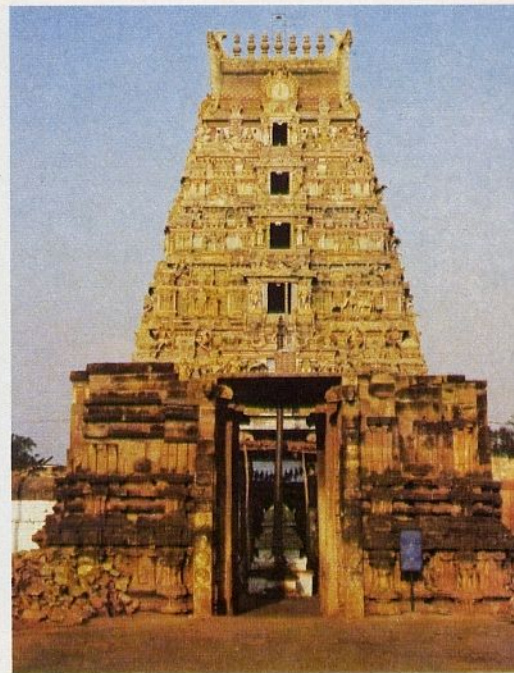
Time passed, and the Indian sun rose, bringing heat fatigue that nearly paralyzed us in our seats, until we made the obligatory connections to trains and finally a bus. As we went higher and higher into the mountainous region surrounding Ahovalam, the countryside rapidly changed. Soon everything was green and lush, the air easier to breathe. And then the jungle was upon us, thick and overpowering. Giant banyan trees towered over our heads, and huge palm leaves blocked the sky. It was another world, another age and dimension of nature.

The further we advanced, the thicker the jungle grew. From my window I could see birds with exotic plumage and dozens of curious monkeys watching from the treetops. Here and there a deer, frightened by the sound of the motor, leapt to safety.

**About to embark** on their climb to Ahovalam, Indradyumna Swami (far right) poses with the village *brāhmaṇa* from Lower Ahovalam (center), Mr. T.N. Srinivas (left), principal of Hyderabad's largest public school, and their "hatchet-guide" (standing).







**The temple cave of Varāha-Nṛsiṃha** (left) juts out from the mountain leading to Ahovalam. Local priests say the Deities in these solid-stone temples were installed thousands of years ago. Above, an ancient temple dedicated to Deities of Nṛsiṃhadeva and Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune, greets visitors to Lower Ahovalam.

“There are tigers also,” Mr. Srinivas noted, laughing. I didn’t see the humor.

Finally the bus stopped. There was no more road. We got down and continued on foot. An hour later we arrived at Lower Ahovalam, a small village at the foot of the mountains. The villagers greeted us with enthusiasm. Although hundreds of thousands of pilgrims assemble each year at Benares and Allahabad to bathe in the sacred Ganges during important religious festivals, few brave the road to Ahovalam.

The village *brāhmaṇa* invited us to his home and fed us an exquisitely simple yet delicious meal of *kṛṣṇa-prasāda* (vegetarian foods that have first been offered to Lord Kṛṣṇa). Then he began relating the history of the sacred city Ahovalam. Night settled in around us with its sounds of nocturnal birds and animals. We sat back to hear his narration.

### A Formidable Atheist

“Several million years ago,” he began, “there lived an extraordinary being named Hiraṇyakaśipu. The *Purāṇas*, the scriptural histories, describe that by executing severe austerities, he gained immense power, by which he tyrannized the universe. Vain and malevolent, he never hesitated to kill anyone who got in the way of his plans for wealth and material pleasures. No one could challenge him.

“But Prahlāda, his youngest son, did not share this demon’s atheistic views. A great devotee of the Lord since birth, Prahlāda had no taste for child’s play or the pursuit of material pleasures. Rather, he bathed constantly in the ecstasy of divine consciousness and shared his spiritual wisdom with school friends whenever the occasion permitted. But Prahlāda’s preaching

greatly displeased Hiraṇyakaśipu, who finally decided to destroy the child. Such devotion could not be allowed to survive. Nonetheless, despite all his efforts to kill the small boy, he was unable to do so. Prahlāda was protected by the hand of God and hence invulnerable.

“Where is this God of yours?’ Hiraṇyakaśipu demanded of the boy Prahlāda. ‘Is He in my palace?’ he mocked, waving his sword toward a pillar. ‘Is he in this pillar?’

“Yes, father,’ the boy replied, ‘God is everywhere.’

Hiraṇyakaśipu, his eyes red with rage, then struck the pillar with his fist. From the pillar sprang instantly a terrible form of the Lord, half-man half-lion, to protect the small, devoted child. This form was called Nṛsiṃhadeva, and He quickly killed the demonic king with His nails.

“The Supreme Lord is omnipresent,” the *brāhmaṇa* said, “and is capable of manifesting Himself wherever He wishes, in whatever form He desires. It is therefore possible for Him to appear in such a marvelous form as Nṛsiṃhadeva to annihilate the demonic and protect His devotees.”

Here the *brāhmaṇa* ended his narration. Now more eager than ever to begin our journey, we looked forward to actually seeing Ahovalam, renowned as the place where Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva had emerged from the pillar to destroy the evil King





Hiranyakaśipu and protect the devoted Prahlāda.

### Temples in Caves

Rising the next morning before sunrise, we bathed and chanted our morning rounds of prayer beads. After a breakfast of rice and spiced vegetables, we took to the road. Our guide, a small man approaching sixty, led us through a tangled wilderness as though it were his backyard. As we penetrated the thick jungle, I noticed a small hatchet suspended from his belt. I was about to ask him what it was for when someone yelled to me from behind.

"Look out! A cobra! A cobra!" Before I could even react, the guide pushed me violently to the side of the thin trail and in one motion drew his hatchet and cut off the cobra's head. I almost decided to turn back then and there. The day before, the guide said as we continued, he had dispatched a python more than twelve feet long. From that moment on, I was never more than two feet behind our hatchet-bearing guide.

After a short climb, we came upon the first of nine temples dedicated to Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva. Thick foliage covered the entrance. At first glance, the temple itself was indistinguishable from its surroundings, except for a few vague sculptures jutting out here and there.

After cutting away the overgrowth, we entered the main room of the temple, which devotees thousands of years ago had carved completely out of the stone

The village brāhmaṇa (above) makes a two-hour climb daily to worship Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva, who in this cavernous temple appears in a blackish form of stone. At right, Nṛsiṃhadeva holds on His lap and claws apart the demonic King Hiranyakaśipu.

wall of the mountain. As we progressed, the light faded, until only an eerie green aura let us discern the ground under our feet. Dozens of bats, disturbed by our visit, flew furiously out over our heads.

We lit our electric lamps and beheld the sanctuary's beauty. Despite its incontestable antiquity, the original carvings and sculpted ceiling remained intact, protected by nature throughout the ages. As with most of the other temples we would visit that day, neither time nor the rampant vegetation had succeeded in erasing the extremely detailed craftsmanship that had gone into its creation.

On a raised stone platform before us stood majestically the Deity of Varāha-Nṛsiṃha. Varāha, the boar incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa, had killed Hiranyakaśipu's nefarious younger brother Hiranyākṣa, and thus the two incarnations Varāha and Nṛsiṃha had been installed together in this temple and worshiped for thousands of years. But gradually the inaccessibility of the place and the ever-growing wall of vegetation had discouraged pilgrims. Now only an occasional visitor still came to offer the Deities wild fruits or *kuṅkuma* powder.







Looming fifteen stories into the sky over Ahovalam is the *ugra-stambha* (above), the pillar from which Lord Nṛsimhadeva is said to have appeared.

All day long we progressed from one temple to another, crossing rope bridges suspended over deep ravines and rivers. At places where no path existed, we cut our way through the foliage and scaled high rocks. In each temple-cave a different Deity of Nṛsimha awaited us: Kareṇca-Nṛsimha, holding a bow; Chatravarta-Nṛsimha, smiling broadly; Mahāloka-Nṛsimha, seated in the company of His eternal companion the goddess of fortune. At each temple, we paused to catch our breath and read from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, an important Vedic scripture that recounts the history of Lord Nṛsimhadeva.

At last, just over a ridge of high boulders, we arrived at a plateau formed by the debris of history. Here was an immense plain, said to be the site of Hiranyakaśipu's gigantic palace, its ruins exposed to the erosion of weather for hundreds and thousands of years. Dominating the landscape, poised fifteen stories high, was the famous *ugra-stambha*, described as the pillar from which Lord Nṛsimhadeva had sprung to rid the earth of the formidable demon Hiranyakaśipu. We stood transfixed by the sheer size of what lay before us. When whole, the palace must have stretched fifteen miles, judging by the pillar, which lay in two halves: one intact, the other fallen to the side.

Standing atop the ridge overlooking the relics of Ahovalam, I began to understand for the first time the meaning of antiquity. For many years my realization of Kṛṣṇa consciousness as an ancient spiritual culture had been abstract and philosophical. Now that realization took a tangible form as I surveyed a scene described thousands of years ago in the sacred Vedic scriptures.

By dusk we had returned to Lower Ahovalam. Temple attendants completed their daily ceremonies as night slowly settled over the village. Families scurried home before dark, and we sorted our gear for the long ride back.



# ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

## In Nature There Are No Mistakes

*This exchange between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, his disciple Dr. Thoudam D. Singh, and guests occurred in December 1973 during a walk at Venice Beach, in Los Angeles.*

**Dr. Singh:** Now scientists have organized a whole department called gerontology, in which they study how to prolong life.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Their real aim should be to stop the suffering. Suppose an old man is in great pain, suffering from many diseases, and suddenly the doctors increase his life-span. What is the profit?

**Dr. Singh:** That is what they do with heart transplants.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** It is nonsense! Let them stop death; *that* would be an achievement. Let them stop all disease: ah, *that* would be an achievement. They cannot do these things! Therefore, all their research is simply a struggle for existence. Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā* [15.7], "The living entities in this conditioned world are My eternal, fragmental parts. Due to conditioned life, they are struggling very hard with the six senses, which include the mind."

**Student:** Now there is a shortage of oil.

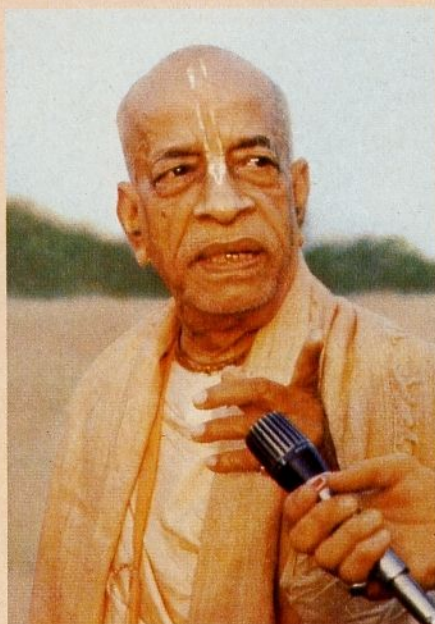
**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes, we have built a civilization that is dependent on oil. This is against nature's law, and therefore there is now an oil shortage. By nature's law, winter is now coming. Scientists cannot stop it and turn it into summer. They wrongly think they control nature. In *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa says that the living being thinks himself to be the doer of activities that are in actuality carried out by nature. The sun is now rising. Can they make it dark? And when it is dark, can they command the sun, "Get up!"?

They do not realize that if they really want to conquer nature, they should try to conquer birth, death, old age, and disease. In *Bhagavad-gītā* [7.14] Kṛṣṇa says, "This divine nature of Mine, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is difficult to overcome. But those who have surrendered unto Me can easily cross beyond it."

**Dr. Singh:** So, is it very hard to overcome nature's laws?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** For the materialists, it is impossible. But if one surrenders to Kṛṣṇa it becomes easy.

**Dr. Singh:** To explain why there are so many varieties of living entities, the scientists say that at a certain time during evolution, the cells' genes, which normally reproduce themselves perfectly for the



next generation, sometimes make a mistake in copying—something like the printing press that sometimes makes mistakes. In some circumstances these mistakes, or mutations, have stood, and different species of living entities have been formed because of the difference in the genes.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** But that "mistake" has been continuing since time immemorial, for you will find that all varieties of living entities have always existed. Therefore the "mistake" is eternal. But when a "mistake" is permanent, it is not a mistake; it is intelligence!

**Dr. Singh:** But scientists say that without mutations there would be only one kind of living entity in the whole universe.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** No. Every living entity has a different mind, and therefore there are so many different species of life to accommodate the different mentalities. For example, we are walking here, but most people are not coming to join us, because they have different mentalities than we do. Why does this difference exist?

**Dr. Singh:** Maybe it is a mistake.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** It is not a mistake. It is their desire, and at the time of death everyone will get a body exactly according to his desire. Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* [8.6], "Whatever state of being one remembers when he quits his body, that state he will attain without fail." What you are thinking of at the time of death exactly determines your next body. Nature will give you the body; the decision is not in your hands, but in nature's, and she is working under the direction of God.

**Dr. Singh:** But science seems to have evidence that different species of life do arise by mistakes.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That is *their* mistake! In the laws of nature there are no mistakes. In railway cars there are first-class, second-class, and third-class sections. If you purchase a third-class ticket but by mistake go to the first-class section, you will not be allowed to stay there. It is not a mistake that there are sections; that is the arrangement. But it is your mistake that you have gone to the wrong section. So, God is so thorough that He knows all the mistakes that will be made. Therefore, according to the mistakes you commit, you enter a particular body: "Here, come here. The body is ready." There are 8,400,000 species of life, and nature works, assigning different bodies, with mathematical precision. When the government builds a city, it builds a prison even before the city is complete, because the government knows that there will be many criminals who will have to go to prison. This is not the government's mistake; it is the criminals'. Because they become criminals, they have to go there. It is *their* mistake.

In nature there are no mistakes. Kṛṣṇa says, "This material nature is working under My direction, O son of Kuntī, and producing all moving and nonmoving beings." [Bg. 9.10] Nature works under the supervision of God, Kṛṣṇa, so how can nature make mistakes? But *we* commit mistakes, we are illusioned, our senses are imperfect, and we cheat. That is the difference between God and man. God does not have imperfect senses; His senses are perfect.

**Dr. Wolf-Rottkay:** Because our senses are defective, the technological enlargements of our senses, like microscopes and telescopes, must also be defective.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. Material existence *means* defective existence. If you construct something with defective knowledge and imperfect senses, whatever you construct must be defective. Therefore we conclude that whatever the scientists say is defective.

