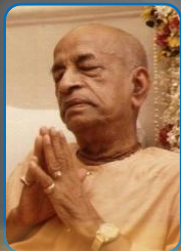


Freedom Newsletter



Dedicated to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada
Founder-Acarya of the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness

ISKCON Prison Ministry / **August 2026**

PO Box 2676
Alachua, FL 32616

PRABHUPADA SPEAKS OUT — Finding Perfect Knowledge in an Imperfect World

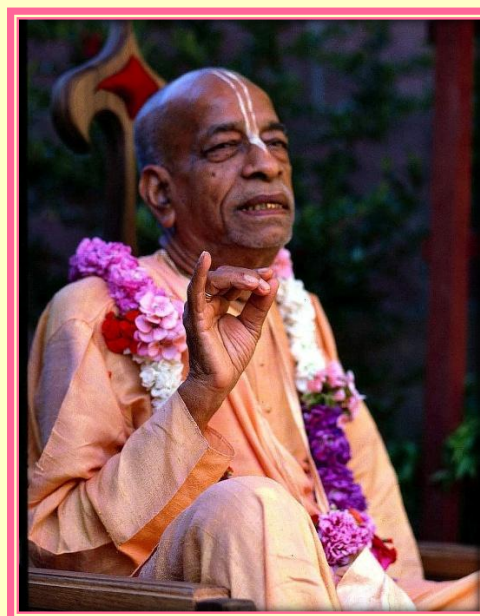
This conversation between His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada and physicist Gregory Benford took place in October 1973, at the Los Angeles Kṛṣṇa center.

Dr. Benford: You are probably familiar with what Western theology calls “the problem of evil”: Why does evil exist?

Srila Prabhupada: Evil is the absence of good, just as darkness is the absence of sunlight. If you keep yourself always in the light, where is the question of darkness? God is all-good. So if you keep yourself always in God consciousness, then there is no evil.

Dr. Benford: But why was the world created with evil men?

Srila Prabhupada: Why was the police department created? Because there is a necessity. Similarly, some living entities want to enjoy this material world; therefore God creates it. He is just like a father who gives a separate room to his mischievous children to play in. Otherwise, the naughty boys would always disturb him.



Dr. Benford: This world, then, is something like a prison?

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, it is a prison. Therefore, there is suffering here. In the prison house you cannot expect comfort, because unless there is suffering, there is no lesson for the prisoners. That is stated in the *Bhagavad-gita duhkhalayam asasvatam*: *Duhkhalayam* means “the place for suffering.” And *asasvatam* means “temporary.” You cannot make a compromise and say, “All right, I am suffering, but I don’t care about that—I shall remain here.” You cannot remain here; you will be kicked out. Now you are thinking that you are an American, you are a great scientist, you are happy, you are getting a good salary.... That’s all right, but you cannot stay in this post. The day will come when you will be kicked out. And you do not know whether you are going to be an American or a scientist or a cat or dog or demigod. You do not know.

Dr. Benford: I think that I will probably be nothing.

Srila Prabhupada: No, that is another kind of ignorance. Krsna explains in the *Bhagavad-gita* [2.12], *dehino ‘smin yatha dehe kaumaram yauvanam jara / tatha dehantara-praptih*: first you are in the body of a boy, then a young man, and in the future you will be in the body of an old man—

Dr. Benford: But after I’m an old man I might be nothing.

Srila Prabhupada: No, no. *Tatha dehantara-praptih*: after death you will pass into another body. So, you cannot say, “I am going to be nothing.” Of course, you may say anything, but the laws are different. You may know the law, or you may not know the law.’ It doesn’t matter—the law will act. For example, if you think, “I will touch the fire—it will not burn me,” that is not a fact. It will burn. Similarly, you may think there is nothing after death, but it is not a fact.

Dr. Benford: Why does a person like me—someone who’s trying to understand the world rationally—seem to find no way in which to do it?

Srila Prabhupada: You are trying to know things rationally, but you are not going to the proper teacher.

Dr. Benford: But I feel that by studying the world I can acquire knowledge, and there is a way to check that knowledge. You formulate hypotheses, you perform experiments, you verify your ideas, and then you see if you can use these ideas in the practical world.

