

The

Benedictine Tree

of Divine Aspiration



Swami B.S. Govinda
Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math
Nabadwip Dham

All Glories to Śrī Guru and Śrī Gaurāṅga

The Benedictine Tree of Divine Aspiration



Compiled for the satisfaction of

His Divine Grace
Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda
Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj

And all the Devotees of Śrī Chaitanya Sārawat Maṭh
with its branches world-wide

On the completion of the second and final part
of Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj's First World Tour—21st February 1993.

Places visited:

First part: Singapore, Australia, Hawaii, California, Florida, Mexico, Venezuela, London, and Ireland.

Second part: Singapore, Malaysia, Mauritius, and South Africa.

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The Sevaite-President-Acharya,
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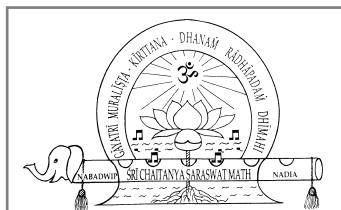
Printed in India, 1993

Edited by: Mahananda Das Bhakti Rañjan

With special mention to many. In particular:

His Holiness Sripad Bhakti Ananda Sagar Maharaj
for the articles in Part II and the Appendices

His Holiness Sripad Bhakti Svarupa Tridandi Maharaj
and Sripad Cidananda Das Brahmachari
for their assistance with Chapter 3
and Sripad Sutasrava Das Adhikari
for the first two articles in Part I



Published by:

Sri Rasabdhi Brahmachari,
Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math,
Kolerganj,
Post Office: Nabadwip,
District: Nadia,
West Bengal, Pin 741302, India
Website: <http://www.scsmath.com>

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Part I
from the
World Tour, First Leg

— 1 —

Divine Benevolence Abroad

An interview with Śrī Mohanānanda Dāsa Adhikārī,

coordinator of the first World Tour of
Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj

Interviewer (Q): Please tell us something about Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj's tour and his plans.

Śrī Mohanānanda Prabhu (A): Plans have been formulated and they change accordingly everywhere we go. But one thing is certain: the desires of the devotees have been fulfilled very much. I can see it in their faces. And it is reciprocal—you can see it in Śrīla Mahārāj's face too, how happy he is. We are now in the San Jose, America, part of the tour, and just about halfway done. The energy count will be a bit low, but he is really stimulated each time he sees the devotees. We are all pros at travelling but he hasn't travelled around the world before, so he's adjusting accordingly,

and he is an expert adjuster. He only needs to be told once, or observe once, and he'll take it perfectly.

(Q): Have you seen His Divine Grace change during the tour?

(A): Physically he's put on a bit of weight because the food has been not only tasteful, but nourishing. We Westerners know that living on a Western diet you don't have to eat much because the food is nourishing and potent. Even small quantities will be nourishing. But the devotees' desire is to give Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj a try of everything at one time; and Mahārāj's desire is to fulfil the wishes of the devotees, so he's trying everything at one time. As a result he's putting on a bit of weight, but that's also necessary

because he's doing a lot of work. He's constantly working, but the work of travelling is a different kind of work than sitting at a desk writing a book or walking around the grounds of Nabadwīp. He's 63 years old and he leaves me for dead—and I'm 20 years his junior. When we walk he takes giant strides and I have to run just to keep up with him, and everyone thinks *I'm* quick! When he is on the go he is super fast.

(Q): What were Śrīla Mahārāj's expectations on this tour?

(A): Actually this tour was organised for one reason only—for His Divine Grace to see his friends and 'family': all of his disciples and those who are spiritually related to him in one way or another. That includes all of Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāj's disciples also. We are basically all of the same family tree; just different branches, if you like. So he is just coming to see all of his well-wishers and his friends. The reason he felt the need to come to the Western part of the world is because he considered that, whereas in Nabadwīp we can come one-by-one to him from all other parts, for many reasons not all Westerners can go there. Now the economy is in a slump and people can't afford to go, and those who can afford to go may not like the conditions. Some are too sick to travel, and others can't travel because of illegal status: Mexicans in America, and others in Australia. They're all over, trying to make a living. They don't understand bureaucracy and boundaries, and they cannot go to Nabadwīp and see Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj. Still others can't travel because the husband can go but the wife can't, or vice-versa. So Śrīla Govinda

Mahārāj felt a need to go to see all of these people and give them some of that mercy that he and only he has. Because, as you can see from the faces of the devotees, all he has to do is just look at them, and they melt like hot butter. So he came for that purpose, just to see the devotees.

The preaching side of the mission developed as we progressed. You can't stop that. People want to ask questions. People want to hear *Kṛṣṇa-kathā* or they want to know about this or that pastime or what Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāj and Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj were really like. And Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj is merciful—he is talking to everybody. He tries to answer everyone's questions in detail, with such person-to-person intimacy that you'd have to be a very insensitive person not to pick that up. He is really very intimate and very direct. He may talk to your eyes, but actually it is directly to your heart. Wherever people may be from, and from whatever *saṃpradāya* or whatever ideas they may have, I've not seen one person who's met him and not felt absolutely satisfied. Whether they are writers or Sanskrit *pandits*, or whoever they may be or think they may be, Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj satisfies them fully. They keep coming back for more. They can't get enough!

(Q): Is it because they are building a temple in Australia that he was inspired to go there?

(A): Not exactly a temple. The intentions originally were to build a temple, then when Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj came he explained that to run a temple means you have to have full-time commitments. You have to think about it in terms of

generations. You don't think about only now. If you're going to have Deities, then you have to seriously consider how many generations can worship those Deities. They are not just dressed-up dolls. And when the devotees heard this directly from Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj, then their conception changed a little.

We will have a nice ashram for the *brahmacārīs* and visiting *sannyāsīs*, where those who want to take full-on practices and full doses of the good medicine can go. For those who just want to take medicine in small doses or want to come and get together, then we'll have a *kīrtan* hall. We'll build a nice *mandir*, where everyone can come. There will be a photo of the Deities of the Nabadwīp Maṭh, and there will be our *Paramparā* photographs. We'll chant, break bread together—take some *Prasādam*—and everyone will be happy. We can come together in the name of our Guru Mahārāj, Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, and be happy. What we are doing is taking association, which is what Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj wants. The devotees are together taking association and trying to preach to other people the glories of Mahā-prabhu's message, and trying to get them to see that there is a right path in this difficult world. And if you follow the right path, good.

(Q): We have the experience in San Jose that devotees have become surcharged since Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj arrived. Has this been the experience in every city he's been to?

(A): Absolutely. Even more so. The enthusiasm I see is a sweetness that comes from the heart. It cannot be disguised.

It cannot be manufactured. It just comes from the heart. You can't stop it. It is like an overflowing river—you try to dam it but it is useless, the stones are going to be ripped apart. If Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj stayed here for one month, all of Los Angeles would be coming here. San Jose would become the second largest city in America. And it is the same in Australia. People started coming out from everywhere like ants out of woodwork, coming from everywhere.

(Q): Devotees that you hadn't seen for many years?

(A): For donkey's years! You can't imagine. Never mind they came; they didn't want to go home. We suddenly had to find accommodation for all of them. Of course a lot of pre-planning didn't take off because while a lot of devotees desired to see Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj come, another side of them told them, "It's not possible, it won't happen." They heard this many times. Even up to two or three weeks before the tour was actually going to take off, there was a lot of pessimism that, "As a matter of fact, it might not happen." But when they heard that Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj was actually on the plane and off to Australia, then it was action-stations: "All men on board; let's get to work. We've got to get this thing together." And everybody's ears pricked up, all woke up, dusted off the cobwebs of their spiritual bodies, and just kept coming.

(Q): The question on everyone's mind is: "Is this the only trip Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj is going to take, or does he feel inspired to make more trips?"

(A): If anybody thinks this is his only tour, then they really haven't realised

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how much the devotees have pleased Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj. Śrīla Mahārāj will travel. He'll travel probably more now and for longer periods than before. Because now he's seen and knows how to travel basically by himself, except for the immigration forms which will take him just a short while to do, he won't be travelling with such a large party next time. Naturally they don't need an expensive porter like myself to tag along, for a start. And Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj has seen what the devotees can prepare in the way of his personal *Prasādam* and needs. So where we can economise, we will. Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj is very conscious of how the money the devotees give is spent. Every dollar in Nabadwīp he has accounted for. And you're a tax man, Hāsyapriya Prabhu—you know how difficult it is to keep a constant check. But Śrīla Mahārāj can account for everything right to the last cent.

(Q): What are Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj's aspirations for the mission?

(A): What Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj would really like more than anything else is constant association among the devotees. That is, forget about your personalities for a moment; forget about your petty differences. Forget about what other *sampradāyas* and other people are doing. Get on with your devotional life. Get on with meeting with each other. If you can get together for *Vaiṣṇava-saṅga* as often as possible, that is nourishment for each one of you. That is most important. Chant the glories of the Holy Name, preach to newcomers, and spread the word if you can. But if you can't, then just come together. A few families can meet; you don't all have to meet at one

time. You can have weekly meetings, and if you can be consistent and meet regularly, that would be nice.

I'll give you a perfect example of that. When the Australian ladies' committee was collecting money and sending Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj some money on a monthly or quarterly basis, it wasn't much money, but what really pleased Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj was not the sum that was collected but the fact that these ladies were actually working together. Each time, they took association with each other, and through that they built a bond between each other. And now in Australia—I can truthfully say, and even Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj will support me in this statement—it is very harmonious and very wonderful that the devotees have put all their differences out of the door. Of course, we may occasionally fight with each other, but generally the family in which there are never any fights is a family that is childless. In our family we have happy fights. But we also have happier times when we have a meeting and *Prasādam* together once a week. We have a simple chanting-hall where we're getting together.

You Americans are the masters for marketing anything. Look what you did with the message of Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj. No doubt he was a great personality. He came here, and as Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj always says, although he wasn't the most successful businessman, in the business of Kṛṣṇa consciousness he was the master, and he had the best of everything. Americans came out from everywhere and didn't know anything about Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism, but they were the best marketers. You can

promote the message and that's what we need now. We need people to go out and say, "Yes, Kṛṣṇa consciousness is still alive." The real sweetness of Kṛṣṇa's message is still available, and not just at the airports, but it is available at any time that you desire it. Here in America it is available at the San Jose temple; at the Miami branch of the Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh; in New York, and elsewhere. It is available. It may not be absolutely known to everybody, though, so that's the job for us now: to let other people know. This is what our various newsletters around the world are doing.

(Q): What can we do to attract Śrila Govinda Mahārāj to return?

(A): That's what we're doing now. I can really only answer for Australia in a definite way, and for others I can only give you a glancing preview. In Australia we are definitely trying to attract Śrila Govinda Mahārāj by getting some land immediately. Right now I'm constantly getting calls from the devotees, asking me to find out what kind of land Śrila Govinda Mahārāj wants. Land is much more available there, and certainly at a cheaper price than here, but still the endeavour to do so is available everywhere. On his next trip Śrila Govinda Mahārāj will go to Malaysia, Mauritius, and South Africa—particularly Mauritius, which he has promised to go to for many years. And after that tour, when he returns to Australia he will see a *mandir*, hall and quarters that we're going to build for him, and then he can visit Australia on a regular basis.

(Q): You're talking about a second tour. What will be the tentative itinerary for the second tour of America?

(A): San Jose, definitely next year. Śrila Govinda Mahārāj has promised. In Maui, one gentleman has offered Śrila Govinda Mahārāj 55 acres of land, and the man is not even a disciple—yet another example of our saying about people coming out of the woodwork. *There* is one man who is hungry for some sort of service to Kṛṣṇa. And somebody else whose desire was not true would have grabbed it immediately, but Śrila Govinda Mahārāj always looks at the devotees' needs, and he says, "I shall come back and then we can talk." And if the gentleman still feels the same, which I'm certain he will, then something will develop on the island of Maui, and Śrila Govinda Mahārāj has promised them also that he will come back for two or three weeks.

He has mentioned to me privately that he would like to come to San Jose again, because our time here is not sufficient. We're here for only seven days, and we're visiting two places within 50 kilometres of each other. Śrila Govinda Mahārāj wants to see other parts of America, particularly New York—he's promised Śrīpād Giri Mahārāj that sometime he would like to go there to see the 'Big Apple,' as he calls it.

Also, many devotees want to take initiation from Śrila Govinda Mahārāj and time is not sufficient to initiate them all. Śrila Govinda Mahārāj shall do what he can now, but the desire to give connection and mercy is there constantly. He must come back. But you can make it more inviting for him by saying, "Well Mahārāj, we're getting a temple together. We're meeting every week and doing some service."

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Everybody wants to get connection—and Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj is giving that easily; but not everybody is coming and saying, “Please engage me in service.” I do hear it from some, quietly, but not many are coming up and saying, “Please engage me in service.” But if everyone comes up and receives connection and then engages in service, automatically you will have a temple here, and it will probably be the crowning jewel of the Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Math’s overseas branches.

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj has special affection for many devotees, but great and special affection for devotees connected to the San Jose *Math* because despite all of their trials, tribulations, and difficult circumstances they still go ahead and do their service, and do their service also to the central *Math* in Nabadwīp. That is another thing people musn’t forget. We do our service for our local *Math*, but we must also do our service for the centre. Devotees should go there whenever possible. Everybody should try to go and stay there for six months and spend some time. Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj likes to engage the Westerners in service there. They are happy to be there and they are doing good service. They are doing things which are full of austerities for them in their Westerners’ bodies, but they’re doing it very happily. And Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj feels comfortable when the Westerners are at the *Math*. He feels that his family is all there. If it is only the Indians and Bengalis, then he feels that only half of his children are there. But when all the Westerners are there, he feels happy; then he’s jolly.

(Q): Is there an open invitation for *all* the devotees to visit Nabadwīp and spend time there?

(A): I can say that absolutely wherever he goes Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj continuously makes an open invitation to everyone. You can go there and be his guest if you like, or if you are his disciple, you can go to your father’s house happily. He will very happily nourish you in any way he can, because he likes to serve.

(Q): On Mahārāj’s next tour, what can we do to improve things for his convenience?

(A): In an organisational sense, I can’t see how you could improve things. You are doing the best within the shortest period of time. What is necessary is that we want to try and give him maximum exposure to the devotees and the general public in the minimum amount of time.

(Q): Is there anything else you’d like to express to the devotees world-wide when we publish this interview?

(A): I would like them to know how grateful I am to everyone who wrote to me with all their suggestions, and to all for their assistance and their planning. It is not a one-man show—I didn’t do this by myself. Through the grace of Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj, and through the kindness of Śrīpād Sāgar Mahārāj who asked me to take charge of this particular part of the tour in planning, I’m just another cog in the wheel. The only reason the wheel has turned around very nicely without any disruption is because of everybody everywhere. And that means from the person who delivers our *Math*’s publications, to the chief

cook making a buffet meal for all of us—everybody has assisted in every way possible. Everyone has found some engagement, some way to serve, and they are serving the centre as the servant of the servant of the servant. That has been the pleasing thing, to know that we have such a big family and they are participating all over the world.

I tell you, any devotee who wants to go any place in the world now, once we have our mission's branches properly established—wherever they go they will find their brothers, sisters, etc. They are never going to feel alone ever again. Once Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj has finished this tour and established everything nicely, no devotee will be able to say that he's alone. And if he says he's alone, then he is not seeing very clearly, because all around him is his family—everywhere. All he needs to do is get in contact with them in the same kind of service mood as you've all shown in the

presence of Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj.

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj loves every one of us, and if the devotees can come together as a loving, serving family, then a beautiful thing will happen. Whenever strangers will see Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj's disciples they will say, "There go those people. They are Govinda Mahārāj's disciples. They are so harmonious and so loving to each other. They are a nice bunch. We should get to know these people," instead of, "There goes such-and-such person's disciples. All they're doing is just gossiping and speculating, and back-stabbing each other the first chance they get." We don't want to hear such things, for it burns our ears. All we want to hear are sweet things. "There goes Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj's disciple; there goes Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj's disciple. They are so nice, and so loving to each other. Let's try to arrange something with them so that we can gain their association."



— 2 —

Universal Grace

The following address was given at the Lauden Nelson Center,
in Santa Cruz, California, on June 30, 1992

by

His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj

**om ajñāna-timirāndhasya
jñānāñjana-śalākayā
cakṣur unmilitam yena
tasmai śri-gurave namah

vāñchā-kalpatarubhyas'ca
kṛpā-sindhubhya eva ca
patitānām pāvanebhyo
vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namah

namo mahā-vadānyāya
krṣṇa-prema-pradāya te
krṣṇāya krṣṇa caitanya-
nāmne gaura-tviṣe namah**

Respected devotees, my dear God-brothers and sisters, honourable gentlemen and ladies, by your mercy I have come here for meeting with you all, and I want to spend some time with you to speak about Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I am not so learned and especially I am very poor in English, but you have much affection for me and you are always my well-wishers, so I shall try to express something about Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Why have I come here to the West? Previously, a great general in the line of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Prabhupāda, felt a great necessity to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness, especially in the Western world. He could not wait to do that, and as soon as

possible he tried to come. And he came alone. But what is that feeling he had? Actually what did he want to do, and why? My connection also is with that consciousness, and I can say it is the topmost necessity for the conditioned souls. One who can understand this cannot tolerate living without giving something of that consciousness. That was Śrīla Prabhupāda's position. He was always feeling compassion for the conditioned souls who are suffering so much in this mundane world. Conditioned souls cannot understand what is good for their real life, their eternal life. That feeling brought him to the West. No doubt, his Gurudeva, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākur, ordered him to preach in the West, but Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākur gave that order to all the devotees also.

The feeling to do good for others was deeply in the heart of Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj. He had no money and not so much experience, but he had eagerness, affection, and a full, good heart. With a full, good heart, he could not tolerate the deficiency of knowledge and Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the *jīva*-souls, and he tried as soon as possible to come to the West. He tried so hard to give Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and during the first year

he suffered in many ways, but his eagerness and his deep feelings gave success to his preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

He started alone, but—*eko 'ham bahu syām*—“I, the One, became many.” This is an aphorism of the *Upaniṣads*. Bhagavān, the Supreme Lord, was alone first and then He became many, and with His heart of Love He manifested Himself in millions of Forms. Similarly, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj, whose heart was filled with Divine Love, wanted to distribute Kṛṣṇa consciousness. His feeling was that it was an extreme necessity for the conditioned souls, and if they didn’t get it, what would they take? And in which way would they live?

Actually he was very disturbed and could not understand why the conditioned souls were running around in the illusory environment. His feeling was very strong. He wanted to give something, and he gave it first in the Western world.

I have come to meet with you all—my friends and your families. I have received mercy from you, therefore I can come. ‘Mercy’ means your affection. Affection has attracted me to meet with you, and this affection has grown through Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Otherwise, I live in India and you live in America—we live so far apart. But attachment, attraction and affection have all grown through Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and thus I have a chance to come here and meet with you. What can I give to you? You have all material things. But Kṛṣṇa consciousness has no end. We can only start and we can only proceed, but we will find that there is no end. It is infinite. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is infinite.

There are several kinds of Relationships in Service to Kṛṣṇa, and feelings are also infinite there. Our connection with the Infinite is always giving us that infinite position. And our service mood will also always work infinitely in that Infinite World. That is Goloka Vṛndāvana. Some may consider the ultimate plane to be Paravyoma or Vaikunṭha, but the underlying necessity is to practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and that is our life’s goal. Our real form is transcendental, not destructible, and there is much possibility to get a position in the Service World. We have that type of possibility and form. If, in any way, any auspicious soul can connect us with that Transcendental World, we will get everything there. This feeling was in the heart of Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj. He tried in many ways to begin his mission in India, but lastly he thought, “My place is in the West, and I can try to do something there.”

