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By The Mercy of Krishna:

As must be widely known by now, Swami Bhaktivedanta, our beloved spiritual master, was stricken with severe illness in May. Although he has been unable to make public appearances since that time, the work which he instituted has continued in all three of the temples devoted to the preaching of Krishna Consciousness.

It is by the grace of the spiritual master that the darkness of illusion is expelled from the heart and mind of the fortunate student, and so it is that the Swami is held in utmost reverence by his disciples.

To be sure, Krishnaregards the service of His pure devotee as greater than service rendered directly unto Him. And we whom the Lord has graced by contact with the Swami have no desire but to serve our teacher with all our powers, and to aid in his work of propagating the great Samkirtan Movement. The work of the genuine spiritual master and the service of God are in no way different.

We ask all men of good will to join us in praying Lord Krishna to allow Swamiji to remain on this planet, where his inspiration is so desperately needed!

Hare Krishna.

The Editors

# FROM THE LECTURES OF SWAMI A.C. BHAKTIVEDANTA

I offer my obeisances unto my spiritual master who has opened my eyes in the midst of darkness.

We are in the darkness of material nature and it is the duty of the Spiritual Master to open our eyes to the light. In our conditional state, we cannot see things as they are. But, by the mercy of the Spiritual Master, we can come to see things, through aural reception. The first way to receive knowledge is by direct perception, through the senses. For example, if I see you playing a drum, that is a kind of knowledge acquired.

However, of all forms of learning, the first class perception is to receive knowledge from direct authorities. According to Vedic literature, hearing from authority is perfect knowledge. Direct sensual perception is imperfect. For example, if a motorman sees a car, he knows what it is, but if a child sees it, he can't know. Simply by use of the senses, we can't know anything certainly. The child is not an expert, as the motorman is. In medicine, if you wish to be a doctor, you must study with a doctor. So, if in material things authority is necessary, how can we learn of God on our own? The Vedic recommendation is that, if you wish to have transcendental knowledge, you must go to a Spiritual Master.

But whom shall I accept for my Spiritual Master? There are two qualifications to look for: first, he must be one who has heard perfectly from his master. And what is the proof of this? That, secondly, he lives fully in the knowledge he has received. Bhagavad Gita is the science of God. In other scriptures, there is a concept of God. But, take this example: We can see that the flower is red, and the leaf is green. But a botanist will give you far more perfect and subtle knowledge. So, there is theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge.

The science of God means that we should have, of course, knowledge of the Lord. We cannot have full, practical knowledge of God. Even with a leaf, we cannot know all about it. This is because, by nature, we are limited. In Bhagavad Gita you will find it stated that we are small particles. In Padma Purana the measurement of the soul is given as the tip of the hair divided by 100, and then again. But we have no way to imagine such things. Sometimes we imagine there is no soul. That soul is within you, but persons

with less intelligence say there is none.

The Vedic way to understand is to learn from authority. A child must depend upon its mother in order to know who its father is, and there is no recourse to her authority. So, similarly, the Supreme Father—God—what is He? How can we know? We can know through the Vedic literature, the merciful mother. The Vedas are called mother, and Smriti, the additional Scriptural literature, is called sister. We must learn of God from the authority of God. Bhagavad Gita is accepted in Indian theological society. There are two divisions in this theological community: the personalist and the impersonalist. The personalists are divided into four, but all four are personalists. All bona fide impersonalists follow Shankaracharya. Now in his commentary on Bhagavad Gita, Shankaracharya says, "The Supreme Personality of Godhead is Krishna." If we want to learn of God, we have Bhagavad Gita, which is spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself.

It is best to accept authority, but questions and doubts are not forbidden. The means of study are outlined in Bhagavad Gita. First you must surrender to a man of knowledge. We have to search out such a person. But simply finding a Spiritual Master is not enough. Next comes inquiry. And, too, there must be service. This is described in every Vedic writing. The same process is always followed: find a bona fide Spiritual Master, surrender, query, and serve.

In Bhagavad Gita, Krishna is the Spiritual Master and Arjuna is the pupil. Krishna and Arjuna are of the same age. They are related, as cousin-brothers, and Krishna's sister is Arjuna's wife. Krishna is playing like an ordinary man. So, on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, Krishna and Arjuna were talking as friends, but when the talks got nowhere, Arjuna accepted Krishna as his Spiritual Master. Only this surrender to one in higher knowledge can resolve our bewilderment.

Bhagavad Gita is also known as Geetopanisad. At the end of each chapter you will find: ity srimad bhagavadgitasupanisatsu, etc. Out of many Upanisads, nine are very important. But Bhagavad Gita is the essence of all Upanisads. In others, there is a faint idea of God, but in the Gita this God is clearly described. In Isopanisad, the glaring effulgence of the Lord is spoken of. This effulgence is like the sunshine, which can obscure our view of the sun. The effulgence blocks our vision of the Lord. The sun, which we see every day, is unapproachable. There is no way for us to go to the sun planet. What then to speak of God? There is a God-planet also, but it is far, far away. The generally accepted name is Bhagavad Gita, but I have named it Geetopanisad, because that is used at the end of each chapter.

Some American lady asked me for a good translation, but I could not offer one. There are many Bhagavad Gitas in English, but the commentaries are poor.

How to understand Bhagavad Gita as it is, is mentioned in 4th chapter, first 3 verses. This yoga was first spoken to the sun god, then to his son Manu, then to his son Iksaku, and then to Mankind. Now Krishna says that, in the course of time, that line of knowledge was broken. There were many scholars then, but still Krishna says that Bhagavad Gita was lost. Ordinary scholarship is insufficient for understanding Bhagavad Gita. Arjuna was nothing more than a fighter. He was neither a scholar nor a Vedantist. He was not even a Brahmin. He was a great fighter. Spiritually, however, he was Krishna's friend. It is naturally understood that the mystery of Bhagavad Gita was given to Arjuna because of this friendship toward the Lord, and Arjuna's understanding is presented in the 10th chapter.

As on a medicine bottle there is a dosage direction, so the Gita should be studied according to the directions of the Gita. This is done through disciplic succession. Arjuna was accepted as the next in line from Krishna. If we follow him, then our understanding is necessarily perfect.



#### THE FIRST DAYS OF SPRING

The aroma of the chant is a bee, Buzzing, calling, a magnet pulling Me away from wife and friends, Forgetful of all but Krishna, A baby— God is a cowherd boy, a baby, All of us are babies, crying For our mother, Krishna, A little bee, buzzing, And stinging me, a cruel lover, When I scream so hard for You And You don't let me see You-My body is exhausted, my voice broken-Look what You've done to me! I can't understand You, but I love You-Do what You want with me-I'll never know why You cheat me, It only seems to be cheating because I'm a fool, Do whatever You want— Ruin me-Your sting is all I ask for, And perhaps a glimpse, now and then, Of Your Lotus Feet-Krishna-

> Damodar das Adhikary (Dan Clark)

#### THE DELIVERANCE OF THE FALLEN

Mercy is kindness delivered from the Supreme Power. People are partaking of mercy whether they acknowledge it or not; Krishna's Mercy shines into all the acts of the universe.

Our position as living entities is that we have sensual bodies. According to Vedic wisdom we have these bodies because we wanted them:

"All beings are born to delusion Bharata, overcome by the dualities which arise from wish and hate, O Conquerer of the foe." (7/27 Bhagavad Gita)

In delusion, hating God, we thought we could better enjoy ourselves as lords of matter—and so, at our wish, we have been put into these bodies which are bound by the three-fold miseries (those arising from the body and mind, those inflicted by other living entities, and those inflicted by Nature). Chief among these are the miseries of birth, death, old age and disease. And yet this very state of temporal life, beset with unavoidable misery, is revealed, on thoughtful examination, to be the mercy of the Supreme.

In our original constitutional position we are infinitesimal fragments of the Supreme Consciousness:

"The living entities are eternally fragmental parts of Me. They are dragging on in a bitter struggle for existence in the material Nature, with the six senses including mind."

(15/7 Bhagavad Gita)

We cannot lose this status, even entangled in the delusions that led to our desiring the perishable body, we cannot lose our eternal part and parcel constitution. Being put into material bodies is God's mercy, and being given the chance to return to Him is also His mercy. This constantly radiating mercy of the Lord is without cause. We are His fragmental portions and He is compassionate toward us, even if we make ourselves strangers and enemies to Him.

His mercy is clearly seen in the Sanskrit word Maya. Maya means

"what is not." It also has a second meaning- "God's grace". It works this way: Maya is the illusory energy, the material world. Maya is what is perishable, what we living entities take as the real and the all-in-all. These 60 to 100 years of life, the family ties, the working hard for a living, the struggle to get on, the struggle to enjoy with mind and body, the attachment to matter as the final substance—these temporal things work as illusion when we think of them as permanent. In other words, when we forget God and look on the world without Him, we are in illusion. When we do not transcend this world, that is Maya.

But Maya is also "God's grace." If we want illusion, it is granted to us. God has the power to smash us into powder for being disobedient sons, but as we go on, forgetful of Him, constructing our Times Squares of the world and living for the 'enjoyment' of our blunt, misery-bound senses, the Supreme Lord gives us— does not deny us— this freedom for mischievous self-damage. He has shown us the approach to Himself-to Him Who is defined as Sat-Chit-Ananda Vigraha, eternity, knowledge and bliss in their fullness— and we choose instead to mate and sleep, to defend and eat alone. And for this revolt we are given more mercy; we are given more and more of what we want, even if what we want is the lower animal status, or hell. And so the transmigration of the eternal individual soul progresses.

If we live demoniac lives we are granted more of the same—that is, mercy. The godly rise and reach His abode. The demons refute their eternal portion and come back to this world to enjoy the pangs of duality (i.e. pleasure and pain, life and death, heat and cold, etc.) If you study it, you can see that the world is all-merciful: whoever wants problems, has them. The Lord has granted you the facilities to spend your life as you wish. You have His instruction and can lift yourself or be your own enemy. In the Bhagavad Gita Sri Krishna states:

"Fixing thy thought on Me, thou shalt, by My grace, cross over all difficulties; but if, from self-conceit, thou wilt not listen, thou shalt perish." (18/58 Bhagavad Gita)

After many births a person may find himself disillusioned with Maya and the pleasures of the body, or if he is so fortunate he may have gained some devotion toward the transcendental Lord of all life— and such a person may desire to go back to Home, back to Godhead where there is real pleasure in association with Krishna.

"Those men of virtuous deeds in whom sin

has come to an end, freed from the delusion of dualities, worship Me steadfast in their vows." (7/28 Bhagavad Gita)

To live for the pleasure of the merciful Lord is called devotional service. Everything is God's; the flowers, the grains, the morning, the opportunity contained in a human life, everything goes back to Him, just as the streaming sunlight, which penetrates every corner of darkness, can be followed back to its source in the sun. Life in devotional service is the offering of the consciousness in everything we do, as a gift to Krishna. We are assured in the Bhagavad Gita that He will accept our gesture.

