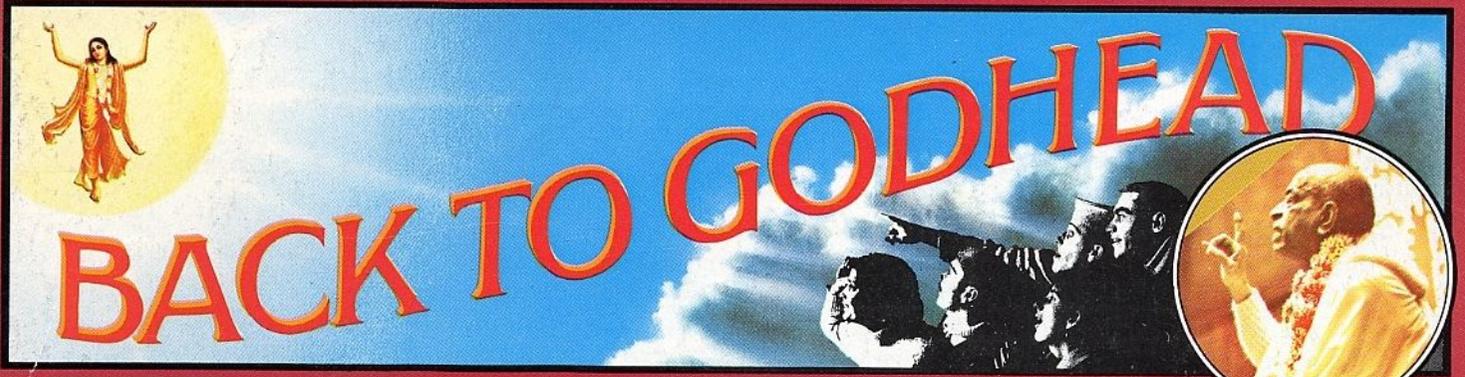


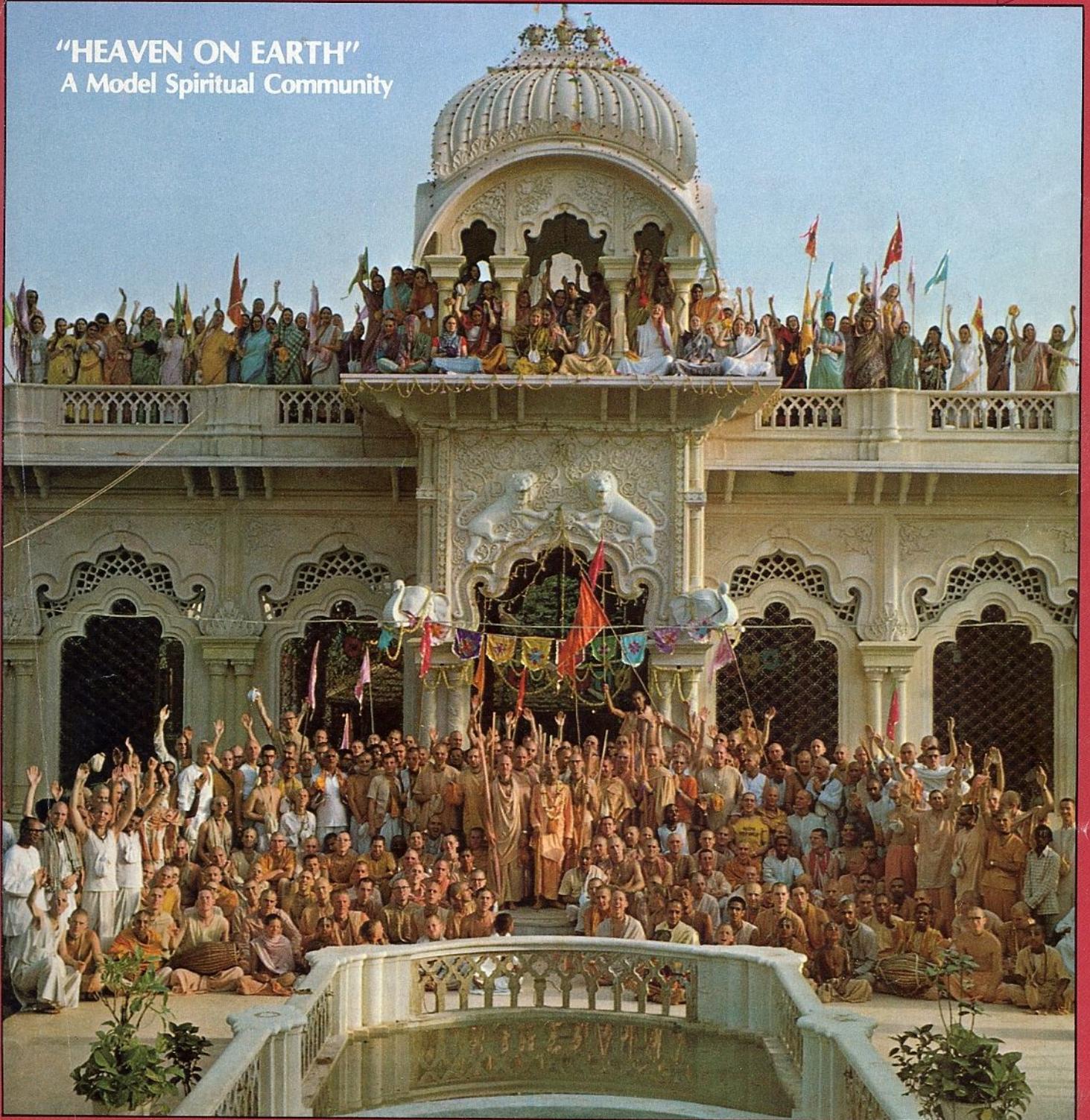
Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.



Vol. 11 No. 3/4

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT

"HEAVEN ON EARTH"
A Model Spiritual Community



A SHORT STATEMENT OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF KRṢṆA 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.



ISKCON's World Headquarters in Śrīdhāma Māyāpur, West Bengal, India.

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: Visākha-devī dāsi

Members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* in Mâyâpur, India.

**HARE KṚṢṆA
HARE KṚṢṆA
KṚṢṆA KṚṢṆA
HARE HARE**

**HARE RĀMA
HARE RĀMA
RĀMA RĀMA
HARE HARE**

God has an unlimited variety of names. Some of them—like Jehovah, Adonai, Buddha, and Allah—are familiar to us, while the names Kṛṣṇa and Rāma may be less so. However, whatever name of God we may accept, we are enjoined by all scriptures to chant it for spiritual purification.

Muhammed counseled, “Glorify the name of your Lord, the most high.” (Koran 87.2) Saint Paul said, “Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.” (Romans 10:13) Lord Buddha declared, “All who sincerely call upon my name will come to me after death, and I will take them to Paradise.” (*Vows of Amida Buddha* 18) King David preached, “From the rising of the sun

to its setting, the name of the Lord is to be praised.” (Psalms 113:3) And the world’s oldest scriptures, the *Vedas* of India, emphatically state, “Chant the holy name, chant the holy name, chant the holy name of the Lord. In this age of quarrel there is no other way, no other way, no other way to attain spiritual enlightenment.” (*Bṛhan-nāradya Purāṇa*)

The special design of the Hare Kṛṣṇa chant makes it easy to repeat and pleasant to hear. Spoken or sung, by yourself or in a group, *Hare Kṛṣṇa* invariably produces a joyful state of spiritual awareness—Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

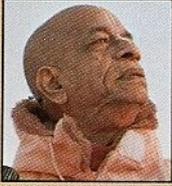
Find out more about Kṛṣṇa consciousness in this issue of *BACK TO GODHEAD* magazine.

BACK TO GODHEAD

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT

Vol. 11 No. 3/4

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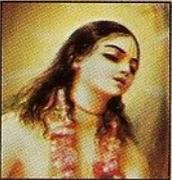
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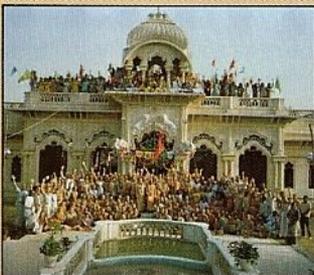
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The continuing presentation of India’s great spiritual classic.
Translation and commentary
by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.



ON THE COVER

Devotees representing thirty countries on six continents joined His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda at last year’s opening of the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Temple in Vṛndāvana, India. The three-day springtime celebration in the town of Kṛṣṇa’s birth inaugurated a new phase of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in “the land of religion.” Symbolizing an effort to revitalize India through strengthening its unique spiritual heritage, the temple opening marked the beginning of ISKCON’s program to attract people the world over to the land of Kṛṣṇa’s birth.
Photo: Viśākhā-devī dāśī

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

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

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PRONUNCIATION OF SANSKRIT WORDS

Sanskrit words and names in BACK TO GODHEAD are spelled according to a system that scholars throughout the world use to show how to pronounce each word. Vowels in Sanskrit are pronounced almost as in Italian. The sound of the short *a* is like the *u* in *but*. The long *ā* is like the *a* in *far* and held twice as long as the short *a*, and *e* is like the *a* in *evade*. Long *ī* is like the *i* in *pique*. The vowel *ṛ* is pronounced like the *ri* in the English word *ring*. The *c* 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.

So that the BACK TO GODHEAD staff may join other members of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement for a spiritually purifying month-long pilgrimage in India, this year we are publishing one less issue of BTG than usual. That is why the present issue is marked “No. 3/4.” Our yearly subscribers, of course, will receive a full twelve issues.

The founder and original editor

of BACK TO GODHEAD is His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. Śrīla Prabhupāda 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 Prabhupāda, 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.

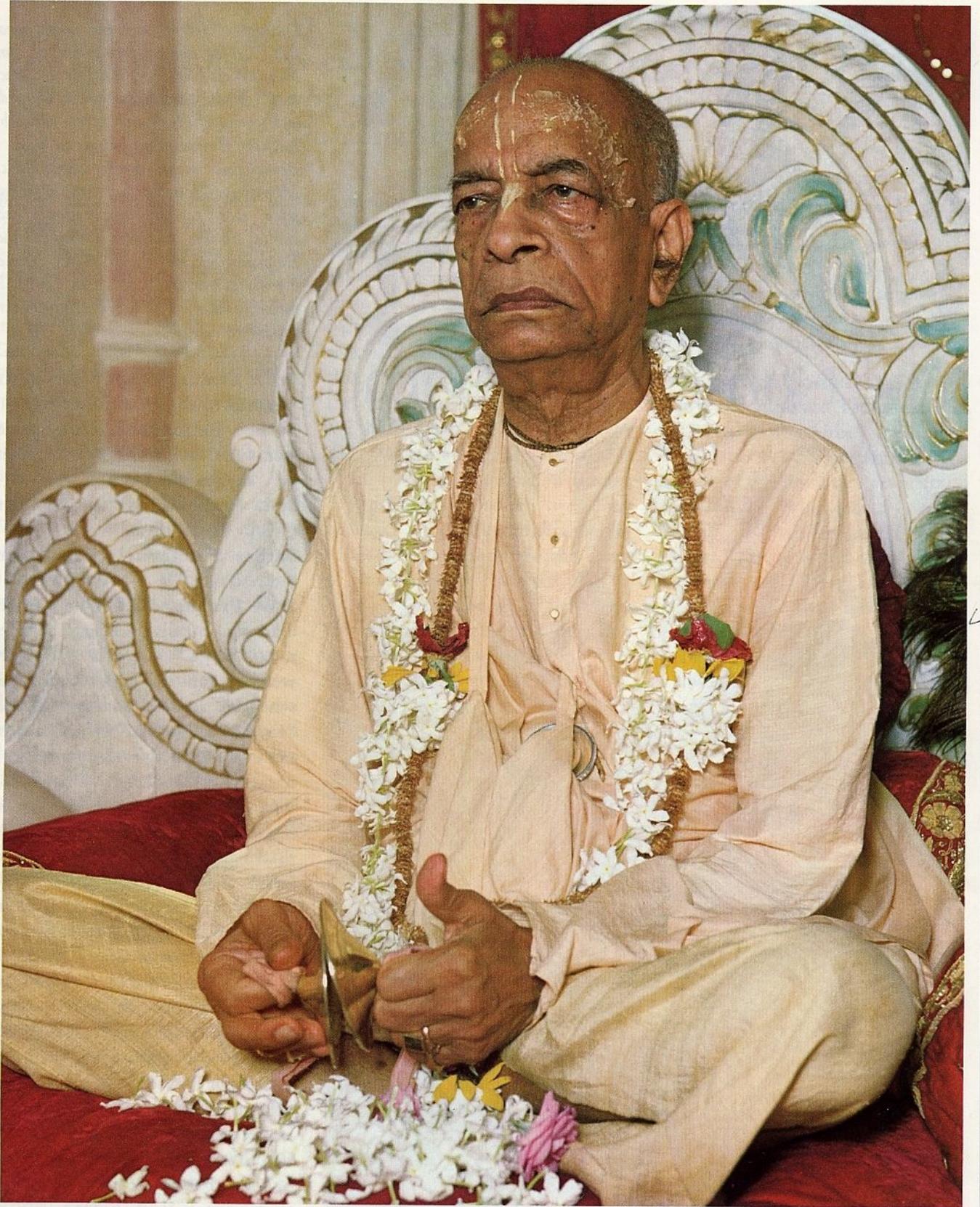
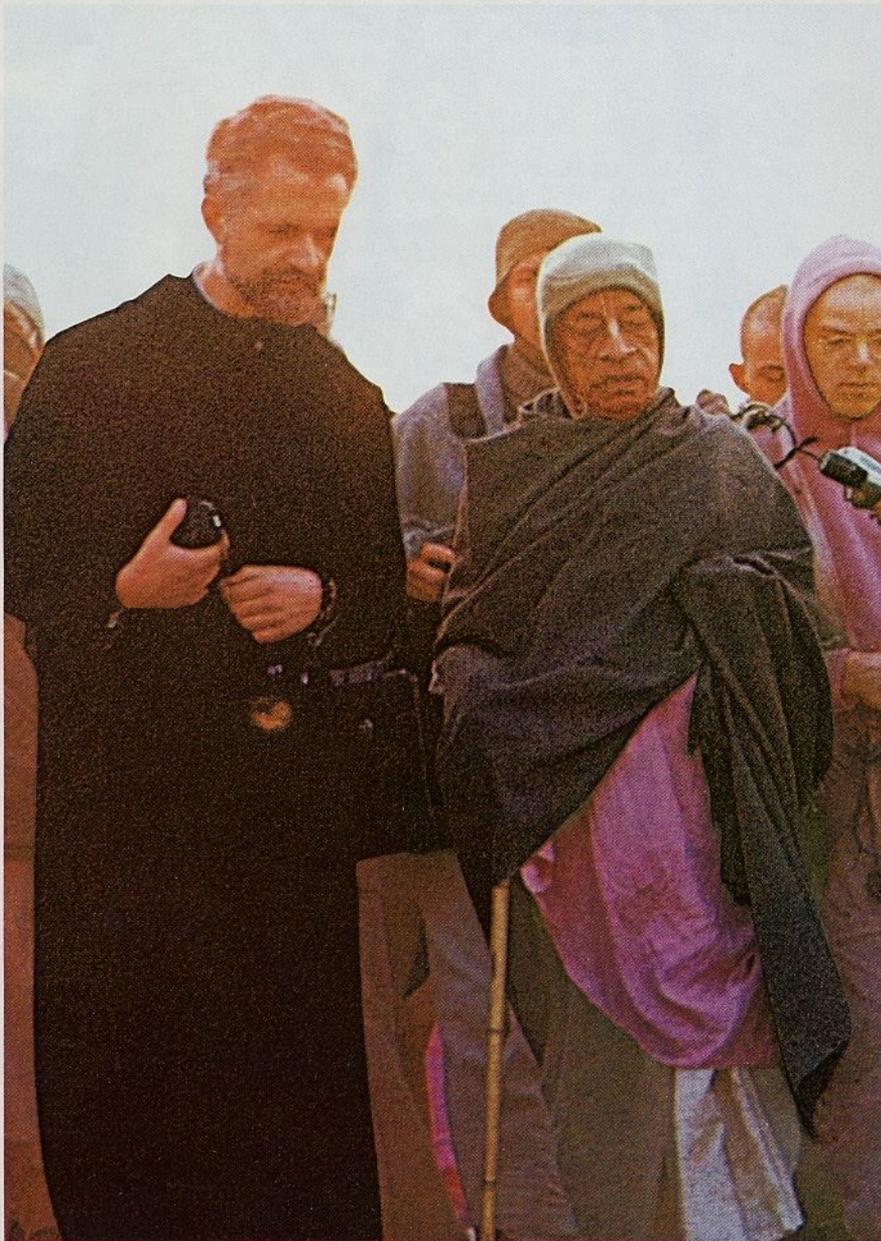


Photo: Bhārgava dāsa (Vr̥ndāvana, India)

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

KṚṢṆA OR CHRIST

The Name Is the Same



During a recent morning walk near ISKCON's center in Frankfurt am Main, West Germany, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and several of his disciples were joined by Father Emmanuel Jungclaussen, a Benedictine monk from Niederalteich Monastery. Noticing that Śrīla Prabhupāda was carrying meditation beads similar to the Catholic rosary, Father Emmanuel explained that he also chanted a constant prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, be merciful unto us." The following conversation ensued:

Śrīla Prabhupāda: What is the meaning of the word *Christ*?

Father Emmanuel: *Christ* comes from the Greek word *Christos*, meaning "the anointed one."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: *Christos* is the Greek version of the word *Kṛṣṇa*.

Father Emmanuel: This is very interesting.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: When an Indian person calls on Kṛṣṇa, he often says, "Kṛṣṭa." *Kṛṣṭa* is a Sanskrit word meaning "attraction." So when we address God as "Christ," "Kṛṣṭa," or "Kṛṣṇa," we indicate the same all-attractive Supreme Personality of Godhead. When Jesus said, "Our Father, who art in heaven, sanctified be Thy name," that name of God was *Kṛṣṭa* or *Kṛṣṇa*. Do you agree?

Father Emmanuel: I think Jesus, as the son of God, has revealed to us the actual name of God: *Christ*. We can call God "Father," but if we want to address Him by His actual name, we have to say "Christ."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. "Christ" is another way of saying *Kṛṣṭa*, and "Kṛṣṭa" is another way of pronouncing *Kṛṣṇa*, the name of God. Jesus said that one should glorify the name of God, but yesterday I heard one theologian say that God has no name—that we can call him only "Father." A son may call his father "Father," but the father also has a specific name. Similarly, God is the

“Whether you call God ‘Christ,’ ‘Kṛṣṭa,’ or ‘Kṛṣṇa,’ ultimately you are addressing the same Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

general name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose specific name is Kṛṣṇa. Therefore whether you call God “Christ,” “Kṛṣṭa,” or “Kṛṣṇa,” ultimately you are addressing the same Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Father Emmanuel: Yes, if we speak of God’s actual name, then we must say, “Christos.” In our religion, we have the Trinity: the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. We believe we can know the name of God only by revelation from the Son of God. Jesus Christ revealed the name of the father, and therefore we take the name Christ as the revealed name of God.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Actually, it doesn’t matter—*Kṛṣṇa* or *Christ*—the name is the same. The main point is to follow the injunctions of the Vedic scriptures that recommend chanting the name of God in this age. The easiest way is to chant the *mahā-mantra*: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. Rāma and Kṛṣṇa are names of God, and Hare is the energy of God. So when we chant the *mahā-mantra*, we address God together with His energy. This energy is of two kinds, the spiritual and the material. At present we are in the clutches of the material energy. Therefore we pray to Kṛṣṇa that He may kindly deliver us from the service of the material energy and accept us into the service of the spiritual energy. That is our whole philosophy. *Hare Kṛṣṇa* means, “O energy of God, O God (Kṛṣṇa), please engage me in Your service.” It is our nature to render service.

Somehow or other we have come to the service of material things, but when this service is transformed into the service of the spiritual energy, then our life is perfect. To practice *bhakti-yoga* [loving service to God] means to become free from designations like Hindu, Muslim, Christian, this or that, and simply to serve God. We have created Christian, Hindu, and Mohammedan religions, but when we come to a religion without designations, in which we don’t think we are Hindus or Christians or Mohammedans, then we can speak of pure religion, or *bhakti*.

Father Emmanuel: *Mukti*? [liberation from material miseries]

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, *bhakti*. When we speak of *bhakti*, *mukti* is included. Without *bhakti* there is no *mukti*, but if we act on the platform of *bhakti*, then *mukti* is included. We learn this from the *Bhagavad-gītā* (14.26):

*mām ca yo ’vyabhicāreṇa
bhakti-yogena sevate
sa guṇān samatītyaitān
brahma-bhūyāya kalpate*

“One who engages in full devotional service, who does not fall down under any circumstance, at once transcends the modes of material nature and thus comes to the level of Brahman.”

Father Emmanuel: Is Brahman Kṛṣṇa?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Kṛṣṇa is Parabrahman. Brahman is realized in three aspects: as impersonal Brahman, as localized Paramātmā, and as personal Brahman. Kṛṣṇa is personal, and He is the Supreme Brahman, for God is ultimately a person.

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.11), this is confirmed:

*vadanti tat tattva-vidas
tattvaṁ yaj-jñānam advayam
brahmeti paramātmēti
bhagavān iti śabdyate*

“Learned transcendentalists, who know the Absolute Truth, call this nondual substance Brahman, Paramātmā, or Bhagavan.” The feature of the Supreme Personality is the ultimate realization of God. He has all six opulences in full: He is the strongest, the richest, the most beautiful, the most famous, the wisest, and the most renounced.

Father Emmanuel: Yes, I agree.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Because God is absolute, His name, His form, and His qualities are also absolute, and they are nondifferent from Him. Therefore to chant God’s holy name means to associate directly with Him. When one associates with God, one acquires godly qualities, and when one is completely purified, one becomes an associate of the Supreme Lord.

