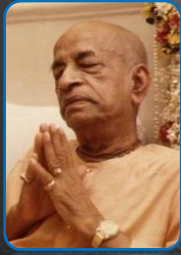


# Freedom Newsletter



Dedicated to His *Divine* Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada  
Founder Acarya of ISKCON

## ISKCON Prison Ministry / FEBRUARY 2020

PO Box 2676  
Alachua, FL 32616

### WHY WE STAY IN THE MATERIAL WORLD

*The following conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada and some of his disciples took place in July 1975 on an early-morning walk in Los Angeles.*

**Disciple:** Srila Prabhupada, what is the qualification for going to the spiritual world?

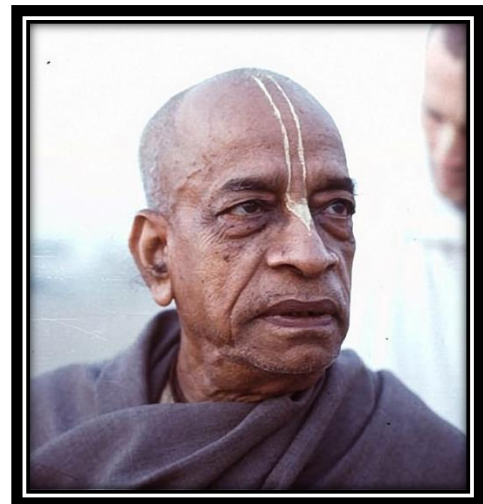
**Srila Prabhupada:** The first qualification is to always remember that this material world is a place of misery (*duhkhalayam*). Then you can go to the spiritual world. As long as you think, "Oh, this material world is very nice," you have to remain here.

**Disciple:** Yesterday in your lecture you gave the example of Queen Kunti, who prayed that calamities would happen to her again and again so that she would realize what a terrible place this material world is and remember Krishna.

**Srila Prabhupada:** Yes, this is intelligence. When one concludes, "This material world is worthless," that is real knowledge. As long as one thinks, "No, it is not always bad; sometimes it is very good," that is ignorance.

**Disciple:** I often meet people who say that without the bad, the good wouldn't be as good.

**Srila Prabhupada:** That is the logic of the criminal who is dunked into water as a punishment. The authorities catch him and put him down into the water, and when he is nearly suffocated they raise him a little and he says, "Ohhh, this is so nice!" But then he is immediately pushed down into the water again.



So the good and bad of this material world are like that. People are put into the water and suffocated, and when they are taken out a little they say, "Ahhhh, this world is very nice." The rascals do not know that the next moment they are going to nearly drown. So unless we remember how suffocating the material world is, we are not fit for going back to Godhead. We must completely detest this world. If we keep just a little attachment for it—"Oh, sometimes it is very good here"—we have to remain.

**Disciple:** Is it true that Krishna will take everything away from a devotee who still has some material attachment?

**Srila Prabhupada:** That is Krishna's special favor. That is not an ordinary favor. When Krishna sees that His devotee is maintaining some material attachment, He says, "This fool wants Me, but at the same time he wants to stay in the material world. So let Me take away all his material possessions so that he will want only Me." This was done to me; I have practical experience. I did not want to take *sannyasa* [the renounced order of life]; I thought I would do business. But Krishna forced me to take *sannyasa*, and my business was dismantled.

**Disciple:** Srila Prabhupada, does Krishna engage the material nature to beat us and kick us so that we will surrender to Him?

**Srila Prabhupada:** Yes. Material nature's only business is beating us and kicking us. But we are so foolish that we think, "This kicking is very nice." That is our disease—we accept the kicking as very nice. We are always suffering three kinds of disturbances: *adhyatmika*, *adhibhautika*, and *adhidaivika*. These are disturbances caused by our own body and mind, disturbances caused by other living entities, and disturbances caused by the demigods, like severe weather or famine. We are always suffering from some disturbance, yet still we are thinking this material world is very nice, and we are trying to improve it. That is foolishness. The disturbances will always continue, so what is the meaning of improvement?

