

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

BACK TO GODHEAD

Vol. 16 No. 8

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT



IN THIS ISSUE:

Ratha-yātrā

A Festival for Everyone

Mantra-Rock!

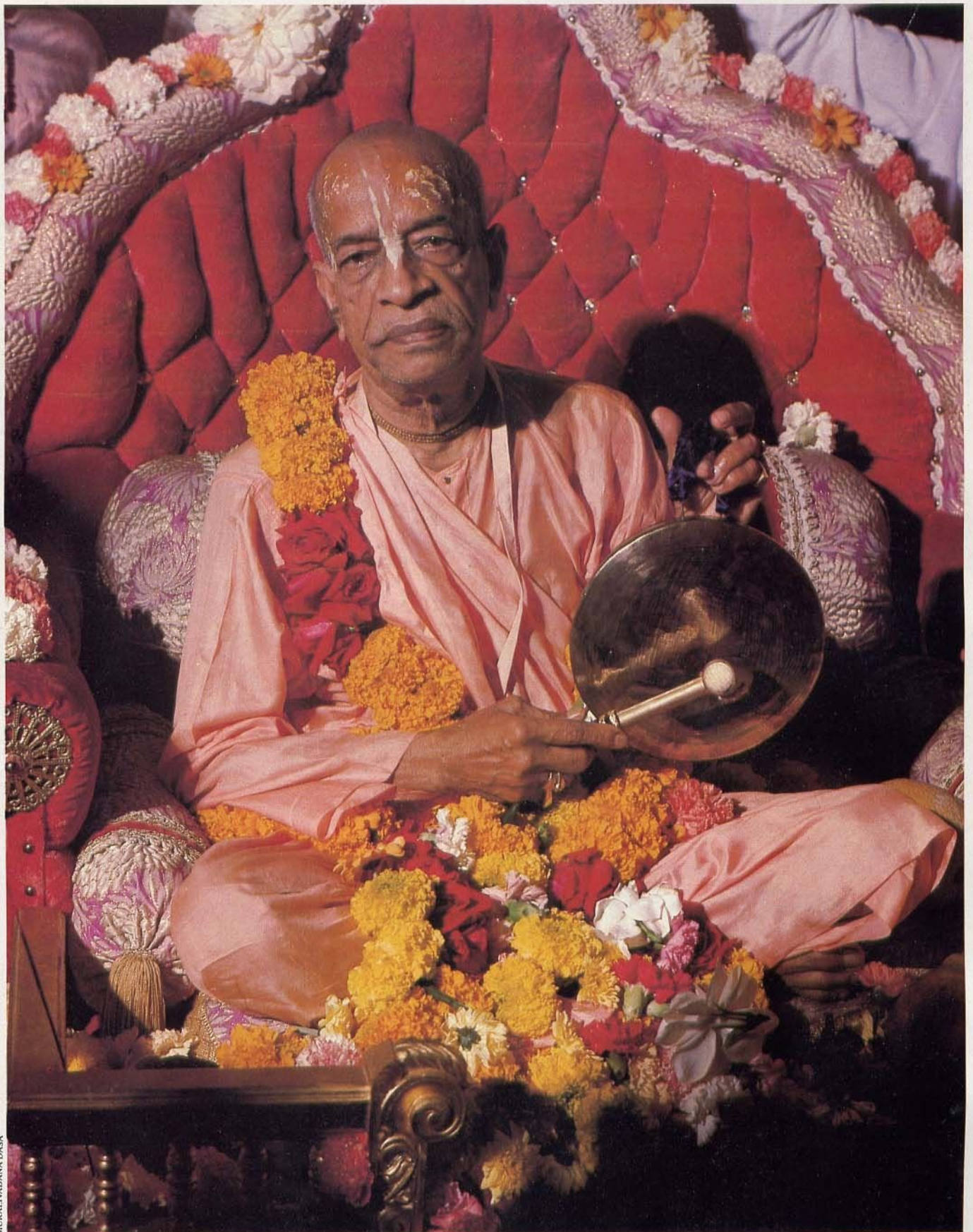
Śrīla Prabhupāda

Onstage with

The Grateful Dead

San Francisco, 1967





MURALIYADANA DĀSA

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

BACK TO GODHEAD

VOL. 16 NO. 8

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT

FOUNDED 1944

FOUNDER

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His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda

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PRONUNCIATION of Sanskrit words and names. BACK TO GODHEAD follows the international scholarly standard. Pronounce short a like the u in but, long ā like the a in far (and hold it twice as long as the short a). Pronounce e like the a in evade, long ī like the i in pique. Pronounce the aspirated consonants (ch, jh, 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 (dāsi for women), meaning "servant." For instance, the name Kṛṣṇa dāsa means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

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

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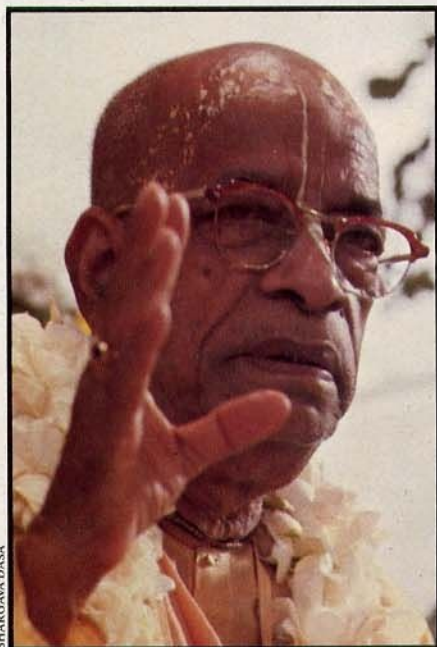
COVER: Ratha-yātrā, "The Festival of the Chariots," an ancient celebration held annually in India, has now become popular in cities around the world. Here, on Fifth Avenue, while thousands view the parade with pleasure and curiosity, enthusiastic celebrants pull three giant chariots toward Washington Square Park. (See page 6.) (Photo: Muralīvadana dāsa)

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."

ARISTOTLE AND HIS TEACHINGS

A Vedic Perspective

An excerpt from *Dialectical Spiritualism: A Vedic View of Western Philosophy*,
by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the
International Society for Krishna Consciousness



BHARGAVA DASA

In *Dialectical Spiritualism* (a book in manuscript), Śrīla Prabhupāda examines with his disciples the ideas of the West's major philosophers. What follows is taken from his discussions about Aristotle.

Disciple: Aristotle constructed a system of abstract notions and principles—"matter," "form," and "privation"; "potency" and "act"; the ten categories; the four kinds of causes; and so on—which he tried to show were universal in scope, capable of explicating reality on all levels. He wanted to show how all of reality is thus intelligible.

Aristotle thought of the cosmos as a hierarchy. At the bottom is prime or pure matter, which possesses no intelligible essence, or "form"; it is pure potency, without actuality. And at the top is God, the unmoved mover of the whole system, who is pure actuality (He is all that He could ever be), sheer form, pure intelligible, intellectual essence, with no tinge of matter or potentiality. In between are the changing substances compounded of matter and form—the elements, minerals, plants,

animals, humans, and the ethereal intelligences that move the stars. The higher up the scale you go, the more form predominates over matter. In this way, Aristotle rejected the separation between the world of forms and the world of matter that characterized the philosophy of his teacher, Plato.

One modern philosopher has observed that Aristotle's conception of God was motivated entirely by dispassionate rational concerns—no extraneous ethical or religious interests influenced his idea—and that this did not go far toward producing an idea of God available for religious purposes.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: By speculation Aristotle may have known something about God, but our point is that we can know everything about God from God Himself. This is not a question of "religion." It is simply a matter of the best process to know God. When we learn about God from God Himself, then our knowledge is perfect. In *Bhagavad-gītā* [7.1] Kṛṣṇa says,

*mayy āsakta-manāḥ pārtha
yogaṁ yuñjan mad-āśrayaḥ
asamśayaṁ samagram mām
yathā jñāsyasi tac chr̥ṇu*

"Now hear, O son of Pṛthā [Arjuna], how by practicing *yoga* in full consciousness of Me, with mind attached to Me, you can know Me in full, free from doubt." This is the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Of course, we may speculate about God, and if we simply think of God that will help us

to some extent. If we are in darkness, we may speculate and concoct ideas about the sun. This is one kind of knowledge. But if we actually come to the light, our knowledge is complete. We may contemplate the sun in darkness, but the best process is to come into the sunshine and see for ourselves.

Disciple: Aristotle understood substance to be a composite of "form" and "matter." "Form" is the essence of a substance, that by which it is what it is, its actuality. "Matter," for Aristotle, is not a kind of stuff; rather it designates the failure of a substance to be fully informed. In other words, matter is a substance's potentiality for development toward form, or its disintegration away from form. God is perfect: He is pure form, without potentiality or matter. But man is a combination of matter and form. Since man is form and matter, he is imperfect, less than fully real or realized. This imperfection is inherent, being located in matter or potentiality.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is nonsense. Man is not made of matter but is covered by matter. Man is made of spirit. If God is spirit, man is also spirit. In the Bible it is also said that "man is made in the image of God"; therefore man is originally perfect. A person is generally supposed to be healthy, but if he falls into a diseased condition, it is not his imperfection. It is something external which has attacked a healthy man. According to his original nature, the living entity is healthy, or in other words, pure spirit.

Disciple: Although Aristotle criticized the



Platonic separation between matter and form, his evaluation of these two was much like that of his teacher. Matter for Aristotle is unknowable and unintelligible, of no intrinsic worth; it is the cause of imperfection, change and destruction. Form alone is the object of knowledge, the really real, the unchangeable and enduring; it alone endows the world with meaning, intelligibility, and intrinsic purpose.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: This means that the Supreme Absolute must have form. *Īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ*. The word *vigrahaḥ* indicates form. That form is not dead but is the activating spirit. Kṛṣṇa's form is *sac-cid-ānanda*: eternal, fully cognizant, and blissful. Our bodies are neither fully cognizant nor fully blissful, but Kṛṣṇa's is. He knows past, present, and future, and He is always happy. Our knowledge is limited, and we are always full of anxieties.

Disciple: For Aristotle, form gives changing things an immanent goal or purpose—entelechy. Therefore all matter has some form for its actualization. The world is an unfolding of phenomena realizing themselves. In other words, nature is driven by purpose.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: We agree with this. According to the *Padma Purāṇa*, there are 8,400,000 various forms, and none of them is accidental. According to *karma*, one receives a particular form. Lord Brahmā receives his form according to his *karma*, and the dog or cat receives its form according to its *karma*. There is no question of accident. Nature unfolds in accordance with a plan, by virtue of which these various forms are existing. *Yas 'tv indragopam athavendram aho sva-karmabandhānurūpa-phala-bhājanam ātanoti*. From Indra down to the *indragopa*, a microscopic germ, all living entities are working out the results of their *karma*. If one's *karma* is good, he attains a higher form; if it is not good, he attains a lower form.

There is a process of evolution. The living entity passes from one species to another, from fish to trees to vegetables to insects to birds, beasts, and humans. In the human form, the result of evolution is fully manifest. It is like a flower unfolding from a bud. When the living entity attains the human form, his proper duty is to understand his lost relationship with God. If he misses this opportunity, he may regress. Aristotle is correct, therefore, when he says that everything has a purpose. The whole creative process aims at bringing the living entity back home, back to Godhead.

Disciple: Does every living entity eventually come to that point?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: As a human being, you can properly utilize your consciousness, or

you can misuse it. That is up to you. Kṛṣṇa gives Arjuna instructions and then tells him that the decision is up to him. Under the orders of Kṛṣṇa, nature has brought you through so many species. Now, as a human, you can choose whether to return to God or again endure the cycle of birth and death. If you are fortunate, you make the proper choice according to the instructions of the spiritual master and Kṛṣṇa. Then your life is successful.

Disciple: Aristotle sees a hierarchy of forms extending from minerals, vegetables, and animals up to human beings and ultimately God, who is pure form and pure act. God is devoid of all

**If one knows
nothing of God,
one should not
speak of God.
When we fully
surrender to God
in loving service,
we can actually
understand
God's nature.**

potentiality or materiality.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Of course there is a hierarchy. And the individual soul transmigrates from one form to another. That is a fact. But who is to say that the next form you attain is closer to perfection? If you have a human form this life, there is no guarantee that you will get a higher form in the next. You accept another form just as you accept another suit of clothes. Those clothes may be valuable, or of no value whatsoever. You get your clothes according to the price you pay, and you accept a form according to your work. Similarly, you bring about your own form, and you enjoy or suffer according to your work.

In any case, a material form is never perfect, because it undergoes six changes. It is born, it grows, it stays for a while, it leaves some by-products, it dwindles, and then it vanishes. When your form vanishes, you have to take on another form, which also undergoes the same processes. When a form vanishes, it decomposes, and its various elements return to nature. Water returns to water, earth returns to earth, air returns to air, and so forth.

Disciple: Aristotle's God is the unmoved mover. He is perfect, and He wants nothing. He does not have to actualize Himself, because He is completely actualized. **Śrīla Prabhupāda:** We also agree that God is all-perfect. Parāśara Muni defines God as the totality of wisdom, strength, wealth, fame, beauty, and renunciation. All these qualities are possessed by Kṛṣṇa in full, and when Kṛṣṇa was present, everyone could see that He was all-perfect. One who is perfect can rule others, and we accept the leadership of a person according to his degree of perfection. If one is not somewhat wise, beautiful, wealthy, and so forth, why should we accept him as a leader? And one who is supremely perfect in all these qualities is the supreme leader. That is natural. Since Kṛṣṇa is supremely perfect, we should accept Him as our leader.

Disciple: God is pure form or actuality, without matter or potentiality. But for Aristotle form without matter means thought. Therefore, he considered God to be entirely mind or intellect (*nous*) and the divine life to be the life of the mind. God's perfection requires this.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: When he said that God is mind, what did he mean? Did he have some conception of God's personality? God must be a person, otherwise how could He think?

Disciple: Aristotle said that God's activity was thought, and that his thought had itself as its sole object: God's thinking is *noēsis noēseos*, thinking of thinking. Thus His nature is self-contemplation.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Does this mean that when one is perfect he engages in no activity? Does God simply sit down and meditate? If so, what is the difference between God and a stone? A stone simply sits; it has no activity. How is inactivity perfection? Kṛṣṇa never meditates, yet when He speaks He delivers perfect knowledge. Kṛṣṇa enacts various pastimes: He fights with demons, protects His devotees, dances with the *gopīs*, and delivers words of enlightenment. There is no question of sitting down like a stone and engaging in "self-contemplation."

Disciple: But is it not possible to meditate while acting?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Certainly, but God doesn't have to meditate. Why should He meditate? He is perfect. One meditates to come from the imperfect stage to the perfect stage. Since God is perfect to begin with, what business does He have meditating? Everything is simply actualized by His will alone.

Aristotle recommends that a man should meditate to become perfect. This meditation presupposes imperfection. Contemplation is recommended for conditioned living entities, but we should understand that God is never conditioned

or imperfect. He is so powerful that whatever He desires or wills immediately comes into being. This information is given in the *Vedas*. *Parāśya śaktir vividhaiva-śrūyate*. God's multi-energies are so powerful that everything is immediately actualized as soon as He desires.

Disciple: But what about the meditations of the Buddha?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Buddha's mission was different. He was setting an example for miscreants who were engaged in mischievous activities. He was recommending that they sit down and meditate, just as you tell a mischievous child to sit in a corner and be quiet.

Disciple: Aristotle never really says that we should end our activities. But he does say that we should contemplate God.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is our process. *Śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ smaraṇam*. One should always think of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa consciousness means remembering Kṛṣṇa and acting for Him. When you sweep Kṛṣṇa's temple, you remember Kṛṣṇa. When you cook for Kṛṣṇa, you remember Kṛṣṇa. When you talk about Kṛṣṇa, you remember Kṛṣṇa. This is the process Kṛṣṇa Himself recommends in *Bhagavad-gītā* [6.47]:

*yoginām api sarveṣāṁ
mad-gatenāntarātmanā
śraddhāvān bhajate yo mām
sa me yuktatamo mataḥ*

"Of all *yogīs*, he who always abides in Me with great faith, worshiping Me in transcendental loving service, is most intimately united with Me in *yoga* and is the highest of all."

Disciple: Aristotle reasons that if God were to know changing things, it would entail change in God Himself. Thus it seems that Aristotle's God has no knowledge of the world. This means that He cannot return the love He receives. He neither loves nor cares for mankind.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: What kind of God is this? If one knows nothing of God, one should not speak of God. God certainly reciprocates with His devotees. As we offer our love to God, He responds and cooperates accordingly. In *Bhagavad-gītā* [4.11] Kṛṣṇa says,

*ye yathā mām prapadyante
tāṁs tathaiva bhajāmy aham
mama vartmānuvartante
manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ*

"As one surrenders unto Me, I reward him accordingly. Everyone follows My path in all respects, O son of Prthā." When we fully surrender to God in loving service, we can actually understand God's nature.

Disciple: God causes motion in the world not actively but by being the object of desire. He moves the world the way the beloved moves the lover. In spite of His

being the supreme object of thought and desire, there is no mention of His being a person. On the contrary, He seems to be merely a sort of consciousness that has no object save itself.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: It appears that Aristotle is a Māyāvādī, an impersonalist. One has to speculate if one does not receive perfect knowledge from God Himself.

