

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

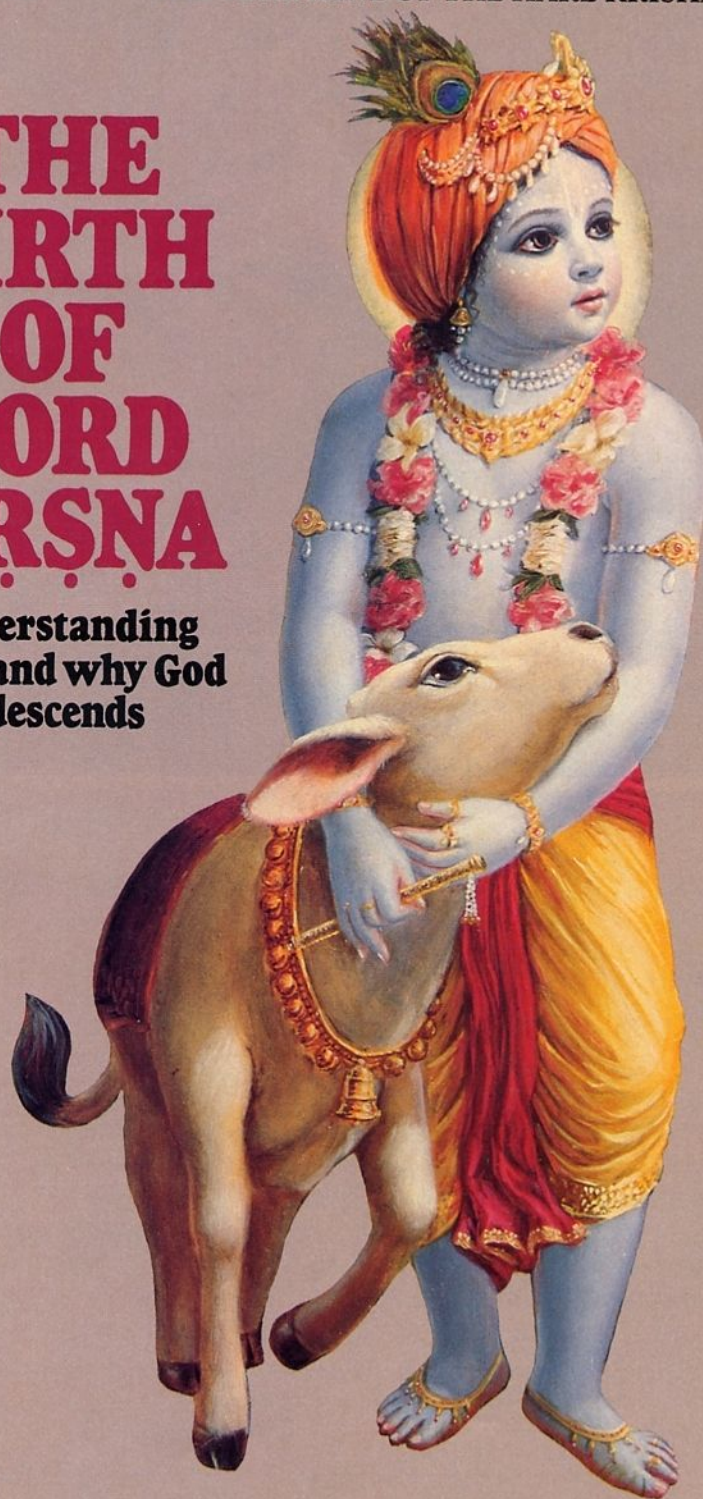


Vol.21 No.8

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT

# THE BIRTH OF LORD KṚṢṆA

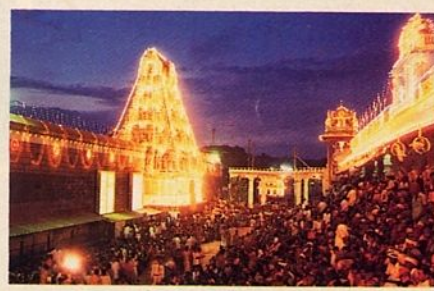
Understanding  
how and why God  
descends



Also:

**The Ultimate  
Terrorist**

**Tirupati Bālajī:  
World's  
Richest Deity**



**The Revolution  
In India's Villages**

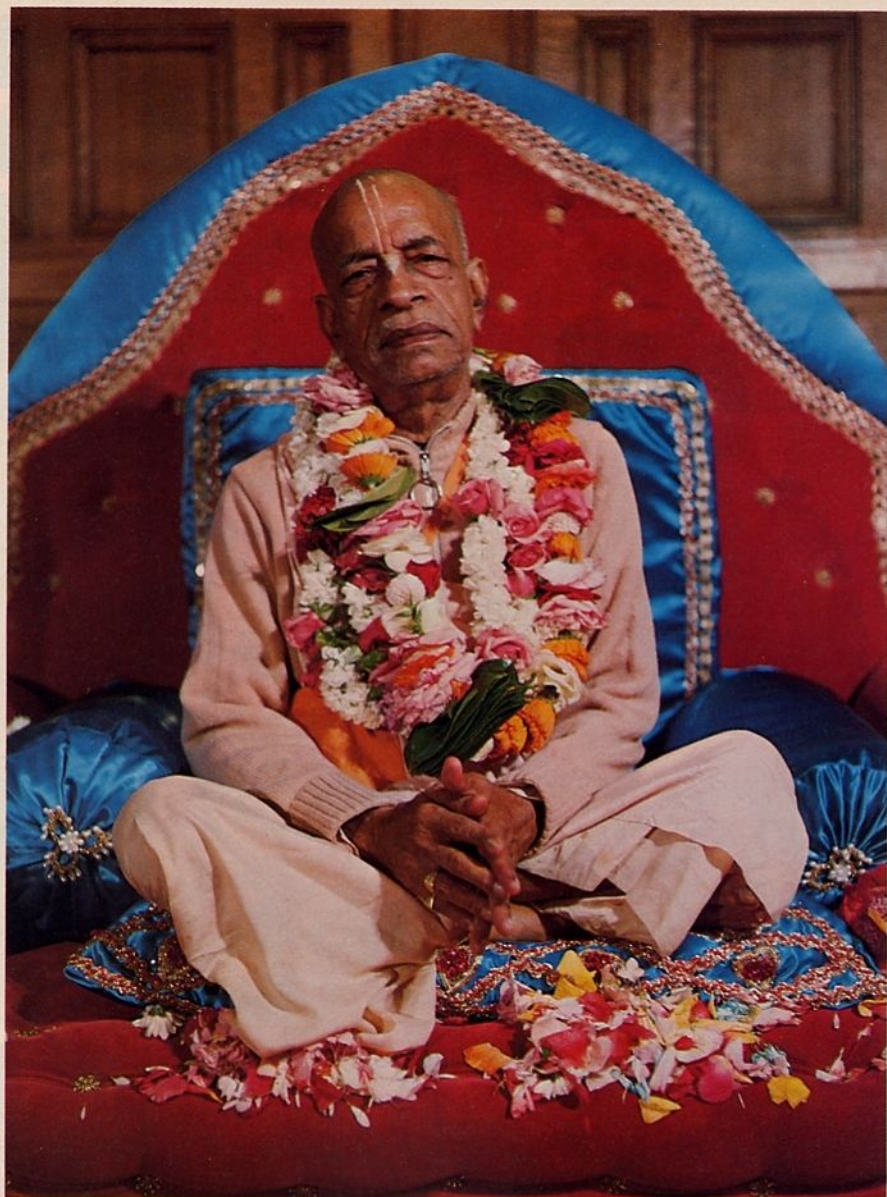
**From Ballet  
To Kṛṣṇa:  
Searching for  
Significance**

**Nuclear  
Nightmares**



**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. Advanced disciples throughout the world have been authorized to serve in the position of spiritual master, initiating disciples of their own. And these disciples, in turn, become linked with Śrīla Prabhupāda through the transcendental system of disciplic succession.



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.



The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement

# BACK TO GODHEAD

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Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda)  
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A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda

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**SPIRITUAL NAMES.** Members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness receive names of Lord Kṛṣṇa or His great devotees, combined with *dāsa* (*dāsi* for women), meaning "servant." For instance, the name *Kṛṣṇa dāsa* means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

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**COVER:** Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, has an eternal youthful body, full of knowledge and bliss. Five thousand years ago Kṛṣṇa appeared on earth in His selfsame spiritual body to display His unlimited pastimes. This year, devotees around the world will celebrate the anniversary of the Lord's appearance, known as Janmāṣṭamī, on August 27. See article, p. 36. (Painting by Parīkṣit dāsa.)

Inset: Temple of Lord Vyenkaṭeśvara (Bālaṅgi). See article, p. 6.







# HIDDEN BLESSINGS

Try as we may, we cannot avoid the frustrations of life.  
But how can we use them to our advantage?

A lecture in London in September 1971  
by His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

In materialistic life we cannot control our senses and mind. The mind is dictating, "Enjoy your senses in this way," and we are enjoying our senses. Materialistic life means sense gratification, and this sense gratification process is going on life after life. In the many varieties of life there are different standards of sense gratification. Kṛṣṇa is so kind that He has given us full liberty to gratify our senses.

We living entities are part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa, and therefore we have small particles of all His desires. Our existence being a small particle of God's, we have all His qualities in a minute degree, just as a small particle of gold has all the qualities of the original gold. Therefore, our enjoying spirit exists because it is there in Kṛṣṇa, the supreme enjoyer.

The *Vedānta-sūtra* says that everything originates in Kṛṣṇa. *Param brahma*, or the Absolute Truth, means "that from which everything is generated." Therefore our desire for sense gratification is coming from Kṛṣṇa. Here is the perfect sense gratification—Kṛṣṇa and His eternal con-

sort, Rādhārāṇī. Young boys and girls are similarly trying to enjoy their senses, but where is this propensity coming from? It is coming from Kṛṣṇa. But the difference between us and Kṛṣṇa is that because we are trying to gratify our senses in the material world, our attempts simply bring us pain and suffering, whereas Kṛṣṇa's sense gratification is full of ever-increasing happiness. Kṛṣṇa consciousness means to gratify your senses in association with Kṛṣṇa. Then your sense gratification is perfect.

For example, if there is a nice sweetball and the finger picks it up, the finger cannot enjoy it. The sweetball has to be given to the stomach, and then the finger can also enjoy. Similarly, we cannot gratify our senses directly. But when we join with Kṛṣṇa, when Kṛṣṇa enjoys, then we can also enjoy. This is our position.

So, we have to purify our propensity for sense gratification. What is that purification? We cannot enjoy anything directly; we have to enjoy through Kṛṣṇa. For example, we take *prasādam* [food offered to Kṛṣṇa]. The nice *prasādam*, the food that is prepared, is not eaten directly—we eat it only after Kṛṣṇa eats. First we offer it to Kṛṣṇa, and then we eat.

What is the difficulty? There is no difficulty, but you become purified. The eating process is the same, but if you eat directly, you become materialistically encumbered. If you offer your food to Kṛṣṇa,

however, and then eat it, you become free from all contamination of material life.

That is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: *yajña-śiṣṭāśinaḥ santo mucyante sarva-kilbiṣaiḥ*. Devotees take *prasādam* after offering it to Kṛṣṇa. That is a form of sacrifice. And whatever we do in this material world that is not a sacrifice for Kṛṣṇa is some sort of sinful activity, even if we do not know it.

For example, killing is sinful, even if we do not kill knowingly. When you walk down the street, you are killing so many insects. Whenever you drink water, you are also killing. Below a waterpot are many ants and microbes that are being killed. Whenever you light a fire, you burn so many small microbes. When you grind spices with a mortar and pestle, you kill many living entities. We are responsible for all this killing. Knowingly or unknowingly, we are becoming entangled in so many sinful activities.

Therefore, in the *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa says that you should eat only those foods that have been offered to Him in sacrifice. Then you become free from all contamination. Otherwise, if you cook so that you can personally eat, without offering your food to Kṛṣṇa, you simply eat all kinds of sinful reactions. That is our position. Unfortunately, because people generally cannot control their senses, they engage in the materialistic way of life and suffer repeated birth and death in different species of life.

Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and Rādhārāṇī, His eternal consort, enjoy blissful pastimes in Goloka Vṛndāvana, Their abode in the spiritual world. By rendering devotional service to Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, the devotee becomes purified and ultimately gains entrance into the divine couple's eternal pastimes, which are forever free of any material taint.



We do not know what our next life will be, but the next life will come. Before us there are so many species of life, and we can take birth in any of them. You can become a demigod, a cat, a dog, Brahmā—there are so many forms of life. In the next life you shall have to accept one of these forms, even if you do not want to.

Suppose somebody says, “In your next life you will have to take the form of a dog or a hog.” You would not like it. But the law of nature says that after giving up this body, when you are not existing in this body anymore, you will have to accept another body according to your *karma*. Your destiny is in the hands of nature. It is arranged by superior supervision.

You cannot order, “Give me the body of Brahmā. Give me the body of Indra or a king or someone else exalted.” That is not in your hands or in my hands; that will be judged by the superior agency of God, and you will be given a suitable body. Therefore, it is our duty to prepare ourselves to qualify for a body that will help us go back to Kṛṣṇa. That preparation is Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Prahlāda Mahārāja, one of the great authorities in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, says that one must take instruction from a *guru*, a spiritual master. But even one who has a nice *guru* cannot become Kṛṣṇa conscious if he is determined to remain in this material world. If my determination is to remain in this material world and enjoy material life, then for me Kṛṣṇa consciousness is impossible.

In the material world people engage in all kinds of political, philanthropic, and humanitarian activities—for what purpose? To make material life happy and prosperous, that’s all. But this is not possible. One should understand that in the material world, however you may try to make adjustments, you cannot be happy. This is the first understanding in spiritual life: that we cannot be happy here in the material world.

To cite an example I have given many times, if you take a fish out of water, you may give it a comfortable velvet bedstead, but still the fish cannot be happy without water. Similarly, we are all spirit souls, and unless we are in spiritual life, we cannot be happy. That is our position.

But we do not know where our real happiness lies, and so we are trying to be happy here, in material conditions. We are becoming frustrated and confused. So we have to give up this hope that we shall be very happy by making adjustments in this material world. That we have to understand first of all. Then Kṛṣṇa consciousness will be effective.

The boys and girls who are our students have become very frustrated with the materialistic way of life. Their fathers and guardians are not poor; there is no scar-

city of food or material enjoyments. Then why are they frustrated? You may say that because India is poverty-stricken the people are frustrated, but why have American boys and girls become frustrated? This is proof that the materialistic way of life cannot make you happy. You may go for some time trying to become happy, but happiness will never come from the materialistic way of life. This is a fact.

Those who are trying to be happy by making adjustments in materialistic life cannot take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Frustration and confusion with the materialistic way of life is the qualification to come to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. These boys and girls have that good qualification.

There is a verse in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that states that Kṛṣṇa, to show some special favor to His devotee, sometimes takes away all the devotee’s material opulences. For example, the Pāṇḍavas lost their

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**Traveling with great  
speed, people are  
going to the office or  
factory from morning  
till night. They are  
working hard, and it  
is called advancement  
of civilization.**

---

kingdom, although Kṛṣṇa was present as their friend. They lost their property, their wife was insulted, and they were driven away to the forest. Why? This question was posed by Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja to Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa replied, “This is My special favor.” Sometimes we cannot understand the special favor of Kṛṣṇa.

So, the frustration of these American and English youngsters with the materialistic way of life is a good qualification for accepting Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Of course, one does not need to become poor to take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. But if anyone has the desire to become spiritually advanced while at the same time enjoying material life, that is not possible. These are contradictory things. You have to become determined to search for happiness only in spiritual life. That is real happiness.

This human form is especially meant for coming to that standard of spiritual life by *tapasya*, by voluntarily rejecting the materialistic way of life. In the history of India there were many great kings who practiced *tapasya*. For example, at the age

of only twenty-four, Bharata Mahārāja left his young wife, his young children, and his whole empire and went to the forest for meditation. There are many such instances.

In the modern civilization, however, very few people are interested in giving up materialistic life and taking up spiritual life. Materialistic life means chewing the chewed. Take, for instance, a father. He works hard to maintain his family. It is very difficult to keep a high standard of living in this age, so he must work very hard and engage his son in the same way. This happens again and again, generation after generation, so it is like chewing chewed things. Suppose you chew some sugarcane, enjoy its juice, and then throw it out into the street. Now, if someone wants to taste it to see how sweet it is, he is chewing the chewed. Similarly, we don’t have very good experience with this materialistic life, this hard struggle for existence, but still we persist in trying to enjoy our senses. This is lust.

In *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa explains that this lust is born of the quality of passion. There are three qualities in the material world: goodness, passion, and ignorance. Because most people are in the mode of passion, they love to work hard for sense gratification. That work is considered happiness. In London you will see everyone engaged in hard work. In the morning, all the buses and trucks are traveling with great speed, and people are going to the office or factory from morning until late at night. They are working very hard, and this is what they call advancement of civilization.

Some people become frustrated; they don’t want all this hard work. Hogs are also working hard day and night, thinking, “Where is stool? Where is stool?” That is their business. Therefore, in one sense this kind of civilization is a hog-and-dog civilization. It is not human civilization. Human civilization means sobriety. As stated in the *Vedānta-sūtra*, a human being should be inquisitive to know these things: Who am I? Why am I put into this condition of working very hard to get a little money? Why am I in this uncomfortable situation? Where did I come from? Where do I have to go?

So, Kṛṣṇa consciousness is for those who have come to detest this material world. They are good candidates for developing Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Then they will inquire why these men are working so hard. Prahlāda Mahārāja answers this in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*: People are working so hard because they do not actually know what the goal of life is. Everyone knows that he is looking after his self-interest, but no one knows what his real self-interest is (*na te viduḥ svārtha-gatiṁ hi*

(continued on page 30)



Coming to Kṛṣṇa

# Free to Dance

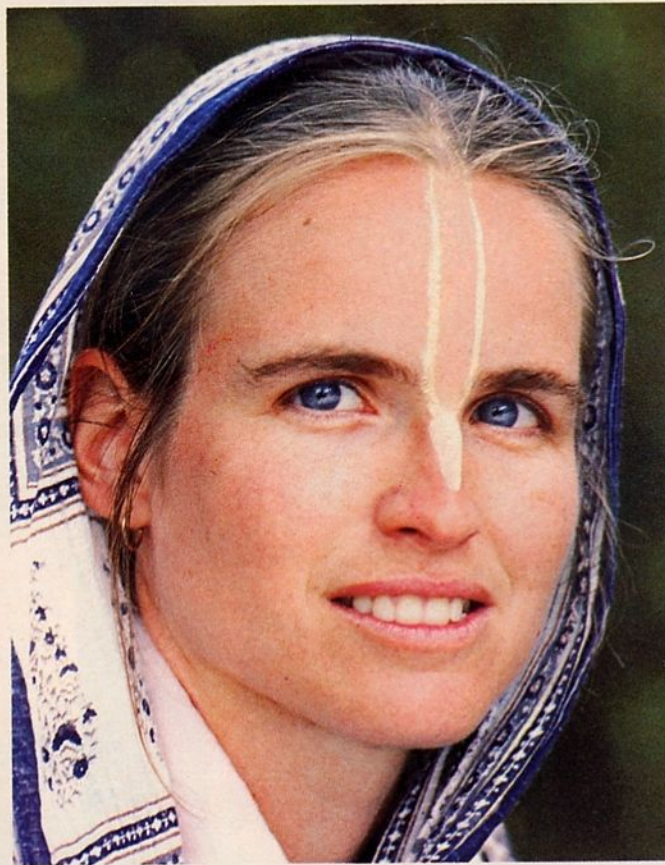
"I could envision myself, floating through pink and lavender hues, transforming my body into delicate strands of emotion."

by DVĀRAKĀDHĪŚA-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

When I was a very young girl, I wanted to become a dancer—not an *ordinary* dancer, bound by the laws of gravity to thump and thud and sweat and pant, but a truly ethereal creature, breathlessly brilliant and light. I could envision myself, floating through pink and lavender hues, transforming my body into delicate strands of emotion. Audiences would be stunned, mystified, enchanted. My entire life would be dedicated to dancing—no time for grocery lists or vacuum cleaners—and although naturally I would grow up to be very beautiful, I would happily forego the messy knots of matrimony for the fulfillment of my unprecedented contribution to the world of ballet.

Within a few years, however, the world became more sharply focused, revealing the reality of a dancer's discipline. I found myself clinging shyly to the wall of the ballet studio, watching the other little girls flutter like fairies across the scuffed tile floor. My feet were not so inclined to follow the flight of my fancy; indeed, I seemed to be more securely weighted to this solid earth than most. Clouded by a myopic fog, and gifted with a singular sense of rhythm that defied conventional synchronization, I suffered through those classes with the growing realization that life must surely consist of more than *this*. After all (I consoled myself), why should I limit myself to a life of physical contortions? What about personal growth? What about intellectual development?

Thus the world's most exquisite bal-



lerina was obliged to retire a full decade prior to opening night, much to her private chagrin. I thought myself to be better suited to becoming a librarian, a teacher perhaps, or a missionary in a foreign land, or maybe a civil rights activist. . . .