All religions are always showing us something. Some are showing heaven, some are showing Vaikunṭha, and some are showing Goloka. But all religions are trying to take us upwards, not downwards. That is the nature of religion.

Everybody has some eagerness to know what Indian religion is. But actually religion is not for India and not for America; religion is for the *jīva*-soul. *Jīva*-souls have permanent existence which is thinking, feeling, and willing, and *jīva*-souls are eternal. They have the Religion of Service to Kṛṣṇa, their Lord, and service to the Transcendental Plane. There we find all happiness, all ecstasy, all beauty, charm, and Divine Love. Whatever we want in this mundane world within our conditioned position—

beyond that, in the Transcendental World, that Divine Love is always waiting for us, waiting to embrace us. That is the actual position, and one who can understand this cannot live without giving that gift to others. That is Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Once we wake up and get connected with that consciousness, we can never leave it. We must proceed stage after stage up to Vrajadhām, Goloka Vṛndāvana. That is the Religion of all the *jīva*-souls.

Many auspicious *mahātmas*, or great religious teachers, come from time to time, and their goal is to try to take us up over this illusory environment. Some religions want to take us to heaven, some religions want to take us to Brahmaloka, some want to take us to Vaikuṇṭhaloka—all of them want to take us to a higher level. But ultimately all the Scriptures and the very intimate servitors of Kṛṣṇa come down into this mundane world to show us our highest life's goal, which is Service to our Divine Lover, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. One who has that feeling will surely give us connection with Kṛṣṇaloka. That is the nature of the *sādhu*. *Sādhus* do not want to enjoy anything, but they are always trying to give enjoyment to others—not mundane enjoyment, but transcendental joyfulness, happiness, ecstasy. The description of Kṛṣṇaloka or Goloka Vṛndāvana is very nicely given in *Brahma-saṁhitā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and other Scriptures that are trying to give Divine Knowledge to us and trying to make us qualified servitors in that Divine Plane.

So I have come to meet with you all not for any mundane enjoyment or for

giving or taking anything mundane. You are my Godbrothers, Godsisters, and spiritual relatives.

Actually the *ātmā*, the soul, is coming from a vast power, and we are part of that. In that way, we are all relatives. When a particular *sādhu* came from India and addressed the people, "Brothers and sisters of America...", everybody was charmed to hear it. We really are all brothers and sisters related with each other in a higher way, and everybody has some existence with a relationship to each other in their eternal form—that is *caitanya-jīvātmā*—and everybody has a service relationship with our Divine Lover, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In that way we are all related. We must try to help each other to progress in the line of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and then we will easily proceed to our destination. That is the advice of the Scriptures.

In this way, I need your association. You are giving me much affection, but not for mundane enjoyment, and not for taking or giving something mundane. By your association perhaps I can give some hope to you all to try to proceed to your destination. I can say what is your own property, what is the wealth of your soul. I must try to help you, and you also can give me hope and encouragement for that Transcendental Service. That is my hope. You have many things in this mundane world, but the real necessity is the mood of practising Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That has no end, and it is increasing in an ever more beautiful way. With heartfelt energy you please try to proceed, and you can preach this Kṛṣṇa consciousness to others for their benefit. I shall try to help in that way,

and if you have any questions about Kṛṣṇa consciousness, I will try to give an answer.

My English is very poor, so I cannot give a formal lecture. It is very difficult for me to give that. But it is very easy for me to give answers about Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I have received some mercy from my Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj, and for a long time I am connected with their movement. Also, it is my duty to everybody. If I can help you to feel satisfied in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then I must feel satisfaction in my service. So if you have any questions you can ask them, and I shall be very happy.

Question: We became attracted to Kṛṣṇa consciousness by a great soul, but sometimes we may not go fully, all the way. What can help us to continue to the goal without leaving it halfway?

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj: This is a very good question. Thank you for your attentive question. It is not only your question, it is the question of all of us. We surrendered unto the Lotus Feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and tried to proceed to our destination, but many obstructions are coming in our life, and we are feeling many disturbances, thus it seems that we cannot proceed to our full destination. There are two factors: one, if we surrender fully to the Lotus Feet of Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa will see us. That is one hundred percent certain. In the Scriptures it is said,

**sakṛd eva prapanno yas
tavāsmīti ca yācate
abhayam sarvvadā tasmai
dadāmy etad vrataṁ mama**
(Śrī Śrī Prapanna-jīvanāmr̄tam 9.4)

Lord Rāmachandra said this about Bibhīṣaṇa. Everyone wanted to oust Bibhīṣaṇa. Bibhīṣaṇa was the brother of Rāvaṇa, and Rāvaṇa was the enemy of Rāmachandra, so everybody thought that Bibhīṣaṇa must have come as a spy. But Rāmachandra said, “Maybe he is a spy; maybe not. But since he took shelter of Me, I must protect him, and I must give him assurance that he will not be ousted.”

So when we took shelter, whether there was any deficiency in us or not will be the first question. Otherwise, in the middle of the way, why are we leaving Kṛṣṇa consciousness? Many may leave and stop practising, or somehow some disturbance may come to them. But what is the process to leave or oust that disturbance? The process is here: Kṛṣṇa Himself says,

**satāṁ prasangān mama vīryya-saṁvidō¹
bhavanti hṛt-karṇa-rasāyanāḥ kathāḥ
taj joṣanād āśv-apavarga-vartmani
śraddhā-ratir bhaktir anukramiṣyati**

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.25.25)

What we need are good friends and association, then we can proceed happily. And the other factor is that if our surrender is perfect, then from the upper level faith will come to us and protect us. If someone is fully surrendered to Kṛṣṇa in His form as Guru or *sādhbu*, then Kṛṣṇa will certainly protect him. He must protect him. But it is also sometimes a factor of time as to when Kṛṣṇa will accept that devotee or how much time He will spend for him. But we should not feel hopeless because of that. When the time actually comes we shall surely understand. It may be a very

short time—just in front of us—or maybe a long, long time. But what is time? Maybe a few births can also come and go in that time, but that is also a very meagre thing. In relation to infinite time it is most insignificant. From Kṛṣṇa we get our hope, and this is a one hundred percent assurance. But while we are waiting for that position of liberation from this mundane environment, and when we want to proceed to our destination, this is when the association of Kṛṣṇa's devotees will be most helpful. Such association can give relief and nourishment to our mind and soul.

Lord Kapiladeva told His mother, Devahūti, "Mother, please don't worry. You are a woman and have no ability to read the *Vedas*, and you cannot practise *yoga* and so forth, but don't worry. I am always satisfied with My servitors who are engaged twenty-four hours a day in My Service. You just try to get their association. Through their association your practising life will happily progress." That means with *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam*, *vandanam*, etc. The Lord says, "If you hear from My servitors about Me, and in their association you happily chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra** and My Glories, you will get much nourishment for your practising spiritual life. Then, ultimately you will get strong, firm devotion, and strong attachment to My Transcendental Form." It is necessary for the practitioners to get real *sādhu-saṅga*, association of the real saints.

It is possible to get *sādhu-saṅga* in two ways: from *śāstra-bhāgavata* (the holy books), and *bhakta-bhāgavata*

(the saintly persons). When there is no saint—when we do not find a real *sādhu* and his association—at that time we can take help from the holy books. In this age, that will be very helpful for the practitioner. Our Guru Mahārāj and Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj have both given many holy books for our practising life's instruction. If we read those books, we will get much strength and nourishment, and we can proceed very happily to our destination.

So if a living *sādhu* is not in front of me, I must try to read his books. And another thing we can do is take the direct association of Kṛṣṇa—that is, by way of His Holy Name. That is the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra*. This method is only for this age of Kali-yuga. It is not for other ages. In Kali-yuga it gives a very good chance to the conditioned souls. Kṛṣṇa Himself appears in His Name, in the form of the *Mahāmantra*. The Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra* and Kṛṣṇa are nondifferent. All the Scriptures teach this to us.

The Name and the Person are the same. They are both transcendental and eternal. Then if we try to chant that Holy Name with faith and respect and without offence*, then we must get the direct association of Kṛṣṇa, also our mood of service to Kṛṣṇa will increase.

So these three methods are immediately in front of us. If we can get all three, that is very good; but in any case we must serve the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra*, chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, and try to get His holy association. And for our practising life, if we cannot get the association of a holy

*See Appendix II

*See Appendix III

person, a *sādhu*, then we can still read the holy books. This is the hopeful process to reach our destination.

Question: When Śrīla Prabhupāda came to the West, he distributed Kṛṣṇa consciousness in a very broad and free way. Over the years, many of us have developed what might be considered not very good habits, such as putting pictures of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa on the wall without offering any worship to Them; saying “*Haribol*” without any reverence, etc. Should we in the West now try to make a change in our attitude?

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj: If Śrīla Prabhupāda would have immediately given what he wanted to establish in the West, everyone would not have been able to digest it. In a very broad way, Śrīla Prabhupāda tried to distribute Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the West. He selected a process when he gave Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and he gave some conditions. “You want to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa? Will you follow four directives?” “Yes.” So he gave you the *Mantra* and instructed, “You must chant sixteen rounds, and you must follow the four directives. If you want to live the life of a *brahmacārī* you can stay in the *Math*, or if you like you can stay in the *Math* in *grhastha* form.” That chance he also gave. He knew the Western world’s activities, in which way it was going, and the West and India are not the same. Indian culture and Western culture are very different. In India, in meetings, ladies are always seated on one side, and gents on the other side. But it is not like that in the West. Here in America, and in

Australia, I see everywhere so many ladies driving cars—not only cars, but big, big trucks as well. Easily they are driving, and with a very free mind. They have a culture in which everybody is giving respect to everybody. I have seen it in Australia especially. We were standing in the road, and a lady was going by in a car very fast. Although she did not know us, and we did not know her, still she gave us some attention and some honour.

Anyway, the cultures of India and the United States are not the same, also the lifestyles are not the same. Prabhupāda considered: “If I try to give them the Indian way, they will not be able to take it.” So he gave some method whereby you must follow the four directives. The four prohibited acts here are very common. Everybody is drinking liquor. Maybe those who have some disease don’t, but everybody else does. Father, mother, wife, sons, and daughters—all are drinking something at the same dinner table. And for mixing of the sexes, everybody has freedom; they can mix almost without restriction. There is so much freedom in the West, and when Prabhupāda saw that, he decided to establish the four directives. He thought, “If they can follow these, they will become advanced in the line of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

Regarding the sixteen rounds, he considered: “They do not know about *Kṛṣṇa-nāma*, *Hari-nāma*.” So he said, “You first practise chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare, Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma*

*No gambling; no intoxication; no illicit sex; and no meat eating.

Hare Hare. Practise! Practise! Then, you will understand what is behind that."

When I first heard that *Mantra* in my youth, I was very small, only twelve years old at that time. I did not know Sanskrit, but the *Mantra* is manifest in the Sanskrit language. *Brāhmaṇas* may give *mantras* for meditation, but if asked the meaning of the *mantra*, they generally reply, "It is not necessary to know. Just meditate on what I have told you, and the *mantra* will reveal the meaning in your heart." That was their advice. And it is true for the *Mahāmantra* that it is transcendental, and He will be revealed in our hearts.

Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj advised everyone, "Chanting sixteen rounds daily is the minimum amount of chanting. But in this way the habit will come to you to chant. First you will get that habit, then your practising life will become very easy. And when the searching tendency grows in your heart, you must try to search out what it is, and you will receive help from the upper level. That is the main process." Prabhupāda did not always tell everything to everybody, but he did ask everyone, "Will you follow the four directives?" "Yes, sir." "You will chant Hare Kṛṣṇa?" "Yes." "Very nice. Now here—take these beads and go on chanting sixteen rounds daily." In this way he engaged everyone.

Kṛṣṇa is very merciful. He does not just look at the devotee's external activities. Kṛṣṇa wants the heart of the devotee. He wants to see if there is love and affection along with the service for Him. Kṛṣṇa wants *that*. He is not looking to see if you are American or you are Indian. Kṛṣṇa does not want to know where

you were born in this world. Kṛṣṇa only wants your love, your affection, and your attachment for Him with full faith and sincerity. And wherever He finds it, Kṛṣṇa will give His mercy. But it is not always coming through the practising process. The practising process will only help us. If I say, "Haribol, Haribol," an outsider will also see me, and he will imitate, saying "Haribol." In that way, some *samskāra* (acquired tendency or notion) will come to them.

There is practically no comparison between Western and Eastern *samskāra*, but you have the right to practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and they have the right to practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is completely separate from all cultures and customs. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the only necessity for the *jīva*-souls. Prabhupāda tried to give that to the Western world.

There are many differences we see between Indian and Western cultures. I remember one devotee who was connected with Kṛṣṇa consciousness for fifteen years. He is a disciple of Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj. When he met with me in Nabadwīp, he had a bag with him and he requested, "Mahārāj, I shall go to Calcutta for three or four days; can I keep my bag in your room?" I told him, "Yes, Prabhu, you can." So he kept his bag in my room. I left, and I did not see where he put it. Then when I came back, I saw that he had placed it near the door. I noticed one pair of big shoes just inside his bag. Suddenly it came in my mind, "Is there anything holy inside the bag?" So I took out the shoes and I saw the *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*, and the *Bhagavad-gītā* also. Then I became

puzzled, and I took it this way: I apologised to Kṛṣṇa, “He does not know what is what. You please forgive his offences, and forgive my offence for not preventing this from happening.”

After four or five days that boy came back, and I said to him, “Oh Prabhu, what have you done? You kept your shoes upon the *Bhāgavatam* and *Gītā*. That is very bad.” But he replied, “No, Mahārāj, I have not kept my shoes in my bag. Somebody else put them there.” I said, “No, Prabhu, nobody else is coming in my room, only you came. Nobody touches anything in my room. Everything is kept here in a very methodical way. Only I know what is where, and nobody ever touches anything. You have done this.” But he very strongly denied it, “No, Mahārāj, I could not have done that. I have been practising Kṛṣṇa consciousness for fifteen years. I know what is what. I could never do that!” Lastly, because he has so much affection for me, and he thought I was angry with him, he began to cry. While he was crying, I embraced him.

I told him, “Prabhu, I believe you have not done it. You are saying that you have not done it, and I believe you. Now be happy! Don’t cry.” Hearing this, he was very happy and stopped crying. He then wanted to show his respect and affection for me, so he fell down to offer *dandavat pranāms*, full *dandavats*. But at that time he was chanting on his beads. So where would he keep his beads? He is expert—fifteen years in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. But immediately he put his chanting beads on top of his shoes! Therefore by this example you can understand what is *samskāra*.

He put his beads right on top of the big, big shoes. He was thinking, “This is the highest place. If I put them on the ground, that is offensive, so some higher place is necessary.” Seeing that his shoes were higher, he put his beads there.

I told him, “Oh Prabhu, what have you done? Don’t do this.” Then he was *very* upset. And he said, “Oh Mahārāj, I am a *mleccha*. Forgive my offences. I do not know what is what. Please forgive my offences.”

Then again I embraced him and told him, “Who am I? Kṛṣṇa will surely forgive you. Kṛṣṇa knows what is what. You have much affection for Kṛṣṇa consciousness; that is your qualification, and that is the highest qualification. Kṛṣṇa is not seeing where you are putting the *Tulasī* beads, but I *must* see, because I am cultured by Indian philosophy. But Indian philosophy or Western philosophy will not give liberation, and they will not give Devotion. Actual Devotion and liberation will come from the heart. And that heart you have. So don’t worry, Prabhu.” Then I embraced him again and I told him one *śloka* from the Scriptures:

**murkho vadati viṣṇāya
dhiro vadati viṣṇave
ubhayos tu samam punyam
bhāvagrāhi janārddanah**

(*Śrī Chaitanya Bhāgavata*, Ādi 11.108)

Kṛṣṇa is enjoying the mood of devotion, and not anything of this mundane plane. And there are two processes of practising life. One type completely tries to follow the directives of the *Vedas*, but does not know their actual meaning. All the rules, regulations and directives

of the *Vedas* are taking us to the mood of Devotion. And Kṛṣṇa is very merciful to one who has the mood of Devotion. But one who has no mood of Devotion can do anything, however holy it may appear, but Kṛṣṇa will not recognise it.

I explained the meaning of that *śloka* to him, and he was very happy. I also told him, “Never do this again. It is offensive, but not for you. It is offensive for me; that is, I know it is not good. You do not know. Therefore Kṛṣṇa will forgive you, but He will not forgive me if I allow it. Kṛṣṇa knows that I am familiar with, and accustomed to, the proper habits from my childhood, but you are not habituated in this way. You are thinking that shoes are higher than the ground, so you kept your beads upon the shoes. In that way you are very innocent.”

Sometimes a small baby passes stool on his mother's lap while she is eating, but the mother does not cast the baby off her lap. The mother cleanses the baby and gives it much attention and nourishment. So Kṛṣṇa is like our mother and our father. Kṛṣṇa is always very affectionate and merciful. He has much love, and we have tiny love. He is always searching for the *jīva*-soul and thinking, “When will he come home?”

Kṛṣṇa gives the *jīva*-souls their freedom, and He will not take back that freedom. With freedom the *jīvas* can finish their material existence through Divine Service to Kṛṣṇa. And for that He gives them freedom. But He is expecting service, expecting love. He has much love, and He wants to reciprocate with the *jīva*-souls. Therefore Kṛṣṇa will not see any bad in us. We just need the heart-

felt desire to serve Kṛṣṇa, then Kṛṣṇa will see only that.

We must try to follow some rules and regulations, and that is good, but it is not the all-essential thing. It is essential for the peace of society. Śrīla Guru Mahārāj said that the system of *varṇāśrama* is ‘proper adjustment with the environment’ and ‘sympathetic dealings with nature.’ That is *varṇāśrama*. We need sympathetic dealings with nature, ourselves, and others. But even if we cannot do that, Kṛṣṇa will never be angry or throw us out if He sees that we have the proper mood of devotion and service. That is the answer, Prabhu, to your question.

Question: How should we picture Kṛṣṇa in our mind while chanting? And how should we see ourselves in relation to Him so that we can remain Kṛṣṇa conscious?

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj: Once, when Śrīla Guru Mahārāj was giving *Hari-nāma-dīkṣā* to someone, they asked, “What should we think about when we chant Hare Kṛṣṇa?” Guru Mahārāj said, “It is not necessary to think of anything. You should just know that the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra* is a transcendental *Mantra*. If you can give proper nourishment to yourself and to that *Mantra*, He can be revealed to you in your heart. Proper nourishment means that you must avoid the ten kinds of offences. And during your chanting time, you must pray to the Holy Name, ‘O Hare! O Kṛṣṇa! Please be revealed in my heart.’”

The *Mantra* is couched as a calling unto the Lord. *Hare Kṛṣṇa* means Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, but it is not necessary for you to know a literal meaning. You only

need to know that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and He appears in this mundane world in the form of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra*. He can appear in the heart of each of us with His full Form; He has that capacity. Kṛṣṇa's Holy Name is nondifferent from Him, so I shall only pray to the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra*, "Please appear in my heart, and dance on my tongue." It is not necessary to think about anything else. This lesson we learned from Śrīla Guru Mahārāj. You are living within the mundane world so your tongue is also mundane, and a mundane thing cannot chant the Transcendental Name.

**ataḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi
na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ
sevomukhe hi jihvādau
svayam eva sphuraty adah**

Kṛṣṇa's Name, Kṛṣṇa's Form, Kṛṣṇa's Qualities, and Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes—all are transcendental, but we are living with mundane consciousness in the mundane world. Here we cannot properly chant *Kṛṣṇa-nāma*. It is not possible. Mundane and transcendental cannot mix, but the mundane may be transformed in contact with the transcendental. And we must pray to Kṛṣṇa: "Please make me transcendental and show Your Form in my heart and dance on my tongue. That is my prayer." When Kṛṣṇa will reveal Himself in our heart, then we can feel, we can see—we can become transcendental. This was Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's answer.

Question: I was in a park, and a devotee gave me a book from which I learned the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra*. I began to chant and feel detachment from the

world, but I never received any instructions or authorisation to chant by any higher Vaiṣṇava. Now I think I may be making offences. What shall I do? What is the proper way to go?

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj: The proper way is that you have somehow gained some divine connection, and that is by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. You are attracted to chant *Kṛṣṇa-nāma*, so inspiration is coming to you from the upper level and giving you some light.

An incident happened in the life of Dhruva Mahārāj, who also had no Guru. His mother told him, "If you want the wealth for which you are seeking, go to Lakṣmīpati—Nārāyaṇa, Viṣṇu. Try to satisfy Him." So he went to the jungle. He did not know how to perform *tapasyā* (penance) and he did not know what is what, but because his mother told him, "Just try to meditate on Nārāyaṇa," he tried to do that with faith and determination. He became absorbed in thinking, "I must try to satisfy Nārāyaṇa." In that way he tried to meditate, and Nārāyaṇa, who has His existence within everybody's heart, immediately understood what Dhruva wanted. At that time He told Nārada Muni, "Nārada, this boy wants My connection, but it is only possible through the proper channel, and you are the proper channel for him." That is Disciplic Succession; we consider this the proper channel. The *Mantra* comes down through heart-to-heart transmission, and in that way it is manifest in the heart of a devotee. Some special mercy may always be available, and somebody can get that. Still, it is also necessary to accept a direct connection with the

Transcendental World, and that is coming in the line of Disciplic Succession. This is the advice of the Scriptures. So Nārāyaṇa said to Nārada, "Go and initiate him with the *Mantra*." Therefore Nārada initiated Dhruva Mahārāj, and through that *Mantra* Dhruva received the *darśana* (he beheld the Divine Form) of Nārāyaṇa.

Nārāyaṇa does not want to break His own rule. When one feels attachment and attraction to the Holy Name within one's mind, that is certainly not offensive, but it will be offensive if you do not know the proper process to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra*. There are ten kinds of offences, and it is necessary to receive the *Mantra* from a proper channel. You can read the *Mantra* in a book or you can hear it from anybody, but that will not be very effective. Still, some effect must be there. Anybody can hear it and he will be affected. That is called *nāmābhāsa*, the hazy Name. That *ābhāsa* can come to you. The Holy Name is never inauspicious; it is a very auspicious thing, no doubt. But it is necessary to connect with a qualified person who will give you the transcendental seeds of that *Mantra*, and also give you advice on how to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.

I can advise you to avoid the ten kinds of offences, and that will be very fruitful for you. But it is necessary to take advice. A teacher is always necessary, whether we reach a very junior class, a senior class, or a higher class. Even if we want to eat something, there also a teacher is necessary. Guidance is *always* necessary! Guidance is always good for everyone; this is the answer.

Question: I would like to see a centre for Kṛṣṇa consciousness develop in Santa Cruz, but there seem to be two camps: the camp of Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj, and the camp of ISKCON. Do you have any suggestions how to bring these two camps together?

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj: I have come here without any sectarian campaign. I am living within that consciousness where my instructors, my Gurus, are playing freely. And both of them—Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj and Śrīla Bhaktivedanta Swāmī Mahārāj—are my Gurus. Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj is my Instructor Guru and my *Dikṣā*-Guru (Initiating Guru). And Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāj, by the mercy of Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj, is also my Instructing Guru. So I only want to practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I have no party feelings. I do not know who is living in this party, and who is living in that party, who is living in India, and who is living in America. I have no differentiating mind. We want to practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness—this is what we have received from Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākur. This is our Preceptorial Line. In that Line, I am so fortunate to have two Gurus, and many others also. But two are super-instructors and Gurus, and I am trying to follow their directives and their process. I am preaching this to my friends and to whoever has some faith in me. My process is to preach, and not to say that this Prabhu or that person is better.

The process is humility, tolerance, and giving honour to others. This process was given by Mahāprabhu. You know that *śloka*, the third *śloka* of the *Śikṣā-*
stakam. The proper chanting qualification

is that you must be humble—humility must be your property; you must be tolerant, and you must give all honour to others. Through these three things, one can easily avoid *Vaiṣṇava-aparādha*. *Vaiṣṇava-aparādha* is the greatest obstruction to chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra*. The *Mahāmantra* is coming from the upper level, and through the Vaiṣṇavas it is coming down. Through the *Pañcatattva*—Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya, Prabhu Nityānanda, Śrī Adwaita, Śrī Gadādhara, and Śrīvāsa Ṭhākur—the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra* is distributed in this mundane world. But if you make any offence to Them, the *Mahāmantra* will not be happy with you, and He will not manifest Himself in your heart. Mahāprabhu said we must avoid *Vaiṣṇava-aparādha*, and also the other nine kinds of offences to *Harināma*. Very easily we can avoid them.

What is necessary, nose or breath? If we have no nose, it may be tolerable, but if we cannot breathe we shall die. What is our life? Our life is for practising Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That is what we need. For every *jīva*-soul, the most important thing is that we need to practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness. What our identification is—that is not so important. Whether someone is Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj's disciple or Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāj's disciple is not so important.

The important thing is we need to practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness under the guidance of a good Vaiṣṇava who has the aforementioned three qualifications; who has developed real feelings about Kṛṣṇa consciousness; and who is expert at giving us Transcendental Knowledge about Śrī Kṛṣṇa. We must invite his

association into our life. We will always try to get good association. A devotee may be in ISKCON, or he may be in Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj's *Māṭh*, but what is important for me is *sādbhu-saṅga*, and wherever there is a *sādbhu*, I shall try to get his association. A *sādbhu* will not differentiate between this camp or that camp. He will differentiate between the levels of devotion. Wherever there is pure devotion, he will be attracted there.

My business is like that. I want to make everybody my friend and well-wisher, not my enemy. This has always been my tendency since childhood. I always bow down to everybody. I shall not make any offence to any Vaiṣṇava. Even if a devotee is not in our *Sampradāya*—he may be in the Rāmānuja *Sampradāya* or any other Vaiṣṇava *Sampradāya*—but I am afraid to make any offence to him.

There is no question about ISKCON. If anybody has that type of feeling, that party spirit, then I must ask him to leave that feeling. Avoid that type of mentality, and come and chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra* which was given by Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, or given by Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāj. They did not want to make a sectarian party, so why are we eager to make a party? We want to harmonise with everything. So we can easily harmonise both of their societies.

But ‘society’ means many people. People have many faults, many difficulties. The ego is the worst enemy for everybody. We must avoid false ego. What will I lose if I give honour to others? If I am humble and tolerant, all good qualities will come to me. Mahāprabhu

said that with this qualification we shall try to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, and then we will gain real feeling for that transcendental *Harināma Mahāmantra*. The Holy Name is nondifferent from Kṛṣṇa, so it is a good practice not to think in the line of party spirit. It is our life's goal to practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness without offence to *Harināma*; and wherever that is possible, we are slaves of that place.

What is our life's goal? And what am I here for? If I can do something good for others, then I shall feel that my mission is successful. Otherwise, so much money is being spent, and that money came through the energy of the devotees. I shall not be happy if my mission is not successful. And what is my mission? To meet with my friends and their families. And if I get the chance to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then I shall try to preach in an independent way. That is my mood. I shall be very happy if by my association anybody will feel inspired to proceed in the line of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Even if it is only one man, then still I shall be very happy. Then I will feel that my mission is successful.

We all need to practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and whichever way it is possible, we shall try to follow in that line. Many missions are going in the line of party spirit. Sometimes they are doing good, and sometimes they are doing many wrong things. Actually, we have no line in that sense. But what is our life's goal—we must first keep that, and then without disturbance to the environment and others, we can proceed. It is necessary to see the goal. And if it is possible to make everything harmonious,

then that is very good. That will give us more inspiration, and that will give us more attachment and attraction for each other. That would be very good, but actually it is very difficult to do. I can control my own ego, and maybe I can control a few of my friends' egos, but I cannot control everybody's ego. And because our ego is our worst enemy, it is questionable how much total harmony is possible.

Another consideration is that Kṛṣṇa does not want to give *Prema-bhakti* to just anybody. Kṛṣṇa wants to give *mukti*, liberation, but He does not want to give *Bhakti*, Devotion, indiscriminately. Even though His devotee is freely distributing the seeds of *Bhakti*, Kṛṣṇa sometimes tries to avoid that because He becomes controlled by one who becomes His devotee.

So a reaction may come to the mind of the general seeker in such a way that he may leave Kṛṣṇa consciousness. But we must go on practising Kṛṣṇa consciousness even though Kṛṣṇa may not want to give it, because if a devotee wants to give it, then Kṛṣṇa cannot do anything. However, when the devotee is no longer present, Kṛṣṇa may try to hide it. Kṛṣṇa is not foolish! Kṛṣṇa may sometimes try to avoid freely giving out consciousness of Him. That is the nature of spiritual transactions.

In the Scriptures it is said, *muktīm dadāti karhicit sma na bhakti-yogam*. This is the reason why there is some disturbance coming in every society. When a devotee wants to leave, Kṛṣṇa feels that He has no right to check that. Devotees randomly distribute Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but after that, one must

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practise. The devotee who gave you the seed will not come and practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness for you. Then in the practitioner's life there may be some fault, and Kṛṣṇa may be avoiding him. Faults are coming, and the practitioners are going away from the track. Then the examination is failed, and one is disqualified. When boys run in a race, everyone has a lane to stay in. And if anyone goes out of his own lane, he is disqualified. But with the proper help from the genuine Vaiṣṇavas, we will always remain on the right path.

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj always tried to harmonise everything. The whole Gauḍīya Mission, and the heads of other missions, came to him from time to time and took advice from him—even his enemy group. ‘Enemy’ means those who were abusing him. On one occasion one person who was the head of an opposition camp, came to see Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, and Guru Mahārāj asked him, “Why are you coming to see me? You are living in an opposite camp.” And that person replied, “Mahārāj, you are

not a party man. Your strong common sense, super intelligence, and disinterested (detached) nature always attract me and this is why I am coming to see you. Talking with you, I always feel very happy. That is why I am coming to you.”

I am a disciple of that Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj, and I have also grown with that consciousness. I am feeling everybody is my friend. And if they are not my friend, then I want to make them my friend. I do not want to have any enemies.

I have many friends in the ISKCON society, and some of them are very good friends. In Śrīla Guru Mahārāj’s Godbrothers’ societies and my own Godbrothers’ societies, many devotees are very affectionate to me, and actually I am living by their mercy. They are affectionate and merciful, and when I am getting their affection and mercy, I am thinking that my practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness must go on in a happy way. So, following in the footsteps of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, I am trying to harmonise with everything. That is my mood.



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Demolishing Pillars of Ego

A Lecture given on the Island of Maui, Hawaii,

by

His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj

Why have I come here to the West? Many times I have thought about it. The devotees have spent much money for my World Tour. I do not know how much they have spent, but I am thinking that for me it is far too much. However, I must give something to my friends, to my Godbrothers, to the devotees and sincere seekers. I must give something, but what shall I give? I can only give a connection, and sometimes I can rectify.

If anyone has any questions, or if anyone has any deficiency or any doubts about Kṛṣṇa consciousness, I shall try to remove these. I will try to give some nourishment to them, and I also will get some mercy from them—that is my wealth, and that is why I have come out from Nabadwīp.

I know what is the position of Guru. Guru is not *laghu*, light. The Guru never has a light position. But I am very tiny, and a conditioned soul, so in which way will I give advice to others? However it is my good fortune that I have that type of *sevā*. It is very hard *sevā*, and it is very hard to continue it, actually.

It is hard in this way. First, we must prevent ego from coming to attack. Ego is a very bad thing for the practitioner. In the Scriptures we see:

**ahaṅkāra-nivṛttānāṁ
keśavo nahi dūragah
ahaṅkāra-yutānāṁ hi
madhye parvvata-rāśayah**
(*Brhma-vaiwartta Purāṇa*)

The position of Kṛṣṇa is that He is very near and dear to everyone of us, but why are we not feeling His presence within our heart? What is the cause? We must try to search the cause. We have received the *Harināma Mahāmantra* from a great Guru, but how much actual progress are we making? This is necessary to consider.

A schoolboy receives every week or every month a progress report which he shows to his guardians, "This is my progress report." Similarly twenty-four hours pass every day, but what is our progress report in Kṛṣṇa consciousness? This we must realise. We have a grand Guru, Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, and a grand Guru, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj; they are world-wide Gurus, and we have gained a connection with them. We are so fortunate no doubt, but what seed have they given to us? And have we planted it properly or not? Is it showing its form and glory or not? It is present in our heart, but it is necessary to realise how

much it is showing itself. We can say that this is one kind of self realisation.

In this way it is as a reminder of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj that we are meeting here, also we can discuss together how much progress we have made in the line of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If we have not progressed so much, where is the deficiency? It is necessary to know. The Scriptures say that Kṛṣṇa is living within the heart of everyone and in all the environment. The Scriptures also say that it is possible to see Kṛṣṇa; He is present everywhere. But why can we not see His presence within our heart always?

One very big obstruction to seeing Kṛṣṇa is ego. We have freedom; everybody has freedom, and through freedom ego is growing. But in one way freedom is very good. I shall give an example. I have freedom of my tongue. I have a tongue, and that tongue can taste many opulent things. It can taste many opulent types of *Prasāda* such as sweets and honey. But it is also within the freedom of my tongue to always taste bitter things.

Kṛṣṇa has given the tongue, and all the senses, for service to Him, but at present we are not using them for that. We are eager to make ourselves like pillars of ego, thus preventing ourselves from making much progress. It is necessary to remove the ego from between ourselves and Kṛṣṇa. Ego is in between us, and it works in a very bad way. We must remove it. But ‘ego’ means what?

What does everyone need? Everyone needs some position—everywhere we see it. But it is necessary to know what is our *actual* position, otherwise we cannot understand Kṛṣṇa conscious-

ness. If such enquiring feelings do not arise within us, then Kṛṣṇa consciousness actually is not possible.

Mahāprabhu is Himself Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, and what did He say? He appears in this mundane world for our supreme benefit no doubt, but He has some interest to taste the Supreme Devotional Mood. He wants to taste in which way it is playing between Kṛṣṇa and the devotees.

**sei rādhāra bhāva lañā caitanyāvatāra
yuga-dharmma nāma-prema kaila
paracāra**

(*Chaitanya-caritāmṛta*
Ādi-līlā 4.220)

Kṛṣṇa is very beautiful, ‘Reality the Beautiful.’ That is the Form of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa’s beauty is such that no other incarnation can compete with Him.

**sarvādbhuta-camatkāra-
līlā-kallola-vāridhiḥ
atulya-madhura-prema-
māṇḍita-priya-māṇḍalah**

(*Chaitanya-caritāmṛta*
Madhya-līlā 23.82)

Kṛṣṇa is playing with the *Gopīs*, and there everything is automatically serving the whole environment. The Play of Kṛṣṇa is going on there like waves in the ocean. Full happiness and full joyfulness are present. It is full of Divine Love, ecstasy and nectar. In the *Līlā* of Kṛṣṇa those waves are always playing.

Kṛṣṇa lives with such loving souls who always try to serve Him in every way with their full energy. The Kṛṣṇa conception is full-fledged theism, and they are using their full energy in serving Him. They are always playing with Kṛṣṇa within the four types of *Rasas*.

Demolishing Pillars of Ego

Somebody feels, "I am the servant of the servants of the servant of Kṛṣṇa."

Someone else feels, "Kṛṣṇa is my friend. Kṛṣṇa and myself, we are equals. We shall play together in the playing ground." Such a person will join with others to take Kṛṣṇa out from His house and go to a grass field or within a cave. They have the form of cowherd boys and they play with Kṛṣṇa in many ways.

Others think, "Kṛṣṇa is my son," and they show much affection in the mood of *Vātsalya-rasa*. And others are in the supreme *Rasa*, *Madhura-rasa*: the Ecstatic Divine Relationship of Consorthood and Paramour Love.

Kṛṣṇa is not born from the womb of other ladies, but each of them are thinking, "Kṛṣṇa is my son." Even the cows are thinking, "Kṛṣṇa is my son!"

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* we can see that all the *Rasas* are playing in a very ecstatic and joyful way in Vṛndāvana. Divine Love is always playing there.

trijagan-mānasākarṣi-
muralī-kala-kūjitaḥ
asamānordhva-rūpa-śrī-
vismāpita-carācarah

(*Chaitanya-caritāmṛta*
Madhya-līlā 23.83)

Kṛṣṇa plays His flute, and everybody keeps contacted through that sound. When Kṛṣṇa plays His flute, Mother Yaśodā and other ladies with maternal feelings towards Him think, "Kṛṣṇa is hungry. He wants to take some food and nourishment." And the cowherd boyfriends of Kṛṣṇa think, "Oh, Kṛṣṇa wants to play with us, now we shall go! Kṛṣṇa is playing His flute and calling us." In this way the flute always keeps connection

with the whole of that environment.

If suddenly the sound of His flute overflows from that plane and goes everywhere, everyone becomes puzzled, like Brahmā. He thinks, "This is not my sound! I am the creator of the whole universe but this is not my sound. Where has this sound come from?"

Anantadeva has the form of a snake, and on his head the planets are present. It is described that this entire universe is upon his head, but when that huge Anantadeva heard the overflowing of that Divine Sound, He also was puzzled.

The whole universe becomes puzzled to try to understand from where this sound is coming. And not just our universe, but all the universes. That sound sometimes comes to other universes also, just like lightning which sometimes flashes through the sky, illuminating it for a moment.

But Kṛṣṇa is just playing. Kṛṣṇa doesn't know, and He has no time to know, who He is. He is always intoxicated with the devotees' love, and in a loving way He always plays in Vraja-dhāma, Vṛndāvana. That is His position.
Atulya-madhura-prema-maṇḍita-priya-mandalah.

His transcendental land is such that service is always going on there, and we are connected in that line. Śrila Guru Mahārāj gives a very nice example of how we are connected with that world: our connection is through the telescopic system. We cannot see how many stars are present in the sky; we cannot see them either in the day-time or the night-time. But through a telescope we can see many stars and planets; and a powerful telescope can show us even more.

Transcendental knowledge comes down through the telescopic system of the Guru-*paramparā*. Actually that plane is our home, and we have shelter there, but only through service and hankering can we enter. Through the mood of hankering and the mood of service we can go to that plane. And that plane is transcendental and infinite.

Kṛṣṇa can appear anywhere and everywhere at any time. It is possible by His will. We cannot control that. If an ant runs on the floor in front of me, he does not know I am sitting here, but if I touch the ant, he can understand, "Something is touching me." But that touch depends on my will, not his. I can withdraw my finger and the ant will no longer feel anything. In a similar way transcendental knowledge comes down in this mundane world; but all is dependent upon the will of that infinite world.

You have read in one of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's books that someone questioned him: "If the finite can understand the Infinite, then how can He be Infinite?" But Śrīla Guru Mahārāj answered, "If the Infinite cannot make Himself known to the finite, then He is not Infinite!"

