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His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, founder- *acharya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, came to America in 1965, at age 69, to fulfill his spiritual master's request that he teach the science of Krishna consciousness throughout the English-speaking world. In a dozen years he published some seventy volumes of translation and commentary on India's Vedic literature, and these are now standard in universities worldwide. Meanwhile, travelling almost nonstop, Srila Prabhupada moulded his international society into a world wide confederation of *ashramas*, schools, temples and farm communities. He passed away in 1977, in Vrindavana, the place most sacred to Lord Krishna. His disciples and followers are carrying forward the movement he started.

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Nothing More To Achieve

Pure love for God is its own reward

A lecture given in New York City, November 30, 1966

*By His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada
Founder-Acarya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness*

*daridya-nasa, bhava-ksaya,—premera 'phala' naya
prema-sukha-bhoga—mukhya prayojana haya*

"The goal of love of Godhead is not to become materially rich or free from material bondage. The real goal is to be situated in devotional service to the Lord and to enjoy transcendental bliss."

—*Chaitanya-charitamrita, Madhya-lila 20.142*

We should not expect that by our devotional service to Krishna our miserable material condition will improve, or that we will be liberated from material entanglement. Thinking in that way is a kind of sense gratification. Yogis and *jananis*, or impersonalistic speculators, try to become free from material entanglement. But in devotional service there is no such desire, because devotional service is pure love. In pure devotional service one has no expectation that "I shall be profited in this way." Devotional service is not a profitable commercial business where one thinks, "Unless I get something in return, I shall not practice devotional service in Krishna consciousness."

Lord Chaitanya prays to Lord Krishna:

*na dhanam na janam na sundarim kavitam va jagad-isa kamaye
mama janmani janmanisvare bhavata bhaktir ahaituki tvayi*

"O my dear Lord, Jagadisha, supreme master of all the worlds, I pray unto You that I do not want any wealth, I do not want any number of followers, I do not want a very nice wife."

"Then what do you want?"

"My dear Lord, I may be put into any condition of life, but please bestow this benediction: that I may not forget You. That's all. Due to my forgetfulness I am suffering so much. So if I can remember You, I don't mind any condition."

Janmani janmani means "birth after birth." Lord Chaitanya does not even want liberation. Lord Krishna says, *mam upetya tu kaunteya punar janma na vidyate*: "One who reaches the kingdom of God hasn't got to come back again to take birth here." But Lord Chaitanya does not even aspire to reach the kingdom of God.

Lord Chaitanya gives us the proper understanding, confirming the teachings of Lord Krishna. In the sixth chapter of the *Bhagavad-gita*, while explaining the yoga system Lord Krishna says, *yam labdhva caparam labham manyate nadhikam tatah*: "One who achieves the perfection of yoga has no other desire to achieve."

We may achieve something in the material world, but that does not stop our desire to achieve something more. I may achieve millions of dollars, but that does not make me satisfied. I want more—ten million dollars. And when I get ten million dollars, then I desire a hundred million dollars. But one who possesses devotional service does not think anything in the world more valuable.

Krishna consciousness is not different from Krishna. Therefore a Krishna conscious person possesses Krishna, and what can be greater than Krishna? So a Krishna conscious person is fully satisfied. And Lord Krishna further says, *yasmin sthito na dukkhena gurunapi vicalyate*: "One situated in Krishna consciousness is not shaken despite the severest type of miseries."

A Krishna conscious person is steady in all circumstances. Prahlada Maharaja was a great devotee even as a five-year-old boy.

Prahlada's atheistic father told him, "Oh, you rascal boy. You are chanting God's name? Who is God? I am God. Why don't you chant my name? If you don't, then I shall throw you into the fire."

But Prahlada was steady. He said, "Father, I cannot stop chanting."

"You nonsense! You cannot? How dare you speak to me like this? Even the demigods are afraid of me."

"Oh, yes, father, I speak like this by the mercy of the same person who allows you to speak."



"Oh, I don't care for anyone's mercy ..."

Prahlada's father had so much wrath, but Prahlada was steady. That steadiness is one of the characteristics of a pure devotee of the Lord. Even in the greatest difficulty, even in the greatest danger, he is not shaken; he is steady. That is the perfection of yoga. And that steadiness can be achieved easily by Krishna consciousness.

So we should not aspire to improve our material condition or to attain liberation. To aspire in that way means we have material desires. Some people say that we must become desireless. But because I am a living entity, desire cannot be completely absent. So my desire should be not to forget Krishna. That's all—that one desire. That is real desire. And all other desires are foolish. We cannot be desireless, but we should have only bona fide desires.

I am part and parcel of the Supreme. So if I desire to work in cooperation with the Supreme, that is a natural desire. That is desirelessness. In the material condition, to desire to eat is natural. As long as you possess a body, you have to eat. No one will criticize you for your desire to eat.

So desirelessness means to desire the natural thing. To desire remembrance of Krishna is natural. Since I am part and parcel of Krishna, how can I forget Him? But somehow I have forgotten Him, and my forgetfulness is the cause of my many desires. And as soon as I desire Krishna, there will be no other desire. That is desirelessness.

As part and parcel of the whole, we get our highest pleasure by reciprocating with the whole. That reciprocation we should aspire after. We should not think that in Krishna consciousness we should desire some material profit.

In the next verse, Lord Chaitanya says:

*veda-sastre kahe sambandha, abhidheya, prayojana
Krishna, Krishna-bhakti, prema,— tina maha-dhana*

"In the Vedic literature, Krishna is the central point of attraction, and His service is our activity. To attain the platform of love of Krishna is life's ultimate goal. Therefore Krishna, Krishna's service, and love of Krishna are the three great riches of life."

Now we aspire to possess something material. But as this verse explains, we should aspire to possess Krishna, to reciprocate with Krishna, and ultimately to love Krishna. In the material world we see a reflection of love in the exchange between two lovers. They don't want anything besides each other. He wants her, and she wants him. But that relationship is only a perverted reflection of real love, which is reciprocated with Krishna.

In the material world there is no possibility of love. What is called love is lust. But we call it love because it is a reflection of love. Love of Krishna is real, and love in the material world is unreal. Lust is like the shadow, and love is the reality. There is a gulf of difference between the shadow and the reality.

A devotee is not anxious for liberation, because he is liberated in his intimate connection with Krishna. One cannot be in intimate touch with Krishna unless one is liberated. So liberation and intimate connection with Krishna are the same thing. Lord Krishna says:

*yesam tv anta-gatam papam jananam punya-karmanam
te dvandva-moha-nimukta bhajante mam drdha-vratah*

What is the translation?

Devotee *[reading]*: "But those men of virtuous deeds whose sin has come to an end, freed from the delusion of dualities, worship Me steadfastly avowed."

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. So to worship Krishna steadfastly means one is liberated from delusion. That is called *mukti*. One who still has some doubt—"Why shall I worship Krishna?"—is still in delusion, and the reactions of his sinful life are not finished. If one has a slight doubt, that means there is still a slight tinge of sinful reaction. One free from all sinful reactions has no more duality. Duality means thinking, "Shall I stick to the process of Krishna consciousness or not?" One free from sinful reactions has firm faith—"Yes! Krishna worship is the final goal."

One who worships Krishna is already liberated. For example, if a man is sitting on the bench of the high court, it is to be understood that he has passed all the educational requirements and is a good lawyer. There is no need to ask whether he has passed his M.A. or his law examination. Similarly, if one is strictly in Krishna consciousness, it is to be understood that he is liberated.

