

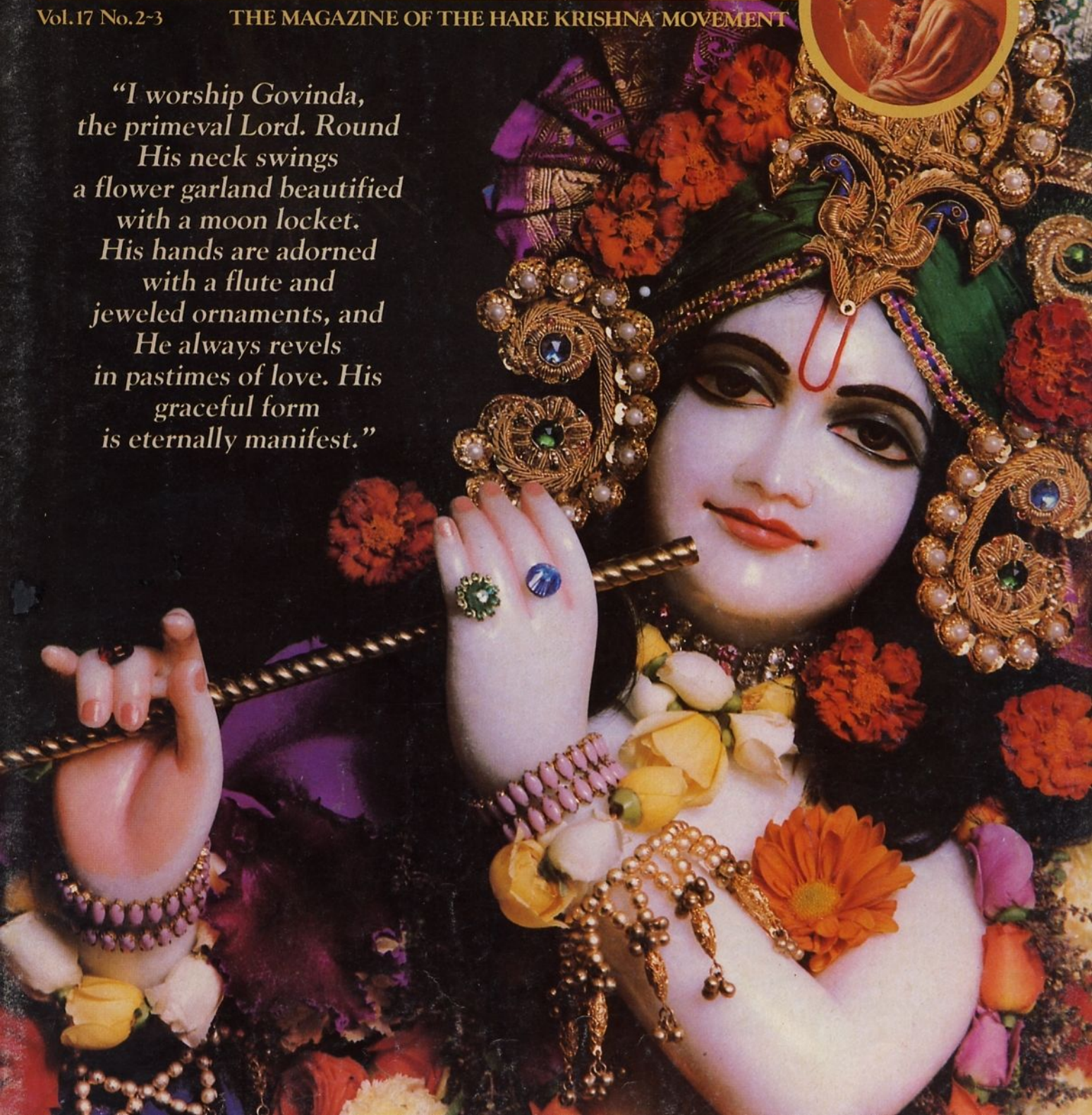
Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.

# BACK TO GODHEAD

Vol.17 No.2-3

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT

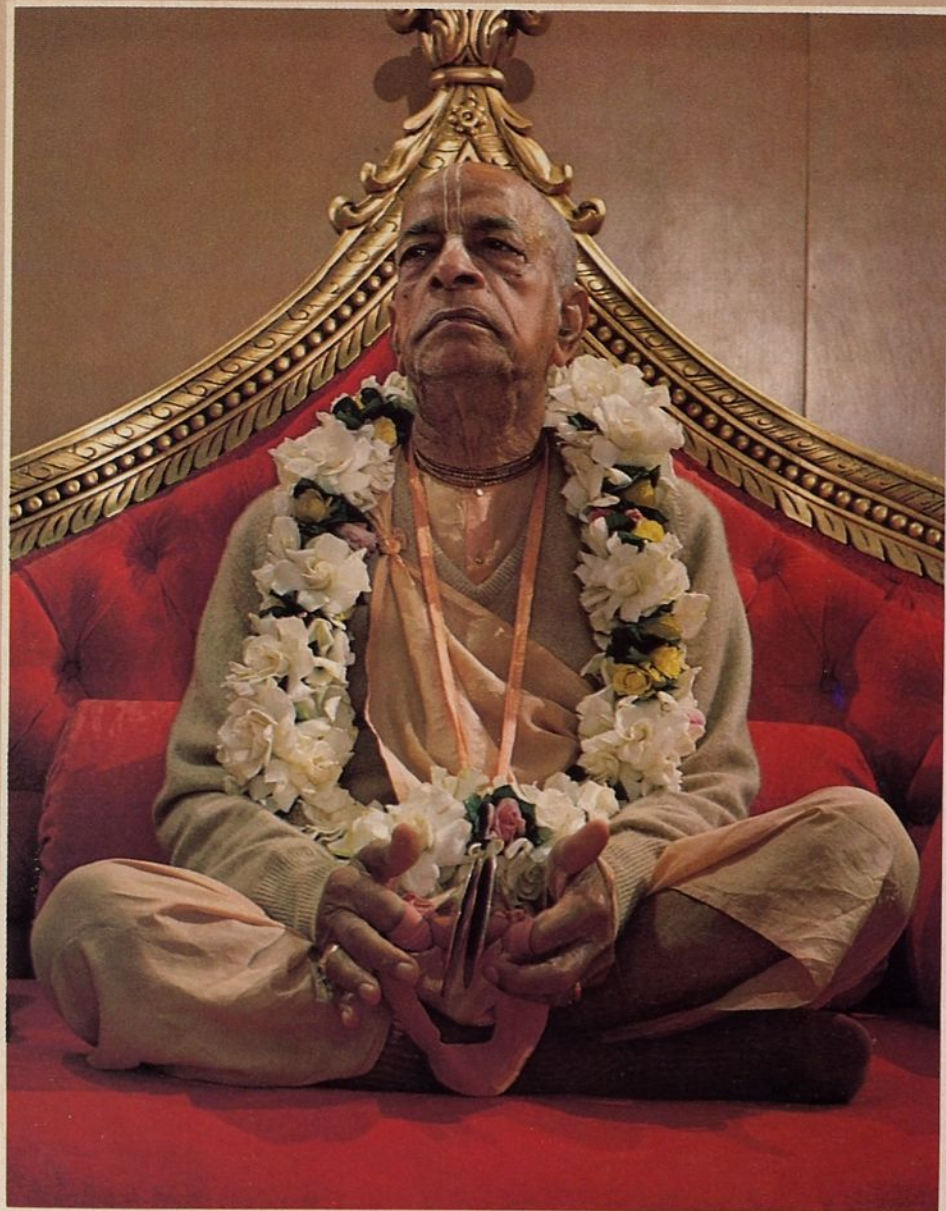
*"I worship Govinda,  
the primeval Lord. Round  
His neck swings  
a flower garland beautified  
with a moon locket.  
His hands are adorned  
with a flute and  
jeweled ornaments, and  
He always revels  
in pastimes of love. His  
graceful form  
is eternally manifest."*





**His Divine Grace A.C.  
Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda,**

Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, 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 literature, 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. His disciples are carrying forward the movement he started.



BACK TO GODHEAD is the monthly journal of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. When Śrīla Prabhupāda began the Society (in New York City, in 1966), he put into writing the purposes he wanted it to achieve. They are as follows:

1. To systematically propagate spiritual knowledge to society at large and to educate all peoples in the techniques of spiritual life in order to check the imbalance of values in life and to achieve real unity and peace in the world.
2. To propagate a consciousness of Kṛṣṇa, as it is revealed in *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.
3. To bring the members of the Society together with each other and nearer to Kṛṣṇa, the prime entity, thus developing the idea within the members, and humanity at large, that each soul is part and parcel of the quality of Godhead (Kṛṣṇa).
4. To teach and encourage the *saṅkīrtana* movement, congregational chanting of the holy names of God, as revealed in the teachings of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
5. To erect for the members and for society at large a holy place of transcendental pastimes dedicated to the personality of Kṛṣṇa.
6. To bring the members closer together for the purpose of teaching a simpler, more natural way of life.
7. With a view toward achieving the aforementioned purposes, to publish and distribute periodicals, books, and other writings.



# BACK TO GODHEAD

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

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**SPIRITUAL NAMES.** 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."

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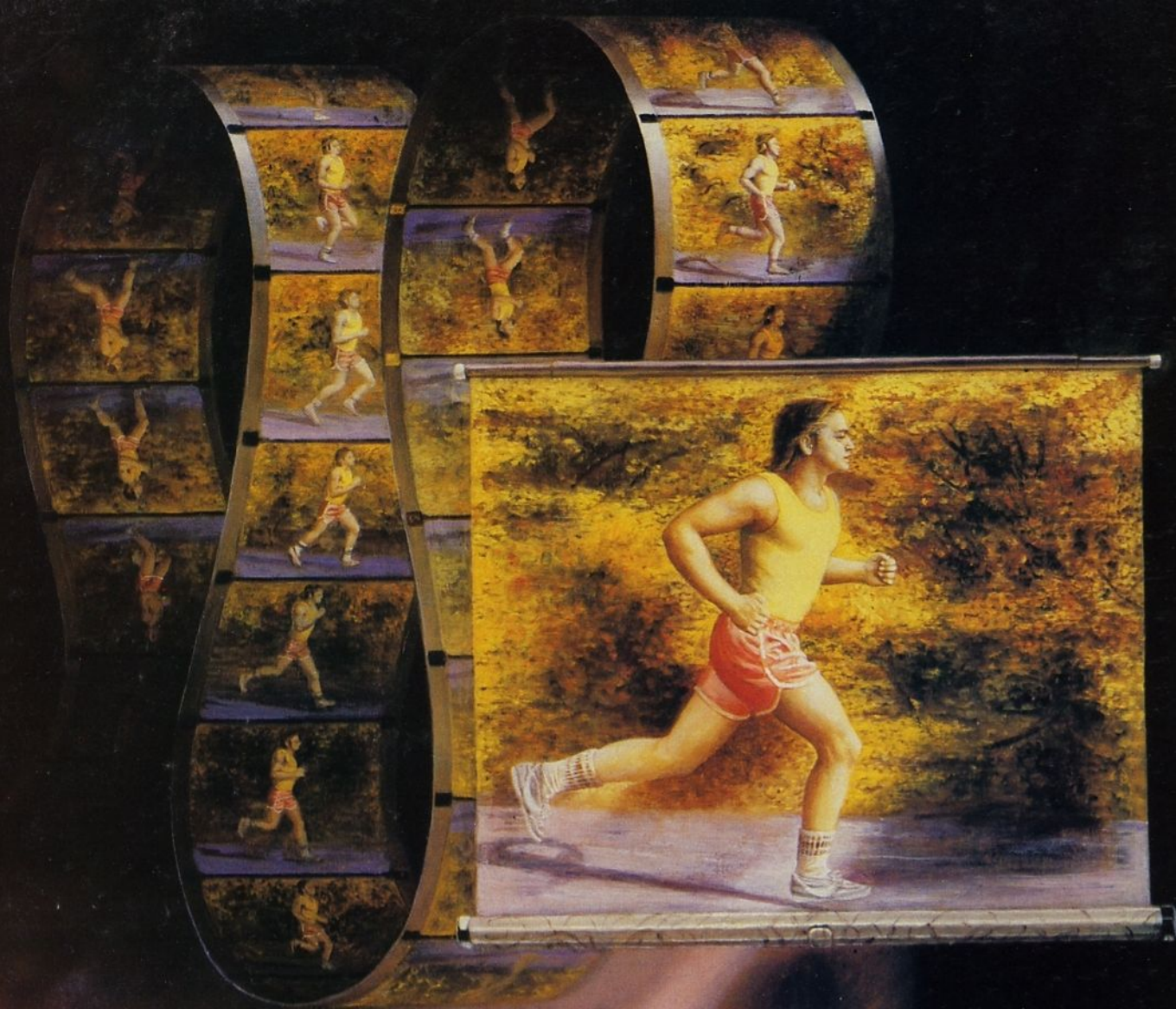
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**COVER:** His lotus-petal eyes full of love and compassion, Lord Kṛṣṇa invites us to join in His pleasure pastimes in the spiritual world, Goloka Vṛndāvana. There, playing as a simple cowherd boy bedecked with fresh blossoms, peacock feather, turban, and jeweled ornaments, He enchants all with His melodious flute-songs. The great devotees pray for this vision to be manifest in their hearts even in this world. (Quotation: *Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā*. Photo: the Kṛṣṇa Deity at the Hare Kṛṣṇa temple, Philadelphia. Photo by Bali Mahārāja dāsa.)







# THE YOU THAT DOESN'T CHANGE

A talk given in April 1968

by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda,  
Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness,  
at Boston University's Marsh Chapel.

**K**ṛṣṇa consciousness, the science of God, is very important, because it enables us to understand God and our relationship with Him. Of course, in every religion there is some conception of God: "God is great." But simply understanding that God is great is not sufficient. We must have knowledge about our relationship with God.

Generally, we take it for granted that God is our order supplier. So those who believe in God usually approach Him in distress or when they're in need of money. Then there are some who approach God out of curiosity, and a few who want to understand the science of God. These are the four classes of men who are interested in God, and they all have a background of pious activities. Without a background of pious activities, a person will not be in-

terested in the science of God. Therefore those who are unfortunate, who are impelled by impious activities, do not believe in God; they never care for God. So it is very difficult for the atheists to understand God.

Still, because Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a science, even an atheist can appreciate it if he is intelligent. Atheist or theist, everyone is conscious. That is a fact. It doesn't matter whether you believe in God or you do not believe in God: you are conscious. As soon as I pinch any part of your body, you at once protest, "Somebody is pinching me! I am feeling pain!" Even in the animals there is consciousness.

Now, what is this consciousness? The *Bhagavad-gītā* says, *avināśi tu tad viddhi yena sarvaṁ idarṁ tatam*: "Consciousness is that which is spread all over your body, and it is eternal." How is consciousness eternal? That you can understand by practical experience. In your childhood you were conscious, in your boyhood you were conscious, in your youth you were conscious, and as you progress to old age you will be conscious. So your body is changing, but your consciousness continues unchanged. This you cannot deny. Therefore *Bhagavad-gītā* says, *na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre*: "Consciousness is eternal. It is not vanquished with the destruction of

the temporary body."

As soon as there is no consciousness in the body, the body is dead. Then what is consciousness? It is the symptom of the presence of the soul. Just as a fire situated in one place distributes heat and light everywhere, the spirit soul present in your body spreads consciousness all over your body. This is a fact.

From your childhood body to your boyhood body to your youthful body, your consciousness continues. Similarly, your consciousness will carry you into another body, and that transmigration from one body to another is called death. When your old body cannot be maintained any more, the consciousness has to be transferred to a new body. When your garment is too old, it has to be changed. Similarly, when the material body is too old to carry on, your consciousness is transferred to another body and you begin another life. This is the process of nature.

But unfortunately the modern educational system has no department for teaching about consciousness or the spirit soul, although this knowledge is the most important. Without consciousness, without the soul's being present, the body is useless. Unfortunately, we take very good care of the body but have no knowledge of consciousness or the spirit soul. This ignorance is due to *māyā*, or illusion. We are

**Illusion:** A series of pictures projected rapidly on a screen appears to be a single image in motion. Similarly, the series of bodies we go through appear to be our changing self. In fact, however, our real self is unchanging. This self is our consciousness, or soul, which passes moment by moment through countless bodies on its journey from childhood to old age, and on to an entirely new body after death. The Vedic literatures tell us to end this painful transmigration by realizing our spiritual nature as loving servants of God and returning to His world of eternal bliss and knowledge.



very serious about the nonpermanent things—the body and its extensions, which will not exist, which will be vanquished after a certain period of years—but we do not care about the eternal consciousness, the spirit soul, which is transmigrating from one body to another. Ignorance of the spirit soul is the main defect of modern civilization.

As long as we are unaware of the presence of the spirit soul in the body, as long as we do not inquire about the spirit soul, all our activities are simply a waste of time. This is stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* [5.5.5]: *parābhavas tāvad abodha-jāto yāvan na jijñāsata ātma-tattvam*. Anyone who has accepted a temporary body is understood to be foolish. So every one of us is born foolish, because we identify ourselves with the temporary body. Everyone knows that his body will one day not exist, but everyone still identifies himself with his body. This is ignorance, or illusion.

Nearly everyone in the world is immersed in this ignorance, for they do not know that they are spirit souls transmigrating from one body to another. Although no one wants to die, cruel death is forced upon everyone. But people do not consider this problem very seriously. They think they are very happy following the principles of animal life—eating, sleeping, mating, and defending. At the present moment people are very proud of the advancement of human civilization, but they are almost totally concerned with these four principles. According to the Vedic literature, this way of life is no better than the animals’.

Human life is meant for advanced knowledge. And what is that advanced knowledge? To know oneself, to answer the question, What am I? In every civilized society there is some set of religious principles, either Mohammedanism or Christianity or Judaism or Hinduism or Buddhism. And what is the purpose of the scriptures and religious principles? To understand consciousness, to understand the spirit soul and how it has fallen into material, conditioned life, how it is transmigrating among various species of life, and how it can be released from this cycle of birth and death. There are 8,400,000 species of life, and we are wandering among them. Only when we reach the human form of life do we have the opportunity to ask the question, What am I? If we do not understand what we are, then we miss the opportunity of human life. We simply waste our time in the propensities of animal life—eating, sleeping, mating, and defending.

We must inquire, “I do not wish to die; why is death forced upon me? I do not want to be diseased; why is disease forced upon me?” But even if a person becomes

very ill, he will generally not inquire like this. He will simply think, “All right, I am diseased. Let me go to the doctor and get some medicine.” But from the innermost part of his heart he doesn’t ever want to be diseased, he doesn’t want to be dead. Why? Because he is eternal. His real position is eternal life, blissful life, without any death, without any birth, without any disease. So he is missing the opportunity of human life unless he inquires into how he can attain this position.

The human form of life is the opportu-

---

**Now you may be  
very happy that  
you have a nice  
American body.  
But do you know  
what your next life  
will be? You should  
know that life  
is a continuity.  
This present life  
is only a flash.**

---

nity to achieve the highest perfection. If we do not make progress toward that vision, we are simply spoiling this opportunity of civilized human life. I especially mention civilized human life, with developed consciousness, developed education. At this developed stage we should ask, “Why are calamities being forced upon me?” Nobody wants to meet calamities. In every city of your country I see the fire brigade and the ambulance always wandering in the street. Who wants his house to be set on fire? Who wants to meet an accident? These things are being forced on us, but still no one asks, “I do not want these calamities. Why are they being forced upon me?” As soon as we become inquisitive to know why all these miserable conditions of life are being forced upon us, that is the beginning of our self-realization.

