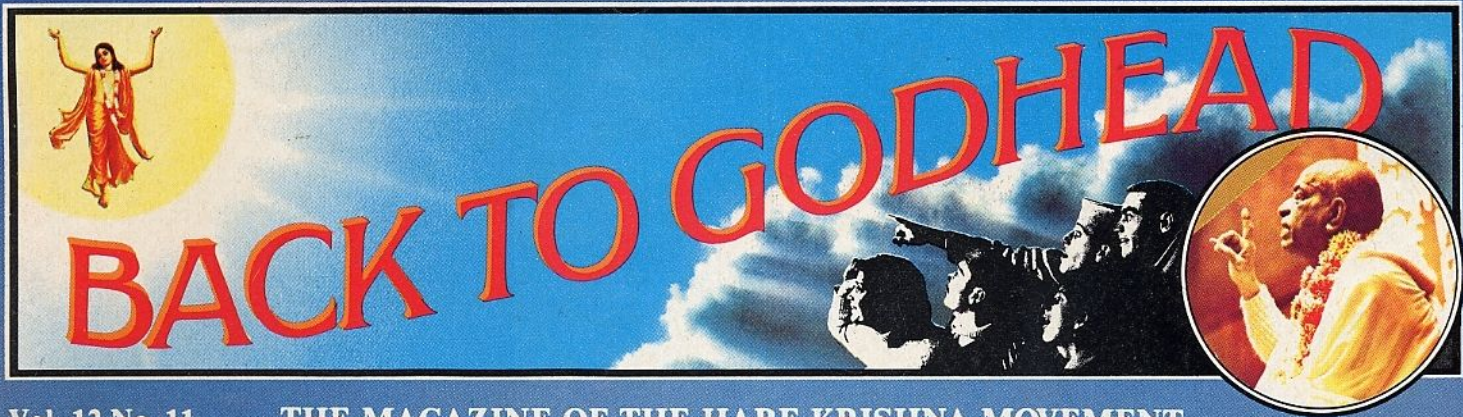


Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.

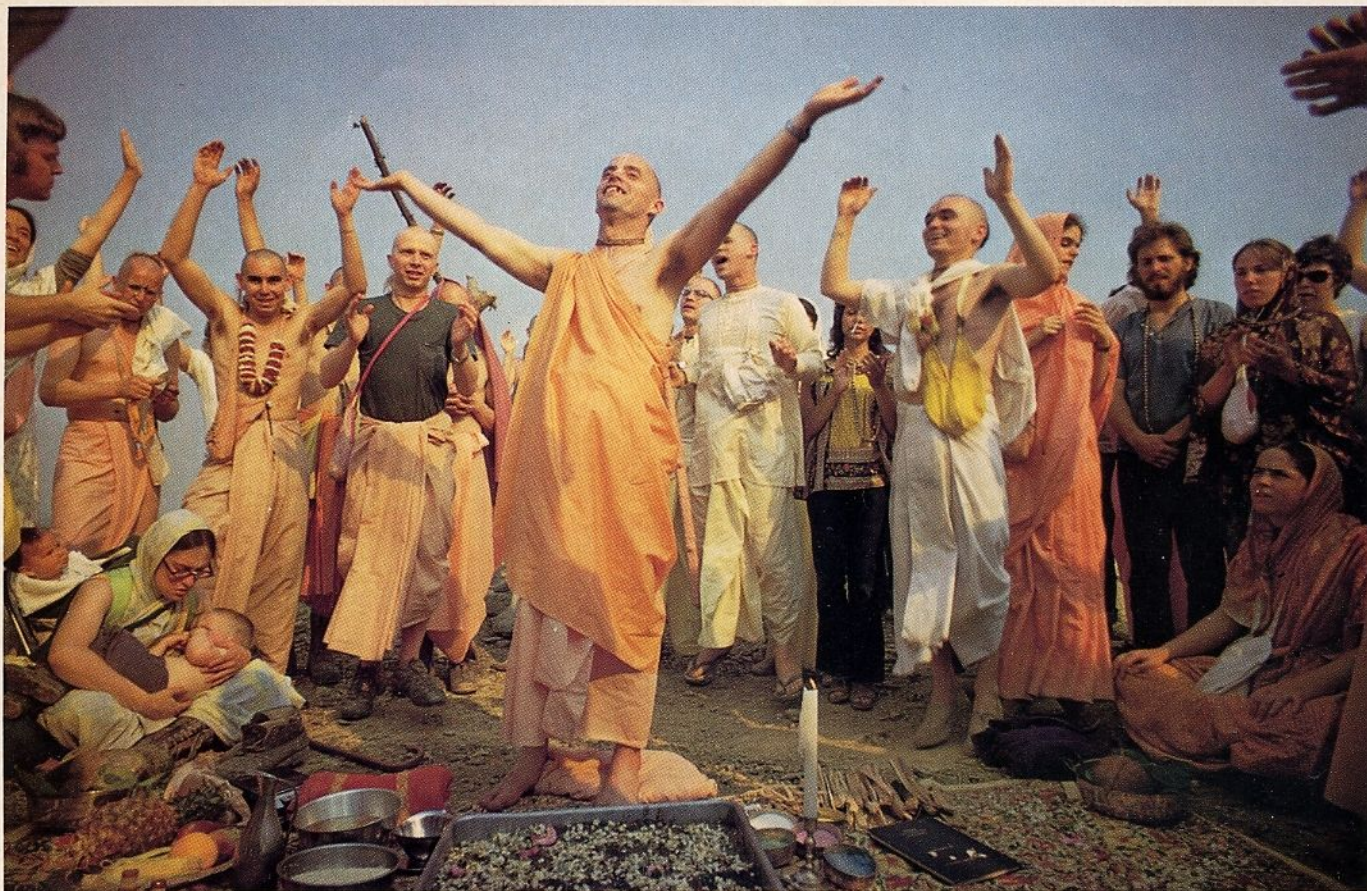


Vol. 12 No. 11

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT

Farming With
Kṛṣṇa in Mind





Devotees chant Hare Kṛṣṇa at the New Vrindāban farm community in West Virginia.

Photo: Viśākhā-devī dāśī

A short statement of the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) is a worldwide community of devotees practicing bhakti-yoga, the eternal science of loving service to God. The Society was founded in 1966 by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, a pure devotee of God representing an unbroken chain of spiritual masters originating with Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself. The following eight principles are the basis of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

We invite all our readers to consider them with an open mind and then visit one of the ISKCON centers to see how they are being applied in everyday life.

1. By sincerely cultivating a bona fide spiritual science, we can be free from anxiety and come to a state of pure, unending, blissful consciousness in this lifetime.
2. We are not our bodies but eternal spirit souls, parts and parcels of God (Kṛṣṇa). As such, we are all brothers, and Kṛṣṇa is ultimately our common father.
3. Kṛṣṇa is the eternal, all-knowing, omnipresent, all-powerful, and all-attractive Personality of Godhead. He is the seed-giving father of all living beings, and He is the sustaining energy of the entire cosmic creation.
4. The Absolute Truth is contained in all the great scriptures of the world. However, the oldest known revealed scriptures in existence are the Vedic literatures, most notably the *Bhagavad-gītā*, which is the literal record of God's actual words.
5. We should learn the Vedic knowledge from a genuine spiritual master—one who has no selfish motives and whose mind is firmly fixed on Kṛṣṇa.
6. Before we eat, we should offer to the Lord the food that sustains us. Then Kṛṣṇa becomes the offering and purifies us.

7. We should perform all our actions as offerings to Kṛṣṇa and do nothing for our own sense gratification.

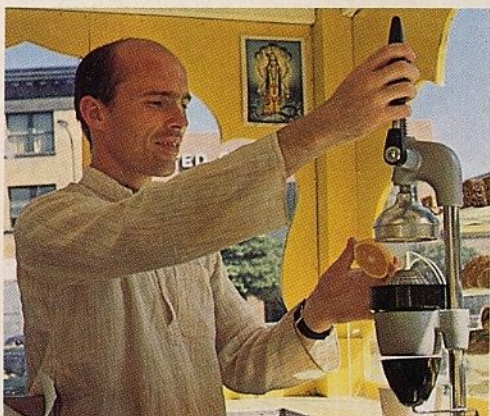
8. The recommended means for achieving the mature stage of love of God in this age of Kali, or quarrel, is to chant the holy names of the Lord. The easiest method for most people is to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra:

Hare Kṛṣṇa
Hare Kṛṣṇa
Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa
Hare Hare
Hare Rāma
Hare Rāma
Rāma Rāma
Hare Hare

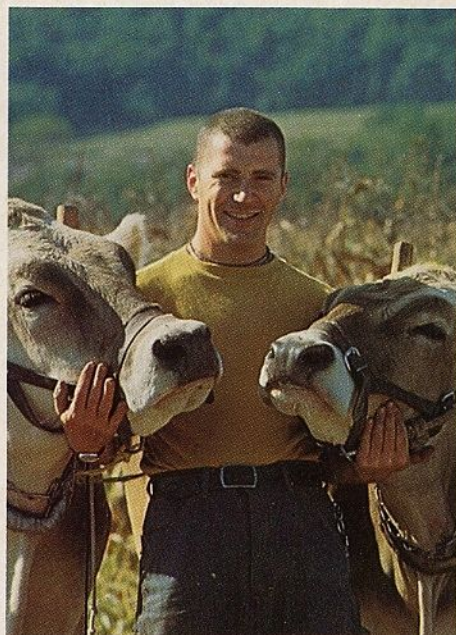
Chant and be happy...



Kulādiri dāsa, president of the New Vrindāban farm community, with family (W. Va.): "What we're interested in here is simple living and high thinking. We work hard building, ploughing, and tending the cows, and it's all a pleasure—because we're always reading our spiritual master's books and chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*."



Bāla-Kṛṣṇa dāsa, manager, Govinda's Mobile Kitchens (Berkeley): "Lots of people ask how the things we serve here can taste so good, and I always tell them it's because we offer everything to Lord Kṛṣṇa. 'You might find it a little amazing,' I say, 'but actually, if you're after yoga and self-realization, the best way to get started is with your tongue: you taste delicious foods offered to Kṛṣṇa and chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*.'"



Paramānanda dāsa, president of the Gītā-nāgari farm community (Pa.): "Chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa is a big part of our lives. By chanting we get a deeper and deeper understanding that all of us are really servants of God. Even these oxen are serving Kṛṣṇa—they pull the ploughs, and the fruits of their labor nourish the whole community. For my part, I'm trying to serve Kṛṣṇa by running the farm and seeing that everyone is working happily. The Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* is so powerful that if everyone chanted it, they'd love God and everyone else, and we'd have a peaceful, God-centered world."



"We never would have lasted through the first winter," says Kirtanānanda Swami (director of the New Vrindāban farm, West Virginia), "without faith in the instructions of our spiritual master Śrīla Prabhupāda and a lot of chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. And before we built 'Śrīla Prabhupāda's Palace' [left], none of us had ever designed a building or worked with marble or anything like that. But we chanted Hare Kṛṣṇa, and gradually Kṛṣṇa revealed these skills."

Find out more about Kṛṣṇa consciousness in this issue of **BACK TO GODHEAD**.

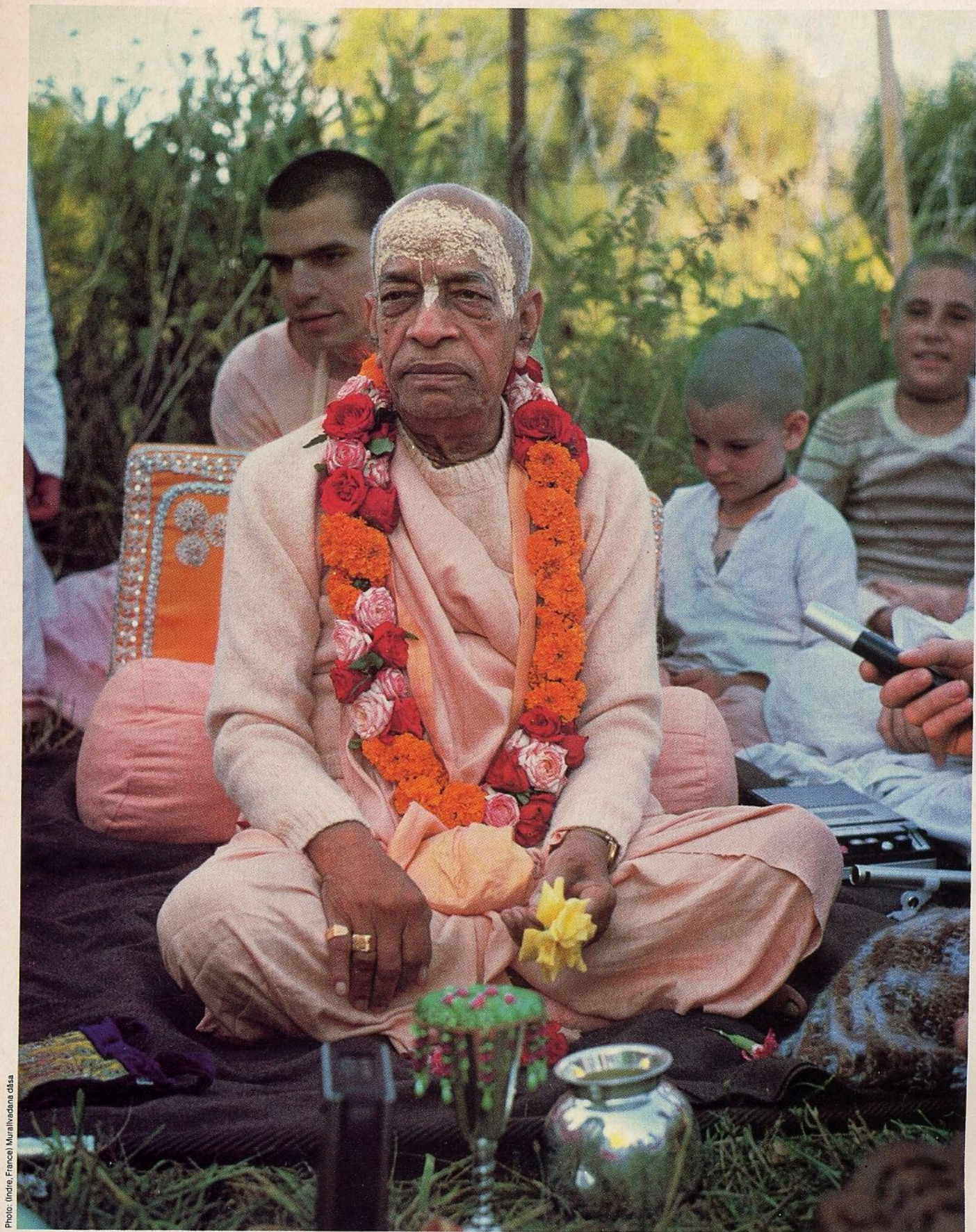


Photo: (Indre, France) Murali vedana dāsa

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

BACK TO GODHEAD

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT

Vol. 12 No. 11

FOUNDER

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

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

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PRONUNCIATION OF SANSKRIT WORDS

Sanskrit words and names in BACK TO GODHEAD are spelled according to a system that scholars throughout the world use to show how to pronounce each word. Vowels in Sanskrit are pronounced almost as in Italian. The sound of the short *a* is like the *u* in *but*. The long *ā* is like the *a* in *far* and held twice as long as the short *a*, and *e* is like the *a* in *evade*. Long *ī* is like the *i* in *pique*. The vowel *ṛ* is pronounced like the *ri* in the English word *rim*. The *ṛ* is pronounced as in the English word *chair*. The aspirated consonants (*ch, jh, dh, etc.*) are pronounced as in *staunch*, *heart*, *hedge-hog* and *red-hot*. The two spirants *ś* and *ṣ* are like the English *sh*, and *s* is like the *s* in *sun*. So pronounce *Kṛṣṇa* as *KRISHNA* and *Caitanya* as *CHAITANYA*.



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◀ The founder and original editor of

BACK TO GODHEAD is His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. In September, 1965, Śrīla Prabhupāda arrived in the United States. In July, 1966, in a storefront in New York City, he began the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. And from those beginning days, BACK TO GODHEAD has been an integral part of ISKCON.

In fact, since 1944, when he started writing, editing, printing, and distributing BACK TO GODHEAD, Śrīla Prabhupāda has often called it "the backbone of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement." Although over the years it has changed in some ways, BACK TO GODHEAD remains, in Śrīla Prabhupāda's words, "an instrument for training the mind and educating human nature to rise up to the plane of the spirit soul."

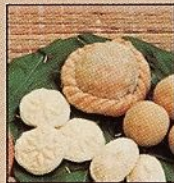
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Sören Kierkegaard said we can find God through "inward passion" and the "leap of faith." His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda replies, "You may say, 'I do not know where to go, but that doesn't matter—simply let me start my car and go.' But is this a very good proposal?"



Discovering the Transcendental Taste 10

A report on the unique food called *prasāda*, "the Lord's mercy": "If we distribute *prasāda* profusely, people will become more and more attracted to Kṛṣṇa. So we have definite plans to make the *samosā* more popular than the hamburger—and Govinda's Kitchen more popular than McDonald's. . . ." By Yogeśvara dāsa.



Farming With Kṛṣṇa in Mind 16

As Śrīla Prabhupāda has written, "The prosperity of humanity does not depend on a demoniac civilization that has no culture and no knowledge but has only gigantic skyscrapers, and huge automobiles always rushing down the highways. The products of nature are sufficient." ISKCON's farms prove the point.



Kṛṣṇa—the Lifter of Govardhana Hill 25

"Then, with one hand, Lord Kṛṣṇa picked up Govardhana Hill, just as an ordinary child picks up a mushroom. 'My dear brothers, My dear father, My dear friends, now you can safely enter under the umbrella of Govardhana Hill. Don't be afraid.'" Drutakarma dāsa adapted this narrative from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

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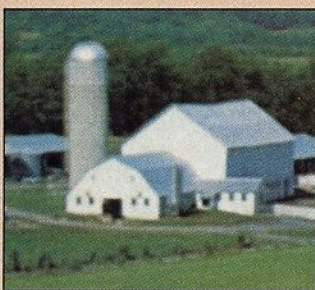
The continuing presentation of India's great spiritual classic.

Translation and commentary

by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

ON THE COVER

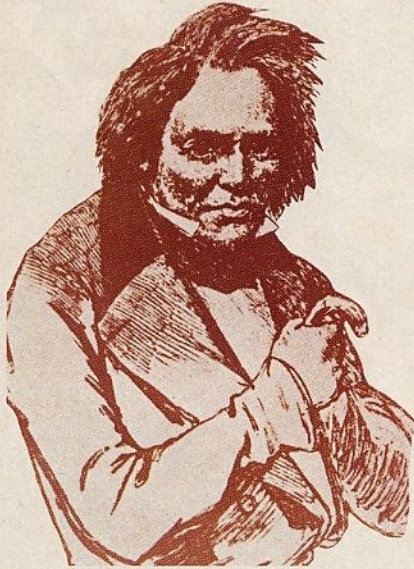
How can we end the world's economic woes? "Just depend on nature's beauty and the cows," says His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. When Śrīla Prabhupāda started the International Society for Krishna Consciousness in 1966, he had much more in mind than a discussion group. Concerned about the suffering caused by today's overurbanized civilization, he began setting up farming communities where people could delight in ancient India's God-conscious culture—"simple living and high thinking." In this issue we feature two of those communities (see page 16): the oldest (New Vrindāban, near Wheeling, West Virginia) and one of the newest (Gītā-nāgarī, near Port Royal, Pennsylvania), pictured here. (Photo by Muralivadana dāsa.)



FROM DESPAIR TO LOVE

Part 2: How to Make the “Leap of Faith”

Sören Kierkegaard, “the father of existentialism,” said we have to make the “leap of faith,” and he saw the goal as God. He wrote, “There is a God—His will is made known to me in holy scripture and in my conscience.” “That’s all right,” says His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, “but to know God’s will you need more than that. . . .”



Hayagrīva dāsa: Sören Kierkegaard lamented the disintegration of Christianity as an effective form of worship and considered modern Christendom to be a kind of sickness—a corruption of Christ’s original message.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Christianity is Christianity. You cannot call it modern or ancient, nor can you say God is modern or ancient. Either a person is a Christian, or he is not. In other words, either he follows the orders of Christ, or he doesn’t. If he does not follow the tenets

of his religion, how can he claim to belong to that religion? This is applicable to all religions. For instance, there are many so-called Hindus who do not believe in anything, yet they consider themselves Hindus and *brāhmaṇas* [priests]. This is insulting.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Concerning the purpose of prayer, Kierkegaard wrote in his *Journals*, “The true success in prayer is not when God hears what is prayed for, but when the person praying continues to pray until he hears what God wills.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, that is very nice. Through prayer one becomes qualified to understand God, to talk with God, and to receive His directions. As stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* [10.10]:

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

“To those who are constantly devoted and worship Me with love, I give the understanding by which they can come to Me.” Our ultimate goal is to give up this material world and go back to home, back to Godhead. Prayer is just one form of service. There are nine kinds of devotional service that we can perform, as explained by Prahāda Mahārāja in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* [7.5.23]:

*śravaṇaṁ kīrtanaṁ viṣṇoḥ
smaraṇaṁ pāda-sevanam
arcanaṁ vandanaṁ dāsyam
sakhyaṁ ātma-nivedanam*

“Hearing about the transcendental name, form, qualities, paraphernalia, and pastimes of the Lord; chanting about these things; remembering them; serving the lotus feet of the Lord; offering the Lord respectful worship with incense, flowers, water, and so on; offering prayers to the Lord; becoming His servant; considering the Lord one’s best friend; and surrendering everything unto Him—these nine activities constitute pure devotional service.”

Whether you perform all nine processes or some of them or only one of them, you can progress in spiritual life. For example, when a Christian or a Muhammadan offers prayers, his service is as good as the Hindu’s service to the

Deity in the temple. God is within, and when He sees that we are sincerely serving Him, He takes charge and gives us directions by which we can swiftly approach Him. God is complete in Himself; He is not hankering after our service. But if we offer Him service, we can become purified. When we are completely purified, we can see God and talk with Him. We can receive His instructions personally, just as Arjuna did in the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Hayagrīva dāsa: For Kierkegaard, faith in God develops when the soul is “willing to stand transparent before God in his full integrity.”

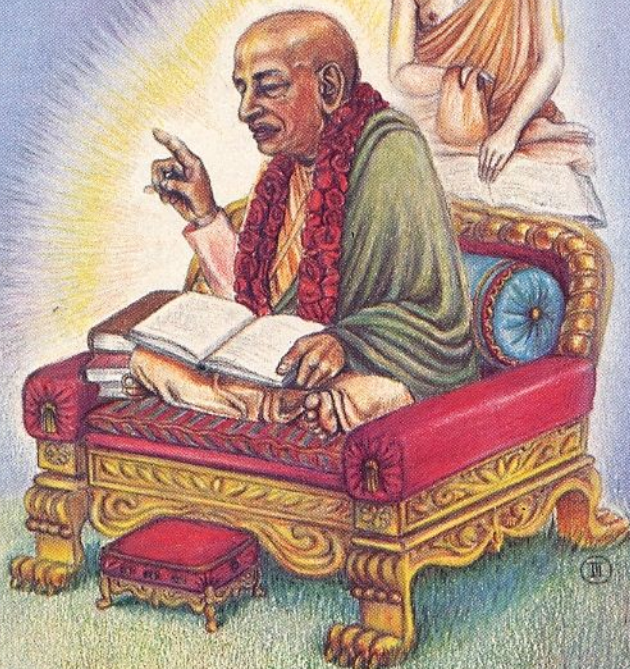
Śrīla Prabhupāda: Standing transparent before God means engaging in God’s service. But to engage in God’s service we must understand that we are His parts and parcels. Just as each part of the body engages in the service of the entire body, so every living entity is meant to engage in the service of God, Kṛṣṇa. As soon as you engage in Kṛṣṇa’s service, you are self-realized. That is *mukti*, liberation from the miseries of material life. The *karmīs* [fruitive workers], *jñānīs* [mental speculators], and yogis are trying to realize the self, but because they are not engaged in rendering service to the Supreme Self, Kṛṣṇa, they are not liberated. We are therefore teaching this Kṛṣṇa consciousness for the ultimate self-realization of everyone.

