

IN THIS ISSUE:

15¢

KRISHNA THE END OF KNOWLEDGE by Hayagriva Das Brahmachary

BACK TO GODHEAD



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By the mercy of Krishna:

The editors of Back To Godhead, along with our revered teacher, Swami Bhaktivedanta and our godbrothers of the Society, wish to express our deep hopes for a happy New Year-- one in which peace and enlightenment may bless the hearts of all men. This, of course, is not just a holiday greeting, but the fervent motivation of our lives in devotional service the year round. Praise be to Krishna for giving us such a sweet task.

The picture which follows our cover in this issue is the product of our new art director, Jodavani Devi Dasi. It portrays Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and His disciples during kirtan. When He was present on this earth four hundred and eighty years ago, Lord Chaitanya introduced the ancient practice of Samkirtan as the remedy for the ills of our present age, and it is this remedy that is being promulgated by this Society.

Our record album, tentatively titled "Krishna Consciousness," has yet to appear, but we're hoping to have it released within the next two weeks.

Our San Francisco activities have been postponed until late in January, but a temple and center there are now being established. So it looks to us as though Krishna Consciousness is destined to grow and to influence events on the American West Coast. We hope this is but the modest beginnings of a world-wide movement. The influence of the kirtan movement stands to reason-- after all, who has more influence than the Supreme Personality of Godhead?

Hare Krishna!

The Editors

FROM THE LECTURES OF SWAMI A. C. BHAKTIVEDANTA

Notes transcribed from lectures given September 20, 22, 1966.

The Bhagavad-Gita is an authoritative statement given to Arjuna by Lord Krishna. It must be borne in mind that the Bhagavad-Gita was spoken on a battlefield. Before the battle, Arjuna declined to fight with his own kinsmen. After the Bhagavad-Gita was spoken, he changed his mind and fought. There was not much time for this discussion-- one hour at the most-- for the opposing armies were already lined up, and eager to begin the combat.

After hearing about the yoga of meditation, which requires going to a secluded place and sitting perfectly still with the eyes focussed on the tip of the nose, Arjuna said, "Dear Krishna, I think this system is too difficult for me, on account of my agitated mind." In the material world our minds are agitated. The nature of the material world is such that we cannot be free from anxieties.

God has many names, according to His different activities. Arjuna here addresses Krishna as "Killer of Demons," because Arjuna sees his own mind as a demon. The sum and substance of any yoga system is to control the mind. Arjuna said that his mind was so agitated, that it was impossible for him to practise meditation. Now, Arjuna, a great warrior, was a personal friend of Lord Krishna, and he was able to understand the Gita in less than an hour whereas today people can't understand it in an entire lifetime. If Arjuna, who was so intelligent and

spiritually receptive that he could understand the Gita in an hour, said that meditation was too difficult for him, what about us? We are not even in the same category as Arjuna, who was Krishna's friend, and who was so intelligent. If it was impossible for Arjuna, can it be possible for us? It is impossible to still a hurricane, and it is equally impossible to still the mind by force. We can control the mind, however, by always thinking of Krishna. Krishna Consciousness is the perfect form of yoga.

Meditation was good in a former age, when people lived millions of years. In the age after that the best method was sacrifice. After that, it was temple worship. Today, the best method is to chant the Name of the Lord, especially "Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare, Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare." Today, we don't live long. We are unfortunate, disturbed and unintelligent. The whole world is fighting. In times such as these, how can we perform anything as difficult as meditative yoga? Bhakti yoga-- Krishna Consciousness, and "Hare Krishna"-- is recommended for the present age. Meditation for the sake of impressing others or yourself will never be successful for even Krishna said that meditation was too difficult in this age. Meditation requires renunciation, but today, even renunciation is too difficult.

In Krishna Consciousness there are only four things that must be renounced: illicit sex, intoxication, gambling, and meat-eating. These four activities agitate the mind. Renunciation of these is easy in Krishna Consciousness for the process

of bhaktiyoga is so easy that these four things become distasteful. Krishna Consciousness does not completely discourage sex, but it discourages sex outside of marriage. One who is serious about spiritual advancement cannot encourage illicit or promiscuous sex. If we really want to control the mind it is not necessary to give up sex and food altogether. We can eat food that is properly cooked and offered to Krishna, and we can get married. Keeping the mind always in Krishna Consciousness is samadhi. When one is in Krishna Consciousness, he is leading a renounced life, even if he is not a monk. Success in any form of yoga is not possible without control of the mind. One who is determined will find a way to control his mind.

