

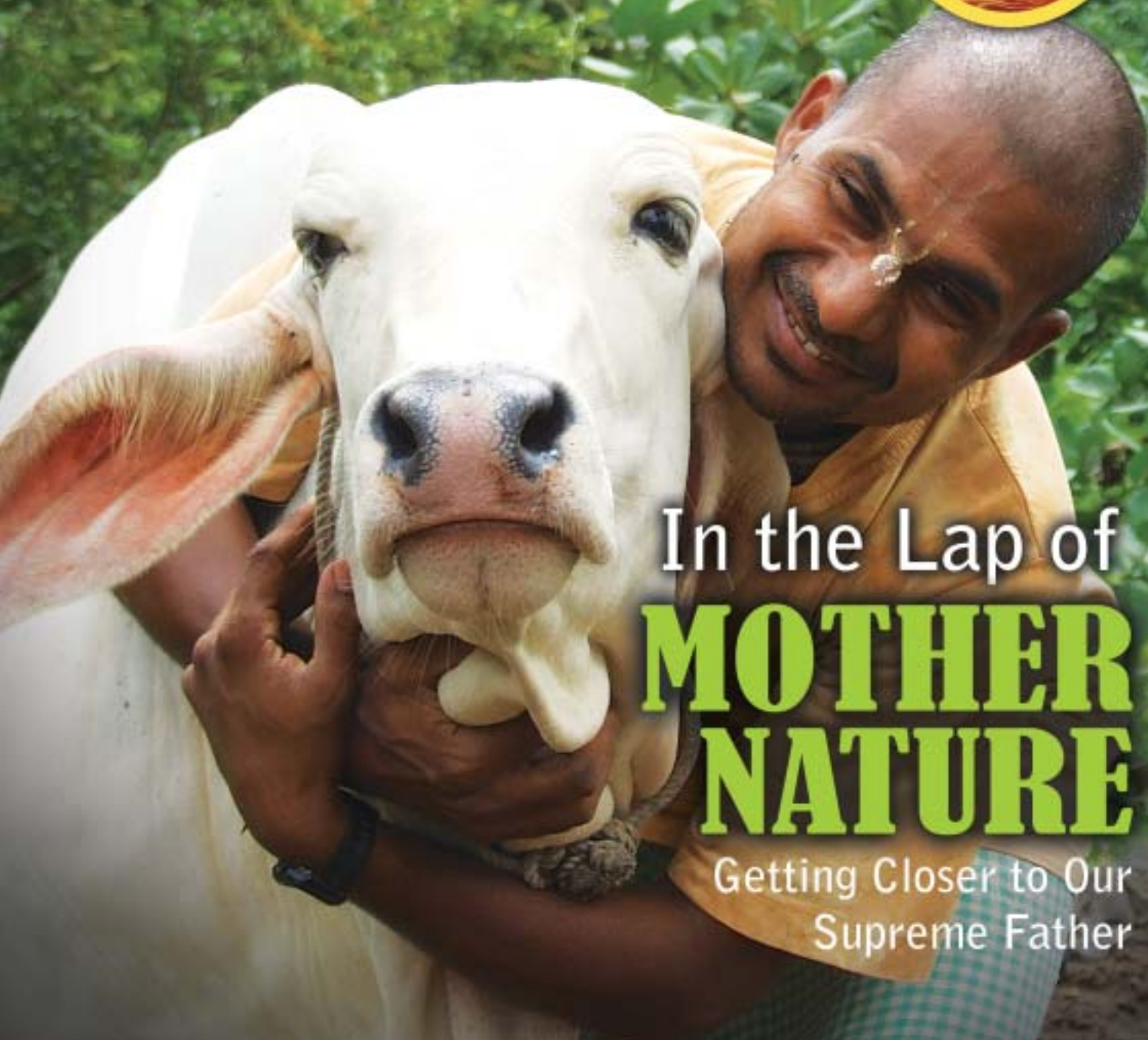
Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience

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The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement

September 2014



# In the Lap of **MOTHER NATURE**

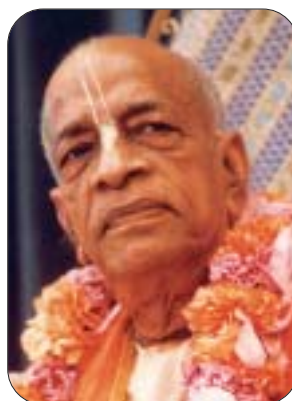
Getting Closer to Our  
Supreme Father



# BACK TO GODHEAD

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## C O N T E N T S

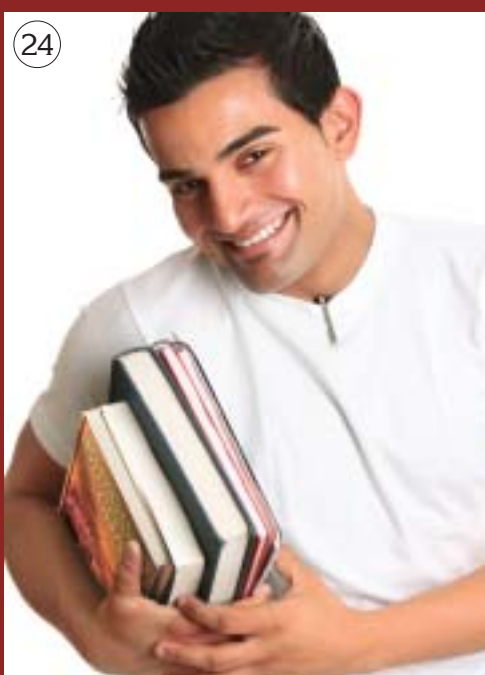
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#### OUR PURPOSES

- To help all people discern reality from illusion, spirit from matter, the eternal from the temporary.
- To expose the faults of materialism.
- To offer guidance in the Vedic techniques of spiritual life.
- To preserve and spread the Vedic culture.
- To celebrate the chanting of the holy names of God as taught by Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu
- To help every living being remember and serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

# BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the  
Hare Krishna Movement



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## LETTERS

### Assisted Death

What are your views on euthanasia?

—Vikram

*Our reply (by Caitanya Carāṇa  
Dāsa):* According to the Vedic philoso-  
phy, we have to live in this body for a  
particular period of time. And in that  
period, there is a certain amount of  
karma (reactions in the form of happi-  
ness and distress) that we have to  
endure. If we try to avoid them prema-  
turely by destroying the body, we gain  
further karma. Why? Because we have  
destroyed the body that was entrusted  
to us by God — it is as good as suicide.  
Whoever assists the patient in his  
death — a doctor, friend, or a relative  
— that person also incurs karma.

The Vedic understanding is to  
allow nature to follow its course. This  
means that we don't accelerate our  
death by taking substances that kill  
our body, which is now known as  
medically assisted suicide. Nor do we  
over-endeavor to prolong our life by  
putting artificial support systems for  
a very long time. If the doctors  
declare that the body is dysfunc-  
tional, or it cannot survive without a  
support system, then extending the  
person's life on that support system  
is not recommended. If the soul is  
destined to go to the next body, why  
stay attached?

There is, however, one form of  
voluntarily accepted death men-  
tioned in the scriptures, which might  
seem like euthanasia but is different.  
It is called *prāya-vrataḥ*. *Prāya-vrataḥ*  
means a person decides to fast to  
death. This is the religious method of  
departing from the body. You may  
call it suicide or you may call it

euthanasia. But when a person feels  
that he has no more desire to live, he  
takes up an austere life and enters  
into a state of religious or devotional  
trance through meditation. He then  
shuts himself off from the world and  
gives up the body.

The important thing here is that  
the person does not take any arti-  
ficial substances to reduce his bodily  
pain. He does not violate any laws of  
nature that invite karmic reactions.  
Fasting is a sacred activity, and  
usually people fast on Ekādaśis and  
other auspicious days. But when one  
sees that the body is no longer  
capable of functioning properly, he  
decides to fast until death, not to  
torture the body, but to quit the  
body in a dignified manner.

The practice of bhakti-yoga  
encourages one to absorb the mind  
in Kṛṣṇa, which enables one to  
transcend all bodily pain and achieve  
purification of the heart. Of course,  
we understand how much pain a  
terminally ill patient has to undergo  
until he or she dies, and we don't  
wish to be hard-hearted by sentenc-  
ing people to suffering. But senti-  
mental or quick-fix solutions to  
avoid suffering may well end up in  
making the suffering worse. Coura-  
geously facing life's challenges by  
absorption in Kṛṣṇa has much  
greater salvific benefits for that  
person, and it offers tremendous  
inspiration to others.