"Whosoever offers to Me with devotion a leaf, a flower, a fruit, or water, that offering of love, of the pure of heart I accept." (9/26 Bhagavad Gita)

When we offer our food to the Lord that is called <u>prasadam</u>, which in Sanskrit means "mercy". When we offer our speech, our bodily acts and our human consciousness, this is also devotional service, and releases us from the bondage of birth and death and brings inner peace and equipoise to all our hours. This service is the secret of yoga, described as the "plus" to life or the link with Godhead. Once it is attained, one never comes back to the perishable and sorrowful. This is confirmed by scriptures:

"Achieving that transcendental devotional service a man becomes perfect, immortal and peaceful." (Narada Bhaktisutra, Code 4)

"Great souls who are engaged in devotional service and attain the Supreme Lord do not again come back to this miserable material conditional life."

(8/15 Bhagavad Gita)

But how does this state come about? If, admittedly, long long ago we chose these bodies for sensual enjoyment, in ignorance—how does enlightenment come about? That too, is Krishna's mercy. We don't grow wise automatically. Whenever anyone takes a step away from dullness or ignorance, that is a manifestation of His mercy. That is why a yogi or a devotee is called a fortunate man. Every individual life is an opportunity for one to realise his actual goal and purpose—those who don't miss the opportunity are receiving the mercy of the Lord. Swami Bhaktivedanta writes:

"Such pure devotional service of the Lord cannot be achieved without the mercy of the pure devotee or the bona fide Spiritual Master, and the Supreme Lord Himself. If sombody is fortunate enough to find a pure devotee for his Spiritual Master, then that Spiritual Master by his causeless mercy imparts the knowledge of pure devotional service... only by the combined mercy of the Supreme Lord and the Spiritual Master." (from the Purport to Code 8, Narada Bhaktisutra)

The present age is called Kali Yuga, a period of 432,000 years symptomized by quarrel and disorder. Evidence of Kali Yuga is seen in people's turning away from God. In our own country, the USA, and in this city of New York, we can see the proud citadel of Maya in its arrogant, temporal victory. Witness the flags and towers of uptown buildings dedicated completely to the 80-100-year life span of economics, politics and sense pleasure. The insidious illusion and perversion of mass advertising has dulled millions into daily acceptance of a nightmarish war on the integrity of the human mind. Add to this the administrative cheating, the promotion of political wars, the disillusionment of the nonconformists and the bewilderment of the drug-takers— and you have perfect ingredients for Kali Yuga. And it is supposed to get worse.

Simultaneously, we are witnessing the mercy of Swami Bhaktivedanta's Samkirtan movement. Swamiji is in the line of disciplic succession from Lord Chaitanya, Who originated the movement of chanting the Lord's Holy Name 500 years ago in India. Chaitanya's movement is the magnanimous light of Supreme mercy shining through the death-fog of Kali Yuga. Lord Chaitanya offers to all Mankind the invitation to sing God's Name, and join with Him in our original association.

Even an intelligent man is pelleted and polluted by the constant force of mass media; and so it grows increasingly difficult for him to see his real obligations in this life. But we do have obligations. We all have the human form of life-and our single purpose should be to realise ourselves and to discover the ultimate goal for which we are living. That goal is Krishna.

By chanting God's Name in the age of Kali Yuga, The Lord is conveniently available to everyone—through the Mercy of Lord Chaitanya. Swami Bhaktivedanta writes:

"Lord Chaitanya is especially merciful to the innocent, unsophisticated person. His name is Patitpama, or the deliverer of the most fallen conditioned soul."

(from Teachings of Lord Chaitanya)

Lord Chaitanya is offering every man, woman and child this gift: simply chant the Lord's Name, and you will see that with this chanting, comes everything else truly desired-the blessing of the full moon of pleasure and peace. Through the magnanimity of Lord Chaitanya what is available is the greatest gift— Love of Godhead, and it is simply handed over. This strong, helping hand of Lord Chaitanya is so direct that many may miss it; they think their entanglement and the world's entanglement to be so complicated that any direct solution is a hoax. But nothing is too complicated for God. Nor do those who have seriously tried the chant speak of it except in terms of strength and ecstasy and constant revivification, as though they have drunk of a secret, magic water from an eternal source.

The people who have taken to chanting in this age are fortunately released from all desires and impure hankerings even while moving in the midst of materialistic insanity. Those who are constantly chanting the Lord's Name are not troubled by impersonal conceptions of void or atheism, nor do they foolishly think themselves God. It is said that Krishna Himself takes control of such surrendered souls and brings them further to Himself, The All Attractive. In the Vedic scripture Srimad Bhagawatam, set down 5000 years ago, it is stated:

"In this age of Kali, people who are endowed with sufficient brain substance worship the Lord, Who is accompanied by His associates, by performance of Samkirtan Yajna (Sacrifice by chanting the Holy Name."

(Srimad Bhagawatam 1st canto)

Again, note that the gift is "endowed." Mercy is operating. We begin to chant and the highest reciprocation between the Supreme Lord and His infinitesimal sparks is at once established and grows ever greater, more intimate, and more pure. Instead of spending our time engrossed in the senses and the temporal world, we are singing His Name; and as we sing we realise that He is the giver of all abilities, even the mis-spent. Then, how fortunate to be singing the Name of the Source-while at the Feet of the Source itself! The Lord has endowed His Name with His full presence. Hare Krishna, Hare Rama is a sound incarnation. It is not an ordinary thing. It is not a laborious exercise. Nor is the chant a secret guarded by a few priests. In this age of severely limited concentration, Samkirtan is the auspicious way to God. Here indeed is the highest mercy for the living entities.

Satsvarupa das Brahmachary (Stephen Guarino)

High ring - low moan
Chanting the sacred mantra
Propelling the spiritual part of us
into oblivion

While the illusion of this material day Slowly drifts into the now meaningless mire of the material world.

Years go by
Frantic searches for possession of the vanishing things
of earth,
while an oblivion, so staggering, is waiting for those whose good fortune
it is

to be able to comprehend the Consciousness of Krishna.

Giant servant in a land of midgets,
who claim to have freedom.

They are servants of things that vanish before their eyes
Tomorrow, cherished things will vanish
And hands will clap for the magician
And eyes will cry for the loss
Singers' beautiful voices - dry with age
While spirits and God throw thousands of
enlightenments into their path - only
to be over-shadowed by the rain forest of the physical,
the perishable worshipped
while the never ending is ignored

But, there are those who have tasted the Nectar of Krishna's sweet fruit And, have lost taste for everything else For them this world, too, is bliss.

Bhaktajan das Brahmachary (John Kinney)

#### MY POSITION

i've grown accustomed to the birth of infants who grow into children;

#### mature;

and die-

like i am doing.

And, i've grown accustomed to the bloom of the earth every spring and its demise every winter.

The oceans i've crossed, the far-away mountains, the sky,

the nightly stars,

the concrete cities and the atomic bomb;

my body

that is steadily running down—

there is nothing that surprises me;

it is all part of this life

or the next few minutes, (what control do i have?).

on this planet.

But when i hear that universes, infinite in number, (which means i cannot conceive how many) are created by a single exhalation of breath of Mahavishnu, who is only a single portion of You: or that You as Baby Krishna contain all these uncountable-by-me universes within Your mouth: then for me to consider myself a god is perverse. Look what i rule! these few square inches i stand upon on this planet; and for only the next 50 years,

i deserve this punishment of standing here on my square inch kingdom, suffering separated, with death being no escape but only a reinstatement into the suffering.

Oh my Lord God, i do not know Who You are! i hear that You are All-Knowledge, All-Bliss, Absolutely. i am lower than the dust on the temple floor which serves by being walked upon by the Lotus Feet of my Spiritual Master; yet i think myself gorgeous, proclaiming myself the enjoyer of this body, and other bodies, and what i perceive with these senses; and enjoying them (trying) like anything. i am a fly that rubs its hands together and drools over a piece of excrement.

Is it any wonder that i suffer from not knowing who i am! i have not surrendered.
i have not surrendered.
i am a strutting lord, thinking (deep-down) i know what puffed-up Brahma (the four-headed one) cannot know. Only Your pure devotees know.
So, i sit here, chanting
Your Holy Names, weeping for You
Who i do not know.

Brahmananda das Brahmachary
(Bruce Scharf)

#### THAKUR HARIDAS

from the book "Sree Krishna-Chaitanya" by Professor Sannyal

It will not be out of place at this stage to introduce the great personaity who is the practising teacher (Acharya) of the chanting of the Holy Name, the special Divine Dispensation for the Age of discord (Kali Yuga), the establishment of which is one of the Purposes of the Appearance of Lord Chaitanya in this world. Thakur Haridas is the eternal associate of the Supreme Lord and appears in the Company of the Lord whenever and wherever the Lord Himself chooses to make His Appearance. Thakur Haridas plays a different role in the different Avataras of the Lord. In this Avatara he is the Acharya of the Holy Name.

The Holy Name is both the Method and Object of worship of every pure soul. In the Kali Age nothing less than the Name Himself can effect the deliverance of fettered souls. This Teaching of Lord Chaitanya is exemplified by the life of Thakur Haridas. In order, therefore, to be able to understand the method and object of worship that can alone be acceptable to a highly controversial Age like the present, which is least disposed to take anything on trust, it will be necessary to follow attentively the events of the life of the Acharya.

The fashionable theology at Nabadwip, which was the cultural centre of Bengal at the time of the Appearance of the Lord was frankly atheistical. The Philosophical School of the New Logic (Naba Nyaya) may be described as the attempt of our empiric reason to deny the necessity as well as practicability of all worship. The jiva is himself discovered to be both worshipper and worshipped. Worship itself is supposed to be but a concoction of the jiva's own erroneous speculations. The position to which one of the most highly developed systems of the Philosophy of Logic led the people of Nabadwip, at the time of the Appearance of the Lord, and through them was accepted by people all over the country, was exactly what was specifically the worst fitted for understanding the uncompromising pure form of worship which it was the Will of the Lord to propagate by the life of Thakur Haridas. Whatever name might be borne by the different systems of speculative philosophy they are in common agreement as regards the logical necessity of atheism. Even the Geeta and the Bhagavatam were taught at Nabadwip at this period as Scriptures of atheism. It gives us an idea of the audacity and range of activity of the New School of Logic of

Nabadwip that it could devise interpretations even of the unambiguous texts of the Bhagavatam itself in favour of their theory of rankest atheism. It is only to be expected in these circumstances that the Scholarship and acumen of Bengal should be generously recognised in all parts of the country and abroad and even by the atheistical Vedantists of Benares, who have always claimed for themselves the theological leadership of philosophical atheism in India.

