

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

BACK TO GODHEAD

Vol. 19 No. 1

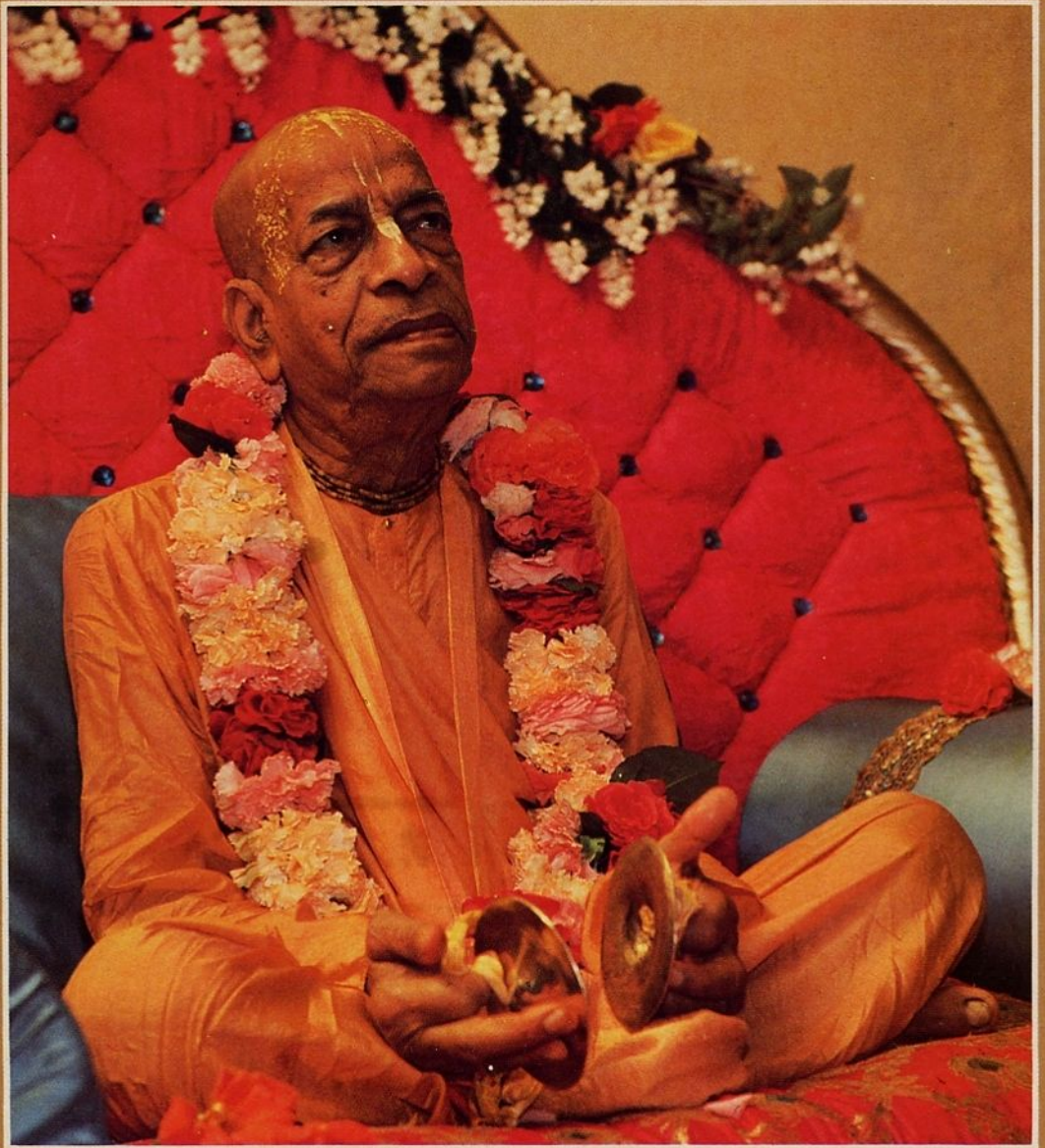
THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT



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

FOUNDED 1944 VOL. 19, NO. 1 JANUARY 1984 PRICE: \$1.50

FOUNDER

(under the direction of His Divine Grace
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His Divine Grace
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PROOFREADERS Kṣamā-devī dāsi, Ṛkṣarāja dāsa
SANSKRIT EDITOR Kuśakratha dāsa
ARCHIVES Nitya-triptā-devī dāsi, Parama-rūpa dāsa
SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES Goloka-Vṛndāvana-devī dāsi,
Govinda-devī dāsi, Janeśvari-devī dāsi, Kṛṣṇa-kṛpa dāsa,
Kuntī-devī dāsi
PRINTING CONSULTANT Paul Bleier

PRONUNCIATION. We spell Sanskrit words and names by a phonetic system that lets you know how to say each word. Pronounce short a like the u in but, long ā like the a in far (and hold it twice as long as the short a). Pronounce e like the a in evade, long ī like the i in pique. Pronounce the vowel ṛ like the ri in rim, and e like the ch in chair. Pronounce the aspirated consonants (ch, jh, dh, etc.) as in staunch-heart, hedgehog, and red-hot. Finally, pronounce the sibilants ś and ṣ like sh. So for Kṛṣṇa say KRISHNA, and for Caitanya say CHAITANYA.

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."

EDITORIAL OFFICES. Send editorial correspondence to BACK TO GODHEAD, 51 West Allens Lane, P.O. Box 18928, Philadelphia, PA 19119. Phone: (215) 848-2350.

SUBSCRIPTIONS. BACK TO GODHEAD is published monthly except March. For a one-year subscription, send \$8.00 to BACK TO GODHEAD, P.O. Box 18928, Philadelphia, PA 19119. (For Canada, add \$2.00. Outside Canada and the U.S.A., add \$3.00 for surface mail, \$22.00 for airmail.)

When writing to change your address or clear up any questions about your subscription, write to Govinda-devī dāsi, P.O. Box 18928, Philadelphia, PA 19119. (Or call 215-822-0787.) We can answer your questions faster if you send us a recent mailing label or invoice. Please allow six to eight weeks for changes to show up on your mailing label.

BACK TO GODHEAD is available in microform from University Microforms International, 300 North Zeeb Road, Dept. P.R., Ann Arbor, MI 48106.



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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to BACK TO GODHEAD, P.O. Box 18928, Philadelphia, PA 19119.

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COVER: Frolicking in the fields of Vṛndāvana, the two transcendental brothers, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, enjoy an eternal, carefree childhood. They are the oldest of all personalities, and yet They never age past the full bloom of youth. Their uninterrupted pastimes, which are the object of meditation for great sages and mystics, are evidence that although these two brothers control the creation, maintenance, and annihilation of the material world, They personally have no work to do. Their only business is enjoyment. (Painting: Rāmadāsa Abhirāma dāsa and Dhṛti-devī dāsi)



THE WAY OF YOGA

Arduous *yoga* processes offer heavenly enjoyment
and even temporary liberation from birth and death.
Can a simpler process offer more?

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

*sarva-dvārāṇi samyamya
mano hr̥di nirudhya ca
mūrdhny ādhāyātmanah prāṇam
āsthito yoga-dhāraṇām*

“The yogic situation is that of detachment from all sensual engagements. Closing all the doors of the senses and fixing the mind on the heart and the life air at the top of the head, one establishes himself in *yoga*.” (*Bhagavad-gītā* 8.12)

There are different kinds of transcendentalists, or *yogīs*: the *jñāna-yogī*, the *dhyāna-yogī*, and the *bhakti-yogī*. All of them are eligible to be transferred to

In the true *yoga* meditation system, practiced in former ages, the aspiring transcendentalist was advised to retire to a secluded place in the jungles or mountains to perform austerities. Sitting erect and practicing breath control, completely free from sex and other material activities, the *yogī* gradually gave up even eating and sleeping. As he approached perfection, he raised himself—the soul—by means of the life airs, to the top of the head, then burst through the skull and transferred himself to any material planet he desired—or to the eternal spiritual world. The entire process takes hundreds of years to complete and is practically impossible in this age.

the spiritual world, because the *yoga* system is meant for reestablishing our link with the Supreme Lord.

Actually we are eternally connected with the Supreme Lord, but somehow or other we are now entangled in material contamination. So the process is that we have to go back again. That linking process is called *yoga*.

The actual meaning of the word *yoga* is “plus.” Now, at the present moment, we are minus God, minus the Supreme. But when we make ourselves plus, or connected with God, then our human form of life is perfect.

By the time death comes, we must reach that stage of perfection. As long as we are alive, we have to practice how to approach that point of perfection. And at the time of death, when we give up this material body, that perfection must be realized. *Prayāna-kāle manasācalena. Prayāna-kāle* means “at the time of death.” For instance, a student may prepare two years, three years, or four years in his college education, and the final test is his examination. If he passes the examination, then he gets his degree. Similarly, if we prepare for the examination of death and we pass the examination, then we are transferred to the spiritual world. All that we have

learned in life is examined at the time of death.

So here in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Lord Kṛṣṇa is describing what we should do at the point of death, when we are giving up this present body.

For the *dhyāna-yogīs*, the prescription is: *sarva-dvārāṇi samyamya mano hr̥di nirudhya ca*. In the technical language of the *yoga* system, this process is called *pratyāhāra*. *Pratyāhāra* means “just the opposite.” For example, suppose my eyes are engaged in seeing worldly beauty. So I would have to refrain from enjoying that external beauty and instead engage in meditation to see the beauty within. That is called *pratyāhāra*. Similarly, I would have to hear *om̐kāra*—the sound representation of the Lord—from within. And in the same way, all the senses must be withdrawn from their external activities and engaged in meditation on God. That is the perfection of *dhyāna-yoga*: to concentrate the mind on Viṣṇu, or God. The mind is very agitating. So it has to be fixed on the heart: *mano hr̥di nirudhya*. Then we have to transfer the life air to the top of the head: *mūrdhny ādhāyātmanah prāṇam āsthito yoga-dhāraṇām*. That is the perfection of *yoga*.

A perfect *dhyāna-yogī* can choose his

own destination after death. There are innumerable material planets, and beyond the material planets is the spiritual world. *Yogīs* have information about all the different planets. Where did they get this information? From the scriptures. From the Vedic literature. For instance, before I came to your country, I got the description of your country from books. Similarly, we can get the descriptions of higher planets and the spiritual world from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

The *yogī* knows everything, and he can transfer himself to any planet he likes. He does not require the help of any spaceship. The scientists have been trying to reach other planets for so many years with their spaceships, and they will go on trying for one hundred or one thousand years. But they'll never be successful. Rest assured. This is not the process to reach another planet. Maybe, by scientific progress, one man or two men can succeed, but that is not the general process. The general process is that if you want to transfer yourself to any better planet, then you have to practice this *dhyāna-yoga* system—or the *jñāna* system. But not the *bhakti* system.

The *bhakti* system is not meant for attaining any material planet. Those who render devotional service to Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord, are not interested in any planet of this material world. Why? Because they know that regardless of what planet you elevate yourself to, the four principles of material existence will still be there. What are those principles? Birth, death, disease, and old age. You will find these on any planet you go to. On some higher planets your duration of life may be very, very much longer than on this earth, but still, death is there. Material life means birth, death, disease, and old age. And spiritual life means relief from these botherations. No more birth, no more death, no more ignorance, and no more misery. So those who are intelligent do not try to elevate themselves to any planet of this material world.

Now the scientists are trying to reach the moon planet, but it is very difficult for them to gain entrance because they do not have a suitable body. But if we enter into the higher planets by this *yoga* system, then we will get a body suitable for those planets. For every planet there is a suitable body. Otherwise, you cannot enter. For example, although we cannot live in the water with this body, we can live in the water with oxygen tanks—for fifteen or sixteen hours. But the fish, the aquatic animals, have a suitable body—they are living their whole life underwater. And of course, if you take the fish out of the water and put them on the land, they'll die instantly. So you see, even on this planet you have to have a suitable kind of body to

live in a particular place. Similarly, if you want to enter into another planet, you have to prepare yourself by getting a particular type of body.

In the higher planets, our year is equal to one day and night, and you live for ten thousand of such years. That is the description in the Vedic literatures. So you get a very long duration of life undoubtedly. But then there is death. There is still death. After ten thousand years, or twenty thousand years, or millions of years—it doesn't matter. It is all counted, and death is there. But you are not subject to death—that is the beginning of *Bhagavad-gītā*. *Na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre*: you are an eternal spirit soul.

**The perfection of
dhyāna-yoga is when
you can place
yourself—the spirit
soul—at the top of
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topmost part of the
head, transfer
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higher planets, as
you like.**

Why should you subject yourself to this birth and death? To ask this question is a sign of real intelligence. Those persons who are in Kṛṣṇa consciousness are very intelligent. They aren't interested in promotion to any planet where there is death, regardless of how long you live. They want a spiritual body, just like God's. God's body is *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*: *īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ*. *Sat* means "eternal," *cit* means "full of knowledge," and *ānanda* means "full of pleasure." If we leave this body and transfer ourselves to the spiritual world—to live with Kṛṣṇa Himself—then we get a body similar to His: *sac-cid-ānanda*—eternal, full of knowledge, and full of bliss. Those who are trying to be Kṛṣṇa conscious have a different aim of life than those who are trying to promote themselves to any of the better planets in this material world.

You are a very minute, spiritual particle

within this body, and you are being sustained in the *prāṇa-vāyu*, or life airs. The *dhyāna-yoga* system—the *ṣaṭ-cakra* system—is to get the soul from its position in the heart to the topmost part of the head. And the perfection is when you can place yourself at the top of the head and, by rupturing this topmost part of the head, transfer yourself into the higher planets, as you like. A *dhyāna-yogī* can transfer into any planet—wherever he likes.

So if you like—just like you are inquisitive about the moon planet—become a *yogī* and go there. A *yogī* thinks, "Oh, let me see what the moon planet is like. Then I shall transfer myself to higher planets." It is the same with ordinary travelers. They come to New York, then go to California, then go to Canada. Similarly, you can transfer yourself to so many planets by this *yoga* system. But anywhere you go, the same systems—visa system and customs system—are there. So a Kṛṣṇa conscious person is not interested in these temporary planets. Life may be of a long duration, but he is not interested.

For the *yogī* there is a process how to give up this body:

*om ity ekākṣaraṁ brahma
vyāharan mām anusmaran
yaḥ prayāti tyajan dehaṁ
sa yāti paramām gatim*

At the time of death—"Om . . ." He can pronounce *om*, the *omkāra*. *Omkāra* is the concise form of transcendental sound vibration. *Om ity ekākṣaraṁ brahma vyāharan*: if he can vibrate this sound, *omkāra*, and at the same time, *mām anusmaran*, remember Kṛṣṇa, or Viṣṇu, he can enter into the spiritual kingdom.

The whole *yoga* system is meant to concentrate the mind on Viṣṇu. But the impersonalists imagine that this *omkāra* is the form of Viṣṇu, or the Lord. Those who are personalists do not imagine. They see the actual form of the Supreme Lord. Anyway, whether you concentrate your mind by imagining or you see factually, you have to fix your mind on the Viṣṇu form. Here *mām* means "unto the Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu." *Yaḥ prayāti tyajan dehaṁ*: Anyone who quits his body remembering Viṣṇu—*sa yāti paramām gatim*—he enters into the spiritual kingdom.

Those who are actual *yogīs* do not desire to enter any other planet in the material world, because they know that life there is temporary. That is intelligence. Those who are satisfied with temporary happiness, temporary life, and temporary facilities are not intelligent, according to the *Bhagavad-gītā*: *antavat tu phalaṁ teṣāṁ tad bhavaty alpa-medhasām*. I am permanent. I am eternal. Who wants non-permanent existence? Nobody wants it.

Suppose you are living in an apartment

and the landlord asks you to vacate. You are sorry. But you'll not be sorry if you go to a better apartment. So this is our nature: wherever we live, because we are permanent, we want a permanent residence. That is our inclination. We don't wish to die. Why? Because we are permanent. We don't want to be diseased. These are all artificial, external things—disease, death, birth, miseries. They are external things.

Just like sometimes you are attacked with fever. You are not meant for suffering from fever, but sometimes it comes upon you. So you have to take precautions to get out of it. Similarly, these four kinds of external afflictions—birth, death, disease, and old age—are due to this material body. If we can get out of this material body, we can get out of these implications.

So for the *yogī* who is an impersonalist, the recommended process is vibrating this transcendental sound, *om*, and leaving this body. Anyone who is able to quit this material body while uttering the transcendental sound *om*, with full consciousness of the Supreme Lord, is sure to be transferred to the spiritual world.

But those who are not personalists cannot enter into the spiritual planets. They remain outside. Just like the sunshine and the sun planet. The sunshine is not different from the sun disk. But still the sunshine is not the sun disk. Similarly, those impersonalists who are transferred to the spiritual world remain in the effulgence of the Supreme Lord, which is called the *brahmajyoti*. Those who are not personalists are placed into the *brahmajyoti* as one of the minute particles.