Hayagrīva dāsa: But Kierkegaard sees self-realization arising out of the expression of the will. He thought that the more self-realized a person is, the more powerful is his will and the better he is able to make proper decisions.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But if you are part and parcel of the whole, you have to take decisions from the whole. *You* cannot make the decisions. The finger does not make decisions for the entire body. The only decision you have to make is the decision to serve Kṛṣṇa—the orders come from Him. Kṛṣṇa ordered Arjuna to fight, and at the end of the *Bhagavad-gītā* Arjuna decided to abide by Kṛṣṇa’s will. This is the only choice we have: either to abide by Kṛṣṇa’s will or to defy His will. After we decide to obey Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa or His representative makes all the other decisions.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Then what is the meaning of full will?

"... Besides following the holy scriptures and your conscience, you have to associate with saintly persons and follow the instructions of the bona fide spiritual master." The bona fide spiritual master comes from a line of bona fide masters that starts with God Himself. As a result, he knows God's will and can impart it to the sincere seeker.





“You cannot make the decisions. . . . at the end of the Bhagavad-gītā Arjuna decided to abide by Kṛṣṇa’s will. This is the only choice we have: either to abide by Kṛṣṇa’s will or to defy His will.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Full will means to surrender to Kṛṣṇa fully—to obey the orders of the Supreme absolutely.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Concerning despair, Kierkegaard thought that despair can actually bear fruit in that it can lead one to desire a genuine life of self-realization. In other words, despair can be a springboard to higher consciousness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: In Sanskrit this is called *nirāśam paramam sukham*: “When one despairs, that is a great happiness.” When a person despairs, it means that everything is finished, all responsibility is gone, and he is relieved. Out of despair Arjuna was thinking of becoming a mendicant. When we despair of all happiness in material life, we may then turn to spiritual life. Sometimes Kṛṣṇa smashes all of our material resources—so that, out of despair, we may fully engage in His devotional service. In other words, when we want to become God-conscious but at the same time, out of strong at-

tachment, we want material enjoyment, Kṛṣṇa will sometimes wreck us materially. At such times we often think that He is being unkind to us, and we despair. We don’t realize that this is Kṛṣṇa’s mercy—that He is removing all impediments so that we can fully and absolutely surrender.

Once Indra, the Lord of heaven, was forced to take on the body of a hog, and he had to come down to earth as that lowly animal. As a hog, Indra had a hog wife, hog children, and so on. After some time Lord Brahmā came down and told him, “My dear Indra, you have forgotten your position. You were once the Lord of heaven. You once possessed great opulence. Now that you are a hog, you have forgotten your previous exalted position. Please leave this filthy life and come with me.” Yet despite Brahmā’s pleadings Indra was not convinced. He said, “Why should I go with you? I am very happy. I have my wife,

children, and home.” Seeing that Indra had become very much attached to his hog existence, Brahmā began to kill all his hog children. Finally, Brahmā killed Indra’s hog wife. When Indra saw that his wife was killed, he despaired: “Oh, you have killed my whole family!” It was only then that Indra agreed to go back to the heavenly kingdom with Lord Brahmā. Similarly, Kṛṣṇa sometimes creates a situation in which the living entity will despair and, out of despair, turn to Him and fully surrender unto Him.

Hayagrīva dāsa: So faith grows out of despair?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, to strengthen our faith in God, we have to give up all hope of happiness in this material life. We have to despair of material happiness.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Concerning individuality, Kierkegaard wrote, “God is the origin and wellspring of all individuality. . . . [This individuality] is the gift of God through which He permits me to be, and through which He permits everyone to be.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: This idea is explained in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* [2.2.13]: *nityo nityānām cetanaś cetanānām*. God is a living being, and we are also living beings. Just as He is eternal, we are also eternal. But the difference is that whereas *qualitatively* we are the same, *quantitatively* we are different. God is infinite, and the living entities are infinitesimal. Therefore, all the living entities are being maintained by God. We are all individual and eternal parts of God, so our natural position is to serve Him and to love Him.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Kierkegaard thought that each of us is in a constant state of becoming.

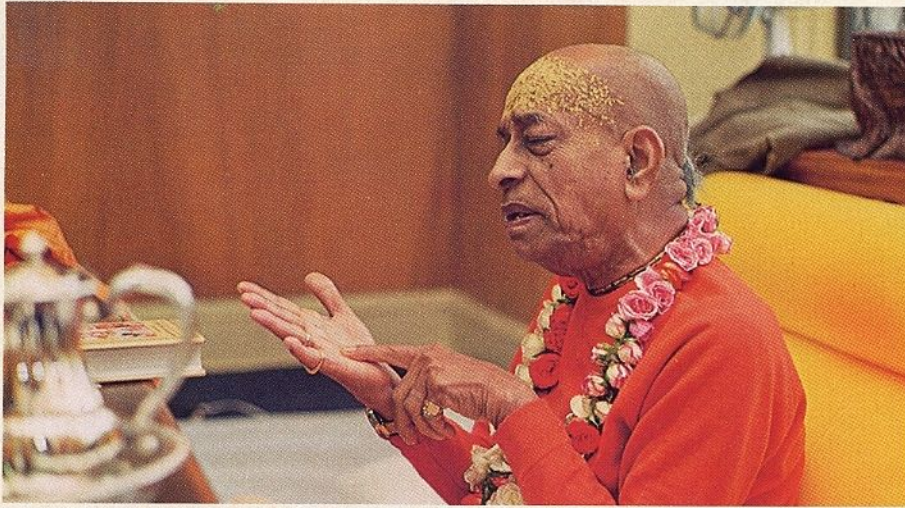
Śrīla Prabhupāda: Becoming what? What is the goal? The goal is Kṛṣṇa. Thus in the *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa says,

*mattaḥ parataram nānyat
kiñcid asti dhanañjaya
mayi sarvam idaṁ protam
sūtre mañi-ṣaṇḍa iva*

“O conqueror of wealth, there is no truth superior to Me. Everything rests upon Me, as pearls are strung on a thread” [Bg. 7.7]. Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate truth—the supreme goal—and completeness means coming to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Hayagrīva dāsa: But even when one is fully Kṛṣṇa-conscious and in association with Kṛṣṇa, isn’t there still a process of becoming?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No. The becoming process ends. There are, however, spiritual varieties. Everything is complete in



“You may have ‘inward passion’ or whatever, but if you do not know the ultimate goal, you may be misled. . . . you must surrender yourself to the guru in order to understand the highest truth.”

the spiritual world, but the living entity enjoys varieties of service to Kṛṣṇa. Sometimes he sees Kṛṣṇa as a cowherd boy, sometimes as Yaśodā’s child, sometimes as Rādhārāṇī’s consort. Sometimes Kṛṣṇa is in Mathurā; sometimes He is in Vṛndāvana. There are many spiritual varieties, but everything is complete in itself—there is no question of becoming. One reaches the point where he is simply enjoying variety—that’s all.

Hayagrīva dāsa: What is the difference between enjoying spiritual variety and enjoying material variety?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: It is artificial to try to enjoy material variety. Material variety is like a plastic flower. A plastic flower has no aroma, so the enjoyment of a plastic flower cannot be the same as the enjoyment of a real flower. It is not satisfying. It is simply artificial, a bluff.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Whereas Hegel emphasized speculative thought, Kierkegaard emphasized action. Kierkegaard saw freedom in proper action.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, spiritual life means proper action. It is improper to think that when we attain the perfectional stage we become inactive. That is the impersonalistic, Māyāvāda theory. Māyāvādīs contend that the living entity is like a jug. A jug makes some sound only as long as it is not full of water. Similarly, the Māyāvādīs say, when we become spiritually “full,” we are “silent,” or inactive. But from the *Bhagavad-gītā* we understand that the soul is never inactive. When inactivity is recommended, this simply means that we should not speak or act foolishly. If we cannot talk intelligently, we had better stop talking. But you cannot equate that inactivity with perfection.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Kierkegaard felt that truth is relative and subjective. He

thought we could discover truth through personal, individual reflection, which he called “inward passion.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Truth is truth, and it is absolute. You may manufacture many relative truths, but the Absolute Truth is one. If you have no knowledge of the Absolute Truth, you emphasize relative truths. You may have “inward passion” or whatever, but if you do not know the ultimate goal, you may be misled. It is all right to say that passion leads to truth. But passion means activity. Where will your activity end? What is the purpose of your activity? You may drive your car, but if you do not know where to go, what is the point? You are simply wasting your energy. Of course you may say, “I do not know where to go, but that doesn’t matter. Simply let me start my car and go.” But is this a very good proposal?

Hayagrīva dāsa: For Kierkegaard it is not *what* is done that counts, but *how* it is done.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: This is a dog’s obstinacy.

Hayagrīva dāsa: This is the kind of subjectivity that is always uncertain. And uncertainty creates anxiety.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. One who does not know life’s aim will always be in anxiety.

Hayagrīva dāsa: For Kierkegaard, this anxiety and uncertainty are dispelled by what he called the “leap of faith.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, but you must make your leap toward a *goal*. Unless you know the goal, the fixed point, your action and energy may be misdirected.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Kierkegaard saw the goal as God. He felt that after passing through the aesthetic and ethical stages of life [see BTG 12/10], we should then use all our energy to reach God through Jesus Christ.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is a good position. That is our process—to approach God through the bona fide spiritual master. But it is not necessary to pass through any lower stages. If you can reach God through Jesus Christ, why not take to God immediately? Our process is that you must surrender yourself to the spiritual master in order to understand the highest truth. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa says,

*tad viddhi praṇipātena
paripraśnena sevayā
upadekṣyanti te jñānam
jñāninas tattva-darśinah*

“Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto Him. The self-realized soul can impart knowledge unto you because he has seen the truth” [Bg. 4.34]. This is the process. It is not that we continue on our own way, hoping to take the right path through experience. If you do not know the right direction, your endeavors will be frustrated. This material world is like the vast ocean, and in the middle of the vast ocean, you do not know where to direct your ship. If you simply have a ship without a captain, you will go one way and then another and simply waste your energy. A captain is needed to give direction. That captain is the guru. If Kierkegaard accepts Christ, then he is accepting some guidance.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Kierkegaard felt that the directions of God are expressed through scripture and the individual conscience. In his *Journals* he wrote, “There is a God—His will is made known to me in holy scripture and in my conscience.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That’s all right, but to know God’s will you need more than that. Besides following the holy scriptures and your conscience, you have to associate with saintly persons and follow the instructions of the bona fide spiritual master. *Sādhu, śāstra, guru vākya, cittete kariyā aikya:* “We can approach God by understanding a saintly person [sādhu], studying the Vedic scriptures [śāstra], and following the instructions of the bona fide spiritual master [guru].” Sādhu, śāstra, and guru corroborate one another. A sādhu is he who talks and acts in terms of the scriptures. And the guru is he who teaches according to the scriptures. A guru cannot manufacture words that are not in the scriptures. When we receive instructions from all three, we can progress perfectly in our understanding of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

(continued on page 13)

Before Mādhavendra Purī, most Indians worshiped Lord Kṛṣṇa in a ritualistic fashion, according to strict rules and regulations. Such formal worship is necessary for those who have not awakened their natural desire to serve the Lord with love and devotion. But Mādhavendra Purī was fully absorbed in spontaneous affection for Kṛṣṇa, and therefore he was able to rise above the forms of worship prescribed for the neophytes.

Mādhavendra Purī appeared almost mad in his love of God. He loudly chanted and sang the names and glories of the Lord without thinking of the time or place. Sometimes in his ecstasy he didn't know whether it was day or night. Sometimes he laughed and sometimes he wept. Sometimes he danced wildly and sometimes he fell to the ground unconscious. He took absolutely no interest in anything not connected with Kṛṣṇa, and for fear of talking about anything other than the Lord, he always lived without a companion. He would eat only if someone offered him food—otherwise he would simply fast.

In many remarkable ways Kṛṣṇa returned Mādhavendra Purī's intense love. Once Mādhavendra was fasting and meditating beneath a tree in the forest of Vṛndāvana, where thousands of years before Kṛṣṇa had played as a child. Suddenly a beautiful cowherd boy (*gopāla*) came with a pot of milk and placed it before Mādhavendra. "Please drink the milk I have brought you," the boy said. Seeing the beauty of the boy, Mādhavendra Purī became satisfied in his mind, and hearing these sweet words, he forgot all hunger and thirst. Then within an instant, the boy left the place and did not return. Mādhavendra Purī's heart was filled with wonder. Later, he realized who the boy actually was and cried out in great ecstatic love: "I saw Lord Kṛṣṇa directly—but I could not recognize Him!"

Soon afterwards, the same cowherd boy appeared to Mādhavendra Purī in a dream and revealed to him the location of the Gopāla Deity. A *brāhmaṇa* priest had tried to hide this Deity of Kṛṣṇa from marauding Muhammadan soldiers and had buried Him nearby. In the dream Kṛṣṇa told Mādhavendra Purī, "For many days I have been observing you, and I have been wondering, 'When will Mādhavendra Purī come to serve Me?' Now that you have come, please unearth the Gopāla Deity, who is none other than My very self." So out of intense love Mādhavendra Purī excavated the Gopāla Deity, built an exquisite temple for Him, and arranged for lavish daily

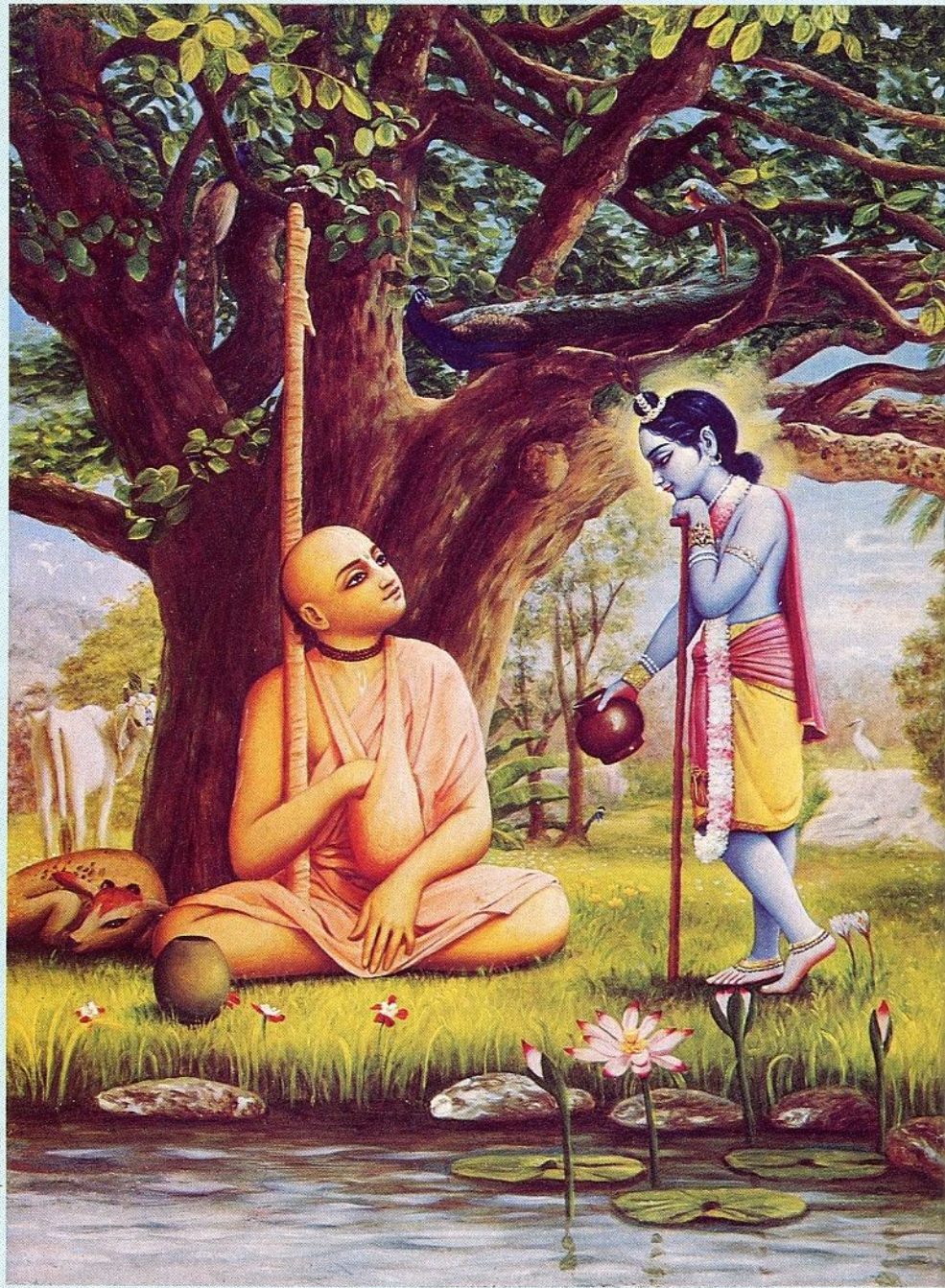


Illustration: Jagadīś-devī dāśī

GREAT SPIRITUAL MASTERS THROUGHOUT HISTORY:

MĀDHAVENDRA PURĪ

(FIFTEENTH CENTURY A.D.)

Western religion usually teaches us that God is someone to fear and revere. In India, though, great spiritual masters have long taught that we can go beyond this limited conception and worship God as our master, friend, or child. And about five hundred years ago Mādhavendra Purī taught that we can even worship God as our dear beloved.

worship. "I have accepted your service," said Gopāla, "because of your ecstatic love for Me."

To test Mādhavendra Purī's love still further, in another dream Gopāla asked him to bring a special kind of sandalwood pulp to cool His body. Gopāla was still feeling hot from being buried in the jungle for so many years, and sandalwood pulp is well known for its soothing, cooling effect. "Bring sandalwood pulp from Jagannātha Purī," said Gopāla. "Kindly go quickly. You must. No one else can do this for Me."

Delighted with this chance to serve his dear Lord, Mādhavendra Purī set off on foot on the arduous eight-hundred-mile journey to Jagannātha Purī, on the Bay of Bengal. Along the way he stopped in Remuṇā at the temple of Gopinātha, and this Deity of Kṛṣṇa showed him another loving favor. Every day the temple priests offered Gopinātha twelve pots of the most delicious sweet rice in the world. (Sweet rice is a preparation made with milk, rice, and sugar and served cold.) Mādhavendra Purī wanted to taste a little of it so that he could prepare a similar sweet rice for his own Deity, Gopāla. But Mādhavendra immediately checked this thought and felt that he had committed a great sin by wanting to eat what was being offered to the Lord. Without saying a word to anyone, Mādhavendra Purī left the temple and went to get some rest in a stall in the town marketplace.

Meanwhile, the Gopinātha Deity spoke to one of His *brāhmaṇa* priests in a dream: "Please get up and open the door to the temple. There you will find a pot of sweet rice I have kept for Mādhavendra Purī. Take it to him. He is sleeping in the marketplace."

Dutifully the priest awoke, found the pot of sweet rice, and took it to the marketplace. Then he began to call out, "Mādhavendra Purī! Mādhavendra Purī! Please come and take this pot of sweet rice—Lord Gopinātha has stolen it for you! Please take it and enjoy it to your heart's content! You are the most fortunate person in the world!" On hearing this invitation, Mādhavendra Purī came out, and with ecstatic love he ate the sweet rice the Lord had sent to him. To this day the Deity in the temple at Remuṇā is known as Kṣīracora Gopinātha—the Deity who stole sweet rice for His pure devotee.

After this incident Mādhavendra Purī pondered, "The Lord has given me a pot of sweet rice, and when the people hear of this tomorrow morning, there will be great crowds." Thinking in this way, Mādhavendra Purī offered his obeis-

sances to Gopinātha on the spot and left Remuṇā before the morning light.

After much walking he reached Jagannātha Purī and obtained eighty-two pounds of Malayan sandalwood—a valuable burden of love to bring back to his Gopāla Deity. Even though he had to pass through provinces heavily patrolled by Muhammadan soldiers and infested with bands of thugs, Mādhavendra Purī was not at all anxious. He was concerned only about carrying the sandalwood back to his beloved Gopāla, and he didn't even take personal inconveniences or impediments into consideration. He just wanted to serve the Lord.

When he arrived at Remuṇā, Mādhavendra Purī again visited the temple of Gopinātha, and the priest there again served him the famous sweet rice. Now Mādhavendra still had the longest and most difficult part of the journey ahead of him. But as he slept that night his own Gopāla Deity appeared in a dream and said, "O Mādhavendra Purī, there is no difference between My body and Gopinātha's body. They are one and the same. Therefore, if you smear the sandalwood pulp on His body, you will also be smearing it on My body. Thus the temperature of My body will be reduced. You should not hesitate to act according to My order. Believe in Me and just do what is needed." In this way Gopāla saved His devotee from possible injury at the hands of enemies. Mādhavendra Purī had passed the Lord's test of his love and devotion. To this day people who travel to India can visit the Deities of Gopāla and Kṣīracora Gopinātha and experience some of the same devotional feelings that inspired Mādhavendra Purī.

Mādhavendra Purī's Love: The Pinnacle of Devotion

We can experience God in different ways. Some worshipers know Him as the formless, all-pervading spiritual effulgence. Others experience Him in their own hearts as the Supersoul (Paramātmā)—the witness, guide, and well-wishing friend. But the most advanced worshipers, such as Mādhavendra Purī, see God face to face in His original form as Kṛṣṇa the cowherd boy, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. To accept loving service from His pure devotee Mādhavendra Purī, the Lord appeared personally before him, spoke to him, and gave him a pot of milk to drink.

In all religions there is some feeling of love of God, but such love varies in degrees of intensity. In his book *The Nectar of Devotion*, the great Kṛṣṇa-conscious spiritual master Śrīla Rūpa

Gosvāmī has analyzed the different kinds of love of God. First we may passively appreciate the sublime qualities of the Lord, as did the Kumāras, the four celibate sons of Lord Brahmā. Progressing further, we come to the stage of desiring to serve the Lord as the supreme master. Hanumān, the monkey servant of Lord Rāmacandra, exemplifies this kind of love. In time, when the relationship of servant and master becomes more intimate, we may advance to the stage of friendship with the Supreme Lord. Kṛṣṇa's cowherd boy-friends are examples. Still more advanced is the worship of Kṛṣṇa as our child. At this stage Kṛṣṇa allows the worshiper to take the superior role of His mother (like Yaśodā) or father (like Nanda). The highest form of love of God is that displayed between lover and beloved. The *gopīs* (milkmaids) of Vṛndāvana love Kṛṣṇa in this way. And of all the *gopīs*, the Lord's eternal consort Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī displays this conjugal love of God to the highest degree.