Thakur Haridas made his appearance in the village of Budhan in the District of Jessore in East Bengal. This has made that part of the country since then a centre of the worship of Godhead by means of the Kirtan. Thakur Haridas was born in a Muhammedan family. He comes into the light of our definite narrative under his changed name of Haridas, which means literally 'the servant of Hari'; Hari being the Name of Godhead in the Scriptures. So Haridas must have given up his family and society in some manner that is not definitely known to us, had been the recipient of the mercy of a Vaishnava and had already made extraordinary progress on the path of pure devotion, although he was in the first flush of youth when he is found living as a recluse in the forest of Benapole in he native District of Jessore. In the depth of the forest he resided in a solitary hut, worshipped the holy Tulasi, chanted daily the Holy Name three lacs (300,000) of times night and day and ate food cooked in the homes of Brahmanas, which he obtained by begging.

The Hindu Chief, who was in charge of the Local Administration of that part of the country, bore the name of Ramchandra Khan. He was one of the greatest of atheists and a hater of the servants of Vishnu (literally, the One All-pervading Lord). Haridas was treated with great reverence by the people, and Ramchandra Khan found this intolerable. He could not rest till he had actually devised a plan for effecting the humiliation of Thakur Haridas. For this purpose he did not hesitate to stoop to the basest of devices.

Ramchandra Khan, finding that Haridas was reputed to be absolutely free from all vices, hit upon a plan of creating in him the vice by exposing which he hoped to accomplish his ruin. He summoned to his help the most famous harlots and told them to destroy the chastity of Haridas who was under the vow of continence as an ascetic. One of the harlots, who was young and possessed great beauty, undertook to effect his ruin in the course of three days. Ramchandra Khan pressed her to take an armed footman (paik) who was to catch him red-handed and bring both of them for punishment. But the harlot proposed that she should at first go by herself and after being with Haridas once take the paik to capture him on her second visit.



That harlot, having put on her best attire, then presented herself at nightfall at the solitary cell of Thakur Haridas. After making her obeisance to the Tulasi she went up to the entrance of the cell and bowing to the Thakur remained there standing. She then sat down at the doorstep, exposing her body to the view of Haridas, and made confession of her uncontrollable passion for him praying to be favoured by his intimate society.

Thakur Haridas agreed to fulfill her wish after he had finished chanting the due number of the Names, bidding her in the meantime to wait and listen to the Samkirtana of the Name which he chanted. The harlot on this assurance remained seated there as Haridas went on with his loud chant of

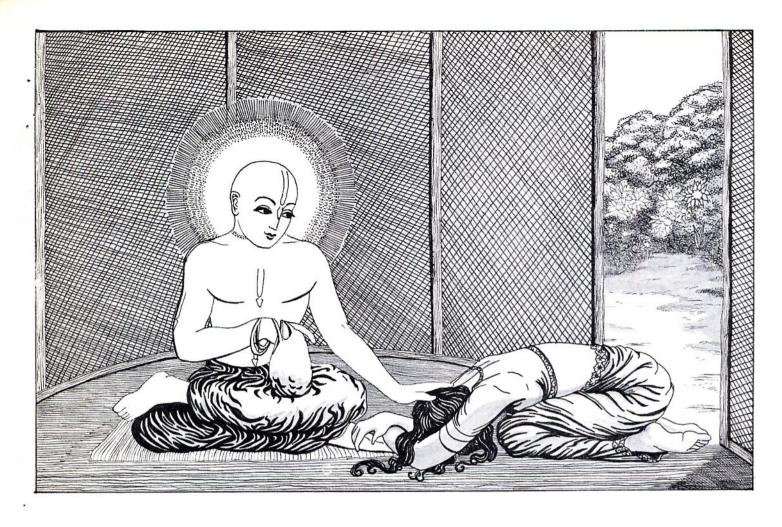
the Holy Name till break of day. The harlot came away disappointed when it was morning, and informed Ramchandra Khan that Haridas had promised to enjoy her society and that the promise would be carried out when she met him next night.

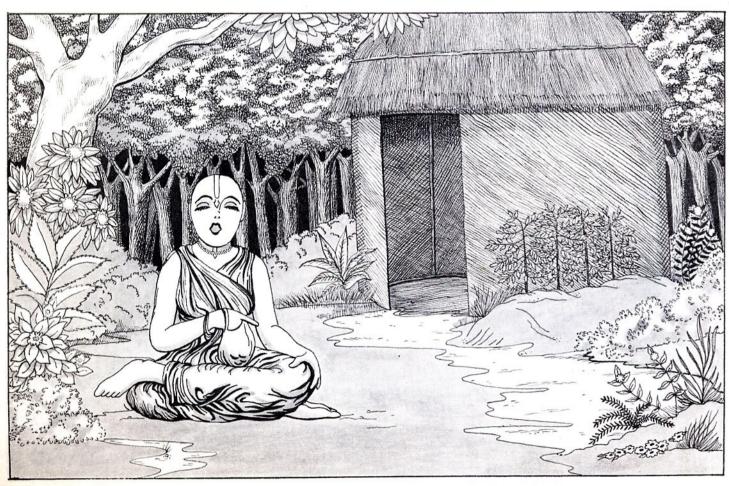
As the harlot presented herself before Thakur Haridas on the second evening he expressed his request that as on the previous occasion he could not keep his promise to her for the reason that he must complete the chant of the due number of Names. He would however, certainly fulfill her desire after the chanting of the due number of Names had been completed; and he accordingly bade her wait there and listen to the chanting of the Name. The harlot made obeisance to the Tulasi and the Thakur and sat listening to the chanting of the Holy Name. But she naturally grew restive as the night was drawing to a close. The Thakur, noticing her impatience, told her that he had taken the vow of chanting a crore of the Name in course of the month. He had expected to finish the full number that night but could not do so although he had chanted Him the whole night. The number would be certainly completed by the nixt night and then the vow would be fulfilled and he would be in the position to enjoy her company. The harlot reported accordingly to Ramchandra Khan.

On the third evening the harlot duly made her appearance and, after making obeisance to the Tulasi and the Thakur, sat at the entrance of the cell listening to the chanting of the Holy Name, chanting the Same herself, till the close of that night. The mind of the harlot was changed by chanting the Holy Name all night in the company of Thakur Haridas. She now fell prostrate at the Feet of Thakur Haridas and confessed to him everything regarding the plot of Ramchandra Khan. She said she had committed endless sin as she was a harlot by trade. She begged the Thakur to save her, who was so vile, by his mercy.

Haridas Thakur replied that he knew everything about the Khan and would have left the place three days ago. He had delayed his departure by three days on her account. The harlot then prayed that he might mercifully instruct her as to how she was to get rid of the miseries of the worldly life. Thakur Haridas then tendered her this advice: 'Give away everything of your household to the Brahmanas. Come and stay here in this cell. Chant constantly the Holy Name. Worship the Tulasi. You will then obtain the Feet of Krishna in no time'. After saying this and instructing her in the Holy Name the Thakur rose up and left the place, chanting the Name of Hari.

Then that harlot on obtaining the command of the Guru gave away to the Brahmanas all the wealth that she had. With shaven head and a single





piece of cloth to wrap her body in, she lived in that cell and took the Holy Name three lakhs of times in course of every night and day. She worshipped the Tulasi, ate uncooked food by chewing, and often fasted. The senses were controlled and love of Godhead manifested itself. She became a famous devotee and a great spiritual teacher; and Vaishnavas of the highest order often came thither to have a sight of her. The people were astonished by this wonderful behaviour of the quondam harlot and bowed with reverence whenever they spoke of the greatness of Haridas.

As the above theme is the subject of the highest importance to the present Age I have tried to keep scrupulously to the words of Sree Kaviraj Goswami in describing this famous event of the life of Thakur Haridas. The chanting of the Holy Name of Krishna imparted by a pure devotee rescued a youthful harlot who had tried to seduce the saint at the instigation of a most profligate atheist. By this process the harlot was not merely rescued from a life of shame but became a devotee of the Lord fit to lift others to the plane of perfect purity.

The chanting of the Holy Name can, therefore, reclaim the worst of sinners. The Holy Name has to be heard with reverence from the lips of a pure devotee. The Holy Name has to be received as a Sacrament from a pure devotee by complete submission at his feet. The Holy Name so received has to be constantly chanted by being free from all offence. The Tulasi has to be worshipped. All earthly possessions and all association with worldly people, especially in matters of food, clothing and residence, must be disowned. By this method, in a short time, the highest spiritual state is realisable. That state consists in serving exclusively the Feet of Krishna. This is the special Divine Dispensation for this Age of discord announced by the spiritual Scriptures and promulgated by the Supreme Lord, Sree Krishna-Chaitanya, through His eternal servant, Thakur Haridas.

The obvious objection to the above, that is likely to suggest itself to those who are too strongly addicted to the concerns of this world, is that it does not sufficiently appeal to the rationalistic imagination. The scheme seems to be dry and sterile. It also appears to be both meaningless and impracticable. Every admittedly futile speculation, despite its futility, seems to be more worthy of the serious consideration of the worldling than any transcendental proposition. Appearances are decidedly against the acceptance of the teaching of Thakur Haridas by the average merely intellectual worldling.

In the first place Thakur Haridas seems to ignore wholly the life that is ordinarily led by people all over the world. The new life that is pro-

posed has apparently no point of contact with the life previously led by the disciple after election. This is not likely to appeal to those to whom the theory of materialistic evolution has become as it were the very breath of their nostrils. 'Is a real gap or abrupt revolution possible in the world of life?' 'Can there be any such thing as the absence of proper purpose anywhere on the part of anybody in this fair world?' Such and similar questions are bound to rush into the brain of all mental speculationists the moment they are asked to take the Holy Name of Krishna to the exclusion of every worldly function. The proposal seems to be so puerile and so queer and so utterly destructive of all that is near and dear to the heart of the average man!

It is for this reason that the <u>sadhus</u> are on principle opposed to discuss spiritual subjects with persons who do not really seek the Truth. Those who think that for them there is no driving necessity for such a quest are not likely to follow seriously any elucidation of propositions that have nothing to do with anything in which they feel really interested. The complete denial of any place to empiric conclusions, in the life that is proposed for the novice, is a staggering blow to most people who feel instinctively that they should refuse to listen to what obviously amounts to nothing short of an incitement to the commission of suicide.

The spiritual purpose itself cannot, however, be explained away nor whittled down by means of clever interpretations. The actual doings and sayings of Thakur Haridas stand in the way of those who try to do so. The Thakur literally acted as he taught. He acted also in accordance with the plainest meaning of his words. So there can be no ambiguity whatsoever.

The harlot's condition was not essentially different from any other worldling. The irrepressible desire for complete renunciation of the world is the natural and inevitable result of the appearance of any real inclination for the spiritual life. The awakened worldly mind understands the necessity of committing mundane suicide in order to be reborn as the immaculate soul for the purpose of realising the life eternal. The material mind is not a figment of the empiric imagination. It is a real envelope and has to be completely discarded. It will not do to imagine this enveloping darkness as possessing anything in common with the light. The material mind is like a sheet of impenetrable darkness that completely shuts out the light of the soul. The soul is by his nature self-effulgent and has nothing to do with the material mind which acts as a screen to cut off the light of the soul from the view of the observer who uses the mind for such a purpose. This is fact and not a hypothesis like the so-called 'truths' and 'facts' conceived by the material mind in the vanity of its ignorance. The spiritual

realisation of the categorical difference and relation of utter incompatibility between mind and soul, is the first unique experience on the threshold of the awakened spiritual life.