**Dr. Singh:** But they seem quite satisfied.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** The ass is also satisfied to carry the load of the washerman. In some parts of India one may sometimes see a dog starving to death. But as soon as it gets a female dog, it is satisfied with having sex. Is that satisfaction? The dog is starving, but still it is satisfied with sex. Everyone is satisfied, even the worm in the stool. That is nature's law.



# ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the "cream of the Vedic literatures" of ancient India. Five thousand years ago the great sage Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa composed this *purāṇa*, or history, to explain the essence of spiritual knowledge. The original Sanskrit text is presented here with transliteration, word meanings, translation, and 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 SIX

#### Puruṣa-sūkta Confirmed

As our serialized presentation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam continues, Lord Brahmā begins to explain to his son and disciple Nārada the difference between Lord Kṛṣṇa's cosmic universal form and His all-powerful personal form in the spiritual realm, which lies beyond fear and death.

#### TEXT 18

(purport continued from last issue)

The conception of spiritual bliss (*brahmānanda*) is fully present in those planets. Each of them is eternal, indestructible and free from all kinds of inebrieties experienced in the material world. Each of them is self-illuminating and more powerfully dazzling than (if we can imagine) the total sunshine of millions of mundane suns. The inhabitants of those planets are liberated from birth, death, old age and diseases and have full knowledge of everything; they are all godly and free from all sorts of material hankering. They have nothing to do there except to render transcendental loving service to the Supreme Lord Nārāyaṇa, who is the predominating Deity of such Vaikuṇṭha planets. Those liberated souls are engaged incessantly in singing songs mentioned in the *Sāma Veda* (*vedaiḥ sāṅga-pada-kramopaniṣadair gāyanti yaṁ sāmagāḥ*). All of them are personifications of the five *Upaniṣads*. *Tripād-vibhūti*, or the seventy-five percent known as the internal potency of the Lord, is to be understood as the kingdom of God far beyond the material sky; and when we speak of *pāda-vibhūti*, or the twenty-five percent comprising His external energy, we should understand that this refers to the sphere of the material world. It is also said in the *Padma Purāṇa* that the kingdom of *tripād-vibhūti* is transcendental, whereas the *pāda-vibhūti* is mundane; *tripād-vibhūti* is eternal, whereas the *pāda-vibhūti* is transient. The Lord and His eternal servitors in the transcendental kingdom all have eternal forms which are auspicious, infallible, spiritual and eternally youthful. In other words, there is no birth, death, old age and disease. That eternal land is full of transcendental enjoyment and full of beauty and bliss. This very fact is also corroborated in this verse of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and the transcendental nature is described as *amṛta*. As described in the *Vedas*, *utāmṛtatvasyeśānah*: the Supreme Lord is the Lord of immortality, or in other words, the Lord is immortal, and because He is the Lord of immortality He can award immortality to His devotees. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (8.16) the Lord also assures that whoever may go to His abode of immortality shall never return to this mortal land of threefold miseries. The Lord is not like the mundane lord. The mundane master or lord never enjoys equally with his subordinates, nor is a mundane lord immortal, nor can he award immortality to his subordinate. The Supreme Lord, who is the leader of all living entities, can award all the qualities of His personality unto His devotees, including immortality and spiritual bliss. In the material world there is always anxiety or fearfulness in the hearts of all living entities, but the Lord, being Himself the supreme fearless, also awards the same quality of fearlessness to His pure devotees. Mundane existence is itself a kind of

fear because in all mundane bodies the effects of birth, death, old age and disease always keep a living being compact in fear. In the mundane world, there is always the influence of time, which changes things from one stage to another, and the living entity, originally being *avikāra*, or unchangeable, suffers a great deal on account of changes due to the influence of time. The changing effects of eternal time are conspicuously absent in the immortal kingdom of God, which should therefore be understood to have no influence of time and therefore no fear whatsoever. In the material world, so-called happiness is the result of one's own work. One can become a rich man by dint of one's own hard labor, and there are always fear and doubts as to the duration of such acquired happiness. But in the kingdom of God, no one has to endeavor to attain a standard of happiness. Happiness is the nature of the spirit, as stated in the *Vedānta-sūtras*: *ānandamayo 'bhyāsāt*—the spirit is by nature full of happiness. Happiness in spiritual nature always increases in volume with a new phase of appreciation; there is no question of decreasing the bliss. Such unalloyed spiritual bliss is nowhere to be found within the orbit of the material universe, including the Janaloka planets, or, for that matter, the Maharloka or Satyaloka planets, because even Lord Brahmā is subject to the laws of fruitive actions and the law of birth and death. It is therefore stated here: *duratyayaḥ*, or, in other words, spiritual happiness in the eternal kingdom of God cannot be imagined even by the great *brahmacārīs* or *sannyāsīs* who are eligible to be promoted to the planets beyond the region of heaven. Or, the greatness of the Supreme Lord is so great that it cannot be imagined even by the great *brahmacārīs* or *sannyāsīs*, but such happiness is factually attained by the unalloyed devotees of the Lord, by His divine grace.

#### TEXT 19

पादेषु सर्वभूतानि पुंसः स्थितिपदो विदुः ।

अमृतं क्षेममभयं त्रिमूर्ध्नोऽधायि मूर्धसु ॥१९॥

*pādeṣu sarva-bhūtāni*  
*puṁsaḥ sthiti-pado viduḥ*  
*amṛtam kṣemam abhayam*  
*tri-mūrdhno 'dhāyi mūrdhasu*

*pādeṣu*—in the one fourth; *sarva*—all; *bhūtāni*—living entities; *puṁsaḥ*—of the Supreme Person; *sthiti-padaḥ*—the reservoir of all material opulence; *viduḥ*—you should know; *amṛtam*—deathlessness; *kṣemam*—all happiness, free from the anxiety of old age, diseases, etc.; *abhayam*—fearlessness; *tri-mūrdhnaḥ*—beyond the three higher planetary systems; *adhāyi*—exist; *mūrdhasu*—beyond the material coverings.

#### TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is to be known as the supreme reservoir of all material opulences by the one fourth of His energy in which all the living entities exist. Deathlessness, fearlessness and freedom from the anxieties of old age and disease



exist in the kingdom of God, which is beyond the three higher planetary systems and beyond the material coverings.

### PURPORT

Out of the total manifestations of the *sandhinī* energy of the Lord, one fourth is displayed in the material world, and three fourths are displayed in the spiritual world. The Lord's energy is divided into three component parts, namely *sandhinī*, *saṁvit* and *hlādinī*; in other words, He is the full manifestation of existence, knowledge and bliss. In the material world such a sense of existence, knowledge and pleasure is meagerly exhibited, and all living entities, who are minute parts and parcels of the Lord, are eligible to relish such consciousness of existence, knowledge and bliss very minutely in the liberated stage, whereas in the conditioned stage of material existence they can hardly appreciate what is the factual, existential, cognizable and pure happiness of life. The liberated souls, who exist in far greater numerical strength than those souls in the material world, can factually experience the potency of the above-mentioned *sandhinī*, *saṁvit* and *hlādinī* energies of the Lord in the matter of deathlessness, fearlessness and freedom from old age and disease.

In the material world, the planetary systems are arranged in three spheres, called *triloka*, or Svarga, Martya and Pātāla, and all of them constitute only one fourth of the total *sandhinī* energy. Beyond that is the spiritual sky where the Vaikuṅṭha planets exist beyond the coverings of seven material strata. In none of the *triloka* planetary systems can one experience the status of immortality, full knowledge and full bliss. The upper three planetary systems are called *sāttvika* planets because they provide facilities for a long duration of life and relative freedom from disease and old age, as well as a sense of fearlessness. The great sages and saints are promoted beyond the heavenly planets to Maharloka, but that also is not the place of complete fearlessness because at the end of one *kalpa* the Maharloka is annihilated and the inhabitants have to transport themselves to still higher planets. Yet even on these planets no one is immune to death. There may be a comparative extension of life, expansion of knowledge and sense of full bliss, but factual deathlessness, fearlessness and freedom from old age, diseases, etc., are possible only beyond the material spheres of the coverings of the material sky. Such things are situated on the head (*adhāyi mūrdhasu*).

### TEXT 20

पादात्त्रयो बहिश्चासन्नप्रजां य आश्रमाः ।  
अन्तस्त्रिलोक्यास्त्वपरो गृहमेयोऽबृहद्भूतः ॥२०॥

*pādās trayo bahiś cāsann  
aprajānām ya āśramāḥ  
antas tri-lokyās tv aparo  
gṛha-medho 'bṛhad-vrataḥ*

*pādāḥ trayāḥ*—the cosmos of three fourths of the Lord's energy; *bahiḥ*—thus situated beyond; *ca*—and for all; *āsan*—were; *aprajānām*—of those who are not meant for rebirth; *ye*—those; *āśramāḥ*—status of life; *antaḥ*—within; *tri-lokyāḥ*—of the three worlds; *tu*—but; *aparaḥ*—others; *gṛha-medhaḥ*—attached to family life; *abṛhat-vrataḥ*—without strictly following a vow of celibacy.

### TRANSLATION

The spiritual world, which consists of three fourths of the Lord's energy, is situated beyond this material world, and it is especially meant for those who will never be reborn. Others, who are attached to family life and who do not strictly follow celibacy vows, must live within the three material worlds.

### PURPORT

The climax of the system of *varṇāśrama-dharma*, or *sanātana-dharma*, is clearly expressed here in this particular verse of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The highest benefit that can be awarded to a human being

is to train him to be detached from sex life, particularly because it is only due to sex indulgence that the conditioned life of material existence continues birth after birth. Human civilization in which there is no control of sex life is a fourth-class civilization because in such an atmosphere there is no liberation of the soul engaged in the material body. Birth, death, old age and disease are related to the material body, and they have nothing to do with the spirit soul. But as long as the bodily attachment for sensual enjoyment is encouraged, the individual spirit soul is forced to continue the repetition of birth and death on account of the material body, which is compared to garments subjected to the law of deterioration.

In order to award the highest benefit of human life, the *varṇāśrama* system trains the follower to adopt the vow of celibacy beginning from the order of *brahmacārī*. The *brahmacārī* life is for students who are educated to follow strictly the vow of celibacy. Youngsters who have had no taste of sex life can easily follow the vow of celibacy, and once fixed in the principle of such a life, one can very easily continue to the highest perfectional stage, attaining the kingdom of the three-fourths energy of the Lord. It is already explained that in the cosmos of three-fourths energy of the Lord there is neither death nor fear, and one is full of the blissful life of happiness and knowledge. A householder attached to family life can easily give up such a life of sex indulgence if he has been trained in the principles of the life of a *brahmacārī*. A householder is recommended to quit home at the end of fifty years (*pañcaśardhvaṁ vanam vrajet*) and live a life in the forest; then, being fully detached from family affection, he may accept the order of renunciation as a *sannyāsī* fully engaged in the service of the Lord. Any form of religious principles in which the followers are trained to pursue the vow of celibacy is good for the human being because only those who are trained in that way can end the miserable life of material existence. The principles of *nirvāna*, as recommended by Lord Buddha, are also meant for ending the miserable life of material existence. And this process, in the highest degree, is recommended here in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, with clear perception of ideal perfection, although basically there is no difference between the process of Buddhists, Śāṅkaris and Vaiṣṇavites. For promotion to the highest status of perfection, namely freedom from birth and death, anxiety and fearfulness, not one of these processes allows the follower to break the vow of celibacy.

The householders and persons who have deliberately broken the vow of celibacy cannot enter into the kingdom of deathlessness. The pious householders or the fallen *yogīs* or the fallen transcendentalists can be promoted to the higher planets within the material world (one fourth of the energy of the Lord), but they will fail to enter into the kingdom of deathlessness. *Abṛhad-vratas* are those who have broken the vow of celibacy. The *vānaprasthas*, or those retired from family life, and the *sannyāsīs*, or the renounced persons, cannot break the vow of celibacy if they want success in the process. The *brahmacārīs*, *vānaprasthas* and *sannyāsīs* do not intend to take rebirth (*apraja*), nor are they meant for secretly indulging in sex life. Such a downfall by the spiritualist may be compensated by another chance for human life in good families of learned *brāhmaṇas* or of rich merchants for another term of elevation, but the best thing is to attain the highest perfection of deathlessness as soon as the human form of life is attained; otherwise the whole policy of human life will prove to be a total failure. Lord Caitanya was very strict in advising His followers in this matter of celibacy. One of His personal attendants, Choṭa Haridāsa, was severely punished by Lord Caitanya because of his failure to observe the vow of celibacy. For a transcendentalist, therefore, who at all wants to be promoted to the kingdom beyond material miseries, it is worse than suicide to deliberately indulge in sex life, especially in the renounced order of life. Sex life in the renounced order of life is the most perverted form of religious life, and such a misguided person can only be saved if, by chance, he meets a pure devotee.

### TEXT 21

सुती विचक्रमे विश्वङ् साशनानशने उभे ।  
यदविद्या च विद्या च पुरुषस्तूमयाश्रयः ॥२१॥



*sṛtī vicakrame viśvaṅ  
sāśanānaśane ubhe  
yad avidyā ca vidyā ca  
puruṣas tūbhayaśrayaḥ*

*sṛtī*—the destination of the living entities; *vicakrame*—exists comprehensively; *viśvaṅ*—the all-pervading Personality of Godhead; *sāśana*—activities of lording it over; *anaśane*—activities in devotional service; *ubhe*—both; *yad*—what is; *avidyā*—nescience; *ca*—as well as; *vidyā*—factual knowledge; *ca*—and; *puruṣaḥ*—the Supreme Person; *tu*—but; *ubhaya*—for both of them; *āśrayaḥ*—the master.

## TRANSLATION

By His energies, the all-pervading Personality of Godhead is thus comprehensively the master in the activities of controlling and in devotional service. He is the ultimate master of both nescience and factual knowledge of all situations.