The Infinite has the absolute right to do everything, therefore He can show Himself also. We may be very tiny souls but He can show Himself to us, but that depends upon His will, and we need to attract His will. His 'will' means His mercy. We can only try to attract His mercy, otherwise it is not possible.

We cannot go directly to the King. If we want to go to the King we must first make some petition and identify ourselves and our wish. Our petition will be taken by an officer, then it will be

passed on to someone else, then another. In this way our identity will become known and when our petition will win approval, only then can we meet with the King. This is the procedure, and it is found everywhere, not only for meeting the King. It also applies if we want to see the Prime Minister, or any minister or official. Similarly, if we want to join in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness line it is necessary to follow a proper line of approach. Śrīla Guru Mahārāj called it the 'proper channel.' If we come through the proper channel we can easily go to that transcendental world, and then we will be able to see what is going on there. From here we cannot understand, but it is possible for the transcendental world to appear within our heart.

In which way will we actually get Kṛṣṇa consciousness?

**ataḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi
na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ
sevonmukhe hi jihvādau
svayam eva sphuraty adah**

We cannot chant pure *Kṛṣṇa-nāma*, so in which way shall we chant? The Scriptures and saints all say that *Kṛṣṇa-nāma* and Kṛṣṇa are non-different, His body is a transcendental body, His playing ground is a transcendental playground, and when He appears in the Form of *Harināma* that also must be transcendental. So how with this mundane tongue can we chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra*?

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Na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ. *Indriya* means the senses: the tongue, eyes, ears, nose and skin. We have these five senses, and through them we can feel. But our senses are all mundane

senses, so in which way will we chant and feel the transcendental *Harināma*? It is not possible by anything mundane, but if we gain a transcendental seed of *Harināma*, and if we can plant and nurture it in a proper way, then it will appear in our heart. When He appears I shall only be able to see Him through transcendental senses, so my senses will be transformed in this way, and through those senses I shall be able to see the play of *Harināma*.

Śrīman Mahāprabhu said that *Harināma* Himself will appear within your heart, and when He will appear, you will then be able to feel His presence. You will be able to feel joyfulness, happiness and a living ecstasy. You will feel everything.

First we need a connection with the proper channel, then it is necessary to plant that within our heart. We have received that seed from a grand Guru, then it is up to us to plant it nicely. The ball is now in our own court; and whether someone can score a goal or not depends on their own capacity.

Capacity comes to us through the process of humility, tolerance and giving honour to others. Mahāprabhu expressed that mainly ‘capacity’ means that without offence we are to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra*. If we are able to chant in this way, the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra* must appear within our heart. The ten kinds of offences are dangerous things*.

The main obstruction is ego. If we cannot first remove the ego then in which way can we chant? Therefore we must follow the four advices given to us

by Śrīman Mahāprabhu, then the ego will go out, and other obstructions will go out also. His advice is:

**trnād api sunicena
taror api sahiṣṇunā,
amāninā mānadena
kīrttaniyāḥ sadā hariḥ**

“One who knows himself as more insignificant than a blade of grass, who is as forbearing as a tree, and who gives due honour to others without desiring it for himself, is qualified to sing the glories of Lord Hari constantly.”

First of all it is necessary to feel who we actually are and what our position is, then the ego cannot come, and we must be humble. *Taror api sahiṣṇunā* means to be tolerant, like a tree. If you cut the branch of a tree he will not protest, and cannot protest also. Everything depends upon your will, but the tree treats you as his friend. If you cut his branches, next year he will still give fruit to you. He will not stop his benevolence.

In which way does the tendency to be an enemy come in this world? Everyone feels the need to have some position, and each have the tendency to make all others lower than themselves: that is ego. But if we give honour to everyone, even to those who have no honour, they must be pleased with us. Therefore if we can make ourselves very humble, tolerant and in the mood of giving honour to others—not only by mouth, but actually by our nature—then the enemy tendency will not come from any other side. Everyone will become our friend, and if we give honour to

*See Appendix III

everyone, then no possibility will arise to make offence to the Vaiṣṇavas. It is very difficult to know who is a Vaiṣṇava and who is not. We do not have that type of capacity, so in which way shall we decide? Therefore it is necessary to always give honour to everyone.

Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj generally instructed, “Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and follow the four directives. Your duty is to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa without offence. In this way you will get everything. And read the books. Why? It is necessary to read the Scriptures in order to make yourself good, but it is not permitted to read all the Scriptures.”

It is not permitted because we may not be able to understand the content properly:

**yāha, bhāgavata pada vaiṣṇavera sthāne
ekānta āśraya kara caitanya-carane**

(*Chaitanya-caritāmṛta*
Antya-līlā 5.131)

“If you want to read the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, go to the Vaiṣṇava who knows its real meaning. In front of him you are to read the *Bhāgavatam*, and in that way you will gain some proper understanding, otherwise you will not be able to understand.”

I can read Bengali, and there is a translation of *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* in Bengali, then why did Śrīla Guru Mahārāj instruct me, “You go to Swāmī Mahārāj and read *Bhagavad-gītā* from him”? There is a reason for that. Śrīla Guru Mahārāj explained, “By this process you will not go in the wrong way. Rather, your understanding must develop in the proper way.” The *Bhagavad-gītā* was the first of our books that I read.

[A child comes and makes an offering to Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj and draws his attention.]

Seeing how the young children are coming and making offerings, and seeing how enlightened and attracted they are by Kṛṣṇa consciousness, I am thinking this is all the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. I am moved to see it. These small boys are very enthusiastic to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra*, and it is not only as a formality, but it is coming from their heart. It is genuine. They do not know about this mundane world and many things, but with the association of their fathers, mothers and other devotees, they feel much inspiration to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra*.

They are so innocent. Sometimes we mention something to them to make them conform to customs, “Oh, this is not good, this is not the behaviour of a good Vaiṣṇava...,” but who are we to tell them like that? We must also show them humility, tolerance and honour.

But ‘humility and tolerance’ does not mean that if anybody kicks my Guru Mahārāj’s photo, or in front of me kicks a Vaiṣṇava, that I shall tolerate such actions. This is not the actual meaning.

We must have tolerance of mind for anything against ourselves. If, however, we see too much disturbance, our first duty is to take ourselves as well as our dependents away from that place. We must leave such association. In this way it is necessary to protect ourselves and the children. At the same time the children must always receive some good inspiration, and I am seeing in the Western world that they are getting that.

I was in Australia, and seeing the mood of all the devotees and children, I was stunned. They are so enlightened with Kṛṣṇa consciousness and so devoted. They gave me some photographs of us all together, and if you will see them you will be happy to notice how nicely they are chanting the *Mahāmantra* and how enlightened they are with Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Actually it is all the property of our Gurudeva.

Now that chair of Guru has come to me. What is my practice? It is that my Guru has ordered me, "Do this....," therefore I am doing it. But if any ego will come to me, then I will fall down, no doubt: "Oh, I am a grand Guru! Why are you not giving respect to me?" I have seen many examples of this. It is no joking matter.

For forty-two years I was with Śrīla Guru Mahārāj. I did not go anywhere without his service, but all the Gurus came to Śrīla Guru Mahārāj. So it is my fortune that I have seen many things in their dealings and how they gave constant honour to others. Some of that mood I have also gained from them.

Whenever they came to the *Math* they would always give honour to one another very nicely. Also my Śrīla Guru Mahārāj right up to his last days expressed, "I am a student, I am not a master. You are also students. You are all my friends, and students; and I am feeling I am also a student." I have received that teaching from my Guru Mahārāj, and I cannot forget it. I am a student. I am his servants' servant, and I am trying to serve his devotees.

I have come out from India to serve the devotees. I have come by the will

of the devotees for the service to the devotees, and to give help to whoever has the devotional mood. I have come to help the sincere seekers who have eagerness for Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I shall try to help them.

If a blind man cannot cross the road, what shall I do? I shall take his hand and help him: "Oh, come, you can cross the road now." In this way it is help to others.

**om ajñāna-timirāndhasya
jñānāñjana-śalākayā
cakṣur unmilitam yena
tasmai śri-gurave namah**

All the conditioned souls are blind actually. They can neither see the Form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa nor the world of His transcendental affairs. They cannot see, so in this sense they are blind. They are searching, "Where is my property? Where is my property?" It is their property, but they cannot see it. The following example is given in *Śrī Chaitanya-caritāmṛta*.

"You are the full proprietor of a large wealth but, even though it is within your own home, you do not know where it is hidden. You do not know that it is hidden within you. In searching for it, if you go to the western side, if you go to the southern side, or if you go to the northern side, you will be cheated. You can also dig a deep well, but you won't find any wealth there either. But if you go to the east corner of your house and dig there, you will find it." This example is given, and the expert who knows that, will show you: "Your wealth is within you. Try to get it in this particular way." Following him, you must be successful.

Śrīṇantu viśve amṛtasya putrāḥ.
 “We are all sons of nectar, sons of the nectarean ocean.” Therefore it is necessary for everyone to discover that wealth, and to find out that it is within, it is in our own heart. And it will be very helpful for us if anyone can show in which way we can easily discover it. This is Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

When you give knowledge of one’s wealth to someone, he will adjust his own activities in order to try to discover it—he will develop the proper devotional mood.

**śravaṇam kīrttanam viṣṇoh
 smaraṇam pāda-sevanam
 arccanam vandanam dāsyam
 sakhyam ātma-nivedanam
 iti pūṁśarpitā viṣṇau
 bhaktiś cen nava-lakṣaṇā
 kriyeta bhagavaty addha
 tan manye ‘dhītam uttamam**

First is *śravanam*, hearing, and if you can listen very attentively, then you can chant—*kīrttanam*. Then comes *smaraṇam*, *pāda-sevanam*, *arccanam*, *vandanam*, *dāsyam*, *sakhyam* and *ātma-nivedanam*. These are the nine principal kinds of practising processes, and you will try to do them. They give nourishment to the *bhakti-latā*, the creeper of *bhakti*, the creeper of devotion. You must try to grow that creeper within your heart.

Question: Śrīla Mahārāj, you mentioned how Śrīla Guru Mahārāj asked you to read *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* under the guidance of Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj and that this process would keep you on the right track. Please could you explain this further.

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj: Yes, I can help to explain it through the following example. When a railway carriage runs along the main track it must not deviate to another track or become derailed. So Śrīla Guru Mahārāj said, “When I am not here, you read *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* from Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj. Stay on the track!” That was his advice, rather his order. At that time he did not give advice to us; his order was sufficient!

Since the day of my joining the *Math* I have seen many things by the mercy of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj. I have also gained many friends, and they are all very good Vaiṣṇavas.

Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj was a very great Vaiṣṇava, and when he expressed, “Govinda Mahārāj is my son,” it is not a light thing. At that time he was a grand world Guru. In the meeting for the opening of the Māyāpur Chandroday Mandir in 1973, he also told the gathering that he considered myself as his son, and Śrīla Śridhar Mahārāj as his *Śikṣā-Guru*. In the opening meeting of his Temple he expressed it. I consider this as one kind of honour for me, and it is a high fortune, otherwise I would not get this type of honour. But I know that I am a very tiny and fallen soul, and I always feel it.

When Śrīla Guru Mahārāj wanted to give his chair to me I was very afraid to take it. I did not want to be a Guru. Actually I have some previous brahminical experience: I was born in a family of *brāhmaṇas*, and that family was a guru family. My father, grandfather, great-grandfather, etc. were all gurus. Being born in such a family I know what is the position of a Guru. Therefore I was not

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eager to take the position of Guru, and I did not want to play or pretend with others in such matters—that is not my nature. I therefore avoided: “Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, I am a very fallen soul. I cannot be Guru now. You are Guru, please you continue.”

“When will you be Guru?”

“I shall see, later.”

More than thirty years passed in this way. But Śrīla Guru Mahārāj was very knowledgeable in law and he said, “After giving this chair to you if I live for at least two years, then your position will be firm; otherwise some legal disturbances may come.” He explained that if someone gives any property to others as a gift, then according to Indian law it will be secure if he remains alive for at least two more years.

Then Śrīla Guru Mahārāj said, “I shall not stay in this world much longer so you must take it at this time. What I am telling you is my last desire. If you do not take this now, I shall die today. Do you hear that?”

I wanted to wait three months more, so I said, “Mahārāj, I have not managed everything, so please give me three months more time.”

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj replied, “No. You must take *sannyāsa* the day after tomorrow, and at that time you must take the chair of this *Maṭh*. I shall give it to you, and if you say ‘No,’ then I must die today.”

I told Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, “Mahārāj, I am your goat, your sacrificial goat. If you want to cut my tail, or if you want to cut my throat; that is your will. I am ready. When you are telling me this, what shall I do? I am ready for the sacrifice.”

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj immediately called Śrīpād Kṛṣṇa Śaraṇa Prabhu* and instructed him, “Go and bring the priest. The day after tomorrow Govinda Mahārāj will take *sannyāsa* and I shall give all charge to him.”

I was afraid to see the chair of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj. I did not want to be a Guru. It was inconceivable to me, but I could not ignore it. I know what is the Guru’s position, therefore I was afraid.

When Śrīla Guru Mahārāj gave that position to me, from that day on I thought that I must be humble, I must be tolerant, and I must give honour to others. These are the first qualifications I need. I must feel that I am a servant of the servant of the servants of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj.

What is the *sannyāsa* promise, and what is the meaning of the *sannyāsi's tridandā*? The meaning is, “With my body, with my speech and with my mind, I shall serve my Guru. I am promising this, and I am accepting the *tridandā* so that by holding it I shall always be reminded of my service.”

In this way I promised to Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, “I shall serve you with my body, I shall serve you with my mind and I shall serve you with my speech. I shall give this ‘punishment’ to myself. I make this promise in front of you and in front of the sacrificial fire.” That is *tridandā-sannyāsa*. *Sannyāsa* does not mean to be a Guru, actually. But it means, “I must serve you with my full energy. I shall not spend one moment for any other purpose.” That is real *sannyāsa*.

*Who since received *sannyāsa* from Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj—and the name ‘Śrīpad Bhakti Prasūn Aranya Mahārāj.’

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is given a description:

**etāṁ sa āsthāya parātma-niṣṭhām
adhyāsitāṁ pūrvvatamair maharśibhiḥ
aham tariṣyāmi duranta-pāram
tamo mukundāṅghri-niṣevayaiva**

“By the service to Kṛṣṇa and the devotees, I must cross over the illusory environment and join the transcendental service world, the plane of dedication. I must join there.” This is the *sannyāsa* promise, and it is the real meaning of *sannyāsa*.

In the present day we see that many *sannyāsīs* are feeling, “I took *sannyāsa*, now everyone will serve me.” But this is not the meaning of *sannyāsa*. Rather, the *sannyāsī* should serve everyone.

Such service may be: “If anyone will try to connect with Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and if I have some seeds of that property, I must give that to him.” If so, then first we must see that whoever wants connection is a sincere seeker. It is necessary to look and see whether he has sincerity and faith, otherwise giving him the seed may destroy me also.

There are ten kinds of *Nāmāparādha*. One of them is that you don’t give advice to chant *Harināma* to one who has no faith. I composed verses about these ten offences. The first one is:

**harināma mahāmantra
sarvva-mantra-sāra
yāñdera karunābale jagate pracāra
sei nāma-parāyaṇa sādhu, mahājana
tāñhādera nindā nā kariha kadācana**

“The Holy Name is chanted all over the world by the power and grace of the saints. They are always absorbed in

chanting the Holy Name. Never abuse them at any time, because that will be an offence to the Name. The Name of Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa Himself are the same, and if you abuse those who are preaching Their glories, the Name will not be happy with you. The Name will not then appear in your heart.”

The ninth *aparādha* is:

**nāme śraddhā-hīna-jana—
vidhātā-vāñcita
tare nāma dāne aparādha suniścita**

“Don’t advise those who have no faith to chant *Harināma*.”

You can notice that faith is necessary everywhere. If you are a follower of Mohammedanism, Christianity, Buddhism or Confucious, the first property of the follower is faith. You must be faithful, then you can enquire further.

The first necessity is to have faith. If someone is faithful and a sincere seeker, I shall try to give help to him, and that will also come to give help to me.

A real Guru always feels, “My disciple is not actually a disciple of myself. He is my Guru appearing in the form of my disciple in order to teach me.” If these feelings will come to a Guru, he is a real Guru. Further, he will feel, “If I shall do anything wrong in front of my disciple he will also do wrong and will not be benefitted by my words; therefore I must try to be perfect.”

Before taking *sannyāsa*, and before taking this chair, I was a very angry person. My nature was that I could not tolerate anything wrong. If anyone told a lie, directly I would chastise him; that was my previous nature. But when Śrīla Guru Mahārāj gave me the service

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of Guru, I left that bad nature. Now I am trying to follow the directives of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, and I am also telling those directives to my friends and to my disciples.

If I am humble, I can say to a boy, "You must be humble!" But if I am not humble, then in which way will he learn humility? If I will not give honour to others, then how will he learn it? Therefore when I have a position as a master, I must serve the disciple, at the same time that will help myself. This is the main and vital thing in the Kṛṣṇa conscious line.

Now we are all to look to see how much progress we have made in our Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It is necessary in any way to make some progress. We have very exalted Gurus in Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj. They are both in the line of Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura who was very broad-hearted. We cannot conceive of how broad-hearted he was.

One day the following incident happened. Śrīla Prabhupāda Sarasvatī Ṭhākura wanted to establish a centre in London. He proposed that a student hostel be constructed where Indians and foreigners can stay. There would then be some chance to give them some nourishment, and some chance to preach to them about Kṛṣṇa consciousness in a very sober way. By this we could gain some friends from the student section in London. Śrīla Prabhupāda expressed that if necessary we can supply them their own type of food—meat—from a restaurant. The main thing is that they will come and that they will try to understand our conception. His point of view

was that if we make a big student home where perhaps one thousand can stay, if ten men will come in the line of Kṛṣṇa consciousness we shall feel ourselves successful. Why? Because it is a very rare thing to come in the line of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It was his proposal that we could gain some affection from the general younger section in this way, and for that, he was prepared to forego our prestige.

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj came from a very exalted brahminical family famous all over India, and earlier he was very attached to brahminical standards. When Śrīla Prabhupāda Sarasvatī Ṭhākura mentioned the possibility of supplying meat, Śrīla Guru Mahārāj was seated there and said to him, "Oh, Śrīla Prabhupāda, our prestige will be lost if we arrange their non-vegetarian food to be brought from a restaurant."

Śrīla Prabhupāda Sarasvatī Ṭhākura replied, "We shall supply everyone with vegetarian food, but if anyone cannot tolerate only vegetarian food, we shall try to supply according to their needs." He showed such a degree of tolerance.

But Śrīla Guru Mahārāj said, "We are Vaiṣṇavas. If we do that, everyone will abuse our mission, and that will not be good."

Śrīla Prabhupāda Sarasvatī Ṭhākura responded, "A thousand births ago I considered this point and decided in this way."

Then Śrīla Prabhupāda Sarasvatī Ṭhākura said something. Upon hearing this, Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's conception became very clear: "Always you must be within *Vaikuṇṭha-vṛtti*. Your mood must be always the full serving mood, then

you can use anything for the service of Kṛṣṇa."

Everything can be used in service to Kṛṣṇa, so why did Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj advise his disciples to follow the four directives, and from where did he get those directives? I shall explain.

These are found in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Actually there are not four, but five, directives given there: *dyūtam*, *pānam*, *striyā*, *śunā* and *jāta-rūpam*. But why did Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj avoid mentioning much about the last, gold?