### Closing Curtains while Eating

Why do we keep curtains or doors of  
the altar closed when we offer food  
to the Lord or when we are taking

prasāda in front of altar?

—R. M. Pujari

*Our reply (by His Holiness  
Romapāda Swami Mahārāja):*

According to *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, it is an offense to offer the Deity food that has been seen by animals or uninitiated persons. In addition, others should not directly see the *bhoga* prior to its being offered to the Deity because we may lustfully consider enjoying that which is meant for Kṛṣṇa, even within our minds, and thus commit an offense. There is the story of Mādhavendra Purī, a great devotee, who felt he committed a great offense by desiring to taste the sweet rice before it was offered to Gopinātha, the Deity at Remuṇa in Orissa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda taught us that we cover the tray of not-yet-offered food preparations from the kitchen to the altar with a cloth, and we offer *bhoga* with the altar curtain (or door) closed to the public. Sometimes a half-curtain is utilized for this purpose, such that the Deity can be seen but the unoffered food items cannot be seen until the offering is completed.

The act of our eating is not a clean activity; thus we cleanse the area fully wherever eating has taken place after eating, and we do not eat in front of the deity.

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### What Is the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement?

Founded in 1966 by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) carries on a great ancient tradition rooted in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the teachings Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke five millennia ago. The *Gītā* and the other Vedic scriptures declare Kṛṣṇa to be the original person, God Himself, who appears periodically in this world to liberate all living beings.

Only five hundred years ago, Kṛṣṇa descended as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to teach the most sublime and effective means of meditation for the present day: the chanting of the names of God, especially as found in the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

Today members of ISKCON continue Lord Caitanya's movement by distributing the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra all over the world.

### Pronunciation

We spell Sanskrit words and names by a phonetic system that lets you know how to say each word. Pronounce short *a* like the *u* in *but*, long *ā* like the *a* in *far* (and held twice as long as the short *a*). Pronounce *e* like the *u* in *evade*, long *ī* like the *i* in *pique*. Pronounce the vowel *r* like the *ri* in *rim*, and *ē* like the *ch* in *chair*. Pronounce consonants like **ch**, **jh**, and **dh** as in *staunch*-heart, *hedge*-hog, and *red-hot*. Pronounce *ṣ* and *ś* like **sh**. So for *Kṛṣṇa* say KRISHNA, for *Caitanya* say CHAITANYA.

### Spiritual Names

ISKCON members receive names of Lord Kṛṣṇa or his great devotees, combined with Dāsa, for men, or Dāsī, for women, both of which mean "servant." For instance, the name Kṛṣṇa Dāsa means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."



# A WORLD OF Cheaters Cheated

*If we are not serious about getting the real thing,  
we will end up getting what we deserve — a cheap thing.*

By His Divine Grace  
**A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda**  
Founder-ācārya of The International Society for Krishna Consciousness

*tataḥ śaṅkhāś ca bheryaś ca  
paṇavānaka-gomukhāḥ  
sahasāivābhyahanyanta  
sa śabdāḥ tumulo 'bhavat*

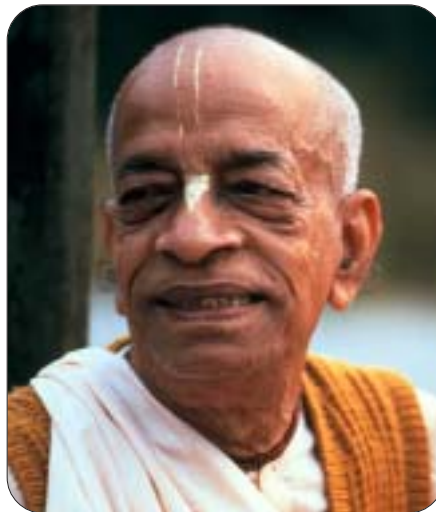
*tataḥ śvetair hayair yukte  
mahatī syandane sthitau  
mādhavaḥ pāṇḍavaś caiva  
divyau śaṅkhau pradadhmatuḥ*  
[Bhagavad-gītā 1.13-14]

**Translation:** “After that, the conchshells, bugles, trumpets, drums and horns were all of a sudden sounded, and the combined sound was tumultuous. On the other side, both Lord Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, stationed on a great chariot drawn by white horses, sounded their transcendental conchshells.”

So these are various types of musical instruments like bugles,

drums, kettledrums, as they use in modern days. Those instruments are no longer in use. By musical instruments, the soldiers are kept alive so they can fight nicely. *Sa śabdāḥ tumulo 'bhavat*: “When simultaneously all the instruments were sounded, it become tumultuous.”

As you see in some pictures,



Kṛṣṇa is driving four white horses. Kṛṣṇa is transcendental. *Nārāyaṇaḥ paro 'vyaktāt*. Kṛṣṇa's body, Kṛṣṇa's activities, everything of Kṛṣṇa, are transcendental. They are *divyam*, not of this material world. In the *catuḥ-śloki Bhāgavatam* (2.9.33-36) it is said, *aham evāsam evāgre*: “Before this material creation, I was existing.” In the Vedas also it is said, *eko nārāyaṇa āsīt*: “Before creation, only Nārāyaṇa was there.”

So Kṛṣṇa's position is always transcendental. He is not any creation of this material world. But because He comes just like a human being and acts also just like human being, those who are less intelligent think of Kṛṣṇa as ordinary human being. *Avajānanti mām mūḍhāḥ* (Gītā 9.11). *Mūḍhāḥ* means asses, or less intelligent

class of men. They cannot understand Kṛṣṇa's position. Kṛṣṇa's position is always transcendental.

### A Transcendental Process

The process of bhakti is also transcendental. It is activity in relationship with Kṛṣṇa. Therefore it is not material. *Mām ca yo 'vyabhicāreṇa bhakti-yogena sevate/ sa guṇān samatīyātān brahma-bhūyāya kalpate* (Gītā 14.26). And thus to understand Kṛṣṇa, you need follow a transcendental process, which is bhakti-yoga. Therefore Kṛṣṇa says, *bhaktyā mām abhijānāti* (Gītā 18.55). We just need to understand these simple facts: Kṛṣṇa is transcendental, Kṛṣṇa's name is transcendental, Kṛṣṇa's form is transcendental, *sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ*. *Īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ* (Brahma-saṁhitā 5.1). Kṛṣṇa's body is not like ours. Our body is *asat*, *acit* and *nirānanda*, just the opposite. *Asat* means temporary — it will not exist eternally. But Kṛṣṇa's body is eternal. And it is *cit*, full of knowledge.

The less intelligent class of men cannot understand Kṛṣṇa. Therefore *śāstra* says, *ataḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ* (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.234). These *indriya*, or the material senses, cannot speculate to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Such efforts are *śrama eva hi kevalam*, or simply laboring, wasting time. Kṛṣṇa should be understood as Kṛṣṇa says. He can explain Himself. Nobody can explain perfectly

because our senses are imperfect. We are deficient by four kinds of faults: we commit mistakes; we are illusioned; we have imperfect senses; we have cheating propensity. Scientists may try to explain by using the terms, "Probably," "Maybe," and so on. That means imperfect knowledge. Still, they want to teach. This is cheating. Knowledge must be perfect. Then you can teach others.

### Are you getting cheated?

So our process is to receive the perfect knowledge from the per-

**Vaṅcīta-  
vaṅcaka-  
sampradāya:  
the whole  
world is full of  
cheaters and  
cheated.  
Because we  
want to be  
cheated, there  
are so many  
cheaters.**

fect source and distribute it. We don't manufacture knowledge. Therefore we are presenting *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is. The *Bhagavad-gītā* is already perfect. Why shall I interpret with my imperfect senses? This is cheating.

But people want to be cheated. *Vaṅcīta-vaṅcaka-sampradāya*: the whole world is full of cheaters and cheated. Because we want to be cheated, there are so many cheaters. They don't want the real thing. Here is the real thing, *Bhagavad-gītā*, the Supreme Personality of Godhead speaking personally about Himself. Why should we interpret? Does it mean that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the supreme authority, left something unexplained to be interpreted later on by some rascals? No. But the rascals dare; they interpret. That is cheating. That is another fault. There are around 650 editions of *Bhagavad-gītā* — simply cheating. The authors are big, big scholars — not scholars, they are all rascals. They cheat. They pose themselves as scholars and people want to be cheated, so they take their words. Such people cannot understand Kṛṣṇa because they take the shelter of the cheaters. Therefore they are cheated.