At his life's end Mādhavendra Purī was deeply absorbed in conjugal love for Kṛṣṇa. In great ecstasy he repeatedly uttered a famous verse beginning with the lines "O my Lord! O most merciful master! When shall I see You again?" It is said that this verse was originally spoken by Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī Herself. Before the time of Mādhavendra Purī, nearly all devotees worshiped Kṛṣṇa alone—without His female counterpart—but after Mādhavendra Purī introduced conjugal love of God into India's spiritual life, more and more devotees began worshiping Kṛṣṇa together with His eternal consort Rādhā.

Before Mādhavendra Purī appeared, the disciplic succession of Madhvācārya (see BTG 12/10) had been full of ritualistic ceremonies—with hardly any sign of love of Godhead. Mādhavendra Purī was the first successor of Madhvācārya to exhibit the symptoms of love of Godhead. In fact, it is said that the tree of devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa sprouted in him and later grew tall and broad in Lord Caitanya, the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa for this age of quarrel. Himself a disciple of Mādhavendra Purī's disciple Īśvara Purī, Lord Caitanya spread devotional service throughout India and ordered His own disciples to spread devotional service to every town and village in the world. Now, after years of careful cultivation by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, the devotional tree that sprouted in Mādhavendra Purī has produced a fast-growing branch called the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

by Yogeśvara dāsa

Discovering the Transcendental Taste

Can you imagine a more enjoyable way to learn to love God? Offer Him delicious preparations—like samosās (spicy vegetable-filled turnovers, deep-fried in clear butter), or lassī (whipped yogurt, fruit juice, and berries, over ice), or Gaurāṅga potatoes in sour cream sauce . . . and eat the “leftovers” as His mercy!

At first I was bewildered. The word “yoga” had always summoned up images of thin men with austere eating habits. Yet here we were, being encouraged to eat our fill. The scene was the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa temple in Rome; the occasion, a delicious ten-course feast in memory of Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda, a great Kṛṣṇa-conscious saint. Our spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, was there with us partaking of the feast, so I asked if he’d please clear up a doubt I’d been entertaining for some time.

“Śrīla Prabhupāda,” I said, “in all yoga practices control of the senses is of first importance. But how is that control possible when there are so many feasts in Kṛṣṇa consciousness?”

“Why should you hesitate?” he replied. “This is not material food. You should take to your full satisfaction. But not too much—then you will be sick and have to fast for two days.”

He went on to describe how all food comes from Lord Kṛṣṇa and should therefore be prepared sumptuously, as an offering to Him.

“Eating is a very important function,” he continued. “It should be done in a spiritual atmosphere and without disturbance. If you are disrupted while taking *prasāda* [vegetarian food offered to Kṛṣṇa with devotion], then there will be loss of appetite, and indigestion.”

In his books and private instructions, Śrīla Prabhupāda often stresses the significance of *prasāda* in developing spiritual consciousness. *Prasāda* is Sanskrit for “mercy.” As mentioned above, vegetarian foods offered with devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa become *prasāda*, “the

mercy of the Lord,” and the remnants of such offerings are highly prized by spiritualists of all kinds. For eleven years now, ISKCON centers throughout the world have held a free “Love Feast” every Sunday (see back cover), at which devotees distribute *prasāda* to anyone and everyone. And at ISKCON’s Māyāpur center near Calcutta, devotees distribute simple but nourishing *prasāda* free to more than ten thousand people every week.

Recently, at several Kṛṣṇa temples around the world, devotees have established Govinda’s Restaurants and made the health-giving, spiritually nourishing experience of *prasāda* even more widely available. To comply with Śrīla Prabhupāda’s instruction that *prasāda* be taken in a spiritual atmosphere, the devotees decorate each restaurant with paintings of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes, and they pipe in soft temple music called *kīrtana*. As far as possible, the ingredients that go into the restaurants’ fare are grown on farms run by devotees, and all the cooks are initiated *brāhmaṇas*. (One of the main brahminical qualities is scrupulous cleanliness.)

Prasāda is also available from a fleet of eighteen food carts in New York City and from a pair of “Govinda’s Mobile Kitchens” in Berkeley, California. The most popular items are the *samosā*, *lassī*, and Gaurāṅga potatoes (see above). Another favorite is the *pakora*, a bite-size chunk of vegetable dipped in spicy batter and deep-fried in clear butter. Bāla-Kṛṣṇa dāsa, who heads up *prasāda* distribution in Berkeley, explained the program this way: “If we distribute



Photo: Muralivadana dāsa



Photo: Viśākhā-devī dāsi

Kṛṣṇa’s *prasāda* profusely, people’s eating habits will gradually be purified, and they’ll become more and more attracted to Kṛṣṇa. So we have definite plans to make the *samosā* more popular than the hamburger—and Govinda’s Kitchen more popular than McDonald’s.”



Above: two New Yorkers sample Kṛṣṇa prasāda, delicious vegetarian dishes offered to Lord Kṛṣṇa with devotion. "From cow's milk," says Śrīla Prabhupāda, "you get butter and so many other things, and you can add fruit, vegetables, and grains to make hundreds and thousands of preparations—that is real enjoyment."

The Philosophy Behind Prasāda

Meat eating is one of the greatest obstacles on the path of spiritual progress. Despite farfetched interpretations, no scripture in the world recommends meat eating—although some scriptures may make a concession for individuals who are unable to control their tongues. But even these authorities strictly forbid cow killing; they advise substituting some less important animal instead. Because we drink the cow's milk, the Vedic literatures consider her one of human society's mothers. Cow protection is thus imperative, for cow's milk stimulates the growth of healthy brain tissues required for understanding the principles and executing the practices of *bhakti-yoga*, devotional service to God. On the other hand, meat contains poisons and cholesterol that simply dull the mind and debilitate the body.

However, vegetarianism in itself is not spiritual. We must also offer our food to God with devotion. Then our eating becomes part of a loving exchange with the Lord. When devotees prepare food, they're aware that the preparation is for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure, not their own. This is genuine spiritual feeling, or *bhakti*.

Bhakti-yoga aims at reawakening our lost sense of God consciousness. Thus the rules governing the preparation of *prasāda* are very strict: the cook must bathe and put on fresh clothes before entering the kitchen; the kitchen itself must be spotless; the cook must never touch his mouth or any other part of his body while cooking; and most important, he must never taste the preparations before offering them to Lord Kṛṣṇa—even to test them. Kṛṣṇa must be the first to relish.

Actually, Kṛṣṇa doesn't need to eat. He is *ātmārāma*, or completely self-sufficient. But He appreciates the devotion with which we prepare foods for Him. The more our consciousness is fixed on pleasing Kṛṣṇa, the more successful is the offering.

This, then, is real yoga, or linking up with the Supreme. It is not a question of stopping eating, but rather of spiritualizing our food by first offering it to Kṛṣṇa. This simple process gradually makes us aware of the essential teaching of the

Vedas: that everything comes from Kṛṣṇa, and that He is the real enjoyer of all our endeavors.

Lunch with a Friend

Whenever friends come to visit me at the New York temple, I take them to Govinda's Restaurant.

"This is very tasty," one old high-school friend told me recently. "What is it?"

"It's a sweet-and-sour preparation, made with pineapple, plantains, eggplant, tamarind water, and spices."

"Is it Indian?"

"You would probably find similar dishes in India."

"I suppose if the food tastes this good, it isn't hard to be a vegetarian. But how do you compensate for the missing proteins?"

"There are great quantities of protein in cheese, milk, nuts, and that split-bean soup [I pointed to the *dahl*!—even more protein than in meat. But equally important is the proper blend of spices. Because the cooks prepare everything for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure, they must learn how to select and properly balance spices. In that proper balance are many minerals, vitamins, and other nutrients needed for good health."

My friend appreciated the care and thoughtfulness with which Kṛṣṇa's devotees prepare food.

"What do you mean by 'spiritual food'?" he asked.

"The *Bhagavad-gītā* explains the difference between proper and improper foods. According to our conditioning by material nature, we are attracted to food characterized by the quality of goodness, passion, or ignorance. We can offer to Kṛṣṇa only foods having the quality of goodness. These are fresh fruits, vegetables, grains, and dairy products (excluding eggs), which are conducive to long life, health, strength, and happiness."

"What about people who don't live in the temple? Do they have to get their *prasāda* from the temple, or can they make it themselves?"

"Many people prepare *prasāda* at home. In fact, there are thousands of people around the country who have altars in their homes and offer their food to Lord Kṛṣṇa every day. If you write to the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust [please see coupon on inside back cover], they'll send you a Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa altar kit and a Hare Kṛṣṇa Cookbook. The idea is that every day when you cook, you cook for Kṛṣṇa and offer the food to Him. Before long, your home will start to feel like a temple—and you'll be well on your way back to Godhead."

Śrīla Prabhupāda Speaks Out

On Christianity and Cow Killing

The following conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and Cardinal Jean Daniélou took place at ISKCON's Paris center.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Jesus Christ said, "Thou shalt not kill." So why is it that the Christian people are engaged in animal killing?

Cardinal Daniélou: Certainly in Christianity it is forbidden to kill, but we believe that there is a difference between the life of a human being and the life of the beasts. The life of a human being is sacred because man is made in the image of God; therefore, to kill a human being is forbidden.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But the Bible does not simply say, "Do not kill the human being." It says broadly, "Thou shalt not kill."

Cardinal Daniélou: We believe that only human life is sacred.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is your interpretation. The commandment is "Thou shalt not kill."

Cardinal Daniélou: It is necessary for man to kill animals in order to have food to eat.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No. Man can eat grains, vegetables, fruits, and milk.

Cardinal Daniélou: No flesh?

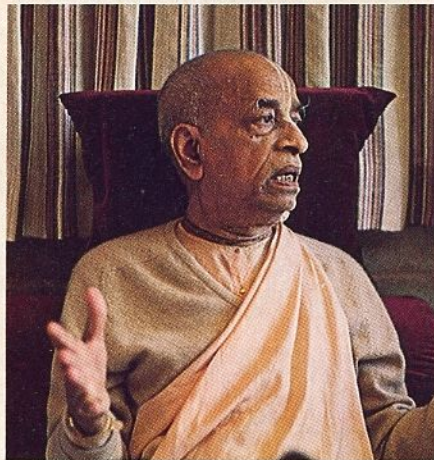
Śrīla Prabhupāda: No. Human beings are meant to eat vegetarian food. The tiger does not come to eat your fruits. His prescribed food is animal flesh. But man's food is vegetables, fruits, grains, and milk products. So how can you say that animal killing is not a sin?

Cardinal Daniélou: We believe it is a question of motivation. If the killing of an animal is for giving food to the hungry, then it is justified.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But consider the cow: we drink her milk; therefore, she is our mother. Do you agree?

Cardinal Daniélou: Yes, surely.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: So if the cow is your mother, how can you support killing her? You take the milk from her, and when she's old and cannot give you milk, you cut her throat. Is that a very humane proposal? In India those who are meat eaters are advised to kill some lower animals like goats, pigs, or even buffalo. But cow killing is the greatest sin. In preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness we ask people not to eat any kind of meat, and my disciples strictly follow this



principle. But if, under certain circumstances, others are obliged to eat meat, then they should eat the flesh of some lower animal. Don't kill cows. It is the greatest sin. And as long as a man is sinful, he cannot understand God. The human being's main business is to understand God and to love Him. But if you remain sinful, you will never be able to understand God—what to speak of loving Him.

Cardinal Daniélou: I think that perhaps this is not an essential point. The important thing is to love God. The practical commandments can vary from one religion to the next.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: So, in the Bible God's practical commandment is that you cannot kill; therefore killing cows is a sin for you.

Cardinal Daniélou: God says to the Indians that killing is not good, and he says to the Jews that...

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, no. Jesus Christ taught, "Thou shalt not kill." Why do you interpret this to suit your own convenience?

Cardinal Daniélou: But Jesus allowed the sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But he never maintained a slaughterhouse.

Cardinal Daniélou: (laughs) No, but he did eat meat.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: When there is no other food, someone may eat meat in order to keep from starving. That is another thing. But it is most sinful to regularly maintain slaughterhouses just to satisfy your tongue. Actually, you will not even have a human society until this cruel practice of maintaining slaughterhouses is stopped. And although

animal killing may sometimes be necessary for survival, at least the mother animal, the cow, should not be killed. That is simply human decency. In the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement our practice is that we don't allow the killing of any animals. Kṛṣṇa says, *patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyaṁ yo me bhaktyā prayacchati*: "Vegetables, fruits, milk, and grains should be offered to Me in devotion" [Bhagavad-gītā 9.26]. We take only the remnants of Kṛṣṇa's food (*prasāda*). The trees offer us many varieties of fruits, but the trees are not killed. Of course, one living entity is food for another living entity, but that does not mean you can kill your mother for food. Cows are innocent; they give us milk. You take their milk—and then kill them in the slaughterhouse. This is sinful.

Student: Śrīla Prabhupāda, Christianity's sanction of meat eating is based on the view that lower species of life do not have a soul like the human being's.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is foolishness. First of all, we have to understand the evidence of the soul's presence within the body. Then we can see whether the human being has a soul and the cow does not. What are the different characteristics of the cow and the man? If we find a difference in characteristics, then we can say that in the animal there is no soul. But if we see that the animal and the human being have the same characteristics, then how can you say that the animal has no soul? The general symptoms are that the animal eats, you eat; the animal sleeps, you sleep; the animal mates, you mate; the animal defends, and you defend. Where is the difference?

Cardinal Daniélou: We admit that in the animal there may be the same type of biological existence as in men, but there is no soul. We believe that the soul is a human soul.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Our *Bhagavad-gītā* says *sarva-yoniṣu*, "In all species of life the soul exists." The body is like a suit of clothes. You have black clothes; I am dressed in saffron clothes. But within the dress you are a human being, and I am also a human being. Similarly, the bodies of the different species are just like different types of dress. There are 8,400,000 species, or dresses, but within each one is a spirit soul, a part and parcel of God. Suppose a man has two sons, not

equally meritorious. One may be a Supreme Court judge and the other may be a common laborer, but the father claims both as his sons. He does not make the distinction that the son who is a judge is very important, and the worker son is not important. And if the judge son says, "My dear father, your other son is useless; let me cut him up and eat him," will the father allow this?

Cardinal Daniélou: Certainly not, but the idea that all life is part of the life of God is difficult for us to admit. There is a great difference between human life and animal life.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That difference is due to the development of consciousness. In the human body there is developed consciousness. Even a tree has a soul, but a tree's consciousness is not very developed. If you cut a tree it does not resist. Actually, it does resist, but only to a very small degree. There is a scientist named Jagadish Chandra Bose who has made a machine which shows that trees and plants are able to feel pain when they are cut. And we can see directly that when someone comes to kill an animal, it resists, it cries, it makes a

horrible sound. So it is a matter of the development of consciousness. But the soul is there within all living beings.

Cardinal Daniélou: But metaphysically, the life of man is sacred. Human beings think on a higher platform than the animals do.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: What is that higher platform? The animal eats to maintain his body, and you also eat in order to maintain your body. The cow eats grass in the field, and the human being eats meat from a huge slaughterhouse full of modern machines. But just because you have big machines and a ghastly scene, while the animal simply eats grass, this does not mean that you are so advanced that only within your body is there a soul, and that there is not a soul within the body of the animal. That is illogical. We can see that the basic characteristics are the same in the animal and the human being.

Cardinal Daniélou: But only in human beings do we find a metaphysical search for the meaning of life.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. So metaphysically search out why you believe that there is no soul within the animal—

that is metaphysics. If you are thinking metaphysically, that's all right. But if you are thinking like an animal, then what is the use of your metaphysical study? "Metaphysical" means "above the physical" or, in other words, "spiritual." In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa says, *sarva-yoniṣu kaunteya*: "In every living being there is a spirit soul." That is metaphysical understanding. Now either you accept Kṛṣṇa's teachings as metaphysical, or you'll have to take a third-class fool's opinion as metaphysical. Which do you accept?

Cardinal Daniélou: But why does God create some animals who eat other animals? There is a fault in the creation, it seems.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: It is not a fault. God is very kind. If you want to eat animals, then He'll give you full facility. God will give you the body of a tiger in your next life so that you can eat flesh very freely. "Why are you maintaining slaughterhouses? I'll give you fangs and claws. Now eat." So the meat eaters are awaiting such punishment. The animal eaters become tigers, wolves, cats, and dogs in their next life—to get more facility.

Hear the timeless wisdom of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness.

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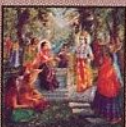
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FROM DESPAIR TO LOVE

(continued from page 7)

Hayagrīva dāsa: Kierkegaard thought that because God sees "everything as equally important and equally insignificant, [He] can only be interested in one thing: obedience."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, and God demands that full obedience (*sarva dharmaṇ parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja*). Our primary obedience should be to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and we should obey the spiritual master because he is the representative of God. If a person carries out the orders of God, he can become a bona fide spiritual master, or guru. A guru does not manufacture anything. He simply presents what God speaks in the scriptures. It is not that we accept just anyone's proclamations about God. Statements must be corroborated by the standard scriptures.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Kierkegaard said, "As an act of worship offered to God, we should renounce everything. . . ."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Worship begins with the renunciation of ulterior motives. Our only business is to love God, and a first-class religious system teaches its followers to love God without ulterior motive. Such worship cannot be checked by material considerations. In any condition we can love God, and God will help us to love Him.

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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Dhṛtarāṣṭra Quits Home

(Reprinted herewith are texts 3 and 4 with purport, including some material inadvertently omitted from the last issue.)

TEXTS 3-4

तं बन्धुमागतं दृष्ट्वा धर्मपुत्रः सहानुजः ।
धृतराष्ट्रो युयुत्सुश्च सतः शारद्वतः पृथा ॥ ३ ॥
गान्धारी द्रौपदी ब्रह्मन् सुभद्रा चोत्तरा कृपी ।
अन्याश्च जामयः पाण्डोर्जातयः ससुताः स्त्रियः ॥ ४ ॥

taṁ bandhum āgataṁ dṛṣṭvā
dharma-putraḥ sahanujah
dhṛtarāṣṭro yuyutsuś ca
sūtaḥ śāradvataḥ prthā

gāndhārī draupadī brahman
subhadra cottarā kṛpī
anyāś ca jāmayaḥ pāṇḍor
jñātayaḥ sasutāḥ striyaḥ

tam—him; bandhum—relative; āgataṁ—having arrived there; dṛṣṭvā—by seeing it; dharma-putraḥ—Yudhiṣṭhira; saha-anujah—along with his younger brothers; dhṛtarāṣṭraḥ—Dhṛtarāṣṭra; yuyutsuḥ—Sātyaki; ca—and; sūtaḥ—Saṅjaya; śāradvataḥ—Kṛpācārya; prthā—Kuntī; gāndhārī—Gāndhārī; draupadī—Draupadī; brahman—O brāhmaṇas; subhadra—Subhadra; ca—and; uttarā—Uttarā; kṛpī—Kṛpī; anyāḥ—others; ca—and; jāmayaḥ—wives of other family members; pāṇḍoḥ—of the Pāṇḍavas; jñātayaḥ—family members; sasutāḥ—along with their sons; striyaḥ—the ladies.

TRANSLATION

When they saw Vidura return to the palace, all the inhabitants—Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, his younger brothers, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Sātyaki,

Saṅjaya, Kṛpācārya, Kuntī, Gāndhārī, Draupadī, Subhadra, Uttarā, Kṛpī, many other wives of the Kauravas, and other ladies with children—all hurried to him in great delight. It so appeared that they had regained their consciousness after a long period.

PURPORT

Gāndhārī: The ideal chaste lady in the history of the world. She was the daughter of Mahārāja Subala, the King of Gāndhāra (now Kandahar in Kabul), and in her maiden state she worshiped Lord Śiva. Lord Śiva is generally worshiped by Hindu maidens to get a good husband. Gāndhārī satisfied Lord Śiva, and by his benediction to obtain one hundred sons, she was betrothed to Dhṛtarāṣṭra, despite his being blind forever. When Gāndhārī came to know that her would-be husband was a blind man, to follow her life companion she decided to become voluntarily blind. So she wrapped up her eyes with many silk linens, and she was married to Dhṛtarāṣṭra under the guidance of her elder brother Śakuni. She was the most beautiful girl of her time, and she was equally qualified by her womanly qualities, which endeared every member of the Kaurava court. But despite all her good qualities, she had the natural frailties of a woman, and she was envious of Kuntī when the latter gave birth to a male child. Both the queens were pregnant, but Kuntī first gave birth to a male child. Thus Gāndhārī became angry and gave a blow to her own abdomen. As a result, she gave birth to a lump of flesh only, but since she was a devotee of Vyāsadeva, by the instruction of Vyāsadeva the lump was divided into one hundred parts, and each part gradually developed to become a male child. Thus her ambition to become the mother of one hundred sons was fulfilled, and she began to nourish all the children according to her exalted position. When the intrigue of the Battle of Kurukṣetra was going on, she was not in favor of fighting with the Pāṇḍavas; rather, she blamed Dhṛtarāṣṭra, her husband, for such a fratricidal war. She desired that the state be divided into two parts, for the sons of Pāṇḍu and her own. She was very affected when all her sons died in the Battle of Kurukṣetra, and she wanted to curse Bhīmasena and Yudhiṣṭhira, but she was checked by Vyāsadeva. Her mourning over the death of Duryodhana and Duṣṣāsana before Lord Kṛṣṇa was very pitiful, and Lord Kṛṣṇa pacified her by transcendental messages. She was equally aggrieved on the death of Karṇa, and she described to Lord Kṛṣṇa the lamentation of Karṇa's wife. She was pacified by Śrīla Vyāsadeva when he showed her dead sons, then promoted to the heavenly kingdoms. She died along with her husband in the jungles of the Himalayas near the mouth of the Ganges; she burned in a forest fire. Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira performed the death ceremony of his uncle and aunt.

Prthā: Daughter of Mahārāja Śūrasena and sister of Vasudeva, Lord Kṛṣṇa's father. Later she was adopted by Mahārāja Kuntibhoja, and hence she is known as Kuntī. She is the incarnation of the success potency of the Personality of Godhead. The heavenly denizens from the

upper planets used to visit the palace of King Kuntibhoja, and Kuntī was engaged for their reception. She also served the great mystic sage Durvāsā, and being satisfied by her faithful service, Durvāsā Muni gave her a *mantra* by which it was possible for her to call for any demigod she pleased. As a matter of inquisitiveness, she at once called for the sun-god, who desired couplement with her, but she declined. But the sun-god assured her immunity from virgin adulteration, and so she agreed to his proposal. As a result of this couplement, she became pregnant, and Karṇa was born by her. By the grace of the sun, she again turned into a virgin girl, but being afraid of her parents, she quitted the newly born child, Karṇa. After that, when she actually selected her own husband, she preferred Pāṇḍu to be her husband. Mahārāja Pāṇḍu later wanted to retire from family life and adopt the renounced order of life. Kuntī refused to allow her husband to adopt such life, but at last Mahārāja Pāṇḍu gave her permission to become a mother of sons by calling some other suitable personalities. Kuntī did not accept this proposal at first, but when vivid examples were set by Pāṇḍu she agreed. Thus by dint of the *mantra* awarded by Durvāsā Muni she called for Dharmarāja, and thus Yudhiṣṭhira was born. She called for the demigod Vāyu (air), and thus Bhīma was born. She called for Indra, the King of heaven, and thus Arjuna was born. The other two sons, namely Nakula and Sahadeva, were begotten by Pāṇḍu himself in the womb of Mādrī. Later on, Mahārāja Pāṇḍu died at an early age, for which Kuntī was so aggrieved that she fainted. Two co-wives, namely Kuntī and Mādrī, decided that Kuntī should live for the maintenance of the five minor children, the Pāṇḍavas, and Mādrī should accept the *satī* rituals by meeting voluntary death along with her husband. This agreement was endorsed by great sages like Śatasrṅga and others present on the occasion.

