

Rays of
The Harmonist

Gaudiya Vedanta Publications

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Dedicated to

ĀCĀRYA KEŚARĪ NITYĀ-LĪLĀ PRAVIṢṬĀ
OM VIṢṆUPĀDA AṢṬOTTARA-ŚATA ŚRĪ

**Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna
Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja**

Founder-Ācārya
of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti

He earnestly desired to re-institute the publication of all the magazines and journals that were being published during the manifest presence of Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda.

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nityā-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata śrī
Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja



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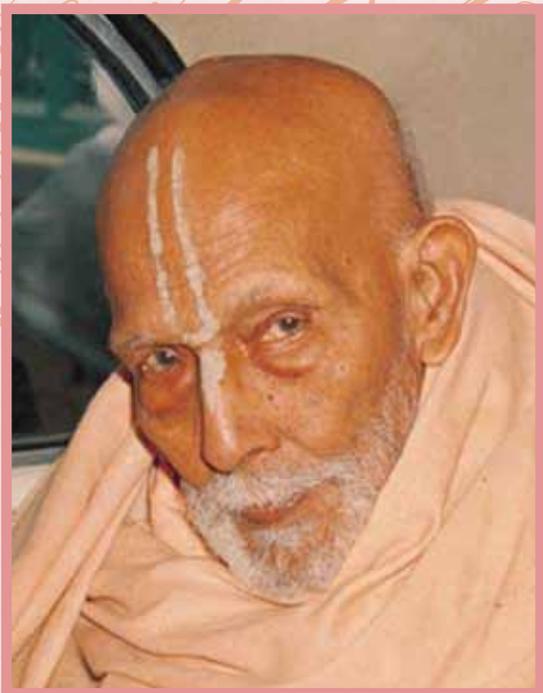
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STATEMENT OF PURPOSES

1. To protect the *vicāra-dhārā*, or current of conceptions, of the *svārūpa-rūpānuga-guru-paramparā* as presented in the modern age by Śrīmad Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura (i.e. to uproot opinions opposed to the genuine conclusions of the Śrī Gauḍīya *sampradāya*).
2. To promote a co-operative effort to preach the message of Śrī Rūpa-Raghunātha in accordance with the last instructions of Prabhupāda Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura.



Editorial

Excerpts from
The Worship of the Disappearance
Day of Śrīla Gurudeva

By Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Śrī Bhagavān and His non-different manifestation, *śrī gurudeva*, are not under the control of material time. The potency of time (*kāla-śakti*) in the form of the cycle of material birth and death can have no influence over them. The pastime of Śrī Bhagavān – the transcendental *visaya-igraba* (object of worship) – in which He descends from the transcendental world to this material world is termed *avirbhāva*, or divine appearance, and the pastime in which He abandons this material world to return back to the transcendental abode, Goloka, is termed as *tirobhāva*.

In exactly the same manner, the arrival of *śrī gurudeva* – who is the *asraya-igraba*, or abode of love for Śrī Bhagavān – in this material world and his departure for *nitya-līlā*, or the eternal pastimes of the Lord, is also termed ‘appearance’ (*avirbhāva*) and ‘disappearance’ (*tirobhāva*). In fact, *śrī gurudeva* is eternally present. His mercifully becoming visible to the eyes of the people of this world is known as his manifest pastime, and when he exhibits his *antardhyāna-līlā* (unmanifest pastime) and remains hidden from public view, it is known as his disappearance pastime.

Because of the false conceptions of the material world, the happiness and distress that arises from this pastime of appearance and disappearance is natural and undeniable. But the distress resulting from the disappearance of

śrī guru is not same as ordinary material distress. It is synonymous with the happiness experienced during his manifest pastimes. In fact, in that distress is an experience of happiness that is unlimitedly greater than the happiness experienced during his manifest state.

The lamentation and cry of grief arising from the absence of the *darśana* of an eternally manifest entity in his un-manifest state may appear to be like ordinary material grief, but material distress and the transcendental pain of separation are never synonymous. Material grief is connected with a material mind engaged in a material body, and it is caused by material lust (*jaḍa-kāma*). It arises when the sense gratification of the material gross or subtle body is obstructed. Transcendental grief, or the mood of separation, however, is connected to the eternal soul and arises out of transcendental love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa or the beloved of Śrī Kṛṣṇa (*kārṣṇa*).

The degree of pain experienced due to separation is directly linked with the extent of the love felt. Feelings of separation are indeed the expression of love (*prema*). The *prema* that is devoid of the experience of the pain of separation cannot be accepted as *prema*, or real love, at any cost. The pain of separation is inseparably related with *prema*. Where there is a feeling of separation, it indicates love, and where there is love, feelings of separation will

certainly exist. Love devoid of separation and separation without love is nothing but a deceitful drama.

It is certainly essential for all of us to participate in the *virahotsava*, or commemoration of separation, in honour of devotees who themselves are afflicted with the pain of separation. Love is the eternal function (*nitya-vṛtti*) of the pure soul. Upon hearing *bhāgavata-kathā*, from the lips of *sādhus*, the pure constitutional position of the soul gradually manifests and simultaneously, the soul's natural tendency (*vṛtti*) is also revealed. Any expression of separation before such a stage of love has been attained is nothing but duplicity. Such separation concludes in some verbal expression only and arises from temporary sentiment.

Śrī Jagadānanda, associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, said,

*gorāra āmi gorāra āmi—mukhe balile nābi cale
gorāra ācāra gorāra vicāra laile phala phale*

Prema-vivarta

It is of no use to merely call out loudly, "I belong to Śrī Gaura, I belong to Śrī Gaura!" The real benefit is achieved only on accepting His precept and following His behaviour.

This is the absolute reality. If, due to temporary sentiment in the name of separation from Śrīla Gurudeva, I display a cry of grief or pretentious weeping in my lecture, *kīrtana* or *istagosthi*, or if I express profuse pain of separation in writing, for example, then I have not observed his *virahotsava* at all. "*Manera kathā gaura jāne, phānki kemane dibe* – Śrī Gaura is aware of your mind. How can you deceive Him?" How will I attain real benefit by weeping excessively to attract the attention of those assembled before me or to earn public acclaim? The sole result will be that we will deceive ourselves and others.

Where pain due to separation from a loved one is genuine, one cannot remain without making an all out effort to bring true pleasure to the loved one. If I have eternal relationship with him, if he is truly my eternal master life after life, if he is not forced to accept a birth in higher or lower species as a result of his past activities like a mortal being, if he, as a most intimate associate of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda has entered Their eternal pastimes, then is He not the eternally exiting reality – in past present and future? Is he not able to grasp my conceptions and tendency for *karma*, *akarma* and *vikarma*? Through his internal vision, is he not able to see my pretentious spiritual practices, my false renunciation of sense gratification in the name of *yukta-vairāgya*, my greed to acquire money, women and recognition while preaching



In the beginning, middle and in end, Śrīla Prabhupāda has always given one single instruction: to cultivate *śuddha-bhakti*. The life and teachings of Śrīla Rūpa and Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī alone should be the subject of our personal behaviour (*acara*) and preaching (*pracara*).



the glories of Bhagavān and His holy names, my posing as *guru* [or a great person] even though I am actually minuscule due to my attachment to lust and anger, and my audacity to want the seat of the spiritual master himself? Does the x-ray vision of his eyes, which are like the transcendental sun and which are always seeing transcendence, unable to see through and identify, both within me and without, my duplicity and unpleasant deeds?

I may be able to fool common people but does that mean that I can fool him also? No; that is never possible. He is an entity beyond the perception of material senses and beyond the control of material energy, and he is completely aware of my internal and external situation. With the transcendental torchlight of knowledge, he removes the covering of ignorance from my eyes, which are immersed in the darkness of ignorance, and He bestows transcendental vision upon me. Then by attaining knowledge of the self (*sva-tattva*), the Supreme Lord (*para-tattva*), the goal (of life), the means to achieve that (*sādhyā-sādhana tattva*) and the obstruction in that path, which is the material energy (*maya-tattva*), I will be extremely blessed.

I shall be inviting extreme misfortune by becoming averse to the instructions of *śrī gurudeva* and not fulfilling his heartfelt desires, and later on, I will also impose much suspicion on *śrī gurudeva's* pastime of delivering the fallen souls itself. This alone is an indication of the conditioned soul's extreme misfortune. There cannot be a greater act of ungratefulness or villainy than this. Such deplorable persons will not even find place in hell. It is imperative to give up their association, considering it to be most inappropriate.

In the beginning, middle and in end, Śrīla Prabhupāda has always given one single instruction: to cultivate *śuddha-bhakti*. The life and teachings of Śrīla Rūpa and Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī alone should be the subject of our personal behaviour (*acara*) and preaching (*pracara*). Our most cherished desire should be to become the dust of the lotus feet of the *rūpānuga* devotees – those following the footsteps of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. With the objective of satisfying the transcendental senses of the Absolute (*advaya-jnana*), the expertise of our *bhajana* is to remain together under the guidance of the *āśraya-vigraha* (*śrīla gurudeva*).

May the current of teachings coming from Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī flow constantly in this world. May we never, under any condition, become disinclined to performing *śrī kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana yajña*. By an ever increasing affection for that alone, all our goals will be accomplished. By taking single pointed shelter at the lotus feet of best of *rūpānuga* devotees, you should preach the teachings of Śrīla Rūpa and Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī with intense enthusiasm and without any fear.

You should never make efforts for accumulating knowledge or money for your own sense gratification. You should collect these only for the service of the Supreme Lord; you should never associate with non-devotees for money or for other selfish motives.

The real *virabotsava* (commemoration of separation) will be observed only when we sincerely endeavour to obey the above mentioned heartfelt wishes of our most worshipful Śrīla Prabhupāda and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. If the disciple displays laziness in or indifference to following the direct or indirect instructions of *śrīla gurudeva*, and only displays the pain of separation merely with his lips when he delivers a lecture, sings a *bhajana* or writes an essay, then such expression will never truly bring pleasure to *śrī gurudeva*. Only while trying to execute the instructions of Śrī Caitanya or while trying to help others follow these instructions, will the genuine grief that results from love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the devotee of Śrī Kṛṣṇa appear in one's heart.

Śrī gurudeva is pleased when his most cherished desires are fulfilled. The glories and the specialities of his precepts and behaviour cannot be completely described in just one essay or even in hundreds of essays and thousands of poetic verses. The more we describe him, the more his glories sound like a new narration. The more we reflect

upon him and his transcendental qualities the more we experience an ever fresh astonishment. Realization of the absence of such a great personality leads to a pain of heart that is so burning likened to the sting of hundreds of scorpions. Only then can the true meaning of the song by Śrīla Narrotama dāsa Ṭhākura be understood:

tua adarsane abi, garale jarala debi

The venom of the snake of separation from You has caused this spirit soul to wither and decay.

Only when the heart is full of agony in separation from *śrī gurudeva*, who is beloved of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, will that same heart experience separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Can other unfavourable activities like discussions or criticism of others, an attempt to hurt others, partisanship, envy, violence or dishonesty find a place in a heart in which the pain of separation from *śrī gurudeva* has awakened? The lotus feet of *śrī gurudeva* alone are the only shelter for *bhakti*, and by keeping those feet in one's heart, none of thoughts opposing *bhakti* are able to find place there.

When everyone makes the service of the lotus feet of *śrī gurudeva* their single, highest goal, then where is the space for dispute? But if there is an aspiration for the prospect of independent gains, worship or recognition, then the collective endeavour to serve *śrī gurudeva* becomes full of faults. Thoughts of becoming independent creep in, and harmony is lost. Due to varieties in people's nature, an assortment of diverse opinion slip in and differences occur upon hearing the simple and clear instructions that have been issued by the same *gurudeva*. In such case, *śrī gurudeva* alone is our saviour.

In the end, I bow down at the feet of all the Vaiṣṇavas with cloth around my neck [in all humility] and seek their mercy and blessings. I pray that they remain pleased with me, because "*vaiṣṇavera kṛpā jābe sarva-siddhi* – all perfections are achieved by the mercy of the Vaiṣṇavas. Only by sincerely taking the *anugātya* of Vaiṣṇavas can true separation from *śrīla gurudeva* be experienced in the heart. Even a dry, hard and desert like heart can become soft, moist and perfectly even, when watered by the mellow of *bhakti*.

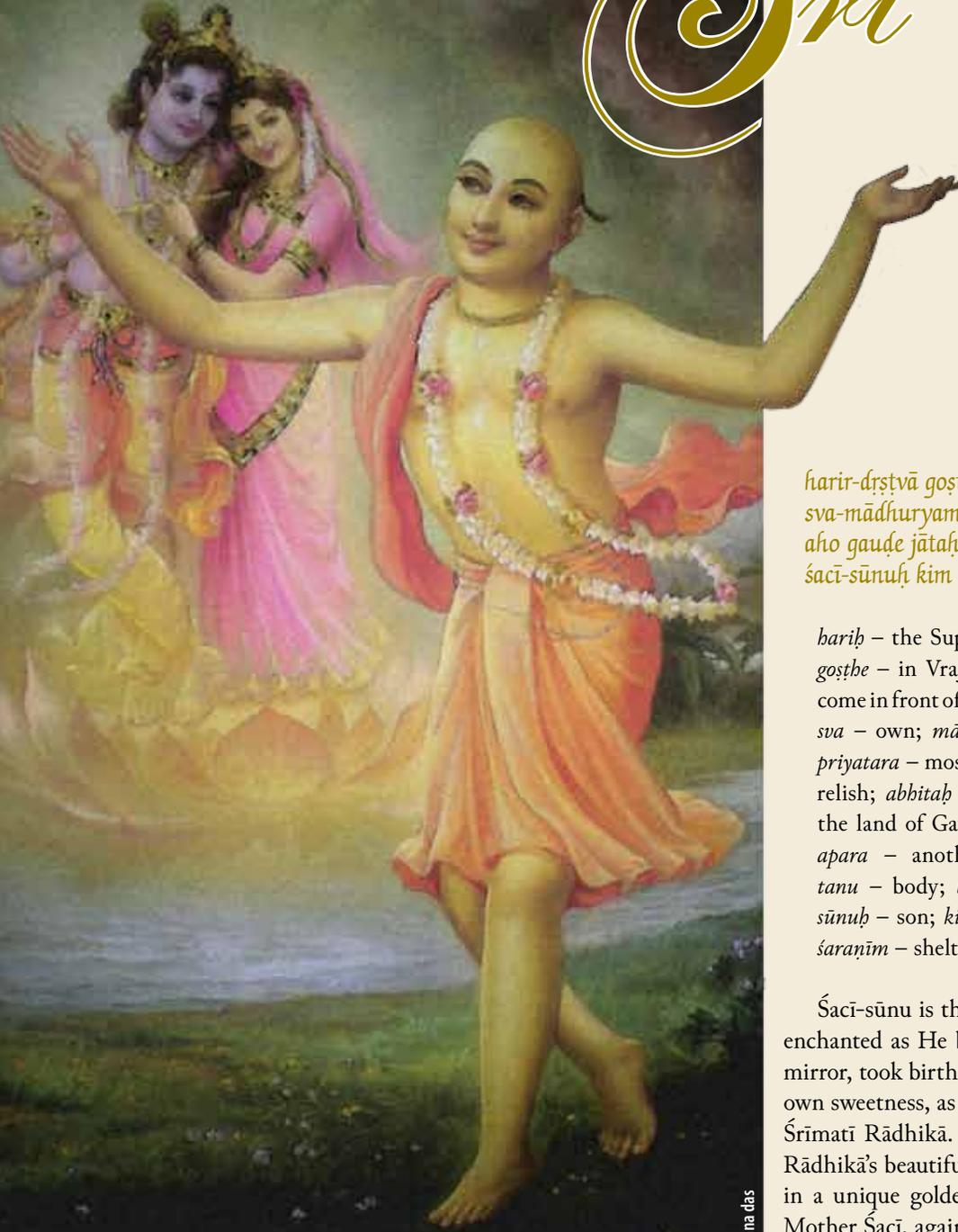
*śrī guru carane rati, ei se uttama gati,
ye prasade pure sarva asa*

Attachment to the lotus feet of *śrī guru* is the highest destination. By his grace all of our desires for spiritual perfection are fulfilled.

All glories to *śrī gurudeva* and his associates! 

Translated from *Śrī Bhakti Pramoda vāṇī-vaibhava*

Śrī Śacī-



painting courtesy – Vasudev Krishna das

*harir-dṛṣṭvā goṣṭhe mukura-gatam-ātmānam-atulam
sva-mādhuryam rādhā-priyatara-sakhīvāptum-abhitaḥ
aho gaude jātaḥ prabhur-apara-gauraika-tanu-bhāḥ
śacī-sūnuḥ kim me nayana-śaraṇīm yāsyati punaḥ (1)*

bariḥ – the Supreme Lord Hari; *dṛṣṭvā* – after seeing; *goṣṭhe* – in Vraja; *mukura* – a mirror; *gatam* – having come in front of; *ātmānam* – self; *atulam* – incomparable; *sva* – own; *mādhuryam* – sweetness; *rādhā* – Rādhā; *priyatara* – most dear; *sakhī* – *sakhī*; *iva* – like; *āptum* – relish; *abhitaḥ* – in every way; *aho* – ah!; *gaude* – in the land of Gauḍa; *jātaḥ* – born; *prabhūḥ* – the Lord; *apara* – another; *gaura* – golden; *eka* – unique; *tanu* – body; *bhāḥ* – accepting; *śacī* – Mother Śacī; *sūnuḥ* – son; *kim* – whether; *me* – my; *nayana* – eyes; *śaraṇīm* – shelter; *yāsyati* – will come; *punaḥ* – again.

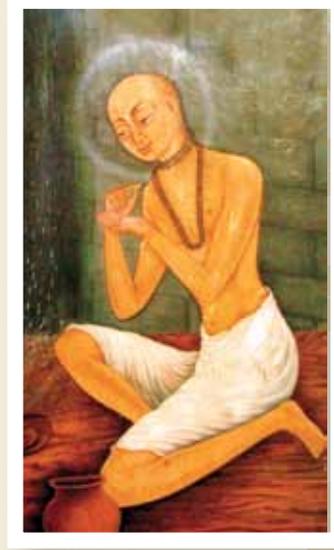
Śacī-sūnu is that Śrī Hari who, in Vraja, upon becoming enchanted as He beheld His own incomparable beauty in a mirror, took birth in Gauḍa-deśa to taste every aspect of His own sweetness, as exclusively relished by His most dear *sakhī* Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Aho! To do so He even adopted Śrīmatī Rādhikā's beautiful golden complexion manifesting Himself in a unique golden form. Will that Śacī-sūnu, the son of Mother Śacī, again appear on the pathway of my eyes?



*purī-devasyāntaḥ praṇaya-madhunā snāna-madhuro
muhur-govindodyad-viśada-paricaryārcita-padaḥ
svarūpasya prānārbuda-kamala-nīrājita-mukhaḥ
śacī-sūnuḥ kim me nayana-śaraṇīm yāsyati punaḥ (2)*

Sūnvāstakam

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī



purī – of Śrī Īsvara Purī; *devasya* – divine master; *antaḥ* – within the heart; *praṇaya* – love; *madhunā* – with honey; *snāna* – bath; *madburaḥ* – sweet; *mubuh* – always; *govinda* – Govinda dāsa; *udyat* – coming forth; *viśada* – splendid; *paricaryā* – service; *arcita* – worshipped; *padaḥ* – feet; *svarūpasya* – of Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara; *prāṇa* – life; *arbuda* – one hundred-million; *kamala* – lotus; *nīrājita* – shone upon; *mukhaḥ* – face; *śacī* – Mother Śacī; *sūnuḥ* – son; *kim* – whether; *me* – my; *nayana* – eyes; *śaraṇīm* – shelter; *yāsyati* – will come; *punaḥ* – again.

He was sweetly bathed with the honey of love that exists within Śrī Īsvara Purī's heart, His lotus feet were perpetually served by Govinda dāsa's illustrious initiatives, and His lovely face shone brightly, being worshipped by Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara with the lotuses of millions of his lives. Will that son of Mother Śacī again appear on the pathway of my eyes?



dadhānaḥ kaupīnam tad-upari bahir-vastram-aruṇam prakāṇḍo hemādri-dyutibhir-abhitaḥ sevita-tanuḥ mudā gāyann-uccair-nija-madhura-nāmāvalim-asau śacī-sūnuḥ kim me nayana-śaraṇīm yāsyati punaḥ (3)

dadhānaḥ – wears; *kaupīnam* – the undercloth of a renunciant; *tad* – that; *upari* – over; *bahir* – external; *vastram* – cloth; *aruṇam* – reddish like the morning sun; *prakāṇḍo* – large body; *hema* – golden; *adri* – mountain; *dyutibhir* – by the effulgence; *abhitaḥ* – in

all respects; *sevita* – served; *tanuḥ* – body; *mudā* – with great delight; *gāyann* – singing; *uccair* – loudly; *nija* – His own; *madhura* – sweet; *nāmāvalim* – series of names; *asau* – that; *śacī* – Mother Śacī; *sūnuḥ* – son; *kim* – whether; *me* – my; *nayana* – eyes; *śaraṇīm* – shelter; *yāsyati* – will come; *punaḥ* – again.

Although He is Bhagavān Himself, just to set an example for His devotees He wore *kaupīna*, the undercloth of a renunciant, and over that, an outer cloth the colour of the rising sun. Upon seeing the brilliant golden hue of His towering form, the golden Mount Sumerū abandoned its pride and worshipped His complexion with the entirety of its own majestic beauty. Attired as a *sannyāsī*, He loudly sang His own sweet names with great delight, wandering about in the mood of a devotee. Will that son of Mother Śacī again appear on the pathway of my eyes?



anāvedyām pūrvair api muni-gaṇair-bhakti-nipuṇaiḥ śruter-gūḍhām premojjvala-rasa-phalām bhakti-latikām kṛpālus-tām gauḍe prabhu-ati-kṛpābhīḥ prakāṭayan śacī-sūnuḥ kim me nayana-śaraṇīm yāsyati punaḥ (4)

anāvedyām – unknowable by Vedas; *pūrvaiḥ* – previous; *api* – even; *muni-gaṇaiḥ* – by the multitude of sages;



bhakti-nipūṇaiḥ – highly expert in *bhakti*; *śruteḥ* – Śrutis, the revealed scriptures; *gūḍhām* – hidden; *premojjvala-rasa* – transcendental amorous emotion; *phalām* – the fruit; *bhakti-latikām* – creeper of *bhakti*; *krpāluḥ* – merciful; *tām* – that; *gauḍe* – in the land of Gauḍa; *prabhuḥ* – the Lord; *ati-krpābhiḥ* – out of profuse mercy; *prakāṣayan* – revealed; *śacī* – Mother Śacī; *sūnuḥ* – son; *kim* – whether; *me* – my; *nayana* – eyes; *śaraṇīm* – shelter; *yāsyati* – will come; *punaḥ* – again.

In the land of Gauḍa (Bengal), out of immense compassion, that merciful Lord revealed and expanded the creeper of *bhakti*, which bears the fruit of *ujjala-prema-rasa*, the transcendental humour of amorous love. The *munis* of previous ages, although highly expert in the science of *bhakti*, were unable to attain a true understanding of this creeper, and the Śrutis had kept it hidden like a priceless jewel. Will that son of Mother Śacī again appear on the pathway of my eyes?



*nijatve gauḍīyān jagati pari gr̥hīya prabhur-imān
hare-kṛṣṇety-evam gaṇana-vidhinā kīrtayata bhōḥ
iti-prāyāṁ śikṣām janaka iva tebhyaḥ paridīśan
śacī-sūnuḥ kim me nayana-śaraṇīm yāsyati punaḥ (5)*

nijatve – as His own; *gauḍīyān* – people of Gauḍa; *jagati* – in this world; *parigr̥hīya* – accepting; *prabhur* – the Lord; *imān* – these; *hare-kṛṣṇety* – the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*; *evam* – thus; *gaṇana* – number; *vidhinā* – prescribed; *kīrtayata* – chant; *bhōḥ* – dear; *iti* – this; *prāyāṁ* – mostly; *śikṣām* – teachings; *janaka* – father; *iva* – like; *tebhyaḥ* – to them; *paridīśan* – showing; *śacī* – Mother Śacī; *sūnuḥ* – son; *kim* – whether; *me* – my; *nayana* – eyes; *śaraṇīm* – shelter; *yāsyati* – will come; *punaḥ* – again.

In this world Śacī-sūnu accepted the residents of the land of Gauḍa (Bengal) as His own and had them perform *harināma-saṅkīrtana*, telling them, “O dear ones, chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* a prescribed number of times daily.” In this way, like a father, He imparted many cherished instructions to them. Will that son of Mother Śacī again appear on the pathway of my eyes?



*puraḥ paśyan nīlācala-patim-uru-prema-nivahaiḥ
kṣaran-netrāmbhobhīḥ snapita-nija-ḍīrghojjvala-tanuḥ*

sadā tiṣṭhan deśe prāṇayi-garuḍa-stambha-carama
śacī-sūnuḥ kim me nayana-śaraṇīm yāsyati punaḥ (6)

purab – in front; *paśyan* – seeing; *nīlācala-patim* – the Lord of Nīlācala, Śrī Jagannātha; *uru* – immense; *prema* – pure love of God; *nivabaiḥ* – causing; *kṣaran* – falling; *netra* – from the eyes; *ambbaḥ* – with water; *abbih* – by them; *snāpita* – bathed; *nija* – own; *dīrgha* – tall; *ujjala* – effulgent; *tanuḥ* – body; *sadā* – always; *tiṣṭhan* – standing; *deśe* – in the place; *prāṇayi* – beloved; *garuḍa-stambha* – pillar on which Garuḍa is sitting; *carama* – behind; *śacī* – Mother Śacī; *sūnuḥ* – son; *kim* – whether; *me* – my; *nayana* – eyes; *śaraṇīm* – shelter; *yāsyati* – will come; *punaḥ* – again.

He would always stand at His favorite place behind the Garuḍa *stambha*. From there He would receive *darśana* of Śrī Jagannātha-deva and become immersed in a most powerful *prema* that caused streams of tears to fall from His eyes, which bathed His tall and exquisite body. Will that son of Mother Śacī again appear on the pathway of my eyes?



mudā dantair-daṣṭvā dyuti-vijita-bandhūkam adharam
karam kṛtvā vāmam kaṭi-nihitam-anyam parilasan
samutthāpya premnāganita-pulako nṛtya-kautukī
śacī-sūnuḥ kim me nayana-śaraṇīm yāsyati punaḥ (7)

mudā – happily; *dantaiḥ* – with teeth; *daṣṭvā* – biting; *dyuti* – splendour; *vijita* – defeat; *bandhūkam* – *bandhūka* flowers; *adharam* – lips; *karam* – hand; *kṛtvā* – do; *vāmam* – left; *kaṭi* – waist; *nihitam* – placing; *anyam* – other; *parilasan* – splendidly manifested; *samutthāpya* – by raising; *premnā* – out of pure love for God; *aganita* – countless; *pulako* – bodily hairs standing erect; *nṛtya* – dance; *kautukī* – eagerness; *śacī* – Mother Śacī; *sūnuḥ* – son; *kim* – whether; *me* – my; *nayana* – eyes; *śaraṇīm* – shelter; *yāsyati* – will come; *punaḥ* – again.

Biting His lips, which defeat the redness of the *bandhūka* flower, placing His left hand on His waist, splendidly waving His right hand above His head, His innumerable bodily hairs standing on end due to His absorption in the *prema* of Śrīmatī Rādhikā in Her separation from Kṛṣṇa, He would dance with the greatest eagerness. Will that son of Mother Śacī again appear on the pathway of my eyes?



sarit-tīrārāme viraha-vidhuro gokula-vidhor-
nadīm-anyām kurvan-nayana-jala-dhārā-vitatibhiḥ
muhur-murcchām gacchan-mṛtakam-iva viśvam viracayan
śacī-sūnuḥ kim me nayana-śaraṇīm yāsyati punaḥ (8)

sarit – river; *tīra* – bank; *ārāme* – place of resting; *viraha* – separation; *vidhuraḥ* – aggrieved; *gokula* – of Gokula; *vidhoḥ* – moon; *nadīm* – river; *anyām* – another; *kurvan* – making; *nayana* – of the eyes; *jala* – water; *dhārā* – stream; *vitati* – spreading; *abbih* – of them; *muhur* – repeatedly; *murcchām* – fainting; *gacchan* – going; *mṛtakam* – lifeless; *iva* – like; *viśvam* – world; *viracayan* – making; *śacī* – Mother Śacī; *sūnuḥ* – son; *kim* – whether; *me* – my; *nayana* – eyes; *śaraṇīm* – shelter; *yāsyati* – will come; *punaḥ* – again.

In a garden on the banks of a river, the son of Mother Śacī, being overwhelmed by feelings of separation from the moon of Gokula (Śrī Kṛṣṇa), shed so many tears that He created a new river. And in that condition, by repeatedly falling unconscious, He caused the whole world also to fall flat as if lifeless. Will that son of Mother Śacī again appear on the pathway of my eyes?



śacī-sūnor-asyāṣṭakam-idam-abhīṣṭam viracayat
sadā dainyodrekād-ati-viśada-buddhiḥ paṭhati yaḥ
prakāmam caitanyaḥ prabhur-ati-kṛpāveśa-vivaśaḥ
pṛthvū premāmbhodhiau prathita-rasade majjayati tam (9)

śacī-sūnoḥ – son of Śacī; *asya* – His; *aṣṭakam* – eight prayers; *idam* – this; *abhīṣṭam* – cherished desire; *viracayat* – granting; *sadā* – always; *dainya* – humility; *udrekād* – abundance; *ati* – very; *viśada* – brilliant; *buddhiḥ* – intelligence; *paṭhati* – recites; *yaḥ* – one who; *prakāmam* – according to desire; *caitanyaḥ* – Śrī Caitanya; *prabhur* – the Lord; *ati* – very; *kṛpā* – mercy; *āveśa* – absorption; *vivaśaḥ* – overwhelmed; *pṛthvū* – great; *prema* – *prema*; *ambhodhau* – ocean; *prathita* – celebrated; *rasade* – nectarean; *majjayati* – plunge; *tam* – him.

Whoever with abundant feelings of humility and a pure heart recites this *aṣṭaka*, which glorifies Śrī Śacī-sūnu, and which fulfils His devotees' cherished desires, Śrī Caitanya, being merciful upon him, will plunge him into the fathomless ocean of *kṛṣṇa-prema-rasa* (nectarean transcendental love for Kṛṣṇa). 🙏

Translated from Śrī Gauḍīya-stotra-ratnam



Śrī Nārāyaṇa- Gosvāmī-virahāṣṭakam

Śrīpad Vamsivadana dāsa Brahmācārī



What is *vipralambha*, the experience of separation, and how is it experienced?

By pure love and compassion alone, the transcendental Vaiṣṇava induces a transformation of heart that is so powerfully tangible that, when bereft of his company, we find no substitute in the four directions. Our subsequent hankering to again behold that person who gave us our real life is the beginning of the experience of *vipralambha*. Our experience of his divinity not only continues, but even intensifies in his absence.

For the Gauḍīyas, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, the best and foremost of *rūpānugas*, epitomizes the pinnacle of the mood of separation. In his *Śrī Śacī-sūnvāṣṭakam*, which is the outpouring of his inner feelings, he reveals his incessant yearning to again behold the divine form of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. His lament contains elucidating *tattva* carrying descriptions of the Lord's beauty, His teachings, His glories and of the pastimes that Śrīla Dāsa Gosvāmī directly witnessed.

Following in the footsteps of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, a humble servant of Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja (Śrīla Gurudeva) has composed *Śrī Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Virahāṣṭakam* in a mood of deep yearning.




*sadā śrī-gaurāṅga-aruṇa-caraṇa-yugme 'ti-lalite
 yadīyā sad-dṛṣṭirjanayati ratiṁ śiśya-manasi
 sa-gosvāmī śrīmān vibudha-vara nārāyaṇa-guruḥ
 gururdevaḥ kiṁ me nayana-saraṇau bhāsyati punaḥ (1)*

He whose mere merciful glance awakens transcendental attachment (*rati*) for the extremely soft and reddish lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and who establishes this in the minds of his disciples forever; who is exalted among transcendently learned personalities, will that Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Gurudeva, again appear on the pathway of my eyes?


*yugācāryatvena pramukha-vibudhairyo nigaditaḥ
 subhījam yo bhakter-niravapata vaideśika hṛdi
 sa bhaktānām bandhuḥ-guru-caraṇa-sevā-sunipuṇaḥ
 gururdevaḥ kiṁ me nayana-saraṇau bhāsyati punaḥ (2)*

He who is adorned by the title 'Yugācārya' by the exalted *paṇḍitas* of Vraja; who has planted the beautiful seed of *unnata-ujjala-bhakti-rasa* even in the hearts of those of foreign lands; and who is most expert in serving the lotus feet of his *gurudeva*, who adorned him with the title 'Bhakta-bāndhava' (friend of the devotees) upon observing him affectionately serve devotees will that Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Gurudeva, again appear on the pathway of my eyes?


*prabhu-śrī-caitanyāmṛta madhura-vāṇīm nu dharaṇau
 prasārya premāḍṛam hṛdayamakaroda yo guṇavatām
 sa 'rādhādāsyākhye' parama-viśaye līpta-hṛdayaḥ
 gururdevaḥ kiṁ me nayana-saraṇau bhāsyati punaḥ (3)*

He who has melted with *prema* the hearts of qualified devotees by preaching the sweet and nectarean message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu all over the world; whose heart is immersed in the ultimate goal, known as *rādhā-dāsyam*; and who is expert in also immersing the hearts of others in that, will that Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Gurudeva, again appear on the pathway of my eyes?





*virāgī yo loke satatam-anurāgī hari-pade
sudakṣaḥ śiṣyānāṁ pragata-manasāṁ śāsana-vidhau
sa-kauṭilya-dhvaṁsī sakala-jagatāṁ tāraka-varaḥ
gururdevaḥ kiṁ me nayana-saraṇau bhāsyati punaḥ (4)*

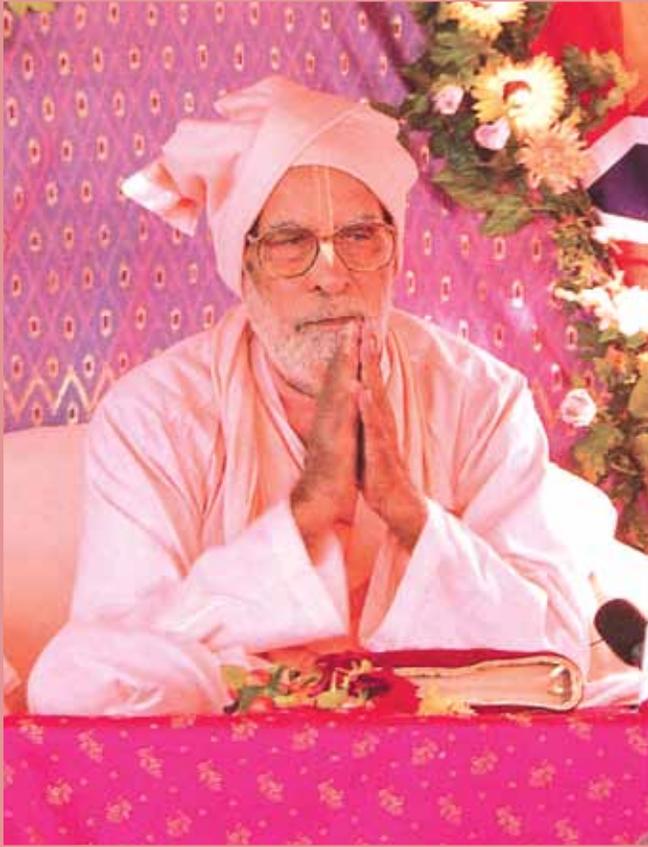
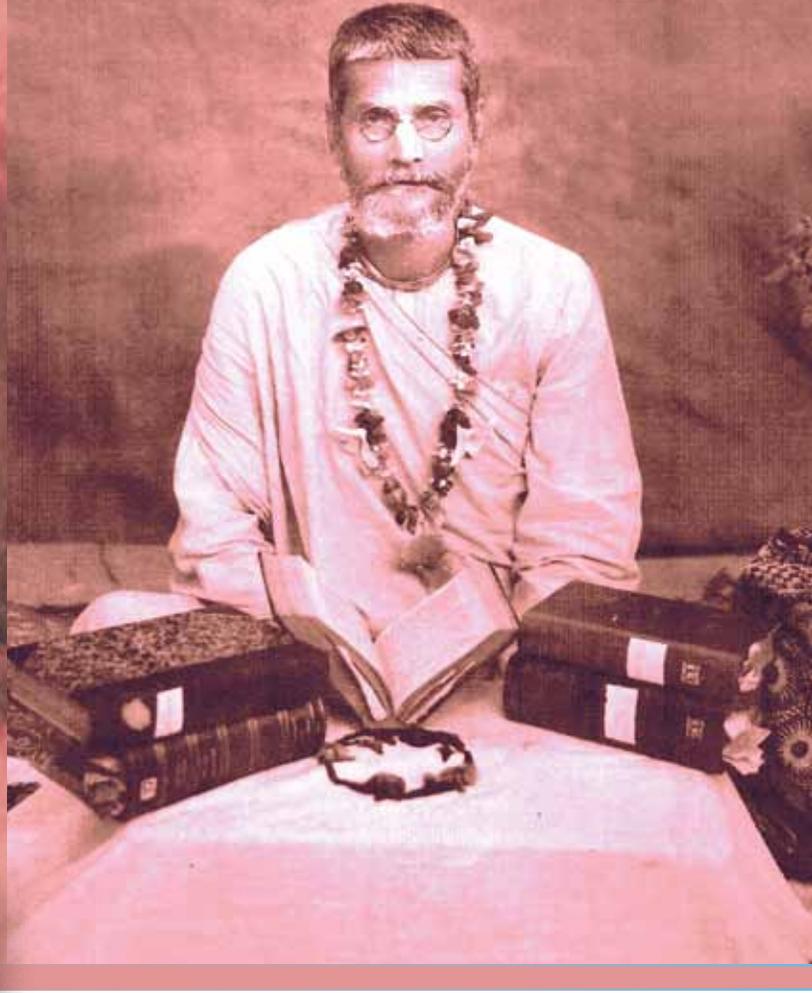
He who is fully detached from the objects of this world and who is endowed with perpetual *anurāga* (attachment) for the lotus feet of Śrī Hari; who is most expert in disciplining his disciples who are trying to elevate themselves spiritually, and who, by that discipline, destroys the crookedness in their hearts; who is foremost among those who deliver the residents of this world, will that Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Gurudeva, again appear upon the pathway of my eyes?



*sadā yo gosvāmī sṛjati sarasa-grantha-
nicayaṁ vinirmāya-vyākhyāṁ subhagam-ākārod
bhāvamakhilam mudā cakre vartī
praṇayamadhunā snāna-madhuro
gururdevaḥ kiṁ me nayana-saraṇau
bhāsyati punaḥ (5)*

He who with his commentaries and purports, always makes the deep moods of the *rasa*-filled transcendental literature of the *gosvāmīs* simple and easy to understand; and who blissfully and charmingly bathes in the honey-like *praṇaya-rasa* (loving mellows) of the best of *rasika-ācāryas*, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, will that Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Gurudeva, again appear on the pathway of my eyes?





*tridaṇḍī sannyaṣī lalita-vadanaḥ kañja nayanaḥ
 kaṣāyair-vaṣṭrairyāḥ parivṛta-tanuḥ pūta-caritaḥ
 śrutau śāṣṭrai jñātā prabhu-dayita rūpo hyanugataḥ
 gururdevaḥ kiṁ me nayana-saraṇau bhāsyati punaḥ (6)*

He who is a *tridaṇḍī-sannyaṣī*; whose lotus face is pleasing and attractive; whose has blue lotus eyes; whose limbs are covered by saffron cloth; whose character is spotless and pure; who is the knower of authorized scriptures like the Śruti (the Vedas, Upaniṣads and *Vedānta-sūtra*) and the eighteen Purāṇas; who is very dear to Prabhu, that is, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu or Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda; and who is a one-pointed follower of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, will that Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Gurudeva, again appear upon the pathway of my eyes?

*mahāṣṭambho vedānta samitigato gauḍa-viduṣāṁ
pravaktā tattvānām hari lalita-bhakter-anudinam
sarasvatyā dhārānavati satatam keśava-guruḥ
gururdevaḥ kiṁ me nayana-saraṇau bhāsyati punaḥ (7)*

He who stands as the great pillar of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti and also a great pillar among scholars who know Gauḍīya *siddhānta*; who is a tireless speaker of the attractive *bhakti-tattva* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa; and who, always protects the line of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda, acting under the guidance of his *gurudeva*, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, a dear disciple of *jagad-guru* Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, will that Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Gurudeva, again appear upon the pathway of my eyes?

*ayogyā durbhāgā viśaya-rasa-liptāḥ kumatayo
labhante yasnehādāti-sujana-saubhāgya-saraṇim
'svabhakti-śrī' dāne karuṇa-ḥṛdayo deśikavaraḥ
gururdevaḥ kiṁ me nayana-saraṇau bhāsyati punaḥ (8)*

He whose affection made everyone – the unqualified, unfortunate, absorbed in sense gratification and wicked – become travelers on the path of auspiciousness, which is pursued by virtuous persons; and who, due to his heartly munificence in bestowing *sva-bhakti-śrī*, the beauty of the wealth of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's own *bhakti*, is the best of spiritual teachers, will that Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Gurudeva, again appear on the pathway of my eyes? 🙏





Accepting

By Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Excerpt from Śrī Jaiva-dharma, Chapter Twenty

Vijaya: Prabhu, please give us some detailed instructions regarding accepting shelter at the lotus feet of a spiritual master (*śrī-guru-pādāśraya*).

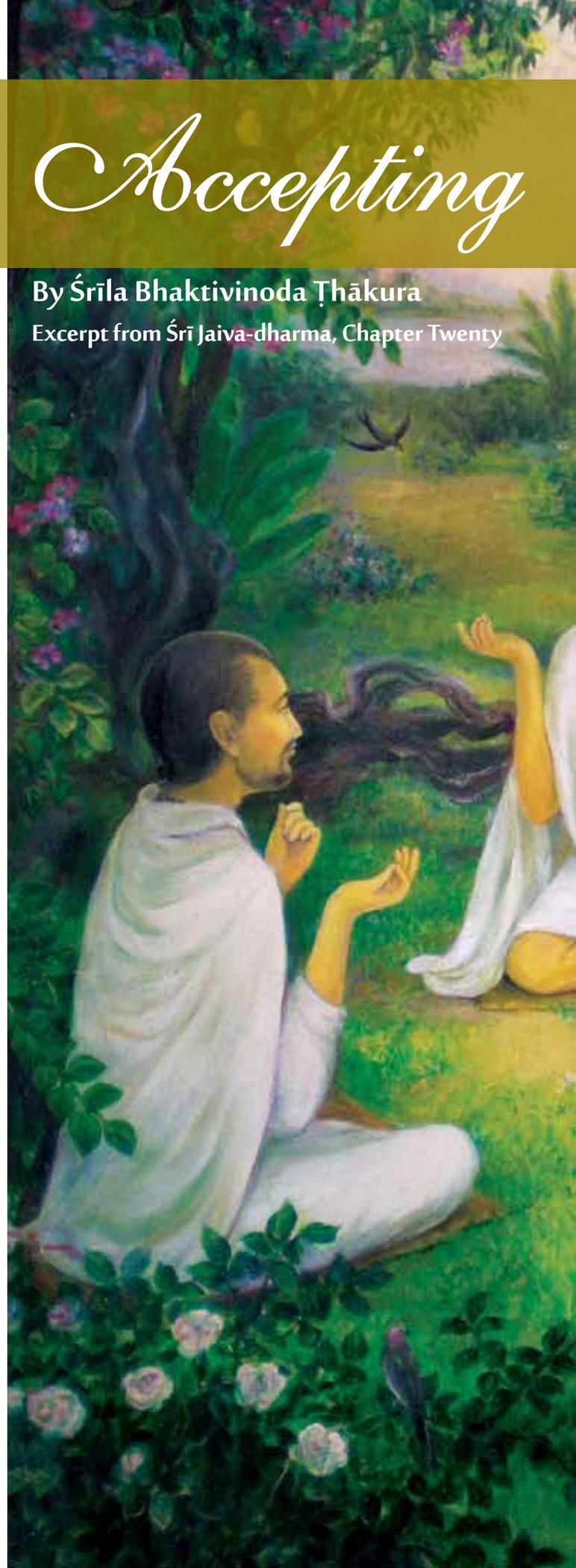
Bābājī: An aspiring disciple should first attain the eligibility (*adbikāra*) to perform one-pointed devotional service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa (*ananya-kṛṣṇa-bhakti*). He should learn the essential truths about Śrī Kṛṣṇa (*kṛṣṇa-tattva*) from a genuine *guru* by taking shelter at that *guru's* feet.

The living entity only attains the qualification for *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* when he develops *śraddhā*. This *śraddhā* is that firm faith that is awakened in relation to Śrī Hari as a result of hearing *harikathā* from the lips of pure saints, or *sādhus*. Association with saints is obtained by the influence of spiritual merits (*sukṛti*) accrued in previous births. Along with *śraddhā*, the mood of surrender (*śaraṇāgati*) will also appear to some extent.*

Śraddhā (firm faith) and *śaraṇāgati* (surrender) are almost the same principle (*tattva*). To be able to perform *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* is certainly the topmost attainment in this world. Therefore, the only person eligible for *ananya-bhakti* (one-pointed devotion) is he who has developed strong faith in these convictions: “I will perform any activity favourable to *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* as my duty and abandon any activity unfavourable to it; Kṛṣṇa is my sole protector and I accept Him as my exclusive maintainer; I am extremely wretched and destitute, and my independent desire is not beneficial for me, whereas exclusively following Kṛṣṇa’s desire is beneficial for me in every way.”

When the *jīva* attains this qualification, he becomes anxious to hear instructions on *bhakti*, and upon finding *sad-guru* (a bona fide spiritual master), he accepts shelter at his lotus feet. That is to say, he becomes the disciple of such a *guru* and accepts instructions (*śikṣā*) on *bhakti* from him.

* This *śaraṇāgati* is the external symptom of *śraddhā*, hence one can understand the development of one’s *pāramāṛthika-śraddhā* – the absolute, or transcendental form of faith – by the extent to which one has developed *śaraṇāgati*.



A Guru

*tad-vijñānārthaṁ sa gurum evābhigacchet
samt-pāniḥ śrotriyaṁ brahma-niṣṭham
Mundaka Upaniṣad (1.2.12)*

In order to obtain knowledge of the Supreme Absolute Reality – Śrī Bhagavān (*bhagavad-vastu*) – the sincere soul must approach a *sad-guru*, carrying firewood for sacrifice in his hands. In other words, he must approach *sad-guru* with transcendental faith in his heart, and surrender to him in every respect – with body, mind and words – and with all the humility at his command. The qualification of a bona fide *guru* is that he is well-versed in the Vedas, has realized the Absolute Truth (*brahma-jñāna*) and is exclusively devoted to the service of Bhagavān.

*ācāryavān puruṣo veda
Chāndogya Upaniṣad (6.14.2)*

He who takes shelter of bona fide *guru*, that is, a *guru* whose conduct is proper, comes to know that Parabrahma.

The characteristics and symptoms of a bona fide spiritual master (*sad-guru*) and a bona fide disciple (*sat-śiṣya*) are given in detail in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (1.23–64). In essence, only a person with pure character and firm faith (*śraddhā*) is qualified to become a disciple, and only that person who is endowed with unalloyed *bhakti*, who knows the science of devotional service (*bhakti-tattva-vit*), and who is of spotless character, simple, without greed, free from the influence of *māyāvāda* philosophy and expert in all devotional activities is genuinely qualified to be *guru*.

A *brāhmaṇa* who is adorned with these qualities and who is honoured by the whole society can be *guru* to people from any of the other *varṇas*, or castes. If there is no such *brāhmaṇa*, one can become the disciple of a *guru* who is situated in a higher *varṇa* than himself. But the principal import of these regulations is that, leaving all considerations of *varṇāśrama*** aside, wherever a sincere soul finds a person who knows *kṛṣṇa-tattva*, he can accept him as his *guru*.

It may be that the above-mentioned qualities are found in a person born in a *brāhmaṇa* family, but those who carry pride in being born into a higher *varṇa* in the dynasty of Āryans can offer no more than conveniences to a person who accepts him as his *guru*. Only a genuine devotee is a *guru* in truth.

Sāstra provides the rules by which the *guru* and the disciple are to mutually examine each other, as well as the time required for this examination period. The purport is that the *guru* will bestow his mercy upon the disciple only

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** *Varṇas*, or occupational divisions, include *brāhmaṇas* (the priestly class), *kṣatriyas* (administrators and warriors), *vaiśyas* (farmers and tradesmen) and *śūdras* (artisans). *Āśramas*, or stages of life, include *brahmachārī* (celibate student), *gṛhastha* (matrimony), *vānaprastha* (retirement) and *sannyāsa* (the renounced order).

when he sees that the disciple is qualified and when the disciple has developed genuine faith in him, understanding him to be a pure devotee (*śuddha-bhaktā*).

There are two kinds of *guru*: the *dīkṣā-guru*, or initiating spiritual master who gives sacred *mantras* to the disciple, and the *śikṣā-guru*, or the instructing spiritual master. One has to accept *mantra* initiation (*dīkṣā*) as well as instruction (*śikṣā*) regarding the process of *arcana* (deity worship) from the *dīkṣā-guru*. There is one *dīkṣā-guru*, but there can be several *śikṣā-gurus*. The *dīkṣā-guru* is also competent to give instructions as *śikṣā-guru*.

Vijaya: The *dīkṣā-guru* is not to be rejected, but if he is incompetent to give *sat-śikṣā*, how can he actually be a *śikṣā-guru*?

Bābājī: Before accepting a *guru*, one should examine him to see that he is expert in his understanding of the *tattva* (fundamental principles regarding the Absolute Truth) spoken of in the Vedas and that he has realized the Supreme Absolute Reality (*para-tattva*). If so, then he will certainly be capable of giving comprehensive instructions on all *tattvas*. Normally, there is no question of giving up the *dīkṣā-guru*.

A *guru* should be abandoned, however, if either of these two circumstances prevail:

(1) The disciple may have accepted the *guru* without having first examined the *guru's* knowledge of *tattva* or whether or not the *guru's* qualities are befitting a Vaiṣṇava, or without carefully observing the *guru's* other qualifications. Later, however, he may experience that the *guru* is unable to help him spiritually. One who is in this situation should give up that *guru*. Many passages in *śāstra* provide evidence of this:

*yo vyakti nyāya-rāhitam anyāyena śṛṇoti yaḥ
tāv ubhau narakam ghoram vrajataḥ kālam akṣayam*

Hari-bhakti-vilāsa (1.62)

Both he who poses as an *ācārya* but who performs an act of injustice – that is, who gives instructions that are opposed to the *sattvata-śāstras* (scriptures that elucidate pure *bhakti*) – and the disciple who mistakenly listens to him will reside in a terrible hell for an unlimited period of time.

*guror aḥy avaliptasya kāryākāryam ajānataḥ
utpatha-pratipannasya parityāgo vidhīyate*

Mahābhārata Udyoga-parva (179)
and *Nārada pañcarātra* (1.10.20)

It is indeed obligatory to reject a *guru* who does not know what is appropriate for the disciple and what is not, and who one finds to be on the wrong path, either because of bad association or because he is antagonistic to the Vaiṣṇavas.

*avaiṣṇavopadiṣṭena mantreṇa nirayaṁ vrajet
punaś ca vidbinā samyag grāhayed vaiṣṇavād guroḥ*

Hari-bhakti-vilāsa (4.144)

One goes to hell if he accepts *mantras* from a *guru* who is not a Vaiṣṇava – that is, from one who associates with women and who is devoid of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. If one has accepted *mantras* from such a false *guru*, according to the regulations of *śāstra*, one should receive the *mantras* again from a bona fide Vaiṣṇava *guru*.

(2) One's *guru* may be rejected if, due to the influence of bad association (*asat-saṅga*), he became a *māyāvādī* or an antagonist to the Vaiṣṇavas, even if he was a Vaiṣṇava when the disciple accepted him as his *guru* and was well-versed in the principles of spiritual truth (*tattva*).

It is actually one's duty to give up such a *guru*. However, if one has accepted a *guru* who is neither a *māyāvādī*, antagonistic to the Vaiṣṇavas nor attached to sinful activities, it is inappropriate to reject him simply because his spiritual knowledge is meagre. One should still respect him as *guru*, and with his permission, one should go to another exalted Vaiṣṇava who is well-versed in knowledge of spiritual truth and take instruction (*śikṣā*) from him, serving him with one's full capacity.

Vijaya: Please tell us about accepting the *kṛṣṇa-mantra* (*kṛṣṇa-dīkṣā*) and also about *śikṣā*, or receiving instructions regarding *bhajana* and instructions regarding serving those *mantras*.

Bābājī: While accepting *śikṣā* from *śrī gurudeva* on the process of deity worship (*arcana*) and on pure devotional service to the Lord, one should in a mood of simplicity, perform service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa (*kṛṣṇa-sevā*) but also earnestly cultivate uninterrupted performance of pure spiritual service fully abiding in, conscientious of, and devoted to the pleasure and welfare of Kṛṣṇa (*kṛṣṇa-anuśīlanam*).

Later, we will separately discuss the limbs of *arcana*. It is most essential to receive *śrī gurudeva's* instructions on one's relationship with Kṛṣṇa (*sambandha-jñāna*), the process of devotional service (*abhidheya-jñāna*), and the ultimate goal (*prayojana-jñāna*).

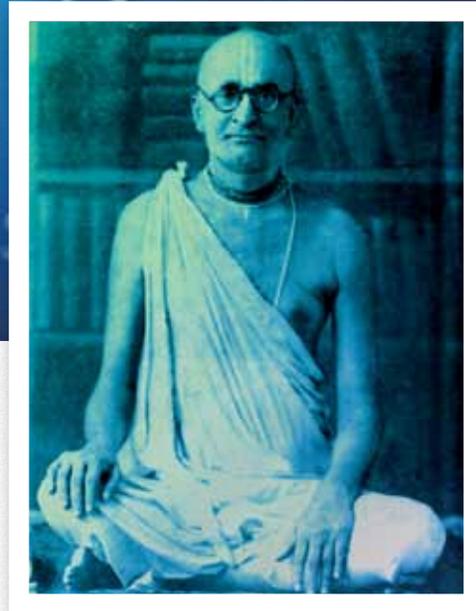
Vijaya: What does it mean to perform *guru-sevā* with faith?

Bābājī: One should not consider *śrī gurudeva* to be a mortal man, or an ordinary *jīva*. Rather, one should understand him to be the embodiment of all the demigods (*sarva-deva-maya*). One should never disobey him, and one should always know him to be a transcendental being (*vaikunṭha-tattva*). 🙏

Immortal Oceans of Mercy

by Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī
Ṭhākura Prabhupāda

*Excerpts from a lecture delivered
on the 14th disappearance anniversary of
Saccidānanda Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura
Nīlimā, Cakra-tīrtha beach,
Jagannātha Purī, 1928*



*vāñcā-kalpa tarubhyaś ca kṛpā-sindhubhya eva ca
patitānām pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ*

* * *

Offer *namaskāra* – my most humble and reverential obeisance – to all Vaiṣṇavas – not once, not twice, but many, many times. I have no duty besides this. The letter ‘ma’ in *namaḥ* (from *namaskāra*) stands for pride, or false ego. Relinquishing that very pride, I offer my most humble obeisance.

The Vaiṣṇavas are *vāñcā-kalpa-taru* – wish-fulfilling trees. Just as the mystical desire trees of this world provide fruits according to one’s prayers, the transcendent Vaiṣṇavas fulfil all prayers addressed to them. But while the desire trees of this material dimension grant temporary, worldly fruits, the transcendent Vaiṣṇavas grant the supreme, undiminished (*akhaṇḍa*) fruit; that is, they grant the eternal goal of life.

Inexhaustible Oceans of Mercy

The Vaiṣṇava Ṭhākuras – those transcendent lords of tenderness – are vast oceans of mercy (*kṛpā-sindhu*). They bestow absolute mercy without ever being asked for it. And the treasure-house of their mercy is never meagre, nor is it ever deficient. It is possible for an ocean in this material world to dry up, but the mercy of the Vaiṣṇavas can never be exhausted. No matter how much wealth of mercy from that treasure-house is distributed, it is never exhausted, nor is it even slightly diminished.

*pūrṇam adaḥ pūrṇam idam pūrṇāt pūrṇam udacyate
pūrṇasya pūrṇam ādāya pūrṇam evāvaśīsyate*

*Bṛhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad (5.1)
Śrī Īsopaniṣad (Invocation)*

He who is the origin of all *avatāras* (*avatāri-puruṣa*) is complete and perfect. Because He is completely perfect, all *avatāras* emanating from Him are also complete. All that emanates from the Supreme Complete is complete. Even if the complete is subtracted from the complete, He still remains complete. In no way does that Parameśvara's completeness experience any diminution.

I offer *namaskāra* – my most humble and reverential obeisance – to such venerable and esteemed Vaiṣṇavas.

Redeemers of the Envious

The Vaiṣṇavas are the redeemers of the fallen (*patita-pāvana*). There is no one within this corporeal realm who can purify me, for in this realm, our jealousy is aroused merely by seeing or meeting each other. Such envy leads to egoism, on account of which one sees others as inferior, insignificant, needy, foolish or fallen. But Vaiṣṇavas are quite different.

I am fallen, and having forgotten Kṛṣṇa, I have become engrossed in sense-gratification. My eyes, ever maddened due to being deluded by material forms, are my sworn enemies; my ears are busy listening to my own praises; my tongue is always busy tasting delectable preparations; my nose is engaged in smelling sweet aromas; my skin is enthralled by touching soft objects; and my mind is always absorbed in meditating upon all of these sense objects. And on account of being so thoroughly immersed in sensuality, I have become completely averse to the Supreme Lord (Śrī Bhagavān).

When I contemplate my situation, I find that I have become completely fallen – that by my actions I have set a course for hell, for I am the most heinous sinner. The Vaiṣṇavas are constantly busy in delivering souls like me. They do not engage in any other venture apart from bestowing mercy on the souls of this world. My only duty is to take shelter of their lotus feet, for apart from this there is absolutely no other means of deliverance.

My Only True Kinsmen

On this day – the disappearance day of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura – I surrender unto the lotus feet of the Vaiṣṇavas, relinquishing all false pride in being the seer, of being the one who touches or the one who smells, and of being the active agent in my own meditation. This pride is nothing but the propensity of my material senses. Because of it, I have become degraded and deprived of the *darśana* of Śrī Bhagavān.

Every single object in this material world, where I am presently situated, attracts me. When I contemplate the

unfortunate state I am in, and I can clearly see that no one else is as hell-bound as I am, then alone am I finally able to realize that apart from taking shelter of the lotus feet of the Vaiṣṇavas, there is no other path to my deliverance.

The inhabitants of this world are here just to cause my doom, for this world is devoid of true kinsmen. All my so-called kinsmen are not favourably disposed to worshipping Bhagavān. My only true kinsmen are the Vaiṣṇavas. Apart from taking shelter of them, no other remedy exists. In fact, there is no need for anyone to engage in any other activity. It behoves everyone to come together and simply engage in serving the servants of Bhagavān. Such engagement ought to begin immediately, for any delay will lead to trouble.

The True Servants of the All-Pervasive Lord

Upon hearing the word 'Vaiṣṇava', many people may be prompted to think it refers to a class of narrow-minded, sectarian living beings who worship Lord Viṣṇu. This is in fact not at all correct. Those who believe in the existence of the Supreme Lord – in other words all true theists – know that He is all-pervasive. He resides in the core of every atom of every universe and dwells within the heart of every living being in the form of *antaryāmī*, the indwelling Supersoul. He is present everywhere and all-pervasive and at the same time He can manifest the infinity of His unlimited Vaikuṅṭha realm inside any one of the infinitesimal six-pointed divisions of all-space, or "hex-atoms".

The words *īśvara* and *brahma* convey a particular entity to the human intelligence, but this is not the same entity as that conveyed by the word *viṣṇu*. The word *viṣṇu* symbolizes the almightiness and omnipresence of the Supreme Being, and cannot be misconstrued as a sectarian word. Those who are genuine Vaiṣṇavas, or worshipers of Viṣṇu, are the only true servants of that Supreme Being. There is no disparity between them and Bhagavān in any way, for they are non-different from His very body.

The word Vaiṣṇava is to be understood as "related to Viṣṇu". In other words, Vaiṣṇavas are the paraphernalia of Viṣṇu. They are knowers of the intrinsic religion of the soul and have transcended the limited nature of this mundane world. Only they who have overcome the narrow-mindedness typical of human beings are truly Vaiṣṇavas. We offer our *namaskāra* – our most humble and reverential obeisance – unto the lotus feet of such Vaiṣṇavas.

Vaiṣṇavas are Immortal

Vaiṣṇavas are not like other living beings. They are souls completely within the shelter of Lord Śrī Caitanya and are perfectly engaged in serving Śrī Kṛṣṇa. With their every action, throughout their lives and after death, they remain engaged exclusively in serving the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya.

“People may ask how one can observe a festival of ecstasy on the occasion of separation, for in this world, a gathering to offer condolences to the grief-stricken would be in order. The answer to this question is that Vaiṣṇavas never die; they are immortal.”



When a man tries to see the Vaiṣṇavas through his own set of spectacles, how can he see them properly, as they truly are? Vaiṣṇavas can only be properly seen by the light of their own mercy.

When a common man dies, a gathering is held to offer condolences. But for us, this day, the disappearance day of such an emperor among Vaiṣṇavas, brings unlimited bliss, for birth and death only apply to living beings bound by the fruits of their actions.

The day of death is the day in which the actions the living being has performed throughout his life – including proper actions (*sukarma*), improper actions (*kukarma*) and inaction (*akarma*) – are given final consideration. That day of death is the last day of all a man's giving and taking. That day heralds the time when the living being is given the punishments and rewards he is due.

But these considerations are not applicable to the Vaiṣṇavas, for they are not bound by the laws of *karma*, that is, by the fruits of their actions. An ordinary living entity engages in activities with the false notion that he is the doer, and maintains the desire to enjoy the results. Therefore, he bears the fruits of those activities, good or bad. The day of death is when those good and bad fruits are received. In the Western world, this day is called the day of judgement.

A person who takes to non-Vaiṣṇavism achieves no auspiciousness, while he who takes shelter of the lotus feet of the Vaiṣṇavas achieves all welfare and auspiciousness as easily as holding a gooseberry in his palm. It is only the non-Vaiṣṇavas who wear the grisly garland of birth and death around their neck. The devotees of Lord Śrī Hari do not have to spawn in the womb of a mortal mother ever again. What to speak of Vaiṣṇavas, even those who have had the fortune of receiving *darśana* of the transcendental, extraordinary lotus feet of the Vaiṣṇavas never take birth again.

This grand celebration on the day of separation from such an exalted Vaiṣṇava is meant to remind us of his accounts and glories. People may ask how one can observe a festival of ecstasy on the occasion of separation, for in this world, a gathering to offer condolences to the grief-stricken would be in order. The answer to this question is that Vaiṣṇavas never die; they are immortal. They are with Bhagavān, participating in His eternal pastimes. Their only activity is to serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa. While they are manifest in this world, *kṛṣṇa-sevā* is their only activity, and when they depart, *kṛṣṇa-sevā* is their only, eternal activity, because *bhakti*, Bhagavān and His *bhakta* are all eternal. 🙏

Translated from the weekly *Gauḍīya*, Volume 6, Number 48



Excerpts From

My Master And His Teachings

Āmāra Prabhura Kathā

Jagad-guru Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda

Appearing in English for the first time

We are presenting herein excerpts from a series of articles by jagad-guru Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda that were published under the title “Āmāra Prabhura Kathā – My Master And His Teachings”. They first appeared in the magazine Śrī Sajjana-toṣaṇī, Year 19, Issues 5–6. We are also presenting excerpts from whatever Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda spoke regarding the supra-mundane and transcendental life and teachings of Śrīla Gaura-kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja on the occasion of his tirobhāva-tithi, the day of his sacred disappearance from this world.

Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura’s style herein reveals a path which preserves a certain unparalleled speciality, independent of the conventional societal norm, regarding how to approach śrī guru and other transcendental personalities. This bears no similarity to the approach adopted by common philosophers to describe the lives of great personalities or their own gurus. In the following article, jagad-guru Śrīla Prabhupāda humbly yet analytically exposes the disposition with which the common people make a show of approaching śrī gurudeva and great personalities. He does so in the course of discussing the accounts (kathā) of his own śrī gurudeva.

[The editors of the original Bengali article]

Will everyone find the narrations (*kathā*) about my spiritual master (*prabhu*) palatable? This I do not know. Indeed, one may even wonder, “How will listening to the accounts of your spiritual master benefit me? Am I sitting here at the cost of my time and wealth just to listen to you eulogize the glories of your master? How will listening to discussions about your master satisfy my self-interest? Why would even a slight curiosity develop in me to hear about him?”



The Realm of Diverse Self-Interest

In this realm of *dviṭīya-abhiniveśa* – where a person is absorbed in anything other than the Supreme Absolute Reality – a host of such questions and objections are bound to arise. This is because in this world, each individual is separated from every other by one thing – illusion. In such a place, one indeed distinguishes between ‘you’ and ‘me’, and ‘yours’ and ‘mine’. Consequently, one person’s self-interest cannot be reconciled with the self-interest of another. Nor does the auspiciousness of one person awaken the auspiciousness of another. In this world full of separate interests, there is even disparity of interest between mother and son, husband and wife, master and servant, and teacher and student. It therefore follows that here, where differences are plentiful, the words, ‘the account of my spiritual master’, stimulate the same feelings of separateness, or disparity, in the heart.

Real Congruity

Such incongruity, however, does not exist in the spiritual world, where the Absolute Truth, the son of the king of Vraja (*advaya-jñāna* Vrajendra-nandana) is the exclusive object (*viśaya*) of interest. The sole interest of the residents of the spiritual realm, referred to as the *āśraya* (abodes of love), is to bring Him happiness. It thus follows that in that place where everyone has one interest only and where only one person enjoys being the cynosure of that interest, the manifestation of duality would be impossible. In that realm, there is no difference between ‘your’ master and ‘my’ master, for there, to speak of ‘my’

master’s glories is to automatically speak of ‘your’ master’s glories, and vice versa: when you speak of ‘your’ master’s glories, I only hear the glories of ‘my’ master.

The countless eternal associates of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the non-dual Absolute Truth and the one and only object of love (*advaya-jñāna viśaya*), are indeed His *vaicitrya-tattva*, or fundamental principle of variegatedness. Their exclusive interest is to satisfy the senses of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Could there possibly be any disparity of interest among those perpetually absorbed in rousing the pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s senses?

Therefore, in this world of disparity, people may or may not honour the accounts of my master. Nonetheless, since I am a lowly dog who is sustained by my master’s remnants, it is my sole constitutional duty and function (*dharma*) to extol his glories.

The Rightful Master of My Heart

I understand the word *prabhu* (master) to refer to that person who can extend his authority over me in every way, who can fully and always exercise control over my whole heart, and who in my every act, every footstep, every inhalation and exhalation and every directive of life is my sole ideal, goal and guide. That person alone is my master. Someone who controls my heart for some time and after awhile is expelled from it, who is my role model for a few moments but who, after a short time, does not remain so, is not worthy of being called my master. It therefore becomes apparent to me that such a person or thing is a mere illusion, or whim of the mind.

By nature I am critical, always looking for faults in others. My heart is so absorbed in attachment to my body and residence that the devotees call me *grha-vrata*, one bound by a vow to home and necessities. In my study of the life of Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja, I have read:

*matir na kṛṣṇe parataḥ svato vā
mītho ’bhīpadyeta grha-vratānām
adānta-gobbir viśatām tamisraṁ
punaḥ punaś carvita-carvaṇānām
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (7.5.30)*

Having assimilated these words spoken by Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja, I become utterly overwhelmed with hopelessness. Here, Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja is referring to a person who is attached to his body and residence, in other words, to a person who is avowedly determined to tend only to the functions of his body and the needs of his residence. Since his senses are restless, he is incapable of propelling his mind in the proper direction – toward Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He cannot do this of his own accord nor with the assistance of someone else, especially if the person whose help he seeks is being guided by the teachings of a *guru* who is impulsive like him,



“If I had ever observed that he performed *hari-bhajana* for twenty-three hours, fifty-nine minutes and fifty-nine seconds of the day, but then for the last remaining second directed his attention to some other object, then he would not have been able to exert his lordship over my heart, as I am completely attached to body and home (*gr̥ha-vrata*).”

that is, someone whose heart is not at peace. Such a person simply continues to encounter troubles and suffering, like someone who keeps chewing what others have already chewed and spat out.

Previously I went to many places, to many religious groups, and I attended many religious gatherings, but it was never my fortune to glimpse a *mabātmā*, a great soul, who could fully capture my heart.

Diverted Toward Illusion

I have stated that only he who is my role model perpetually, at every single step, can be my master, but some may not agree with me on this matter. It seems to me, though, that those people are simply cheating themselves. I am extremely weak and cynical. If I ever see a person immersed in trying to perform *hari-bhajana* for half of the twenty-four hours of the day, and then, during the other half, I see him engaged in activities related to sense objects, I hesitate to accept him, to call him my master. The reason is this: it is my nature to only see faults; thus, when that person’s account of his various efforts to obtain sense objects appears in my heart, besides his efforts in *hari-bhajana*, I reflect on such accounts and immediately fall under the sway of sense objects even more than before. I start to reason that if this person, whom I were to have made my idol, spends some of his time engaging in serving the objects of the senses, then why should I not follow suit, since I am his disciple and he is my *guru*?

These types of thoughts take command of my heart and as a result, I choose someone who is a sense enjoyer as my *guru*. But then I see that instead of having *kṛṣṇa-vastu* (that is, someone qualitatively non-different from Kṛṣṇa – *sākṣād-dharitvena*) as my *guru*, ‘illusion’ has usurped that position. It is illusion that has taken command of my heart in the form of a false *guru* and is now standing on my head. Therefore, in accordance with the prescription of the scriptures, I have endeavoured to take a firm vow to abandon such illusion.

*avaiṣṇavopadiṣṭena
manreṇa nīrayaṁ vrajet
punaś ca vidhinā samyag
grāhayed-vaīṣṇavād guroḥ*

Hari-bhakti-vilāsa 4.366
(quoted from Śrī Nārada-pañcarātra)

If one receives *mantra* initiation from a non-devotee (*avaiṣṇava*), one can only attain a destination in hell. Therefore, one who has done so must take shelter of a bona fide Vaiṣṇava *guru* and take re-initiation in a

full and proper manner, following all the prescribed injunctions.

Therefore, a *guru* whose form is akin to illusion (*māyā-rūpī-guru*^{1*}) is an *avaiṣṇava*, a non-devotee, and initiation or guidance from him will submerge me the hellish regions. Reflecting thus, I took shelter of a Vaiṣṇava *guru* as per the instructions of scripture. According to the telltale signs of a devotee as specified by Śrīman Mahāprabhu, I understand the word ‘Vaiṣṇava’ in this way:

*yāñbhāra darśane mukhe āise kṛṣṇa-nāma
tāñbhāre jāñiba tumi ‘vaiṣṇava-pradhāna’*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 16.74)

Know that person, the sight of whom induces the holy name to burst (*sphurita*) on to the tongue, to be prominent among Vaiṣṇavas. In other words, he is a foremost *mahā-bhāgavata*.

My Master’s Glories

Vaiṣṇavas are perpetually steadfast in their attachment to the holy name. They do not waste their time even for a moment by engaging in any other activity. Therefore, just the sight of such persons causes the holy name to appear in one’s heart. In other words, the desire to perform *hari-bhajana* arises. It is in this way that my *prabhu* (master) extended control over my heart. I witnessed how day and night he never spent even a fraction of a moment in any activity other than *hari-bhajana*, or chanting the holy name. If I had ever observed that he performed *hari-bhajana* for twenty-three hours, fifty-nine minutes and fifty-nine seconds of the day, but then for the last remaining second directed his attention to some other object, then he would not have been able to exert his lordship over my heart, as I am completely attached to body and home (*gr̥ha-vrata*).

In my life I never heard him prescribe any activity other than *hari-bhajana*. His one and only instruction was this: “the living entity has no other obligation than continuous *hari-bhajana*, nor will he ever have any other duty. The knowledge, or conception, that an obligation exists other than *hari-bhajana* is indeed illusion.”

How much will a society that is madly engrossed in material pursuits and bewildered by knowledge acquired through sense perception take note of and respect my master’s words? This I do not know. Nevertheless, it is quite

* A *guru* who is not *kṛṣṇa-vastu*, that is, who is not a direct manifestation of Kṛṣṇa and qualitatively non-different from him (*sākṣād-dharitvena*) and not engaged in *hari-bhajana* twenty-four hours a day.

apparent to me that his words are the one and only directive capable of leading a *jīva* to his ultimate auspiciousness. In his songs, Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura Mahāśaya has also condemned all ideas other than this, as follows:

*āra jāta upalambha viśeṣa sakali dambha
dekhite lāgaye mane vyathā*

Śrī Prema-bhakti-candrikā (2.7)

Apart from this, whatever faulty philosophies are there, all are simply displays of arrogance. For one who respects them and makes an effort to understand them, excruciating mental pain will be the only result.

Moreover, this solitary instruction issued from the lips of Śrī Bhagavān Gaurasundara Himself: “*kīrtaniyaḥ sadā hari – śrī harināma-saṅkīrtana* is to be performed at all times” (*Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka* 3). Here the word *sadā* means ‘without interruption’. In other words, perpetuity is emphasized.

Tridaṇḍipāda Śrī Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī also instructs, “*sakalam eva vibhāya dūrād caitanya-candra-carane kurutānūrāgam* – leave all else far behind and develop attachment to the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya-candra” (*Śrī Caitanya-candrāmṛta* 10).

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī’s *anyābbilāṣitā-sūnyam* verse, as well as the statement by Kapiladeva found in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.29.12): “*abaituky avyavahitā yā bhaktiḥ puruṣottame* – the *bhakti* that is performed to Me, Puruṣottama, is *abaituky*, devoid of all desires other than to serve Bhagavān, and *avyavahitā*, free from the obstructions of *karma*, *jñāna* and so on” (which is quoted in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*) both celebrate the fact that perpetual, continuous *hari-bhajana* is the ultimate form of auspiciousness for the living entities.

My spiritual master’s conduct and the *kīrtana* he performs have indeed unceasingly established this fact. Hence, ‘my’ master is he who establishes the innermost desire of Śrī Caitanya’s heart and is foremost among *rūpānugas*. The beauty of ‘my’ master’s service attracts even Śrī Madana-mohana Himself. My master can take something that is unsightly (*kurūpa*) and make it beautiful (*surūpa*). He can dispel my lowly perception (*kudarśana*) and transform it into one that is beautiful (*sudarśana*). My sole desire, life after life, is to long to serve such a master and to aspire for the remnants of the servants of his servants. 🙏

Translated from the Hindi book

Four Rūpānuga Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas of the Śrī Gauḍīya Sampradāya,
by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja,

from the section on the life of
Śrīla Gaura-kīṣora dāsa Bābāji Mahārāja

Transcendental Non-different in

Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna
Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Excerpts from a lecture given on the occasion of
the auspicious appearance day of
Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, 21 September 1934,
in the *avidyā-haraṇa** temple hall at
Śrī Caitanya Maṭha, Śrī Dhāma Māyāpura

The Vaiṣṇava Is Neither Born Nor Dies

Whatever we know about birth and death in this world does not apply to Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. In fact, instead of saying ‘birth’ and ‘death’, the Vaiṣṇavas use the terms *āvirbhāva* and *tirobhāva*, ‘appearance’ and ‘disappearance’, *prakāṣa* and *aprakāṣa*, ‘manifested’ and ‘un-manifested’, and so forth. By using the words ‘birth’ and ‘death’, a kind of mournful mood, full of disbelief, grief and lamentation arises in the heart. But such moods do not arise when we use words like *āvirbhāva* and *tirobhāva* or *prakāṣa* and *aprakāṣa*.

Factually, for the Vaiṣṇava, pain is completely absent in his appearance and disappearance, unlike the experience of birth and death. Generally, therefore, the Vaiṣṇavas do not use the term ‘birth’ but instead say ‘appearance’ or ‘manifestation’. And in place of the term ‘death’, they say ‘disappearance’ or ‘has become unmanifest’. We understand this from a statement from *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata*, the scripture describing the pastimes of Śrī Caitanyadeva:

* that which utterly destroys ignorance

Appearing in English for the first time

Vaiṣṇavas - Body and Soul

*adyāpiha sei līlā kare gaurarāya
kona-kona bhāgyavān dekhibāre pāya*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is still performing His pastimes to this day, but only a few, very fortunate souls can see them.

From this, we can apprehend that Śrī Caitanyadeva's eternal servants and associates are indeed ever-present. Among us, a few had the good fortune, some time ago, to have the direct audience (*darśana*) of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, but because it is not possible to see him at present, a doubt can arise that he is existing eternally. It should be understood, however, that despite the inability of our mundane eyes to perceive him, he is still present to this day. Do not be amazed by this! I am speaking the truth, the complete truth. He is present with us even today! I will endeavour to remove your doubt to some extent with an example.

Our Deeply Rooted Doubt

Imagine that we are seated by a window inside a house and are looking outside toward the pathway. We see someone walking along the path and can keep sight of him to the extent that our vision allows. When he passes beyond the framework of the window, he goes out of our sight. Please contemplate this example carefully. We accepted his existence upon his entering our vision, but to conclude that he ceases to exist the moment we cannot see him indicates a definite lack of intelligence. That person existed before coming into our vision and continues to exist after he leaves our sight. This is the proper understanding.



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If we relate this example to Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and his action of appearance (*āvīrbhāva*) and disappearance (*tirobbhāva*), our doubt can be removed to some degree. It is simply not logical to think that because we cannot see him with our mundane eyes, he is not present today. The Vaiṣṇavas are eternal; their bodies are transcendental and eternal, and they are not bound within the abject,



“ A snake, which takes its complete form with it when it leaves behind its skin, or shape, in its trail, does not simply discard old and torn ‘cloth’ (its body) and don new cloth (take a new body). Similarly, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura took his supremely munificent and compassionate body to the transcendental abode, where he is situated. He did not leave his body and accept a new one, as one leaves old cloth for new. ”

temporary material nature and subject to birth and death, nor can they ever be so!

Now, you may doubt that the Vaiṣṇava’s body is transcendental. Within your minds, you may consider, “The body that Ṭhākura Mahāśaya came with when he appeared in this world was left behind when he disappeared. We touched his gross body after he left this world, and placed that body in *samādhi*. When he departed for the eternal abode he did not take with him that body that we perceived here. Just as there is a difference between the body and the soul of the materially conditioned living entity, similarly the body and the soul of Śrīla Ṭhākura were also different. This is evident in his leaving that material body behind and departing in his soul form (*debī-rūpa*).”

Your reasons for raising this objection, or doubt, are valid, but to doubt the Vaiṣṇavas in this way will result in us suffering dreadful inauspiciousness. Although we have heard repeatedly that the form of the Vaiṣṇava is transcendental, the contaminating filth of this doubt lingers in our consciousness and is not removed by any means. It is only to maintain the etiquette of respecting the instructions of the Vaiṣṇavas and the statements of the scriptures that we do not express this doubt through our mouth; nevertheless, this mundane mentality is certainly awake in our minds.

O *maṭha* resident Vaiṣṇavas and respected gentlemen! Please do not be displeased by my words, for it is not impossible for such a mentality to reside in the heart of an unfortunate living entity like me. Such feelings have been present in my mind for many days, and it is for this reason that today, even though it is the auspicious appearance day of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, I am discussing the fundamental principles relating to the disappearance of a transcendental personality (*tirobhāva-tattva*). There is no difference between the Vaiṣṇava’s body and his soul, but for those who are sceptical, I will try to clarify it with an example, for it is indeed a fact that Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura took his self-same form with him to that eternal abode of transcendental magnanimity (*audārya-maya nitya-dhāma*). We shall now strive to understand this point.

The Transcendental and Mundane – Similarities and Differences

You have all heard that this world is a shadow of the spiritual world. No one can completely and perfectly understand every aspect of another person or object, merely by beholding their shadow. Yet, the shadow serves the purpose of enabling us to understand which object it is. For example, by seeing the shadow of a tree, we can understand that its source is a tree, but the shadow will not tell us what kind of tree it is, for example, a mango tree or a litchi tree. At the same time, we will perceive that it is not the

shadow of an elephant, a hill or a mountain, but that of a tree only. We can understand that much. Similarly, by seeing the shadow of a human being, we can discern that its source must be a human being and not an animal, but it will be difficult to know whether the shadow belongs to a man called Rāma or one called Yadu.

In this way, since this world is only the shadow of the transcendental world, our experience of this world cannot allow us full understanding of the nature of that transcendental realm. Still, we can know about it to some degree and that is why I am utilizing an example from the material world, in an endeavour to obtain a conception of the transcendental reality (*aprākṛta-tattva*). This example is not completely perfect, but my insignificant intelligence cannot think of a superior one. I am furthermore presenting before you the following example, considering that this sound logic will also help dispel your doubt.

You have seen how a snake leaves its skin and then slithers away in the same form it had before. Upon seeing the skin, we understand that it belongs to a snake. The skin also tells us the exact shape and size of the snake. Although the snake has discarded its full skin, it has gone off in its complete form somewhere else.

I recall one verse from the *Gītā* on this subject. You are aware of the verse:

*vāsāmsi jīrṇāni yathā vibhāya
navāni grbṇāti naro 'parāṇi
tathā śarīrāṇi vibhāya jīrṇāny
anyāni samyāti navāni debī*

Bhagavad-gītā (2.22)

Just as a person discards his old garments and acquires new ones, similarly the embodied soul gives up old bodies and accepts new ones.

Do not consider that this verse, which applies only to conditioned souls, also applies to my subject of discussion. There is no difference between the body and the soul of the eternally liberated *mahāpuruṣas*, so if we apply this verse to them, we will incur an offence. As far as we are concerned, there is a vast difference between our 'cloth' (our body) and us.

The 'cloth' – our body, or the substance that our body is composed of – differs categorically from the substance that we, the living entities, are made of. That is, the constitutional ingredients are diametrically opposite. This *Gītā* verse is thus applicable to us. But it cannot apply to eternally liberated Vaiṣṇavas, because for them the *upādāna*, or ingredients, comprising their bodies and those comprising their soul are, in fact, one and the same. Therefore, the transitory act of leaving one body and accepting another

is not a transcendental, or eternal, function. Now, deeply consider the example of the snake and the *Gītā*'s example of cloth, and perceive the difference.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's All Spiritual Form

At the time of his disappearance, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, took his body, which is completely composed of knowledge and bliss (*cid-ānanda-maya*), with him to the transcendental abode. A snake, which takes its complete form with it when it leaves behind its skin, or shape, in its trail, does not simply discard old and torn 'cloth' (its body) and don new cloth (take a new body). Similarly, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura took his supremely munificent and compassionate body to the transcendental abode, where he is situated. He did not leave his body and accept a new one, as one leaves old cloth for new. In this temple room named *avidyā-haraṇa*, that place where ignorance is totally removed, we are taking *darśana* of the *vigraha*, or the picture, of Śrīla Ṭhākura's manifest (*prakāṣa*) and unmanifest (*aprakāṣa*) pastimes. That *vigraha* is his beautifully decorated worshipful form (*arcā*).

The picture of him before us is his very *arcā-mūrti*, which is transcendental. This form is not transitory but eternal, and this indeed is his form in the manifest (*prakāṣa*) and unmanifest (*aprakāṣa*) pastimes. If this *mūrti* were not eternal, then we would diligently seek out his eternal *mūrti* and worship that alone. But in fact, this very *mūrti* is established at Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's place of *samādhi*, and thus is never material, or temporary. We never heard our *ācāryadeva*, Śrīla Prabhupāda, instruct us to worship a temporary material object, or to imagine a material object to be transcendental and worship it. Therefore, with a peaceful mind, free from doubt, aim to understand the purpose of this example. Consider this subject carefully and see, in every respect, that the body and the soul of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura are totally one and the same, and that he is eternal (*nitya*), transcendental (*aprākṛta*) and ever-lasting and primeval (*sanātana*).

Due to misfortune, we are not able to have the direct audience of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Despite this, may we never be separated from his association. During our student life in our youth, we read a book by Yogendranātha Vasu Mahāśaya that stated, "The book itself is a life sketch of the author." Therefore, although at the present time Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura cannot be perceived by our mundane eyes, we will collect his life from his writings, and endeavour to attain his personal association. 🙏

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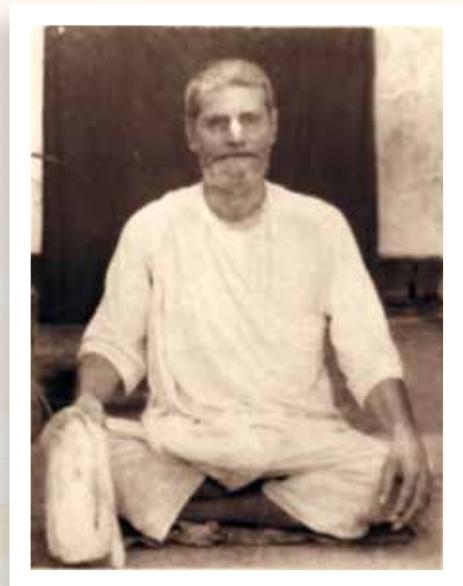
Appearing in English for the first time

Viraha-tattva

The Truth About Divine Separation

**Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna
Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja**

*A lecture given on the
disappearance day of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura
at Śrī Uddhāraṇa Gauḍīya Maṭha, Chuñchurā
on 26 July 1949*



Today is the supremely sanctifying, auspicious disappearance day of Ṭhākura Śrī Śrīla Bhaktivinoda. It is also known as his *viraha-tithi*, the day of separation from him. Every year, we observe this day by extolling his life and teachings, which are purifying for the entire world. At many different times, on many different occasions, all of you have heard about the transcendental life of this great personality. A matter of special significance should be duly noted: this day of separation from him (*viraha-tithi*) comes every year, so every year the Vaiṣṇavas observe a grand festival honouring this occasion with utmost reverence.

A Festival of Bliss, not Sorrow

Separation is a source of great pain for every living entity, so why, yearly, do we make elaborate arrangements in honour of the departure of a great Vaiṣṇava, simply to experience agony? Surely, no one can become excited about such a heart-rending event. Yet, if we take note of the Vaiṣṇavas' definition of *viraha*, we can see that it is also a special type of festival (*utsava*).

The word *utsava* actually implies bliss. That being so, is the sole purpose of holding a festival of separation to find joy in awakening pain in people's hearts? No, this is certainly not the case. According to the verdict of the Vaiṣṇavas, the function of separation is to arouse bliss, and this is why Vaiṣṇavas observe a festival of separation. What is the reason behind this most astonishing thing?

