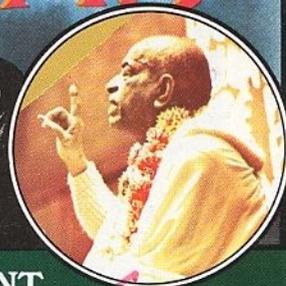


Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.



BACK TO GODHEAD



Vol. 11 No. 2

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT



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. Bhaktivedanta 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.



Devotees outside the Chicago center of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

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.
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 Lord 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.



Photo: Murallivadana dasa

Members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness Chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa Mantra* in Downtown Detroit

*** HARE KṚṢṂA
HARE KṚṢṂA
KṚṢṂA KṚṢṂA
HARE HARE

HARE RĀMA
HARE RĀMA
RĀMA RĀMA
HARE HARE**

Once you've heard it, you'll never forget it. You may not know what the words mean—nevertheless there's something captivating about the Hare Kṛṣṇa chant. Is it the catchy tune, or the fascinating way in which the words are repeated and reversed? People who chant Hare Kṛṣṇa say both contribute to its appeal. But they know that the secret of the chant's attraction is the quality of the sound itself.

Anyone can take three words and make a song out of them, combining them in a clever way. But can that concoction be meditated on all day and night? Would the chanters of those words report, as do the chanters of Hare Kṛṣṇa, that the practice is freeing them from anxiety, opening up their minds to a liberated view of themselves, and investing them with blissfulness? No, of course not. The invented litany would only drive its creators to distraction.

But the sound of Hare Kṛṣṇa is so

enriching that a whole culture has been founded on it. Furthermore, the people who chant Hare Kṛṣṇa are developing good character, gaining knowledge of both the material and spiritual worlds, and helping other people to be free from pain. There is, then, a special quality to the sound of Hare Kṛṣṇa. What is it?

The words Hare, Kṛṣṇa, and Rāma have a special quality because they are seeds of pure spiritual consciousness. They are not a product of an earthbound language changing through the centuries. They are names of God, as ceaselessly energetic as God Himself. When you pronounce these sounds, you are propelled into your eternal position as a particle of spiritual energy, a person living in a transcendental nature. Hare Kṛṣṇa reveals to you the person you really are.

Read more about Kṛṣṇa consciousness in this issue of BACK TO GODHEAD magazine.

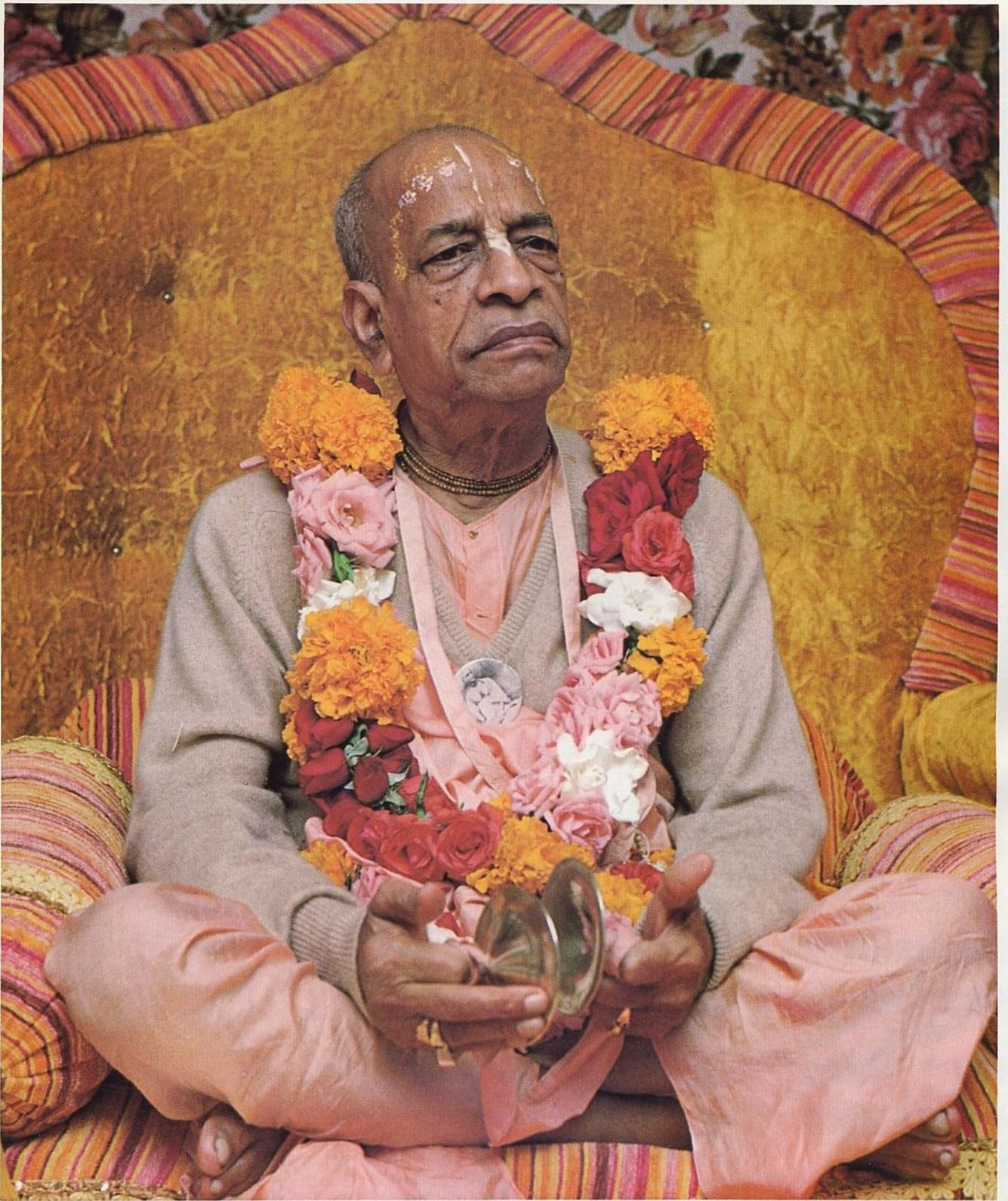


Photo: Visākha-devī dāśī (San Diego)

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

FOUNDER

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

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedānta 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 *pride*. The vowel *ī* is pronounced like the *ri* in the English word *ring*. The *ē* 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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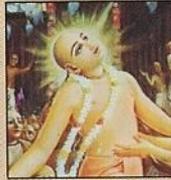
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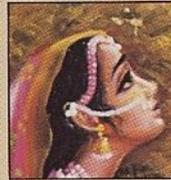
Lord Caitanya taught that the ultimate goal of all religion is to develop spontaneous love for God. The first English translation of a ninety-year-old treatise on the science of *bhakti-yoga* by Śrīla Bhaktivīnoda Ṭhākura.



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Special Centerfold Section:

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

The continuing presentation of India's great spiritual classic. Translation and commentary by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.



ON THE COVER

The great Vedic rulers of the world knew that government without God consciousness could lead only to disaster. Therefore they would take advice on how to run state affairs from learned and saintly devotees of the Lord. Here the great sage Nārada Muni instructs King Prācinabarhiṣat that the goal of life is spiritual enlightenment, not increased sensual pleasure. An original oil painting by Parīkṣīt dāsa.

◀ **The founder and original editor** of BACK TO GODHEAD is His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. Śrīla Prabhupada first came to the United States in September of 1965, and by July of 1966 he had begun the International Society for Krishna Consciousness in a small storefront in New York City.

From the beginning, BACK TO GODHEAD magazine was an integral part of ISKCON. In fact, it has often been called "the backbone of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement" by Śrīla Prabhupada, who began writing, printing and distributing it himself in 1944. Over the years, BACK TO GODHEAD has changed in many ways, but its purpose has remained one: to present topics concerning Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for the spiritual enlightenment of its readers.

MEDITATION AND THE SELF WITHIN

Can meditation solve our everyday problems? Is there life after death? Can drugs help us achieve self-realization? During a recent visit to South Africa, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda discussed these questions with Bill Faill, a reporter for the Durban *Natal Mercury*.

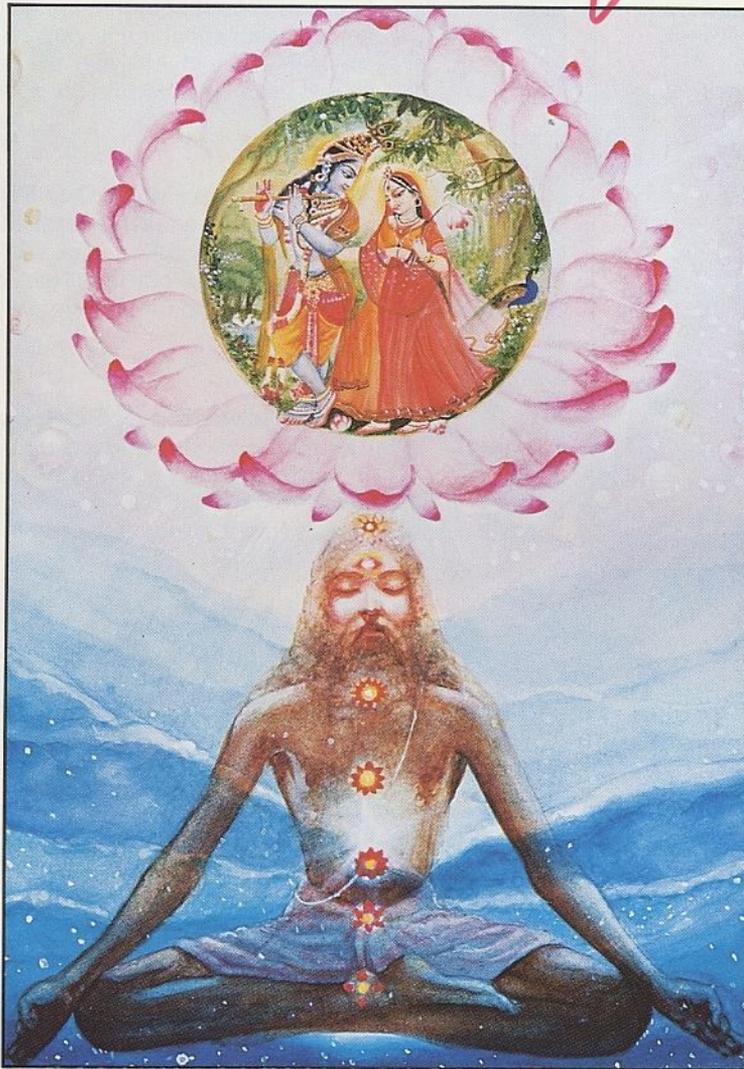
Śrīla Prabhupāda:

"Kṛṣṇa" is a name for God which means all-attractive. Unless one is all-attractive he cannot be God. So this Kṛṣṇa consciousness means God consciousness. All of us are small particles of God, equal in quality with Him. Our position as living entities is like that of a small particle of gold in relation to a large quantity of gold.

Bill Faill: Are we something like sparks in a fire?

Śrīla Prabhupāda:

Yes. Both the fire and the spark are fire, but one is big, and the other is very small. Unlike the relationship between the spark and the fire, however, our relationship with God is eternal, although at the present moment we have forgotten that relationship due to contact with the material energy. We are facing so many problems only because of this forgetfulness. If we can revive our original God consciousness, then we shall become happy. This is the sum and substance of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It



consciousness. Now they are thinking that so-called material advancement is the solution to their problems, but this is not a fact. The real solution is to get out of the material condition entirely by becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious. Because God is eternal, we are also eternal, but in the material condition we are thinking, "I am this body," and therefore we must repeatedly change from body to body. This is due to ignorance. Actually we are not our bodies but spiritual sparks, parts and parcels of God.

Bill Faill: Then the body is just like a vehicle for the soul?

Śrīla Prabhupāda:

Yes. It is just like a motorcar. Just as you go from one place to another in a car, similarly, due to mental concoction in the material condition of life, we are going from one position to another trying to become happy. But nothing will make us happy unless we come to our real position, which is that we are all parts and

is the best process to revive our original God consciousness. There are different processes of self-realization, but in the present age of Kali, people are very fallen, and they require the simple process of Kṛṣṇa

coction in the material condition of life, we are going from one position to another trying to become happy. But nothing will make us happy unless we come to our real position, which is that we are all parts and

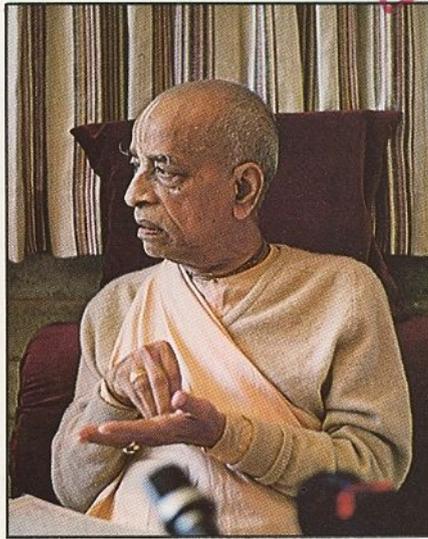
“Real meditation means achieving a state in which the mind is saturated with God consciousness. But if you do not know what God is, how can you meditate?”

parcels of God and that our real business is to associate with God and help all living entities by cooperating with Him. Civilized human life is attained only after a long evolution through 8,400,000 species of life. So if we don't take advantage of this civilized human life to understand who God is, who we are, and what our relationship is, but instead simply waste our life like cats and dogs, going here and there looking for sense gratification, then we will have missed a great opportunity. The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is meant to teach people how to take full advantage of the human form of life by trying to understand God and our relationship with Him.

Bill Fail: If we don't make the most of this life, do we get a second chance in another life?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. According to your desires at the time of death, you get another body. That body is not guaranteed to be a human body, however. As I've already explained, there are 8,400,000 different forms of life. You can enter any of them, according to your mental condition at death. What we think of at the time of death depends on how we act during our life. As long as we are in material consciousness, our actions are under the control of the material nature, which is being conducted in three modes: goodness, passion, and ignorance. These modes are like the three basic colors—yellow, red, and blue. Just as one can mix red, yellow, and blue to produce millions of colors, similarly, the modes of nature are being mixed to produce many varieties of life. To stop the repetition of birth and death

in different forms of life, we must transcend the covering of material nature and come to the platform of pure consciousness. But if we do not learn the transcendental science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then at death we must transfer to another body, either better or worse than our present one. If we cultivate the mode of goodness, then we are promoted to the higher planetary system, where



there is a better standard of life. If we cultivate the mode of passion, then we will remain at the present stage. But if out of ignorance we commit sinful activities and violate nature's laws, then we will be degraded to animal or plant life. Then again we must evolve to the human form, a process that may take millions of years. Therefore a human being must be responsible. He must take advantage of the rare opportunity of human life by understanding his relationship with God and acting accordingly. Then he can get out of the cycle of birth and death in different forms of life and go back to home, back to Godhead.

Bill Fail: Do you think transcendental meditation is helping people?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: They do not know what real meditation is. Their meditation is simply a farce—another cheating process by the so-called *svāmīs* and *yogīs*. You're asking me if meditation is helping people, but do you know what meditation is?

Bill Fail: A stilling of the mind—trying to sit in the center without swinging either way.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: And what is the center?

Bill Fail: I don't know.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: So everyone is talking very much about meditation, but no one knows what meditation actually is. These bluffers use the word “meditation,” but they do not know the proper subject for meditation. They're simply talking bogus propaganda.

Bill Fail: Isn't meditation valuable just to get people thinking right?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No. Real meditation means to achieve a state in which the mind is saturated with God consciousness. But if you do not know what God is, how can you meditate? Besides, in this age people's minds are so agitated that they cannot concentrate. I have seen this so-called meditation; they are simply sleeping and snoring. Unfortunately, in the name of God consciousness or “self-realization,” many bluffers are presenting non-standard methods of meditation without referring to the authorized books of Vedic knowledge. They are simply practicing another type of exploitation.

Bill Fail: What about some of the other teachers, like Ouspensky and Gurdjieff? In the past they brought to the West a message similar to yours.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: We would have to study the particulars of their teachings to know whether they meet the Vedic standard. God consciousness is a science, just like medical science or any other science. It cannot be different because it is spoken by different men. Two plus two equals four everywhere, never five or three. That is science.

Bill Fail: Do you feel that others may have possibly taught the genuine method of God consciousness?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Unless I study their teachings in detail, it would be very difficult to say. There are so many bluffers.

Bill Fail: Just doing it for money.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That's all. They have no standard method. Therefore we are presenting *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is, without any personal interpretation. This is standard.