Once we start on a yoga system, we must stick with it. The desire for spiritual advancement should be there. Out of many men, only a few will try for perfection. Out of thousands of these, only a few will reach it, for it is a difficult process. However, if you want to be a physician, you must study until you graduate. Spiritual advancement is just like that-- except that the rewards are eternal.

Arjuna asked Krishna, "What happens to one who starts to study yoga and then gives up?" Krishna replied that when a cloud gathers together, there is a possibility of rain, but if the wind blows the cloud away, there is no rain. There may be thunder and wind, but there will be no rain. Similarly, if one starts the yoga process and quits, he will not have success. Arjuna asked this question so that, in the future, people would not get discouraged and quit.

Bhagavan means one who has complete and perfect riches, strength, knowledge, renunciation, beauty, and fame. Famous people come and go, but God is always famous. God, or Bhagavan, is One Who has the above attributes in completeness and perfection. Krishna is the proprietor of all riches but He can renounce them at a moment's notice. We receive spiritual knowledge from Krishna, but He Himself had no need of a spiritual master. We must believe One Who is in complete knowledge. We accept the authority of the newspaper regarding current events, so why not accept the authority of Krishna regarding spiritual matters? We do not insist on seeing for ourselves before believing the newspaper, so why insist on seeing before believing the Bhagavad-Gita? The Gita comes from the highest authority, therefore we must make an attempt to understand it. Anyone who makes an attempt will suffer no degradation, even if he fails. One who makes an attempt to study the Gita will never be vanquished. This the Lord guarantees.

When one is self-realized, he makes no distinctions between man and animal, or lower and higher. Ideas of high and low, and other pairs of opposites, belong to the material world. When one is in the transcendental position, and sees Krishna everywhere, he is fit to enter into the Kingdom of God. He knows the Supreme Soul, the workings of nature and of the body, and the relationships of these to each other. When one is in his relationship with the Supreme Lord, all things are of equal value. This is not to say that the living entity is seen as equal to the Supreme Lord, or that all distinctions are obliterated.

This would be equivalent to being proficient in a language and not being able to distinguish nouns from verbs.

We are all part and parcel of the Supreme Lord. The realized man therefore sees all things as part of the Supreme Lord. He sees all things as Spirit Soul, in different dress. One who is bound to the material world does not see this equality. We are in the material world in order to become fit to enter into the Kingdom of God. Krishna comes Himself, or sends His Son or servants to help us-- but people still prefer to live on the level of cats and dogs. They want to exploit nature for business purposes, and to live sensuously like animals.

The work of nature goes on under the direction of God, to give a chance to the conditioned souls. This world's miseries remind us that we cannot be happy outside of the Kingdom of God. We have no control over the rain or the snow. We should understand that we are helpless-- that whatever we do, we are forced to do. Even the blinking of our eyes is controlled by material nature. We have no independence. We are continually being slapped by material nature, and we keep asking for more. The intelligent person knows he is being slapped and kicked.

The condition of the world has deteriorated because we have fools for leaders and teachers. We must first realize the helplessness of our situation before we can surrender to God. We cannot get material nature to stop slapping us, just as a prisoner cannot stop the harassment of prison life. We must be released from the prison of this material nature, for material nature condemns us. When we decide to return to God, spiri-

tual nature helps us. Just as we are free to move on land, but not in the water, so we are truly free in the spiritual world, but not in the material world.

Flowers for Krishna

by Rayarama Das Brahmachary
(Raymond Marais)

Why does sunlight fade the carpet but not flowers?
And who is the sun?

Behold the countless eyes of day,
Numberless daisies ashiver with ecstasy upon the meadow field.
The meadow is a pure, radiant meadow.
Sacrifice is love, I think.

I?

No, not a balloon full of laughing gas
Which has but to burst to fill the ether with merriment--
Although that is nearly adequate.

I?

A flower too! A flower too!
O, make me a sacrifice!
Make me love!

I?

An eye of day.
Surely, what the simple daisies do I can do,
If you will teach me.
What can I give who am already given beyond measure?

O, it is a kind of merging,
For the lover and the beloved quite forget themselves
In their passion.

KRISHNA: THE END OF KNOWLEDGE

by Hayagriva Das Brahmachary
(Howard Wheeler)

At the end of many births the man of wisdom seeks refuge in Me, realizing that Vasudeva is all. Rare indeed is such a high-souled person. (Gita, VII/19)

Today, for the majority of students attending universities and institutions of higher learning, the question of the end of knowledge, the destination of the long pursuit, hardly ever comes to mind. One's eyes are usually fixed on graduation day and the diploma that signifies entrance into a good-paying job. For most, the goal of knowledge is money and the material pleasures it buys.