Srila Prabhupada: That is one more kind of ignorance—because you do not know that you are imperfect.

Dr. Benford: Oh, I know that I’m not perfect.

Srila Prabhupada: Then what is the use of your trying to study the world this way and that way? If you are imperfect, the result will be imperfect.

Dr. Benford: That’s true.

Srila Prabhupada: So why waste your time?

Dr. Benford: But there doesn’t seem to be any other way of finding knowledge.

Srila Prabhupada: Even for material knowledge, you have to go to the university and consult a professor. Similarly, when you want to learn spiritual knowledge—perfect knowledge—you have to approach a perfect teacher. Then you will get perfect knowledge.

Dr. Benford: But how does one know when the teacher is perfect?

Srila Prabhupada: It is not difficult. A perfect teacher is one who has learned from another perfect teacher.

Dr. Benford: But that merely removes the problem a step.

Srila Prabhupada: No, because there is one perfect teacher—Krsna—who is accepted by all classes of teachers. In India we still find the Vedic culture, which is taught by Vedic scholars. And all these Vedic teachers accept Krsna as the supreme teacher. They take lessons from Krsna and teach that.

Dr. Benford: So anyone I meet who accepts Krsna as the perfect teacher—he is a perfect teacher?

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. Anyone who is teaching the teachings, of Krsna—he is a perfect teacher.

Dr. Benford: Then all the devotees here are perfect teachers?

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, because they are teaching only Krsna’s teachings, that’s all. They may not be perfect. But whatever they are speaking is perfect, because it is taught by Krsna.

Dr. Benford: Then you are not perfect?

Srila Prabhupada: No, I am not perfect. None of us claim that we are perfect—we have so many defects. But because we don’t speak anything beyond Krsna’s teachings, our teaching is perfect. We are just like a postman who brings you a money order for one thousand dollars. He is not a rich man, but if he delivers to you the envelope as it is, you are benefited. He is not a rich man, but his perfect dealing—his honest dealing—is perfect. Similarly, we are not perfect; we are full of imperfections. But we don’t go beyond the teachings of Krsna—that is our process—and therefore our teachings are perfect. 🌸



“If you keep yourself always in the light, where is the question of darkness?”

REQUESTING MATERIAL?

Please make sure the **address** you give us is correct. Many institutions now have different addresses for letters and for receiving books. And tell us if you are allowed hardbound books, or only softbound, and how many at a time. Returns are costly. Thank you!

Excerpt from the book **Mind it!** by Chaitanya Charan Dasa

The Mind is a Universe — Not Everything in it is Relevant

The universe's vastness and our smallness render irrelevant to much of what happens in the universe. We don't let, say, a comet shooting through the solar system distract us from our daily schedules.

Our mind is like a universe – it stores billions and billions of memories. Even forgotten memories are still stored somewhere in it, as we might recognize during nostalgic moments. Within our mental universe, unexpected thoughts such as irrational cravings or unfounded worries can pop up at any time. Such mental pop-ups may well be beyond our capacity to control, predict or even explain. Thankfully, they are often like shooting comets; they will pass, provided we don't dwell on them. If however we dwell inordinately on them, we unwittingly lend them our mental energy. Powered by our contemplation on them, they grow prodigiously. And we waste outrageous amounts of our time coveting petty things or worrying about unlikely catastrophes.



Within our mental universe, unexpected thoughts such as irrational cravings or unfounded worries can pop up at any time.

elevate ourselves, we need to filter our mind's thoughts based on their relevance. Central to evaluating relevance is purposefulness – when we know what we are doing and why, we can quickly decide what matters and what doesn't.

Gita wisdom explains lucidly our role and goal within the universe – we are eternal souls who have transmigrated through many bodies and accumulated innumerable memories over many lifetimes. In our present human form, we are meant to attain immortal life by learning to love and serve Krishna. Only those thoughts that contribute to our service to him are ultimately relevant. The more we internalize that purpose of devotional service and harmonize our life with it, the more we become equipped to neglect our mind's random flights of fantasy or worry, thus investing our time and life fruitfully. 🌸

Pertinently, the Bhagavad-Gita (06.05) urges us to elevate, not degrade, ourselves with the mind. To

QUESTIONS for studying the Bhagavad-gita As It Is

In the April, May, and June issues, we included questions on the 3 first chapters of Bhagavad-gita As It Is.