We are minute particles, spiritual sparks, and the *brahmajyoti* is full of such spiritual sparks. So you become one of the spiritual sparks. That is, you merge into the spiritual existence. You keep your individuality, but because you don't want any personal form, you are held there in the impersonal *brahmajyoti*. Just as the sunshine is small molecules, shining molecules—those who are scientists know—similarly, we are tiny particles smaller than an atom. Our magnitude is one ten-thousandth of the tip of a hair. So that small particle remains in the *brahmajyoti*.

The difficulty is that, as a living entity, I want enjoyment. Because I am not only simply existing. I have got bliss. I am composed of three spiritual qualities: *sac-cid-ānanda*. I am eternal, and I am full of knowledge, and I am full of bliss. Those who enter into the impersonal effulgence of the Supreme Lord can remain eternally with full knowledge that they are now merged with Brahman, or the *brahmajyoti*. But they cannot have eternal bliss, because that part is wanting.

If you are confined in a room alone, you

may read a book or think some thought, but still you cannot remain alone all the time, for all the years of your life. That is not possible. You'll find some association, some recreation. That is our nature. Similarly, if we merge into the impersonal effulgence of the Supreme Lord, then there is a chance of falling down again to this material world. That is stated in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.2.32):

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

It's just like the astronauts who go higher and still higher—twenty-five thousand,

**We have been
acclimated to birth
and death. The
modern scientists are
proud of their
advancement, but
they have no solution
to any of these
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They cannot check
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or old age.**

or thirty thousand, or a hundred thousand miles up. But they have to come to rest on some planet. So coming to rest is required. In the impersonal form the rest is uncertain. Therefore, the *Bhāgavatam* says, *āruhya kṛcchreṇa paraṁ paraṁ tataḥ*. Even after so much endeavor, if the impersonalist gets into the spiritual world and remains in that impersonal form, the risk is *patanty adhaḥ*, that he comes down into material existence again. Why? *Anādrīta-yuṣmad-aṅghrayaḥ*: because he has neglected to serve the Supreme Lord with love and devotion.

So as long as we are here, we have to practice loving Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord. Then we can enter the spiritual planets. This is the training. If you are not trained in that way, then by impersonal endeavor you can enter into the spiritual kingdom, but there is the risk of falling down again. Because that loneliness will create some disturbance, and you'll try to have associa-

tion. And because you have no association with the Supreme Lord, you'll have to come back and associate with this material world.

So better that we know the nature of our constitutional position. Our constitutional position is that we want eternity, we want complete knowledge, and we want pleasure also. If we are kept alone, we cannot have pleasure. We'll feel uncomfortable, and for want of pleasure we'll accept any kind of material pleasure. That is the risk. But in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, we'll have full pleasure. The highest pleasure of this material world is sex life, and that is also perverted—so diseased. So even in the spiritual world, there is sex pleasure in Kṛṣṇa. But we should not think that this is something like sex life in the material world. No. But, *janmādy asya yataḥ*: unless that sex life is there, it cannot be reflected here. It is simply a perverted reflection. The actual life is there, in Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is full of pleasure.

So the best thing is to train ourselves in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Then it will be possible in this life at the time of death to transfer ourselves into the spiritual world and enter into the Kṛṣṇaloka, or the Kṛṣṇa planet, and enjoy with Kṛṣṇa.

*cintāmaṇi-prakara-sadmasu kalpa-vṛkṣa-
lakṣāvṛteṣu surabhīr abhipālayantam
lakṣmī-sahasra-śata-sambhrama-sevya-mānariṇ
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

These are the descriptions of Kṛṣṇaloka. *Cintāmaṇi-prakara-sadmasu*: the houses are made of touchstone. Perhaps you know touchstone. It's a small particle. If it is touched to an iron beam, the iron will at once become gold. Of course, none of you has seen this touchstone, but there is such a thing. So all the buildings there are touchstone. *Cintāmaṇi-prakara-sadmasu*. *Kalpa-vṛkṣa*: the trees are desire trees. Whatever you like, you can get. Here from mango trees you get only mangoes, and from apple trees you get apples. But there, from any tree, anything you like you can have. These are some of the descriptions of the Kṛṣṇaloka.

So the best thing is not to try elevating ourselves to the other material planets, because on any material planet you enter, you find the same principles of miserable life. We are accustomed to them. We have been acclimated to birth and death. We don't care. The modern scientists are very proud of their advancement, but they have no solution to any of these unpleasant things. They cannot make anything that will check death or disease or old age. That is not possible. You can manufacture something that will accelerate death, but you cannot manufacture anything that will stop death. That is not in your power.

(continued on page 28)



9.16

Dhruva

Science

FOCUS ON SPIRITUAL SCIENCE

The experimenter himself takes the place of test tubes and microscopes
in the scientific search for the Absolute Truth.

by SADĀPUTA DĀSA

This address was given at a symposium sponsored by the American Hindu Mission at the Sheraton Crossgate in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, in October 1983.

Today the tendency is widespread among people all over the world to think that religion means nothing but sentiment and blind faith. In the past, people would turn to religion to find real knowledge and real guidance for their lives. But the development of modern science has led people to think that religion is outmoded and that religious writings are merely some old scriptures representing the views of people from the medieval period who might have had some interesting insights into life but who really didn't have true knowledge. Nowadays, people think science is the source of true knowledge. So what I would like to do is show that *bhakti-yoga*, the systematic practice

More than meets the eye. With the aid of the electron microscope (and other scientific instruments and procedures), scientists have charted the invisible world of atoms, electrons, electromagnetic fields, and so on. Their discoveries provide us with knowledge that transforms our vision of the physical world around us. But do such discoveries rule out a nonphysical (spiritual) existence? By the systematic procedures of *bhakti-yoga* we can make a scientific discovery of our spiritual self—the effulgent soul dwelling in the heart.

of devotional service to God, is a science and should be considered scientific.

Modern science has two primary features: theories and a systematic experimental approach for proving the theories. For example, if you look at the science of chemistry, you'll find an extensive technical literature describing such things as atoms, electrons, electromagnetic fields, spin, valence, and so forth. These are all theoretical concepts. But these concepts don't simply exist in a vacuum. You also have a set of experiments that will show you the relevance of the theoretical concepts. In other words, by using the concepts and the experiments you can obtain verifiable knowledge.

An important aspect of science, therefore, is that anyone should be able to obtain predictable results by correctly performing the experiments. And it is because science can consistently deliver such practical results that it has become so prominent in the world today.

The truly significant contributions of modern science have come in the realm of physics and chemistry; everything else more or less rests on that structure. And physics and chemistry are devoted entirely to the study of inanimate matter. Of course, these studies have been very successful. We have the theory of the atom, the theory of the electron, and so on. But unfortunately, our natural human tendency

is to assume that if something is successful, it must be perfect and universal. Let's look at some implications of this assumption.

Physics and chemistry describe the world in terms of electrons, protons, electrical fields, and various other such phenomena. If you think this system of ideas is universal, you'll conclude that nothing *but* electrons, protons, electrical fields, and so on exist. Your next conclusion will be that life itself is but matter and that life has arisen by nothing more than the interactions of atoms, according to the laws and theories of physics.

These conclusions are unscientific extrapolations of modern scientific findings. The worst result of such conclusions is that they rule out any genuine religion. If we are nothing but electrons, atoms, and so forth, operating according to impersonal physical laws, what is the question of a spiritual dimension to life or of any sort of spiritual attainment? If I am simply a combination of electrons and protons, what is the question of God realization? What kind of God realization can electrons and protons have? Thus modern science's unfortunate, unscientific conclusion that life comes from matter has led to widespread irreligion. It has actually led to the abandonment of the idea that religion has any real significance.

Here I would like to point out that the ancient system of *bhakti-yoga* is a spiritual

system that is actually scientific. Of course, nowadays people generally think only new ideas are really of value and old ideas must be bad simply because they're old. That is the spirit of the times—but it is incorrect. The scientific system of *bhakti-yoga* actually provides a much more complete picture of reality than does the system of modern physics.

As I said, a scientific system consists of theory along with experimental practice; so I will first outline the theoretical side of *bhakti-yoga*. Books such as the *Bhagavad-gītā* and the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, as well as other Vedic scriptures, outline the theoretical basis for the world view of *bhakti-yoga*. Two main theoretical principles of this world view are extremely significant. The first is that each person is an eternal spiritual entity, a conscious living being, or self, within the body. (In Sanskrit this spiritual entity is called the *jīvātmā*.)

In modern science, on the other hand, we have the idea that a person *is* the bodily machine, and that's it. In other words, the body is a biochemical mechanism, and if one understands all the chemistry of that mechanism, one has understood everything about the person. That's the guiding principle of modern science.

The *Bhagavad-gītā*, of course, agrees that the body is a machine. The *Gītā* describes the human body as a mechanism (*yantra*) constructed from matter (*māyā*). But the *Bhagavad-gītā* also states that there is a completely nonmechanistic entity—the *jīvātmā*, or spirit soul—who dwells within the bodily mechanism and who is the conscious perceiver. According to the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the bodily machine is never actually alive; it is an insentient mechanism. The soul within the body is the conscious perceiver, the life principle, the one who animates the body.

Since no experiment in modern science is sufficiently sensitive to give any direct evidence of the soul, most scientists dismiss this concept. And people in general follow the scientists. Most people today accept that life is just chemistry because they have a general distrust of old systems of thought and because the scientists have never found any direct evidence of the soul. Certainly no chemical experiment is going to give you any evidence for the existence of the soul. Nor will an electron microscope ever show you the soul. The magnifying power is insufficient, assuming even that the soul interacts with electrons, which is highly doubtful.

We should, however, at least recognize that the techniques of physics and chemistry do not rule out the possibility of a spiritual entity within the body. This understanding is very important, because sometimes a negative scientific finding will block our intellectual or spiritual prog-

ress. People tend to think, "Well, the matter is settled. There's no soul in the body; we might as well forget about that." But the matter is far from settled. Again, we should fully realize that no experiment within the corpus of modern physical science rules out the existence of the soul within the body.

The second important principle of the theoretical system of *bhakti-yoga* is that behind the material universe is a supremely intelligent being. This is a traditional idea of many religions, but *bhakti-yoga*, as we shall see, provides a systematic method of knowing this Supreme Being.

This principle of a Supreme Being is, of course, antithetical to modern science.

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Science as it exists today—that is, modern physical science—has tended to progressively exclude the idea of God. At the Darwin Centennial in 1959, Julian Huxley said that Darwin's theory of evolution has excluded the idea of God from all rational discussion.

Unfortunately, modern science, contrary to many statements you will hear, is not fully objective. Objectivity is spoken of as an important trait for a scientist to have, yet there's a certain tendentious character to the pronouncements of some prominent scientists who seem quite eager to eliminate God from the picture. In fact, science has become a tool of the philosophy of materialism. Because modern science has enjoyed its greatest success in the sphere of applied technology and the advancement of materialistic culture, the materialists have said, "Look. Just see what success you can have by concentrating on matter and excluding these old reli-

gious ideas." So materialists have used science to support their materialistic world view, although science per se doesn't support such a world view.

Nevertheless, scientists all over the world are trying to stamp out religion on the basis of scientific findings, and the Darwinian theory of evolution is one of the main tools. The idea behind the theory of evolution is that we don't need to invoke a supremely intelligent creator to explain the phenomenon of life. Darwin's theory of evolution maintains that life has come about purely by physical processes; it's simply a matter of electrons and protons interacting with one another and gradually coming together to form more and more complicated forms, until finally—here we are, thinking about the whole thing. I don't have time to discuss this theory in detail, but I will say that it is a prime example of a nonscientific addition to the body of scientific knowledge. No one has ever explained how atoms can come together to form human beings—or even bacteria, for that matter. Darwinian evolution is completely empty speculation.

So, the element of a supremely intelligent creator is another fundamental principle of *bhakti-yoga*. But there is even more than this. The *Bhagavad-gītā* teaches that this superintelligent being, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is all-pervading, situated in the heart of everyone as the Supersoul (*Paramātmā*). What this means, then, is that we are not separated from God. Some traditional religious doctrines say that God exists, that He created everything, but that He is extremely far away. The *bhakti-yoga* system, however, teaches that God is immediately accessible to us and is, in fact, providing the intelligence by which we direct our day-to-day activities.

An interesting illustration of this fact is the phenomenon of inspiration. Many prominent artists and scientists have recognized that it wasn't by their own power or intelligence that they were able to make their great discoveries. Karl Gauss, a prominent mathematician of the nineteenth century, in describing how he solved a certain extremely difficult mathematical problem, says: "I succeeded not on account of my painful efforts but by the grace of God. Like a sudden flash of lightning, the riddle happened to be solved. I myself cannot say what connected what I previously knew with what made my success possible."

In other words, Gauss admits that the answer to his problem was just given to him; all of a sudden it just appeared in his consciousness, and he knew the answer. And he gave the credit to God. He realized that the information was imparted to him from a higher intelligence.

Many other people have recognized this phenomenon, and it's an essential prin-

ciple of *bhakti-yoga*—that God is directly relating with us, even at this very moment. In our day-to-day lives, we tend not to think about God, except perhaps theoretically. But *bhakti-yoga* teaches that God is very much present always.

So, the existence of the soul and a supremely intelligent, immanent being are two fundamental principles of the system of *bhakti-yoga*. And, as with the physical sciences, certain experimental procedures can confirm these theoretical principles.

In *bhakti-yoga*, the basic experimental procedures lead to realized knowledge of God. This is possible because we are all spiritual entities. If we were just material systems made of electrons, protons, and so on, God realization would be out of the question. After all, what can electrons and protons realize about a supreme spiritual being? But because our nature is inherently spiritual, in principle we can have knowledge of God, who is entirely spiritual. It's a question of one spiritual entity obtaining knowledge of another.

Bhakti-yoga consists of procedures specifically designed to awaken our direct spiritual perception of God, and in many ways these procedures are analogous to those you would find in, say, the science of physics. For example, in the Millikin oil-drop experiment, which measures the

charge on an electron, one first of all has to adjust the conditions of the experiment very carefully. There can't be any vibration running through the room. Then one has to precisely follow each step to accurately measure the electron's charge.

Likewise, in *bhakti-yoga* one must follow certain regulative principles—no eating of meat or taking of intoxicants, for example—and also perform certain procedures, such as chanting the name of God for a certain period each day. Then one can get realized knowledge of the object of study. In a physics experiment, the object of study is some inanimate object or entity, such as an electron. But in *bhakti-yoga* the object of study is the perceiver himself, the *jīvātmā*, and ultimately the Supreme Soul, the *Paramātmā* dwelling in the heart. So by practicing *bhakti-yoga* one can come to perceive the soul and

Now superficially, devotional service may seem merely a material activity that one performs with his various bodily senses. But if we look at devotional service from a theoretical perspective, we can understand what happens when someone begins to serve God. The Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, wants very much to reestablish His relationship with the individual spiritual souls. They, however, know nothing of this relationship because they're covered by the

illusion generated from the material energy. Kṛṣṇa has therefore arranged things so that if a spirit soul, working through proper channels, serves Him, then Kṛṣṇa, acting through the devotee's heart, will reveal spiritual knowledge to that person. There is a reciprocation.

By referring to the theoretical tenets of *bhakti-yoga*, we can understand how this reciprocation takes place, at least in principle; whereas by using mere material concepts, such as those in physics or chemistry, we couldn't begin to understand.

So, there is a large and consistent theoretical basis to *bhakti-yoga*, and if one carefully follows the devotional process, these theoretical statements are confirmed. The process works. I'll read a verse from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* illustrating this point. This is the seventh verse of Chapter Two, First Canto: "By rendering devotional service to the Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, one immediately acquires both causeless knowledge and detachment from the world." Now, this is ample evidence that one who practices devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa acquires causeless knowledge and detachment. If you follow the procedures of *bhakti-yoga* properly, you get results.

What this amounts to, then, is that
(continued on page 28)

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Lord Kṛṣṇa's Cuisine

A Taste of Vedic Hospitality

With spiritual vision and a variety of these tasty snacks, you can make any guest feel welcome.

Text and photo by
VIŚĀKHĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

In every culture, there's an etiquette for receiving guests, but probably nowhere was this etiquette more developed than in the Vedic culture that flourished in India fifty centuries ago. An important part of Vedic reception was the cuisine, which featured a variety of delectable dishes. This month, we offer you a glimpse into this tradition of hospitality as well as some classic Vedic recipes that you can prepare for your next guest.

The Vedic tradition trained householders

to see all living beings as part and parcel of the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa. Thus, Vedic householders felt themselves responsible for giving shelter and comfort not only to their immediate family but to Kṛṣṇa's family—everyone. The Vedic injunction is that even if an enemy comes to your home, you should receive him so well he doesn't apprehend any danger. In fact, even a snake in your home should not go hungry! This training helped the householder become broad-minded, seeing every living being

in relation to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

The Vedic system enjoins that we receive a guest according to our means; if we're so poor that we cannot offer food, we can still satisfy a guest with a comfortable sitting place, fresh water, and pleasant words of welcome. If we're well-off, we can offer a lavish feast.