For example, now the scientists are trying to make some improvement in agricultural production. But how long will this improvement last? If there is no rainfall how will all their "improvements" help? The rainfall is not in

their hands; that is *adhidaivika*: it depends on the demigods. If the demigods want, they can completely stop the rain. So what is all this nonsensical "improvement"?

Krishna says this material world is a place that is meant for misery. So how will you improve it? "Yes," the scientists say, "we are advancing. In the future people will live eternally; nobody will die." This is folly, illusion. People who are trying to do something that is impossible are fools, *mudhas*. Their mentality is like that of the ass. The master sits on the back of the ass and hangs a bunch of grass in front of him. The ass thinks, "I'll get it," and walks on and on. "If I just walk a little forward," he thinks, "I shall get the grass." He has no brain to see that he'll never get the grass, that as he is moving the grass is also moving.

So, the scientists are just like the ass. They do not see how foolish their "improvements" are. For example, now we have manufactured so many airplanes. It was thought, "Within two hours we shall be able to go many hundreds of miles. This is very nice." But there are so many dangers in an airplane. Now there is the problem of how to protect us from accidents. So what is the improvement? The improvement is that now two hundred men at a time can die all together. This is the improvement. What a horrible civilization!

**Disciple:** But someone may say, "You say this is a horrible civilization. So why don't you withdraw from it? Why don't you live by yourselves on a farm somewhere instead of in the cities, using the same cars and airplanes that we use?"

**Srila Prabhupada:** People are suffering for want of Krishna consciousness, so we are trying to make them Krishna conscious. That is our only interest in the material world. Otherwise, we have no interest in staying here. We are not social workers or political workers: we are Krishna's workers. We advise people: "Become Krishna conscious and all your problems will be solved." That is our duty—to advise them, to convince them, to give them all facilities to become Krishna conscious. But if they still do not take the medicine, what can be done? They will go on suffering. These rascals who have the idea that by "improvements" they will be happy in this material world—they will never understand Krishna consciousness. 🌸

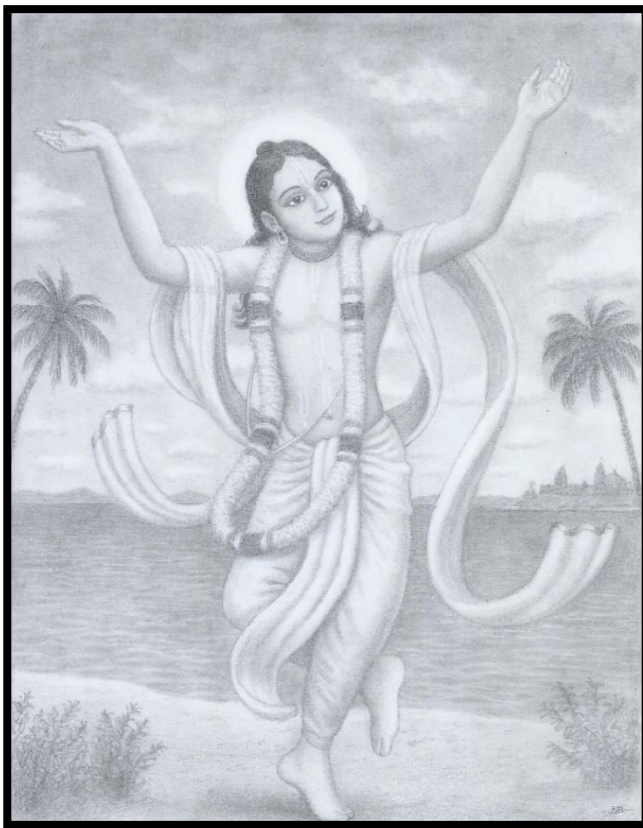


## Need Books or Prayer Beads?

Requests for books, beads or other material should be sent to your devotee pen pal. If you do not have a pen pal, you can send your requests to: ISKCON Prison Ministry, PO Box 2676, Alachua, FL 32616

- 1) Tell us if you can receive hardbound books and how many at a time.
- 2) Please make sure that you are allowed to receive any of the material you request.
- 3) Please let us know if material need to be sent directly to you or through your chaplain.