Māyā is very strong. She always dictates so that we may get cheated: "Why you are taking Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead? He is ordinary man. You can be also equal with Kṛṣṇa. You also become God. You become also incarnation." This is going on. And people flock there because they want to be cheated. They will not accept what Kṛṣṇa says. Kṛṣṇa says, *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇam*: "Only take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness" (Gītā 18.66). Anything that is not approved by the Supreme Lord

Kṛṣṇa is not dharma. *Dharmāṁ tu sākṣād bhagavat-praṇītam* (Bhāgavatam 6.3.19). A human being or a demigod or even a very exalted person cannot manufacture dharma. That is not possible. Real dharma is given by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, and that real dharma is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. *Sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja*: “Just surrender unto me.” Surrender to Kṛṣṇa and follow His instruction, and your life will be perfect. Because you follow the perfect instruction, therefore you are also perfect. It is a simple process. To become perfect, we have to follow the perfect instruction.

### Accept the Perfect Instruction

In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, you will find the perfect instruction. And if we take it as it is and follow it, then we become perfect. To become perfect is not very difficult job. But because we don’t want to become perfect, because we want to be cheated, we do not become perfect. This is the difficulty. So we should know from the very beginning that Kṛṣṇa is transcendental. And all His activities, they are all transcendental. When Kṛṣṇa was just three months old, He killed the *rākṣasī* Pūtānā. An ordinary three-month old child cannot kill such a giant demon. When Kṛṣṇa was six or seven years old, He lifted the Govardhana Hill. If Kṛṣṇa can float big, big gigantic planets in the air just like cotton swab floating, is it very difficult for Him to lift a mountain with His

hand, with His finger? That is not at all difficult for Kṛṣṇa. But those who want to be cheated, they don’t believe these stories when Kṛṣṇa shows His transcendental strength. They will call such stories mythology, as if Vyāsadeva wrote this Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam to put before these rascals some imaginary things. Just see how they want to be cheated. Why should such an exalted personality like Vyāsadeva present something imaginary? Therefore sometimes these cheated people deny that Vyāsadeva wrote

the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. But the real *ācāryas*, like Śaṅkarācārya, Rāmāṇjācārya, Madhvācārya, and Caitanya Mahāprabhu, do not say these stories are mythology. They accept them as they are. So we have to follow these *mahājanas*, or great authorities. If we don’t want to be cheated, then we should take Kṛṣṇa as He is presenting Himself and as it is confirmed by the *ācāryas*. Then our knowledge is perfect.

Thank you very much. Hare Kṛṣṇa. 🌐





# Don't Compromise Your Principles

*“Always do what is right. It will gratify half of mankind and astound the other.” —Mark Twain*

by Mahātmā Dāsa

The first thing Śrīla Prabhupāda explained to a friend of mine in their three-hour meeting on how to run his business was this: “Don’t compromise your principles.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda often said, “I never compromised my principles. If I compromised I could have attracted more people, but then I would have given them a watered down product that would have neither been genuine nor pure. I was not prepared to compromise my principles even if no one joined my mission.”

The truth is that many people joined his mission; and they joined precisely because he did not compromise his principles!

My friend recounts that when his industry was going through

difficult times, his company continued to prosper and grow. He attributes his success to religiously following dharmic (higher order) principles. His company maintained higher principles of integrity and morality than his competitors. The result is that his company continues to be a leader in an industry where many have gone out of business.

The core principles of a company are both the foundations upon which the company is built and the reason it exists. If these principles are not service, integrity and dharmic based, the company cannot last. No company over two-hundred years old whose only motive was profit exists today.

There once were two sadhus who lived by the sea in an area in

which many ships required guidance to safely navigate to the shore. The sadhus regularly helped these ships steer their way to land through difficult waters. Sometimes they were called to rescue people whose boats capsized.

The work of the sadhus attracted the attention of the local people. Eventually a group of supporters and volunteers constructed a building on the beach to better facilitate the sadhus and their work. The building provided shelter from the sun and rain, and served the travelers and seamen who needed rest or medical attention after their long and sometimes strenuous journeys.

However, boats did not travel in

this area all year long. Plus, when the seas were calm ships could easily navigate to shore without help. So the sadhus and their volunteer help had much free time. To enjoy their time together, the volunteers created recreational facilities in the building. Now they could play games, watch movies, and socialize in a comfortable place when there were no stranded ships to assist.

Emphasis slowly and imperceptibly started shifting to enjoying time together rather than helping others. As this happened, the saving of ships and travelers was being seen more as an infringement on their enjoyment than their *raison de e'tre*. After all, this work brought in many unsavory characters that dirtied the place with sand, mud, and water. As well, some of these fellows could be a real nuisance to take care of, and unpleasant to have around. Plus, this took away from their time to socialize. A mood of reluctance and inconvenience — even resentment — over having to cater to these travelers was starting to replace their original mission of service.

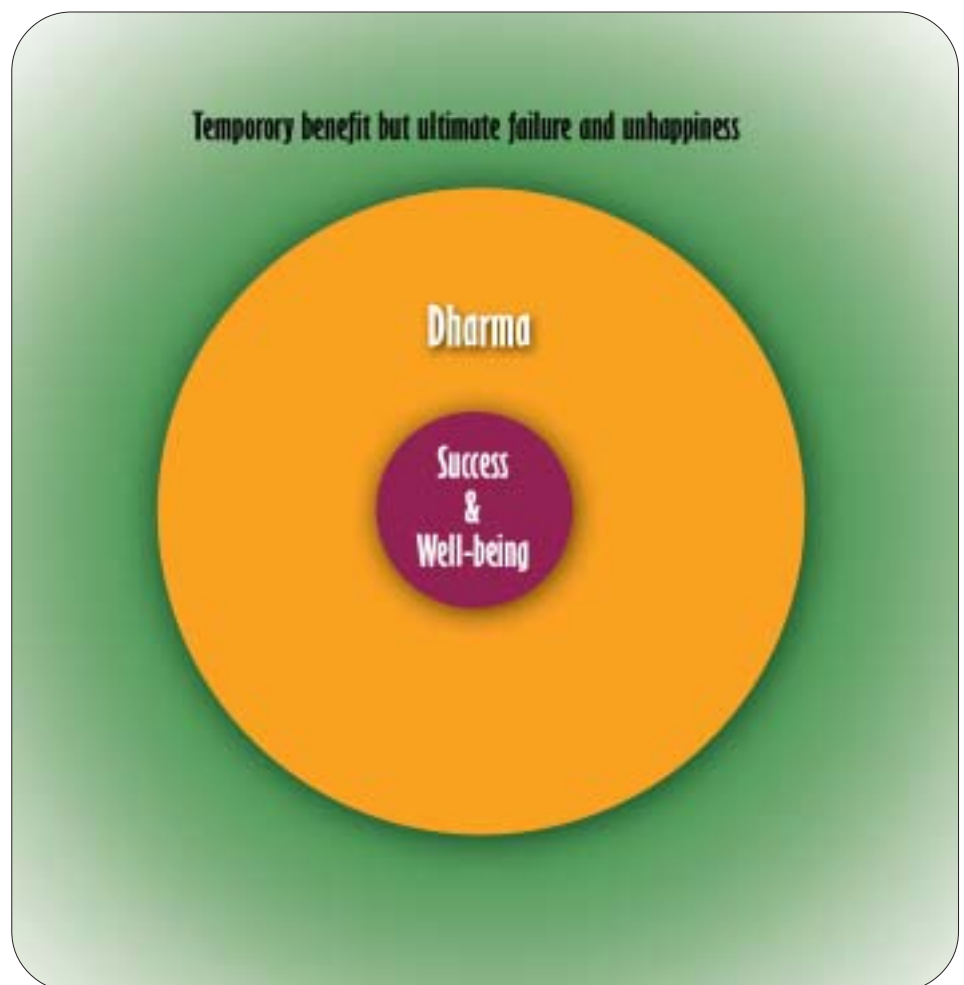
In due course of time, long after the sadhus passed on, the work of saving ships and facilitating travelers was forgotten and the building transformed into a full scale recreational facility. Few people were now even aware of the original purpose of the building. Two sadhus however, who were

completely frustrated that the original mission had been lost, decided to set off for another area, live on the beach, and continue the work and mission of the founding sadhus.