The definition of liberation is given in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*: *muktir hitvanyatha rupam svarupena vyavasthitih*. We each have different conceptions of life. I have one idea, you have another idea, and another person has another idea. *Mukti* means to be free from these different ideas and be situated in our constitutional position.

And what is our constitutional position? We are part and parcel of the Supreme, Krishna. Then what is our duty?

The duty of the part is to serve the whole. Your hand is part of your body, and its duty is to serve the body. Similarly, because you are part and parcel of the Supreme, your duty is to serve Him. You have no other duty. One who understands this point firmly and with conviction is liberated.

Now, someone may ask, "Oh, how can you say such a person is liberated? He goes to the office. He dresses like an ordinary man. What do you mean he is liberated?"

But does *mukṭi* mean that a person must dress differently or have four hands or eight legs? No. All that is required is a change of consciousness. Krishna consciousness means a change of consciousness. We now think, "I am this matter. I have got so many duties within the material world." In Krishna consciousness you change that thinking—"No, I belong to Krishna. I am part and parcel of Krishna; therefore my whole energy should be used for Krishna."

That kind of thinking is Krishna consciousness. Now I apply all my energy to the material conception of life. When I apply my energy—transcendental energy—to Krishna, I am liberated.

Therefore a pure devotee of Krishna does not hanker after *mukṭi*. Bilvamangala Thakura, a great devotee of Krishna, says, *mukṭih svayam mukultānjāliḥ sevate 'sman*: "Oh, the *mukṭi* lady stands with folded hands and asks, 'My dear sir, what can I do for you?' " And the devotee doesn't care. "Oh, what can you do for me? I don't want your help."

Bilvamangala Thakura lived for several years in Vrindavana, and he became a great devotee of Krishna. The story of his life is instructive.

In the beginning of his life Bilvamangala was an impersonalist. He was a South Indian *brahmana*, a very rich man, and very sensuous. He had an ongoing relationship with a prostitute. He was so devoted to the prostitute that even while attending his father's funeral he was asking the priest, "Please make haste. I have to go. I have to go."

After the ceremony Bilvamangala took very nice food in a bag and left for the prostitute's house. When he came out of his home, it was raining in torrents. But he didn't care about the rain. He had to cross a river, but there was no boat. Even though the waves were furious, he swam across the river.

The prostitute thought, "Oh, it is raining, so he may not come." So she blocked the door and went to sleep.

When Bilvamangala came to the house, he saw that the door was locked. It was still raining. To pull himself over the wall into her courtyard, he grabbed a snake. Just see how intensely he was attached to the prostitute.

When Bilvamangala went to the prostitute, she was astonished.

"Bilvamangala, how do you dare come here like this?"

So he described his journey. "Yes. I did this, I did this, I did this, I did this."

Chintamani, the prostitute, said, "My dear Bilvamangala, you have such intense love for me. If you had the same love for Krishna, how sublime your life would be!"

"Oh, yes. You are right." Her words struck him. He left at once.

He began to travel to Vrindavana, but he became attracted to a woman on the way, and he followed her. She belonged to a respectable family. When she arrived at home, she told her husband, "This man is following me. Please ask him what he wants."

The husband asked Bilvamangala, "My dear sir, you appear to be a very nice gentleman and to belong to a very aristocratic family. What do you want? Why you are following my wife?"

Bilvamangala said, "Because I want to embrace her."

"Oh, you want to embrace her? Come on. Embrace her. You are welcome."

The *brahmana* told his wife, "He is a guest. He wants to embrace you and kiss you. So please decorate yourself nicely so that he may enjoy."

The woman followed her husband's instructions.

When Bilvamangala came inside before the woman, he said, "My dear mother, will you kindly give me your hairpins?"

"Yes. Why?"

"I have got some business."

Then he took the hairpins and pierced his eyes—"Oh, these eyes are my enemy." He became blind. He thought,

"Now no more shall I be disturbed."

Then he went to Vrindavana, and he performed penance and austerities there. Krishna as a boy came to him.

"Oh, my dear sir, why are you starving? Why don't you take some milk?"

"Who are you, my dear boy?"

"I am a cowherd boy of this village. If you like, I can give you milk daily."

"All right."

So Krishna supplied him milk. There was friendship between them.

And Bilvamangala has written, "*Bhakti*'s such that *mukti*'s nothing for me." In other words, he thinks, "When Krishna comes to supply milk, oh, then what is the use of *mukti*?"

You see? That's a great soul—Bilvamangala Thakura. It is worth remembering his name. He has written a nice book, *Krishna-kamamrita*, a very authoritative book. Lord Chaitanya found the book in South India, and He recommended that all His devotees read it.

Thank you very much. 🌸

SRILA PRABHUPADA SPEAKS OUT

"We Must Have A Definite Process"

Here is an exchange between His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada and an official from an impersonalist ("God-is-simply-everyone-and-everything") movement. The exchange took place in Paris, on August 13, 1973, with Prabhupada's disciples translating the official's remarks from French.

Official: Personally, I do not like the idea of killing animals.

Srila Prabhupada: But what is the ideal of your order? That I am asking.

Official: Love between men. Understanding.

Srila Prabhupada: What have the animals done? There is no love or understanding shown to them.

Official: I love the animals. I have many animals living with me. I'm surrounded by animals. *[Laughter]*

Srila Prabhupada: That is nice. But a person who is habituated to kill animals—will he be admitted into your order?

Official: I don't think someone who kills animals would like to enter, but if a butcher wants to enter, that is all right, because gradually we will elevate him.

Srila Prabhupada: Then, in principle, the order does not allow animal killing?

Official: Ideally, our movement would not want to see animals killed, or anyone killed.

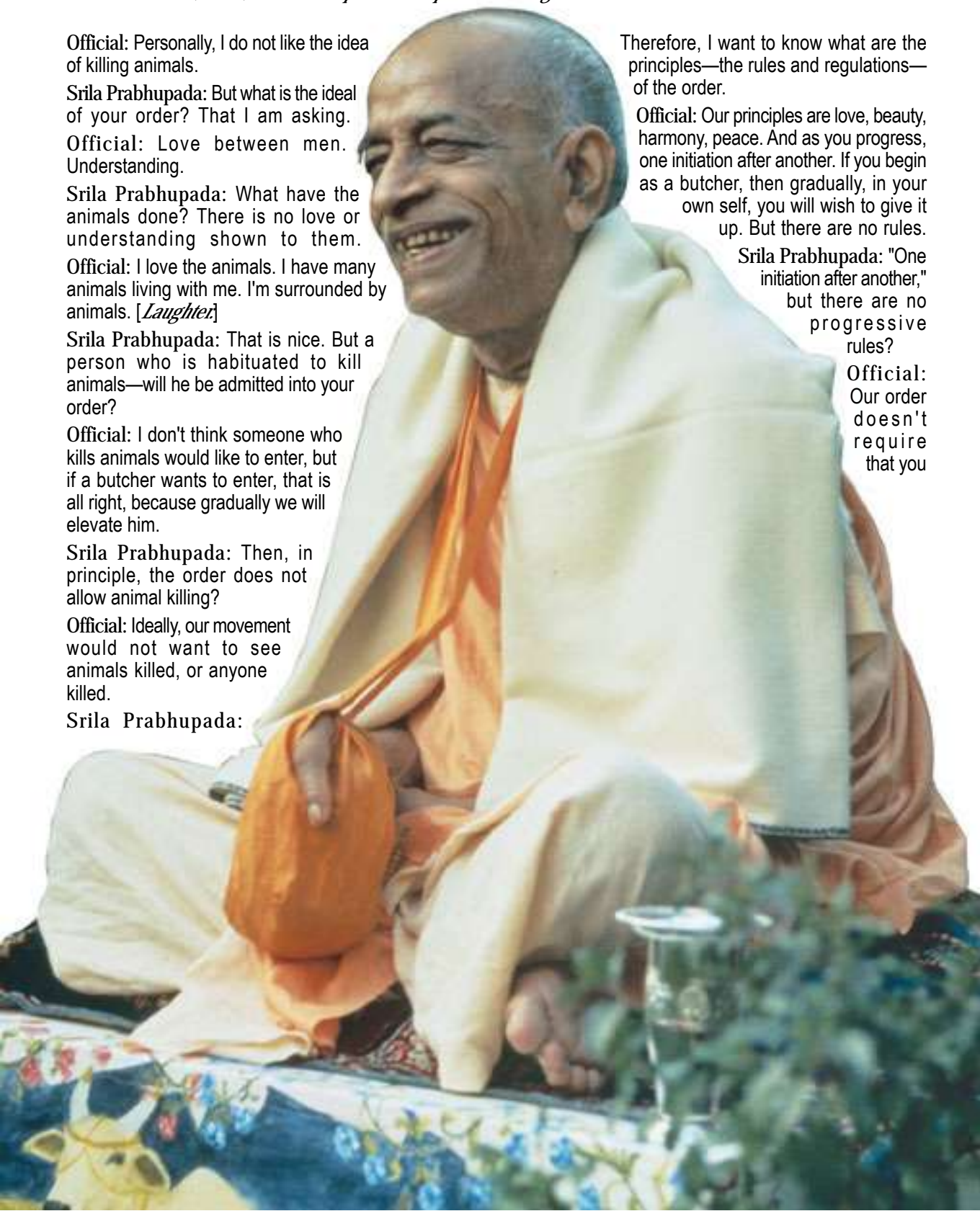
Srila Prabhupada:

Therefore, I want to know what are the principles—the rules and regulations—of the order.

Official: Our principles are love, beauty, harmony, peace. And as you progress, one initiation after another. If you begin as a butcher, then gradually, in your own self, you will wish to give it up. But there are no rules.

Srila Prabhupada: "One initiation after another," but there are no progressive rules?

Official: Our order doesn't require that you



give up meat-eating. Our order is intelligent. If we were to tell people, "Don't do this, don't do this, don't do that," nobody would join us. In any case, the real mystic is someone who has controlled his own body.

Srila Prabhupada: But you cannot explain how to control the body.

Official: It happens immediately, or it will happen in a while.

Srila Prabhupada: At least I cannot accept this. We could discuss further if you had some definite program. Say I want to enter your association. You must give me some prescription by which, if I follow, I'll make progress. But you have no such prescription.

Official: I shall submit to my grandmaster your request for a specific prescription to be given to you.

Srila Prabhupada: But, in principle, your order hasn't got any such prescription.

Official: We will make one special, just for you.

Srila Prabhupada: But not for the general mass of people.

Official: Correct. It is very good that you prescribe no meat-eating, no intoxicants, no premarital or extramarital sex, and so on. These are nice principles that you are following. And we are sure that you have come to these conclusions—on your own—just as perhaps one day we may also come to these conclusions—on our own.

Srila Prabhupada: So for the time being, your order has no such rules and regulations?

Official: Our order makes certain suggestions, but we do not oblige anyone to follow our suggestions.

Srila Prabhupada: What are those suggestions?

Official: Our movement suggests that people live a life as perhaps yours is—of purity, pure thoughts, moral living, and even following certain principles.

Srila Prabhupada: But these impure things are going on all over the world, and you don't say anything. Suppose a man is killing animals. You don't prohibit him. He is engaged in immoral life, and if you don't prohibit him, then how can he become moral? Do you think morality and the killing of animals go together?

Official: Our order likes very much the ideals of beauty and harmony and morality, but we cannot impose these things on anyone.

Srila Prabhupada: But, for instance, the Bible imposes the rule or regulation "You shall not kill." Yet you have no such thing.

Official: Realization is what counts.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, but what that realization is you cannot explain. If you cannot explain, then what is your realization?

Official: Had I not realized something, I would not be here now.

Srila Prabhupada: Then first let us see whether you can describe who you are.

Official: When Moses saw the burning bush and asked the fire, "Who are you?" the fire said, "I am what I am." Who am I? That is a question you are going to have to answer by your own meditations.

Srila Prabhupada: But what is your meditation? What have you learned?

Official: The thing to realize is peace. When you join our order, you receive a letter, and at the bottom of the letter, it says, "With our best wishes for your peace and happiness."

Srila Prabhupada: That's all right. Everyone wants that. But what is the process?

Official: Praying, courage, faith. A serious movement, a serious order, would never guarantee instantaneous illumination.

Srila Prabhupada: No, that we also say. But we must have a definite process. For instance, in answer to the question "Who are you?"—because at least one must know who he is—you gave the vague reply "I am what I am." If you ask me, "Who are you, sir?" and I say, "I am what I am," is that the proper answer? [*Laughter*] That is a nonsense answer.

Official: I could tell you my name, but the interior, the reality, is different. Now, if we all join together in silence and we enter into ourselves and create *one person*, then we will know who we are—from that silence.

Srila Prabhupada: But how it is possible to remain silent?

Disciple [*in jest*]. *Bahunam janmanam ante:* "After many, many births and deaths."

Srila Prabhupada [*laughing*]. That's all right. That's all right. ☺

Fasting		Festivals	
Jan 21	Ekadashi	Jan 10	Ratha Yatra in Bangalore
Jan 22	break fast	Jan 24	Ratha Yatra in Mangalore
Feb 6	Ekadashi	Jan 31	Ratha Yatra in Bellary
	Fasting till noon for Varaha Dev's and Nityananda Prabhu's appearance	Feb 2	Sri Advaita Acharya—Appearance Fasting till noon
		Feb 6	Sri Varaha Deva—Appearance Fasting till noon
		Feb 7	Sri Nityananda Prabhu—Appearance

[In Part II, Professor Sannyal described the gathering of great learned Pandits to hear the teachings of Sri Thakur Haridas, at which time Gopal Chakravarti arose in offense against the Saint. Consequently, Gopal was stricken by leprosy—the circumstances of which will be described in Part III.]

The world is gratuitously assumed by a pseudo-rationalism to be the only reality and the attempt is therefore made to ascertain the methods by following which we can attain the gratification of the senses, which function appears to be the relationship naturally subsisting between ourselves and the world. The senses are assumed to be an integral and undetachable part of ourselves. The mind is identified with the senses on the one hand and with the soul on the other. The senses connect the mind, or the soul, by this assumption, with the external world. The senses are the eyes of the whole system. All pain and pleasure suffered by the mind are due to the way in which the mind directs the senses in their relations with the world. The mind cannot apparently know by intuition, at any rate ordinarily, all the consequences of any particular mode of employment of the senses. The mind can, indeed, try to guess about them. But it can never be quite sure about any occurrence till after actual experience. This uncertainty is supposed to be reducible to certainty if it could be possible to know from experience the uniform "laws" that are assumed to govern all phenomenal occurrences under all circumstances. This hypothesis of the uniform operation of the "laws" of Nature has been built up by the accumulated "experiences" of the race. But as the occurrences themselves present an infinity of complications it has not been possible to attain to anything like certainty in isolating the single threads of the web in order to be certain to reproduce all the occurrences of Nature in the Laboratory.

Assuming that the above object of scientific endeavour will be realisable in practice in the long run, its success should make it possible for us to prolong the possibility and scope of sensuous enjoyment ad infinitum. If we fail to be perfectly "happy" by the complete elimination of "pain" by the proper employment of the "forces" of Nature in the way that is calculated to produce such a result under the then-known "laws of Nature," our labours should still have really no abiding value for ourselves. But has our "experience" up to the present moment taken us an inch towards the realization of unmixed or lasting pleasure? Is "pleasure" really different from "pain"? Or is it only different by circumstance? That which is food for the goose is food for the gander, is not found to be more true than most hypotheses. Variation, which is sought to be eliminated, is found on close inspection and analysis to be itself the indispensable condition of the pleasures. We are, therefore, left inevitably to the present condition of necessary and complete ignorance in order to have any "pleasure" at all by our dealings with the world by means of our senses.

It is argued that pleasure and pain might themselves by

Thakur Haridas

Part III

From the book "Sree Krishna-Chaitanya"

by Professor Sannyal

enriched, deepened and broadened by more experience and that it is worth our while to help this process in a conscious manner. To this the answer would be that the better and more detailed realization of our utter ignorance, in the midst of the mockery of a civilization that is claimed to be based upon knowledge, would be a self-contradiction that is not likely to appeal to the assorting instinct of our rational nature and is calculated to make our condition no better than it is. Civilized wickedness and filth are not preferable to any nuisance of the uncivilized state. Satan, who may be allowed to possess the perfection of worldly culture, is probably more miserable than the uncivilized Gond. It would be difficult for the unbiased reason of man to choose between materialistic savagery and materialistic civilization.

"Ignorance is misery," says one of the wisest of proverbs. Increase of ignorance is not any decrease of misery. Ignorance is supposed to be the state of all empiric knowledge which is improperly assumed to be alone available to man. Our very nature is sometimes supposed to be incapable of real enlightenment. This axiom of pessimism is exploited for advising man to turn a deaf ear to the Teacher of the Absolute. It is even more disastrously utilized for condemning the devotees themselves.

It cannot be otherwise. The soul is in this case identified with the mind-cum-body. Abandonment of the mind, therefore, appears as equivalent to the abandonment of the soul, or to self-immolation. The mind seems to be our all. Groping in perpetual ignorance appears as our inevitable function, miscalled "Search for the Truth." Empiric enthusiasts imaginatively describe this process as the "eternal quest." These metaphors and denunciations do not, however, help us in any way; but, on the contrary, they only tend to obstruct the process of the real quest.

Gopal Chakravarti is a typical *brahmana* of the pseudo-Vedantic School of Shankara. He has no doubts regarding the goal of the Vedanta. According to him the attainment of the Knowledge of the Brahman, Who possesses no distinctive function at all that is capable of being defined, is the goal. By the attainment of the knowledge of the real Nature of the Brahman, the individual soul is freed from all the miseries of his apparent existence which only seems to be limited and is, therefore, only supposed to be miserable. As there is only One Entity, the Brahman, Who is ever free from all defects and all merits, the goal can be no other than complete absorption into the One.

On the attainment of this desirable goal there is no difference between the devotee, devotion and the Object of devotion. The service of the Brahman is thus only a temporary means to a final end, which means being different from the end and is, therefore, necessarily terminable with the attainment of the goal. It is the highest form of religion to try to realize, by the appropriate methods, the knowledge of, and absorption into, the undifferentiated Brahman. When the individual soul becomes one with the Brahman the state of separate existence and necessity for any kind of distinguishable function terminate together. According to Gopal Chakravarti and his associates this knowledge of the Brahman is higher than service and the termination of both knowledge and service is the highest goal. Gopal is quite sure that this is the only teaching of the Scriptures. It may be observed at this place that Shankara does not discard the principle of worship, but declares its tentative necessity which is terminable on self-realization which, according to him, is identical with complete absorption into the One.

Thakur Haridas distinguishes between devotion, work and knowledge. The soul in the bound state desires one of two alternative functions: If he is optimistic he wants greater scope for enjoyment. If he happens to be pessimistic, he hankers for emancipation from the misery of mundane existence.

The latter, the pessimist, sometimes thinks that real emancipation is impossible so long as the consciousness of one's being different or separate from the One persists. It is to this extreme school of atheistic Vedantists, advocating unification with the Brahman, that Gopal Chakravarti, like most cultured people of his day as well as of this, happened to belong by his empiric predisposition. According to this school fruitive work leads to empiric knowledge and the latter to the third position of inexpressible oneness with the Brahman. Devotion or service is classed under fruitive work, which is assigned a lower position than empiric knowledge. The process of advance to the goal of complete unification with the One, according to this school, is devotion (blind faith rendering possible utilitarian work of a low order) (Bhakti) leading to work of a higher order (Karma), which, in its turn, leads up to empiric knowledge of the uselessness of all knowledge and all activity terminating in perfect absorption into the One.

Haridas is neither a pessimist nor an optimist. He is an absolutist. He is convinced that the theory of complete

absorption into the One is logically unsound and opposed to the real teaching of the Scriptures. The alternatives of enjoyment and abstention from enjoyment exhaust, indeed, the possibilities of function of the mind and body; but they have no application to the soul who is located beyond the reach of body and mind. The soul is substantially different from the mind and body. The soul is the substantive reality while the mind is only his perverted reflection in the mirror of limited existence. The mind is the material shadow, so to say, of the soul who is the spiritual substance. The mind is a material phenomenon galvanised into the appearance of self-consciousness by the impulse communicated to it by the deluded soul. Mind is the shadow of the perverse soul mirrored in matter. This description is, and can be, but an imperfect and misleading analogy of the relationship that actually subsists between mind and soul. The shadow of the material substance is not categorically different from the substance itself, both of them being material phenomena. The shadow of the soul in this case is, however, categorically different from the soul, being a material phenomenon pure and simple. The soul in his spiritual or natural condition is categorically different from material phenomena. The soul is self-conscious itself. There can be no such thing as ignorance in the soul. There can be no such thing as genuine self-consciousness in the mind which is non-soul. The apparent self-consciousness of the mind is really a state of complete ignorance which is given its shape and color by the qualities of matter: grossness, limitation, perishability, changeableness, etc. These unwholesome traits are non-existent and impossible in the soul.

The soul is capable of forgetting his real nature, mistaking himself to be a material entity. The soul is not above one possible weakness, willful rebellion against the Truth. It is a real blunder on the part of the soul to choose to be a rebel. But the soul is perfectly free to refuse to serve the Truth, i.e., Godhead. He thereby proves deliberately false to his own substantive nature, because it is the constituent function of the soul, in his natural state of perfect spiritual existence, to be the exclusive servant of the Truth. The soul who rebels against Godhead is punished by his exile to the phenomenal world and by incarceration in the double material case of mind and body. This point will be further elucidated later.