Disciple: But at least the idea of God's moving the world by attraction shows some idea of God as the all-attractive.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Unless God is all-attractive, how can He be God? Therefore the word *Kṛṣṇa*, which means "all-attractive," is the perfect name for God.

Aristotle may have some conception of God, but he has no clear idea of His personality. We can think concretely of God because we are receiving our information from the Vedic literature.

God attracts everyone. In Vṛndāvana He attracts His parents, the cowherd boys and girls, the animals, the fruits and flowers, the trees—everything. Even the water was attracted to Kṛṣṇa. The Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* describes how the water of the River Yamunā would become stunned in ecstasy and stop flowing as soon as she saw Kṛṣṇa.

Disciple: Aristotle had the idea that God was totally unified, without duality. In what way would you say that God's thought and His activity are one?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: God need only think of a thing in order for that thing to be created or actualized. God's thinking, feeling, willing, and acting are the same. Because we are imperfect, when we think of something it may or may not happen. But whenever God thinks of something, it takes place. Because Kṛṣṇa thought that the Battle of Kurukṣetra should take place, there was no stopping it. At first Arjuna declined to fight, but Kṛṣṇa plainly told him that whether he fought or not, almost all the warriors there were destined to die. He therefore told Arjuna to become His instrument and take the credit

for killing them. No one can check what God decides. It doesn't matter whether you help God or not, but it is in your interest that you become His instrument.

Disciple: Aristotle said that a person is happiest and most like the divine himself when he performs his activities in such a way that he is always contemplating "things divine."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, that is the process of *bhakti*, devotional service. But unless one is a devotee, how can he constantly think of God? Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī gives the example of a married woman who has a paramour. She performs her household chores very nicely, but she is always thinking, "When will my lover come at night?" So if it is possible to think of an ordinary person all the time, why not God? It is simply a question of practice, of developing your attraction for Him. Then, despite engaging in so many different types of work, you can think of God incessantly.

Now, Aristotle may have some conception of God, but he has no clear idea of Kṛṣṇa's personality. We can think specifically and concretely of God because we receive information from Vedic literature that God is a person and appears and acts in a certain way. In *Bhagavad-gītā* it is stated that impersonalists experience a great deal of trouble because they have no clear idea of God. If you have no conception of God's form, your attempt to realize God will be very difficult.

Disciple: For Aristotle, God is known by speculative reason, not by revelation.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: We are all limited, and God is unlimited; therefore we cannot understand God by our limited sensory powers. Consequently, God must be known by revelation. As the *Padma Purāṇa* states, *ataḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ*. It is not possible to know God by mental speculation. But when we engage in His service, He reveals Himself. And Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself says in *Bhagavad-gītā* [7.25],

*nāhaṁ prakāśaḥ sarvasya
yoga-māyā-samāvṛtaḥ
mūḍho 'yaṁ nābhijānāti
loko mām ajam avyayam*

"I am never manifest to the foolish and unintelligent. For them I am covered by My internal potency (*yoga-māyā*); and so the deluded world knows Me not, who am unborn and infallible." It is a fact that unless God reveals Himself, He is not known. Therefore He appears, and great authorities like Vyāsadeva, Nārada, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, Rāmānujācārya, Madhvācārya, and Caitanya Mahāprabhu—great scholars and transcendentalists—accept Him as He reveals Himself. Arjuna saw God face to face, and he accepted Him. When we are freed of ignorance by our service to God, God reveals Himself. 🌸



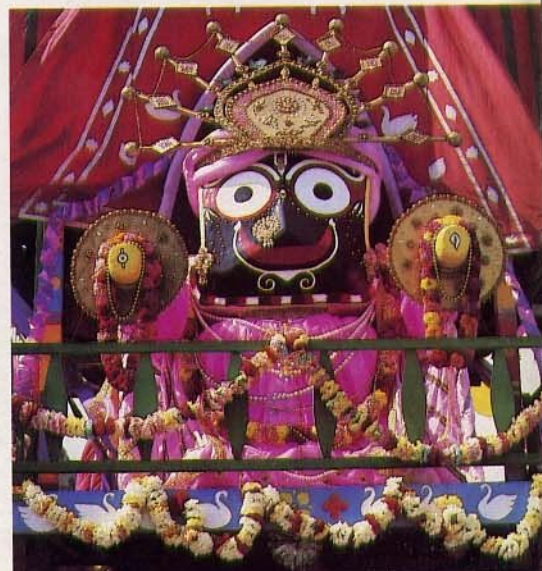
BHARGAVA DĀSA

RATHA-YĀTRĀ

A Festival for Everyone

The world's oldest celebration comes to the West.

by PRAHLĀDĀNANDA DĀSA



YOGESVARA DĀSA



More than a million pilgrims jam the Grand Route for the annual Ratha-yātrā (Festival of the Chariots) in Puri, India (left). Below left, Lord Jagannātha, the center of worship, beams from the main chariot in a recent festival in Boston. Below: As a child in turn-of-the-century Calcutta, Śrīla Prabhupāda gathered his friends each year for a miniature chariot festival. More than sixty-five years later, he would enact the same festival on a magnificent scale in many Western cities.



PAINTING BY PARIKṢIT DASA

For thousands of years devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa have journeyed to Jagannātha Puri in India to take part in the annual celebration called Ratha-yātrā, “The Festival of the Chariots.” During this festival devotees glorify the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa in a two-mile parade of three fifty-foot-high chariots.

In recent years colossal chariots like these have been appearing in major cities around the world, leading many observers to wonder, amid the excitement and joy of the celebration, What does it all mean? Who are those figures riding on the chariots? and Where did this festival come from?

The Ratha-yātrā festival commemorates a meeting that took place between Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, His

most beloved devotee, when They were present on earth five thousand years ago. Once Lord Kṛṣṇa, His brother Balarāma, and His sister Subhadrā journeyed on a chariot to Kurukṣetra, India, to observe the ancient Vedic custom of bathing at a holy place during a solar eclipse. On this auspicious occasion many great devotees of the Lord were reunited with Him. Foremost among them were the devotees from the rural village of Vṛndāvana, where Kṛṣṇa had spent His early years before He had left to live as a king in the opulent city of Dvārakā. During Kṛṣṇa’s absence from Vṛndāvana, the devotees there—especially Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī—always thought of Him and longed for His return. So when Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī met Kṛṣṇa at Kurukṣetra, She invited Him to come back to Vṛndāvana and again enjoy lov-

ing pastimes with His devotees there. Today those who take part in a Ratha-yātrā festival can share in the feelings of Kṛṣṇa’s devotees who drew Him back to Vṛndāvana with their love.

One shouldn’t think that Ratha-yātrā is an empty ritual, a mere imitation of a remote historical event. Although the Jagannātha Deity riding on the chariot may appear to be a wooden statue, He is actually Kṛṣṇa Himself. By Kṛṣṇa’s mercy and omnipotence, He appears as the Deity to give us the opportunity to see Him and serve Him despite our limitations. Though nondevotees cannot understand how the Deity can be God, the Deity reveals Himself to those who serve Him sincerely. We should not conclude, however, that worship of *any* form is worship of God, any more than we would

Colorful, classical bhārata-nāṭyam dance proves a main attraction at San Francisco's Ratha-yātrā (right).



BHARGAVA DASA



YAMARAJA DASA

think we could drop our mail into any box on the street and have it reach its destination. Because the Jagannātha Deity is carved according to the authorized Vedic scriptures, worshiping Lord Jagannātha is worshiping God, just as putting our mail in a mailbox authorized by the post office is the same as bringing the mail to the post office. So worshiping Lord Jagannātha as He rides His chariot in the Ratha-yātrā festival is not idolatry; it is a sublime method of reviving our dormant love of God.

Those familiar with the humanlike image of Lord Kṛṣṇa holding a flute in His two hands may wonder at the unusual appearance of the Jagannātha Deities—rounded bodies, no visible hands or legs, wide-open eyes. The story behind the Deities is that once, thousands of years ago, a king named Indradyumna felt inspired to establish a temple of Kṛṣṇa. So he commissioned a sculptor to carve the Deity. The sculptor pledged to carry out the work in three weeks, provided the king would let him work alone in the temple and not barge in on him. But after only two weeks had passed, the king became very anxious to see how the work was coming, and he entered the temple. There he found only the apparently incomplete forms we see today. The king was despondent until he had a revelation that the Deities in his temple were the fully manifested forms of the

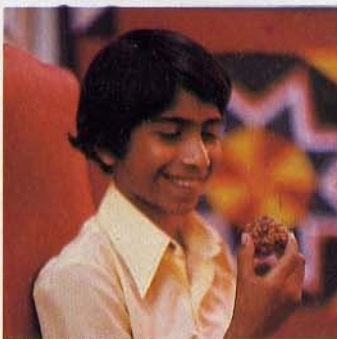
Lord Jagannātha leads the procession down Fifth Avenue (right) in a chariot whose spire seems to rival the Empire State Building's. At the festival site in New York's Central Park (above), participants pause at a display of highlights from
BACK TO GODHEAD.





VISAKHA-DEVI DASÍ

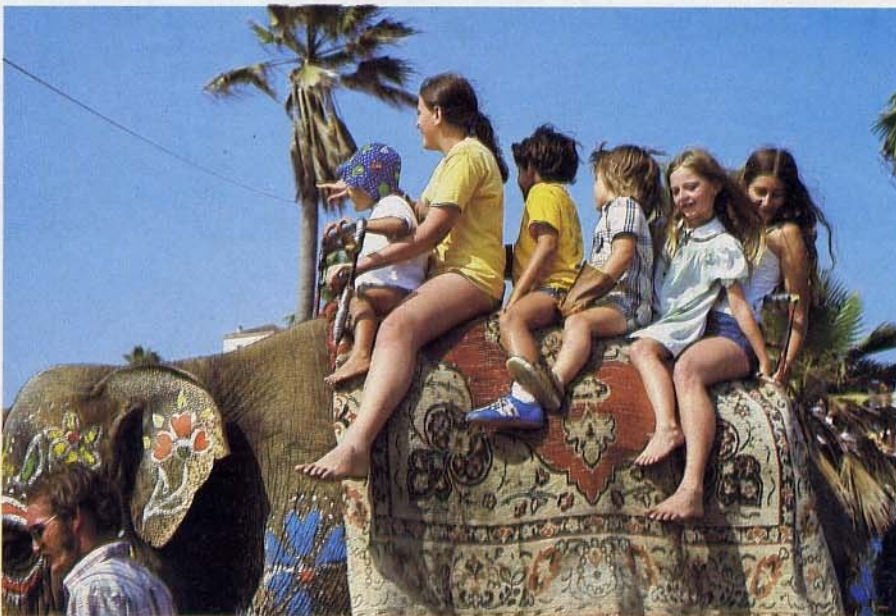
The Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra resounds at San Francisco's Ratha-yātrā (left). The festival at Venice Beach, in Los Angeles (below and below left), brings together more than a quarter of a million celebrants of all ages for feasting and fun.



NITYA-TRPTĀ-DEVI DASÍ



NITYA-TRPTĀ-DEVI DASÍ



BRAHMANANDA SWAMI





A swelling throng draws chariots up Venice Beach to the festival pavilion. The Los Angeles Ratha-yātrā, biggest in the United States, features elephant rides, Indian dancers, films, music, fine-art exhibits, multimedia presentations, a crafts bazaar, and exotic vegetarian cuisine. Above, the Kṛṣṇa Society's Ratha-yātrā in Calcutta brings thousands into the streets to glorify Lord Jagannātha.

Supreme Personality of Godhead, and he began the elaborate worship of Lord Jagannātha, Lord Balarāma and Śrīmatī Subhadrā that continues to this day.

Until the 17th century the West was unfamiliar with Lord Jagannātha and the Ratha-yātrā festival. It was then that the first British came to Purī and saw the festival, with its massive chariots, huge Deities, and immense and enthusiastic crowds. The British called Jagannātha *juggernaut*, a word that soon came to mean

“an overwhelming, irresistible force.”

The British colonists were certainly impressed with the yearly Ratha-yātrā festival at Purī, but of course they never considered importing it to London, for they saw it as merely an overzealous display of idolatry by the “Hindoo heathen.” It would remain for one who knew the true import of the word *jagannātha*—Lord (*nātha*) of the universe (*jagat*)—to bring Ratha-yātrā not only to London but to New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and other points West.

In early 20th-century Calcutta that faithful worshiper of Lord Jagannātha was growing up in the home of Gour Mohan De, an unalloyed servant of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The boy—later to be known as His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder and spiritual guide of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness—was from his early childhood a great devotee of Lord Jagannātha and Ratha-yātrā. From the age of five Śrīla

Prabhupāda organized an annual Ratha-yātrā festival in his neighborhood in Calcutta. His father bought him a three-foot-high Ratha-yātrā cart and helped him decorate it, following the details of the Purī originals. During Śrīla Prabhupāda's Ratha-yātrā festival, his friends pulled the cart with a rope while Śrīla Prabhupāda chanted, played a clay drum, and led the singing, dancing, and distribution of *prasādam* (vegetarian food offered to God). Each year Śrīla Prabhupāda made various improvements on both his Ratha-yātrā cart and the children's festival.

Much later, in 1965, Śrīla Prabhupāda came to the United States on his spiritual master's order to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the West. Soon after the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement got started, Śrīla Prabhupāda inspired the first Ratha-yātrā ever held outside of India. Recalled Jayānanda dāsa, “The first year, 1967, we just rented a flatbed truck and started out in the Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco. We decorated the truck with flowers and put the Deities on the back, and the girls passed out fruit. A good crowd walked along with us at the beginning, and when we turned off Haight Street a smaller group of people came with us and we went all the way to the beach.” Over the years Jayānanda and other devotees spread the festival to other cities.

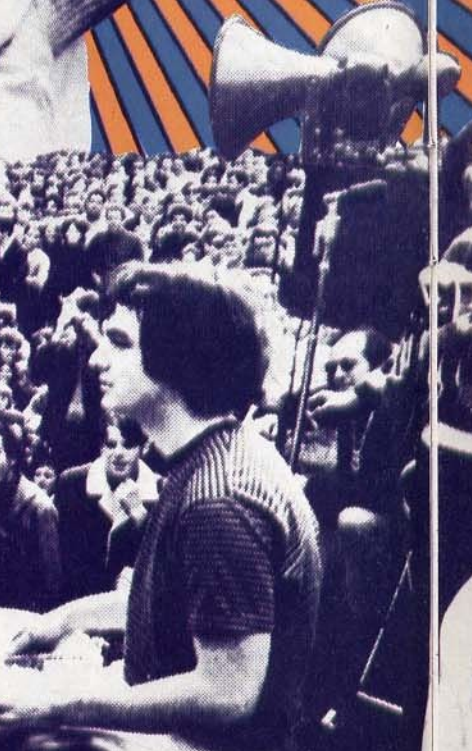
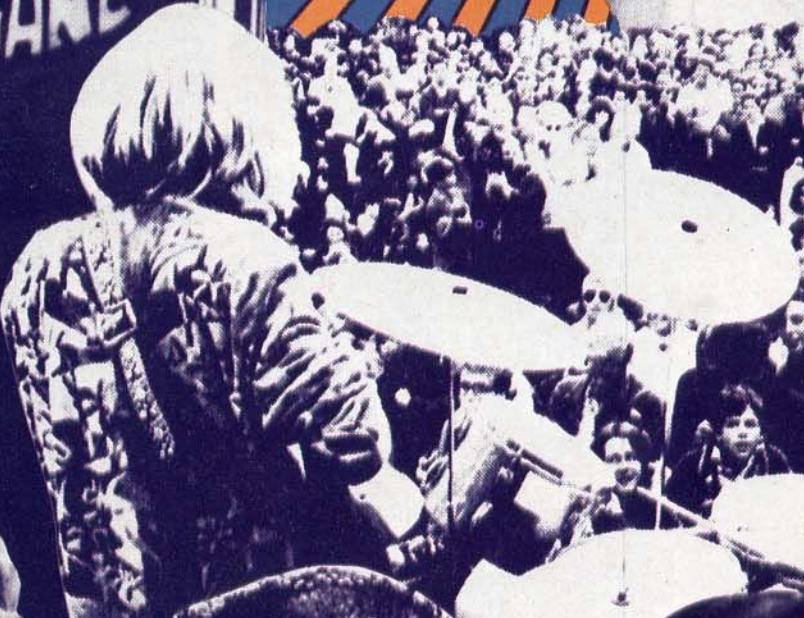
Now Ratha-yātrā is performed in dozens of cities around the world each year. Several mayors have declared special Ratha-yātrā days. At one festival in Vancouver, Canada, Mayor Jack Volrich said, “I hope this Festival of the Chariots, one of the greatest historic festivals in the world, will become an 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.”