Guess what eventually happened? The very same thing happened again. The mission was lost in time and a few frustrated people left the organization to do the work for which it was originally

although understanding dharma, was willing to forget core principles to fulfill selfish ends. As a result he lost everything.

Rāvaṇa of the Rāmāyaṇa was another example. He also understood dharma, but was willing to compromise principles because of his attraction to Sītā, the wife of Lord Rāma. By kidnapping Sītā he set himself on a course of destruction.



intended. And over time the purpose of that organization was also lost. Duryodhana of the *Mahābhārata* is a good example of a highly capable leader who,

When we step beyond the bounds of dharma (core principles) in an attempt to create success, we leave our circle of purpose and protection. Just as Sītā, the wife of

Rāma, was given protection within a safe circle drawn by her brother-in-law Lakṣmaṇa, we will remain safe as long as we act within the circle of dharma.

I witnessed extremely successful projects being terminated when Śrīla Prabhupāda became aware that core principles were either being violated or were about to be violated. One time Śrīla Prabhupāda pulled out the director of one of his most successful projects, a move that resulted in significantly reducing external results for the time being. He did this because the leader's attitudes violated a core principle upon which Prabhupāda based his mission. He didn't want "success" at the cost of violating dharma. He was absolutely confident that greater results would ultimately be achieved by remaining true to the principles upon which the organization was founded.

The relationship between higher order principles or practices and obtaining specific desired results was not always apparent to Śrīla Prabhupāda's managers. Thus, occasionally a strategy that Prabhupāda employed was questioned by managers who didn't see how those higher order principles or practices would produce desired results. Prabhupāda explained that if what you are doing is dharmic, if it is pleasing God, you will achieve success beyond what seems possible. The success comes by God's blessings.

He used to quote the Vedic verse, *yasmin tuṣṭe jagat tuṣṭam*: "If

God is satisfied, then the whole world is satisfied." If you pour water on the root, then it is automatically distributed to every part of the tree. God is the root.

Divine principles have their own logic. An example of this is the principle of building wealth through giving in charity. Those who understand this principle

**If God is satisfied, then the whole world is satisfied." If you pour water on the root, then it is automatically distributed to every part of the tree. God is the root.**

know that benevolence is the foundation of financial success for any individual or company. Wealth is given to those who give. In fact, Prabhupāda said that America's preeminent position in the world was achieved because of the financial support they had given to

impoverished countries. "Give and you shall receive."

I personally witnessed how Prabhupāda never compromised his principles, even in the beginning of his mission when there was little apparent success. From the days of struggle and poverty to the days of massive success, he was always the same person, someone dedicated to his core principles.

How Prabhupāda taught his organization to run was exactly how he lived his life. 🌐

### Quotes

*One who does good is never overcome by evil.*

—Bhagavad-gita 6.40

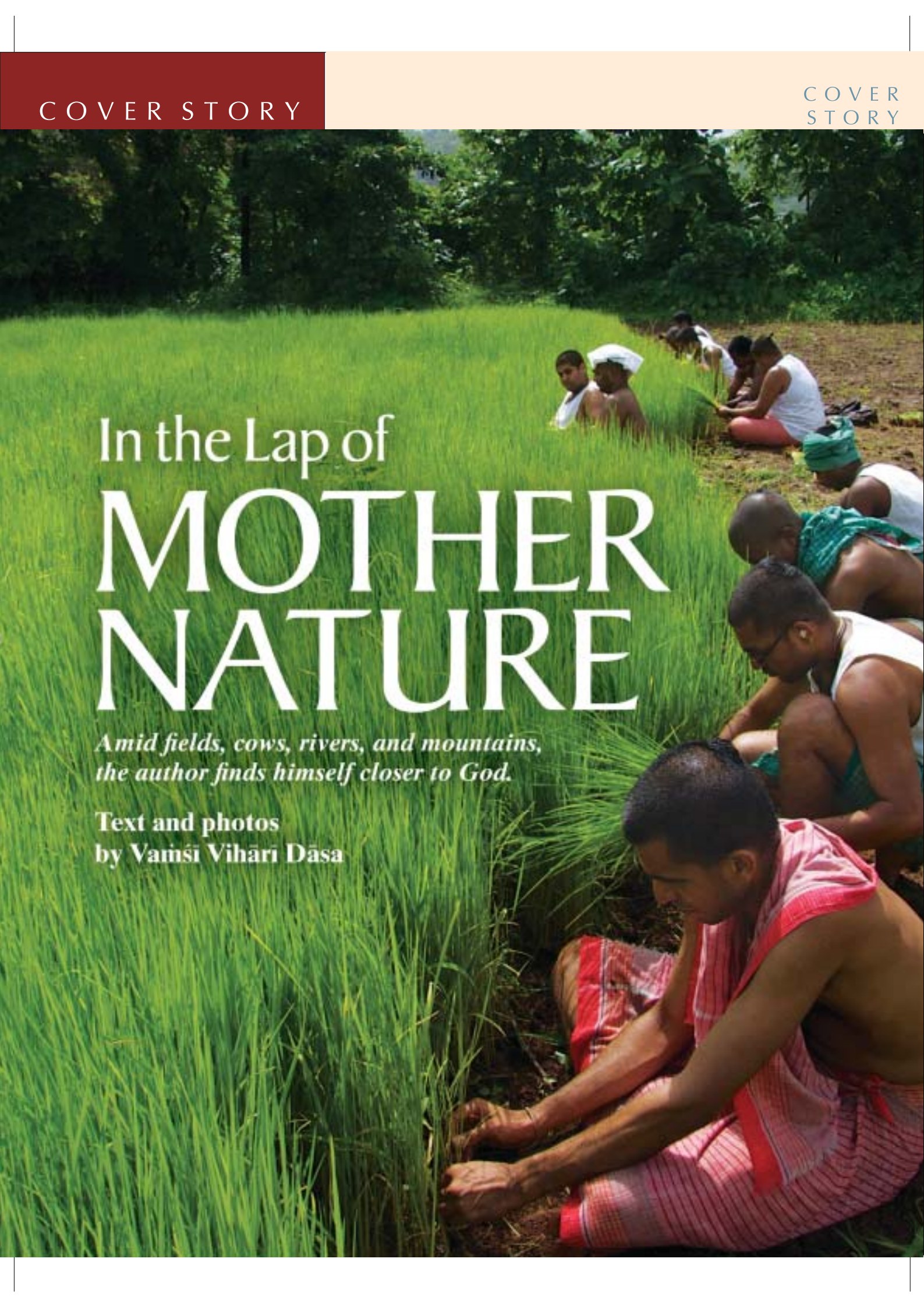
*Just like milk. We may add more and more water to it for cheating the customer, but in the end it will cease to be any longer milk. Better to boil the milk very vigorously and make it thick and sweet. That is the best process.*

—Śrīla Prabhupāda

*One relative may be rejected to save the family, and one family may be given up to save a village. A single village may be sacrificed to save the state, and the whole world should be renounced to save one's soul.*

—Cāṇakya Paṇḍita

*Mahātmā Dāsa, a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda, joined ISKCON in 1969. He is well known in ISKCON for his music and seminars. Visit his website: [www.mahatmawisdom.com](http://www.mahatmawisdom.com)*



# In the Lap of MOTHER NATURE

*Amid fields, cows, rivers, and mountains,  
the author finds himself closer to God.*

**Text and photos  
by Vamsī Vihāri Dāsa**



God is our supreme father, and one of His energies, nature, is our mother. A mother nourishes her child with the milk from her body, and she also sees to the overall development of her child by imparting proper culture and education. Similarly Mother Nature cares for her innumerable



**Left:** Now, our next program will be to organize farming land to set an example to the world how people can be peaceful, happy, and free from all anxieties simply by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra and living an honorable life in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. (Letter, October 19, 1975)

**Above:** All the living entities within the universe are conducted by the Vedic directions, as a bull is directed by the rope attached to its nose. No one can violate the rules laid down in the Vedic literatures. To the chief person, who has contributed the Vedas, we offer our respect! (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.15.8)

**Top:** Kṛṣṇa's navel resembles a lotus, He is garlanded with lotuses, and His eyes are also compared to the petals of a lotus (ālola-candraka-lasad-vanamālya-Vamśī). So if we simply think of only this one verse, which describes Kṛṣṇa's body with reference to the lotus, we can meditate our whole life on how beautiful Kṛṣṇa is, how wise Kṛṣṇa is, and how Kṛṣṇa manifests His creation. This is meditation—thinking of Kṛṣṇa. (Teachings of Queen Kuntī, Chapter 5)

children by providing grains, fruits, flowers, and medicinal herbs, and she showers her motherly affection on us by giving invaluable lessons, guiding us on the journey of life.