## PURPORT

The word *viśvaṅ* is significant in this verse. One who travels perfectly in every field of activity is called the *puruṣa* or *kṣetrajña*. These two terms, *kṣetrajña* and *puruṣa*, are equally applicable to both the individual self and the Supreme Self, the Lord. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (13.3) the matter is explained as follows:

*kṣetrajñāṁ cāpi māṁ viddhi  
sarva-kṣetreṣu bhārata  
kṣetra-kṣetrajñayor jñānaṁ  
yat taj jñānaṁ mataṁ mama*

*Kṣetra* means the place, and one who knows the place is called the *kṣetrajña*. The individual self knows about his limited field of activities, but the Supreme Self, the Lord, knows about the unlimited field of activities. The individual soul knows about his own thinking, feeling and willing activities, but the Supersoul, or the Paramātmā, the supreme controller, being present everywhere, knows everyone's thinking, feeling and willing activities, and as such the individual living entity is the minute master of his personal affairs whereas the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the master of everyone's affairs, past, present and future (*vedāhaṁ samatītāni*, etc.). Only the ignorant person does not know this difference between the Lord and the living entities. The living entities, as distinguished from incognizant matter, may be qualitatively equal to the Lord in cognizance, but the living entity can never be equal to the Lord in full knowledge of past, present and future.

And because the living entity is partially cognizant, he is therefore sometimes forgetful of his own identity. This forgetfulness is specifically manifested in the field of the *ekapād-vibhūti* of the Lord, or in the material world, but in the *tripād-vibhūti* field of actions, or in the spiritual world, there is no forgetfulness by the living entities, who are free from all kinds of contaminations resulting from the forgetful state of existence. The material body is the symbol of the gross and subtle form of forgetfulness; therefore the whole atmosphere of the material world is called *avidyā*, or nescience, whereas the whole atmosphere of the spiritual world is called *vidyā*, or full of knowledge. There are different stages of *avidyā*, and they are called *dharma*, *artha* and *mokṣa*. The idea of *mokṣa*, or liberation, held by the monist in the matter of oneness of the living entity and the Lord by ultimate merging in one, is also the last stage of materialism or forgetfulness. Knowledge of the qualitative oneness of the self and Superself is partial knowledge and ignorance also because there is no knowledge of quantitative difference, as explained above. The individual self can never be equal to the Lord in cognizance; otherwise he could not be placed in the state of forgetfulness. So, because there is a stage of forgetfulness of the individual selves, or the living entities, there is always a gulf of difference between the Lord and the living entity, as between the part and the whole. The part is never equal to the whole. So the conception of one hundred percent equality of the living

being with the Lord is also nescience.

In the field of nescience, activities are directed toward lording it over the creation. In the material world, therefore, everyone is engaged in acquiring material opulence to lord it over the material world. Therefore there is always clash and frustration, which are the symptoms of nescience. But in the field of knowledge, there is devotional service to the Lord (*bhakti*). Therefore there is no chance of being contaminated by the influence of nescience or forgetfulness (*avidyā*) in the liberated stage of devotional activities. The Lord is thus the proprietor of the fields both of nescience and of cognition, and it remains the choice of the living entity to exist in either of the above regions.

## TEXT 22

यस्मादण्डं विराड् जज्ञे भूतेन्द्रियगुणात्मकः ।  
तद् द्रव्यमत्यगाद् विश्वं गोभिः सूर्ये इवातपन् ॥२२॥

*yasmād aṇḍaṁ virāḍ jajñe  
bhūtendriya-guṇātmakaḥ  
tad dravyam atyagād viśvaṁ  
gobhiḥ sūrya ivātapan*

*yasmāt*—from whom; *aṇḍaṁ*—the universal globes; *virāt*—and the gigantic universal form; *jajñe*—appeared; *bhūta*—elements; *indriya*—senses; *guṇa-ātmakaḥ*—qualitative; *tad dravyam*—the universes and the universal form, etc.; *atyagāt*—surpassed; *viśvaṁ*—all the universes; *gobhiḥ*—by the rays; *sūryaḥ*—the sun; *iva*—like; *ātapan*—distributed rays and heat.

## TRANSLATION

From that Personality of Godhead, all the universal globes and the universal form with all material elements, qualities and senses are generated. Yet He is aloof from such material manifestations, like the sun, which is separate from its rays and heat.

## PURPORT

The supreme truth has been ascertained in the previous verse as *puruṣa* or the *puruṣottama*, the Supreme Person. The Absolute Person is the *īvara*, or the supreme controller, by His different energies. The *ekapād-vibhūti* manifestation of the material energy of the Lord is just like one of the many mistresses of the Lord, by whom the Lord is not so much attracted, as indicated in the language of the *Gītā* (*bhinnā prakṛtiḥ*). But the region of the *tripād-vibhūti*, being a pure spiritual manifestation of the energy of the Lord, is, so to speak, more attractive to Him. The Lord, therefore, generates the material manifestations by impregnating the material energy, and then, within the manifestation, He expands Himself as the gigantic form of the *viśva-rūpa*. The *viśva-rūpa*, as it was shown to Arjuna, is not the original form of the Lord. The original form of the Lord is the transcendental form of *Puruṣottama*, or *Kṛṣṇa* Himself. It is very nicely explained herein that He expands Himself just like the sun. The sun expands itself by its terrible heat and rays, yet the sun is always aloof from such rays and heat. The impersonalist takes into consideration the rays of the Lord without any information of the tangible, transcendental, eternal form of the Lord, known as *Kṛṣṇa*. Therefore *Kṛṣṇa*, in His supreme personal form, with two hands and flute, is bewildering for the impersonalists who can accommodate only the gigantic *viśva-rūpa* of the Lord. They should know that the rays of the sun are secondary to the sun, and similarly the impersonal gigantic form of the Lord is also secondary to the personal form as *Puruṣottama*. The *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.37) confirms this statement as follows:

*ānanda-cinmaya-rasa-pratibhāvitābhis  
tābhir ya eva nija-rūpatayā kalābhiḥ  
goloka eva nivasaty akhilātma-bhūto  
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Govinda, the one who enlivens the senses of everyone by His personal bodily rays, resides in His tran-



scendental abode, called Goloka. Yet He is present in every nook and corner of His creation by expansion of happy spiritual rays, equal in power to His personal potency of bliss." He is therefore simultaneously personal and impersonal by His inconceivable potency, or He is the one without a second, displaying complete unity in a diversity of material and spiritual manifestations. He is separate from everything, and still nothing is different from Him.

## TEXT 23

यदास्य नाभ्यान्नलिनादहमासं महात्मनः ।  
नाविदं यज्ञसम्भारान् पुरुषावयवानृते ॥२३॥

*yadāsya nābhyān nalinād  
aham āsam mahātmanah  
nāvidam yajña-sambhārān  
puruṣāvayavān rte*

*yadā*—at the time of; *asya*—His; *nābhyāt*—from the abdomen; *nalināt*—from the lotus flower; *aham*—myself; *āsam*—took my birth; *mahā-ātmanah*—of the great person; *na avidam*—did not know; *yajña*—sacrificial; *sambhārān*—ingredients; *puruṣa*—of the Lord; *avayavān*—personal bodily limbs; *rte*—except.

## TRANSLATION

When I was born from the abdominal lotus flower of the Lord [Mahā-Viṣṇu], the great person, I had no ingredients for sacrificial performances except the bodily limbs of the great Personality of Godhead.

## PURPORT

Lord Brahmā, the creator of the cosmic manifestation, is known as Svayambhū, or one who is born without father and mother. The general process is that a living creature is born out of the sex combination of the male father and the female mother. But Brahmā, the firstborn living being, is born out of the abdominal lotus flower of the Mahā-Viṣṇu plenary expansion of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The abdominal lotus flower is part of the Lord's bodily limbs, and Brahmā is born out of the lotus flower. Therefore Lord Brahmā is also a part of the Lord's body. Brahmā, after his appearance in the gigantic hollow of the universe, saw darkness and nothing else. He felt perplexity, and from his heart he was inspired by the Lord to undergo austerity, thereby acquiring the ingredients for sacrificial performances. But there was nothing besides the two of them, namely the Personality of Mahā-Viṣṇu and Brahmā himself, born of the bodily part of the Lord. For sacrificial performances many ingredients were in need, especially animals. The animal sacrifice is never meant for killing the animal, but for achieving the successful result of the sacrifice. The animal offered in the sacrificial fire is, so to speak, destroyed, but the next moment it is given a new life by dint of the Vedic hymns chanted by the expert priest. When such an expert priest is not available, the animal sacrifice in the fire of the sacrificial altar is forbidden. Thus Brahmā created even the sacrificial ingredients out of the bodily limbs of the Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, which means that the cosmic order was created by Brahmā himself. Also, nothing is created out of nothing, but everything is created from the person of the Lord. The Lord says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.8), *aham sarvasya prabhavo mattah sarvaṁ pravartate*. "Everything is made from My bodily limbs, and I am therefore the original source of all creations."

The impersonalists argue that there is no use in worshiping the Lord when everything is nothing but the Lord Himself. The personalist, however, worships the Lord out of a great sense of gratitude, utilizing the ingredients born out of the bodily limbs of the Lord. The fruits and flowers are available from the body of the earth, and yet mother earth is worshiped by the sensible devotee with ingredients born from the earth. Similarly, mother Ganges is worshiped by the water of the Ganges, and yet the worshiper enjoys the result of such worship. Worship of the Lord is also performed by the ingredients born from the bodily limbs of the Lord, and yet the worshiper, who is himself a part of the Lord, achieves

the result of devotional service to the Lord. While the impersonalist wrongly concludes that he is the Lord himself, the personalist, out of a great gratitude, worships the Lord in devotional service, knowing perfectly well that nothing is different from the Lord. The devotee therefore endeavors to apply everything in the service of the Lord because he knows that everything is the property of the Lord and that no one can claim anything as one's own. This perfect conception of oneness helps the worshiper in being engaged in His loving service, whereas the impersonalist, being falsely puffed up, remains a nondevotee forever, without being recognized by the Lord.

## TEXT 24

तेषु यज्ञस्य पशवः सवनस्पतयः कुशाः ।  
इदं च देवयजनं कालश्चोरुणान्वितः ॥२४॥

*teṣu yajñasya paśavaḥ  
savanaspatayaḥ kuśāḥ  
idaṁ ca deva-yajanaṁ  
kālaś coru-guṇānvitah*

*teṣu*—in such sacrifices; *yajñasya*—of the sacrificial performance; *paśavaḥ*—the animals or the sacrificial ingredients; *sa-vanaspatayaḥ*—along with flowers and leaves; *kuśāḥ*—the straw; *idaṁ*—all these; *ca*—as also; *deva-yajanaṁ*—the sacrificial altar; *kālah*—a suitable time; *ca*—as also; *uru*—great; *guṇa-anvitaḥ*—qualified.

## TRANSLATION

For performing sacrificial ceremonies, one requires sacrificial ingredients, such as flowers, leaves and straw, along with the sacrificial altar and a suitable time [spring].

## TEXT 25

वस्तून्पोषधयः स्नेहा रसलोहमृदो जलम् ।  
ऋचो यजूषि सामानि चातुर्होत्रं च सत्तम ॥२५॥

*vastūny ośadhayaḥ snehā  
rasa-loha-mṛdo jalam  
ṛco yajūṣi sāmāni  
cātur-hotraṁ ca sattama*

*vastūni*—utensils; *ośadhayaḥ*—grains; *snehāḥ*—clarified butter; *rasa-loha-mṛdah*—honey, gold and earth; *jalam*—water; *ṛcaḥ*—the Rg Veda; *yajūṣi*—the Yajur Veda; *sāmāni*—the Sāma Veda; *cātuh-hotram*—four persons conducting the performance; *ca*—all these; *sattama*—O most pious one.

## TRANSLATION

Other requirements are utensils, grains, clarified butter, honey, gold, earth, water, the Rg Veda, Yajur Veda and Sāma Veda and four priests to perform the sacrifice.

## PURPORT

To perform a sacrifice successfully, at least four expert priests are needed: one who can offer (*hotā*), one who can chant (*udgātā*), one who can kindle the sacrificial fire without the aid of separate fire (*adhvaryu*), and one who can supervise (*brahmā*). Such sacrifices were conducted from the birth of Brahmā, the first living creature, and were carried on till the reign of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira. But such expert *brāhmaṇa* priests are very rare in this age of corruption and quarrel, and therefore in the present age only the *yajña* of chanting the holy name of the Lord is recommended. The scriptures enjoin:

*harer nāma harer nāma  
harer nāmaiva kevalam  
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva  
nāsty eva gatir anyathā  
(continued in next issue)*

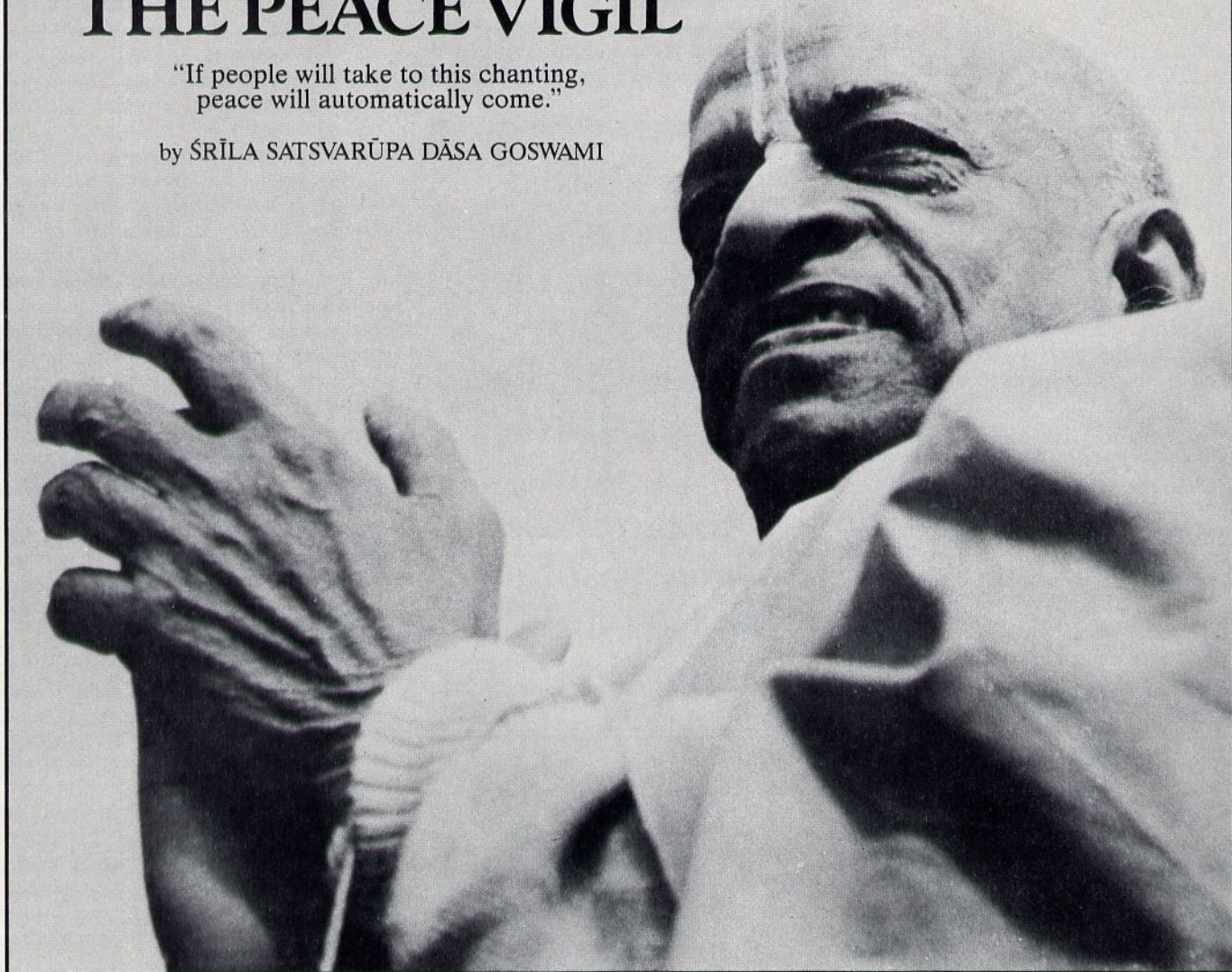


The Biography of a Pure Devotee

## THE PEACE VIGIL

"If people will take to this chanting,  
peace will automatically come."