## Inmate Artwork



*On the left:* Lord Caitanya by Brian B. Soledad, California



*On the right:* Lord Caitanya embracing Sanatana Goswami, by Robert C.H., Moundsville, West Virginia

In devotional service, whether you are a trained artist or new to art, if your intention is to please Kṛṣṇa, that is what He will accept from you; Kṛṣṇa wants **your love**. So if you feel the desire to draw something for Kṛṣṇa, or do anything else in His service, do not let anything stop you; Kṛṣṇa will not only accept your love, but He will guide you and also *reciprocate* with you in ways you never expected. It is said that when you take one step towards Kṛṣṇa, He takes a hundred towards you. Devotees all over the world can vouch for this!

# HOW I CAME TO KṚṢṆA CONSCIOUSNESS

“WHAT DOES GOD LOOK LIKE? WHERE DOES HE LIVE? WHAT DOES HE DO ALL DAY?”

By Jason M.

Inmate in Columbia, South Carolina

It was in 1973 when I first came into contact with Kṛṣṇa’s devotees. I was five years old and traveling through the Frankfurt airport with my parents and older brother. In thinking back on the experience it’s really odd, in a way, that I remember it so clearly now, especially as it became covered by other experiences of conditional life and remained forgotten for some thirty-two years.

As a very inquisitive child I liked to explore and ask many questions of my parents and others around me. Therefore it was always necessary for either my mom or dad to hold my hand so I did not wander off into the environment. This occasion was no different. My eyes were darting around from one person to another. Looking up and down the airport corridors I was indeed enamored by all of the activity.

Then that moment came when I saw from a short distance these beautiful smiling people dressed in brightly colored robes, singing and dancing while playing musical instruments. Everything I had seen prior to seeing them had instantly paled in comparison. My little legs, as if automatically, began to take me toward these happy people. However with my ever-protective mother holding me firmly by the hand, I was restrained from taking off in a full run. Fortunately for me they were coming toward us, and as the type of child I was, a feeling of excitement filled my heart and mind.



The closer this small band of Kṛṣṇa’s surrendered servants came to me, the faster my heart beat, until

they walked right past. I reached out to touch them, their sweet smelling robes gently flowing with the swaying movements of their bodies. They looked upon me smiling, singing and dancing as they traveled along. I then turned around, as if transfixed, my mother practically having to drag me the rest of the way through the airport.

Of course I began asking questions of my dear mother. ‘Momma, how come those people were so happy? Why were they singing and dancing? What were they singing, Momma? Why were they wearing those funny clothes? Momma, why did they have bald heads?’ Unfortunately, my precious mother could not answer any of my questions.

We soon boarded the plane for a transatlantic flight to the United States. South Carolina was our destination, and obviously once we reached it, the questions stopped. My focus shifted to the many activities of a normal little child growing up in a Western culture.

My parents were devout Christians and from early on in my childhood they instilled within me, as well within my older brother and eventually my younger brother, love of God. We went to church regularly. Every night we prayed together and both parents taught us to say our prayers in the name of Lord Jesus Christ. As a very close family we lived this way.

At age eight, as a Christmas present, I received my first Bible. I remember being so proud of it. It was dark blue, with a shiny zipper and my name was etched in gold letters on the front. I was instructed as to the meaning of the red letters and why there were different from the black ones. Each of my parents would take time individually to guide me in a proper study program, telling me to read only a verse or two at a time so as to meditate more deeply on why scripture I had studied. This, they said, would bring greater enlightenment.