If you'd like to have the questions for chapters 4 to 18, send a request by mail at:

Attn: Bhagavad-gita Questions
ISKCON Prison Ministry
PO Box 2676
Alachua, FL 32616

or by electronic letter/email to: IskconPrisonMinistry@gmail.com

Excerpts from inmates' letters

I would like you to know that I'm capable of understanding the Bible now because of the Bhagavad-Gita. God is one for all humanity and speaks the same truth from time to time. Thus, there should not be any disparity between religions.

Rebecca F. —Ocala, Florida

[To Srila Prabhupada]

In your books, you have given us the perfect understanding to leave this material prison. Your books are the key. One just has to use them properly. If one has a key, but never places it into the lock, the door will remain closed. So, like this key, if I do not follow the instructions in your books, the door to spiritual life will also remain closed. You were merciful to give us these books and instructions on how to become Krsna conscious and leave this material prison, and I am indebted to you for this kindness. For this kindness, I owe you my life, yet I have been so unwilling to give it. Please dear Srila Prabhupada, force me into your service. I know that I am unworthy and unwilling, but I know that service to you and to your mission is the only perfection for my life. Please bless me with the desire to serve your mission and never allow me to leave the mercy of Krsna consciousness. Aspiring to become the servant of your servant,

Bhakta Mark M. —St. Marys, West Virginia

The Pandavas were forced to take to exile. Different sections of this time was different experiences and each one Granting lessons/ tools that the Pandavas would be able to use once exile is over. Now this Last year The all are taking identities and Duties that are all somehow serving the King. Now only by completely accomplishing there Duties and always serving the King faithfully, will the Pandavas be able to go back and reclaim there place in there Kingdom. This is like us. As spirit souls we will take many different births, ever gaining tools to serve our wonderful Lord Krsna. Then we will reach a point when we will be able to erve Krsna with full Love, Consideration, and action. Upon completing that life we will retain our Spot to be together With That Great Cowherd Boy and helping him to tend all the cows, feed yogurt to the monkeys, or



cry day and night asking all the beings, where has Dear Krsna gone?

Brandon M. —Marion, Ohio

They DID send some great and extremely helpful books and *Back to Godhead* (BTG) back issues, which I have ravenously devoured and am re-reading

now. I'm so thankful for what both centers have done. I don't want to stagnate. That being said, I have awakened my soul and I see Krishna everywhere, and nothing could deter me from praising Him. I chant at least 3-5 rounds a day, sometimes 10-12. I read at least a portion of literature every day. My favorite book I've read so far is Sri Isopanisad - I couldn't put it down. I had so much momentum and was so happy and engulfed in Krishna. But now I'm starting to feel like I have plateaued, and it is upsetting because I was doing so well. I still chant and read, but I've become more susceptible to the negative environment and influences surrounding me. I'm lacking the stimulation of when everything was moving so fluidly. I learn a lot from the BTG back issues I've received, but I sometimes don't know the source of some of the topics because I'm ignorant to so much of the Vedic literature. Still, once I'm out and have access to it, I want to read Srimad-Bhagavatam and the Mahabharata. There's just so much knowledge left to obtain, and I'm hungry for it. My favorite is Lord Krishna as Nrsimha - I'm so drawn to that form of the Lord for some reason. It may seem odd, but that ferocious avatar of the Lord brings me a serene comfort.

Samuel M. —Phoenix, Maryland

I came across *Back to Godhead* while having a spiritual talk with one of my close friends, but most important I'm self-inclined to know more about the light (Lord Krsna). My devotional services are limited due to the circumstances of my situation, but I've been engaging in activities such as daily reciting of a few mantras including the "Hare Krsna" mantras, and small food offering. I'm sincerely unable to engage in charitable acts at this moment, as I'm currently indigent. If it's not too much to ask, may I receive a Bhagavad-Gita to increase my knowledge of Lord Krsna to further my will to worship?