by ŚRĪLA SATSVARŪPA DĀSA GOSWAMI



*New York's Lower East Side in the late '60s had proved a fertile field for Śrīla Prabhupāda's planting the first seeds of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the West. Now the intensifying war in Vietnam, bringing forth a widespread clamor for peace, provided him an opportunity to present Kṛṣṇa consciousness as the real peace formula.*

The United States' recently increased involvement in Vietnam was creating an increase of opposition to the war. On July 29, American planes had bombed North Vietnam's two major population centers, Hanoi and Haiphong—an escala-

tion which brought expressions of regret from several allied countries, including Canada, France, and Japan. United Nations Secretary General U Thant openly criticized America's policy in Vietnam. Further opposition to the war ranged from the U.S. Senate down to newly formed pacifist groups, and dissenters held peace marches, sit-ins, and rallies in protest of the war and draft.

Religious protest was led by Pope Paul VI. And the World Council of Churches decried America's involvement in Vietnam and called for a halt in the fighting as "the most effective step" toward negotiation. On August 6 (the anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima) there were demonstrations in many major American cities, including a peace vigil at the United Nations

Headquarters in New York.

On August 31, there would begin another two-week-long peace vigil before the United Nations General Assembly Building, and Mr. Larry Bogart had invited Prabhupāda and his followers to open the vigil of "praying for peace." Larry Bogart, who worked at the United Nations Headquarters, had become friends with the Swami and had volunteered his help by arranging to print stationery for the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. The letterhead was designed by James Greene with a sketch of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, and Mr. Bogart's name also appeared on the stationery at the head of the list of ISKCON trustees.

Prabhupāda accepted Mr. Bogart's invitation to the peace vigil. Prabhupāda saw

From *Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta*, by Sat-svarūpa dāsa Goswami. © 1980 by the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust.



it as an opportunity to publicly chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, so he was glad to attend. He announced to his congregation that Monday the thirty-first, instead of the usual morning class at 6:30, everyone should meet at the United Nations Headquarters for a special *kīrtana*.

August 31

Some met at the storefront and went by bus, carrying *karatālas*, a tambourine, and the Swami's bongo. Swamiji rode with a few of his followers in a taxi. The typical dress of his followers consisted of well-worn sneakers, black pants or blue jeans, and T-shirts or button-down sport shirts. Traveling uptown in the early morning put the boys in a lighthearted spirit, and when they saw Swamiji at the U.N. in his flowing saffron robes they became inspired. Swamiji began the chanting, but right away the peace vigil organizers stepped in and asked him to stop. This was a "silent vigil," they said, and it should have prayerful, non-violent silence. The boys were crushed, but Swamiji accepted the restriction and began silently chanting on his beads.

A dignitary stood up before the assembly and made a short speech in which he mentioned Gandhi, and then he turned to Prabhupāda and indicated that he could now speak about peace. Standing erectly, the U.N. skyscraper looming behind him, Swamiji spoke in a soft voice. The world must accept that God is the proprietor of everything and the friend of everyone, he said. Only then can we have real peace. Mr. Bogart had scheduled the Swami for two hours of silent prayer. Prabhupāda had the devotees sit together and softly chant *japa* until their two scheduled hours were up. Then they left.

As Prabhupāda rode back downtown in the heavy morning traffic, he said New York reminded him of Calcutta. Amid the start-and-stop motion and noise of the traffic he explained, "We have nothing to do with peace vigils. We simply want to spread this chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, that's all. If people take to this chanting, peace will automatically come. Then they won't have to artificially try for peace."

September 1

The *New York Post* ran a picture of Swamiji's group at the United Nations Building. Steve brought the clipping in to Prabhupāda: "Swamiji, look. They have referred to you here as 'Sami Krishna!'"

Prabhupāda: "Sami Krishna"? That's all right."

In the picture, some of the boys were sitting with their heads resting on their arms. "Where are you?" Prabhupāda asked. Steve pointed. "Oh, you chant like this, with your head down?"

Prabhupāda had participated in the peace vigil to oblige his contact, Mr. Bogart. Now Mr. Bogart was phoning to offer his appreciation and agreeing to visit the storefront. He wanted to help, and he would discuss how the Swami could solicit help from important people for his movement of Indian culture and peace.

Prabhupāda regarded Mr. Bogart's imminent visit as very important, and he wanted to cook for him personally and

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**He wanted  
to know why  
Stanley wanted  
fifty dollars.  
Stanley replied  
in a small voice,  
"I want  
to purchase  
some gasoline  
and set myself  
on fire."**

---

receive him in his apartment with the best hospitality. When the day arrived, Prabhupāda and Keith cooked together in the small kitchen for several hours, making the best Indian delicacies. Prabhupāda posted Stanley downstairs and told him not to allow anyone to come up while he was cooking the feast for Mr. Bogart. Stanley assented, blinking his eyes with his far-off "saintly" look.

Stanley stationed himself downstairs in the storefront. A few of the boys were there, and he told them, "You can't go up to see the Swami—no one can." About twelve noon, Larry Bogart arrived, pale, elderly, and well dressed, by Lower East Side standards. He said he wanted to see Swami Bhaktivedanta. "Sorry," Stanley informed him, his boyish face trying to impress the stranger with the seriousness of the order, "the Swami is busy now, and he said no one can see him." Mr. Bogart decided he would wait. There was no chair in the storefront, but Stanley brought him a folding chair. It was a hot day. Mr. Bogart looked at his watch several times. A half hour passed. Stanley sat chanting and sometimes staring off blankly. After an

hour, Mr. Bogart asked if he could see the Swami now. Stanley assured him that he could not, and Mr. Bogart left in a huff.

Upstairs, Swamiji had become anxious, wondering why Mr. Bogart had not arrived. Finally, he sent Keith downstairs, and Stanley told him about the man whom he had turned away. "What?" Keith exploded. "But that was . . ."

Within moments, Swamiji heard what had happened. He became furious. He came down to the storefront: "You fool! You silly fool!" He turned and angrily rebuked everyone in the room, but mostly Stanley. No one had ever seen the Swami so angry. Then Swamiji walked away in disgust and returned to his apartment.

Stanley had been going off the deep end for some time, and now he became even more abstracted in his behavior. Stanley's mother knew her son had been troubled for years, and she had therefore requested Prabhupāda to keep a very close watch on him. But now the boy deteriorated in his responsibilities and stopped cleaning the kitchen and storefront. He would stand alone looking at something. He was gloomy and sometimes spoke of suicide. And he stopped chanting regularly. The boys didn't know what to do, but they thought perhaps he should be sent home to his mother.

One day, Stanley went up to see the Swami. He came in and sat down.

Prabhupāda: "Yes?"

Stanley: "May I have fifty dollars?"

Prabhupāda: "Why?"

Prabhupāda used to handle all the money himself, so when his boys needed something, even if it were only twenty-five cents for the bus, they had to see Swamiji. He was never wasteful. He was so frugal that whenever he received a letter, he would carefully tear the envelope apart and use the reverse side as writing paper. So he wanted to know why Stanley wanted fifty dollars. Stanley replied in a small voice, "I want to purchase some gasoline and set myself on fire." Prabhupāda saw Chuck at the doorway and told him to call Bruce at once. Bruce quickly came up and sat with Prabhupāda and Stanley. Prabhupāda told Bruce—whom he had recently appointed to handle petty cash—to give Stanley fifty dollars, and he had Stanley repeat why he wanted the money.

"But Swamiji," Bruce protested, "we don't have that much money."

"There, you see, Stanley," Prabhupāda spoke very calmly. "Bruce says we don't have the money." Then they phoned Stanley's mother. Later Prabhupāda said that because Stanley had asked for fifty dollars for gasoline, which cost only thirty-five cents, he could therefore understand Stanley was crazy.

(To be continued)



# The Hard Rain Of Karma

The systematic cultivation of greed  
can lead only to violence and worldwide disaster.

by ŚRĪLA RĀMEŚVARA SWAMI

The whole world has come under the spell of economic development, which, in a simpler sense, means greed. And our leaders themselves openly admit it—they actually want us to become greedy. At an international conference in the 1930s, John Maynard Keynes, the founding father of our modern economic system, declared, “We must pretend to ourselves and to others that vice is a virtue and that virtue is a vice, because vice is useful and virtue is not. For a little while longer usury, avarice, and precaution must be our gods, for they alone can lead us through the tunnel of economic necessity into daylight.” Words of enlightenment from the twentieth century’s leading economist.

Everyone knows that the basic charm for selling any product is advertising. And the basic principle of advertising is to be able to convince even a person who doesn’t want your product that yes, somehow he wants your product.

Society, we are told, must therefore systematically awaken in its members—individually and collectively—greed, the desire to own and control as many material possessions as possible. This will make for economic development, which our leaders proclaim can solve the world’s problems.

But by awakening greed, they will never be able to realize their desire for a more peaceful world. How will increasing selfishness reduce political and ideological tensions? How will it reduce international competition for wealth and resources? How will it solve the energy crisis? How will it reduce social tensions and the

breakdown of the family?

Every one of these crises can be traced to greed and selfishness. Why else does one out of every three pregnancies end in abortion? Why else does one out of every two marriages end in divorce? It’s all due to the same root cause—greed and selfishness.

We may ask, Why have we become so violent? Why are we competing with nature? Why are we destroying other life forms? Why are we fighting so fiercely with one another?

There is a root cause. If we want to see why a person acts the way he does, we have to look at how he answers the question “Who am I?” In our era, so-called scientists have persuaded us to accept a materialistic, and basically atheistic, concept of self. For years and years we’ve been bombarded with this kind of materialistic propaganda, and so we have formulated our goals from the concept that “I am this body—I am simply a collection of chemicals.” So naturally our purpose in life is to enjoy physical pleasures derived from physical objects. Progress means material progress. Happiness means happiness for my body. Or, to put it simply, happiness means selfishness and greed.

Man has formulated his goals on the basis of this materialistic philosophy. If we examine any nation’s goals (it doesn’t matter what ideology it professes), we’ll find that the real goal is economic development. Eastern bloc, Western bloc, developed or developing nations—it doesn’t matter. They all embrace the same goals, because their basic philosophy of life is the same.

And what happens after the death of the body? That doesn’t matter. Even many of today’s religionists think they’ll automatically go to heaven just because they profess a certain faith. So they’re not

worried about what happens after death. And, of course, to the atheist it hardly matters. So believer and nonbeliever follow the same path, the path of greed.

Unless we’re willing to go deep and change our definition of ourselves, we won’t be able to solve the problems caused by greed and selfishness. After we change this definition, then we can redefine the purpose and goal of our lives, and this will change our course of action.

Granted, it’s not so easy to redefine ourselves and our life’s purpose. Most people are wary of blindly accepting a religious doctrine. But the *Vedas* of India offer much more than some creationist theory based only on faith. The hundreds of volumes of Vedic literature contain a very rational, logical, and scientific explanation of life, an explanation not to be found in any other philosophical or religious literature in the world. The sages who compiled the Vedic literatures took great care to define life in terms at once spiritual and scientific.