Six years passed and as I advanced in my study of the Bible, questions filled my mind. In Sunday school I would ask questions of my teachers. They could not answer them, and at times, made me feel terrible for even asking them. I would ask my parents questions and when I could, I would also ask questions of the preacher. Everyone seemed to give me the same answers: 'we do not know, we are not supposed to know, the Bible does not say, we are not supposed to ask why,' etc. I grew frustrated and became more introspective. I wondered; "What does God look like? Where does He live? What does He do all day?" I wondered about the activities of His angels. I remember looking into the night sky, being bewildered in seeing so many stars, not knowing why.



By the time I turned fourteen my family had moved to an area about forty miles west of Charleston. It was a typical small town. Everyone seemed to have lived there their whole lives. And here I was, having lived on three different continents, trying to fit in. It turned out that it wasn't that difficult, but in time the associations began to corrupt my Christian upbringing. Yes, we still went to church; however, as in the past, I found myself distant in not feeling spiritually satisfied within my heart and soul. Church became just another setting for socializing and not much else. Soon I became sexually active, began using drugs, and listening to heavy metal music that was popular during the 1970's and 1980's. Another six years went by, my becoming very much entangled in material life. Even with very loving and caring Christian parents to guide me, I felt lost.

Moving from one experience to another, nothing truly satisfied me. Yes, there was a sense of temporary satisfaction in one way and then another, although I knew deep down there was more to life. There had to be! Unfortunately for me I just could not find out for myself what it was, and could not find the individuals to teach me what it was. I was missing the point, the purpose of my existence.

Then in March of 1989, while traveling to Florida, with a female companion, to witness a cousin exchange wedding vows, I was stopped for speeding by a police officer in another small southern town. This routine traffic stop turned into a nightmarish experience. Without going into details, I soon found that the individual who stopped us to be a very dangerous fellow. Upon our exiting the vehicle we both were assaulted. This lawless police officer fell dead by actions of self-preservation.

Afterwards, the female and I fled the country due to fear and irrational thought. However, soon thereafter I made the decision to return to face whatever was to come. We both were arrested and charged with Capital Murder. We were facing the death penalty. Again, without going into detail, I received a life sentence with parole eligibility after thirty years. The sentence was handed down to me on September 6, 1989.

Upon entry into prison life I turned to drugs to numb the pain. The drug use, however, was not working. The pain and suffering permeated every fiber of my being. It was not long before I got into trouble and placed into solitary confinement. There the days slowly passed and the nights seemed even more endless without the activities of eating, showering, and walking around the small fenced-in recreational area.



Then one night amidst the noise of individuals screaming and banging on their cell doors, I fell on my knees and cried out to God. Being extremely distressed I begged Him to help me. I begged for forgiveness. The Christian teachings my dear precious parents instilled within my heart as a child were coming to the surface. I remembered, though I had no fully forgotten, love of God.

About a month later I was released from solitary and transferred to another prison. I continued to pray as I had in solitary, but even so, the drug use continued. I was not ready to surrender my will unto God. In fact, I took up the additional sinful activity of running a

small gambling operation. Prison life became routine and I made associations that seemed to make it more bearable. With a TV, radio, money, drugs, food and a wide selection of pornography I settled in to “do my time.”

Years passed as I tried to balance Bible study with my desires to enjoy the co-called comforts I had accumulated within my cell. It was not working and I knew it. God, His Supreme Spirit within my heart, was prompting me to give up the sinful activities. I cried and I prayed for help. My dear family walked with me every step of the way. They visited as often as they could, not at all abandoning me. I looked upon each of them, seeing the love of God they showed me even when I did not deserve it. I learned anew every time we visited that they wanted me to turn my life over to God.

In 1992, three years after I had been in prison, I gave up the drugs. A few months later I gave up the gambling. As a result Bible study became more structured and central in my life. Yet, I still did not give up the pornography, despite my making many efforts to do so. I read in the Bible to “flee youthful lusts,” but I would ask myself, where was I to flee when it was within me?