Victor M. —Helen, Georgia

Srila Prabhupada's Lecture on Bhagavad-gītā As It Is, 4.34-38

—New York, August 17, 1966—

Now, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that "Just like if you have got a very good ship, you can very easily cross the Atlantic Ocean without any difficulty, similarly, we are in the midst of the ocean of ignorance." Our, this life, this conditioned life in the material world is just like the ocean of ignorance, ocean of ignorance. So Lord Caitanya, therefore, He prayed to Śrī Kṛṣṇa like this, ayi nanda-tanuja patitaṁ kiṅkaraṁ mām viṣame bhavāmbudhau: "My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, I am just fallen in the ocean of ignorance."

So we are in the ocean of ignorance. Now, in the ocean, if you get a very good boat or very good ship, as you can cross over, similarly, if we have the ship or the boat of perfect knowledge, then there is no fear. We can cross the ocean very easily. We can cross this ocean very easily.

Now here Kṛṣṇa says, api ced asi pāpebhyaḥ sarvebhyaḥ pāpa-kṛttamaḥ. If, if a person is the most

sinful, the, and the, I mean, the supermost sinful man, but if he gets this knowledge, this knowledge of Kṛṣṇa science, then he can cross over this ocean of ignorance very easily. That means it does not matter what was our past life. Either... Any Vedic literature, especially Bhagavad-gītā... Bhagavad-gītā does not take into account what was you in the past life. That doesn't matter. Because we are in ignorance, we might have done so many things in ignorance, which is not approved, which is not virtuous. That is quite possible. Every one of us, we are subjected. Because due to ignorance, we do so many things, so nobody can say that "I am free from any sinful activities." Nobody can say. So that doesn't matter. But if we get, if we can learn the science of Kṛṣṇa, then, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, api ced asi pāpebhyaḥ sarvebhyaḥ pāpa-kṛttamaḥ: **"Even one is the most sinful man, but if he gets the Kṛṣṇa science, he is free. He is free, and he can go. He can cross over the material ocean of ignorance very easily."**



Book Distribution Stories!

"The Kingdom of God is within you."

By Gurusakti Dasi

Today in Coventry I met Christine. She works as a councilor for Coventry City Council and is also a Corinthian Minister.

Christine married a Hindu Punjabi gentleman twenty years ago and learnt to speak fluent Hindi and Punjabi. The name Surya was given to her by a pundit shortly after her marriage.

Speaking to Christine in Hindi, Punjabi and English felt incredible. I have never experienced speaking to an English person so naturally in both Indian languages. It felt effortless and at the same time so humorous.

Christine chose to take two Bhagavad Gitas. Although she had read it years ago, she had not read Srila Prabhupada's version and wanted one to keep for herself and another available for others to read. She

shared that it is important to understand, acknowledge and accept other people's faiths. No matter how we perceive God, she said, in his eyes we are all his children.

Christine then shared something often spoken about within the Krishna consciousness movement. She reflected on the unrecorded years of Jesus' life in the Bible, particularly in his thirties, and the historical accounts suggesting he travelled to India during this time,



associating with sages and Vedic wisdom. She also mentioned that Jesus instructed Saint Thomas to travel to Goa, where his presence is still honored today.

She reflected on the Christian understanding of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and smiled as she drew an analogy with the Vedic tradition, also expressing the Divine through Krishna, Vishnu and Rama. Christine left excited to read more, learn more, and deepen her growth as a minister.

Christina's parting words endorsed that her intention to read the Bhagavad Gita was not to challenge her faith...but to expand it.

Srila Prabhupada wrote his books not to convert or divide, but to reawaken the soul's relationship with God. This awakening moves beyond labels and boundaries, reaching straight into the heart. Through encounters like this, the world continues to discover Srila Prabhupada as Krishna's genius.

What The Heck Is Going On Here? (Krishna knows 😊) —by Hanuman Das

Lexington, South Carolina. Someone knocks on my door. A young Western-looking man in his 20s is standing on the porch, wearing a bright work shirt. I ask,

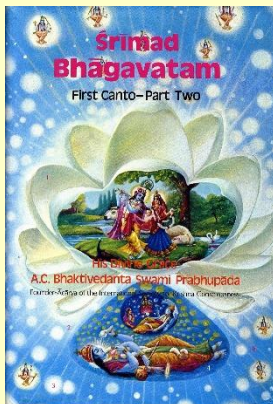
"What's up? What's going on?"