The more intelligent see the goal in the pursuit itself--as in a literary education, the goal is the enjoyment of literature itself, or, as in mathematics, the goal is in postulating and proving certain theorems. Nothing more is desired. It is like the pleasure a man gets in building a cabinet, or a painter in painting a picture. The act itself is its own reward. So for the more intelligent, education itself is its own reward--they neither need nor seek extraneous compensations.

Yet the true artist, the true technician, always honest with himself, never allows his perspectives to stray too far, never allows himself to be too attached to his work. Seeing himself as a man in time and space, seeing his work and the earth in their relationship to the universe, in time and space,

seeing all works, even the grandest-- the earth itself and the entire material universe-- to be perishable, he is not attached. He is happy in his work mainly because of his detachment. He is like the child who happily makes sand castles so diligently on the beach yet leaves them when his father takes him home. He doesn't care if the waves wash them away. It is a matter of always having things in perspective. This may be said not only of a man's work or art; it may be said of a man's entire life.

He who bends to himself a Joy
Doth the winged life destroy;
But he who kisses the Joy as it flies
Lives in Eternity's sunrise.

(From William Blake's Gnomic Verses)

"Knowledge" itself is elusive. The wisest have always claimed to know nothing. One is always getting the impression that mankind is still in kindergarten, especially as one gradually becomes more certain that "This life's five windows of the soul/ Distorts the Heavens from pole to pole." (Blake, From The Everlasting Gospel) Socrates was always claiming to know nothing, and Whitman echoed him: "I cannot tell how my ankles bend, nor whence the cause of my faintest wish. That I walk up my stoop, I pause to consider if it really be." (Song of Myself, 24) The time arrives when man sees himself and his "accomplishments" as nothing more than the dabbings of a child, fabrications to pass the time, games to distract.

It is at this point that "knowledge" begins to break down. Man begins to question, "What is this 'knowledge' I've been so long pursuing? What are its purposes, its categories? Am I on the right path in this pursuit, or am I deluding myself?" If

such a man is fortunate, he will turn to a scripture such as Bhagavad-Gita for guidance, and he will see that Krishna Himself, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, divides knowledge into three "gunas" or qualities: sattva, rajas, and tamas--namely, goodness, passion, and ignorance.

The knowledge by which one indestructible Substance is seen in all beings, undivided in the divided-- know that that knowledge is of the nature of sattva (goodness).
(Gita, XVIII/20)

Such is the knowledge of the good or holy man who sees "the touch of the One in the play of the many." Such a man is never deluded for behind the play of maya he always sees One Actor-- the Supreme Lord. That this knowledge is rare today accounts for the abundance of misery in this kaliyuga, this age of ignorance, chaos and disagreement. Transcendental knowledge is in the mode of goodness automatically. Those who cultivate knowledge beyond this body culminating in the firm conviction that "I am not this body, I am spirit-soul and eternal," begin from the mode of goodness, or sattva. Knowledge in goodness is the starting point for self-realization. Men seeking transcendental knowledge have nothing to do with knowledge in the modes of passion and ignorance. Rather, people who see their own interest as separate from spiritual knowledge are in the inferior modes.

But that knowledge through which one sees in all beings various entities of different kinds as differing from one another-- know that that knowledge is of the nature of rajas (passion). (Gita, XVIII/21)

A man whose knowledge is in the mode of passion comprehends different souls dwelling in different bodies in constant

conflict with one another. This point of view immediately places such a man in the position of defending "that which is mine" and working for his own benefit, for he sees diversity, and is involved in the struggle which is born out of diversity. Such a man very vigorously struggles to maintain his particular interest against the interests of others. He is also constantly trying to improve conditions in the material world, and of course conditions are continually overwealming him. He does not understand that he will never be happy in the material world any more than a fish will be happy on land, for in truth he is not matter, but spirit. He will never be happy on this earth, regardless of the number of gadgets he may devise for his convenience and material comfort, for he is still confined to the prison-house of birth, disease, old age and death.