Money is the main problem for the conditioned souls. They get everything through money: gambling, drinking and intoxication, illicit sex, and killing animals—meat eating. And these are the other four places Kali was given to live in by Mahārāj Parīkṣit.

Gambling, intoxication, illicit sex life and animal slaughter did not exist within the kingdom of Mahārāj Parīkṣit therefore Kali feared for his life. He therefore asked Mahārāj Parīkṣit, "Please allow me to also live where there is money."

The King agreed, "Yes, I am giving that place to you also. You can reside where there is gold—money." In this way Kali stays in five places, therefore actually there are five directives, but Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj did not stress much about the fifth, money. It is necessary to understand why. I can say the reason, and for that I have come here.

Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj always said, "You try to serve Kṛṣṇa in any way. And in any way you can, try to collect money for use in service to Him."

He knew how money was coming for his mission, but he digested all the

sin behind it. He did not express to the unqualified how much sin was in that money, but he digested it all himself. He had such power of digestion.

He did not instruct, "Don't bring money." Instead he advised, "Go for preaching and book distribution. Everywhere money is needed otherwise it is not possible to preach, so also collect money." He stood by that principle and he had the capacity to digest it. That is, he is a *Śaktiyāveśa-avatāra*. He is an incarnation of the power of Nityānanda Prabhu, so he can digest everything.

He said, "Everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa, therefore you are to serve Him in every respect and in every way. You can use everything in the service of Kṛṣṇa." In this way he did not make others feel hopeless.

He knew that it is a very difficult thing to use money, so he took all that charge himself. He ordered, "Do this with the money, and do that. Whatever sinful things will come through that money, I shall take that."

Kṛṣṇa said in *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*,

**yajñārthāt karmmaṇo 'nyatra
loko 'yam karmma-bandhanah
tad-ar�am karmma kaunteya
mukta-saṅgah samācara**

(*Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, 3.9)

If you will try to serve the Lord of *Yajña*, Kṛṣṇa, with your full energy through a real Guru or real Vaiṣṇava, you will not receive any mundane reaction. But if you don't engage in such service, you will receive reaction.

Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj came out from India to the West in order to spread Kṛṣṇa

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consciousness throughout the mundane world, and he knew money to be necessary for that. It is the basis.

He thought: "If I tell my students, 'Don't touch money, Kali is there!' then my preaching programme will be hampered." In the West nobody else was able to preach, so Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj took that preaching responsibility himself. That was his actual desire.

Unlike Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj, our Śrīla Guru Mahārāj continued his preaching in a very small way. He did not want to make his mission very big. He wanted to stay in Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh without going anywhere else. He did not want to construct many buildings. His wish was to have just one building for the Deities, and in a part of that building he wanted one room for his quarters and one room for guests. That was his desire, but when he trained me he expected that I would do some service for the devotees.

Many devotees started to come from

the Eastern, Western, Southern and Northern worlds and Śrīla Guru Mahārāj said, "This mission is now growing very big. You should put some limit to it."

But I was very enthusiastic to see everyone being drawn to Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's teachings and I told Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, "I shall take all the charge, don't you worry. If you give your permission I shall serve them."

He replied, "You do not know English so in which way will you serve them?"

I said, "Mahārāj, by your mercy English will come to me. I shall not go to learn English. By your mercy everything that is necessary will come to me, therefore I am not worried about that."

In this way Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh has grown and by Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's grace and the affection of you all we now have this chance to discuss such topics of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the line of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj even here in Hawaii.



Part II
from the
World Tour, Second Leg

— 4 —

The Eye-Opener

Introducing Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj to a gathering in Mauritius during the second leg of the World Tour.

By
Śrī Adhokṣaja Dāsa Adhikārī

It's a very great opportunity to have in our midst Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj. He represents the *Śrī Rūpānuga Sampradāya* in the whole world today. His Gurudeva, Paramahāmsa Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, is unanimously hailed for his high teachings of the ultimate conclusions of the Scriptures. And we are all truly aware of the great, world-renowned Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāj Prabhupāda who formed the world-wide ISKCON movement. These two great teachers and Svāmījīs both blessed our Guru Mahārāj, Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, to spread the Holy Name around the world.

We also have in our midst Śrīpād Bhakti Ānanda Sāgar Mahārāj. He is highly learned. Apart from English he also knows Hindi, Sanskrit and Bengali, and he can speak each fluently.

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj himself is a master of Sanskrit and Bengali, composing many *ślokas* and songs in these languages.

Now I'll talk about the need for a Spiritual Master.

As our Scriptures we have the *Vedas*. *Veda* means 'to know,' and there our knowledge begins. Spiritual knowledge begins only when we surrender to the Lotus Feet of a Spiritual Master.

Material education such as we have in colleges and universities is, we are

sorry to say, nothing more than progress in ignorance. I also used to be in that tunnel, but the fact is that such education is considered in this way. We can have true knowledge only when we surrender to the Lotus Feet of a Spiritual Master. Real knowledge will make us understand our own self, and God. We will realise our happy position as a servitor, and we will serve accordingly. We will have proper service and we will engage ourselves in proper activities.

We pray in the temples for some spiritual benefit, and in the temples we also read the Scriptures. There it is said that real knowledge of our self is available only at the Lotus Feet of a Spiritual Master.

**tad viddhi pranipātena
paripraśnena sevayā
upadekṣyanti te jñānam
jñāninās tattva-darśināḥ**

(*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.34)

Without surrender we shall not get proper light of who we are, and our service will be nearly null and void; this is mentioned in our *Sāstras*. Lord Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā*, “If you want to have knowledge, this is available only at the Lotus Feet of a Gurudeva.”

For example, there are many educational books, such as books for doctors, but without a qualified teacher, our studies will be in vain. Similarly, matters about spiritual things can be had only at the Lotus Feet of a bona-fide spiritual teacher, a Spiritual Master, and nowhere else. Indeed, this is the advice of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, our Lord, Bhagavān. We should have complete faith in His words.

**ācāryyaṁ māṁ vijāniyān
nāvamanīyeta karhicit
na marttya buddhyāsūyeta
sarvva deva-mayo guruḥ**

(*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.17.27)

Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself glorifies the position of an *Āchāryya*, and says that He Himself comes as the *Āchāryya*. We cannot see Lord Kṛṣṇa, He is spiritual and we are material. But He comes in the form of a Spiritual Master. So, you see, we have the Lord Himself explaining about His own Self, His own wealth.

I won't say more, because our Gurudeva is here and we wish to hear his words. But we can learn everything only from the Lotus Mouth of our Spiritual Master. He is our eye-opener. And by his grace we will have spiritual insight.

Now our Śrīla Gurudeva will speak.



— 5 —
Life's Destination

by
His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj

Honourable teachers, respectable Vaiṣṇavas, and my beloved students, I am feeling very fortunate that you have given me this chance to speak about Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I am especially indebted to the authorities of this college; because of their kindness it was possible for me to meet with you all today.

When I first came here to Mauritius I noticed some very auspicious symptoms. I noticed that the trees are bearing so many fruits, all the earth is very fertile, and all the people are very conscious of religion. I was surprised to see that this country is like a heaven on earth. I saw that many mangoes had fallen from the trees, and many other trees bore ripe papayas and other fruits, yet nobody collected those fruits. Seeing these symptoms immediately inspired me to remember Śrī Vṛndāvana Dhāma. There we find ripe fruits on the trees everywhere, and the souls residing there are full of the mood of service. They are all eternally engaged in the Divine Service of the Supreme Lord. We find such descriptions of Goloka-Vṛndāvana, the Holy Abode of Kṛṣṇa, in *Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā*. This holy book was brought by Śrīman Mahāprabhu from South India, and it is widely accepted by religious

authorities as the authentic treatise depicting the Teachings of Śrīman Mahāprabhu..

**īśvaraḥ paramah kṛṣṇaḥ
sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ
anādir ādir govindah
sarvva-karaṇa-kāraṇam**

(*Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.1)

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Embodiment of Truth, Consciousness and Joy, is Govinda, Kṛṣṇa. He is beginningless, the Origin of all that be, and the Cause of all causes." That is, the actual form of each one of us originates from the *Sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha* of Kṛṣṇa.

All the Vedic Scriptures teach us that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. 'Other gods' also have their own abodes and full powers, but as expansions of the Power of the Infinite Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. If you subtract infinite power from infinite power, you will still remain with infinite power, in a similar way as zero minus zero equals zero.

**om pūrṇam adah pūrṇam idam
pūrṇat pūrṇam udacyate
pūrṇasya pūrṇam ādāya
pūrṇam evāvaśisyate**

A proper examination of the Vedic Scriptures will leave us with no doubt that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Throughout the whole world people are chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra*, and through that we can also have some understanding. In all the Scriptures—the *Vedānta*, *Upaniṣads*, eighteen *Purāṇas*, etc.—everywhere we find chanted the Glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. Still the question arises, ‘What is Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and why should we worship Kṛṣṇa?’

We are in want. We are not fulfilled within ourselves, and for that fulfilment we must worship Kṛṣṇa. What is our want? We need love, we need beauty, we need charm, we need ecstasy, and so on. These are essential for our living soul.

The soul is always in a state of living—the properties of the soul are willing, feeling and thinking. The soul can move, and the *jada*, the material, cannot move. But even within matter, souls are living. Within a tree is living a soul, and this has also been proved by scientists such as Jagadish Bose. But this knowledge is not new; in the ancient *Vedas* we will find all knowledge given in a living way. The knowledge given by the *Vedas* is that behind everything is the living soul, and if we study the *Vedas* we will find this out.

The property of the living soul is willing, feeling and thinking. One who has these properties must necessarily need to do something. He can do good or he can do bad. If he will do good, then good reaction will come to him. And if he will do bad then bad will come to him as his reaction. You have probably heard Newton’s third law which states,

‘To every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.’ Every action has reaction. Therefore we shall try to do good things otherwise we shall not receive any good reaction.

And to get relief from all reaction we are to follow in the line of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. There we can see that if we surrender fully to Kṛṣṇa then everything will go directly into His account. If we can put all our actions in the line of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, reaction will not come to us. This process has been given in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*.

In this gathering you are all students and you all wish to know something about religion, specifically something about Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If you will try to read *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, you must be benefited. Everyone has the chance to improve his future by reading this book whether he is a fruitive worker who needs to do some work, or a knowledge seeker who always must think and gain knowledge, or a yogi wanting to conquer power from the environment, or a *bhakta* who is always surrendered and fully dependant upon the knowledge of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Everyone can gain some good future prospect from reading *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*.

**anāsaktasya viśayān
yathārham upayuñjataḥ
nirbandhaḥ kṛṣṇa-sambandhe
yuktam vairāgyam ucyate**

(Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.255)

The real benefit to be gained is that without mundane attachment we are to engage in service to Kṛṣṇa.

**aśocyān anvaśocas tvam
prajñā-vādāṁś ca bhāṣase
gatāśūn agatāśūṁś ca
nānuśocanti pañditāḥ**

(*Bhagavad-gītā* 2.11)

Kṛṣṇa said to Arjuna, “You are speaking like a wise man, but you are suffering from this material happiness and sadness. You are showing yourself to be knowledgeable in the *Vedas* (*pandit*), but you are not actually following that line.” Then Kṛṣṇa started to give some knowledge of the *Vedas* to Arjuna. He explained that there is a certain plane, and if we can live there, no reaction will come to us.

Kṛṣṇa said,

**niyatāṁ kuru karmaṇa tvam
karmaṇa jyāyo hy akarṇmaṇah
śarīra-yatrāpi ca te
na prasiddhyed akarṇmaṇah**

(*Bhagavad-gītā* 2.8)

“If you do not do anything then you will not get anything. You will not even be able to survive. You must do something, so try to do something good.”

**yajñārthāt karṇmaṇo 'nyatra
loko 'yam karmaṇa-bandhanah
tad-arthaṁ karmaṇa kaunteya
mukta-saṅgaḥ samācara**

(*Bhagavad-gītā* 2.9)

“O Arjuna, this whole world of living beings comes into bondage by all action except action performed as selfless duty offered unto Lord Viṣṇu. Therefore, being free from attachment, fully engage in the performance of action for the purpose of such sacrifice.”

Actually, we need to do something

good even from childhood. This is the knowledge of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Whenever we shall gain any knowledge, we shall try to use that for a good purpose; not only a good purpose, but we shall use it in a way that will be good for everybody. If we will proceed in this way we shall get super benefit in our life as the final result.

When students endeavour for promotion to a higher class, they try heart and soul. But everyone is not able to get the desired result because there may be many types of deficiency. Some may fail in their class, but if we can think that ‘failure is the pillar of success’ then we can get much strength to try and try again. Even in the mundane world we must apply this process.

At first nobody can run. When a very young child tries to run, he must fall down on the ground, but again he tries to run. He falls down, runs, falls down... but gradually he will gain strength and capacity, and finally he will be able to run properly. In this way a *karmmī*, a fruitive worker, has some prospect, *jñānīs* also, yogis also, but the super prospect is with those who are fully surrendered to Kṛṣṇa. By their own freewill they march in the line of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and they will gain the benefit accordingly.

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* we find the advice of Prahlāda Mahārāj to his student classmates.

**kaumāra ācāret prājño
dharmmān bhāgavatān iha
durlabham mānuṣam janma
tad apy adhruvam arthadam**

(*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.6.1)

Benedictine Tree of Divine Aspiration

Prahlāda was a devotee of Lord Nṛsimhadeva. His classmate friends were from 5 to 12 years of age. When he met with them in their teacher's house they would discuss together and he would urge them to enquire about, and practise, spiritual life even from childhood.

We have fortunately gained this human body. We are *jīvas*-souls and we may be given any type of body according to our activities. But now some good previous activities have brought us this human body. In the human body there is very much possibility to learn many things. We have much capacity to learn and realise. Other species such as dogs, cows, etc. only have a very limited power of understanding; just sufficient to try to achieve some basic happiness. Real happiness, however, is not possible in this mundane world, but some realisation is possible.

We use knowledge in many ways to try to gain happiness and a good result. The best thing for the *jīva* is to try to know what is the transcendental world's environment, and his place there. Who am I? Why am I here? What is my destination of life? After death where shall I go? In this human body we can realise the answers to many such questions; and that is called *Bhāgavat-jñāna*, *Bhāgavat-dharma*. If we shall try to read and know about such topics, we must be benefitted.

It is necessary that in this life we try to know what is the super benefit of our human life, and the super benefit of the soul. The soul is actually transcendental, but our body is mortal. The transcendental body is living in the mortal body, whether it be a human body or any

other variety of species.

Actually we are not this body. We are living inside this body. We can understand it when we see a person who is dying. At that time we cannot give him any more days. We can understand that inside the body is the spirit of the person. With the spirit is willing, feeling and thinking, and that is called the *jīva*, the soul. When a man dies, that soul leaves the temporary material body. This is not only Indian philosophy, but in the Western countries also we find famous philosophers such as Hegel who have similar realisations.

We must try to do something good for our self, for our soul. Good is possible through the processes of humility, tolerance, and giving honour to others. We should try to avoid the opposing environment, and in that way we can happily study what is the soul, what is God, and what is the super benefit of this life. Also we shall study about where we have come from, where we shall go, etc. Birth and death is natural in this world, and we are always getting happiness and sadness and many other temporary feelings. We must try to understand all these things.

Prahlāda Mahārāj said,

**kaumāra ācaret prājño
dharmmān bhāgavatān iha
durlabham mānuṣam janma
tad apy adhruvam arthatadam**

(*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.6.1)

We must try to know what is *Bhāgavat-dharma*, and when that steady knowledge comes within us, we shall try to gain the chance through that knowledge to know what is what. If not,

Life's Destination

we shall be losers. Actually it is only in this human body that we can understand properly what is good and what is bad, and if we shall try sincerely we must get that type of knowledge.

What is necessary is sincerity, tolerance, humility and giving honour to others. These four qualities are necessary for everyone. I am very happy to observe that the people here in Mauritius are very enthusiastic and enlightened

with these qualities. Furthermore, their tendency is to be real searchers, and they are practising to do good according to their capacity, while avoiding bad things. I am very happy to see this within this small country.

I am pleased to meet with you all. I do not know how much good I can do for you, but I am with you, and it is my expectation that our attempt must be fruitful for the future.



Reaping the Eternal Fruit

A lecture delivered in Mauritius by
His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj
(Translated from the original Hindi by Śrīpād Bhakti Ānanda Sāgar Mahārāj)

om ajñāna-timirāndhasya
jñānāñjana-śalākayā
cakṣur unmilitam yena
tasmai śri-gurave namah

vāñchā-kalpatarubhyas' ca
kṛpā-sindhubhya eva ca
patitānāṁ pāvanebhyo
vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namah

he kṛṣṇa karuṇā-sindho
dīna-bandho jagat-pate
gopeśa gopikā-kānta
rādhā-kānta namo 'stu te

jayatāṁ suratau pañgor
mama manda-mater gatī
mat-sarvasva-padāmbhojau
rādhā-madana-mohanau

*Jaya Om Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Raksak
Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj kī jaya!*

Jaya samavetā bhakta-vrnda kī jaya!

*All the Eastern and Western devotees
kī jaya!*

All the Mauritius devotees kī jaya!

Gaura-premānande Hari bol!

My dear honourable faithful souls, worshippable Vaiṣṇavas, ladies, gentlemen and beloved children, by your heart's auspicious desire the Supreme Lord has bestowed His mercy upon me so that I could come into your presence today, and am able to have the opportunity to see your auspicious selves and offer my worshipful prayers unto you. After we offer our worshipful prayers to our Divine Master we also realise that the good souls who come and assemble wanting to hear about Kṛṣṇa—they too become worshippable to us.

The Supreme Lord resides within everything that be. We find His Presence everywhere. It is not that the Lord lives only in Vaikuṇṭha or Goloka, although that is His Divine Abode where His Eternal Play goes on. But there are also many Forms of the Supreme Lord.

vadanti tat tattva-vidas
tattvāṁ yaj-jñānam advayam
brahmaeti paramātmeti
bhagavān iti śabdyate
(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.2.11)

We can know about three principal Forms of the Lord from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*—*Brahma*, *Paramātmā* and *Bhagavān*. From a very distant

viewpoint, we may have a very hazy conception of the Lord, and that is called *Brahma*, just as we observe the sun by its blazing light—yet, within the sun itself there is another plane of movement. In the sun there is air, oxygen, fire, and so many elements. But we cannot enter the sun-abode; we can only see an effulgent form from a distance. Similarly, to view the Lord from a great distance means to see only a form of effulgence.

Further, another Form of the Lord is *Paramātmā*. *Paramātmā* resides within all *jīva*-souls. All the souls act in various ways in this world, and the *Paramātmā* is always with them as the Witness. The individual souls by nature are implicated by their actions, but the Lord, with His Transcendental Nature, remains unaffected. Remaining ever-present within the souls, the Lord as *Paramātmā* observes the activities of the souls, or *jīvātmās*. Furthermore, He is also present in every atom of existence; so it is said in the Scriptures that there is no place in creation where the Lord does not preside. When the souls try to enjoy the illusory energy of the Lord—*Māyā*—they abandon their natural inner tendency for service and adopt the nature of an enjoyer. Still, the Lord desires to take even those fallen souls back home to His Divine Abode, known as Paravyomadhāma, Vaikunṭha, or Goloka.

The souls belong to the *tatasthā-sakti*, or Marginal Potency of the Lord. They are not born, but they are manifest by the Will of the Lord. This is accepted in all the Scriptures. When they are thus manifest, they appear in many forms.