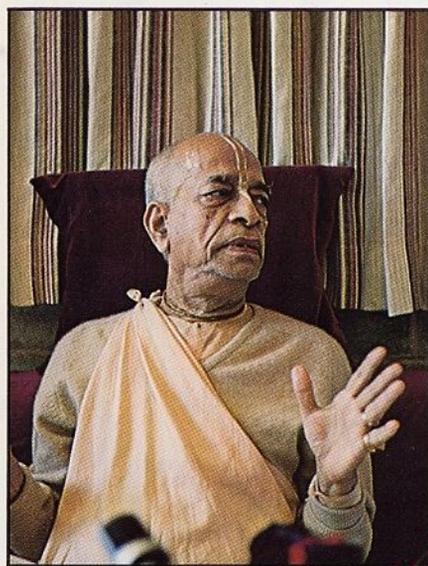
Bill Fail: Yes, if you begin dressing things up, you inevitably change them.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not a new process. It is very, very old—and standard. It cannot be changed. As soon as you try to change it, then the potency is lost. This potency is just like electricity. If you want to generate electricity, you must follow the standard regulations, arranging all the negative and positive poles properly. You cannot construct the generator whimsically and still produce electricity. Similarly, there is a standard method of understanding Kṛṣṇa conscious philosophy from proper authorities. If we follow their instructions, then the process will act. Unfortunately, one of the dangerous diseases of modern man is that

everyone wants to do things according to his own whims. No one wants to follow the standard way. Therefore everyone is failing, both spiritually and materially.

Bill Fail: Is the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement growing?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Oh yes, very much. You may be surprised to know that we are selling books in the tens of thousands. We have about fifty books, and many librarians and college professors are very appreciative of them because until their publication there was no



such literature in existence. It is a new contribution to the world.

Bill Fail: Kṛṣṇa consciousness seems to involve shaving the head and wearing saffron robes. How can an ordinary man caught up in family life practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: The saffron robes and the shaven head are not essential, although they create a good mental situation, just as when a military man is dressed properly, he gets energy—he feels like a military man. Does that mean that unless he is in uniform he cannot fight? No. In the same way, God consciousness cannot be checked—it can be revived in any circumstances—but certain conditions are helpful.

Therefore we prescribe that you live in a certain way, dress in a certain way, eat in a certain way, and so on. These things are helpful for practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but they are not essential.

Bill Fail: Then one can be a student of Kṛṣṇa consciousness while going about normal daily life?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes.

Bill Fail: How about drugs? Can they help in the process of God realization?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: If drugs could help God realization, then drugs would be more powerful than God. How can we accept that? Drugs are chemical substances, which are material. How can something material help one realize God, who is all-spiritual? It is impossible. What one experiences from taking drugs is simply a kind of intoxication or hallucination; it is not God realization.

Bill Fail: Do you think the great mystics down through the ages have actually seen the spiritual spark you mentioned earlier?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: What do you mean by mystic?

Bill Fail: It's just a name given to people who have had an experience of another level of reality.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: We don't use the word "mystic." Our reality is God realization, which occurs when we come to the spiritual platform. As long as we have a bodily concept of life, our understanding is sense gratification because the body is made of senses. When we progress from the bodily platform and we see the mind as the center of sense activity, we take the mind as the final stage of realization. That is the mental platform. From the mental platform we may come to the intellectual platform, and from the intellectual platform we can rise to the transcendental platform. Finally

we can rise above even the transcendental platform and come to the spiritual platform. These are the stages of God realization. However, in this age, because people are so fallen, the *sāstras* [scriptures] give the special recommendation that people come directly to the spiritual platform by chanting the holy names of God: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. If we cultivate this practice on the spiritual platform, then immediately we can realize our spiritual identity. Then the process of God realization becomes successful very quickly.

Bill Fail: Today a lot of people are saying that we must look inward for the truth rather than outward into the world of the senses.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Looking inward means knowing that you are a spirit soul. Unless you understand that you are not the body but rather you are a soul, there is no question of looking inward.

First we have to study, "Am I this body, or am I something within this body?" Unfortunately, this subject is not taught in any school, college, or university. Everyone is thinking, "I am this body." For example, in this country people everywhere are thinking, "I am South African, they are Indian, they are Greek," and so on. Actually, everyone in the whole world is in the bodily conception of life. Kṛṣṇa consciousness starts when one is above this bodily conception.

Bill Fail: So the recognition of the spiritual spark comes first?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Recognizing the existence of the spirit soul within the body is the first step. Unless one understands this simple fact, there is no question of spiritual advancement.

Bill Fail: Is it a question of just understanding it intellectually?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: In the beginning, yes. There are two departments of knowledge: theoretical and practical. First one must learn spiritual science theoretically; then, by working on that spiritual platform, one comes to the point of practical realization.

Unfortunately, today almost everyone is in the darkness of the bodily conception of life. Therefore this movement is very important because it can lift civilized men out of that darkness. As long as they are in the bodily conception of life, they

**“Looking inward
means knowing that
you are a spirit soul.
Unless you understand
that you are not the
body but rather you
are a soul, there is no
question of looking
inward.”**

are no better than animals. "I am a dog," "I am a cat," "I am a cow." Animals think like this. As soon as someone passes, a dog will bark, thinking, "I am a dog. I have been appointed here as watchdog." Similarly, if I adopt the dog's mentality and challenge foreigners—"Why have you come to this country? Why have you come to my jurisdiction?"—then what is the difference between the dog and me?

Bill Fail: There is none. To change the subject a little, is it necessary to follow certain eating habits to practice spiritual life?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, the whole process is meant to purify us, and eating is part of that purifica-

tion. I think you have a saying, "You are what you eat," and that's a fact. Our bodily constitution and mental atmosphere are determined according to how and what we eat. Therefore the *sāstras* [scriptures] recommend that to become Kṛṣṇa conscious, you should eat remnants of food left by Kṛṣṇa. If a tuberculosis patient eats something and you eat the remnants, you will be infected with tuberculosis. Similarly, if you eat *kṛṣṇa-prasāda*, then you will be infected with Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Thus our process is that we don't eat anything directly. First we offer the food to Kṛṣṇa, then we eat it. This helps us advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Bill Fail: You are all vegetarians?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, because Kṛṣṇa is a vegetarian. Kṛṣṇa can eat anything because He is God, but in the *Bhagavad-gītā* He says, "If one offers Me with love and devotion a leaf, a flower, fruit, or water, I will accept it." [Bg. 9.26] He never says, "Give Me meat and wine."

Bill Fail: How about the tobacco question?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Tobacco is also an intoxicant. We are already intoxicated by being in the bodily conception of life, and if we increase the intoxication, then we are lost.

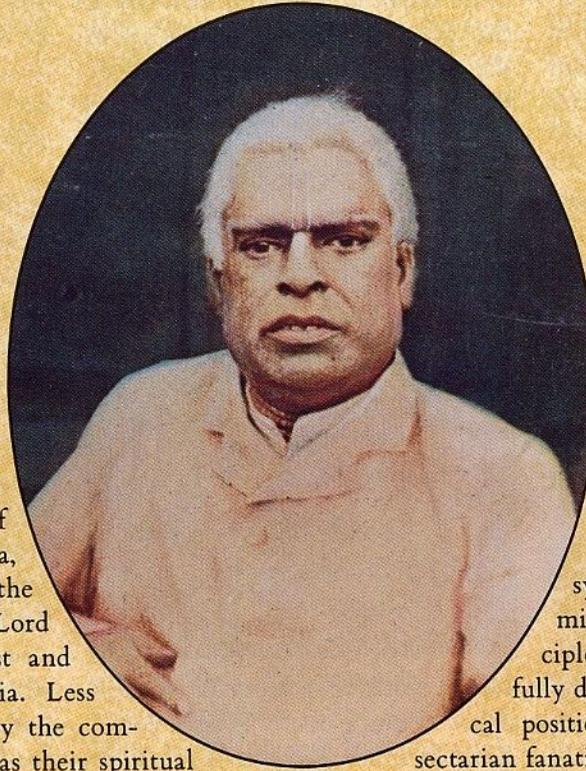
Bill Fail: You mean things like meat, alcohol, and tobacco just reinforce bodily consciousness?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Suppose you have a disease and you want to be cured. You have to follow the instructions of a physician. If he says, "Don't eat this; eat only this," you have to follow his prescription. Similarly, we also have a prescription for being cured of the bodily conception of life: chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, hearing about Kṛṣṇa's activities, and eating *kṛṣṇa-prasāda*. This treatment is the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

THE NECTAREAN TEACHINGS OF ŚRĪ CAITANYA

by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura

(translated from the original Bengali by
Śrīmān Gopīparānadhana dāsa Brahmācārī)



Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura (1838–1914) was well known during his time as a respectable family man, the father of twelve children, and as the local magistrate for the colonial British government of the district of Purī in Orissa, India. There he supervised the management of the temple of Lord Jagannātha, one of the largest and most famous temples in India. Less publicly, he was recognized by the community of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas* as their spiritual master in disciplic succession from Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Thākura Bhaktivinoda's special interest was pioneering the distribution of Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the English-speaking world. He dedicated much of his life to this effort, writing and speaking extensively in English and encouraging other devotees to do the same. His mission has been continued and greatly expanded by his son, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, and by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī's disciple, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

*Followers of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, an incarnation of the Supreme Lord who appeared in West Bengal, India, five hundred years ago.

Published in 1886, *Śrī Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta* (*The Nectarean Teachings of Śrī Caitanya*) was written in straightforward Bengali so that a general audience of devotees and interested laymen could readily appreciate its message. The book systematically and uncompromisingly establishes the basic principles of devotional research, carefully defeating the unsound philosophical positions of sentimental spiritualists, sectarian fanatics, and exploitative scientists. Its subject matter is based largely on the conversations between Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmīs, which are contained in Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja's classic biography, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. *Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta*, presented by the author as "a flood of nectar," is divided into eight sections called "Rainfalls." Each Rainfall is further subdivided into several "Downpours." The present article is taken from the first Downpour of the first Rainfall.

GOPĪPARĀNADHANA DĀSA joined ISKCON soon after graduating from Columbia University in 1972 with a B. A. in linguistics. Now a member of the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust Sanskrit department, he is continuing his translation of Bhaktivinoda Thākura's Śrī Caitanya Śikṣāmṛta by the request of his spiritual master, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

HAVING REACHED AN END, in Kṛṣṇa's devotional service, to all theories born out of inconclusive and argumentative illusion, and offering my obeisances to the giver of that devotion, Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, I am now undertaking the compilation of this book, entitled *Śrī Caitanya-sikṣāmṛta*.

In this world there are three basic phenomena: the Supreme Controller (God), conscious living entities, and dead matter. Dead material things are those that have no capacity to desire, i.e., that are devoid of will-power. We thus designate as material such objects as earth, stone, water, fire, air, space, houses, clothing, and the bodies of living beings. On the other hand, such entities as humans, animals, birds, worms, and insects are types of living beings, each of which possesses the potencies of thinking and desiring. Among all forms of conscious life, the particular cognitive ability of the human species is unique, and therefore the human form is declared by many authorities to be the chief among all sentient and dull beings.

The Supreme Controller

The supreme controller is by His own nature complete and purely conscious. He creates everything, living and nonliving, and He is everyone's protector and regulator. By His desire our benefit can arise, and by His desire our complete failure can occur. In His identity as the Supreme Lord, He dominates over the spiritual universe, Vaikuṅṭha, which is eternal and free from anxiety. He is the ruler of all rulers, and thus all activities in every world are going on according to His desire.

Whereas an object of the material world assumes some gross form, the Supreme Lord is without any such form. For this reason, the *Vedas* describe Him as "formless," meaning that we cannot perceive Him with our gross senses. But all things have some innate form, and the Lord is no exception. As the supremely conscious living entity, He has a living, conscious form, as opposed to the unconscious form of dead matter. We too are conscious living entities, but we experience our consciousness through gross material bodies. Thus our naturally conscious identities have become hidden within material identifications. The Lord, on the other hand, is a purely conscious being, and therefore His natural, vital form, full of consciousness, is His complete identity. We can see His form, however, only with fully conscious vision steeped in devotion. We cannot see God with material eyes.

Some unfortunate people have no faith in the

Supreme Lord. Their eyes of knowledge have been stamped shut. Having been unable to perceive the form of the Lord with material vision, they have decided that He does not exist. Just as persons who are blind from birth cannot see the sun, similarly, atheists cannot possibly believe in the Supreme Lord. By nature, any human will believe in God. It is only those who from birth have been given false instruction in impure association, and who have gradually come under the influence of bad conditioning, who do not accept the existence of God. In their case, apart from their own loss, what loss is there for the Lord?

We should not consider the Lord's abode, Vaikuṅṭha, to be a material place. Madras, Bombay, Kashmir, Calcutta, London, Paris—these are all gross material places. To go to them we must transport our gross body across various material countries and provinces by foot, rail, or ship. Vaikuṅṭha, however, is not this type of region. Eternal, full of life, and faultless, Vaikuṅṭha has a special location beyond all the material worlds. It cannot be seen by the eyes or contemplated with the mind. The only way we can go to this inconceivable abode is to satisfy the Supreme Lord, who is manifested there. At that time we will be able to engage in the service of the Supreme Lord eternally.

A Problematic World

In this material world, happiness is temporary. It is soon lost. In addition, everything here is full of misery: taking birth involves much hardship and distress, and after birth one must care for his body by eating, sleeping, and so forth. Any interference with these functions, beginning with eating, causes great difficulty. Disease is always a danger, along with such miseries as cold and heat. To mitigate these distresses, one must earn money and accept many bodily inconveniences, such as constructing and maintaining a home. After a few years of marriage and raising children, one eventually grows old and loses his good intelligence. During the course of all these developments, one may arrive at some concocted conceptions of life by discussion and argument with other people. In conclusion, the cycle of birth and death is certainly not an experience of unmixed happiness. People in general think of the temporary cessation of pain as "happiness," but real happiness means to escape from this distressful cycle of material life. If we could attain Vaikuṅṭha, the abode of the Supreme Lord, we would no longer be compelled to endure temporary happiness and distress. Rather we could obtain uninterrupted, eternal bliss. Therefore our

THREE BASIC PHENOMENA

DEAD MATTER



ETHER



AIR



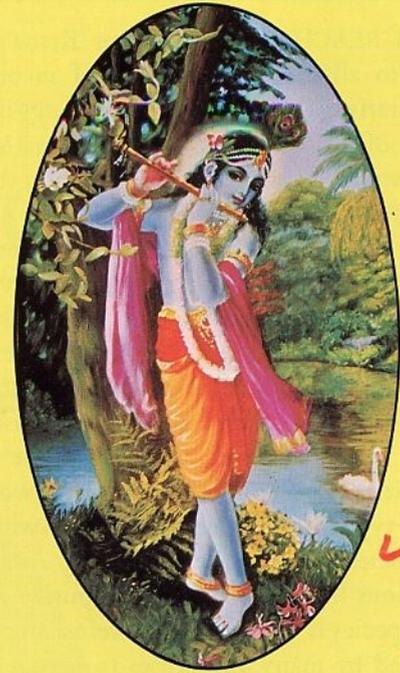
FIRE



WATER



EARTH



LIVING ENTITIES

HUMANS



ANIMALS



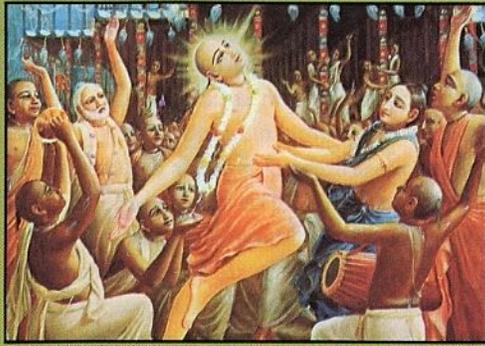
BIRDS



INSECTS



Spontaneous Attraction for the Lord ✓



← LOVE

DUTY →

Worship ✓



Renunciation ✓



Hope for Material Success ✓



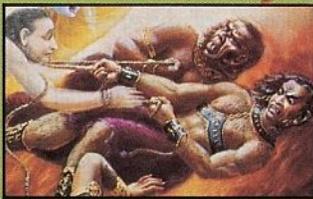
THE FAITHFUL

Those who approach the Supreme Lord motivated by fear, hope, duty or love

HOPE →

FEAR ↓

Fear of Hell ✓



Fear of Poverty and Disease ✓



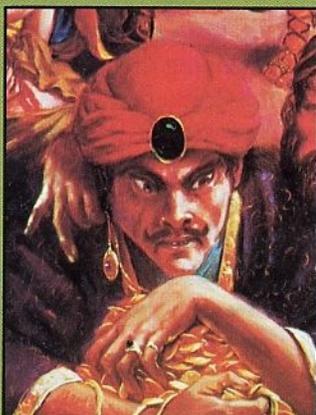
Fear of Death ✓



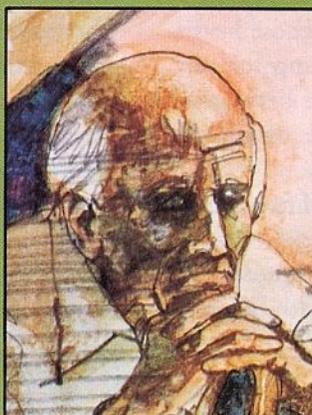
TWO KINDS OF HUMAN BEINGS

THE FAITHLESS

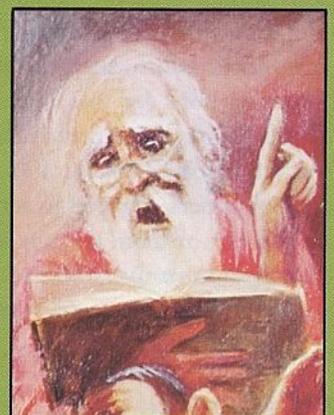
MATERIALISTS



AGNOSTICS



VOIDISTS



ambition should be to satisfy the Lord and be promoted to His eternal abode.