How my idealistic daydreams were to suffer, as the years rolled relentlessly past! The same world that had once appeared so fresh lashed out with unexpected resistance to my hopes of a grand entrance. Sex discrimination, cut-throat competition, financial hardships—numberless varieties of ruthless exploitation, crime, and heartache combined to stifle those dreams of glory and success. Suddenly college was upon me, and despite myriad career choices, nothing seemed to reach deep enough to inspire that potential

somebody cowering behind my unrealized aspirations. All I knew was what I didn't want—a long succession of ill-fitting roles prescribed by parents, spouse, employers, grandchildren, and Madison Avenue executives. I wanted to integrate the unique personal essence I knew to be myself into a life rich with significance and purpose. I desired to be the best person I possibly could be, no matter how painful or difficult the endeavor. But where to find such a lofty goal in a world of deliberate self-deception?

I found what I was looking for in a most unexpected place. When I first came into contact with the Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees, I was prepared to dismiss their unorthodox practices as easily as I had rejected many others. Yet in spite of my reservations,

I was impressed by the sincere dedication of the devotees. How much they were sacrificing for their cause, yet with such obvious relish! Although their lives appeared so disciplined and austere—not at all my idea of a happy way of life—they were nonetheless the most satisfied and radiant people I had ever met. Their days were filled with color and song, yet without frivolity, for their philosophy carried the weight of responsibility and introspection. Even the smallest activity was seen in relation to the Absolute Truth. They were constantly striving to increase their already formidable sincerity and infuse their lives with a spirit of devotional meditation.

That's what I grew to treasure about the  
(continued on page 34)



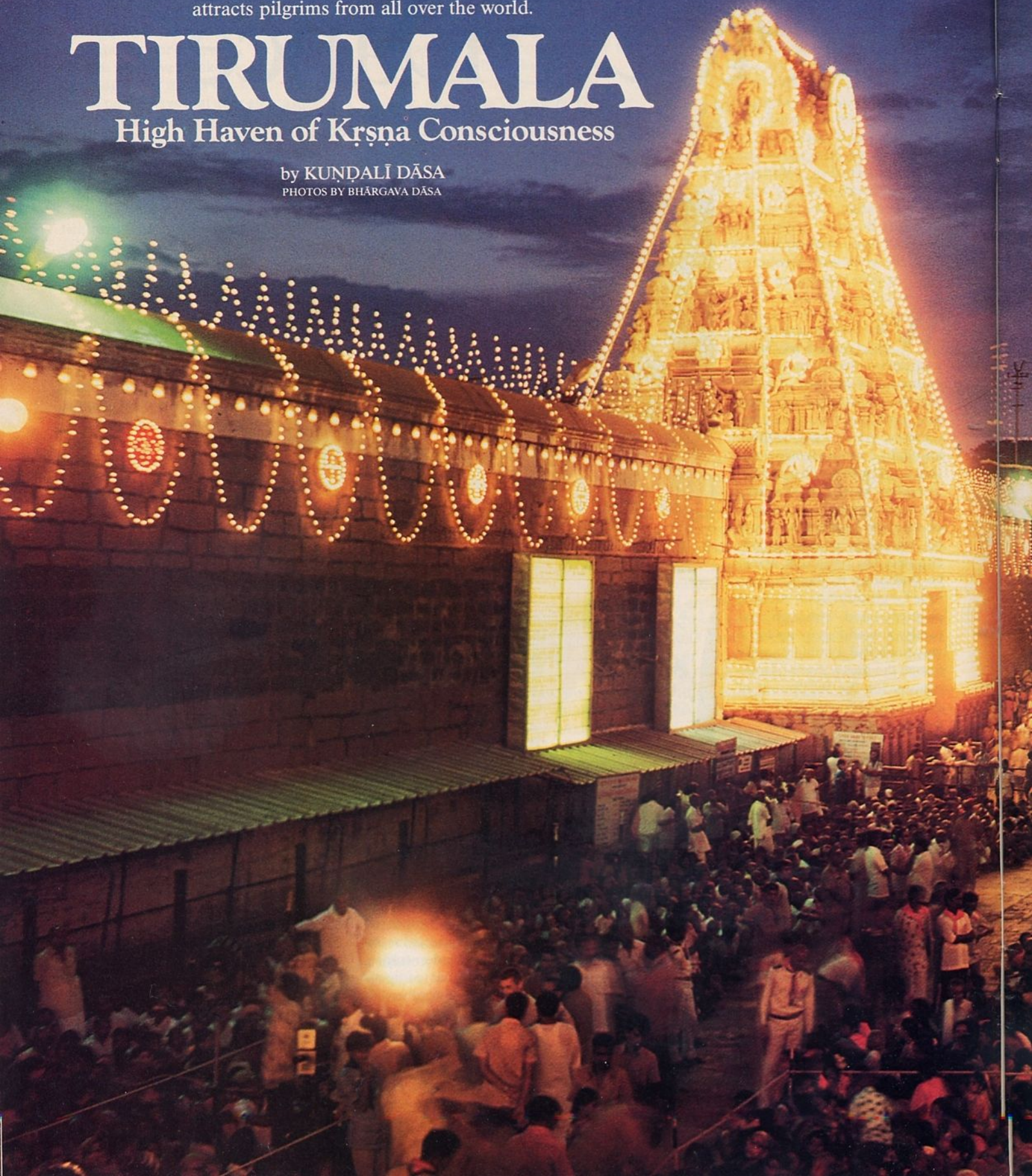
Spiritual Places

Half a mile up in the mountains of South India,  
the temple of Lord Veṅkaṭeśvara  
attracts pilgrims from all over the world.

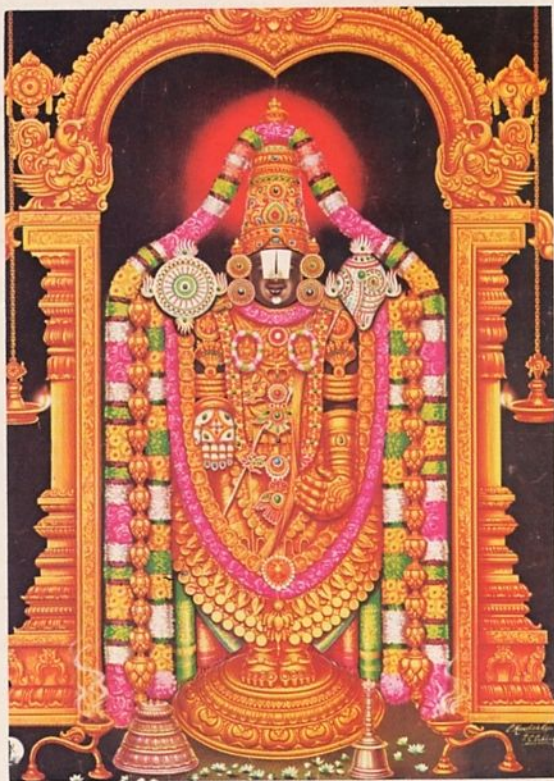
# TIRUMALA

High Haven of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness

by KUNḌALĪ DĀSA  
PHOTOS BY BHĀRGAVA DĀSA







**K**r̥ṣṇa has millions of names. Each name denotes one of His unlimited attributes. He is Rāma, the source of bliss for His devotees; He is Hari, who takes away the anxieties of His devotees; He is Paramātmā, the Supersoul in the hearts of all living entities; He is also called Vyeṅkaṭeśvara, the "Lord of Vyeṅkaṭācala," a chain of hills about one hundred fifty miles northwest

Thousands of pilgrims (below) await the appearance of the processional Deity during one of Tirumala's numerous festivals. The inset shows Lord Vyeṅkaṭeśvara (Bālaṇī), the four-handed Viṣṇu Deity, who receives elaborate worship at Tirumala.







of Madras, in South India.

Of course Kṛṣṇa, being God, is the Lord of all hills. "Vyeṅkaṭācala" refers to the hills where He appeared in a self-manifested Deity form of Lord Viṣṇu some five millennia ago. The same Deity, also known as Bālajī, now resides in a temple in the town of Tirumala, nestled half a mile up in the Vyeṅkaṭācala Hills, known today as the Eastern Ghats. This Viṣṇu temple is the most popular place of pilgrimage in all of India.

To get to Tirumala you must go into the Vyeṅkaṭācala Hills to Tirupati, a town founded by the great saintly devotee and reformer Śrī Rāmānuja (1017–1137). The primary function of Tirupati is to accommodate the tens of thousands of pilgrims traveling daily to and from Tirumala. Day and night a constant roar emanates from these hillsides, as bus after bus wends







Attracting a crowd of pilgrims, blissful street minstrels (left) observe the centuries-old tradition of glorifying the names and pastimes of the Lord and His great devotees. The glittering Ānanda Nilaya Vimāna (opposite page, bottom), "the dome that gives pleasure to the Lord's devotees," stands directly over the inner chamber of the Deity of Vyeṅkaṭeśvara. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the temple underwent extensive repairs and renovations. Two great devotee-kings of the region had the dome thickly plated with gold. Seven-foot-nine-inch-thick walls support the dome. In the background are two intricately carved gates (*go-purams*) through which pilgrims pass as they approach the Deity's inner chamber. Below, a gatekeeper to Vaiṣṇuṭha, the spiritual kingdom of God, stands watch over an entrance to the temple.



its way along the steep and winding mountain road.

If you arrive in Tirupati without a tour bus or some means of a ride to Tirumala, you're in for a thrill. You can always walk up the eleven-kilometer (seven-mile) footpath—it's well lighted at night. Or you might get a seat on board a local bus—one leaves Tirupati every three minutes, from 3:30 A.M. until night. If you board a bus early enough, you can arrive in Tirumala with sufficient daylight left to wait in line, see Lord Vyeṅkaṭeśvara and the temple, then visit the other shrines and places of interest.

Although in Tirumala you will find much to see, your first priority will probably be to get in the long line that goes winding around the temple, from the front entrance and up into the sprawling Queue Complex, a covered stadiumlike

building that holds as many as ten thousand devotees at a time, sheltering them during the long wait to enter the temple. Fortunately, because of the high altitude, the air in Tirumala is fresh, light, and cool. Even in the fierce South Indian summer the devotees are fairly comfortable while waiting to get *darsana*, the audience of Lord Bālaḥ.

Waiting in line to enter the temple, you'll have ample opportunity to take in one of the very fascinating features of the trip: the people. In Tirumala, you will see a greater cross section of Indian people than in any other single place in India (except for Allahabad during the Kumbhā-melā, when, every twelve years, millions congregate to bathe in the Ganges). You'll see bands of gypsies, their womenfolk in colorful full skirts ornamented with tiny mirrors sewn into the fabric. Perhaps you'll

encounter tribal people from the hills of Assam or from remote parts of Gujarat. You'll see wealthy, sophisticated Hindus arriving from all over the globe. You'll see acrobats, jugglers, traveling minstrels, and snake charmers; blissful ascetics, their bodies emaciated from austerities; wealthy businessmen and their families from Calcutta, Delhi, and Bombay. All these diverse peoples flow together, united in their eagerness to see the Personality of Godhead and win His grace.

Waiting in line is also a good opportunity to observe the magnificent architecture of the temple. From outside you can see the dome over the main entrance, teeming with depictions of demigods and various incarnations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. You can also admire the dome over Lord Vyeṅkaṭeśvara's altar. Thickly coated with pure gold, the dome glitters like the self-resplendent spiritual gem *cintāmaṇi*, of which all the buildings in the transcendental kingdom of God are made.

As the day progresses the town gets crowded. There is a perceptible difference, however, between this crowd and the kind of crowd you experience in cities like Bombay or New York. This is a peaceful crowd. The devotees have traveled hundreds, even thousands of miles to see the Deity and make their offerings of prayers and gifts; they are elated, but patient. Waiting to see the Deity, they read scripture, offer prayers to the Lord, chant on their beads, or make small talk. Thus, even though the town appears crowded and hectic, because everyone's mind is on Lord Vyeṅkaṭeśvara, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the atmosphere is always spiritual. Tirumala and the kingdom of God are identical in many ways. For example, the scriptures and great devotees teach that the chief distinction between the spiritual world and the material world is that in the material world everyone is forgetful of Kṛṣṇa, whereas in the spiritual world everyone is fully conscious of Kṛṣṇa. In Tirumala everyone is absorbed in remembering Kṛṣṇa in His four-handed form of Bālaḥ. Certainly such a place is not of this material world.

After seeing the Deity you can tour the rest of the temple and the other buildings



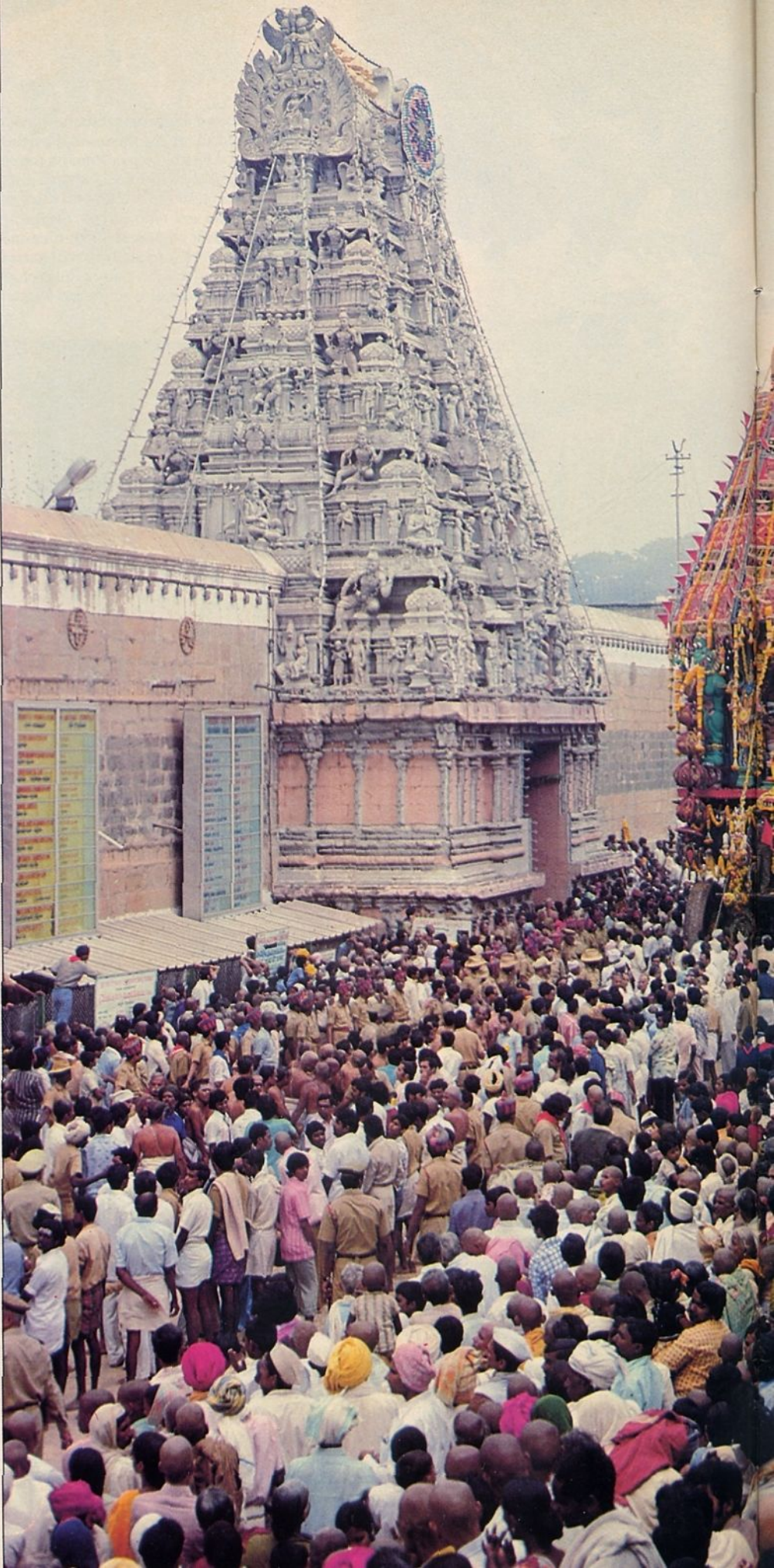
**Brahma-mahotsava**, Tirupati's most popular festival, attracts tens of thousands of pilgrims. The festival runs for fourteen days in the early fall, celebrating the Lord's appearance in Tirupati many millennia ago. During the festival a special small Deity (below)—the original Deity of Lord Vyeṅkaṭeśvara—is eight feet tall—goes on procession twice each day. The Deity rides in one of a dozen conveyances, which are either pulled or carried by His devotees. At right, the Lord's gigantic chariot is dwarfed by the dome over the main entrance to the temple compound.



within the temple compound. (No cameras are allowed.) You'll find numerous statues and reliefs depicting the Lord's incarnations and pastimes. And there are shrines and statues of many great devotees. The Deity's gold and silver palanquins and other sacred paraphernalia are also on display.

That the Deity in Tirumala is a plenary form of Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, was not always known. Traditionally, a Deity of Lord Viṣṇu will bear in His hands certain distinguishing symbols: a lotus, a conch-shell, a discus, and a club. During the time of Rāmānuja, however, in the eleventh century, Lord Vyeṅkaṭeśvara's two upper hands were empty. No one knew why. It was impossible to verify the true identity of the Deity. Was this a form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead or a form of a demigod? To further complicate matters, figures of snakes, symbols of Lord Śiva, are on the body of the Deity. A dispute developed. Some claimed the Deity was Lord Śiva, while others insisted it was Lord Viṣṇu.

In the midst of this feud, Rāmānuja, a saint of great renown, came to Tirumala  
(continued on page 34)







# ISKCON in Tirupati

When ISKCON's founder-*ācārya*, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, visited Tirumala and Tirupati in 1974, he spoke with administrators of the Vyeṅkaṭeśvara temple. He encouraged them to join with ISKCON for the glorification of Lord Vyeṅkaṭeśvara (Kṛṣṇa) throughout the world. Indian-born Śaṅkha-bhṛt dāsa heard these discussions and took heart.

Over the years Śaṅkha-bhṛt dāsa served in nearby Bangalore and Hyderabad. As a natural result of his preaching activities, he developed good relations with the Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD), the board of trustees in charge of the management and development in the region. In 1981 Śaṅkha-bhṛt decided to preach in Tirupati. Mr. P.V.K. Prasad, the executive officer of the TTD at that time, provided an apartment for Śaṅkha-bhṛt and his family. Śaṅkha-bhṛt dāsa and his wife began to distribute Śrīla Prabhupāda's books and *Back to Godhead* magazine door to door and at the bus and train stations.

Śaṅkha-bhṛt: "My idea was to have a big book distribution program, taking the help of TTD for printing books in the South Indian languages. Later on, Śrīla Bhakti-svarūpa Dāmodara Mahārāja visited, and he was very impressed with the potential here for preaching. He thought we should build here, so he advised me to request Mr. Prasad to donate a hundred acres of land. Our proposal was rejected. Mr. Prasad, seeing that I was alone, felt we couldn't make use of so much land."

At every opportunity Śaṅkha-bhṛt reminded Mr. Prasad of Śrīla Prabhupāda's vision: TTD and ISKCON working together in the service of Lord Vyeṅkaṭeśvara. Gradually other devotees joined, and Śaṅkha-bhṛt expanded his preaching programs. In 1982-83, Śrīla Bhakti-svarūpa Dāmodara Mahārāja, director of the Bhaktivedanta Institute, the scientific preaching arm of ISKCON, arranged a number of conferences and seminars in the local schools and colleges. This greatly impressed the people of Tirupati with the scope and purity of ISKCON's programs for presenting Kṛṣṇa consciousness on all levels and to all people.

In 1983 Mr. Prasad paid a visit to Śrīdhāma Mayāpur, the birthplace of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the site of ISKCON's largest project in India.

Śaṅkha-bhṛt: "When Mr. Prasad returned from Mayāpur, he was very enthusiastic to do something to help us. It was a crucial time, because his term as executive officer was coming to an end. I had no idea if the next officer would be as favorable as Mr. Prasad, so I said, 'Forget about the one hundred acres. I humbly beg you to give me a piece of land—whatever you can manage—and we will develop some-

thing on it.' He said, 'O.K. Tomorrow morning come early to my office. I have a place in mind.'

"The next morning I went to Mr. Prasad's office, but they told me he had gone to my apartment. I rushed back and found him with a crew of about twenty workers marking off some property and clearing the land. It was about fifty acres covered with thorns and bushes, and it was very uneven. Mr. Prasad said, 'I am allotting you this piece of land, and these people will clear it for you.' He could see I was a little disappointed because the land looked so rough and so out of the way, but he said to me, 'Don't worry. You don't know the future of this place. It will be one of the best locations in Tirupati, considering the plans for development of this city. It will be a good place for your preaching work.' He also gave seventy thousand rupees for us to build an *āśrama* and *bhājana* hall."

Soon a small temple was constructed to temporarily house the Deities of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda, who had been installed in the summer of 1984. At present, Śaṅkha-bhṛt is busily raising funds for developing the property. Plans include an ornate temple, a three-hundred-room modern guesthouse, a *gurukula* school, and landscaped gardens.

Śaṅkha-bhṛt: "From here we will be able to preach to people all over the world—just by preaching in Tirupati. Everyone comes here on their way to Tirumala. I prayed very hard to Śrīla Prabhupāda to make this happen, and now it is all coming to pass. In the future the bus station will be moved near here, and all the buses will go past our project on the way to Tirumala. We've hardly started our work, yet already we get several busloads of people a day. We will be able to distribute Kṛṣṇa conscious books in every Indian language.