The harlot was not 'converted' by speculative arguments addressed to the mind but simply by listening to the Name of Hari from the lips of Thakur Haridas and chanting the Same herself in his company. She had apparently the advantage of possessing at the very outset a natural regard for Thakur Haridas and for his advice and also for the holy Tulasi. This was the only antecedent condition of her redemption. Was it, therefore, blind and traditional faith that actually saved her in this crisis?

The answer must be in the negative. Those who are most officiously given to the cult of blind faith are not necessarily attracted towards the actual devotee. The affinity for the true soul is itself a spiritual, that is to say perfectly self-conscious, impulse. It must be most carefully distinguished from the blind, material impulse which is so common and which, as a matter of fact, is the worst form of obstacle in the way of the realisation of the spiritual life. The instinctive affinity of the harlot for Haridas is an activity of the soul and as such is, therefore, perfectly moral, perfectly self-cognisant and categorically different from the sensuous sentimentality that ordinarily passes in this world as 'blind' faith. Faith is the instinctive attitude of the soul towards the Truth and can, therefore, never be blind. It is the blind who in their blindness confound true faith with the counterfeit ware with which alone they happen to be, unfortunately for themselves, only too familiar.

Real faith can alone lead one to the presence of the pure soul. The material mind cannot reach the proximity of a <u>sadhu</u>. The harlot possessed the spiritual faculty by which it was possible for her to really approach Thakur Haridas. The <u>Shastras</u> say that this true instinctive reverence for sadhus is the result of previous unconscious association with the pure devotees of the Lord.

For the proper unconscious association with sadhus also sensuous sentimentality is often the chief hindrance. The sensuous sentimentalist seeks the gratification of his own senses. He, therefore, is least disposed to serve the sadhu on the account of the latter. It is going against his grain. The sadhus accordingly keep away from philanthropists, as these are not willing to learn to get rid of their sentimentality. A pseudodevotee, who parades his false sentimentality, readily enough obtains the cheap reverence of all worldly persons as his due, by misunderstanding of the purpose of the Scriptures. Such a person is not likely to bow to the sadhu, as he really wants to be served himself. Plain worldly people are

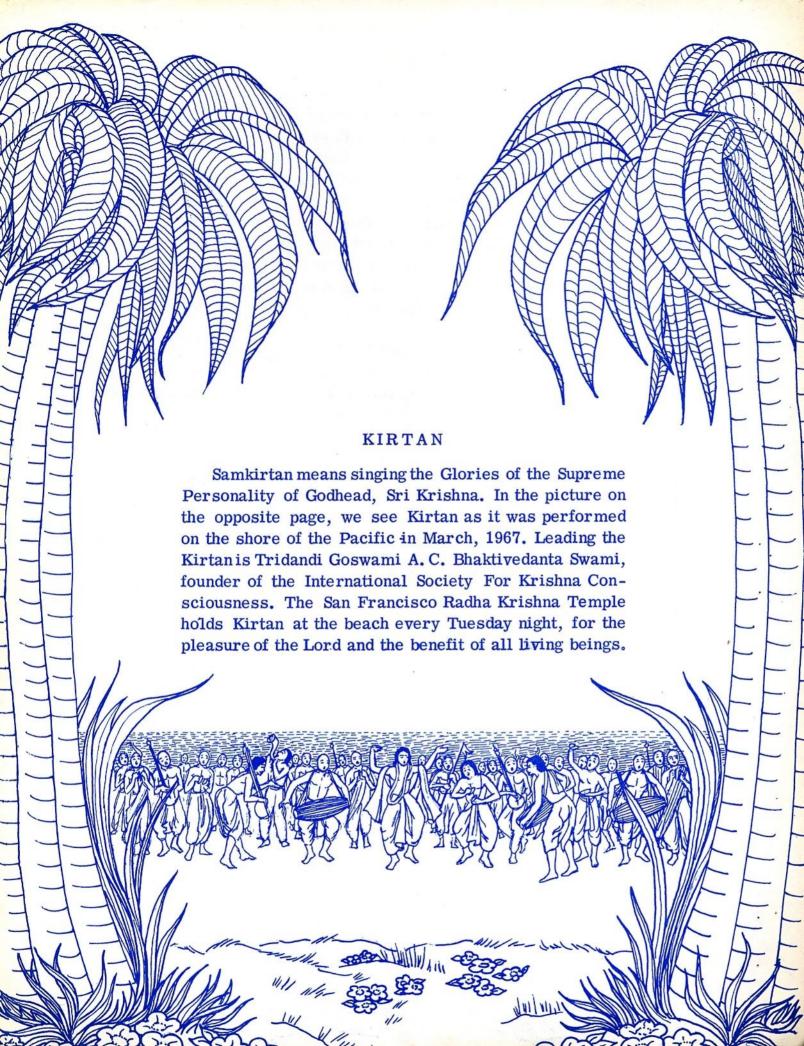
likely to be more easily benefited by the process of unconscious association with the sadhus. Those who bring with them any previously formed notions regarding the nature of the sadhus, find it difficult to get rid of those false sentiments which stand in the way of their associating on a proper footing with the real sadhus. The only natural way of associating with the devotees of Godhead consists in doing whatever the sadhu wants one to do and in the way that he advises, without expecting any desirable or undesirable result to oneself therefrom. The harlot possessed something like this natural faith in sadhus by reason of her previous unconscious association with the devotees of Godhead.

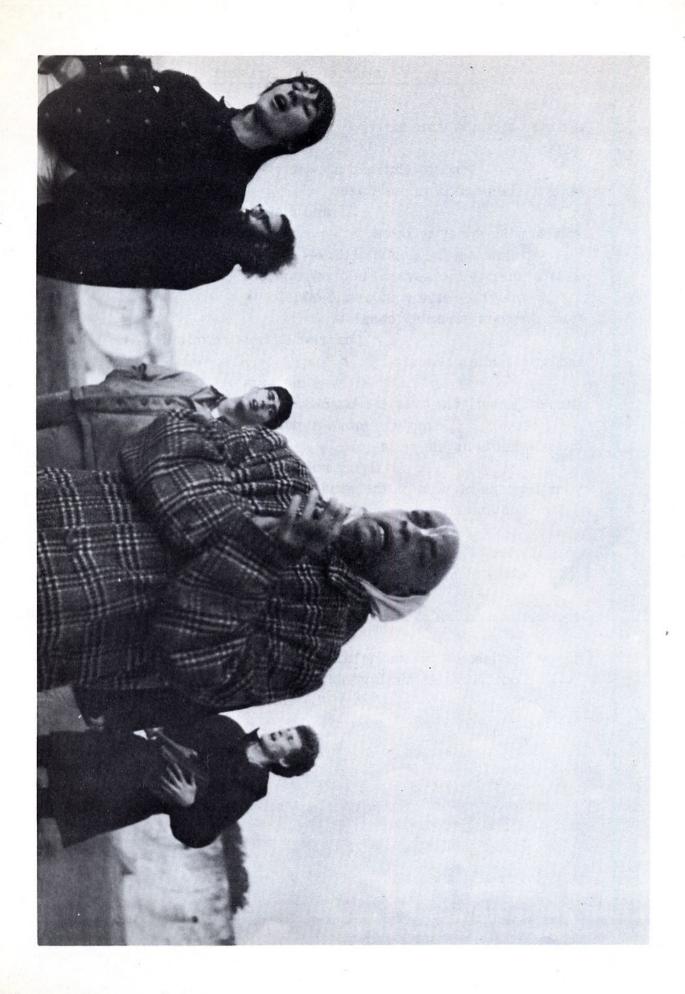
#### End Part I

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Krishna,
You supply all devotees with
sufficient amount of You
to always help us
keep our minds off evil Maya
and on Your Holy Name, Fame and Form—
and we never come down
from the sweet sufficient amount—
As we chant we only proceed up from that point,
at Your pleasure—
Forever—
Love

Madhusudan das Brahmachary (Michael Blumert)





### great whirling disc of Krishna

sitting i a sunlit time ago ocean feet over

norte churned up water—your wishes are plump oranges

and magic flowers.

you that the spray nuzzles

in among the conch shells-

well wisher to the several hebrew turtles

may they live a thousand eons!

(just my toes scraping coral

barracuda unborn mind)

the spirit omnipresent...

(it was the arm

lifting the sailboat over the barbwire moon.)

simply. simply. more slowly.

did you not hear the gods

flying round the landed quest?

your flowers blew in on the wind

and made a roof

for my house of palm.

bengal poet is a sandcrab

shell shaped food for cosmo

Krishna beings

vegetables and fruits from seas

enormous heart.

happy Herdsboy— ocean melting unity.

our bicycles shall gobble up

tibetan trails!

Ted J. Berk

## THE GREAT DELUSION OF THE GRAND ASCENSION THE CALL OF MAYA

by Rupanuga das Adhikary (Robert Corens)

One of life's great delusions is that Self-realization is an automatic process, that simply by staying alive for sixty or a hundred years we will come to know what life is all about. This silly conceit remains, in old age as in youth, generally unfulfilled.

Psychology and other techiques have convinced us, through endlessly speculative exercises, to believe that self-realization (note the small S) involves a mere material display of our potency. After all, what is the materialist—gross or subtle—doing, but materializing ideas (his own or more likely someone else's)? Nothing is actually created by us; all is a play between the senses and their objects. The play of Maya is going on, and it is Krishna alone who is the actual and Supreme Enjoyer.

In this country, we are presently preoccupied with conditioned and false ideas of what our "real" needs are and our labors are meant to guarantee some bodily or mental comfort. Unfortunately, people striving in such a system, even though unhappy and miserable, continue to the graveyard in their search for merely the smallest bit of material peace or pleasure. Their efforts are folly because real happiness is transcendental to the material world. Most people,

> Bewildered by many thoughts, entangled in the meshes of delusion and addicted to the gratification of desires . . . fall into a foul hell. (Bhagavad Gita 16/16)

Describing the wisdom of Yoga to Arjuna, Krishna says:

In this, O joy of the Kurus, the resolute (decided) understanding is single; but thoughts of the irresolute (undecided) are many-branched and endless.

(Bhagavad Gita 11/14)

We must decide whether to choose God and to love Him, or not; and this is the choice of our lives. Krishna gives us the power to concentrate upon Him. If we choose not to think of Him, our minds continue out of control, lost in the impermanent flux of our desires.

The great delusion of the grand ascension is that, by concocting our own intellectual adjustments and mental speculations, we can rise up to knowledge of or union with the Absolute Truth, God. For example, it is often thought that God is some great esoteric secret, properly cherished deep within. However, knowledge of Krishna is public not private, and readily available to those who truly seek It. The sentimental need for privacy is material only, an excuse for personal unauthorized concoctions. If we want a confidential relationship with Krishna, we must take shelter of Him, chanting His Holy Names.

