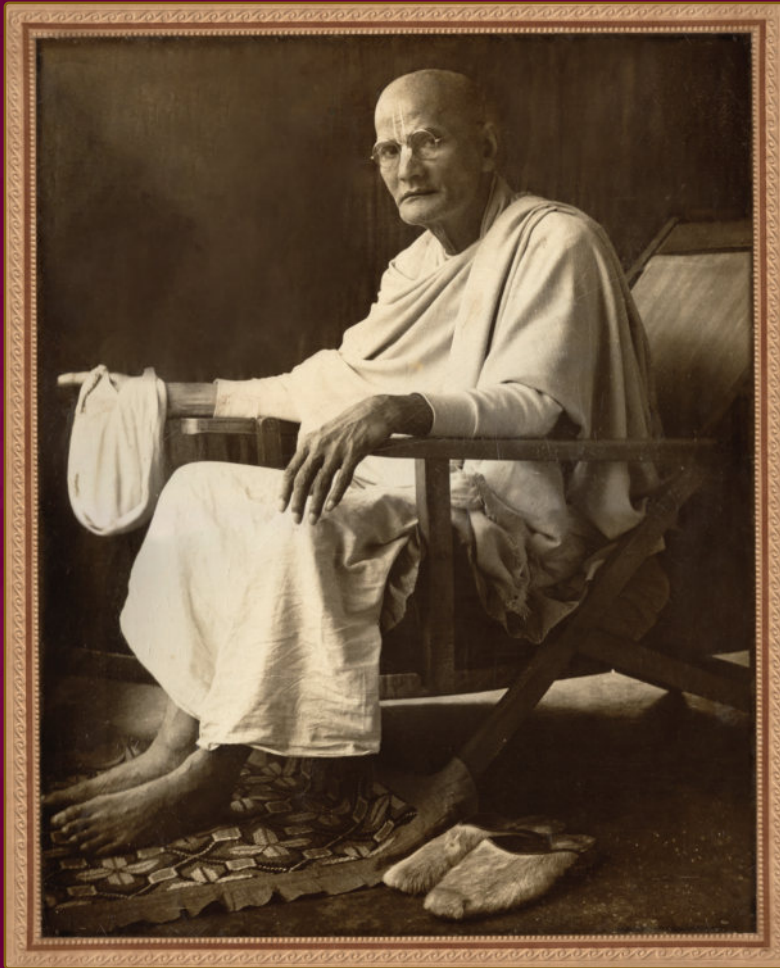


KṚTĪ-RATNA

— Jewel Among Guru-sevakas —



ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD

BHAKTI PRAJÑĀNA KEŚAVA GOSVĀMĪ MAHĀRĀJA

Articles, Letters and Words of Tribute

Rays of The Harmonist

In the first part of the 20th century, pure *bhakti* was propagated throughout India like never before. The disciples, or *guru-sevakas*, of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, executing his command to bring light to the souls of this world, spread Vedic teachings and the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* up and down the subcontinent.

Kṛti-ratna brings us into the revered company of a particularly prominent jewel among those *guru-sevakas*: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

His teachings, endlessly deep, are conveyed in his articles. His letters, brimming with clarity, pragmatism and spiritual potency, allow us to know him more deeply. And narrations of his qualities and deeds, replete with steadfast faith in his *guru*, are recounted by exalted Vaiṣṇavas.



KṚTĪ-RATNA

Jewel Among Guru-sevakas

Kṛti-ratna: Jewel Among Guru-sevakas

ISBN 978-1-63316-189-4

Library of Congress Control Number: 2021942882

Second edition printing: 1,000 copies

Śrī Baladeva-pūrṇimā, 22 August 2021

First printing: 1,000 copies (Śaradiya-pūrṇimā, 24 October 2018)

Printed at Spectrum Printing Press Pvt. Ltd. (New Delhi, India)

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Kṛti-ratna: Jewel Among Guru-sevakas (Second Edition)

has been published with the generous donations of

B. V. Śrautī Mahārāja and Yaśodānandana dāsa.

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

KṚTI-RATNA

Jewel Among Guru-sevakas

nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda

ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD BHAKTI PRAJÑĀNA KEŚAVA GOSVĀMĪ MAHĀRĀJA

Articles, Letters and Words of Tribute

Published by the inspiration of

nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda

ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Rays of The Harmonist



VRINDAVAN • NEW DELHI • SAN FRANCISCO

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The Rays of The Harmonist Team

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Cover Design: Rasikānanda dāsa

Other Acknowledgements: B. V. Bhāgavata Mahārāja (Canada), Gaurasundara dāsa (Hawaii), Dalia Bhaṭṭācārya, and other GVP *sevakas* who gave valuable input on the preface, flaps and back cover text.

Editors' Preface

We were privileged to witness time and again how Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja (Śrīla Gurudeva) was always extremely eager to extol the superlative character and precepts of his beloved *gurudeva*, Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, one of the foremost disciples of Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda.

It is therefore with the sincere hope of bringing Śrīla Gurudeva joy that we present *Kṛti-ratna: Jewel Among Guru-sevakas* on the occasion of the 50th disappearance day of his *gurudeva*, who is the object of his deepest love and highest veneration.

The book is divided into four parts. Parts 1 and 2 consist of articles and letters by Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja (hereafter referred to as Paramagurudeva, or our “grandfather *guru*”). Part 3 consists of words of tribute by his godbrothers and a godsister, and Part 4 consists of homages by his own disciples.

A word of explanation about the letters: most of them were published in *Śrī Gaudīya-patrikā* (in Bengali); letter 43 was published in *Śrī Bhāgatava-patrikā* (in Hindi); and letters 28 and 40 were submitted separately to Paramagurudeva's *Patrāvalī* (a book of his letters), published by Gaudīya Vedānta Samiti,

and were not published in the *patrikā*s. In those publications, names of recipients and persons discussed were for the most part omitted.

In his letters, sometimes Paramagurudeva referred to Bengali calendar dates and sometimes to English dates. Jyestha refers to May–June; Āṣāḍha to June–July; Śrāvaṇa to July–August; Bhādra to August–September; Āśvina to September–October; Kārtika to October–November; Pauṣa to December–January; Māgha to January–February; and Caitra to March–April.

Some of the titles of the articles were adjusted for this English publication, to highlight the article's essence.

We pray to all Sārasvata Vaiṣṇavas, the immeasurably powerful and merciful commanders of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's army, that they forever give us shelter at their lotus feet. We beg the reader to forgive us for any inadvertent errors.

Aspiring to serve Śrī Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas,

The Rays of The Harmonist team 

On the occasion
of the 50th Disappearance Day of
Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja
Śaradiya-pūrṇimā, 24 October 2018

The Bhāgavata- guru- paramparā

(from the 15th century
to the present)



The Six Gosvāmīs:
Śrī Rūpa, Sanātana, Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa, Śrī Jīva, Gopāla-bhaṭṭa, Raghunātha dāsa



Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, Śrīnivāsa Ācārya
and Śyāmānanda Prabhu



Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī
Ṭhākura



Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa



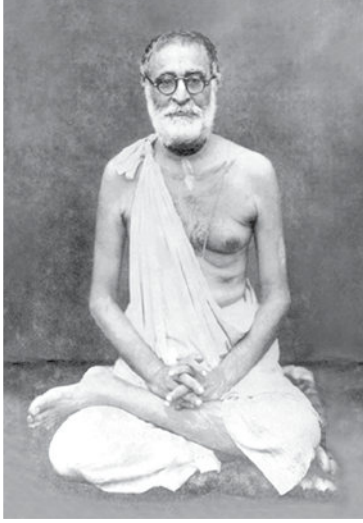
Śrī Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī



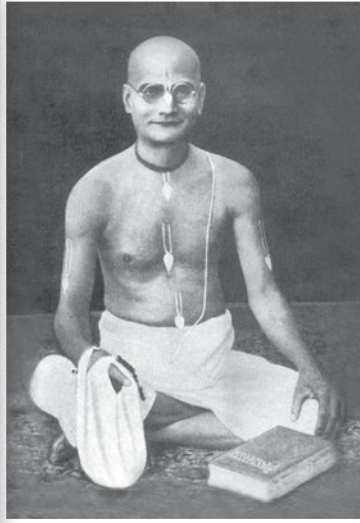
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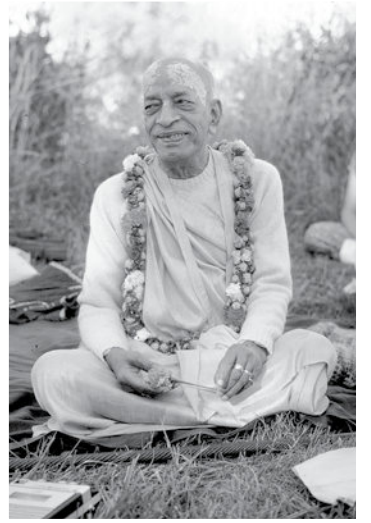
Śrī Gaura-kīśora dāsa Bābājī



Prabhupāda Śrī Śrīmad
Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura



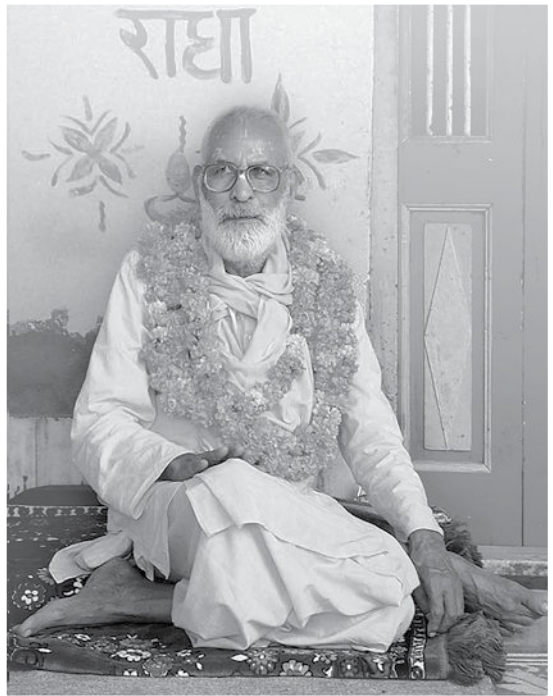
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Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja



Śrī Śrīmad
Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja



Śrī Śrīmad
Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja



Śrī Śrīmad
Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

ŚRĪ ŚRĪ GAURA-ĀŚĪRVĀDA-PATRA
CONFERRED BY ŚRĪ NAVADVĪPA-DHĀMA PRACĀRIṆĪ SABHĀ



On the second day of the 38th annual session of the Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma Pracāriṇī Sabhā (29 March 1932, 446 Gaurābda), the chairman of the committee, Śrīla Sarasvatī Prabhupāda, being highly satisfied with the responsible service rendered by Śrī Vinoda-bihārī Brahmācārī, decorated him with the Gaura-āśīrvāda Award (“Blessings of Śrī Gaura”), and gave him the title “**Kṛti-ratna**” (one who accomplishes jewel-like deeds).

The certificate stated:

śrī śrī māyāpura-candro vijayatetamām
Victory to the Beautiful Moon of Śrī Māyāpura

śrī śrī navadvīpa-dhāma-pracāriṇyāḥ sabhāyāḥ

Śrī Śrī Gaura-āśīrvāda-patram

“BLESSINGS OF ŚRĪ GAURA”

śrī mahāprabhu-sevārthaṁ śrī-dhāmnī-bhūmi-rakṣakaḥ
prajā-pālana-dakṣo yaḥ śrī-caitanya-maṭhāśritaḥ

To serve Śrī Mahāprabhu, he protects the land of the holy *dhāma*. He is expert in caring for its residents and has taken shelter of Śrī Caitanya Maṭha.

śrī-vinoda-bihāry-ākhyā brahmacārī-varāya ca
prabhupādāntaraṅgāya sarva-sad-guṇa-śāline

His name is Śrī Vinoda-bihārī; esteemed among *brahmacārīs*, he a close confidante of Prabhupāda, and is endowed with all good qualities.

dhāma-pracāriṇī-saṁsat-sabhyais tasmai pradīyate
‘kṛti-ratna’ iti khyātam-upādhi-bhūṣaṇaṁ mudā

The noble members of the Dhāma Pracāriṇī Sabhā take great delight in conferring unto him this decorative title, “Kṛti-ratna”...

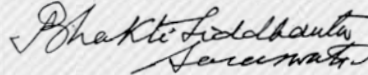
gaṅgā-pūrva-taṭastha-śrī-navadvīpa-sthale pare
śrī māyāpura-dhāma-stha-yoga-pīṭha-mahattame

...at the glorious Yoga-pīṭha, the most exalted place in Śrī Navadvīpa, situated on the eastern bank of the Gaṅgā in Śrī Māyāpura-dhāma...

guṇeṣu vasu-śubhrāṁśu-śakābde ‘smin śubhāśraye
phālguṇa-pūrṇimāyāṁ śrī gaurāvirbhāva-vāsare

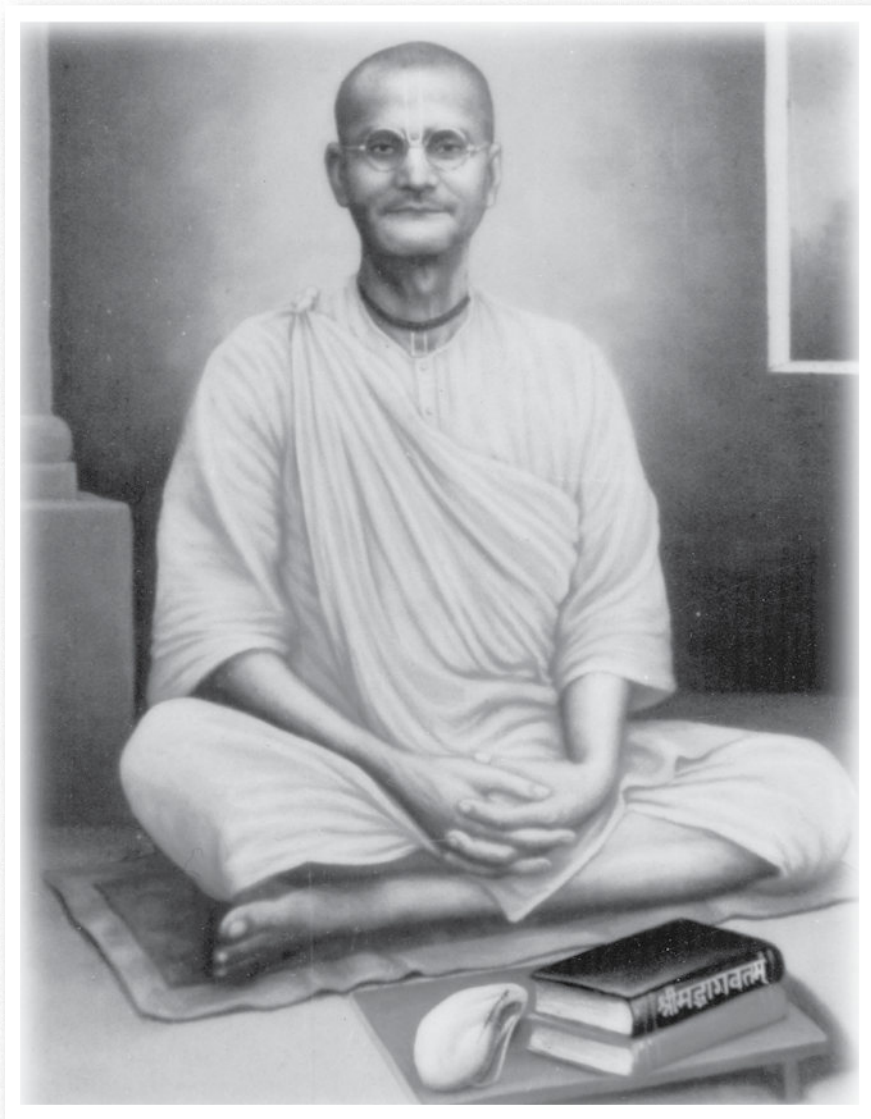
...during the auspicious occasion of Phālguṇī Pūrṇimā, the day of Śrī Gaura’s advent, in the Śaka year 1853 (1932).

Signed,



Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī
Chairman

ŚRĪ ŚRĪ GAURA-ĀŚĪRVĀDA-PATRA
CONFERRED BY ŚRĪ NAVADVĪPA-DHĀMA PRACĀRIṆĪ SABHĀ



During the 40th annual session of the Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma Pracāriṇī Sabhā (1 March 1934, 448 Gaurābda, 8:30 a.m.) in Śrī Caitanya Maṭha's temple room known as Avidyā-haraṇa (usurper of ignorance), the chairman of the committee, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda, after electing the acting committee members, awarded Śrīpāda Vinoda-bihārī Brahmācārī Kṛti-ratna Mahodaya with the title “Upadeśaka” (Instructor).

śrī śrī māyāpura-candro vijayatetamām
Victory to the Beautiful Moon of Śrī Māyāpura

śrī śrī navadvīpa-dhāma-pracāriṇyāḥ sabhāyāḥ

Śrī Śrī Gaura-āśīrvāda-patram

*sarvātmanā śrī guru-gaura-sevā-
sampādakaḥ śuddha-matir naya-jñāḥ
sadāśayaḥ satya-pathaika-rāgī
guru-priyo 'yam kṛti-ratna-varyaḥ*

He delivers himself wholeheartedly to the service of Śrī Guru and Śrī Gaurāṅga, he is of pure intellect, dedicated to spiritual principles, exclusively attached to the path of truth, beloved of his *guru*, and “Kṛti-ratna-śreṣṭha – the foremost jewel of accomplishers”.

*śrī vinoda-bihāry-ākhyo brahmacārī-varo mudā
upadeśaka ity etad upanāmnā vimaṇḍitaḥ*

The noble members of the Śrī Dhāma Pracāriṇī Sabhā take great joy in conferring unto Śrī Vinoda-bihārī, foremost of *brahmacārīs*, the title “Upadeśaka”.

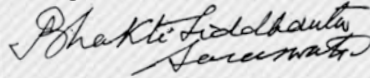
*gaṅgā-pūrva-taṭastha-śrī-navadvīpa-sthalottame
śrī-māyāpura-dhāma-sṭhe yoga-pīṭhāśraye pare*

... at the glorious spot of Yoga-pīṭha, the most exalted place in Śrī Navadvīpa, situated on the eastern bank of the Gaṅgā in Śrī Māyāpura-dhāma...

*bāṇeṣu vasu-śubhrāṁśu-śākābde maṅgalālaye
phālguṇa-pūrṇimāyām śrī gaurāvirbhāva-vāsare*

... during the auspicious occasion of Phālguṇī Pūrṇimā, the day of Śrī Gaura's advent, in the Śaka year 1855 (1934).

Signed,



Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī
Chairman

Part One

Articles and Discourses

by Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja



An Invocation in Separation

An editorial for the inaugural issue of Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā
by Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Today, amidst profuse joy and elation, all that has been awakening within me are the pangs of grief. Although I have been trying to conceal these painful emotions within my heart, my heavy sighs betray me, revealing my pain to the outside world. That burdened breath tumbles and heaves restlessly and has now become the sounds of words. Those words are the very form of weeping. This language is either completely indistinct or partially indistinct as the throat chokes up and the voice falters. Still, I believe that only when this concealed pain of separation is professed and exposed will it subside even slightly.

But even bearing this in mind, today, as I set out to write, the torment I feel by not being able to see Śrī Śrī Guru-pādapadma or Ṭhākura Śrīla Narahari Sevā-vigraha Prabhu, who was devoted solely to serving him, mingles with my pen, causing it to falter at every step and proceed so slowly across the page.

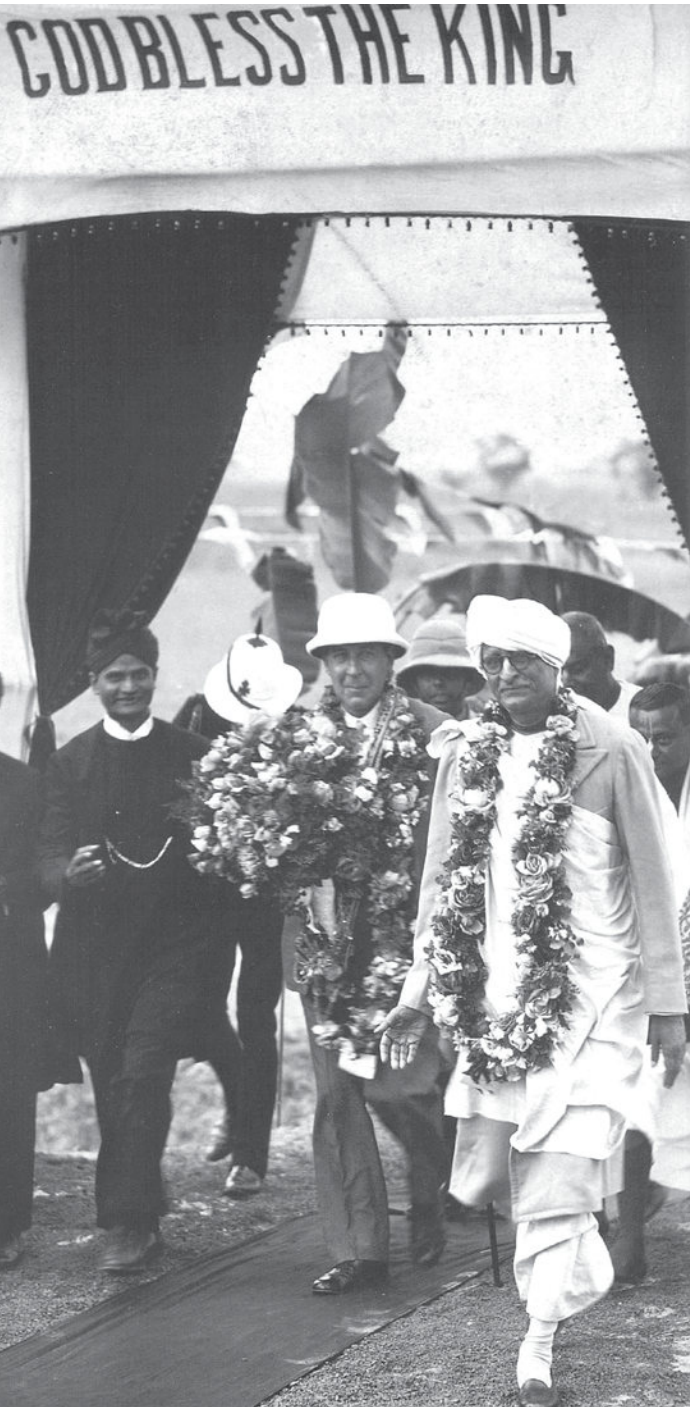
He who has even attracted the all-attractive Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and made Him a captive within his heart; he who has overpowered all-powerful Bhagavān with endearment and who can therefore deliver Him into the hearts of others as he pleases; he who has gathered all the qualities of Śrī Hari, proving the deceived condition of the *nirguṇa-brahmavādīs*, who believe that Absolute Reality is ultimately devoid of personal qualities – that *śrī śrī guru-pādapadma* Śrīla Prabhupāda

advented at the site of Puruṣottama-kṣetra, Śrī Purī-dhāma, as the spiritual master of the entire universe to unfold and fulfil the deepest message of Śrī Caitanya and Śrī Vyāsa.

I am an addict of gross pleasures, my nature is heinously untameable, and I am a fallen wretch; and yet he firmly grabbed me by the hair on my head and dragged me into his shelter, allowing me to be a particle of dust on the soles of his sacred lotus feet. His compassion surpasses even God's compassion. That *śrī guru-pādapadma* – the greatest of all exalted souls, he who is indeed the ideal model within the clan of *paramahamsas*¹ – concealed the glory of his true identity from the world out of humility, and instead introduced himself as *om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Ṭhākura. The residents of this world address him with utmost respect as “Śrīla Prabhupāda”.

He has not just captivated all the residents of India, but the entire world, with the brilliance of his scholarship. When the great thinkers of distant Western countries beheld his visionary, philosophical genius, they became astounded and fell at his feet. The adherents of opposing schools of thought, who know that his logical refutations

.....
¹ Literally supreme (*parama*) swan (*hamsa*), indicating the highest class of realized saints who can extract the sweetest essence from the lake of spirituality, just as a swan extracts milk from water.



“ He has not just captivated all the residents of India, but the entire world, with the brilliance of his scholarship. When the great thinkers of distant Western countries beheld his visionary, philosophical genius, they became astounded and fell at his feet.”

of their doctrines are as severe as bolts of lightning, remain perpetually terrorized. The immovable, impenetrable expanse of his philosophical conclusions regarding service to Adhokṣaja, He who exists beyond sense perception, has forced the peaks of towering, snow-capped mountains to bow to him in veneration. Today, many people are tormented by the anguish of separation that arose because he has concealed himself from us.

His form, shining with the most captivating, supramundane effulgence, has embarrassed all worldly beauty. In refuting philosophies that are opposed to the conclusive truth, his heart seemed to be harder than stone, yet his heart would become overwhelmed with joy whenever he saw someone performing even a very small service with excellence. He is the prime embodiment of that wonderful quality of Vaiṣṇavas summed up by the words “a Vaiṣṇava considers even the most insignificant service we render to be great and becomes at once indebted to us”. Indeed, whenever he saw us render even the most insignificant service, he would heap praises upon us. And whenever he saw us make even the

smallest mistake, he would shower nectar-like rebukes upon us, which were always pregnant with meaningful instruction.

Śrī Caitanya Maṭha is the original Gauḍīya Maṭha. It is the king of all Śrīla Prabhupāda's other *maṭhas* and the most beloved by him. Upon obtaining his most intimate and trusted servant, Śrī Narahari Brahmācārī Sevā-vigraha Prabhu, who was supremely worshipful for all, Śrīla Prabhupāda entrusted him with the entire burden of service to Śrī Caitanya Maṭha. Rid of worrying about the *maṭha* and in great ecstasy, he was able to preach in far-off lands without the slightest hesitation. Today, I realize that since the company of such a vile, fallen wretch as I is thoroughly poisonous, they have abandoned me and gone to a place where even getting any news of them is extremely difficult.

O Narahari dā²! You are known to everyone as Ṭhākura Mahāśaya. Just by uttering your beautiful, most auspicious name, we are all reminded of the constancy with which you performed your service. You personally embody Śrīla Prabhupāda's beloved Śrī Caitanya Maṭha³.

2 Dā – elder brother (Bengali).

3 According to passages taken from several Gauḍīya articles, we derive the following three revelations:

(1) Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda named the original *maṭha* Śrī Caitanya Maṭha because it is the birthplace of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu and thus non-different from the Absolute Godhead. (2) The purpose of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu's appearance, and thus the purpose of Śrī Caitanya Maṭha, is to revive the original Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or *kṛṣṇa-caitanya*, of the living entities and thus reinstate them in their roles of eternal loving service. (3) It is only possible for the living entities to regain their original position through the association and guidance of those whose Kṛṣṇa consciousness is eternally awakened – in other words, the transcendental residents of the eternally existing Śrī Caitanya Maṭha, such as Śrī Narahari Sevā-vigraha Prabhu.

As long as we were in your company, we felt as if we were truly living in Śrī Caitanya Maṭha. You have shown the way to ideal service through your unperturbed and supremely blissful self (*akrodha paramānanda svarūpa*), and striving for that ideal has become the sole aim of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti. Please see me as I try to serve your beloved Śrī *Gauḍīya-patrikā* and shower your kind grace upon me. And if I ever commit any offence, please reprimand me.

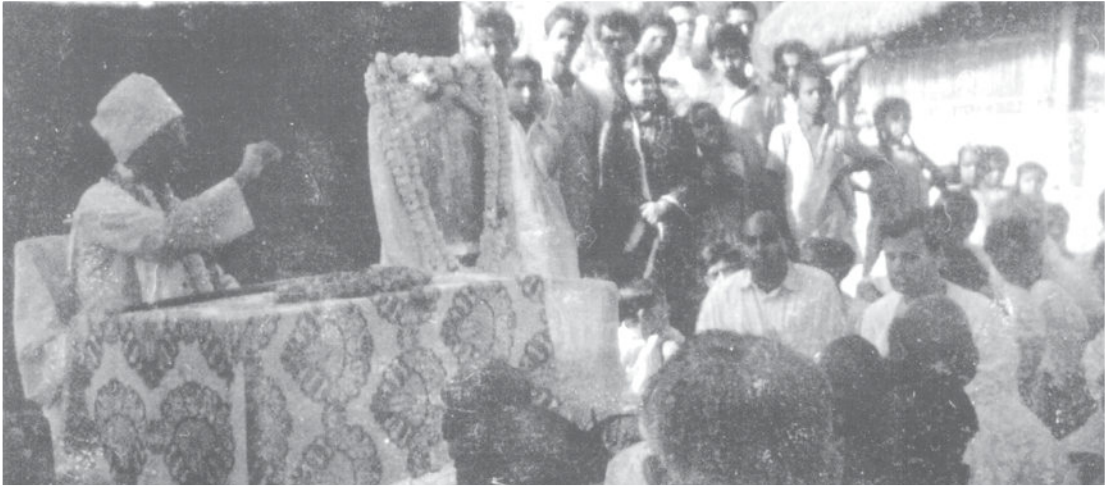
Just as there is a want of exemplary personalities to reprimand me when I make mistakes in my services, there is similarly a dearth of those who will express great joy when they see my small efforts to serve and encourage me congruously. O Śrīla Ṭhākura Mahāśaya! O Śrīla Prabhupāda! The two of you are the sole captains of my spiritual life. Even though you both remain forever immersed in the bliss of your most exalted services within the apical realm of the spiritual domain, please remember this fallen wretch and bestow profuse blessings upon me. Again and again I beg you: please bestow profuse blessings upon me, please bestow profuse blessings upon me! Today, this prayer, full of anguish, is my only supplication at your lotus-like feet.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, you called your beloved magazines *vaikuṇṭha-vārtāvaha*, carriers of the Vaikuṇṭha message. They carried all the divine messages that your predecessor *ācāryas* transmitted to you in this mortal world. Today, please convey a message to me from your supremely exalted place within the spiritual world so that I can publish it and make the name *vaikuṇṭha-vārtāvaha* successful [for the magazine I now begin].🙏

Translated from Śrī *Gauḍīya-patrikā*, Year 1, Issue 1
Gaura-pūrṇimā, 14 March, 1949

A True Experience of Separation

From a speech given by Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja
at Śrī Uddhārāṇa Gauḍīya Maṭha, Chuchura, on 5 December 1952



APPEARANCE AND DISAPPEARANCE HAVE THE SAME PURPOSE

The Vaiṣṇavas' appearance in this world and their disappearance from it are one and the same. Both their arrival in this world and departure from it signify their mercy. Compelled by mercy, they come to this world, and it is for mercy's sake that they also leave it. All of the activities of Vaiṣṇavas are imbued with mercy. "*Vaiṣṇava caritra sarvadā pavitra* – the life and character of Vaiṣṇavas are pure in all respects." Imparting divine bliss is the purpose of their lives. Still, those gripped by misfortune and compelled by temporal pleasures perceive their lives to be devoid of any joy. This is but the influence of *māyā*.

If we think that Vaiṣṇava Thākura has departed from this world and dropped us in an ocean of sorrow, then we are attributing fault to his character. But why would he inflict pain upon us? He does not know how to give pain to anyone. This is why the term *viraha-utsava* ("a festival of separation") came to be used in Vaiṣṇava literature. The word *utsava* refers to that which yields happiness and love, not joylessness or sorrow.

The Vaiṣṇavas' purpose for appearing in this world is not temporal. It has not even a shadow of impermanence. The Vaiṣṇavas are eternal and their practices are also eternal. Their appearance ensures the distinct speciality of

their disappearance, and their disappearance increases the sweet charm of their advent.

The sweetness of their appearance and the magnanimity displayed in their disappearance manifest in this world the literature and chronicles of Vaiṣṇava saints. This literature is the blossoming of *śabda-brahma* (the divine word), where the filthy shadow of the ordinary word cannot penetrate.

Śrīla Prabhupāda is Siddhānta Sarasvatī (*siddhānta* meaning “the perfect conclusion” and *sarasvatī* meaning “the goddess of knowledge”). That is to say, he is the elaboration of the inner conception of the divine temple of the Vaiṣṇava message.

Today is Śrīla Prabhupāda’s holy disappearance day. We do not attribute any sort of fault to this holy day or view Śrīla Prabhupāda’s suprahuman, auspicious activities negatively. With great respect, Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samitī welcomes this occasion (*tithi*) every year. It is a matter of great delight that again this year you have all eagerly assembled to worship this day.

VAIKUNṬHA-DARŚANA

To view happiness and distress equally is actually *vaikunṭha-darśana*. In such *vaikunṭha-darśana*, one perceives uniformity in every object and entity. At the same time, this equality is full of distinctiveness.

Worldly inequities are not found in the divine realm. In this world, happiness and distress are opposites. In the transcendental world, these same conflicting forces produce a divine, mutual uniformity, replete with unique specialities. Happiness and sadness dwell either side of a single path. They advance from opposite directions at the same pace till they meet at a point in the middle.

This middle ground is called *sambhoge vipralambha* (separation in meeting) and

vipralambhe sambhoga (meeting in separation). Śrī Gaurasundara Himself is the presiding deity of this juncture. *Āvirbhāva* and *tirobhāva* are the representations of *sambhoga* and *vipralambha*.

The apprehension of separation experienced at the moment of meeting increases the intensity of union. The deeper the worry of impending separation that arises in one’s heart during meeting, the sweeter the burgeoning flavour of meeting. Likewise, the more acute the impact of meeting, the more the endless current of *vipralambha-rasa* inundates the heart with separation. Such phenomena are illuminated in the life and character of supremely liberated personalities.

SADNESS IN THE ABSENCE OF A VAIṢṆAVA DOES NOT CONSTITUTE SEPARATION FROM HIM

We were attracted by Śrīla Prabhupāda’s supramundane potency, and we narrate his supramundane activities through *kīrtana*. Not everyone’s concept or perception of the supramundane is the same. One can only grasp a supramundane character to the extent that one is immersed in a supramundane disposition. Our tendency to be self-indulgent, our thirst to gratify the senses and our desire to search for happiness do not facilitate a grasp of the supramundane conception.

Whatever longing in separation (*viraha*) we may express via the above-mentioned impulses is but a reflection of enjoyment (*bhoga*). The displeasure we experience when our enjoyment is curtailed cannot be called *viraha*. If that were the case, then the antonyms of *bhoga* – *tyāga* (abstinence) and *vairāgya* (detachment) – would be referred to as *viraha*. Though abstinence and detachment appear spontaneously in the character of one who is experiencing separation, they do not constitute *viraha* in and of themselves.



We experience separation when our pleasure is obstructed. As we beheld Śrīla Prabhupāda's charming and handsome figure, his sweet, gentle smile, his simple and generous dealings, his world-conquering unparalleled scholarship, his natural inclination to constantly speak *hari-kathā* and perform *kīrtana* and other such qualities, we became enchanted by him. We delighted in his compassion and affectionate ways. Even veteran intellectuals were exceedingly delighted by his views and reasoning. It is only natural, therefore, that those who were enchanted by all these qualities of Śrīla Prabhupāda and drawn to him should now experience sadness in his absence. But I want to say that this is an experience of thwarted pleasure rather than *viraha*. *Gurudeva* was a good person, his dealings were nice, he

used to help us so much and make us so happy. That is why we liked him so much. The sadness we now feel in his absence because we are not getting those things is merely *kāmanā* (lust, or desire) and *bhoga* (enjoyment).

SEPARATION IS ONLY EXPERIENCED THROUGH SELF-SURRENDER

From the moment of our birth, we carry out our life according to various notions of good and bad, as dictated by our previous *karma*. We derive much of this conception of morality from our atmosphere and environment. From this assortment of acquired tendencies, we create certain perceptions of sainthood, which in reality are not sainthood. Sainthood is determined by service attitude. As long as there is service

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(*sevā*), there is devotion (*bhakti*). The mundane atmosphere and environment have no authority over *bhakti* or *sevā*. The moment Śrīla Prabhupāda saw a tendency for devotion or service in a person, he would reveal his identity to him. Otherwise, his identity was always concealed from the external world. The dominant characteristic of *bhakti* is *śaraṇāgati*, or surrender. *Śaraṇāgati* is to relinquish our presumed identity, or the idea that we belong to ourselves.

Śrīla Prabhupāda informed us: “One will have to become a devotee and one will have to obtain *bhakti*.” One will receive *gurudeva*’s genuine mercy to the extent that one has offered him one’s self. We hope to derive happiness and comfort from our relatives and friends. We wished for these things even from Śrīla Prabhupāda, and received

them also. But those factors do not produce a true experience of separation. It is surrender of the self (*ātma-samarpaṇa*) that determines separation. *Ātma-samarpaṇa* means to fully offer what one considers to be “I” and “mine”. That is why to hope for any sort of worldly possession, ideology or action from *gurudeva* is not characteristic of *ātma-nivedana*. *Bhakti* is to instantly offer whatever we happen to think is ours to the lotus feet of *śrī gurudeva*.

A person could wonder: “Why is it not *ātma-nivedana* to get something from *gurudeva* and offer it back to him?” But what is the point of taking something from *guru* and giving it back? In accounting terms this is much the same as a deposit and withdrawal. In other words, one might think, “Since I gave my everything to Gurudeva, my balance went to zero. I then took one thousand rupees from him, which brought my balance to a thousand. Again, I gave those thousand coins to Gurudeva, and now I am left with zero. When I collected a thousand rupees from Gurudeva and returned it to him, my balance came to zero, just as when I first surrendered everything to him and had nothing, zero. ($0 + 1,000 = 1,000 - 1,000 = 0$.)”

Though both equations are equivalent in mathematical terms, really, they are not the same. If you think about it, you will see there is a huge iniquity. It is uncharacteristic of a surrendered devotee to try to solicit anything from *guru*. Moreover, the *guru-sevaka* will have to suffer the result of any trouble his *gurudeva* willingly undergoes in an effort to fulfil his disciple’s wish. As such, to derive personal gain from the lotus feet of *gurudeva* is extremely damaging for the *guru-sevaka*. Only the desire to nurture love for the lotus feet of *guru* will destroy other aspirations and is characteristic of a surrendered soul.

UNDERSTANDING ŚRĪ GURUDEVA'S HEART

Esteemed and prominent *sannyāsīs* and *brahma-cārīs* could not comprehend Śrīla Prabhupāda's heart, despite toiling day and night. We had the opportunity to witness this during his manifest presence. How can one ever understand the heart of a supramundane personality without even considering the consciousness needed to do so?

The *guru-sevaka's* exclusive duty is to proceed in accordance with what is on *gurudeva's* mind.

We might think, "Gurudeva has a dire lack of funding and needs a great deal of manpower. If somehow or other we collect some money and give it to him, we may be able to grasp Prabhupāda's mind." Or, we conclude, "Festivals require a great deal of physical labour, so only if we exert ourselves physically day and night [in preparing a festival] will we be doing service."

But if money and manpower cannot complete an immortal personality's efforts to serve Kṛṣṇa, then how can they enable us to comprehend *gurudeva's* mind? To grasp *gurudeva's* mind, one will have to identify his deepest, independent inner desires and render all sorts of services accordingly. Only those who had the opportunity to flawlessly contemplate his deepest service dispositions during his manifest presence are truly blessed. Imposing our own presumptions of what constitutes *śrī guru-pādapadma's* service will never be considered service. Whatever effort we make under the assumption that our perspectives are one with *gurudeva's* does not constitute service, but rather a kind of autosuggestion.

There is no point in imposing notions that belong to the terrestrial world on the transcendental world. By striving to do so, we deviate from the true path. Indications how to truly serve manifest in the *sevaka's* heart from the realm of Vaikuṇṭha.

While assuming a proclivity to enjoy, whatever efforts we exhibit to serve are rooted in a desire for sense gratification. And if we try to check those tendencies, a sense of detachment sprouts

that is mundane. This does not slightly constitute actual service. During Śrīla Prabhupāda's time, we had the opportunity to witness the fact that one cannot satisfy *gurudeva's* mind even by labouring tirelessly day and night with simple-hearted intent. Only someone who understands the difference between *śrī gurudeva's* internal instructions and his external

instructions, or his worldly guidance, and acts accordingly can attain true auspiciousness.

WHAT QUALITIES ENDEAR ONE TO ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA?

Jagad-guru Śrīla Prabhupāda had a *sannyāsī* disciple (Bhakti-vilāsa), who is no longer present. We never observed him displaying any worldly skill in his life. Some of his peers, high-status *sannyāsī* teachers and speakers, cast aspersions on his [apparent] inactivity a couple of times. Śrīla Prabhupāda, roaring like a lion, strongly corrected them.

"I am a big orator. I am a very good instructor. I can captivate everyone with my classes and speeches. I have so much capability. So many

“During Śrīla Prabhupāda's time, we had the opportunity to witness the fact that one cannot satisfy *gurudeva's* mind even by labouring tirelessly day and night with simple-hearted intent.”

people are coming to the *maṭha* due to my lectures. I am therefore a prominent and dear disciple.” Śrīla Prabhupāda never considered those with such a mentality to be exalted servants. The aptitude for *bhakti* is something else. It is only attained by extreme good fortune.

In observing the life and conduct of Śrīla Prabhupāda, we saw several seemingly contradictory incidents.

We saw that someone conversant in all the scriptures, adored by scholars and the veritable sun of philosophical truths had accepted a completely illiterate personality as his *guru*.

We worship Prabhupāda as the personification of the divine message (*vāñī*), and yet when one of the main assistants in his *vāñī-vilāsa-līlā* (preaching pastimes), a particularly bright writer, was overwhelmed by a weakness of heart and suddenly left the *maṭha* to go to Dhaka, Prabhupāda was not in the least perturbed. On the other hand, he would become extremely anxious if one of his servants, whose name was Pañcānana and who happened to be illiterate, went out of his sight for even a moment. This seems quite startling and perplexing, but in reality, it is not, even slightly. These interactions reveal the full current of the nature of *bhakti*. Unlimitedly greater than service to Prabhupāda by moving a pen, which brought about a revolution in the world, is the service propensity of an illiterate person’s heart-felt affection for him. The root fibre of the aptitude for *bhakti* is attachment to the lotus feet of *śrī guru*.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF SERVICE TO GURU

We have seen many exhibit great enthusiasm for reading from the scriptures, performing *kīrtana*, delivering lectures, writing essays and articles,

and publishing books, because a hankering for material gain, worship and prestige corrupted their minds. If, in the course of serving *śrī guru*, we fail to receive something in return, at least some praise and prestige, then we stop serving him. In the name of wanting encouragement from *gurudeva*, we forever hanker for prestige. This in truth is not characteristic of service to *guru* or surrender. The more one is attached to *gurudeva*, the more one qualifies as his servant.

We receive instruction from the following song of the *mahājanas*: “*viṣaye je prīti ebe āchaye āmāra, sei mata prīti hau caraṇe tomāra* – May I love You the way I now love the objects of the senses.” We regard the illusory objects of the senses as ours. Our attachment to them is such that if they leave our field of vision for a mere moment, we feel extreme discomfort. How can we possibly attain Bhagavān’s mercy if we do not develop that sense of possessiveness for the things that are used in the service of Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas? “If the belongings of Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas are getting destroyed, so be it, as long as my own belongings are fine.” This sort of disposition is not considered indicative of a service mentality. A true servant of Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas thinks, “Let all the resources of this illusory world go to ruin, but I will not let even a single particle of any object that is used in the service of Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas be destroyed.”

COMPLETE AND INCOMPLETE OBJECTS

Once, Śrīla Prabhupāda, whose disappearance day it is today, was in Bahram Ganj, a town in the Faridpur district (Bangladesh), delivering a lecture to an assembly of thousands of people. He said, “I can support the destruction of millions of conditioned souls in order to protect a single

cowrie¹ belonging to Bhagavān.” This was thirty-two years ago. When I heard this, tremendous agitation took over my heart. What had I just heard in open assembly from the mouth of this great personality? He had been a vegetarian all his life and had firmly vowed to establish all living entities in the transcendent laws of non-violence. This struck me as extremely revolting, but in truth, it was a profound statement that captured the essence of the Vedas, Vedānta and Upaniṣads.

Books dealing with mathematics state that “plus one” is greater than minus any large amount or infinity. That is, millions and millions of negative integers are still less than a single positive one. Similarly, this illusory world is constructed of transience and deficiency. Therefore, it is always a negative quantity. On the other hand, the transcendental realm, beyond this Earth, is whole. In that place, a single grain of sand is whole and complete. No illusory deficiency can enter that realm.

It follows then that a single cowrie belonging to Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas is a whole and complete object and infinitely greater than billions and billions of imperfect entities in this destitute material realm. Indeed, this teaching has been verily exhibited in the supramundane life of one from the transcendental world. There is no shortage of correlations of this truth in this world either. A king or leader of a nation does not hesitate to sacrifice the lives of hundreds of thousands of soldiers to fulfil his own aims. Commanders and soldiers sacrifice their very lives to fulfil their leader’s wishes.

LOVE FOR THE VAIṢṆAVAS AND SERVICE TO THEM

Just see what the life of a soldier entails! For a meagre monthly stipend that facilitates a bit of fleeting mundane pleasure for his spouse, children, parents, siblings and friends, he is ready and willing to relinquish his own life. In a moment, he can abandon the love and attachment of his mother, father and relatives and is determined to give his life. To what extent do we do that for Śrī Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas? The love of *sādhus*, *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas affords us the wealth of true happiness for all time, yet we are not prepared to accept even a drop of difficulty for their sake, not to speak of giving up our life for them. Is this the sign of a servant of Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas? How magnanimous, how tranquil, how great are the hearts of those who do not hesitate even slightly to relinquish their life for the service of Vaiṣṇavas! At the moment of truth, we can assess how much love a *sevaka* has for Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas.

If someone among us were to contract a contagious or infectious disease, we would realize the extent of our love for Vaiṣṇavas. We would not think twice before immediately abandoning that Vaiṣṇava and going as far away as possible, for fear of contracting the disease or losing our own life, thus revealing the degree of our attachment to this package of pus, blood and flesh, which today or after a hundred years, will certainly perish. We are always saying in discourses, recitations and *kīrtana* that this body is nothing and this mind is nothing, but in reality, that is all we deem important. If what we say is not matched by what we do, then we are wasting our words and misleading people, and what is the use of that? Adherence to the truth is a pre-eminent quality of a Vaiṣṇava. We are always saying that we must give our life to the Vaiṣṇavas, we must offer our everything to

1 A shell formerly used as currency and of minimal value.

the Vaiṣṇavas, and whatever we do we must do for the service of the Vaiṣṇavas. Will all this remain confined in a mere arrangement of words? Once, a person stood ready to give his life for the service of the Vaiṣṇavas and then some heretic hindered him and he fell down. This too we have witnessed.

This morning you heard the song “*jaya-re jaya-re jaya, paramahaṁsa mahāśaya*.” You must always note the event indicated in the following line: “*kuliyāte pāṣaṇḍirā, atyācāra kailo jārā, tā’ sabāra doṣa kṣamā kori* – you forgave the rogues of Kuliyā despite the atrocities they committed.” I am remembering the incident in Kuliyā hinted at in this couplet.

It was during Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma *parikramā*. To test his servitors’ propensity to serve, *jaḡad-guru* Śrīla Prabhupāda, who was on his way to Cāmpāhāṭi with a large group of pilgrims, arrived at Navadvīpa-Kuliyā town. That was some twenty-five years ago. At the time, Śrīla Prabhupāda’s preaching of pure Vaiṣṇava *dharma* exposed the religious exploitation and corruption of Kuliyā’s blasphemous hypocrites and provoked their hatred. They came up with a plot and unleashed a horrendous atrocity against him in the *parikramā* party at Pauḍhā Mā Talā. Calamities vanish by the mere will of the Vaiṣṇavas, but the prime purpose for the *ācārya*’s appearance is to reveal to the world the glories of *sevya* (the served) and *sevaka* (the servant). Therefore, in the midst of the destructive dance of Kali, Śrīla Prabhupāda hid himself in a liquor merchant’s house and examined his *sevakas*’ anguish and attachment [in relation to him]. In this terrible situation, apart from one or two persons, all of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s renowned so-called servants fled for their lives. Thousands of thugs had surrounded the house where Śrīla Prabhupāda had taken refuge. In that moment, one of his servants exchanged garments

with Śrīla Prabhupāda, extricated him from the ring of thugs closing in on them, and safely brought him in disguise back to Māyāpura.

Perilous circumstances reveal the true nature of a *guru-sevaka*. Those who were famous in the world as *guru-preṣṭha* (dear to *guru*), *prabhu-preṣṭha* (cherished by Prabhupāda) or *ācārya-preṣṭha* (the *ācārya*’s dearest), who never hesitated to introduce themselves as his exclusively dedicated associates or who wanted to take pride in being managers of the *maṭha* mission and his primary assistants, did not show up in that evil hour to display the pinnacle of service to *guru*. A *guru-sevaka*’s exclusive duty is to give his life in the service of his *guru*. Do not maintain a conception that such pastimes of the *ācārya* are indicative of his being a mere mortal. Events like these in fact serve to reveal his supra-human glory.

You may recall hearing of a similar event in the life of Ācārya Śrī Rāmānuja. A Śaiva king became so envious of his effective preaching of Vaiṣṇava *dharma* that he tried to kill him. Ācārya Śrī Rāmānuja’s devoted and prominent disciple Ācārya Kureṣa then saved his *guru*’s life by disguising Śrī Rāmānuja in the clothes of a lady. Similarly, Ācārya Śaṅkara was once attacked by a Kapālīka² sect, but Ācārya Padmapāda protected him. Thus, in every *ācārya*’s pastimes, many kinds of calamities occur which serve to demonstrate his supra-human nature. And, on the other hand, the gradations of *sevakas* that become evident are lessons for the souls of this world. That is why I say, in such circumstances alone, the true measure of a *sevaka*’s inclination to serve is revealed. 🌀

Translated from *Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā*,

Year 4 Issues 11&12

2 The *kāpālīka* mendicants are tantric materialists who carry skulls in their hands. They are not Vaiṣṇavas, and they follow a lifestyle that is opposed to *śāstra*. –Ed.

Pangs of Separation from a Disciple

A speech given by Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

On 22 October, 1966, Monday, the day of Ekādaśī, Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Bhikṣu Mahārāja immersed us in the pangs of separation and departed for his destined holy abode. Sheltered at the feet of *paramārādhya*tama Śrī Śrīla Ācāryadeva (Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja), Śrīmad Bhikṣu Mahārāja was a competent proponent of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti, and an assistant editor of *Śrī Bhāgavata-patrikā*.