Later on, when the Pāṇḍavas were banished from the kingdom by the intrigues of Duryodhana, Kuntī followed her sons, and she equally faced all sorts of difficulties during those days. During the forest life one demon girl, Hidimbā, wanted Bhīma as her husband. Bhīma refused, but when the girl approached Kuntī and Yudhiṣṭhira, they ordered Bhīma to accept her proposal and give her a son. As a result of this combination, Gaṇḍakā was born, and he fought very valiantly with his father against the Kauravas. In their forest life they lived with a *brāhmaṇa* family that was in trouble because of one Bakāsura demon, and Kuntī ordered Bhīma to kill the Bakāsura to protect the *brāhmaṇa* family against troubles created by the demon. She advised Yudhiṣṭhira to start for the Pāñcalādeśa. Draupadī was gained in this Pāñcalādeśa by Arjuna, but by order of Kuntī all five of the Pāṇḍava brothers became equally the husbands of Pāñcalī, or Draupadī. She was married with five Pāṇḍavas in the presence of Vyāsadeva. Kuntidevī never forgot her first child, Karṇa, and after Karṇa's death in the Battle of Kurukṣetra she lamented and admitted before her other sons that Karṇa was her eldest son prior to her marriage with Mahārāja Pāṇḍu. Her prayers for the Lord after the Battle of Kurukṣetra, when Lord Kṛṣṇa was going back home, are excellently explained. Later she went to the forest with Gāndhārī for severe penance. She used to take meals after each thirty days. She finally sat down in profound meditation and later burned to ashes in a forest fire.

Draupadī: The most chaste daughter of Mahārāja Drupada and partly an incarnation of goddess Śacī, the wife of Indra. Mahārāja Drupada performed a great sacrifice under the superintendence of the sage Yajña. By his first offering, Dhṛṣṭadyumna was born, and by the second offering, Draupadī was born. She is therefore the sister of Dhṛṣṭadyumna, and she is also named Pāñcalī. The five Pāṇḍavas married her as a common wife, and each of them begot a son in her. Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira begot a son named Pratibhit, Bhīmasena begot a son named Sutasoma, Arjuna begot Śrutakīrti, Nakula begot Śātānika, and Sahadeva begot Śrutakarmā. She is described as a most beautiful lady, equal to her mother-in-law, Kuntī. During her birth there was an aero-message that she should be called Kṛṣṇā. The same message also declared that she was born to kill many a *kṣatriya*. By dint of her blessings from Śaṅkara, she was awarded five husbands, equally qualified. When she preferred to select her own husband, princes and kings were invited from all the countries of the world. She was married with the Pāṇḍavas during their

exile in the forest, but when they went back home Mahārāja Drupada gave them immense wealth as a dowry. She was well received by all the daughters-in-law of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. When she was lost in a gambling game, she was forcibly dragged into the assembly hall, and an attempt was made by Duḥśāsana to see her naked beauty, even though there were elderly persons like Bhīṣma and Droṇa present. She was a great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and by her praying, the Lord Himself became an unlimited garment to save her from the insult. A demon of the name Jātāsura kidnapped her, but her second husband, Bhīmasena, killed the demon and saved her. She saved the Pāṇḍavas from the curse of Mahārṣi Durvāsā by the grace of Lord Kṛṣṇa. When the Pāṇḍavas lived incognito in the palace of Virāṭa, Kicaka was attracted by her exquisite beauty, and by arrangement with Bhīma the devil was killed and she was saved. She was very much aggrieved when her five sons were killed by Aśvatthāmā. At the last stage, she accompanied her husband Yudhiṣṭhira and others and fell on the way. The cause of her falling was explained by Yudhiṣṭhira, but when Yudhiṣṭhira entered the heavenly planet he saw Draupadī gloriously present there as the goddess of fortune in the heavenly planet.

Subhadrā: Daughter of Vasudeva and sister of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. She was not only a very dear daughter of Vasudeva, but also a very dear sister to both Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva. The two brothers and sister are represented in the famous Jagannātha temple of Puri, and the temple is still visited by thousands of pilgrims daily. This temple is in remembrance of the Lord's visit at Kurukṣetra during an occasion of solar eclipse and His subsequent meeting with the residents of Vṛndāvana. The meeting of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa during this occasion is a very pathetic story, and Lord Śrī Caitanya, in the ecstasy of Rādhārāṇī, always pined for Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa at Jagannātha Puri. While Arjuna was at Dvārakā, he wanted to have Subhadrā as his queen, and he expressed his desire to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Kṛṣṇa knew that His elder brother, Lord Baladeva, was arranging her marriage elsewhere, and since He did not dare to go against the arrangement of Baladeva, He advised Arjuna to kidnap Subhadrā. So when all of them were on a pleasure trip on the Raivata Hill, Arjuna managed to kidnap Subhadrā according to the plan of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Baladeva was very angry at Arjuna, and He wanted to kill him, but Lord Kṛṣṇa implored His brother to excuse Arjuna. Then Subhadrā was duly married with Arjuna, and Abhimanyu was born of Subhadrā. At the premature death of Abhimanyu, Subhadrā was very mortified, but on the birth of Parikṣit she was happy and solaced.

(What follows is a continuation of last issue's Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam installment.)

TEXT 23

अहो महीयसी जन्तोर्जीविताशा यथा मवान् ।
मीमापवर्जितं पिण्डमादत्ते गृहपालवत् ॥२३॥

aho mahīyāsī jantor
jīvitaśā yathā bhavān
bhīmāpavarjitaṁ piṇḍam
ādatte grha-pālavat

aho—alas; mahīyāsī—powerful; jantor—of the living beings; jīvitaśā—hope for life; yathā—as much as; bhavān—you are; bhīma—of Bhīmasena (a brother of Yudhiṣṭhira's); apavarjita—remnants; piṇḍam—foodstuff; ādatte—eaten by; grha-pāla-vat—like a household dog.

TRANSLATION

Alas, how powerful are the hopes of a living being to continue his life. Verily, you are living just like a household dog and are eating remnants of food given by Bhīma.

PURPORT

A *sādhū* should never flatter kings or rich men to live comfortably at their cost. A *sādhū* is to speak to the householders about the naked truth of life so that they may come to their senses about the precarious life in material existence. Dhṛtarāṣṭra is a typical example of an attached old man in household life. He had become a pauper in the true sense, yet he wanted to live comfortably in the house of the Pāṇḍavas, of whom Bhīma especially is mentioned because personally he killed two prominent sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, namely Duryodhana and Duḥśāsana. These two sons were very much dear to him for their notorious and nefarious activities, and Bhīma is particularly pointed out because he killed these two pet sons. Why was Dhṛtarāṣṭra living there at the house of the Pāṇḍavas? Because he wanted to continue his life comfortably, even at the risk of all humiliation. Vidura, therefore, was astonished how powerful is the urge to continue life. This sense of continuing one's life indicates that a living being is eternally a living entity and does not want to change his bodily habitation. The foolish man does not know that a particular term of bodily existence is awarded to him to undergo a term of imprisonment, and the human body is awarded, after many, many births and deaths, as a chance for self-realization to go back home, back to Godhead. But persons like Dhṛtarāṣṭra try to make plans to live there in a comfortable position with profit and interest, for they do not see things as they are. Dhṛtarāṣṭra is blind and continues to hope to live comfortably in the midst of all kinds of reverses of life. A *sādhū* like Vidura is meant to awaken such blind persons and thus help them go back to Godhead, where life is eternal. Once going there, no one wants to come back to this material world of miseries. We can just imagine how responsible a task is entrusted to a *sādhū* like Mahātmā Vidura.

TEXT 24

अग्निर्निमुष्टो दत्तश्च गरो दाराश्च दूषिताः ।
हृतं क्षेत्रं धनं येषां तदत्तैरमुभिः कियत् ॥२४॥

*agnir nisṛṣṭo dattaś ca
garo dārāś ca dūṣitāḥ
hṛtaṁ kṣetraṁ dhanam yeṣāṁ
tad-dattair asubhiḥ kiyat*

agniḥ—fire; *nisṛṣṭaḥ*—set; *dattaḥ*—given; *ca*—and; *garah*—poison; *dārāḥ*—married wife; *ca*—and; *dūṣitāḥ*—insulted; *hṛtaṁ*—usurped; *kṣetraṁ*—kingdom; *dhanam*—wealth; *yeṣāṁ*—of those; *tat*—their; *dattaiḥ*—given by; *asubhiḥ*—subsisting; *kiyat*—is unnecessary.

TRANSLATION

There is no need to live a degraded life and subsist on the charity of those whom you tried to kill by arson and poisoning. You also insulted one of their wives and usurped their kingdom and wealth.

PURPORT

The system of *varṇāśrama* religion sets aside a part of one's life completely for the purpose of self-realization and attainment of salvation in the human form of life. That is a routine division of life, but persons like Dhṛtarāṣṭra, even at their weary ripened age, want to stay home, even in a degraded condition of accepting charity from enemies. Vidura wanted to point this out and impressed upon him that it was better to die like his sons than accept such humiliating charity. Five thousand years ago there was one Dhṛtarāṣṭra, but at the present moment there are Dhṛtarāṣṭras in every home. Politicians especially do not retire from political activities unless they are dragged by the cruel hand of death or killed by some opposing element. To stick to family life to the end of one's human life is the grossest type of degradation and there is an absolute need for the Viduras to educate such Dhṛtarāṣṭras, even at the present moment.

TEXT 25

तस्यापि तव देहोऽयं कृपणस्य जिजीविषोः ।
परैत्यनिच्छतो जीर्णो जरया वाससी इव ॥२५॥

*tasyāpi tava deho 'yaṁ
kṛpaṇasya jijīviṣoḥ
paraity anicchato jīrṇo
jarayā vāsasī iva*

tasya—of this; *api*—in spite of; *tava*—your; *dehaḥ*—body; *ayaṁ*—this; *kṛpaṇasya*—of one who is miserly; *jijīviṣoḥ*—of you who desire life; *paraiti*—will dwindle; *anicchataḥ*—even unwilling; *jīrṇaḥ*—deteriorated; *jarayā*—old; *vāsasī*—garments; *iva*—like.

TRANSLATION

Despite your unwillingness to die and your desire to live even at the cost of honor and prestige, your miserly body will certainly dwindle and deteriorate like an old garment.

PURPORT

The words *kṛpaṇasya jijīviṣoḥ* are significant. There are two classes of men. One is called the *kṛpaṇa*, and the other is called the *brāhmaṇa*. The *kṛpaṇa*, or the miserly man, has no estimation of his material body, but the *brāhmaṇa* has a true estimation of himself and the material body. The *kṛpaṇa*, having a wrong estimation of his material body, wants to enjoy sense gratification with his utmost strength, and even in old age he wants to become a young man by medical treatment or otherwise. Dhṛtarāṣṭra is addressed herein as a *kṛpaṇa* because without any estimation of his material body he wants to live at any cost. Vidura is trying to open his eyes to see that he cannot live more than his term and that he must prepare for death. Since death is inevitable, why should he accept such a humiliating position for living? It is better to take the right path, even at the risk of death. Human life is meant for finishing all kinds of miseries of material existence, and life should be so regulated that one can achieve the desired goal. Dhṛtarāṣṭra, due to his wrong conception of life, had already spoiled eighty percent of his achieved energy, so it behooved him to utilize the remaining days of his miserly life for the ultimate good. Such a life is called miserly because one cannot properly utilize the assets of the human form of life. Only by good luck does such a miserly man meet a self-realized soul like Vidura and by his instruction gets rid of the nescience of material existence.

TEXT 26

गतस्वार्थमिमं देहं विरक्तो मुक्तबन्धनः ।
अविज्ञातगतिर्जह्यात् स वै धीर उदाहृतः ॥२६॥

*gata-svārtham imam dehaṁ
virakto mukta-bandhanaḥ
avijñāta-gatiḥ jahyāt
sa vai dhīra udāhṛtaḥ*

gata-sva-artham—without being properly utilized; *imam*—this; *deham*—material body; *viraktaḥ*—indifferently; *mukta*—being freed; *bandhanaḥ*—from all obligations; *avijñāta-gatiḥ*—unknown destination; *jahyāt*—one should give up this body; *saḥ*—such a person; *vai*—certainly; *dhīraḥ*—undisturbed; *udāhṛtaḥ*—is said to be so.

TRANSLATION

He is called undisturbed who goes to an unknown, remote place and, freed from all obligations, quits his material body when it has become useless.

PURPORT

Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, a great devotee and *ācārya* of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava sect, has sung: "My Lord, I have simply wasted my life. Having

obtained the human body, I have neglected to worship Your Lordship, and therefore I have willingly drunk poison." In other words, the human body is especially meant for cultivating knowledge of devotional service to the Lord, without which life becomes full of anxieties and miserable conditions. Therefore, one who has spoiled his life without such cultural activities is advised to leave home without knowledge of friends and relatives and, being thus freed from all obligations of family, society, country, etc., give up the body at some unknown destination so that others may not know where and how he has met his death. *Dhīra* means one who is not disturbed, even when there is sufficient provocation. One cannot give up a comfortable family life due to his affectionate relation with wife and children. Self-realization is obstructed by such undue affection for family, and if anyone is at all able to forget such a relation, he is called undisturbed, or *dhīra*. This is, however, the path of renunciation based on a frustrated life, but stabilization of such renunciation is possible only by association with bona fide saints and self-realized souls by which one can be engaged in the loving devotional service of the Lord. Sincere surrender unto the lotus feet of the Lord is possible by awakening the transcendental sense of service. This is made possible by association with pure devotees of the Lord. Dhṛtarāṣṭra was lucky enough to have a brother whose very association was a source of liberation for this frustrated life.

TEXT 27

यः स्वकात्परतो वेह जातनिर्वेद आत्मवान् ।
हृदि कृत्वा हरिं गेहात्प्रव्रजेत्स नरोत्तमः ॥२७॥

yaḥ svakāt parato veha
jāta-nirveda ātmavān
hṛdi kṛtvā harim gehāt
pravrajat sa narottamaḥ

yaḥ—anyone who; svakāt—by his own awakening; parataḥ vā—or by hearing from another; iha—here in this world; jāta—becomes; nirvedaḥ—indifferent to material attachment; ātmavān—consciousness; hṛdi—within the heart; kṛtvā—having been taken by; harim—the Personality of Godhead; gehāt—from home; pravrajat—goes away; saḥ—he is; nara-uttamaḥ—the first-class human being.

TRANSLATION

He is certainly a first-class man who awakens and understands, either by himself or from others, the falsity and misery of this material world and thus leaves home and depends fully on the Personality of Godhead residing within his heart.

PURPORT

There are three classes of transcendentalists, namely, (1) the *dhīra*, or the one who is not disturbed by being away from family association, (2) one in the renounced order of life, a *sannyāsī* by frustrated sentiment, and (3) a sincere devotee of the Lord, who awakens God consciousness by hearing and chanting and leaves home depending completely on the Personality of Godhead, who resides in his heart. The idea is that the renounced order of life, after a frustrated life of sentiment in the material world, may be the stepping stone on the path of self-realization, but real perfection of the path of liberation is attained when one is practiced to depend fully on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who lives in everyone's heart as Paramātmā. One may live in the darkest jungle alone out of home, but a steadfast devotee knows very well that he is not alone. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is with him, and He can protect His sincere devotee in any awkward circumstance. One should therefore practice devotional service at home, hearing and chanting the holy name, quality, form, pastimes, entourage, etc., in association with pure devotees, and this practice will help one awaken God consciousness in proportion to one's sincerity of purpose. One who desires material benefit by such devotional activities can never depend on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, although He sits in everyone's

heart. Nor does the Lord give any direction to persons who worship Him for material gain. Such materialistic devotees may be blessed by the Lord with material benefits, but they cannot reach the stage of the first-class human being, as above mentioned. There are many examples of such sincere devotees in the history of the world, especially in India, and they are our guides on the path of self-realization. Mahātmā Vidura is one such great devotee of the Lord, and we should all try to follow in his lotus footsteps for self-realization.

TEXT 28

अथोदीचीं दिशं यातु स्वैरज्ञातगतिर्भवान् ।
इतोऽर्वाक्यायशः कालः पुंसां गुणविकर्षणः ॥२८॥

athodīcīm diśaṁ yātu
svair ajñāta-gatir bhavān
ito 'rvāk prāyaśaḥ kālaḥ
puṁsām guṇa-vikarṣaṇaḥ

atha—therefore; udīcīm—northern side; diśaṁ—direction; yātu—please go away; svaiḥ—by your relatives; ajñāta—without knowledge; gatiḥ—movements; bhavān—of yourself; itaḥ—after this; arvāk—will usher in; prāyaśaḥ—generally; kālaḥ—time; puṁsām—of men; guṇa—qualities; vikarṣaṇaḥ—diminishing.

TRANSLATION

Please, therefore, leave for the North immediately, without letting your relatives know, for soon that time will approach which will diminish the good qualities of men.

PURPORT

One can compensate for a life of frustration by becoming a *dhīra*, or leaving home for good without communicating with relatives, and Vidura advised his eldest brother to adopt this way without delay because very quickly the age of Kali was approaching. A conditioned soul is already degraded by the material association, and still in the Kali-yuga the good qualities of a man will deteriorate to the lowest standard. He was advised to leave home before Kali-yuga approached because the atmosphere which was created by Vidura, his valuable instructions on the facts of life, would fade away due to the influence of the age which was fast approaching. To become *narottama*, or a first-class human being depending completely on the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is not possible for any ordinary man. It is stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.28) that a person who is completely relieved of all taints of sinful acts can alone depend on the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead. Dhṛtarāṣṭra was advised by Vidura at least to become a *dhīra* in the beginning if it were impossible for him to become a *sannyāsī* or a *narottama*. Persistently endeavoring on the line of self-realization helps a person to rise to the conditions of a *narottama* from the stage of a *dhīra*. The *dhīra* stage is attained after prolonged practice of the *yoga* system, but by the grace of Vidura one can attain the stage immediately simply by willing to adopt the means of the *dhīra* stage, which is the preparatory stage for *sannyāsa*. The *sannyāsa* stage is the preparatory stage of *paramahansa*, or the first-grade devotee of the Lord.

TEXT 29

एवं राजा विदुरेणानुजेन
प्रज्ञाचक्षुर्बोधित आजमीढः ।
छित्त्वा स्वेषु स्नेहपाशान्द्रुदिभ्रो
निश्चक्राम भ्रातुर्ददर्शिताच्चा ॥२९॥

evam rājā vidureṇānujēna
prajñā-cakṣur bodhita ājamīḍhaḥ
chītvā sveṣu sneha-pāśān draḍhimho
niścakrāma bhrātūr-darśitācchā

evam—thus; rājā—King Dhṛtarāṣṭra; vidureṇa anujena—by his younger brother Vidura; prajñā—introspective knowledge; cakṣuḥ—eyes; bodhitāḥ—being understood; ājamīdhaḥ—Dhṛtarāṣṭra, scion of the family of Ājamīdha; chittvā—by breaking; sveṣu—regarding kinsmen; sneha-pāśān—strong network of affection; draḍhimnaḥ—because of steadfastness; niścakrāma—got out; bhrātṛ—by his brother; sandarśita—direction to; adhva—the path of liberation.

TRANSLATION

Thus Mahārāja Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the scion of the family of Ājamīdha, firmly convinced by introspective knowledge [prajñā], broke at once the strong network of familial affection by his resolute determination. Thus he immediately left home to set out on the path of liberation, as directed by his younger brother Vidura.

PURPORT

Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the great preacher of the principles of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, has stressed the importance of association with sādhus, pure devotees of the Lord. He said that even by a moment's association with a pure devotee, one can achieve all perfection. We are not ashamed to admit that this fact was experienced in our practical life. Were we not favored by His Divine Grace Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja, by our first meeting for a few minutes only, it would have been impossible for us to accept this mighty task of describing Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam in English. Without seeing him at that opportune moment, we could have become a very great business magnate, but never would we have been able to walk the path of liberation and be engaged in the factual service of the Lord under instructions of His Divine Grace. And here is another practical example by the action of Vidura's association with Dhṛtarāṣṭra. Mahārāja Dhṛtarāṣṭra was tightly bound in a network of material affinities related to politics, economy and family attachment, and he did everything in his power to achieve so-called success in his planned projects, but he was frustrated from the beginning to the end so far as his material activities were concerned. And yet, despite his life of failure, he achieved the greatest of all success in self-realization by the forceful instructions of a pure devotee of the Lord, who is the typical emblem of a sādhu. The scriptures enjoin, therefore, that one should associate with sādhus only, rejecting all other kinds of association, and by doing so one will have ample opportunity to hear the sādhus, who can cut to pieces the bonds of illusory affection in the material world. It is a fact that the material world is a great illusion because everything appears to be a tangible reality but at the next moment evaporates like the dashing foam of the sea or a cloud in the sky. A cloud in the sky undoubtedly appears to be a reality because it rains, and due to rains so many temporary green things appear, but in the ultimate issue, everything disappears, namely the cloud, rain and green vegetation, all in due course. But the sky remains, and the varieties of sky or luminaries also remain forever. Similarly, the Absolute Truth, which is compared to the sky, remains eternally, and the temporary cloudlike illusion comes and goes away. Foolish living beings are attracted by the temporary cloud, but intelligent men are more concerned with the eternal sky with all its variegatedness.

TEXT 30

पतिं प्रयान्तं सुबलस्य पुत्री
पतिव्रता चानुजगाम साध्वी ।

हिमालयं न्यस्तदण्डप्रहरं
मनस्विनामिव सत्सम्प्रहारः ॥३०॥

patim prayāntam subalasya putrī
pati-vratā cānujagāma sādhvī
himālayam nyasta-daṇḍa-praharṣam
manasvinām iva sat samprahārah

patim—her husband; prayāntam—while leaving home; subalasya—of King Subala; putrī—the worthy daughter; pati-vratā—devoted to her husband; ca—also; anujagāma—followed; sādhvī—the chaste; himālayam—towards the Himalaya Mountains; nyasta-daṇḍa—one who has accepted the rod of the renounced order; praharṣam—object of delight; manasvinām—of the great fighters; iva—like; sat—legitimate; samprahārah—good lashing.

TRANSLATION

The gentle and chaste Gāndhārī, who was the daughter of King Subala of Kandahara [or Gāndhāra], followed her husband, seeing that he was going to the Himalaya Mountains, which are the delight of those who have accepted the staff of the renounced order like fighters who have accepted a good lashing from the enemy.

PURPORT

Saubalinī, or Gāndhārī, daughter of King Subala and wife of King Dhṛtarāṣṭra, was ideal as a wife devoted to her husband. The Vedic civilization especially prepares chaste and devoted wives, of whom Gāndhārī is one amongst many mentioned in history. Lakṣmījī Sitādevī was also a daughter of a great king, but she followed her husband, Lord Rāmacandra, into the forest. Similarly, as a woman Gāndhārī could have remained at home or at her father's house, but as a chaste and gentle lady she followed her husband without consideration. Instructions for the renounced order of life were imparted to Dhṛtarāṣṭra by Vidura, and Gāndhārī was by the side of her husband. But he did not ask her to follow him because he was at that time fully determined, like a great warrior who faces all kinds of dangers in the battlefield. He was no longer attracted to so-called wife or relatives, and he decided to start alone, but as a chaste lady Gāndhārī decided to follow her husband till the last moment. Mahārāja Dhṛtarāṣṭra accepted the order of vānaprastha, and at this stage the wife is allowed to remain as a voluntary servitor, but in the sannyāsa stage no wife can stay with her former husband. A sannyāsī is considered to be a dead man civilly, and therefore the wife becomes a civil widow without connection with her former husband. Mahārāja Dhṛtarāṣṭra did not deny his faithful wife, and she followed her husband at her own risk.