During one rainy season, I got an opportunity to stay at a small village named Galtare, 120 km north of Mumbai. I've had some attraction for rural life since childhood, and upon spending some time in the countryside, I could understand why Śrīla Prabhupāda



**Above:** Cow dung dried in the sunshine is kept in stock for utilizing as fuel in the villages. They get wheat and other cereals produced from the field. There is milk and vegetables, and the fuel is cow dung, and thus they are independent in every village. There are hand weavers for the cloth. And the country oil-mill (consisting of a bull walking in circle round two big grinding stones, attached with yoke) grinds the oil seeds into oil. The whole idea is that . . . the less we are anxious for maintaining our body and soul together, the more we become favorable for advancing in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. (Letter, June 14, 1968)

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

**Right:** When there is a river, one can take drinking water, wash his clothes, bathe and so on, for that water will serve all purposes. Similarly, if one worships the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, all his goals will be achieved. (Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 14.66, Purport)



**Right:** Human beings need not eat animals. There are ample food grains, milk, fruit, and vegetables so that the human beings as well as the animals can eat sumptuously and to their heart's content. If all living beings are satisfied with food and shelter and obey the prescribed rules, there cannot be any disturbance between one living being and another. (Śrīmad- Bhāgavatam 1.4.12, Purport)



**Above:** "Stick to your own place and grow your food. There is no question of transport. A little transport is required, the bullock cart. Kṛṣṇa was being carried on a bullock cart. There is no use of petrol. Simply use the bull. They are already there. Utilize them." (Morning Walk, Rome, May 25, 1974) "They are simply misusing their advancement, and they are satisfied when they have got a motorcar instead of bullock cart. That's all. They think, 'Now I am advanced. We had bullock carts, and now we have got motorcars with three hundred thousand parts. And every part will give me trouble.' And that is advancement." (Morning Walk, October 1-3, 1972, Los Angeles)



quoted the English poet Cowper: "God made the country, and man-made the town." I could see how the materialistic civilization prevalent in cities makes us godless. In the city, not seeing the hand of God in any aspect of life becomes natural. It is so easy to believe that industry and the Internet fulfill our needs. Packaged foods give us the sense that machines have manufactured them. Life goes on uninterrupted even if no rain falls for many years. But in the village, one can experience God closely. There life is absolutely dependent on agriculture, which depends on rain, and rain depends on God.

When we're close to nature, the intoxication of the materialistic way of life gradually starts fading away. In

my experience, the knowledge enunciated in *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and Śrīla Prabhupāda's purports becomes clearer.

The chirping of the birds, the symphony of the running stream, the mooing of the cows, and the sound of the swift breeze provide inexplicable happiness to the ears. Seeing the unlimited blue sky above, the thousands of stars at night, the giant mountains, the stretch of the green fields below swaying in the wind, and the love of a mother cow for her little calf

*Right: When the flame in a lamp burns the wick improperly, the lamp is blackened, but when the lamp is filled with ghee and is burning properly, there is bright illumination. Similarly, when the mind is absorbed in material sense gratification, it causes suffering, and when detached from material sense gratification, it brings about the original brightness of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 5.11.8)*





**Left and right:** The cow's calf not only is beautiful to look at, but also gives satisfaction to the cow, and so she delivers as much milk as possible. But in the Kali-yuga, the calves are separated from the cows as early as possible for purposes which may not be mentioned in these pages of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.17.3, Purport)



*Above: "We have to follow. If we follow the footprints of great personalities, then there is no danger. Mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ. Just like in the villages there is a track. One who follows that track is not lost. Similarly, if we follow the track of the mahājana — on which a great personality has traversed—then we'll not fall." (Lecture on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 7.9.10, Montreal, July 9, 1968)*



is total perfection for the eyes. The mystical aroma of the soil, the scent of clear pollution-free air, the smell of freshly bloomed flowers, and the fragrance of cow dung deeply purify the sense of smell. The joy of touching soil, cows, green plants, and clear river water seems to reach even our souls. And the taste of fresh fruits, vegetables, grains, water, and pure cow milk impels us to think how the artificial ways of modern life give us untainted miseries in the name of happiness.

While living in the countryside, I tried to visualize Śrīla Prabhupāda's priceless teachings. And I reaped satisfaction of the soul and enhanced





**Above:** The web is created by the spider, and it is maintained by the spider, and as soon as the spider likes, the whole thing is wound up within the spider. The spider is covered within the web. If an insignificant spider is so powerful as to act according to its will, why can't the Supreme Being act by His supreme will in the creation, maintenance, and destruction of the cosmic manifestations? (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 2.9.28, Purport)

**Left:** "Just like the trees, plants, grass. They cannot move. They have no legs. They have got legs, but they cannot move. They are eating through the legs. Therefore they are called *pāda-pa*, which means collecting water through the leg.' These trees are drinking water from within the earth with their legs. Therefore they push their roots very deep to find out where is water. . . . This is God's creation. We have to understand that." (Lecture on Bhagavad-gītā 13.4, Miami, February 27, 1975)

**Left:** "Just like the cow and bull. The bull helps, plowing. That is the original system. Now they have invented tractors, and the bulls are being killed. Why should they be killed? Engage them in tilling the field. They will have an occupation. And the men also will have an occupation. There is immense land. So there will be no question of unemployment." (Conversation, Melbourne, July 2, 1974) According to *smṛti* regulation, the cow is the mother and the bull the father of the human being. The cow is the mother because just as one sucks the breast of one's mother, human society takes cow's milk. Similarly, the bull is the father of human society because the father earns for the children just as the bull tills the ground to produce food grains. Human society will kill its spirit of life by killing the father and the mother. (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.2.29, Purport)

faith. Understanding our supreme father becomes easy when our mother, nature, gives us personal lessons as she holds us in her loving embrace. In these pages, I have presented a few of the numerous teachings that Mother Nature helped plainly illustrate for me during my stay at Galtare. 🌀

Vamśī Vihārī Dāsa, a disciple of His Holiness Rādhānātha Swamī, has a graduate degree in commerce. For the past thirteen years, he has been serving on the staff of the Hindi edition of BTG.

# Three Mindsets

by Śubha Vilāsa Dāsa

There are three mindsets in this world: *saṁskṛti*, *vikṛti* and *prakṛti*. *Saṁskṛti* is the mindset where you keep your needs aside and focus on others needs. *Vikṛti* is the mindset where your needs take prominence to the extent of even crushing others needs. This is called competition. And *prakṛti* is the mindset that is convertible into either *saṁskṛti* or *vikṛti*. In the Rāmāyaṇa, Ayodhyā represents *saṁskṛti*, Laṅkā represents *vikṛti*, and Kiṣkindhā represents *prakṛti*.

When we love things and use people, leading to the mindset of use and throw, we are following the culture of Laṅkā. The law of coercing teaches one that what is mine is mine, and what is yours is also mine.

The law of sharing acts as a bridge across waters of frustration around the island of pride and loneliness, opening up the route to the mainland garden of love. When we follow the law of sharing,

we are following the culture of Ayodhyā.

Today these three mindsets have become three value systems and therefore three lifestyles. The greatest hunger today is not the hunger of the belly, but the hunger of the heart. Today's education system informs us, but we need a system that transforms us. An uneducated heart competes, a half-educated heart cooperates, but an enlightened heart serves. From self-satisfaction comes contentment and from contentment comes the desire to serve.

All of us are in the category of *prakṛti*. When we tilt towards *vikṛti*, we create a Laṅkā atmosphere in the world. But when we tilt towards *saṁskṛti*, we create an Ayodhyā atmosphere. 🌀

Śubha Vilāsa Dāsa is a motivational speaker and a spiritual lifestyle coach. He is also the author of the six-volume series Ramayana — The Game of Life (Book 1). His email: [ramayana.shubhavilas@gmail.com](mailto:ramayana.shubhavilas@gmail.com)

Vikṛti

Prakṛti

Saṁskṛti



# The Vrindavan Mood



As I stepped into Vrindavan  
All I could hear was Rādhe Rādhe  
The sweet sound of the holy name  
Penetrated the air, Permeated the forests  
Sending soft pulsations of bliss in the stony heart of a lost soul like me.