When Lord Kṛṣṇa was present on earth, He personally showed the example of hospitality. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* relates how Lord Kṛṣṇa welcomed His devotee Akrūra:

Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is very kind to His devotees, embraced Akrūra. Taking him by the hand, Kṛṣṇa brought him to His sitting room, where He offered him a very nice sitting place and water for washing his feet. He also worshiped him with suitable presentations of honey and other ingredients. When Akrūra was thus comfortably seated, Kṛṣṇa brought very palatable dishes, and Akrūra accepted them. When Akrūra finished eating, the Lord gave him spices as well as pulp of sandalwood, just to make him more pleased and comfortable. The Vedic system of receiving a guest was thus completely observed by Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Although the India of Vedic days has gradually disappeared, a vestige of Vedic hospitality remains, and it was demonstrated in 1970 when Śrīla Prabhupāda toured India with twenty-five of his American and European disciples. These Western devotees, who for several years had tolerated the quizzical and sometimes hostile attitudes of their countrymen, got an unexpected taste of traditional Vedic hospitality. In Surat, for example, a city in Gujarat state on the west coast of India, crowds gathered to garland Śrīla Prabhupāda and his disciples when they chanted through the streets. Each day a different family would invite the group to their home. The Western disciples would have *kīrtana*, Śrīla Prabhupāda would speak about Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and then the hosts would serve a sumptuous feast of Kṛṣṇa *prasādam*.

Similarly, in Calcutta, Indore, Bombay, Gorakhpur, Madras, Delhi—everywhere the Western devotees went—they were well received.

According to the Vedic tradition, the host is greatly benefited by receiving saintly persons. The genuine saint does not go to someone's home to fill his empty stomach; nor does he go to complain, socialize, or gossip. A saintly person goes to a home to instruct the people there in spiritual life. And certainly this was why Śrīla Prabhupāda traveled with his disciples throughout India—just to remind Indians of their great spiritual heritage. The householders who welcome such visitors are benefited, and their home is sanctified. However, that home where saintly guests are not admitted or respected is condemned, for its

(Recipes by Yamunā-devī dāśī)

Crispy Deep-Fried Dāl (Dalmut)

Yield: 2 cups
Soaking time: 12–24 hours

1 cup split *chana dāl* or *moong dāl*
½ teaspoon fine popcorn salt or equivalent
fine sea salt
1 tablespoon baking soda
2½ cups ghee (clarified butter) or vegetable
oil for deep frying

1. Sort through the dry *dāl* beans and remove any foreign matter. Place the beans in a strainer and lower it into a large bowl of fresh water. Rub the grains between your palms. Change the water and repeat the washing 3 or 4 times or until the water is practically clear.

2. Fill a 1-quart bowl half full of cool water, add the *dāl* and baking soda, stir, loosely cover, and soak in a cool place for 12 hours. (If *moong dāl* is used, soak for 6 to 8 hours.)

3. Drain and rinse the *dāl*. Soak for an additional 12 hours (6 to 8 hours for *moong dāl*) in clean, fresh, cool water.

4. Drain and spread the *dāl* out on a wire screen or clean absorbent towel to dry for 2 to 3 hours. (Insufficient drying may result in an overly-crunchy finished product.)

5. Heat the ghee or oil in a suitable deep-frying vessel over a medium flame to about 375°F. Sprinkle in ½ cup of the *dāl* beans. They will sink to the bottom of the pan, and the hot oil or ghee will froth up the sides of the pan. After 2 to 3 minutes the frothing will subside, and the *dāl* will float to the surface. The frying is completed when the *dāl* is crispy and a light golden color. It should not be allowed to brown. Lift out all the *dāl* kernels with a fine-meshed strainer spoon and transfer to absorbent paper. Fry the remaining *dāl*, ½ cup at a time.

6. While still warm, sprinkle with fine-textured salt and toss to mix. When the *dāl* is cooled to room temperature, it may be stored in a well-sealed jar. Fried *dāl* will remain fresh for up to 3 weeks. After that, it gets stale. Refresh dry *dāl* by warming it in a preheated 250° oven for 5 to 7 minutes.

Deep-Fried Potato Straws, Cashews, Raisins, and Coconut (Guzerati Aloo Chidwa)

One afternoon in Indore, India, in the winter of 1970, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda was receiving offerings from a large gathering of villagers. This preparation was brought fresh and warm in a clean woven basket, along with a large basket of fresh green coconuts. All present thoroughly relished the refreshment, and Śrīla Prabhu-

pāda commented on how expertly it was assembled. He noted that this *chidwa* was one of his spiritual master's favorite afternoon refreshments. Here is that memorable specialty.

Yield: 10 servings

12 ounces baking potatoes (about two medium-sized potatoes)
3 cups ghee or vegetable or nut oil
3 fresh hot green chilis, halved, seeded, and sliced lengthwise into paper-thin strips
1 teaspoon cumin powder
¼ teaspoon cayenne or chili powder
½ teaspoon turmeric powder
1 teaspoon *garam masālā*
1 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon sugar or powdered rock candy
1½ tablespoons ghee or oil
½ cup raw cashew nuts (coarse bits or halved)
1 tablespoon fennel seeds
2 tablespoons sesame seeds



10 to 15 fresh or dried small sweet neem leaves
½ cup raisins or currants
½ cup dried ribbon-type coconut

1. Wash and peel the potatoes. Hold a potato lengthwise in your hand, place it at a slight angle on a hand shredder, and shred through the large holes to yield long, thin straws. Place the potato straws in a colander, rinse thoroughly under cold, running tap water, then soak in cold water for ten minutes. Shake the colander to drain off all of the excess water; thoroughly pat the potatoes dry between absorbent towels.

2. Over a high flame, heat the clarified butter or oil in a deep-walled frying pan or wok until the temperature reaches about 375°F. Drop in a *small* handful of potato straws and fry for about 2 minutes or until they are crisp and golden brown; remove with slotted spoon and drain on absorbent paper. When all of the potato straws are fried, drop in the green chilis and fry until they blister and turn golden brown; remove with a slotted spoon and

transfer to absorbent paper to drain.

3. Blend the powdered spices, salt, and sugar in a small bowl. Heat 1½ tablespoons of ghee or oil in a 7-inch frying pan over medium-low heat for about 1½ minutes. Add the cashews and fennel seeds; stir-fry for about 5 minutes. Drop in the sesame seeds and sweet neem leaves and continue to stir-fry the mixture until the nuts are golden brown; remove the pan from the heat and pour contents through a fine-meshed strainer resting over a bowl. Save the excess ghee or oil for further use.

4. Combine all of the ingredients in a large mixing bowl and gently toss to mix well. Serve fresh and warm or cool to room temperature; store in a well-sealed container at room temperature for up to 2 weeks.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's Puffed Rice and Nuts (Mourri-Kishmish-Kaju Chidwa)

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda gave his disciples the recipe for this simple snack in Indore, India, in 1970.

Yield: 6 servings

¼ cup ghee or vegetable oil
½ cup cashew nuts, halved or broken
½ cup shelled peanuts, halved or whole
1 fresh hot green chili, seeded and pureed or minced fine
1 teaspoon peeled fresh ginger root, minced fine
¼ cup raisins or currants
½ teaspoon turmeric powder
2 teaspoons coriander powder
¼ teaspoon mild asafetida powder
1 teaspoon fine popcorn salt or regular salt
1½ cups puffed rice
2 teaspoons granulated sugar or powdered rock candy

1. Heat 2 tablespoons ghee or oil in a 7-inch frying pan over a medium-low flame. Slowly fry cashews for about 7 to 10 minutes until golden brown. Remove with a slotted spoon and drain on absorbent paper. Prepare the raw peanuts in the same way.

2. Blend the powdered spices and salt in a small bowl.

3. Heat the remaining 2 tablespoons of ghee or oil in a 3- to 4-quart saucepan over a medium flame until a drop of water flicked in instantly sputters. Add the minced ginger and chilis and fry until browned; toss in the raisins, nuts, powdered spices, and salt. Immediately follow by pouring in the puffed rice. Stir-fry for 3 to 4 minutes, mixing the seasonings throughout the puffed rice.

4. Add the sugar and the ghee or oil remaining from the nuts. Toss and fry for a few more seconds. Offer to Kṛṣṇa and serve fresh and hot.

residents are unaware of the higher values of life. All of us should consider it a sacred duty and privilege to welcome guests, especially saintly guests.

If the company is expected, there's usually time to make piping hot savories, tan-

talizing sweetmeats, or an entire meal. But, for the unexpected guest, here are some nibblers you can prepare and keep on hand to serve between meals. These are deep-fried and salty foods that have a diverse range of textures and flavors. You

can store them in air-tight jars and eat them at room temperature, or warm them in the oven. Serve them with a cool drink, fresh cut fruit, or a sweet. They're ideal for offering to Lord Kṛṣṇa—and then to your guest.

THE VEDIC

Transcendental Comment

1984 REVISITED

by Suhotra Swami

Happy New Year! Thirty-six years ago George Orwell selected this year's date as the title of his novel of ominous social prophecy. In his vision, the nations of the world of 1984 would form three superstates, pitted against one another in constant war. Winston Smith, the main character of *1984*, is an official in the government of Oceania, and his duty is to revise recorded history so that it conforms to the political dogma of Big Brother, Oceania's all-powerful leader. Life is depicted as dreary, dull, joyless. Those who count for anything in society—the employees of the State—live under constant surveillance. A careless remark, a few sentences of despair hastily scribbled in a notebook can cost a citizen his sanity in the dungeons of the dreaded Thought Police. For the masses, those persons who are not members of the Party, the State demands less rigid conformity, if only because the masses have become little more than human robots, whose minds are devoid of the ability to think critically.

While Orwell's book is perhaps an accurate foretelling of the rise of totalitarian communist empires, another book, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, predicts a world more comparable to a modern Western technocracy.

God, for *Brave New World*, is science and technology, which extends its influence to all corners of life. Babies are mass-produced in test-tubes, and the children are raised in a tightly controlled but seductively benign environment. All state citizens are trained to fill slots in the complex social machinery, and any tendency in a child to rebel is met by systematic psychological manipulation. The "happiness" of the residents of the brave new world revolves around free sex (marriage has been abolished) and drugs (*soma* for depression, feelies for enhancing excitement). Persons unable to conform to the brave new world are considered savages. They are banished to reservations where they are granted "the right to be unhappy."

The stark prophecies of *1984* and *Brave New World* do not perfectly describe con-

temporary society, but noteworthy similarities are there, nonetheless. In London, for instance, there is a reservation of sorts in King's Row, where thousands of self-proclaimed savages have taken up a lifestyle characterized as "the new tribalism," with tribal names like "the Punks," "the Skinheads," "the Rockabillies," and so on. Similar tribes roam the streets of Paris, Berlin, New York, and San Francisco. Bedecked in their bizarre costumes, they idly gaze into an empty future, while society around them becomes more and more complex and depersonalized.

But perhaps for most of us, a blind op-



timist within smiles, "I'm looking forward to a happy 1984. I've got my own life to live. I can make my own choices. If I want to go to school, I can do that. If I want to get a job, I can do that, too. I can get stoned on cocaine. Or if I want to drop out—well, that's also my right. I'm free!"

Yet who among us can say that we have independently arrived at our personal definition of happiness? Happiness is defined for us by parents, friends, teachers, politicians, psychologists, scientists, and so on. A laboratory rat is free, too. He runs down an alleyway, turns left, then right, and has a choice of levers to push: one for food, one for drink, one for sex. But the rat may

also perish at any moment in the rubber-gloved hands of his big-brother scientist, who gazes down upon his little world from far above.

And far above us, in outer space, surveillance satellites, their unblinking electronic eyes able to read the license plates on our cars, look down upon the maze of our little world. Should they detect things a big brother in Washington or Moscow doesn't like, a signal might be relayed to a missile crew deep under the earth or to a submarine cruising beneath the sea. And in minutes, our world could burst into atomic flames.

Sure, it's frightening, perhaps more frightening than Orwell and Huxley imagined. And what's the solution? These authors—being materialists—didn't have one. Long before Orwell or Huxley, however, sages of ancient India predicted in their writings the ills that would afflict us in the present age. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, a treasure house of Vedic wisdom compiled five thousand years ago, refers to our time as Kali-yuga, the age of quarrel. The *Bhāgavatam* describes Kali-yuga as an "ocean of faults." But it also recommends deliverance from this ocean through the chanting of the holy names: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

The chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa is, quite simply, liberating. When one chants Hare Kṛṣṇa, he liberates his consciousness from its physical and mental coverings. He no longer identifies with the mortal designations of male or female, white or black, American or Russian, but he realizes he is an undying soul. By this knowledge he is freed from the cycle of birth and death.

No, Kṛṣṇa consciousness isn't pabulum for those too weak to face the world as it is. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person is the most uncompromising realist and has no false optimism about living in the material world—in 1984 or any other time. Nor does he retreat into listless despair. He knows he is not the body but is an eternal servant of the Supreme Lord. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person, out of natural compassion, is eager to work enthusiastically in this world to give Kṛṣṇa consciousness to others, and his only reward is that his serv-

OBSERVER

ary on the Issues of the Day

ice be accepted by Kṛṣṇa. Such a devotee is always satisfied, even in the most adverse circumstances.

The year 1984 has just begun, and already the prospects are as ominous as the predictions of Orwell and Huxley. A deliberate, or even accidental, push of a button could set the clock back a thousand years. Our cities, our machines, and our science could be consigned to a mass tomb. Then, standing in the lonely shadows of failure, we would be forced to face ourselves at last and to recognize ourselves for what we really are.

Or we could make it easy on ourselves and give up voluntarily the heavy burden of our false lordship by simply accepting the sublime wisdom of the sacred Vedic texts. This wisdom transcends the limitations of space and time, and it is known as Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It's as fresh and relevant now as ever. Modern man, whose great intelligence is stranded in a meaningless chaos of his own making, has great need of it.

WHO ART IN HEAVEN?

by Drutakarmā dāsa

In response to feminist pressure for a "nonsexist" rendering of the Bible, the National Council of Churches has changed the phrase "God our Father" to "God our Father [and Mother]."

But is God just a formless spiritual entity to which we can attach whatever labels we currently favor? Who is God? Is God masculine, feminine, both, neither? Does anybody really know?

Traditionally, Christians have favored a conception of God as a grey-bearded old man. But when this view is challenged, as is now happening, there's little scriptural evidence that can be marshalled in support of the conventional image of God. In other words, the Bible doesn't really reveal much about what God looks like.

Of course, all the difficulties about the identity of the creator could be very easily resolved if the actual form of God were ever to be revealed to humankind. Amazingly enough, this has already taken place,

most recently five thousand years ago, when the Supreme Lord appeared in His original spiritual form in India. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the Sanskrit classic which records the history of the Lord's incarnation, states, "Dear Lord, if You did not appear in Your eternal transcendental form, full of bliss and knowledge . . . then all people would simply speculate about You according to their respective modes of material nature." That, of course, is exactly what is happening now.

Śrīla Prabhupāda comments, "The appearance of Kṛṣṇa is the answer to all imaginative iconography of the Supreme



Personality of Godhead." (*Kṛṣṇa* is the chief Sanskrit name of God, who is also known as Allah, Jehovah, and so on.) The form of the Lord, as personally seen by great saints and sages present at that time, is completely described in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and other Vedic scriptures. Lord Kṛṣṇa appears as an eternally fresh youth, enjoying transcendental pastimes with His associates in the spiritual world, while at the same time, through His remote expansions, He effortlessly creates, maintains, and destroys millions of universes.

He? Before the feminists raise their voices in protest, it should be pointed out that Kṛṣṇa is not alone. He is eternally

accompanied by His feminine counterpart, Rādhārāṇī. In thousands of temples throughout India (and in ISKCON temples throughout the world), God is worshiped in the form of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. The Vedic scriptures reveal that Rādhā is Kṛṣṇa's personified pleasure energy.

Śrīla Prabhupāda explains, "It is not that Rādhārāṇī is separate from Kṛṣṇa. Rādhārāṇī is also Kṛṣṇa, for there is no difference between the energy and the energetic. Without energy, there is no meaning to the energetic, and without the energetic, there is no energy. Similarly, without Rādhā there is no meaning to Kṛṣṇa, and without Kṛṣṇa there is no meaning to Rādhā. Because of this, the Vaiṣṇava philosophy first of all pays obeisances to and worships the internal pleasure potency of the Lord. Thus the Lord and His potency are always referred to as Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa—the potency always comes first."

Another name for Rādhārāṇī is *Harā*. In the vocative case this becomes *Hare*. So the familiar Hare Kṛṣṇa chant is an address to Rādhārāṇī, the personified pleasure potency of Kṛṣṇa, along with Kṛṣṇa Himself.

So here's a suggestion for the more thoughtful feminists—Why go through all the trouble of rewriting the Bible when the Vedic scriptures already contain the perfect explanation of God's masculine and feminine aspects? And if there's need of a slogan, the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* will serve the purpose more than adequately.