The sannyāsīs accept a rod as the sign of the renounced order of life. There are two types of sannyāsīs. Those who follow the Māyāvādī philosophy, headed by Śrīpāda Śaṅkarācārya, accept only one rod (ekadaṇḍa), but those who follow the Vaiṣṇavite philosophy accept three combined rods (tri-daṇḍa). The Māyāvādī sannyāsīs are ekadaṇḍi-svāmīs, whereas the Vaiṣṇava sannyāsīs are known as tridaṇḍi-svāmīs, or more distinctly, tridaṇḍi-gosvāmīs, in order to be distinguished from the Māyāvādī philosophers. The ekadaṇḍi-svāmīs are mostly fond of the Himalayas, but the Vaiṣṇava sannyāsīs are fond of Vṛndāvana and Purī. The Vaiṣṇava sannyāsīs are narottamas, whereas the Māyāvādī sannyāsīs are dhīras. Mahārāja Dhṛtarāṣṭra was advised to follow the dhīras because at that stage it was difficult for him to become a narottama.

TEXT 31

अजातशत्रुः कृतमैत्रो हुताग्नि-
विप्रां नत्वा तिलगोभूमिरुक्मैः ।
गृहं प्रविष्टो गुरुवन्दनाय
न चापश्यत्पितरौ सौबलीं च ॥३१॥

ajāta-śatruḥ kṛta-maitro hutāgnir
viprān natvā tila-go-bhūmi-rukmaiḥ
gṛham praviṣṭo guru-vandanāya
na cāpaśyat pitarau saubalinīṃ ca

ajāta—never born; śatruḥ—enemy; kṛta—having performed; maitraḥ—worshiping the demigods; huta-agniḥ—and offering fuel in the fire; viprān—the brāhmaṇas; natvā—offering obeisances; tila-go-

bhūmi-rukmaiḥ—along with grains, cows, land and gold; *gṛham*—within the palace; *praviṣṭaḥ*—having entered into; *guru-vandanāya*—for offering respect to the elderly members; *na*—did not; *ca*—also; *apaśyat*—see; *pitarau*—his uncles; *saubalim*—Gāndhārī; *ca*—also.

TRANSLATION

Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, whose enemy was never born, performed his daily morning duties by praying, offering fire sacrifice to the sun-god, and offering obeisances, grains, cows, land and gold to the brāhmaṇas. He then entered the palace to pay respects to the elderly. However, he could not find his uncles or aunt, the daughter of King Subala.

PURPORT

Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira was the most pious king because he personally practiced daily the pious duties for the householders. The householders are required to rise early in the morning, and after bathing they should offer respects to the Deities at home by prayers, by offering fuel in the sacred fire, by giving the brāhmaṇas in charity land, cows, grains, gold, etc., and at last offering to the elderly members due respects and obeisances. One who is not prepared to practice injunctions prescribed in the śāstras cannot be a good man simply by book knowledge. Modern householders are practiced to different modes of life, namely to rise late and then take bed tea without any sort of cleanliness and without any purificatory practices as mentioned above. The household children are taken to practice what the parents practice, and therefore the whole generation glides towards hell. Nothing good can be expected from them unless they associate with *sādhus*. Like Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the materialistic person may take lessons from a *sādhu* like Vidura and thus be cleansed of the effects of modern life.

Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, however, could not find in the palace his two uncles, namely Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Vidura, along with Gāndhārī, the daughter of King Subala. He was anxious to see them and therefore asked Sañjaya, the private secretary of Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

TEXT 32

तत्र सञ्जयमासीनं पप्रच्छोद्विग्नमानसः ।
गावल्गणे क्व नस्तातो वृद्धो हीनश्च नेत्रयोः ॥३२॥

tatra sañjayaṁ āsinaṁ
papracchodvigna-mānasah
gāvalgaṇe kva naś tāto
vṛddho hīnaś ca netrayoḥ

tatra—there; *sañjayaṁ*—unto Sañjaya; *āsinaṁ*—seated; *papraccha*—he inquired from; *udvigna-mānasah*—filled with anxiety; *gāvalgaṇe*—the son of Gavalgaṇa, Sañjaya; *kva*—where is; *naḥ*—our; *tātaḥ*—uncle; *vṛddhaḥ*—old; *hīnaś ca*—and bereft of; *netrayoḥ*—the eyes.

TRANSLATION

Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, full of anxiety, turned to Sañjaya, who was sitting there, and said: O Sañjaya, where is our uncle, who is old and blind?

TEXT 33

अम्बा च हतपुत्राऽऽर्ता पितृव्यः क्व गतः सुहृत् ।
अपि मय्यकृतप्रज्ञे हतबन्धुः स मार्यया ।
आशंसमानः शर्मलं गङ्गायां दुःखितोऽपतत् ॥३३॥

ambā ca hata-putrārtā
pitṛvyaḥ kva gataḥ suhṛt
api mayy akṛta-prajñe
hata-bandhuḥ sa bhāryayā
āsaṁsa-mānaḥ śamalaṁ
gaṅgāyām duḥkhito 'patat

ambā—mother aunt; *ca*—and; *hata-putrā*—who had lost all her sons; *ārtā*—in a sorry plight; *pitṛvyaḥ*—uncle Vidura; *kva*—where; *gataḥ*—gone; *suhṛt*—well-wisher; *api*—whether; *mayi*—unto me; *akṛta-prajñe*—ungrateful; *hata-bandhuḥ*—one who has lost all his sons; *saḥ*—Dhṛtarāṣṭra; *bhāryayā*—with his wife; *āsaṁsa-mānaḥ*—in doubtful mind; *śamalam*—offenses; *gaṅgāyām*—in the Ganges water; *duḥkhitaḥ*—in distressed mind; *apatat*—fell down.

TRANSLATION

Where is my well-wisher, uncle Vidura, and mother Gāndhārī, who is very afflicted due to all her sons' demise? My uncle Dhṛtarāṣṭra was also very mortified due to the death of all his sons and grandsons. Undoubtedly I am very ungrateful. Did he, therefore, take my offenses very seriously and, along with his wife, drown himself in the Ganges?

PURPORT

The Pāṇdavas, especially Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira and Arjuna, anticipated the aftereffects of the Battle of Kurukṣetra, and therefore Arjuna declined to execute the fighting. The fight was executed by the will of the Lord, but the effects of family aggrievement, as they had thought of it before, had come to be true. Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira was always conscious of the great plight of his uncle Dhṛtarāṣṭra and aunt Gāndhārī, and therefore he took all possible care of them in their old age and aggrieved conditions. When, therefore, he could not find his uncle and aunt in the palace, naturally his doubts arose, and he conjectured that they had gone down to the water of the Ganges. He thought himself ungrateful because when the Pāṇdavas were fatherless, Mahārāja Dhṛtarāṣṭra had given them all royal facilities to live, and in return he had killed all Dhṛtarāṣṭra's sons in the Battle of Kurukṣetra. As a pious man, Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira took into account all his unavoidable misdeeds, and he never thought of the misdeeds of his uncle and company. Dhṛtarāṣṭra had suffered the effects of his own misdeeds by the will of the Lord, but Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira was thinking only of his own unavoidable misdeeds. That is the nature of a good man and devotee of the Lord. A devotee never finds fault with others, but tries to find his own and thus rectify them as far as possible.

TEXT 34

पितर्युपरते पाण्डौ सर्वान्नः सुहृदः शिशून् ।
अरक्षतां व्यसनतः पितृव्यौ क्व गतावितः ॥३४॥

pitary uparate pāṇdau
sarvān naḥ suhṛdaḥ śiśūn
arakṣatām vyasanataḥ
pitṛvyaḥ kva gatāv itaḥ

pitari—upon my father; *uparate*—falling down; *pāṇdau*—Mahārāja Pāṇdu; *sarvān*—all; *naḥ*—of us; *suhṛdaḥ*—well-wishers; *śiśūn*—small children; *arakṣatām*—protected; *vyasanataḥ*—from all kinds of dangers; *pitṛvyaḥ*—uncles; *kva*—where; *gatau*—have departed; *itaḥ*—from this place.

TRANSLATION

When my father, Pāṇdu, fell down and we were all small children, these two uncles gave us protection from all kinds of calamities. They were always our good well-wishers. Alas, where have they gone from here?

TEXT 35

कृपया स्नेहवैकल्यात्सतो विरहकशितः ।
आत्मेस्वरमचक्षाणो न प्रत्याहातिपीडितः ॥३५॥

sūta uvāca
kṛpayā sneha-vaiklavayāt
sūto viraha-karṣitaḥ
ātmeśvaram acakṣāno
na pratyāhātīpīḍitaḥ

sūtaḥ uvāca—Sūta Gosvāmī said; kṛpayā—out of full compassion; sneha-vaiklavayāt—mental derangement due to profound affection; sūtaḥ—Saṅjaya; viraha-karṣitaḥ—distressed by separation; ātmeśvaram—his master; acakṣānaḥ—having not seen; na—did not; pratyāha—replied; ati-pīḍitaḥ—being too aggrieved.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī said: Because of compassion and mental agitation, Saṅjaya, not having seen his own master, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, was aggrieved and could not properly reply to Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira.

PURPORT

Saṅjaya was the personal assistant of Mahārāja Dhṛtarāṣṭra for a very long time, and thus he had the opportunity to study the life of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. And when he saw at last that Dhṛtarāṣṭra had left home without his knowledge, his sorrows had no bound. He was fully compassionate toward Dhṛtarāṣṭra because in the game of the Battle of Kurukṣetra, King Dhṛtarāṣṭra had lost everything, men and money, and at last the King and the Queen had to leave home in utter frustration. He studied the situation in his own way because he did not know that the inner vision of Dhṛtarāṣṭra has been awakened by Vidura and that therefore he had left home in enthusiastic cheerfulness for a better life after departure from the dark well of home. Unless one is convinced of a better life after renunciation of the present life, one cannot stick to the renounced order of life simply by artificial dress or staying out of the home.

TEXT 36

विमृज्याश्रूणि पाणिभ्यां विष्टभ्यात्मनमात्मना ।
अजातशत्रुं प्रत्युचे प्रभोः पादावनुसरन् ॥३६॥

vimṛjyāśrūṇi pāṇibhyāṃ
viṣṭabhyātmānam ātmanā
ajāta-śatruṃ pratyūce
prabhoḥ pādau anusmaran

vimṛjya—smearing; āśrūṇi—tears of the eyes; pāṇibhyāṃ—with his hands; viṣṭabhyā—situated; ātmānam—the mind; ātmanā—by intelligence; ajāta-śatruṃ—unto Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira; pratyūce—began to reply; prabhoḥ—of his master; pādau—feet; anusmaran—thinking after.

TRANSLATION

First he slowly pacified his mind by intelligence, and wiping away his tears and thinking of the feet of his master, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, he began to reply to Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira.

TEXT 37

संजय उवाच
नाहं वेद व्यवसितं पित्रोर्वः कुलनन्दन ।
गान्धार्या वा महाबाहो मुषितोऽसि महात्मभिः ॥३७॥

saṅjaya uvāca
nāhaṃ veda vyavasitaṃ
pitroḥ vaḥ kula-nandana
gāndhāryā vā mahā-bāho
muṣito 'smi mahātmabhiḥ

saṅjayah uvāca—Saṅjaya said; na—not; aham—I; veda—know; vyavasitaṃ—determination; pitroḥ—of your uncles; vaḥ—your; kula-

nandana—O descendant of the Kuru dynasty; gāndhāryāḥ—of Gāndhārī; vā—or; mahā-bāho—O great King; muṣitaḥ—cheated; asmi—I have been; mahā-ātmabhiḥ—by those great souls.

TRANSLATION

Saṅjaya said: My dear descendant of the Kuru dynasty, I have no information of the determination of your two uncles and Gāndhārī. O King, I have been cheated by those great souls.

PURPORT

That great souls cheat others may be astonishing to know, but it is a fact that great souls cheat others for a great cause. It is said that Lord Kṛṣṇa also advised Yudhiṣṭhira to tell a lie before Droṇācārya, and it was also for a great cause. The Lord wanted it, and therefore it was a great cause. Satisfaction of the Lord is the criterion of one who is bona fide, and the highest perfection of life is to satisfy the Lord by one's occupational duty. That is the verdict of *Gītā* and *Bhāgavatam*.* Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Vidura, followed by Gāndhārī, did not disclose their determination to Saṅjaya, although he was constantly with Dhṛtarāṣṭra as his personal assistant. Saṅjaya never thought that Dhṛtarāṣṭra could perform any act without consulting him. But Dhṛtarāṣṭra's going away from home was so confidential that it could not be disclosed even to Saṅjaya. Sanātana Gosvāmī also cheated the keeper of the prison house while going away to see Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and similarly Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī also cheated his priest and left home for good to satisfy the Lord. To satisfy the Lord, anything is good, for it is in relation with the Absolute Truth. We also had the same opportunity to cheat the family members and leave home to engage in the service of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Such cheating was necessary for a great cause, and there is no loss for any party in such transcendental fraud.

TEXT 38

अथाजगाम भगवान् नारदः सहस्रम्बुरुः ।
प्रत्युत्थायाभिवाद्याह सानुजोऽभ्यर्चयन्मुनिम् ॥३८॥

athajāgāma bhagavān
nāradaḥ saha-tumburuḥ
pratyutthāyābhivādyaḥ
sānujo 'bhyarcayan munim

atha—thereafter; ajagāma—arrived; bhagavān—the godly personality; nāradaḥ—Nārada; saha-tumburuḥ—along with his tumburu (musical instrument); pratyutthāya—having gotten up from their seats; abhivādya—offering their due obeisances; āha—said; sa-anujah—along with younger brothers; abhyarcayan—thus while receiving in a proper mood; munim—the sage.

TRANSLATION

While Saṅjaya was thus speaking, Śrī Nārada, the powerful devotee of the Lord, appeared on the scene carrying his tumburu. Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira and his brothers received him properly by getting up from their seats and offering obeisances.

PURPORT

Devarṣi Nārada is described herein as *bhagavān* due to his being the most confidential devotee of the Lord. The Lord and His very confidential devotees are treated on the same level by those who are actually engaged in the loving service of the Lord. Such confidential devotees of the Lord are very much dear to the Lord because they travel everywhere

*yataḥ pravṛttir bhūtānāṃ/ yena sarvaṃ idaṃ tatam
sva-karmaṇā tam abhyarcya/ siddhiṃ vindati mānavah (Bg. 18.46)

ataḥ pumbhir dvija-śreṣṭhā/ varṇāśrama-vibhāgaśah
svanuṣṭhitasya dharmasya/ samsiddhir hari-toṣanam (Bhāg. 1.2.13)

to preach the glories of the Lord in different capacities and try their utmost to convert the nondevotees of the Lord into devotees in order to bring them to the platform of sanity. Actually a living being cannot be a nondevotee of the Lord because of his constitutional position, but when one becomes a nondevotee or nonbeliever, it is to be understood that the person concerned is not in a sound condition of life. The confidential devotees of the Lord treat such illusioned living beings, and therefore they are most pleasing in the eyes of the Lord. The Lord says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that no one is dearer to Him than one who actually preaches the glories of the Lord to convert the nonbelievers and non-devotees. Such personalities as Nārada must be offered all due respects, like those offered to the Personality of Godhead Himself, and Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, along with his noble brothers, were examples for others in receiving a pure devotee of the Lord like Nārada, who had no other business save and except singing the glories of the Lord along with his *vīṇā*, a musical stringed instrument.

TEXT 39

युधिष्ठिर उवाच

नाहं वेदं गतिं पित्रोर्भगवन् क्व गतावितः ।
अम्बावाहतपुत्रार्ता क्व गता च तपस्विनी ॥३९॥

yudhiṣṭhira uvāca
nāhaṁ veda gatim pitror
bhagavan kva gatāu itaḥ
ambā vā hata-putrārtā
kva gatā ca tapasvini

yudhiṣṭhiraḥ uvāca—Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira said; na—do not; aham—myself; veda—know it; gatim—departure; pitroḥ—of the uncles; bhagavan—O godly personality; kva—where; gatau—gone; itaḥ—from this place; ambā—mother aunt; vā—either; hata-putrā—bereft of her sons; ārtā—aggrieved; kva—where; gatā—gone; ca—also; tapasvini—ascetic.

TRANSLATION

Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira said: O godly personality, I do not know where my two uncles have gone. Nor can I find my ascetic aunt who is griefstricken by the loss of all her sons.

PURPORT

Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, as a good soul and devotee of the Lord, was always conscious of the great loss of his aunt and her sufferings as an

ascetic. An ascetic is never disturbed by all kinds of sufferings, and that makes him strong and determined on the path of spiritual progress. Queen Gāndhārī is a typical example of an ascetic because of her marvelous character in many trying situations. She was an ideal woman as mother, wife and ascetic, and in the history of the world such character in a woman is rarely found.

TEXT 40

कर्णधार इवापारे भगवान् पारदर्शकः ।
अथावभाषे भगवान् नारदो मुनिसत्तमः ॥४०॥

karnadhāra ivāpāre
bhagavān pāra-darśakah
athābhāṣe bhagavān
nārado muni-sattamaḥ

karna-dhāraḥ—captain of the ship; iva—like; apāre—in the extensive oceans; bhagavān—representative of the Lord; pāra-darśakah—one who can give directions to the other side; atha—thus; ababhāṣe—began to say; bhagavān—the godly personality; nāradaḥ—the great sage Nārada; muni-sat-tamaḥ—the greatest among the devotee-philosophers.

TRANSLATION

You are like a captain of a ship in a great ocean and you can direct us to our destination. Thus addressed, the godly personality, Devarṣi Nārada, greatest of the philosopher devotees, began to speak.

PURPORT

There are different types of philosophers, and the greatest of all of them are those who have seen the Personality of Godhead and have surrendered themselves in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. Among all such pure devotees of the Lord, Devarṣi Nārada is the chief, and therefore he has been described herein as the greatest of all philosopher devotees. Unless one has become a sufficiently learned philosopher by hearing the Vedānta philosophy from a bona fide spiritual master, one cannot be a learned philosopher devotee. One must be very faithful, learned and renounced, otherwise one cannot be a pure devotee. A pure devotee of the Lord can give us direction towards the other end of nescience. Devarṣi Nārada used to visit the palace of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira because the Pāṇḍavas were all pure devotees of the Lord, and the Devarṣi was always ready to give them good counsel whenever needed.

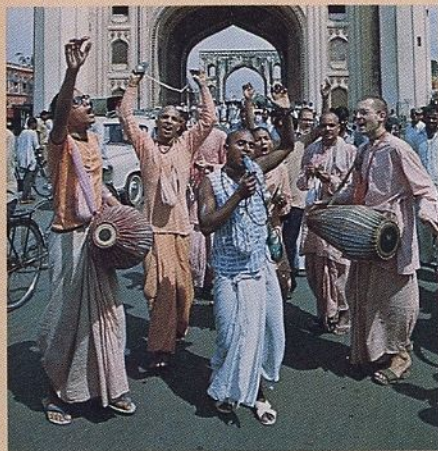
(continued in next issue)



Every Town and Village

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

New Era Begins for ISKCON in India



Recently, a bullock cart filled with ISKCON devotees rumbled along the back roads of the east Indian province of Orissa. When they and their leader Lokanātha Swami reached Badrak, they led crowds of delighted townspeople in chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* and served out a feast of *prasāda* (vegetarian food offered to Lord Kṛṣṇa with devotion). Also, the devotees left many Badrak residents with inexpensive editions of the ancient Vedic literatures, as translated by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

Observing all these goings-on was Bhakti Vikash Mahā-yogī Mahārāja, the manager of the local Kṛṣṇa temple. He felt so impressed with the devotees' enthusiasm for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness that he asked them to take over the management of his temple and use it as a base for their missionary work.

This brief encounter marked a real breakthrough for Kṛṣṇa consciousness in modern India. Now, the Badrak temple is part of the Gauḍīya Maṭha, a multi-temple federation that dates back to the first part of the century, when Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswami (Śrīla Prabhupāda's own spiritual master) started a campaign for reviving Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the world. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta opened sixty-four Gauḍīya Maṭha temples in India and asked his disciples to open similar temples everywhere, especially in the United States and Western Europe. But after he passed away in 1936, his disciples split into factions and fought in the courts for property and power.

This petty legal wrangling has carried on through the years, but Śrīla Prabhupāda has stayed clear of it and mindful of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta's plan to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the world. In 1965, at age seventy, Śrīla Prabhupāda journeyed to America to found the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. In a dozen years he has opened more than one hundred Kṛṣṇa-conscious centers worldwide, but the members of the Gauḍīya Maṭha have been slow in acknowledging his achievements. Now, at long last, this acknowledgment is coming—at least in Badrak.

When Bhakti Vikash Mahā-yogī Mahārāja saw the vigorous missionary work of the ISKCON devotees, he knew that they and their spiritual master Śrīla Prabhupāda are bona fide followers of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta. At that moment he determined to place the Gauḍīya Maṭha temple in Badrak in their charge, and not long afterward, he and the ISKCON devotees approached the temple's board of trustees to see whether they would agree to the proposal. After interviewing the devotees, the trustees concluded, "These ISKCON members are devotees of the highest order." And without hesitation the trustees pledged their support.

ISKCON leaders hope that other Gauḍīya Maṭha temples will follow after their sister temple in Badrak and fully support the nonsectarian mission of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness to every town and village in the world.

A Godbrother Hails Śrīla Prabhupāda's Work

To fulfill the plan of his spiritual master Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswami, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda has not only started many temples but has also translated the primary works of ancient India's Vedic literatures into English. Dr. O. B. L. Kapoor, Emeritus Chairman of the Philosophy Department in Benares's Government Postgraduate College and himself a disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta, has this to say about Śrīla Prabhupāda's translation of the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*:

"Śrī Caitanya is the pioneer of a great social and religious movement that began in India a little less than five hundred years ago. *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* is the most authoritative biography of this great saint and social reformer. But the work is more than a biography. Its greatness consists not so much in the literary skill with which the story of Caitanya's life is told, but in its complete exposition of the profound tenets of the philosophy and religion of Śrī Caitanya as exemplified in His life. Thus, it is a remarkable document of great historical and sociological importance.

"This English edition translated by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda is superb. It contains the original Sanskrit and Bengali verses with their English transliterations, word-for-word synonyms, translations, and elaborate purports, easily bearing testimony to the author's profound knowledge of the subject."