Father Emmanuel: But our understanding of the name of God is limited.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, we are limited, but God is unlimited. And because He is unlimited, or absolute, He has unlimited names, each of which is God. We can understand His names as much as our spiritual understanding is developed.

Father Emmanuel: May I ask a question? We Christians also preach love of God, and we try to realize love of God and render service to Him with all our heart and all our soul. Now, what is the difference

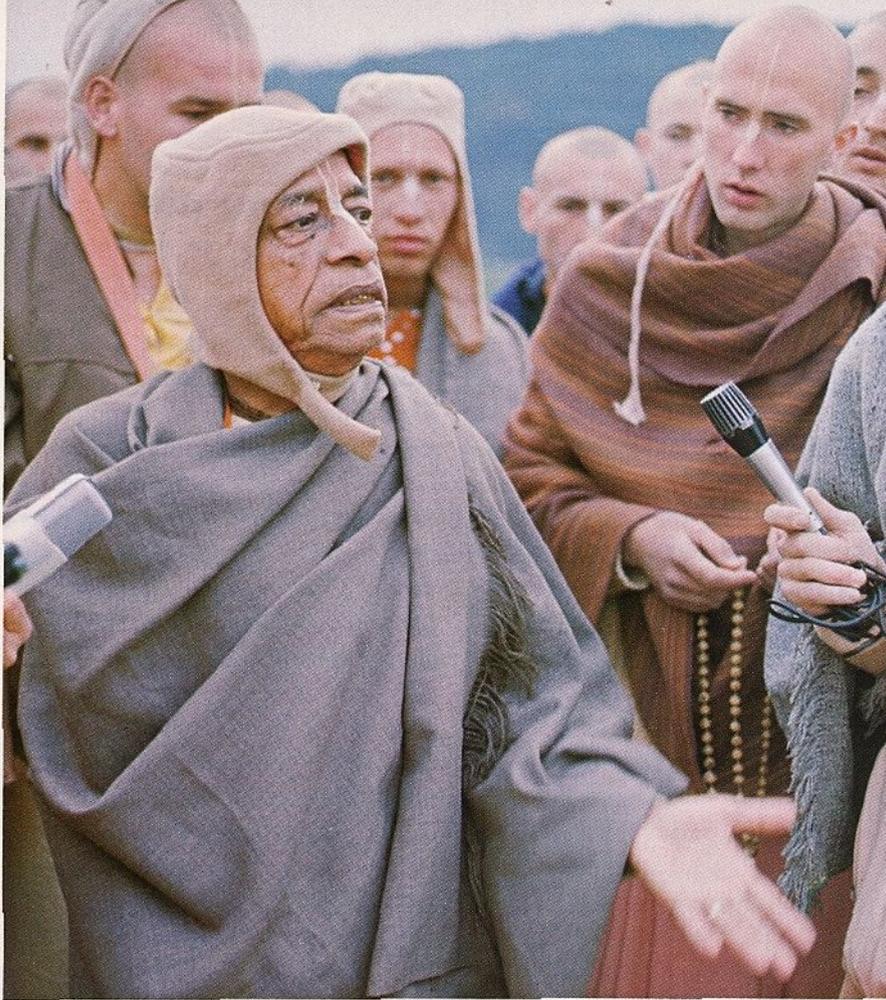


Photo: Bhāgavā dāsa

“They have rubber-stamped themselves as Christian, Hindu, or Mohammedan, but they do not obey God. That is the problem.”

enough to use the right word—*murder*—instead of the word *killing*? *Killing* means any kind of killing, and especially animal killing. If Jesus had meant simply the killing of humans, he would have used the word *murder*.

Father Emmanuel: But in the Old Testament the commandment “Thou shalt not kill” *does* refer to murder. And when Jesus said, “Thou shalt not kill,” he extended this commandment to mean that a human being should not only refrain from killing another human being, but should also treat him with love. He never spoke about man’s relationship with other living entities but only about his relationship with other human beings. When he said, “Thou shalt not kill,” he also meant in the mental and emotional sense—that you should not insult anyone or hurt him, treat him badly, and so on.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: We are not concerned with this or that testament but only with the words used in the commandments. If you want to interpret these words, that is something else. We understand the direct meaning. “Thou shalt not kill” means, “The Christians should not kill.” You may put forth interpretations in order to continue the present way of action, but we understand very clearly that there is no need for interpretation. Interpretation is necessary if things are not clear. But here the meaning is clear. “Thou shalt not kill” is a clear instruction. Why should we interpret it?

Father Emmanuel: Isn’t the eating of plants also killing?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: The Vaiṣṇava philosophy teaches that we should not even kill plants unnecessarily. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.26) Kṛṣṇa says:

*patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyam
yo me bhaktyā prayacchati
tad ahaṁ bhakty-upahṛtam
aśnāmi prayatāmanaḥ*

“If someone offers Me with love and devotion a leaf, a flower, a fruit, or a little water, I will accept it.” We offer Kṛṣṇa only the kind of food He demands, and then we eat the remnants. If offering vegetarian food to Kṛṣṇa were sinful, then it would be Kṛṣṇa’s sin, not ours. But God is *apāpa-vijñā*—sinful reactions are not applicable to Him. He is like the sun, which is so powerful that it can purify even urine—something impossible for us to do. Kṛṣṇa is also like a king, who may order a murderer to be hanged, but who himself is not subjected to punishment because he is very powerful. Eating food first offered to the Lord is also something like a soldier’s killing during wartime. In a war, when the commander orders a man to attack, the obedient soldier who kills the enemy will get a medal. But if the same soldier kills someone on his own, he will be punished. Similarly, when we eat only *prasāda* [the remnants of food offered to Kṛṣṇa], we do not commit any sin. This is confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.13):

*yajña-siṣṭāśinaḥ santo
mucyante sarva-kilbiṣaiḥ
bhūñjate te tv aghaṁ pāpā
ye pacanty ātma-kāraṇāt*

“The devotees of the Lord are released from all kinds of sins because they eat food that is first offered for sacrifice. Others, who prepare food for personal sense enjoyment, verily eat only sin.”

Father Emmanuel: Kṛṣṇa cannot give permission to eat animals?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes—in the animal kingdom. But the civilized human being, the religious human being, is not meant to kill and eat animals. If you stop killing animals

“If you simply chant the name of God found in your own scriptures, you will attain the spiritual platform.”

and chant the holy name Christ, everything will be perfect. I have not come to teach you, but only to request you to please chant the name of God. The Bible also demands this of you. So let's kindly cooperate and chant, and if you have a prejudice against chanting the name Kṛṣṇa, then chant “Christo” or “Kṛṣṭa”—there is no difference. Śrī Caitanya said: *nāmnām akāri bahu-dhā nija-sarva-śaktis*. “God has millions and millions of names, and because there is no difference between God's name and Himself, each one of these names has the same potency as God.” Therefore, even if you accept designations like Hindu, Christian, or Mohammedan, if you simply chant the name of God found in your own scriptures, you will attain the spiritual platform. Human life is meant for self-realization—to learn how to love God. That is the actual beauty of man. Whether you discharge this duty as a Hindu, a Christian, or a Mohammedan, it doesn't matter—but discharge it!

Father Emmanuel: I agree.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: [pointing to a string of 108 meditation beads] We always have these beads, just as you have your rosary. You are chanting, but why don't the other Christians also chant? Why should they miss this opportunity as human beings? Cats and dogs cannot chant, but we can because we have a human tongue. If we chant the holy names of God, we cannot lose anything; on the contrary, we gain greatly. My disciples practice chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa constantly. They could also go to the cinema, or do so many other things, but they have given everything up. They eat neither fish nor

meat nor eggs, they don't take intoxicants, they don't drink, they don't smoke, they don't partake in gambling, they don't speculate, and they don't maintain illicit sexual connections. But they do chant the holy name of God. If you would like to cooperate with us, then go to the churches and chant, “Christ,” “Kṛṣṭa,” or “Kṛṣṇa.” What could be the objection?

Father Emmanuel: There is none. For my part, I would be glad to join you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, we are speaking with you as a representative of the Christian church. Instead of keeping the churches closed, why not give them to us? We would chant the holy name of God there twenty-four hours a day. In many places we have bought churches that were practically closed because no one was going there. In London I saw hundreds of churches that were closed or used for mundane purposes. We bought one such church in Los Angeles. It was sold because no one came there, but if you visit this same church today, you will see thousands of people. Any intelligent person can understand what God is in five minutes; it doesn't require five hours.

Father Emmanuel: I understand.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But the people do not. Their disease is that they don't want to understand.

Visitor: I think understanding God is not a question of intelligence, but a question of humility.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Humility means intelligence. “The humble and meek own the kingdom of God.” This is stated in the Bible, is it not? But the philosophy of the ras-

cals is that everyone is God, and today this idea has become popular. Therefore no one is humble and meek. If everyone thinks that he is God, why should he be humble and meek? Therefore I teach my disciples how to become humble and meek. They always offer their respectful obeisances in the temple and to the spiritual master, and in this way they make advancement. The qualities of humbleness and meekness lead very quickly to spiritual realization. In the Vedic scriptures it is said, “To those who have firm faith in God and the spiritual master, who is His representative, the meaning of the Vedic scriptures is revealed.”

Father Emmanuel: But shouldn't this humility be offered to everyone else, also?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, but there are two kinds of respect: special and ordinary. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya taught that we shouldn't expect honor for ourselves, but should always respect everyone else, even if he is disrespectful to us. But special respect should be given to God and His pure devotee.

Father Emmanuel: Yes, I agree.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: I think the Christian priests should cooperate with the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. They should chant the name Christ or Christos and should stop condoning the slaughter of animals. This program follows the teachings of the Bible; it is not my philosophy. Please act accordingly and you will see how the world situation will change.

Father Emmanuel: I thank you very much.

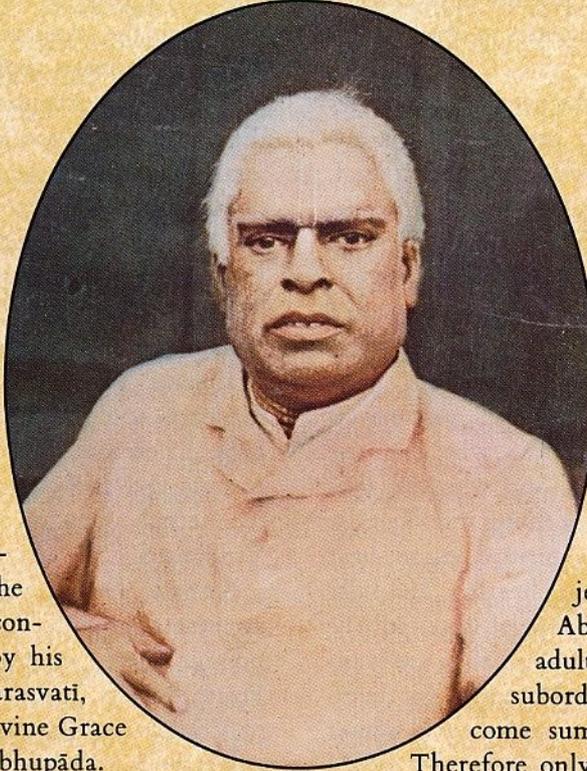
Śrīla Prabhupāda: Hare Kṛṣṇa! 🙏

THE NECTAREAN TEACHINGS OF ŚRĪ CAITANYA

Part 2

by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

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



Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura (1838–1914) was a pioneer in 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 his son's disciple, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda.

Published in 1886, *Śrī Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta* (*The Nectarean Teachings of Śrī Caitanya*) systematically and uncompromisingly establishes the basic principles of devotional practice. Its subject matter is based largely on the conversations between Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmīs, as recorded in Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavīrāja's classic biography, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. The present article comprises the second half of the first chapter.

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

THE NATURE OF LOVE is that it accepts something as its subject and something as its object. Without a subject and an object, love is impossible. In pure spiritual love, the heart of the living entity is the subject, and Lord Kṛṣṇa alone is the object. Since Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Absolute Truth, once pure, unadulterated love for Him awakens, all subordinate worshipable objects become summed up in His original form.

Therefore only love for Kṛṣṇa is actually pure love. While reading this book in its entirety, one will directly experience that pure love to the extent that he is actually searching for it. If, however, simply upon hearing the name of Kṛṣṇa, the reader becomes argumentative, he will be cheated of any factual realization of the Absolute Truth. To argue about the holy name of the Lord is futile. The object indicated by the holy name Kṛṣṇa is the supreme goal of every living entity.

The nectarean pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the crown jewel of all Vedic literatures, were directly perceived in trance by Śrīla Vyāsadeva, the best of sages. Following the advice of Śrī Nārada, Vyāsadeva entered into devotional service to the Lord, the natural form of *samādhi*, and then was able to see the original form of Kṛṣṇa. Later he described

Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes with His devotees, who exhibit devotion free from all material designations. This pure love destroys the living entity's distress, illusion, and fear.

According to their different qualifications, people who read or hear the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa perceive them either intelligently or ignorantly. At the time of Lord Kṛṣṇa's appearance, when His pastimes are manifested to material vision, they stimulate increased intelligent perception by the wise class of men, but only more foolish understanding by those whose intelligence is absorbed in matter. Perception arising under the influence of the Lord's knowledge potency is intelligent perception, but perception that develops in ignorance is unintelligent.

When one tries to understand the nectarean pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa foolishly, one may present many argumentative objections. No such objections are raised, however, if one perceives the Lord's pastimes with intelligence. If one hopes to achieve the supreme goal of life, he should quickly develop this intelligent perception. Why should one choose to understand things in a foolish way and thus, by creating arguments, allow one's best interest to be ruined?

Intelligent perception of Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes is briefly summarized as follows. Those who can rise above thinking of material things, and who can thus become actually thoughtful, can see things intelligently. They see the form of Kṛṣṇa with spiritual vision, hear the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa with spiritual hearing, and fully relish Kṛṣṇa with their spiritual sense of taste. All the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa are nonmaterial—i.e., they are transcendental to this material world. Therefore, by themselves, one's material eyes and other material senses cannot perceive their presence. Only by the inconceivable potency of Kṛṣṇa can these pastimes be perceived with material senses. When, at the time of His appearance the Lord makes His pastimes accessible to gross senses, He grants direct participation in them only to those with intelligent perception. Thus the general mass of people perceive His pastimes unintelligently. They foolishly consider Kṛṣṇa to be something impermanent, thinking that His body, like ours, is born, grows old, and dies. Because of unintelligent perception, some people also believe that formlessness is the ultimate reality and that form can exist only in the material sphere. Therefore, since Kṛṣṇa has a form, they conclude that He is material.

No one can ascertain the nature of the Absolute Truth by argument. How can human reason, which is

limited, deal with the unlimited subject of the Absolute Truth? If one wishes to understand and directly experience the Absolute Truth, he must engage in devotional service to the Lord. This process of devotional service, which is called *bhakti*, is the preliminary stage of what we have previously referred to as pure love of God. One can develop intelligent perception only by receiving the mercy of Kṛṣṇa, and one can receive the mercy of Kṛṣṇa only by acting in devotional service, not simply by acquiring knowledge.

Many kinds of sentiment for the Supreme Truth are seen in the world, but apart from all of them, the affection for the original form of Kṛṣṇa is the only sentiment that meets the standard of pure, unalloyed love. For example, one cannot apply the term *pure love* to the feeling for Lord Allah presented in the Islamic scriptures. Even the prophet who was Lord Allah's dearest friend was unable to directly see His transcendental body, for although he entered into a relationship of friendship with the Lord, he was kept at a distance under the spell of His opulence. Likewise, the Christian conception of "God" is a very aloof phenomenon, and there are certainly no discussions of the pastimes of the impersonal Brahman. Nor is the magnificent form of Lord Nārāyaṇa the most natural object for the soul's ecstatic love. Therefore the only immediate object of pure ecstatic love is Kṛṣṇa, whose original form is found in its eternal splendor in the transcendental abode of Vṛndāvana.

Kṛṣṇa's Vṛndāvana is by nature eternally full of sweetness and bliss. Although spiritual opulence is fully present there, its predominating aspect is not felt. Fruits, flowers, and young sprouts—these are the riches of Vṛndāvana. The domain's subjects are the herds of cows, the friends are the cowherd boys, the consorts are the *gopīs*, and the food is the milk products such as butter and yogurt. The River Yamunā and all the forests and gardens are full of love for Kṛṣṇa. In fact, in Vṛndāvana all of nature acts in Kṛṣṇa's service. Kṛṣṇa, who elsewhere receives the worship and reverence of everyone as the Supreme Absolute Truth, is in Vṛndāvana the sole treasure of life, sometimes known familiarly to the worshiper as his equal, and sometimes as his inferior.

How else could the insignificant living entity ecstatically love the Absolute Truth? The Supreme Truth has His own pastimes and His own desires, and He is anxious to have the living entity's pure love. How can He who is by His nature supreme, who, like common men, hankers for worship but can never be fully

satisfied by such worship, obtain His own happiness? By covering His opulences with the quality of sweetness and evoking the love of His devotees. Thus Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the reservoir of the most wonderfully relishable pastimes, accepts equality with and inferiority to those living entities fit to relish the transcendental relationships of Vṛndāvana, and in this way He obtains His own pleasure.

For those who accept pure and complete love of God as the only goal in life, who else but Kṛṣṇa could they choose as the object of that love? Furthermore, if the language were changed so that words such as *kṛṣṇa*, *vṛndāvana*, *gopa*, *gopī*, *go-dhana*, *govardhana*, *yamunā*, *kadamba*, and so on could not be found anywhere, then devotees trying to develop pure ecstatic love would simply have to somehow pick other words for all the holy names, abodes, paraphernalia, forms, and pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, there is no object of pure love except Kṛṣṇa.

After careful consideration, we can see that there are just two ways of achieving love for Kṛṣṇa, namely, regulated devotional service and spontaneous service. Spontaneous devotion is rare. Regulations have no more power over a person whose spontaneous attraction for Kṛṣṇa has developed, but as long as it has *not* developed, his prime business is to follow the rules of regulated devotional service. Until uncontaminated, spontaneous attraction becomes prominent, a candidate must accept as his duty both the essential and minor regulative principles of devotional service to Kṛṣṇa. Thus the Vedic *śāstras* mention two paths, known as *vidhi-mārga* (regulated devotional service) and *rāga-mārga* (spontaneous devotional service). Since *rāga-mārga* is completely voluntary, it does not have specifically prescribed regulations. Only one who is especially fortunate and highly qualified can enter onto this path. I have consequently written here only about the process of devotional service on the platform of *vidhi-mārga*.

Unfortunate persons cannot recognize the Supreme Lord. For the sake of carrying out their livelihood, they are forced to establish many rules of conduct known as *nīti*, or morality. However, regardless of how excellent a code of morality may be, if it does not further the development of God consciousness, it cannot bring about the perfection of human life. Such morality is simply renegade morality. On the other hand, a set of moral codes that encourages belief in God and prescribes authorized activity on His behalf should be respected as a proper system of guidelines (*vidhi*) for the behavior of human beings.

There are two types of this *vidhi*: major and minor. When one accepts the satisfaction of the Lord as the only goal in life, then the process that immediately fulfills this purpose is called *mukhya* (major) *vidhi*. In contrast, a process that more or less indirectly indicates the final goal of satisfying the Lord is known as *gaṇa* (minor) *vidhi*. For example, bathing early in the morning is one guideline of behavior. By bathing in the morning, the body is cleansed and made free from disease. Thus the mind becomes steady, and when the mind is steady, one is fit to worship the Lord. In this case, then, the goal of life (to worship the Supreme) is not realized directly, since the immediate result of bathing is merely a clean body. If one takes bodily cleanliness to be the ultimate goal of bathing, he will not get the fruit of devotional service. Therefore, except for the worship of the Lord, all other results of the moral principle of bathing are intermediate benefits, and when such secondary results are involved, interference with the final goal is always a possibility.

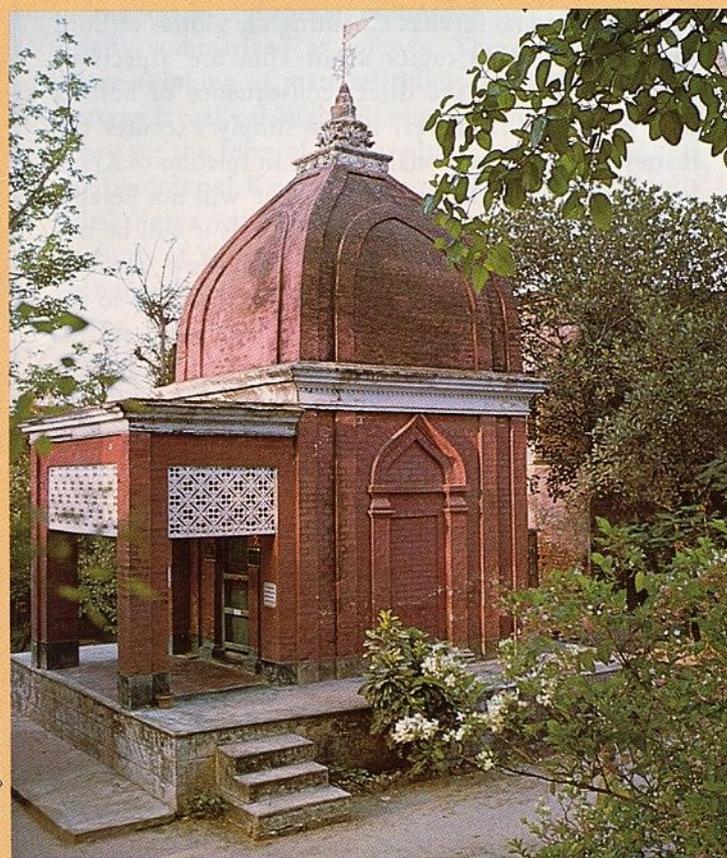
On the other hand, the immediate goal of *mukhya-vidhi* is service to the Supreme Lord. In this major process of activity, there is no intermediate result standing between the means of the regulative principles and the end of devotional service. Chanting the glories of Lord Kṛṣṇa and hearing topics about Him are aspects of *mukhya-vidhi*, since the direct consequence of both is pure devotion. However, if one simply executes the main process of devotional practice in relation to Kṛṣṇa but neglects secondary regulations, he will not be able to fulfill the needs of the body, and thus it will be impossible for him to maintain his life. How can one adopt the *mukhya-vidhi* (direct devotional service to the Lord) if he cannot even keep his body and soul together? The gist of *gaṇa-vidhi*, then, is that by diligent application of all types of education, art, industry, etiquette, and orderliness, which are prime assets of human life, and by also taking to heart bodily, mental, and social regulations, one can honestly maintain his livelihood and thus facilitate his service to the Lord's lotus feet. When *gaṇa-vidhi* is actually carried to its complete fructification, it becomes the assistant of *mukhya-vidhi* and helps make human existence fully ecstatic with the nectar found at the Lord's lotus feet.

