

Reservoir of Pleasure, A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, pg. 268)

Jesus said in Matthew 6:7, "And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition, as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words." (NAS)

CONTEMPLATING MYTHS

When Krsna devotees are not chanting, worshipping the deities or involved in various ISKCON duties, they listen to or act out the pastimes of Krsna. "Since these pastimes are also to be considered as both eternal and transcendental, even a person little advanced in absolute knowledge may be able to think of these and receive full benefit. Swami Bhaktivedanta says that this is so because there is no difference between the pastimes and the actual form of Krsna; his name and form are identical." (**Hare Krishna and the Counter-culture**, J. S. Judah, pg. 61)

Of Krsna's numerous incarnations, devotees are most interested in Krsna's birth as a blue-skinned mischievous youngster nearly 5,000 years ago. The most famous pastime of Krsna was when he danced with the 16,108 cow herdesses and after their pleading, Krsna took them as his wives. He expanded himself into 16,108 forms to dance and marry each girl. The story is complete with the actual details of their dance and marriage but the most amazing part of the pastime is that he was only eight years old at the time. Of course, the Swami Bhaktivedanta has a transcendental explanation of the event, not wanting anyone to suspect Krsna of lustfulness.

Christians are instructed to stick to the study of the Word and give no importance to fables and myths. (1 Timothy 1:4) We were warned that a time was coming when people would not "endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own likings, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander into myths." (2 Timothy 4:3-4, RSV)

WORKS vs. GRACE

The ISKCON is centered around a self-work's salvation plan accomplished by believing four points: (1) I am not this body. (2) Krsna is the supreme personality. (3) Krsna is the same as his name. (4) We are eternal servitors of Krsna; and giving up these four things: (1) gambling, including any frivolous sports or games; this also means having any conversation which is not related to Krsna consciousness, (2) the use of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, coffee, tea, (3) the eating of meat, fish, eggs, mushrooms, onions and garlic, (4) illicit sex, including use of contraceptives which are considered an abomination (married couples only are allowed relationships once a month). An integral part of salvation is chanting the mahamantra daily also. The religion is centered around a false Hindu god and his teachings found in the Bhagavad-gita and the Bhagavatam.

When the Swami Bhaktivedanta was asked, "But what if I want to follow the Bible instead of Vedic literature?" he replied, "There's no use arguing the merits of the Bible over Vedic literature. Both the Bible and the Vedic literature are scripture, and therefore they are in agreement not opposition. The only difference is that the Vedic literature contains much more specific information about God than you'll find in the Bible." (**Back to Godhead**, Vol. 11, No.7, pg. 5)

The Krsna devotees militantly protect their beliefs and are building a reputation for violence against Christians. A Hare Krsna devotee said in conversation with a UPI reporter that "the life of a Christian was not important. Only the Krsna consciousness is of value." The devotees justified their violent acts against Christians stating that "the Christians are connected with demonic people and this evil must be punished. If there is any interference with Krsna consciousness then violence is all right to stop this interference." (**Family Renewal**)

As a ministry we have experienced the Krsna violence. Our witnessing teams have been repeatedly threatened with violence and one brother was flattened with a sock to the jaw by a devotee in Montreal, Canada. Krsnas do not want to peacefully co-exist with disagreeing parties.

The Bible does not agree with the Krsna scriptures on any points and most essentially disagrees with ISKCON on the plan of salvation for mankind. Christians are warned that "in [the] later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron, men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods, which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe in and know the truth." (1 Timothy 4:1-3, NAS)

The plan of salvation is explained simply in John 3:16, "For God so greatly loved and dearly prized the world that He (even) gave up His only-begotten (unique) Son, so that whoever believes in (trusts, clings to, relies on) Him shall not perish... but have eternal (everlasting) life." (John 3:16, Amp.)

No matter how sincerely a devotee follows the Krsna teachings and calls on the name of Krsna, it is in vain. The Word of God says of Jesus, "... there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12, NAS)

(Postscript: The Krsna leader, A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, died on Nov. 14, 1977. Shortly before his death he appointed the twelve-member Governing Board Commission to lead the organization after him. The function of the GBC is merely administrative — the Krsnas say that no one will ever replace Bhaktivedanta or succeed him. The international interracial GBC meets periodically all around the globe to direct the affairs of the still active ISKCON organization.)

JESUS PEOPLE U.S.A.

4431 N. Paulina
Chicago, Illinois 60640

(312)

561-2450

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MANTRAS, SIKHAS & KRSNA

In the vision I was sitting down and I was chanting on my beads. Then I started to see Krsna. His feet came into focus first. As I started chanting more excitedly, I saw his trunk; and when his hands appeared, there was something wicked about them—his fingernails looked like claws. Instead of the peaceful, loving smile I had seen in the pictures, there was a mischievous smirk as if he were pulling one over on someone. Then I saw him completely revealed. He had two horns on his head. I suddenly realized that Krsna was the devil. It was too late. Instantly he jumped out and grabbed me.