Vaiṣṇava Calendar

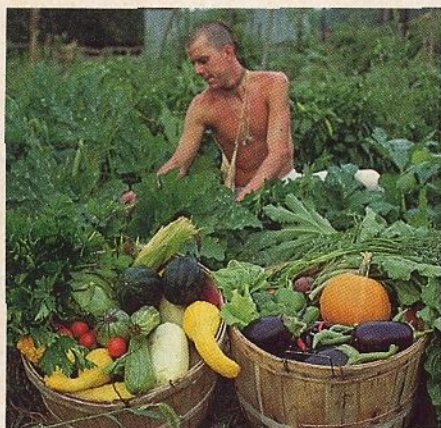
Kṛṣṇa-conscious devotees follow a spiritual calendar that divides the year into twelve months, each named for a different form of Kṛṣṇa. The year is full of Kṛṣṇa conscious festivals, and some of the upcoming ones are listed here. The devotees at the ISKCON center nearest you will gladly tell you about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

Year 491, Caitanya Era Vaiṣṇava months of Dāmodara (October 27–November 25), Keśava (November 26–December 25) and Nārāyaṇa (December 26–January 24)			
Nov. 21 (Dāmodara 26)	Nov. 22 (Dāmodara 27)	Nov. 25 (Dāmodara 30)	Dec. 7 (Keśava 12)
Śrī Uthānaikādaśī (fasting from grains and beans). Disappearance of Śrīla Gaurakīśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja. Bhīṣma-pañcaka.	Ekādaśī break-fast after sunrise before 9:35 A.M. End of Cāturmāsya-vrata and Kārtika-vrata if started from Pūrnimā. Disappearance of Śrīla Bhūgarbha Gosvāmī and Śrīla Kāśīvara Paṇḍita Gosvāmī. Śrī Dhātrī-vrata.	Haimantika-rāsayātrā of Lord Kṛṣṇa. End of Cāturmāsya-vrata and Kārtika-vrata if started from Pūrnimā. Disappearance of Śrīla Bhūgarbha Gosvāmī and Śrīla Kāśīvara Paṇḍita Gosvāmī. Śrī Dhātrī-vrata.	Trisprā-mahādvādaśī (fasting from grains and beans).
Dec. 8 (Keśava 13)	Dec. 21 (Keśava 26)	Dec. 22 (Keśava 27)	Dec. 29 (Nārāyaṇa 4)
Ekādaśī break-fast after sunrise before 9:41 A.M.	Mokṣadā-ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans).	Ekādaśī break-fast after sunrise before 9:50 A.M.	Disappearance of Orh Viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

Farming With Kṛṣṇa

"Human prosperity flourishes by natural gifts, and not by gigantic industrial enterprises," says His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who has founded many Kṛṣṇa-conscious farming communities all over the world. "The gigantic industrial enterprises are products of a godless civilization, and they cause the destruction of the noble aims of human life. . . .

What we need, therefore, is to be obedient to the laws of the Lord and achieve the perfection of human life by devotional service to Him." Here's a look at two ISKCON farms in action.



Kṛṣṇa's Village In West Virginia

by Taru dāsa

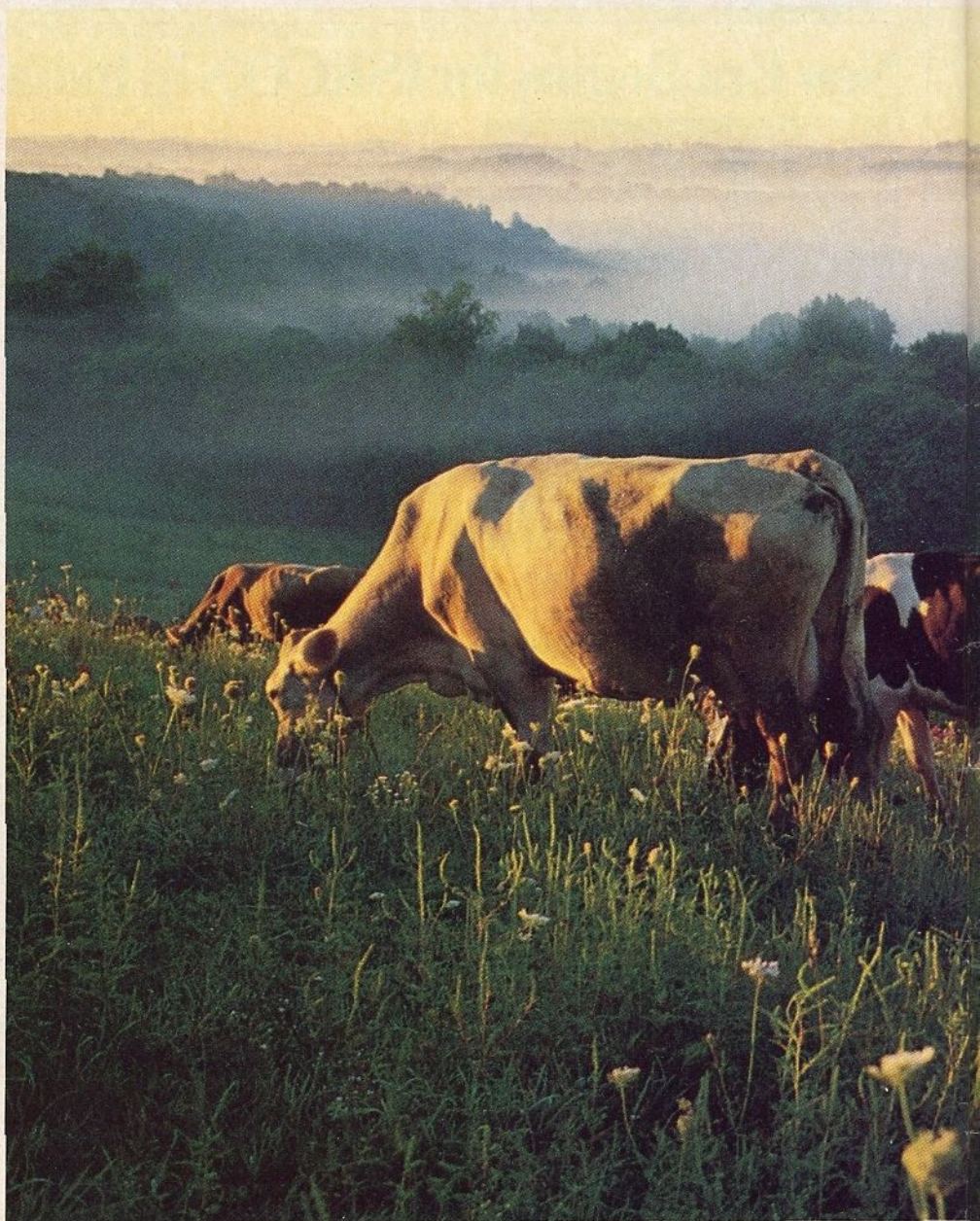
About the last thing anyone would expect to find tucked away in the rolling hills of West Virginia is a community of shaven-headed, saffron-robed Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees. Yet, about ten miles south of Wheeling, near Route 250, just such a community is flourishing.

Begun in 1968, New Vrindāban embodies the ancient way of life that His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda calls "simple living and high thinking." In 1966, when Śrīla Prabhupāda founded the International Society for Krishna Consciousness in New York City, he stated that one of ISKCON's

primary purposes would be "to erect for the members and for society at large a holy place of transcendental pastimes dedicated to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa." Just two years later Kīrtanānanda Swami, one of Prabhupāda's original disciples, came to West Virginia to carry out this mission.

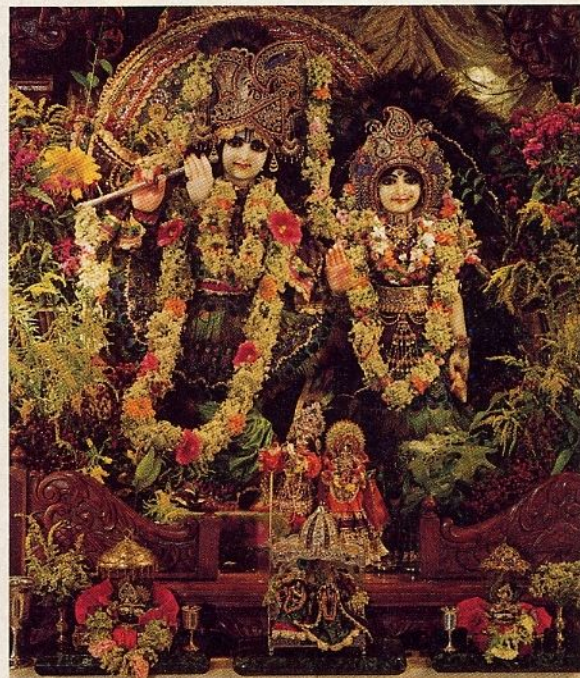
New Vrindāban began as a 133-acre, inaccessible hill farm with one rundown shack, but in nine short years it has grown to more than one thousand acres with dozens of houses, barns, temples, and workshops spread over six well-developed farms. The community even

has its own monthly magazine, *The Brijabasi Spirit*. Yet with all this economic growth the residents have never strayed from Śrīla Prabhupāda's original instructions on the nature of New Vrindāban: "The Vrindāban conception is that of a transcendental village without the botherations of the modern industrial atmosphere. In Kṛṣṇa's Vrindāban the people can fully depend on nature's beauty and the cows, and this New Vrindāban should be such an ideal village—where the residents will have simple living and high thinking." So the aim of New Vrindāban is not to provide a com-



in Mind

Photography by
Muralīvadana dāsa



Far left: Manohara dāsa, New Vrindāban's head gardener, gathers vegetables at the main farm. This year's crop may be large enough to feed the community all winter long, without any help from the Pittsburgh markets. Left: the forty-cow milk herd grazes on the upper pasture at dawn. "Last spring we were getting almost sixteen hundred pounds of milk a day," director Kirtanānanda Swami explains. Above: "All our activities center upon Lord Kṛṣṇa and His eternal consort Rādhārāṇī, who reside here in Their Deity forms of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Vṛndāvana Candra." "Vṛndāvana Candra" means "Kṛṣṇa, the moonlike Lord of Vṛndāvana."

fortable material situation for those who live there, but rather to establish a transcendental land where the atmosphere automatically reminds everyone of Kṛṣṇa.

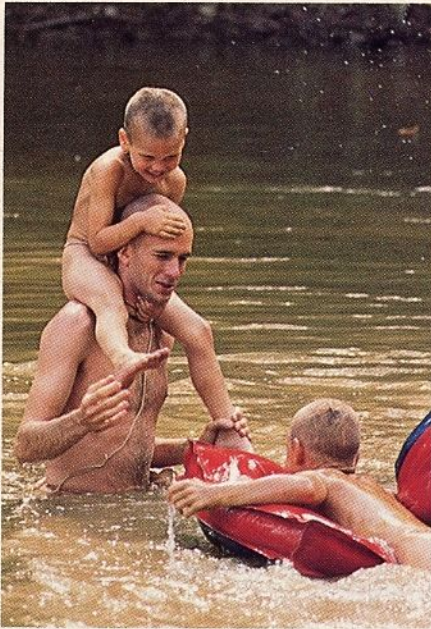
Kirtanānanda Swami, New Vrindāban's director and a former history instructor at Columbia University, points out how important it is that the devotees see Kṛṣṇa as the center of all they do:

"The most successful communities throughout history have tended to be those that were strongly religious—those that could unify on the common worship of God. And obviously, when the con-

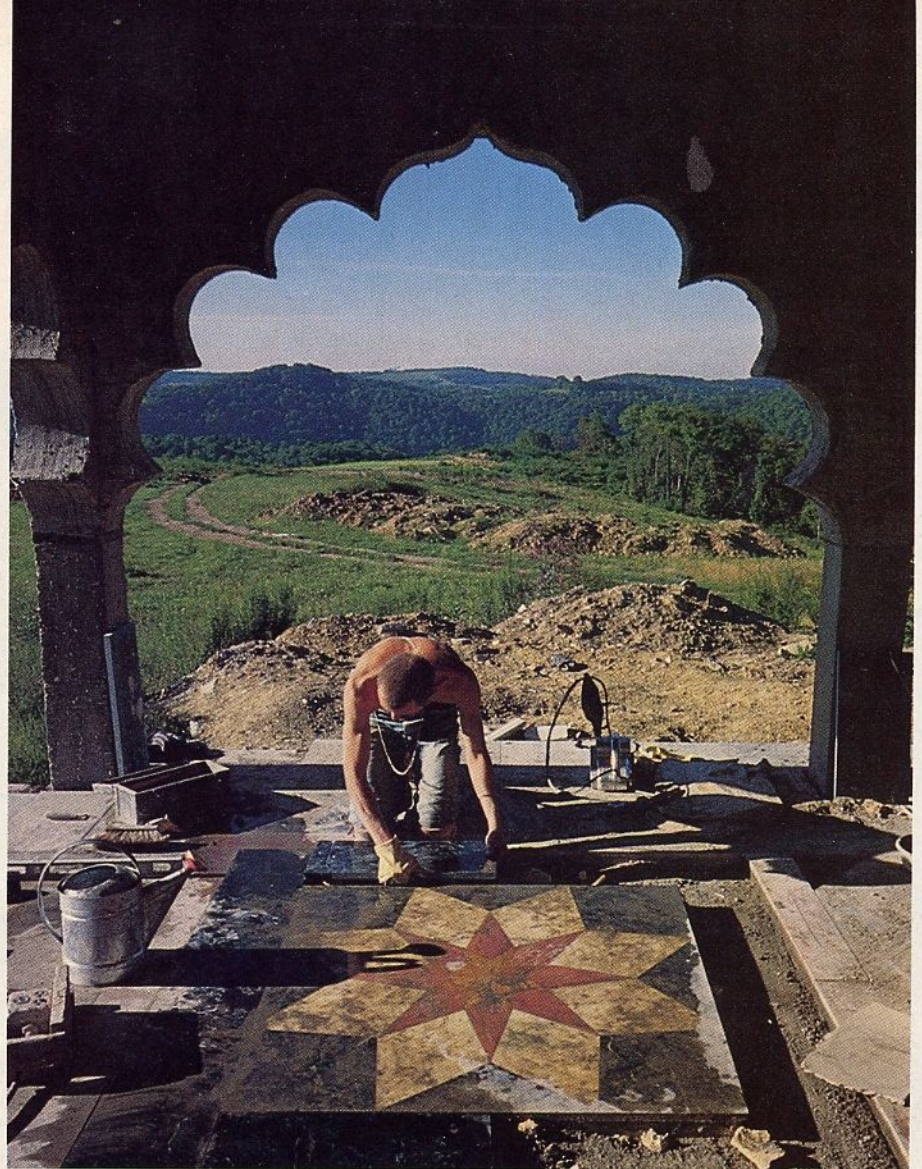
cept of God is most agreed upon, the community will be most united and harmonious. All our activities center upon Kṛṣṇa and His eternal consort Rādhārāṇī, who reside here in Their Deity forms of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Vṛndāvana Candra [*Vṛndāvana Candra* means "Kṛṣṇa, the moonlike Lord of Vṛndāvana"]. We assemble in the temple every morning and evening for worship, and this gives meaning and direction to all our diverse activities. In other words, this temple is our spiritual center. We come early in the morning and see Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī and glorify Them

by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. In this way our minds remain peaceful and fixed on Kṛṣṇa all day."

The 165 devotees live in several dormitories and small houses near the temple. While they eat and dress and live very simply, they accord the Deities, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Vṛndāvana Candra, the most regal opulence. The temple floor and altar are made of marble that devotees cut and polished at the community marble shop. On the altar rests a beautifully carved teakwood Deity platform called a



Above: Śrī Galim dāsa and a few of his students take a dip in Rādhā-kunḍa ("Rādhā's lake," named after a holy place near the original Vṛndāvana, in India). Right: Rṣikumāra dāsa checks a piece of marble cut for the portico of "Śrīla Prabhupāda's Palace." A major newspaper calls the Palace "a master-work of design and painstaking effort." Already, some have styled it "the Western Taj Mahal."



śṛṅgāsana (complete with gold and silver decorations), and the Deities themselves wear bejeweled silk garments and pearl necklaces. Although the devotees desire no opulence for themselves, they realize that nothing is too nice for Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is the center of their lives, and simply by giving something nice to Kṛṣṇa, they satisfy everyone—just as by pouring water on the root of a tree, one simultaneously nourishes all the leaves and branches.

Across from the temple we find a new four-story building called a *dharmaśālā* (roughly, *dharmaśālā* means "lodge"). The upper floor contains guest rooms, while the entire second floor serves as a *prasāda* room, a room where the devotees eat. (*Prasāda* is vegetarian food offered to Kṛṣṇa with devotion.) The walls and floor of the *prasāda* room are set in marble. Although it's as big as a basketball court, during the recent festival on Kṛṣṇa's birthday it overflowed with devotees and guests. On the first floor of the *dharmaśālā* is a spacious kitchen area containing five large stoves, each big enough to hold a sixty-gallon pot. New

Vṛndāban boasts the best *prasāda* in the world, with over seventy-five preparations cooked daily.

All the community's early-morning activities are centered in these two buildings, the temple and the *dharmaśālā*. The devotees rise early—2:30 or 3:00 A.M.—and go to the temple for two hours of individual chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, an *ārati* celebration (which resembles the Christian mass), and classes on the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* ("The Beautiful Story of the Personality of Godhead") and the *Bhagavad-gītā* ("The Song of God"), two ancient Vedic texts that explain the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. At 6:30 everyone goes to the *dharmaśālā* for breakfast. The rest of the day the devotees engage in a flurry of activities all around the farm.

Directly beside the *dharmaśālā* stands the old Bahulaban barn, now divided into two halves—one for woodworking (with table saws, routers, band saws, and the like) and the other for blacksmithing, ironworking, and so forth. Also, the devotees plan to expand the operation into a foundry for casting or-

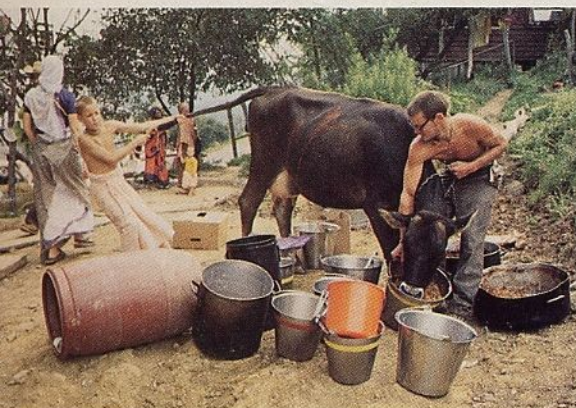
namental metals and Deities.

Across the road we find a seemingly inexhaustible supply of firewood, neatly cut and stacked in cords. But surprisingly, the wood will last no more than half the winter. Woodcutting and land clearing are year-round jobs. Bahulaban farm alone has five large buildings, whose boilers need wood all through the winter. Fully sixty percent of New Vṛndāban's thousand acres is woodland, and all summer and winter devotees thin the forests to secure firewood and lumber.

About two blocks down the road from the *dharmaśālā* we find the *gośālā* ("the cow shelter"), where Kṛṣṇa's cows live. New Vṛndāban's cow population has grown to 150, mostly Holsteins and also some Brown Swiss and Jerseys. From the very start, one of the community's main purposes has been to demonstrate the humaneness and practicality of cow protection. Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, "In New Vṛndāban people should live an ideal spiritual life, completely depending upon agricultural produce and milk from the cows. If there are sufficient grains and milk, the whole economic problem



Above: at the season's peak these devotees will can up to sixty quarts of tomatoes a day. Śrīla Prabhupāda has asked residents to "live an ideal spiritual life, completely depending upon agricultural produce and milk from the cows."



Above: Mother Rūpa and Mother Amṛtapradā pick wildflowers for the Deities. Simply by offering something nice to Kṛṣṇa, you satisfy everyone. Left: each Sunday the devotees offer Kṛṣṇa a feast, and when this wandering cow came upon the serving pots, she, too, was satisfied. (The startled devotees here want her to leave a little for them.)

is solved. However, we have to maintain the animals throughout their lives. We must not sell them to the slaughterhouses. Kṛṣṇa, through His practical example, taught us to give all protection to the cows, and cow protection should be the main business of New Vrindāban."

Cows graze all around the Bahulaban area. The *gośālā* itself holds forty cows at a time for milking. "Last spring we were getting almost sixteen hundred pounds of milk a day," Kīrtanānanda Swami explained. "And one cow hit just under 120 pounds per day for several months. From this ocean of milk we produce about six gallons of butter every day, most of which we turn into ghee [clarified butter] and use here or send to the Society's restaurants. We consider ghee very important, because Śrīla Prabhupāda has said that once people develop a taste for foods cooked in ghee, they will give up meat eating.

"When Kṛṣṇa Himself appeared on

this planet, He lived among the cowherds, and cows are very dear to Him," says Kīrtanānanda Swami. "Consequently, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is celebrated as *go-brāhmaṇa-hitāya ca*, the protector of cows and *brāhmaṇas* [saintly intellectuals]. In a God-conscious, Vedic civilization the cow is fundamental both economically and spiritually, and by protecting the cows and the *brāhmaṇas*, people are guaranteed both material and spiritual success. Conversely, when people slaughter the cow and disrespect the *brāhmaṇas*, their so-called civilization becomes hellish.

"Naturally, cow protection includes bull protection. The bull is our father and the symbol of religion. At present a few boys are working the oxen and hauling wood, plowing fields, and cutting hay. Of course, we do have tractors, but we want to develop skill working the oxen. They are our future."

Beside the *gośālā* stand two steel-and-

glass Harvestore silos, the first twenty by fifty feet and the second twenty by thirty-five feet. The larger silo holds hay, and the smaller one holds ground ear corn. A third silo, erected this fall, holds three hundred tons of corn silage.

"This year Kṛṣṇa has given us very good weather," Kīrtanānanda Swami says, "and the harvest has been wonderful. We're bringing in practically twice as much as usual, and it looks as though for the first time in our history we'll have a surplus for sale. We generally get three good cuttings of hay, but this year we may get four. In addition, we're constantly planting new crops. We planted twenty-five new acres of alfalfa this year, and we'll seed another twenty-five acres with red clover in the spring. Both improve the quality of the hay. Offhand I'd say that each year we cut about 125 acres of meadowland and bring in about ten thousand bales of hay."

The devotees also grow grains for human consumption—buckwheat and wheat, for instance. This year they are also growing mung beans for *dahl* (soup). The community's mill grinds the wheat into flour for *chapatis* (flat, puffed bread patties) during the week and buckwheat pancakes on Sundays. Of course, the bulk of the grain harvest goes to the cows and comes to the devotees as milk, cheese, and butter.

Vegetables grow luxuriantly in the main garden, located next to Rādhā Vṛndāvana Candra's temple. Generally, the vegetable garden supplies the

(continued on page 28)

Right: Gītā-nāgarī farm, near Port Royal, Pennsylvania, ranks among the best in the state in both milk and crop production. Below: the devotees dedicate all that they do to Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa, who reside here in Their Deity forms of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara. This reciprocation of service and love between the devotees and the Lord—always under the guidance of the expert spiritual master—is the secret of Gītā-nāgarī's success.