Now you are trying to solve these problems through so-called scientific research or so-called philosophical research, but the actual solution is to reform or purify your consciousness. If you purify your consciousness, you will end the process of transmigration from body to body. Of

course, now you may be very happy that you have a nice American body. You are enjoying life. But do you know what your next life will be? That you do not know. But you should know that life is a continuity. This present life is only a flash—a moment in our journey through millions of species of life. So the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is the movement for purifying consciousness, ending transmigration, and solving all problems.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is very simple. Simply chant these sixteen words: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. We are simply requesting you to chant these sixteen words. There is no loss on your part, but there is immense gain. Why don’t you make an experiment? It is not very difficult. These American boys are chanting. Although the *mantra* is written in Sanskrit, it is a universal transcendental vibration.

If we take to chanting this *mantra*, we come directly in touch with the Supreme Lord. That makes us purified. If we go near the fire we become warm. Similarly, if we come directly in touch with the Supreme Spirit, our purification begins. So if you chant this Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, your impure consciousness will be purified and you will know what you are.

Chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa is the process of cleansing the mind of all dirty things. And as soon as you are cleansed of all dirty things, your material anxieties are over. That is stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* [18.54]:

*brahma-bhūtaḥ prasannātmā  
na śocati na kāṅkṣati  
samaḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu  
mad-bhaktiṁ labhate parām*

The word *brahma-bhūtaḥ* means that as soon as you come to the platform of spiritual understanding, you immediately get free from all material anxieties. You no longer hanker after any profit, nor are you very sorry when there is a great loss (*na śocati na kāṅkṣati*). Then you can see everyone on an equal level, and your lost relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead is again established. Then your real life begins.

Taking up Kṛṣṇa consciousness means that we begin our real life and get free from the temporary life of changing from one body to another. So the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is a very important movement. Try to understand it. We have our magazine, BACK TO GODHEAD, and we have branches in several places in your country.

So we invite you to come. There is no expenditure. We simply request that you come and try to understand this movement. It is very scientific; it is not a bogus

(continued on page 27)



## The Biography of a Pure Devotee



# Śrīla Prabhupāda Meets His Guru

1922: Calcutta.

Śrīla Prabhupāda (then known as Abhay Charan De) was skeptical: he had seen too many “holymen” at his father’s house—professional beggars, *gañjā* smokers, and the like.

But *this* person was different . . .

by ŚRĪLA SATSVARŪPA DĀSA GOSWAMI

In 1916, while World War I raged in Europe, twenty-year-old Abhay Charan De entered Scottish Churches' College in Calcutta. It was a prestigious Christian school, run mostly by Scottish priests—sober, moral men—and many well-to-do Bengali families sent their sons there to receive a proper British education.

College life was demanding. With Abhay's rigorous schedule of classes and homework, he no longer had much time for worshipping the Deity of Kṛṣṇa. Yet he resisted those Western teachings that demeaned his own devotional upbringing. As one of his classmates later noted, Abhay was always thinking about “something religious, something

philosophical or devotional about God.”

In college Abhay was swept up into the movement for Indian independence. One of his classmates was Subhas Chandra Bose, a firebrand in the movement. The nationalistic ideals he spoke of appealed to Abhay. At the same time, Gandhi was capturing the attention of India's masses by amalgamating Bhagavad-gītā's spirituality with the call for independence from the British. Abhay became a Gandhian.

In 1920, after passing his final examinations, Abhay, as a protest against the British, refused to accept his diploma. He sacrificed a promising professional career, but he did what he and many of his country-

men felt was honorable.

Newly married, Abhay needed employment, and his father secured him a job as a department manager in the pharmaceutical laboratory of Dr. Kartik Chandra Bose. Yet Abhay continued to identify himself with Gandhi's cause. So as a businessman in the Bose establishment he wore the coarse hand-made cotton cloth known as *khādī*, the Gandhian alternative to the English cloth symbolic of Britain's economic stranglehold on India. On the eve of his first meeting with his spiritual master, we find Abhay a confirmed follower of Gandhi's, embarking on a career as a family man and a pharmaceutical merchant.



(Excerpted from *Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta*, by Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami. © 1981 by the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust.)

Abhay's friend Narendranath Mullik was insistent. He wanted Abhay to see a *sādhū* from Māyāpur. Naren and some of his friends had already met the *sādhū* at his nearby *āśrama* on Ultadanga Junction Road, and now they wanted Abhay's opinion. Everyone within their circle of friends considered Abhay the leader, so if Naren could tell the others that Abhay also had a high regard for the *sādhū*, then that would confirm their own estimations. Abhay was reluctant to go, but Naren pressed him.

They stood talking amidst the passersby on the crowded early-evening street, as the traffic of horse-drawn hackneys, ox-carts, and occasional auto taxis and motor buses moved noisily on the road. Naren put his hand firmly around his friend's arm, trying to drag him forward, while Abhay smiled but stubbornly pulled the other way. Naren argued that since they were only a few blocks away, they should at least pay a short visit. Abhay laughed and asked to be excused. People could see that the two young men were friends, but it was a curious sight, the handsome young man dressed in white *khādī kurtā* and *dhotī* being pulled along by his friend.

Naren explained that the *sādhū*, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, was a Vaiṣṇava (a worshiper of Viṣṇu) and a great devotee of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. One of his disciples, a *sannyāsī*, had visited the Mullik house and had invited them to see Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta. A few of the Mulliks had gone to see him and had been very much impressed.

But Abhay remained skeptical. "Oh, no! I know all these *sādhūs*," he said. "I'm not going." Abhay had seen many *sādhūs* in his childhood; every day his father had entertained at least three or four in his home. Some of them were no more than beggars, and some even smoked *ganjā*. Gour Mohan had been very liberal in allowing anyone who wore the saffron robes of a *sannyāsī* to come. But did it mean that though a man was no more than a beggar or *ganjā* smoker, he had to be considered saintly just because he was dressed as a *sannyāsī* or was collecting funds in the name of building a monastery or could influence people with his speech?

No. By and large, they were a disappointing lot. Abhay had even seen a man in his neighborhood who was a beggar by occupation. In the morning, when others dressed in their work clothes and went to their jobs, this man would put on saffron cloth and go out to beg and in this way earn his livelihood. But was it fitting that such a so-called *sādhū* be paid a respectful visit, as if he were a *guru*?

Naren argued that he felt that this par-

ticular *sādhū* was a very learned scholar and that Abhay should at least meet him and judge for himself. Abhay wished that Naren would not behave this way, but finally he could no longer refuse his friend. Together they walked past the Parsnath Jain Temple to One Ultadanga, with its sign, "Bhaktivinod Asana," announcing it to be the quarters of the Gaudiya Math.

When they inquired at the door, a young man recognized Mr. Mullik—Naren had previously given a donation—and immediately escorted them up to the roof of the second floor and into the presence of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, who was sitting and enjoying the early evening atmosphere with a few disciples and guests.

---

**Abhay gathered  
his wits and  
tried to gain a  
comprehensible  
impression,  
but this person  
had already  
told him to become  
a preacher and go  
all over the world!**

---

Sitting with his back very straight, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī appeared tall. He was slender, his arms were long, and his complexion was fair and golden. He wore round bifocals with simple frames. His nose was sharp, his forehead broad, and his expression was very scholarly yet not at all timid. The vertical markings of Vaiṣṇava *tilaka* on his forehead were familiar to Abhay, as were the simple *sannyāsa* robes that draped over his right shoulder, leaving the other shoulder and half his chest bare. He wore *tulasī* neck beads, and the clay Vaiṣṇava markings of *tilaka* were visible at his throat, shoulder, and upper arms. A clean white brahminical thread was looped around his neck and draped across his chest. Abhay and Naren, having both been raised in Vaiṣṇava families, immediately offered prostrated obeisances at the sight of the revered *sannyāsī*.

While the two young men were still rising and preparing to sit, before any preliminary formalities of conversation had begun, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta immediately said to them, "You are educated

young men. Why don't you preach Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu's message throughout the entire world?"

Abhay could hardly believe what he had just heard. They had not even exchanged views, yet this *sādhū* was telling them what they should do. Sitting face to face with Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, Abhay was gathering his wits and trying to gain a comprehensible impression, but this person had already told them to become preachers and go all over the world!

Abhay was immediately impressed, but he wasn't going to drop his intelligent skepticism. After all, there were assumptions in what the *sādhū* had said. Abhay had already announced himself by his dress to be a follower of Gandhi, and he felt the impulse to raise an argument. Yet as he continued to listen to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta speak, he also began to feel won over by the *sādhū's* strength of conviction. He could sense that Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta didn't care for anything but Lord Caitanya and that this was what made him great. This was why followers had gathered around him and why Abhay himself felt drawn, inspired, and humbled and wanted to hear more. But he felt obliged to make an argument—to test the truth.

Drawn irresistibly into discussion, Abhay spoke up in answer to the words Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta had so tersely spoken in the first seconds of their meeting. "Who will hear your Caitanya's message?" Abhay queried. "We are a dependent country. First India must become independent. How can we spread Indian culture if we are under British rule?"

Abhay had not asked haughtily, just to be provocative, yet his remark was clearly a challenge. If he were to take this *sādhū's* remark as a serious one—and there was nothing in Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta's demeanor to indicate that he had not been serious—Abhay felt compelled to question how he could propose such a thing while India was still dependent.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta replied in a quiet, deep voice that Kṛṣṇa consciousness didn't have to wait for a change in Indian politics, nor was it dependent on who ruled. Kṛṣṇa consciousness was so important—so exclusively important—that it *could* not wait.

Abhay was struck by his boldness. How could he say such a thing? The whole world of India beyond this little Ultadanga rooftop was in turmoil and seemed to support what Abhay had said. Many famous leaders of Bengal, many saints, even Gandhi himself, men who were educated and spiritually minded, all might very well have asked this same question, challenging this *sādhū's* relevancy. And yet he was dismissing everything and everyone as if they were of no consequence.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta continued: Wheth-



or one power or another ruled was a temporary situation; but the eternal reality is Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and the real self is the spirit soul. No manmade political system, therefore, could actually help humanity. This was the verdict of the Vedic scriptures and the line of spiritual masters. Although everyone is an eternal servant of God, when one takes himself to be the temporary body and regards the nation of his birth as worshipable, he comes under illusion. The leaders and followers of the world's political movements, including the movement for *svarāj*, were simply cultivating this illusion. Real welfare work, whether individual, social, or political, should help prepare a person for his next life and help him reestablish his eternal relationship with the Supreme.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī had articulated these ideas many times before in his writings:

There has not been, there will not be, such benefactors of the highest merit as [Chaitanya] Mahāprabhu and His devotees have been. The offer of other benefits is only a deception; it is rather a great harm, whereas the benefit done by Him and His followers is the truest and greatest eternal benefit. . . . This benefit is not for one particular country causing mischief to another; but it benefits the whole universe. . . . The kindness that Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu has shown to jivas [souls] absolves them eternally from all wants, from all inconveniences and from all distresses. . . . That kindness does not produce any evil, and the jivas who have it will not be the victims of the evils of the world.

As Abhay listened attentively to the arguments of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, he recalled a Bengali poet who had written that even less advanced civilizations, like China and Japan, were independent and yet India labored under political oppression. Abhay knew well the philosophy of nationalism, which stressed that independence had to come first. An oppressed people was a reality, the British slaughter of innocent Indian citizens was a reality, and independence *would* benefit people. Spiritual life was a luxury that could be afforded only after independence. In the present times, the cause of national liberation from the British was the only relevant spiritual movement. The people's cause was in itself love of God.

Yet because Abhay had been raised a Vaiṣṇava, he appreciated what Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta was saying. Abhay had already concluded that this was certainly not just another questionable *sādhū*, and he perceived the truth in what Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta said. This *sādhū* wasn't concocting his own philosophy, and he wasn't simply proud or belligerent, even though he spoke in a way that kicked out practically every other philosophy. He was speaking

the eternal teachings of the Vedic literature and the sages, and Abhay loved to hear it.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta, speaking sometimes in English and sometimes in Bengali, and sometimes quoting Sanskrit verses of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, spoke of Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the highest Vedic authority. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa had declared that a person should give up whatever duty he considers religious and surrender unto Him, the Personality of Godhead (*sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja*). And the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* confirmed the same thing. *Dharmaḥ projjhita-kaitavo 'tra paramo nirmatsarāṇāṁ satām*: all other forms of religion are impure and

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**“He was speaking  
to everyone, but  
he found something  
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I could understand:  
Here is the proper  
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religious idea.”**

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should be thrown out, and only *bhāgavata-dharma*, performing one's duties to please the Supreme Lord, should remain. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta's presentation was so cogent that anyone who accepted the scriptures would have to accept his conclusion.

The people were now faithless, said Bhaktisiddhānta, and therefore they no longer believed that devotional service could remove all anomalies, even on the political scene. He went on to criticize anyone who was ignorant of the soul and yet claimed to be a leader. He even cited names of contemporary leaders and pointed out their failures, and he emphasized the urgent need to render the highest good to humanity by educating people about the eternal soul and the soul's relation to Kṛṣṇa and devotional service.

Abhay had never forgotten the worship of Lord Kṛṣṇa or His teachings in *Bhagavad-gītā*. And his family had always worshiped Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, whose mission Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī was espousing. As these Gaudiya Math people worshiped Kṛṣṇa, he also had worshiped Kṛṣṇa throughout his life and had

never forgotten Kṛṣṇa. But now he was astounded to hear the Vaiṣṇava philosophy presented so masterfully. Despite his involvement in college, marriage, the national movement, and other affairs, he had never forgotten Kṛṣṇa. But Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī was now stirring up within him his original Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and by the words of this spiritual master not only was he remembering Kṛṣṇa, but he felt his Kṛṣṇa consciousness being enhanced a thousand times, a million times. What had been unspoken in Abhay's boyhood, what had been vague in Jagannātha Purī, what he had been distracted from in college, what he had been protected in by his father now surged forth within Abhay in responsive feelings. And he wanted to keep it.

He felt himself defeated. But he liked it. He suddenly realized that he had never before been defeated. But this defeat was not a loss. It was an immense gain.


Śrīla Prabhupāda: *I was from a Vaiṣṇava family, so I could appreciate what he was preaching. Of course, he was speaking to everyone, but he found something in me. And I was convinced about his argument and mode of presentation. I was so much struck with wonder. I could understand: Here is the proper person who can give a real religious idea.*

It was late. Abhay and Naren had been talking with him for more than two hours. One of the *brahmacāris* gave them each a bit of *prasādam* in their open palms, and they rose gratefully and took their leave.

They walked down the stairs and onto the street. The night was dark. Here and there a light was burning, and there were some open shops. Abhay pondered in great satisfaction what he had just heard. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta's explanation of the independence movement as a temporary, incomplete cause had made a deep impression on him. He felt himself less a nationalist and more a follower of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī. He also thought that it would have been better if he were not married. This great personality was asking him to preach. He could have immediately joined, but he was married; and to leave his family would be an injustice.

Walking away from the *āśrama*, Naren turned to his friend: “So, Abhay, what was your impression? What do you think of him?”

“He's wonderful!” replied Abhay. “The message of Lord Caitanya is in the hands of a very expert person.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: *I accepted him as my spiritual master immediately. Not officially, but in my heart. I was thinking that I had met a very nice saintly person.* 

*The biography of Śrīla Prabhupāda continues in our next issue with a look into the lives of his own spiritual teachers.*





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# IS SOMETHING WRONG IN THE RIGHT-TO-LIFE MOVEMENT?

Beastly injustice threatens the struggle for “the sanctity of human life.”

by ŚRĪLA HRDAYĀNANDA DĀSA GOSWAMI

The abortion debate usually centers on the search for a precise determination of when life begins. Distinguished medical researchers have argued that real and unique human life begins at the moment of conception, when the male sperm and the female ovum unite, because at that point the ovum contains the forty-six chromosomes necessary to guide human development. Those favoring abortion argue that although the complete genetic code for human life is present at conception, this code is not itself a human being but only a necessary precondition for human life.

Insisting that human life begins at conception, the anti-abortion movement seeks to shock us into the awareness that abortion means killing—killing a human being rather than an animal, a bird, an insect, or a fish. Thus although the movement calls itself “pro-life,” it is really pro-human-life. Its fudging with the terms *life* and *human life* reveals a disturbing assumption: that nonhuman life is somehow not actually life at all, or, if it is, then it is somehow not as “sacred” as human life and therefore not worth protecting.

But when we study the distinctions between human life and other life, such as that of the monkeys or cows, we find that

the distinction rests almost entirely on the presence of rational intelligence in the human being. Thus if we accept that only human life is sacred, we run the risk of awarding sacred status to human beings simply because they are more intelligent than lower animals. And we also admit the principle of superior legal status for the more intelligent.\* Once we accept the principle that a more intelligent form of life may kill a less intelligent form, we may ask why more intelligent human beings may not kill those who are less intelligent.

We may argue that animals are not able to live at our level of awareness, communication, or consciousness. On the other hand, a genius may argue that since ordinary human beings cannot live at his level of awareness, communication, or consciousness, they may be killed and even consumed to alleviate both the population explosion and the world food short-

age. The retarded, the senile, the infirm, and other wards of society would be especially eligible for this fate.

These are the ghastly conclusions we are driven to when we try to condemn abortion while defending animal slaughter.

To shed some further light on the questions the abortion issue poses, let us turn toward the East for a moment, to the world's oldest literature, the Sanskrit Vedic literature of India. In the most important of these writings, the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, we find the following statement:

*karmaṇā daiva-netreṇa  
jantur dehōpattaye  
striyāḥ praviṣṭa udaram  
puṁso retaḥ-kaṇāśrayaḥ*

“Under the supervision of the Supreme Lord and according to the result of his work, the living entity, the soul, is made to enter into the womb of a woman through the particle of male semen to assume a particular type of body.” (*Bhag.* 3.31.1)

Subsequent verses go on to say, “On the first night the sperm and ovum mix, and on the fifth night the mixture ferments into a bubble. On the tenth night it develops into a form like a plum, and after that it gradually turns into a lump of flesh. In

\*The Supreme Court has also stated that the reason we may kill the fetus is that it is not viable before a certain number of weeks—it cannot live outside the womb. But mature animals are certainly viable, since they efficiently maintain themselves outside the womb or egg. So why does the Supreme Court allow us to kill animals?



the course of a month a head is formed, and at the end of three months the nails, fingers, toes, body hair, bones, and skin appear, as do the organ of generation and the other apertures of the body, namely the eyes, nostrils, ears, mouth, and anus." The seers of Vedic times apparently knew with great precision how the fetus develops in the womb.

The most important point mentioned here, however, is that the soul "exists within the semen of the father" (*retah-kanāśrayah*). Then, "the soul within the particle of male semen is injected into the womb of the mother" (*striyāḥ praviṣṭa udaram*). This all goes on "under the supervision of God" (*daiva-netreṇa*), and the result is "the generation of a new material body" (*dehopapattaye*). From the Vedic viewpoint, then, life is present even before the moment of conception, what to speak of afterwards.

Today there is growing interest in the doctrine of transmigration of the soul. The concept that an eternal soul has fallen into the material world and is repeatedly taking birth according to his polluted material desires, and that eventually he must go back home, back to God, is an idea that was current and popular among some Greek philosophers, such as Plato and Pythagoras, and among early Christians, such as Origen.

How does transmigration relate to abortion? According to the quotation from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, it is the law of God that the eternal soul be placed within the male semen and then injected into the womb of the mother. Thus according to the wisdom of the East, the person himself, the soul, is present even before conception, and certainly after. What evolves in the womb of the mother is the outer covering of an eternal person, and no one has the right at any stage of embryonic development to mercilessly drag the soul out of the womb into which God has placed him.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, an essential Vedic text written five thousand years ago, we find a simple analogy: Just as we dress ourselves in various clothes and then discard them, we, the soul or self, similarly dress ourselves in different material bodies and then discard them. Unfortunately, that the self is nothing more than the physical and chemical body is an idea that permeates all aspects of modern society and even infects the so-called religious aspects. This spiritual blindness severely weakens anti-abortion appeals to the sacredness of all life.