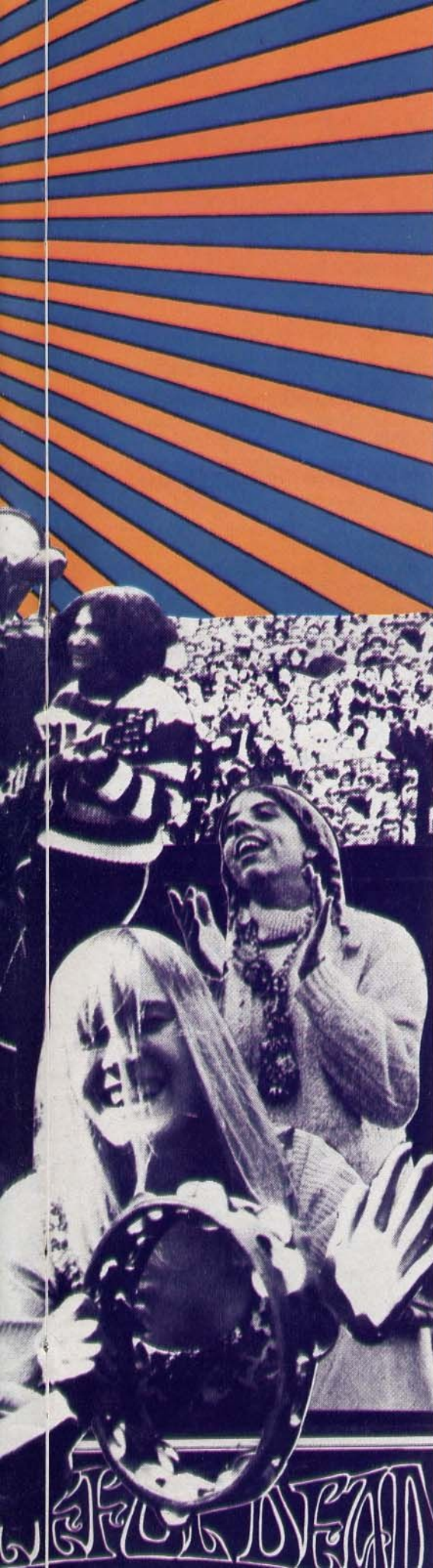
While it is true that taking part in the Ratha-yātrā festival frees one from bad *karma*, the main reason it has become popular the world over is because it is just plain fun. Elephant rides, movies, dancing, drama, classical and popular art, exotic food—there's something for everyone at Ratha-yātrā.

So when you're out in the sun at some park or beach on a weekend this summer, don't be surprised if you look up and see three fifty-foot-high, silk-peaked chariots cruising along amidst waves of dancing and chanting celebrants. Though you might think you're seeing a fleet of clipper ships with multicolored sails, you're actually looking upon a millennia-old festival—Ratha-yātrā. Follow along and dip into an ocean of transcendental delight. 🌸



THE GREAT SOCIETY
JEFFERSON AIRPLANE





The Biography of a Pure Devotee

The Mantra-Rock Dance

January 1967: San Francisco.

“The Avalon Ballroom seemed like a human field of wheat blowing in the wind—finally everyone was jumping, crying, shouting.”

by ŚRĪLA SATSVARŪPA DĀSA GOSWAMI



No sooner had Śrīla Prabhupāda landed in San Francisco than he was ushered into the spotlight of its psychedelic youth scene. His upcoming appearance at the “Mantra-Rock Dance” in the Avalon Ballroom would see him on stage with Allen Ginsberg and the exciting new “acid rock” bands—and Śrīla Prabhupāda would be the center of it all, leading the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Though some of the New York disciples had objected, Śrīla Prabhupāda was still scheduled for the Mantra-Rock Dance at the Avalon Ballroom. It wasn't proper, they had said, for the devotees out in San Francisco to ask their spiritual master to go to such a place. It would mean amplified guitars, pounding drums, wild light shows, and hundreds of drugged hippies. How could his pure message be heard in such a place?

But in San Francisco Mukunda and others had been working on the Mantra-Rock Dance for months. It would draw thousands of young people, and the San Francisco Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Temple stood to make thousands of dollars. So although among his New York disciples Śrīla Prabhupāda had expressed uncertainty, he now said nothing to deter the enthusiasm of his San Francisco followers.

Sam Speerstra, Mukunda's friend and one of the Mantra-Rock Dance organizers, explained the idea to Hayagrīva, who had just arrived from New York: “There's a whole new school of San Francisco music opening up. The Grateful Dead have already cut their first record. Their offer to do this dance is a great publicity boost just when we need it. It's all been arranged. All the bands will be onstage, and Allen Ginsberg will introduce Swamiji to San Francisco. Swamiji will talk and then chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, with the bands joining in. Then he leaves. There should be

around four thousand people there.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda knew he would not compromise himself; he would go, chant, and then leave. The important thing was to spread the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa. If thousands of young people gathering to hear rock music could be engaged in hearing and chanting the names of God, then what was the harm? As a preacher, Prabhupāda was prepared to go anywhere to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Since chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa was absolute, one who heard or chanted the names of Kṛṣṇa—anyone, anywhere, in any condition—could be saved from falling to the lower species in the next life. These young hippies wanted something spiritual, but they had no direction. They were confused, accepting hallucinations as spiritual visions. But they were seeking genuine spiritual life, just like many of the young people on the Lower East Side. Prabhupāda decided he would go; his disciples wanted him to, and he was his servant and the servant of Lord Caitanya.

Mukunda, Sam, and Harvey Cohen had already met with rock entrepreneur Chet Helms, who had agreed that they could use his Avalon Ballroom and that, if they could get the bands to come, everything above the costs for the groups, the security, and a few other basics would go as profit for the San Francisco Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Temple. Mukunda and Sam had then gone calling on the music groups, most of whom lived in the Bay area, and one after another the exciting new San Francisco rock bands—the Grateful Dead, Moby Grape, Big Brother and the Holding Company, Jefferson Airplane, Quick-silver Messenger Service—had agreed to appear with Swami Bhaktivedanta for the minimum wage of 250 dollars per group. And Allen Ginsberg had agreed. The line-up was complete.

In San Francisco every rock concert had an art poster, many of them designed by the psychedelic artist called Mouse. One thing about Mouse's posters was that it was difficult to tell where the letters left off and the background began. He used dissonant colors that made his posters seem to flash on and off. Borrowing from this tradition, Harvey Cohen had created a unique poster—KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS COMES WEST—using red and blue concentric circles and a candid photo of Swamiji smiling in Tompkins Square Park. The devotees put the poster up all over town.

With only a few days remaining before the Mantra-Rock Dance, Allen Ginsberg came to an early morning *kīrtana* at the temple and later joined Śrīla Prabhupāda upstairs in his room. A few devotees were sitting with Prabhupāda eating Indian sweets when Allen came to the door. He and Prabhupāda smiled and exchanged

greetings, and Prabhupāda offered him a sweet, remarking that Mr. Ginsberg was up very early.

“Yes,” Allen replied, “the phone hasn't stopped ringing since I arrived in San Francisco.”

“That is what happens when one becomes famous,” said Prabhupāda. “That was the tragedy of Mahatma Gandhi also. Wherever he went, thousands of people would crowd about him, chanting, ‘Mahatma Gandhi *ki jaya!*’ Mahatma Gandhi *ki jaya!*’ The gentleman could not sleep.”

“Well, at least it got me up for *kīrtana* this morning,” said Allen.

“Yes, that is good.”

The conversation turned to the upcoming program at the Avalon Ballroom.

**Strobe lights
flashed, colored
balls bounced back
and forth to the beat
of the music, large
blobs of pulsing
color splurged across
the floor and walls.**

“Don't you think there's a possibility of chanting a tune that would be more appealing to Western ears?” Allen asked.

“Any tune will do,” said Prabhupāda. “Melody is not important. What is important is that you chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. It can be in the tune of your own country. That doesn't matter.”

Prabhupāda and Allen also talked about the meaning of the word *hippie*, and Allen mentioned something about taking LSD. Prabhupāda replied that LSD created dependence and was not necessary for a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. “Kṛṣṇa consciousness resolves everything,” Prabhupāda said. “Nothing else is needed.”

At the Mantra-Rock Dance there would be a multimedia light show by the biggest names in the art, Ben Van Meter and Roger Hillyard. Ben and Roger were expert at using simultaneous strobe lights, films, and slide shows to fill an auditorium with optical effects reminiscent of LSD visions. Mukunda had given them many slides of Kṛṣṇa to use during the *kīrtana*. One evening, Ben and Roger came to see Swamiji in his apartment.

Roger Hillyard: *He was great. I was really impressed. It wasn't the way he looked, the way he acted, or the way he*

dressed, but it was his total being. Swamiji was serene and very humorous, and at the same time obviously very wise and in tune, enlightened. He had the ability to relate to a lot of different kinds of people. I was thinking, “Some of this must be really strange for this person—to come to the United States and end up in the middle of Haight-Ashbury with a storefront for an āśrama and a lot of very strange people around.” And yet he was totally right there, right there with everybody.

On the night of the Mantra-Rock Dance, while the stage crew set up equipment and tested the sound system and Ben and Roger organized their light show upstairs, Mukunda and others collected tickets at the door. People lined up all the way down the street and around the block, waiting for tickets at \$2.50 apiece. Attendance would be good, a capacity crowd, and most of the local luminaries were coming. LSD pioneer Timothy Leary arrived and was given a seat onstage. Swami Kriyananda came, carrying a *tamboura*. A man wearing a top hat and a suit with a silk sash that said SAN FRANCISCO arrived, claiming to be the mayor. At the door, Mukunda stopped a respectably dressed young man who didn't have a ticket. But then someone tapped Mukunda on the shoulder: “Let him in. It's all right. He's Owsley.” Mukunda apologized and allowed Augustus Owsley Stanley II, folk hero and famous synthesizer of LSD, to enter without a ticket.

Almost everyone who came wore bright or unusual costumes: tribal robes, Mexican ponchos, Indian *kurtās*, “God's-eyes,” feathers, and beads. Some hippies brought their own flutes, lutes, gourds, drums, rattles, horns, and guitars. The Hell's Angels, dirty-haired, wearing jeans, boots, and denim jackets and accompanied by their women, made their entrance, carrying chains, smoking cigarettes, and displaying their regalia of German helmets, emblazoned emblems—everything but their motorcycles, which they had parked outside.

The devotees began a warm-up *kīrtana* onstage, dancing the way Swamiji had shown them. Incense poured from the stage and from the corners of the large ballroom. And although most in the audience were high on drugs, the atmosphere was calm; they had come seeking a spiritual experience. As the chanting began, very melodiously, some of the musicians took part by playing their instruments. The light show began: strobe lights flashed, colored balls bounced back and forth to the beat of the music, large blobs of pulsing color splurged across the floor, walls, and ceiling.

A little after eight o'clock, Moby Grape took the stage. With heavy electric guitars,

(continued on page 20)

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 SEVEN

Scheduled Incarnations with Specific Functions

In this installment of our serialized presentation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Lord Brahmā concludes his description of the Lord's pastime incarnations. He then tells his son and disciple Nārada that no one can completely know or describe the qualities of the omnipotent Personality of Godhead.

(continued from Text 32)

PURPORT

Children play with an umbrella generally known as a frog's umbrella, and Lord Kṛṣṇa, when He was only seven years old, could snatch the great hill known as the Govardhana Parvata at Vṛndāvana and hold it for seven days continuously with one hand, just to protect the animals and the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana from the wrath of Indra, the heavenly King, who had been denied sacrificial offerings by the inhabitants of Vrajabhūmi.

Factually there is no need of offering sacrifices to the demigods for their services if one is engaged in the service of the Supreme Lord. Sacrifices recommended in the Vedic literature for satisfaction of the demigods are a sort of inducement to the sacrificers to realize the existence of higher authorities. The demigods are engaged by the Lord as controlling deities of material affairs, and according to the *Bhagavad-gītā*, when a demigod is worshiped the process is accepted as the indirect method for worshiping the Supreme Lord. But when the Supreme Lord is worshiped directly there is no need of worshiping the demigods or offering them sacrifices as recommended in particular circumstances. Lord Kṛṣṇa therefore advised the inhabitants of Vrajabhūmi not to offer any sacrifices to the heavenly King Indra. But Indra, not knowing Lord Kṛṣṇa in Vrajabhūmi, was angry at the inhabitants of Vrajabhūmi and tried to avenge the offense. But, competent as the Lord was, He saved the inhabitants and animals of Vrajabhūmi by His personal energy and proved definitely that anyone directly engaged as a devotee of the Supreme Lord need not satisfy any other demigods, however great, even to the level of Brahmā, or Śiva. Thus this incident definitely proved without a doubt that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Personality of Godhead and that He was so in all circumstances, as a child on the lap of His mother, as a boy 7 years old, and as an old man of 125 years of age. In either case He was never on the level of the ordinary man, and even in His advanced age He appeared a young boy 16 years old. These are the particular features of the transcendental body of the Lord.

TEXT 33

क्रीडन् वने निशि निशाकररश्मिगौर्यां
रासोन्मुखः कल्पदायतमूर्च्छितेन ।
उद्दीपितस्वररुजां ब्रजभृद्भूनां
हर्तुर्हरिष्यति शिरो धनदानुगस्य ॥३३॥

*kṛīḍan vane niśi niśākara-raśmi-gauryāṁ
rāsonmukhaḥ kala-padāyata-mūrcchitena
uddīpita-smara-rujāṁ vraja-bhṛd-vadhūnām
hartur hariṣyati śiro dhanadānugasya*

kṛīḍan—while engaged in His pastimes; *vane*—in the forest of Vṛndāvana; *niśi*—nocturnal; *niśākara*—the moon; *raśmi-gauryāṁ*—white moonshine; *rāsa-unmukhaḥ*—desiring to dance with; *kala-padāyata*—accompanied by sweet songs; *mūrcchitena*—and melodious music; *uddīpita*—awakened; *smara-rujāṁ*—sexual desires; *vraja-bhṛt*—the inhabitants of Vrajabhūmi; *vadhūnām*—of the wives; *hartuḥ*—of the kidnappers; *hariṣyati*—will vanquish; *śiraḥ*—the head; *dhanada-anugasya*—of the follower of the rich Kuvera.

TRANSLATION

When the Lord was engaged in His pastimes of the *rāsa* dance in the forest of Vṛndāvana, enlivening the sexual desires of the wives of the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana by sweet and melodious songs, a demon of the name Śaṅkhacūḍa, a rich follower of the treasurer of heaven [Kuvera], kidnapped the damsels, and the Lord severed his head from his trunk.

PURPORT

We should carefully note that the statements described herein are the statements of Brahmāji to Nārada, and he was speaking to Nārada of events that would happen in the future, during the advent of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The pastimes of the Lord are known to the experts who are able to see past, present and future, and Brahmāji, being one of them, foretold what would happen in the future. The killing of Śaṅkhacūḍa by the Lord is a more recent incident, after the *rāsa-līlā*, and not exactly a simultaneous affair. In the previous verses we have seen also that the Lord's engagement in the affairs of the forest fire was described along with His pastimes of punishing the Kāliya snake, and similarly the pastimes of the *rāsa* dance and the killing of Śaṅkhacūḍa are also described herein. The adjustment is that all these incidents would take place in the future, after the time when it was being foretold by Brahmāji to Nārada. The demon Śaṅkhacūḍa was killed by the Lord during His pastimes at Horikā in the month of Phālguna, and the same ceremony is still observed in India by the burning of the effigy of Śaṅkhacūḍa one day prior to the Lord's pastimes at Horikā, generally known as Holi.

Generally the future appearance and the activities of the Lord or His incarnations are foretold in the scriptures, and thus the pseudo-incarnations are unable to cheat persons who are in knowledge of the events as they are described in the authoritative scriptures.

TEXTS 34-35

ये च प्रलम्बस्वरदुर्देश्यरिष्ट-
मल्लभकंसयवनाः कपिपौण्ड्रकाद्याः ।

अन्ये च शाल्वकुजबल्वलदन्तवक्र-
सप्तोक्षशम्बरविदूरथरुक्मिमुल्याः ॥३४॥
ये वा मृधे समितिशालिन आत्तचापाः
काम्बोजमत्स्यकुरुसृजयकैकयाद्याः ।
यास्यन्तदर्शनमलं बलपार्थभीम-
व्याजाह्वयेन हरिणा निलयं तदीयम् ॥३५॥

ye ca pralamba-khara-dardura-keśy-arīṣṭa-
mallebha-kaṁsa-yavanāḥ kapi-pauṇḍrakādyāḥ
anye ca śālva-kuja-balvala-dantavakra-
saptokṣa-śambara-vidūratha-rukmi-mukhyāḥ

ye vā mṛdhe samiti-śālina ātta-cāpāḥ
kāmbōja-matsya-kuru-sṛñjaya-kaikayādyāḥ
yāsyanty adarśanam alam bala-pārtha-bhīma-
vyājāhvayena hariṇā nilayaṁ tadīyam

ye—all those; ca—totally; pralamba—the demon named Pralamba; khara—Dhenukāsura; dardura—Bakāsura; keśi—the Keśi demon; arīṣṭa—the demon Arīṣṭāsura; malla—a wrestler in the court of Kaṁsa; ibha—Kūvalayāpīḍa; kaṁsa—the King of Mathurā and maternal uncle of Kṛṣṇa; yavanāḥ—the kings of Persia and other adjoining places; kapi—Dvīvida; pauṇḍraka-ādyāḥ—Pauṇḍraka and others; anye—others; ca—as much as; śālva—King Śālva; kuja—Narakāsura; balvala—King Balvala; dantavakra—the brother of Śiśupāla, a dead rival of Kṛṣṇa's; saptokṣa—King Saptokṣa; śambara—King Śambara; vidūratha—King Vidūratha; rukmi-mukhyāḥ—the brother of Rukmiṇī, the first queen of Kṛṣṇa at Dvārakā; ye—all those; vā—either; mṛdhe—in the battlefield; samiti-śālinaḥ—all very powerful; ātta-cāpāḥ—well equipped with bows and arrows; kāmbōja—the King of Kamboja; matsya—the King of Dvarbhāṅga; kuru—the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra; sṛñjaya—King Sṛñjaya; kaikaya-ādyāḥ—the King of Kekaya and others; yāsyanti—would attain; adarśanam—impersonal merging within the brahmajyoti; alam—what to speak of; bala—Baladeva, the elder brother of Kṛṣṇa; pārtha—Arjuna; bhīma—the second Pāṇḍava; vyāja-āhvayena—by the false names; hariṇā—by Lord Hari; nilayam—the abode; tadīyam—of Him.