On 3 November, 1966, Thursday, the fifth day of the waning moon (*kṛṣṇā-pañcamī*), a festival was held in Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha, Mathurā, in remembrance of the dearly departed Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Bhikṣu Mahārāja. That day, the most worshipful Śrī Śrīla Ācāryadeva presided over a memorial assembly. In that gathering, after eulogies were delivered by *tridaṇḍi-svāmī* Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, *tridaṇḍi-svāmī* Bhakti Kuśala Nārasimha Mahārāja and *tridaṇḍi-svāmī* Śrīmad Bhakti Prakāśa Araṇya Mahārāja, Śrīla Ācāryadeva gave a brief speech that touched the core of everyone's heart. His eyes brimming with tears, he wept and his voice choked with grief. Hearing him, everyone in the assembly also broke into sobs. It was as if the pangs of separation had arrived there in person. The gist of Śrīla Ācāryadeva's eulogy is as follows:

I have no experience of the sorrow a mother and father feel at the loss of their child, as I have been a celibate *brahmacārī* since birth. But I am fully acquainted with pangs of separation from a disciple. Following the departures of Śrīmān Jagabandhu, Śrīmān Anaṅga-mohana and Śrīmān Govardhana, I am again mourning a disciple, for the fourth time. Bhikṣu Mahārāja's *guru-niṣṭhā* was unfathomable and idyllic, and it will prove to be the primary aid in the attainment of his cherished goal. Even if a *sādhaka* suffers from every sort of fault, *guru-niṣṭhā* alone is capable of granting him entrance into the kingdom of *paramārtha* (the greatest wealth, *prema*). In the absence of *guru-niṣṭhā*, however, all good qualities combined cannot help a *sādhaka* reach the realm of *paramārtha*. As such, *guru-niṣṭhā* is the cornerstone in the attainment of divine love for Kṛṣṇa.

Bhikṣu Mahārāja had this sort of *guru-niṣṭhā*. He spent his life serving the divine message, and

in the end, continuously thinking of his service and serving Śrī Caitanya's message, he departed to the realm beyond. Such a life is blessed. He had gone to Delhi to arrange for paper to print *Jaiva-dharma* in Hindi – the famous book on *dharma* penned by the crown gem of Vaiṣṇava teachers, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura – and *Śrī Bhāgavata-patrikā* [magazine]. Just as he returned here to Madhupurī (Mathurā), the birthplace of Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Madhusudana Hari bound his servant in the ropes of His embrace, to keep near Him forever. His efforts in service, his *guru-niṣṭhā* and his eagerness to perform *bhajana* will remain an inspiration for those inquisitive about the process of *bhajana*, as well as for other servants of *śrī guru*. ॐ

Translated from *Śrī Bhāgavata-patrikā*,

Year 12 Issues 6–7



Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī-tattvāṣṭakam

~Why Śrī Kṛṣṇa acquired a bright complexion~

Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī are the presiding deities of Śrī Keśavaji Gauḍīya Maṭha. When they were installed, some Vaiṣṇavas were curious to know why both the deities have the same colour, and they respectfully asked Śrīlā Ācārya Kesarī, “In our Gauḍīya *sampradāya* and elsewhere, the deity of Śrīmatī Rādhikā is made of white marble and the deity of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is made of black marble. How is it that both the deities you have manifested are white?” Śrīlā Ācāryadeva answered this question in a beautiful and unprecedented way by composing *Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī-tattvāṣṭakam*. *Paramārādhya* Śrīlā Gurudeva has wonderfully manifested the fathomless ocean of *śrī rādhā-tattva*, *śrī kṛṣṇa-tattva*, *prema-tattva*, *rasa-tattva* and the topmost *rūpānuga* current of thought within the small pot of this *tattvāṣṭakam*.

from Ācārya Kesarī

by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

The paragraph in square brackets below each verse translation is a *bhāvānuvāda* (translation revealing the author's intent) by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

***rādhā-cintā-niveśena
yasya kāntir vilopitā
śrī-kṛṣṇa-caraṇaṁ vande
rādhāliṅgita-vigrahaṁ (1)***

I worship the lotus feet of that form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa who, by being absorbed in anxious thought of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, has assumed Her golden feature.

[Śrī Kṛṣṇa's immersion in separation from Śrīmatī Rādhikā, who is in *māna* (jealous anger), intensifies to such a point that He assumes Her golden complexion. Alternately, *rādhāliṅgita* means He finally embraces Śrīmatī Rādhikā after Her *māna* has broken.]

***sevyā-sevaka-sambhoge
dvayor bhedaḥ kuto bhavet
vipralambhe tu sarvasya
bhedaḥ sadā vivardhate (2)***

When the supreme object of loving service and the supreme loving servant merge in absolute love, how can any distinction be made between Them? But when They are separated, all of Their distinctions are continuously amplified.

[Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the supreme object of service (*sevyā*) and the supreme transcendental enjoyer (*bhoktā*), and Śrīmatī Rādhikā is the supreme servant (*sevaka*) and the supreme transcendental object of His enjoyment (*bhogyā*). In transcendental union (*sambhoga*), They are non-different (*abheda*), but in transcendental separation (*vipralambha*),

Their duality (*bheda*), in the form of unique qualities, is amplified more and more.]

***cil-līlā-mithunaṁ tattvaṁ
bhedaḥbhedaṁ acintyakam
śakti-śaktimātor aikyaṁ
yugapad vartate sadā (3)***

The Divine Couple, who eternally engage in transcendental pastimes, comprise an existential reality that is inconceivably differentiated and non-differentiated, for the supreme potency and the supreme possessor of potency are always one with each other.

[The supreme existential reality (*para-tattva*) is never without His potency (*śakti*). When *śakti* (potency) and *śaktimān* (the supreme source of all potency) have a single form, then the reality of Śrī Gaura-candra (*gaura-tattva*) manifests. And when They are in two separate bodies, *līlā-puruṣottama* Śrī Kṛṣṇa enjoys unlimited transcendental pastimes with Śrīmatī Rādhikā.]

***tattvaṁ ekaṁ paraṁ vidyāḥ
līlayā tad dvidhā sthitaṁ
gaurāḥ kṛṣṇaḥ svayaṁ hy etad
ubhāv ubhayaṁ āpnutaḥ (4)***

One should know that the Absolute Truth, which is one without a second, has divided His pastimes into two parts. Gaura is Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa is Gaura; hence both of Them are factually the original form of Godhead.

[Although the Supreme Absolute Truth is one, He has two sets of pastimes. In one, He is Śyāmasundara Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and in the other, He is Śrī Gaurasundara. Śyāmasundara is Gaurasundara, and Gaurasundara is Śyāmasundara. Thus both of them are in fact

Svayam Bhagavān, the Original Supreme Personality of Godhead from whom all other forms of God manifest.]

**sarve varṇāḥ yatrāviṣṭāḥ
gaura-kāntir vikāśate
sarva-varṇena hīnas tu
kṛṣṇa-varṇaḥ prakāśate (5)**

Wherever all colours exist simultaneously, a golden hue is manifest. However, in the absence of all colour, a black hue is manifest.

[According to natural science, when the entire visible light spectrum is present in naturally occurring proportions, as in the sun, a golden hue is manifest. In Sanskrit, this is called *gaura-kānti*. On the other hand, when all visible light is absent, a black hue is manifest. This is called *śyāma-kānti*.]

**saguṇam nirguṇam tattvam
ekam evādvitīyakam
sarva-nitya-guṇair gaurāḥ
kṛṣṇa-rasas tu nirguṇaiḥ (6)**

The Supreme Absolute Truth, which is one without a second, is both replete with qualities and devoid of qualities. All transcendental qualities are eternally manifest in Śrī Gaura. And the totality of transcendental humours, completely devoid of any mundane qualities, is manifest in Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

[The word *varṇa* (“complexion”) in the previous verse and the word *guṇa* (“quality”) in this verse establishes *śrī-gaura-tattva* to be as worshipful as *śrī-kṛṣṇa-tattva*. The Supreme Absolute Truth is both *saguṇa*, or possessed of all transcendental qualities, and *nirguṇa*, or devoid of all material qualities.]

**śrī-kṛṣṇam mithunam brahma
tyaktvā tu nirguṇam hi tat
upāsate mṛṣā vijñāḥ
yathā tuṣāvaghātinaḥ (7)**

Those who give up this twofold form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Absolute, and worship the undifferentiated, all-pervading impersonal existence are ‘intelligently’ looking for rice in empty husks.

[Although someone may be learned in all scriptures, his endeavours to obtain impersonal liberation (*mukti*) by worshipping the impersonal *brahma* will only amount to fruitless labour. In other words, such a person is not intelligent at all.]

**śrī vinoda-vihārī yo
rādhayā milito yadā
tadāhaṁ vandanam kuryām
sarasvatī-prasādataḥ (8)**

By the mercy of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda, I worship Śrī Vinoda-bihārī and Śrīmatī Rādhikā as They meet with one another.

[By the mercy of *śrī guru*, I am granted *darśana* (a transcendental vision) of the Divine Couple, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī, at the time of Their transcendental meeting.]

**iti tattvāṣṭakam nityam
yaḥ paṭhet śraddhayānvitāḥ
kṛṣṇa-tattvam abhijñāya
gaura-pade bhaven matiḥ (9)**

Whoever recites this *aṣṭakam* every day with great faith will fully comprehend *kṛṣṇa-tattva* and become immersed in meditation on the lotus feet of Śrī Gaurasundara. ॐ

Part Two

Letters

by Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja





LETTER ONE

On initiation and spiritual practice

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ
All Glories to Śrī Guru and Śrī Gaurāṅga

Śrī Uddhāraṇa Gauḍīya Maṭha
Chowmatha, Chuchura (Hooghly)
10/11/1949

Affectionate greetings, —.

I received your letter dated 6/11/49 yesterday, after returning from Ayodhyā and Naimāśāranya. When I read your letter, it struck me that you are a very learned person and eligible to read our magazine. I certainly think we need to meet and talk in person. I have not had the time to visit your area for quite some time. This year, a group of travellers from — and nearby very enthusiastically requested me to visit your area. With luck, I will be able to visit there this year. I hope at that time to address all of your questions together, in person. It is not always possible to fully address all the details of a subject like this in a letter. Even so, I submit one or two considerations regarding *dikṣā* (spiritual initiation) and *upāsanā* (devotional practice) below:

The word *dikṣā* indicates divine knowledge. Scholars refer to the rite by which sin is completely eradicated and transcendental wisdom roused as *dikṣā*. The ritual aspect of that initiation is not considered *dikṣā* proper but the inception, or commencement, of *dikṣā*. Of course, in some cases we see that transcendental wisdom arises as soon as one receives the *dikṣā mantras* from one's *gurudeva*. In those instances, ceremonial *dikṣā* is real *dikṣā*. We, however, are not so fortunate, and so in our case, it is only ceremonial.

After receiving *dikṣā*, one adopts various practices according to the counsel and principles that *guru-pādapadma* imparts. These activities are referred to as *upāsanā*. The word *upāsanā* does not refer to any sort of enterprise (*karma*) or pursuit of knowledge (*jñāna*). *Upāsanā* is characteristically eternal, so to presume it refers to anything besides *bhakti* is not valid. To explain why *karma* and *jñāna* are not *upāsanā* requires addressing a number of topics. A close review of the Vedānta canon, the Upaniṣads and other similar texts yields numerous references of the word *upāsanā*, but any interpretation other than *bhakti* fails to concur with scripture. The wise will not trust that a conclusion is reliable if it does not concur with scripture.

That said, please consider this verse, which addresses the subject of *dīkṣā*:

*divyaṁ jñānaṁ yato dadyāt / kuryāt pāpasya saṁkṣayaṁ
tasmād-dīkṣeti sā proktā / deśikais-tattva-kovidaiḥ*

Viṣṇu Yāmala

Because it bestows transcendental perception (*sambandha-jñāna*) and destroys sin¹ at the root, those who are learned and knowledgeable in *bhagavat-tattva* refer to this rite as *dīkṣā*.

Please also contemplate this verse from *Brahma-tarka* relating to *upāsanā*:

muktā api hi kurvanti svecchayā upāsanam hareḥ

Even souls who attain liberation perform *upāsanā* of Śrī Hari of their own accord.

What more is there to say? We can discuss matters further in person. I conclude here.

A servant of Śrī Gaura's devotees,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 25 Issue 5

¹ Sin here refers to sin itself (*pāpa*), the desire-seed of sin (*pāpa-bīja*) and ignorance (*avidyā*).



LETTER TWO

In cordial opposition to Māyāvāda

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Uddhāraṇa Gauḍīya Maṭha
Chowmatha, Chuchura (Hooghly)
24/1/1951

Affectionate greetings, Honourable Satyabhūṣaṇa Caṭṭopādhyāya.

I was particularly delighted to receive your letter, mailed from Tata Nagara on the 17th day of Pauṣa, which included your rebuttal essay. I am late in responding, as I was not here. I arrived from Navadvīpa the day before yesterday, and I have to return there tomorrow. I will print your letter in our magazine and provide a proper response.

Pure Vaiṣṇavas do not maintain even a drop of faith in the verdicts of Ācārya Śaṅkara. If you were to consult the Vaiṣṇava scriptures, you would be able to grasp this fact clearly. We do see some corrupted individuals who brazenly imagine themselves to be Vaiṣṇavas but harbour faith in the tenets of Māyāvāda [monism]. We consider this to be unauthorized and illogical. Kindly read the article titled “Śrī Janmāṣṭamīte Dārśanika Ālocanā – A Philosophical Deliberation on Śrī Janmāṣṭamī” in our magazine. It was published in the 9th Issue [of *Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā*], during the month of Kārtika and ran until the month of Māgha, in the 12th Issue. I personally authorized the publication of those excerpts of my lecture in this past Jyeṣṭha Issue of the *Patrikā*, on page 157. Believe that to be the truth. We are *sannyāsīs*; we consider that social reformation takes place incidentally, as a result of religious reformation. We have the qualification to present educated society with the matters they have not mastered.

It is my sincere prayer that in a calm and composed manner you consider the topics I have addressed. When one sets out to advocate the truth, it is inevitable that someone or other becomes disturbed. There is no way to prevent that. But it is certain that we do not wish to agitate anyone in any way. The conduct and precepts ordained by Śrīman Mahāprabhu are the topmost and foremost on all of planet Earth. It appears that you will not be reluctant to accept this fact. We are not blasphemers of Ācārya Śaṅkara, yet we are not inclined to fully praise the logic and reasoning with which he presented his doctrine. We will publish an extensive series of essays on this subject, starting from the first issue of this upcoming third year of the *Patrikā*. What more can I say? I pray for your well-being. I conclude here.

Yours humbly,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

🕉 Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 3 Issue 2



LETTER THREE

A firm stance on education

Pichaldā is a small village in the Medinipur district that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu visited on his way to Śrī Jagannātha Purī. After repeated requests by village residents, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja established Śrīman Mahāprabhu's *pāda-pīṭha* (an altar with the imprint of Śrī Mahāprabhu's lotus feet) there, as well as Śrī Pichaldā Gauḍīya Maṭha. Later, the villagers wanted to open a primary school. For this they formed a school board, which they duly registered, but they needed a hall to run the school. On 23 December 1958, they sent a written request to Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who at that time was in Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha, Mathurā, asking him to donate the old house of the *pāda-pīṭha* for use as a school. The following letter is his response.

From Ācārya Kesarī: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha,
Kāmsa-tilā, Mathurā (U.P.)
23/12/58

My dear — Prabhu,

I have received a signed petition from some residents of your village, requesting that I register the old building that houses the *pāda-pīṭha* in the school board's name. I have no objection to handing it over to the school board, but there are a few points I want to address:

(1) Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti has not the slightest faith in the education provided by today's universities. I do not accept education that is opposed to Śrīman Mahāprabhu to be education.

(2) I am not prepared to bid farewell to religious teachings for the sake of a few rupees.

(3) Pichaldā has been sanctified by the touch of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's lotus feet. The villagers are therefore to be taught in such a way that they pass their life in faithful allegiance to the service of Śrīman Mahāprabhu.

(4) The Pichaldā *pāda-pīṭha* is not a Godless monument, and Vedānta Samiti will not approve teaching atheism on its premises.

(5) I have no objection to transferring the deed if the school board is willing to fully entrust the students to Vedānta Samiti's oversight.

(6) The villagers are likely to remember the essay titled “*Acintya-bhedābheda*”² that we published in *Śrī Ś Gaudīya-patrikā*’s 10th issue, severely reproaching the activities of Calcutta University.

(7) In Śrī Dhāma Māyāpura, I established a high school. Although it was accredited by the university, it violated university statutes by prioritizing religious education. I am not fully aware of the current situation of that school, but I recommend adopting its original model.

(8) It is impossible for a country to benefit from unprincipled students. Religious principles are the most important.

(9) So many Christian missionary schools have survived in our country. If the government recognizes them, then surely the Pichaldā School too can maintain a strong religious curriculum and still receive authorization. There is nothing to fear in this regard.

(10) The individual who donated the land and house for the service of the Pichaldā *pāda-pīṭha* is no longer alive. We have to consider whether or not we should do something that conflicts with his wishes and intent. When I was in Pichaldā, the donor’s son came crying to me one night, saying, “Have you forgone my father’s donation? Will you not fulfil his wishes?” Seeing his distress, I instantly told him I would never let go of what I had received. I still remember how delighted his son was to hear me say that. Everything we do must therefore be as the deceased donor would have wanted. That is to say, no interference with Śrī Gaudīya Vedānta Samiti’s spiritual priorities will be allowed.

(11) That house was offered to aid Vedānta Samiti’s preaching efforts. Vedānta Samiti supports the establishment of a college, school or Sanskrit academy in that house for the sake of education.

2 “In his book, *Śrī Caitanya-cariter Upādāna* (“Śrī Caitanya, A Biographical Critique”), the famous historian Dr. Śrīyuta Bimān-bihārī Majumdāra M.A. Ph.D. attempts to prove an extreme and impossible event. Sadly, Calcutta University did something even more disgraceful by actually publishing the book. We cannot find any good reason for the university to support the publication of such a profane and unreadable book. The aspersions the author casts on Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s transcendent and immortal life story only serve to reveal in glaring clarity his own character and intentions. Whoever reads that book will meet with utter ruin. A similar case in point is another book recently published by the same university, titled *Śrī Caitanya-deva O Tāhār Pārṣada-Gaṇa* (“Śrī Caitanya and His Associates”) by Śrī Girijā Śaṅkara Rāya Chaudhuri, which also attempts to portray the life of Śrīman Mahāprabhu in a negative light. The same author wrote another book some years earlier, titled *Bāṅglā Carita-Granthē Śrī Caitanya* (“Bengali Biographies of Śrī Caitanya”), also published by the university. All three books, in my opinion, should not be heard or read by anyone. Recently we have petitioned the directors of Calcutta University to throw these three books into a pit of fire on the main road in front of the university library.

“Just because an historian publishes some of his speculations, it does not mean they are acceptable as actual history. If postgraduate students rely on these sorts of books from the university to form their understanding of Śrīman Mahāprabhu and His lineage, they will be left with nothing but false, unproven and ill-boding conceptions. These kinds of books will prove extremely detrimental for them. Not only that, if the student body lends these three books any sort of credibility, it will prove to be a needless and malicious attack on the most exalted and pre-eminent religious lineage in Bengal. If authors who are driven by hostility and envy can write history, it spells disaster for the whole world. Bimān Babū and Girijā Babū’s mindset is evident from reading their books. I will address their highly ill-founded mentality at length in another essay.”

However, a committee approved by the Samiti will manage the said school. No atheistic ideology of the education department will be permitted in any part of the school syllabus.

(12) Hirāṇyakaśipu sent his son Prahlāda Mahārāja to school to learn from Ṣaṇḍa and Amarka. Śukrācārya was in charge of the education system there. Prahlāda Mahārāja, in total violation of the orders of his father – the emperor – and of the headmaster, Śukrācārya, gave precedence to the teachings of devotion to Viṣṇu. This is our ideal when it comes to promoting education.

(13) In *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, in the context of a conversation with Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda, Śrīman Mahāprabhu provides the souls of this world specific instruction on education, which is the only criterion we deem acceptable. Any other model of education is likely to be demoniac and we will refuse to accept it.

(14) At the school in Śrī Dhāma Māyāpura, instead of following the Saturday and Sunday school holidays mandated by the university, we instituted holidays on Ekādaśī and Pañcamī. When local Christians and Muslims lodged complaints about this, the university's departmental inspector came and issued me an injunction stating we would stop receiving government aid if we did not close the school on Saturdays and Sundays. I responded by saying, "As an adherent of *sanātana-dharma*, I have no obligation to observe the Christian Sabbath Day (Sunday). You can withdraw your financial support if you want." Although the university did withdraw funding, Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda Institute in Śrī Dhāma Māyāpura is still running today and is still recognized by the government.

(15) Please read my letter to the village residents and be sure to deter them from rushing into anything. I have established and managed other schools, academies and colleges, so I have a lot of experience in this area. There is nothing to be so concerned about. There is no need to register and hand over the land right now. We are not at all obliged to follow Congress' illegal regulations. People of an independent country are not to be subjugated. We must set up the school there in an impeccable manner, such that it becomes a leading institution of learning in the whole Medinipur district. Please explain this to everyone.

I have much to add to this. We will discuss matters in person. I will be returning to Bengal via Assam at the end of Māgha. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 10 Issue 12



LETTER FOUR

Can Śrī Nityānanda and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī be on the same altar?

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Uddhāraṇa Gauḍīya Maṭha
Chowmatha, Chuchura (Hooghly)
31/01/1960

My prostrated obeisances at the feet of the Vaiṣṇavas.

— Mahārāja,

I received your letter dated 25/12/59 on time. I wanted to come to your place for *vyāsa-pūjā* this year, as I did last year, but I am doubtful whether or not I can do so. I have not received any specific invitation for *vyāsa-pūjā* from anywhere else. I cannot say what will end up happening.

In regard to your question, Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu is none other than Śrī Baladeva. In other words, Nityānanda is covertly a form of Baladeva. Nityānanda Prabhu has a special role in the divine pastimes that precludes Him from sharing the same altar as Rādhārāṇī.

Rāma, Nṛsiṁha, Varāha and so on are plenary portions (*aṁśa*) or portions of plenary portions (*kalā*) of Kṛṣṇa Himself. They are not *aṁśas* and *kalās* of Baladeva's *tattva*. In this case, we have to keep in mind the intricacies of the divine pastimes. Through the *śaligrāma-śilā*, the invocation (*prāṇa-pratiṣṭha*) of both *śakti* (potency) and *śaktimān* (the potent) [within the deity] takes place. Hence, *śaligrāma-śilā* is entitled to preside everywhere as the worshipful deity (*arcā-rūpa*). To be specific, He is Nārāyaṇa Himself – Lakṣmī-pati (the husband of Lakṣmī-devī). Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is known as Lakṣmī, Mahā-lakṣmī, Sarva-lakṣmī-mayī and so on. Thus, in placing *śaligrāma-śilā* on the same altar as Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, the fault of *rasābhāsa* (clashing *rasas*) is not incurred.

Even though the deities of Nityānanda Prabhu, Baladeva and Lakṣmaṇa are *viṣṇu-tattva* (of the same essence as Viṣṇu), they cannot always be positioned together [with other deities], due to Their role in pastimes and the intricacies of *rasa*. Where there is a chance of the fault of *rasābhāsa* occurring, They are to remain separate. The fault of *rasābhāsa* is not incurred when Lakṣmaṇa, as Rāmacandra's younger brother, is situated alongside his elder brother's wife, as he is her brother-in-law and a recipient of her affection.

If there is anything more you wish to know or inquire about, write me back. I conclude here.

Servant of Śrī Gaura's devotees,

B. P. Kishore

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

🕉 Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 25 Issue 2



LETTER FIVE

On fortitude in the face of adversity

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha,
Tegharipara, Navadvīpa (Nadiyā)
13/8/1960

My dear —,

I sent you letters dated 1/8/60 and 8/8/60. Please let me know if you have received them or not. I have received all of your letters and telegrams. Today's date is 13/8/60. The newspapers here are circulating a horrifying account of the situation in Assam. I am extremely worried. In such times of peril, it is crucial to remain calm and collected in order to somehow or other stay alive. Keep remembering Bhagavān's name at all times.

"Jāya sakala vipada, bhaktivinoda bolen, jakhon o nāma gāi – All adversities disappear, says Bhaktivinoda, when I sing that name." Singing the holy name is the only thing that will make us worry-free. It is not right to give up the service of Hari, even in the face of hundreds of threats and adversities. Still, we have to use our intelligence to preserve our lives so that we may serve Hari for as long as possible. It is our duty to make that effort.

No word has come from Amayapur. Try to send someone who is from Assam to find out what is happening. I wrote this in my previous letter as well. I think at this time it would be better to bring — to the *maṭha*.

—'s elder brother — can be of assistance in this regard. Bring him to the *maṭha* to stay for a month or two. Just before this unrest broke out, — wrote me a letter asking me to come to Assam. Try to find out what is going on from —. Make a point of maintaining rapport with people of influence there, like the police officers at the station.

It has occurred to me that I should offer you another bit of advice. In the story of Mādhavendra Purīpāda, found in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya-līlā* 4.42), is a verse that reads: *"mleccha-bhaye sevaka mora gelo palāiyā* – fearing the invaders, My servants fled." You should heed this precedent. I provide you with an eight-line quote from *Caritāmṛta*:

*śrī gopāla' nāma mora—govardhana-dhārī
vajrera sthāpita, āmi ihā adhikārī*

My name is Śrī Gopāla. I am the lifter of Govardhana Hill. I was established by Vajranābha. I am the presiding deity of this place.

*saila-upari haite āmā kuñje lukāiyā
mleccha-bhaye sevaka mora gelo palāiyā*

They brought me down from the hill and hid me in a grove, then my servants fled due to fear of the *mleccha* invaders.

*sei haite rahi āmi ei kuṇja-sthāne
bhālo, āilā tumi, āmā kāḍha sāvadhāne*

Since then I have been in this grove. It is wonderful that you have come. Please excavate Me carefully.

*eto boli' sei bālak antardhāna hailo
jāgiyā mādharma-purī vicāra korilo*

Saying this, the boy disappeared and Mādhavendra Purī woke, pondering what to do.

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Mādhya-līlā 4.41–44)

Reflect on these words. If you decide that it is considerably inconvenient for you there, then hand over responsibility of serving the deities to the Assamese devotees and come back. Inform us by letter or telegram, and we can send — and — to run the *maṭha* there. Call on — Prabhu and discuss all these matters. I have given you all the information you need. Deliberate on the matter in full yourself and choose a course of action. Make every effort to keep all the attendants of the *maṭha* out of harm's way. There is a bus that goes from where you are to the Koch Bihar region. If you can't get the convenience and opportunity to travel in the Koch Bihar-Bangladesh bus, you can cross the Assam border into Bengal. That way you do not need to enter Pakistan. Regardless, it is very true that this human life is fleeting; it can leave us at any moment. Death comes to us as a result of our actions. Yet, by serving Bhagavān, we can be freed from all sorts of consequences. The following instruction is found in a book titled *Mitrābha* by Viṣṇu-Śarmā:

*dhanāni jīvitam caiva / parārthe prājña utsrjet
sannimittē varāṇ tyāgo / vināśe niyate sati*

Dedicate your wealth and life to the service of Bhagavān. It is your duty to engage in spiritual action even if your life falls apart.

If the Goalpara district and, more specifically, the neighbourhood you are in, are not facing the kind of trouble we have heard of in other parts of Assam, then stay calm and collected and contemplate the future [of the *maṭha*]. If you think it is necessary, I can send — and —. At the moment, they are preaching with —. I will have to send them word and let them know. I will not send them unless there is actual difficulty.

The temple here is running nicely. — Prabhu has gradually recovered. Everything else here is going well. Be sure to consult —. I am very worried about you. Send me a letter every week. You can also take advice from — Bābu. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Kishore

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 25 Issue 3



LETTER SIX

Fault-finding results from apathy to service

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha
Tegharipara, Navadvīpa, Nadiyā
17/08/1960

My dear —,

I believe that you, — and — have been spreading unjust propaganda in opposition of —. I will dismantle this propaganda. He is a trustee of the *maṭha*. I will leave the full weight of responsibility for the *maṭha* to the trustees. None of you are capable of taking on this burden. To leave responsibility for the *maṭha* in the hands of a bad-tempered person is foolishness. I will not entertain this. The *maṭha* is a place for devotees, not irritable non-devotees. Upon my inquiry, — dāsa has told me everything that the three of you have said about the *maṭha*.

Sitting around idly in the *maṭha* and not engaging in service spawns all manner of gossip and criticism. This is why everyone is to observe a vow of collecting alms (*bhikṣā*) on a daily basis. Lack of engagement in service degrades a person's consciousness. How can someone accustomed to wasting time progress? There is an English saying: "A vacant mind is the devil's workshop." When a person's mind is not focused on a particular service, it becomes degraded and filled with devilish thoughts. For this reason, Mahāprabhu has said, "*kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ*." Only if one serves Hari will one remain absorbed in thoughts of Hari; hence the injunction to chant the name of Hari at every moment. Chanting Hari's name and serving Hari are one and the same.

On seeing this state of affairs, I have resolved to send everyone out preaching. If they do so, they will be engaged in *hari-kīrtana* and will collect alms, as beggars should. Otherwise, nothing auspicious will come to pass. Four or five days ago, a young man came to stay in the *maṭha*, but I did not accept him. There is no need for a person to stay in the *maṭha* if he is not serving Hari and uselessly passing his days in eating and sleeping. Let the body be engaged in service to Hari. Read this letter to all the others and direct them in such a way that they will be absorbed in service to Hari. I conclude here.

Your ever well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 25 Issue 4



LETTER SEVEN

Bhakti is beyond nationalism

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha,
Tegharipara, Navadvīpa (Nadiyā)
06/09/1960

My dear —,

Bhakti does not accommodate any sort of nationalism. As Svayam Bhagavān is beyond all time and space, only the consciousness that has transcended time and space can attain Him. Śrīman Mahāprabhu's teachings are not confined to any particular country or era. Though certain esteemed personalities have shown special grace to the natives of Bengal by penning some sacred literatures in the Bengali language, it is inappropriate to deem them Bengali.

Mahāprabhu's teachings can be presented in any language. Professor Sannyal and others have propagated them in English. Śrī Nīmananda Prabhu has been preaching Mahāprabhu's message in Assamese, Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja in Hindi, and Madhusūdāna Mahārāja and others in Oriya. You are an educated person. Take Mahāprabhu's message properly to heart and continue with determination to preach in Assam in Assamese. Only Śrīman Mahāprabhu's *prema-dharma* (religion of love) will bring peace, friendship and love to the whole world. To this day, no country has found lasting peace through political process. Political thought is thoroughly mundane and fuelled by materialistic sentiment; therefore, it is fleeting. A temporary ideology can never offer eternal happiness and peace to mankind. Śrīman Mahāprabhu's *dharma* is that of the soul. It is not a soulless *dharma*, catering to the hankerings of the mind and body, which are composed of inert material substance. To remain confined to them is bondage. You are a faithful and intelligent person, so always remain resolute in that eternal *dharma*. There is no need to be established in a soulless *dharma*. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

☉ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 25 Issue 2



LETTER EIGHT

Instructions for married Vaiṣṇavas

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Uddhāraṇa Gauḍīya Maṭha
Chowmatha, Chuchura (Hooghly)
05/10/1960

My dear —,

Diligence in observing rules and regulations is itself a primary means to enter the domain of Bhagavān. Therefore, the two of you – husband and wife – should collectively chant a total of one lakh. For example, my dear daughter-in-law can chant forty-thousand names, and you, sixty-thousand. In this way, you will daily complete the chanting of one hundred-thousand names between you.

If you have farmland, then you can plough and cultivate it yourselves. Vaiṣṇavas are not restricted in this regard. Agriculture is more virtuous than commerce. Commerce necessitates bending the truth. There is hardly a need for untruth in agriculture. Therefore, agriculture is the best livelihood for householder Vaiṣṇavas. A householder is forbidden to beg.

On Thursday (03/11/60), on the full moon day, you are to conclude your vows and shave your head. Kārtika-vrata began yesterday, Tuesday 4 October. This falls within Cāturmāsya. From this full moon until 3 November, do not take sesame or mustard oil. You can use peanut oil or ghee. Do not consume salt that is extracted from the earth. Salt sold by a *brāhmaṇa* during the month of Kārtika is considered non-vegetarian. Do not take citron or pomelo in the month of Kārtika. These can be taken during any other months.

It was not proper for you to take *prasāda* cooked by someone who is a Vaiṣṇava in name only. It is not an easy thing to be a pure Vaiṣṇava. A Vaiṣṇava who has received initiation but not received the sacred thread cannot be called a pure Vaiṣṇava. Also, do not take cooked foods from a person simply because he has taken birth in a *brāhmaṇa* family or introduces himself as “Gosvāmī”. You may only accept fruits and roots from such persons.

Those not born in *brāhmaṇa* families but initiated into a *viṣṇu-mantra* attain the status of *brāhmaṇas*. Those who do not accept this are not Vaiṣṇavas. Never take food cooked by them. If they are not under the guidance of a Gauḍīya Maṭha, even if their conduct is pure or if they introduce themselves as Vaiṣṇavas or *brāhmaṇas*, you should not accept foodstuffs from them. Paan (betel nut) induces indulgence. Bhagavān may partake of such items, but it is not proper for any conditioned soul to consume them.

If your mother or mother-in-law observes a pure standard of conduct or if, after bathing, she offers you some dry foodstuffs, you may accept it in an emergency, otherwise not. You should always respect your mother, who bore you in her womb, but if she is not vegetarian, you cannot offer the deities

anything she has touched. If she bathes and washes her hands and feet properly, she can cut up fruits or vegetables, and you can wash them thoroughly, cook the vegetables and offer the vegetables and fruits to the deities. There is nothing wrong with offering respects to your mother by touching her feet.

Separate sleeping arrangements are best. “*asat-saṅga-tyāga—ei vaiṣṇava sadācāra* – Abandoning improper association constitutes the proper conduct of a Vaiṣṇava.” However, if you fall into unavoidable difficulty, what can you do? All rules and regulations can be adjusted in times of emergency or grave danger. To save one’s life, one may receive medicine and a diet from any person. Of course, adhering to the rules and regulations is the most auspicious thing you can do. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhākti Prajñāna Keśava

☉ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 28 Issue 2



LETTER NINE

On agriculture and farming

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Uddhāraṇa Gauḍīya Māṭha

Chowmatha, Chuchura (Hooghly)

8/10/1960

My dear —,

I am trying to publish an article on farming and agriculture for Vaiṣṇavas in the Āśvina-Kārtika issue [of *Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā*]. With some guidance from me, Vaiṣṇavas in many places have begun farming according to scriptural provision. There is nothing wrong with the Vaiṣṇavas in your area starting to farm as well.

Those who consider farming to be somehow inappropriate for Vaiṣṇavas and forcefully stop them from doing it are hypocrites and rogues. Such people do not even know what it means to be a Vaiṣṇava or what *vaiṣṇava-dharma* is. Thus, they cannot become pure teachers of *vaiṣṇava-dharma* and are not to be accepted within such ranks.

Popular opinion has nothing to do with truth; they are not the same thing. Those who perform *bhajana* of Bhagavān are not entangled in the opinions of the general populace. This is a self-evident fact. I conclude here.

With blessings,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhākti Prajñāna Keśava

☉ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 42 Issue 7



LETTER TEN

Speak the truth fearlessly

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha
Kaṁsa-tila, Mathurā (U.P.)
23/11/1960

My dear —,

I received your letter dated 17 October as well as your letter dated 14/11/60. Both letters gave me particular delight, as it is the teachings of scripture that will enlighten us.

Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Gaurasundara has said, “*kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ* – always perform *kīrtana* of the names of Śrī Hari.” Scripture states, “*kalau tad hari-kīrtanāt* – [whatever is attained in other *yugas* by other processes is easily available] in the age of Kali solely by chanting the name of Śrī Hari.” The purport is that only by the persistent cultivation of *hari-kīrtana* and *hari-kathā* are all conditioned souls freed from bondage; that is, they become liberated and eligible to serve Bhagavān. It is a matter of great delight to me that you engage at every opportunity in the discourse of *hari-kathā* and the performance of *kīrtana* with everyone. Speak *hari-kathā* fearlessly.

There is not a word of Śrīman Mahāprabhu’s teachings that is unscriptural, illogical or unfounded. All other preachers, so-called religious orders and preceptors, however, have propagated and continue to propagate irrational opinions that are more or less concocted and contrary to the conclusions of the scriptures, in order to gain repute in present-day society. It is crucial to speak the truth fearlessly. Bhagavān is not for those who are faint at heart. The Upaniṣads state: “*nāyam atmā bala-hīnena labhyaḥ* – self-realization cannot be attained by weakness”. Craven individuals manipulate spiritual dialogue by claiming, “All is well, all is well”. This only serves to reveal their frailty in the process of *bhajana*. You must vehemently oppose this. If necessary, I am ready to appear in an open assembly to debate these matters.

Ask those who want to claim that *nirviśeṣa-brahma* (the featureless aspect of the Absolute Truth) is *para-tattva* (the highest Truth), why we find the word *para-brahma* mentioned in so many places in scripture. *Para-brahma* implies something greater than *brahma*; it points to the supreme principle. *Brahma*, therefore, is not *para-tattva*. I will discuss this point with you in person.

Brahma-jñāna is the negative aspect; the positive aspect is *bhagavad-jñāna*. A negative idea has no value. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the speaker of the *Gītā*, is Himself the origin of *brahma*: “*brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhāham* – I am the origin and shelter of *brahma*” (*Bhagavad-gītā* 14.27). You can explain this statement thoroughly.

The word *viṣṇu* is from the Vedas. *Brāhmaṇas* utter only Viṣṇu's names when sipping *ācamana* water. Demons become fearful upon hearing the very name of Viṣṇu. There is not enough room to write everything in a letter. If one is to enter family life, there is a necessity for knowledge that can facilitate the acquisition of wealth. Spiritual knowledge, however, surpasses all else and heralds all auspiciousness. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhākti Prajñāna Keśava

☉ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 28 Issue 3



LETTER ELEVEN

Who is a mahājana?

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Uddhāraṇa Gauḍīya Maṭha

Chowmatha, Chuchura (Hooghly)

5/1/1961

My dear —,

Yesterday I received your letter dated 30/12/60. I was very delighted to know you spent your Christmas holiday absorbed in *hari-kathā*. It is quite natural that you were delighted that your friend's heart is becoming inclined toward *bhagavad-bhakti*. Without *sukṛti* from previous births, no one can advance in *bhagavad-bhakti*, and only persons of very keen intelligence can follow the subtle distinctions of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's message. Thus, if such a person is endowed with *sukṛti*, the world can reap great benefit.

I will be staying here for most of January. — from Assam is urging me to come to Golakganj. I would go on 19 January and may return here by 24 January. — came to get me one day. There was urgent business to attend to there. Still it is quite possible that now we will not have to go there. That is why I am thinking I will stay here for the month of January. I will definitely be here till the last Sunday of January, that is 29/1/61.

dharmasya tattvaṁ nihitaṁ guhāyāṁ / mahājano yena gataḥ saḥ panthāḥ

Mahābhārata, Vana-parva 313.117

Because the sacred truths of *dharma* are concealed with the hearts of great personalities, one must follow their trail.

The very scripture containing this statement establishes who the *mahājanas* are. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, only twelve *mahājanas* are mentioned. All of its writings address how to follow in their

footsteps. Only these twelve *mahājanas* are true *gurus* and propagators of *dharma*, no one else. The twelve *mahājanas* are as follows:

svayambhūr nāradaḥ śambhuḥ / kumāraḥ kapilo manuḥ
prahlādo janako bhiṣmo / balir vaiyāsakir vayam

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (6.3.20)

Svayambhū (Brahmā), Nārada, Śambhu, Sanat-kumāra, Kapila, Manu, Janaka, Bhiṣma, Bali, Vaiyāsaki, Prahlāda, and Yama.

Hence, not everyone is a *mahājana*. Those who follow the twelve *mahājanas* are called *mahājanānugā* and all are Vaiṣṇavas. In the realm of *dharma*, *aprākṛta-tattva* (supramundane truth, pure divinity) surpasses the grasp of the *pratyakṣa-vādis* (those engrossed in sensory perception), *parokṣa-vādis* (those who can access the metaphysical and heavenly realms), *aparokṣa-vādis* (those who have attained the impersonal aspect of transcendence) and *adhokṣaja* (the manifest opulence of divinity, which is beyond the grasp of the mind and senses).

Teachers of the first three orders have endured since time immemorial, but they are not the *mahājanas* of scripture. We can discuss all these matters in person. The kind of *guru* one obtains depends on one's fortune. What more is there to say? I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 41 Issue 7



LETTER TWELVE

We follow the Vaiṣṇava mahājanas, not the smārtas

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Uddhāraṇa Gauḍīya Maṭha
 Chowmatha, Chuchura (Hooghly)
 4/7/1961

My dear —,

I was delighted to receive your letter dated 14th Āṣāḍha. I came to know that there was a gathering of devotees at the home of —. The more the gatherings grow, the better. But Vaiṣṇava gatherings are useless if they have no connection with *hari-bhakti*. It is the duty of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, especially those of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti, to cease following *smārta* customs and propound the customs of the *sātvata-smṛtis*, namely *Śrī Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* and *Sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā*. Vedānta Samiti does not entertain any disagreement to this. Several *sannyāsīs* of seminal *brāhmaṇa* heredity who introduce

themselves as Prabhupāda's disciples have become rather partial to *smārta* traditions. Vedānta Samiti does not sanction their practice of *smārta* customs. *Jagad-guru* Śrī Śrīla Prabhupāda's close servants know well which views he upheld in his time, which ones he did not, and what standard of conduct he personally followed. It is no fault of Prabhupāda if those who were never around him whimsically choose not to follow his personal conduct. Their behaviour cannot be taken to represent the views accepted by Prabhupāda.

Most people nowadays are comfort-seekers. "If you can simplify religion, then fine; otherwise, give it up." This is their logic. — is a comfort-seeker. Consider the facts for yourself. If, while I am still alive, — and — Prabhupāda are promoting misconduct as proper conduct, then in my absence, they will say, "Guru Mahārāja endorsed the things we did when he was present, and based on that, we are going to structure our community." This sort of rationale is not congruent with scripture.

Those who cannot accept scripture are deplorable. Those who adhere to scripture are matchless. It is a matter of great sorrow that adherence to scripture is gradually disappearing. Making a collective effort to forcefully suppress the injunctions of scripture is inappropriate. Our aim should be to boldly promote the injunctions of scripture to all souls. If even a single person among thousands can conduct himself in accordance with the regulations of scripture, he represents the ideal and is blessed.

The vows and fasts ordained by the authors of scripture are not harmful to one's health or *dharma*. Even from an apparent perspective, fasting is healthy for the body, as it eliminates disease and increases longevity. This is ordained only for householders, not for renunciants. *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* was in fact composed for the householder Vaiṣṇavas. Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī have stated this clearly at the beginning of *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*. Those who have studied *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* know this. There is actually nothing written in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* about renunciation or accepting *sannyāsa*. Nor is there anything written about *sannyāsa* in *Sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā*. That subject is addressed separately in a supplementary text known as *Samskāra-dīpikā*. Renunciants are not required to heed many of the general injunctions that are obligatory for householders.

Continue to uphold the practices of Śrī Vedānta Samiti with zealous conviction. Those who maintain Śrī Vedānta Samiti practices, which are endorsed by scripture, will certainly meet with auspiciousness. Comfort-seeking is at its root indulgence, or sense gratification. The more it diminishes, the better. Read both of my letters to everyone and tell everyone that Vedānta Samiti upholds the practices and precepts of Prabhupāda in every respect. Alterations to these practices, should they occur elsewhere, do not represent the ideal. On occasions such as Janmāṣṭamī, Gaura-pūrṇimā, Nṛsinha-caturdaśī and Nityānanda-trayodaśī, Śrīla Prabhupāda used to fast without water, for the day and night, as would we. Śrīla Prabhupāda's personal conduct is the ideal for the whole universe. Our ideal is not the conduct of some feeble individual. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

❁ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 41 Issue 6



LETTER THIRTEEN

Sat-saṅga is more important than accumulating wealth

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha,
Tegharipara, Navadvīpa (Nadiyā)
4/8/1961

My dear —,

I was particularly disheartened by your letter. Money is not the main medium with which to serve Śrī Hari. *Artha* (wealth) is the root of *anartha* (that which has no value). Wealth used in gratifying one's own senses is *anartha*. Wealth that is or that can be utilized in the service of Hari, however, is not *anartha* but *paramārtha* (supreme prosperity). Is — Mahārāja asking you for money for some purpose other than the service of Hari? If that is the case, then you should not offer him any financial support.

You wrote that you want to use the money you have accumulated or are accumulating in the service of Hari. This is a fine idea, but should an immediate opportunity to serve arise, your duty is to focus your mind on that service then and there. The future of conditioned souls is mostly obscured by darkness. Therefore, do not leave saintly company to go live separately somewhere else. If you live separately, *māyā* will attack you. It is not proper to entertain materialistic activities simply to save a bit of money. Consult with — Mahārāja and somehow or other, figure out a way to live in the *maṭha* again. Let me know by letter what you have decided.

When your good mother took *harināma*, she told me that if she started having difficulty cooking for herself while living on her own, she would live with you in the Railway Quarter. It seems to me her body has recovered and she is healthy; now she is not experiencing any inconvenience. If she still lives with you, it will not be convenient for your *bhajana*. You will have less time to serve Hari. I have written a letter to — Mahārāja as well. The two of you should cooperate and work together to run the *maṭha*. Address your letters to me in Navadvīpa. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 41 Issue 9



LETTER FOURTEEN

The śikṣā-guru is to make one attached to one's dīkṣā-guru

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Uddhāraṇa Gauḍīya Maṭha
Chowmatha, Chuchura (Hooghly)
05/11/1961

Please accept my regards.

I received a letter from you some days earlier. — is well at present and engaged in regular service. He appears to be much better than before. Hopefully this behaviour will last. Still, the scriptures on ethics (*nīti-śāstras*) state: “*avyavasthita-cittasya prasādo 'pi bhayaṅkaraḥ* — what seems promising early on may prove to raise fearsome havoc in the future.” That being said, as long as he remains enthusiastic in *hari-sevā* by hearing *hari-kathā*, things will be auspicious for him. You have endeavoured greatly for his well-being and are continuing to do so. This is also auspicious for you. Both one's own well-being and that of others are imperative. Moreover, the two are reciprocal.

Śikṣā-guru and *dīkṣā-guru* are one in *tattva*. What you wrote is correct. He who gives instruction on service to *guru* is called the *śikṣā-guru*. Not just any person who quotes scriptures can be called *śikṣā-guru*. The duty of the *śikṣā-guru* is to fix one's attachment to the lotus feet of one's *dīkṣā-guru*. If one's *śikṣā-guru* creates discord with one's *dīkṣā-guru*, he ceases to be *śikṣā-guru*. Therefore, *dīkṣā-guru* and *śikṣā-guru* are accepted to be categorically identical. Only their pastimes and activities distinguish them from one another. This must be understood.

On the path of *arcana*, *dīkṣā-guru* must be worshipped first, not *śikṣā-guru*. If *śikṣā-guru* is more powerful than *dīkṣā-guru*, one must offer obeisances to both of them simultaneously. If *śikṣā-guru* is extremely powerful, then he can deliver his disciples from all offences and give them a place at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. This is why he is known as *bhajana-guru*. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has categorized *guru* as follows: “The first *guru* is the *varṇa-pradarśaka-guru* [who introduces one to the spiritual path]; the second is the *nāma-guru* [who imparts the holy name]; the third is the *dīkṣā-guru* [who bestows the *dīkṣā-mantras*]; the fourth is the *śikṣā-guru* [who gives spiritual instruction]; and the fifth is the *bhajana-guru* [who guides one in *bhajana*]. This sequence illustrates the prominence of *bhajana-guru* in *arcana-mārga*. But *dīkṣā-guru* can do all these activities. If *dīkṣā-guru* is not qualified to give instruction and guidance in *bhajana*, then we accept the prominence of *bhajana-guru*. The main point is that we have to reach the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, somehow or other.

Bring lots of people with you for this year's *parikramā*. I conclude here.

Servant of Śrī Gaura's devotees,

B. P. Kṛṣṇa

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 41 Issue 3



LETTER FIFTEEN

Bhagavān personally aids those who have the courage to speak the truth

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha,
Tegharipara, Navadvīpa (Nadiyā)
27/12/1961

My dear —,

I was so very delighted to receive your postcard dated 23/12/61. You managed to fit eighty lines on a single card! You will have to be in college for a long one-and-a-half years to get your degree. I am thinking about you too, every day, and I keep remembering one of Narottama Ṭhākura's songs. He wrote: "*rāmacandra saṅga māge narottama dāsa* – Narottama dāsa begs for the company of Rāmacandra." The Lord's will prevails in all matters. Always remember that. We are the way He has made us. No one has the ability to work against the Lord's wishes.

Whatever happens, make a concerted effort to achieve high grades in your exams. A Vaiṣṇava's heart is the playground of all good qualities. As such, all the virtues of this earthly realm, including knowledge and scientific genius, dwell within the Vaiṣṇavas. Though scientific knowledge is considered to be of demoniac origin, the demigods are by no means deficient in it. Pass with good marks and come.

You must swear to always preach the truth. Bhagavān personally aids those who have the courage to speak the truth. We will not be slaves to a world veering down the path of falsehood. We were not born to indulge sinful proclivities and falsehood. We will not encourage in the slightest the demoniac education offered in modern universities. We must stop the world's demise resulting from the forces of Kali. People who want what is truly auspicious for the world need to solemnly vow to do so. Those with such spirit earn the name *mahā-vadānya*, "great benefactors". What they do is true altruism (*jīve dayā*). Speak the truth fearlessly. For the sake of preaching the truth, Nityānanda Prabhu, Haridāsa Ṭhākura and other Vaiṣṇavas were assaulted by the inimical. Many great personalities have even had to give up their lives for the sake of truth. As such, it will not become us to be fearful. Mahāprabhu's policy is to have mercy on all living beings and to preach, becoming humbler than a blade of grass and more tolerant than a tree. Preaching the glories of the Lord is true altruism.

What more can I say? My health is what it is. I am going to Mathurā on 4/1/62. I conclude here.

Servant of the devotees of Śrī Gaura,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 42 Issue 2



LETTER SIXTEEN

No adversity must stop our hari-kīrtana

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Uddhāraṇa Gauḍīya Maṭha
Chowmatha, Chuchura (Hooghly)
03/01/1962

My dear —,

I received your inland [domestic] letter bearing the name —. The influence of the *aṣṭa-graha* (eight astrological planets) does not affect the residents of Vaikuṇṭha. The *sādhaka-jīva* is to perform constant *hari-kīrtana*. If any sort of astrological occurrence presents itself, he should see it as an opportunity to perform *hari-kīrtana*, and then perform *hari-kīrtana* and *hari-bhajana* with great delight.

The people of Earth have always been opposed to *hari-kīrtana*. By the will of Bhagavān, the *grahas* (planets) menace them as a punishment for their antipathy toward Hari. In order to avoid this punishment, sinners and offenders endeavour to show their loyalty to Bhagavān, and thus the all-auspicious Lord becomes satisfied and protects them from the curse of the eclipse. Although this [interaction with the Lord] serves as a protective talisman for them, only if similar calamity occurs again do they put consistent effort into acts of love for Hari.