Whatever religious forms appear in

the world, whether Christian, Buddhist, Muslim or Hindu, all are one with each other in that the aim of all is to reveal the same objective. The cause of the manifestation of this material world seen from various angles and distances of perception is the reason for different religious conceptions being preached in the world. But the Vedic Religion, or the Teachings given by the *Vedas*, show us that all souls are manifest from the Marginal Potency of the Lord; and from their manifestation, the potencies of thinking, feeling and willing remain with them. Since they possess these potencies, they are therefore units of life, units of consciousness.

It is also shown in this scientific age of exploration of atoms, neutrons and protons, etc., that everything in existence is in a state of movement. Every atom has a certain measurement of other bodies revolving around it. Similarly, in the Vedic Teachings we see that life is present everywhere. With their modern research and studies, the scientists are teaching us these things, but from thousands and thousands of years ago the Vedic Teachings tell us that whatever exists in the world—everything is *cetana*. It is all conscious, living.

Even a cement and brick building is *cetana*. Although at present we do not perceive any movement of the building, in a few hundred years we shall notice that a pillar or other part of the building has dissolved or undergone a reformation. Actually nothing has dissolved, but the internal action of the object has finally made itself visible to us.

The state of *cetana*—consciousness or life—is present everywhere in two

basic forms: *sthāvara* and *jangama*, or stationary and moving. A tree is considered *sthāvara*, or stationary, yet there is life present in the tree. This has been discovered by a Bengali scientist, and it has been demonstrated with scientific instruments that a tree experiences pleasure and pain. So life is present everywhere, and life is called *ātmā*, or soul. In our body millions of life-forms, or souls, are present, but one principle soul guides the entire body as the master of the body, and he is called *dehī* or *ātmā*. In this way, life is present everywhere, and when it shows movement it is called *jangama*, otherwise it is called *sthāvara*. When a soul leaves the body what happens? Within two or three days the body noticeably decays. The body can no longer move—although there is still movement in it by way of its decaying. After only a month or so only bones remain, and they too will later become fossilised. The Observer or Witness of all the actions of the moving souls is the *Paramātmā*. *Paramātmā* is present within everything in existence. This is the Nature of the Form of *Paramātmā*.

Bhagavān is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and by His Nature, His *Līlā*, or Divine Pastimes, continue eternally. In this relative world the *tatasthā-sakti jīva*-souls are bound as though in a prison-house, and this is a relative aspect of the Lord's *Līlā*. In a jail only a very small percentage of the population are found, maybe one percent or less. The normal population are not sent to jail—they reside at their homes and fulfil their works. The evil-doers are sent to jail by the law. The law is for everyone, but the jail is reserved for the violators of the

law. So in the world there may be billions of humans, of which maybe only a few hundred thousand are imprisoned. The rest are free to live and do their business in the world. Similarly, in the Transcendental World, which is known as Paravyomadhāma, all the residents live their lives happily without any obstacles; this plane is also known as *Sevā-bhūmi*, or the Land of Service. There, everyone gives joy to one another. As everyone serves the Supreme Lord, He also serves them—as a son serves his father and a father serves his son. This is similar to what we find in this world where fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters all live happily together.

But what is our work here? Some become husbands, some masters, some servants, etc., but what is their real work? Service. That is everyone's work here. A father accepts service from his sons but he also serves them by rearing and nourishing them. So service is the work of everyone. But in this world that service only remains temporarily and thus cannot afford us real value. If we construct a grand house we think that our son will live there, our daughter will live there, our relatives will live there; we shall have a TV set and live happily there. But soon our lifetime will be over. Somehow or other in the end we shall leave this world, and this must happen to us. Our juniors are also leaving this world. It is not a matter of seniors going and juniors staying, and at every moment we see that in this or that village or town people are going, they are dying one by one....

We have sufficient experience that as soon as one leaves this body he must

leave this world, and no one can live forever within this body. After ten or twenty years, or twenty-five or a hundred years, or two or four months—whatever the time may be, everyone must die. Death is inevitable. As long as there is birth, death is inevitable. So no matter how hard we try, we cannot know happiness here. Today we need money, but is a rich man happy? What is his fate? He may end up with severe stomach trouble and be unable to eat more than a few grains of rice. And one who has beauty cannot be happy either. When his pulse goes wrong he worries why he has become ill, why he has become thin. Today we see that someone has become a great celebrity, but tomorrow he may not have even the power to walk. In this way, the whole world is temporary, and although we are attached to this temporary world we cannot remain here forever.

We cannot claim the house we have built as our own, and our son even won't be able to enjoy it for very long. The money we deposited for our son's welfare may be squandered by him for drugs and other useless or injurious things. One man saves while the other squanders. This is the way of the world.

So all souls have appeared from the Marginal Potency, or *tatasthā-śakti*, of the Lord, and their own home is the vast and infinite Transcendental World, Paravyomadhāma, and they mostly all go there and happily serve the Lord. It is only a small handful of souls like us that cast their glance upon the prison-house of this illusory world of Māyā despite the opportunity to serve in the Transcendental World; from that fateful glance

their misfortune is born. Beyond this we cannot consider any other cause of the *jīva*-souls coming to this world, so we must admit the cause of their coming here is simply their misfortune. When they see Māyā they think, "Here is the object of my enjoyment. I am superior, and that is inferior." Therefore they are attracted to this Māyik, or illusory, plane, which is just like a prison-house.

Still, the Supreme Lord has made all arrangements for taking them back to the Transcendental World. Sometimes when too many disturbances arise He comes here Himself, just as when disturbances arise in a prison, a senior officer or administrator comes personally and fires a few shots here and there to manage the situation. The Supreme Lord descends Personally. He is the Supremely Powerful, so He has no anxiety. When Nārāyaṇa comes from Vaikuṇṭha there is no question of Him 'leaving Vaikuṇṭha empty.' Simply by His Will another Nārāyaṇa can descend here. Also with Him are the Potencies of thinking, feeling and willing, but that Plane is *cetana*, or conscious and living, while this plane is *jada*, mundane or material.

The illusory nature of this plane is also the Potency of the Supreme Lord, but this Potency is like a shadow. Fire has both its form as well as its shadow. The form of fire has its own existence, without which a shadow would not appear. By dint of light, shadow makes its appearance. And we have fallen into this shadow-potency. This is a Potency of the Supreme Lord, and it is also eternal. It will continue on and on. The Divine Pastimes of the Lord—*Lilā*—also go on eternally.

The holy book *Bhagavad-gītā* is now known all over the world. Many will know the famous verse:

**yadā yadā hi dharmmasya
glānir bhavati bhārata
abhyuttānām adharmmasya
tad ātmānām srjāmy aham**

When severe discrepancies in the rules and regulations of religion appear in the world, the Supreme Lord comes personally to set matters right. How? *Paritrāṇāya sādhūnam*. There may be some good souls in this world—of the prisoners in a jail, there may be many who aspire for their own good. To protect them, rescue them from their trials and to take them up, the Lord Himself comes.

**paritrāṇāya sādhūnām
vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām
dharmma-samsthāpanārthāya
sambhavāmi yuge yuge**

So when the Lord comes, all evil disappears just as with the appearance of light, darkness is dispelled. As soon as the Lord appears in the world, all the darkness of the world vanishes. All the *jīva*-souls constantly emanate from the Marginal Potency of the Lord, therefore the illusory world is again filled up, as a jail never stays vacant. When each prisoner's term is up they one by one leave to enjoy their fortune.

We have seen that sometimes when a country attains independence, all its prisoners are released. Sometimes when a president of a nation is changed, for the honour of the new president many prisoners are released. All these things are seen in the world from time to time,

but all these matters are only the shadow of the Original Cause. So when the Supreme Lord appears, so many souls are rescued and leave this world forever. Sometimes He comes Himself and sometimes He sends His representative. The representative is known as the *sādhu* or Guru. He comes here to teach the souls, “*Jīva jāgo jīva jāgo gora cānd bole, koṭā nindrā jāo māyā piśācira kole*—you are all sleeping here! Wake up! Wake up to your real selves! You are transcendental, conscious life, and your home is the Transcendental World of Divine Consciousness and Life. There you will find everything, your house, your home. Please get ready to go there.”

**uttisṭhata, jāgrata,
prāpya varān nibodhata
kṣurasya dhārā niśitā duratyayā
durgām pathas tat kavayo vadanti**

Here, in the *Upaniṣads*, we find the Teachings of the Vedic Philosophy. The Scriptures tell us, “Arise from your slumber in this painful world and have your good fortune! Follow the saints!” They also tell us who we are and what our fortune is: *śṛnvantu viśve amṛtasya putrāḥ*. *Om tat sat*—these words echo all over the universe.

The Transcendental World is Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is Truth, and we are all residents with Him in that Supreme Plane. Our nature is the same as that Transcendental Plane.

The burning power of the sun is also present in the sun's rays. There are also seven primary colours in the sunlight. Similarly, as spiritual rays of the Lord, we are endowed with powers of thinking, feeling and willing. As the

Lord is *Pūrṇa-cetana* or the Supreme Original Conscious Entity, we, the individual souls, are *anucetana*, or atomic particles of consciousness. In the *Śvetāśvatara-paniṣad* the soul is described as being so subtle that it is invisible to the eye:

**bālāgra-śata-bhāgasya
śata-dhā kalpitasya ca
bhāgo jīvah sa vijñeyah
sa cānanyāya kalpate**

The tip of a hair divided ten thousand times is a general estimation of the subtle form of the *jīva*. So he is invisible. But despite his minuteness, his power is great. He resides in the deepest recesses of the heart in such a subtle form, and to date he has never been seen. Nowadays some scientists say they can photograph some hazy shadow aspect of the soul, but still they could not ascertain the infinitesimal form of the soul. As this body is a covering, the soul also has a covering as mentioned in the *Gītā*:

**indriyāṇi parāṇy āhur
indriyebhyah param manah
manasas tu parā buddhir
buddher yah paratas tu sah**

These are all more and more subtle coverings of the soul. More subtle than this bodily type of covering is the covering of the senses; more subtle than the senses is the covering made of the mind; more subtle than that is the intelligence; and more subtle still is the soul—*ātmā*. So the soul resides within so many layers of coverings, and its form is still unknown to us.

Still, even though the soul is infinitesimal in size, it is a particle of conscious

life; and it eternally possesses the potent qualities of conscious life: thinking, feeling and willing. Anything having potency can act—whether with good or bad actions—and such potency of the soul is actually very great. A candle flame may be very tiny, but from such a tiny flame a gigantic fire can be ignited. From the tiny candle a larger candle can be ignited, and a larger one still; and the power of the large candle is of an equal nature to the small one. Their burning power is non-different. Similarly, the *Sat*, *Cit* and *Ānanda*—the Potent Qualities of Eternal Existence, Consciousness and Ecstasy—found in the Original Form of the Supreme Lord are also found within the soul, who is a part (*amśa*) of the Lord. However, at present the soul is covered. Light burns within a lightbulb, but the fire that causes that light cannot be found outside the bulb, although some heat is apparent. There is also cold fire, like neon for example, where even heat seems to be absent. In the microphone there is the invisible fire of electricity doing its work. We cannot perceive that fire, but we see from the results that its work is being accomplished. In this way, the action of power moves in many, many forms. So the potency of the *jīva*-soul can be used for either good or evil. When fortunate souls are ready to use their energy for good, if anyone disturbs them the Lord comes personally and destroys the disturbing elements. Those who want good are good. Thus He has said in the *Gītā*, “I come to protect the saints and to vanquish the evil-doers.” The less good that one wants, the more he is punished, and one who aspires for good is given

a chance by the Lord: "Yes, you want good, so may you be virtuous. Virtue is your own wealth. What shall I take from you? I am full in Myself." In the *Upaniṣads* we find:

**om pūrṇam adah pūrṇam idam
pūrṇat pūrṇam udacyate
pūrṇasya pūrṇam ādāya
pūrṇam evāvaśisyate**

"The Infinite Whole Source of all *Avatāras* and the Infinite Whole *Avatāra*—both are Whole, that is, full with all Potencies. The Infinite Whole *Avatāra* appears from the Infinite Whole Source of all *Avatāras* for the purpose of manifesting His Pastimes. In order to fulfil His Pastimes, the Infinite Whole *Avatāra* accepts His Infinite Whole Form, and finally the Infinite Whole Source of all *Avatāras* remains present; so in no way can the Infinite Completeness of the Supreme Lord ever suffer any diminution."

So if the Infinite Whole is subtracted from the Infinite Whole, the Infinite Whole yet remains. In the Scriptures the Supreme Lord is described as *nija-lābhā-pūrṇa*—He is perfect and complete in Himself. Therefore He feels no necessity for Himself; still, by virtue of His Willing Potency (*icchā-sakti*) His Pastimes go on, and by His Pastimes the fortunate devotee souls offer themselves to Him through Divine Service, and He too serves them and ecstatically gives Himself to them. In that service exchange, the ecstasy that the Lord feels is felt twice as much by His devotees. This is the nature of that Transcendental World, Paravyomadhāma, the Divine Abode of Goloka.

The Lord also has many different Forms, and in each Form He enjoys certain corresponding Pastimes; and the *jīva*-souls can gain the fitness to enter into particular Pastimes according to the classification of their Pure Devotion. The gradations of Ecstatic Divine Relationship are known as *Śānta-*, *Dāsyā-*, *Sakhya-*, *Vātsalya-* and *Madhura-rasas*, or Passive Service, Active Service, Friendship, Parenthood and Consorthood. The pure devotees render Service to the Lord according to the *Rasa* of their inner heart's attraction. We normally speak of 'Service to the Lord,' but we should know that the Lord Himself also serves His devotee. When Kṛṣṇa stole butter Mother Yaśodā chased him with a stick. "Why have you stolen butter? We have no shortage of butter, and you have plenty to eat, so why do you have to steal it?" Then she bound Him with a rope to a tree. In this case the Lord serves His devotee in this mood of dealings as the son of His devotee.

The Relationship of Consorthood takes place between the Lord and the *Gopīs*.

In the Divine Abode, full-fledged Service in the five types of Divine Relationships continues eternally. In the Abode of the Lord's four-armed Nārāyaṇa Form the appropriate Services go on; in the Abode of the Lord's Rāmacandra Form, the appropriate Services go on, as the Lord manifests Himself in those particular Expansions and Forms of different Divine Moods. But we worship Śrī Kṛṣṇachandra with His Eternal Divine Pastimes, because it is in such Form, His most Original Form, that full-fledged Service is manifest in all the

five *Rasas*, and this is the Supreme Ecstasy for the *jīva*-souls. Such ecstasy cannot be experienced anywhere else.

The friends of the Lord say, “Let us play! Whoever is defeated must carry the winner on his shoulders!” When they take a bite from some nice fruit they immediately offer it to the mouth of Kṛṣṇa, saying, “Oh, Brother, this is so tasty—come on, please take some!” All such friendly, familiar dealings are found only in *Kṛṣṇa-līlā* and nowhere else. The *Gopīs* accept Kṛṣṇa as their husband in their thought and actions also. Such Service they render to the Lord. So we have heard about the Lord’s Pastimes and we have heard about His Holy Name, and if we get a connection there, we can have the chance to be allowed into those Pastimes. This is the way of *Bhakti*, and this is called Devotion to the Supreme Personality of Godhead; and He is Kṛṣṇa.

Just see how sweet the Name ‘Kṛṣṇa’ is. ‘Kṛṣṇa’ means ‘He who attracts all the souls to His Abode, and gives them Ecstasy.’ That is Kṛṣṇa.

**kṛṣṇa bhū-vācakah śabdo
naś ca nirvṛti-vācakah
tayor aikyam param brahma
kṛṣṇa ity abhidhiyate**

(*Mahābhārata*)

“The root ‘Kṛṣṇa’ expresses the All-attractive Existence, and the word ‘naś’ expresses the Supreme Ecstasy. The two combined give the Name ‘Kṛṣṇa,’ ascertaining the *Parama Brahma*—the Supreme Absolute Truth, the Godhead.”

He is attracting everyone, yet He never takes away the independence that He has given us. This can be seen as

both the fortune and the misfortune of the *jīva*-souls. The Lord has given independence to all souls—from their very inception they have the potency of thinking, feeling and willing. This independence has been given to us by the Lord. Why? So that by our own desire and free wish we can engage ourselves in His Service. With as much power at our command, as much as we desire, we can combine everything we have and render Divine Service to the Lord.

The Lord’s feeling is, “I have given you independence, and I will not take it back. If you want to serve Me, you may do so; otherwise you can go to Māyā. You may do as you wish. But you will be happy if you render service to Me. Why will you be happy? If you serve the eternal, you will reap the eternal fruit; if you serve the temporal, you must reap the temporary fruit.”

‘To every action there is an equal and opposite reaction,’ as the scientist Newton said in his third law. So Kṛṣṇa is saying, “Do My Service and your service will be done twice as well.” When Kṛṣṇa’s friend is eating a very sweet fruit, he will give that fruit to Kṛṣṇa, “See, Brother, you will like this very much.” Then Kṛṣṇa eats some and says, “Yes, this is excellent, but how shall I eat it alone? You also eat!” Then they both eat very happily. We also hear about the Pastimes of Kṛṣṇa with the *Gopīs* on the banks of the Yamunā. Kṛṣṇa gives happiness to all, even to the point of giving *Himself*. If anyone is unhappy, He gives them double happiness. And the conception that has been given to us by Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu is most elevated: *Viraha-milana*, the conception of Union in

Reaping the Eternal Fruit

Separation, is the bestower of the greatest joy. In the world we may have some feelings resembling that. If a man has gone to a very far and distant land and could not return home to his wife for as long as three or four years, when he finally returns home, how much joy do they both feel? We can just imagine how much joy the husband and wife feel in their hearts.

After a great separation, the joy of reunion is the highest and supermost

joy. Such joy is found in the Pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, and not other pastimes. Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's Gift is to give everyone a chance to aspire to become a member of those Pastimes and live in Vrndāvana. There you will find forest flowers, cows, milk, cream, cheese; you can play with Kṛṣṇa, run with Kṛṣṇa, meet with Kṛṣṇa—everything, you can do with Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes are the most ecstatic of all.



Our Super Benefit

The second part of the previous lecture

When as a young lad of 17 I joined with Śrīla Guru Mahārāj in 1947, he said to me, “I will not be here in Calcutta at all times, so you learn *Bhagavad-gītā* from Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupāda.”

When Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj read the *Gītā* he would translate it and also teach it to me. At that time we were staying in Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj’s house. That was before he took *sannyāsa*. Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj were very intimate friends. I was 17, and Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj’s son was also 17, so we were friends. Sometimes we fought as well.

Every day I would go to Bara Bazaar for preaching, and during the preaching many questions would come up, and many would ask me, “Why have you become a *sādhu*? What value do you find in this life? Why have you given up school studies to become a *sādhu* begging in the street?” In this way many people would question me. One of the questions that came up was, “Oh, why don’t you worship Mother Kālī? If you worship her she will give you everything. Just pray, “*Dhanam debī, rūpam debī, janam debī, yaśam debī,...*” You’ll get everything—wealth, beauty, family, prestige. You’ll get everything, so why don’t you worship Mother Kālī? Why do you worship Kṛṣṇa?”

They seemed to be speaking the truth

and I also felt some trouble to reply properly. So when I returned home I told Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj about it; actually, every day I used to recount to him the day’s happenings. So when I told him about the challenge by the worshippers of Mother Kālī, he said, “Oh! you are foolish. Couldn’t you answer them somehow? You are a devotee of Kṛṣṇa and you worship Kṛṣṇa, that’s no problem; and they are devotees of Mother Kālī, that’s also no problem. But when you want to bring them from that conception to this, couldn’t you have said something?”