He says, "Have you read the Upanisads?"

I'm thinking, 'What the heck is happening here? I'm in the suburbs of South Carolina, with nobody around on the street, a young guy I have never seen before comes to my door and asks me whether I have read the Upanisads...

He asks again,

"I asked if you've read the Upanisads. I saw your license plates—*KRSNA* and *SHIVA*." (from my Shiv Auto business) I'm still thinking, 'What the heck is



going on here?"

I ask him, "Do you like to read?"

He says, "Yes."

"A lot or a little?"

"A lot."

"Do you like to read a lot, a lot, a lot, a lot?"

"Yes, massively."

I tell him, "I've got something for you."

We go into the garage. I give him the Bhagavad-Gita and a few other books, and then I show him the Srimad-Bhagavatam.

He is super excited. We spend the rest of the evening talking about philosophy and

chanting Hare

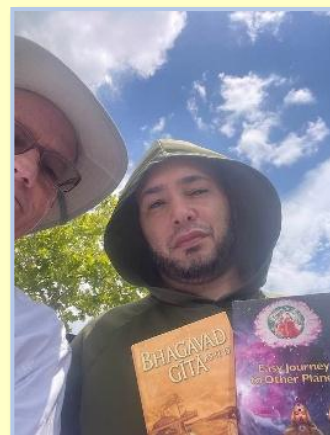
Krsna.

His name is Landon. He lives in Wyoming and just happened to pass by my house while trying to sign people up with his internet company. I didn't get the internet connection from him, but he got a direct connection to the spiritual world. A full Srimad-Bhagavatam set is now on its way to his home in Wyoming.

Jaya, Srila Prabhupada!

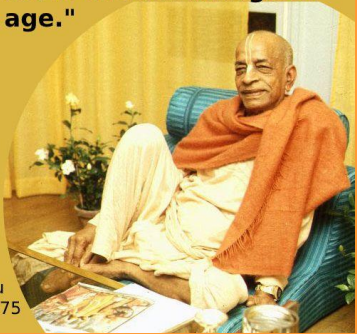
Everyone is suffering —by Divyanga Dasa

This guy was so unhappy till I showed him the Gita "It says this material life is temporary and full of miseries, it's not just you suffering; we're all in this together. But not to worry, there's something more. The spiritual world. Check it out. Read and be grateful."



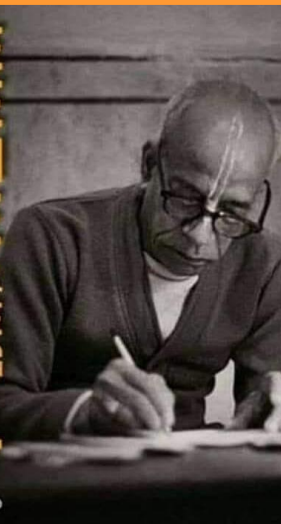
"If you simply chant Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, then you understand clearly what you are, what is God, what is your relationship with Him, what is this world. Everything will be clear. That is the advantage of this fallen age."

From a Lecture,
Bhagavad-Gita
As It Is 16.6 at
ISKCON Honolulu
2nd February 1975



**IN MY ABSENCE
YOU READ THE
BOOKS. WHAT I
TALK, I HAVE
WRITTEN IN THE BOOKS.
YOU CAN ASSOCIATE
WITH ME BY READING
MY BOOKS.**

SRILA PRABHUPADA
AUGUST 7, 1975, TORONTO



Valentine brought me to Krishna —by Nityananda Chandra Dasa

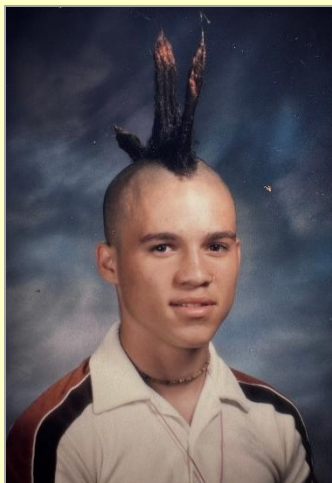
How a punk kid in the 90s became a monk

In 1998, I had been going to the ISKCON temple in Portland, Oregon, regularly for several years, sometimes even daily.