In fact, however, each of us is an eternal spirit soul; we are not the material body that covers us. Every life form—whether bird, insect, fish, mammal, plant, or fetus—houses an individual, eternal soul as well as the Supreme Soul, who accompanies

the individual soul as he transmigrates from body to body in his ill-fated adventures throughout the material universe. Thus every form of life is sacred and should never be whimsically destroyed.

So the only spiritually consistent foundation for the pro-life movement would be the firm belief in the sacredness of *all* life, a belief based on the awareness of the presence of the soul in all living beings. The pro-life movement prides itself on its moral alertness and personal sacrifice for a higher principle. But if the pro-lifers do not accept the sacred status of all life, if

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## How can a nation prosper when men who are less than animals are allowed to sit on high-court benches and authorize young girls to murder their own children?

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they are unwilling to undergo the sacrifice of investigating the actual nature of the soul, then their arguments will contain the seed of atheism, which is the undoer of all morality.

Unfortunately, it seems that the prevailing view that life is nothing but a conglomeration of chemicals moving according to rigid, impersonal laws of nature has penetrated into the ranks of the pro-life movement. For example, even such a learned and moral man as Dr. J. C. Willke states in his *Handbook on Abortion*:

Did you come from a fertilized ovum? No, you once *were* a fertilized ovum who grew and developed into the child or adult you are today. Nothing has been added to the fertilized ovum you once were except nutrition. You are now more developed, larger and more mature, but you were all there at the beginning.

But Dr. Willke is dead wrong. We have never been ova, nor will we ever become ova in the future, nor are we the gross physical body. We are eternal spiritual

souls, part and parcel of God. Unfortunately, Western civilization is totally bereft of any clear understanding of the soul and God.

The actual issue today, of which the abortion issue is the most dramatic manifestation, is the perennial debate between materialism and spiritualism, between atheism and godliness, between the saintly life and the sinful life. A saintly person, a person aware of his constitutional position as a spiritual soul, part and parcel of God, will recognize God as the true proprietor of everything. Such a person will use everything he has, including his body and mind, in the service of the Lord. Although many women foolishly state that they are the proprietors of their own bodies and may therefore kill their own babies, the fact is that none of these women created her own body, nor can any of them protect her body when, by God's law, she is dragged out of it at death. The body is created by material nature under the supervision of God; so how can anyone claim to own his or her body?

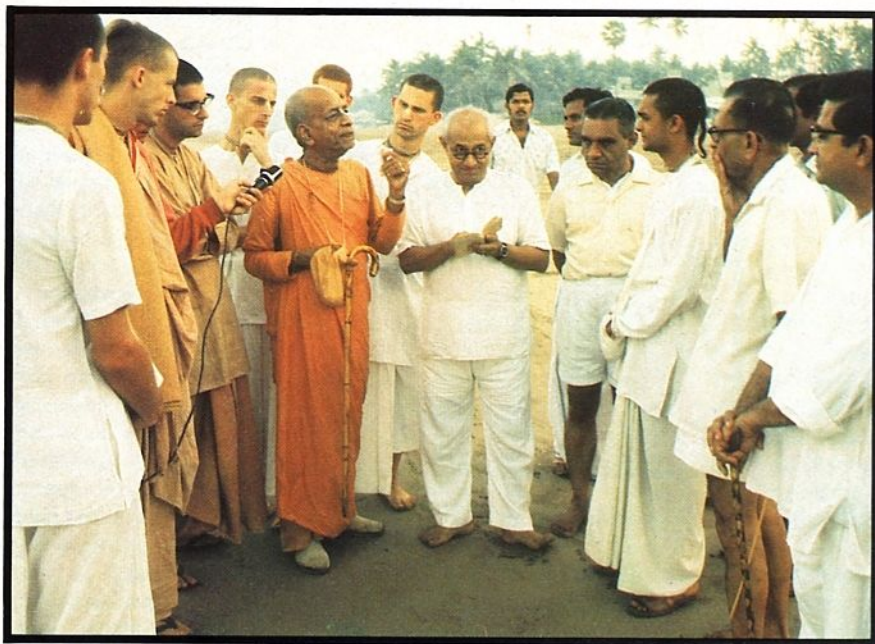
The concept of the body's belonging to an individual is based on the false doctrine of humanism, the hallucination of a man-centered world. Sad to say, this humanistic idea has its very roots in the traditions of most modern religions, which teach that God's principal activity is to provide for the happiness of human beings, to watch over us and reward or punish us. Traditional Western religion thus defines God's identity in terms of our own life. *We are the subjects, we are the doers, we are the enjoyers and sufferers, and God is merely controlling our fate.*

So even our so-called religious concepts are man-centered, not God-centered. We do not see God as the supreme enjoyer of everything. We do not see the universe as existing exclusively for God's pleasure. We do not see God as the supreme proprietor of everything. And consequently even our religious traditions do not have the power to establish a truly moral society.

The Vedic literature calls this type of religion *kaitava-dharma*, "cheating religion." Undoubtedly, the goal of Christianity, Judaism, and other bona fide religions is love of God. But love implies service. One who truly loves God will accept Him as the supreme proprietor and enjoyer and not foolishly think God is meant to be our order supplier. If people have a real sense of God consciousness, they can accept sacrifice and austerity, and this will eliminate most of the problem the pro-lifers are trying to combat.

This brings us to the final point of our discussion. It is obvious that the root cause of the abortion problem is widespread  
(continued on page 26)





## “My Life’s Most Precious Moments”

A Bombay doctor wins the title “big fool” and loves it.

by DR. CHATURBHAI P. PATEL

It was early one morning at about 5:30 during the Bombay winter, on the smooth sands of Juhu Beach, that we first met. I and my friends Babubhai, Bhanubhai, and Chandubhai were walking from the north end of the beach toward the south, and just opposite the Sun 'n' Sand Hotel, in the semidarkness of dawn, the saintly figure of a *sannyāsi* [renunciant] came within the purview of my vision. It was His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda.

He was walking with a group of devotees from the opposite direction, from south to north, striding toward us about twenty feet away. As soon as I saw him my feet automatically turned toward him, and my friends followed me. And lo! He too started coming toward me. We met halfway.

My friends and I were all Vaiṣṇavas [devotees of Kṛṣṇa], born in Vaiṣṇava families, and we had been taught from our early childhood how to pay respect and obeisances to a saint, a *sannyāsi*, or a *sādhū*. So we fell at his feet—all of us—one after the other. He put his pious hand on my head and inquired about my name, profession, and so on. I answered all with full respect. From there we all returned to the temple, joining him in a procession, and from that time he and I started know-

ing each other more and more, and we came nearer and nearer to each other.

I was educated in the Western way and am greatly influenced by the modern methods of imbibing knowledge. So at our first meeting I started arguing with him, sometimes foolishly, sometimes methodically and logically. The first epithet I received from him was “You are a *mūḍha*, a big fool.” Considering my respectable qualification of doctorate from one of the world’s most renowned universities, I went into a fit of laughter, and he too rejoiced and laughed. And there you are. We soon became very close.

The many such occasions we shared opened vistas for us to know each other more and more and generated greater and greater love between us. He was a pious, venerable saint to me; I was a *mūḍha*, a big fool, to him. But he loved me dearly—so much so that if he did not see me for a day on the Juhu sand, he would make urgent inquiries about me.

After our first few meetings a regular program for our having his *sat-saṅga* [spiritual association] on Juhu Beach came into being automatically. Every day my friends and I would rejoice at his frank and sweet talks about the superiority of *bhakti-yoga* [devotional service] and *ātma-vidyā* [self-knowledge]. And I, for arguing with him,

used to get my special epithets: “*mūḍha*” and “rascal.” Then both of us would laugh to our hearts’ content. And so we had our daily routine on Juhu Beach as long as he was in Bombay.

As I already mentioned, I was born into an orthodox Vaiṣṇava family, and right from the early age of ten or eleven I was taught to get up every day before 4:00 A.M., take a bath, say prayers to Kṛṣṇa, read *Bhagavad-gītā*, water the sacred *tulasī* plant, and then do *yoga* exercises and *prāṇāyāma* [breathing exercises] to keep body and mind fit. This has been my daily routine even until today, and now I have entered my seventieth year.

But until my talks with Śrīla Prabhupāda on the Juhu sand, I had not received and understood the real essence of the teachings of the *Gītā* in the true sense. I soon became a life member of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. As a member I got a copy of *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, and I started reading it with gusto. I compared Śrīla Prabhupāda’s commentary with the commentary of the great Vaiṣṇava *ācārya* [exemplar] Rāmānuja, and I found that both are truly equal and parallel to each other. Śrīla Prabhupāda: a real saint and a true *ācārya*.

Now very great respect, love, and devotion developed in me for this saint/*yogi*/



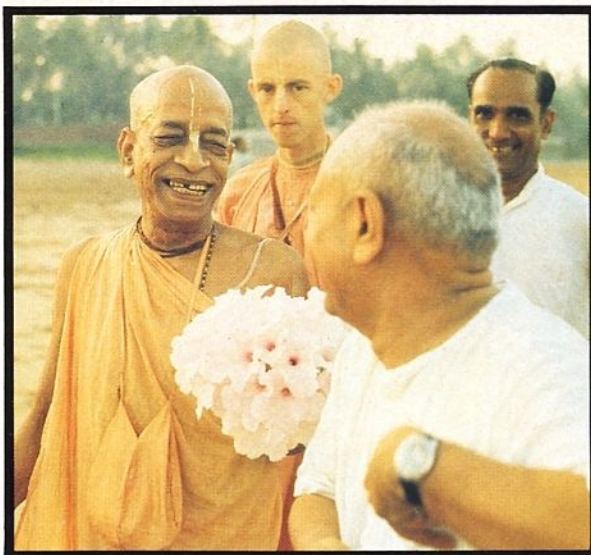
*ācārya*. I saw that his daily life mirrored the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the great song of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and I used to feel an acute sense of dejection when he would go away from Juhu and deprive me of his *sat-saṅga*. I would eagerly wait for his early arrival in Bombay and would keep on inquiring about him from the devotees. When he was there it was the greatest occasion of my life. We used to have sweet talks, slow walks, and sharp arguments with loving quarrels, and I used to get my regular epithets of “*mūḍha*” and “*rascal*.”

Not all days were smooth sailing. One day we had a gust of fiery arguments and a small quarrel—with respect, of course, on my side for him, and with tender love on his side for me. The next day, not as usual, I, instead of walking on the sand, sat with my friends away from his path so that he might not see me. Then, when he came onto the sand for his usual walk, he started searching for me all around, and not finding my whereabouts he started inquiring, “Where is Dr. Patel?” Someone showed him where I was sitting—rather hiding—and lo! he started coming toward me with his band of devotees. I felt extremely ashamed and got up immediately and ran toward him. I fell at his feet and he gave me his benediction. What a saint he was! For him there was no friend or foe: all were equal. A godly personality indeed!

One day I requested him to sanctify my place of residence with his pious feet and to do *saṅkīrtana* [congregational chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa] and take *prasādam* [sanctified food] with all the devotees of the Juhu temple. He readily agreed. He graced my house with his presence and sanctified it. A true devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa is a true representative of the Lord; in his presence we all felt as if Lord Kṛṣṇa were there. That is the blessing of a true devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Some time thereafter I began going to his residential quarters in the temple, accompanying him on his walk from the temple to Juhu Beach, and then walking with him back to the temple. This became a regular routine whenever he was in Bombay. One day I went to his quarters in the early morning and he was still in bed. The attendants would not let me in, not even into the anteroom.

While I was talking with the attendants he must have awakened and heard my voice. He spoke out: “Is it Dr. Patel? Doctor Sahib, come here into my room.” I went in. He was lying on his bed telling his beads. The bed was covered all around with a mosquito net. I touched his pious feet and stood near the end of the bed. He invited me to sit on the bed near him. I



wouldn't do that, as he was a saint. He said, “I want to tell you a secret.” And what was that secret? “Look,” he said, “we were brothers in our previous birth.”

I said, “I don't know.”

“Don't you see,” he said, “we are so much attracted to each other. You come so early from your home to see me, and I also await for your arrival here.”

I was stunned and stood speechless. I submitted.

One day he inquired about my full name. I said, “My name is Chaturbhai Purushottamdas Patel.”

He said, “Patel is your surname, indicating you are a village headman's son.”

“Yes.”

“Then your father's name is Purushottamdas, that is, ‘servant of Purushottama, Lord Kṛṣṇa.’”

I agreed.

“Then your name should be Chaturbhujaṇand—that is, ‘the joy of four-handed Lord Viṣṇu’—rather than Chaturbhai.”

“No,” I said, “I am Chaturbhai. *Chatur* means ‘clever,’ and *bhai* means ‘brother.’ So my name means ‘clever brother of yours.’”

There was a big burst of laughter amongst all of us. I was his intelligent brother from his previous birth, but I became his mentally initiated disciple, a confirmed devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa and His incarnations. Śrīla Prabhupāda was a *sannyāsī* and an *ācārya*, while I was a full-fledged *gṛhastha* [householder] living at home, but still, by his grace, my mind was fixed on the sacred feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Every third year an extra month is inserted into the lunar calendar to bring it into line with the solar calendar. As per astronomical calculations, one year sacred Śravaṇa was the month that came twice. The first month of the double month is called *puruṣottama-māsa*, and devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa observe it by fasting, praying,

and reading *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The last day of this month was *somavati-āmāvāsya*, a very auspicious occasion. On this day all religious people take a bath in the early morning in the sea, or in a river or sacred lake.

I proposed that on that auspicious day Śrīla Prabhupāda take a dip in the sea along with me and the others. He agreed at once. We all planned to go to the sea with extra clothes, take a bath, and change. He accompanied us, but just near the edge of the water someone suggested that he not take a bath in the sea, since he had had a coronary episode some time back. So he halted then and there and would not enter the water. He pondered for a while and then sud-

denly asked me to bring some water in my palm and pour it on his head. He said, “That is as good as a bath on this auspicious day.” Very intelligently, he found the means, and I obliged him. He was pleased. I touched his feet and felt satisfaction at having taken a bath in the sea with him on a very auspicious day.

Thus I had ample opportunity to have his *sat-saṅga*, both in the temple and during our walks on the seashore. He liked to sit in my car and be driven by me to the temple. This was our regular program every day. Then I would touch his feet, leave him at the temple, and go home or to my work at my clinic.

He knew Bengali, and I knew Gujarati. Sometimes I would speak to him in Gujarati, and understanding me fully, he would reply in Bengali, which I in turn could understand. He could not speak Gujarati and I could not speak Bengali, but we could still understand each other very well. So sometimes we would converse in this way.

Chandubhai and I had nicknamed one of Śrīla Prabhupāda's young *sannyāsīs* “Major Domo,” for he was really a dominating personality among all the devotees. I told Śrīla Prabhupāda, and he started to use the nickname himself. At least in our presence he would address that *sannyāsī* as Major Domo, and we all used to laugh. Śrīla Prabhupāda was such a noble person with childlike innocence.

I cannot forget my life's most precious moments with Śrīla Prabhupāda. In my busy life as a medical man, these were my best times. He rectified and sanctified the entire span of my life. He took me to be his brother from his previous life—and that is greatly auspicious for me.

\* \* \*

The following conversation between Śrīla Prabhupāda and Dr. Patel took place in March of 1974.



**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** If you want to worship Kṛṣṇa, you should worship Him directly; you shouldn't worship the demigods—just as if you want to give some food to eat, you should give it to the mouth, not to the rectum. [Laughter]

**Dr. Patel:** But there is a way of feeding through the rectum—

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** To give someone food, there is only one hole: the mouth. You cannot say that because there are so many holes in the body, any hole will do.

**Dr. Patel:** That is not the real argument—

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Worship of the demigods is *avidhi-pūrvakam* [improper].

**Dr. Patel:** But through them one can worship God.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** No. Everyone is part and parcel of God, but not everyone is God. That is the proper understanding. Every hole in my body is part of my body, but when food is to be taken, it is only through this [points to his mouth], not another hole.

**Dr. Patel:** But you can give food in the vein.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** But that is not the

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** “Everything is connected with Me, but I am not everything.” Nobody can exist without Kṛṣṇa, but that doesn't mean everybody is Kṛṣṇa.

**Dr. Patel:** But there is nobody other than Kṛṣṇa.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** No, no. *Na cāhaṁ teṣv avasthitaḥ*: “I am not everybody.”

**Dr. Patel:** As I was reading in the *Bhāgavata* today, everything is emanating from Kṛṣṇa; even the *jīvas* [souls] are part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That does not mean Kṛṣṇa is a *jīva*.

**Dr. Patel:** Nothing can exist without Kṛṣṇa.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That's all right. Everything is material energy, but that does not mean the land is the sea. That is nonsense. Do you say the land and the sea are the same?

**Dr. Patel:** Yes.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That is nonsense.

**Dr. Patel:** It is not nonsense, and I will give you an argument. As a scientist I'll tell you. You break the atoms—

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** You are the lowest sci-

to say.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That I admit. But the difficulty with the *māyāvādīs* [impersonalists] is that they do not distinguish between the varieties.

**Dr. Patel:** Matter is made of *māyā* [material energy]. So we are all *māyāvādīs*—all of us—you and me, because we are talking of *māyā*. Nothing can happen without the energy of God.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That's all right. But you cannot avoid the varieties. In your body, you have a head, you have a hand, and so on. Everything is the body, but if I point to your hand and ask, “What is that?” and you only say, “It is my body,” that is nonsense.

**Dr. Patel:** How can it be nonsense?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** It is nonsense. This is the head, this is the hand, this is the leg [Pointing to the various parts of his body]—

**Dr. Patel:** And the whole thing is the body.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** This is called unity in variety.

**Dr. Patel:** Shall I speak?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes—but you cannot say the head and the leg are the same. You cannot say that.

**Dr. Patel:** Shall I talk now? When this body was being manufactured in the womb—

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** I know: it was just a lump at first. [Pauses] But it became *variegated*.

**Dr. Patel:** Or take the example of the seed. In the seed there is a whole banyan tree. The *Upaniṣads* give this example: from a small seed a big banyan tree has come out—

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That is all right.

**Dr. Patel:** So the *seed* is the real thing. And that seed is Kṛṣṇa. So everything is Kṛṣṇa.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Again “Everything is Kṛṣṇa.” Again the same nonsense, the same nonsense. Kṛṣṇa says, “I am not everything” (*mat-sthāni sarva-bhūtāni na cāhaṁ teṣv avasthitaḥ*).

**Dr. Patel:** *Na ca mat-sthāni bhūtāni*. Kṛṣṇa corrects Himself in the next verse.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** No, it is not a correction. Fools simply cannot understand. Kṛṣṇa is clear: “Although everything exists in Me, I am not everything.”

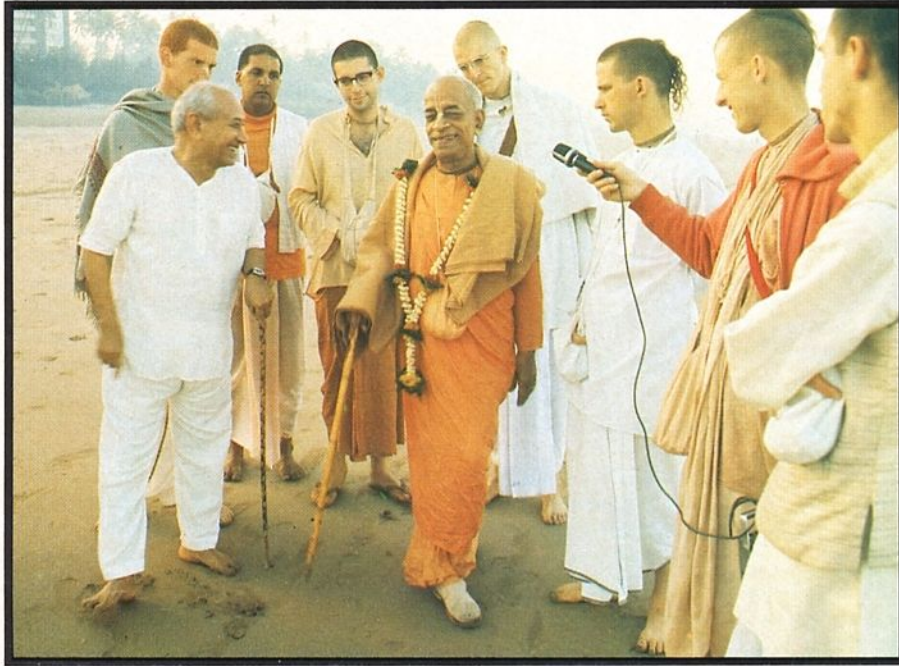
**Dr. Patel:** Still, “Everything exists in Me.”