We are all *amṛtasya-putrāḥ*, children of immortal bliss. By constitution we are not devoid of sublime rapture, joy, since we are inherently minute particles of eternality, cognizance and bliss (*sac-cid-ānanda*). Not even a shadow of agitation, despair, distress, sorrow or any other disturbing emotion exists in us. It is for this reason that the Vaiṣṇava literature acclaims separation (*viraha*) to be a special *rasa*, or humour of love. Within the inner reaches of this *viraharasa*, or love in separation, we perceive the blossoming of *bhakti-vṛtti*, the tendency, or force, of pure devotion, which is constituted of complete joy. This indeed is a festival (*utsava*).

Worldly sorrow submerges a person in uncertainty and doubt, but separation liberates the soul from mundane existence and transports him to the lotus feet

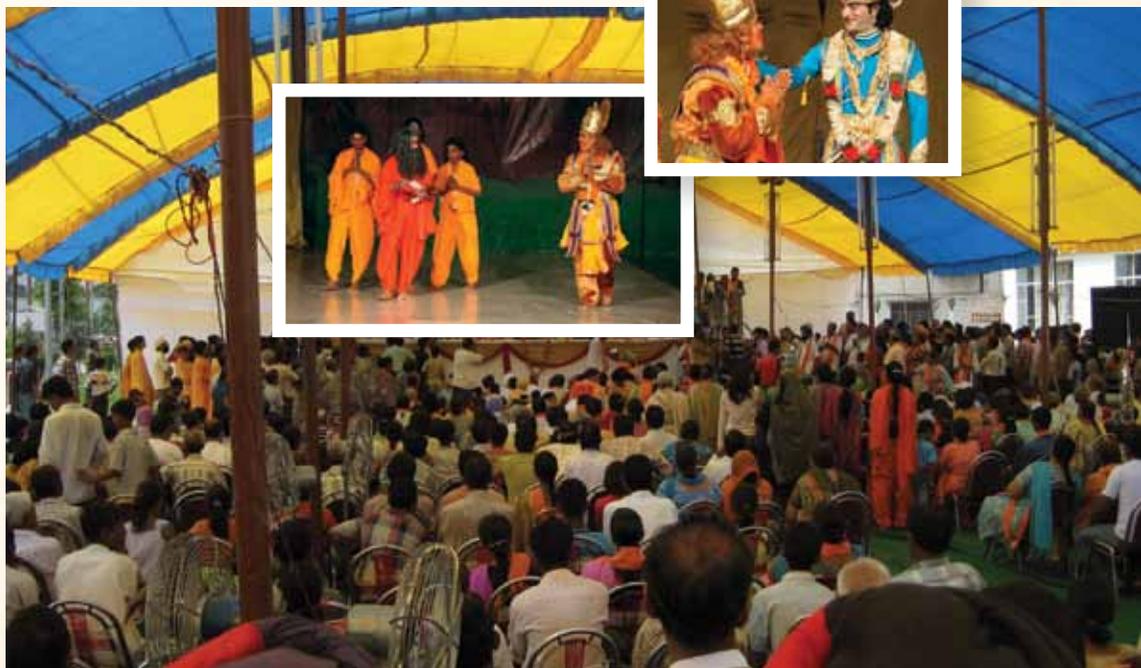
of Bhagavān. A person overcome by lamentation and sorrow is wretched and a *śūdra* – the lowest class of person. But a person anguished by separation (*viraha*) is the best of *brāhmaṇas* and a *nirguṇa-bhakta* (a devotee situated beyond the modes of material nature). In this way, feelings of sorrow and feelings of *viraha*, or separation, are as different as day and night, heaven and hell.

Worldly lamentation and sorrow demoralize a man, crush his spirit and annihilate his strength, whereas, for the devotees of Bhagavān, *viraha* rejuvenates their spiritual zeal, inspiring them to render abundant service. Do not, therefore, fall into the illusion of assuming that sorrow and separation (*viraha*) are one and the same. It may be that in some places the authors of the scriptures have substituted the word for separation (*viraha*) with the word for sorrow (*śoka*), yet the sorrow they refer to is the antithesis of mundane sorrow, which is plagued by illusion and delusion. They refer to the transcendental truth of divine separation (*aprākṛta viraha-tattva*).

Solely within the inner reaches of separation there exists a deep sigh of indescribable bliss that lasts for eternity. In the material world also, a semblance of this can be found on occasion in connoisseurs of poetry.

Worldly Parallels

I would like to present an example to you. When you attend a musical performance in which a professional singer sings the pathetic pastimes of Lord Rāma in a sweet, mellifluous voice, you listen, enthralled. He sings so skilfully that it evokes a deep



mellow of pathos (*karuṇa-rasa*), which attains fruition when your heart melts and tears of sorrow flow in gurgling streams. Despite the extent of the pathos you feel, you not only repeatedly attend such gatherings, but you regularly and cordially invite everyone you know to come along and listen to those performances. Why is this?

If you analyse the reason for this, you will come to appreciate quite thoroughly within the core of your heart that although such pathos causes you anguish, it holds in its depths an indescribable joy that you perpetually crave. Moreover, you repeatedly invite your friends and dear ones to partake of that bliss. Your intention is certainly not to torment their heart, and cause them distress.

One who contemplates this analogy can somewhat grasp the significance of celebrating a festival of separation (*viraha-utsava*) for the Vaiṣṇavas. Separation is usually distressing, yet every year we discuss it and experience joy. We also invite you to partake of that boundless joy.

Viraha is Truly Glorious

Viraha has another name: *vipralambha*. By His own example, Śrīman Mahāprabhu propagated that *vipralambha-rasa*, the flavour of love in separation, is the best of all. It was certainly not His purpose to plunge all those living entities who are free from vice (*anarthas*) into an ocean of sorrow. Just as the natural heartfelt inclination of the supremely liberated souls is indeed *vipralambha-rasa*, so to, for souls who remain ensnared in bondage, it is most auspicious to celebrate a festival of separation, for it serves to liberate them from their vices, or *anarthas*. Thus, whether in a state of spiritual perfection (*siddha*) or practice (*sādhana*), no difference in the intrinsic nature of separation is perceived. Indeed, separation as both the means and the goal has the same purpose and is essentially one cycle, beginning and ending with itself.

Why did Śrīman Mahāprabhu regard *viraha* or *vipralambha-rasa* so highly? This is a special topic of discussion for us. Today the topic of our discussion is not the nature of separation for one in the liberated state, but its relevance in the life of a spiritual practitioner (*sādhaka*) by which that separation (*viraha*, or *vipralambha*) can extricate one from the clutches of vice (*anarthas*) with utmost ease and simplicity.

The renunciation (*vairāgya*) that Vaiṣṇavas possess arises from this *viraha*. The type of renunciation that is practised as a form of pious austerity to earn more enjoyment is not *vipralambha*, or *viraha*. For example, it is common for persons who are impelled by the urge of the belly to observe diets and fasts in order to increase their appetite and capacity to consume foodstuffs. This type of abstinence is not *viraha*, or *vipralambha*. To the

extent that the pain of separation from devotees and the Lord manifests within one's heart, desires for the external material world fade, and true renunciation dawns. Thus, renunciation actually means feeling separation.

Pangs of Separation Liberate the Jīva

Even in the mundane world, we see many examples of this phenomenon. There is no suffering like that of a mother upon the sudden loss of her child. Grief-stricken, she develops such indifference toward the world that there is no possibility of her condition being compared to any other human emotion. While she clutches her dead son's corpse to her bosom and wails, a person could stack hundreds and thousands of coins in front of her, but that money would be as repugnant to her as poison. At such a time, eating, relaxing, dressing nicely and the like will be the bitterest experiences for her.

Therefore, in this world, it is *vipralambha-rasa*, the mood of love in separation, that is indeed supremely auspicious and beneficial, not love in union (*sambhoga-rasa*). This very point is the essence of Śrīla Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda's teachings. In the mood of union, the *sādhaka's* heart can become polluted, whereas intense feelings of separation purify him and establish him in true renunciation (*śuddha-vairāgya*). By the intensity of separation alone the *sādhaka's* desires for worldly life are destroyed. Solely by experiencing the pangs of separation, the *sādhaka-jīva* gains release from his worldly existence (*saṁsāra*) in the form of freedom from his desire to enjoy, from his lust and from other such bondage. It is solely with this intention that every year we celebrate a festival of separation (*viraha-utsava*) in honour of Śrīla Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda.

The Vaiṣṇava's appearance and disappearance has one purpose only. It is exclusively to bestow auspiciousness upon the world that a Vaiṣṇava first appears here, and it is exclusively to bestow auspiciousness upon the world, also, that he disappears. A Vaiṣṇava does not disappear from this mortal realm with the intention of causing it any inauspiciousness. "*Vaiṣṇava caritra sarvadā pavitra* – a Vaiṣṇava's life is always pure."* It is not tainted by a shadow of inauspiciousness. The auspiciousness that Śrīla Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda bestowed upon the world by appearing here was surpassed by the auspiciousness he granted when he disappeared. This is a profound and mysterious truth. If we depend merely upon ordinary insight, we will not be able to grasp its meaning easily. 🌸

Translated from *Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā*, Year-1, Issue 6

* *Śrī Kalyāṇa-kalpataru* (3.2.7) by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Appearing in English for the first time

Contemplating Separation from Śrīla Prabhupāda

by Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Kamala Madhusūdana Gosvāmī Mahārāja

On the Occasion of the Auspicious Disappearance Day of
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda



External Celebration, Internal Separation

Nineteen years ago, *om viṣṇupāda paramahansa* Śrī Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda – who is the embodiment of the compassion potency (*karuṇa-śakti*) of the deity of *vipralambha-rasa*, Śrī Gaurasundara, and who is the sole, true friend of the *jīvas* – enacted his disappearance pastime.

On the 16th day of the last month, Pauṣa, members of the community of Sārasvata-Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas venerated and duly honoured Śrīla Prabhupāda's disappearance day in accordance with the proper conventions, as per their respective qualification (*adbikāra*).

Every year, all of us who have taken shelter of Śrīla Prabhupāda have been worshipping this most sacred *tithi*, the best of all holy days, according to appropriate standards. But in the true sense, in how many of us, has the pain of separation from Śrīla Prabhupāda been able to make even the slightest mark in our hearts? This is known only to Śrīla Prabhupāda himself. From the perspective of making external arrangements for a celebration, I am flawless, unflinching and undeviating, but as far as my internal condition is concerned, who will ascertain that? For an individual like me, who am cheated by external vision, bereft of *sambandha-jñāna*, or true knowledge of my relationship with the Lord, stricken with extreme greed for wealth, women and fame, and infatuated by empty pomp, where is there a question of feeling separation from my Prabhu, my dear-most master?

Without *sambandha-jñāna*, there is no question of actually feeling separation. Yet in defiance of my overwhelming lack of qualification, there comes, from a certain direction, an extraordinarily mighty hope: the unprecedented compassion of *patita-pāvana* Śrīla Prabhupāda for the fallen souls. Thus far, compassion of this amplitude in the deed of delivering lost and fallen *jīvas* has not been displayed by any among the most intimate associates of Śrī Gaura.

Some, having earned Śrīla Prabhupāda's true mercy, have become blessed. Within the inner recesses of their hearts, they are feeling continuous, unending separation from him. Consequently, they are experiencing success, deriving considerable inspiration in the realm of *bhajana*.

Spiritual Anguish – A Source of Boundless Joy

Even in the material world, when a worldly relationship is dissolved due to unavoidable death, a person who was deeply enamoured by another, may be gripped in an intense grief that seems intolerable. In certain cases, the pain of material separation assumes such an extreme degree that, unable to endure it, some people neglect their own body, their highest object of attachment, to such an extent that they bring about their own self-annihilation, their death.

If a person can react so intensely to the severance of a temporary, insignificant relationship within this mortal coil – a relationship wholly in the realm of mundane lust – then how acute and unbearable is separation from that supremely excellent eternal entity belonging to the transcendental realm of Vaikuṅṭha? Such intensity defies words.

The grief resulting from the severance of mundane relationships, which are based on ignorance and born of delusion, is full of despondency and yields nothing but anguish. Conversely, transcendental separation results in a simultaneous blend of absorption in unfathomable bliss and heart-wrenching sobs of lamentation in absence from the dear one. Even though such cries are an expression of extreme sorrow, it is not distressing like mundane grief. In the realm of non-existence, where everything is temporary, all things are a source of trouble. But on the platform of *viśuddha-sattva* in the realm of true and complete existence, a sense of lacking, or absence, occurs – yet it is comprised of supreme astonishment and enhances the moods of *vipralambha-rasa*.

The intimate associates of Śrīla Prabhupāda, who experience intense pain in separation from him, constantly feel his absence, and, inspired by that, they engage in fulfilling his heart's innermost desires (*mano'bhīṣṭa*). Wherever the experience of separation yields slothfulness and consequently generates laxity in service, it is to be understood that it arises from the modes of passion and ignorance. But if the intensity of transcendental separation produces inertia, it is not troublesome like mundane inertia, but full of the experience of the most bountiful happiness.

Although when the sun has set, it may be outside the vision of the living beings in any given country, it cannot be concluded that the sun has become extinct. Similarly, when the associates of Bhagavān perform their disappearance pastimes, they may remain in a domain beyond our range of vision, yet they are eternally His companions, nourishing Bhagavān Śrī Gaurāṅga's and Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes.

Transcendental Separation Stimulates the Mood of Service

For those whose perception is based on 'eyes of flesh', the moment any obstacle to their enjoyment arises, they become seized by a despondency and idleness born of ignorance. But for those whose vision is founded in the Vedas or the holy name, the grief of transcendental separation profusely increases their enthusiasm to serve.

Those who are servants of *śrī guru* are neither the champions of pious fruitive action (*karma*) nor of empiric knowledge (*jñāna*). As the carriers of *śrī gurupāda-padma*'s shoes, their vow is to remain exclusively engaged in fulfilling the innermost desires of his heart, everywhere and always.

*karmāvalambakāḥ kecit kecij-jñāna-avalambakāḥ
vayantu haridāsānām pāda-trāṇa-avalambakāḥ*

Padyāvalī (58)

This means, "Some, having adopted the path of fruitive action, are *karmīs*, while others, having taken shelter of empiric knowledge, have become *jñānīs*, but we, the servants of the servants of Śrī Hari, are the carriers of His servant's shoes."

In separation from *śrī guru*, some of his servants have wholly surrendered their very selves to him, having accrued within their hearts the multitude of teachings that issued from his lotus mouth. And in carrying out those instructions to the letter, they obtain millions of times more stimulus to serve than when he was manifest.

There are others whose aim and object is not to fulfil the innermost desires of *gurudeva*'s heart; yet externally they appear extremely enthusiastic to serve. We must understand, however, that the driving force behind their endeavours is like that of the champions of *karma* – extraneous (*anyābbilāṣa*) and laced with a greed for worldly reputation.

Internal Motive is Beyond External Judgement

According to varying qualifications (*adbikāra*) and consequent gradations in motive, one deed may be classified as either forbidden action (*vikarma*), prescribed action (*karma*), knowledge (*jñāna*), or devotion to the Supreme Lord (*bhakti*). If one performs *hari-kīrtana* to obtain sense gratification that is scripturally unauthorized, but which may be either lawful or unlawful from a materialistic perspective, then that *kīrtana* is to be known as *vikarma*. If one's motive is to attain scripturally authorized happiness, either in this world or the next, then that *hari-kīrtana* will be classified as *karma*. If one's motive in performing *hari-kīrtana* is to achieve liberation, then that *kīrtana* will be known as *jñāna*. And if one performs *hari-kīrtana* driven by a desire to render cent-percent loving service to *śrī guru* and the Vaiṣṇavas in all respects, then that *hari-kīrtana* is *bhakti*.

Individuals of astute intelligence never judge any action on the basis of external performance. Rather, the sole object of their deliberation is the intention behind an action. Even if, from an external standpoint, Hiraṇyakaśipu's

observance of austerity and Rāvaṇa's acceptance of the dress of a renunciant (*tridaṇḍī*) are considered praiseworthy, the intentions behind their actions are undoubtedly condemnable.

The Vaiṣṇava Never Leaves Us

Śrī guru and the Vaiṣṇavas are not entities subject to birth and death like those beings bound by the laws of fruitive action. Like Śrī Bhagavān, they exhibit the pastimes of appearance (*prakāṣa*) and disappearance (*aprakāṣa*) in this world.

*na karmabandhanam janma vaiṣṇavānāñca vidyate
viṣṇoranucaratvaṁ hi mokṣamāburmanīṣiṇaḥ*

Padma-Purāṇa (quoted in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* 10.113)

The meaning is “The Vaiṣṇavas have no material birth, nor are they bound by the laws of *karma*. The learned declare that attaining the position of Lord Viṣṇu's associate servant is indeed *mokṣa*.” Although when the sun has set, it may be outside the vision of the living beings in any given country, it cannot be concluded that the sun has become extinct. Similarly, when the associates of Bhagavān perform their disappearance pastimes, they may remain in a domain beyond our range of vision, yet they are eternally His companions, nourishing Bhagavān Śrī Gaurāṅga's and Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. Even if we cannot directly receive Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions (*upadeśa*) and directives (*nirdeśa*), the fact remains that from a location concealed from our eyes he is protecting and nourishing us in all respects.

Śrīla Prabhupāda Brought the Flood of Hari-kīrtana

He left a wealth of teachings healthful to the consciousness of the living beings. Each word is consciousness awakening. The teachings of Śrīla Prabhupāda – who is non-different from Śrī Baladeva – transmit spiritual strength (*cid-bala*) into us, and are our sole support and shelter. In his pastime of preaching the cherished aims of Śrī Caitanya's heart (*mano'bhīṣṭa*), within a very short period of time he released, through multifarious channels, the unimpaired stream of Śrī Caitanya's teachings. How wonderful are the sublime ideals he established in this world, proving himself to be the best of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's followers in the line of Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī, and the bestower of compassion upon all living entities! His accomplishments cannot be enumerated. His work to benefit the world has earned the unreserved commendation of all honest and genuine people, irrespective of their nation or caste.

Innumerable learned and noble persons placed themselves at his feet and, upon hearing the *hari-kathā* that



emanated from his lotus mouth, discovered their eternal welfare. By bringing a great deluge of *hari-kīrtana* to this world – which was deprived of it and duly stricken, he established an ideal utterly beyond compare. Furthermore, the originality he exhibited in his pastimes as *ācārya*, while preserving the specialty of the stream of teachings coming in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, is unprecedented.

Transcendental Separation – Beyond Expression

How heart-rending is separation from one's dear-most *guru*, the Vaiṣṇavas and other godly personalities! It finds no means of expression in any language of the world, a world saturated with anxieties and limitations. Language can only serve to allude to the direction of the heart's transcendental, loving emotions.

Even so, those who are fully conversant with the absolute truths regarding the Lord and His exalted pure devotees – which are accessible through realization – can comprehend the depth and importance of transcendental loving sentiments, even if they are only expressed to a slight degree through language. Upon the disappearance



of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī Prabhu, his foremost follower Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī Prabhu manifested the painful emotions of his heart as follows:

*śūnyāyate mahā-goṣṭhaṁ girīndro 'jagarāyate
vyāghra-tuṅḍāyate kuṅḍaṁ jīvātu-rabitasya me*

Śrī Prārthanāśraya-caturdaśaka (11)

This means, “In separation from Śrī Rūpa, who was the sole sustainer of my life, this Vraja-maṇḍala appears as if vacant, Girirāja-Govardhana appears like a python, and Śrī Rādhā-kuṅḍa like the mouth of a tiger.” In Śrīla Dāsa Gosvāmī’s transcendental mood of separation from Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī Prabhu – who is the all in all of his very life (*prāṇa*) – his cherished places of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes, his more cherished Girirāja Govardhana, and even his most cherished Śrī Rādhā-kuṅḍa, all appeared lifeless. It seemed that everything was lost and plunged into darkness.

The intense state of mind attained by *mahā-bhāgavata* Vaiṣṇavas in their divine separation is touched upon in the language of Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura:

pāṣāṇe kuṭībo māthā anale paśibo

I will dash my head upon a stone or enter into fire.

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (*Madhya-līlā* 8.247) also gives evidence of this. Śrīman Mahāprabhu inquired, “*duḥkha madhye kon duḥkha haya gurutara* – among all sorrows, what sorrow is the topmost?”

In response, Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya said, “*kṛṣṇa-bhakta viraha vinā duḥkha nāhi dekhi para* – I know of no greater sorrow than separation from the pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Uncompromising Compassion

Only one who is a Vaiṣṇava can realize separation from another Vaiṣṇava. Transcendental separation cannot be realized by those on the platforms of enjoyment and renunciation. Śrīla Prabhupāda, who is an intimate associate of Śrī Gaura, appeared on this Earth by Śrī Gaura’s will solely for the purpose of fulfilling the innermost desire of Gaura’s heart. Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, a *śaktyāveśa-puruṣa*, meaning ‘a person suffused with the great potency of the Lord,’ appeared

as the instrument of Śrī Gaurasundara’s prediction:

*prithivite ache jata nagarādi-grāma
sarvatra pracāra haibe mora nāma*

Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata (Antya-khaṇḍa 4.126)

In every town and village of the earth, the chanting of My name will be propagated.

Thus he has distributed the eternal benediction of this prophesy by drenching the world in a deluge of topics about Śrī Hari. Those individuals who are *sāragrāhī*, seekers of the essence, pursue the welfare of their souls, and it is for certain that a day will come when they will realize the essential nature and inner significance of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s fulfilling this prophesy.

In his worldwide preaching, Śrīla Prabhupāda’s intention was not to gain material fame by astonishing the people of the world with oral recitations of scripture that show indifference to the real meaning of the Upaniṣads and *vedānta-sūtra*, like one carrying hackneyed load, for to do so would be to immolate the self on the sacrificial stake of subservience to the opinions of the masses, who are averse to Bhagavān.

Pained at heart upon seeing the wretched state of human-kind, which was stricken with grief from suffering the threefold material miseries, Śrīla Prabhupāda performed preaching activities that pervaded the entire world. His intention was to install the kingdom of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the heart of every living entity through *hari-kīrtana*. He did not expend one drop of blood to increase party majority by appointing lifeless, paid preachers:

*vrajavāsigaṇa, pracāraka-dhana
pratiṣṭhā-bhikṣuka tā’rā nabe ’śava
prāṇa āche tā’ra, se hetu pracāra,
pratiṣṭhāśā-bīna-kṛṣṇa-gāthā saba*

Vaiṣṇava ke? (18)

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda

The residents of Vraja are the only true preachers in this world, as they are endowed with the wealth of *kṛṣṇa-prema*. They are not devoid of life, and therefore they do not hanker after worldly distinction. They are full of the vitality that comes from loving Kṛṣṇa, and they go out and speak about Him. Whatever they say is free from the desire for prestige.

In these words alone, he has manifested the true criteria for preaching the topics of Śrī Hari. “*Satyam param dhīmahi* – I meditate upon the Absolute Truth.” As the proponent of genuine truth, he waved the victory flag of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*’s message, thereby subduing the deception of

illusion. In this way, Śrīla Prabhupāda’s reputation as a Vaiṣṇava (*vaiṣṇavī-pratiṣṭhā*) has been celebrated everywhere.

An effort to unscrupulously commingle genuine Truth with untruth, or customary truth, and thus become attendant to the disposition of those averse to the Truth, was never once observed in his character. In the unconscious world, *vox populi*, or *vox dei* (meaning ‘the opinion of the general masses is equal to the opinion of God’) prevails. By propagating the *kīrtana* of Śrī Caitanya’s teachings, Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura opposed this current of thought of the unconscious world and endeavoured up to his last breath to establish us in our inherent consciousness.

Genuine truth cannot be ascertained by public opinion. This was Śrīla Prabhupāda’s basic premise. As a result of his lifelong struggle to oppose the innumerable followers of incidental truth, those in whose ears the message containing the real Truth has entered have attained the success of their human form. Those who took shelter of him, in recompense for their very selves being fully sold at his lotus feet, were infused with his mercy potency. They have preached and are continuing to do so. Like porters, they carry everywhere the message of Śrī Caitanya that emanated from his mouth. For them, there is no question of desiring worldly reward.

A Humble Petition

To fulfil the desires of Śrī Gurupāda-padma, who has fulfilled Śrī Caitanya’s innermost desires, indeed constitutes true service to *guru*. And it is through such service that divine separation is realized. Śrī Vārṣabhānavī-dayita dāsa Prabhu, of his own volition, sprinkled the stream of his mercy upon everyone, everywhere, without considering who is superior or who is inferior. I nurture within my heart the hope of becoming the dust of the lotus feet of that supremely merciful Śrī Vārṣabhānavī-dayita dāsa Prabhu, life after life.

*śrī caitanya-mano ’bhīṣṭam sthāpitarṁ yena bhū-tale
svayaṁ rūpaḥ kadā mahyaṁ dadāti sva-padāntikam*

Śrī Prema-bhakti-candrikā (1.38)

When will Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī give me the shelter of his lotus feet? Because he understood the innermost desire of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, he was able to establish His mission in this world and is very dear to the Lord. 🙏

Translated from *Śrī Bhakti-kamala-bhakti-saurabha* a Bengali compilation of the articles and *harikathā* of Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Kamala Madhusūdana Mahārāja

Transcendental Moods of Separation

Excerpts from the writings and lectures of
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja



To feel separation from the spiritual master or Kṛṣṇa is a very good position. That means one who is in pure love with Kṛṣṇa and His representative, spiritual master, he thinks always of them. And this thinking process is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If we can think always of Kṛṣṇa even in separation, that is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And in the absolute platform, there is no difference of separation or meeting. The separation is also meeting, rather in separation one relishes the loving relationship [that is] more tasty. So don't be disappointed that you are separated from me. I am also always thinking of how you are making progress there. And I am always expecting your letters that you have already opened a centre there.

Letter to Kṛṣṇa dāsa, 21 October 1968*



The feeling of separation from the Lord is undoubtedly painful to the devotee, but because it is in connection with the Lord, it has a specific transcendental effect, which pacifies the heart. Feelings of separation are also sources of transcendental bliss, and they are never comparable to contaminated material feelings of separation.

Today, Sunday, November 10, 1974, corresponding to the 10th of Kārttika, Caitanya Era 488, the eleventh day of the dark fortnight, the Rāma-ekādaśī, we have now finished the English translation of Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī's *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* in accordance with the authorized order of His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Gosvāmī Mahārāja, my beloved eternal spiritual master, guide and friend. Although according to material vision His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda passed away from this material world on the last day of December 1936, I still consider His Divine Grace to be always present with me by his *vāñī*, his words. There are two ways of association – by *vāñī* and by *vaṣuḥ*. *Vāñī* means words, and *vaṣuḥ* means physical presence. Physical presence is sometimes appreciable and sometimes not, but *vāñī* continues to exist eternally. Therefore we must take advantage of the *vāñī*, not the physical presence. The *Bhagavad-gītā*, for example, is the *vāñī* of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Although Kṛṣṇa was personally present five thousand years ago and is no longer physically present from the materialistic point of view, the *Bhagavad-gītā* continues.



It is to be admitted that whatever translation work I have done is through the inspiration of my spiritual master,

because personally I am most insignificant and incompetent to do this materially impossible work. I do not think myself a very learned scholar, but I have full faith in the service of my spiritual master, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. If there is any credit to my activities of translating, it is all due to His Divine Grace. Certainly if His Divine Grace were physically present at this time, it would have been a great occasion for jubilation, but even though he is not physically present, I am confident that he is very much pleased by this work of translation. He was very fond of seeing many books published to spread the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. Therefore our society, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, has been formed to execute the order of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 1.5.28, purport*



Āvirbhāva, tirobhāva. Just the rising sun and the setting sun. When the sun sets, it does not mean the sun is finished. Of course, some of the former theosophists and scientists, they used to think that this is..., at night the sun is dead. That is not fact. The sun is not visible to our limited eyes. Similarly, appearance and disappearance of incarnation of Godhead is like that. They are going on just like, a horse is running in due course, but when it comes in front of your door or window, you can see. But that does not mean the running of horse is stopped when you cannot see. Similarly, these incarnations of Godhead, *ananta*, unlimited, they are from this *sahasra-sīrasam* Ananta, Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam Lecture, 3.26.25
2 January 1975*



As Lord Kṛṣṇa's appearance and disappearance are all spiritual, transcendental, they are not ordinary things, similarly, Lord Kṛṣṇa's devotee, His representative, who is sent to this material world for preaching the glories of Lord Kṛṣṇa, their appearance and disappearance is also like Kṛṣṇa's. Therefore, according to Vaiṣṇava principles, the appearance and disappearance of Vaiṣṇavas is considered all-auspicious. Therefore we hold festivals. Just like yesterday we had the disappearance day of His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda. So we offered our respects and observed a festival, *āvirbhāva, tirobhāva*.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam Lecture, 6.1.27-34
Surat, India, 17 December 1970*



Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura passed away from this material world on December 31, 1936, so almost forty years has past. There are two phases: *prakāṣa* and *aprakāṣa*, appearance and disappearance. We have nothing to lament on account of disappearance, because Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa's devotee do not disappear. Not only devotees – even the non-devotees – nobody disappears. Nobody disappears because every living entity is eternal, as Kṛṣṇa is eternal. This is confirmed in the Vedic literature: *nityo nityānam cetanaś cetanānām* (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 2.2.13). The description of the Supreme Lord is that He is *nitya*, eternal, and the living entities are also eternal; but He is the chief eternal.

So spiritually, in appearance and disappearance, there is no difference. Just like in material point of view, suppose you get a son born, you become very happy. When the same son passes away, you become very unhappy. This is material.

But spiritually, there is no difference in appearance or disappearance. So although this is the disappearance day of *om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, there is nothing to be lamented. Although we feel separation – that feeling is there – spiritually there is no difference between appearance and disappearance.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda's
Disappearance Day, Lecture
Los Angeles, 13 December 1973*



So one should not conclude simply by seeing that he is dying. No. The process is different. *Janma karma ca me divyam* (*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.9). As Lord Kṛṣṇa's appearance and disappearance are all spiritual, transcendental, they are not ordinary things, similarly, Lord Kṛṣṇa's devotees, His representative, who is sent to this material world for preaching the glories of Lord Kṛṣṇa, their appearance and disappearance is also like Kṛṣṇa's. Therefore, according to Vaiṣṇava principles, the appearance and disappearance of Vaiṣṇava is considered all-auspicious; therefore we hold festivals. Just like yesterday we had the disappearance day of His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda. So we offered our respects and observed a festival.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam Lecture, 6.1.27–34,
Surat, 17 December 1970*

Excerpt from Five Prayers Glorifying the Special Characteristics of Śrīla 108 Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Ṭhākura*

Presented on the commemoration of
his appearance, Rādhā-Dāmodara Temple,
Vṛndāvana, India, 1961

First Vaiṣiṣṭya

*On this day, O my master, I made a cry of grief;
I was not able to tolerate the absence of my guru. (1)*

*On this auspicious day I have come with this offering
just to worship you, remembering your lotus feet. (2)*

*Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's judgment
is that renunciation is most important.
Not only that, but such knowledge of renunciation
must be delivered to every conditioned being. (3)*

*The beginner in devotional service
has no ability to solve this dilemma,
but you are a mahā-bhāgavata,
you have given us direction. (4)*

*One bewildered by ignorance, what kind of renunciant can he be?
He will only be a phalgu-vairāgi; renouncing externally. (5)*

*Renunciation is actually the result of real spiritual emotion.
Without such feeling it is simply known as show bottle. (6)*

*But there is another 'show-bottle'
for the purpose of preaching.
That is the Lord's sannyāsa,
by which the māyāvādīs are defeated. (7)*

*Lord Caitanya's philosophy is beyond varṇāśrama;
it is bhāgavata-dharma, for putting an end
to all cheating processes of religion. (8)*

*Performing dry renunciation,
there can be no real preaching.
Therefore yukta-vairāgya is given
as the highest essential understanding. (9)*

*"That sannyāsa which I have given you"
is for preaching in devotion.
The faithless sense enjoyers are unable
to understand this. (10)*

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Excerpts from Śrī Virahāṣṭāṣṭakam



Fourth Aṣṭaka

*ṛddhi siddhi yāhā kichu tava vakya sāra
'vrjavāsira prāna āche sebetu pracāra (1)*

*'vyavasāyātmikā buddhi' cakravarttīr vicāra
māyā-mohapāśe āja hala chārahāra (2)*

*babuśākhā vistārila avyavasāyī bāte
pratiṣṭha bāghinī āsi yoga dila tāte (3)*

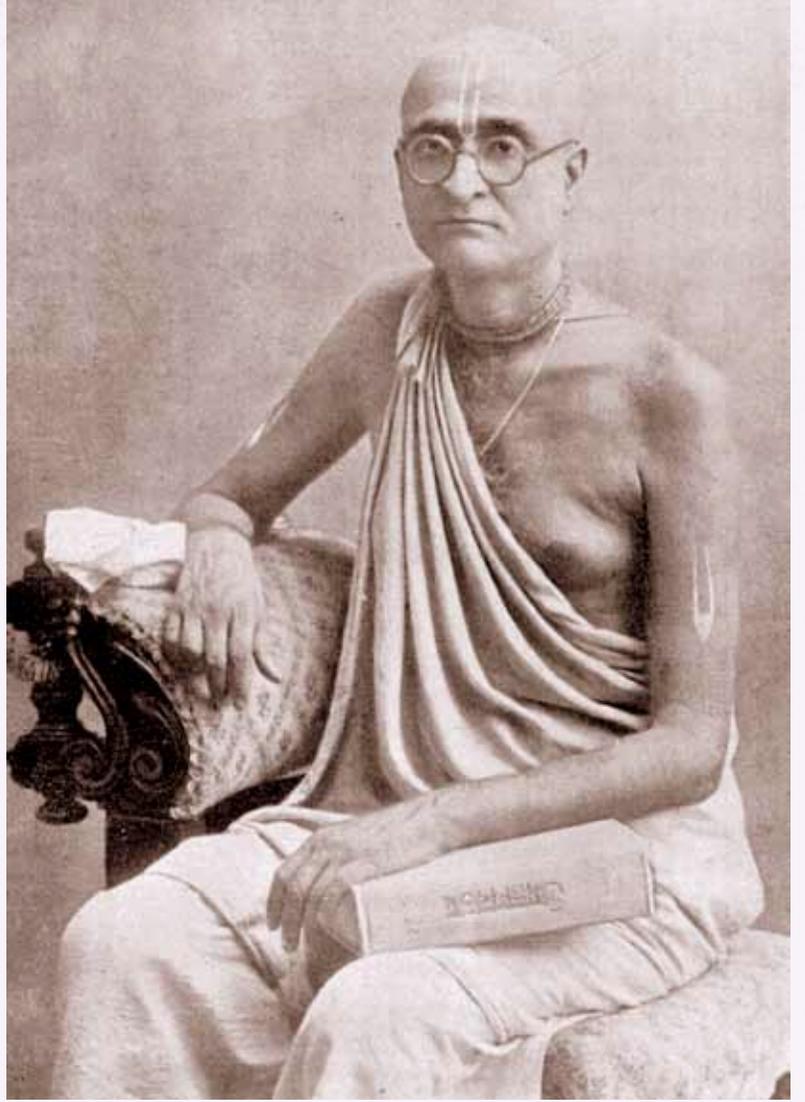
*tomāra marama kathā nā paśila kāne
yogyatā kothāya pāba nāma-saṅkīrtane (4)*

*nāma-gāna sei haya śrī-gurur vānī
bhuliyā' o ai kathā satya nāhi māni (5)*

*taba mukhya kīrtti para-dharam vistāra
mahāmantra mane sei tāra adbhikāra (6)*

*adbhikāra lābhe yadi sabe śīsyē kare
tabe ta dukhita jīva saṁsāra nistāre (7)*

*jīvera darada-dukhī śrīla prabhupāda
viraha-vāsare tava heri avasāda (8)*



“Lord Kṛṣṇa’s associates in Vraja have real life, and therefore they are preaching.”

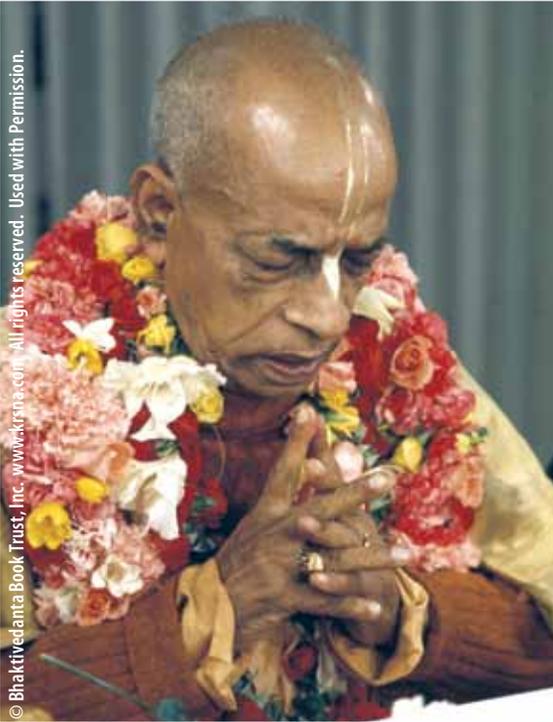
Persons interested in worldly prosperity and subtle perfections will doubtlessly find all such benedictions in your words. “The chanting of the Lord’s holy name is the greatest of all religions.”

By preaching this message and thereby preserving this eternal truth, you, O beloved Gurudeva, have attained the greatest eternal fame.

One who rejects this truth regarding *harināma-saṅkīrtana* will not find truth anywhere in the three worlds; and one who accepts the holy name from your divine lips becomes qualified to make disciples throughout the three worlds and rescue such conditioned souls from suffering.

But in your absence, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the “resolute determination” explained by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has become broken by the forces of darkness, and those who were not fixed in devotional service have divided your holy Gauḍīya Mission into many separated branches.

It appears that the essence of your teachings did not enter very deeply into their ears, and that the tigress of desire for material prestige has regrettably claimed a great many victims. Indeed, I am wondering where I, too, will receive the strength to remain steady in my *bhajana* in separation from your lotus feet. O Śrīla Prabhupāda, the depth of your compassion was such that the suffering of misguided humanity caused deep distress for you; and I am acutely feeling lost and alone on this day of your departure from our vision.





Eighth Aṣṭaka

*caitanya-sevā nabe nirjjana bhajane
bujhāile bāra bāra tava nijajane (1)*

*jagāi mādhbāi uddhāri prabhu dayā kare
sei se-pracāra kārya bujhāile sabāre (2)*

*jagat bhariyā geche jagāi mādhbāi
sabāi heriche bāṭa caitanya nitāi (3)*

*hena kāle tumi yadi ābāra āsite
punaḥ bāra sei bhāve kīrtana gāhite (4)*

*punaḥ yadi dikadigante pracāra haita
ānande loka saba hata uchalita (5)*

*gambhīra humkāre tava pāṣaṇḍī palāta
caitanya-kathāya jīvera hr̥daya bharita (6)*

*punaḥ pṛthivīte saba paḍe yeta sādā
tomāra virabe āja saba mañihārā (7)*

*tomāra virabe prabhu vidare hr̥daye
viraba-vedanā kichu prakāṣe abbaya
jīvera darada-dukhī śrīla prabhupāda
viraba-vāsare tava heri avasāda (8)*

Adored master, you patiently reminded all of your disciples time and again that devotional service to Lord Caitanya is not performed exclusively in solitude.

You took great care to painstakingly explain to all of us that just as the Lord out of His causeless mercy preached everywhere and delivered Jagāi and Mādhbāi, the exact same strategy is still appropriate.

The world has now become filled with countless Jagāis and Mādhbāis, and it is clear to all that the only means for their salvation is the path shown by Caitanya-Nitāi.

If you were to come again at this time, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and personally re-establish the proper understanding of these ideas in all the ten directions, the joy of the people would know no bounds.

Hearing the deeply resonant sound of your voice loudly proclaiming the victory of Mahāprabhu's mission, the demons and atheists would flee, and the thirsty living entities would drink the divine nectar-message of Śrī Gaurāṅga-deva to their complete fulfilment.

The whole world would once again be set aright, whereas in your absence, nothing of value is to be found anywhere.

O Gurudeva, broken-hearted, this Abhaya makes his cry of appeal in the bitter throes of separation from your lotus feet. You compassionately felt the suffering of the *jīvas* to be your own, and I am indeed feeling lost and alone on this day of your disappearance from our vision.

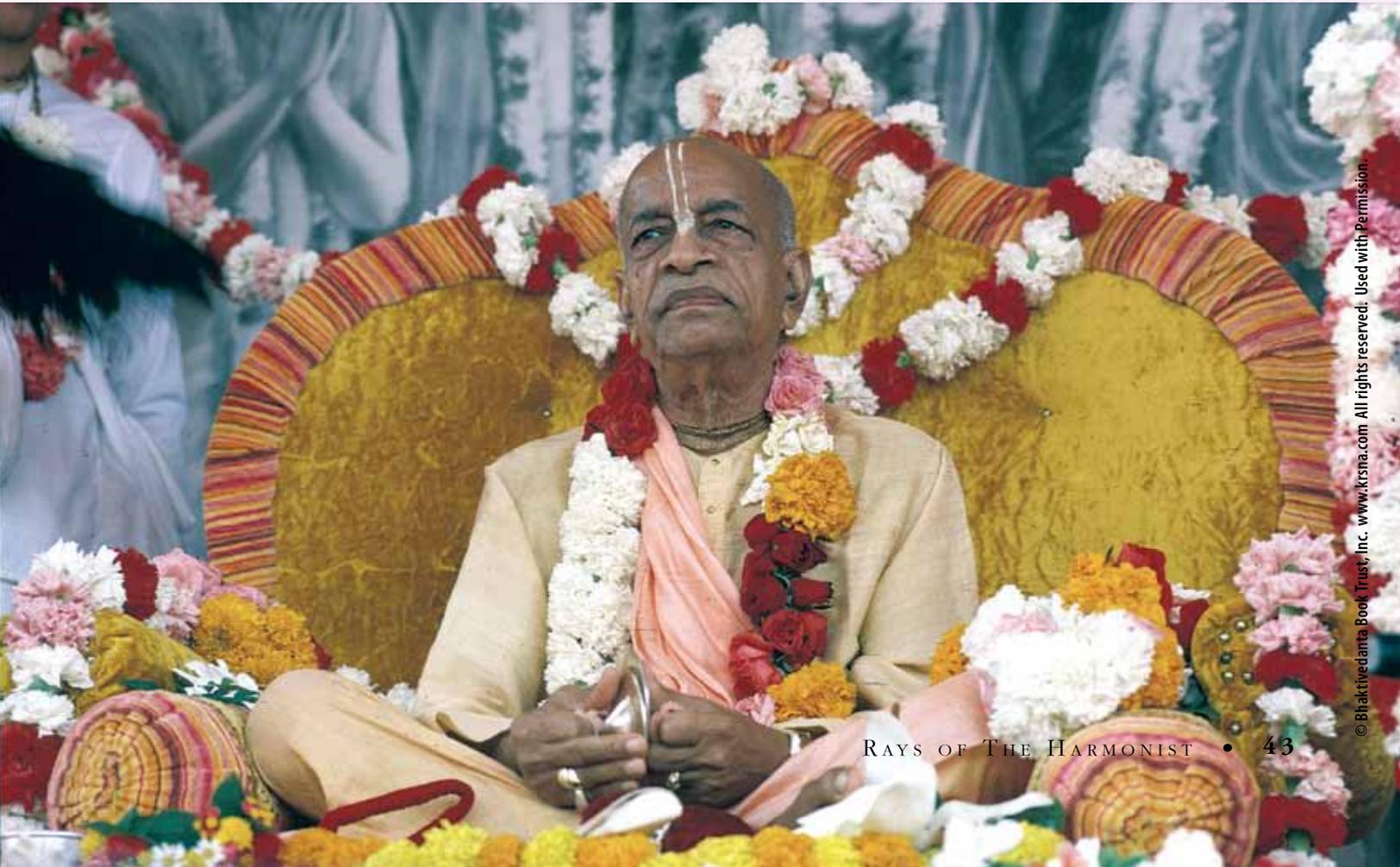
Dīna hīna kāṅgāla

Śrī Abhaya Caraṇa (Bhaktivedānta Svāmī) 

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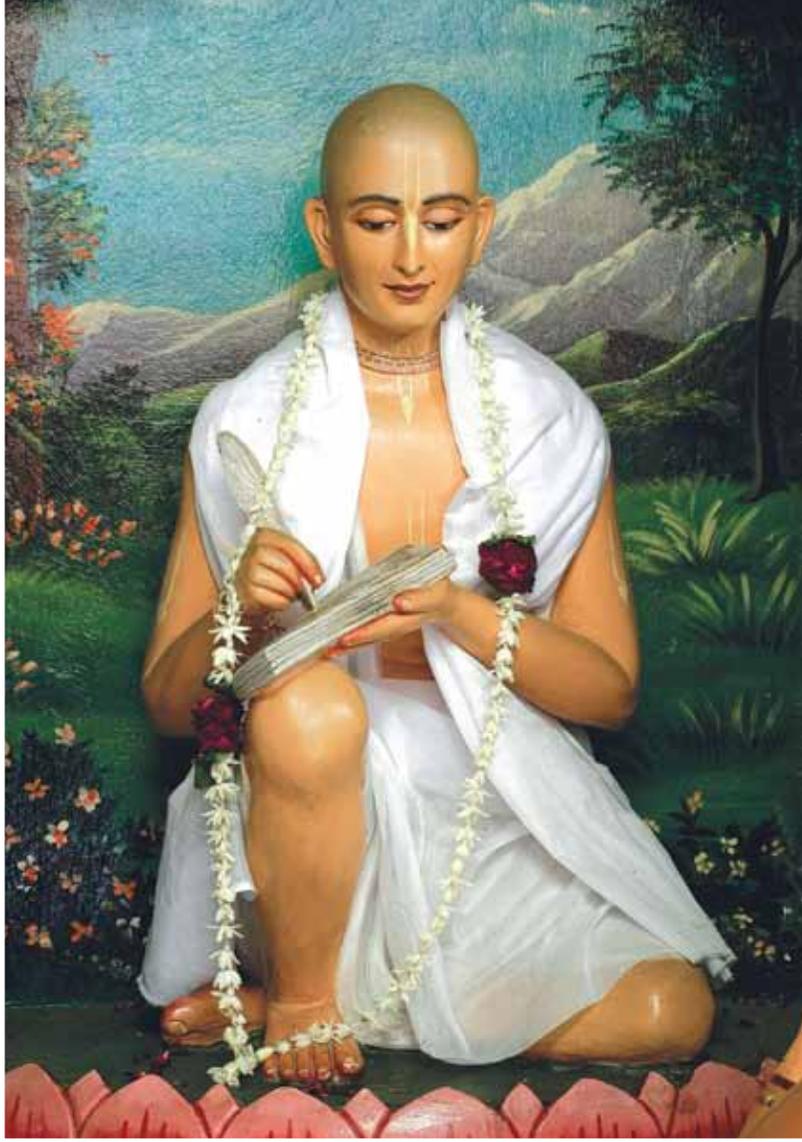
Viraha-Bhāvāvalī

The Wave-like Moods of Separation

An Anthology of Scriptural Verses

The Glory of Separation

It may be said, “It is appropriate to call the bliss of meeting, *sambhoga*, a pleasurable mellow (*rasa*), but how is *vipralambha*, or separation, fit to be called a *rasa*?” Ancient scholars have resolved this question in the following manner:



*na vinā vipralambhena
sambhogaḥ puṣṭim aśnute
kaṣāyite hi vastrādau
bhūyān rāgo vivardhate*

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī
Ujjvala-nīlamanī (15.3)

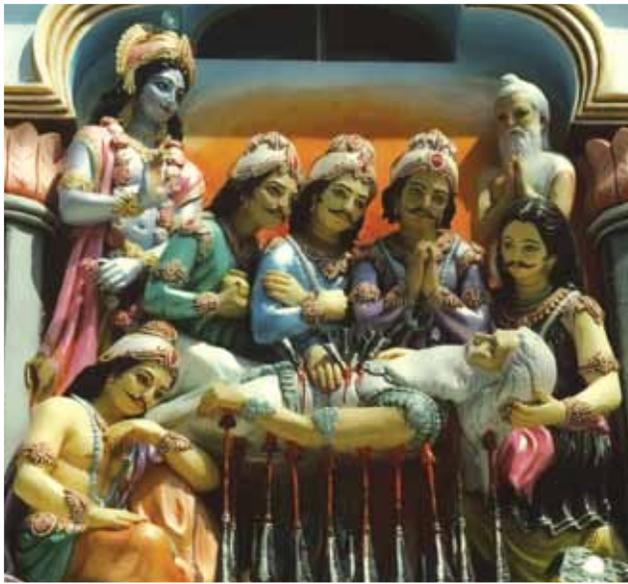
Vipralambha (separation) nourishes *sambhoga* (meeting). That is, *sambhoga* is enhanced by *vipralambha*; without separation, meeting will not be nurtured. By re-dying a dyed cloth, the intensity of its tint increases. Similarly, through separation alone, the joy of meeting is heightened.

Śrī Uddhava's Prayer in Imminent Separation from
Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa

*nāham tavāṅbri-kamalam
kṣaṇārdham api keśava
tyaktuṁ samutsahe nātha
sva-dhāma naya mām api*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.6.43)

O Keśava! I am not capable of leaving Your beautiful lotus feet for a single moment. Therefore, O my Lord, take me with You to Vaikuṅṭha-dhāma, also.



The Lamentation of the Pāṇḍavas in Separation
from Bhīṣma, Droṇa and the Devotee Kings

*sva-jivanādbika-prārthya
śrī-viṣṇu-jana-saṅgateḥ
vicchedena kṣaṇam cātra
na sukhāṁśam labhāmabe*

Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta (1.5.54)

The Pāṇḍavas said, “The association of the devotees of Bhagavān Śrī Viṣṇu is more precious and more desirable to us than our own life. In the absence of such devotees, we are unable for a mere moment to obtain even a particle of happiness from this entire world (this kingdom).



The Statement of Śrīman Mahāprabhu in
Separation from His Beloved Devotee Śrīla
Haridāsa Ṭhākura

*kṛpā kari' kṛṣṇa more diyāchilā saṅga
svatantra kṛṣṇera icchā,—kailā
saṅga-bhaṅga*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya-līlā 11.94)

Mahāprabhu spoke, “Śrī Kṛṣṇa mercifully bestowed upon Me the association of Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura, but today, by the desire of Kṛṣṇa, who is the all-independent Lord, that association has been taken away.

*baridāsera icchā yabe ha-ila calite
āmāra śakati tāñre nārila rākhite*

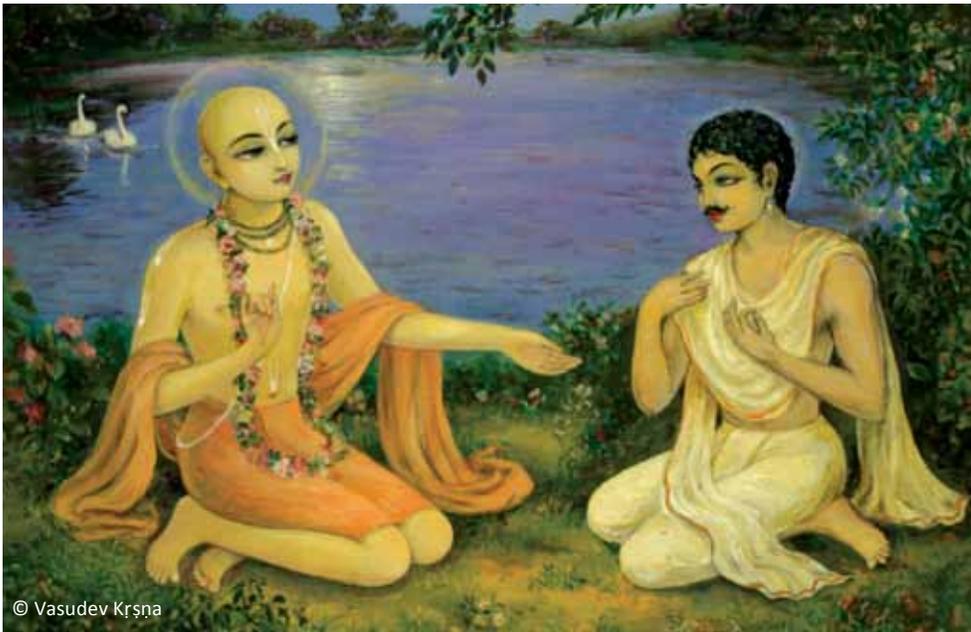
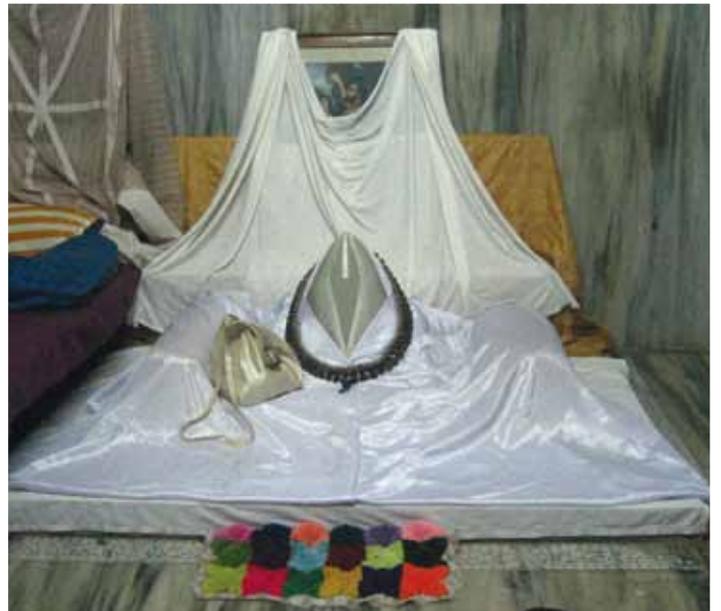
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya-līlā 11.95)

When Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura desired to leave, I did not have the strength to hold him back.

*baridāsa āchila pṛthivīra ‘śiromaṇi’
tābā vinā ratna-śūnyā haila medinī*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya-līlā 11.97)

Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura was the crest jewel of this Earth. Without his presence, the Earth has become devoid of that precious gem.



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**The Questions of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and
the Replies of Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda**

*‘duḥkha-madhye kona
duḥkha haya gurutara?’
‘kṛṣṇa-bhakta-viraba vinā
duḥkha nābi dekhi para’*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 8.247)

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu asked, “Among all the types of misery in this world, what is the greatest sorrow?”

Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda replied, “Separation from the devotees of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the greatest sorrow. There is no misery greater than this.”

*‘śreyo-madhye kona śreyah jīvera haya sāra?’
‘kṛṣṇa-bhakta-saṅga vinā śreyah nābi āra’*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 8.250)

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu asked, “Among all types of auspiciousness, what is the best for the living beings?”

Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda replied, “There is no greater auspiciousness than the association of the devotees of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.”



The Prayers of Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvatipāda in Separation from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu

*abhivyaḅto yatra druta-kanaka-gauro harir abbūn
 mabimnā tasyaiva praṇaya-rasa-magnaṁ jagad abbūt
 abbūd uccair uccais tumula-hari-saṅkīrtana-vidbhīḅ
 sa kālaḅ kiṁ bhūyo 'py abaha paṛivartate madhuraḅ*

Śrī Caitanya-candrāmṛtam (139)

When that form of Śrī Hari whose complexion is the colour of molten gold manifested to the vision of this world, His influence was such that the entire Earth became submerged in *praṇaya-rasa*, loving mellows. It was then that the process of loud, tumultuous chanting of *śrī kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana* was also set in motion. Alas! Will those ambrosial moments ever return?

*saiveyaṁ bhuvi dbhanya-gauḅa-nagarī velāpi saivāmbudbeḅ
 so 'yaṁ śrī-puruṣottamo madhubuḅates tāny eva nāmāni ca
 no kutrāpi nirīkṣyate hari hari premotsavas tāḅṛśo
 hā caitanya kṛpā-nidhāna tava kiṁ vikṣe punar vaibhavam*

Śrī Caitanya-candrāmṛtam (140)

On this Earth, the same fortunate town of Gauḅa still exists, as do the same ocean-beach full of lush forests, the same Śrī Puruṣottama-dhāma, and the same holy names of Śrī Kṛṣṇa such as 'Hare Kṛṣṇa' and 'Hari! Hari'. But alas! That festival of blissful love (*premānanda*) is not perceived anywhere! *Hā* Caitanya! O ocean of mercy! Will Your splendour ever be visible to me again?"

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in Separation from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu



*rathārūḍhasyārād adhipadavi nīlācala-pater
adabhra-premormi-sphurita-naṭanollāsa-vivaśaḥ
sa-barṣaṁ gāyadbhiḥ parivrta-tanur vaiṣṇava-janaib
sa caitanyaḥ kiṁ me punar aṇi dṛṣor yāsyati padam*

Śrī Caitanyāṣṭakam (7)

The Lord of Nīlācala, Śrī Jagannātha-deva, would be mounted on His chariot, and before Him, in the middle of the path, the Vaiṣṇavas would become blissfully immersed in *śrī nāma-sankīrtana*. At that time, in the midst of those Vaiṣṇavas, He used to dance, tossed about by the waves of *mahā-prema*, ecstatic love. Will that Śrī Caitanya-deva ever again visible before my eyes?

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī in Separation from Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Their associates

*rādhā-kṛṣṇera viyoge, chāḍila sakala bhoge,
rukḥā śukḥā annamātra sāra
śrī-caitanyera vicchedete, anna chāḍi seī haite,
phala gavya karena ābhāra*

In separation from Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī renounced palatable foodstuffs, and instead accepted only coarse, dry rice as the mainstay of his life. But the moment he became separated from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, he even stopped taking that and ate only fruits and buttermilk.

*sanātanera adarśane, tāhā chāḍi seī dine,
kevala karena jalapāna
rūpera viccheda jabe, jala chāḍi dile tabe,
rādhā-kṛṣṇa bali rākhe prāṇa*

Then, the moment he could no longer see Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, he left all fruits and buttermilk and begin to take only water to maintain his life. And later, upon his being separated from Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, he stopped drinking water also, his life-airs being held together solely by his crying, “*Hā Rādhā, hā Kṛṣṇa!*”

*svarūpera adarśane, nā dekhe rūpera gaṇe,
virabe vyākula haiyā kānde*

*kṛṣṇa-kathālāpa bine, śravane nābhika śune,
uccaiḥsvare ḍāke ārttanāde*

In the absence of Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara Prabhu and unable to see the associates of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, he became agitated in great separation and merely wept. He would not hear anything but *śrī kṛṣṇa-kathā*.

*hāhā rādhā-kṛṣṇa kothā, kothā ācha be lalitā,
he viśākhe deba daraśana
hā caitanya mahāprabhu, hā svarūpa mora prabhu,
hāhā prabhu rūpa-sanātana*

In a loud distressed voice he called out the names, “*Hā hā Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa! Where are You? He Lalitā! Where are you? He Viśākhā! Give me your darśana! Hā Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu! Hā my Prabhu Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara! Hā hā Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Sanātana Prabhus!*”

*kānde gosāi rātri-dine, puḍi jāya tanumane,
virabe haila jara jara
manda manda jibvā naḍe, preme asru netre paḍe
mane kṛṣṇa karaye smarāṇa*

In this way, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī would weep day and night. His mind and body would burn in the fire of separation, and consequently he became withered and decrepit. His tongue would quiver slowly, tears would flow from his eyes in streams due to *prema*, and within his mind he would be absorbed in remembrance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

By Rādhā-vallabha dāsa



Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī in Separation from
Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu

*nijatve gauḍīyān jagati pariṅṛhya prabbur imān
hare-kṛṣṇety evaṁ gaṇana-vidhinā kīrtayata bboḥ
iti prāyām śikṣām janaka iva tebhyaḥ paridiśan
śacī-sūnuḥ kiṁ me nayana-śaraṇīm yāsyati punaḥ*

Śrī Śacī-sūnvāṣṭakam (5)

In this world, Śacī-sūnu accepted the residents of the land of Gauḍa (Bengal) as His own, and had them perform *barināma-saṅkīrtana*, telling them, “O dear ones, chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* a prescribed number of times daily.” In this way, like a father, He imparted many cherished instructions to them. Will that son of Mother Śacī again appear on the pathway of my eyes?

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī in Separation from
Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī Prabhu

The best of the *śrī rūpānūgas*, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, in intense separation prayed for the shelter of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī after he had disappeared from his vision.

*apūrva-premābdheḥ parimala-payāḥ-phena-nivahaiḥ
sadā yo jīvātur yam iba kṛpayā siṅcad atulam
idānīm durdaivāt pratipada-vipad-dāva-valito
nirālambaḥ so 'yam kam iba tam ṛte yātu śaraṇam*

Prārthanāśraya-caturdaśakam (10)

My lord and my very life, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī Prabhu, ceaselessly and mercifully, in an unparalleled way, splashed an entirely unworthy person like me with droplets from the supremely pure water of the unprecedented ocean of love. Now, due to my misfortune, at every step I am afflicted by the forest fire of calamity and have no shelter. Therefore, to whom can I go for shelter other than my master Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī?

*śūnyāyate mahā-goṣṭham girīndro 'jagarāyate
vyāghra-tuṅḍāyate kuṅḍam jivatu rāhitasya me*

Śrī Prārthanāśraya-caturdaśakam (11)

In separation from Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, the sole sustainer of my life, Vraja-maṅḍala appears as if void, Girirāja Govardhana like a python, and Śrī Rādhā-kuṅḍa like the gaping mouth of a ferocious tiger.

Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura in Separation from the Associates of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu

Unable to see Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and the other Gosvāmīs, as well as his worshipful master, Śrīlā Lokanātha Gosvāmī Prabhu, Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura lamented in great distress.

*saba hailā adarśana, śūnya bbelā tribhuvana,
āñdhala haila enā āñkhi
kābhāre kabibo duḥkha, nā dekbāḍ chār mukha,
āchi yena marā paśu-pākhī*

One after another all my divine masters have disappeared, and the three worlds have become void. Now, I see only darkness before my eyes. To whom can I express my distress? I have become like a dead animal or bird and cannot show my worthless face to anyone.

*ye mora manera vyathā, kābhāre kabibo kathā,
echāra jīvane nāhi āśa
annajala viśa kbāi, mariyā nābika jāi,
dbik dbik narottama dāsa*

To whom can I now express the pain of my heart? Now I am unfortunate and devoid of hope. I am consuming the poison of food and drink, but still I do not die! Oh, fie on me, fie on me!

*tuwā adarśana-abi, garale jārāla debī,
cira-dina tāpita jīvana
hā hā prabhu! kara dayā, deha more pada-chāyā,
narottama laila śaraṇa*

Prārthanā (16), Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī Pada

O Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī! The separation I feel in your absence is like the intense poison of a snake, which is withering my body and forever agitating my life. *Hā hā*, Prabhu! Be merciful and bestow upon me the shade of your lotus feet. Please give me a place at your lotus feet! There, I, Narottama, am taking shelter.



Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura penned the following song in separation from Śrīla Śrīnivāsācārya. Herein, he reveals the heart of one overwhelmed by the pain of



deep separation. Experiencing extreme *viraha*, Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura is lamenting thus:

*je ānilo prema-dhana karuṇā pracura
bena prabhu kothā gelā ācārya ṭhākura
kāñhā mora svarūpa-rūpa kāñhā sanātana
kāñhā dāsa raghunātha patita-pāvana
kāñhā mora bhaṭṭa-yuga kāñhā kavirāja
eka-kāle kothā gelā gorā naṭarāja
pāṣāṇe kuṭibo mātḥā anale paśibo
gaurāṅga guṇera nidhi kothā gele pābo
se-saba saṅgīra saṅge je kaila vilāsa
se-saṅga nā pāiyā kāñde narottama dāsa*

Prārthanā (10), Je ānila prema-dhana

He who, out of His vast compassion brought [to this world] the treasure of divine love – aho! – where has such a master as Ācārya Ṭhākura [Śrīnivāsācārya] gone? Where have my Prabhus Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara, Śrī Rūpa, Śrī Sanātana, and the deliverer of the fallen, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, gone?

Where have my Śrī Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa and Śrī Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmīs gone? Where is my Śrī Kṛṣṇa-dāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī? Where has my Gaurāṅga, the king of dancers, suddenly gone? How can I tolerate separation from them all?

I shall dash my head upon a rock or enter into fire! Oh, where shall I go to find such a great treasure house of Śrī Gaurāṅga's wonderful qualities? Being unable to obtain the association of Lord Gaurāṅga accompanied by all of these devotees with whom He performed His pastimes, Narottama dāsa simply weeps, lamenting bitterly.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura on the day of Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja's Entrance into the Eternal Pastimes



Last year, Baṅgābda 1301 [the Bengali Calendar], on Monday, the 14th day of the month of Phālguna, at ten o'clock in the morning, in his *bhajana-kuṭīra* situated in Koladvīpa, Śrī Navadvīpa-maṇḍala, the elderly general of the society of *bhaktas*, Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, entered the eternal Śrī Dhāma. The perfected Śrīla Bābājī Mahārāja entered the spiritual world, casting Gaura-bhūmi into darkness by depriving us of his audience. Our mortal eyes will no longer be able to behold his dancing and *kīrtana*, both of which invoke ecstasy. May he bestow his mercy upon us from his place in the transcendental world.

Sajjana Toṣaṇī, Year-2, page 2



Śrīla Prabhupāda on Separation-tattva

On the platform of unbroken, eternal time (*akhaṇḍa-kāla*), meeting (*sambhoga*) and separation (*vipralambha*) co-exist. The experience of separation perceived in the realm of transcendental time indicates excellence in the pleasure of meeting.

(the monthly *Gauḍīya*, Year-7, Number-11)

Experiencing *cid-vipralambha*, or separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is indeed the sole *sādhana* for the *jīvas*. The detachment arising from mundane separation only reveals mundane attachment, but the detachment arising from separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the superb demonstration of the desire to satisfy His senses, *kṛṣṇendriyaprīti-vañchā*.

(the monthly *Gauḍīya*, Year-7, Number-11)

This unprecedented desire to satisfy the senses of Kṛṣṇa, as exhibited by Śrīpāda Mādhavendra Puripāda, the original *mahājana* due to his manifesting the sprout of *gopī-prema* in this world, is the sole, perfect ideal and, for those souls seeking to serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa, his moods are our only aim and object. Later, Śrīman Mahāprabhu and His intimate associates displayed this mood in their own practice of devotion.

(the monthly *Gauḍīya*, Year-7, Number-11)



The following are the concluding words of Śrīla Prabhupāda's *Anuvṛtti* (commentary) to *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*, Verse 11, stanzas 23–26, 28–29.

*śrī-gaura-vimukha bhāva, rādhā-kṛṣṇa-premābhāva,
bhaktivinoda dekhe jabe
saṁsārera dekhi gati, kṛṣṇa bhakti-bīna mati,
vāta-vyādhi-chale maunī tabe*

When Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura saw the sorry state of the world – how it's disposition was opposed to Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu and devoid of love for Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, then, spurred by his observation, he feigned rheumatism, and adopted complete silence, refusing all communication with worldly people, whose intelligence was destitute of *śrī kṛṣṇa-bhakti*.

*avalambi jaḍa-bhāva, 'jaḍa-tyāge vraja-lābha'
anukṣaṇa ei kathā mukhe
kṛṣṇa-bhakti-śūnya-dharā, dekhi prakāśila jarā,
antara-daśaya bhaje sukhe*

Adopting *jaḍa-bhāva*, a mood of indifference, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, from his lotus mouth, always used to say, “By renouncing *jaḍa-bhāva*, absorption in mundanity*, one attains Vraja.” Seeing this world devoid of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*, externally he manifested the symptoms of old age, while internally he remained absorbed in the bliss of *bhājana*.

*michā-bhakta-abhimāne, mūḍa-loka nābi jāne,
aparādha kaila bhakta-pāya
nija kṣudra adbhikāre, cāya bhakte dekhivāre,
avaśeṣe aparādha hāya!*

When foolish men have the futile and arrogant conception of themselves as devotees, they commit offence to the genuine devotee's lotus feet. With their insignificant qualification (*adbhikāra*) they want to observe the devotees, but alas! the end result is offence only.

*jīvera durgati heri, kata aśrupāta kari,
śuddha-bhakti karite pracāra
ādeśila bhakta-rāja, kara gaura-hari-kāja
ebe tumi kariyā ācāra*

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura shed profuse tears upon seeing the miserable state of the [conditioned] living entities. That monarch of devotees instructed me to preach *śuddhā-bhakti*, saying, “To accomplish the task of Śrī Gaurahari, you must first practise *śuddhā-bhakti* yourself.”

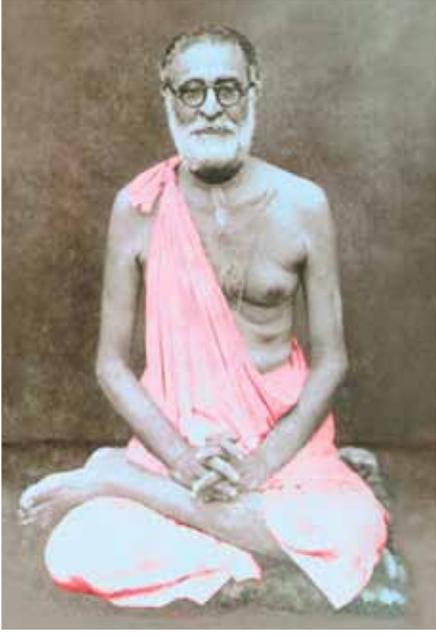
*vinodera padareṇu, smari jabe ārambhinu
'anuvṛtti' karite likhana
aṣṭaśloka hale para, bhaktivinoda-vara
vijaya karila vraja-vana*

When I began to compose this commentary (*anuvṛtti*) to *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*, I remembered the lotus foot dust of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Upon completing the commentary of the eighth verse, that best of masters, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, undertook the victorious journey to the transcendental forest of Vraja [the eternal Vraja-dhāma].

*adya śubha rādhā-dīne, kara kṛpā dīna-bīne
śuddha-bhāgavata-harijana
'anuvṛtti' samāpiyā, taba kare samarpiyā,
dante ṭṛṇa kariyā dhāraṇa*

Today, on the auspicious occasion of Śrī Rādhāṣṭamī, may Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, the pure exalted devotee and intimate associate of Śrī Hari, bestow his mercy upon this fallen and destitute person. Having completed the commentary, with a straw clasped between my teeth, I am offering this work (*anuvṛtti*) unto his lotus hands.

* Here, two meanings of the word *jaḍa-bhava* have been used.



The following are the concluding words of Śrīla Prabhupāda's *Anubhāṣya* (commentary) on *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya-līlā* 20.158):

*navadvīpa māyāpure, prabhugṛha-nātidūre,
anubhāṣya kaila samāpana
śrī-gaura-kiśora dāsa, samprati kuliyā vasa,
jānra bhṛtya—ei abhājana*

Situated in a place (present day Śrī Caitanya Maṭha) near Śrī Śacīnandana Gaurahari's birthplace in Māyāpura, within Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma *maṇḍala*, I have, today, completed writing the *anubhāṣya* of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. This unfortunate person [deprived of the *darśana* of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura] is the servant of Śrīla Gaura-kiśora Prabhu who is now residing in Kuliya (the town of Navadvīpa).

*āji ei sukha-dine, bhaktivinoda bine,
sukhavārttā jānāba kābhāre?
'anubhāṣya' śuni jei, parama prabhulla hai,
urukṛpā vitarila more*

Today, on this day of great happiness, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura is absent from our vision. To whom will I tell this happy news? He heard just one part of this *anubhāṣya* and, being extremely pleased, showered immense mercy upon me.

*tānhāra karunā-kathā, mādhava-bhajana-prathā,
tulanā nābhika tribuvana
tānra sama anya keha, dhariyā ei naradeha,
nābi dila kṛṣṇa-prema-dbane*

Within the three worlds, glories of his compassion and his method of *bhajana* to Mādhava are incomparable. No other person equalled him in distributing the supreme treasure of *śrī kṛṣṇa-prema*.

*sei prabhu-śakti-pāi, ebe 'anubhāṣya' gāi,
ibāte āmāra kichu nāi
yāvat jīvana rabe, tāvat smariba bhabe,
nityakāla sei pada cāi*

It is solely because I have received the potency of that Prabhu [Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura] that I have performed the *kīrtana* of (have written) this *anubhāṣya*. None of this work has been done by me. I am not the doer of it. For as long as I have life, filled with deep emotion, I will remember him. I only desire service to his beautiful lotus feet, birth after birth, forever.

**Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī
Mahārāja in Separation from Śrīla Prabhupāda
and Śrī Narahari Sevā-vigraha Prabhu**

Today, in the midst of 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 them 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 Gurupāda-padma and 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.



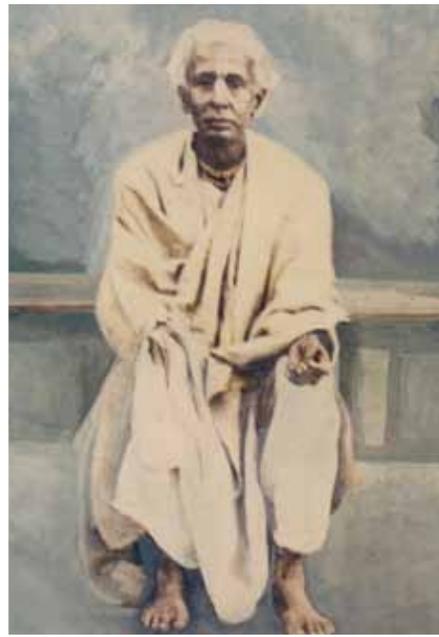
Today I realize that since the company of such a vile, fallen wretch as me is thoroughly poisonous, they have abandoned me and gone to a place where even getting any news of them is extremely difficult for me.



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.

Śrī Gauḍīya Pātrikā, Year-1 Number-1

Published in *Rays of The Harmonist*, Issue 22, Kārtika 2010



We have the propensity to fulfil our desires by enjoying the wealth and belongings of Śrīla Gurudeva, and our foremost duty on this day is to cast this habit into the fire of separation from him, thereby reducing it to ashes. During his physical presence, Śrīla Prabhupāda was merciful to me by supplying me with many comforts. Today, in his absence, I no longer receive this free supply, and therefore I feel acute pain in separation from him. If our need for *śrī guru* were based on a feeling of emptiness that came from being bereft of his tutelage, it would be a far superior feeling of separation.



But today, on his disappearance day, my duty is to fully obliterate my mountain-like pride by remembering his teachings, which are devastating enough to shake the earth and as grave as a clap of thunder.

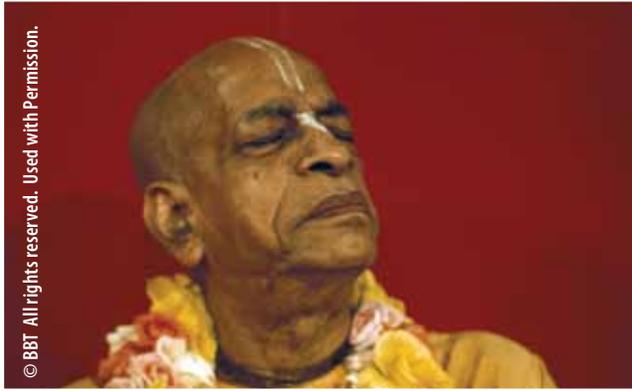
Śrī Gauḍīya Pātrikā Year-1 Number 10-11

Published in *Rays of The Harmonist*, Issue 15, Kārtika 2005

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja in
separation from Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava
Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Yesterday I received your letter dated 12 October, and its contents were heart-breaking. Kindly inform me of the details of the sudden disappearance of *pūjyapāda* Mahārāja (Śrīla B. P. Keśava Mahārāja). I had a very long-standing intimate relationship with Śrīla Mahārāja. When I used to visit Śrī Dhāma Māyāpura, I was taken care of by Śrīpād Narahari Dādā and Śrīpād Vinoda Dādā with great affection. They were my extremely loving friends.

The greatest compassion of Śrīla Keśava Mahārāja was to make me a *sannyāsī*. I had taken a vow that I would never accept *sannyāsa*, but Śrīla Mahārāja forcibly gave it to me. He would certainly have been most pleased today to see the success of my preaching. Last year I visited him in Calcutta along with my disciples, and despite being bedridden, he was very pleased to receive us. I have complete confidence that



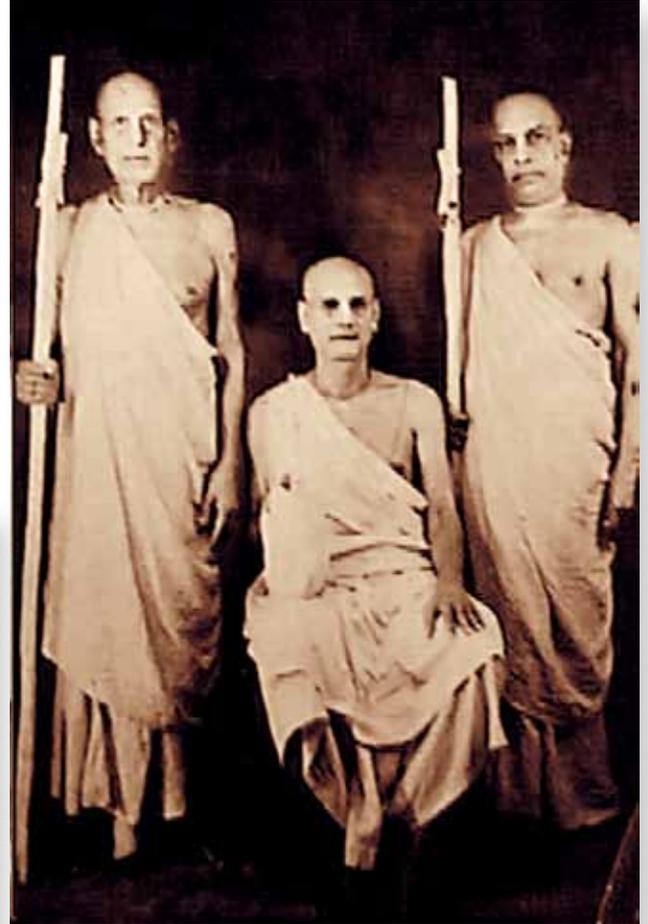
both in his manifest presence and after his disappearance, he must be very pleased to see my widespread preaching of the message of Śrīman Mahāprabhu in Western countries like America, Canada, England, Germany and Hawaii (Honolulu), situated in the Pacific Ocean, as well as eastern countries like Japan (Tokyo) and so on.

I didn't have any desire to take *sannyāsa*. But upon the repeated insistence of Śrīpād Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, Śrīla Keśava Mahārāja bestowed boundless mercy upon this unwilling and blind person, by forcibly giving me *sannyāsa*. It seems that this desire of Śrīla Prabhupāda's was transmitted into his heart, and it was thus that my *sannyāsa* was accomplished.

So I am eternally indebted to Śrīla (Keśava) Mahārāja.

Letter to Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta
Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja
dated 22 October 1968,

Translated from *Śrī Bhagavat Patrikā* Year-14, Issue-7



*vairāgya-vidya-nija-bhakti-yogaṁ
apāyayan māṁ anabhīpsum andham
śrī-keśava-bhakti-prajñāna-nāma
kṛpāmbudhir yas tam abam praṇadye*

“I did not want to accept this *sannyāsa* order, but this Godbrother forced me. ‘You must.’ He forcefully made me drink this medicine. *Kṛpāmbudhi*. He did this favour to me because he was an ocean of mercy. So we offer our obeisances to the Vaiṣṇavas, the representatives of the Lord, they are so kind. They bring the ocean of mercy for distribution to the suffering humanity. So I am offering my respectful obeisances unto His Holiness Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Mahārāja.”

(Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja on the disappearance of
Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Mahārāja, 1968)

**Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Vicāra Yāyāvara Mahārāja in
separation from Śrīla Prabhupāda and His Fellow
Godbrothers**

The composer of this song, *prapūjya-carāṇa* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Vicāra Yāyāvara Mahārāja, is one of the prominent associates of *jagad-guru* Śrī Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda. In this composition, he expresses the pain of separation in accordance with a song of Śrīla



Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura that is filled with *viraba*. Feeling great distress from the separation of his *śrī gurupāda-padma* and fellow Godbrothers, he sang this *kīrtana* while in Jagannātha Purī at the birthplace of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

***je ānila prema-dhana (bhakti) vinoda-dhārāya
(sei) sarasvatī guru mora kothā gelā hāya***

Aho! He who, out of profuse compassion upon the *jīvas* of this world, brought the rare wealth of *prema* through the current of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, alas! where has my *gurudeva*, that Śrī Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, gone?

***kāñbā tīrthayuga, bhāratī, aranya, āśrama
kāñbā parvata, pūrī, kāñbā mora bodhāyana***

Where have Śrī Bhakti Pradīpa Tīrtha Mahārāja, Śrī Bhakti Vilāsa Tīrtha Mahārāja, Śrī Bhakti Viveka Bhāratī Mahārāja, Śrī Bhakti Prakāśa Aranya Mahārāja and Śrī Bhakti Vijnāna Āśrama Mahārāja gone? Where have Śrī Bhakti Svarūpa Parvata Mahārāja, Śrī Bhakti Śrīrūpa Purī Mahārāja and my Śrī Bhakti Prasūna Bodhāyana Mahārāja** gone?

***kāñbā śrī-bhakti-sāraṅga gosvāmī udāra
kāñbā yati padmanābha, sevāprāṇa yāñra***

Where has the munificent Śrī Bhakti Sāraṅga Gosvāmī Mahārāja gone? Where have Śrī Yati Mahārāja and Śrī Padmanābha Mahārāja, whose life was service, gone?

***kāñbā keśava mahārāja, kāñbā narabari
kāñbā svāmī maharaja pṛthvi-pracārakārī***

** who offered me at the lotus feet of my *śrī gurupāda-padma* Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda

Where have Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Mahārāja and Śrī Narahari Sevā-vigraha Prabhu gone? Where has Śrī Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, who preached all over the Earth, gone?

***kāñbā śrī paramānanda, kāñbā turyāśramī
kothā gelā śrī sāgara, bhāgavata svāmī***

Where have Śrī Paramānanda Brahmācārī and Śrī Bhakti Sambandha Turyāśramī Mahārāja gone? Where have Śrī Bhakti Vaibhava Sāgara Mahārāja and Śrī Bhakti Mayūkha Bhāgavata Mahārāja gone?

***kothā bhakti-sudhākara, bhakti-vijaya
gurusevā vinā yāñrā kichu nā jānaya***

Where have those who knew nothing other than service to *guru* – Śrī Nārāyaṇacandra Bhakti Sudhākara Prabhu and Śrī Sakhīcārāna Bābu Bhaktivijaya Prabhu – gone?

***kāñbā nemi, vaikhānasa, giri mahārāja
(prabhupāda) sarasvatī-parikara vaiṣṇava-
samāja***

Where have Śrī Bhakti Vilāsa Gabhastanemi Mahārāja, Śrī Bhakti Gaurava Vaikhānasa Mahārāja, Śrī Bhakti Sarvasva Giri Mahārāja and the society of Vaiṣṇavas, the associates of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, gone?

***kāñbā mādhava mahārāja śrī dayita-dāsa
śrī gurura janmasthāna ye kaila prakāśa***

Where has Śrī Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Mahārāja, who manifested the birthplace of Śrī Guru, Śrī Dayita dāsa, gone?

***kāñbā ācārya mahārāja vṛndāvana-vāsī
gaura-harināma nena basi abarniśi***

Where has Śrī Bhakti Deśika Ācārya Mahārāja, who resided in Śrī Vṛndāvana and chanted the holy names of Gaura and Kṛṣṇa day and night, gone?

***śrī kṛṣṇa kṛpāya babu peyechinu saṅga
dīna yāyāvara kāñde dekhi saṅga-bhaṅga***

By the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, I obtained much association with all these great personalities; however, now that this association has been abruptly stolen away, this wretched Yāyāvara weeps.

Translated from *Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā*, Year-31, Number-6

Quotes from the Gauḍīya on the Topic of Separation

When an enjoying mentality and a thirst for sense gratification (*bhukti*) and liberation (*mukti*) become powerful in the *jīva*, at that time alone *śrī gurupāda-padma*, who is the beloved of Gaura and Kṛṣṇa, hides himself. When we are devoid of realizations and hide our covered thirst for sense enjoyment (*bhoga*) and renunciation (*tyāga*) within the heart, we externally perform an ostentatious show of *hari-sevā* and *hari-kīrtana*. Then:

*pāṣāṇe kuṭībo mathā anale paśibo
gaurāṅga guṇera nidhi kothā gele pābo*

I will smash my head against a stone or enter within fire. Where can I find the storehouse of Śrī Gaurāṅga's transcendental qualities?

We simply repeat these songs of great personalities and become pacified, but we do not engage ourselves, with one-pointed determination, in the service of Śrī Gurupāda-padma, who established the innermost desire of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu (*śrī caitanya mano'bhīṣṭam*). Instead, we hold material gain, adoration and prestige in great esteem. At that time, the supremely merciful associates of Śrī Gaura hide themselves. If we fail to understand them when they are present before us, having attempted to do so with knowledge arising from external sense perception, they give us a second opportunity, and that is, to understand them in their separation. Such is the great compassion of the associates of Śrī Gaura.

Weekly *Gauḍīya*, Year-15, Issue-26

Bhajana devoid of a feeling of separation (*viraha*) is merely the form of *sambhogavāda*, the doctrine of enjoyment. *Bhajana* will begin the moment one obtains the association of devotees of Kṛṣṇa who are absorbed in the moods of separation. If, deprived of such association, one's heart does not become restless, it is because that heart is filled with *nāma-āparādha*. The *bhajana* and *sādhana* of such a person is only a show and mere hypocrisy. 

Weekly *Gauḍīya*, Year-12, Issue-13

In Separation from Keśava

The Agony of Separation is the Vital Breath of the Gauḍīyas

Śrī *Gauḍīya Patrikā** has completed her twentieth year and has auspiciously stepped into her twenty-first. Upon observing the wretched state of twentieth-century *jīvas* like us, that *śrī guru* of the Gauḍīyas has disappeared from this mortal realm to participate in his cherished service in transcendental Vraja-dhāma.

The beloved of Kṛṣṇa, *śuddhā-sarasvatī* [Śrīla Prabhupāda Sarasvatī Ṭhākura] has drawn his intimate personal associate close to him, and is now incorporating his full attention and energy in service to him in the eternal abode. Seeing this, those in the Sārasvata Gauḍīya line who are bereaved by separation from him, cry out in lamentation, "Alas! Alas!"

Like a serpent that has lost his precious crest jewel, the assembly of Sārasvata Gauḍīyas, having today lost a great treasure, the brightest star in the Gauḍīya sky, is lamenting and despondent. Expressions of separation from him are perceived in all four directions.

Tidings of separation from him have echoed throughout the air and sky, causing a great storm to manifest. Today, the Gauḍīya sky is stunned and speechless. Being sad and confused about her duty, Śrī *Gauḍīya Patrikā*, in the absence of her founder, is breathing out long, deep sighs in the intense heat of separation.