Photo: Vipra dāsa

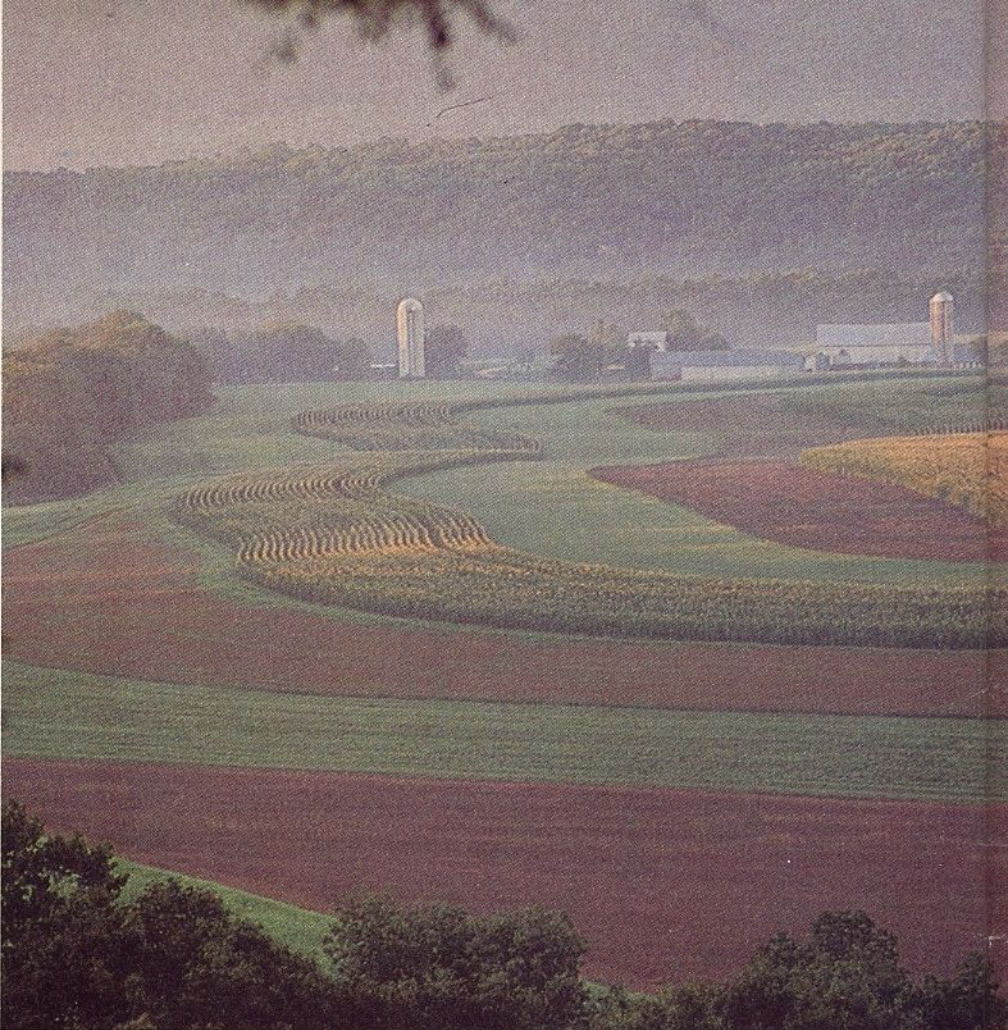


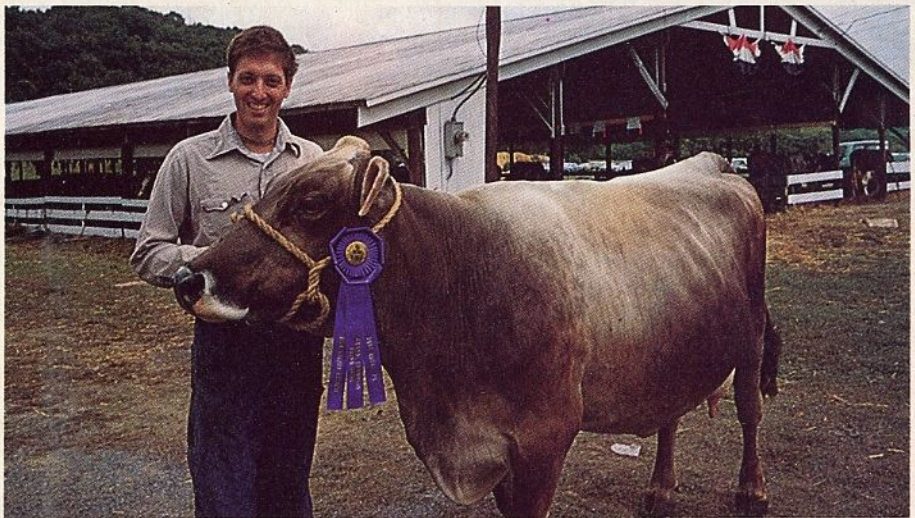
Photo: Vipra dāsa

Singing and Living "The Song of God"

by Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami

Near Port Royal in central Pennsylvania is a spiritual farming community called Gītā-nāgarī, literally "a transcendental village where the teachings of the *Bhagavad-gītā* are lived and sung." Like every other ISKCON farm, Gītā-nāgarī has two purposes: first, to provide a working model of ancient India's Vedic culture as a positive alternative to today's technological culture; and, second, to provide a perfect setting where anyone can attain the highest perfection of life—unalloyed devotional service to the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa.

The wisdom of the Vedic culture is that it recognizes the ultimate authority of the Supreme Lord in all matters. Thus the Vedic culture directs its members to serve the eternal Personality of Godhead rather than the things of this temporary and miserable material world.¹ "Why serve at all; I'll simply remain independent," you might say. But if you think about it, you'll agree that every living entity, in whatever species of life, is rendering service to someone or something. A man serves his wife and children, his boss, his car, his city and nation, and

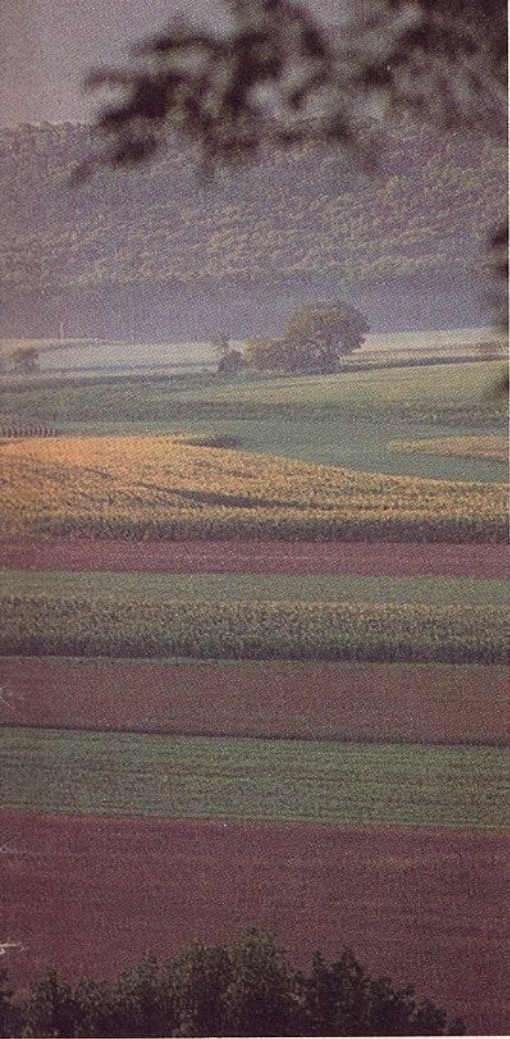


(most basically) the demands of his body for food, rest, pleasure, safety, and so on. Animals also have their "families" and their bodies' demands to serve, and the plant kingdom serves man by supplying fruits, flowers, grains, herbs, and so forth. Through reincarnation one's body or object of service may change, but the *mentality* of service remains. This mentality of service is called *sanātana-dharma*, our eternal occupation.

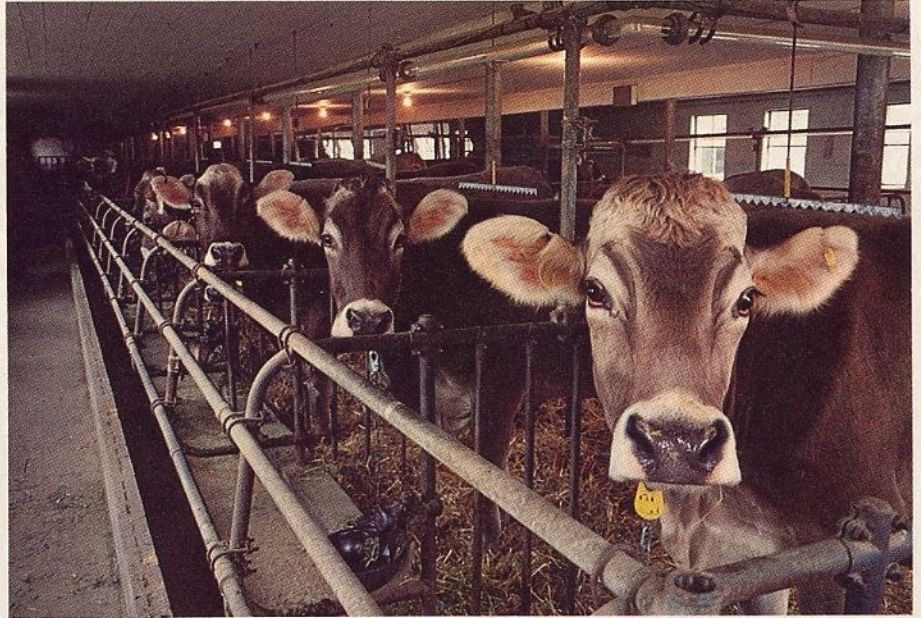
As mentioned above, Vedic culture

directs everyone's service toward the Supreme Lord. By the institution of *varṇāśrama*, the leaders of a Vedic society scientifically divide the citizens into four social orders (*varṇas*) and four spiritual orders (*āśramas*). Without this systematic division, everyone's service is misdirected and society degenerates into chaos.

The four social orders function together much as the various limbs of our body cooperate for the well-being of the whole body. Just as our body must have



Below and lower left: dairyman Devakinandana dāsa (shown at the County Fair) has reason for rejoicing: last year blue-ribbon-winner Dvīpa and the rest of her well-protected herd produced some of the state's creamiest milk.



a brain for thinking, arms for defending, a stomach for digesting, and legs for giving support, so the social body must also have an intelligent class (*brāhmaṇas*) for giving spiritual direction, an administrative and military class (*kṣatriyas*) for managing and defending, a mercantile class (*vaiśyas*) for providing the economic base, and a laboring class (*śūdras*) for giving manual assistance to the other classes. If we think carefully about this analogy, we can see that these divisions of labor have existed in all civilizations at all times, no matter what the political or economic system.

Why are these divisions of labor always present in society? Because they are created by God. As Lord Kṛṣṇa states in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: "According to the three modes of material nature and the work ascribed to them, the four divisions of human society were created by Me" (Bg. 4.13). So you can't artificially create a classless society, any more than you can make a dog the king. You can put a dog on the throne, adorn him with all the finest raiment, and place the royal scepter in his paw, but when you throw a bone on the ground he'll jump down and gnaw it. Similarly, if unqualified men occupy intellectual and administrative posts, then society is doomed to chaos,

confusion, and decline. The Vedic literatures explain that one proves himself by his qualities and his work (not by his birth in a good family!)² and that everyone should find satisfaction in his particular occupation by offering all the results of his work to God.³

The *Bhagavad-gītā* first describes the qualities for the intellectual class: peacefulness, self-control, austerity, purity, tolerance, honesty, wisdom, knowledge, and religiousness. Next, the *Gītā* lists the qualities of work for the administrators and warriors: heroism, power, determination, resourcefulness, courage in battle, generosity, and leadership. In addition, the *Gītā* explains that the kinds of work proper for the merchants and farmers are agriculture, cow protection, and trade, and that the laborers assist the three other classes.⁴

Interwoven into the social fabric are the four spiritual orders—student life (*brahmachārī*), married life (*gṛhastha*), retired life (*vānaprastha*), and renounced life (*sannyāsa*). These orders provide the necessary spiritual discipline to keep society from descending to the animal platform—simply worrying about the problems of eating, sleeping, mating, and defending. No matter how sophisticated their technology, men who concern themselves only with these four problems are no better than polished animals. And any amount of philosophy which does not solve life's *real* problems—birth, death, disease, and old age—is merely intellectual animalism. So

the four spiritual orders insure that the primary goal of human life—self- and God-realization—is not lost in the day-to-day struggle for existence.

In student life (*brahmachārī*) one learns to control his senses and humbly serve a bona-fide spiritual master. Generally, a *brāhmaṇa* remains celibate throughout his life. Although some *brāhmaṇas* get married and enter household life, they indulge in sex only under the guidance of the spiritual master and only for begetting God-conscious children.⁵ Because the child's consciousness will reflect the parents' consciousness at the time of conception, the Vedic system stresses the chastity of women and prohibits free mixing between the sexes. Marriage is a solemn, life-long vow, and there is no such thing as divorce.⁶ As the First Chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā* describes, unrestricted association of men and women leads to unwanted progeny—which creates a hellish situation in society.⁷ Just witness today's social scene: broken homes, illegitimate children, abortions, and urban decay all bear out these age-old truths.

After their children are grown, the parents should retire from worldly pursuits and family affairs and travel to holy places of pilgrimage. This *vānaprastha* stage prepares the parents for leaving this world behind at death and attaining the eternal spiritual world. When the husband is sufficiently detached, he leaves his wife in the care of his eldest son and takes *sannyāsa*, the renounced

order. Then he travels and preaches the message of God from village to village.

Of course, from all this you shouldn't get the idea that devotees compete for better positions in a social or spiritual hierarchy. Whatever their status of life, devotees of the Lord are above ordinary material designations. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa clearly states that if someone offers Him all the fruits of his activities and takes shelter exclusively of Him, then he is above the actions and reactions of nature and attains the supreme goal—an eternal, blissful life of knowledge in Lord Kṛṣṇa's direct association.⁸ So devotees of the Lord have nothing to gain through mundane "social climbing." However, to provide an example for the world at large, devotees may take up any position in society, whether seemingly inferior or superior. In this way the devotees follow the Lord's instructions in the *Bhagavad-gītā*:

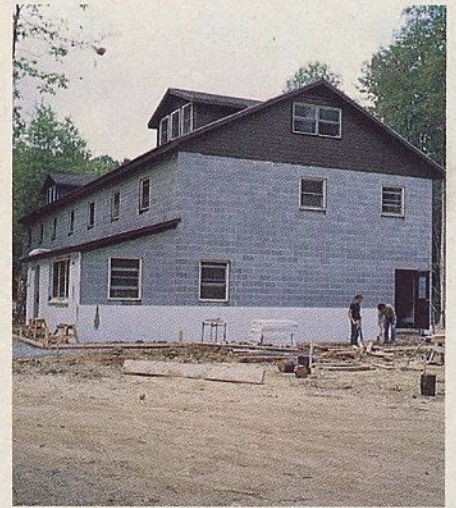
"As the ignorant perform their duties with attachment to results, similarly the learned may also act, but without attachment, for the sake of leading people on the right path" (Bg. 3.25).

Therefore, here at Gītā-nāgarī we live and work according to the divine Vedic institution called *varṇāśrama*. This way we facilitate our own journey back to Godhead and show the proper social and spiritual system to a lost world floundering in the darkness of various "isms"—communism, capitalism, altruism, egotism, and so on—which can never bring the peace and prosperity everyone hankers for.

Another purpose of farms like Gītā-nāgarī is to provide the International Society for Krishna Consciousness with economic self-sufficiency. The responsibility for economic development rests on the farmers and mercantile men (*vaiśyas*), most of whom are married, and the economy itself centers upon the land and cows. If there are sufficient grains and milk, then there is no economic scarcity. This year we harvested twelve tons of wheat, twelve tons of potatoes, thirteen tons of barley, twenty-five acres of corn, twelve acres of oats, five acres of soybeans, and ten thousand bales of hay and alfalfa. The Brown Swiss cows are delivering more than eight hundred pounds of milk a day, and to minimize our dependency on machines and come closer to that ideal of "simple living and high thinking," we're training the oxen to till the fields.

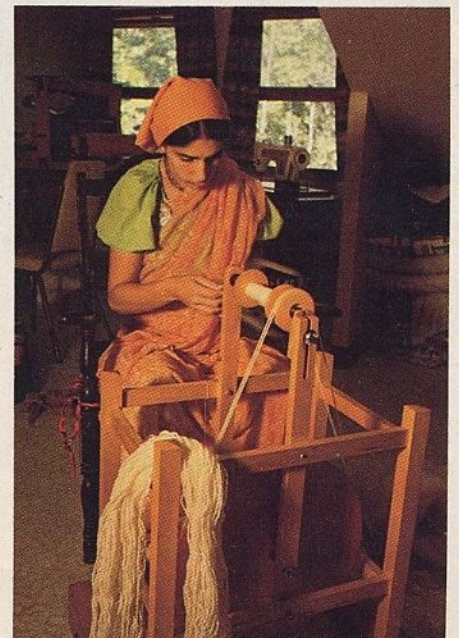
The idea of simple living and high thinking is so essential that one of America's founding fathers considered it paramount. In his *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Thomas Jefferson wrote this:

Right: the devotees have nearly finished building a new temple for Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara. Below: Bhūrijana dāsa often takes his students on field trips through Kṛṣṇa's countryside. Bottom: Mother Satyabhāmā spins wool into yarn that she'll use for sweaters. "Better an honest living in the fields than a false standard of living that can never lead to lasting happiness."



"Those who labor on the land are the chosen people of God. Corruption of morals in the mass of cultivators of the land is a phenomenon of which no age or nation has furnished an example. Corruption is a mark set on those who, not looking up to the heavens for their subsistence (as does the husbandman), depend on workshops and selling to the caprice of customers. While we have land to labor, let us never wish to see our citizens occupied at workshops. Carpenters, masons, smiths [simple technology] are needed in husbandry, but for general operations of manufacture let the workshops remain in Europe. The mobs of great cities add just so much to the support of pure government as sores do to the strength of the body."⁹

Just see how far our nation has strayed from the vision of the founding fathers! The more we go on expanding our huge and troublesome industries and squeezing out our vital human energy, the more we'll feel unrest and dissatisfac-



tion, though the few cunning exploiters among us may live lavishly for a time. We already have more than enough grain, fruit, vegetables, minerals, water, fresh air, and milk to live comfortably and cultivate spiritual life. So why should we hanker after terrible industrial enterprises that prey on the masses of unfortunate men? Better an honest living in the fields than a false standard of living that can never lead to lasting happiness.

As its main purpose the *varṇāśrama* system trains everyone to become the Lord's pure devotees—eligible to return at death to the spiritual kingdom and thus escape repeated birth in this material world. So all the residents of Gītā-nāgarī strictly follow the rules and regulations of *bhakti-yoga*, as prescribed by our beloved spiritual master Śrīla Prabhupāda. For instance, we rise before sunrise, chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, worship the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Deities, attend classes in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and the *Bhagavad-gītā*, avoid the four sinful activities (meat eating, illicit sex, intoxication, and gambling), and offer all the results of our day's work for the Lord's pleasure. This reciprocation of service and love between the devotees and the Lord—always under the guidance of the expert spiritual master—is the secret of success at Gītā-nāgarī and other ISKCON centers around the world. As the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.13) confirms, "The highest perfection anyone can achieve by discharging his occupational duties is to please Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead." 🌸

1. *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*, Mantras One and Two
2. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Canto 7, Ch. 11, text 35
3. *Bhagavad-gītā* 18.47, 48
4. *Bg.* 18.41-44
5. *Śrīmad-Bhāg.* 7.12.11 (Purport)
6. *Śrīmad-Bhāg.* 9.20.22 (Purport)
7. *Bg.* 1.39-43
8. *Bg.* 18.56-58
9. Jefferson, Thomas. *Query XIX on Farming and Manufacturing*



Dhṛṣṭadyumna Swami, director of ISKCON's Gītā-nāgarī farm, was born in 1950 in White Plains, New York. He attended Dartmouth University before coming to the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in 1970. Since that time he has helped coordinate the nationwide distribution of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books and has spoken on Kṛṣṇa consciousness in numerous schools and colleges. He received the sannyāsa order in Māyāpur, India, in 1976.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's Thoughts...

On Vedic Society Versus Modern Society

"The prosperity of humanity does not depend on a demoniac civilization that has no culture and no knowledge but has only gigantic skyscrapers, and huge automobiles always rushing down the highways. The products of nature are sufficient" (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 5.16.24).

"If there is enough milk, enough grains, enough fruit, enough cotton, enough silk, and enough jewels, then why do the people need cinemas, houses of prostitution, slaughterhouses, etc.? What is the need of an artificial luxurious life of cinema, cars, radio, flesh, and hotels?" (*Śrīmad-Bhāg.* 1.10.4).

"Advancement of civilization is estimated not on the growth of mills and factories to deteriorate the finer instincts of the human being, but on developing the potent spiritual instincts of human beings and giving them a chance to go back to Godhead" (*Śrīmad-Bhāg.* 1.11.12).

On Cow Protection

"Kṛṣṇa advises *go-rākṣya*, the protection of cows. This is essential, because if cows are cared for properly they will surely supply sufficient milk. We have practical experience in America that in our various ISKCON farms we are giving proper protection to the cows and receiving more than enough milk. In other farms the cows do not deliver as much milk as in our farms; because our cows know very well that we are not going to kill them, they are happy, and they give ample milk" (*Śrīmad-Bhāg.* 9.15.25).

"... they are killing cows in the thousands. Therefore they are unfortunate in spiritual consciousness, and nature disturbs them in so many ways, especially through incurable diseases like cancer and through frequent wars... among nations. As long as human society continues to allow cows to be regularly killed in slaughterhouses, there cannot be any question of peace and prosperity" (*Śrīmad-Bhāg.* 8.8.11).

On the Distribution of Grains

"... the earth produces sufficient grain to feed the entire population, but the distribution of this grain is restricted due to trade regulations and a desire for profit. Consequently in some places there is a scarcity of grain and in others profuse production. If there were one [Kṛṣṇa conscious] government on the surface of the earth to handle the distribution of grain, there would be no question of scarcity, no necessity to open slaughterhouses, and no need to present false theories about overpopulation" (*Śrīmad-Bhāg.* 4.17.25).

On the Need for Sacrifice to God

"One is mistaken if he thinks that by applying modern machines such as tractors, grains can be produced. If one goes to a desert and uses a tractor, there is still no possibility of producing grains. We may adopt various means, but it is essential to know that the planet earth will stop producing grains if sacrifices are not performed" (*Śrīmad-Bhāg.* 4.19.7).

"If *saṅkīrtana* sacrifice [the congregational chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra] is performed, there will be no difficulty, not even in industrial enterprises. Therefore this system should be introduced in all spheres of life—social, political, industrial, commercial, etc. Then everything will run very peacefully and smoothly" (*Śrīmad-Bhāg.* 4.19.7).

"Because people are without Kṛṣṇa consciousness, they have become thieves, and consequently they are being punished by the laws of material nature. No one can check this, not even by introducing so many relief funds and humanitarian institutions. Unless the people of the world take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, there will be a scarcity of food and much suffering" (*Śrīmad-Bhāg.* 4.18.8).





The Lifter of Govardhana Hill KṚṢṆA

"Being assured by Lord Kṛṣṇa, all the inhabitants of the village—men, women, children, and animals—entered beneath the great hill and remained there for a whole week. They were simply astonished to see Kṛṣṇa holding up Govardhana Hill with the little finger of His left hand. . . ."

One day, in the village of Vṛndāvana, child Kṛṣṇa saw His father Nanda Mahārāja and the other cowherd men preparing a big sacrifice. "My dear father," Kṛṣṇa said, "who is this sacrifice for? What is it all about? Please tell Me—I want to know."

Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, so He actually knew that the sacrifice was for Indra, the Lord of heaven. But because He was playing the part of Nanda's child, He questioned His father just like a curious boy. Nanda remained grave and silent and went on with his business. "Kṛṣṇa is too young to understand such complicated rituals," he mused. Under the spell of Kṛṣṇa's divine energy, Nanda thought that the all-knowing Personality of Godhead was just his little boy.

But Kṛṣṇa persisted with His questions. "My dear father," He protested, "it's not very nice for you to keep secrets from your own family members. You may keep secrets from people who wish you ill, but you shouldn't keep secrets from Me. Please tell Me. Who is this sacrifice for?"

Nanda turned to his child and said, "My dear boy, if You must know, this sacrifice is for Indra, the Lord of heaven. Indra controls the clouds that bring rain. Without rain we can't grow nice grains, fruits, and vegetables, or grasses for our cows to graze on. So we're holding this sacrifice to show our gratitude to King Indra."