TRANSLATION

All demonic personalities like Pralamba, Dhenuka, Baka, Keśi, Arīṣṭa, Cāṇūra, Muṣṭika, Kūvalayāpīḍa elephant, Kaṁsa, Yavana, Narakāsura and Pauṇḍraka, great marshals like Śālva, Dvīvida monkey and Balvala, Dantavakra, the seven bulls, Śambara, Vidūratha and Rukmi, as also great warriors like Kāmbōja, Matsya, Kuru, Sṛñjaya and Kekaya, would all fight vigorously, either with the Lord Hari directly or with Him under His names of Baladeva, Arjuna, Bhīma, etc. And the demons, thus being killed, would attain either the impersonal brahmajyoti or His personal abode in the Vaikuṅṭha planets.

PURPORT

All manifestations, in both the material and spiritual worlds, are demonstrations of the different potencies of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The Personality of Godhead Baladeva is His immediate personal expansion, and Bhīma, Arjuna, etc., are His personal associates. The Lord would appear (and He does so whenever He appears) with all His associates and potencies. Therefore the rebellious souls, like the demons and demoniac men, mentioned by names like Pralamba, would be killed either by the Lord Himself or by His associates. All these affairs will be clearly explained in the Tenth Canto. But we should know well that all the above-mentioned living entities killed would attain salvation either by being merged in the brahmajyoti of the Lord or being allowed to enter into the abodes of the Lord called Vaikuṅṭhas. This has already been explained by Bhīṣmadeva (First Canto). All persons who participated in the Battlefield of Kuru-

kṣetra or otherwise with the Lord or with Baladeva, etc., would benefit by attaining spiritual existence according to the situation of their minds at the time of death. Those who recognized the Lord would enter Vaikuṅṭha, and those who estimated the Lord as only a powerful being would attain salvation by merging into the spiritual existence of the impersonal brahmajyoti of the Lord. But every one of them would get release from material existence. Since such is the benefit of those who played with the Lord inimically, one can imagine what would be the position of those who devoutly served the Lord in transcendental relationship with Him.

TEXT 36

कालेन मीलितधियामवमृश्य नृणां
स्तोकायुषां खनिगमो बत दूरपारः ।
आविर्हितस्त्वनुयुगं स हि सत्यवत्यां
वेदद्रुमं विटपशो विभजिष्यति स्म ॥३६॥

kālena milita-dhiyām avamṛśya nṛṇāṁ
stokāyusāṁ sva-nigamaḥ bata dūra-pārah
āvīrhitas tv anuyugaṁ sa hi satyavatyāṁ
veda-drumaṁ viṭa-paśo vibhajīsyati sma

kālena—in course of time; milita-dhiyām—of the less intelligent persons; avamṛśya—considering the difficulties; nṛṇāṁ—of humanity at large; stoka-āyusāṁ—of the short-living persons; sva-nigamaḥ—the Vedic literatures compiled by Him; bata—exactly; dūra-pārah—greatly difficult; āvīrhitas—having appeared as; tu—but; anuyugaṁ—in terms of the age; saḥ—He (the Lord); hi—certainly; satyavatyāṁ—in the womb of Satyavatī; veda-drumam—the desire tree of the Vedas; viṭa-paśaḥ—by division of branches; vibhajīsyati—will divide; sma—as it were.

TRANSLATION

The Lord Himself in His incarnation as the son of Satyavatī [Vyāsadeva] will consider his compilation of the Vedic literature to be very difficult for the less intelligent persons with short life, and thus He will divide the tree of Vedic knowledge into different branches, according to the circumstances of the particular age.

PURPORT

Herein Brahmā mentions the future compilation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam for the short-lived persons of the Kali age. As explained in the First Canto, the less intelligent persons of the age of Kali would be not only short-lived, but also perplexed with so many problems of life due to the awkward situation of the godless human society. Advancement of material comforts of the body is activity in the mode of ignorance according to the laws of material nature. Real advancement of knowledge means progress of knowledge in self-realization. But in the age of Kali the less intelligent men mistakenly consider the short lifetime of one hundred years (now factually reduced to about forty or sixty years) to be all in all. They are less intelligent because they have no information of the eternity of life; they identify with the temporary material body existing for forty years and consider it the only basic principle of life. Such persons are described as equal to the asses and bulls. But the Lord, as the compassionate father of all living beings, imparts unto them the vast Vedic knowledge in short treatises like the Bhagavad-gītā and, for the graduates, the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. The Purāṇas and the Mahābhārata are also similarly made by Vyāsadeva for the different types of men in the modes of material nature. But none of them are independent of the Vedic principles.

TEXT 37

देवद्विषां निगमवर्त्मनि निष्ठितानां
पूर्भिर्मयेन विहितभिरदृश्यतूभिः ।

लोकान् प्रतां मतिविमोहमतिप्रलोभं
वेपं विधाय बहु भाष्यत औपधर्म्यम् ॥३७॥

*deva-dviṣāṁ nigama-vartmani niṣṭhitānām
pūrbhir mayena vihitābhir adṛśya-tūrbhiḥ
lokān ghnatām mati-vimoham atipralobham
veṣam vidhāya bahu bhāṣyate aupadharmyam*

deva-dviṣāṁ—of those who were envious of the devotees of the Lord; *nigama*—the Vedas; *vartmani*—on the path of; *niṣṭhitānām*—of the well situated; *pūrbhiḥ*—by rockets; *mayena*—made by the great scientist Maya; *vihitābhiḥ*—made by; *adṛśya-tūrbhiḥ*—unseen in the sky; *lokān*—the different planets; *ghnatām*—of the killers; *mati-vimoham*—bewilderment of the mind; *atipralobham*—very attractive; *veṣam*—dress; *vidhāya*—having done so; *bahu bhāṣyate*—will talk very much; *aupadharmyam*—subreligious principles.

TRANSLATION

When the atheists, after being well versed in the Vedic scientific knowledge, annihilate inhabitants of different planets, flying unseen in the sky on well-built rockets prepared by the great scientist Maya, the Lord will bewilder their minds by dressing Himself attractively as Buddha and will preach on subreligious principles.

PURPORT

This incarnation of Lord Buddha is not the same Buddha incarnation we have in the present history of mankind. According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the Buddha incarnation mentioned in this verse appeared in a different Kali age. In the duration of life of one Manu there are more than seventy-two Kali-yugas, and in one of them the particular type of Buddha mentioned here would appear. Lord Buddha incarnates at a time when the people are most materialistic and preaches commonsense religious principles. Such *ahimsā* is not a religious principle itself, but it is an important quality for persons who are actually religious. It is a commonsense religion because one is advised to do no harm to any other animal or living being because such harmful actions are equally harmful to he who does the harm. But before learning these principles of non-violence one has to learn two other principles, namely to be humble and to be prideless. Unless one is humble and prideless, one cannot be harmless and nonviolent. And after being nonviolent one has to learn tolerance and simplicity of living. One must offer respects to the great religious preachers and spiritual leaders and also train the senses for controlled action, learning to be unattached to family and home, and enacting devotional service to the Lord, etc. At the ultimate stage one has to accept the Lord and become His devotee; otherwise there is no religion. In religious principles there must be God in the center; otherwise simple moral instructions are merely subreligious principles, generally known as *upadharma*, or nearness to religious principles.

TEXT 38

यद्दालयेष्वपि सतां न हरेः कथाः स्युः
पाषण्डिनो द्विजजना वृषला नृदेवाः ।
खाहा स्वधा वषडिति स्म गिरो न यत्र
शास्ता भविष्यति कलेर्भगवान् युगान्ते ॥३८॥

*yarhy ālayeṣv api satāṁ na hareḥ kathāḥ syuḥ
pāṣaṇḍino dvija-janā vṛṣalā nṛdevāḥ
svāhā svadhā vaṣaḍ iti sma giro na yatra
śāstā bhaviṣyati kaler bhagavān yugānte*

yarhi—when it happens; *ālayeṣu*—in the residence of; *api*—even; *satām*—civilized gentlemen; *na*—no; *hareḥ*—of the Personality of Godhead; *kathāḥ*—topics; *syuḥ*—will take place; *pāṣaṇḍinaḥ*—atheists;

dvija-janāḥ—persons declaring themselves to be the higher three classes (*brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas* and *vaiśyas*); *vṛṣalāḥ*—the lower class *sūdras*; *nṛ-devāḥ*—ministers of the government; *svāhā*—hymns to perform sacrifices; *svadhā*—the ingredients to perform sacrifices; *vaṣaḍ*—the altar of sacrifice; *iti*—all these; *sma*—shall; *giraḥ*—words; *na*—never; *yatra*—anywhere; *śāstā*—the chastiser; *bhaviṣyati*—will appear; *kaleḥ*—of the Kali age; *bhagavān*—the Personality of Godhead; *yuga-ante*—at the end of.

TRANSLATION

Thereafter, at the end of Kali-yuga, when there exist no topics on the subject of God, even at the residences of so-called saints and respectable gentlemen of the three higher castes, and when the power of government is transferred to the hands of ministers elected from the lowborn *sūdra* class or those less than them, and when nothing is known of the techniques of sacrifice, even by word, at that time the Lord will appear as the supreme chastiser.

PURPORT

The symptoms of the worst conditions of the material world, at the last stage of this age, called Kali-yuga, are stated herein. The sum and substance of such conditions is godlessness. Even the so-called saints and higher castes of the social orders, generally known as the *dvija-janas* or the twice-born, will become atheists. As such, all of them will practically forget even the holy name of the Lord, and what to speak of His activities. The higher castes of society, namely the intelligent class of men guiding the destinies of the social orders, the administrative class of men guiding the law and order of the society, and the productive class of men guiding the economic development of the society, must all be properly well versed in knowledge of the Supreme Lord, knowing factually His name, quality, pastimes, entourage, paraphernalia and personalities. The saints and the higher castes or orders of the society are judged by their proportion of knowledge in the science of God, or *tattva-jñāna*, and not by any kind of birthright or bodily designations. Such designations, without any knowledge of the science of God and practical knowledge of devotional service, are considered to be all decorations of dead bodies. And when there is too much inflation of these decorated dead bodies in society, there develop so many anomalies in the progressive, peaceful life of the human being. Because of the lack of training or culture in the upper section of the social orders, they are no more to be designated as the *dvija-janas*, or the twice-born. The significance of being twice-born has been explained in many places in these great literatures, and again one is reminded herewith that birth, executed by the sex life of the father and the mother, is called animal birth. But such animal birth and progress of life on the animal principles of eating, sleeping, fearing and mating (without any scientific culture of spiritual life) is called the *sūdra* life, or, to be more explicit, the uncultured life of the lower class of men. It is stated herein that the governmental power of society in the Kali-yuga will be passed over to the uncultured, godless laborer classes of men, and thus the *nṛdevas* (or the ministers of the government) will be the *vṛṣalas*, or the uncultured lower-class men of society. No one can expect any peace and prosperity in a human society full of uncultured lower classes of men. The symptoms of such uncultured social animals are already in vogue, and it is the duty of the leaders of men to take note of it and try to reform the social order by introducing the principles of twice-born men trained in the science of God consciousness. This can be done by expanding the culture of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* all over the world. In the degraded condition of human society, the Lord incarnates as the Kalki *avatāra* and kills all the demonic without mercy.

TEXT 39

सर्गे तपोऽहमृषयो नव ये प्रजेशाः
स्थानेऽथ धर्ममखमन्वमरावनीशाः ।
अन्ते त्वधर्महरमन्युवशासुराद्या
मायाविभूतय इमाः पुरुदक्तिभाजः ॥३९॥

*sarge tapo 'ham ṛṣayo nava ye prajāśāḥ
sthāne 'tha dharmā-makha-manu-amarāvanīśāḥ
ante tv adharma-hara-manyu-vaśāsuraḍyā
māyā-vibhūtaya imāḥ puru-śakti-bhājāḥ*

sarge—in the beginning of the creation; *tapah*—penance; *aham*—myself; *ṛṣayah*—sages; *nava*—nine; *ye prajāśāḥ*—those who would generate; *sthāne*—in the middle while maintaining the creation; *atha*—certainly; *dharmā*—religion; *makha*—Lord Viṣṇu; *manu*—the father of mankind; *amara*—the demigods deputed to control the affairs of maintenance; *avanīśāḥ*—and the kings of different planets; *ante*—at the end; *tu*—but; *adharma*—irreligion; *hara*—Lord Śiva; *manyu-vaśa*—subjected to anger; *asura-ādyāḥ*—atheists, the enemies of the devotees; *māyā*—energy; *vibhūtaḥ*—powerful representatives; *imāḥ*—all of them; *puru-śakti-bhājāḥ*—of the supreme powerful Lord.

TRANSLATION

At the beginning of creation there are penance, myself [Brahmā], and the Prajāpatis, the great sages who generate; then, during the maintenance of the creation, there are Lord Viṣṇu, the demigods with controlling powers, and the kings of different planets. But at the end there is irreligion, and then Lord Śiva and the atheists full of anger, etc. All of them are different representative manifestations of the energy of the supreme power, the Lord.

PURPORT

The material world is created by the energy of the Lord, which is manifested in the beginning of the creation by the penance of Brahmājī, the first living being in the creation, and then there are the nine Prajāpatis, known as great sages. In the stage when the creation is maintained, there are devotional service to Lord Viṣṇu, or factual religion, the different demigods, and the kings of different planets who maintain the world. At last, when the creation is preparing to wind up, there is first the principle of irreligion, then Lord Śiva along with the atheists, full of anger. But all of them are but different manifestations of the Supreme Lord. Therefore Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Mahādeva (Śiva) are different incarnations of the different modes of material nature. Viṣṇu is the Lord of the mode of goodness. Brahmā is the lord of the mode of passion, and Śiva is the lord of the mode of ignorance. Ultimately, the material creation is but a temporary manifestation meant to give the chance of liberation to the conditioned souls, who are entrapped in the material world, and one who develops the mode of goodness under the protection of Lord Viṣṇu has the greatest chance of being liberated by following the Vaiṣṇava principles and thus being promoted to the kingdom of God, no more to return to this miserable material world.

TEXT 40

विष्णोर्तु वीर्यगणनां कृतमोऽर्हतीह
यः पार्थिवान्यपि कविर्विममे रजांसि ।
चस्कम्भ यः स्वरहसास्खलता त्रिपृष्ठं
यस्मात् त्रिसाम्यसदानादुरुकम्पयानम्॥४०॥

*viṣṇor nu vīrya-gaṇanām katamo 'rhatīha
yaḥ pāṛthivāny api kavir vimame rajānsi
caskambha yaḥ sva-rahāsāskhalatā tri-prṣṭham
yasmāt tri-sāmya-sadanād uru-kampayānam*

viṣṇoḥ—of Lord Viṣṇu; *nu*—but; *vīrya*—prowess; *gaṇanām*—in the matter of accounting; *katamaḥ*—who else; *arhatī*—is able to do it; *iha*—in this world; *yaḥ*—one who; *pāṛthivāni*—the atoms; *api*—also; *kaviḥ*—great scientist; *vimame*—might have counted; *rajānsi*—particles; *caskambha*—could catch; *yaḥ*—one who; *sva-rahāsā*—by His own leg; *askhalatā*—without being hampered; *tri-prṣṭham*—the topmost planetary space; *yasmāt*—by which; *tri-sāmya*—the neutral state of the

three modes; *sadanāt*—up to that place; *uru-kampayānam*—moving very greatly.

TRANSLATION

Who can describe completely the prowess of Viṣṇu? Even the scientist, who might have counted the particles of the atoms of the universe, cannot do so. Because it is He only who in His form of Trivikrama moved His leg effortlessly beyond the topmost planet, Satyaloka, up to the neutral state of the three modes of material nature. And all were moved.

PURPORT

The highest scientific advancement of the material scientists is atomic energy. But the material scientist is not able to have an estimation of the particles of atoms contained in the whole universe. But even if one is able to count such atomic particles or is able to roll up the sky like one's bedding, even then one is unable to estimate the extent of the prowess and energy of the Supreme Lord. He is known as Trivikrama because once, in His incarnation of Vāmana, He expanded His leg beyond the highest planetary system, Satyaloka, and reached the neutral state of the modes of nature called the covering of the material world. There are seven layers of material coverings over the material sky, and the Lord could penetrate even those coverings. With His toe He made a hole through which the water of the Causal Ocean filters into the material sky, and the current is known as the sacred Ganges, which purifies the planets of the three worlds. In other words, no one is equal to the transcendently powerful Viṣṇu. He is omnipotent, and no one is equal to or greater than Him.