Rādhārāṇī's footsteps shone in every nook and corner  
Bringing forth the pastimes She had with Her beloved Kṛṣṇa  
Her devotion lay etched everywhere  
Sending droplets of mercy in the heart of a lost soul like me.

The soft sounds of Her ankle bells sprung up every now and then  
Resonating perfectly with the sounds of Kṛṣṇa's ankle bells  
The timeless sands of Vrindavan spoke the everlasting saga of Their loving tales  
Sending waves of bliss in the impure heart of a lost soul like me.



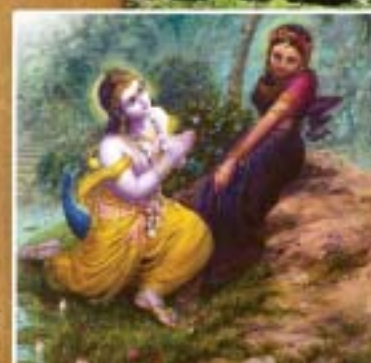
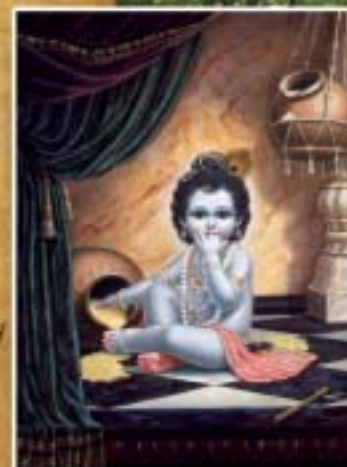
Stealing butter was His favourite pastime  
His ankle bells gave Him away many times  
The love of the gopis stared back at me from every door  
Rekindling the barren heart of a lost soul.

Govardhan still stands with all its glory  
Shielding the sacred Śyāmakuṇḍa and Rādhākuṇḍa from all kinds of fury  
Varṣāṇā and Kālindī lead a listless life  
Torn with the tears of separation glistening in their eyes  
Dumbfounded I stood witnessing their misery  
Making the parched heart of a lost soul like me crumble in agony.

As the wind blew through the gateways of the trees  
With fluttering butterflies and singing birds adding to the glee  
The pastimes of the divine couple rushed through the backdrop of my memory  
Bringing in joy in the arid heart of a lost soul like me.

Such is the beauty and purifying aura of Vrindavan  
All unfolded by the mercy of Vāṣvabhara  
Watered by the Gosvāmīs of Vrindavan  
Nurtured by the ācāryas with a tender heart  
To act as a beacon of light for a lost soul like me.  
O Rādhārāṇī! Please give this lost soul a place at your lotus feet.

—Cintāmaṇī Sakhi Devī Dāsi



SPIRITUAL SCIENTIST

# Wisdom Nuggets

FROM BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ

*Key teachings of the Gītā  
phrased in succinct sūtras  
accompanied with  
concise explanations*

by Caitanya Caraṇa Dāsa

### 1. Within every adversity is an opportunity — the universe is a university

The *Bhagavad-gītā* begins with the famed warrior Arjuna about to participate in a war that will annihilate his entire clan. Thinking about the upcoming fratricide, he suffers an emotional breakdown. He attempts earnestly to reason his way out, but emotion trumps reason in the inner battle. In despair, he turns to Kṛṣṇa: “Help!”

Kṛṣṇa, by His presence and presentation, lifts Arjuna out of both the outer and the inner battlefields. The supreme teacher takes His student to magnificent summits of wisdom that the world has rarely scaled before or after. When they return to the battlefield at the end of the *Gītā*, Arjuna is intellectually illumined, spiritually strengthened and emotionally enlivened.

By thus transforming a battlefield into a classroom, Kṛṣṇa demonstrates that He can utilize every circumstance as a setting for education. And the wisdom he has provided through the *Gītā* can enable us to similarly redefine the various battle-like situations that confront us in our daily life. If we accept Kṛṣṇa as our teacher by meditating on the *Gītā*, he will use the unlikeliest of settings to impart the most unforgettable of lessons. And our life-journey will transform into an adventure in ever-increasing wisdom.

In fact, *Gītā* wisdom explains that the world we live in is an

arena for our spiritual evolution. The universe is essentially a university. Every moment is an opportunity to grow in wisdom and love.

### 2. Be concerned, not disturbed, by change — the real you is indestructible

The world around us is subject to constant change, change that is often unstoppable, uncontrollable and unpredictable. Such change makes us stressed and worried; we naturally look for something unchanging for security. The *Bhagavad-gītā* explains that such an unchanging reality lies within us. We ourselves are at our core souls, spiritual beings who are indestructible (2.13). None of the

weapons that can destroy our body and other material things can even scratch the spiritual soul (2.22). No external change, however threatening or devastating it may seem, can harm our essence. Understanding this fills us with a profound peace that equips us to respond maturely to external changes.

As we live and act in the world, we do need to be concerned about external changes. Due concern about them helps us to think calmly and respond intelligently. But if we become unduly excited, then our consciousness gets caught up in externals and we get attached to them. Thereafter, when things start going wrong, our attachments don’t let us withdraw our consciousness from external things and so we suffer. To the extent we rejoice when external things go right, to that extent we will be forced to lament when those things go wrong.

That’s why the *Gītā* (2.15) recommends that we avoid becoming disproportionately delighted by pleasure or dejected by pain, and thus keep growing spiritually amidst external changes.

### 3. Spirituality is the culmination of science — become a spiritual scientist

Science progresses by first assuming on faith that nature has an underlying order and then seeking to discover that order.

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ately delighted by  
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jected by pain.**

Newton discovered gravity not merely by observing the falling fruit, but by his faith that a rational order in nature had caused the fruit to fall. Noted physicist Paul Davies acknowledges, “Even the most atheistic scientist accepts as

inference to be not just reasonable but essential. Why? Because the more science fathoms the laws of nature, the more their intricacy and inter-relationship insists that they couldn’t have come by chance. Reputed Indian mathema-

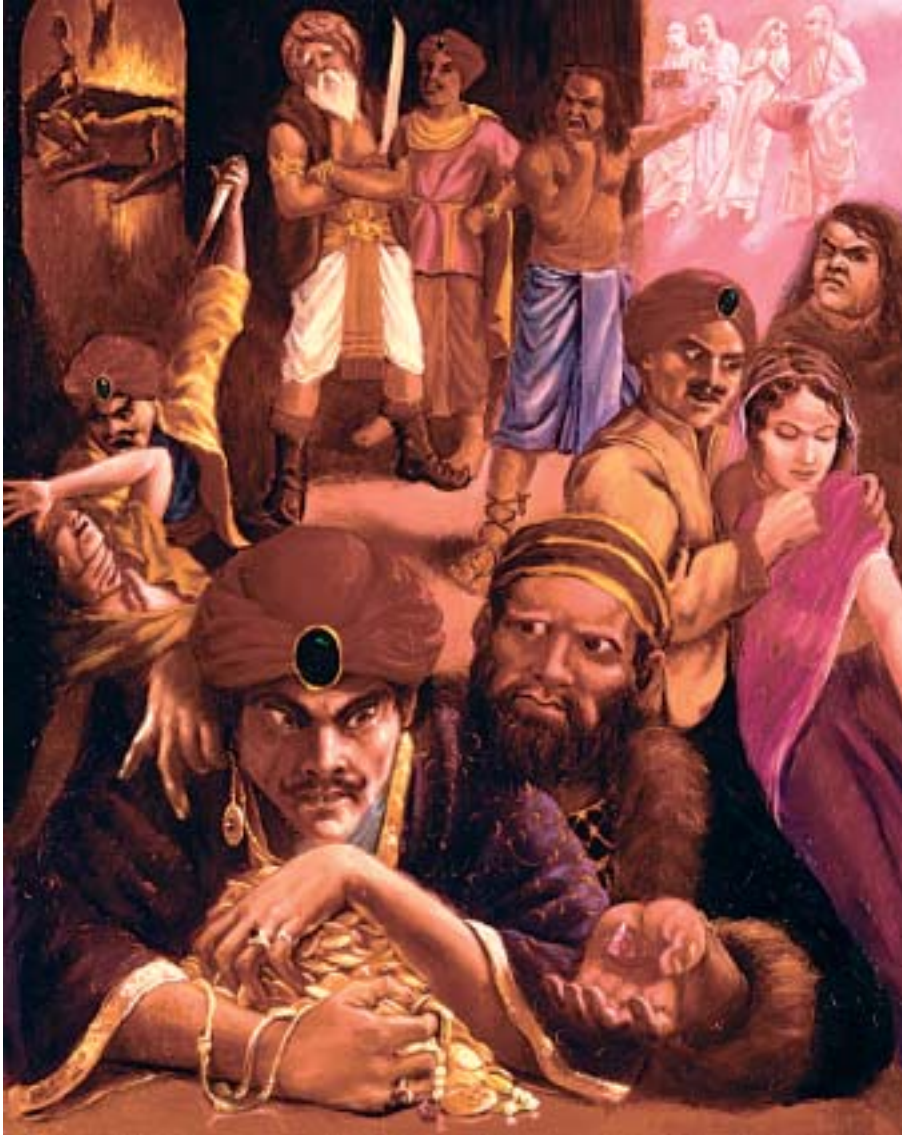
Acknowledging the divine brings meaning not just to the natural order, but also to human affairs. The *Gītā* (15.15) indicates that the same God who oversees insentient matter also guides our consciousness towards its ultimate unfolding.