Who is there to console us on such an unfortunate day as this? Who is there to chastise us with strong words brimming with affection? Who is there to carefully endeavour to educate us by revealing the confidential, concealed and abstruse truths of the

* *Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā* is a magazine started by Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja in 1949; therefore 1969 marked her twentieth year.

Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Excerpts from the articles of
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Vedas, Vedānta, Upaniṣad, *Gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and other scriptures in natural, simple and easy-to-understand language? Who, in this twentieth century, will attempt to establish the supremely pure conclusions of the Vedānta in a voice as loud as thunder, thus stunning the cries of atheists, *māyāvādīs* and ill-logicians – whose all-in-all is materialistic ideas – by refuting their erroneous arguments and faulty doctrines? Who is there to bestow the qualification to serve Bhagavān and His devotees upon unqualified persons while dealing with them in a tender way and maintaining them with pure motherly affection? Today, we are truly forlorn and bereft of shelter.

Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā, Year-21 Issue-1

Performing Kīrtana of the Glories of Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas is the Life of the Gauḍīyas

From this day forth, may the instructions, directives and essential teachings left for us by *śrī gurupāda-padma* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmīpāda be our sole means of sustenance. By putting his words into practice and becoming indifferent to all else may we preserve, with excellence, the precepts and practices of *sanātana-dharma*. This is our exclusive prayer at his beautiful lotus feet. May he shower a torrent of merciful blessings upon us from the highest chamber (*prakoṣṭha*) of Śrī Goloka, thus enabling us to follow his instructions.

We sincerely pray for the spiritual strength from our Sārasvata Gauḍīya *guru-varga* to spread the topics of unparalleled compassion and *siddhānta* – the conclusions of Śrī Rūpa-Raghunātha – throughout the world, and to follow the *vāṇī* (instructions) of Vinoda and Gaura, thus making our lives blessed.

Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā, Year-21 Issue-1



The Appearance and Disappearance of Bhagavān and His Devotees cannot be Comprehended by Materialists

Atheists, who pursue the doctrine of materialism and who are thus deluded by mundane knowledge, have a misconception about the nature and identity of the *bhakta* and Bhagavān. They consider Bhagavān and His devotees to be ordinary living beings bound by their fruitive actions. In this way, they merely declare their own incompetence to understand *tattva*, or absolute truth, and reveal their ignorance and foolishness.

*prākṛta kariyā māne viṣṇu-kalevara
viṣṇu-nindā āra nābi ihāra upara*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi-līlā 7.115)

There is no greater offence than to think that the form of Śrī Viṣṇu is material and inert.

According to the conception of the materialists, Bhagavān also undergoes the results of fruitive action and is controlled by material time. As a result, such materialists are unable to see any difference between the birth and death of living beings gripped by illusion and the appearance and disappearance of transcendental personalities. Their misconception results in their viewing *mūḍhī* and *miśrī*, or puffed rice and rock candy, as one – a synthesis of the spiritual and the material. The advent and departure of exalted personalities, just like the appearance and disappearance of Bhagavān, is subordinate to their own free will.

Those who are foolish (*mūḍha*), impious (*duskṛta*), the lowest among men (*narādhama*), whose intelligence has been plundered by illusion (*māyā-apabrta-jñāna*) and who are demoniac, cannot understand this. From the statements of Purāṇas it is known that Vaiṣṇavas are not bound by *janma-karma*, birth and fruitive action. Vaiṣṇavas do not have to suffer the results of their actions; it is not even a consideration.

Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā, Year-21 Issue-1

The Opportunism of the Guru-bhogīs and Guru-tyāgīs

One year has passed since that *śrī guru* of the Gauḍīyas performed his disappearance pastime. His servants, tormented by separation from him, have passed this time with great difficulty, according to the following consideration:

‘kṣaṇam yuga-śatim iva yāsām yena vinābhavat’

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.19.16)

In the absence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the *gopīs* experience a single moment to be a hundred *yugas*.

"O Keśava, I have no
desire to leave your
beautiful lotus feet for
even half a moment.
Please mercifully give me
a place in your dhāma."



On the other hand, the *guru-bhogī* (he who enjoys the *guru* and his assets) and the *guru-tyāgī* (he who renounces the *guru*) follow the policy of ‘whichever way the wind blows**’ these days, to take shelter of opportunism. In this way, they attempt to establish their respective prominence. From his transcendental abode, that *śrī guru* of the Gauḍīyas certainly perceives this *padmā-niti* [the policy of calculative devotion as adopted by Padmāvatī, the mother of Kāmsa] of the community of ‘enjoyers’ and ‘renunciants’, and assesses it as their great folly.

Doubting persons, who distrust *śrī guru-tattva* and who, arrogant of their discipleship, carry the demeanour “I am great, I am good,” busily engage themselves in testing the inner faith and service tendency of the one-pointed servants of *guru*. Instead of following the transcendental teachings and instructions of *gurudeva*, they perform the illegitimate act of falsely imitating him. In doing so, they display a competitive spirit with each other. They understand merely this to be service to *guru* and expertise in *bhajana*.

Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā, Year-22, Issue-1

Śrī Gurudeva is Eternal – His Auspicious Desire is Our Only Help

On this unfortunate day, the supra-human transcendental life and teachings of Śrī Gurupāda-padma, which are harder than a thunderbolt and softer than a flower, are our only shelter. From his place in the transcendental world, He will surely amend our all faults and imperfections with his sharp instructions. By so doing, he will liberate us from this temporary world polluted by atheistic doctrines.

.....
** This means, what is the state of opinion; which are the current trends; what developments are likely. [Oxford Dictionary]



Today, his auspicious desire and auspicious blessings are our one and only help, support and consolation. Without taking shelter of the path of *vāstava-satya-dharma*, the actual Truth, as indicated by *śrī guru* and Bhagavān, there is no hope of deliverance for this universe, which is full of ulterior desires (*anyābbilāśa*) and brimming with the doctrine of hedonism (*bhogavāda*)

A truth without basis or shelter cannot be accepted as an established truth. Atheistic logic and argument cause the *sādhaka* to fall from the proper path. “*Tarka-apratiṣṭhānāt* – argument is not an established truth.”*** *Brahma-sūtra* (2.1.11) discusses this at length.

*āsraya laiya bhaje tāre kṛṣṇa nāhi tyaje,
āra saba mare akāraṇa*

Thākura Vaiṣṇava-pada

Kṛṣṇa never abandons those who perform their worship under guidance; all others die in vain [that is, they do not survive on the path of *bhajana*].

This is a real indication of the importance of remaining under the guidance of *śrī guru* and as well as opposing him.

Śrī gurudeva's remaining concealed from the eyes of mortal men does not confirm his non-existence and mercilessness. Those who possess these types of antagonistic thoughts and moods are also more or less in the category of atheists. The root cause of this mentality is a lack of trust and faith in *guru-tattva*.

.....
***It is not possible to establish any object, or *vastu*, by logic and argument alone, because what one person proves by logic and argument one day can be refuted by a someone more talented the next. Thus it is stated that logic and argument are incapable of defining the Truth, *apratiṣṭhā*.

Those who think *śrī gurudeva* to be an ordinary living being bound by the reactions of fruitive activity are deceived. In fact, they are situated one hundred *yojanas* (eight hundred miles) away from *guru-tattva*.

Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā, Year-22, Issue-1

A Prayer at the Lotus Feet of Śrī Guru

Considering the present wretched situation of the world, Śrī Jagannātha, Śrī Bhaktinoda, Śrī Gaura-kiśora, Śrī Sarasvatī, Śrī Keśava and others in the Gauḍīya *guru-varga* have, one after the other, all made an auspicious departure to their respective destinations in the transcendental *dhāma*, leaving behind persons like me who are opposed to *bhajana*.

O my shelter, Śrī Keśava! Taking only your remnants and in the association of the devotees, performing *śravaṇa* and *kīrtana* of your supra-human characteristics, I will renounce all desires for sense enjoyment and cross over this insurmountable ocean of material existence, *saṁsāra*. This is my sole ambition. O Keśava, I have no desire to leave your beautiful lotus feet for even half a moment. Please mercifully give me a place in your *dhāma*.

*nāhaṁ tavāṅgri-kamalaṁ
kṣaṇārdham api keśava
tyaktuṁ samutsabe nātha
sva-dhāma naya mām api*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.6.43)

Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā, Year-22, Issue-1

A Prayer for the Mercy of Śrīla Gurupāda-padma

When we desire to be marked as a *guru-sevaka*, we become far distanced from service to *guru*. But if we can become the servant of the servant of *śrī guru* (*guru-dāsa-anudāsa*) there is a chance that at some time or other, we may attain the ability (*adbikāra*) to perform service to *śrī gurudeva* that is in accordance with the feelings of his heart. Just as our *śrī gurupāda-padma* was exclusively dedicated to the service of his *guru*, accepting him as his very life, similarly, with deep sincerity, we pray to *śrī gurupāda-padma* for such one-pointed faith and his ideal service so that we may attain the service of our *guru*.

May the Śrī Gauḍīya *guru-varga* bestow abundant blessings upon us so that we may achieve qualification for the transcendental service of Śrī Śrī Gaurāṅga-Gāndharvika-Girirdhārī and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-Bihārījī. May Śrī Śrī Nṛṣimhadeva, who destroys all obstacles, mercifully remove the impediments and adversity on our path of *bhajana*. This is our one-pointed prayer at His lotus feet. 🌸

Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā, Year-36, Issue-1

O Merciful

By Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta
Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja

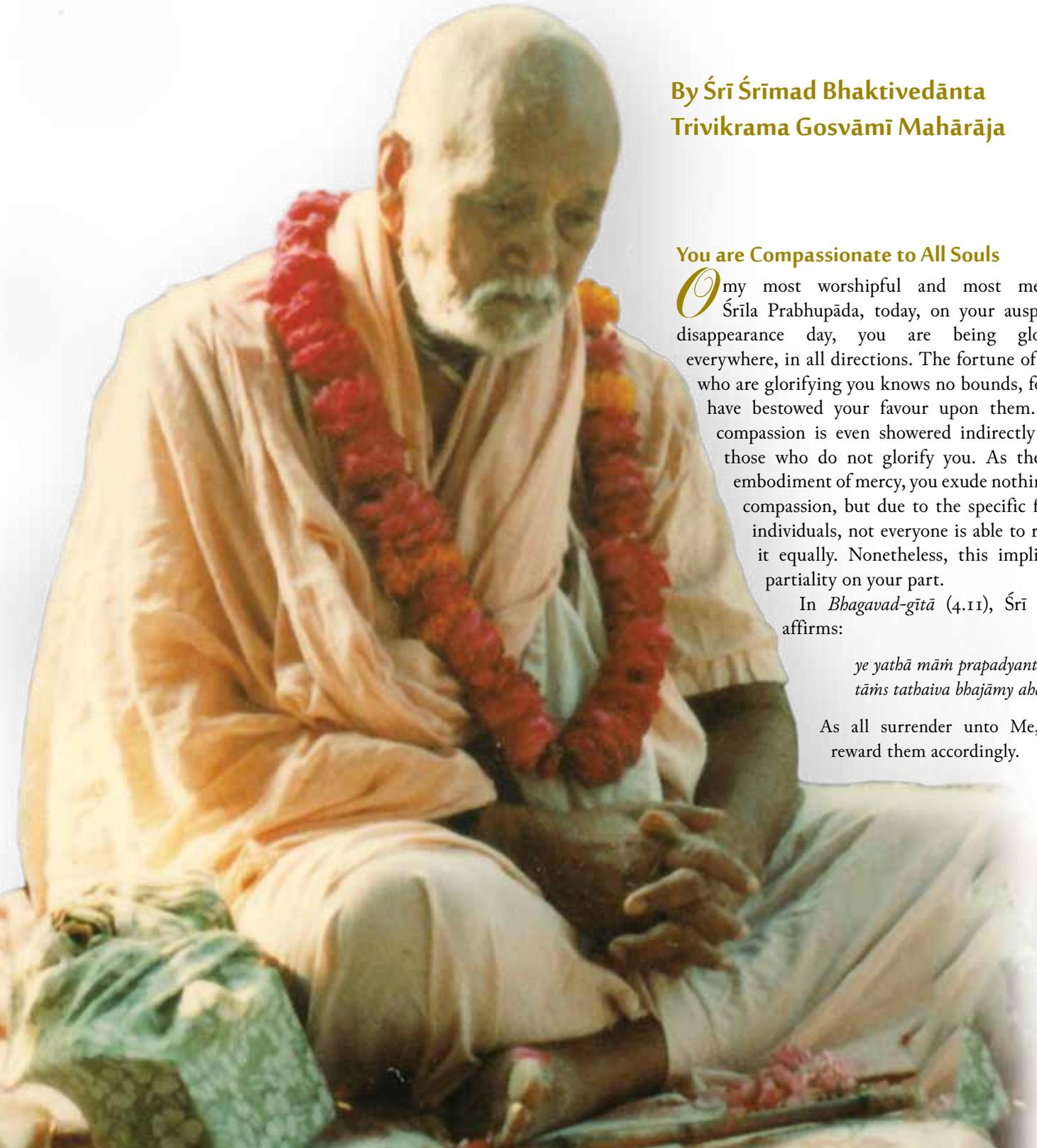
You are Compassionate to All Souls

O my most worshipful and most merciful Śrīla Prabhupāda, today, on your auspicious disappearance day, you are being glorified everywhere, in all directions. The fortune of those who are glorifying you knows no bounds, for you have bestowed your favour upon them. Your compassion is even showered indirectly upon those who do not glorify you. As the very embodiment of mercy, you exude nothing but compassion, but due to the specific fate of individuals, not everyone is able to receive it equally. Nonetheless, this implies no partiality on your part.

In *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.11), Śrī Kṛṣṇa affirms:

*ye yathā mām prapadyante
tāms tathāiva bhajāmy abam*

As all surrender unto Me, I
reward them accordingly.



Śrīla Prabhupāda

Written for the occasion of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda's
disappearance day, 21 December 1957

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have appropriately safeguarded the integrity of this verse. Through your exemplary behaviour you have preserved the veracity of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's statement in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.29), “*samo 'ham sarva-bhūteṣu* – I am equal to all beings.” Without the slightest perturbation, you would appropriately correct those who prided themselves in being your intimate servitors. Yet, such chastisement was, in fact, nothing but your mercy and only demonstrated your quality of being fully composed of compassion.

You are the Embodiment of the Mood of Separation

In fact everything you do, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is full of mercy. You mercifully appeared in this world, you mercifully remained visible to our material eyes for some time, and now, by your mercy, you have again become unmanifest to the materially conditioned living beings. These three actions of yours share the same purpose – to bestow mercy. This is your sole aim. Even today you are not depriving the living entities in any way by remaining concealed from their vision. You are thoroughly acquainted with the means to benefit the *jīva* and in what proportions. The materially conditioned living entity, however, cannot comprehend the manner in which you bestow your mercy.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa allowed the *gopīs* to taste the bliss of union and then revealed His limitless mercy by drowning them in an ocean of separation from Him. Your behaviour is identical to His, for it displays the same unbounded

mercy. There is no difference. If Śrī Kṛṣṇa had remained with the *gopīs* forever, the conditioned souls would surely have been delighted, but the most merciful Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

*yat tv aham bhavatīnām vai / dūre varte priyo dṛśām
manasaḥ sannikarṣārtham / mad-anudbyāna-kāmyayā*

*yathā dūra-care preṣṭhe / mana āviśya vartate
strīnām ca na tathā cetah / sannikṛṣṭe 'kṣi-gocare*

*mayy āveśya manaḥ kṛtsnam / vimuktāśeṣa-vṛtti yat
anusmarantyo mām nityam / acirān mām upaiśyatha*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.47.34–36)

The actual reason why I, the treasured object of your sight, have stayed far away from you is that I wanted to capture your minds and draw them closer to Me. When a woman's lover is far away, she thinks of him more than when he is present before her. Your minds are fully absorbed in Me, forsaking all else, and you always remember Me. Therefore, you will be reunited with Me very soon.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, your devotees, therefore, who are absorbed in constantly remembering you with feelings of separation, have attained and are attaining the state of *mām upaiśyatha*, or reunion with you. This exemplifies your immense mercy.

“A meeting that does not culminate in separation is not truly a meeting at all. Union ends with separation,

and separation with union. Love and rupture have the same import.” This teaching has come from your own lotus lips. As such, you are bestowing your grace upon your devotees today by revealing yourself in a form that they can feel separation from.

O merciful Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are an entity [form] composed of *sac-cid-ānanda* – spiritual existence, knowledge and bliss. The materially conditioned souls can never glimpse your transcendental form. You have expressed with your own lotus mouth that only liberated souls have received your *darśana*. In trying to see you, conditioned souls have merely perceived an image of you reflected in the material mode of goodness. Nonetheless, you have even showered your endless mercy upon those who were attracted by this image. You have made it known to them that all the followers of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (*rūpānugās*) are grieving in separation from him, their worshipful deity.

Your sole objective is service in that same mood. You symbolize the nectarean ocean of *vipralambha*, feelings of separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and as such, your propagation of service in separation (*vipralambha-sevā*) is indeed the manifestation of your compassion.

You Are Uncompromising in Upholding the Truth

O merciful Śrīla Prabhupāda, you cannot actually be introduced in terms of material time, place and historical events, and therefore I am not interested in doing so. By thoroughly refuting all material qualities, you have in all ways revealed and solely preached supremely unalloyed, transcendental devotion characterized by moods of separation. You are entirely intolerant of any material doctrine. Therefore, you have manifested your mercy by refuting *māyāvāda*, the doctrine of illusion, in every page of your sovereign-like writings, which are rich in the conclusions of the scriptures, and in every quiver of your throat through your speech, which is as grave and loud as a clap of thunder.

O merciful Śrīla Prabhupāda, you never pandered to the materialists. Rather, you terrified them, like death personified. Hearing your lion-like roar proclaiming the principles and conclusions of devotion, the champions of *karma* hid deep in their burrows like fearful jackals. Your valour as an upholder of the truth is testimony to your limitless mercy for the living entities.

O generous Śrīla Prabhupāda, no desire other than to serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa was ever present in your character. You were a *brahmacārī*, an unmarried celibate, since childhood and later you manifested the pastime of accepting *sannyāsa*, the renounced order. Thus, you have firmly established the principle that it is extremely difficult to achieve the

ultimate goal of life if one is fond of associating with women. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura writes:

*ramañī-jana-saṅga-sukhaṁ ca sakhe
carame bhayadam puruṣārtha-haram*

Śrī Godruma-candra Bhajanopadeśa

O friend, the pleasure to be had in the company of beautiful young women ultimately turns to fearfulness and distracts one from the true goal of human life.

You have shown limitless mercy by living up to the ideal portrayed in these words of your spiritual master.

O merciful lord, your conceptions are forever divine. In the religious conventions held to discuss various pertinent issues, you invalidated the concept of demoniac *varṇāśrama* and established divine *varṇāśrama*. By your transcendental power, you overcame the fierce opposition. As a result, your sincere servants have been following that system of divine *varṇāśrama* to this day. This divine triumph of yours displays your great compassion.

O merciful Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have condemned the concept that matter and spirit are identical, as well as denounced the ideas of the *prākṛta-sahajiyās*, thereby highly illuminating the nature of supremely pure devotional service. Had you not appeared on this earth, who would have cleansed the heaps of impurities that had entered the *prema-dharma*, religion of unadulterated love, propagated by Śrīman Mahāprabhu and who would have revealed its pure nature? Who would have distributed the beauty of devotional service in the mood of separation, given by Śrīman Mahāprabhu to the world? O Prabhu, there is no end to your mercy.

I Humbly Pray at Your Lotus Feet

O merciful master, on this day of your disappearance, may the remembrance of your mercy become the sole means of my sustenance. How far can an insignificant and wretched soul like me touch upon your limitless compassion? Even the demigods cannot adequately sing its glories. Nonetheless, I will be blessed if one day I can be fortunate enough to serve the lotus feet of one of your servants, thereby connecting with your mercy. Today, on your disappearance day, I humbly pray at your lotus feet that I may not become degraded by committing any offences and that I may eternally remain established in the service of the servants of your servants. 🙏

Translated from *Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā*,

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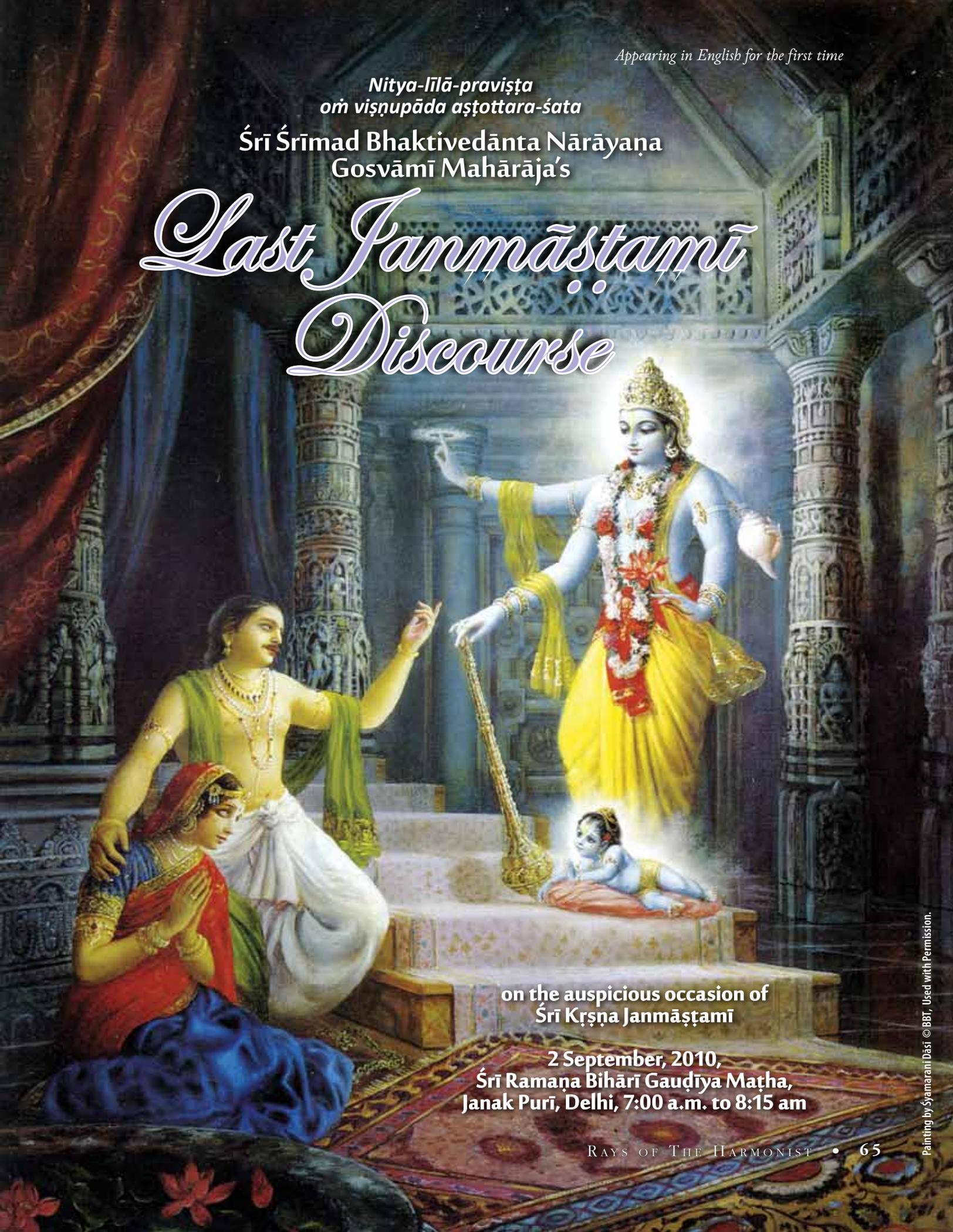
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Nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa
om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa
Gosvāmī Mahārāja's

Last Janmāṣṭamī *Discourse*



on the auspicious occasion of
Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī

2 September, 2010,
Śrī Ramaṇa Bihārī Gauḍīya Maṭha,
Janak Purī, Delhi, 7:00 a.m. to 8:15 am

RAYS OF THE HARMONIST • 65

Some days before Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī, 2010, Śrīla Gurudeva had become unwell and was staying in Delhi, the capital of India, to receive the doctors' special attention. He desired to return to Mathurā for Janmāṣṭamī, and expressed this again and again, but the doctors specifically asked him to remain in Delhi. Complying with their request, Śrīla Gurudeva was thus in Delhi on Janmāṣṭamī day, for the first time ever. In his *bhajana-kutira*, at around 6 a.m. on Janmāṣṭamī morning, Śrīla Gurudeva expressed his deep regret. "Alas! I cannot observe the appearance festival of my *abhiṣṭadeva* Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in His eternal abode of Śrī Mathurā-maṇḍala!" Having spoken thus, Śrīla Gurudeva remained stunned and silent for nearly half an hour.

Even though the most beloved devotees of Śrī Kṛṣṇa have a *sphūrti* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa wherever they look, thus seeing the whole world *kṛṣṇamaya* (literally, 'full of Kṛṣṇa'), they possess a special affection (*anurāga*) for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *dhāma*, pastime places, appearance day and loving companions, absence from which precipitates an experience of transcendental separation.



A Desire to Observe Janmāṣṭamī in Mathurā

In my childhood, my father would carry me on his shoulders to wherever the Janmāṣṭamī celebrations were performed, and at midnight he would give me a little *caraṇāmṛta*, *pañjiri* (an *ekādaśī* sweet) and other *prasāda*. In this way, I received impressions (*saṁskāra*) of observing Janmāṣṭamī from my childhood.

I have been in Mathurā for fifty-six years now and in that time, I have not missed a single Janmāṣṭamī there. It is therefore a matter of great sadness that after so many years, I am very far away from Śrī Kṛṣṇa's birthplace, even though staying in nearby Delhi. Despite my illness, my desire to go to Mathurā is strong. If my health had improved just a little bit, I would have gone to Mathurā on Janmāṣṭamī eve and celebrated Janmāṣṭamī the next morning. This was my inner desire. But our medical specialists are not permitting my desire to be fulfilled.

The Paramount Glories of Mathurā

The city of Mathurā is indeed Mathurā [beyond compare]. Indraprastha (modern day Delhi) is completely different and its glories are different. This city is no doubt

prosperous in all respects, but its entire opulence cannot compare with one stone in Mathurā.

It is stated in the *Pātāla-khaṇḍa* of the *Padma Purāṇa*, "*aho madhu-purī dhanyā vaikunṭhācca garīyasī, dinam-ekam nivāsena harau bhakti prajāyate* – Aho! Due to Kṛṣṇa Himself appearing in Madhu-purī, or Mathurā-purī, that place has become exceedingly glorious, being even more exalted than Vaikuṅṭhā. By staying even a single night in Mathurā Nagarī, *bhakti* for Śrī Kṛṣṇa arises in the heart." This is the glory of Mathurā-dhāma.

The Prime Reason for the Descent of Śrī Kṛṣṇa: the Diminution of Bhāgavata-dharma

In *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.7–8) Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself states:

*yadā yadā hi dharmasya
glānir bhavati bhārata
abhyutthānam adharmasya
tadātmānaṁ sṛjāmy abam*

[O descendant of Bharata, whenever there is a decline of religion and an increase in irreligion, at that time I manifest My eternally perfect form in this mundane world.]

paritrāṇāya sādhūnām
vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām
dharma-samsthāpanārthāya
sambhavāmi yuge yuge

[To protect My unalloyed devotees, to annihilate the wicked and to firmly establish religion, I appear in every age.]

Here, there are two types of *dharma*. One is temporary, or perishable, and the other is eternal. We can understand these verses in a simple way: If a wicked person comes here and begins to strike us or beat us, we would suffer, but only for a certain time. It is not the *nitya-dharma* (eternal function) of the living entities to pray to Bhagavān and worship Him just so he will mitigate their temporary suffering. Rather, that is *anitya-dharma*, or a non-eternal function. Still, Śrī Kṛṣṇa removes the suffering of such followers of this perishable *dharma*. Nonetheless, Śrī *Gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* instructs us on real *dharma*: “After the destruction of the body, I will not die, because I am the *ātmā*, spirit soul. Weapons cannot cut the soul and the wind cannot dry it, nor is it subject to old age. The soul is always youthful, free from death and eternal.”

The *dharma* of the eternal, imperishable soul’s service to Paramātmā is called *ātmā-dharma*. This is the actual meaning of the term. When this eternal function is either lost or declines, Śrī Kṛṣṇa does not wait for even a moment to advent. This is the primary reason for Kṛṣṇa’s descent.

Another Cause for the Descent of Śrī Kṛṣṇa – to Deliver Nalakūvera and Maṇigrīva from the Curse of Śrī Nārada Ṛṣi

Once, in Śrī Nārada Ṛṣi’s travels, he saw the two sons of Kuvera, Nalakūvera and Maṇigrīva, naked and playing in the water with some *apsarās* (heavenly damsels). Upon seeing Śrī Nārada, the *apsarās* were embarrassed and quickly covered themselves with cloth. The two sons of Kuvera remain unclad, however, being intoxicated with pride and arrogance, and thus felt no shame. It was with the sole purpose of bestowing merciful favour upon them that Śrī Nārada desired to curse them. “Do you not have the slightest shame?” He asked them. “These ladies are covering their bodies with their cloth and facing me with folded hands in respect, but you both remain standing there shamelessly, like trees. Hence, you will become trees this very moment!”

As a result, their bodies began to slowly change into trees. Immediately they understood their mistake and prayed to Śrī Nārada Ṛṣi with folded hands, “O master! How will we be liberated?”

Śrī Nārada Ṛṣi replied that Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa would advent at the end of Dvāpara-yuga, and that they

would reside in His courtyard as two *yamala-ārjuna* trees. When Śrī Kṛṣṇa would be bound to the mortar, He would strive to move forward between the two trees. At that time, the mortar would become stuck between them. Kṛṣṇa would then slightly tug the mortar and as a result, the trees would fall. “At that time only,” he told them, “you will both be liberated from this curse and attain *śrī kṛṣṇa-bhakti* and service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in His eternal abode.”

Another Cause – to Bestow a Boon on Ratnamālā, the Daughter of Śrī Bali Mahārāja

With the purpose of cheating Śrī Bali Mahārāja, Lord Śrī Vāmana-deva [the Lord in the form of a dwarf *brāhmaṇa* boy] took an umbrella and wearing wooden shoes, his hair matted, went alone to the assembly of Śrī Bali Mahārāja. Bali Mahārāja and all present were moved by Śrī Vāmana-deva’s presence and rose to respectfully greet Him. Bali Mahārāja offered Him obeisances and said, “O Mahārāja, we are fortunate that today You have come to our kingdom. I am sensing that You want to ask me for something.”

“I am poor,” Śrī Vāmana-deva said, “so what need do I have to fulfil? I only desire to make one small hut in which to perform *bhajana*. For this purpose, the measurement of a mere three of My footsteps will suffice.”

Śrī Bali Mahārāja said, “But how much land will You be able to acquire with Your three small steps? I can give You an enormous kingdom, as well as elephants, horses and a suitable maiden to marry. Why are You only begging for three footsteps?”

Śrī Vāmanadeva replied, “No, no, I am a *brāhmaṇa*. The *dharma* of the *brāhmaṇa* is to be satisfied in all circumstances and to be free from excessive desires. Three footsteps of land are sufficient for Me. But you must vow that you will give Me those three footsteps, regardless of the circumstances. If you recall, your forefather Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja venerated the *brāhmaṇas* and never wavered once he had given his word to them. Remember this.” In this way, Śrī Vāmana-deva began to implement His plan.

Śrī Bali Mahārāja said, “If that is Your wish, so be it. I vow that I will certainly give You three footsteps of land in all circumstances.”

Just then, Śukrācārya said, “O Bali Mahārāja, by my divine vision I have understood that this *brāhmaṇa* is none other than Śrī Viṣṇu. He is the demigods’ spy! Beware of Him! Do not give Him even one straw; you have no idea how He can cheat you.”

Bali Mahārāja replied, “The practice in our dynasty is that once a word is spoken, it is to be honoured in all circumstances. I cannot take back what I have said.”

These days, no one keeps their word. A person may say one thing and then change his mind the very next moment,

and then again the moment after that. In this manner, one's word is always changing, according to one's need at the time.

Śrī Bali Mahārāja took *kuśa* grass and a *saṅkalpa-pātra* (special pot with a spout, used when making a vow with water) and begin to make his vow, but no water came out of the spout. By his mystic power, Śukrācārya had entered the *saṅkalpa-pātra* and blocked it. Śrī Vāmana-deva observed this and told Śrī Bali Mahārāja to bring the container to Him. Śrī Vāmana-deva then took a thin stick and sharply poked it into the spout. A flow of blood poured out from the cut eye of Śukrācārya. The blockage removed, Śrī Bali Mahārāja proceeded with his vow to give Śrī Vāmana-deva three footsteps of land.

Śrī Vāmana-deva then assumed the huge form of Trivikrama, reaching into the sky. With just one footstep He covered the planets of the demigods above the earthly realm as well as all the upper planetary systems. With His second footstep He covered the Earth planet and the seven lower planetary systems. He then asked Śrī Bali Mahārāja, “Where should I put My third step?”

Śrī Bali Mahārāja contemplated this and finally said, “Prabhu, bestow Your mercy upon me by placing Your third step on my head. I am offering myself to You. Now, everything I have no longer belongs to me; it is all Yours! Now I will be as You wish me to be. However you want me to move and whatever You desire me to eat, drink or wear, I will do so.”

For this reason it is stated, “*sarvasvātma-nivedane bali* – Bali Mahārāja attained Bhagavān through *ātma-samarpaṇa* (full self-surrender)” (*Padyāvali* 53). Without *ātma-samarpaṇa*, nothing has been done on this path.

Śrī Bali Mahārāja had a daughter named Ratnamālā. When Śrī Vāmana-deva had entered the assembly, a desire came to Ratnamālā's heart that if she had a son like Him, she would certainly, with great affection, take Him on her lap and lovingly give Him her breast milk. Understanding her desire, Śrī Vāmana-deva gave her the boon that it would be fulfilled. But later, Ratnamālā saw how Śrī Vāmana-deva, a mere boy, cheated her father and stole everything from him. At that point she had a change of heart, and she thought that if He were her son, she would give Him poison to drink, because there is no need for a son such as this. Śrī Vāmana-deva granted this desire also.

In Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, Śrī Bali Mahārāja's daughter Ratnamālā came in as Pūtanā and tried to kill Kṛṣṇa by giving him poison she had smeared on her breasts. This history is explained in the *Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa*, Śrī *Garga-saṁhita* and other scriptures.

Is this way, there are not only one or two reasons for the descent of Svayam Bhagavān, but many.

Explanation of the Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's Song – ‘Dekhite dekhite bhuliba vā kabe’

[Śrīla Gurudeva then instructed the devotees to sing Śrī *Maṅgala-gītam* from Śrī *Gīta-govinda*, written by Śrī Jayadeva Gosvāmī, followed by Śrī *Nanda-nandana-aṣṭakam*, Śrī *Rādhā-kṛpā-kaṭākṣa-stava-rāja*, *Deva! Bhavantam vande* by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, as well as to sing other prayers and songs. After that, he instructed them to sing, *Rādhā-kṛṣṇa prāna mora yugala-kiśora* by Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura. He then resumed his discourse.]

When Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was employed in the law-courts, he worked there during the day and in the evening, at around 6 to 6:30, he took *prasāda*. After that he would rest. Then, at around 12:00 midnight, he would wake up and review the *kīrtanas* he had written. At this time, he would perform *bhajana* filled with *bhāva*, according to the instruction of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī:

*sevā sādhaba-rūpeṇa siddha-rūpeṇa cātra hi
tad-bhāva-lipsunā kāryā vraja-lokanūsārataḥ*

Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.2.295)

[One who has intense longing to attain *rāgātmikā-bhakti* follows in the footsteps of the Vrajavāsīs [such as Rūpa Gosvāmī] who are devoted to *rāga-mārga*. With his external body (*sādhaba-rūpa*) he should chant and hear according to the practice of *rāgānuga-bhakti*, and with his internally contemplated body (*siddha-rūpa*) he should always serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa in a spiritual form fit for his desired service following Śrī Kṛṣṇa's beloved associates and those in their shelter.]

Absorbed in his spiritual form as a *vraja-gopī*, he would proceed to cook, all the while contemplating, “Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* are coming and I will feed them all.” In this mood, he would make *pūrīs*, *halavā* and many other delicious preparations. He recorded these moods in his songs such as *Dekhite dekhite bhūlībo vā kabe*. He was the recipient of the mercy of Śrīman Mahāprabhu and was His intimate associate. Following Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and the six Gosvāmīs, he became famous as the seventh Gosvāmī.

Śrīla Gurudeva then requested for this *kīrtana* to be sung.

*dekhite dekhite, bhuliba vā kabe, nija-sthūla-paricaya
nayane heribo, vraja-pura-śobhā, nitya cid-ānanda-maya* (1)
*vṛṣabhānu-pure, janama loibo, jāvaṭe vivāba ha'be
vraja-gopī-bhāva, haibe svabhāva, āna bhāva nā rahibe* (2)
*nija-siddha-deba, nija-siddha-nāma, nija-rūpa sva-vasana
rādhā-kṛpā-bale, labhība vā kabe, kṛṣṇa-prema-prakaraṇa* (3)
*yāmuna-salila-āharaṇe giyā, bujhibo yugala-rasa
prema-mugdha ha'ye, pāgalinī-prāya, gāibo rādhāra yaśa* (4)



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“In that Śrī Vṛndāvana, I will take birth in Vṛṣabhānupura (Varsānā)...”

Here, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura is saying, “*He Rādhā!* When will that fortunate day come that I forget all connection with my physical body? ‘I am her husband,’ ‘I am his wife,’ ‘I am their son’ – when will all these temporary relationships be forgotten and the only remaining remembrance will be, ‘I am not of this world.’ Forgetting everything else I will reach Śrī Vṛndāvana and see the splendour of Vraja with my own eyes. In that Śrī Vṛndāvana, I will take birth in Vṛṣabhānupura (Varsānā), the birthplace of Śrī Vṛṣbhānū-nandinī. Then because Śrī Vṛṣbhānū-nandinī was married in Jāvaṭa, I will also marry [into a family] there so I can always serve Her. My husband will be most arrogant, doubting me in everything I do. In this way, only the *bhāva* of the *vraja-gopīs* will remain in me and all other moods – of *vātsalya*, *sakhya*, *śānta* and *dāsya* – will forever be forgotten. Only this self-conception will remain: ‘I am a *gopī* and the maidservant of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. I am the recipient of Rūpa Mañjarī’s mercy.’ And that is all! Besides this, there will be no need for anything else!”

Nija-siddha-deba. In our performance of *bhajana*, by the mercy of *śrī gurudeva* we will attain realization of our extraordinary, beautiful *siddha-deba*, youthful and full of transcendental qualities, when the time is right. This *siddha-deba* (perfect form) will also have a perfect name as given by *śrī guru*.

Sva-vasana. What type of cloth will our spiritual form wear? Lalitājī’s cloth is like peacock feathers, some *gopīs* wear red cloth and others wear other colours. Different *gopīs* wear cloth of different colours. In this way, the colour of the cloth we wear will be specific to us.

Rādhā-kṛpā-bale labhība vā kabe. When will I experience all this by the power of Śrī Rādhikā’s mercy?

Kṛṣṇa-prema prakaraṇa. What is a *prakaraṇa*? All the subject matters of the *Bhāgavata* and *Jaiva-dharma* are *prakaraṇa*: how many types of *bhakti* are there? What is

the sequence of *bhakti*? What is *kilakiñcita-bhāva**? What is *hāva*, *bhāva*, *helā* and so forth? In this way, all the different subjects are *prakaraṇa*, categories or expressions of *prema*. When will I understand all of these *prakaraṇas*?

Yamuna-salila ābarane giyā. When, for the service to Śrī Rādhikā, will I carry a pot to Yamunā to collect water and see her pristine waters? On the banks of this Yamunā, I will understand the loving dealings and conversations (*yugala-rasa*) between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, as well as Their *prema*.

Prema-mugdha ba’ye pāgalinī-prāya gāibo rādhāra yaśa. When, maddened in love, will I lose all control, seeing revelations (*sphūrtis*) of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa engaging in loving pastimes wherever I look? I will thus, like a madwoman, sing the glories of Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Her divine *līlā* with Kṛṣṇa.

Transcendental Śrī Vṛndāvana

Do not think of Śrī Vṛndāvana as a barren, unkempt dirty village where hogs wander here and there, and that in Delhi there are such nice buildings, roads and so forth. Do not think like this! Adjust your angle of vision as of now. All of our *ācāryas* have come to Vṛndāvana and bowed down to it in worship. See Śrī Vṛndāvana through Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura’s song, “What is the splendour of transcendental Śrī Vṛndāvana like?”

Then Śrīla Gurudeva instructed the devotees to sing Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura’s song, *Cintāmaṇi-maya rādhā-kuṇḍa taṭa*, which describes Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa in transcendental Vṛndāvana, thus concluding the morning assembly. 🙏

* Scholars describe *kilakiñcita* in this way: when the hero and heroine are meeting and she is feeling extreme joy, she experiences a simultaneous mixture of pride, ambition, weeping, smiling, envy, fear and anger (*Utkalikā-vallarī*, 44, purport)

Excerpts from the Hari-kathā of

*Śrī Śrīmad
Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa
Gosvāmī Mahārāja*



The Importance of Separation for the Sādhaka

[Excerpts marked with an asterisk (*) are compliments of the Hari-kathā team.]

Separation is a Lamppost

The meeting and separation of *śrī guru* and Vaiṣṇavas have the same meaning. The *viraha-titibi* of *śrī gurupāda-padma* mercifully appears in this material world once a year, giving *guru-sevakas* an opportunity to review their service and inspiration to proceed on the path of *śuddhā-bhakti* as preached and practised by him.

For us, who are in the midst of dense darkness due to the disappearance of *guru* and the calamities that come on the path of *sādhana*, this *viraha-mahotsava* is like lamppost guiding us on the proper path and not letting us deviate.

Translated from *Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā*, Year-21, Issue-10

The Result of Separation

The unique feature of this age of Kali is the extraordinary result of *saṅkīrtana*. One who performs *saṅkīrtana*, weeping in a mood of separation from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, that is, from Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs*, and yearning from the core of his heart for their *darśana*, will certainly receive their mercy. Kṛṣṇa never fails to manifest Himself to such a devotee.

Gopī-gīta, Verse 1, Commentary

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's Instructions

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has given instructions on how to weep in the sixth verse of *Śikṣāṣṭakam*:

*nayanam galad-aśru-dhārayā
vadanam gadgada-ruddhayā girā
pulakair nicitam vapuḥ kadā
tava nāma-grahaṇe bhaviṣyati*

O Prabhu! When will my eyes be filled with a stream of tears? When will my voice choke up? And when will the hairs of my body stand erect in ecstasy as I chant Your holy name?

Kim [meaning 'when?'] is not in the original verse but we should include it. "When will I weep while chanting the names Hare Kṛṣṇa, Rādhā-Govinda, and Vṛndāvanēśvarī?" Weeping is our *dharmā*.

20 October 1991, Mathurā*

The Importance of Separation for the Sādhaka

Prema has two aspects, meeting and separation. For us *sādhaka-jīvas*, the mood of separation is more glorious than the mood of meeting. It is very favourable for us. From where does a mood of separation come? When one feels great attachment for a person, a feeling of separation from him may come. Without attachment, there is no feeling of separation.

If you have great attachment for your *gurudeva*, a mood of separation from him may come. Your heart will continually melt and tears will flow from your eyes. But those who have no attachment to *gurudeva*, having not served him, cannot feel separation from him. Love and affection for Kṛṣṇa and Mahāprabhu, and the moods of separation from Them remain far away from such persons. Charity begins at home, and all advancement in *bhakti* begins from attachment to *guru* and pure Vaiṣṇavas. You should therefore try to become attached to your bona fide, pure *guru*.

4 June 2002, USA*

Separation – an Aspect of Prema

We have heard from many Vaiṣṇavas about the principle of separation (*viraha-tattva*). Feelings of separation are very important in the *bhajana* of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas. When first entering the realm of *bhajana* one feels separation. In the middle stage there are such feelings, and finally, even when one attains Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's direct service, there are such feelings. Separation is one of the aspects of *prema*. Where there is separation there must also be subsequent meeting, and that is why Vaiṣṇava literature gives separation great importance.

During that time of separation, we can remember all the qualities of our object of love and worship, whereas this is not possible at the time of meeting. In *viraha* there is meeting internally. You can meet directly then. Vaiṣṇavas never die; rather, they enter into the transcendental world and disappear from here. They are just like Kṛṣṇa. His pastimes appear and then disappear. Similarly, Vaiṣṇavas also appear and disappear.

18 November 2004, Govardhana, India*

Internal Happiness

In *prema* there is meeting and separation. In meeting, there is external meeting only, and in that happiness, the devotee forgets everything internal. But internally, during *viraha*, separation, the devotee recalls the pastimes of meeting. Meeting is certainly one type of happiness, but separation is another. Therefore, *sādhakas* in this world perform *bhajana* in the mood of separation by remembering the pastimes of Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga.

20 March 2008, Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma*

Separation Enhances Meeting

After this, Vyāsadeva saw Kṛṣṇa leave Mathurā and go to Dvārakā. He saw the separation mood of Kṛṣṇa and the Vrajavāsīs. Without the mood of separation you cannot realize or taste *milana*, or meeting, so separation is essential. According to the height of separation, to that extent meeting will be interesting and tasteful. We are unable to describe this in such a way that you will understand, but when you realize it you will understand. Words cannot speak about *milana*, because words have no mouth [full capacity of expression] and the eye is unable to speak. It is such a thing.

5 April 2006, Germany*

The Reality of Our Position

We have been forgetful of Kṛṣṇa since the beginning of time. For this reason, a *sādhaka-bhakta* should always lament, weep and feel separation in his *bhajana*. He should weep like Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, like Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura and like Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Beginners must know that we have forgotten Kṛṣṇa and we have been separated from Him from time immemorial, and therefore their *bhajana* should be full of feelings of separation. The mature devotees will also feel separation, but moreover they will not want Śrīmatī Rādhikā to feel separation from Kṛṣṇa.

14 January 2003, Hilo, Hawaii *

Praying to Feel Separation

*aty utkaṭena nitarām virahānalena
dandabhyamāna hr̥dayā kila kāpī dāsī
hā svāminī kṣanāma iba praṇayena gāḍham
ākrandanena vidburā vilapāmi padyaiḥ*

Vilāpa-kusumāñjali (7)

O Svāminī (my mistress Rādhā)! The heart of this maidservant constantly burns in a great fire of separation from You. Being thus afflicted and crying with great love, I lament in the following verses.

In this verse, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī says, “*aty utkaṭena nitarām virahānalena* – my heart is burning in the great fire of separation.” He sincerely feels this sentiment. I have faith that by the grace of Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, our *gurudeva* and the *guru-paramparā*, we will also realize some sprinkle of this sentiment one day. This is our real prayer. When we pray and sing this *śloka*, that should be our mood. “*Tava nāma-grahaṇe bhaviṣyati* – when, by chanting *harināma*, and remembering and listening, will I weep?” Those who are very fortunate can repent, weep and realize these things.

21 October 1992, Mathurā*

Separation – Proportionate to True Affection

According to how much affection you have for your *gurudeva's* lotus feet, that much separation you will feel from him. You must understand that the devotee who feels separation from his *guru* is very elevated in *bhakti* and he will soon attain the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Without *gurudeva's* mercy, this is not possible.

13 November 2007, Govardhana*

How to Attain a Mood of Separation

When praying, chanting *harināma* or thinking about *harināma*, we should feel some *vipralambha-bhāva*. If we have no mood of separation, we will have to gradually develop that mood through our execution of *sādhana*. By reading about these pastimes, something will enter our hearts and some day we will fully experience all these things, and also by remembering our *gurudeva*. We should always think of *gurudeva* and Caitanya Mahāprabhu also. If we don't understand the mercy of *gurudeva* then we cannot understand anything. If you are getting something new from me then you can remember me also, and I will gain so much.

21 October 1991, Mathurā*

To what extent do we actually feel separation from Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, Their associates Lalitā and Viśākhā, Rūpa Mañjarī, or from Vṛndāvana and Rādhā-kuṇḍa? Do we even feel separation from our *gurudeva*? We are certainly not hankering such that we call out to him, “Where are you, Gurudeva? Where are you?” This mood should exist in the *sādhaka*, then by the grace of his *gurudeva*, he will remember these *bhāvas* and the pastimes will automatically appear in his heart in the same way that worldly thoughts come now.

A Necessary Mood for the Sādhaka

For us it cannot be said that visions, or *sphūrtis*, manifest. In an artificial way, we only imagine that this or that pastime is going on. Even if we are remembering these things, it is not a *sphūrti*. We cannot even imagine this elevated stage, although we may possess some eagerness to see Kṛṣṇa. Only those who are incessantly serving Śrīmatī Rādhikā can possibly have some idea of this stage. We have no *viśuddha-sattva-bhāva* or even *āsakti*, what to speak of *mahābhāva*! In order to taste separation as Śrīmatī Rādhikā does in the elevated stage of *madana*, one must possess some reflection of Her *bhāva*. Only the *mañjarīs* can realize something of such *vipralambha*. Even Lalitā and Viśākhā do not experience separation to this degree.

To what extent do we actually feel separation from Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, Their associates Lalitā and Viśākhā, Rūpa Mañjarī, or from Vṛndāvana and Rādhā-kuṇḍa? Do we even feel separation from our *gurudeva*? We are certainly not hankering such that we call out to him, “Where are



you, Gurudeva? Where are you?” This mood should exist in the *sādhaka*, then by the grace of his *gurudeva*, he will remember these *bhāvas* and the pastimes will automatically appear in his heart in the same way that worldly thoughts come now. As long as worldly thoughts remain in our hearts, though, continuous remembrance and *spūrtis* will not manifest. The *sādhaka* who has some taste in *harikathā* and in chanting, may, by the grace of *guru* and *Vaiṣṇava*, have a momentary *darśana* of *Kṛṣṇa*, just as *Nārada* had *darśana* of *Nārāyaṇa*. Then it can be said that such a *sādhaka* has actually achieved something tangible.

How can we achieve this level of remembrance? We should chant, read and continuously endeavour to realize some of this separation mood in our hearts. To feel this separation is the goal of our lives.

*nāma-śreṣṭhaṁ manum api śaci-putram atra svarūpaṁ
rūpaṁ tasyāgrajam uru-purīm mātburīm goṣṭhavātīm
rādhā-kuṇḍaṁ giri-varam aho rādhikā-mādhavāśām
prāpto yasya prathita-kṛpaya śrī-guruṁ taṁ nato 'smi*

I bow down to the beautiful lotus feet of my spiritual master, by whose causeless mercy I have obtained the supreme holy name, the divine *mantra*, the service of the son of *Śacīmātā*, the association of *Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara*, *Rūpa Gosvāmī*, and his older brother *Sanātana Gosvāmī*, the supreme abode of *Mathurā*, the blissful abode of *Vṛndāvana*, the divine *Rādhā-kuṇḍa* and *Govardhana Hill*, and the desire within my heart for the loving service of *Śrī Rādhikā* and *Śrī Mādhava* in *Vṛndāvana*.

If our *gurudeva* has given us any greed towards *nāma*, *mantra*, *Vrajavāsīs*, *Rūpa* and *Sanātana Gosvāmīs*, *Svarūpa Dāmodara*, *Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu*, *Prabhu Nityānanda*, *Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala*, *Rādhā-kuṇḍa* and *Giri Govardhana*, then we will always remember him and feel indebted to him, and we will thus feel separation from him. *Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī* has received such greed from *Svarūpa Dāmodara*, *Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu*, *Rūpa* and *Sanātana Gosvāmīs*, and he has taken actual *darśana* of *Vṛndāvana* and the *nitya-parikaras* (*Kṛṣṇa*'s eternal associates). Therefore, his mood of separation is profound. Entering deeply into *vipralambha-bhāva*, he quickly moves from *bahya-daśā* (the state of external consciousness) to *ardha-bahya-daśā* (half external, half internal consciousness) and then to *antara-daśā* (internal consciousness) and the *aprakāṣa-lilā* (pastimes unmanifest to this worldly plane) of *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa*.

26 March 1993, Mathurā

The Object of Our Sādhana

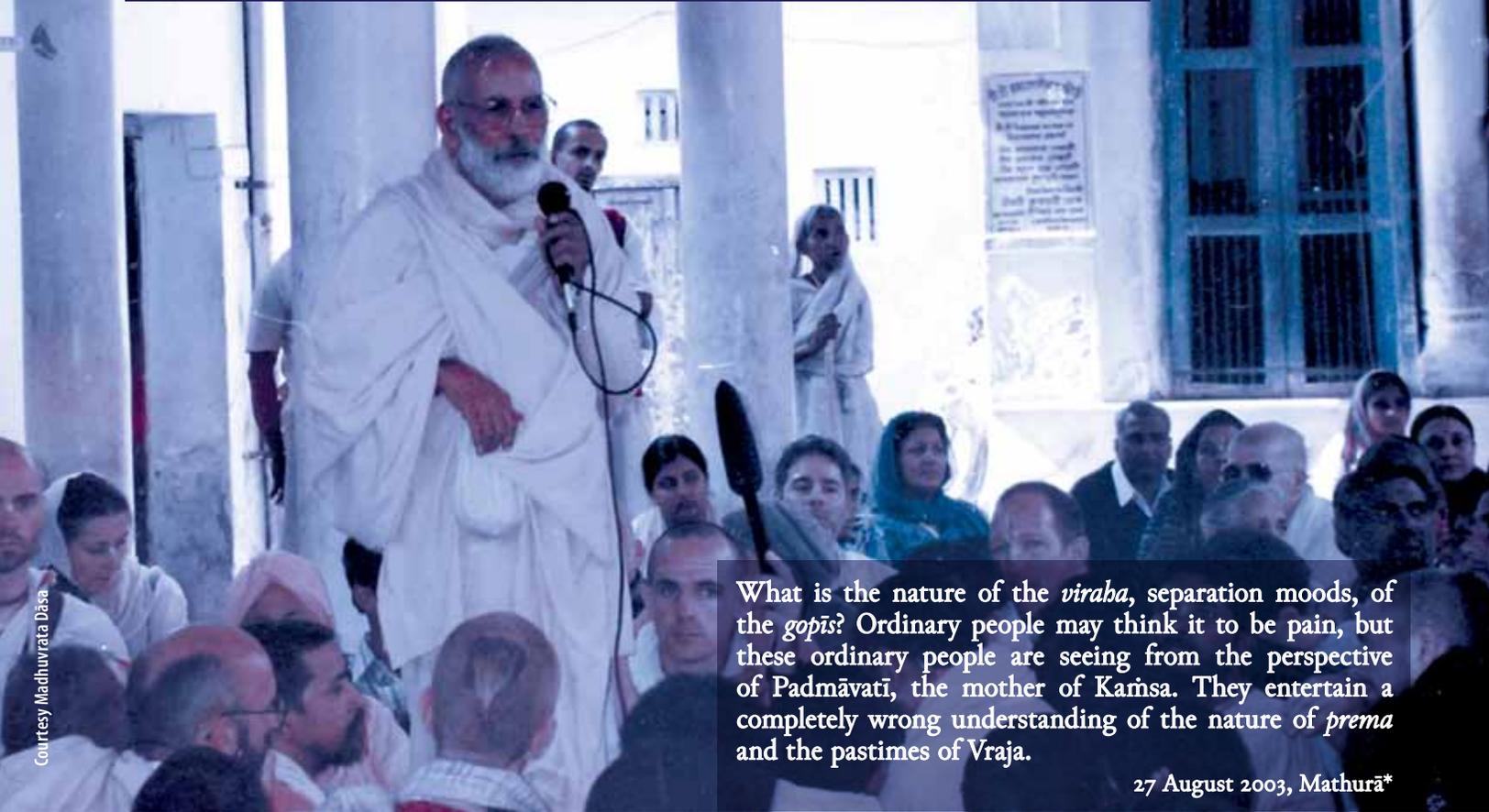
Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is praying in this seventh *śloka*, “I am lying on the bank of Your *Rādhā-kuṇḍa*, taking nothing to eat or drink and always weeping and chanting, ‘*Rādhā! Rādhā!*’ I think that some day or other You will have to give me Your mercy. If You don’t, then I have no need of *Kṛṣṇa*'s mercy, *Rādhā-kuṇḍa*'s mercy, or any others’ mercy. Also, I will no longer want to live here.” In this way he is crying.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhuṇḍa has written that *sambhoga* and *viraba*, *vipralambha*, are standing side by side eternally, forever, for *akhaṇḍa-kāla*.

Do you understand? Only a person who has some realization of *vipralambha* can taste and enjoy *sambhoga-lilā* for eternity, *akhaṇḍa-kāla*. One who has no taste of *vipralambha* cannot enjoy *sambhoga-lilā*. The main object and ultimate goal of our *sādhana-bhajana* is to realize *vipralambha-bhāva*. If *vipralambha* is achieved, we can realize everything else.

21 October 1992, Mathurā*

Describing Transcendental Separation



What is the nature of the *viraha*, separation moods, of the *gopīs*? Ordinary people may think it to be pain, but these ordinary people are seeing from the perspective of Padmāvatī, the mother of Kāṁsa. They entertain a completely wrong understanding of the nature of *prema* and the pastimes of Vraja.

27 August 2003, Mathurā*

The Legacy of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī

*devī te caraṇa-padma-dāsikām
viprayoga-bhara-dāva-pāvakaiḥ
dabhyamānatara-kāya-vallarim
jīvaya kṣaṇa-nirikṣaṇāmṛtaiḥ*

Vilāpa-kusumāñjali (10)

O Devī, I am a maidservant of Your lotus-like feet, whose vine-like body burns in the forest fire of separation from You. Please revive me at once with Your nectarean glances!

“*Devī te caraṇa-padma-dāsaikām* – O Devī, I am a maidservant at Your lotus feet.” *Viprayoga-bhara-dāva-pāvakaiḥ*. *Prayoga* means ‘to meet fully’ and *viprayoga* means the opposite. In other words, it means *vipralambha*. *Vipralambha* does not mean actual separation but it means meeting in an inner way. Just as *prayoga* is included with *viprayoga*, *pralambha* is within *vipralambha* and *yoga* is within *viyoga*. If the idea of meeting (*yoga*) does not come in our separation (*viyoga*), then it is not called *vipralambha*, and that separation mood is not favorable for our *bhakti*.

When one’s meeting with the beloved does not occur externally, *vipralambha* arises and one begins to weep and remember previous pastimes. This is *vipralambha* proper. A sleeping man may dream, ‘I am so wealthy; I am emperor of the entire world! Everyone obeys my command!’ When he awakens, though, he finds that he is lying on the ground with only a worn and torn blanket.

Similarly, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī was about to take the paintbrush from Kṛṣṇa’s hands and serve Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s lotus feet [by painting them], but suddenly nothing was there. He saw, “Oh, I’m not Tulasī Mañjarī, I’m Raghunātha dāsa. Where are Kṛṣṇa and my *svāminī*, Śrīmatī Rādhikā? Where is that *kuñja* in Vṛndāvana?” He then began to weep in separation, as if he were about to die. *Dāva-pāvakaiḥ* means a huge conflagration, like a huge raging forest fire. Fire [the fire of separation] is blazing on all sides and Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is in their midst, with no water in sight.

The fire in the Muñjāṭavī, a forest of sharp canes, threatened to engulf the cowherd boys and their cows in a similar way. Here Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, not seeing Kṛṣṇa, Śrīmatī Rādhikā, the *sakhibis* and that *sevā* for which

he hankers, feels himself to be burning in a fierce forest fire. For him, it was as if a *cintāmaṇi* stone had come into his hand but was now lost. This fire is like *dāva-pāvakaīḥ*, a garland, or wreath, of fire. Just as there are many flowers in a garland, so this forest fire that surrounds him has many individual fires on all sides. He cannot escape this circle of fire, so he is certain he will soon die.

Rūpa Gosvāmī has told or Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* has told that if every kind of calamity and suffering in this whole world together with all happiness from Svarga will be collected at one place, it will not be equal to one thousand-thousandth of a part of the fire of separation. This is *virabanala*.

Do we feel even a spark of that fire? Only one who has the experience of meeting can realize separation. Hearing will not be sufficient to give us this realization. Even if some *anartha*s are removed from our hearts, separation may come to a slight extent only. If we can weep, feeling separation from our *gurudeva* and the Vaiṣṇavas who have helped us, then all *pāpa*, sins, will be burned and this *virabanala* will gradually appear. Then there will be no more smiling, only constant weeping as Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has shown. Because he received the mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, of Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmīs and of others like Svarūpa Dāmodara, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is able to feel separation to such an exalted degree. To Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī he prayed,

*vairāgya-yug bhakti-rasam prayatnair
apāyayan mām anabhīpsum andham
kṛpāmbudhir yaḥ para-duḥkha-duḥkhi
sanātanaṁ tam prabbum āśrayāmi*

Vilāpa-kusumāñjali (6)

To Rūpa Gosvāmī, he has written many prayers, especially the first *śloka* of *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali*:

*tvaṁ rūpa-mañjarī sakhi prathitā pure 'smin
puṁsaḥ parasya vadanam na hi paśyasiti
bimbādhare kṣatam anāgata-bharṭṛkāyā
yat te vyadhāyi kim u tac chuka-puṅgavena*

And *śrī-rūpa-mañjarī-karārcita-pāda-padma*.

In this tenth verse of *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali*, he weeps and prays, “O Devī, I’m feeling as if a chain of huge forest fires are surrounding and burning me.”

“*Dahyamānatara-kāya-vallarim* – this fire has come and is soon to take my creeper-like body in its lap.”

“*Jīvaya kṣaṇa-nirīkṣaṇāmṛtaiḥ* – if You want, You can save me in a fraction of a moment, *kṣaṇa*.” How? “*Nirīkṣana-amṛtaiḥ* – in Your momentary glance, there is an ocean of *amṛta*, nectar.” What vision does Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī

specifically desire to see? “O Rādhikā, You should laugh. Kṛṣṇa is painting Your lotus feet and You smile and tell Him, ‘O Kṛṣṇa, You are not at all efficient in this *sevā*. You are too new and inexperienced. Tulasī, you should do this service. Kṛṣṇa, give the paint to her.’”

“I want that very glance. Rādhikā smiles as She orders Kṛṣṇa, but He is not willing to give up the paint brush. I will go and try to forcibly take it, saying, ‘My Svāminījī has ordered me to paint Her feet but You are not giving up the brush?’ Again Kṛṣṇa will refuse and again I will try to take it. This is the glance I want. If She glances upon me in this way, I will be saved. Otherwise, I will die.”

This is a very brief explanation of this verse.

Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is a true friend. It is very difficult to practise what is given in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, and especially *Ujjvala-nīlamanī*. By his own life, however, and through his writings like *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali*, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has demonstrated how to follow Rūpa Gosvāmī. If he had not left his experience for us, we could not have implemented the instructions of Rūpa Gosvāmī. Therefore we are very much indebted to him. We should remember this and worship the lotus feet of both our *gurudeva* and Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī.

27 March 1993, Mathurā

One With Mamatā Can Feel Separation

Kṛṣṇa’s cowherd friends love Him so much. If Kṛṣṇa would disappear behind a tree even for one-eleventh of a second, they would bitterly cry, “O Kṛṣṇa, O Kṛṣṇa.” They have so much affection for Him that they cannot tolerate Him leaving for even one moment. When Nanda Bābā took Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to Mathurā, all the cowherd boys, like Śrīdāma, Subala and Madhumaṅgala, went with Him. To them, one second of separation from Him is like a *pralaya*, universal destruction. In other words, one second felt like a *catur-yuga*, so many hundreds of thousands of years.

Only one who has *mamatā* for Kṛṣṇa, thinking, “Kṛṣṇa is mine”, can experience this *viraha*, mood of separation. The *sakhās* have abundant *mamatā* for Kṛṣṇa, and for that reason they feel intense separation. Yet, their separation mood is not like that of Mother Yaśodā. Her mood of separation is so unbearable that she has become blind from continual weeping.

The *gopīs*’ separation is still more than that of Mother Yaśodā. They became transcendently mad (*divyonmāda*). Of all the *gopīs*, Śrīmatī Lalitā-devī and Viśākhā-devī have the most intense feelings of separation; and even more than theirs is the separation of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

In order to be able to possess this *mamatā*, one must first have such feelings for *śrī gurudeva* and the Vaiṣṇavas.

In this world there is no *prema*. We must first develop a relationship with *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas, and then *prema* towards Kṛṣṇa can manifest in our hearts. There should be no self-interest at all; then our *mamatā* can become pure and we will experience a real mood of separation.

The *gopīs* feel intolerable separation when Kṛṣṇa goes cow-grazing, and their separation is mitigated by seeing

signs of His return. They may see the dust kicked up by the cows in the distance, or they may hear the sounds made by His flute and horn. At that time all the Vrajavāsīs have such *mamatā* for Him that no one stays in their houses. Everyone comes out on the path to see Him, and this is very natural – it is not artificial at all.

5 September 2003, Mathurā*



Disappearance Day Kathā

On the Disappearance Day of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda

Today is the disappearance day of Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Ṭhākura. We observe the appearance and disappearance day of any devotee or *guru*, but we have not seen it written anywhere in *śāstra* that we should observe the disappearance day of Kṛṣṇa or His manifestations (*avatāras*). Especially we observe the disappearance day of any high-class devotee, more than we do his appearance day. But for Kṛṣṇa and His manifestations we only observe their birthday. And for Vaiṣṇavas or for *guru*, we especially observe their disappearance day because before their birth, we do not know anything about that Vaiṣṇava or *guru*. When he disappears, however, we can read about his entire life or we can see and realize how he developed so much and what he has good he has done for the world.

14 December 2000, Brazil *

On the Disappearance Day of Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Today is the first day of our *ūrjā-vrata* [a Kārtika vow taken for the happiness of Śrīmatī Rādhikā], *niyama-sevā* [following of certain prescribed regulations] and *dāmodara-vrata*. Today is also Śārādīya-pūrṇimā, the day leading to the full moon night, when Śrī Kṛṣṇa began His performance of the *rāsa* dance. Today is also the disappearance day of my *gurudeva*, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. On this day he entered the eternal abode of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the evening, just when the moon was rising. Where? At the *rāsa-sthālī* in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma. That place is non-different from Govardhana. At that time we were all present, as our *gurudeva* chanted, “Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare,” and entered into *nitya-līlā*. 🙏

17 October 2005, Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma*



Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā Announces

the Departure of
Śrīpāda Anaṅga-mohana Brahmācārī

Appearing in English for the first time

Śrīpāda Anaṅga-mohana Brahmācārī's Departure to his Abode

It is with a pained heart that we inform you that on Thursday 2 March 1950, the *trayodaśī-tithi* of the month of Phālguna, at 2.30 p.m., Śrīpāda Anaṅga-mohana Brahmācārī departed to his own abode leaving us all forever.

He spent the last six months of his life in Tāmbaram, a health resort in a mountain town situated ten miles south of Madras. The revered Śrīpāda Trigunānata Brahmācārī, best of the *bhaktas*, and Śrīyuta Gaura-Nārāyaṇa dāsa Adhikārī, Anaṅga-mohana Brahmācārī's dedicated *sevaka*, were extremely affectionate toward Anaṅga-mohana Brahmācārī. Both of them risked their lives in accepting responsibility for his treatment and availed themselves of the opportunity to serve his every need during his last days. We are publishing here the letter they sent informing us about the grievous news of Śrīpāda Anaṅga-mohana Brahmācārī's entering *aprakāṣa-līlā*.



[Upon the departure of Śrīpāda Anaṅga-mohana Brahmācārī, Gaura-Nārāyaṇa dāsa Adhikārī (Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja) wrote the following letter to their *gurudeva*, Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja.]

Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga Jayataḥ

Tāmbāram
2 March 1950

Patita-pāvana, Śrīla Gurudeva,

It is with much distress and apprehension that I offer my *daṇḍavat-praṇāma* at your lotus feet, which grant fearlessness.

O Prabhu! We have failed to protect that most precious treasure you entrusted to us today it was lost.

This morning, from 6 till 10 a.m., he was unconscious, but even in that condition, he uttered, “*Hā Kṛṣṇa, hā Gaurasundara! Kṛṣṇa is calling me to Vṛndāvana! Where is Kṛṣṇa!? Is He in my heart? Where is Gurudeva, where is Bābā* (father)? Please disregard any of my offences to you! Please bestow your mercy upon me!*”

At 10 o'clock he came to external consciousness and from 1:00 p.m. onward, his pulse again started to drop, and again he started calling out the same words as before. Then, at 2:30 p.m. he departed for Goloka Vṛndāvana-dhāma.

He did not experience any pain, his face did not distort in the slightest, and he did not experience any other severe symptoms. He was completely serene – self-composed – when he departed. Others in the hospital noted his chanting

* Here Bābā refers to his *gurudeva*, Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, whom he considered his father.

of Bhagavān's holy names, his peaceful state of mind and his feelings for you, and all were wonderstruck. They counted themselves extremely fortunate to have had the *darśana* of such a personality.

We too have become blessed as a result of receiving this rare service from you. In this world, we do not see that a person leaves his body in such a glorious way. To preserve our auspicious memory of him,** we will at once depart for Siddhābādī Village, his favourite health resort.

Kindly inform us when you will mercifully come to Siddhābādī. Our minds are now restless and we anxiously await your arrival. All our unrest will immediately be dispelled upon receiving your *darśana*, and we will resume our one-pointed, dedicated service to you. We hope to quickly receive your merciful reply and your *darśana*.

Thus ...

Yours,
Gaura-Nārāyaṇa

Śrīpāda Anaṅga-mohana Brahmācārī was an ideal *guru-sevaka*. He is an eternal companion of Śrī Gurupāda-padma, and as his right arm, he continuously remained with him like a shadow, always engaged in his intimate service. His boundless tolerance for suffering set an ideal for all. Such an illuminating example of an ideal *guru-sevaka* is extremely rare.

In separation from him, all in Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti, especially us, his insignificant Godbrothers who were charmed by his qualities, are disheartened by his absence. Thinking about his untimely departure at age twenty-one, all are bewildered.*** May his illuminating ideal of service to *śrī guru* and the Vaiṣṇavas guide us on the path of *bhakti* and always inspire us to serve. This is our sole prayer.

*krpā kari' kṛṣṇa more diyāchilā saṅga
svatantra kṛṣṇera icchā,—kailā saṅga-bhaṅga*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya-līlā 11.94)

Mahāprabhu spoke, “Śrī Kṛṣṇa mercifully bestowed upon Me the association of Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura, but today, by the desire of Kṛṣṇa, who is the all-independent Lord, that association has been taken away.”

Translated from Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā, Year-2, Issue-2

** Meaning their collection of the ashes after his body was cremated.

*** Here, this transcendental condition of *mugdhata*, or being spellbound in emotion, is due to deep affection for and attachment to the Vaiṣṇavas

Remembering the Transcendental Nature of



prapūjya-carāṇa aṣṭottara-śata

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Mahārāja

by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

His Birth and His Early Life in the Maṭha

I heard from the mouth of Śrīla Vāmana Mahārāja's virtuous and learned mother, Śrīmatī Bhagavatī-devī, that *pūjyapāda* Vāmana Mahārāja was born on the Kṛṣṇa-pakṣa-navamī in the month of Pauṣa (23 December) 1921, in the village of Pilajaṅga in the Khulnā district of East Bengal (Bangladesh). His childhood name was Santoṣa. His father, Śrī Satisācandra, took *dikṣā* from my most worshipful master, *om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. After *dikṣā* his name became Śrī Sarveśvara dāsa Ādhikāi. His mother was the disciple of the world famous *jagad-guru, nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda, and his paternal uncle was one of Śrīla Prabhupāda's first disciples, *pūjyapāda* Nārasimha Mahārāja.



In 1930, during Śrīla Prabhupāda's manifest pastime, Santoṣa, who was about nine years old, accompanied his mother to Māyāpura to attend the Śrī Gaura-pūrṇimā festival at Śrī Caitanya Maṭha. On that occasion, his mother offered him to the lotus feet of Śrīla Prabhupāda, who entrusted him to the care of my *gurupāda-padma*, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī*, his dear-most associate. My *gurupāda-padma's* name then was Śrī Vinoda-bihārī Brahmācārī Kṛtiratna. He enrolled Santoṣa in the Śrī Bhaktivinoda Institute in Māyāpura. Śrī Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda gave him *harināma* initiation and later our *gurudeva* named him Śrī Sajjana Sevaka Brahmācārī.

His Sharp Intelligence from Boyhood and His Inclination to Serve Vaiṣṇavas

Śrī Sajjana Sevaka Brahmācārī's intelligence was extremely sharp, his speech was soft and sweet, and his memory was perfect. He could commit to memory and permanently retain whatever he read or heard, be it a *śloka* or a lecture. Śrīla Gurudeva instructed him to learn *ślokas* and told him that for every *śloka* he memorized, he would give him a candy. In this way Sajjana Sevaka Brahmācārī would learn ten to twenty *ślokas* daily.

Although he was top of his class, he never neglected his services in the *maṭha*. He would collect banana leaves to be used as plates, wash them and lay them out for the Vaiṣṇavas' *prasāda*. During *prasāda*, he distributed lemons, water, salt and cups for water. When the Vaiṣṇavas had finished, he would throw away their leaf-plates and clean their eating places.

He strictly adhered to his vow of completing his chanting of *harināma* daily but always completed his studies. He was like the shadow of my *śrī gurupāda-padma*, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī*, serving him in every possible way.

Accepting Dīkṣā

After Prabhupāda entered his unmanifest pastimes, conflicts took place among the devotees in the Gauḍīya Maṭha. Without sound reason, the opposing party jailed our most worshipful *śrīla gurudeva* and forty of Śrīla Prabhupāda's senior, respectable disciples. Among them were Śrīla Narahari Sevā-vigraha Prabhu, Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, *pūjyapāda* Bhakti Kuśala Nārasimha Mahārāja, *pūjyapāda* Paramahansa Mahārāja and *pūjyapāda* Hṣikeśa Mahārāja. It was Śrī Sajjana Sevaka alone who would bring the files regarding the case to the lawyer and go to court, as well as cook *prasāda* and bring it to the jail for all forty devotees.

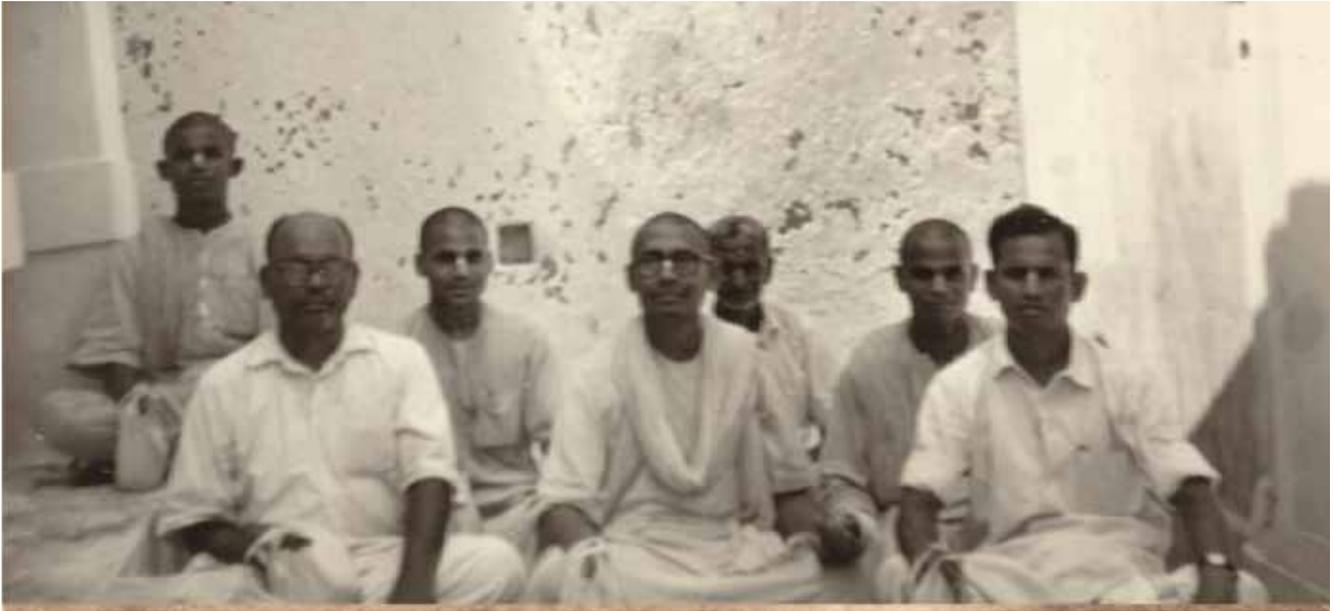
At that time Śrīla Gurudeva gave him the *dīkṣā-mantras*, but could not perform his *upanāyana-saṁskāra*, or sacred thread ceremony. Some people say that Śrī Sajjana Sevaka Brahmācārī (Śrīpāda Vāmana Mahārāja) accepted *harināma* and *dīkṣa* from *pūjyapāda* Bhakti Vicāra Yāyāvara Mahārāja. But the truth is that he received *harināma* from *jagad-guru nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī*, and *dīkṣā* from my *gurupāda-padma*, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

At that time Śrīla Gurudeva had not yet received *sannyāsa*, nor was he accepting disciples: therefore *pūjyapāda* Yāyāvara Mahārāja performed Śrī Sajjana Sevaka Brahmācārī's *upanāyana-saṁskāra*, but factually, Sajjana Sevaka was the *dīkṣā* disciple of our *gurudeva*.

Establishing Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti and Preaching with Śrī Gurupāda-padma

In 1942, after the disappearance of Śrīla Prabhupāda, my *gurupāda-padma* established Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti in Bosapādā Lane, Kolkata. Śrī Sajjana Sevaka Brahmācārī was there at that time, as was Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja. And in 1943, when Śrīla Gurudeva established Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, Śrī Sajjana Sevaka Brahmācārī was with him there also.

He performed all types of service for Śrīla Gurudeva, including cooking for him. And when Śrīla Gurudeva would leave to preach in the cities and towns on either side of the Gaṅgā, Śrī Sajjana Sevaka Brahmācārī would accompany him as his prominent assistant and servant.



Exemplary Vaiṣṇava-sevā

Once, a large number of devotees attended some special occasion at Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti’s centre at Bosapāḍā Lane, but somehow no one was available to cook for them. Śrī Sajjana Sevaka Brahmācārī was ill with a 103 degree fever at that time. Still, Śrīla Guru Mahārāja came to him and instructed him to rise from bed and cook. He immediately did so and afterwards served the visiting Vaiṣṇavas *prasāda*. By this he demonstrated that in the service of his *gurudeva*, he did not even care for his life. Shortly after this incident, his good health returned.

His Affection for Me

In about 1945, under the guidance of Śrīla Guru Mahārāja, a disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda went to preach in Sahabaganja in the state of Bihar. That devotee, Śrīla Narottamānanda Brahmācārī (later *pūjyapāda* Bhakti Kamala Madhusūdana Mahārāja) was renowned for his wonderful explanations of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. He was traveling with Śrī Bhakti Kuśala Nārasimha Mahārāja, *pūjyapāda* Rādhānātha Brahmācārī (later *pūjyapāda* Trivikrama Mahārāja), Prema-prayojana Brahmācārī and Govardhana Brahmācārī. It was then that I met the devotees and gradually began to perform *bhajana* according to the conception of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

From that time on I would write letters to Śrīla Gurudeva, and Śrī Sajjana Sevaka Brahmācārī sent me replies on Gurudeva’s behalf. In those letters he addressed me as “Tivārījī”, as I hailed from a Tivārījī family. Then, in 1946, I left my family responsibilities, wife, job and all else and journeyed to Śrī Dhāma Navadvīpa without notifying anyone about my coming. I arrived in the middle of the

night so the train station was in darkness. Then, on the platform, I noticed someone with a lantern calling out, “Tivārījī, Tivārījī!” It was Śrī Sajjana Sevaka Brahmācārī looking for me! When I heard my name being called I immediately knew it was him.

I went with him to the *maṭha*, and on the way I asked him how he knew of my arrival on that particular train. He said, “Śrīla Guru Mahārāja told me, Śrīman Nārāyaṇa Tivārī is arriving on this train tonight, so you should go there to greet him and bring him to the *maṭha*.” From that time on, Śrī Sajjana Sevaka Brahmācārī cared for me in every respect, supplying me with cloth and whatever else I needed. He always showed me much affection and I came to regard him as my *śikṣā-guru*.

Śrī Bṛhad-mṛdaṅga Sevā

Śrīla Guru Mahārāja established a printing press in the Chuñchurā Maṭha near Kolkata to publish *Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā* and other Gauḍīya scriptures. At that time Śrī Sajjana Sevaka Brahmācārī was the commander of that *maṭha*. He took full charge of the *Patrikā*, selecting all its contents, proofreading and bringing it to press.

Once, while working with the printing press, his finger was seriously cut and blood gushed forth. He simply wrapped a cloth around it and continued with his service. At that time Śrīla Guru Mahārāja was staying there. As soon as he heard what had happened, he ran there, weeping. Immediately Śrīla Gurudeva brought Śrī Sajjana Sevaka Brahmācārī by car to the medical college in Kolkata where his finger was treated. This incident illustrates his dedication to serving Śrīla Gurudeva and Śrīla Gurudeva’s parental affection for him.



His Transcriptions Were Faultless

Śrī Sajjana Sevaka Brahmācārī would always be on hand to take dictation for Śrīla Gurudeva's editorial, even when thousands of people who had come for *parikramā* would come to meet with Gurudeva. Even at such a busy time, Śrīla Gurudeva would dictate the editorial for the *Patrikā*, and Śrī Sajjana Sevaka Brahmācārī would write it down. Without any proofreading, his work, always faultless, was sent directly to press. Śrīla Guru Mahārāja perfectly expressed his thoughts in words, and Śrī Sajjana Sevaka Brahmācārī perfectly transcribed them, just like Gaṇeśa, whose transcription contained no error.

Referencing Ślokas in Service to the Sampradāya

Śrī Sajjana Sevaka Brahmācārī lived for some time in Śrī Śyāmānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha, Medinīpura. Śrī Anantarāma Brahmācārī [later *pūjyapāda* Śrīla Bhakti Jīvana Janārdana Mahārāja] was also there at that time.

In order to compose an important essay, the references for two *ślokas* were needed. The *ślokas* were:

*sampradāya-vibīnā ye mantrās te niṣphalā matāḥ
ataḥ kalau bhaviṣyanti catvāraḥ sampradāyinaḥ*

Prameya-ratnāvalī (1.5)
(quoted from *Padma Purāṇa*)

Unless one has been initiated into the *sampradāyas* by a bona fide spiritual master, the *mantra* received will be without effect. In the age of Kali there will only be four bona fide *sampradāyas*.

*janmanā jāyate śūdraḥ
saṁskārād dhi bhaved dvijaḥ
veda-pāṭhād bhaved vipraḥ
brahma-jānātīti brāhmaṇaḥ*

Smṛti-vākya

By birth, everyone is a *śūdra*. One becomes *dvija* (twice born) upon receiving spiritual purification (*saṁskāra*) from a spiritual master. By studying the Vedas one becomes a *vipra*. The real *brāhmaṇa*, however, is one who knows *brahma*.

In Vṛndāvana, some *gōsvāmīs* and *bābājīs* had been saying that these two *ślokas* are not found anywhere in the *śāstras*. They were also saying that there were more than four *sampradāyas* and that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is not in the line of Madhvācārya. They said that He established the Gauḍīya *sampradāya* Himself, and that this *sampradāya* is not within the Śrī Madhva *sampradāya*.

The two *brahmācārīs* went to the king's impressive library in Mahiṣādala near the town of Medinīpura. They stayed there for several days, combing through many books until they found the required references. While there, they took the opportunity to read most of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava scriptures, as well as the Upaniṣads and Purāṇas that were available in that library.

Accepting Sannyāsa

For the first time in our society Śrīla Gurudeva awarded *sannyāsa* to three people, during the 1952 Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma *parikramā*. They were Śrī Sajjana Sevaka Brahmācārī, Śrī Rādhānātha dāsa Adhikārī (Vrajavāsī) and me (Śrī Gaura-nārāyaṇa dāsa Adhikārī). Our respective *sannyāsa* names were Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Mahārāja, Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Mahārāja and Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa.

The relationship we shared was intimate, as if we were one soul in three bodies. Since I was last to join the *maṭha* among the three of us, both *pūjyapāda* Vāmana Mahārāja and *pūjyapāda* Trivikrama Mahārāja showered me with



astonished and silenced. In this way the preaching program concluded without further impediment.

Preaching in the Villages of Bengal

Upon the completion of Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha's *śrī mandira* and temple hall in Śrī Dhāma Navadvīpa, Śrīla Gurudeva sent *pūjyapāda* Vāmana Mahārāja out to preach with some *brahmacārīs*. They went to towns and villages in Twenty-four Paraganās, in the south of West Bengal. *Pūjyapāda* Vāmana Mahārāja endured many hardships in reaching out to the people and distributing the message of Mahāprabhu in remote areas, particularly in Kakadvīpa and the Sundarbans. When

much affection. All three of us shared the responsibility of determining what services needed to be done, but *pūjyapāda* Trivikrama Mahārāja and I respected *pūjyapāda* Vāmana Mahārāja as our *śikṣā-guru*.

he preached, he demonstrated an extraordinary capacity to tolerate severe difficulties. He would always offer respect to others in full humility. And he could expertly refute any misconceptions about the Absolute Truth

A Living Gauḍīya Dictionary

Śrīla Guru Mahārāja once took five *sannyāsīs* and ten to twelve *brahmacārīs* preaching in Assam. We came to the village of Bārīpaḍā, which was largely populated by the disciples of Haṅkaradeva, who had written the so-called 'Thirteenth Canto' of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. His followers worshipped Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but also ate meat, fish and other abominable foodstuffs. In a large gathering, Śrīla Guru Mahārāja declared that the mouths of those who perform *śrī kṛṣṇa-bhajana* while eating meat and fish and drinking alcohol are like sewers full of stool and urine.

Upon hearing this, Haṅkaradeva's numerous disciples began to attack the devotees on stage with sticks and stones. Tumult erupted and people scattered. Nonetheless, Śrīla Guru Mahārāja remained still and calm. "If you want to fight, we can also take up sticks and stones. You should calm down and listen. Those with questions or doubts are welcome to present them."