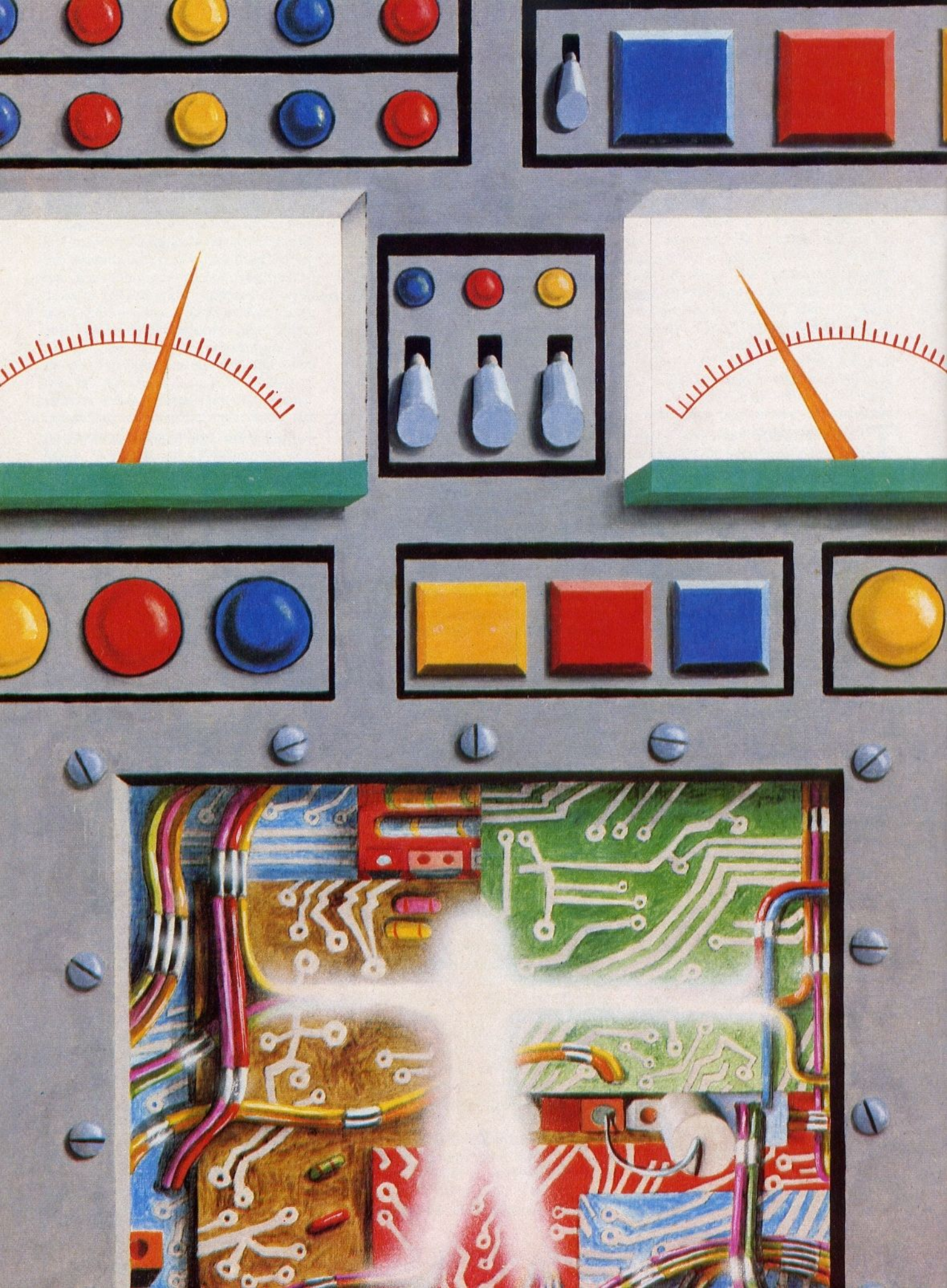
The first thing the *Vedas* teach us is that we are not just combinations of chemicals. Anyone can see this fact. When you analyze the different parts of the body, you cannot find life. You just find hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, carbon, and so on. And none of these elements has consciousness, the primary symptom of life. The source of consciousness is not atoms but the soul. If so-called scientists disagree, let them mix some chemicals in their test tubes and produce a conscious living being.

And more, the *Vedas* give a simple process that enables us to *perceive* our higher, spiritual identity. In this age, the *Vedas* recommend that we meditate on the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. This transcendental sound vibration comes from the spiritual platform of existence; it penetrates the  
(continued on page 29)

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Science

# THE COMPUTERIZED MR. JONES

Can a machine be conscious?

by SADĀPŪTA DĀSA

Science fiction writers often try to solve the problems of old age and death by taking advantage of the idea that a human being is essentially a complex machine. In a typical scene, doctors and technicians scan the head of the dying Samuel Jones with a "cerebroscope," a highly sensitive instrument that records in full detail the synaptic connections of the neurons in his brain. A computer then systematically transforms this information into a computer program that faithfully simulates that brain's particular pattern of internal activity.

When this program is run on a suitable computer, the actual personality of Mr. Jones seems to come to life through the medium of the machine. "I've escaped death!" the computer exults through its electronic phoneme generator. Scanning about the room with stereoscopically mounted TV cameras, the computerized "Mr. Jones" appears somewhat disoriented in his new embodiment. But when interviewed by old friends, "he" displays Mr. Jones's personal traits in complete detail. In the story, Mr. Jones lives again in the form of the computer. Now his only problem is figuring out how to avoid being erased from the computer's memory.

Although this story may seem fantastic,

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some of the most influential thinkers in the world of modern science take very seriously the basic principles behind it. In fact, researchers in the life sciences now almost universally assume that a living being is nothing more than a highly complex machine built from molecular components. In the fields of philosophy and psychology, this assumption leads to the inevitable conclusion that the mind involves nothing more than the biophysical functioning of the brain. According to this viewpoint, we can define in entirely mechanistic terms the words we normally apply to human personality—words like *consciousness, perception, meaning, purpose, and intelligence*.

Along with this line of thinking have always gone idle speculations about the construction of machines that can exhibit these traits of personality. But now things have gone beyond mere speculation. The advent of modern electronic computers has given us a new field of scientific investigation dedicated to actually building such machines. This is the field of artificial intelligence research, or "cognitive engineering," in which scientists proceed on the assumption that digital computers of sufficient speed and complexity can in fact produce all aspects of conscious personality. Thus we learn in the 1979 M.I.T. college catalogue that cognitive engineering involves an approach to the subjects of mind and intelligence which is "quite different from that of philosophers and psychologists, in that the cognitive engineer

tries to produce intelligence."

In this article we shall examine the question of whether it is possible for a machine to possess a conscious self that perceives itself as seer and doer. Our thesis will be that while computers may in principle generate complex sequences of behavior comparable to those produced by human beings, computers cannot possess conscious awareness without the intervention of principles of nature higher than those known to modern science. Ironically, we can base strong arguments in support of this thesis on some of the very concepts that form the foundation of artificial intelligence research. As far as computers are concerned, the most reasonable inference we can draw from these arguments is that computers cannot be conscious. When applied to the machine of the human brain, these arguments support an alternative, nonmechanistic understanding of the conscious self.

To begin, let us raise some questions about a hypothetical computer possessing intelligence and conscious self-awareness on a human level. This computer need not duplicate the mind of a particular human being, such as our Mr. Jones, but must simply experience an awareness of thoughts, feelings, and sensory perceptions comparable to our own.

First, let us briefly examine the internal organization of our sentient computer. Since it belongs to the species of digital computers, it consists of an information storehouse, or memory, an apparatus called



the central processing unit (CPU), and various devices for exchanging information with the environment.

The memory is simply a passive medium used to record large amounts of information in the form of numbers. We can visualize a typical computer memory as a series of labeled boxes, each of which can store a number. Some of these boxes normally contain numerically coded instructions specifying the computer's program of activity. Others contain data of various kinds, and still others store the intermediate steps of calculations. These numbers can be represented physically in the memory as patterns of charges on microminiature capacitors, patterns of magnetization on small magnets, or in many other ways.

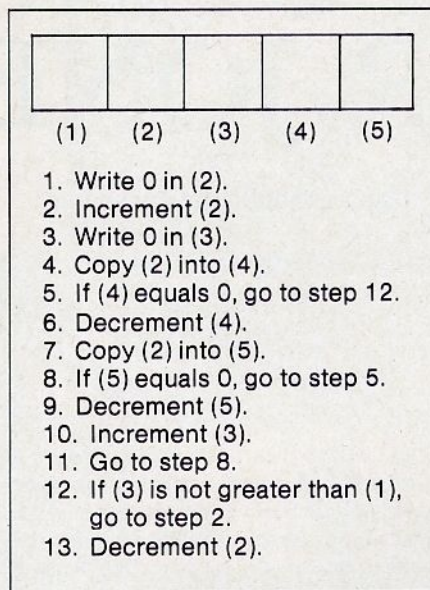
The CPU performs all the computer's active operations, which consist of a fixed number of simple operations of symbol manipulation. These operations typically involve the following steps: First, from a specified location (or "address") in the memory, the CPU obtains a coded instruction identifying the operation to be performed. According to this instruction, the CPU may obtain additional data from the memory. Then the CPU performs the operation itself. This may involve input (reading a number into the memory from an external device) or output (transmitting a number from the memory to an external device). Or the operation may involve transforming a number according to some simple rule, or shifting a number from one memory location to another. In any case, the final step of the operation will always involve the selection of a memory address where the next coded instruction is to be sought.

A computer's activity consists of nothing more than steps of this kind, performed one after another. The instruction codes stored in the passive memory specify the operations the CPU is to execute. The function of the CPU is simply to carry them out sequentially. The CPU's physical construction, like that of the memory, may include many kinds of components, ranging from microminiature semiconductor junctions to electromechanical relays. It is only the logical arrangement of these components, and not their particular physical constitution, that determines the functioning of the CPU.

### Church's Thesis

We can most easily understand the operation of a computer by considering a simple example. Figure 1 illustrates a program of computer instructions for calculating the square root of a number.<sup>1</sup> The thirteen numbered statements correspond to the list of coded instructions stored in the computer's memory. (Here, for clarity's sake, we have written them out in English.) The five boxes correspond to

areas in the memory that store data and intermediate computational steps. To simulate the operation of the computer, place a number, such as 9, in box (1). Then simply follow the instructions. When you have completed the last instruction, the square root of your original number will be in box (2). In a computer, each of these instructions would be carried out by the CPU. They illustrate the kind of elementary operations used by present-day computers (although the operations do not correspond exactly to those of any particular computer).



**Fig. 1.** Computer program for computing the square root of a number. To simulate the operation of the computer, place the number in box (1) and follow the instructions, starting with step 1. When step 13 is completed, the square root of the number (rounded down to an integer) will be in box (2). (In these instructions, "increment a number" means to add 1 to it, and "decrement a number" means to subtract 1 from it.)

The method of finding a square root given in our example may seem cumbersome and obscure, but it is typical of how computers operate. In fact, the practical applicability of computers rests on the observation that every fixed scheme of computation ever formulated can be reduced to a list of simple operations like the one in our example. This observation, first made by several mathematicians in the 1930s and '40s, is commonly known as Church's thesis. It implies that, in principle, any scheme of symbol manipulation we can precisely define can be carried out by a modern digital computer.

At this point, let us consider our hypothetical sentient computer. According to the exponents of artificial intelligence, the intricate behavior characteristic of a human being is nothing more than a highly complex scheme of symbol manipulation. Using Church's thesis, we can break down this

scheme into a program of instructions comparable to our example in Figure 1. The only difference is that this program will be exceedingly long and complex—it may run to millions of steps. Of course, up till now no one has even come close to actually producing a formal symbolic description of human behavior. But for the sake of argument let's suppose such a description could be written and expressed as a computer program.

Now, assuming a computer is executing such a highly complex program, let us see what we can understand about the computer's possible states of consciousness. When executing the program, the computer's CPU will be carrying out only one instruction at any given time, and the millions of instructions comprising the rest of the program will exist only as an inactive record in the computer's memory. Now, intuitively it seems doubtful that a mere inactive record could have anything to do with consciousness. Where, then, does the computer's consciousness reside? At any given moment the CPU is simply performing some elementary operation, such as "Copy the number in box (1687002) into box (9994563)." In what way can we correlate this activity with the conscious perception of thoughts and feelings?

The researchers of artificial intelligence have an answer to this question, which they base on the idea of levels of organization in a computer program. We shall take a few paragraphs here to briefly explain and investigate this answer. First we shall need to know what is meant by "levels of organization." Therefore let us once again consider the simple computer program of Figure 1. Then we shall apply the concept of levels of organization to the program of our "sentient" computer and see what light this concept can shed on the relation between consciousness and the computer's internal physical states.

### Levels of Organization

Although the square-root program of Figure 1 may appear to be a formless list of instructions, it actually possesses a definite structure, which is outlined in Figure 2. This structure consists of four levels of organization. On the highest level, the function of the program is described in a single sentence that uses the symbol *square root*. On the next level, the meaning of this symbol is defined by a description of the method the program uses to find square roots. This description makes use of the symbol *squared*, which is similarly defined on the next lower level in terms of another symbol, *sum*. Finally, the symbol *sum* defined on the lowest level in terms of the combination of elementary operations actually used to compute sums in the program. Although for the sake of clarity we have used English sentences in



Figure 2, the description on each level would normally use only symbols for elementary operations, or higher-order symbols defined on the next level down.

These graded symbolic descriptions actually define the program, in the sense that if we begin with level 1 and expand each higher-order symbol in terms of its definition on a lower level, we will wind up writing the list of elementary operations in Figure 1. The descriptions are useful in that they provide an intelligible account of what happens in the program. Thus on one level we can say that numbers are being squared, on another level that they are being added, and on yet another that they are being incremented and decremented. But the levels of organization of the program are only abstract properties of the list of operations given in Figure 1. When a computer executes this program, these levels do not exist in any real sense, for the computer actually performs only the elementary operations in the list.

In fact, we can go further and point out that even this last statement is not strictly true, because what we call "the elementary operations" are themselves symbols, such as *Increment (3)*, that refer to abstract properties of the computer's underlying machinery. When a computer operates, all that really happens is that matter and energy undergo certain transformations according to a pattern determined by the computer's physical structure.

In general, any computer program that performs some complex task can be resolved into a hierarchy of levels of description similar to the one given above. Researchers in artificial intelligence generally visualize their projected "intelligent" or "sentient" programs in terms of a hierarchy such as the following: On the bottom level they propose to describe the program in terms of elementary operations. Then come several successive levels involving mathematical procedures of greater and greater intricacy and sophistication. After this comes a level in which they hope to define symbols that refer to basic constituents of thoughts, feelings, and sensory perceptions. Next comes a series of levels involving more and more sophisticated mental features, culminating in the level of the ego, or self.

Here, then, is how artificial intelligence researchers understand the relation between computer operations and consciousness: Consciousness is associated with a "sentient" program's higher levels of operation—levels on which symbolic transformations take place that directly correspond to higher sensory processes and the transformations of thoughts. On the other hand, the lower levels are not associated with consciousness. Their structure can be changed without affecting the consciousness of the computer, as long as the higher-

level symbols are still given equivalent definitions. Referring again to our square-root program, we see that this idea is confirmed by the fact that the process of finding a square root given on level 2 in Figure 2 will remain essentially the same even if we define the operation of squaring on level 3 in some different but equivalent way.

If we were to adopt a strictly behavioristic use of the word *consciousness*, then this understanding of computerized consciousness might be satisfactory—granting, of course, that someone could indeed create a program with the required higher-order organization. Using such a criterion, we would designate certain patterns of behavior as conscious and others as not. Generally, a sequence of behavioral events

1. Find the *square root* of X.
2. The square root of X is one less than the first number Y with Y *squared* greater than X.
3. Y squared is the *sum* of Y copies of Y.
4. The sum of Y and another number is the result of incrementing that number Y times.