TEXT 41

नान्तं विदाम्यहममी मुनयोऽग्रजास्ते
मायाबलस्य पुरुषस्य कुतोऽवरा ये ।
गायन् गुणान् दशशतानन आदिदेवः
शेषोऽधुनापि समवस्यति नास्य पारम्॥४१॥

*nāntaṁ vidāmy aham amī munayo 'gra-jās te
māyā-balasya puruṣasya kuto 'varā ye
gāyan guṇān daśa-śatānana ādi-devaḥ
śeṣo 'dhunāpi samavasyati nāsya pāram*

na—never; *antam*—end; *vidāmi*—do I know; *aham*—myself; *amī*—and all those; *munayah*—great sages; *agra-jāḥ*—born prior to you; *te*—you; *māyā-balasya*—of the omnipotent; *puruṣasya*—of the Personality of Godhead; *kutaḥ*—what to speak of others; *avarāḥ*—born after us; *ye*—those; *gāyan*—by singing; *guṇān*—the qualities; *daśa-śatānanaḥ*—one who has ten hundred faces; *ādi-devaḥ*—the first incarnation of the Lord; *śeṣaḥ*—known as Śeṣa; *adhunā*—until now; *api*—even; *samavasyati*—can achieve; *na*—not; *asya*—of Him; *pāram*—limit.

TRANSLATION

Neither I nor all the sages born before you know fully the omnipotent Personality of Godhead. So what can others, who are born after us, know about Him? Even the first incarnation of the Lord, namely Śeṣa, has not been able to reach the limit of such knowledge, although He is describing the qualities of the Lord with ten hundred faces.

PURPORT

The omnipotent Personality of Godhead has primarily three potential manifestations, namely internal, external, and marginal potencies, with unlimited expansions of these three energies. As such, the potential expansions can never be calculated by anyone because even the Personality of God Himself, as the incarnation of Śeṣa, cannot estimate the potencies, although He has been describing them continuously with His one thousand faces.

(continued in next issue)



Every Town and Village

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



Deity forms of Lord Rāmacandra (center) and Śrīmatī Sītā-devī (to His left) grace the altar at Bhaktivedanta Manor, near London. Other Deities are Rāma's brother Lakṣmaṇa and Hanumān (kneeling).

Sītā-Rāma Installed Near London: 10,000 Attend

Hertfordshire, U.K.—Recently at the Bhaktivedanta Manor, the country āśrama of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement near London, devotees installed the Deity forms of Lord Rāmacandra (Kṛṣṇa's incarnation as a perfect king) and His consort, Śrīmatī Sītā-devī. The installation ceremonies were conducted by His Holiness Kṛṣṇadāsa Swami and Śrīla Jayatīrtha Mahārāja, who oversees the movement's activities in Great Britain. More than ten thousand guests attended.

Said Kṛṣṇadāsa Swami, a devotee from India who has lived in England since 1966: "This ceremony has fulfilled a wish I have cherished for many years. Indian people are especially eager to have the Deity of Lord Rāma installed because from their childhood they've known Him as 'Maryādā-puruṣottama Rāma'—the ideal example for human society. He acted as an ideal father, son, husband, king, brother, and master. That is why His kingdom, Rāmārāja, is famous even today."

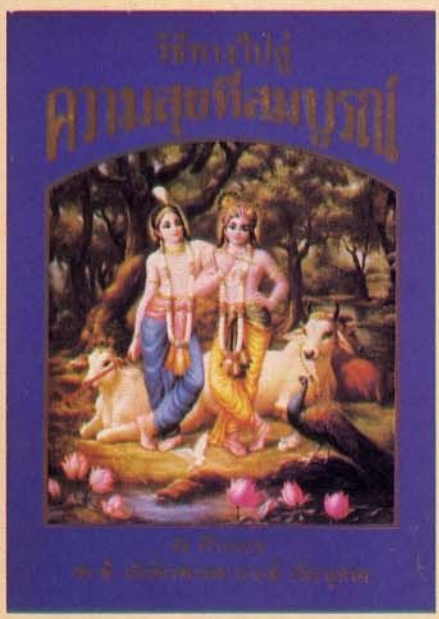
Four ISKCON life members—Mr. Maganbhai Bhimjiyani, Mr. Rameshbhai Patel, Mr. L. Pagarani, and Mr. Kevalani—donated all the expenses for acquiring the Deities from India, and thousands of

other well-wishers donated the cost of the Deities' ornaments, garments, crowns, and other accouterments.

Highlights of the program included a bathing ceremony for the Deities, called *abhiṣeka*; a film about Lord Rāmacandra's pastimes as told in the classic scripture *Rāmāyaṇa*; a drama staged by ISKCON devotees; and a sumptuous feast of *prasādam*, sanctified vegetarian food.

Aussies Won Over by "Children of Krishna"

Melbourne—About a third of all the people in Australia recently viewed a 12-minute documentary about the education of children in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. "The Children of Krishna," which appeared on the Australian version of the *60 Minutes* TV program, focused on the movement's elementary school in Murwillumbah, New South Wales. About five million people watched the show, which brought the station an unusually large amount of mail from viewers. According to station officials, 98.4% of the mail was positive, giving favorable comments about the show and the Hare Kṛṣṇa school.



Book on Kṛṣṇa Published in Thai

Bangkok, Thailand—The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust has announced the publication of a book translated from English into the Thai language and describing ten of Lord Kṛṣṇa's incarnations. Written by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, the book also includes two short essays: *Kṛṣṇa, the Reservoir of Pleasure* and *On Chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa*. The book was translated from English by Sam-mohini-devī dāsī, a native of Thailand.

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 495 Caitanya era—Month of Śrīdhara		
		July 17
		First month of Cāturmāsya begins (fasting from spinach)
July 22	July 24	July 27
Disappearance of Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī.	Disappearance of Śrīla Lokanātha Gosvāmī.	Kārmikā Ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans).
Aug. 4	Aug. 11	
Disappearance of Śrīla Raghunādana Ṭhākura.	Pavitrārōpanī Ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans).	
Disappearance of Śrīla Vamsīdāsa Bābājī Mahārāja.	Jhulana-yātrā (swing festival) of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda begins.	
Aug. 12	Aug. 15	
Disappearance of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.	Jhulana-yātrā of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda ends. Appearance of Lord Śrī Baladeva (fasting till moonrise). Second month of Cāturmāsya begins (fasting from yogurt).	

Mantra-Rock

(continued from page 14)

electric bass, and two drummers, they launched into their first number. The large speakers shook the ballroom with their vibrations, and a roar of approval rose from the audience.

At ten o'clock Prabhupāda walked up the stairs of the Avalon, followed by Kīrtanānanda and Raṇacora. As he entered the ballroom, devotees blew conchshells, someone began a drum roll, and the crowd parted down the center, all the way from the entrance to the stage, opening a path for him to walk. With his head held high, Prabhupāda seemed to float by as he walked through the strange milieu, making his way across the ballroom floor to the stage.

Suddenly the light show changed. Pictures of Kṛṣṇa and His pastimes flashed onto the wall: Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna riding together on Arjuna's chariot, Kṛṣṇa eating butter, Kṛṣṇa subduing the whirlwind demon, Kṛṣṇa playing the flute. As Prabhupāda walked through the crowd, everyone stood, applauding and cheering. He climbed the stairs and seated himself softly on a waiting cushion. The crowd quieted.

Looking over at Allen Ginsberg, Prabhupāda said, "You can speak something about the *mantra*."

Allen began to tell of his understanding and experience with the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*. He told how Swamiji had opened a storefront on Second Avenue in New York and had chanted Hare Kṛṣṇa in Tompkins Square Park. And he invited everyone to the Frederick Street temple. "I especially recommend the early-morning *kīrtanas*," he said, "for those who, coming down from LSD, want to stabilize their consciousness on reentry."

Prabhupāda spoke, giving a brief history of the *mantra*. Then he looked over at Allen again: "You may chant."

Allen began playing his harmonium and chanting into the microphone, singing the tune he had brought from India. Gradually more and more people in the audience caught on and began chanting. As the *kīrtana* continued and the audience got increasingly enthusiastic, musicians from the various bands came onstage to join in. Raṇacora, a fair drummer, began playing Moby Grape's drums. Some of the bass players and guitar players joined in as the devotees and a large group of hippies mounted the stage. Projected slides of multicolored oil slicks pulsed, and the balls bounced back and forth to the beat of the *mantra*, now projected onto the wall: Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. As the chanting spread throughout the hall, some

of the hippies got to their feet, held hands, and danced.

Allen Ginsberg: *We sang Hare Kṛṣṇa all evening. It was absolutely great—an open thing. It was the height of the Haight-Ashbury spiritual enthusiasm. It was the first time there had been a music scene in San Francisco where everybody could be part of it and participate. Everybody could sing and dance rather than listen to other people sing and dance.*

Jānakī: *People didn't know what they were chanting for. But to see that many people chanting—even though most of them were intoxicated—made Swamiji very happy. He loved to see the people chanting.*

For all the fanfare of the night before, Swamiji remained untouched—he was aloof, innocent, and humble, while at the same time very grave and ancient.

Hayagrīva: *Standing in front of the bands, I could hardly hear. But above all, I could make out the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, building steadily. On the wall behind, a slide projected a huge picture of Kṛṣṇa in a gold helmet with a peacock feather, a flute in His hand.*

Then Śrīla Prabhupāda stood up, lifted his arms, and began to dance. He gestured for everyone to join him, and those who were still seated stood up and began dancing and chanting and swaying back and forth, following Prabhupāda's gentle dance.

Roger Segal: *The ballroom appeared as if it was a human field of wheat blowing in the wind. It produced a calm feeling in contrast to the usual Avalon Ballroom atmosphere of gyrating energies. The chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa continued for over an hour, and finally everyone was jumping and yelling, even crying and shouting.*

Someone placed a microphone before Śrīla Prabhupāda, and his voice resounded strongly over the powerful sound system. The tempo quickened. Śrīla Prabhupāda was perspiring profusely. Kīrtanānanda insisted that the *kīrtana* stop. Swamiji was too old for this, he said; it might be harmful. But the chanting continued, faster and faster, until the words of the *mantra* finally became indistinguishable amidst

the amplified music and the chorus of thousands of voices.

Then suddenly it ended. And all that could be heard was the loud hum of the amplifiers and Śrīla Prabhupāda's voice, ringing out, offering obeisances to his spiritual master: "Om Viṣṇupāda Paramahansa Parivrājākācārya Aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswami Mahārāja ki jaya! . . . All glories to the assembled devotees!"


Śrīla Prabhupāda made his way off-stage, through the heavy smoke and crowds, and down the front stairs, with Kīrtanānanda and Raṇacora close behind him. Allen announced the next rock group.

The next morning the temple was crowded with young people who had seen Swamiji at the Avalon. Most of them had stayed up all night. Śrīla Prabhupāda, having followed his usual morning schedule, came down at seven, held *kīrtana*, and delivered the morning lecture.

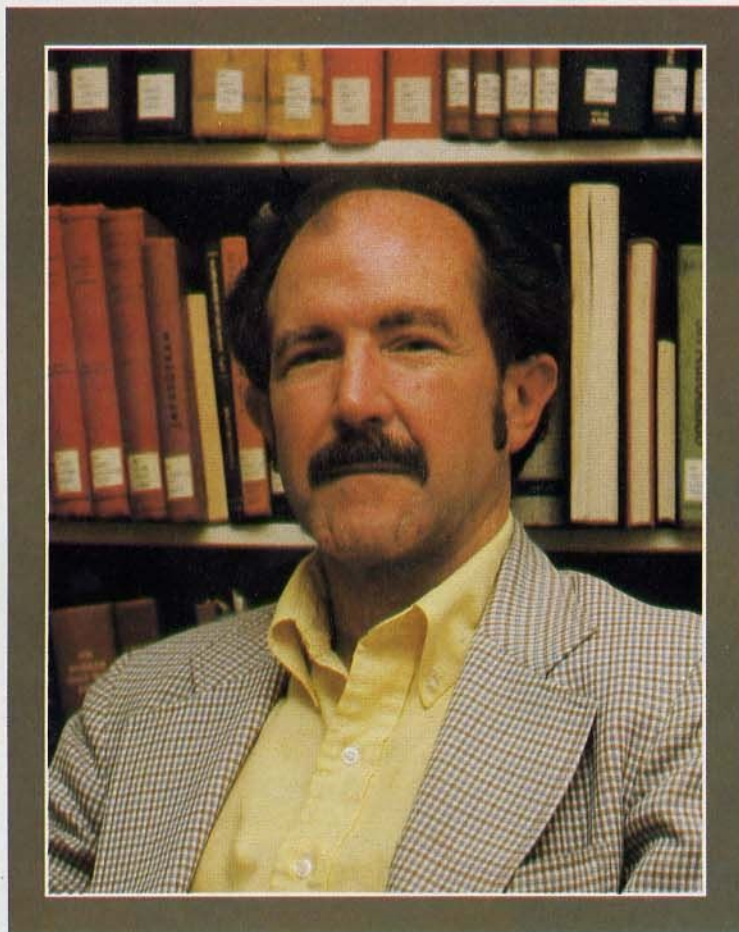
Later that morning, while riding to the beach with Kīrtanānanda and Hayagrīva, Swamiji half-audibly chanted in the back seat of the car, looking out the window as quiet and unassuming as a child, with no indication that the night before he had been cheered and applauded by thousands of hippies, who had stood back and made a great aisle for him to walk in triumph across the strobe-lit floor amid the thunder of the electric basses and the pounding drums of the Avalon Ballroom. For all the fanfare of the night before, he remained untouched, the same as ever in personal demeanor: he was aloof, innocent, and humble, while at the same time appearing very grave and ancient. As Kīrtanānanda and Hayagrīva were aware, Swamiji was not of this world. They knew that he, unlike them, was always thinking of Kṛṣṇa.

They walked with him along the boardwalk near the ocean, with its cool breezes and cresting waves. Kīrtanānanda spread the *cādar* over Swamiji's shoulders. "In Bengali there is one nice verse," Prabhupāda remarked, breaking his silence. "I remember. 'Oh, what is that voice across the sea calling, calling: *Come here, come here. . .*'" Speaking little, he walked the boardwalk with his two friends, frequently looking out at the sea and sky. As he walked he softly sang a *mantra* that Kīrtanānanda and Hayagrīva had never heard before: "*Govinda jaya jaya, gopāla jaya jaya, rādhā-ramaṇa hari, govinda jaya jaya.*" He sang slowly, in a deep voice, as they walked along the boardwalk. He looked out at the Pacific Ocean: "Because it is great, it is tranquil."

"The ocean appears to be eternal," Hayagrīva ventured.

"No," Prabhupāda replied. "Nothing in the material world is eternal." 

(To be continued.)



A VITAL TRANSITION

The Molding of the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement in British India

by DR. THOMAS J. HOPKINS

Dr. Thomas J. Hopkins is the chairman of the Department of Religious Studies at Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Dr. Hopkins, author of The Hindu Religious Tradition, has made his special areas of interest Hindu devotional movements, Purāṇic and popular Hinduism, Hindu temples and religious arts, the Bhagavad-gītā and its interpretations, the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, new religions in America, yoga meditation, and related fields. What follows is a lecture he delivered in February 1981 before the South Asia Seminar at the University of Pennsylvania, in Philadelphia.

Tremendous changes have taken place in American religious life in the past two decades. Some of these changes have been largely internal and continuous with

the past history of American religion, such as the rise of the Jesus movement and the rapid growth of charismatic and evangelical Christian churches. At least one change, however, has no clear historic parallel: the upsurge of religious movements whose leaders and doctrines have roots in traditional Asian religions. Both east Asia and south Asia are well represented in this development, but by far the largest number of new groups have come from India—so much so that the phenomenon can almost be considered a missionary movement from India to America, a reversal of the Western missionary efforts of the 18th and 19th centuries. Instead of Westerners setting forth to Christianize the heathen, the “heathen” are coming to the West and are rapidly winning converts to their own religions.

Why has this happened? Many explanations have been put forth, most of them in terms of Western social and religious history: the decline of religious vitality in the West, disillusionment with Western technological culture, the alienation of young people from the political and religious establishment, and so on. All of these are undoubtedly important, but too little attention has been given to the other side: the surprising vitality of Asian religions in the face of at least two centuries of Western world dominance. A look at the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement may give us some insights into this side of the emerging pattern.