— Testimony of an ex-Krsna who became a Christian

Almost every American has heard of or seen the saffron-robed youth with their shaved heads and "sikhas" — ponytails left so Krsna can pull them out of the ocean of materialism, and "tilakas" — clay markings on their foreheads, chanting the Hare Krsna mahamantra on street corners and other public places. The zealous devotees daily spend hours selling their magazine, **Back to Godhead**, books, incense, and flowers.

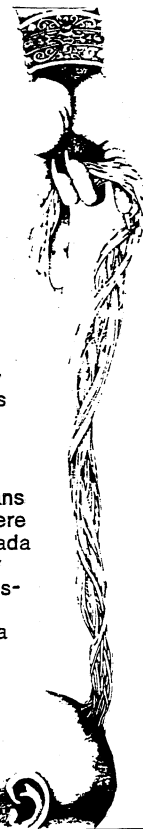
The International Society for Krsna Consciousness (ISKCON) is a relatively new Indian import brought to the states by A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada in 1965. The movement has grown to at least 3,000 full-time devotees with close to a hundred institutions including temples, schools, ashrams, and farm communities. ISKCON also has built a multi-million dollar business, Spiritual Sky Products, manufacturing incense, natural oils, and bath accessories. With financial stability established, the Hare Krsna movement is here to stay.

WHO IS GOD?

Krsna devotees will assure Christians that Krsna consciousness will not interfere with their Christianity. Swami Prabhupada invites all Christians to chant the "holy name of Krsna" and become better Christians by doing so.

In reality this is not the case. Krsna teachings and true Christianity are diametrically opposed.

ISKCON and the Christian are not worshipping the same God. When the Krsna devotee speaks of God he does not mean the Christian's triune God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy



Spirit. (Matt 28:19) They are referring to Krsna, a Hindu God-concept. Even though Krsna's life has no supporting evidence, he is believed to have created the universe.

"Scientists are searching for the ultimate cause or the ultimate controller of this material nature and are putting forth different theories and propositions, but our means of knowledge is very easy and perfect because we are hearing from the perfect person, Krsna. Because Krsna says so, we immediately know that the cosmic machine, of which earth is part, is working so nicely and wonderfully because behind this machine is a driver — Krsna." (*Krsna: Reservoir of Pleasure*, A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, pg. 281.)

The Bible designates Jesus as the creator, not Krsna. (John 1:1-3)

The Bible says of Jesus — "For in Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — all things have been created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together." (Col. 1:16-17, NAS)

Krsna devotees encourage everyone to repeat the holy name of God, Krsna, and by it be perfected. In the Bible God's name is "I AM" or "YHWH" (derived from the Hebrew verb "to be"), not Krsna. When Moses asked God who He was, "God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM'; and He said, 'Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.' " (Exodus 3:14, NAS)

Jesus, the Father's only Son, when rebuking the Pharisees for their unbelief told them, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day; and he saw it, and was glad." The Jews marvelled at this and asked how could He, such a young man, have seen Abraham. Jesus replied, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I AM." (John 8:56, 58, NAS) The Father and Son are one in unity and essence. (John 10:30) Krsna is not the name that God the Father has designated to be exalted either. That place is awarded to the Son.

"Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. 2:9-11, NAS)

When A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, the leader of ISKCON was asked, "Do you think your movement is the only way to know God?" he gave an affirmative, "Yes." The interviewer went on to ask how he was assured of this. Prabhupada answered, "From the authorities and from God, Krsna. Krsna says, 'Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reaction. Do not fear.'"

J. Stillson Judah in his book, *Hare Krishna and the Counterculture*, relates, "While recognizing that Krishna may be worshipped under many different names in various faiths, final salvation is ultimately to be realized only when full fellowship with Krishna is attained." Rarandhar (head of Western District of ISKCON) stated, "There is not even an alternative. Alternative means you have a choice. There is no choice. Either Krishna consciousness or finished.

That's all."

Jesus said about His position, "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life; no one comes to the Father except by (through) Me." (John 14:6, Amp.) The Christian faith makes no room for no other Savior. Jesus said about the other prophets or "gods," "All others who came (as such) before Me are thieves and robbers; but the (true) sheep did not listen and obey them." (John 10:8, Amp.)

TWENTIETH CENTURY IDOL WORSHIP

The Krsna devotees believe that Krsna is the same as his name and Krsna is the same as the deities of him (authorized images of Krsna found in every Krsna temple). ISKCON is actively involved with modern-day idol worship.

"For thousands of years devotees in India have known that we can personally see and serve the Lord in His Deity form (images and idols). Now, to the western mind this idea may seem unfamiliar, but it's easy to understand. The authorized form of the Lord is as good as the Lord Himself . . . Although the average person might suppose that the Deity only represents the Lord, the mature devotee understands that the Deity is the Supreme Lord Himself." ("An Age-old Tradition Comes to the Western World," *Back to Godhead*, Vol. 11, No. 8)

An advanced devotee from the New York Temple says of the idols, "Our limited eyes see metal and stone — the deities are really made out of truth — knowledge — bliss." (*The Strange World of the Hare Krishnas*, Faye Levine, pg. 73.)

Every day at 4:30 a.m. devotees gather to awaken, feed and worship the idols in their temples. Seven food offerings are made each day. The idols enjoy their big meal at 11:00 a.m. which consists of twenty-five dishes. On special days three hundred food items may be offered.

In the Bible there are over 20 scriptures condemning the worship of idols. God directly commands His people, "You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself an idol . . . you shall not worship them or serve them . . ." (Exodus 20:3-5)

Acts 17:29 refutes that idols are deities: "Since then we are God's offspring, we ought not to suppose that Deity — the Godhead — is like gold or silver or stone, (that is, of the nature of) a representation by human art and imagination, or anything constructed or invented." (Amp.) In Isaiah 42:8 God tells us, "I am the Lord, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another, nor My praise to graven images." (NAS)

CALL NO MAN MASTER

Not only does the Hare Krsna devotee place their god, his incarnations and man-made idols before Jesus, they consider A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada to be higher than Jesus — "located in the divine hierarchy above Brahma and Siva and below only Vishnu."

His picture is placed on every temple altar and is daily decorated with garlands of fresh flowers, while the devotees prostrate themselves full length before his picture. Bhaktivedanta is addressed as His Divine Grace and does not discourage his followers' devotion.

The following are a few devotees' comments about Bhaktivedanta: "He's not human — he's transcendental," "His body is not material — it's spiritual," "We offer him food to please Krsna," "flawless in every respect." The devotees refer to themselves in

comparison as "filthy specks of dirt" and "worthless servants." (*The Strange World of the Hare Krishnas*, Faye Levine, pp. 38-9)

In spite of his followers' beliefs, the flawless Bhaktivedanta recently made an embarrassing goof. In a discourse on women he said, "The brains of men are 64 ounces. The brains of the women are only 36 ounces. Never trust a woman or a politician." In the book *Human Anatomy*, Morris, page 928, it says that the average male's brain weighs 48 ounces and the average female's brain weighs 44 ounces. Besides, brain weight does not determine a person's level of intelligence.

The Bible places all men on the same level. "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23, NAS) "If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (1 John 1:8, NAS) Jesus instructed us not to reverence man above God or give man a place of honor which belongs to God. "But you are not to be called rabbi (teacher), for One is your Teacher, and you are all brothers. And do not call any one (in the church) on earth father, for you have only one Father, Who is in heaven. And you must not be called masters (leaders), for you have one Master (Leader), the Christ." (Matthew 23:8-10)

"KRSNAIZED" FOOD

Another Krsna teaching is that prasadam, the meatless diet of food offered to the Krsna idols in the temple and chanted over, becomes the transubstantiated Krsna. Prasadam is supposed to have spiritually purifying qualities and partaking of it is considered as equally as important as chanting the "holy names of Krsna." Temple guests are urged by the devotees to eat the prasadam out of the conviction that even very small amounts of the "Krsnaized" food can improve their souls.

Christians are told not to eat of food offered to idols or participate in these pagan rituals. We are assured, though, that this food is only food and has no special spiritual qualities. "What do I mean then? That a thing sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? No, but I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers in demons." (1 Cor. 10:19-20, NAS)

THE VALUE OF CHANTING

Chanting the mahamantra (Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Hare Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare) given to Chaitanya, the main proponent of Krsnaism, in 1496, is still the essential part of Krsna Consciousness. Full-time devotees must chant 16 rounds of the mantra every day. One round consists of repeating the mantra 108 times. This amounts to 1,728 times daily and the grand total of 630,720 times a year. Teams of devotees spend hours publicly chanting (sankirtan), on street corners, college campuses, and parks.

They believe by chanting the mantra their minds are purified and conscious awareness of Krsna is increased. "The entire process of liberation begins just as we have now begun this chanting and hearing. I wish to point out that this chanting of the holy name of God (mahamantra) and hearing the truths of the Gita is as good as bodily association with Krsna." (*Krsna:*