There are so many practicing impersonalists in the world, striving to merge into or become Krishna. Such persons are transcendentalists who haven't really leaped into the Spiritual Ocean. Either they are afraid of accepting their eternal individuality, or they want to be God, which for them means merging with the Effulgent Rays of Lord Krishna's Body. They are mistaking their true position. Swami Bhaktivedanta calls this spiritual suicide, or giving up the natural position of Sat-Chit-Ananda. It is the realization of our eternal (Sat) feature only, with ignorance of Chit (full knowledge) and Ananda (complete bliss). Thus His Maya shields the Personality of Godhead, Krishna, from those who do not want Him.

Such a misfortune begins with the prevalent conception that Self-realization is an ascending process. Actually, the complete revival of our God-Consciousness depends <u>always</u> upon the Grace of Krishna Himself. This is a <u>descending process</u>; it comes down to us from the Spiritual Platform and does not arise from our material level. We cannot know God by some mechanical process, which would automatically place a false limitation upon Him. To the impersonalist, whose concept of God is limited in that it is incomplete, Krishna remains hidden behind His glaring Effulgence.

Now we can see how far this delusion of ascension reaches, for it keeps the conditioned souls milling about in the impermanent worlds of fantasy and false promise, and can eventually drag the impersonally realized soul down from the Golden Effulgence of Krishna and back into the material ocean. Our eternal position is that of part and parcel. Our perfection is to realize our individual relationship as spirit soul, in sweet loving service of Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If we choose to lose ourselves in speculative worlds or even in His Loving Rays, then we fall far short of our true destination. As a man heading home after an over-extended absence settles for another vacation, we choose foolishly and poorly.

This faith in the ascending process accounts for the skeptical notion that the Maha Mantra is just too easy, too good to be true. After all, we complain, how can one know God simply by chanting His Names?

The ascending process is supposedly "progress," which means it is needlessly complicated. The puffed-up and pompous living entity, who has this misconception of what it means to be independent or "free," must fill his life with pointless confabulations, unworkable fantasies, arbitrary "goals," and other nonsense, merely to lend meaning to such independence. All the same, no amount of philosophizing can disentangle us from our material inheritance, which is never actually at our disposal anyway, but is under the complete control of Lord Krishna. We possess the illusory freedom of drowning in the material turbulence while thinking we are flying. Our actual freedom is in complete surrender to, and dependence upon, Lord Krishna. Of course, we cannot change our allegiance from the material to the spiritual instantly, but we can make an immediate start by chanting HARE KRISHNA, HARE KRISHNA, KRISHNA KRISHNA, HARE HARE. Simply by reading this line you have started.

Those much enamoured of the ascending process are too blinded to accept the bona fide Spiritual Master, whose Grace is necessary for spiritual advancement. They cannot accept the Divine Grace of the Spiritual Master because they do not believe that it is by Krishna's kindness, distributed through the pure devotee, that He may be known. The Spiritual Master is the living proof of Krishna's Divine Grace; in fact, He is Divine Grace itself.

Learn by humble reverence, by inquiry and by service. The men of wisdom who have seen the truth will instruct thee in knowledge. (Bhagavad Gita 4/34)

Spiritual Masters who teach impersonalism are generally descended from Shankaracharya. Factually, Shankaracharya, like Lord Buddha, taught his disciples what they were able to comprehend; he himself was a pure devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Krishna, as is verified in his Meditation on the Gita:

You fools, just worship Govinda (Krishna)! Just worship Govinda! Just worship Govinda! Your grammatical knowledge and word jugglery will not save you at the time of death.

One engaged in Krishna Consciousness is automatically on the Spiritual Platform when serving, chanting, or reading the Scriptures. When the first

Syllable of the Maha Mantra, HARE KRISHNA, HARE KRISHNA, KRISHNA KRISHNA, HARE HARE, HARE RAMA, HARE RAMA, RAMA RAMA, HARE HARE dances on our tongue we immediately transcend impersonality as well as the material worlds. As our practice and sincerity increase, our position becomes factually revealed to us without a doubt.

To those who are constantly devoted and worship with love, I grant the concentration of understanding by which they come to Me.

Out of compassion for those same ones, remaining within My own state, I destroy the darkness born of ignorance by the shining lamp of wisdom. (Bhagavad Gita 10/10, 11)

We can struggle with Krishna, rebels with no cause but our own illusion. If we want, Krishna will even be our Enemy and smash us, for He gives us only what we desire; He enjoys everything.

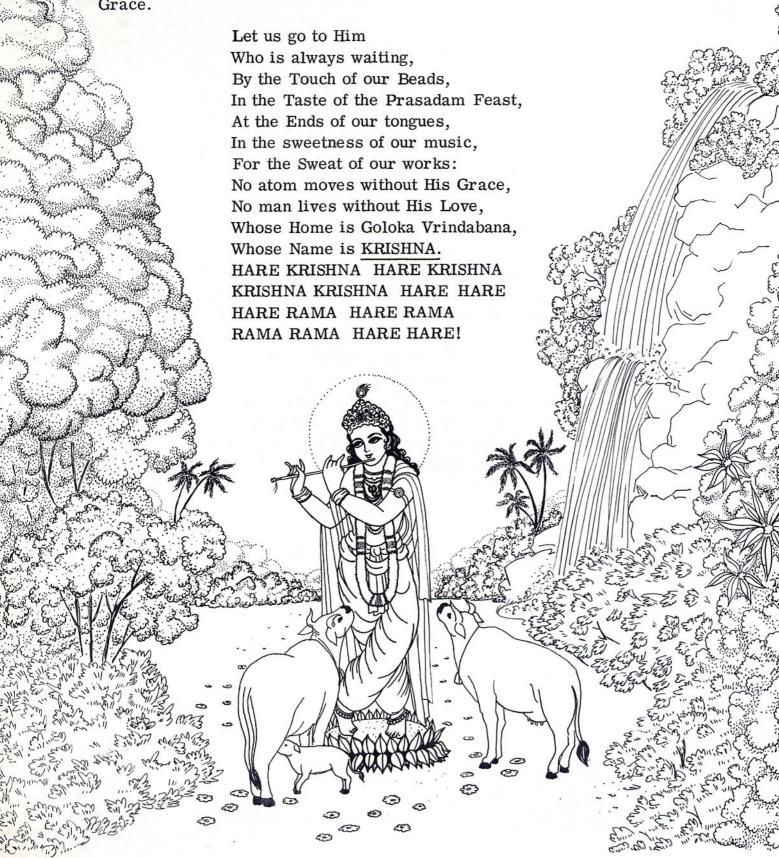
Those who engage in the ascending process are actually struggling with Krishna, thinking "I can do it on my own," or "to ask for help would show weakness," or "surrendering would mean slavery" and on and on. So they flee into the worlds of geegaws, mandalas, psychedelic pacifiers and other material activities. Behold the great Wall Street monopoly set, who are all merely wasting their living energies in games of money. Their least and greatest efforts are alike spent on the wholly perishable.

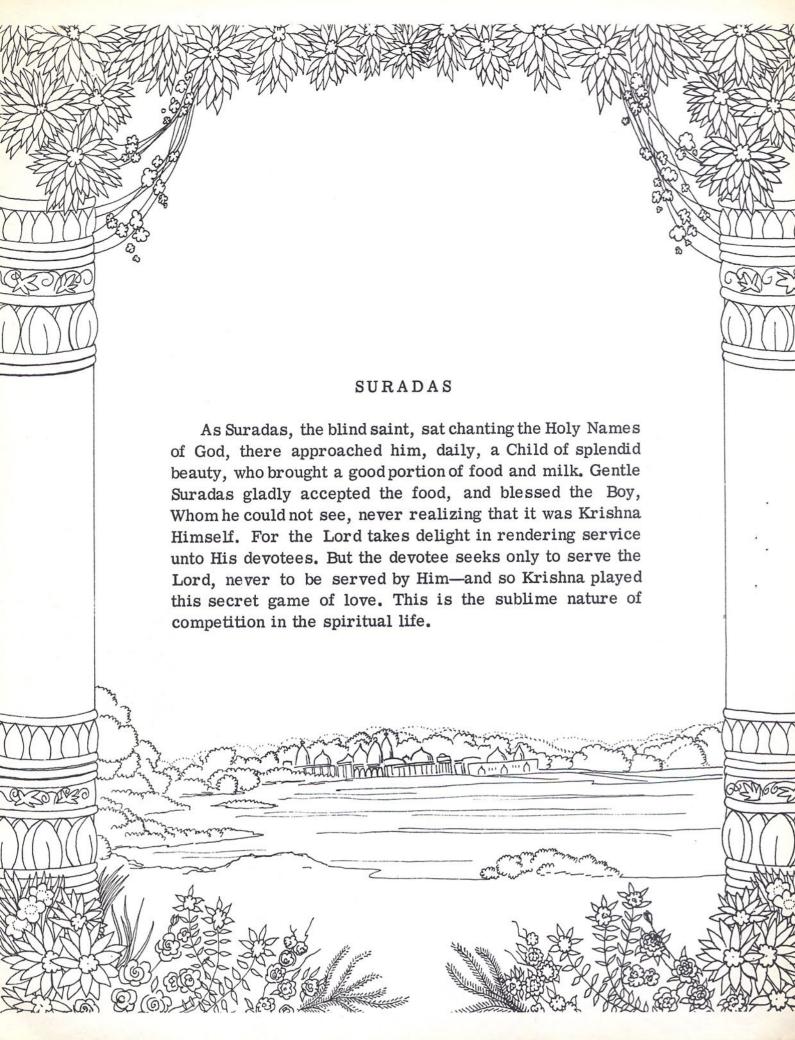
In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna informs us that we have only the right to act, and no right to the fruits of actions; for the fruits belong to Him as Sacrifice. Only the number one fool believes that his private machinations are worth the risk of eternal knowledge and bliss, no matter how fancy and glittering the outcome may appear. In reality he ascends nowhere, but becomes more deeply entangled by the tentacles of his activities. Maya, the illusory energy of the material world, is never more fascinating or seductive than when she appears to a man as his own personal reward and pleasure. This is the ascending process, the call of Maya.