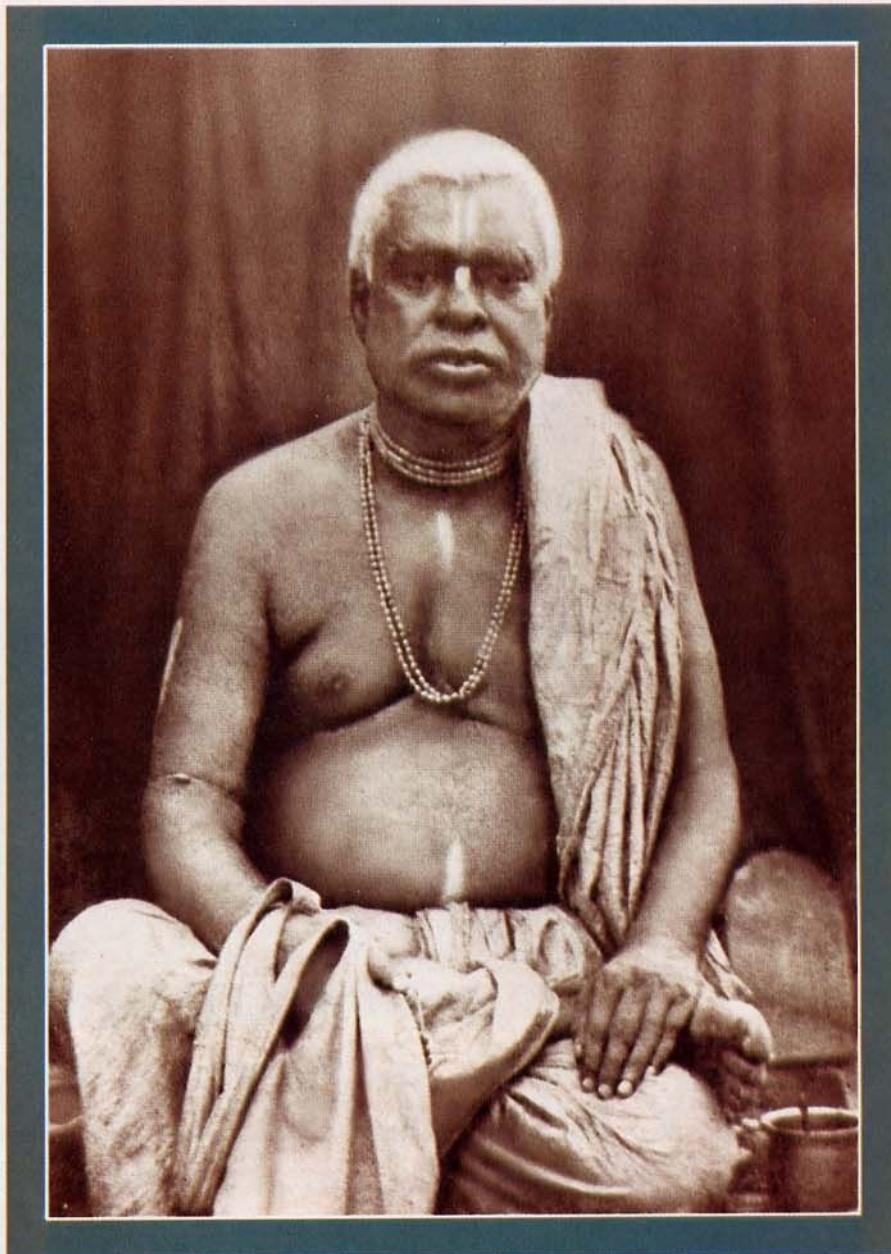
The success of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, if not unique, is certainly outstanding among the groups with Asian roots that have flourished in America in the last

two decades. What are the factors that have made the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement so successful? To understand these factors, it's necessary to understand where the movement came from in India. My primary thesis today is that the reasons for the success of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in the U.S. and elsewhere outside of India derive primarily from the development of that movement in India during the 19th century. What I want to start with today, therefore, is a little bit of the history of the 19th century, looking particularly at the discipic line of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

The development of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in the 19th century—or the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava movement, as it is known in India—occurred in the context of a much larger process of social and religious change, which is represented by a number of very notable figures. The first of these is Ram Mohan Roy, who is generally seen as the father of the Hindu renaissance in the 19th century. Ram Mohan Roy was by no means alone in this effort; change was taking place in many areas. After him many others were involved in social and religious change—many of them, interestingly enough, coming out of the religious background stemming from Śrī Caitanya.* Ram Mohan Roy himself was not specifically a Caitanyite. Though his father was of that background, his mother was a worshiper of Durgā, so even in his parentage he had a kind of mixed orientation. But other, later figures also had some relationship to the Caitanya community and its tradition, so that there was a rather unusual interaction going on in Bengal between the Caitanya tradition, the influence of the modern English language and other Westernization processes, and the renaissance of the Hindu tradition.

What I want to look at first is a prime example of this interaction in the person of Kedāranātha Datta, better known by his religious name of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. He, more than anyone else, put together the factors in the 19th century that made possible the development of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava movement in Bengal and the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in the Western world. Frankly, I didn't know much about him before I started doing some research for this talk. The more I found out about him, though, the more fascinated I became. So I'd like to tell his story, because it seems to me he is not only

*Śrī Caitanya was the great saint and reformer who appeared five hundred years ago in Bengal and taught that one can best attain love of God through the congregational chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*. His followers accept Him to be an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa.—Editor



Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, pioneer of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in 19th-century India.

outstanding in his own personal capability but is in many ways representative of what was going on in Bengal in that period.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was born in 1838. He came out of a Caitanyite background, but rather characteristically for that time and place, he was headed in the direction of English and Western education. His father died when he was relatively young, but his mother's family had money and he was brought up in a zamindar† household of some importance. He was sent to high school in Calcutta at the Hindu Charitable Institution and later completed his education in Calcutta at a Christian college. So he's typical of that group in Bengal who had high social status, an intellectual orientation, and an En-

†A zamindar is a wealthy landholder.—Editor.

glish education that prepared them for life under British rule.

After finishing college Bhaktivinoda started teaching in Orissa, and he is credited by his biographers as one of the pioneers of English education in that state. But he didn't stay in education for very long. Instead, he studied law, passed his law examinations, and in 1862 took employment as a civil servant with the government of Bengal. Then in 1866 he was appointed a magistrate within the provincial civil service, and he carried on in that service for the rest of his government career, until his retirement in 1894.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was in many ways a typical educated Indian serving the British government in India. He held a variety of magistrate posts in Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa. He learned Persian and

Urdu in Bihar, where the Mogul tradition was still preserved in legal and administrative circles, and in Orissa he was for a time, the British-appointed overseer of the Jagannātha temple in Purī; in each case his principal concern was to promote the cause of British law. As a competent and successful young magistrate, his interest in his own religious tradition was strictly personal and was largely a matter of cultural nostalgia. There is little evidence that he saw his Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava heritage as a worthy rival to Christianity and the Western intellectual tradition, nor did he see his private religious interests as deserving of public attention. For the first thirty years of his life, in fact, he had little contact with the real religious and intellectual core of his own tradition. He was unable even to find a copy of the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, which was written in his native Bengali, and he had no acquaintance with either the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* or the writings of the Six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.*

All of this changed in 1868, when he received from a friend a copy of both the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, or *Bhāgavata Purāna*, with the commentary of Śrīdhara Svāmī. He plunged into these works, discovered their wealth of religious teaching, and went through a personal transformation. For the first time he realized there was something in the Caitanyite tradition worth preserving—and not only worth preserving, but worth promoting on a public level. This he took as his new obligation.

I have a copy of a little pamphlet that Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura published called *The Bhagavata: Its Philosophy, Ethics, and Theology*. It was written soon after his great discovery and is based on perhaps the first public lecture he gave to announce his new-found cause. It is clearly directed to English-educated Indians who, like himself, had lost contact with their own tradition. Written in marvelously fluent English, it is nonetheless an argument against the inroads of British education and Western cultural values. It is not a total rejection of the West but a plea for reform based on the religious insights and teachings of Caitanya. In advocating reform, Bhaktivinoda does what any successful reformer must do: he maintains contact with the current social and intellectual climate and yet carries his message beyond the existing level to a new synthesis. But rather than trying to describe this work further, I'd like to give you a sense of

its flavor by reading excerpts from the first part of it.

"We love to read a book," he writes, "which we've never read before. We're anxious to gather whatever information is contained in it, and with such acquirement our curiosity stops. This mode of study prevails amongst a great number of readers, who are mere repositories of facts and statements made by other people. But this is not study. The student is to read the facts with a view to create, and not with the object of fruitless retention. Students, like satellites, should reflect whatever light they receive from authors and not imprison

“The Bhagavat, like all religious works and philosophical performances and writings of great men, has suffered from the imprudent conduct of useless readers and stupid critics.”

the facts and thoughts as the magistrates imprison the convicts in the jail!

"Thought is progressive. The author's thoughts must have progress in the reader in the shape of correction or development. He is the best critic who can show the further development of an old thought, but a mere denouncer is the enemy of progress and consequently of Nature. . . . Thus the shallow critic and the fruitless reader are the two great enemies of progress. We must shun them. . . .

"The *Bhagavat* [that is, the *Bhāgavata Purāna*], like all religious works and philosophical performances and writings of great men, has suffered from the imprudent conduct of useless readers and stupid critics. The former have done so much injury to the work that they have surpassed the latter in their evil consequence. Men of brilliant thoughts have passed by the work in quest of truth and philosophy, but the prejudice which they imbibed from its useless readers and their conduct prevented them from making a candid investigation. . . .

"The *Bhagavat* has suffered alike from

shallow critics both Indian and outlandish. [He knew English well enough, I think, to know what he was saying.] That book has been accursed and denounced by a great number of our young countrymen who have scarcely read its contents and pondered over the philosophy on which it is founded. It is owing mostly to their imbibing an unfounded prejudice against it when they were in school. . . . We are ourselves witness of the fact. When we were in college, reading the philosophical works of the West and exchanging thoughts with the thinkers of the day, we had a real hatred toward the *Bhagavat*. That great work looked like a repository of wicked and stupid ideas scarcely adapted to the 19th century, and we hated to hear any arguments in its favor. With us then a volume of Channing, Parker, Emerson, or Newman had more weight than the whole lot of the *Vaiṣṇav* works. Greedily we pored over the various commentations of the Holy Bible and the labors of the Tattva Bodhini Sabha, containing extracts from the *Upanishads* and the *Vedānta*, but no work of the Vaishnavs had any favor with us.

"But when we advanced in age and our religious sentiment received development, we turned out in a manner Unitarian in our belief and prayed as Jesus prayed in the Garden. Accidentally we fell in with a work about the Great Caitanya, and on reading it with some attention in order to discern the historical position of that Mighty Genius of Nadia, we had the opportunity of gathering His explanations of the *Bhagavat* given to the wrangling Vedantist of the Benares School.

"The accidental study created in us a love for all the works which we found about our Eastern Savior. We gathered with difficulty the *Kurchas*† in Sanskrit, written by the disciples of Caitanya. The explanations that we got of the *Bhagavat* from these sources were of such a charming character that we procured a copy of the *Bhagavat* complete and studied its texts . . . with the assistance of the famous commentaries of Shreedhar Swami. From such study it is that we have at last gathered the real doctrines of the Vaishnavs. Oh! What a trouble to get rid of prejudices gathered in unripe years!"

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura then goes on to put the position of the *Bhāgavata* into its right perspective and to describe its philosophical and theological contents, carrying on in the process a running critique of other positions. In this he foreshadowed his effort throughout the rest of his career: to restore the *Bhāgavata Purāna* and the Caitanya tradition as a whole to respectability. It was not an easy task. As the

*Dating from the 16th century, *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* is the principal work on the life and teachings of Śrī Caitanya. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the foremost of the supplementary Vedic works known as *Purānas*. The Six Gosvāmīs were direct followers of Śrī Caitanya.—Editor

†*Kurchas* are notebooks.—Editor.

pamphlet indicates, learned persons in general held the tradition to be unworthy of serious interest. There was thus no attention given to the great writings of the past and no current publications to elicit such attention or give access to the great treasury of devotional religion that had poured forth from Caitanya onward. Fortunately for the tradition, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura not only recognized the problem but was equal to the task.

Bhaktivinoda published some hundred books during his career, most of them devoted to recovering and promoting the tradition of Caitanya. He was obviously an enormously productive person. His work habits are frightening: He would get up at 4:30 in the morning, bathe, do his *bhajana*,* answer correspondence, and so forth, and then at 9:00 he would go to the court. (Remember, those hundred books were written during his career as a magistrate, which is what he was supposedly spending most of his time at.) So he would go to the law court at 9:00 and finish by 5:00, with an hour's break from 1:00 to 2:00. Then he would translate some Sanskrit religious work into Bengali from 5:00 until 7:00, have dinner, take a couple of hours' nap, get up, and write all night from 10:00 until 4:00. Then he would rest a little bit and go through his daily routine. So he was working about eighteen to twenty hours a day, efficiently. That's the way people describe him. And, amazingly, he also found time to raise thirteen children.

In 1881 Bhaktivinoda started a new Vaiṣṇava journal called *Sajjana-toṣaṇī* to disseminate the teachings of Caitanya. At about the same time he also accepted Jagannātha dāsa Bābāji as his *sikṣā-guru*.† This is an example of a very interesting interaction that was taking place in the 19th century between the educated, intellectual, Westernized, highly philosophically oriented scholar types like Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and the more emotional, ecstatic *bābāji* types in the *paramahansa-sannyāsa* category, who were anything but scholars, who were primarily devotees to the core, and who spent most of their time doing *bhajana* and had no interest in scholarship at all, certainly not to do it or to promote it. But then in Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura—and, I think, in this whole tradition—what you get is a blending of those two components, which is really the secret of all the successful devotional movements in Indian history. They have somehow managed to

* *Bhajana* is the (usually solitary) chanting of the Lord's name or the singing of devotional songs.—Editor

† A *sikṣā-guru* is a spiritual master who imparts Vedic knowledge to someone who may or may not be his initiated disciple.—Editor

bring together the intellectual dimension and the emotional dimension in a creative way; in every one of these movements there has always been that kind of merger. That merger occurred very clearly in the case of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, who was apparently equally at ease wearing a *dhōṭī* and doing *bhajana* or wearing a cloth coat and doing law. He moved between these two worlds with facility and understood them both.

Later on, in 1887, again to promote Caitanya's movement of devotional service to Kṛṣṇa, he began work on commentaries in

Bhaktivedanta Swami brought with him much more than his own abilities; he brought with him a century of working through how the great Vaiṣṇava devotional tradition relates to the modern world.

Bengali on the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and established a printing press at Bhaktibhavan, his house in Calcutta. Printing and publishing were very early seen as the key to successful promotion of the cause. This technology was very early employed by Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura in pursuit of the religious community, and its use was carried even further by his son, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, who would refer to the printing press as the *br̥hat mṛdaṅga*, "the great *mṛdaṅga*."‡ Bhaktisiddhānta said the *br̥hat mṛdaṅga* should supplement the ordinary *mṛdaṅga*, because an ordinary *mṛdaṅga* can be heard for only a couple of blocks but the printing press can be heard around the world. This image of "the great *mṛdaṅga*"—publishing and printing and promoting the cause through writing, translation, and commentaries—is, again, distinctive of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

In 1888, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura discov-

‡ A *mṛdaṅga* is a clay drum used in congregational chanting.—Editor

ered the birthplace of Caitanya, which had been forgotten. Everybody thought it was in Navadvīpa, but it turned out to be in the nearby village of Māyāpura. Bhaktivinoda promoted the building of a temple at that site and used that promotion as a way of generating enthusiasm for the renewal of the Caitanyite tradition. When he retired in 1894, he spent most of his time working on that project, which was successfully completed in 1895.

In 1896 Bhaktivinoda published in Sanskrit a little booklet on Caitanya, to which was attached an English preface called *Caitanya Mahaprabhu: His Life and Precepts*. Copies of this little booklet were sent to various places in the West. One of them ended up at McGill University Library and another at the library of the Royal Asiatic Society in London. From these efforts the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement won intellectual respectability; after all, McGill and the Royal Asiatic Society had sanctioned it.

Finally, in 1900, near the end of his life, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura went to Jagannātha Purī and from that point on spent most of his time in seclusion, performing his *bhajana* incessantly and eventually being initiated as a *bābāji*, a renounced person pursuing his own personal religious activities.

Bhaktivinoda's role in the movement was taken up by his son, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. His father had conducted all of his education, giving him a broad knowledge of English, Sanskrit, and Bengali along with an exhaustive knowledge of devotional texts and a powerful sense of the mission to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He set out to promote the cause and in 1915 established the Bhagavat Press to publish, and publish extensively, the literature of the Vaiṣṇava tradition. He also strove to break down the entrenched caste prejudices in India by giving the sacred *br̥hmaṇa* thread to every qualified candidate who presented himself for initiation, no matter what caste he came from. Thus whether the person was a *sūdra*, an outcaste, or presumably even a non-Hindu, if he qualified religiously he could be initiated and receive the sacred thread, thereby becoming a *br̥hmaṇa* as good as any other *br̥hmaṇa*. Following the example of his father, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī based these actions on the teachings of the *Bhāgavata Purāna*, particularly the history of Nārada, who, although raised as a *sūdra*, was given status as *br̥hmaṇa* because of his personal qualities of devotion and learning. So both Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura pushed this issue—that *br̥hmaṇa*-hood is a matter of personal quality and not of birth.

(continued on page 28)

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

On Sex and Suffering

The following conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and some of his disciples took place on an early-morning walk in January 1974 at Venice Beach, California.

Devotee: Śrīla Prabhupāda, here in California the divorce rate is nearly 50%. Why do you think that is so?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: In India there is a saying that he who is married laments and he who is not married also laments. The married man laments, “Why did I marry? I could have remained free.” And he who is not married laments, “Oh, why didn’t I accept a wife? I would have been happy.” [Laughter.] By sex one begets a child, and as soon as there is a child there is suffering. The child suffers, and the parents also suffer to take care of him. But again they have another child. Therefore it is said in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* [7.9.45], *trpyanti neha kṛpaṇā bahu-duḥkha-bhājah*. In connection with this child-producing there is so much difficulty and trouble, but although one knows that, one again does the same thing.

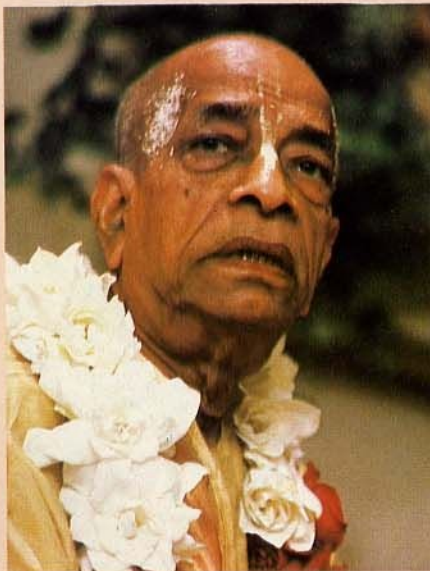
Sex is the main happiness in this material world. That is the main happiness, and it is very abominable. What is this happiness? *Kaṇḍūyanena karayor iva duḥkha-duḥkham*. It is like the rubbing of two hands together to relieve an itch. Sex produces so many bad results, but still one is not satisfied. Now there are contraceptives, abortion—so many things. *Māyā* [illusion] is so strong; she says, “Yes, do this and be implicated.”