Witnessing pursuits that oppose Hari saddens us. Therefore, Bhagavān Himself issues calamities in the world to pacify our sadness. In the face of those calamities, the *karmīs* and *jñānīs* of the world display efforts to practice *bhajana* of Hari, who removes all difficulties. In such a propitious circumstance, their endeavours for *karma* and *jñāna* diminish, which in turn increases the devotees' opportunity to serve Bhagavān [because the *karmīs* and *jñānīs* become more receptive to *bhakti*, more supportive of the devotees' endeavours, etc.].

What is misfortune for the extroverted, or materialistic, is good fortune for the introverted, or spiritual. Thus, for the devotees of Bhagavān, both the influence of the planets and an eclipse bring opportunities for service. Even the extroverted *smārtas*, knowing that only Bhagavān Madhusūdana and no one else can rescue one from disaster, try to perform *bhagavad-bhajana*. At that time, noting that even those normally opposed to the Lord are making efforts favourable to devotion, the devotees perform *nāma-yajña* (the sacrifice of *hari-kīrtana*) in great ecstasy. We will do just that.

Read this letter to all the devotees there and instruct them to act accordingly. I am leaving for Mathurā tomorrow. From there, I will return to Navadvīpa via Jaipur on 24 January. Let me know how all of you are. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 42 Issue 1



LETTER SEVENTEEN

Bhakti is not for the weak, timid and cowardly

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Keśavaḥ Gaudīya Maṭha

Kāṁsa-tīlā, Mathurā (U.P.)

27/01/1962

My dear — Mahārāja,

I was saddened to hear about the incident with —. “*Vīra-bhogyā vasundharā* – the Earth is enjoyed by the valiant.” It is crucial to remember these words. It is not right to imagine that the servants of *mādhurya-rasa* lack valour. *Mādhurya-rasa* is the complete *rasa*, wherein dwell all twelve *rasas*. Where necessary, they all manifest in the servants of *mādhurya-rasa*. Inactivity is the emblem of sloth. “To renounce what is actually favourable for the service of Śrī Hari, considering it vice, is to blunder.” To protect one paisa belonging to Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet, we may permit the destruction of hundreds of thousands. This is the teaching of exalted persons like Śrīla Prabhupāda.³

“*Nāyam ātmā bala-hīnena labhyaḥ* – one cannot attain Paramātmā if one is lacking in strength.” Upon reflection on this statement from the Upaniṣads, it becomes clear that *bhagavad-bhajana* is not for the weak or timid, nor for cowards. Thanks to the stupidity of phony sentimentalist *sahajiyās*, the *dharma* of the Gaudīya Vaiṣṇavas – what Śrīman Mahāprabhu came to preach – is lapsing into oblivion. Unlike the *sahajiyās*, we do not display the slightest hint of weakness in preaching the message of Mahāprabhu. Weakness of heart (*hṛdaya-daurbalya*) is the foremost obstacle in performing *hari-bhajana*. Those thoroughly free of this flaw are most qualified to preach. They alone are worthy of making disciples the world over. Courage, symptomatically, is not passive. The function of consciousness is action.

We have had the fortune to be born in the spiritual family of such valiant personalities as Śrīla Prabhupāda and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Moreover, we maintain claim to the lineage of Śrīman Madhvācārya, the veritable emblem of strength and courage. It is the weak, cowardly, impotent and lazy who are following the efforts of those *bābājīs*, *mātājīs* and caste Gosvāmīs of today who are antagonistic to *bhagavad-bhakti*. We will not replicate the devotional blunders of the *sahajiyās*. The true purport of “*tṛṇād-āpi sunīcena* – feeling oneself lower than a blade of grass” is “*tabe lāṭhi māra tāra śire upare* – kick them in the head.” These words are found in the writings of Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura. If you remember Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura’s words: “*krodha bhakti-dveṣī jane* – may my anger be channelled toward those inimical to the devotees”,

3 The actual meaning of this quotation can be found on page 11 in the article entitled “A True Experience of Separation”.

then you may truly become more tolerant than a tree. What more to say? Can the house that — Bābu donated not be used in the service of Hari? Read this letter to everyone. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhākti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 41 Issue 8



LETTER EIGHTEEN

Perform vratas with devotion

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Keśavaṅī Gauḍīya Maṭha

Kaṁsa-tilā, Mathurā (U.P.)

30/01/1962

My dear —,

It would have been ideal for you to take possession of the home when he left and made arrangements for us. Our people [*brahmacārīs* and *sannyāsīs*] are not suited to such worldly affairs. Why were you so neglectful in the performance of service to Hari? Failing to do things at the proper time causes many difficulties.

From what I have heard people say, — Prabhu's views are not favourable to Vedānta Samiti's preaching of *bhakti*. Refrain from becoming involved. If all one's efforts are not wholly dedicated to Kṛṣṇa, one cannot attain the mercy of Rādhārāṇī. Embracing hardship for the sake of Bhagavān is characteristic of one practising *bhakti*. Know that seeking pleasure and convenience is nothing more than sense gratification. Service to Bhagavān must be rendered wholeheartedly.

Simply for the sake of comfort, many people in your area resist observing Cāturmāsya and other *vratas*. This is contrary to the practised precepts of both Śrīla Prabhupāda and Śrīman Mahāprabhu. Do not give approval or encouragement to such violations. All householders must follow the injunctions of *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*. At the very beginning of *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī and Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī have stated who it is meant for. To make an excuse to not follow the *vrata* by saying, "Householder devotees have to work so hard," is highly inappropriate and offensive. It is never right to spoil the distinct speciality of Vedānta Samiti. If any of Śrīla Prabhupāda's *sannyāsī* disciples are averse to observing these *vratas*, their example should never be accepted as the ideal. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhākti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 42 Issue 3



LETTER NINETEEN

Surrender your attachment to Bhagavān

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha
Kāmsa-ṭīlā, Mathurā (U.P.)
30/1/1962

My dear —,

In this life of worldly existence, it is inevitable for one to become deluded by the illusory energy, *māyā*. Women in particular must surrender their attachments to Bhagavān while still remaining in family life. The *mahājanas* have said:

*viṣaye je prīti ebe āchaye āmāra
sei-mata prīti hauka caraṇe tomāra*

I pray to love You, O Lord, the way I love the objects of the senses.

Always remember this teaching. A widowed lady's sons and daughters are the main focus of her affection and attachment. Generally, she is full of hopes and wishes for her children's future peace and happiness. Having understood your duty to them, guide them so that they too may become well established in devotion to Bhagavān. But you must not harbour any kind of attachment or possessiveness to them. Whatever attachment you have to them in your heart, surrender it to Bhagavān.

You wrote something very wonderful: "Give me all the sorrow and hardship I am due in this very lifetime." Tell this to Bhagavān, at every step. I highly appreciate this attitude of yours.

You prayed to have a vision of me at your final moment. By contemplating the boundless compassion of Śrī Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas at every moment, you will perceive them within your heart constantly, not to speak of at the moment of death. "*Kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ* – Always sing the names and glories of Śrī Hari." Always remember this teaching. Always utter the holy name of Śrī Hari, or at least when you have the opportunity to do so. Pray to *śrī nāma* to eradicate the obstacles you are facing in your *bhajana*. The holy name removes all disturbances that the soul faces. Convey my blessings to your son and daughter. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 41 Issue 12



LETTER TWENTY

Unconditional charity

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha
Kāṁsa-ṭilā, Mathurā (U.P.)
05/02/1962

My dear —,

When we talk about *dāna* (charity), we mean “to give unconditionally”. That kind of giving is in the mode of goodness. Charity not in the mode of goodness is of no use in the service of Bhagavān. In the hands of Bhagavān’s devotees, charity [in the mode of goodness] transforms into *viśuddha-sattva* and transcends the modes of nature. It is difficult for that to be possible in Amataḥ.

I do not understand how Bhuvana Bābu plans to construct a *maṭha* in his own name. *Bhuvana* means “earth” or “dirt”. Śrī Vedānta Samitī’s *maṭhas* are beyond the material world, outside the territory of earth and dirt. There is no way any *maṭha* can be named “Bhuvana”, but a plaque can be made with his name on it.

Bhuvana Bābu’s land is valued somewhere between five and seven thousand, but since we will have to spend twenty to twenty-five thousand to build a *maṭha* and temple, his proposal is hardly charity. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 42 Issue 9



LETTER TWENTY-ONE

Observing Ekādaśī, Ratha-yātrā, etc. on the correct day

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Uddharaṇa Gauḍīya Maṭha
Chowmatha, Chuchura (Hooghly)
12/7/1962

My dear —,

I received your letter yesterday. The calendar does say that the 28th of Āṣāḍha is an Ekādaśī that falls in a waxing fortnight, but “Ekādaśī fast” was not printed in big letters. Despite its absence, the

calendar does state the *pāraṇa* time to break Ekādaśī on the 29th of Āṣāḍha. Though the fast day itself is not mentioned due to a printing error, once people see the *pāraṇa* notice, they should be able to understand there is a fast. That day is Śayana-Ekādaśī, so you should fast on Friday, the 28th of Āṣāḍha, and break it on Saturday, before 9:29 in the morning.

What is printed in our calendar (*pañjikā*) strictly follows the guidelines in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* on the observance of *cāturmāsya-vrata*. One can commence Cāturmāsya on Dvādaśī or Pūrṇimā (the full moon day). Alternatively, one can start Cāturmāsya on the first day of the solar month, which is the first day of Śrāvaṇa. This year, since Pūrṇimā is on the first day of Śrāvaṇa, Cāturmāsya starts on the same day on both solar and lunar calendars. The key point, however, is that those following Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti traditions and *tridaṇḍī-sannyāsīs* in the Gauḍīya *sampradāya* within Prabhupāda’s lineage are duty-bound to commence their *cāturmāsya-vrata* on the day of Pūrṇimā. In particular “*māsa*” – referring to the lunar month – begins from Pūrṇimā. As such, Cāturmāsya refers to a four-month span, from Pūrṇimā to Pūrṇimā. *Gṛhasthas*, too, should shave on Pūrṇimā and begin their *vrata* on that day; they are not to follow the *vrata* any other way. A great many disparate ideas of tradition are emerging in towns and villages due to a prevalent lack of scriptural knowledge. Our calendar quotes *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* as authoritative proof on the observance of Cāturmāsya. Please read the translation thereof provided below, along with the analysis given in our *Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā*. Read our *pañjikā* carefully. Whatever we have noted there is accurate. You will need to apply your intellect somewhat.

The dates of Ratha-yātrā, Herā Pañcamī and the Punar-yātrā in *Śrī Caitanya Pañjikā* (calendar) for Gaurābda 476 [1962] – this year – are all correct. All the publishers of the Bengali calendar made an error. And newsletters like amateur village bulletins, misled the general public as to the date of the Ratha festival. Śrī Śrī Jagannātha-deva’s Ratha-yātrā in Purī took place on the day our calendar stated – Wednesday the 19th of Āṣāḍha – and it quotes in bold a verse from *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* to substantiate the claim: “*ratha-yātrās ca jagannāthānusārataḥ kārayet*”.⁴ It is imperative to conduct Ratha-yātrā the way it is in Purī. We swear, and have received confirmation of the fact, that the Ratha festival in Purī took place that Wednesday. It was not on Tuesday. If anyone still writes that the Ratha festival in Purī happened on the Tuesday, they are perpetrating an untruth. They are cheaters and forgers. We will not abide the views of bogus calendar publishers who are bereft of scripturally sound knowledge. Our calendar is right; all the others were wrong. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 41 Issue 10

4 *kistvidrg bhakti-sandarśī / jagannāthānusārataḥ*

dolā-candana-kīlāla / ratha-yātrās-ca kārayet

Hari-bhakti-vilāsa



LETTER TWENTY-TWO
The word ‘vijñāna’

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Uddhāraṇa Gauḍīya Maṭha
 Chowmatha, Chuchura (Hooghly)
 02/08/1962

My dear —,

I received your letter dated 30/07/62 in — Mahārāja’s name on returning from Purbachak (Medinipur).

We must show the residents of the world our path of peace. Deviants and blind followers cannot and do not know how to traverse the correct and appropriate path. The blind are incapable; the ignorant are deviant. The ignorant need to be taught *jñāna* (knowledge) and *vijñāna* (science or realization). What is considered *vijñāna* (science) nowadays is actually *ajñāna* (ignorance). That is the verdict of the *vijñānīs* (those who are realized). The word *vijñāna* is formed by attaching the prefix *vi* to the word *jñānā*. According to grammarians, the prefix *vi* is used to convey two kinds of meaning [negative or positive], as in the words: *viśeṣa* (special or variety) and *vicyuti* (severance or failure). For instance, in the words *viśrī* (ugly), *vismṛti* (forgetfulness), *viphala* (fruitless), *vikṛti* (malformation or transformation), and so on, the prefix *vi* is used in the negative sense, as in *vicyuti*. The *vi* in *vikṛti* can make it mean either “malformation” or “transformation”. Likewise, the contemporary use of the word *vijñāna* means one thing to the ignorant and another to those with actual knowledge. Thus the word *vijñāna* has two meanings.

On the occasion of — Prabhu leaving his body here in Purbachak, I have been discussing this ignorance called science for ten or twelve days. The impetus for this was that his grandson — dāsa is an M.S.C in science and a professor at Pashkura College. He teaches mathematical psychology. He has authored a book (*Vyavahārika Manovijñāna – Behavioural Psychology*), which has been approved for students from grade nine to the graduate university level. This book is not in line with true *vijñāna*. I will discuss more when you come here. I conclude here.

With blessings,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 41 Issue 5



LETTER TWENTY-THREE

Abandon the company of those who have deviated from the conduct and ideology of Śrīla Prabhupāda

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Uddhārāṇa Gauḍīya Maṭha
Chowmatha, Chuchura (Hooghly)
31/3/1963

My dear — Prabhu,

Your letter dated 22/3/63 arrived in Navadvīpa on the 25th, but I was already in Chuchura. Vāmana Mahārāja brought me your letter on the 27th, which was the 13th of Caitra, a Wednesday, so there was no way you could have received a letter from me earlier than the 14th of Caitra.

As such, I did not have a chance to confirm whether or not you should attend the gathering of the Tāmra-Lipta Samiti at —'s house, but I had already informed you that you should attend the gathering and discuss why — Mahārāja does not perform any *saṁskāras* (ceremonial rites) for those to whom he has given *dīkṣā* initiation. You are not to accept foodstuffs cooked by persons who are not initiated in terms of receiving their *saṁskāra*.

There is no harm in being helpful by providing them with cookware and dishes. There is no fault, because people in our *sampradāya* will be preparing food. But tell me, since you did not receive my letter, did you follow the rules I told you about before? I told Gajendra-mokṣaṇa Prabhu about this too. Let me know what you both did.

The other matter you brought up was about — Mahārāja conducting a *yajña* in our Navadvīpa *maṭha*. I will tell you exactly what happened.

Śrauti Mahārāja engaged — Mahārāja in performing the *yajña* without asking me. I did not appoint him to do so. I was busy with other matters. When I entered the temple sanctum for the installation of the deities, I heard him reciting the *svasti-vācana* by the *homa* (sacred fire). Śrauti Mahārāja was in the temple sanctum. I asked Śrauti Mahārāja then and there, “Why did you sit him down to perform the *yajña*? He does not follow Prabhupāda’s conduct and teachings. I do not want such a person performing the *yajña*. You know that I take these matters very seriously.”

Śrauti Mahārāja said, “Then why did you invite him?”

I told him, “I did not invite — Mahārāja. You can ask him. I did not send him a personal invitation as I did you. Maybe he received one of the general printed invitations that were sent out to all, but I knew nothing about it.”

Later, I came to hear that in my absence — Mahārāja had borrowed a tent and canopy from [our *maṭha* in] Navadvīpa for his annual festival in Kālnā, and when he came to return it, Vāmana Mahārāja,

out of courtesy, invited him to participate in the *parikramā* and deity installation. That is why he came. I did not extend any special invitation to him.

When Śrauti Mahārāja heard this, he said, “Oh, I did not know this.” When they asked me who should perform the *yajña*, I said then that Paṇḍita Rāghava Caitanya would do it. — came out of the inner sanctum, then out to the verandah and sat Rāghava Caitanya down to officiate the fire and recite the *svasti-vācana*. You all saw Rāghava Caitanya performed *homa*, sitting there [by the sacrificial fire] on — Mahārāja’s left. Both of them had the *Sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā* in their hands.

After that, we did not have — Mahārāja do anything. I did the *abhiṣeka* (bathing ceremony) myself with Gaṅgā water and *pañcāmṛta*. I also conducted the installation of the deities inside the temple myself. Śrauti Mahārāja was the officiating priest. *Pūjyapāda* Śrīdhara Mahārāja unveiled the deity room gate.

— Mahārāja partook of *prasāda* and left. He did not meet with me before leaving. Nevertheless, we wish him well and hope that he becomes established in the current of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s teachings and that he adopts behaviour that is favourable to this. That is what we want. Vāmana Mahārāja even maintains dialogue with him about our *maṭha*, and that is why he praises the practices and teachings of our *maṭha*. He even praised the unbiased stance of our *Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā* and submitted an article, which we have published. You can read his article and see for yourself. He is a scholar and very adept at the written word, as you will see.

There was talk about your selling one of your properties at Bheturiya and buying a property in Pichaldā. I will be going to Sundarban to preach. When I return from there, I will go to Assam. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

🕉 Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 42 Issue 8



LETTER TWENTY-FOUR

**For a servant of Hari, trials and tribulations
are a source of auspiciousness**

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti
Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha,
Tegharipara, Navadvīpa (Nadiyā)
12/6/1963

My dear —,

I was very distressed by your letter dated 7/6/63. There is a grave lack of people to take care of the *maṭha* these days. Everyone wants comfort. If they can eat lying down in their beds, then getting up and sitting to eat seems troublesome, and if someone chews their food for them, it's less work for their teeth.

It seems the number of angry, combative people is greater nowadays. Because of their anger issues, they cannot stay with their parents or with their wives and children. Lust and anger have captured them all. What are you going to be able to do? And what can I do? If they could function in the world, would they have come to the *maṭha*? This is the reason why so many come. The “Pi-Pu-Phi-Sho Party⁵” is rather large.

It is because of you that I established the *maṭha* in Assam. Now that you want to leave and come here, it is quite discouraging. Personally, I think you should stay there as long as you are alive. I still have the money in hand that you want to spend on land in Navadvīpa. I want to send the money back to you. The goal of life is to serve Hari. For a servant of Hari, trials and tribulations are the source of auspiciousness. Why would a servant want to be rid of such blessings?

— was a very good boy. I was sorry he could not stay. Please tell — Mahārāja to look for him and bring him back.

Do not let your property go to the Public Work Department (PW). You have had possession of that land for a long time, long before PW came around. Get an injunction issued through the court. Do not accept the notices PW serves. Keep — at Golakganj. He is hardworking and has a simple, goodhearted nature. Be sure that nobody mistreats him in any way. I am going to Chuchura for Ratha-yātrā the day after tomorrow. I cannot seem to find out where — Mahārāja went; it has been about ten or twelve days. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 42 Issue 6

5 The “Pi-Pu-Phi-Sho Party” refers to a very lazy group of people who sleep so late that the sun starts burning their backs. One of them manages to open his mouth to say, “*piṭha puḍeche* – my back is burning,” but all he manages to utter is “*pi pu*”. His laziness is such that he cannot even say the words in full. In response, his neighbours open their mouths to say, “*phire śo* – roll over and go back to sleep,” but only manage to say, “*phi śo*.”



LETTER TWENTY-FIVE

Solitary practice is opposed to hari-bhajana and leads to sense gratification

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Uddhāraṇa Gauḍīya Maṭha
Chowmatha, Chuchura (Hooghly)
19/08/1963

My dear — Mahārāja,

You had sent a letter to — Mahārāja, which is where I saw your address. I am mailing this letter to that address, though I do not know if it will reach you or not.

At present, my health is not particularly good. After tomorrow's blood test, I can start new treatment.

This coming Friday, 23 August, which is the 6th of Bhādra in the Bengali calendar, — Maharāja, — Maharāja and — are leaving from Howrah for a pilgrimage to Kedāra-Badri. They have booked tickets for fifteen people, allowing for an extra one or two. On return from "Hill Concession", first they will go to Dehradun, then to Haridwar. After taking *darśana* of Haridwar, they will go to Rishikesh. I cannot say if you will see them or not. If it is a disturbance to your solitary *bhajana*, then perhaps it will not be possible to see them.

We have heard from our *śrī guru-pādapadma* [Śrīla Prabhupāda] that solitary *bhajana* is another name for sense gratification and, as such, it is opposed to *hari-bhajana*. One hundred percent of the people in this category are seen to fall down. What happens is the same as when *hari-bhajana* is not performed. The example you have set is detrimental to Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti.

You are aged and intelligent. There is no need for me to write more to you. You should have clearly informed me before adopting this lifestyle. Your actions have left me speechless. Even though your health was not good, you could have stayed in any *maṭha* and served Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas. That would have been immediately and ultimately auspicious for you. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhākti Prajñāna Keśava

☉ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 42 Issue 4



LETTER TWENTY-SIX

Eat only what you cook and offer

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Uddhāraṇa Gauḍīya Maṭha
Chowmatha, Chuchura (Hooghly)
19/8/1963

My dear —,

Many days ago, I received the letter you wrote me concerning your new job. My health is not good, so I have stopped corresponding almost entirely. In other news, — and others went to Golakganj for the recent Jhulana festival. Perhaps you received some advice from them.

I do not think there is anything wrong with your enrolling in training. The important question is whether or not you can eat what someone else cooks. You should cook for yourself, offer what you prepare to Bhagavān, and accept the remnants of that offering as *prasāda*. Preparing your meals in a “cooker” is highly convenient. You can make enough for two meals at one time. Enrol in your training course and cook for yourself. If you are prevented from doing so, gently appeal to your superiors. Surely they will not oppose your protecting your religious principles. If they force you to eat meals touched by a Muslim or anyone other than a *brāhmaṇa*, then consult a good lawyer and file a civil or criminal lawsuit.

To interfere with anyone’s religion is, by criminal law, a punishable offence. As far as I know, you can also file a civil suit according to No. 295 of the Indian Penal Code. Congress has never passed any law pertaining to a person’s dietary choices. Without any such law in place, it is a punishable offence for them to put you under duress. For that matter, you could also file a Declaratory Suit. Consult some lawyers. If need be, show them my letter. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhāktī Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 41 Issue 11



LETTER TWENTY-SEVEN

Reinstallation of the deity*śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ*

Śrī Uddhāraṇa Gauḍīya Maṭha
Chowmatha, Chuchura (Hooghly)
26/08/1963

My dear —,

I have received your letter dated 27th of Śrāvaṇa and understood everything. Ramānātha Prabhu went to the Koranta *maṭha* in Orissa. Since then, I have not received any news from him. I am happy to hear that the land is being cultivated nicely there. The farming there depends on you. You have the convenience of rendering service in the *maṭha* without leaving your village. This is a matter of special fortune.

In regard to keeping Ṭhākuraṇi in —'s home, if we wish to maintain the highest standard, then it is required to install the deity again and resume regular worship. One who is not a pure devotee cannot install *śrī vighraha*. Therefore, the old deity must be nicely repainted, given *abhiṣeka* and installed. The term *punaḥ-pratiṣṭhā* (reinstallation) is rather illogical, so we must understand that the deity has not been installed previously. This is the purest standard. You can bathe the deity very briefly and install Him.

In the case of ancient deities, there is no need for reinstallation. One can simply perform *abhiṣeka* and start worshipping Them. "Ancient deities" generally refers to those that have been worshipped for at least three hundred years. This is not the case in your situation.

In many cases, however, people neglect such high standards for social purposes. They modify the standard because they think people will be disturbed, and simply repaint and reinstate the deity with *abhiṣeka*, performing *mahā-mantra kīrtana*. Do what you think is appropriate.

I have no objection if you want to keep a separate deity (Ṭhākuraṇi) in your house. Still, it is ideal if Ṭhākuraṇi is in a separate room or temple facing south, otherwise, *sevā-aparādha* is probable. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 41 Issue 2



LETTER TWENTY-EIGHT

The maṭha cannot be under the control of the general public

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

44 Kailash Basu Street
Kolkata—6
05/06/1964

My dear —,

I have just received your letter dated 1/6/64, from Dinhatā. I came to Kolkata from Dumkā for treatment, as my body is unwell, though it is better than before. But I won't be going to Siliguri and Mathabhanga, due to my health.

You did the right thing to bring that Giridhārī deity with you. I am very happy you did that. We paid for and acquired the *āśrama* there. I am the owner. Nothing that the villagers say will supersede any activity approved by me. In particular, no so-called Vaiṣṇava or *brāhmaṇa* has the right to worship a deity worshipped by Vedānta Samiti *sevakas*, so, who should be entrusted with the responsibility of serving those deities? The villagers sorely lack scriptural knowledge. That is why we do not and will not manage the *maṭha* according to anything they say. We did not and will not structure our society on the basis of public opinion. We know that the general public opposes scripture and religion, which is why I am not particularly fond of Mathabhanga. —'s knowledge of scripture, his conduct and beliefs, also, are not proper. His actions are influenced by public opinion, something I particularly object to. By taking the Giridhārī deity with you, you did what was best and most faithful to scripture, in order to serve the deity immaculately. We have no relationship with those who fail to understand this.

If I go there, I will convey an understanding of all this to them. It is absolutely true that we teach the public. We are their teachers, not their students. We establish *maṭhas* and temples in order to impart wisdom to the people, and we are fully opposed to establishing a *maṭha* or temple under their influence. As such, we are not obliged to accept anything the public says that opposes our teachings. If necessary, I will not hesitate in the slightest to abandon that place. Read my letter to — Mahārāja and some of the local residents there. If it is necessary, once again, you can bring the Giridhārī deity with you and not surrender Him into the hands of the demons. If you like, you can come to Navadvīpa via Mathabhanga. I have received — Mahārāja's letter and I will also write him back. I will stay here for another few days. Write me at Navadvīpa. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava



LETTER TWENTY-NINE

Preachers are educators of the public and therefore need to set an example

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

44 Kailash Basu Street
Kolkata—6
05/06/1964

My dear —,

I received the letter you wrote from Mogra. It is delightful that you are preaching so much, but if you do it independently from *gurudeva*, that preaching transforms into a pathway of *karma*. “*Āśraya loiyā bhaje, tāre kṛṣṇa nāhi tyaje, āra saba mare akāraṇa* – Kṛṣṇa does not neglect one who performs *bhajana* under guidance; all others perish meaninglessly.” The example you are setting is not becoming of you in the slightest. Residents of the *maṭha*, especially the teachers and speakers, travel widely as public educators. If they cannot tolerate even minor upsets, how will they carry on? Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu and Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura endured piercing remarks, to say nothing of physical injury. “*Taror api sahiṣṇunā* – be more tolerant than a tree.” Where are we to apply these teachings of Mahāprabhu? If we cannot reflect them in our own lives, how will we advance in *bhajana*? Whatever happens, do not delay your return after the festivities conclude in Pichaldā.

I sent a letter to — Prabhu to find out about you. He was the one to give me the first news I had of you. Later he wrote me, saying, “I do not know where he is.” I wrote him and told him to find out where you were and send you to me immediately, yet since he could not find you, he could not send you. Meanwhile, I received word from you and was somewhat relieved. Come here via Pichaldā.

My health has deteriorated quite severely since there. I am gradually improving now. After staying a few more days in Kolkata, I will go via Chuchura to Navadvīpa. — Prabhu had an accident with a police vehicle while on *bhikṣā* in Srirampur and is in the hospital there. Although he will be in pain for a few days, there is no cause for fear. — Mahārāja has gone to Chuchura. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhākti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 25 Issue 7



LETTER THIRTY

Householder devotees are to be cremated rather than interred

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

44 Kailash Basu Street
Kolkata—6
09/06/1964

My dear Mother —,

I received the ten rupees sent in —'s hands, as well the ten from — and —. Address your letters to Navadvīpa.

It is forbidden to give *grhastha* Vaiṣṇavas burial; it is not practiced. The custom is to cremate householder devotees who have left their body. In other words, their body is to be burned. Renounced Vaiṣṇavas wearing loincloth are to be interred in the earth, given *samādhi* burial. In ordinary Vaiṣṇava society and that of the caste Vaiṣṇavas, we see the opposite of this custom. Please do not follow their example. Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti does not conduct or condone any activity opposed to the auspices of scripture.

The ancestral homage, or *śrāddha* ceremony, is to be performed on the eleventh day after a person's passing. The male relatives are to shave on the morning of that eleventh day and offer *bhagavat-prasāda*, or *mahā-prasāda*, as *śrāddha* [to the departed person], according to the decrees of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī's *Sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā*. If the surviving wife and children have not been given *harināma* or *dīkṣā* initiation, they are not qualified to perform Vaiṣṇava *śrāddha*. In that case, a godbrother or godsister should perform the *śrāddha* rites for the departed. The uninitiated sons or daughters are not to do anything, since the departed Vaiṣṇava would never have faithfully accepted water and food from them while alive.

If need be, people from the *maṭha* can attend the *śrāddha* ceremony to officiate. There is provision for this in our Samiti.

What more to say? Let us know you are well and send me word about — Bābu. I am concerned for him. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 25 Issue 6



LETTER THIRTY-ONE

Do not donate in such a way that it puts you into hardship

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha
Tegharipara, Navadvīpa (Nadiya)
10/07/1964

My dear —,

I received —'s 15.00 rupees via your money order and 5.00 rupees from you, a total of 20.00 rupees. You currently do not have any income. Why did you send money? Your tenacity exceeds your capacity. In financial difficulty, however, the mind's tenacity cannot accomplish everything. Do not send money now. If, by the will of the Lord, you have a surplus of income, then offer some financial service; otherwise, don't. You will reap the benefits of service even by engaging others in service. Do not take on more hardship. If you experience difficulty, then I too feel the pain; keep that in mind.

Your elder brother comes here from time to time. His speculations make me fear for him if adversity besets him. Keep one instruction from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in mind: “*yasyāhaṁ anugrāhami, hariṣye tad-dhanam śanaiḥ* — when I favour someone, I slowly take away all their wealth.”

Encourage — Bābu and — to serve. Recite and give class on *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavatā*, *Jaiva-dharma*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and other such scriptures for all to hear. — Bābu met with me in Kolkata. Please convey my blessings to everyone. Festivities for Śrī Rathayātrā have commenced. I am in Navadvīpa and will remain here. Preachers have not gone to Jalpaiguri now that the monsoon season has come. They will go when the rains subside. Once again, my health is poor. Convey my respects to Prof. Prabhu. Apparently, his health is not good either. Please give him news of me or show him this letter. Hear *hari-kathā* from him. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhākti Prajñāna Keśava

● Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 26 Issue 1



LETTER THIRTY-TWO

**It is impossible to progress in life
if one does not heed discipline**

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha,
Tegharipara, Navadvīpa (Nadiyā)
13/09/1964

My dear —,

I received the 50 rupees you sent by money order on the 11th, as well as — Mahārāja's 110-rupee money order from Bongaigaon the same day. I see that he is trying to save the tree by watering its root, whereas you seem to be trying to preserve the tree as best you can by watering the leaves and branches. In the kingdom of *bhakti*, service to *guru* [according to his wish] is the root. Jhulana, Janmotsava-vrata and other such events are counted within that. Extravagance and pomposity devoid of service to *guru* have no place in the kingdom of *bhakti*.

— arrived from Assam and went home today to see his father, who has taken ill. I heard straight from his mouth about everything that has been going on in Golakganj and was very disheartened. I read the letter that — dāsa sent to Vāmana Mahārāja. If the three of you can come together sometime to meet me, then I will discuss the various issues with you. To give strength to a weak-hearted individual is the role of the *guru*. It is also the duty of the disciple to accept the chastisement of *guru*. A person can never progress in life without heeding chastisement. This is very important for all of you to know. Those who want to leave the *maṭha* and live someplace far from the lotus feet of *guru* are weak of heart. What is there to doubt in this regard? Nevertheless, it is the *guru's* role to grant them strength.

I heard from someone that — dāsa will abandon his red cloth and wear white again. Undoubtedly, weakness has entered his heart. One can never attain the service of Bhagavān by abandoning *ānugatyā-buddhi* (the wisdom to keep oneself under the guidance of a higher authority). You are a preacher. You perform *hari-kīrtana* constantly. So why then does weakness plague those in your circle? Indulging weakness is the sign of weakness. Be vigilant at all times. Abandoning the worship of Hari is unbefitting one who has attained a human birth.

What more can I write? Work on the temple has commenced. A great deal of money is needed. Put particular effort into collection. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 25 Issue 9



LETTER THIRTY-THREE

Follow the precepts and conduct of Śrīman Mahāprabhu

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha
Tegharipara, Navadvīpa (Nadiyā)
26/09/1964

My dear —,

I am extremely delighted to receive your letter. Do continue to delight me thus from time to time. Even though I have not seen you face-to-face, you are often on my mind and I regularly inquire after you from the Assam devotees. I had wanted to preach Mahāprabhu's message nicely through you in Assam.

You possess sufficient learning and intelligence. If you [continue to] study, you will make a lot of progress. I think that if you read *Gauḍīya-patrikā*, *Jaiva-dharma* and *Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta* and learn the instructions of Mahāprabhu [such as *Śikṣāṣṭakam*] by heart, there could not be a more illustrious preacher in Assam than you. You had a keen intellect. I do not think it has yet been spoiled. Establish yourself firmly in *sadācara* (proper moral behaviour) and follow the precepts and conduct of Mahāprabhu and Vedānta Samiti. If you do this, Bhagavān will surely see to your good fortune. One can only earn Bhagavān's fondness through *bhakti*.

Time permitting, I will certainly come to Assam. I will notify you then and meet with everyone. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 26 Issue 3



LETTER THIRTY-FOUR

Knowledge is one thing, title is another

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha,
Tegharipara, Navadvīpa (Nadiyā)
18/12/1964

My dear —,

I received both your letters, one dated 27/11/64 and the other 11/12/64. I could not find any specific inquiry in either of your letters, and so I do not know what to answer. At present, you are studying the middle portion of Vedānta. Keep on studying. I have no objection. In regard to those who teach Rāmānuja's commentary on Vedānta, however, do not trust it to be flawless. I therefore do not clearly understand what they will teach you. Today's teachers and preachers of religion have no resolute principles. They consider the unteachable to be teachable and irreligion to be religion. Help your school's teachers and students to understand this properly. Prahlāda Mahārāja conveyed this perfectly to his teachers and fellow students. The boy Prahlāda was born a teacher, to even his parents, the leaders of the kingdom. His life story is our ideal. Education is the objective, not degrees or titles. Degrees (*upādhi*) are a disease (*vyādhi*). The students' struggle to accumulate titles and degrees is non-devotional. The less the student endeavours for that, the better.

Failure to serve Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas puts knowledge in the category of ignorance and ensures the students' inevitable downfall. Knowledge is one thing, title is another. The pride and arrogance of title degrades man and renders him inimical to devotion. There is a common saying: "It is preferable to be a beggar by one's own wits than a celebrity by the wits of others." Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmīpāda studied Vedānta under Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, defeated him in debate on Vedānta, and made him his disciple. There is no fault in studying under a simple, honest instructor like Madhusūdana, but the instruction of teachers who are duplicitous is by all means unacceptable. Regardless, I will be pleased if you desist from this thirst for knowledge and strive to serve Hari. If you are in financial need, let me know.

Vāmana Mahārāja went to Sidhabari to look after his health. Urddhvamanthī Mahārāja is taking an intermediate exam on Vaiṣṇava philosophy, Rāghava-Caitanya on poetry, and Kṛṣṇa-kṛpā on *Harināmāmṛta*. They have filled out the forms. Śrī Hari and Harihara have filled out forms for degrees in *Harināmāmṛta*. Vṛṣabhānu, Gorācānda and Mukunda have filled out the forms for the beginner's examination on *Harināmāmṛta*. Rāghava Paṇḍita has signed the form for the teacher at Vedānta Catuspāthī [the Vedānta Samitī's school]. Urddhvamanthī Mahārāja is the poetry teacher. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 26 Issue 3



LETTER THIRTY-FIVE

The Vaiṣṇavas' consideration of impurity

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha
Navadvīpa (Nadiyā)
05/03/1965

Affectionate greetings.

I received your letter dated 19/2/65 containing your questions. We are prepared to discuss your questions in detail, but it would be so wonderful for you to come to Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha in Navadvīpa, specifically from the 28th of Phalgunā to the 4th of Caitra, for Navadvīpa *parikramā* and the appearance celebration of Mahāprabhu. If you come at that time, your questions can be answered and you can see the festival before you go. Still, I will make one or two points now in response to your questions:

(1) A devotee who has received *dīkṣā* and taken shelter of the holy name from a pure devotee is never subject to the *aśauca* (contamination) that occurs when someone is born or dies in one's family [for example]. This applies only to despicable *smārtas*, not Vaiṣṇavas. There is therefore no mention of such contamination in Vaiṣṇava scripture.

(2) A pure Vaiṣṇava should conduct all ten *saṁskāras* (Vedic rites of passage) and other such rituals for a householder devotee. *Smārta-brāhmaṇas* have no right to do so.

(3) If you reflect on the answer to your first question, you will find that it also answers this question.

(4) Vaiṣṇavas are not affected by *aśauca*, so *smārta-brāhmaṇas* have no right to do anything for them in this regard. They will be making an offence if they do so.

(5) It is improper for an impure *smārta-brāhmaṇa* to perform any sort of ritual for Vaiṣṇavas. There is no fault if Vaiṣṇavas engage a pure *brāhmaṇa* who has taken shelter of *vaiṣṇava-dharma* and has good conduct, but I think that sort of *brāhmaṇa* is rare in Bengal. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

🕉 Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 25 Issue 10



LETTER THIRTY-SIX

The duties of Śrī Hari's devotees in a demoniac society

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha,
Tegharipara, Navadvīpa (Nadiyā)
31/3/1965

My dear —,

I was very saddened to read your letter dated 22/3/65. Poor ethics are rampant in the world under the influence of Kali. In a society where wicked policies prevail, saintly behaviour is not praised. This reminds me of a story.

Once, in a village where everyone smoked cannabis, a child was born to a prominent pro-cannabis family. But as he grew up and started going to school, he never participated in taking cannabis. His cannabis-addicted parents were very disappointed in him and tried, with force, to get him to smoke. When they failed in their attempts, they summoned the village “ganja doctor” for a consultation. The parents reasoned that if their child did not consume cannabis and did not want to, then surely something was wrong with him and he needed treatment. When examples of such behaviour in this kingdom of Kali can be found so easily, then you know without a doubt that you are going to have to undergo hardships.

I witnessed another similar instance. A newborn, after seven or eight days, was still not crying, so the parents and caregivers approached a doctor with their concerns. Why was this baby not crying at all? And they asked the doctor to give the infant some sort of medicine to make him cry. This example is just like the previous one. Ridding the Earth of the adversity gripping it is the only duty of those of upstanding character. Of all the altruistic pursuits seen in this world in this human form of life, helping others to cultivate a spiritual way of life is by far the best. Hence, should an educated, worthy individual such as you vow to help others in this highest way, you will benefit your hometown, your whole country and all of your countrymen.

Your elder brother is an alcoholic, and so he believes it is best not to chant the holy name of Hari; and if one absolutely must, then he figures it is better to drink and chant. You are an educated person, so I cannot resist sharing a song written by the playwright D.L. Roy: “*Āhā kibā māniyeche re, mader saṅge harināma* – Oh, how utterly wonderful it is, to drink and chant the holy names of Hari.” Teach your brother this song by D.L. Roy when he is sober.

Though Kali's influence is formidable, you need not fall prey to wrongdoing. Bhagavān is there. He always protects His servants. Battle the corrupt with the strongest ferocity by philosophical debate and by your personal conduct and behaviour. Nṛsimhadeva will infuse you with potency and grant you

immense strength. Never accept defeat under any circumstance. These days, Congress has advertised a motto in Sanskrit everywhere: “*Satyam eva jayati* – only the truth prevails.” The victory of truth is inevitable.

When Kāṁsa defied the demigods with his atrocities, the demigods prayed to Kṛṣṇa to subdue and rectify him. Kṛṣṇa instructed them to hide themselves and bide their time. He told them, “Very soon I will advent in the womb of Devakī to protect you. Preserve your lives somehow or other until My birth.” Accordingly, the demigods concealed themselves in the forests, jungles, mountains, caves and far-away lands, to save themselves from the demons’ clutches and preserve their religion and lives. If you find yourself severely inconvenienced, you may adopt their example and find accommodation elsewhere.

Only profound conviction in devotion to Bhagavān can protect the *sādhaka* in his life’s journey. Śrī Bhagavān presents such situations in order to test and further the depth of the *sādhaka*’s conviction. No matter how difficult the questions are on a test, the student who has studied perfectly will never fail. I have faith that you will surely be able to progress due to this test that Bhagavān has orchestrated. Adversity is the main foundation of success. A weak-hearted person sees difficulty as unfortunate and tries to prevent it or be liberated from it. A strong person confronted with adversity sees it as a cause of auspiciousness and embraces it. So, knowing adversity to be your good fortune, embrace it firmly, and you will be victorious.

In this earthly realm, common sense teaches us that if we are soft, then those of wicked disposition will display increased formidability; therefore, they are never to be shown softness. If they make one argument, you should counter it with ten, with great ferocity. If necessary, there is nothing stopping you from seeking the assistance of the state police and other such organizations. Preserving your religious principles supersedes even the preservation of your life. Always remember this. In our nation, there is no scarcity of examples of those who gave their life to preserve the principles of religion. What more can I say? I am quite worried for you.

I have not been able to reply in a timely fashion, due to being rather busy here with various tasks related to the constitution [of the Samiti]. Do not think anything of it. Let me know what the current situation is and send word to me in Navadvīpa. Vanamālī Prabhu, you and Urukrama Prabhu should sit together in one place every day to recite scriptures and perform *kīrtana* with great determination, and they should strive to subdue those who oppose the truth. Though the demons may display great prowess by the influence of *tamo-guṇa*, the servants of *viśuddha-sattva* (pure spiritual existence) are not intimidated and continue to fearlessly follow the instructions of Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas with particular conviction. You should never deviate. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 17 Issue 2



LETTER THIRTY-SEVEN

Encouraging a childhood friend in hari-bhajana

[The following letter was penned by Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja in English and has been left unedited.]

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha
P.O. Navadvīpa (Nadīyā)
23/04/1965

My dear —,

It is pretty long time passed away, I venture to write you. I received your letter dated 25/3/65. But I was awaiting your second letter to test your sincerity, but you failed. It is a matter of great joy that you consider yourself that you will lead a life of an ascetic. I most cordially invite you to come and join whenever you like. My advice: [a] man like you should not waste your old age in worldly affairs. I invite you to recollect our views of our early life.

I think your sons have been well developed in keeping your family in good and proper condition. They should be taught to seek after the grace of God when they will feel any difficulty in the sojourn of worldly life.

I do not like to snatch away your time any more. I stop here with the expectation of your arrival here.

I am retiring to Assam for a period of one month or so within a week. Let me know your decision.

In the service of the Supreme Lord

Swami B. P. Keshava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 26 Issue 6



LETTER THIRTY-EIGHT

The smārtas' misconception about aśauca (impurity)

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha

P.O. Navadvīpa (Nadiya)

17/09/1965

My dear —,

Some time ago, I received a letter from you. Today, just now, I have received another registered letter. In both letters, you write of the same predicament. Do relate my response to the assembly of scholars and also help the general public understand it properly.

First of all, it is crucial to consider what *patita* (fallen) and *aśauca* (contamination) imply. The antonym of *patita* is *unnata* (exalted). Who then, among humankind, is elevated and who is fallen? This too we must consider. What does the word *patita* mean? Those who do not have faith in scripture, who carry out their lives consuming vile foods and substances like meat, fish, onions, garlic, tea, paan, cigarettes, etc., are truly fallen souls. The lowest calibre of people consumes substances in the modes of *raja* (passion) and *tama* (ignorance). Advanced souls maintain a *sāttvika* (mode of goodness) diet. I will relate to you a story to illustrate this:

There was a village where everyone smoked cannabis – men, women, children and youth. Quite unexpectedly, a child in one of the families there could not stand the smell of cannabis and refused the attempts of his mother, father and siblings to give it to him. In a pro-cannabis community and village, it was astonishing to refuse cannabis. The village norm was to introduce young children to smoking cannabis almost as soon as they had passed the stage of infancy! And so it was that they tried to introduce this particular child to cannabis, but he refused. His parents and all of the neighbours were worried that the child was suffering from depression or some severe disease that made him refuse to smoke ganja. They decided it was necessary to summon a “ganja doctor” to treat the boy. The neighbourhood collaborated to figure out how to get this boy to smoke cannabis.

When I received your letter, I was reminded of the story of the pro-cannabis village. Are there no refined, *sāttvika* people in your village? Is everyone a deviant? Is everyone engaged in *rājasika* and *tāmasika* habits? I find that hard to believe. Surely there are some educated, intelligent, discerning individuals in your village. Get their help.

Sattva-guṇa (the mode of goodness) always prevails. In the end, *tamo-guṇa* and *raja-guṇa* are defeated. Look at the war between the demons and the demigods, as detailed in the *Mahābhārata*. Though the demons were victorious at first, ultimately, they were defeated by Viṣṇu's Sudarśana *cakra*. The disposition of the demigods is exalted, and that of the demons is degraded and fallen. Thus it is essential to consider what is elevated and what is fallen.

Hiranyakaśipu, emperor of India at the time, went to great effort to be hostile to the devotee Prahlāda. But Bhagavān Himself advented in the form of Nṛsiṃha and annihilated that powerful king, Hiranyakaśipu. This is recognized throughout Hindu society as a fully authentic story. It follows that whoever antagonizes the devotees of the Lord in any way is surely a wretched soul, and Nṛsiṃhadeva will tear open his chest and annihilate him. Forever keep this belief and fortitude in your heart. Bhagavān is surely there. He is called “*bhakta-vatsala*” because He protects His devotees and destroys their antagonists.

Devotees are, for eternity, pure (*śuci*). Devotees are never contaminated (*aśuci*) or impure (*apavitra*). Devotees, or in other words, those who have fully taken shelter of *nāma* and are following the standards of pure conduct, are never *āśauca*. They do not need to follow the rules pertaining to *āśauca*. Those who have not been initiated into the *viṣṇu-mantra* or *mahā-mantra* or do not earn the qualification to be initiated into these *mantras*, are always impure, from the moment they are born till the moment they die; therefore, they are not eligible to enter the temple sanctum [to serve the deity].

The ancient *Smṛtis* *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* and *Sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā* are practised throughout India. Especially in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh, the customs and rituals of these two *smṛtis* have been prevalent for the past five hundred years. Raghunandana Bhaṭṭācārya’s *Aṣṭa-vimśati-tattva*, which is about two to three hundred years old, is a rather modern *smṛti* by comparison and is only popular among the class of demonic persons in Bengal. It is not for pure-hearted persons with *sāttvika* inclinations. If you would bring a few of your village’s learned *smārta* scholars to me, I would surely be able to convince them. Once informed, they would be bound to follow the verdicts of the ancient Vaiṣṇava *smṛtis*.

Aṣṭa-vimśati-tattva, that is, Raghunandana Bhaṭṭācārya’s views, are, in many places, illogical and unfounded. According to his *śuddhi-tattva* (principles of purity), it is rather impossible for anyone to be free of impurity for as long as they live. They are bound to stay contaminated and wretched for most of their life. It goes so far as to render *brāhmaṇas* impure in general. Allow me to explain why this is.

In a *brāhmaṇa* family, as soon as a child takes birth, seven generations of both the father’s and mother’s family are considered contaminated for ten days. In the meantime, if a death occurs in either of those sets of seven generations, the period of contamination starts all over again for all of them. In seven generations, on both sides of the family, someone or other is always going to be dying or being born, which means all of them will have to spend most of their lives contaminated.

If they are purified simply with the passing of time [such as for ten days as mentioned above], then why do they need to chant *mantras*? Which *mantra* are they supposed to chant to eliminate the contamination and attain a state of purity? If the chanting of *mantras* results in purification, then I want to ask that if you chant them on the very day that someone dies or is born, will it or will it not eliminate the contamination? *Brāhmaṇas* recite the *gāyatrī-mantra* daily at the three junctures of the day. Does the *brahma-gāyatrī* not have the power to destroy impurity?

As you can see, it is unbecoming of any educated and intelligent community to accept such illogical and inconclusive ideas. They are thoroughly flawed and inconsistent.

I have only given an example of the *brāhmaṇas*, but this is applicable to all castes – *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas*, *śūdras*, outcastes, those born outside matrimony and others – in all circumstances.

In ancient times, caste was determined on the basis of qualities and behaviour, not one's ancestry or parentage. Even today, this standard is still prevalent in many places in India. In the *Gītā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself has stated: “*catur-varṇyam mayā sṛṣṭam, guṇa-karma-vibhāgaśaḥ* – the four castes are created by Me in accordance with a person's qualities and actions.” Who has the capacity to contest the *Gītā*? Since the demoniac mentality has gained prominence in the present age of Kali, it has become customary for race and caste to be determined by one's ancestry. But if we accept that race can be determined based on ancestry, then we deem sexual intercourse between man and woman to be the deciding factor of race and social status, and the words of *Gītā* to be irrelevant. Scripture states: “*viṣṇu-bhaktō bhaved-daiva, āsuras-tad-viparyayaḥ* – those dedicated to the worship of Viṣṇu are divinely endowed, while those who worship various gods and goddesses are characterized by a demonic mentality.” As such, the demigods are exalted and the demons are fallen. There is no doubt in this regard.

In the age of Kali, those with a degraded inclination base their countless endeavours on physical prowess. Yet, ultimately, their pursuits are not sustainable in the slightest. The ritual criterion your village abides by dictates that no one can worship Nārāyaṇa if they are impure. That being the case, Nārāyaṇa often has to go ten, twelve or fifteen days, and sometimes a whole month, without eating. These notions are heresy. They posit that no one is qualified to perform spiritual activities once they are contaminated. They think that their standards of contamination are so powerful that even Bhagavān Himself succumbs to them! No one can accept this. Your neighbours' degradation and contamination will persist for their entire lives; nothing can eradicate that. You, however, are initiated into the practice of Bhagavān's *nāma-mantra*, that is, the *viṣṇu-mantra* and the holy name, and as such, you have no impurity. You do not need to follow such customs of *āśauca*. Those who see you as fallen are mistaken. Actually, they themselves are fallen, so do not associate with them, ever. Understand that keeping company with degraded people degrades you. Vaiṣṇavas deliver the fallen. Degraded souls will gain deliverance if they associate with Vaiṣṇavas. Do not entertain any ideas held by such hypocrites. Society is not God. Society is subservient to God and His devotees.