As soon as a person awakens to his real self-interest, which is devotional service to the Lord, he should begin practicing it. Thinking, "Now we can enjoy pleasure in the material world, and later, when we grow old, we will work for the satisfaction of the Lord," is a fruitless attitude. Time is very valuable. From the very day one knows what is to be done, he must make the effort to do it. The human form of life is especially rare, and no one can say when death will occur. Therefore, even children should be taught how to practice devotional service to God. The Vedic histories tell of the great devotees Dhruva and Prahlāda, who achieved the mercy of the Lord at an extremely young age. If they were capable of performing devotional service in childhood, why should we doubt that any child can? Actually, anyone who practices serving the Lord from early childhood is sure to gradually reach his natural spiritual position.

Motivations for Service

There are four basic causes why persons in different conditions of life try to achieve the satisfaction of the Supreme Lord: fear, hope, a sense of obligation, and spontaneous attraction. Some people are impelled to worship the Lord out of fear of hell, poverty, disease or death. Others worship Him in hopes of achieving sense gratification or success in the material world. However, neither of these groups can find unadulterated happiness in their worship of the Lord unless they ultimately renounce all fear and hope and instead become attached to pure devotional service. The third group of devotees, driven by a sense of duty or obligation, pray to God with gratitude for His being the creator of the universe. And the last group are those who are motivated by neither fear, hope, nor obligation, but who automatically achieve love for the Lord by worshipping Him, and who thus serve Him out of spontaneous attraction. Just as in the material world, simply by seeing something, we may immediately develop a desire for it and then strive for it, similarly, persons in whose hearts this inclination arises simply by thinking of the Supreme Lord act in His devotional service because of spontaneous attraction. Their devotional service is known as *rāga-bhakti*.

Worshippers engaged in serving God out of fear, hope, or a sense of duty are not as pure as those who serve Him spontaneously. The actual devotees are those who serve the Supreme Lord in *rāga-mārga*, the path of spon-

aneous worship. Only after spontaneous attraction has developed can one enter into the intimacy of the deep relationship existing between the living entity and the Lord. This relationship is eternal, but for the living entity bound to material nature, it remains hidden unless he finds the right process to uncover it. Just as fire can be manifested by rubbing a flint stone, so one's relationship with God can be revealed by following one of the various paths of devotional service. For many people, their spiritual relationship is manifested by constant worship motivated by fear, hope, or obligation. For example, first Dhruva Mahārāja worshiped Lord Viṣṇu in the hope of attaining a kingdom. But in the course of his devotional practice, he developed spontaneous attraction in knowledge of his pure relationship with the Lord and rejected any material benediction for sense gratification.

Material fear and hope are extremely contemptible. Thus, when a practicing devotee's intelligence becomes strong, he abandons fear and hope, and his sense of duty becomes his only impetus for service. Until spontaneous attraction for the Supreme Lord develops, he maintains this sense of duty, which encompasses two broad categories: observance of the various functions of devotional service and avoidance of what is against the regulative principles of devotional service. He carefully follows the methods of realizing God consciousness that were determined with careful consideration by great authorities in the distant past and then recorded in books. This is known as *vidhi-mārga*, the path of regulated devotional service. By becoming regulated by the concept of duty, the devotee develops respect for the authority of the revealed scriptures and for the regulations of devotional service in practice.

Common Ground

If we look at the historical accounts of different peoples throughout the world, we can easily see that faith in God is a common characteristic of all humankind. Even uncivilized, animalistic nomads, whose occupation is hunting for animal flesh, still offer obeisances to the sun and moon, huge mountains, great rivers and even large trees, worshipping them as creators and controllers. Why is this? Because the belief in a Supreme Lord is a natural and essential function of human life, and thus even when a human being is heavily conditioned, as long as his consciousness is not completely covered, his belief in God will be manifested to a certain extent. However, after he attains some status of civilization and begins to study

various kinds of material knowledge, his natural faith in God becomes more or less covered by false arguments; and direct atheism, or else the monistic idea that the ultimate truth is void, may take root in his mind. We should understand that such miserly attitudes simply indicate an unhealthy consciousness devoid of spiritual strength.

Whether he be totally uncivilized or well suited for developing faith in the Supreme Lord, a human being can have his progress suspended and his life made wretched by the three atheistic diseases of materialism, agnosticism, and voidism. Although not everyone is attacked by these diseases, some do fall prey to them and become attached to their own situations, thus remaining unqualified to reach any higher position in life. On the other hand, even uncultured forest dwellers, by virtue of becoming civilized and expert in morality and education, and then further adopting the social and spiritual organization of the Vedic *varṇāśrama-dharma*,* can very quickly come to the platform of devotees qualified to engage in the service of the Supreme Lord. This is the natural course of a human being's spiritual growth. But if obstructions in the form of spiritual disease arise, one's way of life becomes perverted.

Superficial Differences

Although human nature is the same everywhere, people living in different nations and on different continents acquire different secondary characteristics. It is impossible to find two people living in the world who have exactly the same secondary nature. Even two brothers born from the same womb will differ in appearance and personality, what to speak of people born in separate countries. In different regions, things such as the locations of bodies of water, air currents, mountains and forests, and the availability of foodstuffs and clothing all vary. Consequently, differences naturally occur in people's appearance, social status, occupation, and style of dressing and eating. Each nationality has a peculiar disposition of mind, and thus various conceptions of the Supreme Lord, although the same in essence, appear superficially dissimilar. As people in different places rise above their aboriginal condition and gradually develop culture, science, law, and devotion to God, their means of worship also diverge in terms of language, costume, kinds of offerings, and

mental attitudes. Considering all these secondary differences impartially, however, we find no discrepancy. As long as the object of worship is the same, there is no harm. Therefore Lord Caitanya has specifically ordered that we should execute our own service to the Supreme Lord in the mode of pure goodness and at the same time refrain from ridiculing the religious codes of others.

Under the influence of the above-mentioned factors, the religious systems proclaimed by different nationalities vary in the following ways:

- (1) different spiritual masters
- (2) differences in mental and emotional attitudes toward worship
- (3) different prescribed rituals of worship
- (4) different types of affection for and activities in relation to the object of worship
- (5) different names and terminologies resulting from differences in language.

Because of the variety of spiritual authorities, in some places people honor the Vedic sages, in others they revere the prophets led by Muhammed, and in still other regions they esteem the religious personalities who follow Jesus. Similarly, in each locality many different men of knowledge are shown particular respect. Each community should, of course, properly honor its own spiritual masters, but simply for the sake of gaining followers, no one should try to establish that the instructions given by one's own local spiritual master are better than the instructions of spiritual masters everywhere else. The propagation of such an antagonistic position would certainly be inauspicious for the world.

A devotee's prescribed ritual of worship varies according to his mentality and devotional feeling. In some places the mode of worship is to seat oneself in a sacred place and practice renunciation and breath control. In another place worship is performed by falling down five times during the day and evening—even if caught unprepared—to offer obeisances facing the direction of the chief shrine. And elsewhere worshipers kneel down, either in the temple or at home, and with folded hands declare their own fallen condition and the glories of the Lord. Each of these types of worship also differs in the matter of what to wear, whether and how to eat, what is clean or unclean, and so forth. Furthermore, the sentiment and behavior toward the worshipable object vary among religions. Some worshipers, whose consciousness is saturated with devotion, set up a Deity of the Supreme Lord in their heart, in their mind, or in the outside world, with the understanding that it is nondifferent from the Lord. In other processes, which

*A system of social organization that divides society into four functional classes and four spiritual orders for the purpose of progressive spiritual realization.

are inclined more toward logical argument, a conception of the Lord is formed within the mind and worshiped; external images are not accepted. Actually, however, all of these Deities are factual representations.

In accordance with language differences, the Lord is called by various names. Different names are also given to the religious systems, and there are different terminologies for use during worship.

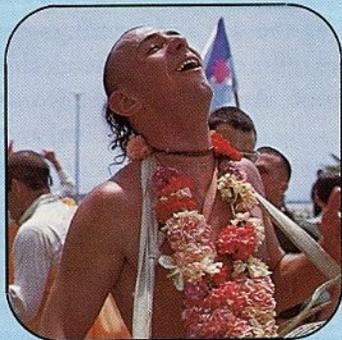
The many religions of the world have naturally grown very distinct from each other due to these five kinds of differences. However, to create mutual discord because of these differences would be disastrous. If one happens to be in another's temple at the time of his worship, one should think, "Here my Lord is being worshiped in a different form. Since I am committed to my particular practice, I cannot take part in this ritual, but as I watch it, I am developing a greater feeling for my own method of worship. The Supreme Absolute Truth is one without a second. Therefore, as I offer my obeisances to the form which I see here, I pray to my Lord, from whom this form comes, that this Deity will help me expand my love for Him."

Those who do not behave in this way, but who exhibit malice, envy, or ridicule toward other religious processes, certainly deviate from true religion due to a lack of intelligence. If such people actually loved their own Supreme Lord, they would not be attracted to such useless disputes.

On the other hand, although it is nonsensical to ridicule other religious practices, if we notice some genuine fault, we should never tolerate it. Rather, we should make every effort to uproot it by proper means and thus benefit the deluded practitioners. For this reason, Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu argued with the Buddhists, Jains, and Māyāvādīs and brought them to the true path. All devotees of the Lord should follow the example of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and reject all so-called religious systems containing the unwanted elements of atheism, agnosticism, materialism, disbelief in the existence of the spirit soul (which amounts to the idea that working for the body is all in all), hedonism, and impersonalism. Devotees should know that these systems are unauthorized, deceptive, and only dim reflections of—and sometimes completely against—the principles of real religion. Actually, followers of these fraudulent processes are pitiable. According to their ability, devotees should make every effort to protect people in general from all these evils.

Pure, unalloyed love of God is the actual eternal religion of the spirit soul. Thus, in spite of the above-mentioned five kinds of distinctions among religious systems, we should recognize as genuine any religious process whose goal is the realization of pure love of God. It is useless to quarrel over superficial differences. If the goal of a process is pure, then the system is fully auspicious. 

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First Canto "Creation"

Chapter Four

Appearance of Śrī Nārada

(continued)

TEXT 16

परावरज्ञः स ऋषिः कालेनाव्यक्तरंहसा ।
युगधर्मन्यतिकरं प्राप्तं भुवि युगे युगे ॥१६॥

*parāvara-jñāḥ sa ṛṣiḥ
kālenāvyaakta-ramhasā
yuga-dharma-vyatikaram
prāptam bhuvi yuge yuge*

parāvara—past and future; *jñāḥ*—one who knows; *saḥ*—he; *ṛṣiḥ*—Vyāsadeva; *kālena*—in the course of time; *avyakta*—unmanifested; *ramhasā*—by great force; *yuga-dharma*—acts in terms of the millennium; *vyatikaram*—anomalies; *prāptam*—having accrued; *bhuvī*—on the earth; *yuge yuge*—different ages.

TRANSLATION

The great sage Vyāsadeva saw anomalies in the millennium. This happens on the earth in different ages, due to unseen forces in the course of time.

PURPORT

The great sages like Vyāsadeva are liberated souls, and therefore they can see clearly past and future. Thus he could see the future anomalies in the Kali age, and accordingly he made arrangement for the people in general so that they can execute a progressive life in this age which is full of darkness. The people in general in this age of Kali are too much interested in matter, which is temporary. Because of ignorance they are unable to evaluate the assets of life and be enlightened in spiritual knowledge.

TEXTS 17-18

मौक्तिकानां च भावानां शक्तिहासं च तत्कृतम् ।
अश्रद्धानाग्निःसत्त्वान्दुर्मेधान् हसितायुषः ॥१७॥

दुर्भगांश्च जनान् वीक्ष्य मुनिर्दिव्येन चक्षुषा ।
सर्ववर्णाश्रमाणां यद्दृश्यौ हितममोषटक् ॥१८॥

*bhautikānām ca bhāvānām
śakti-hrasam ca tat-kṛtam
āsraddadhānān niḥsattvān
durmedhān hrasitāyusaḥ
durbhagānś ca janān vīkṣya
munir divyena cakṣuṣā
sarva-varṇāśramānām yad
dadhya hitam amogha-dṛk*

bhautikānām ca—also of everything that is made of matter; *bhāvānām*—actions; *śakti-hrasam ca*—deterioration of natural power; *tat-kṛtam*—rendered by that; *āsraddadhānān*—of the faithless; *niḥsattvān*—impatient due to want of the mode of goodness; *hrasita*—reduced; *āyusaḥ*—of duration of life; *durbhagān ca*—also the unlucky; *janān*—people in general; *vīkṣya*—by seeing; *munih*—the muni; *divyena*—by transcendental; *cakṣuṣā*—vision; *sarva*—all; *varṇāśramānām*—of all the statuses and orders of life; *yad*—what; *dadhya*—contemplated; *hitam*—welfare; *amogha-dṛk*—one who is fully equipped in knowledge.

TRANSLATION

The great sage, who was fully equipped in knowledge, could see, through his transcendental vision, the deterioration of everything material, due to the influence of the age. He could also see that the faithless people in general would be reduced in duration of life and would be impatient due to lack of goodness. Thus he contemplated for the welfare of men in all statuses and orders of life.

PURPORT

The unmanifested forces of time are so powerful that they reduce all matter to oblivion in due course. In Kali-yuga, the last millennium of a round of the four millenniums, the power of all material objects deteriorates by the influence of time. In this age the duration of the material body of the people in general is much reduced, and so is the memory. The action of matter has also not so much incentive. The land does not produce food grains in the same proportions as it did in other ages. The cow does not give as much milk as it used to give formerly. The production of vegetables and fruits is less than before. As such, all living beings, both men and animals, do not have sumptuous, nourishing food. Due to want of so many necessities of life, naturally the duration of life is reduced, the memory is short, intelligence is meager, mutual dealings are full of hypocrisy and so on.

The great sage Vyāsadeva could see this by his transcendental vision. As an astrologer can see the future fate of a man, or an astronomer can foretell the solar and lunar eclipses, similarly those who can see through the scriptures and foretell the future of all mankind are called liberated souls. They can see thus due to their sharp vision of spiritual attainment.

And all such transcendentalists, who are naturally devotees of the Lord, are always eager to render welfare service to the people in general. They are the real friends of the people in general, not the so-called public leaders who are unable to see what is going to happen five minutes ahead. In this age the people in general as well as their so-called leaders are all unlucky fellows, faithless in spiritual knowledge and influenced by the age of Kali. They are always disturbed by various diseases. For example, in the present age there are so many TB patients and TB hospitals, but formerly this was not so because the time was not so unfavorable. These unfortunate men of this age are always reluctant to give a reception to the transcendentalists who are representatives of Śrīla Vyāsadeva and selfless workers always busy in planning something which may help everyone in all statuses and orders of life. The greatest philanthropists are those transcendentalists who represent the mission of Vyāsa, Nārada, Madhva, Caitanya, Rūpa, Sarasvatī, etc. They are all one and the same. The personalities may be different, but the aim of the mission is one and the same, namely, to deliver the fallen souls back home, back to Godhead.

TEXT 19

चातुर्होत्रं कर्म शुद्धं प्रजानां वीक्ष्य वैदिकम् ।
व्यदधाद्यज्ञसन्तत्यै वेदमेकं चतुर्विधम् ॥१९॥

*cātur-hotraṁ karma śuddham
prajānāṁ vīkṣya vaidikam
vyadadhāt yajña-santatyai
vedam ekam catur-vidham*

cātuḥ—four; *hotram*—sacrificial fires; *karma śuddham*—purification of work; *prajānām*—of the people in general; *vīkṣya*—after seeing; *vaidikam*—according to Vedic rites; *vyadadhāt*—made into; *yajña*—sacrifice; *santatyai*—to expand; *vedam ekam*—only one *Veda*; *cātuḥ-vidham*—in four divisions.

TRANSLATION

He saw that the sacrifices mentioned in the Vedas were means by which the people's occupations could be purified. And to simplify the process he divided the one *Veda* into four, in order to expand them among men.

PURPORT

Formerly there was only the *Veda* of the name *Yajus*, and the four divisions of sacrifices were there specifically mentioned. But to make them more easily performable, the *Veda* was divided into four divisions of sacrifice, just to purify the occupational service of the four orders. Above the four *Vedas*, namely *R̥k*, *Yajus*, *Sāma*, and *Atharva*, there are the *Purāṇas*, the *Mahābhārata*, *Saṁhitās*, etc., which are known as the fifth *Veda*. Śrī Vyāsadeva and his many disciples were all historical personalities, and they were very kind and sympathetic toward the fallen souls of this age of Kali. As such, the *Purāṇas* and *Mahābhārata* were made from related historical facts which explained the teaching of the four *Vedas*. There is no point in doubting the authority of the *Purāṇas* and *Mahābhārata* as parts and parcels of the *Vedas*. In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, the *Purāṇas* and *Mahābhārata*, generally known as histories, are mentioned as the fifth *Veda*. According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, that is the way of ascertaining the respective values of the revealed scriptures.