Therefore the *Bhāgavatam* says, *kaṇḍūivan ṅanasijam viśaheta dhīraḥ*. A man who is *dhīra*, sober and sane, tolerates this itching sensation of sex desire. One who can tolerate the itching sensation saves so much trouble, but one who cannot is immediately implicated. Whether illicit or legitimate, sex is trouble.

Devotee: Śrīla Prabhupāda, this is the first time we’ve walked this way. Everything looks different and new.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: [Laughs.] This is material life. We are wandering sometimes this way, sometimes that way, and we are thinking, “Oh, this is new.” *Brahmaṇḍa bhramite*: we are wandering all over the universe trying to find out something new. But nothing is new: everything is old.

When a man becomes old, he generally thinks, “Oh, this life is so troublesome.” So he is allowed to change to a new body, a child’s body. The child is taken care of,



and he thinks, “Now I’ve got such a comfortable life.” But again he becomes old and disgusted. So, Kṛṣṇa is so kind: “All right,” He says, “change your body.” This is *punaḥ punaś carvita-carvaṇānam*, chewing the chewed. Kṛṣṇa gives the living entity many facilities: “All right, become a tree. All right, become a serpent. All right, become a demigod. All right, become a king. Become a cobbler. Go to the heavenly planets. Go to the hellish planets.” There are so many varieties of life, but in all of them the living entity is packed up in this material world. He’s looking for freedom, but he does not know that freedom is available only under the shelter of Kṛṣṇa. That he will not accept.

Seeing the suffering in this material world, the *Māyāvādīs* [impersonalists] want to make life variety-less (*nirviśeṣa*) and the Buddhists want to make it zero (*śūnyavādī*). But neither proposition is possible. You may remain variety-less for some time, but again you will want varieties. Big, big *sannyāsīs* [renunciants] preach so much about *brahma satyaṁ jagan mithyā* [“The impersonal Absolute is true; this universe is false”], but again they come down from Brahman to do political and social work. They cannot remain in Brahman for long, so they have to accept this material variety, because variety is the mother of enjoyment. Therefore, our proposition is this: Come to the real variety, Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Then your life will be successful.

Devotee: Most people are trying to enjoy so much in this life that they don’t even think about the next life.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: They do not know what the next life is, so they make it zero. They say, “There is no next life,” and in that way they are satisfied. When a rabbit sees some danger it closes its eyes and thinks there is no danger. These rascals are like that. It is all ignorance.

Devotee: There is a philosophy called stoicism, which says that since life is meant for suffering, one should just become very sturdy and suffer a great deal.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: So, their idea is that one who can suffer without any protest—he is a first-class man. Believing in such a philosophy means that one does not know how to stop suffering. One class of philosophers says that suffering cannot be dismissed and therefore we must be strong to tolerate it. And another class of philosophers says that since life is full of suffering, we should make life zero. But neither class has any information that there is real life where there is no suffering. That is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. There is life, but no suffering. *Ānandamayo bhyāsāt*: simply bliss. Dancing, eating, and chanting, with no suffering. Would anybody refuse that? Is there any such fool?

Devotee: People deny that such a life exists.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But suppose there is such a life, where you can simply dance, eat, and live happily for eternity. Would you not like to accept it?

Devotee: Anyone would like to accept it. But people think it doesn’t exist.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: So our first proposition should be that there is a life like this—only happiness, with no suffering. Everyone will say, “Yes, I would like it.” They will accept it. Unfortunately, because people have been cheated again and again, they think that this is another cheating. Therefore, preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness means to convince people that there is a life full of happiness, with no suffering.

Devotee: What will convince them that we are not cheating, also?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Invite them to come to our temple and see our devotees. We are chanting, dancing, and eating nicely. This is practical proof.

Devotee: But doesn’t one have to be purified before one can realize these things?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No. We say, “Come and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa with us; you’ll become purified. We don’t want anything from you. We shall give you food—we shall give you everything. Simply come and chant with us.” This is our message. 🌸



The Meeting Of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa

by DRAVIḌA DĀSA


Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, stands on the bank of the River Yamunā with Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, His eternal consort, in this scene in Goloka Vṛndāvana, the Lord's spiritual abode. The prancing peacock's jubilant calls, the fragrance of the lotus and jasmine spreading on the cool, soothing breezes, the fresh springtime atmosphere—all lend the perfect touch to this most exalted spiritual event: the meeting of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Because the spiritual love epitomized in Their meeting resembles the attraction between a young man and a young woman, it is generally misunderstood by those who try to fathom it without reference to the Vedic *śāstra*, or revealed scriptures. These books draw a sharp distinction between love of God and what passes for love between ordinary human beings. "The desire to gratify one's own senses is lust [*kāma*]," writes Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja in his 16th-century devotional classic *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, "but the desire to please the senses of Lord Kṛṣṇa is love [*prema*]. . . . Therefore lust and love are quite different. Lust is like dense darkness, but love is like the bright sun."

Our original nature is to dwell in the "bright sun" of love of Kṛṣṇa in the spiritual world. But somehow we become envious of Kṛṣṇa in His position as supreme enjoyer, and with that envy our love for Him turns to lust and we enter the darkness of the material world. Thus it is lust that brings us to this world of forgetfulness of God, lust that keeps us here, and lust that prevents us from knowing Lord Kṛṣṇa as our eternal master, guide, friend, and lover. Only when we transmute that lust back into love for Kṛṣṇa can we realize that we are His eternal servants and that our real happiness lies in serving *His* senses, not our own.

Bhakti-yoga, the practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or devotional service, changes lust into love

of God. The first step is hearing—hearing the name of Kṛṣṇa in the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* and hearing the teachings about Kṛṣṇa given through the revealed scriptures by the great devotees of the Lord and the Lord Himself. But all-important in this process is that the sound we hear (or the words we read) come from the right source, a pure devotee of God. His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda writes this way about hearing the pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa: "It is stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that one who hears the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa with the *gopīs* [the cowherd girls in the spiritual world, of whom Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is the foremost] will attain the highest platform of devotional service and will be freed from the lust that overwhelms everyone's heart in the material world. In other words, by hearing the pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, one can get rid of all material lust. . . . Unless one hears from the right source, however, one will misinterpret the pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, considering them to be ordinary affairs between a man and a woman. In this way one will be misguided."

So let us not be misguided. Kṛṣṇa is God, the all-powerful, all-perfect creator, maintainer, and destroyer of everything, and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is His most beloved worshiper (Her very name means "one who worships Kṛṣṇa best"). Since we are all servants of the Lord, each of us has some role to play in His eternal pastimes of love. But we can discover that role, our original spiritual identity, only if we carefully follow the instructions of those exalted souls who have realized God and whose only motivation is compassion for those of us suffering in this material world, far from our spiritual home. If we follow their instructions, we will one day realize the truth of the unlimitedly sweet pastimes of the Lord—and this will be the perfection of our lives. 

THE YOGA DICTIONARY

The Sanskrit language is rich in words to communicate ideas about spiritual life, yoga, and God realization. This dictionary, appearing by installments in *BACK TO GODHEAD*, will focus upon the most important of these words (and, occasionally, upon relevant English terms) and explain what they mean. (For a guide to proper pronunciation, please see page 1.)

A **Arjuna.** The hero of the *Bhagavad-gītā* and personal friend of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Five thousand years ago, Arjuna, one of the five righteous princes known as the Pāṇḍavas, faced the duty of fighting in a great battle against his evil cousin Duryodhana. Just as the battle was to begin, Arjuna, torn between his duty as a prince and his finer sentiments of compassion and familial love, threw down his weapons in despair. Unable to decide whether to leave the battlefield in disgrace or fight against his beloved relatives and friends, Arjuna turned to his friend Kṛṣṇa, who was acting as his charioteer. There on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, on a chariot drawn between the two opposed armies, Kṛṣṇa enlightened Arjuna with the teachings that have come down to us in the seven hundred verses known as *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Aṣṭāṅga-yoga. This is the eightfold discipline by which to achieve union with the Supreme. It is described in *Bhagavad-gītā* and also in the writings of the sage Patañjali (for whom it is sometimes called "the Patañjali yoga system").

The eight stages in *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* are *yama* (restraint of the senses), *niyama* (restraint of the mind), *āsana* (sitting in the appropriate posture), *pratyāhāra* (withdrawal from sense objects), *dhāraṇā* (mental concentration), *dhyāna* (meditation), and *samādhi* (a trance of perfect realization).

To follow the *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* system, one must practice so as to attain these eight stages, one after another. As described in *Bhagavad-gītā* (Chapter Six), one must vow complete celibacy and withdraw to seclusion in a sanctified place. There one must strictly regulate one's eating and sleeping, subdue one's mind and senses, discipline one's respiration, cease all external awareness, and ultimately fix one's mind unswervingly on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. Thus one attains perfection.

We should note, however, that the rules of this system are so stringent that in the present age they are nearly impossible to follow. Arjuna himself, although a man of extraordinary qualifications, admitted in *Bhagavad-gītā* that he would be unable to endure the difficulties of *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*. Instead he followed the path of *bhakti-yoga*, the *yoga* of devo-

tional service, which is easier, more direct, and therefore more appropriate for people today.

Of course, one may elect to practice *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* by going to a *yoga* class or retreat where one can skip over the difficult and unpleasant austerities but still learn to sit in yogic postures, practice exercises in breathing, and take part in sessions of meditation. This path has the advantage of being easy, but unfortunately it is useless for spiritual realization.

Astral travel. There are various means by which a *yogī* can enable his mind to take him out of his body to journey to far distant places in the universe. This is described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (Second Canto). But *Bhagavad-gītā* advises that even if one goes to Brahmāloka, the highest planet in the universe, one cannot stay there, but will have to return to where one is now. On the other hand, if one focuses one's mind upon Kṛṣṇa and becomes fully Kṛṣṇa conscious, one can go beyond this material universe and enter the eternal spiritual sky, the abode of Kṛṣṇa, from which one never has to return. The desire to travel to other planets in this material world is therefore considered an impediment on the path of spiritual realization. Whether one goes by *yoga* or by the mechanical rockets of modern science, traveling to other planets cannot free one from the cycle of birth and death. So from the spiritual point of view it is a useless waste of time.

Asuras. *Bhagavad-gītā* describes two kinds of human beings—the godly (*devas*) and the ungodly (*asuras*). Those who are godly are known by their good qualities, such as purity, simplicity, self-control, fearlessness, truthfulness, and tranquility. The ungodly, on the other hand, are those who are harsh, arrogant, conceited, foolish, and bewildered by lust, anger, and greed. The godly proceed on the path toward liberation, following the guidance of scriptures, whereas the ungodly, bound by their own illusions, suffer the worst tortures of repeated birth and death. Because the ungodly try to exploit the world, its creatures, and their fellow men through mean, cruel, vicious acts, the laws of *karma* force them to be born as dogs, worms, pigs, and other lower species of life. The ungodly, who are also called demons, are vividly described in the Sixteenth Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā*.

TRANSITION

(continued from page 24)

Now, out of all this we get Bhaktivedanta Swami. He really is simply the inheritor—well, not *simply*: he's a great person in his own right—but he is the inheritor of this tradition. He himself was given an English education at Scottish Churches' College in Calcutta, went into business, and ran a pharmacy for many years in Allahabad. He was initiated in Allahabad by Bhaktisiddhānta, and finally he moved more and more toward the renounced life. Essentially, he spent most of his time pursuing his religious career. In 1944 he founded *BACK TO GODHEAD* magazine, which is now being sold by his disciples and his disciples' disciples throughout the country. In 1959 he was initiated as a *sannyāsī*,* and in 1962 he published the first volume of his translation of and commentary on the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. In August of 1965 he left India for New York City, and the history after that is fairly well known.

The point I want to make is that Bhaktivedanta Swami brought with him much more than his own abilities; he brought with him a century of working through the problem of how the great tradition of the Vaiṣṇava devotional path relates to the modern world, how that tradition can be related to the Western mentality, how it can be promoted within the West, and how it can be propagated by the acquisition of new members. For instance, new members of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness organization go through a two-stage initiation. First they are simply given a religious name and beads to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa on. The second initiation is the initiation into brāhmanhood. But, again, this is not an American innovation. Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī had done that in India, and it was simply carried over into this country by Bhaktivedanta Swami.

For almost every one of what may seem to be innovative practices, the way was paved during the three generations before Bhaktivedanta Swami came to America. The practices were shaped for precisely the kind of situation Bhaktivedanta Swami would meet in New York City in 1965. And it's out of that 19th-century background—unknown, to say the least, to the people to whom he was bringing his message—that this tremendous Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement has emerged. The whole thing was set in place in the 19th century, and the ground was prepared for somebody with the determination and drive that Bhaktivedanta Swami had to tap the resources of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism and bring it over and put it in a place where it would take root and flourish.

*A *sannyāsī* is a renunciant.—Editor

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LETTERS

Dear Sadāpūta dāsa:

I would like first of all to express my appreciation for your articles in BACK TO GODHEAD, Vol. 16, No. 3-4 and No. 5. The arguments you have presented against the general theory of evolution and the accepted scientific view of the origin of life are both lucid and sound.

The theory of evolution, however, is only a reflection of a much broader philosophy—the philosophy of materialistic science. It is this philosophy that is the cause of many people's rejection of any theistic religion and that must therefore be exposed as inferior to belief in God. In other words, faith in God, as a prelude to love of God (Kṛṣṇa), must be shown to be more rational than faith in materialistic science.

Refutations of the theory of evolution, when presented within a scientific framework, are useful to a certain extent. Predictions that follow from the theory can be shown to be inconsistent with the evidence, and certain assumptions of the theory can be shown to be highly improbable. But a person who has accepted the scientific framework would conclude from these arguments only that the theory of evolution is in need of further modification and refinement, analogous to physics before the advent of Einstein. You would not have convinced him to believe in a God who is the creator and maintainer of the universe.

Faith in God, therefore, must be shown to be more rational than faith in science. How is this to be accomplished? In your article "Evolution: A Doctrine in Search of a Theory," you briefly discussed the role of faith in both science and *sanātana-dharma*. Your discussion implies that both types of faith are equally rational and verifiable. According to science, however, faith in *sanātana-dharma* is not based on verifiable observations; depending on the scientist, the existence of God remains either a delusion, a psychological wish, or simply a subjective belief. No matter how much one's faith grows, *sanātana-dharma* remains a subjective, psychological belief akin to faith in an alternative world based on one's continual use of peyote.

What must be propagated instead are logical arguments for faith in God. In oth-

er words, the philosophy of theism must be shown to be superior to the philosophy of materialistic science. This can be accomplished through a critical analysis of the assumptions which underlie science, with a view toward exposing their limitations, e.g., the dependence on the senses and the reliance on inductive reasoning, which requires faith of the highest order. Complementing this analysis should be an in-depth examination of the role of deductive reasoning—Just what does a proof actually prove?—followed by a study of various proofs for the existence of God. (Not to say that a proof for the existence of God could actually place God before our senses, but it could demonstrate that faith in God is logical, given a certain set of postulates.) Special attention could be paid to Anselm's ontological argument, Aquinas's argument for an unmoved mover, and the argument from design, which was a favorite of His Divine Grace Swami Prabhupāda's.* A discussion of epistemology, or the theory of knowledge, would also be fruitful, for it would delineate the role of logic, the role of the senses, and the role of faith. In summary, I think what is needed is a science of God sharpened by Western philosophy.

Note: Concerning epistemology, Hume's statement (as presented by you in your article on evolution) that no amount of finite observation of the things of this world could ever justify conclusions concerning an infinite, transcendental being is fallacious. From the finite one can never know the infinite in full, but one can still

*"The ontological proof," discovered by St. Anselm of Canterbury (1033–1109), in effect argues that if you think that God might not exist, then you are not really thinking about God. But since you *can* conceive of God, God exists, without even the possibility of not existing. This argument, however, is less a proof for God's existence than a revelation of it.

St. Thomas Aquinas (1224/5–1274) rejected the ontological argument, but advanced five others. One held that motion is inexplicable without an ultimate, unmoved mover. Another argument held that an ultimate intelligence is necessary to explain the regularity, order, and direction found in nature. This ever-popular argument is commonly called "the argument from design."—Editor

know certain characteristics of the infinite, just as one can know that the set of whole numbers is infinite.

I would appreciate learning your thoughts on these matters.

Yours,
Brad Berquist
Minneapolis, Minn.

Dear Brad Berquist:

Hare Kṛṣṇa! Thank you very much for your letter about my articles in BACK TO GODHEAD.

I certainly agree that we must show faith in God to be more rational than faith in modern science. I would suggest, however, that we can ultimately accomplish this by demonstrating that there are scientific methods available whereby the individual can actually come to know God in a direct, personal way. It is quite true that at present people will tend to suppose that no such methods exist, and that the realizations of great souls are subjective beliefs, hallucinations, etc. What we have to do, then, is show that there really is a rational basis for an objective science of God consciousness.