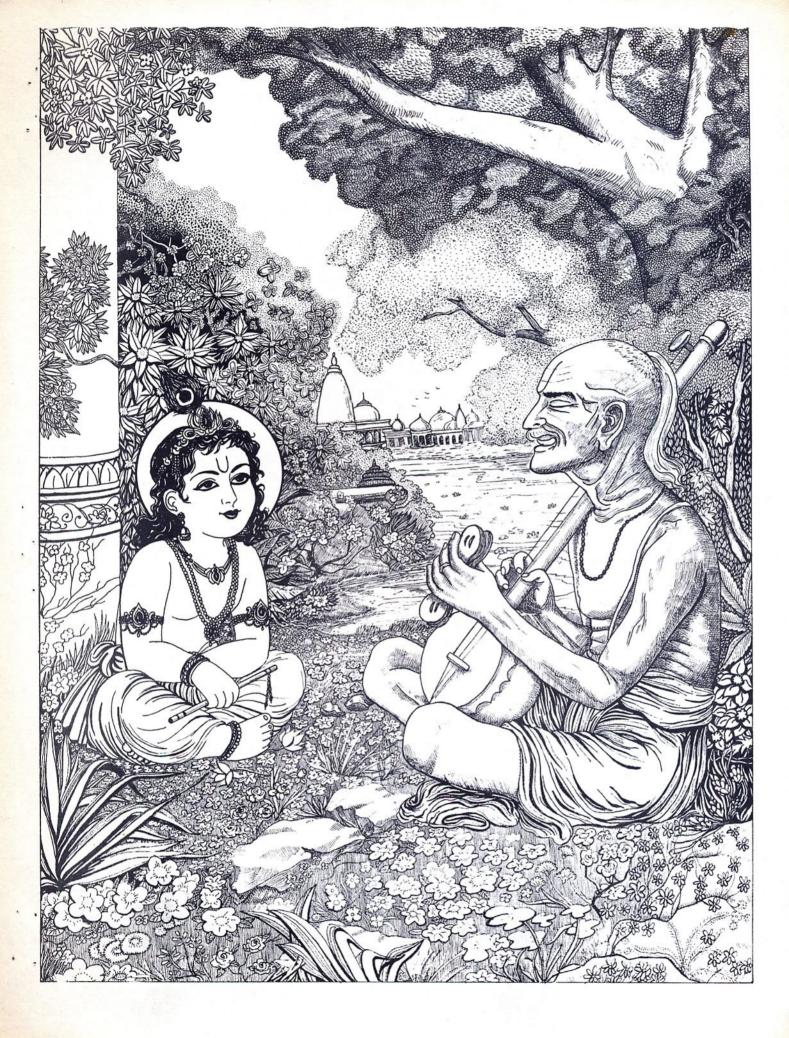
Man did not, with his puny intellect, discover or invent the Scriptures, the Word of God, That contains all that can be asked. Krishna Himself, by His Causeless Mercy, tells us how to come home to Godhead. This great gift descends from the Spiritual Sky. Otherwise, we could never know it. Transcendental concepts are not from the material plane and can certainly not be improved upon, much less replaced by the pitiful endeavors of embodied souls.

Our actual position—the position of all living entities—is Sat-Chit-

Ananda. Why settle for less? Krishna facilitates our returning to Godhead because He Loves us and wants us to come Home. Swami Bhaktivedanta's instructions, the Maha Mantra, the Scriptures— all are Krishna's Divine Grace.







# ON INSTALLATION OF THE NEW DEITY to Hayagriva das and Upendra das

I don't know
if it's Monday
Wednesday or Friday
I'm up on my feet
dancing
— our temple has a
new Murti!

Blackish Krishna
Lord of the Dance
— oh now we can
really sing and play
— this Murti is
real God-brother!

His toes and palms are pink and His foot is black His leg is crossed in curving posture His robes are bright yellow His chest is grand His eyes are huge His crown is gold His arms are bent holding a black flute He stands in the heart of our temple surrounded with incense and flowers and barefoot dancing servants wearing faded yellow robes play cymbals and organ, Sing His Kirtan Hare Krishna!

Take heart, here's new singing to the evergreen Cupid.
He is Shyamsundar and shining like a fresh rain cloud.

Hare Krishna!

Satsvarupa das Brahmachary (Stephen Guarino)

## HOW I MET A.C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI Brahmananda das Brahmachary (Bruce Scharf)

In my second year of college I took LSD. In my third year of college I read Whitman and Henry Miller, paused, and continued eating drugs. In my fourth year, one summer day by the seaside, I first read the Bhagavad Gita and learned that spiritual life meant not to take drugs but, as Krishna ordered, "Surrender unto Me." But, how do you surrender to God? What does "surrender" mean? And who is God?

So I read Ramakrishna, Lao Tzu, Buddha, and countless countless commentaries and interpretations and concluded that spiritual understanding was not a home-study course. I had to live it. I had to find a spiritual master.

I hung around the oriental bookstores, looking for my guru; thinking the old lady at Orientalia a sage; seeing people who passed me on the street and wondering, "Are you my guru? Are you my guru?" Uptown I wandered to the swamis who sat enthroned with harems of soggy old ladies fanning them with their talk. Still, they were swamis. I spoke to one who told me to either get married or stop fornicating. It seemed natural. I stopped searching for that ultimate satisfaction in sex, and immediately I felt liberated from having to play the "male" role. I stopped eating meat; it came naturally, but still I was feeling for my guru.

One evening an old drug friend came by with a leaflet, saying that he had just been to a storefront several blocks away where there was this swami who spoke bad English into a tape recorder, and Allen Ginsberg was there. The leaflet read, International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Incorporated— and offered ecstasy through transcendental sound vibrations. Right?

So I went. And I chanted HARE KRISHNA, not knowing what I was singing. It just sounded very pretty. And after the service I walked the streets, singing HARE KRISHNA; only I couldn't remember the tune or the proper order. So, I sat in Washington Square, while some guys near me were panting over a stick of pot, and I sang HARE KRISHNA to my own tune that was so wrong I had to eliminate the final HARE HARE. It was such a beautiful experience, so beautiful in fact that I actually did not want to realize I was enjoying it, because as soon as you examine it and say, "It's nice", you are thinking about it. This is something you

just want to experience purely without any self-consciousness. It's called "bliss." I knew I would never be the same again.

I went back the next morning and learned the tune and the words properly, and it was even better. The next day my job as an elementary school teacher was to begin. How could I go to a job? I just wanted to sit in that bare storefront and sing HARE KRISHNA. So that morning I paced the streets thinking my parents had spent all this money for my education, and I was trying to be responsible, and it was to be my first real job. I wandered into a church. It was so quiet. I started humming HARE KRISHNA and then chanted softly so as not to disturb the handful of worshippers there, and at once the ties of family and responsibility snapped. How foolish of me to hesitate in giving up everything. I fancied myself so free and I was binding myself to what other people would think of me.

I walked straight back to that storefront and asked a Minerva-haired fellow if I could speak with the Swami. We crossed an open courtyard where a tall, thin boy with eyes that never seemed to blink sat typing in the summer morning sunshine, like a scribe in a Lower East Side monastery.

Upstairs A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami sat in faded saffron robes on a mat with a typewriter, stacks of papers, and a yellow tin box before him. He greeted me with a smile that was gigantic, like an ocean, and such jolly eyes, and I had the feeling he had been expecting me. I told him my desire to give everything up, my job, my family, my responsibilities, everything, and be his student. "It is not necessary to renounce your activities. Just change your consciousness! You keep your job and your responsibilities, but just chant HARE KRISHNA. This is Krishna Consciousness."

I agreed, declaring that all my wages were his. "Thank you very much," he said.

Later I feared I had been to hasty, but chanting burns away all doubts. I am no longer Bruce Scharf who went to college, read great books, took drugs, had sexual experiences, and wondered who he was and what he was doing here. Now I am Brahmananda das Brahmachary who is struggling to serve his Spiritual Master sincerely and submissively. It is so difficult yet so natural.

# KRISHNA AND THE VEDIC VIEW: The Swami Responds



Dear Swami Bhaktivedanta,

Could you please explain the Vedic concept of Universal Time? It seems to me that this is a be-wilderingly complex system of thought.

Yours truly, Henry Langdon

Dear Mr. Langdon,

Universal Time is no more complex than the relationship of a second to a minute to an hour to a day. History is divided into series of four Yugas, or sub-Ages. Each

complete series is 4, 200, 000 years long. One thousand of such complete ages make one day of Brahma. Brahma is the creator of this Universe, and his life span is co-equal to it. Brahma's day is a thousand ages, and his night is also a thousand ages. And Brahma lives one hundred years. Thus, we can calculate the duration of this universe at something over three hundred billion years. I hope this answers your question.

Dear Swami,

How long does it take to attain perfection in Krishna Consciousness?

Thank you,

Walter Arden

Dear Mr. Arden,

One second is more than enough. The perfection of Krishna Consciousness is found in complete surrender unto the Personality of Godhead, Lord Sri Krishna. If you are capable of such surrender, then don't delay even one more heartbeat. The Maha (Hare Krishna) Mantra will help you to be able to surrender, by giving you direct experience of the Lord's presence. By thus understanding His Beauty, Kindness and other Attributes, you will realize the value of His association, and will at once surrender for His sake.

Dear Swami Bhaktivedanta,

Is it necessary to have a spiritual master in order to achieve Krishna Consciousness? Or is the chant alone enough?

Sincerely, Helen Lee

Dear Miss Lee,

Chanting will put you directly in touch with the Source—Krishna Himself. But the spiritual master is Krishna's direct representative, and he too is of incalculable value for your spiritual progress.

Dear Swamiji,

Why was this material world created, if God truly loves us?

Yours, N. Ogden

My dear N. Ogden,

Do you think the government builds its prisons in hopes that they'll be filled? But there is a need. As the criminal must be removed from moral society, so the living entities who reject God must leave the spiritual realm, where all adore Him.

Dear Swami,

You say that unalloyed service to the Lord is the purest devotion. But how can we always put faith in Krishna's mercy, and at the same time never ask Him for anything?

> Thank you, Marie Moskowitz

Dear Miss Moskowitz,

We need never ask for the Lord's mercy. It is given us freely and abundantly at all times. Even the atheist enjoys it. But what we must have is God's loving service, if we are to know true happiness. Make this loving service the object of your every prayer, and see the result yourself.

Dear Swamiji,

What's wrong with pleasure?

D. T. Mervin

Dear D. T. Mervin,

Until you serve Krishna, you cannot know what pleasure is.

Dear Swami,

If one has rejected God, will God still take him back?

Yours,

Miss Anita Keough

My dear Miss Keough,

We are all here due to mistakes. Krishna only cares for our love.

Dear Swami,

Is it necessary to pursue all the different yogas in turn in order to reach the Ultimate?

Yours truly, John Ble

Dear Mr. Ble,

You can walk the stairs to the top of the Empire State Building if you like. But the elevator is also there. Try chanting Hare Krishna.

Dear Swami,

Why do so many people neglect the Lord, if He is the center of everything?

Thanks, Brendan Jones

Dear Mr. Jones,

Why do some men lie down on the Bowery Street? There is independence, and independence means one can choose wisely or foolishly.