"It is significant that the TTD has given us this land. Every religious group, *yoga* organization, and what-have-you in India has tried to get a place here. Some have been trying for years. They want to come because to be in Tirupati is prestigious. And Tirupati is the wealthiest temple in all of India. If the TTD, which controls a lot of that wealth, decides to back some project, that project will flourish.

"But the TTD hasn't allowed any of these groups to come in. ISKCON is the exception. That's because we are preaching the scriptural conclusions without deviating, without concocting anything. We follow the prescribed *dharma* for the age, chanting the holy names of the Lord, and we are convincing people to live a spiritual life. The TTD trustees like us. They want us to work with them to give people real religion. Śrīla Prabhupāda's vision is coming true."



# THE VEDIC

## Transcendental Comment

### TERROR FROM THE YEAR ZERO

by Suhotra Swami

The year 1986 is proving to be a strange and terrifying year, especially for Americans living in Europe. The fear of terrorist reprisals against U.S. citizens in the wake of President Reagan's air attack on Libya is palpable. Here in Heidelberg, where I spend much of my time, the once-easygoing American military off-base housing installations have been sealed off from the surrounding German neighborhoods by roadblocks manned by armed soldiers in full combat gear. AFN, the U.S. Armed Forces Radio Network, recently aired a half-hour program instructing its listeners on what to do if, while seated peacefully in one's airline seat and quietly anticipating a happy landing in some exotic tourist mecca, "a wild-eyed kid suddenly shoves an AK-47 in your ribs."

It got so bad that American travelers began avoiding Western Europe like the plague, with Hollywood luminaries like Steven Spielberg canceling trips to the Cannes Film Festival. Despite America's recently rediscovered celluloid jingoism, swaggering body-sculpted clones of Rambo were nowhere to be seen in the traditional vacation haunts of London, Paris, and Rome. Instead, globe-trotters from the land of the free and the home of the brave were opting for more somber destinations in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, the Chernobyl reactor began spewing deadly isotopes all over the map. The harried leader of a group of thirty-one tourists from Long Island told *Newsweek* after the group's hasty exit from Kiev, "We came to the Soviet Union because there is no terrorism. And here we were, suddenly in the middle of a major catastrophe."

Though an American by birth, I have an entirely different point of view on all this. I'm a member of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement and have accepted the teachings of *Bhagavad-gītā*, which many Americans might feel presents a too-pessimistic outlook on life. In a sense, that's true—this ancient book of knowledge does de-

scribe this material world as *duḥkhālayam aśāśvatam*, "a temporary, miserable place." However, in my understanding, recent events have only confirmed these wise words. Having no illusions about what to expect from this present plane of existence on which we're all situated, I'm engaged in elevating myself to the ever-blissful spiritual realm of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That I am doing mainly by preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness to others, which is the reason I live in Europe.

I'll admit to the possibility of my being too simplistic, but it seems to me that



Americans have an unlimited capacity for self-delusion. Despite the shocks to our national consciousness that have been summarily delivered with pitiless regularity in Beirut, on board the *Achille Lauro*, and elsewhere, we are not learning the real lesson. It is not a question of a recently increasing trend of terror—the trend was firmly established way back in the year zero. Be it by bullet, bomb, or Alzheimer's disease, everybody's going to be killed by material nature.

Despite their growing sense of unease about the state of the world, Americans have not yet recognized the extent of the danger. While agonizing over the possibilities of long-awaited pleasure tours exploding in our faces, why not just admit from the outset that there is no real pleasure to be had in this tour from birth to

death we call life? Let's finally recognize the simple fact that there's no security from death in this material world, wherever we may go. And let's get on with the *real* business of life: breaking our attachments to falsehood, and rising to meet God face to face.

### SAVING THE DAY

by Mathureśa dāsa

China thinks it may need to establish time zones. The Peking Energy Association has even submitted a proposal for a daylight savings time system: turn the clocks ahead April 1, turn them back September 15.

Although wider than the continental United States, China runs wholly by Peking time. This makes things hard for people living in western regions, such as Tibet. At 10 A.M. in Peking, Tibet is still dark, and the Peking evening news arrives on the airwaves in the early afternoon.

I'll bet all this doesn't really inconvenience most Tibetans, though. They probably ignore the clock, if they have one to ignore, and get up, like most people, sometime around sunrise. And who needs the evening news anyway? It's really preposterous how some people impose on everyone else their versions of time and news.

Not that I'm anti-clock or anti-time. I own an electric snooze alarm. It features a lighted dial so I can see what time it is when one of my kids wakes up crying, and a back-up battery just in case the electricity goes out while I'm sleeping. The alarm is set for 3:30 A.M., but I always hit the snooze control twice, rising at 3:50 to shower, dress, and make it to the nearby Hare Kṛṣṇa temple by 4:15.

The first service every day at the Hare Kṛṣṇa temples, in whatever time zone, is *maṅgala-ārati*. It begins one and a half hours before sunrise during a daily time period called *brāhma-muhūrta*. According to the Vedic literature, this *brāhma-muhūrta* period is especially favorable for spiritual advancement. One who regularly rises at this time, glorifies the Supreme Lord by chanting His names and offering Him prayers, and hears atten-



# OBSERVER

ary on the Issues of the Day

tively about the Lord and His pure devotees from revealed scriptures makes steady progress toward the eternal kingdom of God. *Brāhma-muhūrta* at the Hare Kṛṣṇa temples is an exhilarating experience no one should miss.

I can understand that a Tibetan trying to make spiritual advancement by Peking time would be in big trouble. Four o'clock in Peking must be around midnight in western China, and midnight is nowhere near *brāhma-muhūrta*. So, out of respect for Tibetans with snooze alarms set to 3:30 A.M., China should definitely institute time zones.

But then again, why bother? Peking's rationale is that time zones would save electricity (all those light bulbs burning at 10 A.M. in Tibet), which could be channeled into the country's electricity-starved industries. Here we have a typical example of faulty reasoning coming from people who, due to ignoring the *brāhma-muhūrta*, are interested in material, instead of spiritual, progress. China just wants to get its textile factories humming so it can turn out more blue jeans for export to the West. This is both materially and spiritually shortsighted. China is the world's biggest producer of not blue jeans but rice, and for rice production I'm sure rising with the sun works just fine, no matter what's happening in Peking. If rice farmers wanted to they could rise an hour and a half earlier, make some spiritual progress during the *brāhma-muhūrta*, then spend the day in the paddy fields chanting the holy names.

## BEHIND THE NUCLEAR NIGHTMARE

by Kuṇḍalī dāsa

Seven years ago I lived only an hour from the nuclear plant at Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania. An accident there threatened to trigger a partial meltdown, and alarming quantities of radiation were released into the atmosphere. It was a hair-raising experience. Yet I was more frightened by the recent disaster in the

Soviet plant at Chernobyl, even though it was some fifty-five hundred miles away. Thinking this over, I realized why Chernobyl was so chilling to me. You see, in the interim since Three Mile Island, I have gained a greater appreciation of Kṛṣṇa's words in *Bhagavad-gītā*. Specifically, I have a greater appreciation of His description of the materialistic mentality, which He calls demoniac, and which is responsible for the nuclear terror.

In the sixteenth chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa contrasts the godly and demoniac mentalities. In so doing He makes a point pertinent to atomic meltdowns and other nuclear nightmares:



The demoniac, who are lost to themselves and who have no intelligence, engage in unbeneficial, horrible works meant to destroy the world.

Commenting on this verse, Śrīla Prabhupāda explains that although inventions such as atomic reactors and nuclear warheads are considered to be advancement of human civilization, the net result is more tension, fear, and anxiety. At the time of this writing, for instance, about eighty-four thousand people had to be evacuated because of Chernobyl, and we won't know the toll in human life and the damage to the environment in and around the Soviet Union for many years. As Śrīla Prabhupāda has written, "Ultimately, they will invent or create something that will bring destruction to all. . . . Such weapons are not meant for the peace and

prosperity of the world."

Of course, the materialists don't want to destroy the world. They don't set out to create nightmares such as Chernobyl or Three Mile Island. Their real motive seems far more innocuous: to make the world more livable, to harness nature and make it work for them in achieving more and more sensual pleasures from life.

But Kṛṣṇa's teachings scientifically show that the materialistic outlook is based on the false assumption that the material body is the self and that to gratify the senses is the prime goal of life. Materialists—whom Kṛṣṇa calls *karmīs* because they are ensnared in the retributive law of *karma*—are ignorant of the self beyond the temporary body and of the purpose of human life; they do not know what is good or what is bad for them. Thus, although proud of their technological feats, they are, as Kṛṣṇa says, less intelligent.

All but the most humble materialist, however, are loath to admit these facts. They prefer to concoct various atheistic theories and philosophies (which defy both reason and experience) to justify their attachments to sense gratification. They present themselves as being interested in world peace, using terminology like "the family of man," "the working classes," and so forth. But their words do not tally with their actions.

Kṛṣṇa's version, on the other hand, tallies well with the deeds of these unscrupulous persons:

The demoniac person thinks: "So much wealth do I have today, and I will gain more according to my schemes. So much is mine now, and it will increase in the future, more and more. He is my enemy, and I have killed him, and my other enemies will also be killed. I am the lord of everything. I am the enjoyer. I am perfect, powerful, and happy. I am the richest man, surrounded by aristocratic relatives. There is none so powerful and happy as I am. I shall perform sacrifices, I shall give some charity, and thus I shall rejoice." In this way, such persons are deluded by ignorance.

Materialists, whether communists or capitalists, rich or poor, scientists or philosophers, altruists or misanthropes,

(continued on page 30)



# ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

## Sin in the Name of Religion

*This is the conclusion of a conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and a guest, Dr. Christian Hauser, a psychiatrist, that took place in Stockholm in September 1973.*

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Now, for one who is actually God conscious, where is the question of fighting or killing? Everyone is his brother. He knows God is the supreme father and we are all His sons. So one should know it for a fact—*sarva-yoniṣu kaunteya mūrtayaḥ sambhavanti yāḥ tāsāṁ brahma mahad yonir ahaṁ bīja-pradaḥ pitā* [Bhagavad-gītā 14.4]: “It should be understood that all species of life are made possible by birth in this material nature, and that I, the Lord, am the seed-giving father.” That is God consciousness.

And in the Christian Bible you have the specific commandment “Thou shalt not kill.” Last night, a gentleman asked me, “Thou shalt not kill whom?” But there is no question of whom.

If you ask “Whom?” then at least “Thou shalt not kill thy father and thy mother.” And the cow is your mother, because she supplies you her milk. The cow supplies her milk, and so she is your mother. So how can you kill your mother?

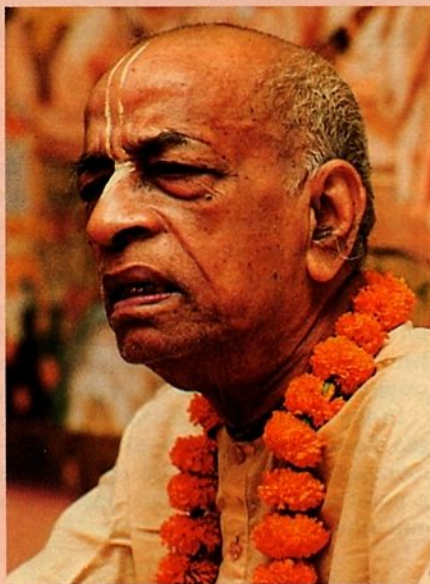
**Dr. Hauser:** Well, some people drink other milk, too. Like goat’s milk. Is the goat a mother if you drink goat’s milk?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes, yes. But generally we drink cow’s milk. Some people may also have drunk goat’s milk at times, but nobody can say, “I’ve never drunk cow’s milk.” Nobody can say this, virtually anywhere in the world. Cows are created for that purpose—supplying us milk.

But we are killing the cow, our mother. And we are killing our father, the bull. The bull is our father because he plows the fields to supply us grain. He goes out and works hard to supply us food. He is a father to us. And yet we are killing him. Therefore, we are killing our very mother and father.

The *Bhagavad-gītā* specifically instructs us, *kṛṣi-go-rakṣya*: We human beings must protect the cow, our milk-giving mother. *Go-rakṣya*—“protect the cow.” Not *go-hatya*—“kill the cow.” This is most sinful.

If one is sinful, how can he say he is religious? Do you think a sinful man can be truly religious? Yet this is going on. In the



name of religion, people are committing sins. I mean to say, this sinful killing of animals, especially cows, is the main cause of humanity’s current degradation.

*Veda-niṣidhya-kārya kare veda-mukhya māne.* As Lord Caitanya said, “People are acting against every religious principle, but advertising themselves, ‘I am religious. I believe in religion.’” These nonsensical things are going on. A Christian is going against the basic Christian principle; nonetheless he is proud of being a Christian.

Today virtually all people are like that—even the Buddhists. In Japan I asked the head of a big printing firm, “You are a Buddhist, and Lord Buddha taught *ahimsā*, nonviolence—no flesh-eating. Do you eat meat?”

And he said, “Yes.” He admitted—“Yes, I am sorry. I eat meat.”

These things are going on. Actually, no religion will allow flesh-eating. In the Mohammedan and Jewish religions also it is allowed only after offering sacrifice—and never is the flesh to be taken when wholesome fruits, nuts, grains, and milk products are available. Only in the desert, or in other words, only as a last resort. Not from a slaughterhouse.

**Dr. Hauser:** Pardon? Not from what?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** A slaughterhouse. But now people are regularly maintaining slaughterhouses. These grossly sinful ac-

tivities are going on.

So in our movement we have got restrictions. Anyone who comes to be a serious student—he must give up the four main sinful activities: illicit sex, gambling, intoxication, and flesh-eating. Every one of our students. Every one. First of all, he must agree to this principle. Then I accept him as my student.

**Dr. Hauser:** Do you use leather?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Generally we avoid it, since at the present time people are obtaining it by sending the animals to the slaughterhouse.

**Dr. Hauser:** So you don’t allow it?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** We don’t use it. For instance, none of our shoes are made of leather. Today there are so many substitutes, various plastics and other things. And every one of them is nice.

But leather, in itself, it is not prohibited, because you can get it after the animal has died a natural death. Yes. In India, those who are flesh-eaters wait until after a cow has died, and then they come and clear away the carcass. Then they eat the flesh and save the bones and horns and hooves and take off the skin to make shoes, and so forth. Since they get all their supplies for nothing, they can easily make their living.

The main idea is, sooner or later the animal will die. So let us wait for that time. Why should we kill a living animal?

**Dr. Hauser:** Do you use leather in your drums?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes, after the cow has died a natural death, that leather can be used.

**Dr. Hauser:** So you have leather drums?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes, that has been the way of making drums for thousands of years. But that leather is collected only after the animal has died a natural death. Not by killing.

So our principle is mercy. Mercy. We never needlessly kill or torment any living being. The Lord is the all-merciful, and now, in this human form, we can revive our relationship with Him. After traveling through untold millions of lower forms, now we can revive our old relationship with the all-merciful. Yes. But only if we become merciful.

**Dr. Hauser:** Thank you very much.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Hare Kṛṣṇa.



# ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

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

## Third Canto: “The Status Quo”

### CHAPTER THIRTEEN

#### The Appearance of Lord Varāha

In this installment of our continuing presentation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, the great sage Maitreya continues his descriptions of the appearance of the Lord's boar incarnation, to Vidura, an eternal associate of the Lord.

#### TEXT 25

निश्चय ते वर्धरितं खखेद-  
क्षयिष्णु मायामयसुकरस्य ।  
जनस्तपःसत्यनिवासिनस्ते  
त्रिभिः पवित्रैर्भुनयोऽगृणन् स्म ॥२५॥  
niśama te ghargharitam sva-kheda-  
kṣayiṣṇu māyāmaya-sūkarasya  
janas-tapaḥ-satya-nivāsinaś te  
tribhiḥ pavitrair munayo 'gṛṇan sma

niśama—just after hearing; te—those; ghargharitam—the tumultuous sound; sva-kheda—personal lamentation; kṣayiṣṇu—destroying; māyā-maya—all-merciful; sūkarasya—of Lord Boar; janas—the Janaloka planet; tapaḥ—the Tapoloka planet; satya—the Satyaloka planet; nivāsinaś—residents; te—all of them; tribhiḥ—from the three Vedas; pavitrāiḥ—by the all-auspicious mantras; munayaḥ—great thinkers and sages; agṛṇan sma—chanted.

#### TRANSLATION

When the great sages and thinkers who are residents of Janaloka, Tapoloka and Satyaloka heard the tumultuous voice of Lord Boar, which was the all-auspicious sound of the all-merciful Lord, they chanted auspicious chants from the three Vedas.

#### PURPORT

The word *māyāmaya* is very significant in this verse. *Māyā* means “mercy,” “specific knowledge” and also “illusion.” Therefore Lord Boar is everything; He is merciful, He is all knowledge, and He is illusion also. The sound which He vibrated as the boar incarnation was answered by the Vedic hymns of the great sages in the planets Janaloka, Tapoloka and Satyaloka. The highest intellectual and pious living entities live in those planets, and when they heard the extraordinary voice of the boar, they could understand that the specific sound was vibrated by the Lord and no one else. Therefore they replied by praying to the Lord with Vedic hymns. The earth planet was submerged in the mire, but on hearing the sound of the Lord, the inhabitants of the higher planets were all jubilant because they knew that the Lord was there to deliver the earth. Therefore Brahmā and all the sages, such as Bhṛgu, Brahmā's other sons, and learned *brāhmaṇas*, were enlivened, and they concertedly joined in praising the Lord with the transcendental vibrations of the Vedic hymns. The most important is the *Bṛhan-nārāḍīya Purāṇa* verse Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

#### TEXT 26

तेषां सतां वेदवितानमूर्ति-  
ब्रह्मावधार्यात्मगुणानुवादम् ।  
विनद्य भूयो विबुधोदयाय  
गजेन्द्रलीलो जलमाविवेश ॥२६॥  
teṣāṃ satāṃ veda-vitāna-mūrtir  
brahmāvadhāryātmaguṇānuvādam  
vinadya bhūyo vibudhodayāya  
gajendra-līlo jalam āviveśa

teṣāṃ—of them; satāṃ—of the great devotees; veda—all knowledge; vitāna-mūrtiḥ—the form of expansion; brahma—Vedic sound; avadhārya—knowing it well; ātma—of Himself; guṇa-anuvādam—transcendental glorification; vinadya—resounding; bhūyaḥ—again; vibudha—of the transcendently learned; udayāya—for the elevation or benefit; gajendra-līlaḥ—playing like an elephant; jalam—the water; āviveśa—entered.

#### TRANSLATION

Playing like an elephant, He entered into the water after roaring again in reply to the Vedic prayers by the great devotees. The Lord is the object of the Vedic prayers, and thus He understood that the devotees' prayers were meant for Him.

#### PURPORT

The form of the Lord in any shape is always transcendental and full of knowledge and mercy. The Lord is the destroyer of all material contamination because His form is personified Vedic knowledge. All the Vedas worship the transcendental form of the Lord. In the Vedic mantras the devotees request the Lord to remove the glaring effulgence because it covers His real face. That is the version of the *Īsopaniṣad*. The Lord has no material form, but His form is always understood in terms of the Vedas. The Vedas are said to be the breath of the Lord, and that breath was inhaled by Brahmā, the original student of the Vedas. The breathing from the nostril of Brahmā caused the appearance of Lord Boar, and therefore the boar incarnation of the Lord is the personified Vedas. The glorification of the incarnation by the sages on the higher planets consisted of factual Vedic hymns. Whenever there is glorification of the Lord, it is to be understood that Vedic mantras are being rightly vibrated. The Lord was therefore pleased when such Vedic mantras were chanted, and to encourage His pure devotees, He roared once more and entered the water to rescue the submerged earth.

#### TEXT 27

उत्क्षिप्तवालः खचरः कठोरः  
सटा विधुन्वन् खररोमशत्वक् ।  
खुराहताभ्रः सितदंष्ट्र ईक्षा-  
ज्योतिर्वभासे भगवान्महीध्रः ॥२७॥  
utkṣipta-vālah kha-carah kaṭhorah  
saṭā vidhunvan khara-romaśa-tvak



*khurāhatābhrahṣaḥ sita-damṣṭra ikṣā-  
jyotiḥ babhāse bhagavān mahidhrahṣaḥ*

*utkṣipta-vālaḥ*—slashing with the tail; *kha-caraḥ*—in the sky; *kaṭhōraḥ*—very hard; *saṭāḥ*—hairs on the shoulder; *vidhunvan*—quivering; *khara*—sharp; *romaśa-tvak*—skin full of hairs; *khura-āhata*—struck by the hooves; *abhrahṣaḥ*—the clouds; *sita-damṣṭraḥ*—white tusks; *ikṣā*—glance; *jyotiḥ*—luminous; *babhāse*—began to emit an effulgence; *bhagavān*—the Personality of Godhead; *mahi-dhrahṣaḥ*—the supporter of the world.

#### TRANSLATION

Before entering the water to rescue the earth, Lord Boar flew in the sky, slashing His tail, His hard hairs quivering, His very glance was luminous, and He scattered the clouds in the sky with His hooves and His glittering white tusks.