In the articles you mentioned, I have not undertaken this task but have mainly concentrated on the unavoidable negative work of clearing away the obstacles to spiritual life that have been thrown up by materialistic scientists. However, I am now writing a book on the science of God consciousness, and when it is finished I would be interested in hearing your comments.

I agree that logical arguments can play an important role in building people's faith in God, but logic alone is not enough. The problem is that a logical argument is no better than its premises, and these, by definition, are not proven. Now, what premises are sufficient to establish the existence of God? In many arguments purporting to prove the existence of God, a preconceived idea of God is covertly inserted at some point, thus conveying the impression that the argument proves something it really does not prove at all. This was one of Hume's complaints about the design argument. Proponents of this argument want to conclude from it that an infinite, beneficent being created the world, but Hume pointed out that the creator could just as well have been a finite being of moderate intelligence and questionable character. Another example is provided by Aquinas's argument for an unmoved mover. Aquinas concludes that "this is what men call God," but why does

**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 literature singles out one *mantra* as the *mahā* (supreme) *mantra*. The *Kali-santarāṇa Upaniṣad* explains, "These sixteen words—Hare KṚṣṇa, Hare KṚṣṇa, KṚṣṇa KṚṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare—are especially meant for countering 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.

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an unmoved mover have to be anything like the God of religion, who takes a personal interest in people's lives? An unmoved mover might be something completely impersonal, and, indeed, many logical arguments for the existence of God tend to arrive at an abstract, impersonal conception of God that is practically atheistic.

By the way, in what sense do whole numbers exist? Can you *prove* that there are infinitely many of them? Modern mathematics has not done this. For example, in Zermelo-Fraenkel set theory the axiom of infinity *postulates* that there are infinitely many integers. These could "exist" only in a model of set theory, but mathematicians never try to show that such models exist in any real sense of the word.

In one of my monographs, I present a version of the design argument for the existence of God. There the logical and empirical arguments indicate that absolute information specifying the structural plans of organisms must exist (in a real sense). I conclude that this fact is inconsistent with the idea of evolution, but that it is consistent with revealed knowledge about God. The argument does not *prove* that the absolute information resides in the mind of God—it might exist in some sort of utterly impersonal Platonic realm of ideal forms. Yet for a pious person the argument opens up the possibilities that God may really exist and that we may be able to communicate with Him directly. These possibilities are confirmed by the Vedic (and other) scriptures, which provide revealed information about God and prescribe specific methods by which the individual can come into direct contact with Him.

As far as I can understand, real knowledge of God can come only by revelation and can be *proven* true only on an individual basis by personal revelation. (A logical argument for this statement can be derived from the discussion of information compression in the "Chance and Unity" article in BACK TO GODHEAD: incompressible information cannot be generated by deduction from postulates occupying less space [in "bits"] than the information itself, and thus to obtain the information, some information source is necessary. . . .) The problem is this: by what criteria can we distinguish between genuine and spurious revelation, and between genuine God consciousness and hallucinations? It seems to me that one of the contributions of the literature of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, as presented by Śrīla Prābhupāda, is that it does give us valid criteria for making these distinctions. What do you think about this?

Sincerely yours,
Sadāpūta dāsa

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NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Why You Should Become a Devotee of Kṛṣṇa—and Why You Don't

You *should* become a devotee of Kṛṣṇa. Why?

1. When you become a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, you enter into the association of great souls. These great souls, or pure devotees of God, are your best friends in this world. The Vedic literature describes them as “able to fulfill the desires of everyone and full of compassion for the fallen souls.” They have realized Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and can therefore help you tremendously in your realization of God. More so than the politician, educator, or sectarian religionist, a pure devotee is a true welfare worker—because he can work for your eternal benefit. While others claim, “God is dead,” the pure devotee reveals God to you by helping you revive your forgotten relationship with Him.

But where, you may ask, are such devotee-friends to be found today? Admittedly, it is rare to find a pure devotee of the Lord—a person totally free of all material desire, who wishes only to serve God. But we have the writings of such magnanimous persons. And in their writings, especially in the Vedic literature, the great devotees have explicated the science of pure love of God. The writings of these great friends of humanity are solace and guidance for one who aspires to God realization.

In the past there was Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, who spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā*; Śrīla Vyāsadeva, who compiled all the *Vedas*; and Lord Caitanya, who taught the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa. More recently one of Lord Kṛṣṇa's pure devotees, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, taught the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the world. He founded the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement and translated and commented on many volumes of Vedic literature.

But you may feel that you cannot find anyone nowadays of Śrīla Prabhupāda's stature. Nevertheless, Śrīla Prabhupāda's followers in the International Society for Krishna Consciousness are also your true friends. Since devotees base their lives on devotional service to Kṛṣṇa, they don't try to exploit others for self-aggrandizement but try to help them reach life's spiritual goal. This is the basis of true friendship and love: to help another person on his or her path back to Godhead.

2. Another reason you should become a devotee of Kṛṣṇa is that devotion to Kṛṣṇa is your original nature. You and I—all of us—are eternal servants of God. But you have temporarily forgotten this. According to the *Vedas*, you are eternal, full of bliss and knowledge, and by becoming a devotee of Kṛṣṇa you will return to your

normal, healthy condition. As a sick person should become well, as a crazy person should become sane, and as a lost person should find his home, so you, being an eternal servant of God, should become His devotee.

3. Becoming a devotee is the only thing that can save you at death. The great Vedic thinker Śaṅkara advised his too-sophisticated contemporaries, “Worship Govinda [Kṛṣṇa]! Worship Govinda! Worship Govinda! Your mental speculation won't save you at the time of death.” The material world is full of dangers; death may come at any moment. And after death, the Vedic literature explains, comes another birth in another body and then another lifetime of suffering. This is the law of *karma*. He who is so illusioned as to disregard death and not prepare for the next life is a fool. But becoming a devotee can save you at the time of death, because devotional service gives you the means to escape the reactions of *karma*.

4. At the time of death a pure devotee of the Lord leaves the material world and returns to Kṛṣṇa in the spiritual world. As I have already stated, this is the soul's original though forgotten nature—to be an eternal servant of God. The only way to return to this position is by acting as a devotee of the Lord in this lifetime. *Bhagavad-gītā* [18.55] says, “One can understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead as He is only by devotional service. And when one is in full consciousness of the Supreme Lord by such devotion, one can enter into the kingdom of God.”

Here are some of the standard reasons why you don't become a devotee of Kṛṣṇa:

1. You may be completely misinformed about what a devotee of Kṛṣṇa is. Newspaper accounts sometimes depict Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees as cultists. This is false. Or you may think that to be a devotee you have to give up your job and family, shave your head, and do all sorts of fanatical things. This is also false. In other words, you may really not know what a devotee is. If you remain misinformed, then you cannot become genuinely interested in devotional service.

2. You may think you don't have time to serve God; you are too busy with other things you consider more important. The Vedic literature says that men who are too busy with mundane matters to inquire about devotional service and self-realization are completely wasting their lives.

3. You may be a victim of atheistic propaganda concerning the origin and nature of life. Those who say a human being is nothing more than a mass of chemicals and

electrical impulses, that all life has evolved from matter, and that there is no eternal soul are killers of spiritual inquiry. If you believe this propaganda, you will find it difficult to start on the path of devotion.

Bhagavad-gītā describes four kinds of persons who do not become devotees of Kṛṣṇa. One is the *mūḍha*, or fool. Just as a donkey works hard all day simply to get some grass from its master, the foolish materialist takes up the burden of hard work just to maintain himself and his family, but he neglects spiritual life. Such a poor *mūḍha*, wrongly thinking he is his body, identifies himself as an American, a Russian, an Indian, and so on. And his only ken of happiness is in terms of his body.

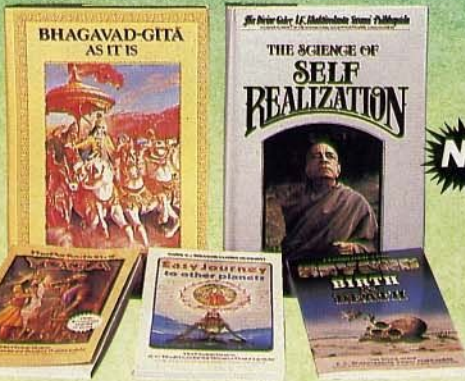
Bhagavad-gītā also describes the *nārādhama*, “the lowest of men.” Although educated and cultured, the *nārādhama* has no spiritual sense and is thus unable to take up devotional service.

Another kind of person unable to serve Kṛṣṇa is the *māyāpahṛta-jñāna*, one whose sophistication in philosophy or religion leads him to think that religion is a relative, cultural phenomenon, that Kṛṣṇa is a myth, or that God can be found only in a particular religious sect. According to Vedic knowledge, however, one can know a true devotee of God not by whether he is nominally a Christian, Jew, Hindu, or whatever but by whether he has developed the symptoms of love for God. The chief of these are complete absence of mundane desires and an unimpeded flow of devotional service to God.

Bhagavad-gītā describes a fourth category of persons who don't become devotees: *āsuraṁ bhāvam āśritāḥ*, the staunch atheists. Obviously, the avowed atheist will not become a devotee of God.

So the reasons you should become a devotee of Kṛṣṇa are compelling, whereas the reasons you don't are descriptions of misfortune. If you can admit that there is substantial validity to our claims for taking up devotional service, you should investigate further. Even if you are not prepared to change your life totally, you can add devotional service to it without any difficulty. Association with the great souls of the past is available through Śrīla Prabhupāda's translations of *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and other books of Vedic literature. And the current followers of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, are eager to share this knowledge and introduce you to such practices as chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and offering food to Kṛṣṇa, which you can easily adopt. Why don't you become a devotee of Kṛṣṇa? —SDG

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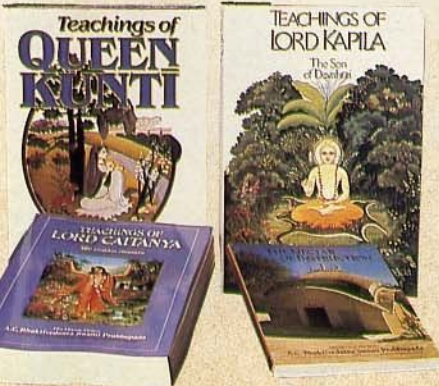
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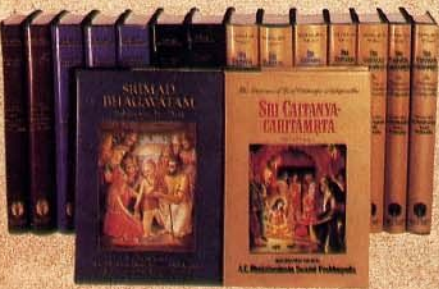
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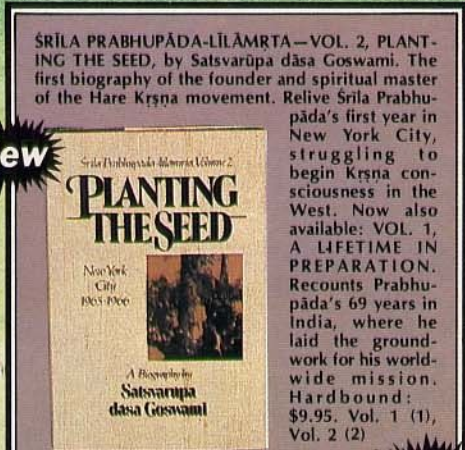
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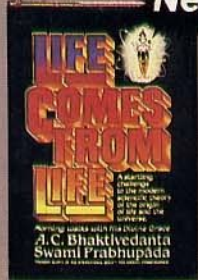


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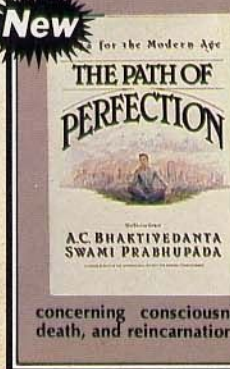


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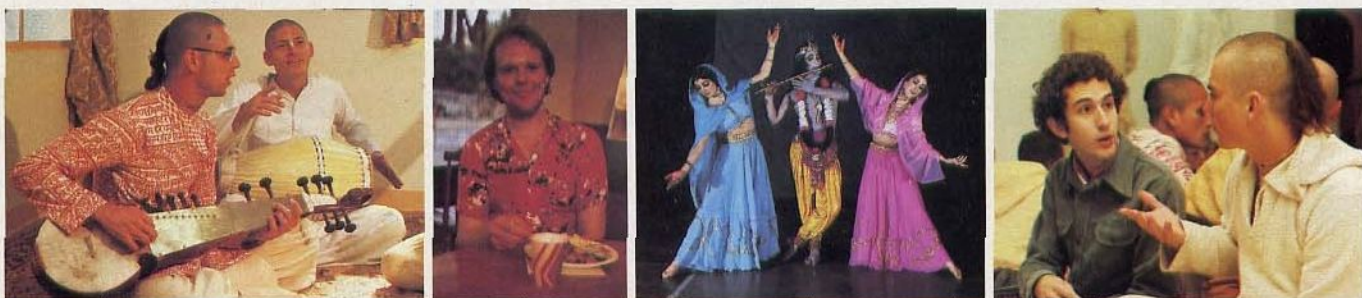
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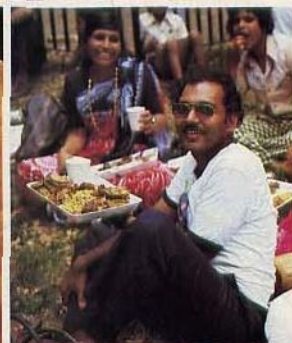
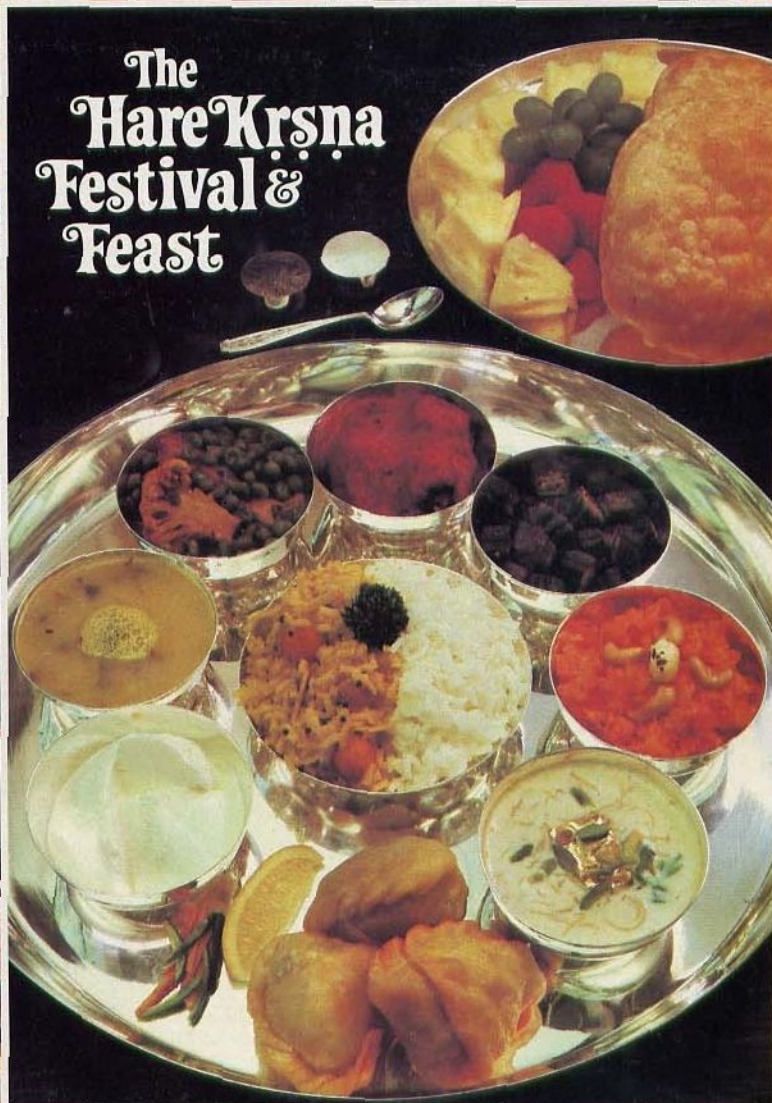
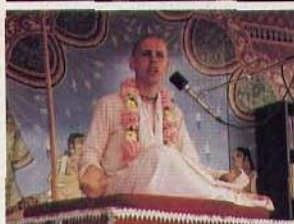
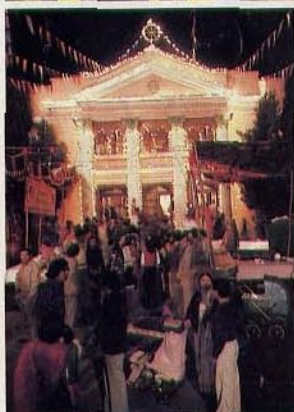
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The Hare Kṛṣṇa Festival & Feast



Delicious, traditional Vedic cuisine was part of the cultural legacy Kṛṣṇa consciousness brought to Western shores. Eating, like everything else for Kṛṣṇa devotees, is a part of the complete spiritual experience of life. Sunday sees the doors swung open and hundreds of friends—regulars as well as newcomers—joining in a festival of music, dance, and spiritual discourse and then sharing hearty plates of savories, vegetable extravaganzas, sweets, and nectar drinks. Come by, Sunday or any day, and relish the taste of the world's oldest cultural tradition. See page 31 for the center nearest you.