Visiting the temple

My journey of visiting temples began in 1993 in Honolulu as a skater kid. In Portland, I would ride my 1978 Honda CX 500 to the temple in the early morning after working the night shift at Plaid Pantry (Portland's 7/11). A few years prior, I shaved off the spiked, dreaded mohawk that I had sported for years, for motorcycle helmets made mohawks impossible, but I was still certainly a punk kid.

At the temple, I would take off my motorcycle boots, enter, bow down, and practice Japa meditation. I remember one such morning when the head priest



Kshetrajna Prabhu, an elderly disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda, seemed to practically glow in the corner while doing his morning meditation. It was a very quiet and humble temple. For every morning that I would visit, it would be just him and me doing Japa meditation in the temple hall.

One day, the head of the humble center, Mother

Mahabhagavat, who ran the place along with her husband Kshetrajna, came to me with some news. She stated that there were going to be some changes, changes that would be good for me. She explained that she and her husband were going to retire from running the center, and that 30 monks [devotees] and 5 'monkettes' would be coming to Portland to open a new center. Another Level?

Was a more immersive experience possible?

See, although I loved coming to the center on 42nd St in NE Portland, I really didn't know how to take a deeper step. At the center I had no peers; I was 19, and everyone else was married and had kids. Coming daily and

offering services and practicing meditation in the early mornings was great, but was a more immersive experience possible?

I remember the day the monks arrived. They hit the street with *kirtan* that was just like a party. All 35 of them were from the age range of 17 to 25, all my peers. The Sunday events



were amazing. Even some of my old punk/goth friends started showing up. Even the bassist of one of my favorite local hardcore punk bands showed up and also became a fully committed member. Needless to say, it was exactly what I needed. Actually, I wanted to live just like all of the monks; fully immersed in kirtan, study, fun, feasting, and early morning practices. But just like a person who plans to retire, there were always some obstacles and attachments that created an ever-changing ETA.

Three Anchors

Three attachments kept me from making that jump in my life:

1. My house
2. My new motorcycle
3. My girlfriend

But as a friend once told me, "If God likes you, he gives you everything, but if he loves you. He takes it all away." I started to notice a merciful surgical removal of those attachments.

1st was the house

I rented a four-bedroom house in NE Portland for an

amazing price. It was \$600 a month, split with three other vegetarian roommates. It had but only one flaw: the dining room floor was unfinished. Other than that, with the three roommates, the ideal price of \$150 each was amazing. On top of that, we developed a great grocery system wherein each roommate would spend only about \$40 a month on groceries, and each of us only had



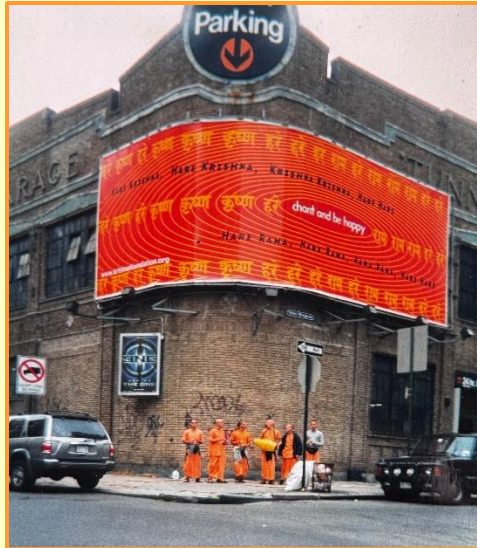
to do the shopping on one of the weeks of the month. However, with all the bills in my name, it became quite an annoyance when the roommates began flaking or just being late on their payments.

2nd was my new motorcycle.