The followers of Haṅkaradeva declared Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to be an ordinary person, not an incarnation of God, and requested evidence of His supreme position. Śrīla Guru Mahārāja motioned to *pūjyapāda* Vāmana Mahārāja, indicating he should speak. *Pūjyapāda* Vāmana Mahārāja stood up and quoted thirty-five or so *ślokas*, starting with *kṛṣṇa varṇam tviṣākṛṣṇam* and *channa avatāra*, to prove that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is indeed God. The audience was



His Expertise in the Art of Speaking Sweetly while Refuting Bogus Philosophies

Pūjyapāda Vāmana Mahārāja could speak *barikathā* for three or four hours. When it was necessary for him to refute the misconceptions of the *sabaiyās*, the impersonalists or those who conceive that every philosophy is valid (*yata mata tata paṭha*) he would speak so sweetly that no one, not even the members of that sect, would become hurt or offended. Furthermore, they were able to appreciate the depth of the philosophy he was presenting.



His Compilation of the Transcendental Life of Śrīla Gurudeva

On the order of Śrīla Gurudeva, Śrīla Vāmana Mahārāja printed many books, such as *Jaiva-dharma*, *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*, *Gauḍīya Gīti-guccha*, *Navadvīpa-śatakam*, *Navadvīpa-dhāma Parikramā* and *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. He also wrote wonderful articles for the *Gauḍīya Patrikā*.

He refuted others' misconceptions, but he would do it in such a way that their feelings were not hurt, as if carefully performing a surgical operation. After the disappearance of Śrīla Guru Mahārāja, Śrīla Vāmana Mahārāja compiled his transcendental life history. He had regularly noted down his activities and pastimes and used this information in this book that comprised Śrīla Gurudeva's entire life, from his appearance to his disappearance.

It included accounts of his accepting the shelter of Śrīla Prabhupāda, serving the Gauḍīya Maṭha, his *niṣṭhā* in Prabhupāda, his developing Māyāpura, his establishing Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti after the disappearance of Śrīla Prabhupāda and then preaching all over India, his *parikramās* of various *dhāmas* and *tīrthas*, and his giving *sannyāsa*. In particular, it presented Śrīla Gurudeva's line of thought in a marvellous way.

This book also described the pilgrimages we went on with Śrīla Gurudeva to such places as Śrī Jagannātha Purī [including *parikramā* of the entire Kṣetra-maṇḍala], Kāśī-dhāma, Ayodhyā-dhāma, Vāsukinātha, Naimiṣāraṇya, Vaidyanātha-dhāma, Bhadracalam, Prayāga, Mathurā-maṇḍala, 84 kośa Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā*, Dvārakā, Rana-chodajī, Kūrmācala, Panna Narasiṃha, Jeo-Narasiṃha, Pakṣi-tīrtha, Trivandrum, Uḍupī, Veṅkaṭeśvaram, Śrī

Raṅgam, Kedāra, Bādri, Mumbādevī Kāmākhyā-devī, Mahābalipuram, Padmanābha Tīrtha, Viṣṇu-kāñcī, Śīva-kāñcī, Daṇḍakāraṇya and Citrakūṭa.

A Strong Decision

Once, one of Śrīla Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja's disciples, who was somewhat uncontrolled, started to regularly quarrel with the people living near the *maṭha*, and also with the *maṭha* devotees. He did not even offer respect to the *sannyāsīs*. His behaviour became a topic for the annual meeting. Śrīla Vāmana Mahārāja said that unless chastised, people like this never change and they ruin the atmosphere in the *maṭha*. He said that if necessary this person should be expelled from the *maṭha*. Finally, those in the meeting agreed. Therefore at times, he would demonstrate impartiality even to his own disciples.

An Ācārya In the Anugatyā of His Godbrothers

Although *pūjyapāda* Vāmana Mahārāja was the *ācārya*, he was completely devoid of the pride of being an *ācārya*, and it was observed in his life that he would always willingly remain under the guidance of his Godbrothers. During Navadvīpa *parikramā*, before he would give initiations, he would come to Śrīla Trivikrama Mahārāja and to me and say, "O Mahārāja, please order me to give initiations."

Once, while in Nīlācala Gauḍīya Maṭha in Purī-dhāma, *pūjyapāda* Vāmana Mahārāja became ill. He tried homeopathic and Ayurvedic medicine, but his condition remained the same. People begged him to go to a doctor in Kolkata, but he would not heed their requests because he did not want to independently take *maṭha* funds for his own health.

When news of his condition reached me, I immediately went to Purī along with Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmācārī [now Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Mādhava Mahārāja] and told him that he could not stay there, we would not allow it. I requested him to kindly come with us to Kolkata where we would arrange for his medical care. He immediately began to make plans to leave and told his servants, “Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja has come, so I must go to Kolkata.”

On another occasion when he became ill, he went to our *maṭha* in Sidhabarī, near Asansol in Bengal. The atmosphere there is pleasant and healthy, and the drinking water is good. A famous homeopathic doctor from that place treated him, but instead of Śrīla Vāmana Mahārāja recovering his health, he became more ill.

I went there with Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmācārī and when he saw me he said, “Now Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja won’t let me stay here. Navīna, come and pack my bags. I am about to be given a military order to leave.” That evening we left for Kolkata and after a few days of treatment he recovered his health.

Faith in his Godbrother

I once sent *pūjyapāda* Vāmana Mahārāja a letter requesting him to come to Mathurā because many people there wanted to take *harināma* and *dikṣā* initiation. Furthermore, if he came, the people of Mathurā could take his *darśana*.

He wrote back, “I told you long ago, and I am telling you again, that you yourself should, without hesitation, give *harināma* and *dikṣā* initiation. My health is not good. If you do this it will save me from having to travel and the preaching there will not be hindered.”

How rare it is to find a Vaiṣṇava *ācārya* like him who, with trust and magnanimity, instructs his Godbrother to give *harināma* and *dikṣā*. These days, differences and quarrels take place in *maṭhas* about this subject matter alone.

Advocating Bhajana in the Mood of Rādhā-dāsyam

Sometimes, especially during Navadvīpa *parikramā*, *pūjyapāda* Trivikrama Mahārāja and I would have loving quarrel (*prema-kalaha*). They would even take place on the stage, in public. He would cut my arguments and I would cut his. Once, in the course of one such quarrel, I presented *mādhurya-rasa* according to the conception of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. My point was that on the strength of their service to Śrī Rādhā, Her maidservants (*dāsīs*) do not even care to serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa. I quoted the *śloka*, *na pārāye ’ham niravadya-saṁyujām* (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.32.22). Śrī Kṛṣṇa is saying “O *gopīs*, even if I lived as long as Lord Brahmā or any other demigod, I would not be able to repay My debt to you.”

In *Gīta-govinda* (3.7.9) we see that when Śrīmatī Rādhikā is in *māna*, Kṛṣṇa says “O dearest Rādhikā, I will never offend You like that again. Please forgive me.” And also in *Gīta-govinda* (10.19.8): “*smara-garala khaṇḍanam mama śirasi maṇḍanam debi pada ṭhallavam udāram* – My beloved! Offer the fresh buds of Your enchanting feet as an ornament upon My head.”

Therefore, in the eyes of *tattva*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is Svayam Bhagavān, but due to the excellence, or superiority of *āśraya-jāṭīya-prema* (the *prema* experienced by devotees) He becomes indebted to Śrīmatī Rādhikā and begs from Her alms of forgiveness.



Pūjyapāda Trivikrama Mahārāja refuted my statements and established the *bhagavattā*, or Godliness, and importance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In this way there ensued sweet debates between us. *Pūjyapāda* Vāmana Mahārāja, the chairperson of the assembly, witnessed our loving quarrels and spoke his conclusion. “*Rādhā-pakṣa chāḍi ye jana se jana, ye bhāve se bhāve thāke āmī to rādhikā pakṣa pātī sadā* – I am exclusively in the group of Śrī Rādhājī. I become happy when She is happy, and when She is sad, I become sad.’ This is the *vicāra*, or conception, of the *rūpānugās* (followers of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī).

“Performing *bhajana* with the inclination to serve Śrīmatī Rādhikā is the best type of *bhajana*. It cannot be said that no one is qualified to perform this kind of *bhajana*. In this world there is always a *rūpānugā* Vaiṣṇava who is capable of doing such *bhajana*. Past, present and future –there will always be someone with this qualification. To say otherwise is incorrect because the world would face destruction if it lacked the presence of such a qualified person.”

His philosophical perspective made a substantial impression on the audience.

Absorption in Vipralambha-bhajana

From the beginning of his devotional life, *pūjyapāda* Vāmana Mahārāja was absorbed in *vipralambha-bhajana*. When a disciple came to him to discuss any issue, especially in relation to management, he would say, “Go to Śrīpāda Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja and he will address your problem.”

For two or three years before his disappearance he completely withdrew from the external world, absorbing himself internally in *nāma-bhajana*. Sometimes, he was overwhelmed with ecstasy, and day or night he would call out, “O Ṭhākuraṇī, *dayā karo!* (Give me Your mercy), Ṭhākuraṇī! *Dayā karo! Kṛpā karo!*” He would even cry this out as he slept.

His Disappearance and Samādhi

In 2004, some days before his disappearance from this world, Śrīla Vāmana Mahārāja was staying on the bank of the river Gaṅgā at a place called Vaidyavātī, a short distance from Kolkata. Even though his health was poor he journeyed to Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma to observe Kārtika-vrata. And in that month of Kārtika, on the day of Gaura-tṛtīyā, he entered into Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa’s *nitya-līlā*.

On this day I was at Śrī Govardhana performing our annual Śrī Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā* with approximately 1000 participants. Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Ācārya Mahārāja and others from Śrī Dhāma Navadvīpa informed me that Śrīla Vāmana Mahārāja’s *samādhi* ceremony would not be performed until I arrived. I had already sent Śrī Bhaktivedānta Tīrtha Mahārāja and Śrī Bhaktivedānta Vana Mahārāja to Navadvīpa from Govardhana, but upon hearing the words

of Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Ācārya Mahārāja, I immediately left my responsibilities and went to Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma with Bhaktivedānta Mādhava Mahārāja.

Upon my arrival in Kolkata, however, I learned that Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Ācārya Mahārāja and some new *maṭha* devotees had ignored the requests of other *sannyāsīs* and senior residents of the *maṭha* and had placed Śrīla Vāmana Mahārāja in *samādhi* in the middle of the night. They had previously informed me of a scheduled time for the ceremony, but went ahead and performed it early, without waiting for us to arrive. This was quite disconcerting for some of my Godbrothers and for me. Nonetheless, I went to Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma and, accompanied by *kīrtana*, performed *pūjā-arcana* and *parikramā* of his *samādhi*. A day later, I returned to Govardhana.

The Ideal Vaiṣṇava

In this way I lived with *pūjyapāda* Vāmana Mahārāja for almost sixty years and had the opportunity to closely observe and understand him. He possessed all the qualities that are inherent in a Vaiṣṇava. By nature he was simple, grave, humble, tolerant, overflowing with *guru-niṣṭhā* and inclined to serve the Vaiṣṇavas. This situated him on a high level of *bhakti*.

I have seen many people, including myself, who give explanations from the scriptures and enjoy taking praise from others for it. But having known *pūjyapāda* Vāmana Mahārāja for so long, I have never seen him do this, not even by accident. He is also very tolerant. As if taking poison and digesting it, he may see the faults in others, but he never speaks about them. He has so much eagerness to preach the instructions of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and he has preached in all the villages of West Bengal and Assam. Bhagavān has especially empowered this great personality with many transcendental qualities.

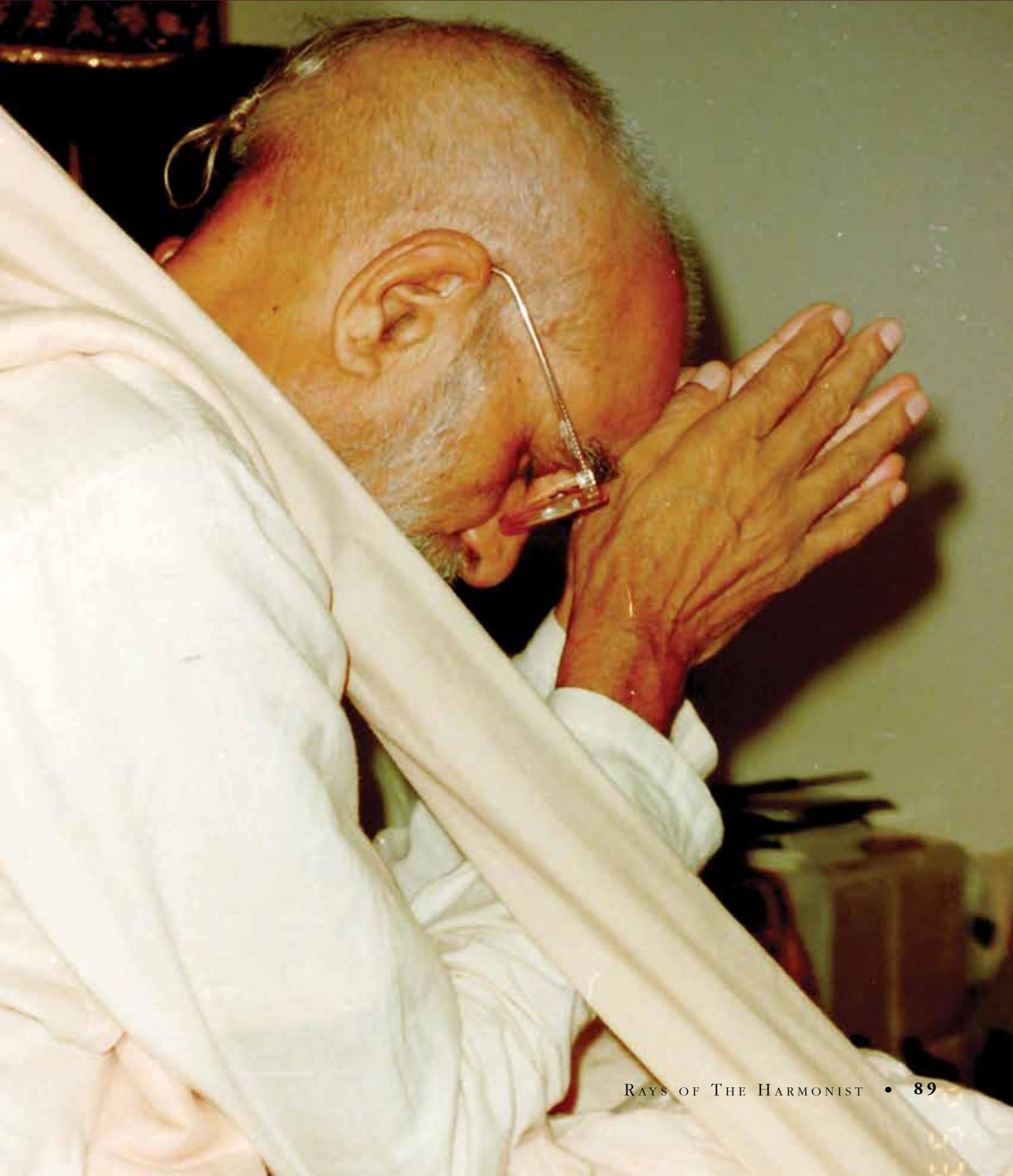
His *guru-niṣṭhā* was astounding. With his life in his hands, he would step forward and offer himself in the service of Śrīla Gurudeva. *Guru-niṣṭhā* is the backbone of *bhakti*. I have seen many *guru-sevakas*, but *pūjyapāda* Vāmana Mahārāja’s service to Śrīla Gurudeva with his body, mind, words and sentiments – as a *brahmacārī* and as a *sannyāsī* – was extraordinary. In this world, such a *guru-sevaka* is rare.

We pray to him that while engaged in the eternal service of Śrīla Gurudeva and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, he be merciful upon us all so that we can also perform *guru-sevā* with *niṣṭhā* like him and thus dedicate our lives to Śrī Guru and his mission. 🙏

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Śrī Prabandhāvalī, Chapter 1.

Homages from Prominent Gaudīya Vaiṣṇavas



A Few Words In

OF NITYA-LĪLĀ-PRAVIṢṬA AṢṬOTTARA-ŚATA ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD BHAKTIVEDĀNTA



Accomplishing an Incomparable Feat

The special Vaiṣṇava saint of the Śrī Gauḍīya *sampradāya*, Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, accomplished an incomparable feat in the world by preaching the glories of Śrī Gauḍīya *sampradāya* and the transcendental pastimes of Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nityānanda in India and throughout the world.

My *gurupāda-padma*, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Sāraṅga Gosvāmī Mahārāja, on the order of his *gurudeva*, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa aṣṭottara śata* Śrī Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda, went to London and other places in the West to propagate the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He stayed in London for some time where he stirred a revolution in his preaching *śrī gaura-vāṇī*. However, as soon as he heard the news of

Śrīla Prabhupāda's disappearance, he returned to India immediately.

Afterwards, some other Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava saints also went to the West for preaching, the foremost among them being Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja. Though Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja propagated the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu on a wide scale throughout the world, his disciples could accept the conceptions and practices of Śrī Gauḍīya *sampradāya* only as much as their qualification would allow.

Unforgettable Preaching

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja continued in the wake of these other Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, propagating the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu

Remembrance

NĀRĀYAṆA GOSVĀMĪ MAHĀRĀJA



by Śrīmad Bhakti Kamala
Parvata Mahārāja

and the Gauḍīya *sampradāya* throughout the world in an unforgettable, storm-like manner. I have said ‘unforgettable’ because along with preaching, he also inspired people everywhere to adopt the Gauḍīya *sampradāya* conduct (*ācāra*). Due to his manner of practising and preaching, many, many people abroad became his disciples, subsequently diligently devoting themselves to serving him.

My Relationship with Him

I have known Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja for a very long time. My *gurudeva*, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa aṣṭottara śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Sāraṅga Gosvāmī Mahārāja, entrusted me with the responsibility of overseeing the construction of Śrī Indraprastha Gauḍīya Maṭha, Malkāgaṅja, Delhi. By my *gurudeva*’s mercy, I succeeded in finishing the

construction, and on the occasion of the installation of the deities, I arranged a four day religious conference at Śrī Indraprastha Gauḍīya Maṭha. To help organize the conference, I requested Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja from Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha, Mathurā, to attend. He then came to Śrī Indraprastha Gauḍīya Maṭha, and according to his instructions, I successfully hosted the festival and the assemblies.

Unimaginable Parental Affection

The parental affection that Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja has shown me, considering me his younger brother, is unimaginable. Whenever I went from Delhi to Mathurā to meet him, he used to leave aside his work to greet me. He would personally attend to me and very affectionately have me sit with him to honour *prasāda*. He was instrumental in helping me to advance in *bhakti* by inspiring me to serve in the *maṭha*, help with the publications, preach and so forth.

To understand and explain his selfless mood is very difficult. I will always continue to remember his affection and pray that he continue to bless me from the eternal *dhāma*. 🙏

Śrīmad Bhakti Kamala Parvata Mahārāja is a disciple of *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Sāraṅga Gosvāmī Mahārāja. For a long time, he preached in Delhi according to his *gurudeva*’s instruction, and is currently performing *bhajana* in Mathurā.

ŚRĪLA MAHĀRĀJĀJĪ,

Wealthy with Transcendental, for Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa

Prayer for Association

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura composed one song, which begins, *kabe śrī caitanya more karibena dayā*. In one stanza, in which he prays at the feet of the Vaiṣṇavas, he says, “*krpā kari saṅge laba ei akiñcane – He Vaiṣṇava Ṭhākura! The prayer of this fallen person is that you mercifully take me, a destitute soul, into your company.*” The Vaiṣṇavas are supremely merciful. It is by their mercy alone that *viṣṇu-bhakti* can be attained. So, taking shelter of the *dainya-bhāva* (humble mood) expressed in this verse of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, I pray to Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, a *parama-bhāgavata*, to bring me into his association, that is, to absorb my consciousness in the lotus feet of Bhagavān, as his is.

Extolling the Vaiṣṇava’s Qualities Is the Success of One’s Existence

It is most auspicious for me to speak something in memory of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, for to speak the glories of the devotees of Viṣṇu is the supreme ideal of life. Only a tongue that glorifies Śrī Viṣṇu and the Vaiṣṇavas is successful. Śrīla Mahārājajī was such a great soul, that not just one’s tongue can attain success by speaking his glories, but one’s entire existence. Simply by remembering him one achieves the result of bathing in Gaṅgā or Yamunā. By touching the Gaṅgā one can be purified, but one is purified by remembering a mere particle of the unfathomable transcendental character of Śrīla Mahārājajī. Even though it is very difficult for a worthless person like me to remember him, still, by his mercy, I can endeavour to speak something of his glories.

When a great personality (*brhad*) mercifully grants his association, then even one who is insignificant (*anu*) gets to have association and audience of he who is great. I am

insignificant, so whatever I speak about the glories of such a great personality as Śrīla Mahārājajī is only the result of his mercy.

The Supremely Pure Preacher of Śrīman Mahāprabhu’s Vāṇī

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja preached in India and abroad, establishing the immaculate ideal of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in the world. It is truly his glory that he made many, many non-devotees into devotees. Being attracted by his practice (*ācāra*) and his conceptions (*vicāra*) as well as his message (*vāṇī*), many, many residents of Western countries who were highly learned and had all facility to enjoy worldly comforts and happiness are now endeavouring to practice *bhajana* in a pure manner, free from any worldly pride and with renunciation. Seeing this, I curse myself, “Although I have been born in the land of Bhārata, the great devotional spirit that has awakened in them by the influence of Śrīla Mahārājajī has not arisen in me.”

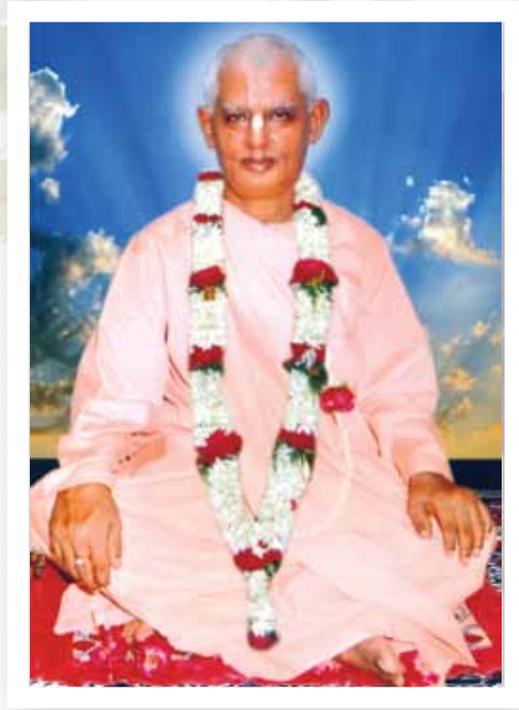
Factually, it is indeed the great glory of Śrīla Mahārājajī that he performed the *kīrtana* of the *vāṇī* of Śrīman Mahāprabhu in a completely pure manner when speaking to the residents of Western countries, and by doing so, he made them mad for *bhakti*. It is impossible for a person like me to speak the glories of Śrīla Mahārājajī in a complete and proper manner. Even Svayam Bhagavān Himself told Uddhavajī, “It is extremely difficult for Me to express the glories of a devotee such as you.”

Always Endeavouring for the Spiritual Upliftment of All

In my life, I observed the idealistic life of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja very closely, with attention to fine detail. He would bestow profuse mercy to even the

Pure Love

by Śrīmad Gopānanda
Vana Mahārāja



most ordinary of ordinary people. He would not look upon the insignificant as insignificant, the degraded as degraded or the lowly as lowly. Rather, because he was endowed with equanimity, he would, with his glance of pure mercy, always endeavour for the spiritual upliftment of all.

Free from a Sense of Superiority

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja would offer great respect even to insignificant persons, such as me. Moreover, he had great affection for me. Whenever he saw me, he would call me close, to talk with me. He preached all over the world the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and many big-big men were always with him, but still, no kind of mundane pride was ever capable of touching him.

Endowed with Munificence

Once, on the occasion of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's *tirobhāvatiṭṭhi*, which is always observed in Śrī Rūpa-Sanātana Gauḍīya Maṭha, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja personally came to our *maṭha* to invite us to the festival. The car he travelled in passed the gate of our temple and headed toward Śrī Madana-mohana Mandira. I was sitting on the veranda of our temple. The car turned around and again drove past our gate. I came down from the veranda to the gate and asked Śrīla Mahārāja, "What place are you looking for?"

"We are only coming to you," he answered. I was humbled by this, and folding my hands, told him, "Although I am most insignificant, you have personally come to invite me." He then got out of the car and embraced me, with tears of affection in his eyes. "You are the servant of Śrīla Bhakti Hṛdaya Vana Mahārāja," he said. "From the beginning of your service to him, I have noted you. The *niṣkaṣaṭa-sevaka* (non-duplicitous servant) of *śrī guru* is qualified to be

respected as *guru*. At present, you are situated in his place as his representative, and so you are dear to me."

"Oh, Mahārājaji!" I said, "This is due to your pure mood."

He responded, "You must certainly come to our festival and speak on a topic we have selected."

One who Truly Respects the Wealth of Bhakti

One topic of great wonder is that due to our deep attachment to enjoyment, we do not give attention to narrations of Bhagavān as sung by the *sādhvas*, devotees of God. Rather, our attention is ever focused on external sense objects and affairs. Great personalities renounce the external sense objects of this world, and being attached to *bhakti* to Bhagavān, they engage in service to Him, giving all respect to the wealth of devotion. We, on the other hand, give utmost respect to the very sense objects they reject. This is our misfortune.

Śrīla Mahārājaji, who is wealthy with the transcendental treasure of *prema* for Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, always gave us this instruction, "Our only business is to perform *bhagavad-bhakti*. Sense objects of the external world are equal to poison. *Bhagavad-bhakti* is *amṛta*, the nectar of immortality." We are fortunate and blessed to have received the association of such a *mahāpuruṣa*. May he bless us from the *nitya-dhāma* that our sole goal will become *bhagavad-bhakti*. This is my prayer at his lotus feet. 🌸

Śrīmad Gopānanda Vana Mahārāja is a disciple of *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Hṛdaya Vana Mahārāja and present *ācārya* and governor of the *maṭha* established by his *gurudeva*.



PŪJYAPĀDA MAHĀRĀJĀJĪ

the Giver of Great Bliss to Our Guru-varga

by Śrīmad Bhakti Cakora Śrautī Mahārāja

He who Increases the Bliss of his Servants

How selfless and detached a Vaiṣṇava was *pūjyapāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja! Just by my thinking of this my eyes fill with tears. Now eight to nine [at the time of writing] months have passed since he entered the eternal pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda, but memories of him are fresh in my mind. His affection for me began not just two years or four, but more than fifty years ago, ever since my *paramārādhyā gurudeva*, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrīla Bhakti Sāraṅga Gosvāmī Mahārāja established the Śrī Indraprastha Gauḍīya Maṭha in Delhi. *Pūjyapāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja had been invited to attend the festival and participated actively in those celebrations. Śrīpāda Śeṣaśāyī Brahmācārī and other Vaiṣṇavas also came with him.

At that time I had been residing in the temple for five years. By the mercy of Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga I had great enthusiasm for service. Many other senior Vaiṣṇavas from Śrī Dhāma Vṛndāvana also came to the festival. The responsibility for arranging *prasāda* for all these devotees was on me. Seeing my enthusiasm for service and my full involvement in it, *pūjyapāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja engaged the *brahmācārīs* who had come with him in helping me. Śeṣaśāyī

Prabhu and I were of the same age. On meeting a friend of my age, my enthusiasm for service increased. In this way, the four day festival passed in great happiness.

The Giver of Great Happiness to Our Guru-varga

On that occasion, upon hearing the speech of *pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja in the religious assembly, my *gurupāda-padma* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Sāraṅga Gosvāmī Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja and Śrīmad Bhakti Saurabha Bhaktisar Mahārāja were extremely pleased.





Although *pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja's native language was Hindi, he also spoke in Bengali and English. It was on that day that I developed a natural mood of devotion to him. Later whenever I met with him, he instructed me on the performance of *bhajana*.

Expert at Both Preaching and Practising

Just as *pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja was a very qualified preacher, he was also a *bhajanānandī*. Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī said to *nāmācārya* Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya-līlā* 4.103), “*ācāra*’, ‘*pracāra*’—*nāmera karaba ‘dui’ kārya, tumi—sarva-guru, tumi—jagatera ārya* – You are practising *nāma-bhajana* and also preaching about *nāma*. Thus, as the greatest devotee, you are the *guru* of all.”

Adorned with the Pure Conduct of a Vaiṣṇava

In the same way that *pūjyapāda nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī, the *gurudeva* of Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, had a loving relationship with my *gurudeva*, similarly, *pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja showed much affection for me. A temple was constructed in Nandagrāma by the name ‘Śrī Gosvāmī Bhajana-kuṭīra’ (or Nanda-āśrama), in accordance

with the merciful instruction of Śrīmad Bhakti Suhṛda Akiñcana Mahārāja, who was the *ācārya* of the Śrī Gauḍīya-saṅga, at the time. When I invited *pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja to the festival he accepted immediately. On 6 April 1993, the day of Śrī Śrī Baladeva Prabhu's *rāsa-pūrṇimā*, *pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja personally paid to hire a bus and brought *mathavāsīs*, devotees and followers to Nandagrāma. In such a wonderful way he accomplished this inauguration festival. As he was about to leave, I offered him some *praṇāmī* (donation), but he flatly refused to accept it.

The Good Fortune of Serving Śrī Giridhārīju as Instructed by Pūjyapāda Mahārājaji

Even before the establishment of Śrī Gosvāmī Bhajana-kuṭīra in Nandagrāma, *pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja showed that he was very satisfied with me, as I was already staying in Nandagrāma. Once he stayed in one of the rooms of a person who owned the land where Śrī Giridhārī Gauḍīya Maṭha, Govardhana, is now established, and performed *bhajana* there. He appreciated that I had some taste to stay in Vraja-Nandagrāma and he would enthuse me to continue. On his instruction, I have spent many years serving Śrī Śrī Giridhārīju in Nanda-āśrama at Nandagrāma.



Being with Pūjyapāda Mahārājajī on the Banks of Pāvana-sarovara in Nandagrāma

When *pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārājajī would bring his Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā* party to Nandagrāma, he would first take *darśana* of Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī's *bhajana-kuṭīra* on the banks of Pāvana-sarovara. Then, without fail, he would come to Nanda-āśrama with his party and perform *kīrtana* of the *kathā* of Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga. In later times, due to his health, he could not go on *parikramā*, and on his order, the devotees in his shelter would come to Nanda-āśrama when on Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā* and perform *kathā-kīrtana*.

The Final Blessings of Pūjyapāda Mahārājajī

Last year, after hearing of *pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja's ill health, I went to Śrī Giridhārī Gauḍīya Maṭha. His servants told me that on the doctor's order, *pūjyapāda* Mahārāja was not allowed to speak. But still, they kindly informed him that Śrautī Mahārāja had come from Nandagrāma. I was observing this through the window. As soon as he heard my name, *pūjyapāda* Mahārājajī looked directly at me, his eyes wide open. It was as if he was giving me his final blessings. At the time of his disappearance I was ill and unable to

move my body, so I was unable to attend the festivals of separation held in his honour.

Manifesting the Service of Śrīman Mahāprabhu and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda

In India and abroad, Śrīla Mahārājajī preached the message of Śrīman Mahāprabhu with great enthusiasm, even in his advanced age. In just a few years he manifested Śrī Rūpa-Sanātana Gauḍīya Maṭha in Śrī Vṛndāvana, Śrī Giridhārī Gauḍīya Maṭha in Govardhana, Śrī Śrī Keśavjī Gauḍīya Maṭha in Navadvīpa, and many other preaching centres and temples in India and abroad. He also published many books, translating into Hindi and English the scriptures of the Śrī Gosvāmīs. In this way, he manifested the service of Śrīman Mahāprabhu and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda in this world, thus bestowing great spiritual benefit upon all souls.

A Prayer at the Lotus Feet of Pūjyapāda Mahārāja

“Aprākṛta vastu nabe prākṛta gocara – transcendental objects cannot be perceived by material senses.” “Vaiṣṇava cinīte nāre devera śakati – even the demigods cannot recognize the Vaiṣṇavas.” “Mui kemane ciniba adbhāma alpā mati – how can I, who am fallen, understand the Vaiṣṇavas with my small intelligence and thus explain their real glories?”

May he continue to attract me from the eternal abode. With this prayer, I am concluding my *puṣpāñjali*.

*vāñchā-kalpa-tarubhyaś ca kṛpā-sindhubhya eva ca
patitānām pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ* 🌸



Śrīmad Bhakti Cakora Śrautī Mahārāja is a disciple of *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Sāraṅga Gosvāmī Mahārāja. For many years he has been performing *bhajana* in Śrī Gosvāmī Bhajana-kuṭīra in Nandagrāma, near Pāvana-sarovara.

Viraha-



A Great Śrī Rūpānuga-ācārya

My *dīkṣā gurupāda-padma*, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa* *om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Vaibhava Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja, as well as my *śikṣā* and *sannyāsa-gurupāda-padma*, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Jīvana Janārdana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, had a very affectionate mood of friendship with *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Their loving dealings with each other were profound. Because of this, Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Vaibhava Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrīla Bhakti Jīvana Janārdana Gosvāmī Mahārāja also had an intimate relationship with Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārājajī.

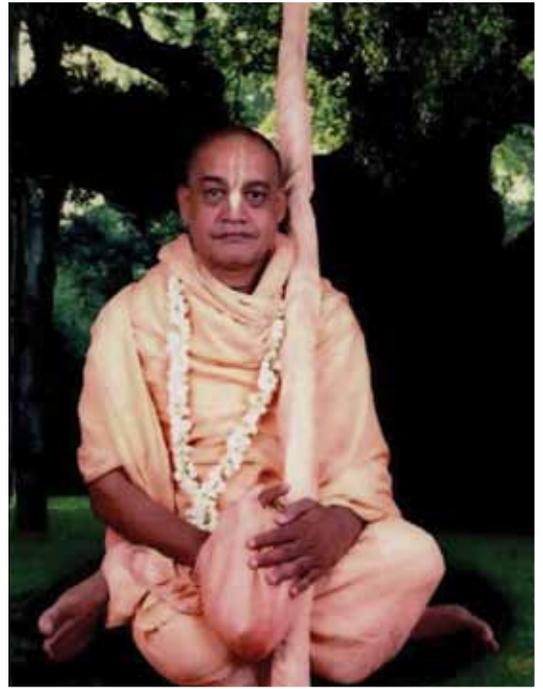
Nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja was a great *rūpānuga-ācārya*. His *guru-niṣṭhā* and *guru-sevā* are most noteworthy.

Assisting in Various Services

Whenever my *gurudeva*, Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Vaibhava Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja, would come to Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha in Mathurā, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārājajī would attend and serve him with great joy. Many times Śrīla Guru

Smarana

by Śrīmad Bhakti Kamala Govinda Mahārāja



Mahārāja took Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja with him to various places to preach and also to accomplish tasks such as *vigraha-pratiṣṭhā* (installing deities). In August 1979, Śrīla Mahārāja came to the place where Śrīman Mahāprabhu's met with Rāya Rāmānanda on the banks of the Godāvārī in Kubur, bringing Śrīman Śeṣaśāyī Prabhu, Śrīman Kānāi Prabhu, Śrīman Śubhānandna Prabhu, Śrīman Premānanda Prabhu and other *brahmacārīs* with him. There he assisted in the activities of *vigraha-pratiṣṭhā*, *yajña*, *hari-kathā*, *kīrtana* and other services.

A Preacher of the Pure Transcendental Message of Śrīla Prabhupāda

Many times I had the good fortune of the association of Śrīla Mahārāja in Rājamahendri, Āndra Pradeśa [a South Indian state]. At that time, Śrīla Mahārāja gave much *hari-kathā*, so filled with specialties that all present relished its *rasa* deeply. Śrīla Mahārāja's *kathā* had a potency that was so attractive. If someone heard *kathā* from his lotus mouth just once, his heart and mind became naturally attracted to him. When Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Vaibhava Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja, Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Jīvana Janārdana Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja discussed the glories of Śrīla Prabhupāda and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī among themselves, all three would weep. These great personalities were the actual preachers of the *suddhāvāṇī* of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

One who Awakens Knowledge of One's Transcendental Relationship

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja came for the festival of *vigraha-pratiṣṭhā* in the Gauḍīya Maṭha situated in Baharamapura, where he enthusiastically performed *vigraha-pratiṣṭhā*, *kīrtana*, lectures and other services. During this festival, a conference of Vaiṣṇavas worldwide was organized, and many Vaiṣṇavas from over the world came, as well as big-big *sādhus* and *sannyāsīs*. That was a memorable time for me, because Śrīla Mahārāja gave me his association and bestowed great mercy upon me. After the festival I went with him to Śrī Kṣetra, where I had the good opportunity to perform *parikramā* with him. I had *darśana* of many places and from him heard their glories.

After the departure of Śrīla Prabhupāda's associates, it was Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja who, by speaking *kathā* related to the confidential pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, would awaken divine *sambandha-jñāna* in the hearts of the listeners. Akin to my *dīkṣā-guru* and *śikṣā-guru*, I always saw Śrīla Mahārāja as my *guru*.

The Propagator of Kathā Related to the Moods of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī

Śrīla Mahārāja had very intimate dealings with Śrīla Bhakti Jīvana Janārdana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and he heard from him *rasa-kathā*, especially *kathā* related to the moods of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. He would listen with great zeal and



Śrīmad Bhakti Jīvana Janārdana Gosvāmī Mahārāja

retain what he heard in his heart, with great care. Śrīla Janārdana Gosvāmī Mahārāja did not go away preaching much, but Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja shared those moods received from him, with the entire world.

Whenever Śrīla Mahārāja went to Khaḍgapura [the residence of Śrīmad Bhakti Jīvana Janārdana Gosvāmī Mahārāja] he would hear this *kathā* from him. And when Śrīmad Bhakti Jīvana Janārdana Gosvāmī Mahārāja would come to Mathurā, both *mahārājas* would lovingly perform Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā* together, and express the moods of their hearts to each other. The relationship of Śrīla Guru Mahārāja and Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja cannot be expressed with words, because the language of love is silent.

The Bestower of Sad-śikṣā

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja had an intimate connection with our Śrī Caitanya Mission. Whenever any *brahmacārī* in our Mission became dissatisfied for any reason and went to Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha, Śrīla Mahārāja would give him *sad-śikṣā* (proper and beneficial instructions) and send him back.

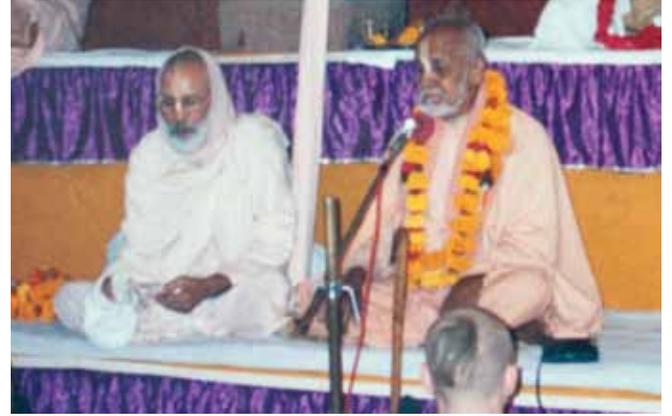
Affectionate Upon the Destitute

Whenever I met Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, he would assure me, “Be patient. Śrīla Janārdana Mahārāja has bestowed profuse mercy upon you.” Many times, Śrīla Mahārāja came to Khaḍgapura for *darśana* of Śrīmad Janārdana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, so sometimes I had the good fortune

of seeing him. After Śrīmad Janārdana Gosvāmī Mahārāja’s disappearance, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja would come to take *darśana* of his *samādhi*.

The Potency of the Prayer of Vaiṣṇava Ṭhākura

I remember the day my *gurupāda-padma* Śrīmad Bhakti Vaibhava Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja, was performing his pastime of illness. Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja went to him and said, “There is much work left for you. Please do not act out this pastime.” Some time later, Śrīla Guru



Śrīmad Bhakti Vaibhava Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja speaking

Mahārāja again became healthy and began to perform astonishing preaching activities in the Eastern and Western countries. I had never before seen him preach like this.

Endowed with A Glance Full of affection

The activities Śrīla Mahārāja performed for the auspiciousness of the world through the medium of *bṛhad-mṛdaṅga* will be the source of inspiration for many generations to come. I have greatly benefited from his association. He always spoke on topics about Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa to his listeners, and he looked upon all devotees in his shelter with an affectionate glance.

The enthusiastic speech of Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja has greatly inspired us all. It is our incalculable misfortune that this crest jewel of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas is no longer visible to our eyes. Although we cannot have his direct audience, his *vāṇī* will continue to stir in our hearts for ages to come, inspiring us to progress in the realm of *bhajana*.

Finally, with deep emotion and tears in my eyes, I bathe the lotus feet of Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja with this prayer, “Please bestow upon me causeless devotion for you and the for the divine lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. May I sink in the ocean of that nectar with which you have drowned the entire world.” 🙏

Śrīmad Bhakti Kamala Govinda Mahārāja is the present *ācārya* of Śrī Caitanya Mission, as well as the *ācārya* of the Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Gauḍīya Maṭha in Kaḍgapura.

Madhura-rasa in a Special and Most Superior Manner



by Śrīmad Bhakti Vaibhava Sāgara Mahārāja

[Excerpts from his lecture given in the Viraha-sabhā (assembly of separation)
1 Januaray 2011, Śrī Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha, Navadvīpa]

Maṅgalācaraṇa

I offer my obeisances at the lotus feet of my supremely merciful master, *nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa om aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Vilāsa Tirtha Gosvāmī Mahārāja*, and to my *parama-gurudeva, nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda*, and pray for their mercy. I then offer my obeisances at the feet of my *śikṣā-guru, Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja*. Out of his mercy, may he be pleased with me. To all others present, please accept my obeisances.

Leaving Martya-lilā and Appearing in Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa

Today a *viraha-sabhā* has been organized in honour of the disappearance of Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Four days earlier, on *śukla-navamī* (the ninth

day of waxing moon), Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja left *martya-lilā* and joined his *gurudeva, nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja*, who is more dear to him than millions of his own lives, and also his *parama-gurudeva, nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda – Nayanamañī Mañjarī* – to assist them in the loving service of Śrī Vṛṣabhānu-nandini at Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa. For Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, the position of *mañjarī* indeed is the most desirable and exalted post.

Immersed in Loving Service to Śrī Vṛṣabhanunandini

If we deliberate on the speciality of the current of the *rūpānugā* conception, we will see that on Vṛṣabhānu-nandini's order, *pūjyapāda* Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa



Gosvāmī Mahārāja came from a certain place to perform auspicious activities for the benefit of the world – to preach the *kathā* of Bhagavān everywhere. Having done so, he is now again joining his *gurudeva* to be fully immersed in the loving service of Śrī Vṛṣabhānu-nandinī, in that very place whence he came – Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa.

He who Accepted the Inner Conceptions of Śrīla Prabhupāda in a Very Exalted Manner

In his service, in his performance of *bhajana*, and in his *hari-kathā*, Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja emphasized the amorous mellow (*madhura-rasa*) more than any other topic. In his life, he had a speciality of accepting this alone as the most exalted subject. *Jagad-guru nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, two days before leaving his pastimes in this mortal world, said, “*pratyaśāṃ me tvam kuru govardhana pūrṇam* – O Govardhana, please fulfil my expectation” (*Śrī Govardhanāṣṭaka* by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī). What expectation? “*Nija-nikata-nivāsam dehi*

govardhana tvam – O Govardhana, please give me residence near you” (*Śrī Govardhanavāsa-prārthanā Daśakam* by Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī). Here, residence at Govardhana means residence on the bank of Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa. In the lives of the Gauḍīyas, only Rādhā-kuṇḍa is the exclusive refuge.

Actual Meeting and Separation

Today we are observing a *viraha-utsava*. The word *vipralambha* means to attain internally, but *sambhoga* means to attain externally. Actual *sambhoga*, however, is the intense heartily endeavour, to establish in our heart the one we serve externally. But actual *vipralambha* is the endeavour to externally manifest and serve the one we have seated internally in our heart.

How to Experience Separation?

How can we experience separation from *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas? It can be experienced to the extent that one has dedicated oneself in the service of *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas, forsaking

material conceptions and completely surrendering at their lotus feet.

Final Aim

Our Vaiṣṇava scriptures are scriptures of separation only. In *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, we can see this, according to the teachings given to us by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. The essence of His teachings is in His final pastimes, within the separation He tasted in Gambhirā in utmost seclusion. This alone is our path and this alone is our final aim. To reach that goal, the same type of acute separation from *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas should first arise in our heart; otherwise, it is impossible to reach that goal.

A Hint of Separation in the Prayer of Vṛtrāsura

When a war ensued between Indra and Vṛtrāsura, Vṛtrāsura spoke to Indra with a sincere and simple heart, even on the battlefield. “Indra, in today’s battle, you will win and I will die. Do you know what am I thinking? I think that Bhagavān will bestow mercy (*kṛpā*) on you, but not compassion (*karuṇā*).”

Indra asked, “If He bestows *kṛpā* upon me, then on whom will He bestow His *karuṇā*?”

“*Karuṇā* will only be bestowed upon those who possess nothing,” Vṛtrāsura replied. “It will be bestowed upon those who have no expectation of this world or support from it, and who do not even desire anything in this world, only Bhagavān. O Indra, you will not receive the *karuṇā* of Bhagavān, so desist from battle for a moment. I will call my Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa with prayers just once.” Then, on the battlefield itself, Vṛtrāsura called his Lord with a sincere heart:

*aham hare tava pādaika-mūla-
dāsānudāso bhavitāsmi bhūyaḥ
manaḥ smaretāsu-pater guṇāṁs te
grṇīta vāk karma karotu kāyaḥ*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (6.11.24)

O my Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, will I again be able to be a servant of Your eternal servants, who only find shelter at Your lotus feet? O Lord of my life, may I again become their servant so that my mind always thinks of Your transcendental attributes, my words always glorify those attributes, and my body always engages in the loving service of Your Lordship.

Hearing the sincere call of Vṛtrāsura, Bhagavān personally appeared on the battlefield and said, “*Varam brūhī...* – ask for a boon. Whatever boon you want, ask for that.” The demigods were wondering what would happen if this Vṛtrāsura asks for

the high post of Brahmā rather than the lower post of Indra. Bhagavān had said that He would provide whatever boon he wants. But devotees never want anything:

*na nāka-prṣṭham na ca pārameṣṭhyam
na sārva-bhaumaṁ na rasādhipatyam
na yoga-siddhīr apunar-bhavaṁ vā
samañjasa tvā virabhyā kāṅkṣe*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (6.11.25)

The meaning is, “O my Lord, I do not desire the position of Indra, Brahmā or sovereignty over the lower planets, nor do I desire perfection in *yoga* or liberation. I only desire that when in separation from You I will weep sincerely, being exclusively surrendered to You at that time. Considering my welfare and auspiciousness, You will not be able to resist giving me Your audience.”

When the separation from *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas arises as a result of such surrender, only then is it possible to have their audience again.

His Nectarean Instruction to Me

Today is the *viraba-sabbā* of an exalted *śikṣā-guru*. I first had his *darśana* around 1980–81 in Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha, Mathurā. At that time, he had said, “Taruṇa Prabhu, if you want to be happy in life, if you want to make your stay in the *maṭha* successful, then you should perform *harināma* profusely. We have come to the *maṭha* only for *hari-bhajana*; therefore, we should have no other aim than to do that.

“You should know that one who desires anything from this world cannot attain Kṛṣṇa, and one who wants to attain Kṛṣṇa cannot desire anything from this world.” With this mood he used to make us perform *bhajana* and inspire us with much enthusiasm to study the scriptures. When he would see me when he came to Māyāpura at the time of *parikramā*, he used to say, “How are you? Are you studying or not?” He used to bestow so much affection upon those engaged in transcendental studies.

Today, I will not say anything more, except that his associates should maintain the beautifully decorated garden prepared by him.* This alone will be the special testimony of faith in and devotion to the lotus feet of Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. I will not try to say anything more than my level of understanding.

*vāñchā-kalpa-tarubhyaś ca kṛpā-sindhubhya eva ca
patitānām pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ* 

Śrīmad Bhakti Vaibhava Sāgara Mahārāja is currently the caretaker of Śrī Rudradvīpa Gauḍīya Maṭha, Rudradvīpa.

* The wonderful mission he established in this world.

PŪJYAPĀDA ŚRĪLA NĀRĀYAṆA MAHĀRĀJA,

A Most Munificent and

In this world, only those who induce others to drink the mellow of śrī kṛṣṇa-kathā are the greatest donors. In the association of Vaiṣṇavas, when the ignorance of millions of lifetimes is dispelled, the real constitutional nature of the soul manifests. At that time, all the *anarthas*, or wicked and sinful activities, are

removed. As *anarthas* are eradicated, a person's suffering, pain, unhappiness, bad conditions and bondage also end. The insignificant *jīva* then becomes a great soul and his life becomes saturated with devotion to Lord Hari. What to speak of the world, Lord Jagannātha Himself becomes controlled by such a person.



Ideal Sainly Personality

by Śrīpāda Bhakti Prasāda Viṣṇu Mahārāja

Crowned with the Designation of Most Munificent

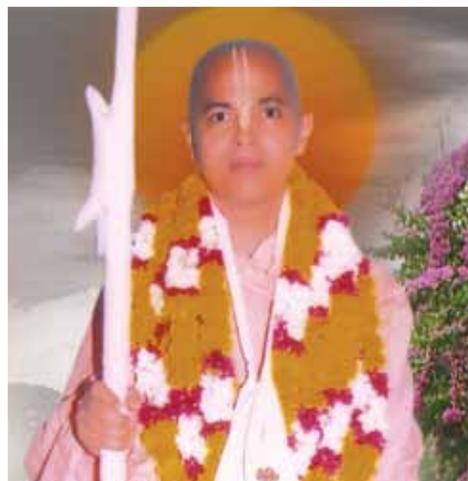
Other than a Vaiṣṇava *ācārya*, who can bestow supreme auspiciousness upon the insignificant, fallen, unhappy and ignorant conditioned soul? Worldly parents, relatives and friends can only chain us in bondage to the material world, give us suffering, completely destroy us, teach us faulty conduct and instruct us to intake wrong eatables. They cannot impart the path to real happiness. That path can only be revealed by saints via their potent *hari-kathā*. Consequently, in this world only those who make us drink *kṛṣṇa-kathā* are our greatest friends.

Among such great friends of the conditioned souls, supremely worshipful Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja was a uniquely great and munificent *ācārya*. By showering upon the whole world the current of pure *bhakti* as practised and preached by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, he is duly crowned as the most munificent, as uttered by the *gopīs*: “*bhūvi grṇanti te bhuridā janāḥ – O Kṛṣṇa, one in this world who performs kīrtana of your līlā-kathā is the most munificent*” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.31.9). The preaching of Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja has bestowed upon present-day devotees who follow the conceptions of the Gauḍīya *rūpānugā* line a new jubilation, a new enthusiasm and such a strong faith that they will never under any circumstances take to a path other than the path preached and practiced by him.

Relationship of Śrīla Mahārāja with My Gurudeva

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja would come with many *brahmacārīs* from his *maṭha* to our Vṛndāvana *maṭha* to honour my *gurudeva*, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, on his appearance day, when he was present in this world. Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja used to offer *puṣpāñjali* to him, like he would to his own *gurudeva*. He would first offer a garland to Śrīla Gurudeva, placing it around his neck, offer him *saṣṭāṅga-praṇāma* and touch his lotus feet.

Before Śrī Rūpa-Sanātana Gauḍīya Maṭha was established in Vṛndāvana, for many years Śrīla Nārāyaṇa



Mahārāja used to perform the Vṛndāvana section of his Vraja-maṇḍala *parīkramā* while residing at our Śrī Caitanya Gauḍīya Maṭha, Vṛndāvana. At that time, I had the fortune of hearing his *hari-kathā*, which was sweet and simple but filled with the highest conceptions. One could learn something from his every word and every action. In those days, I also had the opportunity to serve him. Once, when Śrīla Mahārāja was staying in our Vṛndāvana *maṭha* with his *parīkramā* party, a devotee asked him, “Mahārājajī, why don’t you construct your own *maṭha* in Vṛndāvana?” He responded, “Oh, but this is our *maṭha*! I never thought to make any other, separate *maṭha* in Vṛndāvana.” In this way, he always brimmed with this broad-mindedness and true line of conceptions.

Presenter of Bṛhad-mṛdaṅga and Jīvanta-mṛdaṅga

It was with perfection that Śrīla Mahārāja furthered the *brhad-mṛdaṅga* work of Śrīla Prabhupāda by translating into the national language of Hindi, scriptures like *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Śrī Gīta-govinda* with commentaries of Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*, as well as the books of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, Śrīla

Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda, giving them very attractive covers. By this great work, he has performed monumental service to the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*.



While residing in Mathurā, Śrīla Mahārāja took great care to give in detail the teachings of *Jaiva-dharma*, *Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta*, *Upadeśāmṛta*, *Manab-śikṣā* and many other scriptures, from beginning to end, to the many fortunate residents of the *maṭha*. He would make them memorize *sloka*s and *kīrtana*s and also impart many teachings, simply by his own behaviour in day-to-day life. In this way, Śrīla Mahārāja prepared many *jīvanta-mṛdaṅgas*, or living *mṛdaṅgas* (preachers), to serve the *vāṇī* of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. These living *mṛdaṅgas* will continue to serve the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu by performing *kīrtana* (*hari-kathā*) as they heard it from Śrīla Mahārāja.

He Boldly Presented the Truth

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja was most influential throughout all of Vraja. The Vraja scholars, the *paṇḍas*, the wealthy and the poor – all were captivated by his sweet behaviour. Due to the influence of Śrīla Mahārāja, the line of Śrīla Prabhupāda continues to dominate proudly throughout Vraja. He has saved many ignorant people from the clutches of *bābājīs* and has established his influence by defeating the *bābājīs* in every way, be it in terms of the power and glory of the *sampradāya*, scriptural erudition, knowledge or numbers of followers.

When he would come to the bank of Rādhā-kuṇḍa he would speak *hari-kathā* in line with the conceptions of Śrīla Prabhupāda. At that time, no *sabājīyā* had the courage to come before him. Unable to refute him, all listened from a distant place, remaining hidden. On the other hand, those who were simple-hearted would become enchanted by his bold and truthful *hari-kathā*. Actually, Śrīla Mahārāja had a very special quality: he was highly expert in speaking according to place, time and audience. By his conduct and

conceptions, he defeated both the external opponents of the Gauḍīya Maṭha and the internal opponents.

His Instruction for this Worthless Person

Śrīla Mahārāja had a very deep relationship with my senior Godbrother Śrīla Bhakti Vijñāna Bhāratī Mahārāja and they used to discuss various subjects. Once, I went with Śrīla Bhāratī Mahārāja to Śrī Rūpa-Sanātana Gauḍīya Maṭha for Śrīla Mahārāja's *darśana*. At that time he told me, “Rāma Prabhu (my *brahmacārī* name), chant one *lākha* of *harināma* [one hundred thousand holy names] daily. By doing so you will never fall into any difficulties in life.” This instruction is still etched in my memory and I try my best to follow it.

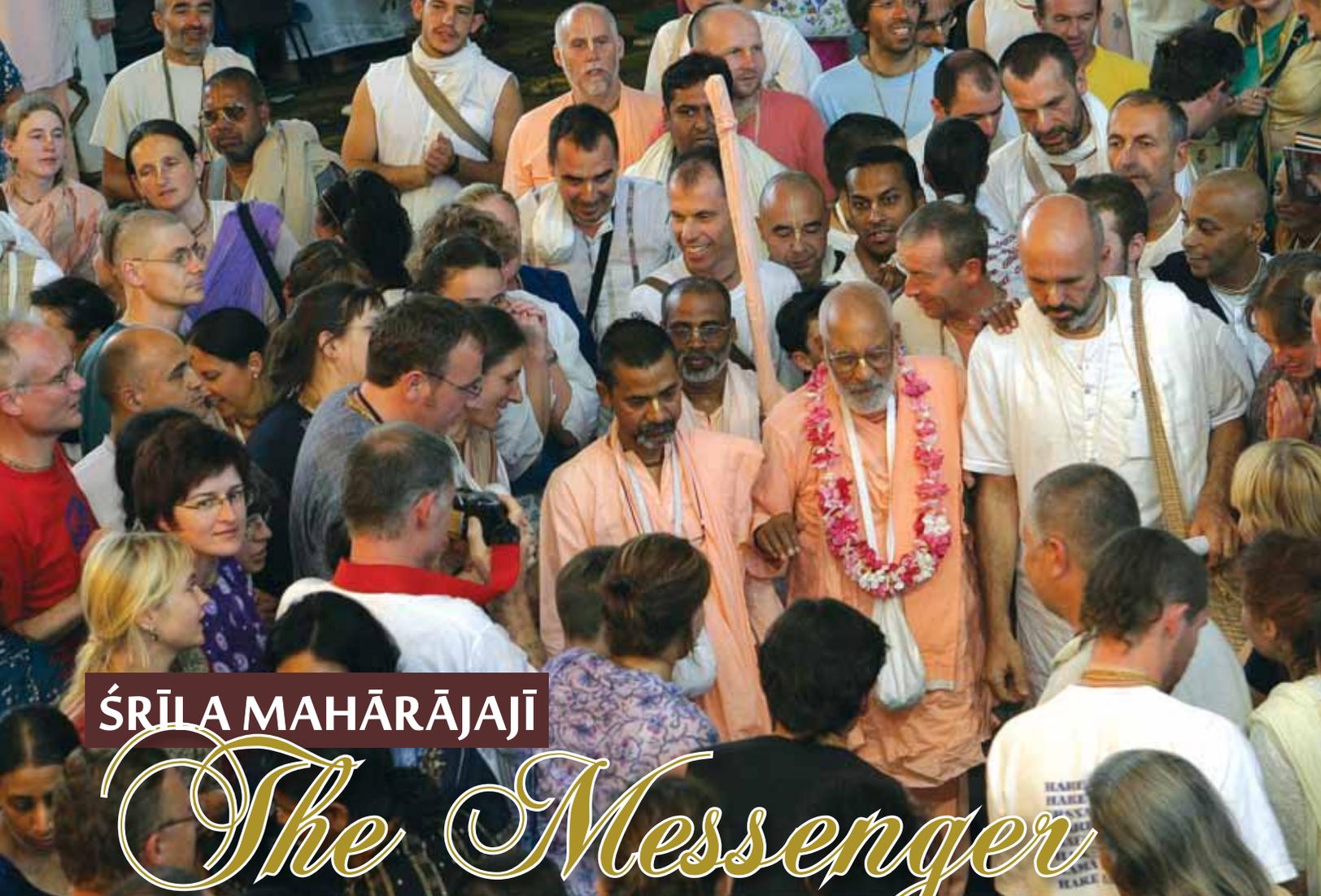
The Absence of an Ideal, Most Magnanimous, Steadfast Sainthood Personality

Śrīla Mahārāja was most munificent. It was his auspicious desire that for the purpose of serving Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the people of all the Gauḍīya Maṭha forget their petty self-interest and come together to preach *bbakti-dharma*, in the form of the *harināma-saṅkīrtana*. He often expressed his desire that all the Gauḍīya Maṭhas should have a single *pañjikā* (calendar). Now, one by one such ideal, steadfast, great saints who are adept in *bhajana* have disappeared. Without their manifest presence, who knows how we shall be able to advance in the realm of *bbakti*. This is the matter of the highest concern. Despite the presence of scriptures, it is very difficult to advance on the path of *bbakti* in the absence of Vaiṣṇavas who are ideal in their practice of *bbakti*. Often, due to the absence of such saints, there is a decline in adherence to scriptural standards of behaviour.

I pray at the lotus feet of Śrīla Mahārāja, which grant fearlessness, that he bestow such mercy upon us from the eternal abode so that we may never deviate from the path shown by our *śrī rūpānugā-sārasavata guru-paramparā*.

According to the words of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, “*haridāsa āchila pṛthivīra śiromaṇi, tāhā vinā ratna-sūnyā baila medinī* – Haridāsa Ṭhākura was the crown jewel of this world; without him, this world has now become bereft of its valuable jewel” (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya-līlā 11.97*). Now, with the disappearance of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, this world is now bereft of its valuable jewel. 🙏

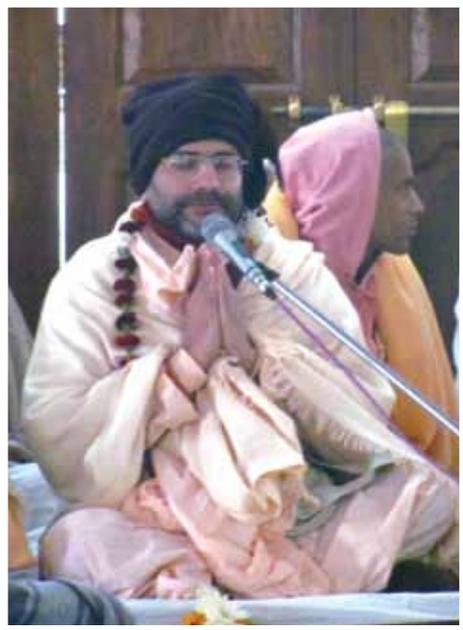
Śrīpāda Bhakti Prasāda Viṣṇu Mahārāja is a *dikṣā* disciple of *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Gosvāmī Mahārāja* and a *sannyāsa* disciple of *om viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Kumuda Santa Gosvāmī Mahārāja*. He preaches the message of Caitanya Mahāprabhu all over India, especially in Himachal Pradeśa.



ŚRĪLA MAHĀRĀJĀJĪ

The Messenger

OF ŚRĪMAN MAHĀPRABHU'S TEACHINGS TO THE WORLD



[Spoken by Śrīpāda Bhakti Vidagdha Bhāgavata Mahārāja in his *puṣpāñjali* at Śrī Giridhārī Gauḍīya Maṭha, Govardhana, on the occasion of the separation festival of Śrīla Gurudeva on 9 January 2011]

Maṅgalācaraṇa

First of all, I prostrate myself at the lotus feet of my śrīla guru mahārāja, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārājājī, who bestows *sambandha-jñāna* and I plea to him for his causeless mercy and blessings. I offer prayers at the lotus feet of *jagad-guru* Śrīla Prabhupāda along with all his associates. And I pray for the causeless mercy and blessings of *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa pūjyapāda* Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārājājī, whose festival of separation we have gathered to honour today.

Śrīla Mahārāja – Well-established in Mānad-dharma (honouring others) and Always Giving Enthusiasm to Preach

Over the last several years, *pūjyapāda* Śrīla Mahārājaji would invite me to Śrī Rūpa-Sanātana Gauḍīya Maṭha for the conference held in honour of the separation day of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Although I have no qualification, he would affectionately seat me next to him, not letting me sit on a lower level. He always encouraged me to never stop preaching, to continue without fail. However, after the departure of our *guru-varga* [Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja and all of the other disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda Sarasvatī Thākura], who always guided us on the proper path, and also now, after the departure of my elder Godbrother *pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, I feel, at least in regard to myself, that my enthusiasm to preach has lessened somewhat. May our worshipful, respectable and honourable *pūjyapāda* Mahārāja forever remain in our thoughts. Now, whenever we go preaching, we will always feel the absence of such a great personality.

Protecting the Conception of Śrīla Prabhupāda's Paramparā

Now that Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārājaji has left, who will we go to if there is any opposition to *siddhānta*? I will briefly tell of an occurrence that took place some years before.

Some so-called Gauḍīyas used to always speak against the Gauḍīya Maṭha. *Pūjyapāda* Mahārājaji refuted their false claims by composing a book called *Prabandha-pañcakam*, in which he strongly and boldly presented the proper *siddhānta* with evidence from *śāstra*. In this way, he protected the pure line of thought of Śrīla Prabhupāda's *paramparā*. That book caused such great agitation in the minds of these so-called Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas that they could give no reply.

Like a Lion, Pūjyapāda Mahārājaji Cast Out Irrelevant Conceptions and Established Tattva-vastu, Absolute Truth

The original *rūpānuga-dhārā* comes directly from the line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, but many other conceptual streams put themselves forward as *rūpānuga-dhārā*. This is not just a current phenomena; it has been going on for a long time. *Pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārājaji would always expose these so-called *rūpānuga-dhārās*, and in so doing, would put them in their actual place. This is most important, to present the original conception of the preaching and practising of the line of thought of *rāgānuga-ācāryas* – Śrī Svarūpa-Rūpa-Sanātana Gosvāmīs – and on the other hand, to expose and uproot the improper conceptions and false doctrines being preached in the name of *rūpānuga-dhārā* by those who in fact oppose it. Both are extremely necessary – to cast out

the improper conception and establish the actual truth. In both of these tasks, *pūjyapāda* Mahārājaji was like a lion.

Mahārājaji's Relationship with my Śrī Guru Mahārāja

Many times my *guru mahārāja* sent me to Śrīla Mahārājaji, because he knew *pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārājaji ever since *pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārājaji joined the *maṭha*. *Pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārājaji would say, "I am the first servant of Śrīla Purī Mahārājaji." In 1945, my *guru mahārāja* took *sannyāsa* in Cāmpāhāṭī and then, as a *tridaṇḍī-sannyāsī*, he came to Śrī Uddhārāna Gauḍīya Maṭha, Chuñchurā. *Pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārājaji also came to that *maṭha* at the time, as a new devotee. It was then that his *gurudeva*, *nitya-līla-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārājaji, engaged him in the service of my *guru mahārāja*. Therefore, my *guru mahārāja* knew him from those days and always had great affection for him. Śrīla Guru Mahārāja would say that Śrīpāda Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja is a truly learned person and that he had known him for a long time. Many times *pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārājaji would come to my *guru mahārāja* to offer him his newly



released publications. Upon receiving it, Guru Mahārājaji would become extremely pleased. I know this, because I was a witness to that.

Once, there was a controversy among some Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas about the *svarūpa* of the *jīva*, about where the *jīva* has come from, and about how the *jīva* become bound in this *samsāra*. Some said that the *jīva* fell from Vaikuṅṭha or from the *rāsa-līlā* itself, and they asserted this using the words of their *gurudeva* as evidence. *Pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārājaji came to my *śrīla guru mahārājaji* and asked, "How is it possible for any *jīva* to fall from Vaikuṅṭha and become a conditioned soul?" Śrīla Guru Mahārājaji discussed this and many other topics with *pūjyapāda* Mahārājaji.

Pūjyapāda Mahārāja – Wealthy in Transcendental Literature

I noted that previously, long before Śrī Rūpa-Sanātana Gauḍīya Maṭha was built and there was only Śrī Keśavaji

Gauḍīya Maṭha, *pūjyapāda* Mahārājajī would always stay there. Whenever I went there for his *darśana*, I would curiously look at his transcendental literatures in the *almārīs* (bookcases) in his *bhajana-kuṭīra*. Since childhood I was very curious about the scriptures and eager to read them. At those times Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha was solely being maintained by the devotees there doing Dvādaśī *bhikṣā* twice a month. Many people had the conception that *pūjyapāda* Mahārājajī had little wealth and that his temple was very poor and that other Gauḍīya Maṭhas were quite wealthy. But whenever I saw the collection of scriptures in the ten *almārīs* surrounding him in his room, I would think, “Who says that *pūjyapāda* Mahārājajī lacks wealth? He is the most wealthy of all.”

When my *guru mahārājajī* gave me *dīkṣā*, he instructed me to ask donations of *granthās* from where ever possible; he never instructed me to beg for ordinary wealth. Therefore, upon seeing the extensive library of *pūjyapāda* Mahārājajī, I thought, “Śrīla Mahārājajī really possesses the greatest wealth.” That is because Śrī Kṛṣṇa has expanded Himself in the form of His transcendental message, in the form of holy scriptures.

The Opulence of the Crest Jewel of Rasikas – Pūjyapāda Mahārājajī is Approved by Śrīman Mahāprabhu

It is not that *pūjyapāda* Mahārājajī has become glorious just by establishing Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha, Śrī Rūpa-Sanātana Gauḍīya Maṭha, Śrī Giridhārī Gauḍīya Maṭha and Śrī Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha in Navadvīpa. He was glorious even before this. The grandeur of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārājajī is known all over the world, as he is the crest jewel of all *rasika-bhaktas*. His being so is due to the desire of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. He was a *rasika-bhakta* before he was renown as such. Despite having the opulence of these *maṭhas*, he is still to be seen as a *rasika-bhakta* because this opulence is approved by Śrīman Mahāprabhu. Śrīman Mahāprabhu’s desire was that the whole world should look to Mahārājajī and follow his path, by which all would finally reach Bhagavān. This was the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and *pūjyapāda* Mahārājajī was made the medium. Being selected by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu for this task is not the same as being nominated by some ordinary person or becoming famous as a result of advertising. Mahārājajī was nominated by Śrīman Mahāprabhu Himself.

Bhajanānandī and Goṣṭhānandī

Our *guru mahārājajī* would say that many people could perform *bhajana* and many could attain perfection in such *bhajana*, but only that person whom Śrīman Mahāprabhu nominated to be the messenger of His teachings is capable of giving Mahāprabhu’s message to the entire world, not

others. This is the difference between the *bhajanānandī* and *goṣṭhānandī*. It is not true that the *goṣṭhānandī* is not a *bhajanānandī*. He is also a *bhajanānandī*, because without being a *bhajanānandī* no one can be a *goṣṭhānandī*. However, whenever someone is selected by Śrīman Mahāprabhu and nominated as the messenger of His teachings, he alone is known as the real *goṣṭhānandī*.

Pūjyapāda Mahārājajī was both a *bhajanānandī* and a *goṣṭhānandī*. He was selected and nominated by Śrīman Mahāprabhu. First of all *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārājajī, then *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārājajī, and then our *guru mahārāja*, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārājajī, and after his disappearance, *pūjyapāda* Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārājajī was appointed by Śrīman Mahāprabhu to spread the preaching of His message (*gaura-vāṇī*). Bhagavān Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu will preach His message through whomever He chooses. We should submit ourselves to His wish. Whoever is following the path of Śrīman Mahāprabhu should certainly accept this truth: whoever Mahāprabhu chooses as the messenger of His teachings in this world should be accepted as His representative, without the slightest arrogance, and they should be praised.

My Purpose in Participating in this Festival of Separation

I personally experienced how Śrīla Mahārājajī was always blissful, so it only follows that he is in bliss now and will always remain in such *ānanda*. I have come to this *viraha-utsava* with the purpose of attaining some auspiciousness. After the disappearance of *nāmācārya* Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura, Śrīman Mahāprabhu gave a boon that whoever was present at the festival in which Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura’s transcendental form was placed in *samādhi*, whoever participated in the festival of separation from him, and whoever took *prasāda* from that festival would all attain *śrī kṛṣṇa-prema*. I have come to today’s festival with this greed. My purpose in attending was not to give a speech but to hear the glories of *pūjyapāda* Mahārājajī from his near and dear associates and the other devotees, and to obtain one drop of *prema*. Therefore, I am praying to Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārājajī and all assembled Vaiṣṇavas that they will all bless me that one day I will experience the *anarpita-carīm prema* bestowed by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

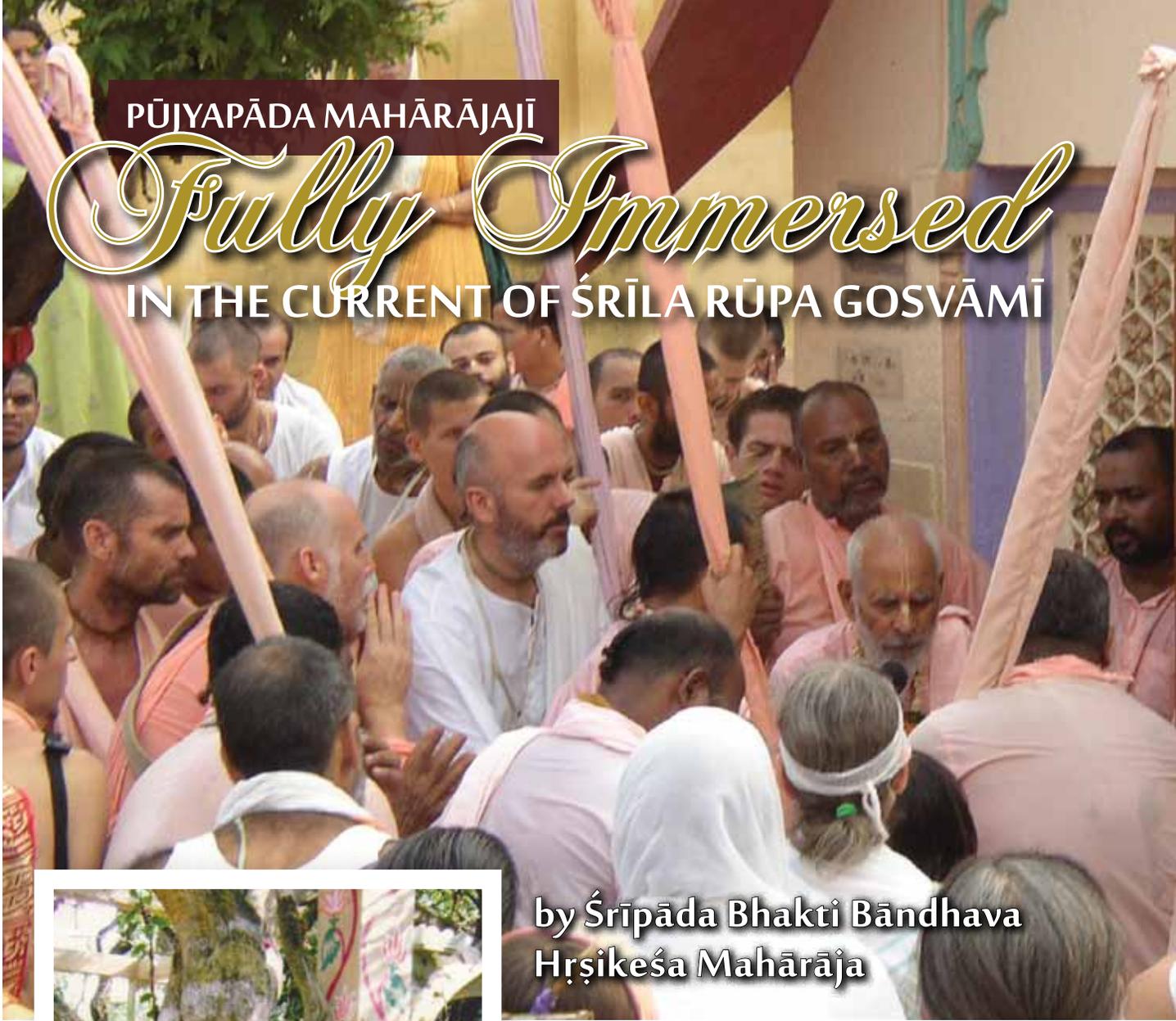
vāñchā-kalpa-tarubhyaś ca kṛpā-sindhubhya eva ca patitānām pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ 🙏

Śrīpāda Bhakti Vidagdha Bhāgavata Mahārāja is a disciple of *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārājajī, and resides in Nandagrāma on the banks of Pāvana-sarovara in the *bhajana-kuṭīra* of Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī.

PŪJYAPĀDA MAHĀRĀJĀJĪ

Fully Immersed

IN THE CURRENT OF ŚRĪLA RŪPA GOSVĀMĪ



by Śrīpāda Bhakti Bāndhava
Hṛṣikeśa Mahārāja

*vaiṣṇavera guṇagāna karile jīvera trāṇa
śuniyāchi sādhu-guru mukhe**

By glorifying the Vaiṣṇavas the living entities attain deliverance. This we have heard from the mouth of *sādhu-guru*.

I had heard from devotees in Mathurā about the special *viraha* issues of *Śrī Śrī Bhāgavat Patrikā* magazine, which were in memory of and dedicated to my *śikṣā-gurudeva*, *śrī-rūpa-priyātmā* Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who continually bathes in the current of the *rūpānugā* conceptions. I was deeply pleased to see these issues. When some devotees from Mathurā *maṭha* visited Ṭer-kadamba and heard from me of his attachment to this place, they asked me to contribute by offering a *puṣpāñjali* at his lotus feet, so on their request I am doing

* From the *kīrtana Jaya re jaya re jaya paramahaṁsa mahāśaya*.



so. Although Śrīla Mahārājāji's glorious qualities are unlimited, I will express a few of those jewel-like qualities, feeling most fortunate to be able to do so.

A Lion's Cub

About four or five years ago, by the mercy of Śrī Vana Vihārī Bābājī Mahārāja, the *viśrambha-sevaka* of my *parama-gurudeva*, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇu-pāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Sāraṅga Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who established the Śrī Gauḍīya Saṅga, I had the fortune of performing *parikramā* of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, after not having done so for approximately forty years. I participated in Navadvīpa *parikramā* performed from the newly established Śrī Śrī Keśavājī Gauḍīya Maṭha in Kolerdaṅga. During *parikramā* time I would sit in the evening classes and heard the profound moods and completely fearless *hari-kathā* full of scriptural *siddhānta* spoken by *pūjyapāda* Mahārājāji. At that time it struck me that he was really the child of a lion. By

this I mean the child of Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, he who has the valour of a lion and who is adorned by my *parama-gurudeva* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Sāraṅga Gosvāmī Mahārāja with the title “*pāṣāṇḍa gajaika śimha* – the lion that destroys the elephant of heresy”.

An Actual Ācārya

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja resided almost his whole life in Śrī Keśavājī Gauḍīya Maṭha in Mathurā, and from there he preached and practised pure *prema-bhakti* as followed and taught by Śrīman Mahāprabhu. He also printed books related to pure *bhagavat-bhakti*, along with a refutation, a book called *Prabandha-pañcakam*. In this way he set the example of an ideal *ācārya*.

He who Grants the Qualification for Nikuñja-sevā

Śrīla Mahārājāji established preaching centres and temples in many places throughout the world with the purpose of preaching the *śrī-rūpānuga-vicāra-dhārā* (line of thought of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī) of the Śrī Brahma-Madhva-Gauḍīya *sampradāya*. By establishing Śrī Rūpa-Sanātana Gauḍīya Maṭha in Sevā-kuñja, Śrī Dhāma Vṛndāvana, Śrīla Mahārājāji bestowed qualification for *nikuñja-sevā* upon those who had taken his shelter.

A Real Godbrother

On the order of my *śrī gurupāda-padma*, *aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Suhr̥d Akiñcana Gosvāmī Mahārājāji, who requested the re-construction of *siddha-piṭha* Imlitalā, I, along with my Godbrother Śrīman Tamāla-kṛṣṇa Brahmācārī, went to Śrīla Mahārāja in Mathurā for his advice and with a request for his help in this endeavour. Immediately upon our introduction, Śrīla Mahārāja began to speak about the affectionate relationship between my *parama-gurudeva*, Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Sāraṅga Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and his *gurupāda-padma*, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Later, through the local Mathurā-vāsīs under his shelter, he arranged a good solution to our problem, thus showing the ideal of a real Godbrother.

Always Prepared to Serve

Approximately eleven years ago, I received the good fortune to serve in Ṭer-kadamba, in the forest of *kadamba* trees at the place of *bhājana* of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Some time after that, during Śrī Vraja-maṅḍala *parikramā* 2001, on the day of Śrī Gopāṣṭamī, Śrīla Mahārājāji made an auspicious visit to Ṭer-kadamba. He spoke with jubilation and great love on the glories of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī's residence in Vraja, on Kṛṣṇa's pastime of cow grazing (*go-carana*), and on the pastime of Śrīmatī Rādhājī cooking *kbīra*



to fulfil the desire of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Every year he would come to Ṭer-kadamba and, absorbed in *bhāva*, he would speak of the glories of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

When he heard that I, a destitute servant, had received service in that pastime place, he was greatly pleased and spoke his thoughts: “After so many days, we Sārasvata-Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas (Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas in the line of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda) have obtained service at the place of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī. This service is only for the Sārasvata Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas. By your serving here, you are performing true *guru-sevā*. Perform this service without any fear, and if you ever experience any kind of inconvenience, then tell me without any hesitation.” He told the same thing to *parampūjya* Bhakti Cakora Śrauti Mahārājajī.

Almost every year Śrīla Mahārāja would come to Ṭer-kadamba and I always gave him the *kbīra prasāda* that is offered there every day. If ever any of the servants of Śrīla Mahārājajī requested him not to take the *kbīra* due to health concerns, he would lovingly tell them, “This *kbīra* has been prepared by Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī Herself. This is Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī’s *mahā-prasāda*, so no harm can come from taking it.”

The various types of services that Śrīla Mahārāja rendered to renovate the pastime place of Śrī Ṭer-kadamba are fresh



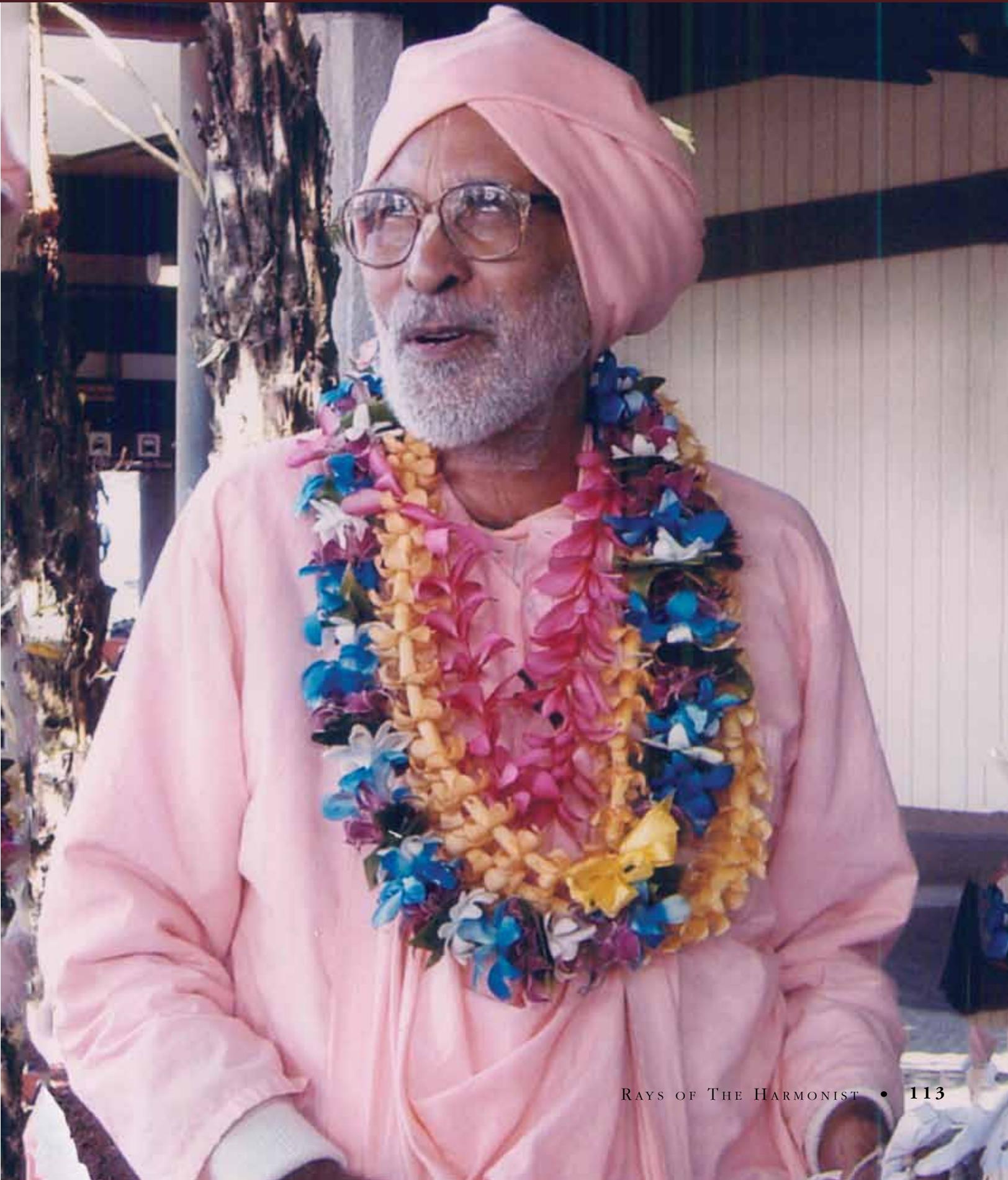
in my memory of him, even today. Among the many pastime places in Vraja-maṇḍala, this Ṭer-kadamba was specifically dear to him. This is evident in his *hari-kathā* and his *śrī rūpa-anugatya*. Śrīla Mahārājajī personally planted a *kadamba* tree here, sight of which kindles our remembrance of him.

His Transcendental Service to Vraja

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja is the transcendental embodiment of service to the servants of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, who have *niṣṭhā* in Vraja and in service to Vraja. Pastime places such as Uddhava-kyārī, Bhāṇḍīravāṭa, Durvāsā-ṭilā and other places, awaken memory of his service in this way. For this reason the family of Śrī Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa, the residents of Ūccāgaon, adorned him with the title Yuga-ācārya, thus illuminating the glories of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas. 🙏

Śrīpāda Bhakti Bāndhava Hṛṣikeśa Mahārāja is a disciple of *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Suhrḍa Akiñcana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, a prominent disciple of *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Sāraṅga Gosvāmī Mahārāja. He serves at Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī’s *bbajana-kuṭīra* at Ṭer-kadamba, Nandagrāma.

Homages from Godbrothers



A Pūspāñjali Full of

Maṅgalācaraṇa

Firstly, I offer my innumerable prostrated obeisances at the lotus feet of my supremely worshipful *gurudeva*, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja*, and pray for his mercy. I also offer my obeisances at the feet of my *śikṣā-gurus*, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja* and *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja*, and pray for their causeless mercy. I offer my obeisances at the feet of all Vaiṣṇavas and also pray for their mercy.

Unqualified to Glorify a Transcendental Personality

Supremely worshipful Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja is a transcendental personality. I have no knowledge or intelligence to properly speak anything in relation to his transcendental character. Still, because of the hope that one who glorifies *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas is delivered, I will try to say something.

The Personification of the *Ṭṛṇādapi* Verse and a Real *Lākhapati** in the line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja had strong *niṣṭhā* in his *gurudeva* and an intense interest in *harināma*. He used to wake up at three every morning to perform *harināma*. He was a real *lākhapati* devotee (one who chants one hundred thousand holy names daily) in the line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Although he remained engaged in performing all types of temple service, publication work and preaching, he chanted one *lākha harināma* daily. He was the personification of the *ṭṛṇādapi sunicena* verse spoken by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

* One who possesses great wealth, in this case, the great wealth of the holy name, that is, they chant one *lākha* (one hundred thousand names, or sixty-four rounds) every day.



Once, Śrīla Mahārāja took us to a house for a preaching program. The residents of the house were new and did not know etiquette so they did not show him proper respect. We noted this and were just about to correct them, when Śrīla Mahārājaji told us, “Do you know that there is an

Gratefulness

by Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Maṅgala Mahārāja



adage in Vaiṣṇava society that goes like this, ‘*vaiṣṇava haite mane chila baḍa sādha, ṭṛṇādapi śloketi paḍe gelo bādha* – I had a great aspiration to become a Vaiṣṇava, but then, when I came across the verse *ṭṛṇād api sunicena, taror api sabiṣṇunā*, which describes the qualifications of a Vaiṣṇava,

I became disheartened, for it is not easy to be more humble than a blade of grass and more tolerant than a tree.’ So you should remain silent. These people are new to *bhakti*. When they become more familiar, their behaviour will also become more appropriate.”