**Fig. 2.** Levels of organization of the program in Figure 1. The program in Figure 1 can be analyzed in terms of a hierarchy of abstract levels. The level of elementary operations is at the bottom, and each higher level makes use of symbols (such as *squared*) that are defined on the level beneath it.

would have to be quite long to qualify as "conscious." For example, a long speech may exhibit certain complex features that identify it as "conscious," but none of the words or short phrases that make it up would be long enough to display such features. Using such a criterion, one might want to designate a certain sequence of computer operations as "conscious" because it possesses certain abstract higher-order properties. Then one might analyze the overall behavior of the computer as "conscious" in terms of these properties, whereas any single elementary operation would be too short to qualify.

### Defining Consciousness

We are interested, however, not in categorizing patterns of behavior as conscious or unconscious but rather in understanding the actual subjective experience of conscious awareness. To clearly distinguish this conception of consciousness from the behavioral one, we shall briefly pause here to describe it and establish its status as a subject of serious inquiry. By *consciousness* we mean the awareness of thoughts and sensations that we directly perceive and *know* that we perceive. Since other

persons are similar to us, it is natural to suppose that they are similarly conscious. If this is accepted, then it follows that consciousness is an objectively existing feature of reality that tends to be associated with certain material structures, such as the bodies of living human beings.

Now, when a common person hears that a computer can be conscious, he naturally tends to interpret this statement in the sense we have just described. Thus he will imagine that a computer can have subjective, conscious experiences similar to his own. Certainly this is the idea behind such stories as the one with which we began this piece. One imagines the computerized "Mr. Jones," as he looks about the room through the computer's TV cameras, actually feeling astonishment at his strange transformation.

If the computerized Mr. Jones could indeed have such a subjective experience, then we would face the situation depicted in Figure 3. On the one hand, the conscious experience of the computer would exist—its subjective experience of colors, sounds, thoughts, and feelings would be an actual reality. On the other hand, the physical structures of the computer would exist. However, we cannot directly correlate consciousness with the actual physical processes of the computer, nor can we relate consciousness to the execution of individual elementary operations, such as those in Figure 1. According to the artificial-intelligence researchers, consciousness should correspond to higher-order abstract properties of the computer's physical states—properties described by symbols such as *thought* and *feeling*, which stand at the top of a lofty pyramid of abstract definitions. Indeed, these abstract properties are the only conceivable features of our sentient computer that could have any direct correlation with the contents of consciousness.

Since consciousness is real, however, and these abstract properties are not, we can conclude only that something must exist in nature that can somehow "read" these properties from the computer's physical states. This entity is represented in Figure 3 by the arrow connecting the real contents of consciousness with higher levels in the hierarchy of abstract symbolic descriptions of the sentient computer. The entity must have the following characteristics:

(1) It must possess sufficient powers of discrimination to recognize certain highly abstract patterns of organization in arrangements of matter.

(2) It must be able to establish a link between consciousness and such arrangements of matter. In particular, it must modify the contents of conscious experience in accordance with the changes these abstract properties undergo as time passes and the



arrangements of matter are transformed.

There is clearly no place for an entity of this kind in our current picture of what is going on in a computer. Indeed, we can conclude only that this entity must correspond to a feature of nature completely unknown to modern science.

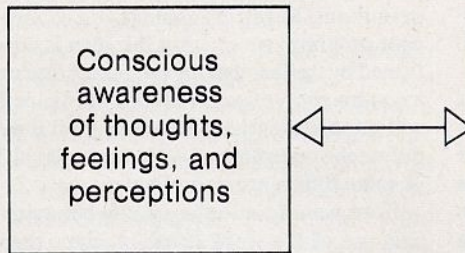
This, then, is the conclusion forced upon us if we assume that a computer can be conscious. Of course, we can easily avoid this conclusion by supposing that no computer will ever be conscious, and this may indeed be the case. Aside from computers, however, what can we say about the relation between consciousness and the physical body in a human being? On one hand we know human beings possess consciousness, and on the other modern science teaches us that the human body is an extremely complex machine composed of molecular components. Can we arrive at an understanding of human consciousness that does not require the introduction of an entity of the kind described by statements (1) and (2)?

Ironically, if we try to base our understanding on modern scientific theory, then the answer is no. The reason is that all modern scientific attempts to understand human consciousness depend, directly or indirectly, on an analogy between the human brain and a computer. In fact, the scientific model for human consciousness is *machine* consciousness!

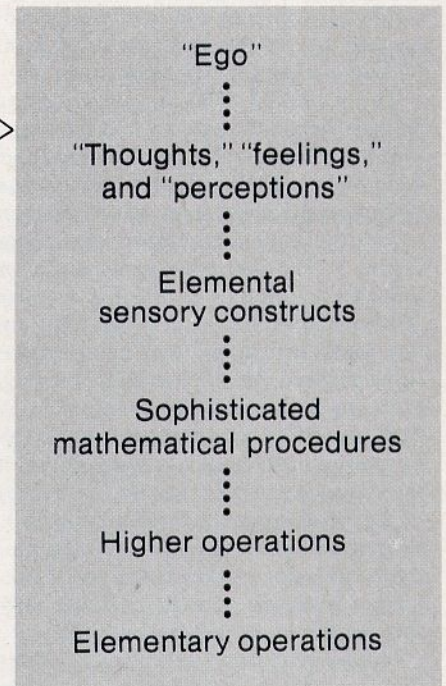
### The Mechanical Brain

Modern scientists regard the brain as the seat of consciousness. They understand the brain to consist of many different kinds of cells, each a molecular machine. Of these, the nerve cells, or neurons, are known to exhibit electrochemical activities roughly analogous to those of the logical switching elements used in computer circuitry. Although scientists at present understand the brain's operation only vaguely, they generally conjecture that these neurons form an information-processing network equivalent to a computer's.

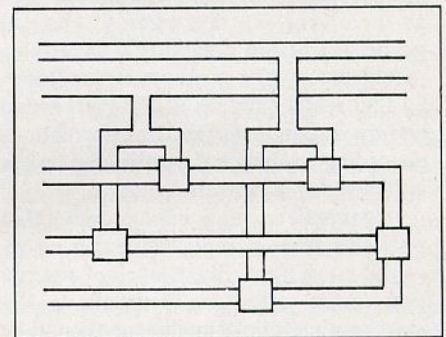
This conjecture naturally leads to the picture of the brain shown in Figure 4. Here thoughts, sensations, and feelings must correspond to higher levels of brain activity, which resemble the higher organizational levels of a complex computer program. Just as the higher levels of such a program are abstract, these higher levels of brain activity must also be abstract. They can have no actual existence, for all that actually happens in the brain is that certain physical processes take place, such as the pumping of sodium ions through neural cell walls. If we try to account for the existence of human consciousness in the context of this picture of the brain, we must conclude (by the same reasoning as before) that some entity described by



**Fig. 3.** The relation between consciousness and the physical structures of a hypothetical sentient computer. If we assume that the computer is conscious, then both the contents of the computer's consciousness and the physical hardware of the computer are real. However, the contents of consciousness can correspond only to higher-order abstract properties of this hardware. These properties are represented within the tinted section by a hierarchy of symbolic descriptions. Such properties exist only in an abstract sense—they are not actually present in the physical hardware of the computer.



Computer hardware



statements (1) and (2) must exist to account for the connection between consciousness and abstract properties of brain states.

Furthermore, if we closely examine the current scientific world view, we can see that its conception of the brain as a computer does not depend merely on some superficial details of our understanding of the brain. Rather, on a deeper level, the conception follows necessarily from a mechanistic view of the world. Mechanistic explanations of phenomena are, by definition, based on systems of calculation. By Church's thesis, all systems of calculation can in principle be represented in terms of computer operations. In effect, all explanations of phenomena in the current scientific world view can be expressed in terms of either computer operations or some equivalent symbolic scheme.

This implies that all attempts to describe human consciousness within the basic framework of modern science must lead to the same problems we have encountered in our analysis of machine consciousness.<sup>2</sup> To account for consciousness, we shall inevitably require some entity like the one described in statements (1) and (2). Yet in the present theoretical system of science we find nothing, either in the brain or in a digital computer, that corresponds to this entity. Indeed, the present theoretical system could never provide for such an entity, for any mechanistic addition to the current picture of, say, the brain would simply constitute another part of that mechanistic system, and the need for an entity satisfying (1) and (2) would still arise.

Clearly, then, we must revise the basic theoretical approach of modern science if

we are adequately to account for the nature of conscious beings. If we cannot do this in mechanistic terms, then we must adopt some other mode of scientific explanation. This brings us to the question of just what constitutes a scientific explanation.

### A Nonmechanistic Explanation

Any theory intended to explain a phenomenon must make use of a variety of descriptive terms. We may define some of these terms by combining other terms of the theory, but there must inevitably be some terms, called primitive or fundamental, that we cannot so define. In a mechanistic theory, all the primitive terms correspond to numbers or arrangements of numbers, and scientists at present generally try to cast all their theories into this form. But a theory does not have to be mechanistic to qualify as scientific. It is perfectly valid to adopt the view that a theoretical explanation is scientific if it is logically consistent and if it enables us to deal practically with the phenomenon in question and enlarge our knowledge of it through direct experience. Such a scientific



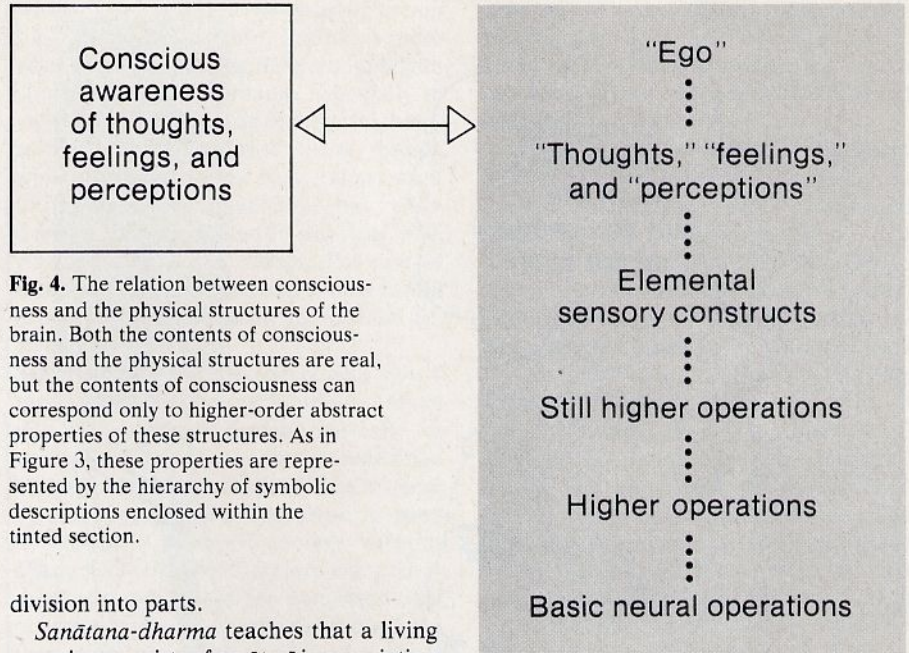
explanation may contain primitive terms that cannot be made to correspond to arrangements of numbers.

In our remaining space, we shall outline an alternative approach to the understanding of consciousness—an approach that is scientific in the sense we have described, but that is not mechanistic. Known as *sanātana-dharma*, this approach is expounded in India's ancient Vedic literatures, such as *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. We shall give a short description of *sanātana-dharma* and show how it satisfactorily accounts for the connection between consciousness and mechanism. This account is, in fact, based on the kind of entities described in statements (1) and (2), and *sanātana-dharma* very clearly and precisely describes the nature of these entities. Finally, we shall briefly indicate how this system of thought can enlarge our understanding of consciousness by opening up new realms of practical experience.

By accepting conscious personality as the irreducible basis of reality, *sanātana-dharma* departs radically from the mechanistic viewpoint. For those who subscribe to this viewpoint, all descriptions of reality ultimately boil down to combinations of simple, numerically representable entities, such as the particles and fields of physics. *Sanātana-dharma*, on the other hand, teaches that the ultimate foundation of reality is an Absolute Personality, who can be referred to by many personal names, such as Kṛṣṇa and Govinda. This primordial person fully possesses consciousness, senses, intelligence, will, and all other personal faculties. According to *sanātana-dharma*, all of these attributes are absolute, and it is not possible to reduce them to patterns of transformation of some impersonal substrate. Rather, all phenomena, both personal and impersonal, are manifestations of the energy of the Supreme Person, and we cannot fully understand these phenomena without referring to this original source.

The Supreme Person has two basic energies, the internal energy and the external energy. The external energy includes what is commonly known as matter and energy. It is the basis for all the forms and phenomena we perceive through our bodily senses, but it is insentient.

The internal energy, on the other hand, includes innumerable sentient beings called *ātmās*. Each *ātmā* is conscious and possesses all the attributes of a person, including senses, mind, and intelligence. These attributes are inherent features of the *ātmā*, and they are of the same irreducible nature as the corresponding attributes of the Supreme Person. The *ātmās* are atomic, individual personalities who cannot lose their identities, either through amalgamation into a larger whole or by



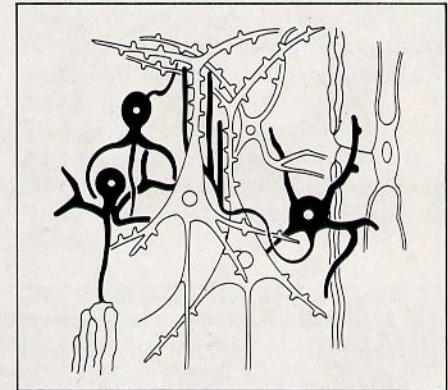
**Fig. 4.** The relation between consciousness and the physical structures of the brain. Both the contents of consciousness and the physical structures are real, but the contents of consciousness can correspond only to higher-order abstract properties of these structures. As in Figure 3, these properties are represented by the hierarchy of symbolic descriptions enclosed within the tinted section.

division into parts.

*Sanātana-dharma* teaches that a living organism consists of an *ātmā* in association with a physical body composed of the external energy. *Bhagavad-gītā* describes the physical body as a machine, or *yantra*, and the *ātmā* as a passenger riding in this machine. When the *ātmā* is embodied, his natural senses are linked up with the physical information-processing system of the body, and thus he perceives the world through the bodily senses. The *ātmā* is the actual conscious self of the living being, and the body is simply an insentient vehicle-like mechanism.