There are many styles of human life: nomadic life, barely civilized life, civilized life enriched by material science, atheistic moral life, theistic moral life, devotional life in practice, and the life of a devotee in ecstatic love of God. Actually, human existence as such

(continued on page 14)



Like a jewel on the Ganges plain, the first building of a future city, ISKCON's world headquarters in Māyāpur, India, rises above the fertile fields of Lord Caitanya's homeland.



Classic red sandstone tomb of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura rests peacefully amidst the palms on the banks of the Jalāngi.

Discovering the Lord's Birthplace

by His Holiness
Acyutānanda Swami

In 1886, when Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was stationed in Jagannātha Purī, India, as a government minister, he became so anxious to see the land of Lord Caitanya that he applied many times for a transfer to any town nearby. Upon not receiving the desired transfer, he formally submitted a resignation from public service, but it was refused. Then, to his great rejoicing, he obtained a transfer to Kṛṣṇanagara, twenty-five miles from Navadvīpa, Māyāpur, the birthplace of the Lord. Once stationed there, he did not let a single free moment pass without visiting the land of Navadvīpa. He made inquiries about the exact whereabouts of the different places of Lord Caitanya's pastimes and soon discovered that the then city of Navadvīpa was a town of only one hundred years' standing. Convinced that Navadvīpa was not the actual birthplace of Lord Caitanya, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda became curious to locate the authentic spot. He at once commenced a



Photo: Bhāgavā dāsa

Nearing the spires and five-tiered tower at the birthplace of Lord Caitanya, worldwide delegates of ISKCON make their annual springtime pilgrimage.

vigorous inquiry to find the truth of the matter. Finally, after persistent inquiry, he was told that the actual site was lost under the shifting course of the Ganges. Not satisfied with even this explanation, he himself set out to discover the *yoga-pīṭha* (birthplace). After great difficulties, he came to know of a place then in the possession of the Mohammedans that was being adored by many realized souls as the true birthplace of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Local inquiry and corroborative evidence from ancient maps of the latter part of the eighteenth century that showed the name “Śrī Māyāpur” at last helped him discover the actual site. As a final proof, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda showed the site to Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī, the foremost devotee of Lord Caitanya at that time, who confirmed that it was definitely the site where the Lord had appeared. Although Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī was old and disabled, when he was brought to that holy place and found it genuine, he immediately jumped up and began to dance in ecstasy.

Soon afterward, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda retired from his government position and personally went door-to-door in Calcutta to raise funds for the construction of a temple memorializing Lord Caitanya’s birthplace. Today, pilgrims from every part of the world congregate there to pay their respects to the Lord and His pure devotees.

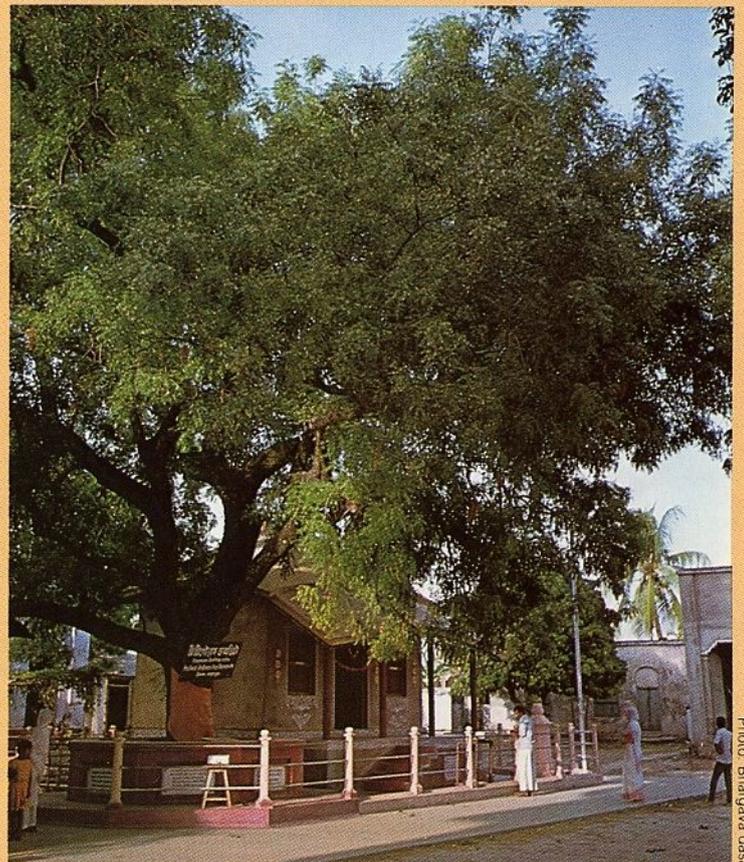
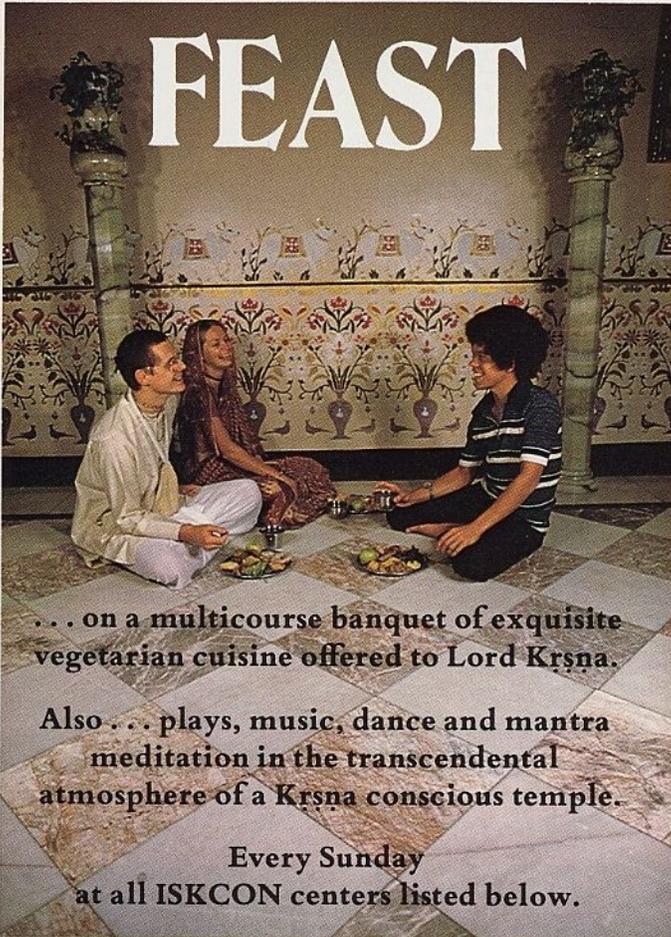


Photo: Bhāgavā dāsa

Ancient nim tree under which Lord Caitanya took His birth gave Him His youthful nickname of “Nimāi.”

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(continued from page 11)

begins with religious morality. As long as one's way of life is not centered around God (and by extension, as long as it remains uncivilized, unscientific, and immoral), it cannot be considered any better than animal life. Real human life must be governed by the rules and restrictions of theistic morality. Therefore the considerations of this discussion begin with God-conscious moral life.

Among the chief ornaments of a God-conscious way of life are material science, culture, and ethics. And when, along with these features, religious morality matures into devotional life, all one's desires are satisfied.

The activities of the *jiva* (living entity) are known as *jaiva-dharma*, and on the human level, as human *dharma*. Human *dharma* has two aspects, *gauna* and *mukhya*, which are concerned with conditioned and purely spiritual activities respectively. *Gauna*, or conditional, *dharma* deals with the world of matter, its material modes, and the conditioned living entity's relationship with them. *Mukhya*, or spiritual, *dharma* has as its subject the pure spirit soul and is therefore the actual *jaiva-dharma*. *Gauna-dharma* is in fact nothing more than *mukhya-dharma* affected by material nature and transformed according to the modes of matter—goodness, passion, and ignorance. As the living entity's activities rise above these three modes and again become fully spiritual, *gauna-dharma* changes into *mukhya-dharma*. In other words, *gauna-dharma* is the soul's natural propensities covered and perverted by material designations. When all false designations are eliminated from *gauna-dharma*, it becomes *mukhya-dharma*.

Gauna-dharma includes both the conditioned activities prescribed by the regulations of *gauna-vidhi* and those forbidden by its restrictions, or in other words, both pious and sinful activities. A person should not artificially renounce his conditioned activities; rather, in the advanced stage of his liberation from the material modes, these activities will automatically be transformed back into spiritual activities. *Gauna-dharma* comes about when the conditioned soul allows his spiritual activities to become perverted. These material activities can again become spiritualized if reconverted by the proper means. Therefore, in future chapters, we shall first discuss the rules and restrictions of *gauna-vidhi*, then those of *mukhya-vidhi*, and finally the perfection of *jaiva-dharma*: devotional service in ecstatic love of God.

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First Canto "Creation"

Chapter Five

Nārada's Instructions on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

(continued)

TEXT 11

तद्वाग्विसर्गो जनताघनिष्ठो
यस्मिन् प्रतिश्लोकमबद्धवत्यपि ।
नामान्यनन्तस्य यशोऽङ्कितानि यत्
शृण्वन्ति गायन्ति गृणन्ति साधवः ॥११॥

tad-vāg-visargo janatāgha-viplavo
yasmin prati-ślokaṁ abaddhavaty api
nāmāny anantasya yaśo'ṅkitāni yat
śṛṅvantī gāyanti gṛṅanti sādhaḥ

tat—that; *vāk*—vocabulary; *visargaḥ*—creation; *janatā*—the people in general; *agha*—sins; *viplavaḥ*—revolutionary; *yasmin*—in which; *prati-ślokaṁ*—each and every stanza; *abaddhavati*—irregularly composed; *api*—in spite of; *nāmāni*—transcendental names, etc.; *anantasya*—of the unlimited Lord; *yaśaḥ*—glories; *aṅkitāni*—depicted; *yat*—what; *śṛṅvantī*—do hear; *gāyanti*—do sing; *gṛṅanti*—do accept; *sādhaḥ*—the purified men who are honest.

TRANSLATION

On the other hand, that literature which is full of descriptions of the transcendental glories of the name, fame, forms, pastimes, etc., of the unlimited Supreme Lord is a different creation, full of transcendental words directed toward bringing about a revolution in the impious lives of this world's misdirected civilization. Such transcendental literatures, even though imperfectly composed, are heard, sung and accepted by purified men who are thoroughly honest.

PURPORT

It is a qualification of the great thinkers to pick up the best even from the worst. It is said that the intelligent man should pick up nectar from a

stock of poison, should accept gold even from a filthy place, should accept a good and qualified wife even from an obscure family and should accept a good lesson even from a man or from a teacher who comes from the untouchables. These are some of the ethical instructions for everyone in every place without exception. But a saint is far above the level of an ordinary man, and he is always absorbed in glorifying the Supreme Lord because by broadcasting the holy name and fame of the Supreme Lord, the polluted atmosphere of the world will change, and as a result of propagating the transcendental literatures like *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, people will become sane in their transactions. While preparing this commentation on this particular stanza of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* we have a crisis before us. Our neighboring friend China has attacked the border of India with a militaristic spirit. We have practically no business in the political field, yet we see that previously there were both China and India, and they both lived peacefully for centuries without ill feeling. The reason is that they lived those days in an atmosphere of God consciousness, and every country, over the surface of the world, was God-fearing, purehearted and simple, and there was no question of political diplomacy. There is no cause of quarrel between the two countries of China and India over land which is not very suitable for habitation, and certainly there is no cause for fighting on this issue. But due to the age of quarrel, Kali, which we have discussed, there is always a chance of quarrel on slight provocation. This is due not to the issue in question, but to the polluted atmosphere of this age: systematically there is propaganda by a section of people to stop glorification of the name and fame of the Supreme Lord. Therefore, there is great need for disseminating the message of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* all over the world. It is the duty of every responsible Indian to broadcast the transcendental message of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* throughout the world to do all the supermost good as well as to bring about the desired peace in the world. Because India has failed in her duty by neglecting this responsible work, there is so much quarrel and trouble all over the world. We are confident that if the transcendental message of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is received only by the leading men of the world, certainly there will be a change of heart, and naturally the people in general will follow them. The mass of people in general are tools in the hands of the modern politicians and leaders of the people. If there is a change of heart of the leaders only, certainly there will be a radical change in the atmosphere of the world. We know that our honest attempt to present this great literature conveying transcendental messages for reviving the God consciousness of the people in general and re-spiritualizing the world atmosphere is fraught with many difficulties. Our presenting this matter in adequate language, especially a foreign language, will certainly fail, and there will be so many literary discrepancies despite our honest attempt to present it in the proper way. But we are sure that with all our faults in this connection the seriousness of the subject matter will be taken into consideration, and the leaders of society will still accept this due to its being an honest attempt to glorify the Almighty God. When there is fire in a house, the inmates of the house go out to get help from the neighbors who may be foreigners, and yet without knowing the language the victims of the fire express themselves, and the neighbors understand the need, even

though not expressed in the same language. The same spirit of cooperation is needed to broadcast this transcendental message of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* throughout the polluted atmosphere of the world. After all, it is a technical science of spiritual values, and thus we are concerned with the techniques and not with the language. If the techniques of this great literature are understood by the people of the world, there will be success.

When there are too many materialistic activities by the people in general all over the world, there is no wonder that a person or a nation attacks another person or nation on slight provocation. That is the rule of this age of Kali or quarrel. The atmosphere is already polluted with corruption of all description, and everyone knows it well. There are so many unwanted literatures full of materialistic ideas of sense gratification. The people in general want to read (that is a natural instinct), but because their minds are polluted they want such literatures. Under the circumstances, transcendental literature like *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* will not only diminish the activities of the corrupt mind of the people in general, but also it will supply food for their hankering after reading some interesting literature. In the beginning they may not like it because one suffering from jaundice is reluctant to take sugar-candy, but we should know that sugar-candy is the only remedy for the jaundice. Similarly, let there be systematic propaganda for popularizing reading of the *Bhagavad-gītā* and the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* which will act like sugar-candy for the jaundice-like condition of sense gratification. When men have a taste for this literature, the other literatures, which are catering poison to society, will then automatically cease.

We are sure, therefore, that everyone in the human society will welcome *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, even though it is now presented with so many faults, for it is recommended by Śrī Nārada, who has very kindly appeared in this chapter.

TEXT 12

नैकर्म्यमप्यच्युतभाववर्जितं

न शोभते ज्ञानमलं निरञ्जनम् ।

कृतः पुनः शश्वदमद्रमीश्वरे

न चार्पितं कर्म यदप्यकारणम् ॥१२॥

*naiṣkarmyam apy acyuta-bhāva-varjitaṁ
na śobhate jñānam alam nirāñjanam
kutaḥ punaḥ śaśvad amadrāmīśvare
na cārpitaṁ karma yad apy akāraṇam*

naiṣkarmyam—self-realization, being freed from the reactions of fruitive work; *api*—in spite of; *acyuta*—the infallible Lord; *bhāva*—conception; *varjitaṁ*—devoid of; *na*—does not; *śobhate*—look well; *jñānam*—transcendental knowledge; *alam*—by and by; *nirāñjanam*—free from designations; *kutaḥ*—where is; *punaḥ*—again; *śaśvat*—always; *ahadram*—uncongenial; *īśvare*—unto the Lord; *na*—not; *ca*—and; *arpitaṁ*—offered; *karma*—fruitive work; *yat api*—what is; *akāraṇam*—not fruitive.

TRANSLATION

Knowledge of self-realization, even though freed from all material affinity, does not look well if devoid of a conception of the Infallible [God]. What, then, is the use of fruitive activities, which are naturally painful from the very beginning and transient by nature, if they are not utilized for the devotional service of the Lord?

PURPORT

As referred to above, not only ordinary literatures devoid of the transcendental glorification of the Lord are condemned, but also Vedic literatures and speculation on the subject of impersonal Brahman when they are devoid of devotional service. When speculation on the impersonal Brahman is condemned on the above ground, then what to speak of ordinary fruitive work which is not meant to fulfill the aim of devotional service. Such speculative knowledge and fruitive work cannot lead one to the goal of perfection. Fruitive work in which almost all people in general are engaged is always painful either in the beginning or at the end. It can

only be fruitful when made subservient to the devotional service of the Lord. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* also it is confirmed that the result of such fruitive work may be offered for the service of the Lord, otherwise it leads to material bondage. The bona fide enjoyer of the fruitive work is the Personality of Godhead, and thus when it is engaged for the sense gratification of the living beings, it becomes an acute source of trouble.

TEXT 13

अथो महाभाग भवानमोघदृक्

शुचिश्रवाः सत्यरतो धृतव्रतः ।

उरुक्रमस्याखिलबन्धमुक्तये

समाधिनानुसर तद्विचेष्टितम् ॥१३॥

*atho mahā-bhāga bhavān amogha-dṛk
śuci-śravāḥ satya-rato dhṛta-vrataḥ
urukramasyākhila-bandha-muktaye
samādhinānusara tad-vicēṣṭitam*

atho—therefore; *mahā-bhāga*—highly fortunate; *bhavān*—yourself; *amogha-dṛk*—the perfect seer; *śuci*—spotless; *śravāḥ*—famous; *satya-rataḥ*—having taken the vow of truthfulness; *dhṛta-vrataḥ*—fixed in spiritual qualities; *urukramasya*—of the one who performs supernatural activities (God); *akhila*—universal; *bandha*—bondage; *muktaye*—for liberation from; *samādhinā*—by trance; *anusmara*—think repeatedly and then describe them; *tad-vicēṣṭitam*—various pastimes of the Lord.

TRANSLATION

O Vyāsadeva, your vision is completely perfect. Your good fame is spotless. You are firm in vow and situated in truthfulness. And thus you can think of the pastimes of the Lord in trance for the liberation of the people in general from all material bondage.

PURPORT

People in general have a taste for literatures by instinct. They want to hear and read from the authorities something about the unknown, but their taste is exploited by unfortunate literatures which are full of subject matter for satisfaction of the material senses. Such literatures contain different kinds of mundane poems and philosophical speculations, more or less under the influence of *māyā*, ending in sense gratification. These literatures, although worthless in the true sense of the term, are variously decorated to attract the attention of the less intelligent men. Thus the attracted living entities are more and more entangled in material bondage without hope of liberation for thousands and thousands of generations. Śrī Nārada Ṛṣi, being the best amongst the Vaiṣṇavas, is compassionate on such unfortunate victims of worthless literatures, and thus he advises Śrī Vyāsadeva to compose transcendental literature which is not only attractive but can also actually bring liberation from all kinds of bondage. Śrī Vyāsadeva or his representatives are qualified because they are rightly trained to see things in true perspective. Śrī Vyāsadeva and his representatives are pure in thought due to their spiritual enlightenment, fixed in their vows due to their devotional service and determined to deliver the fallen souls rotting in the material activities. The fallen souls are very eager to receive novel informations every day, and the transcendentalists like Vyāsadeva or Nārada can supply such eager people in general with unlimited news from the spiritual world. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* it is said that the material world is only a part of the whole creation and that this earth is only a fragment of the whole material world.

There are thousands and thousands of literary men all over the world, and they have created many, many thousands of literary works for the information of the people in general for thousands and thousands of years. Unfortunately none of them have brought peace and tranquility on the earth. This is due to a spiritual vacuum in those literatures; therefore the Vedic literatures, especially the *Bhagavad-gītā* and the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, are specifically recommended to the suffering humanity to bring about the desired effect of liberation from the pangs of material

civilization, which is eating the vital part of the human energy. The *Bhagavad-gītā* is the spoken message of the Lord Himself recorded by Vyāsadeva, and the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the transcendental narration of the activities of the same Lord Kṛṣṇa which alone can satisfy the hankering desires of the living being for eternal peace and liberation from miseries. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is, therefore, meant for all the living beings all over the universe for total liberation from all kinds of material bondage. Such transcendental narrations of the pastimes of the Lord can only be described by liberated souls like Vyāsadeva and his bona fide representatives who are completely merged in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. Only to such devotees do the pastimes of the Lord and their transcendental nature become automatically manifest by dint of devotional service. No one else can either know or describe the acts of the Lord, even if they speculate on the subject for many, many years. The descriptions of the *Bhāgavatam* are so precise and accurate that whatever has been predicted in this great literature about 5,000 years before is now exactly happening. Therefore, the vision of the author comprehends past, present and future. Such liberated persons like Vyāsadeva are not only perfect by the power of vision and wisdom, but also in aural reception, in thinking, feeling and all other sense activities. A liberated person possesses perfect senses, and with perfect senses only can one serve the sense-proprietor, Hṛṣīkeśa, Śrī Kṛṣṇa the Personality of Godhead. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is, therefore, the perfect description of the all-perfect Personality of Godhead by the all-perfect personality Śrīla Vyāsadeva, the compiler of the *Vedas*.