I replied, “What could I say to them? They said that from the worship of Mother Kālī we would get wealth, beauty, family, and so on.”

Then Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj said, “Will you die eventually or not?”

“Sure, everyone has to die some time. We are no exception.”

“Alright. If you worship Kṛṣṇa properly, in the end you get the shelter of Kṛṣṇaloka, is it not?”

I replied, “Yes, it is true. If we worship Kṛṣṇa properly we must get His mercy, and if we get His mercy we must go to Kṛṣṇaloka.”

Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj then pointed out, “And what will be your destination after death if you worship Mother Kālī? You will reach the place of Mother Kālī.

By doing her service, when she is satisfied with you, you will become one of her associates. What is your gain in becoming one of her associates, and where will you go? She lives in the cremation ground, otherwise she lives peacefully with Lord Śiva in the Himālayas. There it is absolutely freezing. If you go to join her in the cremation ground there is another disturbance—when you become her associate, what kind of form will you take? All her associates have the forms of witches, wizards, ghosts and spirits; she has two sons with such forms, and you also will have to take such a form! No doubt you can get the wealth, family and other things that you are praying for, but when she is satisfied by your worship what will you get? Think about *that*. And Mother Kālī also has a special nature—she goes naked. The artists paint pictures of her clothed, but the Scriptures tell us that she goes naked. She covers herself with hands. Whose hands? The hands of her own sons. You call her ‘mother’—so whose mother is she? She’s your mother. And she cuts off the hands of the demons and uses their hands as her clothing. She attracts them, chops off their heads and uses their skulls as a garland. What good will you get from that? And after becoming her devotee you will have to become a witch or ghost to live with her!”

That was Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj’s reply. Then he said to me, “Couldn’t you have replied to them like that?”

I said, “If I speak like that to them they will beat me! They will say, ‘What kind of preaching is this?’”

Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj responded,

“Then you can tell them, ‘Alright, that is very nice, you can become Mother Kālī’s son; but *we* are not interested in the outcome of that. We prefer to have fruits, cream, cheese and butter in the company of Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana, and enter into His Pastimes in Kṛṣṇaloka: *Yamunā-līlā*, *Rāsa-līlā*, etc. Do you prefer this, or do you prefer that? Whatever you please, you can accept; it is your decision!’”

In this way with his jolly mood Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj used to joke with me in my youth.

The argument of the general people was, “We are gaining all these things—wealth, family, youth, etc.” But Prabhupāda’s argument was, “Oh, you are getting all those things, but they will not stay with you. You will lose all. Then, if you become a great devotee of Kālī, you will live with her. Think what you will get then. But when *we* become great devotees we shall live with Kṛṣṇa. We will reach the home of Kṛṣṇa!”

So Kṛṣṇaloka is the Plane of the most special Transcendental Pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. There, the highest Divine Play takes place, covering the Principal Divine Relationships of *Dāsy-*, *Sakhya-*, *Vātsalya-* and *Madhura-rasa*.

In Nārāyaṇa-loka or Vaikuṇṭha-loka the Pastimes take place within two and a half *Rasas* beginning with *Śanta-rasa*, then *Dāsy-a-rasa* and half *Sakhya-rasa*. It is never mentioned in the Scriptures that Nārāyaṇa has any friends. All are His reverential servants, or half-friends, like Lakṣmīdevī, Nārāyaṇa’s Consort. Her mood with Nārāyaṇa is always, “Please, what is Your order my Lord?”

She can never behave with familiarity like a *Sakhī* (lady-friend) and chide

Our Super Benefit

Him, "Kṛṣṇa, go away!" But in Vaikuṇṭha all dealings with the Lord in His Nārāyaṇa Form are mainly on the level of reverential servitude. This is not the case in Kṛṣṇaloka; there, Mother Yaśodā may pull Kṛṣṇa's ear and chastise Him, "Oh what is this wrong you have done?" And Kṛṣṇa accordingly will also play with her as her son.

Once some cowherd girls, *Gopīs*, came to Mother Yaśodā's house and accused Kṛṣṇa of some misbehaviour. They went to Mother Yaśodā and gave her a report, accusing that, "Your son comes to our house and does such and such. He creates disturbances, and our milk and other dairy foods are spoiled by his meddling."

Then Kṛṣṇa denies, "No, no! See my hands—I never touched any of their milk or butter, you would smell the scent otherwise. I took whatever food you gave me, that's all. They are telling lies."

Mother Yaśodā asks, "Then why on earth are they lying?"

"Well, of course, they are only coming here just to see Me! That's the real reason. But they can't tell you that; they are hiding behind their accusations."

Then the cowherd girls laugh, Kṛṣṇa also laughs; Mother Yaśodā also laughs and she leaves the matter. But when the cowherd girls walk back to their homes Kṛṣṇa suddenly appears before them, saying, "What is this? You went to My mother and caused so much trouble for Me. Now I shall retaliate by coming to you all as your husband; what will you do about that?"

Such are the Pastimes in Kṛṣṇaloka. But this play of Kṛṣṇa cannot be found in any other Form of the Lord. For

example, Lord Rāmachandra is the Godhead Himself, *Pūrṇa-brhma*—the All-perfect Supreme Godhead, completely transcendental to the mundane plane. But what does He show us in His *Līlā*? He resides completely within the jurisdiction of law. He always gives full honour to all the Vedic laws and injunctions. He never breaks any of the rulings, infallibly. This is His behaviour at all times. For this reason He is famous as *Maryyādā-puruṣottama*, or the Supreme Lord as the Protector of Vedic Rulings. He is none other than the Supreme Lord Himself, but He manifests this special aspect. Although He is free and independent of all rules and regulations, He shows this full subordination to the Vedic codes of conduct. When it came to His ear that, "Your wife was in another's house," He immediately banished Śrīmatī Sītādevī to the forest. So in this Incarnation, the Lord manifests the nature of complete subordination to law.

But as Kṛṣṇa there is no such question of law. The question of law never enters His thoughts. His freedom is absolute, but there we find love, beauty, charm—as much affection of the heart as is ever possible, as much beauty as can ever be possible, as much attraction as can ever be known in the world and beyond—everything is found in its fullest possibility in *Kṛṣṇa-līlā*.

When Kṛṣṇa personally appeared in this world, He Himself declared, "*I am the Supreme Lord!*" In the Teachings of the *Gītā* we find this all through:

**tam eva śaraṇam gaccha
sarvva-bhāvena bhārata....**

(18.62)

And:

**mām hi pārtha vyapāśritya
te 'pi syuḥ pāpa-yonayah
striyo vaiśyas tathā śūdras
te 'pi yānti parāṁ gatim**

(9.32)

“O Arjuna, whoever takes full shelter in Me, whether they are low-born as sinful outcastes, women, *vaiśyas* or *śūdras*—they too will attain the Supreme Objective; taking their own internal divine form they go to the topmost plane, the Plane of My Service.”

**sarvva-dharmmān parityajya
mām ekam śaraṇam vraja**

Kṛṣṇa is saying, “I am the Supreme Lord, the Supreme God. Take shelter in Me!”

**man-manā bhava mad-bhakto
mad-yajī mām namaskuru**

“Give yourself to Me, be My devotee, worship and honour Me.”

**daiva hy eṣā guṇamayī
mama māyā duratyayā
mām eva ye prapadyante
māyām etāṁ taranti te**

Here, the Lord refers to Māyā, the illusory power, as His Māyā; so, naturally, “I give liberation from that Māyā to anyone who surrenders to Me, furthermore, I give them entrance into My Pastimes. I am so powerful, I am *Bhagavān*.”

At that time, Kṛṣṇa spoke in that very manner—yet there was no one, without exception, who could oppose Him. As we mentioned before, there are many Forms of the Lord, such as Rāma, Nṛsiṁha, Vāmana, etc. He reveals Him-

self in these various Forms according to the particular nature of His various Pastimes. But the Pastimes of Kṛṣṇa are so elevated; the Lord makes the law, the Lord breaks the law, yet nothing can touch Him. In such a Form the Supreme Lord has His Transcendental Play. Therefore it is mentioned in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.3.28):

**ete cāṁśa-kalāḥ pumisah
krṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam**

The Lord has infinite Expansions and Sub-expansions, all embodying the Supreme Potency of Godhead, but Kṛṣṇa is the Original Supreme Godhead Himself, *Bhagavān*. So in His Original Form—*Bhagavān*—Kṛṣṇa plays His Pastimes; and in His indwelling Supersoul Form—*Paramātmā*—He resides within the hearts of all living beings. Therefore the Divine Principles of Vaiṣṇavism teach us—*jīve sammāna dibe jāni' krṣṇa'-adbiṣṭhāna* (C.c. Antya 20.25)—to give obeisances to all souls, to give respect to all, knowing Kṛṣṇa to be resident there. If it is your son, you must still offer him obeisances; but that is to be done mentally. Otherwise it will not be to the child’s benefit, for he will think, “My father is offering me obeisances, so I am superior to him.” But he should be respected with the knowledge that the Lord is residing within his heart. This is the principle.

So today you have all assembled here to hear the messages of the Lord. The Lord Himself is your own natural wealth, and in your hearts the Lord is gloriously presiding. He has many, many Forms, and we have many, many paths to reach Him; but the Supreme Path is

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Bhakti, Devotion. The Transcendental Knowledge given by the Lord in *Gītā* is greatly respected all over the world. Why? Because the Teachings given there are for one and all. The book itself is very compact—700 verses. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is 18,000 verses, and the *Mahābhārata* is 100,000 verses. The *Padmapurāṇa* is also a full 100,000 verses long.

The *Gītā* is only 700 verses long, but it is accepted world-wide. In the *Gītā*, the *karmmī* (worker) finds his interest, the *jñānī* (liberation-seeker) finds his interest, the *yogī* (meditator) finds his interest—and the *bhakta*, or true devotee, finds his interest. Even an anarchist may be found to be keeping the *Gītā* in his pocket, because the way to attain detachment is clearly given therein. This Knowledge of *Gītā* now pervades and commands the respect of the world; even Russia. The Knowledge of the *Gītā* is so unprejudiced. The Lord happily praises the worker in the world:

**niyatam kuru karmma tvam
karmma jyāyo hy akarmanah
śarīra-yatrāpi ca te
na prasidhyed akarmanah**
(*Bhagavad-gītā* 3.8)

“Do something! Otherwise you won’t even get your food for your bare maintenance. Man must work, so work in such a way as to invite your highest good. That will be most auspicious for you.” And that is (3.9):

**yajñārthāt karmmano ’nyatra
loko ’yam karma-bandhanah
tad artham karma kaunteya
mukta-saṅgah samācara**

The point is to work in such a way that you don’t become bound by that work. You need liberation from such bondage, so you should work to attain that end. One poet of India wrote that, “At birth, a child must cry, but everyone laughs and smiles, happily discussing, ‘Oh, very nice! You have a child; is it a boy or a girl? Oh, it is healthy. Just see, it is crying.’ So at birth, all a baby can do is cry, but the rest of the world laughs. But you have to work in such a way that you can leave the world laughing—you can be detached—and the rest of the world may weep for you.” There is such a work, and that work is to render Service to the Supreme Lord.

**yat karosi yad aśnāsi
yaj juhoṣi dadāsi yat
yat tapasyasi kaunteya
tat kuruṣva mad arpaṇam**

(*Bhagavad-gītā* 9.27)

“O son of Kuntī, whatever work you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer in sacrifice, whatever you give away, whatever vows you may follow—do all as an offering unto Me.”

Kṛṣṇa is saying, “In this way, work only for Me, and you will never be bound in this world. Who am I? I am Viṣṇu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. *Yajñārthāt karmmano ’nyatra loko ’yam karma-bandhanah.*” Therefore if you work for Viṣṇu, you cannot but be blessed with all success. Everything you do will become auspicious.

You can think like this: ‘Oh, there are so many flowers in my garden, but they are being wasted by falling all over the road. If I collect the flowers from those trees and offer them to the Lord,

they will then become worshippable, and I shall take them and touch them to my forehead.”

Similarly we see so much grass on the pathways, and daily we may trample it underfoot. But if any auspicious grass has been used in the worship of the Lord, we touch it to our heads in respect.

Therefore the Lord is teaching us, “Take everything for worship. Make your intelligence mature, then all your bondage will leave you and even in this world you will find true happiness. One whose heart is purified can tolerate both the joys and sorrows of this world. One who has gained real consciousness never laments over anything in this world (*gatāśūn agatāśūṁś ca nānuśocanti paṇḍitāḥ* [2.11]).”

This will be the proper adjustment. Whoever has appeared in our house, either as a son or a daughter, our duty is to attend to them with our best ability. We must think that the Lord has placed them under our care, so now we must serve them. Even if one or more of them suddenly dies, we shall not be sad, knowing that the Lord has taken them. Everything is the wealth and property of the Lord. Whatever we eat we shall first offer to Him and then take His Divine Remnants, *Prasāda*. If we shall give anything to anyone we shall first offer it to the Lord and give that to a devotee for their service to Him. In this way if we live our normal lives in the world, whatever we do will be auspicious. When we surrender ourselves to the Lotus Feet of Kṛṣṇa, whatever we do, whether family life or anything, the Supreme Lord becomes our centre.

When the visible universe is considered to revolve around the sun, the

scientific term applied is ‘heliocentric’; and when the earth is considered the central point of reference, the term used is ‘geocentric’; but we need to make our lives ‘Godcentric.’ We need to invite Him into our families. If whatever we do, we first offer to Him, then all our activities will become unselfish. More than that, they will also become transcendental. Nothing inauspicious will be able to enter there—everything will be auspicious. This is the Service of the Supreme Lord, *Bhagavān*. “*Sarvvam karmmākhilam pārtha jñāne parisamāpyate* (*Gītā* 4.33)—all these varieties of sacrificial works culminate in Knowledge Divine.” This means that the acme of Knowledge is *Bhakti*:

**tapasvibhyo 'dhiko yogi
jñānibhyo 'pi mato 'dhikāḥ
karmmibhyaś cādhiko yogi
tasmād yogī bhavārjuna**

**yoginām api sarvveśām
mad-gatenāntarātmanā
śraddhāvān bhajate yo mām
sa me yuktatamo mataḥ**

(*Bhagavad-gītā* 6.46,47)

**bahūnām janmanām ante
jñānavān mānī prapadyate
vāsudevaḥ sarvvam iti
sa mahātmā sudurllabhaḥ**

(*Bhagavad-gītā* 7.19)

Such are the Teachings of the Lord in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. The main point is that you are to give yourself to Him. There is no question of seating Him on a far and distant throne and just offering some worship. He is in your heart, He appears in your temple—He is within all living beings. He resides everywhere at all times (*vāsudevaḥ sarvvam iti*).

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Knowing this, you will easily know what is needed of you: *Bhakti, Sevā*—the service of a divine slave. The Sanskrit word ‘*Bhakti*’ originates from the root ‘*bhaj*’: *bhaj-dhātuḥ sevāyāṁ*. The fundamental potency of the root ‘*bhaj*’ is service. So we want to live in the plane of full service.

The Scriptures inform us that where we live at present is the plane of exploitation—if we dig a hole in the ground, wherever we throw the earth must become a hill. This example is a nice analogy of this world. We fulfil our occupations and maintain our bodies, but we are bound to commit violence. Without violence we cannot survive. The Scriptures prohibit us from taking the life of other living beings, especially from taking meat, fish, and so on. Still, we must eat something to survive. For our survival we must feel the need to secure food.

The question may then arise that in our garden there are very nice vegetables and fruits. But how shall we eat them? We shall have to cut the vegetables, but that is also killing, for even within fruits there are millions of atomic life-forms, and we cannot avoid eating them along with the fruit. If we examine cow’s milk under a microscope we shall also find millions of life-forms moving hither and thither. We enjoy yoghurt very much, and we are very careful to see that it is set properly when making it, but under a microscope we shall see that it is absolutely full of living bacteria.

So what will you eat? Atomic bacteria and microbes? Whatever you eat, you are bound to murder other living entities. And if you stop eating altogether, you will nonetheless have to breath; without at least breathing you will never survive.

But with every breath billions of atomic living entities enter into our bodies.... Therefore we are not fit to maintain ourselves, and this is why this world is called the plane of exploitation. We cannot live without killing others. We cannot survive. So we are bound to commit violence.

But the Scriptures say, “Why have you opened your own account? You don’t need this account.” If two or three policemen chase a murderer but are unable to catch him, they may shoot; one or two people may be killed, one or two may be injured, but what can be done? One of the policemen may be injured or even lose his life in the attempt to catch the culprit. Then what are the consequences?

All the responsibility is absorbed in the government’s account. The injured policeman who caught the criminal will be promoted or have his salary doubled. All his medical necessities will be provided. Otherwise, even if he is unable to return to his work for the rest of his life he will be awarded double pension as compensation. He will be rewarded.

If you shoot someone you will be arrested immediately for the most heinous crime, but if someone is killed by a policeman in the attempt to catch a criminal, all responsibility is absorbed in the account of the government.

However, one who cannot survive without exploiting others or giving pain to others needs, to be saved himself. And this is possible if such a person offers everything to the account of the Lord: “O Lord, this is all Your wealth—this house, family, sons, everything. I am a servant in Your family, and I shall do service to all. I will also get *Prasāda*, and all my needs will be fulfilled.” In this

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way, one who makes his family ‘God-centric’ will gain all success for them.

We can consider, therefore, three stages in general: the plane of exploitation, the plane of renunciation, and the plane of dedication. A surrendered soul—one who has given his all and himself to the Lord—he can do no wrong. Whatever he does goes to the Lord’s account. The Lord Himself said

**yānti deva-vratā devān
pitṛn yānti pitṛ-vratāḥ
bhūtāni yānti bhutejyā
yānti mad-yājino 'pi mām**

(*Bhagavad-gītā* 9.25):

“The worshippers of ‘other gods’ (demigods) gain entrance into the corresponding abode of the god worshipped; the worshippers of the forefathers who regularly perform the *śrāddha* ceremonies reach the forefathers’ abode, Pitṛloka; and My devotees reach Me.”

“My devotees attain to My abode. My devotees are transcendental to the three qualities of mundane nature: goodness (truthfulness, illumination), passion (agitation, activation), and ignorance (foolishness, stupefaction)—(*sattva-guṇa*, *rajo-guṇa* and *tamo-guṇa*).”

**ūrdhvam gacchanti sattva-sthā
madhye tiṣṭhanti rājasāḥ
jaghanya-guṇa-vṛtti-sthā
adho gacchanti tāmasāḥ**

(*Bhagavad-gītā* 14.18)

“The good go upwards (as far as Satyaloka); the passionate remain in the middle (in the human plane); and the ignorant must fall (to the hellish regions).”

So those who remain in those particular qualities will receive a corresponding result. But the Lord says, *man-*

niketan tu nirguṇam—“Whoever lives in My home lives in the Transcendental Plane. He is not bound by those mundane qualities. Whatever is done in My Plane is done with Devotion for Me, *Bhakti*, and that Devotion is the source of all Blessings and Benedictions.” Thus *Bhakti* has been given the absolutely highest position in all Scriptures. Whether you are capable of doing anything or not, offer yourself, surrender yourself unto the Lotus Feet of the Lord. Whether you are a *grhaṣṭha*, *sannyāsī* or *brahma-cārī* is not the point, whatever you may be, you will get your supreme benefit. This is the direction of our Vedic Religion.