TEXT 20

ऋग्यजुःसामायर्वाख्या वेदाश्चत्वार उद्भूताः ।
इतिहासपुराणं च पञ्चमो वेद उच्यते ॥२०॥

*ṛg-yajuḥ-sāmātharvākhyā
vedāś catvāra uddhṛtāḥ
itihāsa-purāṇaṁ ca
pañcamo veda ucyate*

ṛg-yajuḥ-sāma-atharva-ākhyāḥ—the names of the four *Vedas*; *vedāḥ*—the *Vedas*; *catvāraḥ*—four; *uddhṛtāḥ*—made into separate parts; *itihāsa*—historical records (*Mahābhārata*); *purāṇam ca*—and the *Purāṇas*; *pañcamah*—the fifth; *vedaḥ*—the original source of knowledge; *ucyate*—is said to be.

TRANSLATION

The four divisions of the original sources of knowledge [the *Vedas*] were made separately. But the historical facts and authentic stories mentioned in the *Purāṇas* are called the fifth *Veda*.

TEXT 21

तत्रर्गवेदधरः पेलः सामगो जैमिनिः कविः ।
वैशम्पायन एवैको निष्णातो यजुषामुत ॥२१॥

*tatrarg-veda-dharaḥ pailaḥ
sāmagō jaiminiḥ kavīḥ
vaiśampāyana evaiko
niṣṇāto yajuṣām uta*

tatra—thereupon; *ṛg-veda-dharaḥ*—professor of the *R̥g-veda*; *pailaḥ*—the ṛṣi named Paila; *sāmagāḥ*—that of the *Sāma-veda*; *jaiminiḥ*—the ṛṣi named Jaimini; *kaviḥ*—highly qualified; *vaiśampāyanaḥ*—the ṛṣi named Vaiśampāyana; *eva*—only; *ekaḥ*—alone; *niṣṇātaḥ*—well versed; *yajuṣām*—of the *Yajur-veda*; *uta*—glorified.

TRANSLATION

After the Vedas were divided into four divisions, Paila Ṛṣi became the professor of the *R̥g-veda*, Jaimini the professor of the *Sāma-veda*, and Vaiśampāyana alone became glorified by the *Yajur-veda*.

PURPORT

The different *Vedas* were entrusted to different learned scholars for development in various ways.

TEXT 22

अथर्वाङ्गिरसामासीत्सुमन्तुर्दारुणो मुनिः ।
इतिहासपुराणानां पिता मे रोमहर्षणः ॥२२॥

*atharvāṅgirasām āsīt
sumantur dāruṇo muniḥ
itihāsa-purāṇānām
pitā me romaharṣaṇaḥ*

atharva—the *Atharva-veda*; *āṅgirasām*—unto the ṛṣi Aṅgirā; *āsīt*—was entrusted; *sumantuḥ*—also known as Sumantu Muni; *dāruṇaḥ*—seriously devoted to the *Atharva-veda*; *muniḥ*—the sage; *itihāsa-purāṇānām*—of the historical records like the *Purāṇas*; *pitā*—father; *me*—mine; *romaharṣaṇaḥ*—the ṛṣi Romaharṣaṇa.

TRANSLATION

The Sumantu Muni Aṅgirā, who was very devotedly engaged, was entrusted with the *Atharva-veda*. And my father Romaharṣaṇa was entrusted with the *Purāṇas* and historical records.

PURPORT

In the *Śruti-mantras* also it is stated that Aṅgirā Muni, who strictly followed the rigid principles of the *Atharva-vedas*, was the leader of the followers of the *Atharva-vedas*.

TEXT 23

त एत ऋषयो वेदं स्वं स्वं व्यसन्ननेकधा ।
शिष्यैः प्रशिष्यैस्तच्छिष्यैर्वेदास्ते शाखिनोऽभवन् ॥२३॥

ta eta ṛṣayo vedam
svam svam vyasyann anekadhā
śiṣyair praśiṣyais tac-chiṣyair
vedās te śākhino bhavan

te—they; *ete*—all these; *ṛṣayaḥ*—learned scholars; *vedam*—the respective Vedas; *svam svam*—in their own entrusted matters; *vyasyan*—rendered; *anekadhā*—many; *śiṣyair*—disciples; *praśiṣyair*—grand-disciples; *tac-śiṣyair*—great grand-disciples; *vedāḥ te*—followers of the respective Vedas; *śākhinaḥ*—different branches; *abhavan*—thus became.

TRANSLATION

All these learned scholars, in their turn, rendered their entrusted Vedas unto their many disciples, grand disciples and great grand disciples, and thus the respective branches of the followers of the Vedas came into being.

PURPORT

The original source of knowledge is the Vedas. There are no branches of knowledge, either mundane or transcendental, which do not belong to the original text of the Vedas. They have simply been developed into different branches. They were originally rendered by great, respectable and learned professors. In other words, the Vedic knowledge, broken into different branches by different disciplic successions, has been distributed all over the world. No one, therefore, can claim independent knowledge beyond the Vedas.

TEXT 24

त एव वेदा दुर्मेधैर्धार्ष्यन्ते पुरुषैर्यथा ।
एवं चकार भगवान् व्यासः कृपणवत्सलः ॥२४॥

ta eva vedā durmedhair
dhāryante puruṣair yathā
evam cakāra bhagavān
vyāsaḥ kṛpaṇa-vatsalaḥ

te—that; *eva*—certainly; *vedāḥ*—the book of the knowledge; *durmedhair*—by the less intellectual; *dhāryante*—can assimilate; *puruṣair*—by the man; *yathā*—as much as; *evam*—thus; *cakāra*—edited; *bhagavān*—the powerful; *vyāsaḥ*—the great sage of Vyāsa; *kṛpaṇa-vatsalaḥ*—very kind to the ignorant mass.

TRANSLATION

Thus the great sage Vyāsadeva, who is very kind to the ignorant masses, edited the Vedas so they might be assimilated by less intellectual men.

PURPORT

The Veda is one, and the reasons for its divisions in many parts are explained herewith. The seed of all knowledge, or the Veda, is not a subject matter which can easily be understood by any ordinary man. There is a stricture that no one should try to learn the Vedas who is not a qualified brāhmaṇa. This stricture has been wrongly interpreted in so many ways. A class of men, who claim brahminical qualification simply by their birth-right in the family of a brāhmaṇa, claim that the study of the Vedas is a monopoly of the brāhmaṇa caste only. Another section of the people take this as an injustice to other castes who do not happen to take birth in a

brāhmaṇa family. But both of them are misguided. The Vedas are subjects which had to be explained even to Brahmājī by the Supreme Lord. Therefore the subject matter is understood by persons with exceptional qualities of goodness. Persons who are in the modes of passion and ignorance are unable to understand the subject matter of the Vedas. The ultimate goal of Vedic knowledge is Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead. This Personality is very rarely understood by those who are in the modes of passion and ignorance. In the Satya-yuga everyone was situated in the mode of goodness. Gradually the mode of goodness declined during the Tretā and Dvāpara-yugas, and the general mass of people became corrupt. In the present age the mode of goodness is almost nil, and so for the general mass of people, the kindhearted, powerful sage Śrī Vyāsadeva divided the Vedas in various ways so that they may be practically followed by less intelligent persons in the modes of passion and ignorance. It is explained in the next śloka as follows.

TEXT 25

स्त्रीशूद्रद्विजबन्धूनां त्रयी न श्रुतिगोचरा ।
कर्मश्रेयसि मूढानां श्रेय एव भवेदिह ।
इति भारतमाख्यानं कृपया मुनिना कृतम् ॥२५॥

strī-śūdra-dvijabandhūnām
trayī na śruti-gocarā
karma-śreyasi mūḍhānām
śreya evam bhaved iha
iti bhāratam ākhyānam
kṛpayā muninā kṛtam

strī—the woman class; *śūdra*—the laboring class; *dvija-bandhūnām*—of the friends of the twice-born; *trayī*—three; *na*—not; *śruti-gocarā*—for understanding; *karma*—in activities; *śreyasi*—in welfare; *mūḍhānām*—of the fools; *śreyaḥ*—supreme benefit; *evam*—thus; *bhaved*—achieved; *iha*—by this; *iti*—thus thinking; *bhāratam*—the great Mahābhārata; *ākhyānam*—historical facts; *kṛpayā*—out of great mercy; *muninā*—by the muni; *kṛtam*—is completed.

TRANSLATION

Out of compassion, the great sage thought it wise that this would enable men to achieve the ultimate goal of life. Thus he compiled the great historical narration called the Mahābhārata for women, laborers and friends of the twice-born.

PURPORT

The friends of the twice-born families are those who are born in the families of brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas and vaiśyas, or the spiritually cultured families, but they themselves are not equal to their forefathers. Such descendants are not recognized as such for want of purificatory achievements. The purificatory activities begin even before the birth of a child, and the seed-giving reformatory process is called Garbhādhāna-saṁskāra. One who has not undergone such Garbhādhāna-saṁskāra, or spiritual family planning, is not accepted as being of an actual twice-born family. The Garbhādhāna-saṁskāra is followed by other purificatory processes out of which the sacred thread ceremony is one. This is performed at the time of spiritual initiation. After this particular saṁskāra, one is rightly called twice-born. One birth is calculated during the seed-giving saṁskāra, and the second birth is calculated at the time of spiritual initiation. One who has been able to undergo such important saṁskāras can be called a bona fide twice-born.

If the father and the mother do not undertake the process of spiritual family planning and simply beget children out of passion only, their children are called dvija-bandhus. These dvija-bandhus are certainly not as intelligent as the children of the regular twice-born families. The dvija-bandhus are classified with the sūdras and the woman class, who are by nature less intelligent. The sūdras and the women class do not have to undergo any saṁskāra save and except the ceremony of marriage.

The less intelligent classes of men, namely women, *śūdras* and unqualified sons of the higher castes, are devoid of necessary qualifications to understand the purpose of the transcendental *Vedas*. For them the *Mahābhārata* was prepared. The purpose of the *Mahābhārata* is to administer the purpose of the *Vedas*, and therefore within this *Mahābhārata* the summary *Veda* of *Bhagavad-gītā* is placed. The less intelligent are more interested in stories than in philosophy, and therefore the philosophy of the *Vedas* in the form of the *Bhagavad-gītā* is spoken by the Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Vyāsadeva and Lord Kṛṣṇa are both on the transcendental plane, and therefore they collaborated in doing good to the fallen souls of this age. The *Bhagavad-gītā* is the essence of all Vedic knowledge. It is the first book of spiritual values, as the *Upaniṣads* are. The *Vedānta* philosophy is the subject matter for study by the spiritual graduates. Only the post-graduate spiritual student can enter into the spiritual or devotional service of the Lord. It is a great science, and the great professor is the Lord Himself in the form of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and persons who are empowered by Him can initiate others in the transcendental loving service of the Lord.

TEXT 26

एवं प्रवृत्तस्य सदा भूतानां श्रेयसि द्विजाः ।
सर्वात्मकेनापि यदा नातुष्यद्बृहदयं ततः ॥२६॥

evam pravṛttasya sadā
bhūtānām śreyasi dvijāḥ
sarvātmakenāpi yadā
nātuṣyadd hṛdayam tataḥ

evam—thus; pravṛttasya—one who is engaged in; sadā—always; bhūtānām of the living beings; śreyasi—in the ultimate good; dvijāḥ—O twice-born; sarvātmakena api—by all means; yadā—when; na—not; atuṣyat—become satisfied; hṛdayam—mind; tataḥ—at that time.

TRANSLATION

O twice-born brāhmaṇas, still his mind was not satisfied, although he engaged himself in working for the total welfare of all people.

PURPORT

Śrī Vyāsadeva was not satisfied with himself, although he prepared literatures of Vedic value for the all-around welfare of the general mass of people. It was expected that he would be satisfied by all such activities, but ultimately he was not satisfied.

TEXT 27

नातिप्रसिद्दबृहदयः सरस्वत्यास्तटे शुचौ ।
वितर्कयन् विविक्तस्य इदं चोवाच धर्मवित् ॥२७॥

nātiprasīdadd hṛdayaḥ
sarasvatyās taṭe śucau
vitarkayan vivikta-stha
idaṁ covāca dharmavit

na—not; atiprasīdat—very much satisfied; hṛdayaḥ—at heart; sarasvatyāḥ—of the River Sarasvatī; taṭe—on the bank of; śucau—being purified; vitarkayan—having considered; vivikta-sthaḥ—situated in a lonely place; idaṁ ca—also this; uvāca—said; dharmavit—one who knows what religion is.

TRANSLATION

Thus the sage, being dissatisfied at heart, at once began to reflect, because he knew the essence of religion, and he said within himself:

PURPORT

The sage began to search out the cause of not being satisfied at heart. Perfection is never attained until one is satisfied at heart. This satisfaction of heart has to be searched out beyond matter.

TEXTS 28-29

धृतरतेन हि मया छन्दांसि गुरवोऽग्नयः ।
मानिता निर्व्वलीकेन गृहीतं चानुशासनम् ॥२८॥
भारतव्यपदेशेन ह्यग्नायार्थश्च प्रदर्शितः ।
दृश्यते यत्र धर्मादि स्त्रीशूद्रादिभिरप्युत ॥२९॥

dhṛta-vratena hi mayā
chandāṁsi guravo'gnayaḥ
mānitā nirvvalīkena
gṛhītaṁ cānuśāsanam
bhārata-vyapadeśena
hy āmnāyārthaś ca pradarśitaḥ
dṛśyate yatra dharmādi
strī-śūdrādir apy uta

dhṛta-vratena—under a strict disciplinary vow; hi—certainly; mayā—by me; chandāṁsi—the Vedic hymns; guravaḥ—the spiritual masters; agnayaḥ—the sacrificial fire; mānitāḥ—properly worshiped; nirvvalīkena—without pretense; gṛhītaṁ ca—also accepted; anuśāsanam—traditional discipline; bhārata—the Mahābhārata; vyapadeśena—by compilation of; hi—certainly; āmnāya-arthaḥ—import of disciplic succession; ca—and; pradarśitaḥ—properly explained; dṛśyate—by what is necessary; yatra—where; dharmādiḥ—the path of religion; strī-śūdra-ādibhiḥ api—even by women, śūdras, etc.; uta—spoken.

TRANSLATION

I have, under strict disciplinary vows, unpretentiously worshiped the Vedas, the spiritual master and the altar of sacrifice. I have also abided by the rulings and have shown the import of disciplic succession through the explanation of the Mahābhārata by which even women, śūdras and others [friends of the twice-born] can see the path of religion.

PURPORT

No one can understand the import of the Vedas without having undergone a strict disciplinary vow and disciplic succession. The Vedas, spiritual masters and sacrificial fire must be worshiped by the desiring candidate. All these intricacies of Vedic knowledge are systematically presented in the Mahābhārata for the understanding of the women class, laborer class and the unqualified members of brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya or vaiśya families. In this age, the Mahābhārata is more essential than the original Vedas.

TEXT 30

तथापि बत मे दैह्यो ह्यात्मा चैवात्मना विभुः ।
असम्यक् इवाभाति ब्रह्मवर्चससत्तमः ॥३०॥

tathāpi bata me daihyo
hy ātmā caivātmanā vibhuḥ
asampanna ivābhāti
brahma-varcasya-sattamaḥ

tathāpi—although; bata—defect; me—mine; daihyaḥ—situated in the body; hi—certainly; ātmā—living being; ca—and; eva—even; ātmanā—myself; vibhuḥ—sufficient; asampannaḥ—wanting in; iva ābhāti—it appears to be; brahma-varcasya—of the Vedāntists; sattamaḥ—the supreme.

TRANSLATION

I am feeling incomplete, though I myself am fully equipped with everything required by the Vedas.

PURPORT

Undoubtedly Śrīla Vyāsadeva was complete in all the details of Vedic achievements. Purification of the living being submerged in matter is made

possible by the prescribed activities in the *Vedas*, but the ultimate achievement is different. Unless it is attained, the living being, even though fully equipped, cannot be situated in the transcendently normal stage. Śrīla Vyāsadeva appeared to have lost the clue and therefore felt dissatisfaction.

TEXT 31

किं वा भागवता धर्मा न प्रायेण निरूपिताः ।
प्रियाः परमहंसानां त एव ह्यच्युतप्रियाः ॥३१॥

*kiṁ vā bhāgavatā dharmā
na prāyeṇa nirūpitāḥ
priyāḥ paramahaṁsānām
ta eva hy acyuta-priyāḥ*

kim vā—or; *bhāgavatāḥ dharmāḥ*—devotional activities of the living beings; *na*—not; *prāyeṇa*—almost; *nirūpitāḥ*—directed; *priyāḥ*—dear; *paramahaṁsānām*—of the perfect beings; *te eva*—that also; *hi*—certainly; *acyuta*—the infallible; *priyāḥ*—attractive.

TRANSLATION

This may be because I did not specifically point out the devotional service of the Lord, which is dear both to perfect beings and the infallible Lord.