#### PURPORT

When the Lord is offered prayers by His devotees, His transcendental activities are described. Here are some of the transcendental features of Lord Boar. As the residents of the upper three planetary systems offered their prayers to the Lord, it is understood that His body expanded throughout the sky, beginning from the topmost planet, Brahmaloka, or Satyaloka. It is stated in the *Brahma-samhitā* that His eyes are the sun and the moon; therefore His very glance over the sky was as illuminating as the sun or the moon. The Lord is described herein as *mahidhrahṣaḥ*, which means either a “big mountain” or the “sustainer of the earth.” In other words, the Lord’s body was as big and hard as the Himalayan Mountains; otherwise how was it possible that He kept the entire earth on the support of His white tusks? The poet Jayadeva, a great devotee of the Lord, has sung of the incident in his prayers for the incarnations:

*vasati daśana-sikhare dharanī tava lagnā  
śaśini kalāṅka-kaleva nimagnā  
keśava dhṛta-śūkara-rūpa jaya jagadīśa hare*

“All glories to Lord Keśava [Kṛṣṇa], who appeared as the boar. The earth was held between His tusks, which appeared like the scars on the moon.”

#### TEXT 28

घ्राणेन पृथ्व्याः पदवीं विजिघ्रन्  
क्रोडापदेशः स्वयमध्वराङ्गः ।  
करालदंष्ट्रोऽप्यकरालदृग्भ्या-  
मुदीक्ष्य विप्रान् गृणतोऽविशत्कम् ॥२८॥

*ghrāṇena pṛthvyāḥ padavīm vijighran  
kroḍāpadeśaḥ svayam adhvārāṅgaḥ  
karāla-damṣṭro 'py akarāla-dṛgbhyām  
udvikṣya viprān gṛṇato 'viśat kam*

*ghrāṇena*—by smelling; *pṛthvyāḥ*—of the earth; *padavīm*—situation; *vijighran*—searching after the earth; *kroḍa-apadeśaḥ*—assuming the body of a hog; *svayam*—personally; *adhvara*—transcendental; *āṅgaḥ*—body; *karāla*—fearful; *damṣṭraḥ*—teeth (tusks); *api*—in spite of; *akarāla*—not fearful; *dṛgbhyām*—by His glance; *udvikṣya*—glancing over; *viprān*—all the brāhmaṇa-devotees; *gṛṇataḥ*—who were engaged in prayers; *aviśat*—entered; *kam*—the water.

#### TRANSLATION

He was personally the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu and was therefore transcendental, yet because He had the body of a hog, He searched after the earth by smell. His tusks were fearful, and He glanced over the devotee-brāhmaṇas engaged in offering prayers. Thus He entered the water.

#### PURPORT

We should always remember that although the body of a hog is material, the hog form of the Lord was not materially contaminated. It is not

possible for an earthly hog to assume a gigantic form spreading throughout the sky, beginning from the Satyaloka. His body is always transcendental in all circumstances; therefore, the assumption of the form of a boar is only His pastime. His body is all *Vedas*, or transcendental. But since He had assumed the form of a boar, He began to search out the earth by smelling, just like a hog. The Lord can perfectly play the part of any living entity. The gigantic feature of the boar was certainly very fearful for all nondevotees, but to the pure devotees of the Lord He was not at all fearful; on the contrary, He was so pleasingly glancing upon His devotees that all of them felt transcendental happiness.

#### TEXT 29

स वज्रकूटाङ्गनिपातवेग-  
विशीर्णकुक्षिः स्तनयन्दुन्द्वान् ।  
उत्सृष्टदीर्घोर्मिश्रजैरिवार्त-  
श्चक्रोश यज्ञेश्वर पाहि मेति ॥२९॥

*sa vajra-kūṭāṅga-nipāta-vega-  
viśīrṇa-kukṣiḥ stanayann udanvān  
utsṛṣṭa-dīrghormi-bhujair ivārtas  
cukrośa yajñeśvara pāhi meti*

*saḥ*—that; *vajra-kūṭa-āṅga*—body like a great mountain; *nipāta-vega*—the force of diving; *viśīrṇa*—bifurcating; *kukṣiḥ*—the middle portion; *stanayan*—resounding like; *udanvān*—the ocean; *utsṛṣṭa*—creating; *dīrgha*—high; *ūrmī*—waves; *bhujaiḥ*—by the arms; *iva ārtas*—like a distressed person; *cukrośa*—prayed loudly; *yajña-īśvara*—O master of all sacrifices; *pāhi*—please protect; *mā*—unto me; *iti*—thus.

#### TRANSLATION

Diving into the water like a giant mountain, Lord Boar divided the middle of the ocean, and two high waves appeared as the arms of the ocean, which cried loudly as if praying to the Lord, “O Lord of all sacrifices, please do not cut me in two! Kindly give me protection!”

#### PURPORT

Even the great ocean was perturbed by the falling of the mountainlike body of the transcendental boar, and it appeared to be frightened, as if death were imminent.

#### TEXT 30

खुरैः क्षुरपैर्दरयन्तदाप-  
उत्पारपारं त्रिपरु रसायाम् ।  
ददर्श गां तत्र सुषुप्तग्रे  
यां जीवधानीं स्वयमभ्यधत् ॥३०॥

*khuraiḥ kṣurapair darayaṁs tad āpa  
utpāra-pāraṁ tri-paruḥ rasāyām  
dadarśa gām tatra suṣupsur agre  
yām jīva-dhānīm svayam abhyadhatta*

*khuraiḥ*—by the hooves; *kṣurapair*—compared to a sharp weapon; *darayan*—penetrating; *tad*—that; *āpaḥ*—water; *utpāra-pāraṁ*—found the limitation of the unlimited; *tri-paruḥ*—the master of all sacrifices; *rasāyām*—within the water; *dadarśa*—found; *gām*—the earth; *tatra*—there; *suṣupsuḥ*—lying; *agre*—in the beginning; *yām*—whom; *jīva-dhānīm*—the resting place for all living entities; *svayam*—personally; *abhyadhatta*—uplifted.

#### TRANSLATION

Lord Boar penetrated the water with His hooves, which were like sharp arrows, and found the limits of the ocean, although it was unlimited. He saw the earth, the resting place for all living beings, lying as it was in the beginning of creation, and He personally lifted it.



## PURPORT

The word *rasāyām* is sometimes interpreted to mean Rasātala, the lowest planetary system, but that is not applicable in this connection, according to Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura. The earth is seven times superior to the other planetary systems, namely Tala, Atala, Talātala, Vītala, Rasātala, Pātala, etc. Therefore the earth cannot be situated in the Rasātala planetary system. It is described in the *Viṣṇu-dharma*:

*pātāla-mūleśvara-bhoga-saṁhatau  
vinyasya pādau prthivīm ca bibhrataḥ  
yasyopamāno na babhūva so 'cyuto  
mamāstu māṅgalya-vivṛddhaye hariḥ*

Therefore the Lord found the earth on the bottom of the Garbhodaka Ocean, where the planets rest during the devastation at the end of Brahmā's day.

## TEXT 31

खदंष्ट्रयोद्धृत्य महीं निमग्नं  
स उत्थितः संरुरुचे रसायाः ।  
तत्रापि दैत्यं गदायापतन्तं  
सुनाभसन्दीपिततीव्रमन्युः ॥३१॥

*sva-damṣṭrayoddhṛtya mahīm nimagnāṁ  
sa utthitah saṁruruce rasāyāḥ  
tatrāpi daityaṁ gadayāpatantaṁ  
sunābha-sandīpita-tīvra-manyuḥ*

*sva-damṣṭrayā*—by His own tusks; *uddhṛtya*—raising; *mahīm*—the earth; *nimagnām*—submerged; *saḥ*—He; *utthitah*—getting up; *saṁruruce*—appeared very splendid; *rasāyāḥ*—from the water; *tatra*—there; *api*—also; *daityaṁ*—unto the demon; *gadayā*—with the club; *āpatantaṁ*—rushing towards Him; *sunābha*—the wheel of Kṛṣṇa; *sandīpita*—glowing; *tīvra*—fierce; *manyuḥ*—anger.

## TRANSLATION

Lord Boar very easily took the earth on His tusks and got it out of the water. Thus He appeared very splendid. Then, His anger glowing like the Sudarśana wheel, He immediately killed the demon [Hiraṇyākṣa], although he tried to fight with the Lord.

## PURPORT

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the Vedic literatures describe the incarnation of Lord Varāha (Boar) in two different devastations, namely the Cākṣuṣa devastation and the Svāyambhuva devastation. This particular appearance of the boar incarnation actually took place in the Svāyambhuva devastation, when all planets other than the higher ones—Jana, Mahar and Satya—merged in the water of devastation. This particular incarnation of the boar was seen by the inhabitants of the planets mentioned above. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī suggests that the sage Maitreya amalgamated both the boar incarnations in different devastations and summarized them in his description to Vidura.

## TEXT 32

जघान रुन्धानमसह्यविक्रमं  
स लीलयेमं मृगराडिवाम्भसि ।  
तद्रक्तपङ्काङ्कितगण्डतुण्डो  
यथा गजेन्द्रो जगतीं विमिन्दन् ॥३२॥

*jaghāna rundhānam asahya-vikramam  
sa līlayebhaṁ mṛgarāḍ ivāmbhasi  
tad-rakta-paṅkāṅkita-gaṇḍa-tuṇḍo  
yathā gajendra jagatīm vibhindaṁ*

*jaghāna*—killed; *rundhānam*—the obstructive enemy; *asahya*—unbearable; *vikramam*—prowess; *saḥ*—He; *līlayā*—easily; *ibham*—the

elephant; *mṛga-rāṭ*—the lion; *iva*—like; *ambhasi*—in the water; *tad-rakta*—of his blood; *paṅka-aṅkita*—smeared by the pool; *gaṇḍa*—cheeks; *tuṇḍaḥ*—tongue; *yathā*—as if; *gajendraḥ*—the elephant; *jagatīm*—earth; *vibhindaṁ*—digging.

## TRANSLATION

Thereupon Lord Boar killed the demon within the water, just as a lion kills an elephant. The cheeks and tongue of the Lord became smeared with the blood of the demon, just as an elephant becomes reddish from digging in the purple earth.

## TEXT 33

तमालनीलं सितदन्तकोट्या  
क्षमास्तुक्षिपन्तं गजलीलयाङ्ग ।  
प्रज्ञाय बद्धाञ्जलयोऽनुवाकै-  
र्विरिञ्चिमुख्या उपतस्थुरीशम् ॥३३॥

*tamāla-nīlaṁ sita-danta-koṭyā  
kṣmām utkṣipantaṁ gaja-līlayāṅga  
prajñāya baddhāñjalayo 'nuvākair  
virīñci-mukhyā upatasthur īśam*

*tamāla*—a blue tree named the *tamāla*; *nīlam*—bluish; *sita*—white; *danta*—tusks; *koṭyā*—with the curved edge; *kṣmām*—the earth; *utkṣipantaṁ*—while suspending; *gaja-līlayā*—playing like an elephant; *aṅga*—O Vidura; *prajñāya*—after knowing it well; *baddha*—folded; *añjalayaḥ*—hands; *anuvākaiḥ*—by Vedic hymns; *virīñci*—Brahmā; *mukhyāḥ*—headed by; *upatasthuḥ*—offered prayers; *īśam*—unto the Supreme Lord.

## TRANSLATION

Then the Lord, playing like an elephant, suspended the earth on the edge of His curved white tusks. He assumed a bluish complexion like that of a *tamāla* tree, and thus the sages, headed by Brahmā, could understand Him to be the Supreme Personality of Godhead and offered respectful obeisances unto the Lord.

## TEXT 34

ऋषय ऊचुः

जितं जितं तेऽजित यज्ञभावन  
त्रयीं तनुं खां परिधुन्वते नमः ।  
यद्रोमगर्तेषु निलिल्युरद्धय-  
स्तस्मै नमः कारणवृकराय ते ॥३४॥

*ṛṣaya ūcuḥ  
jitam jitam te 'jita yajña-bhāvana  
trayīm tanuṁ svām paridhunvate namaḥ  
yad-roma-garteṣu nililyur addhayaḥ  
tasmai namaḥ kāraṇa-sūkarāya te*

*ṛṣayaḥ ūcuḥ*—the glorified sages uttered; *jitam*—all glories; *jitam*—all victories; *te*—unto You; *ajita*—O unconquerable one; *yajña-bhāvana*—one who is understood by performances of sacrifice; *trayīm*—personified Vedas; *tanuṁ*—such a body; *svām*—own; *paridhunvate*—shaking; *namaḥ*—all obeisances; *yat*—whose; *roma*—hairs; *garteṣu*—in the holes; *nililyuḥ*—submerged; *addhayaḥ*—the oceans; *tasmai*—unto Him; *namaḥ*—offering obeisances; *kāraṇa-sūkarāya*—unto the hog form assumed for reasons; *te*—unto You.

## TRANSLATION

All the sages uttered with great respect: O unconquerable enjoyer of all sacrifices, all glories and all victories unto You! You are moving in Your form of the personified Vedas, and in the hair holes of Your body the oceans are submerged. For certain reasons [to uplift the earth] You have now assumed the form of a boar.



## PURPORT

The Lord can assume any form He likes, and in all circumstances He is the cause of all causes. Since His form is transcendental, He is always the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as He is in the Causal Ocean in the form of Mahā-Viṣṇu. Innumerable universes generate from the holes of His bodily hairs, and thus His transcendental body is the *Vedas* personified. He is the enjoyer of all sacrifices, and He is the unconquerable Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is never to be misunderstood to be other than the Supreme Lord because of His assuming the form of a boar to lift the earth. That is the clear understanding of sages and great personalities like Brahmā and other residents of the higher planetary systems.

## TEXT 35

रूपं तवैतन्ननु दुष्कृतात्मना  
दुर्दर्शनं देव यदध्वरात्मकम् ।  
छन्दांसि यस्य त्वचि बहिरोम-  
स्त्राज्यं दृशि त्वङ्घ्रिषु चातुर्होत्रम् ॥३५॥

rūpaṁ tavaitan nanu duṣkṛtātmanāṁ  
durdarśanaṁ deva yad adhvārātmakam  
chandāṁsi yasya tvaci barhi-romasv  
ājyaṁ dṛṣi tv aṅghriṣu cātur-hotram

rūpaṁ—form; tava—Your; etat—this; nanu—but; duṣkṛta-ātmanāṁ—of souls who are simply miscreants; durdarśanaṁ—very difficult to see; deva—O Lord; yat—that; adhvārātmakam—worshipable by performances of sacrifice; chandāṁsi—the Gāyatrī mantra and others; yasya—whose; tvaci—touch of the skin; barhiḥ—sacred grass called *kuśa*; romasv—hairs on the body; ājyam—clarified butter; dṛṣi—in the eyes; tu—also; aṅghriṣu—on the four legs; cātuh-hotram—four kinds of fruitive activities.

## TRANSLATION

O Lord, Your form is worshipable by performances of sacrifice, but souls who are simply miscreants are unable to see it. All the Vedic hymns, Gāyatrī and others, are in the touch of Your skin. In Your bodily hairs is the *kuśa* grass, in Your eyes is the clarified butter, and in Your four legs are the four kinds of fruitive activities.

## PURPORT

There is a class of miscreants who are known in the words of *Bhagavad-gītā* as *veda-vādi*, or so-called strict followers of the *Vedas*. They do not believe in the incarnation of the Lord, what to speak of the Lord's incarnation as the worshipable hog. They describe worship of the different forms or incarnations of the Lord as anthropomorphism. In the estimation of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* these men are miscreants, and in *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.15) they are called not only miscreants but also fools and the lowest of mankind, and it is said that their knowledge has been plundered by illusion due to their atheistic temperament. For such condemned persons, the Lord's incarnation as the gigantic hog is invisible. These strict followers of the *Vedas* who despise the eternal forms of the Lord may know from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that such incarnations are personified forms of the *Vedas*. Lord Boar's skin, His eyes and His bodily hair holes are all described here as different parts of the *Vedas*. He is therefore the personified form of the Vedic hymns, and specifically the Gāyatrī mantra.

## TEXT 36

स्रक्तुण्ड आसीत्सुव ईश नासयो-  
रिडोदरे चमसाः कर्णरन्ध्रे ।  
प्राशित्रमास्ये ग्रसने ग्राहस्तु ते  
यच्चर्वणं ते भगवन्नग्निहोत्रम् ॥३६॥

srak tuṇḍa āsit sruva īśa nāsaya-  
r iḍodare camasāḥ karṇa-randhre  
prāśitram āsye grasane grahāḥ tu te  
yac carvaṇam te bhagavann agni-hotram

srak—the plate for sacrifice; tuṇḍe—on the tongue; āsit—there is; sruvaḥ—another plate for sacrifice; īśa—O Lord; nāsayoḥ—of the nostrils; iḍā—the plate for eating; udare—in the belly; camasāḥ—another plate for sacrifices; karṇa-randhre—in the holes of the ears; prāśitram—the plate called the Brahmā plate; āsye—in the mouth; grasane—in the throat; grahāḥ—the plates known as soma plates; tu—but; te—Your; yat—that which; carvaṇam—chewing; te—Your; bhagavan—O my Lord; agni-hotram—is Your eating through Your sacrificial fire.

## TRANSLATION

O Lord, Your tongue is a plate of sacrifice, Your nostril is another plate of sacrifice, in Your belly is the eating plate of sacrifice, and another plate of sacrifice is the holes of Your ears. In Your mouth is the Brahmā plate of sacrifice, Your throat is the plate of sacrifice known as soma, and whatever You chew is known as agni-hotra.

## PURPORT

The *veda-vādi*s say that there is nothing more than the *Vedas* and the performances of sacrifice mentioned in the *Vedas*. They have recently made a rule in their group to formally observe daily sacrifice; they simply ignite a small fire and offer something whimsically, but they do not strictly follow the sacrificial rules and regulations mentioned in the *Vedas*. It is understood that by regulation there are different plates of sacrifice required, such as *srak*, *sruva*, *barhiḥ*, *cātur-hotra*, *iḍā*, *camasa*, *prāśitra*, *graha* and *agni-hotra*. One cannot achieve the results of sacrifice unless one observes the strict regulations. In this age there is practically no facility for performing sacrifices in strict discipline. Therefore, in this age of Kali there is a stricture regarding such sacrifices: it is explicitly directed that one should perform *saṅkīrtana-yajña* and nothing more. The incarnation of the Supreme Lord is Yajñeśvara, and unless one has respect for the incarnation of the Lord, he cannot perfectly perform sacrifice. In other words, taking shelter of the Lord and rendering service unto Him is the factual performance of all sacrifices, as explained herein. Different plates of sacrifice correspond to the different parts of the body of the Lord's incarnation. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Eleventh Canto, it is explicitly directed that one should perform *saṅkīrtana-yajña* to please the Lord's incarnation as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. This should be rigidly followed in order to achieve the result of *yajña* performance.

## TEXT 37

दीक्षानुजन्मोपसदः शिरोधरं  
त्वं प्रायणीयोदयनीयदंष्ट्रः ।  
जिह्वा प्रवर्ग्यस्तव शीर्षकं क्रतोः  
सत्यवासथ्यं चितयोऽसवो हि ते ॥३७॥

dīkṣānujanmopasadaḥ śirodharaṁ  
tvam prāyaṇīyodayanīya-daṁṣṭraḥ  
jihvā pravargyas tava śīrṣakam kratoh  
satyāvasathyam citayo 'savo hi te

dīkṣā—initiation; anujanma—spiritual birth, or repeated incarnations; upasadaḥ—three kinds of desires (relationship, activities and ultimate goal); śīraḥ-dharam—the neck; tvam—You; prāyaṇīya—after the result of initiation; udayanīya—the last rites of desires; daṁṣṭraḥ—the tusks; jihvā—the tongue; pravargyaḥ—prior activities; tava—Your; śīrṣakam—head; kratoh—of the sacrifice; satya—fire without sacrifice; āvasathyam—fire of worship; citayaḥ—aggregate of all desires; asavaḥ—life breath; hi—certainly; te—Your.

## TRANSLATION

Moreover, O Lord, the repetition of Your appearance is the desire for all kinds of initiation. Your neck is the place for three desires, and Your tusks are the result of initiation and the end of all desires. Your tongue is the prior activities of initiation, Your



head is the fire without sacrifice as well as the fire of worship, and Your living forces are the aggregate of all desires.

## TEXT 38

सोमस्तु रेतः सवनान्यवस्थितिः  
संस्थाविभेदास्तव देव धातवः ।  
सत्राणि सर्वाणि शरीरसन्धि-  
स्त्वं सर्वयज्ञक्रतुरिष्टिबन्धनः ॥३८॥

*somas tu retah savanāny avasthitiḥ  
saṁsthā-vibhedās tava deva dhātavaḥ  
satrāṇi sarvāṇi śarīra-sandhi-  
tvam sarva-yajña-kratur iṣṭi-bandhanaḥ*

*somaḥ tu retah*—Your semen is the sacrifice called *soma*; *savanāni*—ritualistic performances of the morning; *avasthitiḥ*—different statuses of bodily growth; *saṁsthā-vibhedāḥ*—seven varieties of sacrifices; *tava*—Your; *deva*—O Lord; *dhātavaḥ*—ingredients of the body such as skin and flesh; *satrāṇi*—sacrifices performed over twelve days; *sarvāṇi*—all of them; *śarīra*—the bodily; *sandhiḥ*—joints; *tvam*—Your Lordship; *sarva*—all; *yajña*—*asoma* sacrifices; *kratuḥ*—*soma* sacrifices; *iṣṭi*—the ultimate desire; *bandhanaḥ*—attachment.