If we refer back to our arguments involving machine consciousness, we can see that in the body the *ātmā* plays the role specified by statements (1) and (2). The *ātmā* is inherently conscious, and he possesses the sensory faculties and intelligence needed to interpret abstract properties of complex brain states. In fact, if we examine statements (1) and (2) we can see that they are not merely satisfied by the *ātmā*; they actually call for some similar kind of sentient, intelligent entity.

We can better understand the position of the *ātmā* as the conscious perceiver of the body by considering what happens when a person reads a book. When a person reads, he becomes aware of various thoughts and ideas corresponding to higher-order abstract properties of the arrangement of ink on the pages. Yet none of these abstract properties actually exists in the book itself, nor would we imagine that the book is conscious of what it records. As Figure 5 shows, to establish a correlation between the book on the one hand and conscious awareness of its contents on the other, there must be a conscious person with intelligence and senses who can read the book. Similarly, for conscious awareness to be associated with the abstract properties of states of a machine, there



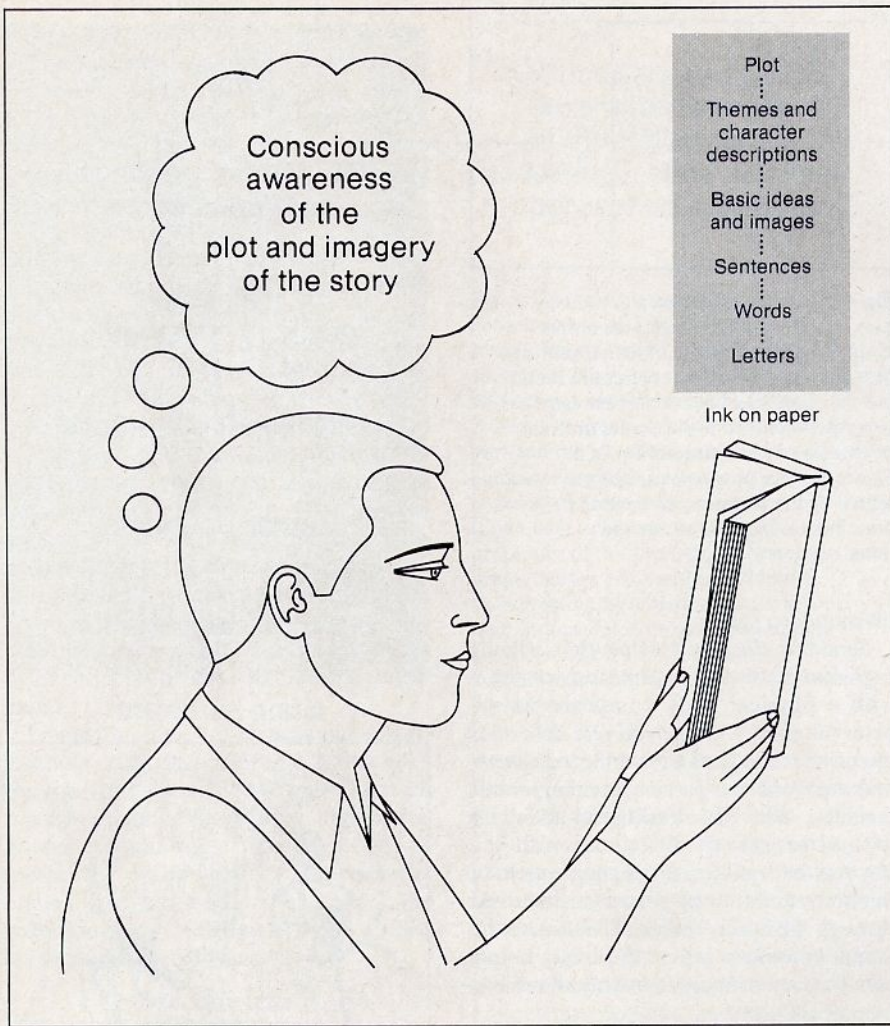
must be some sentient entity to read these states.

At this point one might object that if we try to explain a conscious person by positing the existence of another conscious person within his body, then we have actually explained nothing at all. One can then ask how the consciousness of *this* person is to be explained, and this leads to an infinite regress.

In response, we point out that this objection presupposes that an explanation of consciousness must be mechanistic. But our arguments about machine consciousness actually boil down to the observation that conscious personality cannot be explained mechanistically. An infinite regress of this kind is in fact unavoidable unless we either give up the effort to understand consciousness or posit the existence of a sentient entity that cannot be reduced to a combination of insentient parts. *Sanātana-dharma* regards conscious personality as fundamental and irreducible, and thus the "infinite regress" stops with the *ātmā*.

The real value of the concept of the





**Fig. 5.** The relation between consciousness and the physical structures of a book. When a person reads a book, he becomes aware of higher-order abstract properties of the patterns of ink on paper that are not directly present in these physical structures. One can similarly understand the correlation between consciousness and abstract properties of structures in Figure 4 if we posit the existence of a nonphysical agency with the sensory and cognitive faculties of a conscious person.

*ātmā* as an explanation of consciousness is that it leads directly to further avenues of study and exploration. The very idea that the conscious self possesses its own inherent senses suggests that these senses should be able to function independently of the physical apparatus of the body. In fact, according to *sanātana-dharma* the natural senses of the *ātmā* are indeed not limited to interpreting the physical states of the material brain. The *ātmā* can attain much higher levels of perception, and *sanātana-dharma* primarily deals with effective means whereby a person can realize these capacities in practice.

### The Science of Consciousness

Since neither the Supreme Person nor the individual *ātmās* are combinations of material elements, it is not possible to scrutinize them directly through the material sensory apparatus. On the basis of material sensory information, we can only infer their existence by indirect arguments, such as the ones presented in this article. Ac-

ording to *sanātana-dharma*, however, we can directly observe and understand both the Supreme Person and the *ātmās* by taking advantage of the natural sensory faculties of the *ātmā*. Thus *sanātana-dharma* provides the basis for a true science of consciousness.

Since this science deals with the full potentialities of the *ātmā*, it necessarily ranges far beyond the realm of mechanistic thinking. When the *ātmā* is restricted to the physically embodied state, it can participate in personal activities only through the medium of machines, such as the brain, that generate behavior by the concatenation of impersonal operations. In this stultifying situation, the *ātmā* cannot manifest his full potential.

But the *ātmā* can achieve a higher state of activity, in which it participates directly in a relation of loving reciprocation with the Supreme Person, Kṛṣṇa. Since both the *ātmā* and Kṛṣṇa are by nature sentient and personal, this relationship involves the full use of all the faculties of perception,

thought, feeling, and action. In fact, the direct reciprocal exchange between the *ātmā* and Kṛṣṇa defines the ultimate function and meaning of conscious personality, just as the interaction of an electron with an electric field might be said to define the ultimate meaning of electric charge. *Sanātana-dharma* teaches that the actual nature of consciousness can be understood by the *ātmā* only on this level of conscious activity.

Thus, *sanātana-dharma* provides us with an account of the nature of the conscious being that takes us far beyond the conceptions of the mechanistic world view. While supporting the idea that the body is a machine, this account maintains that the essence of conscious personality is to be found in an entity that interacts with this machine but is wholly distinct from it. Furthermore, one can know the true nature of this entity only in an absolute context completely transcending the domain of machines.

We have argued that the strictly mechanistic approach to life cannot satisfactorily explain consciousness. If we are to progress in this area, we clearly need some radically different approach, and we have briefly indicated how *sanātana-dharma* provides such an alternative. *Sanātana-dharma* explains the relationship between consciousness and machines by boldly positing that conscious personality is irreducible. It then goes on to elucidate the fundamental meaning of personal existence by opening up a higher realm of conscious activity—a realm that can be explored by direct experience. In contrast, the mechanistic world view can at best provide us with the sterile, behavioristic caricature of conscious personality epitomized by the computerized Mr. Jones.

### Notes

1. In actual computer applications, much more sophisticated methods of calculating square roots would be used. The method presented in Figure 1 is intended to provide a simple example of the nature of computer programs.
2. For the sake of clarity, let us briefly indicate why this is so. Suppose one could describe a model of a sentient entity by means of a computer program. Then a certain level of organization of the program would correspond to the elementary constituents of the model. For example, in a quantum mechanical model these might be quantum wave functions. The level of the program corresponding to "thoughts" and "feelings" would be much higher than this level. Hence we conclude that this "cognitive" level would not in any sense exist in the actual system being modeled. It would correspond only to abstract properties of the states of this system, and thus an entity of the kind described in (1) and (2) would be needed to establish the association between the system and the contents of consciousness.



# Religious Principle

(continued from page 8)

upon the need for the individual to attain a form of purity or transcendental status and doesn't hold out very much hope for the transformation of social or corporate structures in the historical world. But I think there are many of us here who think of ourselves as representing a tradition in the Jewish and Christian perspectives in which we would hold out more hope for the action and presence of God in the redemption of corporate, historical structures of human existence, rather than a more individual notion of deliverance. I think that reflects an attitude toward the material which is in some ways different.

Let me illustrate by going back to a point you quoted from Jesus on not being able to love God and Mammon at the same time and your interpretation of that, which was that you can't love God and *material* at the same time. The more accurate translations of the New Testament, the more recent ones, put it very bluntly and say you can't love God and *money* at the same time—which is really what *Mammon* is supposed to mean. Now, money and matter are not the same. A very, very important point. Money and matter are not the same. Money is in fact in some ways a denial of and a rejection of the possibilities and beauty and significance of the earth, of matter, of the material, the flesh. It's an abstraction. Money is an abstraction. It's a paper or, say, a piece of silver or gold that has no significance whatever except as it's used for exchange purposes, usually for one's own selfish profit, although not always. And the idea that money is a diversion from our love and care for the material

world, our devotion to—our *affection* for—the material world, I think, is more what Jesus was driving at when he talked about God and Mammon. Especially in view of the constant use of material things as the central focus of devotion—bread, wine, the human body. Now, I don't want to provoke an argument here, but I wondered if that resonated in any way with your perspective on things. I'm one of those people who believe it's most useful in an interfaith discussion not to avoid differences of opinion.

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** No, of course not. I think that you've put us a little too much in a niche, though, because factually we don't say that society cannot be redeemed in a corporate way also. But it has to come by changing the heart. There's no question of having a changed society without changed hearts. So therefore our movement is a movement for congregational chanting. This is actually meant to be a very wide movement to affect the whole of society. And in that way we are very optimistic, because it is Lord Caitanya's prediction that for ten thousand years this congregational chanting will become dominant all over the world and usher in a social change that is worldwide and will affect all areas of corporate society.

**Dr. Cox:** That will come at the end of the Age of Kali?

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** No, that comes *now*.

**Dr. Cox:** During the Age of Kali?

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** During the Age of Kali, for ten thousand years. Then, after that, Kali resumes its dark feature.

And I'd like to make just one point about the passage about Mammon and money. It seems to me the meaning of money is *control*. Money is the means by which one lords it over matter. And if you

take out this idea of *controlling* matter, then matter can be used in God's service. Now *that* is perfect. Therefore the Lord is correct in saying you cannot love God and Mammon.

Money means control. It is the means by which the whole world is controlled. So it is this idea in the heart of the conditioned soul—"Let me be the controller"—that alienates him from God, because God is the only controller. And when we surrender our control to Him, then we use the so-called matter in His service, in which case it is no longer matter; it is spirit. The only difference between matter and spirit is its relationship to God. Our proposition—ISKCON, Kṛṣṇa consciousness—is to spiritualize this whole material world. Then we will have the kingdom of God. The definition of *kingdom of God* is "the place where God is king." If we make God king here, then why isn't this the kingdom of God? And if God is not king, whatever you want to do here, it won't be the kingdom of God. So first of all we have to recognize that God is king. That means a change of heart. One has to give up the personal tendency to want to be controller, to think, "I'm the king. I'm the lord of all I survey."

**Student:** But money doesn't always mean control, doesn't always mean power.

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** Certainly, money can be used in God's service also. We go out and collect money.

**Student:** That's right, you do.

**Śrīla Bhaktipāda:** But we are not using it for ourselves. I'm not saying that money can't be used in God's service. *Anything* can be used in God's service. All right?

**Dr. Cox:** Yes. I liked this exegesis better than the one I'd heard first. I very much liked your elaborate interpretation. 🌸

# Hard Rain

(continued from page 21)

sensory and mental levels of perception and directly acts upon the soul, gradually awakening it to full self-realization. The Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* is composed of Sanskrit names of God. In fact, this *mantra* is considered to be the Supreme Lord's sound incarnation. Becoming self-realized reduces automatically the selfishness and greed our society cultivates, because the satisfaction of realizing the higher self surpasses and reduces the importance of material pleasures.

The *Vedas* purify and transform not only the way we see ourselves but also the way we see nature and the universe. Already, scientists are making our lives more comfortable through an understanding of nature's laws. So we know that acting in harmony with nature's laws will naturally

lead us to more profitable, successful, and happy lives. And correspondingly, if out of ignorance we violate these laws, then there must be some reaction. As Sir Isaac Newton observed, for every action there is a corresponding reaction. Newton was talking about the law of *karma*, a fundamental operating principle of the universe that acts not only on the chemical and biochemical planes but on the mental and psychological planes. In other words, for every action we perform, there must be a reaction. This is the law of *karma*.

Now let us consider the karmic status of our modern civilization. Let's consider man's actions toward nature and his fellow man, and the resultant reactions. First of all, man is violent toward his environment. He exploits nature's resources. Of course, sometimes he tries to repair the damage with a bit of environmental concern. He can sense that polluting the air, land, and

water isn't exactly the right thing to do, but in the end, economic considerations always seem to win out. Basically, man has become an exploiter of nature.

Now what about man's actions toward other life forms? Even more obviously, the actions of modern man can be summed up in one word—violent. For instance, man is violent toward the trees. One may have never thought of that before. But just consider how many hundreds of millions of trees we're cutting down just so that we can print rubbish novels and pornographic literature. Don't the trees have a right to live? Who has given man the right to kill trees so that he can produce pornography? This is bad *karma*. We're setting ourselves up for violent reactions.

And man's actions toward animals—*incredibly* violent. Every year we're killing hundreds of millions of animals. This is even worse than killing trees, because the



**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-santaraṇa 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.

animals have a highly sensitive nervous system and so they can feel the pain more excruciatingly. We know we can get our protein from other sources—cheese, milk, butter, nuts, and grains, just to name a few. So why kill? Again, this is bad *karma*.