I could not tame this terrible enemy that tortured my mind by causing such agitation in my body. Then there was the issue of the anger I felt regarding how my case had been handled. Turning the anger inward I grew depressed, taking shelter in the sinful activity of viewing pornography. It was a vicious cycle I could not break, no matter how much Bible study I did or how earnest my efforts were. I even began running miles upon miles around the prison recreation yard. I worked out with weights, but nothing I did conquered these enemies of my mind.



I remember reading book after book espousing psychology in the form of self-help, conflict resolution, suicide prevention, etc. I studied some philosophy. I read the writings of many Christian authors. They all seemed to be saying a lot about different aspects of life, without any of them saying anything to actually assist me. Yes, I was learning along the way, though I still felt lost. I began visiting with a spiritualist and we talked about God, living for Him, that we are all His children, etc. But I just could not connect with what I was looking for. I branched out into other religions just to see if the answers were in the teachings they were propagating. I found none. Even the questions I had as a child resurfaced, with no answers.

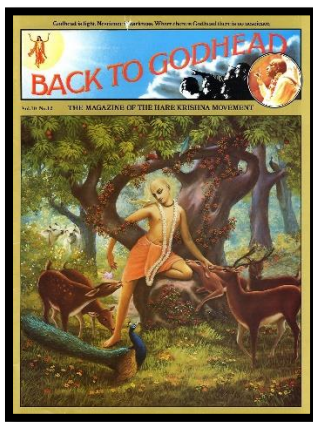
In 1996 I was transferred to another prison, one that was closer to my family. My spiritual journey continued, though not without many personal struggles. Looking at the years go by, I saw my life as being empty and I grew more depressed.



In 1998 I took a job in the prison library and this seemed to help to some extent, especially as I had early on cultivated the practice of reading. Being in the library gave me more access to books and I appreciated this privilege. A few more months passed and as I was going through an incoming box of books I discovered a book entitled Bhagavad-gita As It Is, chapters 1 to 6, with commentary. Having never heard of it before, I picked it up and checked it out. Well, for the next two years I studied this edition, though not fully understanding all of it.

I wondered how many chapters there were to this book, as I had a desire to read it in its entirety. I read of the three gunas and how we were to be free of them. However I could not figure out how to do this. The commentary was kind of hard to follow so I debated on sending a letter to the address listed in the back, but never did. I just kept studying it, thinking how I would like to have a complete edition of this book entitled Bhagavad-gita.

Three more years passed and despite my own efforts to advance in spiritual life, a deep seated depression had me in its clutches. In the darkness of ignorance I was certainly in illusion. At this point I began contemplating killing myself. Even in light of the love my family and a few friends showed me, I was miserable. Prison life was destroying my desire to continue on. I reasoned with myself, 'I'm going to die in prison anyway, why continue to live in these miserable conditions?' I discussed this matter with my spiritualist friend, who had now been visiting me for some ten years. It was at this point that the topic of reincarnation came up. Yet in part because of my Christian upbringing not speaking of such a spiritual matter, and in part because I really did not care anymore, I quickly dismissed it.



My life seemed to continue going slowly nowhere. The fight to survive was intense. Then one night as I was making my rounds of book and magazine delivery I was offered two Back to Godhead magazines, along with Bhagavad-gita As It Is and *Science of Self-Realization*. By the grace of God my desire to have a complete copy of Bhagavad-gita had been satisfied. Even as I did not know exactly what I had, I knew in my heart of hearts I had just received something special. I returned to my room that night and looked through each one of these transcendental publications. I briefly read a passage out of the Gita. I looked at the Table of Contents to *The Science of Self-Realization*, along with looking at the pictures in the *Back to Godhead* magazines. I felt a happiness that I had never felt before. I really did not understand why, but I did.