Finally, Krishna speaks of "knowledge" in ignorance:

And the knowledge that is confined to one single effect as if it were the whole, and is without reason, without foundation in truth, and trivial-- that knowledge is declared to be of the nature of *tamas* (ignorance, or dullness). (Gita, XVIII/22)

Such a man is simply happy with a little food, a place to sleep, some sex enjoyment and a few other pleasures to make life "tolerable." He considers his body to be the cause of effects and of things into which he comes into contact, and he is therefore a slave to his body, working always with his body-comfort in mind. Such men are on the level of the animals-- they have no desire for improvement either in this world or in the next. Their conception of the universe is strictly physical and they have no idea of a Supreme Spirit behind the mater-

ial guise. Of them it is said, "the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." (John, I/5)

A brief review of the fields of contemporary knowledge reveals passion and ignorance to be the two predominant modes. In the "humanities," for instance, history (from the transcendental viewpoint) truly becomes a pack of lies perpetrated on the dead, so much senseless conjecture and family gossip. Of what use is history? Its only justification is that man can learn from it and it can give man a sense of direction; in this century alone there have been two major wars and thousands of books have been written about them, horrors that might well have been forgotten have been dug up, revitalized and dealt to the public in tons of newsprint. Still mankind rushes stubbornly into a third holocaust. History only teaches that it teaches nothing. That most historians are cynics is testimony to this.

Speculative philosophy becomes the most useless of all gestures-- stacks and stacks of words that are only good for burning on a cold night. Rationalizing, speculation, intellectualizing a la Western philosophic tradition have only led-- at most-- to dry and dusty treatises and pipe-arguments. Similarly, literature may contain some beautiful stories, but in this century it so often consists of many stylistic conceits and materialistic nonsense-- students had rather dissect the jittery personalities of Faulkner, Pound, Hemingway than read their works. After so many years, man has finally become wary of words and those who use them. "Were you thinking that those were the words, those upright lines? those curves, angles,

dots?/ No, those are not the words, the substantial words are in the ground and sea,/They are in the air, they are in you."

(Whitman, "A Song of the Rolling Earth") In the realm of words, poetry, often accused of being the most senseless and useless mode of man's expression, seems to be the only one worth retaining. Poetry is the music of words, and music of transcendental praise does not belong to the sphere of "knowledge." But history, which only records struggle on the material plane, and philosophy that is filled with vain speculation, and literature that also depicts materialistic struggle and is written to amuse without enlightening and is the work of authors desirous of money and fame-- such fields of knowledge are in the modes of passion.

Like history, philosophy, and literature, science has only succeeded in implementing man with encumbrances that mainly serve to divert his energy. For example, because there are so many automobiles, man feels the need to travel more and more. Now man is spending so much energy to reach the moon-- for what specific reason, no one can really say, save for the psychological need he must feel to escape earth. However, advanced yogis and those advanced in Krishna-consciousness know that such vehicular interplanetary travel is most difficult, if not impossible. Space travel is not difficult-- the gross materialists are simply going about it the wrong way. Furthermore, science has principally helped man to destroy himself most effectively. In this realm, science has proved itself most helpful and progressive. Extermination. When God gave man gunpowder He knew the little bangs would grow into bigger and bigger ones. In this

field, science is most adept. "They murder to dissect" is now a bland statement. Always what Hart Crane called "the iron dealt cleavage," iron, metal, science cutting flesh. It is a familiar story. Yet these madmen, masters of extermination, receive large financial grants from universities and foundations to further pursue the annihilation of the race. They are always trying to kill God, but God cannot be killed. Yet science, the pursuit of the firecracker, is considered knowledge. At its best when it attempts to satisfy the material desires of man by helping him attain adequate food and shelter or curing his physical diseases for a short duration, it is knowledge in the mode of passion. And when science shackles man with modern "conveniences" or frivolous gimmicks or when it exterminates man by monstrous bombs and military devices, then it is asuric-- it is knowledge in the mode of ignorance and darkness. Although modern man places all his hopes in science, the wise know this to be the knowledge of the madhouse.

And while mentioning madhouses, the lunatics of psychology, one of the latest "departments of knowledge," are known to be on the loose, supported by a considerable amount of police-power. These "PhD" testgivers, judges of sanity, can haul any citizen off the streets of (for example) New York City, throw him in Bellevue Observation Ward, and keep him there "indefinitely." If the unfortunate soul happens to manage a squeal of protest, these heavy-handed soul-searchers throw him into their own Bellevue Kangaroo Court then clap him away into a rat-infested State bedlam supervised by doctors and orderlies whose sadism

would have afforded Kraft-Ebing some juicy histories. Many sensitive and intelligent men are broken by the doctors of psychology who manage them much like they manage their white mice. Either conform to the madness of contemporary civilization or you're "psychotic," they tell modern man. So this latest branch of "knowledge," in the mode of darkest ignorance, is affording man one of the biggest detours on his road to happiness.