There are many such examples where, by his personal behaviour, he taught us the principle of becoming humbler than blade of grass. What to speak of new and ignorant persons behaving improperly, even when some learned *sannyāsīs* behaved improperly toward him, he would not mind. By giving detailed explanations of the life and character of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī and other Gosvāmīs, he imparted so many instructions to us about humility. In this way, by actually following the teaching of *ṭṛṇādapi sunicena* verse, and not merely speaking it, Śrīla Mahārāja also gave us the inspiration to follow it and perform *bhajana* under the guidance of Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas.

The Embodiment of Service

There was a time when Śrīla Mahārāja used to give *hari-kathā* three to four times a day. By the medium of his *hari-kathā*, he used to arouse *sevā-vṛtti* (the tendency to serve Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas) in everyone’s mind and heart. He would remain perpetually absorbed in the service of Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas, and he would instruct the other residents of the *maṭha* to do likewise.

Established in the Actual Meaning of the Ṭṛṇādapi Verse

To follow the instructions of *śrī guru* and Vaiṣṇavas and to show them proper etiquette (*maryādā*) Śrīla Mahārāja never even cared for his own life. Once, in front of Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha, Śrī Narahari Sevā-vigraha Prabhu and Śrī Narottamānanda Brahmācārī were discussing the price for milk and vegetables with the vendors and milkmen. The milkmen of that area were quarrelsome by nature. A quarrel ensued and somehow Śrī Narottamānanda Prabhu got a

head injury, which started to bleed. When Śrīla Mahārāja heard the commotion and saw the blood coming from Śrī Narottamānanda Prabhu's head, he became outraged. Taking a piece of bamboo from the courtyard of the *maṭha* he hit the insolent milkmen, breaking the bamboo and sending the milkman crashing to the ground. Śrī Narahari Prabhu expertly took command of the situation. This behaviour of Śrīla Mahārāja actually demonstrated *trṇādāpi sunīca*, being more humble than a blade of grass. This behaviour was typical of him. He easily tolerated those who behaved in an uncivilized way toward him but never tolerated any demonstration of uncivilized behaviour toward other Vaiṣṇavas.

Ornamented with Qualities of a Vaiṣṇava

Śrīla Mahārāja possessed the twenty-six exalted qualities of a Vaiṣṇava in full, such as mercy, truthfulness and so forth. He was so merciful that to deliver others, he went to foreign lands to give *hari-kathā* and wrote books even when he was unhealthy. When Śrīla Mahārāja translated *Jaiva-dharma* into Hindi, my *śrīla guru mahārāja* was extremely pleased. Although my *śrīla guru mahārāja* is surely pleased to see Śrīla Mahārāja's success in preaching pure *bhakti*, if he had directly seen the pure devotional scriptures published by Śrīla Mahārāja, he would have been completely elated.

I have personally experienced, closely, his quality of not seeing others' faults and his nature to want to deliver the fallen. If those who had committed great offences asked for his forgiveness in all humility, he immediately forgave them. I stand as evidence to this, as he forgave this greatly offensive person many times and gave me shelter of his lotus feet, which bestow all fearlessness.

Friend of the Devotees (Bhakta-bandhava)

Once, I was sick in Navadvīpa. Śrīla Guru Mahārāja [Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja] gave me a letter personally written by him and sent me to *pūjyapāda* Mahārāja in Mathurā. When I reached Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha I paid my obeisances to Śrīla Mahārāja and gave him the letter. When he read it, he became very happy and told me, "Do you know that by this letter, Gurudeva has given you to me?"

He then sent me to an acquaintance of his in Delhi for my treatment. As a recipient of his affectionate behaviour – his natural affection for me and his concern for my health – I experienced that I was being attracted to his lotus feet more and more. By letter, I expressed my gratitude to him, telling him that due to his kindness in arranging my medical treatment, I have become indebted to him forever.

Even if I made slippers for him from my own skin, I would not be able to repay my debt to him.

Śrīla Mahārāja, the Embodiment of Compassion

Pūjyapāda Mahārājajī would consider even a person's performance of a small amount of service as great. For example, the first time he sent me for *bhikṣā*** , I did not have even a scent of desire to do it, and only went out on his order. I went to two or three houses and then came back with only a little flour. I went to Śrīla Mahārājajī with the flour and he said, "Oh! On your very first day of *bhikṣā* you have brought so much flour! Do this everyday, then our *maṭha* will be maintained." His response filled me with enthusiasm.

In pursuance of his order I performed *bhikṣā* for many years after that. Śrīla Mahārāja often used to say, "*Bhikṣā* is not an abominable activity; rather it is the revered tendency of pure saints to bestow mercy upon souls averse to Kṛṣṇa. Wherever you go for *bhikṣā*, perform as much *kīrtana* and *kathā* as possible." Later, Śrīla Mahārāja taught me how to preach and perform *harināma-sankīrtana* in many new places. I have tried to follow his teachings to the best of my capacity. This is all a result of the enthusiasm he gave me on my first day of *bhikṣā*.

Everyone's Maintainer

I am an extremely fallen soul with no knowledge, intelligence, power or capacity. Not only from a spiritual perspective but also from physical perspective, I am somehow alive only by his mercy. Like Bhagavān Nārāyaṇa who gives shelter to all and maintains them,*** Śrīla Mahārāja also maintains everyone by giving them *prema-bhakti*. In truth, Śrīla Mahārāja is like the *svarūpa* of Bhagavān Nārāyaṇa.

He who Strengthened Our Conceptions of the Bhāgavata Guru-paramparā

By writing the book *Prabandha-pañcakama*, or *Five Essential Essays*, Śrīla Mahārāja has illuminated the glories and enhanced the dignity of the residents of the Gauḍīya Maṭha. By writing so effectively, he has silenced the critical *bābājīs* who questioned the *guru-paramparā* and who looked disdainfully upon the saffron cloth worn by Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas. Śrīla Mahārāja's feat in this regard was not at all ordinary.

The Embodiment of Affection

Among Śrīla Mahārāja's many special characteristics, I noted one in particular as prominent: anyone who heard him speak *hari-kathā* just once could not help but be

** *Bhikṣā*, or the begging of alms, for the spiritual benefit of the society, is one of the customary duties of a *brahmacārī* or *sannyāsī*.

*** *Nara* means 'human' and *ayaṇa* means 'shelter'.



attracted to him. He showed so much affection to all and dealt with everyone so sweetly that each person thought that he was most dear to him. He gave the same affection to the disciples of other *gurus*, or those coming from other *maṭhas*, as he gave to his own disciples. He was never partial to anyone.

Affection towards Godbrothers

Śrīla Mahārāja endeavoured to see that all of his Godbrothers remained in the *maṭha* and, considering them to be extensions of his *gurudeva*, he gave them appropriate respect. If for some reason a Godbrother left the *maṭha* to perform *bhajana*, Śrīla Mahārājāī would go to bring him back to the *maṭha* or would send another devotee to get him. He then encouraged him to perform *bhajana* and *guru-sevā* all together. Śrīla Mahārāja would make us understand “*āśraya loiyā bhaje, kṛṣṇa tāre nāhi tyaje, āra saba more akarāṇa* – one who performs *bhajana* by taking shelter of *śrī guru* and the Vaiṣṇavas is never forsaken by Kṛṣṇa. Others who try to perform *bhajana* without taking shelter of *śrī guru* and the Vaiṣṇavas will die in vain; in other words, his *sādhana* becomes as futile as trying to ignite a fire by pouring ghee into ash.” In this way, Śrīla Mahārāja would give many scriptural evidences and say with great affection, “Stay in the *maṭha* and perform service to *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas. Only by this can you attain all auspiciousness. *Niṣṭhā* in *guru* is the backbone of *bhajana*.”

Almost everyone knows of Śrīla Mahārāja’s affectionate relationship with Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Mahārāja

and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Mahārāja, but actually, he had deep affection for all his Godbrothers. For example, when our Godbrother Kālācānda Prabhu was ill, Śrīla Mahārāja was very busy preaching in Western countries. Nevertheless, he always asked after his well-being via phone and he did not hesitate to spend *lākhas* of rupees for his treatment.

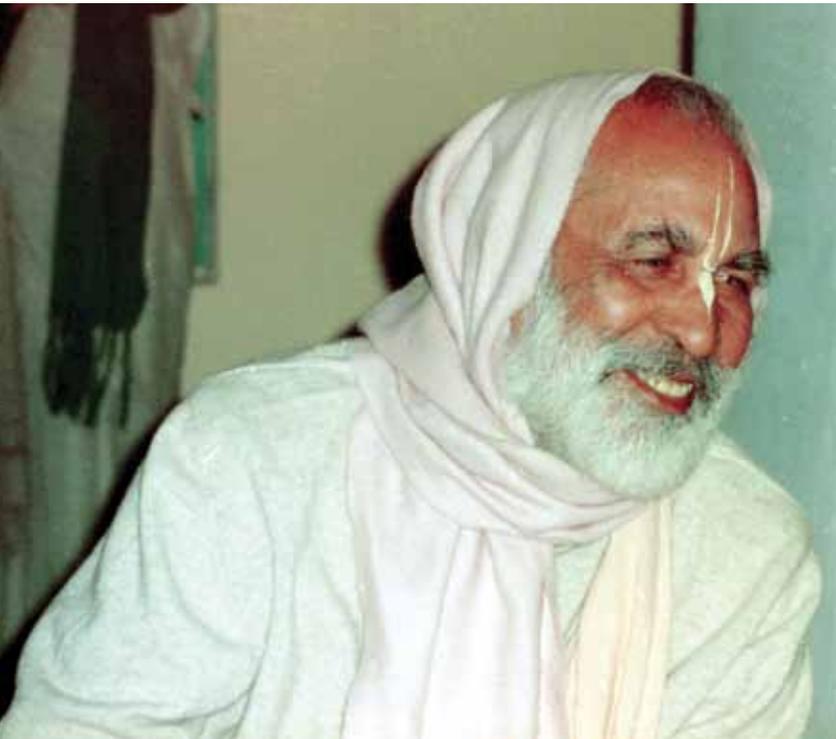


When Kālācānda Prabhu, our Godbrother, left his body Śrīla Mahārāja was giving evening *hari-kathā*. He was informed of his disappearance after the class and he personally came down and anointed Kālācānda Prabhu’s forehead with *tilaka* and circumambulated him four times. He then instructed others present do the same. His ideal is worshipable for me.

His Special Contribution

*yadi nārāyaṇa nabita, tabe ki baita,
kemande dharitāma de?*

If Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja had not appeared in this world, what would have happened? How would I have remained alive?



*rūpa-raghunāther mahimā, ujjala-premera-sīmā,
(pāścātya) jagate jānata ke?*

Who would have spoken the supreme glories of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, and the ultimate limit of *unnata-ujjala prema* to the residents of the Western countries?

*gauḍīya-vicāra, gauḍīya-ācara,
praveśa-cāturī-sāra*

If he were not there, then who would have been able to gain the essential expertise to enter in the confidential conceptions and practices of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism?

*pāṣāṇḍera-dalana, apasiddhāntera khaṇḍana,
śakti chilo vā kāra*

In present times, who compares with Śrīla Mahārāja in an ability to defeat the atheists and impostors and in refuting false *siddhāntas* that have crept into the Vaiṣṇava society?

*gao punaḥ punaḥ, (śrīla) nārāyaṇera guṇa,
sarala haiyā mana.
e bhava-sāgare, emone (parama) dayāla,
nā dekhi je ekajana*

O devotees! Sincerely sing the qualities of the supremely glorious Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, again and again, because there is no Vaiṣṇava as supremely merciful in this material existence.

*(śikṣā) gurudeva baliyā, nā genu galiyā,
kemone dharinu de?
maṅgala biyā, pāṣāṇa diyā,
kemone gaḍiyāche*

Although I utter the name of my *śikṣā-guru*, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, my stone-like heart has not melted. Oh! How is this Maṅgala still alive?

Śrīla Mahārāja is Non-different from Nityānanda

After the disappearance of Śrīla Guru Mahārāja, I remained under the shelter of Śrīla Mahārāja and tried to follow his instructions.

*jagāi mādhbāi haite muñi se pāpiṣṭha
purīṣera kīta haite muñi se laghiṣṭha*

I am a worse sinner than Jagāi and Mādhāi and am even lower than the worms in stool.

*mora nāma śune yei tāra puṇya kṣaya
mora nāma laya yei tāra pāpa haya*

Anyone who hears my name loses the results of his pious activities. Anyone who utters my name becomes sinful.

*emona niḅhr̥ṇa-more kebā kṛpā kare
eka śrīla nārāyaṇa gosvāmī binu jagat bhitarē*

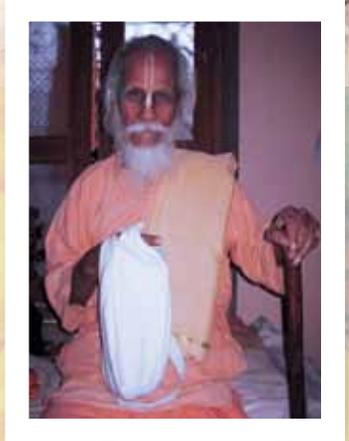
adapted from
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi-līlā 5.205–207)

Who else but Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja would give mercy to such a wretched person like me?

I have the boundless mercy of Śrīla Mahārāja but unfortunately I am not able to retain his mercy.

Śrīla Mahārāja, who never saw a fault in anyone, has always forgiven me. Today also, I pray at his lotus feet, which grant fearlessness, that although I am bereft of proper performance of *bhajana* and although I am a neophyte who does not even have a speck of *bhakti*, still may he forgive all my offences and accept me as his own, giving me my perfect spiritual form (*siddha-deha*) in Vṛndāvana and engaging me in service to the Divine Couple in the *rāsa-maṅḍala*. Saying this, I offer this *puṣpāñjali* of words at his lotus feet. 🙏

Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Maṅgala Mahārāja is a disciple of *paramārādhyā nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja*, on whose order he has, for many years, rendered service at Śrī Keśavaji Gauḍīya Maṭha under the guidance of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Currently, he travels throughout Vraja, preaching *barināma-saṅkīrtana*.



Memories of Our Very Affectionate Śrīla Mahārājajī

by Śrīpāda Raṅganātha dāsa Brahmācārī
(Raṅga Bābā)

He followed the instructions of Gurudeva perfectly

Pūjyapāda Nārāyaṇa Mahārājajī completely followed all the instructions given to him by our *śrī guru mahārāja*, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Śrīla Guru Mahārāja gave him the responsibility of managing the *maṭha* in Mathurā, which he did in a very proper manner. He was also impeccable in granting spiritual instructions to his disciples and to those who had taken his shelter. He was very affectionate to me.

Mahārājajī was Bhakta-vatsala

Once I went for *darśana* of Nandagaon and Varsānā and I was two days late in returning. *Pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārājajī asked the other devotees of my whereabouts. Then he sent

Bhikṣuka Mahārāja to find me. Bhikṣuka Mahārāja searched for me everywhere, but did not locate me. In the end, I met him in Mukharāi Gaon, which is the village of Rādhārāṇī's maternal grandmother. The *sevaka* of the temple there, Gopinātha Prabhu, had to go to Delhi on urgent business; therefore, he left me with all the responsibility of the service. I told him to stop in the Mathurā Maṭha on his way to Delhi and inform the devotees that your Raṅganātha Brahmācārī is in Mukharāi and would come back in a few days. But he did not pass through Mathurā and *pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārājajī was very worried about me.

One time I was in Navadvīpa, and I went to Mathurā from there by foot, walking all the way. The journey took about two months. In the meantime, before I arrived, *pūjyapāda* Vāmana Mahārājajī sent a letter to *pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārājajī saying that when Raṅganātha

Brahmacārī arrives in Mathurā, then very quickly send him back to Navadvīpa, because there is some inconvenience here in Ṭhākurajī's *sevā* due to a shortage of *sevakas*. When I reached Mathurā, *pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārājajī told me that *pūjyapāda* Vāmana Mahārājajī has sent a few letters saying that I had to immediately return to Navadvīpa. I requested to *pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārājajī, "I have walked two months to reach Mathurā. Please allow me to take *darśana* of Mathurā, Śrī Vṛndāvana and other places. Immediately after *darśana* I will return." He very kindly gave permission, so after I took *darśana*, I left for Navadvīpa.

Adorned with the Qualities of Affection and Forgiveness

Pūjyapāda Nārāyaṇa Mahārājajī completely followed the instructions of Śrīla Guru Mahārāja in his life. In the early morning he bathed, put on *tilaka*, performed *ābhika*, and then sat for *kīrtana* and class. In the mornings sometimes the *brahmacārīs* gave class, and sometimes Mahārājajī did. But in the evenings he would surely give class. *Pūjyapāda* Mahārājajī had great love for all the residents of the temple. Because there were many *brahmacārīs* in Mathurā, I did not have the chance to get much service. I therefore went back to Navadvīpa, because when one is in the residence of *guru*, one should do service.

After eight or ten years I again came to Mathurā, because at that time there was a shortage of *sevakas*. If anyone was disturbing another devotee, then *pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārājajī would make them understand this. The devotees had more affection for *pūjyapāda* Mahārājajī than for any other Godbrother. If any resident of the temple did anything wrong, Mahārājajī would correct him affectionately and forgive him. No one else had the power to forgive like him. If anyone was doing something unfavorable for *hari-bhajana*, then he would make them understand and instruct them to pursue only *hari-bhajana*. He translated many books from Bengali and printed them in Hindi. Three months prior to Gaura-pūrṇimā, he would go to Bengal for the purpose of collecting rice, and after collecting it, he would give it all to the *maṭha*.

Dear to the Devotees

After Gaura-pūrṇimā devotees would come to Guru Mahārāja and say, "Next time you send devotees out on *bhikṣā*, please send only Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja in our area." Śrīla Guru Mahārājajī asked Nārāyaṇa Mahārājajī, "Can you do *bhikṣā* again?" and Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja would at once become ready to go. He accepted everything Guru Mahārāja said and followed it perfectly. The relationship between *guru* and disciple is like that between a father and son. A *guru* will be just like a father. *Guru* always looks

after the disciple with the desire for him to accept good instruction. *Guru* is directly the equivalent of Bhagavān. The disciple respects the *guru* as God; just as one would serve God, so one should serve the *guru*.

Love between Godbrothers

Pūjyapāda Vāmana Mahārāja, *pūjyapāda* Trivikrama Mahārāja and *pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja – these three had great love for each other. They gave affection to all, and never harmed anyone, acting with everyone like their brothers. The three of them all performed very deep *bhajana*.

His Instructions to Me

When the Govardhana *maṭha* was being built, I was residing in the Mathurā temple. Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārājajī told me, "Now you stay in Govardhana and perform *bhajana*, because long ago I also stayed at that very place and performed *bhajana*." In this way, he sent me from Mathurā to Govardhana.

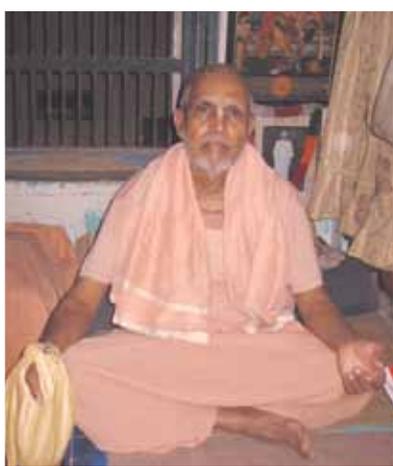
A Servant of Śrīla Guru Mahārājajī

Some years before I joined the *maṭha*, *pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja and *pūjyapāda* Trivikrama Mahārāja came to the *maṭha* in Navadvīpa. At that time there were very few *brahmacārīs*. Hence, all the *brahmacārīs* had to assume a lot of responsibility for service. When Guru Mahārāja left the Māyāpura *maṭha*, *pūjyapāda* Vāmana Mahārājajī performed Guru Mahārāja's service. When *pūjyapāda* Vāmana Mahārāja became ill and could not serve Guru Mahārāja, then *pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārājajī remained in the service of Guru Mahārāja. Then after him, when other *brahmacārīs* came, they engaged in the service of Guru Mahārāja, because Guru Mahārāja sent Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja to the Mathurā temple, and gave the responsibility for managing the Navadvīpa temple to Vāmana Mahārājajī.

Śrīla Guru Mahārāja's Order to Mahārājajī to Preach Hari-kathā

Pūjyapāda Vāmana Mahārāja always stayed in the *maṭha* practising *bhajana*, and Śrīla Guru Mahārāja told him, "Go and preach *hari-kathā*." Śrīla Guru Mahārāja told the same to *pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja. "There is no need for too many temples; otherwise one will have to always stay there, and if one always stays in the temple, then who will preach *hari-kathā*?" 🙏

Śrīpāda Raṅganātha Brahmacārī is the disciple of *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja and has very humbly and submissively served his *gurudeva* and Godbrothers throughout his whole life. Now he is staying in Mathurā, always performing *nāma-bhajana*.



Śraddhā Puṣpāñjali

by Śrīpāda Śeṣaśāyī dāsa Brahmācārī

Appearance, Initiation, Sannyāsa and Guru-sevā

Nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja appeared in 1921 during *brahma-mubūrta* on Maunī-amāvasyā, in a village named Tiwāripur in the Buxar district of Bihar. Both his parents were Vaiṣṇavas initiated into the Śrī *sampradāya* and from childhood, he had a keen interest in spiritual life. Due to acute detachment from the world, he renounced his home and family and in 1947 received *dikṣa* from *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. He had the fortune of travelling with Gurudeva to all the pilgrimage places of India. As he heard Gurudeva's *hari-kathā* in all the holy places, he took all his conceptions to heart. In 1952 he received *sannyāsa* from Gurudeva. After

some time, Gurudeva appointed him as the caretaker of Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha, Mathurā, for the purpose of propagating the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu throughout Hindi-speaking regions. Here, on the order and mercy of Gurudeva, he began publishing the Hindi periodical *Śrī Śrī Bhāgavat Patrikā* and translated and published in Hindi scriptures such as *Jaiva-dharma* and *Śrī Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta*.

Attaining his Association

In the Bengali year 1366, Śrīla Guru Mahārāja came to Pichaldā, the village where I lived before joining the Gauḍīya Maṭha. This village had had been purified by the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. On the fifth day (*pañcamī*) of the month Āṣāḍha, on Saturday, the day of the

bathing-festival of Lord Jagannātha, Śrīla Guru Mahārāja established the Pichaldā *pāda-pīṭha*, a footprint memorial commemorating Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's visit there. In this *maṭha*, Śrī Śrī Guru-Nityānanda-Gaura-Rādhā-Vinoda-biharījū were installed.

Śrī Gaura-govinda dāsa Adhikārī, who was a resident of the Pichaldā Village, was my *varṭma-pradarśaka-guru*, that person who first connected me with the Sārasvata Gauḍīya line. By his endeavour only did I come to the *maṭha*. Thereafter, in 1959, I came to stay with *pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja in Mathurā.

Attaining the Good Fortune of Serving him

When I came to Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha, there were not many servants – only five or six *brahmacārīs* were there. I used to cook and wash clothes for Mahārājajī and answer the Bengali letters. He used to take me wherever he went to preach. In 1959, on Viśvarūpa-mahotsava, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja received *sannyāsa* from Guru Mahārāja, and on the same day, Guru Mahārāja gave me saffron cloth. By the order of Gurudeva, Mahārājajī taught me *arcana*, cooking and so forth. For the yearly *viraha-utsava* of Gurudeva, Mahārājajī himself used to go to all the *maṭhas* of Vṛndāvana and Govardhana to personally invite all the Vaiṣṇavas. Upon returning to the *maṭha*, he would participate in cooking and other services.

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja Ordered Mahārājajī to Perform Kīrtana

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja often used to come to Mathurā from Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara Temple in Vṛndāvana. Once, the governor of Orissa came to have *darśana* of the deities of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodarajī. The *pūjārīs* there arranged that a musical performance welcome him. But there was some delay in the tuning of their instruments and when the governor arrived, they were still tuning them. Upon observing this, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja ordered Mahārājajī to perform *kīrtana*. He sang *Jaya rādhā-mādhava, jaya kuñjavibhārī* in a very sweet voice. When the *kīrtana* was completed, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja presented a copy of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in English to the governor. The governor then gave some *praṇāmī* to Thākuraḅī and left for Imlīlā. The *gospāmīs* were still seated in the Rādhā-Dāmodara courtyard trying to create charming music with harmonium, tabla and sitar. “The *sannyāsīs* performed *kīrtana* for the governor and did not give us a chance,” they said. In response, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja said, “You were wasting time in just tuning your instruments. The governor was only here for a short visit. He was not going to wait till you got ready to play.”

Some Loving Memories of Mahārājajī

Today, I am offering some transcendental memories of my supremely merciful senior Godbrother, Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, at his lotus feet.

He used to perform *hari-kathā* and *kīrtana* every day, going from house to house in Mathurā. Every year in Kārtika, he used to take a bus to Nandagrāma, Varsānā, Ādi-badrī, Kedāranātha and Kāmyavana, where he spoke *hari-kathā*. In those days, the devotees in Mathurā used to bring *prasādam* on *parikramā*, which they cooked in their own homes.

Once, he went to Kosī on the appearance day of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Mahārāja, where, after a festival of *kīrtana* and *hari-kathā*, *khichari prasādam* was served.

Once, when Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja came from the West, he was not well and immediately called for Mahārājajī. At that time, Mahārājajī had just sat down for speaking *hari-kathā* in the evening, but when he heard that Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja was ill, he stopped the *hari-kathā* and immediately went with two of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja's disciples to visit him. I was also with them. Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja said, “My Godbrothers are upset with me. Ask for forgiveness from them on my behalf and have a feast at all Gauḍīya Maṭhas upon my disappearance. Give instructions to my disciples.” On the night of the disappearance of Śrīla



Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, we stayed in Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Temple. The next day after *maṅgala-ārati*, we had *darśana* of all the seven temples of Vṛndāvana. On the way, Mahārājajī performed *kīrtana* for a long time, and at around twelve noon, Mahārājajī placed him in *samādhi*. 🌸

Śrī Śeṣāyī Brahmacārī is a disciple of *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and upon his order, he has been serving in Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha under the guidance of Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja for a long time.

*Homages from Highly Esteemed
Residents of Vrāja*



ŚRĪ NĀRĀYAṆA MAHĀRĀJA –

A Real Guru

Śrī Rameśa Bābā Mahārāja



Śrī Māna Mandir Sevā-sansthān Trust

Māna Mandira
Gahvaravan, Varsānā
Dist. Mathurā—281405
Uttara Pradeśa, India

Date: 20 August 2011

Fearlessness is Only Attained by Association of Saints

In this world, a blind man who leads another blind man is *guru*. Actually, a bona fide *guru* is rarely found. Without a real *guru*, one cannot attain auspiciousness. The living entity is averse to Bhagavān from time immemorial and always plagued by many types of fears, such as the suffering of death and grief. In such a fear-inspiring world, how can fearlessness be attained? This is not possible on the strength of one's knowledge. Even Brahmā, whose life span is so long, is not capable of bestowing fearlessness. There is no fearlessness anywhere in the world, in any species. If it is there at all, it can only be found in the proximity of saintly personalities. By associating with them, a state of fearlessness can easily be attained. Complete auspiciousness is only bestowed by saints.

Surrender to Great Saintly Personalities is the Sole Means of Crossing the Ocean of Material Existence

Vraja has always been the holy land of saints. In this very Vraja, the best of saints, the most worshipful Śrī Nārāyaṇa Mahārājajī, who by the light of his transcendental knowledge has made millions of living entities move toward fearlessness, has been a real *sad-guru* (bone fide spiritual master), and even after his entering into the eternal pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava in Their abode, he is present in everyone's heart. One can very easily cross the ocean of material existence by surrendering to a saint like him, who is detached from worldliness. Even Brahmā and Śaṅkara cannot cross the ocean of material existence and therefore, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, Himself, has given the *yugala-mantra* to Śiva, and knowledge of Vedas to Brahmā.



Boundless Affection for Vraja and Its Residents

Śrī Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja was above sectarian narrowness and was therefore dear to all. Not only did he delight devotees by the splendor of his transcendental knowledge, but he also showed boundless love for the pastime places of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He had deep love for Vraja and its residents. This became known by the following incident. I had been staying in Śrī Māna Mandira in Gahvaravana, Varsānā for sixty years without a break. When I saw how the divine mountains of Vraja were being destroyed, I sat in protest on Sakhīgiri Mountain in the year 2000. At that time, it was Śrī Nārāyaṇa Mahārājaji who came there first of all with his disciples and associates, expressing his complete support and thus strengthening the protest. It is only by the effort of great saintly personalities like him, that today the divine mountains of Vraja are free from illegal digging, and many pastime places of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa have been prevented from destruction.

He Who Rained Divine Nectarean Kathā in India and Abroad

One can meet a God-loving altruist and a desireless saint such as Śrī Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja only by the mercy of the Lord. Due to material attachments, the living entity remains

unfortunate even after meeting with such saints. Only if they become attached to such great saintly personalities can they easily achieve liberation:

*saṅgo yaḥ saṁsṛter hetur asatsu vibito 'dhiyā
sa eva sādhuṣu kṛto niḥsaṅgatvāya kalpate*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.23.55)

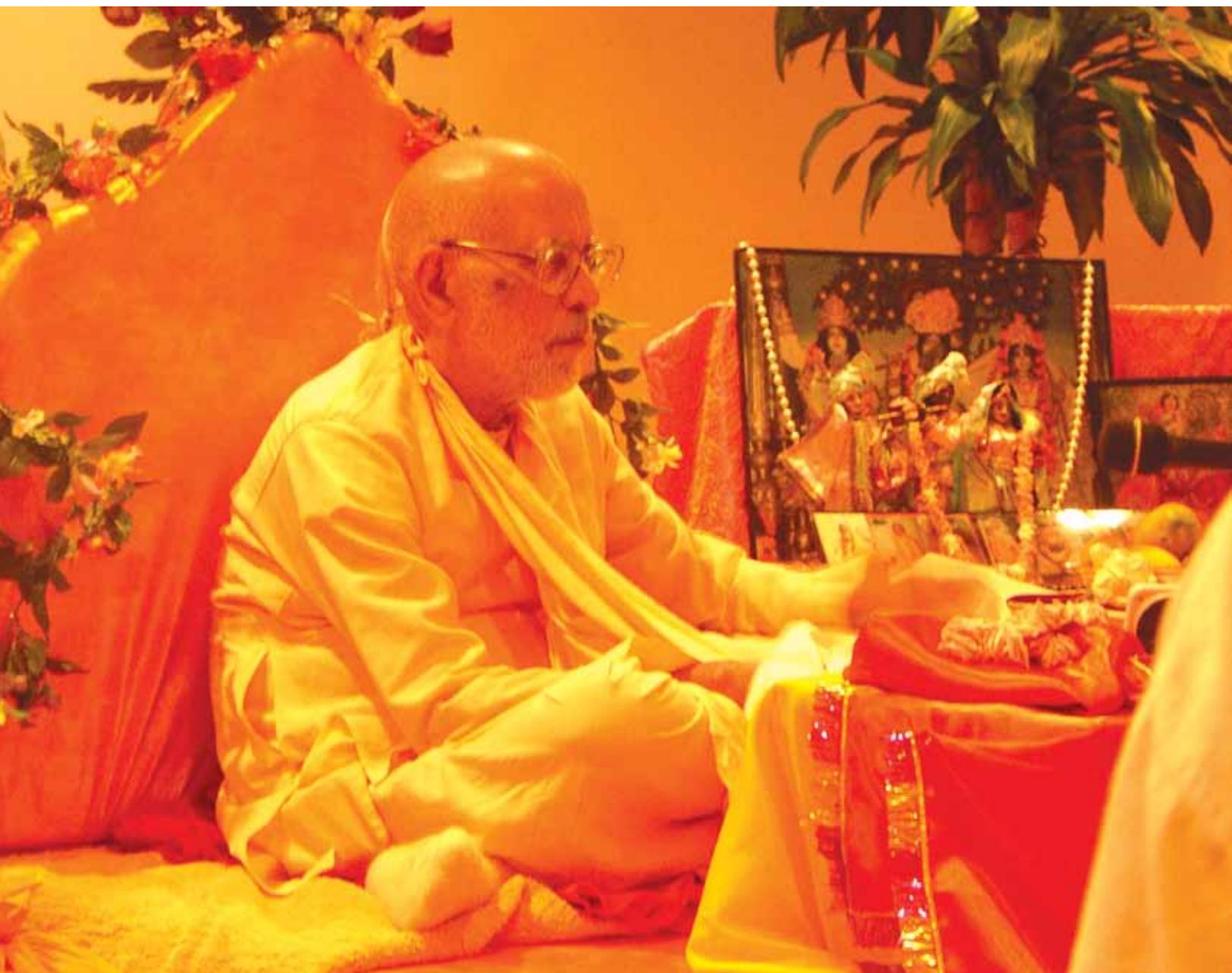
Even if someone falls into ungodly association due to his ignorance, such association still leads to degradation. But in the same way, even if someone finds himself in the association of saintly persons accidentally, such saintly association very easily leads him away from bad association and cuts his worldly attachment.

By his divine nectarean *kathā*, Śrī Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja has shown the path of fearlessness to so many living entities, both in India and abroad. His transcendental and merciful deeds will always reside in the form of his devotees and his glories will be ever-lasting. 🙏

The detached saint Śrī Rameśa Bābā has resided continuously in Varsānā for the last sixty years and is dedicated to the protection of pastime places of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Vraja.

THE WORSHIPABLE DIVINE PERSONALITY –

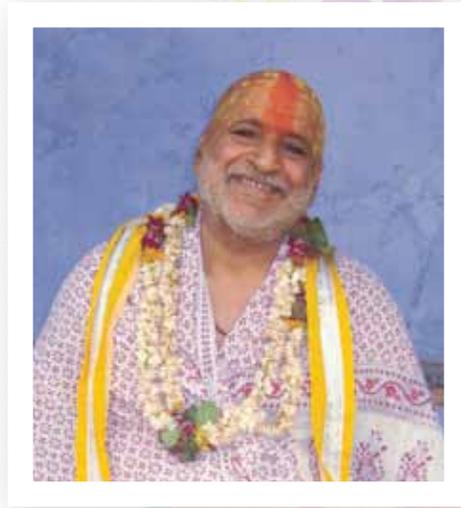
*Mahārājaśrī is Present in Śrī
in a Special Form*



Kṛṣṇa's Abode

A spoken puṣpāñjali by
Śrī Viṣṇu Pāṇḍe (Śāstrījī)

at the viraha-sabhā in
Śrī Rūpa-Sanātana Gauḍīya Maṭha,
Śrī Dhāma Vṛndāvana,
10 January 2011



The Ācārya is Directly the Form of the Bhagavān

The saintly personalities and *ācāryas* are *bhāgavata-svarūpa*, the direct form of the Bhagavān. Bhagavān desires nothing other than His devotees. Bhagavān told Śrī Durvāsā:

*nāham ātmānam āśāse
mad-bhaktaiḥ sādhubhir vinā
śriyaṁ cātyantikīm brahman
yeṣāṁ gatir abhaṁ parā*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (9.4.64)

O best of the *brāhmaṇas*, without saintly persons for whom I am the only destination, I do not desire to enjoy My transcendental bliss and My supreme opulences. [BBT Translation]

Pūjya Mahārājaśrī is Endowed with Special Rāga

The ordinary meaning of *vairāgya* (renunciation) is '*guṇeṣu asaṅgo vairāgyam* – being devoid of *saṁsarga*, or connection with material qualities, is *vairāgya*'. However, the real meaning of *vairāgya* is '*viśiṣṭo ragaḥ iti virago, virāgasya bhāvaḥ vairāgyam* – where there is *rāga*, special loving attraction, that is *vairāgya*'. Such *vairāgya* endowed with special attachment is only seen in Vaiṣṇava saints and *ācāryas* like *pūjya Mahārājaśrī*.

Devotees are More Dear to Bhagavān than His Own Self

Śrī Bhagavān showed the mood of His heart for the Vaiṣṇavas who are decorated with *vairāgya* which is endowed with *rāga*, special loving attraction, through two verses He spoke in the Eleventh Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. In the first verse Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

*na tathā me priyatama
ātma-yonir na śaṅkaraḥ
na ca saṅkarṣaṇo na śrīr
naivātmā ca yathā bhavān*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.14.15)

O Uddhava, because you are My devotee You are more dear to Me than My son Brahmā; than Śaṅkara, who has come from My form; than My brother Saṅkarṣaṇa; than My wife Śrī Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune; and even than My own self.

Just see! In light of the love He has for His saintly devotees, Ṭhākuraḥ considers His own self to be insignificant.

Bhagavān Collects the Foot-dust of the Devotees

Bhagavān not only becomes controlled by the devotees, but also He follows them and collects their foot-dust. In the next *Bhāgavatam* verse, Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

*nirapekṣaṁ munim śāntaṁ nirvairam sama-darśanam
anuvrajāmy abhaṁ nityaṁ pūyeyety aṅghri-reṇubhiḥ*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.14.16)

"I will purify the entire universe with the foot-dust of My devotees." O Uddhava, thinking like this, I am always wandering behind My devotees who are desireless (*nirapekṣa*) and peaceful, whose minds absorbed in Me being free from all enmity and who have equal vision to all.

Pūjya Mahārājaśrī is the embodiment of the first line of the above *śloka*, *nirapekṣam munim śāntaṁ nirvairam samadarśanam*.

Nirapekṣam

Nirapekṣam actually means to desire nothing but Bhagavān. Just as *bhakti* is *nirapekṣa*, similarly, our worshipful Mahārājaśrī, the embodiment of *bhakti*, is also *nirapekṣa*. He had no *apekṣa*, expectation, besides *bhakti* and *bhāgavata-bhāva*. The deeply powerful, hearty desire of *pūjya* Mahārājaśrī was that *bhakti-siddhānta* – the waves and droplets from the nectarean ocean of the *Bhāgavatam* – and the fragrance of *śrī-kṛṣṇa-bhakti* spread throughout the entire universe. In this way, *pūjya* Mahārājaśrī is seen as the clear example of one who is *nirapekṣam*.

Munim

Munim means ‘those who constantly absorb their minds in Bhagavān’. *Pūjya* Mahārājaśrī was always immersed in *śrī kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa* and *prema-lakṣaṇa-bhakti* (*bhakti* characterized by *prema*) and he always endeavoured to absorb all souls in this consciousness.

Mahārājaśrī’s Teachings on the Meaning of the Bhāgavata

In the year 2007 at Śrī Giridhārī Gauḍīya Maṭha in Govardhana, *pūjya* Mahārājaśrī called an assembly of the learned scholars of Vraja to discuss the subject matter of the verse in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (12.13.12) – *kaivalyaika-prayojanam*.

In this meeting, I expressed my own consideration of it: “The one-pointed devotional moods of the *bhaktas* for Bhagavān, which are devoid of desires such as *jñāna*, *karma* and heavenly pleasures, is called *kaivalya*. This is the *prayojana*, or goal, given in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The dedicated devotees of Bhagavān and Śrīmatī Bhakti-devī

are splendidly situated well apart from *karma*, *jñāna* and so on. Therefore, the means to attain Bhagavān is *prema*, the subject established in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.”

Later in that assembly, Mahārājaśrī supported this conclusion. I felt so happy to hear his conception. Mahārājaśrī explained that *bhakti* characterized by *prema* is the essence of the *Bhāgavatam*.

The Purpose of Pūjya Mahārājaśrī’s Preaching

Pūjya Mahārājaśrī was always concerned about the deliverance of the conditioned souls. The purpose of his worldwide preaching and broadcasting of *bhāgavata-dharma*, or *vaiṣṇava-dharma*, was only to complete the *jīvas’* journey of deliverance, beginning from surrendering at the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to obtaining the goal of *bhakti* characterized by *prema*. The final instruction of Bhagavān in the Eleventh Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is:

*tasmāt tvam uddhavotsrjya codanām praticodanām
pravṛttiṁ ca nivṛttiṁ ca śrotavyaṁ śrutam eva ca*

*mām ekam eva śaraṇam ātmānam sarva-dehinām
yābi sarvātma-bhāvena mayā syā hy akuto-bhayaḥ*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.12.14–15)

O Uddhava! Give up all Śruti, Smṛti, scriptural injunctions and prohibitions, engagements and disengagements, that are worth hearing and not worth hearing, and with your entire being, fully surrender unto Me, who resides as *antaryāmī*, the inner witness, in all living beings. By doing so, you will be free from all fear.



Pūjya Mahārājaśrī is an Associate in Bhagavān's Dhāma

“Pūjya Mahārājaśrī has gone somewhere.” Don't think like this. He is situated in Bhagavān's *dhāma* only, in a most special manner. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Śrī Bhagavān clearly said:

*martyo yadā tyakta-samasta-karmā
niveditātmā vicikīrṣito me
tadāmṛtatvaṁ pratīpadyamāno
mayātma-bhūyāya ca kalpate vai*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.29.34)

When a person leaves all fruitive actions and surrenders himself fully to Me, at that time, by My desire, such a *bhakti-yogī* will become more knowledgeable than a *jñānī*. He becomes a special object of My mercy. Afterwards he attains the nectar of immortality and receives opulence equal to My own.

In this verse *vicikīrṣito* means ‘in a special manner (*vi*) Bhagavān desires to give mercy (*cikīrṣā*)’. Bhagavān desires to bestow special mercy upon great saintly personalities. In other words, He accepts them as associates in His pastimes.

Just as the Existence of Bhagavān is Eternal, so is the Mahāpuruṣa's

When the *mahāpuruṣas* and *ācāryas* leave the material covering, it does not mean that their existence is lost. Rather, they continue to exist eternally, just as Bhagavān's existence is eternal. Śrī Bilvamaṅgala Ācārya enunciated the eternal existence of Bhagavān in the second *maṅgalācaraṇa* verse of *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta* with the words *asti svastarūṇī*. If Bhagavān were not eternal, then the use of verbal root *as* in the eternal, present continuous tense would not be used in this *maṅgalācaraṇa* verse. The hidden meaning of ‘in this way’ is that Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is eternally present in Śrī Vṛndāvana. In the same manner, the recipients, or relishers, of that supremely nectarean object (*param-rasamaya-vastu*), the pastime associates of Bhagavān are also eternally present.

Consequently, *pūjya* Mahārājaśrī is situated eternally as an associate in the pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and he will certainly continue to give you inspiration.

The First Evidence of the Eternality of the Mahāpuruṣas

In his *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* commentary named *Subodhinī-ṭīkā* Śrī Vāllabhācāryajī explains that the term *bhūridā janāḥ* (10.31.9) refers to a great personality who is the most munificent giver of charity: *ataeva tādrśam kathāmṛtam ye bhūvi gṛṇanti, ta eva bhūridāḥ bahvartbadātāraḥ ya*



iti prasiddhā vyāsādayaḥ bhūridā te ajanā te kevalam bhāgavadrūpāḥ janānādi-doṣa-rabitā vā.

This means that those persons who perform *kīrtana* of the eternally present *kathāmṛta* in this world are *bhūridāḥ*, or the bestower of profuse [transcendental] wealth. Here the term ‘those’ means the famous Śrī Vyāsadeva and so on. They are *bhūridā* and they are also without birth, because they are *bhāgavata-svarūpa*, the very form of Bhagavān; in other words they are free from the defects of birth and so on.

In essence, the *mahāpuruṣas* who are the most generous donors of greatest of wealth and who are free from birth and death are called *bhūridā janāḥ*. The question may arise as to whether Śrī Nārada, Śrī Vyāsa and all the other *mahāpuruṣas* of the *bhāgavata-sampadāya* have left, that is, ceased to exist. The answer to this question in accordance with the doctrine of the previous *ācāryas* is, “No, their existence is eternally present. Even those who drink the nectarean *kathāmṛta* bestowed by such *mahāpuruṣas* will attain eternal existence.”

Pūjya Mahārājaśrī is also such a *bhūridā janāḥ*. Why? Because he distributed the charity of this *bhāgavata-kathāmṛta* in abundance, everywhere. Therefore, he is always present. The essence of this teaching is as follows: just as Śrī Vyāsa, Śrī Nārada and others are always present, being free from birth and death, in the same way our *svāmīpāda* Śrī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja is also always present, being free from birth and death.

The Second Evidence of the Eternal Existence of the Mahāpuruṣas

If the *mahāpuruṣa*'s existence were not eternal, why was it stated in the Veda, *tad-viṣṇo paramaṁ adāṁ sadā paśyantī sūrayaḥ?* The word *sadā* means 'always'. Pūjya Mahārājaśrī is such a divine personality that he is always, even at the present time, taking *darśana* of the *svarūpa* of the *dhāma*.

A Divine Sage

In the second line of the first *maṅgalācarana* verse of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the words *mubhyantī yat sūrayaḥ* describes those *sūris*, or sages, who due to lack of surrender to the Supreme Lord, are bewildered about the meaning of the Vedas. However, our worshipful divine sage Mahārājaśrī is different from them in all respects because he thoroughly understood the meaning of this statement of Bhagavān “*mām ekam eva śaraṇam ātmānaṁ sarva-dehinām – surrender only to Me, who am the internal witness in all living beings*” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.12.14–15), and is thus established in the topmost limit of surrender. He liberated countless souls by inspiring them to surrender to Bhagavān. He is always present in Bhagavān's *dhāma* as *guru-karṇa-dhāra* (the divine master who takes responsibility for disciple deliverance) and will continually give inspiration to all of you.

The Final Desire of Mahārājaśrī

Pūjya Mahārājaśrī would say one beautiful thing. He would tell me, “Paṇḍitājī, the translation of the *Śrī Bhāgavatam* by Gītā Press is in accordance with the line of thought of *māyāvādīs*. My desire is to present a completely different translation of the eighteen thousand verses of *Śrī*

Bhāgavata, in accordance with Vaiṣṇava *siddhānta* and based on the foundation of all our *ācāryas*' commentaries such as *Sārārtha-darśinī*.” This was his strong desire. I heard that before pūjya Mahārājaśrī's entrance into the eternal pastimes, he had completed the translations of all the verses of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, as well as most of the Tenth Canto translations, along with commentaries.

The Duty of Those in the Shelter of Mahārājaśrī

So, brothers! If you always remain followers in the guidance of Mahārājaśrī, *bhāgavata-dharma* will certainly illuminate your heart, and as a result, you will attain the ability to fulfil his heart's desire. It has clearly been told in *śāstra*;

*yasya deve parā bhaktir yathā deve tatha gurau
tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ prakāśante mahātmanaḥ*

Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (6.23)

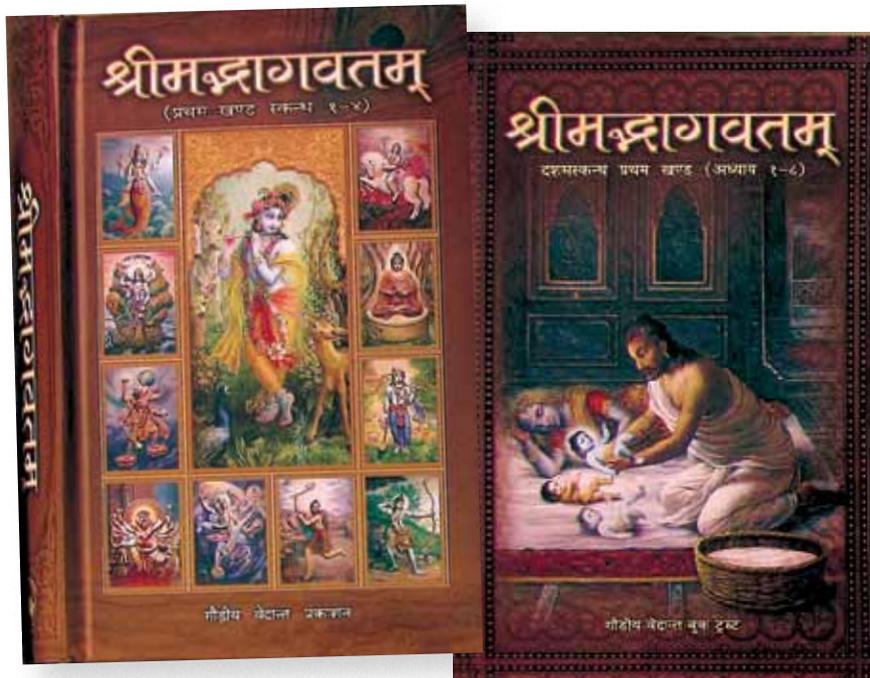
All the hidden meanings of the Śrutis are revealed only in the heart of that great soul who has the highest transcendental devotion towards Śrī Bhagavān and also His representative, *śrī gurudeva*.

When will Mahārājaśrī be pleased? When you follow his mood in your whole life in preaching and broadcasting as he himself did; and when you preserve that *dharma* spread by him; his objects and his *dhāma* [the temples of *śuddha-bhakti* manifested by him in the *dhāma*, and the *dhāma-parikramās* set in motion by him] when you protect all this, then he will be pleased. As a result of his happiness alone, the light of *bhāgavata-dharma* will shine within you.

Brothers! Mahārājaśrī was directly the form of the *bhāgavata*! He preached and spread the scriptures of *bhakti* all over the world, now you all should continue to follow the path he has shown and remain immovable in the *siddhānta* of *bhakti*. Following your *ācāryas*, always remember your position of servitude, '*gopī-bharttuḥ pada-kamalayo-dāsa-dāsānudāsa* – be situated in the mood of the servant of the servant's servant of the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the maintainer of the *gopīs*.'

In this way, I am resting my speech, considering my life successful by offering a verbal *puṣpāñjali* at the lotus feet of pūjya Mahārājaśrī. 🌸

Śrī Viṣṇudatta Paṇḍe (Śāstrījī) is a learned Vaiṣṇava scholar of Śrī Mathurā Purī in the Vallabha *sampradāya*.

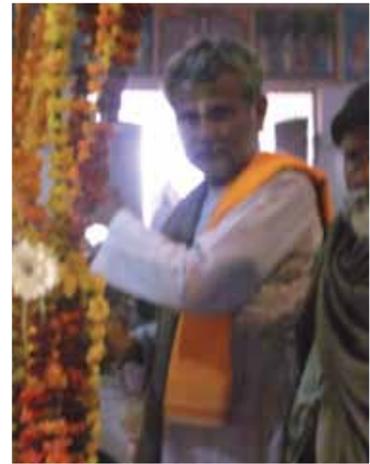


PŪJYA MAHĀRĀJAŚRĪ –

the Living Form of Rāgānugā-bhakti

Gosvāmī Śrī Dīpaka Kumāra Bhaṭṭa

The *puṣpāñjali*, heartfelt homage, offered on January 9, 2010,
at Śrī Giridhārī Gauḍīya Maṭha, in Govardhana
on the occasion of the festival of separation



Dear Vaiṣṇavas and respected learned gentlemen! I am a simple Vrajavāsī boy sitting among you. I am approaching you with a request, so please forgive me.

The Hari-kathā Sung by the Vrajavāsīs Purifies the Three Worlds

Uddhavajī said in regard to the *vraja-gopīs*:

*vande nanda-vraja-strīṇām pāda-reṇum abbikṣaśaḥ
yāsām hari-katbodgītām punāti bhuvana-trayam*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.47.63)

I repeatedly offer my respects to the dust from the lotus feet of the *vraja-gopīs*, the damsels of Nanda Mahārāja's cowherd village, who purify the three worlds when they sing Śrī Kṛṣṇa's glories.

Again Śrī Uddhavajī spoke on the subject of the *vraja-gopīs*:

*kvemāḥ striyo vana-carīr vyabhicāra-duṣṭāḥ
kṛṣṇe kva caiṣa paramātmani rūḍha-bhāvaḥ*

*nanv īśvaro 'nubhajato 'viduṣo 'pi sāksāc
chreyas tanoty agada-rāja ivopayuktaḥ*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.47.59)

Aho! How exalted is the *parama-prema*, the supreme love, saturated with *rūḍha-bhāva* found in the *gopīs* who wander in the forest. They have the highest perfection of unalloyed love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In comparison, what is the position of all others like me, who are really *vyabhicāra-duṣṭāḥ*, guilty of improper behaviour due to lacking one-pointed *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. But just as a great medicinal herb or nectar will grant welfare by taking it even without knowing of its qualities or glories, similarly, even without knowing the glories of the *vraja-gopīs*, if anyone performs *bhajana* following in their shelter, then Śrī Bhagavān bestows auspiciousness upon them.

The Real Vrajavāsī Never Desires Anything Mundane

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said that as long as one has no *prema* for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, maintaining this body is useless. Śrī

Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who appeared to purify Kali-yuga, composed and spoke only the *Śikṣāṣṭaka* in His whole life. He told one thing in the *Śikṣāṣṭaka* that directly showed the quality of the Vrajavāsīs.

*na dhanam na janam na sundarim
kavitam va jagadisa kamaye
mama janmani janmaniśvare
bhavatad bhaktir abaituki tvayi*

Śikṣāṣṭaka 4

He Jagadīśa, I do not desire wealth or followers, nor do I desire beautiful poetry (here meaning knowledge). He Prāṇeśvara, Lord of my life, my only desire is to have unalloyed devotion unto Your lotus feet birth after birth.

The Vrajavāsīs do not desire wealth, because in relation to Vraja the *gopīs* themselves said:

*jayati te 'dbikam janmanā vrajab
śrayata indirā śaśvad atra hi*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.31.01)

O beloved! Because of Your birth here, this Śrī Vraja-maṇḍala has become more glorious than Vaikuṅṭha. Due to this, the presiding goddess of all beauty and wealth, Śrī Lakṣmī, is residing here continuously decorating it.

Pūjya Mahārājaśrī is Truly a Vrajavāsī

Pūjya Mahārājaśrī was a true Vrajavāsī adorned with all the qualities just described, as well as being decorated with all other good attributes. He was the living embodiment of *rāgānugā-bhakti*, and was completely inundated with *vraja-prema*. If he is declared to be the very expression of the principle of *vraja-prema*, this would be no exaggeration. Just by catching sight of Mahārājaśrī one would feel that a real Vrajavāsī was coming. One does not become a Vrajavāsī simply by taking birth in Vraja, because that Vraja in which the Vrajavāsīs took birth was also the birthplace of demons such as Aghāsura and Bakāsura.

Vrajavāsīs Only See Rāgānugā-bhakti and Prema

We Vrajavāsīs had a natural spontaneous affection for *pūjya Śrī Nārāyaṇa Mahārājajī*. Why? Because the Vrajavāsīs do not look at anyone's erudition, nor do they look at any *sampradāya*, nor do they look at any *paramparā*. The Vrajavāsīs only see. Who has *rāgānugā-bhakti* and *prema*? In truth, *pūjya Mahārājaśrī* was the living embodiment of that *rāgānugā-bhakti*, about which *vrajācārya Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa* has explained in his book *Bhakti-rasa-taraṅgiṇī*.

Pūjya Mahārājaśrī distributed the *rāgānugā-bhakti* of the Vrajavāsīs all over the world; therefore all the Vrajavāsīs came together and conferred upon *pūjya Mahārājaśrī* the title *Yugācārya* and offered him prayers.

Please consider that there are titles such as *mahā-maṇḍaleśvara*, *jagad-guru* or *viśva-guru* and who knows what else that are usually conferred upon someone by religious councils and assemblies. However, there is not even one *dharma-ācārya* who can come to us Vrajavāsīs and say that we have offered him the respect we offered *pūjya Mahārājaśrī*.

Mahārājaśrī Has Not Gone Anywhere

Although this is the world of birth and death and one who comes here will certainly have to leave, you should never have the notion that Mahārājaśrī has gone anywhere. I will never accept this! Even if you stand in front of me with a *tulasī* leaf and *sālagrāma* in your hand and make an oath, still we Vrajavāsīs will never accept that Mahārājajī has gone – we will not accept this at any price, for we are living directly in *rāgānugā-bhakti*. Come to the villages of the *aṣṭa-sakhīs* today, after five thousand five hundred years have gone by. Just see! Even today you cannot get fresh butter; you will get butter from the day before, because we know that even today that boy of Nanda comes and eats butter! He has not gone anywhere; rather He always stays in Vraja and eats butter. In the same way, Mahārājaśrī, the living embodiment of Vraja's *rāgānugā-bhakti*, is always present in Vraja.

Pūjya Mahārājaśrī is Always Present in the Hearts of Those who Follow and Accept Rāgānugā-bhakti

Although Mahārājaśrī's glories cannot be conveyed in words, still, I will continue to speak a few more words about him. *Pūjya Mahārājaśrī* is present in our hearts, he will always be there. As long as the earth remains, as long as the creation goes on, Mahārājaśrī will always be in the hearts of those who are influenced by *vraja-prema*, those who accept and follow *rāgānugā-bhakti*, but if they are demons, well, that is another topic of discussion.

The Depository of Pūjya Mahārājaśrī

There is one thing you should remember: this *maṭha* and mission that Mahārājajī has established is the legacy that he has left with you, and those who disrupt this treasure given by the *mahāpuruṣa* can never be forgiven. 🙏

Gosvāmī Śrī Dīpaka Kumāra Bhaṭṭa is in the *varṇśaja*, line of Vrajācārya Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭajī, as well as the present 'in-charge' (*pīṭhādhiśvara*) of the Vrajācārya-pīṭha in Uñcāgaon (Varsānā).

MY ŚRADDHĀÑJALI –

Heartfelt Offering of Flowers –

TO NITYA-LĪLA-PRAVIṢṬA AṢṬOTTARA-ŚATA ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD
BHAKTIVEDĀNTA NĀRĀYAṆA GOSVĀMĪ MAHĀRĀJA

by Śrī Yamunā Prasāda Caturvedī
(baḍe caube, tīrtha-purohit, Mathurā)



Relationship of the Śrī Gauḍīya Sampradāya Ācāryas with my Ancestors

In Mathurā-tīrtha within Vraja, our house is known as the home of *baḍe caubejī*, prominent Vedic scholars. Our forefather was Śrī Ujāgara Caube, who was the *tīrtha-purohit* of all fifty-two state kings and the four *sampradāyas*. Our family line has been serving as the *tīrtha-purohit*, official guiding priests of the holy places, for about the last five hundred years. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, appeared in the Śrī Gauḍīya *sampradāya*, which is within the Madhva *sampradāya*, along with Śrīla Rūpa, Śrīla Sanātana and the rest of the six Gosvāmīs. The line of Śrī Ujāgara Caubejī has been the *tīrtha-purohit* of Mathurā-maṇḍala for many Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas.

Later, in 1932, the protector of the Gauḍīya *sampradāya*, *om viṣṇupāda paramahaṁsa* Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī, came to Mathurā with the purpose of performing the eighty-four *kosa parikramā* of Mathurā-Vraja-maṇḍala. At that time, our father Śrī Gopāla-candajī (the son of Śrī Vṛndāvana-candajī), served Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda by performing the *saṅkalpa*, or vow-taking ceremony, for the Śrī Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā* as well as worshipping Śrī Yamunājī at Viśrāma-ghāṭa, the prominent holy place of Mathurā. He then stayed with him for the whole eighty-four *kosa parikramā*. The details of this *parikramā* are available in the records of our priests. From that time, the relationship between the Śrī Gauḍīya *ācāryas* and our line has been going on. Accompanying *om*

viṣṇupāda paramahaṁsa Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī were Śrī Giri Mahārāja, Śrī Tīrtha Mahārāja, Śrī Bhāgavata Mahārāja, Śrī Bodhāyan Mahārāja, Śrī Atulacanda and Śrī Kuṅja Bābu (who all have signed their names on the register) along with many other devotees who participated in the pilgrimage.

Some Memories of Mahārājaśrī's Transcendental Affection

In 1954, *tridaṇḍi-svāmī* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja came to Mathurā to perform pilgrimage of Vraja. Śrī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja had come with him. That was the first time I met Mahārājajī, and my relationship with him has been going since then. Mahārājajī had very deep love and affection for me, and he often took my counsel in many affairs. He considered me as a member of his family and would say, “Along with being our *tīrtha-purohit*, you are my friend too.” I accepted Mahārājaśrī as my *sikṣā-guru*. Whenever any pilgrims came to the Mathurā Maṭha for *darśana*, he would call me and request me to take them around. I would show them all the holy places and then bring them back to the *maṭha*, but I never asked for a donation. Then Mahārājaśrī would himself tell the pilgrims to give me some donation.

The Example of Mahārājaśrī

Every single year Mahārājaśrī has been performing the eighty-four *kosa parikramā* of Śrī Vraja-maṇḍala. No other



ācārya of the Gauḍīya *sampradāya* has done Śrī Vraja-*maṇḍala parikramā* yearly. Some *ācāryas* perform *parikramā* after three years, some after five years; but Mahārājaśrī's pilgrimage has been going on every year continuously. Every year on the eighty-four *kosa parikramā*, Mahārājaśrī would call me and have me go to Viśrāma-ghāṭa with him and Śrī Yamunājī's worship, the *saṅkalpa* for Vraja *parikramā* and other duties were performed by me. In this way, Mahārājaśrī had deep affection for me and he would honour me from time to time.

Mahārājaśrī was Supremely Capable of Cutting all Doubts

Every year after Janmāṣṭamī, Mahārājaśrī would call all the Mathurā *brāhmaṇas* and would duly honour them. He would call a religious assembly of the learned men at Mathurā, Śrī Vṛndāvana and Govardhana, and would respect the *brāhmaṇas* and *caturvedīs*. One specialty of Mahārājaśrī was that if any learned man had any doubt, Mahārājaśrī would at once resolve it and that person would become satisfied. I saw many times that if any person asked any type of question, Mahārājaśrī quickly gave the solution.

Well-wisher of the Vrajavāsīs

Mahārājaśrī renovated many of the run-down *kunḍas* within the eighty-four *kosa* Śrī Vraja-*maṇḍala*. In Govardhana he also planned to clean and refill Brahma-*kunḍa*. For the welfare of the Vrajavāsī villagers, he did some social welfare activities also, and for this even today, the residents of Vraja-*maṇḍala* remember Mahārājaśrī.

Mahārājaśrī Respected the Followers of all Sampradāyas

Mahārājaśrī never belittled the *ācāryas* of any *sampradāya*, rather, he respected and honoured them all. From time to time

he would call an assembly of scholars and invite the followers of other *sampradāyas*, offering them appropriate respect.

Mahārājaśrī's Humility

Whenever Mahārājaśrī would go abroad to preach, he would call a meeting of the Vrajavāsī *brāhmaṇas*, scholars and *paṇḍitas*, and take their blessings for his travels to the West. Later on, I would also come to invoke auspiciousness for his journey; and when Mahārājaśrī returned to Mathurā from his travels he would tell us all the news, such as what obstacles he met and how they were overcome by the mercy of his *guru-mahārāja*.

One Example of the Affection of Mahārājaśrī

One time I went to Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma for the occasion of the five-hundredth year anniversary festival of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's appearance. At that time, the welcome and respect Mahārājaśrī gave me I can never forget for the rest of my life. He looked after me in every respect, for which I am very grateful.

One clear example of Mahārājaśrī's affection for me is that on the same day that Mahārājaśrī entered *nitya-līlā* I saw him in my dream at four in the morning. I was so amazed that upon rising, I went straight to the Gauḍīya Maṭha. There I found out from Śrī Premānanda Prabhujī that Mahārājaśrī had entered *nitya-līlā* early that morning at three a.m. Hearing this, I was shocked. I stood speechless, thinking, "He with whom I've had relation for sixty years is now gone." He has gone to *nitya-līlā*, yet may his immortal name and activities remain in this world, this is my wish. With these words I now rest my pen. 🌸

Śrī Yamunā Prasāda Caturvedī, *baḍe caube*, is a resident of Mathurā and *tīrtha-purohita*. He is the well-wisher of the Gauḍīya Maṭhas, serves with a selfless mood, and is a sweet-speaking *tīrtha-purohita*.

PŪJYA MAHĀRĀJĀJĪ –

The Glory of Vraja

Śrī Gopeshwarnath Chaturvedi



He Shows the Path to the Lotus Feet of the Lord

Pūjya Śrī Nārāyaṇa Mahārājajī was an extraordinary saint of Vraja. He was a medium by whose light this *vaiṣṇava-dharma* spread everywhere in all directions, and many living entities in both India and abroad were shown the path to the lotus feet of the Lord, which is the goal of human life. For ages and ages to come, people will make their lives successful by following the instructions of Mahārājajī.

He Possessed a Very Affectionate Nature

In 1985, the protest for liberating of the birthplace of Lord Rāma had started. I had the responsibility of accelerating the proceedings of this movement in Mathurā via Vishva Hindu Parishad and Bajrang Dal. Therefore, it was natural on my part to lend support to various programs linked with Hindu honour and prestige. Hindu meetings and assemblies of saints were held in various places, and there was an endeavour to lend appropriate support to solve their problems.

One day, the city co-ordinator of Bajrang Dal, Śrī Satish Dabar told me that I was being called by Mahārājajī of the Gauḍīya Maṭha. I had never met Mahārājajī before and went with Mr. Dabar to his service. In the very first meeting, I experienced his very affectionate nature. I also attained his blessings of support for every activity related to Hindu self-respect. I was overwhelmed by having easily attained the support of a *mahāpuruṣa*.

When I was leaving his room, Mahārājajī said, “Caturvedījī, a person sells eggs in front of the Maṭha, and the foul smell of the eggs is not conducive to *bhajana*. We have asked him to move his stall so many times, but he is a quarrelsome man and not willing to move.” “Mahārājajī,” I said, “you have bestowed supreme mercy upon me by giving me service. I will do my best.” Finally, that man shifted his stall elsewhere.

Then, by the inspiration of Mahārājajī, Bajrang Dal conducted a movement in the Mathurā district prohibiting the selling of eggs near any temple or *āśrama*. This was one hundred percent successful. From then on, we received the blessings and support of Mahārājajī for all of our programs. When he would speak in large assemblies, the Hindu society received so much inspiration from his enlightening words. Whether the program be in worship of Śrī Rāma-śilā or Śrī Rāma-pādukā, the Gauḍīya Maṭha lent us its utmost support.

The Power of Mahārājajī’s Blessings

Once, Mahārājajī organized Śrī Bhāgavata-kathā at the birthplace of Lord Kṛṣṇa (Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Janmabhūmi). For that, a *śobbā-yātrā*, or procession, was scheduled from Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha to the birthplace, but local

administration refused to give their permission for that. Many attempts were made to oppose it, but all were unsuccessful. One night, we appeared before Mahārājajī to discuss this and it was decided that we shall go to the birthplace in the morning while doing *kīrtana* and then see what happens. Mahārājajī fully supported this proposal. Early in the morning, the *śobbā-yātrā saṅkīrtana* started with much pomp. By the time the administration received news of this, we had already reached Viśrāma-ghāṭa. A large police force tried to stop the procession there, but by the mercy of Mahārājajī, they were firmly opposed and the procession reached the birthplace without any hindrance. Even the city Police Chief could not stop it.

The Renovation of the Durvāsā Ṛṣi Temple by Mahārājajī

The *mabanta* of the Durvāsā Ṛṣi temple on the other side of the Yamunā gave the temple to Mahārājajī. It was in a very dilapidated state, so Mahārājajī proceeded to repair and beautify it. Various obstacles were faced, but finally the temple was repaired. Despite its finished construction, the local villagers attempted to prevent the installation of the deities by every means. Mahārājajī told me, “So much wealth has been spent on the renovation of the Durvāsā Ṛṣi temple, but some local people causing a disturbance, opposing the installation of the deities. I am thinking that now this temple should be left as it is.” I replied, “Mahārājajī, the deities will be installed and the temple will also function. Just give me your blessings to be able to do this.”

Then, one day, an auspicious time was decided to install the deities and the installation took place. As expected, a struggle was also there, but eventually the opponents surrendered to Mahārājajī and now *dharmā* is being propagated by the Durvāsā Ṛṣi temple without any hindrance.

Mahārājajī – the Main Source of Blessing in the Formation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmabhūmi Vikāsa Samiti

Along with the movement to reclaim Ayodhyā, determination was growing to reclaim Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Janmabhūmi. Therefore, the government began to create many obstacles to daily religious programs. Subsequently, the ‘Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmabhūmi Vikāsa Samiti’ was formed. The main source of blessings for this *samiti* was Mahārājajī.

Silent Teaching by Mahārājajī

The repair of Brahma-kuṇḍa, near Mānasī-gaṅgā in Govardhana, was begun by Mahārājajī on a large scale, but the inflow of sewer water was not stopped. When a sewer line was installed near Brahma-kuṇḍa, I informed

Mahārājajī of the scheme. He became very pleased and said that one day, we would have to go there together to see it. In those days, Mahārājajī’s health was not so good, so I was hesitant to make further arrangements, but Mahārājajī said, “Come tomorrow at 5 a.m. and we shall go to Govardhana.” I reached the Gauḍīya Maṭha at 5:02 am and was astonished to see Mahārājajī already seated in the car, waiting for me. Maybe he was teaching me that I should arrive before time. When we arrived at Mānasī-gaṅgā, he saw the whole plan and became very pleased. “It is good that impure water no longer come into Mānasī-gaṅgā and Brahma-kuṇḍa.”

Beautification of the Banks of Yamunā by the Blessings of Mahārājajī

Once, at the beginning of Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā* Mahārājajī came to Viśrāma-ghāṭa with his party for *saṅkalpa*. I submitted before Mahārājajī that every year, one or two steps of the bank were breaking, and that I am endeavouring to repair them. Mahārājajī ordered, “Start this work immediately and I shall offer my support by donating five *lākha* (five hundred thousand) rupees for this purpose.” Upon hearing this, I became so jubilant. Later, by the blessings of Mahārājajī, a plan involving *crores* (hundreds of thousands) of rupees was sanctioned by the government to repair and beautify the banks of Yamunā, and all the banks from Viśrāma-ghāṭa to Bengali-ghāṭa were repaired and protected.

A Spiritual Guardian

Whenever Mahārājajī returned from the west to Mathurā, he would always mercifully call for me. He would ask Śrī Mādhava Mahārāja to phone me or he would send Purandara Prabhu to the house of this servant. Upon presenting me in his service, he would inquire about various social and religious activities, and like a guardian would give me heartily guidance, which was my invaluable treasure. If he ever ordered some service from me, it was my extraordinary fortune that such a great soul was mercifully giving this servant some service.

Now, I will always wait for his affectionate guidance. Faithfully bowed at his feet,

Gopeshwar Nath Caturvedi
Ratan Kund, Mathurā 

Śrī Gopeshwar Nath Caturvedi is a renowned religious worker of Mathurā. He is one of the trustees of Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Janmabhūmī. He is also the regional president of Vishwa Hindu Parishad and Bajarang Dal. He has immense interest in service of saints.

*Śraddhā Puspāñjali from
Dīkṣā and Śikṣā Disciples*



Unforgettable Memories



Offer unlimited *daṇḍavat-pranāma* at the lotus feet of most revered *dīkṣā-guru, nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja* and also to my revered *śikṣā-guru, nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja*.

Absence from the One who Consoles

[From a *puṣpāñjali* spoken in the *viraha-sabha*, 1 January 2011]

Today we have assembled here [Śrī Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha, Navadvīpa with heavy hearts. I had heard of the word *viraha* (separation) but never had experienced it in the very core of my heart like I am today. When Śrīla Mahārājāji was present, I could not really understand anything about the pain of separation, even though I had observed many disappearance days. After the disappearance of my *gurupāda-padma* [Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja], we understood something about separation but our heart did not break completely. Śrīla Mahārāja was there to console us. “Don’t worry,” he would say. “In separation from him, try to follow his instructions and ideals as best you can. By doing so you will understand the actual meaning of separation.” But now who is there to console us?

[The following is the written offering.]

One Who Nourished Us by His Affection

Who will experience separation? He who has an extremely close relationship with someone, only that person will experience separation. No one else. For such a long time, Śrīla Mahārāja made us stand by maintaining us with his affection. When we came to the *maṭha*, our *guru-mahārāja* gave us *dīkṣā* and then said, “Go to Śrī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja and learn everything from him. Hear *hari-kathā* from him. Have the same degree of faith in him as you have in me, not a fraction less.”

Dīkṣā-guru and *śikṣā-guru* are both equal. There is no difference between them, but their roles differ. The *dīkṣā-guru* gives *dīkṣā* (*mantras*), while teachings of the scriptures and instructions on how to advance in spiritual life and how to enter deep *bhājana* are imparted by *śikṣā-guru*. Therefore, *dīkṣā-guru* and *śikṣā-guru* are equal. It was with this conception that Guru Mahārāja would take us to Śrīla Mahārājajī and say to him, “Mahārāja, on your order I have given them spiritual birth by giving them *dīkṣā*, but the responsibility of imparting all teachings related to *sādhana* and *bhājana* and of nourishing and maintaining them with parental affection is on you. And the responsibility to chastise and correct them is on Śrīla Trivikrama Mahārāja.” And this is how Śrīla Mahārāja used to maintain us. Previously, there was no substantial difference of opinion among us Godbrothers. This only came later and this is our misfortune.

He Bestowed Spiritual Auspiciousness

Śrīla Mahārājajī would speak to all who came before him about the necessity of performing *bhājana*. Whenever he met with someone, he did not ask about any mundane topics, but rather asked, “How is your *bhājana*? Speak some verse.” For the purpose of making everyone expert in speaking on scripture, he used to give us *hari-kathā* in the morning, afternoon and evening – three times a day – and had us memorize appropriate *śloka*s that we could quote in speaking *hari-kathā*. He endeavoured so much for our spiritual welfare.

Śrīla Mahārāja’s heart was very simple, full of deep *anurāga* for Śrīmatī Rādhikā. He would often say, “Except for *bhakti*, there is nothing else worth desiring in this world. Upon attaining *bhakti*, all else is achieved.” He also used to say, “Take shelter of *śrī gurudeva* with your body, mind and words and you will always be successful.” He was an expert *bhājanānandī*. Just by receiving *darśana* of his lotus face, all our sufferings used to go away and a desire to chant *harināma* arose. It is for this reason that the scriptures state:

*yānbhāra darśane mukhe āise kṛṣṇa-nāma
tānbhāre jāniba tumi ‘vaiṣṇava-pradbhāna’*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 16.74)

A topmost Vaiṣṇava is he whose very presence makes others chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa.

A Topmost Preacher of the Line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī

All transcendental qualities come of their own accord to those in whose hearts *bhakti* is present. All power to attract others manifests in them. Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja caused the current of *vraja-rasa-bhakti* to flow in such a way that everyone became attracted to him automatically. That is why Śrī Dīpaka Bhaṭṭa, the descendent of Śrī Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa of Ūncāgaon (the village of Lalitā sakhī) and *guru* of places like Varsanā, invited all Vaiṣṇavas to his village and then, in the presence of them all, he honoured Śrīla Mahārāja with the title Yugācārya.

And Śrīla Mahārājajī really was the *yugācārya*. Even in his old age, he preached the message of Śrīman Mahāprabhu throughout all the regions of the world. There is no region he did not go. The main subject of his preaching was *unnata-ujjala-bhāva*, or worship in the mood of a *mañjarī* in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. He used to say, “Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja has cut the jungles by his preaching. Now, I shall go there and preach his main mission.” In the last days of his manifest presence, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda also used to lament, “My whole life was spent in cutting jungles and I could not give what I came to give.”

What was that thing? *Unnata-ujjala rasa*, or the line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Śrīla Mahārāja preached this alone. Only after hearing from Śrīla Mahārāja about *rūpānuga* and *rāgānuga-bhakti* again and again did I understand something about the speciality of *rūpānuga-bhakti*.

One who Taught Non-Enviousness

Once, Bhaktāgrima Prabhu, Advaya-jñāna Prabhu, two other *brahmacārīs* and I went to preach in Shillong. One day, Bhaktāgrima Prabhu went to the shop of a *māravādī* (merchant) for *bbikṣā* and he gave him five rupees. But Bhaktāgrima Prabhu said that he would not take less than ten rupees and went for *bbikṣā* elsewhere. When returned, he saw that the shop of that *māravādī* had caught fire and that most of his goods were burned. Bhaktāgrima Prabhu went back to where we were staying and while telling us about the incident said that the *māravādī* had been struck by his curse. Later, when we returned to Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha and told Śrīla Mahārāja about the preaching, we also told him about that incident. Śrīla Mahārāja listened

to everything and did not say a word, but that evening, while giving *hari-kathā*, he asked everyone, “How can we understand if our heart is becoming purified or not?” When none of us responded, he himself gave the answer, “When we are not disturbed even when all circumstances are there to agitate us, when we are insulted by someone but do not request God to punish that person – meaning we do not curse him. Rather we think that such insult is due to our past actions. Only then can we understand that our heart is being purified.” Through this *hari-kathā*, Śrīla Mahārāja imparted the teaching that those who desired to become *sādhvas* should not even think of cursing somebody.

Intolerant when Proper Etiquette is Transgressed

Śrīla Mahārājajī never tolerated transgression of *maryādā*, or proper etiquette. When we were in Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha, we used to see how at noon *prasāda* Śrīla Mahārājajī would come from his *bhājana-kuṭīra* to where the devotees were honouring *prasāda* and looked to see whether or not they were sitting in line according to seniority. If he saw some infraction, he would first correct that person and then sit where he would sit to honour *prasāda*. He used say, “If someone joined *maṭha* one day before you, he has heard *hari-kathā* for one day more than you and performed one more day of *guru-sevā*. By considering him superior and giving him respect we will attain auspiciousness.”

One who Imparted the Teachings of Śikṣāṣṭakam

In Navadvīpa, Śrīla Mahārājajī used to explain *Śikṣāṣṭakam* very nicely in his morning classes and also used to make us remember its verses. “*Śikṣāṣṭakam* has been personally spoken by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu,” he would say; “therefore all devotees should adorn themselves with this necklace.” When he would explain the second verse, *nāmnām akāri bahudhā*, he said, “In this verse, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has invested all his *śakti*, or power. All His power means to perform *bhājana* while absorbed in the mood of His *svarūpa-śakti* Śrīmatī Rādhikā.”

One Who Did Not See the Faults of Others

Once, Śrīla Mahārājajī was giving *hari-kathā* regarding *vaiṣṇava-aparādha*, and he described all of the offences to the Vaiṣṇavas. After *hari-kathā*, I questioned him, “Mahārājajī! After hearing of the offences that can be committed to Vaiṣṇavas, it seems that we shall not be able to reside in the *maṭha* even for a day. How, then, will we attain auspiciousness?” In response, Śrīla Mahārāja replied, “Guru and Vaiṣṇavas are very merciful. They do not see the faults of others. If they were to do so, then nobody would be able to reside in the *maṭha*.”

One who Appreciated Ideal Character

Once, eight to ten *brahmacārīs* went with Śrīla Mahārāja to preach in the area of Sundarvana, Bengal. When we crossed the river, the boatman asked us to step down. On the bank there was slush that went for some distance. Somehow, with much trouble we crossed it with Mahārājajī. He told us, “Your *gurudeva*, *pūjyapāda* Vāmana Mahārāja, used to take so much trouble to come here to preach every year. This is *guru-sevā* and *bhakti*.”

Expert in the Conceptions of the Sampradāya

Once, under the guidance of Śrīla Mahārājajī, twenty to thirty *brahmacārīs* and eight to ten *sannyāsīs* went with him to preach in Medinīpura. The subject of the *hari-kathā* there was ‘Can *hari-bhājana* be performed by those who have taken *dīkṣā* from a *kula-guru*?’ In response, Śrīla Mahārāja said, “*sampradāya vibinā ye mantras te niṣphalāḥ matāḥ* – a *mantra* is useless unless it is received through a bona fide *sampradāya*” (*Padma Purāṇa*). There are only four pure Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas* in Kali-yuga. Those who desire to attain *bhakti* should take shelter of any one of these four *sampradāyas* and perform *bhājana*. Only then it is possible to attain perfection in *bhājana*. Especially in Kali-yuga, one should take shelter of the *sampradāya* that has been accepted by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and perform *bhājana* while accepting His ideal. If the *kula-guru* is from a bona fide Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya* and properly follows the conceptions, practices and etiquette of that *sampradāya*, then it is okay. Otherwise, as advised in the scriptures, one should leave the *kula-guru* and take shelter of a *mahā-bhāgavata* from a bona fide *sampradāya*, and from him, again take *dīkṣā*.

One who Possessed Divine Capabilities

Whenever Śrīla Mahārājajī danced during Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma *parikramā*, all who witnessed it would attain unprecedented happiness. Upon returning from the *parikramā* all the devotees would sit together to honour *prasāda*, but the *brahmacārīs* were sometimes so tired that they did not come to distribute *prasāda*. If this ever came to Śrīla Mahārāja’s attention, he would immediately come out of his *bhājana-kuṭīra* and summon one or two *brahmacārīs*, calling their name. Upon hearing his voice, all the *brahmacārīs* would automatically come from wherever they were and shortly after, *prasāda* would be distributed to thousands of people. This is an example of his divine capabilities. This would not happen on the call of any other *mahārāja*. Śrīla Mahārāja would not just chastise or correct us, but by the ideal he himself set and with his *hari-kathā*, he prepared us for spiritual life.

Śrī Śācinandana Gaurahari Fulfils the Desire of Bhakta-bāndhava Śrīla Mahārāja

One night in Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha, during Navadvīpa *parikramā*, thousands of devotees sat down for *prasāda*. Rice, dahl, *sabji*, and so forth, had just been served and then it started to rain so heavily it was extraordinary. When this news reached Śrīla Guru Mahārāja and Śrīla Mahārājajī, Śrīla Guru Mahārāja started to chant the Nṛsiṃha *mantra* and Śrīla Mahārājajī came down to the pilgrims while chanting “*Jaya Śrī Śācinandana Gaurahari!*” He raised his arms and asked the pilgrims to also loudly chant, “*Jaya Śācinandana Gaurahari! Nitāi Gaura Premānande!*” Everyone did so and instantly it stopped raining on the temple premises, but to our surprise, the torrential rain continued beyond the four walls of the temple. There was even water all around the *maṭha*, but not even one drop of rain fell in the temple. Upon witnessing this miracle, all of the devotees and pilgrims were stunned. The next year, more pilgrims took part in our *maṭha*’s *parikramā*, having heard about this.

One who Developed Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha

Whatever positive development took place in Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha was due to mercy of Śrīla Mahārājajī. He gave the entire responsibility of the construction to me. According to his instructions the *dharamasālā*, school building, *bhājana-kuṭīra*, temple hall, and so forth, were constructed. He wanted to do much more but could not due to providence.

One with Firm Determination for the Service of Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas

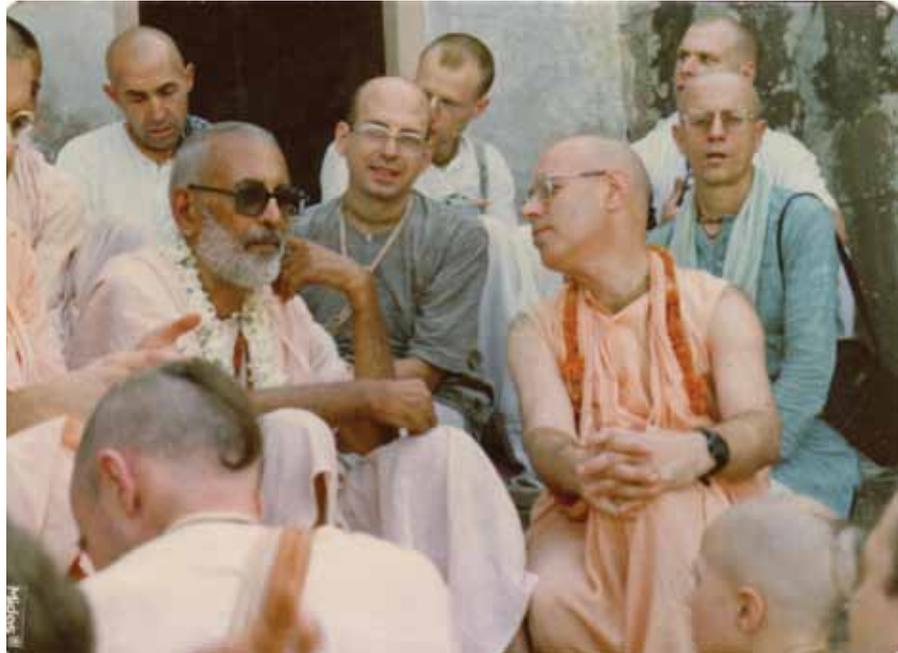
Śrīla Mahārājajī was an expert operator. He used to give respect to all the Vaiṣṇavas and gentle people of Śrī Dhāma Navadvīpa and Śrī Vraja-maṇḍala. Whenever the *maṭha* experienced any difficulty, we all would become fearful, but Śrīla Mahārājajī used to easily solve even the most difficult of problems very quickly. He would say, “Sincerely perform *hari-bhājana* and serve Hari, *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas. By doing so, you will never encounter any problem, but the moment you think of your own happiness, various types of problems will arise before you. Don’t be worried about your future, because your spiritual guardians, *śrī guru* and the Vaiṣṇavas are worrying for that.”

All-auspiciousness is Attained Only by Following in the Footsteps of Guru and Vaiṣṇavas

Once in Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha, Navadvīpa, during the month of Kārttika, Śrīla Mahārājajī regularly sang *Rādhā-kṛpā-kaṭākṣa*, *Nandanandanāṣṭakam* and *Dāmodarāṣṭakam* in such a sweet voice that all devotees who heard him were spellbound. After *kīrtana*, he would give class on *Dāmodarāṣṭakam* and *Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta*. In speaking on *Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta*, Śrīla Mahārāja explained the hierarchy of devotees and in conclusion he said that there is no need to roam everywhere like Gopa-kumāra. Instead of wasting time, one should directly enter the *rūpānugā* line of Vraja, under the guidance of *śrī guru* and Vaiṣṇavas.

One who Satisfied Everyone’s Heart

Śrīla Mahārājajī has renovated many pastime places in Śrī Vraja-maṇḍala. Many Vaiṣṇavas used to come to hear *hari-kathā* from him, whether they knew of his glories or not. He used to give such sweet answers to each person’s question that their heart was satisfied. All who heard his *hari-kathā* became attracted to him. Many *sannyāsīs* and *brahmacārīs* from ISKCON also came to hear his *hari-kathā*, which was full of lofty moods, and were satisfied.



Even the Plants and Trees of Vraja are Related to Him

Once, during Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā*, Śrīla Mahārājajī and the *parikramā* party were staying in Varsānā. In those days, many Bengali pilgrims attended that *parikramā*. One of those pilgrims used to defecate under one particular tree every day. After two days, that tree appeared before Śrīla

Mahārāja in a dream and said, “I am performing *bhajana* here in the form of a tree and a certain person from your *parikramā* party has been defecating under me for the past couple of days.”

When Śrīla Mahārāja gave *kathā* the next day, he said, “In Vraja-maṇḍala, all the trees are great personalities performing *bhajana*. In our *parikramā* party, there is a certain person who is defecating under one of those trees. I request that person to ask forgiveness from that tree.” As he spoke this, tears flowed from his eyes.