## TRANSLATION

O Lord, Your semen is the sacrifice called *soma-yajña*. Your growth is the ritualistic performances of the morning. Your skin and touch sensations are the seven elements of the *agniṣṭoma* sacrifice. Your bodily joints are symbols of various other sacrifices performed in twelve days. Therefore You are the object of all sacrifices called *soma* and *asoma*, and You are bound by *yajñas* only.

## PURPORT

There are seven kinds of routine *yajñas* performed by all followers of the Vedic rituals, and they are called *agniṣṭoma*, *atyagniṣṭoma*, *uktha*, *ṣoḍaśi*, *vājapeya*, *atirātra* and *āptoryāma*. Anyone performing such *yajñas* regularly is supposed to be situated with the Lord. But anyone who is in contact with the Supreme Lord by discharging devotional service is understood to have performed all different varieties of *yajñas*.

## TEXT 39

नमो नमस्तेऽखिलमन्त्रदेवता-  
द्रव्याय सर्वक्रतवे क्रियात्मने ।  
वैराग्यभक्त्यात्मजयानुभावित-  
ज्ञानाय विद्यागुरवे नमो नमः ॥३९॥

*namo namas te 'khila-mantra-devatā-  
dravyāya sarva-kratave kriyātmane  
vairāgya-bhaktiyātmajayānubhāvita-  
jñānāya vidyā-gurave namo namaḥ*

*namaḥ namaḥ*—obeisances unto You; *te*—unto You, who are worshipable; *akhila*—all-inclusive; *mantra*—hymns; *devatā*—the Supreme Lord; *dravyāya*—unto all ingredients for performing sacrifices; *sarva-kratave*—unto all kinds of sacrifices; *kriyā-ātmane*—unto You, the supreme form of all sacrifices; *vairāgya*—renunciation; *bhaktiā*—by devotional service; *ātma-jaya-anubhāvita*—perceivable by conquering the mind; *jñānāya*—such knowledge; *vidyā-gurave*—the supreme spiritual master of all knowledge; *namaḥ namaḥ*—again I offer my respectful obeisances.

## TRANSLATION

O Lord, You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead and are worshipable by universal prayers, Vedic hymns and sacrificial in-

gredients. We offer our obeisances unto You. You can be realized by the pure mind freed from all visible and invisible material contamination. We offer our respectful obeisances to You as the supreme spiritual master of knowledge in devotional service.

## PURPORT

The qualification of *bhakti*, or devotional service to the Lord, is that the devotee should be free from all material contaminations and desires. This freedom is called *vairāgya*, or renouncement of material desires. One who engages in devotional service to the Lord according to regulative principles is automatically freed from material desires, and in that pure state of mind one can realize the Personality of Godhead. The Personality of Godhead, being situated in everyone's heart, instructs the devotee regarding pure devotional service so that he may ultimately achieve the association of the Lord. This is confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.10) as follows:

*teṣāṁ satata-yuktānāṁ  
bhajatām prīti-pūrvakam  
dadāmi buddhi-yogaṁ taṁ  
yena mām upayānti te*

“To one who constantly engages in the devotional service of the Lord with faith and love, the Lord certainly gives the intelligence to achieve Him at the ultimate end.”

One has to conquer the mind, and one may do it by following the Vedic rituals and by performing different types of sacrifice. The ultimate end of all those performances is to attain *bhakti*, or the devotional service of the Lord. Without *bhakti* one cannot understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The original Personality of Godhead or His innumerable expansions of Viṣṇu are the only objects of worship by all the Vedic rituals and sacrificial performances.

## TEXT 40

दंष्ट्राग्रकोट्या भगवंस्त्वया धृता  
विराजते भूधर भूः समूधरा ।  
यथा वनाग्निःसरतो दत्ता धृता  
मतङ्गजेन्द्रस्य सपत्रपद्मिनी ॥४०॥

*daṁṣṭrāgra-koṭyā bhagavaṁs twayā dhṛtā  
virājate bhūdhara bhūḥ sa-bhūdhara  
yathā vanān niḥsarato datā dhṛtā  
mataṅ-gajendrasya sa-patra-padmīnī*

*daṁṣṭra-agra*—the tips of the tusks; *koṭyā*—by the edges; *bhagavan*—O Personality of Godhead; *twayā*—by You; *dhṛtā*—sustained; *virājate*—is so beautifully situated; *bhū-dhara*—O lifter of the earth; *bhūḥ*—the earth; *sa-bhūdhara*—with mountains; *yathā*—as much as; *vanāt*—from the water; *niḥsarataḥ*—coming out; *datā*—by the tusk; *dhṛtā*—captured; *matam-gajendrasya*—infuriated elephant; *sa-patra*—with leaves; *padmīnī*—the lotus flower.

## TRANSLATION

O lifter of the earth, the earth with its mountains, which You have lifted with Your tusks, is situated as beautifully as a lotus flower with leaves sustained by an infuriated elephant just coming out of the water.

## PURPORT

The fortune of the earth planet is praised because of its being specifically sustained by the Lord: its beauty is appreciated and compared to that of a lotus flower situated on the trunk of an elephant. As a lotus flower with leaves is very beautifully situated, so the world, with its many beautiful mountains, appeared on the tusks of the Lord Boar.

(continued in next issue)



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**Wellington, New Zealand**—2 Kensington St. (mail: P.O. Box 2753, Wellington)/850876

### RESTAURANT

**Auckland, New Zealand**—Gopal's, 1st fl., Civic House, 291 Queen St./ (9) 34885  
**Lautoka, Fiji**—Gopal's, Cnr. —Yasawa St. & Naviti St./ 62990  
**Suva, Fiji**—Cnr. —Pratt St. & Joske St. (opp. Reserve Bank)/314154

## AFRICA

**Abeokuta, Nigeria**—Ibadan Rd., Obantoko, behind NET (mail: P.O. Box 5177)  
**Accra, Ghana**—582 Bk. 20, Odokor, Official Town (mail: P.O. Box 01568, Osu)  
**Benin City, Nigeria**—Karo Estate Rd., off Upper Mission Rd., (mail: P.O. Box 3681)  
**Buea, Cameroon**—Southwest Province (mail: c/o Yuh Laban Nkesah, P and T, VHS)  
**Durban (Natal), S. Africa**—P.O. Box 56003, Chatsworth, 4030/ (31) 435-815  
**Ibadan, Nigeria**—Oba Akintoba St., opp. Unibadan (mail: P.O. Box 9996 U.I.)  
**Johannesburg, South Africa**—"Misty Hills," Plot 69, Reifontein Rd. (mail: P.O. Box 723, Muldersdrift (Tvl.), 1747/ (11) 666-2716  
**Kitwe, Zambia**—P.O. Box 20242  
**Lagos, Nigeria**—No. 2 Murtala Mohammed International Airport Expressway, Mafaluku (mail: P.O. Box 8793, Lagos)  
**Mauritius**—White House, Celicourt Antelme St., Quatre Bornes (mail: P.O. Box 108, Quatre Bornes, Mauritius)/46804  
**Mombasa, Kenya**—Hare Krishna House, Sauti Ya Kenya and Kisumu Rds. (mail: P.O. Box 82224, Mombasa)/312248  
**Nkawkaw, Ghana**—P.O. Box 69, Nkawkaw  
**Nairobi, Kenya**—Muhuroni Close, off West Nagara Rd. (mail: P.O. Box 28946, Nairobi)/744365  
**Port Harcourt, Nigeria**—2 Eligbam Rd. (corner of Obana Obhan St.), G.R.A. II (mail: P.O. Box 4429, Trans Amadi)  
**Takoradi, Ghana**—64 Windy Ridge (mail: P.O. Box 328)  
**Warri, Nigeria**—1 Ogunu St., Bendel Housing Estate, Ugborikoro (P.O. Box 1922, Warri)/053-230-262

### FARM COMMUNITY

**Mauritius (ISKCON Vedic Farm)**—Beau Bois, Bon Accueil

### RESTAURANT

**Mauritius**—Govinda's, 78, St. Jean Rd., Quatre Bornes/42409

## ASIA

### INDIA

**Agartala, Tripura**—Assam-Agartala Rd., Banamalipur, 799001  
**Ahmedabad, Gujarat**—7, Kailas Society, Ashram Rd., 380 009/449935  
**Bambanore, Gujarat**—N.H. 8-B, Surendranagar (city office: 32 Ananta Nagar, Kalavad Rd., Rajkot 360 003)  
**Bangalore, Karnataka**—210, Bellary Road, Sadashiva Nagar, 560 080/361 539  
**Baroda, Gujarat**—18, Sujata Society, Gotri Rd., 390 015/66499  
**Bhubaneswar, Orissa**—National Highway No. 5, Nayapali, 751 001/53125  
**Bombay, Maharashtra**—Hare Krishna Land, Juhu 400 054/626-860  
**Calcutta, W. Bengal**—3 Albert Rd., 700 017/443757  
**Chandigarh, Punjab**—Hare Krishna Land, Dakshin Marg, Sector 36-B, 160 036/44634  
**Chhaygharia (Haridaspur), W. Bengal**—Thakur Haridas Sripatbari Sevashram, P.O. Chhaygharia, P.S. Bongaon, Dist. 24 Parganas  
**Gauhati, Assam**—Post Bag No. 127, 781 001  
**Hyderabad, A.P.**—Hare Krishna Land, Nampally Station Rd., 500 001/51018  
**Imphal, Manipur**—Hare Krishna Land, Airport Road, 795 001  
**Madras, Tamil Nadu**—232 Kilpaik Garden Road, Madras 600 010/662286  
**Mâyâpur, W. Bengal**—Shree Mâyâpur Chandrodaya Mandir, P.O. Shree Mâyâpur Dham (Dist. Nadia)  
**Moirang, Manipur**—Nongban Inghkon, Tidim Rd.  
**Nagpur, Maharashtra**—70, Hill Road, Ramnagar, 440010/33513  
**New Delhi**—M-119 Greater Kailash I, 110 048/6412058  
**Pandharpur, Maharashtra**—Hare Kṛṣṇa Āśrama, across Chandrabhaga River, Dist. Sholapur, 413304  
**Patna, Bihar**—Rajendra Nagar Road No. 12, 800 016/50765  
**Peta-Kakani, Andhra Pradesh**—Guntur District  
**Pune, Maharashtra**—4 Tarapur Rd.  
**Silchar, Assam**—Ambikapatti, Silchar—788004, Cachar District  
**Surat, Gujarat**—Rander Rd., Jahangirpura, Surat, 395005/84215  
**Tirupati, A.P.**—No. 37, B Type, T. T. D. Qrs., Vinayaka Nagar, K. T. Rd., 517501/2285  
**Trivandrum, Kerala**—T. C. 24/1485, WC Hospital Rd., Thycad, 695 014/68197  
**Vindāvan, U.P.**—Krishna-Balarām Mandir, Bhaktivedanta Swami Marg, Raman Reti, Mathurā/178

### FARM COMMUNITIES

**Hyderabad, A.P.**—P.O. Dabilpur Village, Medchal Taluk, Hyderabad District, 501 401  
**Mâyâpur, W. Bengal**—(contact Mâyâpur)

### RESTAURANTS

**Bombay**—Govinda's (at Hare Krishna Land)  
**Vindāvan**—Krishna-Balarām Mandir Guesthouse

### OTHER COUNTRIES

**Bali, Indonesia**—Jalan Sagamona 17, Renon, Denpasar  
**Bangkok, Thailand**—139, Soi Putha-Osoth, New Road/233-2488  
**Chittagong, Bangladesh**—Caitanya Cultural Society, Sri Pundarik Dham, Mekhala, Hathazari/108 (city office and mail: 23 Nandan Kanan, Chittagong/20-2219)  
**Colombo, Sri Lanka**—188 New Chetty St., Colombo 13/33325  
**Hong Kong**—5 Homantin St., Flat 23, Kowloon/3-712263  
**Jakarta, Indonesia**—Yayasan Kesadaran Kṛṣṇa Indonesia, J.L. Kamboja 10-12, Tomang Raya/599 301  
**Kathmandu, Nepal**—Sri Kunj Kamaladi/2-16368  
**Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**—Lot 9901, Jalan Awan Jawa, Taman Yari, off 5½ Mile, Jalan Kelang Lama, Petaling/730172  
**Manila, Philippines**—170 R. Fernandez, San Juan, Metro Manila/707410

**Taipei, Taiwan**—(mail: c/o ISKCON Hong Kong)

**Tel Aviv, Israel**—P.O. Box 48163, Tel Aviv 61480

**Tokyo, Japan**—2-41-12 Izumi, Suginami-ku, Tokyo T168/ (3) 327-1541

### FARM COMMUNITY

**Cebu, Philippines (Hare Kṛṣṇa Paradise)**—231 Pagsabungan Rd., Basak, Mandaue City/83254

### RESTAURANT

**Cebu, Philippines**—Govinda's, 26 Sanchiango St.

## LATIN AMERICA

### BRAZIL

**Belem, PA**—Av. Gentil Bitencourt, Passagem MacDowell, 96 (entre Dr. Moraes e Benj. Constant)

**Belo Horizonte, MG**—Av. Getúlio Vargas, 167, Funcionários/ (031)223-2776

**Brasília, DF**—MSPW Quadra 13, conj. 6, Casa 8/ (061) 553-1173

**Curitiba, PR**—Av. 7 de Setembro, 1594, Alto da Rua 15/ (041) 264-6634

**Florianópolis, SC**—Rua Ivo Reis Montenegro, 421, Itaguaçu

**Fortaleza, CE**—Rua José Lourenço, 2114, Aldeota

**Goiania, GO**—Rua 104 Bloco 14, Setor Sul

**Manaus, AM**—Rua dos Andradas, 465, Centro

**Pindamonhangaba, SP**—Av. Cel. Fernando Prestes, 405

**Pôrto Alegre, RS**—Rua Tomas Flores, 331, Bonfim

**Recife, PE**—Rua Maria Digna Carneiro, 6960, Candeias, Jaboatão

**Ribeirão Preto, SP**—Rua Cerqueira Cesar, 480, Centro

**Rio de Janeiro, RJ**—Ladeira da Glória, 98, Olória/ (021) 285-5643

**Salvador, BA**—Rua Álvaro Adorno, 17, Brotas/ (071) 244-1072

**Santos, SP**—Rua Antonio Bento, 92

**São Paulo, SP**—Rua Bom Pastor, 798, Ipiranga (mail: C. P. 4855/63-1674)

**Vitória, ES**—Rua Chafic Murad, 218, Praia do Soá

### FARM COMMUNITIES

**Pindamonhangaba, SP (New Gokula)**—Bairro Riberao Grande/ (0122) 42-2466

**Vrajabhumi**—(contact ISKCON Rio)

### MEXICO

**Guadalajara**—Morelos No. 1514, Sector Hildago, Jalisco/26-12-78

**Mexico City**—Gob. Tiburcio Montiel 45, San Miguel Chapultepec, Mexico, D.F. 18/ (905) 271-0132

**Mexico City**—Govinda's Cultural Center, Insurgentes Sur 2384-1, Mexico City 01000 D.F./548-9323

**Monterrey**—Calle Casas Grandes, No. 320-A (second floor), Col. Mitras Centro/483600

**Morelia**—Ticatemene No. 52 pte., Col. Selix Ireta 58070, Morelia, Mich.

**Vera Cruz**—Calle 3, Carebelas No. 784, Fraccionamiento Reforma/50759

### FARM COMMUNITY

**Tulancingo, Hidalgo (Nueva Gauda-Manḍala Bhūmi)**—(contact Mexico City)

### PERU

**Arequipa**—Jerusalem 402/229523

**Cuzco**—San Juan de Dios 285 Altos/222353

**Chosica**—Parque Echenique 122

**Huancayo**—(contact ISKCON Lima)

**Lima**—Avenida San Martín 135, Barranco/670405

**Lima, Peru**—Jiron Junin No. 415/289491

**Trujillo**—Bolívar 738

### FARM COMMUNITY

**Asociacion Krishna**—Correo De Bella Vista, DPTO, De San Martín

### RESTAURANTS

**Arequipa**—(at ISKCON Arequipa)

**Chosica**—(at ISKCON Chosica)

**Cuzco**—Calle Espáderos 128 (near Plaza de Armas)

**Lima**—Av. Grau 137, Barranco

**Lima**—Av. Schell 634, Miraflores

### OTHER COUNTRIES

**Bogota, Colombia**—Carrera 44A, No. 22D-bis-57/269-3118

**Buenos Aires, Argentina**—Centro Bhaktivedanta, Andonaegui 2054, (1431) Buenos Aires

**Call, Colombia**—Avenida 9 Norte, 17-33/621688

**Caracas, Venezuela**—Calle Valparaíso con Callejón Wash., Quinta "Mamá Vieja," El Paraíso/461-6559

**Christ Church, Barbados**—31 Goodland Park/ (809) 42-84209

**Cochabamba, Bolivia**—P.O. Box 3988/46441

**Concepción, Chile**—Nongüen, 588/23150

**Córdoba, Argentina**—Montevideo 950, Paso de los Andes/ (051) 262229

**Crabwood Creek, Guyana**—Grant 1803, Sec. D, Corentyne, Berbice

**Cuenca, Ecuador**—Pje. Paucarabamba & Gral. Veintimilla Barrio-las-Chirimollas/ (07) 82-93-58

**Georgetown, Guyana**—24 Uitvlugt Front, West Coast Demerara

**Guayaquil, Ecuador**—Velez 1915 (between Carchi & Tulcan)/36-16-47

**La Paz, Bolivia**—Calle 16 Obrajes 460, (mail: P.O. Box 10278)/783556

**Medellin, Colombia**—Calle 56 (Bolivia), Parque de Bolívar

**Montevideo, Uruguay**—Pablo de Maria 1427

**Panama, Republic of Panama**—Via las Cumbres, entrada Villa Zaita, frente a INPSA No. 10

(mail: P.O. Box 6-29-54, Panama)/681070

**Quito, Ecuador**—Carrón 641 Amazonas/520466

**San Jose, Costa Rica**—100 mtrs. sureste de aptos. Torre Blanca, Urbanización Carmiol, Montes

de Oca, Casa No. 49 (mail: P.O. Box 166, Paseo Estudiantes, Z-1002)

**San Salvador, El Salvador**—Avenida Universitaria 1132, Media Quadra al sur de la Embajada

Americana, San Salvador (mail: P.O. Box 1506)/25-96-17

**Santiago, Chile**—Manuel Carvallo 771, Nunoa/392734

**Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic**—Calle Cayetano Rodriguez No. 254

**Trinidad and Tobago, West Indies**—Prabhupada Ave., Longdenville, Chaguanas

### FARM COMMUNITIES

**Guayaquil, Ecuador (Nuevo Nilácala)**—(contact Guayaquil)

**Guyana**—Seawell Village, Corentyne, East Berbice

**San Salvador, El Salvador**—Carretera a Santa Ana, Km. 34, Canton Los Indios, Zapotitán,

Dpto. de La Libertad

### RESTAURANTS

**Cuenca, Ecuador**—Govinda's, Anexo Hotel, Crespo

**Guayaquil, Ecuador**—Govinda's (contact Guayaquil)

**San Salvador, El Salvador**—25 Avenida Norte 1132

**Santiago, Chile**—Govinda's (contact Santiago)



# For Your Information

## RESOURCES

**If you're a scientific person, apply your mind to the science of self-realization.** Read *Mechanistic and Nonmechanistic Science*, an investigation into the nature of consciousness and form, by Richard L. Thompson.

In this book, Dr. Thompson shows how physics breaks down when it tries to deal with consciousness. He examines how biology runs in circles when it tries to account for complex forms of life. For scientists seeking a unified view of the world, he suggests looking beyond theories that boil everything down to impersonal arrangements of numbers. And he gives some revolutionary ideas of what science has yet to find. Includes rigorous technical sections you can read if they're for you, or skip over without hindrance if they're not.

245 pages, softbound.

For your copy, check with the gift store at the Hare Kṛṣṇa center nearest you.

**Prepare your child to go back to Godhead.** ISKCON now has more than twenty primary and secondary schools worldwide, and some of these schools are now prepared to accept students from outside their local communities. Here's your opportunity to give your child a strong spiritual foundation, in addition to standard academic knowledge.

For more information, write to Śrī Rāma dāsa, ISKCON Gurukula Education Office, Almviks Gärd, 15300 Järna, Sweden.

**Tired of media stereotypes of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement?** Want to understand who the Hare Kṛṣṇa people really are and what they're about? Then read *Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna: Five Distinguished Scholars on the Krishna Movement in the West*, a collection of interviews with Harvey Cox, Larry Shinn, Thomas Hopkins, A. L. Basham, and Srivatsa Goswami conducted by the book's editor, Steven J. Gelberg, the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement's director for interreligious affairs. Together, these dialogues shed much light on relevant historical, sociological, psychological, and theological issues surrounding the movement. This book will help you understand the logic and appeal of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

276 pages, softbound.

Order from a bookstore or check the gift shop of the Hare Kṛṣṇa center nearest you.

**Enjoy the writings of Śrīla Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami**, one of the present spiritual masters in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. The author of a six-volume biography of Śrīla Prabhupāda, he continues to produce essays, poems, and other writings for everyone interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. For a list of publications, write The Gītā-nāgarī Press, P.O. Box 149, Line Lexington, PA 18932.