NEXT-LIFE INSURANCE

by Mathureśa dāsa

With the economic growth of the twentieth century, insurance sales have blossomed as never before. Americans alone now pay \$200 billion a year in premiums—"the gross national premium," as it is sometimes called. Only the banking industry handles more of America's wealth. There are 400 million life insurance policies in force in the United States, which means that many Americans

(continued on page 30)

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

On Real Intelligence

The following conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and some of his disciples took place in May 1975, during an early-morning walk in Melbourne.

Devotee: Śrīla Prabhupāda, I read in one of your books that one way we can learn about God is through a process called *anumāna*. What is that?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Logic. For example, as soon as we see a machine, we know there must be an operator of that machine. This is logic. You cannot expect the machine to work without an operator. Similarly, this material nature is a machine and the operator is God. Even though you cannot see God, by logic you can know He exists. This is human reasoning.

But the atheistic scientists will not accept this simple argument. Even an ordinary typewriter cannot work automatically; it requires an operator to push the buttons. Then how can this big machine of the material nature work without an operator? What is this nonsense!

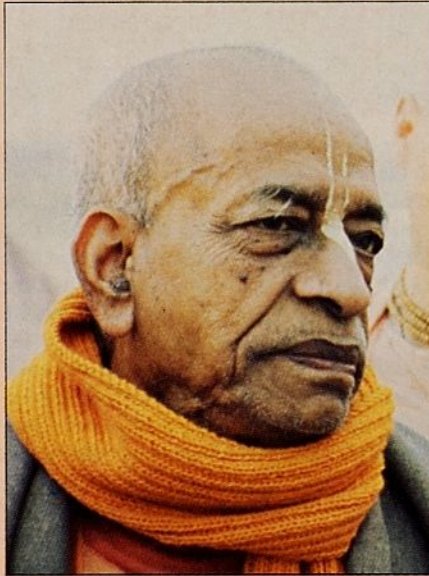
The scientists say, "There is no God. Everything is working by the forces of nature." But what is nature? Nature is simply a machine, just as our bodies are machines. The operator of the bodily machine is the soul, and the guide is the Supersoul, Lord Kṛṣṇa in the heart. As soon as the soul goes away from the body, the bodily machine stops working. And the same is true for the machine of the material nature. It does not work without an operator. But the so-called scientists have no common sense to understand this logic. Therefore they are rascals.

Devotee: Who is the greater rascal, the material scientist or the ordinary atheist?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Anyone who does not accept God is a rascal. That is Kṛṣṇa's statement in the *Bhagavad-gītā* [7.15]: *na mān duṣkṛtino mūḍhāḥ prapadyante narādhamāḥ*. Who doesn't recognize God? Those who are sinful rascals, the lowest of mankind.

Now, someone may say, "No, the scientists are so educated." But that education is false education. Real education means to understand God. *Vedais ca sarvair aham eva vedyah*.

If one does not understand God, his education is useless. It has no meaning. When someone claims to be educated, we should simply ask, "Will that education save him from death?" If not, then what is the value of his education? Our real problems are



birth, old age, disease, and death. Can materialistic education solve these problems? Can the scientists stop anyone from growing old? Nobody wants to become old; everyone wants to keep himself youthful. But no scientist can stop old age. Then what is the value of the scientists' education? We acquire an education so we can solve our problems. The scientists are solving only temporary problems, but they cannot solve the ultimate problems. Therefore their education is useless. *Śrama eva hi kevalam*: it is simply hard labor for nothing. That's all.

Devotee: The leaders seem to have adopted a stop-gap policy. They keep the people in ignorance and fool them into believing progress is being made, when actually it's not. In this way the leaders can maintain their position.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, the blind leading the blind: *andhā yathāndhair upanīyamānāḥ*. The leaders tell the people that by material adjustments they will be happy. But that is not possible. Still, the people are such fools that they do not think, "Where is the solution to my problems? You have given me the chance to live in a skyscraper building, but is that the solution to the problems of birth, old age, disease, and death?" No one has brain enough to ask this question.

Everyone is trying to save himself from disease, from old age, from death. Why do people go to a physician as soon as there is some disease?

Devotee: They want to get well.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. And ultimately,


they do not want to die. But even if you have the best physician, death will eventually come in any case. Then where is the solution to the problem of death?

Still, people accept science as the solution to all their problems. Therefore the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* [2.3.19] says, *śva-vid-varāhoṣṭra-kharaiḥ samstutaḥ puruṣaḥ paśuḥ*. "Those who are like dogs, hogs, camels, and asses praise leaders who are also like animals." Both the leaders and their followers are animals; none of them is a human being. The big animal bluffs, "I have done so much for you, and I promise to do more. Give me your vote." And the small animal thinks, "Yes, he has done so much for me. Let me vote for him." This is going on. *Andhā yathāndhair*: one blind man is leading other blind men. What is the use? If I am blind and I say, "Come follow me and I shall take you to Melbourne," as soon as we go in the road, I will be killed and you will also be killed. That's all.

Devotee: Śrīla Prabhupāda, sometimes when we tell people this life is full of miseries, they say, "What do you mean? There are high points and low points, but basically I am a happy person."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is their foolishness. They cannot distinguish misery from happiness. They are being kicked by material nature, the agent of Kṛṣṇa. Because they are desiring in various ways to become controllers or enjoyers, they are being offered various types of bodies and suffering repeated birth and death. But because people have no sense, they think this material life is pleasurable.

Now, as Australians, you may have so many nice facilities, but you cannot enjoy them perpetually. By the force of nature you will have to change your position. Today you may be living in a nice apartment, and tomorrow you may become a rat in that apartment. It is not in your power to change the strong laws of nature. You must change your position.

Actually, everyone is being controlled by the material nature at every moment. So an intelligent person asks how to get out of this material nature, how to end the suffering of repeated birth, old age, disease, and death. And Kṛṣṇa explains how to end this suffering in *Bhagavad-gītā* [7.14]: *mām eva ye prapadyante mām etān taranti te*. "As soon as the rascal surrenders to Me, he is out of the control of My material nature." Surrendering to Kṛṣṇa is real intelligence. 

ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the “cream of the Vedic literatures” of ancient India. Five thousand years ago the great sage Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa composed this *purāṇa*, or history, to explain the essence of spiritual knowledge. The original Sanskrit text is presented here with transliteration, word meanings, translation, and purports by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Third Canto: “The Status Quo”

CHAPTER THREE

The Lord’s Pastimes Out of Vṛndāvana

In this installment of our continuing presentation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Uddhava, an intimate associate of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s, summarizes the Lord’s activities following the Battle of Kurukṣetra.

TEXT 14

क्रियान् भुवोऽयं क्षपितोरुभारो
यद्रोणभीष्मार्जुनभीममूलैः ।
अष्टादशक्षौहिणिको मदंशै-
रास्ते बलं दुर्विषहं यदुनाम् ॥१४॥

kiyān bhuvō ’yaṁ kṣapitoru-bhāro
yad roṇa-bhīṣmārjuna-bhīma-mūlaiḥ
aṣṭādaśākṣauhiṇiko mad-āṁśaiḥ
āste balaṁ durviṣahaṁ yadūnām

kiyān—what is this; bhuvah—of the earth; ayam—this; kṣapita—abated; uru—very great; bhārah—burden; yat—which; droṇa—Droṇa; bhīṣma—Bhīṣma; arjuna—Arjuna; bhīma—Bhīma; mūlaiḥ—with the help; aṣṭādaśa—eighteen; akṣauhiṇikaḥ—phalanxes of military strength (vide Bhāg. 1.16.34); mat-āṁśaiḥ—with My descendants; āste—are still there; balaṁ—great strength; durviṣaham—unbearable; yadūnām—of the Yadu dynasty.

TRANSLATION

[After the end of the Battle of Kurukṣetra, the Lord said:] The abatement of the earth’s great burden, eighteen akṣauhiṇis, has now been effected with the help of Droṇa, Bhīṣma, Arjuna and Bhīma. But what is this? There is still the great strength of the Yadu dynasty, born of Myself, which may be a more unbearable burden.

PURPORT

It is a wrong theory that due to an increase in population the world becomes overburdened and therefore there are wars and other annihilating processes. The earth is never overburdened. The heaviest mountains and oceans on the face of the earth hold more living entities than there are human beings, and they are not overburdened. If a census were taken of all the living beings on the surface of the earth, certainly it would be found that the number of humans is not even five percent of the total number of living beings. If the birthrate of human beings is increasing, then the birthrate of other living beings is increasing proportionately. The birthrate of lower animals—beasts, aquatics, birds, etc.—is far greater than that of human beings. There is an adequate arrangement for food for all the living beings all over the earth by the order of the Supreme Lord, and He can arrange more and more if there is actually a

disproportionate increase of living beings.

Therefore, there is no question of an increase in population causing a burden. The earth became overburdened due to *dharma-glāni*, or irregular discharge of the Lord’s desire. The Lord appeared on the earth to curb the increase in miscreants, and not the increase in population, as is wrongly put forward by the mundane economist. When Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared, there had been a sufficient increase in miscreants who had violated the desire of the Lord. The material creation is meant for fulfilling the desire of the Lord, and His desire is that the conditioned souls who are unfit to enter into the kingdom of God have a chance to improve their conditions for entering. The entire process of cosmic arrangement is intended just to give a chance to the conditioned souls to enter the kingdom of God, and there is an adequate arrangement for their maintenance by the nature of the Lord.

Therefore, although there may be a great increase in population on the surface of the earth, if the people are exactly in line with God consciousness and are not miscreants, such a burden on the earth is a source of pleasure for her. There are two kinds of burdens. There is the burden of the beast and the burden of love. The burden of the beast is unbearable, but the burden of love is a source of pleasure. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī describes the burden of love very practically. He says that the burden of the husband on the young wife, the burden of the child on the lap of the mother, and the burden of wealth on the businessman, although actually burdens from the viewpoint of heaviness, are sources of pleasure, and in the absence of such burdensome objects, one may feel the burden of separation, which is heavier to bear than the actual burden of love. When Lord Kṛṣṇa referred to the burden of the Yadu dynasty on the earth, He referred to something different than the burden of the beast. The large numbers of family members born of Lord Kṛṣṇa counted to some millions and were certainly a great increase in the population of the earth, but because all of them were expansions of the Lord Himself by His transcendental plenary expansions, they were a source of great pleasure for the earth. When the Lord referred to them in connection with the burden on the earth, He had in mind their imminent disappearance from the earth. All the members of the family of Lord Kṛṣṇa were incarnations of different demigods, and they were to disappear from the surface of the earth along with the Lord. When He referred to the unbearable heaviness on the earth in connection with the Yadu dynasty, He was referring to the burden of their separation. Śrīla Jiva Gosvāmī confirms this inference.

TEXT 15

मिथो यदैषां भविता विवादो
मध्वामदाताप्रविलोचनानाम् ।
नैषां वधोपाय इयानतोऽन्यो
मय्युद्यतेऽन्तर्दधते स्वयं स्म ॥१५॥

mitho yadaiṣāṁ bhavitā vivādo
madhv-āmadātāpra-vilocanānām
naiṣāṁ vadhopāya iyān ato ’nyo
mayy udyate ’ntardadhate svayaṁ sma

mīṭhaḥ—one another; *yadā*—when; *eṣām*—of them; *bhavitā*—will take place; *vivādaḥ*—quarrel; *madhu-āmada*—intoxication by drinking; *ātāmra-vilocanānām*—of their eyes being copper-red; *na*—not; *eṣām*—of them; *vadha-upāyah*—means of disappearance; *iyān*—like this; *ataḥ*—besides this; *anyaḥ*—alternative; *mayi*—on My; *udyate*—disappearance; *antaḥ-dadhate*—will disappear; *svayam*—themselves; *sma*—certainly.

TRANSLATION

When they quarrel among themselves, influenced by intoxication, with their eyes red like copper because of drinking [madhu], then only will they disappear; otherwise, it will not be possible. On My disappearance, this incident will take place.

PURPORT

The Lord and His associates appear and disappear by the will of the Lord. They are not subjected to the laws of material nature. No one was able to kill the family of the Lord, nor was there any possibility of their natural death by the laws of nature. The only means, therefore, for their disappearance was the make-show of a fight amongst themselves, as if brawling in intoxication due to drinking. That so-called fighting would also take place by the will of the Lord, otherwise there would be no cause for their fighting. Just as Arjuna was made to be illusioned by family affection and thus the *Bhagavad-gītā* was spoken, so the Yadu dynasty was made to be intoxicated by the will of the Lord, and nothing more. The devotees and associates of the Lord are completely surrendered souls. Thus they are transcendental instruments in the hands of the Lord and can be used in any way the Lord desires. The pure devotees also enjoy such pastimes of the Lord because they want to see Him happy. Devotees of the Lord never assert independent individuality; on the contrary, they utilize their individuality in pursuit of the desires of the Lord, and this cooperation of the devotees with the Lord makes a perfect scene of the Lord's pastimes.

TEXT 16

एवं सञ्चिन्त्य भगवान् स्वराज्ये स्थाप्य धर्मजम् ।
नन्दयामास सुहृदः साधूनां वर्त्म दर्शयन् ॥१६॥

evaṁ sañcintya bhagavān
sva-rājye sthāpya dharmajam
nandayām āsa suhṛdaḥ
sādhūnām vartma darśayan

evaṁ—thus; *sañcintya*—thinking within Himself; *bhagavān*—the Personality of Godhead; *sva-rājye*—in his own kingdom; *sthāpya*—installing; *dharmajam*—Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira; *nandayām āsa*—gladdened; *suhṛdaḥ*—the friends; *sādhūnām*—of the saints; *vartma*—the path; *darśayan*—by indicating.

TRANSLATION

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, thus thinking to Himself, established Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira in the position of supreme control of the world in order to show the ideal of administration on the path of piety.

TEXT 17

उत्तरायां धृतः पूरोर्वशः साञ्चभिमन्युना ।
स वै द्रौण्यस्त्रसंशुष्टः पुनर्भगवता धृतः ॥१७॥

uttarāyām dhṛtaḥ pūror
vaṁśaḥ sādhu-abhimanyunā
sa vai drauṇy-āstra-sampluṣṭaḥ
punar bhagavatā dhṛtaḥ

uttarāyām—unto Uttarā; *dhṛtaḥ*—conceived; *pūroḥ*—of Pūru; *vaṁśaḥ*—descendant; *sādhu-abhimanyunā*—by the hero Abhimanyu; *saḥ*—he; *vai*—certainly; *drauṇi-āstra*—by the weapon of Drauṇi, the son of Droṇa; *sampluṣṭaḥ*—being burnt; *punaḥ*—again, for the second time; *bhagavatā*—by the Personality of Godhead; *dhṛtaḥ*—was protected.

TRANSLATION

The embryo of Pūru's descendant begotten by the great hero Abhimanyu in the womb of Uttarā, his wife, was burnt by the weapon of the son of Droṇa, but later he was again protected by the Lord.

PURPORT

The embryonic body of Parikṣit which was in formation after Uttarā's pregnancy by Abhimanyu, the great hero, was burned by the *brahmāstra* of Aśvatthāmā, but a second body was given by the Lord within the womb, and thus the descendant of Pūru was saved. This incident is the direct proof that the body and the living entity, the spiritual spark, are different. When the living entity takes shelter in the womb of a woman through the injection of the semen of a man, there is an emulsification of the man's and woman's discharges, and thus a body is formed the size of a pea, gradually developing into a complete body. But if the developing embryo is destroyed in some way or other, the living entity has to take shelter in another body or in the womb of another woman. The particular living entity who was selected to be the descendant of Mahārāja Pūru, or the Pāṇḍavas, was not an ordinary living entity, and by the superior will of the Lord he was destined to be the successor to Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira. Therefore, when Aśvatthāmā destroyed the embryo of Mahārāja Parikṣit, the Lord, by His own internal potency, entered into the womb of Uttarā by His plenary portion just to give audience to the would-be Mahārāja Parikṣit, who was in great danger. By His appearance within the womb, the Lord encouraged the child and gave him complete protection in a new body by His omnipotency. By His power of omnipresence He was present both inside and outside of Uttarā and other members of the Pāṇḍava family.

TEXT 18

अयाजयद्रमसुतमश्वमेधैस्त्रिभिर्विष्टुः ।
सोऽपि क्षमामनुजै रक्षन् रेमे कृष्णमनुव्रतः ॥१८॥

ayājayat dharma-sutam
aśvamedhais tribhir vibhuḥ
so 'pi kṣmām anujai rakṣan
reme kṛṣṇam anuvrataḥ

ayājayat—made to perform; *dharma-sutam*—by the son of Dharma (Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira); *aśvamedhais*—by horse sacrifices; *tribhiḥ*—three; *vibhuḥ*—the Supreme Lord; *saḥ*—Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira; *api*—also; *kṣmām*—the earth; *anujaiḥ*—assisted by his younger brothers; *rakṣan*—protecting; *reme*—enjoyed; *kṛṣṇam*—Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead; *anuvrataḥ*—constant follower.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Lord induced the son of Dharma to perform three horse sacrifices, and Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, constantly following Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, protected and enjoyed the earth, assisted by his younger brothers.