TEXT 14

ततोऽन्यथा किंचन यद्विवक्षतः
 पृथग्दृशस्तत्कृतरूपनामभिः
 न कर्हिचित्कापि च दुःस्थिता मति-
 लेभेत वाताहतनौरिवास्यदम् ॥१४॥

tato 'nyathā kiñcana yad vivakṣataḥ
 pṛthag dṛśas tat-kṛta-rūpa-nāmahīḥ
 na karhicit kvāpi ca duḥsthitā matir
 labheta vātā-hata-naur ivāspadam

tataḥ—from that; anyathā—apart; kiñcana—something; yat—whatsoever; vivakṣataḥ—desiring to describe; pṛthag—separately; dṛśaḥ—vision; tat-kṛta—reactionary to that; rūpa—form; nāmahīḥ—by names; na karhicit—never; kvāpi—any; ca—and; duḥsthitā matīḥ—oscillating mind; labheta—gains; vātā-hata—troubled by the wind; nauḥ—boat; iva—like; āspadam—place.

TRANSLATION

Whatever you desire to describe, which is separate in vision from the Lord, simply reacts, with different forms, names and results, to agitate the mind as the wind agitates a boat which has no resting place.

PURPORT

Śrī Vyāsadeva is the editor of all descriptions of the Vedic literatures, and thus he has described transcendental realization in different ways, namely by fruitive activities, speculative knowledge, mystic power and devotional service. Besides that, in his various *Purāṇas* he has recommended the worship of so many demigods in different forms and names. The result is that people in general are puzzled how to fix up their minds in the service of the Lord; they are always disturbed to find out the real path of self-realization. Śrīla Nārada is stressing this particular defect in the Vedic literatures compiled by Vyāsadeva, and thus he is trying to emphasize describing everything in relation with the Supreme Lord, and no one else. In fact, there is nothing existent except the Lord. The Lord is manifested in different expansions. He is the root of the complete tree. He is the stomach of the complete body. As such, pouring water on the root is the right process to water the tree, as much as feeding the stomach supplies energy to all the parts of the body. Śrīla Vyāsadeva should not have compiled any *Purāṇas* other than the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* because a slight deviation from that may create havoc for self-realization. If a slight deviation can create such havoc, then what to speak of deliberate expansion of the separatist idea from the Absolute Truth Personality of Godhead. The most

defective part of worshiping demigods is that it creates a definite conception of pantheism, ending disastrously in many religious sects detrimental to the progress of the principles of the *Bhāgavatam*, which alone can give the accurate direction for self-realization in eternal relation with the Personality of Godhead by devotional service in transcendental love. The example of the boat disturbed by whirling wind is suitable in this respect. The diverted mind of the pantheist can never reach to the perfection of self-realization due to the disturbed condition of the selection of object.

TEXT 15

जुगुप्सितं धर्मकृतेऽनुशासतः
 स्वामवरक्तस्य महान् व्यतिक्रमः ।
 यदाक्यतो धर्म इतीतरः स्थितो
 न मन्यते तस्य निवारणं जनः ॥१५॥

jugupsitaṁ dharma-kṛte 'nuśāsaṭaḥ
 sva-bhāva-raktasya mahān vyatikramaḥ
 yad-vāk'yato dharma itītarāḥ sthito
 na manyate tasya nivāraṇaṁ janaḥ

jugupsitaṁ—verily condemned; dharma-kṛte—for the matter of religion; anuśāsaṭaḥ—instruction; sva-bhāva-raktasya—naturally inclined; mahān—great; vyatikramaḥ—unreasonable; yat-vāk'yataḥ—under whose instruction; dharmāḥ—religion; itī—it is thus; itarāḥ—the people in general; sthitaḥ—fixed; na—do not; manyate—think; tasya—of that; nivāraṇam—prohibition; janaḥ—they.

TRANSLATION

The people in general are naturally inclined to enjoy, and you have encouraged them in that way in the name of religion. This is verily condemned and is quite unreasonable. Because they are guided under your instructions, they will accept such activities in the name of religion and will hardly care for prohibitions.

PURPORT

Śrīla Vyāsadeva's compilation of different Vedic literatures on the basis of regulated performances of fruitive activities as depicted in the *Mahābhārata* and other literature is condemned herewith by Śrīla Nārada. The human beings, by long material association, life after life, have a natural inclination, by practice, to endeavor to lord it over material energy. They have no sense of the responsibility of human life. This human form of life is a chance to get out of the clutches of illusory matter. The *Vedas* are meant for going back to Godhead, going back home. To revolve in the cycle of transmigration in a series of lives numbering 8,400,000 is an imprisoned life for the condemned conditioned souls. The human form of life is a chance to get out of this imprisoned life, and as such the only occupation of the human being is to reestablish his lost relationship with God. Under the circumstances, one should never be encouraged in making a plan for sense enjoyment in the name of religious functions. Such diversion of the human energy results in a misguided civilization. Śrīla Vyāsadeva is the authority in Vedic explanations in the *Mahābhārata*, etc., and his encouragement in sense enjoyment in some form or other is a great barrier for spiritual advancement because the people in general will not agree to renounce material activities which hold them in material bondage. At a certain stage of human civilization, such material activities in the name of religion (as sacrificing animals in the name of *yajña*) were too much rampant. The Lord incarnated Himself as Buddha and decried the authority of the *Vedas* to stop animal sacrifice in the name of religion. This was foreseen by Nārada, and therefore he condemned such literatures. The flesh-eaters still continue to perform animal sacrifice before some demigod or goddess in the name of religion because in some of the Vedic literatures such regulated sacrifice is recommended. They are so recommended to discourage flesh-eating, but gradually the purpose of such religious activities is forgotten, and the slaughterhouse becomes prominent. This is because foolish materialistic men do not care to listen to others who are actually in a position to explain the Vedic rites.

In the *Vedas* it is distinctly said that the perfection of life is never to be

attained either by voluminous work, or by accumulation of wealth or even by increasing the number of population. But it is so attained only by renunciation. The materialistic men do not care to listen to such injunctions. According to them, the so-called renounced order of life is meant for those who are unable to earn their livelihood because of some corporeal defects, or for persons who have failed to achieve prosperity in family life.

In histories like the *Mahābhārata*, of course, there are topics on transcendental subjects along with material topics. The *Bhagavad-gītā* is there in the *Mahābhārata*. The whole idea of the *Mahābhārata* is culminated in the ultimate instructions of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, that one should relinquish all other engagements and should engage oneself solely and fully in surrendering unto the lotus feet of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. But men with materialistic tendencies are more attracted to politics, economics and philanthropic activities mentioned in the *Mahābhārata* than to the principal topic, namely the *Bhagavad-gītā*. This compromising spirit of Vyāsadeva is directly condemned by Nārada, who advises him to directly proclaim that the prime necessity of human life is to realize one's eternal relation with the Lord and thus surrender unto Him without delay.

A patient suffering from a particular type of malady is almost always inclined to accept eatables which are forbidden for him. The expert physician does not make any compromise with the patient by allowing him to take partially what he should not at all take. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* it is also said that a man attached to fruitive work should not be discouraged from his occupation, for gradually he may be elevated to the position of self-realization. This is sometimes applicable for those who are only dry empiric philosophers without spiritual realization. But those who are in the devotional line need not be always so advised.

TEXT 16

विचक्षणोऽस्यार्हति वेदितुं विभो-
रनन्तपारस्य निवृत्तितः सुखम् ।
प्रवर्तमानस्य गुणैरनात्मन-
स्ततो भवान्दर्शय चेष्टितं विभोः ॥१६॥

*vicakṣaṇo'syārhati veditum vibhor
ananta-pārasya nivṛtitaḥ sukham
pravarta-mānasya guṇair anātmanas
tato bhavān darśaya ceṣṭitam vibhoḥ*

vicakṣaṇaḥ—very expert; *asya*—of him; *arhati*—deserves; *veditum*—to understand; *vibhoḥ*—of the Lord; *ananta-pārasya*—of the unlimited; *nivṛtitaḥ*—retired from; *sukham*—material happiness; *pravarta-mānasya*—those who are attached to; *guṇaiḥ*—by the material qualities; *anātmanas*—devoid of knowledge in spiritual value; *tataḥ*—therefore; *bhavān*—your goodness; *darśaya*—show the ways; *ceṣṭitam*—activities; *vibhoḥ*—of the Lord.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Lord is unlimited. Only a very expert personality, retired from the activities of material happiness, deserves to understand this knowledge of spiritual values. Therefore those who are not so well situated, due to material attachment, should be shown the ways of transcendental realization, by your goodness, through descriptions of the transcendental activities of the Supreme Lord.

PURPORT

Theological science is a difficult subject, especially when it deals with the transcendental nature of God. It is not a subject matter to be understood by persons who are too much attached to material activities. Only the very expert, who have almost retired from materialistic activities by culture of spiritual knowledge, can be admitted to the study of this great science. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* it is clearly stated that out of many hundreds and thousands of men only one person deserves to enter into transcendental realization. And out of many thousands of such transcendentially realized persons, only a few can understand the theological science specifically dealing with God as a person. Śrī Vyāsadeva is therefore advised by Nārada to describe the science of God directly by relating His transcendental activities. Vyāsadeva is himself a personality expert in this science, and he

is unattached to material enjoyment. Therefore he is the right person to describe it, and Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the son of Vyāsadeva, is the right person to receive it. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the topmost theological science, and therefore it can react on the laymen as medicinal doses. Because it contains the transcendental activities of the Lord, there is no difference between the Lord and the literature. The literature is the factual literary incarnation of the Lord. So the laymen can hear the narration of the activities of the Lord. Thereby they are able to associate with the Lord and thus gradually become purified from material diseases. The expert devotees also can discover novel ways and means to convert the nondevotees in terms of particular time and circumstance. Devotional service is dynamic activity, and the expert devotees can find out competent means to inject it into the dull brains of the materialistic population. Such transcendental activities of the devotees for the service of the Lord can bring a new order of life to the foolish society of materialistic men. Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His subsequent followers exhibited expert dexterity in this connection. By following the same method, one can bring the materialistic men of this age of quarrel into order for peaceful life and transcendental realization.

TEXT 17

त्यक्त्वा स्वधर्मं चरणाम्बुजं हरे-
भजन्नपकोऽय पतेत्ततो यदि ।
यत्र क्व वामद्रमभूद्दुष्य किं
को वार्थ आप्तोऽभजतां स्वधर्मतः ॥१७॥

*tyaktvā sva-dharmam caraṇāmbujam harer
bhajann apakvo'tha patet tato yadi
yatra kva vābhadram abhūd amuṣya kiṁ
ko vārtha āpto'bhajatām sva-dharmataḥ*

tyaktvā—having forsaken; *sva-dharmam*—one's own occupational engagement; *carāṇā-ambujam*—the lotus feet; *hareḥ*—of Hari (the Lord); *bhajan*—in the course of devotional service; *apakvaḥ*—immature; *atha*—for the matter of; *patet*—falls down; *tataḥ*—from that place; *yadi*—if; *yatra*—whereupon; *kva*—what sort of; *vā*—or (used sarcastically); *abhadram*—unfavorable; *abhūt*—shall happen; *amuṣya*—of him; *kiṁ*—nothing; *kaḥ vā arthaḥ*—what interest; *āptaḥ*—obtained; *abhajatām*—of the nondevotee; *sva-dharmataḥ*—being engaged in occupational service.

TRANSLATION

One who has forsaken his material occupations to engage in the devotional service of the Lord may sometimes fall down while in an immature stage, yet there is no danger of his being unsuccessful. On the other hand, a nondevotee, though fully engaged in occupational duties, does not gain anything.

PURPORT

As far as the duties of mankind are concerned, there are innumerable duties. Every man is duty-bound not only to his parents, family members, society, country, humanity, other living beings, the demigods, etc., but also to the great philosophers, poets, scientists, etc. It is enjoined in the scriptures that one can relinquish all such duties and surrender unto the service of the Lord. So if one does so and becomes successful in the discharge of his devotional service unto the Lord, it is well and good. But it so happens sometimes that one surrenders himself unto the service of the Lord by some temporary sentiment, and in the long run, due to so many other reasons, he falls down from the path of service by undesirable association. There are so many instances of this in the histories. Bharata Mahārāja was obliged to take his birth as a stag due to his intimate attachment to a stag. He thought of this stag when he died. As such, in the next birth he became a stag, although he did not forget the incidence of his previous birth. Similarly, Citraketu also fell down due to his offenses at the feet of Śiva. But in spite of all this, the stress is given here to surrendering unto the lotus feet of the Lord, even if there is a chance of falling down. Because, even though one falls down from the prescribed duties of devotional service, he will never forget the lotus feet of the Lord. Once

engaged in the devotional service of the Lord, one will continue the service in all circumstances. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* it is said that even a small quantity of devotional service can save one from the most dangerous position. There are many instances of such examples in history. Ajāmila is one of them. Ajāmila in his early life was a devotee, but in his youth he fell down. Still he was saved by the Lord at the end.

TEXT 18

तस्यैव हेतोः प्रयतेत कोविदो
न लभ्यते यद्भ्रमताम्यपर्येषः ।
तद्वृत्त्यते दुःखवदन्यतः सुखं
कालेन सर्वत्र गभीरंरहसा ॥१८॥

*tasyaiva hetoḥ prayateta kovido
na labhyate yad-bhramatām upary adhaḥ
tal-labhyate duḥkhavad anyataḥ sukham
kālena sarvatra gabhīra-raṁhasā*

tasya—for that purpose; *eva*—only; *hetoḥ*—reason; *prayateta*—should endeavor; *kovidaḥ*—one who is philosophically inclined; *na*—not; *labhyate*—is not obtained; *yat*—what; *bhramatām*—wandering; *upari adhaḥ*—from top to bottom; *tat*—that; *labhyate*—can be obtained; *duḥkhavat*—like the miseries; *anyataḥ*—as a result of previous work; *sukham*—sense enjoyment; *kālena*—in course of time; *sarvatra*—everywhere; *gabhīra*—subtle; *raṁhasā*—progress.

TRANSLATION

Persons who are actually intelligent and philosophically inclined should endeavor only for that purposeful end which is not obtainable even by wandering from the topmost planet [Brahmaloka] down to the lowest planet [Pātāla]. As far as happiness derived from sense enjoyment is concerned, it can be obtained automatically in course of time, just as in course of time we obtain miseries even though we do not desire them.

PURPORT

Every man everywhere is trying to obtain the greatest amount of sense enjoyment by various endeavors. Some of them are busy engaged in trade, industry, economic development, political supremacy, etc., and some of them are engaged in fruitive work to become happy in the next life by attaining higher planets. It is said that in the moon the inhabitants are fit for greater sense enjoyment by drinking *soma-rasa*, and the *Pitṛloka* is obtained by good charitable work. So there are various programs for sense enjoyment, either during this life or in the life after death. Some are trying to reach the moon or other planets by some mechanical arrangement, for they are very anxious to get into such planets without doing good work. But it is not to happen. By the law of the Supreme, different places are meant for different grades of living beings according to the work they might have performed. By good work only, as prescribed in the scriptures, one can obtain birth in a good family, opulence, good education and good bodily features. We see also that even in this life one obtains a good education or money or bodily beauty. Similarly, in our next birth we get such desirable positions only by good work. Otherwise, it would not so happen that two persons born in the same place, at the same time are seen differently placed according to previous work. But all such material positions are not permanent. The positions in the topmost Brahmaloka and in the lowest Pātāla are also changeable according to our own work. The philosophically inclined person must not be tempted by such changeable positions. He should try to get into the permanent life of bliss and knowledge where he will not be forced to come back again to the miserable material world, either in this or that planet. Miseries and mixed happiness are two features of material life, and they are obtained in Brahmaloka and in other *lokas* also. They are obtained in the life of the demigods and also in the life of the dogs and hogs. The miseries and mixed happiness of all living beings are only of different degree and quality, but no one is free from the miseries of birth, death, old age and disease. Similarly, everyone has his destined happiness also. No one can get more or less of these things simply by personal endeavors. Even if they are obtained, they can be lost again. One should not, therefore, waste time with these flimsy things, but

one should only endeavor to go back to Godhead. That should be the mission of everyone's life.

TEXT 19

न वै जनो जातु कथंचनाव्रजे-
न्युकुन्दसेव्यन्यवदङ्ग संसृतिम् ।
स्मरन्मुकुन्दाङ्घ्रियुपगृह्णं पुन-
विहातुमिच्छेन्न रसग्रहो जनः ॥१९॥

*na vai jano jātu kathañcanāvrajen
mukunda-sevy anyavad aṅga saṁsṛtim
smaran mukundāṅghry-upagūhanam punar
vihātum icchenna rasa-graho janah*

na—never; *vai*—certainly; *janah*—a person; *jātu*—at any time; *kathañcana*—somehow or other; *āvrajet*—does not undergo; *mukunda-sevi*—the devotee of the Lord; *anyavat*—like others; *aṅga*—O my dear; *saṁsṛtim*—material existence; *smaran*—remembering; *mukunda-aṅghri*—the lotus feet of the Lord; *upagūhanam*—embracing; *punaḥ*—again; *vihātum*—willing to give up; *icchet*—desire; *na*—never; *rasagrahaḥ*—one who has relished the mellow; *janah*—person.

TRANSLATION

My dear Vyāsa, even though a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa sometimes falls down somehow or other, he certainly does not undergo material existence like others [fruitive workers, etc.] because a person who has once relished the taste of the lotus feet of the Lord can do nothing but remember that ecstasy again and again.

PURPORT

A devotee of the Lord automatically becomes uninterested in the enchantment of material existence because he is *rasa-graha*, or one who has tasted the sweetness of the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa. There are certainly many instances where devotees of the Lord have fallen down due to uncongenial association, just like fruitive workers, who are always prone to degradation. But even though he falls down, a devotee is never to be considered the same as a fallen *karmī*. A *karmī* suffers the result of his own fruitive reactions, whereas a devotee is reformed by chastisement directed by the Lord Himself. The sufferings of an orphan and the sufferings of a beloved child of a king are not one and the same. An orphan is really poor because he has no one to take care of him, but a beloved son of a rich man, although he appears to be on the same level as the orphan, is always under the vigilance of his capable father. A devotee of the Lord, due to wrong association, sometimes imitates the fruitive workers. The fruitive workers want to lord it over the material world. Similarly, a neophyte devotee foolishly thinks of accumulating some material power in exchange for devotional service. Such foolish devotees are sometimes put into difficulty by the Lord Himself. As a special favor, He may remove all material paraphernalia. By such action, the bewildered devotee is forsaken by all friends and relatives, and so he comes to his senses again by the mercy of the Lord and is set right to execute his devotional service.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* it is also said that such fallen devotees are given a chance to take birth in a family of highly qualified *brāhmaṇas* or in a rich mercantile family. A devotee in such a position is not as fortunate as one who is chastised by the Lord and put into a position seemingly of helplessness. The devotee who becomes helpless by the will of the Lord is more fortunate than those who are born in good families. The fallen devotees born in a good family may forget the lotus feet of the Lord because they are less fortunate, but the devotee who is put into a forlorn condition is more fortunate because he swiftly returns to the lotus feet of the Lord, thinking himself helpless all round.

Pure devotional service is so spiritually relishable that a devotee becomes automatically uninterested in material enjoyment. That is the sign of perfection in progressive devotional service. A pure devotee continuously remembers the lotus feet of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and does not forget Him even for a moment, not even in exchange for all the opulence of the three worlds.

TEXT 20

इदं हि विश्वं भगवानिवेतरो
यतो जगत्स्थाननिरोधसम्भवाः ।
तद्धि स्वयं वेद भवांस्तथापि ते
प्रादेशमात्रं भवतः प्रदर्शितम् ॥२०॥

*idaṁ hi viśvaṁ bhagavān ivetaro
yato jagat-sthāna-nirodha-sambhavāḥ
taddhi svayaṁ veda bhavāṁs tathāpi te
prādeśa-mātram bhavataḥ pradarsitam*

idaṁ—this; *hi*—all; *viśvam*—cosmos; *bhagavān*—the Supreme Lord; *iva*—almost the same; *itaraḥ*—different from; *yataḥ*—from whom; *jagat*—the worlds; *sthāna*—exist; *nirodha*—annihilation; *sambhavāḥ*—creation; *tat* *hi*—all about; *svayaṁ*—personally; *veda*—know; *bhavān*—your good self; *tathāpi*—still; *te*—unto your; *prādeśa-mātram*—a synopsis only; *bhavataḥ*—unto you; *pradarsitam*—explained.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Lord Personality of Godhead is Himself this cosmos, and still He is aloof from it. From Him only this cosmic manifestation has emanated, in Him it rests, and unto Him it enters after annihilation. Your good self knows all about this. I have only given a synopsis.

PURPORT

For a pure devotee, the conception of Mukunda Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is both personal and impersonal. The impersonal cosmic situation is also Mukunda because it is the emanation of the energy of Mukunda. For example, a tree is a complete unit, whereas the leaves and the branches of the tree are emanated parts and parcels of the tree. The leaves and branches of the tree are also the tree, but the tree itself is neither the leaves nor the branches. The Vedic version that the whole cosmic creation is nothing but Brahman means that since everything is emanating from the Supreme Brahman, nothing is apart from Him. Similarly, the part and parcel hands and legs are called the body, but the body as the whole unit is neither the hands nor the legs. The Lord is the transcendental form of eternity, cognition and beauty. And thus the creation of the energy of the Lord appears to be partially eternal, full of knowledge and beautiful also. The captivated conditioned souls under the influence of the external energy *māyā* are therefore entrapped in the network of the material nature. They accept this as all in all, for they have no information of the Lord who is the primeval cause. Nor have they information that the parts and parcels of the body, being detached from the whole body, are no longer the same hand or leg as when attached to the body. Similarly, a godless civilization detached from the transcendental loving service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is just like a detached hand or leg. Such parts and parcels may appear like hands and legs, but they have no efficiency. The devotee of the Lord, Śrīla Vyāsadeva, knows this very well. He is further advised by Śrīla Nārada to expand the idea so that the entrapped conditioned souls may take lessons from him to understand the Supreme Lord as the primeval cause.