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. Just like in this hotel [Pointing to a nearby hotel], there is so much furniture, there are so many rooms. But if you say everything is the hotel, that is nonsense.

**Dr. Patel:** But without the furniture the hotel cannot be, without the rooms the hotel cannot be—

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** [To the others] This man is less intelligent.

**Dr. Patel:** That is what I am.



proper way. That is *avidhi-pūrvakam*.

**Dr. Patel:** But in the *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa Himself says, “Worship of the *devas* [demigods] is worship of Me.”

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** No, no. Kṛṣṇa says,

*ye 'py anya-devatā-bhaktā  
yajante śraddhayānvitāḥ  
te 'pi mām eva kaunteya  
yajanty avidhi-pūrvakam*

“Worshipping the demigods is *sevā* [worship] of Me—but it is *avidhi-pūrvakam* [improper].” Earlier He says, *mat-sthāni sarva-bhūtāni na cāhaṁ teṣv avasthitaḥ*.

**Dr. Patel:** Can you translate that?

entist. No, no, no! I cannot hear this nonsense. If you say the sea and the land are the same, this is *complete* nonsense.

**Dr. Patel:** It is nonsense in the present circumstances, but—

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Any circumstances, any circumstances. We admit that the land and the sea are both matter, but you cannot say land is water, water is land. You cannot say that.

**Dr. Patel:** Would you please give me a decent hearing?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Everything is matter; that is all right.

**Dr. Patel:** That is right; that is what I want



**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. If you say the furniture is the hotel, that is less intelligent.

**Dr. Patel:** But if you take out the furniture, the hotel will not be a hotel any more.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That's all right, but you cannot say the furniture *is* the hotel—

**Dr. Patel:** But that is also an argument.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That is a nonsense argument: "Hotel is furniture." You cannot say everything is the hotel. "The furniture is the hotel. The doorman is the hotel. The food is the hotel." What is this? There must be varieties.

**Dr. Patel:** We are trying to dig to the seed of the tree of varieties.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** But you do not know how the tree is manifested. Therefore you are less intelligent.

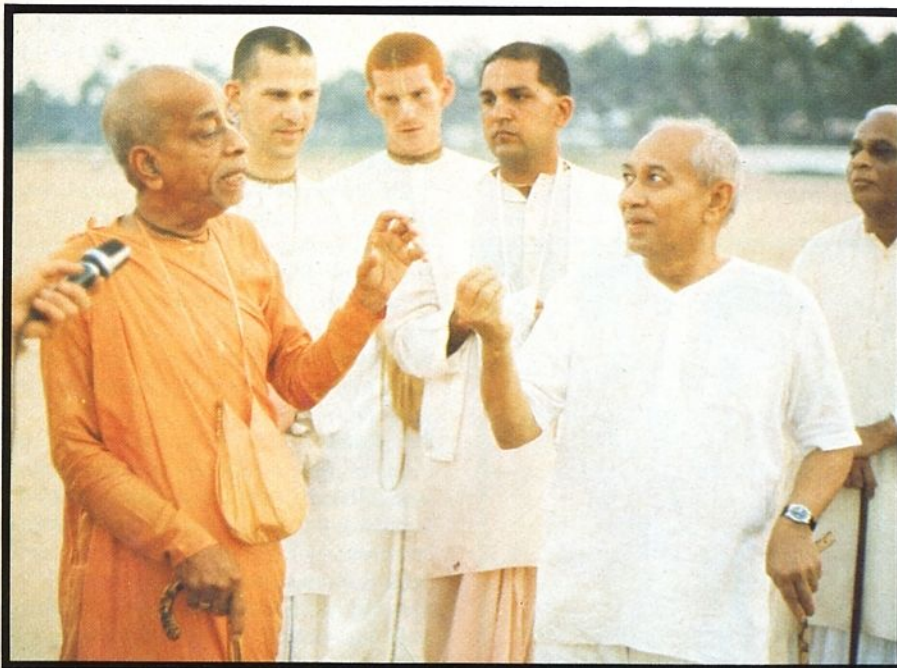
land, and the land is different from the water. Simultaneously one and different. You are simply thinking *abheda* [nondifference]. That is your deficiency.

**Dr. Patel:** No, no. I will try to understand your *bheda* [difference] also, but for me *abheda* is more important at the present.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That means you are less intelligent.

**Dr. Patel:** I don't mind becoming the *least* intelligent. Why less? [Laughter]

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** But you should come to this understanding: that in the *abheda* [oneness] there is *bheda* [variety]. It is a very simple thing. My hand is not different from my body, but still my hand is not my body. Even a child can understand. But you are not submissive; therefore you do not understand.



**Dr. Patel:** I am very less intelligent. The tree is manifested from the seed.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That's all right. That everyone knows. But when the tree is grown you cannot say the leaf is also the seed, the fruit is also the seed, the trunk is also the seed. This is nonsense.

**Dr. Patel:** This is what the *Vedas* say—

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** No, that the *Vedas* do not say.

**Dr. Patel:** You understand it differently; I understand it differently.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** How can you say everything is the same? There *is* variety. This is called *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva* philosophy: God is simultaneously one with everything and different from everything. This is Caitanya's philosophy.

**Dr. Patel:** That is the philosophy?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. Take the same example as before: the water is matter, and the land is also matter. As matter they are one, but the water is different from the

**Dr. Patel:** No. [Insistently] I am *extremely* submissive. But I cannot submit without understanding. That is what I was taught in my school.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Because you do not submit, you do not understand.

**Dr. Patel:** But I will not submit without understanding.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** No, no. *Tad viddhi-praṇipātena. Praṇipāta:* first of all you must surrender.

**Dr. Patel:** I am being *praṇipāta*. Do you think I am disrespecting you? If you think so, then please pardon me.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** No, no. It is not a question of disrespecting. But there is no full surrender. You think that you know better than me.

**Dr. Patel:** I don't think so.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes.

**Dr. Patel:** No, no. If you think that, I will not talk, starting from tomorrow.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** No, no.

**Dr. Patel:** I want to learn.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That is very good. So don't talk, simply hear; that will be beneficial.

**Dr. Patel:** But if I don't talk—

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** No, simply hear; don't talk. That will be your respect.

**Dr. Patel:** And when I want to make you talk, what will I do?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Your habit is that as soon as I begin talking, you immediately talk, without hearing. Therefore you do not understand.

**Dr. Patel:** In what way will I make you talk? You tell me the way—

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Simply *hear* first of all.

**Dr. Patel:** *Acha*, let us hear.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Simply be patient. Then if you cannot understand, inquire. Don't think, "I know better than him; therefore I shall talk." That will never help you to understand.

**Dr. Patel:** Well, if you run away with the idea that I am thinking like that, you are wrong.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** You are habituated to think like that.

**Dr. Patel:** I'm habituated, but I have all respect for you. Don't say that I'm disrespectful.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** No, no, I know that—

**Dr. Patel:** The idea that I'm disrespecting you—

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** I am simply pointing out your defects.

**Dr. Patel:** That's all right. I am prepared to correct them. But if I don't excite you, you keep mum. So how shall I excite you?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Put a question, and I shall answer it from the *śāstra* [scriptures]. Any child can understand, if I ask him, "What is this?" "Hand." "What is this?" "Head." "What is this?" "Leg." Does he say, "Body"? So you are speaking like less than a child.

**Dr. Patel:** That is what I am. That is what I am.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. Arjuna in the beginning was arguing, but when he saw it was useless he said to Kṛṣṇa, "Now I surrender to You." That is required.

**Dr. Patel:** But you are so very hard and harsh.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** I must be hard. The whole world is falling for this *māyāvāda* philosophy. Therefore I am very much hard. I don't make any compromise with these *māyāvādī* rascals. No, I'll never do that. Even if I don't make any disciples, I'll be satisfied, but I cannot make any compromise with these rascals. I cannot. If I make one moon, that is sufficient; I don't want many stars. That was my *guru mahārāja's* principle, and that is my principle. What is the use of any number of fools and rascals? If one man understands rightly, he can deliver the whole world. 🙏



# 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. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

## Second Canto: "The Cosmic Manifestation"

### CHAPTER NINE

#### Answers by Citing the Lord's Version

As our serialized presentation of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* continues, Lord Kṛṣṇa reveals Himself in two ways to Brahmā, the demigod who oversees the creation of the universe. The first revelation comes through the Sanskrit word *tapa*, an order to execute austerity. After Brahmā fulfills the order by meditating for many years, Kṛṣṇa reveals Himself and His personal abode.

(Continued from Text 5)  
PURPORT

This verse is the prelude for explaining the transcendental nature of the form and the abode of the Lord. In the beginning of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it has already been said that the Supreme Absolute Truth exists in His own abode without any touch of the deluding energy. Therefore the kingdom of God is not a myth but factually a different and transcendental sphere of planets known as the Vaikuṇṭhas. This will also be explained in this chapter.

Such knowledge of the spiritual sky far above this material sky and its paraphernalia can be known only by dint of devotional service, or *bhakti-yoga*. The power of creation by Lord Brahmā was also achieved by *bhakti-yoga*. Brahmāji was bewildered in the matter of creation, and he could not even trace out the source of his own existence. But all this knowledge was fully achieved by him through the medium of *bhakti-yoga*. By *bhakti-yoga* one can know the Lord, and by knowing the Lord as the Supreme, one is able to know everything else. One who knows the Supreme knows everything else. That is the version of all *Vedas*. Even the first spiritual master of the universe was enlightened by the grace of the Lord, so who else can attain perfect knowledge of everything without the mercy of the Lord? If anyone desires to seek perfect knowledge of everything, he must seek the mercy of the Lord, and there is no other means. To seek knowledge on the strength of one's personal attempt is a sheer waste of time.

#### TEXT 6

स चिन्तयन् द्व्यक्षरमेकदाम्भ-  
स्युपाशृणोद् द्विर्गदितं वचो विभुः ।  
स्पर्शेषु यत्पण्डितमेकविंशं  
निष्किञ्चनानां नृप यद् धनं विदुः ॥ ६ ॥

sa cintayan dvya-kṣaram ekadāmbhasy  
upāśṛṇod dvir-gaditam vaco vibhuḥ  
sparśeṣu yat ṣoḍaśam ekaviṁśam  
niṣkiñcanānām nṛpa yad dhanam viduḥ

saḥ—he; cintayan—while thus thinking; dvī—two; akṣaram—syllables; ekadā—once upon a time; ambhasi—in the water; upāśṛṇot—heard it nearby; dvīḥ—twice; gaditam—uttered; vacaḥ—words; vibhuḥ—the great; sparśeṣu—in the sparśa letters; yat—which; ṣoḍaśam—the sixteenth; ekaviṁśam—and the twenty-first;

niṣkiñcanānām—of the renounced order of life; nṛpa—O King; yat—what is; dhanam—wealth; viduḥ—as it is known.

#### TRANSLATION

While thus engaged in thinking, in the water, Brahmāji heard twice from nearby two syllables joined together. One of the syllables was taken from the sixteenth and the other from the twenty-first of the sparśa alphabets, and both joined to become the wealth of the renounced order of life.

#### PURPORT

In Sanskrit language, the consonant alphabets are divided into two divisions, namely the *sparśa-varṇas* and the *tālavya-varṇas*. From *ka* to *ma* the letters are known as the *sparśa-varṇas*, and the sixteenth of the group is called *ta*, whereas the twenty-first letter is called *pa*. So when they are joined together, the word *tapa*, or penance, is constructed. This penance is the beauty and wealth of the *brāhmaṇas* and the renounced order of life. According to *Bhāgavata* philosophy, every human being is meant simply for this *tapa* and for no other business, because by penance only can one realize his self; and self-realization, not sense gratification, is the business of human life. This *tapa*, or penance, was begun from the very beginning of the creation, and it was first adopted by the supreme spiritual master, Lord Brahmā. By *tapasya* only can one get the profit of human life, and not by a polished civilization of animal life. The animal does not know anything except sense gratification in the jurisdiction of eat, drink, be merry and enjoy. But the human being is made to undergo *tapasya* for going back to Godhead, back home.

When Lord Brahmā was perplexed about how to construct the material manifestations in the universe and went down within the water to find out the means and the source of his lotus seat, he heard the word *tapa* vibrated twice. Taking the path of *tapa* is the second birth of the desiring disciple. The word *upāśṛṇot* is very significant. It is similar to *upanayana*, or bringing the disciple nearer to the spiritual master for the path of *tapa*. So Brahmāji was thus initiated by Lord Kṛṣṇa, and this fact is corroborated by Brahmāji himself in his book the *Brahma-saṁhitā*. In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* Lord Brahmā has sung in every verse *govindam ādi-purusam tam aham bhajāmi*. Thus Brahmā was initiated by the Kṛṣṇa mantra, by Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, and thus he became a Vaiṣṇava, or a devotee of the Lord, before he was able to construct the huge universe. It is stated in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* that Lord Brahmā was initiated into the eighteen-letter Kṛṣṇa mantra, which is generally accepted by all the devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa. We follow the same principle because we belong to the Brahmā *sampradāya*, directly in the disciplic chain from Brahmā to Nārada, from Nārada to Vyāsa, from Vyāsa to Madhva Muni, from Madhva Muni to Mādhavendra Purī, from Mādhavendra Purī to Īśvara Purī, from Īśvara Purī to Lord Caitanya and gradually to His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, our divine master.

One who is thus initiated in the disciplic succession is able to achieve the same result or power of creation. Chanting of this holy mantra is the only shelter of the desireless pure devotee of the Lord. Simply by such *tapasya*, or penance, the devotee of the Lord achieves all perfections like Lord Brahmā.



## TEXT 7

निशम्य तद्वक्त्रदिदृक्षया दिशो  
विलोक्य तत्रान्यदपश्यमानः ।  
स्वधिष्यमास्थाय विमृश्य तद्वित्तं  
तपस्युपादिष्ट इवादधे मनः ॥ ७ ॥

*niśamya tad-vakṭr-didr̥kṣayā diśo  
vilokya tatrānyad apāśyamānaḥ  
svadhiṣnyam āsthāya vimṛśya tad-dhitaṁ  
tapasy upādiṣṭa ivādadhe manaḥ*

*niśamya*—after hearing; *tat*—that; *vakṭr*—the speaker; *dir̥kṣayā*—just to find out who spoke; *diśaḥ*—all sides; *vilokya*—seeing; *tatra*—there; *anyat*—any other; *apāśyamānaḥ*—not to be found; *svadhiṣnyam*—on his lotus seat; *āsthāya*—sit down; *vimṛśya*—thinking; *tat*—it; *hitam*—welfare; *tapasi*—in penance; *upādiṣṭaḥ*—as he was instructed; *iva*—in pursuance of; *ādadhe*—gave; *manaḥ*—attention.

## TRANSLATION

When he heard the sound, he tried to find the speaker, searching on all sides. But when he was unable to find anyone besides himself, he thought it wise to sit down on his lotus seat firmly and give his attention to the execution of penance, as he was instructed.

## PURPORT

To achieve success in life, one should follow the example of Lord Brahmā, the first living creature in the beginning of creation. After being initiated by the Supreme Lord to execute *tapasya*, he was fixed in his determination to do it, and although he could not find anyone besides himself, he could rightly understand that the sound was transmitted by the Lord Himself. Brahmā was the only living being at that time because there was no other creation and none could be found there except himself. In the beginning of the First Canto, in the First Chapter, first verse, of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, it has already been mentioned that Brahmā was initiated by the Lord from within. The Lord is within every living entity as the Supersoul, and He initiated Brahmā because Brahmā was willing to receive the initiation. The Lord can similarly initiate everyone who is inclined to have it.

As already stated, Brahmā is the original spiritual master for the universe, and since he was initiated by the Lord Himself, the message of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is coming down by disciplic succession, and in order to receive the real message of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* one should approach the current link, or spiritual master, in the chain of disciplic succession. After being initiated by the proper spiritual master in that chain of succession, one should engage himself in the discharge of *tapasya* in the execution of devotional service. One should not, however, think himself on the level of Brahmā to be initiated directly by the Lord from inside because in the present age no one can be accepted to be as pure as Brahmā. The post of Brahmā to officiate in the creation of the universe is offered to the most pure living being, and unless one is so qualified one cannot expect to be treated like Brahmā directly. But one can have the same facility through unalloyed devotees of the Lord, through scriptural instructions (as revealed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* especially), and also through the bona fide spiritual master available to the sincere soul. The Lord Himself appears as the spiritual master to a person who is sincere in heart about serving the Lord. Therefore the bona fide spiritual master who happens to meet the sincere devotee should be accepted as the most confidential and beloved representative of the Lord. If a person is posted under the guidance of such a bona fide spiritual master, it may be accepted without any doubt that the desiring person has achieved the grace of the Lord.

## TEXT 8

दिव्यं सहस्रान्दममोघदर्शनो  
जितानिलात्मा विजितोभयेन्द्रियः ।

अतप्यत साखिललोकतापनं  
तपस्तीयांस्तपतां समाहितः ॥ ८ ॥

*divyāṁ sahasrābdam amogha-darśano  
jīṭānilātmā vijitobhayendriyaḥ  
atapyata smākhila-loka-tāpanaṁ  
tapas tapīyāṁs tapatāṁ samāhitaḥ*

*divyam*—pertaining to the demigods in the higher planets; *sahasra*—one thousand; *abdam*—years; *amogha*—spotless, without a tinge of impurity; *darśanaḥ*—one who has such a vision of life; *jīta*—controlled; *anila*—life; *ātmā*—mind; *vijita*—controlled over; *ubhaya*—both; *indriyaḥ*—one who has such senses; *atapyata*—executed penance; *sma*—in the past; *akhila*—all; *loka*—planet; *tāpanam*—enlightening; *tapas*—penance; *tapīyān*—extremely hard penance; *tapatām*—of all the executors of penances; *samāhitaḥ*—thus situated.

## TRANSLATION

Lord Brahmā underwent penances for one thousand years by the calculations of the demigods. He heard this transcendental vibration from the sky, and he accepted it as divine. Thus he controlled his mind and senses, and the penances he executed were a great lesson for the living entities. Thus he is known as the greatest of all ascetics.

## PURPORT

Lord Brahmā heard the occult sound *tapas*, but he did not see the person who vibrated the sound. And still he accepted the instruction as beneficial for him, and therefore he engaged himself in meditation for one thousand celestial years. One celestial year is equal to  $6 \times 30 \times 12 \times 1000$  of our years. His acceptance of the sound was due to his pure vision of the absolute nature of the Lord. And due to his correct vision, he made no distinction between the Lord and the Lord's instruction. There is no difference between the Lord and sound vibration coming from Him, even though He is not personally present. The best way of understanding is to accept such divine instruction, and Brahmā, the prime spiritual master of everyone, is the living example of this process of receiving transcendental knowledge. The potency of transcendental sound is never minimized because the vibrator is apparently absent. Therefore *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* or *Bhagavad-gītā* or any revealed scripture in the world is never to be accepted as an ordinary mundane sound without transcendental potency.