The next day, however, reality of dwelling in this environment reminded me of the misery and suffering. My cell assignment [my cellmate] was hellish and because of this and everything else, I unfortunately could not find the strength to begin a

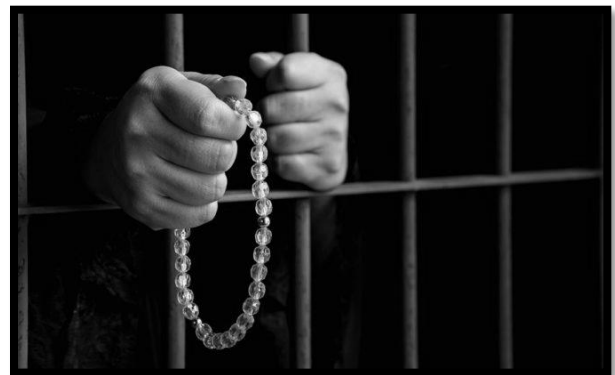
thorough reading of any of these transcendental publications so I kept them tucked away.

Eighteen more months passed and I was finally able to get a cell reassignment. My new cellmate was a young fellow who seemed to care about others and he showed me this by trying to relieve me of my misery by putting me in contact with pen pals, prison correspondence programs, etc. He was very compassionate so I eventually decided to share those two *Back to Godhead* magazines with him. I told him, upon handing them to him, "There's an address on the cover and you can write to them and they will write you back. They seem like good people." Of course I did not know for sure that anyone would write back to him, but I just felt led to say it anyway.

A week later he wrote to ISKCON Prison Ministry in Moundsville, West Virginia. Well, on his birthday October 10, 2005 he received a package and I was standing next to him when he opened it. It contained *Coming Back*, *Perfection of Yoga*, two *Back to Godhead* magazines, the booklet *On Chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa* and other information. It was a truly amazing experience for both of us. We really could not believe our great fortune.

While my cell mate Shawn read the letter written by Kṛṣṇa's devotee, Mukta Kesa Dasa, I picked up *Coming Back* as I had been unavoidably contemplating the spiritual impact of suicide, life after death, etc. Upon Shawn reading Mukta Kesa's letter he shared it with me and I was immediately stunned by the great depths of spiritual knowledge he conveyed. It was the deepest letter I had ever read! I knew at that moment I had in fact found who and what I had been searching for during the past twenty-nine years.

That day I began chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and over the next ten days realized truths that had remained covered for so long.



I quickly, but very thoughtfully, read *Coming Back* and then *Perfection of Yoga*. I read the booklet, the BTG magazines, and the other information. I could not get enough of this profound philosophy of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness. Everything I needed was coming to me at the very lowest point in my life.

On October 22, 2005 I wrote a letter to ISKCON Prison Ministry. I shared a small portion of my spiritual journey and put forward a very respectful request to also receive some transcendental items. In a few weeks a package arrived. It contained a compact edition of *Bhagavad-gita As It Is*, Welcome Home, *Teachings of Queen Kunti*, two BTG magazines, and a Bhagavad-gita study course. The journey to become Kṛṣṇa conscious had begun, or rather reached another level. Over the next eighteen months Mukta Kesa Dasa showed me boundless mercies. He wrote twenty letters to me, sent me numerous transcendental publications, altar photographs, japa mala beads, bead bag, study courses—all with the topmost expert spiritual guidance that has bestowed upon me the most glorious gift of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

And as I sit here finishing this story of how I came to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, tears are streaming down my face. The tremendous gratitude I feel within my heart is truly immeasurable. I am indeed eternally indebted to my beloved spiritual guide for it is he that very personally showed me how to get back home, back to Godhead. He freely shared with me this most sublime spiritual nectar that His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupada ever so mercifully gave to this entire earth planet while he tirelessly traveled freely distributing Kṛṣṇa-prema, pure love of God.