According to the Vedic version, the Lord is naturally fully powerful, and thus His supreme energies are always perfect and identical with Him. Both the spiritual and the material skies and their paraphernalia are emanations of the internal and external energies of the Lord. External energy is comparatively inferior, whereas the internal potency is superior. The superior energy is living force, and therefore she is completely identical, but the external energy, being inert, is partially identical. But both the energies are neither equal to nor greater than the Lord, who is the generator of all energies; such energies are always under His control, exactly as electrical energy, however powerful it may be, is always under the control of the engineer.

The human being and all other living beings are products of His internal energies. Thus the living being is also identical with the Lord. But he is never equal or superior to the Personality of Godhead. The Lord and

living beings are all individual persons. With the help of the material energies the living beings are also creating something, but none of their creations are equal or superior to the creations of the Lord. The human being may create a small playful sputnik and may throw it into outer space, but that does not mean that he can create a planet like the earth or moon and float it in the air as the Lord does. Men with a poor fund of knowledge claim to be equal to the Lord. They are never equal to the Lord. This is never to be. The human being, after attaining complete perfection, may achieve a large percentage of the qualities of the Lord (say up to 78%), but it is never possible to surpass the Lord or to become equal with Him. In a diseased condition only the foolish being claims to be one with the Lord and thus becomes misled by the illusory energy. The misguided living beings, therefore, must accept the supremacy of the Lord and agree to render loving service to Him. For this they have been created. Without this, there cannot be any peace or tranquility in the world. Śrīla Vyāsadeva is advised by Śrīla Nārada to expand this idea in the *Bhāgavatam*. In the *Bhāgavad-gītā* also the same idea is explained: surrender fully unto the lotus feet of the Lord. That is the only business of the perfect human being.

TEXT 21

त्वमात्मनाऽऽत्मानमवेक्ष्यमोषदृक्
परस्य पुंसः परमात्मनः कलाम् ।
अजं प्रजातं जगतः शिवाय त-
न्महानुभावाभ्युदयोऽधिगण्यताम् ॥२१॥

*tvam ātmanā'ātmanam avehy amogha-dṛk
parasya puṁsaḥ paramātmanaḥ kalām
ajam prajātaṁ jagataḥ śivāya tan
mahānubhāvābhyudayo'dhiganyatām*

tvam—yourself; *ātmanā*—by your own self; *ātmanam*—the Supersoul; *avehi*—search out; *amogha-dṛk*—one who has perfect vision; *parasya*—of the Transcendence; *puṁsaḥ*—Personality of Godhead; *paramātmanaḥ*—of the Supreme Lord; *kalām*—plenary part; *ajam*—birthless; *prajātam*—have taken birth; *jagataḥ*—of the world; *śivāya*—for the well-being; *tat*—that; *mahānubhāva*—of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *abhyudayaḥ*—pastimes; *adhiganyatām*—describe most vividly.

TRANSLATION

Your goodness has perfect vision. You yourself can know the Supersoul Personality of Godhead because you are present as the plenary portion of the Lord. Although you are birthless, you have appeared on this earth for the well-being of all people. Please, therefore, describe the transcendental pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa more vividly.

PURPORT

Śrīla Vyāsadeva is the empowered plenary portion incarnation of the Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He descended by his causeless mercy to deliver the fallen souls in the material world. The fallen and forgotten souls are detached from the transcendental loving service of the Lord. The living entities are parts and parcels of the Lord, and they are eternally servitors of the Lord. All the Vedic literatures are, therefore, put into systematic order for the benefit of the fallen souls, and it is the duty of the fallen souls to take advantage of such literatures and be freed from the bondage of material existence. Although formally Śrīla Nārada Ṛṣi is his spiritual master, Śrīla Vyāsadeva is not at all dependent on a spiritual master because in essence he is the spiritual master of everyone else. But because he is doing the work of an *ācārya*, he has taught us by his own conduct that one must have a spiritual master, even though he be God Himself. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Lord Śrī Rāma and Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, all incarnations of Godhead, accepted formal spiritual masters, although by Their transcendental nature They were cognizant of all knowledge. In order to direct people in general to the lotus feet of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, He Himself in the incarnation of Vyāsadeva is delineating the transcendental pastimes of the Lord.

TEXT 22

इदं हि पुंसस्तपसः श्रुतस्य वा
स्विष्टस्य व्रक्तस्य च बुद्धिदत्तयोः ।
अविच्युतोऽर्थः कविभिर्निरूपितो
यदुत्तमश्लोकगुणानुवर्णनम् ॥२२॥

*idam hi puṁsas tapasaḥ śrutasya vā
sviṣṭasya sūktasya ca buddhi-dattayoḥ
avicyuto 'rthaḥ kavibhir nirūpito
yad-uttamaśloka-guṇānuvarṇanam*

idam—this; *hi*—certainly; *puṁsaḥ*—of everyone; *tapasaḥ*—by dint of austerities; *śrutasya*—by dint of study of the Vedas; *vā*—or; *sviṣṭasya*—sacrifice; *sūktasya*—spiritual education; *ca*—and; *buddhi*—culture of knowledge; *dattayoḥ*—charity; *avicyutaḥ*—infallible; *arthaḥ*—interest; *kavibhiḥ*—by the recognized learned fellow; *nirūpitaḥ*—concluded; *yat*—what; *uttamaśloka*—the Lord, who is described by choice poetry; *guṇa-anuvarṇanam*—description of the transcendental qualities of.

TRANSLATION

Learned circles have positively concluded that the infallible purpose of the advancement of knowledge, namely austerities, study of the Vedas, sacrifice, chanting of hymns and charity, culminates in the transcendental descriptions of the Lord, who is defined in choice poetry.

PURPORT

Human intellect is developed for advancement of learning in art, science, philosophy, physics, chemistry, psychology, economics, politics, etc. By culture of such knowledge the human society can attain perfection of life. This perfection of life culminates in the realization of the Supreme Being Viṣṇu. The *Śruti* therefore directs that those who are actually advanced in learning should aspire for the service of Lord Viṣṇu. Unfortunately persons who are enamored by the external beauty of *Viṣṇu-māyā* do not understand that culmination of perfection or self-realization depends on Viṣṇu. *Viṣṇu-māyā* means sense enjoyment, which is transient and miserable. Those who are entrapped by *Viṣṇu-māyā* utilize advancement of knowledge for sense enjoyment. Śrī Nārada Muni has explained that all paraphernalia of the cosmic universe is but an emanation from the Lord out of His different energies because the Lord has set in motion, by His inconceivable energy, actions and reactions of the created manifestation. They have come to be out of His energy, they rest on His energy, and after annihilation they merge into Him. Nothing is, therefore, different from Him, but at the same time the Lord is always different from them.

When advancement of knowledge is applied in the service of the Lord, the whole process becomes absolute. The Personality of Godhead, His transcendental name, fame, glory, etc., are all nondifferent from Him. Therefore, all the sages and devotees of the Lord have recommended that the subject matter of art, science, philosophy, physics, chemistry, psychology and all other branches of knowledge should be wholly and solely applied in the service of the Lord. Art, literature, poetry, painting, etc., may be used in glorifying the Lord. The fiction writers, poets and celebrated literateurs are generally engaged in writing of sensuous subjects, but if they turn towards the service of the Lord they can describe the transcendental pastimes of the Lord. Vālmīki was a great poet, and similarly Vyāsadeva is a great writer, and both of them have absolutely engaged themselves in delineating the transcendental activities of the Lord, and by doing so they have become immortal. Similarly, science and philosophy also should be applied in the service of the Lord. There is no use presenting dry speculative theories for sense gratification. Philosophy and science should be engaged to establish the glory of the Lord. Advanced people are eager to understand the Absolute Truth through the medium of science, and therefore a great scientist should endeavor to prove the existence of the Lord on a scientific basis. Similarly, philosophical speculations should be utilized to establish the Supreme Truth as sentient and all-powerful. Similarly, all other branches of knowledge should always be engaged in the service of the Lord. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* also the same

is affirmed. All "knowledge" not engaged in the service of the Lord is but nescience. Real utilization of advanced knowledge is to establish the glories of the Lord, and that is the real import. Scientific knowledge engaged in the service of the Lord and all similar activities are all factually *Hari-kīrtana* or glorification of the Lord.

TEXT 23

अहं पुरातीतमवेऽभवं मुने
दास्यास्तु कस्याश्चन वेदवादिनाम् ।
निरूपितो बालक एव योगिनां
शुश्रूषणे प्रावृषि निर्विचिञ्चताम् ॥२३॥

*ahaṁ purātītabhave 'bhavam mune
dāsyāstu kasyāścana veda-vādinām
nirūpito bālaḥ eva yoginām
śuśrūṣaṇe prāvṛṣi nirvikṣatām*

ahaṁ—I; *purā*—formerly; *atītabhave*—in the previous millennium; *abhavam*—became; *mune*—of the muni; *dāsyāḥ*—of the maidservant; *tu*—but; *kasyāścana*—certain; *veda-vādinām*—of the followers of *Vedānta*; *nirūpitaḥ*—engaged; *bālaḥ*—boy servant; *eva*—only; *yoginām*—of the devotees; *śuśrūṣaṇe*—in the service of; *prāvṛṣi*—during the four months of the rainy season; *nirvikṣatām*—living together.

TRANSLATION

O Muni, in the last millennium I was born as the son of a certain maidservant engaged in the service of brāhmanas who were following the principles of *Vedānta*. When they were living together during the four months of the rainy season, I was engaged in their personal service.

PURPORT

The wonder of an atmosphere surcharged with devotional service of the Lord is briefly described herein by Śrī Nārada Muni. He was the son of the most insignificant parentage. He was not properly educated. Still, because his complete energy was engaged in the service of the Lord, he became an immortal sage. Such is the powerful action of devotional service. The living entities are the marginal energy of the Lord, and therefore they are meant for being properly utilized in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. When this is not done, it is called *māyā*. Therefore the illusion of *māyā* is at once dissipated as soon as one's full energy is converted in the service of the Lord instead of in sense enjoyment. From the personal example of Śrī Nārada Muni in his previous birth, it is clear that the service of the Lord begins with the service of the Lord's bona fide servants. The Lord says that the service of His servants is greater than His personal service. Service of the devotee is more valuable than the service of the Lord. One should therefore choose a bona fide servant of the Lord constantly engaged in His service and accept such a servant as the spiritual master and engage himself in his (the spiritual master's) service. Such a spiritual master is the transparent medium by which to visualize the Lord who is beyond the conception of the material senses. By service of the bona fide spiritual master, the Lord consents to reveal Himself in proportion to the service rendered. Utilization of the human energy in the service of the Lord is the progressive path of salvation. The whole cosmic creation becomes at once identical with the Lord as soon as service in relation with the Lord is rendered under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master. The expert spiritual master knows the art of utilizing everything to glorify the Lord, and therefore under his guidance the whole world can be turned into the spiritual abode by the divine grace of the Lord's servant.

TEXT 24

ते मय्यपेताखिलचापलेऽर्भके
दान्तेऽवृत्तक्रीडनकेऽनुवर्तिनि ।

चक्रुः कृपां यद्यपि तुल्यदर्शनाः
शुश्रूषमाणे मुनयोऽल्पभाषिणि ॥२४॥

te mayy apeta-khīla-cāpale'rbhake
dānte'dhṛta-kṛḍanake'nuvartini
cakruḥ kṛpām yadyapi tulya-darśanāḥ
śuśrūṣamāṇe munayo'pa-bhāṣiṇi

te—they; mayi—unto me; apeta—not having undergone; akhīla—all kinds of; cāpale—proclivities; arbhake—unto a boy; dānte—having controlled the senses; adhṛta-kṛḍanake—without being accustomed to sporting habits; anuvartini—obedient; cakruḥ—did bestow; kṛpām—causeless mercy; yadyapi—although; tulya-darśanāḥ—impartial by nature; śuśrūṣamāṇe—unto the faithful; munayah—the muni followers of the Vedānta; alpa-bhāṣiṇi—one who does not speak more than required.

TRANSLATION

Although they were impartial by nature, those followers of the Vedānta blessed me with their causeless mercy. As far as I was concerned, I was self-controlled and had no attachment for sports, even though I was a boy. In addition, I was not naughty, and I did not speak more than required.

PURPORT

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* the Lord says, "All the Vedas are searching after Me." Lord Śrī Caitanya says that in the Vedas the subject matters are only three, namely to establish the relation of the living entities with the Personality of Godhead, perform the relative duties in devotional service and thus achieve the ultimate goal, back to Godhead. As such, *Vedānta-vādī*, or the followers of the Vedānta, indicates the pure devotees of the Personality of Godhead. Such *Vedānta-vādī* or the *bhakti-vedāntas* are impartial in distributing the transcendental knowledge of devotional service. To them no one is enemy or friend; no one is educated or uneducated. No one is especially favorable, and no one is unfavorable. The *bhakti-vedāntas* see the people in general are wasting time in false sensuous things. Their business is to get the ignorant mass of people to reestablish the lost relationship with the Personality of Godhead. By such endeavor, even the most forgotten soul is roused up to the sense of spiritual life, and thus being initiated by the *bhakti-vedāntas*, the people in general gradually progress on the path of transcendental realization. So the *Vedānta-vādīs* initiated the boy even before he became self-controlled and was detached from childish sporting, etc. But before the initiation, he (the boy) became more and more advanced in discipline, which is very essential for one who wishes to make progress in the line. In the system of *varṇāśrama-dharma*, which is the beginning of actual human life, small boys after five years of age are sent to become *brahmacārī* at the guru's *āśrama* where these things are systematically taught to boys, be they king's sons or sons of ordinary citizens. The training was compulsory not only to create good citizens of the state, but also to prepare the boy's future life for spiritual realization. The irresponsible life of sense enjoyment was unknown to the children of the followers of the *varṇāśrama* system. The boy was even injected with spiritual acumen before being placed by the father in the womb of the mother. Both the father and the mother were responsible for the boy's success in being liberated from the material bondage. That is the process of successful family planning. It is to beget children for complete perfection. Without being self-controlled, without being disciplinary and

without being fully obedient, no one can become successful in following the instructions of the spiritual master, and without doing so, no one is able to go back to Godhead.

TEXT 25

उच्छिष्टलेपाननुभोदितो द्विजैः
सकृत्स भुञ्जे तदपास्तकिल्बिषः ।
एवं प्रवृत्तस्य विशुद्धचेतस-
स्तद्धर्म एवात्मरुचिः प्रजायते ॥२५॥

ucchiṣṭa-lepān anumodito dvijaiḥ
sakṛt sma bhuñje tad-apāsta-kilbiṣaḥ
evaṁ pravṛttasya viśuddha-cetasas
tad-dharma evātma-ruciḥ prajāyate

ucchiṣṭa lepān—the remnants of foodstuff; anumoditah—being permitted; dvijaiḥ—by the Vedāntist brāhmaṇas; sakṛt—once upon a time; sma—in the past; bhuñje—took; tat—by that action; apāsta—eliminated; kilbiṣaḥ—all sins; evam—thus; pravṛttasya—being engaged; viśuddha-cetasas—of one whose mind is purified; tat—that particular; dharma—nature; eva—certainly; ātma-ruciḥ—transcendental attraction; prajāyate—was manifested.

TRANSLATION

Once only, by their permission, I took the remnants of their food, and by so doing all my sins were at once eradicated. Thus being engaged, I became purified in heart, and at that time the very nature of the transcendentalist became attractive to me.

PURPORT

Pure devotion is as much infectious, in a good sense, as infectious diseases. A pure devotee is cleared from all kinds of sins. The Personality of Godhead is the purest entity, and unless one is equally pure from the infection of material qualities, one cannot become a pure devotee of the Lord. The *bhakti-vedāntas* as above mentioned were pure devotees, and the boy became infected with their qualities of purity by their association and by eating once the remnants of the foodstuff taken by them. Such remnants may be taken even without permission of the pure devotees. There are sometimes pseudo-devotees, and one should be very much cautious about them. There are many things which hinder one from entering devotional service. But by the association of pure devotees all these obstacles are removed. The neophyte devotee becomes practically enriched with the transcendental qualities of the pure devotee, which means attraction for the Personality of Godhead's name, fame, quality, pastimes, etc. Infection of the qualities of the pure devotee means to imbibe the taste of pure devotion always in the transcendental activities of the Personality of Godhead. This transcendental taste at once makes all material things distasteful. Therefore a pure devotee is not at all attracted by material activities. After the elimination of all sins or obstacles on the path of devotional service, one can become attracted, one can have steadiness, one can have perfect taste, one can have transcendental emotions, and at last one can be situated on the plane of loving service of the Lord. All these stages develop by the association of pure devotees, and that is the purport of this stanza. (continued in next issue)



ISKCON NEWS

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

ISKCON Joins "Mummers' Parade"

With roots in precolonial America, Philadelphia's New Year's Day Mummers' Parade of elaborately costumed string bands and colorful floats has been a city-sponsored classic since 1901. This year's parade was certainly unique for Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna were there, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself along with His most heroic devotee, riding on their chariot surrounded by chanting, dancing Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees. Televised live during the parade and highlighted on the evening news, the prizewinning Kṛṣṇa chariot and marchers were the result of a joint effort by ISKCON and the Charles Klein New Year's Association, a famous Mummers' Parade marching club of over sixty years' standing.

When the members of the Klein club saw ISKCON's Ratha-yātrā parade in Philadelphia last year, they marveled at the spontaneous joy and enthusiasm it generated. They immediately called ISKCON's Philadelphia temple to find out how they could create at the Mummers' Parade the same surcharged atmosphere and spirit they felt at Ratha-yātrā. "They contacted me, wanting to make their Mummers' Parade theme 'Hare Kṛṣṇa,'" explained Philadelphia temple president Rabindra Svarūpa dāsa Adhikāri. "They asked our advice and participation in the parade."

The Klein Club then designed and built a dazzling sixteen foot yellow and red chariot, complete with canopy and "drawn" by three life-size white horses. The chariot was designed and decorated according to the famous Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna painting on the cover of *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*. In addition, the Republican party donated a large white elephant mounted on wheels, which was later draped with a crimson Hare Kṛṣṇa banner.

On the day of the parade, the magnificent chariot, carrying a beautifully

dressed Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, preceded by the elephant, and surrounded by a jubilant mass of singing and dancing devotees, rolled up Broad Street in central Philadelphia. The transcendental spectacle won a parade prize as well as live television coverage. In addition, the official program magazine of the Mummers' Parade featured a three-hundred-word description of Lord Kṛṣṇa's appearance in this material world five thousand years ago. Explaining how Kṛṣṇa carried out His divine mission of protecting the pious and annihilating the unrighteous on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, the official statement, which was later read on television, concluded: "So chant along with us Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare as this great moment in ancient India is relived today here on Broad Street. Hare Kṛṣṇa!"

Farm News

Mississippi Farm Flourishing

"Everything in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is always increasing," goes a favorite ISKCON saying, and the New Orleans temple farm in Carriere, Mississippi, proves the point. Temple leaders are negotiating the purchase of an additional two hundred fifty acres of land, which will expand the Deep South farm community to well over four hundred acres.

Lots of hard work in the spirit of devotion to Kṛṣṇa has produced bountiful results from the fertile Gulf Coast soil. For example, last fall the farm's three acres of sugarcane provided one hundred gallons of syrup. Right now, thirteen hundred strawberry plants are sitting in a one-acre garden, and, in a

poor year for pecans, devotees still harvested over two hundred gallons of the nutritious nuts from twenty trees.

In addition, forty acres of winter rye grass is helping to nurture a herd of forty-one cows, calves, and bulls. "Here at the farm we produce all the milk, curd, butter, ghee, and cream our temple in New Orleans needs—and then some!" said temple and farm president Nityānanda dāsa Adhikāri. Having just constructed a milking house adjacent to the farm's twin seventy-foot silos, the New Orleans devotees are presently getting thirty-five gallons of milk a day from sixteen cows.