One has to receive the transcendental sound from the right source, accept it as a reality and prosecute the direction without hesitation. The secret of success is to receive the sound from the right source of a bona fide spiritual master. Mundane manufactured sound has no potency, and as such, seemingly transcendental sound received from an unauthorized person also has no potency. One should be qualified enough to discern such transcendental potency, and either by discriminating or by fortunate chance if one is able to receive the transcendental sound from the bona fide spiritual master, his path of liberation is guaranteed. The disciple, however, must be ready to execute the order of the bona fide spiritual master as Lord Brahmā executed the instruction of his spiritual master, the Lord Himself. Following the order of the bona fide spiritual master is the only duty of the disciple, and this completely faithful execution of the order of the bona fide spiritual master is the secret of success.

Lord Brahmā controlled his two grades of senses by means of sense perception and sense organs because he had to engage such senses in the execution of the order of the Lord. Therefore controlling the senses means engaging them in the transcendental service of the Lord. The Lord's order descends in disciplic succession through the bona fide spiritual master, and thus execution of the order of the bona fide spiritual master is factual control of the senses. Such execution of penance in full faith and sincerity made Brahmā so powerful that he became the creator of the universe. And because he was able to attain such power, he is called the best amongst all the *tapasvīs*.



## TEXT 9

तस्मै स्वलोकं भगवान् समाजितः

सन्दर्शयामास परं न यत्परम् ।

व्यपेतसङ्केशविमोहसाध्वसं

स्वदृष्टवद्भिर्पुरुषैरभिष्टुतम् ॥ ९ ॥

*tasmai sva-lokaṁ bhagavān sabhājitaḥ  
sandarśayām āsa paraṁ na yat-param  
vyapeta-saṅkleśa-vimoha-sādhvasaṁ  
sva-dṛṣṭavadbhir puruṣair abhiṣṭutam*

*tasmai*—unto him; *sva-lokaṁ*—His own planet or abode; *bhagavān*—the Personality of Godhead; *sabhājitaḥ*—being pleased by the penance of Brahmā; *sandarśayām āsa*—manifested; *param*—the supreme; *na*—not; *yat*—of which; *param*—further supreme; *vyapeta*—completely given up; *saṅkleśa*—five kinds of material afflictions; *vimoha*—without illusion; *sādhvasaṁ*—fear of material existence; *sva-dṛṣṭa-vadbhiḥ*—by those who have perfectly realized the self; *puruṣaiḥ*—by persons; *abhiṣṭutam*—worshiped by.

## TRANSLATION

The Personality of Godhead, being thus very much satisfied with the penance of Lord Brahmā, was pleased to manifest His personal abode, Vaikuṇṭha, the supreme planet above all others. This transcendental abode of the Lord is adored by all self-realized persons freed from all kinds of miseries and fear of illusory existence.

## PURPORT

The troubles of penance accepted by Lord Brahmā were certainly in the line of devotional service (*bhakti*). Otherwise there was no chance that Vaikuṇṭha or *svalokaṁ*, the Lord's personal abodes, would become visible to Brahmā. The personal abodes of the Lord, known as Vaikuṇṭhas, are neither mythical nor material, as conceived by the impersonalists. But realization of the transcendental abodes of the Lord is possible only through devotional service, and thus the devotees enter into such abodes. There is undoubtedly trouble in executing penance. But the trouble accepted in executing *bhakti-yoga* is transcendental happiness from the very beginning, whereas the trouble of penance in other processes of self-realization (*jñāna-yoga*, *dhyāna-yoga*, etc.), without any Vaikuṇṭha realization, ends in trouble only and nothing more. There is no profit in biting husks without grains. Similarly, there is no profit in executing troublesome penances other than *bhakti-yoga* for self-realization.

Executing *bhakti-yoga* is exactly like sitting on the lotus sprouted out of the abdomen of the transcendental Personality of Godhead, for Lord Brahmā was seated there. Brahmāji was able to please the Lord, and the Lord was also pleased to show Brahmāji His personal abode. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, in the comments of his *Krama-sandarbhā* annotation of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, cites quotations from the *Garga Upaniṣad*, Vedic evidence. It is said that Yājñavalkya described the transcendental abode of the Lord to Gārgī, and that the abode of the Lord is situated above the highest planet of the universe, namely Brahmaloka. This abode of the Lord, although described in revealed scriptures like the *Bhagavad-gītā* and the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, remains only a myth for the less intelligent class of men with a poor fund of knowledge. Herein the word *sva-dṛṣṭavadbhiḥ* is very significant. One who has actually realized his self realizes the transcendental form of one's self. Impersonal realization of self and the Supreme is not complete, because it is just an opposite conception of material personalities. The Personality of Godhead and the personalities of devotees of the Lord are all transcendental; they do not have material bodies. The material body is overcast with five kinds of miserable conditions, namely ignorance, material conception, attachment, hatred and absorption. As long as one is overwhelmed by these five kinds of material miseries, there is no question of entering into the Vaikuṇṭhalokas. The impersonal conception of one's self is just the negation of material personality and is far from the positive existence of per-

sonal form. The personal forms of the transcendental abode will be explained in the following verses. Brahmāji also described the highest planet of the Vaikuṇṭhaloka as *Goḷoka Vṛndāvana*, where the Lord resides as a cowherd boy keeping transcendental *surabhi* cows and surrounded by hundreds and thousands of goddesses of fortune.

*cintāmaṇi-prakara-sadmasu kalpavṛkṣa-  
lakṣāvṛteṣu surabhir abhipālāyantaṁ  
lakṣmī-sahasra-śata-sambhrama-sevya-mānaṁ  
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi  
(Brahma-saṁhitā 5.29)*

The statement of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *yad gatvā na nivartante tad dhāma paramaṁ mama*, is also confirmed herewith. *Param* means transcendental Brahman. Therefore, the abode of the Lord is also Brahman, nondifferent from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Lord is known as Vaikuṇṭha, and His abode is also known as Vaikuṇṭha. Such Vaikuṇṭha realization and worship can be made possible by transcendental form and sense.

## TEXT 10

प्रवर्तते यत्र रजस्तमस्तयोः

सत्त्वं च मिश्रं न च कालविक्रमः ।

न यत्र माया किमुतापरे हरे-

रनुव्रता यत्र सुरासुरार्चिताः ॥ १० ॥

*pravartate yatra rajas tamas tayoh  
sattvaṁ ca miśraṁ na ca kāla-vikramaḥ  
na yatra māyā kim utāpare harer  
anuvratā yatra surāsurārcitāḥ*

*pravartate*—prevail; *yatra*—wherein; *rajaḥ tamaḥ*—the modes of passion and ignorance; *tayoh*—of both of them; *sattvaṁ*—the mode of goodness; *ca*—and; *miśraṁ*—mixture; *na*—never; *ca*—and; *kāla*—time; *vikramaḥ*—influence; *na*—neither; *yatra*—therein; *māyā*—illusory, external energy; *kim*—what; *uta*—there is; *apare*—others; *hareḥ*—of the Personality of Godhead; *anuvratāḥ*—devotees; *yatra*—wherein; *sura*—by the demigods; *asura*—and the demons; *arcitāḥ*—worshiped.

## TRANSLATION

In that personal abode of the Lord, the material modes of ignorance and passion do not prevail, nor is there any of their influence in goodness. There is no predominance of the influence of time, so what to speak of the illusory, external energy; it cannot enter that region. Without discrimination, both the demigods and the demons worship the Lord as devotees.

## PURPORT

The kingdom of God, or the atmosphere of the Vaikuṇṭha nature, which is called the *tripād-vibhūti*, is three times bigger than the material universes and is described here, as also in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, in a nutshell. This universe, containing billions of stars and planets, is one of the billions of such universes clustered together within the compass of the *mahat-tattva*. And all these millions and billions of universes combined together constitute only one fourth of the magnitude of the whole creation of the Lord. There is the spiritual sky also; beyond this sky are the spiritual planets under the names of Vaikuṇṭha, and all of them constitute three fourths of the entire creation of the Lord. God's creations are always innumerable. Even the leaves of a tree cannot be counted by a man, nor can the hairs on his head. However, foolish men are puffed up with the idea of becoming God Himself, though unable to create a hair of their own bodies. Man may discover so many wonderful vehicles of journey, but even if he reaches the moon by his much advertised spacecraft, he cannot remain there. The sane man, therefore, without being puffed up, as if he were the God of the universe, abides by the instructions of the Vedic literature, the easiest way to acquire knowledge in



transcendence. So let us know through the authority of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* of the nature and constitution of the transcendental world beyond the material sky. In that sky the material qualities, especially the modes of ignorance and passion, are completely absent. The mode of ignorance influences a living entity to the habit of lust and hankering, and this means that in the Vaikuṇṭhalokas the living entities are free from these two things. As confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, in the *brahma-bhūta* stage of life one becomes free from hankering and lamentation. Therefore the conclusion is that the inhabitants of the Vaikuṇṭha planets are all *brahma-bhūta* living entities, as distinguished from the mundane creatures who are all compact in hankering and lamentation. When one is not in the modes of ignorance and passion, one is supposed to be situated in the mode of goodness in the material world. Goodness in the material world also at times becomes contaminated by touches of the modes of passion and ignorance. In the Vaikuṇṭhaloka, it is unalloyed goodness only.

The whole situation there is one of freedom from the illusory manifestation of the external energy. Although illusory energy is also part and parcel of the Supreme Lord, illusory energy is differentiated from the Lord. The illusory energy is not, however, false, as claimed by the monist philosophers. The rope accepted as a snake may be an illusion to a particular person, but the rope is a fact, and the snake is also a fact. The illusion of water on the hot desert may be illusion for the ignorant animal searching for water in the desert, but the desert and water are actual facts. Therefore the material creation of the Lord may be an illusion to the nondevotee, but to a devotee even the material creation of the Lord is a fact, as the manifestation of His external energy. But this energy of the Lord is not all. The Lord has His internal energy also, which has another creation known to be the Vaikuṇṭhalokas, where there is no ignorance, no passion, no illusion and no past and present. With a poor fund of knowledge one may be unable to understand the existence of such things as the Vaikuṇṭha atmosphere, but that does not nullify its existence. That spacecraft cannot reach these planets does not mean that there are no such planets, for they are described in the revealed scriptures.

As quoted by Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, we can know from the *Nārada-pañcarātra* that the transcendental world or Vaikuṇṭha atmosphere is enriched with transcendental qualities. These transcendental qualities, as revealed through the devotional service of the Lord, are distinct from the mundane qualities of ignorance, passion and goodness. Such qualities are not attainable by the nondevotee class of men. In the *Padma Purāṇa, Uṭtara-khaṇḍa*, it is stated that beyond the one-fourth part of God's creation is the three-fourths manifestation. The marginal line between the material manifestation and the spiritual manifestation is the Virajā River, and beyond the Virajā, which is a transcendental current flowing from the perspiration of the body of the Lord, there is the three-fourths manifestation of God's creation. This part is eternal, everlasting, without deterioration, and unlimited, and it contains the highest perfectional stage of living conditions. In the *Sāṅkhya-kāumudī* it is stated that unalloyed goodness or transcendence is just opposite to the material modes. All living entities there are eternally associated without any break, and the Lord is the chief and prime entity. In the *Āgama Purāṇas* also, the transcendental abode is described as follows: The associated members there are free to go everywhere within the creation of the Lord, and there is no limit to such creation, particularly in the region of the three-fourths magnitude. Since the nature of that region is unlimited, there is no history of such association, nor is there end of it.

The conclusion may be drawn that because of the complete absence of the mundane qualities of ignorance and passion, there is no question of creation nor of annihilation. In the material world everything is created, and everything is annihilated, and the duration of life between the creation and annihilation is temporary. In the transcendental realm there is no creation and no destruction, and thus the duration of life is eternal unlimitedly. In other words, everything in the transcendental world is everlasting, full of knowledge and bliss without deterioration. Since there is no deterioration, there is no past, present and future in the estimation of time. It is clearly stated in this verse that the influence of time is conspicuous by its absence. The whole material existence is

manifested by actions and reactions of elements which make the influence of time prominent in the matter of past, present and future. There are no such actions and reactions of cause and effects there, so the cycle of birth, growth, existence, transformations, deterioration and annihilation—the six material changes—are not existent there. It is the unalloyed manifestation of the energy of the Lord, without illusion as experienced here in the material world. The whole Vaikuṇṭha existence proclaims that everyone there is a follower of the Lord. The Lord is the chief leader there, without any competition for leadership, and the people in general are all followers of the Lord. It is confirmed in the *Vedas*, therefore, that the Lord is the chief leader and all other living entities are subordinate to Him, for only the Lord satisfies all the needs of all other living entities.

#### TEXT 11

श्यामावदाताः शतपत्रलोचनाः

पिशङ्गवस्त्राः सुरुचः सुपेशसः ।

सर्वे चतुर्बाहव उन्मिषन्मणि-

प्रवेकनिष्कामरणाः सुवर्चसः ॥११॥

śyāmāvadātāḥ śata-patra-locanāḥ  
piśaṅga-vastrāḥ surucaḥ supeśasaḥ  
sarve catur-bāhava unmiṣan-maṇi-  
praveka-niṣkābharaṇāḥ suvarcasāḥ

śyāma—sky-bluish; avadātāḥ—glowing; śata-patra—lotus flower; locanāḥ—eyes; piśaṅga—yellowish; vastrāḥ—clothing; su-rucaḥ—greatly attractive; su-peśasaḥ—growing youthful; sarve—all of them; catuḥ—four; bāhavaḥ—hands; unmiṣan—rising luster; maṇi—pearls; praveka—superior quality; niṣka-ābharaṇāḥ—ornamental medallions; su-varcasāḥ—effulgent.

#### TRANSLATION

The inhabitants of the Vaikuṇṭha planets are described as having a glowing sky-bluish complexion. Their eyes resemble lotus flowers, their dress is of yellowish color, and their bodily features very attractive. They are just the age of growing youths, they all have four hands, they are all nicely decorated with pearl necklaces with ornamental medallions, and they all appear to be effulgent.

#### PURPORT

The inhabitants in Vaikuṇṭhaloka are all personalities with spiritual bodily features not to be found in the material world. We can find the descriptions in the revealed scriptures like *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Impersonal descriptions of transcendence in the scriptures indicate that the bodily features in Vaikuṇṭhaloka are never to be seen in any part of the universe. As there are different bodily features in different places of a particular planet, or as there are different bodily features between bodies in different planets, similarly the bodily features of the inhabitants in Vaikuṇṭhaloka are completely different from those in the material universe. For example, the four hands are distinct from the two hands in this world.

#### TEXT 12

प्रवालवैदूर्यमृणालवर्चसः

परिस्फुरत्कुण्डलमौलिमालिनः ॥१२॥

pravāla-vaidūrya-mṛṇāla-varcasāḥ  
parisphurat-kuṇḍala-mauli-mālināḥ

pravāla—coral; vaidūrya—a special diamond; mṛṇāla—celestial lotus; varcasāḥ—rays; parisphurat—blooming; kuṇḍala—earring; mauli—heads; mālināḥ—with garlands.

#### TRANSLATION

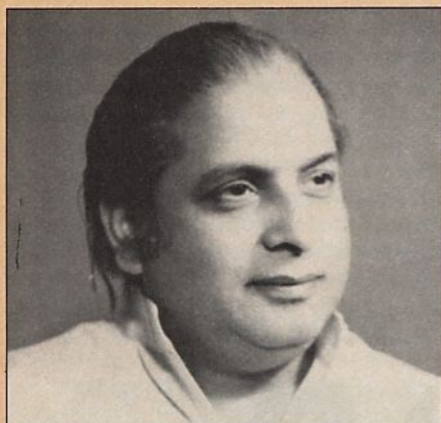
Some of them are effulgent like coral and diamonds in complexion and have garlands on their heads, blooming like lotus flowers, and some wear earrings.





# Every Town and Village

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



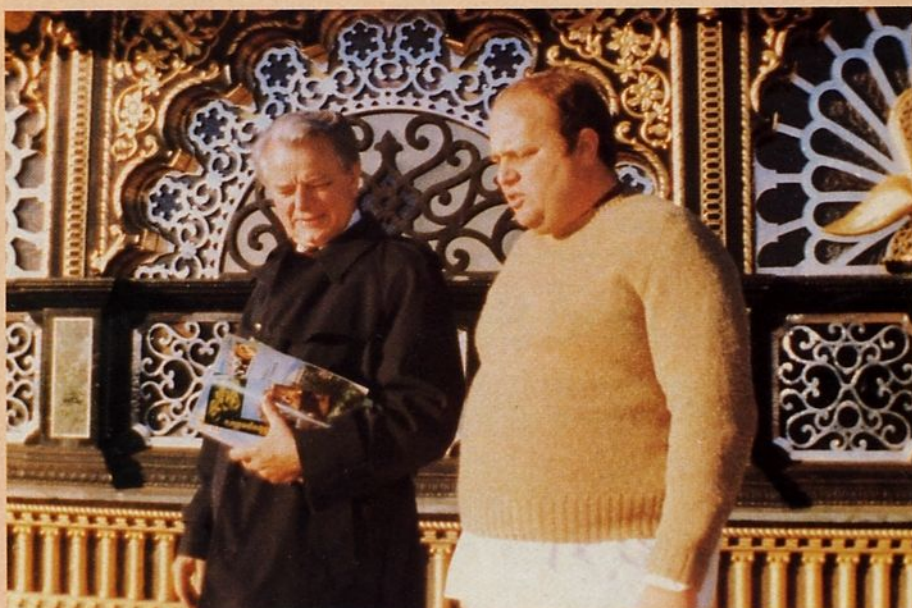
Sri Lallan Vyas, Secretary General of the Council for Overseas Indians.

## Cultural Envoy Praises ISKCON, Prabhupāda

**Baltimore**—Nearly three hundred guests and devotees celebrated Govardhana-pūjā and Diwali here with chanting, feasting, a performance of classical *bharata-nāṭyam* dance, and a play about Kṛṣṇa's pastimes staged by devotee schoolchildren. The guest speaker was Śrī Lallan Vyas, Organizing Secretary of the World Hindi Foundation, Secretary General of the Council for Overseas Indians, and chief editor of *Vishva Hindi Darshan*, a cultural journal published in New Delhi. Here is his address:

"Every year the Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees celebrate the festivals of Diwali and Govardhana-pūjā with complete devotion. Diwali, related to Lord Rāma, reflects the joy and happiness expressed after His coronation in Ayodhyā. Govardhana-pūjā is related to Lord Kṛṣṇa, who lifted Govardhana Hill on His finger just to save the cowherd community from the fury of Indra. These festivals and many similar ones show that Lord Rāma and Lord Kṛṣṇa have had a great impact on the cultural life of India. Indeed, it is as if the mainstream of Indian life flows between the Ganges of Rāma and the Yamunā of Kṛṣṇa.

"King Bhagīratha brought the Ganges to earth for the welfare of mankind, but sometimes I think Śrīla Prabhupāda brought both the Ganges and Yamunā by chanting the *mantra* Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Rāma—not only for America but for all humanity. The Indians abroad are obviously included. Śrīla Prabhupāda was not only a profound scholar of our *sāstras* [scrip-



U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd, books and *BACK TO GODHEAD* in hand, tours Prabhupāda's Palace of Gold with Mahābuddhi dāsa, the general manager for the Palace.

## Prabhupāda's Palace: "It Sure Beats the White House!"

**New Vrindaban, West Virginia**—When U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd (D., West Virginia) visited his home state this past November, he took a tour of Prabhupāda's Palace of Gold, the Hare Kṛṣṇa showpiece in the West Virginia hills. Senator Byrd said it was too bad he'd heard of the Palace only recently. Otherwise, he said, he could have brought with him the other Democratic Senators who had visited West Virginia with him the month before.

Senator Byrd inquired about the religious background of the New Vrindaban Community, where the Palace is located, and took with him a copy of *Bhagavad-gītā*

*As It Is*. This is one of about sixty books by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, in whose honor the Palace was built.

Shaking hands with other Palace tourists, Senator Byrd met one couple from New Jersey. "We came to see the Palace after we saw it on TV," they said.