In this way, through the medium of his *kathā*, Śrīla Mahārāja taught that the bushes, trees, plants and everything else in Vraja-maṇḍala is transcendental and that one should not try to harm them in any way. Cutting the bushes to use as *dātuna* (a twig to clean the teeth) or cutting the trees for any other use is an offence. All the plants of Vraja-maṇḍala are performing *bhajana*. They are not the objects of our enjoyment. Hearing this, that person cleaned the place surrounding the tree, paid obeisances to the tree and asked for its forgiveness.

One who Fulfilled the Innermost Desire of his Gurudeva

When my *guru-mahārāja* heard that everyone was requesting Śrīla Mahārājāī to go abroad to preach, he told him, “Mahārājāī, you should certainly go abroad to preach. This is the desire of our *gurudeva*, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Gurudeva bestows unlimited mercy upon you. Fulfil his innermost desire.” Later, when Śrīla Mahārāja went abroad, he sent my *guru-mahārāja* the details of one month of his preaching. Hearing of his extensive preaching, my *guru-mahārāja* became very pleased.

Wherever Śrīla Mahārājāī went he became very happy when people had pictures of my *gurudeva*, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, as well as Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Mahārāja and *parama-gurudeva* Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja on the altar. He was a bold preacher. In the matter of speaking the truth, he feared no one. And he gave affection to everyone, be that person a resident of the *maṭha*

or a householder. Wherever Śrīla Mahārāja went preaching, the devotees of that place remember his mercy and qualities, even today.

Attaining Śrīla Mahārāja’s mercy only possible by following his instructions

Śrīla Mahārāja was affectionate to everyone and encouraged everyone to perform *hari-bhajana*. He has disappeared from this world, but from the scriptures we know that *śrī guru* and the Vaiṣṇavas do not go anywhere; they are forever present and have only disappeared from our mundane eyes. But at the same time, separation from them is very difficult to tolerate. If we are able follow his instructions, however, he will be pleased wherever he is and will bestow his mercy upon us from there.

In offering my *puṣpāñjali* at his lotus feet I can only say that I have committed many offences at his feet.

May he mercifully forgive me and give me blessings. This alone is my prayer.

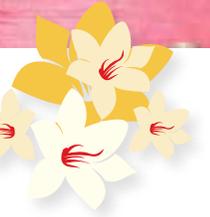
Bhaktivedānta Parivrājaka 🌸

Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Parivrājaka Mahārāja is one of the first *dikṣā* disciples of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja and has done long standing services to the mission under the guidance of his *śikṣā-gurudeva*, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.





Gurudeva, My Deity, Life and Soul



Offer my humble obeisances at the lotus feet of my beloved *dikṣā-guru*, Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, my Prabhupāda.

Dear Śrīla Gurudeva,

Please accept my *daṇḍavat-praṇāmas* at your sheltering lotus feet. All glories to Śrī Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga. All glories to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-biharijī.

As far as I have understood from you, the essence of our practice and our perfection is to remember the moods of our *ācāryas*, pray for the moods of our *ācāryas*, and weep for the moods of our *ācāryas*. When we chant the holy name, we can remember the beautiful pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and Their associates. Especially, when we remember the service moods of Their associates, those moods will come to us. This can happen only by the grace of a pure devotee who is situated with us here in the material world, and also with Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the spiritual world. Therefore I take shelter at your lotus feet. Only by the grace of a

mahātmā such as your dear self is this perfection possible, and you appeared in this material world for that sole purpose: to pick us up, and to enthuse and infuse us with transcendental serving moods, and take us to the spiritual world to play with Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa there. How could I be so fortunate to meet someone like you? And at the same time, I am so unfortunate that I could not understand you, could not see you.

I could not have seen – could not have related to – the sun of your real self, so you covered that brilliant sun with a beautiful cloud. Now, that beautiful cloud has disappeared, and my great misfortune is that I can see neither the cloud nor the sun. I am trying to remember you and your instructions, but still, so much of the time I'm working by my own intelligence, which is pitifully inadequate. Please continue to guide me so that I can find shelter and instruction. Otherwise, how can I advance? How can I help others? You said of yourself that you are just a dry straw. By that measure, what can I say of myself?

I have no real life other than the moods of service that appear in my heart by your grace. Apart from that, my life in this material world is not real life. You are therefore *devatātmā* – not only my worshipful deity, but also the life and soul of my soul. My only hope of real life is that when that real life appears in my heart, I can offer it in your service, rather than use it for enjoying and controlling here in this material world. My real life appears only by your grace, so it belongs to you.

You may ask me, “And what about your relationship with your *guru mahārāja*?” You once said, “*Dikṣā-guru* is

so powerful that he can appear as *śikṣā-guru*.” And when I asked you who gave me *dikṣā* – you or my *guru mahārāja* – you replied, “He gave you *dikṣā*, but through me.” How can I separate the two of you?

Please give me the grace to stay on course in this ocean of mystical potency, grace and love.

Your very tiny aspiring servant,

Bhaktivedānta Nemi 



In Our Hearts Forever by his “Heartly Blessings”



Offer my insignificant *praṇāma* to my eternal spiritual master, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja*, my Śrīla Prabhupāda, by whose causeless mercy I am able to write you this insignificant offering. He has given me the priceless gift of your association.

My Dearest Śrīla Gurudeva,

On this most auspicious transcendental occasion of your divine disappearance day, in which you have re-entered the divine eternal pastimes of the Divine Couple, I prostrate myself unlimited times at the dust of your divine lotus feet:

*vairāgya-yug-bhakti-rasaṁ prayatnair-
apāyayan-mām-anabbipsum-andham
krpāmbudbiryah para-duḥkha-duḥkḥī
śrī śrīmad bhaktivedānta nārāyaṇaṁ
taṁ praḥḥuṁ āśrayāmi*

You, my dear Śrīla Gurudeva, have induced me to drink the nectar of *śuddhā-bhakti*. This nectar is also containing complete renunciation of this world and the phantasmagoric, illusionary, so-called happiness, which brings only suffering and heartaches. Had you not come into my life, or my external existence of breathing like



a bellows in a blacksmith's shop, how would I have ever come to know anything about the transcendental realm of Goloka Vṛndāvana, where you are an eternal associate of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, Kṛṣṇa's most beloved who controls Him by Her *mādanākhyā-mahābhāva*.

I have no power to digest any of what you give in your *hari-kathā* and the *bhāvas* that you shower on those who are blessed by your personal association. But seeing my existence, destitute and bereft of any *bhakti* or even any good qualities, you are personally assisting my digestion in the form of your sweet guidance, patience, loving words and encouragement. I never was fortunate to have any personal close relationship with my *dikṣā-guru mahārāja*, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda. Now he has brought me to you for much needed nurturing so that one day, I will be able to take the powerful elixir of *śuddhā-bhakti* mixed with the *bhāva* that he and you have in every atom of your transcendental bodies.

Thanks to you, my relationship with my *guru mahārāja*, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is deeper and stronger. This is your mission, to deeply instil into the heart so many sweet, profound moods that were given to this world by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmīpāda. Establishing these deep moods of *rādhā-dāsyam* is the *mano 'bhīṣṭa* of Śrī Gaurāṅga!

Please help me Śrīla Gurudeva, to completely surrender my total *prāṇa*, words, senses, body and heart to your service. I have no hope in this lifetime or any lifetime in the future to attain one drop of *bhakti-rasa* without your guidance. I also have insufficient greed to approach the destination to where you are beckoning me to go. I have complete conviction however that in the association of those who are surrendered to you, and by serving them, I will gradually be lifted into the region where I can behold your pure association. I am eternally indebted to you, and can only try to give these jewels to others in the form of

your *hari-kathā*, which is a treasure of unlimited jewels.

Many devotees are experiencing you more deeply in their hearts now, in a wonderful transcendental way. Please allow me to serve your followers and experience the nectar of their hearts.

I want to please you in some small way by my service, which you lovingly guide me to perform. Thank you for tolerating me and not kicking me away. Thank you for sometimes mercifully kicking me instead. When, oh when, will I be able to perform *viśrambena-guro-sevā*?

*rādhā-sanmukha-saṁsaktim sakhī-saṅga-nivāsinīm
tām abhīm satatam vande guru-rūpām parām sakhīm*

I forever worship my *guru*, who in his form as an exalted *sakhī* is happily immersed in the company of Śrīmatī Rādhikā and the other *sakhīs*.

Please help this fallen and decrepit soul to someday enter the realm where you eternally reside. There, I will wash with my tears, your delicate lotus feet as I embrace them to my heart.

I have no real qualification to make this prayer, but you are the condensed mercy of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and the giver of real life to the lifeless.

I hope and pray to someday be able so speak your *hari-kathā* in a way that will please you and travel tirelessly in this world, as you mercifully did. I do not want to waste a moment of time that I could use to study your *hari-kathā* and books and the books of my *guru mahārāja* and all our *ācāryas*. By this, I hope to get a feeling of your *mano 'bhīṣṭa* and dedicate my life to fulfil that desire.

Begging to remain an insignificant piece of dust at your lotus feet,

Bhaktivedānta Sajjana 🍀



A Transcendental Gardener

My Dear Śrīla Gurudeva,

Taking on my head the dust of the lotus feet of my most merciful masters, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja (my Śrīla Prabhupāda) and Śrīla Gaura Govinda Mahārāja, by whose combined mercy I have been given the shelter of your lotus feet, I am offering to you this insignificant homage.

You appeared in my life at a time when I was devastated, just after the disappearance of my beloved *śikṣā-guru*, Śrīla Gaura Govinda Mahārāja. Lo and wonder, the not-even-dared-to-be-hoped-for miracle of finding myself for the third time in this one life at the feet of a *mahā-bhāgavata* who was compassionately concerned for my eternal welfare manifested again.

At first, the very lofty heights of the *hari-kathā* you were presenting day after day, albeit in a most sober way, made me doubt that I actually had a place in your spiritual family. But it gradually dawned on me that this was precisely your mission: to provide to so many spiritual aspirants the next installment of mercy by elaborately clarifying the ultimate goal of *bhakti* in the *rūpānuga* tradition. At the same time, you tirelessly pointed out the very same teachings in my Śrīla Prabhupāda's writings.

Faithfully fulfilling my Śrīla Prabhupāda's last request to you, you mercifully supplied the much needed water of *hari-kathā* to the seeds and creepers of *bhakti* he had started to cultivate. It could be said that you shone a projector lamp on his books, revealing what our repeated, careful readings had not brought out, thus confirming the first teaching I had received from my *śikṣā-guru*: there are two ways to approach *sāstra*: *aparā-vicāra* and *tattva-vicāra*, apparent and absolute considerations. Unless one approaches *śikṣā-guru*

who is a *tattva-vit sādhu* and surrenders to his tutelage in all humility, one only has access to the superficial meaning of one's *dikṣā-guru's* teachings.

Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja glorified Śrīla Sarasvatī Thākura by writing that he had softened the rigid path of *vaidhi-bhakti* with a touch of the sacred *rāga-mārga*: "*śībhilita-vidbi-rāgā-rādhyā-rādheṣa-dhāni...* – he has minimized the hardness and stiffness of the rules and regulations of calculative devotional service by a touch of the divine love. He caused the domain of pure love to descend into this plane by establishing the service of Rādhā-Govinda, thus verifying that a flow of divine love from the heart is the all in all." Reflecting upon your amazing dispensation of mercy through the many volumes of sacred literature you have translated and written commentaries on, and the countless lectures you delivered, I cannot but be moved to express the same about your Divine Grace.

You presented the essence of our previous *ācāryas'* teachings of in a most charming and fascinating way. You gave us tremendous spiritual hope, planting seeds of spiritual greed in our hearts. Bitterly lamenting your physical departure from our vision, I pray that your mercy will guide me to always associate with pure Vaiṣṇavas, who will nurture this seed in my barren heart. By this, I may be able to glorify you, not just by words but with the genuine spiritual progress you expected your tireless efforts to produce in our lives.

Your aspiring servant,

a beggar at your feet,
Bhaktivedānta Śuddhāvaitī 



Your Astounding Legacy

First, I would like to offer my most humble obeisances in the dust of the lotus feet of my *dikṣā-guru*, *om viṣṇupāda paramahaṁsa aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Śrīla Gaura Govinda Gosvāmī Mahārāja*. Similarly, placing my head in the dust of his divine lotus feet, I offer my most humble obeisances unto my *sannyāsa- and śikṣā-guru*, *nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja*. Finally, I offer my most humble obeisances in the dust of the lotus feet of *nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja – Śrīla Prabhupāda – and nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja*.

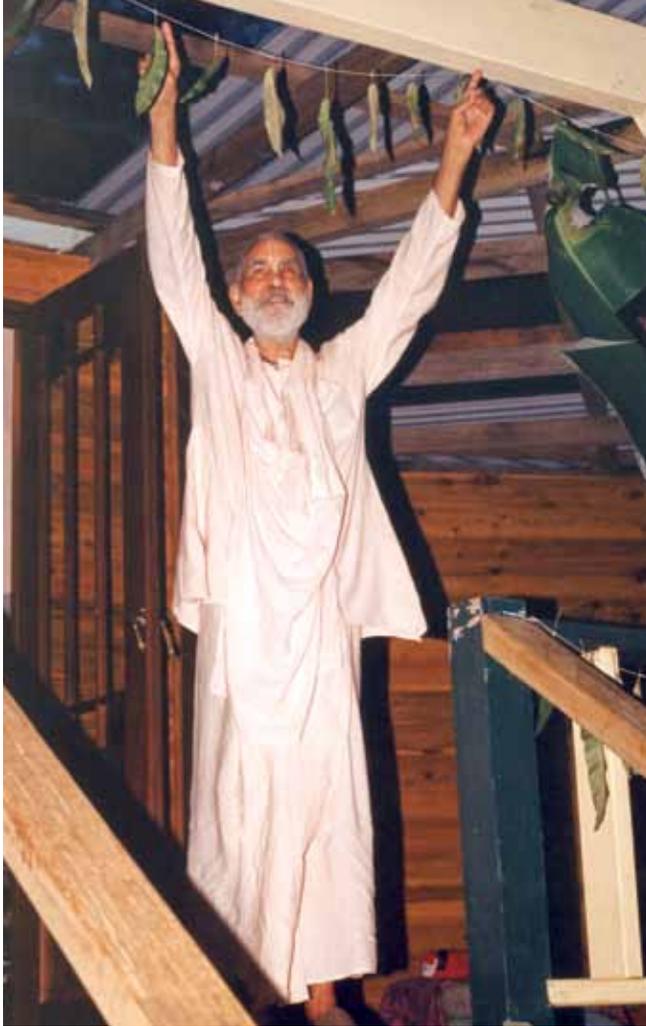
Dear Śrīla Gurudeva,

To write an offering in homage of someone as transcendently exalted as your divine self can never be

done adequately by a contaminated soul such as me, but for my purification and for the pleasure of Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga, I will make a humble attempt.

His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda has said that his books will be the law books for the next ten thousand years. We very humbly put forward that your books will be the love books for the next ten thousand years. Just as Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda has taken the commentaries of our previous *ācāryas* and presented the most subtle and complicated aspects of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava philosophy in a very concise and easy to comprehend manner, you have taken the teachings of our Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* on *bhakti-tattva*, *bhāva-tattva*, *prema-tattva*, *rāgānuga-bhakti*, etc., and made the most esoteric teachings ever known to man available in every corner of the globe.

You have done it in a most extraordinary manner. You have so beautifully and poetically presented these teachings



and pastimes, in such a way as to arouse the curiosity and greed of your audiences, whilst at the same time you have not revealed all the details of these pastimes and teachings. The result is that your books on these subjects are on the bookshelves of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas from all organizations around the world, and are even read by those who opposed you. What to speak of devotees being all over the world, your books are in homes and libraries in every corner of the globe.

On subjects like *rāgānugā-bhakti*, your books are authoritative, they are the standard, they are the guiding light. You have very beautifully entwined *līlā* and *rasa-kathā* with *siddhānta*. You have shown to the world the sweetness, charm, beauty, and priceless gems of what Caitanya Mahāprabhu has come to give, whilst at the same time protecting this aromatic flower of *rasa* with thorns of sharp, flawless and irrefutable *siddhānta*. Anyone who wants to know the authorized process of entering into *rasa-kathā*, *līlā-kathā* and *rāgānugā-bhakti*, will invariably refer to your books and teachings.

In your books, you have very compassionately protected people from the pitfalls of *sabājjīyaism*, speculation and so forth. It would not be out of order to say that for those who want to understand or enter these higher realms of *bhakti* that are the inheritance given to us by Śrī Caitanya

Mahāprabhu and our predecessor *ācāryas*, that your ‘love books’ are the ‘law books’ for the next ten thousand years.

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda has so rightly said, “Everything is in my books.” And by your books, Śrīla Gurudeva, you are indeed showing how everything is in his books. Your books and teachings are the keys by which one can open the treasure chest of *prema-tattva*, *līlā-tattva*, and *rasa-tattva* that are so lovingly and expertly placed within the Bhaktivedānta commentaries of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda’s books.

From one perspective, it may be said that Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja is the foremost disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Prabhupāda. One of the main reasons is because one of his arms (your divine self) has established *prema-dharma* on this planet, in a way that has never been done before and may never be done again. All over the world, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Prabhupāda established that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. But, through you, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja has shown the world the sweetness of Kṛṣṇa, and the process to enter into that realm of sweetness. Through you, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja has established the *mano ’bhīṣṭa* (inner heart’s desire) of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Through you, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja has revealed to the world the sweetness of Kṛṣṇa, and even more than Govinda’s sweetness, the *prema* of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. You have revealed to the world how Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has plundered that treasure chest of Rādhārāṇī’s *prema* and distributed the beauty of that *prema* to the whole world. Śrīla Gurudeva, your fulfilling the *mano ’bhīṣṭa* of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu on a global scale has greatly attributed to your spiritual master being revealed as the foremost disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Prabhupāda.

Your legacy as the *prema-ācārya* for the present age is set, but now another part of your legacy is unfolding. Not the *prema* that you have revealed in your books, but the *prema* that you have planted in the hearts of your disciples and followers. How will they manifest the fruits of your teachings? You have given numerous teachings and instructions. Now is the examination time. Your sincere followers will no doubt pass the examination. There will always be transitory issues to deal with. But with the main mission of their lives being to attain *bhāva-bhakti* and to help others attain this goal, they will surely pass the test. You have meticulously trained and prepared them for this. I pray to be able to enter your University (in this life), sit for the exam and truly be counted as one of your followers.

Aspiring to be your servant,

Bhaktivedānta Āśrama 



My Master Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī and Śrī Maṅgala-gītam

Offer my obeisances thousands of times at the lotus feet of my *gurupāda-padma nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Gaura Govinda Gosvāmī Mahārāja* and the same to my beloved *guru, nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja*.

By the causeless mercy of Śrī Śācinandana Gaurahari, Śrī Guru first appeared in my life as Śrī Śrīmad Gaura Govinda Svāmī Mahārāja, who attracted me towards the unalloyed devotional service (*uttamā-bhakti*) of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. When I offered myself at his lotus feet I vowed that the lord of my heart life after life will be none other than him. After Śrīla Gaura Govinda Svāmī Mahārāja entered *nitya-līlā*, I met Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

in Mathurā. At first I could not realize that the same *gurupāda-padma Śrīla Gaura Govinda Svāmī Mahārāja* had appeared in the form of Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja to deliver me. It was very difficult for me to take shelter at the lotus feet of Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, but later in dream Śrīla Gaura Govinda Svāmī Mahārāja confirmed that I should, and this freed me from all doubt. I thus accepted Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja as my *guru*, realizing that he is none other than my master:

*vairāgya-yug-bhakti-rasaṁ prayatnair
apāyayan mām anabbhīpsum andham
kṛpāmbudhir yaḥ para-duḥkha-duḥkhī
nārāyaṇas taṁ prabbum āśrayāmi*

Though in the beginning I was unwilling to drink the nectar of devotional service possessed of renunciation, and I was ignorant and unqualified, but my master Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, out of his causeless mercy, made me drink it. He is very compassionate to a fallen soul like me.

Many jewel-like experiences with Śrī Guru are locked in my heart, but I would like to share my experience of how my beloved *gurupāda-padma*, the master of my heart, appeared once again to shower his mercy upon this unqualified soul.

Although I had chance to associate with and serve many exalted Vaiṣṇavas since my childhood, I was searching for a real master to whom I could offer my heart. At that time I was attracted towards the teachings of the great Vaiṣṇava *ācārya* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda, who successfully preached the mission of Śrīman Caitanya Mahāprabhu all over the world. I then met Śrī Śrīmad Gaura Govinda Svāmī, whom I knew to be his most intimate disciple and non-different from him. I dedicated my life to his mission when I took shelter of him.

In those days I loved to sing devotional Hindi songs of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, but I found that Śrīla Gaura Govinda Svāmī Mahārāja preferred to hear the songs of great devotees like Vidyāpati, Caṇḍīdāsa and Jayadeva Gosvāmī. It was as if these *kīrtanas* were his life and soul and he would absorb himself listening to the songs of Śrī *Gīta-govinda* for hours and hours. In *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* this symptom is described as *āsaktis tad-guṇākhyāne*, one of the *anubhāvas*, or subordinate signs of ecstatic emotion, which is a symptom of a very advanced devotee of Kṛṣṇa. I was so attracted to him and proud to be his servant.

In Śrī *Gurvaṣṭakam*, Verse 5, it is described:

*śrī-rādhikā-mādhavayor apāra-
mādburya-lilā guṇa-rūpa-nāmnām
prati-kṣaṇāsvādana-lolupasya
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

At every moment, Śrī Gurudeva is experiencing intense greed in his heart to taste the unlimited sweetness of the holy names, forms, qualities and pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava in Vṛndāvana. I adore the lotus feet of that Śrī Gurudeva, which are the abode of grace and auspiciousness.

I understood that he is certainly a *gaura-priyajana*, a dear associate of Mahāprabhu. Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī used to read the poems of Vidyāpati, Caṇḍīdāsa and Jayadeva Gosvāmī's Śrī *Gīta-govinda*. He used to make Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu very happy by singing these songs. *Vidyāpati*,

*caṇḍīdāsa, śrī-gīta-govinda ei tina gīte karā'na prabhura
ānanda (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 10.115).*

Once he found me singing some Hindi *kīrtanas* about Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī on the occasion of Candana-yātrā. He called me to him and blessed me with the order to learn to sing the songs of Śrī *Gīta-govinda* and other traditional classical Vaiṣṇava *kīrtanas*. Those *kīrtanas* were quite impossible for me to sing for him at that time, because I had never studied classical Indian music. Before I could fulfil his desire, he entered into *nitya-līlā*. Within my heart, I was always crying, "Will those days come, when I will be engaged in singing for the pleasure of my master, Śrīla Gaura Govinda Svāmī?" Many days and nights passed in separation from him. After sometime his mercy manifested in my heart and I was able to sing the songs of *Gīta-govinda*.

*mahāprabhu vinā keba nāhi dayāmaya
kākere garuḍa kare,—aiche kon haya*

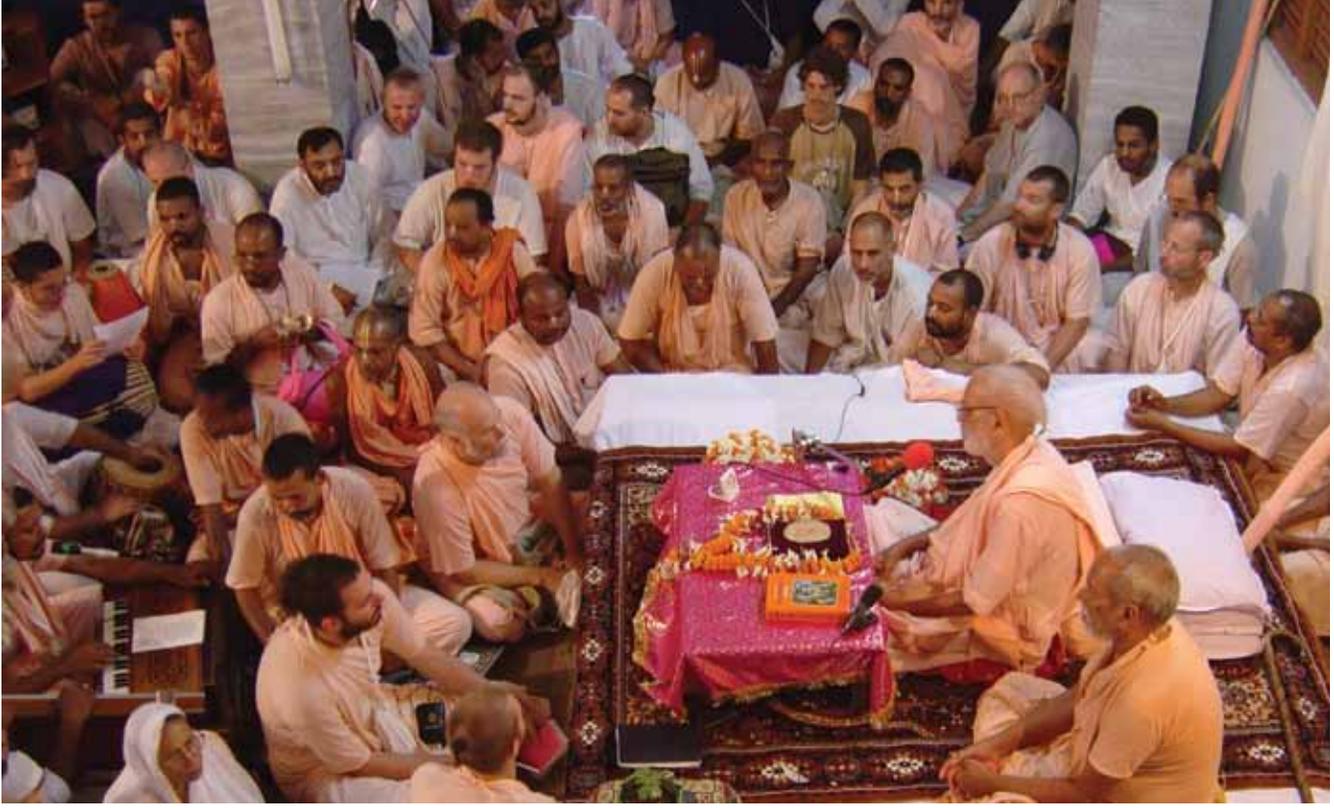
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 12.182)

"But for Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu," Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya continued, "who is so merciful? He has converted a crow into a Garuḍa. Who could be so merciful?" [BBT translation]

Who could be more merciful than Śrī Gurupāda-padma, who is the manifestation of Śrīman Caitanya Mahāprabhu and who gave one drop of mercy and made me to sing for his pleasure? But how could I sing for him now? This was a grief in my heart.

After sometime I met Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. I was amazed by him. He was such a high class *rasika* and *tattva-jña ācārya*. I observed in him all the exalted symptoms of my master Śrīla Gaura Govinda Svāmī and felt that my same *gurupadā-padma* had appeared again.

Once, just after Śrī Rādhāṣṭamī, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja came from Mathurā to Bhubaneśvara with his servant Śrīpād Navīna-kṛṣṇa Prabhu (who later became B. V. Mādhava Mahārāja), to shower mercy upon me. On the first evening, before he started his *hari-kathā*, he asked me to sing an Orissan *kīrtana* of my choice. I sang my favourite song, Śrī *Maṅgala-gītam* from Śrī *Gīta-govinda*, which I had wanted to sing for Śrīla Gaura Govinda Svāmī Mahārāja. As I sang, tears came from his eyes and a deep satisfaction welled in my heart, a satisfaction I had not felt since the disappearance of Śrīla Gaura Govinda Svāmī. It felt like a current of mercy had entered in my heart. In choked voice he said, "This melody is very very wonderful, as it expresses all the moods hidden in this song." He then explained the deep meanings of Śrī *Maṅgala-gītam* and glorified this song as being very dear to Śrīman Caitanya Mahāprabhu. When



Kṛṣṇa, in the form of Mahāprabhu, was tasting the moods of Rādhārāṇī in Gambīra, Śrīmatī Lalitā-devī in the form of Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī, would sing this song to stimulate the moods Mahāprabhu came to relish – the deep sentiments of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Mahāprabhu would cry bitterly and say:

*kāhān mora prāṇa-nātha muralī-vadana
kāhān karon kāhān pān vrajendra-nandana,
kāhāre kabiba, kebā jāne mora duḥkha
vrajendra-nandana vinu phāṭe mora buka*
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 2.15–16)

“Where is the Lord of My life, who is playing His flute? What shall I do now? Where should I go to find the son of Mahārāja Nanda? To whom should I speak? Who can understand My disappointment? Without the son of Nanda Mahārāja, My heart is broken.” [BBT translation]

Śrīla Gurudeva also said how Lord Jagannātha would leave His temple at midnight and run to embrace the lady singing this *kīrtana* as she collected flowers in a garden. The next morning, the priest found Lord Jagannātha’s clothes to be torn. Later, in a dream, Lord Jagannātha expressed His feelings to the priest and to the king that this song makes Him mad with ecstasy, regardless of where it is sung or who sings it. When I heard these explanations from him, I was so impressed, because I had only heard these explanations from Śrīla Gaura Govinda Svāmī. I never heard this *kathā* from any other *sādhu*.

That year I came to Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā*. On the morning of the first day, Śrīla Gurudeva asked me to sing *Maṅgala-gītam* just as I had sung it for him in Bhubaneśvara. He said that this song means it brings *maṅgala*, all auspiciousness, and that we should begin our *kārtika-vrata* and *parikramā* with it. Though I was not used to sing in public, I tried to sing for the pleasure of Śrīla Gurudeva. At that time I felt Śrīla Gaura Govinda Svāmī to be personally listening in the form of Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. After that, on many occasions Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja would like to ask me to sing this *Maṅgala-gītam*. Each time I sang it, I felt the presence of Śrīla Gaura Govinda Svāmī more and more in him. Slowly my heart was stolen by him.

This *Śrī Maṅgala-gītam* is that chain which bound me at the lotus feet of my *gurus*, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda, Śrīla Gaura Govinda Svāmī Mahārāja and Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. May I become their unpaid slave forever to serve their mission.

Śrī gurupadā-padma, the lord of my heart, is always one and the same for me. My master Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja is always present in *Śrī Maṅgala-gītam* in *nitya-līlā*, to shower *maṅgala*, auspiciousness, upon all the sincere souls of this world.

On his holy disappearance day I beg at his lotus feet when he will pull me out this material world and engage me in serving his beloved divine couple Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda in *nitya-līlā*.

Begging for the mercy of the *guru-sevakas*,
Bhaktivedānta Muni 



śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ



Śrīla Gurudeva, the Greatest Bhūri-dā

Offer my most humble *sāṣṭāṅga-daṇḍavat-praṇāma* at the lotus feet of my most revered spiritual master, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja*. He is the best among the eleventh generation in the *bhāgavata-paramparā*, which comes down from Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu and has been manifested fully in this world through Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī and Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmīpāda.

All activities performed by Śrīla Gurudeva, who is most dear to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, are transcendental.

*guru, vaiṣṇava, bhagavān,—tīnera smaraṇa,
tīnera smaraṇe haya vigbha-vināśana,
anāyāse haya nija vāñchita-pūraṇa*

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 1.20–21)

Remembrance of him removes all obstacles in our *bhajana* and, moreover, bestows upon us our most cherished

devotional goals. However, how could I possibly remember and glorify Śrīla Gurudeva, whose character and activities are transcendental? *Mūḍhaira-vedyaṁ praṇatābbigamyam* – he cannot be known by foolish people; he's well known only to those sublime souls who have fully surrendered unto his lotus feet without duplicity. Only to those fortunate souls does he allow entrance into his transcendental character and pastimes. However, *nikṣipta madhu-bindavas ca parito bhrasta mukhat guñjitaḥ* – drops of honey from their mouths have fallen and scattered all around me for my divine prospect. Thus, I will venture to say a few words.

Engrossed in the moods of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Śrīla Gurudeva has come to this world to distribute the unadulterated gift of Śrī Gaurahari. His books and lectures are unprecedented; having created a worldwide phenomenon. At a time when it seemed that the gifts of *rāga-mārga* and *rasa-kathā* had completely disappeared, even banned, in our

gaura-sārasvata-parivāra, he taught the esoteric truths about the descent of Śrī Gaurahari in a systematic way, leaving no chance for misunderstanding. For instance, during the month of Kārtika, while lecturing on Śrī Satyavrata Muni's Śrī *Dāmodarāṣṭakam* along with Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī's commentary, he would gradually go from the *aiśvarya* conception of Śrī Bhagavān to the *mādburya* conception. Then, he would stress *vātsalya-rasa*, because it is not possible to mistake it for mundane lust and, finally, true to the words *mādbureṇa samāpayet*, he would end up introducing the idea of *parakīya-mādburya-rasa*. Similarly, all over the world, he lectured on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, from Dhruva Mahārāja to Prahlāda Mahārāja to Ambarīṣa Mahārāja, until he would finally disclose the glories of Tenth Canto.

Bhūvi gr̥ṇanti ye bhūri-dā janāḥ, those who spread the message of Śrī Bhagavān are most munificent, and Śrīla Gurudeva's munificence knew no bounds. He was, in fact, the embodiment of our previous *rūpānuga ācāryas'* divine grace. Taking their remnants, especially those of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, he revealed to the world the inner meaning of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the most sacred type of pure service to the lotus feet of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, *mañjarī-bhāva*.

Thus, Śrīla Gurudeva showed us the highest ideal of aspiration while warning us, at the same time, not to venture jumping to that goal without properly following the process under the *anugatyā*, or guidance, of *rasika* Vaiṣṇavas. He instructed us to avoid imitationism and *sabaijīyāism* but to follow the path traced by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, beginning with the nectarean instructions of his *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*. In this way, he performed the pastime of tirelessly distributing the incomparable treasure of *rādhā-dāsyam* all over the world:

*mat-tulyo nāsti pāpātmā nāparādhī ca kaścana
paribhāre 'pi lajjā me kiṃ bruve puruṣottama*

Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.2.154)

O Śrīla Gurudeva! I am the biggest offender to your lotus feet. How could I offer you a suitable *puṣpāñjali*? However, knowing of your divine benevolence, I have come to offer you my impure heart. I am the worst of the needy and the meanest of the mean. This is my only qualification, my only hope to attract your attention and appeal to your magnanimity.

Aparādhera sāgara
Bhaktivedānta Sagara 🌸



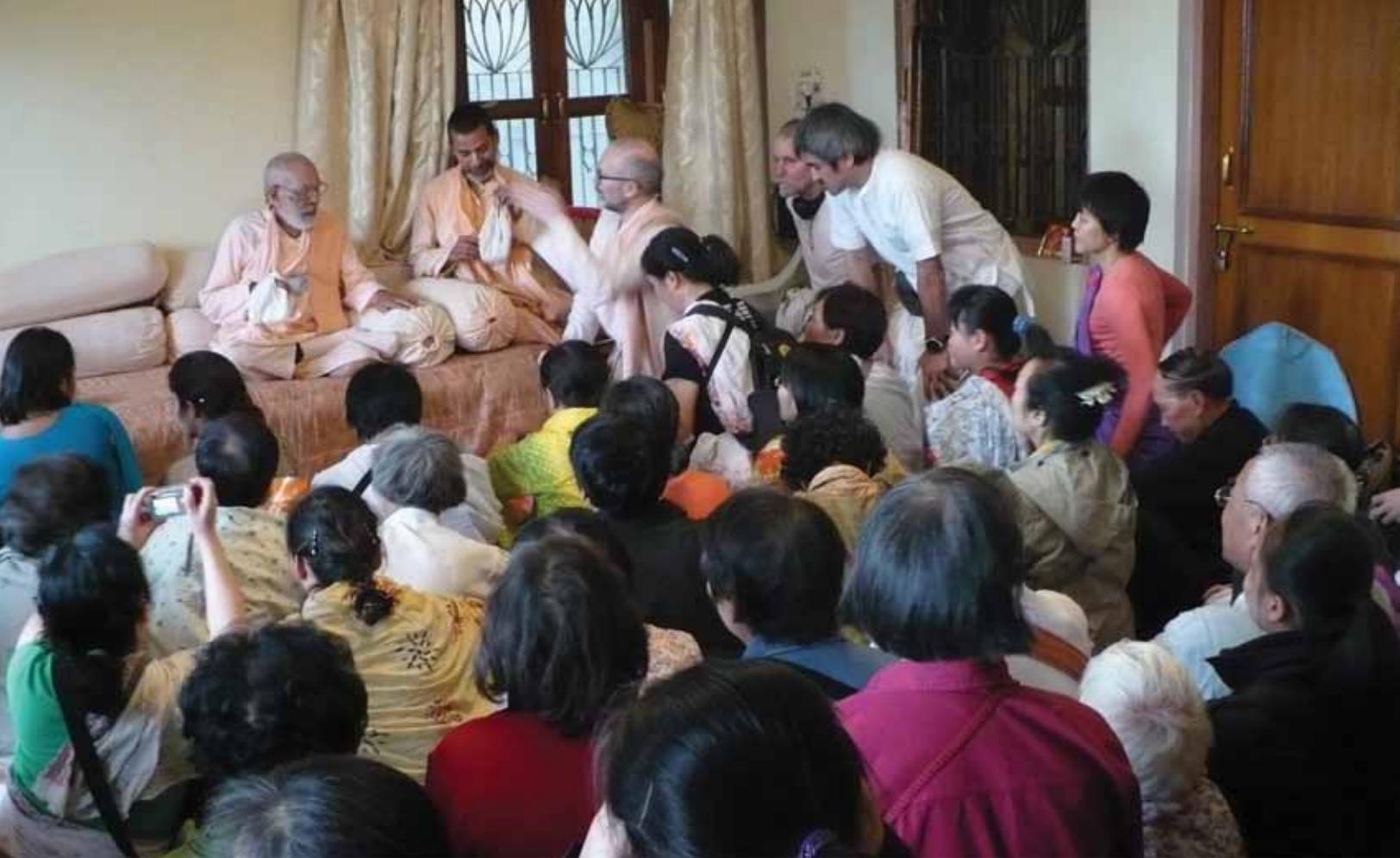
The Impossible Became Possible

Dear Śrīla Gurudeva; my master, my best friend, my everything, from my heart I offer myself unto the dust of your lotus feet, O dear *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata jagat-guru* Śrī Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:

*mūkaṁ karoti vācālaṁ
paṅguṁ laṅghayate girim
yat-kr̥pā tam abhāṁ vande
śrī-gurum dīna-tārāṇāṁ*

I offer respectful obeisances unto *śrī guru*, the deliverer of all fallen souls, whose mercy can turn the dumb into eloquent speakers, and enables the lame to cross mountains.

How is it possible for one as fallen, dumb and lame as me to understand you, much less suitably glorify you? This is my greatest lamentation, as I bear separation



from you in my heart. No one ever has understood, helped and loved me as you do. No one was ever so capable. No one except a genuine *rūpānuga guru*, a *mahā-bhāgavata*, could give the precious jewel to the world that you so generously brought into the lives of persons who are ignorant of even their own true natures as spirit souls. You once told us that we can never really thank you for what you have given us, but that we could only pray for more mercy. Therefore, I pray that you will mercifully keep us close to your heart, make us able to always speak your glories and empower us to cross every mountain.

Your love and affection is felt by all who take shelter of you. When we would gather to be with you for your festivals around the world, and in the holy *dhāmas* for *parikramā*, we all felt the shelter of your love and affection “charging our batteries”. Like a protective bubble, a love bubble, we felt safe and happy to be together with you, because of you. Just like the Lord, you could bring all of us very diverse individuals into harmony; you united us with your wondrous aim and object, which is to make our love and affection so qualified that we might one day soon be invited into the service of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda. I see that our service to you is to show our love for you by affectionately co-operating with each other just like a loving family, and together realize and share your glories with the world, through your teachings

and books, and through chanting the holy names as you have taught us – with *sambandha*; always remembering our relationship with Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

One of your many unique characteristics is that under your shelter are devotees from so many different *saṅgas* and backgrounds. You welcome all sincere followers in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. The festival days of all the great *ācāryas* in the line of Śrīla Prabhupāda Sarasvatī Thākura are celebrated throughout the calendar year, thanks to your broad mood. This sense of inclusiveness is so empowering. How enlivening it is to hear from all those in our *sampradāya*, which is the glorious family of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu!

My heartfelt prayer to you Śrīla Gurudeva, is that you make me fit to be an instrument of your merciful love and affection, for all those whom you guide me to serve, for in this way my own rectification is assured. The greatest privilege you could ever bestow upon me is the beautiful service you have given me, to “try your best with what Kṛṣṇa has given you” in realizing and repeating what you have given us. Your words are like magic in how they transform all who faithfully hear them. Truly, you are the deliverer of the fallen, the voice of the dumb, and the strength of the lame.

Your unworthy,
Bhaktivedānta Vaiṣṇava 



Where Would I Have Been Without You, Śrīla Gurudeva?

*gurave gauracandrāya rādbikāyai tad-ālaye
kṛṣṇāya kṛṣṇa-bhaktāya tad-bhaktāya namo namaḥ*

Let me first offer my *koṭi daṇḍavat-praṇāmas* to my *dīkṣā-guru, nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja and the same unlimited *daṇḍavat* to my *śikṣā-gurus, nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja, and our beloved *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja and to his beloved *gurudeva, nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

Oh, I still cannot believe you have left our limited vision, Śrīla Gurudeva! I thought you would stay with us forever in that form. I thought one day I would be able to accept your constant urging of me towards *sannyāsa* and then preach your message all over the world. I thought you would stay on this planet at least as long as Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī did, at least until you were 147, Śrīla Gurudeva! I had become so captivated by your strength of clarity, of your brilliant

mind and divine intelligence, by unique interpretations of seemingly understandable verses, by your divine enthusiasm to give us everything, especially to lead us onto the correct path of *rāgānuḡā-bhakti*. But then twenty some years of Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā* and touring passed and you came to New Braja in 2010 looking frail and fragile. And you told us the doctor said to not travel anymore. Was that you, Śrīla Gurudeva? I could not believe that you would stop traveling and preaching.

Were these the same eyes that saw you chastising me for something I thought I was innocent of? For being slow, for not finishing the service you had given me in a quick, urgent fashion? Gurudeva, was that you that came and went like the number one runner that your younger brother had told me about? Or that person I sat with in the park in Mathurā, after your morning walk? I had said, “Mahārāja, I just turned fifty years old yesterday.” And you said sharply, “I don’t believe it! I don’t believe it!” And then you fell silent. I thought you were going to give me your *maṅgalam bhavatu* blessings for my birthday, but you never did. I once sat in front of you alone

with my Kārtika unkempt beard and you told me, “You are looking old. You should be like me. You should always think you are twelve years old...” Wait a minute!

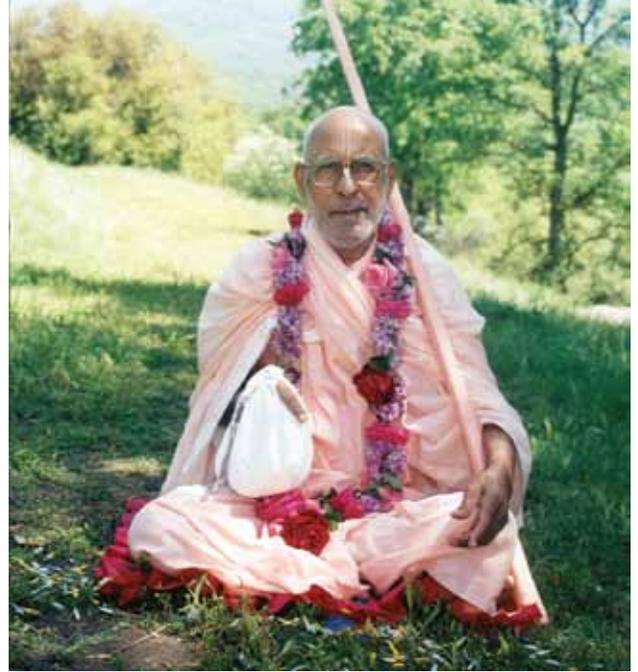
Is that not part of the *ekādaśa-bhāvas* mentioned by Śrīla Bhaktivinoḍā Ṭhākura in his *Śaraṅgati* and *Jaiva-dharma* masterpieces of theistic literature? You were so clever, Gurudeva, more clever than my wife even, at least that was what you said about her, when she would sneak her tape recorder near your door and record some of your *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali* conversations as the early Western devotees asked you questions on lofty topics.

I remember in the early days I would sit in your evening Hindi class. I knew hardly any Hindi at all. In fact I was not even learning Hindi. But sometimes I would recognize a verse or a Bengali phrase. Afterwards you would say, “Are you understanding anything?” And I would embarrassingly say, “Yes, Mahārāja, I am getting something.” I remember back in the early days when we could go into your room, sit down and ask question after question... well, maybe for an hour at least... it seems like forever now.

I was there when you came into the LA airport and touched down on American soil for the first time. To you it was holy place too. It was still Vṛndāvana by your touch. It was “a *mahā-tīrtha* because Svāmī Mahārāja had come here” and you wanted to go wherever he went. Then you started your tour, drilling us with *anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyam jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānuśīlanam bhaktir uttamā*. Pure devotional service, nothing less, not *vaidhibhakti*, not mixed devotional service but service that would attract even Śrīmatī Rādhikā Herself!

And your relationship with Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja was so close. “My relationship with him was transcendental...” It would never be broken, you meant. But the disbelievers who could not accept that there was another *śuddha-bhakta* on the planet, dared to challenge that. There was no one like Prabhupāda! “Yes,” you would humbly say to all, “Svāmī Mahārāja was like a great beacon of light in a lighthouse. I just want to go everywhere he went.” Who would have ever imagined, Gurudeva, that your following would grow to become as big as Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja’s? But it was your harmonizing style, Śrīla Gurudeva, just like you gave us the morning *bhajana Prabhupāda-stavakaḥ* that Śrīla Śrīdhāra Mahārāja wrote for Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Prabhupāda.

You gave us so many beautiful *bhajan*s and the service of translating and editing your books. They were your books, they were never mine. It was like any time I boldly put my name on the credits of a book, some objection would come up regarding the editing. Were you trying to tell me, “O Tīrthapāda, wake up; try to give up your false ego.” A Vaiṣṇava has no ego, zero. Beneath all the barrage of criticism you got for trying to spread the glories of the holy names,



to follow the request of Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja to help his disciples, to keep the *siddhānta* pure and not compromise it, you reminded me so much of my *śikṣā-guru* Śrīla B.R. Śrīdhāra on your pristine Vaiṣṇava sastric conclusions.

Possibly, I did some service for you. I helped on your early books and your *Rays of The Harmonist* magazine. Perhaps, with all the criticism I got, you were preparing me for hard years in the future without you. I still cannot believe that you have left our vision. At any moment you are going to walk through the door and begin your unique style of giving class. And you would again ask me to lead *kīrtana* or explain a verse. This time I would not fail. I had refused many times to explain a verse when you asked me to. I was never bold enough to fulfil your requests for me to speak. Maybe, now I am. Now I have a better understanding that ‘perfect practice makes perfect’.

Every time I go to your *samādhi* now, I see that picture of you smiling, there in New Braja. You had asked me that day to make you laugh! I think you taught us that laughter and crying were not too far apart, that there is a place on the cheeks for hot and cold tears. And don’t mind my tears down here, Śrīla Gurudeva, I am happy for you also. And even though the last two months I never got to say hello or even goodbye, it is all right. Instead, you wanted me to remember the early years of incomparable strength and the dream I had about you departing for *nitya-līlā*. Now, I know what it means that *dīkṣā-* and *śikṣā-guru* are simultaneously one and different, being *kṛṣṇa-rūpa* and *kṛṣṇa-svarūpa* respectively. Thank you for all the mercy and happiness you gave to me and my family, to all my Godbrothers, and to all the unbelievably fortunate devotees that you accepted causelessly. I will always remember you; I can never forget you.

Your fallen *śikṣā* disciple,
Dāsānudāsa Tīrthapāda 🙏



Śraddhā Puṣpañjali

*śrī-kṛṣṇa-līlā-kathane sudakṣam
audārya-mādhurya-guṇaiś ca yuktam
varam vareṇyam puruṣam mahāntam
nārāyaṇam tvām śirasā namāmi*

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja is expert in describing *kṛṣṇa-līlā*. He is endowed with the qualities of magnanimity and sweetness, and he is the best of the great souls. Because he is always relishing Kṛṣṇa's sweetness, he is able to freely distribute that sweetness to others. I bow down and place my head at his lotus feet.

O Conqueror of the world! You travel to many countries to propagate the message of Sri Guru-Gaurāṅga-Rādhā-Vinoda-vihārijī and to fulfill meaning of various verses like,

*mahad-vicalanam nṛṇām grhiṇām dīna-cetasām
niḥśreyasāya bhagavan kalpate nānyathā kvacit*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.8.4)

O exalted one, persons such as your good self travel from one place to the next. They do not have any self-interest in doing so but do this for the eternal auspiciousness of poor-hearted *grhasthas* (householders) who are so bound to household life that they cannot even go to *sādhus'* *āśramas*. Otherwise, such great souls are not slightly interested in visiting the homes of householders.

*mahānta-svabhāva ei tārīte pāmara
nija kārya nāhi tabu yāna tāra ghara*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 8.39)

Saintly people are causelessly merciful by nature. Therefore they go to people's houses to deliver the fallen, although they have no personal business there.

*prthivīte āche yata nagarādi grāma
sarvatra pracāra haibe more nāma*

Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata (Antya-khaṇḍa 4.126)

Lord Caitanya said, "As many villages, towns, or countries, as there are on the surface of the globe, my name will be celebrated."

You cleanse the mirror of the mind of the fallen souls in this world and cause *bhakti* to Śrī Gaurasundara-Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa to arise in their heart. Therefore, you are conqueror of the world.

O Best of *parivrājakācāryas*! O circumambulator of the world! Without considering your age, you travelled the whole world to preach the message of your master, *ācārya-kesarī* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and Sri Gaurasundara-Rādhā-vinoda-vihārijī and thus fulfilled the meaning of the verse, "*bhavad-vidhā bhāgavatās tīrtha-bhūtāḥ svayam vibho, tīrthi-kurvanti tīrthāni svāntaḥ-sthena gadābhṛtā* – My lord, devotees like your good self are verily holy places personified. By the strength and purity of the Personality of Godhead situated within your heart, you purify places of pilgrimage that have been contaminated by the sins of sinners" (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.13.10). Therefore, you are fit to be called the best of *parivrājakācāryas*.

O Guru of the whole world! You are always thinking of the auspiciousness of the residents of this world and always striving to manifest Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the moods of His associates in their heart. For those who have forgotten Jagannātha, you, like Nityānanda Prabhu, punish their atheistic heart. You are therefore fit to be called the *guru* of the whole world.

O Best of experts! When you went to the West for four months, you used to say that you would come back soon, but without the water of your service, *darśana* and nectarean *hari-kathā*, these months passed so slowly as it does for the *cātaka* bird in the hope of water. "I am not far from you. I just

went from one end of the earth to the other end and returned in ten to twelve hours, just as when I go to Delhi and return.” We cannot find solace in the statements of Uddhava and Kṛṣṇa that they explained in Vṛndāvana or Kurukṣetra. We want your lotus feet to always be in Mathurā-Vṛndāvana. You are expert in narrations of the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and equipped with qualities of magnanimity and sweetness, and therefore, the whole world loves you. But we are not so selfish that we think you should give *hari-kathā* only to us. Nevertheless, we feel it is our misfortune that sometimes you go far away.

O Magnanimous one! The combined form of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and the son of Śacī, Caitanya Mahāprabhu – the supremely merciful bestower of love for the holy name and preacher of *rāga-bhakti* – gave *harināma-saṅkīrtana*, love for the holy name and *rāga-bhakti* without considering a person’s qualification. Similarly, you also gave *harināma-saṅkīrtana*, love of the holy name and *rāga-bhakti* without considering any qualification. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura has said that the recipients of the Vaiṣṇava’s mercy are those whose eyes hanker for seeing beautiful forms, whose tongues hanker to taste flesh and liquor and whose feet dance to the beat of music. Therefore, by receiving the mercy of you, the best of the Vaiṣṇavas, such people’s dispositions transform into hankering to see the form of the Lord, to taste *mahāprasāda* and dance in *nāma-saṅkīrtana*, respectively.

O Possessor of sweetness! By your sweet words and qualities, you harmonized all opposing sides and had them drink the *rasa* of Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s and Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes.

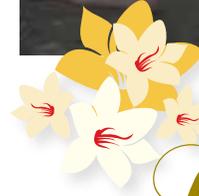
O Brave One! By the blessings of your *gurudeva*, the founder of Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti – *ācārya-keśari nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda astoṭṭara śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja* – with your lion-like roar you removed from the hearts of *jīvas* affected by Kali the enemies of lust and anger, the cheaters of *karma* and *jñāna*, the devouring witch of the desire for liberation and the wild elephants of offences. “*Suniyā govinda raba palāya āpani saba, śimbanāde jena kari gaṇa* – All undesirable elements will run away by hearing the sound vibration of Govinda’s name, just as a deer flees upon hearing the roar of a lion” (*Prema-bhakti-candrikā* 2.13).

By coming to this world, you filled it with love, and in your eternal form, you went to the eternal abode to serve your *guru-ruṣa-sakbī*, Śrī Vinoda Mañjarī.

*śrī bhakti prajñāna prabhu dāsyā param
praṇāmi sadā nārāyaṇa padam*

I perpetually offer obeisances at the lotus feet of Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja who is a most prominent dedicated servant of Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

Yours,
Purandara dāsa 🙏



Viraha Socaka

Lamentation

*jaya jaya pavitra sthāna, teyārīpura nitya-dhāma
prakaṭila āmāra prabhuvara
gaṅgātīre suśobbaya, benasthāna nāhi haya
seī sthāna vandi bāra bāra (1)*

All glories, all glories to that sacred place, the eternal abode known as Tevārīpura, where my great master [who is non-different from Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu] appeared. Gracefully bedecked on the bank of the holy Ganges, such a beautiful site does not exist anywhere else. I extol that holy place again and again.

*maunī amāvasyā dine, sarvaguṇa-sulakṣaṇe
kīrtana-mukhe haila āvirbhāva
adbhuta sulakṣaṇa dekhi’ bhaktaḡaṇe haila sukbi
ānande vihvala haila saba (2)*

On the new moon day, endowed with all the divine qualities and all auspicious marks, you made your



Glorious and blessed are these parents, and glorious is the deliverer of the world, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who bestowed this jewel to the people of the world. To deliver the people of the world and spread the principles of *śuddha-bhakti*, Śrī Rādhā sent one of Her eternal associates here.

*jaya jaya guruvara, br̥dayete samādara
bhaktaḡaṇa karaye anukṣaṇa
viśvavāsī sabe bhakta, mahimā kīrtane rata
divānīśi sarvākṣaṇa (5)*

All glories, all glories to you, my all worshipful and great spiritual master, who the devotees of the Lord always regard with deep loving respect within their hearts. Day and night, the devotees around the world are continuously engaged in singing your glories.

*tumi jagad 'guru' haye, vāñchākalpataru tāhe
bhajana śikṣā dile mahāśaya
tomāra mahimā apāra, varṇibāre śakti tā'ra
yadi haya kṛpā taba tāya (6)*

O Great Personality! Assuming the position of spiritual master of the entire world and thus becoming a wish-fulfilling tree, you have given unprecedented instructions on the performance of *bhajana*. Your glories are unlimited, and the potency to extol them can only be obtained if one receives your mercy.

*guru sevāra mahimā kata, gosvāmī grantha āra jata
prakāśīle sadā anukṣaṇe
nija sukha nāhi dekhe', paradukhe sadā dukhī
guru-sevā śikhāīle sarvajane (7)*

You have continually expressed the glories of service to *śrī guru*, and you have revealed to the world the scriptures of the Gosvāmīs, and much more. Without caring for your comfort and always feeling distressed at the suffering of others, you have exhibited to the world how to dedicate one's life in the service of *guru*, by your own example.

*atula yaśa-pratiṣṭhā pāīyā, 'yugācārya' pada laiīyā
nāhi tomāte kona abhimāna
vaiṣṇavera jata guṇa, tomāte tāhā darśana
haiīyā thāke nitya pratikṣaṇa (8)*

Even after you attained incomparable fame and reputation and even after accepting the title *Yugācārya*, there was not a trace of pride in you. All the qualities found in a *Vaiṣṇava* are perpetually and every moment seen within you.

in Separation

appearance amidst the performance of *kīrtana*. Seeing the astonishing signs of your virtuous nature, the devotees of the Lord became joyful – overwhelmed with happiness.

*pitā bāleśvaranātha, mātā lakṣmīpriyā sātha
śīśukāle kaila nānā raṅga
nāhi jāne mātā-pitā, putra mora jagat-trātā
nityānandābbinna seī aṅga (3)*

In his childhood, you performed many pastimes with your father Śrī Bāleśvaranātha and mother Śrīmatī Lakṣmīpriyā. Your parents did not realize that their son was the deliverer of the whole world and that your form was non-different from Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu.

*dhanya bena mātā-pitā, dhanya-kṛṣṇa viśva-srṣṭā
bena ratna dile jagajjane
jagajjīva nistārīte, śudhabhakti pracārīte
pāthāīlo rādhā nityajane (4)*

*guru -ājñā śire laīyā, viśvavasīra dvāre gīyā,
jāgāile kata badha jīve
viśve nānā sthāne jāīyā, babu maṭha sthāpiyā
bhaktiśikṣā dile jagajīve (9)*

Taking the order of your spiritual master upon your head, you went to the doors of the residents of the world and woke up so many conditioned souls. By traveling to various places in the world and establishing many *maṭhas*, you bestowed instructions on the performance of *bhakti*.

*bhaktivinoda-sarasvatī, viśvavyāpī jāñ'ra khyāti
seī dhārāya śudhabhakti sāra
seī dhārā vaikuṅṭha haite, āsiyāche avanīte
badhajīve karite nistāra (10)*

In the stream of teachings coming from Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda, whose fame extends throughout the world, the true essence of *bhakti* is found. That stream which originates in the spiritual world has come to the earth in order to deliver the conditioned souls.

*ṭhākurañīra nijagana, tini ye eka mahājana
tāhe prabhu bhakti prajñāna
pāśaṅḍa gajaika (siṁha) hena, māyāvāda kari' kbāndana
susiddhānta bhakti sthāpana (11)*

One of Śrīmatī Rādhā Ṭhākurañī's dear-most associates, who is a truly great personality, is Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. As a lion who subdues the elephant of atheism, he cuts *māyāvāda* philosophy and establishes the proper conclusive truths regarding *bhakti*.

*tā'ra nitya priyajana, śrīvāmana nārāyaṇa
trivikrama hana mahājana
vedānta samiti puṣpa, eī tina mahāna vrnta
śrīkeśavera vaibhava eī triratna (12)*

His dear eternal associates Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, you – Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja are all great personalities. These three great personalities are the stalk of the flower of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti. These three jewels are the opulence of Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

*svabhāva tomara prabhu, kusiddhānta nābi kabhu
sabite nā pāra bhāla mane
bābājī sampradāya saba, nindāmanda kare raba,
sarasvatī-dhārāke nābi mane (13)*

O Master, your nature is such that you can never in good conscience tolerate improper philosophical principles. The community of *bābājīs* propagates disreputable and wicked rumors and refuses to accept the teachings coming in the line of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda.

*prativāda simbanāde, 'prabandha-pañcakam' hāte
vrajanāde kari kbāna kbāna
tāñdera yata bhrānta mata, samāpta karile saba
sarasvatī dhārāi mahāna (14)*

In opposition, roaring like a lion and with the Prabandha-pañcakam in hand, you smashed them like a thunderbolt. You put an end to all their erroneous views and demonstrated that only the line of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda is great.

*antarete icchā taba, purīdhāme prakāśiba
antaḥ-lilā kari samāpana
navadvīpe nitya ra'ba, tathāya āchena prabhu
keśava gosvāmī prāṇadhana (15)*

Your inner desire was: I shall display the conclusion of my final pastimes in Purī-dhāma [like Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu]. Then I shall eternally live in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, where my master Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, the wealth of my life, also stays....

*prabhu mora bhaktivinode, ṭhākura śrīla prabhupāda
jagannātha-dāsa mahāśaya
śrīla gaurakiśora prabhu, vāmana gosvāmī prabhu
trivikrama gosvāmī mahāśaya (16)*

...along with my masters Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda, the great personality Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, my master Śrīla Gaurakiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, my master Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and the great personality Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

*eī sabara saṅga chāḍi, anyatra kemana kari'
rahiba cintiya mane mane
govardhana purīdhāma, navadvīpa--- gauradhāma
tina dhāma kari' darśana (17)*

Your mind was fixed, 'How can I leave the association of all these personalities and live elsewhere? Let me take *darśana* of the three holy abodes, Govardhana, Purī-dhāma, and Navadvīpa-dhāma, the place of Śrī Gaura.'"

*sadā ra'be gauḍavane, icchā chila eka mane
nija guru āchena yathāya
gosvāmī srikeśava, nikaṭe pāyīya taba
ānandita antara biyāya (18)*

You had a one-pointed desire to always remain in Gauḍavana, where your own spiritual master stays. Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, having again attained you near him, became joyful within the core of his heart.

*taba nija bhaktagaṇa, sadā yāce śrīcaraṇa
sakātare paḍi' taba pāye*

*patita adbhama āmi, patita-pāvana tumi
krpā kari rākha dāse pāye (19)*

Falling at your feet, afflicted by immense grief, your devoted followers always beg for the shelter of your lotus feet. I am the fallen and lowest and you are the savior of the fallen. Please mercifully keep this servant at your lotus feet.

Your servant
Dvija-kṛṣṇa brahmacārī 🙏

Can be sung to the metre of *Nadīya-udaya giri kirtana*, which is sung on the evening of Gaura Purṇimā.



Viraha-kusumañjali

Offer unlimited obeisances at the lotus feet of my beloved *gurudeva, nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja*.

*akṣṇoḥ phalaṁ tvādrśa-darśanaṁ hi
tanoḥ phalaṁ tvādrśa-gātra-saṅgaḥ
jihvā-phalaṁ tvādrśa-kīrtanaṁ hi
su-durlabhā bhāgavatā hi loke*

Śrī Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya (13.2)

O Vaiṣṇava! To see a person such as you is the perfection of the eyes. To touch a person such as you is

the perfection of the body. To glorify the qualities of a person such as you is the perfection of the tongue, for pure devotees are very rare within this world.

Experience of Śrī Keśhavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha, Mathurā

In 1996, when I was connected to ISKCON Delhi, a deep understanding had become fixed in my heart that Śrī Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja was urging all to follow the moods of the *gopīs*. Then, by extreme good fortune, I achieved the opportunity to come to Śrī Keśhavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha in



Mathurā. Some friends of mine from ISKCON and I arrived in the *maṭha* at around twelve midnight, but still, Śrīla Gurudeva's near and dear Premānanda Prabhu arose from his bed and arranged *prasāda* for us. It was just like coming to one's own family. Premānanda Prabhu's sweet behavior was akin to the affection of a mother and reminiscent of the culture of the old Gauḍīya Maṭha. He gave us the faith that if we decide to reside in the *maṭha* passing life would not be difficult. I thereafter started visiting the *maṭha* and staying there from time to time.

Remembrance of My First Meeting with Śrīla Gurudeva

During Kārtika month 1996, Śrīla Gurudeva went to Māna-sarovara during Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā* and I had the fortune of driving him in my car. On the way, due to my foolishness, I transgressed the injunction of *Bhagavad-gītā* 4.34, *tad-viddhi pranīpātena*, that is, to understand the knowledge given by the spiritual master, by first offering obeisance to him, asking appropriate questions and serving him. I presented to Śrīla Gurudeva my conception that by continuously executing *vaidhī-bhakti*, the qualification

to enter *rāgānugā-bhakti* will come naturally. Therefore, one should not perform inappropriate endeavors to attain *vraja-bhāva* or *gopī-bhāva*. As *śāstric pramāṇa* I quoted the verse of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.33.30), "*naitat samācarej-jātu mansāpi hy anīśvara* – he who is not a controller and who is incapable should not even think of such topics in his mind, what to speak of performing with his body." If anyone imitates these pastimes of Īśvara out of foolishness, he will be destroyed and fall down. Bhagavān Śiva drank the venomous poison arisen from the ocean. If someone imitates him by drinking poison, then certainly he will burn to ashes.

Śrīla Gurudeva asked, "Where in this verse does it forbid the hearing of pastimes in relation to *vraja-bhāva*? This verse forbids unqualified people from imitating these transcendental pastimes; however, it does not forbid one to hear them. In fact, in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, hearing and explaining *vraja-līlā* is greatly encouraged: "*vikrīḍitaṁ vraja-vadhubbīr-idaṁ ca viṣṇo* – that sober person who hears or explains again and again with faith the transcendental *rasa-vilāsa* pastimes of the *vraja-gopīs* with Śrī Kṛṣṇa will achieve *parā-bhakti* at the lotus feet of Bhagavān and very

quickly be *jitendriya*, victorious over his senses and freed forever from the disease of mundane lust in the heart” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.33.39).

Śrīla Gurudeva continued, “Someone may say, ‘First let the Gaṅgā dry up and then I will cross’, or in other words, ‘First I will terminate my *anarthas*, and then I will achieve *bhakti*’, but this is not possible. Rather, those who have faith that hearing or chanting about these pastimes will free one from the disease of the heart are called sober persons; others are not. Those who think otherwise are *nāma-aparādhīs*, because the fourth offense to the holy name is to blaspheme the *śruti-sāstra*.”

We then reached Māna-sarovara Śrīla Gurudeva expanded on this subject with great force and gave a warning. He said, “There is no place here for those who think that without greed *vaidhī-bhakti* will naturally transform into *rāgānugā-bhakti*. They are free to leave immediately.” Hearing these words of chastisement, which were filled with affection, my heart told me, ‘My search that has continued life after life has now ended. Other than from this *mahā-bhāgavata* there is no *rasa* to find anywhere in the world. Now if I can receive some of the *ucchiṣṭa prasāda* of this *vraja-rasa rasika mahā-bhāgavata*, my life will be successful.’

The Wealth of Guru is His Real Disciples

Once I inquired from Śrīla Gurudeva, “Did I ever receive your shelter in a previous birth?” Śrīla Gurudeva smiled and answered, “In my last life I tried to catch you, but just as a fish jumps and escapes from a net, you went far from me due to your material desires. *Guru-tattva* is *akhaṇḍa*, unbroken; hence, I (*guru-tattva*) attracted you again and brought you to *paramārtha*, the ultimate goal.”

He gave the example of the cuckoo and crow. This creation has such rules. The creator did not teach the honest cuckoo how to make a nest and did not teach the crafty crow how to recognize the cuckoo’s eggs. When the cuckoo is pregnant, she searches for the nest of a crow in which the crow has just laid its eggs, and when the crow is absent, she leaves her eggs there and with her beak pushes the crow’s eggs out of the nest. Although the crow is accepted as being very clever, it protects and keeps warm the eggs of another and the cuckoo watches from a distance. When the eggs hatch and the chicks come out, they do not make the crow sound “*kāṇva, kāṇva* (kaw, kaw)” but chirp like cuckoos. Some doubt comes in the crow when she hears this sound, but she still cannot fully understand that these are not her children. The cuckoo, on the other hand, sits on any nearby branch or parapet and sings in a sweet melodious voice. There is no one in the world who does not like her singing. The new chicks of the cuckoo strive to sing in a similar fashion, because,

after all, the chicks are the cuckoo’s younglings. Until their wings come out, they practice their mother’s exact tone. By her sweet voice, the cuckoo instructs her chicks, “Now the crow is going to recognize you. You must immediately fly off behind me.” In this manner, the chicks escape near death at the crow’s hands.

Similarly, Śrīla Gurudeva does not stay in his own residence, but wanders and preaches to the ‘children’ of others, and with his sweet voice, he attracts those with *sukṛti* and who have even slightly surrendered in their previous lives, placing the nectarean *rasāyana* of his sweet *hari-kathā* in their ears. Through his *hari-kathā*, he instructs the faithful *jīvas*. “*Hitvātma-pātam*... – O best of the demons! I accept this as the highest learning: those embodied souls who are always perturbed due to fixation with the false notion of ‘I and mine’, should leave their inauspicious homes and go to the forest to take shelter of Śrī Hari” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.5.5).

In other words, Śrīla Gurudeva would call, “Come out of the crow’s nest, the dark well of family life, and follow me so that you can be saved from the punishment of Yama.” He would also say, “Family members cry for those who leave their homes and take his shelter, while those who leave cry for Bhagavān.”

Real Viraha-kusumāñjali is to Endeavor to Destroy the Mountain of Pride

When I heard such *hari-kathā* from the lotus mouth of Śrīla Gurudeva, I recognized that my ears’ thirst over many lives had been satisfied. Whenever I received the chance to serve him, my faith that his lotus feet are the store of *amṛta*, immortal nectar, became stronger. Remembering Śrīla Gurudeva’s gentle yet strong, grave words of instruction to endeavor to destroy the mountain of pride is my duty on this *viraha-kusumāñjali*. That Śrīla Gurudeva, who would chastise me with strong yet affectionate words and give instructions on the abstruse meaning of the *śāstras* in simple and easy-to-understand language, is now no longer present amongst us in a physical form.

After a whole year of waiting the spring season arrives. Although the *cātaka* bird is happy that the time to quench its thirst has come, it wails in distress if there are no clouds in the sky. Similarly, by supreme great fortune I have received an insignificant amount of Śrīla Gurudeva’s association and feel blessed. Still, due to not being able to see Śrīla Gurudeva after he has entered *nitya-līlā*, I feel desolate and devoid of life.

Aspiring to serve Śrīla Gurudeva eternally,

Dhīra-kṛṣṇa dāsa
(Vṛndāvana) 



Śrīla Gurudeva's Mercy

Offer my *danḍavat-praṇāma* at the lotus feet of my initiating spiritual master, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

As disciples of His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, Śrīla Gurudeva, we are now living in the day to day reality of separation from him. It is said that the last merciful act of *śrī guru* is his disappearance from our worldly vision. He enters into our lives by his divine potency, remains for some time to give his association, then mysteriously vanishes back to his own position in the spiritual realm. For the conditioned soul who has taken shelter of His lotus feet, *śrī guru* brings the greatest auspiciousness, both in meeting and separation. In meeting the disciple gains the fortunate opportunity to directly serve him, and in separation he becomes absorbed in deep remembrance of his *gurudeva's* divine qualities,

pastimes and instructions. In separation, the merciful presence of *śrī guru* is perceived by the disciple who completely adheres to His instructions and teachings.

Although most unqualified and possessing only a mundane perception of Śrīla Gurudeva, I will try to recount my personal experiences with him, and in this way attempt to glorify him.

Śrī guru appears within this world in an unbroken disciplic succession. To deliver unlimited mercy upon the conditioned souls, he gives them his own invaluable association, being an eternal associate of the Lord and very dear to Him. He seeks out persons in the most fallen conditions and is therefore known as *paṭita-pāvana*, saviour of the most fallen. He endeavours inexhaustibly to arrange for their eternal benefit, while simultaneously and constantly serving the lotus feet of his most worshipful *iṣṭadevas*, ultimately desiring that all souls eventually engage in that same service.

Śrīla Gurudeva, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, is the contemporary crest jewel of this ultimate welfare distribution.

Śrīla Gurudeva found me in the depth of a shadow-like existence, and somehow he bestowed upon me a glimmer of inclination to serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa. I had been introduced to Kṛṣṇa consciousness by reading the books of *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and was thus convinced that this subject of *bhakti* was superior in every way to all other spiritual topics. In my heart, I had accepted Śrīla Prabhupāda as my spiritual guide. Then, by the arrangement of the Lord, I came in contact with Śrīla Gurudeva's disciples and ultimately found my way to his lotus feet in Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha, Mathurā. At that moment I experienced for the first time a ray of genuine love and affection, a compassionate blessing that touched my soul. From that day forth, I endeavoured to follow Śrīla Gurudeva's instructions, despite my lack of qualification.

I was serving in Śrīla Gurudeva's Śrī Gaura-Govinda Gauḍīya Maṭha in Birmingham, UK, for four years, and then spent some time travelling with Śrīpād B. V. Dāmodara Mahārāja. Then in Badger June 2006 Śrīla Gurudeva, through the agency of Śrīpād Mādhava Mahārāja, requested me to travel with him in his personal entourage. At that time I could hardly believe my fortune, and remember confirming this request firstly with Dāmodara Mahārāja, then with Brajanāth Prabhu, Vrinda Didi and finally Śrīlā Gurudeva himself. I was incredulous, extremely excited and somewhat nervous at the thought of spending three months with Śrīlā Gurudeva in Hawaii.

My main engagement was to prepare his *prasādam* and also learn to type in Hindi. I remember him asking me in Govardhana "Can you cook for me?" I replied, "No, Gurudeva, I don't know how." He then instructed me to learn from Dvija-kṛṣṇa Prabhu and Śrīpāda Mādhava Mahārāja, who were two of Śrīlā Gurudeva's favourite cooks.

After Kārtika month in 2006, I went with Śrīla Gurudeva and his party to Hawaii and we resided there in seclusion for about two and a half months. During that time Śrīpāda Mādhava Mahārāja instructed me how to cook preparations that were healthy and appealing to Śrīla Gurudeva's taste. Mahārāja watched me very closely and sampled all dishes before they were offered to Śrīla Gurudeva. Eventually, when Mahārāja was certain that I could cook all of the dishes and that Śrīla Gurudeva was happy with them, he left me to my own devices. That was my first direct contact with Śrīla Gurudeva's daily service schedule. I was able to witness, at least externally, Śrīla Gurudeva's constant selfless engagement in devotional service.

Śrīla Gurudeva's Daily Schedule.

To illustrate this point I will outline Śrīla Gurudeva's daily schedule at that time. He would arise at around 3.30 to 4 a.m. and sit on his bed, chanting *jaya-dhvani* and reciting various *stava-stuti* (prayers, songs and verses) from memory. After this he would bathe, dress and chant *gāyatrī-mantras*. Then, sitting on his bed, he would chant *harināma*. At this time we were able to offer prostrated *praṇāma* to him. *Maṅgalārati* was then performed, usually by singing *Śrī Yugalārati* by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and offering *ārati* paraphernalia. Śrīla Gurudeva would then perform *Tulasī parikramā* and water *Tulasī-devī*, while offering prayers. He would then go out for his morning walk. I would stay back at his *bhajana-kuṭīra* and perform some *sevā*, usually either cleaning or preparing breakfast.

After about one hour, Śrīla Gurudeva would return and we would sit at his lotus feet for *darśana*. In later years Śrīla Gurudeva requested us to learn verses, and at this time we recited those verses, along with their meanings and any purports. Gurudeva would then give his commentary on those verses. Many of these recitals have been recorded, so anyone can hear me stammering in a state of nervous forgetfulness.

Śrīla Gurudeva would then take a breakfast of fruit and some grains like puffed rice, and after a short rest he would begin writing, which was his all-absorbing interest. During these times Gurudeva was so totally immersed in this that he would not notice any activity around him. Every twenty minutes or so he would take breaks, prompted by Śrīpād Mādhava Mahārāja, to walk and chant. At around 11.15 a.m. Śrīla Gurudeva would accept a massage from the devotees present, and sometimes if I was finished with cooking I would assist.

If the weather in Hawaii at that time was good and the ocean calm, he would then walk a little on the beach and bathe in the ocean. I would always try to be present for that! After bathing, Śrīla Gurudeva would put *tilaka* and chant *gāyatrī*, and then he would take *prasādam*.

He would honour *prasādam* with his eyes closed and I would remain close by. He once told me that he was his *gurudeva's* favourite cook, indicating that his palate was very keen. Sometimes he mercifully gave his critique of my preparations. These comments ranged from "Not good taste" to "So so" up to "kub bhalo" or "First class!" All preparations were expected to be perfect, but because I am far from perfect myself, varying degrees of flavour resulted in their preparation. Śrīla Gurudeva would honour at least six to ten preparations every lunch time, including rice, dahl, yoghurt, tofu, different types of *sabji*, like spinach, jackfruit (his favourite), banana-flower, drumsticks, *lauki* and *sukta* (bitter *sabji*) or *karela*. Occasionally, when a preparation

was not up to standard, Śrīla Gurudeva would call me and give me that preparation to taste from his own plate. In this way he displayed his supremely merciful nature by accepting *prasādam* prepared by an outcaste person such as myself.

After resting for about an hour, Śrīla Gurudeva would then resume his writing. He often commented that the north shore of Oahu, Hawaii, in the house of Vṛndāvana Prabhu was the best place to perform his writing service and that was why he stayed there for long periods at one time. At around 5.00 p.m. Śrīla Gurudeva would take a snack like *paṇad* or some fruit and then complete his writing and chant some more *harināma* or speak with his *sevakas* about different issues regarding his disciples, temples or mission.

He would then chant his *gāyatrī-mantras* and accept another massage. Following the massage, he would take *prasādam*, consisting of two to three *sabjīs* and rice. After that he would sit on his bed and chant, and it was apparent that he was deeply absorbed. At this time of the day, either Acyutānanda Prabhu or I would sit with Śrīla Gurudeva in his *bhajana kutira*, in case he needed anything. At around 9.30 p.m. Śrīla Gurudeva would take rest, and one of us would switch off his bedside light and make sure he was comfortable.

It was during these evenings that I remember contemplating the infinite variety of services that Gurudeva must be performing, both within this world and the transcendental realm. And how I never saw him do anything for himself, all of his activities were for the benefit others.

At first I was very nervous to perform this kind of intimate service for Śrīla Gurudeva, but after some time it became natural and familiar. To maintain a mood of complete reverence on a day to day basis did not seem necessary or practical, as Śrīla Gurudeva was much more comfortable with a familiar and natural loving mood if we maintained a healthy degree of respect. It almost seemed that Śrīla Gurudeva was dependent on us to help him perform these daily activities, but in fact, Śrīla Gurudeva was completely maintaining and nourishing us, both spiritually and materially by his association.

I always tried to keep in the forefront of my mind that Śrīla Gurudeva was dealing with us on the platform of *naravata-lilā*, or human-like pastimes. Śrīla Gurudeva tolerated and accepted my attempt at service until 2010, taking me with him on his world travels. The memories of those experiences are my eternal treasures. I often wonder how a person like me could come to such a fortunate position, being born outside the *varṇāśrama* system in a non-devotional family and being completely enamoured by *māyā* up till this present day. My only conclusion is that it only took place by the unparalleled mercy of the pure Vaiṣṇava.

A disciple has the right to consider his *guru* the greatest of all spiritual masters and does so without disrespecting any other *ācārya*. It is in this mood that I conclude that in the history of time, never has such a personality existed, who has given wholesale the content of his spotless heart so freely. Śrīla Gurudeva opened up the treasure chest of *rāgānugā-bhakti*, and more specifically *rūpānuga-bhakti*, and freely distributed it in all corners of the world, without consideration of qualification. His focus on the *bhajana* and the literature of the Gosvāmīs in the line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, in which the ultimate goal of service to Śrīmatī Rādhikā is uppermost was unprecedented. He freely gave this opportunity to thousands of fortunate souls across the globe.

At the time of Śrīla Gurudeva's final pastimes within this world, I was also most fortunate to be invited into his *bhajana-kutira* to serve him. For two and a half months I was able to sit with Śrīla Gurudeva for eight hours a day, every day, mostly during the night from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. This service took place first in Delhi, then in Govardhana during Kārtika month, and finally in Jagannātha Purī. For the most part, these experiences are difficult to describe, suffice to say that Śrīla Gurudeva performed this pastime in such a way as to engage his disciples in his service.

Sometimes it was difficult for us to understand that the symptoms of Śrīla Gurudeva were transcendental. I tried to reconcile everything from the viewpoint of *śāstra*, and by hearing from Vaiṣṇavas experienced in such service. Needless to say, all this service was Śrīla Gurudeva's blessing upon us.

In this present atmosphere of separation, I feel that it is now that service to Śrīla Gurudeva really begins. His legacy is the inheritance of his surrendered disciples. In order to maintain our internal relationship with Śrīla Gurudeva, it is imperative to continue to follow his teachings. His primary desire was that we one day experience the moods he was experiencing, in other words, he wanted us to become proficient in *bhajana*. He also desired that the current of his divine teachings be propagated to the best of our ability, first understanding what he came to give and then teaching future generations.

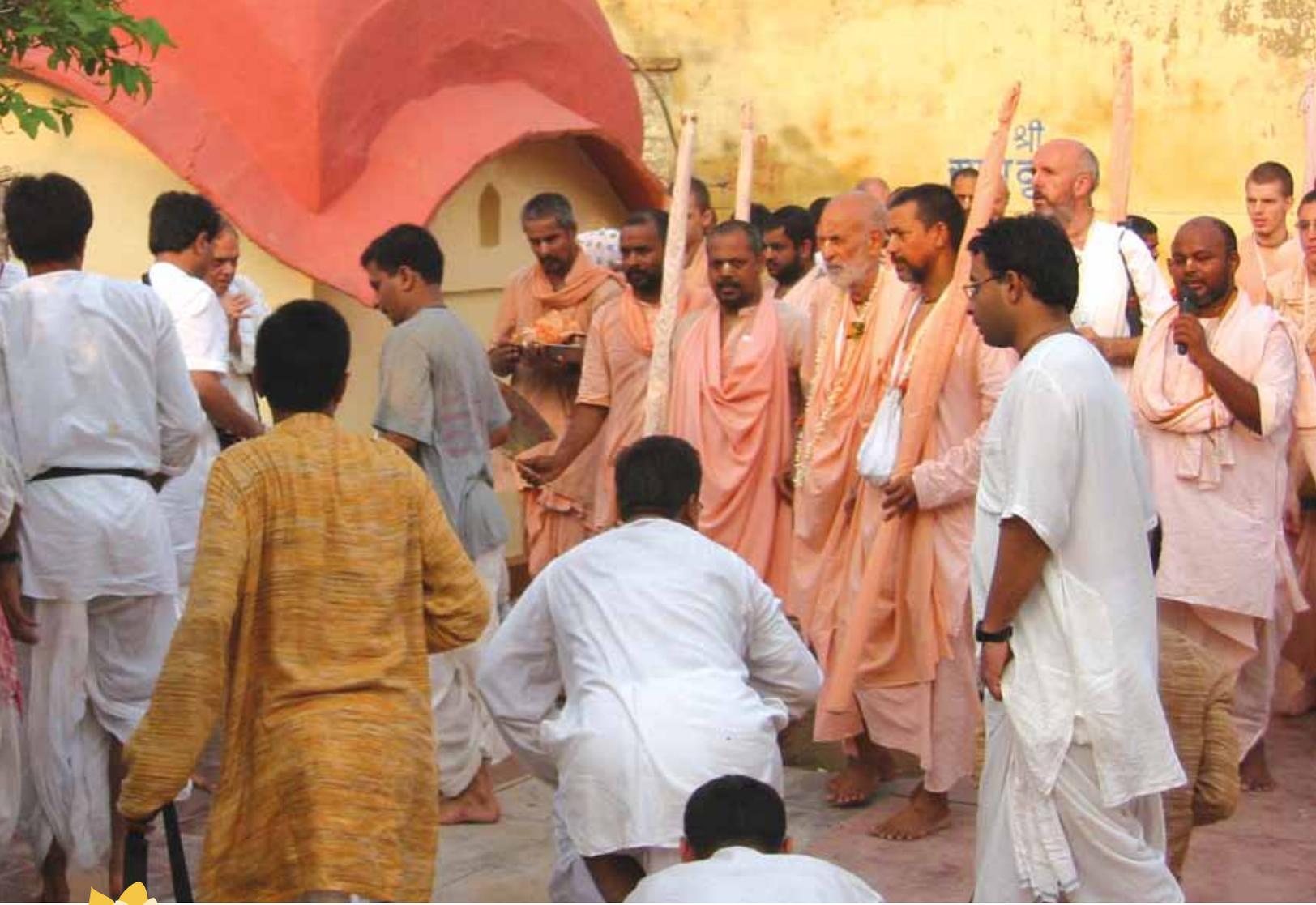
I pray that Śrīla Gurudeva's gift to me one day manifests in my heart, and that the bitter sweet feelings of separation from him always remind me of those magical and precious moments he bestowed upon me.

The glories of Śrīla Gurudeva are unlimited, and my capacity to glorify him or serve him is minuscule and filled with offences and faults.

I beg apologies from Śrīla Gurudeva, the Vaiṣṇavas and the readers for those inadequacies.

Aspiring for the desire to serve the Vaiṣṇavas

Dāsānudāsa Madhuvrata dāsa 



ŚRĪLA GURUPĀDA-PADMA –

Following in the Footsteps of Śrī Rūpa

With a straw in my teeth I offer unlimited *sāṣṭāṅga-daṇḍavat-praṇāmas* to the lotus feet of my Śrīla Gurupāda-padma rūpānuga-ācārya-vārya nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who is always situated in the heart of Vraja-maṇḍala and by whose causeless mercy one can attain devotion unto the Vrajavāsīs.

To attempt to glorify Śrīla Gurupāda-padma is likened to a lame man trying to cross over the Himālayan Mountains, or a dumb man trying to recite poetry. Nevertheless, his causeless mercy is such that even the aspirations of an insignificant and fallen condition soul like me can be fulfilled. By his inspiration, one can begin to desire for that which is rarely achieved.

In one verse Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmīpāda has described that Śrīman Mahāprabhu came to bestow the topmost

radiant and splendid love of Godhead (*unnatojjvala svabhakti-śriyam*). There is no greater goal than this to be achieved for the *jīva*. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu wanted all living entities to accept this most rare and precious gift and therefore empowered Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmīpāda to establish this innermost desire (*mano-'bbiṣṭa*) of His in this world. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī accomplished this by writing about this most splendid love in all of his books.

Śrīla Gurupāda-padma in order to preserve and fulfil the innermost heart of Śrīman Mahāprabhu practised and taught the teachings of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Starting from *ādau śraddhā tataḥ sādhu-saṅga...* he showed the proper path and sequence of advancement for the condition souls, thus putting to shame the cheap imitators (*sahajiyās*) and silencing the critics (*dveṣīs*), whose barking reveal that they are devoid of any real *sambandha-jñāna*.

He established concepts like *uttama-bhakti* (*anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyam...*) and that it has three divisions, *sādhana-bhakti* (*kr̥ti-sādhya bhavet sādhyā...*), *bhāva-bhakti* (*śuddha-sattva-viśeṣātmā...*) and *prema-bhakti* (*samyāṅ masr̥ṇta-svānto...*).

Moreover, he explained *rāgānugā-bhakti* – *sevā sādḥaka-rūpeṇa...* and *kr̥ṣṇaṅ smarān janān cāśya...* – and that greed is the only price to enter into this kind of method of devotion (*kr̥ṣṇa-bhakti-rasa-bhāvitā matiḥ*).