Fruitive work and empiric knowledge are functions of the mind and, therefore, purely material phenomena. By means of such work and knowledge the deluded soul cannot realize his natural function for the plain reason that they are not his proper function at all. By means of work and knowledge the soul only moves in a vicious circle of material existence which is seemingly conscious but is really one of absolute ignorance. This is the explanation why, by means of the undifferentiated knowledge of the Brahman, freedom from the fetters of work and knowledge of this anomalous existence can be attained by crores of years of endeavour. This is what Gopal says. The delay is, however, not due to the

complexity of the process, as he supposes it to be. So long as a person continues to suppose that an impersonal all-pervasive Entity is the goal of knowledge one is not yet freed from the real ignorance of his spiritual function. This must be so, because Truth is not impersonal.

Neither is Truth a person in the sense in which the mentalists, including Shankara, apparently want us to understand the term. Spiritual personality is categorically different from the distorted empiric notion of the same. Until the nature of the Personality of the Truth is properly grasped, one continues in the deluded state which is also the state of limitation (bondage). Therefore Gopal Chakravarti is right, although he is unaware of it, in holding that the chance of emancipation of a person who has attained to the notion of Godhead as an impersonal and inactive, although all-pervasive and transcendental, Entity, is very slight. Gopal does not understand that his ideal person is also necessarily no less deluded than himself if he supposes his condition to be the goal.

The interpretation of the text relied upon by Gopal Chakravarti, said Thakur Haridas, is that of a person who does not understand the Nature of the Name by reason of his having no access to Him. The deluded person is no longer consciously contradicting himself and is not, therefore, insincere in the sense of being double-tongued. He is certainly to be pitied. Neither can his conduct be regarded as sincere inasmuch as it is opposed to his real nature of which he only happens to be ignorant by his own conscious perversity. The empiric casuist who affects to believe in the impersonal nature of the Truth is only pushing his conscious perversity of the choice of untruth to its logical conclusion. If the deliberate error is not ignored his conduct cannot be regarded as consistent, being altogether untrue.

Gopal Chakravarti's source of error lay deeper than the plane on which he stood and was, therefore, naturally incomprehensible to him in his condition of cultured perversity. The Vaishnavas, who alone understand the real cause of the worldly ailment, alone possess the true spirit of toleration. Thakur Haridas showed his toleration of the rank atheism of deluded Gopal Chakravarti by abstaining from disturbing him further. This toleration really means the withdrawal of his causeless, apparently aggressive, mercy from a deluded soul whose opposition to Godhead is likely to be increased by the process. It is the greatest possible misfortune that can befall a conditioned soul to miss the special mercy of the Vaishnava by his successful opposition to the Truth. The apparent intolerance of a Vaishnava is as helpful to a person as his tolerance of evil. The Vaishnava never cooperates with the offending soul in his sinful activities. He does not agree to be false to himself and his eternal Master to please the confirmed apostate. Such sympathetic toleration of evil is a grave offence against the Truth notwithstanding the significant fact that it alone is relished by the pantheistic school of

the pseudo-Vedantists.

The point reached marks almost the limit of rational discussion toward the spiritual issue which is open to the empiricist. He cannot proceed further without discarding the method of empiricism by giving up completely the process of his unaided effort. It was not possible for Gopal Chakravarti to retrace his steps by any other method. That he was not at all prepared for this is proved by his offensive conduct towards Thakur Haridas who had, therefore, no other alternative but to leave him to the mercies of Maya. But the actual good will of Haridas towards the offender bore its fruit in the swift punishment, that could be intelligible to the sufferer himself, that smote him in the form of leprosy. Gopal was, thereby, afforded an excellent opportunity of revising his impersonal doctrine. But he was of course free to avail of it or not.

The Godless attitude is an attitude of absolute confidence in one's own judgment and power. The atheist is not at all disposed to submit to another in any circumstances. He has to be compelled to submit to non-God because he can consistently submit only to compelling force. Such submission alone is appreciated in the state of sin and ignorance which is a radically false position and necessarily entails constant irrational conduct on a really rational being unnaturally disposed to accept the same through the no less unnatural fear of punishment.

The Holy Name of Godhead is not a thing of this world. The Name of Godhead is identical with Godhead Himself. The Godhead appears in this world in the Form of the Name on the lips of His pure devotees. He appears as the transcendental Sound on the spiritual lips of the soul in the state of grace.

The Name of Godhead appearing on the lips of a pure devotee as the Transcendental Sound, is perceptible as such only to the spiritual ear. These statements are likely to appear absurd and puerile to the dogmatic impersonalist. Can the soul, he will persist to ask, have lips and ears? Can the soul have senses? But—can the empiricist know, even if he have?

The transcendentalists maintain that the soul has an infinity of senses of which the physical senses are a perverted reflection. There cannot even be the shadow of existence of the physical senses if there were no substantive spiritual senses. But there are also the spiritual senses themselves as distinct from but not unrelated to their corresponding shadowy reflections in this phenomenal world. This is involved in the very definition of the Absolute. The spiritual sense is categorically different from the physical sense. The spiritual senses are perfect and self-conscious, there being no interval or barrier of time or space between the sense and its possessor. The spiritual body is indivisible and perfectly self-conscious in every part and is identical with the owner of the body. All this is incomprehensible to us although it is perfectly consistent

with the fundamental principles of indivisible substantive existence, that are also acceptable to the empiricist. The empiricist, although he may sometimes, under pressure of his own logic, seem to agree with the conclusions of transcendentalism, finds it impossible to adopt them in practice. The absolute conduct is not possible on the mundane plane to which he finds himself strictly confined by his own postulates backed by the real Deluding Potency.

If one is merely disposed to regard any sound as transcendental, such wish alone will not make the sound of his choice to become really transcendental. Similarly, if a person is disposed to regard a transcendental Sound as an occurrence of the mundane atmosphere such attitude will not also affect the subjective nature of the transcendental Sound. There is real difference between the transcendental Sound and mundane sound. The transcendental Sound is identical with the object denoted by the sound. The mundane sound is separated from the object denoted by it by the intervals of time and space. To hear the mundane sound of the name of a Lion is not the same thing as to see the beast. On the spiritual plane the very word 'Lion' is identical with the animal. The animal is fully realisable by and in the hearing of his name. Whereas the real nature of the mundane animal, denoted by the mundane sound, ever remains a thing unknown.

The Name of Krishna is identical with Godhead. But the Name of Krishna does not manifest Himself on mundane lips nor to the mundane ear. The Name Krishna appears in His Form of the Transcendental Sound on the spiritual lips of His devotees and is heard by the spiritual ear of the submissive soul by the Grace of Krishna. The Name Krishna is identical with the Possessor of the Name. The Name Krishna appears to the listening ear, as He is, only by degrees. As soon as the dormant soul catches the first faint reflection of His Light he is at once completely free from the bondage of ignorance and sin. It is the Name Who comes of His Own accord to our fettered soul. The bound jiva, or living entity, has no access to the Presence of Krishna on his own initiative. Krishna's Approach is heralded by the harbinger of Light whose first glimmerings on their appearance put an end to all misconception regarding the categorical difference between light and darkness.

Unless and until the soul becomes aware of the true nature of spiritual existence by being so enlightened by the Source of all consciousness, he is sure to mistake the mind for his real self and the mental function as the only knowledge. If at this stage he does not wilfully shut his eyes but keeps them turned towards the growing Light he gradually and in due course obtains the sight of the concrete Source of all light. This is the mode of Appearance of the Holy Name. The sight of Krishna is alone capable of inspiring love for Krishna. This the position of Thakur Haridas as explained by himself to the Pandits who were in assembly at the house of the

Mazumdar.

Thakur Haridas mercifully explains that the different concrete forms of the so-called 'liberation' concocted by the mentalists as their unknowable summum-bonum are the outcome of the desire for sensuous gratification. If one could live in the happy realms of Krishna described in the Scriptures, the empiricist supposes that such a person should be enabled to enjoy more good things than are available on the Earth if his condition is really worth having. The same desire for extended opportunities of sensuous enjoyment happens also to be the real motive behind the formulation of the other 'forms' of the empiricist's 'saved' existence. The grossness of the ideal of liberation is fully unmasked when one is told that the salvationist's "final" form is to become the equal of Godhead by merging with the Object of his worship!

It is to this unnatural and profane position that the unchecked speculations of the mentalists are logically bound to lead in the long run. Thakur Haridas ascribes the grossness of the ideal to the attitude of the empiricist, the insatiable desire for sensuous pleasure.

The desire to enjoy is categorically different from, and wholly incompatible with, the desire to serve, to love. If one feels a real desire to serve Krishna he would lose all taste for his own enjoyment. All impurity, unwholesomeness and misery are fortunately and mercifully ordained by the Lord as the inevitable consequence of the insatiable desire for selfish enjoyment. But the soul who turns away from immediate enjoyment by considerations of greater prospective enjoyment in the sequel, cannot also for that very reason realize the condition of loving devotion to the Feet of the Lord, however strongly impressed he may profess to be of the desirability of such a state. He is, no doubt, free to think that he really desires it; but at the same time he is wholly incapable of ever attaining to it by such desire. But, says Thakur Haridas, he may nevertheless attain to love for Krishna by the Chanting of the Holy Name, by the Grace of the Holy Name Himself. This is the special Dispensation for the Age which is so irremediably speculative; and there is no other way open to this Age for attaining to the loving service of Krishna.

Haridas refers to the texts of the Scriptures to prove the truth of his statements. This is the only proper use of the Shastras. The Shastras bear witness to the Truth of the realizations of all really pure souls.

There is one other fact which is worthy of our notice. The Pandits of the learned assembly, headed by Hiranya Mazumdar, the master of the house, took the side of Thakur Haridas. They not only strongly censured the conduct of Gopal Chakravarti in the open assembly but Hiranya Mazumdar thought it his duty to renounce all further connection with a *brahmana* who could be guilty of an act of discourtesy to the devotee of Godhead. Nevertheless the Pandits and Mazumdar himself felt themselves involved in the sin of Gopal Chakravarti by

the unhappy circumstance of their having had to hear most reluctantly the blasphemous words uttered by Gopal in their presence. For this sin the only expiation, prescribed by the Shastras, was to seek in all humility the pardon of Thakur Haridas, not for the offender, but for themselves. This is not mere courtesy, but an unavoidable necessity if one really wants to serve the Truth. Any association, deliberate or accidental, with untruth tends to obscure our vision of the Truth, Who is, indeed, a very Jealous Master. Those who are disposed to serve the Truth with causeless, loving devotion, throw to the winds all considerations of ignorant propriety or ignorant justice and are never satisfied by serving the Truth by all their senses at all times and in all circumstances. By the grace of Thakur Haridas this instinct of loving devotion actually manifested itself in the conduct of those who had listened with faith to the Absolute Truth from his pure lips.

Sri Raghunathdas Goswami was a child at this time. He used to visit the Thakur in his hut during his stay at Chandpur. The boy was the fortunate recipient of the mercy of Thakur Haridas. This is considered by Sri Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami as the real cause of Raghunath Das's subsequent unique devotion to the Feet of Sri Chaitanya. The mercy of a *sadhu* acts equally on all persons, irrespective of age, sex or condition—all of whom have an equal chance of being benefited by associating with a real *sadhu*. The interests of the soul are not capable of being adversely affected by any worldly conditions. The boy's soul has no defect of immaturity any more than that of an old man the advantage of maturity. Such maturity or immaturity has no relevancy in one's associating with a *sadhu*. The boy's soul, equally with the soul of the old man, may or may not be disposed to listen to the words of a *sadhu* for the genuine purpose of acting up to the same. It is as necessary for a child to associate with a *sadhu* as for an adult; but in neither case can one be sure of obtaining the mercy of the *sadhu* with whom he may choose to associate. The *sadhu* is kind to one who is really inclined to serve Godhead. It is the function of a *sadhu* to foster one's inclination for the service of the Lord by means of his conduct and words. The articulated sound is, however, the *sadhu's* unambiguous weapon to fight all un-Godliness. It should puzzle the muddled brain of the whole race of self-conceited empiricists to understand why and how the *sadhu* need have no other work except talking about almost anything to whom he likes. Any person who is spoken to by a *sadhu*, even for the tiny space of a second, has every chance of attaining the real object of life which is unattainable by infinite endeavour by any other method. Nay, it is our duty to listen to a real *sadhu*, if we are fortunate enough to meet him, in preference to all other duties, which are not only of secondary importance, but are a positive obstruction on the path of the highest and only good. End—Part III 🌸

Srila Prabhupada On Science

With the support of Vedic knowledge, Srila Prabhupada challenged society's blind allegiance to modern science.

By Drutakarma Dasa in 1986

On a warm, sunny, dry December morning, my taxi driver turned from the raucous, acrid main roads of New Delhi into the calm, spacious, tree-lined avenues of Chanakya Puri, the capital city's international quarter. As we entered the garden-bordered driveway to the stately Taj Palace hotel, I pinned my conference badge on the lapel of my dark blue suit jacket. A uniformed and turbaned hotel employee with a great moustache opened the door. I stepped out and paid my fare in rupees to the driver. I was in New Delhi for the World Archeological Congress.



The conference room was decorated in muted royal style, reminiscent of a bygone era of Moghul opulence. Dimmed chandeliers cast a golden glow. I sat among the archeologists, waiting my turn to speak. After a brief introduction by the section chairman, and a respectful smattering of applause, I stepped to the podium. My opening humor drew some chuckles. Then, identifying myself as a member of the Bhaktivedanta Institute, the science studies branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, I began to read my paper "Puranic Time and the Archeological Record."

I looked into the eyes of the assembled scientists, and for the next twenty minutes argued politely but forcefully against the Darwinian view that humans evolved fairly recently from apes. The actual evidence, I said, favored the Puranic idea that humans have been present on this planet since the beginning of creation. In other words, human history extends throughout vast cycles of cosmic time, each lasting hundreds of millions of years. As I was speaking, I remembered my spiritual master, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, who decades earlier in this same city had

begun the work I was now helping him carry out.