"What do you think about it?" the Senator asked.

"It's beautiful. We've never seen anything like it," they said. "It sure beats the White House."

Gazing at the picturesque Palace interior, the Senator replied, "It sure does, doesn't it!"

tures] but also a great devotee. He lived the life he preached. He has shown the world that the only path to salvation, or *mukti*, is to become a complete devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa by dedicating everything to Him and remembering Him at every moment. This is the essence of Lord Kṛṣṇa's teachings.

"By the grace of God I am a humble world traveler, and I am very happy to see the devotees and temples everywhere in the world. Śrīla Prabhupāda was instrumental

in bringing East and West together—an impossibility (according to Kipling) made possible.

"Creating the spiritual world of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness was a unique human achievement. Śrīla Prabhupāda came to America in 1966, and in the short span of fifteen years his holy mission made a worldwide base. In the whole course of human history there is no other example of a religious movement making such a tremendous



impact on mankind in so short a time. The success of ISKCON, which seems to have been destined, is the greatest miracle of the modern world.

“Śrīla Prabhupāda was not an ordinary human being: he was a direct messenger of Lord Kṛṣṇa. He shined the light of God where there was darkness all around—the darkness of ignorance and material desires. In my humble view the secret of his success is that he never compromised his principles and ideals, as given by Lord Kṛṣṇa. How could there be a compromise between truth and untruth, between the pure and the impure? He thus set the best example for modern spiritual preachers. For the best results in spiritual life, he in-

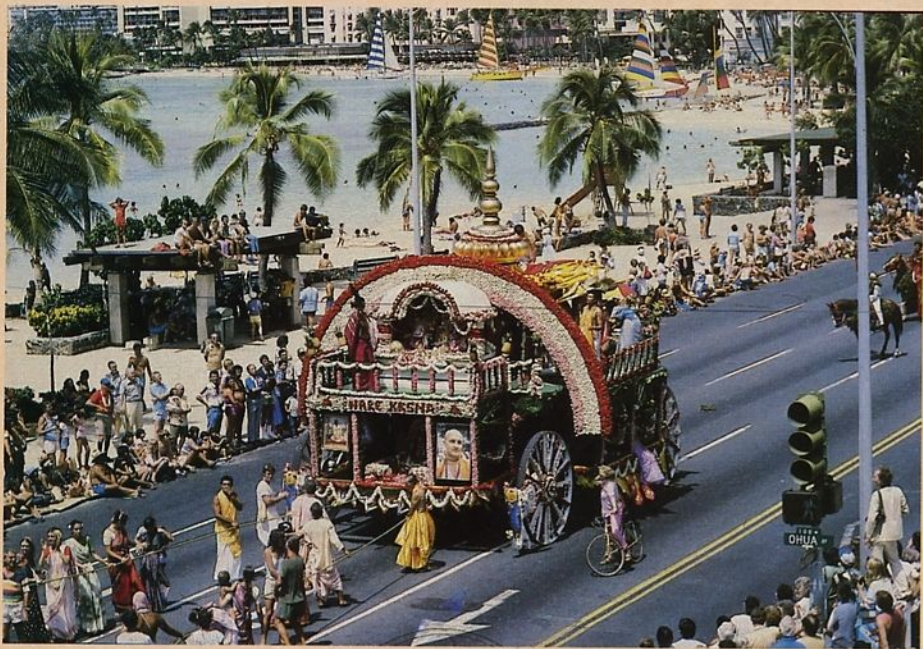
sisted, one must practice and preach the genuine science of God.

“If God were to come in person, many would still doubt Him. Similarly, many people with conditioned minds still nurse misunderstandings about this movement of pure *bhakti*, pure devotional service to God, even though the *Bhagavad-gītā* says, *saṁśayātmā vinaśyati*: “a doubtful mind invites destruction.” The sun has risen, but still people have doubts. “Have you done enough research to prove it is genuine?” they ask. Ignorance is often used to challenge knowledge, and sometimes when ignorance begets a majority, knowledge feels isolated. But if those with true knowledge have determination and

faith—i.e., *saṅkalpa-śakti*—nobody on earth can defeat them. God is always with truth; that is why truth prevails. I am sure the devotees have no doubts about this. Success is bound to come.

“Although I am still not a member of ISKCON, I am proud of this great organization—not because it has an Indian origin but because it is the mission of Lord Kṛṣṇa, with ample proofs beyond doubt. The true message of Lord Kṛṣṇa and *sanātana-dharma* [the eternal duty of living beings] does not limit itself to any caste, creed, or country. It belongs to all mankind. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the most genuine stream of spiritual teachings ever to cross Indian boundaries.”

## 600,000 Say “Aloha” to Lord Jagannātha



**Honolulu**—Resplendent beneath a rainbow of 40,000 red, white, peppermint, and pink carnations, followed by thirty-three marching bands, equestrian units, and floral floats, and ushered in by an entourage of twice that many, Lord Kṛṣṇa and His devotees celebrated Honolulu’s fifth annual Rathayatra Festival.

“Rainbows of Aloha” was the theme of the parade, officially the 35th annual Aloha Week Floral Parade, put on by the city of Honolulu. But the devotees were planning their own parade anyway. And why, they thought, should the city have a parade without Kṛṣṇa? So they put the Deity of Jagannātha (Kṛṣṇa, “Lord of the universe”) on a huge floral chariot (the largest float in the parade) and introduced Him to the crowds as “Kṛṣṇa, the source of all rainbows.”

Thus it was that 100,000 spectators and a television audience of 500,000 smiled,

waved, and cheered as Lord Kṛṣṇa’s devotees pulled His chariot in the three-mile procession, heralded by a majorette whose blue banner announced Lord Kṛṣṇa’s float to be an official prize-winning entry.

When the parade ended, the Hare Kṛṣṇa festival continued in Kapiolani Park. There the devotees chanted Hare Kṛṣṇa and profusely distributed *prasādam*, food first offered to the Lord.

### ISKCON Festival In Indian Holy Places

**Māyāpur, West Bengal**—On March 1, Kṛṣṇa devotees from around the world will gather to honor Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who appeared here nearly 500 years ago to teach the sublime chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*. The devotees will also journey to Vṇḍāvana, the place most sacred to Lord Kṛṣṇa.



### 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 Mādhava		
February 1	February 2	February 3
Appearance of Śrī Advaita Aclārya (fasting till noon).	Disappearance of Śrīpāda Mādhvācārya.	Disappearance of Śrīla Rāmānujācārya.
February 4	February 6	February 8
Bhāimī Ekādaśī (fasting for appearance of Lord Varāha). Appearance of Lord Varāha.	Appearance of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu (fasting till moonrise).	Appearance of Śrīla Narottama dāsa Thākura.
Vaiṣṇava Month of Govinda		
February 13	February 19	February 22
Appearance of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura (fasting till noon).	Vijayā Ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans).	Śrī Siva-rātri, appearance of Lord Śiva.
February 24	March 6	March 7
Disappearance of Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī.	Trisprā Mahā-dvādaśī (fasting from grains and beans).	Disappearance of Śrīla Mādhavendra Puri.
March 9	March 10	
Śrī Gaura-pūrmī, appearance of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu (fasting till moonrise).	Ānandotsava in the house of Śrī Jagannātha Miśra.	



We welcome your letters. Write to  
BACK TO GODHEAD  
51 West Allens Lane  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19119

## LETTERS

One of the reasons I started subscribing to BACK TO GODHEAD was for the beautiful artwork. But my issues are being ruined by the address label pasted on the front picture. Why is it necessary to put the labels on the front cover? Why not the back?

Terrell B. Kriegh  
Indianapolis, Indiana

OUR REPLY: A few issues ago, we moved up from third-class mail to second-class. When we switched, our mailing people began putting the labels on the front cover. But the Postal Service tells us it's okay for us to put the label on the back, so from now on that's what we'll do. We're sending you new copies of the issues the labels messed up. Thanks for setting us straight.

\* \* \*

I thought that I would send a little note along with my renewal just to let you know how much I really enjoy BACK TO GODHEAD. Each issue is *beautiful*! (Both the layout and the subject matter.)

Your staff should be very proud of your achievements on this magazine. I salute you all for creating something worthwhile to read in this time of violence and madness. I also salute you for carrying on the work that Lord Chaitanya started centuries ago!

Although I do not officially belong to your movement, I strongly support it. I feel that contrary to popular belief your movement is not a "cult" or any other foul name the media conjures up. (Since when did worshipping the Lord himself become something to be outlawed?)

I think that all those disbelievers would be singing a different song if they tried chanting the maha-mantra for a while. It truly is an uplifting experience!

Nancy McCauley  
Brockport, New York

\* \* \*

I've been traveling here and there, but now I've landed in Red Mountain, which is not too far from Los Angeles. I was wondering if my subscription is still valid for BACK TO GODHEAD magazine. I would like to still keep reading it.

I want to express my delight in reading this literature. It's definitely different, and it gives me lots of spiritual insights and knowledge. Just because the pictures are so colorful and Kṛṣṇa is so beautiful and beautifully dressed, I'm attracted to the "magic" of Kṛṣṇa devotees. I very much

appreciate your spiritual endeavors to give folks love for God. I think it's working!

Kathy Vlery  
Red Mountain, California

\* \* \*

*In last month's BACK TO GODHEAD, we published a letter (with our reply) from a Mr. Richard L. Miller. Citing the advancement he had made through rāja-yoga, Mr. Miller took us to task for closed-mindedness. Any spiritual path, he seemed to assert, could lead one to God. BACK TO GODHEAD disagreed. Now Mr. Miller has more to say.*

Thank you for your thoughtful letter.

It is *not* my view that everyone's path to God is equally valid. Some ways are long and difficult, others short and easy—is it not preferable to take the shorter way?

To set matters straight, the scriptural authority on Rāja-Yoga is not the *Bhagavad-gītā* but the *Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali*.

The austerities of Rāja-Yoga of which you have spoken, which appear to you as impossible, are grouped under the headings of "Yama" and "Niyama." These may be considered as the ethical or moral foundation of Rāja-Yoga.

Now, the virtues we are asked to practice are the same as those which most religions ask—celibacy, ahimsa or non-violence, truthfulness, etc. These are really not at all difficult to practice, as I have learned from experience.

I may also point out that the main purpose of these requirements is to keep the yogi's mind calm and unshaken. It is not unreasonable, therefore, in the present age, for the yogi to choose whatever moral or ethical system helps him to attain this end.

Furthermore, I don't think one should allow the supposed difficulties of the system to frighten one off from Rāja-Yoga. Even if one is not totally perfect in Yama and Niyama, one may *still* reap spiritual advancement, for this reason: Rāja-Yoga is a *scientific* system of attainment—and if the practices are followed faithfully, the results will be forthcoming.

Your own system utilizes mantra yoga; I say, why not use all the other yogic techniques?

As for my familiarity with religious scriptures, I have devoted many years to the wholehearted and singleminded study of mystical writings of China, India, Europe, and all other lands. Although it is the work of a lifetime, I feel I have made

a suitable beginning and am therefore entitled to speak.

I still feel that your system is incorrect in many of its statements—but I will allow the truth to bear witness to itself and write no more.

Namaste.  
Richard L. Miller  
Wilmington, Delaware

OUR REPLY (from Jayādvaita Swami, Senior Editor): We are in agreement: among the various ways to truth, the shortest, most direct way is the one we should prefer.

Now, let us consider. As you say, *yama* and *niyama* form the ethical and moral basis for *yoga*. To practice *yoga* one must be truthful, nonviolent, and so on. But these are only the *beginning* of *rāja-yoga*. As you point out, *rāja-yoga* is a scientific system. And in science we must proceed step by step.

(It's strange, by the way, to find such an eclectic as you brushing aside *Bhagavad-gītā*, the one book nearly the entire world accepts as the supreme authority on *yoga*. But anyway, let's proceed.)

*Rāja-yoga* gradually guides one through eight steps. As Patañjali tells us, *yama* and *niyama* are steps one and two. The third step is *āsana*—sitting in postures for meditation. Then comes *prāṇāyāma*—control of the breath. The next step is to withdraw the senses from whatever they're involved in. Then comes mental concentration. Then meditation. And finally one reaches the ultimate stage—*samādhi*, full absorption of one's consciousness in the Absolute Truth. So by following all the steps of *rāja-yoga*, one gradually comes to *samādhi*, the ultimate goal.

As I pointed out in reply to your previous letter, the path to *samādhi* through this eightfold system is arduous. Each of the eight steps calls for its own rigorous discipline. (And as in any science, if you don't follow the procedure you won't get the result.)

To give only one example, *prāṇāyāma*—control of the breath—means that ultimately the *yogī* has to come to the point of stopping his breathing entirely! Having accomplished this, he holds his senses so well under control that he can take the next step—withdrawing the senses from all material engagements. Just from this one example, perhaps you can see why the Vedic sages who taught this *yoga* system in a previous age tell us not to waste our time with it now. If one follows the practices faithfully, the results will be forthcoming. Only one trouble: the practices are nearly impossible to follow.

In *mantra-yoga*, however—the path the Vedic literature sets forth for the present age—meditation is simple and direct. One need not go through the preliminary



stages of mechanically trying to subdue the mind and senses by long, difficult exercises in sitting, breathing, sensory discipline, and so on. Instead, one comes directly to the highest stage—*samādhi*, constant meditation on the Supreme Absolute—by chanting the transcendental names of the Absolute.

According to Patañjali (*sūtra* 2.45), one attains perfect *samādhi* simply by meditating on and surrendering to the Supreme Lord (*samādhi-siddhir īśvara-pranidhānāt*). In *rāja-yoga*, one must undergo all the disciplines of the eightfold process, step by step, before one can attain this perfection. But by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, one at once focuses one's attention on the Lord, who is present in the form of His transcendental name.

According to the Vedic scriptures, the Supreme Absolute Truth, the Supreme Lord, is nondifferent from His name. So by chanting His names we immediately come in touch with Him. What could possibly be more simple, straightforward, and direct?

You ask, "Why not use all other yogic techniques?" and you suggest that one choose whatever moral or ethical codes help calm his mind.

This hardly seems a wise suggestion. Suppose a diseased man says, "Why take only one medicine? Why not whatever medicine makes me feel good? Why not take all medicines?" Is this a very intelligent idea? The wise patient takes what the expert doctor tells him will best treat his disease. Similarly, the wise *yogī*, or the most intelligent person striving for spiritual progress, takes the method of *yoga* the Vedic literatures recommend for liberation in our present materially diseased age. The *Upaniṣads* say:

*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa  
kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare  
hare rāma hare rāma  
rāma rāma hare hare  
iti śoḍaśakam nāmnām  
kali-kalmaṣa-nāśanam  
nātaḥ parataropāyaḥ  
sarva-vedeṣu dr̥ṣyate*

"The chanting of the *mahā-mantra*—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare—can wipe out all the contaminations of our present Age of Quarrel and Hypocrisy. In all the *Vedas*, one can find nothing superior to this chanting of the *mahā-mantra*."

Chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* is the most simple, direct, and easy way to attain the perfection of *samādhi*. It is therefore the way the *Vedas* most emphatically recommend for spiritual realization now. ❧

# 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, focuses upon the most important of these words (and, occasionally, upon relevant English terms) and explains what they mean. (For a guide to proper pronunciation, please see page 1.)*

**B** **Brahmā**—After Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in His form as Viṣṇu, creates the innumerable material universes, in each universe He brings forth a highly exalted living being known as Brahṁā, who then engineers the further details of creation. As there are countless universes, there are also countless Brahṁās. (The post of Brahṁā is one the Supreme Lord bestows upon the living being in each universe who has lived his former life with the greatest piety.)

According to Vedic literature, Brahṁā lives from the time of creation until the time the universe is destroyed—more than 311 trillion years. When the universe is destroyed, Brahṁā dies and attains liberation.

*Bhagavad-gītā* informs us that since Brahṁā himself is mortal, even if one attains the abode of Brahṁā one is still within the material world. Thus one must still undergo the material miseries of the cycle of birth and death. In contrast, the pure devotees who attain the abode of Kṛṣṇa, the eternal Personality of Godhead, never need take birth again. It is because Brahṁā devotes himself entirely to Lord Kṛṣṇa that his own liberation is assured.

Did you learn in school about the "Hindu Trinity"? Well, forget it. Though Brahṁā may be regarded as "the creator," Viṣṇu as "the preserver," and Śiva as "the destroyer," Viṣṇu is the source and sustainer of both Brahṁā and Śiva. The *Brahma-saṁhitā* tells us that Brahṁā's great power reflects the unlimitedly greater power of the Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa), just as a jewel reflects the light of the sun. There is only one Supreme Lord—Viṣṇu—and all other living beings are His servants. Brahṁā and Śiva depend entirely on Lord Viṣṇu, to whom they are entirely devoted. Even the greatest of the demigods always look toward the lotus feet of Lord Viṣṇu as the supreme destination. This is confirmed in the *Rg-veda* (*om tad viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padam sadā paśyanti śūrayaḥ*). The things we learn in school are often wrong.

The word *Brahma* (with a short *a*) may denote either the imperishable soul or the Supreme Absolute Truth. But the meaning of the word *Brahmā* (with a long *ā*) is completely different, as described above. To help keep things straight, the publica-

tions of the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust render the word with the short *a* as *Brahman*.

**Brahma-bandhu**—A *brāhmaṇa* is an intellectual, and a *brahma-bandhu* (literally, "friend of a *brāhmaṇa*") is a person born in a *brāhmaṇa* family but lacking brahminical qualifications. The unreasonable notion that anyone born in a *brāhmaṇa* family is automatically a *brāhmaṇa* enjoys no support from Vedic literature. The son of a doctor may become a doctor, but only when he acquires the necessary skills and knowledge. One who accepts a person as a doctor or a *brāhmaṇa* merely because of that person's birth commits a most regrettable blunder.

**Brahmacārī**—A celibate student living under the guidance of a spiritual master. In the Vedic system of social and spiritual progress, a man proceeds through four stages of spiritual development—student life, married life, retired life, and renounced life. The first stage, the life of a student, is known as *brahmacharya*.

According to the Vedic system, a boy at five years goes to live with a spiritual master and receive training from him in self-control and spiritual understanding. Such a student, even if the son of a king, humbly surrenders to the spiritual master in the role of a menial servant. And the spiritual master enlightens the student with the spiritual wisdom of the *Vedas*.

Essential to Vedic student life is the strict observance of celibacy. The Vedic sages teach that sexual attraction is the basic principle of materialistic entanglement. One cannot properly advance in spiritual realization or become a properly cultured human being if he is preoccupied with thinking about, trying for, or taking part in sex. And mastery over the urge for sex helps one advance swiftly in spiritual realization.

The student who fully realizes the advantages of abstaining from sex may continue his vow of celibacy throughout his life. Otherwise, upon attaining adulthood, with the permission of the spiritual master the student may leave behind the life of *brahmacharya* to marry and raise a family. His *brahmachārī* training, however, will guide him in a married life of self-control, evenmindedness, and spiritual enlightenment and responsibility.



## The Vedic Observer

# The Truth Doesn't Hurt

There is a wiser response to pain than Dr. Feelgood's pharmacopoeia.

by YOGEŚVARA DĀSA

Most of the sufferings that afflict us all are more annoying than dangerous, more a bother than a threat. Even granting that physical and mental miseries are inevitable drawbacks to life in the material world, nature has endowed the body with curative mechanisms; left to our own devices, we would be quite able to cope with the greater part of our ailments.

But we are not left to our own devices. Indeed, we are overwhelmed by the devices of others: pharmacological wonders that shine forth at us from TV screens, magazine spreads, and prescription counters or appear clandestinely on street corners and at social gatherings. Drugs both soft and hard have moved out of the slums and into the mainstream.

More than one expert thinks that the phenomenon of a medicated society stems from a culturally reinforced need to avoid pain. "Youngsters are growing up that way" is what *Newsweek* recently heard from Donald Russakof, who heads a group-therapy organization. "They are being told that they don't have to deal with pain in any sense, from headaches to anything that's bothering you. It's hard to say

whose fault it is, but it's happened."