**Plain living, high thinking.** Get out of the city—away from the noise, pollution, and the anxiety and madness of city life. Come back

to a simpler, more natural way of life. Live close to the earth, close to God. The Hare Kṛṣṇa movement has thirty-four farm communities throughout the world. These are sacred places where your spirit can unfold. And at the same time, they're realistic, practical places, where you can build a sane, stable life for yourself and, if you're married, for your family.

To find out more, get in touch with the ISKCON farm community nearest you (you'll find them in the list of centers on pages 20–21 of this magazine).

Or write or call Paramānanda dāsa, who is the ISKCON minister for farm communities. His address is the Gītā-nāgarī Farm, R.D. No. 1, Box 839, Port Royal, Pennsylvania 17082; phone: (717) 527-4101.

**Own a full set of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books.**

Now you can have a full library of the Vedic classics in your home. Translated and explained by the world's foremost scholar and devotee, these books open up new realms of spiritual life. Each book is a deluxe, beautifully illustrated hardbound volume. And now we make it far easier for you than ever before to get a full set of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. For details, check with the Hare Kṛṣṇa center nearest you.

**Going to Bombay?**

Visit the ISKCON cultural center—Hare Krishna Land, in beautiful Juhu Beach. A short ride from the Bombay airports, Hare Krishna Land features a gorgeous traditional Kṛṣṇa temple, together with a multistory modern guesthouse, Govinda's pure vegetarian *prasādam* restaurant, musical and theatrical performances in the 425-seat auditorium, and a sublime atmosphere of spiritual realization in the association of Kṛṣṇa's devotees.

For further information, inquire at your local ISKCON center or get directly in touch with ISKCON in Bombay.

**Radio KHQN, ISKCON's Utah station**, offers taped, serialized programs. Each series consists of from thirty to one hundred half-hour programs and is based on ISKCON publications and the Vedic literature. Programs include such topics as Kṛṣṇa, Śrīla Prabhupāda, *Mahābhārata*, *Rāmāyaṇa*, plus programs on diet, reincarnation, science, abortion, and issues of the day. A demo is available for \$1.50 that includes samples of each series. Cost is \$3.00 per sixty-minute tape (postage paid in U.S. only). Write KHQN, P.O. Box 379, Spanish Fork, UT 84660, or call (801) 798-3559.

**Note to Subscribers.** Planning to move? Let us know when and where so we can keep your BACK TO GODHEAD coming without a break.

## FESTIVALS & 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 Sridhara

(July 22–August 19)

**July 24**—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhagavān dāsa Goswami Gurudeva, one of the present spiritual masters in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

**July 26**—Gītā-nāgarī Ratha-yātrā. Call (717) 527-4101. Montreal Ratha-yātrā. Call (514) 521-1301.

**August 1**—Kāmikā Ekādaśī. Fasting from beans and grains.

**August 2**—Vancouver Ratha-yātrā. Call (604) 433-9728.

**August 4**—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Jagadīśa Goswami, one of the present spiritual masters in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

**August 16**—Pavitrārōpaṇī Ekādaśī. Fasting from beans and grains. Also, Los Angeles Ratha-yātrā. Call (213) 836-2676.

**August 17**—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, one of the chief literary disciples of Lord Caitanya.

**August 19**—Appearance anniversary of Lord Balarāma, Lord Kṛṣṇa's elder brother. Fasting till moonrise. Also, the end of Jhulanā-yātrā. Also, the start of the second month of Cātmāśya. Fasting from yogurt.

### Month of Hrsikesa

(August 20–September 18)

**August 27**—Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī-vrata, the appearance anniversary of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Fasting till midnight. Devotees celebrate by recounting Kṛṣṇa's glories and presenting Him gifts. Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa center for details.

**August 28**—Appearance anniversary of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Fasting till noon. Devotees mark this day with personal remembrances.

**August 31**—Annadā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans. Also, the appearance anniversary of Śrīla Gopāla Kṛṣṇa Goswami Bhāgavatapāda, one of the present spiritual masters in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

**September 7**—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Kīrtanānanda Swami Bhaktipāda, one of the present spiritual masters in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

**September 9**—Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Sītādevī, consort of Śrī Advaita Ācārya. Also, the appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Lalitā-devī, foremost of the cowherd girlfriends of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.





# Every Town and Village

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

## Govinda's Restaurant Opens in Ecuador



Karṇāmṛta-devī dāśī serves *prasādam* to guests at Govinda's Restaurant in Cuenca, Ecuador.

**Cuenca, Ecuador**—ISKCON devotees recently opened a restaurant here in this large and important tourist city. The purpose of the restaurant, known as Govinda's, is to distribute *prasādam* (vegetarian food prepared for and offered to Lord Kṛṣṇa). Distributing *prasādam* is a powerful, transcendental means of spiritualizing society. Govinda's is the city's first purely vegetarian restaurant.

The devotees offer a standard menu of soy burgers, yogurt with fruit, milkshakes, vegetable curries, and sweets, as well as Brazilian, Chinese, and Italian cuisine.

Ecuadorian-born Mohana Vilāsa dāsa, who manages both the temple and the restaurant, says the restaurant draws many European and American tourists. They enjoy the fine food in a peaceful atmosphere and derive great spiritual benefit.

## Australian Devotees Send Plea to Soviet Premier

**Sydney, Australia**—ISKCON devotees recently held a demonstration in front of the Russian Consulate here to draw attention to the plight of Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees in the Soviet Union. The demonstrators included fifteen children from the Society's school (*gurukula*) in Murwillumbah, New South Wales.

The event attracted national press coverage, including four television networks and representatives of Australia's leading newspapers. After a press conference held by Cittahārī dāsa (ISKCON's regional secretary for New South Wales and Queensland), two *gurukula* boys released twenty-five white doves, one for each imprisoned devotee in the USSR.

Australia's leading daily newspaper, *The Australian*, ran an article by the nation's

most respected religious writer, James S. Murray. In the article, "Hare Krishnas Victims of Soviet Wrath," Mr. Murray wrote, "The movement has brought KGB investigation and has led to interrogations, raids on meetings, physical violence, and eventual confinement of Krishna devotees in labor camps, psychiatric hospitals, and prisons. . . . The authenticated material supporting their claims [of persecution] is impressive."

Mr. Murray went on to describe the cases of two Russian Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees. Anatoli Pinyayev, Śrīla Prabhupāda's first Russian disciple, is now imprisoned in a special psychiatric hospital in Smolensk, where he is administered heavy, prolonged doses of the drug galoperidol, resulting in a deteriorating physical and

mental condition. Olga Kiseleva, imprisoned for being a Hare Kṛṣṇa devotee, gave birth to a daughter while in prison. Eleven months later the child was dead, owing to poor conditions of the prison. "She [Olga] remains separated from her husband and their two children for the offense of obeying her conscience and wanting to chant the holy names of God," Mr. Murray writes.

Two *gurukula* boys, Prahlaḍa and Ramaṇa, wrote a letter to Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev. Prahlaḍa read the letter on prime-time national television news, capturing the hearts of millions of Australians. The letter appeared in five newspapers and in Australia's *People* magazine, which interviewed Prahlaḍa and Ramaṇa.

Ramaṇa (eleven) and Prahlaḍa (twelve) asked Mr. Gorbachev to let them meet him in Moscow. "For a long time now," the boys wrote, "we have wanted to visit your country, but we are a little scared about the things we have heard about Russia. We have heard some terrible things about what is happening to the parents of Hare Kṛṣṇa children. . . . We don't think you would like it if you were punished for a belief you have." The boys told Mr. Gorbachev they would like to go to Russia and meet children, maybe even his own, to show there was no harm in the Hare Kṛṣṇa life-style. The boys ended by expressing their concern about the nuclear disaster in Chernobyl.



Prahlaḍa dāsa (left) and Ramaṇa dāsa with their letter to Soviet Premier Gorbachev.

BRUCE DEVINE



# IN PURSUIT OF



For those who think perfection is unattainable, the Vedic literature says think again.

by NĀGARĀJA DĀSA

Claims of perfection generally draw skeptical responses. I saw a bumper sticker that read “Christians Aren’t Perfect, Just Forgiven,” implying that if we claim to be perfect no one will believe it. It seems the old adage “Nobody’s perfect” is as popular today as ever. Yet despite

popular opinion, the Vedic literature assures us we can indeed become perfect.

Ordinarily we say that something is perfect when it does what it is supposed to do. A nut may fit a bolt perfectly. A certain gift may be the perfect one for a friend—one that genuinely satisfies him. Or we may



# OF PERFECTION



have just eaten the perfect chili pepper—hot!

The example of the chili pepper helps illustrate the Vedic idea of perfection. The chili is supposed to be hot. You might say that to be hot is its function, the reason for its existence. In Sanskrit the function or

intrinsic qualities of an object are said to be its *dharma*. Thus something is perfect when it displays its *dharma*, when its activity is consistent with its constitutional character.

We also have a *dharma*, an activity we are inherently meant to do. The Vedic

**Spiritual life begins with initiation** by a bona fide spiritual master. Here, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda accepts an aspiring devotee as his disciple. The initiate receives sacred beads and vows to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* a prescribed number of times daily.



literature explains this by first clearing up any misconceptions we may have about our identity. Without knowing who we are, knowing what we are meant to do is impossible. The Vedic literature reveals to us our eternal identity as an infinitesimal spirit soul. We are all tiny parts of the unlimited supreme spirit soul, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Since we are subordinate parts of God our constitutional function is to serve Him. The Vedic literature further states that the pure spirit soul originally and naturally serves God in the mood of unalloyed love. The *dharma* of the living entity, therefore, is to engage in pure devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

Now, does this agree with our everyday experience? Well, don't we all want to love someone? And don't we all want to be loved in return? A boy wants to love a girl, and a girl wants to love a boy. We love our children, our parents, our community, our nation, all of humanity. We even see that those who cannot express their love to other people often live with pets and invest their love in them. The desire to love is intrinsic. It comes from deep within and cannot be checked. And intrinsic to love is service. No one can claim to love without serving the loved one.

Consider the reasonableness of the Vedic declaration that we are meant to love and serve God. We feel a driving need to love and serve, but we do not find satisfaction in the temporal relationships of this world despite our honest endeavors to love and serve. Our attempts to express love and service in the limited, temporary relationships of this world are destined to fail because our love is specifically meant for God. By trying to satisfy our loving propensity independent of God, we remain imperfect.

The perfection of human life, therefore, is to attain to the stage of pure devotional service to Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. And there is a way to reach that stage. The Vedic literature describes not only the process for attaining perfection but also the various levels of perfection along the way.

The *Vedas* emphatically and unequivocally declare that the process for advancing from our condition of materially contaminated consciousness to the exalted state of pure consciousness, wherein one serves God with spontaneous, unadulterated love, is the chanting of the holy names of God:

*harer nāma harer nāma  
harer nāmaiva kevalam  
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva  
nāsty eva gatir anyathā*

"In the present Age of Kali, the age of quarrel and hypocrisy, the only means of deliverance is chanting the holy name of

the Lord. There is no other way. There is no other way. There is no other way." (*Brhan-nāradya Purāṇa*)

When Kṛṣṇa descended five hundred years ago as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, His specific purpose was to inaugurate the *saṅkīrtana* movement—a movement meant to purify anyone who adopts the simple process of chanting the holy names of God. Lord Caitanya especially recommended the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. Not only did He spread the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa all over India, He also empowered His disciples to continue His mission.

Although Lord Caitanya was widely renowned as a scholar, He did not write any books. He left the task of presenting the philosophical and scriptural basis of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement to His intimate disciples. Foremost among His disciples

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**Sometimes one who  
is not free from  
material desires may  
imitate the ecstasy of  
an advanced devotee.  
Don't be fooled.  
Spiritual ecstasy does  
not come cheaply.**

---

was Rūpa Gosvāmī, an erudite scholar and former minister in the government of West Bengal. In his treatise on the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, entitled *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, Rūpa Gosvāmī elaborately described the stages through which one passes as he progresses in spiritual life to the ultimate perfection of pure love of God.

Rūpa Gosvāmī, after a scrutinizing analysis of the vast library of Vedic literatures, defined nine steps to perfection: 1) preliminary faith, 2) association with devotees of the Lord, 3) engaging in regulated devotional activities, 4) becoming free from sinful habits, 5) remaining steady in self-realization, 6) acquiring a taste for hearing about the Supreme Lord, 7) attachment for Kṛṣṇa consciousness, 8) ecstasy, and 9) pure love of God.

By understanding the characteristics of these nine levels of realization, the candidate for spiritual perfection can continually monitor his or her advancement.

The aspirant will also be able to determine who, among those claiming to love God, exhibits the symptoms of God realization.

Each level of spiritual advancement warrants elaborate description, but for our present purpose we will simply explain the prominent characteristics.

The first level of realization is called *śraddhā*, or the point at which one has a little faith that the spiritual path may be the solution to the problems of life. As we previously explained, the soul's innate craving for fulfillment in love can never be satisfied in the material world. No matter how hard we try to be happy, we will inevitably meet with frustration. Realizing the futility of material life, the intelligent and sincere soul will become attracted to the spiritual path.

One who has awakened his attraction to spiritual life, one who possesses a small degree of faith, will naturally want to associate with those who have already progressed to advanced stages of realization. *Sādhu-saṅga*, associating with saintly people, is the second stage. If one is sincere, then Lord Kṛṣṇa, who knows everyone's heart, will direct one to other sincere souls.

In the association of devotees one hears spiritual truth, receives spiritual instruction, develops a stronger faith in the Lord and in the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and prepares to make lifelong vows and to receive formal initiation from a bona fide spiritual master. The Vedic literature declares that one who wants to advance in spiritual life must accept a spiritual master. If one wants to learn some mundane subject, one requires a teacher. Certainly to even hope to understand supramundane subject matter, one requires the guidance of a God-realized spiritual master.

In the third stage one accepts a spiritual master and begins to follow his instructions. This stage is called *bhajana-kriyā*. It is generally understood that one's spiritual life actually begins at the point of initiation. "Initiation," of course, means "beginning." At the time of initiation the disciple begins a new life, regulated by the spiritual master, a life that will enable him to advance surely and steadily toward the final goal.

Developing pure love of God is something like cultivating a plant. At the time of initiation the spiritual master gives the seed of the plant that will one day bear as its fruit pure love of God. Just as a gardener must prepare the earth before seeding it, the disciple must have already prepared his heart (by developing faith and by associating with devotees) to receive the seed of spiritual life at initiation. Now he must give the tender seedling of



devotion regular care, hearing and chanting about Kṛṣṇa and following the directions of the spiritual master.

The bona fide spiritual master initiates the candidate into the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*. Chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa is itself sufficient for self-realization; however, one must chant properly, without offenses. One waters the delicate devotional plant by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, but one must simultaneously pull the weeds: material desires, offenses against devotees, offenses against the holy name. The continual guidance of the spiritual master is essential to insure that the disciple applies the process correctly and thus makes steady advancement.

The fourth stage is called *anartha-nivṛtīh*, freedom from all materialistic pursuits. This has nothing to do with repression, but is a natural stage in spiritual evolution. When one regularly chants the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* and follows the program of spiritual activities prescribed by the spiritual master, one's material desires will undoubtedly diminish. Initiates in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement vow to refrain from meat-eating, illicit sexual relations, intoxication, and gambling. Thus they immediately shun sinful habits and, by the potency of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, gradually purge the desire to commit even

the smallest sins.

Unless one is completely pure, understanding God will not be possible, what to speak of entering a loving relationship with Him. God is the supreme pure; to associate with Him we must also become pure. A genuine religious process must have the power to purify one of the tendency to sin.

The fifth stage is called *niṣṭhā*, steadiness. When one is freed from sinful habits, spiritual advancement is rapid and steady. Only when one abandons all desire to act independently of the order of the Lord can he attain steadiness in self-realization. If one's consciousness is not free of material desire, he will sometimes become distracted from his spiritual pursuit. One on the platform of *niṣṭhā* has firm faith that the single act of perfecting his devotional service to Kṛṣṇa will certainly fulfill all his desires. Therefore, he is not disturbed by the desire to perform extraneous activities.

Due to his full faith in Kṛṣṇa, the steadily devoted soul acquires a taste for Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This taste is called *ruci*, the sixth stage of advancement. The transcendental taste of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is far greater than any taste within our worldly experience. Kṛṣṇa is the reservoir of all sublime tastes, and as one begins to

reawaken his relationship with Kṛṣṇa, he relishes those tastes with ever-increasing pleasure. One highly advanced devotee has revealed the depth of spiritual pleasure available in Kṛṣṇa consciousness by declaring:

Since I have begun to enjoy the transcendental exchanges of love with Kṛṣṇa, which are always newer and newer, whenever I remember the pleasure of past sexual activities, my lips curl and I wish to spit on the idea.

Although sexual pleasure is generally considered the highest pleasure in material life, the devotee who has attained the stage of *ruci* finds it repulsive.

The devotee savors such great pleasure in Kṛṣṇa consciousness that he naturally becomes increasingly attached to Kṛṣṇa. That attachment is the seventh level of spiritual realization, called *āsakti*.

It is the nature of pleasurable objects that one becomes attached to them. In material life this attachment causes great anguish, because we inevitably separate from the objects of our attachment. The devotee who has attained the seventh level of realization need not fear separation from the object of his attachment, because that object is Kṛṣṇa, who is ever existing and ever present. A devotee who is  
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## THE SUNDAY FEAST

What's multicolored, multicourse, carefully prepared from the purest, freshest vegetarian ingredients, mildly seasoned with herbs and spices, offered to Lord Kṛṣṇa with love and devotion, and served free to all comers in a blissful, genial atmosphere until no one can eat another bite? For the answer, visit your local Hare Kṛṣṇa center (see pages 20-21) every Sunday afternoon. And come hungry.





ROGER ANNEY

## Lord Kṛṣṇa's Cuisine

# The Master and the Memorizer

A student of cooking learns that a cook and a recipe tester are not the same thing.

by VIŚĀKHĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

Ten years ago when I was learning to cook, I would go into the kitchen each morning after breakfast armed with several recipes written by my teacher, Yamunā-devī dāśī, take a deep breath, say some prayers to my spiritual master and Lord Kṛṣṇa, and begin to test the recipes. As it turned out, the recipes weren't the only thing tested.

Since I knew little about cooking, I was like a blank slate for Yamunā. I quickly learned from her that turmeric was a bright yellow powder that stained my apron and

that mustard seeds were small, round, and black and went everywhere when I spilled them. But other things took more time to learn.

I remember intensely studying the jars of urad and moong *dāl*, trying to tell one from the other—I was too embarrassed to ask Yamunā again which was which. Was cumin brownish-gray and fennel greenish, or was it the other way around? And then there were the measurements. How many teaspoons in a tablespoon, tablespoons in a quarter cup, ounces in a pound? Toward

the end of the morning I was so dazed by the mental exertion that I generally forgot if I had salted a dish or not. By twelve o'clock both the dishes and the cook were finished.

We would make a lunch offering to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Vanavīhārī, the Deities of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Yamunā was worshipping, and then sit down together for lunch.

In one month I had tested almost two hundred recipes. It was an educational experience. Afterwards, however, a problem arose. When devotees heard that I had been cooking under Yamunā's supervision, they assumed that I had become a cook; they looked on me as Yamunā's protégée. My service took me many places, and usually, at whatever temple I visited, the devotees would assume I was an expert Vedic cook.

True, I could now tell urad from moong and cumin from fennel (fennel is greenish), but I was a recipe tester, not a cook. Give me a clear, comprehensive recipe, the ingredients, and the equipment, and I could make a reasonable facsimile of the dish. But with no recipe—watch out!

A cook, on the other hand, can take whatever ingredients and equipment are available and make a tasty, balanced meal. A cook can apply the principles and procedures of a tradition and make innovative dishes that are still in keeping with that tradition. A cook's art is dynamic, and no matter how much she knows, she's always keen to learn more. And she applies her expertise in unexpected and pleasing ways.

Yamunā was the master, I was the memorizer. After I left her small cottage in southern Oregon, I was called upon to make breakfast daily for a group of devotees in the Los Angeles temple. Drawing on my arsenal of Yamunā's recipes, I astonished myself and everyone else with the results: *boras*, *badas*, *wadas*, *upma*, *idlis*, *dosas*, *sabjis*, *puris*, *parathas*. But I also began to lament how much time it took me each day to pick the recipes, gather the ingredients, and prepare and serve the meal.

Then, quite unexpectedly, my husband and I were asked to open a temple in Butte, a town in northern Malaysia. My husband was the temple president, and I—you guessed it—was the temple cook. Although I thought I followed Yamunā's recipes just as she had taught me, the dishes never seemed to turn out quite right. But I tried my best, offered the result before our small altar, and had the pleasure of distributing *kṛṣṇa-prasādam* to people who had never before tasted it. They appreciated it. We talked to many people about Kṛṣṇa consciousness and gave them Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. Before long, sixty guests were attending our Sunday

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(Recipes from *The Hare Krishna Book of Vegetarian Cooking*, by Ādi-rāja dāsa)

### Seasoned Okra Slices with Coconut (Masala Bhindi Sabji)

Preparation time: 25 minutes  
Servings: 4-6

1 pound fresh, tender okra  
2 teaspoons ground coriander  
½ teaspoon turmeric  
1 pinch cayenne pepper  
1 teaspoon salt  
4 tablespoons ghee (clarified butter) or vegetable oil  
1 teaspoon cumin seeds  
½ teaspoon black mustard seeds  
2 pinches asafetida  
2 ounces grated coconut  
1½ tablespoons lemon juice  
1 teaspoon sugar

1. Rinse the okra pods and pat them dry. Cut off the two ends and slice the pods into rounds ¼ inch thick. (You can cut 2 or 3 pods at the same time.) Put the slices in a mixing bowl and sprinkle over them the turmeric, cayenne pepper, salt, and ground coriander. Toss the slices to coat them evenly with the spices.