Prabhupada's First Book

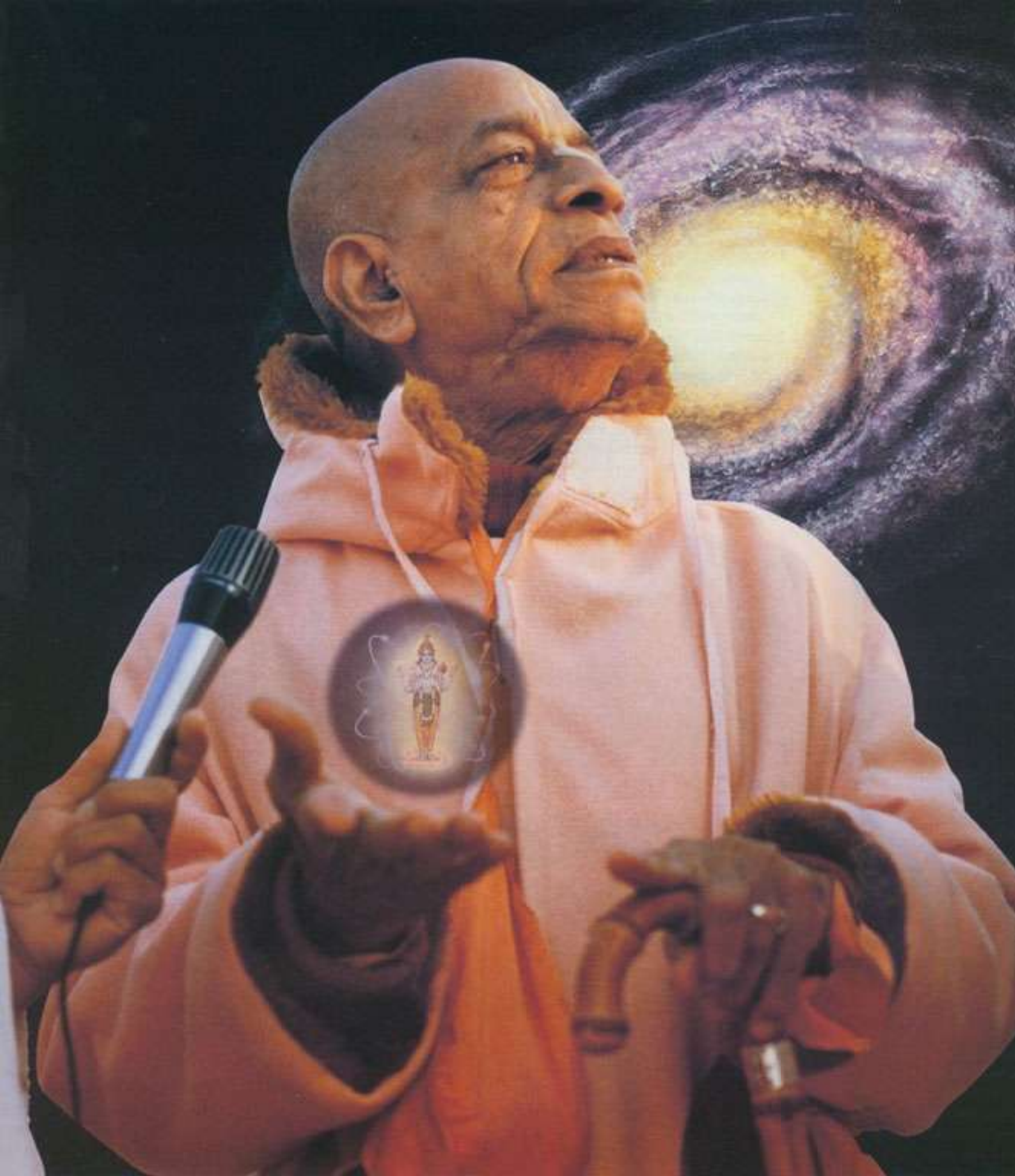
In 1959, Srila Prabhupada was living in a small room above a Krishna temple in the old, crowded Chhipiwada district of Delhi. At that time he wrote a slender book called *Easy Journey to Other Planets*. Srila Prabhupada would later publish dozens of volumes of writings, including his monumental translation of the *Bhagavata Purana*, or *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, but *Easy Journey to Other Planets* was his first book. And, significantly,

he placed these words on the first page: "Dedicated to the scientists of the world, with the blessings of His Divine Grace Sri Srimad Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Goswami Maharaja, my spiritual master."

Although he dedicated his book to the scientists of the world, Srila Prabhupada did not shrink from challenging some of their most cherished conclusions about life and the universe.

For example, he wrote, "Krishna says in the *Bhagavad-gita* that hundreds of thousands of years ago the *Gita* was spoken to the presiding deity of the sun, who delivered the knowledge to his son Manu, from whom the present generation of man has descended. Manu, in his turn, delivered this transcendental knowledge to his son King Ikshvaku, who is the forefather of the dynasty in which the Personality of Godhead appeared."

The idea that humans on this earth are part of a larger community of humanlike beings populating the universe certainly contradicts the idea that we humans evolved on this planet by random evolutionary processes. So also does the idea that humans of an advanced level



of civilization, such as King Ikshvaku, lived on this planet hundreds of thousands of years ago.

Srila Prabhupada realized that the accounts of life and the universe found in the ancient Vedic texts were in fundamental conflict with the accounts of modern science. His courage in directly addressing this conflict, his refusal to quietly avoid it, represents one of Srila Prabhupada's great contributions. This contribution is especially worthy of remembrance during this year, the one hundredth anniversary of Srila Prabhupada's birth.

No Postdated Checks

Srila Prabhupada was prepared to give scientists credit for anything they could actually accomplish. But he would not give them credit for assertions they could not practically demonstrate. For example, scientists are fond of asserting that life arose on earth by chemical combination. In response to such claims, Srila Prabhupada argued that no one has observed life arising spontaneously from chemical combination in nature. Nor have scientists produced life by combining chemicals in their laboratories. Faced with protests that great progress has been made and that life would indeed soon be produced in laboratories, Srila Prabhupada refused to accept from materialistic scientists these "postdated checks."

Turning from the origin of life to the origin of species, Srila Prabhupada rejected Darwin's proposal that one species transforms into another. There is evolution, he said, but it is the evolution of the soul through various forms of life, all created by Krishna. In any city, he reasoned, there are varieties of houses and apartments. According to one's means, one obtains a certain dwelling. Similarly, God has created millions of species, and according to a soul's karma the soul occupies first one kind of body, then another. The kinds of bodies, once manifested by the arrangement of the Lord, do not transform. If one species does transform into another, Srila Prabhupada asked, why do we not see this occurring today?

In *Easy Journey to Other Planets*, Prabhupada examined the concept of antimatter. According to nuclear scientists, both matter and antimatter are destructible. But if something were truly antimaterial, said Srila Prabhupada, it should not be subject to destruction, as are the antimaterial particles observed by scientists in their atom smashers. Truly antimaterial entities are described in the *Vedas*, he went on to say. The soul, for example, is an ever existing particle of consciousness, emanating from the supreme conscious being, Krishna.

The Shortcomings of Science

According to materialistic science, the soul is a mythological concept. Consciousness is simply the result of chemical interactions in the brain. Srila Prabhupada often challenged this idea. The soul, he proposed, is the source of consciousness. If the soul is present in the body, the body displays consciousness. If the soul leaves the body, consciousness disappears. If, as the materialistic scientists claim, consciousness comes from chemicals, they should demonstrate this by injecting chemicals into a dead body and thus restoring its consciousness.

In discussing the origin of the universe, most materialistic scientists favor some version of the "big bang" theory. According to this theory, an infinitely small and dense particle of matter suddenly expanded into the universe as we know it. Srila Prabhupada questioned how such a process could produce all the signs of order and design we can observe in the universe. He upheld the Vedic account of creation, in which creation unfolds under the supervision of the Supreme Lord and subordinate demigods like Brahma.