Norman Cousins writes in his book *Anatomy of an Illness*, an account of his struggle against a crippling disease, "Americans are probably the most pain conscious people on the face of the earth. For years we have had it drummed into us—in print, on radio, over television, in everyday conversation—that any hint of pain is to be banished as though it were the ultimate evil. As a result, we are becoming a nation of pill-grabbers and hypochondriacs, escalating the slightest headache into a searing ordeal.

"The most ignored factor of all about pain," Mr. Cousins concludes, "is that the best way to eliminate it is to eliminate the [bodily] abuse."

From the Vedic perspective, this advice is sound but the conclusion not quite to the point. Pain, like old age and death, will never be eliminated, nor, in this world, was it ever meant to be. Pain is an effective alarm, an indication that something is seriously wrong. Addicts of heroin, cigarettes, Valium, caffeine, aspirin, or any other pain-avoidance agent carry their cause to a self-defeating extreme, for pain is to be heeded, not avoided, its causes dealt with, not denied.

Devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa, followers of the Vedic culture, recognize pain as a symptom of embodied life, nature's way of signaling us that since we are eternal be-

ings our presence in a fragile material body is a mistake and that the material body, no matter how well pampered or coddled, is simply a bad bargain.

A devotee's life is one of moderation. While recognizing the self to be different from the body, a devotee doesn't neglect the body's needs. The Vedic teachers don't advise us to seek pain as a path to spiritual advancement. So when simple cures won't do, a devotee consults a physician.

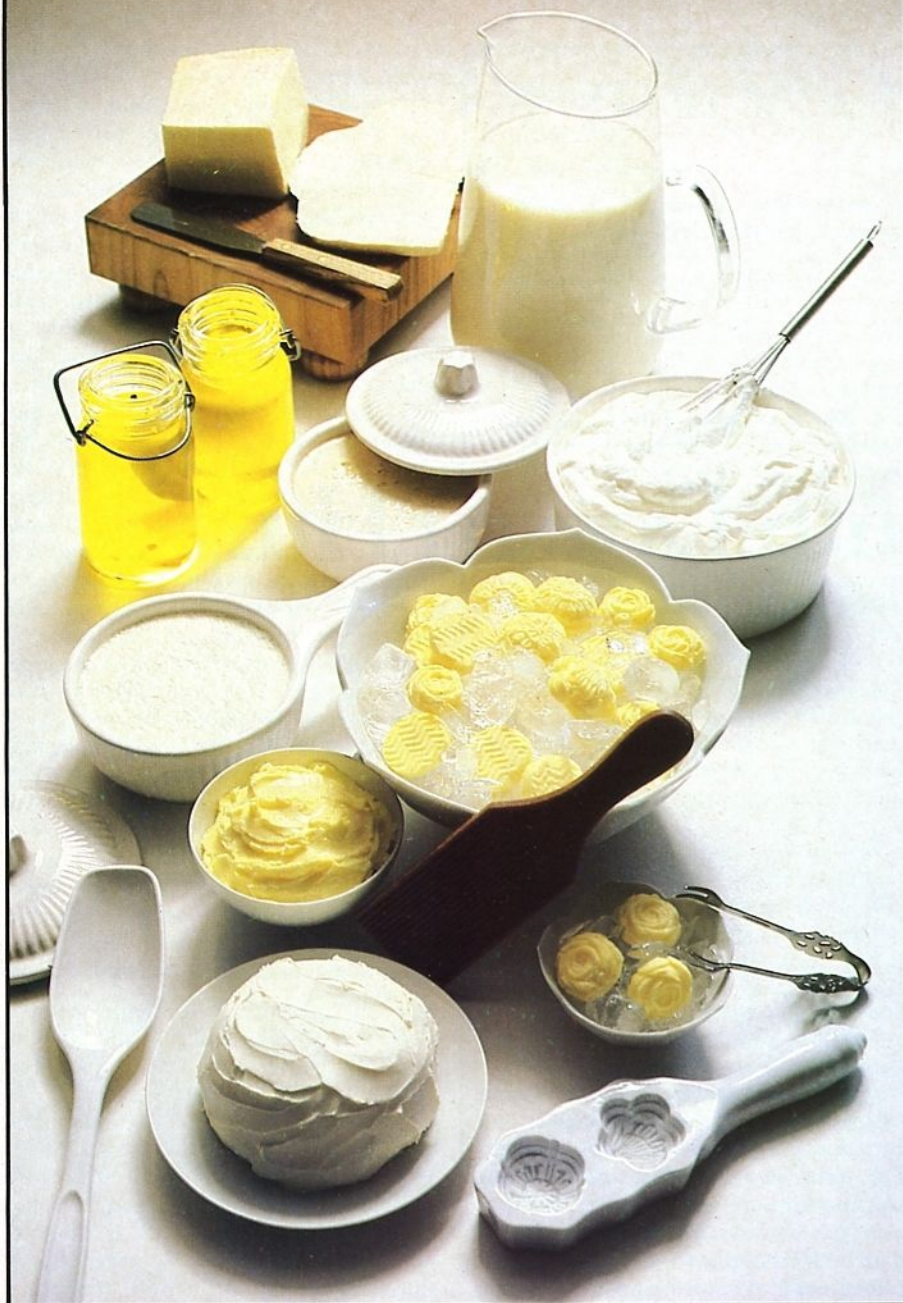
Perhaps in days of yore it was otherwise. Ascetics would spend years in forests or mountains subjecting themselves to rigorous *yoga* practices to subdue worldly desires and realize the higher self within. And austerity is in fact the key to dealing with pain in all its forms. But the key to austerity for spiritual advancement is toleration, not self-torture.

*Tapasya*, the Sanskrit word for austerity, refers to the voluntary sacrificing of something desirable for a higher purpose. If, as Mr. Cousins suggests, abuse and overindulgence are at the root of pain, then self-control is prerequisite to self-satisfaction. Austerity in one's habits of eating, sleeping, sex, and work requires training lamentably absent from contemporary school curricula. In Vedic education, however, it is quintessential. The Vedic scriptures describe the body as a

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## Lord Kṛṣṇa's Cuisine

# The Golden Essence of Milk

Ghee (purified butter) is the ideal cooking medium. You can easily make it at home and cook vegetarian dishes to please Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Text and photo by  
VIŚĀKHĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

If you have no money, then beg, borrow, or steal, but somehow get *ghee*." So advised the great atheist Cārvāka Muni, who lived thousands of years ago in India.

Ghee is purified butter. It's made by first skimming the cream from milk, then churning the cream into butter, and finally heating the butter very slowly until all of

its moisture is driven off and its protein solids have separated. The result is ghee, the essence of milk, and of all cooking mediums it is by far the best. Cārvāka must have enjoyed the distinctive, faintly sweet, delicately nutty flavor of ghee, which lends an irresistible quality to even ordinary foods. For him, without ghee there was no question of good food, and without

**Milk, the miracle food**, yields cheese, cream, yogurt, butter, and *ghee* (the golden liquid in the two jars). The essence of milk and the consummate cooking medium, ghee imparts such a refined, irresistible flavor that it's earned the label "liquid gold" from those experienced in preparing Kṛṣṇa's cuisine.

good food to enjoy, what was the use of living?

Yet although Cārvāka was a dyed-in-the-wool atheist, he would never have considered eating meat. Even for Cārvāka, the very idea of meat-eating was barbaric. Why cut a cow's throat when you can simply feed her grass and fodder and drink her blood, transformed into the much more agreeable form of milk? From milk you can produce cream, yogurt, cheese, buttermilk, butter, and ghee. And with ghee you can make many hundreds of thousands of dishes (we'll share some of the recipes with you in the coming months). As Cārvāka found, all our needs in eating—nutrition, digestibility, variety, and taste—can be fully satisfied if we have ample ghee.

Ghee is more than the finest of all cooking mediums. In Vedic ceremonies like those for marriage and spiritual initiation, ghee is generously ladled into the sacrificial fire. In fact, in a former age, called the Tretā-yuga, performers of sacrifice literally poured this purified butter—by the ton—into sacrificial fires while learned saints precisely and melodiously chanted timeless Sanskrit *mantras*. Cārvāka might have considered this a waste of the "liquid gold." But the elaborate ceremony was a way to please the Supreme Lord, and when the Lord is pleased all a devotee's aspirations are fulfilled. When Kṛṣṇa sees that a devotee is sincerely trying to please Him, He reciprocates and showers all benedictions upon the devotee.

But the Tretā-yuga is long gone. Now just purchasing a little butter pinches the purse, and even if one has ample ghee, most probably one has no interest in Vedic sacrifices. Besides, one would be hard put to find saints qualified to pronounce the *mantras* the way they should be. But in this age of quarrel and hypocrisy, the same benefits one could formerly derive by offering tons of ghee into the sacrificial fire one can now derive by chanting the holy names of God, especially the *mahā-mantra* (the great chant for deliverance): Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. And in whatever ghee is available, one can cook dishes to offer to Kṛṣṇa. ("All that you eat," Kṛṣṇa says, "should be offered to Me.")

The ghee Kṛṣṇa enjoys has many attributes besides its fine taste. You can heat ghee to high temperatures and it won't bubble or smoke, because the water



(which bubbles at 212° F) and the protein solids (which burn at 250) have been removed. So besides being excellent for mixing into simple cooked food to bring out great flavor, ghee is ideal for sauteing, braising, and both shallow frying and deep frying. Ghee also keeps well: sealed and stored in a cool, dry cupboard, it will last two or three months; frozen, it will last up to six.

Ghee is also high in vitamin A. So it's desirable both for cooking and as a dietary component. (That's the word from the

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Their small book *Milk and Milk Products in Human Nutrition* gives evidence that the nutritive properties of ghee place it above other animal and vegetable fats.) If you're concerned with your cholesterol intake, don't worry about cooking with ghee. Researchers have shown that eating ghee won't raise the cholesterol in your blood.

When you're making your first batch of ghee—the butter is ever so gently simmering and the protein solids are silently set-

ting—you might meditate on an analogy Śrīla Prabhupāda once gave: "Ghee is present in butter, but to get ghee from butter you must follow the procedure that's given by an experienced cook. Similarly, Kṛṣṇa is in everything by His various energies, but to realize His presence and to develop our love for Him, we have to follow the procedure given by the bona fide spiritual master."

Try cooking with ghee. You'll quickly find out why Cārvāka wanted it at any cost.

#### (Ghee Recipes by Yamunā-devī dāśī)

Making ghee is neither difficult nor complicated, but it does take time. There are no shortcuts in preparing pure ghee. A quick method may yield a product resembling that of the long method, but only long, slow cooking fully evaporates all the liquid from the pure butterfat, bringing out the distinctively sweet, nutty flavor in the pale gold oil. Only by long, slow cooking at a very low heat is the faintly caramel, sweet aroma and flavor developed and the moisture driven off.

Any ordinary unsalted butter from the local supermarket will produce superb ghee that will add a completely new dimension to your cooking. (Although it's feasible to make ghee from salted butter, the salt masks the flavor and makes the protein solids separated from the ghee generally unusable as a special seasoning.)

You can make ghee either in the oven or on the stove. For quantities over 5 pounds, using the oven makes the project a joy, because you don't have to tend the ghee at all. Smaller amounts, which take less time, can be more easily watched on the stove, especially if you're in the kitchen anyway and have a free burner. The chart below gives you an approximate idea of how long it takes to make various amounts of ghee by both methods.

Unsalted Grade AA Butter	Oven Method Time	Stove Method Time	Yield
1 pound	1¼ to 1½ hours	1 hour	1½ cups (¾ lb.)
2 pounds	1¾ to 2¼ hours	1½ hours	3 c. (1½ lbs.)
3 pounds	2¾ to 3¼ hours	2 hours	5 c. (2¼ lbs.)
5 pounds	3½ to 4 hours	3 hours	9 c. (4 lbs.)
10 pounds	6½ to 7 hours	5 to 5½ hours	17 c. (7¾ lbs.)

#### Ghee (Oven Method)

##### Equipment:

4- to 5-quart heavy saucepan or pressure cooker

Fine-mesh wire skimmer or large metal spoon (not slotted)

Ladle

Large sieve or strainer, lined with 3 thicknesses of cheesecloth or 1 thickness of good quality paper towel (Don't use the kind with plastic reinforcing threads.)

Clean metal can, glass jar, or earthenware crock with a tight-fitting lid

Small container for storing protein solids

1. Preheat the oven to 300° F. Fill a heavy, thick-walled saucepan or pressure cooker with unsalted butter and place it, uncovered, in the oven. Make sure to leave at least an inch or two above the butter when filling the pan. Allow the butter to melt and clarify, undisturbed, for the necessary amount of time (see chart below). Check smaller amounts periodically, but you can leave large amounts overnight with the oven at 275° to 300° F. (If your heat's too high the butter can catch fire. Careful!) When there's a layer of solid foam on the surface, clear amber-gold ghee in the middle, and lumps of golden-brown solids on the bottom, gently remove the pan from the oven.

2. Skim the crusty foam from the surface with a fine-mesh wire skimmer. If you don't have one, you can use a large metal spoon, which is much less efficient and a little wasteful but adequate if used carefully. Place the foam in a small container and save (see step 6).

3. Ladle the clear ghee into your can, jar, or crock through a large sieve or strainer lined with 3 thicknesses of cheesecloth or 1 thickness of good quality paper towel. (Don't use a paper towel with plastic reinforcing threads: the plastic will melt.) When you come near the solids on the bottom of the pan, stop before you disturb them.

4. Pour one or two cups of cold water into the pan and refrigerate for a few hours, until

the ghee floats to the top and forms a solid layer. You can lift it off in a single piece and wash it under cold running water. Pat the ghee dry with a paper towel and add it to the ghee that has already been strained.

5. Cool the ghee to room temperature, uncovered. Store in an airtight container in a cool, dark, dry place, or in a refrigerator. Ghee that has been properly purified, filtered, and stored will last for months.

6. Discard the remaining water in the pan and combine the remaining solids at the bottom with the foam skimmed off from the surface of the ghee. You can use the solids as a sandwich spread or mix them into cooked vegetables, soups, and other dishes. Refriger-

ated, the solids will keep for only 4 or 5 days, so use them quickly.

#### Ghee (Stove Method)

##### Equipment: (same as oven method)

1. Place 1 to 5 pounds of butter into a large, heavy saucepan. Heat over medium-high flame, stirring occasionally, until the butter melts and comes to a boil. When the surface of the butter is covered with a frothy white foam, reduce the heat to a very low temperature. Simmer the butter, uncovered and undisturbed, until the gelatinous protein solids have collected on the bottom of the pan and a thin layer of pale golden, crusty solids has formed on the surface.

2. With the wire-mesh skimmer, skim off the thin crust on the surface. How long you need to cook the ghee depends on how much you make, but the ideal finished ghee is crystal-clear and pale in color. Ghee becomes dark when cooked over too high a flame or cooked too long. You may skim off the foam as it forms and hardens and save it in a small container.

3-6. (Follow steps 3-6 in the oven method.)

#### Seasoned Ghee (Masālā ghee)

The use of seasoned ghee is perhaps the subtlest way to introduce seasonings into simple cooked or raw foods. Ideally, vegetables eaten by children, the elderly, or invalids should be garnished with seasoned ghee to impart a lively but mild flavor to otherwise bland dishes. Just as you might steep a fresh vanilla pod in simmering cremes or custards to release its bouquet, you may add a ginger root or turmeric root or selected aromatic spice seeds to slowly simmering ghee to release hinted flavors. When you strain the spices off, you'll have a clear, aromatic oil filled with subtle nuances of flavor.

Masālā ghee is made just like regular ghee, so simply follow either recipe for ghee given above, adding the spices as soon as the butter melts. For example, to make 1½ cups of seasoned ghee, simply add *one* of the following to 1 pound of melted butter and proceed as outlined above: a 1-inch-square piece of peeled, sliced, fresh ginger root; 2 tablespoons of cumin seeds; a 1-inch-square piece of whole turmeric root; 1 to 1½ tablespoons of whole black peppercorns; or 2 tablespoons of whole cloves. Be sure to label and date your masālā ghee, or you won't be able to distinguish it from your plain ghee.



# RIGHT-TO-LIFE

(continued from page 10)

promiscuity, which is the result of equally widespread ignorance of even basic spiritual principles. Unless people learn the actual purpose of human life—to revive our eternal loving relationship with God—they will continue to be obsessed with illicit sex, and it will be very difficult to stop abortion.

Modern society has completely misunderstood the great responsibility of human life. Both we and the animals need food, sex, sleep, and protection, but only we human beings have the intelligence to understand God and to solve the problems of life—birth, old age, disease, and death. America's obsession with sex, and the resultant atrocities committed to get rid of unwanted fetuses, show a great degradation in human society. We are distinguished from the animals by our expanded awareness, which allows us to be religious:

we can understand God. A pig or a dog cannot understand God, although a pig or a dog may have sex, eat, drink, and be merry. A pig or a dog may even defend its own kind, but a pig or a dog cannot serve God and accept Him as the supreme enjoyer of everything. If we think that religion exists to provide God's blessings in the form of prosperity and material happiness, then we are subtly adopting the same mentality as the atheist.

If we accept the atheistic propaganda that life evolves from matter, that life does not come from the soul, then we will find it impossible to sustain a moral society. But if we do recognize that life comes from the soul, then we must recognize that all living beings must have a soul and thus be in some way sacred. The *Bhagavad-gītā* and other Vedic writings clearly explain these points.

How can materialistic men who have the enjoying spirit of monkeys and dogs be allowed to make laws that openly violate

the universal laws of God? How can a nation prosper when men who are less than animals are allowed to sit on high-court benches and authorize young girls to murder their own children? Through the democratic process, men who are less than animals should be replaced by actual human beings who know God and respect His laws.

If the pro-life movement can become part of a broader struggle to recognize the sacredness of all life and to preserve the special status of human society, based on the spiritual mission of the human being, then undoubtedly it will attain great success.

*ŚRĪLA HRDAYĀNANDA DĀSA GOSWAMI* ĀCĀRYADEVA oversees affairs in Brazil for the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, in which he is one of the present spiritual masters. He and another devotee are working on the translation and commentary for the final three cantos of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, which Śrīla Prabhupāda left unfinished when he passed away.

## Truth

(continued from page 23)

machine (*yantra*). And as anyone knows who has ever owned a car, every machine has its particular needs. Abuse can shorten its life. The wrong kind of fuel will cause motor trouble. Improper maintenance will lead to inadequate performance. And most important, of course, is the driver behind the wheel. If he is negligent or uninformed about caring for his vehicle, he's likely to wind up having to travel some other way.

Much of a devotee's austerity, then, is guided by common sense. A Kṛṣṇa devotee rises early, bathes, and typically spends between three and four hours in study, temple ceremonies, and meditation (specifically the chanting of the holy names of God, as found in the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*). His meals, carefully balanced, consist of vegetarian foods offered to the Lord. Whenever possible, a devotee eats his meals with other devotees in a peaceful environment, free from haste and distractions. He performs his work conscientiously, in a spirit of detachment, remembering that life's purpose is not riches or fame but the attainment of love for God through devotional works. His thoughts therefore center on how to implement devotional principles, even within his occupation. A businessman may consider how to spend a portion of his profits to propagate Kṛṣṇa consciousness; an artist may contemplate spiritual themes for his work; a homemaker may arrange a gathering with friends to discuss spiritual topics and hold group chanting. The *Bhagavad-gītā*

calls such thinking austerity of the mind.

The drive for power assumes a wholesome form in the character of a devotee. In his dealings he will aim for the greatest profit, but he remains free from selfish ambition and enmity. The devotee knows that Kṛṣṇa determines the results of his efforts. So he strives to work well, but without jeopardizing his spiritual principles. The same causes of stress and anxiety that bring suffering to a nondevotee may attack a devotee as well, but a devotee advanced in his *sādhana* (devotional practices) remains undisturbed, fixed in his spiritual determination.