2. Heat half the ghee in a frying pan; drop in the cumin seeds and black mustard seeds. Cover the pan for a moment to prevent the mustard seeds from popping out. Then toss in the asafetida and fry for a few seconds. Add as many of the seasoned okra as will fit in one layer. You will probably have to fry them in 2 or 3 batches. You should have an idea of how many batches it will take before you start cooking, so that you can divide the ingredients accordingly. Stir-fry each batch of okra for 3 to 4 minutes, until the pods appear to wilt and brown. For each batch, add a portion of the sugar, a portion of the remaining ghee, and a portion of the grated coconut. Keep frying and stirring until the pods turn reddish brown and are very tender. Sprinkle the lemon juice over them and offer to Kṛṣṇa.

### Sweet-and-Sour Vegetables (Khati mithi sabji)

Preparation time: 40 minutes  
Servings: 4-6

6 ounces tamarind  
2 tablespoons ghee or vegetable oil  
1 teaspoon cumin seeds  
2 tablespoons grated fresh ginger  
2 green chilies, sliced  
½ teaspoon ground black pepper  
¼ teaspoon asafetida  
1 cup whey  
4 ounces brown sugar  
1 pineapple, trimmed and cubed  
3 carrots, sliced  
2 teaspoons mango powder  
2 teaspoons paprika  
2 teaspoons ground coriander  
10 ounces *panir* (milk curd), pressed and cubed  
3 zucchinis, cubed

4 tomatoes, quartered  
3 stalks celery, diced  
2 teaspoons salt  
4 potatoes, peeled, cubed, and deep-fried, or  
3 green plantains, sliced

1. Start by making tamarind juice as follows: Tamarind is a bean pod of a tropical tree. The brown pulp is scraped from the pods, dried, and sold in packets. To use, remove the seeds from the pulp and tear or chop the pulp into small pieces. Boil the pieces in a small amount of water for about 10 minutes, or until the pieces of pulp soften and fall apart. (Use about 2 cups of water to 8 ounces of tamarind.) Then force as much of the pulp as possible through a strainer, catching the juice in a bowl. If tamarind is unavailable, you can simulate its flavor by replacing it with a mixture of lemon juice and brown sugar.

2. Then make the *masālā* as follows. Heat the ghee in a large saucepan and fry the cumin seeds, then the grated ginger and green chilies. Next toss in the ground pepper and the asafetida and fry for a few seconds more. Then pour the whey into the *masālā* and simmer for a moment. Add the tamarind juice, brown sugar, pineapple chunks, sliced carrots, mango powder, paprika, and ground coriander. Allow it to boil and thicken, stirring occasionally to prevent scorching.

3. Meanwhile, deep-fry the *panir* cubes until light brown, and set them aside.

4. Add the zucchini to the *masālā*, cover the pan, and cook until barely tender. Then add the fried *panir* cubes, tomatoes, celery, and salt. Stir well. If you are using sliced green plantains, add them at this point. If you are using fried potatoes, add them after the *panir* cubes have soaked up some of the sauce and become juicy. Cover the pan, and cook until all the ingredients are tender. Offer it to Kṛṣṇa.

### Plain White Rice (Chawal)

Preparation time:  
Steamed rice: 20 minutes  
Boiled rice: 15 minutes  
Servings: 4-6

10 ounces *basmati* or other good-quality long-grain white rice  
1¾ cups water  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 or 2 tablespoons ghee or butter

### Steamed Rice

This method of cooking rice is the one most often used in India. All the water, and whatever flavoring may be added, is absorbed into the rice. You will need a tight-fitting lid to keep the steam from escaping. If too much escapes, the rice will not cook thoroughly.

If you want to flavor the rice, try adding one of the following: a little lemon juice, a tiny pinch of turmeric, a few raw cumin seeds, the skin (not seeds) of a green chili, or a piece of fresh ginger.

Wash the rice, soak it, and let it drain. Bring

the water and salt to a full boil in a 3-quart saucepan.

Heat the ghee in another saucepan over a medium flame and fry the drained rice, stirring for a minute or so to saturate the grains evenly with the ghee. When the grains become translucent, pour the boiling water into the rice. Let the water come to a boil again. Boil rapidly for 1 minute, stirring once to prevent the rice from forming clumps. Cover tightly. Turn the heat to the lowest setting and cook for about 15 to 20 minutes (depending on the type of rice you use), or until the rice has absorbed all the water and is tender and fluffy. Offer it to Kṛṣṇa.

### Boiled Rice

Boiling rice is the quickest way to cook rice. This method is therefore especially useful (but not essential) when the rice is to be mixed with other ingredients. For this method, the rice (washed or unwashed) is boiled in more water than it can absorb; drain when done.

Bring 2 quarts of salted water to a boil in a heavy-bottomed saucepan. Add the rice and boil briskly for about 10 minutes. To tell if the rice has cooked enough, withdraw a grain from the water and squeeze it between your thumb and forefinger. It should mash completely; the center should not be hard. If the center is still hard, boil the rice for a few more minutes and test again. Drain the rice in a colander, then put it into a serving bowl and dot it with butter. Offer it to Kṛṣṇa.

### Tomato Chutney (Tamatar chatni)

Preparation time: 40-50 minutes  
Servings: 4-6

1½ pounds tomatoes  
4 tablespoons water  
1 tablespoon ghee  
1 tablespoon fresh ginger  
2 or 3 fresh chilies, minced  
3 cloves  
4 bay leaves  
1 cinnamon stick 2 inches long  
½ teaspoon cumin seeds  
1 pinch asafetida  
1 teaspoon salt  
3 tablespoons brown sugar

1. Blanch the tomatoes, purée them with 4 tablespoons of water, and set them aside. In a medium-size saucepan, heat the ghee over a medium flame and stir-fry the ginger and the next five spices for 1 minute. Put the tomatoes in the saucepan with the asafetida and salt. Mix with a wooden spoon, cover, and cook over a low flame for 20 to 30 minutes. Stir occasionally at first, then more often as the chutney thickens, until there is hardly any liquid in the pot.

2. Now stir in the sugar and raise the flame. With a quicker motion, stir the chutney for 5 minutes more, or until it has thickened to the consistency of thick tomato sauce. Discard the cloves, bay leaves, and cinnamon stick. Transfer the chutney into a bowl. You can offer it to Kṛṣṇa as a dip for savories or along with a meal.



# PERFECTION

(continued from page 27)

attached to Kṛṣṇa will never give up Kṛṣṇa consciousness, for nothing can sway his determination to serve his supremely attractive master. Mādhavendra Purī, an eminent devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa, prays,

Let the sharp moralist accuse me of being illusioned; I do not mind. Experts in the Vedic activities may slander me as being misled, friends and relatives may call me frustrated, my brothers may call me a fool, the wealthy mammonites may point me out as mad, and the learned philosophers may assert that I am much too proud. Still my mind does not budge an inch from the determination to serve the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, though I am unable to do it.

The pleasure experienced by the devotee in the *ruci* stage gradually intensifies to the point of overwhelming spiritual ecstasy, called *bhāva*, which is the eighth level of transcendental realization. When a devotee reaches this stage, certain symptoms indicative of transcendental ecstasy appear in his body. Rūpa Gosvāmī discusses eight symptoms: perspiration, becoming stunned, standing of the hairs on end, faltering voice, trembling, changing

bodily color, tears, and devastation.

Sometimes one who has not advanced through the preceding seven stages of realization—one who is not even free from material desires—may imitate the ecstasy of an advanced devotee. Don't be fooled. Spiritual ecstasy does not come cheaply; it is the result of dedicated practice of the principles of Kṛṣṇa consciousness for many, many years.

The *bhāva* stage is the preliminary stage of love of God, because one's love for Kṛṣṇa is almost mature. The ecstatic bodily transformations mentioned above are evidence of this, just as the lightening horizon is evidence of the rising sun. An even more reliable demonstration of the devotee's level of advancement can be seen in his normal activities. Rūpa Gosvāmī describes the standard of behavior for a devotee absorbed in ecstatic love (*bhāva*) as follows: 1) He is perseverant and forgiving. 2) He is concerned that no time is wasted outside of devotional service to Kṛṣṇa. 3) He is detached from worldly affairs. 4) He is free of false prestige. 5) He has great hope for receiving Kṛṣṇa's mercy. 6) He is intensely eager for Kṛṣṇa's association. 7) He chants Hare Kṛṣṇa with great relish. 8) He is attached to hearing

descriptions of the transcendental qualities of the Lord. 9) He has deep affection for those places where the Lord resides.

Having progressed through all subordinate levels of spiritual realization, the devotee finally reaches the stage of pure love of God, known as *prema*. The great spiritual teachers of the Vedic tradition define *prema* as the stage in which one invests all of his love in one object—Kṛṣṇa. At this ultimate level of spiritual perfection, the devotee is fully liberated from the influence of the material energy. Although apparently existing within this world, he is undeniably situated in the spiritual world by dint of his complete absorption in the name, form, qualities, and pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The fully matured devotee has now completely reestablished his eternal loving relationship with Kṛṣṇa. He has attained perfection.

Although perfection is rare, it is nevertheless possible. In this age especially, by the inconceivable mercy of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, one can steadily and quickly progress to the ultimate goal of life by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

# NIGHTMARE

(continued from page 13)

educated or illiterate, have one common purpose: sense gratification. As long as they remain our social, economic, political, and intellectual leaders, life will continue to be fear-ridden. The plain and simple truth is that even if we manage to do away with the nuclear threat, we will still not have peace and happiness for long because the persons behind such projects as Chernobyl and Three Mile Island, in their unrelenting quest to bring

nature under their rule, will continue with their "unbeneficial, horrible works."

Does Kṛṣṇa give a solution?

Yes. First, before we can achieve collective peace, we must have peace within ourselves, for society can be only as peaceful as its members. Such peace cannot be legislated. It requires a change of heart, from material consciousness to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. However, once we have made a commitment to effect this change in ourselves, we can try to change the hearts of others.

Kṛṣṇa's formula for this change is that

we acknowledge Him as the supreme beneficiary of all sacrifices and austerities, the Supreme Lord of all the planets, and the actual benefactor and well-wisher of all living entities. He assures us that a person in such pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness "attains peace from the pangs of material miseries." Any solution short of a change of heart, a relinquishing of material values for spiritual ones, insures that the nuclear nightmares or their equivalent will remain with us in one form or another, because the mentality behind them will still be with us.

# BLESSINGS

(continued from page 4)

*viṣṇu*). One should know that his real self-interest is to make progress toward Viṣṇu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. But people do not know this. Why don't they know it? Because they hope for happiness in this material world, which is impossible to achieve. It is good to hope for something that is possible, but if I hope for something that is never possible, that is foolishness.

We are a composition of the external and internal energies of God. The external energy consists of the gross material body of earth, water, fire, air, and ether, along with the subtle material body of mind, ego, and intelligence. Behind both gross and subtle material bodies is the spiritual soul, part of God's internal en-

ergy. Just as your body can be covered by a shirt and coat, which are external to it, so the spiritual soul is covered by the gross and subtle material bodies.

You may think that simply by having a nice shirt and coat you can be happy, but is it possible? Unless you eat nicely, unless you sleep nicely, unless you have your sense gratification, will you be happy simply by putting on a nice shirt and coat? No. That is not possible.

Similarly, it is not possible for the spirit soul to be happy by adjusting Kṛṣṇa's external, material energy. You are a spirit soul. Therefore you must have spiritual food, you must have a spiritual life; then you can be happy. As you cannot be happy simply by having a nice shirt and coat, you cannot be happy simply by the materialistic way of life.

But in the modern civilization, people

are struggling very hard to be happy through the manipulation of gross and subtle matter. Gross matter includes high skyscraper buildings, machines, factories, nice roads, good motorcars, and so on. Subtle matter includes such things as nice songs, poetry, and philosophy. People are trying to be happy with this gross and subtle material existence, but it cannot be.

Why have people accepted this sort of civilization? Because they are led by blind leaders. That is why they're reluctant to hear about God. Though we are conducting this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, very few are interested. But suppose we advertise some falsehood—"If you follow this path, within six months you'll become God and you'll be all-powerful." Many people would come. Such promises are made by one blind man to other blind men. Suppose a blind man says to another



blind man, "All right, come, follow me. I shall help you cross this busy Mulberry Street." The leader is blind, and his follower is also blind. The result will be that they will both be hit by some car or truck and die.

Unfortunately, we are so blind that we do not know we are tied up very tightly by the stringent laws of material nature. How can we become free from this material bondage? We have to take instruction from those who are not blind, those whose eyes are open to spiritual truth and who are liberated from material bondage. You have to take instruction from such persons; then you will understand what your self-interest is. Otherwise, if you are already blind and you take instruction from another blind man, it will be impossible for you to be liberated from the material bondage.

What is the interest of a child when it is crying? It is searching after its mother's breast. Anyone who knows this immediately brings the child to his mother—"Take care of your child; he is crying." The mother takes him to her breast, and the child is immediately happy. The child cannot express what he wants, so he simply cries. But one who knows what he is crying for helps him, and the child becomes happy. Similarly, because we are part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, we are actually crying for Him. But these false leaders, these blind leaders who do not know, are giving us stones instead of bread.

How can one be happy? I have already explained the gross external energy and the subtle external energy. Those who are interested in this gross and subtle external energy will never have their ambition of life fulfilled. Therefore, one who is interested in Kṛṣṇa and in showing others the path to Kṛṣṇa is the real friend to all. One who is giving Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the real friend of the world. No one else can give happiness to human society. That is the statement of Prahlaḍa Mahārāja.

You cannot manufacture a process of happiness by tackling this material energy. That is not possible, because the material energy is not under your control. The material energy is controlled by the Supreme. How can you overpower the material energy? It is not possible. Kṛṣṇa explains that in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.14):

*daivī hy eṣā guṇa-mayī  
mama māyā duratyayā  
mām eva ye prapadyante  
māyām etaṁ taranti te*

"This material energy is under My control, so you cannot overcome it by your own power. But if you surrender unto Me, you can cross over it."

All the material activities of the cosmic manifestation are going on just to bring

the rebellious souls back to Godhead. That is the situation. *Māyā's* stringent laws are there. Why? What is the purpose of the police force or the military force? The purpose is to keep the citizens obedient to the state. If a citizen becomes disobedient to the state laws, he is immediately put into police custody. Similarly, anyone who rebels against the superiority of God is put under the control of the stringent laws of material nature, and he suffers. That is our position.

Therefore our self-interest is to seek out the Supreme Personality of Godhead and surrender unto Him. That will make us happy. That is Prahlaḍa Mahārāja's advice and also ours: Seek out the path of

Kṛṣṇa consciousness and you'll become happy. You'll eat nicely, dance nicely, live nicely, and go back home, back to Godhead. Enjoy this life and the next. That is our request.

The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is so nice. Everyone should take it seriously and try to understand it. It is authorized on the Vedic principles; it is not something manufactured or unauthorized. We are opening centers in different parts of the world to give an opportunity for people to understand their real self-interest: attaining pure devotion for Lord Kṛṣṇa. That is our mission. So kindly help us and join us.

Thank you very much. Hare Kṛṣṇa. ❀

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# ABLE TO CROSS MOUNTAINS

Braving jungle paths, mountain trails, and flooded fields, Bhakti Rāghava Swami has revolutionized the spreading of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in India.

by ĀNAKADUNDUBHI DĀSA

It's six o'clock in the morning. Scores of Bengali pilgrims, bearing their clothes and blankets in bundles across their backs, hair still wet from their early-morning bath in the sacred Ganges, walk barefoot along the narrow road to the Mayapur Chandrodaya temple.

The temple is gorgeously decorated. In the center of the marble floor sits a sacrificial fireplace built of bricks and soft mud. Surrounding it are piles of luscious tropical fruits and flowers. Gaily painted clay pots bearing green coconuts and small festoons rest upon small mounds of fresh, unhusked grains. Painted rice flour motifs of conch shells, flowers, elephants, and sacred cows decorate the floor, and the Deities of Lord Caitanya and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, resplendent in fabulously embroidered silk dresses, bear witness to all.

In the crowded temple room nearly six hundred devotees from around the world sit cross-legged on the cold floor, straining to hear Śrīla Jayapātāka Swami shouting into the microphone to make himself heard above the voices of the excited pilgrims.

"Today we are going to award the order of *sannyāsa* to Rāghava Paṇḍita Prabhu," he explains. "*Sannyāsa* is not an ordinary thing. It is the act of renouncing everything that is sacred to the materialists. To accept *sannyāsa* not only means taking a vow of lifelong celibacy, but it is the act of totally absorbing oneself in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, love of God.

"I find no one more appropriate to receive this title of *sannyāsa* than Rāghava Paṇḍita. He came here to Māyāpur in 1976, on Śrīla Prabhupāda's order. We were reluctant at first to engage him in any services that might be too physically demanding. But one day as I was speaking with him, I started to outline a plan for Nāma Haṭṭa programs that I'd been developing to revolutionize our preaching activities in India. Rāghava took to it wholeheartedly, and in the following six years he traveled all over India, establishing more than one thousand centers.

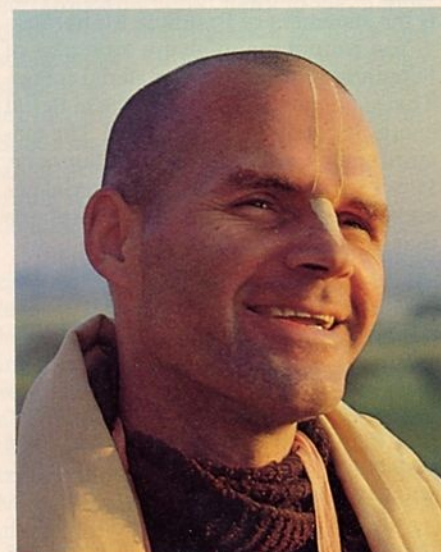
"For those of you who don't already know," Jayapātāka Swami shouts, "Rāghava Paṇḍita cannot even walk without the aid of crutches. But even if no transportation is available or if a particular place is very remote, he will happily walk ten or twelve miles, following jungle paths or hill trails or trudging through fields flooded by swollen rivers. To do these things, one must be detached from his bodily condition. Otherwise, how could he risk so much?

"Therefore," Jayapātāka Swami concludes, "I feel it is most appropriate to

**Bhakti Rāghava Swami** (right) has brought Kṛṣṇa consciousness to thousands of Indian villages. At a recent festival in Māyāpur, West Bengal (above), Bhakti Rāghava Swami chants Hare Kṛṣṇa with Śrīla Jayapātāka Swami Ācāryapāda and villagers from throughout India.



YAMARĀJA DĀSA



VIŚĀKHĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ





award him the title of Bhakti Rāghava Swami.”

A priest ignites the sacred fire while chanting Sanskrit prayers. Flames leap up to lick the ceremonial spoon as the priest feeds them with clarified butter. The initiates confirm their vows, chanting prayers in response to the priest’s call, and the sacrifice is completed.

Later that afternoon I left the main temple and crossed the fields to the Māyapur boys’ school compound, where Bhakti Rāghava Swami—with more than eight hundred fifty members from his various centers—was staying. I made my way to the smallest of the huts. There I found Bhakti Rāghava Swami sitting in the cool stillness, his face and shoulders illuminated by the thin shafts of sunlight shining through the bamboo lattice window

behind him.

Brushing off my congratulations, he eagerly began to speak about the Nāma Haṭṭa program. We walked outside together—he on his crutches—as he described how his party of devotees was systematically visiting every town and village in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, and Bangladesh. When the party arrived in a town, they would invariably be invited to people’s homes. These people would be encouraged to develop their home into a temple and to preach door to door, distributing books, pamphlets, and *prasādam* (spiritual food). In this way, Bhakti Rāghava Paṇḍita had opened one thousand preaching centers, transforming the lives of thousands of people.

Yet when he spoke there was no hint of self-importance, but a sense of wonder at

how the predictions of the great spiritual teachers were coming to pass. In the late nineteenth century Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura had envisioned a splendid city populated by Vaiṣṇavas right here in Śrīdhāma Māyapur, a place where devotees from all over the world could gather together and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and glorify Lord Caitanya.

Bhakti Rāghava Swami and I had been walking around together for almost one hour before it occurred to me how difficult it must be for him, walking with crutches on India’s rough roads. He had been lame in his right leg since his youth, but in March 1984 he lost the leg in a bomb blast when he tried to stop a band of armed robbers from stealing the worshipable Deities of the Mayapur Chandrodaya Mandir. I asked him if it caused



him much inconvenience.

"Well, at least my leg doesn't get in the way anymore," he joked. "But seriously, I just try to use whatever energy the Lord has given me in His service. If I were to lament, I would not accomplish anything."