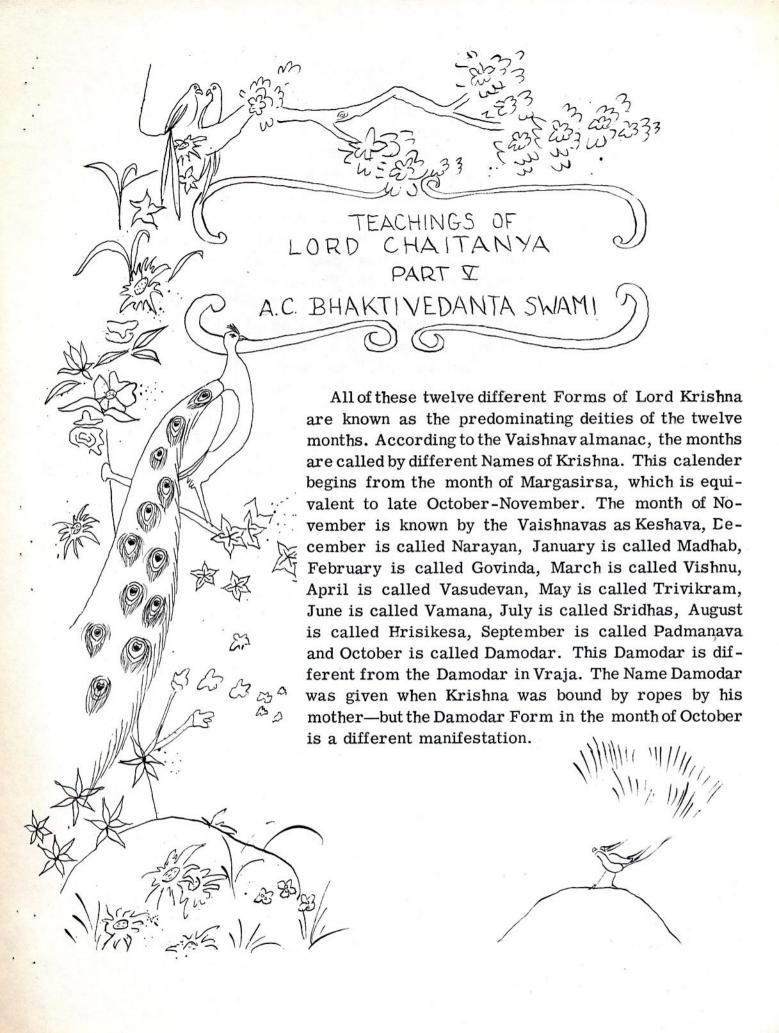
Ever your well-wisher, A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami

#### FROM AN APRIL MORNING TALK BY SWAMI

There is a nice example When I was flying from San Francisco— The plane was flying Above the cloud ocean. When I came first from India I saw the water ocean And the cloud ocean is just the same, Round all round. Above the cloud is the sun And though we came down through the cloud And everything in New York is cloudy, Still, above the cloud The sun is shining. Cloud cannot cover the whole world— It can't even cover The whole United States. Which is not even more Than a speck in the universe. From the sky The skyscrapers are very tiny; From God's position All this nonsense becomes insignificant. I, the living entity, Am very insignificant, And my tendency is to come down. The sun hasn't got The come-down tendency. The Supreme Lord doesn't come down To Maya, or under the cloud. But we have the tendency To be controlled by Maya.

Do you know how Maya kicks?
The she-ass kicks the male ass
When he comes for sex.
Among the cats they fight and whine.
These are the teachings of Nature—
She tricks.
It is like the capture of an elephant.
He is caught in the forest
By use of a trained she-elephant
Who leads him
And makes him fall into a pit.

versified by Damodara das Adhikary (Dan Clark)



Similarly, the Vaishnava community marks different parts of the body, and each mark is known by one of these twelve different Names of the Supreme Lord. The mark on the forehead is called Kesava, and for the belly, the breast, and the arms there are different names; the Names that are used for the months are also used for this purpose.

The four formal Forms, the Vasudeva, Samkarshan, Pradyumna and Aniruddhya, are also expanded in the Vilasa Murti. They are eight in number, and their names are Purushottam, Achyuta, Nrisingha, Janardana, Hari, Krishna, Adhoksha and Upendra. Out of these eight names. Adhoksha and Purushottam are the Vilasa or Forms of Vasudeva. Similarly, Upendra and Achyuta are the Vilasa Forms of Samkarshan; Nrisingha and Janardana are the Vilasa Forms of Pradyumna; and Hari and Krishna are the two Vilasa Forms of Aniruddhya. This Krishna is different from the original Krishna. All these twenty-four Forms are known as the Vilasa manifestations of Pravhav (four-handed) Form, and they are differently named according to the different position of the symbolic representations, that is, the mace, the disc, the lotus flower and the conchshell. Out of these twenty-four Forms, there is also a division of Vilasa and Vhaibhava. Names mentioned herein, such as Pradyumna, Trivikram, Vamana, Hari, Krishna—are also different in features. Then in regards to the Prahava Vilasa of Krishna, which is Vasudeva, Samkarshan. Pradyumna and Aniruddhya, there are in total twenty further variations. All of them preside over Vaikuntha planets in the Spiritual Sky and are situated in eight different directions; although each of them is eternally in the Spiritual Sky, some of them are manifested in the material world also. In the Spiritual Sky all the planets dominated by the feature of Narayan are eternal, and the highest topmost planet in the Spiritual Sky is called Krishna Loka. That Krishna Loka is divided into three different portions: 1. Gokula, 2. Mathura and 3. Dwarka. In the Mathura portion, the Form of Keshav is always situated. This is also represented on this earthly planet. In India there is a place called Mathura where Keshav Murti is worshipped; similarly there is a Purushottam Form in Jagganath Puri and in Orissa; and in Prayag or Allahabad there is Madhav Brindu Madhar, and, similarly, there is the Form of Madhusudan in Mandhar hill. In Anandanrnya there is the Form of Vishnu, and in Mayapur, the birthplace of Lord Chaitanya, there is the Form of Hari. So there are also many other Forms situated elsewhere on this earthly planet.

Not only in this universe, but in all the other universes, such Forms are distributed all over. On this earthly planet also it is indicated that all the portions of the whole earth are divided into 7 islands or continents,

it is understood that on each and every island there are similar Forms, but at the present moment they are found only in India. They are indicated to be in other parts of the world, but at the present there is no information where they are situated. But from Vedic literature we can understand there are Forms in other parts of the world. These different Forms of Krishna are distributed all over the world and the universes to give pleasure to the devotees. Not that the devotees are only born in India, but in all other parts of the world there are devotees who have simply forgotten their identity. Such Forms-incarnate have come not only to give pleasure to the devotees, but to reestablish the devotional service and other activities vitally concerning the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Some of them are incarnations as mentioned in the scriptures, such as the Vishnu incarnation, Trivikram incarnation, Nrisingha incarnation and Vamana incarnation.

In the Siddartha Samhita there is a description of the 24 Forms of Vishnu named differently according to the different positions of the symbolic representations in the 4 hands. In ascribing the different nomenclatures to the different descriptions of Vishnu Murti, the counting should begin 1. with the lower right hand and then rising to the 2. upper right hand, then 3. to the upper left hand and then 4. down to the lower left hand. In these 4 hands are held the four representations: club, wheel conch shell and lotus flower; all in varying positions. Thus in this fashion Vasudeva is represented by 1. club, 2. conch shell, 3. wheel and 4. lotus flower. Similarly, Samkarshan is represented by club, conch shell, lotus flower and wheel. Pradyumna is represented by wheel, conch shell, club and lotus flower. Aniruddhya is represented by wheel, club, conch shell and lotus flower. In the Spiritual Sky also, the representation of Narayan is calculated as follows, at 20 in number: Hrisikesha is represented by conch shell, wheel, flower and club. Narayan is represented by conch shell, lotus flower, club and wheel. Sri Madhava is represented by club, wheel, conch shell and lotus flower. Sri Govinda is represented by wheel, club, lotus flower and conch shell. Vishnu Murti is represented by club, lotus flower, conch shell and wheel. Madhusudan is represented by wheel, conch shell, lotus flower and club. Trivikram is represented by lotus flower, club, wheel and conch shell. 'Vamana is represented by conch shell, wheel, club and lotus flower. Sridham is represented by lotus flower, wheel, club and conch shell. Hrisikesh is represented by club, wheel, lotus flower and conch shell. Padmanava is represented by conch shell, lotus flower, wheel and club. Damodar is represented by lotus flower, wheel, club and conch shell. Purushottam is represented by wheel, lotus flower, conch shell and club. Sri Achyuta is represented by club, lotus

flower, wheel and conch shell. Sri Nrisingha is represented by wheel, lotus flower, club and conch shell. Janardan is represented by lotus flower, wheel, conch shell and club. Sri Hari is represented by conch shell, wheel, lotus flower and club. Sri Krishna is represented by conch shell, club, lotus flower and wheel. Adhoksaja is represented by lotus flower, club, conch shell and wheel. Upendra is represented by conch shell, club, wheel and lotus flower.

According the <u>Hayasirsa Pancharacha</u>, there are sixteen Forms and they are also different in name according to the different positions of the wheel and club. The conclusion is that the Supreme Original Personality of Godhead is Krishna—He is called Leela Purushottam and He is principally in Vrindaban as the son of Nanda. It is also learned from the <u>Hayasirsa Pancharacha</u> that nine Forms are protecting two Puris known as the Mathura Puri and the Dwarka Puri, and they are in the 4 Forms like Vasudeva, Samkarshan, Pradyumna, and Aniruddhya; and besides these four Forms there are Narayan Forms, Nrisingha Forms, Hayagriva Forms, Varaha Forms and Brahma. The above discriptions are different manifestations of the Prakhas and Vilasa Forms of Lord Krishna.

Now Lord Chaitanya is informing Sanatan Goswami that there are different forms of the Svamsa also; Svamsa Forms are divided into the Samkarshan division and incarnation division. From the Samkarshan division come the three Purusha avatars, namely the Karanodakshayee Vishnu, Garbhodakshayee Vishnu and Khirodakshayee Vishnu; and the other division, also called avatar, includes the Lord's incarnation as Fish, as Tortoise etc. There are 6 kinds of different incarnations: 1. the Purusha avatar, 2. the Leela avatar, 3. the Guna avatar, 4. the Manu avatar, 5. the Yuga avatar, and 6. the Saktavesh avatar. Out of six kinds of Vilasa manifestations of Krishna there are 2 divisions based on His age. They are called Balya and Pauganda. The original Form of Krishna as the son of Nanda enjoys Himself in the two Forms of His childhood, namely Balya and Pauganda.