PURPORT

Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira was the ideal monarchical representative on the earth because he was a constant follower of the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. As stated in the *Vedas (Īsopaniṣad)*, the Lord is the proprietor of the entire manifested cosmic creation, which presents a chance for the conditioned souls to revive their eternal relationship with the Lord and thus go back to Godhead, back home. The whole system of the material world is arranged with that program and plan. Anyone who violates the plan is

punished by the law of nature, which is acting by the direction of the Supreme Lord. Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira was installed on the throne of the earth as a representative of the Lord. The king is always expected to be the representative of the Lord. Perfect monarchy necessitates representation of the supreme will of the Lord, and Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira was the ideal monarch on this supreme principle. Both the King and the subjects were happy in the discharge of worldly duties, and thus protection of the citizens and enjoyment of natural life, with full cooperation of material nature, followed in the reign of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira and his worthy descendants like Mahārāja Parikṣit.

TEXT 19

भगवानपि विश्वात्मा लोकवेदपथानुगः ।
कामान् सिषेवे द्वार्वत्यामसक्तः सांख्यमास्थितः ॥१९॥

*bhagavān api viśvātmā
loka-veda-pathānugaḥ
kāmaṅ siṣeve dvārvatyām
asaktaḥ sāṅkhyam āsthitaḥ*

bhagavān—the Personality of Godhead; *api*—also; *viśva-ātmā*—the Supersoul of the universe; *loka*—customary; *veda*—Vedic principles; *patha-anugaḥ*—follower of the path; *kāmān*—the necessities of life; *siṣeve*—enjoyed; *dvārvatyām*—in the city of Dvārakā; *asaktaḥ*—without being attached; *sāṅkhyam*—knowledge in Sāṅkhya philosophy; *āsthitaḥ*—being situated.

TRANSLATION

Simultaneously, the Personality of Godhead enjoyed life in the city of Dvārakā, strictly in conformity with the Vedic customs of society. He was situated in detachment and knowledge, as enunciated by the Sāṅkhya system of philosophy.

PURPORT

While Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira was the Emperor of the earth, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa was the King of Dvārakā and was known as Dvārakādhiṣā. Like other subordinate kings, He was under the regime of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira. Although Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the supreme emperor of the entire creation, while He was on this earth He never violated the principles of the Vedic injunctions because they are the guide for human life. Regulated human life according to the Vedic principles, which are based on the system of knowledge called Sāṅkhya philosophy, is the real way of enjoyment of the necessities of life. Without such knowledge, detachment and custom, the so-called human civilization is no more than an animal society of eat, drink, be merry and enjoy. The Lord was acting freely, as He willed, yet by His practical example He taught not to lead a life which goes against the principles of detachment and knowledge. Attainment of knowledge and detachment, as very elaborately discussed in Sāṅkhya philosophy, is the real perfection of life. Knowledge means to know that the mission of the human form of life is to end all the miseries of material existence and that in spite of having to fulfill the bodily necessities in a regulated way, one must be detached from such animal life. Fulfilling the demands of the body is animal life, and fulfilling the mission of spirit soul is the human mission.

TEXT 20

स्निग्धसितावलोकने वाचा पीयूषकल्पया ।
चरित्रेणानवद्येन श्रीनिकेतने चात्मना ॥२०॥

*snigdha-smitāvalokena
vācā pīyūṣa-kalpayā
caritrenānavadyena
śrī-niketena cātmanā*

snigdha—gentle; *smita-avalokena*—by a glance with a sweet smile; *vācā*—by words; *pīyūṣa-kalpayā*—compared to nectar; *caritrena*—by character; *anavadyena*—without flaw; *śrī*—fortune; *niketena*—residence; *ca*—and; *ātmanā*—by His transcendental body.

TRANSLATION

He was there in His transcendental body, the residence of the goddess of fortune, with His usual gentle and sweetly smiling face, His nectarean words and His flawless character.

PURPORT

In the previous verse it is described that Lord Kṛṣṇa, being situated in the truths of Sāṅkhya philosophy, is detached from all kinds of matter. In the present verse it is described that He is the residence of the goddess of fortune. These two things are not at all contradictory. Lord Kṛṣṇa is detached from the variegatedness of the inferior nature, but He is in eternal, blissful enjoyment of the spiritual nature, or His internal potency. One who has a poor fund of knowledge cannot understand this distinction between the external and internal potencies. In *Bhagavad-gītā*, the internal potency is described as the *parā prakṛti*. In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* also, the internal potency of Viṣṇu is described as *parā śakti*. The Lord is never detached from the association of *parā śakti*. This *parā śakti* and her manifestations are described in the *Brahma-saṁhita* (5.37) as *ānanda-cinmaya-rasa-pratibhāvitābhiḥ*. The Lord is eternally joyful and cognizant in the taste derived from such transcendental bliss. Negation of the variegatedness of the inferior energy does not necessitate negation of the positive transcendental bliss of the spiritual world. Therefore the Lord's gentleness, His smile, His character and everything related to Him are all transcendental. Such manifestations of the internal potency are the reality, of which the material shadow is only a temporary representation from which everyone with proper knowledge must be detached.

TEXT 21

इमं लोकममुं चैव रमयन् सुतरां यदून ।
रेमे क्षणदया दत्तक्षणस्त्रीक्षणसौहृदः ॥२१॥

*imam lokam amuṁ caiva
ramayan sutarām yadūn
reme kṣaṇadayā datta-
kṣaṇa-stri-kṣaṇa-sauhṛdah*

imam—this; *lokam*—earth; *amuṁ*—and the other worlds; *ca*—also; *eva*—certainly; *ramayan*—pleasing; *sutarām*—specifically; *yadūn*—the Yadus; *reme*—enjoyed; *kṣaṇadayā*—by night; *datta*—given by; *kṣaṇa*—leisure; *stri*—with women; *kṣaṇa*—conjugal love; *sauhṛdah*—friendship.

TRANSLATION

The Lord enjoyed His pastimes, both in this world and in other worlds [higher planets], specifically in the association of the Yadu dynasty. At leisure hours offered by night, He enjoyed the friendship of conjugal love with women.

PURPORT

The Lord enjoyed in this world with His pure devotees. Although He is the Personality of Godhead and is transcendental to all material attachment, He nevertheless exhibited much attachment for His pure devotees on the earth, as well as for the demigods who engage in His service in the heavenly planets as powerful delegated directors in the management of all material activities. He displayed special attachment for His family members, the Yadus, as well as for His sixteen thousand wives, who had the opportunity to meet Him in the leisure hours of night. All these attachments of the Lord are manifestations of His internal potency, of which the external potency is only a shadow representation. In the

Skanda Purāna, Prabhāsa-khaṇḍa, in the topics between Lord Śiva and Gaurī, there is confirmation of His internal potential manifestations. There is mention of the Lord's meeting with sixteen thousand cowherd damsels although He is the Haṁsa (transcendental) Supersoul and maintainer of all living entities. The sixteen thousand cowherd damsels are a display of sixteen varieties of internal potencies. This will be more elaborately explained in the Tenth Canto. It is said there that Lord Kṛṣṇa is just like the moon and the internal potential damsels are like the stars around the moon.

TEXT 22

तस्यैवं रममाणस्य संवत्सरगणान् बहून् ।
गृहमेधेषु योगेषु विरागः समाजयत ॥२२॥

*tasyaivaṁ ramamāṇasya
saṁvatsara-gaṇān bahūn
grhamedheṣu yogeṣu
virāgaḥ samajāyata*

tasya—His; *evam*—thus; *ramamāṇasya*—enjoying; *saṁvatsara*—years; *gaṇān*—many; *bahūn*—great many; *grhamedheṣu*—in household life; *yogeṣu*—in sex life; *virāgaḥ*—detachment; *samajāyata*—awakened.

TRANSLATION

The Lord was thus engaged in household life for many, many years, but at last His detachment from ephemeral sex life was fully manifested.

PURPORT

Even though the Lord is never attached to any kind of material sex life, as the universal teacher He remained a householder for many, many years, just to teach others how one should live in householder life. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura explains that the word *samajāyata* means “fully exhibited.” In all His activities while present on the earth, the Lord exhibited detachment. This was fully displayed when He wanted to teach by example that one should not remain attached to household life for all the days of one's life. One should naturally develop detachment as a matter of course. The Lord's detachment from household life does not indicate detachment from His eternal associates, the transcendental cowherd damsels. But the Lord desired to end His so-called attachment to the three modes of material nature. He can never be detached from the service of His transcendental associates like Rukmiṇī and other goddesses of fortune, as described in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.29): *lakṣmī-sahasra-śata-sambhrama-sevya-mānam*.

TEXT 23

दैवाधीनेषु कामेषु दैवाधीनः स्वयं पुमान् ।
को विश्रम्भेत योगेन योगेश्वरमनुव्रतः ॥२३॥

*daivādhiṇeṣu kameṣu
daivādhiṇaḥ svayaṁ pumān
ko viśrambheta yogena
yogeśvaram anuvrataḥ*

daiva—supernatural; *adhīneṣu*—being controlled; *kameṣu*—in sense enjoyment; *daiva-adhiṇaḥ*—controlled by supernatural force; *svayaṁ*—himself; *pumān*—living entity; *kaḥ*—whoever; *viśrambheta*—can have faith in; *yogena*—by devotional service; *yogeśvaram*—the Supreme Lord; *anuvrataḥ*—serving.

TRANSLATION

Every living entity is controlled by a supernatural force, and thus his sense enjoyment is also under the control of that supernatural force. No one, therefore, can put his faith in Lord Kṛṣṇa's

transcendental sense activities but one who has become a devotee of the Lord by rendering devotional service.

PURPORT

As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*, no one can understand the transcendental birth and activities of the Lord. The same fact is herein corroborated: no one but one who is enlightened by the devotional service of the Lord can understand the difference between the Lord's activities and those of others, who are controlled by the supernatural force. The sense enjoyment of all animals, men and demigods within the purview of the material universe is controlled by the supernatural force called the *prakṛti*, or *daivi-māyā*. No one is independent in obtaining sense enjoyment, and everyone in this material world is after sense enjoyment. Persons who are themselves under the control of supernatural power cannot believe that Lord Kṛṣṇa is not under any control beyond Himself in the matter of sense enjoyment. They cannot understand that His senses are transcendental. In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* the Lord's senses are described as omnipotent; i.e., with any sense He can perform the activities of the other senses. One who has limited senses cannot believe that the Lord can eat by His transcendental power of hearing and can perform the act of sex life simply by seeing. The controlled living entity cannot even dream of such sense activities in his conditional life. But simply by the activities of *bhakti-yoga*, he can understand that the Lord and His activities are always transcendental. As the Lord says in *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.55), *bhaktiā mām abhijānāti yāvān yaś cāsmi tattvataḥ*: one cannot know even a fraction of the activities of the Lord if he is not a pure devotee of the Lord.

TEXT 24

पुर्यां कदाचित्क्रीडिर्द्विर्यदुभोजकुमारकैः ।
कोपिता मुनयः शेषुर्भगवन्मतकोविदाः ॥२४॥

*puryām kadācit kṛīḍadbhir
yadu-bhoja-kumārakaiḥ
kopitā munayaḥ śepur
bhagavan-mata-kovidāḥ*

puryām—in the city of Dvārakā; *kadācit*—once upon a time; *kṛīḍadbhiḥ*—by sporting activities; *yadu*—the descendants of Yadu; *bhoja*—the descendants of Bhoja; *kumārakaiḥ*—princes; *kopitāḥ*—became angry; *munayaḥ*—the great sages; *śepur*—cursed; *bhagavat*—the Personality of Godhead; *mata*—desire; *kovidāḥ*—cognizant.

TRANSLATION

Once upon a time, great sages were made angry by the sporting activities of the princely descendants of the Yadu and Bhoja dynasties, and thus, as desired by the Lord, the sages cursed them.

PURPORT

The associates of the Lord who were playing the part of princely descendants of the Yadu and Bhoja dynasties were not ordinary living entities. It is not possible that they could offend any saintly man or sage, nor could the sages, who were all pure devotees of the Lord, be influenced to anger by any of the sporting activities of the princes born in the holy dynasties of Yadu or Bhoja, wherein the Lord Himself appeared as a descendant. The cursing of the princes by the sages was another transcendental pastime of the Lord to make a show of anger. The princes were cursed in order that one may know that even the descendants of the Lord, who could never be vanquished by any act of material nature, were subjected to the reactions of anger by great devotees of the Lord. One should therefore take great care and attention not to commit an offense at the feet of a devotee of the Lord.

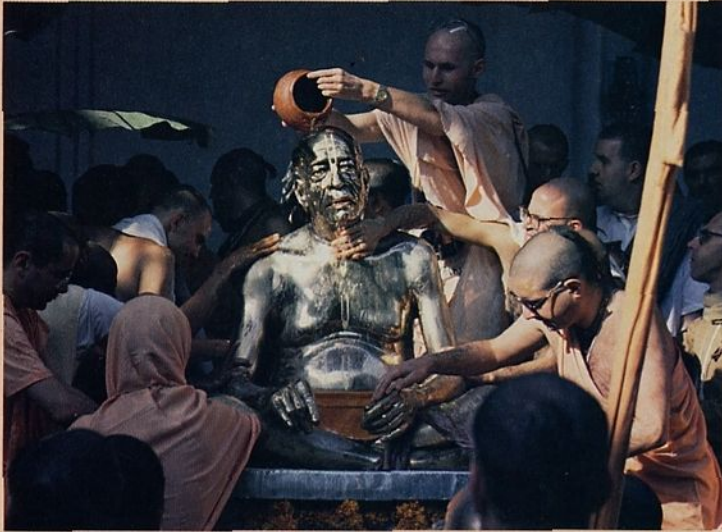
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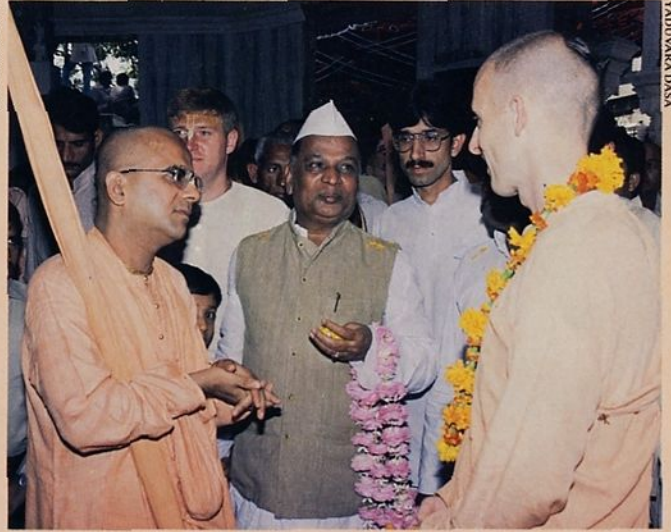
Every Town and Village

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

Memorial to Śrīla Prabhupāda Opens in India's Holiest City



Devotees from ISKCON centers around the world lovingly bathe the large brass *mūrti* of Śrīla Prabhupāda.



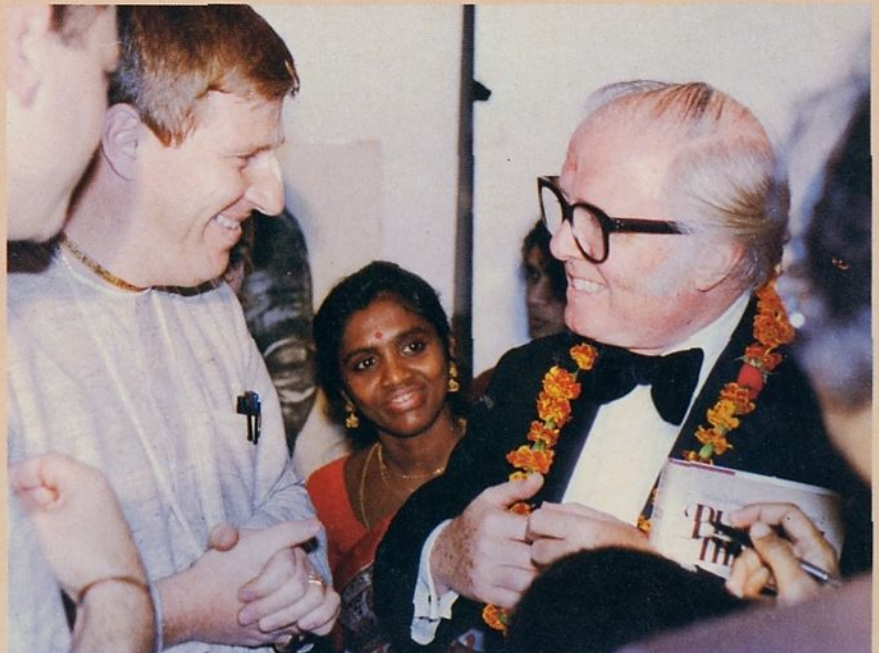
His Excellency Mr. S. B. Chavan (center) with Śrīla Gopāla Kṛṣṇa Goswami Bhāgavatapāda and Śrīla Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami Gurupāda.