Not stopping there he went to the very heart of the *rūpānugas* and gave a glimpse to the world by explaining concepts like *rāgātmika-bhakti*, *sambandhānuga-bhakti*, *kāmānuga-bhakti*, *bhāva-ullasa-rati* and *tat-tad-bhāva-icchamāyī*. For this the world will be forever indebted to Śrīla Gurupāda-padma. If Śrīla Gurudeva had not come to this world, these concepts would have been lost forever. Who else but Śrīla Gurudeva understood and spoke the teachings of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in this way?

Furthermore in order to help us practically cultivate greed to taste and enter this *vraja-bhakti*, Śrīla Gurudeva showed by his example how one should always reside in Vraja and continually worship Śrī Girirāja Govardhana, Yamunā-devī, Vṛndā-devī, Gopeśvara Mahādeva and all the *līlā-sthalīs* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. He taught us how to perform Dāmodara-vrata, or Ūrjjā-vrata, for the pleasure of Śrīmatī Rādhārānī and that there is only one desirable object of this *vrata*, that is to attain the service of Her lotus feet and become Her eternal maidservant (*pālyadāsī*).

Coming from *nitya-vraja*, Śrīla Gurudeva gave us his love and affection, the pure and sweet love of a *vrajavāsī*, a *rāgātmika-jana*, thereby letting us taste and experience the nature of that love. He has left us hankering eternally for this.

Externally Śrīla Gurudeva was the embodiment of the strict standards set by Śrīman Mahāprabhu, upholding the vow of *tridaṇḍi-sannyāsa*, and internally his heart was overwhelmed and flowing with the sweetest nectar of Vraja. Those who were fortunate enough to hear and associate with him saw and felt this sweetness. After having seen and tasted this, what else remains worth living for?

A most fallen and unworthy servant,

Giridhārī dāsa brahmacārī 



The Example

First of all, I offer my full *daṇḍavat-praṇāma* again and again unto the lotus feet of my *gurudeva*, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and beg for his mercy that I can write something in glorification of him.

When I came to Śrīla Gurudeva, I was only sixteen. Although his classes were very powerful, I could understand little. Living in the *maṭha* with the *brahmacārīs* under his expert care and seeing his unparalleled character and dedication to serving Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas, I came to develop deep respect and veneration for him.



of Perfection

I am simple and foolish, and therefore, I cannot truly understand the magnitude of my *śrī gurudeva's* glories. My faith is also soft and limited. But anyone who has had some of his association cannot but sense his nature, so true and authentic. In the beginning I could not understand much of Śrī Gurudeva's classes, but I could observe his demeanor and habits, and I could see that they were high class and exemplary. I was struck with how he would say his *maṅgalācaraṇa* before giving class. He was always very grave and deeply absorbed, and in a mood of intimacy, he was reverentially and deeply connected with his own *guru* and the *guru-paramparā*.

Before I met Śrīla Gurudeva, I was under the impression that *gurus* sat on grand *vyāsāsanas* and instructed others. But it was obvious that Śrīla Gurudeva did not possess a touch of pride in being a great devotee and *guru*. Instead he was so humble and genuine, possessing the qualities of the most dedicated disciple. I had never experienced this in any other person. Perhaps that is why we are so attracted to him. An *ācārya* is one who teaches by example, by his behaviour. We would always surround him even if just to observe him. It seemed like everything he did was done with high Kṛṣṇa consciousness and purpose. When he came before the deities, he was always serious and in a deep mood, and even in his advanced age, he still did full *daṇḍavat-praṇāma* and *parikramā*. While in Mathurā he would always go to the back of the temple room, and offer respects to the picture of his *guru* and *guruwarga*.

I can never remember seeing Śrīla Gurudeva enter the temple room casually. This is also how he was during *kīrtana* – very involved. He would often tell us that we should not be neutral, meaning indifferent, to *kīrtana* and he would chastise someone who wasn't involved in the *kīrtana*. I remember that a few times at least when Gurudeva chastised everyone saying that all present should have *karatālas* and know how to play them, or at least clap. And it was best to not be caught sleeping! Gurudeva would notice and wake you up, drawing everyone's attention to you!

When he would lead us on *parikramā*, he would always orchestrate the *kīrtana*, making sure that all elements of it were going on nicely. Often times, the *parikramā* would become congested, as everyone was struggling to walk near Śrīla Gurudeva. He would bring the *kīrtana* to the forefront and rearrange us all. If an able-bodied person was chanting on their beads during the *kīrtana*, he would compare that person with an old lady and jokingly rebuke them. Everyone was inspired in *kīrtana* when he was in our midst. He was and is a very expert *kīrtaniyā*. Another wonderful impression Śrīla Gurudeva had on me was to see his dealings with people. He was so patient and loving, knowing perfectly how to deal with each individual in each unique situation. And he always said precisely the right things.

When he met with a senior or high-class devotee, Śrīla Gurudeva would light up and speak sweet words, relating to them so beautifully and respectfully. When he met with the local household devotees he was always very kind and personable, always asking about their welfare and their family affairs. He expertly knew how to pacify and avert certain *paṇḍas* (guides to the *dbāma*) who were always looking for money. He treated them respectfully and gave them what was their due, thus avoiding unnecessary conflict.

With disciples who did something wrong, he was very firm, chastising them in an effort to rectify their

mistake. Like a father, he was concerned for us all. I felt that each day I was fortunate to receive his association and be in close proximity with him I could learn something, either from his instructions or from his example. I am just mentioning a few examples, a few remembrances, but really each day could be made into a book containing special teachings.

Because of his unparalleled characteristics, everyone wants to serve him and surrender to him. He was such a *sad-guru* (bona fide spiritual master) and *ācārya*. I simply have the faith that Śrīla Gurudeva is such an amazing

personality that to serve him and dedicate one's life to him is a life well spent.

I also have the faith that to truly be able to appreciate his glories, one must hear from someone who actually knows his real nature and position. With these words, I am remembering the lotus feet of Śrīla Gurudeva and hoping to one day be able to inspire others to come to know this great personality.

Aspiring to be a speck of dust at his lotus feet

Gaurasundara dāsa (Hawaii) 🌸



A Humble Puṣpāñjali AT THE LOTUS FEET OF MY DIVINE MASTER

Offer my prostrated obeisances at the divine lotus feet of my *dīkṣā-guru*, His Divine Grace Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda. I offer my full *daṇḍavat-praṇāmas* at the divine lotus feet of my *śikṣā-guru*, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja. And finally, I offer my full prostrations at the divine lotus feet of my *śikṣā-guru*, His Divine Grace Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja (Śrīla Gurudeva).

Dearest and most beloved Śrīla Gurudeva,

The year was 1978 and I used to dress Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda in the New York Temple. My Godbrother would play a recording of a *bhajana* tape while we dressed and decorated Ṭhākuraṅgi. The songs were captivating: *Vibhāvarī-śeṣa*, *Je Ānilo Prema-Dhana*, *Emona Durmati Hari Haraye*, etc. Everyday, I would dress Ṭhākuraṅgi and listen to these sound vibrations, and something soon began to touch my heart. I



inquired, “Who is the person singing these *bhajan*s?” And I was told it was you, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, the devotee who placed Śrīla Prabhupāda in *samādhi*. Your voice was the sweetest and most powerfully captivating sound vibration I had ever heard. I was told by someone that you were the most renowned *kīrtaniyā* in the whole Gauḍīya Maṭha. Days passed into weeks and weeks passed into months, and as a ritual we would play that same recording each morning. Something must have gradually entered my heart because at some point I made a quiet declaration to myself, “I must find him and I must serve him!”

One year in the early 1980s I was in Vṛndāvana and eagerly began to inquire from the local devotees about how I could locate you. “Go to Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha in Mathurā, the place where Śrīla Prabhupāda was given *sannyāsa*,” I was told. Full of eagerness and like a small child I embarked for Mathurā, unaware of the profound change that was about to take place in my life.

When I reached the top of the stairs in the *maṭha* I could see the temple room and the deity doors. I looked to my left and I saw you sitting in a chair looking straight ahead, chanting on your *mālā*. No one else was there and no one was looking at me. I just stood there staring at you, my heart beating faster and faster. I knew it was

you, although I had never seen a photo of you. Something more than mystical was happening to me as I stood there for at least two or three minutes just looking at you. A revelation came to my heart: “you are again in the presence of Śrīla Prabhupāda.” I remembered some words from a tape of *pūjyapāda* Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja that was being circulated. “Follow your heart, follow your heart; the heart will never lie.” I approached you and paid my *praṇāmas*. You looked at me with your bright blue eyes and suddenly smiled broadly as if you had been sitting in that chair waiting for me. That was all it took. My heart was captured, stolen. Overwhelmed, I sat at your feet. It felt as if we had found each other again.

In December of 1984 I came to stay for some time in Mathurā. During this stay you so kindly fulfilled my desire for *sevā* to you. It was out of your causeless love and mercy that you did so. A large plot of land had been donated to you near Sevā-kuñja and you brought me there to view it. We walked around the plot together and you described to me in vivid detail what your plans were. You eventually pulled out a large paper with an intricate architectural drawing of the *maṭha* plans in its entirety. Personally, to my own eyes, all I could presently see was an empty plot of land with a small hut that had been dilapidated by what appeared to have been a fire.

When I left Mathurā that time my life changed drastically. For the next six years I spent all of my time collecting to assist in the construction of Rūpa-Sanātana Gauḍīya Maṭha. I spoke of you to all of my friends and Godbrothers. Some became very eager to meet you. It was an amazing and exciting time. I felt such purpose to my life. We were always exchanging letters, and sometimes you would say, “Please come soon or we will feel some difficulty.” I would come two or three times a year with my various collections. Some of my friends, although not having yet met you, would also help generously. I used to love placing large stacks of rupees all around your feet and body as you sat on your bed. At those times, Navīna Prabhu would always tightly lock the door. Once, you said, “I feel that I am just dreaming that you have just placed all of these rupees on my bed. Will I wake up?”

You were so kind and loving to me. It seems that you were always worried for me. I remember your embracing me and holding me tightly to your chest. I could feel your heart beating. One year when I was leaving it was winter time. You noticed that I was wearing a short sleeved shirt and said that I was like a *vairāgi* and would be cold traveling through so many countries. To my shock, you removed your own saffron sweatshirt from your body and handed it to me, ordering me to put it on. A few *brahmacārīs* were in the room and they looked somewhat stunned. I refused to

put the shirt on, and said that instead I will place it on my altar and worship it, but you strongly insisted, so I squeezed into it. The sleeves came only to my forearms and the chest and shoulders were so tight. I never felt so warm in my whole life, so loved. You laughed and embraced me. I was at a loss for words.

Years later, in the 90s when I was with you at Rūpa-Sanātana Gauḍīya Maṭha, you pointed to the pillars and various structures and said, “You have done this.” I would strongly object and say, “No, you have done this!” Arguing back and forth I finally said that Kṛṣṇa had done it for you. “Kṛṣṇa can only do *preraka*,” you replied and then walked away laughing. *Preraka* (my previous name) means ‘one who has been sent’.

In the late 80s and early 90s a small devoted group had taken shelter of your lotus feet. You began to elaborately speak upon topics related to our ultimate *sādhya*. You described *rādhā-dāsyam* in all of its splendor and glory. You gave us deep commentaries and sweet *līlās* from *Rāga-vartma-candrikā*, *Ujñvala-nīlamanī* and other Gosvāmī *granthas*. You instructed us to perform *bhājana* with the single aim of an *ekāntika vraja-bhāva* mood directed towards *rādhā-dāsyam*, in the line of Śrī Rūpa. You warned us not to cultivate any activities that would create *puṣa-bhāva*. You thoroughly clarified the *mano-bhīṣṭa* and speciality of Śrīman Mahāprabhu and the deep meaning of *rūpānuṣa*. It was like a new awakening for us, the next phase of our spiritual life, a continuation of what Śrīla Prabhupāda had brought us. You were slowly changing us. You once told Campakalātā, who used to come and stay in India for four to six months with our girls, “I want to transform you so much that when Prāṇa-kiśora comes he will no longer recognize you.”

Coming to the West, Prema-yuga The Second Hare Kṛṣṇa Explosion

None in your group of devotees ever conceived that you would leave India. When preparations were being made for your first Western tour, you called me to your room and told me that your *guru mahārāja* had come to you and instructed you to go and preach in the West. You also told me that you had promised Śrīla Prabhupāda that you would preach in the West and that you would surely fulfil that promise.

I will never forget how shortly thereafter we saw you disembarking out of the gate at LAX in 1996 for the first time. It was a completely surreal scene. A small group of devotees were nervously chanting, walking here and there, anxiously waiting to greet you. A *kīrtana* slowly began as the people started coming through the gate. Finally we saw you and Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmācārī from a distance. You were shining like the warm morning sun. You smiled widely when you saw all of us. The moment was perfectly

captured by Gokula Prabhu as he snapped a photo of Campakalātā trying to place a garland on you, as she wept and laughed simultaneously, utterly stunned to see you on Western soil. You and Navīna Prabhu laughed to see this. It was back in '94 or '95 that Śrīpāda Gaura Govinda Mahārāja had told his disciples that a *prema-yuga* would be coming and it would begin in '96. It was a prophecy that none of us understood at that time. It didn't take long after your arrival in 1996 to understand what Śrīpāda Gaura Govinda Mahārāja had seen in his transcendental vision. Soon after your arrival, a massive flood of *bhakti* would envelop the planet again. A second wave, a second explosion, coming after the departure of our beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I was fortunate that first year in that I was able to be your driver, and I drove you all over California. I was able to be with you here and there, and also throughout the far east those first few years. I witnessed first hand the transformations devotees would go through after hearing your *hari-kathā* for only two or three days. I watched grown men and women, Godbrothers and Godsisters, stand before you, weep uncontrollably and then fall at your feet. One devotee could only utter the words, “Thank you, thank you,” weeping and weeping. You smiled lovingly, put your hand on his head and said, “I wanted this.” Only a resident of Vraja, a *parikara* of Śrī Rādhā and an intimate associate of Śrī Rūpa could perform such magic on the hearts of devotees everywhere.

O Gurudeva, dear friend, dear master, you told me once that Śrīla Prabhupāda was *satya-saṅkalpa*, whatever he said is bound to become truth. This was his nature and calibre. Gurudeva you are also *satya-saṅkalpa*. One time in Mathurā you asked me if I were happy. I asked you why. You said that if I were not happy that you would personally begin a court case against Kṛṣṇa, on the side of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. You said that Kṛṣṇa promised in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that if His devotee serves Him then that devotee must become happy forever. So if I were not happy then you would take Kṛṣṇa to court for not telling the truth. Just after this I became a little emotional and told you that if I had to take birth again I might be directed to another *guru*. I told you that I never wanted to be separated from you. You took my hands and promised me that you would find me. You said that we would always be together and that you would never let me go. You are *satya-saṅkalpa*. Your words must become truth. They are all I have now to keep me alive. All other prospects are now bleak and meaningless. The only thing of value is to be with you eternally. Please find me, Gurudeva. Please look for me even if I stray to weakness. You are my only hope.

Destitute and shattered,
Your Prāṇa-kiśora dāsa 



The Value of His Śikṣā

Let me first offer my most prostrated humble obeisances to my divine spiritual master His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda, who has come to this world to save the fallen souls in the grip of *māyā* and in so doing fulfilling the prediction of Śrīla Bhaktinoda Ṭhākura as that representative of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu who spread the *saṅkīrtana* movement all over the world.

Next let me offer my prostrated obeisances to my *śikṣā-guru tridaṇḍīsvāmī* Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who has taken the essence of mercy of the

Gauḍīya *rasika-vaiṣṇavas* and delivered it to the devotees who were hankering to taste the nectar of *kṛṣṇa-kathā*. In so doing, he has nourished the thirst of devotees who were hungry for spiritual progress on the path of *bhakti*.

By perfectly following in the footsteps of my Śrīla Prabhupāda and his own *gurudeva*, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja is the fit representative of our Gauḍīya lineage. Indeed, he is *jagad-guru* in the line of descending *ācāryas* in the Brahma-Madhva-Gauḍīya-Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*.

At the time of Śrīla Gurudeva's arrival in the Western world, many devotees from other camps had undergone a tumultuous experience, having observed the incongruent behaviour of many senior devotees and their subsequent spiritual difficulty. Consequently, they were questioning the leadership of the *saṅkīrtana* movement in the Western world and experiencing a lack of faith. Śrīla Gurudeva then came out of Mathurā-Vṛndāvana bearing the pure message of his *guru-varga*. By freely giving of his association to all, devotees had the chance to experience the nectar of *barikathā* emanating from the lips of a living *rasika* Vaiṣṇava. The arrival of Śrīla Gurudeva in the West was like the appearance of a rain cloud in the desert.

In coming to the West, Śrīla Gurudeva was fulfilling his promise to His Divine Grace Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda, to help his disciples, who were like infant children in spiritual development. He reminded us of service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava, beyond the sphere of material and 'spiritual' politics and partisanship, and he installed in the eager hearts of the devotees that the highest goal of life was to obtain *kṛṣṇa-prema* in the mood of *rādhā-dāsyam*, which is what Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to give. Had it not been for Śrīla Gurudeva, this mood may have been lost in the course of time.

By Śrīla Gurudeva's preaching and writings, windows to the teachings of our *guru-varga* opened wide, and many of the writings of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura were translated into English. With his expertise to guide us, we were thus given a hint of the aroma of that service saturated with "my-ness" and love: service to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Without Śrīla Gurudeva's expounding this sentiment of the *rasika* Vaiṣṇavas, we may never have captured the scent of that mood in our hearts to 'do or die', to try, hope against hope, to achieve the *prema* that is in the wake of the residents of Vraja.

This is the 'birthright' of those in our *sampradāya*. It is not an artificial imposition on the mind or some *sabaijyā* concept. Śrīla Gurudeva reminded us strongly to give up our material conceptions and bodily comforts and consciousness and again follow Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions. Had we not received the opportunity to hear from and associate with such a Vaiṣṇava, our advancement may have been stunted due to unclear conceptions.

Many people do not really understand the principle of *śikṣā-guru*. Some even think that accepting a *śikṣā-*

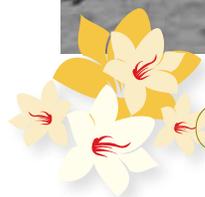


guru means to relinquish one's *dikṣā-guru*, but this is not the case. Whereas the *dikṣā* relationship tends to be based on awe and reverence, *śikṣā-guru* permits a level of familiarity and intimacy. This *śikṣā* relationship is tasteful, desirable and appreciated by the devotee. You can speak with your *śikṣā-guru* like you can to your friend or uncle. Out of affection he gives you good advice that helps you not stray from the path. Never once did Śrīla Gurudeva minimize Śrīla Prabhupāda to me or to my Godbrothers, nor did he emphasize his own position in my life over Śrīla Prabhupāda's. In fact he reminded us again and again what Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted from us. If he saw us stray from that path, he said, "Is this what your *guru mahārāja* would want?" By his friendship, care and genuine concern for our spiritual welfare, he nurtured our *bhakti*, strengthening our bond with Śrīla Prabhupāda and developing our loving appreciation for his association and service. I genuinely feel sorry for those who missed an opportunity to associate with him, an intimate servant of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

It is with great honor I offer my respects to Śrīla Prabhupāda, who gave me to Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja for him to help me on my spiritual path. Without his blessings I may never have had the opportunity to hear and serve such an advanced *rasika* Vaiṣṇava. And I offer my prostrated obeisances to *tridaṇḍisvāmī* Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who has shown his kindness and mercy upon me, allowing me in some small way to serve him, and who has left an indelible impression on my heart. I feel deeply bereft of his friendship, counsel and conversation.

The lowly and insignificant servant,

Mahābuddhi dāsa 



His Most Benevolent Mission

Offer my most sincere and prostrated obeisances unto the divine lotus feet of my spiritual master, *nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda* and to my *śikṣā-guru, nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, Śrīla Gurudeva*, on this sacred anniversary of his passing from this mortal world and entering the eternal pastimes of the glorious Goloka Vṛndāvana.

Dearest Śrīla Gurudeva,

Because of my selfishly desperate nature, your pastime of entering *nitya-lilā* has been most traumatic, but gradually you are giving me strength and my enthusiasm is returning. I wish that somehow, I could have done more to serve you, to love you as I feel you loved us. In this past year I have sincerely contemplated this fact and it has brought me some solace. Actually, just this attempt to glorify you is causing a tremendous surge of inspiration to serve your mission.

When reading your books, I cannot help but consider Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura's prediction that in the future, Vedavyāsas will advent to ensure that the authentic message of the Vedas will be duly propagated. In you, this prediction has surely and undoubtedly been fulfilled. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (4.20.25) describes how important it is to hear the glories of the Lord from a self-realized soul:

*sa uttamaśloka mahan-mukha-cyuto
bhavat-padāmbhoja-sudbhā kaṇānilaḥ
smṛtiṁ punar viśmṛta-tattva-vartmanām
kuyoginām no vitaraty alam varaiḥ*

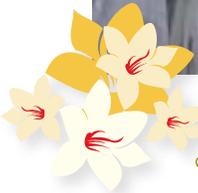
My dear Lord, You are glorified by the selected verses uttered by great personalities. Such glorification of Your lotus feet is just like saffron particles. When the transcendental vibration from the mouths of great devotees carries the aroma of the saffron dust of Your lotus feet, the forgetful living entity gradually remembers his eternal relationship with You. Devotees thus gradually come to the right conclusion about the value of life. My dear Lord, I therefore do not need any other benediction but the opportunity to hear from the mouth of Your pure devotee. [BBT translation]

O Śrīla Gurudeva, you are such an exalted swanlike *paramahansa*, as you most mercifully gave a supreme benediction, a priceless jewel, to us pitiful, insignificant *kali-bata jīvas*, or fallen souls of this degraded age. Your contribution to the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava society by empowering it with a most refined level of loving harmony is uniquely placed as a jewel like chapter in its history. And this is just part of your legacy. It is therefore our duty to always promote such loving respect in an effort to serve your mission, which places the highest potential of full realization of the self as its primary goal. Our work is just beginning.

I pray for the mercy of the Vaiṣṇavas and our *guru-paramparā* that we will succeed in serving you in this way.

Always aspiring for your mercy and the mercy of our divine *ācāryas* and Vaiṣṇavas,

Tamopahā dāsanudāsa 



Let it Rain

Millions and millions of times I reverently place my head at the lotus feet of my holy masters, *nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja* and *nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja*.

O Gurudeva! You came and charmed our hearts and then left with them, like a messenger in the night. On waking, I suddenly found you were gone and yet still so present, listening to our cries. That which you came to

give, you are now enabling us to realize through separation, distantly watching to see when we will walk and cheering us on from afar.

Your beauty is present in so many hearts as a rain cloud of mercy just ready to burst. I pray to punctuate my life in your service with those clouds of mercy.

Your aspiring servant,

Padābja dāsa 🙏



He Sweetly Harmonized Everything

We offer our prostrated obeisances unto the lotus feet of our most merciful *gurudeva, nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, Śrīla Prabhupāda*. And we offer an equal number of obeisances unto the lotus feet of our dear *śikṣā-guru, nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, Śrīla Gurudeva*.

In the very beginning of his tours to the U.S.A. Śrīla Gurudeva smiled and told us, “Svāmījī told you that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and I have come to tell you to forget that He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” It was presented in a humorous manner but at the same time very seriously.

Initially we were alarmed. Was this *siddhānta* opposite to what Śrīla Prabhupāda taught? Śrīla Gurudeva then



harmonized everything and explained how this was also the conclusion of our Śrīla Prabhupāda. This is verified in *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* (11.8) where Śrīla Prabhupāda says, “In their [the Vrajavāsīs’] loving exchange, they forget that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord”.

So from the beginning, Śrīla Gurudeva taught us an essential truth: when in the loving hands of a *mahā-bhāgavata*, it is necessary to yield to his approach, for Vaiṣṇavas are unified in principle and *siddhānta*. By his mercy, may the lesson he taught guide us in our association with all Vaiṣṇavas in the future, for they are our only hope.

Gurudeva often told the story of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, who established that Kṛṣṇa’s human-like pastimes were uppermost and that Kṛṣṇa’s *parakīya-bhāva* with the *gopīs* was the zenith of them all. The followers of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī attempted to kill Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura for this, perceiving his bold assertion of this fact to be a direct attack on Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, who presented *svakīya-rasa* in *Śrī Gopāla-campū*. One whose *bhakti* is immature would have little chance of spiritually surviving among such seeming confusion without proper guidance.

Moreover, Śrīla Gurudeva also taught us that Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī was not opposing his worshipful *gurus*, his uncles Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, who fully endorsed the conception of the transcendental *parakīya-rasa* of Kṛṣṇa with the *vraja-gopīs*, and that even Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī clearly hinted at *parakīya-rasa* in his writings.

Śrīla Gurudeva would also cite the example of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda’s commentary on Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī’s *Upadeśāmṛta*, in which he

presents a different perspective from that of his father, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Yet he considered Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura as his most worshipful *guru*.

In this way, Śrīla Gurudeva taught us the *siddhānta* that we cannot always understand the deep inner moods in the hearts Vaiṣṇavas, nor can we understand their purpose, merely by their words.

In any bona fide *sampradāya*, each *ācārya* carries a divine order, which is his mission in this world. That order may or may not be similar to that of his own *guru*. In the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*, in the line of Śrī Rūpa, we are so fortunate to receive the association and guidance of Vaiṣṇavas who can bestow upon us the direct mercy of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Śrīla Gurudeva was such a Vaiṣṇava, whose loving association we are now bereft of.

Apparent differences of *siddhānta* between Vaiṣṇavas are recorded in the annals of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava history. Śrīla Gurudeva revealed so many of these histories to us, and by so doing showed us the necessity of approaching all Vaiṣṇavas properly, with utmost respect, so as to not disturb our spiritual progress. By his mercy, we noted the necessity of requiring higher guidance to reconcile seeming differences, and that they can in fact be reconciled.

We pray from the core of our hearts that Śrīla Gurudeva always bestow upon us a gentle nature that allows us to fully respect all bona fide Vaiṣṇavas, especially those in our Sārasvata Gauḍīya family.

Aspiring to serve Śrī Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas,

Śaunaka dāsa and Kṛṣṇa-vilāsini dāsī 



The Abode of Love and Affection

Dear Śrīla Gurudeva

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your all merciful lotus feet. All glories to Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga and all glories to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-vihārījī.

It is almost one year now since you returned to serve your Svāmīnī, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, who had sent you to this world to collect sincere souls and train them to be engaged in Her divine service.

In my first meeting with you in Lautoka, 1997, I expressed in Hindi that I had always felt myself to be a servant (*naukara*) of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and you immediately corrected me by saying, “a *naukrāṇī* (maidservant).”

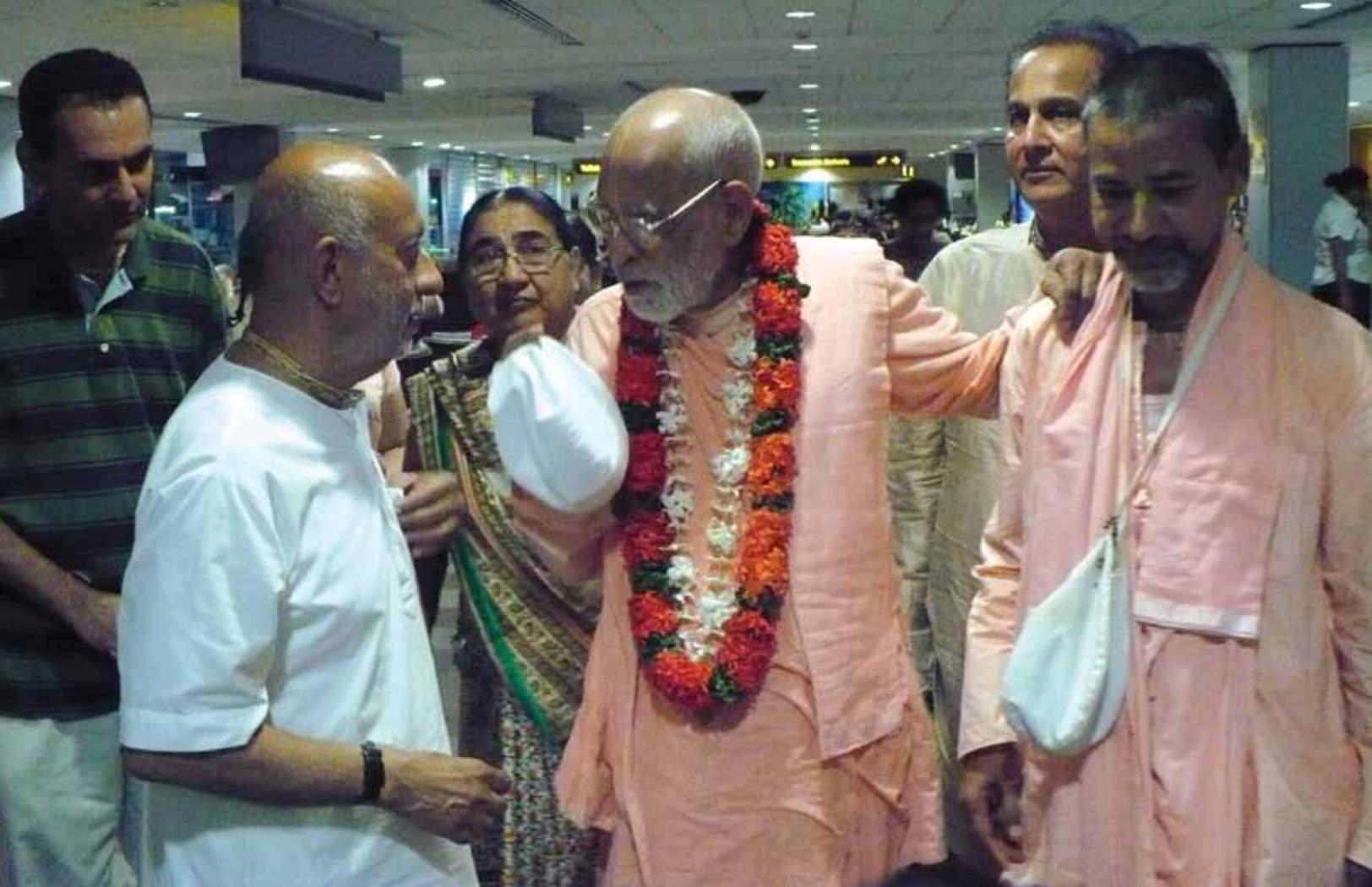
In 1975 and 1976, my wife Kṛṣṇa-līlā and I, had hosted Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja (Śrīla Prabhupāda) at our house in Lautoka, Fiji. During one of the room *darśanas*

with him, some devotees told Śrīla Prabhupāda that we were not chanting. Śrīla Prabhupāda looked at us very compassionately and said, “*sab theek ho jayega* – everything will be alright.”

About twenty years later when things were not alright and when I realized that I needed the guidance and shelter of a bona fide *guru*, I used to cry at night and pray to Śrīla Prabhupāda and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī to help me. I did this for a few years.

When I first heard your *hari-kathā* I felt like iron being attracted to a magnet. I had never heard such wonderful *hari-kathā* in my life. That one week in Lautoka was enough to change my life.

In Sydney, the following year, I approached you and requested that you give Kṛṣṇa-līlā and me *harināma* and



dīkṣā. You said that you considered us disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda because we had associated with him and served him. I said, “Śrīla Prabhupāda did not give me the *mantras*; I received them from someone else. But I have complete faith in you, devoid of a tinge of doubt. Meeting you must be the result of *sukṛti* accumulated over thousands of births. I want to belong to you completely and not have one foot in each boat.” You became pleased and gave *harināma* and *dīkṣā* to me and my wife.

Once in Sydney when I was alone with you, you said to me, “Jagannātha, you have no parents, no children, and your wife is favourable to your development of *bhakti*; therefore, you have no anxieties.” I immediately replied “No, Gurudeva, I have a lot of anxieties. I am not able to perform *bhajana* as I would like to.” Then you said “I also have a lot of anxieties, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are not giving me *darśana*.”

On another occasion, I expressed regret that although I had been coming to Vṛndāvana for the month of Kārtika for the last twenty years, I never had the opportunity to meet you in that time and that they were twenty years wasted. You replied that we had met at the right time by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa.

During one of your visits to Fiji, a program had been organized, but you were not well enough to go. I was with

you alone for a few hours, and you said that being in the company of a pure devotee is more beneficial than going to a program.

At the end of Kārtika in 2010, I came to you with Śrīpāda Tīrtha Mahārāja and informed you of the passing away of my wife Kṛṣṇa-līlā in Vṛndāvana. You expressed surprise and responded, “*uski aayoo nabi thi* – she was not of age.” Then, after contemplating this for a while, with closed eyes you said to me, “*aap ki patni babut bhagyashali hai* – your wife is very fortunate.”

Now that I am completely alone and you are no longer physically present before us, I pray that you always remain in the core of my heart and always guide me. I pray that all my desires may become one with your desires; that my mind, body, words and wealth be always engaged in your service; and that I never give up the aspirations that you have given us in any of my future births.

Please Śrīla Gurudeva, give me guidance, shelter and your sweet devotional moods life after life.

I beg to remain,

Your eternal servant

Jagannātha dāsa (Fiji) 🙏



Puspāñjali

*guru hī brahma guru hī viṣṇu
guru hī devo mabeśvarāya
guru hī sākṣāt parabrahma
tasmai śrī guruve nāmaḥ*

Remembering the lotus feet of my *paramārādhyatama śrī gurudeva*, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa tridaṇḍī svāmī aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārājajī*, I bow down to him hundreds and hundreds of times, and while praying to his lotus feet I consider myself supremely fortunate. When I remember or think about such a *sad-guru*, his mercy comes on the pathway of my memory and I feel very honoured and proud. Remembering the moments I spent in his proximity brings happiness to mind and soul, even today, and as I recall his soft hands stroking on my head, I become tearful.

My First Darśana

I can fully recall the first time I had *darśana* of Śrī Gurudeva. It is as if it were yesterday. It was May or June, 1994–95. I had just opened my medical clinic and store in the Vikāsa

Market and had put seven or eight waiting-room chairs outside on the porch. It was two or three in the afternoon and I was distributing medicine. Usually, the chair next to me remained empty while the patients sat outside by the counter. Suddenly a *tridaṇḍī* saint wearing wooden shoes appeared and stood facing me. In accordance with the impressions, *saṁskāras*, I had received from my family, and also in accordance with my nature, I rose from my chair to welcome him and offer him *praṇāma*, touch his feet and ask him to sit on my seat. His nature perfectly pure, the greatly worshipful *santaḥjī* requested me to take my seat and then sat in the empty chair next to me. He told me to continue prescribing treatment to my patients.

After some time I asked him if he was in need of any medicine. “Beṭā (my son),” he said. “I came to see you. All our *brahmacārīs* praise a doctor named ‘Gauḍa,’ I was thinking, ‘We are of the Gauḍīya *sampradāya*, so who is this Gauḍa? Upon observing your conduct, behaviour and mood, I feel that you are not any foreigner but a Gauḍa of our *sampradāya*. You are from a *brāhmaṇa* family and born in Vraja. You should continue to serve the saints as you are

doing and engage your mind in *kr̥ṣṇa-bhakti*, then you will certainly receive all-auspiciousness.”

Saying this, he got up to leave. I again asked, “Are you in need of any medicine?” He said, “Beṭā, I only came here to meet you,” and then he left. After he left, the patients who were waiting told me, “He is not an ordinary saint but the greatest saint in the Gauḍīya *sampradāya* in present times.” From that day forth, a great eagerness to meet him developed, his image remaining always in my mind.

Like Antaryāmī, He Knows the Heart

During those days, the activities of the municipality elections intensified. Due to my inclination toward politics, one of my friends, whose mother was a candidate in the elections, came to me and said, “If we get eighty-five votes from the Gauḍīya Maṭha then my mother will win.” I immediately agreed to help and we planned a visit to the Gauḍīya Maṭha that evening.

I completed my business in the shop at eight or nine that evening and then went with my friend to the temple. Pūjyapāda Mahārājajī had just finished taking *prasāda* and was about to perform *bhajana* and take evening rest. When he heard that we had come, he called us to his room and sat us down. Before we said anything, he unexpectedly said, “Beṭā, remain far from politics and politicians. As soon as they get their selfish purpose accomplished they no longer care for others. You will deviate from performing your actual responsibilities; therefore give full attention on your work and remember the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa.” Then he said, “*Acchā!* Now tell, why you have come.” My friend and I looked at each other and then turned to him and said, “*Bas!* We only came for your *darśana*.” And we left.

As we came downstairs, Śrī Mādhava Mahārājajī (then Navīna Prabhu) came behind us and gave us *prasāda*. “Mahārājajī told me to tell the doctor that the purpose for which he came here would be successful.” After eight days the elections took place and the eighty-five votes from the Gauḍīya Maṭha were in favour of my friend’s mother and she was victorious.

Natural Affection, Like a Father

As the days passed, the frequency with which I visited the temple increased and my affection for Guru Mahārājajī and attraction to him and faith in him became deeper and deeper. He began to call me *beṭā* and whenever he travelled abroad to preach, he would call by phone and describe his travels. He would also ask about my happiness and welfare and that of the others in Mathurā.

Once I had pain in my appendix. I took many kinds of medicine, but none of them worked. Finally, as I was preparing for an operation, a phone call unexpectedly came

from Mahārājajī, abroad, and he said, “Let me talk to Dr. Sañjaya.”

My mother said, “He is sleeping; his health is not good.”

Mahārājajī said, “I know that his health has been bad for the last three days. He is my son. Let me talk with him.” My mother woke me up and gave me the phone. As soon as I heard Gurudeva’s voice, I said, “*Carāṇa sparśa* – I respectfully touch your feet.” Śrīla Gurudeva was quiet for some moments and then said, “Beṭā, put *tulasī* leaves in Gaṅgā water and drink it. Everything will be all right. I will meet with you when I return.”

I told my mother what Gurudeva had said and she immediately placed *tulasī* leaves in Gaṅgā water and gave it to me to drink. Amazingly the pain subsided and to this day, it has not returned. By this, both Śrī Gurudeva’s divine vision and his words as being *brahma-vacana*, unfailing, like that of *brahma*, were proven. What he instructed became the remedy.

Śrī Gurudeva would always bless me that I would become victorious. Whenever he saw me – at any time, in any place, on any stage – he would call me near him and give me a place at his feet. But he would never allow me to sit near him for very long. He would say, “People are waiting for you to perform your duty. Quickly go there [to your clinic].”

Not only that, in front of all he would call me, ‘my *putra*’, ‘my *beṭā*’ or ‘my assistant’. In this way, he treated me so much as his very own that my eyes would fill with tears

Protecting the Culture of Vraja

Śrīla Gurudeva used to entrust me with the responsibility of dealing with the local government administration as he guided us to protect the Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s pastime places in Vraja and keep the current of *vraja-bhakti* always flowing.

In conjunction with Guru Mahārāja’s inspiration and instruction, plans began for the auspicious cleaning of Śrī Brahma-kuṇḍa near Śrī Mānasī-gaṅgā. Śrī Mahārājajī performed *pūjā* with a large number of devotees and engaged the residents of Govardhana, the Vrajavāsīs in this service. At that time, the district collector Śrī Narendra Bhūṣaṇa (IAS) and the provisional commissioner Śrī Amṛta Abhijāta (IAS) took blessings from Mahārājajī. In this way, with great enthusiasm, the entire government administration became involved in the task of renovating Śrī Brahma-kuṇḍa. While doing so, they needed to excavate and in the process, Śrī Girirājajī *śilās* came out and a source of sweet water also appeared.

Surabhi-kuṇḍa

During the eighty-four *kosa* Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā*, in the course of the *parikramā* of Śrī Girirāja Govardhana, Śrīla Gurudeva always gave me the good fortune of



performing service by instructing me to arrange *prasāda* for the pilgrims. Every year, on that day, Śrī Guru Mahārājajī would come to Surabhi-kuṇḍa, where he would speak the glories of that place, but its external condition was not good and he became inspired to renovate it. He discussed his ideas with me and gave me the responsibility to renovate Surabhi-kuṇḍa. Every year on the auspicious occasion of Dipāvalī, our Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā* comes to Surabhi-kuṇḍa, and arrangements are made to welcome the devotees and serve them *prasāda*.

Guru Mahārājajī gave me all potency, confidence and valour to perform various tasks in Śrī Durvāsā Gauḍīya Maṭha and Śrī Giridhārī Gauḍīya Maṭha, from purchasing the land to the completion of the construction, and also to deal with the local problems and disturbing elements that came up. Now I cannot even imagine how I ever did that.

He always encouraged me to carefully think of others and remember everyone's welfare, to not perform any act of injustice to anyone, and to always endeavour to increase the beauty of Vraja, by planting trees on the pathways of Vraja, cleaning the *kuṇḍas*, and filling them with fresh water. He would talk about new new plans and methods and I would try to help implement them.

Śrīla Gurudeva's Friendship to Me

In the year 2002, I was struck with a great problem and as a result, people around me, all of my friends and relatives, began to feel antagonistic toward me. Danger was threatening my work and profession. My family and relatives were pressuring me to change my line of work.

In the middle of all this, Śrī Gurudeva arrived in Vraja from abroad and called me to Govardhana. "What has happened to you?" he asked. "How has such darkness fallen on your face?" Tears welled in my eyes and I began to weep. Śrī Guru Mahārājajī sat quietly, as if reading the state of my heart and said, "Beṭā, you have to really move forward. This obstacle has come in your path, but if it had not come, how could your path ahead be cleared? Today is *ekādaśī*. Come out of this state of consciousness and from today, do not allow yourself to feel any fault or lacking. You are

a doctor by nature, so with your experience and assiduity, treat the ill."

Mādhava Mahārājajī then came and told me about the subject of his Ph.D. and encouraged me, also, to do a Ph.D. Śrī Gurudeva blessed me, saying, "Do not worry about anything. Whoever you give medicine to will certainly become well. Continuously perform *śrī kṛṣṇa-bhakti* and service to the devotees. Give full attention to your work. If you leave, then those who come to you with so much faith in you will be despondent. Help them in a kind way."

Śrī Gurudeva kept stroking my head with his hand. From that day, having obtained Śrīla Gurudeva's words of blessing and inspiration, I have never looked back. I furthered my studies in the field of Homeopathy, with perseverance and endeavour, I completed a Ph.D.

My Humble Prayer

My Śrī Gurudeva and his *brahma-vacana* (unfailing words of blessing) are with me even today. If any problem comes and troubles me, Śrī Gurudeva comes in my dreams and blesses me with the solution. Whenever I deeply remember him, Śrī Gurudeva comes before me.

Just as all actions are performed by the mercy and inspiration of *antaryāmi* Bhagavān, all of my actions were performed by Śrī Gurudeva himself. He showed us the path and taught us lessons by which we, our family, the human race and entire world receive auspiciousness. As Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared in this world and, by acting out His pastimes, bound the Vrajavāsīs in *prema* and *bhakti* to Him, similarly, our *parama-pūjanīya guru mahārājajī* came in this age and preached the message of *śrī kṛṣṇa-bhakti* all over the world, bringing tidings of *vraja-bhakti* and *vraja-prema*. In this way, by his affection and love he bound all who were able to take his *darśana*. From time to time, Bhagavān and His devotees appear. In this sequence, Gurudeva, a great devotee of Bhagavān, came. Having performed his pastimes on the stage of this world, Śrī Gurudeva is present in the *nitya-dhāma*.

Finally, I make this prayer to Gurudeva: May the blessings and mercy he showered upon me and my family when he was present continue, and I may continue to follow his ideal and path. May my mind remain focused on *śrī kṛṣṇa-bhakti* and service to the saints. May I continue on the path Śrī Gurudeva guided us on, may I follow all his instructions, and may I achieve *bhagavad-bhakti* and the lotus feet of Bhagavān, thus making my human life successful.

Hare Kṛṣṇa

With obeisances at the lotus feet of Śrī Guru Mahārājajī

Sanjaya dāsa (Dr Sanjay Gauda) 🙏



The Love of Śrīla Gurudeva

Offer my heartfelt *daṇḍavat-praṇāma* unto the lotus feet of my divine spiritual master and dearest friend, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇu-pāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

The mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Śrīla Gurudeva's heart and soul, and he brings it to us in a most beautiful way, with so much love and affection for each and every person who comes to him, regardless of that person's background, age and so forth. He gives his mercy to all.

We hear that it is we who need to surrender to the bona fide spiritual master, but my humble observation is that it is Śrīla Gurudeva who surrenders unconditionally to us, out of his all compassionate desire to really help us. He is so merciful that he fully embraces a person, coming to whatever level they are on, and gives them an opportunity to enter a

particular mood with him. That mood is loving service to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. He is fully surrendered to Them.

I have observed his kindness on so many occasions. Someone may have come to him whom he had never met but who had heard about him and made a great endeavour to receive his *darśana*. In reciprocation, Śrīla Gurudeva has initiated that person on the spot. I saw this in Holland on Śrīla Gurudeva's first tour out of India. One French girl had heard of a holy man who had come to Europe. She hitchhiked to where Śrīla Gurudeva was staying. All by hearsay, she found him, just as he was about to leave. We did not want his departure to be hindered and were anxious to hurry this interaction along, but Śrīla Gurudeva would not be hurried and spoke with her and gave her the *mahā-mantra*.

One particularly strong impression I have is how Śrīla Gurudeva, Śrīla Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrīla Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja once allowed us into their world. In my first Navadvīpa *parikramā* in 1994, I remember seeing the three of them sitting together. They were surrounded by so many *brahmacārīs* and *sannyāsīs*, but these three personalities shone. Their presence was so profound and they were taking us into their world, sharing the *dhāma* with us and the teachings of our *guru-varga*. In their presence I had a glimpse of an insight that they were in contact with a much higher reality. It felt that they were lifting us into the reality that they were experiencing and offering us to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Everything was so charged with potency and so beautiful and unique. I cannot imagine that I will experience anything like that again in my lifetime.

Once, I watched as Śrīla Gurudeva sat in a chair and so many devotees gathered around him, crowding in front of his room in Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha. Some massaged his feet, some asked questions, and others offered him garlands, donations and fruits. I was just witnessing this charming scene. He noted this and looked straight at me, understanding my mind and said, “Yes, we are all like a family.” We are a family linked by him. In this way, we were allowed in to participate in his beautiful dealings.

I feel most fortunate to be able to serve Śrīla Gurudeva directly. I wanted a service that was unique to me, and by it, my relationship with him developed. I had wanted to build a house for Śrīla Gurudeva and his party and for the Western devotees, to make a home for him to return to at the end of his travels. I offered this idea to him and he fully gave me the order to do that, to buy Gopinātha Bhavana, develop it and maintain it. His plan was bigger

than my plan and Gurudeva guided the project, very gently and subtly. He soon made it known to me that he wanted a temple at Gopinātha Bhavana, also. After ten years of serving Śrīla Gurudeva in this way, he installed the deities of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gopinātha. Somehow, at the time of the deity installation, Śrīla Gurudeva left the door partially open and I peeked through into the deity room. Despite the enormous crowd, only one other person saw me do this. It was then that I realized that Śrīla Gurudeva had utilized my service in such a way that it brought the best out of me. He then offered the result of this service to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and, in his infinite kindness, gave it back in *sukṛti* just to help me. I contemplated how he was doing this for each and every one of us, giving us service just for our own benefit.

One thing I deeply know is that when Śrīla Gurudeva left this world he came into the heart of all of his disciples and followers. Everyone without exception. He was so present. He gave himself so completely at that time. This was such an intimate experience for all. He promised us many times that he would be there for us if we kept on following his instructions, chanting, etc., but at the time of his departure, he gave an actual experience of this, proving conclusively that he is a fully transcendental personality.

I feel that he is with me all the time and that I am not separated from him. I was in shock for a few months when he left this world, but then, when I went to Navadvīpa, I realized that he is my heart and that he has not left us at all.

I pray that he always finds some way of using me, even though I have no qualification, in service to him.

Aspiring for the dust of his lotus feet eternally,

Gopinātha dāsa 



Magic, Mischief and Muffins

Offer my loving obeisances to my beloved *gurudeva*, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja*.

Through his *hari-kathā*, Śrīla Gurudeva has inspired us to always hear, chant and remember, his heart giving us access to the Divine Couple and the eternal conjugal pastimes. It is this heart, so overflowing with love and affection that attracted me as it attracted you, and that remains the full flowing yet ever-steady platform for my practice of *bhakti*.

However, it was his extraordinary ability to maintain the highest standards in leading a worldwide *saṅga*, performing

the role of a global *ācārya* while at the same time being so loving, soft, personal and intimate that really made him so special and so very dear to me.

Back in the 90’s, my father visited Śrīla Gurudeva’s travelling party in Holland. My dad is an agnostic. Śrīla Gurudeva invited him to sit on the stage with him. He turned to my dad and pointed at me sitting in the back of the class. And then he said in front of three hundred devotees, “He is your son. He is also my son. We must be brothers!” and then he laughed. My dad was agnostic. Yet years later in hospital he said to me, while pointing to a photo of Śrīla Gurudeva, “He’s the one for me!” Such



was Śrīla Gurudeva’s universal appeal that he could resonate with so many people’s hearts even when a person did not even believe in God.

Another time, we were at the opening ceremony of the Durvāsā-ṭilā Mandira in Vraja. It was a hot day and there must have been five hundred devotees assembled. Kṛṣṇa dāsa had led a highly charged *kīrtana* and spirits were high. I was sitting to the right of Śrīla Gurudeva, about twenty metres behind him. I was hungry and so my attention was fading. Out of nowhere, Gurudeva turned his head, smiled at me and threw me two sumptuous bananas. How adorable! He not only knew my heart but heard my mind imploring for some *prasādam*! His throw was so accurate. They landed straight in my lap!

One of my favourite stories about Śrīla Gurudeva is in regard to a devotee who had brought a muffin to offer to Śrīla Gurudeva. Mādhava Mahārāja sternly told Śrīla Gurudeva he was not to eat this. He was always very concerned for Śrīla Gurudeva’s health. Later that evening, as Mādhava Mahārāja was inspecting the tray before distributing the remnants, he noticed that Śrīla Gurudeva had managed to scoop out the inside of the muffin while leaving the outside intact. He had done this to make it appear as though he hadn’t eaten any of the muffin. Śrīla Gurudeva had this amazing ability to be, simultaneously,

the wisest elder on the planet and also the most playful boy. He could give you the deepest instruction and at the same time be very childlike. I see the muffin story as an allegory. Externally, we may look much the same as we used to, but internally, over the years, great changes have taken place in us, as Śrīla Gurudeva has scooped out, with his own hands, the blockages in our hearts and created a space for us to connect with God and fill our hearts with love.

During my first year with Śrīla Gurudeva, in 1996, he instructed me in four words long, so deep and so broad that they live inside me to this day: “Business is your *bhajana*.” He was so personal, so practical, expert at knowing what we each need for our progress.

He made me feel so special, loved and good to be alive, with his shower of affection upon me. I feel warm inside and experience this love as I write this.

Although his disappearance leaves a massive gap in our lives, he remains ever close and is always willing to listen to us, advise us and support us if we just talk to him. Although I loved his physical form, I feel his presence in my life every day and know he is my eternal guide.

Praying to one day truly serve him, the abode of love and affection,

Yaśodā-nandana dāsa 🍁

ŚRĪLA GURUDEVA'S EXTRAORDINARY QUALITIES:

A Few Personal Memories



*śrī-kṛṣṇa-līlā-kathane sudakṣam
audārya-mādhurya-guṇaiś ca yuktaṁ
varaṁ vareṇyaṁ puruṣaṁ mahāntaṁ
nārāyaṇaṁ tvāṁ śirasā namāmi*

I bow down and place my head at the lotus feet of Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who is expert in describing *kṛṣṇa-līlā*. He is endowed with the qualities of magnanimity and sweetness, and he is the best of the great souls. Because he is always relishing Kṛṣṇa's sweetness, he is able to freely distribute that sweetness to others.

Śrīla Gurudeva kindly, and inexplicably, allowed me to travel with him for two-and-a-half years, and also to attempt to serve him for seventy-two days before he left this world on 29 December 2010. Sadly, I lack spiritual vision. But even from my ordinary perspective, it was evident just how extraordinary our Śrīla Gurudeva is.

Tireless in the Service of Parama-gurudeva

Usually, people over the age of sixty retire, especially if they have worked very hard in their life. Śrīla Gurudeva would be flown to Hawaii and other lovely holiday destinations. He could have relaxed there. Instead, up to the advanced age of eighty-nine, he worked relentlessly on translating and writing. During the time I travelled with him, I would enter his *devanāgarī* corrections on the computer. Although a third of his age, I sometimes found it challenging to keep up with him.

One day in the Philippines, some of the devotees travelling with Śrīla Gurudeva went on an afternoon excursion to see a volcano. By chance, I had stayed behind. When Śrīla Gurudeva saw me, he was very pleased. "We have not come here to enjoy sightseeing," he said. "Our only aim for being here is to serve *guru* and Kṛṣṇa."

Immense Attachment to Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

Śrīla Gurudeva loved *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. During the time I travelled with him, I saw this, as he worked tirelessly on translating *Bhāgavatārka-marīci-mālā* and *Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛta*. The previous *ācāryas* reveal *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and Śrīla Gurudeva delighted in their commentaries. When he went to the ocean in Hawaii, he would more or less simply dip in and then return. But when he would enter into the ocean of these commentaries,



he would swim there for hours on end. Śrīpāda Mādhava Mahārāja would have to invoke some discipline, to safeguard Gurudeva's physical health.

To Śrīla Gurudeva, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* was dearer than his own life. According to the *Skaṇḍa Purāṇa*, this is the defining characteristic of a *mahā-bhāgavata*.*

Direct Spiritual Perception

What struck me when I first met Śrīla Gurudeva is that he spoke about Śrī Śrī Rādhā- Kṛṣṇa and the residents of Vṛndāvana not as an idea, but as real people he actually knew. For my whole life I had been hearing about these topics from people who knew them only as an idea. Śrīla Gurudeva spoke about Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa differently,

* Verse from *Skaṇḍa Purāṇa* quoted in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (10.33).

with a closeness and detail that comes only from genuine perception. No longer was this a mere exchange of words.

One thing I noticed while travelling with Śrīla Gurudeva is how much affection he has for the previous *ācāryas*, such as Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. He would become so animated speaking about them on their appearance day or disappearance day. This made a big impression on me. Since then these personalities stopped being merely historical figures. They started to become living personalities in my life.

A Friend to All

By his nature, Śrīla Gurudeva was always kind to everyone. He was careful never to hurt any creature, not even mosquitoes or poisonous snakes. He never thought of his disciples as his servants; rather he saw himself as a servant.

Śrīla Gurudeva always accepted with genuine appreciation whatever we tried to give him with love. He didn't look at the item, but at the intention or mood of the person giving it. Once a lady gave Śrīla Gurudeva a big, colourful plastic clock. I had carefully cleaned and arranged Śrīla Gurudeva's room at Śrī Rūpa-Sanātana Gauḍīya Maṭha. I was concerned the large plastic device would disturb the aesthetic balance of the room. But Śrīla Gurudeva immediately accepted the gift with love. He wanted the big clock mounted prominently on the wall.

I knew that one should never visit the *guru* empty-handed. So one day in Mathurā I bought a small roll of dried figs. I chose the figs very carefully, but looking back, they were hard and of rather poor quality. When I gave them to Gurudeva he accepted them with such relish. He emphasized that they were very helpful.

Of all the friends I have had in this life, Guru Mahārāja is without doubt my best friend – my only true friend. I know many feel this way.

He Saw Only the Best in Us

All of Śrīla Gurudeva's disciples think he loved them best of all. Śrīla Gurudeva once said this is the characteristic of a true *guru*. I spent most of my life actually trying to run away from Śrīla Gurudeva. But he mercifully came after me again and again, trying to bring me to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

I grew up from infancy without a mother. I never speak about it to anyone. But one of the first things Śrīla Gurudeva said to me when I took shelter of him in India as a boy was, "Always remember, I am your mother."

Śrīla Gurudeva looked through our physical body. He looked through our false ego, shortcomings and faults. He looked through our millions of lifetimes of accumulated good and bad activities, and saw the soul, an eternal servant of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Gurudeva saw not only this. He saw

in that soul our beautiful spiritual form, qualities and activities, which now exist only as an unexpressed potential. We go around seeking and measuring each other's faults. We define others by their flaws. Śrīla Gurudeva defined us by the highest potential of our soul.

Always Present

Perhaps the single most important lesson I have learned while trying to serve Śrīla Gurudeva, and which I am still learning, is that our relationship with Śrīla Gurudeva does not depend at all on physical proximity. I can be very close to Śrīla Gurudeva physically, but if my heart is absorbed in material desires, the entire ocean of material existence stands between Śrīla Gurudeva and me.

Śrīla Gurudeva taught us that *sādhū-saṅga* means "to completely follow a *sādhū* in all ways." If we are a true disciple, if we are following his instructions fully in all ways, there is no separation between us and Śrīla Gurudeva. This is not a relationship bounded by time and space.

Śrīla Gurudeva once explained, "Just as there is no separation between Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* at any time, and yet at the same time they feel separation from each other, so the spiritual master is never separated from the disciple."** However, this is true only if we become a disciple more than in name only.

Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Śrīrūpa Siddhāntī Gosvāmī Mahārāja explained:

A genuine disciple is just as rare as a genuine *guru*. ... Only at the time of *śrī gurudeva's* disappearance can one recognize the actual identity of his disciples. One can then understand who has approached *śrī guru* with what intention. ... If the disciple's heart is not clean, *śrī guru's* heart does not reflect in it. Only out of immense fortune does the moon of *bhakti* that exists in the heart of *śrī gurudeva*, *mahā-bhāgavata*, manifest within the heart of the disciple.***

For those who miss Śrīla Gurudeva, there is a way to him, and that is by becoming a true disciple. Throughout the years, I have had many material desires. I still have many. Looking back, I can say there is no desire, material or spiritual, in my life that Śrīla Gurudeva has not fulfilled, except for one: to be worthy to be called his disciple. Begging Śrī Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas for their kindness,

Sundara-gopāla dāsābhāsa 

** Śrīla Gurudeva, 3 December 2002 (Murwillumbah, Australia).

*** From the "*Upadeśāmṛta*" of Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Śrīrūpa Siddhāntī Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Published in *Rays of The Harmonist*, No. 16 (Kārttika 2006).



Eternal Gratitude

Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga-Gāndharvikā-Giridhārī Śrī Śrī Rādhā-vinoda-bihārīju jayataḥ!

I am offering my heartfelt *puṣpāñjali* to the lotus feet of my *gurupāda-padma*, *om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Gaura Govinda Svāmī Gurudeva, and equally I offer my heartfelt *puṣpāñjali* to the lotus feet of my beloved *śikṣā-gurudeva*, *om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. *Śrī rūpānuga gauḍīya guru-varga ki jaya!*

Dear Śrīla Gurudeva,

I have been requested by sincere Vaiṣṇavas to write an offering to you on the most auspicious occasion of your holy disappearance day. Actually I have no ability or even inclination to write an offering to you on the most auspicious occasion of your holy disappearance day; such is my condition. You continually shower the sunshine of your mercy upon me, but like an owl, I only open my eyes to the darkness. You force me from bed in the morning, make me chant and force me to take *prasāda*. Your *harikathā* is full of sublime teachings and prompts remembrance of my real existence. However I remain steadfastly opposed to any effort to improve my practice of *bhajana*. In this way I realize that you have spent the gallons of spiritual blood just to try and get one sincere person to seriously take to Kṛṣṇa Consciousness.

It is for this reason alone that you have come to this plane to attract debauchees like myself away from the allures of *māyā*. Your every action is imbued with a special sweetness that is more rare, more subtle and more valuable than I could have ever imagined was possible. I observed that your interactions with the devotees transcended what is normally possible within the bounds of material time and space.

You are the most consummate musician playing on the heartstrings of your disciples and so expertly arranging unlimited varieties of seemingly random interactions meant to further our self-realization and purify our existence. Your wondrous glories know no bounds, and I am eternally grateful to you for allowing me to have the tiniest glimpse of them.

So on this day I pray that I will continue to be able to meditate and realize just a little more every day of your limitless qualities, into eternity. And I dream that maybe one day I will be so filled with astonishment that there will be nothing left to do but fall down in complete surrender in the dust of your lotus feet. *Kabe ha'be bolo se-dina āmār.*

Jaya Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja *ki jaya!*

Your devoted but foolish servant,
Gokuladāsa dāsa (Perth, Australia) 



Crying for Mercy

*M*y Dearest Śrīla Gurudeva,
I pray to one day offer my life airs, like thousands of flowers at your lotus feet. By your mercy, even a lowly audacious person such as I can hope that real sincerity may actually manifest in this heart which is full of lust and duplicity.

Although I am like an ignorant animal, and barely capable of comprehending even a drop of what you actually desire to give me, you gave me the instruction to share your message and inspire your devotees on your behalf. I know that it is because of my severe spiritual weakness that you send me around the world to receive the association of so many wonderful sweet-hearted Vaiṣṇavas, so that I may gradually learn how to please you.

By your unlimited compassion and sweet heartfelt affection, you attracted and gave shelter to multitudes of

us lost, orphan-like souls. By your relentless preaching, you have impressed upon my heart the need for constant guidance “from now and in perfection.” You have stressed dependence upon and surrender to, the saviours of the highest calibre. To this day, you continue to prove to us without a doubt that if one faithfully attempts to follow the instruction of *guru*, Kṛṣṇa maintains them. You taught us that we should take responsibility to try to honour Vaiṣṇavas according to their level of development in *bhakti*. And you steered us away from *asat-saṅga* and *aparādha*.

You made pure *bhakti* the exclusive focus of your preaching and accepted no compromise. You established our goal and gave us the means to attain it. You also engrained within us that without *guru-niṣṭhā*, all of our endeavours in *bhakti* will be fruitless. And that real *guru-niṣṭhā* means to engage oneself by mind, body, words and *ātma* in the *mano-*

'*bhīṣṭam sevā* of *śrī guru*. By your own personal example, you showed the world that the most important activity for the conditioned soul is to take shelter of the pure devotee, forsaking all material or social conventions. In Govardhana, you said, "You should only be attached to that place where *hari-kathā* is being spoken by the pure devotee."

Through powerful evidence from *śāstra*, you smashed multitudes of misconceptions and established the absolute truth. In order that we not become weak and rely on sentimentality, you drove into us the true conceptions of *bhakti* according to *tattva* and taught us to propagate your mission accordingly. You shared with us the secret that the only qualification for *bhakti* is the intense greedy desire to attain it. And then you poured the nectar of your *hari-kathā* into our ears so that we may develop that greed. And most of all, you gave us the endless hope that one sweet day, it will be possible for us to lovingly serve Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Her dear most Beloved in the *kuñjas* of Vṛndāvana.

I am limitlessly indebted to you for rescuing me from my own speculative tendencies and engaging me in your

service, despite my severe deficiencies. You know my heart. I am a fraud, full of so many bad qualities and material desires. Yet, I have pride in being your devotee. Please make it so! I don't want to become stuck in some pseudo idea of service. Please direct me as to how I can serve you best; the best thing I can do that will be the most pleasing to you. I don't want to have any other ambition. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda said, "It is necessary to have the constant help of a spiritual teacher to show us the way... . If the spiritual teacher doesn't constantly teach us... we're bound to lose in no time even the treasure that we may have received." Please don't keep me hoping for too long. I am weak. You know that.

Without your help, I fear I will perish! Your mercy is always there.

Please make it clearly visible to me!

Praying to one day become your true disciple,

Your insignificant son,
Kīśorī-mohana dāsa 🙏



Śrīla Gurudeva's Beautiful Arrangements

Offer my obeisances millions of times at the lotus feet of my beloved *gurudeva*, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

I first met Śrīla Gurudeva in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The year was 1999. I was immediately struck by the love and concern he showed his devotees and how not a second would pass without his full devotion to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa being in his heart and mind. Although not possible for we conditioned souls to really grasp this, it was somehow apparent to all.

In 2004 Śrīla Gurudeva first visited our family in Penang (Malaysia) and we rented a beach bungalow for him. At the end of his stay, he told me that he was returning the following year and asked me to purchase a beach house for him, in which he would work on presenting the literatures of our *guru-varga*. I tried but could not find a beach house anywhere. Finally, two months before he arrived, I was in such a dilemma that I decided to buy instead a unit in a beach condominium. Then, one day before the transaction was finalized, my wife Mālatī dāśī saw a newspaper advertisement for a beach house, and although those from



the relevant offices and lawyers told me it would take three months to complete the transaction, it took only one. We could only stand back amazed and note that Śrīla Gurudeva himself had masterfully arranged for his beach house in time for his arrival.

Then, in 2007, Śrīla Gurudeva's visit was timed during a season in which the waves washed an abundance of sea shells and dirt on to the beach. I wondered how we were possibly going to clean the beach for Śrīla Gurudeva's

morning walk, but the day he arrived, the waves washed up only water! Again, we were simply amazed.

During Śrīla Gurudeva's visits in 2007 and 2009, we noted a bird in a tree on the beach that was cooing. It reminded us of the pastime of Śrī Kṛṣṇa cooing in Kokilavana to attract Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Fascinatingly, the bird appeared only when Śrīla Gurudeva came and left when he left. That bird was never seen at any other time and has not been seen since Śrīla Gurudeva's last visit in 2009.

Śrīla Gurudeva's preaching never stopped, even in his final days in Govardhana. He arranged for so many devotees to come on *parikramā*, the rich, the poor, the young, the old, the sick, the healthy, the busy, the lazy – somehow or other, devotees flooded in from all over the world. He was performing such active pastimes like this in his last days. He brought them there to visit Rādhā-kuṇḍa, the topmost place in this Earth, as described by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in

Upadeśāmṛta. This was Śrīla Gurudeva's mercy upon us. He then performed another amazing *līlā* by taking a trip to Purī, even though he seemed so frail.

In this way, our Śrīla Gurudeva was always mindful of the welfare of the devotees. Now it is time for us to reciprocate, to remember his teachings and practices and attempt to emulate him, so we may one day become qualified to serve Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa as he is. Only this will make him happy. And if we regard our differences and each other's weaknesses as insignificant in our single-pointed attempt to make him happy, surely we will be successful.

I aspire to always have the good fortune of performing some menial service to him, as that is the only thing that gives life meaning.

His fallen son,
Parameśvarī dāsa (Malaysia) 🌸



Remembering Winter, Memories of Spring

Offer my humble, heartfelt *praṇāma* to your divine and cooling lotus feet, my all compassionate and loving master, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Māhārāja, my Śrīla Gurudeva.

Last winter's clouds were saturated with water;
A downpour from the hearts of your brothers and sisters,
crashing waves of emotions from your sons and daughters,
and showers of tears from your grandsons and granddaughters.

On December Twenty-nine, Two Thousand and Ten
the Earth became heavy with sadness.
The Indian Ocean, a barrier, between us
and that painful voyage from Purī to Navadvīpa.
Yet, our hearts and tears arrived, on the bank of the Ganges,
for the breaking of the pit.

Men clad in saffron cloth, color of the rising sun,
gathered to honor the glories
of the walking *Bhāgavatam*.
They worshiped you, our master, our father, our everything,
with sweet water, milk and yogurt.
All gathered to sing your glories, as we, your children,
made a binding commitment.
On this sorrowful day, we made a promise,
to honor and glorify you, till our last breath.



You are Earth's foremost Vrajavāsī.
Our tears froze as the blizzard swelled,
while Winter enveloped us.

In such a climate, memories were our only warmth.
Your *hari-kathā* converted villages and cities
into holy places.
Your sweet words, infused with your moods,
pervaded the West with your foot-dust.
Your blue eyes pierced the hearts of the human race.
Your books studied by present *sādhakas*
will be worshiped by future pure devotees.
Memories of you from previous springs
illuminate the winter.

Your instructions were songs.
When you sang to one, it benefited all.
Hari-kathā flowed from your *vyāsasana*,
like a melodious *kīrtana*.
It is said that *guru's* instructions are absolute.
You instructed us, “pl-ea-se, b-e s-o-ft, like a fl-o-wer.”

As you sang this, you gestured your fingers like a petal.
Your voice curling into tune,
singing “s-o-ft” and “fl-o-wer.”
A deep tone in the beginning,
leading to a high melodious pitch at the end.
Your instructions entered our hearts and souls,
You are our eternal spiritual master.

Thus was your power and sweetness.
You traveled the Earth more than twenty times,
Planting the seeds of *bhakti* everywhere,
changing the destiny of Missions, families and hearts.
Softening our character, you initiated us for
the preparation of our ultimate *sevā, rādhā-dāsyam*.
Only, you, the foremost Vrajavāsī
could have performed such miracles.
All glories to you our Śrīla Gurudeva, my Father.

Your son, eternally,
Your Viśvambhara dāsa
(Oakland, California – USA) 🙏

Our Dear-most Friend

Offer my heartfelt *puṣpāñjali* to my *dīkṣā-guru*, Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī, my Prabhupāda and eternal well-wisher, and to my *śikṣā-guru*, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, my Gurudeva and dear-most friend.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came with the rest of the Pañca-tattva, plundered the storehouse of love of God, and then tasted that *prema* and distributed it without discrimination. Locana dāsa Ṭhākura describes how Nityānanda Prabhu broke the dam that had been blocking the ocean of mercy, to bring a flood of divine love of God. That barrier was time. It broke and the waters of *prema* began to flow, but they were confined to India. Śrīla Prabhupāda then broke that barrier, and the flow of *kṛṣṇa-prema* inundated the entire world. But there was still a barrier left to break.

For the benefit of conditioned souls all over the world, Śrīla Prabhupāda firmly established the platform of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *siddhānta*, that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One who carefully heard him and read his books, however, could discern that he was imparting an even higher understanding, that in fact, Kṛṣṇa is the darling son of Mother Yaśodā, the affectionate friend of Subala, and especially the enchanting beloved of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Śrīla



Gurudeva's emphasis on this higher conception that Kṛṣṇa is Vrajendra-nandana, Yaśodā-nandana, Śyāmasundara, Rādhā-Madana-mohana and *dhīra-lalita-nāyaka* broke that final barrier. He removed all obstacles to the flow of *vraja-rasa* and moreover, within that *rasa*, he unequivocally revealed the topmost attainment for the souls of this world: *rādhā-dāsyam*.

Śrīla Gurudeva also clarified the process. It is not just that we should perform *nāma-saṅkīrtana* in a general way, but following in the footsteps of Śrī Rūpa and Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, who revealed the moods of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *Śikṣā-ṣṭakam*. And he also clarified the goal, *prema-sevā* to Yuga-lakṣmī, under the guidance of Śrī Rūpa.

While giving us a clearer understanding of *sambandha*, *abhidheya* and *prayojana*, he cautioned that we should not jump too high too quickly, but should very carefully follow the *maryādā* of *bhakti* as given by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and our *guruwarga*.

One of Śrīla Gurudeva's specialities was how he made us feel that we have a personal relationship with him, and that it is unbreakable, just like a family relationship. This is not dependent on how much close association we had with him, how freely we could speak with him, or how much we saw him. He offered this extraordinary relationship to all. However, the responsibility was and is on the ability of the disciple to surrender and accept what *guru* gives. It is a matter of faith. He allowed us to be part of *his* family. This was his extraordinary mercy, and it was so endearing.

What family is Gurudeva in? One day, Śrīla Gurudeva was with a group of Western devotees and he asked them, "What is your *gotra*?" Gurudeva himself answered the question. "You are in the *acyuta-gotra*. But I am not. What *gotra* am I in?" There was silence. An intelligent devotee

then said, "Oh, you are in the *rādhā-gotra*." "Yes," he replied, "this is a special part of the *acyuta-gotra*."

Within that *rādhā-gotra*, Śrīla Gurudeva is in the group of Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī, with the intimate maidservants of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has revealed that those in the group of Śrī Rūpa are no less than Śrī Rūpa herself. They have given up all of their self-interest and are even qualified to be group leaders themselves, but have no taste for that. Their only interest is in becoming immersed in *dāsyāmṛtābhīm*, the nectarean ocean of *prema-sevā* to Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Within this group of Śrī Rūpa, Śrīla Gurudeva is in the group of Śrī Vinoda Mañjarī. In this world, Śrī Vinoda manifested the Bhaktivedāntas, who, as a team, along with the entire *vinoda-sārasvata-gauḍīya* lineage, assist Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī in fulfilling the inner heart's desire of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

When I first met Śrīla Gurudeva, I could feel that he was just like my Śrīla Prabhupāda in quality and nature. He was of the same potency. He only ever took me closer to Śrīla Prabhupāda. Once, when I was in Russia with Gurudeva, he was joking with me. Then he said, "Did you ever speak like this with your Prabhupāda?" I said, "No, but I wanted to." He said, "He asked me to do this for you because he didn't have enough time."

My humble petition at Śrīla Gurudeva's lotus feet is that he somehow make me qualified to eternally assist him and my Śrīla Prabhupāda in their service to Śācīnandana Gaurahari and Śrī Śrī Yuga-lakṣmī.

Fallen and insignificant,

Vṛndāvana-vilāsinī dāsī 🌸



You Gave Everything

Offer my humble obeisances at the holy lotus feet of my beloved *dīkṣā-guru*, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and the same humble obeisances at the holy lotus feet of my beloved *śikṣā-gurus*, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja and *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

My dearest Śrīla Gurudeva, almost a whole year has passed since you disappeared from our external vision. The thought of no longer being able to have your *darśana* and hear your *harikathā* gives pain to my heart. But at the same time I know you are still with me, deep in my heart;

protecting, maintaining and guiding me. Your love is eternal and not affected by time and place. As long as my head is bowed at your lotus feet and my heart is endeavouring to follow your mood and instructions, I feel your connection very strongly, and I'm able to endure my life by your mercy.

I feel forever grateful that you came into my life so many years ago. We were drying up and crying out for genuine *sādhū-saṅga*. You literally walked through our door and said that you wanted to stay with us! How kind Kṛṣṇa is. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.19.33) states, "Simply by our remembering you, our houses become instantly sanctified, what to speak of seeing you, touching you, washing your holy feet and offering you a seat in our home." Your heart



was overflowing with compassion, and your affectionate dealings with us immediately vanquished our despondency. You instilled so much hope and inspiration into my heart, clearing away so much ignorance.

I have been reflecting on how much you have given, and I am astonished. You gave everything:

You illuminated Śrīla Prabhupāda's writings with clarity, precision and a depth of understanding of what he was trying to establish – the line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu under Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. You strongly established our *sādhya*, our goal: *rādhā-dāsyam*, the pinnacle of devotion. You also established the *sādhana*, the practice, to achieve this. You highlighted for us the primary and secondary reasons for Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's descent. You explained to us the different levels of devotees by giving the examples of Dhruva Mahārāja, Prahlāda, Ambarīṣa, Hanuman, the Pāṇḍavas and Uddhava, and in this way traced the path of developing divine love, culminating in the highest *prema* revealed to Uddhava by the example of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. And you illuminated for us the varieties of obstacles on the path of *bhakti*, that is, our *anarthas* and offences.

In translating so many *śāstras*, you have infused them with your divine moods, so that now, in your physical

absence, we can wholeheartedly take shelter of them, in this way making it possible for us to remain in the current of your mercy by giving us enthusiasm to continue in our devotional practices.

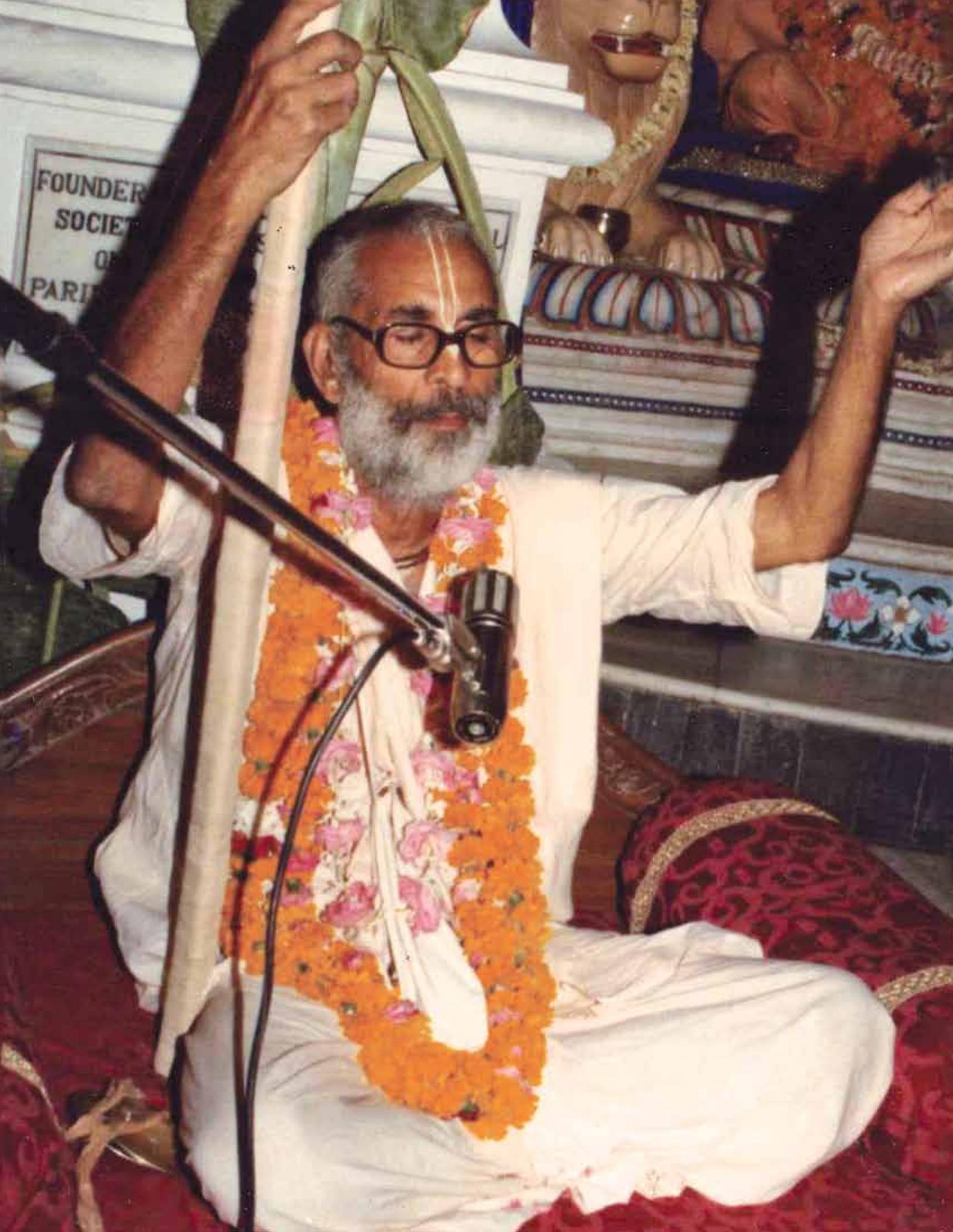
You have encouraged us to factually practice *trṇād api sunīcena*; to become more humble than a blade of grass, more tolerant than a tree, devoid of false prestige and ready to give all respects to others, for in such a state of mind we can chant the *mahā-mantra* continuously. You told us that this is our pathway into *prema-bhakti*, the key that will unlock the door to our unlimited good fortune.

Along with all this, you encouraged in us *utsāhān niścayād dhairyāt* – to be joyfully enthusiastic, confident and patient. You gave us guidance on how to give up bad association and how to adopt the behaviour of pure devotees, for this is the necessary fuel to nourish our tender creepers of devotion.

I pray that I remain always at your lotus feet aspiring for your *prema-bhakti* to enter my heart. I am so thankful, grateful and happy that you 'wandered' into my life.

Affectionately, your aspiring servant,

Mekhalā dāsī (Murwillumbah, Australia) 



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Such Profound Mercy

Offer my most grateful obeisance to my *dīkṣā-guru* His Divine Grace Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda who inexplicably plucked me from the darkness of this world with the light of transcendental knowledge. And I offer my most loving obeisance to your Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Seeing this offender who had no claim to your kindness, Śrīla Gurudeva, you nevertheless mercifully took me as your own.

Long after others were calling you ‘Gurudeva’, I was still calling you ‘Mahārāja’, even though years before I had asked you for *śikṣā*. I was hesitant to call you ‘Gurudeva’ for the change seemed to hold some significance. At the time, I could not quite grasp what that significance was. To go from accepting the advice of a venerable Vaiṣṇava to accepting an eternal relationship with him is not something to be considered lightly. The implications and profoundness of accepting a *śikṣā-guru* were all but lost on my dull consciousness, and bowing only to the dictates of my mind in an attempt to impress you, one day I called you, ‘Gurudeva’. And, you noted it.

You raised your eyebrows, and opened your eyes wide. Tilting your head and with a hint of challenge in your voice, you questioned me, “Oh, ‘Gurudeva?’” Your eyes matched the challenge in your voice. My attempt to impress you was foolish. Not only that, but you required an answer to your question. A serious choice had to be made and you were not

going to allow me to make it later. Looking you firmly in the eye I repeated, in as confident a voice as I could muster, “Gurudeva.” And you accepted that. Such profound mercy...

I was not in your presence very often, but whenever I was, my mind would become very happy. It was as though all the causes for its disturbance would run far away. This gave me a sense of fearlessness when with you, my carefree behaviour often completely exposing my foolishness. But you never seemed to mind.

You always seemed happy to see me. You allowed me to joke with you and make you laugh, you allowed me to confide in you and surprise you, and you even allowed me to inquire about *rādhā-tattva*, which I did just to see the happiness it brought you. Because you allowed such familiarity, I became forgetful of who you really are.

You are my Gurudeva. Your profound mercy spread its net across the whole world capturing all who came near it. You captured me with a whisper of a challenge. How did your profound mercy capture others? You have manifested yourself in so many different ways to attract unlimited conditioned souls, giving each of us the opportunity of service to the Divine Couple. Such profound mercy... .

Hoping to one day be your real disciple,

Raṅgadevī (Rukmavatī) dāsī 



My Gurudeva, a Transparent Via-medium

Offer my unlimited *praṇāma* to my beloved *dīkṣā-guru*, Śrī Śrīmad A. C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who lifted me from the animal platform and introduced me to the names of Kṛṣṇa. I also offer my unlimited *praṇāma* to my beloved *śikṣā-guru*, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who gave me my first glimpse of real love.

Śrīla Gurudeva said, “The purpose of our preaching is to present the instructions given by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. We should know the purpose, the aim and object of our *bhajana* and *sādhana*, and then we must practise the devotional activities that lead us to that goal.”

Śrīla Gurudeva had countless glories. His objective was to get right to the core of Mahāprabhu’s teachings. He gave hundreds of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* classes on the

step by step development of understanding Kṛṣṇa; and he took our hands and lead us into the nectarean sweetness of *rāsa-pañcādhāya*, the essence of the Tenth Canto. By his divine love and power of *bhakti*, he artfully and beautifully conveyed the life and moods of Vraja, bringing the residents and personalities of *cinmaya* Vraja to life, as our friends and associates, preparing us, aspiring *sādhakas*, for our fully developed spiritual state.

If a goal is not clearly defined it may be missed, and Śrīla Gurudeva, repeatedly stressing that the only way to progress was step by step through the stages of *bhakti*, made it very clear that although the *stāyī-bhāva* of the *sādhaka* is not realized until the stage of *bhāva*, not only was it quite acceptable to delve, with *guru’s* guidance, into the intimate pastimes of Vraja and aspire to realize them, but



that to do so was the actual sovereign heritage of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism. Śrīla Gurudeva often said that he was a doctor performing operations; as such, he issued the prescription for having the Vraja pastimes enter our hearts. Subtleties of *rasa* can only be conveyed from pure *guru* to disciple when the disciple is ready to receive them. Nonetheless, these pastimes of nectar are what Mahāprabhu came to give to the stricken souls of Kali-yuga; and our Gurudeva, via his books and his astounding *harikathā*, has lead the world into them in a benign and exquisite way.

It was a living feeling, a divine spiritual experience; from within I felt Śrīla Gurudeva preparing and inviting me towards insights into the sweet intimate *cinmaya* Vṛndāvana life. Hearing his *vraja-līlā-kathā*, including extensive descriptions of all the different *rasas*, I came to feel touched by a personal connection with, and affection for, each of the residents of that transcendental village. Śrīla Gurudeva was the true transparent via-medium. No false ego got in the way of his presentation, because he *had* no false ego.

This sort of transmission can only happen when the teller truly owns the feelings, emotions and relationships in his own heart. This is how elevated spiritual feelings and moods are imparted into the hearts of others, according to qualification.

Only a servant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā can bring one into the pastimes of Vṛndāvana. “Outside we are male,” I heard Gurudeva say, “but inside, *mañjarī*.” This statement revealed his elevated position; and also insinuated that externally we must be strict followers of *bbakti-sadācāra*, just like our *guru-paramparā* and the six Gosvāmīs, but internally we should aspire for the moods of the maidservants of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

As Gurudeva told the pastimes of *līlā-sthalīs* on *parikramā*, etc., all would be absorbed. His unique style led one to feel that, although very present with us, he was in another realm that he was actually participating in the pastimes about which he was telling. His emotions and mannerisms as he spoke were so authentic and uncontrived

that I became convinced that he spoke not from merely having heard or read, but from personal involvement in the very pastimes he narrated.

Once, as I sat at Śrīla Gurudeva's feet in the huge crowd at Gopinātha Bhavana during Kārtika-vrata, he was relating how Kṛṣṇa called the *gopīs* on His flute, and they came running in the dead of night. The *rāsa-līlā* began, but then Kṛṣṇa disappeared, and the *gopīs* went into the forest to look for Him. I hung on every word as he spoke. In my mind the *rāsa-līlā* was from some transcendental realm far away from me. Then Gurudeva said, "The *gopīs* were in distress and they came out here and sang *Gopī-gīta*." He said "out here" with a glance and gesture towards the bank of Yamunā River, just outside and down the road from where we sat. Though it is hard to portray in words, this was an example of the many instances in Śrīla Gurudeva's *harikathā* that affected me profoundly. His body language and gesticulation conveyed to me that he was *living* in the

pastime and had an intimate familiarity with it. It was not just a poignant story but a very real and moving incident for him, which happened right there in that vicinity. And directly due to my loving connection with him as his *śikṣā-śiṣya*, I tangibly experienced the reality of my opportunity to be in that pastime too, as soon as I become willing to wholeheartedly embrace it.

Śrīla Gurudeva was like Nityānanda Prabhu; on both the qualified and unqualified He showered his loving kindness. A person like me, completely rooted in this mundane world, was given to experience these things to some minute degree. Such is the wonder and magnanimity of my Śrīla Gurudeva, who has claimed my heart forever.

Begging to serve him birth after birth,

the struggling and unworthy,

Bhadra dāsi (New Zealand) 🙏



Beyond My Wildest Dreams

First offer my *puṣpāñjali* to the lotus feet of Śrī Śrīmad A. C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhuṣāda, who mercifully engaged me in the service of *śrī harināma*. I am eternally and joyfully indebted to him. I next offer my *danḍavat-praṇāmas* to the lotus feet of my *dikṣā-guru*, Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who opened my heart to the softness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, reality the beautiful. And I offer millions of *danḍavats* to the one who surpassed my wildest dreams of sheltered friendship. All glories to you, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, my eternal friend. You are forever my ray of hope.