In certain places in Bengal, if someone dies, generally it is their son that performs their *śrāddha* ceremony and, according to their race and caste, observes a period of *āśauca*. Vaiṣṇavas are never to perform the style of *śrāddha* practised by *smārtas*, which is known as *nandimukha-śrāddha*. I have understood from your letter that your village does not perform the *śrāddha* ceremony that accords to pure Vaiṣṇava standards, but rather, it follows *śrāddha* in accord with the aforementioned impure tenets of Raghunandana. This is not to be considered *śrāddha* proper. I think I have told you a few things about this earlier. I am jotting them down again to remind you:

What does the word *śrāddha* mean? The *śrāddha* rite has evolved from the word *śraddhā*, which means “faith”. In other words, it involves expressing to the departed individual one's faith and devotion. The word *śrāddha* is constructed by integrating the conjunct *ṣṇa* into the word *śraddhā*. Activities related to *śraddhā* (faith) are called *śrāddha*. However, the *mantras* chanted in *smārta* society when offering oblations, or *śrāddha*, to one's deceased mother or father imply that they are considered to

have become ghostly spirits. One such chant is as follows: “*ete preta-tarpaṇa-kāle bhavantiha* – when oblations are being offered to them they summon their ghostly spirit to be present.”

Consider that no matter how good of a man the son’s father was, once he falls into the jaws of death, he will be regarded as a ghost, and the son must address the father as such. “O father, you have become a ghost now. I am offering you what ghosts eat: fish and other burned preparations. I am giving you burned fish and burned food. Please eat this and be appeased.” The priests actually say this during the *śrāddha* ceremony. Certain educated individuals have heeded Vaiṣṇava counsel and accepted their rebuke, and so, in their homes, they offer burned bananas or rice and other items instead of fish. Still, a son cannot consider this to constitute *śrāddha* for his father. Rather, these are *aśrāddhā* (faithless) acts.

Indeed, we need to put a stop to these customs in society for good. Vaiṣṇava tenets assure that one is under no obligation to perform *śrāddha*, as it constitutes a *nāma-aparādhā* [implies a lack of faith in the holy name]. However, for the sake of social graces, a ceremony that involves offering the *sāttvika mahāprasāda* (remnants of foodstuffs in the mode of goodness that have been offered to the Lord) is true *śrāddha*. Liberated personalities, demigods, demons and even those of abominable birth all attain salvation by partaking of *mahāprasāda*. There is no mention anywhere of gaining such results from performing *smārta śrāddha*. The *smārtas* know this, and that is why they perform *śrāddha* and other related rites in Gayā, at the site of Viṣṇu’s footprint. This practice, however, contradicts their own edicts concerning *śrāddha*. Since their ceremony itself is supposed to release the soul, why would they need to offer *śrāddha* again at Viṣṇu’s lotus feet? Never participate in any *śrāddha* ceremony held by the *smārta* community. Even if you are invited, do not partake of the foodstuffs served if you accept the invitation, because even the *smārtas* themselves do not partake of those offerings.

Those who eat fish, onions and garlic, chew tobacco, smoke cigarettes and *biḍis* and drink alcohol are degraded. Nowhere in Hindu society, even among those who worship various demigods, do they offer either cooked or raw cut meat or fish. This is not standard practice anywhere. Those who partake of such impure foods are indeed fallen, because they fail to offer the gods high-grade respectable food items.

Those who neither consume fish, onions, garlic, *biḍis*, cigarettes, tobacco, etc. themselves nor even touch food prepared by those who consume them are truly elevated souls and never degraded. Those who try to act like demons for no good reason, and call you fallen, are surely the fallen ones, or “*patita*”, as they say in your dialect. You are never fallen.

In Kolkata, a tactic quite popular with the thieves and pickpockets is to rob a person and immediately point at someone else, yelling “Thief! That’s him. Thief!” People who frequent Kolkata are familiar with this sort of gambit.

When I received your letter, it occurred to me that Bhagavān is favouring you. The *sādhaka-jīva* can try so hard to give up bad company and still fail. In your case, however, I am seeing that the bad company is giving you up of its own accord. What could be more auspicious than this in a *sādhaka*’s life? This means you will not have to eat at their houses, they will not offer you tobacco and *biḍis* or a smoke from their hookah if you go over to their houses, and they will not come to your house. You will not have to feed them or offer them tobacco and *biḍis*, as is customary in your part of the country. What else could have led to better association than this turn of events? Give thanks to Bhagavān for this.

“*Asat-saṅga tyāga ei vaiṣṇava ācāra* – giving up bad association constitutes proper conduct for a Vaiṣṇava.” This statement is seen in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. Giving up bad company is the primary proactive step in observing proper Vaiṣṇava etiquette. This is happening to you automatically, by the will of the Lord. Whatever happens, carry on and stick to your principles with staunch resolve. Do not compromise your principles in any way. Good people will be bound to follow your example.

I am preoccupied with many services here. It is not possible for me to go elsewhere right now. Besides, it costs so much to go anywhere. If it is really necessary, I am prepared to reason with your community’s scholars. Once I defeat them in debate, they will have to abandon their *smārta* conceptions and adopt Vaiṣṇava tenets. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s philosophy is supreme. The whole world has recognized the religion of love He propagated to be the best of all. If incompetent folk cannot accept the message of *vaiṣṇava-dharma*, it is still foremost. It is widely accepted and in accord with scripture. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Gītā* and other Vedic texts are the proof.

What more should I write? Let me know what kind of effect this letter has. Come to the *maṭha* in Mathabhanga from time to time. Keep this letter safe with you and read it now and then. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Swami Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 17 Issue 8



LETTER THIRTY-NINE

Tenacity in maintaining Vaiṣṇava standards

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha,

Tegharipara, Navadvīpa (Nadiyā)

17/09/1965

My dear — Prabhu,

I received your letter dated 13/09/65. Did — dāsa perform the *śrāddha* ceremony and other related rites according to *Sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā* or not? If people from another *sampradāya* are present at the *śrāddha* ceremony, they may take *darśana* and accept *prasāda*, but they are not to be allowed to participate in performing any of the rites. They may assist in preparing the sacrificial altar. They have no right to recite the *mantras*, perform the *pūjā* or offer the *bhoga*. As they do not belong to a bona fide lineage and do not observe proper conduct, they cannot officiate at any rite purely. If they have close contact with anything, the rite will have to be considered impure and opposed to scriptural injunction. To sum up the matter, we from Vedānta Samiti do not condone — dāsa’s conduct and behaviour. While *aṣṭa-prahara* [a form of *kīrtana* performed throughout the eight divisions of the day] and other such performances may not be so bad, they are not condoned by the Gauḍīya Maṭha and

Vedānta Samiti. They are considered *nāma-aparādha*. The *aṣṭa-prahara kīrtana* of Vaiṣṇavas who do not follow proper conduct and make offences to the holy name is impure.

— dāsa has abandoned the principles of the *maṭha* and adopted the behaviour of his kind. This is not approved by us. If one is a *gṛhastha*, one must be a pure *gṛhastha*. Pure *gṛhastha* Vaiṣṇavas are also worthy of our obeisances. A pure *gṛhastha* devotee can do everything we are tasked with doing.

Please inform me of the condition of your health. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 26 Issue 2



LETTER FORTY

The necessity of a constitution to bring discipline to the maṭha

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha

Tegharipara, Navadvīpa (Nadiyā)

17/09/1965

My dear — Mahārāja,

It is of utmost importance that I write you, the main reason being the lack of discipline among the residents of the *maṭha*. Whatever rules and regulations are needed to bring about discipline should therefore be employed. I think that if need be, we ought to expel those who are independent and insubordinate, in order to maintain our Samiti's standards. There is a crucial need to address all these issues. You, especially, need to be present. If there is no particular inconvenience in Mathurā, then we will need to discuss all these matters, either during or after Ratha-yātrā.

Now, especially, my health is dwindling day by day. Legal advisers and friends are telling me to make arrangements. When I hear that you are coming, I will send word for — Mahārāja to come. His conduct and behaviour also have not been particularly satisfying. If I try to speak too much, it affects my health. If it is not convenient to talk in Chuchura, then perhaps we can talk in Navadvīpa. You may also come after discussing the [Samiti's] constitution with — Bābu. If you have on hand the constitution belonging to — and — Mahārāja from Māyāpura, then bring it with you. Otherwise, I have everything with me here; it just needs to be found and brought out. We need to discuss matters with Prabhupāda's disciples and those who may not be disciples of this *maṭha*, yet still faithful. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava



LETTER FORTY-ONE

In opposition to those proclaiming themselves to be Bhagavān

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha
Tegharipara, Navadvīpa (Nadiyā)
30/04/1966

Affectionate greetings, — Bābū!

I was overjoyed to receive your registered A/D letter dated 16/04/66. It was delayed in arriving. On top of that, I am late in replying, as we have been busy with many duties. Please do not mind.

Seeing your efforts to establish the truth, we convey to you our heartfelt thanks and are most enthused. Subdual of the wicked and protection of the genteel is the Godly path.

We had said before to fix a date and send us a letter informing us when Anukūla Ṭhākura can come for an open debate. There is no mention of this in your letter. Let us know at least one month in advance, once you have settled on a date.

You wrote suggesting a *paṇḍita* from Contai to do the mediation. We know that there are no good *paṇḍitas* in Contai. We have published many essays in *Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā* in opposition of Pañca-tīrtha and other *paṇḍitas* from Contai. It can be said that their knowledge of scripture is hardly consistent. At any rate, they have no capacity to mediate. Therefore, we need to appoint a capable mediator. We think it best to find an especially qualified judge of the High Court. If there really is no one, then we will have to choose a suitable person from among outsiders.

It is imperative that the party in question be personally present. No one can simply present themselves to be Bhagavān, nor will they be accepted as Bhagavān, simply because their zealous followers present them as such. This is an obvious fact. That said, everything will be discussed at the time of the investigation. I will be waiting for your reply to this letter. It is unbecoming of us to let Anukūla Candra's group off easily, and we will not. Godhood cannot be determined by brute force. Earthly strength is useless in spiritual matters.

At any rate, if you can make time to come here at some point, it would be good. We can discuss and settle things in person. I conclude here.

Servant of Śrī Gaura's devotees,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhākti Prajñāna Keśava

🕉 Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 25 Issue 12

[The party invited for the open debate retreated, so the above-mentioned assembly did not take place.]



LETTER FORTY-TWO

Specific instructions on managing a spiritual institution

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha
Tegharipara, Navadvīpa (Nadiyā)
21/08/1966

My prostrated obeisances at the feet of the Vaiṣṇavas.

— Prabhu! As representative of your Tāmralipta Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sammilanī, Śrī — dāsādhikārī “*bhakti-śāstri*” Prabhu has requested me to write and inform you how we manage our *samiti*. Though I have nothing of particular significance to state, I have noted a few points below, which all of us agree on.

(1) We are to defend, by all means, the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava practices and precepts as established by Śrīla Prabhupāda. Should a person willingly or unwittingly fall from that standard or become corrupt, [the management] should seek to rectify him. If his rectification is not possible, he should be regarded as a negative influence and his company abandoned. In certain circumstances, it may be necessary to simply remain indifferent to him.

(2) We have a duty to advocate the fact that farming is not forbidden for Vaiṣṇavas. Directives to this effect are found in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* and *Sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā*. Besides, Śrīla Prabhupāda himself endorsed agriculture. Those who oppose agriculture are antagonists of Śrīla Prabhupāda and the Gosvāmīs and are unfit to become members of the society.

(3) Any social or provincial practice or custom that opposes the teachings of the Gosvāmīs is not to be accepted.

(4) Should the *jāti-brāhmaṇas* [proponents of hereditary caste superiority] say anything in opposition to the *daiva-varṇāśrama* advocated by Śrīla Prabhupāda or try to institute any customs according to their beliefs, the Samiti is to vehemently refute them. Furthermore, we should know them to be *vaiṣṇava-aparādhis* and abandon their company, since they are inimical (*duḥ-saṅga*). If necessary, we should host large assemblies to persuade them to adopt *daiva-varṇāśrama*. If persons of another *varṇa* raise any objection, they should be dealt with in the same way.

(5) Ceremonies like *śrāddha* (offering of funeral oblations), marriage, *anna-prāsana* (giving a child his or her first grain or solid food), *upanayana* (receiving the sacred thread) and all other such rites are to be conducted according to Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī’s *Sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā* and *Samskāra-dīpikā*. No *smārta* custom or local tradition is authorized. Standards of *pūjā* (worship), *pārvaṇa* (funeral rites performed on certain lunar days) and the regulations for various *vrātas* (ritual fasts and vows) should be observed according to *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī’s commentary on it, as well as the aforementioned *Sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā*, as published by Gauḍīya Maṭha. We must not accept

the books, practices or ideologies of *sahajīyās* or any of the other thirteen *apasampradāyas* (bogus lineages) as legitimate.

(6) The practical conventions for living a Vaiṣṇava lifestyle as established by Śrīla Prabhupāda are to be adopted, along with rituals conducive to that, in accord with scripture. And they are to be conducted as per the specifications detailed in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*.

(7) Any person who has faith in Śrīla Prabhupāda may join the Samiti, but it is imperative that they adopt pure, incorruptible conduct.

(8) Other rules and regulations will be specified in time. I conclude here.

The prostrate servant of the servant
of the Vaiṣṇavas,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 25 Issue 11



LETTER FORTY-THREE

Yukta-vairāgya – holistic renunciation

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Keśavaṇī Gauḍīya Maṭha

Kaṁsa-tilā, Mathurā (U.P.)

26/10/1966

My dear Rādhā Mādhava,

His mind is highly restless, shifting from moment to moment. The specific reason for this is that his heart is extremely weak. When *bhakti* arises, natural renunciation arises along with it. Lacking natural renunciation, he has resorted to an exhibition or posturing of renunciation, which has made his heart feeble. Renunciation that empowers a person in the service of Śrī Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas is the only true and worthwhile renunciation, whereas abnegation that causes one to be detached from service to Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas has not even the slightest value. Relinquishing the service of Vaiṣṇavas is not renunciation. We should seek to increase our tendency to serve them by any means necessary. To think “No other Vaiṣṇava possesses the quality of renunciation; only I am renounced,” is called pride, or *pratiṣṭhā* (pretentiousness). Such pride and pretentiousness counteracts one’s service to Hari and causes degradation. To reap inspiration from the examples set by the *maṭha* constitutes simple and genuine Vaiṣṇavism. You should endeavour to cultivate your spiritual practice properly in this manner. I conclude here.

Your eternal well-wisher,

B. P. Keśava

Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava

☪ Śrī Bhāgavata-patrikā, Year 12 Issue 5

Part Three

Words of Tribute from Disciples of
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda



EXCERPTS FROM
Some Opinions on Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā

by the revered Śrīyuta Abhaya Carāṇa De
Editor of Back to Godhead magazine

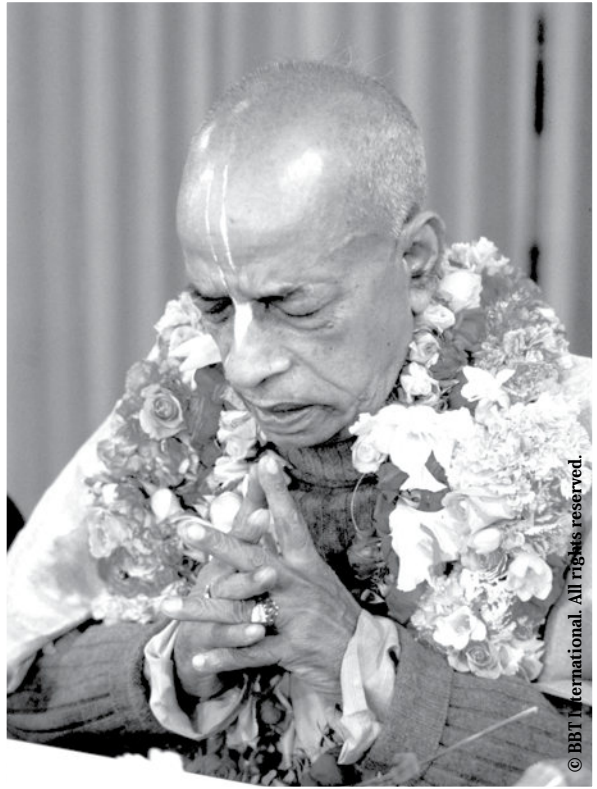
Some time after the disappearance of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda in 1936, the weekly periodical *Gauḍīya* and other publications he established discontinued. In 1949, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja re-established *Gauḍīya*, now as a monthly periodical under the name *Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā*, and sent the first issue to all those sheltered at the lotus feet of Śrīla Prabhupāda. After receiving it, Śrī Abhaya-carāṇa De (later known as Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja) wrote Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja a letter expressing his appreciation. The editors of *Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā* presented it, along with the appreciations of others, in the magazine's second issue, naming the column "Some Opinions on Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā".

Pūjyapāda Keśava Mahārāja,

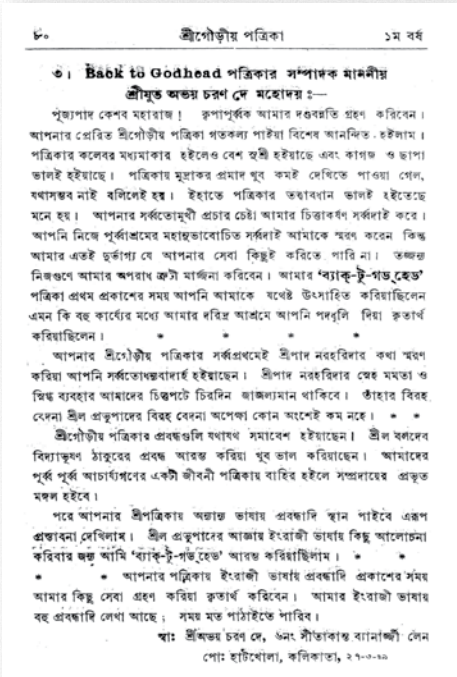
Please accept my prostrated obeisances.

Yesterday I became extremely pleased to receive the *Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā* you sent me. Although the *patrikā* (magazine) is of medium size, its cover is beautiful, and its paper and printing are also good. Very few printing mistakes are seen and can be considered negligible, or almost nil. By this it seems that the magazine has been perfectly supervised. Your comprehensive and extensive preaching efforts always attract my heart.

That you always think of me befits the high benevolence continuing from your previous *āśrama* [as a *brahmacārī*]. I am so unfortunate, however, that I am unable to render any service to you. Therefore, out of the goodness of your heart, please forgive my offences and shortcomings. You very much encouraged me when I first printed my *Back to Godhead* magazine.



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Even though you were extremely busy, you blessed me with your foot dust [by visiting me] in my deplorable condition as a householder.

We are wholly indebted to you for having inspired us to remember Śrīpāda Narahari dā in the very first article of your *Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā*.¹ The affectionate, caring and sweet behaviour of Śrīpāda Narahari dā will remain forever illuminated in my heart. The pangs of separation from him are in no way any less than the pangs of separation from Śrīla Prabhupāda.

The articles in *Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā* are placed in proper order. You have done well by starting with an article on Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa. Publishing the life-sketch of our previous *ācāryas* one by one in the magazine will be extremely beneficial for our *sampradāya*.

I saw a proposal that your magazine also present articles in other languages besides Bengali. By the order of Śrīla Prabhupāda, I started *Back to Godhead* magazine to put forward discussions in the English language.

When you print articles in your magazine in English, please bless me by accepting a little service from me. I have written many articles and essays in English, and I can send them at your convenience.

Śrī Abhaya Caraṇa De
6 No. Sita Kanta Banerjee Lane
P.O. Hatakhola
Kolkata
27 March 1949

Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā,
Year 1 Issue 2

☉ *Rays of The Harmonist*, No. 8,
Summer 2001, Śrī Puruṣottama-vrata

¹ Please see page 3: Viraha-māṅgalya – An Invocation in Separation.

Condolence Speech

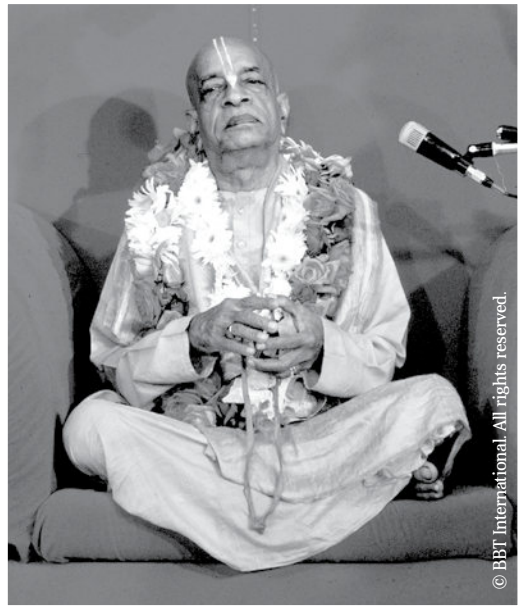
(AN UNEDITED TRANSCRIPTION)

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja

Seattle (Washington) U.S.A.
21 October 1968

One has to accept the renounced order from another person who is in renounced order. So I never thought that I shall accept this renounced order of life. In my family life, when I was in the midst of my wife and children, sometimes I was dreaming, my spiritual master, that he's calling me, and I was following him. When my dream was over, I was thinking – I was a little horrified – “Oh, Guru Mahārāja wants me to become *sannyāsī*. How can I accept *sannyāsa*?” At that time, I was feeling not very satisfaction that I have to give up my family and have to become a mendicant. At that time, it was a horrible feeling. Sometimes I was thinking, “No, I cannot take *sannyāsa*.” But again I saw the same dream. So in this way I was fortunate. My Guru Mahārāja [Prabhupāda begins to cry, choked voice] pulled me out from this material life. I have not lost anything. He was so kind upon me. I have gained. I left three children, I have got now three hundred children.

So I am not a loser. This is material conception. We think that we shall be loser by accepting Kṛṣṇa. Nobody is loser. I say from my practical experience. I was thinking that “How can I accept this renounced order of life? I cannot accept so much trouble.” So . . . But I



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retired from my family life. I was sitting alone in Vṇḍāvana, writing books. So this, my godbrother, he insisted me, “Bhaktivedānta Prabhu. . .” This title was given in my family life. It was offered to me by the Vaiṣṇava society. So he insisted me. Not he insisted me. Practically my spiritual master insisted me through him, that “You accept. Because without accepting the renounced order of life, nobody can become a preacher.” So he wanted me to become a preacher. So he forced me through this godbrother, “You accept.” So unwillingly I accepted. And then I remembered



that he wanted me to go to the Western country. So I am feeling now very much obliged to my, this godbrother, that he carried out the wish of my spiritual master and forced me to accept this *sannyāsa* order.

So this godbrother, His Holiness Keśava Mahārāja, is no more. He has entered Kṛṣṇa's abode. So I wish to pass a resolution of bereavement and send them. So . . . And I have composed one verse also in this connection in Sanskrit. So you all present, you sign this. I shall send it tomorrow. The verse I have composed, it is in Sanskrit. *Vairāgya-vidyā-nija-bhakti-yogam*. This Kṛṣṇa consciousness is *vairāgya-vidyā*. *Vairāgya-vidyā* means to become detestful to this material world. That is called *vairāgya-vidyā*. And that is possible simply by this *bhakti-yoga*. *Vairāgya-vidyā nija-bhakti-yogam*

“ So he forced me through this godbrother, “You accept.” So unwillingly I accepted. And then I remembered that he wanted me to go to the Western country. So I am feeling now very much obliged to my, this godbrother, that he carried out the wish of my spiritual master and forced me to accept this *sannyāsa* order. ”

apāyayan mām. So this . . . Just like medicine. The child is afraid of taking medicine. That also I have experienced. In my childhood, when I became ill, I was very stubborn. I won't accept any medicine. So my mother used to force medicine within my mouth with a spoon. I was so obstinate. So anyway, similarly, I did not want to accept this *sannyāsa* order, but this godbrother forced me.

“You must.” *Apāyayan mām*, he forcefully made me to drink this medicine. *Anabhīpsu andham*. Why I was unwilling? *Anabhīpsu* means unwilling. *Andham*. *Andham* means one who is blind, who cannot see his future. The spiritual life is the brightest future, but the materialists cannot see to it. You see? But the Vaiṣṇavas, the spiritual master, they forcefully, “You drink this medicine.” You see, *apāyayan mām anabhīpsu andham śrī-keśava-bhakti-prajñāna-nāma*. So this is my godbrother, his name is Keśava, Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava. *Kṛpāmbudhi*. So he did this favor upon me because he was [an] ocean of mercy. So we offer our obeisances to Vaiṣṇava, *kṛpāmbudhi*. *Vaṅca-kalpa-tarubhyaś ca kṛpā-sindhubhya*



**“ So this is my godbrother,
his name is Keśava,
Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava...
So he did this favor
upon me because he was
an ocean of mercy. ”**

eva ca. The Vaiṣṇavas, the representatives of the Lord, they are so kind. They bring the ocean of mercy for distributing to the suffering humanity. *Kṛpāmbudhir yas taṁ ahaṁ prapadye*. So I am offering my respectful obeisances unto His Holiness, because he forcefully made me adopt this *sannyāsa* order.

So he is no more in this world. He has entered Kṛṣṇa's abode. So I am offering my respectful obeisances along with my disciples. On the first day of my *sannyāsa*, I never thought, but I remembered that I'll have to speak in English. So I remember on that *sannyāsa* day, when there was a reception, so I first of all, I spoke in English. So it is all arrangement of Kṛṣṇa, higher authority. We are writing like this, “Resolved that we the undersigned members and devotees of International Society of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness Incorporated, in a condolence meeting under the presidency of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami, today the 21st of October, 1968, at our Seattle branch, express our profound bereavement on hearing the passing of His Divine Grace *om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, the *sannyāsa-guru*, preceptor of our spiritual master, and on October 6th, 1968, at his headquarter residence in Navadvīpa, West Bengal. We offer our respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of Śrī Śrīmad B. P. Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja with the following verse composed on this occasion by our spiritual master.” This verse I have already explained to you. So I wish that you all sign this and I'll send it tomorrow by air mail. Have you got a pencil?

Girl: Yes. (sound of Prabhupada signing) (end)

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Letter of Condolence

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Seattle (Washington) U.S.A.
22 October 1968

I offer my humble prostrated obeisance at the lotus feet of all the Vaiṣṇavas.

Śrīpāda Trivikrama Mahārāja,

Yesterday I was heartbroken to receive your letter dated 12 October. How did *pūjyapāda* Mahārāja disappear so suddenly? I want to know. I have had a very long-standing intimate relationship with Śrīla [Keśava] Mahārāja. When I used to visit Śrī Dhāma Māyāpura, Śrīpāda Narahari dādā and Śrīpāda Vinoda dādā were very affectionate to me, and I loved them so much.

At around the same time, in Kolkata, I was very close with the senior Tīrtha Mahārāja, Professor Nīśikānta Sannyāl and Vāsudeva Prabhu. Later on, I used to visit freely with Śrīpāda Śrīdhara Mahārāja, as if we were the closest of family members. Except for Śrīpāda Śrīdhara Mahārāja, all of the above-mentioned Vaiṣṇavas have gradually disappeared. Our time is also imminent. The longer we have the opportunity to serve Śrīla Prabhupāda, the better.

I have a very close connection with the Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti. You, and particularly Śrīpāda Vāmana Mahārāja, are well aware of the fact that I was one of the Samiti's three founders. We

conceived the idea of forming Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti at Bose Para Lane, Kolkata, even before Śrīla Mahārāja accepted *sannyāsa*. Within a few days of forming the Samiti, Śrī Narottamānanda Brahmācārī (presently *tridaṇḍi-svāmī* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Kamala Madhusūdana Mahārāja) separated himself from the Samiti, and Śrīpāda Vāmana Mahārāja (who was then a *brahmācārī*) visited our home at Sita Kanta Banerjee Lane, to make me the chief editor of the Bengali magazine *Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā*.

Carrying the order of Śrīla Mahārāja on my head, I began to regularly write articles for the *Gauḍīya-patrikā*. Śrīla Mahārāja greatly appreciated whatever I wrote. Thereafter, I was also appointed the chief editor of the Hindi magazine *Śrī Bhāgavata-patrikā*, wherein many of my articles were published. Later, I could not submit articles due to lack of time. Now I have become a resident of foreign lands and have to travel twenty thousand miles every year.

The greatest compassion of Śrīla Keśava Mahārāja was to make me a *sannyāsī*. I had vowed that I would never accept *sannyāsa*, but Śrīla Mahārāja gave it to me by force. He would certainly have been most delighted to see the success of my preaching today. Last year, I visited him in Kolkata along with my disciples, and though he was bedridden, he was very pleased to receive us. I have complete confidence that both in his manifest presence and after

his disappearance, he is very pleased to see my widespread preaching of the message of Śrīman Mahāprabhu in Western countries like America, Canada, England, Germany and Hawaii (Honolulu), which is situated in the Pacific Ocean, as well as Eastern countries like Japan (Tokyo) and so on.

I was a staunch *grhamedī* (family man). From time to time, Śrīla Prabhupāda used to come to me in dreams and call me to renounce family life and come along with him. The dreams would frighten me and make me think that I had to accept *sannyāsa*. I had not the slightest desire to take *sannyāsa*, but on the repeated insistence of Śrīpāda Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, Śrīla Keśava Mahārāja bestowed boundless mercy upon this unwilling and blind person, by forcibly giving me the renounced order. It seems that this desire of Śrīla Prabhupāda's was transmitted into his heart, and it was in this way that my *sannyāsa* was accomplished.

I am eternally indebted to Śrīla [Keśava] Mahārāja. Therefore, immediately after receiving your letter, I organized a *viraha-sabhā* (festival of separation) at the Seattle temple, to honour his disappearance. I am sending the "condolence resolution"¹ of the meeting, along with this letter. Kindly accept it as our humble offering of love and respect (*śraddhāñjali*). In my other centres (the list is enclosed), particularly London, Hamburg (Germany) and Honolulu (Hawaii), I have given the instruction to arrange a *viraha-sabhā*.

You will be glad to know that the American youths and young married couples have formed three *sankīrtana* parties under my guidance. One such party is currently travelling to all the

cities in America, and I, also, am with this party. The second party of six devotees is performing *kīrtana* at different places in London. The Indians living there are amazed to see them. Those Indians have given up their homeland and have come all the way to the Western world to become big *sāhebs*,² but the Americans are performing *harināma-sankīrtana*. Somehow, the preaching work is progressing beautifully. I am interested to know what kind of constitution you are forming. You will receive my full support in this regard, as I am a man of "constructive ideas". I do not favour "destructive policies".

It was the desire of Śrīla Prabhupāda and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura that Americans perform *kīrtana* in Śrī Dhāma Māyāpura, and that opportunity has now come. Unfortunately, there are those who are in fact intruding on Māyāpura by considering it to be their personal property.

These days, others are restricted from visiting that place. Śrīla [Keśava] Mahārāja used to deal with these *guru-tyāgīs* (persons who give up their *guru*) and *guru-bhogīs* (those who enjoy the property of their *guru*) with sword in hand. Last year, he mentioned that he would arrange five acres of land for me in Śrī Dhāma Māyāpura. You were present at that time. If you help me in this matter, I intend to make an *āśrāma* in Māyāpura. American boys and girls can visit and stay there and receive proper training. If we establish cooperation and work together, the task of preaching can be splendidly conducted. Therefore, I am eager to know the details of your "constitution".

I am going to Montreal tomorrow. From there I will go to Sante Fe (New Mexico), and then to Los Angeles. I am sending the addresses of our

1 These words and others below, in quotation marks, appear in English in the Bengali letter.

2 One aspiring to be like a Westerner.

various centres along with this letter. We are executing a plan to build New Vṛndāvana on three hundred acres of land. Kindly reply to the Los Angeles – Hollywood address, as I will be staying three days in Montreal, seven days in Santa Fe, and almost one month in Los Angeles.

*prthivīte āche jato nagarādi grāma
sarvatra pracāra haibe mora nāma
Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata
(Antya-khaṇḍa 4.126)*

My holy name will be broadcast
in every town and village of this
Earth planet.

You should create a “constitution”
based on this prediction, such that
the task of preaching will spread
powerfully throughout the world.
I hope your *bhajana* is going on
nicely.

Your obedient servant,

Śrī Bhaktivedānta Svāmī

P.S. If you have any nice photograph
of Śrīla Mahārāja, then kindly send it
to me. I will get a life size oil painting
made of it, and along with a picture of
Śrīla Prabhupāda, I will place it in my
prominent centres, particularly New
York, Hollywood, London and so forth.

Translated from *Śrī Bhāgavata-patrikā*,
Year 14 Issue 8 (1968)

[The following letters also appeared in the same
issue of *Śrī Bhāgavata-patrikā*.]

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KRISHNA
CONSCIOUSNESS, INC.

Twenty six, Second Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10003.

Acharya : Swami A. C. Bhakti Vedanta

Telephone : 674—7428
Montreal (Canada)

Resolved, we the undersigned members and devotees of the
International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Radha Krishna
Temple, 3720 of October Park Avenue, Montreal, Canada, this day the
25 the October 1968 a Condolence meeting under the Presidency of His
Divine Grace Sri Srimad A. C. Bhakti Vedanta Swami express our
profound bereavement on the disappearance of His Divine Grace Om
Vishnupad 108 Sri Srimad Bhakti Prajnan Keshav Goswami Maharaj
(the Sanyas Guru Preceptor of our Spiritual Master) as on October 6,
1968 at his Nabadip residence, West Bengal, India.

Sd.—A. C. Bhakti Vedanta Swami

The following devotees were present at the meeting: —

- (1) Sri Janardhan Dasadhikari, (2) Sri Advaita Dasadhikari,
(3) Sri Umapada Brahmachari, (4) Sri Dayal Nityadas Brahmachari,
(5) Sri Jayapatakadas Brahmachari, (6) Sri Paramananda Dasadhikari,
(7) Sri Subal Dasadhikari, (8) Sri Baikunthanath Brahmachari, (9)
Sri Brahmanandadas Brahmachari, (10) Sri Sachisutadas Brahmachari,
(11) Sri Hansaduttadas Brahmachari, (12) Sri Rayaramadas Brahmachari,
(13) Mr. Charles Scioseia, (14) Sri Gopal Krishna Khanna, (15) Mr.
Paul H. Garrison, (16) Srimathi Lilavatidevi Dasi, (17) Srimathi
Satyabhamadevi dasi, (18) Srimathi Himavatidevi dasi, (19) Srimathi
Balai dasi, (20) Srimathi Kanchan Bala dasi and (21) Srimathi Leelasuka
dasi.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KRISHNA
CONSCIOUSNESS, INC.

518, Frederick Street, San Francisco, California 94117.

5516, Roosevelt Way, N. E. Seattle, Washington 98105.

Telephone : 731—9671

Oct. 21, 1968

Acharya : Swami A. C. Bhakti Vedanta

Resolved that we the undersigned members and devotees of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Inc., in a condolence meeting under the Presidency of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhakti Vedanta Swami to-day, the 21st October 1968, at our Seattle Branch, express our profound bereavement on hearing the disappearance of His Divine Grace Om Vishnupad 108 Sri Smd. Bhakti Prajnan Keshav Goswami Maharaj (the Sanyas Guru Preceptor of our Spiritual Master), as on October 6, 1968, at his Headquarter residence in Nabadip, West Bengal, India.

We offer our respectful obeissances unto the Lotus Feet of Om Vishnupad Sri Srimad 108 B. P. Keshav Goswami Maharaj with the following Verse Composed on this occasion by our Spiritual Master:—

वैराग्यविद्यानिजभक्तियोगं अपाययत् मां अनभिप्सुमन्दम् ।

श्रीकेशव भक्तिप्रज्ञान नामा कृपाञ्जुधिर्यस्तमहं प्रपद्ये ॥

Sd.—A. C. Bhakti Vedanta Swami

The following members and devotees here present at the meeting:—

(1) Mrs. Boni Mc Elroy, (2) Mr. Thimas Hegig, (3) Mr. Mark D Attilo, (4) Mr. Kolert Cusimano, (5) Mrs. Hope Carter, (6) Mr. John and Gaster, (7) Mr. James P. Kolu, (8) Mr. Joy Fulcher, (9) Mr. Breat T. Seldon, (10) Mr. Nathan Barueli Zakheim, (11) Mr. Michael C. Morrisseo, (12) Mr. Sherrie Schweitzer, (13) Mr. Curis Jackson, (14) Srimathi Govindadevidasi, (15) Srimathi Madhavilatadevi dasi (16) Srimathi Srimathidasi, (17) Sri Amal Krishnadas Brahmachari, (18) Sri Vishnujanadas Brahmachari, (19) Sri Kebatinandandas Brahmachari, (20) Srimathi Harsharanidevi dasi, (21) Sri Jivananda Dasadhikari, (22) Jayanandadas Brahmachari, (23) Sri Sudamadas Brahmachari, (24) Sri Nara Narayandas Brahmachari, (25) Sri Upendra das Brahmachari, (26) Madhudwisadas Brahmachari, (27) Sri Kartikeyadas Brahmachari and (28) Sri Jai Gopaldas Brahmachari.

A Younger Godbrother's Expression of Distress in Separation

Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja



śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Gopinātha Gauḍīya Maṭha
Īśodyāna, Śrī Māyāpura (Nadiyā)
26/10/1988

This is a humble submission by a fallen soul, a servant of the servant of the lotus feet of the most worshipable *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa tridaṇḍi-gosvāmī śrī* Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, on the commemoration of his disappearance day.

Pūjyapāda Mahārāja,

Although today we commemorate your disappearance, you are eternally absorbed in service to our most worshipful Śrī Guru-pādapadma, as you are his intimate associate. You have concealed yourself from our vision, yet you have manifested your eternal pastimes at your dearest place, Śrī Dhāma Navadvīpa-Māyāpura. There, at Śrī Caitanya Maṭha, you are overwhelmed in the bliss of eternal service to *paramārādhya* Śrī Śrīla Prabhupāda. This place is the birthplace of Śrīman Mahāprabhu and is non-different from Śrī Vṛndāvana. Your most beloved godbrother and friend, Śrī Śrīla Narahari dā, is also there with you as your prominent assistant in the eternal service of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Both of you blessed this fallen younger godbrother with your affection at the beginning of his *maṭha* life, and he received the opportunity to serve the lotus feet of Śrīla Prabhupāda under the guidance of your lotus feet for three long years. In those days, you opened up the inexhaustible storehouse of your affection and profusely encouraged your unqualified, fallen brother in *sevā*. I thought then that I would pass my whole life in Śrī Dhāma Māyāpura, bound by your affection and in service to Śrīla Prabhupāda. But as fate would have it, I ended up living in Kolkata for such a long time, first at Śrī Gauḍīya Maṭha in Bagbazar, and later, after the disappearance pastime of Śrīla Prabhupāda, at the Śrī Caitanya Gauḍīya Maṭha established by our godbrother *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa* Śrīmad Bhakti Dāyita Mādhava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Now, in the last part of my life, I have once again come to Śrī Dhāma Māyāpura to Śrī Gopinātha Gauḍīya Maṭha, Ísodyāna, and have been staying here for the last eight months. Unfortunately, here, too, I am passing my time in great distress, being devoid of the association of genuine Vaiṣṇavas well-versed in the art of *bhajana*. Therefore, afflicted with grief, I am praying today at your lotus feet: O *adoṣa-darśi*¹ Vaiṣṇava Ṭhākura, please do not forget your unfortunate younger brother. Despite your not being manifest, please always shower the nectar of your affection upon him, just as you used to.

At Kaṭwā, when you accepted the sacred garb of *tridaṇḍa-sannyāsa* from *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa parama-pujyapāda tridaṇḍi-yati* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Gosvāmī Mahārāja, this fallen one was also present there. I think that by the desire of *pūjyapāda* Śrīdhara Mahārāja, I lit the sacrificial fire. During your manifest pastimes, I occasionally had the good fortune to have your association at places like Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha in Navadvīpa, Chuchura Maṭha and Kolkata.

Today, I have become completely helpless. I entered the 91st year of my life last October, on the 15th, 1988. I am now rather incapacitated and cannot willfully go from one place to another to have the association of *śuddha-bhaktas*, and I feel myself cheated of such fortune. In this state, please protect the spiritual life of this fallen younger brother, even though you remain hidden from sight, by nourishing him with the stream of the nectar of your affection.

Today, my heartfelt solicitation at your lotus feet is this: O best of those Vaiṣṇavas who do not see the faults of others, by your own magnanimous qualities, please rectify all my known and unknown faults and discrepancies and bestow upon me the eligibility to engage in eternal service to Śrī Śrīla Prabhupāda. This is my sole submission at your lotus feet on this auspicious occasion of your disappearance day.

Servant of the servant of the Vaiṣṇavas,

Śrī Bhakti Pramoda Purī

Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 41 Issue 4

Published in *Rays of The Harmonist*, No. 9,
“Śrī Gadādhara-tattva”, Winter 2001

1 One who does not look at the faults of others.

His All-Encompassing Sevā

Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja



KṚTI-RATNA PRABHU – FOREMOST
AMONG ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA’S
DISCIPLES

*J*agad-guru nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, who is adorned with unlimited virtues, had many renounced disciples residing in the *maṭha*. Śrīpāda Vinoda-bihārī Brahmācārī “Kṛti-ratna” Prabhu is not merely one of them, but foremost among them. Following Śrīla Prabhupāda’s entrance into Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes in the spiritual world, Śrīpāda Vinoda-bihārī Brahmācārī accepted *tridaṇḍa-sannyāsa* from *parama-pūjyapāda parivrājakācārya tridaṇḍi-svāmī* Śrīmad Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Gosvāmī Mahārāja and became known as *tridaṇḍi-svāmī* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. He was the founder and chairman of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti.

On the eve of Sunday 6 October 1968, or the 19th of Aśvina (1375) in the Bengali calendar, at around 6:15 in the evening, he orchestrated his disappearance pastime at the Samiti’s main headquarters, Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha, in Śrī Dhāma Navadvīpa. At the auspicious juncture of the first day of the lunar fortnight and Rākā Pūrṇimā, during a complete lunar eclipse, while chanting *śrī harināma-saṅkīrtana*, and before his disciples, who were also performing *saṅkīrtana*, he entered the eternal evening pastimes (*nitya-sāyāhna-līlā*) of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govindajī during the sixth *yāma* (part) of the day.

According to the calculation of time in this elemental realm, his age was seventy-one years, eight months, and twelve days.

APPEARANCE OF AN EXTRAORDINARY PERSONALITY

He appeared on 24 January 1898, in Banaripara, a town in the district of Barisal, in a renowned and respected family of landowners.

His esteemed father, who received *mantra* initiation from Vijaya Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī of the Advaita lineage, possessed all the good qualities befitting a Vaiṣṇava. After taking shelter of his *guru's* feet, he performed *sādhana-bhajana* under his guidance and spent much of his time studying scriptures on *bhakti*. Like his father, his mother also was adorned with all of the auspicious qualities of a Vaiṣṇava. She was highly intelligent, and moreover, extremely devotional. Śrī Bhagavān arranged for his intimate associate to appear in such a family of devotees.

From his childhood, it was clearly evident that his heart was full of *bhakti*, compassion and other auspicious virtues befitting a Vaiṣṇava. His family members were astonished upon seeing, even in his childhood, the blossoming of *bhakti* and all good qualities. Noting, in particular, his dedication to truth, his vehement opposition of injustice, his love of *dharma*, and other great qualities, perceptive persons declared, "Very soon this boy will prove himself to be an exalted suprahuman personality." And by the will of the Lord, that is precisely what happened.

TAKING SHELTER OF ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA

In 1915, at the age of eighteen, he had the fortune of taking *darśana* of Śrī Dhāma Māyāpura.

There, he also had the great opportunity to receive *darśana* of *jagad-guru* Śrīla Prabhupāda's lotus feet and to hear *hari-kathā* from his lotus lips. Later, in 1919, he took full shelter at Prabhupāda's lotus feet, which grant fearlessness, and as a *naiṣṭhika-brahmacārī* (monk fixed in his vow of celibacy), he began to reside in Māyāpura in Śrī Caitanya Gauḍīya Maṭha, "Vraja-paṭṭana". There, he proceeded to practise the limbs of devotion as taught by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī: taking shelter of *śrī guru's* feet, receiving initiation and instructions from him and serving him with intimacy.

HEARING ŚUDDHA-BHAKTI-SIDDHĀNTA AND SMASHING MĀYĀVĀDA

Śrīla Mahārājajī heard from the mouth of Śrīla Prabhupāda of the matchless specialty of pure devotion as practised and preached by Śrīman Mahāprabhu and expounded in all the Vedic scriptures. He discovered that Śaṅkara's Māyāvāda commentary propounding Kevalādvaita (exclusive monism) is the most prominent obstacle on the path of *bhakti*.

When Śrīla Mahārājajī heard the confidential conclusion – that *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* presents the true meaning of *Brahma-sūtra*, the conclusion of the *Mahābhārata*, the commentary on the *gāyatrī-mantra* and the purport of the Vedas – he collected ten to twelve manuscripts on the [authentic Vaiṣṇava] philosophies of Viśiṣṭādvaita (qualitative monism), Śuddhādvaita (refined monism), Śuddha-dvaita (refined dualism), Dvaitādvaita (dualism within monism), the *Govinda-bhāṣya* of Vaiṣṇava-ācārya Śrī Baladeva Vidyabhūṣaṇa, and the [above-mentioned Māyāvāda commentary of Śaṅkarācārya named] *Śārīraka-bhāṣya*. Under Śrīla Prabhupāda's direction, he gave keen focus

to delivering specialized discourses in Cuttack at Ravenshaw College, Odisha, and at other large assemblies, refuting Śaṅkara's views. Summaries of these speeches appeared in the *Dainika Nadiyā Prakāśa*, published in Māyāpura.

Śrīla Mahārājaji expounded the concepts of *Brahma-sūtra* through Śrīman Mahāprabhu's teachings on *nāma-bhajana*. He would say, "The word *brahma* should be understood to mean *śabda-brahma*, divine sound vibration. And *śabda-brahma* is the same *nāma-brahma* (divinity encapsulated in the holy name) preached by Śrīman Mahāprabhu. Nowhere in the five hundred and fifty verses of *Brahma-sūtra* is there mention of *brahma* being formless (*nirākāra*), undifferentiated (*nirviśeṣa*) or without attributes (*nirguṇa*)."

SERVICE TO THE DHĀMA, THE LORD OF THE DHĀMA, AND ITS RESIDENTS

When Śrīla Mahārājaji took shelter of the most worshipful Śrīla Prabhupāda's feet, Śrīla Prabhupāda gave him considerable responsibilities to ensure that the service of Māyāpura would be executed perfectly. Śrī Narahari "Sevā-vigraha" Prabhu, the guardian of *ākara-maṭha-rāja* Śrī Caitanya Maṭha, was his inseparable and bosom friend. With his counsel, he rendered many types of services to Dhāmeśvara Śrī Gaurahari¹ and to the residents of the *dhāma*. Due to his birth in a high-class family of landowners, and much more than that, due to the mercy of *śrī guru* and Gaurāṅga, he was magnanimous at heart. When he saw the sorrows of others, his heart would melt. At that time, he cared for all of Māyāpura in a charming manner, without discriminating on the basis of a person's caste or religion. He resolved rights and

wrongs in such wonderful ways that all would be pleased. The wrongdoers would become ashamed of their injustices and pray for forgiveness. Due to the skillful resolutions he proffered, citizens who were struggling with poverty did not need to squander their money in the government courts.

Everyone – from the district magistrates of Nadiyā to the judges, arbitrators, lawyers and the school and college teachers – knew Śrī Vinoda-bihārī Brahmācārī Kṛti-ratna, or Vinoda Bābu, to be a religious, benevolent, virtuous man and a citizen of Nadiyā Town, and they offered him appropriate respect. His auspicious qualities, as befitting a Vaiṣṇava, enchanted everyone.

PLEASING ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA

Śrī Vinoda-bihārī Brahmācārī would make all the arrangements for Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma *parikramā* and the celebration of Śrī Gaura's birth, and also for the Śrī Dhāma Pracāriṇī Sabhā [an assembly established by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura to propagate the glories of Śrī Navadvīpa]. He set up a printing press, and in 1929, he curated a spiritual exhibit. He oversaw the publication of the daily *Nadiyā* (*Dainika Nadiyā Prakāśa*), the weekly *Gauḍīya* and various scriptures. He supervised the construction of the main road in Śrī Dhāma [Māyāpura], managed the finances and rendered many other services, thus pleasing Prabhupāda greatly, even as a *brahmācārī*.

Vinoda dā and Narahari dā were bosom friends to all. Just being around them filled everyone's heart with joy. No matter how far away we were for some service or other, as soon as we made plans to return Māyāpura, our hearts became full of happiness. We so craved to see them that our hearts would actually ache. They, too, were always delighted to see us.

¹ Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the Lord of that holy abode.



I observed the eagerness of our worshipful Prabhupāda also to go to Māyāpura when he was staying at the Kolkata *maṭha*. And when he arrived in Māyāpura, it was as if his soul was soothed and he would find peace. During this time, Vinoda dā and Narahari dā rendered most of the personal service to Prabhupāda. In those days, we had the opportunity to hear from the mouth of Prabhupāda all the confidential conclusions pertaining to the realm of *bhajana*. Now, that all seems like a dream. “*Te hi no divasā gataḥ* – those days are long gone”.

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA’S DISAPPEARANCE AND FOUNDING GAUḌĪYA VEDĀNTA SAMITI

Early in the morning on 1 January 1937, in Kolkata at Śrī Bagbazar Gauḍīya Maṭha, the most worshipful Śrīla Prabhupāda entered into

aparakṣa-līlā (Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes in the spiritual world). His divine body was transferred by a special train to Krishnanagar and then to Śrī Māyāpura Caitanya Maṭha, where he was placed in *samādhi*. After a few years, some disturbances began within the mission. In 1940, with extreme sadness, Śrī Vinoda-bihārī Brahmācārī was compelled to leave Śrī Caitanya Maṭha. On the day of Akṣaya Tṛtīya in 1941, in a rented building at Bose Para Lane, Kolkata, he established Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti.

BHAGAVĀN’S UNSOLICITED COMPASSION

Once (sometime between 1941 and 1942), Mahārājajī was sitting in his Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti location at 33/2 Bose Para Lane when his godbrother Śrīpāda Nārāyaṇa dāsa Mukhopādhyāya Prabhu “Sevā-suhṛda” arrived

to meet with him. It was the day of Ekādaśī. They became absorbed in talks, and since it was getting late, Śrī Nārāyaṇa dāsa wanted to return home. But Mahārājaji did not have a single paisa to prepare even the simplest *prasāda* to offer his godbrother.

He was experiencing deep anguish when a sparrow, surely sent by Bhagavān, dropped a small bundle from above. When he picked it up, he saw it contained six and half anna of paisa in it, a viable sum at the time.

Understanding the paisa to be heaven-sent, he had a *brahmacārī* order some *sandeśa*, and after offering it, he lovingly fed his godbrother. He did not, however, have anything to feed all of the other Vaiṣṇavas present. Just then, the postman knocked at the door and informed him that *tridaṇḍi-svāmī* Bhakti Sarvasva Giri Mahārāja had sent him one hundred rupees. How auspicious! How blessed! Glorious is Bhagavān Gaurasundara,

who is affectionate to His devotees. Glorious is Guru-pādapadma's causeless mercy. Witnessing this unexpected occurrence, all the Vaiṣṇavas present became stunned and began to cry the praises of Guru-Gaurāṅga repeatedly. Accepting this gesture of unsolicited divine compassion, *pūjyapāda* Mahārāja then glorified Śrī Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas, his heart overflowing with joy.

ACCEPTING SANNYĀSA

That same year, on Bhādra-Pūrṇimā (September 1942) in Kaṭwā, the holy location of Mahāprabhu's *sannyāsa-līlā*, he accepted *sannyāsa* from the respected *parivrājaka-ācārya tridaṇḍi-svāmī* Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Gosvāmī Mahārāja and became known by the name *tridaṇḍi-svāmī* Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. From then onward, he began preaching the message of Gaura in countless places with great zeal.



ESTABLISHING DEVĀNANDA GAUḌĪYA MAṬHA AND OTHER CENTRES FOR PREACHING ŚUDDHA-BHAKTI

Śrī Dhāma Māyāpura was the very life and soul of *pūjyapāda* Mahārāja and Narahari dā, but after Prabhupāda's departure, the situation in Māyāpura deteriorated to such an extent that it was not possible for them to remain there a moment more. After consulting with Narahari dā, he went to Tegharipara Koladvīpa, where he established the main *maṭha* of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti.

Koladvīpa, Kuliya, is Aparādha-bhañjana-pāṭa, "that place where offences are forgiven". There, Gopāla Cāpāla and Śrī Devānanda Paṇḍita, who had committed offences at the feet of Mahāprabhu's dear associate Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, were forgiven. Thus the *maṭha* was named Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha. This exceptionally beautiful *maṭha* was founded on a little more than six *bighas* (three acres) of land. There, they manifested much grandeur: a gigantic temple dome that touches the sky and a huge *nāṭya-mandira* (temple for dancing). Surrounding the temple on four sides were living quarters for the devotees, a Sanskrit school, a publishing department, etc. To preserve the ancient history of Koladvīpa, Mahārājāṇi established a deity of Kola, or Varāha, in one of the sections of the altar. The appropriate priests installed the deities in a festive ceremony as per the guidelines of the *sātvata-śāstras* (scriptures in the *bhakti* line).

BHAGAVĀN BUDDHA AND GAUTAM BUDDHA ARE NOT THE SAME

In 1942, he established Śrī Uddhārāṇa Gauḍīya Maṭha in the town of Chuchura and began to preach in the nearby areas. During this

time, in the town of Ramapur, he gave lectures for one week on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in a Sanskrit school, which was established by a famous lawyer named Śrī Phaṇibhūṣaṇa Cakravartī Śāstrī (M.A.V.L.). The school contained a large library, and one particular Buddhist scripture in it, entitled *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtram*, caught Mahārājāṇi's attention. He included quotes from this book in his own compilation called *Māyāvāder Jivani* – *A History of Māyāvāda*. *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtram* is a collection of historical accounts from Tretā-yuga about Māyāvādis. In one place, it is written that Rāvaṇa, the King of Laṅkā, used to travel by celestial airplane to a high mountain peak to meet with Buddha and study Ādvaitavāda.

In 1946, while performing *ūrjā-vrata* in Kāśī Mahā-nagarī, Mahārājāṇi travelled to Buddha Gayā [presently known as Bodh Gaya]. There he came to know that since ancient times the Buddha Gayā temple was managed entirely by the esteemed *mahanta* of Śaṅkarācārya's *ādvaitavādi* lineage. Śaṅkarācārya thus has claim to the wealth of Buddha Gayā. How did Śaṅkarācārya become the leader of a Buddhist *maṭha*? Does this imply that the Śaṅkara *sampradāya* originates from a Buddhist lineage?

Overwhelmed with curiosity, Mahārājāṇi inquired about this from the head of that temple, who gave him a book to inspect entitled *Lalita Vistāra*. Mahārājāṇi refers to parts of that book in his own *Māyāvāder Jivani*. There, it is mentioned that Śākya Buddha performed austerities underneath a pipal tree at Buddha Gayā, which is the appearance place of Pūrṇa Buddha (the complete Buddha), having understood the spot to be favourable for the attainment of perfection.

In his book, Mahārājāṇi writes, "Buddha Gayā's original name was Kikāṭa. To this day, Śaṅkara

sannyāsīs worship a deity of Buddha at this place. They accept that Buddha Gayā is the appearance place of Ādi Buddha, or Viṣṇu Buddha. It is where Śākya-simha Buddha performed his spiritual practice. By this it is clearly evident that Bhagavān Buddha and Gautama Buddha are not the same person. According to *Amarakoṣa* (an ancient, highly reputable Sanskrit thesaurus), another name for Bhagavān Buddha is Samasta-bhadra. Bodhisattva Buddha mentions Samasta-bhadra Buddha. After attaining realization, Gautama became known by the name Buddha. Thus, we know, there are three Buddhas: Gautama Buddha, Bodhisattva Buddha and Ādi Buddha.”

In *Māyāvāder Jīvanī*, Mahārājajī has written, “*Laṅkāvatāra-sūtram* is a famous and authoritative Buddhist scripture. The Buddha mentioned in this book is not Śākya-simha Buddha. In the first chapter of this book, the king of Laṅkā, Rāvaṇa, sings the praises of Bhagavān Buddha and all the Buddhas who are yet to appear.

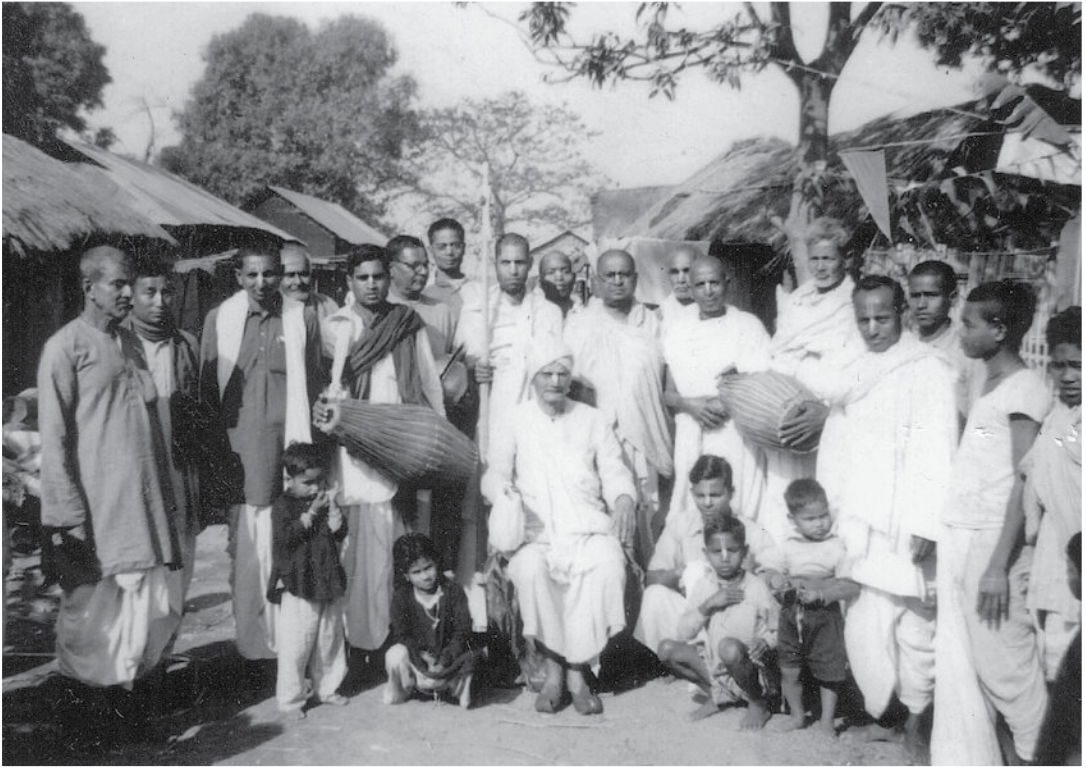
“The Viṣṇu Buddha mentioned in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is not the *śunyavādī* (nihilist) Gautama Buddha. ‘*Namo buddhāya śuddhāya, daitya-dānava mohine* – I propitiate that pure Buddha who bewilders the demonic sons of Diti and Danu’ (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.40.22). And ‘*tataḥ kalau saṁpravṛtte, sanmohāya sura-dviṣaṁ / buddho-nāmāñjana-sutaḥ, kīkaṭeṣu bhaviṣyati* – then, just as Kali-yuga commences, a son of Añjanā by the name of Buddha will appear in Kīkaṭa to bewilder the enemies of the theists’ (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.3.24). Viṣṇu Buddha is also referred to in the *Liṅga Purāṇa*, *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, *Varāha Purāṇa* and *Nṛsimha Purāṇa*. Buddha Gayā is the appearance place of Viṣṇu Buddha. It is a place of worship for Śākya-

simha Buddha.” Mahārājajī established these truths in his *Māyāvāder Jīvanī* on the grounds of scriptural reference and sound logic.

MĀYĀVĀDA – COVERT BUDDHISM

From the scriptures of Śrī Nārada and Śrī Śaṇḍilya Ṛṣi, *pūjyapāda* Mahārājajī revealed that another name for *Brahma-sūtra* is *Bhakti-sūtra*. He did not accept the *jñāna-vāda* of Ācārya Śaṅkara to be the same as *brahma-vāda*. He provided proof from *Padma Purāṇa* and other scriptures that Māyāvāda is not supported in *śāstra* and is nothing other than covert Buddhism. Although it appears to resemble Veda, in actuality, it contradicts Veda, is destructive to devotion, and does not concur with Vedic teachings. According to *Padma Purāṇa* and *Varāha Purāṇa*, Śrī Viṣṇu instructed Śrī Rudra as follows: “Devise a scripture of bewilderment that will conceal My true nature.” These teachings are Rudra’s form of destruction intended to annihilate the eternality of *bhakti*, the *bhakta* and Bhagavān. Mahārājajī has assessed this topic thoroughly in his book.

In Vedānta, the prefix *ni* in the words *nirākāratva* (formlessness), *nirviśeṣatva* (undifferentiatedness), *niḥśaktitva* (powerlessness) and *nirguṇatva* (quality-lessness) precludes mundanity (*prākṛta-tattva*) while affirming transcendence (*aprākṛta-tattva*). Quoting the views of Śrīla Kavirāja Gosvāmī and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura, Mahārājajī cautions the practitioner of *bhakti* to shun Māyāvāda, which is adverse to *bhakti*, and the company of Māyāvādīs, which destroys *bhakti*. Driving Māyāvāda far away and giving love for Bhakti-devī (the goddess of devotion) was one of Mahārājajī’s main purposes.



HIS EXTRAORDINARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Śrīla Mahārājaji exemplified the ideal of conviction of service to *śrī guru*, Gaura-dhāma and Dhāmeśvara Śrī Gaura, who embodies the Pañca-tattva. In the defense of truth, he was harsher than a thunderbolt, yet in his affection for his disciples, his heart was softer than a flower. His extremely condensed affection for his disciples was exemplary. If a disciple was beset with disease or injury, Śrīla Mahārājaji's soft, flower-like heart would melt, and he would give his everything to restore that disciple back to health.

In the initial stages of manifesting his *ācārya-līlā*, he was penniless and thus he faced some

struggles. However, by Bhagavān's inspiration, some particularly faithful and wealthy devotees helped him, and thus *maṭhas* and temples were opened in many different locations. He established the sixteen-*kroṣa* Navadvīpa *parikramā*, and celebrated Gaura-*janmotsava* with great festivity. He also inaugurated the *parikramās* of Śrī Vraja-maṇḍala, Kṣetra-maṇḍala, Gauḍa-maṇḍala and pilgrimages to many other sacred places in India. In so doing, he set an example for the world of the limb of *bhakti* known as *pāda-sevanam*.

In Śrī Dhāma Navadvīpa and Chuchura, Mahārājaji inaugurated the Ratha-yātrā of Śrī Jagannāthaji. For the purpose of comprehensively

studying scriptural texts (*śāstra-grantha*) and propagating Sanskrit education, he established a library, a Sanskrit school and a dormitory for students. To print scriptures and religious magazines, he established a printing press. Organizing various events and festivals, he gathered faithful people together and spoke a lot of *hari-kathā* to them.

HIS DISAPPEARANCE

Mahārājā established many *maṭhas*: Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha in Śrī Dhāmā Navadvīpa; Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha in Mathurā; Śrī Pichaldā Gauḍīya Maṭha in Pichaldā, Medinipur; Śrī Gopālajī Gauḍīya Maṭha and preaching centre in Balesore, next to Khīra-chorā Gopinātha; Śrī Goloka Gaṇja Gauḍīya Maṭha in Golakganj, Assam; Śrī Vāsudeva Gauḍīya Maṭha in Basugaon; and other preaching centres elsewhere. All these preaching centres

served as the stage for disseminating the deep conclusions of pure devotion (*śuddha-bhakti-siddhānta*) taught and practised by *guru* and Gaurāṅga. By hearing *hari-kathā* from his lotus mouth, lucky souls attained the good fortune of entering into pure devotion.

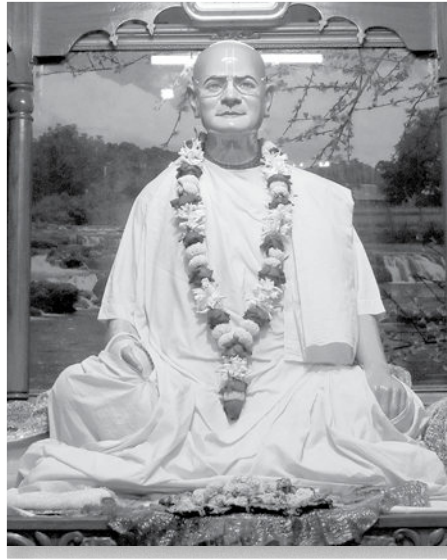
On 10 October 1968, at the west side of the same *nāṭya-mandira*, his divine form was placed into *samādhi*. An elegant mausoleum was constructed there, according to the regulations of scripture.

PANGS OF SEPARATION

A person who fails to comprehend the importance of proper dental care is bound to regret it later. [And in regard to Mahārājā] this is our condition today. He who possesses all good qualities, who is full of enthusiasm and who teaches through his ideal example has disappeared, causing us to experience a deep anguish that is not possible to describe in words. In separation from a godbrother such as he, who has

returned back to *śrī guru*, Śrī Gaurāṅga and Gaurādhāma, our hearts are completely overwhelmed. Our sorrowful prayer at his lotus feet is that he may be pleased with us.

Seeing the suffering that his disciples are feeling in separation from him, we are also full of anguish. According to his wishes, *tridaṇḍi-svāmī* Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Mahārāja, as the president and *ācārya* of the society, Śrīmad



Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja as the vice president, and Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Mahārāja as secretary are perfectly managing all the tasks of his mission. Even after his departure, the *sevakas* of the *maṭha* are giving their very lives in an endeavour to serve, and are thus continuing to please him. This matter brings great joy and pride to our hearts.

☪ Śrī Bhāgavata-patrikā, Year 41 Issue 12

Parts of this article were reordered, according to chronological sequence.

A Lowly Servant's Grief-stricken Offering

Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Kumuda Santa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

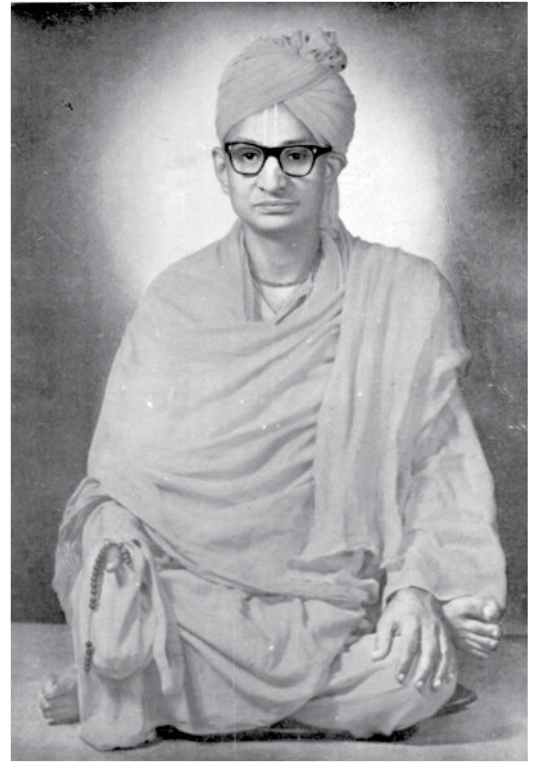
Respected readers,

Today, on the supremely sanctified occasion of the hundredth anniversary of the appearance of *parama pūjyapāda nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, I have been instructed to glorify him in terms of his many qualities. In order to purify myself, I will only relate whatever I have personally perceived and experienced of his life and character, and nothing else.

I was fortunate to have received the full shelter of Śrī Gurudeva's [Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda's] lotus feet at the age of eleven. At that time, I was living in the rented Kolkata *maṭha* at No. 1 Ultadanga Junction Road and studying at primary school. Later, I stayed in the *maṭha* in Māyāpura and studied *Harināmāmṛta-vyākaraṇa*. At the time, the present *ācārya* of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti, Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Mahārāja, was my classmate. We lived together, studying, serving and so on. Since then, I had the good fortune to be extremely close to *parama- pūjyapāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

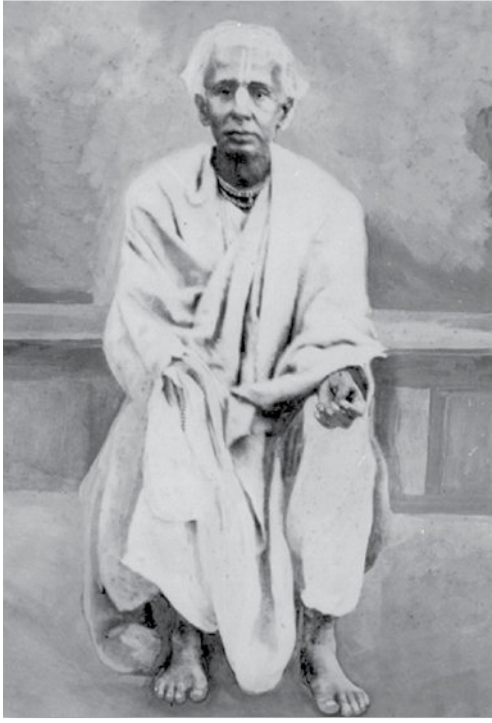
VINODA DĀ AND NARAHARI DĀ'S IDEAL CHARACTER, GURU-NIṢṬHĀ, GURU-SEVĀ AND BHĀJANA

In those days, all the residents of the *maṭha* affectionately addressed him as Vinoda dā. I also called him Vinoda dā. He had not yet taken *sannyāsa*. As the property manager in Śrī Dhāma



Māyāpura, he took full charge of overseeing the estate. He was rather debonair and would ride a horse to tend to estate affairs. Vinoda dā naturally commanded so much authority that we were somewhat intimidated by the very sight of him. Although he was a *brahmacārī*, all the *sannyāsīs* and senior godbrothers treated him with particular respect.

At the time, Śrīla Prabhupāda's dear servant *pūjyapāda* Śrīpāda Narahari Prabhu looked



after the *maṭha* in Māyāpura. He was, in a way, the mother of the *maṭha*. We all addressed him as “Prabhu”. He had a very accommodating nature and cared for all the youngsters in the *maṭha* with great affection. We therefore spoke with him openly and without inhibition. The grave and sombre Vinoda dā and the simple and straightforward Śrī Narahari Prabhu made an astonishing, transcendental combination. Together, they enlivened us all with their ideal character and their exemplary faith in *guru*, service to *guru*, and practice of *bhajana*, so much so that till today we have not deviated from the realm of *bhajana*. Theirs was a great friendship.

Śrīpāda Narahari dā was always loudly chanting the names of Hari throughout the day, wherever he went, busy with various tasks in service to the *maṭha*, but we did not know what he

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maṭha with great affection. ”**

did at night. One evening, I woke unexpectedly and saw that he was rapt in chanting *japa* of the *mahā-mantra* – “*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare*” – in a gentle yet stricken tone. I then saw, to my surprise, that his *śikhā* was tied by rope to a peg in the wall. I knew it was not appropriate to disturb his *harināma*, so I went back to sleep. In the morning, I offered obeisances at his lotus feet with great sincerity and inquired, “Prabhu, why did you have your *śikhā* tied to a peg in the wall last night while you were performing *bhajana*?” He dismissed me affectionately, saying: “Go and study, you won’t understand all this just yet.”

Then he continued. “You see, I’m busy all day with various services in the *maṭha*, so I don’t get any time to chant *harināma*. At night when chanting, I tie my *śikhā* to the peg in the wall so that laziness and sleep do not overcome me.” Such was his astonishing conviction in performing *sādhana* and *bhajana*.

Worshipful Vinoda dā was a very grave and munificent person, devoted to *bhajana*. From



**“ Vinoda dā
would stun
everyone with
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views, which were
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the beginning, he was well-versed in Vedānta and other scriptures. He would stun everyone with his philosophical views, which were replete with the conclusions of *bhakti*, and with his irrefutable logic.

HIS APPEARANCE IN THIS WORLD

Śrīpāda Keśava Mahārāja appeared in a village named Banaripara in the Barisal district of East Bengal (Bangladesh). I have been to his childhood home. He was born in a well-educated and aristocratic family. Even though I was a very small boy at the time, seeing the luxuries they had, I wondered how he could have suddenly left living in such an affluent home with his mother, father, friends and relatives, to enter the path of *bhajana*.

HE SURRENDERED EVERYTHING FOR THE SERVICE OF ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA

Our *guru-pādapadma*, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Ṭhākura, had so much affection for him. And why wouldn't he?

Worshipful Vinoda dā had completely submitted his body, mind, words and very life, his everything, to Śrīla Prabhupāda. There were times when he even gave up all concern for his own life in the service of his *guru*.

During Śrīla Prabhupāda's manifest presence, Vinoda dā was always ready to serve, and even after the disappearance of Śrīla Prabhupāda, he always endeavoured to preserve the *maṭhas* and preaching centres for *śuddha-bhakti* established by his *guru*. He also endeavoured to preserve Śrīla Prabhupāda's exemplary conduct and ideals. Though he met with a variety of obstacles and impediments in doing so, he never deviated from his duty.

His firm conviction was that the lotus feet of his *gurudeva* were always on his head, providing him protection. On the strength of this confidence he remained intent on the *mano'bhiṣṭa sevā* of Śrīla Guru-pādapadma. He was afraid of nothing. He always spoke the unbiased truth fearlessly.

HE FULFILLED ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA'S INNERHEART'S DESIRES

After Śrīla Prabhupāda entered *nitya-līlā*, all the daily, weekly and monthly publications, namely *Nadiyā-prakāśa*, *Śrī Gauḍīya*, and *Śrī Bhāgavata*, stopped, along with the preaching of the Gauḍīya Maṭha. Śrīpāda Keśava Mahārāja enthusiastically began publishing the monthly *Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā* in Bengali and *Śrī Bhāgavata-patrikā* in Hindi. Fearlessly, he preached *śuddha-bhakti* in accordance with the conceptions of Śrīla Prabhupāda all over India.

To fully carry out this *mano'bhīṣṭa sevā* of Śrīla Prabhupāda, he first established Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti in Kolkata. Next, he accepted *sannyāsa* in the town of Katwā from his godbrother, a *dikṣā* and *sannyāsa* disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda, *parama pūjyapāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja, by whose wish he established Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha in Koladvīpa, in Navadvīpa town.

Around that time, in the midst of those grim circumstances, I too left the main *maṭha* to establish a *maṭha* in Keshiyari. Mercifully, he set foot in that *maṭha* and fearlessly dismantled the false conclusions opposed to *śuddha-bhakti* propounded by a certain bogus lineage (*apasampradāya*). In that crowded assembly there was no one who dared oppose his sound conclusions and logic. Everyone who heard his deliberations was struck with wonder.

Due to his incomparable aptitude for preaching the message of Śrīla Prabhupāda, he established preaching centres not only in Bengal, but all over India. Even at present, his followers, disciples and grand-disciples are preaching throughout India under the auspices of his Śrī

Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti. They are propagating *śuddha-bhakti* and *harināma* all over the world and establishing preaching centres and *maṭhas* everywhere. Seeing this brings me great joy.

HE POSSESSED ALL THE SYMPTOMS OF A SAD-GURU, AS DESCRIBED IN THE SCRIPTURES

During Śrīpāda Keśava Mahārāja's lifetime of preaching, I directly witnessed in him all of the symptoms of an authentic spiritual master (*sad-guru*), as described in the scriptures. Throughout his life, I never saw in him a single trace of the six enemies of lust, anger, greed, illusion, intoxication or envy.

"*Kanaka kāmīnī, pratiṣṭhā-bāghinī, chāḍiyāche jāre sei to vaiṣṇava* – one who has cast off wealth, women and the tigress of prestige, and who has given up all bodily attachment, is a Vaiṣṇava." I have directly witnessed in my life how he exemplified these words. Many persons accept the dress of a *sādhū* or *sannyāsī*, yet they remain perpetually attached to wealth, women and prestige. But I never perceived even a trace of a scent of the desire for wealth, women and prestige in Śrīpāda Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja's devotion-filled life. He did not come to this world to pose as a *sādhū*. Rather, he preached *śuddha-bhakti* by his own devotional conduct. In this regard, he set an incomparable example. Today, in separation from him, we are experiencing anguish of heart. Leaving us, he has gone from this world to remain forever in the eternal pastimes (*nitya-līlā*).

In this age of Kali, a topmost Vaiṣṇava *guru* like him is extremely rare. *Śrī gurudeva* is the eternally perfected embodiment of the Lord's mercy. The fortune to associate with such a

personality is not available to everyone. What does non-duplicitous service to *guru* accomplish? “*Vaiṣṇavera āvedane kṛṣṇa dayāmaya, e heno pāmara prati hoiben sadaya* – the Vaiṣṇavas’ prayers invoke Kṛṣṇa’s compassion, such that He may favour this wretch.” According to this scriptural statement, only by the mercy of the *guru* can one attain eternal service at the lotus feet of Śrī Bhagavān. There is no other way to obtain Śrī Bhagavān. Śrīla Gurudeva is the direct embodiment of Bhagavān’s mercy potency. He descends to this material world by the Lord’s will to deliver souls who are averse to Bhagavān and to bestow eternal service to the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Such an authentic *guru* is obtained only by great good fortune.

In this age of Kali, a topmost Vaiṣṇava *guru* like him is extremely rare. Glorification of him on the hundredth anniversary of his appearance is beneficial for the self – *vaiṣṇavera guṇa-gāna, korile jīvera trāṇa* – glorifying the Vaiṣṇava effects the salvation of the soul. We have heard from the mouths of *sādhus* and Śrī Gurudeva that the soul gains deliverance by singing the glories of the Vaiṣṇavas. To properly appreciate the occasion of his appearance, the non-duplicitous *sādhaka* must endeavour to uphold the example he set. It is through examining his life that we can recognize the speciality of his appearance in this world. It is impossible to say how many *guru-sevakas* have offered themselves at his lotus feet and are doing *bhajana* in Śrī Gaura-dhāma or Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma. The present *ācārya* of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti, Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Mahārāja, is also exuberantly spreading his teachings everywhere. In terms of succession, his ideal is exemplary. Presently, the recipient of his affection and mercy, Śrī Nārāyaṇa Mahārājāji,

is preaching extensively throughout India and abroad as well.

* * *

It is true to say that I have received the affection and mercy of *pūjyapāda* Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. However, today on his hundredth anniversary, as I look into my heart, it seems that I have not even come close to emulating his exalted example, nor have I completely or properly followed it. Be that as it may, he is compassionate and loving. On this sacred hundredth anniversary of his appearance, I prostrate myself at his lotus feet and beg him to shower his merciful blessings on me so that my life too will be filled with *bhajana* and I will finally arrive at the lotus feet of Bhagavān. There is much to write about him, and there are many qualified and accomplished writers. I do not want to deprive them [of space in the book] by writing too much.

In conclusion, I only wish to say that today, this fallen and lowly person considers himself fortunate to have had the opportunity to offer his fervent supplication at the lotus feet of Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. May he be merciful to me. I am now eighty-four years old; the time has come for me, too, to depart from this world. Thus, on this occasion, I offer my *puṣpāñjali* at his lotus feet and conclude my homage.

Praying for mercy,

the fallen servant

Śrī Bhakti Kumuda Śānta



Śrī Bhāgavata-patrikā,

Year 41 Issue 12 (1998)

Some parts of this article were re-ordered for the sake of categorizing topics.

PATRIKĀ-PRAŚASTI

In Praise of the Patrikā

Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti-Sambandha Tūryāśramī Mahārāja



My prostrated obeisance first of all unto the lotus feet of Bhagavān's devotees.

Keśava Mahārāja! In this new year, please accept my prostrated obeisances. Your ever-new powers of creativity have written a new chapter for the field of preaching. Śrīmān Subodha informed me by letter of the wonderful arrangement you made during last year's *parikramā*. You are renowned everywhere. Who does not sing of your competence? Though you have no desire for prestige, it never stops following you. Though you are so glorious and though receiving your merciful glance is rare for such an insignificant person as myself, I have easily obtained it.

*paramārādhya prabhupāda patita-pāvana
pracchad paṭe pāṭhakera durlabha darśana* (1)

On the cover, the most worshipful Śrīla Prabhupāda, savior of the fallen, gives the readers a rare *darśana* of him.

*jāhāra smaraṇe sarva vighna vināśana
anāyāse bhava-kṣaya pāya prema-dhana* (2)

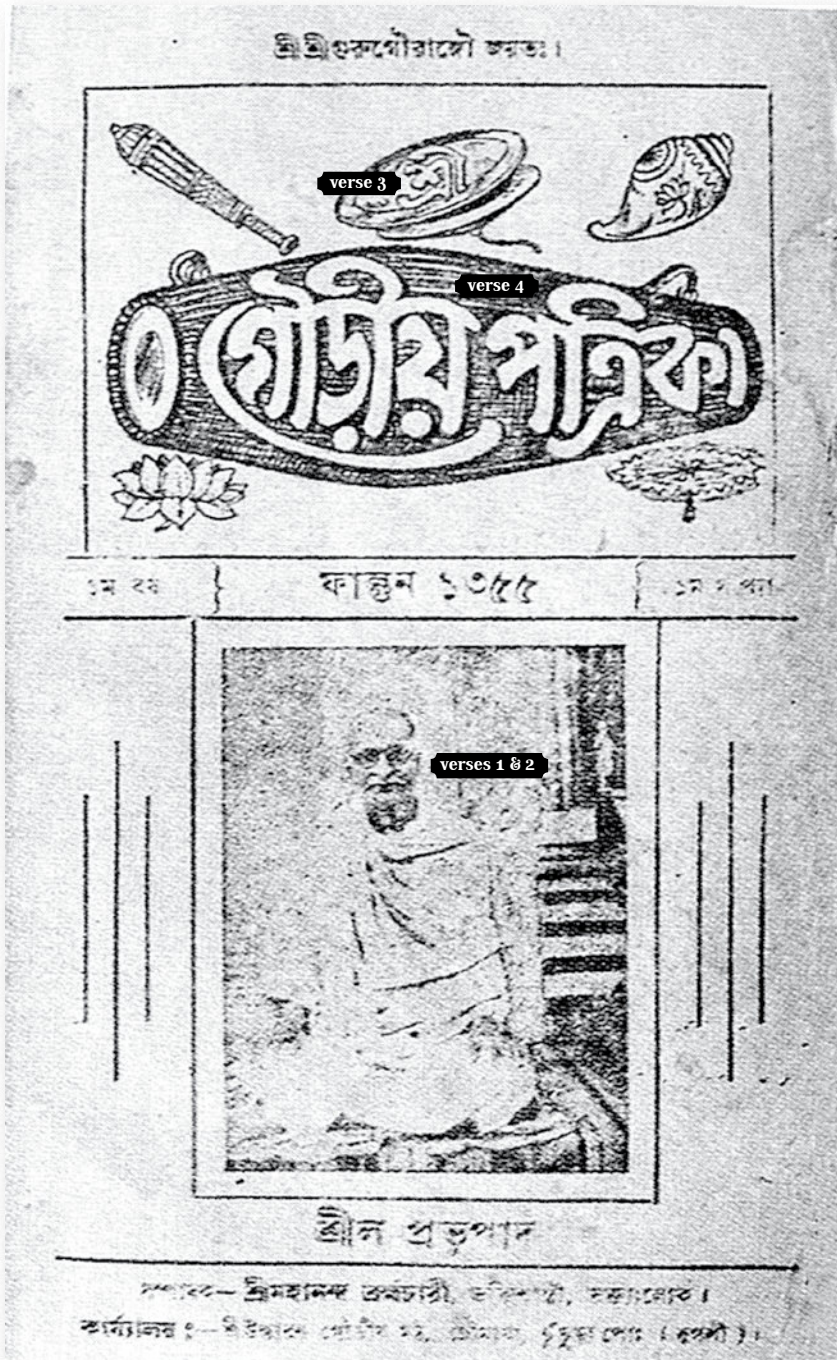
Remembering him destroys all obstacles, easily brings our existence in ignorance to an end and enables attainment of the treasure of *prema*.

*śirobhāge śrī-śera āyudha sakala
kali-kalūṣa vināśite dhare sarva-bala* (3)

At the very top is “Śrī”, the lion [Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu] who destroys the impurities of this age of Kali [commonly symbolized by an elephant] with His divine weapons [the tumultuous roar of *harināma-saṅkīrtana*].

*padma-gadā-śaṅkha-cakre patrī suśobhita
madhura-mṛdaṅga aṅke gauḍīya aṅkita* (4)

The magazine is adorned with the lotus, mace, conch shell and disc, and the word “Gauḍīya” is imprinted on the body of the sweet *mṛdaṅga*. [In other words, it refers to the *bṛhad-mṛdaṅga*, or printing press, the sweet sound of which disseminates the *kīrtana* of the Gauḍīya conception throughout the world.]



Cover of the first issue of *Śrī Gaudīya-patrikā*. Corresponding verse numbers are shown above.

*śiro-deśe sarva-śreṣṭha bhāgavater-vāṇī
sampādaka saṅkete ēkeche hṛday-khāni* (5)

At the head [top of the page] is the foremost message of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*,¹ which reveals the publisher's heartfelt intentions.

*bhagavāne bhakti binā saba paṇḍa-śrama
dui pārśve dui caraṇe vāṇī sarvottama* (6)

At its base, on either side, like two feet, is the other sublime message of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*,² which teaches that all endeavours are futile without devotion unto Bhagavān.

*aiśvarya-audārya-mādhuryera uddeśa
maṅgalācaraṇe tāra haya samāveśa* (7)

Its auspicious invocation addresses Bhagavān's majesty (*aiśvarya*), magnanimity (*audārya*) and sweetness (*mādhurya*), creating the perfect synthesis of the three.

*kāgaja, kālī, chāpādi sarvāṅga sundara
akṣarete kṛṣṇa-kāruṇya kṣare nirantara* (8)

The paper, ink, and printing are gorgeous all around. Kṛṣṇa's mercy (*kṛṣṇa-kāruṇya*)

1 *sa vai puṁsāṁ paro dharmo / yato bhaktir adhokṣaje
ahaituky apratihata / yayātmā suprasidati*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.2.6)

The supreme *dharma* for human society is pure devotion to Adhokṣaja, the Transcendental Person. This devotion must be free of ulterior motives and practised constantly to completely satisfy the self.

2 *dharmah svanuṣṭhitaḥ puṁsāṁ / viśvaksena-kathāsu yaḥ
notpādayed yadi ratim, śrama eva hi kevalam*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.2.8)

If, even after executing *varṇāśrama-dharma* precisely, a human being does not develop a taste in his heart for hearing and chanting the glories of Śrī Bhagavān and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, his endeavour has been useless labour.

is flowing incessantly from each and every letter.

*dhanya dhanya kāryādhyakṣa brahmacārī vara
bhaktyāloke bhakti-maṇḍapa sadā śobhākara* (9)

Blessed are the *brahmacārīs* tending to these tasks, as they illuminate the pavilion of devotion (*bhakti-maṇḍapa*)³ with the light of devotion (*bhaktyāloka*).³

*prabandhe nibandhe patrī haye su-sajjita
pratiṣṭhātāra prajñāna kare vighoṣita* (10)

This magazine is beautifully adorned with articles and essays that proclaim the founder's profound knowledge (*prajñāna*).

*prati-pakṣe patrī jadi hana prakāśita
supta-jīver luṭa-dharma haya jāgarita* (11)

If the magazine is published every fortnight, the dormant *dharma* of the sleeping souls will waken.

*heno patrī pāṭhāiyācho anugraha kori
kṛtajñatā-svarūpa tāhā sadā jeno smari* (12)

You kindly sent me this magazine. I will always remember this with gratitude.

vaiṣṇava-dāsābhāsa

Śrī Bhakti Sambandha Tūryāśramī

☪ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā,


Year 1 Issue 4

3 These also refer to the *patrikā's* head editor, Śrī Mahānanda Brahmācārī "Bhaktyāloka", and supervisor, Śrī Kṛṣṇa-kāruṇya Brahmācārī "Bhakti-maṇḍapa".

শ্রীশ্রীগুরুগোবিন্দো জয়তঃ ।

verse 6 ধর্মঃ যতুষ্ঠিতঃ পুংসাং বিধক্সেন-কথাসু যঃ ।

verse 5 স বৈ পুংসাং পরো ধর্মো যতো ভক্তিরধোক্সজে ।



verse 6 নোংপাদয়েদ্ যদি রতিং শ্রম এব হি কেবলম্

verse 5

অহৈতুক্যপ্রতিহতা যন্নাত্মা সুপ্রসীদতি ॥

সেই ধর্ম শ্রেষ্ঠ যাতে আত্ম পরসম । অধোক্সজে অহৈতুকী ভক্তি বিয়শ্রুত ॥
 অন্ত ধর্ম সূষ্টরূপে পালে বেই জন । হরি কথায় রতি নৈলে পণ্ড সেই শ্রম ॥

১ম খণ্ড

গৌরপূর্ণিমা, ২৯ গোবিন্দ, ৪৬২ গৌরান্দ
 সোমবার, ফাল্গুন ১৩৫৫, ইং ১৪।৩।৪৯

১ম সংখ্যা

শ্রীশ্রীহরিগুরুবৈষ্ণব-বন্দনা verse 7

বন্দেহং শ্রীগুরোঃ শ্রীযুতপদকমলং শ্রীগুরুন বৈষ্ণবাংশ
 শ্রীরূপং সাগ্রজাতং সহগণরঘুনাথান্বিতং তং সজীবম্ ।
 সাদৈতং সাবধূতং পরিজনসহিতং কৃষ্ণচৈতন্তদেবম্
 শ্রীরাধাকৃষ্ণপাদান্ সহগণললিতা-শ্রীবিশাখান্বিতাংশ্চ ॥

শ্রীল-প্রভুপাদ-বন্দনা

নম ওঁ বিষ্ণুপাদায় কৃষ্ণপ্রেষ্ঠায় ভূতলে ।
 শ্রীমতে ভক্তিসিদ্ধাস্ত-স্বরস্বতীতিনামিনে ॥

A Glimpse of His Early Life and Pilgrimages

Śrīmatī Sarojavāsīnī-devī



Following Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda's disappearance, his dear disciple and companion Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja found new and innovative ways to carry on his *guru's* mission. For several years after establishing Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti in 1941, he took huge groups of devotees on pilgrimage of numerous holy sites across India every year during the month of Kārtika, often booking whole train compartments. He thus preached the message of Lord Caitanya, providing countless souls the opportunity to hear and chant in the company of devotees and thoroughly cultivate the limb of devotion known as *pāda-sevana*,

which can either mean "to serve the Lord's lotus feet" or "to utilize one's feet in the Lord's service". Accompanying Śrīla Ācāryadeva on many of these pilgrimages was his aunt, the esteemed Śrīyuktā Sarojavāsīnī-devī. In 1949, she submitted an unprecedented chronicle of those extraordinary preaching tours to Śrī Sajjana-sevaka Brahmācārī (Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja), who was editor of *Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā* at the time. He writes:

"The venerable Śrī Sarojavāsīnī-devī, whose writings reveal her supreme devotion, is the first and most distinguished of Śrīla Prabhupāda's female disciples. About six months ago, she

sent me a lengthy lyrical composition about *pūjyapāda* Ācāryadeva, requesting that I publish it. But *pūjyapāda* Ācāryadeva firmly objected, which is why its publication was not immediate. Owing to the respected author's determined insistence and repeated requests, I am compelled to publish this work, even though publishing anything in praise of *pūjyapāda* Ācāryadeva goes against his wishes.

“As the author is revered and worshipped by Vaiṣṇavas in all the *aśramas* of the renowned Śrī Gauḍīya Maṭhas, it is quite impossible for me to deny her order and requests. Śrīla Thākura Bhaktivinoda's publishing of his autobiography did not diminish his glory in the slightest. It truly benefitted the world.”

This piece first appeared in 1950, in *Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā*, Year 2, Issues 3–6.

PART ONE: THE EXTRAORDINARY QUALITIES OF A VAIṢṆAVA



The sacred body of a Vaiṣṇava is host to all extraordinary virtues, as Śrī Kṛṣṇa's devotees are infused with all of His own qualities. I hereby declare the glories of Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Svāmī, whom I know to be the glowing embodiment of such qualities.

***tomāra ananta guṇa sadā jāge mane
nāhi dekhi eto guṇa sarva sādharāṇe***

***sarva mahā-guṇa-khani guru-dāsa-gaṇa
kintu vicārile bhāi āche tara-tama (2)***

Your infinite virtues forever awaken in my mind. I do not see such characteristics in ordinary souls. All the servants of *śrī guru* are repositories of extraordinary qualities, but subtle consideration, O brother, reveals unique differences.

***bālya-kāla haite dharme chilo tava prāṇa
dekhiyā-o bujhi nāi pāpiṣṭha ajñāna***

***pīḍita-skhalita-bandhu-hīna-jana-sevā
śiṣu-kāle koriyācho tumi rātri-dibā***

***sarva mahā-guṇa-gaṇa vaiṣṇava-śarīre
kṛṣṇa-bhakte kṛṣṇa-guṇa sakala sañcāre***

***tāhāra jvalanta mūrti jānilāma āmi
jaya bhakati prajñāna śrī keśava svāmī (1)***

***‘śrī dharma-rakṣiṇī sabhā’ koriyā pracāra
śiṣu-gaṇe jānāile dharma-mātra sāra (3)***

Dharma has been your life and soul since you were a child. Sinful and ignorant as I am, I could not

comprehend this fact, even though I witnessed it. As a small boy, you sought day and night to serve those who were in distress, had lost their way, or were without friends. You founded an association called “Śrī Dharma-rakṣiṇī Sabhā – an assembly to defend religious principles” and taught your childhood peers that *dharma* alone is the essence of life.

***vidyālaye giyā kato andhātura jāne
oḍaṇī pariyaṅ vastra karechile dāne
duḥkhī-daridrera prati apāra karuṇā
dekhiyāche bhāgya-hīnā e’ adhamā janā (4)***

How often you would go to school, meet a blind beggar or someone else in distress, and give them the shawl and other clothes you were wearing. Your compassion for people suffering from despair and poverty was limitless. I witnessed this myself, unlucky, fallen person that I am.

***janmābadhi vairāgyera jvalanta vighraha
kona-kāle nāhi chilo bhojane āgraha
parera duḥkhethe duḥkhī sevā-mātra sāra
koriyācho eka-mane nā kori’ āhāra (5)***

From birth, you represented the glowing ideal of renunciation. There was never a time you showed any zeal for satisfying your tongue and stomach. Rather, being so pained at seeing others in distress, you would even neglect to eat, as being of service to them was the only thing that mattered, and you did this with single-minded focus.

***praśānta hṛdaya tava udāra carite
deśa-deśāntare giyā maṅgala sādhithe
anāthera nātha chile bālya ha’te tumi
se-saba smariyā tomā’ sadā namī āmi
tomāra asīma guṇa sparśibāre nāri
patitā adhamā muī mahā-durācārī (6)***

Calm and gentle of heart and magnanimous of character, you went from place to place seeking the highest welfare for all. You have been a refuge for the orphaned ever since your childhood. Remembering all of this, I offer my obeisances to you always. I cannot even hope to touch your limitless qualities, being so fallen, wretched and totally degenerate.

***e-jaḍa jagate tava pitṛ-svasā āmi
ati bālye ‘didi’ bo’le dākiyācho tumi
acchedya sambandha ihā
(satīrtha) tomā-āmā sane
janmiyāi labhechile
se-sambandha-jñāne (7)***

In the eyes of the world, I am your paternal aunt, but you used to refer to me as your big sister when you were very little, because our bond as godbrother and godsister is an inseparable one, a relationship you were evidently aware of since your very birth.

***“tomāra jīvane kabhu nāhiko saṁsāra
udāsa prakṛti sadā mayā-moha-pāra”–
bālya-khelā dekhi’ ihā boleche sabāi
mora māyā-mugdha mana kabhu bujhe nāi
bālaka-kāla hoite tomāra vairāgya
dekhiyāche manda-mati heno hata-bhāgya (8)***

“Your life will never involve becoming entangled in mundane family life. By nature, you are always indifferent to worldly interests, having surpassed the delusions of Māyā.” Seeing your childhood play, everyone said as much, but as my mind was bewildered by Māyā, I never understood this, even though I – foolish, pitiful person that I am – had witnessed your renunciation since your childhood.

***parama bāndhava mora e-jagate tumi
dekhāile adhamāke guru guṇa-maṇi
sei guru advitīya mahā-mahājana
nityānanda-heno prabhu patita-pāvana
gaura-vāṇī-avatāra sudhī-jana gāya
heno prabhu milechilo tomāra kṛpāya
patitera bandhu prabhu karuṇā-sāgara
tāhāra dayāra kaṇa varṇe śakti kārā (9)***

You are my best friend in this world, as you showed to this wretch a *guru* who is a jewel of all good qualities. That *guru* is second to none and a great, great personality who, like Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, is the saviour of the fallen. Saintly persons proclaim him to be the *avatāra* of Śrī Gaurahari's teachings, and it was due to your mercy that I met such a master. He is the friend of the fallen, an ocean of compassion. Who even has the power to describe a single particle of his mercy?

***patitā adhamā muī nara-kulāṅgārā
paśura adhama paśu haite durācārā
heno pāpa nāi janme nā karechi āmi
sarva aparādhe doṣi divasa-jāminī
emona ghrṇita nāi e' jaga-mājhāre
mahā-pāpī durācārī nāhiko saṁsāre
dekhiyā jānilā prabhu dayāra supātra
ahaitukī dayā prabhu korilena mātra (10)***

I am a deviant and a wretch, a disgrace to humanity. I am inferior even to the various species of animals, as my behaviour is worse than theirs. There is no sin that I have not committed in this birth. Day and night, I am repeatedly guilty of every possible offence. There is none so despicable in this world, no greater sinner or degenerate in all of material

existence. Our Prabhu saw me and knew I was the ideal candidate for his compassion. The mercy he showed me was simply causeless.

***heno guru-kṛpā āmi tava kṛpā ha'te
lābha karechinu āmi e mora niścite
ataeva punaḥ punaḥ juḍi dui hāta
o-carāṇe kori koṭi koṭi praṇipāta (11)***

I can say for certain that I received the mercy of our *guru* because of your mercy. Therefore, again and again, I clasp my hands and offer millions and millions of obeisances unto your feet.

***saralera atyādarśa susarala tumi
kāpaṭya nā pelo sthāna tomā' nami nami
janmābaddhi chile tumi arthe anāsakta
nāhiko ādara arthe atīva birakta
niṣkiñcana nāmera se jogya adhikārī
tomāra carāṇa-padma jeno sadā smari (12)***

You are so simple-hearted, the epitome of sincerity. Pretence finds no abode in you. Hence I worship you time and time again. Since your birth, you have been indifferent to wealth and extremely detached. Never have you adored money. Such a person alone deserves to be called renounced. I pray that I always remember your lotus feet.

***taru-heno sahiṣṇutā śunechinu āmi
guru-kṛpā-bale satya dekhilāma āmi
emona sahiṣṇu āra emoto udāra
bhābite lāgaye citte mahā-camatkāra (13)***

I had heard of being more tolerant than a tree, and by the strength of *śrī guru's* mercy, I saw that such a quality truly exists. When I think of your tolerance and compassion, it strikes my heart with great wonder.

*kr̥ṣṇete arpita-citta māyā-moha dūra
sevānande magna sadā vacana madhura
prasannātmā, suprasanna tomāra badana
aprasanna tomāke nā dekhi kona-kṣaṇa
tomāke darśile citte ānanda udaya
śrī bhakti prajñāna keśava kī jaya jaya* (14)

Your heart is offered to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and thus remains far from illusion and ignorance. You are always immersed in the ecstasy of service, and you always speak sweetly. As you are self-satisfied, your countenance is supremely happy. I have never seen you unhappy for even a moment, and beholding you rouses sheer delight in the heart. All glories, all glories to Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava, I do declare.

*aśeṣa nindāya bindu ruṣṭa naho tumi
lakṣya kori' bahu-dina dekhiyāchi āmi
kāhāra upara tumi aprasanna nao
krodhera udreka kabhu khūje nāhi pāo
ṣaḍ-vega-jayī, ṣaḍ-guṇa vibhūṣaṇa
ṣaḍ-doṣa parihārī, parama sajjana
nindādi-ghṛṇita-kārya kabhu nāhi karo
ahar-niṣa kr̥ṣṇa-cintā mauna-mūrti-dharo* (15)

You are not even slightly irked by incessant criticisms. I noted this a long time ago. You are never displeased with anyone. You are never provoked, even when people try to find a way to anger you. You have conquered the six urges, you are decorated with the six virtues and you have relinquished the six faults. You are a supremely virtuous and noble person. You never engage in slander and gossip or other such contemptible activities. Day and night, you embody silent absorption in thoughts of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

*atīva mahān tumi ati mahājana
ahar-niṣa sevānande ācho sumagana
gurvādeśa ekamātra śirodeśe dhori'
guru-vāṇī pracāricho sadā viśva bhoṛi'* (16)

You are particularly illustrious, an exceptional personality. Day and night, you are totally immersed in the ecstasy of service. Clutching only the instructions of your spiritual master to your head, you have continuously preached his teachings throughout the world.

*śrī ūrjā-pālana bhakti labhe aikāntika
cāturmāsya madhye śreṣṭha māsā je kārtika
tāhāte niyama kori vrata ācaraṇa
bhakta-gaṇa saṅge sevā-niyama pālana* (17)

Kārtika is foremost of the four holy months of Cāturmāsya, and people obtain one-pointed devotion by observing *śrī ūrjā-vrata*. You make it a rule to always follow the vows of that period, and in the company of the devotees, you observe *niyama-sevā*.

*śrī bhagavat-dhāma bahu tīrtha subhramaṇa
parikramā koritecho niyā sādhu-jana
mahā-mahājana guru-dāsa agaṇana
mahā-bhāgavata saba patita-pāvana
gurvādeśe śrī caitanya-vāṇī paracāra
śravaṇa korile jīva labhe para-pāra
śrī caitanya-vāṇī haya amṛtera dhvani
āsanna maraṇera se mṛta-saṅjīvanī* (18)

[During that time,] you gracefully tour Bhagavān's divine abodes and many holy sites, performing pilgrimage in saintly company. With you roam countless great and exalted personalities, servants of your spiritual master, and bona fide representatives of the Lord, all of whom are saviours of

fallen souls. On the order of your spiritual master, you preach the teachings of Śrī Caitanya, hearing which the souls of this world achieve deliverance. That sound, Śrī Caitanya's message, is the nectar of immortality and brings the dead back to life, even though death is always imminent.

**śrī guru-pādapadma āra guru-bhakta-gaṇa
abirāma vande jeno mora duṣṭa mana**

**paropakāraka haya gaura-bhakta-gaṇa
aikāntika parahita cinte sarva-kṣaṇa** (19)

May my wretched mind incessantly venerate Śrī Guru-pādapadma and his devotees. The devotees of Śrī Gaurahari are dedicated to helping (*upakāra*) others (*para*) and are always thinking exclusively of what is beneficial for them.

**'para'-upakāra 'laghu'-upakāra nahe
jāra marme jīva guru-kṛṣṇa-sevā labhe**

**nija-gaṇa-prati mahāprabhu dayāmaya
ati dayā ka're bolechilo amāyāya—**

**'bhārata-bhūmite hailo manuṣya-janma jāra
janma sārthak kori' karo 'para' upakāra'—**

**se vāñīra atyādarśa śrī keśava svāmī
kāya-mano-vākye tāra pada vandi āmi** (20)

[*Para* can also mean “superior”. The poet therefore says:] [The devotees do not offer] trivial handouts but a superior form of altruism, which enables conditioned souls to attain the service of *guru* and Kṛṣṇa. Out of overwhelming compassion, the merciful Mahāprabhu sincerely addressed His associates as follows: “One who has taken human birth in the land of India should give meaning to his life by working for the welfare of others.” Since Śrī Keśava Svāmī is the paragon of this instruction, I worship his lotus feet by body, mind and words.

PART TWO: FIVE YEARS OF PILGRIMAGE

**vatsarete tina-bāra bhakta-saṅga-dāna
dayā kori' e-sujoga karecho bidhāna**

**kārtikādi vrata-kāle je kailā vidhāna
smaraṇa koriyā gr̥he nā rahe parāṇa** (21)

As a gesture of pure compassion, you have instituted a programme to grant association with devotees three times a year [during Śrī Gaura-Puṇimā, Ratha-yātrā and Kārtika-vrata]. When people remember the programmes you organized during Kārtika and other holy occasions, their hearts would not allow them to remain at home.

**śrī vighraha-rūpa śrī gaurāṅga mahāprabhu
saṅge jagad-guru śrīla sarasvatī prabhu**

**prabhu-juga suśobhita kibā śibikāya
daraśane tri-tāpādi dūrībhūta haya**

**agraṇī koriyā prabhu śrī guru-gaurāṅga
pādapadma-makaranda labhe bhakta-vṛnda
sarva-mukhe sadā 'guru-gaurāṅge'ra jaya
śravaṇe pāṣaṇḍī-jana bhakati labhaya** (22)

Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu presides [over these pilgrimages] in His deity form, along with *jagad-guru* Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda. Seeing these two lords ensconced on a beautiful palanquin dispels the threefold sufferings of this realm. Putting *śrī guru* and Śrī Gaurāṅga in the forefront, the devotees collect the nectar from their lotus feet. Each and every person's mouth resounds with proclamations of *śrī guru* and Śrī Gaurāṅga's glories, the sound of which inspires devotion even in avowed atheists.



*ki madhura śrī mūrati śrī guru-gaurāṅga
virājaya śrī keśava nārasimha dvandva*

*ki āścarya manohara dṛśya se samaya
śrī guru-gaurāṅga rādhā-mādhava jaya jaya* (23)

How sweet and appealing are the forms of *śrī guru* and *Śrī Gaurāṅga* accompanied by both *Śrīla Keśava Mahārāja* and *Śrī Nārasimha Mahārāja*! What a wondrous and captivating sight it was then! All glories to *śrī guru*, *Gaurāṅga* and *Rādhā-Mādhava*.

*e' rūpe prathama varṣe—śrī vraja-dhāma
bhāgavata-gaṇa-saha kaile parikrama*

*mathurā, vṛndāvana, jato vana-upavana
rādhā-kunḍa, śyāma-kunḍa, giri-govardhana*

*jāvaṭa, varṣāṇa, saṅketa, śrī nandagrāma
śrī gokula mahāvana jato vraja-dhāma*

*guru-ānugatye kaile saba parikramā
e' adhame saṅge kailā apāra mahimā* (24)

Thus, during the first year, you went on pilgrimage of *Śrī Vraja-dhāma* with the devotees throughout *Mathurā*, *Vṛndāvana* and all the major and minor forests, as well as *Rādhā-kunḍa*, *Śyāma-kunḍa* and *Govardhana Hill*. We toured the whole abode of *Śrī Vraja*, including *Jāvaṭa*, *Varṣāṇa*, *Saṅketa*, *Śrī Nandagrāma* and *Śrī Gokula Mahāvana*. The whole pilgrimage party followed in our *guru's* footsteps, and because your glory is truly boundless, you brought this wretch along.

***dvitīya varṣete—kṣetra-maṇḍala je-bhumi
bhakta-gaṇa la'ye parikramā kaile tumi***

***ke jānito caurāṣī-krośa kṣetra-maṇḍal haya
śāstra-juktye jānāile tumi mahāśaya***

***śrī jagannātha śrī mandira ha'te parikramā
ārambhiyā dekhāile kṣetra-maṇḍal-sīmā*** (25)

For the second year, you took the devotees on pilgrimage of Śrī Kṣetra-maṇḍala. Who knew that Kṣetra-maṇḍala was actually eighty-four *krośas*? You, sir, enlightened us with this fact, with proof from scripture. Starting from the temple of Lord Jagannātha, you showed us the perimeters of Kṣetra-maṇḍala.

***anati-dūrete prabhupāda-janmasthāna
prathamei bhakta-saha korile prayāṇa***

***darśana-sparśana āra daṇḍavat nati
jaya prabhu śrī bhaktisiddhānta sarasvatī***

***āvirbhāva-sthāne kori' bahu sukīrtana
pūjana, vandana āra ātma-nivedana*** (26)

Not too far [from the Jagannātha temple] is Śrīla Prabhupāda's birthplace, which is where you first went with all the devotees. As the devotees beheld and touched that place and offered obeisances, they called out "Jaya Prabhu Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī!" They performed many beautiful *kīrtanas* at that holy appearance site and offered worship and homage, surrendering their very souls.

***tathā ha'te parikramā-kārī bhakta-gaṇa
kṣetrera maṭha-mandira korilo darśana***

***saba parikramā kori' śrī kṣetra-maṇḍale
vijaya korilo mahā-mahima-sakale***

***sthāne sthāne bahu śrī vighraha daraśana
varṇibāra śakti kabhu nā dhare durjana***

***jaya jaya śrī bhakati-prajñāna keśava
dūribhūta karo mora aparādha saba*** (27)

From there, you took the devotee pilgrims to see all the *maṭhas* and temples of Śrī Kṣetra. In this way, all those exceptionally glorious devotees completed a full pilgrimage of Śrī Kṣetra-maṇḍala. This lowly person does not have the power to describe all the places we visited and of all the deities whose *darśana* we received. All glories, all glories to Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava. Kindly dispel my offenses.

***trītiye—vaiṣṇava-dhāma tīrtha śrī kāṣīte
vrata-udjāpana kaile śuddha-bhakti-mate***

***viśvanātha viṣṇu-bhakta-agragāṇya haya
bhakta-bhagavān śambhu sarvottama kaya***

***ityādika bahu tattva-kathā pracāṛile
śuddha-bhakti-dhārā tathā aneka barṣile***

***āra jato prabhupāder bhaktottama-gaṇa
ekādhāre bhāgavata korito varṇana***

***kibā sumadhura kaṇṭhe śrī hari-kīrtana
vārāṇasī ha'lo jeno goloka-bhavana***

***jaya jaya kāṣī-dhāma, jaya viśvanātha
tomāra caraṇe koṭī koṭī praṇipāta*** (28)

The third year, we went on pilgrimage to the Vaiṣṇava abode and holy place of Śrī Kāṣī (Vārāṇasī), where we observed the vows of the month according to the principles of pure devotion. Viśvanātha (Lord Śiva) is foremost among the devotees of Viṣṇu. Also known as Śambhu, he is said to be the Lord in the form of a devotee or the Lord's foremost devotee. You discussed this and other philosophical points, showering everyone profusely with the concepts of pure *bhakti*. All of Śrīla Prabhupāda's other exalted disciples spoke on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The sweet voices of the



devotees performing *kīrtana* for Śrī Hari seemed to transform Vārāṇasī into the divine realm of Goloka. All glories to Kāśī-dhāma, and all glories to the lord of the universe, Lord Śiva, at whose feet I offer millions of obeisances.

***caturthete—deo-ghara śrī vaidyanāthete
ūrja-vrata sādhiplena bahu bhakta-sāthe***

***bahu darśanera sthāne sukīrtana kori’
rāvaṇeśvara-mahimā kahile vistāri***

***śrī-guru-gaurāṅga jaya saba bhakta gāya
bhakta-saha parikramā korile mahodaya***

***prārthanā āmāra vaidyanātha-śiva-pāya
vaiṣṇava-dāsera dāsa karaho āmāya* (29)**

The fourth year, you observed *ūrjā-vrata* in Deoghar [Jharkhand], the abode of Śrī Vaidyanātha [Śiva, as lord of all physicians], with a great many devotees. You conducted sweet *kīrtana* at various holy sites and spoke at length of the greatness of the deity [of Vaidyanātha Śiva], whom Rāvaṇa had worshipped. All of the devotees sang the glories of *śrī guru* and Gaurāṅga. In this way, you went on pilgrimage with the devotees, holy sir. I pray at the feet of Vaidyanātha Śiva to make me the servant of the servant of the Vaiṣṇavas.

***pañcamera—kārtikete dvārakā-mukhete
śubha-jātrā korilena bhakta-gaṇa-sāthe***

virāṭ vyāpāra sei virāṭ sambhāra
je dekheche se bujheche mahā-camatkāra
dvārakā gamana-pathe bahu darasana
bahu bahu tirtha tāra nā jāya kathana
prathame vijaya kaile śrī vṛndāvana
śrī govinda-gopīnātha-madana-mohana
bahu bahu śrī vighraha apūrva darasana
śrī gokulānanda ādi śrī rādhā-ramaṇa
gauḍīyā-ṭhākura-gaṇa-caraṇāravinde
darasana karāile sarva-bhakta-vṛnde (30)

The fifth pilgrimage was an auspicious journey to Dvārakā in the month of Kārtika with the devotees. It was a massive undertaking, requiring a massive amount of supplies. You would have had to have seen that great wonder to fathom it. There were many sites to see on the way to Dvārakā, so many, many holy places that I cannot recount them all. We started in Śrī Vṛndāvana with unprecedentedly beautiful audiences of many deities, including Śrī Govinda, Gopīnātha, Madana-mohana, Śrī Gokulānanda, and Śrī Rādhā-ramaṇa. You enabled all the devotees to behold those most adored deities of the Gauḍīya tradition.

rūpa-sanātana-pade daṇḍavat kori'
jātrā karechile mathurā nagarī
mahā-yogapīṭha ādi keśavera sthāna
ātma-nivediyā tathā korilā prayāṇa
mathurāra svāmī-traya-caraṇa darasana
mathureśa, dvārakeśa, kubjeśa-vandana
yamunāra caturviṁśa ghāṭera sparśana
viśrāmādi ghāṭa-śobhā nā jāya varṇana (31)

After offering prostrated obeisances at the feet of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, you journeyed to the town of Mathurā,

where you supplicated your soul at the temple of Ādi Keśava, a *mahā-yoga-pīṭha*, or highly potent site of spiritual union. From there, you proceeded to worship and behold the three masters of Mathurā: Mathureśa, Dvārakeśa, and Kubjeśa. You visited the twenty-four bathing *ghāṭas* along the Yamunā, headed by Viśrāma-ghāṭa, the beauty of which is beyond description.

tā sabāra pādapadma bahu namaskari
parikramā calilo śrī jayapur nagarī
mahā-mahottama saba bhāgavata-gaṇa
ki apūrva śobhā jayasurete gamana
ki sundara manorama nagarī-gaṭhana
rāja-patha prāsādādi ati suśobhana
siṁhānāde śrī guru-gaurāṅgera jaya
prati-dhvani kare sabe pāśāṇa kāpaya
guru-gaurāṅgera kibā kamanīya veśa
darasana koriyā dhanya jayapura deśa
henō jayapura-pade bahu namaskāra
ghaṭibe ki darasana kona-kāle āra? (32)

After offering many obeisances at the lotus feet of all those deities, the party went to the town of Śrī Jayapura (Jaipur). The sight of those most exalted and glorious devotees travelling to Jaipur was extraordinarily beautiful. How exquisite and charming the layout of the city is, and the royal boulevard and palace are spectacular. The rockwork of the city vibrated as it echoed the lion-like roar of the devotees chanting the glories of *śrī guru* and Gaurāṅga. In fact, the land of Jaipur was blessed to see the lustrous attire that *śrī guru* and Gaurāṅga wore. I offer countless obeisances to Jaipur. Who knows if I will ever see it again?

kibā se apūrva tathā śrī govinda-murti
jāhāra daraśe jīva labhe śuddha-bhakti



*anādira ādi sei govinda caraṇa
āha śrī mandira kibā atula śobhana
kīrtana-mukhete bhakta-gaṇa-parikramā
se śobhāra e-jagate nā āche upamā
prabhu gopīnātha āra gopāla ālaya
ki nṛtya-kīrtana kaile saba mahodaya*

*sei aparūpa śobhā āra ki jivane
kakhona darśana ha'be nāhi āsā mane
jaya jaya 'jayapura' ki apūrva dhāma
smaraṇa mānase mama hau abirāma
e-saba sampada lābha śrī keśava ha'te
vicārite jogyā āmi nāhi kona-mate
gaura-bhakta-dayā dīne sunechinu āmi
mo-adhame kṛpā kare, tāra sāksī tumi (33)*

The very sight of the incomparable deity of Śrī Govinda is such that it bestows pure devotion upon conditioned souls. The feet of Śrī Govinda are the cause of all causes. Ah, and the beauty of that temple is matchless. Nothing in this world can compare to the sight of the devotees performing *kīrtana* and circumambulating the altar there. How the devotees danced and chanted at the temples of Gopinātha and Gopāla! I do not even have a hope of seeing such a beautiful sight again in my life. "All glories, all glories to Jaipur!" I say. What an incomparable abode. I am constantly reminded of it. I am by no measure even worthy of conceiving of all the treasures I received from Śrī Keśava Mahārāja. I have heard that Śrī Gaurahari's devotees are merciful to the destitute, but it is you who are witness to the mercy shown to me.

PART THREE: PILGRIMAGE TO DVĀRAKĀ

*jayapura, ājamīra, meśānā, puṣkara
ityādika bahu-tīrtha sāvitṛī-pāhāda
kato je dekhinu āmi keśava-kṛpāte
tulanāya bindu-mātra nāhi smaraṇete (34)*

Jaipur, Ajmer, Mehsana, Pushkar, Savitri Mountain – I can hardly recall but a drop of everything I have seen by Śrī Keśava's mercy!

*śrī guru-gaurāṅga-mūrti śibikā-upari
jabe praveśilo sabe śrī sudāmāpurī
ki apūrva dṛśya ramya sudāmā-mandira
bhakata-caraṇa jethā seve raghu-vīra
sudāmā-prāsāda nija-vāsa ha'te baḍo
vicitra sevāra tāhe vividha sambhāra*

***bhakta-sevā dekhā'lena kṛṣṇa dayāmaya
kara-padme sudāmāra pāda prakṣālaya
cāmara vyajana kare rukmiṇī āpani
mūrti-bheda ramā jini śrī kṛṣṇa-gr̥hiṇī (35)***

What a delightful sight: the deities of *śrī guru* and Gaurāṅga entering the charming Sudāmā temple in Sudāmā-purī, where Raghuvīra (Kṛṣṇa) served the feet of His devotee. He made Sudāmā a palace larger than His own. The worship in the temple there involves a variety of services and plentiful paraphernalia. Merciful Kṛṣṇa demonstrated how to serve devotees by washing Sudāmā's feet with His own lotus hands, while His wife Rukmiṇī, who is another form of Ramā-devī (the goddess of fortune), fanned Sudāmā with a *cāmara* (yak tail fan).

***mama pūjā ha'te mama bhakta-pūjā baḍo
e-vākyera sapramāṇa dekhā'lena dadha
kṛṣṇa sevichena kārṣṇa jīva-sikṣā tare
viṣaya hoiyā āsrayera sevā kare
nami se sudāmā-pati, āra sudāmāre
sarvādhama je'ne kṛpā karaho āmāre
e-vaibhava dekhāile śrī keśava svāmī
kṛpā-ṛṇe cira-baddha thāki jeno āmi (36)***

“Worship of My devotee is greater than worship of Me.” Kṛṣṇa demonstrated and firmly proved these words. He served His devotee in order to teach the conditioned souls. Though He is the ultimate object, or enjoyer (*viṣaya*), He became the agent, or servant (*āsraya*). I bow to that master of Sudāmā and to Sudāmā himself. Know me to be the most fallen person and have mercy on me. I am forever indebted to Śrī Keśava Svāmī for his mercy in showing me these treasures.

***‘porabandara’ hoite bāṣpa-jāne caḍi’
godhūli-lagane jāi mūla-dvārakā-purī***

***bhakta-saṅge śrī dvārakā-nāther śrī caraṇa
āra kato devī-devā agaṇita jana
niśārambha-hetu hailo aspaṣṭa darśana
bhakta-goṣṭhī-saha punaḥ sudāmā-gamana (37)***

From Porbandar, we boarded a steam engine train and reached the main city of Dvārakā by dusk. How many gods and goddesses and countless others must have been accompanying the devotees to the feet of Śrī Dvārakanātha! As night was setting in, we could not see clearly, and so the group of devotees shortly returned to Sudāmā-purī.

***sudāmā hoite jātrā beṭa-dvārakāte
je ānander kaṇa kabhu nā pāri varṇite
āraba sāgaropari ‘jala-mahā-jāne’
guru-gaurahari āra bhāgavata-gaṇe
kī apūrva śobhā dhare kibā manohara
sayahneta astācale jabe dibākara
mahānīla-sindhu-mājhe se ‘jāhāja’-khāni
mukharita sadā guru-gaura-jaya-dhvani
sindhu tāra abirata deya prati-dhvani
śrī guru-gaurāṅga-jaya gāhiche āpani
bhāgavata-jana-gaṇa bhakti rasa-bhare
prārthanā koriche sabe guru-gaurāṅgere
keho keho mahājana padāvalī gāya—
‘dayāra sāgara gaura-nityānanda rāya’
rādhā-mādhavera vraja-vilāsa-varṇana
bhakti-rase kīrtana koriche bhakta-gaṇa
samudrera se-dina ki mahā-bhāgya ha’lo
gaura-goṣṭhī-saha gaura vakṣe virājilo (38)***

From Sudāmā's place, the party journeyed to Beṭa Dvārakā. I could never describe how delightful that place is, not even an iota of it. *Śrī guru* and Gaurāṅga, along with the devotees, boarded a large ship in

the Arabian Sea. What a lustrous and entrancing sunset that was; I have never seen anything like it. Amid the vast blue ocean, the ship resounded with the glories of *śrī guru* and Gaurāṅga, and the ocean echoed back without pause, as if it too were glorifying Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga. Brimming with loving devotion, all the devotees offered prayers to Guru-Gaurāṅga. Certain noble souls sang poems like: “*dayāra sāgara gaura-nityānanda rāya* – Śrī Gaura and Nityānanda Rāya are oceans of mercy...” The devotees described the pastimes of Rādhā-Mādhava in Vraja and performed *kīrtana* absorbed in *bhakti-rasa*. How fortunate the ocean was that day, as Śrī Gaura gracefully rested in its bosom, along with His associates.

*para-dine dvi-prahara astamita prāya
parikramā pāuchilena beṭa-dvārakāya
dvārakāra ghāṭa-śobhā ati manohara
mudrā-chāpa dilo tathā sarva-hasta-para
śibikāte śrī gaurāṅga kibā suśobhana
bhakta-gaṇa ārambhilo mahā-saṅkīrtana
abirāma ‘śrī kṛṣṇa-caitanya-nityānanda’
simha-nāde uccāriche gaura-bhakta-vṛnda
ki apūrva parikramā ke dekheche āra
beṭa-dvārakā-vāsī dekhe’ mahā-camatkāra* (39)

The next day, toward the end of the afternoon, the *parikramā* party arrived at the island of Beṭa-Dvārakā. The splendour of the Dvārakā ports was captivating, and when we arrived our hands were stamped. Śrī Gaurāṅga looked resplendent on His palanquin, and the devotees began a grand *saṅkīrtana*, singing “Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Nityānanda” incessantly, at the pitch of roaring lions. No one had ever seen such an amazing pilgrimage party. The inhabitants of Beṭa-Dvārakā witnessed that wonder.

*saṅkīrtane śrī mandira parikramā kori’
tabe to darśana kailā dvārakā-bihārī
bhakta-bhare śrī dvārakā-nāthera stavana
vandanā korilo saba bhakta-mahājana
vaikuṇṭha hoite varā śrī dvārakā-purī
rāja-rājeśvara tathā āpani kāmśārī
kibā rūpa ki lābaṇya muni-manohara
śaratera śaśī tathā akiñcitkara
dvārakā-nātha kṛṣṇera pāda-padma-dvaya
prasphuṭita svarṇa-śata-dala tuccha haya
pāda-saroje nūpura bāje kiñkinī
darśane juḍāya heno tāpita-parāṇī
caturbhuja śaṅkha-cakra-gadā-padma-dhārī
kibā aparūpa sāja dvārakā-śrī hari* (40)

After circumambulating the temple while performing *saṅkīrtana*, we beheld Dvārakā-bihārī. All those exalted devotees offered prayers in glorification of the Lord of Dvārakā. The city of Dvārakā is greater than the divine realm of Vaikuṇṭha, for Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of Kāmṣa, presides there as the King of kings. What a beautiful form, bewildering to even great mystics! The autumn moon pales in comparison. The two lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa as the Lord of Dvārakā put to shame blooming, golden, hundred-petal lotus flowers. Ankle-bells chime sweetly at His lotus feet, and the sight of Him soothes the burning anguish of the heart. That Śrī Hari of Dvārakā has assumed an astounding four-armed form, clutching a conch, disc, mace and lotus.

*apara kakṣete prabhu balarāma mūrti
jāhāra kṛpāya jīva labhe kṛṣṇa-bhakti
anya kakṣe virājay pradyumna mahāśaya
dvārakeśātmaja prabhu jaya jaya jaya* (41)

The adjoining chamber houses the deity of Śrī Balarāma Prabhu, by whose mercy the souls of this realm attain devotion for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In yet another chamber resides the great and noble Pradyumna, the son of Dvārakeśa. All glories! All glories! All glories!

**adūrete āche saba mahiṣīra gaṇa
rukmiṇī, satyabhāmā, jāmbuvatī hana
mahā-lakṣmī-gaṇa saba mahiṣīra veśe
dvārakā āsiyā sevā kailo śrīnivāse
āra kato deva-devī śobhe gr̥he-gr̥he
svarṇa-dvārakā dekhile muni-ṛṣi mohe
dvārakā-nāthera pade e-minati kori
tāhāra kaiśora mūr̥ti sadā jeno smari** (42)

Not far from there are all the queens – Rukmiṇī, Satyabhāmā, Jāmbavatī, and others. The entire host of illustrious Mahā-Lakṣmīs came to Dvārakā in the guise of queens to render service to Śrīnivāsa Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Many gods and goddesses beautified each and every house. That golden city of Dvārakā bewilders even the great sages and seers. I pray at the feet of the Lord of Dvārakā that I may always remember Him as a teenage boy [in Vraja].

**ei-rūpa kichu-dina dvārakā thākiyā
śrī guru-gaurāṅga jānopari sājāiyā
śrī guru-gaurāṅga jaya boli bārabāra
bhakta-goṣṭhi āsilenā ārabera pāra** (43)

We thus spent some days in Dvārakā, and then, having decorated *śrī guru* and Gaurāṅga atop the palanquin and shouting, “All glories to *śrī guru* and Gaurāṅga,” again and again, we returned to the shore of the Arabian Sea.

**‘śrī kṛṣṇa caitanya āra prabhu nityānanda
śrī advaita gadādhara śrīvāsādi
gaura-bhakta-vṛnda’**

**suddha-bhakta-gaṇa ati sumadhura svare
gāhite gāhite gelo samudra o-pāre**

**susajjita parikramā dibā abasāne
uttarilā śrī gomatī-dvārakā bhavane** (44)

The pure-hearted devotees sang, “*śrī kṛṣṇa caitanya āra prabhu nityānanda, śrī advaita gadādhara śrīvāsādi gaura-bhakta-vṛnda*,” so very sweetly. Singing thus, we crossed back to the mainland. The exquisitely adorned *parikramā* party reached the palace of Śrī Gomatī-Dvārakā by the end of the day.

**gomatī-dvārakā-nātha ki-rūpa lāvaṇya
darśana korile haya nija janma dhanya
kibā aparūpa rūpa, kibā se mūr̥ati
sākṣāt vaikuṇṭha-nātha śrī kamalā-pati**

**gomatī-dvārakā-nāther caraṇe prārthanā
koriche patitādhama bahirmukha-janā** (45)

Such is the beauty of the Lord of Gomatī-Dvārakā that one feels blessed to have been born. What a magnificent appearance and how splendid a form! He is the Lord of Vaikuṇṭha Himself, the husband of Kamalā (Lakṣmī). I, a fallen, wretched lady who is averse to performing *bhajana*, offered my prayers there at the feet of Gomatī-Dvārakānātha.

**janma hau jathā-tathā kona duḥkha nāi
tomāra dāsera ghare kīṭa-janma pāi**

**ei adhame kṛpā karo śrī-dvārakeśvara
kukkura hoite pāri tava bhakta-dvāra**

**viṣṇu-bhakta-pada-raja, pada-dhauta jala
bhukta abaśeṣa mora hauka sambala**

**sādhū-guru-vaiṣṇavete nā āche bhakati
aparādha nāśibāra nāhiko śakati**

**ahaitukī dayā jadi satya vastu haya
adhame o-dayā karo ohe dayāmaya**

*śrī-guru-vaiṣṇava-pade ei bhikṣā māgi
prati-janme karo more pada-reṇu-bhāgī
guru-dāsa-gaṇa-pade sakātara bhikṣā
aparādha kṣama sabe nā karo upekṣā
adoṣa-daraśī mora prabhu-bhakta-gaṇa
doṣa kṣami' mo-adhame hao parasanna* (46)

Wherever I am to be born next, I will not be perturbed in the slightest, even if it is as an insect, as long it is in the house of your devotee. Kindly have mercy on this wretch, O Lord of Dvārakā. Let me be a dog on your devotee's doorstep. May the dust from the feet of Viṣṇu's devotees, the water that has washed their

feet, and their remnants give me strength. I have no devotion for saintly personalities or for *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas, and I have no power to eradicate my tendency to commit offenses. If there truly is such a thing as causeless mercy, then please bestow it upon this wretch, O merciful one. I beg these gifts at the feet of *śrī guru* and Vaiṣṇavas. Kindly allow me to partake of the dust from Your feet in every birth that I take. I fervently beg at the feet of the servants of *śrī guru* to forgive all of my offences and to not neglect me. The devotees are my masters and they do not see fault in others. Please forgive the flaws of this wretch and be pleased with me.

PART FOUR: AYODHYĀ, NAIMIṢĀRAṆYA AND OTHER PLACES

*śrī keśava svāmī kṛpā koriyā apāra
more dhanya kori' kaile sat-vyavahāra
saba tīrtha tītharāja kṛpāya tomāra
dekhilāma, śunilāna mātmya apāra
tomāra caraṇe mora ei to minati
duramati dūra kori' deho bindu bhakti* (47)

O Śrī Keśava Svāmī, out of your unparalleled mercy, you have blessed me by engaging me in such pious activities. By your mercy, I have beheld so many holy places, including the king of all holy places, and heard their matchless glories. My prayer at your feet is that you dispel my wicked mentality and grant me a drop of devotion.

*śaṣṭha-varṣe ṣaḍ-bhuja mahāprabhu smari'
vijaya kailo keśava ayodhyā-nagarī
guru-gaurāṅgera kori apūrvā sājana
mahārāja-dvaya hailā śibikā-bāhana
sarva-bhakta-gaṇa saṅge parama haraṣe
ayodhyā bhramaṇa kailo aśeṣa-viśeṣe* (48)

The sixth year we went on pilgrimage, Śrī Keśava Mahārāja was meditating on Mahāprabhu's six-armed form, and so we travelled to the city of Ayodhyā. *Śrī guru* and Gaurāṅga were decorated like never before. Two Mahārājas were designated to carry the palanquin. Touring Ayodhyā with all of the devotees and with such great delight was so infinitely special.

*lakṣmaṇa-killāya ati suramya mandira
sītā, rāma, bhrātṛ-gaṇa āra mahāvīra
se mandire tā'sabāra mahā-sevā haya
sītā-rāma-dhvani binā āra nāhi kaya* (49)

There is a gorgeous temple atop Lakṣmaṇa Hill where Sītā and Rāma preside, along with Rāma's brothers and the great, valiant Hanumān. In that temple, they are rendered grand service, and no one there says anything besides "Sītā-Rāma".

*mandirera madhye eka kakṣa suśobhaya
śrī-guru-gaurāṅga tāhā korilo vijaya*

**abirāma śrī guru-gaurāṅga jaya jaya
śuniyā ayodhyā-vāsī kṛtārtha mānaya** (50)

The deities of *śrī guru* and *Gaurāṅga* were brought to a beautiful chamber in that temple and situated there. The residents of *Ayodhyā* considered themselves blessed to hear the incessant proclamations of victory to *śrī guru* and *Gaurāṅga*.

**maṅgala-ārati, guru-vaiṣṇava-vandana
bhakta-goṣṭhi saha uṣaḥ ati sukīrtana
caitanya carita haya parāmṛta-khani
śrī keśava mahārāja vākhāne āpani
śrī sanātana-sikṣā siddhāntera sāra
gurvānugatyete tāhā koriche pracāra
dāmodara-vrata boli' 'dāmodaraṣṭaka'
bhakti-bhare gāhiteṇa śuddha-bhakta saba
e-rūpe niyama-sevā supālana kori'
parikramā korilena ayodhyā-nagarī** (51)

The devotees would gather for *maṅgala-ārati* followed by prayers to *guru* and *Vaiṣṇavas*, performing beautiful *kīrtana* at the break of dawn. *Śrī Keśava Mahārāja* himself gave the classes on *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, the pastimes of Lord *Caitanya*, which are vibrations of sheer nectar. The instructions given to *Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī* are considered the essence of all philosophical conclusions. You [*Śrī Keśava Mahārāja*] preached those teachings as per the guidance of your *guru*. Since it was *Dāmodara-vrata*, all the pure-hearted devotees were singing *Dāmodaraṣṭakam* with great devotion. Thus the devotees observed their *niyama-sevā* vows and performed pilgrimage of the town of *Ayodhyā*.

**gaura-bhakta-gaṇa guru-gaurāṅgera jaya
śrī vaiṣṇava-gaṇa sītā rāma rāma gāya**

**jaya sītā-rāma jaya, jaya sītā-rāma
śrī-rāma madhura dhvani haito abirāma**

**dhanya se' ayodhyā-dhāma śrī-rāma-rājatva
ki bujhibe e-pāṣaṇḍī tāhāra mahattva**

**mahā-yogapīṭha śrī śrī rāma-jaṇma sthāna
parikramā kori' kailo sahasra praṇāma** (52)

The devotees of *śrī guru* were praising *guru* and *Gaurāṅga*, and the other *Vaiṣṇavas* were singing “*Sītā-Rāma, Sītā-Rāma*”. “All glories to *Sītā-Rāma*” they would chant, again and again. The beautiful sound of “*Śrī Rāma*” was incessant. Blessed is the abode of *Ayodhyā*, the kingdom of *Śrī Rāma*. What can a heretic like me understand of its glories? *Śrī Rāma*’s birthplace is a *mahā-yoga-pīṭha*. The devotees circumambulated the site and offered thousands of prostrations there.

**kapipati hanūmān-jīra śrī mandira
pradakṣiṇa daraśane ha'lo mahā-bhīḍa**

**kanaka-bhavana ityādika bahu purī
daśaratha, kauśalyā, kaikeyī, sumitrā sundarī**

**rāma-rājasabhā daśaratha-rājasabhā
ati āścarya dr̥śya avarṇanīya śobhā**

**śrī rāma-mandira āche bahu sthāne sthāna
agaṇita sevā tāhā nāhi parimāṇa**

**darśana bhramaṇa jei rāmacandra-purī
parikramā korilena ayodhyā-nagarī** (53)

There was a huge crowd circumambulating the temple of the monkey king *Hanumānji* and trying to have *darśana*. Next were a golden palace and many other palaces belonging to *Daśaratha*, *Kauśalyā*, *Kaikeyī* and pretty *Sumitrā*. *Rāma* and *Daśaratha*’s royal courtrooms were stunning sights of indescribable splendour. Everywhere, there were countless temples dedicated to *Śrī Rāma*. There is no quantifying the amount of

service being rendered in all of those places. Thus we toured the city of Ayodhyā on pilgrimage, taking *darśana* of Rāmacandra's city.

***sarayūra saba ghāṭa darśana sparśana
rāma-ghāṭa daśaratha-ghāṭa agaṇana
pratyaha emoto kori nagara-bhramaṇa
sandhyārati-kāle haito apūrva kīrtana
śrī-guru-vandana, mahājana-padāvali
sukīrtana koritena bhakta-goṣṭhī mili*** (54)

We saw and touched the *ghāṭas* along the river Sarayū, like Rāma-ghāṭa, Daśaratha-ghāṭa and countless others. Every day we toured the city, and then in the evenings, there were incomparable *kīrtanas* for the *ārati* offered at dusk. The devotees assembled to perform beautiful *kīrtana*, offering prayers to *śrī guru* and singing poems written by great personalities of the past.

***bhakta-bhāgavata-mukhe grantha-bhāgavata
kṛṣṇa-bhakti labhibāra eka-mātra patha
atīva madhura haya grantha-bhāgavata
(prabhu) narottamānanda-mukhe śuni abirata
bhakti-tattva kato rūpe kareṇa vyākhyāna
śravaṇe niṣṭreyāḥ lābha kare bhāgyavān
'mahopadeśaka'-khyāti vyākhyāne paṇḍita
sakala lokera mana haya camatkṛta
asīma karuṇāśīla keśavera gaṇa
nata-śīre vandi bhāi tāhāra caraṇa
bhagavat dhāme śuddha bhāgavata-kathana
tāhāra prasāde sabe korito śravaṇa*** (55)

Hearing the *grantha-bhāgavata* from the mouths of the *bhakta-bhāgavata* is the only means to obtain devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The book *Bhāgavata* is incredibly sweet, and we listened continually to its recital from the mouth of Śrī

Narottamānanda Prabhu [later known as Śrīmad Bhakti Kamala Madhusūdana Mahārāja]. It describes the principles of *bhakti* in so many different ways, and the fortunate attain salvation by listening to it. Renowned as “Mahopadeśaka”, Śrī Narottamānanda Prabhu was a very learned person and so adept at explaining the *Bhāgavata*'s subtleties that everyone was left astounded. Śrī Keśava Mahārāja's followers are very compassionate. I bow my head at their feet. By their mercy, everyone was able to listen to pure discussions about Bhagavān while in Bhagavān's holy abode.

***ayodhyā-vāsike rādhā-govindera tattva
sītā-rāma-sevā ha'te adhika mahattva
ujjala madhura vraje pāraṅgiya vasa
rasarāja-mūrti kṛṣṇa se-rasera baśa
kānta-bhāve vrajāṅganā kailo upāsana
āno avatāre nāhi tāhāra tulana
avatārī nandātmaja, avatāra nahe
'īśvara parama kṛṣṇa'—sarva śāstre kahe
vraja nikuṅje śrī śrī rādhā-govinda
rāsādika līlā kailo niyā gopī-vṛnda
ityādika rasotkarṣa rāmacandre nāi
sītā-rāma-bhakta-gaṇa jānilo sabāi*** (56)

They revealed to the residents of Ayodhyā the *tattva* of Rādhā-Govinda and how service to Them is more glorious than service to Sītā-Rāma. The effulgent, sweet *parakīyā-rasa* (the love of paramours) reigns in Vraja, and the personified king of love, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is controlled by that love. The *gopīs* of Vraja worshipped Kṛṣṇa as their lover, and there is nothing in any of Kṛṣṇa's other incarnations that can compare with this interaction. The son of Nanda Mahārāja is not an *avatāra* but the source of all other *avatāras*. All

scriptures declare that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord. Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda engage in the *rāsa* dance and other pastimes with the cowherd girls in the secret groves of Vraja. The devotees of Sītā-Rāma came to know that such excellence of *rasa* does not exist in Śrī Rāmacandra's pastimes.

***rāma-bhakta-gaṇe keśava koriyā dhanya
subha-jātrā korilena śrī naimiṣāraṇya***

***guru-gaurāṅgera kori' kamanīya sāja
śibikā skandhete kailo dui mahārāja***

***bhakta goṣṭhī praveśilo naimiṣa-kṣetrete
śrī-guru-gaurāṅga jaya gāhite gāhite (57)***

Śrī Keśavaḥ blessed the devotees of Rāma thus and proceeded to embark on an auspicious pilgrimage of Śrī Naimiṣāraṇya. The deities of *śrī guru* and Śrī Gaurāṅga were decorated in a most appealing manner and two Mahārājas carried the palanquin on their shoulders. The party of devotees then entered the site of Naimiṣa-kṣetra, singing the praises of Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga all the while.

***paramahamṣa maṭha-prānte praveśilo dhīre
anirvacanīya śobhā ke varṇite pāre***

***kibā se-madhura nṛtya madhura kīrtana
bahu-bāra śrī mandira kailo parikrama***

***maṭhera sevaka, parikramā-kāri-gaṇe
miliyā apūrva hailo kīrtana-nartane***

***simha-nāde bhakta-gaṇa gāy kṛṣṇa-caitanya
nityānanda prabhu mora atīva vadānya***

***śrī guru-gaurāṅga āra śrī rādhā-mādhava
daṇḍavat praṇati korilo bhakta saba (58)***

Slowly we entered the perimeter of the Paramahamṣa Maṭha, its beauty inexplicable. Who can even try to describe it? The dancing that day was so charming and the *kīrtana* so sweet. We

circumambulated the temple shrine so many times. The resident temple *sevakas* and the devotees on pilgrimage came together for an unprecedented dancing *kīrtana*. Like roaring lions, the devotees cried out “Kṛṣṇa-Caitanya and Nityānanda Prabhu are so incredibly merciful!” Thereafter, the devotees all offered their prostrated obeisances to Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava.

***viśva-guru sarasvatī śrīla prabhupāda
guru-gaura-saha śrī rādhā śrī kṛṣṇacāda***

***paramahamṣa-maṭha ethā korilo sthāpana
ṣāṭa-hājār ṛṣi jathā korito bhajana***

***śrī caitanya-vāṇī tathā hau paracāra
śrī gaurāṅga-kṛpā-lābha karuka saṁsāra***

***atīva nirjana sthāna śrī naimiṣāraṇya
sādhu viṣṇu-bhakta binā nāhi dekhi anya (59)***

In order to preach the message of Śrī Caitanya so that the whole of material existence may obtain His mercy, Sarasvatī Thākura Śrīla Prabhupāda, who is *guru* to the whole of existence, established Śrī Rādhā and the moonlike Śrī Kṛṣṇa, along with *guru* and Gaurāṅga, there in the Paramahamṣa Maṭha. That area is where 60,000 sages once performed their spiritual practices. Śrī Naimiṣāraṇya is a very remote place, where hardly anyone besides saints and Vaiṣṇavas are seen.

***śrī gomatī-gaṅgā tathā patita-pāvanī
ati sannikāṭe āche viṣṇu-tīrtha-khāni***

***atyanta pavitra kṣetra cakra-tīrtha haya
caturdike bahu deva-devīra ālaya***

***śrī sūta-gosāi śrīmad bhāgavata paḍāno
karṇa-dvārā āra saba ṛṣi kailo pāno***

***vyāsagādī, sūtagādī bahu niketana
brahma-kunḍa ādi kato āche agaṇana (60)***

The Gomatī Gaṅgā flowing there is a saviour of the fallen. Nearby is a site sacred to Lord Viṣṇu. The *cakra-tīrtha* there is a very sanctified holy site and is surrounded on all four sides by the temples of various demigods and goddesses. Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī taught the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* there, while all the sages present drank his recitation through their ears. There, one can see the shrine dedicated to Vyāsa and another to Sūta, as well as Brahma-kunḍa and countless other sacred spots.

***bhakta-gaṇa eka-dina śrī naimiṣa haite
parikramā kailo saba miśrīka-tīrthete
dadhīci munira jethā bhajana-āgāra
atīva sundara tathā bindu-sarovara
sītā-kunḍa subṛhat kunḍa manohara
tan nikaṭe lava-kuśa-vālmiki muni-vara
bahu bahu āche tāhā darśanera sthāna
adūrete vālmiki-muni-tapovana
miśrīka hoite punaḥ belā dvi-prahare
punar-āgamana kailā śrī naimiṣa-pure*** (61)

One of the days we were there, all the devotees went on a small pilgrimage from Naimiṣāranya to Miśrīka Tīrtha, where Dadhīci Muni performed his spiritual practice. The reservoir there, called Bindu-sarovara, is especially beautiful. In the same area is the vast Sītā-kunḍa, another very enchanting place. Nearby is the place where Vālmiki, the foremost of sages, lived with Lava and Kuśa. There were many, many places to see in the area. Not too far away was the forest where Vālmiki underwent austerities. It was late in the afternoon by the time we returned to the town of Naimiṣa from Miśrīka.

***saba bhakte śrī naimiṣāranya-parikramā
karājñā jānā'le naimiṣa-mahimār sīmā***

***jaya jaya jaya kṣetra śrī naimiṣāranya
smaraṇa korile jīva ha'be ati dhanya*** (62)

Śrī Keśava Svāmī brought all the devotees on pilgrimage of Śrī Naimiṣāranya and acquainted them with the full extent of its glories. All glories, all glories, all glories to the sacred site of Śrī Naimiṣāranya. Souls will find that they are blessed simply by remembering that place.

***naimiṣe bosiyā kārtik-paurṇamāsī dine
ūrjā samāpana kailo saba bhakta-gaṇe
jaya bhakti-maya kṣetra śrī naimiṣāranya
kṣetra-vāsī jīva-jantu saba mahā-dhanya
heno dhāma dekhāile śrī keśava svāmī
kāya-mano-vākye tā're nata-śire nami
e-adhame sabe mile karo kṛpā-kaṇa
tabe to' sārthaka haya jīvana-dhāraṇa*** (63)

The devotees all completed their *ūrjā-vrata* on the full moon day of Kārtika, while still in Naimiṣāranya. All glories to the site of Śrī Naimiṣāranya, which is permeated with devotion. All the souls dwelling there are greatly blessed. I offer my respects to Śrī Keśava Svāmī by body, mind and words, and I bow my head to him for showing us such a holy abode. Let all of those great personalities show me a fraction of their mercy so that my life may prove to be worth living.

***gurudeva śrī bhaktisiddhānta sarasvatī
prabhupāda-padme jeno bindu rahe rati
tāhāra caraṇa-padma bhavārṇabe tarī
kona gaty-antara nāi tini-i kāṇḍārī
jaya jaya jaya śrī śrī guru-pādapadma
makaranda pānakārī jaya bhakta-vṛnda
guru-dāsa-gaṇa-pade e' minati kori
more kṛpā kori' deho guru-gaurahari*** (64)

I pray that I may preserve even just a drop of attachment to the lotus feet of Gurudeva Śrī Siddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda. His lotus feet will ferry me across this ocean of nescience. I have no other refuge. He alone is captain. All glories, all glories, all glories to Śrī Śrī Guru-pādapadma! All glories to the devotees who are like bumblebees drinking nectar! I offer this prayer at the feet of the servants of *śrī guru*: Have mercy on me and grant me [the service of] *guru* and Gaurahari.

*dvitīya varṣe śrī kṣetra-parikramā haya
tāhāra varṇane kichu avaśiṣṭa raya*

*kato sthāna, kato kathā, kato je darśana
nā varṇite pāri tāhā koriyā smaraṇa*

*vārdhakyā vaśataḥ mora saba vismaraṇa
ekhona kahiye kichu tāra vivaraṇa*

*kṣamā-śīla dayā-śīla prajñāna keśava
aparādha-puñja mora dūra karo saba* (65)

Something still remains to be said regarding our second year of pilgrimage, when we went to Śrī Kṣetra. There were so many places, so many histories, and so many deities to see that I cannot remember and describe them all. As I get older, I am forgetting everything, so here I add a few more descriptions of that pilgrimage. O Prajñāna Keśava, you are forgiving and merciful. Please eradicate all the accumulated offences I have made.

*mahāprabhu patita-pāvana śrī caitanya
kṣetra-vāsī-jana-gaṇe karechile dhanya
tā'sabāra aikāntika gaurāṅge bhakati
gaura-dhana, gaura-prāṇa, gaura-mātra gati
ei-deśe rāgātmikā bhakti sabākara
dekhīyā lāgaye mane ati camatkāra* (66)

Mahāprabhu Śrī Caitanya, the saviour of the fallen, blessed the residents of Śrī Kṣetra (Jagannātha Purī). All the people there possess exclusive devotion for Śrī Gaurāṅga. Śrī Gaura is their wealth, their life, their only goal. I was greatly surprised to see that everyone in that land possessed *rāgātmikā-bhakti*, or spontaneous devotion.

*cilkā hrada kālī-hrada jeno su-bhramaṇe
ki apūrva śobhā tāhā sadā paḍe mane*

*dui bajrā ekatra koriyā yojana
madhya-sthale śrī-guru-gaurāṅga simhāsana*

*sthāpana koriyā saba bhakta mahājana
kibā nṛtya bādyā kailā hari saṅkīrtana* (67)

Chilika Lake, like Kālī Hrada [in Vṛndāvana], is a beautiful spot to travel to. I constantly remember how incomparably beautiful it was there. The devotees put two barges together and situated the deities of Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga on a throne in the middle. All the exalted devotees then performed *saṅkīrtana*, dancing and playing instruments ecstatically.

*lavaṇākta garalākta hradera salilo
mahāprabhu-pāda-sparśe hoilo nirmala*

*rātra-dibā madhye pāro hoiyā sabāi
śailo-mārga nṛtya-gīta jhārikhaṇḍa jāi*

*mahā-bhakti-maya sthāna pārvatya-pradeśa
sevāmaya deśa-vāsī guṇete viśeṣa* (68)

That noxious salt water was purified by the touch of Mahāprabhu's feet. Within a day and a night, the party crossed the lake. Then, singing devotional songs and dancing, we travelled a passage through the hills to Jharkhand. That mountainous region is a land characterized by great devotion, and the locals are remarkably hospitable.

*raṇapure jagannātha, gaurāṅga-caraṇa
śaraṇa-kule śrī-bābā koriyā darśana
oḍagāye raghunātha apūrva mandira
nayāgaḍe rāja-sevā annakūṭe bhīḍa
tathā ha'te khaṇḍapādā śrī caitanya maṭha
darśiyā dhorilo sabe kaṇṭhila patha (69)*

In Raṇapura, we saw the feet of Śrī Jagannātha and Śrī Gaurāṅga. In Śaraṇa-kula, we saw Śrī Laḍḍu-Bābā. In the village of Odagaon is a wondrous temple of Raghunāthaji. An enormous crowd had gathered to see the *annakūṭa* offering at the royal palace in Nayā-gaḍa. From there we visited the Śrī Caitanya Maṭha in Khandapara and then started on the road to Kaṇṭhilo.

*kothāo dekhinu nāma śrī-kaṇṭhilo haya
śrī nila-mādhava-mūrti tathā virājaya
kibā rūpa-lābaṇyera koriyā nichani
vidhātā gaḍilo tāra śrī mūrati khāni
kibā apūrva śobhā caraṇa du'khāni
uchali uchali dhauta kare suradhunī (70)*

Somewhere I have seen that the place where the deity of Śrī Nila-mādhava is situated is called “Śrī Kaṇṭhilo”. How much beauty must the Creator have summoned to fashion a form so beautiful? How stunning are His two lotus feet being washed by the splashing of the celestial river flowing close by.

*śrī nila-mādhava-pādoddeśe paraṇāma
krpā-drṣṭi-dāne mora pūrṇa karo kāma
heno śrī mādhava dekhilāma je krpāya
kāya-mano-vākye āmi vandi' tāra pā'ya
śrī nila-mādhava-pade kori e' prārthana
sāra mora hau guru-vaiṣṇava-caraṇa*



*anukṣaṇa mānasete ei cintā kori
āra ki darśibo nila-mādhava śrī hari (71)*

I offer my obeisances unto Śrī Nila-mādhava. May He cast a merciful glance upon me and fulfil my heart's desires. I submit my body, mind and words in obeisance at the feet of he whose mercy allowed me to behold that Śrī Mādhava. I pray at the feet of Śrī Nila-mādhava that the feet of *guru* and *Vaiṣṇavas* be the essence of my life. I forever hold this one thought in my mind: Will I behold that Nila-mādhava Śrī Hari once again?

*mahānadī-vakṣe naukā tin-dina bhāsaya
kibā kamanīya śobhā bhāvātīta haya*

***tīre thāki' sarva-loka kare daraśana
kibā aparūpa rūpa bhuvana-mohana***

***aviśrānta guru-gaurāṅgera jaya-dhvani
mahā-nadī sadānande deya prati-dhvani*** (72)

For three days, the boat rode the breast of the Mahānadī. The beauty of that journey surpassed this material existence. All the people dwelling along the banks of that river were able to behold the Lord's enchanting form, and the Mahānadī echoed the resounding glories of *guru* and Gaurāṅga in perpetual ecstasy.