To facilitate our spiritual evolution, the *Gītā* offers a time-honored methodology of yoga that offers enterprising spiritual scientists experiential perception of higher spiritual realities. Just as science confirms its theories through experiments, spirituality confirms its tenets through experiences.

Discovering the order that encompasses all of existence — matter and consciousness — is the culmination of science.

#### 4. Don’t let desires become parasites — be restrained to avoid becoming drained

Our desires can energize us, but if they are not regulated they act like parasites and exhaust us. The *Bhagavad-gītā* (16.21–22) indicates that such desires that impel us to self-defeating actions fall into three broad categories: lust, anger and greed. Lust and greed often fuel our desires for the many worldly objects that enter our vision and imagination, be they glitzy forms or gaudy products. These desires are innumerable and endless, and most of them are unrealistic that cannot be fulfilled. Consequently, a conscious or subconscious irritation builds up within us. When this irritation becomes intolerable, we succumb



*Lust, anger and greed — the three parasites in the mind.*

an act of faith the existence of a law-like order in nature.”

*Gītā* wisdom takes this scientific faith to its next level by pointing to the person behind the order. Many eminent scientists hold such an

atician Srinivasa Ramanujan put it well, “An equation for me has no meaning, unless it represents a thought of God.” That God who governs nature, the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.10) reveals, is Kṛṣṇa.

to anger, which perverts us into becoming sulky (mentally angry) or snappy (verbally angry) or even beastly (physically angry). In this way, lust, greed and anger cumulatively divert our focus away from the main goals of our life, both material and spiritual. The resulting inattentiveness makes us falter and blunder during the course of our life. As our plans misfire and backfire, and nothing seems to be working, we get mentally exhausted and exasperated. Just as parasites drain their host, so do such desires drain us.

That's why it is prudent to be restrained. Being restrained doesn't mean sentencing ourselves to a life of dry denial; it simply means choosing our desires judiciously and not letting the world foist desires on us. By introspection we can shortlist those of our desires that grow from our core; that reflect our aspirations and talents; that propel us towards self-actualization.

#### 5. Look at the mind before you look with the mind

When a normally cordial friend snaps at us for no reason, we understand sympathetically, "That's due to a bad mood." We then ascribe their irritability to their moody mind, thereby separating their mind from them.

Differentiating between the mind with its moods and the person is something that we do not just with others but also with ourselves. However, with ourselves we usually do it after the event to rationalize it: "I spoke like that

because I was in a foul mood." If instead we could catch our bad moods beforehand, we could avoid much trouble.

Pertinently, the *Bhagavad-gītā* (14.22) urges us to first observe our emotions and then decide whether to act on them. This essentially involves looking at the mind instead of looking with the mind.

Looking with the mind means identifying ourselves with the mood of the mind and acting on it. It means using the mind as our spectacles and letting its color tinge our vision.

Looking at the mind means looking first at the specs — it means becoming aware of our feelings and evaluating: "Are these

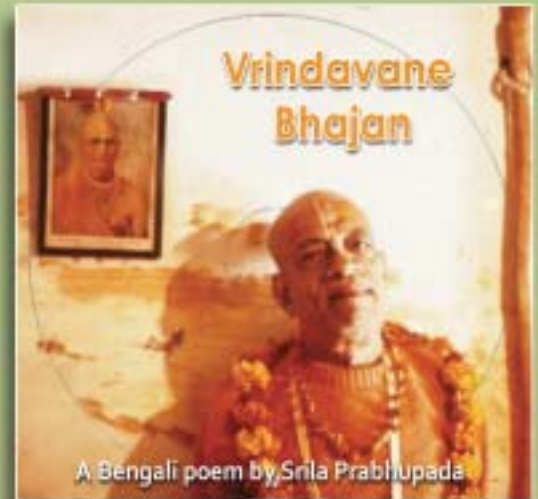
my authentic emotions coming from my core values and central concerns? Or are these just passing fancies, kneejerk reactions to extraneous events, hormonal rushes that have little to do with the essential me?"

By becoming introspective, we can become selective about which emotions we act on and thus become much more constructively productive. 🌐

*Caitanya Carāṇa Dāsa is the associate-editor of Back to Godhead (US and Indian editions). To subscribe for his daily Bhagavad-gītā reflections, please subscribe for Gitadaily on his website, thespiritualscientist.com.*

## New Audio CD of Śrīla Prabhupāda's Poems

His Holiness Jayapatāka Swami has translated and commented upon *Vrindavane Bhajan*, an early work of Śrīla Prabhupāda that signalled his purpose and mission in this world. An audio CD of these poems will be launched during Janmāṣṭamī 2014, and the money from the sales will go towards the building of the Temple of Vedic Planetarium in Mayapur.



Please contact your nearest ISKCON temple for more details.

## MY EXPERIENCE



# When our Failure is a Success

*Where you turn to  
when you fail in  
devotional service  
decides the result.*

by Vraja Bihārī Dāsa

Anyone who comes to ISKCON temples is immediately exposed to the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra. And those who are convinced about the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness soon take up the practice of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa a fixed number of times daily. If you have been practicing this mantra meditation for some time now, you must have realized how difficult it is to keep the mind fixed and focused on the holy name.

To improve the quality of our chanting, we need to make it the most important priority of our life. One reason many devotees are unable to make this change could be due to the fear of failure. Chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa can be the most humbling experience, especially if we make it the most important goal of our life. Kṛṣṇa is inaccessible to the conditioned souls; those who are not qualified do not get access to

Kṛṣṇa's intimate association. He reserves the right of not being exposed to the conditioned souls. Thus chanting can expose us to our own disqualifications; chanting can reveal to us that we are far away from Kṛṣṇa.

This realization can be a painful experience. To avoid this realization, we may prefer to believe that chanting is one of the many things to be done in devotional service. If we profess that chanting is the most important activity, immediately we are exposed to the painful reality of our own poor chanting. It seems hypocritical that on the one hand we declare chanting to be most

truly feel that I am a failure in chanting, that feeling is a success. If we can feel lowly and inadequate, that is an excellent platform to experience the sweet taste of Kṛṣṇa. It is fifty percent success; the other fifty percent is experienced when we turn to Kṛṣṇa for help. Therefore to feel a failure and then turn to Kṛṣṇa in our career as a chanter of Hare Kṛṣṇa is spiritual success.

This is important because we attract Kṛṣṇa's mercy only when we humbly surrender to Kṛṣṇa. If we have a high estimation about ourselves, how can we humbly beg Kṛṣṇa for mercy?

Many times we tell other

is not some yogic technique that we could acquire by some tips or acronyms to improve chanting. Most likely we may fall short of the standard.

At this point in time, we have to turn to Kṛṣṇa and beg Him to help us chant well. The more we endeavor sincerely, the more we'll be exposed to our own poor chanting. At this point, we would be humbled. As Bhūrijana Prabhu says in his book *Japa*, humiliation would come before humility.

Therefore let us make chanting our number one goal. Never mind the failure, for we shall fail forward! Without this pure ambition, our lives are hollow. Good chanting is the best ideal to strive for; it is our connection to Kṛṣṇa. This sincerity will lead to humility, and it is humility that eventually gives us a higher taste in the process of bhakti-yoga.

An important point to note: it is important that our sense of failure must compel us to turn to Kṛṣṇa, and only then we can experience the sweetness. Otherwise, a sense of failure by itself leads to despondency. If we can remember Kṛṣṇa as we fail, that failure is the ultimate success. ❀

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**We attract Kṛṣṇa's mercy only when we humbly surrender to Kṛṣṇa. If we have a high estimation about ourselves, how can we humbly beg Kṛṣṇa for mercy?**

sacred, but on the other hand, our actions are contrary to the reality we preach about. The more we glorify the holy names, the more we have to face the stark truth of our own inadequacies of chanting. And this revelation is painful because we want to feel a sense of self-worth and success in our spiritual lives. Hence we avoid discussing the importance of good chanting, because these discussions only confirm to us our abject failure in our vow of chanting.

The beauty of Kṛṣṇa conscious process, however, lies in experiencing this failure. If we can

devotees how fallen we are but these expressions could be more out of social etiquette rather than heart-felt conviction. At such times, humility, the most important element in the life of a chanter, remains only a theoretical understanding. It is only *jñāna*, or theoretical knowledge, and rarely does it translate into *vijñāna*, or practical realization.

Making chanting our number one priority offers us a rare chance to convert this knowledge into realization. When we have a noble aspiration to chant well, we will try hard to achieve it. Certainly, we may fail initially but good chanting

EVERY TOWN & VILLAGE

WORLDWIDE ACTIVITIES OF KṚṢṆA CONSCIOUSNESS



Spreading Kṛṣṇa's Message  
during World Cup Football



According to book distributor Prāṇanātha Dāsa, ISKCON devotees distributed approximately 8,000 of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books in Portuguese, Spanish and English all over the country during the World Cup that was held in Brazil recently. Large groups of *harināma-saṅkīrtana* parties traveled to all major cities where World Cup games were held.

"As the saying goes, 'Football is the most important thing amongst things that don't have any importance,'" says Śrī Kṛṣṇa Mūrti. "It is nice entertainment, but it's not going to change anyone's life." For the devotees, however, the World Cup was life-changing, because it was a unique opportunity to broadcast Lord Kṛṣṇa's names to huge numbers of people from all over the world in one place at one time. "And that is the biggest victory in this World Cup, for us, and for Brazil," says Śrī Kṛṣṇa Mūrti.

### ISKCON Devotee Becomes Chaplain to Harrow Mayor

**London, England:** Ajay Maru, the first Gujarati Mayor of Harrow, selected Śrutidharma Dāsa as the Mayor



of the London Borough of Harrow. Śrutidharma is the president of ISKCON's Bhaktivedanta Manor near London, and this is the second time he will be serving as chaplain to a Mayor of Harrow. ☸

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### The Truth Behind ....

(Continued from page 34)

darkness for the viewing eye, which is another partial expansion of the sun. Similarly, material false ego, a particular product of the Absolute Truth made visible by the Absolute Truth, obstructs the individual soul, another partial expansion of the Absolute Truth, from realizing the Absolute Truth.

When the cloud originally produced from the sun is torn apart, the eye can see the actual form of the sun. Similarly, when the spirit soul comes out of his material covering of false ego by inquiring into the transcendental science, he regains his original spiritual awareness.

Just as the sun can burn away the clouds that prevent one from seeing it, the Supreme Lord (and He alone) can remove the false ego that prevents one from seeing Him. There are some creatures, however, like owls, which are averse to seeing the sun. In the same way, those who are not interested in spiritual knowledge will never receive the privilege of seeing the Lord. ☸

—Śyāmānanda Dāsa



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## VAIṢṆAVA CALENDAR

Sep 1– Oct 15, 2014

- 2 Sep:** Rādhāṣṭamī — Appearance of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī
- 5 Sep:** Fasting for Pārśva Ekādaśī, (additional complete fasting till noon today on account of Lord Vāmanadeva's appearance on the next day)
- 6 Sep:** Break fast (Mumbai) 06:24 am - 10:32 am, Śrī Vāmana Dvādaśī — Appearance of Lord Vāmanadeva (fasting is done yesterday), Śrīla Jiva Gosvāmī appearance
- 7 Sep:** Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura appearance. Fasting till noon.
- 8 Sep:** Ananta Caturdaśī Vrata, Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura disappearance, Last day of the second Cāturmāsya month
- 9 Sep:** Śrī Viśvarūpa Mahotsava, Acceptance of sannyāsa by Śrīla Prabhupāda, third month of Cāturmāsya begins (fasting from milk for one month)
- 15 Sep:** Śrīla Prabhupāda's arrival in the USA
- 19 Sep:** Fasting for Indirā Ekādaśī
- 20 Sep:** Break fast (Mumbai) 09:11 am - 10:30 am
- 4 Oct:** Śrī Rāmacandra Vijayotsava, Śrī Madhvācārya appearance
- 5 Oct:** Fasting for Pāśāṅkuśā Ekādaśī, Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī disappearance, Śrīla Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī disappearance, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavīrāja Gosvāmī disappearance
- 6 Oct:** Break fast (Mumbai) 06:30 am – 10:27 am
- 7 Oct:** Last day of the third Cāturmāsya month
- 8 Oct:** Śrī Kṛṣṇa Śāradyā Rāsayātrā, Śrī Murārī Gupta disappearance, Lakṣmī Pūjā, fourth month of Cāturmāsya begins (fast from urad dāl for one month)
- 13 Oct:** Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura disappearance

## The Truth behind False Ego

**W**e all know how many of the world's problems could be solved if the warring parties could resolve their ego problem. Caligula, Nero, Genghis Khan, Hitler, Napoleon and a few names from our Vedic history like Rāvaṇa, Hiraṇyakaśipu and Śiśupāla are all prime examples of otherwise successful individuals with big ego problems.

Now, brace for something shocking. The *Bhagavad-gītā* does not put only these characters in the rogue's gallery of big time egoists but squarely puts all living entities — bar none — in the same category. But surely, you may protest, "I do not have an ego problem like Genghis Khan or Rāvaṇa. I am merely a small fry." Well, let's analyze these so-called small fries and see whether they are all innocent.

Let's begin with a definition. Śrīla Prabhupāda writes: "When we are materially contaminated, we are called conditioned. False consciousness is exhibited under the impression that I am a product of material nature. This is called false ego."

Thus, the bare acceptance of our material body as our real self is the evidence of one acting under the influence of the false ego. If this is the "false" ego, then is there a "real" ego? Yes. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (1.4.10) states, *aham brahmāsmi*: "I am Brahman, I am spirit." This sense of "I am" also exists in the liberated stage of self-realization. This sense of "I am" is ego, but when the sense of "I am" is applied to this false body, it is called false ego. When the sense of self is applied to reality, that is real ego.

There are some philosophers who say we should give up our ego, but we cannot give up our ego, because ego means identity. We ought, of course, to give up the false identification with the body.

The very first sign of the false ego trapping a living entity is the identification of the living being with bodily relationships. This false ego associates with different modes of material nature, and thus the senses become attached to the modes of material

nature. The mind is the instrument for feeling different material experiences, but intelligence is deliberative and can change everything for the better. The intelligent person, therefore, can attain salvation from the illusion of material existence by proper use of intelligence. An intelligent person can detect the awkward position of material existence and thus begin to inquire as to what he is, why he is subjected to different kinds of miseries, and how to get rid of all miseries, and thus, by good association, an advanced intelligent person can turn towards the better life of self-realization.

Can Kṛṣṇa, or God, also have a false ego?

As explained in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.4), the separated material energy of the Personality of Godhead is covered by eight kinds of material coverings: earth, water, fire, air, sky, mind, intelligence and false ego. All these are emanations from the Personality of Godhead as His external energy. These coverings are just like the covering of clouds for the sun. The cloud is a creation of the sun, yet it actually covers the eyes so that one cannot see the sun. The sun cannot be covered by the clouds. The cloud can at utmost extend a few hundreds of miles in the sky, but the sun is far greater at millions of miles. So a hundred-mile covering is not sufficient to cover millions of miles. Therefore, one of the various energies of the Supreme Personality of Godhead cannot, of course, cover the Lord. But these coverings are created by Him to cover the eyes of the conditioned souls who want to lord it over the material nature. Actually the conditioned souls are covered by the illusory creative cloud of matter, and the Lord reserves the right of not being exposed to their eyes. Because they have no eyes of transcendental vision and because they cannot see the Personality of Godhead, they therefore deny the existence of the Lord and the transcendental form of the Lord.

Although a cloud is a product of the sun and is also made visible by the sun, it nevertheless creates

(Continued on page 31)