PURPORT

The dissatisfaction which was being felt by Śrīla Vyāsadeva is expressed herein in his own words. This was felt for the normal condition of the living being in the devotional service of the Lord. Unless one is fixed in the normal condition of service, neither the Lord nor the living being can become fully satisfied. This defect was felt by him when Nārada Muni, his spiritual master, reached him. It is described as follows.

TEXT 32

तस्यैवं खिलमात्मानं मन्यमानस्य खिद्यतः ।
कृष्णस्य नारदोऽभ्यागादाश्रमं प्रागुदाहृतम् ॥३२॥

*tasyaivaṁ khilam ātmānaṁ
manya-mānasya khidyataḥ
kṛṣṇasya nārado 'bhyāgād
āśramaṁ prāg-udāhṛtam*

tasya—his; *evam*—thus; *khilam*—inferior; *ātmānam*—soul; *manya-mānasya*—thinking within the mind; *khidyataḥ*—regretting; *kṛṣṇasya*—of Kṛṣṇa; *nāradaḥ abhyāgāt*—Nārada came there; *āśramam*—the cottage; *prāg*—before; *udāhṛtam*—said.

TRANSLATION

As mentioned before, Nārada reached the cottage of Kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyana Vyāsa on the banks of the Sarasvatī just as he was regretting his defects.

PURPORT

The vacuum felt by Vyāsadeva was not due to his lack of knowledge. *Bhāgavata-dharma* is purely devotional service of the Lord to which the monist has no access. The monist is not counted amongst the *paramahaṁsas* (the most perfect of the renounced order of life). *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is full of narrations of the transcendental activities of the Personality of Godhead. Although Vyāsadeva was an empowered Divinity, he still felt dissatisfaction because in none of his works were the transcendental activities of the Lord properly explained. The inspiration was infused by Śrī Kṛṣṇa directly in the heart of Vyāsadeva, and thus he felt the vacuum as explained above. It is definitely expressed herewith that without transcendental loving service of the Lord, everything is void; but in the transcendental service of the Lord everything is tangible without any separate attempt at fruitive work or empiric philosophical speculation.

TEXT 33

तमभिज्ञाय सहसा प्रत्युत्थायागतं मुनिः ।
पूजयामास विधिवन्नारदं सुरपूजितम् ॥३३॥

*tam abhijñāya sahasā
pratyutthāyāgataṁ muñiḥ
pūjayāmāsa vidhivan
nāradaṁ sura-pūjitam*

tam abhijñāya—seeing the good fortune of his (Nārada's) arrival; *saḥasā*—all of a sudden; *pratyutthāya*—getting up; *āgataṁ*—arrived at; *muñiḥ*—Vyāsadeva; *pūjayāmāsa*—worship; *vidhivat*—with the same respect as is offered to Vidhi (Brahmā); *nāradaṁ*—to Nārada; *sura-pūjitam*—worshiped by the demigods.

TRANSLATION

At the auspicious arrival of Śrī Nārada, Śrī Vyāsadeva got up respectfully and worshiped him, giving him veneration equal to that given to Brahmājī, the creator.

PURPORT

Vidhi means Brahmā, the first created living being. He is the original student as well as professor of the *Vedas*. He learned it from Śrī Kṛṣṇa and taught Nārada first. So Nārada is the second *ācārya* in the line of spiritual disciplic succession. He is the representative of Brahmā, and therefore he is respected exactly like Brahmā, the father of all *vidhis* (regulations); similarly all other successive disciples in the chain are also equally respected as representatives of the original spiritual master.

Thus end the *Bhaktivedanta purports* of the First Canto, Fourth Chapter, of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled "Appearance of Śrī Nārada."

Chapter Five

Nārada's Instructions
on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

TEXT 1

सुत उवाच

अथ तं सुखमासीन उपासीनं बृहच्छ्रवाः ।
देवर्षिः प्राह विप्रर्षिं वीणापाणिः सयन्निव ॥ १ ॥

*sūta uvāca
atha taṁ sukham āsīna
upāsīnaṁ bṛhat-śravāḥ
devarṣiḥ prāha vipraṣiṁ
vīṇā-pāṇiḥ smayann iva*

sūtaḥ—Sūta; *uvāca*—said; *atha*—therefore; *taṁ*—him; *sukham āsīnaḥ*—comfortably seated; *upāsīnam*—unto one sitting nearby; *bṛhat-śravāḥ*—greatly respected; *devarṣiḥ*—the great ṛṣi among the gods; *prāha*—said; *vipraṣiṁ*—unto the ṛṣi among the *brāhmaṇas*; *vīṇā-pāṇiḥ*—one who carries a *vīṇā* in his hand; *smayan iva*—apparently smiling.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī said: Thus the sage among the gods [Nārada], comfortably seated and apparently smiling, addressed the ṛṣi amongst the *brāhmaṇas* [Vedavyāsa].

PURPORT

Nārada was smiling because he well knew the great sage Vedavyāsa and the cause of his disappointment. As he will explain gradually, Vyāsadeva's disappointment was due to insufficiency in presenting the science of devotional service. Nārada knew the defect, and it was confirmed by the position of Vyāsa.

TEXT 2

नारद उवाच

पाराशर्य महाभाग भवतः क्वचिदात्मना ।
परितुष्यति शरीर आत्मा मानस एव वा ॥ २ ॥

nārada uvāca
pārāśarya mahā-bhāga
bhavataḥ kvacid ātmanā
parituṣyati śārira
ātmā mānasa eva vā

nāradaḥ—Nārada; *uvāca*—said; *pārāśarya*—O son of Parāśara; *mahā-bhāga*—the greatly fortunate; *bhavataḥ*—your; *kvacid*—if it is; *ātmanā*—by the self-realization of; *parituṣyati*—does it satisfy; *śāriraḥ*—identify the body; *ātmā*—self; *mānasaḥ*—identifying the mind; *eva*—certainly; *vā*—and.

TRANSLATION

Addressing Vyāsadeva, the son of Parāśara, Nārada inquired: Are you satisfied by identifying with the body or the mind as objects of self-realization?

PURPORT

This was a hint by Nārada to Vyāsadeva regarding the cause of his despondency. Vyāsadeva, as the descendant of Parāśara, a greatly powerful sage, had the privilege of having a great parentage which should not have given Vyāsadeva cause for despondency. Being a great son of a great father, he should not have identified the self with the body or the mind. Ordinary men with a poor fund of knowledge can identify the body as self or the mind as self, but Vyāsadeva should not have done so. One cannot be cheerful by nature unless one is factually seated in self-realization, which is transcendental to the material body and mind.

TEXT 3

जिज्ञासितं सुसम्पन्नमपि ते महदद्भुतम् ।
कृतवान् भारतं यस्त्वं सर्वार्थपरिब्रूहितम् ॥ ३ ॥

jijñāsitaṁ susaṁpannam
api te mahad-adbhutam
kṛtavān bhārataṁ yas tvam
sarvārtha-paribrūhitaṁ

jijñāsitaṁ—fully inquired; *susaṁpannam*—well versed; *api*—in spite of; *te*—your; *mahad-adbhutam*—great and wonderful; *kṛtavān*—prepared; *bhārataṁ*—the Mahābhārata; *yaḥ tvam*—what you have done; *sarva-ārtha*—including all sequences; *paribrūhitaṁ*—elaborately explained.

TRANSLATION

Your inquiries were full and your studies were also well fulfilled, and there is no doubt that you have prepared a great and wonderful work, the Mahābhārata, which is full of all kinds of Vedic sequences elaborately explained.

PURPORT

The despondency of Vyāsadeva was certainly not due to his lack of sufficient knowledge because as a student he had fully inquired about the Vedic literatures, as a result of which the Mahābhārata is compiled with full explanation of the Vedas.

TEXT 4

जिज्ञासितमधीतं च ब्रह्मयत्तु सनातनम् ।
तथापि शोचस्यात्मानमकृतार्थ इव प्रभो ॥ ४ ॥

jijñāsitaṁ adhītaṁ ca
brahma yat tat sanātanam
tathāpi śocasy ātmānam
akṛtārtha iva prabho

jijñāsitaṁ—deliberated fully well; *adhītaṁ*—the knowledge obtained; *ca*—and; *brahma*—the Absolute; *yat*—what; *tat*—that; *sanātanam*—eternal; *tathāpi*—in spite of that; *śocasi*—lamenting; *ātmānam*—unto self; *akṛtārtha*—undone; *iva*—like; *prabho*—my dear sir.

TRANSLATION

You have fully delineated the subject of impersonal Brahman as well as the knowledge derived therefrom. In spite of all this, why should you be despondent, thinking that you are undone, my dear prabhu.

PURPORT

The Vedānta-sūtra or Brahma-sūtra compiled by Śrī Vyāsadeva is the full deliberation of the impersonal absolute feature, and it is accepted as the most exalted philosophical exposition in the world. It covers the subject of eternity, and the methods are scholarly. So there cannot be any doubt about the transcendental scholarship of Vyāsadeva. So why should he lament?

TEXT 5

व्यास उवाच
अस्त्येव मे सर्वमिदं त्वयोक्तं
तथापि नात्मा परितुष्यते मे ।
तन्मूलमव्यक्तमगाधबोधं
पृच्छामहे त्वाऽऽत्मभवात्मभूतम् ॥ ५ ॥

vyāsa uvāca
asty eva me sarvam idaṁ tvayoktaṁ
tathāpi nātmā parituṣyate me
tan-mūlam avyaktam agādha-bodhaṁ
prcchāmahe tvātmā-bhavātma-bhūtam

vyāsaḥ—Vyāsa; *uvāca*—said; *asti*—there is; *eva*—certainly; *me*—mine; *sarvam*—all; *idaṁ*—this; *tvayā*—by you; *uktaṁ*—uttered; *tathāpi*—and yet; *na*—not; *ātmā*—self; *parituṣyate*—does pacify; *me*—unto me; *tat*—of which; *mūlam*—root; *avyaktam*—undetected; *agādha-bodham*—the man of unlimited knowledge; *prcchāmahe*—do inquire; *tvā*—unto you; *ātma-bhava*—self-born; *ātma-bhūtam*—offspring.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Vyāsadeva said: All you have said about me is perfectly correct. Despite all this, I am not pacified. I therefore question you about the root cause of my dissatisfaction, for you are a man of unlimited knowledge due to your being the offspring of one [Brahmā] who is self-born [without mundane father and mother].

PURPORT

In the material world everyone is engrossed with the idea of identifying the body or the mind with the self. As such, all knowledge disseminated in the material world is related either with the body or with the mind, and that is the root cause of all despondencies. This is not always detected, even though one may be the greatest erudite scholar in materialistic knowledge. It is good, therefore, to approach a personality like Nārada to solve the root cause of all despondencies. Why Nārada should be approached is explained below.

TEXT 6

स वै भवान् वेद समस्तगुह्य-
मुपासितो यत्पुरुषः पुराणः ।
परावरेणो मनसैव विश्वं
सृजत्यवत्यत्ति गुणैरसङ्गः ॥ ६ ॥

sa vai bhavān veda samasta-guhyam
upāsīto yat puruṣaḥ purāṇaḥ
parāvareṣo manasaiva viśvaṁ
sṛjaty avaty atti guṇair asaṅgaḥ

saḥ—thus; vai—certainly; bhavān—yourself; veda—know; samasta—all-inclusive; guhyam—confidential; upāsītaḥ—devotee of; yat—because; puruṣaḥ—the Personality of Godhead; purāṇaḥ—the oldest; parāvareṣaḥ—the controller of the material and spiritual worlds; manasā—mind; eva—only; viśvam—the universe; sṛjati—creates; avati atti—annihilates; guṇaiḥ—by the qualitative matter; asaṅgaḥ—unattached.

TRANSLATION

My lord! Everything that is mysterious is known to you because you worship the creator and destroyer of the material world and the maintainer of the spiritual world, the original Personality of Godhead, who is transcendental to the three modes of material nature.

PURPORT

A person who is cent percent engaged in the service of the Lord is the emblem of all knowledge. Such a devotee of the Lord in full perfection of devotional service is also perfect by the qualification of the Personality of Godhead. As such, the eightfold perfections of mystic power (*aṣṭa-siddhi*) constitute very little of his godly opulence. A devotee like Nārada can act wonderfully by his spiritual perfection, which every individual is trying to attain. Śrīla Nārada is a cent percent perfect living being, although not equal to the Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 7

त्वं पर्यटमर्क इव त्रिलोकी-
मन्तश्चरो वायुरिवात्मसाक्षी ।
परावरे ब्रह्मणि धर्मतो ब्रतैः
स्नातस्य मे न्यूनमर्लं विचक्ष्व ॥ ७ ॥

tvaṁ paryaṭann arka iva tri-lokīm
antaś-caro vāyur ivātma-sākṣī
parāvare brahmaṇi dharmato vrataiḥ
snātasya me nyūnam arlaṁ vicakṣva

tvaṁ—your goodness; paryaṭan—traveling; arkaḥ—the sun; iva—like; tri-lokīm—three worlds; antaḥ-carāḥ—can penetrate into everyone's heart; vāyuh iva—as good as the all-pervading air; ātma—self-realized; sākṣī—wit-

ness; parāvare—in the matter of cause and effect; brahmaṇi—in the Absolute; dharmataḥ—under disciplinary regulations; vrataiḥ—in vow; snātasya—having been absorbed in; me—mine; nyūnam—deficiency; alam—clearly; vicakṣva—search out.

TRANSLATION

Like the sun, your goodness can travel everywhere in the three worlds, and like the air you can penetrate the internal region of everyone. As such, you are as good as the all-pervasive Supersoul. Please, therefore, find out the deficiency in me, despite my being absorbed in transcendence under disciplinary regulations and vows.

PURPORT

Transcendental realization, pious activities, worshiping the Deities, charity, mercifulness, nonviolence and studying the scriptures under strict disciplinary regulations are always helpful.

TEXT 8

श्रीनारद उवाच

भवतामुदितप्रायं यशो भगवतोऽमलम् ।
येनैवासी न तुष्येत मन्ये तद्दर्शनं खिलम् ॥ ८ ॥

śrī nārada uvāca
bhavatānudita-prāyaṁ
yaśo bhagavato 'malam
yenaivāsau na tuṣyeta
manye tad-darśanaṁ khilam

śrī nāradaḥ—Śrī Nārada; uvāca—said; bhavatā—by you; anudita-prāyam—almost not praised; yaśaḥ—glories; bhagavataḥ—of the Personality of Godhead; amalāṁ—spotless; yena—by which; iva—certainly; asau—He, the Personality of Godhead; na—does not; tuṣyeta—be pleased; manye—I think; tat—that; darśanam—philosophy; khilam—inferior.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Nārada said: You have not actually broadcast the sublime and spotless glories of the Personality of Godhead. That philosophy which does not satisfy the transcendental senses of the Lord is considered worthless.

PURPORT

The eternal relation of an individual soul with the Supreme Soul Personality of Godhead is constitutionally one of being the eternal servitor of the eternal master. The Lord has expanded Himself as living beings in order to accept loving service from them, and this alone can satisfy both the Lord and the living beings. A scholar like Vyāsadeva has completed many expansions of the Vedic literatures, ending with the *Vedānta* philosophy, but none of them have been written directly glorifying the Personality of Godhead. Dry philosophical speculations even on the transcendental subject of the Absolute have very little attraction without directly dealing with the glorification of the Lord. The Personality of Godhead is the last word in transcendental realization. The Absolute realized as impersonal Brahman or localized Supersoul, Paramātmā, is less productive of transcendental bliss than the Supreme Personal realization of His glories.

The compiler of the *Vedānta-darśana* is Vyāsadeva himself. Yet he is troubled, although he is the author. So what sort of transcendental bliss can be derived by the readers and listeners of *Vedānta* which is not explained directly by Vyāsadeva the author? Herein arises the necessity of explaining *Vedānta-sūtra* in the form of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* by the self-same author.

TEXT 9

यथा धर्मादयश्चार्या मुनिवयानुकीर्तिताः ।
न तथा वासुदेवस्य महिमा ह्यनुवर्णिता ॥ ९ ॥

yathā dharmādayaś cārthā
muni-varyānukīrtitāḥ
na tathā vāsudevasya
mahimā hy anuvarṇitāḥ

yathā—as much as; dharmādayaḥ—all four principles of religious behavior; ca—and; arthāḥ—purposes; muni-varya—by yourself, the great sage; anukīrtitāḥ—repeatedly described; na—not; tathā—in that way; vāsudevasya—of the Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa; mahimā—glories; hi—certainly; anuvarṇitāḥ—so constantly described.

TRANSLATION

Although, great sage, you have very broadly described the four principles beginning with religious performances, you have not described the glories of the Supreme Personality, Vāsudeva.

PURPORT

The prompt diagnosis of Śrī Nārada is at once declared. The root cause of the despondency of Vyāsadeva was his deliberate avoidance of glorifying the Lord in his various editions of the *Purāṇas*. He has certainly, as a matter of course, given descriptions of the glories of the Lord (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) but not as many as given to religiosity, economic development, sense gratification and salvation. These four items are by far inferior to engagement in the devotional service of the Lord. Śrī Vyāsadeva as the authorized scholar knew very well this difference. And still instead of giving more importance to the better type of engagement, namely, the devotional service to the Lord, he had more or less improperly used his valuable time, and thus he was despondent. From this it is clearly indicated that no one can be pleased substantially without being engaged in the devotional service of the Lord. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* this fact is clearly mentioned.