Many examples of similar diversions can be given: mathematics are concerned with number games. No mathematician has ever been able to prove that one equals one, and besides, reducing everything to an equation helps no one. Politics is an animal farm for the power-hungry, the vanity of vanities, and business and finances are simply the arts of throat-cutting. In that sense they hold hands with science. Sociology is concerned with the dying and anthropology with the dead. The language into which one is born affords a sufficient number of confusing symbols without one's trying to learn others. Most comparative linguists never manage to master their own native tongues. And astronomy. One glance at the sky and any fool can tell you the stars are innumerable. All these fields of knowledge are in the modes of passion and ignorance.

Such are the branches of "knowledge" offered by man, a poor serving indeed, hardly worthy of consideration let alone a lifetime's devotion. The principle of money-making keeps most of them in business, and behind the money-making principle is the principle of sense-gratification. And sense-gratification mainly includes eating, merry-making, sleeping, sex-life and defend-

ing. So take these away and the whole structure of "knowledge" collapses. It's all really rather basic after all. But the veneer, glossed by centuries of deceit, is thick indeed, and many are entrapped. The real problems of birth, old age, disease and death go unsolved and untouched. So it is said that "Grace is given of God, but knowledge is bought in the market."

How to get out? How to put an end to trickery and delusion, the fruits of false knowledge? Krishna says:

At the end of many births the man of wisdom seeks refuge in Me, realizing that Vasudeva is all. Rare indeed is such a high-souled person. (Gita, VII/19)

By Me, in My unmanifested form, are all things in this universe pervaded. All beings exist in Me, but I do not exist in them.

And yet the beings do not dwell in Me-- behold, that is My divine mystery. My Spirit, which is the support of all beings and the source of all things, does not dwell in them.

As the mighty wind blowing everywhere ever rests in the aethereal space (akasa), know that in the same manner all beings rest in Me.

At the end of a cycle all beings, O son of Kunti, enter into My Prakriti (nature), and at the beginning of a cycle I generate them again.

Controlling My own Prakriti, I send forth, again and again, all this multitude of beings, helpless under the sway of maya. (Gita, IX/4-8)

Fools disregard Me when I assume a human form; for they are unaware of My higher nature as the Supreme Lord of all beings. Being of the deceitful nature of fiends and demons, they cherish vain hopes, perform vain actions, pursue vain knowledge, and are devoid of judgement.

But the great-souled men, O Partha, who are endowed with the divine nature, worship Me with undisturbed minds, knowing that I am immutable and the origin of all beings.

Ever glorifying Me, always striving with self-control, remaining firm in their vows, bowing before Me, they worship Me with love and unwavering steadiness.

Others, again, offer the oblation of knowledge and worship Me either as one with them or as distinct from them; and still others in various ways worship Me, whose form is the whole universe. (Gita IX/11-15)

Therefore worldly knowledge, by the standards of the Gita, is concerned with maya, the illusion, or the play of God. All things that are perceived by the senses (sight, sound, touch, taste, smell) and by the mind are ephemeral, illusory. While the human being is in contact with them, they seem real enough, but when they are past they have no more reality than dreams. One can easily understand this by thinking of the past years in one's life. Now those past years are no more tangible than dreams. Similarly, this moment that is now passing is seemingly real, but in the future, with retrospection, it will also have that dream-like quality. World War II is now over. Now that it is over it only seems like a bad dream. This is the nature of all things in the material world. They are here one moment and gone the next. It is impossible to hold onto them for any length of time. Because they do not endure, because they are all ephemeral, they are called maya, illusion. Life itself, then, is maya. As long as we are perceiving things through these bodies, we are entangled by maya. Life is very much like being rushed through a tunnel of dreams. We plunge in one side (birth) and are cast into the tunnel's darkness. While rushing through this darkness all kinds of illusory forms flash past-- sounds, sights, tastes, touches, odors all confront us, all kinds of men and women, countries, lands, earths, solar systems and all the paraphernalia of the material universe presents itself to us. Then suddenly we come out the tunnel (at death) and are once again in the Light. It is this Light, not the tunnel, that is the Reality. Those who are

concerned with knowledge of the tunnel are deluded. The tunnel universities and tunnel occupations and pastimes are not for wise men. The truly wise are concerned with the Reality. The Reality is the Kingdom of Krishna, of God, which is the true and eternal abode of Bliss-Knowledge-Absolute. It is in this Kingdom, not in the tunnel, that we are free and blissful. The tunnel is only darkness, confusion and pain. One has often heard that this world is darkness and that we see, as it were, "through a glass darkly." This is what William Blake meant when he wrote:

This life's five windows of the soul
 Distorts the Heavens from pole to pole,
 And leads you to believe a lie
 When you see with, not thro', the eye
 That was born in a night, to perish in a night,
 When the soul slept in the beams of light.