In reality, demigods like Indra are simply servants of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord. The *Bhagavad-gītā* clearly says that whatever benefits the demigods can bestow actually come from Kṛṣṇa, and that instead of worshipping these lesser personalities, we should just worship Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. To teach Nanda and the other inhabitants of Vṛndāvana this lesson, Kṛṣṇa said, "My dear father, I don't think you have to offer this sacrifice to Indra. Even if you don't please Indra, what can he do? He must pour water everywhere, whether anyone worships him or not. That's his duty. Let's have nothing to do with Indra, father. Instead, let's hold a big sacrifice to honor Govardhana Hill."

Govardhana Hill already occupied a special place in the

From the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, translation and commentary by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda. (Adapted by Drutakarma dāsa.)

hearts of Vṛndāvana's residents, who cared very little about what went on in the wide world outside their forest village. The *gopīs* (cowherd girls) would praise Govardhana Hill in this way: "Govardhana Hill is most fortunate—Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma always take Their cows and walk on its slopes, so Govardhana always enjoys the touch of Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. In joyful gratitude Govardhana Hill supplies nice fruits and cool water to Kṛṣṇa and the cowherd boys, and newly-grown grass to the cows. So we can understand that Kṛṣṇa finds this hill very pleasing."

Understanding how dearly Kṛṣṇa loved Govardhana Hill, Nanda replied, "All right, my dear boy, since You are asking, we shall hold *another* sacrifice for Govardhana Hill. But for now just let me finish *this* sacrifice for Indra."

"Oh no, father," said child Kṛṣṇa. "Please don't wait! Making another sacrifice for Govardhana Hill will take too much time! Just please take all the things you were going to offer to Indra and take them to Govardhana Hill as quickly as you can."

Kṛṣṇa insisted, very politely and gently, and finally Nanda Mahārāja relented. "All right. You just tell us what You want us to do." Then Nanda and the other simple-hearted cowherd men did exactly what Kṛṣṇa said. First they cooked all kinds of delicious foods in great quantity. They cooked first-class rice and spicy split-bean soup (*dahl*). They made zesty *pakorās* by dipping vegetable chunks in spiced batter and frying them in clear butter. They also prepared *puris* (flaky, puffed flat-breads), sweet rice (a thick drink made with milk, rice, and sugar), and many kinds of traditional Indian milk sweets, such as *sandēśa*, *rasagulla*, and *aṁṛtakeli*.

After preparing this feast, the cowherd men decorated their cows with silk hangings, gilded their horns, and fed them fresh, green grass. Then they dressed themselves very beautifully and helped the cowherd women climb into the gaily decorated bullock carts. Keeping the cows in front, everyone then circled Govardhana Hill and sang songs in praise of Kṛṣṇa. Finally the village *brāhmaṇas* chanted Vedic hymns and offered the feast—a huge mountain of food—to Govardhana Hill.

Suddenly, to the amazement of all, Kṛṣṇa expanded Himself into a colossal transcendental form. Child Kṛṣṇa (who remained as He was) and all the residents of Vṛndāvana fell to the ground and began to offer prayers. The giant figure of Kṛṣṇa spoke for all to hear: "*I am Govardhana Hill.*" Then the mammoth form began to eat the mountain of

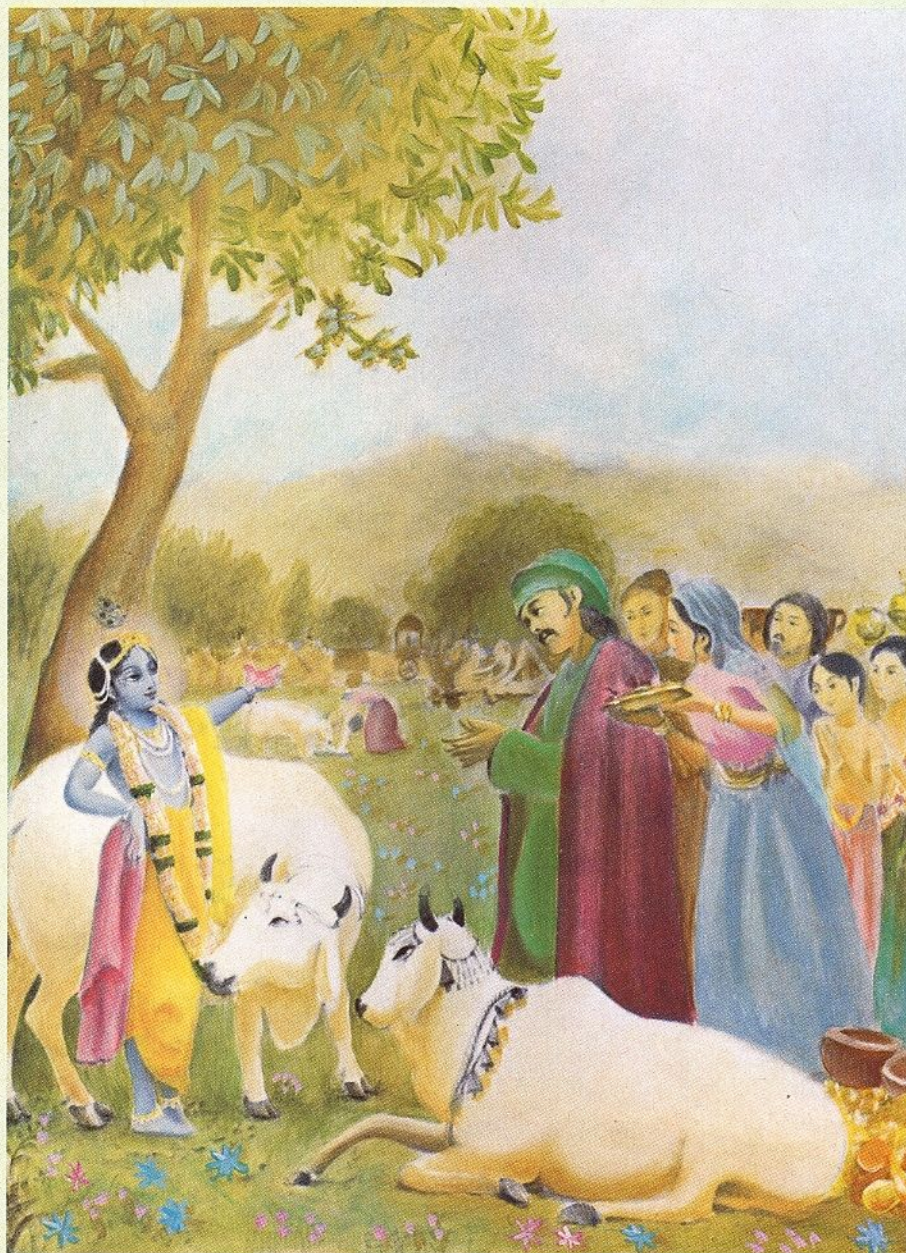
food with great satisfaction. Everyone could clearly see that Lord Kṛṣṇa and Govardhana Hill were one and the same. To this very day, pilgrims take stones and pebbles from Govardhana Hill and worship them in the same way that *brāhmaṇa* priests worship the Deity form of Kṛṣṇa in the temples. Out of reverence for Govardhana Hill, devotees of Kṛṣṇa will not even set foot on its sacred slopes. Instead they walk around the twelve-mile path circling its base—such is their devotion.

Afterwards, Kṛṣṇa ordered the cowherd men to worship Govardhana Hill every year. And to this day, each October or November the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana gather around Govardhana

Hill to observe this festival. They drive their cows around the hill and offer a huge feast. ISKCON temples worldwide also celebrate the festival of Govardhana Hill.

When King Indra saw Kṛṣṇa stop the sacrifice meant for him, he became very angry. "These cowherd men shall suffer," he said. "I'll teach them to defy the demigods! Just because that boy Kṛṣṇa told them to worship Govardhana Hill, they stopped *my* sacrifice. That boy talks too much. He's just a child. What does He know about the cosmic situation? I will punish Him for being such an upstart."

Indra called his most powerful clouds, including the deadly *samvartaka*, which



Kṛṣṇa said, "My dear father, I don't think you have to offer this sacrifice to Indra. Even if you don't please Indra, what can he do? . . . Instead, let's hold a big sacrifice to honor Govardhana Hill."

usually comes to destroy the world at the time of devastation. Indra told the clouds, "Go to Vṛndāvana and flood that village! Destroy Vṛndāvana! Drown all the cowherd men and all their cows with them. Don't be afraid. I shall be flying behind you on my elephant. I shall attack Vṛndāvana with furious storms. Together we shall punish those impudent residents."

Soon the dark, threatening clouds appeared over Vṛndāvana and began hurling down streams of rain and chunks of ice. Lightning crashed. Thunder roared. The wind howled and shrieked, driving the rain like piercing arrows. Floods covered all of Vṛndāvana's fields and pastures. The men and animals shivered and trembled, and the cows bowed their heads and sheltered their calves beneath them.

In complete helplessness all the residents of Vṛndāvana came to take refuge at Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. They prayed, "O Kṛṣṇa, You are all-powerful and You are very kind to Your devotees. Please protect us from Indra's wrath."

"Don't be afraid," Kṛṣṇa said. "You are all My pure devotees and have no shelter but Me. I shall protect you. Indra is trying to prove his supremacy, but I shall take care of him. Actually, Indra is My devotee, but somehow he has become puffed up and mad with power. I'll take away his false prestige and bring him back to his senses."

Then, with one hand, Lord Kṛṣṇa picked up Govardhana Hill, just as an ordinary child picks up a mushroom. "My dear brothers, My dear father, My dear friends, now you can safely enter under the umbrella of Govardhana Hill. Don't be afraid. I will not let the hill fall from My hand."

Being assured by Lord Kṛṣṇa, all the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana—men, women, children, and animals—entered beneath the great hill. They remained there for a whole week and yet did not feel hungry, thirsty, or at all uncomfortable. They were simply astonished to see Kṛṣṇa holding up Govardhana Hill with the little finger of His left hand.

When King Indra saw Kṛṣṇa's mystic power, he was thunderstruck and baffled. He called off all the clouds and made the strong winds stop. In a short time the sky over Vṛndāvana became completely clear and the sun shone brightly.

Kṛṣṇa said, "My dear cowherd men, now you can return to your homes along with your wives, children, cows, and valuables. The danger is over. The rain has stopped and the floodwaters are going down." The cowherd men loaded up their carts and slowly departed with



Kṛṣṇa accepted Indra's apology and said, "My dear Indra, please return to your kingdom, but always remember this: no one is superior to Me."

their cows and families. After they had gone, Kṛṣṇa carefully put down Govardhana Hill, exactly where it had been before and where it remains to this day.

All the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana came to Kṛṣṇa and embraced Him in great ecstasy. The *gopīs*, Mother Yaśodā, Nanda, and Kṛṣṇa's elder brother Balarāma blessed Him over and over again. From the heavens the demigods beat their drums, played their tambouras, sounded their conchshells, and poured down showers of flowers.

Now that Kṛṣṇa had saved the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana, King Indra appeared before Him in a secluded forest glade. Indra's golden crown was dazzling like the sun, but still he fell down at Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. "My dear Lord," he said, "I am very sorry I sent floods and hailstorms to Vṛndāvana. I became angry because You stopped the sacrifice that the cowherd men were going to hold for me. I was puffed up with false pride and behaved like an ignorant fool. But now, by Your grace, I can see that You are the Supreme Lord. I beg You to forgive me. I am Your eternal servant."

Kṛṣṇa accepted Indra's sincere apol-

ogy and said, "My dear Indra, please return to your kingdom, but always remember this: no one is superior to Me."

Before departing, King Indra and all the other demigods bathed Kṛṣṇa with the milk of cows from the spiritual world and with Ganges water from the trunk of Indra's elephant. The wives of the demigods danced with joy and satisfied the Lord by pouring showers of flowers from the sky. Kṛṣṇa was very pleased with this worship, and therefore the earth became bountiful with natural gifts. The happy cows overflowed the land with their milk. The water of the rivers nourished the trees, which put forth all sorts of delicious fruits and fragrant flowers. Also, the trees began pouring drops of honey, and the hills and mountains produced potent medicinal herbs and valuable jewels. Because of Kṛṣṇa's presence, all these things happened very nicely, and the lower animals, who are generally envious, were envious no longer. At last, King Indra and the other demigods took Kṛṣṇa's permission and went back through cosmic space to the heavenly kingdom.

Farming

(continued from page 19)

community all summer and part of the winter, and this year the crop was better than ever.

Although most of the community's activities take place at Bahulaban, the main construction is going on at another farm about two miles away. At this hundred-acre farm (called Guruban, in honor of Śrīla Prabhupāda) we find what a major newspaper calls "a masterwork of design and painstaking effort." Now nearly completed, "Śrīla Prabhupāda's Palace" sits atop the highest hill for miles around and has a view that is truly celestial. In fact, the Palace itself appears to have descended from another world. Its concrete dome, intricately cut marble floors, hand-molded concrete work, and portico entrances recall the temples of ancient India. Actually, the Palace beautifully combines Eastern and Western styles, thanks to the sincere dedication of Bhāgavatānanda dāsa, a seven-year devotee who designed and helped build the entire structure. The main dome is flanked by two smaller domes, and the facing of the building is of Italian marble. Around the perimeter we find a walkway enclosed with lotus arches. The walkway is a checkerboard of red and green marble, and the columns have facings of geometrically carved marble. Throughout the interior are finely sculptured doorjams, windowsills, cornices, railings, and so on.

Inside the Palace's main room, Italian white Crema marble covers the walls above a finely carved wainscot. Kīrtanānanda Swami points out that the devotees are also fashioning stained-glass windows and crystal chandeliers. Large paintings of Kṛṣṇa-conscious spiritual masters throughout history will complete the temple.

Kīrtanānanda Swami says that the major event in New Vrindāban's history has been the building of the Palace. "Originally we were planning Govindajī Temple to be our first major construction effort. But after a while I began to think this was not exactly right. The *sāstras* [revealed scriptures] say that one has to approach Kṛṣṇa through the spiritual master. So we decided first of all to construct a residence for Śrīla Prabhupāda. Actually, we can see that everything that has happened has been simply by Kṛṣṇa's plan. After all, before this none of us had ever designed a building or worked with crystal chandeliers or marble or anything like that. But gradually, Kṛṣṇa has revealed these skills, up to the point that now we have become con-

vinced that whatever we think of we can actually execute. Simply because we wanted to give something wonderful to Śrīla Prabhupāda, Kṛṣṇa has brought all of this here. It has certainly not developed from our skill.

"We hope to attract many people to the Palace," Kīrtanānanda Swami says. "We don't shun publicity—our mission is to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The Palace is devotion; it's Kṛṣṇa consciousness in action. People may come here simply because they are attracted by a beautiful building, but when they come we can instruct them on the importance of accepting the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master."

Connected to the Palace and Guruban is Madhuban, which consists of eighty-eight acres of pine trees and corn and wheat fields. The center of Madhuban is Lord Jagannātha's temple, and apart from Jagannātha Puri in India, the Jagannātha Deities here are the largest in the world. They are five feet tall and are carved out of an old elm that once fell down on the Vrindāban Road.

Behind the main house at Madhuban are a number of individual residences shaped like aboriginal huts and composed of a mixture of cement and clay. These are called "Prabhupāda houses," because Śrīla Prabhupāda himself designed them back in 1969. They take only a couple of days to build, and they provide an economical dwelling for devotees who like more privacy.

But anyone looking for a really quiet, meditative atmosphere will discover that the original Vrindāban Farm is the best. Though visible from across the valley at Madhuban, the old Vrindāban farm is virtually inaccessible. Its 133 acres connect to Madhuban along a peaked ravine that's impossible to climb during winter. The only practical access to Vrindāban is a muddy two-mile road starting at Bahulaban. Vrindāban Farm is the place where Śrīla Prabhupāda first visited in 1969, and now it is the home of thirty-six *brahmachāris* [celibate students] and the Deities Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Vṛndāvana-nātha. The devotees have converted the 150-year-old farmhouse into a small temple to shelter the Deities. And nearby are a number of individual dwellings, including two A-frames and a geodesic dome.

"Only two or three boys stay at Vrindāban Farm during the day," explains Kīrtanānanda Swami. "Everyone else leaves to work at Bahulaban or the Palace. Vrindāban is more like a retreat, and its atmosphere is one of special seclusion. It is not our goal, however, to become recluses. Śrīla Prabhupāda has warned us that it's not a good idea for a

conditioned soul to try to retire from his normal activities. Our main concern here is rendering service to Kṛṣṇa and in that way advancing in Kṛṣṇa consciousness."

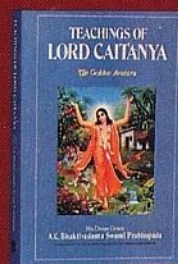
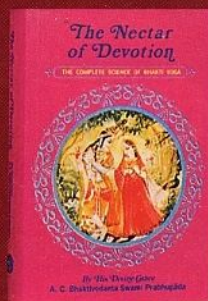
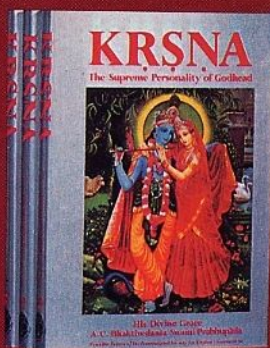
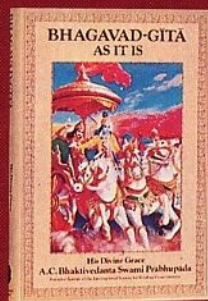
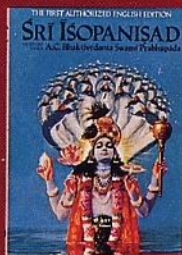
On a ridge to the west of Vrindāban Farm lies a 208-acre tract of land called Nandagrāma. This farm is accessible by a half-mile gravel road. Like the Vrindāban farm, Nandagrāma is very isolated. It consists mostly of corn and alfalfa fields, magnificent hardwood forests, and pastureland for about forty calves and heifers. The creeks running between the ridges have many waterfalls where the devotees sometimes bathe during the summer. Also, the Gurukula school is located at Nandagrāma, and three teachers and fourteen little *brahmachāris* now live there year-round. The boys spend much of their recreation time playing with the calves and heifers.

Kīrtanānanda Swami has this advice for new communities: "Don't try to start one without Kṛṣṇa at the center. We never would have lasted through the first winter without faith in the instructions of Śrīla Prabhupāda and a lot of chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. In the beginning, real community living isn't all milk and honey, although there is plenty of both.

"Here at New Vrindāban we hope to show that regardless of occupation or skill, everyone can serve Kṛṣṇa by applying his energy to help us establish a transcendental village devoted to Him. People are always coming here with new skills, new devotion, and new help. The only requirement for living here is the desire to serve Kṛṣṇa. Of course, one has to be willing to purify his life and give up sense gratification, especially gambling, illicit sex, intoxication, and meat eating. By chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa we can come to realize that all of Kṛṣṇa's creation is holy and that Kṛṣṇa deserves our eternal service. And through this service we can ultimately attain the sweetest relationship and the goal of life—deep love of Kṛṣṇa."



The son of a Baptist minister, Kīrtanānanda Swami was born in 1937 and came to the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in 1966. In 1967, at the famed Rādhā-Dāmodara temple in India's Vṛndāvana, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda conferred on him the sannyāsa, or renounced, order (and hence the title "swami"), a first in ISKCON's history. Under Śrīla Prabhupāda's guidance, he started New Vrindāban in 1968.



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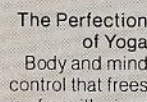
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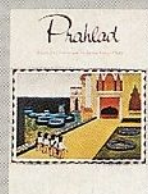
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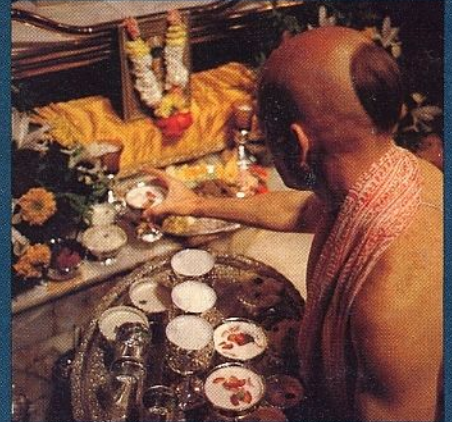
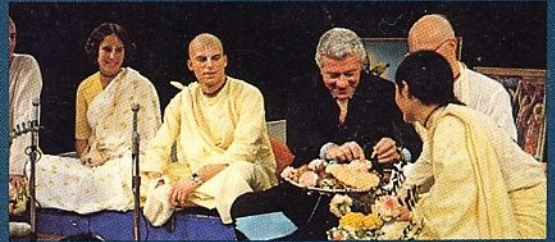
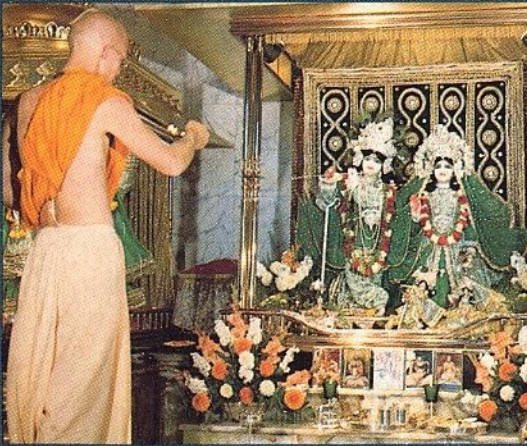
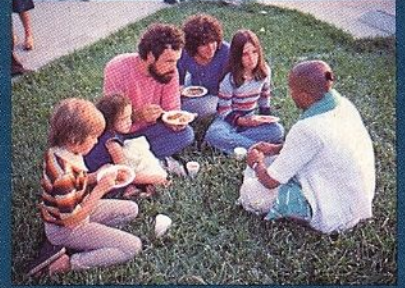
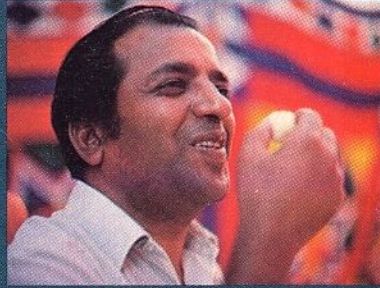
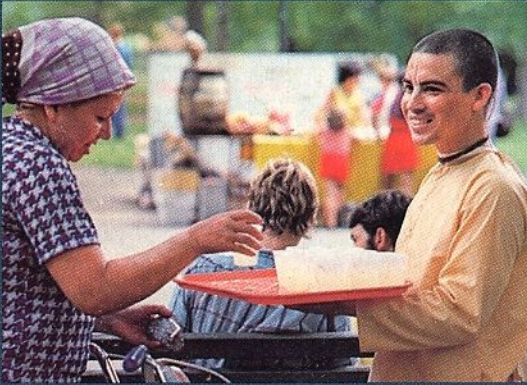
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Like millions of other people, you may be realizing that eating meat isn't so good for your health or your budget. You may have also heard that it brings bad karma. But then again, you may also be asking yourself, "Would a vegetarian diet give me enough protein?" or "Would it taste good?" So here's a suggestion: Why not join us this Sunday for some vegetarian *prasāda*—zestful Indian dishes that Lord Kṛṣṇa's devotees offer to Him with love, just the way He requests in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Not only is *prasāda* the most incredibly delicious food you've ever tasted, and not only does it provide you with every vitamin, mineral, and protein you need—but also, because it's been offered to Kṛṣṇa, *prasāda* gives you a unique spiritual pleasure that no other food can. So why not join us this Sunday for the free, world-famous transcendental Love Feast? And after the feast be sure to stay for the movie, play, or puppet show. (Please see page fourteen for the center nearest you.)