After liberation, which is the last item in the line of performing religiosity, etc., one is engaged in pure devotional service. This is called the stage of self-realization or *brahma-bhūta* stage. After attainment of this *brahma-bhūta* stage, one is satisfied. But satisfaction is the beginning of transcendental bliss. One should progress by attaining neutrality and equality in the relative world. And passing this stage of equanimity, one is fixed up in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. This is the instruction of the Personality of Godhead in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. The conclusion is that in order to maintain the status quo of the *brahma-bhūta* stage, as also to increase the degree of transcendental realization, it is recommended by Nārada to Vyāsadeva that he (Vyāsadeva) should now eagerly and repeatedly describe the path of devotional service. This would cure him from gross despondency.

TEXT 10

न यद्वचश्चित्रपदं हरेर्यशो
जगत्पवित्रं प्रगृणीत कर्हिचित् ।
तद्वायसं तीर्थमुशन्ति मानसा
न यत्र हंसा निरमन्त्युशिक्षयाः ॥१०॥

na yad vacaś citra-padam harer yaśo
jagat-pavitram pragṛṇīta karhicit
tad vāyasam tīrtham uśanti mānasā
na yatra haṁsā niramanty uśikkṣayāḥ

na—not; yat—that; vacaḥ—vocabulary; citra-padam—decorative; hareḥ—of the Lord; yaśaḥ—glories; jagat—universe; pavitram—sanctified; pragṛṇīta—described; karhicit—hardly; tat—that; vāyasam—crows; tīrtham—place of pilgrimage; uśanti—think; mānasāḥ—saintly persons; na—not; yatra—where; haṁsāḥ—all-perfect beings; niramanti—take pleasure; uśikkṣayāḥ—those who reside in the transcendental abode.

TRANSLATION

Those words which do not describe the glories of the Lord, who alone can sanctify the atmosphere of the whole universe, are considered by saintly persons to be like unto a place of pilgrimage for crows. Since the all-perfect persons are inhabitants of the transcendental abode, they do not derive any pleasure there.

PURPORT

Crows and swans are not birds of the same feather because of their different mental attitudes. The fruitive workers or passionate men are compared to the crows, whereas the all-perfect saintly persons are compared to the swans. The crows take pleasure in a place where garbage is thrown out, just as the passionate fruitive workers take pleasure in wine and woman and places for gross sense pleasure. The swans do not take pleasure in the places where crows are assembled for conferences and meetings. They are instead seen in the atmosphere of natural scenic beauty where there are transparent reservoirs of water nicely decorated with stems of lotus flowers in variegated colors of natural beauty. That is the difference between the two classes of birds.

Nature has influenced different species of life with different mentalities, and it is not possible to bring them up into the same rank and file.

Similarly, there are different kinds of literature for different types of men of different mentality. Mostly the market literatures which attract men of the crow's categories are literatures containing refused remnants of sensuous topics. They are generally known as mundane talks in relation with the gross body and subtle mind. They are full of subject matter described in decorative language full of mundane similes and metaphorical arrangements. Yet with all that, they do not glorify the Lord. Such poetry and prose, on any subject matter, is considered decoration of a dead body. Spiritually advanced men who are compared with the swans do not take pleasure in such dead literatures, which are sources of pleasure for men who are spiritually dead. These literatures in the modes of passion and ignorance are distributed under different labels, but they can hardly help the spiritual urge of the human being, and thus the swanlike spiritually advanced men have nothing to do with them. Such spiritually advanced men are called also *mānasa* because they always keep up the standard of transcendental voluntary service to the Lord on the spiritual plane. This completely forbids fruitive activities for gross bodily sense satisfaction or subtle speculation of the material egoistic mind.

Social literary men, scientists, mundane poets, theoretical philosophers and politicians who are completely absorbed in the material advancement of sense pleasure are all dolls of the material energy. They take pleasure in a place where rejected subject matters are thrown. According to Svāmī Śrīdhara, this is the pleasure of the prostitute hunters.

But literatures which describe the glories of the Lord are enjoyed by the *paramahāṁsas* who have grasped the essence of human activities.

(continued in next issue)



ISKCON NEWS

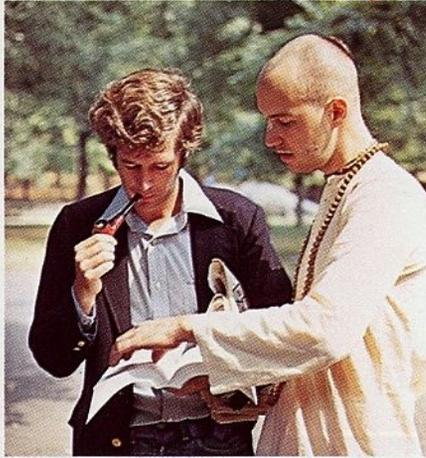
A look at the worldwide activities of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Book Distribution Climbs 34.5% in 1975

Defying the serious recession that slowed the world economy in 1975, ISKCON devotees increased their sale of Kṛṣṇa conscious literature last year by more than one third over 1974. The grand total topped nine million books and magazines, not including the Spanish, German, French, and Japanese literature sold abroad. Of two million books distributed, over a half million were fully illustrated 300–400 page volumes, and the seven million BACK TO GODHEAD magazines almost doubled the previous year's total.

Why the vast increase? "It's all due to the dedication of the devotees as well as a growing receptivity of the public to Kṛṣṇa consciousness," explained Rāmeśvara dāsa, a trustee of the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, which publishes the books of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and BACK TO GODHEAD magazine. With renewed commitment to fulfill Śrīla Prabhupāda's request to "distribute my books profusely," the members of ISKCON spent more time and energy than ever before doing just that. In the process they showed impressive determination and steadfast faith. For example, the hundred-man Rādhā-Dāmodara traveling party crisscrossed North America in six new Greyhound-type buses and ten vans, breaking sales records and simultaneously putting on full-scale lecture and festival programs on dozens of campuses.

The public's increasing receptivity to Kṛṣṇa conscious literature is also a key factor in the remarkable sales record. In a recent letter to His Holiness Tamāl Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī, leader of the Rādhā-Dāmodara traveling party, Śrīla Prabhupāda observed, "There is no other instance in history where religious books were sold with such enthusiasm and success."



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New Preaching Centers Acquired

To accommodate expanding book distribution and festival programs, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness is busily acquiring new preaching bases in major American cities.

The new Detroit temple is a Spanish-mission style stucco and marble mansion that originally housed the wealthy Lawrence B. Fisher, of "body by Fisher" fame, when he was the first president of Cadillac Motors in 1929. Replete with formal gardens, fountains, and even a waterfall, the estate lies on the Detroit River and features an ornate boathouse with indoor boat well. The temple was purchased with donations from local supporters and others sympathetic to the cause of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Ninety percent of the residents of the district in which the temple is located expressed approval of their new neighbors in a poll conducted by local authorities. Many residents asked if the new Hare Kṛṣṇa temple would provide recreational facilities for their children. Govardhana dāsa Adhikārī, president of the Detroit temple, replied, "Yes, your children may come over and sing with us anytime. We also have puppet shows, plays, and lots of free food!"

In Maryland, ISKCON devotees have recently purchased a striking fifteen-acre estate within an easy half-hour's drive from Washington, D. C. Constructed a few years ago as a day camp and riding stable, the estate sports a gymnasium, barn, and swimming pool. Residents of Potomac, the affluent suburb that surrounds the estate, will greet the devotees on March 1st, 1976, the official opening date.

Plans for the estate reveal that it will be a thriving center for Kṛṣṇa consciousness. One of its functions will be to serve as a base for groups of devotees to regularly tour the Washington area, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and distributing literature. In addition, the gymnasium on the property will be converted into a temple for worshipping the Deities of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. In a kitchen designed to meet rigorous government health code standards, devotees will prepare elaborate *prasāda** feasts for hundreds. And by developing the guesthouse facilities (including a swimming pool), the devotees hope to attract members of Washington's diplomatic circles, among others, for Sunday festivals and life membership programs.

*Food first offered to Lord Kṛṣṇa.



Photo: Bhārgava dāsa

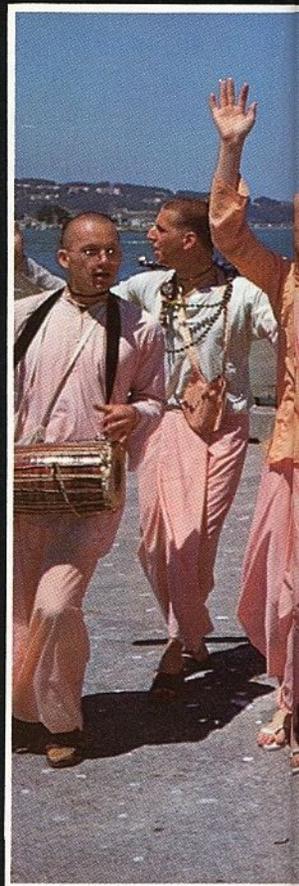


Photo: Bhārgava dāsa

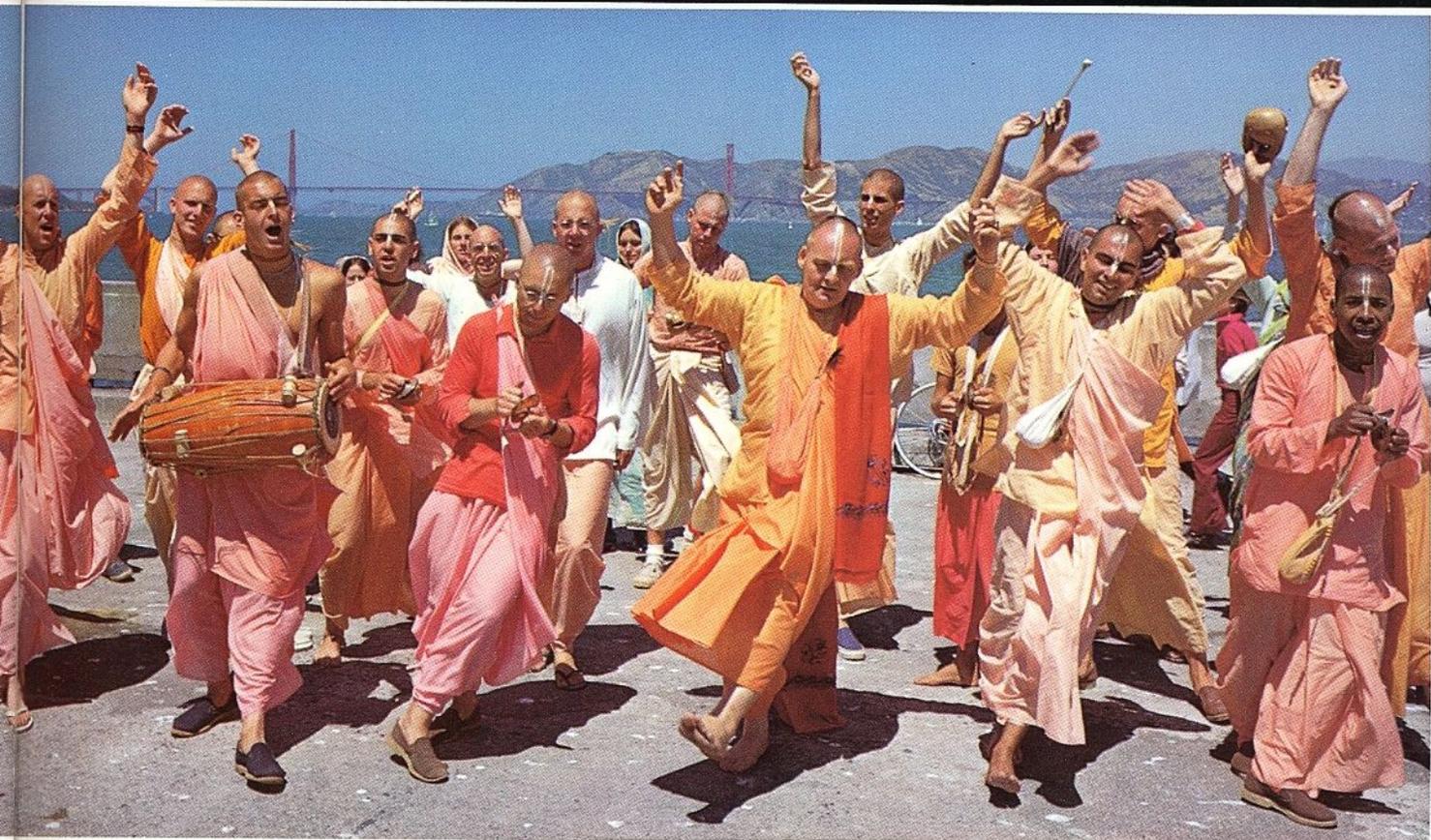


Photo: Muralivadana dāsa

“We’d Like You To Meet Kṛṣṇa . . .”

Introducing people to Kṛṣṇa is a full-time job for the members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. They chant Hare Kṛṣṇa on San Francisco Bay (above) and on Parisian boulevards (top left), give out free pineapples—offered first to Lord Kṛṣṇa—in the old section of San Juan, and distribute literature at Los Angeles International Airport (right). On the go a steady eighteen hours a day, the devotees attribute their enthusiasm to Kṛṣṇa Himself, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Kṛṣṇa’s their secret, and they want Him to be everyone else’s, too. Hearing the music, tasting the food, and looking over the books, people the world around are meeting Kṛṣṇa for the first time, the beginning of a beautiful—and permanent—relationship.

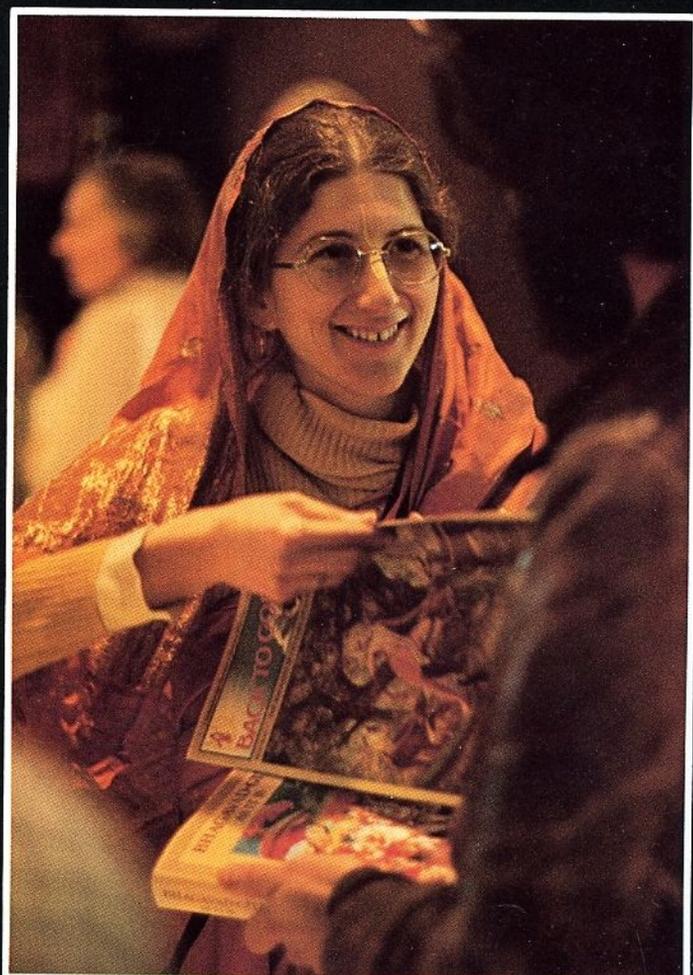


Photo: Viśakhā-devi dāsi



WHAT'S WRONG WITH OUR POLITICIANS?

A point-by-point analysis of the problem and a positive program for change.

(edited from a pamphlet by His Holiness Siddhasvarūpa Ānanda Gosvāmī)

TO SAY THAT MOST POLITICIANS are incompetent, and in many cases downright dishonest, isn't very controversial. We've all read about their blunders, their tricks, and their schemes. So the aim of this article is not to give proof of their failure to bring about world peace and prosperity; it is rather to show that the root cause of their incompetence is selfish materialism, and that the remedy is the respiritualization of society through the worldwide propagation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

The following are some of the reasons why a self-centered materialist is incapable of bringing about a peaceful and harmonious world society:

He has no sense of spiritual brotherhood. The materialistic leader can never bring harmony to society because he fails to see the spiritual unity of all mankind. Preoccupied with superficial distinctions such as race, class, or nationality, he cannot understand that all living beings are his brothers, being children of God, the Supreme Father. As Lord Kṛṣṇa puts it in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.35):

And when you have thus learned the truth, you will know that all living beings are but part of Me, and that they are in Me and are Mine.

He has a one-sided view of life. Instead of using his influence to bring about social conditions favorable for both spiritual as well as economic development, the materialist considers economic development to be the all in all. Thus he promotes the creation of an artificial environment that is far from peaceful, contemplative, or healthful. Devoid of spiritual culture, the people become alienated from God, nature, and each other. And the more alienated and materialistic the people get, the

more frustrated, angry, and bewildered they become. Thus a materialistic leader takes the people on a "progressive" march to a hellish existence.