So if the human race acts violently, then by the law of *karma*, nature will react violently—with energy shortages, drought, famine, racial conflict, social disintegration, moral decline, and finally, war. Each year the world's governments spend \$500 billion on armaments. Why is that? As we become more and more violent toward nature, so by nature's law of *karma*, we are being forced to become more and more violent toward one another. We're headed for a most destructive karmic reaction.

Just imagine you're a judge and you see a human civilization killing hundreds of millions of trees and animals—and even its own children (every year some fifty million unborn children are killed by abortion)—year after year after year. You realize that you're dealing with a society of murderers. So what is your sentence going to be? In the same way, nature is going to judge us very harshly. This is the real crisis—that the *karma* coming down on this modern civilization is going to be very violent.

And we're seeing the warning signs now, in the heating up of the cold war. This is a clear indication of future *karma*. Just read the predictions of the effects of a thermo-nuclear war between America and the Soviet Union. A full-scale war would do away with 150 to 175 million Americans out of a population of 220 million. Is there even one person in this whole country who thinks this is impossible? People sense it's going to happen. Violent *karma* is awaiting us, in one form or another, unless we change society's present course.

As the singer said, "It's a hard rain that's gonna fall." So the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement wants to stop this rain of *karma*. Even if we can't stop the rain (although that's our ultimate goal), at least we're holding out an umbrella for people who have the courage to take shelter. This is the umbrella of knowledge, the knowledge of our individual and collective purpose in life, the knowledge of the spiritual nature of the life force and the universe.

So we're asking everyone please to consider the path we are pointing out. If you feel it is correct, then try to apply the principles of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in your own life and try to give this knowledge to others. This is the duty of a person who has knowledge. A doctor gives medicine to the sick—he doesn't keep it for himself. So please consider this request. If you find in the Vedic literature some enlightenment, don't just keep it to yourself. Help people who are trying to spread it.

## Enhance Your Spiritual Life

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# NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

## Guidance for Pilgrims: Hare Kṛṣṇa and the Jesus Prayer

I was with His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda in Australia in 1974 when he spoke on several occasions to church leaders and audiences of seminarians. While telling about Lord Caitanya's universal *saṅkīrtana* movement of chanting God's holy names, Śrīla Prabhupāda would explain that Christians could also take part by chanting the name of Jesus Christ. He pointed out that the word *christ*, coming from the Greek word *christos*, is philologically related to the name Kṛṣṇa. He also said that if, along with chanting *Christos*, Christians would give up slaughtering animals and eating meat, they would advance in spiritual realization.

Śrīla Prabhupāda has written about the universality of chanting the names of God:

The Lord is the proprietor of all the universe, and therefore He may be known in different places by different names, but that does not in any way qualify the fullness of the Lord. Any nomenclature which is meant for the Supreme Lord is as holy as the others because they are all meant for the Lord. Such holy names are as powerful as the Lord, and there is nothing to bar anyone in any part of the creation from chanting and glorifying the Lord by the particular name of the Lord as it is locally understood. They are all auspicious, and one should not distinguish such names of the Lord as material commodities.

There is an old Christian tradition that stresses the chanting of the holy names of God. The *Philokalia*, a collection from eleven centuries of early Christian writings, documents that certain early fathers of Eastern Christianity gave exclusive importance to the recitation of the Jesus Prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me." These early fathers lived in solitary, eating only a little bread and water. In their practice of constant prayer, they used breathing exercises and concentration on the heart, reminiscent of *haṭha-yoga* techniques from India. Yet although the severe austerities and divine insights of these fathers are inspiring, hardly anyone now can expect to adopt such a life of constant solitude.

The practice of chanting the Jesus Prayer was also current in nineteenth-century Russia, as described by the wandering renunciant-author of *The Way of a Pilgrim*. This book is an autobiographical account of a pilgrim who, having discovered the virtues of the Jesus Prayer, wandered homeless through the forests and towns of Russia, requesting whomever he

met to recite the prayer constantly.

But how many Christians today would follow the pilgrim's example of denying himself earthly pleasures and simply wandering with a backpack and a little bread, chanting the name of Jesus Christ? Today we are accustomed more to seeing "born-again" Christians justify a life of subdued hedonism in the name of religion. Popular evangelists urge their followers to send them money and pray to God for wealth and material blessings.

These extreme constricts—on one hand the life of austerity and detachment from the material world and on the other hand the life of materialistic Christianity in which God wants *us* to enjoy the world—are too often the only alternatives open to Christians. For sincere Christians, this presents a serious problem.

A modern reference that touches on the same problem is J.D. Salinger's book *Franny and Zooey*. I had never read this book, but I had heard that it mentions the chanting of *japa*. Zooey says,

It's nothing new, for God's sake. It didn't just start with the little pilgrim's crowd. I mean. In India, for God knows how many centuries, it's been known as *japam*. *Japam* is just the repetition of any of the human names of God. Or the names of his incarnations—his avatars, if you want to get technical. The idea being that if you call out the name long enough and regularly enough and literally from the heart, you'll get an answer. Not exactly an answer. A response.

As the story goes, Franny, sickened with the phonies in the world and with a college system that teaches knowledge but not wisdom, takes up chanting the Jesus Prayer. While in a restaurant with her shallow boy friend, she faints in desperation and is taken home, where she emotionally withdraws, cries, and continuously chants the Jesus Prayer. Her concerned parents and her brother Zooey try to persuade her to become her old self again, and finally Zooey brings her out of her isolation by advising her not to hate the phony people of the world but to remain detached. Since Franny is an actress, she should not retreat from the world but work as an actress in service to God.

Yet Zooey's philosophy is sentimental. His advice leaves much to be desired, as he himself admits:

When you first felt the urge, the *call*, to say the prayer, you didn't immediately start searching the four corners of the world for a master. *You came home*. . . . So if you look

at it in a certain way, by rights you're only entitled to the low-grade spiritual counsel we're able to give you around here, and no more.

A genuine spiritual master would have been able to give Franny much more practical help in spiritual life, for he would have been able to explain the art of precisely how to render service to the Lord by chanting His name and at the same time offering the results of one's work to Him in devotion.

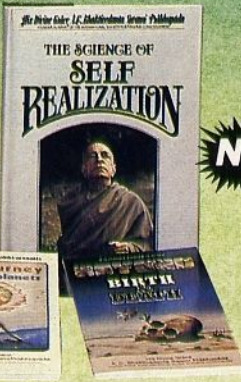
The name of God is identical with the Supreme Lord Himself; therefore, by chanting God's names a devotee comes in direct touch with the Lord. One need not cut himself off from the world, because the whole material world is the energy of God and can be used in His service. Without expert guidance, however, one's philosophy is bound to be incomplete, and he will either want to renounce the world or enjoy it for himself. A devotee can become an actress, or for that matter a lawyer, a welfare worker, a humanitarian, or a family person in the service of God. But one has to learn the art of performing all activities as service to Him.

The process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness offers many facilities to help pilgrims, whether Christian, Hindu, Muslim, or whatever. There's the worship of God in His Deity form in the temple. There's the process of offering food to Kṛṣṇa and accepting the remnants as His mercy. These spiritual practices are pleasant, easy, and powerful. A materialist cannot understand how God and His name can be the same or how God's Deity form can be nondifferent from His original form. But these absolute facts are stated in the Vedic scriptures and understood by pure devotees.

If a pilgrim does not know how to worship the Deity form of God or how to offer Kṛṣṇa delicious food and then eat the spiritual remnants—if his only choices, therefore, are either to reject this world and chant in solitude or, on the contrary, to think that God sanctions a life of materialistic enjoyment, including even animal slaughter and illicit sex—then he is at a great disadvantage, despite his prayers or his professing the name of God. Only by following the guidance of a genuine spiritual master can a devotee of God, a chanter of God's names, pass through all the difficulties of living in the material world and attain the pure and eternal devotion to Kṛṣṇa that is the ultimate fruit of chanting. —SDG



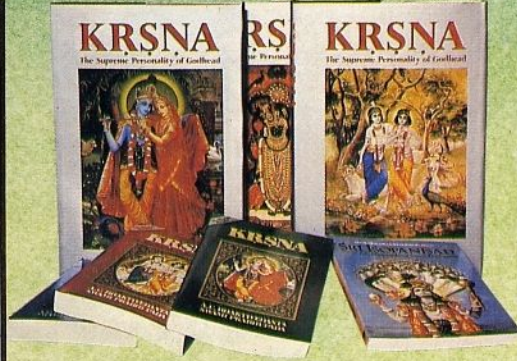
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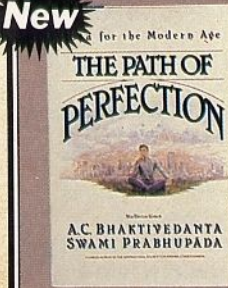
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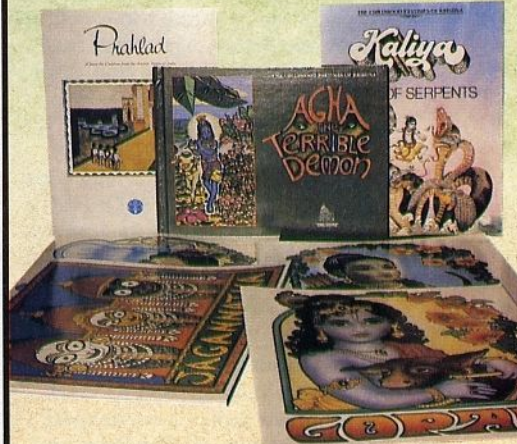


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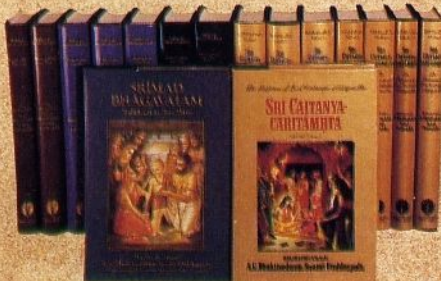
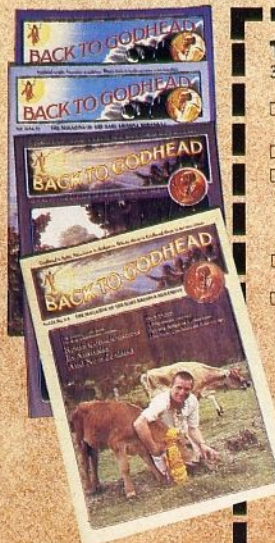
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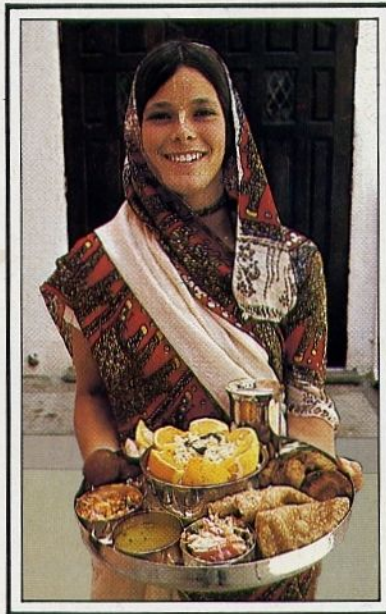
# The Sunday Feast

It's a kind of open house. You come alone or with your friends or family. First you might like to meet some of the devotees. Maybe you'll want to sit down and talk philosophy. Look through some of the books and magazines. Or maybe you'll just wander around on your own a bit and see what the place is all about. It's up to you.

The schedule differs from center to center. Generally things get started with some chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa. It's a kind of meditation. The idea is to meditate on the sound of the chanting. And if you decide to join along in the chanting too—well, so much the better. And if you feel like dancing in ecstasy, fine! You take it as you like, at your own pace, in your own way.

After the chanting (it usually goes for twenty minutes or so) there's a talk on *Bhagavad-gītā*. In case you don't already know, *Bhagavad-gītā* is the basic book of spiritual knowledge the Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees get their philosophy from. It's five thousand years old, originally written in Sanskrit, and its ideas have drawn some of the deepest minds of the world. Emerson and Thoreau revered it. Albert Schweitzer found it fascinating. Mahatma Gandhi said it was the most important book in his life. If you haven't read it yet, you're in for quite a profound encounter.

And of course you can ask the devotees questions about it too. In fact, the whole *Gītā* is in the form of a dialogue, and questions and answers have always provided the way to get at the essence of what the book is all about.



After the talk about the *Gītā* comes a ceremony called *ārati*. If you've never been to a Hare Kṛṣṇa temple before and you've never been to India, chances are you've never seen anything quite like it. *Ārati* is an ancient and very beautiful ceremony that helps you come out into your spiritual identity, into a higher awareness, and ultimately into being reunited with Kṛṣṇa—God—in a very personal way.

In the *ārati* ceremony, Kṛṣṇa Himself appears on the temple's altar in His Deity form (a statue, most people would say). A devotee offers Kṛṣṇa flaming lamps of camphor and ghee, fragrant flowers, peacock fans, and a special white whisk called a *cāmara*. All this to the sounds of hand cymbals, drums, and the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa. The effect of the ceremony is that

you actually feel that you're in the personal presence of Kṛṣṇa—which in fact you are. (We're all in Kṛṣṇa's presence all the time, without thinking about it, but the *ārati* ceremony helps us realize it.) How it happens may be a little hard to explain. But when you attend the ceremony, the spiritual experience is very pure and natural. That's why Kṛṣṇa temples in India have held *āratis* every day since longer ago than anyone can remember.

After *ārati* comes the feast. And it's no small-time snack. Devotees have spent all day—sometimes more—cooking wonderfully varied dishes, with devotion for Kṛṣṇa. After the food is offered to Kṛṣṇa (that's part of what goes on with the *ārati*), devotees and guests alike sit down to sumptuous plates. There are sweet things made with milk and grains and sugar that taste like ice cream, cake, and cream cheese all rolled into one. There are spicy things, fried things, baked things, blended things . . . People have been known to go on for hours later asking, "And what were those spicy yellow balls with the tomato sauce?" And was that yogurt with the soft little cakes in it?" Others have just eaten and smiled big smiles.

After the feast, maybe you pick up a copy of *Bhagavad-gītā* to take home with you. And when you finally leave, you probably feel a whole lot richer within yourself than you did when the evening started.

And that, in a nutshell, is what it's all about.

(See page 31 for the center nearest you.)

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