For me, it has been a long journey filled with difficulty. Many times I felt like totally giving up, but now that I have become Kṛṣṇa conscious I am thankful that I did not. In receiving this torchlight of transcendental knowledge I do see now that God truly is our eternal well-wisher and is all auspicious in everything that He does. Yes, Kṛṣṇa is the greatest; there are none greater nor equal to Him. Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Person to whom I humbly offer my loving devotion by humbly seeking to become a servant of a servant of a servant of His devotees. Jaya! Hare Kṛṣṇa! 🙏

### Would you like to see your STORY and/or ARTWORK in the *Freedom Newsletter*?

We encourage you to write the **story** of how you came to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Write in your own words, using simple language. Stories should be only about a page or two.

We also encourage all of you to **draw** topics about Kṛṣṇa, whether you are known as a “talented” artist or not. With Kṛṣṇa artwork, what is most important is your desire to please Kṛṣṇa.

Send your story and/or your artwork to: **ISKCON Prison Ministry, PO Box 2676, Alachua, FL 32616**

**And please write “MY STORY”, or “ARTWORK” on the envelope.**

Please be patient though: due to the high volume of mail, it may take a few months before you see your submission in the newsletter.

### Important - if you TRANSFER to a new unit/address:

Subscriptions to the *Back to Godhead* magazine (BTG) are sponsored by the Prison Ministry (IPM), NOT by the BTG Office. So if you have a change of address, please write to IPM, at the address below, to inform us. Please write "*CHANGE OF ADDRESS*" on the outside of the envelope so we can process it immediately. Thank you.

**ISKCON Prison Ministry, PO Box 2676, Alachua, FL 32616**

The same is goes for the *Freedom Newsletter* (FN). When newsletters are returned we can only assume that the inmate has been released from prison and his/her name is deleted from our mailing list. To make sure you continue receiving the newsletter be sure to notify us of your change of address at the above address.

**Excerpts from inmates' letters**



"I have been absorbed in chanting and reading. I want to tell others about Kṛṣṇa. I just don't know enough so far. I was waiting until I read more. Currently I am reading the Bhagavad-Gita as it is. I just made it to chapter 10. I have to say that I enjoy the Gita a lot. I plan to go through it a second time and keep a journal of verses and Prabhupada's purports. I was wondering how I could help spread the movement. I have tried chanting some more. It seems to be going a lot better for me."

**Richard**

"I feel like I've been fighting for an eternity. Now I'm so tired; mentally, emotionally, and physically exhausted. I don't want to fight anymore.

This is why I've begun research into spiritual matters. Anyway, I will follow your instructions on chanting."

**Michael; Jefferson City, Missouri**

"Daru Brahman Dasa brought a drum and cymbals but no one knew how to use either, so he used the drum and led us through very nice sankirtan. About 20 people came."

**Gerald N.; Graceville, Florida**

"I have received the beautiful hard-cover copy of Bhagavad-Gita As It Is. I cannot tell you how overjoyed I was to receive this precious gift. It will be treasured.

Thank you.

Thank you also for this association and the encouragement to chant. I am once again chanting daily and not eating any meat. I am feeling 100% better already.

I am far from being a devotee of Lord Krishna, but I do aspire to become one. Any assistance you provide in this endeavor will be profoundly appreciated. Please know that I am a serious student. I do not wish to waste a moment. Any books or materials that you may send will be treasured, studied, and read over and over.

I am looking forward to hearing from you again. I hope you will share any advice or guidance you feel may help me advance in realization. Please allow me to benefit from your knowledge and wisdom. And if there is anything I can do to be of service to yourself or ISKCON, please let me know.

Again, thank you so much for this beautiful Gita. It is already my most cherished possession here. Thank you for all you are doing."

**Robert; Sneads, Florida**

"Well, I will say my relationship with Kṛṣṇa will get better; I have found inner peace with myself and am able to understand things better.

I tried chanting and felt as someone was calling me. I will do this more and more."

**Jesse**



"Our program has grown a lot. New men are becoming interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I give a Bhagavad-Gita class every day on the yard. Then we have our own worship service. Preaching is my life. And my friends always ask, "Why is it, no matter what we start talking about, we end up talking about Kṛṣṇa?" And you know your friends see you as a priest when they say they're sorry for letting a cus word slip.