Vṛndāvana, India—On November 6, 7, and 8, hundreds of ISKCON devotees and guests attended the dedication here of a memorial built in honor of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder and spiritual guide of ISKCON. Vṛndāvana is one of India's most revered holy cities and the site of the internationally known Krishna-Balarām temple, which Śrīla Prabhupāda opened in 1975. The two-story marble memorial, complete with ornate balconies and winding staircases and featuring photo and sculpture exhibits, stands adjacent to the Krishna-Balarām temple.

His Excellency Mr. S. B. Chavan, Minister of Planning for India's central government, was the guest of honor at the dedication ceremonies. He and Mr. Ghorpade, a member of India's parliament, delivered speeches praising Śrīla Prabhupāda's unique achievements in distributing India's rich, spiritual heritage all over the world.

The highlight of the dedication ceremony came when devotees visiting from ISKCON centers around the world bathed and dressed a larger-than-life-size *mūrti* of Śrīla Prabhupāda. In this *mūrti* form Śrīla Prabhupāda now presides over the memorial temple complex, receiving regular daily worship from his disciples and grand-disciples.

Filmmaker Attenborough Receives Biography



Sir Richard Attenborough, producer-director of the Academy-Award-winning film *Gandhi*, talks with Dhanañjaya dāsa, ISKCON's director of public affairs for the United Kingdom. The occasion was the opening of a photo display on the life of Gandhi at the Indian Cultural Center in London. Folding his hands and saying, "Namas te" [a respectful greeting], Sir Richard accepted a garland and a copy of the second volume of Śrīla Prabhupāda's biography, *Planting the Seed*, and expressed interest in visiting Bhaktivedanta Manor, ISKCON's country estate near London.

ENCOUNTER AT KURUKṢETRA

Fifty centuries ago, during a fierce, fratricidal war, Lord Kṛṣṇa and one of His pure devotees achieved a unique intimacy . . .

by RAVĪNDRA-SVARŪPA DĀSA
PAINTING BY PARĪKSIT DĀSA



In the midst of the great battle, surrounded by the clash of arms, the pounding of hooves, the rattle of trappings, the shouts of warriors, and the screams of wounded men and beasts, where the dust churned up by the horses dimmed the sun and blood turned the earth to mud, Kṛṣṇa suddenly stopped the chariot and sprang to the ground. Raising the wheel of a disabled chariot over His head,



the Lord raced toward the great general Bhīṣmadeva like a lion charging an elephant. Just moments before, wave after wave of lethal arrows from Bhīṣmadeva's bow had crashed relentlessly down upon Arjuna's chariot. In amazement, the other warriors had seen the figures of Arjuna and his driver Śrī Kṛṣṇa completely disappear behind the curtains of the general's arrows. It had been certain that Arjuna was about to fall before the fury of the attack.

And then Bhīṣmadeva's bow was still. It dropped to the ground, and the invincible general stood unarmed and stared with widening eyes at the Lord charging furiously toward him. In intense concentration he noted every detail of Kṛṣṇa's appearance: He saw how the beautiful flowing black hair of the Lord had turned ashen from the dust of battle; he saw how beads of sweat adorned His face like dew on a blue lotus flower; he saw how red smears of blood from wounds made by his own arrows enhanced the beauty of the transcendental body of the Lord. Bhīṣmadeva watched the Lord rushing toward him, preparing to kill him with a hurl of the wheel, and he was filled with ecstasy.

This encounter on the battlefield between Lord Kṛṣṇa and Bhīṣmadeva was not the hostile clash of enemies that it appears to be. On the contrary, it was the reciprocation of deepest love between the Supreme Personality of Godhead and one of His great devotees, and from it both derived the highest transcendental bliss. Śrīla Prabhupāda explains this encounter at Kurukṣetra in Chapter Nine of the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and if we study the incident under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master, who can take us to the reality that lies beyond appearance, we can begin to enter into the profound mysteries of the relations between the Lord and His pure devotees.

The battle at Kurukṣetra was a civil war within the Kuru dynasty between the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra (called the Kauravas) and the sons of Pāṇḍu (called the Pāṇḍavas) for rulership of the kingdom. Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Pāṇḍu were brothers, and in the normal course of events Dhṛtarāṣṭra, as the elder of the two, would have been king. But because Dhṛtarāṣṭra was blind from birth, Pāṇḍu ascended to the throne.

Then Pāṇḍu died untimely. His five orphaned sons—one of whom was Arjuna—came under the care of their uncle Dhṛtarāṣṭra, who raised them and trained them in the military arts along with his own sons. The eldest son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the evil-minded Duryodhana, became increasingly envious of his cousins, and he resented any share they would have in the kingdom, which, had his father been ruler, would have fallen entirely to him. Dhṛtarāṣṭra was not a bad man, but he was weak-willed and excessively fond of his

eldest son, and gradually he fell in with Duryodhana's vicious schemes to kill the Pāṇḍavas.

All these plots failed, but Duryodhana did manage to cheat the Pāṇḍavas of their share in the kingdom and have them banished for fourteen years. When the Pāṇḍavas returned from exile to reclaim their rightful share of rulership, it was refused them. They then requested five villages to rule, but even that was asking too much: they were denied even as much land as you could drive a pin into.

To appreciate how important rulership was to the Pāṇḍavas, we need to understand an important Sanskrit word: *dharma*. Sometimes translated as "duty," sometimes as "religion," *dharma* contains both meanings but has really no exact equivalent. Formed from the Sanskrit root *dhr*, meaning "to support or sustain," *dharma* de-

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notes the fundamental basis of a thing, that by which something is what it is, its inalienable nature or character. Thus the *dharma* of fire is to burn, and the *dharma* of sugar is to be sweet.

We learn from the *Bhagavad-gītā* and other Vedic texts that every human has a two-fold *dharma*, one permanent and one temporary. Since all living entities are eternal, subordinate particles of God, our essential and unalterable nature, our permanent, eternal *dharma*, is to serve God. Now one may object that since many people quite plainly don't serve God, that cannot be everyone's unavoidable *dharma*.

People who appear not to be serving God, however, really are serving Him, although they do so unwillingly. To serve someone means to be controlled by the other person's order, and since everyone is necessarily controlled by God, everyone serves Him. Those who serve God willingly, in love and devotion, are controlled directly and favorably by God, and they enter into eternal life. But those who rebel against God, seeking independence, serve Him unwillingly, being controlled by Him

indirectly and unfavorably, through material nature; therefore, they must suffer repeated birth and death. Because service to God is our *dharma*, serve we must. Nevertheless, we have this much freedom: *How to serve God is up to us.*

In addition to this eternal and universal *dharma* pertaining to the soul, there is a supplementary *dharma* pertaining to the body; it is temporary and particular, applying only to civilized human beings. The Vedic literature tell us that four groups of people naturally compose human society: *brāhmaṇas*, or intellectuals, who guide society according to their knowledge of the highest truth; *kṣatriyas*, or executives, who manage society under brahminical direction and protect the citizens from external and internal disturbances; *vaiśyas*, or producers, who create the wealth of society by agriculture and trade; and *sūdras*, or laborers, who assist the other three groups.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna that these four kinds of people, endowed with the appropriate qualities and aptitudes, are His creation; thus they are as natural to human society as head, arms, belly, and legs to the human body. Vedic society had the advantage over ours in recognizing this; following the directions of the Vedic literature, it determined to which group a child belonged on the basis of his inherent tendencies and then educated him intensively to assume a social role in fulfillment of his own nature. Each group had its particular constellation of duties, obligations, injunctions, prohibitions, and moral and ethical values, which together constituted the *dharma* of that group. Although *dharma* in this sense is usually translated as "duty," it is not like some externally imposed fiat followed merely out of a sense of obligation; rather, by virtue of nature and education, it is constitutive of one's own self. To go against one's *dharma*, therefore, is not just to do wrong; it is to violate one's very nature.

Because Vedic society was God-centered, the permanent and the temporary *dharma* were in harmony; the members of each group executed their particular duties as service to God. As Kṛṣṇa instructs Arjuna in the *Bhagavad-gītā* [3.9]: "Work done as a sacrifice for Viṣṇu has to be performed, otherwise work binds one to this material world. Therefore, O son of Kuntī, perform your prescribed duties for His satisfaction, and in that way you will always remain unattached and free from bondage."

Now we can understand why it was so important for the Pāṇḍavas to rule: they were *kṣatriyas*, and rulership was their *dharma*. Kṛṣṇa states conclusively that it is far better to execute one's own *dharma* imperfectly than that of another perfectly [Bg. 3.35].

Moreover, in pursuing their *dharma* in relation to society, the Pāṇḍavas would

also fulfill their *dharma* in relation to God. The Pāṇḍavas were great devotees of Kṛṣṇa—so great that Kṛṣṇa Himself, having descended into this world, played the part of their friend and kinsman. And Kṛṣṇa wanted the pious and devoted Pāṇḍavas, rather than the impious and ungodly Kauravas, to rule. When the Kauravas remained obstinate in opposing the rights of the Pāṇḍavas, war became inevitable. Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna in the *Bhagavad-gītā* [4.8] that He descends to earth to reestablish *dharma*. And in the great battle at Kurukṣetra, which took place by Kṛṣṇa's will for that very purpose, the Pāṇḍavas were His chosen instruments.

Kṛṣṇa Himself did not fight. The Kauravas objected that the Pāṇḍavas would have an unfair advantage if the all-powerful Lord fought on their side. Kṛṣṇa therefore vowed that He would not personally take up arms and would participate strictly as a noncombatant, as the driver of Arjuna's chariot.

Bhīṣmadeva was also a great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa's, a devotee of the same stature as the Pāṇḍavas. But Bhīṣmadeva, strange to say, was on the wrong side, the side of the impious Kauravas. Bhīṣmadeva was the aged and revered grandsire of the Kuru dynasty, a valiant warrior, a brilliant general, and a great authority on religious principles. He was extremely affectionate toward the Pāṇḍavas, and he had repeatedly warned the Kauravas in the strongest terms of the wickedness and folly of their course. But when that course had led to war, Bhīṣmadeva had been obliged to fight for Duryodhana against his own beloved grandchildren, the Pāṇḍavas, because he was maintained at Duryodhana's expense.

It appears in Bhīṣmadeva's case that his temporary *dharma* as a *kṣatriya*, which bound him in honor to his patron, was in conflict with his eternal *dharma* as a devotee, which bound him in love to his Lord. And it seems he erred in choosing to follow the former rather than the latter.

In fact, however, there was no disparity in *dharma* for Bhīṣmadeva. A pure devotee acts only in obedience to the Lord, and the real reason Bhīṣmadeva fought for the Kauravas was that Kṛṣṇa wanted him to. Kṛṣṇa had two purposes to fulfill by this. First, He wanted the Kauravas to have every possible advantage—and a fighter and leader like Bhīṣmadeva was a huge advantage—so that when the Kauravas went down in ignoble defeat, the whole world would see that, however well-favored the side of vice may be, it can never conquer virtue.

Kṛṣṇa's second purpose was more confidential. In the kind of relationship Kṛṣṇa and Bhīṣmadeva enjoyed, their love for one another was intensely aroused by fighting. Kṛṣṇa therefore placed Bhīṣmadeva in the opposing ranks to set the stage

for a mutually satisfying encounter at arms.

To understand the relationship between the Lord and His warrior-devotee; we need to know something about the idea of *rasa* in the Vedic analysis of love. The flavor or taste of love varies according to the kind of relationship. A fan loves a celebrity, a loyal retainer loves his employer, a young man loves his brother, a mother loves her child, a husband loves his wife—these are all relations of love, but in each the *quality* of love, the emotional coloring, is distinct. That distinctive emotional coloring, that characteristic, affective flavor, is called *rasa*.

No matter how intense the material *rasas* we experience in this world seem to us, they are only stale and juiceless copies—reflected into this world like a mirage into a desert—of the real and original spiritual *rasas* tasted in relation with God. To show

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us this, Vedic texts recount hundreds of fascinating encounters between the Lord and His devotees—like this one between Kṛṣṇa and Bhīṣmadeva—in which different *rasas* are exhibited. Expert devotees, analyzing these narrations, have discovered twelve distinct *rasas*, which they divide into two categories, called direct and indirect. A direct *rasa* is situated permanently in the heart of a devotee, whereas an indirect *rasa* will suddenly appear under certain conditions. The five direct *rasas* are called neutrality, servitude, fraternal love, parental love, and conjugal love. The seven indirect *rasas* are called humor, astonishment, chivalry, compassion, anger, dread, and ghastliness.

In the neutral *rasa*, a devotee is so overwhelmed by the transcendent greatness of God that he can do no more than passively adore Him. In servitude, the devotee feels subordinate to God, but He also wants to express His love actively by rendering service. A devotee in the more intimate fraternal *rasa* relates to God informally and as an equal, as one friend to another. In the parental *rasa*, the Lord takes the sub-

ordinate position of a child, and the devotee loves the Lord in the mood of a mother or father. In the most intimate, conjugal *rasa*, the devotee has the feelings of a wife or a girl friend toward the Lord.

You may see a contradiction between the idea of *dharma*, which says that the living entity is an eternally subordinate servant of God, and the idea of *rasa*, which holds that a devotee can act as the Lord's equal or superior. But there is no contradiction. While the living entity is never equal to or superior to the Lord, when the Lord wants to taste the feelings that arise in intimate relationships, He allows a devotee to become His companion, parent, or lover by causing the devotee to forget the immense differences between them. Ontologically, the devotee remains a subordinate servant; psychologically, by the will of the Lord, he becomes the Lord's equal or superior. *Rasas* with Kṛṣṇa are thus pure service to Him and are the highest expressions of *dharma*.

Kṛṣṇa is the supreme enjoyer, the reservoir of all *rasas*, eternally engaged in pastimes of love with innumerable devotees, relishing infinite varieties of emotions and feelings. Devotees situated in various *rasas* serve Kṛṣṇa by satisfying His desire to enjoy in some particular way. The devotee is impelled solely by love, which is an intense desire to satisfy Kṛṣṇa with no interest at all in one's own enjoyment. This distinguishes spiritual *rasas* from material ones, which are based on lust, or a desire to secure one's own satisfaction. If one wants to appreciate the spiritual quality of the *rasas* between Kṛṣṇa and His devotees, one must be free from lust. Otherwise, there is the danger, especially acute with reference to the conjugal *rasa*, of conceiving the spiritual *rasas* materially.

Because we are emanations of God, whatever is in us reflects what is originally in Him. Thus we can understand something about God by studying ourselves. For example, we are persons, so we can understand that God must be a person. We have bodily form, and therefore we know that God does also. We enter into various relationships; so does God also. Of course, the personality of God is without the limitations and faults of material personalities, nor can God's transcendental body be injured by blade or bullet or ravaged by age and disease like our material bodies. Nor do His relationships have any of the well-known shortcomings that make material relationships so problematic. People who speculate about God deny Him personality, body, and relationship, because of the imperfections that attend these things in the material world. This needlessly limits God; all that has to be denied are the imperfections.

Accordingly, there is no need for misgivings when we hear that God likes to

fight. The fighting propensity is certainly found in us, and therefore it originally exists in God. A fight offers unique pleasures: an intense concentration of the mind and a heightening of the senses, along with the excitement of contest and adventure, the thrill of being challenged by danger, and an exhilaration in the testing of one's strength and courage.

Of course, in the material world, fighting is altogether polluted by hate and enmity, and with the advent of modern mechanistic warfare, it has degraded into mere terrorism and indiscriminate butchery. The *dharma* of *kṣatriyas* is to fight, but when they engage in a trial of arms, such as the one at Kurukṣetra, they at least observe the rules of chivalry. No *kṣatriya* would attack an enemy when he was disarmed or asleep. Equals fought only with equals on equal grounds. Battles were

conducted in the spirit of sporting contests, and they were waged where civilians would not be in danger. All things deteriorate in time: Chivalry is dead, and the plan for our next big war has the military on both sides bunkered safely in underground Pentagons, while their weapons rain destruction onto each other's defenseless civilian population. We have reason enough to dislike fighting, but we shouldn't project all the despicable characteristics of fighting in the material world onto God's transcendental fighting. The perversions are ours, not God's.

When Kṛṣṇa wants to enjoy the pleasure of fighting, He calls upon an appropriate devotee to be His opponent. When Kṛṣṇa fights with His devotee, He enjoys feelings of love enhanced by the sharp emotions of combat, and Bhīṣmadeva yearned to serve Kṛṣṇa in this way. In

Bhīṣmadeva the direct *rasa* of servitude was combined with the more prominent indirect *rasa* of chivalry. Fighting with Kṛṣṇa is a natural expression of that special valorous enthusiasm which characterizes the chivalrous *rasa*.