***ei-rūpa bahu-sthāne kori daraśana
nīlādri āsiyā ūrjā kailo samāpana***

***kṛpā kori mo-adhame śrī caraṇa-saṅga
diyāchile bo'le cinti e-saba prasāṅga*** (73)

In this way, we saw many places, and coming to Nīlādri (Jagannātha Purī), we completed our *ūrjā-vrata*. It is only because Śrī Keśava Svāmī mercifully gave me the company of his feet that I am even able to contemplate these topics.

PILGRIMAGE TO SETUBANDHA RĀMEŚVARAM



***śuniyā praphulla haya hṛdaya āmāra
rāmeśvara parikramā ha'be ei-bāra
pathe āche bahu tīrtha nāhiko gaṇana
sarvatra pracāra-hetu ha'be paryatana
bhāratera madhye jato darśanīya sthāna
tulanā nāhiko kabhu ihāra samāna***

***emona sujoga jei chāḍibeka bhāi
kapāla tāhāra manda jānīlāma tāi*** (74)

My heart is delighted to hear that we will be going on pilgrimage to Rāmeśvaram this time. There

are countless holy places on the way, and our purpose in touring will be to preach the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Of all the places to see in India, there is nowhere like Rāmeśvaram. O brother, I know a person would have to be dull in the head to forego such an opportunity. 🙏

Part One – *Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā*, Year 2 Issue 3;
Part Two – *Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā*, Year 2 Issue 4;
Part Three – *Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā*, Year 2 Issue 5
(except last three verses, which are from Issue 6);
Part Four – *Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā*, Year 2 Issue 6

Part Four

Words of Tribute from Disciples of
Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja



The Transcendental Character of Śrī Guru-pādapadma

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja

When *paramārādhya*tama Śrīla Keśava Gosvāmīpāda was commenting on “*vairāgya-yukta bhakti-rasa – bhakti-rasa* imbued with renunciation” [from Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī’s *Vilāpa-kusmañjali*, Text 6], he explained that another name for renunciation (*vairāgya*) is “*kṛṣṇendriya prīti-vāñchā-maya vipralambha* – the intense feeling of separation from Kṛṣṇa that consists of the desire to please His senses”. *Vairāgya* that trivializes *brahma-jñāna* (knowledge of the impersonal aspect of Bhagavān) and inspires contempt, fear and disregard for *sāyujya-mukti* and other forms of liberation, is enlightened renunciation, since it consists solely of the desire to give happiness to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. For spiritual practitioners, *vairāgya* means the renunciation of all enjoyment for the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa, but for liberated personalities, *vairāgya* means devotion to Kṛṣṇa’s service. Śrīla [Raghunātha] Dāsa Gosvāmī has pointed out that *vairāgya-yukta bhakti-rasa*, or renunciation in devotion, entails abstention from [mundane] action that is characterized by detachment, knowledge and devotional engagement. The Māyāvāda conception of renunciation, which excludes the existence of transcendental delights, can never be called actual *vairāgya*.

When used to describe a specific quality of Bhagavān, who is endowed with the six opulences of divinity, the word *vairāgya* refers to His natural position, as He is Māyādhīśa (the Lord of



the illusory energy). *Bhakti* can never be attained by artificially practising renunciation while performing solitary meditation (*nirjana-bhajana*), nor is the renunciation of those souls who hanker for liberation ever a cause of the attainment of pure devotion.

Those who are not well-versed in spiritual truth think that *vairāgya* means gross renunciation, but we find in the *śāstras* that *vairāgya* is actually the most exalted state of longing for Kṛṣṇa’s loving pastimes. The renunciation of *prākṛta-sahajiyās*



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(those who superimpose mundane sentiment on to transcendental matters) and those who abstain from material pleasure is a fickle and deceitful means of satisfying their underlying desires. Only through the eyes of *bhakti* can one see or realize the eternally perfect renunciation of the eternally perfect *mahātmās*, the focus of which is Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s happiness.

Detachment and omniscience are naturally evident in the lives of exalted personalities. They know who is simply engrossed in satiating the senses in the name of serving Hari, and as omniscient witnesses, they give sincere practitioners the chance to escape the clutches of such hypocrisy. And when they see people who are inclined to be of service, they offer them encouragement, thereby showing what it means to care for and protect those who truly wish to serve.

“*Keśarīva sva-potānām, anyeṣām ugra-vikramah* – the lioness nurtures her offspring tenderly, but is ferocious to her enemy.” [This verse was composed by Śrīdhara Svāmī in his commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (7.9.1).] Similarly, to the atheists and hypocrites, Śrīla Guru-pādapadma was the punisher, like death personified, but he was full of loving, parental

affection for his disciples and those who had taken shelter of him. He would rectify their hundreds of faults and mistakes, and give them the chance to serve and remain engaged in *hari-bhajana*. He would provide anyone who came to his *maṭha* or missions for *hari-bhajana* – even if they were aged, ill or devoid of any worldly qualifications – with shelter and the opportunity to perform *hari-bhajana*. This demonstrates beyond doubt his brilliant example of complete surrender to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, his mercy and magnanimity, his compassionate nature, his tendency to help all and his sorrow upon seeing the suffering of others.

Politicians say, “*satyaṁ bruyāt priyaṁ bruyāt, mā bruyāt satyaṁ apriyaṁ* – speak the truth and speak it in a pleasing manner; do not utter unpalatable truth.” Guru-pādapadma, however, would loudly insist wherever he went that the right thing to do is to speak the truth no matter how unpleasant. If we do not speak the truth, then the many secrets of scripture will not be revealed and broadcast in this world. *Sādhū*, *guru* and *Vaiṣṇavas* want the real welfare of the people of the world, and even if their piercing words are not initially pleasing, they are nonetheless the cause of complete auspiciousness.

In this connection, venerable Śrīla Gurudeva has written, “Nowadays we see the publication of many religious magazines that are gradually deviating from the rules and regulations established and propagated by *ācārya-kesarī jagad-guru* Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda and that are headed down a different path. The main cause for this is a desire for worldly gain, name and fame. We should always remember the teaching of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*: ‘Dharma cannot be protected unless

one is unbiased and detached.’ If maintaining complete impartiality entails facing even the gravest adversities, one should embrace them to set an example for the rest of the world.”

The cutting words and criticisms uttered by saintly persons, *guru* and *Vaiṣṇavas* bring about one’s good fortune and remove the difficulties and obstacles related to *bhajana*. Their unbiased ethics, disciplinary assertions, and treatment of the blunt, bitter truth are like healing *mantras* that result in one’s obtaining a taste for chanting *śrī nāma*.



Śrīla Guru Mahārāja displayed unparalleled love and sympathy for his godbrothers. Many godbrothers came to visit him, and just from the way they addressed him affectionately, either as “Vinoda dā” or “Keśava Mahārāja”, he could tell what their situation was and would help them as best he could, either financially or otherwise. Meanwhile, he personally never expected any financial assistance. He thus generously and selflessly gave thousands of rupees to help others. We can confidently say that he had great love for his godbrothers (*satīrtha-vātsalya*).

All sorts of people would come to see him: scholars, those who prided themselves as being devotees, the ignorant, the clever, children, youths and the elderly. But when they saw his gentle, calm appearance, heard his grave and authoritative voice, and beheld his slight smile and beautiful face, they would all forget their various motives and demands. Even when refuting impersonalist logicians, he never humiliated them but always preserved their dignity. Many people, influenced by ulterior motives, sought his advice on various matters, but they could not take to heart the true

power of such a saintly personality, who was so exclusively devoted to Kṛṣṇa. How can ordinary people grasp the transcendental behaviour of eternally perfected, great souls? Generally, people do not and cannot understand when a great soul is bestowing mercy and when he is deluding them. His view was, “No one in this world is an object of my attachment or indifference. All are instrumental in serving *guru* and Kṛṣṇa.” This is the transcendent perspective of a *mahā-bhāgavata*.



As mentioned previously, Śrīla Guru Mahārāja’s novelty and speciality were evident in the execution of his every act. On either side of Narahari Torāṇa, the main gate of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samitī’s main preaching centre, Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha in Navadvīpa, he placed sculptures he had had fashioned of a lion subduing a rogue elephant, which symbolizes [the destruction of] atheism (*pāṣaṇḍa-gajaika-simha*), thus praising Śrī Caitanya-candra, the enemy of Mura, in the tradition of Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura.



Śrīla Gurudeva’s close godbrother, Śrīla Bhakti Sāraṅga Gosvāmī Mahārāja, awarded him with that same title (“*Pāṣaṇḍa-gajaika-simha*”) and would address him as such. It was as if he were always ready, sword in hand, to defeat Māyāvādīs and other opponents of *śuddha-bhakti*. Regarding such entities as his eternal enemies, he made an unshakeable vow to uproot Śrī Śaṅkara’s

Advaitavāda, or Māyāvāda, from this world. He clearly expressed this determination in his letters, essays, articles, commentaries, explanations, statements and lectures. The revered Śrīla Bhakti Sāraṅga Gosvāmī Mahārāja would say to Śrīla Guru-pādapadma, “When I see you, I am reminded of Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda. Anyone whose *darśana* makes the memory of Śrīla Gurudeva appear in the mind is *guru-svarūpa*, the embodiment of *guru*, and the greatest of all *mahā-bhāgavatas*.”



“He regarded protection of the *sampradāya*, or disciplic succession, to be the topmost service to Śrīman Mahāprabhu, and only after careful contemplation did he take up his formidable pen.”

It is said that all of Kṛṣṇa’s qualities appear in His devotees. Śrīla Ācāryadeva had not passed exams in law or engineering, but he would give legal advice to lawyers and barristers, and he would also advise engineers. Many expert engineers were amazed to learn that the *tilaka*-marked, sky-high temple of

the main *maṭha* was constructed according to Śrīla Guru Mahārāja’s instructions and design. *Jagad-guru* Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura had said, “Protecting service to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is essential to protecting our sacred lineage.”

By “service to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī” he was referring to protecting *maṭhas* and temples from the clutches of sense enjoyers and wicked persons by means of litigation in courts of law. Śrīla Guru-pādapadma followed the instructions of his most worshipable Śrīla Prabhupāda and accepted the responsibility of protecting the mission by legal means. Even Prabhupāda was amazed by his astonishing talent and power of

memory. Once, during an argument with some lawyers, Śrīla Guru Mahārāja's godbrother, Śrīla Mādhava Mahārāja, asked him, "When did you study law so well that you can fight with lawyers and persuade them to accept your point of view?"



His literary contributions and novel ways of explaining philosophical truths are unparalleled. The ingenuity of his writing is forever solidified by the fact that he could maintain the innate mood and current of the key philosophical truths he addressed, without succumbing to cliché.

He regarded protection of the *sampradāya*, or disciplic succession, to be the topmost service to Śrīman Mahāprabhu, and only after careful contemplation did he take up his formidable pen. His main goal was to establish *tattva-siddhānta*, or conclusive philosophic truths, and he did so directly and indirectly through the medium of debate, exhibiting stunning, otherworldly creativity. His songs, such as *Śrīla Prabhupāda-ārātī*, *Śrī Tulasī-ārātī* and *Maṅgala-ārātī*, highlight his innovative genius. In the wake of the divine poet Śrī Jayadeva and his *Gīta-govinda* poem, Śrīla Guru Mahārāja, in his *Maṅgala-ārātī* song, hints at the unparalleled, sweet and intimate transcendental pastimes of the eternally youthful Divine Couple of Vraja.

Sometimes guests would arrive unexpectedly when Śrīla Guru-pādapadma was dictating an article for *Śrī Patrikā*, but even after conversing with them at length about various topics, he would not lose track of the main subject of the article nor experience any loss of interest in the task. Surely, this too was one of his supramundane specialities.



More than anything, it was Śrīla Ācāryadeva's undivided conviction in his own *śrī guru-pādapadma* that secured him a seat of distinction among his peers and followers. Always offering sound advice to his godbrothers on legal matters and various other concerns, he displayed a generous, liberal disposition. He was renowned in the Sārasvata Gauḍīya community as an expert on ethics and policy and a talented logician, because when complex spiritual questions or obscure logical dilemmas arose, he would offer profound, solid answers that concurred with scriptural precedent.

Śrīla Ācāryadeva set the standard for the faithful observance of holy fasting days like Śrī Janmāṣṭamī, Śrī Ekādaśī, Śrī Gaura-jayantī, Śrī Rāma-navamī, Śrī Nṛsiṃha-caturdaśī, Śrī Advaita-saptamī and Śrī Nityānanda-trayodaśī, careful to avoid fasting on days when two lunar dates overlap. [Such an overlap causes the sacred occasion to start well after sunrise, making it impossible to observe a full vow of fasting from one sunrise to the next during that holy lunar day.] He ensured total, strict observance of the rules and prohibitions of *cāturmāsya*- and *ūrjā-vrata* within his Śrī Vedānta Samiti, adhering to the customs and example practised and preached by Śrīla Sarasvatī Prabhupāda, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura and Śrīman Mahāprabhu. He never encouraged or condoned any sort of negligence in observing Cāturmasya vows or the deceitful adulation of honouring only Ūrjā-vrata.

Once during a discussion on *tattva-siddhānta* with the venerable king of renunciants Śrīla Śrīdhara Gosvāmī Mahārāja, Śrīla Gurudeva displayed his faith in his *guru*, saying, "I have never met the previous Gosvāmīs; I do not know them. I simply accept *jagad-guru* Śrīla Prabhupāda's



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line of thought as the unerring truth, and I will try to know and understand the previous Gosvāmīs through Śrīla Prabhupāda’s eyes. I will give his explanations and commentaries preference before all others. ‘*Ācāryera jei mata, sei mata sāra, anya āra mata jato jāuka chārahāra* – the opinion of the *ācārya* is the most important; any other opinions are to be rejected.’ This is my viewpoint.” His single-pointed faith in Śrīla Prabhupāda is certainly unequalled.



Śrīla Guru-pādapadma, the dear most associate of Śrī Gaurasundara, has written *Māyāvāder Jīvanī bā Vaiṣṇava-vijaya* for the eternal benefit of the conditioned souls. After refuting materialists, deviant *yogīs* and adherents of other faulty doctrines, he showed them the path of real spiritual knowledge and ultimate spiritual benefit. As an ideal *tridaṇḍi-gosvāmī*, he wanted to bestow true auspiciousness even upon antagonistic hypocrites. We find many instances of his fearlessness and steadfastness in protecting the truth. Never once did

he support the doctrine that spirit and matter are non-different. To expose the indulgent tendencies and selfish mentality of the *prākṛta-sahajiyās*, he published and circulated *Sahajiyā-dalana*, which was based on a compilation of articles and notes by Śrīla Prabhupāda and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura, while personally demonstrating the ideal of maintaining an immaculate standard of conduct and a faultless way of life.

In contrast to the trivial efforts of the central government and various missions to introduce social initiatives to alleviate physical and mental distress, Śrīla Ācāryadeva established spiritual hospitals [temples], a Vedānta college, and other such institutions. He was more severe than a thunderbolt in rejecting bad association and more pleasant than a lotus flower in regard to endeavours favourable for the cultivation of *bhakti*. Giving no quarter to the customs of the materialistic *smārta* community, which is mired in ritualistic orthodoxy (*karma-kāṇḍa*) and advocates customs like *aśauca* (when family members of the deceased or recently born are

considered impure) or *mala-māsa* (the prohibition of religious activity during the sacred leap month of Puruṣottama), Śrīla Guru-pādapadma instead preached the purifying power of chanting the holy name and the importance of observing sacred vows during Puruṣottama month, as we see in his article titled “*Śrī Puruṣottama-vrata Pālana*”.



A surrendered soul with no possessions, he spent his life completely dependent on Kṛṣṇa's will. His constant attitude was “May the desire of Bhagavān be fulfilled” and “by the will of Bhagavān, everything is possible”. This awed his disciples. His fondness of pigeons and sparrows, his strict policy of non-violence, and his simple, empathetic interactions with everyone, young or old, drew everyone's attention.

He never compromised his simple, straightforward, and tranquil disposition, even when sharply refuting the various degraded, devious doctrines of *jīva-brahmaika-vādīs*, who consider that the living being is *brahma*; *pāṅcami-sālīs*, a subsect of Lingayat Shaivites; *pañcopāsakīs*, who worship the five deities: Sūrya, Gaṇeśa, Durgā, Śiva and Viṣṇu; *bahu-īśvara-vādīs*, who believe that there are many gods; *śunya-vādīs* (Buddhists and others); *nirviśeṣa-brahmavādīs*, or impersonalist pantheists and others.



He never condoned laziness in the name of performing solitary *bhajana*. On the contrary, he instructed everyone to cultivate *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*

in the association of *sādhus* by body, mind and words. He taught by his own exemplary practice that one attains all perfection and absorption in *kṛṣṇa-prema* only by *śrī harināma*. To his disciples, he demonstrated by his own perfect example that one can conquer hunger, thirst and the destructive tendencies of the five senses by loud *kīrtana*, day and night, of the sixteen-name Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, either by chanting a fixed number of rounds or chanting incessantly.

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He taught that although Śrīla Kavirāja Gosvāmī says, ‘I am lower than a worm in stool,’ while Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura says, ‘I will kick the head of such people [those averse to Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas]’, one should know both statements to have the same purport, conveying true humility that benefits the soul. With this understanding, one should receive initiation into the *dharma* of offering respect to one and all without expecting any

honour in return and chant *kṛṣṇa-nāma*. The exalted and profound sentiments he expressed in regard to his object and method of worship (*upāśya-tattva*) establish him simultaneously as both a *bhajanānandī* (one who delights in *bhajana*) and a *goṣṭhānandī* (one who delights in propagating *bhakti*).

His mercy in acting to liberate *jīvas* from the burden of their *anarthas* was causeless. The doors of his temples and *maṭhas* were always open for the benefit of people trying to perform *hari-bhajana*. His endeavours to serve his Vaiṣṇava peers were without limit, and he was only satisfied once he had served them perfectly. The best introduction to his supramundane character is given in the

books that he wrote to destroy Māyāvāda; in his poems, philosophical articles and so on; and in the profound lectures on spiritual philosophy he delivered at various assemblies.



He took full shelter of Śrīla Sarasvatī Prabhupāda's instructions, was eternally established in the conceptions of Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, and always relished the concepts preached by Śrī Rūpa and Raghunātha. Thus he remained immersed in the pleasure of serving Śrī Śrī Gaura-Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārījī. He would always try to engage his disciples in *hari-kathā* and *hari-kīrtana*, and he instructed them to avoid mundane conversation, or "the urge to speak" mentioned in *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*.

No one could give Śrīla Guru-pādapadma any foodstuffs or clothes, no matter how hard they tried. He never accepted any donations or deeds of properties from his widowed followers, and he would not allow his disciples to accept such charity either. On the other hand, he never hesitated to bestow mercy, even when it was not asked for. To inspire enthusiasm to serve *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas, he sometimes accepted simple offerings. Contemplating the perils of those who were attached to their families, he would always warn his renunciant disciples by describing the *prākṛta-sahajiyās* as *ghara-pāglā*, or "madly attached to their home" and *grhī-bāulā*, "household mendicants". He used to quote the statement from *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya-līlā* 6.278):

*viṣayīra anna khāile malin haya mana
malin mana haile, nahe kṛṣṇera smaraṇa*

If one eats food given by materialists, the mind becomes contaminated, and when the mind is contaminated, one cannot remember Kṛṣṇa.

Following this principle, he strictly forbade any exchange or contact with the *sampradāyas* of those who try to enjoy *guru* and his property (*guru-bhogīs*) and those who renounce *guru* (*guru-tyāgīs*). By his own example, he taught his disciples to practise renunciation of enjoyment for the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa. During *śrī ūrjā-vrata*, *śrī puruṣottama-vrata* and other occasions of observing strict vows, he would instruct his disciples to give up their craving for nice meals and to practise renunciation by sleeping on the ground and eating like a cow [that is, without using one's hands].



In regard to accepting donations, he instructed the devotees going out to collect alms (*bhikṣā*) to properly consider the verse by Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, "*tomāra sevāya, duḥkha haya jato, seo to' parama sukha* – troubles encountered in Your service shall be the cause of great happiness." He told them that they should not seek to live a comfortable life but should tolerate difficulties for the service of Śrī Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas. Some people living in the *maṭha* had sufficient bank balance to maintain themselves for the rest of their lives. He called those so-called disciples hypocrites disguised as Vaiṣṇavas, sense enjoyers devoid of faith in Bhagavān, and atheists.

Śrīla Guru-pādapadma was the ideal *guru* and was expert in *kṛṣṇa-tattva*. He forbade those who presumed they could follow his example to meditate on *aṣṭa-kālīya-līlā* and imagine their spiritual form (*siddha-deha*) while still suffering from *anarthas*, or unwanted tendencies. He would draw everyone's attention to a particular quote of *jagad-guru* Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions:

“*Smaraṇa* will take place by the influence of *kīrtana*, and then it is possible to perform solitary *bhajana*.” He pointed out that the improper imitation of *śrī guru* and Vaiṣṇavas is not service or worship, but rather hypocrisy.

On the main door of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Catuspāthī, the school he founded, he asked his disciples to write the following verse by Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura:

*jaḍa-vidyā jato, māyāra vaibhava,
tomāra bhajane bādhā
moha janamiyā, anitya saṁsāre,
jīvake karaye gādhā*

Knowledge of this material world is knowledge born of Your illusory energy (*māyā*). It creates obstacles in devotional service and makes an ass of the eternal living entity by increasing his infatuation with this temporary world.

In other words, there is no real use in studying scripture, grammar, etc., just to collect money, beautiful women and prestige. “All should know that real honour is found in the cultivation of knowledge that causes love for Kṛṣṇa to manifest in the heart.” And “You must sincerely kick out whatever knowledge causes obstacles to *bhakti*. Sarasvatī, the goddess of learning, is dear to Kṛṣṇa, and *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* resides in her heart. This knowledge, steeped in devotion, is Bhaktivinoda’s wealth.”

What he wished to teach was the purport of these statements.



Śrīla Guru-pādapadma never tolerated those who made a pretence of service or who imitated *bhakti*. Once, one of his *gr̥hasṭha* disciples offered him the deed to a property to establish a *maṭha*, but then tried to make *guru* and the Vaiṣṇavas his servants. Śrīla Gurudeva called for the *maṭha* devotees [who had gone to the *gr̥hasṭha*’s house] to return, and thereafter treated that so-called disciple with indifference.

He was very strict in disciplining his personal servants and expected even so-called professed disciples to abandon duplicity, to honour the senior servants of their *guru* and to cooperate. He condemned the behaviour of those who made a show of begging alms (*madhukarī*) in Vraja-maṇḍala or other holy places to maintain their lives and would remind us that those attached to indulging their tongue and other senses suffered the terrifying consequence of being born in Vraja as monkeys, turtles and other lower species. He would say that until one attains a state of transcendence beyond

the modes of material nature, he cannot develop the capacity to accept alms without being affected by the modes.



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On one occasion, one of Śrīla Guru Mahārāja's godbrothers wrote in his magazine, "Those who dwell outside Māyāpura or far away from it are deprived of service to Śrīla Prabhupāda." Śrīla Ācāryadeva objected to this and announced in a voice as deep as a thunderbolt, "Those who exploit their *guru* and his accomplishments for their own enjoyment or who have abandoned their *guru* or his teachings are millions of miles away from Śrīla Prabhupāda. They have left Māyāpura and have been living in the kingdom of Kali for the past ten to twelve years. Surely, they have not served Śrīla Prabhupāda and Śrī Dhāma. Śrī Guru-pādapadma, who is non-different from Nityānanda Prabhu, always deceives duplicitous people by offering them wealth and other temptations. On the other hand, those servants who are exclusively dedicated to the service of their *guru* and whose lives are surrendered to *guru* remain absorbed in the service of *śrī gurudeva's* innermost desires, no matter where they live."

Śrīla Guru-pādapadma endeavoured from the core of his heart to serve anyone who approached him and who had some relationship with Śrīla

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Prabhupāda, whether they were a renunciant resident of the *matha*, a householder or anyone else. This is the special transcendental quality of a disciple who has offered his *ātmā*, his very self, to Śrī Gurudeva.

Śrī Guru-pādapadma was often seen to be quite particular about organizing even five and ten rupee notes very carefully and beautifully in his moneybag, which may have given someone plenty of reason to think he was too attached to money. When asked about this, he would reply in Śrīla Prabhupāda's words, “*Āsakti-rahita, sambandha-sahita, viṣaya-samūha sakali mādghava* – we should be detached from material things and at the same time see them in relation to Mādghava, as everything is meant for His pleasure.” In other words, divine attachment to the service of Śrīman Mahāprabhu is synonymous with the bliss of *bhagavat-prema*, which seeks to please Kṛṣṇa's senses. Those who try to imitate rather than follow Śrīla Guru-pādapadma's divine character will inevitably be guilty of deviating from the performance of *bhajana*. However, accepting his loving chastisement and the instructions he gives to benefit one's soul will bring auspiciousness. He would say that although *guru's* heart is pained

by the misery of others, it is impossible to help them if they are dishonest.

One day, when a devotee requested him to speak on *rāsa-līlā*, *bhramara-gīta*, etc., he replied, “When the heart has attained a state of pure transcendence (*śuddha-sattva*), having been freed of undesirable tendencies, then as one chants the holy name, the eligibility to hear about *rāsa-līlā* and other similar pastimes appears. Otherwise, the transcendental pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda will seem to be the exploits of a mundane hero and heroine, which will give rise to perverse notions. *Rasa* can only appear in the spiritual body; it is impossible to experience the amorous ecstasy known as *śṛṅgāra-rasa* in a material body. Only a person who has lost interest in gross pleasures and whose consciousness has wakened with divine love (*jāta-rati*) is qualified to discuss *sambhoga-rasa*.”

The mercy and inspiration of Bhagavān are essential in order to understand *śrī guru* and Vaiṣṇavas in truth. Sometimes Vaiṣṇavas give prestige and honour to a person who is averse to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in an effort to stay far away from his bad association. Other times, Vaiṣṇavas conceal their identity and nature, out of fear of associating with worldly persons. While they sometimes make a display of accepting disciples and being surrounded by them, and even receiving advice and service from them, they nevertheless preserve their independence. This is the speciality of their inconceivable, divine character.



Throughout his life, Śrīla Ācārya-pādapadma always sought to protect Śrīla Prabhupāda’s

innermost wishes. He was constantly engaged in establishing *daiva-varṇāśrama-dharma*, maintaining his spiritual practice, preaching the conclusions of *bhakti*, organizing pilgrimages of the holy *dhāma*, setting up printing presses to publish devotional literature, propagating the holy name and other such services.

Some months before Śrīla Paramārādhya-deva entered *aprakṛta-līlā*, he enacted a pastime of accepting medical treatment in the big city of Kolkata, the capital of Kali. At that time, he was staying in a house of a very faithful devotee in Tangra (near Kolkata). People may doubt why he left Śrī Dhāma to stay in the capital of Kali. “*Jathāya vaiṣṇava-gaṇa, sei sthāna vṛndāvana, sei sthāne ānanda aśeṣa – Mahā-bhāgavata śrī gurus* invoke the transcendental realm of Goloka Vṛndāvana, causing it to appear wherever they go, and remain absorbed in the *aṣṭa-kālīya-sevā* of the youthful Divine Couple of Vraja.”

The eternally liberated, topmost *mahāpuruṣa*s relish the sweetness of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda’s transcendental pastimes and the magnanimity of Śrī Gaurasundara, who came to bestow the ultimate goal of life: *kṛṣṇa-prema*. Ordinary people who yearn to perform *hari-bhajana*, especially the servants of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti, are exceptionally fortunate and blessed to have attained the shelter of the lotus feet of such a *mahā-bhāgavata*. Without a doubt, *śrī rūpānuga-sārasvata* Vaiṣṇavas are and will always remain indebted in all respects to this transcendental *mahāpuruṣa*.



Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī,

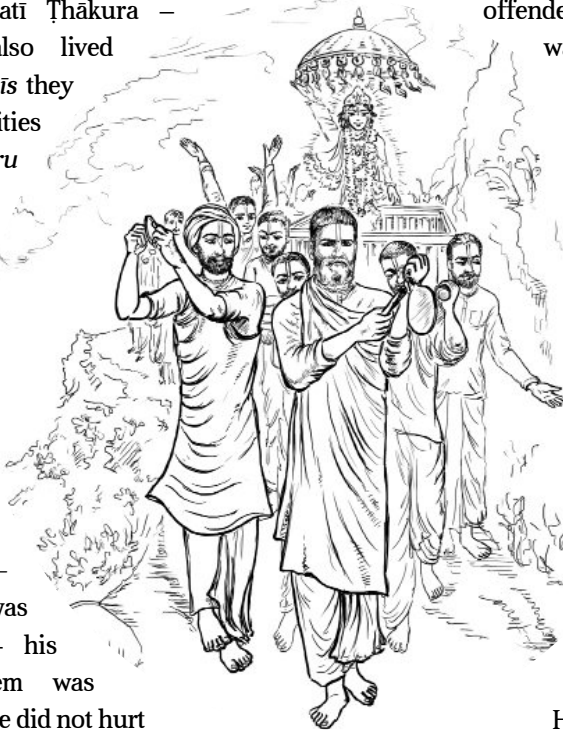
Chapter 7

The 26 Transcendental Qualities of Vaiṣṇavas As Observed in my Śrī Guru-pādapadma: Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja

An excerpt from the article “The 26th Year of Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā”

When Śrī Guru-pādapadma was residing at the establishment of his *guru* – Śrīla Prabhupāda Sarasvatī Ṭhākura – several heretics also lived there. As *guru-bhogīs* they enjoyed the facilities provided by their *guru* [Śrīla Prabhupāda], and as *guru-tyāgīs* they did not pay heed to the life and precepts of their *śrī guru*. They even obstructed and hindered Śrī Guru-pādapadma’s *viśrambha-guru-sevā*¹. Still, he was *akṛta-droha* [1] – his conduct with them was without malice and he did not hurt them.



When any offender acknowledged his own fault, Śrī Guru-pādapadma would forget the offender’s transgression. In this way, as the embodiment of forgiveness, he was supremely compassionate – *kṛpālu* [2].

His integrity – *satya-niṣṭhā* [3] – is well known; he never tolerated wrongdoings. He was harder than a thunderbolt. Yet, to the same degree, he was more tender than a flower and his nature was simple. Selfish people were afraid of him.

He was equanimous – *sama* [4] – toward everyone; he addressed even a child as *āp* [the honourific form of the pronoun “you”].

He was never enamored by *kali-pañcaka* [gambling, intoxication, illicit relationships, gold or wealth]; hence he was *nirdoṣa* [5] – faultless and innocent.

1 *Viśrambha-guru-sevā* is performed by one who knows the heart of his *gurudeva* and can render intimate *sevā* to him accordingly. Although it is not possible for a conditioned soul to obstruct such *sevā*, these incidents nevertheless revealed the great determination of Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja to serve Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda.

He helped his god-brothers and dependents generously when he himself was free from debt.² He never permitted inappropriate conduct, and he continually headed a movement of non-cooperation against the practices of *prākṛta-sahajiyās* (capricious imitationists). Having practised and preached pure *bhakti* (*śuddha-bhakti*) throughout his entire life, he established the significance of the term *mahā-vadānya* [6] – extremely magnanimous.

His strong moral principles in regard to *dharma* and *adharma* always amazed the entire Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava society. Such a soft natured – *mṛdu* [7] – and calm personality is rare in this world. Those enchanted by his qualities and those who were the recipients of his mercy would consider him a transcendental and affectionate father who bestows *prema-bhakti*.

He was immaculate – *suci* [8] – being always engaged in *śrī nāma-bhajana*. He never paid heed to the so called pure and impure conceptions of *karma-jāda-smārta sampradāya* [materialistic priests who engage in mundane, karmic rituals] engaged in mundane ritual.

“No one other than Śrīla Gurudeva is our protector.” Being imbued with this feeling, he possessed the quality of *akiñcana* [9] – freedom from a sense of possessiveness born of full surrender.

2 In those times, it was always a financial strain on the mission to perform preaching and other activities. Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja would take out a loan for his massive seven-day Navadvīpa *parikramā*, for which he charged no fee, and he would even pay for those who had no money to travel there. After *parikramā*, he and his disciples and followers would preach tirelessly and collect to pay that debt. At those times, when he was free from debt, he would help his god-brothers and dependents generously.

Because his disposition was to be *sarvopakāraka* [10] – concerned for the welfare of all – he always reflected on how all the *jīvas* of the world would, by *hari-bhajana*, be delivered from nescience (*avidyā*), or forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa. And because he was always one-pointedly absorbed in *kṛṣṇa-sevā* and devoid of all material desires and longings, he was never observed to be in want of mental peace – he was always *śānta* [11].

His high level of dependency on his *iṣṭadevas* – *śrī guru* and Bhagavān – was most astonishing. When he left the mission of his *gurudeva*, which was embroiled in dispute, he did not take a single penny with him. Once, while in the Kolkata *maṭha* [at a time when he did not have enough money to serve his dear god-brother who was visiting], he cried with a choked voice and with tears flowing from his eyes, “*Hā Prabhupāda!*” and then a bird sitting in the lofts of the *maṭha* helped him by dropping a small bundle of coins. He thus accepted Kṛṣṇa as his only shelter – *kṛṣṇaika-saraṇa* [12]. Consequently, his life fully reflects the ideal character of *bhakta* Kureśa.

By establishing service to the ever-youthful, conjugal divine couple, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī-jiu, he imparted teachings on selfless – *akāma* [13] – *kṛṣṇa-bhajana*. All of his endeavours were for the sake of Kṛṣṇa, and thus he inspired everyone to perform *bhāgavata-bhajana*. In this way, his life passed with simplicity and without desire – *anīha* [14].

He never deviated from the teachings of Śrī Gurudeva and he never abandoned the ideal shown by him. With a firm – *sthira* [15] – vow of service to Śrī Mukunda, he carried a begging-bag over his shoulder, free from all embarrassment and humiliation.

He was never disturbed by thirst or hunger or a greed for wealth and so forth; thus, as **vijita-śaḍ-guṇa** [16], he was **jīteṇḍriya-gosvāmī** – one who conquered lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride and envy.

He never approved of the efforts to collect more than necessary (*atyahāra*) nor did he contemplate gratifying the senses with dietary and recreational habits; therefore, he was **mita-bhuk** [17].

“*Guror ājñā hy avicāraṇīya* – the instructions of *gurudeva* are to be followed unhesitatingly and without deliberation.” He was bound in his vow to follow and execute, in every respect, the orders and directions of Śrī Gurudeva – Śrīla Prabhupāda. He was therefore **apramatta** [18] – extremely cautious and sober, not calculative or whimsical.

Because, in the realm of spiritual relationships, he respected everyone in accordance with their position, he was **mānada** [19].

Being devoid of all desire for mundane profit, adoration and recognition, he protected all conventions of *varṇa* and *āśrama* and embodied the significance of the word **amāni** [20] – without desire for respect.

He was completely immersed in the conceptions of the *svārūpa-rūpānuga* line and properly followed the *āmnaya-vāṇī* (message of *śrī guru-paramparā*). He refuted *ādhyakṣika* (direct, indirect and indistinct) knowledge. He accepted in every respect the sole guidance of his *śrī gurudeva* and acquainted us with his **gambhīra** [21] – profound nature.

With the sole objective of delivering the conditioned souls – who are gripped by trifling things and scorched by three-fold miseries – in every village, town and holy place and throughout India, he preached *śrī nāma-prema*, he composed and published scriptures and he established

spiritual education centres (*maṭhas*) and places of worship (temples), which revealed his **karuṇā** [22] – supremely compassionate nature.

Kṛṣṇeti yasya giri. In accordance with this verse of *Upadeśāmṛta*, for the welfare of the *sādhakas* and *sādhikās* and all his dependents, as well as to serve the perfected devotees of Bhagavān – his god-brothers – his doors were always open. He was prepared to sacrifice his life for the welfare of those bound to him by the thread of love. This was the hallmark of his **maītri** [23] – friendship.

His compositions – “Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Āratī”, “Śrī Tulasī Āratī”, “Śrī Gaura-Govinda Āratī”, “Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī-tattvāṣṭakam”, “Advaitavāda-sāṅkhyamat-nyāymatduṣanam” and so forth – acquaint us with his potency of **kavitva** [24] – transcendental poetry.

He was proficient – **dakṣa** [25] – in all subjects, which is why Śrīla Prabhupāda adorned him with the title Kṛti-ratna. Because he was particularly lucid in regard to social policy and economics, as well as the management and objective [of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s mission], and because of his spiritual prudence, he was the Superintendent General of the undivided Gauḍīya mission.

Since *harikathā-kīrtana* was the sole aim of his life, he conquered the urge to speak, thus demonstrating the significance of the word **maunī** [26]. He would always stay far away from the line of thought of non-devotees and materialistic people, who are absorbed in topics unrelated to Bhagavān.

In essence, insignificant writing and language are always incapable of describing the transcendental qualities of Śrī Guru-pādpadma.

Translated from *Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā*,
Year-26, Issue-1
By the Rays of The Harmonist team

Reminiscing a Drop of His Glories

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja

O Śrī Gurudeva, this fallen wretch is completely unqualified to extol your glories. Only those who, by your causeless mercy, have realized your exalted nature are worthy of singing of your splendour. Of this there is no doubt. Still, “*vaiṣṇavera guṇa-gāna, korile jīvera trāṇa* – singing the glories of a Vaiṣṇava is the cause of a living entity’s salvation.” Following this statement, this abominable person is boldly endeavouring to write something for his own purification.

You taught those desiring their spiritual welfare through your own ideal behaviour and are thus known as *ācārya* (one who teaches by example). Just as Śrī Kṛṣṇa flew in the sky, holding on to the whirlwind demon, Tṛṇāvarta, similarly, as a baby, you flew the sky, carried by a falcon, thereby revealing your supramundane nature. Through your observance of strict celibacy from infancy, you have proclaimed that association of women is wholly inappropriate for persons on the path of spirituality. I deem the glorification of you coming from the mouth of one who is [attached to] associating with women as ill-behooved. At a very tender age, you abandoned your virtuous and wealthy parents, and taking a solemn vow to completely fulfil your *śrī gurudeva*’s inner heart’s desire, you perfectly followed the statement “*ataḥ budha ābhajet taṁ, bhaktyaikeyeṣaṁ guru-devatātmā* – intelligent persons take shelter of *śrī gurudeva*, accepting him as their life and soul, and engage in exclusive devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.2.37).



Pleased with your expertise and competence, your *śrī gurudeva* adorned you with the title “Kṛti-ratna”. After accepting *sannyāsa*, you travelled to all of the holy *tīrthas* throughout India, tracing the steps of Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nityānanda. Your devoted followers celebrate you as being non-different from Śrī Rāmānujācārya’s disciple Kureṣa [in risking your life for your *gurudeva*].



“ Because of your extraordinary expertise in the philosophy expounded in the scriptures, you are known as “Ācārya Kesarī – the lion-like preceptor”. ”

The local administration at the time was afraid of you, due to your fearlessness. Because of your extraordinary expertise in the philosophy expounded in the scriptures, you are known as “Ācārya Kesarī – the lion-like preceptor”. You are the founder of the illustrious Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti. By your *gurudeva*’s – Śrīla Prabhupāda’s – causeless mercy, you preserved his standards and preaching and are thus the protector of our disciplic line. Your divine form resembles that of Śrīla Prabhupada. Your book

Māyāvāder Jīvanī bā Vaiṣṇava-vijaya fully destroyed and buried the doctrine of Śaṅkara. It is no exaggeration to say this. You defended the truth and boundaries of human propriety when you proclaimed before all in a learned assembly that anyone who proclaims a follower of Devī to be God will surely suffer in hell. In service to *śrī guru*, you exchanged cloth with Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura and have thus been celebrated as his *sannyāsa* disciple by your intimate followers.

I am utterly unqualified to describe your unlimited virtues, yet by your causeless mercy, I am direct proof of the statement “*paṅgu laṅghayate girim* – the mercy of *śrī guru* enables the lame to cross mountains”. In the way the Gaṅgā is worshipped with Gaṅgā water, I am humbly submitting this glorification to you.

☉ Excerpt from *Śrī Bhāgavata-patrikā*,

Year 42, Issue 12

ON THE OCCASION OF YOUR VYĀSA-PŪJĀ Your Fallen Servant's Humble Offering

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja

*prabhu-nityānanda dvāre, śrīvāsa paṇḍita-ghare
mahāprabhu dilena śikṣaṇa
vyāsa-pūjā anuṣṭhāna, bhakatera prāṇa-dhana,
bhinna nahe śrī guru-pūjana (1)*

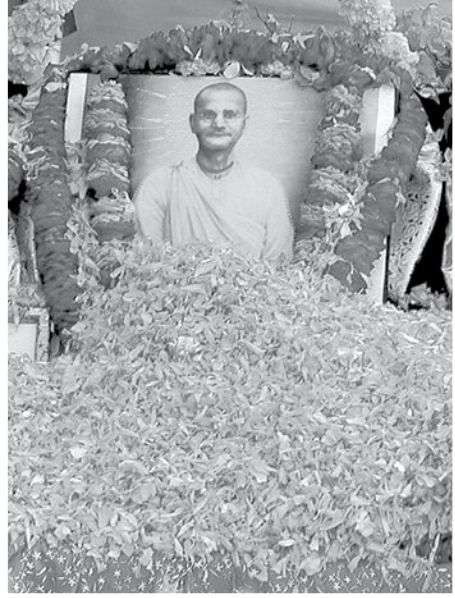
At the house of Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, Mahāprabhu gave instruction through Nityānanda Prabhu for the celebrating of Vyāsa-pūjā, which is the life of the devotees and non-different from the worship of śrī guru.

*vyāsa-rūpe bhagavān, dharā-mājhe vartamāna,
ajña-jane dānite prajñāna
guru-rūpe śāstra marma, śikṣā dena ātma-dharma,
prema-bhakti śreṣṭha prayojana (2)*

In the form of Vyāsa, Bhagavān is present in this earthly realm to impart *prajñāna* [the illumination of *sambandha*, *abhidheya* and *prayojana*] to the ignorant. In the form of *guru*, He teaches the very essence of the scriptures – that *prema-bhakti*, which is the ultimate goal of life, is the nature of the soul.

*māyāvāde vyāsa-pūjā, bhaktira vañcanā sevā
jathā haya tripuṭī vināśa
sevaka thākiyā nitya, sevyere seuite bhṛtya
sadā kare ei abhilāṣa (3)*

The worship of Vyāsa seen in the Māyāvāda sects is a deceptive expression of devotional service, as those sects believe *bhakta*, *bhakti* and Bhagavān to be temporary objects, subject to destruction.



Actually, the servant wishes to remain a servant in servitude to his master forever.

*“jīva nitya-kṛṣṇa-dāsa”, prabhura śrī mukha-bhāṣa,
ei mata sarva-śreṣṭha māni
dvitva jadi nāhi rabe, ‘pūjā’ śabda mithyā tabe,
sei pūjā pūjā nāhi gaṇi (4)*

“The soul is the eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa.” These words issued from the Lord’s own mouth, and I regard this verdict as supreme. If duality is not a constant, then the word *pūjā* (worship) itself is false. Otherwise, the said worship cannot be considered worship.

*‘nitāi caraṇa satya, tāhāra sevaka nitya’
mahājana ei kathā gāya
janame maraṇe tāi, o pada sevite cāi,
gurudeva! nā theliho pāya (5)*

“Eternal and true are the feet of Nitāi, and everlasting is His servant.” The *mahājanas* (exalted personalities) sing this fact. In birth and death, I wish to serve those feet. Gurudeva! Do not push me away from your feet.

*māyātīta vastu tumi, māyāya mohita āmi,
kemone pūjibo bolo tomā
kabe tava kṛpā habe, māyā-devī dūre jābe,
śuddha-sattva koribeka āmā (6)*

You are an entity beyond the illusory energy, whereas I am bewildered by it. Tell me, how will I worship you? When will you be merciful? When will the goddess Māyā go away? Please transfer me to *śuddha-sattva* (the level of pure existence).

*prema-dātā-śiromaṇi, nityānanda tumi śuni,
māyātīta golokete sthāna
patita jīvera tare, avatari prṭhvi-pare,
jīve kṛṣṇa koritecho dāna (7)*

I hear that you are in fact Nityānanda, the crown jewel of the donors of divine love. Your place is in Goloka, which is beyond the illusory energy. You descended to this Earth for the sake of fallen souls and gave them Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

*tumi kṛṣṇa-dhane dhanī, dātā-gaṇa śiromaṇi,
kṣudra-jīva nā pāre bujhite
anna-vastra-pathya-dāna, ati tuccha sei dāna,
tumi di'cho kṛṣṇa-bhakti cite (8)*

You are rich in the wealth that is Kṛṣṇa and are the crest jewel of benefactors, which lowly souls cannot fathom. Donations of food, clothing and

medicine are exceedingly trivial. What you give fills the heart with *bhakti* to Kṛṣṇa.

*jathā nityānanda vibhu, lāñchita hoiyā tabu,
jagāi mādhai uddhārilo
temati he guru-vara, parahita vrata-dhara,
lāñchanā sahicho abirala (9)*

Just as Lord Nityānanda delivered Jagāi and Mādhai, despite being attacked by them, you, O foremost among *gurus*, made a vow to aid others, tolerating incessant abuses.

*jīva saba bhoge matta, nā cāhe śunite satya,
vyāsa-pade nāhiko viśvāsa
nānā mata sṛṣṭi kori', chaḍā-gāne nṛtya kori'
prema-dhane ha'yeche udāsa (10)*

All the souls of this realm are enthralled with sensory pleasures; they do not wish to hear truth and they do not have faith in the feet of Vyāsa. They concoct various doctrines and dance to vulgar rhymes. They have become indifferent to the wealth of divine love.

*kāme prema jñāna kori', icaḍete pāka dhorī'
sahajiyā guru-drohī haya
māyāvāda amaṅgala—, ghoṣile abanī-tala,
sajjanera citta kaile jaya (11)*

Thinking lust to be love, the immature and presumptuous *sahajiyā* sentimentalists become traitors of *guru*. Māyāvāda spells inauspiciousness; this fact you have declared throughout this earthly plane, winning the hearts of the saints.

*tumi mahā tejīyān, mithyāśreyī bhīti-sthāna,
satyāśreyī dekhe snehamaya
sābakera kāche jathā, simha snehamaya pitā,
temati śobhicho dayāmaya (12)*

You possess prodigious spiritual potency and represent fear itself for those who have resorted to falsehood. The truthful see you as affectionate. You shine like a loving lion with his cubs, O merciful one.

*chābbiśa guṇete guṇī, tomā saha nāhi gaṇī,
kebā āche abanī mājhāra
kṛpālu, akṛta-droha, mahā-jayī māyā-moha,
akiñcana, sama, satya-sāra (13)*

You are endowed with all the twenty-six qualities of a Vaiṣṇava. Who in the world can compare with you? You are compassionate and bear no resentments. You have conquered the delusions of māyā. You are aloof to the world, equal to all, and true to your very core.

*nirdoṣa, vadānya, mṛdu, kṛṣṇaika-śaraṇa śudhu,
suśānta, sarvopakāraka
akāma, nirīha, sthira, samudra-sama gambhīra,
vijīta-śaḍ-guṇa, mita-bhuka (14)*

You are faultless, magnanimous, gentle and surrendered exclusively unto Kṛṣṇa. You are exceedingly tranquil, dedicated to the welfare of others, devoid of lust, indifferent, composed, as profound as the ocean, victorious over the six faults, and you eat very little.

*amānī, mānada tumi, apramatta, kavi, maunī,
maitra, dakṣa, śuci o karuṇa
sarva-guṇa adhiṣṭhāna, tava mājhe śobhamāna,
śobhā jeno prabhāta aruṇa (15)*

You are humble and respectful, sober, and both a poet and a silent ascetic. You are endearing, expert, clean, pensive and tender. You are the

abode of all good qualities. They shine in you like the crimson of dawn.

*namo namo guru-vara, tumi mahā-śakti-dhara,
patita-pāvana tomā jāni
avaśya tāribe more, hṛde ei āśā dha're,
ājī tomā śata-bāra nami (16)*

O foremost of gurus, I bow to you again and again. You bear grand power, and I know you to be the saviour of the fallen. Surely you will deliver me. I carry this hope in my heart and bow before you hundreds of times on this day.

*ājī tava pūjā-dine, nānā-dravya āne āne,
puṣpa-gandha-dravya samujjvala
āmi hata-bhāgā ati, pāśāṇa sadṛśa mati,
aśru-bindu nāhiko sambala (17)*

Today, on the day of your worship, others are bringing countless splendid items, like flowers and perfume, but I am so deprived of good fortune that I have the sensibility of a rock and cannot muster a single teardrop.

*je bīja ropile tumi, se-bījera phule āmi,
gāthiyāchi ei kṣudra hāra
tomāra pradatta dhana, tomākei samarpaṇa,
śudhu mora brthā ahañkāra (18)*

I have strung this measly garland made of flowers from seeds you sowed. Offering you the wealth you granted me is but a gesture of my worthless arrogance.

Fallen servant,
Śrī Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama

❁ Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, Year 7 Issue 1 (1955)

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Heralding auspiciousness for the entire world on the occasion of
om viṣṇu-pāda paramahaṁsa parivrājakācārya-varya aṣṭottara-śata-śrī
Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja's 67th Appearance Day

ŚRĪLA ĀCĀRYADEVA KĪ KṚPĀ-VAIŚIṢṬYA-KUSUMA CAYANIKĀ

A Collection of Flowers

The Speciality of Śrīla Ācāryadeva's Mercy

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

namo om viṣṇupāda śrī-bhakti-prajñāna keśava
śrī prabhupāda preṣṭhāya gaura-pārṣada rūpiṇe

I offer obeisances unto *om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava, dearly beloved of Śrī Prabhupāda, and associate of Gaurahari.

śrī caitanya-mano'bhīṣṭa pari-pūraka mūrtaye
gaura-sārasvatāmnāya ācāryāya namo namaḥ

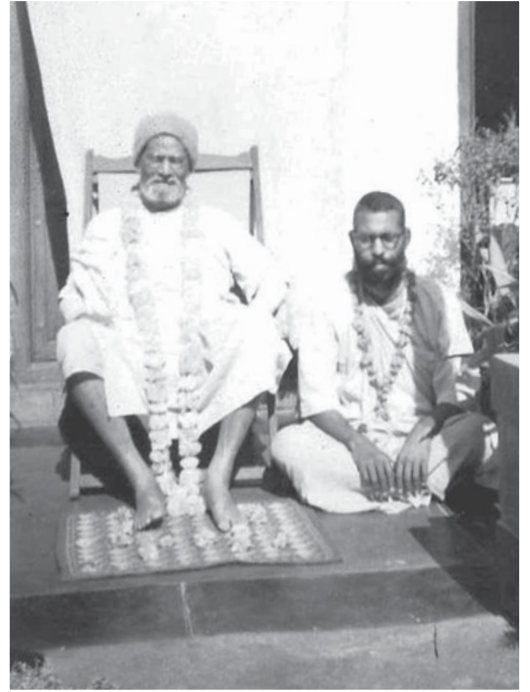
You are the personified fulfilment of Śrī Caitanya's innermost desires, teacher of the divine Gaura-Sārasvata message. I bow repeatedly unto you.

gūḍānurāgiṇe tubhyaṁ śrī-siddhānta-sarasvatī
śrī-gaura-karuṇā-śakti-svarūpāya namo namaḥ

You are possessed of profound attachment for Śrī Siddhānta Sarasvatī and you are the personification of Śrī Gaura's compassion potency. I bow unto you.