We have many interfaith discussions. And so many faiths are coming to our worship service. Christians, Buddhist, Islam, Wicca, and even two Vedanta impersonalists. We all chant Hare Krishna together. And dance in great joy!

In prison there are many ways to trick men into some devotional service. Like honoring prasadam. After I offer my veggie tray to the Lord, I like to ask the men sitting at my table if they'd like something off my tray. I also like to buy a bag of Jolly Ranchers (candies), offer them to the Lord, then go around asking, "Care for a Jolly Rama?" The men simply love it. And can't get enough!

At our worship, we try to engage everyone. Like the chapel orderly, who sets up a fan, or brings a table, something, anything. And the chaplain, who lights the candle. He's made so much advancement over the past 6 years that last time, he was dancing down the hall, singing Hare Kṛṣṇa maha mantra, matches in hand. Some men bought japa beads at our canteen and chanted Hare Kṛṣṇa! They read Prabhupada's books and preach to their friends.

Actually, due to wonderful devotees like you, this whole prison has become a holy Dhama! Because Prabhupada has come in the form of his books, CDs and DVDs."

**James; Salem, Oregon**

"I would like to say thank you for everything that you have helped me with. I appreciate it so very much, and thank you for showing me the way to our sweet Lord Kṛṣṇa. Thank you for the recent Back to Godhead magazine; I enjoyed every article in it.

I also appreciate the books you sent. They sure have helped me in my spiritual life. The Gita is my favorite; I've already read it cover to cover three times and I've just started it for the fourth time.

All I do with my time is read and chant; I rarely watch any T.V. It's all garbage on the screen."

**Charles; Leavenworth, Kansas**

"Before I go any further thank you from the depths of my heart for taking the time out to correspond as well as educate me!!!

Yes I was at school, for which I'm a clerk, and a couple of dudes where discussing what they believe in and the peace of mind they in now. So I ask to explain and was told to write and I would receive a pen-pal to a guide me though. I'm thrilled cause I'm trying to soak up all the knowledge I can!!"

**Shawn; Susanville, California**

"I should be getting out before the end of this year. I definitely plan on visiting the Kṛṣṇa center there and continuing in my spiritual growth. I feel that my life finally has meaning! I've spent my entire life caught up in material desires. My time here in prison and reading the works of Srila Prabhupada have made me realize how little this material world really means and what my true meaning of life is- Kṛṣṇa consciousness!"

**Bradley; Beaumont, Texas**

## Calendar

### February 2020

- 2- Disappearance of Madhvacarya
- 4- Disappearance of Ramanujacarya
- 5- **Bhaimi Ekadasi (fast from grains and beans)**  
*Fast till noon for appearance of Lord Varaha; feast tomorrow*
- 6- Appearance of Lord Varaha
- 7- **Appearance of Nityananda Prabhu (fast till noon)**
- 8- Appearance of Narottama Dasa Thakura
- 13- **Appearance of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur (fast till noon)**
- 19- **Vijaya Ekadasi (fast from grains and beans)**  
Disappearance of Isvara Puri
- 24- Disappearance of Jagannatha Dasa Babaji & Rasikananda Thakura

### March 2020

- 6 - **Amalaki Vrata Ekadasi (fast from grains and beans)**
- 7 - Disappearance of Sri Madhavendra Puri
- 9 - **GAURA PURNIMA (Lord Caitanya's appearance day: fast till moonrise)**
- 10 - Festival of Jagannatha Misra
- 16 - Appearance Day of Sri Srivasa Pandita
- 20 - **Papamochani Ekadasi (fast from grains and beans)**
- 21 - Disappearance Day of Sri Govinda Ghosh
- 29 - Appearance Day of Sri Ramanujacharya



**NOTE:** this newsletter only has 10 pages but the formatting shows 11 and I can't fix it. So know that you are not missing a page here! 😊