The conclusion is that there is no end of the expansions and incarnations of Krishna. Here Lord Chaitanya describes some of them to Sanatan just to give him an idea how the Lord is expanding and how He is enjoying. This is confirmed in the Srimad Bhagawatam, in the 1st canto, 3rd chapter. It is said there that there is no limit to the emanations of incarnations of the Supreme Lord, just as there is no limit to the number of waves in the oceans. As far as the incarnations are concerned, the first incarnations of Krishna are as the 3 Purusha avatars, namely the Maha Vishnu avatar, Garbhodakshayee avatar and Khirodakshayee avatar. This is confirmed in the Shastrasirsa Stotra. Krishna's energies

are also divisable into three: His energy of thinking, His energy of feeling, and His energy of acting. In His energy of thinking He is the Supreme Lord; in His energy of feeling He is Lord Vasudeva; and in His energy of acting He is Samkarshan Valaram. Without thinking, feeling and acting there is no possibility for the creation. Although there is no question of the creation of the Spiritual world, there is nonetheless creation of this material world; both the Spiritual world and the material world are manifestations of the active energy of the Forms of Samkarshan and Valaram of Krishna. In the Spiritual world, the Vaikuntha planets and the Krishna Loka planet are situated in His energy of thinking. Although there is no creation of the eternal Spiritual world, still it is to be understood that the Vaikuntha planets are depending on the thinking energy of the Supreme Lord. This thinking energy is described in the Brahma Samhita, 5th chapter, 2nd verse; where it is stated that the Supreme Abode known as Goloka is manifested just like a lotus flower with hundreds of petals. Everything is manifested by the Ananta, Valaram, or Samkarshan Form. The material cosmic manifestation and the different universes are manifested through Maya, or material energy. The material nature of the material energy is not the cause of all this cosmic manifestation. Rather, it is caused by the Supreme Lord's different expansions through the material nature; without superintendence of the Supreme Lord there is no possibility of any creation. The Form by which the energy of the material nature is created is called Samkarshan. It is understood that under the superintendent energy of the Supreme Lord this cosmic manifestation is created. The example is given of the iron which becomes red hot in contact with fire—when it is red hot it becomes also like fire. In the Srimad Bhagawatam, 10th canto, 46th chapter, it is said that Rama and Krishna is the Origin of all living entities. These two Personalities enter into everything. It may even now appear that they are differently situated.

A list of the incarnations occurs in the Srimad Bhagawatam, 1st canto. They are as follows: 1. Chaturdasham, 2. Narada, 3. Nara, 4. Mathsa, 5. Yajna, 6. Naradayan, 7. Kardemenkopeel, 8. Dutakria, 9. Hayasesha, 10. Hansa, 11. Dukupria or Eprishnee Garva, 12. Hrisha, 13. Prithu, 14. Narasingha, 15. Kurma, 16. Dhanantari, 17. Mohini, 18. Vamana, 19. Parkava, 20. Radavendra, 21. Vyas, 22. Brahma Valarama, 23. Krishna, 24. Buddha, 25. Kalki. Out of these 25 Leela avatars almost all of them appear in one day of Brahma, which is called a Kalpa, and therefore they are sometimes called kalpa avatars. Out of these, the incarnation of Hanghan Mohini is not permanent, but Kapila, Notatria, Risha, Nonanaree and Vyas are 5 eternal Forms, and they are more celebrated. The incarnation of Tortoise, Fish, Naradayan, Baraha, Hayagriva, Rishnagumbra,

Valumbera, Valadeva are considered as incarnations of Vaibhava. Similarly, there are three incarnation of the qualitative modes of Nature. They are called Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.

Of the Mananta avatars there are fourteen in number: 1. Yoga, 2. Beevu, 3. Shutersan, 4. Hari, 5. Vaikuntha, 6. Arjed, 7. Vaman, 8. Sadvoboma, 9. Risha, 10. Vishuction, 11. Darmashetu, 12. Sudama, 13. Jodeshel, 14. Behead bama. Out of these fourteen incarnations of Mananta, Yoga and Vaman are also Leela avatars. The balance are Mananta avatars. These fourteen Mananta avatars are also known as Bhaiva avatars.

The four Yugas are also described in the <u>Bhagvatam</u>: in the Sattya Yuga the incarnation of God is white; in the Treta Yuga the incarnation of God is red; in the Dwapara the incarnation of God is blackish; and the incarnation in the Kali Yuga is also blackish but sometimes, in a special Kali Yuga, the color is yellowish or golden. As far as the Saktavish avatars are concerned, they are Kapila and Deshaga, the Shresh avatar, Ananta, Brahma (sometimes the Lord Himself becomes Brahma), Jutershan (as the incarnation of Knowledge), Narada (as the incarnation of devotional service), King Prithu (as the incarnation of administrative power), and Barshnav (as the incarnation of subduing evil principles).



## THE ONE REAL ELOQUENT ART OF THE WORLDS

Saraswati
is playing her vina
inspiring the
speech makers and musicians
But
only God-praise is
sweet.
Somehow they get at
her, though,— the others—
from her generosity flows
measured lyrics, sounds, forms
of swan and river and
lotus and dye.

But for me the pure One,
Krishna, is all
I want to know,
and my divine teacher
is he who shows
me Krishna-direction.
First teacher is my Spiritual Master
Swami Bhaktivedanta father of light,
and then my God-brothers and sisters,
by their slightest
actions in His favor—

'All we want to do
is please Him.
Anything else is
less than that.'
Also bugs are teachers
running up the sides of
bowls accompanied
by God.
And sunlight is a teacher.
Everything shows me
I am God's,
all atoms are His.

Every painting reflects a piece of His Nature,
Every voice is raised by Him,
He knows the minor spirits and demons,
He observes the wasted lives.
He is all—and you Mr. Artist, what is your proficiency?
Grab a broom and sweep
the temple floor.
Learn—know God is in clear
water and fragrant air
and beyond all the suns
and moons.

Begin serving the Lord—

and you can know what it is all about.

He is within you He is everywhere He is the Supreme

Person and He dwells in the Spiritual Sky.

Everything you need is in the

Bhagavad Gita and
can be learned at the feet of a Spiritual

Master who is a pure servant of God

like Swami Bhaktivedanta.

Very soon you'll learn the topmost eloquence —it's <u>Hare Krishna</u> (God-Praise)

Good wherever you go.
If you learn it
you'll see the Promise
God made to man, Learn it now,
for wherever you go.
Chant it always,—
the one real art of the worlds:
Hare Krishna Hare Krishna
Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama
Rama Rama Hare Hare

Satsvarupa das Brahmachary (Stephen Guarino)

### HUMAN WELFARE ACTIVITIES

## by A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami

Once, when I met the founder of a human welfare society, I suggested a little improvement on it by keeping all the items of the plan in touch with the plannings of the Bhagavad Gita. The whole theme of the Bhagavad Gita is to do everything in relation with the wish of the Supreme Lord. Arjuna was sufficiently educated in politics, sociology, family affairs, education and all that is required for human welfare, but he was lacking in the sense of service for the Supreme Lord. So far as Arjuna was personally concerned, he was actually quite cognisant, but he assumed the role of a common man who did not know how to work according to the plan and desire of the Lord. That was the beginning of Bhagavad Gita.

Arjuna pretended to become a pious man, and he desired to be non-violent, refraining from the painful acts of bloodshed on the battlefield. Such a pious attitude, without knowing the desire of the Supreme Lord, was condemned by Sri Krishna. He described such a psuedo-pious attitude as befitting an unadvanced person. Piety, non-violence and all such good qualities are judged in terms of their purpose. A small boy, without knowing the effect of his pious activity, gave to his ailing brother some pieces of foodstuff when his brother asked for it. The ailing brother was suffering from typhoid fever and as he was a child, he asked his younger brother to give him the food. The younger brother, without knowing the result of his charitable work, gave this to the suffering brother. When the whole thing was disclosed to the mother, the charitable younger brother was severely punished for the food could well prove fatal to the diseased boy. This is our practical experience.

Simply to do charitable work without knowing the effect of it is to act in the mode of ignorance. So far as charities, penances and sacrifices are concerned, they are all of three qualities: Charity done in full cognisance of the authoritative injunctions is called Sattvik, or in goodness. Charity done with the purpose of getting something in return is called Rajasik, or in the mode of passion. And charity done in darkness, without knowing its effect, done under some superior pressure or request, is called Tamasik, or in the mode of ignorance. The same applies to other good works also. Tamasik charity and Sattvik charity are two different items altogether. One leads to degradation while the other leads to elevation. Therefore simple charity, penance and sacrifices may not be al-

ways good, unless accompanied by a descriptive and discriminative know-ledge.

Human welfare activities in full scientific knowledge will certainly elevate the status of human society. Now, the aim of welfare activity must be first of all ascertained. This means we must consider the aim of life. Is the aim of life to live for a number of long years? The Bhagawatam says no. It is not such. Because, so far as longevity is concerned, the life of some tree is far longer than that of a human being: The longest duration of life of the human being is not more than 100 years. But in the vegetable kingdom some trees live more than one thousand years. A human being will answer that the tree may live for one thousand years but the signs of life are absent there. The main sign of life is breathing. The Bhagawatam, in answer to this, will say that there are many many big bellows which can breathe more vehemently than a man. So breathing is no special qualification. There are beasts who can produce more children than the human being. They also eat sumptuously according to their own standard of life. And so, according to Bhagawatam, which is the practical commentary on the Vedanta Sutra, the only aim of life should be to hear the message of the Supreme Lord, wherein only lies the sum total welfare of human society.

In the Bhagavad Gita the ultimate instruction is to surrender unto the will of the Supreme Lord, and in that manner the surrendered soul is protected in all ways by the Lord from all the frailties of human life. Arjuna understood this principle and he altered his decision to leave the battlefield. Therefore, to know the Supreme Lord and to know our eternally existent relationship with the Lord does not mean to give up all activities. But to know Him, our relationship with Him and our duties to Him is the highest knowledge. And to impart this knowledge to one and all is the highest welfare activity in human society.

#### OUR PRAYER

HARE KRISHNA, HARE KRISHNA, KRISHNA KRISHNA, HARE HARE;
Our obeisances to You, Golden One, Prince of Him, Gouranga.
Obeisances to Your pure disciples.
Obeisances to our grand master, Bhaktivinode Thakur.
Obeisances to Guru Maharaj, Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati.
Obeisances to all our spiritual masters past, present, future:
Join us, please, in our plea
To the Lord of everything that is,
Krishna,
You, Who spin planets and hatch ant eggs
While You play Your flute and dance.

So unworthy are we to ask anything.

Constantly we wander to Your Maya

And forget it is Yours.

What humility do we have?

Why do we not surrender to You instantly?

Yet, Lord, only to Your mercy can we turn.

Our Father, Our Master, Our Child, Our Sweetheart, Our Friend, Swamiji
Is stricken
By Your Maya. Please,
We beg,
Ask, Your servant, to restore His Body
So He can fix us up
Properly
In Your Service.

We do not know how to serve You.

Let Him, Who has sacrificed everything to You,

Teach us.

To take Him from us

Is to pull the breast,

Swollen with You,

From our infant mouths.

HARE RAMA, HARE RAMA, RAMA RAMA, HARE HARE.

Brahmananda das Brahmachary (Bruce Scharf)



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## by A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami

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## KARMI OFFICE

Karmis spread a mental blanket out over the office talking to each other so smart and clever Never praising the One.

Not even seeing in their actions that He is all or they may even say it but it means nothing because they have no knowledge of God and they have no knowledge of God because they do not serve and try-to-love.

I am packed in
here like any other
BUT I PRAISE THEE
DIVINE SELF
I PRAISE THEE
BY THY NAME
AND FORM
HARE KRISHNA

Satsvarupa das Brahmachary (Stephen Guarino)