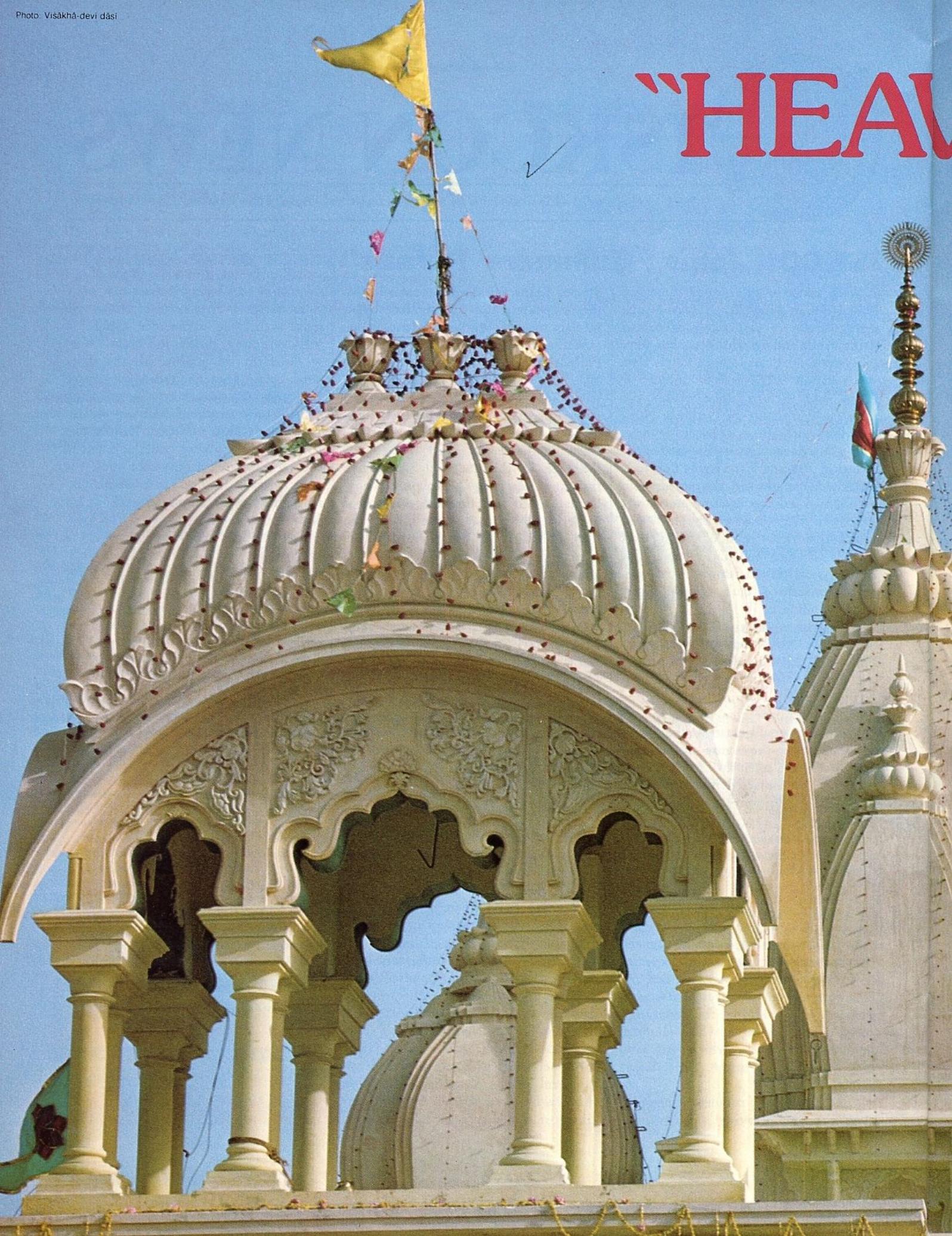
But the heavy construction begins in the spring, when a hilltop temple overlooking all the surrounding countryside is due to be built. The worship room will be seventy by fifty feet, with a split-level floor and a balcony, and above this will be a large feasting hall. Nityānanda dāsa invites other ISKCON devotees as well as interested visitors to see Carriere and take advantage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in a rural setting. [See page 14 for address.]

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 Govinda (February 16—March 17, 1976)		
Kṛṣṇa-pakṣa (dark fortnight)		
February 28 (Govinda 7:3)	February 29 (Govinda 7:4)	March 1 (Govinda 7:5)
Siva-rātri-vrata (optional fast)	Siva-rātri-vrata break-fast before 9:54 A.M.	Disappearance of Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī and Rasikānanda Gosvāmī
Śukla-pakṣa (bright fortnight)		
March 4 (Govinda 7:8)	March 12 (Govinda 2:6)	March 13 (Govinda 2:7)
Appearance of Puruṣottama Thākura.	Amalaki-ekādāsi (fasting from grains and beans)	Ekādāsi break-fast before 9:48 A.M.
March 14 (Govinda 2:8)	March 16 (Govinda 3:0)	March 17 (Vaiṣṇ 3:1)
Disappearance of Mādhavendra Puri	Śrī Caura-pūjīmā (appearance of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Fast until moonrise). Rādhā-Mādhava Dola Yātrā (6 day festival).	Anandotsava of Śrī Jagannātha Miśra. Beginning of Caitanya Era 490

"HEAV



VEN ON EARTH"

The Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Temple: A Model Spiritual Community

*A conversation between BTG editor
Dāmodara dāsa and Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Temple
president Dhanañjaya dāsa.*

Dāmodara dāsa: Why has the International Society for Krishna Consciousness spent so much time and effort constructing such a large temple in a small Indian village like Vṛndāvana?

Dhanañjaya dāsa: The first reason is that we want to attract people from all over the world to visit the holy land of Lord Kṛṣṇa's birth—and to provide nice facilities for them when they come. Vṛndāvana is a land of great spiritual potency. In fact, it's said in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that anyone who visits Vṛndāvana, even if he's sinful, will at once contact a spiritual atmosphere and

automatically chant the holy names of the Lord. Of course it may appear to an outsider that for us to build a big temple in a small village is a waste of energy. But the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Temple in Vṛndāvana is not only a place to worship God. It is the hub of a long-range social reform project. Vṛndāvana is the center of religion in India—the birthplace of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Starting from this point, we want to reinstitute a culture based on God consciousness, strictly according to the design of the Vedic literature. We plan to make it a success in every way—economically, agriculturally, socially.

When Vedic culture flourished in India the temple was the center of life—the center of all community activities. The temple's school educated the children; its religious services provided inspiration and purpose; and the temple priests counseled the townspeople on

family and economic problems as well as their spiritual life. On the whole, the temple provided a common focus of life that gave solidarity to the community and fostered friendship and purposefulness. Constructing the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Temple is a very practical first step in reinstating that strength into Indian culture. The temple can provide the material and spiritual necessities of life when the rest of society is failing.

Dāmodara dāsa: But why should Westerners like yourself and so many others in ISKCON feel they have the right or the responsibility to educate Indians in their own culture?

Dhanañjaya dāsa: True, for centuries Westerners have come to India to teach that economic development is the path to success. But we're teaching Indians a different lesson—that materialism *isn't* what human life is all about, and therefore that industrialization isn't the answer to their problems. Only Westerners can teach this lesson to India because only Westerners have experienced the emptiness and frustrations of gross materialism. The present generation of Indians hasn't been through this yet so they're easily led to believe that large-scale industry will solve all their problems.

(continued on page 23)

Exquisite domes atop ISKCON's Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Temple in Vṛndāvana herald an international spiritual community.

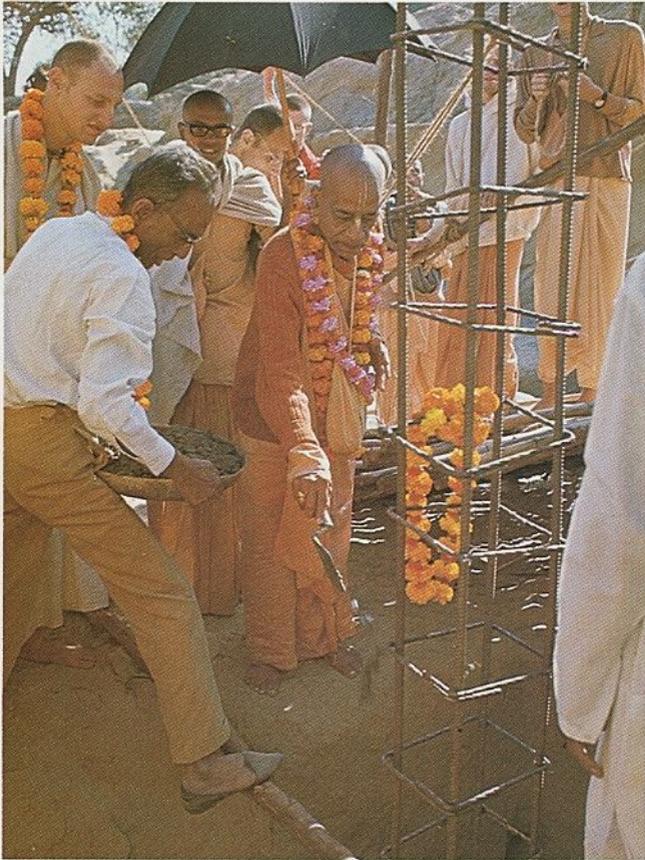


Photo: Viśākhā-devī dāśī

His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda pitches in a trowel of earth to initiate temple construction as His Holiness Gurudāsa Swami (far left) looks on.

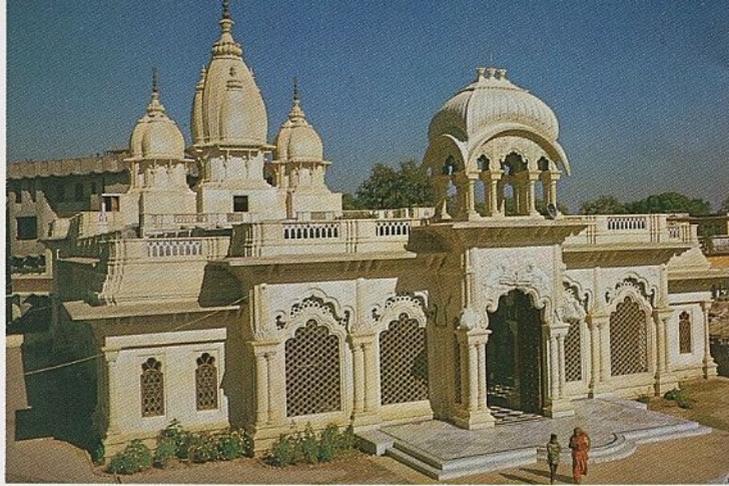


Photo: Bhārgava dāsa

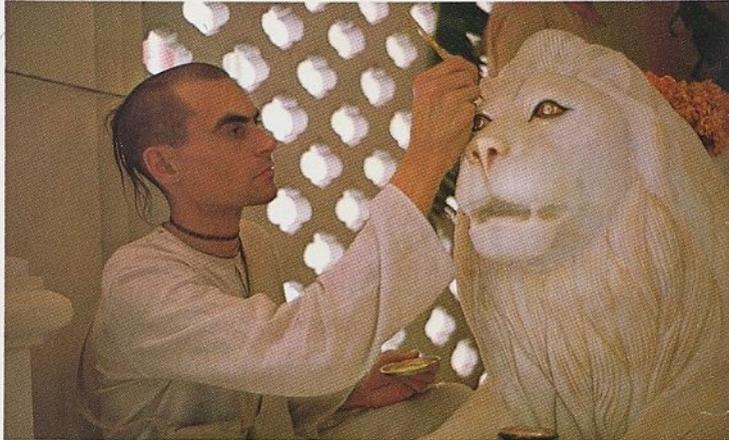
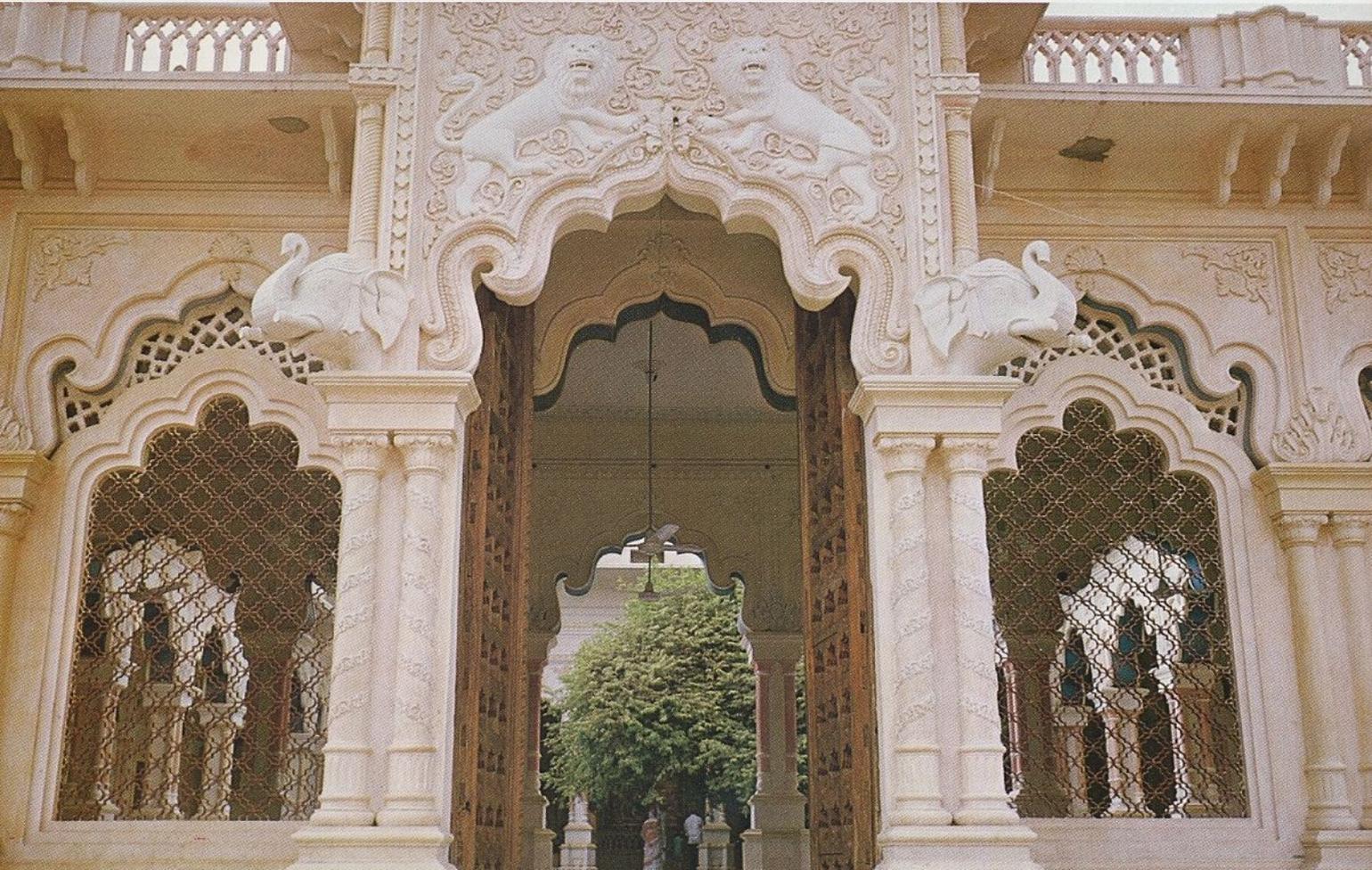


Photo: Viśākhā-devī dāśī

With intense concentration, artist applies finishing touches to a temple sculpture in preparation for opening of beautiful Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Temple, now Vṛndāvana's most popular.

Open door reveals auspicious tamal tree, one of five in Vṛndāvana, around which temple was built.



How It All Began...

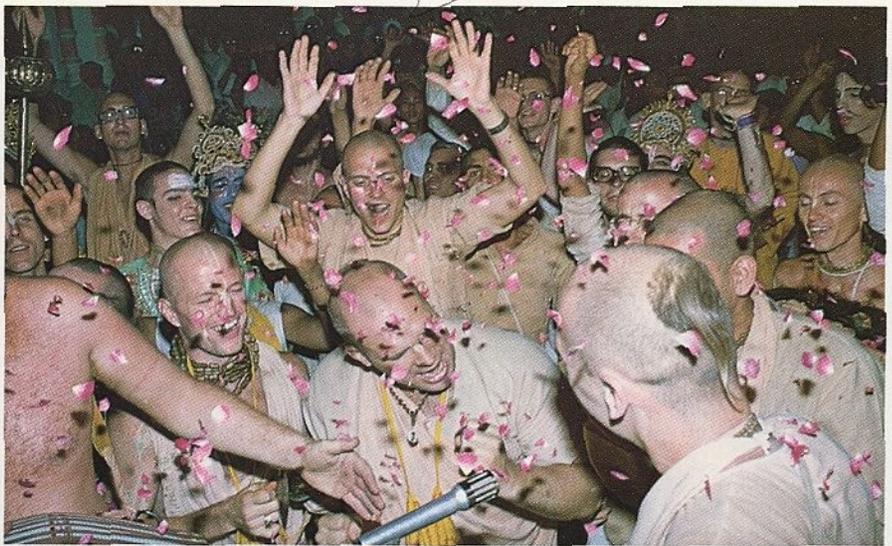
by His Holiness
Guru dāsa Swami
(as told to Dāmodara dāsa)

I first learned of Śrīla Prabhupāda's plan for a "heaven on earth" in Vṛndāvana, India in May of 1970. Vṛndāvana is the birthplace of Lord Kṛṣṇa, which lies some ninety miles southeast of Delhi. I was in Delhi when Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote me a letter explaining his plan. He asked me to investigate a report that the king of Bharatpur wanted to give us one of his many palaces. Of the many palaces the Maharāja of Bharatpur owned around Vṛndāvana, the Lakṣmīrāṇī Kuñj palace was especially beautiful. In his letter, Śrīla Prabhupāda said it would be excellent as an ISKCON center. So we looked into it.

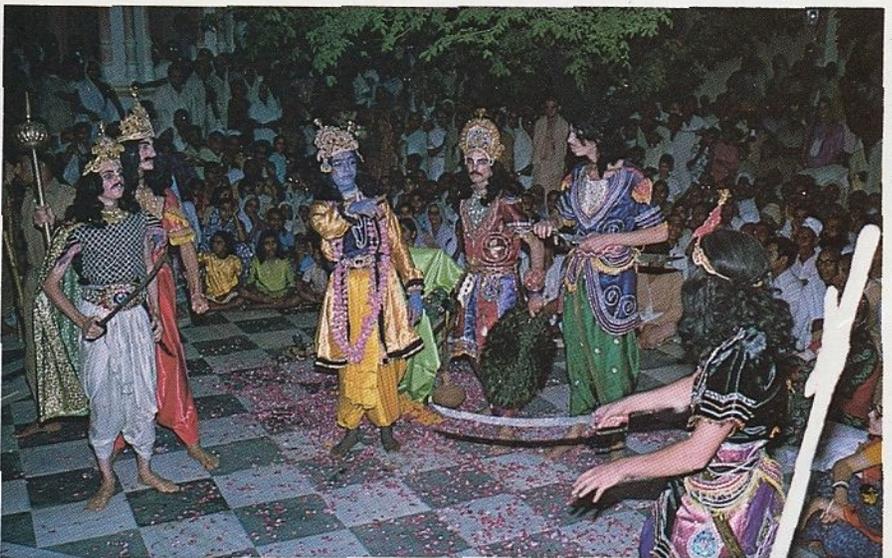
By Kṛṣṇa's arrangement, however, the Lakṣmīrāṇī Kuñj palace was not to be our ISKCON, Vṛndāvana, center. At our first meeting and later on, the king made various offers, but it soon became clear to us that he was more interested in getting money than in giving charity.

When Śrīla Prabhupāda found out that no palace was available, he reluctantly turned his attention to construction. Construction work is a big endeavor, particularly in India, but now it was our only recourse.

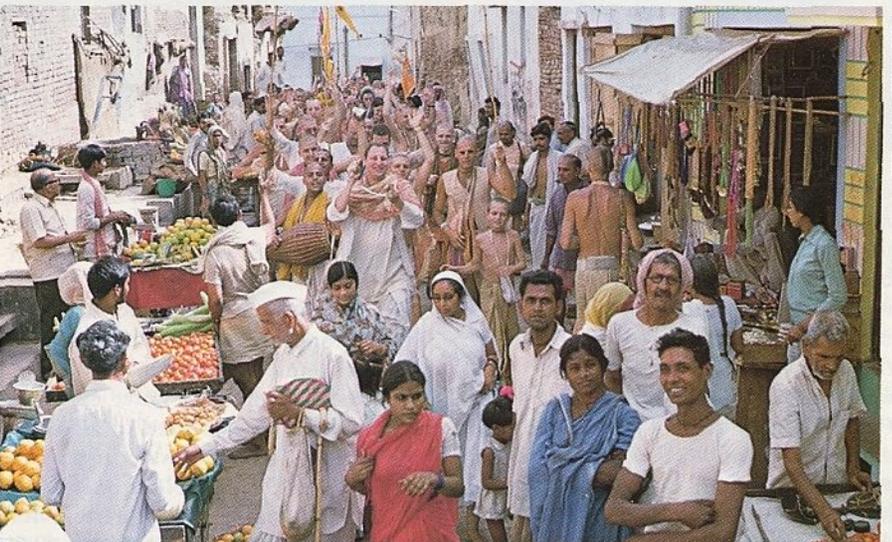
The first step in actually constructing our temple was to find a good location. I liked best a one-acre site in the Raman Reti district, about five miles west of the center of town. I sent Śrīla Prabhupāda a map and told him that the owners, Mr. and Mrs. Saraf, wanted to donate the land to us. The Sarafs had become familiar with some ISKCON devotees who were living in Vṛndāvana at a place known as Brahma-kuṇḍa, and they liked them very much. Śrīla Prabhupāda accepted the donation and told us to go on with the work of making an ISKCON, Vṛndāvana, center. He really catalyzed things with a letter to us in June of 1972: "We have fenced the land, but



Shower of flower petals rains down as enthusiastic devotees fill the temple with Kṛṣṇa's holy names.



At opening celebration last April, nightly dramatic performances in temple courtyard bring to life India's vast Vedic literature.



Beaming devotees chant Hare Kṛṣṇa as they weave their way through one of Vṛndāvana's colorful bazaars.

Photo: Visakha-devi dasi

Photo: Visakha-devi dasi

Photo: Visakha-devi dasi

Spirit from Stone

by Baradrāja dāsa

(as told to Dāmodara dāsa)

I was in Māyāpur, in what is now West Bengal, when I received a letter from His Holiness Gurudāsa Swami asking me to go to Jaipur to see how the carving of the twelve Deities for the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Temple was coming along. When I arrived in Jaipur, the sculptor let me stay at his home along with the twenty-five members of his household—three generations—all of whom helped with the carving.

My first look at the Deities was inspiring. The two that were almost finished were good, and I suggested only a few small changes—a slight enlargement of the eyes and a change in the cheek structure. I was going by my personal experience. Indian sculptors have their own tradition, but much of it has been spoiled by years of catering to modern tastes. I was trying to stick to the old tradition, where the image is considered beautiful only when it reflects the meditative mood of the sculptor and evokes that same mood in the onlooker. There are also strict rules about proportion, but they are secondary. A small deviation in the rules can remain as long as the Deity has the proper mood.

After instructing the sculptor on the

At high point of grand opening ceremony, Śrīla Prabhupāda personally performs first offering to the Deities.