The Vedic universe, quite apart from its origin, differs structurally from the universe depicted by modern science. Many of the structural features of the



Vedic universe, such as Mt. Meru, a huge mountain rising from a plane in the center of the universe, simply aren't visible to modern scientific investigators. But Srila Prabhupada suggested that there may be much that is beyond the range of the senses of ordinary humans. To illustrate this point, Prabhupada often repeated the story of the frog in the well. Because the frog was confined to the well, the frog's perceptions were limited. When told of the existence of the ocean, the frog, who had seen only the small amount of water in his well, could not imagine such a thing.

So beyond pointing out the shortcomings of specific scientific theories about the origin of life and the universe, Srila Prabhupada also offered an epistemological critique of the entire scientific method. The scientific method is empirical. Citing Vedic sources, Srila Prabhupada observed that knowledge acquired by empirical methods is infected with four defects: mistakes, cheating, illusion, and imperfect senses.

The best way to acquire knowledge, Srila Prabhupada said, is to accept knowledge from a person beyond the defects of the empirical method. That person is the Supreme Lord, who has given us perfect knowledge in His words, as recorded in the *Vedas* and transmitted by chains of bona fide spiritual masters.

In *Easy Journey to Other Planets*, Srila Prabhupada repeats the essence of such true knowledge, given by the Lord Himself: "Lord Krishna instructs that all the planets within the material universe are destroyed at the end of 4,300,000 ´ 1,000 ´ 2 ´ 30 ´ 12 ´ 100 solar years ... The living entity, however, is constitutionally an antimaterial particle. But unless he elevates himself to the region of the antimaterial worlds by cultivation of

antimaterial activities, he is destroyed materially at the annihilation of the material worlds and is subject to take rebirth in a material shape with the rebirth of a new material universe. In other words, he is subject to the pains of repeated births and deaths.

"Only those living entities who take to the loving service of the Personality of Godhead during the manifested stage of material life are undoubtedly transferred to the antimaterial worlds after quitting the material body. Immortality is obtained only by those who return to Godhead by practice of antimaterial activities."

Ultimately, Prabhupada opposed the conclusions of materialistic scientists because those conclusions discourage people from taking up antimaterial activities that can deliver one from the cycle of birth and death. Misguided by scientific teachings that deny or downplay the existence of God and the soul, people engage in material activities that keep one in ignorance of one's true spiritual identity and keep one from returning to one's original spiritual home.

Recruiting Help

In 1960, when Srila Prabhupada published *Easy Journey to Other Planets*, he was alone. He would not remain so for long. In 1965 he journeyed to the United States, arriving in New York, and founded the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. He trained his followers in the basic teachings and practices of devotion to Krishna. By the 1970s his movement had grown considerably, and its activities had become more varied.

In 1971, Srila Prabhupada began to converse on scientific topics with Thoudam Damodar Singh, a graduate student in biochemistry who had become attracted to Prabhupada's teachings. The young scientist later became a disciple of Srila Prabhupada, and received the name Svarupa Damodara Dasa. In conversations with Svarupa Damodara and others, Srila Prabhupada outlined his critique of modern science and asked his scientifically trained followers to develop it in detail. Svarupa Damodara (now Bhaktisvarupa Damodara Swami) responded positively, and in 1975 he and other disciples founded the Bhaktivedanta Institute. Srila Prabhupada wanted the Institute members to challenge erroneous scientific teachings and intelligently present the correct Vedic ones.

Srila Prabhupada's vision for giving spiritual knowledge through science was variegated. He wanted members of the Bhaktivedanta Institute to lecture boldly at colleges and universities, stage debates, organize conferences, set up educational institutions, publish books and journals, build museums and planetariums. In his personal exchanges with scientists, sometimes he boldly challenged, sometimes he manifested tolerance and kindness. As it has not been possible for any single follower of Srila Prabhupada to encompass all of his

moods and strategies, different followers have concentrated on different aspects of his vision. But they are all acting for one purpose—to carry on Srila Prabhupada's work of establishing the truth about reality for the welfare of the entire world.

In the Nineteenth century, India's British rulers offered Western education to Indian intellectuals. The goal was to create a cadre of English-speaking and English-thinking Indians to assist them in the British program of military, political, economic, religious, and cultural domination. This educational program successfully induced many Indian intellectuals to abandon their traditional culture and wisdom for Western modes of science and theology.

The program even made its mark on Gaudiya Vaishnavism, the line of Krishna devotees that traces back to Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. But in the middle of the nineteenth century, Kedarnatha Dutta (1838-1914), an English-speaking magistrate in the colonial administration, became interested in Gaudiya Vaishnavism. After his initiation by a Gaudiya Vaishnava guru, he inaugurated a revival of Gaudiya Vaishnavism among the intelligent classes, in Bengal and throughout India.

The central goal of Gaudiya Vaishnavism is cultivation of *bhakti*, or devotion, to Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The *bhakti* school also incorporates a strong philosophical tradition, grounded in a literal, yet by no means naive, reading of the Vedic and Puranic texts, including their accounts of history and cosmogony. Kedarnatha Dutta, later known by the title Bhaktivinoda Thakura, communicated Gaudiya Vaishnava teachings not only to his Indian contemporaries but also to the worldwide community of intellectuals. He reached the latter by publishing several works in English, among them *Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu: His Life and Precepts*, which appeared in 1896.

In the early twentieth century, Bhaktivinoda Thakura's son Bimala Prasada Dutta, later known as Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura (1874-1936), carried on the work of his father, expanding Gaudiya Vaishnavism in India and sending a few disciples to England and Germany. The European expeditions did not, however, yield any permanent results, and the missionaries returned home.

In 1922, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, then known as Abhay Charan De, met Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura in Calcutta, India. A recent graduate of Scottish Churches College in Calcutta and a follower of Gandhi, Prabhupada was somewhat skeptical of this very traditional guru. But he found himself won over by Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati's sharp intelligence and spiritual purity. At this first meeting, Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati requested Prabhupada to

spread the Gaudiya Vaishnava teachings throughout the world, especially in English. In 1933 Prabhupada became the formal disciple of Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati, and in 1936, the year of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta's death, Prabhupada received a letter from him renewing his request that Prabhupada teach in the West. In 1965, at the age of 69, Prabhupada came to New York City, where a year later he started ISKCON, the institutional vehicle through which the teachings of Gaudiya Vaishnavism were to spread quickly around the world.

Among these teachings are those connected with the origin of life and the universe. To scientifically establish these teachings, Srila Prabhupada in 1975 organized the Bhaktivedanta Institute. He envisioned the introduction of Gaudiya Vaishnava teachings on the origin of life and the universe as a direct confrontation with prevailing Western scientific ideas, such as Darwinian evolution.

My own involvement in the Bhaktivedanta Institute, as a Western convert to Gaudiya Vaishnavism, can thus be seen in the historical context of the larger cultural interaction between Western science and an Asian Indian knowledge tradition with vastly different views on natural history. ☪

News from Mangalore



The Deities of Sri Krishna and Balarama were offered a new dress and Krishna stood as Giridhari in His special alankara for the occasion.

The Lord was offered a variety of special food items including a cake replica of Govardhana Hill.



To recognize the cow's service to human society, Go puja celebrations included arati to a cow and her calf.

Vidya Dana

ISKCON Bangalore initiated the distribution of free note books to government school students. At the inaugural function of this Vidya Dana programme, Sri Ashwath Narayan, (MLA, Malleshwaram) distributed free note books to students of the Government High School in Malleshwaram. The free note book distribution at that school was sponsored by First Flight couriers.



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