A 1980 Honda CB 900 custom dual transmission bike. It had high and low shifts like a 10-speed bike. I had gotten into three motorcycle wrecks with my original bike while driving in the rainy streets in Portland. This 600 lbs monster was a big upgrade. I had gone on several road trips, including to the little islands and ports off of Seattle with my girlfriend. Unfortunately, or fortunately for me, in late winter 1998-99 I got in a crash with a car, I flew over the side of it, and although I was quite beat up, I had to push this heavy beast home some 10 blocks away.

3rd was my girlfriend

Alison D. (Not my goth friend mentioned above) was my girlfriend for some time. She was a punk kid like me, running in some of the same circles. We were roommates, and she would also come with me most Sundays to the new temple. On Saturday, February 13th, we went to a home kirtan event. It was sort of a pre-Valentine's kirtan party. It was a very nice event, and I felt spiritually nourished. However, my girlfriend, whose birthday was that day, also wanted to go to a big house party. The thought felt like a big downgrade to what I had attended and I protested but we still ended up going. At the party, there were tons of people, and shortly, my girlfriend started drinking and partying. But what got me was when I



Not far from Washington Square Park was a huge billboard with the Maha mantra.

found her making out with another girl. That was the surgical cut I needed. We argued, and I told her that I was becoming a monk. Upset but also relieved, I walked the two hours home chanting Japa.

The next morning, I called up Jaya Kesava, he was a former runway model for Nike who became a monk some six months back. He is the one who first taught me how to wear a dhoti, but with style. I told him that I was ready for ashram life; he was elated. He and the other guys thought, that if I was to ever become a monk it would have been months ago. In their passion they had given up on the thought of it happening.

Ashram life meant waking everyday around 4 AM, dancing in kirtan, reading and studying, engaging in hours of daily meditation, little bit of wrestling, and other fun activities like snow sledding. It was the funnest time of my life, but I was also the time which I felt I grew the most.

In my journey to monkhood, visiting temples felt like dating God, Krishna, but committing to monk training felt like getting engaged ॐ after many years.

However, later I got engaged to

my wife. A bit of a double entendre for those who know me; my wife's name is Krishna [dasi].



Now, many of you may be scratching your head, how does a monk get married? Well, in the Indian tradition, Vedic culture, monkhood is like college; most students graduate and move on. Some students, however, stay in college to lead as professors. 🌸

What does "Harinam" mean?

- "**Hari**" is a name for Lord Vishnu or Krishna, and "**nam**" means name.
- Harinam means chanting or singing the holy names of God, specifically the Hare Krishna maha-mantra, recommended for this age of Kali, the age of quarrel and hypocrisy.
- When done together in public streets or parks, it is called *Harinam-sankirtan*, often accompanied by dancing and traditional instruments like drums and cymbals.

ISKCON's Traveling Outreach Widens Its Reach Across Nigeria —excerpt

By Atma Tattva Das, ISKCON News Staff Writer | Jul 27, 2026

Since early 2026, a free, in-person outreach initiative called *Harinama Ananda* has carried out public chanting of Hare Krishna, book distribution, and community visits to towns across Nigeria, with groups of 17 to 25 devotees spending four days at each location. The initiative is built around harinam [chanting the holy name] outreach, and led by the temple president in Benin City, Yadhunatha Das, who was himself introduced to the movement as a child through his father, and who began joining traveling chanting parties around age five.

Harinama Ananda's expansion this year reflects a broader effort by ISKCON's West African branch to reach the roughly 26 of Nigeria's 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory, where the movement has no permanent center. Krishna consciousness reached Nigeria in 1979 through Brahmananda Dasa and Bhakti Tirtha Swami, both disciples of A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. Sadly, nearly five decades later, there are centers in only about ten of Nigeria's states.

A Response to Institutional Scale

The initiative addresses a structural problem: Nigeria's population, among the largest and fastest-growing in the world per the United Nations Population Fund, spans a geography that about ten established ISKCON centers cannot cover through fixed institutions alone. Organized harinama had declined in Nigeria for nearly



Yadhunatha Das distributes Srila Prabhupada's books.

a decade, Yadhunatha said, as earlier participants took on marital and employment responsibilities. Repeated encounters with Nigerians who assumed the movement no longer existed there, he said, led him to treat sustained traveling outreach as a long-term institutional commitment. "That was where I decided that I want to take this as my lifetime project, to take harinama to every town and village," Yadhunatha said.