(William Blake, The Everlasting Gospel)

Since our concerns are not really with the tunnel, since our real happiness cannot be found in the tunnel, what are we to do? Are we to kill ourselves to get out of our miserable condition? No, we have no right to do this. Even our own material body does not belong to us: we have no right to put an end to it. "Man is a prisoner who has no right to open the door of his prison and run away," Socrates said. "A man should wait, and not take his own life until God summons him." Socrates was one of the few philosophers in the West to understand that the body is the abode of darkness.

The body is a source of endless trouble to us by reason of the mere requirement of food; and it is liable also to diseases which overtake and impede us in the search after true being: it fills us full of loves, and lusts, and fears, and fancies of all kinds, and endless foolery, and in fact, as men say, takes away from us the power of thinking at all.

Whence come wars, and fightings, and factions? whence but from the body and the lusts of the body? Wars are occasioned by the love of money, and money has to be acquired for the sake and in the service of the body; and by reason of all these impediments we have no time to give to wisdom; and, last and worst of all, even if we are at leisure and betake ourselves to some speculation, the body is always breaking in upon us, causing turmoil and confusion in our enquiries, and so amazing us that we are prevented from seeing the truth. It has been proved to us by experience that if we would have pure knowledge of anything we must be quit of the body-- the soul in herself must behold things in themselves: and then we shall attain the wisdom which we desire, and of which we say that we are lovers; not while we live, but after death; for if while in company with the body, the soul cannot have pure knowledge, one of two things follows-- either knowledge is not to be attained at all, or, if at all, after death. For then, and not till then, the soul will be parted from the body and exist in herself alone. In this present life, I reckon that we make the nearest approach to knowledge when we have the least possible intercourse or communion with the body, and are not surfeited with the bodily nature, but keep ourselves pure until the hour when God himself is pleased to release us. And thus having got rid of the foolishness of the body we shall be pure and hold converse with the pure, and know of ourselves the clear light everywhere, which is no other than the light of truth. (Socrates, from Plato's Phaedo)

To come out the tunnel of darkness into the light of truth therefore is the end of knowledge. The light of truth emanates from God, Krishna, Who is the abode of all wisdom and all truth. Our happiness then is in surrendering to the Godhead who will put an end to all the false "knowledge" of the tunnel. The light of His truth scatters ignorance and darkness as the sun in the material universe scatters the darkness of night. While we are in the tunnel, we have certain guidebooks to follow that will lead us into the light. The Gospel of Christ is such a "guidebook." The Bhagavad-Gita is another guidebook. The Koran and Buddhist sutras are also authorised guidebooks. We should be careful, however, to make certain our guidebook is authorised scripture and not mere human speculation.

As long as we are in the tunnel of darkness thinking ourselves these bodies and administering to the demands of these bodies, we will not be happy. We will be like diseased men scratching their sores, making their disease worse and worse. The "knowledgeable" man, PhD, MD, DD or LSD, who thinks himself this body and who attaches importance to its fame and administers to its desires, is a first class fool with a skin disease. He does not deserve to be listened to, regardless of his teachings. The wise man knows that he is under the spell of illusion due to material contact. He surrenders himself to the Lotus Feet of Krishna and becomes automatically freed from material contamination. He cries "Hare Krishna, Hare Rama" at the Lotus Feet of the Lord, imploring liberation from his diseased condition. And, if he is sincere, real knowledge is communicated to him by Krishna, knowledge that I am not this body: I am spirit soul, ever blissful and ever free. I am Brahman, and my joy is in eternal association with the Supreme Lord. This is real knowledge and is transcendental to knowledge in the mode of goodness, passion and ignorance. It is the beginning of Krishna consciousness. The process of chanting clears away the dirt of materialistic "knowledge" and makes one eligible to receive real knowledge from the Supreme Lord. It is only in this transcendental knowledge that this life becomes worth living and in which the next life is eternally blissful.

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