Kṛṣṇa was eager to be attacked by His beloved Bhīṣmadeva, and so, as the supreme controller in everyone's heart, He caused Duryodhana, after a disastrous day of battle, to approach Bhīṣmadeva with an insulting accusation: The Pāṇḍavas were winning only because Bhīṣmadeva, out of affection for them, was reluctant to attack them with his full prowess; if Bhīṣmadeva was unwilling to fight the Pāṇḍavas, he should have said so in the beginning. A *kṣatriya* cannot tolerate any insult to his honor, and Bhīṣmadeva responded with a vow: He would slay all five Pāṇḍavas the
(continued on page 30)

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

LETTERS

I enjoy BACK TO GODHEAD very much. I find it both inspirational and thought-provoking. I want to thank you for publishing such an excellent magazine. I live in a rather remote area in Upper Michigan and look forward to learning more about Kṛṣṇa each month.

Cindy L. Feliciano
K.I. Sawyer AFB, Michigan

* * *

Hare Kṛṣṇa. I have read with great pleasure and interest the essay "In Pursuit of the Highest Truth." I admire your efforts to bring together the Eastern and Western philosophical understanding of Godhead.

I was born and brought up in a Vaiṣṇava family. From my early childhood, I had the privilege to learn about Kṛṣṇa and worship Him. So when I came to this country, I was very much disturbed and disgusted with the Western concept of God as a bush of fire, or a pillar of fire, or a cloud. Unfortunately, there were no temples in this country then to show Westerners what God looks like. Thanks to Śrīla Prabhupāda, today everyone can see and appreciate the most beautiful and opulent form of the Lord.

In your essay, which is very pleasing and convincing even to the most ordinary person, you have explained the form of the Lord, the Supreme Truth. The picture of Kṛṣṇa being chastised by His mother brought tears of joy into my eyes.

Laxmi Narayan Chaturvedi, M.D.
Akron, Ohio

I have read with considerable interest the interview "You Can Be Happy" with Śrīla Bhavānanda Goswami Viṣṇupāda in the July 1982 issue of BACK TO GODHEAD.

Not only in other parts of the world but here in India as well, many scientifically-minded and educated people have not appreciated the basic unity of life, which is the basis for nonviolence. The truth, however, is that the Vedantic concept of the unity of life is fully supported by modern science.

Let me quote Nobel Prize winner Szent-Gyorgi on this subject. Discussing the role of chemicals universally required by animals from plant food, he said: "This simple fact involves a point of great philosophical importance. If I look upon the cells as a mechanism and upon the molecule as a wheel of this mechanism, I say that there are two mechanisms, the plant cell and my cell, whose parts, the single wheels, are interchangeable. Two mechanisms whose parts are interchangeable cannot be very different. This is the first scientific evidence for the great fundamental chemical unity of living Nature. There is no real difference between cabbages and kings. We are all recent leaves on the old tree of life."

In fact, many beautiful parallels between the Vedantic ideas and the most modern scientific concepts can be enumerated.

D. R. Sharma
Allahabad, India

OUR REPLY: Although the *Vedas* generally stress the spiritual—rather than the

chemical—unity of life, it is true that there are many parallels between Vedic concepts and the concepts of modern science. (See *Focus on Spiritual Science*, page seven, in this issue.)

* * *

I am disturbed by the pejorative use of the term "petty nationalism" in the November 1982 issue of your magazine. Didn't Kṛṣṇa urge Arjuna to fight for the kingdom, even though Arjuna wanted to maintain a pacifist stance? "Action, not inaction" was, I believe, Kṛṣṇa's precise instruction.

Ray Hampton
London

OUR REPLY: Kṛṣṇa's first instruction to Arjuna in the *Bhagavad-gītā* is that an intelligent person should not identify with the material body. Our bodies may have been born in England or America, Russia, or Japan, but the soul within the body is neither English nor American nor Russian nor Japanese. The soul is eternal, a fragmental part of the Supreme Lord. When we leave our present bodies at death we are transferred to other bodies, and we forget all the affiliations—national, political, racial, social, familial and so on—of our previous life. Since Arjuna was a prince and a great military commander, Lord Kṛṣṇa urged him to fight to establish a kingdom based on the eternal universal principles of God consciousness—not any sectarian nationalistic differences. Kṛṣṇa urged Arjuna to be active in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, in other words, not active for a temporary cause. In this age, Lord Caitanya has recommended that our "fighting" be to spread the chanting of the names of God, or "Hare Kṛṣṇa," to every town and village on earth.

Coming to Kṛṣṇa

“Find a Bona Fide Guru”

A young woman tells of her search for satisfying answers in a world of hypocrisy and dead ends.

by KAMRĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

I entered Cornell University in the fall of 1971 at the age of seventeen, full of hopes, expectations, and innocent dreams. For the first time, I was away from my parents' close jurisdiction. The new opportunity to associate with world-famous scholars and professors excited me, and I was looking forward to preparing for a career in veterinary medicine.

With my newly found freedom, it was only a few months before I had abandoned the strict moral principles my orthodox Jewish parents had tried to instill in me. I made new friends who, like me, had come to Cornell for a good education—and a good time. I was having fun doing things I knew my parents wouldn't approve of, but something wasn't right. I would go to parties where most of the kids were drinking or taking drugs, and I would see members of the faculty behaving just like the students. Here were my teachers challenging my intelligence, demanding me to study and to cultivate a deep love of knowledge, yet by their activities, they seemed to be indicating that life's real goal lay in hedonism. So I was shocked to see that the enjoyment of the professors was on the same level as that of the students. And I began to question the value of working to attain a degree in veterinary medicine.

By the end of my first semester, I was already dissatisfied with dating, partying, hearing rock music, and getting intoxicated, and I wanted to apply myself to my studies.



But the profound disillusionment I felt with my professors also disillusioned me about the life I was supposed to be working so hard to make for myself.

For example, my first biology course was taught by a well-known British professor, who began her introductory lecture by announcing to thirteen hundred students that she had a five-acre marijuana field in back of her house. The reactions of the students varied from cheering to booing, but for me this was another blow to my weakening faith.

As for my expanding freedom to enjoy ever-increasing sense pleasures, I realized that I would just become ever-increasingly dissatisfied. It was a syndrome: hankering for a bigger and better stereo system or

more and better horses, or whatever happened to strike my fancy. I would have to work hard to achieve my goals, but upon achieving them, I would immediately become dissatisfied and have to work still harder to achieve an even more ambitious materialistic goal. I became fearful, anticipating a life of frustration. I wanted to give up my recently acquired bad habits, but what could replace them that would actually satisfy me?

Although my friends considered me overly philosophical, I saw myself as simply trying to make sense out of life. Any goal appeared to be a dead end, so I began to question: “Is anything absolute? I have one opinion, someone else has another opinion, and someone else has another opinion. But what is the answer?”

Certainly microbiology class or lectures in the autopsy lab weren't providing answers to such questions. I was already disillusioned with my religious training. Where would I find answers to my questions?

I say I had rejected religion, but I had good reasons. My parents weren't living up to the principles they professed and had tried to instill in me. They didn't seem convinced, and I wasn't convinced. They had sent me to an Orthodox Hebrew school, but that had only increased my disillusionment. Even my teachers hadn't seemed to understand the essence of the Old Testament and the Torah, and the synagogues were more populated for Tuesday



The Gopīs See Kṛṣṇa Leaving for the Pasturing Ground
(Dīrghā-devī dāsī, 1977)

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night bingo than for Saturday morning Sabbath services.

When I began to see Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees on the Cornell campus, I was curious. I think I must have admired them right from the beginning, if for no other reason than that they were always there—day after day for several hours a day. They obviously had conviction, and it made me want to return to religion for the answers to my questions. I would see the men dressed in *dhotīs*, their foreheads marked with *tilaka*, their heads shaved except for a *sikhā* in the back. Usually I would be on my way to the student union building, and I would pull my hat down low and cross the street. I was miserable and bored, sunk in thoughts of my unanswered questions. I figured I didn't have anything in common with these Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees, but I did begin to think that maybe religion could answer my questions. Thus it was a considerable breakthrough when I decided to again experiment with religious life.

I visited various churches, temples, *yoga* groups, and meditation centers. A Quaker group near the campus would hold silent meditations, and I went several times. They would sit quietly for hours, and anyone who wanted to say something could stand up and speak. But it seemed mostly mundane. Someone would quote a poet or talk about the Grateful Dead or discuss what band was going to play on campus or speak on some other topic I had already rejected as not providing any ultimate answers. But I continued to search. I became especially interested in *yoga*, and I decided to become a vegetarian. I learned of so many religious people who were vegetarians, and I began to conclude that eating flesh would deter me from my spiritual goals.

I found a vegetarian restaurant about forty-five minutes from Cornell in the town of Trumansburg, and I used to go there regularly. The girl who owned the restaurant was interested in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, and she would let Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees from the Buffalo center stay there on occasion. Then one evening I was sitting in the restaurant when devotees entered, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and putting sticks of incense at all the tables. Some of the devotees were selling books. The devotees' happy, smiling faces, their enthusiasm, and their music all attracted me deeply. Suddenly I felt that I'd like to be a part of this group. I let the idea pass, but I purchased a set of three *Kṛṣṇa* books from one of the devotees. I looked at the pictures, glanced at some of the Sanskrit words, which I couldn't read, and wondered about the bluish boy with the flute in His hand and the peacock feather on His head. I gave the books to a friend.

But I decided I should become more

seriously involved with *yoga*. I was already interested in a popular *yoga* group, and now I began regularly attending the chanting and meditation sessions. The members would chant their *mantras* softly, indoors. I asked, "If this is the Absolute Truth, like you say, why don't you go out and chant in the streets like the Hare Kṛṣṇas?"

They said, "Oh, we don't want to upset people. Everyone has his own path toward self-realization."

I was again sensing hypocrisy, especially when I found that some of the members were involved in drinking and homosexual activities, but I continued attending the meditations. I even received initiation, but I found the philosophy of the group vague and impersonal. I was praying earnestly—

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BACK TO GODHEAD.
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I wasn't in control of
the events in my life.***

to whom I wasn't sure—for some guidance, and an answer came during a group meditation. It was as if a voice from within overwhelmed me: "Find a bona fide *guru*." I didn't know what the "voice" meant, and I wasn't sure how to follow the instruction, but I never forgot it.

Then, after two years of study at Cornell, I took a leave of absence and turned toward the field of horsemanship. I studied under a top British instructor at an academy in Maryland, but I ran into the same frustrations I had met at Cornell: unanswered questions. I would be riding frisky thoroughbreds during the cold winter weather, and as we would approach the six-foot-high jumps, all I could think would be, "What if the horse falls on me? What if I died at this instant? What would I have attained?" I started to pray daily in complete despair, "O God, if there is a God, please take all these things

away from me, and let me know what You want me to do!"

I called the telephone information for the number of the Washington, D.C., center of the *yoga* society I had joined at Cornell. The operator, however, instead of giving me the number, told me, "Don't bother with them. They won't accept an out-of-town member. Try the Hare Kṛṣṇa center. They'll accept anyone." But I insisted, got the number, called, and was refused. I still didn't call the Hare Kṛṣṇa center.

By now, the prospect of a career in horsemanship also lost its taste, and I went to my parents' home in New York City. I was unsure of what to do with my life. But I had to do something, so I got a job as a riding instructor. Then one day, in the Port Authority Bus Terminal, a devotee gave me a BACK TO GODHEAD magazine. I had been teaching riding in New York City for a few months and was becoming more and more frustrated. But the more I felt frustrated, the more I read and reread the BACK TO GODHEAD. The cover picture showed two men, like puppets on strings, being manipulated by the three modes of material nature. I felt that I could relate to that, as I could see that I was not in control of the events in my life. There was a full-page picture of the New Vrindaban farm community in West Virginia, and an article about chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* on beads. I called the temple in Brooklyn, and the devotee I spoke with (Śravaṇīyā-devī dāsi) answered all the questions I had been asking for almost three years.

Śravaṇīyā sympathized with my frustration and explained to me about transmigration of the soul. She told me, "We attain different bodies—animal, human, plant, male, female, and so on—according to our activities and desires. But only in the human body can we question the goal of life and realize that we are suffering. The goal of life is to learn to love Kṛṣṇa."

"In the BACK TO GODHEAD magazine," I said, "I read about how the three modes of material nature control all that we do. But I read in the *Bhagavad-gītā* where Kṛṣṇa says, 'Rise above the three modes.' So how do we rise above the modes if everything we do is controlled by them?"

Śravaṇīyā explained that devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, beginning with hearing about Kṛṣṇa from a pure devotee, was transcendental to material activities. "Later on in the *Bhagavad-gītā*," she said, "Kṛṣṇa says, 'One who engages in full devotional service transcends the modes of material nature and comes to the spiritual platform.' So you can rise above the modes of material nature by performing pure devotional service to the master of the modes of nature, Lord Kṛṣṇa. But the key is that devotional service must be done under the

guidance of a spiritual master. You have to accept a bona fide guru.”

Here was the clinching line. “Find a bona fide guru.” I was very relieved and pleased by the answers I was getting, but I had other questions. By the time we were finished, I was almost crying in joy. Śravaṇiyā had given me tangible hope that the answers to all my questions lay in performing devotional service to Kṛṣṇa.

On my next day off from work I visited the temple. I arrived early enough in the morning to be able to take part in chanting *japa*, attending the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class, and eating *prasādam*. I went out with a group of devotees to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa on the streets of Manhattan. It was wonderful. And I realized I had been sent there by the same person who, a year and a half before, had told me from within my heart, “Find yourself a bona fide guru.” I

felt alive.

In my talks with devotees at the temple, I expressed my concern about making an abrupt change in my way of life. The devotees rose very early in the morning and were very disciplined in their practices. I knew it was the correct way to lead my life, but I also knew it was going to be difficult. The devotees agreed with me. But they pointed out that to achieve any goal in life I would have to work and perform austerities, and I now was striving for the supreme goal. I had been ready to undergo austerities to attain a doctorate in veterinary medicine, but this degree was even better, because you could take it with you after death.

The next day, when I returned to work, all I had to do was exercise a horse belonging to a big New York lawyer. I rode the bridle paths all day in Central Park, dressed

in my custom-made breeches, boots, hunt cap, and jacket. But today I chanted the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare—as loudly as I could.

Within a few days, I moved into the Brooklyn temple, and the welcome I received from the devotees was wonderful. I could understand that Kṛṣṇa was personally taking care of my life. He had directed me to His devotees, who could, by their words and sincere examples, help me to attain eternal knowledge and happiness. I received initiation from a bona fide guru, Śrīla Prabhupāda, a few months later, and by following his sublime instructions, I am guaranteed to attain the highest goal available for any living being—eternal devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa. ❀

YOGA

(continued from page 5)

So those who are very intelligent aren't concerned with these four things, *janma-mṛtyu-jarā-vyādhi*: birth, death, old age, and disease. They are concerned about having a spiritual life full of bliss and full of knowledge, and that is possible when you enter into the spiritual planets. That is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (8.14):

*ananya-cetāḥ satatam
yo mām smarati nityaśaḥ
tasyāham sulabhāḥ pārtha
nitya-yuktasya yogināḥ*

Nitya-yuktāḥ means “continuously in trance.” This is the highest *yogī*: one who is continuously thinking of Kṛṣṇa, and is always engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Such a perfect *yogī* does not divert his attention to this sort of process or that sort of *yoga* system or the *jñāna* or *dhyāna* systems. Simply one system: Kṛṣṇa consciousness. *Ananya-cetāḥ*: without any deviation. He's not disturbed by anything. He simply thinks of Kṛṣṇa. *Ananya-cetāḥ satatam*. *Satatam* means “everywhere and at any time.”

Just like my residence is at Vṛndāvana. That is the place of Kṛṣṇa, where Kṛṣṇa advented Himself. So now I am in America, in your country. But that does not mean that I'm out of Vṛndāvana. Because if I think of Kṛṣṇa always, it is as good as being in India. I am in Vṛndāvana. I am in New York in this apartment—but the consciousness is there in Vṛndāvana. Kṛṣṇa consciousness means you already live with Kṛṣṇa in His spiritual planet. You simply have to wait to give up this body.

So this is the process of Kṛṣṇa con-

sciousness: *ananya-cetāḥ satatam yo mām smarati*. *Smarati* means “remembering.” *Nityaśaḥ*, “continually.” Kṛṣṇa declares that He becomes easily available to someone who is always remembering Him. The highest, most valuable thing becomes very inexpensive for one who takes up this process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. *Tasyāham sulabhāḥ pārtha nitya-yuktasya yogināḥ*: “Because he's continually engaged in such a process of *yoga*, *bhakti-yoga*—oh, I am very cheap. I am easily available.”

Why should I try for any hard process? Why shall I take to that? We chant, “Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.” And you can chant twenty-four hours a day. There are no rules or regulations. Either in the street or in the subway, at your home or in your office—there is no tax, no expense. Why don't you do it? Thank you very much. ❀

SPIRITUAL SCIENCE

(continued from page 9)

when a person practices *bhakti-yoga* and gets results, he can understand them in terms of the theoretical concepts of the system, and if he continues practicing and gets more and more results, he gradually develops faith that *bhakti-yoga* is actually scientific.

This process is entirely analogous to what happens in a science such as chemistry. Suppose a person initially doesn't know about chemistry. Maybe he doubts that chemistry really is a valid subject. If he takes a course in chemistry, he'll hear all kinds of theory—electrons, orbitals, and so on—which sound to him like so

much gobbledygook. But if he performs the experiments and thinks carefully in terms of the theory, he'll eventually say, “Aha! This works! I know these ideas have some value, because if I apply them systematically, I get the predicted results.” And if over a period of years he performs more and more advanced experiments, he'll gradually become completely convinced that chemistry is a real science.

The message I'm trying to convey here this evening is simply that *bhakti-yoga* is a science in precisely this sense—that there are theoretical principles as well as systematic procedures, and if a person does the procedures carefully, then, through experience, he will gradually come to realize that *bhakti-yoga* works.

Of course, *bhakti-yoga* is fundamentally different from physical science, because in *bhakti-yoga* one is not studying inanimate matter but attaining spiritual realization. But *bhakti-yoga* is not just a sentimental religious system people are supposed to accept merely on faith; it is a system that produces tangible results when one carries out the procedures in the prescribed way. And in this sense *bhakti-yoga* is completely scientific. ❀

SADĀPŪTA DĀSA studied at the State University of New York and Syracuse University and later received a National Science Fellowship. He went on to complete his Ph.D. in mathematics at Cornell, specializing in probability theory and statistical mechanics.

CHANT!



Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare

What is a *mantra*? In Sanskrit, *man* means “mind” and *tra* means “freeing.” So a *mantra* is a combination of transcendental sounds that frees our minds from the anxieties of living in the material world.

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

The *Nārada-pañcarātra* adds, “All *mantras*

and all processes for self-realization are compressed into the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*.”

Five centuries ago, while spreading the *mahā-mantra* throughout the Indian subcontinent, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu prayed, “O Supreme Personality of Godhead, in Your 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.

KURUKSETRA

(continued from page 24)

next day with five arrows especially made for that purpose. These he handed over to Duryodhana for safekeeping. But Arjuna, by a clever stratagem, got the arrows away from Duryodhana. Bhīṣmadeva understood that Kṛṣṇa was behind the ploy, and so he swore that the next day Kṛṣṇa would have to take up weapons Himself (breaking His own vow), otherwise His friend Arjuna would die.

And so it came about on the battlefield that Kṛṣṇa charged toward Bhīṣmadeva with upraised wheel to save Arjuna from certain death at the general's hand. Bhīṣmadeva had kept his promise and forced Kṛṣṇa to break His own. Arjuna, acting in the fraternal *rasa*, grabbed Kṛṣṇa around the waist to check His assault on Bhīṣmadeva, pleading with Him not to break His promise and be known as a liar. Kṛṣṇa could appreciate Arjuna's friendly concern, but he had deliberately gone back on His word to show that He protects His devotee unconditionally, at whatever cost to Himself. Nothing supersedes His love for His devotees.

Kṛṣṇa was magnificent—in protecting Arjuna and in breaking His promise. And Bhīṣmadeva relished this in deep ecstasy, just as he relished the stern military features of Kṛṣṇa as He adroitly maneuvered Arjuna's chariot in battle, a whip in His

right hand and a bridle rope in His left. He relished seeing Kṛṣṇa's hair made ashen and disheveled by battle, and His face beaded with perspiration from the effort of guiding the chariot. And he relished seeing the wounds inflicted by his own arrows on Kṛṣṇa's body.

Kṛṣṇa displayed these features in battle to satisfy the chivalrous love of His servant, just as Bhīṣmadeva pressed his furious attack against Kṛṣṇa to satisfy the fighting spirit of the Lord. Because the arrows falling upon Kṛṣṇa were shot in chivalrous worship by His beloved Bhīṣmadeva, the Lord accepted them as He would a shower of soft roses offered by another devotee. The Lord enjoyed the wounds inflicted upon Him by Bhīṣmadeva, although in truth, there is no possibility of wounds on the spiritual body of Kṛṣṇa. Just as intense love can cause goosebumps to be raised on the skin or a flush to appear on the face, so Kṛṣṇa responded in love to Bhīṣmadeva with the appearance of wounds on His inviolable transcendental body.

Thus Kṛṣṇa graciously accepted the love offered to Him by Bhīṣmadeva. It was the general's most wonderful hour. After the battle was over, when he lay with his body so riddled with arrows that it did not touch the ground, and great sages had gathered with the Pāṇḍavas to witness the passing of the mighty warrior-devotee, Bhīṣmadeva fixed his mind with intense concentration on the image, driven indelibly into

his heart, of Kṛṣṇa, angry and disheveled, with the wheel lifted high, rushing at him as a lover runs to meet his beloved.

The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* relates many pastimes between Lord Kṛṣṇa and pure devotees like Bhīṣmadeva. Hearing these narrations will certainly act as an antidote to the prevalent poisonous stereotype of a remote, static, and entirely unsociable God, a God too grandly aloof to enter fully into mutual relationships: a God you wouldn't really care to know. This pernicious idea of God has led many people to think that relations with Him must be vacuous and one-sided, and spiritual life deadly dull; godless relationships seem far more interesting. Mark Twain spoke for these people when he quipped: "Heaven for climate, hell for society."

But Kṛṣṇa shows us that relationships with Him are endlessly rich and attractive, filled with powerful and exalted emotions, replete with fascinating interchanges, utterly absorbing in interest, and charged through and through with ecstasy. Each of us possesses a *rasa* with Kṛṣṇa as part of our eternal makeup, but as long as we remain turned away from Him to seek happiness in material relationships, our *rasa* lies undeveloped and dormant within our heart. To encourage us to revive our sleeping love for Him, Kṛṣṇa has graciously revealed some of His unlimited pastimes, so that we can see there is no society like Kṛṣṇa's society, nor any love like Kṛṣṇa's love. 🌸

INSURANCE

(continued from page 13)

have more than one. Altogether, American lives are insured for more than \$3.5 trillion.

From one point of view, insurance is simply a way to distribute misfortune. The idea is simple: Since life is full of potential calamities, we can share the financial loss from such calamities by contributing to a mutual fund from which those of us who actually suffer loss may be indemnified. For example, a group of home owners may agree to pay \$200 apiece for \$20,000 worth of fire insurance on their homes. The assumption is that, at most, one in every one hundred customers will collect his \$20,000, but everyone—as insurance salesmen are fond of saying—will have purchased "peace of mind."

Since insurance, or loss sharing, is a corollary of trade and property ownership, we can assume that it has existed in one form or another throughout history. The merchants of ancient Rhodes shared the risks of their seagoing ventures, and many centuries ago Chinese merchants insured cargo on boats going down the Yangtze River.

Over the centuries the insurance business has given rise to a rich lore. Tales of

arson, murder, suicide, and other crimes are plentiful, and new ones still appear regularly in today's newspapers. "Insurance," wrote Alexander C. Campbell, a nineteenth-century author, "has made bartrary a trade, arson a business, and murder a fine art. There is hardly a crime . . . of which it is not the prolific mother."

But our purpose here is not to disparage the insurance business. Serious insurance-related crimes probably get more attention than their relative infrequency merits. And, without insurance, the industry's defenders point out, no economy can grow. Also, insurance does afford us a certain amount of financial protection.

Not that the premiums we pay make this world any less miserable. Rather, the insurance industry, like the health-care industry, flourishes only because this world is filled with misery. Financial protection is better than no protection at all, but we shouldn't be made to believe that we're getting more than that. Life insurance, for example, does not literally insure our lives; it simply provides for our loved ones after we die. It could, therefore, more aptly and honestly be called "death insurance."

What strikes a student of the Vedic literature is that although we're insured against fire, disease, death, flood, drought,

and unemployment in this life, we have made precious little provision for the next life. Is the possibility of a life after this one such an unlikely risk?

Spokesmen for any religious persuasion could, of course, make facile statements about "eternal life insurance," threatening us with dreadful fates if we don't sign up for their brand of salvation. But the followers of the Vedic literatures are not trying to frighten us into buying a bill of goods, like the insurance salesman who conjures up imminent tragedy to sell his policies. The *Vedas* explain that we are eternal individual souls situated within these temporary bodies. While the body is subject to any number of dangers—it can be burned, cut, crushed, drowned, and so on—the soul is indestructible. When the body dies, we are transferred either to another body in one of the millions of species of life or to the transcendental world, to live eternally in our fully awakened spiritual identities.

As individual souls, we are indestructible, but does that mean we have nothing to fear? The greatest calamity for a soul with a human body is to plummet into the lower species. So while taking all precautions to care for and insure our temporary bodies and properties, we should not

neglect our spiritual well-being.

The *Vedas* give us a documented, well-reasoned warning to this effect. A human being whose life is devoid of Kṛṣṇa consciousness develops a mentality like that of an animal: he is primarily interested in defending himself, his family, his nation, and so on, so that he can enjoy eating, sleeping, and sex. Whereas the animal has only his claws and fangs for defense, human beings have sophisticated weapons—and sophisticated insurance policies.

Despite the sophistication, however, the mentality of eat, sleep, mate, be merry, and enjoy life is basically the same as an animal's. In the next life, therefore, such a soul is matched with a suitable animal body, and he loses the opportunity for the spiritual advancement his human intelligence had afforded him.

The *Bhagavad-gītā* states that even a little advancement on the path of devotional service to Kṛṣṇa can protect one from this greatest of all dangers. We can hardly imagine the work it takes to earn the money to pay \$200 billion in insurance premiums, yet every year, thousands of faithful souls, driven by the fear of fire, disease, death, and other catastrophes, manage to pay such a sum. Even a fraction of that labor and money directed towards the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, could save us from a far greater catastrophe.

FESTIVALS

and the 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 Hare Kṛṣṇa center nearest you will gladly tell you more about the meaning of the festivals listed here.

Month of Nārāyaṇa (December 21–January 18)

January 6—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the great philosopher and pure devotee who was an immediate follower of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Pañcadraviḍa Swami Tridandīpāda, one of the present spiritual masters in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

January 15—Jayantī Mahā-dvādaśī (fasting from grains and beans).

Month of Mādhava (January 19–February 17)

January 23—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, the great follower of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu who established the Rādhā-ramaṇa temple in Vṛndāvana.

January 24—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jayadeva Gosvāmī, author of the famous Vaiṣṇava poem *Gīta-govinda*.

January 28—Ṣaṭ-tilā Ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans).

February 7—Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Viṣṇupriyā-devī, consort of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, one of the followers of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu known as the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura, a Vaiṣṇava ācārya and author who appeared in the middle of the seventeenth century.

February 8—Appearance anniversary of Śrī Advaita Ācārya, a close associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and an incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa's expansion Mahā-Viṣṇu. (Fasting till noon, followed by feasting.)

February 12—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Rāmānujācārya, a famous eleventh-century philosopher and spiritual master in the disciplic line coming from Lord Viṣṇu's consort, Lakṣmī-devī.

February 13—Bhaimī Ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans; fasting for the appearance anniversary of Lord Varāha).

February 14—Appearance anniversary of Lord Varāha, Lord Kṛṣṇa's boar incarnation.

February 15—Śrī Nityānanda Trayodaśī, the appearance anniversary of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, a close associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and an incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa's brother, Balarāma. (Fasting till moonrise.)

Enhance Your Spiritual Life

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

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

2 Magazine Binder (for your copies of *Back to Godhead*): a handy way to keep each month's issue in excellent condition. Holds 12 issues. \$5.00.

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

4 Mr̥daṅga Drum: lightweight, double-headed Indian-style drum used in chanting the mahā-mantra. Unbreakable. Comes with an instruction book and cassette instruction tape. \$119.85.

5 Deity Poster: a full-color photo of the beautiful Deities at the Los Angeles Hare Kṛṣṇa center. Poster-size. \$2.50.

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

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NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Overcoming Hatred

"I hope our kids will grow up with more hatred," says a Lebanese mother. "They must be more on guard."

A Lebanese soldier wears a T-shirt with the slogan, "Kill 'em all!"

In North Ireland an interviewer asks a boy, "What do you feel about your father's death now?" The boy's friend answers for him, "Revenge, that's what you want. Isn't it, Paul?" The boy agrees, "Aye. Revenge."

These are the voices of vengeful survivors in countries torn by war. In such countries—and there are many of them—hatred and revenge show little sign of letup. Usually the living hatred in such places has been bred by generations of crimes and atrocities. For a person to seek revenge when his family members are slain in a sectarian feud is natural. And for an economically oppressed people to take bloody vengeance on their oppressors is also understandable. But because the hatred and revenge make peace and harmony impossible, even for future generations, a sane person will see these destructive forces as undesirable. As theologian H. E. Fosdick stated in his book *Wages of Hate*, "Hating people is like burning down your own house to get rid of a rat."

The ancient Vedic literatures offer serious solutions to human hatred. The history of the great saintly king Dhruva Mahārāja gives an instance of how one man overcame a vengeful anger that threatened to annihilate an entire race.

One day, Dhruva Mahārāja learned that his younger brother had been killed by a member of the Yakṣas, a powerful mountain tribe. Overwhelmed with lamentation and anger, Dhruva immediately got on his chariot and set out to take revenge. Dhruva Mahārāja was a great fighter, and he and his forces began killing thousands of Yakṣa soldiers. But Manu, the law-giver of the human race, being compassionate to the remaining Yakṣas, approached Dhruva to give him instructions.

Manu did not approve the attack on an entire state to retaliate for one man's crime. The situation was similar to many modern-day conflicts, where cities and nations of nonpolitical, nonmilitaristic

men, women, and children become victims of military violence.

Manu said, "My dear son, please stop. It is not good to become unnecessarily angry. It is the path of hellish life. By killing Yakṣas who are not actually offenders, you have gone too far."

Manu's instructions were ultimately spiritual, because according to Vedic literature, it is only when we can see the spiritual oneness of all living beings that all party differences can be cleared up.

"One should not accept the body as the self," said Manu, "and thus, like the animals, kill the bodies of others." The animal thinks that the body of another animal is his food; therefore, one animal attacks another. But a human being, according to Manu, the law-giver for humanity, should not even kill animals unnecessarily, what to speak of human beings.

Dhruva Mahārāja was not only a warrior, but a pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead; therefore, he soon became submissive to the wisdom of Manu. Dhruva had temporarily forgotten his original God consciousness, but Manu's instructions revived it. Nowadays, we can hardly find a politician or military leader who can stop in his tracks and deeply consider why he is pushing thousands of people on toward the path of violence. But that is even more reason why educational advice like that of Manu to Dhruva should be extended to all people. It is the greatest need of the day.

Manu taught God consciousness. He informed Dhruva that every living entity contains an eternal spark of spirit and that the Supreme Lord also dwells in the heart of everyone. Therefore, since every living creature is a residence of the Supreme Lord, unnecessary killing is unlawful. A person should act to please God, and that will simultaneously please himself and others. But vengeance will please and satisfy no one.

By elevating himself beyond sectarianism to God consciousness, a person will go beyond the bodily designations that sustain so many racial and fanatically nationalistic hatreds. For one who is God conscious, no individual or group

is an ally or an enemy: everyone is an individual spirit soul, part and parcel of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Dhruva Mahārāja took the instructions of Manu, ceased his killing, and came to peaceful terms with the Yakṣas. In other words, the transcendental wisdom of Vedic knowledge was practical and successful in establishing peace. This knowledge is still applicable today, as it is universal and intended for all times. Wherever people sincerely attempt to implement this advice, therefore, good results will come.

But if wisdom like Manu's does not become influential, then what is the fate of humanity? There are indications that the slogan "Kill 'em all!" is sometimes on the minds of the leaders of the superpowers. Abusive words and threats are passed back and forth with increased intensity, and the nuclear weapons are already on hand for the mutually assured destruction of both superpowers as well as much of the rest of the world.

In his recent address to the United Nations, President Reagan declared, "In modern times a new, more terrifying element has entered into the calculations: nuclear weapons. A nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought."

But how can we avoid it? Summit conferences like START and INF, with bafflingly complex de-escalation plans, will always fail unless some real wisdom is introduced. Behind the diplomatic masks and underneath the superpower peace rhetoric lurks the irrational enemies of humanity: hatred, revenge, and ignorance—all based on identifying the body as the self.

The world's leaders show no appreciable understanding of God consciousness and how it can work to solve the deadly feuds between individuals and nations. But now more than ever we need practical enlightenment. The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is making the Vedic knowledge available to all people, with confidence that if even a few responsible leaders take it up, humankind will be spared. The alternative is to go on suffering from the ignorant, vengeful acts of those who want to "Kill 'em all!"—SDG

Enjoy the Taste of Spiritual Life

At the centers of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, you'll find classes in the science of self-realization, blissful chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, festivals, and—every Sunday afternoon—the famous Hare Kṛṣṇa feast. To find out more, call or visit the Hare Kṛṣṇa center nearest you.



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