O you whose heart is most merciful to the undeserving! O Śrīla Gurudeva! When will I see you again? You are the artisan who has mastered my heart. I am now completely devastated. How can I be expected to reach the realm of *sattvika-bhāva* alone and attain *bhakti-rasa*, which has taken root in my heart by the will of your affectionate compassion? Who is going to stare into my soul and correct me? Śrīla Gurudeva, you alone have the power to craft these tears of separation into oceans of *prema*, in which waves of infinite *līlās* will manifest. Śrīla Gurudeva, bless my soul with that *prema* that will manifest as the eternal delight of service to you. Gathering strength to survive without your presence, please make me a particle of your merciful affection towards those souls who are afflicted with the disease of hoping for materialistic happiness.

The extent of your resolute service exalts the glory of Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. By adopting us, the infant disciples of Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhuṣāda, Śrīla B. R. Śrīdhara Mahārāja, Śrīla Gaura Govinda Mahārāja, Śrīla Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and many other saints, you have revealed that the deep nature of true friendship is manifest through service.

Your translations of the literatures of our *ācāryas* are a path connecting us to the entire family of our *guruvarga*, and to Śrī Gauracandra, the life and soul of pure *bhaktas*. Your books are the sturdy pillars of the future mission of Vaiṣṇavism. Without prejudice, you are giving the deep, internal reasons for the appearance of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu; you are disclosing the love locket of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's heart; and you are instigating that most essential greed for *rādhā-dāsyam*.

With compassionate affection, you deliver us from our own mischief and teach us how to identify and overcome the obstacles on the path to *prema-bhakti*. You make us most happy by telling us that Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, can only be obtained by the most intimate type of unalloyed loving service, and not by traversing the avenue of awe and reverence. You are filling our hearts with hope by revealing that the fountainhead of all *rasa*, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, are ready to accept all servitors wherever and whenever they dedicate themselves to loving exchanges with Them.

By impressing in our hearts the reality that pure devotional service is devoid of *dharmā*, *artha*, *karmā* and *mokṣā*, you have made us aware that the materialistic devotee may cherish duplicity; speaking high *tattva* whilst concealing something different inside. We must not attempt to be seen as heroes, putting on a show of unconditional service to Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga. We must always be fearful of hiding, from ourselves and others, the fact that we may be striving to fulfill our own desires simply to acquire karmic name and fame. Using deep discrimination, we must identify the evils that harm our progress in *bhakti*. Gurudeva, you always command us to become one-pointed towards pure *bhakti*; tasting the bitterness of this material

world is unnecessarily time-consuming and only hinders our swift progress towards that goal.

O Gurudeva! By your mercy, and by the strength of our practice of *sādhana* and *bhajana*, let our sense of material existence soon become obscured. Instill in us your divine grace and make our hearts the receptacle of the intoxicating *rasa* of love of God, so that by the sweetness of this love we may obtain perpetual shelter at the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

Aspiring for the mercy of Śrī Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas,

Hlādinī-śakti dāsi (Hawaii) 🌸

A Fragrance of Your Vaiṣiṣṭhya



Offer thousands of heartfelt *praṇāmas* to the lotus feet of my beloved spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja Prabhupāda, by whose grace I was picked up from the ocean of material existence and given the chance for devotional service. I offer equal heartfelt *praṇāmas* unto the lotus feet of my *dikṣā-guru* Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Gosvāmī Mahārāja. I am unable to properly describe his impact on my existence. He gives me the flowers for offering. The same heartfelt *praṇāmas* go thousands of times to the loving feet of my *śikṣā-guru* Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, whose transcendental love and mercy have exhaustively clarified and strengthened the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu on Earth and in our hearts.

My Dear Śrīla Gurudeva,

You first appeared to me as the form of *vātsalya* affection after the departure of my beloved *dikṣā-gurudeva*. Such heartfelt understanding simply does not exist in this world of misunderstanding.

Just like a Śukadeva Gosvāmī, you delivered *harikathā* to replace the atmosphere of danger and sorrow with a festival of joy. Your discourses always gave the comparative study. We might have regarded all spiritual *kathā* as equal. But every interaction with you created appropriate discrimination to focus, step by step, on a very specific goal. You instructed that without aim and object, *sādhana* has no meaning.



“May you become the *dāsī* of Śrīmatī Rādbikā.” May I please hear your voice always beckoning me via the most direct route home. Your assertion that your *darling son or daughter* would never be derailed was like Nṛsimhadeva’s roar. Alone we are vulnerable, but within your affectionate and *rasika* Vaiṣṇava *saṅga* we will boldly go to our goal taking others with us.

You viewed all of us as flowers for offering to Vṛndāvana’s Divine Couple. Being seen as such felt like home’s embrace. You once asked me, “If you want to make a garland for Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala in spiritual Vṛndāvana, what should you do? Make one for Them here. If you want to cook something for Them there, what should you do? Cook something for Them here.” You told us, “Your *svarūpa* is made of *prema*; that is why you cannot tolerate anything other than *prema*.”

Guru-mukha-padma-vākhyā, cittete kariyā aikhya. On Rādhāṣṭamī morning you asked, what is *ramita-viṣākhe*? Your explanations re-shaped our eternal future *āra nā kariha mane āsā*.

You travelled the Earth, but never left Vraja-bhūmi. All raised land was Govardhana and all water Yamunā.

Pāramārbhika faith cannot be gathered very easily, but a moment of your association had so much potency. Once meeting you, a person was marked for eternity.

The gift of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, given after such a long time, continued as the sound from your lips. And this vibration distributed happiness, health and the desire to serve Kṛṣṇa on a very grand scale. Such easy fortune is almost never had.

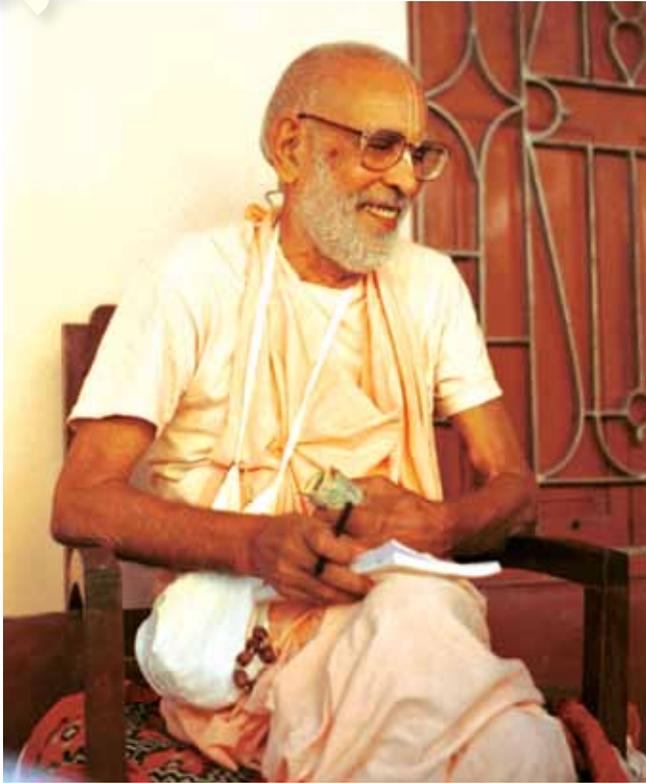
We knew you were not of this world, yet you fostered close bonds with us, knowing we’d be saved from the greatest danger thereby. Your affectionate dealings were many, but *jñānānjana śalākayā* they were all gestures to smear our soul’s eyes with the divine salve.

I could never have known how much wealth I was lacking had I not met you. I can only invoke the ocean of mercy with utter desperation to please utilize me in any insignificant way, to assist your holy dust in keeping Śrī Gaurāṅga’s mission, so advanced by you, thriving in this *brahmāṇḍa*. *Eṣa puṣpāñjali aim gurave namaḥ!*

Humbly, your daughter

Mādhavī dāsī (San Francisco, U.S.A) 

A Humble Offering



*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-salākayā
cakṣur unmīlitaṁ yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

Salute to the day I met you, Śrīla Gurudeva
Remembering each second I spent with you,
Śrīla Gurudeva
I cherish your beautiful blue eyes, reflecting the *prema*
of Yugala-kīśora, Śrīla Gurudeva
Lamenting for not striving more when you were here,
Śrīla Gurudeva
Adorning myself with your beautiful *harikatā*,
Śrīla Gurudeva
Nitya-navīna—ever-fresh – your loving, parental dealings
with us, Śrīla Gurudeva.
Affectionate to all, your disciples or not, Śrīla Gurudeva
Remote from you is prestige and pride, never
demanding respect, Śrīla Gurudeva
Amāninā mānadena – respecting devotees of each level,
Śrīla Gurudeva
Yugācārya – capturing hearts worldwide, Śrīla Gurudeva
Admirable, your gentlemanly aura so refined,
Śrīla Gurudeva

Niṣṭāvan to your *gurudeva* and your *guruwarga*,
Śrīla Gurudeva

Melodious is your voice, enchanting all, Śrīla Gurudeva
Always ready to shower your blessings, Śrīla Gurudeva
Happily forgiving our mistakes, even our disrespect,
Śrīla Gurudeva

Amazingly dealing personally with all, Śrīla Gurudeva
Rādhārāṇī's mañjarī – Ramaṇa Mañjarī,
Always absorbed in *svarūpa-siddha-bhakti*
Jīvas like me, fallen and wretched, pray for your mercy,
Śrīla Gurudeva.

From my childhood, my parents nourished my devotional creeper. I felt special attraction for a painting of Lord Kṛṣṇa made by my mother. In 1986, I came in touch with ISKCON and started to render service there, sincerely praying for *sad-guru*. It is said that sincere prayers are answered. By the mercy of Śrīla Prabhupāda and Kṛṣṇa, destiny planned my meeting with Śrīla Gurudeva. It's a long story. I vividly remember Śrīla Gurudeva sitting on the chair outside his room in Mathurā. Instantly my heart went out to him. His glowing complexion, simplicity, blue eyes and affectionate nature made me cry. That was the beginning of twenty years of association with him.

I was like a daughter who received both his love and his chastisement. Once I showed him a translation I had done and he scolded me a lot for my mistakes. Later, he called me and said, "I have scolded you a lot. You are not angry with me?" I was speechless with this glimpse of his boundless love for us.

Once I told Śrīla Gurudeva that due to some problem, I would not be able to come to Kārtika. He said, "Will there ever be a time you do not have a problem?" This really struck me. "The material world is like that," he said, "full of problems and momentary happiness."

I could write pages and pages about our dear-most Śrīla Gurudeva, but space is limited. So on this day, I confess that I am his most fallen disciple who, in spite of having such close association with him, could not progress much. But I feel a deep love for him and aspire to one day render some service at his lotus feet. O Śrīla Gurudeva, please engage me in that. Only then I will get your mercy.

Your fallen servant

Vṛndā dāsī (New Delhi) 🙏



A Glimpse of Your Unlimited Glories

*nāma-śreṣṭham manum api śacī-putram atra svarūpaṁ
rūpaṁ tasyāgrajam uru-purīm māthurīm goṣṭhavātīm
rādhā-kunḍam giri-varam abo rādhikā-mādhavāśām
prāpto yasya prathita-kṛpaya śrī-gurum tam nato 'smi*

Dear Śrīla Gurudeva,
My *koṭi-koṭi daṇḍavats* at your lotus feet,
which are so merciful, soft, fragrant, and sweet.
This prayer of Śrī Raghunātha dāsa, so beautiful and sublime,
expressing your causeless mercy, unlimited and divine.

For countless lifetimes I've travelled around,
then you appeared, starting my spiritual account.
Your beautiful personality made me spell-bound
and your *harikathā*, so marvellous and profound.

Kṛṣṇa sent you to lift *māyā's* illusion,
full of quarrel, hypocrisy and massive confusion.
You gave the topmost teachings in great profusion,
that *śrī rādhā-dāsyam* is the final conclusion.

The storehouse left by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī,
was carefully protected under lock and key.
You opened it up, distributing generously
Mahāprabhu's gift, without payment or fee.

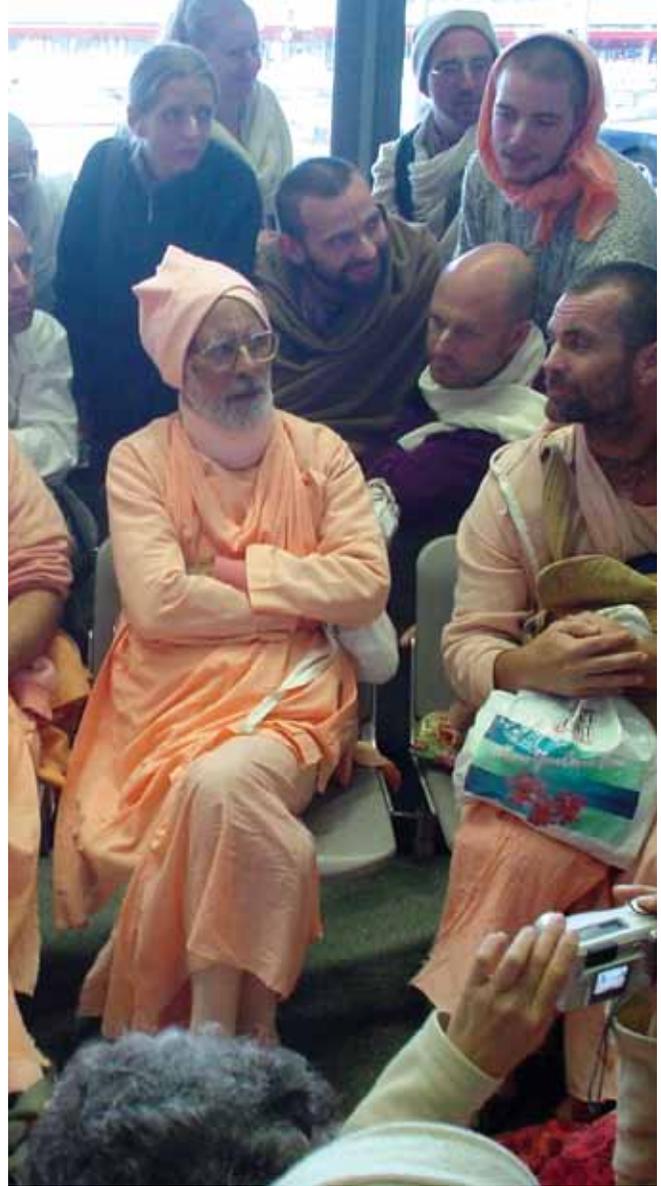
Your heart soft as butter and as honey, so sweet,
thirsty bees came to drink it, their hearts full of greed.
Your *harikathā* ever-fresh, so marvellous indeed,
uncountable lives changed with shelter at your feet.

Till the last moment you travelled tirelessly around,
inspiring lost souls, far too many to count.
Those fortunate to meet you – automatically bound,
their misery left, building *sukṛti* in vast amounts.

Your life fully spent with love and devotion
in your Gurudeva's mission with whole dedication,
always preaching and writing, giving much information,
to nourish our souls and those of future generations.

You appear to be physically absent from our vision,
but you shine in our hearts with your innumerable instructions.
Please inspire us in your pure *bhakti* mission
to be one-pointed, united and without division.

Like you, we want to be selfless and full of compassion,
brimming over with love, care and affection.
If we can preach boldly and practice without deviation,
it may please you and bring you deep satisfaction – our lives'
perfection.



Your own example showed us how to serve *harināma*
hoping that one day we will chant *śuddha nāma*.
You showed us our goal – to serve Śrī Śrī Rādhē-Śyāma
in the beautiful, secret *kuñjas* of Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma.

At any time we can leave this world of misconception,
which is filled with illusion, fear and self-deception
Only you, Gurudeva, know where we truly belong,
our real identity, our eternal service and our spiritual form.

Goloka Vṛndāvana is beyond the calculation of my tiny brain,
our real home where Śrī Yugala-Kiśorijī's pure love
and sweetness reign.

There, you expertly assist in the service
of Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī,
Lalitā Sakhī, Viśākhā and your dear-most Śrīmatī
Rādhikā Ṭhākuraṇī.

You now wait for us where Yamunā is flowing and
bees are humming,
where the peacocks are dancing and
the birds are chirping,
where Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Raman-Bihārījī, seated on a
golden throne laugh and sing,
while you and the other *sakhīs* fan and dance, joke,
play and swing.

You're our sole guardian, our well-wishing friend
and the shelter for the poor.
You patiently nourish our tiny *bhakti*-seed so it will
one day mature.
You want that our heart and service become
so crystal-pure
that you can offer it in the service of your
Śrī Śrī Yugala-Kiśora.

Gurudeva, the impossible becomes possible, with your power.
Even my hard heart will one day become a fragrant flower.
You've kindly inspired within me the mood to serve,
binding me with your affection, not letting me swerve

You continue to give me shelter, though I'm not qualified.
Patiently guiding me onward, from darkness to light
An expert surgeon, cutting my false ego and pride
Only you know my heart, nothing can I hide

For everything you have given me, I can never repay.
I'm eternally indebted to you and find no other way
than to offer you my heart, O Gurudeva, for this I pray,
to purely serve you with a sincere heart, one life, one day.

I long to be with you, to one day be totally free
from illusion, anger, lust, pride and envy,
following your instructions and those of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī.
Please allow me to serve you Gurudeva, now and eternally.

Your unqualified and fallen,

Vṛndā-devī dāsī 



śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅga jayataḥ!

Impressions in My Heart

Offer my humble *praṇāma* unto the lotus feet of my
most worshipful *gurudeva*, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om*
viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī
Mahārāja.

Śrīla Gurudeva always inspired the devotees who took
his shelter, and even those who did not take his shelter,
to have an aim and object in their practice of *bhajana*. He
used to say that if the goal is fixed then half of the journey
is over, and only the other half (i.e. *sādhana-bhajana*) needs
to be done. With his loving and caring shelter, he instilled
in our hearts the desire to serve Kṛṣṇa (*kṛṣṇa-sevā-vāsanā*)
and in so doing uprooted the desire to serve material world
(*saṁsāra-deva-vāsanā*).

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākūra wrote *bhajanās* about
hankering for perfection (*siddhi-lalāsa*), such as *varāṇe taḍit*
vāsa tāraṅgī kamala mañjarī nāma, and Śrīla Gurudeva gave
the pictorial form of some of these *bhāvas* by manifesting
Sevā-kuñja and the pictures of Śrī Śrī Rūpa, Rati, Vinoda
and Ramaṇa Mañjarīs. He gave us a glimpse of the *sevā* he
does in *aprakāṣa-līlā* and with whom, and he describes all the
ekādaśa-bhāvas mentioned by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.
Śrīla Gurudeva gave us the highest aspirations whilst keeping
us grounded in the reality of our own position.

Though I am unable to glorify even a moment of Śrīla
Gurudeva's divine pastimes on this Earth planet, by the
mercy of our Vaiṣṇavas, I have received the opportunity to
present my little insignificant *puṣpāñjali* at his lotus feet.
I would like to illustrate this with a few examples that
created an impression in my heart.

Once when Śrīla Gurudeva was performing his sickness
pastime, he asked me, "O Rāgalekhā! Why did you not
come to see me? I was so sick. You are my home doctor."

I replied, "O Gurudeva, nobody let me in because no
darśanas were allowed."

Śrīla Gurudeva said, "Who stopped you? Whenever you
will come, I will myself unbolt the door for you." He turned
to his *sevaka* (Śrīpad Mādhava Mahārāja) and said, "Allow
her to come into my room whenever she wants."

I thought, "Why would Śrīla Gurudeva himself open
the door for me? Surely he is just joking." But years later,
when he was exhibiting his *asvastha* (unwell) pastimes,
Śrīla Gurudeva returned to Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha,
Mathurā, for one or two days. It was after Janmāṣṭamī,
2010. It was raining heavily, but somehow I was able to
journey to Mathurā. I saw that his *bhajana-kuṭīra* was
locked from outside and that Śrīpāda Mādhava Mahārāja



was chanting on the balcony. I peeped from the door grill to see Śrīla Gurudeva chanting on his bed. He saw me immediately and with his finger, pointed to the other gate, indicating that I should enter his room through it. I asked one *brahmacārī* to open the gate as the other gate was bolted from inside, but he said that he did not have the keys. Then, with a hand gesture, I communicated from the same grill to Śrīla Gurudeva that I cannot get in. Śrīla Gurudeva then rose from his bed, came to the kitchen door, opened it, and then went back and sat on his bed. One boy accompanied me as we entered his room. I bolted it from inside and offered *praṇāmas* to Śrīla Gurudeva. There was a mixed feeling of joy and sorrow – joy because of his tender care and how he kept his promise to open the door for me and sorrow because I had disturbed him while he was doing his *bhajana*.

I went twice more to have his *darśanas*, once in Delhi and once in Mathurā. Both times he inquired from me about the roads on the *parikramā-mārga* in Vṇḍāvana. “Are they dug out? Kārtika *parikramā* is about to come. The buses will be able to go on the *parikramā-mārga*?” He was so anxious about the *parikramā*. Actually the whole *parikramā-mārga* and even the other side of ISKCON to Brijabāsī was dug out as they were putting in some sewer lines. I told Śrīla Gurudeva that buses would not be able to go there because were wide trenches dug out in the road. To my surprise, on Ekādaśī day, just before Kārtika *puṇimā*,

I saw two bulldozers filling up the land with clay. I mused that the driver of one of the bulldozers must be Śrīla Gurudeva and of the other was Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja! Anyway, the *parikramā-mārga* became workable and the buses could reach Gopinātha Bhavana on Pūrṇimā day. Śrīla Gurudeva had vowed that as long as he was performing his *prakaṣa-līlā* (pastimes in this world), he would conduct Kārtika *parikramā* and Navadvīpa *parikramā* every year. He kept that promise and even after entering *nitya-līlā*, he is still doing this.

Once, Śrīla Gurudeva was going to Mathurā. On the way, he stopped under a flyover in Delhi and the devotees had his *darśana*. I offered my *praṇāmas* at his lotus feet and he looked at me and said, “I want you to collect 108 flowers (devotees) and I will make a garland and present it to Śrīmatī Rādhikā.” But it is my great misfortune that even until now, I am not able to follow this instruction.

By the grace of Śrī Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas I got the opportunity to go down memory lane and try to glorify Śrīla Gurudeva.

On this occasion of his first anniversary of his disappearance, I pray at his lotus feet to please engage this fallen, unworthy soul in his service, wherever he is present.

Aspiring servant of Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas,

Rāgalekhā dāsī (New Delhi) 



The Unlimited Mercy of Śrī Guru

Offer my unlimited obeisances to the lotus feet of my dear-most spiritual master, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja*, who has showered me with an ocean of kindness.

Śrīla Gurudeva searched for us all, all of us lost souls in this material world, and picked us up one by one, going out of his way to do this. He is “spending gallons of blood” as Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda said, to come and collect us and bring us out of the grip of the material energy. Once in Australia I saw Śrīla Gurudeva look to the back of the crowd in a particular way and I turned to see who was there. A man had been coming to the programs. One night he was wearing an African outfit and the next night a Muslim outfit. To me it looked as if Śrīla Gurudeva was saying, “What did you get yourself into this life?” He is so eager to create some *sukṛti* for us and comes again and again to give us that opportunity.

This is exemplified in a story Śrīla Gurudeva often told about Kailāśa, a farmer who was busy on his land. One day, Nārada Muni came and said, “Now, Kailāśa, it is time to take initiation.”

Kailāśa responded, “No, I will take later. I am too busy now.” Some time later, Nārada Muni returned but he was unable to find Kailāśa. As he was leaving his farm, he saw a bull.

“Kailāśa? Is that you? Will you take initiation now?”

“No,” Kailāśa said, “I am too busy ploughing the land.” Nārada Muni left and returned a few years later, but that bull was nowhere to be found. Occupying that farm now was a dog.

“Kailāśa? Is that you? Will you take initiation now?”

“No, I am too busy protecting the land and the children here. I have no time to take initiation.” Years later, Nārada Muni returned again. He could not find the dog, but he knew that Kailāśa must still be there in some form because of Kailāśa’s attachment to the farm. He then saw cobra.

“Kailāśa? Is that you? Will you take initiation now?”

“No, I am too busy protecting the treasure hidden on the property.” Nārada Muni then instructed the children there to break back of snake but not kill it, and then throw the snake into the forest.

Nārada Muni then went to the forest and said, “Kailāśa, are you ready to take initiation now?”

“Yes, I am now ready to receive initiation,” Kailāśa finally said.



Pure devotees like Śrīla Gurudeva do like this. They come again and again to help us. This point really strikes me. They are so selfless and have so much love for their Svāmīnī. Śrīla Gurudeva would do anything for Her. Once in a lecture at Rūpa-Sanātana Gauḍīya Maṭha, he said that the pure devotees, like Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, promise that even if there is a one sincere soul in the material world, they will make all the arrangements for that person to become a devotee so that he also will attain the goal of pure *bhakti*.

Sometimes Śrīla Gurudeva would instruct me to do something that seemed quite insignificant to me, and once, I did not carry out his order. But each and every time, I came to learn that he really wanted me to do it and that what he wanted was not insignificant at all. This taught me that his most simple instructions and words were not to be taken lightly, and really, we have to follow them to the letter and not fantasize an interpretation of them. Even if we think the words he speaks are just to test us or that they

do not really mean anything, we should honour his words and take them most seriously.

Once, while talking to me, he indirectly gave me a personal instruction that I did not even recognize as an instruction until months later, when I heard someone speaking about *guru-tattva*. We may consider some of his words and actions more significant than others, but he is a pure devotee and all of his words and actions are significant. In our condition, however, we are unable to see that. Even when Śrīla Gurudeva said, “How are you?” or “How is your baby?” it carried a significance that we could not comprehend.

One thing I have come to understand is that Gurudeva is so powerful that he will inspire us to act in a way that utilizes us for his higher purpose, even if we do not comprehend what he is doing. It may come to us like an intuition, and may even seem to have no connection with

anything spiritual. Long before I actually got a mobile phone, I thought to get one and went to the shop. Suddenly, an old man in the store collapsed against the shop window. I picked him up and placed him on a chair. He fell again and at that time I spoke the *mabā-mantra* into his ear and then left the shop without even buying the phone. Although I never came to know what happened after that, it struck me that everything has a purpose. There is a bigger plan. And we have no clue what the pure Vaiṣṇavas are doing or how they are using us to help someone in their spiritual journey.

I pray at his lotus feet that he eternally engages me, somehow or other, in service to him.

Unqualified but aspiring to serve
Śrī Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas,

Tuṅgavidyā dāsī (Vṛndāvana) 



Our Śrīla Gurudeva

*namaḥ om viṣṇupādāya rādhikāyai priyātmane
śrī-śrīmad-bhaktivedānta-nārāyaṇa iti nāmine*

*śrī-govinda āśraya vighrabaye gaura kamaik carine
śrī rūpanuge pravaraaya rāmaṇeti svarūpine*

In my whole life I had not met any one like Śrīla Gurudeva. Yes, I had met Śrīla Prabhupāda in his books, and in them he stressed one point consistently: only a pure devotee can make a conditioned soul understand the scriptures, and through his mercy enable him to realize them in his heart. As years passed, I kept thinking that in this age of Kali it was probably impossible for me, a worthless soul, to meet a pure devotee of the Lord and associate with him.

Then one day, back in 1992, on the invitation of Śrīman Rāmacandra Prabhu and Śrīman Viṣṇu Prabhu, my family and I met Gurudeva for the first time at Viṣṇu Prabhu’s parental house in Rajouri Garden, where Gurudeva had come to stay for a few days. When Gurudeva spoke, it was not the voice of anyone from this material world. It was a voice that was bringing immeasurable peace and bliss. The topic was Śrīman Mahāprabhu and *Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda Samvad*, and for the first time in my life, I felt that I was sitting in the best place in the world. Soon after the class, I requested Śrīla Gurudeva to one day allow me to do Śrī Girirāja *parikramā* with him. With a big enchanting smile, “You will surely do Girirāja *parikramā* with me”.

The very next year, in the auspicious month of Kārtika, I did my first ever Śrī Girirāja *parikramā*. It was with the devotees of Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha. I was thinking “Oh, how I wish Gurudeva would also come with us.” Just then a devotee told us that Gurudeva was there too, and that he was at Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī’s *bhajana-kuṭīra*. Soon we reached there and took his blessings.

In the year 2000 a critical phase came in my life. I was to have surgery in Gaṅga-Rāma Hospital, Delhi. I was unhappy at the thought of having to suffer so much pain. I was thinking “I am following all regulative principles and trying to live my life according to my Gurudeva’s wishes, so why am I getting so much suffering?” I forgot all that Śrīla Gurudeva had been teaching us, about how Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja faced all problems of his life completely surrendering to the Lord, never demanding anything from Him, and having complete faith in the words of his Gurudeva, Śrī Nārada Muni. I forgot all the sentiments expressed by Mahāprabhu in *Śikṣāṣṭakam: āśliṣya vā pāda-ratām pīnaṣṭu mām ... mat-prāṇa-nāthas tu sa eva nāparaḥ*. I just had to meet with Śrīla Gurudeva to find solace, and so my family took me to him. He admonished me and said, “You are my daughter, you will face everything very boldly. I have had so many surgeries myself. Nothing can harm you. Just remember Śrī Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas and everything will be all right.”

Soon thereafter, when I went for a final checkup two days prior to my operation, the doctor told me that I did

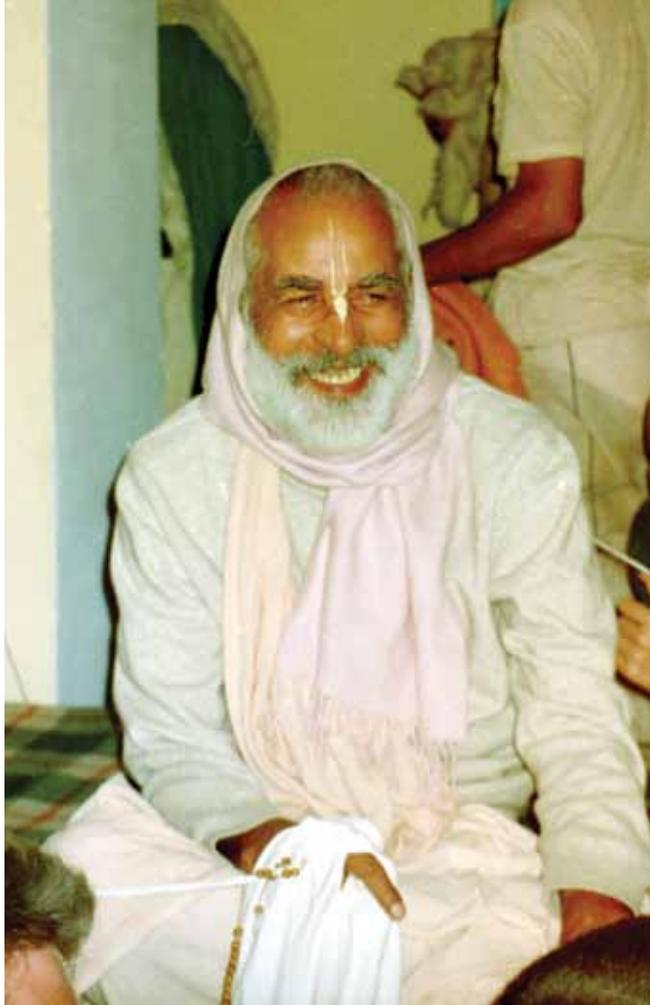
not need the surgery anymore. This was nothing but a sheer miracle by my Gurudeva's mercy. Some may say that Śrīla Gurudeva 'left his body' of this disease or that, but I am a living example of how a mountain of a misery was turned to a molehill by Śrīla Gurudeva's mercy. His leaving this world was purely his own doing. It was his pastime, and if we cannot fathom that, then we should beg for his mercy so that he gives us eyes to discern the truth. And regarding his taking *samādhi* in Navadvīpa, he did purposely. In this way, we will all visit Navadvīpa-dhāma year after year, which probably many of us would not do if he had taken *samādhi* in Govardhana.

In the beautiful Vaiṣṇava *kīrtana*, *yañ kali rūpa śarīra nā dharata*, the devotee sings of the mercy of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, that if he had not come, who would have opened the treasure chest of the Vrajavāsī's love and given its transcendental taste to living entities like us? Indeed who would have fulfilled the mission of Śrīman Mahāprabhu – *śrī-caitanya-mano-'bhīṣṭam sthāpitaṃ yena bhū-tale*.

Mahāprabhu's magnanimous mission was to make available so easily that, which had not been given ever before. *Anarpita-carīm cirāt karuṇayāvātīrṇaḥ kalau*. Mahāprabhu came to give the *unnatojjvala-rasa*, the love of the *mañjarīs*, the *gopīs* – *tat-tad-bhāva-icchāmayī* – to give the top most love in the heart of conditioned living entities

of the age of Kali. All this is very true, so his mercy is so magnanimous that it cannot be described in words. But had we not met Śrīla Gurudeva who would have told us about Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in the first place, who would have told us about all the other Gosvāmīs too – Śrīla Sanātana, Śrī Jīva, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa and others. Like a true *yugācārāya* serving the mission of Mahāprabhu who else could have made us understand the *vaiśiṣṭya* of *rūpānuga-bhakti* from *rāgānugā-bhakti*? And who would have told us about Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, his *Bhajana-rāsa* and the deep meanings of his *bhajanas*? Who would have taken pains and taught us the *Manaḥ-śikṣā*, verse after verse! Who would have spoken so beautifully and candidly about *Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta*? Who would have told us about the unfathomable contribution of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Ṭhākura Prabhupāda and his revolutionary preaching within India and without? Who would have told us about our Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda and the many aspects of his personality we did not know about, like his closeness to our Śrī Gurudeva, how they used to cook together in Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara Temple, how Gurudeva sent the deities, sweet meats, cymbals, etc. to help him in his preaching in the western world, and how he always revered him as his *śikṣā-guru*? Who would have taught us all this?





Like a patient teacher who teaches the first letters of the alphabet to the little ones in kindergarten, Śrīla Gurudeva made us understand everything with so much love, patience and concern. He made us understand very profound *tattva-siddhānta* about Śrīman Mahāprabhu, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, Śrī Baladeva Prabhu, the Gosvāmīs, the Vaiṣṇavas and *śrī guru* with such simplicity that everything seemed so easy. For example, he would say, “What is our relationship with Śrī Baladeva?” and he would explain that *tattva* and bring us closer and closer to the inhabitants of Vraja. We would individually feel, “Oh, I can reach out to the Vrajavāsīs so easily; they are all waiting for me, only I am lacking in sincere prayer, lacking in *sādhana-bhajana*. His *harikathā* was so attractive, *śrī-kṛṣṇa-ākaraṣiṇī*, it would attract even Kṛṣṇa, what to speak of helpless material souls like me. In his association we were always living in Vṛndāvana. Our Śrī Mādhava Mahārāja used to ask my daughter, from when she was five years old and big enough to speak, “*Kahañ se āyi ho* – where have you come from?” He would purposely do that in front of Śrīla Gurudeva, and she would say, “*Ūñcāgaon se* – I have come from Ūñcāgaon, the village of Śrīmatī Lalitā-devī.”

Once, one revered Godsister, Rāgalekhā dāsī, one said to my daughter, “Your name is Viśākhā Sakhī and Viśākhā Sakhī’s village is Kāmaī Karehlā. You must say this before

Śrīla Gurudeva and let us see what he says!” My daughter, who quite small then, did as she was told. Next time when Mādhava Mahārāja asked where she hailed from, Viśākhā answered, “Kāmaī Karehlā.” Śrīla Gurudeva reacted immediately, with so much emotion. He said, “No! Who told you Kāmaī Karehlā. We belong to Śrī Lalitājī’s *gaṇa*. You must not answer any other village except Ūñcāgaon!”

Śrīla Gurudeva is always there with whosoever remembers him. He can never leave his children, his sons and daughters. He always used to chide us, “You have only one problem: how to do *bhajana*. You have no other problem. Keep your foot on the head of all other problems and do *bhajana*.”

But still, being a conditioned soul easily bewildered, when sometimes I can’t see him I miss him too much and the pain seems unbearable. Like this year on Śrī Baladeva Purṇimā, I was remembering how we used to tie *rākhī** on his arm. Both his arms would be full of *rākhīs*, but still he would keep putting them forward for all our God brothers and Godsisters who wanted to tie him with this knot of love.

*sei se parama bandhu, sei mātā pitā,
śrī-kṛṣṇa-carane jei prema-bhakti data
sakala janame pitā mātā sabhe paye,
kṛṣṇa guru nahi mile bhajah biyaye*

Truly, he only is our true friend and saviour because he gave us the greed, the hankering, to attain love for Kṛṣṇa. Birth after birth we’ve had so many mothers and fathers, but all those relations were not of value. At last in this birth we have found a pure devotee of the Lord who has given us an alternative to this miserable world, an alternative of eternal bliss, eternal knowledge and eternal service.

Śrīla Gurudeva is forever in our hearts

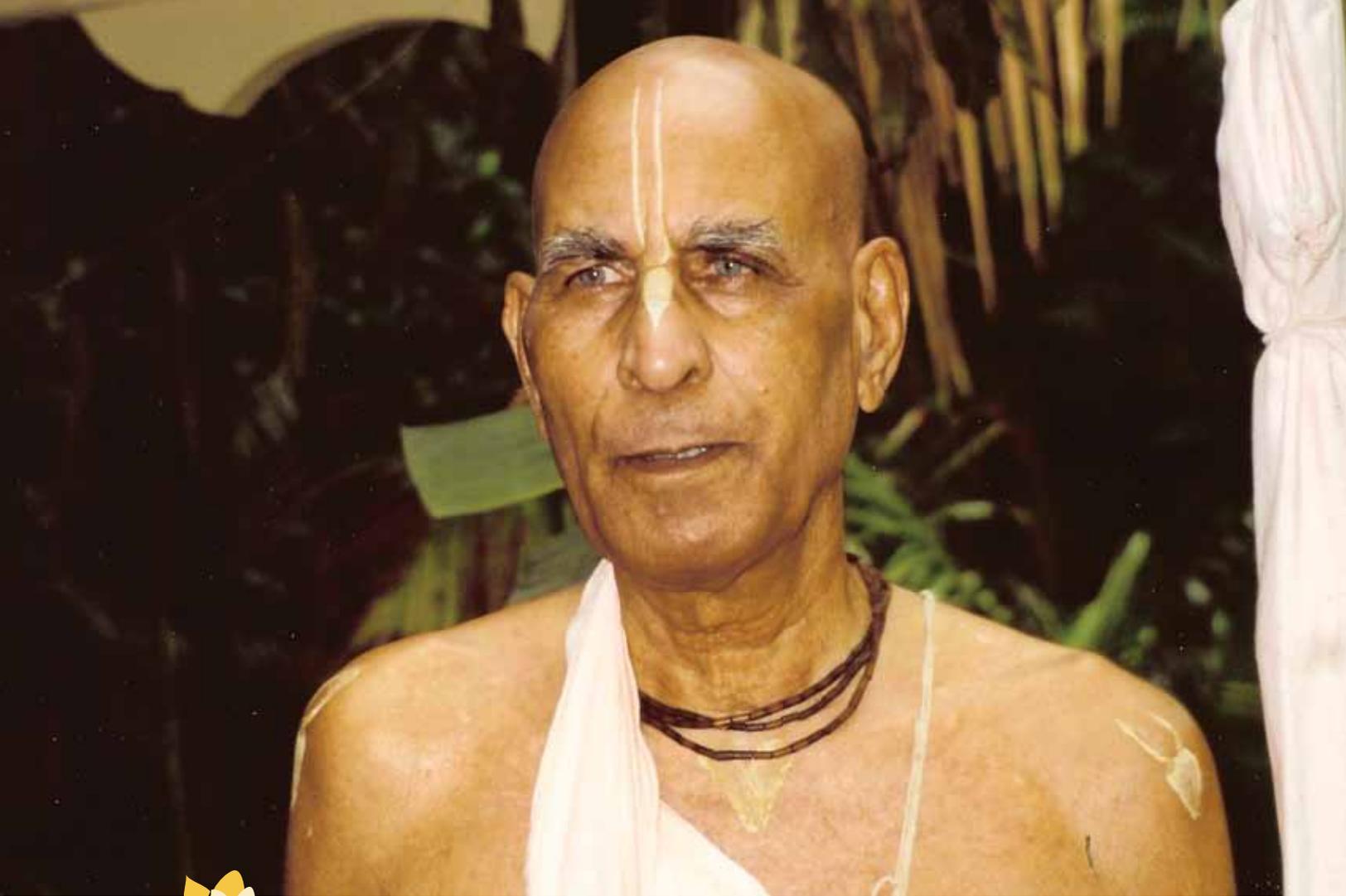
He “will not rest”, as he used to say many times himself, until he has found us all a place at the lotus feet of Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī, Śrī Rati Mañjarī and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Conjugal. He, along with Śrīla Prabhupāda, is our guide to our eternal abode.

O Śrīla Gurudeva, please bless me that may my only objective in life be to please you and the Vaiṣṇavas birth after birth, and may I eventually attain a place amongst the *pālyadāsīs* of Śrī Rādhikā, under your supervision.

Jaya Śrīla Gurudeva!
Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda
Śrī Guru-paramparā ki jaya!

Your fallen daughter

Lalitā-devī dāsī (New Delhi) 



My Beloved Gurudeva

Offer my humble *praṇāma* at the lotus feet of my beloved Gurudeva, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇu-pāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

Blessed is the day when I first heard your name!

Blessed is that moment when I first saw you!

I came to Vraja then for the first time in my life with the sole purpose of meeting with you.

When I translate your books, sincere admiration for the perfect clarity and depth of your thought overwhelms me again and again, and, unable to continue, I mentally perform *pūjā* to your lotus feet. With awe and reverence I bow down before your infinite prowess!

But as soon as I meet with you, I forget about awe as I am immersed in the sweetness of your association. At such moments I realize I have no friend as close, as dear and as beloved as you. Even your shortest questions and remarks make it clear that you always participate in my life. Unfortunately, I do not always understand this.

Once you said to me, “You should be closer to me.”

“But how, Śrīla Gurudeva?”

“Through my books.”

“I already translate your books one after another...”

“Through the *mantras*,” you said.

I had nothing to reply – only to droop my head on your lotus feet in deep sorrow for my pitiful, helpless condition, hoping for your mercy.

At first you bestowed upon me the blessing of your association, and these ten years were the happiest in my life. Now you have bestowed the blessing of separation. To tell the truth, it is a heavy burden in my heart, but I shall carry this priceless treasure to the end with utmost care. I know that after separation meeting follows, because you always come at the call of those who weep for you.

Always yours,

Jagad-mohinī dāsī (Russia) 



Śrīla Gurudeva, My Eternal Guardian

vande 'bāṁ śrī guru-varaṁ śrī rūpānuga-pravaram
vraja-rasa-rasikaṁ ca kṛpā-mūrti nārāyaṇam

My dear most Śrīla Gurudeva, I offer my millionfold obeisances at your divine lotus feet, which are the only hope and shelter for a fallen *jīva* like me. On your divine disappearance day, this fallen daughter of yours is attempting to glorify you, whose glories are unlimited and unfathomable. I am not only spiritually illiterate but also bereft of any literary qualities, yet I have the audacity to glorify you. Please forgive me and kindly accept this humble offering at your divine lotus feet.

About fifteen years ago when I first met you, my heart was in ecstasy to have your *darśana*. I knew at once that you were the spiritual guide I had been waiting for my whole life, perhaps lifetimes. As I drowned in the ocean of your transcendental smile and deep blue eyes, I thanked Rādhā-Śyāmasundarjī and Girirāja Govardhana for answering my prayers. You asked me, “Do you know who Kṛṣṇa is?” My heart was pounding as I looked at you, speechless. And then you started to describe Kṛṣṇa’s transcendental beauty and pastimes. In this way, from my very first *darśana*, Śrīla Gurudeva, you nurtured my *kṛṣṇa-bhakti-latā-bīja* with unconditional love and affection.

yāre dekhe, tāre kabe —kaba kṛṣṇa-nāma
ei-mata 'vaiṣṇava' kaila saba nija-grāma

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā, 7.101)

As empowered representatives of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu they would ask whoever they met to chant the names of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In this way they transformed all of their fellow villagers into Vaiṣṇavas.

Śrīla Gurudeva, you ardently followed and fulfilled this instruction of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu wherever you went. In a short span of fourteen years, you travelled the globe over thirty times and spread the message of *rūpānuga-bhajana* in every nook and corner of the world. Your compassion and humility is unparalleled. More humble than a blade of grass, more tolerant than a tree and devoid of seeking self-respect, you propagated the holy names of Kṛṣṇa fearlessly and boldly. You certainly are the greatest proponent of *rūpānuga-bhajana-paddhati* and the foremost Vaiṣṇava *ācārya* of the twenty-first century.

In a very simple and loving way, you sowed the seed of *vraja-prema* in the scorched hearts of millions of souls and then nourished them with your sweet *harikathā* and



melodious chanting of *harikathā*. Anyone who heard the nectarean *harikathā* that emanated from your lotus lips was instantaneously attracted to you and your teachings. When you spoke *harikathā*, I always felt as if you were directly seeing the sweet pastimes of Śrī Yugala-kīśora and describing them for the benefit of us fallen souls. You were certainly always absorbed in the highest moods of Vraja, especially the mood of *mañjarī-sevā*. Thus, you were an expert at explaining the most esoteric and deep *siddhānta* in such a lucid and simple manner that even a fool like me could understand it.

During your *asvastha-līlā*, we went for Śrī Girirāja *parikramā* to pray for your speedy recovery. At Śrī Uddhava-kuṇḍa, we told the priest there that we were your disciples and while fondly and profusely narrating your glories, he wept bitterly. He told us how you helped him and other Vrajavāsīs in their times of need. Then at Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa, when the *paṇḍas* came to know that we were your disciples, they all inquired about your well-being with great concern. You were so dear to all the Vrajavāsīs and were certainly their crown jewel. That’s why they all so lovingly bequeathed you with the title of “Yuga-ācārya”.

Once when you were visiting Houston, I wanted to speak to you, because of the shame I felt for not making

any progress in my *bhajana*. When I came before you, I started crying and said that I was not worthy of being your disciple. Then I felt the warmth of your loving hand on my head. I looked up and saw you, the personification of transcendental compassion. You said to me three times, “I want this *Āratī*. No need for you to try, I will try from my end. Only sincerity is needed.” Śrīla Gurudeva, I cannot repay you even in millions of lifetimes for always encouraging me in my *bhajana*, and for sprinkling your mercy by giving me a glimpse of the rarest and the highest treasure, *unnatojjvala-rasānī svā-bhakti-śrīyam*. We had no *sukṛti* or capabilities or qualifications, yet like Śrīman Mahāprabhu you showered your mercy and also gave us the *patrata* (qualification) to become recipients of that mercy.

Once at Houston airport I asked you, “Śrīla Gurudeva, the five Pāṇḍavas are still doing *bhajana* at Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa and have not yet attained *vraja-bhakti*. And at Śrī Uddhava-kūṇḍa, also, Uddhavajī is doing *bhajana* and has not yet attained *vraja-bhakti*, so how can *jīvas* like us possibly attain it?”

“All of you will surely get *vraja-bhakti*,” you declared to the assembly of devotees, “because you are under the guidance of Mahāprabhu. If you take the shelter of a *parikāra* (associate) of Mahāprabhu, you will attain the position of a *rādhā-dāsī*. This is the glory of *gaura-līlā*. If you take shelter of Gaurāṅga’s name, you will attain Vrajendra-nandana in your heart. One who takes shelter of Gauḍa-maṇḍala is bound to eternally reside in Vraja-bhūmi and serve Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī as her maidservant.”

Śrīla Gurudeva, we were very fortunate to host you at our home during your last visit to Houston. All your daughters were always very eager to cook for you and you instructed us individually regarding what to cook. Then, every evening you told us how you liked it. You always told your darling daughters that it is very easy for us to please Kṛṣṇa just by cooking *bhoga* and offering it to Him. Those were the most blissful days of my life. We would collect flowers, clean our homes and get your room ready. Now those blissful days have been taken away. When will we again get the opportunity to serve your lotus feet? Śrīla Gurudeva my heart cries out, as this separation is unbearable. I beg and pray at the lotus feet of Śrījī:

*aisi kṛpa karo śrī rādhe
man mandir ban jai
us mandir me ho ik āsan,
gurudeva vabaan āyen*

*phulon se karun unka svāgat
chhapan bhog lagaun
rāt din chhavi niharun unki
charan-sevā mil jaya
aisi kṛpa karo śrī rādhe...*

Śrīla Gurudeva, on this most auspicious day, I pray and offer my heart at your divine lotus feet, begging for your mercy that I may continue to follow your instructions sincerely.

Aspiring for your eternal *prema-mayī sevā*
Your daughter,

Ārti dāsī (Houston) 🌸

A Drop of Śrīla Gurudeva's Incomparable Specialities

*M*y dear most beloved Śrīla Gurudeva, I offer my heartfelt *puṣpāñjali* and *danḍavat-pranāmas* at your lotus feet.

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda wrote, “As touchstone is hard to find, a pure devotee of the Lord is also rare to find even amongst millions of liberated souls.” There are so many different kinds of pure devotees, but amongst them, how many are *vraja-bhaktas*? A *vraja-bhakta* is extremely rare. And amongst those *vraja-bhaktas*, how rare is it to find a *rasika* Vaiṣṇava who is a *pālyā-dāsī* of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, thus coming in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī? This is far more rare. So how fortunate are we that such a *rūpānuga* Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava like Śrīla Gurudeva,

filled with the sweetness of Vraja and the deep *bhāvas* of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, came to this world to bestow the highest, rarest gift – *rādhā-dāsyam* – to those fortunate souls who have taken shelter of him?

But now our most beloved Śrīla Gurudeva has left this world. We are bereft of his transcendental, physical association and thus the opportunity to hear directly from his lotus mouth his very astounding illuminations of *vraja-līlā* and *gaura-līlā*, his *rasika* descriptions of the sweet loving moods of the *vrajavāsīs* and of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s ecstasies, as well as the deeply moving expressions of his profound moods of separation. We are bereft of his ever so merciful glances, imbuing our hearts with drops of his deep



mysterious *bhāvas*, of his sweet words of jest, of those loving exchanges that would completely melt our hearts, and of the highly potent medicine of his direct chastisements that could at once remove any obstacle. Is it possible to find such an extraordinary Vaiṣṇava in this life ever again? As Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura wrote: Oh, my heart is breaking as I have lost the association of Kṛṣṇa's most intimate devotee.

Now Śrīla Gurudeva has mercifully given us this most painfully bitter medicine of separation. But within that is the most unimaginable sweet nectar that can completely destroy our hearts' disease of material attachment at the root.

And what did Śrīla Gurudeva leave us? Oh, such a vast inheritance! Such a great treasure! This is our indescribable good fortune which may take us a whole lifetime or many lifetimes to realize. He gave us a most complete understanding of all Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *tattva-siddhānta* as a very strong foundation, so that we could catch the sweet *rasa* that was flowing from his heart, through his lotus mouth.

Many devotees were in complete confusion about the origin of the *jīva*, and held the opinion that we fell from the spiritual world. However, Śrīla Gurudeva said that this is quite absurd and in fact impossible because there is no influence of *mahā-māyā* in the spiritual world. He gave much śāstric evidence to prove that we have come from Kāraṇodakaśāyī Viṣṇu in the *taṭasthā* region, thus completely eradicating any doubt one may have about this.

We had so many misconceptions about *guru-tattva*. Therefore, Śrīla Gurudeva first presented the fact that not all *gurus* have the same *adbikāra* (qualification), and explained the hazards of accepting an unqualified *guru*. Then he clarified the qualities of a *guru* from whom we should take shelter: "*tasmād guruṁ prapadyeta jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam ...* – one who has fully realized the Vedic scriptures, the Supreme Absolute Truth and has no material attachments whatsoever."

Who actually had a true understanding of the significance of *dikṣā* before Śrīla Gurudeva enlightened us? He explained that *dikṣā* is necessary to purify our hearts and thereby develop a real taste in chanting *barināma*, as well as to establish our relationship with Kṛṣṇa. There are two kinds of initiation: *anuṣṭhānika-dikṣā*, or formal initiation, and *vidvad-rudhi*, the realization of *dikṣā*. *Dikṣā* means *dī* – *divya-jñāna*, which is transcendental knowledge, specifically of our relationship with Kṛṣṇa; and *kṣa* means the eradication of all kinds of *anarthas* and *avidya* (ignorance). Without them, the process of *dikṣā* is not complete. Śrīla Gurudeva said, "At the time of receiving the *mantras* from a bona fide *guru*, the devotee is admitted into the school of *dikṣā*, and it may take a very long time, even lifetimes, to realize all these things." Therefore, he also said it is essential to accept a *śikṣā-guru* after the departure of one's *dikṣā-guru*.



Śrīla Gurudeva pointed out the difference between the *pāñcarātrika guru-paramparā* (the line of *dīkṣā*) which consists of *gurus* who may not all be realized souls, and *bhagavat guru-paramparā* (the line of *śikṣā*), consisting of those *gurus* who are all realized souls. These realized *gurus* carry the specific conception of *tattva-siddhānta* and mood of *rasa* of our Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava line, whether through *dīkṣā* or *śikṣā*. Therefore we accept this *bhagavat guru-paramparā*.

Just as Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda derived the name ‘International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness’ from the verse *kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa-bhāvitā matiḥ...* one could also say that Śrīla Gurudeva derived the name of his ‘International Pure Bhakti Yoga Society’ from the verse *anyābbilāṣitā śūnyam jñāna-kārmādy anāvṛtam...*. Śrīla Gurudeva highlighted this verse of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī as the most excellent definition of pure *bhakti*. How he analyzed each and every word of this verse, so that everyone would know the exact meaning of *uttamā-bhakti*, or pure devotion, without any shadow of a doubt! *Uttamā-bhakti* also implies the existence of *adhāma-bhakti*, or inferior devotion, that is, *karma-miśrā-* and *jñāna-miśrā-bhakti*, *aropa-siddhā-* and *saṅga-siddhā-bhakti*, etc., as opposed to *svarūpa-siddhā-bhakti*, which comprises *navadhā-bhakti* – *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam*, etc. He also pointed out that *śaraṇāgati* (surrender) is only the doorway to *bhakti*, which was also quite a revelation for us.

Who knew the essence of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* before Śrīla Gurudeva explained it? He showed the many different levels of *bhaktas* delineated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*: the *jñānī-bhakta*, *śuddha-bhakta*, *premi-bhakta*, *prema-para-bhakta* and *prematura-bhakta*. Above all, he highlighted *gopī-prema*, especially Rādhikā’s *prema*, as being beyond these gradations and completely unparalleled! Kṛṣṇa told the *gopīs*, “*na pārāye ’haṁ niravadya-saṁyujām...* – I am forever indebted...”. In fact, Śrī Kṛṣṇa accepts the *gopīs* as the ultimate example of the verse *man-manā bhava mad-bhakto...*, revealed to us by Śrīla Gurudeva as the essence of the entire *Bhagavad-gītā*.

How many of us actually understood the real goal of our lives before we met Śrīla Gurudeva? Śrīla Gurudeva emphasized over and over again, that we must first establish the goal, otherwise how can we possibly attain it? He said that the verse: *ārādhyo bhagavān vrajēśa-tanayas-tad-dhāma vṛndāvanam ...* clearly defines our *sambandha*, *abhideya* and *prayojana*.

Many of us thought we were practising *sādhana-bhakti* before we met Śrīla Gurudeva, but how many of us actually knew the definition of *sādhana-bhakti* or its goal? Śrīla Gurudeva therefore illuminated Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī’s most excellent definition of *sādhana-bhakti*: *kṛti-sādhyā bhavet sādhyā-bhāvā sā sādhanābhidhā...*, pointing out that

if *bhāva-bhakti* is not our goal, then we are not actually performing *sādhana-bhakti* at all. And what is *bhāva-bhakti*? It is *śuddha-sattva-viśeṣātmā prema-sūryāṁśu-sāmya-bhāk...* In this way he clearly defined the goal.

It seems that before we met Śrīla Gurudeva, many of us were quite happy to follow the path of *vaidhi-bhakti* (leading to Vaikuṅṭha or at most Goloka, not Vraja Vṛndāvana), having almost no idea about *rāgānugā-bhakti*. Śrīla Gurudeva said, “Let the whole world speak about *vaidhi-bhakti*, but I will speak about *rāgānugā-bhakti*!” Another time he said, “Following in the line of our *ācāryas* and by their desire I am revealing many things about *rāgānugā-bhakti*. No one else is speaking like this. All are silent, but I am not silent. In our entire *guru-paramparā* hardly anyone will give this. I want all of you to have *rāgānugā-bhakti*.” Therefore, Śrīla Gurudeva encouraged most of us in *rāgānugā-pravṛtti* – following the path of *vaidhi*, with a deep aspiration to practise *rāgānugā-bhakti*.

I wonder how many of us clearly understood the difference between *rūpānuga* and *rāgānugā* before Śrīla Gurudeva defined it? He explained that those *sādhakas* who are serving Kṛṣṇa on the path of *rāga*, following in the footsteps of the *rāgātmikā-bhaktas* in Goloka Vṛndāvana, are all *rāgānugā-bhaktas*. However, those who are *rāgānugā-bhaktas* are not all *rūpānuga-bhaktas*. Only those who are following the mood and process of *bhājana* of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, and aspiring to serve Rādhikā under the guidance of Rūpa Mañjarī are both *rūpānuga* as well as *rāgānugā-bhaktas*.

What is the difference between *aiśvarya* and *mādhurya*? Śrīla Gurudeva made it crystal clear. *Aiśvarya-līlā* is a display of opulence that cannot be performed by any human being, in which both the *bhakta* and Bhagavān are aware of His Godhood. Whereas *mādhurya-līlā*, which is far more tasteful to Kṛṣṇa, comprises human-like pastimes in which great opulence may be displayed without the *bhakta* or Bhagavān Himself having any awareness of His Godhood. Kṛṣṇa is not so attracted by *aiśvarya-mayī bhakti*, but He is supremely attracted by *mādhurya-mayī bhakti*.

Following the mood of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Gurudeva also proved how the spotlessly pure *parakīya-rasa* that Kṛṣṇa tasted in Vraja is far superior to *svakīya-rasa*, in satisfying Him.

Śrīla Gurudeva also revealed and very deeply explained the two primary, or internal, and two secondary, or external, reasons for Mahāprabhu’s descent in an absolutely unprecedented way.

However, Śrīla Gurudeva is not only a topmost *tattva-vit ācārya*, but he is the crest jewel among all those who are *rasika*, drowning everyone in a nectarean ocean of *rasa* through his supremely sweet *harikathā* and books – giving us *dīkṣā* in the true sense of the word.

What he has given us, and is continuing to give us is absolutely phenomenal! Incomparable! Indescribable! “Tasmin mahān-mukharitā madhubhic-caritra – in assemblies of great Vaiṣṇavas, unlimited rivers of pure nectar flow from their lotus mouths, in the form of their harikathā.” I simply

pray at the lotus feet of Śrīla Gurudeva to realize one drop of the supremely sweet nectar he has given.

Your most unqualified daughter,

Caru-candrikā dāsī 🌸

The Sprouting of Bhakti



Offer my heartfelt *praṇāma* again and again at the lotus feet of my beloved Gurudeva, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who I will now attempt to glorify.

I never wanted to be a devotee. I wasn't inspired to wear a *sārī*, play *karatālas*, be so good, believe so much extraordinary philosophy or sign up to a religion that externally at least, seem to think women are a little bit stupid. But all that changed when I met my beloved *guru*. Honestly, if he had told me to become a performance clown and wear a red nose and perform for cash, I would have done it!

How could I worry about women being considered less intelligent when we were so loved by him, when he treated us so beautifully and called us his darling daughters? Who he was, how he treated others and his reactions to things that happened to him taught me everything I know. How can we really glorify or talk about someone so profound and deeply personal as our extraordinary Gurudeva? It's like trying to explain the fragrance of a rose. He was service and devotion personified. Who he was, who he is, his mood, his loving dealings and his selfless service *is* Kṛṣṇa consciousness for me, in one beautiful blue eyed package. He *is* my relationship with the philosophy, with other

devotees, with the scriptures, with Kṛṣṇa and with Rādhā Herself.

It is his teaching that we should aspire to be the maidservants of Rādhārāṇī. Only he would have wanted that for us. How could I want for myself what I could not even comprehend? So I began to want for myself what he wanted for me and for all of us.

He was, and still is, our light, our guiding star. My love for him is my only taste of devotion. He always expressed the importance of having a goal. “How can you buy a ticket at the train station,” he would ask, “if you do not know where you are going?” He gave us the goal, and showed us the way to the goal. To serve at his lotus feet is still the only thing that makes sense.

How can we love or serve Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa if we cannot love ourselves, each other or him? Of these three, he was by far the most exciting because of the way he loved us back, immediately, unconditionally, eternally. And his love was coming directly through his relationship with Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

That’s why we would travel all around the world to see him: to touch his feet and to hear his classes, some of which we did not even understand. That’s why we sat for hours on cold floors just to be in close proximity to the best and purest source of love there is. It was like sitting in front of an open fire hydrant; it doesn’t matter who you are, you’re going to get wet. And he drenched us constantly with his mercy.

He told us we could get whatever mercy we wanted, that it was unending and causeless. It only depended on the size of pot we brought, and in this regard, we were encouraged to be greedy. Even if our pot were small, because our self-conception was small, he would shower us with mercy

anyway. He wasn’t giving out by some ration system. He had an endless supply.

He told us he was a pot mender, plugging the endless holes in our hearts with love, compassion and hope. “Don’t be hopeless” was something he would remind us of all the time. He saw something, and nurtured something in us, that we cannot even see in ourselves. What was he seeing?

Every aduki bean, in fact every bean that’s sitting in your cupboard, has the ability to sprout at any time. All that’s needed is water. If you soak any dry old bean and then keep it moist for a few days, it will show great signs of life, sprouting with green shoots and lots of energy. Where we see dry beans, Gurudeva would see sprouts. Not only did he see them, he brought the water to make them grow. He saw that same potential in all of us. And with his penetrating gaze would invite the soul to wake up from its slumber and sprout!

We ran away from him, wore raincoats, put up umbrellas, and still so beautifully and humbly he would come back to see us, encourage us, love us, pat us on the head, give us his hearty blessings, smile and look at us with those amazing blue eyes, gentle but powerful and slightly mischievous, and shower the mercy, knowing that sooner or later we would get soaked and start to grow.

It doesn’t matter how long you knew him, or whether you felt you didn’t know him. It doesn’t matter how you felt about what you did or didn’t do. Our relationship with him is completely beyond the ‘shoulds’. It’s the same promise he gave each and every one of us – that he will never leave us. As usual, he always does the hard bit. All we need to do is believe.

Praying for his mercy to fully take
root in my heart,

Anaṅgā-mohinī dāsī (England) 🙏

The Manifestation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s Most Merciful Glance

First of all, we offer our humble obeisances to our most divine master *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja* and to all our *rūpānuga-guruwarga*, who are more than a million well-wishers, and who constantly protect and help us on the dangerous open road of material existence.

We have heard from the lotus mouths of the *mahājanas* that the root cause of our faults and miseries is forgetfulness of Bhagavān, and that one will never be fortunate enough to remember Him as long as one remains forgetful of Śrī Guru

and Vaiṣṇavas. That only by remembering and praying to them, will one be able to pray for the service of Bhagavān. Our *mahājanas* have described this to be the only process to remember Him. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself has repeatedly stated that He is so completely controlled by His devotees’ love and affection, that He can no longer remain independent. Such is the glory of Śrī Guru, who is the abode of this extraordinary type of *prema* that controls even Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

There is no difference between Bhagavān and His





pure devotee; thus we can see that Bhagavān's pastime of delivering the *jīvas* is performed by Śrī Guru. But because he is *āśraya-bhagavān*, his mercy is available to the *jīvas* in such an extraordinary way that even Bhagavān becomes astonished. By Bhagavān's mercy, even degraded *jīvas* such as us became fortunate by witnessing this unprecedented mercy seen in the manifested pastimes of Śrīla Gurudeva.

Our *mahājanas* have stated that if we want to realize our highest aspiration, we should not limit ourselves by desiring anything less. In this way we remember how Śrīla Gurudeva would mercifully encourage and inspire all by describing the pinnacle of desire – the treasure of the highest service to Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. In a most charming and fearless way, Śrīla Gurudeva declared the real *vāṇī* of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, and how that *sva-bhakti-śrīyam* that Śrīman Mahāprabhu came to distribute was attainable by all who take shelter of His feet, even the most degraded!

Repeatedly travelling around the world, Śrīla Gurudeva would fill everyone's heart with hope and aspiration for such a treasure. Fearlessly, our Gurudeva would establish *vraja-bhāva*, especially the mode of worship of the *vraja-ramaṇīs*, as our foremost object of meditation, and at the same time he would kindly and carefully describe the way by which even ordinary *jīvas* could gradually become qualified to enter that realm of service.

Once a band of dacoits became attracted by the opulence of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu. They saw how He would be opulently dressed, wearing many priceless jewels, and

gracefully roaming about in ecstasy with His associates. The dacoits thought this was surely the mercy of Caṇḍī-devī; that they could steal this wealth from Nityānanda Prabhu and His associates and be 'happy' forever. In this way they made a plan, and at night time came to the place where Nityānanda Prabhu was staying, but by the Lord's power they were all put into a deep slumber.

They came a second time, but then saw that giant guards wearing *tilaka* and *tulasī* neck beads, and chanting "Hari Hari" were guarding that place. They were deeply frustrated, but still came back for a third try. This time the night was extremely dark, and unable to see anything, they fell into deep wet ditches, breaking their hands and legs, and they were attacked by leeches and huge mosquitoes. Suffering intensely, the leader of the dacoits, who was a fallen *brāhmaṇa*, started to realize that the *avadhūta*, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, was no ordinary person, but the Supreme Lord Himself. In this way he lamented profusely for his foolishness. Lord Nityānanda, hearing his sincere prayer, released them of their suffering, and the dacoit came to His lotus feet repeatedly begging His forgiveness. Not only did Nityānanda Prabhu forgive him, making him the recipient of His mercy, but He said "Go and bring other dacoits and murderers to the path of pure *dharmā*."

This type of astonishing mercy was and is being fully manifested by Śrīla Gurudeva. We also approached Śrīla Gurudeva like dacoits, wanting his mercy so that we could fulfil our desires in this world of matter, but how merciful

he is that he has engaged this band of dacoits in his service and is thus transforming our hearts by the power of his compassion.

We remember him telling us that we should be ideal, and he asked if we knew what that meant. We said no, and he gave many examples. Looking into our eyes, he said, “Be ideal in *bhajana*.” But how can dacoits become ideal in *bhajana*? Even this he explained extensively.

Another time, during class, he was explaining about the different types of devotees, and while telling the fruit-seller *līlā*, he said that a *sādhaka* must have a resolve like hers. She had made a vow that she would meet Kṛṣṇa or give up her life. We asked Śrīlā Gurudeva how could someone without powerful *samskāras* be like her? He said, “You can be more than that, why do you want to be like her? Be a maidservant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.” We said “Because that’s what you said Gurudeva, but how is this possible?” Śrīlā Gurudeva said, “If great personalities became like that by the mercy of Guru and Kṛṣṇa, then why by the mercy of Guru can you not become like that?”



Offer my most humble praṇāma to you, my dear most, perfect, kind and compassionate Gurudeva, om viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

Missing your eyes, like lasers,
shooting our hearts with *prema*,
The inexplicable happiness and joy
each time you came.

Missing the sweet intonation of your voice,
the way your eyebrows lift,
The swarms and crowds of devotees,
through which you would sift.

Missing the way you accept gifts, flowers,
and any small offering,
Perform grain ceremonies, weddings,
and have devotees sing.

Missing observing your love infiltrate each person
with whom you interact,
In trance during class, listening, and preserving
śāstra with pure fact.

Missing buying you gifts to offer
every time we meet,

*guru, vaiṣṇava, bhagavān,—tinera smarāṇa
tinera smarāṇe haya vighna-vināśana*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi-līlā 1.20–21)

Śrī guru, the Vaiṣṇavas and Bhagavān – even remembrance of these three obliterates all obstacles.

Continuously falling at the lotus feet of our most worshipful Śrīlā Gurudeva and the Vaiṣṇavas, we pray that they bless us to eternally remain in the shelter of those lotus feet, which are more cooling than millions of moons.

Please bless us with increasing enthusiasm in our *sādhana-bhajana* so that our hearts may be gifted with the true mood of separation, for in this way we can eternally experience that most special meeting.

Aspiring for the *niṣkapāta-sevā* of
Śrī Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas,

Śrī Gaṅgāmātā Gauḍiṇya Maṭha 🌸

Accepting them all, even letting me put shoes
on your lotus feet.

Missing hearing devotees’ questions,
and your perfect answers each time,
Flawlessly representing our *paramparā*,
preserving our line.

Missing your blessing hand
sending rays of pure love,
Greeting you after your morning walk,
bundled up, using gloves.

Missing running to your door,
rushing to get the best spot,
During *govardhana-pūjā*,
on each head placing a pot.

Missing the way, before each class,
you garland your *Bhāgavatam*,
And your hands, in the *kīrtana*,
delicately swaying, so calm.

Missing the way you orchestrate
each festival so perfectly,
How you say, “Go home and tell everyone
how it went so smoothly.”



Missing the way you say, “My dear darling daughters
and sons,
we will meet again tomorrow.”
And when the festivals end,
such sadness and such sorrow.

Missing the way you relish
speaking *barikathā*,
And patiently listen and correct your disciples,
so honest and raw.

Missing your graceful stroll,
the way you glide,
And how each person feels noticed,
even if trying to hide.

Missing coming to see you,
not worried if I get fired,
So entranced when you talk to me,
can’t remember what transpired.

Missing the way my heart races
and jumps when you’re near,
An uncontrollable excitement,
and when you leave, full of tears.

Missing you passing out *prasādam*,
and the pushing to get it at any length,

Placing it diligently in our hands,
with such force and strength.

Missing watching you garlanded,
feet bathed and *āratika* done,
Ringing *kartālas* when some speak too long,
and greeting all when they come.

Missing your perfect English,
so sweet and succinct,
The way you put on your turban,
your cloth perfect and neat.

Missing your voice, your eyes,
your *tilaka*, your smile,
Traversing the globe tirelessly
for miles and miles.

I can’t ever fathom
meeting such a perfect person again,
I relish each moment
and pray for you to send.

When will I serve you
in the right mood, properly?
This is my desire and prayer
eternally.

Kṛṣṇa-mayī dāsī (California, U.S.A) 



O Distributor of Mercy!

*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-salākayā
cakṣur unmilitam yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

A spoken word disappears in the air, as you say
But words in a book are here always to stay
Out of vast compassion you wrote day and night
Disseminating pure *bhakti* by your divine might.

“Read deeply,” you said, “take this into your heart
Then give it to others so their *bhakti* may start.
Distribute as did Prabhupāda’s disciples for him
For without knowledge of *bhakti*, one’s path is grim.
Go to train stations, airports and ports by the sea
If they could do for him, you can do for me.”

Some ladies in Vṛndāvana try to serve you this way
Distributing your books, travelling for days
Overjoyed when you heard, you sent blessings to all
Though your divine *śakti* is doing it all.

You’re now blessing India with these lady crews
Sikkhim, the Punjab and Darjeeling too
In Purī – Ratha-yātrā, Hardwar – Śiva-rātri
Summers in the mountains, flooding Manali

Book fairs in Delhi, Bhubaneśvara too
All this inspired, solely by you.

Your daughters all joining to share what you gave
To spread your pure teachings, glory and fame
As a cloud discriminates not where to drop water
You’re doing with *śāstra*, through your darling
daughters.

Our heartfelt obeisance to you, divine master
Your literary mercy, we’ll distribute faster
O Gurudeva, keep us at your lotus feet
When, o when will we again meet?

Your beloved daughters,
Vasanti dāsī on behalf of the
ladies’ book distribution team, Vṛndāvana

Anitā dāsī, Bakulā dāsī, Cāru-candrikā dāsī, Indirā dāsī, Jānakī dāsī,
Kuñja-kalikā dāsī, Maṇi-mati dāsī, Nāgarī dāsī, Sāvitrī dāsī, Sulatā
dāsī, Taruṇī dāsī, Vasanti dāsī

Along with our dear sisters Gāyatrī dāsī, Jayantī dāsī, Jayaśrī dāsī,
Karuṇā-mayī dāsī, Kṛṣṇa-bhakti dāsī, Nandīnī dāsī, Raseśvarī dāsī,
Sumaṅgala dāsī, and Yamunā dāsī (x2) 

To Serve Śrī Guru with Relation



om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-śalākayā
cakṣur unmilitaṁ yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ

How happy were we when Śrī Guru appeared in our life! And how sad is it to face the fact that such a merciful personality has physically disappeared from our midst. Śrī Guru is certainly present everywhere and in everything, but do we have the vision to perceive that? When everyone talks about separation from Śrīla Gurudeva, I feel ashamed that a strong mood of separation from him has not yet arisen within my heart.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu asked Rāya Rāmānanda, “What is greatest sadness?” Rāya Rāmānanda replied, “*kṛṣṇa-bhakta-viraha vinā duḥkha nāhi dekhi para* – separation from the dear devotees of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the saddest experience.” It would be far better to feel that pain of separation than not to feel anything at all, which is my current position. I can only conclude that I must be a great offender because I am devoid of such love for the lotus feet of Śrīla Gurudeva.

In an article entitled ‘Viraha-bhajana’, Śrīla Gurudeva said that those disciples who, through their service mood, experience increasing attachment for their *guru* before his disappearance from this world are most fortunate. But I am not in this category, either. Even though Śrīla Gurudeva tried to teach me to serve with a sense of relationship with him; due to my *anarthas* and *aparādhās*, I have not been able to do so.

During Kārtika last year, I was asked to translate for Lalitā-priyā dāsī [from China], who was assisting with Śrīla Gurudeva’s medical treatment. For this reason, I was allowed to enter his room. For many days I had tried to flee from painful feelings of separation from Gurudeva, and had busied myself in my activities in a mechanical way. But when I came before Śrīla Gurudeva, tears fell from my eyes. I later understood that it is Śrīla Gurudeva’s desire that I serve with a mood of relationship with him, a connection to him.

Seeing my pitiable condition of trying to avoid feeling love in my so-called service to him, he strongly shook this conditioning. Without feeling a connection to Śrī Guru, all the busyness, even in the name of service, helps very little. But if we feel this connection, our love for him can grow through our service to him. I left it so late to understand this truth: *śrī-guru-carāṇe rati ei se uttamā-gati*. Now I can only contemplate my misfortune and weep.



Even though we lacked clarity in the lofty concept that our sole goal is to become a maidservant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, that is, to attain *mañjarī-bhāva*, Śrīla Gurudeva mercifully made this most precious gift available to us, without considering our lack of qualification. Furthermore, he even broadcast this good news to the whole world. Who can understand his causeless mercy? His mercy alone compensates for all the *sukṛti* we lack in our quest for this rarest treasure of *prema*.

My only desire and prayer at his lotus feet, is that life after life I may come back to this *rūpānuṅga* line of our *ācāryas*, and under their guidance, continue my practice of *bhakti* with great faith, so that I may one day claim the wealth that Śrīla Gurudeva has stored for us.

Just as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu left *prema* in the river Padma, waiting for Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura to receive it in the future, so Śrīla Gurudeva has also given us the blessing that we will obtain this *prema* at the proper time, when we are fully qualified. We will then experience his mercy forcefully flowing in our heart, and contemplating his magnanimity, our eyes will flood with tears. When we become his qualified disciple, others may then see Śrīla Gurudeva present in us. This is the real glory of a disciple. When Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu saw Paramānanda Purīpāda, He said, “You must be the disciple of Mādhavendra Purī.” When will that day come when our relationship with Śrīla Gurudeva will be easily detected by our presence?

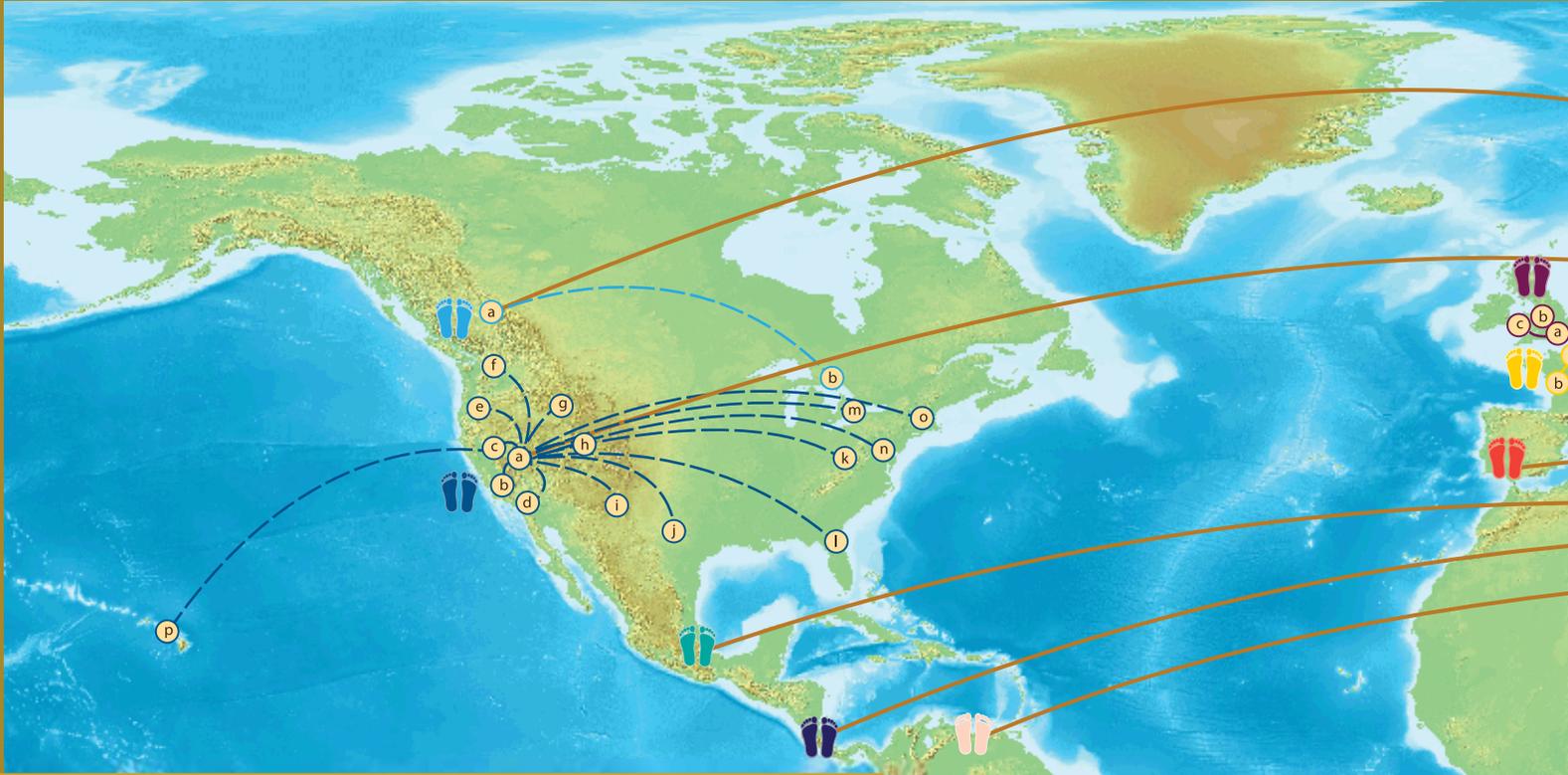
On this *tirobbāva* day of my divine master Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, may he teach me how to serve him with love. At his lotus feet I beg to have a separation mood that will be favourable for my minute service to his divine grace.

Humbly,

Yamunā dāsī (China) 

“Ṭhākura-vaiṣṇava-ṣada, avanīra sūsampada”

“Prārthanā” by Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura



India The length and breadth of India

USA

- (a) Badger, California (14)
- (b) Los Angeles, California (12)
- (c) San Francisco/Bay Area, California (16)
- (d) San Diego, California (2)
- (e) Eugene (1) / Portland (1), Oregon
- (f) Lake Washington (1) / Seattle (1), Washington
- (g) Boise, Idaho (1)
- (h) Las Vegas, Nevada (4)
- (i) Tucson, Arizona (2)
- (j) Houston, Texas (17)
- (k) New Vrindavan, West Virginia (1)
- (l) Alachua (5) / Coral Springs (2) / Miami (3) / Orlando (1), Florida
- (m) Gita Nagari, Pennsylvania (1)
- (n) Washington D.C. (5)
- (o) NYC (2) / New Jersey (2)
- (p) Hilo (3) / Honolulu (6) / Kauai (1) / Kona (1) / Maui (4) / North Shore (13), Hawaii

Canada

- (a) Vancouver (2) / Saranagati Farm (1) / Salt Spring Island (1)
- (b) Toronto (1)

Mexico, Mexico city (1)

Costa Rica, San Jose (2)

Venezuela, Caracas (1)

Brazil

- Rio De Janeiro (2) / São Paulo (3)

Spain, Granada (1)

United Kingdom

- (a) London (3) / Brighton (3) / Bath (3) / Glastonbury (1)
- (b) Birmingham (3) / Leicester (1)
- (c) Wales (2)

France

- (a) Paris (2)
- (b) New Mayapura (1) / Toulouse (3)

The Netherlands

- Amersfoort (1) / Amsterdam (1) / Apeldoorn (2) / Bodegraven (2) / Rotterdam (1) / The Hague (4) /

Germany

- (a) Berlin (2)
- (b) Frankfurt (4) / Heidelberg (1) / Neumuehle (1) / Olpe (1) / Frielendorf (1) / Paderborn (2)
- (c) Munich (3)

Austria, Vienna (2)

Italy

- (a) Stressa (1) / Verbania (2)
- (b) Pisa (1) / Viareggio (1)
- (c) Venice (1)

Ukraine, Odessa (2)

Russia

- (a) Moscow (3)
- (b) Volgograd (1)

Turkey, Istanbul (1)

United Arab Emirates, Dubai (2)

Mauritius (2)

South Africa

- (a) Johannesburg (1)
- (b) Durban (1) / Pietermaritzburg (1)

Nepal

- (a) Kathmandu (1)
- (b) Janaka-puri (1)

Thailand, Bangkok (3)

Malaysia

- (a) Kuala Lumpur (5) / Penang (5)
- (b) Johor Bahru (1)

Singapore (8)

China

- (a) Hong Kong (4)
- (b) Guangzhou (1)

Australia

- (a) Brisbane (10) / Murwillumbah (10)
- (b) Melbourne (1)
- (c) Cessnock (2) / Sydney (5)
- (d) Perth (2)

Indonesia, Bali (4)

Taiwan, Taipei (4)

Philippines

- (a) Manila (3)
- (b) Cebu (4)

Japan, Narita (3)

New Zealand, Auckland (3)

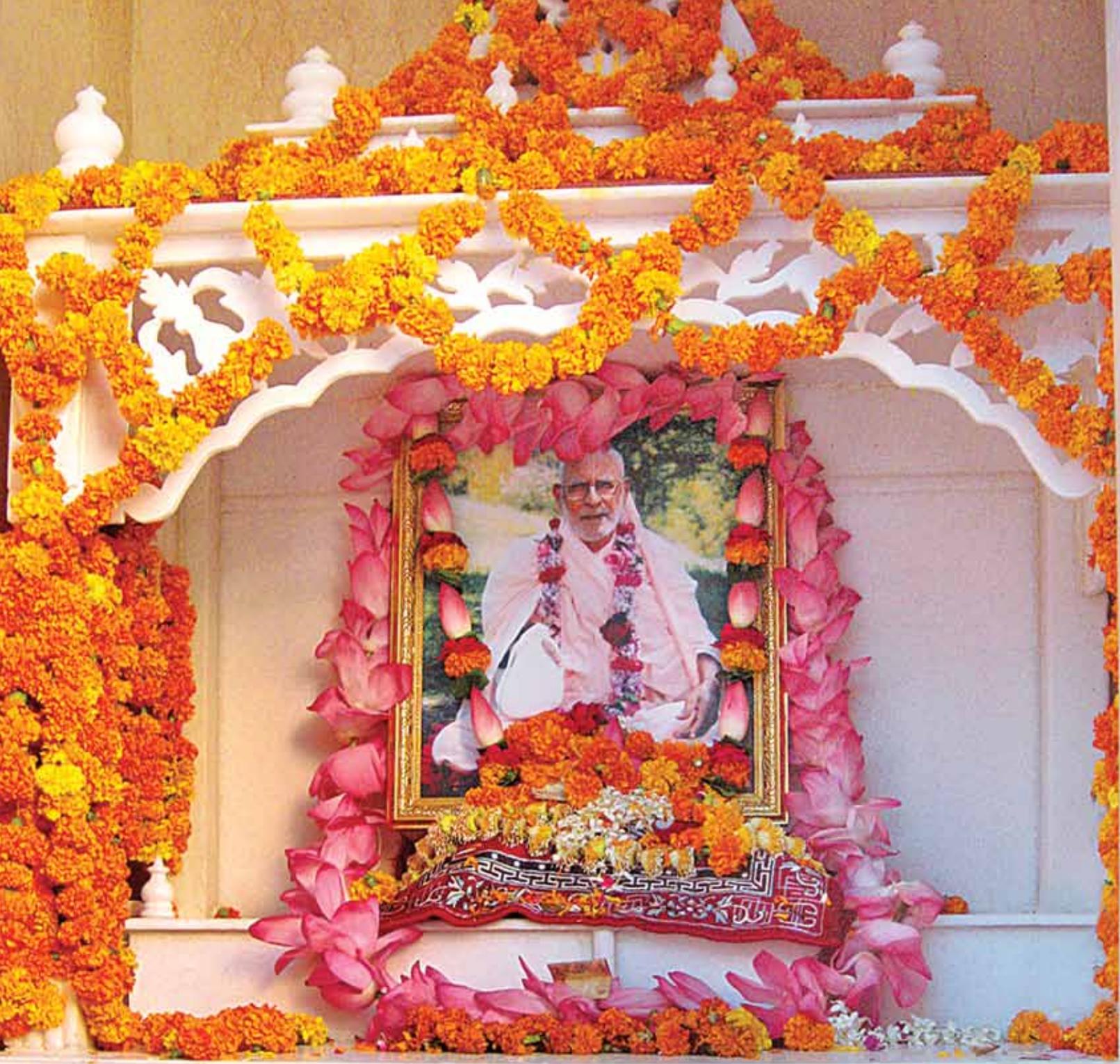
Fiji

- Labasa (1) / Lautoka (7)
- Nadi (2) / Suva (2)

“The lotus feet of the Vaiṣṇavas
are the earth’s most valuable treasure.”



To bestow pure *bhakti* upon all *jīvas*, from 1996 to 2010
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja
travelled the world more than thirty times.



Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja
Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara Mandira
Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma

Puṣpa-samādhī Mandira