I remembered visiting Bhakti Rāghava Swami in a village hospital the day after the bombing incident. He had been lying on a small bed in a drab, unpainted four-by-eight-foot room. I'd brought him some fruits and flower garlands. Scores of local people who had heard about the incident crowded into the room, staring at him in disbelief.

"Should I tell them to leave?" I asked.

"No, it's all right. I'm used to it," he replied, weak from loss of blood. He proceeded to preach to the crowd in fluent Bengali. "Here is evidence that this temporary body is simply a source of misery. Don't waste your lives trying to make a comfortable material situation. It can all be taken away within a moment—as you can see. Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu ap-


peared here in Bengal five hundred years ago to teach us to chant the *mahā-mantra*: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. This chanting is a call to the supreme soul, Kṛṣṇa, to free us from material energy and accept us within His spiritual energy. So please take up this chanting."

He fell silent, exhausted. The people were amazed that a person in such a painful condition could speak so eloquently. And this was a Westerner, speaking their language and telling them what they should have already known. Many bowed down to offer this saint their respects. My eyes filled with tears of pride and admiration.

Night was now closing in as we returned along the raised dirt road to the temple to attend an awards ceremony for the members of the Nāma Haṭṭa program. It was dark by the time we arrived at the temple, and decorative street lamps illuminated the roads. Thousands of pilgrims crowded into the temple grounds. The temple was

already packed.

Raising his voice above the loud splash of the fountain, Bhakti Rāghava Swami commented, "Lord Caitanya has given the most sublime and practical process for realizing our eternal spiritual identity, so that we can cease the illusion of falsely identifying with the temporary material body. We simply have to chant the holy names of Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura wrote in one of his famous songs, *jīva kṛṣṇa dās e viśvās, korle to' ar duḥkha nai*. 'O spirit soul, if you just realized that you are the eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa, all your problems would be removed.' The purpose of the Nāma Haṭṭa is to distribute this knowledge all over India, and all over the world."

As he spoke, I saw intense compassion and determination in his eyes. I was reminded of a verse written by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, the sixteenth-century biographer of Lord Caitanya: Even though a devotee may be lame, by keeping complete faith in Lord Caitanya, he will be able to cross mountains. 


## Free to Dance

(continued from page 5)

devotees, their sweet understanding that everything is meant as an offering of love to God. They saw His presence everywhere and delighted in His will as the vital center of their lives. I was attracted, not simply by an unusual style of living, but by the real experience of coming closer to someone whom I knew intuitively to be the most significant person in my life, the eternal, all-attractive Lord. I saw that all materialistic paths would cheat me of this very deep happiness of intimate exchange with Him.

Becoming a devotee was not simply another career choice, a parody of conventional occupations with an exotic cultural flavoring; it was an unveiling of the spiritual personality suffocating under layers of assumed identities. I began to perceive how I had defined my very existence according to the circumstances of my birth, and how relentlessly I was suffering from this temporal and uncertain identity. When I began to sense that all that appeared glorious in this world was but a meaningless embellishment of this basic misidentification, I decided to try this revolutionary alternative. To discover the real me, hidden beneath a mass of

flesh and relative values, was something I felt could warrant lifelong dedication.

I've never regretted my decision to take up Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The austerities of spiritual discipline become increasingly effortless as I gradually perceive how they are releasing me from the blind suffering of sense gratification. That longing to be free from the forces of physical gravity and social conventions now has definite direction in the path back to the spiritual world. My life might be riddled with the imperfections of my personal lack of sincerity, but I have a goal that is noble and wonderful and pure. And I even get to dance after all. 

## Memorizer


(continued from page 28)

feast. In time we left the temple in the hands of competent Malaysian devotees and returned to our service in the United States.

It has been ten years since I've tested a recipe, and the challenge and excitement of those first days, when I was like a bud-

ding scientist performing important experiments in a laboratory, has faded. But I'm still benefiting from the experience. When my husband or I start feeling hungry, say around noon, I stop what I'm doing and make a full meal, ready by one. And while it cooks, I can usually even find time to do a few other things. At some point during those years, cooking for Kṛṣṇa changed for me from a mind-boggling, time-

consuming endeavor and became more natural—almost as natural as eating.

In my family we take simple, healthy *prasādam*. *Kichari* is one of our favorites. We also enjoy varieties of *rices*, *dāls*, vegetables, salads, and breads. And when we feel we're eating the same thing all the time, we go across the street to Yamunā's house, because she practically never makes the same thing twice. 

## TIRUMALA


(continued from page 10)

on pilgrimage. Both factions called on him to settle their dispute. Śrī Rāmānuja locked a gold discus and conch, symbols of Lord Viṣṇu, in the Deity's room overnight. Next morning, all were astonished to find the conch and discus in the Deity's hands, and since that day Lord Vyeṅkaṭeśvara's identity as Lord Kṛṣṇa has never been questioned.

The temple of Lord Vyeṅkaṭeśvara is

the wealthiest in all of India, with an average income of three lakhs of rupees (thirty thousand dollars) a day. It is said that at Tirumala, Lord Viṣṇu grants the wish of anyone who offers Him their weight in something, be it gold, fruit, cloth, or whatever. Pilgrims who make such an offering and ask a boon or blessings generally return (after achieving their desire) and make another offering to the Lord, acknowledging His kindness.

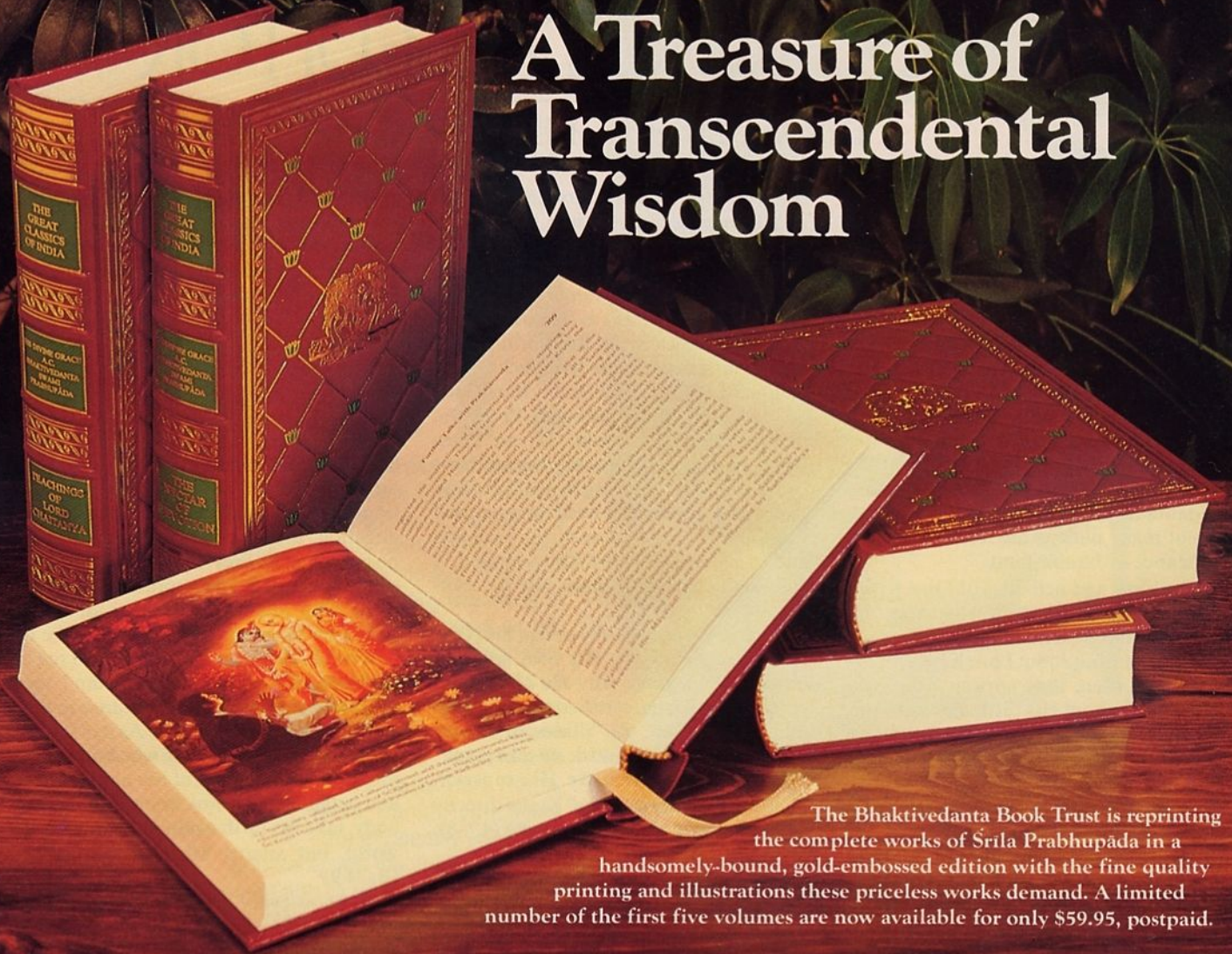
By nightfall most visitors to Tirumala are gone, accommodations for pilgrims

being limited. The main facilities are down in Tirupati, an hour's drive away. With a floating population of sixty thousand people a day coming through Tirupati, the town is an almost unbelievable feat of municipal management and organization. After seeing Tirumala the devotees usually spend another day seeing the sacred sites in Tirupati. The principal temples there are the temple of Govindarāja Svāmī, a Viṣṇu Deity, and the temple of Padmavati, the eternal consort of Lord Vyeṅkaṭeśvara. 



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# NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

## The Appearance of Lord Kṛṣṇa

Five thousand years ago Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, appeared on earth to attract the people of the world back to Him. This year the annual celebration of Lord Kṛṣṇa's birthday, Janmāṣṭamī, falls on August 27. Janmāṣṭamī is perhaps the most widely celebrated of all the religious holidays of India, and each year, regardless of sectarian affiliation, hundreds of millions of Indians attend the temples, hold festivals, and worship in their homes. Now, owing to the work of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, many people of many nations are learning the significance of Janmāṣṭamī.

The birth and activities of Lord Kṛṣṇa are transcendental, even when they appear ordinary and material. But for those who are hearing about Lord Kṛṣṇa for the first time, there may appear to be contradictions about His birth. For example, if He is the eternal God, the source of everything, why does He have a mother and father?

Or we may also question the relevance of Kṛṣṇa's birth: Can it help us with our immediate concerns in today's world? Even a great devotee, Queen Kuntī, expressed bewilderment about the birth of Lord Kṛṣṇa. In her prayers in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* we find: "It is bewildering, O soul of the universe, that You take birth, although You are the vital force and the unborn."

The apparent contradiction is solved when we understand the true nature of Godhead and the true nature of the soul. Kṛṣṇa Himself explains in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that He, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is eternal. All other living entities, being part and parcel of Him, are also eternal. In other words, we are like God in that in our original position we are free of birth and death. But there is a difference between ourselves and God. We are tiny individual souls, subject to falling under the illusory influence of Kṛṣṇa's material energy, *māyā*. He never comes under the spell of the material world, which is His creation. So when He chooses to come into the material world, He is not forced to do so, as are the individual souls. Kṛṣṇa's "birth" is not the incarnation of a spiritual soul within a material body. Kṛṣṇa descends into this world in His eternal, spiritual form. "Although I am unborn and My transcen-

dental body never deteriorates . . . I still appear in every millennium in My original transcendental form." (Bg. 4.6)

Even Arjuna, Kṛṣṇa's intimate friend and the disciple to whom Kṛṣṇa taught the *Bhagavad-gītā*, was at first puzzled by Kṛṣṇa's appearance in the world. When Kṛṣṇa informed Arjuna that He had first taught the *Bhagavad-gītā* many thousands of years ago to the sun-god, Vivasvān, Arjuna raised his doubt. Arjuna knew Kṛṣṇa as his contemporary friend. How could Kṛṣṇa be referring to a talk He had had with a person who lived thousands of years ago? "Many, many births both you and I have passed," Lord Kṛṣṇa replied. "I can remember all of them, but you cannot."

Even if we theoretically accept that God appears on earth by His own spiritual power, we may ask why He chooses to come here. Kṛṣṇa certifies that the material planets are all "places of misery where repeated birth and death take place." Why then does He leave His superior, blissful abode for this one? Kṛṣṇa directly answers this in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.7-8):

Whenever and wherever there is a decline in religious practice, and a predominant rise of irreligious practice—at that time I descend Myself. To deliver the pious and to annihilate the miscreants, as well as to reestablish the principles of religion, I Myself appear, millennium after millennium.

To teach the universal religion, the Personality of Godhead appears in numerous forms, or incarnations, such as Lord Rāma, Lord Buddha, Lord Jesus Christ, and Muhammad. There are many bona fide representatives of God, as revealed in the scriptures of the world. But when God appears as Kṛṣṇa, He appears in His original form as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In all cases the mission is the same: to lead people to God consciousness and obedience to the principles of religion. Sometimes Kṛṣṇa Himself appears, and sometimes He sends one of His sons or servants to represent Him.

Since Kṛṣṇa can do His work in any of these empowered forms, we may ask why He comes in His original form. That appearance in His original, eternal form of Kṛṣṇa is His causeless mercy, bestowed upon the living entities so that they can concentrate on the Supreme Lord as He is and not on mental concoctions or imagi-

nations, which impersonalistic, speculative philosophies wrongly think the Lord's forms to be. Also, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa comes in His original form to mitigate the anxieties of the pure devotees, who are very anxious to see Him. This is the prime purpose of Kṛṣṇa's appearance.

Still, one may doubt, "Kṛṣṇa's appearance may be pleasing to His pure devotees, but what has this to do with me?" Most people are more concerned with their own birthdays, the birthdays of friends and family members, or the birthdays of national heroes. Being without spiritual realization, they focus their love on temporary objects; they cannot imagine the significance of Kṛṣṇa's appearance. Even those who attend the temples of Lord Kṛṣṇa on Janmāṣṭamī sometimes take it as a ritual. But if, by the grace of Kṛṣṇa's devotees, one comes to understand the significance of Kṛṣṇa's appearance in the world, it is the greatest gain. As it is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, "One who knows the transcendental nature of My appearance and activities does not, upon leaving the body, take his birth again in the material world, but attains My eternal abode." (Bg. 4.9)

To know everything about God is impossible. But if we become even a little faithful in hearing about the appearance of Kṛṣṇa, the ensuing transcendental knowledge can free us from repeated birth and death. As Prabhupāda has stated, "One who can understand the truth of the appearance of the Personality of Godhead is already liberated from material bondage, and therefore he returns to the kingdom of God immediately after quitting the present material body."

On Janmāṣṭamī the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement holds gala festivals in all of its centers, and the public is invited. These festivals consist of presentations and celebrations—through drama, art, music, and dance—of the divine birth of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. There is joyous *kīrtana* (the congregational singing of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* and other songs) and a huge feast. Please join with the devotees of Kṛṣṇa, have a good afternoon or evening, and receive the tremendous spiritual benefit of understanding more about Kṛṣṇa's appearance and activities in this world. Consult our address list (see pg. 20-21) for the Hare Kṛṣṇa center nearest you. —SDG



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

# CHANT!

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 many anxieties of living in the material world.

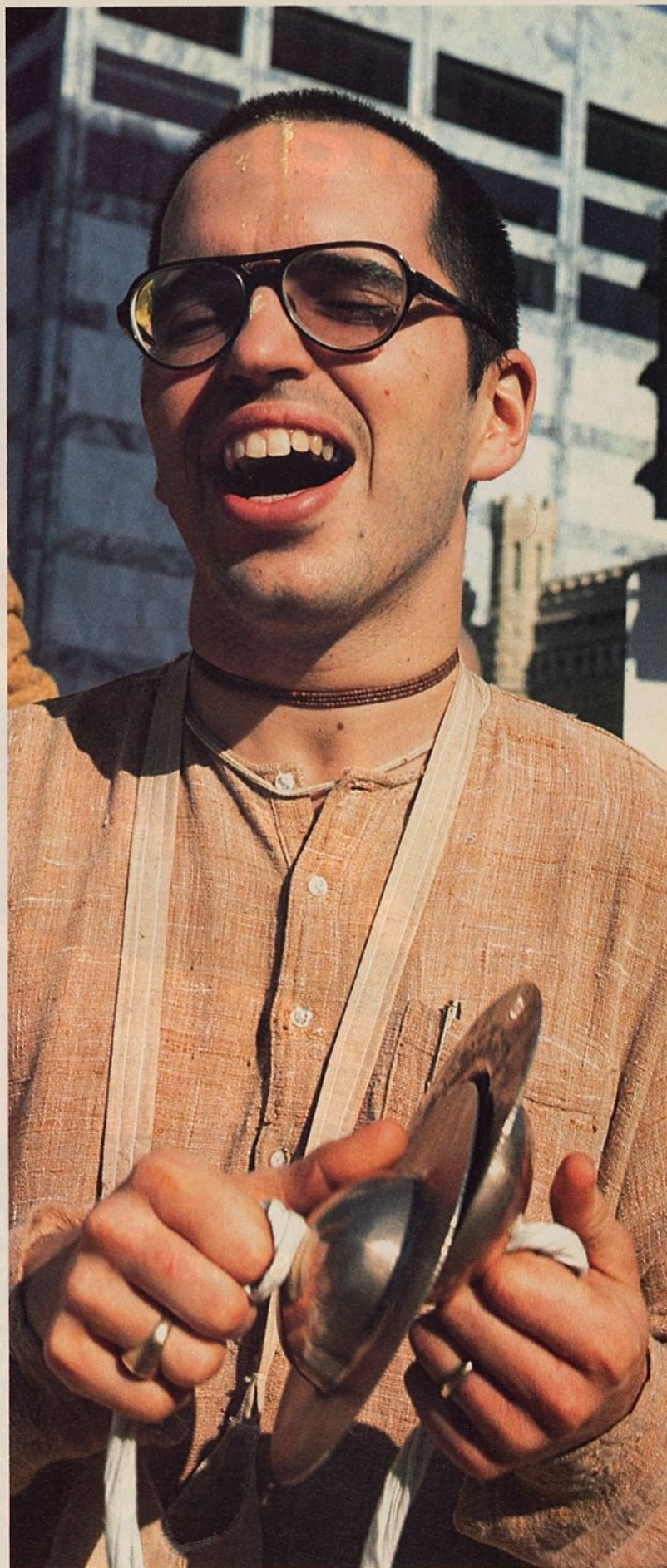
Ancient India's Vedic literatures single out one *mantra* as the *mahā* (supreme) *mantra*. The *Kali-santaraṇa Upaniṣad* explains, “These sixteen words—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare—are especially meant for counteracting the ill effects of 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 hundred years 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.

PHOTO BY MURALĪVADANA DĀSA

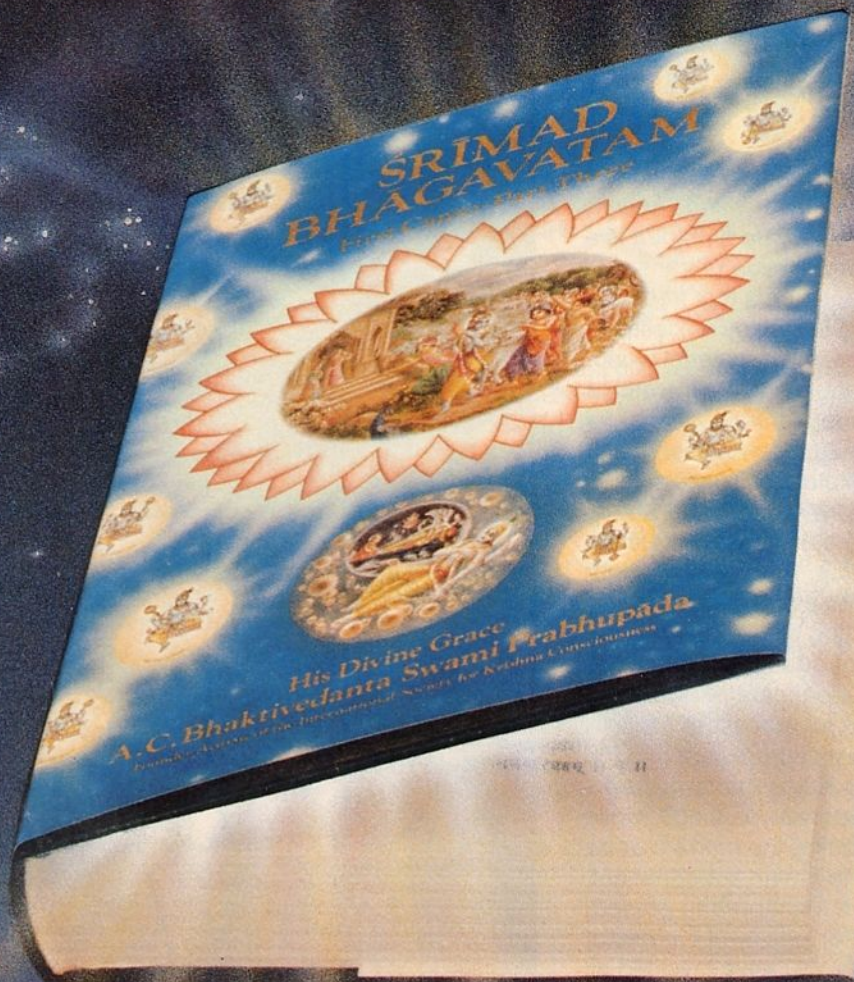




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