He's ambitious and self-serving. The materialistic politico, having neglected the spiritual side of life, is never satiated in his drive for power and position. Since his number one consideration is his own political advancement, he continually campaigns for office, and after winning the election, he's afraid of being removed from his seat. He is so preoccupied with the fear of losing his job, status, power, and wealth that this fear itself—not love, or actual concern for the people—is the primary motivation for his activities. Materialistic leaders are merely merchants, trading empty promises for votes, and the people naturally distrust them. Everyone knows that a sly merchant must be watched very carefully: even when offering a "good bargain," he ultimately has his own bank balance in mind.

He's always disturbed and often irrational. Because the materialistic politician is not at peace with himself, he cannot help others find peace, either individually or collectively. Unable to realize all his political ambitions, he is often subject to deep inner frustration, which may cause him to behave irrationally. A person in such a disturbed state of mind cannot have the clear intelligence needed to solve today's complex problems. Even if his mind is razor-sharp, his decisions will never be clear if his heart is infected with selfish desires. A crooked politician may be intellectually astute, but an envious person with a sharp mind is like a poisonous snake with a beautiful jewel on its forehead. The snake is still dangerous, despite its fancy ornaments.

His perception is blurred. Due to the pressures of power, many of today's leaders try to forget their miseries by dimming their awareness with intoxicants like alcohol, amphetamines, caffeine, and nicotine. A recent article in the *Los Angeles Times* revealed that the highest rate of alcoholism in the United States is in Washington, D. C., and in Washington, D. C., the area most affected is Georgetown, the suburb where most U. S. senators and congressmen live. A true leader sharpens his awareness; he doesn't blur it with a haze of intoxication.

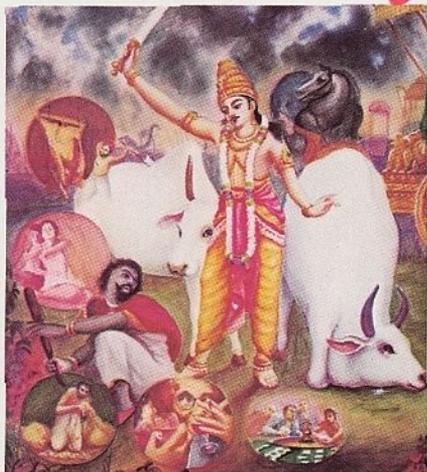
He neglects God's laws. Today's politicians are too busy wheeling and dealing to pay much attention to the laws of God. As Lord Kṛṣṇa explains in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.21):

Whatever action a great man performs, common men follow. And whatever standards he sets by exemplary acts, all the world pursues.

(continued on page 22)

Three Examples of Perfect Leadership

Mahārāja Parīkṣit



Even armies of bodyguards can't protect today's political leaders, but King Parīkṣit was such an exalted personality that he was always perfectly protected by Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself. Even as a child in his mother's womb, Lord Kṛṣṇa shielded

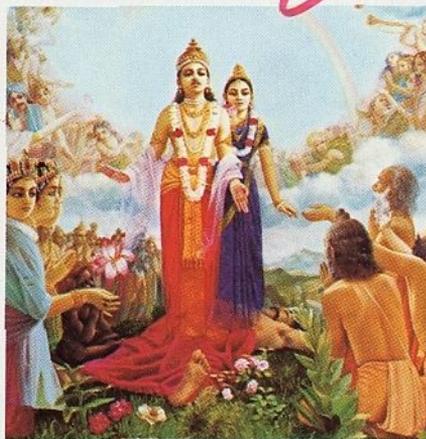
him from the searing heat of a nuclear weapon hurled by his father's enemy. Later Parīkṣit was trained and finally enthroned by his grandfather, King Yudhiṣṭhira.

King Parīkṣit followed the Vedic system of consulting a council of *brāhmaṇas* (learned and saintly philosophers) on state affairs. While today's "think tank" experts sell themselves to the highest bidder, the self-realized sages who advised Mahārāja Parīkṣit gave their services freely, without salary. Thus they were above suspicion of any special interest, and they guided the king purely and flawlessly in his administration.

Mahārāja Parīkṣit was very vigilant in protecting the citizens. When the four symptoms of sinful life so prominent in modern times—illicit sex, intoxication, meat-eating, and gambling—began to appear, he undertook a tour of the world to vanquish them from his kingdom. He came across an abominable low-class man torturing a cow and severely chastised him with the following words: "Whoever causes offenseless living beings to suffer must fear me anywhere and everywhere in the world. Any upstart who tortures the innocent shall be immediately uprooted by me, no matter who he may be." Foreseeing the future degradation of human society, Parīkṣit then said that if an unqualified, sinful man is allowed to act as an executive head, "certainly irreligious principles like greed, falsehood, robbery, incivility, treachery, misfortune, cheating, quarrel, and vanity will abound."

Although King Parīkṣit was certainly famous for his impeccable administration, he is better known for his spiritual activity after leaving the post of king. Early in his reign he was cursed to die by a young *brāhmaṇa* boy due to a misunderstanding. Although he could have nullified the curse, King Parīkṣit accepted it as God's will, and decided to fast until death. He seated himself on the bank of the Ganges River, and an assembly of the greatest personalities of the day soon gathered to witness the wonderful event. During the seven days of life remaining to him, King Parīkṣit neither ate nor slept nor moved from his seat. His only activity was to ask Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī questions about transcendental subjects and to listen intently to his answers in the form of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *The Beautiful Story of the Personality of Godhead*. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the culmination of all Vedic knowledge and simply by hearing it, the king achieved the highest goal of life—ecstatic love for Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Mahārāja Pṛthu



Unlike today's leaders, Mahārāja Pṛthu considered it his primary duty to enlighten the citizens with spiritual knowledge. He knew that any leader who simply exacts taxes from the people, but does not inform them of the mis-

sion of human life, is thoroughly condemned. Indeed, he is liable to suffer for the impious activities they perform out of ignorance. King Pṛthu advised the citizens: "Dedicate your minds, your words, your bodies, and the fruits of your labor for the service of the Supreme Lord. Then you will surely achieve the final objective of life [love of God]."

In addition, under the king's firm hand all law-abiding citizens were perfectly protected from both internal and external dangers. Everyone was pleased by his practical activities, and all the citizens were very satisfied to have him as their ruler. When he traveled through the world on his victorious chariot, appearing as brilliant as the sun, all thieves and rogues hid themselves, and all other kings recognized his supremacy.

However, King Pṛthu did not present himself as a

royal authority empowered to command everyone. In fact, he was renowned for his humility and impartiality. He ruled so impartially that if the son of his enemy was innocent, he would not punish him, but if his own son was punishable, he would not hesitate to punish him. Even though he was very opulent due to the prosperity of his entire empire, King Pṛthu was never inclined to utilize his opulences for the gratification of his senses. He remained unattached, exactly like the sun, which remains unaffected in all circumstances.

Like all saintly kings of the Vedic age, King Pṛthu voluntarily gave up his rule before death or infirmity overtook him, and he retired to the forest to completely immerse himself in God consciousness.

Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira



King Yudhiṣṭhira was famous as “the king whose enemy was never born” because he was so pious that no one hated him. Indeed, his qualifications were so glorious that his fame spread all over the universe and his pure devotional service induced the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself to become his intimate friend.

Another epithet for King Yudhiṣṭhira was “the personification of goodness,” for by continuous service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, he was freed from all desire for sense gratification and personal wealth, fame, or power. This complete selflessness made him a worthy emperor of the world. “All good for the citizens!” was his motto, and he lived up to it by always seeing to the social, political, economic, and spiritual upliftment of the citizens of his kingdom. Due to his perfect administration and his pure devotion to God, even the rivers, oceans, hills, forests, etc., were all pleased with him, and they supplied their bounty profusely. Thus during the reign of King Yudhiṣṭhira the citizens of the world were never troubled by a lack of any necessity, or by mental agonies, diseases, excessive heat or cold, or any other disturbance.

Like all saintly kings of the Vedic age, Yudhiṣṭhira renounced his kingdom at the end of life to devote himself exclusively to spiritual practice. After enthroning Parikṣit as emperor of the world, Yudhiṣṭhira gave up his regal dress and left for the North. His devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa was so pure that even before relinquishing his body he achieved the highest spiritual abode.

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(continued from page 19)

A good leader must be an ideal example for the people to admire and try to follow. If he is able to set the standard of perfect behavior, then the people will naturally be inclined to follow. Therefore he must obey God's laws and possess godly qualities himself. Of course, many politicians go to church and publicly declare their piety. A person is known, however, not by his words, but by his deeds. Certain qualities must be present in a worthy leader, and certain ones must be absent. For instance, a spiritually enlightened leader is free from lust, anger, and greed. Although strong in his determination, he is gentle, compassionate, and ready to respect others. Above all, he actually follows God's laws; he doesn't simply proclaim himself to be pious and then act sinfully beyond the range of the TV cameras.

These are just a few reasons why a materialistic person is unqualified to be a leader of society. The list is endless, but they all point to the same conclusion: a materialistic politician, devoid of spiritual knowledge and ignorant of the goal of life, can never help bring about world peace and prosperity. Since the problem stems from ignorance, the obvious solution is education. Unfortunately, present-day educational institutions provide no information about our spiritual nature and our relationship with God. In a recent conversation with Dr. Thomas J. Hopkins of Franklin and Marshall College, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda expanded on this theme:

"People want material gain because they have no spiritual information. If I take care of my shirt very nicely, but I do not care for the person inside the shirt, then what is my position? Similarly, this whole material world is busy taking care of the body, not the soul inside the body. Therefore all these so-called educational institutions are blind. It is a society of the blind leading the blind. The solution is first of all to understand that you are spirit. Then find out what is your relationship with God and act accordingly."

This, then, is the goal of human life. As long as we ignore our relationship with God and remain caught up in the pursuit of material wealth and physical comforts alone, we will always find ourselves alienated, confused, and anxious about the future. World peace and prosperity do not depend upon more sophisticated weaponry or increased productivity, but on the widespread propagation of genuine spiritual knowledge.

This knowledge can be easily acquired through the practice of *bhakti-yoga*, especially the hearing and

chanting of the holy names of God. The result of chanting the name of the Lord is that the heart of the chanter becomes cleansed, and he sees his true spiritual identity as an eternal servant of God. God has many names, and they are given in the various scriptures of the world. Different names refer to His different attractive features: Jehovah means all-powerful, Allah means all-compassionate, and so on. The name Kṛṣṇa, however, means *all-attractive* and thus contains all other names of God within it. Therefore the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare—is especially purifying and can rapidly awaken our consciousness of God.

Of course, it is not possible to present even an adequate summary of the sublime process of *bhakti-yoga* in a few short pages. The inquisitive reader is referred to the works of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. In his books, especially the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, he has presented a crystal-clear picture of the *bhakti-yoga* process.

By reading these books and chanting the holy names of God, the people of the world can become spiritually strengthened and convinced of the need for genuine spiritual leadership. Then, when the time comes to choose their leaders, they will naturally select a person with the qualities necessary to guide human society on the path back to home, back to Godhead.



Kṛṣṇa Conscious 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 of the ISKCON center nearest you will gladly tell you about the meaning of these festivals.			
Year 489, Caitanya Era Vaiṣṇava month of Mādhava (January 18—February 15, 1976)			
Śukla-pakṣa (bright fortnight)			
February 5 (Mādhava 19)	February 7 (Mādhava 21)	February 8 (Mādhava 22)	
Vasanta-pāñcamī of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Appearance of Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī, Śrīla Pundarīka Vidyānidhī, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Raghunandana Thākura. Disappearance of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura.	Śrī Advaita-saptamī (appearance of Advaitācārya—fasting).	Advaita-saptamī break-fast before 10:05 A.M.	
February 9 (Mādhava 23)	February 10 (Mādhava 24)	February 11 (Mādhava 25)	February 12 (Mādhava 26)
Disappearance of Śrīpāda Madhvācārya.	Disappearance of Śrīla Rāmānujācārya.	Bhāimī-ekādaśī. Fasting for Varāha-dvādaśī.	Ekādaśī break-fast after 8:50 A.M. and before 10:00 A.M. Śrī Varāha-dvādaśī (appearance of Lord Varāha).
February 13 (Mādhava 27)	February 14 (Mādhava 28)	February 15 (Mādhava 29)	
Śrī Nityānanda-trayodaśī (appearance of Nityānanda Prabhu—fasting).	Nityānanda-trayodaśī break-fast before 9:59 A.M.	Madhurotsava of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Appearance of Śrīla Narottama dāsa Thākura.	
Vaiṣṇava month of Govinda (February 16—March 17, 1976)			
Kṛṣṇa-pakṣa (dark fortnight)			
February 20 (Govinda 9)	February 25 (Govinda 10)	February 26 (Govinda 11)	February 28 (Govinda 13)
Appearance of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura Prabhupāda. Disappearance of Puruṣottama Thākura.	Vijayā-ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans).	Ekādaśī break-fast after 8:07 A.M. and before 9:54 A.M.	Siva-rātri-vrata (optional fast).

THE PEACE FORMULA

by His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Just as a national state is protected by the department of law and order, so the state of the universe, of which this earth is only an insignificant fragment, is protected by the laws of nature. This material nature is one of the potencies of God, who is the ultimate proprietor of everything that be. This earth is, therefore, the property of God, but we living entities, especially the so-called civilized human beings, are claiming God's property as our own under an individual and collective false conception. If you want peace, you have to remove this false conception from your mind and from the world. This false claim of proprietorship by the human race is the cause of all disturbances of peace on earth.

Foolish, so-called civilized men are claiming proprie-

tary rights on God's property because they have now become godless. You cannot be happy and peaceful in a godless society. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa says that He is the factual enjoyer of all the living entities' activities, that He is the Supreme Lord of all universes, and that He is the well-wishing friend of all beings. When the people of the world know this as the formula for peace, it is then that peace will prevail.

Therefore, if you want peace at all, you will have to change your consciousness into Kṛṣṇa consciousness, both individually and collectively, by the simple process of chanting the holy name of God. This is the standard and recognized process for achieving peace in the world. We therefore recommend that everyone become Kṛṣṇa conscious by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

This is practical, simple, and sublime. Four hundred and eighty years ago this formula was introduced in India by Lord Śrī Caitanya, and now it is available in your country. Take to this simple process of chanting as above mentioned, realize your factual position by reading the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, and reestablish your lost relationship with Kṛṣṇa, God. Peace and prosperity will be the immediate worldwide result.

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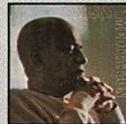
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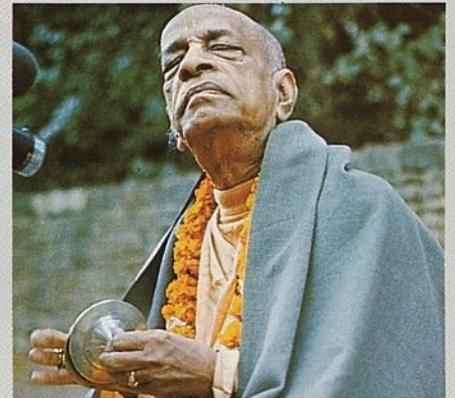
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The Kidnapping of Princess Rukmiṇī



My dear Kṛṣṇa,
O infallible and most beautiful one, I have heard of Your transcendental qualities. I may be shameless in expressing myself so directly, but You have captivated me and taken my heart. I know that You are very kind toward Your devotees. Therefore I have decided to become your eternal maidservant. I have selected Your lordship as my husband, and I request You to accept me as Your wife. You are supremely powerful, O lotus-eyed one. Now I belong to You. It would be ludicrous if what is enjoyable for the lion is taken away by the jackal. Therefore I request You to immediately take care of me before I am taken away by Śiṣupāla. Please come here and catch hold of my hand so that I may not be touched by Śiṣupāla and his men.
Princess Rukmiṇī

The King of Vidarbha, Mahārāja Bhiṣmaka, had five sons and a young daughter known as Rukmiṇī. Many saintly persons used to visit the King's palace, and from them Rukmiṇī obtained information about Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Simply by hearing about the opulences of Kṛṣṇa, she desired to surrender herself to His lotus feet and become His wife. All the relatives of King Bhiṣmaka agreed that Rukmiṇī should be given in marriage to Kṛṣṇa, and after hearing how Rukmiṇī was a reservoir of all transcendental qualities—intelligence, liberality, exquisite beauty, and righteous behavior—Kṛṣṇa Himself decided that she was fit to be His wife.

However, Rukmiṇī's brother Rukmi arranged for her to be married to Śiśupāla, a determined enemy of Kṛṣṇa. When the black-eyed, beautiful Rukmiṇī heard of this settlement, she became very morose. But, being a king's daughter, she could understand political diplomacy, and therefore she decided to take immediate steps to acquire Kṛṣṇa as her husband. After some deliberation, she wrote a letter to Kṛṣṇa and entrusted it to a *brāhmaṇa* messenger. Without delay, she sent him with her letter to Kṛṣṇa's capital city of Dvārakā.