Themes and Participants

Each journey combines public chanting and dance, distribution of devotional literature, prasadam (sanctified vegetarian food), and informal conversation with residents. The party includes kirtana leaders, book distributors, cooks, and a dancing group. The team adapts to local context, at times using African textiles for devotional dress and relying on local intermediaries, including a barrister in one state without an ISKCON center who arranged lodging and translated for residents. Yadhunatha said children's participation in the dancing functions as an informal point of entry with families, and that one encounter in Port Harcourt led a woman to relocate to Benin City, become an initiated practitioner, and bring family members into the movement.

Logistics and Follow-Up





Devotees distribute prasadam to residents following a Harinama Ananda street procession.

The bus, which replaced an overcrowded and unreliable earlier vehicle, lets the party travel together for cost and security reasons and reach states it previously could not

access. Fuel, accommodation, repairs, books, instruments, and prasadam determine how often and how far the team travels. Harinama Ananda's stated goal is six national circuits a year; current capacity supports two or three. "Now we have a bigger van," Yadhunatha said. "So we don't have an excuse. We have to travel."

Organizers describe follow-up, not travel itself, as the project's principal limitation. In Abia State, for example, residents continue to contact the team after visits, but no local center or trained member is in place to sustain regular programming there. Some contacts stay connected through WhatsApp groups and festivals, though Yadhunatha said this falls short of ongoing spiritual guidance. A long-term need is trained devotees willing to remain in newly reached areas once the party moves on, so local programming can continue after it departs. "In the next ten years, we should be having more centers, more ISKCON centers in Nigeria," Yadhunatha said. "More centers and bigger parties, not just this one party."

Calendar

AUGUST 2026

- 03 Aug 2026 - Disappearance Day of Srila Gopala Bhatta Goswami
- 06 Aug 2026 - Disappearance Day of Srila Lokanatha Goswami
- 07 Aug 2026 - The Incorporation of ISKCON in New York
- 09 Aug 2026 - **Kamika Ekadashi**
- 16 Aug 2026 - Disappearance Day of Sri Raghunandan Thakura
- 16 Aug 2026 - Disappearance Day of Sri Vamsidas Babaji
- 23 Aug 2026 - **Pavitropana Ekadashi**
- 24 Aug 2026 - Disappearance Day of Srila Rupa Goswami
- 24 Aug 2026 - Disappearance Day of Sri Gauridas Pandita
- 28 Aug 2026 - Jhulan Yatra Ends
- 28 Aug 2026 - **Appearance Day of Lord Balarama**
- 29 Aug 2026 - **Second Month of Caturmasya Begins**
- 29 Aug 2026 - Srila Prabhupada's Departure from India, for the USA

SEPTEMBER 2026

- 04 Sept 2026 - **JANMASTAMI - Appearance of Lord Krishna**
- 05 Sept 2026 - **Appearance Day of Srila Prabhupada**
- 09 Sept 2026 - **Annada Ekadashi**
- 16 Sept 2026 - Srimati Sita Thakurani Appearance Day
- 19 Sept 2026 - **RADHASTAMI: Appearance of Srimati Radharani**
- 22 Sept 2026 - **Parsva Ekadashi**
- 23 Sept 2026 - **Sri Vamana Dwadashi : Appearance of Sri Vamana Deva**
- 23 Sept 2026 - Appearance Day of Sri Jiva Goswami
- 24 Sept 2026 - **Appearance Day of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura**
- 25 Sept 2026 - Disappearance Day of Srila Haridas Thakura
- 26 Sept 2026 - Acceptance of Sannyasa by Srila Prabhupada
- 27 Sept 2026 - **Third Month of Caturmasya Begins**

What is Caturmasya?

Chatur means Four, *Masya* means Month, and *Vrata* means Austerity.

Caturmasya Vrata is observed for a period of four months, calculated with the moon calendar. It is approximately from June/July and ends on Uthana Ekadashi, some time in October/November.

During these four months devotees reduce bodily activities like eating and sleeping (while maintaining their health), to increase absorption in Krsna's service, especially hearing and chanting.