śrī rūpānuga-siddhānta-vipakṣi-mukha-mardine
kṛṣṇa-tattvajña-samrāje kṛti-ratnāya te namaḥ

You subdue and rectify those who antagonize the conclusions of the *rūpānugas*, you are the



sovereign of those acquainted with the truth of Kṛṣṇa, and you are *kṛti-ratna*, which means “each of your accomplishments is an exquisite jewel”. I bow unto you.



1ST FLOWER

I address you, who fulfilled the heartfelt ambitions of Śrīla Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda. You are his beloved companion and foremost of his heirs!

Following *jagad-guru* Śrīla Prabhupāda's disappearance pastime, the Rūpānuga-Sārasvata Gauḍīya current was forced to progress along a treacherous path, rife with innumerable obstacles. Śrī Prabhupāda's genuine servants were severely tested. The stories about this are heart-rending.

In that period, the preaching centres Śrīla Prabhupāda had established began closing down one by one. The publications of the spiritual periodicals in Bengali, Hindi, English, and Sanskrit, namely, the *Gauḍīya*, *Bhāgavata*, *The Harmonist*, and *Sajjana-toṣaṇī*, stopped. The worldwide

“The Sārasvata Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava family is and always will be in your debt for restoring momentum to the virtually extinct current of Sārasvata-Vaiṣṇavism.”

reverberations of the *bṛhad-mṛdaṅga*, or printing press that published literature concerning pure devotion, also ceased. Pilgrimages to Śrī Dhāma Navadvīpa, Vraja-maṇḍala, Kṣetra-maṇḍala and other places dwindled into obscurity.

Those *brahmacārīs* and others living in the *maṭha* whose faith was too tender gave up the

maṭha lifestyle. Without shelter, they returned to their previous *āśramas* (stations in life). Some of the *brahmacārīs* and *sannyāsīs* scattered here and there, and began performing *bhajana* in solitude, idly passing their lives somehow or other. Everyone became passive and bewildered, through and through.

During these dark days of Sārasvata-Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism, you established the Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti. On Śrīla Prabhupāda's order, received in a dream, you accepted *tridaṇḍa-sannyāsa* in Śrī Kaṭwā, the sacred spot where Śrīman Mahāprabhu enacted his *sannyāsa-līlā*.

Taking a firm vow to fulfill Śrīla Prabhupāda's innermost desire and preach the message of Śrī Gaurahari (*gaura-vāṇī*), you freed the checked flow of the Sārasvata current and spread it not only throughout all of Bengal, but also Bihar, Assam, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh and other places all over India.

You were the first to revive Śrī Navadvīpa *parikramā* and to start publishing a monthly spiritual magazine, *Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā*, once again. You were even the first to revive pilgrimages to Vraja-maṇḍala, Kṣetra-maṇḍala, Dvārakā-dhāma, Badrī-Nārāyaṇa-dhāma, Naimiṣāranya, and the holy places of South India, by which you reinitiated the preaching of *gaura-vāṇī* everywhere.

Revived and enthused by these actions you took to preach *bhakti*, your godbrothers followed your example. The Sārasvata Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava family is and always will be in your debt for restoring momentum to the virtually extinct current of Sārasvata-Vaiṣṇavism. I offer repeated obeisances unto your lotus feet, which are more soothing than millions of moons and which inspire fearlessness.

2ND FLOWER

Śrīla Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Ṭhākura was a direct associate of Śrī Gaura. Once you heard his message of pure devotion, you could not bear to be separated from him, and though still in your tender teenage years, you gave up, as if they were bits of straw, the love of your doting mother, the infatuation of friends, grand opulence and wealth befitting a king, the desire for prestige and the thrills of an upper-class education, and offered yourself wholeheartedly at the feet of your *śrī guru*, thereby becoming supremely dear to him.

In the early days of preaching Śrī Gaura's message, when there were only three or four people living in the *maṭha* with Śrīla Prabhupāda and he was conceiving of his wide-reaching plan to establish centres around the world to preach pure devotion, he would say with firm conviction: "This Vinoda will manage all of these centres."

Śrīla Prabhupāda would engage you in intimate and confidential services. He was so pleased with you that he adorned you with the title Kṛti-ratna, "he whose achievements are veritable jewels", which was a divine utterance (*vāṇī*) of blessing, indicative of devotion.

When the rogues of Kuliya – antagonists of pure religion – made their atrocious attack, you repeated the ideal of *guru-sevā*, as shown once before by Śrī Rāmānujācārya's prominent disciple, Śrī Kureṣa, who is the exemplar of a *guru-sevaka*.

By subduing various disruptive individuals and factions who opposed the practice of devotion, you served Śrī Gaura's divine name (*śrī gaura-nāma*), Śrī Gaura's holy abode (*śrī gaura-dhāma*)



and Śrī Gaura's heartfelt desires (*śrī gaurakāma*) in so many ways, which was the cherished desire (*mano'bhīṣṭa*) of your *śrī guru*, and you continue to do so. O you who are the dearly beloved of your *guru* and foremost of *ācāryas*, I offer my respects millions and millions of times unto your lotus feet.

**“He was so pleased with you
that he adorned you with
the title Kṛti-ratna,
‘he whose achievements are
veritable jewels’... ”**

3RD FLOWER

The first time you led Śrī Dhāma *parikramā* after Śrīla Prabhupāda orchestrated his pastime of disappearance, you were victimized by the *kulāṅgāras* (those who brought disgrace to the Sārasvata Vaiṣṇava family), who are antagonistic to *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas, yet you nevertheless exemplified the model of tolerance, that is, *taror iva sahiṣṇutā* – being more tolerant than a tree.

Despite an onslaught of unwarranted cutting remarks of —, you displayed the pinnacle of humility – *trṇād api sunīca* (more humble than a blade of grass), *mānada* (deference), and *amānī* (modesty) – resulting in the palpable bewilderment and astonishment of your godbrothers in recounting the said events.

Satisfied by the modest service of your surrendered and exclusively devoted disciple Anaṅga-mohana Brahmācārī, you blessed him with the attainment of love for Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa's divine abode, thereby establishing the blazing ideal of protecting and nurturing one's dependents.

Hearts as dry as wood or stone melt upon remembering you. Seeing your disciples experience even the slightest difficulty causes you



great distress, and you are always endeavouring to fortify them with the scientific knowledge of their relationship with Kṛṣṇa. You are the concentration of Śrī Gaura's compassion. You are the personified form and preceptor of the statement: "*kīrtanīya sadā hariḥ* – constantly sing and chant the glories and names of Hari."

I surrender my all unto your lotus feet!

4TH FLOWER

You encompass the specialities of your predecessor *ācāryas* while remaining luminous in your own speciality and originality.

You established Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti to correct the common erroneous notions that the purport of *Vedānta-sūtra* is *nirviśeṣa-jñāna*

**“Satisfied by the modest
service of your surrendered
and exclusively devoted
disciple Anaṅga-mohana
Brahmacārī, you blessed
him with the attainment
of love for Kṛṣṇa.”**

(monism) and that the followers of Śaṅkara's doctrine are 'Vedantists'. You established it to propagate the fact that *Vedānta-sūtra*'s true and only purport is *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* and that Vaiṣṇavas, specifically Sārasvata Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, are the true Vedantists.

Preserving the distinction of your own bona fide *tridaṇḍī* lineage and, at the same time, preserving the special contributions of previous *ācāryas*, you manifested the tradition of the "Bhaktivedānta" name.

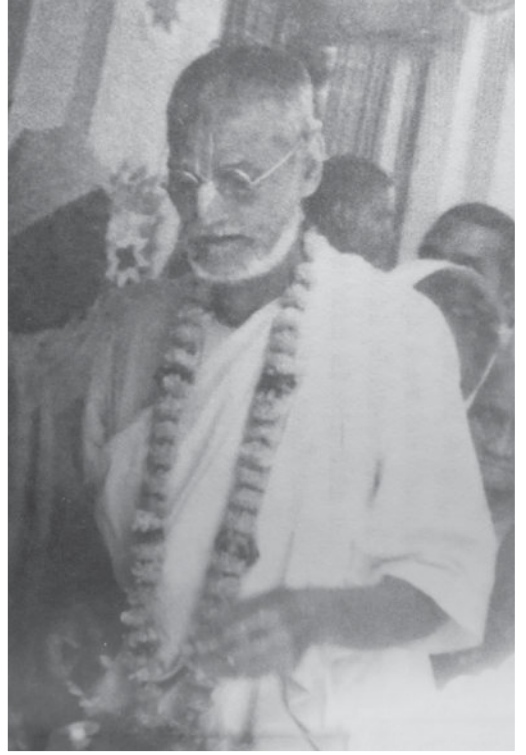
You are non-different from Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī, Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa and Śrīla Sarasvatī Thākura in the way you devise ever-new, wondrous, and unassailable arguments that refute Māyāvāda and various misguided anti-*bhakti* sects and complement your *svapakṣa* (family). We repeatedly perform *ārati* to your lotus feet!

5TH FLOWER

Armed with the resolute evidence from scripture and wielding the razor-sharp weapons of your invincible arguments, you shattered the foundations of Sahajiyāism, thereby delighting Śrīla Prabhupāda and his dear associates.

In *Māyāvāda kī Jīvanī*, you pulverized the fortress of Māyāvāda by the force of your innovative arguments and scriptural evidence, proving that it is really covert Buddhism.

You have displayed your dedication to following in the footsteps of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and your wondrous power of creativity in the following articles: *Śrī Janmāṣṭamī Dārśanik Ālocanā* – A Philosophical Study of Śrī Janmāṣṭamī, *Pradīpa-śikhā* – The Lamp's Flame (the introduction to *Prema-pradīpa*), *Āmāra Vaktavya* (the introduction to *Śrī Rūpānuga-bhajana-samrat*), *Cālanī Au Sūca* – The Sieve and the Needle. With one profound little article,



**“You established
Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti
to correct the common
erroneous notions that
the purport of *Vedānta-
sūtra* is *nirviśeṣa-jñāna*
(monism) and the followers
of Śaṅkara's doctrine are
'Vedantists'.”**

“*Nimbāditya and Nimbārka are Not the Same Person*”, you silenced all the misguided, baseless chatter of those relishing “*Nimba rasa*” [which also means “bitter neem juice”].

Your book *Acintya-bhedābheda* served as a razor-sharp trident to dismember the three-headed demon of those who betrayed your *guru* – Vāsudeva, Sundarānanda and the prominent *sahajiyā* Haridāsa – and their philosophies, which were opposed to the current of Śrī Sārasvata-Gauḍīya conceptions. Thus you served Śrīla Prabhupāda’s cherished ambitions and accomplished the grand task of protecting the *sampradāya*.

In Assam, within the most formidable fortress of the Haṅkara *sampradāya*, in a huge assembly, you refuted all of their unfounded arguments like a fearless lion, establishing Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu as Bhagavān Himself and the pre-eminence of pure devotion. At the Akhila Baṅgīya Saṅskṛta Sammelana (Bengal-wide Sanskrit Conference) in Chuchura, you showed no concern for public opinion by refuting the *karma* and *jñāna* that are opposed to the Lord, as well as Māyāvada and other misguided philosophies. You then established pure devotion to Kṛṣṇa, thus highlighting your role as *ācārya* in preaching the uncompromising truth. I offer my repeated obeisances unto your lotus feet, O Ācārya Keśarī (lion-like teacher).

6TH FLOWER

When you read the description of Śrī Rathayātrā from *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* during the grand festival of Śrī Rathayātrā, you became submerged in the ocean of *vipralambha-rasa* and

began to weep, causing all the listeners to weep. You display such humility when extolling Śrīla Prabhupāda’s glories in front of his *samādhi* temple in Śrī Dhāma Māyāpura that even hearts as hard as thunderbolts melt and seep out through the channels of the eyes. O foremost of *ācāryas*! You are the personification of the ocean of *vipralambha-rasa* and you hold the message of Śrī Rūpa and Raghunātha so dear. I offer millions upon millions of obeisances unto your lotus feet, which are venerated by the hosts of demigods.

7TH FLOWER

In Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma (which is Vraja), on the island of Śrī Koladvīpa (which is Śrī Govardhana), in the region of the island that corresponds to the *rāsa-sthālī*, you established the presiding deity of that part of the *dhāma*, Śrī Śrī Kola-deva, in the Samiti’s main temple. There, you

manifested the wondrous Śrī Śrī Rādhā Vinodabihārī, Kṛṣṇa embraced by Śrī Rādhā, who is absorbed in the infinite ocean of *vipralambha-rasa* and imbued with the exalted state of divine love referred to as *adhirūḍha-mahābhāva*. On the one hand, in a splendid and unprecedented manner, you demonstrated your role as an *ācārya* in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, and on the other, you revealed your own magnificent speciality and originality. O Rūpānuga Ācārya! May you be forever victorious!

8TH FLOWER

In an astonishing way, you have revealed the ideal of *guru-niṣṭhā* and the most sublime principles of *guru-tattva* in the verses of *Śrīla Prabhupāda-ārati*,

**“In Māyāvāda kī Jivanī,
you pulverized
the fortress of Māyāvāda
by the force of your
innovative arguments
and scriptural evidence.”**



**“The specialities of your mercy
are blossoms of divinity –
infinite and innumerable.”**

conviction in Śrī Gaura-Kṛṣṇa in the verses of Śrī Śrī Gaura-Govinda Maṅgala-ārati; conviction in Śrī Vṛndā-devī in the verses of Śrī Tulasī-ārati, and guru-niṣṭhā, upāśya-tattva (the truth of the deity), upāśya-niṣṭhā (faith in the deity) and acintya-bhedābheda-tattva (the truth of simultaneous oneness and difference), all together, in Śrī Śrī Rādhā Vinoda-bihārī-tattvāṣṭaka. These songs are great, invaluable and immortal gems of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava literature and contain the most sublime illustrations of confidential philosophical truths, profound scholarship, peerless esoteric expertise (rasikatā), and that fathomless flavour of love called vipralambha (longing in separation).

In order to spread the message of Śrī Caitanya all over this Planet Earth, you convened the grand sacrifice (mahā-yajña) of saṅkīrtana.

O most exalted of the teachers in the line of Śrī Vyāsa, on the occasion of your appearance and its celebration, my sole fervent prayer at your lotus feet is that I, too, may be able to offer my life as mere kindling in fulfilling this great sacrifice, which is your cherished ambition.

O ocean of compassion and foremost of ācāryas! The specialities of your mercy are blossoms of divinity – infinite and innumerable. Never could they be counted! I have plucked but a few petals from them and, in a childish effort, attempted to worship your feet in the way that one makes oblations of Gaṅgā water to the Gaṅgā herself. Kindly reveal a glimpse of your transcendental message within my heart and grant me the eligibility to serve your dearest ambitions.

Praying for mercy,
Tridaṇḍi-svāmī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa

❁ Śrī Bhāgavata-patrikā,
Year 9 Issue 12 (1963)

Vinoda and Vinoda-bihārī

A glorification of the unprecedented contribution of
Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Published in Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā, under the auspices of
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

THE MEANING OF AVADHŪTA

A discussion of this sort ought to start from the beginning, from the very root (*mūla*) of the matter. Indeed, *guru* and *mūla* are like the noun and the adjective respectively [in that *guru* is the root]. Therefore, in discussing roots and beginnings, the subject of *guru* is bound to arise. In this case, however, the intention is not to start the discussion with Kṛṣṇa [the original *guru*, the very root of all *sampradāyas*], who first imparted divine knowledge unto Brahmā. Rather, our topic of discussion begins from the root of the Gauḍīya community, the crowning jewel of the Brahmā *sampradāya*, the lineage descending from Brahmā.¹

pāṣaṇḍa-dalana āra prema-pracāraṇa
dui kārye avadhūta kareṇa bhramaṇa
Śrī Caitanya-caritamṛta (Antya-līlā 3.149)

The *avadhūta* sets about two tasks in his wanderings: to tame the wicked and propagate *prema*.

The *avadhūta* (unconventional saint) is as inexplicable as he is extraordinary. There is

nothing extraordinary about actual insanity, however, or someone acting like a crazy person to gain attention. That is just abnormal and decidedly mundane.

evam vrataḥ sva-priya-nāma-kīrtiyā
jātānurāgo druta-citta uccaiḥ
hasaty atho roditi rauti gayaty
unmāda-van nṛtyati loka-bāhyaḥ
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.2.40)

Someone who is constantly preoccupied with performing *kīrtana* of the Lord's names he most cherishes experiences the awakening of divine love, which melts his heart. He then displays spiritual ecstasy, sometimes laughing, sometimes crying, sometimes singing and sometimes dancing like a madman, not caring about the opinion of the general masses.

As stated above, when, overwhelmed by intense longing (*anurāga*), the *avadhūta* sings Śrī Kṛṣṇa's names, he loses his social inhibition. In that state, like a mad person, sometimes he laughs, and at other times he cries. Sometimes he yells, and sometimes he is silent. From a materialistic perspective, this external

¹ This is referring to Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu.

manifestation of his longing is perceived as a platform for deception.²

THE SPECIALITY OF THE GAUḌĪYA AVADHŪTA

The original *avadhūta* of the Gauḍīya lineage, Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu, refrained from any



“The *avadhūta* sets about two tasks in his wanderings: to tame the wicked and propagate *prema*.”

² People in general are cynical about fake exhibitions of the symptoms of ecstasy. Unable to discern the false from the true, however, they assume the genuine *avadhūta* to be a cheater like the others.

such expressions of overwhelming ecstasies and occupied himself with curbing others' wicked tendencies (*pāṣaṇḍa-dalana*) and propagating *prema* (*prema-pracāraṇa*) [as in the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* verse quoted above]. In this recent pastime, He may not tout a plough or club, but the functions of those instruments never ceased. Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu is perpetually situated in His role of subduing evil, as He once did with His club, and drawing people to Him, as He did with His plough. It can also be said that His plough readies the field of the heart so that He may sow the seed of the vine of *bhakti*. Either way, these are instruments He uses in His role of propagating *prema* (*prema-pracāra*).

Our Gauḍīya *guru-varga* are this type of *avadhūta*. They do not only relish their rapture; they preach too. They do not simply throw pearls into the brush; they prepare the field and sow the seed. They do not just quash evil; they propagate *prema*. Chastisement does not work on its own; there has to be affection too.

ŚRĪLA KEŚAVA GOSVĀMĪ MAHARĀJA IS AN AVADHŪTA

The actual name of the *avadhūta* we are discussing is “Vinoda”. Though “Vinoda”³ is beyond all trifling designations, in this world of appellations, he is known as *tridaṇḍi-svāmī* Śrī Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. It is he who decorates the esteemed *sannyāsa* order and blesses it. Someone who is naturally beyond *varṇāśrama*, and a *paramahansa* beyond ordinary prohibitions, still follows *varṇāśrama*

³ This refers to Śrī Vinoda Mañjarī, Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja's *gopī* form in Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's pastimes.



Śrī Vinoda Mañjarī

and submits to the constraint of rules and regulations, certainly not for his own welfare but because he wants to benefit the masses who are averse to their own good. If we can grasp this fact, it puts our own wellbeing in our hands.

THE FIRST FUNCTION OF THE
AVADHŪTA: PĀṢAṆḌA-DALANA –
SUBDUING THE EVIL-MINDED
HYPOCRISY OF MĀYĀVĀDA

Of all the hypocrisy and wickedness in the world, the worst is impersonalism, or Māyāvāda, which was widely preached by Śrī Śaṅkarācārya, though it was not what he treasured in his heart. Māyāvāda attacks *prema* itself. Māyāvāda is an evil-mindedness that wants to merge with and become what is left of the personification of *prema* (Śrī Bhagavān) after it has cut off His lotus-like hands and feet with the swords of mundane logic. If the personified form of eternity, consciousness and bliss is so loathsome [as to attempt to destroy it], then why the ambition to merge with that form? Evidently, this is severe evil-mindedness. The form of fire draws insects to immolate themselves in it. If one does not accept that divinity has form, why become one with it?

From the very beginning of Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Prabhu's surrendering his life to his divine master, he identified Māyāvāda to be the main impediment to propagating *prema*. *Māyāvāder Jivānī* ("Victory Over Māyāvāda"), his book of research into the modern and unsophisticated origins of Māyāvāda, will surely endure as an illuminating lamppost for those seeking their eternal welfare.

At present, simply upon hearing the words *advaitavāda*, *brahmavāda*⁴, or other similar doctrines, almost everyone understands them to mean Śrī Śaṅkarācārya's *Kevalādvaitavāda* [which is Māyāvāda]. *Māyāvāder Jīvanī* delivers an escape from this whirlpool of illusion. The ancient Advaita philosophy of the Brahmvādīs has never been the same as Śrī Śaṅkara's Māyāvāda. For Brahmvādīs, the ultimate destination is the effulgent Brahmaloka. Māyāvādīs, on the other hand, are downright offenders, fit to be punished by Yama, death personified, as stated in Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (*Madhya-līlā* 6.167):

*śrī-vigraha je nā māne,
sei to' pāṣaṇḍī adṛśya,
aspr̥śya—sei haya
yama-daṇḍī*

He is wicked who denies
the form of Divinity; he is
not to be seen or touched;
he will be punished by
Yama.

Māyāvāda is but a version of Buddhism, that is, of Buddhadeva's *Śūnyavāda* – which literally translates as “the zero theory” or “voidism”. [The doctrine of Buddhism is not within the Vedas and is therefore not regarded or practised by those pursuing Vedic culture and ideals. In propagating their philosophy, cleverly], the Māyāvādīs have inserted *brahma*, a word from the Vedas, in

4 Brahmvādīs, or Advaitavādīs, accept both impersonal and personal aspects of *brahma* – the Supreme Absolute Reality – although their inclination is towards the impersonal aspect. They thus attain the destination of effulgent Brahmaloka. –Ed

place of *śūnya*. At their roots, both Buddhism and Māyāvāda have the same objective: nihilism. *Padma Purāṇa* therefore refers to Māyāvāda as *prachanna bauddha-vāda* or “veiled Buddhism”, while Śrīman Mahāprabhu declared it to be atheism that seeks Vedic corroboration.

THE LIMITATIONS OF APAROKṢA- JÑĀNA (MONISM)

Śrīla Prabhupāda informs us in his elucidations on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavata* that the cultivation of Vedic teachings that gives precedence to *karma* constitutes inferior or limited knowledge (*aparā-vidyā*), or perception that cannot transcend these temporal realms. At the same time, it is not that cultivation of *aparokṣa*⁵ (impersonalism), which is knowledge driven by indifference to the mundane as a result of seeing action (*karma*) as the source of suffering, cannot be called absolute spiritual knowledge (*parā-vidyā*), as it does not awaken the inherent nature of the soul.

Those who subscribe to this *aparokṣa* (monistic) perspective can conceive only of oneness, as in the Vedantic axiom “*ekam evadvitīyam* – there is only one, second to

5 Śrī *Brahma-saṁhitā*, Verse 33, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī's *ṭīkā* – translation: There are five types of knowledge, namely that which pertains to direct sense perception of gross phenomena (*pratyakṣa* or *akṣaja*), to Svarga (*parokṣa*), to the unmanifest, formless Brahman (*aparokṣa*), to Vaiṣṇava (*adhokṣaja*) and to Goloka Vṛndāvana (*aprākṛta*).

none.” But they cannot reconcile plurality. The understanding of those who rely on this *aparokṣa* perspective of the Absolute is blocked when it comes to the plurality of that one Indivisible and Absolute Whole, i.e. the variety of Śrī Bhagavān’s names, forms, qualities, pastimes and companions. For them, *prema*, the supreme goal of human existence, then becomes the setting sun disappearing beyond the furthest horizon.

CULTIVATION OF TRANSCENDENCE BEGINS FROM THE POINT OF ADHOKṢAJA

Exploration of the variegatedness of spiritual existence begins with scrutiny of *adhokṣaja-tattva*, or that which is definitively beyond the perception of material senses. He who is absorbed at every moment in divine pastimes, defying every strained attempt the conditioned souls make to know Him through their senses, is Adhokṣaja. Once the conditioned souls disengage their senses from that painful enterprise of monism and engage them in the service of the Lord of the senses, Śrī Hṛṣikeṣa, then by His own sweet will, that Entity who is beyond the grasp of the senses allows Himself to be perceived by the souls’ senses. If He did not forever keep Himself separate from the indulgent purview of the conditioned souls’ senses, then He would become but another inert object to be enjoyed by them, and it would be impossible for the living entities’ tendency to serve wholeheartedly to manifest.

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN APRĀKṚTA AND ADHOKṢAJA

The senses of the Lord of the senses [Śrī Hṛṣikeṣa], however, cannot be gratified to the utmost degree even by our cultivating transcendental awareness of Adhokṣaja (He who is

beyond the purview of the senses). Although the Lord of the senses is worshipped by everyone and although He sustains all, the sheer delight He experiences from being scolded and nurtured, He cannot derive from the illustrious hymns of the Vedas.

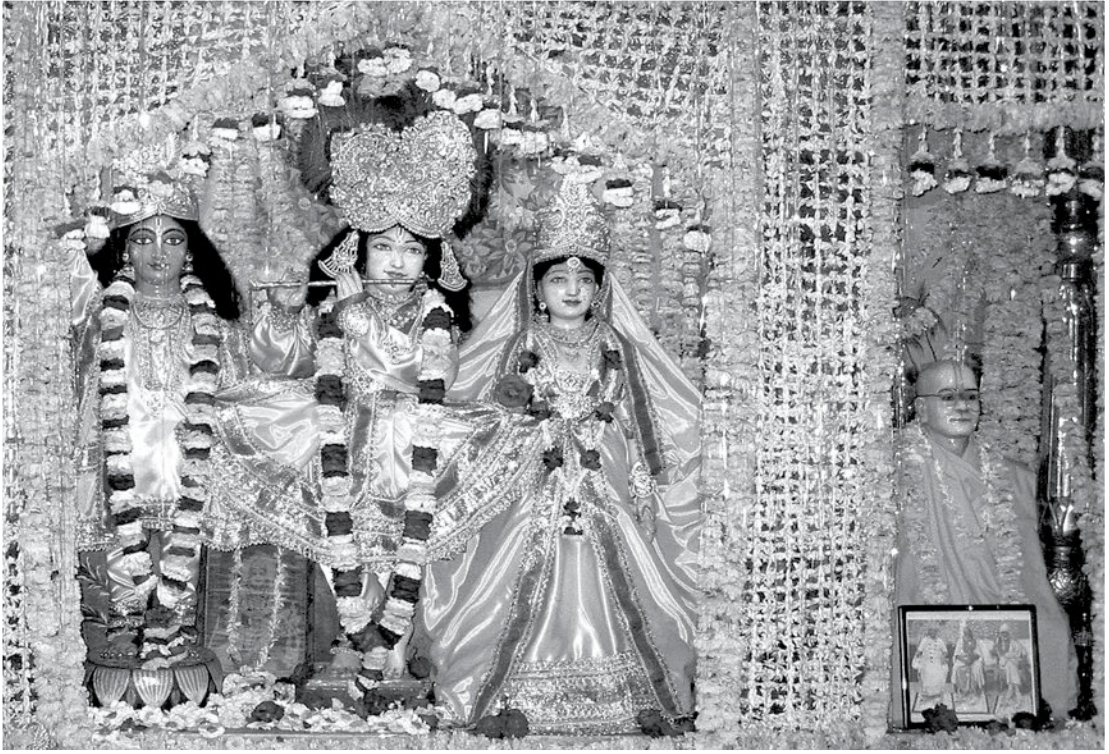
Though the words *adhokṣaja* (transcendent) and *aprākṛta* (beyond materiality) are synonymous, one cannot deny their respective specialities. *Adhokṣaja* implies reverence and formality (*aiśvarya*) and *aprākṛta* implies intimate sweetness (*mādhurya*).

When Adhokṣaja, that entity of pure transcendence, appears in His supreme speciality as indistinguishable from the mundane, although He is in fact beyond its reach, He is recognized as *aprākṛta-tattva*, or that which resembles the mundane (*prakṛta*) but is in fact not.⁶ As *aprākṛta-tattva*, Bhagavān, God of gods, climbs into the lap of His mother and starts bawling. He becomes overjoyed when He gets to eat His friends’ remnants. And He is terrified when He sees the formidable indignation of His beloveds, the *gopīs*.

THE SECOND FUNCTION OF THE AVADHŪTA: PREMA-PRACĀRAṆA, PROPAGATING PREMA, THE PINNACLE OF APRĀKṚTA-TATTVA

Within that *aprākṛta-tattva*, two specialities shine forth. One is characterized by sweet charm and intimacy (*mādhurya*) and the other by benevolence and magnanimity (*audārya*). By saying that Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes are characterized by *mādhurya* and Śrī Gaura’s pastimes by *audārya*, it does not mean that those pastimes

⁶ See endnote by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja for an elaboration on this topic.



are strictly either *mādhurya* or *audārya*. When intimacy and sweetness is profuse, it yields magnanimity, and when magnanimity prevails, it naturally produces charm and sweetness.

The Gauḍiṃya *avadhūtas* shun the monistic approach of *aparokṣa* and know realization of the Lord's *adhokṣaja* aspect to be insufficient. They declare that cultivating a conception of the ultimate summit of *aprākṛta* to be their most cherished objective. Śrīla Keśava Gosvāmī Prabhu demonstrated his highly nuanced realization of *aprākṛta* by manifesting the service of Śrī Rādhā- Vinoda-bihārī, the treasure of his heart. This extraordinary and unique pastime of his, of propagating *prema*, is the main objective of our discussion.

**“Śrīla Keśava Gosvāmī
Prabhu demonstrated
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the treasure of his heart.”**

HOW ŚRĪ KṚṢṆA LOST HIS COMPLEXION WHILE IMMERSED IN THOUGHT OF ŚRĪ RĀDHĀ

In describing the specific *tattva* of Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī, Śrīla Keśava Gosvāmī Prabhu first of all glorifies Them as follows:

*rādhā-cintā-niveśena yasya kāntir-vilopitā
śrī-kṛṣṇa-caraṇaṁ vande rādhāliṅgita-vigrahaṁ
Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī-Tattvāṣṭakam (1)*

I venerate the feet of that Śrī Kṛṣṇa who has become so immersed in the contemplation of Śrī Rādhā that His own bodily complexion has faded to the degree that His form now appears to be fully embraced and entwined with that of Śrī Rādhā.

In fact, this verse acquaints us with both Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī and Śrī Gauracandra simultaneously. Primarily, the phrase *rādhāliṅgita-vigraha* conveys a sense only of Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī, that is, Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra with Śrī Rādhājī, His complexion eclipsed by Hers. A description of this event is found in the *Śrī Varāha-saṁhitā*.

Once, when a sulking Śrīmatī Rādhājī left the arena of the *rāsa* dance with Her girlfriends, Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra became overwhelmed with longing for Her. In the torment of separation from Her, He searched for Her everywhere until He became immersed in longing for Her at the base of a tamarind tree on the bank of the Yamunā river. His rapture was so profound that His limbs became covered with Śrīmatī Rādhājī's golden hue. Thus He came to bear Her mark; He became Śrī Rādhā's Kṛṣṇa. Meanwhile, Śrī Rādhājī was searching for Śrī Kṛṣṇa with Her friends when She arrived at that spot and was astonished to see Him with that golden complexion. Śrī Vinoda Mañjarī witnessed this supremely wondrous

meeting of Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and, in the form of Śrī Keśava Gosvāmī, revealed this unprecedented form on this earthly plane.

OTHER MEANINGS OF RĀDHĀLIṅGITA-VIGRAHA

Second, *rādhāliṅgita-vigraha* refers to Śrī Gauracandra as the united form of Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Jayadeva Gosvāmī hinted at this when he wrote: “*gāḍham-āśliṣṭau nirbheda-māptau* – when They embrace so intensely, it as if They become one.” When *śakti* (the supreme potency), and *śaktimān* (the possessor of the potency) are wrapped in an intense embrace, They become mutually indistinguishable, and that is the form of Śrī Gaura. Śrīla Keśava Gosvāmī described this as follows:

*cil-lilā-mithunaṁ tattvaṁ
bheda-bhedam-acintyakam*

Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī-Tattvāṣṭakam (3)

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Person who orchestrates the pastimes of divinity, manifests in the united form of *śakti* and *śaktimān* as Śrī Gauracandra, who thus personifies *acintya-bheda-bheda-tattva* [the principle of simultaneous oneness and difference that characterizes the true nature of reality].

Third, *ān* in the word *āliṅgita* (*ān* + *liṅgita*) means “complete, boundary, limit, diffusion, extensiveness,” etc. And so it follows that *rādhāliṅgita-vigraha* means that Śrī Rādhā's golden complexion pervades Śrī Kṛṣṇa, from His head to His toes, and that Her *bhāva* (mood) expands to His heart. It is this Śrī Kṛṣṇa, marked by this unique speciality, who is Śrī Śācinandana Gaurahari.

GOPĀLA-TĀPANĪ UPANIṢAD STATES ŚRĪ KṚṢṆA IS A BRAHMACĀRĪ

We will now shift topics somewhat, in order to illustrate the unique wonder of Śrī Rādhā-Vinodabihārī's form. In *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad*, we find a notable statement that Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra is a *brahmacārī*.

In a worldly sense, *brahmacarya* is the first of the four stations of life in Vedic society, a state in which the individual is very pure, innocent and free from gross lust. Therefore, the fact that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is a *brahmacārī* indicates the glories of the *gopīs* of Vraja – their supreme purity, their faultlessness, and their being devoid of even a scent of lust.

*sahaja gopīra prema,
nahe prākṛta kāma*

The pure love of the *gopīs* is spontaneous and is not mundane lust.

*akaitava kṛṣṇa-prema, jeno jāmbu-nada hema
sei premā nṛloke nā haya*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 2.43)

Pure love for Kṛṣṇa is free from all hypocrisy – pure like the gold of the Jāmbu river. Such love does not exist in the realm of men.

It follows therefore that Śrī Kṛṣṇa's position as a *brahmacārī* cannot be appreciated by the mundane perception of the human world.

THE ULTIMATE MEANING OF BRAHMACĀRĪ

Brahmacarya does not only mean to be devoid of lust. One who forever revels in the names,

**“*Brahmacarya* does not
only mean to be devoid
of lust. One who forever
revels in the names,
forms, qualities and
pastimes of Parabrahma,
the Supreme Lord,
is truly a *brahmacārī*
to the core.”**

forms, qualities and pastimes of Parabrahma, the Supreme Lord, is truly a *brahmacārī* to the core, a *brahmacārī* in the ultimate spiritual sense. [*Brahma* refers to Parabrahma, the Supreme Reality and *cārī* means “revels in”.] From this perspective, the *brahmacarya* of the residents of Vraja is millions of times greater than that of the Four Kumāras, who were celibate from birth and for eternity. And among the residents of Vraja, the most exalted are the *vraja-devīs*, who are forever immersed in serving Śrī Kṛṣṇa in amorous love (*madhura-rasa*).

HOW DOES PARABRAHMA REVEL IN HIMSELF?

But this still begs the question that if Śrī Kṛṣṇa is Himself Parabrahma, how is He a *brahmacārī*?

Śrī Nārada-pañcarātra provides an illuminating point to reconcile this query:

*yathā brahma-svarūpa
śrī kṛṣṇaḥ prakṛteḥ paraḥ
tathā brahma-svarūpā
rādhikā prakṛteḥ parā*

Just as Śrī Kṛṣṇa, as the personification and fullest expression of *brahma*, is beyond the material energy, so Śrīmatī Rādhikā, too, is the utmost personification of *brahma* and beyond the material energy. [Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the *viśaya-tattva* or objective principle of that divinity, while Śrī Rādhā is the *āśraya-tattva*, or subjective principle.]

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is *ātmārāma* (self-satisfied), but He is also *līlārāma* (one who delights in divine pastimes). Both these states of being are eternal and exist simultaneously. As *ātmārāma*, He delights in the unmanifest state of His *svarūpa-śakti*, and as *līlārāma*, He delights in the manifest state of His *svarūpa-śakti*.

*ei mata jagatera
sukhe āmi hetu
rādhikāra rūpa-guṇa
āmāra jīvātu
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta
(Ādi-līlā 4.248)*

In this way, although I am the cause of happiness in this world, Rādhikā's form and qualities are My very life.

Therefore, in both Śrī Kṛṣṇa's state of *ātmārāma* and His state of *līlārāma*, Śrīmatī Rādhikā, who, also, is *brahma-svarūpā* and who is the embodiment of His *svarūpa-śakti*, is the object of His revelry. Thus Śrī Kṛṣṇa is eternally a *brahmacārī*.

Without being acquainted with the nuances of *śakti*, one cannot fathom the nature of the ultimate wielder of *śakti* – *śaktimān*. Though Śrī Kṛṣṇa governs *śakti*, He is forever covered by that completely pure *śakti*. This is what defines His quality of *brahmacarya*.

ŚRĪ ŚRĪ RĀDHĀ-VINODA-BIHĀRĪ IS THE ULTIMATE EXPRESSION OF ŚRĪ KṚṢṆA'S BRAHMACARYA

The most exalted of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes are those He enacts as a paramour in the land of Vraja. The love of paramours (*parakīyatā*)

automatically encompasses the love experienced within matrimony (*svakīyatā*), in the same way that the word *upapati* (paramour) has the word *pati* (husband) in it. Matrimonial love, on the other hand, lacks paramour love. For this reason, the expression of *parakīya* is considered whole and complete. This is why the utmost *viṣaya* (object of love), Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and the utmost *āśraya* (abode of love), Śrīmatī Rādhikā, embrace that utmost conception – *parakīya-bhāva*. In truth, however, this paramour affection is not the cause of the Vraja *gopīs'* eternal and unprecedented love but an indicator of it.

Becoming more and more immersed in that *parakīya-bhāva*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa went from relishing the joys of being the *viṣaya* (the beloved), to relishing the joys of the *āśraya*. He experienced the love felt by the *āśraya* to be far superior.

*viṣaya-jātīya sukha āmāra āsvāda
āmā haite koṭi-guṇa āśrayer āhlāda*

*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta
(Ādi-līlā 4.133)*

The pleasure of the *viṣaya* is what I personally relish, but the delight of the *āśraya* is millions of times greater than that.

It would not be exaggerating to say that Śrī Kṛṣṇa does not feel this way when experiencing pastimes of matrimony (*svakīyatā*). Because of the extensiveness and immensity of the bliss of the abode of *prema* (*āśraya-vinoda*), He became overwhelmed with a longing to taste it.

*āśraya-jātīya sukha pāite mana dhāya
jatne āsvādite nāri ki kori upāya*

*vicāra koriye jadi āsvāda upāya
rādhikā-svarūpa haite tabe mana dhāya*

*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta
(Ādi-līlā 4.134, 145)*

[Śrī Kṛṣṇa thinks:] My mind is chasing the joy that the *āśraya-jātīya* (the lover, or active subject of *prema*) feels. Despite My efforts to do so, I cannot. What can I do? When I deliberate on how I might taste that joy, My mind races toward the idea of assuming Rādhikā's intrinsic nature."

This sort of greed is in actuality the ultimate result of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *brahmacarya*. What is the deep pleasure that Rādhā feels? Driven by this greed Śrī Kṛṣṇa went to revel (*vihāra*) in that deep pleasure (*vinoda*) of Rādhā and lost His own mood and complexion. That is who Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī is and that is who Śrī Gauracandra is.

*śrī rādhāyaḥ praṇaya-mahimā
kidṛśo vānayaivā-
svādāyo yenādbhuta-madhurimā
kidṛśo vā madīyaḥ
saukhyam cāsyā mad-anubhavataḥ
kidṛśam veti lobhāt
tad-bhāvādhyāḥ samajani
śacī-garbha-sindhau harīnduḥ*

*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta
(Ādi-līlā 1.6)*

"How great is the glory of the deeply intense love (*praṇaya*) of Śrī Rādhā? What is the nature of My astonishing sweetness, which She alone relishes? And what special kind of happiness does She experience upon tasting

My sweetness?" Intense greed to taste these three things arose within the heart of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and to fulfil that intense desire, He took birth from the womb of Mother Śrī Śacī, like the full moon rising from the ocean.

Śrīla Keśava Gosvāmī Prabhu manifested service to Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī in this world, defeating the notion of impersonal, monistic *brahmacarya* and inspiring all towards cultivating *aprākṛta-brahmacarya*. He thus discourages the people of the world from nurturing the worthless egotistical notions they interpret from statements like "*aham brahmāsmi* – I am *brahma*". There is no need for the soul to long to become *brahma* and strive to merge with Parabrahma [the *viśaya*]. Let all souls instead immerse themselves in the ecstasy of the *āśraya*, which is inherent in their true nature and identity, under the guidance of the root *āśraya-vigraha* figure, Śrī Rādhārāṇī, who experiences an ecstasy that Parabrahma Himself hankers to taste.

THE EXCLUSIVE SPECIALITY OF ŚRĪ RĀDHĀ-VINODA-BIHĀRĪ

The three deities Śrī Rādhā-Madana-mohana, Śrī Rādhā-Govinda, Śrī Rādhā-Gopīnātha, represent the principles of *sambandha*, *abhidheya* and *prajojana*, respectively. They, along with Śrī Rādhā-ramaṇa, who is famous as Their combined form, and also all the other deity forms of Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra, represent His absorption in relishing only *viśaya-vinoda*, the pleasure He enjoys as the object of love. Even the "melted by love" form of Śrī Jagannātha, though assumed due to separation from Rādhā, does not manifest as a result of relishing the deep pleasure experienced by Rādhā (*rādhā-vinoda*). It is for this reason that the form of Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-



Śrī Rādhā-Madana-mohana



Śrī Rādhā-Govinda



Śrī Rādhā-Gopinātha

bihārī represents a unique speciality in Gauḍīya society. Unfortunately, however, certain so-called Gauḍīyas, out of ignorance and insanity born of envy, say that Śrī Kṛṣṇa's absorption in Śrī Rādhā's mood and His acceptance of Her complexion was a one-time occurrence, and therefore, eternal service to such a manifestation is not possible.

This is a symptom of misfortune. This sort of knowledge is influenced by mundane sensory perception (*akṣaja*) and can never appreciate the simultaneous ever-freshness and eternality of Bhagavān's pastimes. With this logic, such people would regard Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara's *dāma-bandhana-līlā* as a one-time occurrence as well, and thus deem Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī's establishment of service to Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara as inappropriate. The limited intelligence of such persons would dictate that if Śrī Rādhā-Madana-mohana are to be served eternally, then it would not be possible to eternally simultaneously serve Śrī Rādhā-Govinda. They cannot conceive

of the fact that because there are so many different pastimes, there are so many different eternally worshipful deity forms. These people seem unable to see that in Śrī Puruṣottama-dhāma, to either side of the ancient deity of Śrī Toṭā Gopinātha, are dark-complexioned Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Śrīmatī Lalitā, and in Vraja-dhāma, in Nandagrāma, the Baladeva who stands beside Śrī Kṛṣṇa has the same dark complexion. In truth,



Śrī Toṭā Gopinātha

perceiving Bhagavān's pastimes as illusory or temporary is due to the influence of Māyāvāda.

*māyāvāda doṣa jāra hṛdaye paśilo
kutarke hṛdaya tā'ra baja-sama bhelo
Śaraṇāgati (5.3.5)*

A heart in which the flaw of Māyāvāda has entered becomes embroiled in false logic and becomes as harsh as a thunderbolt.

SERVING ŚRĪ RĀDHĀ-VINODA-BIHĀRĪ
LEADS TO SERVICE IN BOTH REALMS
OF GOLOKA

There are two realms that exist within Goloka Vṛndāvana. One is called *kṛṣṇa-pīṭha* and the other *gaura-pīṭha*. The Lord of both of these realms is Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In relation to these two states that the Supreme Truth (*para-tattva*) exists in, Śrīla Keśava Gosvāmī Prabhu has said:

*tattvam-ekaṁ param vidyāl-
līlayā tad-dvidhā-sthitam
gaurah kṛṣṇaḥ svayaṁ hy etad
ubhāv ubhayam āpnutaḥ
Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī-Tattvāṣṭakam (4)*

The Supreme Truth is one. Through different pastimes, however, that one Truth manifests as and exists in two different and individual forms as Śrī Gaura and Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They are both the Supreme Truth and Entity. In principle, Gaura is Kṛṣṇa Himself. Both of these forms are inextricably linked. Śrī Gaurasundara becomes Śyāmasundara Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śyāmasundara Śrī Kṛṣṇa once again becomes Śrī Gaurasundara.

When absorbed in pastimes of union (*sambhoga-līlā*), that *para-tattva* is Śrī

**“ This union and separation
nourish each other, and thus
Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Gaura
share this duality.
... Through serving
Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī,
one attains a revelation of
both pastimes and gains the
opportunity to relish the joy of
service in both *kṛṣṇa-pīṭha*
and *gaura-pīṭha*. ”**

Vrajendra-nandana in *kṛṣṇa-pīṭha*. And when He becomes absorbed in pastimes of separation (*vipralambha-līlā*), He is Śrī Śacīnandana in *gaura-pīṭha*. This union and separation nourish each other, and thus Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Gaura share this duality.

This wonder cannot be conjured up or appreciated by any taxing feat of the imagination. These two pastimes are simultaneous and eternal, and the story of Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī is like a *yoga-sūtra* (a connecting thread) to these two pastimes. Therefore, through serving Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī, one attains a revelation of both pastimes and gains the opportunity to relish the joy of service in both *kṛṣṇa-pīṭha* and *gaura-pīṭha*.

A person who worships only Gaura during his *sādhana* will, in the stage of perfection, attain service only in *gaura-pīṭha*. And someone who worships only Kṛṣṇa during his *sādhana*, likewise attains only *kṛṣṇa-pīṭha*. By engaging in

the service of Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī, however, the *sādhaka* resides in both realms when he attains perfection and becomes submerged in the bliss of serving both Śrī Śyāmasundara and Śrī Gaurasundara. This is the special wonder of Śrī Śrīla Keśava Gosvāmī Prabhu's role in the

promulgation of *prema*. This is the most esoteric and exalted attainment in the process of *bhajana* performed by the followers of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī.

Translated from *Śrī Gaudīya-patrikā*
By the Rays of The Harmonist team

ENDNOTE

The following is an excerpt from a lecture by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja delivered on the appearance day of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, in Singapore, 13 February, 2001.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda taught that there are five kinds of knowledge: *pratyakṣa* [*akṣaja*], *parokṣa*, *aparokṣa*, *adhokṣaja*, and *aprākṛta*. The knowledge of everything we see and realize by our direct experience is called *pratyakṣa* [or *akṣaja*]. But this is false [not complete, or true, knowledge].

Then, *parokṣa*. We don't see Svarga, heaven, but we believe in it. There is also a history of Svarga. We will have to accept Svarga, although we don't see it. We hear that if a man is a thief, a dacoit, a debauch, and so on, he will have to go to *naraka*, hell. On the other hand, if he is pious, he will go to Svarga and there he will be very happy. This knowledge is called *parokṣa*.

Then, *aparokṣa*. This is the knowledge taught by Śaṅkarācārya. One day we will have to die, and we will have to give up everything in this world. Our beauty will go, our body will go, whatever we are collecting will go, and everything else will go. We cannot take anything, neither our pennies nor our pens, from this world. So why are we collecting all these bogus things? Why? An intelligent person thinks about this and becomes detached, but a bogus, foolish person remains attached to sense gratification.

Then, *adhokṣaja*. What is *adhokṣaja*? *Adhokṣaja* is Vaikuṇṭha, that place where there is no *kāla*, time. There is only the eternal present. There is no birth and death, and no suffering and sorrow. Nothing bad is there. In that abode there is so much opulence, and everyone there prays to Nārāyaṇa.

There is something higher than this, however, and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has taught that this most superior truth is called *aprākṛta*. *Aprākṛta* is that realm where *vraja-līlā* is performed. Kṛṣṇa is sometimes like a baby there. There He is controlled by His father and mother, He is controlled by His beloved *gopīs*, and He is controlled by his friends. No one can ever imagine such very, very sweet pastimes. We should try to know this *aprākṛta*. We should try to serve this *aprākṛta* Kṛṣṇa who is with so many *gopīs*, with His father and mother, with His *sakhās*, and with all His cows and very sweet cowherding pastimes. This is the aim and object of our life: service to this Kṛṣṇa. This is *aprākṛta-jñāna*.

Endnote transcribed and edited
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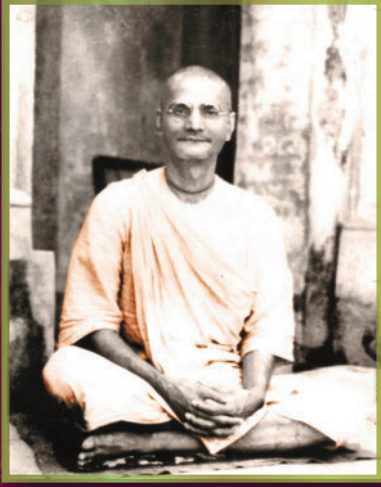
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Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja's impact on this Earth was momentous.

As one the foremost disciples of Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, he devoted his life to serving his *guru's* mission with dynamism throughout India – leading pilgrimages, giving discourses and writing articles on subtle and vital aspects of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava philosophy.

He was the *sannyāsa-guru* of Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, who performed the inconceivable task of bringing the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement to Western shores and firmly establishing it there. Furthermore, he was the *dikṣā-* and *sannyāsa-guru* of Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who later travelled the globe countless times, perfectly elucidating the inner purpose of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's advent.

He took birth in East Bengal in 1898 and departed from this world in 1968, having sown the seeds that would change the lives of millions.

Throughout his life, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja always sought to protect Śrīla Prabhupāda's innermost wishes. He was constantly engaged in establishing *daiva-varṇāśrama-dharma*, maintaining his spiritual practice, preaching the conclusions of *bhakti*, organizing pilgrimages of the holy *dhāma*, setting up printing presses to publish devotional literature, propagating the holy name, and other such services.

Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda would engage him in intimate and confidential services. He was so pleased with him that he adorned him with the title Kṛti-ratna, which was a divine utterance of blessing, indicative of devotion.

Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Your heart is offered to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and thus remains far from illusion and ignorance. You are always immersed in the ecstasy of service, and you always speak sweetly. As you are self-satisfied, your countenance is supremely happy. I have never seen you unhappy for even a moment, and beholding you rouses sheer delight in the heart. All glories, all glories to Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava, I do declare.

Śrīmatī Sarojavāsīnī-devī