Reaching the gate of Dvārakā, the *brāhmaṇa* informed the doorkeeper of his mission, and the doorkeeper led him to Lord Kṛṣṇa, who was sitting on a golden throne. After the messenger was duly greeted according to his brahminical status, he carefully read Rukmiṇī's letter to the Supreme Lord:

"My dear Kṛṣṇa, O infallible and most beautiful one, I have heard of Your transcendental qualities. I may be shameless in expressing myself so directly, but You have captivated me and taken my heart. I am an unmar-

ried girl, young in age, and You may doubt the steadiness of my character. But my dear Kṛṣṇa, since You are the supreme lion among human beings, the supreme person among persons, any girl not yet out of her home, or any woman of the highest chastity, would desire to marry You, being captivated by Your unprecedented character, knowledge, opulence and position.

"I know that You are very kind toward Your devotees. Therefore I have decided to become Your eternal maidservant. My dear Lord, I dedicate my life and soul unto Your lotus feet. I have selected Your Lordship as my husband, and I request You to accept me as Your wife. You are supremely powerful, O lotus-eyed one. Now I belong to You. It would be ludicrous if what is enjoyable for the lion is taken away by the jackal. Therefore I request You to immediately take care of me before I am taken away by Śiśupāla. Please come here and catch hold of my hand so that I may not be touched by Śiśupāla and his men."

Lord Kṛṣṇa was very pleased to hear Rukmiṇī's statement. He shook hands with the messenger and said, "My dear *brāhmaṇa*, I am very glad to hear that Rukmiṇī is anxious to marry Me, since I am also anxious to get her hand. I can understand that Rukmiṇī's brother has arranged her marriage with Śiśupāla in a spirit of animosity toward Me. So I am determined to give him a good lesson. Just as one can bring forth fire from ordinary wood by proper manipulation, similarly, after dealing with the demoniac princes, I shall bring forth Rukmiṇī like fire from their midst."

When Kṛṣṇa heard that Rukmiṇī's marriage was scheduled for the following day, He decided to leave for the kingdom of Vidarbha immediately. He ordered His driver to harness the horses to

His chariot and prepare for the journey, and they started at once. Within a single night they rode one thousand miles to their destination, the town of Kuṇḍina.

Kṛṣṇa's elder brother, Lord Balarāma, soon received the news that Kṛṣṇa had left for Kuṇḍina accompanied only by a *brāhmaṇa*, and that Śiśupāla was there with his ally Jarāsandha and a large number of soldiers. Suspecting that they would attack Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma took strong military divisions of chariots, infantry, horses and elephants and rode to the precinct of Kuṇḍina.

Meanwhile, inside the palace, Rukmiṇī was expecting Kṛṣṇa to arrive. But when neither He nor the *brāhmaṇa* messenger appeared, she became full of anxiety and began to think how unfortunate she was. She thought, "There is only one night before my marriage day, and still neither the *brāhmaṇa* nor Kṛṣṇa has returned. I cannot understand this."

Being the Supersoul of all living beings, Kṛṣṇa could understand Rukmiṇī's anxiety, so He sent the *brāhmaṇa* inside the palace to let her know that He had arrived. When Rukmiṇī saw the *brāhmaṇa*, she was elated. She smiled and asked him whether or not Kṛṣṇa had come. The *brāhmaṇa* replied, "The son of the Yadu dynasty, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, has arrived!" He further encouraged her by saying that Kṛṣṇa had promised to carry her away without fail. Rukmiṇī was so thrilled by the *brāhmaṇa*'s message that she wanted to give him in charity everything she possessed. However, finding nothing at hand suitable for presentation, she simply bowed down and offered him her humble respects.

When King Bhiṣmaka heard that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma had come, he invited Them to see the marriage ceremony of his daughter. He

arranged to receive Them and Their soldiers in a garden house. As was the Vedic custom, the King offered Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma honey and fresh washed cloth.

Meanwhile, Rukmiṇī came out of the palace to visit the temple of the goddess Durgā. Rukmiṇī was dressed very beautifully, and as she proceeded toward the temple, she was very silent and grave. Her mother and girl friends were by her side, and she was surrounded by royal bodyguards. In this way she entered the temple and offered her prayers to the deity. Ordinary people pray to Durgā for material wealth, fame, strength and so on. Rukmiṇī, however, desired to have Kṛṣṇa for her husband, and therefore she prayed to the deity to be pleased with her and bless her. Then she caught hold of the hand of one of her girl friends and left the temple, accompanied by the others.

All the princes and visitors who had come to Kuṇḍina for the marriage were assembled outside the temple to see Rukmiṇī. When the princes, who were especially eager to see her, caught sight of Rukmiṇī leaving the temple, they were struck with wonder. Indeed, they thought she had been especially manufactured by the Creator to bewilder them! She appeared to be just a youth not more than thirteen or fourteen years old. Her body was well constructed, the middle portion being thin. The beauty of her green eyes and pink lips was enhanced by her scattered hair and different kinds of earrings, and around her feet she wore jeweled lockets. All in all, the bodily luster and beauty of Rukmiṇī, which was specifically intended to attract the attention of Kṛṣṇa, appeared as if painted by an artist perfectly presenting beauty following the description of great poets.

Although the princes gazed upon her beautiful features, she was not at all proud. Her eyes moved restlessly, and when she smiled very innocently, her teeth appeared just like lotus flowers. Expecting Kṛṣṇa to take her away at any moment, she proceeded very slowly toward her home. The motion of her legs was just like that of a full-grown swan's body, and her ankle bells tinkled very mildly.

The princes assembled there were so overwhelmed by Rukmiṇī's beauty that they almost became unconscious, and they fell from the backs of their horses and elephants. Full of lust, they hopelessly desired Rukmiṇī's hand, comparing their own beauty to hers. Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī, however, was not interested in any of them. In her heart she was simply expecting Kṛṣṇa to come and carry her away. As she adjusted the ornaments on the fingers of her left hand, she happened to look upon the princes. Suddenly she saw that Kṛṣṇa was among them. Although Rukmiṇī had never seen Kṛṣṇa before, she was always thinking of Him, and thus she had no difficulty recognizing Him.

Ignoring the other princes, Kṛṣṇa immediately took Rukmiṇī and placed her on His chariot. He then proceeded slowly, without fear, taking Rukmiṇī away exactly as a lion takes a deer from the midst of jackals. Meanwhile, Balarāma appeared on the scene with the soldiers of the Yadu dynasty.

Jarāsandha, who had previously been defeated many times by Kṛṣṇa, began to roar, "How is this? Kṛṣṇa is taking Rukmiṇī away from us without any opposition! What is the use of our being chivalrous fighters? My dear princes, just look! We are losing our reputation by this action! It is just like a jackal's taking booty from a lion!"

All the princes, led by Jarāsandha, then became very angry at Kṛṣṇa for kidnapping Rukmiṇī. They stood up and properly armed themselves with their bows and arrows. However, as they began to chase after Kṛṣṇa on their chariots, horses and elephants, the soldiers of the Yadu dynasty turned and faced them. Terrible fighting between the two belligerent groups ensued. The princes opposing Kṛṣṇa were all very expert fighters, and they shot their arrows at the Yadu soldiers just as a cloud splashes the face of a mountain with torrents of rain. Determined to defeat Kṛṣṇa and recapture Rukmiṇī from His custody, Jarāsandha and his companions fought with Kṛṣṇa's army as severely as possible. Rukmiṇī was seated by Kṛṣṇa's side on His chariot. She became fearful when she saw the arrows of the opposing party raining onto the faces of the soldiers of Yadu, and she looked at Kṛṣṇa, grateful that He had taken such a great risk alone. She felt very sorry. Kṛṣṇa understood, and He encouraged her with these words: "My dear Rukmiṇī, don't worry. Please rest assured that the soldiers of the Yadu dynasty will kill all their opponents without delay."

Lord Balarāma and the commanders of the Yadu soldiers did not tolerate the defiant attitude of Jarāsandha's army. They started to strike them with their arrows. As the fighting progressed, the princes and soldiers of the enemy began to fall from their horses, elephants and chariots.

When the enemy found that they were gradually being defeated, they thought it unwise to risk losing men for the sake of Śīsupāla. They felt that Śīsupāla himself should have fought to rescue Rukmiṇī from the hands of Kṛṣṇa, but when they saw that Śīsupāla was not competent enough to fight with Kṛṣṇa, they

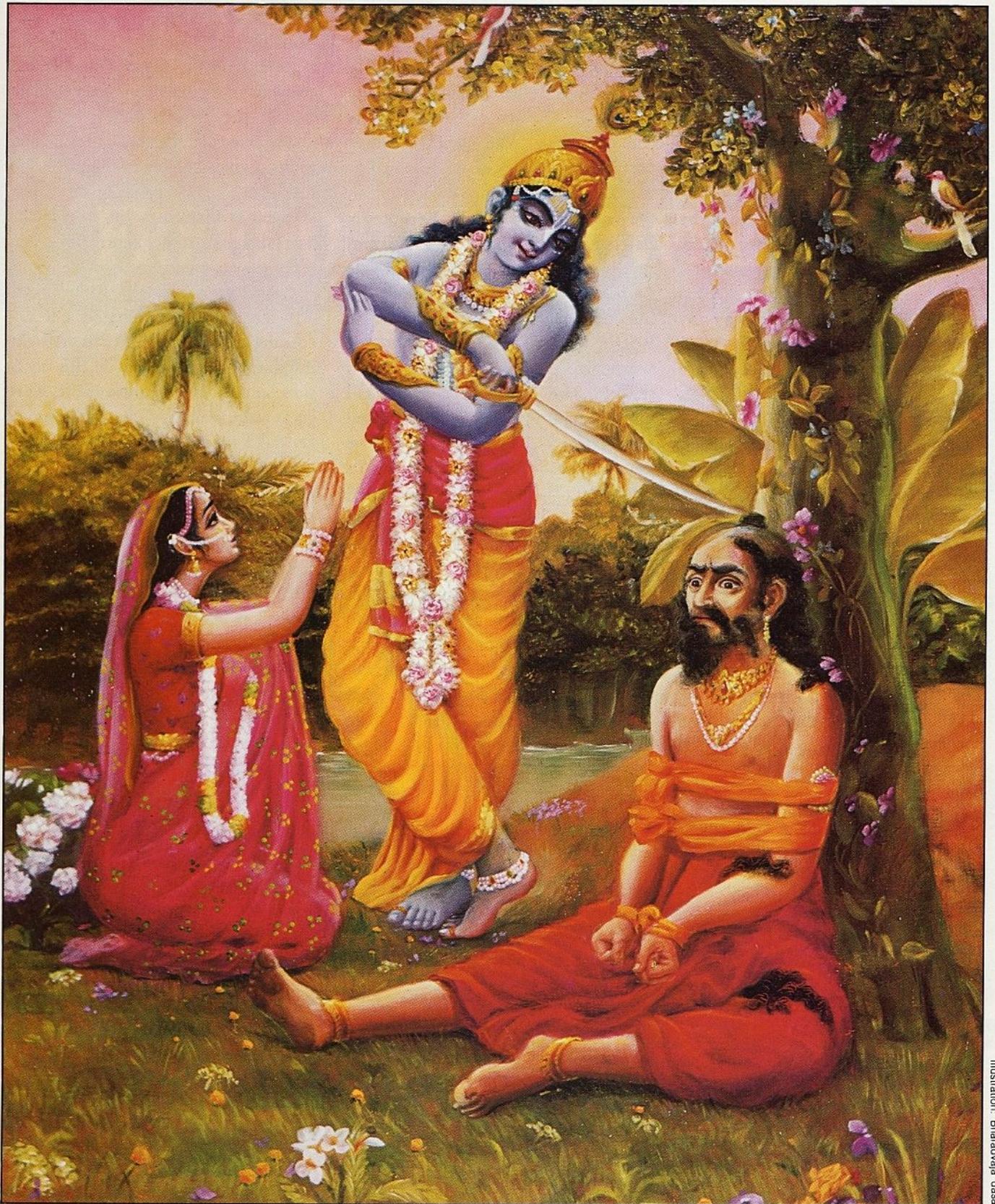


Illustration: Bharadvāja dāsa

At Rukmiṇī's request, Lord Kṛṣṇa grew compassionate and agreed not to kill the foolish Rukmi. At the same time, He wanted to give him some slight punishment.

decided not to lose their strength unnecessarily. Therefore they ceased fighting and dispersed.

Rukmiṇī's brother Rukmī, however, was very agitated. He was determined to personally teach Kṛṣṇa a lesson. He drew his bow and forcefully shot three arrows directly against Kṛṣṇa's body. Then he condemned Kṛṣṇa, saying, "You are the most abominable descendant of the Yadu dynasty. Stand before me for a minute so I can teach You a good lesson! You are carrying away my sister just like a crow stealing clarified butter meant for use in a sacrifice. You are proud of Your military strength, but You cannot fight according to regulative principles. You have stolen my sister, so now I shall relieve You of Your false prestige. You can keep my sister in Your possession only as long as I do not pin You to the ground with my arrows."

Upon hearing all these crazy words from Rukmī, Lord Kṛṣṇa immediately shot an arrow and severed Rukmī's bowstring. Rukmī then took up another bow and shot another five arrows at Kṛṣṇa. At-

tacked for a second time by Rukmī, Kṛṣṇa again severed his bowstring. Again Rukmī took up a bow, and yet again Kṛṣṇa cut its string. Having run out of bows, Rukmī took the assistance of swords, shields, tridents, lances, and similar other weapons used in hand-to-hand combat. But Kṛṣṇa destroyed them all in the same way as before. Repeatedly baffled in his attempts, Rukmī finally took his sword and ran very swiftly toward Kṛṣṇa, just as a fly hurtles toward a fire. As soon as Rukmī reached Him, Kṛṣṇa cut his weapon to pieces, took out His own sharp sword, and prepared to kill him. But Rukmiṇī, understanding that Kṛṣṇa was not going to excuse her brother, fell down at the Lord's lotus feet. In a very grievous tone, trembling with great fear, she began to plead with Him: "Please do not kill my brother just before the auspicious time of our marriage. I am happy to get You as my husband right at the last moment before my marriage to Śiśupāla, but I do not want our marriage to cost my elder brother's life. After all, he loves me, and he simply wants me to

marry someone who, according to his calculations, is a better man than You."

At Rukmiṇī's request, Lord Kṛṣṇa grew compassionate and agreed not to kill the foolish Rukmī. At the same time, He wanted to give him some slight punishment. So He tied Rukmī up with a piece of cloth and snipped at his mustache, beard, and hair, leaving some spots here and there.

Kṛṣṇa then brought Rukmiṇī to Dvārakā and married her according to the Vedic rituals. All the inhabitants were happy on this occasion, and in every house there were great ceremonies. The citizens of Dvārakā were so pleased that they dressed themselves with the nicest possible ornaments and garments and presented gifts to the newly married couple. The story of how Kṛṣṇa kidnapped Rukmiṇī was poeticized, and the professional readers recited it everywhere. In this way, all the inhabitants of Dvārakā were extremely jubilant, seeing Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord, and Rukmiṇī, the goddess of fortune, peacefully united. 

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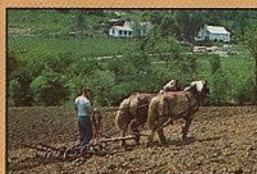
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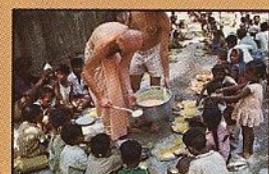
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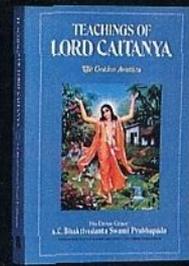
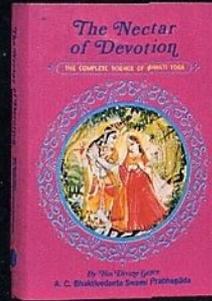
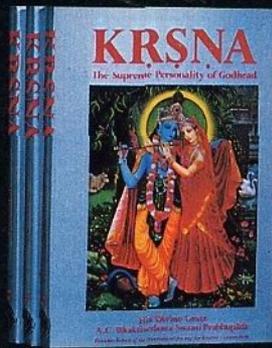
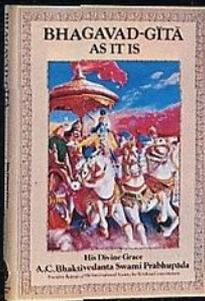
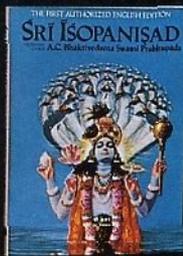


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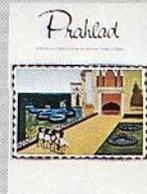
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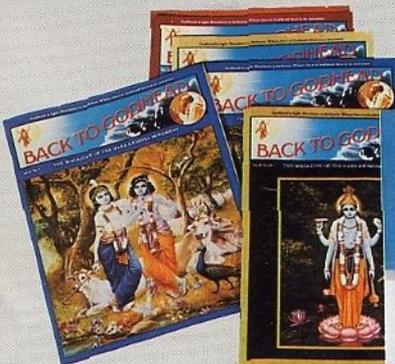
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