Because the devotee's wants are simple, so is their attainment. In the minimizing of his needs, the devotee discovers a sense of freedom unknown to those still attached to the objects of the senses. His wealth lies in simplicity, and his pleasures come from the attainment of spiritual insights. He is equipoised in happiness and distress, for he knows that every situation in the material world—even the most provoking—is temporary, and that there are higher purposes to be considered than mere relief.

Ultimately, self-indulgence and the consequent endeavor to avoid pain are symptoms of a spiritually dulled society, one whose members receive little if any understanding of the fundamental difference between the soul and the body, the driver and the vehicle. Ignorant of our true identity, we accept anything pleasurable as good, anything obstructing pleasure as bad.

To complicate matters, self-appointed visionaries offer fool's gold, awareness

without any rules of austerity: in a phrase, pain avoidance. And in our choice of religions, as in our choice of any other commodity, we are a consumer society. Let the buyer beware. By and large, the public remains as spiritually naive as it was before the advent of the counterculture. We are as eager as ever to consume whatever the merchants of bliss distribute under the designer labels of *nirvāṇa* and meditation. We are a public that associates self with sensuality, not with transcendence, a public restlessly in search of diversion rather than wisdom.

It is still the privileged few who achieve an appreciation of sacrifice and austerity, and fewer still are those who acquire the technical knowledge of how it is to be done. We are a society of extremes, as radical in our renunciation as in our possessiveness. If we're not madly pursuing Mammon, we're digging our fallout shelter in the mountains of Colorado.

The Vedic process, on the other hand, embraces appropriate austerity, counterbalancing our material needs with a strong sense of our spiritual needs. Devotees, while meeting their family and business obligations, regularly chant the holy names of God and distribute literature on spiritual life. This form of austerity—dedicating one's time and energy toward disseminating Kṛṣṇa consciousness—may not be as sophisticated as the multimillion-dollar advertising campaigns that push medical painkillers, stimulants, and mood enhancers, but the process brings far greater results: knowledge of the self beyond all physical and mental discomforts, a self beyond all pain.



# CHANGE

(continued from page 4)

bluff. Try to understand with all your argument, reason, logic. We are prepared to answer your questions.

This movement is for your benefit; it is not an institution to make some profit. It is just meant to render service to the whole of humanity so that you may understand the science of God and be benefited. We are simply presenting Kṛṣṇa consciousness before you. Now it is up to you to accept it or not. Thank you very much.

Are there any questions?

**Student:** How does Kṛṣṇa consciousness relate to *advaita* philosophy?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** The basic principle of *advaita* philosophy is that the living being is one with God. That is a fact. We are nondifferent from God. For example, the president of your country is an American, and you are also an American. So there is no difference between you as far as being Americans is concerned. In that sense you are one. But at the same time, you are not the president. That you are an American does not mean you are on an equal level with the president. Is that not a fact?

Similarly, we are all qualitatively one with God. The word *qualitatively* means that whatever we have as spirit souls, God also has. There is no difference in quality. For example, suppose you take a drop of water from the vast Atlantic Ocean and you chemically analyze the ingredients. The composition of the drop of water is the same as the composition of the vast Atlantic Ocean. So qualitatively the drop of water is equal to the vast mass of water in the Atlantic Ocean. Similarly, you are a spirit soul, a spark of the Supreme Spirit Soul, God. You have all the spiritual qualities that God has. But God is great, you are minute. He is infinite, you are infinitesimal. So you and God are qualitatively one, but quantitatively different.

Those who are simply accepting the feature of being qualitatively one with God—they are called *advaita-vādīs*. They forget that quantitatively they cannot be equal to God. If the living entity is quantitatively equal to God, then why has he fallen into this conditioned life of material existence? Because the living entity's constitutional position is infinitesimal, he is prone to be caught up by the influence of *māyā*, illusion. How could he be caught by *māyā* if he is also the Supreme? Then *māyā* would be greater than God. These things are to be considered.

So our philosophy, the *Vedānta* philosophy, is *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*, inconceivable simultaneous oneness and difference between God and the living entity. We are qualitatively one with God, but quantitatively we are different. That is

our philosophy, Vaiṣṇava philosophy. So *advaita-vāda* (oneness) and *dvaita-vāda* (difference) are both true. We are nondifferent from God in quality, but different in quantity. That is perfect philosophy.

Is that clear to you?

**Student:** Well, I heard someone give an analogy that we're just like rivers flowing to the sea. The sea is Brahman, the Absolute, and when we reach enlightenment we merge into Brahman and become one with the pure light and the spirit.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** But although water is

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---

always being poured into the sea, water is also being taken out. That is a fact. From the sea, water evaporates and forms a cloud, and from the cloud water again falls down into the sea as rain. Sea water is not in a fixed position.

So do not think that because you have once mixed with the sea water there is no chance of coming out again. You have to come out. But if you enter within the water and become one of the living entities there, you don't have to come out. So our philosophy is not to mix with the water but to go deep into the water and become one of the aquatics there. Then we won't have to come out again.

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* [10.2.32] says,

*ye 'nye 'ravindākṣa vimukta-māninaḥ  
tvayy asta-bhāvād aviśuddha-buddhayaḥ  
āruhya kṛcchreṇa paraṁ padaṁ tataḥ  
patanty adho 'nāḍṛta-yuṣmad-aṅghrayaḥ*

This is a very nice verse. It says that although some people think they have become liberated by Brahman realization, their thoughts are not yet purified, because they reject the service of Kṛṣṇa.

Therefore, even after performing severe austerities and entering the Brahman effulgence, they must come back again to the material world. So if you don't want to come back again, then you have to enter deep into the "water" of the spiritual kingdom and remain as one of the servants of the Lord. This is the Vaiṣṇava philosophy.

We want to enter into the spiritual kingdom and live in our spiritual identity. We don't want to superficially mix with water and again evaporate, again come back. Those who believe in the philosophy of *advaita-vāda* generally give the example you have given, but any sane man can understand that mixing superficially with the water of Brahman is not perfection. Then you must come out again by evaporation. If you want to use that example, you have to also accept this conclusion. How can you say you are not coming back? It is a fact.

So if you don't want to come back again, go deep into the water and become one of the living entities under the shelter of the water. They have no problem; they do not come back. The big aquatics live peacefully within the water. They never come out into the rivers, because in the rivers there is no place to accommodate them. So if you want to live perpetually in the spiritual kingdom, you have to understand your identity as one of the servants of God. Then you'll be perfect. Otherwise you'll be baffled, that's all.

Your question is very intelligent. Unfortunately, most people are not intelligent enough to ask questions about this great science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Although they are very proud of their advanced education, they do not know what they are. They are simply taking birth, living for some time, and dying just like cats and dogs. That's all. At the present moment the condition of human civilization is most abominable, because people do not care about the real identity of the self. They are mistakenly identifying themselves with the body (*yasyātma-buddhiḥ kuṇape tri-dhātuke*). *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* says that one who identifies his body as his self, who thinks he is the protector of his kinsmen, who thinks the part of the world where his body has been produced is worshipable—such a man is no better than an ass or a cow (*sa eva go-kharah*). So this is the challenge in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

But people are so much engrossed in ignorance that they don't care. "All right. Let us go on like this." But if I say, "You are God; you can do whatever nonsense you like," then they will be very pleased. People will be very eager to hear me. But we cannot say such a thing.

Any further questions?

All right, let us chant. Please chant Hare Kṛṣṇa with us for some time.



# CLOSE ENCOUNTER WITH ANOTHER KIND

Of the 8,400,000 species of life enumerated in the *Vedas*, two confront each other on the broad Australian plains. The feathered and the unfeathered biped regard each other across the vast gulf that separates their kinds.

The emu, like all animals, must follow the ways of his species according to the dictates of nature. For him no question arises of what to do with his life; his purposes are fixed and invariant. But the human is set apart from animals: he is developed in consciousness.

It is not that the man is categorically different from his feathered fellow creature; alien though they may appear to each other, man and emu are kin. However di-





vergent their bodies, each is a living soul, a fragmental part of the one supreme soul; as such they are of the same spiritual nature and are equals. Yet fate has cast them into diverse bodies.


Here the human regards his own past, for a soul dwells in a human form only after evolving upward through all the species of life; on the cosmic time scale, the man has only recently shed his feathers. But now he has that which makes him unique—not a soul, for all life is soul, but a body in which the soul's own consciousness is relatively uncovered. In this condition, the soul can ask himself: Who am I? Why am I here? Where did I come from, and where shall I go? What purpose or sig-

nificance has my life? The ability to put such questions makes man different from emu, and the *Vedas* tell us that such inquiry—inquiry into ultimate meaning and truth—is the real purpose of human life.

Unlike the emu, however, a human must pursue his purpose deliberately, consciously. This final step in the evolution of consciousness will ultimately free him completely from the endless repetition of birth and death in various species of life and liberate him into an eternal life of knowledge and bliss. In fact, we see here a human being who has taken advantage of his opportunity, and even a little advancement on his path will save him from the

worst danger—that of falling back down again into the animal forms.

It is unfortunate that most humans no longer use their gift of developed consciousness. Electing to live like animals, they run the grave risk of becoming animals once more. Indeed, our feathered friend may be looking, all unknowingly, at the form of his long lost opportunity. But his time will come around again in due course.

Meanwhile, those of us now in the human form should not lose our rare opportunity to be truly human and so to become what we truly are: wholly spiritual beings, deathless, fully conscious, and filled with unending joy. 





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## HARE KṚṢṆA HARE KṚṢṆA KṚṢṆA KṚṢṆA HARE HARE HARE RĀMA HARE RĀMA RĀMA RĀMA HARE HARE

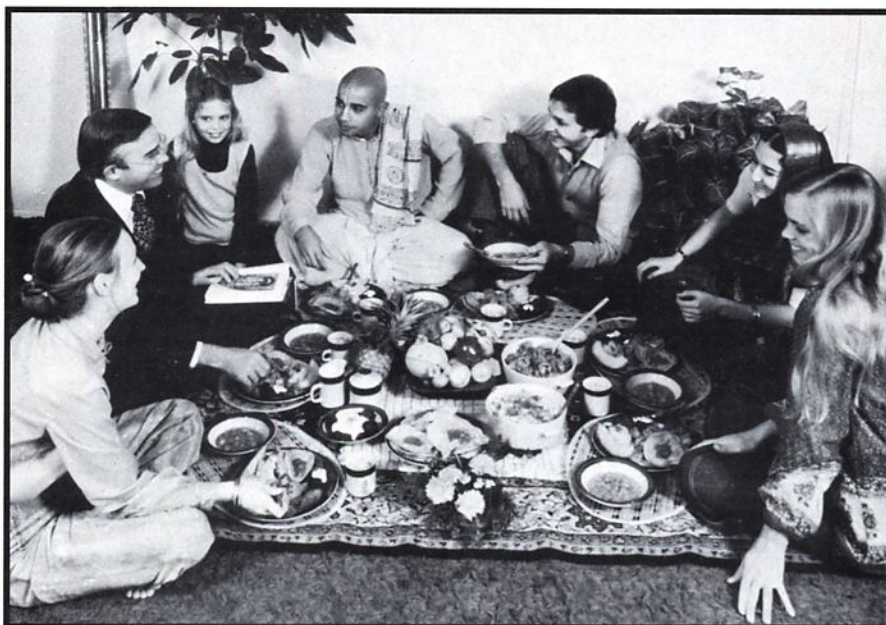
WHAT IS A MANTRA? In Sanskrit, *man* means "mind" and *tra* means "freeing." So a *mantra* is a combination of transcendental sounds that frees our minds from anxiety.

Ancient India's Vedic literature singles out one *mantra* as the *mahā* (supreme) *mantra*. The *Kali-santarāṇa Upaniṣad* ex- plains, "These sixteen words—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare—are especially meant for counter- acting 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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# NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

## The “Kṛṣṇa” Books: Antidote for Suffering

Among the selected books of Vedic literature His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda translated and wrote commentaries on, the trilogy known as *Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead* is unique. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s *Kṛṣṇa* books directly tell us what God is like in His original, personal form and what He and His liberated associates are doing in the eternal, spiritual world. In our temporary world of manifold miseries, one who properly understands Kṛṣṇa’s transcendental activities can attain the transcendental platform of eternal existence in full bliss and knowledge. So the *Kṛṣṇa* books provide much more than fascinating stories: they provide invaluable spiritual knowledge.

Upon first seeing the *Kṛṣṇa* books, however, many people express doubts: “Isn’t this mythology? I can’t take this literally.” They conclude that Kṛṣṇa is just as imaginary as popular heroes like Superman or the mythological gods of ancient lore. To such people I would say, Rather than reject Kṛṣṇa as imaginary and the *Kṛṣṇa* books as mythology, you should understand who Kṛṣṇa is. Kṛṣṇa is far more than a popular hero or cultural myth. He is the Absolute Truth, and His pastimes described in the *Kṛṣṇa* books are transcendental. The *Kṛṣṇa* books deal exclusively with the highest philosophical understanding of the cause of all causes.

Now one may ask, “How can the ultimate truth be a person?” And the answer is that Kṛṣṇa’s personality is not limited or material. The Vedic sages address Him as Bhagavān, “He who possesses to an infinite degree the opulences of wealth, fame, beauty, knowledge, strength, and renunciation.” The Sanskrit word *kṛṣṇa* literally means “all-attractive” and is therefore the perfect name for the Supreme Being.

Because we have all had bitter experience that persons are always imperfect and mortal, we are prone to conclude that the Absolute Truth can

have no personal form or activities. But Jīva Gosvāmī, the great sixteenth-century philosopher of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, informs us that unless we accept the Absolute Truth as inconceivable we can never even begin to understand Him. In other words, Kṛṣṇa is a person, but He is not a person like us—limited, frail, and mortal.

Still, there is another pressing objection to taking Kṛṣṇa consciousness seriously: “Granted that there is a formidable and convincing philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and granted that the concept of God as the Supreme Person is valid. But how is all this relevant to us today? The people of the world are faced with the practical and urgent problems of economic and class struggles, and there is the imminent threat of nuclear war. So even if Kṛṣṇa is God and is enjoying a life of eternal bliss with His devotees in the spiritual world, how does that help us here in our day-to-day predicaments?”

The answer is that unless we know the Absolute Truth, we can never solve problems arising from the immediate, relative truths. An expert physician knows that certain symptoms indicate a specific disease and that by curing the disease he can cure all the symptoms. Similarly, the world’s problems of conflict, scarcity, oppression, disease, and so on are merely symptoms of our ignorance of life’s real purpose: to know, serve, and love God. Unless our leaders themselves become enlightened in God consciousness and attack the root cause of social ills—widespread spiritual ignorance—no palliative measures can ever succeed in curing the body politic.

The human propensity for love has to be satisfied in terms of the real self and its spiritual needs, not just in terms of immediate physical, familial, or social needs. Our ultimate need is to understand our intimate loving relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. So Kṛṣṇa is not irrelevant; rather, attempting to solve our problems without Him is ir-

relevant. Forgetting the Supreme Personality of Godhead and disobeying His codes of universal religion are the causes of all suffering. Careful study of the *Kṛṣṇa* books, therefore, is not a waste of time but an activity of the utmost importance.

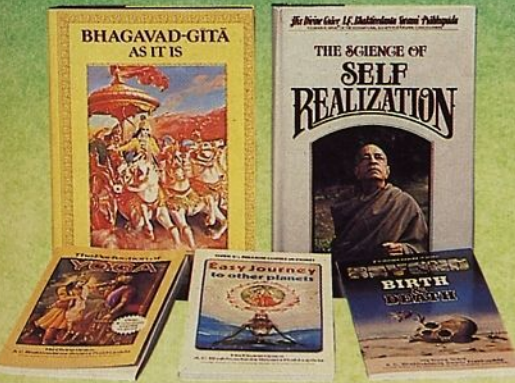
For those of us not interested in reading lengthy treatises on transcendental philosophy, Śrīla Prabhupāda has presented the *Kṛṣṇa* books in the attractive form of short stories comprising ninety chapters. The *Kṛṣṇa* books are actually a summary study of the Tenth Canto of the Sanskrit scripture *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which describes Lord Kṛṣṇa’s all-attractive pastimes. In the *Kṛṣṇa* books Śrīla Prabhupāda has made the essence of this most sublime Vedic literature accessible to modern readers all over the world.

The relevance of the *Kṛṣṇa* books to our modern difficulties becomes even clearer when we consider the setting of the original narration of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The scene was a sacred forest in India five thousand years ago. The sage Śukadeva Gosvāmī narrated the pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa to the emperor Parīkṣit, who had been cursed to die within seven days. By their practical example, these two exalted persons teach us that life’s ultimate purpose is to hear about, glorify, and remember the Supreme Personality of Godhead. King Parīkṣit was especially intent on hearing about Kṛṣṇa, because he knew he would die in a matter of hours. He was confident that by hearing about Kṛṣṇa during his last moments, he would attain the eternal, spiritual world and thus escape the cycle of birth and death.

Not only King Parīkṣit but every one of us should be aware of death at every moment. And since the purpose of life is to become fully Kṛṣṇa conscious before death, hearing or reading about Kṛṣṇa is our prime need. Thanks to Śrīla Prabhupāda, his *Kṛṣṇa* books let us fulfill this need in a most pleasurable way. —SDG



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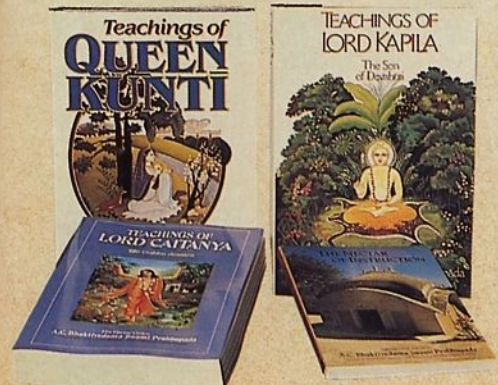
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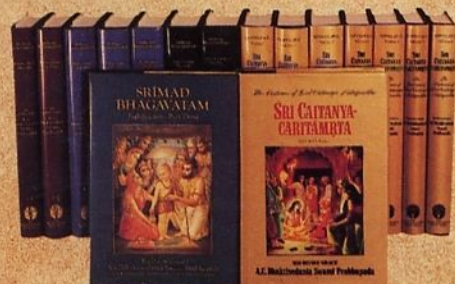
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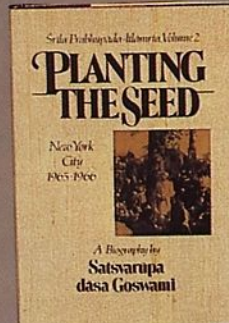
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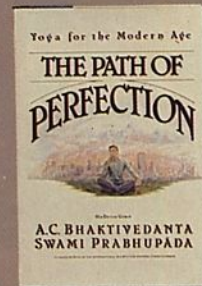


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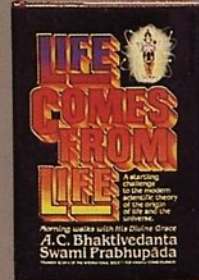
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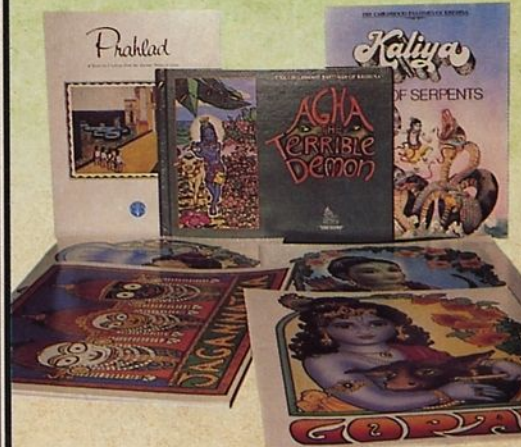
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