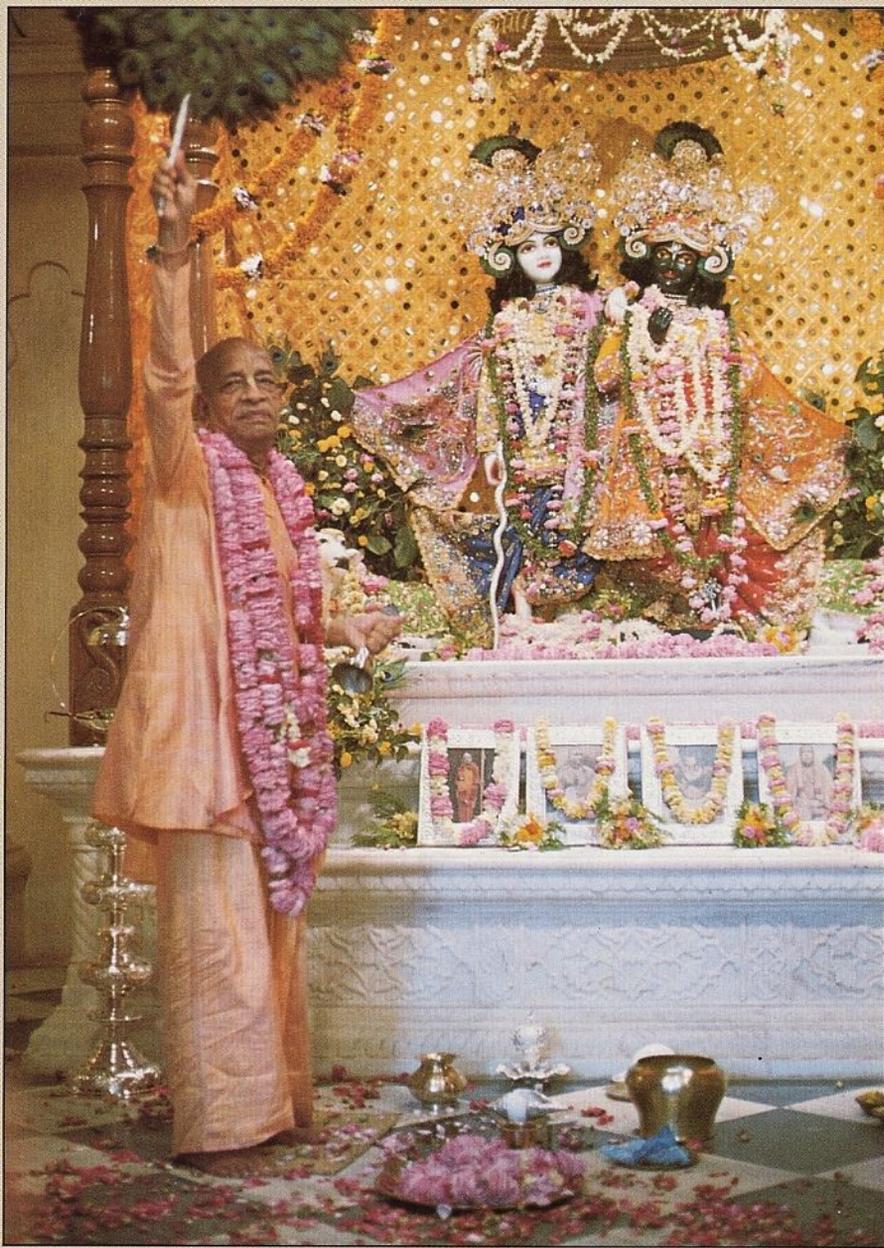


Photo: Viśakhā-devi dāsi

otherwise we have done nothing. So immediately bricks must be brought so they can sit during the rainy season and become soaked. A tube well must be dug immediately. I don't know why this has not been done. If needed, we can draw the water up by pump and store it in a tank, just as at the Vṛndāvana train station. We shall require much water for construction and for the vegetation, so a water supply must be there. We must have our own well. Sweet or salty, it does not matter."

Water is scarce throughout Vṛndāvana. Besides, the Vṛndāvana municipal

pipeline had not yet reached the Raman Reti area. And even if it had, it couldn't have provided us with sufficient water, for it only runs in the morning and the evening. So for such a large construction project, the pipeline would have been both costly and impractical.

A friend of mine—a water expert—came to help us. We tried to ascertain how we could get sweet water in an area that had up till then yielded only salty. Sweet water was much preferred, for then we would not have to depend on any other source for drinking and cooking water. But a sweet-water well was

almost unheard of in that part of the district, because the ground was full of minerals. In fact, our plot was surrounded by tracts with only saltwater wells on them. By Kṛṣṇa's grace, however, when we finally dug our well we hit pure, sweet water. Everyone in Vṛndāvana was amazed. They thought that perhaps we were mystics, and that certainly Kṛṣṇa was blessing us. In either case, they reasoned, it made our temple very special.

When the sweet well got started, everyone in the area came, not only to ask for water, but also to see the project



few changes I wanted made, I saw two rough chunks of marble—one white and the other black—that were to become the Deities of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa. I was spellbound. The two brothers were being carved in Their characteristic shapes, and just for fun the sculptors had put Them together the way They would appear on the altar, with Balarāma's elbow raised up to lean on Kṛṣṇa's shoulder and Kṛṣṇa's arms positioned to hold His flute. Enchanted, I felt I could see right through the white and black marble to the finished Deities inside.

A few months later, after a short visit to our clay modeling workshop in Bengal, I returned to Jaipur. This time I watched the sculptors finish all the Deities except the one of Śrīla Prabhupāda. The first attempt wasn't turning out too well, so I asked them to start over again. Then I took a train up to Vṛndāvana to be there when Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma, and the other completed Deities arrived. They were being driven up on a Golden Jaipur Co. truck named "Krishna," which I thought very auspicious.

About two A.M. on the night the Deities were scheduled to arrive, I was awakened by a terrific uproar. All the peacocks in Vṛndāvana seemed to be



trumpeting their piercing cries, producing waves of sound that started far off and then swept across miles of holy land to the other side of town, echoing back and forth. I rose, dressed, and went outside to see what was going on. Lo and behold, the truck with Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma had pulled in!

The workmen who unloaded the truck the next morning were very nice. All day long, every day, they'd chant Hare Kṛṣṇa as they worked, and when some extra service turned up, they'd do it for nothing. And although their supervisor was a Muslim, he was very concerned about the Deities. "Be careful, be careful! Don't break Kṛṣṇa!" he would shout, perspiring heavily. The crew of Muslims and Hindus labored side by side, loudly chanting as they carried Kṛṣṇa, and whenever they put a box down, they would cry out in unison, "All glory to Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma!"

Next I spent about a month painting the Deities. The residents of Vṛndāvana soon learned about the new Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, and they would come to the window of the room I was working in to catch a glimpse of Them. But the



Deities were always turned away from the window when I was painting, so the eager Vṛndāvanites would bang on the window grating with their sticks, saying, "I want to see Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma!" But they had to wait.

When the painting was finished, I returned to Bengal for another short visit and then went back to Jaipur a third and final time to supervise the carving of the last Deity—Śrīla Prabhupāda. The work should have taken four days, but it stretched out to a full month. Not only was the sculptor very temperamental, but on top of that he spoke only Hindi, which I can't speak. Although communication was difficult, however, by Kṛṣṇa's mercy the work turned out nicely.

Later on, in Vṛndāvana, I was painting the final touches on the Deity of Śrīla Prabhupāda's spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, when Śrīla Prabhupāda walked into the room to inspect the work. "Thank you very much," he said to me. "But one thing," he added in his gentle yet uncompromising way, "the lips should be a little more pink." I gladly changed the color. After so many months of giving orders to sculptors, it was refreshing to take orders from a pure devotee of the Lord.

that had been so blessed by Lord Kṛṣṇa. As a result, the public opinion forming around us was becoming very positive.

The next step in the project was to employ an architect to draw up plans for the building itself. Two architects from India submitted one plan each—very grandiose schemes—and Saurabha dāsa, a devotee of Śrīla Prabhupāda's from Holland, submitted two plans. We chose one of his. He didn't have as many years of experience as the professional architects, but still his design outclassed theirs. As a devotee, he knew exactly how to arrange things for the pleasure of

the Deities on the altar. He designed four Deity workrooms directly underneath the altar—one for sewing, one for storing decorations, one for storing big items such as swings, thrones, and hanging backdrops, and one room with a safe where the Deities' jewelry could be kept. No ordinary architect could have thought of these things.

In July, 1972 Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote me, "You have told me that the water from the well is sweet. That is very good news. Water in Vṛndāvana, if it is sweet, is very digestive. Simply by drinking that water one becomes healthy. As far

as the name of the temple is concerned, you can call our place the ISKCON Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Temple."

That was the first mention of a Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma temple. Śrīla Prabhupāda told us that it would be the only such temple in Vṛndāvana. He wanted to feature Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma because the area of Raman Reti where the temple was to stand was where Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma played as cowherd boys with Their friends. Raman Reti means "enjoyable sands." There's a nice park near the temple dedicated to Their dancing. It has an overwhelming feeling and is a

wonderful place to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Meanwhile, several factors were holding up progress. First was a lack of money. The funds for the project were coming from our collections in Delhi, Calcutta, and Hyderabad. Every day two or three devotees would visit businessmen in their offices and appeal to them for donations as part of our membership drive. But the money was coming in slowly. In addition, we had little in the way of building materials because of government shortages. Rather than allot goods to religious groups, they preferred to support the army and movie theaters.

To try to remedy this situation, I regularly went to Delhi to talk with officials such as the Minister of Mining and the man who controlled allotments of cement. I'd go to their homes early in the morning, sometimes while they were still in their pajamas so they couldn't escape, and impress upon them the need for a center of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in Vṛndāvana. This approach finally struck a sympathetic note, and they began to sanction the amounts of cement and steel we needed. But still we experienced shortages. We could get only little bits and pieces here and there, either because we didn't have much money or because the government would only give us small amounts at one time. During this difficult period, Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote me, "Now go on and develop the Vṛndāvana center with full enthusiasm and do not be discouraged by any temporary setbacks. Always work in the spirit of being completely dependent on Kṛṣṇa for everything." And indeed, Kṛṣṇa always made it possible for the work to go on.

Miraculous things would happen. When hundreds of people had been denied their supplies, we'd get our order approved. When there was a flood in the river our sand came from, new sand from another location came through right on time to be mixed with the cement that had just come in from another place. In this way we were being trained to depend on Kṛṣṇa, especially since we were building His temple in Vṛndāvana itself. We didn't consider these obstacles to be unpleasant incidents. They seemed to be Kṛṣṇa's test—to see how much love we were willing to put into His temple.

Over the next two years, the temple building went up gradually while the



Photo: Bhāgavata dāsa

Delicious vegetarian dishes, prepared according to traditional Vedic recipes and offered first to the Deities, are served at the International Guest House restaurant.

guest house, which did not require such fine workmanship, shot up suddenly. We planted fruit trees for future gardens and built other shelters for the storage of as many as three thousands bags of cement at one time. Trucks rolled onto the property day and night, and each time a truck arrived, the peacocks would trumpet their joy. It was great. An interesting fact is that the whole temple was built by hand. Our only machine was a little cement mixer. The scaffolding was simply bamboo tied together. The ornamental work—peacocks, elephants, scrolls—was done by skilled masons who chipped bricks by hand. We didn't buy anything prefabricated. We cut it ourselves out of brick or red sandstone.

After plans for the triple altars had been finalized, we went to Jaipur to arrange for the carving of the Deities. Baradrāja Prabhu went there three times, very kindly staying there at great sacrifice to oversee the work. [See insert section, p. 20.]

As the completion date drew near, we traveled all over India getting Deity paraphernalia—marble plates, silver staffs, six-foot brass lamps, clothing, a special type of jewelry from Jodhpur, and so on. Then Śrīla Prabhupāda told us how to set up a festival for the temple opening. He told us to invite our life

members, religious and government leaders, and dramatic troupes (including ISKCON's dancers).

The festival for the opening of the temple was held in April, 1975. Dozens of government officials attended from all around the country (including the governor of the state of Uttar Pradesh). There were concerts, dances, plays, guest speakers, feasts for thousands, a three-day ancient Vedic bathing ceremony to install the Deities, and a gigantic parade through the town of Vṛndāvana featuring elephants and gaily costumed marching bands.

Now, a year later, the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma temple is just as Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted it: a living, exciting temple. Classes are held throughout the day in both English and Hindi. Devotees chant before the Deities twenty-four hours a day. The guest house, Vṛndāvana's only modern accommodation, has eighty beautiful rooms, each with separate bath and balcony—comfortable living by any standards, East or West—and two first-class restaurants. Today the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Temple receives more visitors than any other temple in Vṛndāvana, proving what Śrīla Prabhupāda has always advised us: with enthusiasm, patience, and complete faith in Kṛṣṇa, all obstacles can be overcome and all endeavors can meet with success. 🌸

(continued from page 17)

But before the present era, before the English and the Moguls occupied the subcontinent, the people of India understood that a social structure without God at the center is doomed to failure. Now, by and large, they've forgotten this. In the villages, the people are still religious, but their practice rarely goes beyond ritualism. They have little knowledge of the philosophy and scriptural basis of their own Vedic culture.

Our spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is very concerned about India's condition. He's a rare soul who is fully conversant with the Vedic basis of Indian society. Taking direction and inspiration from his *guru*, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, he sees that if India is to prosper once again, it must reawaken its own unique spiritual heritage, which once made India the most opulent country on earth. In fact, the *Vedas* say that India was once the capital of the whole planet.

Since the past greatness of India was due to its spiritual strength, to try to rebuild India on a materialistic, Western model is foolish. The solution is rather to reconstruct Indian society on the basis of the ancient Vedic tradition. This tra-

dition is much more than just a collection of rites and customs; it's a living, integrated, scientific philosophy and life-style that can solve India's problems if applied as it was meant to be applied. The Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Temple is going to be a center for Vedic studies where people can learn the original solutions to all spiritual and material problems, practically apply them, and then teach them to others.

Dāmodara dāsa: Besides the long-range plans for Indian society, what has the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Temple done concretely for the Vṛndāvana community?

Dhanañjaya dāsa: Right now we're distributing food to hundreds of people daily. Fresh, sweet water—hard to come by in the area—is available for everyone. At the well, residents and pilgrims can drink and use the water for bathing. We have many tubs for poor people to wash in. And on the roadside, our trough provides fresh water for oxen, buffalo, and cows.

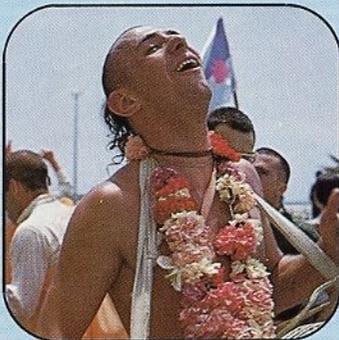
But we provide more than handouts: we employ people. In building the temple, we employed hundreds of local men. We kept alive traditional crafts by giving work to sculptors, woodworkers, and many other craftsmen living in Vṛndāvana. Now, to continue their

work, we're developing cottage industries to supply the temple.

In addition, construction has begun on the temple school. We're filling up an acre of land next to the main plot, and planning to start off with facilities for 250 students. It will be the only school in Vṛndāvana where both Hindi and English are taught. Both Indian and Western children will learn there, and teachers will be drawn from both ISKCON's worldwide staff and the local residents. We plan to affiliate the school with Agra University. Another benefit for the neighborhood will be the branch offices of the post office and the Punjab National Bank that will occupy two of the storefronts on the roadside concourse of the school's land.

Also in the works is a dairy farm about three miles from the temple. It has about 500 acres of pasture land and 150 acres for growing wheat, vegetables, and other crops. The present owners of the farm want us to manage it for them. They've seen how well we're doing with our farms in other countries, and more important, they have faith that we can maintain a devotional atmosphere at the farm, which will give the workers there a fulfilling life centered around service to God.

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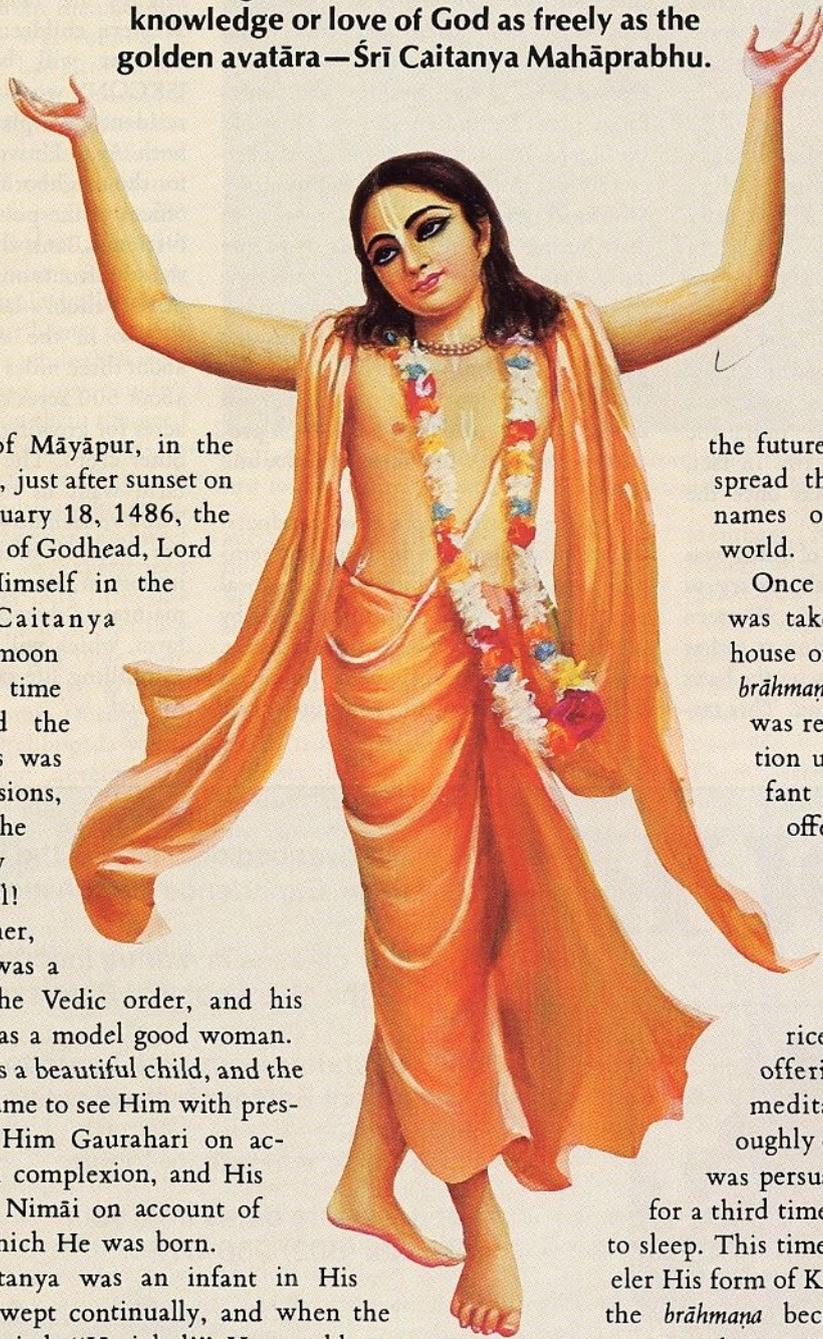
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The Glories of the Golden Avatāra

Since the beginning of time, avatāras have descended from the spiritual world to impart transcendental knowledge. But none have ever distributed knowledge or love of God as freely as the golden avatāra—Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.



In the district of Māyāpur, in the town of Nadia, just after sunset on the evening of February 18, 1486, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, advented Himself in the form of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. The moon was eclipsed at the time of His birth, and the people of Nadia, as was usual on such occasions, were bathing in the Ganges and loudly crying, "Hari bol! Hari bol!" His father, Jagannātha Miśra, was a poor *brāhmaṇa* of the Vedic order, and his mother, Śacīdevī, was a model good woman.

Lord Caitanya was a beautiful child, and the ladies of the town came to see Him with presents. They named Him Gaurahari on account of His golden complexion, and His mother called Him Nimāi on account of the *nim* tree near which He was born.

When Lord Caitanya was an infant in His mother's arms, He wept continually, and when the neighboring ladies cried, "Hari bol!" He would stop. Thus the words *hari bol* were always being uttered in the house, indicating

the future mission of the Lord: to spread the chanting of the holy names of God throughout the world.

Once a *brāhmaṇa* on pilgrimage was taken in as a guest in the house of Jagannātha Miśra. The *brāhmaṇa* cooked some rice and was reading grace with meditation upon Kṛṣṇa when the infant Nimāi came and ate the offering. The *brāhmaṇa*, astonished at the child's act, cooked again at the request of Jagannātha Miśra. Again Nimāi ate the cooked rice while the *brāhmaṇa* was offering it to Kṛṣṇa with meditation. Although thoroughly discouraged, the *brāhmaṇa* was persuaded that he should cook for a third time after everyone had gone to sleep. This time Nimāi showed the traveler His form of Kṛṣṇa and blessed him, and the *brāhmaṇa* became overwhelmed with ecstasy at the appearance of the object of his worship.

Beautiful as the child Nimāi was, everyone heartily loved to see Him every day. As He grew up He

(Taken from "Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu: His Life and Precepts," a short work by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura first published in 1896.)

"Chant the holy name of the Lord!"

became a whimsical and frolicsome lad, and after His fifth year, He was admitted into a primary school where He picked up Bengali in a very short time. In His eighth year, He was admitted into the school of Gaṅgādāsa in Gaṅgānagara, close to the village of Māyāpur. In just two years he became well-read in Sanskrit grammar and rhetoric, as well as scriptural studies and logic.

Scholastic Prowess

At the age of fourteen or fifteen, Caitanya married Lakṣmidevī, the daughter of Vallabhācārya, also of Nadia. At this age Caitanya was considered one of the best scholars of Nadia, the renowned seat of logic and Sanskrit learning. All the scholars and logicians were afraid of confronting Him in literary discussions. At this time he would preach devotional service at intervals. During Caitanya's residence in East Bengal, His wife, Lakṣmidevī, left this world from the effects of snakebite. On returning home, He found His mother in a mourning state. This time He consoled her with a lecture on the uncertainty of human affairs. Later, at His mother's request, He married Viṣṇupriyā, the daughter of Sanātana Miśra.

Caitanya was now so renowned that He was considered to be the best scholar in Nadia. At this time Keśava of Kashmir came to Nadia to discuss philosophy with the scholars there. Afraid of this scholar, the professors of Nadia left town on the pretense of an urgent invitation. Thus Keśava met Lord Caitanya on the banks of the Ganges in Māyāpur, but after a very short discussion he was defeated by the boy and obliged to decamp out of shame. Nimāi was now the most important scholar of His time.

At the age of sixteen or seventeen Caitanya traveled to Gayā with a

host of His students, and there He took spiritual initiation from Īśvara Purī, a renounced devotee and a disciple of the renowned Mādhavendra Purī. Upon His return to Nadia, Nimāi turned religious preacher. Indeed, His religious nature became so strongly represented that Advaita Prabhu, Śrīvāsa, and others, who had before the birth of Caitanya already accepted the path of devotion were astonished at the change of the young man. He was now no longer a contending logician, a wrangling debater, and a criticizing rhetorician. Now He swooned at the name of Kṛṣṇa and behaved as an inspired man under the influence of His religious sentiment. His secretary Murāri Gupta has given an eyewitness account of how He showed His heavenly powers in the house of Śrīvāsa in the presence of hundreds of His followers, who were mostly well-read scholars.

At this time He and His sincere followers opened a nocturnal school of chanting in the compound of Śrīvāsa. There the Lord preached, there He sang, there He danced, and there He expressed all sorts of religious feelings. Nityānanda Prabhu, a renowned preacher of devotional service who had just completed His travels all over India, joined Caitanya at that time. In fact, a host of preachers of devotion, all sincere at heart, came and joined Him from different parts of Bengal. Nadia now became the regular seat of many exalted devotees of Kṛṣṇa, whose mission was to spiritualize mankind with the highest influence of the devotional creed.

Rogues Converted

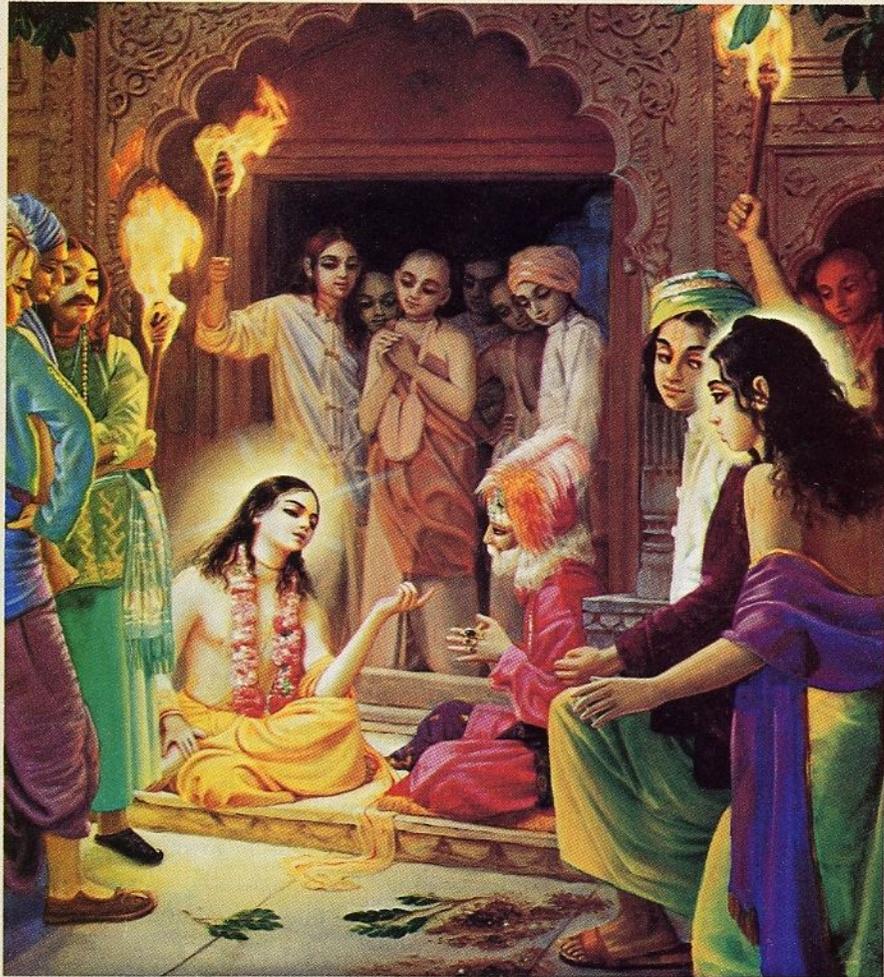
The first mandate that Caitanya Mahāprabhu issued to Nityānanda Prabhu and Haridāsa, another of His intimate disciples, was this: "Go, friends, go through the streets of the

town, meet every man at his door and ask him to sing the name of Hari and lead a holy life. Then come to Me every evening and report the results of your preaching." Thus ordered, the two preachers went out and met Jagāi and Mādhāi, two most abominable characters, who insulted them upon hearing Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mandate. Soon, however, the two rogues were converted by the influence of devotion inculcated by their Lord. The people of Nadia were now surprised. They said, "Nimāi is not only a gigantic genius, but He is certainly a missionary from God almighty."

Brāhmaṇa's Complaint

From this time to His twenty-third year, Caitanya Mahāprabhu preached His principles not only in Nadia but in all important towns and villages around that city. In the houses of His followers He showed miracles, taught the esoteric principles of devotion, and sang the holy names of God with other devotees. His followers in the town of Nadia commenced to sing the holy name of Hari in the streets and bazaars. This created a sensation and roused different feelings in different quarters. The devotees were highly pleased. But some *brāhmaṇas* became jealous of Nimāi's success and complained to Chand Kazi, the ruling magistrate of the district, that Caitanya was violating Hindu principles. The Kazi then went to Śrīvāsa's house and broke a drum, declaring that unless Nimāi ceased making noise about His strange religion, the Kazi would be obliged to enforce Mohammedanism on Him and His followers.

When this declaration was brought to Caitanya Mahāprabhu's notice, He ordered all the townspeople to return in the evening carrying torches. This they did, and Nimāi marched out with His



A tense moment of confrontation is resolved as Nadia's city magistrate (the Kazi) accepts the divinity of Caitanya Mahāprabhu and pledges never again to obstruct the congregational chanting of the names of God.

chanting party divided into fourteen groups. Upon His arrival at the Kazi's house, He held a long conversation with the Kazi and in the end communicated into his heart His devotional influence by touching his body. The Kazi wept, admitting that the keen spiritual influence he had felt had cleared up his doubts and produced in him the highest ecstasy. The Kazi then joined the chanting party.

The world was astonished at the spiritual power of the great Lord, and hundreds and hundreds of heretics converted and joined His banner after this affair. But some of the jealous and low-minded *brāhmaṇas* of Kuliya picked a quarrel

with Caitanya and collected a party to oppose Him. The Lord was naturally softhearted, though strong in His principles. He declared that party feelings and sectarianism were the two great enemies of progress, and that as long as He should continue to inhabit Nadia as a member of a certain family, His mission would not meet with complete success. He then resolved to become a citizen of the world by cutting His connection with His particular family, caste, and creed, and with this resolution He embraced the position of *sannyāsa** at Katwa, under the guidance of Keśava Bhārati of

*The renounced order of life.

that town, in His twenty-fourth year. After taking the renounced order, Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, as He was now named, wished to go to Vṛndāvana and reside there. However, on the request of His dear mother, Śācīdevī, He consented to live at Jagannātha Puri so that she could easily hear news of Him.

Logician Swayed

Upon His arrival at Puri, Caitanya Mahāprabhu saw Lord Jagannātha in the temple and then resided with Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya at the latter's request. Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya was a gigantic scholar of the day. He was the best logician of the time and was known as the most erudite scholar in the Vedānta philosophy of the school of Śāṅkarācārya. His brother-in-law Gopinātha Mīśra, who had known Mahāprabhu from Nadia, held Him in great reverence and declared that the renunciate was not a common human being. On this point Gopinātha and Sārvabhauma had a hot discussion. Sārvabhauma then requested Mahāprabhu to hear his recitation of the *Vedānta-sūtra*, and the latter tacitly submitted. Caitanya heard with silence what the great Sārvabhauma uttered with gravity for seven days, at the end of which the latter said, "Kṛṣṇa Caitanya! I think you do not understand the Vedānta, for you have not said anything after hearing my recitation and explanations." Caitanya replied that while He understood the verses very well, He could not make out what Śāṅkarācārya meant by his commentaries. Astonished at this, Sārvabhauma said, "How is it that You understand the meanings of the verses but do not understand the commentaries which explain the verses? Ahh, well! If You understand the verses, please let me have Your interpretations." Mahāprabhu

thereupon explained all the verses in His own way, without touching the pantheistic commentary of Śaṅkara. The keen understanding of Sārvabhauma saw the truth, beauty, and harmony of Caitanya's explanations. Sārvabhauma was then obliged to utter that it was the first time he had found someone who could explain the Vedānta in such a simple manner. He then submitted himself as a follower of Lord Caitanya.

In a few days Sārvabhauma turned out to be one of the best devotees of the time. When reports of this were circulated, the whole of Orissa sang the praise of Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, and hundreds and hundreds came to Him and became His followers. In the meantime Caitanya Mahāprabhu thought of visiting Southern India, and He started with one Kṛṣṇadāsa on the journey.

Touring the South

Caitanya Mahāprabhu's biographers have given us many details of His journey to South India. First He went to Kūrmakṣetra, where He performed a miracle by curing a leper named Vāsudeva. He then met Rāmānanda Rāya, the governor of Vidyānagara, on the banks of the Godāvārī and had a philosophical conversation with him on the subject of love of God. He worked another miracle by touching (making them immediately disappear) the seven trees through which Rāmacandra, the son of Daśaratha, had shot His arrow and killed the great Vāli Rāja. He preached devotional service and chanting the names of God throughout the journey. At Raṅgakṣetra He stayed for the four months of the rainy season in the house of Vyeṅkaṭa Bhaṭṭa. There He converted the whole family of Vyeṅkaṭa to devotional service of Kṛṣṇa, along with the son of Vyeṅkaṭa, a boy of ten years named

Gopāla, who afterward went to Vṛndāvana and became one of the Six Gosvāmīs or prophets serving under their leader, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya.

Upon the Lord's return to Puri, King Pratāparudra and several *brāhmaṇas* joined the banner of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He was now twenty-seven years of age. In His twenty-eighth year He went to Bengal as far as Gauḍa in Malda. There He picked up two great personages named Rūpa and Sanātana. Though descended from the lines of *brāhmaṇas*, these two brothers had become demi-Muslims by their con-

tinual contact with Hussain Shah, then the emperor of Gauḍa. Their names had been changed by the emperor into Dabir Khās and Sākara Mallik, and the Shah loved them heartily, for they were both learned in Persian, Arabic, and Sanskrit and were loyal servants of the state. The two gentlemen had found no way to come back as regular Hindus and had written to Lord Caitanya for spiritual help while He was at Puri. Caitanya had written in reply that He would come to them and extricate them from their spiritual difficulties. Now that Caitanya had come to Gauḍa, both the brothers

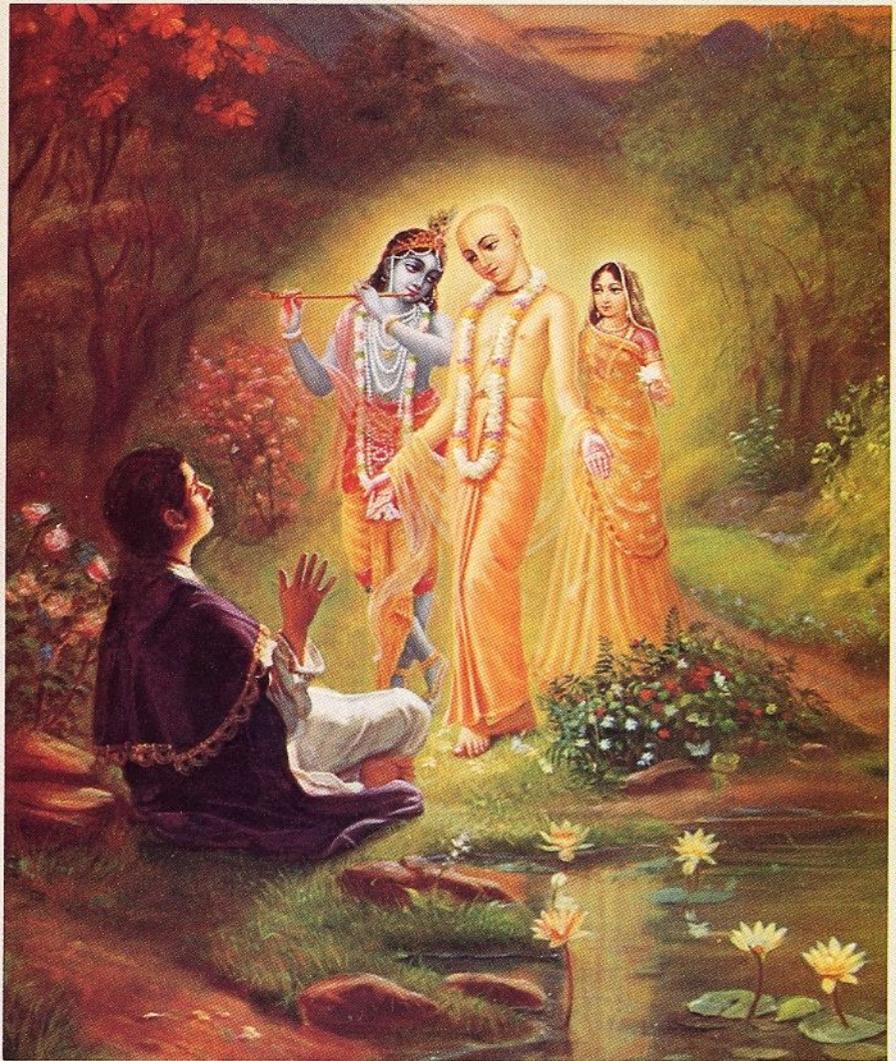


Illustration: Muralidhara dasa

Lord Caitanya reveals Himself as the combined form of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa to His pure devotee Rāmānanda Rāya, who is overcome by ecstatic emotion at the sight.

appeared before Him with their long-standing prayer. Caitanya ordered them to go to Vṛndāvana and meet Him there.

“Revive the Holy Places”

When Rūpa Gosvāmī finally met Lord Caitanya at Allahabad, the Lord trained him in spirituality for ten continuous days. Then the Lord directed him to go to Vṛndāvana to write theological works scientifically explaining pure devotion and to revive the places where Lord Kṛṣṇa had at the end of Dvāpara-yuga exhibited His spiritual pastimes for the benefit of the religious world.

After Rūpa Gosvāmī left Allahabad for Vṛndāvana, Caitanya Mahāprabhu came down to Benares. Sanātana Gosvāmī joined Him there and took instruction for two months on spiritual matters.

While at Benares, Caitanya had an interview with the learned *sannyāsī* of that town in the house of a *brāhmaṇa* who had invited them all. The *sannyāsī* were headed by their most learned leader, Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī. But after a short con-

troversy, they submitted to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, admitting that they had been misled by the commentaries of Śaṅkarācārya. It was impossible even for learned scholars to oppose Caitanya for long, for there was some spell in Him that touched their hearts and made them weep for their spiritual improvement. The *sannyāsī* of Benares soon fell at the feet of Caitanya and asked for His grace. Caitanya then preached pure devotion and instilled into their hearts spiritual love for Kṛṣṇa, which obliged them to give up sectarian feelings. The whole population of Benares became devotees after this wonderful conversion of the *sannyāsī* and they performed a mass chanting of the holy names with their new Lord. After sending Sanātana to Vṛndāvana, Caitanya Mahāprabhu went to Puri again through the jungles with His comrade Balabhadra, who reported that the Lord performed many miracles on the way, such as making tigers and elephants dance upon hearing the name of Kṛṣṇa.

From His thirty-first year,

Caitanya Mahāprabhu continually lived in the house of Kāśī Miśra. During His last eighteen years, in this world, Lord Caitanya’s life was one of settled love and piety. He was surrounded by numerous followers, all of whom were exalted devotees distinguished from the common people by their pure character, deep learning, firm religious principles, and spiritual love of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu slept short. His ecstatic sentiments carried Him far and wide in the firmament of spirituality every day and night, and all His admirers and followers watched Him throughout. He worshiped, communicated with His missionaries at Vṛndāvana, and conversed with those religious men who daily came to visit Him. He sang and danced, and oftentimes lost Himself in religious beatitude. He was most amiable in nature, and He was humility personified. His sweet appearance gave cheer to all who came in contact with Him. All who came to Him recognized Him as the all-beautiful God appearing in this world for the benefit of mankind. 🌸

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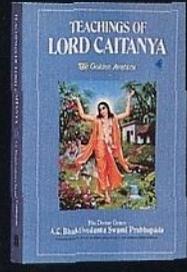
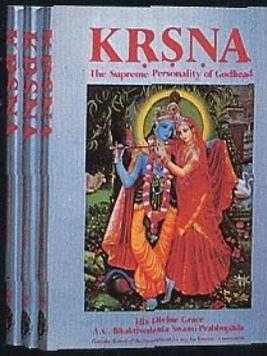
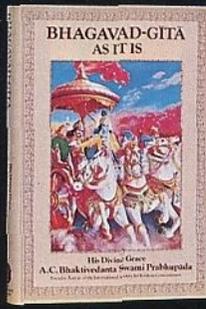
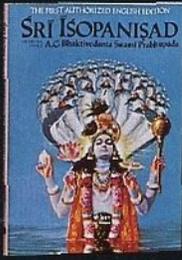


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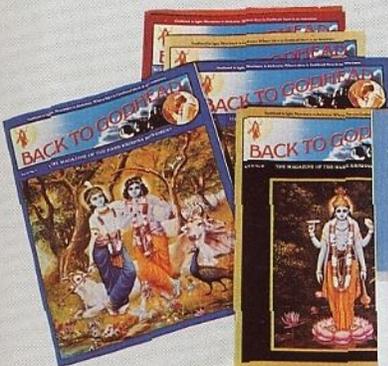


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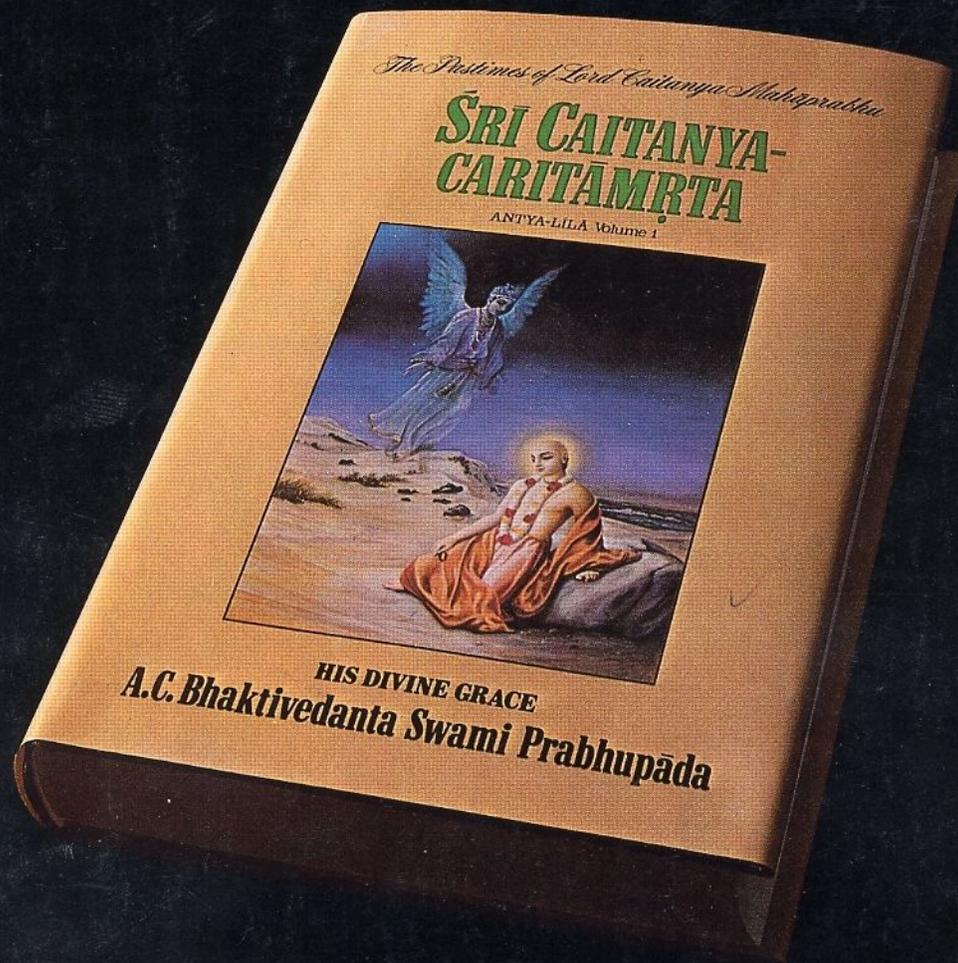
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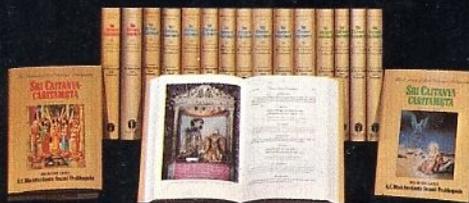


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