So, as I said before, you have assembled here today to hear about *Bhagavān*, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I have tried with all my might to speak to you about Him. And you have given me much time in which to do so. I consider myself blessed because you have all so patiently heard these talks about the Lord. I want to do some good for you all. There are so many forms of religion, but real religion is in your hearts. That is your potency, and that is your wealth—and that is Love for the Supreme Lord, Divine Love, *Prema*. It is in the hearts of all, and it is for all. The Lord is engaging in a loving search for the lost servants. As the Lord searches for His servants, you also have the tendency to search for Him.

We can take some help from the ground, like a small child trying to walk for the first time. In the beginning he falls down, but taking the help of the ground he again stands, regains confidence and finally, after a few attempts, begins to walk. When the same child grows, he

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may well be able to run the four-minute mile. He gets such strength. Similarly, we live in this world, and taking what help we can get in this world we can begin to walk on the path of the life of Devotion for the Supreme Goal. Then we can have our super benefit. We need to invite the attitude to want to do good for others. In that way we will get our own benefit and we shall be able to do good for the entire world. *Viśvam pūrṇasukhyate*. We want to be able to live our lives and maintain our families through our Service without exploiting others, and automatically we shall see that no burden will ever come to us.

If we are not the cause for the birth of others, then we, accordingly, will not be born. This is also thought out by many *brahmacārīs*, so they avoid marriage and go on in life as free men. But those who marry—they also have their religious life. Actually, according to the Scriptures they hold the highest position in the world of religious thought because they are the maintainers of all the other *āśramas*, the religious categories into which humankind is divided. So from whatever position you may be in now, you can start on the journey towards Kṛṣṇaloka. You are already in the life of searching for happiness and preventing unhappiness, but it is already the law of nature of this world that joy and sorrow will come and go automatically.

**mātrā-sparśās tu kaunteya
śitoṣṇa-sukha-duḥkha-dāḥ
āgamāpāyino 'nityās
tāṁs titikṣasva bhārata**

(*Bhagavad-gītā* 2.14)

"O son of Kuntī, the contact of the

senses reacting with their objects give the sensations of cold and heat, pleasure and pain. But they are all temporary, always coming and going. So tolerate them, O Bhārata."

When joy comes, it is followed by sorrow. After the sun rises, it later sets; again it rises, again it sets. So happiness comes, then sadness; after sadness again comes happiness. There is no shortage of happiness in this world. It will come automatically. But when we have attained this human form of life, and when we have heard about the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa and come to know a little about His Holy Abode through the Scriptures and the association of devotees, we shall get the aspiration to find our own home, the soil of the soul. If we simply make the attempt to proceed to that Transcendental World we will come to our natural position.

We all know that none of us can remain in this world. We all have to leave one day. But if we only once aspire to proceed to our own home, we will get much opportunity. The Lord will surely bless us. The Lord says that even if one dies before completing his spiritual practising life, in the next life he will be given a higher position (*śucinām śrīmatām gehe yoga-bhraṣṭo 'bhijāyate*). One who only once makes the attempt for auspiciousness is never a victim of inauspiciousness (*na hi kalyāṇa-kṛt kaścid durgatim tāta gacchati*). He can progress to a higher and higher destiny.

The Wisdom of the *Gītā* is so beautiful. Everything needed to be known, for everyone, is found there. This is why the *Gītā* is preached throughout the world. The elevated saintly persons declare that

Benedictine Tree of Divine Aspiration

Śrī Gītā is the entry standard for spiritual life. If one can first properly appreciate the Gītā, then he can aspire for a higher position; it is like passing the entrance examination before entering college. Everybody's primary benefit is to be found, therefore, in the Gītā.

I thank you all very much for giving me this time today. By the wish of all you devotees, by your grace, I came here today, so I must try to give you something. Please go on together chanting the Holy Name of the Lord, *Harināma-saṅkīrtana*, and from this, all Transcendental Knowledge will be revealed in your hearts. *Harināma-saṅkīrtana* is the *yuga-dharma* of Religion for the age, and if you continue happily with this, the Lord who is already within your

hearts will graciously manifest Himself—the Lord and His Name are identical:

**nāma-cintāmaṇih
krṣṇa-caitanya-rasa-vigrahaḥ
pūrṇaḥ śuddho nitya-mukto
'bhinnatvān nāma-nāminoḥ**
(*Padmapurāṇa*)

"The Holy Name 'Krṣṇa' is the wish-fulfilling Gem, Krṣṇa Himself, the Living Form of Ecstasy, the Absolute Whole, Transcendental to Māyā, the Eternal Independent; because, the Name and the Named are identical."

So by the Grace of the Supreme Lord we have today this opportunity to chant His Holy Name, and we shall do that for the auspicious conclusion of this meeting.



Everyone's Real Friend

At the end of a gathering in Mauritius. A short talk given

by

His Holiness Śrīpād Bhakti Ānanda Sāgar Mahārāj

We are very fortunate to have had the opportunity in Mauritius to hear from Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj. In a very simple and charming way he has delivered to us some words about Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As it was mentioned by a respected guest earlier today, "I see Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Prabhupāda in Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj." This is no accident, because Śrīla Prabhupāda and Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj are very intimately connected. For many years in India they lived together, and Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj was like a son to Śrīla Prabhupāda. He said, "I consider Govinda Mahārāj as my most beloved son, actually."

It was from Śrīla Prabhupāda that Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj studied *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*. Śrīla Prabhupāda himself studied from Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj's Guru, Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj. So these three form a very intimate group.

After Śrīla Prabhupāda left the world in 1977 we had Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj to guide and shelter us. We all felt the need that after Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj's disappearance there would be someone to continue presenting these teachings in a genuine and authentic way. I knew from both Śrīla Prabhupāda and Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj that the person would be Śrīla

Govinda Mahārāj. For this reason I, and others, many times invited him to travel around the world. It is therefore a special event for me that he has kindly taken me with him on these travels.

Here in Mauritius we have all had the opportunity to hear how Śrīla Mahārāj has given us a very happy idea about serving Kṛṣṇa. He has also expressed much appreciation for this lovely country.

The Vaiṣṇavas never say, "I am Guru." They never show themselves as being superior to us. Śrīla Mahārāj always said, "I am a simple man. Śrīla Prabhupāda was a great Guru, but I am a simple man and I do not know if I can do such big things."

But gradually from all over the world people came to Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's home, Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Math in Nabadwīp, and as they went back to their own homes around the world they also felt, "We need such a teacher." Consequently they sent more and more invitations. The result is that now, like Śrīla Prabhupāda, Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj is doing these same things and is spreading the exalted teachings of the *Śrī Rūpānuga Sampradāya* around the world.

The Vaiṣṇava, the devotee of God, the devotee of Kṛṣṇa, is the real friend of

all living beings and of all human society. He is their natural friend, and he has no enemy in the world. He gives us the teachings of how we also can become Vaiṣṇavas. ‘Vaiṣṇava’ means ‘the servant of God, Viṣṇu.’ One who belongs to Viṣṇu is called a Vaiṣṇava. Vaiṣṇavas are not sectarian religionists.

Dharma is often translated as ‘religion’. But *dharma* comes from the original root word *dhri* which means ‘to hold’. It means that our very nature, the substantial part that holds us in our life, is *dharma*. *Vaiṣṇava-dharma* is our original nature, and it is also called *jaiva-dharma*. *Jaiva* comes from the word *jīva*. As Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj explained here, the *jīva* is the soul; that is, you and I. We are souls, and our nature is to serve God, to serve Kṛṣṇa. But now our original spiritual nature has become covered by mundane association, the material world. Therefore the Vaiṣṇava saints come from time to time to awaken us to our original natural self of being a servant of Kṛṣṇa. In Bengali this is called *jīvera ‘svarūpa’ haya—kṛṣṇera ‘nitya-dāsa’*. We are not only servants of Kṛṣṇa in the morning or in the evening, but eternally. Eternal means that there is no beginning, and no end. It is our natural position to serve Him, and we can serve Him through the mercy and grace of the Vaiṣṇava teachers like Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj.

Service to Kṛṣṇa is the most natural function of the soul. It is not a matter of converting anybody from this religion to that religion. It is already the natural function within the soul of all beings. And, as Śrīla Mahārāj has kindly told us, if we start this knowledge from our

childhood and through our youth-hood, it will stay with us eternally. In such a way we shall have a start in life and we shall have some purpose.

In French there is a nice expression, ‘*raison d'être*’. We must have ‘*raison d'être*’, we must have a goal in life, we must have a purpose in life, not only eating. When we are hungry we can only think about eating, and when we are tired we can only think about sleeping. Later on we may marry and have a family and we may have to fight for our family and for our country. But these things alone are not everything. There is ‘*raison d'être*’. There is a reason for living, beyond and above our bodily existence.

Śrīla Mahārāj has pointed out to us that we are not this body. The person in this body goes from boyhood to youth to old age. An old person once had a young body, but in both bodies he is the same person, the same soul. Similarly you were also in a young baby’s body, now you are in a young lady’s or gentleman’s body. Your body will become older and old, but you are the same person. From young, to being youthful, to adult, to older, you are the same person; only the body is changing. And that person is spiritual. He or she is *jīvātmā*, a living soul. The soul is spiritual and has some spiritual work to do, some spiritual function to do, and that is service to God.

It is Śrīla Mahārāj’s observation, and also mine by his grace, that in Mauritius you all naturally have that Godly heart. It is a very happy thing to see, because your future will be very great and bright.

When Śrīla Prabhupāda came here it

Everyone's Real Friend

was reported that he said, "This country can all become Vaiṣṇavas. They can all become devotees of God." He had that vision to see. And Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj also has told us like that. He feels very much happy and at home here.

Just as we were so fortunate to have

the association of Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are now so lucky to have Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj. He is carrying the same current. He is a personality of the same soil, the same land. He can, and is, giving us these teachings.



— Appendix I — *Āchāryya-charaṇa-vandana*

Glorification of Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj

Composed (and translated) by His Holiness Śrīpād Bhakti Ānanda Sāgar Mahārāj

**jaya śrīla mahārāja caraṇāravinda
śrī bhakti sundara deva-goswāmī govinda [1]**

**jagatera sumaṅgala karibāra āśe
tumi avatīrṇa hailā snigdha guru-veṣe [2]**

**praphulla nalina yena hāsimākhā mukha
dekhi vriddha-bāla-yuvā pāya mahā-sukha [3]**

**svadeśe-videśe harināmera pracāre
abhinava gaura-preme bhāsāle sabāre [4]**

**śrī-kare lekhanī yena ananta phowārā
sumadhura divyavāṇī-vigalita-dhārā [5]**

**su-siddhānta-dhārādhara satya sugambhīra
śrī-guru-vaiṣṇava-sevā-niṣṭha mahādhīra [6]**

**sādhu-priya saralatā tomāra bhūṣaṇa
amānī mānada sadā miṣṭha-sambhāṣaṇa [7]**

**guru-mahārāja yatirāja-rājeśvara
śrī-bhakti-rakṣaka deva-goswāmī śrīdhara [8]**

**parama santuṣṭa tava viśrambha-sevāya
nija-hāte vyāsāsane vasā'la tomāya [9]**

**sukhe manonita kailā uttarādhikārī
ehena apūrvva sneha kothāo nā heri [10]**

**rūpa-sarasvatī-śrīdhār-dhārā-srotasvinī
tava hr̄de vahe sadā bhuvana pāvani [11]**

**śīva-guru-saṅkarṣaṇa karuṇā-nilaya
nityānanda-rūpe tava hr̄de vilasaya [12]**

**sujana sudhīra-gaṇa tava guṇa-gāya
durbhāgā vañcita aparādhe mare hāya [13]**

**guru-gaura-kṛṣṇa-sevā-saubhāgya-prakāśe
sānande sāgara bhāse saṅkīrttana rāse [14]**

Āchāryya-charaṇa-vandana

Glory to the Lotus Feet of our Śrī Gurudeva
Śrī Bhakti Sundara Deva-Goswāmī Govinda. [1]

Wishing Grace Divine upon the whole of the creation,
From Goloka came thee down, most Gracious Incarnation. [2]

Hundred-petalled lotus flower—Lotus Face ablooming,
Young and old behold thee, all their heart's joy overflowing. [3]

Both home and abroad Lord's Hallowed Name thou art apreaching,
Flood of Love for Gaura entire planet inundating. [4]

Benedictine fountain from thy pen in hand awriting,
Sweetest songs of Love Divine a flow is never ending. [5]

Agent of the Waves of Perfect Truth—fathomless ocean,
Serve Śrī Guru and Vaiṣṇava! thy life's dedication. [6]

Truthful heart adored by saints—thy natural compassion,
Always humble, giving honour, in sweet conversation. [7]

Guru Mahārāj of Nyāsī Kings the Great Grandfather,
Śrī Bhakti Rakṣaka Deva-Goswāmī Śrīdhara—[8]

Satisfied supremely with thy Service dedicated,
By his own hand did he place thee on his chair exalted. [9]

Joyfully as his successor he hath thee achosen,
Such benign affection ne'er we find in all creation. [10]

Rūpa-Sarasvatī-Śrīdhara River flowing freely
From thy heart throughout the world makes everything so Holy. [11]

Supreme God of Good our Guide, compassion's Divine Treasure
Ever plays within thy heart as Nityānanda's Pleasure. [12]

Faithfully the true devotees sing thy Supreme Glories,
Lost, deluded souls dishonour thee, alas! and perish. [13]

By thy Grace shall we now serve our Lord and Golden Master,
Sāgara exults in thy Sweet Chanting Dance forever. [14]

Tridaṇḍibhikṣu Śrī Bhakti Ānanda Sāgar
Śri Gaura-Purṇimā
8th March, 1993

— Appendix II —

Chanting the Mahāmantra

From *The Search for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Reality the Beautiful*
by

His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj

Before chanting the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa, we must first chant the Pañca-tattva Mantra:

**Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Chaitanya, Prabhu Nityānanda
Śrī Advaita, Gadādhara, Śrīvāsādi Gaura-bhakta-vṛnda**

The Pañca-tattva, or five features of the Absolute Truth, came to give the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra* to the fallen devotees of this age, so they are the general representation of Guru for us. They help us to enter into the domain of Kṛṣṇa and also the plane of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

After chanting the Pañca-tattva *Mantra*, we should chant the *Mahāmantra*:

**Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa
Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare
Hare Rāma Hare Rāma
Rāma Rāma Hare Hare**

This *Harināma Mahāmantra* is found in the *Upanisads*, as well as in the *Agni Purāṇa* and the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*. In the *Kalisantarāṇa Upaniṣad*, it is recommended as the highest *Mantra*, and the scholars have mentioned this *Mantra* as a means of address only; no appeal should be attached to that. This Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra* is the *yuga dharmma nāma*, or the process of God realisation especially meant for the present age: Kali-yuga. We find the *Mahāmantra* mentioned everywhere in the *Purāṇas*. This *Mantra* can be chanted silently, mentally, or aloud. It has been given to us by Mahāprabhu as the general recommendation for the fallen souls. He has given it for all, whether they are qualified or unqualified. The only condition for receiving it is *śraddhā*, faith.



— Appendix III —

Daśa-vidha Nāmāparādhā

The Ten Offences to the Holy Name
(to be carefully avoided by the devotees)

by His Divine Grace
Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj

(Translated from the original Bengali by Śrīpād Bhakti Ānanda Sāgar Mahārāj)

Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra*—
of all mantras the best,
Throughout the world is preached
by saints' potent grace behest;
Such saints to the Name devoted,
such pure souls great:
Never dare offend them—
never show them hate.

•

Lord Kṛṣṇa, son of Nanda,
of all lords the Leader—
The great Śiva and all the gods
serve His feet forever;
The touchstone of the Name
is Kṛṣṇa incarnate—
His pastimes, nature, form, also
think not separate.

•

“Guru’s a form of Kṛṣṇa—
the Scriptures corroborate;
In the form of Guru,
Kṛṣṇa blesses the fortunate.”
Never offend that Guru
by thinking him mere mortal;
Gain your highest objective—
serve the Name for time eternal.

The Vedas with Mother Gāyatrī
and Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam
Illuminate the lotus feet
of Śrī Hari’s name;
Whoever vilifies
those Holy Vedic Scriptures—
Never keep their company,
know them as offenders.

•

The glories of the Name—
all Scriptures’ exaltation;
Dare not think their praise
to be exaggeration.
Agastya, Ananta, Brahmā,
Śiva, etc., ever
Sing the glories of that Name
with full-hearted fervour.
Who can cross the ocean
of the glories of that Name?
Whoever says ‘exaggeration’
have their sin to blame.

•

The Holy Names of Kṛṣṇa—
eternal wealth of Goloka:
Who thinks those Names imaginary,
mundane—he’s offender.

All Scriptures claim the Name
 all sin it can destroy,
But those who spend their time in sin
 making it a ploy—
Such a wicked attitude
 is that of an offender
Deceived by illusion,
 perpetually to suffer.

•

Incomparable Name of Kṛṣṇa—
 the treasure of ecstasy:
Never dare compare it with
 auspicious piety.

•

Those who're faithless t'ward the Name—
 deceived by Providence:
Giving them the Holy Name
 surely's an offence.

•

Despite them hearing the infinite
 glories of Kṛṣṇa's Name,
Those whose hearts don't melt in love
 are rascals of ill fame;
Only pride and avarice
 their thoughts and deeds do yield—
The Pure Name of Kṛṣṇa
 to them is ne'er revealed.

•

Casting off these ten offences,
 leaving no exception,
Those pure souls who chant the Name
 in Holy Congregation—
The miracle of love for Kṛṣṇa
 they will surely savour,
The Name Divine Himself will shine
 within their hearts forever.

•

(Tridaṇḍi-bhikṣu Śrī
 Bhakti Sundar Govinda)



Publications available

from
Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, Nabadwīp
Website: <http://www.scsmath.com>

i) By and about Śrīla B.R. Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj

Search for Śrī Kṛṣṇa—Reality the Beautiful
Śrī Guru and His Grace
The Golden Volcano of Divine Love
Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā—(The Hidden Treasure of the Sweet Absolute)
Loving Search for the Lost Servant
Śrī-Śrī Prapanna-jīvanāmṛtam (Positive and Progressive Immortality)
Subjective Evolution—(The Play of the Sweet Absolute)
The Guardian of Devotion
Sermons of the Guardian of Devotion Vols. I, II, III, IV
Home Comfort—An Introduction to Inner Fulfilment
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Śrī Kīrtana Mañjuṣā—(The Treasure Chest of Divine Kīrtanas)
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ii) By and about Śrīla B.S. Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj

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Śrī Brahmā-saṁhitā
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Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu—His Life and Precepts (Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākura)
Śrī Nabadwīp Bhavataraṅga (Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākura)
Relative Worlds (Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura)
Śrī Chaitanya Sarasvatī—(The Voice of Śrī Chaitanyadev)
Omni-Science
Śrī Vaiṣṇava Toshani
Counterpoint
Kalyan Kalpataru (Magazine)
Guardian of Devotion (Calcutta Publication)
Kīrtan Guide
Vaiṣṇava Calendar



Publications are also available in
Bengali, Dutch, Hindi, Hungarian,
German, Italian, Orian, Portuguese,
Spanish, Swedish, and Tamil.



What we need are good friends and association. Then we can proceed happily. And the other factor is that if our surrender is perfect, then from the upper level faith will come to us and protect us. If someone is fully surrendered to Kṛṣṇa in His form as Guru or *sādhu*, then Kṛṣṇa will certainly protect him. He must protect him.

A teacher is always necessary, whether we reach a very junior class, a senior class, or a higher class. Even if we want to eat something, there also a teacher is necessary. Guidance is *always* necessary! Guidance is always good for everyone.

—Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj